

Pembrokeshire Branch is delighted to send you our monthly E-newsletter to keep you informed about what CAMRA is doing in our County.

Feel free to contact us (e-mail addresses below) if you have any questions or suggestions.

Better still, why not come along to a Branch Meeting or Social? You will find us a friendly, welcoming bunch of fellow real ale and cider lovers who will be glad to see you.

HEADLINES:

Enjoyable Branch Meeting in the Royal Oak Fishguard

Making Friends with Our Northern Neighbours in Bae Ceredigion CAMRA

October Branch Meeting and Social, Carmarthen Beer Festival, St Peter's Hall, Carmarthen, Friday 6th October, 2pm (Festival Thursday 5th and Saturday 7th also)

November Branch Meeting and Social, Mantle Brewery 16, Pentood Industrial Estate, Aberteifi/Cardigan SA43 3AG, , Saturday 25th October, 2pm

Branch Annual General Meeting, and Christmas Dinner, 1pm, Saturday 16th December at the *Corner Piece*, Rudbaxton.

TAFARNDAL LLEOL YN 2024 CANLLAW CWRW DA CAMRA

LOCAL PUBS IN 2024 CAMRA GOOD BEER GUIDE

ERIOED MWY O DAFARNDAL YN CAU I LAWYR AM BYTH

EVER MORE PUBS SHUTTING DOWN FOREVER

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE PEMBROKESHIRE PUB?

A CAMRA VISITOR TOURS NEWPORT

Recruitment Drive – Get CAMRA Publicity Material into our Pubs!!

Siaradwyr Cymraeg dal eisiau!

WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING:

Enjoyable Branch Meeting in the Royal Oak Fishguard

An excellent turnout of Branch members gathered in the historic *Royal Oak* in the centre of Fishguard on September 16th. After an hour dealing with Branch business and thereby keeping us forging ahead, whilst enjoying fine local ales, the meeting was closed and members proceeded to enjoy a pub crawl of the town. The Fishguard Arms and the Cambrian were visited and much splendid ale supped in a convivial atmosphere. Why not join us at Carmarthen Beer Festival for our next Branch Meeting.

Making Friends with Our Northern Neighbours in Bae Ceredigion CAMRA

The following Saturday a select band of Branch activists braved the long bus journey to Brynhoffnant, north of Aberteifi/Cardigan Town to visit the newly refurbished Bragdy Aberteifi and meet our friends in the North, Bae Ceredigion CAMRA. Apart from enjoying fine ale, good food and an interesting brewery tour, we had interesting and worthwhile discussions with our northern neighbours, laying plans for future co-operation, and with the Head Brewer and the proprietor of the Brewery. We will hopefully be visiting another brewery somewhat nearer home in November – see below.

WHAT WE'RE DOING NEXT:

**October Branch Meeting and Social, Carmarthen Beer Festival, St Peter's Hall,
Carmarthen, Friday 6th October, 2pm**

Carmarthen CAMRA always put on a fine beer festival. For what's happening this year see https://www.facebook.com/carmarthenbeerfestival/?locale=en_GB

The Festival runs from Thursday 5th to Saturday 7th October. We shall have a Branch Meeting followed by a Social there on the Friday afternoon, meeting in the hall at around 2pm.

322 bus from Haverfordwest Bus Station at 12.10 arrives Carmarthen bus station at 13.13. T5 from Fishguard at 10.50, Letterston 11.04 and arriving Haverfordwest Bus Station 11.26 connects. Bus back at 16.35 arrives Haverfordwest at 17.45. This connects with the last T5 northwards departing at 18.30.

By rail there is a train from Haverfordwest Rail Station at 13.15, arriving Carmarthen at 13.53. . The 11.50 from Fishguard, 12.04 Letterston, arriving 12.26 connects with the train. Going back there are trains at 15.47 from Carmarthen arriving at Haverfordwest at 16.25 to connect with the 17.00 T5 northwards. The next train is at 17.58, arriving 18.37, cunningly recently rescheduled to miss the last northbound T5 bus from the railway station at 18.30.

Travelling by bus is therefore recommended if you want to stay longer at the Festival.

