Wightwash

Volume 2. Number 107

Magazine of the Isle of Wight branch of CAMRA

Winter 2026 Issue

In this FREE issue...

- Brewery News
- Prize Quiz
- Dates for your Diary
- Island Characters
- Wightwash and AI
- and much, much more....



CAMRA

The Campaign fo The Real Ale
exists to preserve and promote good beer and pubs.

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CAMRA

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CAMRA

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Island People Island Pride

Every year, Isle of Wight CAMRA members help celebrate the outstanding pubs, clubs, breweries and beers that make our Island such a great place to enjoy a pint.

Please take a few moments to vote for:

Your Favourite Isle of Wight Pub

Your Favourite Isle of Wight Beer

EVERY MEMBER CAN VOTE

Every member will receive a voting slip containing a random, unique voting code.

You can:

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OR

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WHY VOTE?

Your vote helps to:

- Recognise and reward outstanding Island pubs
- Support local brewers and local beers
- Highlight the quality and diversity of the Isle of Wight pub and beer scene
- Celebrate the businesses and people who keep real ale thriving on the Island

This annual ballot is a valuable exercise that helps shine a spotlight on our great pubs and beers. It is your opportunity to reward the publicans, pub staff and brewers who work hard throughout the year to provide excellent beer and a welcoming atmosphere.

NOT A MEMBER? GO TO PAGE 2

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

Support Local Pubs • Celebrate Local Beer • Reward Great Brewers

Isle of Wight CAMRA
Championing Real Ale, Cider, Perry and Great Pubs

The results will be announced in early February 2027.

Local Beer A Brighter Island

Raising a Glass to Isle of Wight's **Good Beer Guide** Pubs

Island pubs featured in this year's CAMRA Good Beer Guide gathered recently for a special evening celebrating their achievement.

The event, the first of its kind on the Island, was held at Goddards Kitchen and Bar. Presentations were made by Joe Robertson MP, while Isle of Wight CAMRA Chairman John Nicholson acted as master of ceremonies.

Pubs recognised this year included Ale House (Cowes), The Castle (Ryde and Sandown), Cedars (Wootton), The Duke of York (Cowes), Fowler & Co. (Ryde), Goddards Kitchen and Bar, Harry's Bar (Ryde), The Highdown (Totland), Horse and Groom (Ningwood), Man in the Moon and Newport Ale House (Newport), Red Lion (Freshwater), Sportsman's Rest (Porchfield), The Star (Ryde), Travellers Joy (Northwood), Vine Inn (Freshwater and St Helens), The Volunteer (Ventnor), Waterfront (Totland) and The Wheatsheaf (Yarmouth).

A special thank you goes to Bob Simpson and his team at Goddards for hosting a memorable evening and Mike Hoar for coordinating IW ~GBG entries.



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Please note the deadline for the **Spring Issue** will be **11th February 2027**

Putting together this issue of Wightwash has been a bit of a challenge! With Microsoft discontinuing Publisher, a programme I've relied on for over 20 years, I've had to learn a completely new system from scratch (at my age!). Thank you for your patience, apologies for any small oversights along the way, and a big thank you Affinity.

Tim

GODDARDS

Bottling Back on Track

A recent hiccup with the bottling line at Goddards Brewery has now been successfully resolved, and production is back up to full speed.

One of the first jobs for the newly repaired machine was bottling 750 bottles of **The Golden Drop**, which are destined for the prestigious **'03 Champions Dinner** at London's Dorchester Hotel in Park Lane.

The **Golden Drop** is a 4.8% ABV English hop pale ale, packaged in 330ml bottles. The beer takes its name from the famous drop goal scored by *Jonny Wilkinson* in the closing moments of the 2003 Rugby World Cup Final in Sydney, when England defeated Australia to become world champions. The remaining 4,800 bottles from the latest run will be sold through the open trade.

