

58TH EDITION

SUMMER 2017



## South Devon CAMRA Pub of the Year 2017 Rugglestone Inn at Widecombe



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# WELCOME

## 58TH EDITION SUMMER 2017



Recent lobbying by CAMRA has been to good effect as there will be protection from developers for pubs, when the legislation goes through in July. In addition 9 companies including Sainsbury and Punch have agreed to uphold the proposals, prior to the law being passed following moves by CAMRA and the All Party Parliamentary Pub Group. Recent other successes achieved by CAMRA campaigning include over 2000 pubs listed as Assets of Community Value (ACV) which provide protection from sale and change of use. And business rate relief of £1000 allowed for smaller pubs, along with beer duty being frozen in 2016 and cut in the 2013, 2014 and 2015 budgets. CAMRA members have been emailing their local election candidates to ask them to protect and promote the beer and pub industry after Brexit. Camra Chairman, Colin Valentine points out that we have a unique opportunity to change tax rules and thereby have a significant impact on the industry which currently contributes £23bn to the UK economy. By the time this magazine is in your pub, your MP will be decided and I urge you to continue to lobby them on this.

After 10.5 years and 43 issues I have decided to hang up my Editor's hat. In this period, I have made a huge number of friends from the pub and brewing industries, and from the CAMRA family. I will be handing over to Andrew Thomson ([andrewthomson@virginmedia.com](mailto:andrewthomson@virginmedia.com)) and I hope he will have as much fun as I have had. I will look forward to seeing all of my beery friends at various events over the coming months.

*Cheers,*

*Tina Hemmings*  
Editor

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## PUB NEWS

The freehold of **Kingsbridge Inn**, Totnes has been sold by Enterprise Inns and the new owner intends to lease the pub to allow the new tenant a free-of-tie arrangement. It is currently being tidied up in preparation for its new undertaking.

**Dartmoor Halfway Inn**, Newton Abbot reopened in May after an impressive refurbishment and has a newly revised menu.

The **Sandy Park** at Chagford has reopened. Beer was good when we called, and the new landlord will be endeavouring to maintain the present high quality beer. Beers on were Otter Bitter on gravity, Dartmoor IPA, Tribute and Proper Job.

The pretty **Star Inn** at Liverton reopened in May after a comprehensive refurbishment by the owners, Punch Taverns. The new landlords are looking forward to making the pub the centre of the community, and will be featuring special food and entertainments in the coming months.

Jim and Carol of the **Exeter Inn** in Ashburton are planning their retirement, which sadly means we will lose them as long-standing landlords in the area, and where a good pint was guaranteed. The Exeter has had famous customers over the years, with Sir Francis Drake reputed to be among them. Sir Walter Raleigh was arrested in the pub in 1603, prior to him being imprisoned in the Tower of London. The pub was already nearly 500 years old by then.

Bridgehouse Brewery Cherry Choc Stout was for sale at The **Crown and Sceptre** in St Marychurch recently, and was an explosion of fruity loveliness on the tongue.

A popular Torquay GBG pub has recently been put up for sale. The Grade II listed **Hole in the Wall** in Park Lane has been a hostelry since the 16C making it the town's oldest pub. David Jones, the landlord for the last 18 years has decided to retire, and we wish him a long and happy one.

In May The **Green Ginger** in Torquay was invited to launch the new Bays collaboration for wildlife conservation, Crocod'ale. In the week starting 31<sup>st</sup> July the brewery will feature all its ales and there will also be a Bays 'Meet the Brewer' on 2<sup>nd</sup> August from 4pm onwards

The **Swan** at Newton Abbot was serving a good pint of Upham Brewery's 1st Drop at our last visit. Otter Bitter was also on hand pump.

Devon Life magazine published an article in May naming the 16 best pubs in Devon. The first-listed was the **Queens Arms** in Brixham. Within the South Devon Branch area a further 2 pubs appeared, namely the **Court Farm Inn** at Newton Abbot and the **Ferry Boat Inn** at Dittisham. It was interesting to note that the first 7 listed were CAMRA GBG entries or current/past CAMRA Pubs of the Year.

**Correction.** We reported that The London Inn in Ashburton was to be reopened. The London was destroyed by fire some time ago and the reopened pub is The Royal Oak.

Following **New Lion Brewery** winning Gold at the 2016 SIBA South West Independent Beer Awards, its cask Totnes Stout went on to be judged against the 7 other regional Gold winners at the SIBA National Independent Beer Awards 2017, held in Sheffield in March for the Champion Cask Porters, Stouts, & Old Ales class. It won Gold there too, making it the best in the country. The keg Pandit IPA and Smokestack Lightning had also won Gold in the regional finals and Pandit IPA went on to win Silver in the national finals. The brewery continues to make innovative ales alongside the core beers. Most recently bottled was Barrel Thief at 9.3%abv, a rich and fruity barley wine, made in collaboration with a local bakery using surplus bread.

