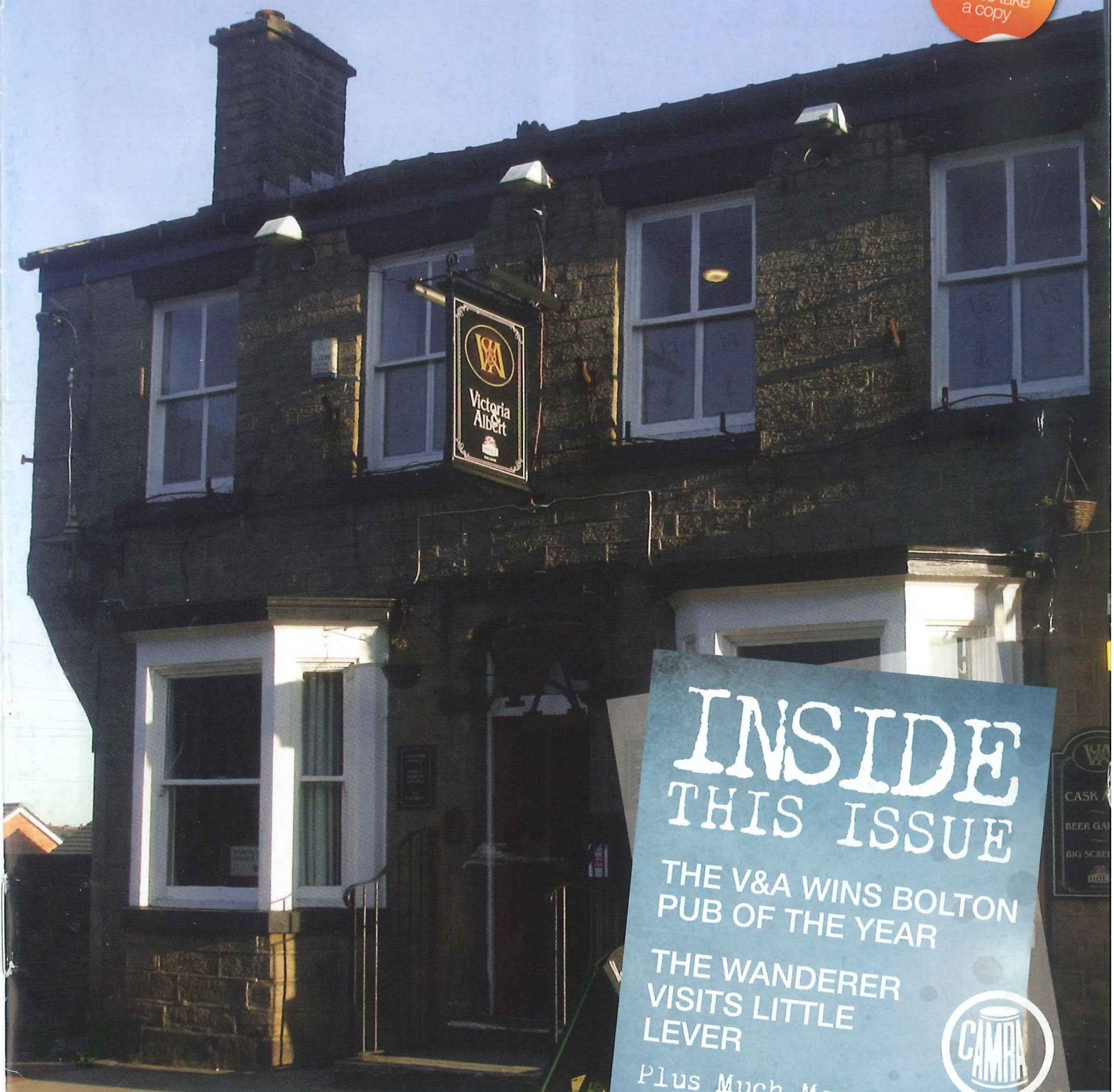


BEER BREAKS

Magazine of the Bolton Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale

Issue 6 | December 2013 - February 2014

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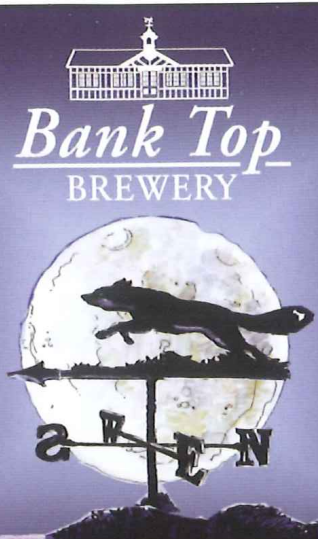
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From the Editor

Hello All!

