

73RD EDITION

AUTUMN 2022



South Devon CAMRA does Dartmoor



South Devon CAMRA
Supporting Real Ale in the South West



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**BEER & CIDER
FESTIVALS**

Easter Weekend

August Bank Holiday



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WELCOME

**73RD EDITION
AUTUMN 2022**



South Devon CAMRA is back!

Sunshine Beer Festival attendance up 40% on pre-pandemic level with 11 new CAMRA members signed up at the fest and attendance breaking social events for South Devon real ale and cider drinkers.

Want to get out and about and be part of it? Check out page 5 for what's coming up or visit southdevon.camra.org.uk.

Also in this edition:

- **What's On in the South Devon area** (page 5)
- **News about your pubs and breweries** (page 8-11)
- **South Devon CAMRA does Dartmoor (by bus)** (page 13)
- **Out and about after covid** (page 15)
- **Sunshine Beer Festival roundup** (page 16 & 17)
- **Pub in Focus – The Blue Anchor, Teignmouth** (page 20 & 21)
- **The latest snippet from Pete McArthur's diary** (page 22)
- **Barrow Hill Roundhouse beer festival** (page 23)
- **Roger Adams ventures north** (page 25)
- **A Martian at the GBBF** (page 28 & 29)



*Cheers,
Andrew Thomson
Editor*

Please enter your monthly What Pub scores by the **6th** of the following month for them to be included on that month's database. For a 'how to' description of scoring see southdevon.camra.org.uk





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WHAT'S ON

BRANCH MEETINGS AND SOCIAL EVENTS

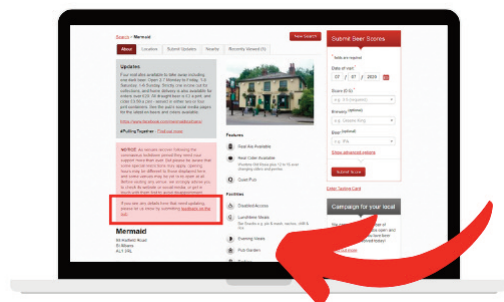
Date/Time	Purpose	Location
13 September, 2000h	Branch business meeting	Maltings Taphouse, Newton Abbot
21 September, midday	Social – Newton Abbot	Meet at The Railway Brewhouse Newton Abbot
11 October, 2000h	Branch social meeting	The Queens Arms Brixham
19 October, midday	Brixham crawl	Start at the Old Market House
29 October, 1230h onwards	Devon branches joint social*	The Beer Engine, Newton St Cyres
8 November, 2000h	Branch business meeting	Paignton Conservative Club Palace Avenue, Paignton
23 November, midday	Kingskerswell crawl	Start at The Barn Owl
10 December, midday	Branch Christmas social	TBA

*Pre booked event, please email our branch social secretary Lawrence Stringer for details (secretary@southdevon.camra.org.uk).

BEER FESTIVALS

Date	Event	Location
16-18 September	Abbfest	Fermoys Garden Centre
22 Sept-2 Oct	Cask ale week	At a real ale pub near you
7-8 October	Weymouth Octoberfest	Weymouth Pavilion
9 October	YeoCider	Yeoford Village Hall
20-21 October	Swindon CAMRA beer festival	The Steam Museum, Swindon
28-30 October	Halloween Beer festival	The Albert Inn, Totnes
2-4 December	The Queens Arms Charity beer festival	The Queens Arms, Brixham
21-22 January 2023	Exeter CAMRA Festival of Winter Ales	Corn Exchange, Exeter
20-22 July 2023	CAMRA Sunshine beer festival	Teignmouth Rugby Club

Please check individual events prior to attending



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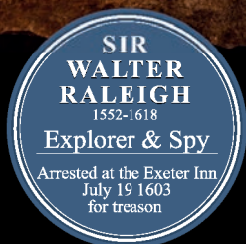
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PUB NEWS

The Golden Lion in **Brixham** has reopened. We wish new licensees Paul and Mandy Jones well with their new pub.

In **Paignton, The Isaac Merritt** is now part of the East Midlands based Crafty Pub Group. Manager Melanie Rowe stays on and CAMRA members will still see up to 6 real ales on the bar.

Following the stunning success of the **Albert Inn** in **Totnes** Summer beer festival - thanks must go in part to Totnes Ladies Rugby Club for livening up proceedings no end and demolishing the cider stocks, the next beer festival will be the Halloween Beer festival 28-30th October. Beers from Bridgetown and from other breweries will feature, as will ciders and music from N.U.M.B.

New owners at **The Rugglesstone Inn** in **Widcombe in the Moor**. Richard Vaudin and Vanessa Mason Hill have taken over from previous owners Richard and Vicki Palmer. They intend taking nothing away from this highly successful multi-award winning business.

