



# SCOTCH WHISKY REVIEW

EDITION 8

AUTM N 1997

## A LOAD OF (Ferin)TOSH

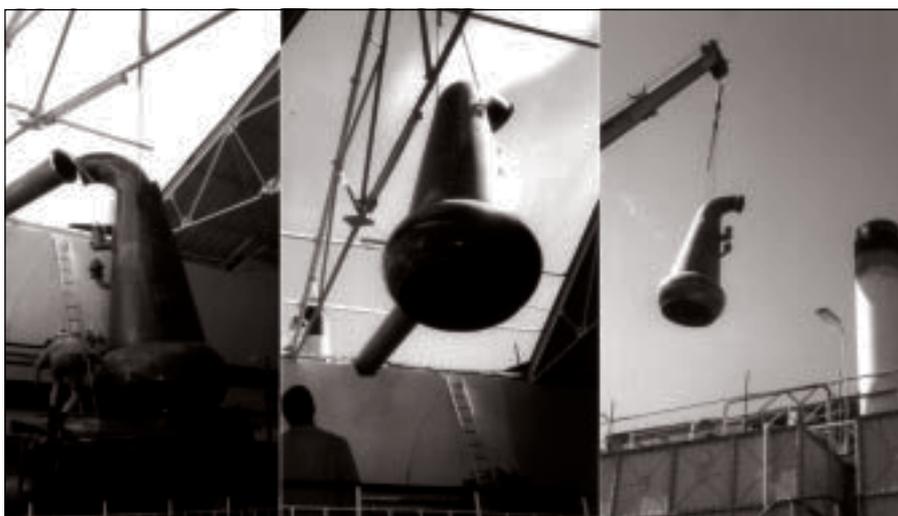
There is a huge discussion within (and without) the industry about the role of independent bottlings. The matter has recently been in the courts at home and as I write, action is starting in the US. Thankfully, no-one with any influence wants to see these bottlers removed from the trade but some would have them bound by trade mark considerations and with some good argument.

In a surprise telephone call, one senior member of the Scotch Whisky Industry asked me if I shared his irritation regarding a new release of five single malts from Invergordon Distillers. Each a regional representative, three are named after long-gone distilleries; Kincapple, Glenluig and Ferintosh—the most historical of all Scotch Whisky's heritage. My caller proposed that where the appellation 'single' is employed the distillery of origin should be declared as well as the bottler responsible. As Loch Fyne Whiskies only stocks malts with the distillery of origin clearly defined our policy should be clear but I thought it strange that a major producer with several distilleries under his control should want to see what is effectively his name on an independent bottling over which he has no quality control.

What do you, the consumer, think? This led me to thoughts about the Invergordon five pseudo or bogus whiskies. Apart from the three ancient distilleries mentioned, the other two have suitably established names; 'Craignure' is the Island representative (Invergordon own Jura, at Craighouse) and 'Druichan' from Isaly (presumably pertaining to Bruichladdich, Druich/Bruich gedit?).

Invergordon was taken over by Jim Beam in 1993 in a very hostile battle. On acquiring the four malt distilleries Beam closed three immediately including the supreme Bruichladdich.

Seems they want the heritage but not the responsibilities.



## SWAN-UPPING SEASON SUCCESSFUL!

Speyside's biggest pots were refurbished during this summer's silent season. A new swan neck for a wash-still, a new condenser and a still house roof were installed at Glenfarclas. Stills last about 15-20 years producing about 15 million litres of Glenfarclas in that time. See p8 for a bonzer deal on the 15 & 30yo.

## HOORAY! GLEN GARIOCH: BACK FROM EXTINCTION

Just in time for its 200th anniversary in November 1997, Glen Garioch Distillery has been revived from what was previously described as 'permanent' closure in 1995 after owners Morrison Bowmore Distillers had failed to find a buyer (see SWR4).

After considerable expenditure on the refurbishment of distilling equipment full production restarted in August. Morrison's have recognised that the interest in single malts and the desire of consumers to sample a wide variety of whiskies make the proposition of production worthwhile. In 1994/5 the company became wholly owned by Suntory of Japan and it was shortly afterwards that the closure was announced after a long period of mothballing. Now it appears that same overseas investment has revived the distillery.

See page 8 for a deal on the 'caber-tosser' malt, 'black' Glen Garioch 29yo.

## LOWLAND REVIVAL LIKELY

The future of two closed Lowland distilleries looks brighter—thanks to the potential of tourism.

**Bladnoch** will produce 'tiny' quantities under the new owner with the assistance of United Distillers, who still own the Bladnoch brand. Such quantities will be economically viable due to visitor receipts and will be sufficient to satisfy the demand as a single malt. See Charlie MacLean's Diary on page 12.

A proposal to revive **Rosebank** Distillery is part of a £70m project to restore the Forth-Clyde canal linking Glasgow & Edinburgh. "If I have my way, it will happen," Dr Alan Rutherford, UD's Head of Production told LFW. "There is much to be finalised with the British Waterways Board concerning land, access, planning and finance but all the parties concerned are keen. There is a determination that limited distilling, supported by a visitor attraction, will happen."

Dr Rutherford announced the closure of both distilleries in 1993.

## THE LOBBYIST



**Hugh Morrison is a crucial member of the Scotch Whisky Industry.**

### **LFW: What is your job?**

I am Director General of the Scotch Whisky Association and have been for four years. Prior to that I was a civil servant with the Scottish Office working in international trade, inward investment, economic development and regional policy — all highly relevant to my current position with the SWA. This background is useful given that much of my work involves discussion with governments and officials.

**LFW: Tell us about the Association.** The Association was formed in 1917 as The Whisky Association based in London with branches in Scotland and Ireland. In 1943 it became the Scotch Whisky Association.

The SWA is the trade association which represents 95% of Scotch Whisky producers, wholesalers and brokers. We have 66 members, representing 26 corporate entities.

A levy is raised from members, calculated according to size and turnover so the big boys pay more than the small. We have a Council with 18 members. At the AGM it is one member one vote but I've never seen a vote required.

I have a staff of 36 in Edinburgh and 2 in the London office which is used as an address and meeting place.

**LFW: What is the role of the Association?**

Our stated aim is 'to promote and protect the interests of the Scotch Whisky Industry'. We have a varied range of things to do; we promote Scotch as the highest quality spirit and protect its quality image, and collect and present industry statistics. As part of image protection, just recently we mounted a campaign to warn the public of the dangers of buying casks of whisky as investments from unscrupulous traders. We also advised the authorities of this activity and such traders have been deterred from continuing.

Because the industry exports to 206

countries there is a large international dimension to our work.

Our top priority is the protection of Scotch Whisky, its geographical origin and name. Anywhere in the world you will find products which are packaged to look like Scotch but which are not. If we became like "cheddar" cheese and you could make "Scotch" anywhere the industry would be in very real difficulties. We use the laws of the countries to protect what are in fact our intellectual property rights.

**LFW: Is that a legal or a political battle?**

In countries that have laws on intellectual property rights we use the laws of that country. In countries that haven't adopted laws about geographical origins or type definition for product, we try to get them to establish the law and then we go after infringers using that law.

We have a powerful legal department in house but when we are pursuing cases around the world we need local agents and lawyers.

Major recent successes are that now the US recognises the EU definition of Scotch Whisky, in return the European Union recognises the American definition of Bourbon. As of last year the Australians have adopted the minimum European strength for whisky of 40%.

Our principal political work is in trying to reduce trade barriers. In about 140 countries that we export to there are restrictions of one kind or another ranging from tax discrimination to labelling regulations that only apply to Scotch, such as health warnings or strip stamps which enable customs to hold things up on the quayside. Some countries have substantial tariff discrimination or monopolies which can restrict circulation of a product. It is constraints such as these that we go for.

**LFW: Is tax the main issue?**

Yes. Last year we finally won success in Japan, where the tax rate on the local product *shochu* was seven times less than the rate on Scotch whisky. This was quite clearly contrary to world trade rules and we had the World Trade Organisation set up a panel which insisted that Japan harmonise its tax on all spirits. This has been a 25-year battle that started when Scotch was taxed higher than Japanese whisky. Whisky taxes were harmonised in 1989, but *shochu* continued to enjoy an advantage. Over the next three years all spirits taxes will be either increased or reduced to equality. After the first harmonisation sales of Scotch rose from £70m to £130m so this latest move will be very beneficial.

**LFW: How do you get the WTO to set up a panel?**

We lobby the British Government and the EU. Now we have succeeded in Japan, the next targets are Korea and Chile. Korea has discrimination in favour of *soju* and Chile in favour of the local wine-based spirit called *pisco*. WTO panels on these cases are in the course of being established.

**LFW: Do you do this all alone?**

We liaise very closely with spirit producers from Europe, America and Canada and, to a lesser extent, with other wine & spirit products with geographical origins. Because Scotch is the major traded spirit both in terms of value and number of countries exported to, we are either in the lead or well to the front.

**LFW: Where next?**

Taiwan has been giving us all considerable concern, but now the Taiwan government has agreed to change the tax regime so all spirits are taxed at the same rate and will introduce product definitions for the protection of geographical origin. They are aiming for implementation of these laws by July next year but I shall only relax when it is a done deal.

India introduced a ban about 30 years ago on a large range of goods, including Scotch, under provision for a country to ban or restrict imports in order to protect its balance of payments. India persuaded GATT that it needed this kind of protection. Since then it has developed massively and now the WTO (GATT's successor) has told India that this kind of protection is no longer justified and they must liberalise.

One Indian official told me there is as much 'Scotch' consumed in India as is produced in Scotland! That illustrates the other problem — there is a lot of counterfeiting. Scotch is regarded by Indian consumers as the pinnacle of status, and India is a massive spirits market with great potential.

After India, China and Eastern Europe are next on our list. China is an applicant for membership of the WTO and we are arguing with the EU that China must liberalise its spirits market as a condition of entry. It is potentially a massive market, and I've recently been in China talking to officials about the requirements for liberalisation. In Eastern Europe those applicants for membership of the European Union will have to liberalise their spirits markets in order to join.

**LFW; You must be very pleased.**

We have been making good progress on discrimination within spirits but there is still very considerable discrimination between spirits and wine and beer. Recently a Japanese journalist asked me, now you have sorted out discrimination between spirits how about the wine/beer/spirit imbalance? Are you going to ask Japan to balance that?

I replied that our objective worldwide is that the only sensible way to tax alcohol is in accordance with the alcohol content, whether beer, wine or spirit. I would like to see harmonisation across the categories but until I persuade the British Government to harmonise taxes here I don't see much hope of persuading the Japanese!

