



# St Helens & Districts CAMRA Newsletter

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## CAMRA News

### Keep Pubs Afloat campaign

Due to the campaigning efforts of CAMRA members, 55 MPs from all parties have actively contributed to the Keep Pubs Afloat Campaign. They have promised to urge the Chancellor to give serious consideration to introducing an annual £5,000 Business Rate Relief for pubs in England, as well as a freeze in Beer Duty for the rest of this Parliament. Such a large number of MPs from across the political spectrum adding their voice to this Campaign, shows just how serious the threat to pubs is in towns, cities and villages across the UK. MPs know this is an issue their constituents really care about and want to see it addressed; it's a message the Chancellor cannot afford to ignore.

### The Brewery Information System

The Brewery Information System (BIS) is CAMRA's on-line brewery database, containing details of all known breweries and the associated beers which they produce. BIS can be accessed at <https://bis.camra.org.uk>. CAMRA members have read-only access to view publicly-available information about breweries and the beers they brew. User Guides have been compiled to help show what information is held within BIS, and how to navigate around the system more easily. All guides are available via your CAMRA Welcome Page by doing a search on "BIS User Guide".

## Branch News

### Note from the Editor

It seems our branch IT guy was actually telling the truth, so we've removed him from the asylum and dusted him down. We even gave him a beer. Changes are happening people, lots of electronic changes. The main change is contact email addresses, which you'll notice in this edition of the newsletter. For more information see Scott our IT guy.

### Branch Pubs Officer

As detailed in the September newsletter, an election to the position of Branch Pubs Officer will be made at the Committee meeting in October. Anyone interested in the post needs to put their name forward to the branch Chair ASAP.

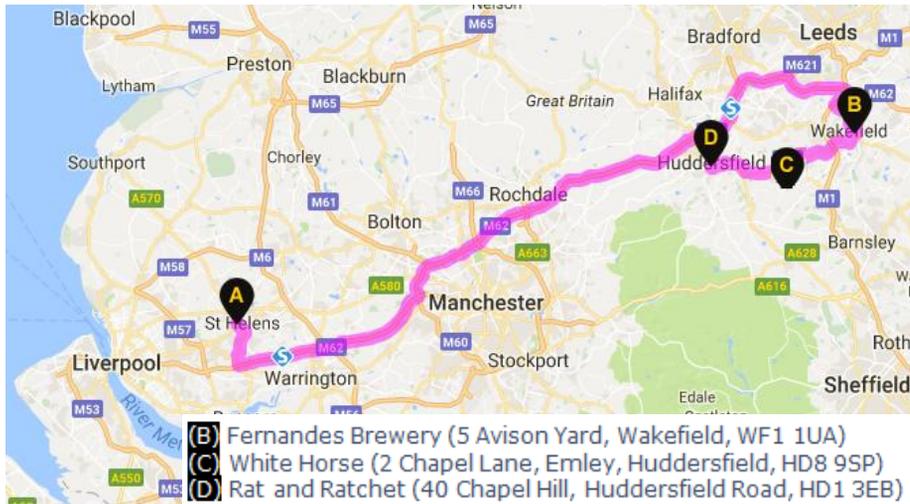
### St Helens & Districts CAMRA pub of the year awards

There will be an event to celebrate the excellence in our local pub scene on October 18<sup>th</sup> 2017 at 7pm. The event will be hosted at the HoneyRose Foundation, Radiant House, 2-4 Cotham St, WA10 1SA (above the old Gas showrooms in the centre of town). <https://www.honeyrosefoundation.org.uk/contact>

### **There is an open invitation for CAMRA members to come along and join us.**

There will be a bar serving a number of bottled/cask beers and real ciders, and a free buffet. Card-carrying CAMRA members will also receive one free drink on arrival.

Ossett Brewery Tour and Rat Craft Beer Festival by Philip Firth



Our transport for the 125 mile round trip to West Yorkshire and tour of Ossett Brewery establishments



Tour organisers, Andy Evans from the Cricketers Arms and Liz Crosby from Ossett Brewery

On Saturday September 9<sup>th</sup> 2017 at 11am an intrepid band of around 50 beer lovers set off from The Cricketers Arms on a tour of Ossett Brewery pubs in West Yorkshire, organised on behalf of the local CAMRA branch by Andy Evans.