**Bays** has teamed up with Paignton Zoo again to brew a special beer, this year in aid of Crocodiles, many of which are now critically endangered. The aptly named Crocod'ale 4.7%abv is an easy drinking light golden ale and 10 pence from every bottle and pint sold will go towards supporting vital conservation work.

**Platform 5 Brewing Company** in Newton Abbot has rationalised their range of beers. The recently launched APA (American Pale Ale at 4.6%) will be joining The Coaster and The Antelope in the core range with IPA, Western Gold, Blitzzen, and The Whistleblower being brewed seasonally.

**Totnes Brewing Company**, although committed to brewing predominantly cask ales has realised that some of them really benefit from being kegged, and lots of their lager-only drinkers have switched to more interesting ales albeit in kegs. It recently took delivery of a new bright tank for conditioning and carbonating its beer in preparation for kegging it.

**Black Tor Brewery** from Christow continues to be busy; its Pride of Dartmoor 4% was enjoyed as a guest ale at The Stranger's Bar in The Houses of Parliament in March. Down Draught will be available until November and has been brewed to commemorate the 25 year's service of the Devon Air Ambulance. From every pint or bottle sold, 10p will go to the air ambulance charity. And the limited edition beers New Zealand IPA 5.2% and Porter 4.4% proved very popular, its next brew will be American IPA 5% produced with Simcoe, Cascade, Mosaic & Pekko hops.

More pubs are now taking **Bridgetown** beer and due to popular demand there is now a distinct possibility of Shark Island Stout appearing in bottles. The seasonal special, Cheeky Blonde (ABV 4.5) is now available and the brewery is also in the experimental stage with a new hoppy/fruity-style beer (which the Brewery Liaison Officer has tasted - initial tastings were very good.)

Four of **Summerskills** beers were featured at The Tuckers Maltings Beer Festival - Start Point, Tamar Bitter, Stout and Devon Frost. The latter, which sold out on the Friday, was originally brewed for the beer festival at the Queens Arms in Brixham and has now become part of its regular portfolio. A recent collaboration with Owens Coffee to produce a coffee stout will be available soon as a vegan friendly 'Urban Brew' in 500ml bottles. The Baya coffee, which has been described as 'rich and velvety, with spicy and dark chocolate flavours and a hint of citrus' seems to blend well with Summerskills Stout. The annual production of 'Out Back and Home' will be available during May and June in cask to support the RNRMC and Devonport Field Gun Crew.



# SIBA FESTIVAL AT TUCKERS MALTINGS

In April the 25<sup>th</sup> Southwest SIBA's Festival, showcasing the finest Southwest ales was held at Tucker's Maltings. The Society of Independent Brewers put on this eagerly-awaited event which tends to herald the start of the beer drinkers' spring.

The festival opened on Thursday with judging of the beers by publicans, Camra representatives, Tucker's suppliers, fellow brewers from outside the region and other representatives from the industry, making them very much the brewers' choice. There were about 100 judges and 4 rounds of judging, and the local SIBA brewers were on hand to fetch the ales and provide clean glasses etc. The winning beers were announced at the end, once the numbers had been crunched and the sums been done. The SW SIBA area stretches from Gloucester and Wiltshire to the Isles of Scilly and Cornwall.

With over 250 beers the completion was fierce and the South Devon CAMRA area was represented by the following winners

Red Rock Brewery won Gold for Pilsner in the class Small Pack Standard Lagers & Pilsners.

Red Rock Brewery won Silver for Slow Original Wheat Beer in the class Small Pack Speciality Mid to Dark Beers.

South Hams Brewery won silver for Sherman in the class Small Pack Strong Bitter & Pale Ales

Dartmoor Brewery won Bronze for Jail Ale in the class Premium Bitters & Pale Ales

Overall winners were

## **Gold**

Dawkins Ales, Ultra 6.6%  
Premium Strong Bitter

## **Silver**

Moor Beer Company, Stout 5%  
Porters, Stouts, Old Ales

## **Bronze**

Country Life Brewery, Old Appledore 3.7%  
Standard Bitters and Pale Ales



*Judging the ales*



*Red Rock - Gold and Silver*



*Sam accepts Silver for South Hams*



*Jail Ale wins Bronze*

# ITINERANT IMBIBERS

Bovey Tracey was doubtless much the same before we arrived as it was after we left - and as we only crossed the road from where bus 39 from Newton Abbot dropped us to get to the Cromwell Arms, there is no reason to suppose it was much affected by our presence. Inside this town centre St. Austell pub, split into 3 distinct areas, we were able to try both the common and the decidedly less-so from the brewery's range. The usual included Proper Job and Tribute, as well the less-common Bucket of Blood and the Small Batch Brew 'Overkill is Underrated' from the brewery's Trial Plant. It was agreed that the beers were all on fine form - as would be expected from a pub with a Good Beer Guide entry.

