

What's yours

(Award winning)



then?



CAMRA Highlands & Western Isles | FREE Magazine | Spring 2015



Loch Ness Brewery gains a clean sweep of our branch Beer Of The Year



- Xmas Walkabout report
- POTY and BOTY winners



- Aviemore Visit
- Breweries News
- Pubs news
- Pubs in Sheffield
- Volunteers Wanted



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Welcome... to the Spring issue of our quarterly magazine. In this edition:

not only, but also:

- > Xmas walkabout report
- > POTY winners
- > BOTY winners
- > Brewery and Beers news and pubs news
- > Aviemore visit
- > Updated Real Ale pubs list
- > Focus on .. Martin Donnelly
- > Snapshot of Sheffield pubs
- > Updated branch diary
- > Committee Volunteers Wanted

If you would like to place an advert, please contact one of the branch officers (see Diary page).

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We can help you in preparing your advert if you wish.

Please be aware that the CAMRA logo is copyrighted and should not be used in pub adverts.

An average of 3500+ copies are distributed to CAMRA branch members, to Highlands & Islands brewers, to Good Beer Guide listed and Real Ale pubs; plus extra copies to advertisers.

We welcome your letters, news, views and opinions. Let us know what is happening at your local, or tell us about pubs you have visited.

Thanks to all who have taken trouble to send in pub and beer reports, or articles, keeping us up-to-date with brews and what is happening in local pubs.

Please note that the editor reserves the right to edit contributions sent for publication.

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Summer edition **deadline** is Monday 1st June, for publication by mid June.

There are now about 170,000 members of CAMRA mostly in Britain. This makes it the biggest consumer lobby group in Europe and as such CAMRA has some clout. But, out of that 170,000 roughly only 10% are active members—giving up some of their time to help the Campaign. As CAMRA members, it is easy to forget that many people haven't heard of CAMRA—I have often had to explain that it is nothing to do with taking photographs! This ignorance is prevalent within the licenced trade—many bar staff have no idea about real ale or how to look after it and serve it. CAMRA exists to promote the brewing and drinking of Real, “live” Ale and in parallel, promote the existence and use of the great, British social institution—pubs. Over the 42 years since the campaign was founded, CAMRA has helped to achieve much. There are now more breweries in Britain than there were a hundred years ago. Many more pubs now serve real ale and that has been found to “add value” and a “better quality” to a pub that adds real ale to its bar choice. There are many negative pressures on the pub trade and CAMRA needs to keep up the good work. That needs committed volunteers. As you can read later in this magazine, *Your Campaign and this branch, Needs You!*

Cheers,

Ed.



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Christmas Walkabout 2014



The growing popularity of our branch's Xmas Walkabout meant that a record 40 (approx) drinkers gathered in Blackfriars on a dry and mild Tuesday evening in December. It was great to see so many, including several members from 2 or 3 of "our" breweries and the main organisers of North Hop which is returning to Eden Court at the end of the summer.

4 of us, joined by a 5th partook the free, minibus that the new owners of the Dores Inn were providing, a great, innovative answer to the new, stricter drink-drive limit to check out the Inn which had 4 very well kept ales on which were all tried as we had food, so had time.

An advance party checked that The Corriegarth continues to serve excellent **Happy Chappy** as well as 2 or 3 other ales from the Punch list. The Heathmount has 2 handpumps usually serving local ales but we hadn't time to try either of them. This year we gathered at Blackfriars – Del and Janette were dispensing Cromarty **Happy Chappy**, Caledonian **Rare Red Rye**, Orkney **1878** and **Corncrake** and, specially for the Winter season - Hopback **Summer Lightning!** All the ales were in great nick and several of us lingered for a while to try more than 1 before heading out to navigate as many places as possible in the

limited time available.

Some of us walked down to The Innes Bar which had a very nice Theakston's **Old Peculier** as well as a good Caledonian **Deuchars**. The bar was pleasantly busy with pool players and various drinkers.

Others took the shortest walk across the road to The Phoenix Ale House to partake of some of the dizzying array of 10 ales – Orkney **Northern Light**, **Raven**, **Andrew's Ale** and **Clootie Dumpling**, Inveralmond **Santa's Swallie**, Houston **Jock Frost**, **Peters Well**, **Warlock stout** and **Slainte** and Black Sheep **Bitter**.

Kings Highway also had 10 ales on as normal but as it is a Wetherspoon it is also the cheapest place so is always busy.

Cairngorm **White Lady**, Caledonian **Deuchars**, An Teallach **Crofters Pale Ale**, Lees **Christmas Plum Pudding**, Houston **Slainte**, Adnams **Broadside**, Greene King **Abbot Ale**, Sharp's **Doombar**, Fullers **London Pride**, Hardy and Hansons **Captain Christmas**.

Then it was up Church Street to Hootenanny which always has 2 Black Isle ales on. A very good **Red Kite**, which has been rejuvenated (*see Brewery News – Ed*) and a good **Heather Honey**. Staff were more knowledgeable and the ales were much improved on previous years – a pleasing change.

A few of us popped in to The Room. It was almost empty but was serving a decent Cromarty **Happy Chappy**. By the time other groups of us were passing, it had closed for the night.

The Mercure Hotel (The Arts Bar) provided a decent **Trade Winds** under Top Pressure and comfy seats then some of us ventured across to Lauders where we enjoyed a very good Orkney **Red MacGregor** among the tasteful Xmas decorations.

This is a classic, Scottish, corner pub in a great, town centre location – fantastic potential for a modest flagship place. Since the summer, The Gellions has had real ale on. That evening it had a decent

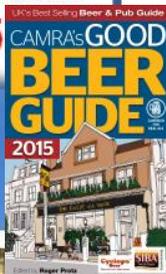


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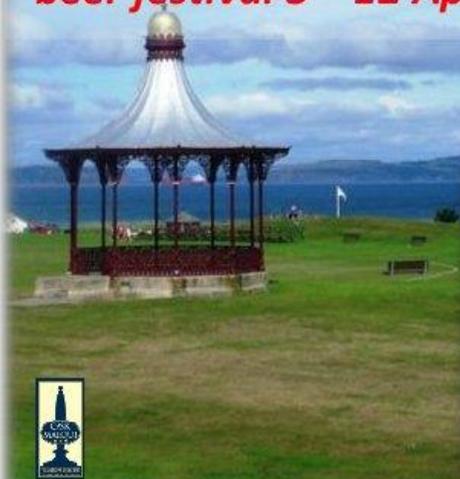
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Cromarty **Happy Chappy**, and an ok Caledonian **Flying Scotsman**. It has always been one of the most popular bars in town and was noticeably the busiest of the night. Some Ross County staff were in. Hopefully, the bar staff will become more comfortable with real ale.

A small contingent of us tried the very popular Johnny Foxes which had a hand-pull dispensing Black Isle **Heather Honey**. Unfortunately, in the worst possible advert for real ale, it was only good for sprinkling on a plate of chips.

Across from MacDonalds, The Caledonian had a good Loch Ness **HoppyNESS** which was just finishing, and a decent Greene King **IPA**.

We had been told by an advanced reconnaissance party that, as usual, the Palace Hotel had an empty hand pump. They do usually have an ale on in the summer when it is busy.

Across the river, the Glen Mhor Hotel (Nico's bar) had an empty hand pump. Our groups who were still going, began to gather at a pleasantly busy No. 27 on Castle Street which had very good Windswept

Blonde, Wolf and **Tornado**, as well as an ok Speyside Craft **Bottlenose Bitter**. And so, up to the final place of the evening – the Castle Tavern. 6 ales were on offer - **An Tealach Ale** and **Crofters**, Cairngorm **Santa's Sledgehammer**, Kelburn **Red Smiddy**, Orkney **Corncrake**, Speyside Craft **Dark Sky**. We were treated to excellent stovies to finish the night off and quite a few made it through to the end.

It was good to see so many people from all over our huge branch area - Dornie, Lewis, Thurso, Aviemore, Al and Tash from Windswept, Sean, quite a few from Nairn, Black Isle, Kirkhill, Drumnadrochit as well as Inverness. The night seemed to go down well and we hope everyone enjoyed themselves.

Thanks to all the staff who served us and especially George, Veronica and staff at the Castle Tavern.

*We get very few reports on some of these places, so, if you are a CAMRA member and have your smartphone, use their WiFi and please take a minute to go on to **WhatPub?** and put in scores for the ales you are drinking—thanks.*

Discounts for CAMRA members

This is the first of what will become a regular listing and we will update it accordingly. Pubs and Hotels offering discounts on real ale or accommodation for card carrying CAMRA members:-

Alexander Bain (Wick) - Wetherspoon 50p/pint promotion with CAMRA voucher.

Allanrannoch Arms (Munlochy) - 20p/pint, 10p/half.

Anderson (Fortrose) - stay 1 night, 2nd night free (Nov 1 - Mar 31).

