

78TH EDITION

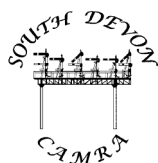
WINTER 2023



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South Devon CAMRA

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WELCOME

78TH EDITION WINTER 2023



Hello,

"CAMRA wants a cut in duty on draught beer and cider served in pubs, clubs and taprooms – to help our locals compete with the likes of supermarket alcohol.

We are urging the Chancellor to scrap red tape which prevents most licensees and festivals from selling draught beer and cider for people to take-away and enjoy at home.

As well as making sure consumers can buy takeaway draught beer, we know that licensees, brewers, and cider makers need to know what their energy and business rates bills will look like next year – so we are also asking the Government to take action in those areas too" (Nic Antona, CAMRA Chairman)

Check out CAMRA's reaction to the Autumn statement on page 15

Also in this edition:

- **What's On in the South Devon area and beyond** (page 5)
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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 2024** for them to be considered. For a 'how to' description of scoring see southdevon.camra.org.uk





EXETER FESTIVAL OF BEER 2024

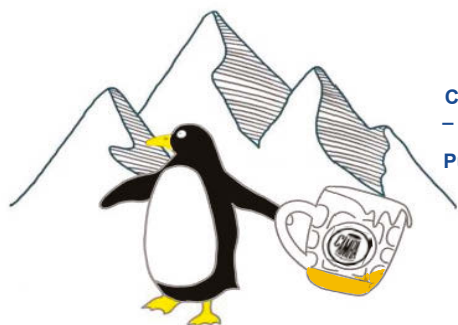
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WHAT'S ON BRANCH MEETINGS AND SOCIAL EVENTS

Date/Time	Purpose	Location
9 December 2023, midday	Branch Christmas social	Torbay Inn, Fisher Street, Paignton
12 Dec 2023, 1930h	Pub of the Year choice – first stage	Paignton Conservative Club
28 Dec 2023, midday	Social	Railway, Newton Abbot
9 Jan 2024, 1930h	Social Meeting	New Quay Inn, Brixham
24 January 2024, midday	Midweek crawl to Ivybridge	Exchange, Fore Street.
13 February 2024, 1930h	Branch meeting – GBG selections	Torquay Central Conservative Club, Union Street
21 February 2024, 1115h	Midweek crawl to Chagford	173 bus, stop 40 Sidwell Street, Exeter
12 March 2024, 1930h	Pub of the Year choice – second stage	Paignton Conservative Club
20 March 2024, 1100h	Midweek crawl to Salcombe	164 Tally Ho bus from Totnes Coronation Road

BEER FESTIVALS

Date	Event	Location
18 – 20 January 2024	Exeter Festival of Beer	Corn Exchange, Exeter
26 – 28 January 2024	Albert Beer Festival	Albert Inn, Totnes
15 – 17 February 2024	Great British Winter Beer Festival	Burton-on-Trent Town Hall
18 – 20 April 2024	Maltingsfest	Osborne Park, Newton Abbot
18 – 20 July 2024	South Devon Sunshine Festival	Teignmouth Rugby Club

Please check individual events prior to attending

DURANT ARMS BEER FESTIVAL

A small group of branch members elected to visit the festival, held over three days, on the first day, the Friday. Unfortunately, Ashprington is not the most accessible village when it comes to public transport, so taxis from and to Totnes were our chosen means of transport.

We arrived at about 12.15 and were the first customers, so there was plenty of choice, with Yorkshire featuring as we would expect. Roosters Brewery of Harrogate had the privilege of being the chosen brewery for a tap takeover in the bar with four of their beers on hand pumps. I found Capability Brown, described as 'a classic English bitter' to be exactly that and very much to my taste.



After a first beer in the bar, it was time to explore the garden where the rest of the beers were. There were thirteen casks from a variety of breweries plus a further six from Otter, however the Otter beers were still settling so were not yet available. The thirteen included a few popular, well known brews including Jaipur from Thornbridge, Citra from Oakham and Island Street Porter from Salcombe. Ones I particularly enjoyed were Lord Marples from Thornbridge, Dutiful Supremacy from Wild Child in Leeds and Otto from Hand Brew Co in Worthing.

All too soon it was 4.30pm and the taxis arrived to take us back to Totnes where we had time for quick one in the Waterman's before catching our respective buses homeward.

