British Guild Of Beer Writers

Newsletter April 2016

IS THIS THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE? After 45

years as one of the largest single-issue consumer groups in the world, the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) could be coming to an end.

The organisation is embarking on a consultation of as many as possible of its 170,000 plus members to ask them who and what it should represent in the future — and it may no longer be focussed on real ale.

One of its four founders (and founding Guild member), Michael Hardman, has returned to lead the Revitalisation Project — a wholesale review into the purpose and strategy of CAMRA.

They'll be asked whether CAMRA should move away from promoting and protecting traditional real ale and become more inclusive, or shed subsidiary issues which have become attached to the organisation over the years — such as pub heritage, cider and foreign beer — in order to narrow its focus exclusively on cask-conditioned beer.

Options include becoming a consumer organisation for all beer drinkers, all pub goers regardless of what they drink, or even all alcohol drinkers, regardless of where they drink it.

Revitalisation Project Chairman Michael Hardman said: 'This could mark a fundamental turning point for the Campaign for Real Ale. So fundamental, it may no longer continue as the Campaign for Real Ale and instead become a campaign for pubs, or a campaign for all drinkers.

'It's not up to us though. It's up to members to tell us what they want the Campaign to do in the future.'



More information about the Revitalisation Project can be found at www.camra.org.uk/revitalisation.

Guild Seminar on alcohol guidelines In January this year Dame Sally Davies, England's Chief Medical Office, published new guidelines for low risk drinking, the first time that the UK's sensible drinking message had been revised since 1995. The draconian new advice, which concluded that there is 'no safe limit for alcohol consumption', has been widely questioned in the media.

Paul Chase, a leading commentator on alcohol policy and the author of *Culture Wars and Moral Panic, the story of alcohol and society*, will review the evidence presented to support new guidelines. He will show how the many studies showing significant health benefits from moderate alcohol consumption have been ignored in publishing advice that is more consistent with an anti-alcohol public health agenda than the peer reviewed scientific research.

When: Wednesday 11 May 2016 @7.00 p.m. Where: Cock & Lion, 62 Wigmore St, London W1U 2SA.

To attend: RSVP: Angle Armitage at Cask Marque angle@cask-marque.co.uk

Recreating old beer styles The Guild/BHS event old beer styles was a fantastic success and it was great to have a full house at Fuller's fabulous Hop Cellar. If I receive copies of all the presentations I am planning to put them up on the Guild's website. Many thanks to those Guild members who made presentations and to Paul Hegarty for organising the event.

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Guild AGM Our AGM will be on Wednesday, June 22, London, at an allocation still to be decided. **Guild dinner 2016** — December 1 at the Park Lane Hotel, London. **Tim Hampson**

NEWS

- Norwich City of Ale: May 26-June 5. Launch Event, May 26. Email Frances Brace to reserve a place: frances@redflamecommunications.co.uk.
- Cask ale week: Thursday, September 22-Sunday, October 2. Cask Report Seminar: Wednesday, September 21. Hoping you'll make the most of the opportunity when you're talking to editors and broadcasters over the coming weeks and months.lf you'd like any more info please contact Frances Brace 07432 692309 or Heather Ryland 07527 375847; twitter@caskaleweek.
- New York based Guild member Alex Hall emigrated to the US in 1999 and became involved in the beer scene on the East Coast, however back in 1996 he co-founded the Glastonwick beer and music festival which hits 21 this year (June 3-5). Alex, as he does every year, will be coming back to organise and work on it and he can now announce that tickets are available; for more information go to www.cask-ale.co.uk/beerfestival.html.
- Guild member Allan McLean is associated with the continuing Raise Your Glass! beer heritage exhibition at the Museum of Edinburgh until 25 June. The exhibition, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, is free of charge at the Museum of Edinburgh, a City of Edinburgh Council venue that showcases the city's great past, on the Canongate, part of the Royal Mile. John Martin, chairman of the SBAA and a director of Brewing Heritage Scotland, is the point of contact for members wanting to visit the former brewing area of the Canongate and attend talks and walks supporting the Museum of Edinburgh event, itself on a site once surrounded by breweries. Events need to be prebooked, but the exhibition is open without prior booking during normal Museum of Edinburgh hours. Artefacts and information from Scotland's brewing past are featured in new displays in the Museum of Edinburgh exhibition. Members wanting to attend a walk or talk should phone John Martin on 0131 441 7718 or email martin.j7@sky.com. Talks are at the Museum of Edinburgh on Saturday April 23 at 11am, Wednesday May 18 at 2pm and Thursday June 16 at 2pm. Organised walking tours highlighting where breweries existed and which tell their history

and fascinating stories start from outside John Knox House at 6pm on Wednesday April 20, Friday May 13 and Thursday June 16. For more information contact Allan McLean on 07531 129892 or allanpmclean@gmail.com.

THIRST DEGREE THEATRE

With a fantastic reputation for its thriving theatres and its independent breweries, Sheffield is well known by lovers of beer and culture. Now long-term British Guild of Beer Writers member, author and Master Brewer Alex Barlow is bringing the dramatics of drink to the city as he prepares to open his unique microbrewery in the heart of Sheffield.

