



# St Helens & Districts CAMRA Newsletter

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## CAMRA News

### Beer Scoring

One of CAMRA's core aims is to promote good-quality pubs, real ale, cider & perry. CAMRA members are therefore encouraged to rate the quality of beverages in the pubs they visit using the National Beer Scoring System (NBSS). **NOTE: the system is used to score the quality of cider and perry as well as real ale!**

NBSS is used to judge beer quality in pubs on a 0-5 point scale and this assists CAMRA branches in selecting pubs for the Good Beer Guide. **NOTE:** enter the date you tried the beer if you score at a later date. Scoring is completed as follows:

0. No cask ale available
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.

You submit your scores on the <http://whatpub.com> website, as follows:

Log into the *Whatpub* site using your CAMRA membership number and password, click on the "beer scoring" tab, click the [Start scoring] button, search for the relevant pub and then type in your scores in "Submit Beer Scores" form. Why not give beer scoring a try if you haven't done so already? Good luck!

### Digital Image Library

A Digital Image Library has been launched to give Branches access to photographs held at CAMRA's Head office. The Digital Image Library is accessible online at <http://library.camra.org.uk> and allows members to search and download images which CAMRA has permission to use. The "Guide to the System", which is available on the national website (<https://members.camra.org.uk/group/guest/branch-memos>) has more information on how gain access and use the system.

## Branch News

### CAMRA Merseyside Pub of the Year 2017 winner - Cricketers Arms

The Cricketers Arms has won the CAMRA Merseyside Pub of the Year 2017 for the third year in a row. The certificate was presented to Andy Evans by Doug Macadam, Merseyside Coordinator on July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017.



### Rail Ale trip on June 10<sup>th</sup> 2017 by Christopher Simm

Always a favourite with CAMRA members and pub goers, it was time to head off to Bury for the Rail Ale trip along the East Lancashire Railway. Meeting at the Cricketers for an 11 o'clock departure, the discussions had already begun about which places to visit and at what time. A brief stop at services as there may have been a problem with the coach. Not sure if that had anything to do with the tropical temperatures inside, but all seemed fine(ish) and off we went.

Arriving roughly an hour later, it was time to put plans into action. A drink first and then buy a train ticket or the other way round. Given the bad weather was beginning to creep in, decisions got made fairly quickly. I can't really speak for everybody, but given the nature of the weather at times, I'm not sure many people ventured past Ramsbottom.

The first stop is nearly always the **Trackside** and in this case was not different. It's a good place to start and end a hard days travelling. It's safe to say it was better on the return journey as more beers were on the bar. (5 ales and roughly 7 ciders/perries upon arrival). Having said that, you can always find a beer, cider or perry worth trying at any time of the day, no matter how many are on. Plus there's the added bonus of being able to spill out onto the platform which offers more seating and all adds to the experience. Unless it's raining of course. Bank Top Port o' Call was my drink of choice for the first visit.



3.97	OUTSTANDING
£2.30	PISTON BROKE
4.57	NAVYORS
£2.75	BLAUDE
4.57	TYNE BANK
£2.80	NORTHERN PORTER 5
5.7	OSSETT
£2.90	SOUTH PACIFIC 1
5.07	BANK TOP
£2.90	PORT O'CALL 5



Then it was off to the **Two Tubs** in Bury (formally The Globe Inn), a Thwaites pub. A good selection of their ales and possibly one or two extras from elsewhere. 6 ales and 2 ciders to be precise. There always seems to be a helpful chap sat at the end of the bar willing to offer advice on which ones are which, if you are looking a bit puzzled. I seem to remember a similar thing happening the last time I visited this place, which would have been the previous year. A very deceiving pub, as when you walk through the front door it looks quite pokey. But if you walk a little further down the corridor it opens up into a rather large back room. The first half of the pub seems to be quite old looking in design, but as you move through the pub it opens up and becomes more modern. Always worth a visit, even if it's just for one as the pub certainly has character. Lancaster Bomber was my drink of choice here.

Leaving the Two Tubs, it was time to head back to the station and catch the train to Ramsbottom. Destination was the **Ramsbottom Tap**. (formally the First Chop) a very good small pub with a large selection of cask and keg ales and ciders, clearly labeled on a chalkboard, with the added bonus of 30p off a pint for CAMRA members.