BREWERY NEWS

On July 2nd, **Bays Brewery** celebrated its 15th birthday! They would like to thank everyone – their great team, suppliers and, of course, loyal drinkers. They have been overwhelmed by your support over the last 15 years. Here's to the next 15 - CHEERS!

They are also delighted to have raised £1523 for Paignton Zoo through sales of their seasonal beer Savanna Ale. This will help towards the creation of a new giraffe house for an all-female herd of Rothschild's giraffe. Over the years Bays are proud to have raised more than £20,000 to help protect endangered species including rhinos, elephants, gorillas and orangutans.

Black Tor reports selling 60 casks of Sunshine Pale Ale in pubs leading up to The Sunshine Beer Festival, plus, it was the first beer to sell out. The pop-up bar, shop and BBQ in July at the brewery had a great turn out, and they're planning more similar events throughout the year. Four cask ales were served along with local wine, cider and Black Tor Rum, with the BBQ by local Beardon Dexter Beef Farm. There will be four cask ales at this year's Budleigh Salterton Literary Festival including a special Festival Beer, and Telegraph Beer Writer Adrian Tierney-Jones will be giving a talk about his new book along with a Black Tor beer tasting, limited tickets available.

Latest limited Edition beers Sun Dance Pale Ale 4.3%abv and Ramble 4.7%abv golden ale are currently in South West pubs. Black Tor's Premium Reserve Golden Rum is growing a loyal following in local Devon pubs. »

BREWERY NEWS ... CONTINUED

» While sales steadily increase, **Bridgetown Brewery** was delighted to represent the South Devon area at the recent Great British Beer Festival with Albert Ale and Shark Island Stout.

Dragon's Breath from **Dartmoor Brewery** is back in cask from October.

Devon Earth Brewery continues to optimise the brewing process and try new recipes to minimise its carbon footprint, and use only malts and hops from the UK. Existing recipes for vegans leave out finings and trials are finding lighter ales clear reasonably well when unfinned – available locally from the Autumn.

'Holly Red Ale' is a new brew from **Otter Brewery** to support #PintsMeanTrees – an environmental initiative which sees Otter plant a tree for every brewer's barrel they sell in 2022. Holly Bitter is a 4.0% Red Ale and Otter's first pure English hopped beer with a flavour profile which is sure to delight their loyal followers. Red Ale will be available to all Otter's direct customers from the autumn. Patrick McCaig, MD of Otter Brewery explains: "Our on-trade partners are really getting behind Pints Mean Trees which is great for their business and for the environment as well. Holly Red Ale is the second of four delicious beers we will be launching to support Pints Mean Trees, so we are hoping many more pints can be sold and many more trees planted.

"We are supporting landlords with some fantastic point of sale including Font Clips, Bar Top Cards, Tent Cards and Bar Runners and I would encourage operators to get involved by contacting us via email at trees@otterbrewery.com or by calling 01404 891285." Landlords can also apply to have their venue designated as a Free Tree Hub as part of the Pints Mean Trees initiative, where the wider community can gather on nominated days to collect further trees. Species being provided for planting include Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Rowan, Crab Apple, Hazel and Wild Cherry.

Red Rock Brewery announces the launch of Freshwaters All Day ABV 4.2%, a new session IPA which has been named after Bob Freshwater a musical maestro extraordinaire and a sampler of the many finest products at the brewery. It was initially launched in July but quickly went out of stock. It will be available again from 1st August on tap in pubs and will be available in bottles from mid-August.

Freshwaters All Day ABV 4.2% is a session IPA created from a winning combination and British and US hop varieties. The result created is a fruity ale with flavours mango, grapefruit, passionfruit, mint and pine. These tropical notes are complimented by a hoppy floral citrus orange finish and balanced bitterness. It is a refreshing product and makes a great accompaniment for those summer evenings.

Salcombe Brewery Co. has won a Gold Medal for its Pilsner at the 2022 European Beer Challenge following hot on the heels of a Gold for Belgica, its small batch Belgian Pale Ale, at the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) Awards.

Also new from Salcombe is Atlas (ABV 4%), a new Session IPA that celebrates the South West's seafaring heritage. It was available from 1st July on tap in pubs and from 11th July in 330ml cans from retail outlets, including the brewery shop and online »

BREWERY NEWS ... CONTINUED

» for nationwide delivery from www.salcombebrewery.com. Atlas (4.0% ABV) is a session IPA created from a winning combination of British, US and Australian hop varieties. The result is a fruity ale with flavours of peach, blueberry and papaya. These tropical notes are complemented by a hoppy citrus finish and balanced bitterness. It is the perfect pint to enjoy with an ocean view and the ideal accompaniment to BBQ food.

Head Brewer, Sam Beaman, comments: "Atlas is the second beer in our new small batch range. Our first, Belgica, won gold at the SIBA awards so the pressure is on to follow it with something just as outstanding. I am confident that we have hit the mark with Atlas and it will be a fantastic addition to our range of award-winning ales."

