

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.

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A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW BRANCH MEMBERS!

Thanks to everyone's hard work and support from local brewers and publicans displaying our publicity material, Pembrokeshire CAMRA continues to be one of the fastest growing Branches in the country!

A hearty welcome to those of you who have just joined our campaign! We hope to make you welcome in person over a flagon of your favourite tipple at one of our meetings and socials – see below.

WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING:

PUB CRAWL FOLLOWS BRANCH MEETING IN FISHGUARD

There was another good turnout for our November Branch meeting at the *Cambrian* in Fishguard. The pub offered a good selection of real ales and was obviously popular with locals. After the meeting a group of members sampled Bass on gravity dispense poured in the true traditional way from a jug in the *Fishguard Arms*, followed by a splendid couple of pints of *Coles* in the Globe, rounding the afternoon off with a pint in the *Ffwrn*.

As this one showed, Branch meetings are social occasions as well as business ones. Why not join us next time and see for yourself.

WHAT WE'RE DOING NEXT:

BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, Saturday 14th December, 1pm *Hope and Anchor*, Goodwick Square, Goodwick, SA64 0BP

This is the most important Branch Meeting of the year, when we elect our Branch Officers for the coming year. It also features our annual Christmas Meal, organised this year for us by John Padget, to whom our thanks are due. The closing date for meal bookings was the end of November, so if you have not booked a meal already you have, sadly, missed out this year. However, you are more than welcome to come along just for the AGM.

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 who are likewise (but these can be found for suitable candidates at the AGM if needed).

As stated above, you do not have to partake of the Christmas Dinner to take part in the AGM, but please bring your current CAMRA Membership Card to vote

Getting there:

Our Branch Chair, Alwen, has arranged for a Fflecsi Bws to take us. It departs Haverfordwest Bus Station at 11.45, picking up at Letterston about 10-15 minutes later. If there is demand, it can also pick up at Fishguard bus station on the way, or indeed at intermediate places up the A40. The return journey leaves Goodwick at 5.10pm. Note Fflecsi Bwsiau can be up to 20 minutes later than advertised pickup times so if the bus is late, wait.

We need some idea of numbers and who is coming so if you want to board the Branch Bws let the Secretary know on secretary@pembrokeshire.camra.org.uk

CARMARTHENSHIRE CAMRA BIRTHDAY PARTY – Saturday 4th January, 2pm at the *New Coracle Tavern* 1 Cambrian Place, Carmarthen, SA31 1QG

We have sent in numbers for this to Carmarthen, which they need for the buffet etc. If you have not already let us know you are coming, you cannot unfortunately just turn up on the day. However, if you haven't told us but would like to come let our Secretary know as soon as possible and he will see if he can squeeze you in.

Getting there:

T5 bus from Fishguard at 10.50, calls Letterston 11.04 and arrives Haverfordwest Bus Station at 11.21. 322 bus for Carmarthen leaves Haverfordwest Bus Station at 12.10 arriving Carmarthen Bus Station 13.15. The venue is a few minutes' walk from there.

322 back leaves Carmarthen Bus Station at 16.32 arriving Haverfordwest Bus Station at 17.45. T5 north leaves 18.49.

Train from Haverfordwest leaves 13.18 arriving 13.56, if it is not cancelled. The rail station is 20 minutes' walk from the pub. Trains back leave at 17.58 arriving 18.37. connecting with the T5 north from the station at 18.45. There is a 19.41 arriving 2019.

We also hope to have our annual get-together with Carmarthenshire at the *Station House* in Whitland, run by the brother of the landlord of the *Cresselly Arms*, Branch and Wales Pub of the Year, at some point in the New Year – watch this space.

SELLING ADVERTISING TO FUND OUR NEW BRANCH MAGAZINE, Puffin Pints, UNDER WAY SOON

Neil Richards of Paper Red Media, who will be producing our Branch magazine, has just told us that he and his colleague Matt will shortly start contacting our local pubs, breweries etc. to see if they are interested in advertising in our Branch magazine. These advertisements will fund the production of the magazine, so it will be free to us and will be then distributed, also free, to pubs, clubs and other suitable establishments across the County at the start of the tourist season, so maximising the effectiveness of such advertisements.

Branch members themselves interested in advertising in Puffin Pints, or who know people who are, are asked to contact the Magazine Editor, Steve, at secretary@pembrokeshire.camra.org.uk so he can put them in touch with PRM. Also everyone should let any publicans and brewers know that they may soon be contacted by PRM to offer them advertising in our magazine.