The Sentinel Brewing Co will open its doors on April 11 following the conversion of the former Geoff Hall carpet showroom. The project will allow drinkers to see the grain to glass process while sampling beer straight from the tank, in what Alex describes as the 'theatre of brewing at work'.

And on the April 11/12 visitors can even watch the installation of the huge tanks making up Sentinel's brewhouse, each 'a stainless steel work of art', as they enjoy a range of beers already brewed by Alex with friends at Purity and Marble.

Alex was once the youngest ever Master Brewer and the first Englishman to manage a Czech brewery. His mission to educate people about beer has taken in the ALL BEER guide, a runner-up at the 2009 BGBW Awards, principal of Sheffield University's microbrewing MSc course, and he is The Beer Academy's Director of Training, whose courses will be held on site.

Alex wants the Sentinel Brewing Co. to help students of both the city's universities and Sheffield College to understand the brewing, hospitality and catering industries and he also expects the business to take on 18 staff by the end of 2016.

The 25-Hectolitre SK plant turns out 4400 pints per brew which customers can enjoy from one of four different Sentinel branded glass shapes and sizes, specially selected to enhance beer flavour. The sensory experience will be complemented by pairing

CALENDAR 2016

- Craft Brewers Conference, Philadelphia, May 3-6
- Great British Beer Festival, London, August 9-13
- British Guild of Beer Writers awards and dinner,

London, December 1

Please send details of any relevant events to Adrian Tierney-Jones freshly-prepared locally-sourced foods with the beer range, while many of the dishes incorporate the malt, hops, yeast, wort or beer. The kitchen should be up and running from April 2.

Once opened, the Sentinel Brewing Co will also sell beers from other breweries and the facility will be available for private functions — with several bookings already made by local businesses.

Commenting on the opening Barlow, said: 'the city has a proud reputation in the brewery industry and this will be one of only a few breweries in the UK which allow people to experience the process, sample from the tank and take a "fresh beer to go".

'This idea has been in my head for many years so I'm delighted to invite people to join us from Monday April 11 to see the brewhouse being installed. I'm looking forward to providing what will be a truly unique experience for the people of Sheffield and beyond.'

STYLE BORING AT FULLER'S

One of the most appealing aspects of the beer industry is the undercurrent of collaboration. Echoing this same sense of working together to improve civilisation the second joint effort between the Guild and the BHS (not the store but the Brewery History Society) was held on March 24.

The two parties came together to hold a one-day conference titled *Recreating Historical Beer Styles* — generously hosted at Fuller's in Chiswick. The event started with a look at the origins of beer in the company of BHS member lan Hornsey and then focused on specific beers — with Martyn Cornell running through the rise and fall (and return!) of porter and Ron Pattinson showing why he is a brewers' log book in human form.

The afternoon's presentations looked at the fascinating creation of Tutankhamen's beer by S&N in 1990 with Jim Merrington the driving force. By studying the ingredients used in the beer from dregs left in old ceramic pots that were found among the remains in Egypt 1000 bottles were produced and launched to great fanfare at Harrods.

Cue some very interesting photos of Harrods' owner Mohamed Fayed in Tutankhamen garb. To his credit he swiftly wrote a cheque for £47,000 to S&N (that went to charity) for the whole batch, which he then sold in his shop.

Miles Jenner, managing director of Harvey's, then

delivered the gloriously colourful story of the creation of Harvey's Imperial Extra Double Russian Stout that was originally sold into the US market. It nearly ended in disaster because some weeks after bottling he noticed that the corks in some of the bottles he'd kept back in the UK were easing themselves out of the vessel and were only held in place by the metal Champagne-style closures.

After a few of these corks dangerously popped out of the bottles he feared the brewery was doomed as the world's most litigious country would likely have a line of people suing Harvey's for eye injuries or worse. Thankfully he avoided such a fate and subsequently decided to leave the beer longer in tanks for future brews and to use metal bottle tops instead of corks. We now have a wonderful beer that harks back to the period of the Russian Tsar's.

Former brewing microbiologist at Guinness Eddie Bourke then romped through the inspiration behind the brewery's recent moves to recreate old recipes including West Indies Porter and Dublin Porter.

Needless to say all this beer talk resulted in strong demand at Fuller's brewery tap when all the conference presentations were concluded. And in the spirit of collaboration the BGBW/BHS event culminated in the official launch of a new brew — 'Relentless Optimism' — that was produced by the combined efforts of Fuller's, Moor Beer, Cerveza Dumas from Spain and Charles Faram.

Let's hope this collaborative activity continues into 2017 as this Guild member for one reckons the first of these two joint-ventures have been a very welcome addition in the year's diary of beer events. **Glynn Davis**

AND TO FINISH, HERE'S SOMETHING FOR PATRIOTIC EX-PUNK GUILD MEMBERS FROM CORPORATE MEMBERS UTOBEER

