

NORTH SEA ALE

THE WAW FACTOR

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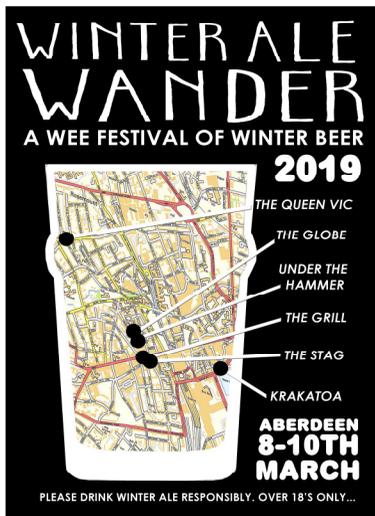
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It was little more than a week before Xmas the local branch went forward to investigate the possibility of holding a Winter Ales Festival. Attempting to start was somewhat handicapped as the licensed trade embarked on it's busiest weeks of the year and discovering that one potential supplier required a minimum order of 50 casks (over twice what was anticipated as even worth considering).

Whilst there was some optimistic consideration of a dozen plus hostleries offering 12-18 beers this was generally considered to be more likely a future event beyond 2019. As things turned out the initial approach to 10 outlets quickly dropped to 9 as the closure of Carraiges was announced. Other outlets, primarily those that weren't part of the spine that composed the pub crawl were deemed the likely ones to drop out and so it proved.

So Friday 8th March to Sun 10th March 2019 the first participants in the inaugural WINTER ALE WANDER are

The Queen Vic Rosemount Place
The Globe North Silver Street
Under the Hammer
The Grill Union Street
The Stag Crown Street
and last but not least
Krakatoa Trinity Quay
Between them these bars will have a selection of 10-12 Winter ales over the weekend and perhaps longer if anyone fancies thirds or even fourths.



It is said anecdotally that the best way to enjoy a Winter Ale is at the end of a bracing walk which rationally would involve a zig-zag route from the start but the human approach will probably end joining the dots in as short and straight a line as can be mustered with more zigger zagger towards the end. However it is reckoned that better enjoyment may well be had by sticking to half -pints in the first instance.

It would be hoped that in future years more hostleries will take part providing a wider range of ales but primarily that will depend on how many people partake of a few halves this time round.

The intrepid six look forward to seeing you..

END OF AN ERA CARRAIGES CLOSES

Farewell: final fare stage for CARRIAGES

Whilst in general I find the closure of any bar a sad event it becomes somewhat more pertinent when the howff in question had been a regular personal watering hole even if that regularity was well into the decades of a past century. There is much more personal disappointment when it happens to a bar that not only is currently being frequented but had been off and on frequented well into the decades of a past century. It was over 30 years ago that I first entered the downstairs bar of the Brentwood Hotel and in the mists of time I can't quite recall whether the first beer was Whitbread Castle Eden or Ind Coope Burton Ale. Since then Carriages managed the exceptional feat of regularly supplying and generally keeping in good condition up to 8 different ales. The final chapter became known last year when it was heard that the hotel had been put up for sale in what was to say the least a difficult market. It would appear that the purchaser has plans to operate the building in a somewhat different market from the one it has occupied for many years resulting in the removal of both the bar and restaurant. Consistent information has been difficult to come by over the last 6 months or so the identity of the purchaser being a very shadowy area didn't bode well for it's future. A number of closing dates have been posited but the last wheel kept on rolling when at one point Scapa special went back on sale. As things currently stand it looks like it will still be open when this article goes to press but will be shut by the time you read it.

So where to next? After all there are a half dozen real ale outlets within 5 minutes walk of Carriages but while they all offer a little something that Carriages did (and more in some other respects) there was a particular blend beyond beer that made it irreplaceable. It is also hard to believe it will re-open in a format that'll tempt me back.

CARRIAGES

Many thanks for over 30 years of excellent ales
Best wishes to all staff in their future endeavours



Ian Chapman
presents Ham-
ish with a
quaiçh for
services to
real ale

CAMRA AGM

A more orthodox Beer Festival plus beer discounts-where's the catch?

For those who still hanker for the more regular beer festival we can announce that there will be a substantial beer festival taking place from 5th-7th April 2019. However there are a number of less conventional aspects to consider. The event is in Dundee and is not open to the public. However, entry can be facilitated by taking out membership of CAMRA as it is the AGM weekend of the UK organisation.

Annual membership costs from £25 and includes £20 of Wetherspoon vouchers. A number of local bars offer discounts; the St Machar Bar, Krakatoa plus all Belhaven outlets on real ale purchases so even moderate drinkers can recover most if not all of the subscription rate over the course of the year. All this plus the opportunity to have a Pub crawl in Dundee what more can one ask for? If really keen it is also possible to attend the AGM itself. So for anyone who has considered taking out a subscription in the past 2019 is probably the best year to give it a try. No one is expected to organise the next Aberdeen beer festival from the start and volunteering is just that. We look forward to seeing a few new members at the Caird Hall in Dundee.