Advertising rates will be:

¼ page of A5 full colour	£90
½ page ditto	£145
1 full page	£260
Full page, inside front or back cover	£280
Full back page	£300

In the New Year we will be looking for articles, in English or Cymraeg, and items of news about local pubs and breweries. News of what they are doing and planning from local publicans and brewers will

be especially welcome for the Pub and Brewery News sections of the magazine. Indeed, contributions from all local members will be much appreciated – this is our, and so your, magazine. **Deadline for your contributions is the end of February.**

The **final copy deadline** for the Editor – who will be contacting local pubs and breweries himself as required to their get up to date news – is **the end of March.**

TEWKESBURY BEER FESTIVAL VISIT 5th to 8th FEBRUARY 2025

Branch members will be attending this noted CAMRA Beer Festival.

SIBA BEERX, LIVERPOOL, 19th and 20th MARCH

Branch members will also be attending this top Beer Festival organised by the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates.

Interested in attending either, or both, of these events? More members welcome – but you will need to book your own accommodation and transport.

Contact the Secretary on secretary@pembrokeshire.camra.org.uk

for more details.

PUBS AND BREWERIES NEWS

GOOD NEWS ON THE LOCAL REAL ALE FRONT

Good news this month for once as a number of local real ale venues have opened or reopened.

A completely new star in our sky is the *Star* micropub in the centre of Narberth, near the Town Hall, which has recently opened. When our reporters visited, it offered Gower Gold and Bluestone Blitz on gravity dispense, in excellent condition. The Gower is likely to be a regular beer, but the other one will vary.

The micropub is currently open from noon to 8pm Sundays and Mondays, noon to 10pm Wednesdays and Thursdays, noon to 11pm Fridays and Saturdays. Pies, mash and peas are available from noon until 6pm Monday to Saturday, but not on Sundays. Worth trying out!

The pub by the beach at Pwll Gwaelod, by Dinas Cross, which had been closed for some time, has now reopened under the new (or actually very old) name of the *Sailors' Safety*. Our roving beer

reporters found Butty Bach in very good form available, which will be their normal offering, but may be supplemented sometimes by a second ale on gravity dispense. The new team running the pub are also hoping to make it again noteworthy for its seafood, but those just dropping by for a beer are made very welcome.

Hours at the moment are noon to 10pm every day, lunches Wednesdays to Sundays 12 to 3pm, dinner Wednesdays to Saturdays 6-9pm.

Both these pubs are supportive of CAMRA and in return deserve our support. As with all pubs these days, it's use them or lose them, so don't let these green shoots wither – pop in for a pint soon.

The *Ranch* at Llanychaer expects to reopen soon, we are glad to say – a hidden gem with a unique ambience – again worth trying out.

Gwaun Valley Brewery has rebranded its widely acclaimed Nutty Mild as simply Nutty, as whilst delicious it is probably not really a Mild. Local CAMRA members are often to be found sampling Nigel's latest brews in the Brewery Tap at Kilkeffeth on Friday afternoons. Why not drop along and join them?

Finally local community buyout pub *Y Cross* at Haycastle Cross appears to be thriving and now offers tasty and good value food in the evenings Thursday to Saturday, as well as Sunday lunches. “Thrifty Thursday” is especially worth a try. The portions are as big as the prices are small! There is now a full programme of events in the pub, including TV coverage of the Autumn Rugby Internationals, Welsh language lessons, a Quiz on the first Wednesday evening of each month, and Darts League matches every Friday at 8pm.

The pub is open 5-11 pm every day except Wednesdays when it opens at 3. Local Branch members visit this pub between 3 and 6 pm every Wednesday. Why not join this weekly Branch social and get to know other Real Ale and Cider enthusiasts?

Other news?

Any local brewers, or publicans, doing anything likely to be of interest to local CAMRA members, and indeed local members with any news of developments on their local pub scene, 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.

NATIONAL NEWS (NONE OF IT GOOD THIS MONTH, SADLY!)

As we reported in our last issue, CAMRA, which is a strictly non-party-political organisation, welcomed the Chancellor's decision in the Budget to cut the rate of tax specifically on beer and cider

served in pubs, clubs and taprooms. However, in fairness we must report below that other parts of the Budget have been received less well by hop and cider apple growers and those in the pub trade.

HOP GROWERS HOPPING MAD AFTER “BUDGET BLOW”

British hop growers fear the imposition of inheritance tax on farms in the Budget will lead to the closure of many family-run hop producers. British Hop Association spokesman Mark Andrews, a tenth-generation hop and cider apple grower, warned the tax could “be the death knell for British hop growing”. There are already only 44 hop growers left in Britain, and the BHA estimates that the acreage in Britain devoted to growing hops has fallen by 40% since 2019.

British beer depends on British hops, and indeed British barley and other grains, grown by British farmers in British fields. If those farms should fail for any reason then our unique brewing heritage going back centuries will be lost.