Argyll Hotel (Ullapool) - 20p/pint, 10p/half - or real cider, also 10% off rooms.

Braeval Hotel (Bandstand Bar) (Nairn) - 10% off accommodation (when booked direct).

Cairn Hotel (Carrbridge) - 20p/pint, 10p/half.

Cawdor Tavern, 20%/pint.

Ferry Boat Inn (Ullapool) - 20p/pint, 10p/half - or real cider, also 10% off rooms.

Four Seasons (Inchree, Onich) - 10p/pint, 5p/half.

Glen (Newtonmore) - 20p/pint, 10p/half for real ale or real cider.

Great Glen (Fort William) - Wetherspoon 50p/pint promotion with CAMRA voucher.

King's Highway (Inverness) - Wetherspoon 50p/pint promotion with CAMRA voucher.

Taigh Ailean Hotel (Portnalong Skye) - 20p/pint, stay 1 night, 2nd night free (Nov 1 - Mar 31).

Winking Owl (Aviemore) - 20p/pint.

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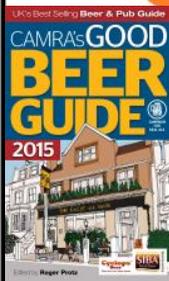
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JUST A FEW OF THE MANY BREWERIES



Aviemore Visit

As Aviemore has our 2nd biggest concentration of licenced premises in our huge branch area, we planned our 2nd annual, short visit to check out the state of play. Maybe partly because it is such a tourist destination, there seems to be a quite a bit of volatility in some of the places closing, changing ownership, etc. On a rather snowy day in early February a party of four local CAMRA Branch committee members had an outing to Aviemore by train—easy but not cheap at £13.90 return.

Our first port of call was Cairngorm Brewery which is just over a mile away from the station. The Brewery boasts a modern visitor centre which has been accredited as a 4 Star Visitor Attraction by Visit Scotland's Quality Assurance Scheme. Guided tours and tastings are available for £3 (over 18's only, booking essential).

Our mission (oh yes!) was to be the human guinea pigs to taste a new recipe version of the already popular 5% abv **Highland IPA**. This new recipe includes Dr Rudi, Pacific Jade and Perle hops with late hopping of Galaxy and Crystal. Oh my! - what a great taste and flavour experience! Although a bit colder than it should normally be served (the cask was in the conditioning tank room which was slightly warmer than it was outside, which was itself just below freezing!) what a splendid ale this was - personally, I prefer more hoppy beers, but no so hopped they rip your throat out! I will be watching carefully to see when it appears in our locals!



With an emptying pint glass in hand, Merlin Sandbach, the Operations Manager, took us through the warehouse to the bottling hall where two members of the team were running the line which was bottling **Trade Winds**, a rightful winner in the “specialist beer” category - made with a proportion of wheat, Perle hops and elderflower. During the shift, roughly a dozen pallets (sixty 12 bottle packs on each) will have been processed.

Back to the visitor centre, but not before a photo opportunity!



So as to contrast and compare, Merlin offered us a sample of **Wildcat** which after **Stag** has always been one of my favourite Cairngorm beers.

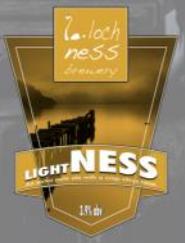
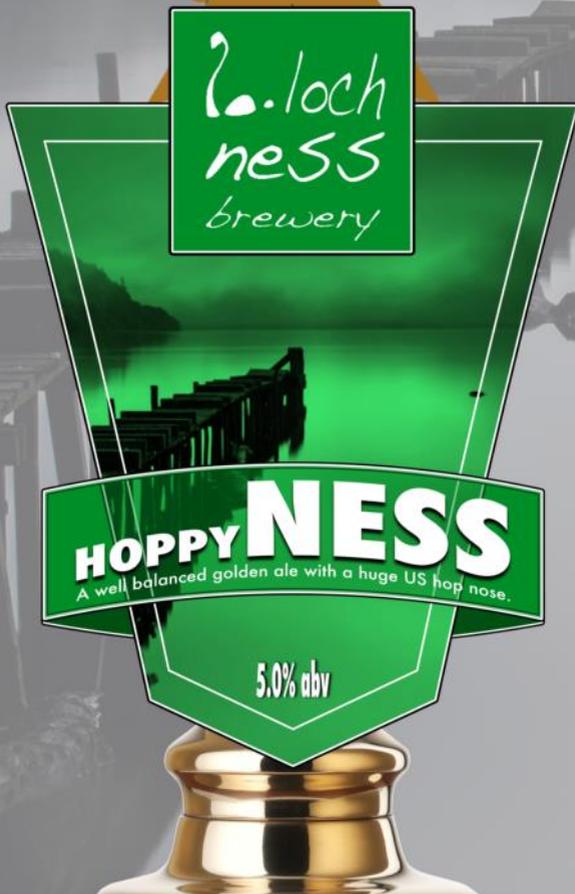
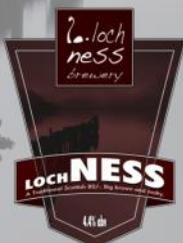
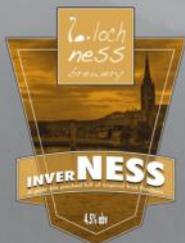
After the new recipe for IPA, it looks like I will have to relegate **Wildcat** to number three in my ranking for Cairngorm beers.

After a chat with Ian, the head brewer, including our feedback on the new recipe, Merlin kindly ran us down to our next port of call where we met up with Gordon our Editor, the fourth member of our party.

Andrew Farmer from Fife has had the Mackenzies Highland Inn since May 2013 and as well as gaining Cask Marque accreditation, now has five real ales on the bar - one from Cairngorm, the rest from the Greene King stable, and one cider from Thistly Cross. We tried:- **Knee Deep** (Caledonian). Others available included:- **Santa's Swallie** (Inveralmond),

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(Continued from page 8)



Dark Island (Orkney), Makenzies Highland Ale (which is possibly Greene King IPA) and **Trade Winds** (Cairngorm). Also available on keg were Cairngorm **Black Gold** replacing the Guinness and he has arranged for **Schiehallion** to replace the slowest selling keg lager. We had a good chat with Andrew, who is "kitchen" based, and we were impressed with what he had to say. Next on the list of

improvements is a new kitchen and some refurbishment of the dining area. The Inn also caters for guests as well as day customers in the bar.

Having been to Cairngorm Brewery, it was then onto the new Cairngorm "Brewery Tap", the Winking Owl (or Winky as it is known locally) where we again caught up with Merlin and also Cairngorm's Managing Director Samantha Faircliff. Cairngorm has rescued this failing bar and given it the rejuvenation it needed. It has been one of THE Aviemore places for over 30 years and many locals were concerned at its decline. That has been comprehensively turned around and the improvements are ongoing. (see more photos on the *WhatPub* entry including the fantastic men's toilet! - Ed.) Please note CAMRA members enjoy a 20p pint discount here!

There are six hand pumps, with four dispensing Cairngorm - **Trade Winds**, **Stag** and **Wildcat**, and with the fourth the Cairngorm sea-

(Continued on page 12)



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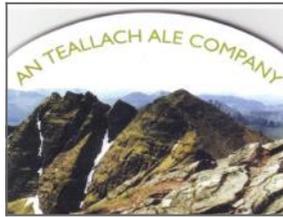


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(Continued from page 10)



sonal which was **White Lady** on this visit. Cairngorm **Black Gold** is the stout available on a font dispense. There is an innovative "partial" tie with the pub owners—Star Bars and Pubs (Heineken) which means that Caledonian **Deuchars** and **Flying Scotsman** are on the other two hand pumps or sometimes another real ale from the Heineken stable.

An opportunity to have an informal meeting with "The Boss" of Cairngorm Brewery was very welcome and a number of interesting matters were discussed over a very pleasant lunch, including the brewery's future plans for Deenos in Inverness. Cairngorm are also looking to further future expansion - watch this space! In Inverness, as the A I Welders/foundry is a historic and listed building, the planning for the refurb and restoration has been much more complicated and slow. Work is expected to start this summer – a year later than hoped. As previously reported, the upper floors will be reworked first to give rentable, IT offices which will be equipped with super-fast Internet. After that the bar and cellar will be done and will become the brewery flagship pub where new bar staff will receive training.

Following a recent change to it's ownership, one of our party nipped downstairs to Doo Below at Skiing Doo who now have a single Speyside hand pump which was offering **Findhorn Killer Red IPA**. (The Skiing Doo has been heavily featured on the 6 part, BBC documentary series "The Mountain" this January and February—Ed.) The Doo Below opens at 3pm and a quick half could have been tried but a looming train departure urged a quick walk towards the station.

A swift call into Mambo (was **Super Panther** which was also featured on the "The Mountain" —Ed.) confirmed that Cromarty **Happy Chappy** was still available on keg and is now badged as keg **Happy Chappy** rather than "Super Panther".