Our thanks to Alan, Lesley, Simon and their team for an excellent festival with interesting beers in fine form. Looking forward to the next festival!

Alan Cooke

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PUB NEWS

The Silent Whistle in **Ashburton** reopened on 30th September 2023 after a refurbishment which saw it completely redecorated plus the addition of a 'Snug', a partition wall between the toilets and the Pool Room and the complete refurbishment of the toilets. The pub still remains largely as a 'Sports Bar' but now has the quiet area in the form of the Snug. The bar now serves two real ales from handpump with at least one from Dartmoor Brewery plus another local one, often also from Dartmoor.

The next chapter for the **Tally Ho** in **Littlehempston** sees Mike and Kelly Joiner run their very own freehouse having bought the freehold from the community group originally formed to save the pub.

The Upside Bar is new in **Paignton**, opposite the station. Ex Teign Cellars leadership opens with 2 changing real ales on the bar.

TQ Beerworks Taphouse in Abbey Crescent **Torquay** is adding 3 real ales to their range and are launching with a 10% discount to card carrying CAMRA members. There is also one real cider on the bar.

Landlord Giles Hawkins from **The Albert Inn** in **Totnes** would like to thank everyone who battled the elements to attend and make the recent Halloween Beer Festival another resounding success. "I am always in awe of the support the pub receives and am very grateful to everyone that comes to the Albert," said Giles. All the beers sold well, with Bridgetown brewer George's Double Chocolate Stout (6.66%), Titanic Plum Porter and Thornbridge Jaipur IPA all selling out!

Their next beer festival is from 26 – 28 Jan 2024 where the Bridgetown Brewery range will take centre stage (including one or two "specials" from the brewery) along with some ciders.

BREWERY NEWS

Brewed in partnership with Paignton Zoo to celebrate its 100th anniversary, **Bays Brewery's** Wild 100 has raised £1,600, bringing their wildlife conservation charity total to more than £27,000. The family-run brewery joined forces with its friends at Paignton Zoo earlier this Summer to mark their 100th anniversary with the launch of a special-edition charity ale.

Last year Bays Brewery and Paignton Zoo teamed up for the launch of a limited-edition 'Savanna' ale, with proceeds going towards a new giraffe house for its all-female Rothchild's herd. Other firm favourites from the two Torbay businesses included Orangutan Ale, Crocod-ale and Trunk Ale, to name a few, with 10p of each pint and bottle sold donated to wildlife conservation.

Paignton Zoo Events and Corporate Relationship Manager, Katie White, added: "We're delighted to hear that Bays Brewery have raised £1,600 through the sale of Wild 100 – an extra special beer for our centenary year. All of the money raised will go towards our mission of helping halt species decline, and we'd like to say a big thank you to the Bays team and to everyone that's enjoyed a bottle of Wild 100. »

BREWERY NEWS ... CONTINUED

» It has been great to work with Bays over the past few years, and we can't wait to continue this relationship for years to come."

Its current charity brew, Beery Head, is available now and inspired by Torbay's most designated world heritage site of Berry Head, with 5% of proceeds going to Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust. Completing this year's charity line-up will be Bays' festive favourite, Jingle Ale, which went on sale in November, a Christmas-time tippie supporting the Torbay Holiday Helpers Network (THHN). Available now in bottles and cask, the ho-ho hoppy bitter is deep amber in colour with a subtle sweetness throughout, perfect for those looking to raise a toast to a great cause this Christmas. 5% of all proceeds from the charity ale go to THHN – a top Torbay charity that provides free memory-making holidays to families who have seriously ill children or are recently bereaved.

Jingle Ale is the fourth and final charity brew from the family-run brewery in 2023, with the latest local tippie hoping to spread some Christmas cheer among those who need it most. The Paignton-based brewery will once again be showing its support to some top local charities with the launch of four brand new charity brews in 2024 – so watch this space!

Bays online shop has been awarded Gold in the Online Retailer category of the Taste of the West Retail & Hospitality Awards 2023. Plus, Bays Wins big at Food Drink Devon Awards after they scooped not just one but FIVE awards at the Food Drink Devon Awards 2023. They picked up the coveted Gold for Devon Rock, Devon Dumpling and Rock Steady, while Devon Cove and Pure Gold were awarded Silver.

By the time you read this, brewer George at **Bridgetown Brewery** will have returned from a well-earned holiday in South Africa and will be back to the grindstone concocting recipes for the Albert Inn Winter Beer Festival from 26-28 January 2024. Rumours abound that Brutus Mild and Queens Speech may be amongst the "specials" that will be available during the festival.

