

85TH EDITION

AUTUMN 2025



**So, what's a retired
News & Brews editor to do
with his new found freedom?**

see page 12

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WELCOME

to the Autumn 2025 edition
of South Devon CAMRA
branch magazine.



Welcome to the Autumn 2025 edition of News and Brews, South Devon CAMRA's quarterly magazine.

In July we ran a successful beer festival in Totnes Civic Hall and if you attended, hope you had a great time. Also at our June AGM, Clive Mackriell was elected as our new Branch Chairman, taking over from Bob Southwell who has now taken on the role of Cider and Perry coordinator. Also at the AGM, Dave Clarke was elected as membership secretary and has already had some success in recruiting new members.

We will be having a celebration for Bob later this Autumn, see the website for details www.southdevon.camra.org.uk

There's a fair amount going on in South Devon CAMRA this quarter, details inside, and our former magazine editor, Andrew Thomson has been using his spare time to good effect. The Grumpy Old Man this issue is a vintage article first published in this magazine in Spring 2013.

Hope you enjoy this issue.

Cheers for now,
Lawrence Stringer
Editor



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THE NEW BRANCH CHAIRMAN

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of News & Brews, the branch magazine of South Devon CAMRA. I have the honour of representing the branch as Chairman having been elected at the June 2025 AGM. I would firstly like to pay tribute to Bob Southwell who has stepped down after a remarkable 12 years as our chairman

During this time Bob has led our branch of the organisation with vision, dedication, and unwavering commitment. His leadership has been instrumental in developing and keeping the branch together through the pandemic and beyond. We are deeply grateful for his invaluable contributions and the positive impact he made on all of us. His legacy of leadership and dedication will be remembered for years to come. Under his watch the branch Beer & Cider Festival was resurrected back in 2018 and has gone from strength to strength since then. A big act to follow indeed. Bob is remaining on the Branch Committee where he will put his considerable knowledge to use as the Cider and Perry Coordinator.



Some of you will recognise me from various beer festivals which I have been involved in since 2016. My journey began as the Bar Manager for the popular Summermoon Festival at Kingskerswell from 2016 until 2019 which sadly did not resume after the pandemic. I was and remain involved with the SIBA Tuckers Maltings (now Maltingsfest) beer festival for many years until joining the organising committee as Bar Manager from 2019 onwards.

I am also the Bar Manager on the current organising Committee for the South Devon Camra Beer & Cider festival since it re-started at Newton Abbot Rugby Club in 2018 before moving to Teignmouth Rugby Club for 2019, 2022-2024 and this year at Totnes. I also volunteer and give assistance to other festivals including Ipple Tipple, Ramsfest, Devon County Show Main Bar and Abbfest.

This years inaugural Totnes Beer & Cider Fest was a great success and it was lovely to meet so many of you there and talk beer. A huge thank you from me to the organising committee, volunteers, sponsors and everyone who attended, as well as of course Totnes Town Council and Becky who made us so welcome at the new venue.

My vision for the branch in the future is to continue to build on the successes of the past years in terms of campaigning, support for the licensed trade and in particular Independent Brewers, many of which we are fortunate enough to have in our branch area. Our frequent mid week socials are still very popular and we need little excuse for a meet up at various festivals and joint branch socials.

Details of the benefits of joining CAMRA can be found on our website. As well as the many benefits of being a member, you will also be able to contribute in deciding which pubs go into the CAMRA Good Beer Guide and our various pub awards by participating in the Whatpub beer scoring process, again full details can be found on our website.

Thank you and I look forward to meeting many of you on my travels,

Cheers and Best Wishes, *Clive Mackriell*

85TH EDITION – AUTUMN 2025

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WHAT'S ON

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BRANCH MEETINGS & SOCIAL EVENTS

Branch meetings all start at 7.30pm unless stated

Date	Event / Location
September	
Wednesday 17	Midweek Social No.7 Bus from Newton Abbott visiting pubs on the route then on to Totnes. More info on our website.
Friday 19	Social Meet at Abbfest (next to Fermoy's Garden Centre TQ12 5TN). More info on our website and https://abbfest.org
Saturday 27	Bus trip to Widdecombe, Manaton and/or Bovey Tracey by The Haytor Hoppa 271 Bus from Newton Abbot bus station at 11.00am. Visit The Rugglestone Inn and The Old Inn in Widdecombe, then on to The Kestor at Manaton or the pubs in Bovey Tracy and return to Newton Abbot.
October	
Tuesday 14	Branch Meeting 7.30 pm at The Railway Brewhouse, 197 Queen St, Newton Abbot TQ12 2BS
November	
Tuesday 11	Branch Social. Starts 7.30pm at The Golden Lion 65 New Road, Brixham TQ5 8NL. Commemorating 50 years of South Devon CAMRA at the place the inaugural meeting was held. Also a thank you social for Bob Southwell.
December	
Tuesday 2	Branch POTY Meeting. Please see website for details.
Saturday 13	XMAS Social Please see website for details.
Saturday 27	Post Christmas Walk around the pubs in Totnes from Noon. Further details on our website .