Carriages
Final
Night



Rigg Robertson presents Windswept Brewery Champion Beer of Scotland winning certificates for Speciality Beer—Weizen and Real Ale In A Bottle (Dark) Wolf of Glen Moray

WOOHA BREWERY VISIT

Perhaps the first thing to hit the casual visitor to the WOOHA brewery is the space. As I never visited their original site there is nothing for me to compare but generally small breweies and even some larger ones tend to have space as a premium. In fact for a fleeting moment I thought lets hold a beer festival right here, other factors, however, tended to outweigh the generous space asset.

The brewery however in production terms is probably still a minnow compared to it's neighbour the Roseisle distillery but ironically probably has a much higher international profile than Roseisle as the whisky produced almost entirely goes for blending purposes.

The emphasis on international sales approx 70% also may go some way to explain their limited exposure in the Aberdeen area. Something of a shame as they certainly have a range of comprehensively distinctive beers

Casual visit is also something that WOOHA isn't. The round trip of about 150 miles conducted midweek was not likely to tempt many members from the Aberdeen area. At one point it did look as if the attendance might just comprise the social secretary and the Brewery Iliason officer. The serendipitous event of a big football match in Rothes and a few other hardy souls plus probably the most local CAMRA member to the brewery ensured a respectable turnout.

An intriguing selection of beers were sampled especially the elderflower 6.5 % which was in prototype production. I commented that it would be even more interesting in about 6 months time,which reminds me, as I have just such a bottle nearing that stage now, excuse me!

BOTTLE CONDITIONED ALE

Patience: a virtue that brings its own reward?

In today's 24/7 instant gratification society those of us on the riper side of 40 may tend to believe that those on the less ripe side have no idea of the concept. However, in the naturally conditioned beer world there is the perfect example of such an issue.

The lesser praised arena of bottle conditioned beers is one that most beer publications tend to overlook essentially because it tends like home-brew to imply drinking at home and most of us prefer to do our drinking at the bar. The humble bottle however does provide many benefits and advantages over its more common or garden (weather permitting) draught variety.

Firstly it does have the advantage of convenience (unless you have a public house downstairs or next door) presuming you have such accoutrements as glasses and bottle openers plus a reasonably non-shaky hand. This is also a useful point when the desire for a beer is set against one of our rare more inclement Winters and the aforementioned happy circumstance does not apply.

An even more intriguing point is the shelf life. Pub beer does tend to go off after around a week even if you do use an appropriate container to take some home and store it carefully. The bottled beer will usually keep for months and if you do manage the self discipline bit may well improve with age. This is not a given and generally depends on the style and strength of the beer. The stronger the ale the more fermentable material the yeast has to work with to develop additional textures and flavours plus of course a longer shelf-life. The likelihood of the beer deteriorating prior to the arrival of the best before date (BBE) is extremely rare. In recent years I personally can only recall one beer that tasted significantly poorer just prior to BBE but it was still drinkable.

Which brings us to the more serious speculate to accumulate era. If anyone asks me when bottle-conditioned ales (BCA) taste at their best I would usually reckon 2-3 months after BBE. However there is a higher risk of the beer having gone off by this time. Whilst not severely so this risk is generally out-weighed by the greater likelihood that the beer if not tasting much better will probably taste not much different to the beer during the rest of its bottled life. Of course if you have stored a large batch of a specific beer to this point and it has all gone off neither the brewery nor retailer will give you much in the way of recompense so don't bother to take them back.

A more prudent approach to storing a bulk purchase is to procure an additional ½ dozen bottles for monitoring and quality control purposes. This involves the serious and demanding obligation of having to open one of aforementioned bottles every other month or so. The upside of this dedication is the ability to assess just how the beer is maturing and generally if a significant improvement is noticed then the beer has probably peaked and it may be a good idea to enjoy it at this point but perhaps keep a couple for deep storage. If the worst comes to the worst then you've only lost a couple of bottles.

So if BCAs are such a Cinderella of brewing how widely available are they? In recent years the options have widened considerably through local brewers, specialist off-licences and even super-markets.

I will however take the opportunity to do something I don't normally do. When asked "what's my favourite beer?" I normally tend to get irritated. Nowadays I just point out that there is a beer for every occasion and it therefore depends on the occasion concerned. In the BCA arena though I'm quite prepared to state that the most improved beer (not necessarily the best) in bottle I've ever tasted was Burnside No.1 PA. The beer was about 2 months past BBE and was barely recognisable to the draught versions I had been offered in various bars. As this is not a particularly strong ale the transformation is even more remarkable. So on this occasion I'm quite happy to say

"Burnside: fits the Bill"

CAMRA SCOTLAND MANIFESTO

Take part in CAMRA's election campaign in Scotland

With elections taking place just around the corner in Scotland, now is the time to make sure that your elected representatives support beer drinkers and pub-goers.

