

# ALE TALK



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

## PUB OF THE YEAR, 2024: THE COUNTY, HUDDERSFIELD



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**PRESENTS**



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# CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Those of you who keep up with CAMRA news via the website or internet will already be familiar with the rumpus over so-called 'Fresh Ale.' However, we must always remember that one of the consequences of a membership where older people preponderate is that there will be a sizeable number of members who depend on the written word or terrestrial TV channels for their information. If a story it isn't covered by broadcast and news media, many people simply do not get to know about. This Chairman's column is aimed precisely at those people.

Carlsberg Marston's Brewery Company (CMBC) has come up with a new wheeze, called 'Fresh Ale' which comes in 30 litre kegs and has a shelf life of 14 days. Fresh Ale is being trialled with Wainwright's Gold and Wainwright's Amber, and also Hobgoblin Gold. So what is the problem, you may ask? Well this brewing behemoth has decided to dispense Fresh Ale through hand pumps, labelled 'brewery conditioned beer.' It doesn't take a genius to work that many drinkers who are not members of CAMRA will believe they are drinking cask ale, when in fact they are drinking a product which although unpasteurised, has completed its conditioning in the brewery. It is no longer a live product, and therefore it is keg beer. CMBC is taking an aggressive stance, making the grandiose claim that the move is a bid 'to begin reinvigorating Britain's beer and pub culture.' Are there fairies at the bottom of the garden? It goes without saying that the other big players, AB, InBev, and Heineken will be watching with interest, while small cask brewers can look forward to their products being frozen out.


CAMRA has responded assertively by writing to Trading Standards that the intention to serve this product from hand pumps is a breach of the Consumer Protection From Unfair Trading Act 2008, as the average customer may buy 'Fresh Ale' on the basis that they believe it to be cask ale. CAMRA quotes section 2 which protects customers from 'a presentation which

is likely to deceive the average consumer to take a transactional decision he would not have taken otherwise.' Furthermore, CAMRA has cited a precedent from 1988 in which the Local Authority Co-ordinating Body on Trading Standards (LACOTS) ruled that the use of hand pumps to dispense keg beer was misleading, and passed that on to all local Trading Standards departments. CAMRA has asked for a meeting with National Trading Standards to discuss what action can be taken to stop the hi-jacking of hand pumps.

CMBC has a track record for misleading marketing, badging Wainwright as a 'Lakeland Original' when in fact it was originally brewed in Blackburn before being moved to Wolverhampton after CMBC purchased the brand from Thwaites. It is disappointing to learn that the Fresh Ale concept was originally piloted by the small Devon based brewery, Otter, in 2023. CMBC followed suit in March of this year. It just goes to show that the Campaign for Real Ale is as relevant as ever and there is no cause for complacency. The good fight must still be fought. Please report any encroachments in our area.


**Paul Laxton**

*Chairman, Huddersfield and District Branch*



**Did you know?**

**Pubs raise over £100 million a year for charity**



Source: [pubaid.com](http://pubaid.com) (accessed 2020)

# Branch Awards

## Winter Pub of the Season 2024

### Boshaw Trout at Hade Edge



Set high up in the Pennines above Holmfirth, the Boshaw Trout at Hade Edge is one of the remotest pubs in the Huddersfield Branch area. Run by the successful team from the Nook in Holmfirth, the pub serves up to six cask beers from the Nook brewery range alongside good quality food. Buses to Hade Edge itself are very limited, the 29 and H7 from Holmfirth will drop you there, whilst the 310 from Huddersfield and Holmfirth is every 30m and stops at Cross Gate, approx. ½ mile away.

## Rural Pub of the Year 2024

### Traveller's Rest at Meltham



In a stunning hillside location with far reaching views from the beer garden, the Traveller's has retained the Rural Pub of the Year award for 2024. The pub serves as one of the Milltown brewery taps and has eight handpumps serving beers from Milltown along side other breweries

and a real cider. The 335 from Slaithwaite and Holmfirth stops outside the pub and the 324 stops at Slaithwaite Road at Helme Lane, approx. 15m walk away.

## Pub of the Year 2024

### The County, Huddersfield



The County, located Princess Street just off the main precinct and across from the Town Hall, has pub of the year for 2024. It is part of the Beerhouses chain which owns pubs including the Sportsman in Huddersfield, Refreshment Rooms on Dewsbury Railway Station and Stalybridge Buffet Bar on Stalybridge Railway Station. Refurbished to a high standard, the bar and partitions have been retained alongside John Smith's Magnet windows and an exterior lamp. On the beer front, the County focuses mainly, but not exclusively, on Yorkshire beers with Brass Castle, Thornbridge, Timothy Taylor, Vocation regularly featuring alongside many others. The County is approximately 5 minutes' walk from the bus station and 10 minutes' walk from the railway station.



# Branch Awards

## Mild Pub of the Year 2024

### The Head of Steam, Huddersfield



The Head of Steam at Huddersfield railway station is a worthy winner of the Mild Pub of the Year Award. It is one of the few pubs in the Branch area that serves a permanent Mild, Timothy Taylor

Dark Mild. On the presentation night, six milds were available!! With **Kirkstall Extra Special Mild, Fell Light Mild, Fell Mixed Mild, Fell Dark Mild** and **Thornbridge Grand Purposes Mild** all on tap alongside Taylors Dark Mild. Surely a record for the most milds available in a pub at once!

As well as being a great supporter of Mild, the Head of Steam serves a wide range of beer styles across a dozen or so handpumps and real cider is also available.



# Riverhead Refurbishment



Riverhead Brewery Tap in Marsden re-opened at the beginning of March after a major refurbishment.

Entering from Peel Street the changes to the bar are quite eye catching, the glass rack and lighting give an industrial feel. Extensions into adjacent buildings have provided more seating including a separate room in what was formerly the Wine Bank bar. Some brewing vessels have been moved up to the ground floor and these provide a good focal point.