BEER FESTIVALS 2025

Date	Event / Location
Sept 18-21	Abbfest Food drink and music festival https://abbfest.org/ for details and tickets.
Oct 17-18	Beer festival at Dunsford Village Hall (just west of Exeter) 10 unusual beers. All sessions with live entertainment. All proceeds to raise funds to keep the Village Hall open. For details see: www.dunsfordvillagehall.org
Oct 24-26	Halloween Beer Festival. Albert Inn (Totnes) featuring six beers from around the country plus "specials" from Bridgetown Brewery along with their normal range and some ciders.

Please check individual events prior to attending

PUB & CLUB NEWS

Wetherspoons report that Pepsi is its biggest selling draught product (Tim Martin via Morning Advertiser.) but the big news this quarter is that **The Hole in the Wall in Bodmin** has won CAMRAs South West pub of the year competition for 2025. The pub will now compete with four others for the overall CAMRA National Pub of the Year award. Peter Bridle, CAMRA South West Regional Director, said: "The Hole in the Wall is a very welcoming community pub with great customer service. It is a traditional and eclectic pub with a single bar and a superb selection of up to six well-kept cask beers, regularly featuring in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide. "The pub is very popular with locals and has character and charm in abundance. CAMRA branches in the region nominated some terrific pubs and the level of entries in the competition was very high, so to come out on top is quite an achievement." The Hole in the Wall was originally (in the 18th Century) Bodmin's town jail but is now a popular award winning pub.

The Upside Bar in Newton Abbot is now under the ownership of Dean Roberts who used to manage it for Jon Moreton and Stuart Odell.

The Moon 41-43 Queen Street **Newton Abbot** is a new Cocktail Bar with live music open Mon to Thurs 17.00-22.30 Fri 17.00-23.00 Sat 17.00-23.30 Sun Closed, no real ale but worth a visit in case this changes.

The Union, Newton Abbot is open again.

The Dartmouth Inn, Totnes. After being closed for several months, The Dartmouth re-opened at the end of February under new management. The lease has been taken on by Rob Westlake who also runs the King William IV pub in Fore Street. There are three real ales available, currently all from the south-west of England, together with Old Rosie Cider. A variety of pub food including daily specials is served throughout the day and early evening. There is an outside drinking and eating area at the front.

Albert Inn, Bridgetown, Totnes. Life at the Albert continued unabated through the summer with the tourist season having been in full swing. "We have an excellent relationship with Steamer Quay Caravan Park and we are very grateful for their support," comments landlord Giles Hawkins. Following the successful summer beer festival in June plans are already being put in place for the traditional Halloween Beer Festival in the pub which will run from 24-26 October and which will feature six beers from around the country plus "specials" from Bridgetown Brewery together with the normal beer range from Bridgetown Brewery along with some ciders. Hawkins also commented on the knock-on effect of the recent CAMRA Totnes Beer Festival. "It was very pleasing to see so many CAMRA members popping into the South Devon Pub Of The Year. Hopefully they all went away happy," he said.

Palk Arms, Hennock. It has been decided that the popular Sunday summer music sessions in the beer garden will continue for as long as the weather permits after which all music will be put on inside the pub. Landlord Mike Rowland had also been happy with his decision to replace Guinness with the more local stout Mena Dhu. We are trying to source more local products where possible. The locals seem very happy with the change," Rowland commented.

BREWERY NEWS

Bays Brewery, Paignton are making waves once again with the launch of their latest charity brew 'Ahoy', a refreshing golden ale raising a glass - and vital funds for the heroic crew of Torbay RNLI. 'Ahoy' is the third release in the family-run brewery's 2025 Charity Brews campaign and will be available in bottles, beer boxes and on cask.

Director of Bays Brewery, Peter Salmon, said: "As a Torbay-based family brewery that's approaching its 18th year, our roots are firmly planted in the Devon community, and we're incredibly proud to give back to the people and organizations that make this region so special. "Our 'Charity Brews' aren't just about creating great beers - they're about making a meaningful difference. Whether it's protecting our coastlines, supporting the region's habitat, or helping local families in need, we're thrilled to raise a glass for these worthy causes in 2025."