Dragon's Breath from **Dartmoor Brewery** is their winter warmer that comes out in October and is brewed until March. It's a rich full-bodied ale flavoured with black treacle, deep ruby in colour, and with a delicious aftertaste of Morello cherries. Their Christmas Ale is a light bodied Yuletide beer with notes of Christmas spice and pudding fruit on the finish. A well rounded, easy drinking beer with nutty and biscuity flavours.

Over at **Riviera Brewing** they're busy brewing Christmas beers. Christmas Ale is a light bodied Yuletide beer with notes of Christmas spice and pudding fruit on the finish. A well rounded, easy drinking beer with nutty and biscuity flavours. Christmas Gold 4%, hoppy, Santa Express 5.2 % a spiced special amber ale, Donner & Blitzed 4.1% session Amber plus the popular dark Ale Drunken Porter 4.3%. These Cask Ales can be found on the pump in the Railway Inn & Tuckers Maltings Tap House in Newton Abbot in mid- December.

They are especially pleased to be supplying Paignton's newest Craft Ale Bar the Upside Bar next to Paignton Railway Station. Riviera Brewing also supplies direct to the public with free delivery in the Newton Abbot and Torbay areas. Ale is available using a 2-pint cask system plus new stainless steel Growler 9 pint cask and bottles. »

BREWERY NEWS CONTINUED

» **Salcombe Brewery Co** is celebrating a double win for its Island Street Porter at the 2023 World Beer Awards. Not only did it win a gold in the porter category but it was crowned overall 'Country Winner' too, meaning it was judged to be the best porter in the country. It will now go head-to-head with the best from the rest of the world for a chance to be crowned World's Best Porter.

Jordan Mace, Salcombe Brewery's managing director, said: "We are thrilled with these new accolades for Island Street Porter, which has already won a Gold Award from SIBA and a Champion Beer Award from Taste of the West. Our burgeoning trophy cabinet is testament to the brew team's hard work, creativity and focus on quality. Not only have they created a beer that has beaten off competition from across the globe to achieve a gold award but, it has also been recognised as the best of its kind in the country."

Island Street Porter is a carefully crafted, velvety, delicately bitter porter with just a hint of sweetness. Eight different malts combine to suggest dark chocolate, coffee and black cherry. While the aroma pleasingly suggests Black Forest gâteau. It's a real crowd pleaser.

The Bravo Zulu brewed by **Summerskills** to commemorate their 40th anniversary was very well received, with the final cask reserved for the Queens Arms Brixham Charity Beer Festival. They also brewed a 3.4% ABV version of their Cellar Vee to take advantage of the new Beer Duty arrangements that came into force at the beginning of August. This is slowly securing regular appearances in pubs and clubs where there is a demand for a tasty low ABV traditional bitter. They are also planning to bottle some in 750ml bottles as a table beer.

They have Turkey's Delight and Christmouse in cask ready for the festive season along with bottle conditioned Turkey's Delight in 500ml as usual and a limited run of Christmouse in 750ml bottles.

Introducing David Wheeler, new membership secretary for South Devon CAMRA

"I joined CAMRA Redditch and Bromsgrove Branch basically because I enjoyed the friendship that came from like-minded people who like a beer. I moved to Torquay about 3 years ago but still maintain a house in Bromsgrove where I am the joint organiser of Redditch and Bromsgrove branch Bromsgrove Beer and Cider Festival held at the end of June each year.

I owned my own Flexible Packaging Printing Company from the early 80's through to 2021 when I decided to retire, although I still work part time importing stationery and Christmas products.

One early warning, I will be looking for volunteer(s) to man a membership stands at our Sunshine Beer and Cider Festival in July."




A poster for the Great British Beer Festival Winter 2023. The background is dark blue with white snowflake patterns. In the center, the words "GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL" are written in large, bold, white letters with a distressed, hand-painted texture. Below this, "WINTER" and "15-17 FEB" are written in a similar style. In the top right corner, it says "BURTON-UPON-TRENT" and "BOOK TICKETS wintergbbf.org.uk". In the bottom right corner, there is a circular logo for CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale) with a beer can inside. At the bottom left, there is a silhouette of a large, ornate building, likely a church or festival hall. The overall design is festive and modern.