Welcome again to Bolton Beer Breaks. The reputation and standards of beer, pubs and clubs within the Bolton area continues to grow. The

Ukrainian Club, previous cover star and host to the Bolton CAMRA beer festival have been awarded the regional club of the year by CAMRA. This is no mean feat as the region covers all of Manchester, Wigan, Stockport, South East Lancashire and the High Peak area. The Bolton pub of the year for the second consecutive year, (another very creditable achievement) is The Victoria and Albert in Horwich. The V&A also came third in the regional competition, and both should be congratulated.

There have recently been awards for Blackedge Brewery and Bank Top Brewery and Red Bank Cider continue to grow their business, going from strength to strength. More and more pubs are deciding to have at least one hand pump, with most trying to stock reasonably local ale, and many clubs within Bolton and the region will serve decent ale.

The edition you are reading now is likely to be the last in its current guise, although, fear not, we will return in the new year with a new look and hope to continue entertaining and informing the people of Bolton and further afield. We are always looking for articles that any readers may feel would be of interest, so if you would like to submit anything (this includes advertisers also), please contact the editor at the address on the left.

Happy reading.

Cheers,

Jez Wadd

Bolton Branch Editor



See the back cover for latest news of our 2014 beer festival

Beer, Brewery & Pub News

Congratulations to Bank Top Brewery & Blackedge Brewing Company

Sharples-based Bank Top Brewery landed the top prize in the bottled speciality beers category with their Port O'Call ale, while Radcliffe's Brightside won the overall championship with Amarillo, an American-style single hop IPA. Irwell Works from Ramsbottom also finished third in the standard mild ales section with their Tin Plate brew.

More than 60 judges sampled the beer at the Hawkshead Brewery Beer Hall in Staveley, Cumbria where the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates (SIBA) were staging the competition.

Bank Top boss Dave Sweeney - a trustee of the North West SIBA - said in advance of the event he would be delighted if any of the local breweries received awards, and he was not disappointed.

"It's a great feeling," he said. "Everything is rosy for the micro brewers in and around the Bolton area, and it's fantastic.

"It was a massive surprise, because although we have won awards for Port O'Call before, it was the first time we entered the bottled category.

"The judging is very fair. No one knows which brewery is which when they are being tasted throughout the day, with the winners' identity only revealed at the end."

Family-run Brightside, meanwhile, were caught on the hop by their own success.

The company run by Neil Friedrich, wife Maxine, with their children Lance and Carley could not spare anyone to attend the event.

Carley said: "It was total surprise. The reason we didn't go was that we had so much going on the day before, it was impossible. Then I got a text message from someone at Irwell Works, saying we



Blackedge are presented with their SIBA certificate

had won, and we were over the moon."

The Friedrichs only started brewing beer from the back of their bakery in 2011, and have only become a full-time brewery within the last few months.

There was also a bronze for Horwich brewers Blackedge for their Black Port in the speciality beers category. Blackedge are now selling bottled ales, gift packs, branded polo shirts & glassware direct from the brewery. For details, contact the brewery - www.blackedgebrewery.co.uk

Pub & Club News

The Ainsworth Arms, Halliwell Road - the licence has been taken over from Punch Taverns by Convivial Management Services, parent company for Dunscar Bridge Brewery who are understood to be carrying out a major refurbishment to open as a new Dunscar Bridge Brewery tap house.

Congratulations to **The Dunscar Arms**, Darwen Road, on winning the Bolton CAMRA Autumn Pub of the Season award.