Salcombe Brewery has partnered with Too Good to Go to help reduce its waste and has just donated over £1000 to The Seahorse Trust, which has been raised through a five pence donation for every bottle sold of its Seahorse beer. These announcements have been made as Salcombe Brewery Co embarks on its journey to B Corp status. Certified B Corps, are companies verified by B Lab to meet high standards of social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability. The Seahorse Trust was founded in 1999 by Neil Garrick-Maidment to preserve and conserve the natural world, especially the marine environment, with the seahorse as its flagship species. The Trust makes a difference through education, conservation and campaigning for protected areas.

Sandford Orchards, launches Wilde Cherry Cider (ABV 4%), a deliciously sweet cider, made from English apples and cherries and is bursting with fruit flavours. It is the latest addition to the Sandford Orchards flavoured cider range and was available from mid-July in 500ml bottles from www.sandfordorchards.co.uk as well as selected retail outlets, pubs and hospitality venues.

The results are in for this year's Sandford Orchards Breakthrough Cider Maker Awards and the 2022 gold winner is Moons Cider with silvers being awarded to Rawlins Family Cider and Artistraw. The Sandford Orchards Breakthrough Cider Maker Awards, now in their second year, are remarkable awards that offer aspiring cider makers advice, guidance and guaranteed listings in the on and off trade and truly support the future of cider in the UK.

Sandford Orchards, is thrilled to have been awarded silver medals for all three of its vintage ciders at the International Cider Challenge 2022. The General, Sandford Reserve and Apple & Oak each received a silver medal at the prestigious awards.

The General - Mighty Vat-Aged Cider (ABV 8.4%). The Imperial Stout of the vintage range, this super rich cider is bold and satisfying with the flavours of Seville orange, plum and baked apple. It is a superb complement to gamey meats or a fully-laden Sunday roast.

Sandford Reserve - Finest Cask-Aged Cider (ABV 7.4%) - the 'exhibition' cider of this new range. Using the pick of the 2019 crop and matured in larger wine casks, Sandford Reserve drinks like a smooth, oaky, chardonnay with flavours of honey, Madeira and dried fruits. It's the perfect partner to curry or spicy Asian food. »

BREWERY NEWS ... CONTINUED

» Apple & Oak - Fresh Oak-Finished Cider (ABV 6.7%) 'Apple and Oak', is a dry vintage cider aged in new oak barrels. It showcases youthful, ripe, bittersweet apple flavours which are complemented by hints of vanilla and toasty oak. The ideal accompaniment to a cheese ploughmans or cured meats, it's the 'cider nouveau' of the collection.

Sandford Reserve has won Gold at the International Cider Challenge 2022, Gold at the International Cider Awards 2021, Silver at the World Cider Awards 2021 and Gold at Taste of the West Awards 2021. In addition, it was awarded the category trophy at this year's International Cider Challenge, making it officially a supreme champion!

Following a rocky couple of years **Totnes Brewing Co** are back in their stride making the best of the new brew kit installed during lockdown. They have a whole new range of beers and feel they have something for everyone. On now or about to come on - Citra 3.9% hoppy pale in cask, Jared, 5% tropical NEIPA, Freya 3.9% session pale, American Wheat 3.6% lightly hopped wheat beer, Too Much Pud 3.5% a classic Wheat Beer, Mosaic 5.4 Single hopped Oat IPA, New Castle 4.5% classic Brown Ale and Lumin a 3.5% Hazy Pale. Assistant Brewer Ben supports Head Brewer Gary to help keep up with demand and they now have between four and six of their own beers on at any one time – plus lots of guest beers on tap and in bottles and cans.

To bring in the Autumn, Gary has brewed a London Pride 'clone' on Cask only. Called LP, this classic Ale is sweet, malty and very moorish at 3.5% ABV. If it goes well, they hope to keep it on permanently alongside their other core Cask ale, Citra.

TQ Beerworks brewed 2 cask conditioned beers for the recent South Devon CAMRA Sunshine beer festival – the Stout and Pale Ale - Pale Ale was the second beer to sell out at the event!

Almost 90% of drinkers back CAMRA's call to raise minimum juice content of cider to guarantee quality – and help save traditional orchards

Members of the public polled by YouGov have given their overwhelming support to a call to change the rules on as the minimum amount of juice required to be in a pint of cider, in order to improve quality and safeguard the nation's orchards. A YouGov survey found that 93% of people think that the preservation of traditional orchards is important – with 87% of respondents supporting raising the 'minimum juice content' of cider to help halt the decline of orchards.

