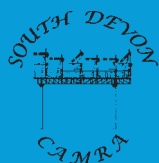


68TH EDITION

WINTER 2019



**It's back for 2020:
South Devon Sunshine
Beer & Cider Festival**
see page 3



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WELCOME

68TH EDITION
WINTER 2019



Hello,

The South Devon Sunshine Beer and Cider Festival is back for 2020, to be held at Teignmouth Rugby Club from 23 - 25 July 2020. See more at southdevon.camra.org.uk. We look forward to seeing you there.

Also in this edition:

- **What's on in the South Devon area** (page 5)
- **News about your pubs and breweries** (pages 6 - 9)
- **CAMRA update** (page 9)
- **Pub in Focus**
The Durant Arms, Ashprington (pages 10 - 11)
- **Day out in Burton**
the home of brewing (page 14)
- **Tribute to Peter O'Nions** (pages 18 - 19)
- **Returning the casks** (page 20)
- **So many beer festivals** (page 23)
- **Grumpy on some CAMRA members**
(pages 28 - 29)



Cheers,
Andrew Thomson
Editor

Your Whatpub scores will be used to inform the Good Beer Guide choices in February. It is important you complete your scores by **2nd February 2020** for them to be considered. For a 'how to' description of scoring see southdevon.camra.org.uk

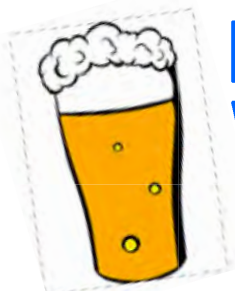


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WHAT'S ON

Branch Meetings and Social Events

Date	Time	Purpose	Location
14 Dec	midday	South Devon CAMRA Christmas social	Tap House Newton Abbot
14 Jan	20:00	Branch meeting - Pub of the Year choice	Crown & Sceptre St Marychurch
22 Jan	TBA	Midweek to Bovey Tracey	Start at Newton Abbot bus station time TBA
11 Feb	20:00	Branch meeting - Good Beer Guide selection	Paignton Conservative Club
10 Mar	20:00	Branch meeting - Pub of the Year choice	The Barn Owl Kingskerswell

Beer Festivals

Date	Event	Location
6 - 8 Dec	Queens Arms Charity Beer Festival	Queens Arms Brixham
17 - 18 Jan	Exeter FOWA	Exeter City FC St James's Park
24 - 26 Jan	The Albert Inn Winter Ales Festival	The Albert Inn Totnes
31 Jan - 1 Feb	Salisbury Winterfest	British Legion Club Salisbury
4 - 8 Feb	GBBF Winter fest	New Bingley Hall Birmingham
7 - 8 Feb	Bath CAMRA fest	Widcombe Social Club
21 - 22 Feb	Dartmouth Beer Festival	The Flavel, Dartmouth

Please check individual events prior to attending

Robin and Caroline Lewis are the new landlords of the **Cromwell Arms** in **Bovey Tracey**. Participants at a recent branch meeting at **The Old Coaching Inn** in **Brixham** enjoyed 3 beers straight from the cask - Dartmoor Best, Otter Ale and Palmers 200.

Coombe Cellars in **Combeinteignhead** had Butcombe Rare Breed and Doom Bar on a recent visit and were found to be on form.

The Cott Inn in **Dartington** took the Top British pub 2019 award in The Great British Pub awards.

Renovations continue apace at **The Palk Arms** in **Hennock** ready for the Xmas period.

Our intrepid reporter took the scenic route to the October **Kingskerswell** branch meeting, reporting Salcombe Seahorse, Dartmoor Jail and Doom Bar at **The Hare & Hounds**, while **The Lord Nelson** had Twickenham Naked Ladies (rare in our area), Fullers London Pride and Salcombe Shingle Bay on the bar. Then on to **The Park Inn**, with South Hams Wild Blonde, Exeter Avocet and Teignworthy Springtide before he settled on the Badger range in **The Barn Owl** for the meeting!