Copperhead Ales Brewery and Taphouse, Unit 6 Burke Road, TQ9 5XL **Totnes**. Jack and Jordan were very pleased to have been one of the two South Devon breweries that were represented at the recent GBBF. They are currently brewing to full capacity and have a number of functions and events booked for the next few months in addition to their regular Friday stall at Totnes market. The Taphouse continues to flourish and is now open Wednesday to Saturday every week. Four of their ales are available on handpump and on a recent visit these included the seasonal July Flame, a thirst-quenching IPA which was very welcome on a particularly warm afternoon!

Bridgetown Brewery, at The Albert, Totnes. Brewer George's latest batch of his strong dark ale "RealAleativity" (ABV 4.7%) has proved very popular and beers have also been supplied to the Staverton and Skyrise festivals. George and his beers also proved a hit at the Totnes Beer Festival where he was part of the "meet the brewer" entertainment. He is back now hard at work both concocting new beers for the Halloween Beer Festival at the Albert (details elsewhere in this magazine) and producing beers to keep up with demand from local outlets.

Cornwall's Firebrand Brewing Co. has just installed two new 7,500 litre fermentation vessels to boost their brewing capacity, as demand for their alcoholic and non-alcoholic beers continues to rocket. Joe Thompson, Co-owner and Head Brewer at Firebrand Brewing Co. explains: "We started 2025 with the busiest January ever and each month sales have continued to soar, outstripping previous years and leaving us working hard to deliver our maximum output, but still struggling to quench the thirst for our beer. We believe that this is an upward trend so we decided to invest in two additional fermentation vessels.



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LAZY DAYS?

So, what's a retired News & Brews editor to do with his new found freedom?

On one of the hottest days of the year, spend time with Christie Belle satisfying a yearning to visit more inaccessible parts of my newly 'adopted' county, hitherto thwarted by a car's aversion to roads lacking white paint down the middle.

So, it's the ferry from Dartmouth to Dittisham to check out this picturesque village and its pubs. Arriving at Greenway, it's necessary to disembark to join a smaller 'shuttle' ferry as the boat's draught has to respect the river as it's quite shallow in places.

The Ferry Boat Inn at Dittisham Quay boasts its own FBI (Ferry Boat Inn) cask beer alongside Sharps Doom Bar and Atlantic and runs a mouth-watering food menu. A leisurely pint allows a relaxing view of assorted cruisers and yachts making their way up to Totnes...and dreaming back to my boating days. Good to see tourists from further afield sharing the experience and even



asking this new 'local' advice where to drink, where to eat and what to see.

A 20-minute walk up the hill and along 'The Level' finds The Red Lion pub/post office/store where you can buy stamps and groceries, then cross the room to enjoy Palmers Copper and Dartmoor Legend accompanying a tasty hot pastie. The panoramic river view from this part of the village is quite absorbing.

Back at the quay a ring of the Ships Bell shocks the ducks and summons the ferry to make the short crossing back to Greenway Quay, site of a legendary murder in 'Dead man's folly'. No famous people to be seen, just tourists paying homage to our greatest crime author.

Up the meandering track to take afternoon tea at Agatha Christie's holiday home, checking out the rooms. No river view today from her bedroom, though the deciduous trees will allow a fascinating winter view along this stretch of the river. Next, on to the extensive gardens, hurriedly passing enthusiastic yoga training on the croquet lawn and following the meandering path to the Boathouse, site of another literary atrocity. Back to the jetty to join the other fans for the ferry trip back to Dartmouth.

A packed day for a 'retiree' so homebound to put feet up and enjoy a beer. But then the phone rings – my brother's looking for crew for his next yacht trip.....

Andrew Thomson



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Andrew Thomson

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A DAY OUT IN THE COTSWOLDS



This is an event I used to visit almost every year, but not since before COVID. Run by Gloucestershire CAMRA and the Postlip Hall Association, this year saw the 47th festival, one of the longest running in the country.

It takes place in a 15th Century Tithe Barn adjacent to Postlip Hall, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire, which is up a long drive off the B4632, west of Winchcombe. It has grown considerably in size since my last visit, yet there is still plenty of room for visitors and for tents and camper vans etc.

This year there were 105 beers and 40 ciders.