To be taxed and sold as cider, the Treasury currently requires a product to have just 35% juice – this is known as the 'minimum juice content'. CAMRA is calling on the Treasury to raise the minimum juice content for cider to 50%. This modest increase would help improve cider's value perception, integrity and reputation – and provide a renewed demand for acres of orchards bearing tannin-rich apples that are currently being wound down due to a lack of demand.



SHINGLE BAY	LIFSAVER	DEVON AMBER	SEAHORSE	GOLD
~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~	~~~~~
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 what3words - daisy.navy.fields

# HAYTOR HOPPING

On one of the hottest days of the year (so far!) numerous members from South Devon and Exeter and East Devon branches set off to visit Widecombe and Bovey Tracey by bus.

Most of us met at Newton Abbot Bus Station, after a traditional breakfast at the Richard Hopkins, to join the 11.20 Stagecoach 39 bus to Bovey Tracey. Fortunately it was a full size single decker, by the end of the day there would be over 20 of us. This has to be a post Covid record for a mid-week social.

When the bus arrived in Bovey, it became the 271 and continued to Widecombe. On arrival we all set off to walk the short distance down to The Rugglestone. By now it was 12.30, the car park was full, any shaded seating outside was taken and there was a queue to the bar that stretched outside. Fortunately when we got our beers there were plenty of seats in the nice cool bar. The choice of beers was: Dartmoor Legend, Otter Bright and Teignworthy Moor all served by gravity from casks behind the bar.

The next call required a walk back up the hill to the village centre and the Old Inn, a large Hall & Woodhouse pub, serving Jail Ale and Badger Tanglefoot, the choice of many. The opportunity was taken in a sunny garden for the official trip photo, there are only three members missing from it.



*'South Devon CAMRA does Dartmoor'*

It was soon time to catch the Hoppa back to Bovey. One of our regulars, Martin 'the bag' arrived on it, having been to the pubs in Bovey, he was now going to do Widecombe, an upside down day for him, but he seemed happy enough!

The Bell Inn was the first calling point where the choice was between South Hams Wild Blonde, Dartmoor Legend and Doom Bar. The pub itself was covered in scaffolding, but there was a stunning garden to the rear where many of us gathered. The next call was the Cromwell Arms, although a few of our number, myself included had to catch the next 39 back to Newton Abbot, so we could get home on the same day.

For once all our buses turned up and on time, well done Stagecoach.

*Alan Cooke*



# The Heart of DARTMOOR

Dartmoor Brewery is the second largest Brewery in Devon, officially the highest brewery in England at 1,465ft above sea level. The Brewery is still located in Princetown, just a few steps away from the Prince of Wales pub where it all began in 1994.



[WWW.DARTMOORBREWERY.CO.UK](http://WWW.DARTMOORBREWERY.CO.UK)

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## A NEW ERA: THE STONEHOUSE SAUNTER

It was a warm and sunny day for our first official post Covid CAMRA branch organized trip. It was decided to pay a visit round the Stonehouse area of Plymouth.

I arrived at Royal William Yard a wee bit early so a stroll around the wonderful grade 2 listed complex was a must. It is the old Royal naval victualling yard which serviced naval vessels for years with supplies of various food and drinks etc. It offers lovely views across to the Mayflower marina, Captain Scott's memorial and mount wise and further to Mount Edgcombe across in Cornwall. On the other side it enjoys magnificent vistas across to Devil's Island and Plymouth Sound complete with paddle boarders and swimmers enjoying the good weather.

We all met up in The Steel Brewery located in the Old Mills Bakery building located just inside the main gate. It serves a range of on site in house beers. Their most well-known beer was Plymouth Ale. They serve a wide variety of different styles of beers all served in either 1/3rds, ½ or pint glasses. Appropriately, my first beer was Just Ask Phil, a 5% chocolate stout, very drinkable but as it was early I stuck to drinking halves only. There were a variety of beer styles on offer including stout, pale ale, sour, new age, sambro pale, pilsner, wheat beer and a hazy IPA. Despite the consensus that the beers were expensive and served too cold a very pleasant couple of hours were enjoyed in this interesting environment.

Our next pub was right next to the Royal Marine Barracks behind Millbay Port, The Artillery Arms. A very traditional pub with a friendly landlady called Elaine who made us feel very welcome. Summerskills Devon Frost, a 4.5% premium golden bitter was the most popular on offer. Andy our leader (AKA Airfix) had to depart el pronto to take his work colleague home as he had had one too many so I am not sure if he had a drink or not, but we met up with him at the next pub The Vine Arms next to the Cremyll ferry landing. The Vine describes itself as the first and last pub in Devon. It is reported as a free house but on our visit was serving St Austell beers. It is a proper traditional pub with no food, dog friendly and an ideal stop off point before crossing the "border into Cornwall" on the nearby foot ferry. A lovely pub, albeit with limited seating.