November Branch Meeting and Social, Mantle Brewery 16, Pentood Industrial Estate, Aberteifi/Cardigan SA43 3AG, , Saturday 25th October, 2pm

Provisionally we will be meeting at this fine local brewery, accessible via the trusty T5 bus with no changes from Haverfordwest, Letterston, Fishguard and points north along the A487 on Saturday 25th November. There will be a tour of the brewery for those interested and a chance to sample their splendid Locales.

Confirmation and travel details in your November Newsletter. If the Brewery find they cannot accommodate us (they have provisionally agreed) we will hold a Branch activity on that date anyway, so keep the date free.

Branch Annual General Meeting, and Christmas Dinner, 1pm, Saturday 16th December at the Corner Piece, Rudbaxton.

The most important Branch Meeting of the year and one of the most enjoyable social events in our calendar.

Menu choices for you to advise your selections will be in the November newsletter.

Also anyone willing to stand for Branch Office most welcome. You must be a paid up member of Pembrokeshire CAMRA and have a Proposer and seconder likewise (but these can be found for suitable candidates at the AGM if needed).

PUBS AND BREWERY NEWS

TAFARNDAI LLEOL YN 2024 CANLLAW CWRW DA CAMRA

Mae 24 o dafarndai yn Sir Benfro wedi ymddangos yn 2024 Canllaw Cwrw Da CAMRA, a gyhoeddwyd ar 28 Medi. Cafodd y tafarnau hyn eu harolygu gan ymgyrchwyr y Gangen yn gynharach eleni ac maent yn arddangos cwrw go iawn ar ei orau. Gwnewch bwynt o roi eich cwsmeriaeth iddynt – ni allwn fforddio colli unrhyw un ohonynt.

Mynnwch eich copi o'r Canllaw Cwrw Da diweddaraf am y gyfradd aelod gostyngol arbennig o £13.99 o <https://shop1.camra.org.uk/product/the-good-beer-guide-2024/>

LOCAL PUBS IN 2024 CAMRA GOOD BEER GUIDE

24 Pembrokeshire pubs have appeared in CAMRA's 2024 Good Beer Guide, published on 28th September. These pubs were surveyed by Branch activists earlier this year and showcase real ale at its best. Make a point of giving them your custom – we cannot afford to lose any of them.

Get your copy of the latest Good Beer Guide at the special discounted member's rate of £13.99 from <https://shop1.camra.org.uk/product/the-good-beer-guide-2024/>

Other news?

Any local brewers, or publicans, doing anything likely to be of interest to local CAMRA members please feel free to contact our Secretary and Newsletter editor, Steve, at the e-mail address below and we shall be delighted to share the tidings.

NEWYDDION CENEDLAETHOL

ERIOED MWY O DAFARNDAU YN CAU I LAWR AM BYTH

Mae dwy dafarn y dydd wedi bod yn cau am byth ledled Cymru a Lloegr yn ystod hanner cyntaf eleni. Yn chwarter cyntaf 2023, collwyd 153 o dafarndai. Gwaethygodd hyn yn yr ail chwarter, pan gaeodd 230 o dafarndai am byth. Cafodd 383 o dafarndai eu dymchwel neu eu trosi at ddefnyddiau eraill rhwng Ionawr a Mehefin eleni. Mae hynny ychydig yn brin o'r 386 o dafarndai a gollwyd yn 2022 i gyd. Collodd Cymru'r nifer uchaf o dafarndai, 52, yn ystod hanner cyntaf eleni.

Yn amlwg mae ein tafarndai dan fygythiad nag erioed o'r blaen, yn enwedig yma yng Nghymru. Fel unigolion, gallwn helpu drwy ymweld â'r tafarndai sy'n dal i fod ar agor yn amlach – mae'n eu defnyddio neu'n eu colli.

