

Welcome

Welcome to 'Ey up!!' - the 2nd edition of our monthly branch newsletter which we are producing for a 3-month trial period. We would appreciate any feedback about this newsletter whether it be good, bad or indifferent, via e-mail to swiggin@wigancamra.org.uk

Local Brewery News

ALLGATES BREWERY: The brewery is running to absolute capacity at present selling beer sometimes before it is brewed. A new beer, called Nellie Melba (4.3%), has been brewed from a recently acquired Australian single hop Melba. Monthly beer 'Patchcroft' has been well received and is a personal favourite of the head brewer, Jonny. Look out for the ginger-infused 'Hardybutts'. 'Dairy Pit' and 'Blue Sky Tea' have recently been bottled.

PROSPECT BREWERY: A double dose of bad luck and bad news during September. Firstly, thieves brazenly stole two Karcher pressure washers (worth over £3000). The theft happened at lunchtime whilst brewing was in operation and three members of staff were working in the adjoining unit. Then, notification was received from the landlord terminating the lease on the brewery on November 8th 2016. The need to relocate the brewery is now of primary importance.

On the beer front, sales of core range beers has remained very strong over the summer months and additional brews are now being undertaken to facilitate bottling of beers ahead in readiness for the Christmas rush. Bottling is now being done locally by Morrow Brothers in Buckshaw Village, near Chorley.

HOPHURST BREWERY: All 3 beers in their 'specials' range have had great feedback and will be brewed again. They have also received good news regarding their hop contract for 2016 acquiring what they need to move forward despite another bad harvest in America. Flaxen and Campfire are in the first batch of beers for bottling to be followed by Joust, Cosmati and Debonair. The brewery will shortly be celebrating their 1st anniversary which just happens to coincide with their 50th brew.

MARTLAND MILL: To-date, the brewery has exceeded all expectations and is now generating a lot of repeat trade. Likewise, the Tap 'n' Barrel is also exceeding expectations and is selling more than 20 barrels a week of their own beers. D Day Dodger is their latest beer which is a traditional golden ale. The brewery now offers brewery trips for groups on Friday to Sunday, including music. On 3rd October, the Tap 'n' Barrel hosted a Brewery Historical Society event with head brewers from Cains, Bank Top and Boddingtons giving a presentation.

PROBLEM CHILD BREWERY: Tantrum is the latest beer - a summer ale at 4.5%, golden with tropical fruits and dry hopped. The brewery was represented with a pop-up bar at Haydock Park Racecourse on 26th September. A range of their beers were also seen at the Reet Good Beer Festival in Wigan.

WELLCROSS BREWERY: There seems to have been no activity from this brewery for quite some time. As such, it is strongly suspected that brewing has ceased. If you know any different, then let us know.

Social trip to Shrewsbury

On Saturday September 26th, a coach full of us took to the road bound for the delightful Shropshire town of Shrewsbury.

But, being a Wigan CAMRA trip, we had to call at a brewery first. The Stonehouse Brewery, just outside of Oswestry, proved to be a perfect calling-off point. Set next to a disused railway line and surrounded by a pretty orchard, we all enjoyed the good weather sat outside on the picnic tables whilst sampling their beers. Although it was only a fleeting visit, we were warmly welcomed by the owners, Shane and Alison Parr. Shane also provided us with an impromptu tour around the brewery. Despite some of group being happy to stay there all day, it was soon time to move on.

Shrewsbury never disappoints. With 43 real ale pubs in the town centre (11 listed in the Good Beer Guide 2016) there was plenty of choice. If that wasn't enough, the local CAMRA branch were hosting their annual beer festival in the historic Morris Hall. Popular pub choices were :- Admiral Benbow ; Coach & Horses ; Three Fishes ; Salopian Bar and the Dolphin. The beer festival was in a small venue and was very busy. However, all beers were served on handpull and those sampled were in good condition.

Upon leaving Shrewsbury, spirits were high and Sandra's quiz kept us all amused for the first part of our return journey. However, we had one final stop at another brewery. This time it was at Big Hand Brewery, just outside Wrexham, which was hosting a Beer & Rugby Bash. We arrived in time for the build up to the big game (England versus Wales in the Rugby Union World Cup) which was being shown on a big screen. There was a choice of 8 cask ales on handpull from Big Hand, Cwrw Ial, Axiom and Griepel breweries with all the respective brewers in attendance. Too soon it was time to leave and head back to Wigan. With England leading and a final blast of 'Swing low, sweet chariot' and we were on our way.