The Ship in **Kingswear** has changed exterior colour from white to a grey and blue livery. Our reporter found the Jail, Trelawny and Exmoor Gold to be on good form.

Gary and Julie Roberts (of Cromwell Arms, Bovey Tracey fame) have moved to the **Kestor Inn** in **Manaton**. This next chapter of their life sees them running a free of tie pub, and with plans for a microbrewery.

The Live & Let Live at **Landscope** has a new manager, Tom. His intention is to replace one of the 2 local beers served by handpump with an ever changing nationally sourced ale.

Rock for Rowcroft raised £2,481.92 at **The Railway Brewhouse** in **Newton Abbot**.

The Taphouse & Bottle Shop in **Newton Abbot** has just celebrated its 3rd birthday as an 'on licensed' premises. To coincide it has made changes to the bar layout, enabling the introduction of more beer taps. This includes an extra handpump, bringing the number of real ales able to be served to four. As usual, the bar will be open 7 days a week in the fortnight leading up to Christmas. The new upstairs facilities are available for hire.

Roger Cudlip was visibly moved when presented with the CAMRA Regional Pub of the Year award by Regional Director Gareth McDonald in a packed pub. **The Tom Cobley** in **Spreyton** now goes on to be considered for the National award, a trophy they are familiar with from the past!

The Blue Anchor in **Teignmouth** has won the 2019 Herald Express Pub of the Year competition, retaining the title it won in 2018!

Skinner's Betty Stoggs has made a reappearance in **The Old Church House** in **Torbryan** and our reporter found it in excellent condition.

Over in **Totnes**, the Halloween Beer Festival at **The Albert Inn** was a great success despite the atrocious weather which destroyed the pub gazebo! The next Beer Festival will be 24-26 January 2020.

BREWERY NEWS

Following **Bays Brewery's** success in 2018 where their beer Devon Dumpling won Silver Champion Beer of Britain in the Strong Bitter Category, they have had further success this year where their other beers 'Topsail' and 'Gold' were both finalists in the 2019 Champion Beer of Britain. Christmas beer 'Jingle Ale' is now available in most pubs across the region. 'Jingle Ale' is an "all singing, all dancing" Christmas bitter! Deep amber in colour with a subtle sweetness throughout, easy drinking with a festive hoppy finish. It is also available in 10 and 20 litre polypins direct from their brewery shop in Paignton.

Advent 4.8% ABV, **Black Tor's** popular ruby red festive ale fortified with special reserve port is in pubs and also available in bottles for the first time. November saw release of Nine Maidens IPA 5% abv in cask, a modern IPA brewed with 9 new world hop varieties full of tropical fruit and citrus flavours and dry bitter finish. A new website with webshop was recently launched, with bottles and merchandise now available to buy direct from the brewery online. Black Tor will be running a cask ale bar and selling bottles and Christmas giftpacks at The Christmas Fair at The Shops at Dartington 14th & 15th December. January will see the return of seasonal beer Resolution 4.4% abv in pubs, a golden-straw coloured malty bitter late hopped with Wakatu hops with refreshing lime zest flavours and floral aromas.

The **Bridgetown Brewery** Xmas offering, Queens Speech, has been brewed and will be available for the festive season and will also feature in the upcoming January beer festival at the Albert from 24 – 26 January. Meanwhile Head Brewer George is also attempting to brew a pumpkin beer for the winter months, and the brewery is delighted to boast their recent SIBA accreditation.

Dartmoor Winter Warmer, Dragon's Breath, is available in both cask and bottle.

It has been a very busy few months for **New Lion Brewery**, since it moved to the new premises at Webber's Yard, Dartington in August, as preparations were needed to move and connect the brewing equipment. In October the long awaited Community Benefit Society was launched and investors from the local community were invited to become co-owners of the brewery. Sufficient was raised through 270 investors to refurbish the building, including a new bar, some solar panels and more fermenting capacity and the work will start soon. The brewery has its brewery tap open on Fridays as before, and from mid- December they are hoping for Saturday 1700-2100 (check with brewery advisable).