Gyda'n gilydd gallwn ni yn CAMRA lobi'r Llywodraeth, yn San Steffan a Chaerdydd, i weithredu i atal y llifogydd cyflymach o gau tafarndai. Mae arnom angen gweithredu ar ardrethi busnes cosbol, biliau ynni sy'n cael eu dileu, biliau TAW gormodol, a "datblygwyr" diegwyddor yn cael gwared â chosbau aneffeithiol am ddiystyru cyfreithiau cynllunio yn enbyd i gyfnewid "trosiadau" tafarndai proffidiol.

Felly os ydych yn gwerthfawrogi peint i lawr eich tafarn leol, gwnewch yn siŵr eich bod yn dal i fynd yno a chefnogi CAMRA i frwydro i achub ein tafarndai ledled y wlad.

NATIONAL NEWS

EVER MORE PUBS SHUTTING DOWN FOREVER

Two pubs a day have been closing for good across England and Wales in the first half of this year. In the first quarter of 2023, 153 pubs were lost. This got worse in the second quarter, when 230 pubs shut down for good. 383 pubs were demolished or converted to other uses between January and June of this year. That is just short of the 386 pubs lost in the whole of 2022. Wales lost the highest number of pubs, 52, in the first half of this year.

Clearly our pubs are threatened as never before, especially here in Wales. As individuals, we can help by visiting the pubs that are left more often – it is a case of use them or lose them.

Collectively we in CAMRA can lobby Government, in Westminster and Cardiff, to act to stop the accelerating flood of pub closures. We need action on punitive business rates, rip-off energy bills, excessive VAT bills, and unscrupulous “developers” getting away with ineffectual penalties for grossly flouting planning laws to cash in on profitable pub “conversions”.

So if you value a pint down your local pub, make sure you keep going there and support CAMRA in fighting to save our pubs nationwide.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE PEMBROKESHIRE PUB?

We invite members to tell us which is their favourite pub in Pembrokeshire, and why. E-mail the Secretary at the e-mail address below. No submissions this month so Steve the Secretary and Newsletter Editor will have to step up to the mark himself.

Mine are, in no particular order:

The ***Tafarn Sinc***, Rosebush, – pub saved by the local community in the heart of the Preseli’s. Friendly bar staff who serve good ale and put up with me inflicting my learner’s Welsh on them. Good food too.

The ***Fishguard Arms***, Fishguard – cosy, friendly local serving Bass on gravity dispense. Especially pleasant on a wet winter afternoon when they have the fire going.

The ***Gwaun Valley Brewery*** – another superb location in the hills. Trying the latest offering from knowledgeable and friendly brewer Nigel is always an adventure and often a most rewarding one. His Nutty Mild should in my view be in serious contention for Champion Beer of Britain. Also you can do a brewery tour without stirring from your stool at the bar!

The ***Trewern Arms***, Nevern – fine ales in an idyllic village setting. Enjoying a pint in their beer garden in the autumn sunshine is my idea of heaven.

Bessie's, Pontfaen. A national treasure. Again, sitting in their beer garden overlooking the pastures and woodland of the Gwaun valley supping their gravity dispensed Bass on a sunny summer day is a timeless pleasure.

The Rampin, Cilgerran. Another atmospheric and cosy local serving excellent ale. Like many of the others in this list, it makes me think of the *Green Dragon* in J.R.R. Tolkien's Hobbit village of Bywater, my idea of the perfect pub.

Enough from me – let's hear from the rest of you!

A CAMRA VISITOR TOURS NEWPORT

Mike Clarke, Chair of Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe CAMRA in the Home Counties, is a regular visitor to our county and a beer writer. We hope he will be a regular contributor to our Newsletter, and our Branch Magazine when this finally is launched. We look forward to meeting Mike on a future visit to Pembrokeshire. Here he reflects on a recent tour of the Pembrokeshire village of Newport/Trefdraeth, a place well-endowed with fine pubs (and on the T5 bus route!)

Pubs of Newport

No, not the M4 traffic blackspot with the tunnels but the much more sedate and picturesque resort in Pembrokeshire.

I have to admit to being a non-native guide, but being Chair of CAMRA's Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe branch, I like to think I know a good pub with decent ale. I've have become familiar with the pubs of Newport for short but intense bursts of exploration over the past few years and the pubs are a definite reason for returning.