The Bleachworks, in conjunction with **Dunscar Bridge Brewery**, is running a competition to name a seasonal Christmas beer. The prize is two tickets to the Bleachworks New Year's Eve Ball, and a pin of Dunscar Bridge beer. For information visit www.bleachworks.com

The end for **The Red Lion** in Westhoughton looks to be near. Planning permission has been granted to open a care facility on the site, and a further application to demolish part of the pub, which has been closed for about two years, has been submitted. A decision on the partial demolition is due to be made in the new year.

Bank Top Ale House - the former Brown Cow in Horwich is currently undergoing major

refurbishment and will open in early December as the second Bank Top Brewery tap.

The Park in Farnworth – the owners, Trust Inns, have sold the pub to developers and it has closed its doors as a pub for the last time.

The Windmill in Westhoughton sold By Punch Taverns in 2012 to Platinum Projects Europe Ltd has been demolished to make way for new housing.

The **Cross Guns in Westhoughton** has been sold by Admiral Taverns to developers and is being demolished. The **Cross Guns on Deane Road** in Bolton was delicensed by owners Punch Taverns in July. The remaining Bolton **Cross Guns on Blackburn Rd** in Egerton is alive and well and has had a recent refurbishment, usually has 3 cask beers available.

The **Waggon & Horses** on the A6 in Westhoughton is closed until further notice following a change of licensee by Marston's.

The **Kings Arms Hotel** in Farnworth now has an additional handpump, bringing the total to 6. Bank Top and Cross Bay are usually on the bar, generally with beers from other local micros.

The Wellington on Market Street in Farnworth has reopened after a refurbishment and is now serving real ale, recently Thwaites Lancaster Bomber. This follows the pub being sold by Punch Taverns to Western UK Hilton Park Ltd.

The former Royal British Legion Club in

Blackrod is now open as **Heroes Bar**, serving real ale from two handpumps.

The boarded up Cattlemarket on Brunel St in Bolton was delicensed by owners Enterprise Inns in July.

The **Ellesmere Road Rec Club** is serving Real Ale, currently: Thwaites Original - 3.6% ABV, Wychwood Hobgoblin – 4.5%, Adnams Ghostship – 4.5%, Non-members of the club can sign in for £1. Contact Marcus at the club for details. Ellesmere Road Rec Club, 22 Ellesmere Road, Bolton BL3 3JT.

Latest entries to the **Branch LocAle** scheme aimed at promoting venues serving quality real ale brewed within 25 miles of the town are the **Ellesmere Club** in Morris Green, the **Fox & Stork** on Halliwell Rd, the **Hope & Anchor** at Doffcocker and the **Stopes Tavern** in Little Lever. For the full list of 22, visit the Branch website.

All Branch Pubs serving real ale and/or real cider are now listed on the new online CAMRA WhatPub database at whatpub.com and details or changes can be updated using the Submit Changes option. Camra members can sign into the site with their membership number and Postcode password and score beers whilst drinking their pint using their mobile, no need to wait until you get home. Use the search facility to find details of the nearest pubs too!

Real Cider & Perry In Bolton

When I arrived at the Greater Manchester Cider and Perry Festival in June, I was extremely surprised to discover that two of the ciders on offer were produced in Bolton. Red Bank Cider, run by Lee Thorne, went into production last autumn. Lee has used cider apples from the West Country to produce two ciders, Proper Cider at 6.1% ABV and Real Cider at 7.8% ABV. Both were available at the Cider and Perry Festival, where Proper Cider was the first to sell out and Real Cider was voted Cider of the Festival.

Lee produced 4000 litres of cider, 3000 of which have been bottled. The rest is available in 5 litre, 10 litre or 20 litre bag-in-boxes. In the Bolton CAMRA

area, Red Bank ciders first appeared at The Bowling Green, Horwich and Downtown on Bradshawgate. More recently, a specially commissioned 4.4% version has been on sale at The Levers Arms. The ciders have also been available from a number of off-licences, including Here To Please You, Manchester Rd, Westhoughton.