Seasonal Beers Heading Nationwide



Goddards' seasonal beer this winter will be **Puncheon Porter (5%)**, which will be distributed to Wetherspoon pubs across the Midlands and South via Black Country Ales wholesalers.

Meanwhile, Goddards' popular **Duck's Folly (5.2%)** has been selected for Wetherspoon's nationwide winter beer programme, running from December through to February. Around 600 casks are ready for the release, replacing **Fuggle De-Dum (4.8%)**, which has featured

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in the chain's seasonal promotions in previous years.

With bottling now back on track, Goddards is once again producing a full portfolio of bottled beers, including **Pompey Royal, Puncheon Porter, Riptide, The Golden Drop and Quarr Abbey Ale**. Visitors to Quarr Abbey can also enjoy **Apiary Ale**, brewed with honey from the abbey's own apiary. Available exclusively at the abbey.

A Beer for Every Sport?

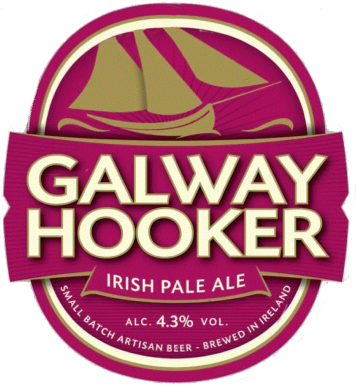
There has been much discussion recently about a sporting theme emerging within the **Powder Monkey** beer range.

Pompey Royal represents football, **Universal Boss Rum Infused Porter** and **Pilsner** inspired by cricketing legend *Chris Gayle,* covers cricket, while **Galway Hooker (4.3%)** celebrates rugby as of course does **The Golden Drop**.

Brewing Success

Congratulations are due to Albie, who is nearing completion of the *Foundations of Brewing* course, run in conjunction with Nottingham University.

And if you're visiting the Goddards **Kitchen and Bar**, you'll currently find **Castle Eden Black (4.6%)** on the bar. Its popularity has been impressive, although it is expected to be replaced shortly by Puncheon Porter.



Tim Marshall



YATES'



When I popped into the brewery to catch up with Josh for the latest news for this column he and Lloyd from No 7 in Niton were busy on the pilot plant transferring the mash to the copper for a special brew for December's beer festival. This had been planned for the October anniversary of David Snr's passing, but got delayed. The aim is for 4.6% brew with East Kent Goldings and Challenger hops.The pilot plant yields two firkins so it is planned to keep one back for a while to see how it ages.

We are now in the quieter season for brewing with the chance to build up bottle stocks. The opportunity will also be taken to

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take a couple of weeks off brewing in January to replace the brewery floor and drainage.

An exciting development on the horizon is a plan for short length bottling runs with Craft Beer Bottling. This would offer a minimum run of 100 cases allowing short runs of beers not currently available in bottle. We look forward to seeing how this develops.

Beers out in trade at the moment are Dark Side of the Wight, Sea Dog, Islander and Holy Joe. Santa's Ale is currently conditioning in cask and will be in trade soon, whist Yule be Sorry (7.5%) is in the conditioning tanks



and developing wonderfully well - I had the pleasure of a small taster during my visit and it was superb, very rounded and mellow, whetting the appetite for its appearance on the bar.

DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER
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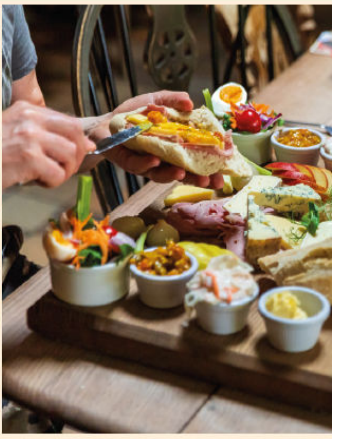

Main Road, Arreton, Newport, PO30 3AA | 01983 539361 | dairymansdaughter.co.uk

Yatsey Snr's grandson Harrison, a member of the brewery team, is running the **London Marathon** in memory of his grandfather, raising funds for the Hospice, as a thankyou to them for the wonderful way that they looked after David in his last days. If you would like to donate in David's memory there is a link on the brewery website or click the QR code.