Platform 5 has recently expanded the fermenting room which will now house 5 X 6BBL Fermentation tanks in order to keep up with increasing demand. They currently are in the process of brewing an Oatmeal stout which will be on the bars of their 3 pubs, The Railway Brewhouse in Newton Abbot, Molloy's in Torquay and Molloy's in Teignmouth in December. The name had not been decided as we went to press.

Riviera Brewing has had another busy year with ales travelling far and wide. »

BREWERY NEWS.... CONTINUED

» Recently Torbay Express 5% and Drunken Porter 4.4% found their way to the far north of Scotland on a special land cruise train. Currently the brewery is ramping up production for the Christmas and New Year season with special ales being produced. Santa Express 5% is a spiced amber ale, Christmas Gold 4% and Winter Warmer 4.4% Dark Ale. All are available direct from the brewery in bottle and small cask, some larger casks will find their way into selected local pubs. New Generation British hops continue to be a feature of RBC Ales, Jester and Olicana are currently being used with more to follow next year. The planned expansion of the store room has enabled a larger stocks of Barley Malts to be kept. RBC Ale is brewed with Maris Otter floor malt providing the best flavour profile and a regular supply is currently obtained from Warminster Maltings.

Salcombe Brewery sees a January launch of its first reduced alcohol beer, Salcombe Lite, an ABV 2.5% small batch brew which will be available until stocks last on draught in pubs across the country and in bag-in-boxes (5L, 10L and 20L) from the brewery shop. It's a smooth golden ale with floral hints and a spicy hit. Also returning is festive favourite Christmas Tide, available in bottle/bag in boxes and on draught. This malt-driven beer is ideal for a winter's day with crystal, chocolate and wheat malts that bring warmth and body to the beer. The plethora of hops build on the chocolatey malt base and add a bittersweet finish.

South Hams now owns Ashridge Ciders and Soft Drinks; an award-winning producer of traditional drinks notably the extremely popular Devon Gold and Devon Blush Ciders, the Sparkling organic Elderflower Pressé and Cox & Bramley Apple Juice; recent winners in the Taste of The West Awards 2019. Additions to the brewery awards cabinet: a Silver for Wild Blonde in the Food & Drink Devon Awards, and also Golds for the Sherman American Pale Ale and the whisky hued Cloch Point.

Devon Porter milk stout and Black + White - two ales that are guaranteed to get the glasses raised across the county. Their newly launched Mulled Cider a warm, spiced drink that keeps for 90 days when opened and is a choice that has become ever more popular with cider drinkers, and also with ale drinkers looking for something a little more festive as we head up to the Christmas period.

Summerskills Westward Ho! featured in the JD Wetherspoon National Guest Ale programme between September and November and was well received. They are now making regular trips down to Cornwall and three of their beers were featured at the October Cornwall CAMRA beer festival in Falmouth. They brewed an IPA with Centennial hops to coincide with the 4th July celebrations and another with Slovenian Dragon hops. The IPAs are being trialled in EcoKegs at a couple of venues in Plymouth and getting the right level of secondary fermentation in these containers is proving to be an interesting learning experience! Their local hop grower had a good crop again this year so they produced our green hop Plymhop Ale at the end of September. Christmas beers Turkey's Delight and Christmouse have been brewed and bottled ready for the festive season. Stronger, darker beers such as Whistle Belly Vengeance and Indiana's Bones are selling well and Plymouth Porter has made a seasonal return as has their Stout. »

BREWERY NEWS & CAMRA UPDATE

» Launched in May 2019, **Teignmouth Brewery** is run by brewer John Norish who learned his trade at the Teignworthy brewery in Newton Abbot. Currently there are three beers brewed, Templar, Portside and Deckhand. All these have abvs around 4 – 4.5%. Beer is supplied in casks to some of the local pubs, notably the Blue Anchor in Teignmouth and the Devon Arms in Torquay. The brewery has recently started a line of bottle conditioned ales and also have a Christmas seasonal ale 'Blitzened' planned or even brewed by the time this gets to print.

