



This will take place over the weekend of the 25th/26th September from 11am - 6pm at Ventnor Botanic Garden and will celebrate the first harvest of Ventnor Botanic Garden hops and the creation of Goddards Hoppiness, as well as demonstrating a variety of traditional skills, following the West Wight Landscape Partnership's successful festival at Afton Park last year.



As part of this FREE event, there will be beer tasting, bar, traditional music and dancing, local food stalls and plant sales. There will also be walks and talks on a variety of related subjects.

The festival is the result of a partnership between the West Wight Landscape Partnership, the Ventnor Botanic Garden Friends Society and Blunt events.

There will be three FREE coaches leaving from and returning to the west Wight each day. Places must be booked. For more info contact Irene on 759779 or email irene.fletcher@iow.gov.uk.



Wightwash

Volume 2, Number 45

Newsletter of the Isle of Wight branch of CAMRA

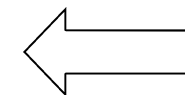
Autumn Issue 2010

The Campaign for Real Ale exists to preserve and promote good beer and pubs.



October is Local Ale Month

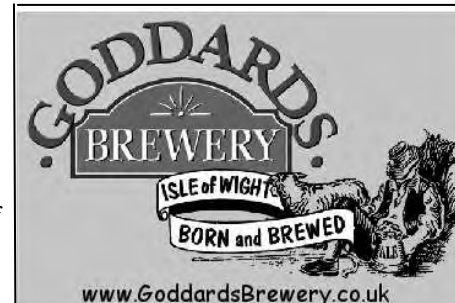
Look out for this sign



With a mouth-watering choice of beers from Yates, the new **Island Brewery** and **Goddards** (including Hoppiness made from Isle of Wight hops) what better time to sample a local brew.

Dozens of Island pubs are now participating in the "LocAle" scheme. You can see a list of some of them on our website

www.wightwash.org.uk



www.GoddardsBrewery.co.uk



www.yates-brewery.co.uk



"The brewer's job is to make a constant product with variable ingredients."

Richard Harvey - Goddard's Head Brewer

In May I wrote to Andrew Turner congratulating him on his re-election and voiced my concern over a number of issues. Here is part of his reply:-



Thank you for contacting me and for your congratulations on my re-election. I am of course delighted to serve the Island and Islanders again.

You are already aware that I am a keen supporter of local pubs. They provide a key focal point and meeting place in, among others, our rural communities and play an important part in our national culture. Of course they are facing a crisis in the country at the moment with six pubs closing every day. We need to make sure that policies are implemented that will stop and indeed reverse that trend.

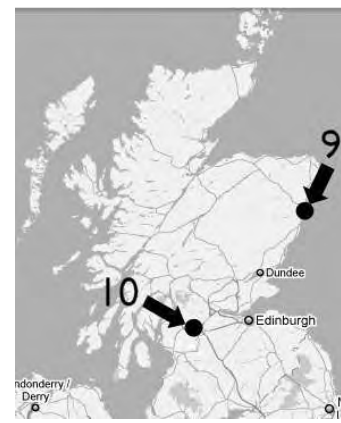
As you know the Conservatives did not gain enough MPs to form a majority Government, so our policies need to be discussed with the Liberal Democrats. Full details of the new coalition Government's policies to answer all your specific questions have yet to be announced...

Win a £20 Meal Voucher for the Chequers Inn or a case of Yates' Ales

Just answer these easy questions. The first two correct answers out of the hat on 1st November win the prizes.

Send answers to - The Editor, Wightwash, Oakdene, Rookley, Ventnor, PO38 3NH or email - editor@wightwash.org.uk

- 1/ Who was the mother of Elizabeth I?
- 2/ Kevin Rudd was the Prime Minister of which country?
- 3/ In which national park would you find "El Capitan"?
- 4/ Who wrote the Cliff Richard hit "Living Doll"?
- 5/ Boadicea and First Gold are varieties of what?
- 6/ "Oh what a Beautiful Morning" comes from which musical?
- 7/ Which river flows through the city of Belfast?
- 8/ Which brewery is in Wainfleet, Lincolnshire?
- 9/ and 10/ Name these Scottish cities.