Beer and pubs are close to the hearts of many voters in Scotland. There are now over 120 breweries across Scotland, with another 10 in the pipeline. The brewing and pubs industry contributes £1.6 billion to the Scottish economy and supports the employment of 60,000. This means there are even more great real ales to enjoy than ever before.

However, there are still a number of issues facing brewers and pubs across the country that need to be addressed. From tied licensees paying above market value for their rent and beer, to the impact of the drink driving policy on rural pubs, more needs to be done by the Scottish Parliament to support the industry.

Now is the time to show the Scottish Parliament that beer and pubs are important issues for constituents across the country. Please write to your local candidate today by visiting www.camra.org.uk/lobbyscotland and ask them to publicly support CAMRA's Manifesto for Scotland ahead of the election on Thursday 5th May.

We are asking candidates to commit to the following aims:

To introduce reform for pubs tied to large companies (pubcos) so that licensees have a fair and equitable relationship

To review the impact of the drink driving policy on the pub sector and help support affect pubs

To strengthen planning laws so that planning permission is always required before a pub can be demolished

To make it easier for local people to take over their local pub through community ownership

To retain and extend the current Small Business Bonus Scheme

To work more closely with the Scottish Food and Drinks Industry to promote real ale and to encourage outlets to promote real ale from small brewers

The only way we can secure an election result for beer drinkers and pub goers is with your help. Please write to your candidates today and share all feedback with campaigns@camra.org.uk so that we can track support.

DIARY

When		Where	Why
Sat 23rd Feb	2pm	Ma Cameron's	GBG / POTY selection
Thu 14th Mar	8pm	Aitchies Ale House	Branch Meeting
Tues 9th Apr	8pm	Under the Hammer	Branch Meeting
Sat 11th May	2pm	Elizabethan Fraserburgh	Branch Meeting



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

Join up, join in, join the campaign

You are just moments away from a year in beer heaven!

From as little as £25* today, be part of the CAMRA community and enjoy discounted entry to around 200 beer festivals, exclusive member offers and more. Discover all the ins and outs of brewing and beer with fantastic magazines and newsletters, but even more importantly support various causes and campaigns to save pubs, cut beer tax and more.

Join CAMRA today

Enter your details and complete the Direct Debit form below to get 15 months for the price of 12 for the first year and save £2 on your membership fee.

Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit www.camra.org.uk/joinup or call 01727 798440. All forms should be addressed to Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

Your details:

Title Surname

Forename(s)

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)

Address

..... Postcode

Email address

Tel No(s)

	Direct Debit	Non DD
Single Membership (UK & EU)	£25 <input type="checkbox"/>	£27 <input type="checkbox"/>
Joint Membership (Partner at the same address)	£30.50 <input type="checkbox"/>	£32.50 <input type="checkbox"/>

*For information on Young Member and other concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk/membership-rates or call 01727 798440.

I/we wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association these are available at camra.org.uk/memorandum

Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title Surname

Forename(s)

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)

Joint member's Email

Joint member's Tel No

Signed

Date

Applications will be processed within 21 days of receipt of this form. 04/17

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		Date			

Below is a list of outlets that sell real ale which are known to the Aberdeen, Grampian & Northern Isles branch of CAMRA.

CAMRA is in no way recommending all of the pubs in this list. If you want a list of recommended pubs you will need to buy the Good Beer Guide. The pubs are placed in alphabetical order by location and then pub.

If you know of any pubs that sell real ale, in our area, which are not on this list, or any pubs on this list that no longer sell real ale please contact the editor. Your help is much appreciated

Aberdeen

Aitchies Ale House
 Archibald Simpson's
 Atholl Hotel
 Blue Lamp
 Brewdog
 Brewdog (Union Street)
Brig 'O Don
 Cameron's (Ma's)
 Dutch Mill
 Ferryhill House Hotel
 Globe
 Grays Inn
 Grammar F.P. club
 Grill
 Howff
 Illicit Still
 Justice Mill
 Krakatoa
 Mains of Scotstown
 Mariner Hotel
 McGinty's
 Number 10
 Old Blackfriars
 Prince Of Wales
 Queen Vic
 Slains Castle
 St Machar Bar
 Stag

Triple Kirks
 Under The Hammer

Aberchirder

New Inn

Aboyne

Boat Inn

Alford

Haughton Arms

Ballater

Alexandra

Balmoral Bar

Deeside Inn

Glenaden

Banchory

Burnett Arms

Douglas Arms Hotel

Ravenswood Club (British Legion)