CAMRA has welcomed the House of Commons Treasury Committee's report on the Impact of Business Rates on Business.

CAMRA National Chairman, Nik Antona commented: "Pubs pay 2.8% of the Business Rates bill but only account for 0.5% of total business turnover. This is an overpayment of around £500 million by the sector each year. The report highlights that Business Rates do not fall upon all businesses equally and they place a far greater cost on bricks and mortar, than those that operate mainly online. The crucial role that pubs play as the social heart of many communities cannot be moved online. That is why it is vital that the system is drastically reformed or replaced."

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PUB IN FOCUS – THE DURANT ARMS

This time we are in Ashpington to check out The Durant Arms, owned and run by the Woollacott family. Parents Alan and Lesley and son Simon took it on over 6 years ago. It's their first pub, though Simon started working in a village hostelry in his teens while living in Castleton, Derbyshire, an early introduction to the industry. After a 4 year post-university stint working ski seasons in the Alps/Summers in UK pubs, he continued at The Peak Hotel in Castleton, and then Leeds Brewery, and latterly in the South West. Meanwhile, Alan and Lesley retired in 2003, selling up and eventually moved to Cornwall after a short time in Scotland and a gap year travelling the world!

Seeking to settle down after globetrotting, the next chapter of their life saw them on the other side of the bar. The Durant Arms came on the market as a free house and they visited as 'secret diners' to see what it was like; a pub with no beer turnover to speak of, plus accommodation, but in need of TLC and a lot of refurbishment. So, they opened for Christmas 2013 to full pub with a tiny bar, and booked letting rooms, and then promptly closed in the New Year for renovations. After relocating the bar, with the discovery of a stone flag floor, the installation of a log burner and a good lick of paint, they reopened in March 2014. Every year since they've refurbished something - rebuilt a chimney for another log burner, a new floor and paved the yard, aiming to keep it a nice local pub, and importantly, using local trades. A new cooler has gone into the cellar this year and they're using vertical dispense to reduce wastage and fit in more beer! Next job - the three letting rooms are due to be refurbished in 2020.



The Durant Arms

Dating from 1725 the pub was owned by the Sharpham Estate until 1940, when the estate was split up and sold. Formerly known as The Ashpington Inn, around 1865 it was renamed after the then Lord of the Manor, Richard Durant, following his philanthropic refurbishment of the estate cottages and the pub. A cow shed and out-houses were added to the pub, while the whole estate was sold into private hands after the Second World War.

Otter Brewery were extremely helpful in setting up, and together with Simon's experience - one Leeds Brewery pub had 12 hand pumps - meant they were able to hit the ground running, and The Durant Arms has been a great success since. Their relationship with Otter continues, with their beers much liked by customers. They buy direct from all breweries and currently have Dartmoor IPA and Noss Brewery Church Ledge, a top seller, on the bar. »

THE DURANT ARMS... CONTINUED



Alan and Simon behind the bar

» They maintain Derbyshire and Yorkshire contacts and quite a few Northern customers live nearby who like a head on their beer, and appreciate the varied offers on the bar. Yorkshire Day, 1st August, is celebrated every year when only Yorkshire beers are served.

Their notable themed events are usually oversubscribed. In January Burns Night features a thespian addressing the haggis, an annual beer festival in September has only beers chosen by the regulars, and a Diwali curry night, to honour the Hindu Festival of Light, is popular with the local community. Then there's a Gin Festival in July, and a Beaujolais Nouveau event in November. Popular charity quiz nights have benefitted the local cricket club,

RNLI Lifeboats, Citizens' Advice and Macmillan Nurses, and they play host to the local pheasant shoot that gathers in the pub.