Future Branch Social Trips

The two remaining social trips in 2015 will follow a similar pattern and include return transport by 29-seater executive coach from Wigan town centre; visit to a brewery on outward journey; visit a town/city with a good selection of real ale pubs AND hosting a CAMRA Beer Festival; time-permitting, call at real ale pub on return journey. The transportation costs for each trip is just £12, which includes a tip for the driver. A £5 non-refundable deposit (per person) is required to reserve your place on each trip.

The trip to Hebden Bridge and Halifax, on 14th November, is fully booked and a waiting list is in operation. There are just a few places left to Sheffield, on Saturday 24th October, but you'll have to be quick to reserve your place if you want to come along.

For more info and to reserve your place, please contact social@wigancamra.org.uk

Pub of the Season, Autumn 2015

At the CAMRA Branch meeting in September, voting took place for the 'Pub of the Season, Autumn 2015' and the clear winner was the Albion Ale House in Standish. Other nominations were for the Delph Tavern in Tontine (Orrell) and Wigan Central.

Beer Festivals in October 2015

Beer festivals are a great place to try a range of different beers and beer styles that you may not come across in your local pubs and clubs. Listed below are just some of the beer festivals and events happening in and around our region (and some a bit further away) during October 2015 :-

- 1st-3rd - * **Lytham Beer Festival** : Lowther Pavilion, Lowther Terrace, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire FY8 5QQ
- 1st-4th - **Broughton Festival of Beer** : pubs in and around Broughton-in-Furness, Cumbria
- 1st-4th - **Beer Festival @ Wheatsheaf, Croston** : Town Road, Croston, Leyland PR26 9RA
- 1st-4th - **Beer Festival @ The Continental, Preston** : South Meadow Lane, Preston, Lancashire PR1 8JP
- 2nd-3rd - **Sandbach Beer Festival** : St Marys Church Hall, Sandbach, Cheshire, CW11 1HD
- 2nd-4th - **World Cup of Beer @ Newton Sports Club** : Crow Lane East, Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside WA12 9XE
- 7th-10th - **Nottingham Robin Hood Beer & Cider Festival** : Nottingham Castle, Castle Place, Nottingham NG1 6EL
- 7th-11th - **Beer Festival @ Top Lock, Heapey** : Copthurst Lane, Heapey, Chorley, PR6 8LT
- 8th-10th - * **Ashbourne Beer Festival** : Town Hall, Market Place, Ashbourne, DE6 1ES
- 8th-10th - * **Stoke Beer Festival** : Fenton Manor Sports Complex, City Rd, Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 2RR
- 8th-11th - **Independent Manchester Beer Convention** : Victoria Baths, Hathersage Road, Chorlton-on-Medlock, Manchester, M13 0FE
- 9th-10th - **Beer Festival @ Liverpool Cricket Club** : Aigburth Road, Liverpool, L19 3QF
- 9th-11th - **Beer Festival @ National Waterways Museum** : South Pier Road, Ellesmere Port, C65 4FW
- 14th-17th - **Bolton Beer Festival** : Bolton Rugby Union Club, Mortfield Pavilion, Avenue Street, Bolton, BL1 3AW
- 15th-17th - **Chorley & Astley Rotary Club Beer Festival** : Army Reserve Drill Hall, Devonshire Road, Chorley, PR7 2DJ
- 15th-17th - * **Sandgrounder (Southport) Beer Festival** : St John Ambulance Hall, Wright Street, Southport, PR9 0TU
- 15th-17th - **Warrington Oktoberfest** : Pyramid Parr Hall, Palmyra Square South, Warrington, WA1 1BL
- 15th-17th - * **Wakefield Beer Festival** : The Space, Waldorf Way, Wakefield, WF2 8DH
- 16th-18th - **Beer and Music Festival @ Our Lady St Gerards** : Browndedge Road, Lostock Hall, Preston, PR5 5AA
- 16th-18th - **Beer and Pie Festival @ Broughton Club** : Whittingham Lane, Broughton, Preston PR3 5DA
- 16th-18th - **Glossop Oktoberfest** : Glossop Labour Club, 11-13 Chapel Street, Glossop, SK13 8AT
- 21st-24th - * **Steel City Beer and Cider Festival** : Kelham Island Museum, Alma Street, Sheffield S3 8RY
- 21st-25th - **Real Ale Festival @ Ship & Mitre, Liverpool** : 133 Dale Street, Liverpool, L2 2JH
- 21st-25th - **Manchester Oktoberfest** - Albert Square, Manchester City Centre.
- 22nd-25th - **Keighley & Worth Valley Railway Beer & Music Festival** : Bradford Road, Keighley, Yorkshire BD21 5JA
- 23rd-24th - * **Matlock and Dales Beer Festival** : County Hall, Smedley Street, Matlock, Derby, DE4 3AG
- 28th-31st - * **Birmingham CAMRA Beer and Cider Festival** : New Bingley Hall, 1 Hockley Circus, Birmingham, B18 5PP
- 28th-31st - **Didsbury Beer Festival** : St. Catherine's Social Club, School Lane, Didsbury, Manchester, M20 6HS
- 30th-31st - **Billinge FC Beer Festival** : Billinge Community Soccer Centre, Car Mill Road, Billinge, WN5 7TX
- 30th-1st Nov - **Independent Salford Beer Festival** : St Sebastian's Community Centre, 1 Douglas Green, Salford, M6 6ES