Happy Christmas from all at Yates' Brewery and myself.

Jeff Sechiari

BLO Yates' Brewery



ISLAND BREWERY

How fast the year comes around, the days shorten, and the seasons change. When I was a boy, I seem to remember that we always had frost from mid-October onwards, snow by Christmas and signs of spring during March. The seasons were pronounced and there was no doubt which season you were in. Nowadays, the weather is all over the place and even nature gets confused as to which season it is it, which can be disastrous if, for example, plants sprout then get hit by frost.



Imagine, then, what it does to the beer drinker, who used to rely on dark beers during the darker seasons, and lighter, floral beers during the floral seasons. The effect on your body clock, I am guessing, must be dramatic!

At least Island stick to some sort of seasonal rotation, and it is one that we can all reliably look forward



to. **Wight Christmas** is one of those seasonal favourites, distinguished by its unusual utilisation of Munich Malt together with malted oats and chocolate malt, it has a distinctive creamy texture and satisfying chocolatey character, maintaining a slight astringency on finish, which is an important factor in maintaining desire when tasting. If a drink finishes leaving you with a wet, watery mouth, that is what naturally happens when you are ill, so triggers an off-putting reaction.

Of course, Island's other regular dark beer, **Earl's RDA**, with its espresso aftertaste, is an all-year-round favourite and not surprisingly so, as it has been awarded best *English Style Stout* in the world on two separate occasions, as well as a whole range of other local awards. If you have never tried this beer, treat yourself. You can even heat it up and pass it off as an espresso (not a drop of coffee in it) if you want to test your family and friend's taste buds!

Tennyson has proved so popular that Island now produce a keg version for

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those venues that cannot handle cask. Initially surprising given the use of the super bitter American Simcoe hops, but its popularity is down to the expert balance that Ashley achieved in giving it a rich biscuit malt finish.

Island's other beers, their bitters, ranging from the light and refreshing **Nipper** to the rich strong **Vectis Venom** are available all year round. **Yachtsman's** remaining the festival favourite, closely followed by **Wight Gold** as a pub standard, then there are the specials that often feature in *Newport Ale House* and *The Ale House Cowes*, which include oatmeal stout, marmalade porter, marmalade IPA, Black IPA, etc, etc. In fact, if you want a small batch custom brew for a special occasion, you only have to ask (with plenty of notice), either Island direct, or one of the Ale houses (in fact any pub with an Island account).

John Nicholson

BLO Island Brewery & IW Branch Chairman

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AI, Robots, and Wightwash

There has been a great deal of talk lately about the potential threats of AI, or "A One," as a friend of mine insists on calling it. These days, as you probably know, AI stands for Artificial Intelligence. Back in the day, of course, it meant something quite different involving farmers with long rubber gloves doing something round the back of a cow.

While the technology is modern, the fear of clever machines is nothing new. Way back in 1942, the celebrated science fiction writer **Isaac Asimov** tackled the very same worry in a short story called *Runaround*. To keep his fictional machines in check, he introduced his famous Three Laws of Robotics:

- **First Law**: A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.
- **Second Law**: A robot must obey the orders given to it by human beings, except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.
- **Third Law:** A robot must protect its own existence, as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Laws.