CASK and keg		
1	BEAVER TOWN GAMMA RAY AMERICAN PALE ALE	5.40
2	PAULANER WHEAT BEER	5.50
3	PAULANER LAGER MUNCHNER HEIL	4.90
4	FRULLI Strawberry Fruit BEER	4.10
5	Rena's Framboise Raspberry Beer	3.60
6	BAND (BULGARIAN) PILS	4.20
7	Tony Rebel CUTCH CIDER	4.00
8	SHINDIGGER PILS	4.10
9	AMSTEL LAGER	5.00
10	Cherry Beer	3.50
CASK		
1	GALAXY	3.90
2	Citra Storm	4.00
3	OAT MEAL Stout	5.30
4	BREADMILL PALE	4.20
5	ROARING MEG	5.50
CAMRA Ramsbottom Tap 30p off 11 CASK BEERS Keg is served in Pines, Halves 30p off		

Real Cider		
SHEPPY'S OAKWOOD (PILSNER CIDER)	4.8%	4.00
WHISKY CIDER	6.9%	4.20
HAPPY DATE	4.0	4.00
SCRUMPY Apple Cider	5.3%	4.20
FANNY'S Brambling Apple & Blackberry Cider	4%	4.00
Strawberry and Lime	4.7%	4.00

really say too much more about this place, other than the staff are always friendly and it's always worth popping in for a quick pint or 2. It was just the one pint on this visit which was an oatmeal stout.



Still in Ramsbottom it was time to visit the **Irwell Works Brewery Tap**. Always a favourite, as on a good day there is an outside balcony area where you can enjoy the view of a Morrison's supermarket and Ramsbottom train station. But if you look a little higher you will see some fantastic hillside landscape. A good selection of Irwell ales, both on the bar and in bottles, plus 2 ciders. (6 available on the bar).



There's usually standing room only when you walk into this place, unless you are one of the lucky ones who have somehow managed to book your seat in advance. As the weather was rather dubious, it was safe to say the pub was full and you could only find a seat by someone else deciding to leave. A very dog friendly pub, which doesn't make things easy at busy times, but always a friendly atmosphere. Including a rather amusing sign which read "Dogs welcome, children must be kept on a lead."

Time to head back into Bury and to **The Robert Peel**. A typical open plan style Wetherspoons pub, with low and high tables everywhere and a reasonable selection of ales (five of them I believe). You can always find at least 1 worth trying. And of course there is the added bonus for CAMRA members as you can use one of your vouchers. A small selection of ciders were also available, one of which was Old Rosie by Westons.

As there was still time left, we made a dash for the **Trackside** and a quick pint. This time it was a very interesting Honey Stout from Big Clock.

5:30 was fast approaching, so it was time to get back on the coach and head for home. A sing-a-long seemed to be the order of the journey as we headed back towards the Cricketers for a pie (or sandwich) and a pint.

The view from Irwell Works Brewery balcony. A lot better when the weather is good.



## Pub News

### Call for news

We'd like to use this section to publicise anything of interest that is going on in our local pubs. If you are a customer or publican please get in contact, let us know if what's going on, and we'll publish it here.

### Phoenix

The Phoenix (Canal Street, WA10 3LL) has a new landlord who is committed to keeping a range of real ales, and hopefully, in the future, ciders and perries. A re-launch event was held on 8th July night that was very well attended. Everyone had a great time and it was commented that the beer was on top form. We would encourage people to visit the Phoenix and try it for themselves.

## CatHop beers

CatHop beers is a new Real Ale in a bottle shop in Rainford that that opened its doors on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, selling beers from local breweries as well as those from further afield. Located in the old art gallery, Inglenook Farm, Rainford, opening hours are Thurs - Sat 11 - 7 and Sun 11 - 5.

## **Brewery News**

Connoisseur Ales (121-125 Church St, St. Helens, WA9 1JS) is opening its doors to the public to celebrate its 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Open days will be:

- Friday September 1<sup>st</sup> between 4pm and 10pm
- Saturday September 2<sup>nd</sup> between 12 noon and 10pm.