The other three members of the party were found in the Cairn Bar at the Cairngorm Hotel and were apparently unconcerned about the time. With 15 minutes before the train was due, and the station 50 meters away there was, after all, time for a half.

As ever, Cairngorm **Stag** and **Gold** were on offer, and since as of this morning, Stag has now been relegated to second favourite, I chose the former - and very good it was too!



Our "mission" was to visit all Aviemore hostellers currently serving real ale, but frozen points, treacherous conditions underfoot, and the very generous hospitality of our Cairngorm Brewery hosts at both the visitor centre and Winking Owl slowed our progress, and so we missed the Old Bridge Inn. (Happily one of our party had enjoyed a very good pint of **Stag** there in early January). It might also have been good to try the Speyside **Red IPA** at Doo Below, but I am sure we will have another opportunity very soon. Yes, in July on Saturday the 11th at 14.00 where we have a Committee Meeting at Mackenzies. It's a **Saturday** afternoon, so join us if you can —Ed.



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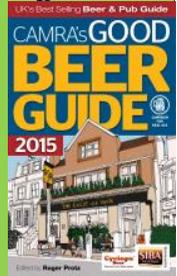


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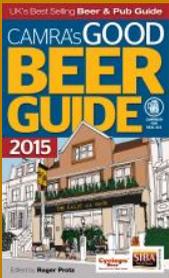
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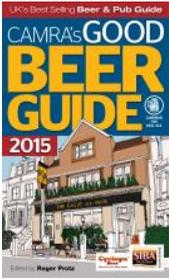
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Good Beer Guide



One of our members has trawled his collection of Good Beer Guides (GBG) going back to the first

(pamphlet) edition in 1972 (but currently missing 1979, and 1992) and has put together a list of all of the places

that have been included in the GBG in the H&WI over the years.

It makes for interesting reading and shows between 1972 and 2014 the **Clachaig** (Glencoe) to have been the most listed closely followed by **Clachnaharry** and these days, unlikely candidates which closed their doors to Real Ale many years ago.

The record also shows the evolution as premises changed their names, or took on other functions.

The listing from 1972 to 2014 is available on the H&WI website. We can not include the 2015 entries - you will have to buy the GBG for that, or the 2016 - because they have not been decided yet!

New H&WI Website

Although it did not effect H&WI, there was a major cyber attack on the main CAMRA website last year. Our Branch site was hosted elsewhere and therefore was at no risk. However, security has been beefed up, and all UK branches have been offered hosting space on CAMRAS "Fort Knox" servers.

H&WI have taken advantage of this and we have migrated our branch web space to the new servers.

An unfortunate but necessary conse-

quence has been to modify the web address which is now:-

<http://www.highland.camra.org.uk/>

Highland Brewing Company

Rob Hill and his son, Lewis are planning a major expansion this year with kit ordered to double the capacity of the brewery. These fermenters and conditioners should be installed by early summer and will allow more flexibility and demand to be met more easily.



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Farewell to Patrick and Judy Price



Photo from RightMove website which successfully marketed the hotel

hours.

Fishing mad Patrick and his wife Judy, took over the Scourie Hotel in the 1990's. They moved the short distance north from The Inchbae Hotel near Garve, which was also a fishing stop-over for tourists.

Over the years they have served regular real ales from the Isle of Skye, Cairngorm and Black Isle breweries. Patrick's favourites have been Cairngorm **Trade**

You may remember the television series on fishing a few years ago, I think on the BBC, which featured the Scourie Hotel and was a great advert for the Highlands. The hotel has the use of 25,000 acres of Brown Trout, Sea Trout and Salmon fishing and Patrick was in his element and just loved to talk fishing with anyone.

The hotel has a fishing lodge feel about it and many of it's dishes included locally caught fish.

We wish Patrick and Judy well in their retirement.



Winds and Black Isle **Yellow Hammer** and they used to pick up Black Isle casks on their weekly Inverness re-supply run.



At times the

Scourie was the only real ale outlet in the north-west and was a welcome stop over. The 29 roomed hotel always closed for the winter but with a thriving real ale clientele, they kept the rear bar open, mainly in the evenings for a few



HebCelt 15-18 July 2015

Once again, the **Loch Ness Brewery** will be having a real ale bar at this years Hebridean Celtic Festival in Stornoway—a music festival that is growing year on year. The bar should be in the same position as previous years at the top far corner, just above the smaller marquee. A selection of their brews will be on offer with around 6 on sale at any time and others coming on in rotation. HebCelt will be celebrating 20 years and some of the groups already confirmed are; Canadian Le Vent Du Nord, Indian Raghu Dixit, American Chastity Brown and Welsh Mabon. With Karen Matheson leading the Scottish contingent of well established and emerging acts.



Pub News - Spring 2015

Lots of Changes in Aviemore - **Doo Below / Skiing Doo** has changed hands and Speysides **Findhorn Killer Red IPA** is now available. Following a short closure, **Ben Macdui's** is open again. **MacKenzies Highland Lodge** now has 5 RA hand pumps and one for cider.

After an extensive refit, **The Winking Owl** is very much open for business.

Natural Retreats have reopened the **Cas Bar** (lower end of the Cairngorm Funicular railway) mid February and have Real ale on. Similar plans are in place for **1097** (what was the **Ptarmagan**) at the top of the funicular.

After the previous tenant left, **The Topsy Laird** in Kingussie re-opened it doors on 6 Feb and will continue to have 2 Cairngorm ales on. John Mackenzie, the new tenant, is hoping to get another 3 hand pumps on the bar within the next 3 months. We wish him well and hope he has more success.

In Spring last year, **The Aultbea Hotel**, on the West Coast above Poolewe, was sold. The new owners, Robin Macgregor and Ballal Mirza, closed for a month after the New year, reopening on 12 Feb. "Extensive works" have been carried out, and there is now a combined lounge / bar area and a single separate dining area where there were once two.

The Scourie Hotel has been a loyal advertiser and supporter of our branch for many years. At the end of January, after 17 years, Patrick and Judy Price passed the business onto Richard, Fiona and their daughter, Charlotte Campbell. Speaking to Fiona, whilst there are long term plans, in the short term it will be "business as usual". We wish Patrick and Judy all the best, and the Campbells continuing success in the future. *(see page 21 for more.—Ed.)*

The Cawdor Tavern currently offer a 20% *(yes, percent—Ed.)* discount on Real Ales to members of the Premier Card scheme and would be happy to roll this out to CAMRA members.

The **King's Highway** in Inverness has a "CAMRA corner" on an alcove wall beside the main condiments area with posters, local brewery info and membership joining details.

These Pub News changes are the only ones we know about because we have been informed by the owners / managers or licencees. Because of the nature of our area, if people do not advise us, it is difficult to find out what is going on.

As ever, if readers of WTY know of any interesting snippets, please let us know!

Cromarty's Tap Takeover of Blackfriars



Over the 3rd weekend of February, all 7 hand pulls on the bar at Blackfriars in Academy Street, were in use - dispensing Cromarty Brewing Co. ales. The idea of the "tap takeover" - "7 ales on 7 pumps" arose from discussions between Del and the brewery who have always been pleased that their ales are often available at Blackfriars.

The ales were available in roughly their order of ABV along the bar and it was an awesome sight to see the row of Comarty pump clips. (see photo of a chuffed Del above).

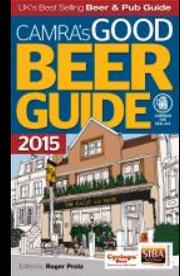
As usual in Blackfriars, live music was provided. On Friday, Raymond Chuchuk (a wizard accordionist) and on Saturday, the Root Ma Toot Big Band.

The 7 ales were all in top, fresh condition and featured the brilliant ales that are often available in various establishments around our area but also the seldom seen on cask, **AKA IPA** which at 6.7% is a huge, tasty beer.

We were able to enjoy, **Hit The Lip, Atlantic Drift, Happy Chappy, Red Rocker, Rogue Wave, Ghost Town** and **AKA IPA**. The mini festival was well received, with over 500 pints served on the Saturday night alone and is the 1st time Del and Janette have tried an event like this. Hopefully, it won't be the last.

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Breweries News

As part of CAMRA's support for real ale and real ale breweries, volunteers from among the branch membership can be Brewery Liaison Officers. BLOs keep in contact with "their" brewery, encouraging and if appropriate, advising.

BLOs are asked to make a progress report to CAMRA every 3 months, via the CAMRA website.

In Highlands & Western Isles branch, we now have 12 or 13 breweries. Our magazine is also quarterly so what follows is the news we have over the past 3 months.

Other CAMRA branch magazines publish news from their breweries written by the breweries themselves. This is free publicity to the very customer base that you want to appeal to.

Some of our breweries don't even have a CAMRA member on their staff but we would be happy to take any news you care to pass on to us—see the contact info on the diary page.