A short bus ride then took us to Chudleigh Knighton, where we passed the burnt-out shell of The Anchor en route to the Claycutters, now the only game in town. Before becoming a pub, this was 3 terraced cottages, in one of which Grumpybob reminded us that his mother had been born. This gave me the chance to suggest that his predilection for beer might have originated here. On the bar were Tribute and Otter Ale (apparently the Legend had 'gone').

Back on the bus into Chudleigh and at the former Pub of the Year, The Bishop Lacy, we were greeted by (in no particular order) landlady Wendy, a roaring fire, and the pub dog. Laying claim to the large circular table in the bar, we were soon rewarded as landlord Robin appeared with a couple of plates of roast potatoes. These we enjoyed with the good Tanner's Box O' Frogs, Otter Bitter, and Hunter's Pheasant Plucker from the bar.

Peter O'Nions

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## THE APRIL MID-WEEK SPECIALS

The group returned to one of its favourite areas for this spring outing namely Ashburton and Totnes.

Although we did not repeat the chaotic trip of two years ago when we all caught different buses, left documents in an Ashburton pub and fortuitously met one of our members in South Brent after he had embarked on a scenic tour of Devon, we did still manage the odd cock-up.

We all caught the same bus to Ashburton but still managed to start our day in two separate pubs as some members of the group (we were twelve in number) did not realise that our first port of call was where we were meeting further members of the party. Sanity returned and we all enjoyed some good Dartmoor Ales, Legend and IPA in my favourite Ashburton pub, the Exeter Inn.

From there we trundled up the road to Hound of the Baskervilles aka The Royal Oak, an interesting venue where the front of the building is a café/restaurant and at the rear is a bar where Doombar and Black Tor DPA were on offer along with the welcome addition of Tiny Rebel's Juicy, a good Welsh beer.

Back to the bus and on to The Dartmoor Lodge where four good beers were on offer including Butcombe and Exe Valley Spring Beer, giving us a really good choice. We also observed an interesting wedding party where a bride and bride (yes you did read it right) were celebrating their nuptials! We may be ordinary folk but we do see life.

It was then back to Totnes and a visit to The Albert Inn where we all enjoyed Bridgetown Bitter, which was drinking extremely well, the Albert Ale and not to forget Shark Island Stout, which certainly excited some of our group who don't get out too often!

At this point our reporter left to leave the hardened drinkers to do their worst.

Until we meet again.

*Edgar Walton*

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## ***SOUTH DEVON CAMRA TOUR OF SOUTH HAMS***

South Devon numbers were lacking on the May mid-month jaunt, taking in Dartmouth, Slapton and Kingsbridge. I already knew that our beloved Treasurer was attempting to drink the Lake District dry and that Peter the book seller was forced to work on his day off, but three of us? Fortunately the Chairman, Andrew and myself were joined by four members of Exeter branch Martyn, Ian, David and Tim.

The conversation on the bus from Paignton to Kingswear ranged from beers, breweries and pubs to Richard Cromwell. We called in at the Ship for one for the ferry and I tried the Otter Pale Ale which was a new one for me. We were joined here by Peter - no, not that one - but another Exeter member who lives in Dawlish and is becoming a familiar face at our meetings.

Across the water, we hove to at the Cherub and having taken on board suitable refreshment, set off to catch the bus to Slapton. En route we met my friend Eddy, proprietor of a fudge shop, who was bravely standing out in the rain holding an umbrella and a sample tray of his produce which was eagerly snaffled up by the company. He was also wearing a boater! Outside of butchers' shops, I thought that I was the only person who wore a boater in the area.

The journey to Slapton was uneventful, the normally scenic view obscured by rain and mist. We visited both the Queen's Arms and the atmospheric Tower Inn where the beers were in excellent condition. Continuing on to Kingsbridge we went to the Hermitage which was a first time for me and then to the more familiar Creek's End where the outward journey came to an end. Here, I revisited an old preconception and tried a half of Abbot.