* denotes beer festivals organised by the local branch of CAMRA

Local Beer Festival success

Two beer festivals in Wigan held on the same weekend in mid-September, were both roaring successes.

The inaugural 'Reet Good Beer Festival' was held on Mesnes Field raised funds for the Wigan Youth Zone. On Saturday evening, the festival was full to capacity and people were queueing to get in. Spencer Parry, the festival organiser, says he was overwhelmed by the success of the festival and plans are already being made for next year's festival.

It was a similar success story from the Crooke Hall Beer, Boat and Music Festival. Over 37 barrels of real ale and 7 kegs of cider were sold. Over £2000 was raised for charity - the Stroke Association and Wigan and Leigh Hospice, two very worthy causes. Greg Liptrot, licensee and festival organiser, would like to thank all the festival volunteers for their hard work and all the bands for providing their services free-of-charge. However, a few more festival volunteers for next year's festival would always be welcomed.

Road to Wigan Beer Festival

The dates for this extremely popular festival are 1st to 11th October.

This is not your usual beer festival. It's not held in a cavernous sports hall or in a tent in the middle of a field. Instead, AllGates' pubs have once again joined forces to give you the chance to get out and enjoy some great beers in some great pubs in the Wigan area.

All you need to get started is to pick up a festival guide in any AllGates pub. This will tell you which pubs are selling which beers during the 11 day festival. Take your time, enjoy a beer or two and later, or another day, visit a different AllGates' pub.

Once again, a 'beer bus' will be operating between all participating AllGates pubs on Saturday 3rd October. A day out not to be missed if previous festivals are anything to go by.

Keep checking the AllGates website for more details of the festival – www.allgatesbrewery.com

Champion Beer of Britain 2016 - your vote counts, now!!

The Champion Beer of Britain award is decided annually at the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) in London. However, there is a year-long process leading up to this final decision. The process for the 2016 final has started, and will finish at the GBBF in 2016. The main stages are...

Stage 1: Member Voting

This first very important step is where ALL CAMRA MEMBERS can get involved: members vote for their favourite beer or beers, in a variety of different beer styles. This is very easy to do, you simply go to www.cbobvoting.org.uk, log in with your usual credentials, and start voting! Voting is only open until the END OF OCTOBER!

You will see that there are 11 beer categories, and you can vote for up to 5 beers in each one. Do not be put off by all the categories and beers! You can vote for UP TO 5 beers in UP TO 11 categories; you do not need to vote for 5 beers, you do not need to vote in all 11 categories. If you have ONE favourite beer from your region, then vote for that one beer in that one category.

You will also see that all applicable beers (i.e. from your particular region) are automatically presented for you to choose, making selection easy.

Stage 2: Regional Judging

Shortlists of potential finalists in each region are drawn up, based on the members' votes. Then, during the year, these are whittled down to finalists from each region, usually by local tasting panels. These often take place at Beer Festivals.

Stage 3: Champion Winter Beer of Britain

This particular award is decided at the National Winter Ales Festival (Feb 2016), and incorporates some of the beer styles particularly applicable to the Winter season. Regional finalists (as decided by the regional judging) in those categories will be judged here, and the Champion Winter Beer of Britain (CWBoB) winner is decided. This is an important award in itself, but the beer then also goes forward to the last round, below...

Stage 4: Champion Beer of Britain

The finalists from the regional judging, AND the CWBoB winner, all go to the Great British Beer Festival (Aug 2016), where they are judged and the Champion Beer of Britain is finally announced. Note that there are also Gold, Silver & Bronze awards within each beer category to be won, which are also very important for breweries and beer drinkers alike.