- Answers to the Spring Quiz:**
 1/Waldorf 2/ Mark Woodnutt
 3/ Vietnam 4/ Oscar Wilde
 5/Black Sabbath 6/Lamb
 7/ Grass 8/ Rupert Grint
 9/Ian Rankin 10/ Patricia Highsmith

Robin and Lorraine Flux of Ryde win a £20 meal voucher for the Chequers Inn and David Barber of East Cowes wins a case of Yates' Ales.

A true locals pub where visitors are always made welcome

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Stop Press:
 Our guest ale list now includes
Goddards / Hoppiness
 made with IOW hops

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The Longstone

The Mottistone Longstone is probably the oldest landmark on the Island. It dates from Neolithic times and is the only megalith to be found here. It stands at the end of Strawberry Lane in the village of Mottistone. Map Reference SZ407842.

There are in fact two stones at the site, a smaller flat stone stands beside the twelve foot standing stone.

Unlike some ancient monuments these are probably of greensand excavated locally. It is believed that the site has been used as a meeting place for generations and it still holds an attraction for many.

The name Mottistone may be a derivation of the words Meeting stone. It is unlikely that the smaller stone was used as a sacrificial altar but these suggestions seem to persist.



In recent times pagan rituals have been staged on site by local devotees and midsummer morning attracts large numbers of sightseers including the local team of Morris Men.

For most visitors it is a potent visual link with our distant ancestors.

Rob Marshall



The Longstone

CRAIG AND MARIE WELCOME YOU TO
THE WHEATSHEAF INN
 IN YE KYDGE'S TOWN OF BRAYDYDGE
 FRESHLY COOKED FOOD
 &
 WIDE RANGE OF BEERS AND WIDES
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 UP TO 4 REAL ALES & EXCLUSIVE GERMAN LAGERS

In the meantime I can tell you that there is a specific commitment in the Government's coalition agreement to 'review alcohol taxation and pricing to ensure it tackles binge drinking without unfairly penalising responsible drinkers, pubs and important local industries'.

The Government has also already announced plans to ban the sale of alcohol at below cost price (supermarkets often do so as a loss-leader) and to overhaul the Licensing Act to give police and councils more power to tackle pubs and clubs that become magnets for trouble, which of course damages the more responsible pubs and the reputation of pubs in general.

Whatever the detailed policies that emerge, I can assure you that the Conservative Party recognizes the unique place that pubs play in our communities and we will work to support them within the

challenging times that we face as a Government. Whilst in opposition we ran a national campaign to 'Save the Great British Pub' - our commitment to that aim will not change now that we are in Government.

Whilst writing, I should like to say how much I enjoy reading *Wightwash*. I always pick it up to browse through when I see a new edition is out. It may not be a controversial publication but it is an interesting and informative one which represents CAMRA on the Island very successfully.

Andrew Turner MP

Join
CAMRA
 Today

Just fill in the form below and send, with a cheque (payable to CAMRA Ltd) to Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts, AL1 4 LW
 Rates are Single £22 Joint £27
 Retired £13 (Joint £16) Under 26 £13 (Joint £16)

Name.....
 Address.....

 Post code.....

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and I agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Signed.....Date.....

I'm going to start with **Goddard's News** as I'm just as impressed as everyone else that we've now got a beer with proper Isle of Wight hops. There's a full account of the hop side of this story further on in this issue but here's a copy of the pumpclip for you all to look out for.



It was nearly a complete Isle of Wight beer but brewer Richard Harvey wanted to use Maris Otter malted barley and sadly none was grown on the Island this year. Never mind, maybe next year.

Richard has an interesting trip to work. He sails over from Portchester at the beginning of the week, moors his yacht in Ryde Harbour where he stays the rest of the week and cycles in to work – very green! The summer rush is now over and once

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holidays have been taken, a start can be made installing the new equipment that has been waiting in the yard. This includes a mash tun, a grist case and most importantly a new racking tank that will be used to increase the brewlength and insure a consistent yeast count.