Cromarty Brewing Co:

After 3 years of building and expanding, they enjoyed a short period to "draw breath" and carry out some routine maintenance. The new, additional conditioning tanks and fermenting vessels have been installed in their planned positions in the brewery. This gives the capacity and flexibility to meet expected demands for the foreseeable future. The 3rd anniversary ale has been brewed and should be available in bottles by the time you are reading this. The Cromarty Brewery "Tap Takeover" at Blackfriars was a great success—see the article on page 19.



Black Isle Brewing Company:

They are now tweaking and updating the recipe for one or two of their beers and the

BLACK ISLE BREWERY



new brews are now appearing in pubs to positive reception (see Xmas Walkabout report on page 4 and 6). The **Red Kite** in Hootananny's in December was a pleasant surprise and is a positive improvement on the old version. It is a more hoppy ale now which brings it back up in to contention with modern ales from other breweries. Black Isle will continue to focus on it's successful export markets for bottle and keg.

Loch Ness Brewery;

Carlsberg have taken Wilderness as their only permanent Scottish cask ale for their Scottish customers. George Wotherspoon has been to a Moscow trade Show on the back of their regular Russian order. Plans are afoot to brew a low abv brew around 2.8 to 3%. They also plan to bring back real ale in a bottle for initially, their DarkNess, HoppyNess and Prince of DarkNess. Steve Crossland will be visiting Will Meyers of the Cambridge Brewing Company near Boston to brew a collaboration beer called Loch Ness Monsta, which will be a 3.5% dark mild.



Cairngorm Brewery;

Some of the recipes for their core beer range are being tweaked (see the Aviemore Visit article for an example) and the beer range is being slightly revised to respond to demand (see the advert on the inside back cover). The bottling line continues to be used to capacity. The Winking Owl in Aviemore is now open and is quickly being re-establishing as a great bar and is the Cairngorm brewery tap. Work should start on the A I Welder's building in Inverness soon and will continue for 2 years.



Cuillin Brewery;



The brewery should be back in operation after the quiet winter months. The planned expansion of the Sligachan Hotel should be ongoing which will give more storage space for the brewery. Bottles of 2 or 3 of the ales should be available around the area and the ales are always on in Seamus's bar next to the Sligachan Hotel on Skye.

Hebridean Brewing Company Ltd;

No progress to report since last issue from our new BLO.



An Teallach Ale Company;

No News, but a new design pump clip



was spied on a lovely **Crofter's Pale Ale** in The Phoenix, so possibly they have been updating and rebranding.

Isle of Skye Brewing Co;

Full planning permission has been given for their temporary warehouse and once built, work can start on enlarging the brewing capacity.



Getting busy now for the start of the summer season and a fourth brewer will be starting in March.

In the special, one-off Scottish CAMRA 40th Anniversary magazine, "Cheers!", on page 19 it is written that Cromarty Brewery were the first brewery to have won Aberdeen's Beer of the Festival two years running. In fact this accolade went to the Isle of Skye Brewery in 2002 and 2003, both times with Cuillin Beast. This mistake has already been alluded to by our Aberdeen correspondent, Richard Jones, in the Winter edition of "What's yours then?".

Plockton Brewery;

No News. Hopefully, Andy is brewing and building up stock for a busy summer.



Old Inn Brewhouse;

No News. The 100 litre, micro brewery which is housed behind the Old Inn at Gairloch. No BLO yet—any takers?



Glenfinnan Brewery;

No News. Another of our small, remote, Highland breweries. We are hoping to recruit a BLO for this simple job soon.



River Leven Brewery

Our new BLO hasn't managed to file his report yet but we will publish in the next edition of the magazine.



WooHa Brewing Company

WooHa Brewing Company is now in production and have beers being conditioned, ready for bottling. Generally the production will be bottle conditioned, although the Brewster, Heather McDonald, is arranging to launch at the **Bandstand Beer festival** (2 - 12 April) where limited release casks of WooHa Porter will be available.



Nothing further has been heard so far on the possible brewery on the Knoydart peninsula.

Highlands & Islands Brewers in 2015



Isle of Skye Brewery - Based at Uig, by the Western Isles ferry terminal, brewing since December 1995. Started major expansion and re-branding in 2013. (see advert)

Valhalla Brewery - Most northerly brewery in the UK, brewing on Unst since December 1997. Ales include White Wife and Auld Rock.

Black Isle Brewery - Started brewing in December 1998 in converted farm buildings. Ales include Red Kite and Yellowhammer. Organic ales are a speciality. Much enlarged, new brewery opened 2011. Concentrates on large scale bottling.

Isle of Arran Brewery - Located close to Brodick Castle. Opened in late March 2000. Ales include Blonde, Dark, and Sunset. Expansion and re-branding started in 2013.

Fyne Ales Brewery - Based in Argyll, at the head of Loch Fyne, brewing started on St Andrew's Day 2001. Ales include Jarl and Maverick. Brewery refocused and expanded in 2012. Further expansion underway.

Cairngorm Brewery Company - Set up in late 2001. Ales include Trade Winds, Wildcat, Stag, Highland IPA, and Black Gold among others. Seasonal ales are regularly brewed. Expanded in 2011 and still expanding in 2013. Much expanded and improved brewery shop opened in late 2013. (see advert)

Hebridean Brewing Company - Based at Stornoway in the Outer Hebrides. Brewing since January 2002. Beers include Islander Strong Ale, Berserker Export Pale Ale, and Clansman Ale (first ale ever brewed in Stornoway) and now Seaforth. 2014/15—Not currently Brewing—moving.

River Leven—Brewing in one of the old Alcan smelter buildings in Kinlochleven since 2011.

An Teallach Brewery - Moved to the family's croft, near Dundonnell, in March 2001. Ales include An Teallach Ale, Beinn Dearg Ale, and Crofter's Pale Ale among others. Greatly expanded in 2012.

Islay Ales Co Ltd - Established in an old Tractor Shed in Bridgend, in March 2004. Ales include Finlaggan, Black Rock, and Dun Hogs Head; plus seasonal brews.

Cuillin Brewery - The brewery was born on 10th September 2004, in the old public bar of the Sligachan Hotel. Skye, Eagle, Pinnacle, Black Face, and Glamaig Ales are brewed. Started offering bottled beer in 2013.

Highland Brewing Company - Located in the old Swannay cheese factory at Birsay, on Orkney Mainland. Well regarded ales include Scapa Special, Orkney Blast, Dark Munro among others.

Sinclair Breweries Ltd - Formed in 2006 by local hotelier and restaurateur Norman Sinclair, who purchased the **Orkney** - which originally commenced brewing in 1988 at the Old Schoolhouse in Sandwick on Orkney mainland—and **Atlas**

Breweries. Ales regularly brewed include Three Sisters, Latitude, and Nimbus from Atlas; plus Raven Ale, Dark Island, Red MacGregor, and Skull Splitter from Orkney. Much expanded in 2011—12. (see advert)

Glenfinnan Brewery - irregularly brewing on a 4 bbl plant since October 2006 - Regular brews are Glenfinnan Gold, The Standard Ale, and Glenfinnan Dark (for the Winter).

Colonsay Brewery - First brews in March 2007. IPA, 80/- and Lager (Limited real ales).

Plockton Brewery - The first brew was produced on 1st April 2007. Craggs Ale and Starboard IPA may usually be found in Plockton, and at other local outlets—also in bottle.

Oban Bay Brewery - Brewing since mid 2009. 5 barrel brewery attached to Cuan Mor.

Old Inn (Gairloch) Brewery - 100 litre micro-brewery. First brews in February 2010.

Loch Ness Brewery - First brews in September 2011. RedNess, HoppyNess, Dark..... Etc. New, bigger brewery in 2012. Expanding again in 2014/15. (see advert)

Cromarty Brewery - First brews in December 2011. Ales include Happy Chappy, Brewed Awakening, Red Rocker, Hit The Lip, AKA and a growing portfolio. Increased brewing kit in early 2013. Brewery shop now open. (see advert)

Spey Valley Brewery—a “nano brewery” started in 2012 producing 5 cask conditioned real ales—found round and about the Keith area.

Windswept Brewery—started commercial brewing in 2012 in the Lossiemouth area. Blonde, APA and Wolf are proving popular along with Tornado and Weizen.

Speyside Craft Brewery—started commercial brewing at Forres in 2012. Bottlenose Bitter, Randolph's Leap, Moray IPA and Bow Fiddle Blond are the ale portfolio so far.

Wooha Brewing Company—setting up in an industrial unit in Nairn will be producing bottle conditioned beers possibly this summer.

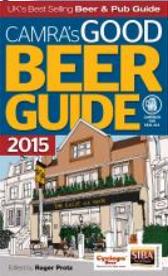
Not all of the breweries listed are in our branch area: the Highland Brewing Co, Valhalla, Orkney, Spey Valley, Windswept and Speyside are all in the Grampian & Northern Isles area; the Arran Brewery falls in the Ayrshire & Galloway area; while Fyne, Islay, Colonsay & Oban Bay Breweries are covered by Glasgow & West Scotland.