There is an accessible toilet on the ground floor whilst the ladies and gents are upstairs.

There is new seating in a variety of styles throughout the pub and comfy sofas have been retained in the upstairs room.

On the beer front, there are nine handpumps serving four regular Riverhead Beers – Happy Valley, Butterley Bitter, March Haigh and Redbrook Premium Bitter alongside various beers from Riverhead, Ossett, Salt, and guest beers.

Overall, a top quality refurbishment job has been done which has generally retained and improved most the pub's best features as well as adding new ones.



# In search of cask ale in The Outer Hebrides.

The Hebridean Way is a cycle route of 185 miles in the Outer Hebrides. It starts on the tiny island of Vatersay at the Southern end of the archipelago heading Northwards across ten islands before ending at the Butt of Lewis. We planned to do the ride in 2020 but abandoned the idea when the covid pandemic led to restrictions. More than two years later, in May 2023, Diane and I set out to do the ride.

Getting to the Outer Hebrides is the first challenge. We wanted to take the train from Huddersfield but engineering works, rail strikes and poorly performing rail franchises all conspired against us. Instead, we drove for seven hours to Oban on the West Coast of Scotland from where we'd catch a ferry to Castlebay on the Isle of Barra. We paid to leave the car in Oban for the duration of our holiday. At our b&b in Oban we enquired about cask ale in the town and were directed to a pub called The Corryvreckan, close to the harbour. It turned out to be the local branch of Wetherspoons. I enjoyed a pint of Rudgate Ruby Mild. Like us, it had travelled a long way from Yorkshire but was still good. Would it be the last pint of cask ale we were to enjoy for the next ten days or so?

Next day, we headed to the ferry terminal to catch the early afternoon CalMac ferry 'Isle of Lewis' for the crossing to Barra. The sun shone. The sea was calm. The distance to Castlebay is 90 miles, taking about five hours. Arriving on the Isle of Barra in early evening sunshine, we quickly found our overnight accommodation, just yards from the ferry terminal. Our bike ride would start the following day. For now, we were keen to sample the local hospitality and made our way to The Castlebay Hotel. A group outdoors was enjoying a smoke - all were speaking Gaelic. They greeted us, directing us to the public bar where live traditional music was playing though it was not yet 7pm. This

was a promising start. But scanning the bar, I saw only keg beers and cider – Tennents Lager, John Smiths Bitter, Guinness, Bellhaven Bitter and Strongbow cider. No cask ale here. I sampled a pint of Bellhaven whilst we enjoyed the music. We then made our way to the nearby Café Kisimul, a tiny but excellent Scottish/Asian restaurant, where I enjoyed scallop pakora, followed by lamb curry and a local bottled beer.

Next morning, we began riding South onto the island of Vatersay and the official start point of the Hebridean Way. In the sunshine the long sandy beaches here are almost white. The sea switches from deep blue to turquoise as the clouds pass overhead. Reaching the start point, we re-traced our route, cycling Northwards across the isles of Vatersay and Barra to a tiny ferry terminal at Ardmhor, where we sailed the Barra Sound to the Isle of Eriskay. We cycled over a long causeway passing signs warning us to watch out for otters crossing the road. We saw no houses, no shops, no settlements of any sort before eventually reaching our accommodation at The Borrodale Hotel in Daliburgh, South Uist, a comfortable, welcoming hotel with a fine restaurant. As for the bar, it contained the same array of keg beers I'd seen the previous night. Feeling I should sample the local fare, I drank two pints of Tennents Lager.

The following morning was dry and bright with a strong tailwind. We cycled briskly at first but it didn't last. People say it's not unusual to experience all four seasons in a single day in the Outer Hebrides. By lunchtime it had turned wet, the wind was beginning to swirl. We ate our lunch in a draughty bus shelter. Cycling further North, we experienced heavy, cold rain and a nasty crosswind before reaching our b&b in Bayhead on the Isle of North Uist. We'd cycled 65km that day. Asking about

## In search of cask ale in The Outer Hebrides.

an evening meal, our landlady suggested a nearby pub, The Westford Inn at Claddach, North Uist. It meant riding back about 4 miles in wind and rain. But cycling gives rise to a big appetite so off we went. Seek and ye shall find as it says in the Good Beer Guide! Behold - we found three cask ales on offer - Skye Red at 4.2%, Skye Blaven at 5% and Shapes in the Clouds at 3.5%. Dining with a fellow cyclist, Alan a postman from Birmingham, we enjoyed the food, the company and the real ale.

Next day we cycled to Tarbert on Harris. The journey included a ferry crossing of one hour. We saw otters in the sea close to the harbour at Berneray and seals on the crossing. The Harris Hotel at Tarbert offers live music on Thursday evenings. Again, the restaurant served fine food but there was no cask ale, only keg beers including locally-produced craft beer from nearby Loomshed Hebridean Brewery. There was a huge selection of scotch whisky.

The following day we cycled steeply and slowly up through the mountain passes of Harris, looking skywards for Golden Eagles. Again, we bumped into Alan the Postman. He persuaded me that a loping bird in the distance was in fact an eagle. Later that day we came across a lonely shipping container at the side of the road, miles from anywhere. It was re-purposed as a wood-fired pizza cabin. The pizza was excellent. Our ride that day finished in Callanish on the Isle of Lewis and site of the world-famous standing stones which we visited. Our guest house accommodation was unlicensed but Diane persuaded the chef so sell us a bottle of Merlot.

The next day was Saturday. We continued cycling North on the Isle of Lewis before reaching the four-star Borve Country House Hotel. Once again, the accommodation was comfortable, and the food was good. As for the bar, it supplied the usual range of keg beers including the ubiquitous John Smiths Bitter. Next morning, we cycled the final leg of the Hebridean Way to the striking Butt of Lewis lighthouse built by David Stevenson in 1862.