My thoughts being confirmed, I parted from the company to return solo to Dartmouth, the others returning via Totnes. I was the only foot passenger waiting for the ferry and as the last car went past, it stopped and I was given a lift by my chum Eddy, the fudge man. Thus it was that not only did I save my fare but I got a lift straight home - or rather to a nearby former branch POTY, The Queens Arms in Brixham, which is more or less the same thing. Serendipity!

*The Dapper Drinker*



*Outside the Cherub*

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# THE SOUTH WEST CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR

The process begins with each CAMRA branch nominating their Cider Pub of the Year. They are then judged against each other by two judges, one of them being myself. The competition covers a wide geographical area from Gloucestershire, Bristol and parts of Wiltshire in the north through to Somerset, Devon and in to Cornwall. These were the nominated pubs:

**Gloucestershire:** The Railway at Newnham - a bus ride from Gloucester.

**Cheltenham:** The Jolly Brewmaster

**Chippenham:** The Three Crowns

**Swindon:** The Gluepot

**Bristol:** The Orchard and three others (they were only meant to nominate one!)

**Somerset:** Pebbles Bar, Watchet

**Exeter and East Devon:** The Old Fire House, Exeter

**North Devon:** The New Inn, Roborough

**Plymouth:** The Fortescue

**South Devon:** Ye Olde Cider Bar, Newton Abbot

**Cornwall:** The Stable Bar, Newquay

There is a standard set of criteria including welcome, hospitality and knowledge and it was expected that the person serving would know something about the cider and Perry on offer. Some fell at this first hurdle as I usually ask what they consider to be their driest cider. Good responses might well be to offer a small sample and possibly a discussion about one or two ciders, but an "I don't know" reply is not encouraging. Worst still I was told in one establishment that they were all dry on the basis that he was a Wagner's drinker! Clearly, there must be a range of ciders (and perries) served in good condition. These should be traditional ciders and not the fruit flavoured nonsense which is just industrial syrup and heavily sweetened. The official CAMRA line is that so called fruit ciders can only be made of *real fruit* and not concentrate or syrup, but these are rare and are nowhere near as sweet. One entry lost heavily out on this basis with eight ciders, but only one could be said to be traditional. (Incidentally, it is women who are tending to be the more discriminating, asking for drier ciders which are often a little more of a challenge, whilst it is the blokes who ask for the very sweet and easy to drink ciders!) It always helps to have a cider list, but on two occasions the list mixed up real cider with keg products including Poundhouse and Addlestone as well as the fruit ciders. In other establishments the list was not immediately obvious or was difficult to read. The pub should also cater for a cross section of clientele, but on two visits it was predominately the under 25s or student based. Finally, it should represent value for money and by that we do not mean cheap. Was the experience worth the price and would you return? Some of the more trendy establishments were very expensive indeed.

The overall winner was the **YE OLDE CIDER BAR** in Newton Abbot. It had a 'flying start' being the only true cider bar in the country to be open at regular/ normal hours. It is predominately cider with no beer or lager, but there are a wide range of fruit »



## MEET THE BREWER

A tap takeover or meet the brewer? I am not sure what the difference is, or even if there is one but I went to my first one at the Tally Ho, Littlehempston at the end of March. I did not know what to expect but the first sight was of two South Hams Brewery beers on dispense at the bar. I asked for a half of Devon Pride, I then looked around and espied two young men in logoed shirts sitting behind a table covered with flagons and bottles of beer. They were Joe and Sam, the South Hams brewers. There were also bowls of various malts from pale biscuit coloured to dark brown and almost black, and three varieties of dried hops one of which was Cascade. These go into beer and were for us to smell and taste. The brewers offered samples of their beers and I was quick to accept Devon Pride, dark, malty and fruity 3.9%, Stumble Bee with lots of honey in the taste 4.2%, Wild Blonde, delightfully fruity 4.4%. Then Black and White, a very nice milk stout 5.2%, and the light gold and hoppy Prawn Juice 4%. All were very good but being served by the brewers they should be. Another brewer was present (competition?) who joined in asking questions which was a bonus; he asked more technical stuff.

The South Hams boys then started a mini mash, the first process in beer making. They mixed hot water, at the right temperature, with some of the malt, mixed it into a thick porridge and then squashed it through a sieve to produce a very cloudy dirty looking milky sweet liquid. Again the temperature was watched until it reached the right level then yeast was added and we watched and waited and very slowly the yeast ate the sugar converting it into alcohol and CO<sup>2</sup>. It bubbled up the glass but didn't look very appetising. So it was back to the real beer; bottled ones. Sherman, an American pale ale 6.4%, then Cloch Point 7.8%. This is a Devon Pride aged in a whisky cask, (and wow the strength was there along with the whisky taste) not one to be drunk in a rush. Finally Lifeboat 1, another whisky ageing this time using Devon Porter (only 5.8%). This was even more wow, it was my favourite of the night. So many thanks to the Tally Ho and the South Hams brewers, a good night and lots of excellent beers, I must do it again.