Glen hotel

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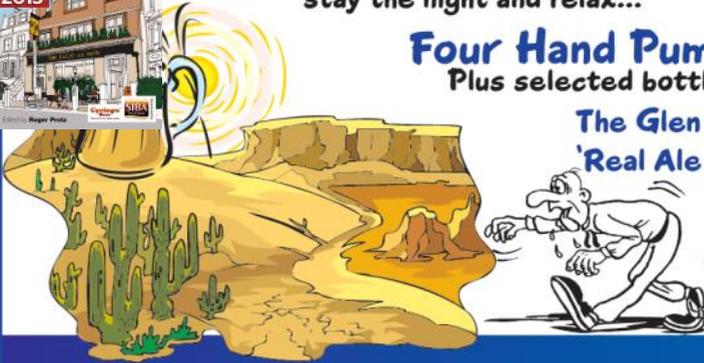
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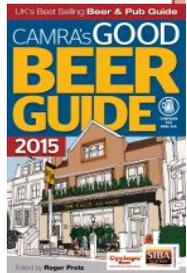


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Real Ale Pubs List

These Pubs, Inns and Hotels are known to sell (or to have recently sold) cask-conditioned ale.

They are listed in geographical area and area lists are in an order that would allow a continuous pub crawl if you have safe transport.

Please let us know about the quality of real ales on offer, particularly if you think Good Beer Guide inclusion is merited.

We make no claims as to the quality of the beer and you should note that some of the pubs listed may only stock real ale on a seasonal basis (S).
(TP) - ale served using top pressure so not fully real ale.

Inverness

Blackfriars
Caledonian
Castle Tavern
Chieftan Hotel
Clachnaharry Inn
Corrigarth Hotel
Exchange
Fairways Loch Ness Golf Course
Gellions
Glen Mhor Hotel (Nicos Bar)
Heathmount Hotel
Hootananny
Innes Bar
Johnny Foxes (TP)
Kings Highway
Lauders
Mercure Hotel—Arts Bar (TP)
Number 27
Palace Hotel
Phoenix Ale House
Room
Snowgoose
Tomlinson's Beer Shop
Waterfront Bar

Badenoch & Strathspey (route from N to S)

Gun Lodge Hotel, Ardersier
Inverness Airport (D'Lish)
Golf View Hotel & Spa, Nairn (TP)
Braeval Hotel (Bandstand), Nairn
Cawdor Tavern, Cawdor
Haugh Hotel, Cromdale
Garth Hotel and Restaurant, Grantown on Spey
Grant Arms Hotel, Grantown on Spey
Seafeld Lodge Hotel (Lodge Bar), Grantown on Spey
Craig Bar, Grantown on Spey
Muckrach Lodge Hotel, Dulnain Bridge
Boat Hotel, Boat of Garten
Cairn Hotel, Carrbridge

Aviemore

Cairngorm Brewery
Dalfaber Country Club
Mackenzies Highland Inn
Winking Owl
Skiing Doo (Doo Below)
Cairngorm Hotel
Roos' Leap
Ben Macdui
Old Bridge Inn
Woodshed Bar at Hilton Coy-lumbridge Hotel

Badenoch

Glenmore Lodge (Lochain Bar), Glenmore
Pine Marten Bar, Glenmore
Loch Inch Boathouse (Quarter Deck Bar), Kincaig
Suie Hotel, Kincaig
Kingussie Golf Club
Topsy Laird, Kingussie
Silver Fjord Hotel, Kingussie
Duke of Gordon Hotel (Ghillies Rest Bar), Kingussie
Glen Hotel, Newtonmore

Easter Ross

Black Isle

Royal Hotel, Cromarty
Cromarty Arms, Cromarty
Plough Inn, Rosemarkie
The Anderson, Fortrose
Station Hotel, Avoch
Allangrange Arms, Munloch
Culbokie Inn, Culbokie

Inverness to Dingwall

Bog Roy, Inchmore
Conon Bridge Hotel
Edderton Inn, Edderton
Inchbae Lodge Hotel, Garve
Aultguish Inn, Garve

Strathconon

Glen Affric Bar, Cannich
Slaters Arms, Cannich
Struy Inn, Struy

Loch Ness

(c/w from INV)

Dores Inn, Dores
Craigdarroch Inn (Am Fuaran Bar), Foyers
Whitebridge Hotel, Whitebridge
Stravaiger's Lodge, Fort Augustus
Bothy Bar, Fort Augustus
Caledonian Hotel (Corbie Bar), Fort Augustus (S)
Lock Inn, Fort Augustus
Lovat Arms Hotel, Fort Augustus (TP)
Glenmorrison Arms Hotel, Invermorrison
Loch Ness Inn (Brewery Bar), Lewis-ton
Benleva Hotel, Drumnadrochit

Fort William

Fort William (North)

Invergarry Hotel
Great Glen Water Park, South Laggan
Eagle Barge, Laggan (S)
Old Station Restaurant, Spean Bridge
Stronlossit Hotel, Roy Bridge
Corrour Station House
Restaurant, Corrour Estate

Fort William (town)

Moorings Hotel (Neptune Bar & Mariner's Lounge), Banavie
Alexandra Hotel (S)
Ben Nevis Bar
Ben Nevis Inn, Achintee
Cobbs @ Nevisport
Crofter Bar & Restaurant
Glen Nevis Restaurant
Grog & Gruel
Great Glen
Volunteer Arms ???
West End Hotel

Fort William (South)

Four Seasons, Inchree, Onich
Onich Hotel, Onich

Real Ale Pubs List

Loch Leven Hotel, Ballachulish
Laroch Bar, Ballachulish
Clachaig Inn, Glencoe
King's House Hotel, Glencoe
Ice Factor (Bothan Bar), Kinlochleven
MacDonald Hotel (Bothy Bar), Kinlochleven

Fort William (West)

Glenfinnan House Hotel, Glenfinnan
Glenuig Inn, Glenuig
Glenuig Village Hall, Glenuig
Loch Shiel Hotel, Acharacle
Salen Hotel, Salen
Ariundle Centre, Strontian
Arisaig Hotel (Crofters Rest), Arisaig
Chlachain Inn, Mallaig
Steam Inn, Mallaig
West Highland Hotel, Mallaig (S)
Old Forge, Inverie

Wester Ross Cluanie to Kyle of Lochalsh

Cluanie Inn, Cluanie
Glenelg Inn, Glenelg
Kintail Lodge Hotel (Kintail Bar), Glensheil Bridge
Jac-o-bite Restaurant, Glensheil
Dornie Hotel, Dornie
Clachan Bar, Dornie

Plockton to Gairloch

Plockton Inn, Plockton
Plockton Hotel, Plockton
Strathcarron Hotel
Lochcarron Hotel
Applecross Inn
The Potting Shed, Applecross
Tigh an Eilean Hotel, Shialdaig
Torridon Inn, by Annat
Kinlochewe Hotel (Beinn Eighe Bar)

Ledgowan Lodge Hotel, Achnasheen
Loch Maree Hotel, Talladale
Badachro Inn, Badachro (TP)

Gairloch

Old Inn
Myrtle Bank Hotel (S)
Millcroft Hotel (fish Box Bar & Stag's head Lounge)
Melvaig Inn

Gairloch to Ullapool

Poolewe Hotel, Poolewe
Aultbae Hotel (Jam Jar Bar), Ault-

bae
Drumchork Hotel, Aultbae (S)
Dundonnell Hotel (Broomberg Bar), Dundonnell

Ullapool

Arch Inn
Argyll Hotel
Ceilidh Place
Ferry Boat Inn
Morefield Motel
Seaforth Bar & Restaurant

Ullapool North

Summer Isles Hotel,
Achiltibuie (S)

Caithness and Sutherland

West to East Coast (clockwise)

West Coast

Altnacealgach Inn, Ledmore Junction (S)
Inchnadamph Hotel, Assynt (S)
Caberfeidh, Lochinver
Kylesku Hotel, Kylesku
Scourie Hotel, Scourie

North Coast

Sango Sands Oasis, Durness (S)
Smoo Cave Hotel, Durness (S)
Ben Loyal Hotel, Tongue (S)
Tongue Hotel, Tongue (S)
Weigh Inn (Ashes Bar), Thurso
Commercial Hotel (Comm Bar), Thurso

Central Hotel (Top Joes), Thurso
Holburn Hotel (Bar 16), Thurso
Ulbster Arms Hotel (Anglers Nook), Halkirk (S)
Castletown Hotel, Castletown (S)
Northern Sands Hotel, Dunnet
Seaview Hotel, John O'Groats