This spot claims to be the windiest in Britain. The day we visited was calm and sunny with blue skies.

Our return cycle journey included two nights in Stornoway. Leaving the Butt we stopped at the nearby friendly Cross Inn for lunch where I enjoyed an excellent bowl of cullen skink. In this part of the world the Sunday licensing laws are still very widely observed. The public bar was closed. Nor was there time to linger. We still had a 3-hour cycle ride to Stornoway.

Arriving in Stornoway on a Sunday evening is not ideal. Most pubs, restaurants and cafes are closed. We did find two pubs that were open. The first offered only keg beer but the second, The Crown Inn & Harbour Bar offered two cask ales - Deuchars Caledonian IPA and Fyne Ales Jarl. We didn't stay for long - the pub was almost empty. But it was just the second establishment offering cask ale we'd found in cycling over 200 miles in the Outer Hebrides. As for the cycling, the people, the sights and the hospitality – they were all excellent.



**ASK, "IS IT CASK?"**

The launch of 'Fresh Ale' by Carlsberg Marston's Brewing Company (CMBC) is a handpump hijack, which misleads consumers into thinking they will be served a cask-conditioned beer – which is far from the case.

Serving so-called 'Fresh Ale' though a handpump also boots a genuine cask beer off the bar, depriving consumers of choice.

CMBC claim to champion cask beer but have instead closed breweries and removed cask lines from bars.

# PUB AND BREWERY NEWS

If you run a pub or have any news or information about your local that you want to tell us about email [aletalk@huddscamra.org.uk](mailto:aletalk@huddscamra.org.uk)

## An appeal to all members in the Huddersfield District!

Pub surveys are our means of keeping the information in *WhatPub?* up to date - and, right now, many of our surveys are out of date. It's a really easy job to amend a pub survey; all we need are people to go into pubs and change the information if necessary. So, we're asking for your help, as CAMRA members, to get our *WhatPub?* descriptions up to date, so that members from any area can easily decide which pubs to visit and which of the excellent Huddersfield area ales to appreciate!

If you feel you can help, please contact the Pubs Officer (for a survey sheet) at: [pubsofficer@huddscamra.org.uk](mailto:pubsofficer@huddscamra.org.uk) Many thanks!

**Empire** – Splash of Ginger 4%

**Magic Rock** – Voodoo Ranger, 5.3% hazy IPA

**Mallinson's** – Lucy 4.3%, All the Women 3.9%, Lupino Trio 3.9%

**Zapato** – Oro, 3.4% pale ale

## Lord's Brewery



In March Lord's Brewery undertook a rebrand and unveiled its new look at multiple pubs across the region. The new branding brings a more uniformed look across the core range beers (Lords Lager,

Brock, Corax, Reynard, Malamute and Sanglier) as well as monthly specials. The new designs bring an instantly recognisable look across the bar.



### Core Range Beers

**Sanglier** (Pale) 4.0%

**Corax** (Stout) 4.1%

**Brock** (Dark Mild) 3.6%

**Malamute** (IPA) 4.5%

**Reynard** (Blonde) 4%

**Buckwild** (ESB) 5%



## New Bars in Holmfirth

In December 2023, a new bar opened in Norridge Bottom next to Y Bar, called **Nowhere Bar**. It is an excellent reconstruction of a derelict building, carried out to a high standard using local stone, with balconies overlooking the River Holme.

On the bar, two handpumps dispense beers from the in-house micro-brewery (the brewer was formerly at Here Be Monsters) and there is cider from Udder's Orchard.

Opening hours are Wednesday – Sunday 1000 – 2100.

In mid-January, a new micro-pub opened in the alley between the Nook and the Tap House. Called **Barhemia**, it has one handpump which serves a changing range of beers, alongside a wide range of bottled beers. The enthusiastic owners have plans to increase the number of handpumps. Opening hours are Monday – Thursday from 1730 and Friday – Sunday from 1400.

Above O'Brien's, **Cooper's Yard** opened on 16<sup>th</sup> March. It has a large indoor area with a variety of street food eateries and a keg beer bar which has various anecdotes about its previous use as a butchery.

## The Ark, Flockton

A pub that was closed for many months has re-opened in Flockton.

Huddersfield's oldest pub, The George and Dragon, more recently known as Jack's Bar & Kitchen, which dates back to 1485 was put up for sale with a £330,000 price tag last year. The pub had been run by the landlord of the nearby Sun Inn. However, there were fears in the village that if wasn't sold as a pub it might become a house like many other pubs which close and never re-open.

Then came the good news. **Nailmaker Pub Co.**, a Yorkshire based, independent pub group and brewery, announced in January that it had completed the purchase of the pub. The company has started work on refurbishing the interior, carrying out necessary work on the two fireplaces, the pillar by the bar, new lounge areas with fixed seating, and the clearing of overgrown brambles and bushes to open up the beer garden.

By the time you read this, the pub will have been given a new name, **The Ark** Flockton, which

harks back to the late 1400's. Although the pub was in recent times formerly known as Jacks Bar & Kitchen, Jack's Craft Alehouse & Diner, and the George & Dragon, a plaque on the building proclaimed that "This curious roadside inn was built in 1485. In those days it was known as The Noah's Ark or Chained Poker. This was due to the pokers which appeared at each side of the fireplace. It wasn't until early Victorian times that the inn was renamed the George & Dragon."

The beer cellar has been upgraded and the bars will feature **four cask ales with 2 to 3 Nailmaker brewery beers (Clout Stout permanent) plus 1 or two local brewery swaps**. On the keg fonts there will be beers from Tiny Rebel, SALT Beer factory, Vocation and BrewDog.

## Scene at the Bar...

**Magic Rock, Birkby** - has a new beer, Voodoo Ranger Hazy IPA (5.3%). Also reported as selling Ruddy Bitter (4.0%), and Fourpure Oktoberfest Marzen (5.4%).

