



CHESTER & SOUTH CLWYD



CAMRA DIARY

For the latest events, please visit the branch web site
www.chestercamra.co.uk



Fri 1 - Sun 3 Mar;
Thur 21 March;
Fri 22 Mar;
Fri 12 April;

Kash March Madness Festival, **Kash**, Brook Street, Chester.
Branch Meeting, **Bear & Billet**, Chester Start: 8.15 pm
Stonehouse Brewery Visit (provisional) Details to follow
Kelsall & East Chester Pubs Social

A minibus run taking in hosteleries at **Bridge Trafford, Ashton, Mouldsworth & Kelsall**. Depart Ship Victory 6.30 pm.
Pick-ups on arrangement.

Thur 18 Apr;
Fri 3 May;

Branch Meeting, **Bridge End**, Ruabon Start: 8.15 pm
Rural South Chester Pubs Social
Hop on board the minibus as we head for **Farndon, Broxton & Tattenhall**. Depart Ship Victory 6.30 pm. Pick-ups on arrangement.

Fri 3 - Sun 5 May;
Thur 16 May;

Kash Cinco de Mayo Festival, **Kash**, Brook Street, Chester.
Branch Meeting, **Mill Hotel**, Chester Start: 8.15pm

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As well as Chester and its environs, this Branch covers an area stretching from Parkgate on the Wirral to Tushingam in the South.
Branch Contacts: *(phone numbers, are 01244- unless otherwise noted)*
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Web editor: John Silloth webmaster@chestercamra.co.uk



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NORTH WALES BEER FESTIVAL

Chester & South Clwyd CAMRA is delighted to confirm that this event will be held on 10 & 11 May at the Centenary Club, Glyndwr University Racecourse Stadium [Wrexham Football Club] on Mold Road, Wrexham. There have been previous, very successful events at the Gresford Colliery Club, under the banner of Wrexham Beer Festival, but it was felt that a more central location would be more of an attraction to visitors.

We are pleased to have reached agreement with Glyndwr University to hold a festival in the newly-refurbished centenary lounge under the Yale stand at the stadium. The larger venue gives the opportunity to increase the size of the festival, and to appeal to visitors from further afield; hence the renaming as North Wales Festival.

We hope to have most, possibly all North Wales breweries represented, and a competition for Champion Beer of North Wales will be held during the event. There will be upwards of 50 beers to try (including the competition beers), and a range of real ciders and perries.

Since acquiring the football ground, the University have greatly improved facilities at the club, particularly the centenary suite, which functions as the students' union bar during term time, and we are sure that all visitors will be impressed by the venue. It has lots of comfortable seating, a stage with built-in sound system, and a fully fitted kitchen which will provide hot and cold food throughout the festival.

The festival will run over three sessions: Friday 7–11 pm, & Saturday 11 May 12–4 & 7–11.

Ticket prices will cost £3 for each session. A festival programme is included in the price, but as an experiment, glasses will cost an extra £2; refundable at the end of the session if you do not wish to keep it.

Live music will be provided, with Saturday afternoon designated as a (fairly) quiet session.

We would be delighted if every Wales member could attend at least one session, and show support for the event. Tickets can be bought online at www.northwalesbeerfest.org.uk More detailed ticket information will be circulated in due course, but do please mark the dates in your diaries. Bring a friend along, and enjoy what promises to be a superb event.

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Early December at the Pied Bull in Chester and it could have been renamed the "Happy Brewers". The reason was the presentation of the awards for the Champion Beer of Cheshire for 2012.

Pictured by the Pied Bull plant are (l-r); Pete Skeaping-Brown (Woodlands Midnight Stout); Tom Sinclair (Pied Bull Matador) and Barrie Davison (Frodsham Aonach).

At only 30, Tom demonstrates a new generation of craft brewers coming through the system with good quality products.