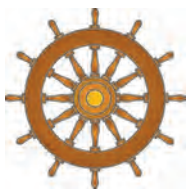
Simon has introduced a couple of premium 'craft' keg products on the bar recently and they're selling well. This category has proved an addition for them as their real ale sales continue to grow strongly.

While Alan can trace his CAMRA involvement back to the 1970s, the pub's been in and out of the Good Beer Guide over the years. Downside is it's not on a public transport route, though little yellow 'Bob the Bus' runs a couple of trips out from Totnes during the week, and taxis are not unreasonable, particularly if split among 4/5 drinkers, as some CAMRA members found out at the September beer festival!

And then, just as we were winding up our discussions, a nudge from another family member. Tess, the pub dog, wants to point out we're in a Dog Friendly Pub!



Tess



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BURTON UPON TRENT

One thing I had never done was to visit the home of brewing, Burton upon Trent. There lies the Bass museum, once closed for several years after Molson Coors bought Bass Charrington, but now reopened as the National Brewery Museum. This is obviously somewhere I had to visit. It was not difficult, there is a train straight from Newton Abbot to Burton upon Trent but it takes nearly three and a half hours. Well the Travel Lodge is a very short walk from the station and the Museum not much further.

Burton upon Trent is a town of breweries, every way you turn are huge vessels full of beer or soon to be beer, Molson Coors, Marstons. Every other vehicle seems to be a huge lorry moving vast quantities of beer. The water here is ideal for brewing beer.

The Museum is now run by volunteers who also provide tours, it only costs £11.95 to go in and this includes 3 beer vouchers in the bar, beer brewed on site by Heritage Brewing Co. The tour is certainly worth doing, the leaders are so full of information it makes your head hurt, a detailed history of brewing including the malting and hopping processes. There are lots of old artifacts, equipment and vehicles including the famous White Shield bottle car, and shire horses, drays and carts. Actually we know quite a bit about beer etc and the tour adds to this and explains more.

At the entrance is one of the few remaining Bass Union brewery sets, as perfected many years ago for the brewing of the beer we all know and love, Draught Bass. One system is still being used to brew Bass by Marstons in Burton upon Trent. After the tour and a good look around we retired to the bar for our free beers, I managed to sample all that they had on offer including a porter, stout, bitter, IPA and a golden ale, they were all on top form, well the brewery was next door.

We continued our time in this beery town with a few visits to some fine pubs. First the Derby Inn (GBG and NI) a small boozer but the old fashioned type that I love and guess what I drank? Draught Bass of course. Then the Coopers Tavern (GBG and NI) which used to be the Bass brewery tap and it has changed very little, small side rooms with old interesting stuff, a small bar with no proper serving counter and some beers on gravity service. This is a gem not to be missed. They did have Bass for sale but I opted for another local brewer, Joules, Mulberry mild and S43 Absolution. Both absolutely excellent. I did manage to visit a couple more pubs but they were not really worth mentioning. I had a pretty good trip and achieved another tick in my wish list book.

Roger Adams

Your Whatpub scores will be used to inform the Good Beer Guide choices in February. It is important you complete your scores by **2nd February 2020** for them to be considered. For a 'how to' description of scoring see **southdevon.camra.org.uk**





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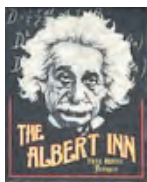
The Albert Inn

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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.

