

Ey Up!! Wigan CAMRA Newsletter

April 2016

Welcome to the April edition of our monthly newsletter. My name is Jo and I will be bringing you as up to date news as I can about what's happening in the Wigan area. If you have anything you would like to be included in the newsletter, please contact me on the email below and I will include it in the next edition. As always, we welcome your feedback about this newsletter as we still need to decide whether we continue with it in the current format throughout 2016. Please send any pub information or feedback to young@wigancamra.org.uk

LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

ALLGATES BREWERY: No report available.

HOPHURST BREWERY: Sales continue to do well. Three fermenters are now operational, Cosanti is bottling well.

MARTLAND MILL BREWERY: Beer sales are continuing to do well and are on the rise.

The first brew of Arctic Convoy has been really well received with very positive feedback from customers. It has sold faster than anticipated and Paul will be brewing a second batch. They are looking to brew a new beer - bombers blonde in the next month or two.

Two new fermentors were delivered on 30th March so Paul will be able to brew 5 days a week. Bottling of beers will be starting soon.

The Tap goes from strength to strength and have some new events for the future including a beer festival and BBQ's and an Open Mic Session 1st Thursday of the month.

PROBLEM CHILD BREWERY: There is a 5% Bavarian style Golden Ale "Dirty Beer".

PROSPECT BREWERY: The search for premises continues, but the brewery is safe until May 2017. Morrow Brothers, Buckshaw are bottling Nutty Slack. On 2nd May it is hoped to have the keys to Arch number 2 adjacent to Wigan Central. The team at Wigan Central received their Pub of the Year award and expressed their gratitude to the Camra members who support them.

WILY FOX BREWERY: Brewing has commenced with the core beers:- Blonde Vixen 3.8% ABV a blonde session ale with maris otter malts, hopped with American cascade and Chinnook.

Crafty Fox 4.0% ABV Lancashire ale with a maris otter and crystal malts, hopped with Northdown, fuggles and East Kent Goldings. The Fox Hat 4.2% ABV a hop fused golden ale with maris otter malts, hopped with American cascade and Chinnook.

LOCAL PUB NEWS

Pub of the Season for Spring was voted for at the last Branch Meeting, the winner was **Wigan Central**. Congratulations to the team and although a date is yet to be arranged for the presentation, we will keep you informed.

New micropub planned for Wigan - Hophurst Brewery (in Hindley) have plans to open a micropub on Hallgate in Wigan town centre. Expect up to 6 real ales and 3 key keg beers. It will be located midway between The Anvil and the Tap 'n' Barrel in a premise previously occupied by 'Seriously Silver'. If all goes well expect it to be open in the summer. Next door to a pizza/kebab shop and opposite a chippy - it cannot fail !!

Wily Fox – up and running - Beers are now in production at Wily Fox, Wigan's newest and biggest brewery. A soft launch of their beers was held at The Hoot in Standish on Wednesday, 13th April. 'Dublin' Up', an oatmeal stout, was available together with their three core beers - 'Crafty Fox', 'Blonde Vixen' and 'The Fox Hat'. A new beer is in the pipeline - 'Mutiny' (5.0%), a pale designer IPA brewed with a treasure trove of hops. Expect to see a lot of their beers in Wigan in the coming weeks and months.

Greg and Jenny Liptrot - as mentioned in the previous newsletter, recently left the Crooke Hall Inn after years of loyal service to Allgates and to Real Ale. Their commitment to Real Ale, constant support of Camra's aims and of course always making sure quality Real Ale was available at their pubs has been recognised by Camra members from throughout the branch. Because of this, Greg and Jenny have been awarded the Commitment to Real Ale Award, whilst they were at Wigan Beer Festival on the Thursday session. This award recognises their hard work and consistency and we wish them both all the luck in the future.

Wigan's Beer and Bottle Shop - A fabulous addition to Wigan's Real Ale and Craft Beer selection has opened in Standishgate. Wigan Camra warmly welcomes the **Northern Temple Beer Shop**. A dedicated beer shop with a huge selection of Real Ale and Craft Beer bottles. There's been a lot of great reviews from this place, and the owner, John, knows his beer! There's also events planned for the 'back room' throughout the year so hopefully we'll be able to bring you information about those in upcoming newsletters.