**Four Sons, Fixby** - Bradfield Farmer's Blonde, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker, Vocation Bread and Butter.

**George and Dragon, Flockton** - has reopened as Ark and is run by Nailmaker brewery.

**The Star, Folly Hall** - has been selling Adnams Lighthouse (3.4%), Parkway Brewing Co. Giggle and Titter (3.8%), Empire Splash of Ginger (4.0%), Pictish Pacific Jade (4.1%), Nightjar Loki (4.3%), Ossett Most (4.0%).

**Barhemia, Holmfirth** - now selling real cider (bag in a box) this was Thundering Molly on a recent visit; recent real ales have been from Brass Castle and Red Willow and there are plans to increase the number of handpumps. Opening hours are Monday-Tuesday 17.00 to 21.00; Wednesday-Thursday 17.00 to 23.00; Friday-Saturday 14.00 to 23.00; and Sunday 14.00 to 19.00.

**Nowhere Bar, Holmfirth** - the first brew from the onsite micro-brewery was Gyle, a 4.5% dry hopped pale ale; Kirkstall Black Band Porter also available when visited alongside a real cider from Udders Orchard.

**O'Brien's, Holmfirth** - Cooper's Yard has opened to the rear of O'Brien's selling keg beer only alongside a variety of street food.

**Lord Wilson, Huddersfield** - now stocking up to six ciders, recently these were Cockeyed Monkey Mango; Snail's Bank Rhubarb; Thistly Cross Whisky Cask; Weston's Rosie's Pig, Rosie's Pig Cloudy, Rosie's Pig Tropical.

**Plumbers Arms, Huddersfield** - selling beers from Copper Dragon, Black Sheep alongside Doom Bar, Bradfield Farmer's Blonde and Ossett White Rat.

**Williams Beer and Gin, Huddersfield** - selling Williams Gumption and Goose Eye Chinook Blonde.

**Wireworks, Lindley** - no longer serving real ale or food.

**Royal Oak, Linthwaite** - serving up to four changing beers, recently these were Black Sheep Blonde, Marston's Pedigree, Moorhouses White Witch and Wye Valley HPA.

**Victoria, Lockwood** - no longer serving real ale.

**New Mill Working Men's Club** - selling Bradfield Farmer's Blonde and Farmer's Pale.

**Scapehouse Inn, Scapegoat Hill** - has JW Lees Bitter and MPA alongside Timothy Taylor Landlord.

**Scholes Cricket Club, Scholes** - regular beers are usually from Nook and Phoenix breweries, these were Hopsack and Heywood Pale Ale (both Phoenix) on a recent visit.

**Rose and Crown, Thurstonland** - selling Farmer's Blonde, Leeds Pale, Theakston's Best and Coach House Gunpowder Mild.

**Zapato, West Slaithwaite** - selling Oro Ultra Pale Ale (3.4%).



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# REAL DRAUGHT BEER IN KIRKLEES 1975

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In 1975, when the Kirklees branch was formed, the country was dominated by the Big Six brewing companies. It was estimated that about 100 independent brewers remained in Britain out of the many thousands that had previously existed. Only a few years earlier you could have added Whitakers, Ramsdens, Bentleys Yorkshire Breweries (BYB), plus John Smiths and Whitbread's neither of which sold real ale. And not many more years before that, Hammonds, Ainleys, Bentley & Shaws, Stocks, Springwell and Seth Seniors all offered distinctive brews in their own pubs.

Amalgamation and takeovers resulted in the vast majority of the pubs being owned and supplied by six big business groups – Allied, Bass Charrington, Grand Metropolitan (Watneys), Imperial Tobacco (Courage), Scottish and Newcastle and Whitbread. Collectively, known as the 'Big Six', they closed down our local breweries and substituted other beers of quite different character. These beers were filtered, pasteurised and chilled to remove all signs of life which gives beer its character and flavour. The resulting lifeless liquid was then put into kegs and sold as 'draught' and served under carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) pressure which always affects and often ruins the flavour.

Huddersfield Town and the locality was dominated by Bass Charrington and Tetleys. So, a pub selling handpulled Sam Smiths, Timothy Taylors or Camerons was like an 'oasis in a desert.' At the time it was reported that there were only 21 different beers from 12 breweries available in traditional form. Some were very frequently found; many in only one or two pubs.

"Beer is just as much a part of the Yorkshire heritage as coal and cricket. And Yorkshire beer is unique, identifiable, possessing qualities not

known in other parts of Britain, and demanding its own individual method of dispense. Yet there is variety in Yorkshire ale – rich dark beers and light hoppy brews – sufficient to create adherents who are connoisseurs. Magnanimous, the Yorkshireman even admits to a taste for ale from outside the broad acres and allows small quantities of it – even from west of the Pennines – to sell in Yorkshire pubs." Thus, was the sentiment at the time.

Yorkshire brewing tradition stretches back over two centuries. Following a century of dramatic mergers and closures, there were only three breweries left in West Yorkshire. This meant the County had to draw heavily on brewers from South Yorkshire, Humberside, and North Yorkshire. Choice of beer was somewhat limited and locally, there was no clear picture of what was available in terms of real ale.

The first Good Beer Guide was published in November 1972 by CAMRA – then the **Campaign for the Re-vitalisation of Ale**. The guide cost 25p and listed pubs where the drinker could find real draught beer, which brewer's beer was available, and their opening times.

In the foreword, it was stated that the guide, which was intended to help drinkers find pubs serving real draught ale, was necessary only because the majority of Britain's brewers had been pursuing a policy over the past few years of 'robbing' the public of its already limited choice.

Two major developments threatened to kill off real beer once and for all:

- The large-scale promotion of characterless keg and tank beers at an advertising cost of millions of pounds a year; and

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## REAL DRAUGHT BEER IN KIRKLEES 1975

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- The transfer from traditional methods of serving real beers to carbon dioxide pressure pumps which make ale gassy and sickly.