Mass Lobby of Parliament – 12-12-12

A small group of members from Chester & S. Clwyd CAMRA travelled to London by train to attend the CAMRA Mass Lobby of Parliament on 12 December 2012. We had alerted our local MP to meet with us at 1 pm in the Central Lobby of Westminster and arrived at the Emmanuel Centre to register our arrival and collect crib cards with loaded questions for our MP before joining the queue for entry into Parliament. Most of the other visitors were fellow CAMRA members, some having travelled from Scotland. After about 40 minutes we entered the security area which had airport style checks; X-ray machines for hand baggage or contents of pockets and walk through metal detector screens. Thankfully no shoe removal, but if you looked a bit dodgy they gave you a quick body pat down. Finally we walked through into the Palace of Westminster and headed to the Central Lobby.

We found our MP and questioned him about the *Beer Tax Escalator*, the negative effect it has on pub business and inquired if he was aware that the effect of increasing duty produced less revenue to the exchequer due to falling sales instead of an increase. He appeared sympathetic to the cause and would provide some support to debates about bringing PubCos into line about beer pricing to landlords and more options for guest beers.

However he kept to the party line by stating the escalator tax was introduced by the previous Labour government and was not due for review until 2015; very disappointing!

After the formalities we were shown around the Lords debating chamber and surrounding rooms, all very plush and ornate. Having spent nearly an hour with us we thanked our MP for his time and returned to the Emmanuel Centre to collect a free pint of beer in exchange for our feedback cards.

The next event for the day was to be a series of speeches from the great and the good of CAMRA and some MPs but we decided to pursue the real cause of the campaign and try some more beer! >>>



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>>> So off we went to the Speaker, a smallish pub just off Parliament Square and we had time to enjoy a pint before a big rush completely filled the place. Seeking somewhere less crowded we found the Cask Pub & Kitchen in Pimlico. Up to 10 cask beers are available but we only tried a few in the time allowed but a good selection, however mostly hoppy!

Overall, about 1,000 members lobbied 350 MPs so an effective day of action but its true success has yet to be seen from the actions of our MPs. Top marks to CAMRA HQ who organised the Mass Lobby event; everything went smoothly and generally to time. *J B*



Helsby Beer Festival

.... now in its 4th Year takes place on 8 & 9 March at Helsby Community Sports Club Chester Road, Helsby

To appeal to Real Ale lovers at other times they now have a hand pump selling cask beers at all times. Brimstige Breweries beers have sold really well. The quality and taste have been excellent and consistent and they intend to keep stocking them in the future. The regular beers include Sand Piper, Scarecrow, Trappers Hat and Rhode Island Red.

The small friendly Team of employees and Committee members put in lots of time and effort to keep the place running and would like to tell everyone that the doors are open to all, whether they be sporting or not, to pop in and try a beer or two.

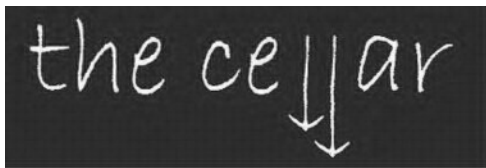
As a very active sports club it is run as a not for profit organization and for the benefit of the sporting members and locals alike.

