

Bonnie brews from Loch Lomond

YOU CAN'T move in Scotland at the moment without a new microbrewery popping up while you're looking the other way.

South of the border this has been happening for a long time but it seems the growth in Scotland is just getting into its swing.

One of the newest is in our branch area — Loch Lomond Brewery in Alexandria. Fiona and Euan MacEachern have been homebrewing for a few years before setting up the brewery, which made its first beer in October.

The beers are currently being sold in the Village Inn in Arrochar and have been sighted in the Bon Accord and Pot Still in Glasgow too. The brewery is also in talks with a well-known department store about stocking bottled beer.

Of the beers made so far, Ale of Leven is a sweetish



Fiona MacEachern, owner of Loch Lomond Brewery, digs out the mash from the first brew. (Photo courtesy Loch Lomond Brewery)

heavy-type ale while Bonnie 'n' Bitter is a hoppier beer in a Deucharsy vein. A darker ale called Kessog was brewed before Christmas and has been selling well at the Bon.

■ The brewery shop is open at the weekends for sales of bottled beer and mini-casks direct from the brewster! See lochlomondbrewery.com for more details.

Pubs news

■ The former Red Lizard on Bell St is now called THE LIBERTINE and has been seen selling Fyne beer.

■ THE LANGSIDE in Battlefield (previously The Mission) has re-opened selling real ales from the Mitchells & Butlers list.

■ HORTON'S (formerly Frankenstein 1868) is selling Deuchars and Caledonian 80/-.

■ The new DUKES BAR in Yorkhill is serving one real ale, Belhaven IPA.

■ THE HAYBURN VAULTS in Partick has re-opened after a long refurbishment as "Deoch an Dorus" and is selling Deuchars.

■ JACKSON'S DOGHOUSE in Cambridge St has three handpumps and is selling a selection of beers including Kelburn, according to reports.

■ THE ANTONINE ARMS in Twechar has ceased trading, but we are told it has already re-opened under its old name of the Barrhill Tavern.

■ BRUADAR is the name of the new beer bar now open in the premises of the former Millhouse, next door to the Three Judges. (See report on p 2).

■ On George Square, BROWN'S is not just for cocktails. A recent visit found Sharp's Doom Bar and Harviestoun Natural Blonde on offer, and prices are lower than the swish ambience would suggest.

■ Real ale in the shape of a rotating guest ale from the Arran Brewery is back at the BEER CAFÉ in the Merchant City.

We're back!

This newsletter is the fourth incarnation of the *Glasgow Guzzler*. It has been produced on and off for over twenty years



and we hope its relaunch will make a contribution to the increasingly exciting beer scene in our area. We welcome letters, comments, rants, reports, news and opinions — theeditor@glasgowcamra.org.uk

It's all gone to Pot for Frank

HOPE STREET'S famous whisky pub The Pot Still is under new management. Frank Murphy, who ran the Clockwork for the last few years, has taken over the pub with his family.

The focus of the pub will continue to be whisky, but Frank is committed to serving local real ale from breweries such as Kelburn and Houston. The pub is not tied on bottled beers and some little-known Bavarian specialities have found a place in the fridge.

It's not the first time Frank has stood behind the bar at the Pot Still. He was a barman there when the pub was run by legendary licensee Ken Storrie, who sadly died in 2010.



Frank at the pumps

A midwinter night's dream in Partick

DEPENDING ON whom you listen to, the new Bruadar bar at Partick Cross is the best thing to happen for beer in Glasgow for years, or a flash in the pan that will be lucky to last six months. We sent a roving reporter to the opening night on 19th December to see for himself.

Bruadar is (apparently) Gaelic for “dream” and the bar, in the premises last known as the Millhouse and the scene of several previous failed bar ventures, is the attempt by Fuller Thomson, operators of bars such as the Holyrood 9a in Edinburgh, to create a serious beer establishment in the west end of Glasgow.

Though announced to the public at very short notice, brewers like Williams Bros, Black Isle, Tempest and others have been happy to help out by supplying beer. Indeed the Williams brothers themselves, Bruce and Scott, had turned up for the opening to launch their kegged Profanity Stout.

As well as Stella and its ilk, some less run-of-the-mill beers from independent brewers are available served kegged, and this format will also be used to serve imported American and continental beers.

Real ale drinkers are in for a treat with four cask taps dispensing beers from the most

talked about microbreweries of Scotland and England. And they are taps, mounted in the back of the bar — there are no handpumps. This can make it slightly tricky to see what is cask and what is keg, but better signage and use of blackboards would solve that. It does keep the bar counter nicely uncluttered.

Pricing is reasonable for this part of town, with session-strength beers at comparable prices to the Three Judges across the road. Stronger beers can be much more expensive though, so check before you inadvertently find yourself with a £6 pint! Pay attention to the blackboard, or ask.