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A TRIBUTE TO PETER O'NIONS

Unfortunately, Peter passed away a few weeks ago after problems associated with various operations to remove some brain tumours. He was a long standing member of the branch and was a very active member both at our meetings and at all the various socials and I would hazard a guess that he probably attended more meetings than anybody else. He also held various official branch positions and most recently as Publicity Officer. As a result, most of you will have almost certainly met him and he is well remembered as being an 'eccentric' character. He loved his beer outings and particularly enjoyed the midweek bus socials where his generous nature saw him provide the rest of us with 'refreshments' in the form of sweets, biscuits and a whole variety of more exotic sustenance such as the occasional Bombay mix and other delicacies. The result was that the rest of us were shamed into making future provisions. He also loved his beer and would unashamedly identify himself as the 'Torbay Ticker' which set him up for some ribaldry which he accepted and took in his stride. He was not a modern 'ticker' with computer lists and printouts and recorded his 'ticks' on bits of paper that were transferred in to books which added to his eccentric image and we have a lovely photograph of him on the floor with all his bits of paper doing his administration at the Bristol Beer Festival.

Life had not been kind to Peter and as a result of a sporting injury and a brain operation in his teens he was left with some mobility problems. However, he was not a moaner or a quitter and cheerfully went about his life. He was naturally intelligent and witty, but his injury denied him access to a University which would have been very much his forte. I last saw Peter at Newton Abbot Hospital where he was in good spirits and I promised him a bottle of conditioned beer. Unfortunately, he then deteriorated very rapidly and I was never able to honour my pledge. By the time you will have read this we will have held a Day of Appreciation for his life and all his memories.

Thank you Peter

Bob Southwell



PS: A special beer brewed by Black Tor Brewery in memory of Peter was on the bar at the Queens Arms to be enjoyed by his many friends.

A TRIBUTE TO PETER O'NIONS... CONTINUED



The Queens Arms in Brixham was the venue for the tribute to our friend Peter O'Nions who passed away recently. A packed pub of South Devon, and Exeter and East CAMRA members joined local friends and family to sample the special one-off 'Peter's Matickulous Beer', a multiplicity of sweets and savouries and buffet kindly provided by landlord Chris Simmonds.

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WALES, THE RETURN OF THE CASKS

Someone has to do it, take the empty beer casks back to the breweries after the beer festival. That means another trip to Wales so check the passport and an early start from Kingsteignton. Pete was driving and Dave was organising, nine of us and lots of empty casks piled into the minibus and off we went. We had a very good run, no traffic problems nor border checks so we were at the first brewery, Hopcraft, early, they were racking this day and were really too busy but they did chat for a while, we dropped the empties and moved on.

Glamorgan Brewery is just a short distance away and they were all very busy as well but they did give us a good welcome, broke out a few beers and chatted away about their expansion plans, they are the main beer supplier for Welsh rugby it seems. We presented their certificate for the best Welsh beer of our festival, we were given a beer to take away and off we went to no 3. Grey Trees brewery, we stopped at the brewery in a small industrial estate to drop off the casks, a quick chat and on to their pub, Grey Trees National Tap. This was not far away but parking was a problem, the bus was too big so Pete dropped us off and went off to hide the bus. The rest of us piled into the Tap to sample some beers. The pub decoration and refurbishment was finished off now but had no food, it is supposed to be famous for pork pies, none available though today.

Right, we called up Pete and moved on, I was getting hungry! We found the Glamorgan brewery tap, Rhoswenallt Inn, they had food and beer so we stayed here for quite a while. Their loyalty scheme of buy 9 drinks and get the 10th free was easily achieved. However we had more casks to return and off to the Treforrest brewery, only time to unload and buy a few bottles.

We all wanted to go to the Tiny Rebel brewery and pub, but disaster, it was closed for a private function, and the bouncers wouldn't let us in. Plan B was to go to their pub in Newport. We found a parking place, found the pub, a converted main street shop with minimalistic decor but lots of T R beers and good food. We had plenty of time spare now so some of us had a wander about. The local Spoons didn't have exciting beers and the Lamb only had Doom Bar but the Pen and Wig, famous for Bass, also had several Welsh beers which we tried. We started to wander back to the Tiny Rebel pub and saw Hogarths Gin Palace which looked interesting, it had Courage Directors and some Welsh and Worcester beers so we had to stay there for a while to sample some.