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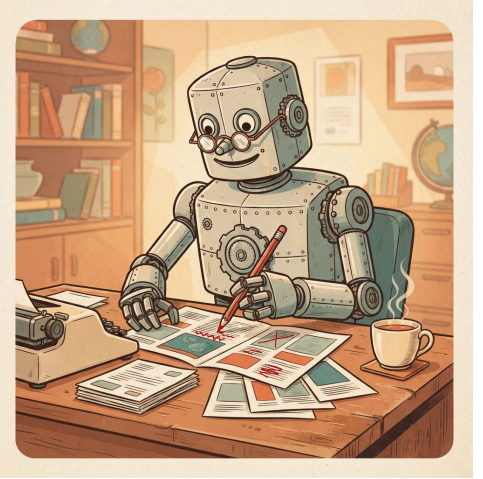
It is a remarkably sensible set of ground rules. In fact, if you simply swap the word "robot" for "computer," it seems like a rather good idea to insist that every modern software programme has something similar baked into its code.

While we are on the subject, we thought we should be clear about how we put Wightwash together. We **do** make use of various AI programmes during production, **but** strictly as an editing tool. You can rest assured that every article you read in these pages, unless clearly stated otherwise, is 100% original and written by a real human being!

Tim Marshall





Ken (Buzzy) Matthews



It was not unexpected, but when the inevitable news comes of the departure of someone you hold dear, it still brings a shock. Ken "Buzzy" Matthews was someone many people held dearly. He was passionate about all he did, especially beer. Buzz once said to me, "You know what, Juan, once you become an aficionado, you immediately deprive yourself of the enjoyment that millions of people worldwide derive from drinking crap!" As usual, he was not far wrong. Buzzy was not just an aficionado of beer; he was an aficionado of life.

From the last conversation I had with him, he knew he was going to die. We spent much of that conversation reminiscing about the places we had been, the fun we had, and the adventures we shared. If you never heard the tale of how a local woman simply got into his car as he drove through Hawick because she wanted a lift home and somehow knew he would be passing her house, then you missed one of his classics. I can still hear him telling it, tears streaming down his face with laughter.

Ken

Then there was the story of how, as a young man, he found himself in the tasting room of Williams & Humbert in Jerez with two Island friends. Growing impatient while waiting for a guide, they helped themselves to the bottles laid out before them. By the time someone arrived, they were so drunk they could barely stand. Being young and resilient, they recovered soon enough. Williams & Humbert never again left visitors alone in a room full of sherry.



Juan and Buzzy returning from the Southsea Beer Festival

The stories go on, and it is for that reason that I wish to propose a toast to Buzzy. We were fortunate to have known him and shared part of our lives with such a wonderful, dedicated and humorous character. His love of stout and conversation would soon produce that unmistakable Joker-like smile creeping up from the corners of his mouth. He met friends from far and wide at beer festivals, comparing beers, places and prices with the meticulous records that delighted fellow enthusiasts. His naturally ordered mind, right down to the correct orientation of a staple, led him to take charge of regional meetings and leave a legacy that undoubtedly remains today.

I think of him with a mixture of pride, joy and sadness, though the sadness quickly gives way to the countless memories. Rather than mourn his passing, I find myself celebrating the life of a wonderful, joyous and unique character whom we shall all miss greatly. To Ken "Buzzy" Matthews, in gratitude for his friendship, companionship and the many years he enriched our lives.

To Buzzy!

John Nicholson (aka Juan)

Wightwash's very own pub and beer historian, ***Paul Hathaway*** *has been busy once again. His latest collection of curious historical rules and regulations about pubs and beer has just been published on the Wightwash website.*

Over the coming issues we'll be dipping into this fascinating treasure trove of facts from those ***"who knew best".***



Our first gem comes from **Ecgbert, Archbishop of York**, who held office between AD 740 and 766. In his Canon 18, he decreed: "That no priest go to eat or drink in taverns." Miserable sod!.



In 1266, **Henry III got involved**. *The Assize of Bread and Ale Act* was one of England's earliest attempts to regulate the price of essential goods. In medieval times, bread and ale were everyday necessities, forming a major part of most people's diet.

The Act linked the weight of bread and the price of ale to the cost of grain. When wheat or barley became more expensive because of poor harvests, bakers had to make smaller loaves rather than increase prices. When grain prices fell, loaves became larger again. Similar controls applied to ale.