I set off on the Saturday from Totnes station on a direct train to Cheltenham and arrived on time just before 11 am. I had a few minutes wait for the arrival of five friends from the Midlands,

then we all climbed into a taxi for the 30 minute trip to Postlip Hall. It's a long walk up the drive on a particularly humid day, so by the time we arrived we were ready for a beer or three! It's a ticket only event so we just needed a wristband, glass, programme and tokens and we were in. We established our area on the grass outside the Tithe Barn and were soon joined by friends who had arrived from various parts including Ireland and the IoM, it was good to catch up after a few years. The Tewkesbury Town Brass Band were on stage, always popular, playing a selection of traditional brass band tunes.

The Tithe Barn (right) has very thick stone walls, so the temperature varies very little throughout the year, ideal for keeping beer cool. As I was thirsty I started with a pint of Holden's Golden Glow, a beer I've missed down in Devon. From then on it was halves, I won't bore you with the details, you can see the full list of beers and ciders here:



<https://postlip.camra.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/CBF-2025-Programme-v2.pdf>

A DAY OUT IN THE COTSWOLDS... CONTINUED

» Traditionally when we leave the festival we walk the 30 minutes to the Corner Cupboard (right), a pub in Winchcombe, this year was no exception. Landlord and London Pride were available and very good they were.

All too soon our taxi arrived and we were back at the station. My train was described as 'Delayed', this turned out to mean 30 minutes late, resulting in arriving back to Totnes at about 10pm, in pouring rain – fortunately the only rain of the day.

Alan Cooke

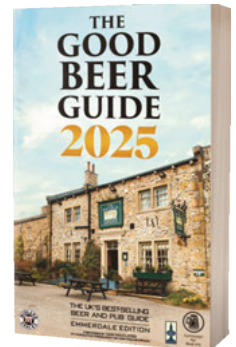


THE GOOD BEER GUIDE 2025

The Campaign for Real Ale's (CAMRA) Good Beer Guide – the UK's best-selling beer and pub guide – is celebrating its 52nd edition with not one but two covers featuring two of the UK's favourite locals: Coronation Street's Rovers Return Inn, and Emmerdale's Woolpack.

The Guide, which surveys 4,500 of the best pubs across the UK, is the definitive beer drinker's guide for those seeking the best pints in the nation's pubs.

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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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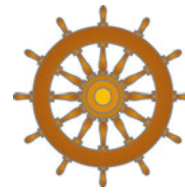
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RX301	100% Polyester Long Sleeve Sweatshirt	£15.00
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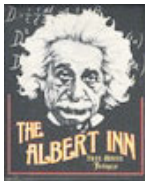


Bridgetown Brewery brews Albert Ale 3.8% abv; Bridgetown Bitter 4.2% abv; Shark Island Stout 4.5% abv and recently introduced Totnes Hemp Beer, Green Leaf 4% abv. There is also a selection of craft ales from around the world.

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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SOUTH DEVON CAMRA CELEBRATES 50 YEARS - PART 2

Further to the article in the summer edition of News & Brews regarding the early meetings of the South Devon branch of CAMRA; at the recent Totnes Beer & Cider Festival I had the pleasure of meeting said Kevin who had brought along his collection of old What's Brewing newspapers.



With the Golden Lion in mind I asked Kevin to look for any further details of an earlier meeting and in just 10 minutes he showed me a What's Brewing paper dated July 1975 and sure enough contained within the Branch Diary pages was a reference to "Meeting to test support" and an entry reading 'South Devon: Wed 9 Jul - Golden Lion, New Road, Brixham; 8.30pm

So this stands as the earliest written record of the Branch. Unfortunately being discovered just days before the actual anniversary it wasn't possible to arrange a social so close to the festival so it was decided to defer celebrations until the previously known date of the 11th November.

This news came as a surprise to Jay and Alex who took over the running of the Golden Lion in 2023. I can announce that a branch social to celebrate the 50th Anniversary year will

be held at the pub at 7.30pm on Tuesday 11th November 2025 and I look forward to seeing many branch members and friends there when a commemorative award will be presented.

We have also designed a commemorative logo and commissioned a run of clothing which can be ordered through Alan Cooke.

Clive Mackriell



WhatPub is closing

WhatPub will close down on 1st October 2025.

The alternative is to use CAMRA's new national website, CAMRA say:

"We've brought all our data and pub-going tools together, so you can get the best of everything CAMRA has to offer in one convenient place.

Our site brings you:

A Streamlined Experience: Navigate with ease and find everything you need faster.

Enhanced Features: From Good Beer Guide content, to personal trip creation, beer wish lists and more, you can discover more ways to enjoy your favourite pubs and beers

Exclusive Content:

Get access to beer and brewery information to help you choose where to go and what beers to try!"



If you haven't already tried the new website, now is the time to start.

You can find it here <https://camra.org.uk> or scan the QR code with your smart device.

