
To mark the First Stonehaven Real Ale Festival

A Homecoming of Scotland's Beers

A BEER from a long-vanished North-east brewery will be brought back to life as part of the Stonehaven Real Ale Festival. For the first time in 100 years, drinkers will be able to enjoy a pint as produced by the town's once-thriving Bridge of Cowie Brewery. The Memorial ale is being recreated by organisers of the festival, which is being held on November 5 and 6 at Stonehaven Town Hall as a Homecoming of Scotland's Beers. Festival organiser Robert Lindsay said: "The festival is a celebration of Scotland's brewing tradition, so we thought it only right to recreate the sort of ale brewed in Stonehaven's last working brewery.

"Bridge of Cowie Brewery stood on the site of today's Burns Memorial Garden in Stonehaven, but closed its doors around 1909. It marked the end of a thriving brewing industry in the town, which once had two breweries on the go.

"It's a real thrill to bring back an ale that was last seen more than a century ago. We think that nod to the past will strike a chord with the hundreds of folk we will welcome to the festival." Robert, a master brewer and owner of the town's Marine Hotel, carried out extensive research to come up with the recipe for the Memorial ale. "You can tell from excise records what sort of malt was being bought in and what strength of beer was being brewed.

"Our Memorial ale will be typical of a Scotch Ale being brewed in the late 1800s. "It will be darker, stronger and sweeter than the sort of ales we are used to these days, with very little hops to it." Great care has been taken to recreate the process, conditions and temperatures that would have been found at the Bridge of Cowie Brewery, where brewing coppers would have been heated by wood fires and ales left to ferment in colder storage conditions than today.

The Memorial ale - named in tribute to the vanished brewery and to reflect the festival's logo, which incorporates Stonehaven's iconic War Memorial - is being brewed at the acclaimed Deeside Brewery in Lumphanan. The brewery has also come on board as official sponsor for the Stonehaven Real Ale Festival. Deeside owner Rob James said: "I was delighted to help with the brewing of the Memorial ale and when I saw the passion and commitment of the festival organisers, I wanted to be involved in the whole event.

"I know this is going to be a very special festival, with the emphasis not just on enjoying the ales, but also celebrating a traditional craft - as well as having a lot of fun. "I really see this festival growing in years to come to become a major part

of the North-east calendar." The festival, to be staged in Stonehaven Town Hall, will feature music and other entertainment.

Strictly not-for-profit, funds from the event will go to local charities and community groups.

To find out more, visit www.stonehavenrealalefestival.co.uk

To find out more about the Deeside Brewery, visit www.deesidebrewery.co.uk