Local officials enforced the rules, and bakers or brewers who cheated customers could be fined, lose their goods, or face public punishment. The aim was to prevent profiteering and ensure that basic food and drink remained affordable.

At a time when poor harvests could quickly lead to hardship and unrest, these controls helped protect ordinary people and maintain social

stability. Although the regulations were amended over the years, the principles behind the Assize remained in force for around three centuries.

Today, the Assize of Bread and Ale is remembered as an important early example of consumer protection, showing that concerns about fair prices and honest trading are far older than many people realise.

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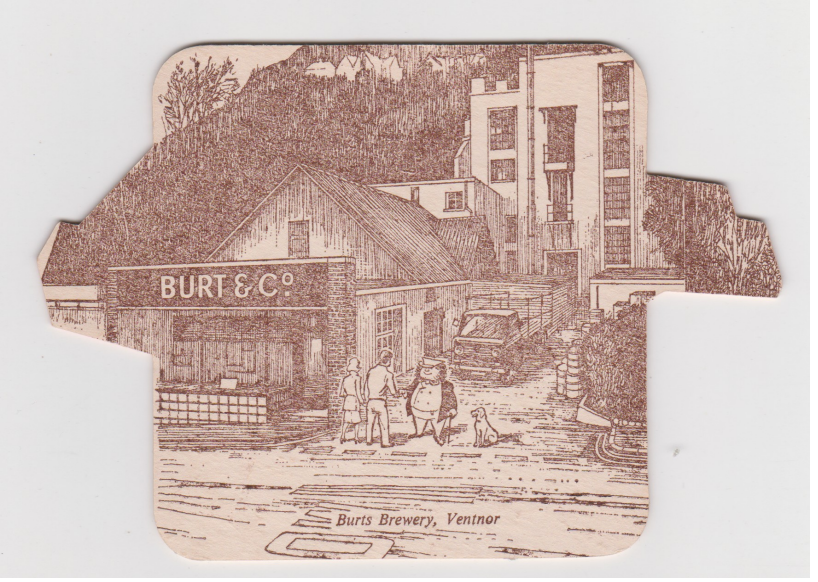
Beer Mats No. 2

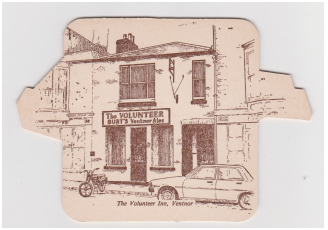
Burts of Ventnor - Island Shaped Mats

This is the second in an occasional series looking at beermats relating to the Island. On this occasion we are looking at set of mats produced by Ventnor's Burts Brewery issued in 1983. Although many readers will be too young to have seen these in their heyday, in ex-Burts pubs, they are still very familiar as part of displays.

Looking at the images of the brewery at the time, with its street front shop, and their varied collection of eleven pubs, it presents quite a striking view of how the world of the licensed trade has changed between then and now.

Prior to this series of mats Burts had only produced four known mats, dating between 1957 - to celebrate their success at that year's Brewers' Exhibition, and 1980. The only mat after this series was produced in 1994 by the Newport based incarnation of the firm.





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The Royal Standard
Hotel
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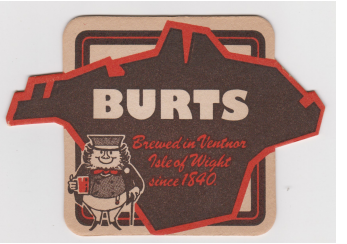
in the Wall
Ventnor