The original plan to visit the Ossett Brewery in Huddersfield was foiled late in the day by unforeseen building works. However, a short detour to Wakefield provided an opportunity to visit the **Fernandes Brewery Tap** and sample a large range of Fernandes ales. Unsurprisingly, four free pint tokens on arrival (courtesy of Ossett Brewery) also went down well with everyone on board! To help cope with the sudden onslaught of thirsty token waiving customers, Andy ended up having to lend a hand behind the bar.



What a hero...

Most of the Fernandes ales were rather pleasant, hoppy and light in colour, including 'Ale to the Tsar' 4.1%, 'Session IPA' 3.8%, 'INN-Festation' 4.0% and, my favourite, 'Sunshine IPA' 5.5%. The beers also had that fresh and lively taste that you only get with ales that are brewed on the premises.

Fernandes 'Black Chalice IPA' 5.2% was a malty hoppy black ale, with a texture not too dissimilar to Guinness. However, personally, I wasn't 100% convinced that a black ale with strong hoppy taste was a great combination.

Understandably, people were a bit reluctant to leave the pleasant surroundings of the Fernandes Brewery Tap, but lunch beckoned. Delicious homemade steak pie, chips and mushy peas was provided compliments of

Ossett Brewery in the **White Horse** in the village of Emley, along with yet another free beer token. I tried Ossett 'Excelsior' 5.2%, another pleasant gold-coloured ale with a hoppy taste.

The final leg involved a short transfer by coach into Huddersfield so we could attend the Rat Craft Beer Festival in **The Rat & Ratchet** pub. We also receive another free pint token 😊.

A few intrepid souls managed a brisk walk to **The Grove**, a craft beer place with an impressive menu of ales and 2 or 3 ciders.

A happy coachload of people arrived back at the Cricketers Arms at around 8:30pm.

The trip was great value, the beer was excellent and over £400 was raised for charity.



A large selection of Fernandes ales

**So, not a bad day out!**



Outside the Rat & Ratchet, Huddersfield

September CAMRA social by Scott Griffith

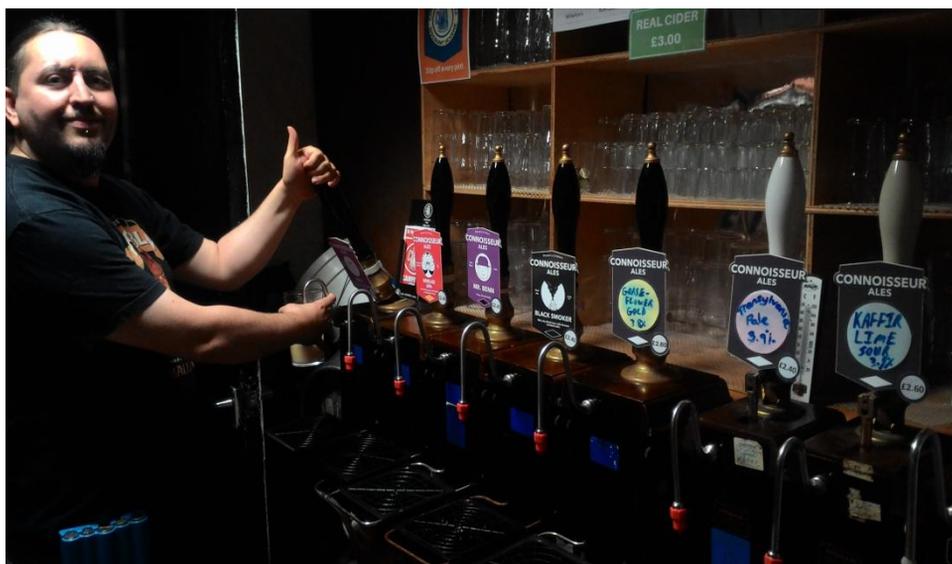
Location: Connoisseur Ales Brewery & Tasting Rooms

Date: Friday September 1<sup>st</sup> 2017

The setting: Connoisseur Ales 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday Party

St Helens and Districts CAMRA chose to have their September Social at the Connoisseur Brewery, to coincide with the brewery's third birthday celebrations. This was a great idea as there would be plenty to choose from on the night and the brewery was centrally placed, so it was easy to find food too. Connoisseur's event ran on both the Friday 1<sup>st</sup> and also Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 2017, with the CAMRA social starting at 7:30pm on the Friday.