Red Bank ran a successful stall at Bolton Food and Drink Festival, where sales covered the cost of bottling the ciders. Lee is hoping to increase production to around 24,000 litres in this next season. The ciders also went down very well at the Bolton Lads and Girls Club Beer Festival at Bolton Rugby Club, for which Lee produced some flavoured ciders using rum and natural fruit flavourings (Note -ciders containing added flavourings do not qualify as real cider according to CAMRA's definition).

Barristers on Bradshawgate has introduced real cider - Thatchers Heritage cider is available.

If you have any info on the availability of real cider and perry in Bolton, contact Alison Whitaker, Cider Officer on cider@boltoncamra.org.uk.

The Wanderer

Little Lever

On the easterly most edge of Bolton lies the **Stopes Tavern** (serviced regularly by the 524 bus, every 30 minutes through the evening up until 23:45) and this is where I begin with a good pint of **Outstanding Blonde**. As you enter the pub there's a cosy parlour to your right, the tap room is to the left down to the front of the pub, and the bar, with a single hand-pump, is to the right of this. For many a year the pub has served good form **Bank Top Flat Cap**, only, but beers from Outstanding and Brightside breweries have made recent appearances. It's a lovely local, but time now to stroll, just down the road.

The **Queen Anne** is a large, imposing, **Thwaites** house, on the left side of the road heading toward the village. On entering, to the right is a large lounge area, with the tap room straight ahead to the back of the pub, but I'm going to the bar area on the left. The 3 hand-pumps serve: Wainwright as standard; Original, or Lancaster Bomber; and usually a seasonal. Can't go wrong here, as I plump for the **Little Bewdy** to enjoy the last



Henighans

tastes of summer! The pub has a community focus and various games teams; including, so I'm led to believe, a darts team for donkeys?

It's a 10 minute walk to my next port of call, **Henighans**, which is through the centre and on the right up Lever Street. This is a very open pub, with TV screens all around for the sports loving locals, who can also play a bit in representative teams. Again just the one beer, but a good **Bank Top Flat Cap** always goes down a treat.

Back round the corner onto Church Street and I'm soon in the **New Inn**, which has a central bar dividing the two distinct areas of the pub. Once again it's a sports oriented pub, with a couple of large TV screens, but regularly has entertainment in the area to the left of the bar. Two beers here: **Bank Top Flat Cap** and **Holt's Bitter** are both usually served well, and I enjoy a pint of the latter.

Finally, it's a short saunter down to the **Jolly Carter**, which has come back to form over the last few months. I choose to go through the door on the right into the lounge side of the bar, which has a raised snug area and hand-pumps on that bar, though the tap room on the other side is spacious. Whilst there are still 3 hand-pumps the pub is allowed to serve only one beer, which is a rotating guest from **Bank Top**, and this evening happens to be a tasty pint of **Old Slapper**. However, as with so many pubco owned establishments, there will be a change of tenant soon (sometime in October) and we can only hope the improvements continue.

It takes 5 minutes to get across the main road and down for the bus back to town; our eastern outpost isn't "the badlands" for real ale, as it's been a very enjoyable little wander, and one worth doing again, and again, and again.



Stopes Tavern

New Inn



Jolly Carter

The Masons Arms

Egerton

Somewhat difficult to see by people passing, the Masons Arms stands on Blackburn Road in Egerton. It is part of a terrace of houses and if you have time to drop in for a pint, you step into a warm, welcoming atmosphere, where the ale was on top form on my visit.

The landlady Jolene assisted by her mother Vivien have been in charge for the best part of 10 years and have managed to cultivate a proper pub. Jolene said "We sometimes get lost in the battle of the local micropubs", although for the last world cup they decorated the exterior of the pub and won a national award, the prize for which was the only large screen TV in the place. There is one large bar in the middle of the room where the beers on offer are always Jennings Cumberland and Theakstons



Best Bitter and 2

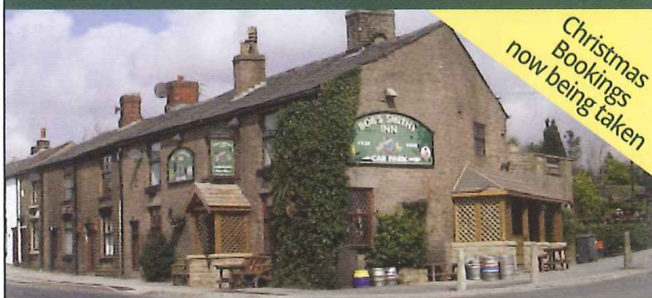
further hand pumps which rotate with guest beers, on this occasion from Theakstons and Fullers. These beers are from the Star Pubs list to which the pub is tied. The Masons is a proper pub, where you will enjoy good beer and friendly service. Take some time to give it a try.