The Star
Wroxall



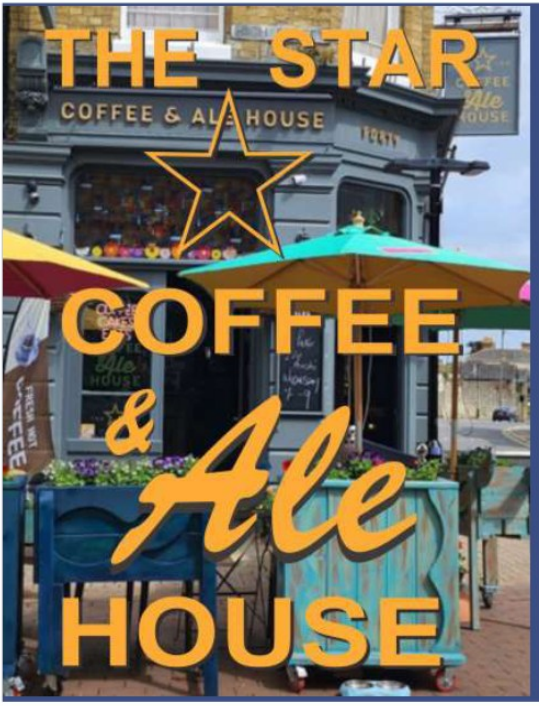
The Terminus Hotel
Ventnor



The first **Cowes Beer Festival** proved what can happen when local enterprise, community spirit and a bit of imagination come together.

The event was organised by Reg and Steph from The Ale House Cowes, with plenty of help from Jeff Leddcott and Dave Edwards, better known to many as "Hobbit". Together they created a festival that not only celebrated great beer but also showed what can be achieved when enthusiastic people roll up their sleeves and get things done.

And what a beer list it was. With around two dozen cask ales on offer, alongside ciders and other favourites, the festival arguably featured one of the most varied selections seen on the Island for many years. Whether your taste runs to a traditional bitter, a rich stout, or something a little more adventurous, there was plenty to keep the taste buds entertained.



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That adventurous spirit is something Reg and Steph have built into The Ale House itself. Their shelves and pumps feature everything from German smoked beers and cloudy wheat beers to imperial Russian stouts. Alongside these international classics sit creations from local brewers, including marmalade porter and black IPA. It's a combination that reflects both curiosity and confidence, and it clearly struck a chord with festival-goers.



Stuart Ellis, Mayor of Cowes the the Festival team.

The idea follows in the footsteps of other successful Isle of Wight events, including the Ryde Beer and Walking Festival organised by Rod Madigan of The Star Coffee and Ale House. Seeing what had worked elsewhere, Reg and Steph recognised that Cowes had all the ingredients needed for its own festival.

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Importantly, Cowes Town Council also saw the bigger picture. This was never just about beer. It was an opportunity to showcase the town, encourage visitors to explore local businesses, discover historic walks and learn more about Cowes's unique maritime heritage. It demonstrated how local councils and local businesses can work together to create something that benefits the whole community.

The festival also attracted visitors from beyond the Island, with people making the journey across the Solent

ESTD THE 1984
WATERFRONT

The Waterfront Bar and Restaurant finds itself tucked in the bay of Totland beach, sat upon the seawall, offering undisturbed, panoramic views of the Western Solent where it meets the Dorset Jurassic Coastline, as well as stunning sunsets all year round!

Staff offer a friendly and warm welcome, whilst the Kitchen use a wide variety of locally sourced produce to deliver the best seasonal dishes, the island has to offer. If you aren't sat in our Table Serviced Restaurant, you could be enjoying the fresh sea air in the Beer Garden and watch the skies turn from blue to sunset pink!



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on the Red Jet to experience it for themselves.

Of course, no first-year event is ever perfect. Organisers would no doubt have welcomed a few more people through the gates, and there are lessons to be learned. Better signage around the town is already being discussed, along with ways of involving even more local organisations and businesses.

But that's how successful events grow. The foundations have been laid, enthusiasm is high, and expectations are already building for next year.

So, well done Reg, Steph, Jeff and Hobbit. Here's to raising a glass to an excellent first effort and an even bigger and better Cowes Beer Festival in 2027.