Speaking of the Three Judges, is it a good idea to situate a new venture right next to one of the best-known real ale pubs in the city? The answer must be yes—it makes Partick Cross a real beer destination, worth crossing town for in the knowledge that if there's nothing you fancy in one pub, or it's full to bursting, you can always try the other.

Big wooden tables give the bar a pleasantly informal feel and it's altogether much more modern in style than a typical pseudo-Victorian pub interior. It will be interesting in the weeks ahead to see if Bruadar lives up to its initial promise.



Bar staff in action at Bruadar.

Times change at the Clockwork Beer Co

AFTER THE departure of Frank Murphy to run the Pot Still, the man taking over as brewer at the Clockwork is Declan McCaffrey.

Declan is a graduate of Heriot-Watt University's brewing course who has previously worked at BrewDog and at Offbeat in Crewe, the brewery set up by Michelle Haylock Kelsall after the demise of

her Windie Goat Brewery in Ayrshire.

Declan has already made his mark on the beers by producing dry-hopped versions of the popular Amber IPA with Willamette and Saaz.

Fans of New World hops can look forward to increased use of varieties such as Nelson Sauvin and Columbus in the months ahead.

THE NEW GLASGOW GUZZLER



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Then and now

THE LIST below is the Glasgow pubs that were in the 1996 *Good Beer Guide*:

Aragon, Athena Taverna, Babbity Bowster, Blackfriars, Bon Accord, Brewery Tap, Dr Thirsty's Alehouse, Mitre Bar, Ritz, State Bar, Station Bar, Three Judges, Ubiquitous Chip, Victoria Bar.

Seven of these pubs are in the 2012 guide. Three others still exist whilst four have disappeared: the Mitre Bar, now an alcohol free museum piece at the Riverside Museum; the Ritz, which is now a Punjabi restaurant; Dr. Thirsty's Alehouse, once I found it, is closed and available to let; and The Brewery Tap is currently

trading as the Butchershop Bar & Grill.

Five of these pubs (and I am sticking my neck out here) have been ever-present since 1996 – I leave you to guess those. The Athena Taverna has changed its name more than once but is currently in the guide under the name of Mulberry St.

The Aragon and Ubiquitous Chip are still serving real ale, I am not sure about the Victoria but it certainly provides live music. [No real ale last time I looked – Ed]

The major change in Glasgow in the last sixteen years is the emergence of Wetherspoons. Their first pub opened

in December 1996, the architecturally stunning Counting House and they currently provide five houses to the 2012 guide: Crystal Palace, Sir John Moore, Esquire House, Sir John Stirling Maxwell and The Society Room.

Southside drinkers are much better served these days, because apart from the Stirling Maxwell in Shawlands and Mulberry St. they can enjoy a tittle at Sammy Dow's and the Granary.

What does all this mean, I hear you say. Well I think this underlines the fact that the really good pubs continue year on year. There is a wide selection of other good pubs who realise the value of real ale and that Wetherspoons are very much part of the real ale scene in Glasgow.

Real ale is back on the bar in heritage pub



JAMES AND John Clancy's Gorbals pub hadn't sold real ale for a generation. But the Laurieston Bar on Bridge Street is now regularly serving cask-conditioned beer from Argyll brewery Fyne Ales.

Since an experimental "Cask Night" in June, the pub has

been trialling several Fyne beers to see how they go down with customers.

The Clancys have been in the trade long enough to remember when all draught beer was cask-conditioned ale. In the 1960s and 70s, most Glasgow pubs switched to filtered and pasteurised keg beer, or "container beer" as it was called back then. Now, 40 years after CAMRA was founded, live beer is finally becoming trendy again.

The Laurieston is a hidden gem for those in the know. The intact 1960s fixtures and fittings got the pub listed in CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors.

Punters in the bar, though, come for the friendly service, as well as the McGhee's pies served from an original vintage pie heater. It's also a popular stop for "sub crawls".

Drum & Monkey is Glasgow Pub of the Year



The Drum & Monkey in the city centre was recently voted winner of the branch's Glasgow Pub of the Year award. On November 29th members of the branch visited the pub to present manager Roddy Young (second from right) and his team with a certificate.

Photo: Euan Fraser

Four old soaks

YOU NEVER know who or how many people will turn up for a crawl, and I put it down to the weather that only four hardy souls ventured out.

The south side crawl started at Samuel Dow's. Well Sammy needed a visit from a heating engineer as it was a little cold; however, the three ales, Trade Winds and Witches Cauldron from the fine Cairngorm Brewery and Red Smiddy from the more local Kelburn were all in good form. The pub is well frequented and has a regularly changing beer menu.

Shortly before we moved on we were joined by George who had been on a sightseeing tour of the south side courtesy of First Bus. You would think that asking for a certain stop might indicate that that was where you wanted to get off!

Anyway it was time to brave the elements and head for Mulberry St and we were not disappointed. Firstly because the heating was working, secondly I found a comfy chair and thirdly Fyne Ales Jarl was being served. Jarl is one of my favourite beers and was in top form. I could have chosen Bitter & Twisted which was also looking good.