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THE END OF TEIGN CELLARS?

I have had lots of favourite pubs but when one closes it is a very sad day. Teign Cellars Newton Abbot of real ale, craft beer and food fame closed its doors on 28 October 2023. I did not know this for a few days and was very disappointed when I went for a good pint and a chat only to find the doors locked. I have known this pub for many years, it was very close to my office and I had work dealings with three of the business owners over time.

I remember it first as the Devon Arms famous for folk nights. Then it was taken over by Karen and Roger who did many changes to the layout including the position of the bar. It became my Friday POETS pub; it served real ale and was in the Good Beer Guide for many years. I once walked in with an umbrella and briefcase and received a cold reception from some of the locals, but when it was explained that I did not work in the local Tax Office they accepted me. Karen and Roger sold up and entered into a more daring adventure of driving across the world to Australia!

The new owners were Nina and Albert, they were not from this part of the world but the locals finally approved them and all was well. Friday night became dominoes night, a small group of us would spend hours trying to outwit each other to get your last domino out and win a few pennies off the other players. There were cunning plans and accusations but it never came to blows. Nina was an expert; she had a large pint pot for her float and it was always full. Eventually Nina and Albert retired and sold out to a pub group, I think.

The pub became a sports bar but that didn't include dominoes or real ale so the group moved next door. After a year or so it became the Green Man which was much more of a pub but I can't remember any real ale. The domino players were now slowly moving around the town into different locations with real ale. The Green Man ticked over for a year or two.

A new venture opened up in nearby Union Street, an off licence selling lots of beers, bottled and canned and unusual ones. This was great, run by Stuart, it was called The Teign Cellars! It didn't remain a shop for too long, it moved to the pub, the Green Man which obviously became Teign Cellars. Real ale, craft beers and ciders appeared in abundance. I could pop in on Fridays again. Happy days until October 2023!

Roger Adams



NEWS FROM CAMRA

Commenting on the King's Speech, CAMRA Chairman Nik Antona said:

"It is disappointing that the Government's agenda for the coming parliamentary session makes no reference to supporting pubs, brewers, or the wider hospitality industry.

"Earlier this year, in light of the tragic case of the Crooked House in Himley, CAMRA published data showing that potentially unlawful pub demolitions and conversions continue to take place.

"The King's Speech was an opportunity for the Government to make a firm commitment to pub protection and announce legislation to bolster the planning enforcement tools available to local authorities to deter unscrupulous developers from flouting planning rules.

"Unfortunately, we are still uncertain about whether the Government will act, and they have already ruled out making legislative changes to the Pubs Code, to better balance the relationship between pub companies and their tenants, and to improve consumer choice in the tied pub estate.

"Looking ahead to the Autumn Statement, we hope that the Chancellor will take urgent action on energy supply and pricing issues, business rates relief and cutting red tape preventing draught takeaway sales from taking place".

Commenting on what the Autumn Statement means for pub-goers, pubs and breweries, CAMRA Chairman Nik Antona said:

"Extending the 75% discount on business rates bills for pubs in England for another year beyond next April is very much welcome – and much needed for pubs facing rising prices and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.

"The Chancellor admitted that temporary measures like this couldn't go on forever, so it is vital that the Government urgently reforms the grossly unfair business rates system which penalises pubs and puts their future at risk.

"CAMRA is calling on the Scottish and Welsh Governments to commit, now, to offering similar help for pubs with the burden of business rates. We'd also like to see the UK Government find a way to help with business rates for the beer and pub sector in Northern Ireland if there continues to be no Executive ministers in post to do so.

"Freezing all alcohol duty until August 2024 is certainly to be welcomed. However, this is a missed opportunity to give targeted help to protect the nation's pubs, social clubs and taprooms by cutting tax on draught beer and cider served in pubs instead of an across-the-board freeze in all alcohol duty.

"Reducing the tax burden specifically on pints in pubs must be extended in the future to keep pub-going affordable and to help keep pubs open and at the heart of both community life and local economies by giving them a fighting chance of competing against cheap supermarket alcohol."

BRIXHAM

Autumn was upon us, the forecast was for rain all day and strong winds. I thought 'what the hell' the pubs are all reasonably close together in Brixham, so off I went to meet anyone else who turned up in the Vigilance, Brixham's Wetherspoon's. I was surprised to find about 10 other members had made the effort.