Our final pub was the lord high Admiral, a very popular "chic" pub famous for its food and chilled out atmosphere. It has a very nice beer garden which was full on our visit with people enjoying the sunshine. There was a variety of beers on offer but I didn't make a note of what they were, sorry folks. It is worth a visit and is highly recommended. This free house offers many unusual beers not usually seen in Plymouth.

A very nice afternoon was enjoyed by the larger than usual group with many new faces, which is always welcome. After a break of close to 3 years which out an official trip it was nice to be back to a near normal.

I'll drink to that. Where next Andy?

*Phil Ward*

## BRING ME SUNSHINE — A VOLUNTEER'S TAKE

After a break of 3 years due to the Covid pandemic the much anticipated return of South Devon's Sunshine beer festival arrived. Three of us met up at the train station to catch the direct train to Teignmouth. There was a shuttle minibus service which we missed so we walked to the rugby club where his event was taking place. It was a pleasant day so it didn't matter.

Upon arriving I signed in to do a bit of volunteering behind the bar. As well as an ale festival, cider and Pimm's, rum and wine were also on sale. On arrival we noticed how busy it was compared to the previous festival. In fact I later found out over 1000 people turned up during the 3 day event. There was one group who had travelled from Bristol as well as a contingent of people from Denmark who were holidaying in the area.

The main charity supported by the festival was the RNLI Lifeboats who bought their mascot "Stormy Stan" to help raise funds. The festival was opened by the Lord Mayor of Teignmouth who was supported by the Town Cryer.

On the first day they had sold out of 6 barrels of beer, not bad for one day. In the afternoon there was a rugby league game between Teignmouth and Saltash - a rare opportunity to watch a predominately northern England game. Quite a few Saltash supporters made the crossing across the "border" to watch the tussle. A tough game indeed. One player didn't enjoy it too much though after breaking his ankle (ouch).

The highlight for many people was the welcome return of pig racing, where the "serious" money was spent. People queued up to place £1 bets on their favourite pig. Once the race started people became very noisy both young and old shouting for their favourite pig. Afterwards there was a charity auction to sell off the pigs for the RNLI charity. The bidding got very vocal especially with the Bristol crowd.

The festival started off with 38 beers and 15 ciders. Apparently by the end of the Saturday session most of the ales had been sold but the club bar had been opened for festival goers.

Early evening there was a concert by a visiting Catholic school jazz band and choir from Chester who had travelled extensively across Europe giving concerts. We chose, however not to listen to them instead opting to visit Teignmouth's premier real ale pub The Blue Anchor. We were later joined by The Guru himself The Bag. Colin (aka Cee Bee) decided to try and catch an earlier train, but alas he was too late. The Mexican and I planned to catch a later train. Upon arrival at the train station we saw him on a train with Uncle John headed in the "wrong" direction. I am reliably informed that he did in fact end up in Exeter.

An excellent day out at the aptly named Sunshine Beer festival, guaranteed to bring a smile to everyone. Many thanks to the friendly folk at South Devon CAMRA who helped make everyone so welcome and to ensure a successful festival. I raise my hat to you all, well done.

*Phil Ward*

# **SOUTH DEVON SUNSHINE BEER FESTIVAL 2022**

This year's Sunshine Beer & Cider Festival took place between 21st and 23rd July at Teignmouth RFC.



*'Great day for outside drinkers'*

Judged highly successful, attendance was 40% up on the last Sunshine festival held in 2019 with over 1000 through the doors over the 3 days.

There were 38 different beers and 15 Ciders, plus a Pimm's, Rum and Wine Bar. Fortunately there were two casks of some beers, because all the ciders and most of the beers had sold out when we closed on Saturday night.

The Festival Special, brewed by Black Tor, soon sold out - the entire brew had sold out to pubs around our area before the festival even opened.

The event was opened at 5pm on the Thursday by the Mayor and Mayoress of Teignmouth, Russell Sowden (TRFC Chairman), Mark Brookfield (TRFC Operations Manager & President) and Patrick Brophy – Teignmouth Town Crier. Later on the Champion Cornish Beer of the Festival competition was held, resulting in a win for Padstow Brewing Company's Padstow Pilot a 4% Porter.

Over the three days of the festival there were numerous 'Meet the Brewer' events hosted by brewers from around Devon



*'Stormy Stan's a real ale fan'*

Two popular local bands performed: Rockafellas on Friday night and The Shrine on Saturday following Chester Catholic School City Jazz.

A rugby league match on Saturday complemented Ady Byng's Pig Racing! The RNLI were our main charity with their exhibition supported by mascot Stormy Stan, who seemed to enjoy the beers.

The next SUNSHINE Beer & Cider Festival will be 20th-22nd July 2023. See you then!