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A Trip to Shropshire

Bishop's Castle

What could be better for a day out than a nice country town with a brewery? The best answer is a nice country town with two breweries.

Thus it was, a short while ago, I found myself in the quiet country town of Bishop's Castle, which nestles amid the Shropshire hills, just over 20 miles southwest of Shrewsbury, and only a stone's throw from the Welsh border.

There is an hourly train from Manchester to Shrewsbury, where you can get a bus to Bishop's Castle. If travelling by car, you could leave the M56 at junction 10, and then enjoy a pleasant drive down the A49 to Shrewsbury, before picking up the A488 to the town.

Older CAMRA members will be aware that the **Three Tuns** has been brewing in Bishop's Castle long before CAMRA was founded. The truth is that they have been brewing on and off since well before 1642, when they were properly licensed. The pub next to the brewery has a lovely, rambling rustic feel to it and, as is so often the case when you are "out in the sticks", it is very easy to fall into conversation with the locals.

Five of their beers are always available on the pumps, so I (obviously!) tried them all. They included Rantipole (an old local word for a lecherous, rakish youth) and an excellent stout. Prices ranged from £2.60 to £2.95 per pint.

From there a gentle stroll down the main street will bring you to the town's other brewery, the **Six Bells**, with its small adjoining tap across from the parish church. One of their beers is called Big Nev (named for the brewer) and another is named "Ow-Do" – as much a Shropshire greeting as a Lancastrian one.

There are other pubs in the town – **The Boars Head**, **The Kings Head**, **The Vault**, and the **Castle Hotel** – which all serve real ale. The beers available included Salopian, Wye Valley and Joule's of Market Drayton were available when I was there. The close proximity of these pubs means that you can enjoy an easy crawl from one to the other.



At the tiny tourist office, there are several leaflets available which will guide you on circular walking routes through the surrounding peaceful countryside. Alternatively Ludlow is a wonderful old gem of a town, less than 20 miles drive away, or you could spend a day in Shrewsbury.

The **Old Castle Hotel** will provide you with comfortable accommodation. However if you would prefer an excellent homely B&B then I can strongly recommend the **Poppy House** (poppy-house@sky.com or 01588 638443). The latter does three nights for the price of two in winter, which I feel is excellent value.

Whichever you choose, they are both a minutes stroll from the **Three Tuns**!

Richard Blagg

GUESS WHICH PUB?

Answer in the next edition

Clue - *Think of November.*

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CAMRA & Me

Paul Romoff's story

Back in the late 60's I was not into a lot of beer drinking, but I often went to one of my local pubs where I enjoyed a pint (or three?) of draught Worthington E – which cost somewhere around 1/3d a pint (about 6p)!

From the early 70's it became clear that pubs that had up to then dispensed beers through handpumps or by gravity were gradually being provided with shiny new taps. The beers that came out of this new equipment had different names but tended to be remarkably similar in character and also, because they were forced up the pipes by gas, they were fizzy. All in all, not to my palate.

In 1974, my job took me to Bristol and in about 1978/1979 it was by chance that I learned of a Beer Festival being held in the local Exhibition Centre. My involvement with CAMRA started here. I was hooked! After joining the Campaign I attended the next AGM and (for my sins) became Branch Treasurer. A post I held for the next seven years!

In 1991, my job brought me to the North-West where the local Branch was one of my first points of contact.

Although my activity within CAMRA is not as much as it used to be, I still manage to do a bit from time to time – whether it was helping to save the Dog and Partridge a few years ago or acting as Finance Officer at the recent mini event at the Ukrainian Club.

So what, you ask has CAMRA done for me?