When the site opens just type what you are looking for into the search box just below

"Looking for great pubs, clubs and beers?"

It can be a branch area, a town, a village or a single pub or club

When you get to the pub you are looking for, the **Beer Score option** is at the top of the screen on the right hand side.

Alan Cooke

South Devon CAMRA Website and Whatpub co ordinator

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BEER & CIDER FESTIVALS

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The Grumpy Old Man reminisces.

(first published in News and Brews in Spring 2013)

In the good old days, when the Austin A35 roamed the streets, the pub bar was a much uncomplicated affair. The pump clips were simplicity itself and usually labelled as mild, bitter and sometimes best bitter. Unfortunately, the two ugly sisters of branding and marketing now pervade most bars with the beers displaying an incredible range of names all accompanied by specially designed and illustrated pump clips.

We now can face a plethora of brands all jostling for attention in a highly crowded and competitive market place.

But why is the Grumpy Old Man getting on his high horse about all of this?

Your first thought is that this constitutes competition and therefore, by some people's definition, should be beneficial. However, too much competition and choice often causes obfuscation and confusion.

(Can anybody actually make sense of the relative merits of different mobile phone operators or the claims' of different energy companies).

As with all branding, you will often have to make a choice on the attractiveness of the pump clip, or the name, or whatever leaps out at you, rather than the nature and qualities of the beer itself which will always remain a secondary consideration.

Too often the choice on the above basis will be a disappointment.

At least mild, bitter and best bitter are considerably more self-explanatory and likely to create less disappointment.

How do you choose when faced with such a range.

Sex will always sell and you may well be having your Freudian weaknesses exposed, and your testosterone turbo fuelled, by Twickenham's Naked Ladies or the pump clips for the Bateman seasonal range featuring Beryl Cook figures in short skirts and plump thighs – best stop there!

What about the more direct and no messing about approach of an Old Legover or is there a double meaning which this innocent has failed to detect Anything blond and suggestive will also work well such as Blond Temptation or Bombshell or Voluptura as well as the marvellously named Sporrán Warmer Blond again with the appropriate, and lurid, pump clip with the display of copious amounts of flesh. >>

WHAT'S IN A NAME? ... CONTINUED

>> Similarly, clever names might be your forte such as Beer Elsie Bub or Lickerish Stout or are you attracted by alliterations and, if so, you can't get any better examples than Magg's Magnificent Mild or Ginga Ninja.

Perhaps you are the more subtle and intelligent type intrigued by names like Laughing Gravy, Beltane Braces or Kitty Wilkinson's Chocolate and Vanilla Stout. The opposite could also be the case with a very unobvious approach and the macho strength thing thereby seeking out a pint of Baz's Bonze Blower.

Strong brands will always tend to be the winner as they constitute a safe bet in a sea of uncertainty.

Some years ago I remember a CAMRA visitor to Devon surveying an impressive range of beers at a particular free house, but not being local, he failed to recognise any of them and so plumped for Fuller's London Pride being the only one that he had previously encountered. It was his loss as he had over-looked some really cracking beers. Such is the power of advertising and the creation of strong brand identity.

*Bola Southwell
Aka the Grumpy Old Man*

CAMRA MEMBER PUB DISCOUNTS

The following pubs give discounts to card carrying CAMRA members

Pub	Location	Scheme
Golden Lion	Brixham	10% off cask beers
The Queens Arms	Brixham	Mondays real ale £3.50 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 Church House Inn	Stokeinteignhead	30p 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:

Bob Southwell, Roger Adams, Andrew Thomson, Phil Ward, John Betts,
Paul 'Grizzly' Adams, Clive Mackriell, Alan Cooke.

SOUTH DEVON CAMRA BRANCH CONTACTS

Branch Chairman - Bob Southwell
chairman@southdevon.camra.org.uk

Vice Chairman & Treasurer - Ian Packham
vicechairman@southdevon.camra.org.uk

Social Secretary, Branch Contact & Webmaster
Alan Cooke 07767 362502
web@southdevon.camra.org.uk

Membership Secretary - David Clarke 07877 246495
membershipssec@southdevon.camra.org.uk

Secretary - David Wheeler 07970 711038
secretary@southdevon.camra.org.uk

Pub Liaison Coordinator - Phil (Billy) Kidd 07718 924126
beerscoring@southdevon.camra.org.uk

Magazine Editor - Lawrence Stringer 07961 269272
magazine@southdevon.camra.org.uk

Visit our award winning website at: www.southdevon.camra.org.uk

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magazine@southdevon.camra.org.uk

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