**LFW: What is the British argument against that?**

Only tradition and history, there is no real sensible argument. At present we

have a system where whisky, the local product, is taxed at 1.5 times the rate of wine, which we import, and 1.75 times that of beer. In 1920 Mr Chamberlain introduced very substantial increases in tax on spirits in order to finance munitions. When asked why he wasn't putting a tax on wine he said that nobody drinks it, and you don't tax a product that nobody uses!

When I asked our last Chancellor of the Exchequer, Ken Clarke, if he could think of any other country which discriminates against its own product, he could not. Many countries discriminate in favour of the home product, contrary to world trade rules, but there is no rationale in economics for discriminating in favour of imports.

The Japanese case to the WTO referred to European discrimination between wine and other drinks asking why shouldn't they discriminate also? We send a very strong signal overseas that this kind of discrimination, which harms our overseas market, is all right because we discriminate here in Britain.

Sometimes you will find people advancing health or social arguments for discrimination, the idea that so called 'hard' liquor should be taxed more, but as borne out in the government's sensible drinking message, moderate drinking of alcohol is good for you, excessive drinking is bad. It doesn't matter which type of drink it is, alcohol is alcohol. And, if you look at social disorder there is no evidence that spirits play a major part in social disorder in this country.

So we strongly argue to the British Government that this is an important industry which should be looked after rather than hampered.

**LFW: But they need to raise tax.**

True, and it is not for me to tell the Chancellor how he should be balancing his books, but when Ken Clarke last increased the tax on spirits, revenue fell. When he then froze and later decreased tax, spirits revenue stabilised and then increased. The rate of tax on spirits is at the point of diminishing returns, put the tax up and you earn less because people switch to other alcohol products. Why? Because these are competing products and taxing them differently discriminates against the home produced product.

There is a massive problem with cross border shopping, smuggling, fraud and diversion for which our new government has set up a review. I've told them that it's all very well looking at the problem and applying a bit of sticking plaster—such as more policemen at Dover or tightening up documentation—but that only addresses the symptoms and not the cause which is that the UK, when compared with our continental neighbours, has very high taxes on alcohol across the board.

The Chancellor must reduce tax on alcohol and that on spirits at a greater rate. This discrimination, which encourages people to drink imported products,

exports jobs from the glens of Scotland to the vineyards of France.

**LFW: So how does one go about pressing an argument?**

First, have a good case well presented. We employ economic consultants to help produce supporting arguments.

Then ask, who do you want to influence? My method is to consider a series of concentric circles—at the centre is the target, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the first circle out are Treasury and Customs Officials who advise him. In the next ring are other government departments and ministers who put in submissions to the Treasury—we seek support from MAFF (Agriculture and Food) and also the Scottish Office. Next, back-bench MPs are crucially important—a Chancellor will rarely make a change if he doesn't think he will get support from the House. The outer circle is the media, whose support will make a crucial difference. A media campaign and a few receptions for back bench MPs can be quite effective at getting things started. We have always sought a meeting with the Chancellor before the Budget to make sure our case is well understood.

## *economics of the madhouse*

**LFW: In 1994, after losing VAT on fuel, the Chancellor raised tax on Scotch, was that a shock to you?**

It was, as prior to that we had had two duty freezes. Ken Clarke had to respond very rapidly to the crisis of a hole in his budget, to calm the City. Excise duty is the simplest way of raising money, but I don't think he actually thought it through. I predicted that he would get a drop of £100m in revenue, which officials claimed was a grotesque overestimate, but it turned out to be a £123m drop. I got my knuckles rapped for describing this as the 'economics of the madhouse'! In 1995 he froze the tax on beer & wine and reduced spirits because we had convinced him of two things, an increase in revenue and a logical change in economics towards equity for the benefit of international trade and national interest. We secured two 4% drops in a row.

I hope that Gordon Brown who has adopted so many other elements of Clarke's strategy will adopt this element too, and I commend it to him.

**LFW: How responsive is Gordon Brown who has put tax up already.**

We shall see, I have yet to meet him in Government. He has set up a review on excise duties on spirits and tobacco, which is just what we had been urging, but it is not examining tax structure. The review is to report back by 31st December. Unfortunately he has also announced a tax rise on 1st January so

there is work to be done.

**LFW: So what is Europe doing?**

In Europe we also have a bizarre situation, a single European market of which one of the objectives is to harmonise taxation to eliminate competitive distortions, but where distortions on alcohol taxation have been maintained.

In 1993 the Commission established a system of duty rates whereby states had to charge a minimum rate. On wine this is zero, beer about 2.5p per half pint and on spirits it is either 8p or 16p (depending on national precedent) per equivalent 35ml measure. Straight away there is institutionalised discrimination between wine, beers and spirits, helping the southern member states who produce wine.

Note that these are minimum rates, there is no maximum. Seven countries apply no excise on wine but all apply more than the minimum on spirits.

Furthermore we have 15 member states with different rates. This variance has led to massive problems. We are not particularly worried about cross border shopping which is legitimate because if someone goes to France to buy a bottle of Scotch it is still from the Glens. Much more damaging is smuggling, people who bring in more than they should, and various tax frauds where goods sold for export never actually leave the country. This is damaging not only to the Exchequer but also bad for our industry because products at knockdown prices don't help our quality image—and it is something the Association is doing its best to stop.

Certain member states, in order to meet Maastricht criteria for single currency entry, have put up the taxes on spirits while leaving wine untouched. This is totally contrary to the spirit if not the law of the European market and we have been pressing the Commission in the first instance to stop matters getting worse; member states should agree not to increase discrimination between spirits and wine. Over the longer term we must harmonise. But tax decisions in Europe have to be taken by the council of ministers with unanimous agreement, and it is not in France or Italy's interest to put a positive rate on wine, so *im-passe*. It is very frustrating, but I hope that I will convince them that they ought to stop matters getting worse. This is a very long term battle.

Europe is a very important market to us; 40% of our exports go to other parts of the EU and it is a market where we could do better.

**LFW: If you are pouring a whisky here which do you offer?**

We have a rotor system from members and dispense from a decanter so nobody knows what's inside.

**LFW: Your desert island dram?**

I hope that I will be allowed to take a case of different whiskies, so I can introduce Man Friday to some of our splendid blends and to the magnificent range and variety of single malts.

**LFW: Very diplomatic!**

## IS THAT ALL YOU DO?

Michael Jackson

Incredulously, people ask: "Is that all you do?" Indignantly, I demand to know what they mean. "Just travelling around the world, drinking, and writing about it?" Actually, travelling takes quite a long time. A trip from London to visit a Scottish Distillery requires at least a day, there and back. A distillery in Kentucky or a brewery in Alaska takes a little longer. The resultant article or chapter demands a further day to write, starting around 8 or 9, and finishing usually some time between 6 and 7—not that I have a long commute: my house is next door but one to my office (in a former brewery building).

Each burst of travelling and writing somehow soaks up a third day of 'management time'. In theory, I should therefore not travel more than a third of that time. In practice, I do: not just to research and write, but also to take part in judgings or broadcasts, give lectures, seminars, tutored tastings, book-signings, and the like.

In the past 12 months, I have pursued those various activities in Belgium (twice), France, Germany, Sweden, Finland, Poland, Russia, Japan (twice), New Zealand, Mexico and the United

States (eight times). Fortunately I like travelling, but even the happiest wanderer gets worn by packed planes, missed connections, long layovers and endless delays.



When I am giving a tutored tasting in Guadalajara or Houston, New York or Toronto, I am nurturing the market for single malts (or speciality beers), and for my books. There will be a morning TV appearance, lunch with a local columnist, a drive-time radio show. Fortunately,

I enjoy explaining malt (and hops), but how many times in a day can I spell Auchentoshan, Glenfarclas and Lagavulin (never mind Bamberger Rauchbier)? The columnist cannot be expected to know, and I want him to get it right.

Research...write...manage...promote.

In the days when I, too, was solely a journalist, I thought a definitive article on single malts would be useful. When I started writing in greater length, I imagined the finished book was the end of the matter. Now, I update each book every two or three years. Who is the most current on malts: Jackson, MacLean, Murray? The truth is that we leapfrog one another.

We do it partly because each of us is conscientiously trying to stay up to date, but also bookshops demand new items every Christmas. In this respect they are like Loch Fyne Whiskies; "Can I tempt my customers with a cask strength version, vintage-dated, port-wood finished?"

This Christmas, my Beer Companion and Pocket Beer Book are in new editions. Come next year, I had better be checking whether Bunnahabhain is planning anything aged in Tequila casks or whether Springbank still deserves its stars.

Yes, this is all I do.

## WHISKY FOR YOUR EARS

Walter Schobert

Many pop and rock singers have described in their songs how much they owe to the enjoyment of whisky—sometimes even mentioning brand names. The Crash Test Dummies for example ("What if the artist ran the TV? All the ads would be for fine Scotch Whisky: Glenfiddich, Glenlivet, the whole single malt family"—*I expect you have to hear it -Ed.*). Good to know that for his minimalist song "MMM MMM" Brad Roberts has not gargled with Jack Daniels but used Scotch—even though he is spelling it with an 'e'. Still, no modern group has yet devoted a whole album to whisky—that remains the domain of folk singers and two new CD's have been released.

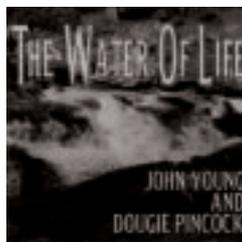
**The Angels' Share** is the name Robin Laing has given to his new recording. It contains 16 songs that he has been performing in a number of live concerts in Edinburgh throughout the summer. Laing is a very traditional folk singer and the songs are drinking songs in the best sense of the word. Most of the songs are old ones (three by Burns, one by Will Fyffe), some have been rearranged by



Laing. "Our Glens" is a gentle pastiche in praise of those other 'Glens' (ie -Livet, -Fiddich, -Dronach etc. Only one ("More than just

a dram") is by himself. Still the album is a must for every whisky fan. Glenmorangie who sponsored the concerts, have invested their money well.

Also new is **The Water of Life** from Kilmahew Music, sponsored by Allied Distillers. They have chosen the folk veteran John Young. He concentrates on old familiar songs by Robert Burns



such as "John Barleycorn", "The Deil's awa' with the excise man" and "My love is like a red, red rose". "Dumbarton Drums" is included reflecting the headquarters of Allied's distilling and blending operations. "Mr. Ballantine's Finest", "The Laphroaig Lilt", "A taste of Teacher's", not only celebrates some of the finest products of the firm but are also arranged in a really pleasing sequence of Strathspeys and reels. The all-round musician, Dougie Pincock, who played with the Battlefield Band in the '80s, accompanies Young. Traditional music that can be appreciated while enjoying some good glasses, alone or with friends.