This edition was a temporary measure designed to fill the gap between CAMRA's formation and the commercial publication in 1974 of a much more comprehensive guide. With only six months of research behind it, there were obviously many gaps with some parts of the country not covered at all. Fortunately, the newly formed West Riding Branch based in Huddersfield did contribute to the guide. It recommended an initial six pubs all complying with the four tenets of CAMRA's Special General Meeting October 1972 definition of real draught ale.

Of the six pubs listed, the **Black Horse** at Lindley served Bass Charrington (Tadcaster) Bitter and Dark Mild; the **Foresters Arms** at Lower Cumberworth was a Free House but served Wards Bitter; the **New Inn** at Meltham served Tetley Bitter and Mild on hand pull; the **Travellers Rest** at Meltham also served Tetley Bitter and Mild but on electric pump; the **White Hart** at New Mill was a Free House and served various bitters and milds including Scottish & Newcastle, Bass Charrington, Tetleys and Websters; the **Woodman** at Thunderbridge was also a Free House and the only pub in the area serving Timothy Taylors Bitter.

One of the main features that marked out the first year of the Kirklees branch's activities was the production of a Guide to Real Ale in Kirklees.

The "Guide to Real Ale in Kirklees" had been in continuous preparation since January 1975 and by July all known public houses in the Kirklees Metropolitan District had been visited by members of the branch. Grant McNair was instrumental in organising the survey forms and volunteers. Philip Charlesworth stressed that good relations must be maintained with the licensed trade and that landlords and brewers be encouraged to join the branch.

The survey of the pubs provided some interested statistics. In the greater Huddersfield area, there were 55 pubs that sold BASS Charrington Dark Mild (o.g. 1031.8) and this was often the only traditional real ale sold in that pub. The Town Centre had 4; North Huddersfield 16; South Huddersfield 16; Kirkburton and Denby Dale 2; Holmfirth 5; and the Colne Valley and Meltham 12.

There were some notable exceptions: The **Commercial** in Town had Sam Smiths Old Brewery Bitter and 4X Mild; The **Woodman** at Thunderbridge had Taylor's Best Bitter and Theakston's Bitter; The **Windmill** at Skelmanthorpe and The **Three Acres** at Emley both had Barnsley Bitter; The **Spinners Arms** at Colne Bridge had Bass Charrington and Bass Worthington but was the only pub to serve Draught Bass in the area; The **Peacock** on Leeds Road served Cameron's Bitter while The **Fleece** on Sheepridge Road was the only pub to serve Cameron's Mild in Kirklees. The **Dusty Miller** at Longwood sold the only real Webster's Best Mild and Pennine Bitter in the Huddersfield area; and The **Castle** at Castle Hill, a Free House, sold only Theakston's Old Peculiar. The **Rose & Crown** (aka The **Nook**) at Holmfirth had Tetley Bitter, Stone's Bitter Youngers XXPS Scotch Bitter and Sam Smith's 4X Mild; The **Farmer's Arms** at Burnlee also sold Tetley Mild and Bitter and Stone's Bitter; and The **Bareknuckle Boys** at Hinchcliffe Mill was the only pub to serve Thwaites Dark Mild and Bitter- the landlord converted from keg to beer engine! The remaining pubs sold Tetley and Bass Charrington Mild and Bitter.

After this epic survey, the first Real Ale guide went on sale in August 1975 at the price of 15p. It listed 168 pubs selling Real Ale, the beers from 12 breweries, and devoted a page and a half to pubs whose only Real ale was mild. Twenty-five of the best pubs were recommended for inclusion in the 1976 edition of CAMRA's national Good Beer Guide. It wasn't until the 1980's that Huddersfield spawned its first home-grown breweries, The West Riding Brewery and the Linfit Brewery.



Nigel and I live in the Lockwood district of Huddersfield and there are three decent pubs within walking distance of our abode and also on a short bus ride to Berry Brow.

Starting at Berry Brow there is the Golden Fleece, which serves three real ales. Ossett and Abbeydale are a couple of breweries that are usually on offer here. The 308, 310, 314 and 316 buses get you to this pub. Just a short walk along the road is the Railway, also on the same bus route as the Fleece as well as being near Berry Brow railway station. The Railway is a small pub with six handpulls on and these are kept in very good condition. Beers from Thornbridge, Abbeydale Exmoor and Titanic are regulars here and well worth a try. The Railway has been Huddersfield CAMRA's Spring pub of the season and is in the 2024 Good Beer Guide. Also near Berry Brow, in the hamlet of Armitage Bridge is the superb Armitage Bridge Monkey Club, a many times winner of CAMRA's Club of the Year. Again, served by the 310, 314, 316, and also the 324 bus to Meltham which goes through Lockwood. The Monkey Club has got four handpulls on, with one of them being a house beer from Empire Brewery. Ashover, Wensleydale, and 4Ts have also been on as well and are very drinkable. It's well worth a visit and customers are made to feel very welcome.

Returning to Lockwood, there is a pub called the Lockwood, a large pub, which has no real ales on. Just a little further on is the Shoulder of Mutton, a back street local which serves six real ales. Abbeydale, Titanic, Thornbridge and Oakham are regularly served here. The Shoulder of Mutton has been a Huddersfield CAMRA Pub of the Season and has previously

appeared in the GBG. The Lockwood and Salford Conservative Club, a couple of doors up from our house, had one real ale on when last visited – which was Ossett White Rat. All the buses mentioned pass very near to these pubs.

A 10 minute walk from our humble abode is the excellent Star Inn at Folly Hall. A very cosy public house just off the main A616, there are at least six handpulls serving Ossett White Rat and Pictish Brewer's Gold permanently and the others from various breweries which include Mallinson's, Briggs Signature Ales, Empire (all local breweries) and also breweries you don't really see much around here. The Star has a fire which makes it very comfortable when drinking your beer and it's very cold outside! The buses 324, 310, 314 & 316 stop practically outside the pub. The Star has won various CAMRA awards which includes Spring pub of the season 2022 and also is included in the 2024 GBG. Well worth a visit.