*Roger Adams*

## CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR.... CONTINUED

>> ciders on offer. In due course I will be organising the presentation of the certificate for South West Cider Pub of the Year and that should be a good night.

*Bob Southwell*

*CAMRA South West Cider Coordinator*



### Postscript

The presentation took place in mid-May where Bob presented the award to owner Jonathan McCool and praised the Ye Olde Cider Bar for being a unique institution whose fame spreads well beyond South Devon.

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# THE SUPERIOR PALE ALE



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## PUBS AND CLUBS OF THE YEAR

This year the South Devon **Pub of the Year** competition was split into two - Town and Country.

The **Town Pub of the Year** is the **Blue Anchor** in **Teignmouth** and the runner up is **Teign Cellars** in **Newton Abbot**.

The **Country Pub of the Year** has been won by the **Rugglestone** at **Widecombe in the Moor** and the runner up is the **Tally Ho** at **Littlehempston**.

The overall winner was the **Rugglestone** and the runner up the **Tally Ho**.

The **Cider Pub of the Year** was the **Cider Bar** in **Newton Abbot** and the **Club of the Year** was the **Conservative Club** in **Shaldon**.

The grade 2 listed Rugglestone Inn, a few minutes' walk from the picturesque village of Widecombe in the Moor, has taken the coveted award of overall Pub of the Year in the annual poll by members of South Devon CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale.

The pub, which previously won the accolade in 2012, was judged primarily on the consistent quality of its ales, with factors such as Welcome and Service; Decor; Clientele Mix; and Value

for Money also considered. It was originally a cottage, and was converted to an Inn in 1832, taking its name from a local Logan (or rocking) stone. It has a cosy bar and 2 more rooms with real fires. Their ale is served straight from the cask with 4 real ales available along with a traditional local cider. It is popular for home cooked food and the owners raise pigs themselves to provide meat for the kitchen. A pretty garden with

roaming hens and ducks, and a car park with bouncy goats makes the visit there memorable. The picture shows Richard and Vicky Palmer receiving their award and the front page has the CAMRA team and locals helping to celebrate.

The Tally Ho is the first community pub in South Devon having been taken over by the community in 2014 when the pub was in danger of being sold for accommodation. Since then the pub has risen in stature, first being listed in the Good Beer Guide in 2016 and coming in as runner-up Pub of the Year for 2017. Marc and Rachel Davies run the pub and provide Dartmoor Legend as a regular beer plus 2 guests, and were delighted to receive the award. »



*Marc and Rachel with Ian Packham*

## PUBS AND CLUBS OF THE YEAR.... CONTINUED



*Luke and Adele - The Blue Anchor*



*Stuart - Teign Cellars*

» The town pubs have also received their certificates. The Town Pub of the Year was the Blue Anchor in Teignmouth and they have shown their mettle by serving their community with good beer, good beer festivals and good service. Luke and Adele have managed the pub for a couple of years now and obviously enjoy the role.

Teign Cellars in East Street Newton Abbot has been turned round from a pub that had failed several times to a thriving craft bar and gastro pub by the landlord Stuart O'Dell, who has a history in Devon, having won CAMRA awards at all three of his previous pubs. An accomplished chef, Stuart has also received recognition for his food.

For the first time a presentation for Club of the Year was made by the South Devon CAMRA branch, and this was awarded to Shaldon Conservative Club. The club has a well-deserved reputation for delivering consistently good ale, and also for providing something out of the norm. At the same time, we took the opportunity to present the steward, Kevin Wilson, with a tankard to commemorate his retirement.

For the report of the Cider Pub of the Year, see page 13

A further presentation will be made shortly to Richard Knibbs, the previous owner of the Ye Olde Cider Bar who, having taken over around 46 years ago made the bar into the popular cider retailer it became in that period. He will be receiving a special CAMRA award for his lifelong devotion and commitment to cider.



*Bob and Kevin*

# MARCH ROUND THE BAY

Well, two-thirds of it actually, as we started our third midweek trip of the year in Paignton. Official start point was the Inn on the Green, the large food and live entertainment-based Marston's pub overlooking the seafront green. As it doesn't open until midday, though, our photographer Andrew was taking his usual pre-trip breakfast in the nearest Wetherspoon pub - in this case the Talk of the Town in nearby Torbay Rd. It was here that Bob and I, having met at the station, found him. On returning from the bar with our beers, Bob related the gem he had just overheard, as one young woman told her friend: 'I don't like the cider-it tastes of apples.' I fear I must now lapse into Apprentice Grumpy mode to enquire 'Was she presumably expecting a drink made from apples to taste of strawberries? Or pomegranates? Or maybe even choc chip cookies?