**Whisky Galore** is the celebration of Scotch Whisky as an audio book. On two cassettes Bill Torrance presents more than two hours of songs, stories and talks round our favourite drink. His guests are well known and renowned experts such as the Earl of Elgin, Roddie Martine, Martin Green and Gillian Strickland.

They tell us about whisky, its history, the difference between malts and blends and how they are made. Nothing we do not already know about but they do it in an extremely entertaining way. Music, nicely chosen but alas poorly performed punctuates the tour. Especially nice is the second tape, on which Arthur Bell and Charles MacLean talk about the art of tasting—a very nice, instructive and amusing lecture, especially when you do not listen to it 'dry'.

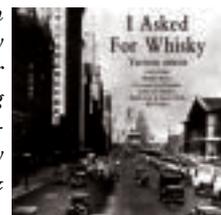
*Editor's note: Walter is Germany's leading writer on Scotch Whisky with two books and recently, a regular newsletter, to his credit. As to who the 'Crash Test Dummies' are, I have no idea ( Oh boy, do I feel old).*

All of these CD's and tapes are available from LFW plus the ever popular mood inducer, often to be heard in the shop, **I Asked For**

**Whisky**—15 tracks from Sunnyland Slim & Lacy Gibson, Byther Smith, Buster Benton with Carey Bell, Big Walter 'Shakey' Horton, Mississippi Fred McDowell, Muddy Waters and Billy Boy Arnold & Sammy Lawhorn and others.

For those who prefer less Scottish-ness accompanying their dram!

<b>The Angels' Share</b>	CD	£ 11.99
<b>The Angels' Share</b>	Cassette	£ 6.99
<b>The Water of Life</b>	CD	£ 11.99
<b>Whisky Galore</b>	Double Cassette	£ 9.99
<b>I Asked For Whisky</b>	CD	£ 7.99



## WHISKY FOR YOUR EYES

The coffee table took a good pounding last month. These days it would appear that every publishing house needs to list a whisky book among its titles. Consequently new titles are appearing thick and fast, often without enough regard to need or quality and some are simply rushed with embarrassing results—buyer beware. Two new releases stand out from the dross and while both could be described as ‘coffee table’ tomes, rather than pocket books, on no account should they be summed up as merely decorative. Here are the new additions to the LFW recommended list.

### Jim Murray's Complete Book of Whisky Carlton, 224 pp £20.00

Jim Murray is a full time whisky writer whose talents are called upon around the world. Despite this, apart from his *Irish Whisky Almanac* there has been no book, until now.

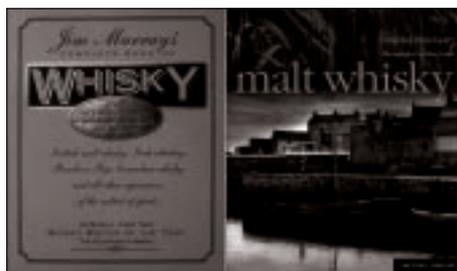
This is his personal opus and Scotch is granted half the available pages, followed by a large chunk on the Bourbons and whiskies of America and Ireland which are described with a singular passion, thereafter the distillers in India, Pakistan, Japan, Czech Republic, Spain & New Zealand are positively reviewed. Although there is little on blended Scotch or much on the history of the spirit this is a comprehensive book on the world's whisky distilleries.

But where this book really differs is in its delivery as a travelogue of the world's whiskies. Jim's enthusiasm for the subject bubbles, transporting you around the valleys or breathing in the salt of the islands, sweating in the tropical heat or sampling in the Himalayas. The easy anecdotal style makes even the technical bits readable, woven as they are through the ongoing engaging read.

This is very much one man's guide to the whiskies of the world and his passion for all of them. Jim's style is characteristically straight, honest, enthusiastic, critical, and often surprising—he has caused this reviewer to return to a previously unliked distillery for further evaluation (and enlightenment). There is a lot of new information and much personal opinion and producers are already enjoying the exploitation of Jim's 'sound-bite' style of appraisal.

It is rare to find such detailed treatment afforded to whiskies other than Scotch, but here the descriptions of influences such as local production technique, maturation or climate and the history, background and tasting by proxy of far flung whiskies ultimately serve to aid our appreciation of Scotch, and perhaps stimulate our curiosity?

An easy and enlightening exploration of the many people, places and whiskies that most of us will never have the opportunity to experience for ourselves—and all without the jet lag.



### Charles MacLean: Malt Whisky Mitchell Beazley, 176 pp £25.00

In contrast to Murray's reticence to be book bound, MacLean is a prolific producer of enjoyable, eloquent and informative books. His *Pocket Whisky Book*, currently being revised, is the single most useful book for the Scotch Whisky enthusiast or professional.

This is Charlie's *tour de force* and is beautifully illustrated with a clever mix of specially commissioned atmospheric duotones, colour photographs and easily followed diagrams. True to form it is about *Scotch Malt Whisky*, (one suspects he recognises no other whisky producing region). Scotch is his subject and the one he has mastered with consummate skill.

His book starts with the history of Scotch, its social context from earliest appearance to malt's present day rediscovery. Thereafter the consideration is devoted to flavour—first, the aspects of production and how variations in flavour arise. Malt whisky appreciation from the anatomical mechanics to the act of tasting and (oh joy!) the language, (with further development of the tasting wheel). Then, by way of relief from such academia, there is a brief regional tour of Scotland before addressing individual distillery potted histories and detailed tasting notes.

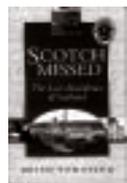
MacLean's mastery of language is perfect and for such a detailed study of the subject to be found in one accessible and enjoyable volume is a real delight.

Use this as a text book for educational purposes, or as a manual for instant reference. But enjoy it as a fireside read, glass in hand, and very enjoyable too. For those of you with narrow book shelves:

### Brian Townsend: Scotch Missed, NWP

£7.99 has been updated with the addition of a further 25 lost distilleries and released as an affordable paperback. A gentle yet distressing read that is illustrated with pictures of empty fields littered

with distillery bits, or supermarkets and flats where proud stills once worked. This is essential on the shelves of any self-respecting student of whisky. Even if you bought the 1994 hardback describing 80 such distilleries you need this update which is astonishingly contemporary, reflecting the hopes for Bladnoch and Rosebank described on page one of this issue of *SWR*.



## WHISKY FOR BREAKFAST



As enthusiastic fans of marmalade we have known for some time how the Loch Fyne's flavours enhanced our home made marmalade. Finally after much searching we have found a commercial preserve maker capable of producing marmalades to our satisfaction.

Well Pickled is a Scottish company making small batch preserves by hand including our own *Scotch*, a traditional thin cut seville. The darker 'high proof' *Double Scotch* is rich, thick and spiced, with a double dose of the Loch Fyne—ideal for luxury christmas breakfasting!

LFW SCOTCH MARMALADE £ 2.50  
DOUBLE SCOTCH MARMALADE £ 2.90

*Warning: do not operate machinery or drive after consuming the Double Scotch!*

## AND NOW SOME WHISKY!

### HIGHLAND PARK 18 & 25yo

Two new vintages of Highland Park have been released which are superb bottlings worthy of our fullest recommendation.

We were preparing a review when an enthusiastic Michael Jackson 'phoned to tell us of his reaction and then faxed his characteristically succinct thoughts: "I've always rated the 12yo as the great all-rounder, with that smokiness, succulent heather honey, maltiness, smoothness, depth and roundness of flavour, and length of finish. *If I played golf, I'd have this at the 18th hole.*"

At 18 years, it gains in richness, and spiciness: ginger, cinnamon, vanilla, fresh oak, leafiness, tobacco. *If I smoked, I'd have this with a cigar.*

At 25, there is yet more finesse, fruitier lemon, nutty toffee, fudge and chocolate. *I do eat desserts, so I'll have this with death by chocolate!"*



The 25yo is magnificently presented in a unique round wooden casket.

OB HIGHLAND PARK 18 43% £ 37.50  
OB HIGHLAND PARK 25 54% £ 94.90

## ARDBEG SAFE! (pt. 2)

Of all the new bottlings, the re-launch of Ardbeg must be the most significant in recent years and for many years to come. Is very exciting for us; being on the road to Islay we are Ardbeg specialists and alarmingly not too long ago we were reduced to just one bottling on our shelf. New owners Glenmorangie have listened to a wide range of opinion and thought hard about the product required, both for market appeal and to satisfy the small but noisy demand that Ardbeg remain the most extreme of all Scotch whiskies. They've been very smart and have decided that Ardbeg is to be a small-to-medium volume seller of 30,000 cases (compared with Lagavulin 50,000 or Glenmorangie 160,000 cases) in a premium price position, available only in 'better' shops rather than multiple grocers or booze shops.



Ardbeg—*The Ultimate* has a new, branded, dark green bottle that feels good—fatter in the hand and bigger than the norm by virtue of a 'punt', a depression up the base. The black label thankfully retains the Celtic lettering of the old Hiram Walker style and the box is simple black and forest green. Two variants have been launched; a standard 17yo at 40% and a limited edition vintage, currently from 1978 (43%).

## DISTILLERY PARROTS

Dear Sir,

Having spent several holidays visiting many of the distilleries in different areas of the country I am puzzled as to why some of them employ parrots. These 'pretty pollies' greet our party at the reception and off we go eager to learn all about the mystic processes of distilling. But halfway through the tour our group is near comatose by the monotonous monologue. We are told that questions may be asked but they are not always encouraged and often poorly or not answered. Some groups are so large we

Each vintage will be continuously replaced. Prices are a small premium but not unreasonable.

The 17yo (£ 27.50) is soft, palatable to Kildalton refusniks—those who don't like the strong phenolic, medicinal characteristics. It is possible that this will initially disappoint traditional Ardbeg fans but they will quickly appreciate it for its perfect balance. The peat is there but all the other Islay characters are up on the same level; sweet, oaky vanillins with the aftermath of an Atlantic storm—all very round and amiable.

The 1978 (£ 33.90) will delight the extremists; a more pungent nose—the peat dominates slightly, but to taste it's salt first, sweetness next, then, as you swallow, a shotgun blast of peat—it caught me off guard. The taste fades quickly through bitterness to a long finish of smoke, peat and finally the sea—a perfect Ardbeg. Hopefully the next vintage will be a similar growbag-filtered style. 'Provenance', a super packaged Ardbeg, will be released soon, hopefully during December 1997 with a price of about £200. An unchillfiltered, cask strength vintage from 1974—the time when the distillery home-malted the barley—it promises to be a goliath to drink. As a special limited edition these bottles will be very collectable. Contact us now to register interest and availability.