There is also a plan to bottle some of the seasonal beers with the bottling plant purchased from Hampshire brewery 18 months ago. The main bottling of Goddards beers is carried out by Bath Ales. Look out for the Autumn seasonals – **Ducks Folly** and of course – **Hoppiness!**

Yates Brewery

After the “crazy” bank holiday weekend, Dave Yates is looking forward to his favourite time of the year when he can concentrate on **Wight Winter** and **Yule Be Sorry**. There is a cask of the latter that has been quietly conditioning away for the last 12 months ready for bottling. During the hectic Bank holiday weekend Yates’ provided bars and stillages for events at The Castle, Sandown, Crab and Lobster Tap, Ventnor, Kings Head, Yarmouth, The Highdown, Totland, The Vine, St Helens, Chale Show and the Havenstreet Steam up. This is after The Garlic Festival which saw 2,000 bottles of the new “**Garlic Beer**” sold. Wightlink travellers may have

It became a sort of lateral thinking problem for us - trying to work out what the jokes should have been. "The Scotsman who was found starved to death on a pay-as-you-enter bus", took the longest to solve. Eventually Roger put his finger in the air and whispered triumphantly "pay-as-you-leave!"

The one about the incontinent man who phones his doctor, and when asked "Where are you (w)ringing from?", replies "From the waist down"; became "Where are you phoning from?" - "From the waist up".

But the one that nearly had us sending out for clean underwear was the one about the duck that went to buy some lip-balm and when asked by the chemist "Would you like to pay cash?", replied "No, could you put it on my bill?".

Chas's version was: "So the chemist asked if the duck wanted to pay cash, and the duck said 'No, would you put it on my beak?'".

The bemused audience sat in silence while hoots of laughter rang out from the bandstand as musicians clutched their ribs and wiped tears from their eyes. Sadly, I don't think we'll see Chas on here again. It's such a pity.

Tim Marshall - Musician



Mark Voller's **POLICE PAGE** will appear in the next issue



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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Due to circumstances beyond my control the Wightwash deadline had to be brought forward by several days and that has unexpectedly left me with a couple of pages to fill.

Before I took over Editorship for Wightwash I was for many years a P&O ship's musician. During this time I wrote the odd article not only for Wightwash but also Grapevine, Canberra's crew magazine.

I came across this article and I thought it might amuse some of you to glimpse a former life.

IS IT A FUNNY OLD BUSINESS?



Musicians must be the bane of comedians lives. Well, we've heard it all before; and if we haven't on the first show, we certainly have by the second. We also have a reputation for a bizarre sense of humour. The general rule of thumb for comedians is - if the band laughs, leave it out.

The poor comic has, therefore, a group of men sat behind him either stony - faced or absent - minded gazing in to their music stands where there will almost certainly be a book or magazine.

Generally, we just don't find comedians funny. There are a couple of exceptions: the surreal Tommy

Sutton and the brilliant Dave Evans for example - and a comedian who in deference to his future career (which can be described at best as "dubious") I will call "Chas".

Chas looked good and had a fine delivery. The problem was he was very, very stupid. His act consisted of telling a series of jokes he had heard from other comics without understanding them in the slightest. That's why he got them wrong.

This became apparent when he began his first show hopping from foot to foot explaining that it was his impression of "the first Irishman on the moon". It should, of course, have been "on the sun".

Chris and Wendy welcome you to...

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A friendly welcome, excellent real ales, delicious food and a fine selection of wines await you at the pub with charm, character and the oldest license on the island.

Victoria and Simon look forward to seeing you soon!

www.crabandlobstertap.org.uk

already seen the scary video. Another success this year has been Yates' Golden Ale. All in all Yates' business which includes Stumpy's Beers has seen an increase of over 25% over the last 12 months. Look out for the new bottle labels which have been designed by Russell Ince of Wax Crayon Design.



(John Nicholson's Report on Island Ales appears on page eight)

Next year marks the 125th anniversary of William Henry Long, author of the dictionary of the Isle of Wight dialect and publisher of over 200 IW folk songs. It is hoped to celebrate this event by performing his songs and ballads at pub locations across the Island. The Dolly Mops from Ryde specialise in singing his local folk collection. We have received a request from

organiser Mark Earp: "Where we need some assistance from Wightwash readers is for more detailed information about WHL and any persons who may have sung his songs in Island pubs.