So now it's up to you! Go to the voting website (www.cbobvoting.org.uk) to start it all off. Note that voting is only open until the END OF OCTOBER, so don't delay!

New breweries

Although no new breweries have opened in our branch area during 2015, there has been plenty of activity nearby and across our region. Some of the breweries opening up in the past few months are :-

DRINK UP BREWING : *Central Workshops, Back Longworth Road, Horwich, Bolton, BL6 7DB (6.4 miles from Wigan)*

Beers first started appearing in Spring 2015, although a number of the early beers were brewed at Rivington Brewing Company. A 10-barrel plant has been newly installed alongside the 2 hectolitre plant used for seasonal and test brews. It's intended that their beers will be available in can, cask, bottle and keg formats.

The official launch of their beers was at the Original Bay Horse in Horwich on 13th August. Their core beer range currently includes :- **dubWest (5.0%)** - *West Coast Pale Ale*; **dubWhite (4.5%)** - *Hefeweizen*; **dubSummer (4.5%)** - *English bitter*; **dubClassic (3.0%)** - *Dark Mild*; **dubSmash (5.3%)** - *Saison*; **dubFire (5.0%)** - *American Amber Ale*; **dubFire Ace (5.0%)** - *dubFire dry-hopped with Sorachi Ace*.

RIVINGTON BREWING COMPANY : *Cunliffe Farm, New Road, Anderton, Chorley, PR6 9EY (7.2 miles from Wigan)*

Craft brewery based on a dairy farm. First brewed Spring 2015. Size of plant: 1.5BBL. The brewery is predominately bottling, with some limited keg and cask facility. Beers produced so far includes :- Radical (4.9%) - farmhouse ale; Choice (6.2%) - IPA; Uber Rad (7.7%) - strong Belgian ; Bodacious (4.6%) - golden session ale.

THIRD EYE BREWERY : *Eccleston (8.6 miles from Wigan)*

Founded by Matthew Leach, a keen home brewer. Located on a farm near to the Delph Dive Centre. Brewing on a 1.5BBL plant producing just 6 firkins at a time. Only one beer being produced at present - Session (3.9%) which will be making an appearance at both the Lytham and Southport Beer Festivals this month.

NEPTUNE BREWERY : *Unit 1, Sefton Lane Industrial Estate, Maghull, Liverpool, L31 8BX (15.7 miles from Wigan)*

Founded by Les O'Grady, first brewed June 2015. 1BBL micro brewery. Brewing cask, keg and bottles. Beer without isinglass finings. Beers include :- Triton (4.4%) - pale ale; Riptide (3.7%) - English bitter; Abyss (5.0%) - oatmeal stout; Jack May (6.3%) - IPA; Erik the Red (4.5%) - American red ale; Amberjack (4.5%) - amber ale; Amberjack'd (6.0%); Thick & Twisted (6.6%) - stout ; Amber (3.7%) ; Lowtide (2.8%) - English bitter.

ROCK THE BOAT BREWERY : *6 Little Crosby Road, Crosby Village, Liverpool, L23 4TS (19.4 miles from Wigan)*

First brewed June 2015. Located in a 16th century wheelwright's workshop in picturesque Little Crosby Village. Beers include :- Mussel Wreck (3.9%) - golden bitter; Bootle Bull (3.8%) - amber bitter; Liverpool Light (3.4%) - blonde session ale; Dazzle (3.6%) - pale golden beer.

3 POTTS BREWING COMPANY : *Russell Avenue, Southport (20.2 miles from Wigan)*

Run by husband and wife team, Simon and Shona Potts, from an outbuilding at the back of their home, just a stone's throw from Southport Brewery. This 'nanobrewery' promises 'small batch beers' brewed in Southport' with a capacity to produce around 200 bottles per week. Bottled-version of Sprocket IPA (5.5%), their first beer, was launched at the Tap and Bottles in Southport on 16th August. Cask versions should go on sale very shortly.

RED STAR BREWERY : *Unit 54B, Stephenson Way, Formby Business Park, Formby, Liverpool, L37 8EG (20.6 miles from Wigan)*

First brewed May 2015. The 10 barrel brewplant was supplied by PBC Brewery Installations Ltd. Red Star's bottled Partisan ale as already attracted interest from Serbian football fans – Red Star Belgrade v Partizan Belgrade is known as Serbia's Eternal derby.