If you fancy starting a collection, climb aboard the new Ardbegs—it's going to be very busy. If they can maintain these characters and quality then whisky fans are on to a winner.

Meanwhile on Islay, distilling re-started in June and has continued since then. Work is underway to create a visitor centre including shop, tour route and heritage centre which should open in May next year. By the following May the still house will be extended to bring the condensers inside and make it more visitor friendly. At present it is necessary to squeeze past the pots which when boiling can be somewhat dangerous.

Consideration is also being given to the possibility of restoring the floor maltings thus completing the new owner's plans to provide a very traditional distillery for visitors.

travel as crocodiles, the tail of which is oblivious of what is being heard or seen by the head.

There are of course exceptions; some of the best tours I have experienced have been with a distillery worker, either retired or active, as they are knowledgeable of the process and have many worthy anecdotes.

Now that charging is the norm for distillery tours, surely it would be better value if the pre-recorded distillery parrot had a proper understanding of their distillery and the process, from field to bottle.

Richard McConochie, Hampshire.



Actual strengths to be advised, you're not catching us out that way!

## UD & 'CASK STRENGTH'

United Distillers are releasing six variants of their Distillery Malts. These cask strength, unchillfiltered bottlings are limited to just 3,000 of each and are priced at £41.90. We had hoped to include them in our Stock List but the whole batch has been returned to the Leven bottling plant to be relabelled owing to scuffing in transport.

This is extremely frustrating for the production people. Their cask strength bottlings have to pass down the bottling line twice anyway. Once to fill the bottle, then a delay while the strength of that run is evaluated and overprinted onto the labels, (strength reduces during the vatting and bottling process by the equivalent of 0.1% overnight). Once printed, they're down the line again for labelling.

Some other producers overcome this expensive diversion by diluting to a predetermined strength such that 'cask strength' becomes a euphemism for 'a bit strong'. Tell-tale signs are pre-printed tubes or youngish whiskies with abv's in the low 50%.

Such attention to detail indicates a company conscious of Scotch Whisky's quality requirement. (This article is not sponsored by UD but comes from our respect for their pursuit of excellence!)

Four new **Rare Malts**, (OB-r on our list) have been released—Clynelish, Hillside, Mannochnore & Dufftown. Special mention must be made for the Caol Ila released in the spring, as it appears to be unpeated, allowing the 'island on the edge of the Atlantic' characters to come to the fore—brilliant!





## THE ISLAY BROTHERS

An invitation to all our customers to consider the great whiskies of Islay, home to the notorious peaty whiskies. But they are not all like that.

Take Bunnahabhain; arguments continue as to whether 'Bunny' is peated. It certainly has a sea-fresh air about it, very smooth and agreeable to many. At 15 years Bruichladdich is one of the best whiskies in our shop, a rich faintly peaty

dram and very sophisticated. Caol Ila is used extensively in blends for its great aroma and a finish that lasts for days! In Bowmore, the turning point in the flavours, peat is evident as is the Atlantic; the 17yo is perfection. Port Ellen; now sadly closed, but still available in this superb G&M bottling, balancing lemony sweetness. Complex Lagavulin zips with spicy dryness, or is it sweetness? As a

cask strength bottling this Laphroaig is powerful whisky for curry drinkers, only overshadowed by the tongue-blaster Ardbeg. *To celebrate Ardbeg's relaunch, we're adding a **free miniature** of the 17yo to every order with any Islay whisky in it – how's that?*



## LFW EXCLUSIVE

### SCOTCH WHISKY BROOCHES

The ultimate accessory for the whisky enthusiast, these beautiful silver brooches have been specially commissioned by Loch Fyne Whiskies.

Created in sculptured sterling silver and handmade in Scotland, the set of five unique brooches represents 'the water of life' and celebrates the diversity of Scotland's whisky regions and influences—Pagodas, pot stills, clear waters and barley, the highlands and islands. 5.5cm across, they are eye catching, detailed and elegant. Fitted with a safety clasp, each brooch is £95, with a set of five £450, representing a saving of £25.

BROOCH — PAGODAS (TOP LEFT)  
 BROOCH — POT STILLS (TOP RIGHT)  
 BROOCH — WATER & BARLEY (CENTRE)  
 BROOCH — HIGHLANDS (LOWER LEFT)  
 BROOCH — ISLANDS (LOWER RIGHT)



## FOR THE 'ONE-TO-FIVE'RS'



*"I use mine all the time"*  
 — Charlie MacLean

It's very rewarding the number of LFW customers who tell us of their 'one-to-five' parties where five whiskies are selected from our list according to our taste score of 1 to 5 from our stock list.

To assist in these and other tasting sessions we have developed the Loch Fyne Whiskies melamine tasting mat, a wipe clean mat with markers for five glasses and an aide memoire of Charlie MacLean's descriptors to assist discussion and note taking.

Glassware too is important. For such sessions (and relaxed dramming), we recommend one of our port glasses, a wide rim with full tulip shape and good balance. We also have classic nosing glasses as used by the professionals.

If you buy a tasting mat with five glasses we'll include a free water carafe to complete the set.

LFW TASTING MAT	£ 4.90
CLASSIC NOSING GLASS + COVER	£ 7.50
PORT GLASS	£ 3.50
WATER CARAFE	£ 3.50
LFW TASTING MAT + 5 PORT GLASSES	
+ FREE CARAFE	£22.40
LFW TASTING MAT + 5 CLASSIC NOSING GLASSES + FREE CARAFE	£42.40





## IT'S TROLLY-DASH-TIME!

**WELCOME** to the shop shelf, a selection of recommendations, new items, interesting bottlings and assorted **DEALS**. Carefully selected and displayed in the sequence of a jumble, so you'll have to read carefully and take notes; but watch out for those **DEALS**, there are some real hum-dingers!

### PLEASE NOTE

All our **DEALS** are for Christmas 1997; to qualify you must order on or before **15th December, 1997**. Furthermore if you are claiming deals please identify the extras you expect when placing your order.

### TOP SHELF

√ First are the new Ardbegs; see page 6 for the tasting note. The 17 is necessary in any good whisky cupboard, the '78 is a must for the peat-heads.

OB ARDBEG 17 40% £ 27.50  
OB ARDBEG '78/17 43% £ 33.90

√ Also available is some remaining stock from the previous owners of a rare 30yo.  
OB ARDBEG - WB 30 40% £ 99.90  
Remember an order which includes any bottle of Islay whisky gets one free miniature Ardbeg 17yo (worth £2.90) in the delivery.

√ Our ever-popular house malt, The Inverarity, is offering a great deal—buy five bottles of The Inverarity Malt, get a sixth bottle free (£ 18.90).

OB INVERARITY 8 40% £ 18.90  
√ Morrison's 'Official Distillery Archive Selection'; £5 off our list price on these three (resulting in £ 59.90, £ 79.90 & £ 69.90 respectively).

OB AUCHENTOSHAN '75/21 55% £ 60.99  
OB AUCHENTOSHAN '65/31 46% £ 84.99  
OB GLEN GARIOCH '68/29 56% £ 75.99

—seen how black that Glen Garioch is?  
√ Wonderful smokey Bowmore; buy any two from this display and receive a free half bottle of Bowmore Legend (£9.90).

OB BOWMORE 12 40% £ 21.90  
OB BOWMORE—Mariner 15 43% £ 34.50  
OB BOWMORE 17 43% £ 37.40  
OB BOWMORE '73/21 43% £ 64.50  
OB BOWMORE '69/25 43% £ 73.90  
OB BOWMORE—Darkest 43% £ 33.70  
OB BOWMORE—Cask St. 56% £ 30.90

and we've got a silly pre-christmas price on the Bowmore 21yo — £ 49.90.

√ More goodies for fans of the Classic Six, order any two, and get a free Classic Six Mini pack (£ 15.90).

OB DALWHINNIE 15 43% £ 23.50  
OB TALISKER 10 46% £ 24.90  
OB CRAGGANMORE 12 40% £ 23.50  
OB OBAN 14 43% £ 22.90

OB LAGAVULIN 16 43% £ 25.90

OB GLENKINCHIE 10 43% £ 23.90

√ Gordon & MacPhail are giving a free half bottle of their Glen Calder Blend with any two bottles of these malts:

G&M ARDMORE '81/14 40% £ 24.60

OB BENROMACH 12 40% £ 21.90

CC CAOL ILA '81/16 40% £ 25.90

G&M IMPERIAL '79/18 40% £ 27.30

G&M INVERLEVEN 1984 40% £ 22.90

G&M MORTLACH 15 40% £ 24.70

G&M PULTNEY (Old) 8 40% £ 19.70

√ Last on the top shelf is a brace deal, buy a combination of the greatest (Δ) whiskies, from Glenfarclas (one for drinking now, one for later) for £ 89.90 the pair, a saving of £9.

OB GLENFARCLAS 15 46% £ 29.90

OB GLENFARCLAS 30 46% £ 69.00

### MIDDLE SHELF

√ Collectors! — A few of the old style Glengoyne 17yo still-shaped bottle have been found, going for a bin-end price!

OB GLENGOYNE (old) 17 43% £ 26.90

√ A limited edition Glengoyne (of 2,100).

OB GLENGOYNE '71/25 49% £ 74.90

√ Glenmorangie; any of these five comes with a free 18yo miniature (£4.50), plus there's £3 off any wood finish (£ 25.90) and £4 off the 18yo (£ 31.90).