Helsby Community Sports Club

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Bowls  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two floodlit greens • Twelve teams playing in six local leagues (inc. Ladies teams) • Open and members-only competitions • Greens also for hire 	Rugby Union  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First XV in South Cheshire League • Vets/Casuals XV (play monthly) • Training every Wednesday • Matches every Saturday • For more info: call Phil on 07714 763184 												
Football  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First team and Youth team (U18) playing Cansberg West Cheshire League • Junior teams from Under-7 through to Under-16 • Matches every Saturday and Sunday <p style="font-size: x-x-small;">For more info: visit www.helsbyfc.com</p>	Rugby League  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams from Under-7 through to Under-16 • Training every Thursday • Matches every Sunday <p style="font-size: x-x-small;">For more info: call Adam on 07735 857755 or email adam@helsbyrugby.net</p>												
Running  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training night every Wednesday • Cross-country and road race fixtures • Track training during summer months <p style="font-size: x-x-small;">For more info: visit helsbyrunningclub.org.uk or email runners@helsbyrunningclub.org.uk</p>	Tennis  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three courts plus two Junior courts - all floodlit • LTA coaching for seniors and juniors • Club nights every Thursday during the season • Inter-club matches including Winter League <p style="font-size: x-x-small;">For more info: call Bill on 07710 103088</p>												
Fishing  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two well-stocked ponds • Sunday matches held on a regular basis throughout the year <p style="font-size: x-x-small;">For more info: call Ken on 01920 964317 or email ken@holland55@talktalk.net</p>	Snooker/Darts  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two full-size match tables • Four teams in local Snooker league playing Tuesday and Friday • One team in local Billiards league playing every Wednesday • Two teams in local Darts league playing every Thursday <p style="font-size: x-x-small;">Lounge available for hire for private parties. Catering available upon request. Bar Extension available.</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Tel. 01928 722267</p>												
Sports Memberships <table border="0" style="width: 100%; font-size: x-small;"> <tr> <td>Junior</td> <td>£15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Senior</td> <td>£25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Concession</td> <td>£20</td> </tr> </table> <p>Opening Times</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%; font-size: x-small;"> <tr> <td>Monday to Friday</td> <td>7.00pm to 11.00pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Saturday</td> <td>12 noon to 9.00pm</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sunday</td> <td>12 noon to 9.00pm</td> </tr> </table> <p>Bar with Regular All Welcome Real Ales</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: x-small;">www.helsbysports.com</p>		Junior	£15	Senior	£25	Concession	£20	Monday to Friday	7.00pm to 11.00pm	Saturday	12 noon to 9.00pm	Sunday	12 noon to 9.00pm
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Concession	£20												
Monday to Friday	7.00pm to 11.00pm												
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GOOD BEER GUIDE

Architectural Delight

After much talk and expectation, the Saighton based Brunning & Price group have unveiled the latest addition to their estimable pub estate.

The **Architect**, which opened just before Christmas, lies in landscaped grounds between Nicholas Street and Nuns Road in Chester close by the city walls and Roodee racecourse. It is a conversion of St Martin's Lodge which had originally been the two storey regency home of

famous architect and bridge designer Thomas Harrison, but had been boarded up ever since the police vacated their headquarters next door to make way for the new HQ building.

As we've come to expect from Brunning & Price, they've made an exemplary job of the restoration with the pub basically comprising of two halves. Making full use of the rambling original interior of the listed Georgian building, to the right you'll find several rooms of varying size and intimacy given over to dining with table service.

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For something less formal and more pubby head into a sympathetic brick extension where the bar looks down on an impressive spacious lower level seating area. If you're a devotee of B&P pubs you'll be familiar with the decor, fixtures and furnishings. There's the usual frame-to-frame prints (of varying topicality), the tall bookshelves, wood floors, carpets and rugs, fresh flowers, blackboards, chunky furniture and lots of glass and window. Outside there's a patio with sloping lawns which we can expect to be mobbed particularly when the horse racing season resumes in May.



Regarding CAMRA's *raison d'être*, the real ale, expect Phoenix B&P Bitter and Weetwood Cheshire Cat as standard backed up by guest beers, which included those from Beartown, Tatton and Titanic during the first week of opening.

Prices range from £3.30 to £3.70 reflecting the upmarket nature of the establishment.

The Architect will no doubt have its critics (we might expect remarks about affordability and clientele)

but it should be viewed as a marvellous new edition to the already diverse Chester pub scene.

Cestrians can also be grateful for the vibrant restoration of a historic understated building that had become little more than an overgrown eyesore.

Behind the Pumps

Andy Smythe, landlord of the **Red Lion** in the Chester suburb of Handbridge, answers a few of our questions ...

How long have you been in the pub trade?

I started out with the Little Oak back in 1994. In 2003 I left to run Locus [former Engine House pub now the Shillong curry house] as well as working in my original trade as a sparky. I missed running a pub though and took on the Red Lion in October 2009.

How did you get into the pub trade to begin with?

I've always enjoyed talking crap - some would say I'm fluent at it - as well as socialising and enjoying a beer so I just fancied giving it a go!