Popular local licencees open a micropub

Richard and Ruth Hull, licensees at the Allgates-owned Victoria Inn in Aspull, are due to open their own micropub in Eccleston, just outside our branch area. The Cock T'Alehouse will focus, as the name implies, in cask ales and cocktails. It is situated opposite Eccleston Institute in what used to be 'Grocers on The Green'.

Thankfully, Richard and Ruth are not leaving the Victoria which, under their stewardship, has won the Wigan CAMRA Pub of the Season on two occasions in recent times.

The micropub was due to open on September 25th but this has been delayed due to planning application issues. As such, their application will now be considered at a committee meeting on October 27th. We hope all goes well and wish Richard and Ruth good luck in their new venture.

More pubs and bars open in Wigan

The long-closed Crofters Arms on Market Street has finally re-opened as a pub, after a spell of being a Thai restaurant. It has been renamed 'Downtown Crofters Wigan' and is described as 'home of live entertainment' and already has it's own website - see www.downtownwigan.net. When our roving reporters called by there were two handpulls serving Tetley Gold and Black Sheep. Yet another welcome addition to the thriving pub and real ale scene in Wigan.

Marty's Bar and Kitchen has finally opened on Wallgate, in the old Pooles' Pie Shop. Unfortunately no real ale but you do have a choice of 4 lager fonts, including Brooklyn Lager at £4 a pint. Craft beer in bottles also available.

No more progress at Prodesse ?

After opening in a blaze of glory on May 28th and shaking up the real ale scene in Hindley, it is sad to announce that the Prodesse Ale House in Hindley has been sold. We understand that it is likely to remain as a pub, although the new owners are likely to revert back to keg beers. In it's short spell, the Prodesse gained CAMRA recognition for its beers and ciders, most of which were sourced locally, and was one of the early recipients of Wigan CAMRA's LocAle Accreditation 2015.

Wigan CAMRA wishes the previous owner, Julie Swarbrick, well in her future ventures and hope that cask ale may once again return to the Prodesse at some time in the future.

Theme decided for Wigan CAMRA Beer Festival 2016

At our Beer Festival planning meeting on 2nd September, the most significant decision was the theme for next year's Wigan Beer Festival. After much debate, the decision was - 'at the seaside'. As such, what you can expect ? Well, perhaps not donkey rides but maybe plenty of beers from coastal breweries.

As the festival gets nearer, we will keep you informed of more themed activities. As always, we are open to any suggestions or ideas to make one of the best beer festivals in North West England even better.

The dates for the next Wigan CAMRA Beer Festival are 3rd-5th March 2016.

Next Branch Meetings

The next branch meeting will take place on Tuesday, 14th October at 8pm. The venue for the meeting is the Eagle and Child at Bispham Green near Parbold, right on the fringe of our branch area. Due to the difficulties of getting there and back via public transportation, a courtesy bus is being provided from Wigan town centre, with likely pick-up points in Standish en-route. For more details, check our website nearer to the time of the meeting - www.wigancamra.org.uk.

The following meeting will be held on Thursday, 19th November at 8pm and the venue is All Gates Brewery.

Cask Ale Report 2015

Cask Reports have been produced annually since 2007 and summarise the cask ale market from the previous year as well as studying the existing market and predicting future trends and offering advice and tips to licensees of all levels. It is written by Pete Brown, esteemed beer author and blogger. The latest edition was released in September 2015. Some of the key points within this report are listed below :-

Cask Ale drinkers visit the pub twice as often as the average pub-goer. Their annual spend on food and drink amounts to £967. This is:- almost double the spend of the general population; 63% higher than wine drinkers; 48% higher than beer drinkers who don't drink cask ale; 45% higher than spirits drinkers.

70% of cask ale drinkers take the lead when deciding which pub to go to with a group of friends. Till receipts may show cask to be a relatively small proportion of takings – but indirectly it significantly drives sales of other drinks.

50% of cask ale drinkers go to the pub once a week or more, helping to fill the venue and create atmosphere. They are a quintessential part of 'pubiness', helping differentiate the pub from other food and drink outlets.

Currently cask ale represents just 17% of all beer sold in the on-trade. This is growing – and will reach 20% by the year 2020.

"This increase is significant not only for pubs, but also for breweries," says Pete. "Almost 4 new breweries are opening every week. There are now 1,700 of them, most brewing cask-conditioned ale and most supplying pubs whose sales are increasing – despite all the market challenges. What a great success story for British industry."