OB GLENMORANGIE 10 40% £ 21.50

OB GLENMORANGIE 18 43% £ 35.90



OB GLENMORANGIE — port, madeira or sherry-wood finish 43% £ 28.99  
 ✓ A limited (4,000) Port Wood finish Glen Moray in mahogany box celebrates the centenary of the distillery.  
 OB GLEN MORAY—Port 18 40% £ 84.90  
 ✓ The splendid Glen Rothes, now more affordable and buy both you get a lovely jug (£10—sorry, jug not for sale alone).  
 OB GLEN ROTHES '84/12 43% £ 31.90  
 OB GLEN ROTHES '72/24 43% £ 74.90  
 ✓ Highland Park 12yo comes with a free 10cl mini-decanter at no extra cost.  
 OB HIGHLAND PARK 12 40% £ 22.50  
 ✓ Two superb new ages from Highland Park; everyone should try the 18yo.  
 OB HIGHLAND PARK 18 43% £ 37.50  
 OB HIGHLAND PARK 25 54% £ 94.90  
 ✓ Free Dalmore miniature (£4) when you buy both a Bruichladdich 10yo and a Jura 10yo. Or Dalmore min with every bottle of the perfect Bruichladdich 15yo.  
 OB ISLE OF JURA 10 40% £ 20.90  
 OB BRUICHLADDICH 10 40% £ 22.50  
 OB BRUICHLADDICH 15 40% £ 30.60  
 ✓ The two ace (Δ) Macallans; buy both get a free water jug (£12).  
 OB MACALLAN 18 43% £ 37.90  
 OB MACALLAN '71/25 43% £ 85.90

**LOWER SHELF**  
 ✓ A new Balvenie — port wood finish.  
 OB BALVENIE—Port 21 40% £ 38.90

✓ Marvellous Murray McDavid bottlings. Buy their Springbank 27yo with one other MM bottling, deduct £5; buy the Springbank with two other MM items deduct £10. Try the Laphroaig (LFW bottling of the year) and/or the Bunnahabhain (a sub for Spbk. 15yo).  
 MM SPRINGBANK '69/28 46% £ 57.90  
 MM LAPHROAIG '87/10 46% £ 29.70  
 MM BUNNAHABHAIN '79/17 46% £ 33.90  
 ✓ The softest whisky in the shop; that's what we're calling the new Old P. It's incredible, it never hits the tongue yet simply swarms with flavour. As good as ever, lots of fishing port character about this one. Anyway the deal is; buy one bottle get a free miniature of sister distillery An Cnoc (£2.80).  
 OB OLD PULTNEY 12 40% £ 21.90  
 ✓ Signatory 'light and dark' pair; buy both and get your LFW £2 off vouchers doubled *and* redeemed, (£ 75.70 the pair plus one voucher left).  
 S AULTMORE '85/11 60% £ 37.20  
 S BUNNAHABHAIN '79/17 57% £ 44.50  
 ✓ Springbank 'Local Barley'—small quantities of a fabulous whisky, entirely local ingredients + bourbon wood.  
 OB SPRINGBANK '66/31 46% £ 95.00  
 ✓ The 21 Distillery (or Fauna & Flora) malts, (in our Stock List OB-d)—buy *any two* for £50. A possible saving of almost

£10—limited to one deal per delivery.  
 ✓ A new very limited (350) range of aged whiskies from Glen Catrine.  
 OB GLEN SCOTIA '73/23 40% £ 45.00  
 OB INCHMURRIN '66/30 40% £ 45.00  
 OB OLD RHOSDHU '67/29 40% £ 45.00  
 OB LITTMILL '64/32 40% £ 45.00  
 ✓ You should try a grain whisky and here's the best, available now at 12 yo.  
 OB CAMERON BRIG 12 40% £ 18.20  
 ✓ A favourite blend and the new Johnnie Walker vatted malt, a perfect pair.  
 OB J WALKER GOLD 18 43% £ 44.90  
 OB J WALKER MALT 15 43% £ 29.90  
 ✓ Mitchell's, a new blend from Springbank that won't disappoint fans.  
 OB MITCHELL'S 12 43% £ 19.90  
 ✓ Grouse Gold Reserve, a success at our Heilan' Banquet (see page 11).  
 OB FAMOUS GROUSE 12 40% £ 19.70  
 ✓ Johnnie Walker Swing, a rocking bottle that won't fall over on any voyage.  
 OB J WALKER SWING 40% £ 29.90  
 ✓ A double winter warmer; a gift pack of a half bottle of Grouse and a branded Scottish lambswool scarf.  
 OB GROUSE, 35cl + SCARF 40% £ 13.50  
 ✓ Finally, the award-winning Loch Fyne!  
 Order four, get free delivery of your entire order!  
 OB LOCH FYNE 40% £ 13.90  
*Phew! It all fits!*



## THE ANNIVERSARY MALTZ

Think ahead for 1998; distilled 50, 40 and 30 years ago, the perfect present for 50, 40 and 30 year celebrations.

G&M STRATHISLA	'48/48	40%	£ 175.00
G&M GLEN GRANT	'58/38	40%	£ 63.00
G&M LINKWOOD	'68/28	40%	£ 43.90

## GRUB UP!—TUMMY DEPT.

Space prevents featuring many whisky foods and goods known by shop customers.



LFW SCOTCH MARMALADE	£ 2.50(b)
LFW DOUBLE SCOTCH MARMALADE	£ 2.90(b)
BUY BOTH LFW MARMALADES	£ 5.00(c)
Also from the tummy dept:	
GLENFIDDICH CAKE	
rich fruit cake—ideal for Xmas	£10.75(c)
WHISKY CHOCS (8)	
Scottish handmade from Begian chocolate	£ 3.00(a)
REAL HAGGIS in a skin (tinned)	
Lamb with Drambuie Haggis	£3.50(b)
Venison with Glenturret Haggis	£3.50(b)

## MINIATURE EXCELLENCE



The newly released Johnnie Walker Blue Label miniature makes a very elegant gift.

OB J WALKER BLUE MIN	40%	£ 13.60(a)
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## FRIENDSHIP QUAICh



Satin-lined box with miniature of the Loch Fyne and 7.5cm pewter QuaiCh.  
LOCH FYNE MIN & QUAICh £ 20.00(b)

These beautifully detailed china mini jugs and decanters, hand finished with gold, are available in fly fishing, Scottish wildlife or game shooting designs. Matching sets of 4 toddy cups (designs front & back) available in shooting and fishing only. (Please state choice).

MINI DECANTER height 12cm	£ 27.00(b)
MINI WATER JUG	£ 25.00(b)
4 TODDY CUPS	£ 39.00(b)



No Christmas list would be complete without the Ho-Ho! stocking fillers...

'FIRE ALARM' in case of emergency...	£ 1.99(a)
WHISKY TOOTHPASTE	£ 2.99(a)
BOOTLEG WHISKY FOAM BATH	£ 3.99(a)
TODDY SPICE KITS	£ 2.99(a)
MORNING AFTER HERBAL REMEDY	£ 0.99(a)



No matter how elephantine your order the delivery charge is fixed at a mere **£5.90 per delivery to each address.**

A clever way to avoid this is to include four bottles of The (award-winning) Loch Fyne and we'll deliver the lot for free. This and all other deals are for orders placed on or before Monday, December 15th. As ever we'll do our best to get it to you quickly, but it's worth ordering soon (now?) for Xmas.

(x) p+p charges for small items posted alone, see back of stock list for details.

## LOCH FYNE WHISKIES PERSONALISED LABEL SERVICE

Our custom label service is an easy, painless way of expediting the problems of present finding and delivering for all occasions. The best advice we have is don't use an excessively expensive whisky—they often don't get opened but sit pride of place on the mantelpiece, particularly if adorned with our high quality wooden box.

There are two options: the Loch Fyne, our award-winning (in case you didn't know) blend with your label on the front and our blue and gold cork seal, descriptive back label and award sticker; alternatively, for those who think a malt would be more impressive, our house malt *Inverarity*. Both are very high quality products and excellent value.

We produce either a simple text label; e.g. *Joe Soap's - 40 years - Celebration Choice - Happy Birthday, love from Cameo Unscented* or, specially selected by *Liz & Phil to celebrate Richard & Lyndsay's Bronze Award, blah-blah* or something more complex, either a photo, logo or something from our huge library of 'clip-art' subject to discussion (*she's an 80yo pot-holing, Partick Thistle fan? - No problem!*).

### Charges:

LOCH FYNE + CHRISTMAS LABEL	£ 16.00
LOCH FYNE + SIMPLE (as above L)	£ 16.00
LOCH FYNE + COMPLEX LABEL	£ 18.00
INVERARITY + SIMPLE LABEL	£ 21.00
INVERARITY + COMPLEX (as above mid.)	£ 23.00
TUBE + DUPLICATE LABEL (as above) add	£ 1.50
TOP QUALITY PINE PRESENTATION BOX	£ 10.00

We have illustrated labels for **Christmas**, golfers, fishermen or weddings for which price is as for 'simple'.

For clubs or companies favourable case rates are available.

Give us a call to discuss your requirements and then leave it to us—problem solved!

## OUR SEASON OF CELEBRITY TASTING EVENINGS

Boy, did you guys miss something! The LFW *Celebrity Tasting Season* was the most fun you could have with your clothes on! Four whisky evenings were held over the last six months at The George Hotel, Inveraray and for those who attended they were superb value, most informative and above all, tremendous entertainment.

The industry 'celebrities' of each event really pulled out the stops to provide guests with unique experiences in whisky appreciation, as all those who *can* remember, will never forget(!).



To start the season, **Jim McEwan** of Morrison Bowmore Distillers gave us a total of 89 years of Bowmore, guiding us firstly on a highly personal tour of Islay and the methods of production used. We were then treated to a vertical tasting of the Bowmore range right up to the superlative 30 year old. Jim explained that the wide range of Bowmore variants and ages was as a result of the same marketing think as BMW—there is a Bowmore to suit every range and pocket. Jim advised the addition of water to a malt in relation to the strength; if the whisky is 40%, then add 40% water, in a 60% whisky, a similar ratio of water is preferred. To identify the body in a whisky, a kilted Jim recommended we look at his 'legs'! Roll the spirit around the sides of the glass and hold to the light, evaluating the time it takes for the legs or teardrops to fall. In the case of the 30yo, I'm still waiting! A show of hands showed a preference for the 17yo—most balanced peat and sea, and the new 'Darkest' which is liqueur-like in style.



**Richard Paterson**, Master Blender with Whyte & Mackay held the June evening to an increasingly confident assembly of whisky buffs. Richard's delivery has been appreciated by many and now it was the turn of LFW customers. In a three part session, Richard started with a fascinating and often surprising history of the blending business, attrib-

uting the success of Scotch to the inability of Catherine of Aragon to produce an heir! Next we delved into the W&M custom blending sets. Starting with a measure of vatted grain whisky we added a splash of Lowland malt followed by a Campbeltown (a 20yo Glen Scotia—but that's another story!) nosing each change as we progressed. (This time the advice was plunge the nose deeply three times saying hello, good evening, how are you? to the whisky). Blending continued with the judicious addition of cask strength samples of Bruichladdich (this is easy!), Jura, Tullibardine (help!), Fettercairn (oh dear, things are seriously wrong), Tamnavulin, Tomintoul (still no improvement), Dalmore (that's better) and finally a prepared vatting of 35 single malts (ah-ha!). Richard passed among us giving advice on utilising the Campbeltown and the Dalmore to recover disasters and the vatting to polish our efforts. During the buffet he assessed our blends and later awarded certificates and prizes to his favourites, one of them a bottle of 21yo W&M to the 'best assembled' by Inveraray's Bert Campbell which we thought to be very worthy of bottling.