*Alan Cooke*



# The Albert Inn

## Home of Bridgetown Brewery

32 Bridgetown Totnes TQ9 5AD  
01803 863214

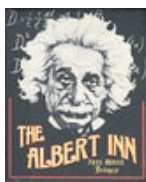


**Bridgetown Brewery brews Albert Ale 3.8% abv; Bridgetown Bitter 4.2% abv; Shark Island Stout 4.5% abv and recently introduced Totnes Hemp Beer, Green Leaf 4% abv. There is also a selection of craft ales from around the world.**

Yes, it is a pub with a darts team, a weekly quiz, people resolving their crosswords, people talking, joking, arguing and putting the world to rights. Our own ales brewed on the premises, traditional home made pies, curries, Sunday roasts etc.

However, it also provides a sheltered beer garden overlooking the Dart. Free WiFi. Regular live music, an open mic night for the adventurous or enthusiasts.

Would you expect culinary theme nights, an elaborate lunch menu; a wine list that will surprise you by variety and price? A large range of malt whisky; calvados and brandy to please the connoisseur? Give us a try you will be surprised.



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OTTER BREWERY

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## PUB IN FOCUS – THE BLUE ANCHOR, TEIGNMOUTH

Six changing beers on the bar and South Devon CAMRA Town Pub of the Year for 2022 - we're checking out the Blue Anchor in Teignmouth, run by licensees Luke Stewart and Adele Hearne since 2015.

They leased the pub and have created a vibrant business. Adele's past experience in the industry, latterly at the Blue Anchor, complements Luke's admin background. While Luke reckoned his position would be behind the scenes, staff shortage on the first day put him behind the bar, and he hasn't looked back.

While stressing 'lifestyle' rather than 'job' they both enjoy the social side meeting the customers and have made many friends over the years - this outweighs the long hours and hard work setting up events etc. Third member of the team, Elliot Elmer has worked with them for many years and was their only member of staff when reopening after Covid, and the only member of staff working with them through all the restrictions. They managed with just the 3 of them until thankfully getting more staff available to work... not a situation they would want to be in for long again! The nature of hospitality means for Summer and busy times they rely on people who will work part-time. For events they need staff who can step in and are lucky to have a good team of people willing to help.



*'Luke and Adele receive the Town Pub of the Year 2022 award from Bob Southwell'*

Their customer base is mainly local - seasonality isn't a massive affect as they're set back from the beach area, but increasingly holiday makers come out of their way as they get to know about the pub. »



## **PUB IN FOCUS – THE BLUE ANCHOR .... CONTINUED**

» They run 2 beer festivals, Easter and August, with regular music nights, events at Christmas, and they intend bringing back a mid-Summer fete – it has been a casualty of the past 28 months. 2 darts teams are based at the pub.

Beer and cider choice is theirs without restriction. There are up to 6 beers on the bar all the time and they're always ready to try something new. Customer demand is closely followed. The mix on the bar is generally from 3.5 up to over 6% ABV, with range of styles and colours. Darker, malty beers sell best at the Blue Anchor.

The future? They want to get better at what they do and develop the outside to be more usable. While not planning more large events as they are sensitive to location, they see positive times for the industry, particularly for wet pubs. A shift back to pubs being pubs – space for people to drink and not a dining room.

A party of CAMRA members dropped in recently to present the South Devon CAMRA Town Pub of the Year 2022 award in recognition of exemplary beer choice and quality, as well as atmosphere, welcome, and community focus. An accolade for sure!





## STOURBRIDGE

*Part of an occasional series, South Devon CAMRA member Peter McArthur dips into his diary to share some of the highs, and lows, as he reflects on a career in hospitality management.*

The pub/restaurant was a popular venue for locals. We had our own management house within the grounds of the business and settled down to see if we could improve the business.

The pub side of the business was good however I did inherit a problem with underage drinkers and some rough types using the bar. The first thing to do was to maintain the law and ensure that the underage were not allowed in the bar area. I called a meeting of all bar operators and we discussed the situation. This was before the change in the licensing laws and “challenge 21 and challenge 25” had not come in yet. We set up our own version of the challenge system, however it was not the norm for youngster to carry with them some form of ID and unfortunately many over 18’s were turned away as they had no proof of age.

The next thing was to sort out some of the dubious customers. As well as the ones who I thought could be violent, I also reckoned that I had a small drug problem. I spoke to my regional manager about this and we agreed that for a limited time door staff would be employed over the weekends to see if we could discourage the small amount of idiots coming in. Over time this worked and the restaurant picked up with families. We still had on occasions the odd rogue ex customer who, when drunk, thought it fun to cause chaos in the grounds. On one occasion one decided to rip some of the guttering down and swing it around near the main entrance while shouting abuse.