John Nicholson







TIME IS NOT THE ENEMY OF CASK BEER.

John Nicholson, our famous chairman (he likes us to call him that), writes: *"I remember the best TT Landlord your chairman could ever find, at the Sun, Calbourne. Definitely a 5 (top score) if ever there was one! Geoff was the landlord. And I asked him what his secret was. He said,* ***never put it on before the sell-by date!".***

CAMRA have just issued a paper, **Cask Beer Conditioning in the Supply Chain**, explaining the complexities of beer storage and transport.

Many people assume that cask beer is constantly fermenting in the pub cellar, but the reality is more interesting. Once beer is racked into a cask, it undergoes a process known as conditioning, which consists of two stages: secondary fermentation and maturation.

Secondary fermentation is relatively short-lived. During this period, live yeast converts remaining sugars into a small amount of alcohol and

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carbon dioxide, creating the beer's natural sparkle. In most cellars, this process is completed within three to seven days.

The longer stage is maturation. Here, the yeast continues to improve the beer by removing unwanted flavour compounds and helping develop a smoother, more rounded character. Depending on the style and strength of the beer, maturation can take anything from a week to several months. As a result, cask beer is often not at its best immediately after racking.

This helps explain why time in the supply chain is not necessarily harmful. Historically, pubs often stored beer for weeks before serving, and some brewers still allow casks additional conditioning time before delivery.

Distance itself is rarely a problem. Well-handled cask beer can travel hundreds of miles and arrive in excellent condition. The real threats are excessive heat, poor storage and rough handling, all of which can damage flavour and clarity.



Ultimately, great cask beer depends less on simple freshness and more on careful conditioning, storage and handling. Time, when managed properly, can actually improve the finished pint.



Harry's Bar, The Royal Esplanade Hotel, Ryde, PO33 2ED

This occasional series was inspired by the silhouettes displayed on the wall in Cockrams Yard, the passage way between South Street and Pyle Street, which I now know is called the "People's Galley. In this issue we look at ***Rev. Edgar Greenshield.***



Edgar William Tyler Greenshield was born in 1877, the son of a Newport draper. As a young man he was inspired to devote his life to missionary work and between 1901 and 1913 made five extensive journeys to the Arctic.

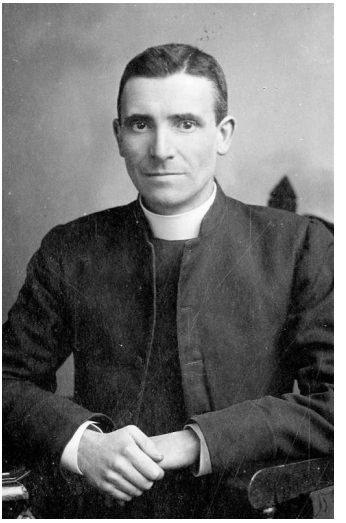
He was a contemporary of Scott, Amundsen and Shackleton, he became a popular public speaker as interest in exploration in the polar regions grew.

At twenty, he joined the Church Missionary Society College, mastering practical trade skills and medicine alongside his theological studies After hearing a talk from Rev Henry Lewis about his missionary work in India, he decided that he wanted to become a missionary himself.



1901 he set sail on his first mission to the Canadian Arctic where he endured violent snowstorms, freezing temperatures and long hours of darkness.

Edgar spent two years on Blacklead Island, learning to speak the Inuit language and putting his medical and practical skills to good use, caring for the sick and building the first hospital in the Arctic Circle.



The Inuit people held him in such deep affection that they gave him their own name: *Ilataaqauq* (our new friend).

Between expeditions, Edgar returned to England to share his experiences on behalf of the Church Missionary Society, consistently championing the Inuit people and their way of life. Riding a wave of public fascination with polar exploration, he became a sought-after speaker.