Anyway, in due course we arrived at the Inn on the Green, to find other members of the team already there. New manager Colin has brought his extensive Wetherspoon cellarman-ship training to bear, and on offer were good Pedigree and Jennings Snecklifter from the Marston's stable, along with the local Hunters 'Royal Hunt', suggesting that the general ale quality was 'on the up'.



We then doubled back along the seafront, and looked into the Spinning Wheel, a compact bar set back and down a few steps. We were surprised with the Hunter's 'Old Charlie' and Bays' Devon Dumpling. A notable feature was the wooden cask of Bays' Windfall cider behind the bar.

One bus ride later and we were in Torquay, heading for the revamped Green Ginger - now the only Wetherspoon pub in town since the London Inn was sold to Yates. Gone is the Ginger's dance floor, and a number of new tables have been installed. The number and range of ales seems much the same as before.

Round the harbour, the new Yates was our final stop of the day, minus Grumpy and Terry and Sarah, who left to catch the Teignmouth bus. Some slight changes from the new owners,

but apparently most of the staff have been retained. Most noticeable was the increased prices from its days as a Wetherspoon outlet, though the Bombardier Burning Gold and South Hams Wild Blonde were on very good form.



*Peter O'Nioms*



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# WHAT'S ON

## Branch Meetings and Social Events

Date	Time	Purpose	Location
20 June	20:00	Branch AGM	Totnes Brewing Company Totnes
24 June	12:00	Social Meet	Summer Moon Festival see below
11 July	20:00	Branch Meeting	Crown & Sceptre St Marychurch
5 August	10:00	Minibus trip to Somerset in conjunction with its branch, to visit local pubs. Reservations via Phil (philipandmo.stevens@tesco.net)	
18 August	19:00	Branch BBQ	Hunter's Brewery

## Beer Festivals

Date	Event	Location
14 - 17 July	Kingsbeer Festival, Kingwear Station. Arrive by train for free entry.	
21 - 22 July	Beer and Bluegrass Festival info at <a href="http://www.beerandbluegrass.co.uk">www.beerandbluegrass.co.uk</a>	Victoria School, Poole BH13 6A3
8 - 12 August	Great British Beer Festival	Olympia, London
17 - 20 August	4th Shaldon Conservative Club Beer Festival, 9 ales including the popular Bateham's Bitter.	Shaldon
25 - 28 August	Devon Diesel Beer Festival Rails and Ales festival with 60+ beers	Staverton Station
25 - 28 August	Annual Bank Holiday Beer Festival	George Inn Blackawton
25 - 28 August	Bay Horse Beer & Cider Festival 20+ beers, 15+ ciders, music and good food, in conjunction with Totnes Sea Change Music Festival.	Totnes
25 - 28 August	Blue Anchor Beer & Cider Festival 30+ beers, 15+ ciders and live music.	Teignmouth
1 - 3 September	4th Durant Arms Festival 20+ ales, music, Thai street food and fun.	Ashprington

# AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY QUANDARY

What to do for a hot 2016 Bank Holiday weekend? Well, obviously, as those of us with an inclination towards beer know, either you hold a Beer Festival or you attend them and there are plenty to choose from.

We are close to Dartmouth, so this Bank Holiday also means Regatta, love it or hate it you have to go and have a look. We chose Friday to have a look. There's usually a Bays bar on the embankment, but this year it was Doom Bar, as it was in the Crab & Bucket. We retired to the Windjammer where, thanks to landlord Andy, normality is the watchword and the beers were the usual selection to the usual high standard.



*Big Taste Beer festival, South Hams*

So Saturday dawned hot and clear, Regatta still in full swing - what to do? We did the obvious and got on a Stagecoach number 3 heading toward Kingsbridge. We decided exercise was required so we alighted at the Slapton turn, electing to walk to our chosen destination, Stokeley Farm Shop and the Big Taste Beer Fest, run by South Hams Brewery. It turned out to be a wise choice; there were good beers to be enjoyed outside under sun umbrellas. I had was wearing my smart new

branch polo shirt and as a result fellow member Colin Staines, who is the BLO for South Hams Brewery, introduced himself to us and we passed a pleasant hour or so enjoying the beers.

Beer List:

The full range of 7 South Hams Brewery beers + Prawn Juice at 4%.

RCH East Street Cream and Hewish Mild.

Dark Star Pale Ale at 4.7%.