While I was cleaning up the premises, for a short period the bar takings dropped due to fewer drinkers. I was then hit by head office wondering why my bar revenue had dropped compared with my budgeted target. One can’t win! On a positive note, we had very buoyant Friday evenings. We had a POETS club every Friday. Now this wasn’t a dab into the arts. No, this was more down to earth, for you see from 4 pm the bar started to get very busy, so much so that I had to employ 2 bar staff. POETS stood for ‘Pi** Off Early, Tomorrows Saturday’. We had a great atmosphere and Friday’s takings were so much better for it.

Another problem was the economic climate in the area at that time. Many of the factories in the area were laying off staff and that included the big car factories. A few of the female staff had relations who were now unemployed so they were now the only bread winners in their families. This then led to some taking liberties while at work. Up till then my liquor stock had been in the surplus and the food gross profit was close to the budgeted target. Unfortunately CCTV had not come out and it was down to marking bottles, control of stock when ordering from the stores and unannounced till checks. I also had staff meetings to discuss the seriousness of the problems. This worked for a few months then I started to get bad stocks again. Not very good conversations with my regional manager about this. Anyway after an in-depth with my other half we decided to hand in our notice and move back to Torquay.



# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear editor,

It was with great interest that I read Kevin May's article entitled 'Atmosphere' in the summer edition of News and Brews magazine.

Like Kevin I have also attended both railways and their splendid beer festivals, albeit in pre pandemic years and my Bluebell experience was in a somewhat muddy field at Horsted Keynes during their Giants of Steam event. I would generally concur with Kevin's views but do consider that the South Devon Railway's splendid Staverton festivals are

somewhat limited by the available space. What Staverton though may lack in space, it absolutely oozes in character as one enjoys the ales whilst watching the era of yesteryear gently glide by.

Many preserved railways do of course offer beer festival weekends and after all, what is there not to like about good and varied ales and cider together with steam. Kevin waxes lyrically about



*Barrel House*

the atmosphere of the 'beer hall' at The Bluebell, so now I arrive at my favourite for atmosphere, The Barrow Hill Roundhouse Beer Festival. On atmosphere alone, this to me surpasses all other railway related festivals and this year's cask ale and ciders ran to 25 pages! So, what does one get for one's admission? The usual glass, programme and evening entertainment, but in addition, admission to an iconic 1870 steam locomotive roundhouse (where steam, ex mainline, locomotives are frequently revolved on the turntable), several different bars and short trips behind 1960's era diesel hauled trains, together with much, much more to view, inspect and savour. A cathedral of period railway excellence and with such a superb choice of ales, what's not to like?

A goodly trip from the South West but I would heartily commend Barrow Hill Beer Festival to not only Kevin but all others wishing to make a rail and ale pilgrimage.

*Paul Hulme*

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## NORTH TO NORTHUMBERLAND

I had planned a trip to nearly Scotland several years ago but things somehow got in the way. Now seemed the time to brave the north of England. We wanted to see Hadrian's Wall and some of the famous museums of Roman history.

My research had found that a very convenient hotel was situated in a village called Once Brewed and the hotel was called Twice Brewed (GBG). I just had to go there.

We drove, stopping in Bridgnorth on the way up at The Black Horse, Wye Valley HPA. The pub didn't do evening meals and we searched around, found the Bassa Villa, Hobsons Town Crier and food.

On to Once Brewed in the morning and the hotel which actually had a brewery attached. That evening I was able to sample Twice Brewed Bitter and Consus, a stout.

Next day we walked to and along the famous wall, visited the museums and I drank the beer, Sycamore Gap and Steel Rigg a porter. We visited the said Sycamore Gap with the most photographed tree in the country and Steel Rigg a fabulous viewpoint and another museum. I found the brewery taphouse later in the day, had a chat with the brewer, looked at the brewing plant and bought lots of beer to bring home, they had over 12 different brews in bottles or cans.

We fancied a change of menu that night and drove to nearby Hexham and visited the Dipton Mill Inn (GBG), home of Hexhamshire Brewery. I was able to sample Devil's Water and Shire Bitter and buy a couple of bottles to bring home.

Back to Twice Brewed to finish off with When in Rome and Fama, the first time in cask for that beer. Now we had to head south and visit relatives, John and Co, on the way home. But not a bad thing. We went out to eat that evening in the village of Sandbach at the pub The Old Hall (GBG). They had a beer called Brunning and Price Bitter but it was brewed by St Austell. When up north I like to drink northern beers so I went for Weetwood Cheshire Cat and Timothy Taylor Boltmaker. After that I was dragged down the road to John's local, a micropub called Ebeneezers and another array of new beers. I had to have a favourite of mine which I so rarely see on cask, Titanic Plum Porter, and finished off with a hazy hoppy beer which I cannot remember the name of.

Well, it turned out to be a great trip up north, history, scenery, great pubs and good beer, what could be better.