His most unforgettable homecoming took place in Newport in December 1906. Dressed from head to toe in traditional Inuit clothing, Edgar captivated his hometown crowd with displays of Arctic wildlife and played a thrilling, dramatic phonograph recording of a polar bear hunt.

In 1909, he survived a dramatic shipwreck when the Dutch schooner *Jantina Agatha* struck an iceberg. After escaping in lifeboats, he helped keep ten men alive for about eleven months before rescue.

Edgar journeyed to the Arctic for a fifth and final time between 1911 and 1913. Though he longed to go back once more, duty at home called; he chose to remain in England to care for his ageing parents. It was a decision that saved his life, as the ship he had been scheduled to sail on was subsequently lost with all hands.



In his later years, Edgar continued his ministry among sailors and fishermen in Ireland, the Shetland, India, and finally Teesside, where he passed away in 1938. Today, his gravestone bears a simple, fitting tribute to a remarkable Island life: "A friend of the Eskimo".



One of the most touching stories from Edgar Greenshield's time in the Arctic concerns a doll exchanged between two young girls who never met. Before leaving for the Canadian Arctic, Edgar took with him a doll belonging to fourteen-year-old Mollie Alderslade of Newport to give to an Inuit girl



. Almost two years later, he returned with a gift in exchange: a handmade Inuit doll for Mollie from her unknown friend.

The doll's head was carved from driftwood, its clothing was made from caribou skin, and its hair from musk ox fur. Dressed in traditional Inuit costume, it provided a fascinating insight into Arctic life. The doll can today be seen at Carisbrooke Castle Museum.

Much of the information used in this article has been reproduced and adapted from the Isle of Wight Hidden Heroes project (iwhiddenheroes.org.uk) produced in partnership with Ventnor Exchange and Beachy Books. We are most grateful.

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Send answers to - The Editor, Wightwash, Oakdene, Rookley, Ventnor, PO38 3NH
or email - editor@wightwash.org.uk

1/ Which US state is made up entirely of islands?

2/ What does IPA stand for?

3/ Which former Pakistani cricket captain became Prime Minister of Pakistan?

4/ What type of animal is *Aslan* in C.S. Lewis's Narnia books?

5/ Which classic British sports car was named after the sound of its exhaust?

6/ How many pints are in a standard British firkin cask?

7/ Who wrote the novel Pride and Prejudice?

8/ Which musical includes the song "Defying Gravity"?

9/ and 10/ name these TV comedy characters (not the actors).





Answers to the Autumn Quiz
1/ Canada
2/ Leonard Bernstein
3/ To Kill a Mockingbird
4/ Brighton and Hove Albion
5/ Morland
6/ A car
7/ George III
8/ Aston Martin DBS
9/ Grenada
10/ Cuba

Sheila Sheldon wins a meal voucher and Judy Ballanger wins a case of Yates' beer.

Thank you to all the others who took part - better luck next time



Dates for your Diary

11th December **IW CAMRA Xmas Dinner** - The Cedars, Wootton
23rd December **Xmas Concert with Abbey Brass** - Travellers Joy 7pm
24th December **Xmas Eve Party** - Castle Inn, Sandown - No ticket required
31st December **New Years Barn Dance** - Bargeman's Rest, Newport
31st December **New Years Eve Party** - Castle Inn, Sand'n - No ticket required
?? January 2027 **IW CAMRA AGM** - details TBA (see website)
?? February 2027 **IW CAMRA Social** - details TBA (see website)
16th - 17th May **Wightrider** IW Bus Museum, Ryde

Although we make every effort to make sure these dates and events are correct, there may be last minute changes and cancellations so please check first.

Please let me know if you would like to publicise an event in the magazine and/or the website. Just send an email to: editor@wightwash.org.uk **It's FREE!!**

The views expressed in Wightwash are not necessarily those of the editor or CAMRA (the Campaign for Real Ale) either nationally or locally.



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