After some magic tricks, part three of the evening was a glorious free for all about the range of W&M/Invergordon products, the stars being the W&M 21yo, Bruichladdich 15 and 26yo and the sadly now discontinued Crawfords 5 Star.



September brought the flagship evening, a gourmet dinner with whisky served in place of wine. **Ian Stothard**, roving ambassador for Matthew Gloag and Son, owners of The Famous Grouse and distributors of Highland Distillers range of whiskies, joined forces with Donald Clark, owner of The George Hotel, to create a menu whose description alone is splendid (see right). The event was perfect, kilted or tartan-attired guests were greeted with a welcoming dram of Grouse 12yo, Gold Reserve. After a short medley of pibrochs and a rendering of *here-we-go (etc.)*, local bagpipe champion Stewart Liddell led us into the dining room where a single long banquet table, entirely candle lit, had been prepared for us. LFW's Richard welcomed the guests and Stoddie introduced the first course commanding that the evening be informative but above all fun; it certainly was! Special mention must go to The George Hotel whose cuisine and staff were faultless. On the whisky front the biggest surprise of the evening came

### THE HEILAN' BANQUET MENU

Chilled Ogen Melon with Scottish Berries & Fruit Coulis accompanied by Glengoyne unpeated Single Malt Whisky

Medley of West Coast Seafood with a white wine sauce accompanied by Bunnahabhain Islay Malt Whisky

Fillet of Beef with Haggis & Wild Mushrooms en Croute with boats of tasty whisky sauce and Scottish vegetables of the season accompanied by The Macallan 18 year old

Crème Brûlée accompanied by *more* Macallan

Orkney Cheeses & Oatcakes accompanied by Highland Park Orkney Malt

Coffee and conversation accompanied by the whiskies of your choice



after the seafood when a lemon sorbet was served which, with Bunnahabhain accompaniment, produced an incredible taste reaction! The Crème Brûlée with Macallan was not so clever, and we suggest going back to the Glengoyne instead. A truly memorable evening (a mere £25—all in!) whose infamy has already spread far and wide.

Finishing off the season, **Allied Distillers** fielded two players, John Rutherford and Ken Lindsay who introduced their two new malts, Scapa 12yo and Glendronach 15yo which along with Laphroaig are marketed as *The Defenders of the Malt* in the USA. In an interesting twist we then moved onto the 'Cromarty Malt', the vatting of 45 malts used in the creation of Ballantine's Finest which was the fifth sample on our tasting mats. This was followed by Ballantine's 12yo and 21yo. After a raucous evening, a show of hands favoured the Glendronach and the Ballantine's 21yo which unfortunately is not available in Britain (*dig-dig*).

Our thanks to all who contributed to a very successful season. All participants gave us great satisfaction with compliments regarding the supreme quality of presentation and the value for money. We were most pleased that each evening complemented the others with a new angle each time. Hard work but fun, if only school was as informative and enjoyable!



## SOMEONE HAS TO DO IT...



Leaves from *Charlie MacLean's Diary*  
June

To mark the refurbishment of the visitors' centre at Glenkinchie Distillery, just outside Edinburgh, United Distillers invited the 'Friends of the Classic Malts' to an open day in early June. Distillery tours, tastings of the six 'Classic Malts' from the brand ambassadors, a talk on Lowland Distilling from yours truly, a bowls competition and a sandwich lunch was on offer. They hoped for 250 people—a comfortable number in the marquee which had been hired, and manageable from the talks and tastings point of view.

Three thousand people applied! The event was run over three days, and still not everyone could be catered for. Making their own travel and accommodation arrangements, enthusiasts arrived from Italy, France, Germany and Holland; from Wiltshire, Somerset, Yorkshire and Northumbria, as well as from Scotland. It was even rumoured that one couple had travelled from Brazil, but I didn't meet them!

What had they in common? Only a shared interest in malt whisky and a thirst for information. There were almost as many women as men, and from all kinds of backgrounds—pensioners, industrial chemists, doctors, a professor or two, retired miners. Some were very knowledgeable, but most were simply enthusiasts.

Even in his welcome speech, Brian Bisset, the manager of the distillery, did not mention that the whisky bar in the visitors' centre was free. You can imagine the joy on the faces of the devotees when this was discovered! I can report with complete conviction that 800-odd brand ambassadors were created over the two weekends.

### July

Glenkinchie's new visitors' centre was designed by Skakel & Skakel of Edinburgh (with captions and explanatory notes by myself). It employs cunning lighting and sound effects, a large scale model of a distillery, artefacts and curios, and communicates its message engagingly and effectively—a message which embraces blended whisky as well as malt, as befits a distillery licensed to John Haig & Sons.

The new visitors' centre at The Glenlivet Distillery was also opened this summer, and the contrast is instructive. Edinburgh-based Northcross, the designers, were faced with the challenge of turning a sow's ear into a silk purse: although a heroic malt with an unbeatable story to tell, Glenlivet Distillery itself is a mish-mash of large industrial buildings. So their achievement is all the more commendable.

Northcross were responsible for the visitors' centres at Strathisla and Glen Grant Distilleries—both outstanding—and for restoring the Victorian woodland garden which lies behind the latter (originally constructed by Major James Grant). What impresses me is the style and personality of both the place and the malt. All three visitors' centres, including Glenlivet, are completely different in atmosphere and feel. The unifying factor is that their owners, Chivas & Glenlivet, have not stinted on cost: materials, fabrics, furniture, joinery-work, decoration—everything has been superbly executed.

The company was justifiably grateful to Jill Preston, Heritage Director, and in his speech at the launch Chivas' Chairman, James Esprey, handed her an envelope containing 'a meal for two in her favourite restaurant'. Brian Wilson, Minister for Sport, opened his (very amusing) speech by remarking that, as a representative of the recently elected and squeaky-clean new government, he felt nervous about sitting at a table at which sealed envelopes were being passed around!

### Midsummer

I spent a week in the high summer on a 76 foot 12 metre yacht, built in 1929, participating in United Distillers' Classic Malts Cruise. John Mill, *Eilidh's* 78 year old owner/skipper, who has sailed the West Coast every summer for forty-three years, said it was the longest spell of hot weather he had ever known. Lagavulin Distillery—where we called to collect lobsters—ran out of water and had to move its silent season forward by a month or so.

Our destination was Loch Harport on Skye, where Talisker Distillery is discovered, and where a ceilidh had been arranged. Forty-three yachts parked in the bay—a record number for the Cruise—and the partying went on well into the small hours on one boat, at least, where I was being entertained by a Danish amazon!

I had no idea what enthusiasts the people of Skye are for line-dancing. The display given by the local devotees of this ancestor of aerobics, went on interminably, with many of the participants wearing stetsons and cowboy boots. The amazon then gave a display of off-beat dancing—literally dancing off the beat. Try it: it is absolutely impossible, unless you are cranked up by at least half a bottle of Oban!

### August

United Distillers have graciously allowed Bladnoch Distillery, Wigtown, to resume production, albeit in a limited way. The event was celebrated with a reception at the distillery, which also trumpeted the fact that Wigtown had been made 'Scotland's Book Town'. The latter was marked by Galloway's most distinguished poet, Alastair Reid, who came from New York and read an exquisite piece about his childhood in these parts, and I said a few words about the significance of the reopening of the distillery. It seems significant to me for two reasons. First because it marks a sea-change in the attitude of large distillery owners towards allowing distilleries back into production; second because it demonstrates the important contemporary role that distilleries (and their visitor centres) play in their local communities and economy.

Raymond Armstrong and his family bought Bladnoch Distillery in 1993. He is a property developer from Belfast, just across the water (many Gallowegians go to Belfast to shop), and thought it might convert to holiday homes. One of the conditions UD placed upon the sale was that the purchaser did not resume production. When Raymond took possession, he realised what an important role the distillery played in the community, so put his plans on hold and re-opened the visitor centre. But there is little point in having a visitor centre without an operating distillery (*pace* Dallas Dhu!), so he went back to UD and asked for a waiver of the prohibition against production. Dr Alan Rutherford, UD's Head of Production, was fully supportive of the proposal, and Raymond hopes to be back in production next summer.

I have my doubts whether he will achieve this deadline—although some of the plant is still there, including the stills, it is in poor condition—but the importance of this remote and beautiful corner of Scotland is enormous. Raymond Armstrong, United Distillers and Dumfries & Galloway Regional Council are to be congratulated.

### September

Do you know that Macallan and its sister companies, Highland Distilleries and Robertson & Baxter, single handedly support Spain's ancient coopering industry? We all know that *The Macallan* is all matured in ex-sherry butts, but I had no idea just how important the company was to the guys who make the butts until I went to Jerez (where the sherry comes from) in September, to look at the cooperage which makes their casks and the bodegas where they are filled.

The wood itself—all slow grown Spanish Oak—comes from the Pyrenees in the North. The trees are cut into rough staves here and are air dried for about six months before being shipped down to Jerez, where they continue to season

for a further ten months before going to the cooperage. The latter looks like a cross between a Hollywood film-set and Dante's inferno. An earth floored hanger, with open flaming pits for bending the staves into the hoops and charring the casks; loud with the whining of band saws and the banging of coopers' hammers; redolent of fresh wood, charred wood and sweat. The thirty-three men employed here work fast and furiously, the ones tending the flaming pits like so many demons; every one of them a craftsman. The very embodiment of the dignity of labour.

The new casks are filled with *mosto*, new wine fresh from the presses, for four to six months, then filled with dry oloroso sherry (the age does not matter) and left in the bodega for around two years. This produces the optimum conditioning for Macallan's purposes and after this they are shipped to Scotland to be filled with new make.

## Sitting by the pool after breakfast...

Sitting by the pool after breakfast one glorious September morning with David Robertson, Manager of Macallan Distillery, we talked about the contribution made by sherry to the colour of *The Macallan*. I have always assumed it is maturation in sherry-wood which lends colour to mature malt, but David corrected me and with terrifying numeracy calculated the per centage of colour which might be given if the wood had absorbed five litres of wine. It was less than one. The colour comes from the tight-grained Spanish oak.

October

Andrew Symington, Managing Director of the Signatory Vintage Malt Whisky Company asked me if I would come in, nose samples from eight casks and write tasting notes to be sent the next day to a customer in Sweden. The whiskies were outstandingly good—three 'Top Dressing' Speysides (including a 33 year old Macallan), a 27 year old Springbank, a 31 year old Laphroaig and an 18 year old North British. In spite of their age there was not a trace of wood about them, just wonderful mellowness and complexity.