Crown at Worthington – As mentioned in the previous newsletter, the Crown has closed its doors for good and there are plans to demolish it. Locals have arranged a petition to save this historic and community central pub and are looking for signatures. Links to the petition can be found at <https://www.change.org/p/save-the-crown-at-worthington>

Refurbishment of **The Royal Oak** on Standishgate seems to be nearing completion. No date is yet known for opening, but this hopes to be a great reappearance for the Wigan Lane scene as well as adding another pub to the Real Ale trail developing in Wigan.

It has been confirmed that **Casa Carlos**, Standishgate, are now offering one real ale as of 10 March - Copper Dragon Golden Pippin - £2.40 per pint (introductory offer).

Dementia Friendly - A monthly support group for people living with dementia and their carers is being offered at the Hare & Hounds pub, Billinge on the first Tuesday of each month from 1pm to 3pm. During this period the pub is closed to the general public and activities offered include darts, pool, dominoes and music. Contact Janet on 07775921468 for more info.

SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS

For some time now Wigan CAMRA has had a presence on Twitter (@wigancamra) and with over 2600 followers it's proving to be one most popular CAMRA sites in the North West.

Despite having a Facebook page for Wigan Beer Festival, it may come as a surprise that, unlike many other local CAMRA branches, Wigan CAMRA has not had a presence of Facebook. However, this has now been rectified so check out our brand new Facebook page at www.facebook.com/wigancamra next time you go online.

We'll be keeping it updated with details of CAMRA, and non-CAMRA, related news and events across our branch area and further afield. This will include pub news, brewery news, local beer festivals, branch meetings, social trips, etc. We hope this will be seen as a welcome addition to the real ale scene on social media.

There are currently two independent 'local' Facebook groups that are also well worthy of a visit :- SLANG (South Lancashire Ale News Group) and RAW (Real Ale in Wigan). The latter has no affiliation to CAMRA and is a 'closed group' which means that you will need to request an invitation to participate in the group.

BRANCH SOCIAL TRIPS

Saturday 21st May – a trip to the Chesterfield area, with an option to visit the Barrow Hill Roundhouse Rail Ale Festival which is often referred to as 'the most atmospheric beer festival of the year' (see <http://www.railalefestival.com/>). A must for all train enthusiasts?

Saturday 4th June – a trip to the 'Three Valleys Beer Festival'. A festival with a bit of a difference as it is spread across 18 pubs over 3 valleys in the Derbyshire Dales. (see <http://www.threevalleysfestival.org.uk/>)

Saturday 2nd July – a trip to Peakender 2016, a festival of beer arranged by Thornbridge Brewery in the grounds of Thornbridge Hall near to Bakewell. A tour of Thornbridge brewery may also be on the cards. (see <http://www.thornbridgebrewery.co.uk/festivalofbeer.php>). I'm sure a couple of pub stops will also be accommodated.

If you would like to book on any of these social trips please email social@wigancamra.org.uk,

BEER FESTIVALS (AND OTHER BEERY EVENTS)

May promises to be a great month of festivals across the country.

Thu 12th May – Sat 14th May: **Chester Charity Beer Festival**, *Chester Rugby Union Football Club, Hare Ln, Littleton, Chester*

Fri 13th May – Sat 14th May: **Sale Beer Festival**, *Sale Masonic Hall, Tatton Rd, Greater Manchester, Cheshire*

Sat 14th May – Sun 15th May: **Ludlow Spring Festival**, *Ludlow Castle, Castle Sq, Ludlow, Shropshire*

Thu 19th May – Sat 21st May: **Forever Bury Beer Festival**, *Bury FC Social Club, Gigg Lane, Bury*

Thu 19th May – Sat 21st May: **Rail Ale Festival @ Chesterfield**, *Barrow Hill Roundhouse Railway Centre, Campbell Drive, Barrow Hill, Chesterfield*

LOCAL EVENTS THIS MONTH

The next branch meeting has now been confirmed as **Wednesday, 18th May from 8pm** at the **Wayfarer Brewpub and Restaurant in Parbold**. Everyone is welcome to attend the meetings and we encourage you to join us to discuss the events happening in the Real Ale industry. You'll get an insight into how the breweries are doing and what new beers might be available at your local soon. What's happening in the pubs and bars around town and you can have your say on which pubs should be considered for awards and recognition. We're a friendly bunch who welcome new faces and hope to see you there.