East Coast

Alexander Bain, Wick
Mackays Hotel Cocktail Bar), Wick
Norseman Hotel (Wicker Bar), Wick (S)
Bay Owl Restaurant, Dunbeath
Bannockburn Inn, Helmsdale (TP)
Belgrave Arms Hotel, Helmsdale
Sutherland Inn, Brora
Golspie Inn, Golspie
Trentham Hotel, Poles Nr Dornoch
Eagle Hotel, Dornoch
Dornoch Castle Hotel, Dornoch
Dunroamin Hotel, Bonar Bridge

Invershin Hotel, Invershin
Achness Hotel, Lairg
Crask Inn, Lairg

Skye

Sligachan Hotel (Seumas' Bar), Sligachan (S)
Old Inn, Carbost
Taigh Ailean Hotel (Munro's Bar), Portnalong
Old School Restaurant, Dunvegan (S)
Stein Inn, Waternish
Edinbane Inn, Edinbane
Lodge at Edinbane, Edinbane
Uig Hotel, Uig
Bakur Bar, Uig
Ferry Inn, Uig
Flodigarry Country House Hotel, Staffin
Bosville Hotel (Merchant Bar), Portree
Isles Inn, Portree
Royal Hotel (MacNab's Inn), Portree
Sconser Lodge Hotel, Sconser
Broadford Hotel (Gabbro Bar), Broadford
Dunollie Hotel (Redhills Lounge), Broadford
Claymore Restaurant, Broadford
Hebridean Hotel, Broadford
Saucy Marys Lodge, Kyleakin (S)
Isle Ornsay Hotel (Praban Bar), Sleat
Ardvasar Hotel, (Hideout Bar) Ardasar

Western Isles, N to S

Carlton Lounge, Stornoway, Lewis
An Lanntair Arts Centre, (S) Stornoway, Lewis
Hotel Hebrides (Mote Bar), Tarbet, Harris (S)
Isle of Harris Inn, Tarbet, Harris (S)
Hammersay House (Lochmaddy), North Uist
Lochmaddy Hotel, Lochmaddy, N Uist
Langass Lodge, Loch Elport, N Uist (S)
Borrodale Hotel, Daliburgh, S Uist (S)
Polochar Inn, Lochboisdale, S Uist
Am Politician, Isle of Eriskay, S Uist



the Winking Owl



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Winking Owl is the site of the Aviemore Inn where Robbie Burns was served breakfast in 1787!

Branch POTYs 2015 and BOTY

After collating the votes that were cast by our branch members, we have the following winners:

Inverness District Pub of the Year 2015 - **Phoenix Ale House**

Badenoch & Strathspey Pub of the Year 201 - **Braeval Hotel Bandstand Bar, Nairn**

Easter Ross & Loch Ness Pub of the Year 2015 - **Benleva Hotel, Drumnadrochit**

Wester Ross Pub of the Year 2015 — **Plockton Hotel, Plockton**

Skye & Western Isles Pub of the Year 2015 - **Stein Inn, Waternish, Skye**

Fort William and Lochaber Pub of the Year 2015—**Clachaig Inn, Glencoe**

Caithness and Sutherland Pub of the Year 2015—**Eagle Hotel, Dornoch**

Congratulations to them all. We will be presenting their certificates during the next few months.

DarkNESS is our Highlands and Western Isles Beer of the Year

Congratulations to the Loch Ness Brewery who had the top 3 in our Beer of the Year. This is the first time that a Loch Ness beer has won this competition.

During October and November last year, all CAMRA members were asked to vote for their favourite beers that they drank during the year. As in previous years we took all our Branch member votes for any beers brewed in our Branch from this voting.

A very disappointing 25 Branch members voted, that is just 10% of our membership

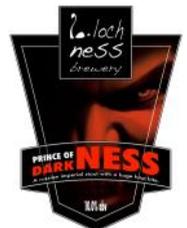


- do the other 90% not care? On a positive note, this is 11 more voters than last year.

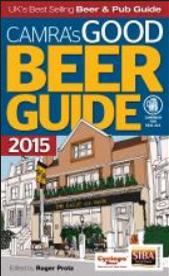
This voting helps competitions, our rounds, in-Beer of Scotland, Champion Beer of The top 3 this



to get beers through to CAMRA which after numerous rounds, including Champion Beer of Britain. The top 3 this year are;



1st **DarkNESS** their 4.5% stout style, 2nd **HoppyNESS** their 5% strong bitter and 3rd **Prince of DarkNESS** their 10% Imperial stout.

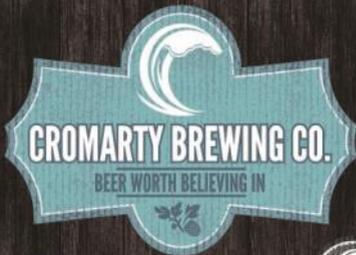


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The branch are confident that all of the bars and lounges that the public can visit in the H&WI branch area without having to have a meal (restaurants), staying the night (hotel), or paying an entrance fee (club) have now been included on the WhatPub website.

Currently, there are 210 real ale places in the H&WI branch area.

However, CAMRA is not all about real ale, its remit is "to encourage pub going" in general. You never know, one day, the pub not selling real ale for all those years may start - ugly ducklings do turn into swans!

The branch is currently populating the WhatPub website with non real ale places so as to include ALL "pubs" in the H&WI area. Currently we have added about 100, but there is still some way to go.

H&WI now have 326 entries in our branch area, and across the UK, there are more than 37,000. You do not have to be a CAMRA member to use the site - give it a go:-

<http://whatpub.com/>

If you want to look for ALL places with a bar or lounge, you need to un-check the tick under the search box.

Committee Members Wanted

Do you have a passion for real ale, have some time to spare and want to help keep your Committee going? The Committee are voted in each year at the AGM (next one in January 2016) and hold the post for one year. At the year end all posts are up for renewal but as we do not get

many other volunteers the same incumbent usually continues. CAMRA rules state there are certain posts that have to be filled; Branch Chairman, Secretary (usually includes Branch Contact), Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Pubs Officer

plus there are a few other posts like Vice Chairman, Social Secretary, Web Master, Newsletter Editor, Young Members Officer, Public Affairs Officer, Press Officer, Pub Preservation Officer, Locale Coordinator, Student Liaison Officer, Cider Representative and Clubs Officer. Plus there are a few less formal posts that would ease the Committee's workload. Some members have come on the Committee without a post just to see what is needed and then gone on to take a post. The Committee do have to abide by the CAMRA Internal and External Policies, which are amended each year after the Members Weekend in April. Once a month we have either a Branch meeting, which are more informal, or a formal Committee meeting. There are also socials, tasting events and minibus trips. Any CAMRA member can join the Committee at any time, just come along to a meeting or contact a Committee member and show your interest. We are losing a few key committee holders this year and need new volunteers to keep the Committee going. If we do not get any interest then we will have to do less CAMRA work in the Highlands and Western Isles.



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Barbara Tring

It is with sad news that we report the untimely death of Barbara Tring on the 26th February. Barbara was the wife of Bill Tring who was our Branch Chairman for many of our early years. Although she was not really a real ale drinker she supported Bill and the Branch through his years as Chairman, going on trips and helping out at our Marymas beer tent. Behind the scenes she helped Bill with all the mundane computer work and paperwork. She was always smiling and happy to help where she could, she will be missed.

Drinking in Sheffield

Over the years I have been a regular drinker in Sheffield, - having to visit the Mother-in-Law does have advantages. There are so many very good pubs but I usually have a regular few and pick on a new one or two now and again. The following outlets are centred in the 'Valley of Ale', route of the mainly mild River Don which, at times, has created an-



guish and heartache for some of the publicans as flood levels have risen and damaged their low lying pubs. This area was originally very industrial and other than a few smaller industrial units and the Kelham Island Museum, flats have taken over. Although it is not a very pretty area as there are quite a few cleared areas or old buildings – waiting for something to happen. The pubs have their regular couple of beers, all different from each other and the rest are guests and nearly

all are kept in top condition as they sell very quickly. Prices vary from £2.20 to £3.46 a pint, depending on strength/brewery/pub. With an easy web of travel (not found up here), I often meet people visiting their 'local' from as far a field as Rotherham, Doncaster, Derby, Chesterfield and Leicester. These are some of the outlets and the beers that were available when I visited late last year. Starting in Nursery Street and ending in Hillsborough where there are trams and buses to get you back to the town centre:

Harlequin. Tap for the Sky's Edge Brewery. Skye Edge Yellow Rose (4.5%), Thirst Aid (4%), Stout (5%), New England Best (4.2%), Blonde (4%), Glentworth Winter Wonder (4.3%), First Chop Good Measure (3.9%), Double Top Citra Tip (5.2%) and Great Heck Topaz IPA (5.5%). (9 ales)