We have received information that during the late 50s and early 60s a gentleman used to sing his songs using a piano in Ryde pubs. It has now been suggested that this person was in fact the famous IW tramp, Theadore?

We really would like to ascertain if this is correct. Could you help via the magazine?" If you can help at all, please contact us by phone 721557 or email editor@wightwash.org.uk

For those of you who still yearn for a Nieg-horn Octoberfest I'm pleased to announce that **Extras Catering and Recruitment Ltd at Cowes Yacht Haven** are holding an Octoberfest on 8th October at Cowes Yacht Haven. It will run from 7pm till midnight and serve a selection of German beers (served in glass Steins) and wines. There will also be authentic German food. A traditional brass Oompah band will provide the music for



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 Great Selection of Real Ales
Good food and friendly welcome
 Monday Night Quiz 9pm

listening and dancing. Sarah Flanagan, an organiser of the event said, “We really hope people will enter into the spirit of *Oktoberfest*, the beers and wines we’ve selected are to be tasted and enjoyed. The aim of the night is just to have fun.” Fancy dress is encouraged to help transform the Haven into a traditional beer tent. The ticket price - £16.50 includes a souvenir Stein. It is hoped that this will be an annual event. We will try to bring you more details via the Wightwash website (www.wightwash.org.uk) as they emerge.

Looking for a pub to buy or lease? Check out the **Gully Howard** website for details of the following: Castle Inn, Newport; Ponda Rosa, Ashy; Pilot Boat, Bembridge; Yarbridge Inn, Brading; Eight Bells, Carisbrooke; The Griffin, Godshill; White Hart, Havenstreet; Railway Medina, Newport; Worlds End, Newport; Marine, Ryde; Railway, Ryde; Fleming Arms, Ryde; Culver Haven, Culver Down; Ocean Deck, Sandown; Ale and Oyster, Ventnor; Volunteer, Ventnor; Mill Bay, Ventnor; The Vine, St Helens

Recent national news-
In a recent survey “Sky-related customers” spend £4.50 per head, (about a pint and a half, per event)- gross profit £2.25. “And customers would then leave at the final whistle,” says **Mike Smith**, licensee of the **Three Compasses** in Hornsey. This compares unfavourably with quiz night customers, who spend on average £13.50 per head (gross profit £8), because they stay longer and often buy food too. Plus, they interact positively with other customers. He says the Monday quiz night attracts 20 teams – 80-100 people – and has made Monday the pub’s second busiest food day of the week, after Sunday. Mike thinks Sky is sailing “close to the wind” if it believes the pub industry’s demand for its product will keep it paying

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Brass Monkey Beer Festival
10 Champion Ales!

The Penny Red Tea Room

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Appendix i
The Hop Garden Isle

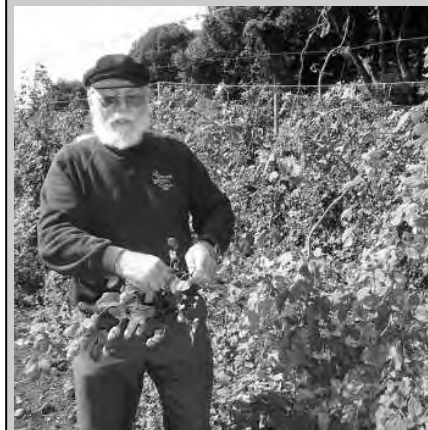
In 1854 the Isle of Wight was the fifth biggest producer of hops in the country. The Royal Navy who had a huge presence in Portsmouth had a far more liberal attitude to alcohol than these days and needed to make sure that their sailors had enough beer to drink. Although the agricultural land in Hampshire is fine for malting barley its shallow chalky soil is not suitable for hops. The agricultural land on the Isle of Wight, particularly in the Arreton Valley, on the other hand was perfect. Sadly the navy’s disapproval of drunken sailors and the import of cheaper foreign hops made hop production unviable and the practice died out.