I serve on two nosing panels (the Scotch Malt Whisky Society and the Adelphi Distillery) and write tasting notes for several brand owners, but this was the first job I have done for Signatory. With this quality of whiskies I hope it won't be the last! Onerous and responsible work, I am sure you will agree, but someone has to do it...



### SPIRIT SAFES...

Strictly for collectors, we have a small quantity of Glengoyne's 'Middle Cut'. Limited to a measley 100 bottles, this 30yo is remarkable owing to its 3kg, solid brass lockable spirit safe style case. The price? A reasonable £490.

### ...AND SILENT STILLS

Signatory have created a new 'Silent Stills' series for collectors of lost, demolished, defunct or resting distilleries. Each perspex-windowed wooden box includes a matching numbered miniature and a sample of stave from the cask from which the whisky was drawn, decorated with the information as it appeared on the cask end.

These bottlings are described in our Stock List as 'ss' and represent excellent value given the level of presentation.



## NOSIN' AROUND WITH BOB BARLEYCORN

*Our dumb waiter listens and writes...*

While dusting round the back of the sofa in the Clubhouse last week I overheard proposals by Mr. Big to cash in on the upstart Glenmorangie's considerable advances in the east end of town.

Come Easter, allegedly, a small quantity of something called **The Distiller's Selection** will be smuggled back from the racketeering duty-free profiteers into the plucky British specialist market. Apparently Mr Big's Classic Six gang have been 'Double Matured' in complementary wine cask wood. Sounds like a fancy word for finishing to me.

Apparently Glenkinchie is to be wedded to the vicar's covert chum, Amontillado (aged fino). Dalwhinnie gets Oloroso—a surprising move I thought. Cragganmore's being coated in the contents of the port decanter! Local boy Oban is drawn against Montilla Fino while Mr Big's bruiser, Talisker, hugs the all-loving Amoroso.



It was getting harder to hear—Lagavulin was being doused with Pedro something, him-and-his? The thin one at the counter, who speaks Spanish, suggested Ximinez. I looked it up, Pedro Ximinez! A grape! The 'PX' grape is 'used for its intense sweetness to make an unctuous wine with the character of black treacle and raisins, which the Spanish pour over vanilla ice-cream for a delicious dessert'

You read it here first, folks.

Did you know that in Norway alcohol over 60% is considered a narcotic? Look out for all those cask strength bottlers being locked up.

Now that Monsieur Moet's gone away, laughing all the way..., the twinning of Mr Big with Mr G. Met looks assured. No-one in the club thinks this makes much difference to the Scotch Whisky biz but at least Mr. B is getting a decent vodka at last, even if he is gaining a name that sounds like a trade union.

Ooops! Here's the boss—back to work. Where's that bottle?

For those who feel the need for their own dumb waiter, clones of 'Bob' are available (66cm high in robust resin) for £90, although no guarantees are made as to their snooping abilities.

**GREENLEES BROTHERS,**  
 BONDED VATTING  
 AND  
 BOTTLING WAREHOUSE PROPRIETORS.  
 Vattings & Bottlings made in Customer's own name.



## ARGYLL'S FORGOTTEN WHISKY BARONS

*Robert Haydock*

The great names of Walker, Dewar, Mackie and Buchanan are well established in the lore of the whisky industry. Less well known now, though leaders and innovators in their own day, are the Greenlees Brothers, whose brand Old Parr is still a major player today in markets such as Japan. Subsumed into the Distillers Company (now United Distillers) shortly after the 'great amalgamation' of 1925, Greenlees Brothers had a proud history which began in, and never lost touch with, Campbeltown. What follows is a short history of this remarkable firm from its infancy until the retirement of the two founders of the business in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

The Greenlees family came to Campbeltown in 'about' 1640, when a miller of that name moved from Lochwinnoch (Renfrewshire) to Southend (8 miles SSW Campbeltown). In 1810 James Greenlees, farmer at Peninver (3.5 miles N Campbeltown) married Catherine Galbreath. Peninver was the farm originally worked by Catherine's father, Samuel Galbreath. The couple had 11 children, the first born son (b. 1812) being named Samuel, after James' father. James died in 1850 leaving £186 18s 7d, of which £137 18s 9d represented cattle, horses and farm implements. Samuel worked with his father on the small farm at Peninver; at some point between 1836 and 1839 he joined with his brother-in-law Daniel Greenlees as a partner in the Hazelburn Distillery, Campbeltown. The distillery, built in eighteenth century occupied lands rented and feued from the Duke of Argyll. The partnership was known as Greenlees Colvill & Co. 'Possessed of great natural energy and unwearying perseverance, he [Samuel Greenlees] ...soon made the business one of the most extensive and successful in the town'. Samuel Greenlees was in particular responsible for selling the product of the Hazelburn Distillery, and travelled widely on its behalf.

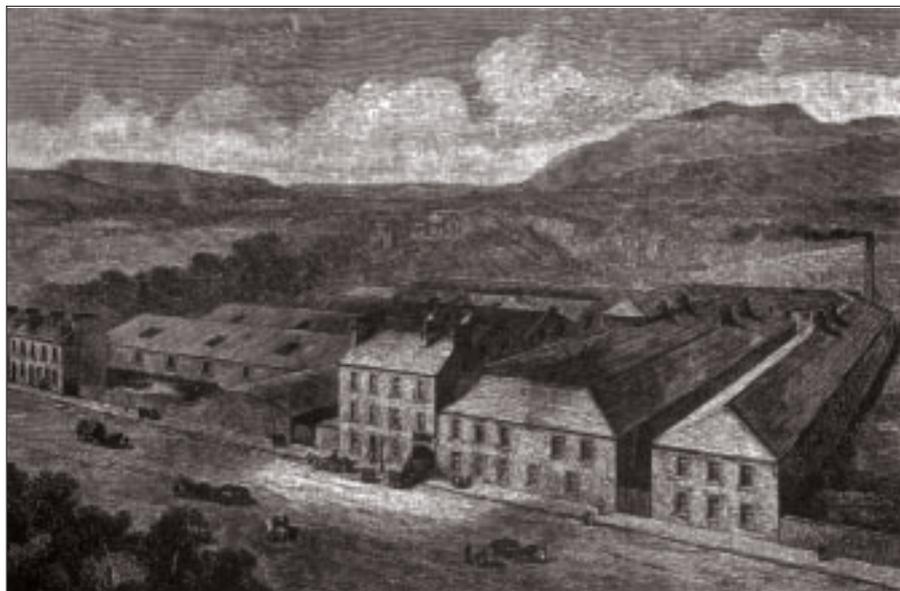
In 1881 Samuel Greenlees bought out his brother-in-law's interest in the business and became sole partner in Greenlees Colvill & Co; his share in the firm was valued as £14,711 6s 9d when he died in 1886. It was estimated at this time that the distillery had an annual capacity of 250,000 gallons, and an actual production of 192,000 gallons. The wash still, holding 7,000 gallons, was the largest in Campbeltown. The distillery workforce was around 14 men. By 1881 Greenlees Colvill & Co had also acquired Moy Farm which was extensively improved by Samuel Greenlees, 'his early experience in agriculture being of great use to him in the improvements he made...'

Samuel Greenlees married his cousin, Agnes Greenlees, in December 1840. The couple had five children, including sons James (b. 1848) and Samuel (b. 1850). Agnes died at some point between 1850 and 1861, when Samuel married Isabella Ralston, by whom he had a further 6 children. Isabella Greenlees died in 1897 at the Greenlees family home, Hazelbank. James and Samuel Greenlees were both educated locally in Campbeltown at the United Presbyterian Academy. On leaving school Samuel joined his father working in the distillery whilst his elder brother James was an apprentice in the offices of Baird Brothers, the coalmasters and ironfounders at Glasgow and Gartsherrie. In 1871 both brothers moved to London where they established the firm of Greenlees Brothers at Gresham Buildings. At 21 and 23 years of age they were remarkably young to take such a step; it seems unlikely that it would have been without the encouragement (and possibly financial assistance) of their father, although it is possible they had also received an inheritance from their mother. The business they set up had

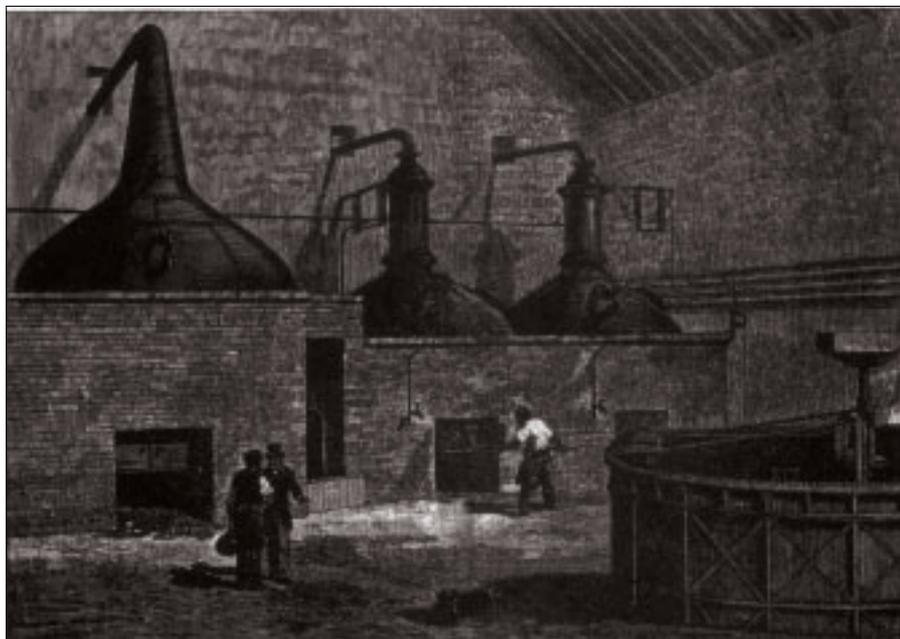
a firm base in the agency for Hazelburn whisky; they also had agencies for another Campbeltown Distillery, Dalaruan, and for Lagavulin. However their intention in London was to exploit the market for blended whiskies, still very much in its infancy.