The Rat and Ratchet on the top of Chapel Hill is the last pub on the road from where we live. Owned by Ossett Brewery, the Rat also has an onsite brewery, the Rat Brewery. It serves six regular and four changing ales. The Rat also sells cider from local cider producers Pure North and Udder's Orchard and from producers from further afield. Bus services 306, 308, 310, 314, 316 and 324 stop right outside the Rat.



# WHY NOT JOIN CAMRA....?

CAMRA was established in 1971 and so has recently celebrated 50 years of fighting to get better beer in pubs, and today CAMRA has grown into an organisation that champions the Great British Pub with a passion for real ales still at its heart.

CAMRA is an independent, voluntary organisation with over 154,000 members nationally and has been described as the most successful consumer group in Europe, so has quite a voice when needed and campaigning is what CAMRA does. From lobbying the Government to take action on business rates and local volunteers campaigning against possible pub closures, to supporting pubs and breweries through Covid and much has been achieved in the 50 years, not least a long term future for quality real ale and cider, which is now readily available across the UK, but there is much more to achieve with your help.

Membership in Huddersfield has mirrored the effects of Covid and now the economic situation and has gradually reduced over the last 2 years but we do hope that now Covid is perhaps past the worst and this will enable people to get out to pubs and restaurants and the fact that we are now again putting on social events and producing our all new colour Ale Talk magazine quarterly, we hope this will also encourage people to sign up and then get all the benefits of membership.

We aim to: Protect and improve consumer rights, promote quality, choice and value for money, support the public house as a focus of community life, campaign for greater appreciation of traditional beers, ciders and perries as part of our national heritage and culture and seek improvements in all licensed premises and throughout the brewing industry

CAMRA Membership from 1 July 2023 costs £30.50 pa for single memberships, £38.50 joint at the same address or if under 26 is just £22. All these are for memberships paid by Direct Debit.

To sign up for membership please visit [www.camra.org.uk/joinus](http://www.camra.org.uk/joinus) or call 01727 798440 weekdays from 9am to 5pm. When you join a full year's membership includes;

- A welcome pack to help you make the most of your membership.

- Award-winning, quarterly Beer Magazine and What's Brewing online news and a Podcast.
- Free or reduced entry to CAMRA beer festivals. £30 worth of CAMRA Real Ale vouchers, £40 for joint members.
- Discounts on pints at participating pubs as part of CAMRA's Real Ale Discount Scheme. In Huddersfield, the Crown, Head of Steam and Rat & Ratchet do offer this on production of your membership card. WhatPub site also details some 12 other pubs and clubs around Huddersfield offering card discounts.
- Learning resources to help you discover more about beer and brewing.
- The opportunity to campaign for quality real ale, cider and Perry and to save pubs under threat from closure.
- Discounts on CAMRA books including the annual best-selling Good Beer Guide.
- Social activities in your local area and exclusive member discounts online.

Your local committee runs the events in Huddersfield and our own website [www.huddscamra.org.uk](http://www.huddscamra.org.uk) and each area of the country has such volunteers. Why not join us.

We look forward you to signing up for membership and you will then have full access to our site and get all the above benefits.

Shortly after signing up and getting the info from CAMRA Head Office you should receive an email from [membership@huddscamra.org.uk](mailto:membership@huddscamra.org.uk) as long as you agree to receive emails which we hope you will do so we can then also send out to you regular information about our activities.

See elsewhere in this magazine for our most recent activities and local pub awards.

# LONDON CALLING

FRIDAY 26TH – MONDAY 29TH APRIL 2024

## DAY 1 (26/4/24) WALKING ROUND WOKING

Nigel and I had decided a few months back to have a weekend in the south of England and a bit of football thrown in as well. We made plans to watch Raynes Park Vale v Guernsey FC. Our journey began at 0605 from Huddersfield on the National Express 564 coach to London. Our base for the weekend was the Wheatsheaf in Woking – which is part of Ember Inns. Our room was very comfortable and the breakfast we had each morning was very enjoyable. It is just a short walk out of the town centre on Chobham Road and also offers a CAMRA discount.

Once we had got settled into our abode, we went to Woking train station to purchase our advanced tickets for the weekend as we would be travelling into London both days and also a single into London Victoria for our journey back home on the Monday.

All done so we called firstly into the **Junction Tap**, which only had Doom Bar on and a cider (Lilleys) so we had half of the cider. Our next port of call was a Wetherspoons establishment, the **Herbert George Wells**. Using a few of our Wetherspoons vouchers, we tried *Tillingbourne Falls Gold* and *Inveralmond Ossian* both of which were in good condition. We also had a bit of food here as well. The next stop was **Woking Railway Athletic Club**, a very unassuming building and didn't look particularly welcoming. To gain entry just press a buzzer and you either had to be a member or have your CAMRA card to hand. The gentleman that served us was a pleasant guy and all the customers made us very welcome. We partook in *Wantsum Red Raddle* and *Elephant School Alizarian Crimson*. Pleasantly surprised here and is certainly worth a visit if in Woking. We decided to wander back to our abode and before turning in for the night we had *Dark Star Red Dwarf* which went down rather nicely. We had noticed that they did food so we booked a table for the Sunday evening before we went home on the Monday.