Dawkins Bristol Best at 4%

Altogether a good selection of beers covering all abvs from 3.8% to 5.2%

On Sunday morning it was raining and I had to keep an appointment in Totnes, this resulted in us having an hour or so to kill, so it was off to Staverton where Devon Diesel Society were having one of their twice yearly Rail Ale Festivals. The number of beers seems to keep increasing and this time there were 45 on offer with around another 14 in reserve. There were beers from breweries all round the country, far too many to list here, supplied, I suspect, mostly by Isca. It is a very professional looking set up at Staverton and an atmospheric venue for a festival.

After returning to Totnes for my appointment, we were faced with the long drive back to Stoke Fleming, so refreshment was required to assist us. Conveniently the Bay Horse was also holding a Beer Festival, its 11th. >>



*Devon Diesel festival  
'platform with a view'*

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Challenge 25 applies (under 25's please bring a valid ID)

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## AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY... CONTINUED

>> The layout was the same as previous years with 25 beers on offer, again mostly through Isca. Although our stay had to be fairly short as Rose was driving, I was impressed by the selection available and the quality of the ones I sampled.

My apologies to any other local Beer Festivals that I may have missed over the Bank Holiday weekend, but there's only so much a dedicated pair can do.

*Alan & Rose*

We had a similar dilemma. Living at the other end of South Hams, there was even more choice. I elected to go to The Bay Horse Festival on the Friday night, the Devon Diesel festival on the Saturday and The Blue Anchor at Teignmouth on the Sunday.

The Bay had some different ales and I find it so nice to be able to try something different - don't suggest I am becoming a bit of a ticker! The Diesel Society was in its usual stunning location and the ale selection was wide-ranging and in super condition. The Blue Anchor had a good selection of ales in the function room outside and over the course of the weekend ran over 50 beers. I found a long-standing favourite, Dark Star's Hophead, a beer which won Champion Beer of South Devon Camra Festival in 2002.

And the following weekend, the festivities did not stop as the Durant Arms Festival had 20 beers including a selection from Thornbridge, The Wild Beer Company and Powderkeg. Their Speak Easy and Thornbridge's Jaipur probably appearing amongst my favourite top 10. A good selection of Yorkshire and Devon beers made up the numbers and along with some Morris dancers outside and a great folk band inside the evening was a big success.

*Tina and George*



*Durant Arms beer selection*

And there is a great selection of festivals again this August Bank Holiday.

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I/we wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association these are available at [camra.org.uk/memorandum](http://camra.org.uk/memorandum) ☐

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Applications will be processed within 21 days of receipt of this form. 04/17

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<p><b>Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society</b></p> <p>To the Manager Bank or Building Society</p> <p>Address</p> <p>Postcode</p> <p>Names(s) of Account Holder</p> <p>Bank or Building Society Account Number</p> <p>Branch Sort Code</p> <p>Reference</p>		<p><b>Service User Number</b></p> <p align="center">9 2 6 1 2 9</p> <p align="center"><b>FOR CAMRA OFFICIAL USE ONLY</b></p> <p>This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society</p> <p>Membership Number</p> <p>Name</p> <p>Postcode</p> <p><b>Instructions to your Bank or Building Society</b></p> <p>Please pay Campaign For Real Ale Limited Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Campaign For Real Ale Limited and, if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.</p> <p>Signature(s)</p> <p>Date</p>	
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Philip German, Terry Cooke, Edgar Halton, Alan and Rose Cooke

**Last date for submission for the Autumn magazine - 15.8.17**

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Ad Size	1 issue	2 issues	3 issues	Year
1/4 page	55	65	90	110
1/2 page	75	100	125	150/ 170*
full page	100	160	200	240/ 260*
back page	-	-	-	350*

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## THE GRUMPY OLD MAN ASKS WHETHER ADVERTISING IS IN THE BEER DRINKERS' INTEREST

Grumpy has chosen his next target as the insidious world of advertising, but apologises in advance if it reads like a first year lecture in micro economics. Any fool knows that the objective of advertising is to increase sales or protect them from competitor encroachment which involves either increasing or defending market share. Why is this so vital? A stable or increasing market share helps to stabilise output and to obtain a return on investment and is also a performance indicator for management salaries. The bigger the market share then the greater the return on capital so pleasing shareholders, with management status and salaries enhanced. However, what is in all of this for the consumer? The answer is probably absolutely nothing. Way back in the 'glorious days' of keg bitters I fondly remember the Chairman of Whitbread pronouncing that the success of advertising and branding would be to generate large scale production and economies of scale resulting in lower costs and prices. In other words, cheaper beer would benefit the consumer. What cobblers! The keg bitters of this era were expensive and remained so with a premium over the real ales produced on a much smaller scale; so much for economies of scale being passed on to the consumer. In reality this just enhanced company profits and shareholders' dividends. The aforesaid Chairman also claimed that we clearly liked the keg beers as sales were booming, but this hardly stands up to the era when CAMRA was being born as an antidote to the dreadful flow of fizz. This raises the question of whether advertising can really create sales of 'bad' product and in this case it clearly did so in the short run.