Gerry took over the path finding but his yards need recalibration as four hundred yards to the Granary would

have left us well short. We did arrive at the Granary which was a first for me. This is a large pub with a lot of charm situated at a fork on the road. The beer choice on the day was from Keltek and Caledonian: I had a Deuchars which was full of flavour and the others enjoyed the Keltek.

Our next stop was the James Tassie, but a knockout blow; there was no ale available at five o'clock on a Saturday evening! But by good fortune we were only two minutes from the Sir John Stirling Maxwell, one of my favourite Wetherspoons: it is smaller than most and feels more like a pub. I had a good pint of Caledonian Double Dark; this would have been better served a little warmer but this is a regular problem in many pubs. Once the beer had warmed up the full flavour was delivered.

At 6pm, we were literally four old soaks by virtue of the constant rain but I had reached my limits, Rick needed a helping hand on the bus, so we bailed out. On the day four was a magic number as we, always found a table but hopefully on the next crawl a higher turnout will appear. A crawl is a great way to visit several pubs, discuss diverse topics and sample several ales, all in good company.

TIM DAVIES

Fancy a pint of Twitter?



TWITTER USERS can keep up to date with the latest local beer news, thanks to switched-on pubs who have begun tweeting information about their guest beers.

Among the Glasgow pubs tweeting their beers (some more regularly than others) are Blackfriars (@Blackfriarspub), the Three Judges (@the3judges), the Bon (@thebonaccord), and on the south side the Langside (@TheLangside). The old-established @lauriestonbar and the trendy new @bruadarbar are both at it.

Wetherspoons are well represented with both @Counting_House and @HenglersAles tweeting. Frequent flyers may like to know that even the bar at Glasgow Airport airside has got in on the act: @ales_sanderling – so you can decide on your pint while you wait to check in!

One other way to keep in touch is to follow the account @glasgowbeer. This retweets everything posted with the #glasgowbeer hashtag, so if you find an unusual beer on sale, let people know by tweeting about it!

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GWOS Guzzler 12-01

opinion.....

So ... why shouldn't I drink from the bottle?

YOU HAVE to ask yourself why, when pubs provide glasses of every size and shape to suit every bottle they stock, that people – particularly young blokes – want to drink from the bottle in any case? Answer – “It’s cool”. Or rather, that’s no answer at all. “Because all my mates do it”. Ah! Peer pressure, also known as the lemming tendency – and we all know what Walt Disney trained us to believe

about lemmings. The truth is that we see Americans (cool dudes) drinking from bottles on TV and in films so, being slaves to American cultural colonisation, we have to do it too. Just as children demand to eat crap in burger bars, instead of our traditional fast food (fish and chips) just because TV ads tell them to, so their elders want to be seen as trendy and drink ersatz lager

from bottles. This next bit is more difficult since most of the beer they drink from the bottle has little or no quality to start with, but it remains a fact that you cannot properly enjoy a beer if you drink it from the bottle.

There are two reasons for this. First you cannot get the gas out of solution. Believe it or not, lager should not be a fizzy drink. The gas in the bottle is there to form the head on the beer when it is poured. It’s not there to improve the rifting and farting of the consumer. If you doubt this, take a trip to Bavaria or Bohemia where the lager beers are superb – and not gassy!

The other reason is that enjoying beer, like any other food, is an all-sensory experience – if you drink it from a bottle you can’t smell it and, believe it or not, smelling beer is part of enjoying beer. I once saw two young blokes drinking Grolsch from the

famous swing-top bottles. They kept hitting themselves in the eye with the swinging bottle tops.

I couldn’t help thinking that they deserved the punishment they were giving themselves.

Finally it’s unhealthy and potentially dangerous. The landlord in the pub would never sell beer from visibly dirty bottles so he cleans them. But he can’t clean under the crown cap and that’s where the potential danger lies – and that’s the bit of the bottle that our trendy drinker inserts in his, or her, mouth. The bottles may be hygienically stored in the pub cellar, but heaven only knows how long they have lain around in warehouses before then.

So there it is then. Three reasons why you shouldn’t drink out of the bottle. There is a fourth reason of course – it tastes better out of a glass.

ALISTAIR BOYD

• Disagree? email theeditor@glasgowcamra.org.uk

branch diary.....

Saturday 10 March
Branch AGM
2pm, see website for venue

Saturday 24 March
Social – Crawl by bus towards Glasgow
2pm, The Swan, 1 Quarry Lane, Lennoxton

30–31 March
Larbert Beer Festival
Dobbie Hall, Larbert

Wednesday 11 April
Branch meeting
7.30pm, Jacksons, 95–97 Cambridge St, Glasgow

25–28 April
Paisley Beer Festival
Paisley Town Hall

28–30 June
Scottish Real Ale Festival
Corn Exchange, Edinburgh

Check glasgowcamra.org.uk for up-to-date information