What have been the biggest changes you've seen in the last twenty years?

Lots. When I started out all the regional breweries (except the commendably resistant Shepherd Neame) were being taken over and real ale was going nowhere. It was Greenall's Bitter and Original and little else so it's good to see it taking off and all the micro-breweries springing up. What else? The crazy price of a pint. Unfair rents. The PubCo would sometimes double your rent if your business was good. They were in a win-win situation because if the landlord walked out they could then show good trade figures to some newly retired policeman or whoever who fancied a go running his own boozier. Today there are fewer and fewer mugs succumbing to temptation, so now you can haggle with your area manager.

What are your favourite and worst aspects of the job?

Without doubt meeting so many good people and the *craic*. Worst is dealing with the occasional awkward drunk and the long hours leading to less and less reward.

What in your opinion makes a good pub?

A good landlord! I would say this but it's true! Obviously you're also looking at the place being warm, welcoming and with friendly banter. The ale's got to be good and you've got to offer some decent grub these days. Not many places can survive on wet sales alone.

How's trade at the moment?

Right now [January] - extremely average i.e. not brilliant.

What do you see as the future for the pub and how will you adapt?

I know the PubCos are in a bit of a mess at the moment but they'll find their way around things. A free-house is the way to go.

What are your favourite five pubs (in any order)?

The Fat Cat (Norwich). Crown Liquor Saloon (Belfast), McDaid's (Dublin), Bull (Beaumaris) and the Drovers Inn (Loch Lomond).

Most amusing pub story?

The Little Oak has two doors in off Broughton. One day a little harmless drunk came reeling up to the bar asking for a drink. I told him he'd had a little too much and we couldn't serve him. He graciously acknowledged this and walked out. Seconds later he appeared through the other door at the opposite end of the bar. I asked him if he was the same fella who'd just been in and got knocked back. He didn't recognise me or the pub at all
.....and he was still drunk.



Acton, Nantwich	Star	01270 627296	Wednesday 8.30 pm
Alderley Edge	de Trafford Arms	01625 583 881	Wednesday evening
Altrincham	Old Market Tavern	0161 927 7062	Wednesday 9.30 pm
Bollington	Poachers	01625 572086	Last Sunday of the month for charity
Broxton	Sandstone	01829 78233	Tuesday evening 9 pm
Buglawton	Robin Hood	01260 295241	Tuesday evening
Chefard	Egerton Arms	01625 831366	Alternate Thursdays 8.30 pm
Chester	Bawn Lodge	01244 324971	Tuesday 8.30 pm
Chester	Pied Bull	01244 325829	Thursday evening
Chester	Ship Victory	01244 376453	Thursday evening
Comberbach	Spinner & Bergamot	01606 891307	Wednesday 8 pm
Congleton	Castle Inn	01260 277505	Tuesday evening
Congleton	Counting House	01260 272654	Wednesday evening
Crewe	Woodside	01270 569513	Tuesday 9 pm
Davenham	Bull's Head	01606 43725	Sunday & Tuesday evenings
Dean Row	Unicorn	01625 524379	Wednesday 9 pm
Dodleston	Red Lion	01244 661636	Tuesday 9 pm
Dutton	Tunnel Top	01928 718181	Charity Quiz night, Tuesday 9 pm
Halkyn	Blue Bell	01352 70309	Wednesday 8.30 Winter Quiz (Oct - March)
Handbridge	Carlton	01244 671070	Tuesday evening
Handforth	Railway	01625 523472	Thursday 8.30 pm (in aid of Mencap)
Hoole	Bromfield	01244 345037	Tuesday evening
Holt, Wrexham	Peal o'Bells	01829 270411	Monday 9 pm
Houghton Green	Plough	01925 815409	Thursday 9 pm
Kelsall	Farmer's Arms	01829 751784	Friday & Sunday evening
Kingsley	Red Bull	01928 788097	Tuesday evening
Knutsford	Lord Eldon	01565 652261	Monday 8.30 pm
Knutsford	Cross Keys	01565 750404	Wednesday 9 pm
Little Budworth	Shrewsbury Arms	01829 760240	every other Wednesday
Macclesfield	Railway View	01625 423657	Sunday evening
Macclesfield	Treacle Tap	01625 615938	Sunday 8.30 pm
Marton	Davenport Arms	01260 224269	Thursday 9 pm
Middlewich	Big Lock	01606 833489	Wednesday 9 pm (free)
Middlewich	Boar's Head	01606 833191	Sunday evening
Mobberley	Bull's Head	01565 880105	Thursday evening
Mobberley	Church Inn	01565 872651	Thursdays 9 pm
Nantwich	Black Lion	01270 628711	Monday 8.30 pm
Nantwich	Peacock	01270 624069	Wednesday 9 pm
Penketh	Ferry Tavern	01925 791117	Sunday 9.30 pm
Peover Heath	Dog Inn	01625 861421	Thursdays & Sundays
Pickmere	Elms	01565 733395	Thursday evening
Rainow	Rising Sun	01625 424235	Thursday evening
Sandbach	Limes	01270 763506	Tuesday 9.30 pm
Styal	Ship Inn	01625 523818	Thursday evening
Warrington	Dog & Partridge	01925 813915	Tuesday evening
Warrington	Ring o' Bells	01925 634035	Wednesday 9.30 pm
Warrington	Hoop & Mallet	01925 419182	Thursday 9 pm
Willaston	Nag's Head	01270 650176	Thursday cash prize
Wilmslow	Coach & Four	01625 525046	Every Sunday evening
Wilmslow	King William	01625 524022	Every Sunday evening
Winsford	Red Lion	01606 552285	Every Sunday evening
Wrenbury	Cotton's Arms	01270 780 377	Friday 9 p.m.