Fat Cat. Has the Kelham Island Brewery next door, so tends to have a couple of their brews. Kelham Island Pale Rider (5.2%), Kelham Best (3.8%), Twisted Pirate Bitter (4.2%), Fun Fare Christmas Cake Walk (6.5%), Stancill Ginger Pale Ale (4%), Salamander Porter in a Pear Tree (4.8%), Gargoyles Humbug (5%), Caledonian Knee Deep (4.5%). (8 ales)

Kelham Island Tavern. Recent CAMRA National Pub of the Year and also has an award winning garden. My Father-in-Law was born



next door when it was back to back houses and now is an overgrown wasteland. Liverpool Organic Styrian (4%), Acorn Gorlovka Imperial Stout (6%, aged in Speyside whisky



Gardeners Rest. Tap for the Sheffield Brew-



barrels), Thwaites Nutty Black (3.3%), Milestone Santas Porter (5.2%), Abbeydale Deception (4.1%), Crouch Vale Amarillo (5%), Bank Top Santa's Claws (5%), Yorkshire Dales Jingle Pot (4.1%), Acorn Cracker (4.1%), Three Castles Winter Storm (4.6%), Acorn Barnsley Bitter (3.8%), Bradfield Farmers Blonde (4%), and Pictish Brewers Gold (3.8%). (13 ales)

Shakespeares Ale and Cider House. They



were running down stock to close 25th and 26th Dec but still a very good selection. Salamander Santa Claws (3.8%), Geeves Red Rye Ale (4%), Hopcraft Red Water (4.7%), Stancill Wonderland (4.8%), Steel City Christmas is Cancelled (5.8%), Blue Bee Blitzen Stout (5%) and Abbeydale Deception (4.1%). (7 ales)

Wellington (has been the Cask and Cutler).

Majority of their beers are from it's own brewery out the back – Little Ale Cart Farmers Boy (3.9%), Stars and Stripes (4%), Dominion of New Zealand (5%), Bittern (4.3%) plus Mighty Oak Polar Dancer (4.4%) and Mighty Oak Good Cheer (4.5%). (6 ales)

ery. Due to recent snow not too many guests available. Sheffield Forgemaster (4.8%), Crucible Best (3.8%), Five Rivers (3.8%), Porter (4.4%), Blanco Blonde (4.2%), Seven Hills (4.2%), Pennine Ale Be Back (4%), Green Duck Duck Blonde (4.2%) and Angel Ales Banefire (5% chilli stout). (9 ales)

Hillsborough Hotel. Wood Street Brewery is in the cellar. Wood Street IPA (5.1%), Stout (4.5%), Truffle Oak (4.9%), Ginkgo (4.3%), Honey Locust (4.6%), Downton Pumpkin Ale (4.2%), Downton Honey Blonde (4.3%), Raw Jewel on the Hill (4.1%) and White Rose White Light Ming (4.4%). (9 ales)

New Barrack Tavern. Castle Rock beers are



regular. Castle Rock Red Riding Hood (4.3%), Harvest Pale (3.8%), Screech Owl (5.5%), Sherwood Oak (4.4%), Snowwhite (4.2%), Bradfield Farmers Bitter (3.9%), Acorn Barnsley Bitter (3.8%), Cwynty Ddraig Black Dragon (7.2%), Bradfield Belgium Blue (4.9%) and Acorn 12th Noel (5.9%). (10 ales)

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Focus on Martin Donnelly



Martin and his wife Elinor, own the Craigdarroch Inn overlooking Loch Ness in the village of Foyers.

Q. Where are you originally from?

A. Beaconsfield, Bucks, but I was born in Glasgow.

Q. What is your background?

A. Trained in Cookery at Leith's School of Food and Wine, South Ken, London, then went on to work for Paul Heathcote in Manchester, Hambledon Hall, Rutland, Gordon Ramsay in London and Glasgow and then Michael Caine's, Gidleigh Park Devon and Glasgow.

Q. What made you move to Foyers?

A. The chance for me and my wife to have our own, Highland, hotel business.

Q. How/when were you introduced to real ale?

A. Student days!

Q. What styles of real ale do you like?

A. In summer, a light, hoppy, fruity number and in winter, the dark, heavy guys like Loch Ness Brewery's **Prince of DarkNess**.

Q. What is the best part of your work?

A. Meeting all the different nationalities that find their way to us here on Loch Ness.

Q. What is the worst part of your work?

A. Not getting out into the Highlands as much as we'd like in the summer months for outdoor pursuits and sailing. My father in law has a yacht moored local-

ly that Elinor and I and the kids wish we could spend more time onboard.

Q. What hobbies/interests do you have?

A. Skiing and clay pigeon shooting.

Q. What is your favourite book?

A. Anything by Tom Clancy.

Q. What is your favourite song/group?

A. Mumford and Sons.

Q. What is your favourite film?

A. The Usual Suspects.

Q. What is your favourite part of Scotland?

A. The Highlands, especially the north west coast up by The Summer Isles.

Q. Why should we go to The Craigdarroch Inn?

A. To enjoy a superb setting with a convivial atmosphere, good pub grub and decent beers and wines. The local staff that work here are great and have a nice blend of friendliness and professionalism. In the summer months the loch view beer garden is a great place to while away an afternoon.

Martin, Thank You.

Traditional Cider Matters



Real Cider and/or Real Perry is sold (or has recently been sold) in the following inns & hotels. (Please note that some may be seasonal outlets).

Please let us know if you find additional outlets selling real cider or perry.

The Anderson, Fortrose - Thatchers Heritage Cider

Eagle - Inn on the Loch, Laggan Locks - Thatchers Original Cider

Stronlossit Inn, Roy Bridge - Thatchers Cheddar Valley Cider

Strathcarron Hotel - Thatchers Cider (rotated with cask ales)

Glen Hotel, Newtonmore - Westons Old Rosie or 1st Quality Cider

Benleva Hotel, Drumnadrochit - Thatcher's Heritage Cider all year round, plus bottled ciders, including Loch Ness Cider and selection of real ciders for festivals

Scourie Hotel - Two Westons Ciders on handpump

King's Highway, Invermess - Real Cider is on draft during their 2 beer festivals each year

Alexander Bain, Wick - Westons Old Rosie & Organic Draught

Vintage Cider; Thatchers Heritage & Dry Cider

Badachro Inn - Westons Cider is served here

Argyll Hotel, Ullapool - Westons ciders from the box

Torrison Inn - Westons Ciders are served in the bar.

Kinlochewe Hotel, at the foot of Beinn Eighe, is serving Westons Family Reserve Draft Cider

Clachaig Inn, Glencoe - Westons cider on hand pump.

Bandstand Bar, Naim - Westons ciders on handpump plus wider selections at their festivals.

Grog & Gruel, Fort William - Thatchers Heritage cask cider. On tap for as long as sales make it viable - could be all year round but unfortunately sales usually drop dramatically during winter months.

Glen Affric Bar, Cannich - serving Westons Cider after requests from hill-walking customers.

Blackfriars - Thistly Cross ' Jaggy Thistle—the real scrumpy cider.

CIDER in May

CAMRA has celebrated cider and perry during the month of October for a number of years now and, this year, we are introducing a second opportunity to celebrate this traditional drink in the month of May.

May might seem a strange time to celebrate a drink made from apples and pears but there is some logic in the timing. May is a time when the apple and pear trees in our orchards are in blossom and, without the orchards and tree blossom, we wouldn't have the fruit to make the ciders and perries that are on offer throughout the year. Unfortunately many of the old traditional orchards have disappeared over the years but, thankfully, in recent years producers have started to plant new trees to keep the tradition of cider and perry production alive.

May is also the time when the juice that was pressed the previous year has fermented through and is ready to drink. Real ciders and perries differ from the more industrial products available in that they are not fizzy and the flavours of the fruit used in their production come through in the final product.

So why not take the opportunity to visit some of the many pubs which now offer real cider or perry and give them a try?



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Pub of the Year & Beer of the Year & You the members

Well, another year of voting and another year of apathetic voting from Highland & Western Isles members. In the past the committee has faced criticism in not putting Pub of the Year voting out to members, so this year we did and we received the mighty haul of 32 voters. When you take off the committee voters that leaves 21 members out of 200+ who bothered to vote. Beer of the Year was even worse. Excluding the 11 committee voters only 14 members bothered to go to the website and vote for their favourite Scottish ales. This voting data helps to promote Scottish ales and also allows us to extract the data to award our Beer of the Year. All branch members would have known this of course, as they were sent a flyer with all the details of how to vote for POTY & BOTY with their Scottish CAMRA 40th anniversary magazine. A very sincere thanks to all the members who took the time to vote.

To not vote for your favourite ale pub(s) and favourite Scottish ales is a bit of an insult to the people who bring them to us. I firmly believe we produce some of the finest ales in the UK and it is only right we recognise this.

We organise mini bus trips out to ale pubs but these are rarely attended by more than the committee members. We don't ask for much, but even the most basic requests such as simple voting seem to fall on deaf ears. I often wonder why we have 230+ CAMRA members. Why do they belong? We don't have that many Wetherspoons.