After a good breakfast followed by a couple of beers it was off to the next pub. Fortunately it was next door - the Birdcage where only Timothy Taylor Landlord was available, the Purity Mad Goose having just run out.



Next call was across the road - the Conservative club with two from Otter available - Amber and Over the Bar, brewed for the Rugby World Cup.



We now undertook what was perhaps the longest trek so far, or perhaps it just felt like it because it was pouring with rain! We all got a good soaking before we arrived at the Golden Lion. Tribute and London Pride were on offer here. »

BRIXHAM ... CONTINUED

» The next trek was definitely the longest from the Lion to the New Quay Inn, near the harbour. This was a first time for many of us, the recently previous landlord was never open when we were around so it was good to find a new lady, Danielle, in charge and currently open from noon to midnight every day. There was also a nice selection available on the hand pumps - Tribute, St Austell Conversion, for the World Cup again, Jail Ale and Dark Star's popular Hophead.



Next was round the corner to the Blue Anchor with a choice of Abbot Ale, Sharp's Solar Wave and Doom Bar. This was our first chance today to sample Doom Bar, but most of us elected for the rarer Abbot Ale.

It was now past four o'clock so we headed towards the Queen's Arms, calling at the Manor for a rest before the final assault. There was, as usual, an excellent selection of ales and ciders to choose from and even a few snacks - pork pies, sausage rolls etc courtesy of Chris the landlord - much appreciated, many thanks.

Alan Cooke



The Albert Inn

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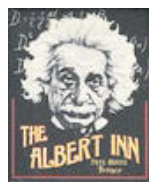


Bridgetown Brewery brews Albert Ale 3.8% abv; Bridgetown Bitter 4.2% abv; Shark Island Stout 4.5% abv and recently introduced Totnes Hemp Beer, Green Leaf 4% abv. There is also a selection of craft ales from around the world.

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.

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.

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PETERBOROUGH BEER FESTIVAL 2023

So it came to pass that on the morning of Wednesday 23rd August the wife and I set off to attend the 44th Peterborough beer festival. It was a straightforward journey on GWR and LNER trains via Paddington and Kings Cross and we arrived at the festival in good time for the afternoon/evening session, being joined by two sisters in law and a brother-in-law.

Entry was a reasonable £6 or £3 for CAMRA members including tasting guide. Various styles of festival drinking glasses were available for £4 each and were fully refundable at the end if undamaged.

The festival itself was a sizeable affair arranged over three sides of a rectangle, the first and largest marquee to our right held around 250 beers and also the wine and gin sales. There was also a decent selection of bottled world beers if that is your thing (it was for the wife).

At 90 degrees from the beer tent was the music tent which also housed the cider sales and also a couple of merchandise stands.



Moving around another 90 degrees were the dozen or more food vendors catering for just about every taste from crepes to kebabs. Within this area was a large grassed section with many picnic tables dotted around, although on busier days taking one's own chairs/blankets would have been a good idea. »

PETERBOROUGH BEER FESTIVAL ... CONTINUED

» So, to the main event: **The CHAMPION ALES** were judged to be:

1ST OSSETT	WEST YORKSHIRE	POSH RAT
2nd Grainstore	Rutland	Zahara
3rd Ossett	West Yorkshire	Voodoo

We got in a bit late to get some Posh Rat but did manage to try the Zahara which was rather good.

In addition to the aforementioned Zahara we also tried:

Blue Monkey	Nottingham	Pina Colada pale ale
Castor	Cambridge	I know a man who Cranachan
KCB	Peterborough	B5
Nene Valley	Oundle	Mandarina Bavaria
Panther	Norfolk	Summer Daze
Parish	Melton Mowbray	Fruits of the parish
Thornbridge	Derby	Astryd
IVO	Somersham	What do you recommend?

A notable mention should be made at this point to Kirsty my drinking buddy for the day, we took it in turns to select a beer and it turns out that one of her suggestions, the Panther Summer Daze was probably the best that we sampled.

Unfortunately, due to recent legislation, carry outs were no longer available, so I was unable to try a couple more in take away form for the following few days.

The weather was kind to us throughout the afternoon into the evening, and we were treated to a set by The Very Beautiful South who did all the numbers made famous by Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbott.

All in all, this was a very well laid out and organised beer festival and it is now in our diary as a fixture for the future.