Appendix ii
A Very Short History Lesson

Hops were introduced into this country around 1400. Prior to that various plants were used to preserve and flavour ale including heather, broom and wormwood. In 1524, hops were condemned as an adulteration by Henry VIII, and an injunction against their use was issued. However, in 1536, Edward VI (Henry’s successor) commended hopped beer as “*notable, healthy, and temperate.*”

The first evidence of hops on the Isle of Wight is in 1627 when Sir John Oglander brought two specialists over from Farnham to create a hop garden. It was a particularly successful introduction. Although being slightly less than one acre in size, in one year it produced “one thousand pounds weight of hops”.

Appendix iii
Roy Cummings – Veteran Hop Picker



As a child, the only holiday Roy Cummings got was a three week break in the hop fields of Kent. “We used to sew two sheets together and stuff them with straw to make a mattress” “The farmers would supply us with food and fuel for our fires but we had to collect our own kindling” “I don’t pick off the hop cones. I pick off a stalk, remove the leaves and then run the stalk between my finger and thumb to strip off the hops. It’s much quicker.” “We were paid by the bushel.” “Hand picking is much better. With automatic picking the machines fill up the baskets with stalks and leaves and all sorts of rubbish.”

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Arreton, Isle of Wight
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 Home cooked meals served every day
 between 12 noon to 9 pm
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Hoppiness made with last year's hops. Veteran hop picker Roy Cummings was on hand to offer advice (see appendix iii).

Nigel explained the rather unusual brewing process. During the boil, a mixture of hops was added at the start, about the middle stage and at the end. Then, during fermentation, two muslin bags containing the hops were suspended in the beer and monitored on a daily basis. The first brew of around 4,500 pints is now ready for consumption.

Although the official CAMRA tasting is due to take place at the Hop Festival on 25th September (see back page for details) I can report that this 5% abv beer was received with much acclaim by all that tasted it. Look out for it in a pub near you soon while stocks last!



Cheers!

Simon toasts brewers Richard and Nigel on the birth of a fine Isle of Wight product

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 UP TO 6 REAL ALES
 Including local ales from Yates' Brewery
 Live Music every Thursday and Friday evenings
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any price. "There are clearly alternatives to watching Blackpool v Wigan," said Mike * **Publicans**- Have you withdrawn Sky in the last year or two, or planning to? How are you making up for it? Let us know how it goes.

A council has shut down a pub after travellers rode five horses into the bar - causing mayhem among locals. More than 100 travellers descended on the **Cross Keys** pub in Erith, Kent, on August 15, and five of them simply rode their horses through the bar doors in a bid to get a drink. Police licensing officer PC Eddy Boston showed CCTV evidence of a woman riding her horse into the pub at an earlier incident in June, saying it had become a 'regular occurrence' - Daily Mail...

*This story reminds me of the time I went for a job interview as a blacksmith. He said, "Have you ever shod a horse?" I said, "No, but I told a donkey to b*gger off once"*

In the next issue (Winter/Christmas) I promise not to mention horses in "neigh way" whatsoever. Did I tell you that I once had a horse called Treacle?.. He had golden stirrups Ta ta!

Paul

Dates for your Diary

18th /19th September
Real Ale and Blues Festival
 Horse and Groom, Ningwood
 Free 1/2 pint for CAMRA members
 (please show membership card)

25th September
Hop Festival and Traditional Skills Fayre
 Ventnor Botanic Gardens

25th—26th September
Sweetcorn Fayre
 Arreton Barns

8th October
Octoberfest at Cowes Yacht Haven
 Authentic German Beers and Cuisine

20th October
Branch Meeting
 Vine, St Helens - 8.30

21st—24th October
V-Bay Festival
 Various venues in Ventnor
 Four days of music, arts, fun family activities, fine dining and real ale.

25th—28th November
Brass Monkey Beer Festival
 Broadway Inn, Totland
 10 Champion Ales past and present
 Ten tastes for a tenner!

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Having adjusted and refined over the first 10 brews, the recipe and colours are now cast in stone. This is not to say that there won't be any variation at all, because real ale is a natural product; made from natural ingredients (Island Brewery's beer, just 4: water, yeast, malt, hops). Just as Real Ale matures and its flavour develops and changes in the cask, any or all the ingredients can and do vary, naturally, according to weather, climate and other influencing factors, so constant monitoring and fine tuning is normal procedure in brewing. But, these brews are now defined and the colours benchmarked.