Some members may be aware I am in my final year of duty as secretary for the branch. Family and work commitments may be forcing me to stand down but I also feel there is now no longer the personal satisfaction gained back from the hundreds of volunteer hours I put in over the year. I am not alone, the committee is at bursting point and I fear for the survival of the branch. Perhaps we are now regarded as not needed. That may be the case, however, the fact that real ale and the breweries that produce it are in such rude health is down in part to the role played by the Highlands & Western Isles Branch of CAMRA. Messages of praise received from both members and visitors outwith the branch endorse this. Praise for our magazine is received with every issue.

We have often asked for a bit of help or if things need to be done differently but replies there came none.

Over to you guys. I feel we really are approaching crisis point. If we are at the end then let us know so at least we can be put out of our misery sooner rather than later and devote our freely given time somewhere else.

Gareth Hardman
Branch Secretary
CAMRA

Highlands & Western Isles Branch. (For Now)



Stein Inn

THE OLDEST INN ON SKYE



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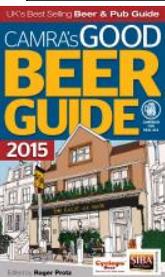
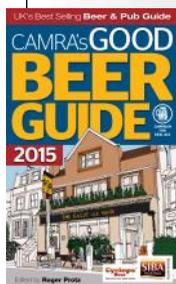
Magical places do exist ... just journey down a narrow winding road that leads to the sea and nestled in a charming hamlet is the very place of your dream: the Stein Inn.

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Mild in May

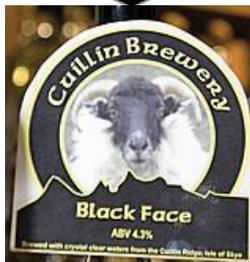


Every year, CAMRA promotes Mild in May to encourage people to drink this nearly forgotten real ale style. There are quite a few breweries brewing Mild all year but some just brew it for a couple of months.

The only event I know in our Branch area is The Benleva Hotel in Drumnadrochit having a mild on rotation every day during May, usually using Scottish brewed ones if available.

The Forth Valley Branch have their Forth Valley Mild Trail held every May when they encourage pubs along a section of railway to have a

mild on and people are encouraged to take the train stopping at each station. This year it is on 9th May.



The official CAMRA wording on Mild's (60/- is a Scottish mild) are; "They range from black to dark brown to pale amber in col-

our. Malty and possibly sweet tones dominate the flavour profile but there may be a light hop flavour or aroma. Slight diacetyl (butterscotch) flavours are not inappropriate. Alcohol levels are typically low, less than 1043og or 4.3 % ABV. Pale mild's have a lightly fruity aroma and gentle hoppiness. Dark mild's may have a light roast malt or caramel character in aroma and taste."

Mild's now brewed in our area are Loch Ness **MildNess** and Cuillin **Black Face**. In the past, other breweries had a mild but they are no longer brewed. Other Scottish brewed mild's are **Arran Dark**, **Belhaven 60/-**, Fyne Ales **Wee Stoater**, Highland **Dark Munro** and **Light Munro**, Tryst **Brockville Dark**, Strathaven **Craigmill Mild** and Williams' **Black**.

So, if you see a mild in a pub give it a go, you never know, you might like it. Also, as it is generally, lower in alcohol, you will be less prone to a hangover. This makes it a great candidate as a session ale.





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Branch Diary (meetings start at 7.30 pm) (all welcome)

All these events are open to CAMRA members and non-members, including committee meetings. * Not all events are necessarily organised by CAMRA. This diary is as much about the local real ale scene as it is about CAMRA branch activities.

April

3rd to 12th Bandstand Beer Festival, at Braeval Hotel, Nairn *

Saturday 4th 14:00 onwards Branch Social at Bandstand

16th to 19th Loch Ness Springfest Beer Festival at Benleva Hotel Drumnadrochit *

Saturday 18th 14:00 Branch Members Meeting at Dores Inn, Dores by Loch Ness.

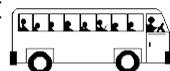
May

Saturday 9th at 14:00 Full Beer Tasting Course at Benleva Hotel

Tuesday 12th Committee Meeting Craigdarroch Inn, Foyers
22nd to 24th Plockton Hotel Real Ale (& Gin) Festival *

June

Saturday 20th 14:00 Branch Members Meeting Allangrange Arms, Munloch
Saturday 27th Minibus beer trip—Clachaig Inn, Glencoe via Ft. William – meet at townhouse 9 am



Your local CAMRA branch

Protect your pleasure! Become actively involved with your local branch.

We need your help! Not a massive time commitment, just an hour or two a month will help our small committee in supporting the local publicans and brewers who together provide us with such a wonderful range of real ales to enjoy.

Branch activities might have to be changed—Please check the branch website to confirm the dates, times and places of meetings and socials—
www.highland.camra.org.uk (new address—no, really!)

Contact Details

Gareth Hardman (Secretary & Branch Contact) - 01463 238462
18, Scorguie Gardens, Inverness, IV3 8SS
contact@highlandcamra.org.uk or
secretary@highlandcamra.org.uk



Eric Mills - 01456 459343
chair@highlandcamra.org.uk
Arnold Stout (social secretary)
socials@highlandcamra.org.uk
Gordon Streets (editor)
news@highlandcamra.org.uk

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Pittodrie Stadium, Aberdeen

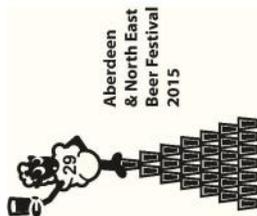
Thursday 4th June 3pm - midnight
Friday 5th June 2pm - midnight
Saturday 6th June noon - 11pm*

* subject to beer range availability and staffing level requirements

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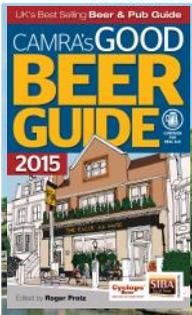
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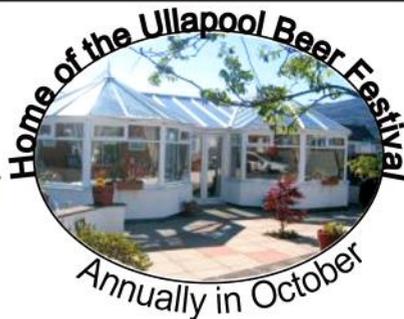
Proprietors: Mr & Mrs A.D. & B.J. Oulton

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22nd
23rd
24th



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JUST A FEW OF THE MANY BREWERIES



Drink in a Real Ale Pub? - Rate the Beer!

Highlands & Western Isles CAMRA needs your help in surveying the pubs in our massive Branch area. To tell us which pubs are worth considering for the Good Beer Guide, use CAMRA's 6-point NBSS (National Beer Scoring Scheme) to record Beer Quality. The info you give us helps us judge which outlets could go in to The Good Beer Guide, which outlets merit an award of area POTY and Branch POTY and which of our local beers merits the award of BOTY. It's easy! (if you are not sure about your score for a beer—half scores are fine—i.e. $1\frac{1}{2}$ for an OK beer but you wouldn't have another pint)

What do the scores mean?

0 - No cask ale available.

$\frac{1}{2}$ - **Undrinkable.** Beer so poor you have to take it back or can't finish it.

1 - Poor. Beer that is between barely drinkable and drinkable with considerable resentment.

2 - Average. Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.

3 - Good. Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.

4 - Very Good. Excellent beer in excellent condition.

5 - Excellent. Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

Simply email us which bar, the beer(s) and your scores plus any real ale and real cider news to our Branch Contacts (see Diary page).

CAMRA members can use the new website: whatpub.com

Log in to it using your normal CAMRA login details, search for the pub and then click on "Submit Beer Scores" - fill in the boxes on the form, scrolling down and then click "Submit Beer Score". You can do this for any pub in the country. Thanks!



What's yours then? is a quarterly newsletter magazine produced by the Highlands & Western Isles Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale. The views & opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the editor, CAMRA, nor its Branches.



*We hope you have enjoyed reading our Spring magazine. Unless you intend to keep it, please **DO NOT** throw it away.*

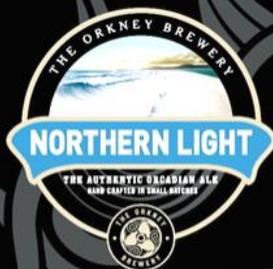
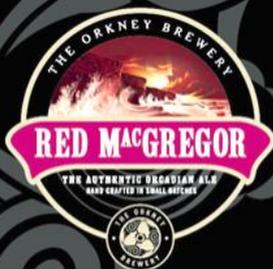
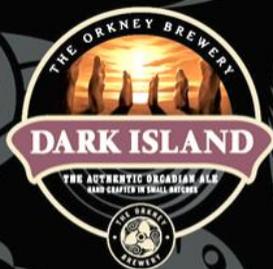
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