We join our heroes as they stride down to the brewery at four in the afternoon, all the better to sample some of the beers early on before they are all used up. As promised there are a lot of ales available, and our heroes are determined to try them all!



There were twelve Connoisseur beers available in total, including a selection of new beers: The Gorse Flower Gold, made with real gorse flowers was potentially flavoured, one of those beers that improves as you drink it. There was also Transylvania Pale to try; and our host Kevin, proudly declared as he poured, that the name was due to the use of three different hops from the Transylvania region of Romania that are not usually available outside of the country. Another new beer, the Kaffir Lime Sour, was a firm favourite of the evening

with our stalwart (if increasingly unsteady) heroes; created with kaffir lime leaves and very drinkable, with a taste that brings to mind lime cordial. The Liquorice Stout, made with liquorice root (a heavy tasting beer, feeling like a meal in a glass); and an 18-month lagered Tropical Maibock finished off the list of new beers, and once all these were sampled it was time to find sustenance!

Our heroes had trouble at this point. It appears that a local sports team had unhelpfully (but most probably without malice aforethought) booked their match to coincide with the branch's social outing – so most places were very busy. Other patrons at the brewery had cunningly avoided this by ordering in a curry; but as our band of merry boozers had already wandered into town, they settled for visiting a sandwich shop.

Thus braced and fortified, our heroes returned to once again sample and deplete the supplies at the brewery. This was aided by the official start-time of the social being upon them, and our intrepid adventurers were joined by other members of the branch and committee.

As it happened Connoisseur also had around twenty ciders & perries available throughout the celebration, sharing the same CAMRA discount as the beers. The offerings ran the gamut from sweet to dry in a range of strengths, including three from Pulp, and two from Broadoak, with the other spaces filled from Sandford Orchards, Snails Bank and more. There was a particular favourite in the Pulp Beet & Orange, a very interesting sweet cider.



Sampling the ciders and having more of the range of beers, our indomitable heroes stayed for the whole evening. As a matter of fact, they stayed past the advertised closing time due to having to wait on a taxi (Still time for another then? Why not!). Rumours that they were spotted wearing traffic cones and snoring by the canal are greatly exaggerated.

## Forthcoming Events

### Cider walk around St. Helens town

Well, it appears to be cider month (again) and our branch is planning an apple walk around the town. It could go pear shaped though...

The date will be Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October. Further details are yet to be finalised, but will appear on our usual social media outlets. Or if you prefer, you could flag down one of our cider reps for more information nearer the time.

*If anyone would like to publicise an event in the newsletter please send it us via email [newsletter@sthelenscamra.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@sthelenscamra.org.uk)*

### Socials in 2018

In 2017 there were a number of well attended social events, for example the East Lancashire Railway trip and the Ossett Brewery tour. We are actively seeking ideas about pulling together a program for 2018. If anyone has any ideas about any good beer festivals or places of beer & cider interest please get in touch and let us know what you have in mind.

### Beer Festival at The Old Mill, Prescot November 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> 2017



For more information: <http://www.theoldmillprescot.co.uk/events>



Before all you book readers and enthusiasts start going mad, no St. Helens hasn't discovered or indeed found a Waterstones lurking about the town. Instead it has found something much more interesting. The W stands for Winestore and it's a new outlet for Beers, Wines and Spirits. This magical place can be found on Walmsley Road, Eccleston and has been open since 27th September.

Their web address is - <http://winestoreeccleston.co.uk> and they also have a facebook page. Or if you feel like popping round - 68 Walmsley Road, Eccleston, St. Helens, WA10 5JN and they are open Monday to Saturday midday until 8pm.

## Articles

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

## NEXT Committee Meeting

The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday October 11<sup>th</sup> 2017 at The Boars Head, 675 Elton Head Rd, WA9 5BT at 8pm. There is a Committee meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month. All CAMRA members are welcome to attend these meetings. 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 Wednesday October 25<sup>th</sup> 2017 at The News Room Cafe Bar, 89 Duke St, WA10 2JG 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 between an hour and an hour and a half). 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>