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FREE listings; tell us your music or quiz details.

Please phone the pub for confirmation before travelling.

The Editor accepts no responsibility for changing circumstances and lives in a state of perpetual ignorance.

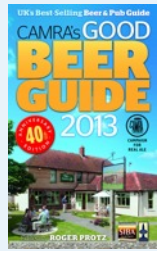
Listings

Please let us know if any of these details are out of date, or if we can add any more entries. We want to publicise live music, quiz nights and indeed anything else that brings the pub and its community together.

Good Beer Guide 2013 - 40th Edition

The 2013 Good Beer Guide is fully revised and updated, with details of more than 4,500 pubs across the UK serving the best real ale.

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YOUR RIGHTS

You should receive a **full pint**, not 90%. The licensee expects to be paid in full! We always ask them politely to “squeeze a drop more in”, or *top it up, please*”.

If you have a **chipped glass, dirty cutlery, bad food or sour beer**, don't hesitate; let the staff know, politely. It is easy for things to be missed in a busy session: a little courtesy and understanding on both sides should resolve matters.

If the licensee won't put things right, then call Trading Standards or Environmental Health.
(See a phone book, web site, public library or town hall.)



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

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EDITORIAL DETAILS

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*Edited by George Symes with Production & Technical Wizardry by Martin Baxter
Published by the Cheshire branches of the Campaign for Real Ale
Views expressed in Out Inn Cheshire are those of the individual authors
and are not necessarily supported by the editor or CAMRA*

Printed by Delmar Press (Colour Printers) Ltd of Wall Lane, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 5LS
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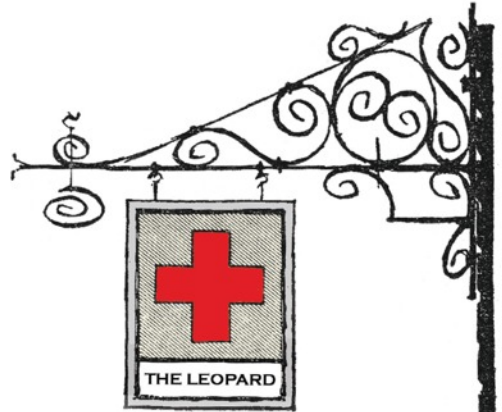
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Copy Deadline; 30 April

Publishing Date; 1 June (approx)



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