Nigel Sanders





SHINGLE BAY	LIFESAVER	DEVON AMBER	SEAHORSE	GOLD
ABV 4.2%	ABV 4.8%	ABV 3.8%	ABV 4.4%	ABV 4.2%

A BEER FOR EVERY OCCASION

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Campaign
for
Real Ale

Real stories, real people, **real ale**



THE OLDEST PUB IN ENGLAND

Now that sounds like somewhere you just have to go. It is in Nottingham in the Midlands which is not an area I have visited but apparently, I had been there before, a very long time ago. So off we went, train from Newton Abbot, change at Birmingham New Street and in four and a half hours there you are. The city is on a hill and only a short taxi ride to the centre and our hotel. We then set off on a stroll towards the castle on the rock and soon came across this very old pub built in the 12th century.

Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem listed in CAMRA's National Inventory. Well, I don't believe that date but it certainly was old and some parts were cut into the rock so may have there for a very long time. In through the front door past the servery bars and into lots of rooms dug into the rock (soft sandstone) all shapes and sizes, I did



not see them all nor count them. The bar was black painted wood and old, there was a bank of handpumps serving several Greene King beers that I had not seen before and around the corner another bank of at least 5 pumps with mainly local brews. We settled into a small cave with old furniture to order food and drink, Lincoln Green Tuck a 4.7% porter and Milestone Cursed Galleon a 4.3% stout named after one of the pubs curiosities. I also spied beers from Little Brewery and Pheasantry. »

THE OLDEST PUB IN ENGLAND ... CONTINUED

» After that you cannot just go home, there were other pubs in Nottingham in fact another one listed in CAMRA's National inventory, Ye Olde Salutation which we spotted on the way back to the hotel. Now the hotel had a fine bar, advertised in the Nottingham Drinker, the Cock & Hoop, guess where I went next. Correct, 5 cask ales and at least 4 craft beers, I settled for Deez Nuts from Bang the Elephant brewery, I kid you not, 4.8% peanut butter stout. There were also beers from Magpie, Little, Blue monkey and Castle Rock.

The next day was cultural, Nottingham Castle and museum and the City of Caves, all fascinating. Then the Salutation, lots of black painted wood panels, furniture and bar with a good bank of handpumps which included Doom Bar and Titanic Plum Porter you know which I chose, there were beers from Castle Rock, Bradfield, Robinsons and Little Critters. The pub was old and black and the customers interestingly seemed to be quite Goth but the beers were good.

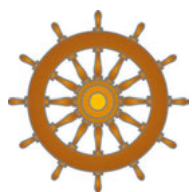


Now just around the corner from the hotel was a pub listed in the Good Beer Guide which just had to be visited, the Keanes Head. Again, a good bank of handpumps but a busy pub and not easy to find a seat. The beers were from Castle Rock, Liquid Light, North Brewing and Vocation and ciders called Pig Squeal and Pheasant Plucker so definitely worth the visit.



This was only a quick visit to the midlands but very interesting, a castle, caves, a fantastic choice of beers and four interesting great pubs. I will go back.

Roger Adams



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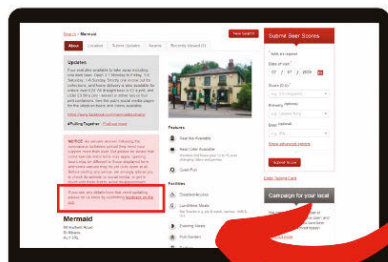
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COVID. HOW WELL DO YOU REMEMBER THE PUB RULES AND REGULATIONS?

It is a sensitive issue, with too many people dying and many others with long term consequences, and I really must not show flippancy at their expense, and generally show some respect. However, this is not the case with the dim lunatic fringe who either denied the existence of Covid or espoused spurious arguments on the subject. I was told by one person that my vaccination would put 2 pounds of metal into my arm. I pointed out the impossibility of this given the size of the dose and the tiny gauge of the syringe. I was then told that it was organic metal that grew in the body! I am sure that the Pentagon would be highly interested in the concept of organic metal. Then there is a whole lot of conspiracy theories involving Bill Gates, the World Health Organisation, the World Economic Forum, China, and many others. How and why this was being done was always somewhat vague.