Twelve Connoisseur Ales beers will be available including a selection of new beers - Gorse Flower Gold, Transylvania Pale, Kaffir Lime Sour, Liquorice Stout and an 18-month lagered Tropical Maibock. We also have 20 ciders & perries available throughout. CAMRA discount will apply to all beers as usual and we're extending the discount to include ciders for the birthday weekend.

## **Forthcoming Events**

### August CAMRA social - Rainhill Pub Walk on Friday August 18<sup>th</sup> 2017

**All welcome.** If you want to join us please make your way to the Manor around 7pm. We aim to set off for the next pub around 7:30pm. The pubs we aim to visit include:

- Manor Farm, Mill Lane, Rainhill, L35 6NE
- Ship Inn, Warrington Road, Rainhill, L35 6PE
- Commercial Hotel, 12 Station Road, Rainhill, L35 0LP
- Victoria Hotel, Warrington Road, Rainhill, L35 0LR
- Skew Bridge Alehouse, 5 Dane Court, Rainhill, L35 4LU

### September CAMRA social - Connoisseur Brewery on Friday September 1<sup>st</sup> 2017

We are holding our September social at the Connoisseur Brewery on Friday September 1<sup>st</sup>. **All welcome.** If you want to join us please make your way to the Connoisseur Brewery any time from 7:30pm. As noted above, there will 12 ales available (many of which are new) plus a mini cider festival featuring 20 real ciders and perries. They offer a CAMRA discount on their ales, and this will be extended to the ciders/perries as well for their birthday weekend. They also, as always, have a range of their own ales available in bottles, as well as fruit wines, mead, and a variety of soft drinks.

### Ossett Brewery Tour and Rat Craft Beer Festival on Saturday September 9<sup>th</sup> 2017

Anybody wishing to join this trip needs to contact Andy Evans at The Cricketers Arms ASAP as there are only 7 places left on the bus. The cost of the trip is £15, including the bus, food, 4 pints and a tour of the brewery. The coach will leave The Cricketers Arms at 11am.



## **Articles**

*If anyone would like to write a short article or news story for the newsletter please send it us via email [sthelenscamra@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sthelenscamra@hotmail.co.uk).*

## NEXT Committee Meeting

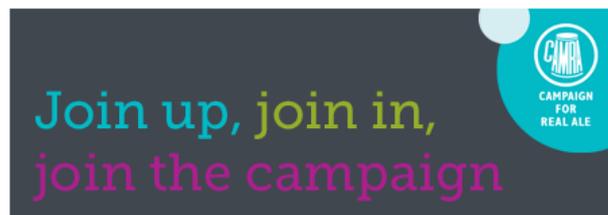
There is a Committee meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month. All CAMRA members are welcome to attend these meetings unless it is a closed event (this will be advertised as such in advance). Committee meetings are always held at local pubs that serve real ale. All are welcome to attend our Committee meetings, but only Committee members can vote.

## NEXT Branch Meeting

The next Branch meeting will be held on June 24<sup>th</sup> 2017 at The Abbey, Hard Lane, St. Helens, WA10 6TL at 8pm.

There is a Branch meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month to discuss current issues and have a general catch up with local brewery, pub, and beer festival news. Most meetings are quite informal and fairly short (on average an hour). All are welcome to attend our Branch meetings, members and non-members of CAMRA alike, but if it comes to a vote only CAMRA members can vote at Branch meetings. Our CAMRA Branch meetings are always held at local pubs that serve real ale.

**NOTE:** If you are a St. Helens CAMRA member and you are attending your first meeting we will buy you a pint as a welcome to the branch!!!



CAMRA is more than just promoting great beer.

- It's very sociable - you'll meet others who share your interest in all things beer (or cider/perry!)
- CAMRA offers a range of training for volunteers - including Emergency First Aid, Food Hygiene, Stewarding and Health & Safety
- You'll gain skills to enhance your CV
- CAMRA volunteers are a wonderful mix of people, of all ages, from all walks of life

If you are interested in joining CAMRA all the relevant details can be found at <http://www.camra.org.uk>

If you are planning a night out in St Helens, Rainhill, Rainford or Prescot download one of our Real Ale Pubs Maps. They are freely available on our website <https://sthelenscamra.org.uk/real-ale-in-st-helens/pub-walks>