For a start, I feel proud that I have been part of an Organisation that has quite literally saved traditional British Beers and pubs - this is a fight that continues to this day.

I have been given the opportunity to visit different parts of the country to collect beers for festivals or as a visitor to numerous breweries - many of which have long-since disappeared.

I have been given the unique opportunity to assist at Beer Festivals, learn new skills and work alongside others with similar aims and interests.

In addition, CAMRA has been like a large social club where, over the years, I have met many people both on a National and Local level all of which I can call acquaintances and some of them I like to think of as friends.

MEMBERS WEEKEND & AGM

25th - 27th April 2014

CAMRA Members' Weekend, featuring the National AGM and Conference, is where our members discuss our future policy and direction. The weekend also offers the opportunity to members to socialise with friends, visit recommended pubs and go on organised trips. The Members' Weekend is open to all CAMRA members and will be held at The Spa Complex, Scarborough.

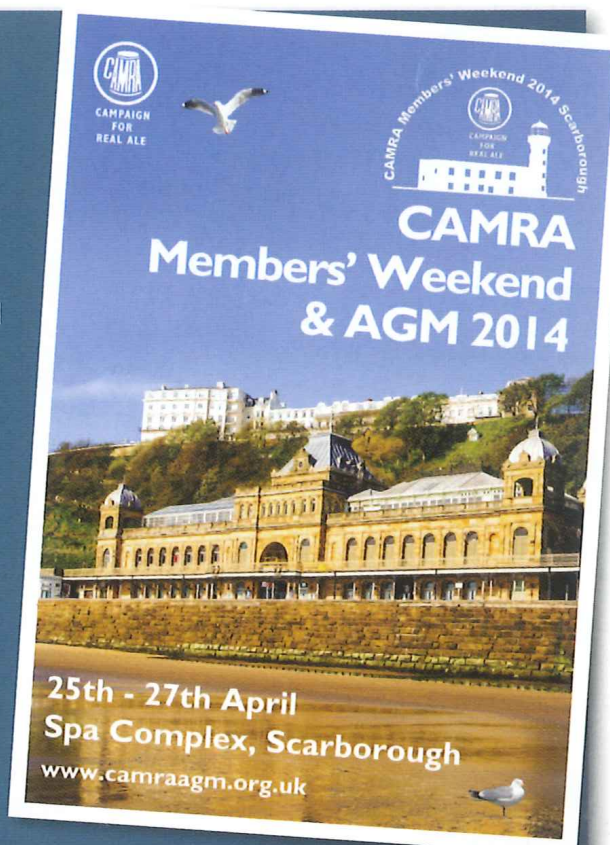
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1. Visit the Members' Weekend website: www.camraagm.org.uk
2. Select "Member Login" at the top right hand corner to log in.
3. Once logged in, click "Register" on the home page or on the navigation bar located in the top right hand corner.
4. Once clicked, you should receive on-screen confirmation that your registration has been successful.

Please note that joint members will need to login and register individually.

Closing date for pre-registration is Friday 28th March 2014.

As a pre-registered member you will receive the Members' Weekend Handbook before the event. This will be sent out the week following the cut off for pre-registration. Members' Conference packs will be available at the venue.



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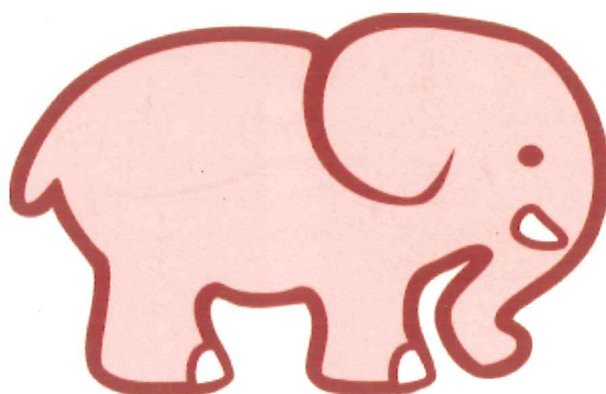
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CAMRA members **just £1 entry at all sessions** on production of card

Over 18s ONLY except Saturday before 4:00pm

www.boltoncamra.org.uk

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