Taste in London was still geared towards the lighter Irish whiskies—in their early years Greenlees Brothers sold three vats of Irish whisky to one of Scotch; 'it took some time to get it [i.e. Scotch] into the trade and the public favour' recalled James Greenlees in 1908. Their endeavours, particularly within the London market, were path-finding both in terms of 'educating the public up to a blended whisky of a pleasant description', and also in developing brands: 'If you buy a bottle of whisky with a brand on it the public know the firm's name is on it, and they depend on it...' Their earliest blend carried on the label the distinctive signature Greenlees Brothers, a style subsequently much imitated. 'Greenlees Brothers may' wrote the *Campbeltown Courier*, 'be regarded as pioneers of whisky blending as well as the pioneers in popularising Scotch whisky throughout the world'. 'To Messrs. Greenlees Brothers', wrote *Wyman's Commercial Encyclopaedia* in 1890, 'belongs the credit of having made the trade in Scotch whisky, and of having introduced that beverage to the British public in a wholesome and agreeable form, blended with the utmost nicety and judgement, so that delicacy of flavour and absolute purity are, as far as possible, combined.

Greenlees Brothers' principal brand of blended Scotch was Lorne Highland Whisky. They had begun selling this in 1871, and applied in January of that year for copyright of a trademark (St Andrew's Cross, Lion, Thistle and GB quartered on shield), and also of a showcard which featured a portrait of



HAZELBURN DISTILLERY, AT THE TIME OF BARNARD'S 1887 SURVEY



HAZELBURN DISTILLERY, STILL HOUSE

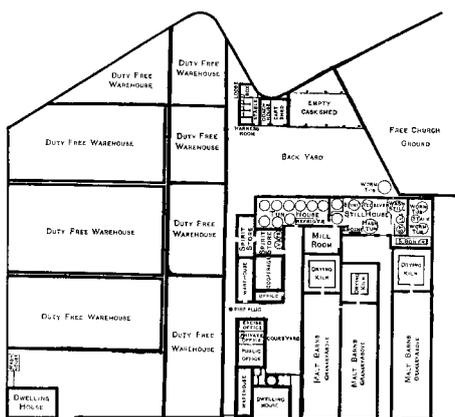
the Marquis of Lorne and the words Highland Whisky and a background of Argyll tartan. In addition they also sold a Fine Old Irish Whisky, and Connaught (1879) Irish whisky, which must have accounted for the bulk of their sales in these early years. The firm also sold a single or self whisky under the name Hazelburn (1872), North British Very Old Scotch Whisky (1873) and another blend, Glenlussa (1875), named after a glen 3 miles north east of Campbeltown. Argyll associations were also used with Davaar Scotch Whisky (1885), celebrating the island at the mouth of Campbeltown Loch with its famous cave paintings, although Dew of Ben Gullion (1885) apparently refers to a fictional location. Other nineteenth century brands included Dunblane Very Old Highland Whisky (1885), Club Whisky (1885) Peacock Brand Old Scotch Whisky (1886), Deeside Scotch Whisky (1886) and the Golfer's Special Whisky. In the early twentieth century, in the heat of the 'what is whisky' crisis, Greenlees introduced a Matured Scotch Grain Whisky (1907). By 1909 they had also introduced (Ancient) Old Parr, and in 1911 The Old Admiral Finest Highland

Whisky. In addition to these trademarked brands the firms also sold other 'patriotic' blends, such as 'Death or Glory' and 'Thin Red Line'. By 1885 Greenlees brothers had apparently achieved a dominant position in the marketing of blended whisky in England, and also had some success in exports. James Buchanan recalled that 'the wants of the licensed Trade in London were pretty well met by Messrs. Greenlees, whose Lorne Whisky practically held a monopoly of supply'. Like other firms they exploited advertising whenever possible, often obtaining exposure in novel ways. In November of 1889 they secured the sole contract to supply whisky at Olympia during Barnum's residency there. By 1884 they had opened bonded and export warehouses in Osborne Street Glasgow, where they claimed to have handled over 1.3 million gallons of whisky in 1886. By this time they had also moved from Gresham Buildings in London to 31 Commercial Street, 'one of the finest buildings' in the East End. The additional capacity afforded by these new premises was not simply to cope with the increasing sale of whiskies, but also to house stocks held under agencies for a wide range of champagnes and wines. By 1890 the Osborne Street site had been extended to cover an acre and a half, the warehouses holding 15,416 casks and 10,000 cases of whisky. The monthly turnover of the Osborne Street warehouse was 72,000 gallons, in excess of 3.5 million gallons for the year. Greenlees Brothers brands were supplied, claimed one advertisement, 'to His Majesty the King, His Excellency the Viceroy of India, and to the Courts of their Highnesses the Gaekwar of Barodas, the Maharaja of Rapur, the Nizam of Hydrerbad, and the Nawab of Patudi, etc. etc.'. Another claimed

that Greenlees Brothers whisky was 'used by all nationalities all over the world'.

In 1886, following the death of Samuel Greenlees Senior, the two brothers took over the Hazelburn Distillery, converting it into a limited liability company, with a capital of £25,000. In 1888 the two brothers took over the business known as Colvill, Greenlees & Company at the Argyll Distillery, Campbeltown, which they formed into a limited company with a capital of £12,000; here they planned to build a new mash and still house and raise annual output to around 150,000 gallons. Both of these firms came under the general supervision of Samuel Greenlees, who for some time was based in Campbeltown, where in 1893 he guided a party led by Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Albany around the Hazelburn plant. By 1900 the firm's distilleries were said to have an output of half a million gallons of whisky a year. Both Samuel and James were prominent in a variety of trade pressure and benevolent organisations; James gave evidence to at least two parliamentary enquiries into whisky, making the most of the opportunity for advertisement. 'The production of a beautiful electro-plated model of the still from which runs the silver stream, which changes into a golden one, by the time Mr Greenlees has done with it, completed a useful piece of testimony, with just a not too predominant flavour of advertisement'.

By this time the brothers were arguably past their peak, and there were to be no successors to follow them. James Greenlees retired from the business in 1910, aged 62. By 1926 he had died. Samuel continued as a director of Greenlees, Colvill & Co Ltd until 1919, when he sold his majority shareholding to the distillers Mackie & Co. He had already moved to London to play a more prominent role in Greenlees Brothers and was no doubt responsible for the decision to merge that business with those of Sir James Calder to form Macdonald Greenlees Williams Ltd, initially a rival to the DCL's increasing domination of the whisky trade. It was to be this business that merged with the DCL, taking with it Old Parr, the Greenlees Brother's (and Argyll's) lasting contribution to the world of whisky.



PLAN OF HAZELBURN DISTILLERY





The very tasty 25cl Excise Officers Dram, worth £6.90—free with orders over £100.

## SUMMARY OF EARLY BIRD DEALS

For further details and *more deals* see pages 8 & 9. Deals are for orders placed with us on or before December 15th and are *strictly limited*, once gone no more, so order soon to avoid disappointment. *Please advise what deals you are claiming when placing your order.*

✓ All orders of value over £100 will receive a very enjoyable 25cl malt whisky.

✓ Order five bottles of our house malt *The Inverarity* and we'll send you six.

✓ *Glenmorangie* range of five—see page 8 for deal prices, and a free miniature of the 18yo with any one.

✓ Any, yes any *Islay* Whisky gets one free Ardbeg 17yo min.\*

✓ Any two *Classic Six* bottles give us a packing problem fitting in a free C6 miniature pack (but we'll manage).\*

✓ Any two of a selected range of *G&M* bottlings, a free half bottle of Glen Calder—see page 8.

✓ Order any two Distillery Malts (OB-d) for fifty smackers.\*

✓ Order 2 bottles of *Bowmore* = a free half bottle of Bowmore Legend.

✓ *Distillery Archive* Auchy 21 or 31yo or Glen Garioch 29yo, short change us by £5 per bottle.

✓ The new OB *Old Pultney* bottling will come to you with a free min of An Cnoc.

✓ A saving of £9 when you buy a brace of Glenfarclas 15 & 30yo.

✓ *MM* Springbank plus one other *MM* deduct £5. *MM* Springbank and two other *MM*'s feel good about £10 off.

✓ Order one *Bruichladdich* 15yo, or both *Jura* & *Bruichladdich* 10yo's and enjoy a free Dalmore min.

✓ Include six bottles of *Loch Fyne* for free delivery of your order.

✓ Order from *Loch Fyne Whiskies* for great value, fast, excellent service!

\* For fairness, one per delivery.

## FEBRUARY CLOSURE

The shop will be closed during February 1998 for alterations to increase the amount of display space for rare and collectable bottlings. Mail order requests will be processed but possibly more slowly than our usual 'blimey-that-was-quick' speed.

*(There, I've announced it—I'll have to get on with it now).*

## CASK OWNERS' RELIEF

Anyone who bought a cask of malt whisky from a 'wine & spirit investment advisor' and now feels that they may have been duped into buying something a little less valuable than promised (see *SWR4* page 11) may like to know of Paul Smith's creation of a database of owners. Write to him at; The Malt Whisky Buyers Helpline, 98 Stricklandgate, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 4PU.

## DELUXE STILL-BAGGING

The ultimate Scotch Whisky holiday can be tailor-made by a new business established by two ex-employees of the industry. Distillery Destinations will create a specialist tour of Scotland to your level of expertise, opening industry doors otherwise shut. Distillery Destinations, 304 Albert Drive, Pollokshields, Glasgow, G41 5RS.

## The LOCH FYNE Blend of SCOTCH WHISKIES



*We wish all our customers and friends a very Warm and Happy Christmas and a prosperous 1998.*

*Thank you for your custom.*

*Richard, Lyndsay & Roddy.*



## THEY WERE KIDDING...

*But the SWA were not.*

A cheeky Austrian example of passing off as Scotch, scotched by the Scotch Whisky Association. Clearly not true Scotch Whisky, produced in Scotland, after legal action in Austria, Glen Kiddy became Glob Kitty (—eh?).

Readers of the black & white, non executive *SWR* will not be able to fully appreciate the square bottle with the red and gold label.

## POST + PACKING & DUTY CHARGE

Inevitably we have to consider our p&p charges (last done in 1995 when they were reduced from £6.50 to £5.90). This list sees the abolition of the single bottle rate so that now all despatches of bottles are at £5.90. Next year prepare yourselves for an increase.

Excise Duty on a bottle (@ 40%) goes up 19p on January 1st, 1998. Our price changes will follow early next year.

**SCOTCH WHISKY REVIEW** is free to all *bona fide* mail order customers. **If you have not bought by mail order from the last (Spring) catalogue and do not buy from the accompanying (Autumn) list then we will not be troubling you again.**

We are no longer sending out Stock Lists and *SWR*'s to prospective customers more than once. If you or a friend would like a current stock list please ask and you will be sent one with a back-issue *SWR*. Your name will not be placed on our mailing list for current *SWR*'s until you have bought by mail order.

## PLEASE TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT US!

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