Scott Skinners

Tor Na Coille

Banff

Market Arms

Braemar

Fife Arms

Invercauld Arms Hotel

Moorfield House Hotel

Brodie

Old Mill

Catterline

Creel Inn

Charleston of Aberlour

Aberlour Hotel

Mash Tun

Craigellachie

Craigellachie Hotel

(Copper Dog)

Highlander Inn

Cullen

Grant Arms

Royal Oak

Three Kings

Cults

Cults Hotel

Daviot

Smiddy

Dufftown

Stuart Arms

Dyce

Dyce Farm

Granite City

Spider's Web

Elgin

Against the Grain

Drouthy Cobbler

Muckle Cross

Sunninghill Hotel

Ellon

Dog Tap

Station Hotel

Tolbooth

Findhorn

Crown & Anchor
 Kimberley Inn

Fochabers

Gordon Arms Hotel
 Grant Arms

Forres

Carisbrooke Hotel
 Knockomie Hotel
 Mosset Tavern
 Ramnee Hotel
 Red Lion

Fraserburgh

Elizabethan
 Saltoun Arms

Garlogie

Garlogie Inn

Garmouth

Garmouth Hotel

Glenlivet

Croft Inn

Gourdon

Harbour

Huntly

Crown Bar

Inverurie

Black Bull
 Edwards
 Gordon Highlander

Johnshaven

Anchor
 Ship

Kingswells

Four Mile House

Lossiemouth

Windswept Tap Room

Luthermuir

Sauchieburn Hotel

Maryculter

Maryculter House

Marykirk

Marykirk Hotel

Methlick

Ythan View

Muir Of Fowlis

Muggarthaugh

Netherley

Lairhilllock

Newburgh

Newburgh Inn

Newtonhill

Newton Arms

Oldmeldrum

Redgarth

Pennan

Pennan Inn

Peterhead

Crosskeys
 Harbour Spring

Pitmedden

The Craft

Portsoy

Boyne Hotel
 Shore Inn

Rothies

Seafield Arms
Station Hotel

Rothiemay

Forbes Arms

Rothienorman

Rothie Inn

Stonehaven

Belvedere
 Marine Hotel
 Ship Inn

Tarland

Aberdeen Arms
 Commercial Hotel

Tarves

Aberdeen Arms Hotel

Tomintoul

Glen Avon
 Hotel Square
 Richmond

Torphins

Learney

Westhill

Shepherds Rest

Whitehills

Seafield Arms

Orkney**Birsay**

Barony

Burray

Sands

Evie

Mistra

Harray

Merkister

Holm

Commodore

Hoy

Stromabank

Kirkwall

Albert Hotel
 Auld Motor Hoose

Ayre Hotel	Rousay	Cleaton House
Helgis	Taversoe	Shetland
Kirkwall Hotel	Stenness	Lerwick
Orkney Hotel	Standing Stones	Captain Flints
Reel	Stromness	Scalloway
Shore Inn	Ferry	Scalloway Hotel
St Ola	Stromness Hotel	Scousburgh
Torvhaug	Sanday	Spiggie Hotel
Ophir	Kettletoft Hote	
Noust	Westray	

PUB NEWS

First the bad news.

Aberdeen. Carriages in Crown street closed finally on 20th February after numerous reprieves

Dunecht Jaffs Handpumps removed and ale no longer on sale

Insch Station Hotel Ale no longer on sale after a short trial

Inverbervie Queens Arms Hotel Handpump removed and ale no longer on sale

Lossiemouth Beach Bar Gutted by fire and future unknown

Lossiemouth Golf View Hotel Previously Skerry Brae and confirmed as no

Macduff Old Moray No longer selling ale and handpump removed

Westhill. Broadstraik nolonger has ale on sale.

Now the good news

Aberdeen. Brig O' Don, King Street Now selling Abbot Ale/Bitter & Twisted

Aberdeen Aitchies Ale House was recently sold to owners of Beer Story Brewery (Insch).

Not planning any changes at the moment. Opening on Sundays from noon to 7pm

Aberdeen.Globe Belhaven have sold it to Paul Beattie, a former restaurateur in Aviemore. 3 new Angram pumps with Deuchars IPA and a variety of Windswept ales

Aberdeen Brewdog have opened a third branch in Union Square. A bit more like a restaurant than the other BrewDogs in town

Aberdeen. Brewdog are converting the former Musa restaurant to the Hop & Anchor draft house pub, opening March 8th. With two cask ales onsale

Ballater.The fife Arms has finally reopened and is selling two Cairngorm bees in the Flying Stag bar.

Ballater Invercauld Arms has two Cairngorm beers on sale

Kingswells Four Mile House Now selling Bitter & Twisted in both bars

Dyce (Airport Terminal) Distilling House Selling Deuchars IPA - Airside so flyers only!

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Live music



Real Ale



Street food



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