In the early stages of going into the pub there was a QR code to be photographed and the details of your visit recorded, so as to make you contactable should another person become infected. In some places there were no paper versions at first and those without mobile phones were either illegally waved through or denied entry. When paper versions became more common I did not realise that so many Napoleon Bonapartes were such avid pub goers! Now for the mask issue. On the first day of restrictions, I was in a pub when an intended customer entered minus mask. He was rightly told that he had to wear one, to which he replied that as a free-born Englishman he was not going to be told what to wear on his face by government. The reply was predictable that as a free born licensee the door was over there and that he should vacate the premises. I expected, and hoped for, a discussion on the concepts of freedom and liberty, but I was disappointed as the ejectee meekly did as he was told and left. A group of young men tried to enter another establishment with their pullovers pulled up over their faces which they claimed was the equivalent to a mask. They were told not to be stupid, get a mask or get out. One of the group had taken a used, and soiled, handkerchief from his pocket and wrapped it round his face. He was told that this was disgusting and that he should leave immediately. It wasn't long before some masks were being worn as 'fashion accessories', being languidly draped over the chin and lower lip.

Do you remember the period when alcohol could only be bought with food, and some interesting issues arose as to what constituted food. A minister was asked whether a scotch egg qualified. He rather gave the impression of not knowing what a scotch egg actually was, but went on to suggest that it would probably be OK, but not soup. Would the result be different if the soup came with croutons and a slice of bread? What happens if a landlord provides free food or charged a nominal amount like 20p. Could a group of 4 people share a meal? There were also periods when there had to be minimum distances between customers which meant landlords having to get their tape measures out to ensure minimum distances between tables and I seem to remember there was also a maximum of 6 people per table. I remember witnessing 3 people arriving at a table shortly followed by another 3 and they all illegally grouped round the same table. When 2 more arrived they started to move the furniture to fit a table for 10. Presumably they knew the rules, but were not capable of reading the large signs imploring people not to move the furniture. The management would not be impressed, having measured the gaps and organised the tables accordingly, only for the whole thing to be torn asunder in seconds. They now split the group on to 2 tables, but the group were not happy with more improvised table arrangements. »

COVID. HOW WELL DO YOU REMEMBER THE PUB RULES AND REGULATIONS? .. CONTINUED

» The regulations also did not allow movement between tables, but this lot were like jack in the boxes leaping up and down, leaning over each other and sitting on the edge of tables in a form of musical chairs. There was a period when waiter service was introduced. I love the idea of the continental experience, but the British don't do it very well. You needed to attract the waiter's attention, whereas they would be with you after a brief interval but the waiter never seemed to be looking in your direction. I don't know why people seem to prefer queueing at a bar, being jostled with people getting served out of turn. By contrast, waiter service is both more genteel and civilised.

Then there were the one-way routes to enable access to the toilets, passing as few fellow customers as possible. In one case they were accessed by leaving the back door and round the outside to another entrance with the eventual destination just yards from the departing point! Do you recall the footprint indicators in a variety of colours. Many are still there and I would like to think that they might be incorporated into a future Covid pub museum. In one place they told you where to stand whilst queueing at the bar and we followed the trail of these different coloured steps whilst shuffling forward.

Finally, 2 issues not associated with rules. The period saw an enormous increase in electronic transactions. I have always resisted, as a don't fancy a 39-page bank statement which required the felling of 2 trees. Secondly, there was the welcome decline of the pool table and principally for more space. I won't miss having to be moved so that shots can be made or a bum in my face or being jabbed by cues in uncomfortable places. They won't be missed.

Bob Southwell Aka the Grumpy Old Man

CAMRA MEMBER PUB DISCOUNTS

The following pubs give discounts to card carrying CAMRA members

Pub	Location	Scheme
Old Exeter Inn	Ashburton	10% off cask beers
Golden Lion	Brixham	10% off cask beers
The Queens Arms	Brixham	Mondays real ale £3 pint
The Cherub Inn	Dartmouth	10% off a pint
The Palk Arms	Hennock	15% off a pint Monday-Friday
The Sloop	Kingskerswell	10% off cask beers
Dartmouth Inn	Newton Abbot	30p off a pint
Maltings Taphouse	Newton Abbot	10% off cask & keg
The Railway	Newton Abbot	10% off bar bill
Torbay Inn	Paignton	10% off a pint
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
TQ Beerworks	Torquay	10% off a pint
Yates	Torquay	10% off a pint
Totnes Brewing Co	Totnes	10% off TBC brews

THANKS TO ALL OUR CONTRIBUTORS:

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Last copy date for Spring 2024 is 15th February 2024

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