Now it was getting late so back to the minibus where the others were waiting and off to Newton Abbot. The journey seemed much shorter going home but perhaps that was the snooze! We visited 5 breweries, only drank beer in one but managed 5 pubs and lots of different beers. I like collecting beer and returning casks.

Roger Adams

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SO MANY BEER FESTIVALS...

...so little time. I've managed to attend nine so far this year and will make double figures when I hit the 23rd annual Worthing beer and cider festival hosted by my own West Sussex Arun & Adur branch of CAMRA. It's always held in late October and this event will close the festival season for us south coasters. Its book end to open the season is the West Sussex CAMRA event in Yapton in mid-May. I've attended the last three years and the weather has cooperated wonderfully. The bars are located in the village hall but in the fine weather everyone congregates on the village green where the picnic blankets come out and the portable BBQ's are fired up. Combine that with over 100 beer options and it all makes for a wonderful olfactory assault on the senses.

My favourite, however, is the annual pilgrimage I make down to Totnes in late August for the South Devon Stream Railway 'Rails & Ales' festival. My mate Tony and I stumbled across it back in 2016 and it's become a fixed point on our summer calendar. This year had a few curve balls waiting for us. Instead of a nostalgic ride behind a chuffing steam locomotive our trip up the line was pulled by a 50's era diesel unit. Still fun but without the smell of burning coal and the sound of a steam whistle calling out the warnings.

Half way up the line is the station at Staverton and the venue for the festival. Folks crowd the platform and sip their beer as the trains pull in & out at regular intervals. Close your eyes and you'd easily think you've been pulled back in time to the age of steam. This year the bank holiday Saturday was hot so we took shelter under the umbrella of a picnic table in what used to be the goods yard.

The hosts had kindly laid on a DJ and he commenced playing only 70's vinyl all afternoon. He was happy to take requests so we had an eclectic musical trip through the 70's as folks requested their favourites from yesteryear. I asked for 'I know what I like (in your wardrobe)' from the Genesis album 'Selling England By the Pound'. It went down a treat with folks at a number of tables singing along. Considering it was blazing hot I thought some 'Cheap Sunglasses' by ZZ Top would be appropriate and asked for it. The DJ and his assistant looked at me as if I was wearing a dunce cap.

'They aren't a 70's band' he insisted and refused to spin it. He was thinking their huge hits from 'Eliminator' and 'Afterburner' made them an 80's outfit. Well I'm going to use this privileged position to set the 'record' (pun intended) straight. ZZ Top were formed in Houston, Texas in 1969. During the 70's they released six studio albums culminating in the 1979 release 'Deguello' which includes the track 'Cheap Sunglasses'. They 100% fit the 70's only criteria. Check their wiki page if you don't believe me. If the same DJ is back again next year I'm going to make sure he plays it.

Kevin May

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THE GRUMPY OLD MAN ASKS WHETHER SOME CAMRA MEMBERS ARE INCLINED TOWARDS GOOD OLD-FASHIONED MEANNESS

Mere *parsimony* is not economy. Expense may be an essential part in true economy (Edmund Burke).