Good brewing is both an art and science. So, a good brewer has to be both artist and engineer, in the right proportion, and maestro Coleman has that quality! The precision and balance of Isle of Wight Brewery's beers are engineered in artistry and with a passion for the tradition of English brewing and the product, Real Ale, at its finest. Each beer is a benchmark for its style and distinguished by consistency and quality.


With **Wight Gold** reaching a cask a day at the Traveller's Joy, one of the most popular has proved to be **Yachtsman**, especially with the sailing fraternity. They say there is no such thing as bad publicity, and, victims of their own success and demand for the beers, an earlier and one-off confusion with some casks gave customers an impromptu introduction to another beer, and, unintentionally it served well. Casks are now labelled at source and an additional cold room has been added to the brewery.

Popularity and demand have been so much, right from the start, and has continued to grow at such a pace that it has meant the operation has had to hit the ground running, with such logistical problems like hoping that new casks would turn up in time to receive beer in brew and, thank goodness, no expense was spared on such a quality and state of the art brewery to with stand the g-force exerted in the initial accelerated drive in getting things off the ground. And now the operation is flying and cruising along on a steady routine.

With the instant success of each of the five new brews, not least, at the GBBF, and an invention of a 6th – **Golden Knight** - at the Traveller's Joy; better start planning for the Christmas rush. The question are things ready enough to see a seasonal special ale?

John Nicholson

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Food Served 12 - 2.15 6.30 - 9.15
 Sunday 12 - 2.30 not evenings
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have been more laws passed concerning hops than there have been with murder (see appendix ii).

After consultation with hop experts Steve Wright and Dr Peter Darby, Chris decided on First Gold and a relatively new hop, Boadicea. Both varieties are dwarf which makes them more resistant to disease and they both have roughly the same alpha acid percentage. Once picked, the hops have to be dried and vacuum packed. The initial drying is done on the premises in one of the green houses and then they are taken to a commercial oast house in Hereford. Regrettably, the Island no longer has its own oast house although the evidence of one can still be seen at Briddlesford Farm.



The project was dealt a blow last year when brewer Xavier Baker phoned Chris to tell him that Ventnor Brewery was to cease trading. Fortunately Anthony Goddard was willing to take over, and brewers Richard Harvey and Nigel Eldridge were given the job of turning the hops into beer.

This year the hop picking started on 1st September with a band of around 45 including volunteers from the Friends of Ventnor Botanic Garden and the Green Gym. As a reward, they were treated to the first taste of Goddards



The Castle Inn
 "A proper local pub!"
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The Ventnor Botanic Hop Garden



With a backdrop of Ventnor and the English Channel, the hop vines at Ventnor Botanic Garden must have one of the most picturesque settings in the country.

The hops were planted in the spring of 2009 and first harvested at the end of that summer. Now in their second year, they have reached their full potential and the crop has increased four fold.

The idea was the brain-child of Head Gardener

Chris Kidd who wanted to reintroduce hops back to the Isle of Wight (see appendix i) and curator Simon Goodenough who wanted to solve a problem of what to do with a field that had previously only produced wild flowers and rabbits with a



varying degree of success. Simon, incidentally was one of the first ever members of CAMRA. He joined in 1976 at a meeting in Chiswick and was given the membership number 71.



Now, growing hops is not just a matter of buying a packet of seeds from SCATS and hoping for the best. For a start you need a licence. Yes, hop growing is monitored and regulated. In fact there

Chris Kidd and Simon Goodenough



Garden play area and pet animals



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Favourite

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BeerPoint is a system whereby members of the Isle of Wight branch of the Campaign for Real Ale can recommend pubs that they have recently visited and found the beer to be a good standard.

The system is providing a useful tool in highlighting good (or bad) practice.