I've visited the pubs in spring and, this year for the first time, high summer – and in this resort town it makes quite a difference.

For a town of only slightly more than a thousand permanent residents, it's remarkably well pubbed. That there are four pubs within a couple of hundred yards along the main road must owe something to the seasonal influx of holiday makers.

I have a soft spot for the eastern most of the pubs, the *Golden Lion*. Or I should say, the three tables that squeeze between the front of the honey-coloured pub and the busy A487 that runs past it. I first visited in the week after the second Covid lockdown was lifted at the end of April 2021 so being served a pint of real ale was worth a celebration, even if it had to be outside and delivered via table service. When I returned this summer, we were still forced to sit on the outside benches but this was because the inside of the pub was crammed full of pre-booked diners rather than a statutory no-go zone.

Apart from ordering drinks and using the facilities, I've not spent enough time inside the pub to comment on its interior, apart from the impression that it has a somewhat rambling, cosy layout with a few nooks and crannies. There's apparently a restaurant attached to the bar, which I've never seen despite several visits. The car park is over the road. On my last visit I spent an amusing half-pint watching a couple of locals extract a Volvo estate from its space among a clutch of 4x4s using what looked like a fifty-nine-point turn. I felt like buying them a drink once they'd finished but as they were driving away decided better of it.

A long bar stands directly opposite the entrance, which has three handpumps, although only two at any one time were in use on my last visit. The pub has gained a reputation for being the unofficial tap for nearby Bluestone Brewing Co (of which more later) and on one of my visits in August I enjoyed their Rocketeer, a best bitter. On a subsequent visit there was no Bluestone option but I had a reasonably locally brewed pint of Tenby Harbwr Sea Horse.

A couple of minutes' walk uphill towards the Market Street crossroads is the *Llwyngwair Arms*. It's a rather forbidding looking building – three storeys of grey-brown stone directly fronting on to the main road. Signs by the doors advertise real ale and Sky and BT Sports rather than food – and I suspect it's the least visited of the four pubs by tourists (except for sports' fans).

It's well worth stepping inside. It has the feel of a genuine locals' pub but one that also gives newcomer a welcome, especially from the cheerful landlady. There are two large rooms

downstairs with seating around the edges and plenty of tables. I also seem to remember a dartboard. The bar has a feeling of authentic history with an impressive fireplace and various nautically themed pictures and posters on the walls. Steps between the rooms lead to a beer garden (more like beer patio) behind the pub, which is south-facing and apparently a sun-trap. There's also another room on the first floor. WhatPub reports that "The Court Leet, an ancient institution meets here and the Lady Marcher attends most of its meetings. The annual mayoral ceremony is also held here each November."

As promised by the door, real ale is available, although there were only two on my last visit. I've had Gower Gold more than once here and most recently I also had Brains' Reverend James, which were perfectly fine. Check WhatPub for opening times. The pub currently shuts on Mondays and only opens at lunchtime at the weekend.

Less than a hundred yards away is the *Castle Inn*. This is a pub with several different and contrasting areas. A single storey extension built on the left of the pub houses a restaurant and kitchen, which is distinctly separate from the rest of the pub. Some photos on the bar wall document the construction of the extension, which was long enough ago to appear to have very different health and safety practices!

Behind the pub is a beer garden, which houses several covered timber alcoves which feature particularly huge wooden tables (one could probably seat a dozen). I visited when the 2021 lockdown was lifted and this substantial seating area appears to have been constructed with the obligatory outdoor service in mind. On a busy Sunday lunchtime in August 2023 the alcoves were in high demand, despite the iffy weather.

The bar area in the Castle Inn is probably my favourite of any Newport pub. More specifically, it's the left-hand side where a couple of tables are placed close to the bar, adjacent to the fireplace and an old clock, surrounded by some fine light wooden panelling.

I've enjoyed a few memorable pints of Bluestone Stone Cold from a few miles up the road at the end of the weekday evening when the bar's been fairly quiet. The pub often has Butty Bach from Wye Valley on handpump and something from Sharps. On my last visit, it was their Solar Wave. This was surprisingly drinkable despite tasting more like an Apple and Mango J2O than beer.