## Day 2 (27/4/24) SWANNING AROUND SOUTH WEST LONDON

We had already had our day sorted with some football in the afternoon – Raynes Park Vale v Guernsey – so after a good breakfast we caught the train to Clapham Junction then a bus to Wimbledon. The two of us wobbled up to the Wetherspoon's, **The Wibbas Down Inn**, where we had hot chocolate due to the copious amount of alcohol the night before!!! And no we didn't start singing the Wombles song!!! We then took the 163 bus to Morden and alighted at Raynes Park where we tried to find the Wetherspoons which we didn't realise was permanently closed. There didn't seem to be any pubs round here so we tried to find the football ground, we ended up asking at the library and got another 163 bus which stopped right outside the ground. The game was very entertaining and afterwards we took a 131 bus to Merton where we called into a pub called the **Sultan**. They mainly had Hopback beers on the bar and we had *Hopback Citra* and *Downton Dragon*, both in very good condition. The **Trafalgar** was where we called in next and is well worth checking out. It isn't a very big pub but had plenty of real ales on. We tried *Surrey Hills Shere Drop* and *Vibrant Forest Black Forest*, both in excellent condition. A nightcap at our hotel made for a great day out in South West London.

## DAY 3 (29/4/24) SUNDAY IN THE SMOKE

Yet again we had already had our day sorted out and after another good breakfast we got a train from Woking to London Waterloo, calling first to New Malden where we hit yet another Wetherspoon establishment, the **Watchman**. Here we tried *Twickenham Naked Ladies* which was very hoppy and pleasant. We caught the 131 bus to Wimbledon and got off at Leicester Square. We noticed a pub called the **Porcupine**, where we had *Adnam's Ghost Ship* (£6.50 for 2

## LONDON CALLING

halves). We had checked out a pub called the **Harp**, just around the corner from the Porcupine, but it didn't open until 3.00 as they were doing some staff training. We backtracked and firstly called into a Greene King establishment, The **Garrick Arms**. The 2 beers they had on weren't available so we had half a cider, Orchard Thieves, £7.40 for both. A couple of doors down we had noticed a pub called the **Chandos** – which we found on entering was a Samuel Smith house. It's interior is quite

dark but had plenty of space to sit down. We both had a pint of the **Old Brewery Bitter** which was a very eye watering £6.30 a pint!!!!!! Carol nearly had to be winched up off the floor – but then again this is London prices we are talking about here!!

And so, to the **Harp**, just a few doors down from Chandos. It's West London CAMRA pub of the year and quite rightly so. It has a good selection of ales on, and we tried *Harvey's*, *Dark Star* and *Cornerstone*. As we had already had a meal booked at

our abode, our last port of call was a keg pub called **Distortion**, just up from Wandsworth Road overground station. The couple of drinks we had went down well and made for a great weekend down in the south of England. We will certainly be coming back down here again at some point. Our meal at our hotel was wonderful and we enjoyed our stay in Woking – looking forward to our next visit. All credit to TfL for running the buses and trains well.

## Michael Walker Remembered.

Michael Walker, a former member of the Huddersfield Branch of CAMRA, sadly passed away on the 28<sup>th</sup> March this year. He died peacefully at the Huddersfield Royal Infirmary aged 75 years, having spent the latter years of his life in care homes at Marsh and Lindley.

Michael was introduced to CAMRA and the local branch when it was known as the Kirklees branch by his old friend Paul Norcliffe. Paul knew Michael through their work at the Royal Infirmary and quickly became good friends. Michael worked in the Catering stores at the hospital having previously worked at the Co-op Stores.

Michael had a quiet temperament, was widely read, and had an impressive worldly knowledge. He regularly attended meetings and eventually became a minute taker following in the footsteps of Val Davies. Michael served many years with the branch on the committee as Secretary and continued to do so until February 2011 when Paul Lunn took over.

Michael liked a beer and would help out at the Branch beer festivals, usually on the door although he was known to have served behind the bar on the odd occasion. He enjoyed his trips out with the members often turning up at the very last minute



before the bus left and would also attend Regional meetings when the opportunity arose.

Outside of CAMRA, Michael was a keen walker and enjoyed a good CAMRA ramble. He is pictured here on a walk from Marsden to Holme in 2012. He was also a 'Munro bagger.' Munro bagging is a popular pastime in Scotland where walking enthusiasts challenge themselves to climb as many of the peaks as they can.

In later years Michael became less active as his memory began to fade, and he gradually drifted apart from the branch. Due to circumstances beyond his control, Michael eventually went into a care home where he saw out the rest of his days. Michael will always be remembered as a well-respected member of the Branch and will be sadly missed by all those who knew him.

A Requiem Mass took place at St. Joseph's RC Church, Somerset Road, Huddersfield on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April at 11.00am, followed by committal at Huddersfield Crematorium at 12.30pm.

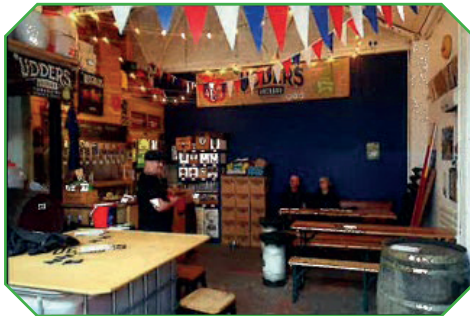
**Bob Tomlinson**  
Branch Contact

# Cider and Perry in Huddersfield



CAMRA supports and campaigns for cider and perry throughout the year but we tend to highlight it with celebrations twice a year. Unlike real ale production which can occur all year round, real cider and perry is generally a seasonal product and can only be made when the fruit is ripe. Production is tied to a natural cycle of the apple and perry pear trees found in orchards around the country.

Traditionally, the month of May is chosen because it is when the orchards come into bloom and the fruit begins to set which will then be harvested. October is equally an extremely busy time for cider makers when production is in full flow and fruit is being harvested, milled, pressed and stored for fermentation.



CAMRA has over the past two to three years been focusing on educating drinkers about cider and perry. Despite being largely unknown outside of the UK, perry which is produced from pears rather than apples, is now making a comeback with producers creating both new and traditional perries to great acclaim.