BeerPoint is administered by our chairman

John Nicholson who can be contacted via editor@wightwash.org.uk



Here is a list of our current **Recommended BeerPoint** pubs by area:

North:

Horseshoe, Northwood; Traveller's Joy, Northwood; Prince of Wales, East Cowes; Sportsman's Rest, Porchfield; Ship and Castle, East Cowes; Anchor, Cowes; Union, Cowes; Fountain, Cowes

East & North East:

Dark Horse, Brading; King Lud, Ryde; Fowler & Co, Ryde; High Park Tavern, Ryde; Lake Huron, Ryde; Solent Inn, Ryde; Simeon Arms, Ryde; Vine, St Helens; Ye Old Village Inn, St Helens; Wheatsheaf, Brading

Central:

Chequers, Rookley; Crown, Shorwell; Three Bishops, Brighthstone; Four Seasons, Wroxall; William Coppin, Newport; Pointer Inn, Newchurch; Prince of Wales, Newport; White Lion, Arreton

South and South East:

Ale and Oyster, Ventnor; Bonchurch Inn; Buddle, Niton; Chine Inn, Shanklin; Crab and Lobster Tap, Ventnor; King Harry's, Shanklin; Village Inn, Shanklin; Old Comical, Sandown; Perks, Ventnor; Volunteer, Ventnor; White Lion, Niton; Village Inn, Shanklin

West:

Prince of Wales, Freshwater; Sun, Hulverstone; Vine, Freshwater; Colwell Bay Inn; Sun, Calbourne; Broadway, Totland; Kings Head, Yarmouth; Red Lion, Freshwater; Waterfront, Totland.

Please check the website for an up-to-date list

www.wightwash.org.uk

and click on "BEER POINT"



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There has been a quiet revolution happening in our bars without many of us noticing.

Fastcask™ is new method of storing cask beer in pub cellars that could see real ale reaching out to a new audience of drinkers.



One of the problems with real ale is the time it takes to settle. A normal beer will take hours if not days to “drop bright” and it is certainly not a good idea to move a barrel once it has been tapped. However, Marstons have come up with a form of yeast treatment that allows beers to settle almost immediately.

With fastcask™ the yeast is removed from the beer by centrifuge and then replaced in the form of a gel bead that is naturally heavier and drops to the bottom of the cask. To produce the beads – which are spherical and about the size of peppercorns – live, fresh yeast is mixed with a slightly acidic alginate gel (made from a seaweed extract). Such beaded yeast has also been used in the productions of some champagnes.

The system has several advantages:-

The barrels can be moved from one bar to another depending on trade. The beer is always ready to be put on sale, immediately after delivery if needed. And because the beer doesn't require “finings” (dried fish bladders) fastcask™ beers are suitable for vegetarians and vegans.


The beer still needs to be tapped and vented to allow it to breathe but fastcask™ will enable real ale to become available to many more pubs and also to such outlets as trains and cruise ships (can someone let P&O know about this before my next cruise, please?)

Fastcask™ was initially used in two beers: Marston's Pedigree and Wychwood Hobgoblin although conventional versions of these beers are still available.

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Most prevalent on the Island is Marston's EPA which only uses fastcask™



Although I have yet to hear if CAMRA have formed an official opinion of fastcask™ there have been some reservations voiced.

Writing in Hop Press (Southern Hampshire) Pat O'Neill writes:

“One thing can be said with certainty; fastcask™ will present CAMRA with a tough problem. Is it really real ale? Marstons have already jumped the gun by claiming that the system fully meets all the Campaign's definitions, whether the grassroots membership will agree with that is very much an open question. One key problem is the need to centrifuge the beer initially into a bright condition; not only does this remove the initial yeast as intended, but it also has the unfortunate consequence of removing some of the bigger protein molecules that add complexity to the flavour.”

What do you think?

Ron's Recommendation

My favourite drinking haunt is the Chine Inn, Shanklin. I have mentioned it before, but there's been a BIG change!

Bill Downer (Prince Charming himself) has now reintroduced food at lunchtimes and evenings. The new Chef, Jay, is a gem, and the menu has to be one of the most varied and clever to be seen in a pub.



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On draught at present are Sharp's Doom Bar, Timothy Taylor's landlord, and a LocAle beer from the new Island brewery.

Ron Bird