*'The Old Hall, Sandbach'*

*Roger Adams*





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# A MARTIAN AT THE GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL

*Agent LKTSNGT48Z your mission is to investigate the GBBF in the usual utilitarian manner without opinions or emotions and do not get involved. This is your last chance.*

*Report.*

The first thing you do on arrival is obtain a glass which comes in different sizes, from a pint downwards. They all have a logo which, bizarrely for the middle of summer seems to have a winter theme in all white, giving the impression of snow and frost and I was looking for a Father Christmas. The line measurements were also all in white which must have made serving accurately very difficult. I was intrigued by the need for different sized glasses and initially thought that they must be for different sized people. However, after some observation, my in-built computer told me that this theory was rubbish. I was particularly intrigued by the rather dainty 1/3 pint glasses. Shortly afterwards, I came across a small group using such glasses and asked them whether they were an effete drinking society. They were not very happy with this, robustly pointing out that they were tickers and that 1/3 pints enabled more beers to be tried and ticked. Apparently, the GBBF was too mainstream and there were not that many ticks to be had and many were elsewhere no doubt chasing fermented yak's milk in remotest Northumbria. I suggested that they should try some Martian moon juice or Neptunian nectar. Suddenly they became highly excited and frantically searching their programmes thinking that these beers might be on the foreign bars.

I then left them only to be encountered by a man with a fish on his head! Shortly afterwards a woman appeared with an octopus hat accompanied by a man with a jellyfish on his head and then the traffic cones made their presence. What sort of madness was this? I suspect some quaint regional dress patterns had been brought to London for the day. There were many polo shirts celebrating provincial beer festivals and it suddenly dawned on me what this was all about. The GBBF was the mother ship spawning seeds to be disseminated, and they had all now returned to pay homage to the grand master. There were also people in orange tops who were mainly sitting, appearing to be very lazy watching the world go by and they all had the same name of Tango. Suddenly like a grand game of musical chairs they upped and changed places. What was going on? I had this image of some remote town where everybody was called tango, wore orange tops and sat on chairs all day! Later on I was to discover another function for this orange brigade.

It was now time for a beer despite what I had been told and how would they know. The bars appeared to be named after British landmarks such Ben Nevis, Windsor Castle and the Angel of the North Et al. The problem for a logical thinking Martian was that these landmarks bore no geographical link to the beers sold. The Edinburgh Castle Bar was selling Devon beers from 600 miles away. The pricing policy was clearly designed by an Earthling without clear Martian thinking. One bar had a 3.8% beer selling for well over £6 a pint whilst a 5% beer sold at £4.60! The staff were generally friendly and efficient. One bar member referred to me as Metal Mickey and could not serve me as my metal would interfere with the electronic payment system and said that he was not prepared to accept Martian rock for payment. Fortunately, all staff wore name badges and I duly reported The Grumpy Old Man to the organisers suggesting the need for some diversity training. »

## A MARTIAN .... CONTINUED

» Similarly, I also reported one of the orange top brigade for insisting that I should use the Unisex toilet. The first beer was Laughing Gravy (apparently derived from a Laurel and Hardy film), closely followed by an adjoining mild and both were brilliant. Suddenly I fancied a cider, but my brain was warning of the dangers given that they are all over 6% and was really the height of stupidity. Martians get drunk when their metal joints start to clank and the early signs were there. When I arrived somebody had requested a pint of Strongbow only to be told that all the cider was real and not artificially sweetened or carbonated. He then changed his order to a pint of Thatcher's Gold! Somebody else asked for a really sweet cider, but as there were none she was given a taste of a medium and she loved it. Why are Earthlings so gullible to advertising and branding which would never happen to a cool, rational thinking Martian? I immensely enjoyed a Dabinette cider made by Temple from Somerset. It was time to move on, but the clanking was getting worse. It was then that I discovered the delights of Old Wood Chopper (I think it was called) which was hefty in strength. The first slid down beautifully and a second was required.

"One more Old Wood Chopper, give it to me" I started to sing and when I was immediately ordered back to base by my superiors. Stuff them. "One more Wood Chopper, give it to me". Suddenly my feet had left the ground and I was being propelled forward by two of the orange top brigade. My initial thoughts were how helpful they were in assisting me to another bar, but as the exit loomed I realised I was being ejected. "Why are you not sitting on your seats" I proclaimed lamely. There was a policeman outside who said "you Martians are trouble and leave quietly now". I duly clanked off down the road to await my fate whilst thinking that the policeman could also benefit from some diversity awareness training.

*Bob Southwell Aka the Grumpy Old Man*

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Waterside Inn	Paignton	10% off a pint
The Green Dragon	Stoke Fleming	10% off a pint
The Castle Inn	Stoke Gabriel	40p off a pint
The Kents	Torquay	50p off a pint Monday-Friday
The Old Engine House	Torquay	10% off cask beers
Yates	Torquay	10% off a pint
Totnes Brewing Co	Totnes	10% off TBC brews



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