One such local cider and perry producer is 'Udders orchard based in Lindley, Huddersfield, owned and run by David Kendall-Smith. Udders Orchard makes real, full juice, naturally fermented cider and perry using as much locally grown, foraged and bartered fruit as he can get his hands on, in other words, fruit that would otherwise go to waste. This means collecting an array of apples

grown in ordinary gardens, wild sown apples growing in hedgerows, and specific cider apples grown in orchards in and around the Huddersfield area.

The cidery has a Tap room located at 70A Acre Street in Lindley, below the Hadfields sandwich shop and not far from the Lindley Clocktower. Every year Dave hosts the annual Lindley Cider festival with the aim of introducing and educating drinkers to the delights of real cider and perry.

This year the festival was held over the sunny weekend of May 10th to 12th and featured a range of 26+ real ciders and perries from small producers that would put most pubs and some beer festivals to shame. There was a cornucopia of exciting cider from across the country – East to West, North to south, and even some from over La Manche!

Entry was free from 12noon to 9pm each day with live music Friday evening from the Ukulele players and Hokum Skiffle on Sunday afternoon. Food was available on Saturday and included gourmet hot dogs and burgers from Singing Pineapple (including vegan options) and a selection of Broster's pork pies and Lone Loaf Jalapeno rolls (vegan) most of the weekend.

Of the 22 different ciders on offer, 8 were of the dry style, 6 sweet, 5 medium and 3 medium/dry. There was plenty of contrast in flavour and strength with a rare opportunity to sample a Dry Normandy cider, Templers Choice, from Normandy. Also, available were single variety (SV) ciders: Slack Ma Girdle from Devon and Hangdown from Somerset. There were oak barrel fermented ciders such as Heck's Vintage Dry matured for 12months in oak barrels and who could deny Mr Whitehead's Rum cask cider from Hampshire with its wonderful kick. Ciders with real fruit such as Sandford Orchards Fanny's Bramble put the commercial essence based ciders to shame. A dry cider from Lincolnshire, Crabba-Dabba-Do, was described as a blend of crabs and dabs. It had to

# BRANCH DIARY

be explained to one slightly confused drinker that it was made from crab apples and Dabinett apples and not marine crustaceans and fish!

Dave love for foraged apples drove him to produce Highway to Hull, a 6.2% abv dry cider, made with driver-discarded wild apples picked from the M62 junctions. Was this a homage to Dave Litten, the “Bloke from Hull” and former regional cider co-ordinator – we can but speculate?

There were just 4 perries available, 2 dry, 1 medium/dry and 1 medium. There was a wonderful 3 year matured dry perry called Flakey Bark from Herefordshire with a flavour unlike any other! And for the first time, a collaboration perry between Udders Orchard and Simon’s cider called Nomis Take. Simon Gibson, a late great mate of Dave’s, unexpectedly passed away last year after pressed a batch of Conference pears. To celebrate Simon’s memory, Dave collected and blended some of his own Norton Butt perry with Simon’s to produce this heavenly collab. Check out “Nomis” backward.

The Cidery Taproom is open at the beginning of each month for sales of a selection of Dave’s ciders and perries. See social media and the website for details.

[www.uddersorchardcider.co.uk](http://www.uddersorchardcider.co.uk)

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## FORTHCOMING BRANCH MEETINGS

### Monday 15th July

Riverhead Brewery Tap, Marsden

### Monday 19th August

Tap House, Holmfirth

## FORTHCOMING SOCIALS

details tbc, please check online at:  
[huddscamra.org.uk](http://huddscamra.org.uk)

### Wednesday 3rd July

Berry Brow Social - starting at the Fleece then Liberal Club and Railway

**Thank you** to the **Sportsman**, Huddersfield; **Four Sons**, Fixby and **Sair Inn**, Linthwaite for hosting our recent Branch meetings

**Aletalk** is produced by Huddersfield Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor, CAMRA Ltd. or its Branches. No part of the magazine may be reproduced without permission. Contributions are welcome from any CAMRA member and may be sent to [Aletalk@huddscamra.org.uk](mailto:Aletalk@huddscamra.org.uk)

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# Campaigning for you

Real ale is just the start...

We support everything from pubs and drinkers' rights, to licensee and breweries, the list is endless, united in the story we all love, our great tradition.

### So why not join us?

Save on beer when you visit the pub with our vouchers and discount schemes. Plus save on entry to 100s of beer festivals too, just a few perks of our CAMRA membership.

Make our story part of yours.

Join at [camra.org.uk/join](http://camra.org.uk/join)



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for  
Real Ale

Real stories, real people, real ale



## BREWING UP A STORM SINCE 1992 IN THE HEART OF YORKSHIRE

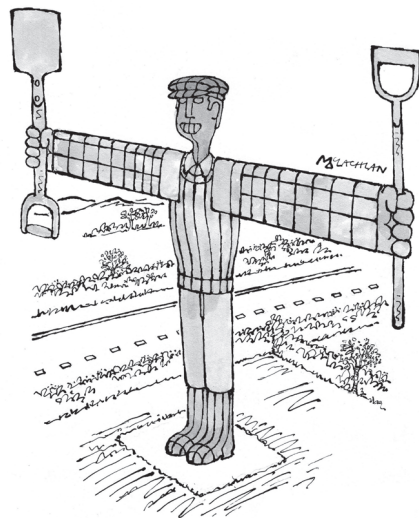


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## Fuggles farmer foils attack of the killer wilt

In our eyes, farmer Tom Spilsbury is a hero worthy of immortalising as a statue. Over the past few decades, the killer wilt fungus has decimated acres of English Fuggles hops, an ingredient crucial to the *Taylor's taste*. Thankfully, Tom agreed to plant two new yards of Fuggles just for us, in soil elevated above local rivers. This protects our hops from any wilt attacks spreading from land upstream. So we can keep brewing with the Fuggles that give Taylor's its inimitable flavour. Here's to Tom Spilsbury, hops hero, beer legend.

All for that taste of Taylor's



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