At the latest branch meeting, it was unanimously agreed to award our first LocAle award of 2016 to the **Railway in Parbold**. Having recently become a freehouse, there is now a strong emphasis upon beers from local breweries. Secret shopper visits have also deemed that the beers are both kept and served well. The presentation of the award will take place on **Thursday, 21st April** as part of the CAMRA social trip to the CAMRA preview night at the **Beer, Pie and Chilli Festival at the Ship Inn in Lathom**. The branch is offering **free transport** to members to attend the presentation and the preview night. Transport is via the Wigan Transport Trust (double decker) bus and picks up at the bus stop opposite the GPO sorting office at **7pm prompt**. We will also pick up at the bus stop opposite the Globe in Standish enroute – approximately 7:10pm. We will be aiming to get back into Wigan between 10pm and 10:15pm so that members can get their onward transport home.

WIGAN BEER FESTIVAL 2016

The 29th Wigan Beer Festival took place over the first weekend of March. Once again a great weekend was had by all and the festival was a great success. Wigan Camra would like to thank all the volunteers who took time out of their lives to work for free at the festival! Without them the festival wouldn't be possible and we hope you can make it again next year. A big thank you out to all our festival customers, who make it great fun and enjoy lots of beer with us – same time next year?

THE REVITALISATION PROJECT

Camra has sometimes been criticised for failing to move with the times, being old-fashioned and reactionary, and failing to embrace developments in the pub and beer industry such as craft beer. The National Camra AGM took place in Liverpool last weekend and offered a chance for our members to voice their opinions on who they should represent in the future and what they should be campaigning for.

Camra currently has 177,000 members. All members should have been posted a consultation booklet and invited to complete a survey (<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RevPRoj2016>) and/or attend one of almost 50 consultation meetings across the country this summer.

The key question being put to Camra members is who do we represent now, and who should we represent in the future to help secure the best outcome for the brewing and pub industry? Do we want to play a key part in driving the beer market back into growth and to help create a thriving pub sector, do we continue with our narrow focus, or should we become more inclusive?

When Camra was founded the most important thing was choice and combatting poor quality beer. Now our members need to tell us what is important to them. We need to hear from as many members as possible to tell us what they think the organisation should look like in the future.

The Revitalisation Project steering group will consider the outcomes of the consultation and present a proposal for CAMRA's future purpose, positioning and campaigning activity for members to approve at CAMRA's Members' Weekend in April 2017. More information about the Revitalisation Project can be found at www.camra.org.uk/revitalisation.

CAN YOU HELP US?

Most of you will be familiar with our quarterly branch news mag 'Swiggin in Wiggin'. A lot of effort goes into the publication by our contributors and also our editor but all of this effort is in vain if we do not get copies of the magazine out promptly after printing – nobody wants to read out of date information! We do try to cover all of the real ale outlets within our branch (with a couple of exceptions where the licensee has declined deliveries).

We have about 17 regular distributors covering pubs in Wigan centre, Poolstock, Winstanley, Pemberton, Orrell, Upholland, Billinge, Roby Mill, Newburgh, Parbold, Dalton, Skelmersdale, Roby Mill, Shevington, Standish, Appley Bridge, Wrightington, Crooke, Standish Lower Ground, Springfield, Wigan Lane area, New Springs, Aspull, Hindley, Hindley Green, Platt Bridge, Ashton-in-Makerfield, Garswood plus a few good beer outlets round and about our neighbouring branches.

With so many places to cover, some of our distributors deliver to over a dozen outlets so we are looking to try to lighten their load and recruit a few more volunteers. The Swiggin is currently delivered to the Prospect Brewery in Standish once it has been printed as we often only get a day or two notice of the delivery date (though of course know we have submitted a final draft to the publishers so know round about when to expect it) so it is easiest to have the delivery to where we know someone will be in to receive it. The delivery is sorted and bundles/boxes left for pick up – emails are sent to the distributors to tell them to collect asap. It is important that copies are out throughout the branch within a few days as advertisers may get annoyed if they see copies have reached other pubs before their own.

If you feel you may be able to help then please contact Carol Worthington asap and let her know which area(s) you could deliver to prospect@wigan.camra.org.uk Carol will contact anyone offering to help to let them know if their offer is for an area which is currently covered by someone who might be overloaded. Please note the next edition is currently being prepared so may well be due around the middle to end of May