The late Richard Boston (beer columnist for the Guardian in the '70's) was invited on to television to debate with the Chairman of Whitbread on the issue of keg v. real ale. Richard knew that the Whitbread PR people would provide all kinds of statistics in support of the keg movement, and their mass advertising, and this duly happened. When it came to Richard's turn his mind froze and all his research was forgotten. He then issued that immortal phrase - "come off it, you know it, and I know it, your beer is gnat's piss". The Chairman never recovered!

We are always told that advertising is merely informative and helps consumers to make rational decisions. They are not being persuaded to buy, but merely being helped along the way in their decision making process. Really! However, it rarely says anything meaningful about the product or its qualities or advantages to the consumer. How many beer adverts mention flavour or taste as opposed to creating some sort of trendy imagery? From the good old days mentioned above I can think of only one which told us that "you can taste the hops in Ben Truman". That was a lie and quickly spawned the phrase that there were more hops in a dead frog than in a pint of Ben Truman. Apparently Double Diamond works wonders, but what on earth does that nebulous phrase mean? It certainly did not work wonders for the money in your pocket. Another beer, I think Courage, was apparently was what your right arm was for. Ignoring left handed drinkers for one moment it again says nothing about the beer or the experience. Then there was the notorious Watney's Red Barrel which proudly presented Chairman Mao with his little red book proclaiming the Red Revolution. How was a working class man from Huddersfield meant to relate to that? >>





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## GRUMPY.... CONTINUED

>> Perhaps he was not meant to as the beer was being promoted to trendy youth, predominantly around London. All total cobbles of course and a meaningless waste of resources. In reality, and from hindsight, it was obvious that the beer experience was irrelevant and the image everything. It would have been remarkably difficult to advertise the qualities of the keg beer as you could not really talk about it in any glowing or positive terms as it was sweet, fizzy, cold and pretty dreadful. Unfortunately, many modern adverts have not improved the situation. Some of you will recall the late Rik Mayal performing as an army officer buffoon to promote Bombardier all with exploding canons and idiotic patriotic statements. As far as I can see it could equally well be advertising ice cream. You will be pleased to know that it is going to be re-launched with Bob Mortimer in the role. Lucky us!

A strong brand created by advertising is expensive and has to be recouped from the consumer. In the economist's lingo you create price elastic demand where the strength of your brand enables you to raise prices and not lose appreciable trade. What you lose from those few who drop out of the market at higher prices, is more than compensated by higher prices paid by those who remain brand loyal. Really strong brands are able to claim this price premium. Take the example of Guinness which has a gravity of about 4.2%?, but has a ridiculous price well in excess of the equivalent strength bitters, nearing the £5 a pint in many places, even well above that in London. Such is its brand strength that even when challenged by a cheaper, and possibly better, porter or stout on the same bar at 2/3rds of the price, Guinness will still be the option. The strong brand also enables it to be the default choice when faced with a variety of other products on display that most consumers have never heard of and the choice is made for you. Other strong brands operate in a similar manner. Sharp's Doom Bar was being sold in all Wetherspoon's pubs, but was being offered at nearly 50p extra a pint over other competitive beers. When did you last see a cheap pint of Fuller's London Pride? The pricing situation is made worse by the structure of the pub industry. The Pub Cos. are dominated by national brands which are perceived to be what the consumer wants, but the consumers will have to pay a price reflecting the rents charged by these companies on top of the prices charged by the brand leaders.

Successful advertising through strong brands will create national identities and sales. Now to be a truly national brand with these mass sales you have to be all things to all consumers and the result is often blandness. You cannot produce a distinctive beer which might be heavily hopped as that may well be a very limited market. Neither can you produce a thick heavy, malty and sweet beer as that also only appeals to a certain market segment and certainly will not appeal to everyone. The result is a beer that generally is *inoffensive* with the 'edges' of distinctiveness ironed out. These national brands are sweet and dominated by caramel, but, of course, easy to drink without any demanding characteristics. As they are often the output of large multi-national companies with profit maximising objectives, there is every incentive to cut corners with ingredients and inevitably the beer quality is likely to suffer.

*Bob Southwell AKA The Grumpy Old Man*

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