Parsimonious is my word of the week, but fear it too often applies to CAMRA drinkers. I get too many emails asking where discounts can be had, but note that what they are **not** talking about is where they can get decent beer in good pubs and put bluntly they are just being plainly mean and win the parsimonious prize of the week. I prefer to talk about value for money and do not have an issue with paying that bit extra for an interesting beer. However, how much extra is the key point. Last month I was in affluent Surrey and went in to one pub where the car park was full of expensive 4 wheel drive vehicles (not cars) which must prove very useful on the local, rugged, precipitous, and mountainous suburban roads! Courage Best and Directors were the only beers available and I chose the Best at £4.60 a pint! I will leave you to decide whether that constitutes value for money (it shouldn't take you too long), but I can say that the quality was extremely good and at that price it really needed to be otherwise a greyhound would not have beaten me back to the bar to complain. Too many Pub Cos serve up the usual national range of boring suspects at inflated prices, and often in poor quality that defy the imagination and go off the bottom of my value for money index scale. Short measures do not seem to such an issue these days, but they certainly were in the past. One pub once served such a measure that could have been filled up with a bowl of fruit and it would still not have over-flowed. Upon questioning the measure I was told what did I expect when they were cheapest pint in town!! My reply was to point out that had constituted no surprise as there was so little beer in the glass. No surprise either that I was asked to leave. There is a very unfortunate trend for some pubs not to serve in pint measurements and instead adopting 2/3rds of a pint. We were encouraged by David Cameron to adopt this schooner measure as a means of possibly tackling problem drinking. The problem then becomes how to convert the 2/3rds to a pint price equivalent and here comes the shock. £4.20 might sound reasonable, but we always think in terms of pints, but that works out at £5.30 which almost certainly is not so reasonable.

Some people can be very vociferous and having been told that a CAMRA discount was not available continuing to argue the point to the extent that an unintended exit is likely to be suggested. Not only is this bad manners and extremely undiplomatic but also brings CAMRA in to severe disrepute. I can't help wonder with some people, and hopefully a minority, that the price and the discount seem to be more important than the quality of the beer and the general pub experience. Are such attitudes possible unintended consequences of CAMRA's discount schemes? Another pub experience in a GBG pub proved to be a fine display of arrogance and a lesson on how to look a complete idiot (I chose the word carefully) "A pint of John Smith please. Sorry Sir we don't sell John Smiths. What do you mean, everybody sells it back home. If you did sell it you would sell buckets of it and make a fortune". Eventually he settled for something else (preferably in a glass rather than a bucket), and predictably moaned about the quality being vastly inferior to John Smiths back at home in Rotherham where he would be paying a good pound or so less and a classic case of Oscar Wilde's dictum that a man »

GRUMPY CONTINUED

» who knows the price of everything knows the value of nothing. All he really wanted was a cheap pint he recognised with the quality hardly entering in to the decision. Not only did he also win the parsimonious prize of the week whilst proving to be unsuitable for HM Diplomatic Service with all the diplomacy coming from the other side of the bar!

I had an email from a local branch member who had been charged 40p for a small taster in Exeter. My immediate reaction was to assume that was somewhat excessive and illegal since they were not being served a defined measure and depending on the size of the taster constituted an amazing price for a pint equivalent. On the other hand, there is clearly a potential cost to the publican and especially if the beer is strong and therefore expensive. However, on reflection I could see some sort of logic of other login to all of this. Too many CAMRA members wander along the row of hand pumps 'leering and peering' at the gravities and seeking a taste of all the beers. In fact they were not only embarrassing but they also become a bloody nuisance and give the rest of us a bad name. ! (It was pointed out to me that when a pint is eventually bought then the 40p is refunded). Where there are a group of you and one person holds up the process of relieving the thirst for others with questions and sample tastings it is to, say the least, irritating and should be relegated to the back of the queue for others to be served. "Is that a citrus type beer and how malty is this one, where is it from and could I have a taste of each please"? All of this and all they want is a half or worse still a third! I know of one pub where the staff hide when they see a certain person coming through the door.

Bob Southwell Aka the Grumpy Old Man

CAMRA MEMBER PUB DISCOUNTS

The following pubs give discounts to card carrying CAMRA members

Pub	Location	Scheme
The Monks Retreat Inn	Broadhempston	10p off a pint
The Drum Inn	Cockington	20p off a pint
The Cherub Inn	Dartmouth	60p off a pint
The Palk Arms	Hennock	15% off a pint Monday-Friday
The Sloop	Kingskerswell	10% off cask beers
Waterside Inn	Paignton	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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