Bits and Pieces

Martland Mill held a meet-the-brewer evening at the Albion Ale House in Standish on 22nd September and also hosted a regional meeting of the Brewery History Society on 3rd October at the Tap 'n' Barrel followed by a brewery tour.

The Sportsman Inn in Duke Street, St Helens has recently been acquired by Gary Wright (of George Wright Brewing Company) and are currently offering CAMRA members 50p a pint discount on George Wright beers.

Barry travels to Newcastle

I have always wanted to explore the Newcastle beer scene. So, when Wigan Warriors were playing at St James Park in this years 'Magic Weekend', I thought this would be the perfect opportunity for a weekend on the Tyne!

On arriving in Newcastle on a beautiful Saturday morning me and my companion headed for our first stop, a Wetherspoons but not for beer, we opted for a large breakfast and a mug of tea. We chose the Union Rooms which is a very large pub and is close to the station, with a good choice of beers on so we chose to pay a visit later in the day.

After checking into our hotel we set off on our adventure. We soon found our first beer stop - the Crown Posada, a national inventory pub which is a long and narrow with two very impressive stained glass windows over the front doors. In the corner as you go in is a tiny snug where we enjoyed a pint of Tyneside Blonde from Hadrian & Borders Brewery. There is an interesting coffered ceiling as well as local photographs and cartoons of long gone customers and staff on the walls. Other beers available were Chocolate and Dobber by Marble, Pennine Pale 4% and Golden Cocker from Gundog Brewery.

It was a shame to leave but our next place was just a few yards away, a small micro brewery bar called the Bridge Tavern. A trendy bar with its own micro brewery with a range of beers under the Tavernale name. There has been an ale house on this site for over 200 years, the original building was demolished in 1925 and new premises built following the construction of the towns most famous landmark, the Tyne Bridge. A good selection of beers were available on our visit and food ranging from bar snacks to evening meals and home cooked Sunday roast dinners.

From here we made our way up some steps, which I had to pause half way up, to the Bridge Hotel which is situated next to the high level bridge built by Stephenson's. The rear windows and the patio have view of the city walls and the Tyne and Gateshead Quays. The main bar area is adorned by many stained glass windows with a raised area set out for dining. Live music events are also held in the upstairs function room in what is claimed to be the oldest folk club in the country. Two regular beers feature, Sharps Doombar and Anarchy Blonde Star. Also available were Jarl, from Three Kings Brewery, Dark Side Of The Moon 4.1%, Castle 3.8%, Roosters Wild Mule, Fat Cat Brewing Company Porter, Totally Brewed Papa Jangle's Voodoo Stout and Oatmeal Pale Ale at 4.5%. Not a bad choice I thought.

It was now time to make our way to one of my favourite pubs - Lady Grey's which is close to the historic theatre royal and busy shopping areas. This pub was formerly known as the Adelphi, serving six real ales and two ciders. This one roomed pub with its central bar is very pleasant and relaxing with its low background music. From here it was just round the corner to the four times pub of the year winner Bacchus, with nine hand pumps offering a wide selection of changing guest beers with one hand pump dedicated to cider and another to beers from Orkney Highland Brewing Company. A house beer is brewed by Yorkshire Dales Brewery and a large selection of draughts and bottle foreign beers are available. The walls show photographs and posters of industries in which the region used to lead the world.

Another short walk took us to Pleased To Meet You, which has been totally refurbished to a high standard. Situated in Newcastle's premier real ale street, it offers six hand pulled beers local and national brewery's with a trend toward the out-of-the-ordinary.

It was time to take a break from our beer now and watch our Wigan Warriors take on Leeds which I am pleased to say we had a good win. After the game we made our way to the Hotspur, a traditional double fronted pub opposite Haymarket bus station and Eldon Square with the universities close by. A very popular pub and very busy on match days where eight handpumps adorn the bar with six serving guest ales and two serving real cider. This was a very friendly pub where the interior has been refurbished without losing any of its character.

After a short walk we came to the Bodega where two stained glass windows are the architectural highlights of this pub which stands next to the Tyne theatre and is popular with football and music fans. The interior offers a number of seating and standing areas with separate booths for more intimate drinking. Several old brewery mirrors adorn the walls with a good selection of foreign bottle and draught beers available.

It was now time to finish where we had started the day at the Union Rooms, but this time with a nice pint of Tyneside Blonde to end our day. As we made our way back to the hotel after having a wonderful day in Newcastle I was already planning a return trip next year.

Article by Barry Seale (Wigan CAMRA member)