The pub (with associated restaurant) runs a sizeable food operation, which perhaps explains why the staff need a rest. It closes (even in high tourist season) between end of Sunday lunch service and Wednesday lunchtime. Perhaps check opening hours with the pub if you fancy a visit outside these times.

The *Royal Oak* is what CAMRA tends to call a “homely” pub. Entry from the street into the two-hundred-year-old pub is to an upper-level lounge with comfortable soft furnishings and even a fish tank. The tiled bar is reached by descending a half flight of steps and is decorated with some paintings of local landmarks. Towards the end of the pub is a games area with a pool table.

There’s also a food offering here, although a little more idiosyncratic, with curries featuring prominently on the menu and a hot food display counter in the lounge. They’re also more than happy to serve customers a few welcome bowls of chips to soak up the beer.

The real ale is good with at least two handpumps on. On my visit I sampled the recently announced runner-up in the CAMRA national Champion Beer of Britain competition. OK, it was Greene King Abbot Ale but it was suitably well-kept. Gower Gold is also regularly available.

Away from the concentration of great pubs in the middle of town, it’s also worth mentioning the *Trewern Arms* a couple of miles away in Nevern. Well within walking distance of Newport, this is a hotel with the bonus of a bar run by licensees who take a keen interest in real ale. Beer festivals, featuring local musicians, are hosted in the hotel’s function room and spill out into the hotel’s large beer garden. Local breweries are promoted. Last time I visited there were beers from Tenby Harbwr and Gwaun Valley available.

Slightly further away from Newport and in hiking rather than walking distance is the Bluestone Brewing Co tap room on the foothills of Carn Ingli and at the head of the Gwaun Valley. It’s well worth a visit if only to see the ecologically sustainable measures that are a hallmark of the brewery, which is based on a working farm (the compost toilets are a must-visit).

It's a peaceful and relaxed spot that occasionally and radically transforms into an open-air music venue when hundreds of revellers (somehow) make their way here for in-brewery concerts.

On my last visit the beers available in the taproom were all keg versions. So, to sample their cask ales, I needed to return to the pubs of Newport, which was no great hardship at all!

Mike Clarke

RECRUITMENT DRIVE – GET CAMRA PUBLICITY MATERIAL INTO OUR PUBS!!

We are starting to get results from our drive to get our excellent “*Ten Great Reasons to Join CAMRA*” recruitment leaflet, and the Welsh-language version, “*Deg rheswm gwyh i ymuno â CAMRA*”, into our local pubs, but we still need to get more out.

Why not pick up some leaflets and stands for YOUR local at our next Branch meeting? Our Secretary has ample supplies and will also demonstrate the origami needed to erect the stands for them ready to go on the bar, with the landlord/lady's permission of course.

Can you help? Let our Secretary know at a Branch meeting when he will be able to give you the leaflets and stands or contact him by email on secretary@pembrokeshire.camra.org.uk. In the latter case we can drop the leaflets and stands round to you or if that's not feasible post them.

OTHER NEWS

Siaradwyr Cymraeg dal eisiau!

Hoffen ni estyn allan at y gymuned Gymraeg yn ein hardal. Mae Ysgrifennydd y Gangen, Steve, yn dysgu Cymraeg (wel, mae e'n wedi basio ei arholiad Myndediad!) ond hoffen ni

gynnwys siaradwyr Cymraeg rhugl wrth ysgrifennu erthyglau hon a chylchgrawn Cangen posibl yn y dyfodol.

Gallwch chi helpu? Cysylltwch ag Ysgrifennydd y Gangen yn

secretary@pembrokeshire.camra.org.uk

CHECK OUT OUR BRANCH WEBSITE:

www.pembrokeshire.camra.org.uk

Keep up to date with the latest goings on in the Real Ale Scene in Pembrokeshire. Articles and information always welcome to WebsiteCo-ordinator@pembrokeshire.camra.org.uk

Cheers!

Nigel Skipper, Chairman chairman@pembrokeshire.camra.org.uk

Steve Brady, Secretary secretary@pembrokeshire.camra.org.uk