PUBLICANS UNHAPPY AT NATIONAL INSURANCE AND MINIMUM WAGE HIKES

A number of pub businesses, such as Mitchell & Butlers and Wetherspoons, have warned that Budget rises in employer National Insurance contributions and the National Minimum wage will lead to fewer pubs, higher beer prices, and fewer jobs in the hospitality industry, which currently employs 3.5 million people in this country. Small independent pubs, in particular, are already struggling with high energy costs and business rates and for many this could be the last straw.

WEATHER AND MARKET WORMS IN OUR CIDER APPLES

Our Branch Cider officer, Jimmy Whitworth, a noted local real cider maker himself, told our Branch meeting in November that there had been a poor apple harvest throughout our area this year, due to inclement weather, especially during the pollination period. Some of our local cider makers were experiencing difficulties as a result.

Jimmy also warned that demand for keg cider has fallen due to the fickleness of consumer fashion. This had led to big producers such as Bulmers cutting apple orders (there is still *some* apple in Bulmers!), in turn leading to farmers grubbing up orchards. Additionally, there is commercial pressure to replace traditional varieties of cider apples with sweeter ones such as Katy and Dabinett. Losing orchards has long term effects as it takes at least 8 years to bring a new cider orchard into production.

Furthermore, family cider orchards, often going back many generations, fear being forced to close because of the new Inheritance Tax on our farmers.

CAMRA supports real cider as much as we do real ale and stands by our cider apple growers and cider makers, as well as hop and barley growers, brewers and pubs in their current troubles. We need YOUR help to do so!

MEANWHILE THE MEGAKEGGERY JUGGERNAUT GRINDS ON

Having devoured a string of breweries around our country, Carlsberg Marston's Brewing Company (CMBC), the "British" tentacle of global brewing multinational Carlsberg AS, has announced plans to axe eleven traditional British beers within the next few weeks. Among the much-loved real ales to be shut down in the service of globalised greed are Banks's Mild, Wells Bombardier, Marston's Old Empire, Ringwood Old Thumper, and Jennings Cumberland Ale.

CAMRA's Real Ale, Cider and Perry Campaigns Director, Gillian Hough, rightly lamented that this was *"another example of a globally owned business erasing UK brewing heritage"*.

CAMRA was formed in 1971 to fight this very threat from big breweries to local real ales, and real ale in general. Then the market was dominated by a few big UK-based megakeggeries. Now it is even more dominated by even fewer and much bigger global megakeggeries.

Clearly our Campaign is needed more than ever! **Don't let your pint – and the pub you drink it in – die - get active with CAMRA!**

OTHER ITEMS

CAMRA PUBLICITY MATERIAL FOR OUR PUBS STILL AVAILABLE!!

We have lots of the CAMRA Recruitment Leaflet – "Join the CAMRA Story" in English and Welsh, plus stands and posters. They need to be got out to our pubs.

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.

WHATPUB, CAMRA'S PUBS AND CLUBS DATABASE, NEEDS YOU!

Every establishment selling alcohol to the general public to drink on the premises is meant to be on the CAMRA WhatPub database, maintained in Pembrokeshire by our Pubs database Co-Ordinator, Paul Padget, and his team. See

<https://whatpub.com/>

Given the large area we cover with a relatively small number of active members, we often struggle to keep the information on WhatPub up to date. If you see something wrong or out of date on a pub's entry, please go to the bit at the bottom of the entry where it says

"Seen some incorrect or missing details?

Send an email to the CAMRA branch with your updates."

Click on the link and e-mail us with your corrections. Visiting CAMRA members and indeed members of the public do this, which the Branch appreciates, but we could do with more updates from local members who are more likely to know the pub and so be able to provide accurate information.

Also please feel free to score the beer you drink – see "Submit Beer Scores" link on the right hand side at the top of the WhatPub entry for each pub. You'll need to log on with your CAMRA Membership Number and password to do this, but it greatly helps us to choose the best pubs to go in the Good Beer Guide each year. Ideally we would like to base the whole GBG selection process on these scores, as many other Branches do, but that needs all of us to get out there submitting scores!

MEET CAMRA MEMBERS NEAR YOU FOR A SOCIAL PINT

If you are interested in meeting like-minded ale and cider drinkers near you, drop us a line on

secretary@pembrokeshire.camra.org.uk

with the contact details you'd like us to share and what sort of area you would be willing to meet up in and we'll put you in touch with other members near you who have done the same.

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 let's hear from you!

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

Last but not least, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all CAMRA members, in Pembrokeshire and elsewhere. May we all enjoy many more years of enjoying our favourite beers and ciders in our favourite pubs!

Cheers!

Alwen Thomas, Chair chair@pembrokeshire.camra.org.uk

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