

# *NEWS AND BREWS*

*Summer 2014*

*Free Magazine of*

*The South Devon Branch of*

***FREE***

**THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE**



***South Devon CAMRA Pub of the Year 2014***  
***The Queens Arms, Brixham***



**South Devon**  
**CAMRA**

*Supporting Real Ale*  
*in the South West*



# Welcome to *NEWS AND BREWS*

46th EDITION

Summer 2014

South Devon CAMRA, like all CAMRA branches, is run by its members with support from a small team of paid staff in HQ. And all branches are looking to increase the number of volunteers to aid the jobs versus people ratio. We volunteers have a lot of fun socialising on pub and brewery trips, and although to some it might sound sad, talking about beer and pubs at meetings. Where else would you hear of the best places to visit?

So if you have some spare time, even as little as an hour, please consider becoming involved. If you cannot spare the time to join our committee there are less demanding tasks you could undertake. Our monthly meeting takes approximately 2 hours and all are welcome. Perhaps you could send me an occasional article for this newsletter or help with its distribution. Or keep the branch informed about changes you see in your local pubs, e.g. change of landlord or ales/cider supplied. We have 350 pubs in this branch so to keep an eye on all of them is nigh impossible. You could work at a beer festival, which is great fun, or help with lobbying your MP where CAMRA has a specific campaign.

One of the simplest things you could do is become a beer scorer. Use What Pub to score the ale you sample at any pub you visit (even outside this area). This helps the branches gain data that goes towards choosing pubs for the Good Beer Guide, especially useful for country pubs where access might be limited. For this you need no previous experience as instructions are on the website (<http://whatpub.com/>) and you do not need to come to meetings.

We look forward to seeing you or hearing from you.

*Cheers, Tina Hemmings*



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## *Pub News*

A new family team has taken over at the Durant Arms, Ashprington, and has changed the emphasis back to a village pub. The bar and cellar have been refurbished and branch members have found the ales to be at a very good standard. When our reporter visited there was Bass on gravity, which comes down a pipe and through the wall to a font in the bar. Don't be fooled into thinking it's a keg beer.

The Isaac Merritt in Paignton launched a new house beer in May. Singer is a light amber beer with good malty character, is 4.2% abv and is brewed exclusively for the pub by Hunters Brewery of Ipplepen. At the launch evening, Del Turney, the winner of the competition to design the new pump-clip, pulled the first pint.

Teignworthy's mild, Martha's Mild, has been remarked upon by several branch members. As it is CAMRA's campaign to serve milds in May, this ale has been available around the local pubs and has met with universal approval.

The Monks Retreat in Broadhempston has 3 ales on when we visited; Jail Ale and Legend from Dartmoor Brewery and Lady of the Lake from Glastonbury Brewery. All were in good nick.

A new Wetherspoons is likely to open soon in Teignmouth in the premises which was Tiggs.

Teign Cellars in Newton Abbot had its 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary in May, which saw a huge range of unusual beers and key keg ales. Another bar was put up in the bottle shop to allow space for all the extra offerings and allowing for 3 extra hand pumps and 10 more key kegs on top of their usual large range. London Sour No.3 from Kernel and Siren's Caribbean Chocolate Cake were particularly nice, and I thought the dry-hopped Pandit from New Lion really hit the spot for the hop chasers among us.

The Queens Arms in Brixham went on a chocolate egg run to the children's ward in Torbay Hospital at Easter. Sixty eggs were bought with the year's proceeds from the pub's swear box (although some eggs were donated by Asda who also gave a discount).

Several pubs look likely to reopen soon: The Vestry in Newton Abbot; The Coach House (previously The Globe) in Brixham; The Bronx Bar (previously The South Pacific Bar) in Teignmouth and The Artful Dodger in Torquay are all in the final stages of refurbishment.

The Kings Arms in Buckfastleigh has reopened as a free-house having been bought from a PubCo and is selling 2 guest ales. We tried the Butcombe Gold and found it very acceptable.

The Albert Inn at Totnes held an ale and cider festival in May, and all the beers were reported to be in excellent condition. They also had the wonderful Grandma's Weapon Grade Ginger Beer.

Several pubs have been recommended by our roving reporter. The Ferry Boat at Dittisham, The New Inn at Morleigh, The Seven Stars at Kingsbridge and the Loddiswell Inn at Loddiswell all deserve a visit. The New Inn at Halwell has new landlords and the beer is very good and he reports the Dodbrooke Inn at Kingsbridge is a little gem.

The South West Cider Pub of the Year is The Pebble Tavern in Watchet.



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## **Brewery News**

Teignworthy Brewery won a Gold Award in the Premium Strong Ale Class at the 2014 SIBA Festival at Tuckers Maltings. This is the second time in 4 years now that Russian Imperial Porter has carried off this prize.

Dartmoor Brewery was the other South Devon brewery to receive recognition at the SIBA Festival. It won Bronze for Speciality Beer with Three Stout Hares, its honey beer made with Dartmoor heather honey.

Bays won a Best Green Business Award at the National SIBA Brewing Awards for its environmentally friendly approach to brewing - which includes a recent £30,000 investment in solar power and its use of local suppliers which is helping the brewery to greatly reduce its carbon footprint.

Quercus Brewery has a new Brewer, Tom Maderios, an American who was formerly at Twickenham Brewery for 8 years. In the month he has been there he has already produced a new beer. Called Devon Amber, it is a 3.8 % abv session beer. Shingle Bay continues to be their biggest seller.

In North Devon, Clearwater Brewer recently celebrated its move to new premises with an afternoon of beer, food and jazz. The full beer range was there to be sampled, and bottled ale was given as a 'party bag'. Favourites among our party were Proper Andsom, a dark rich bitter, and Real Smiler, a golden hoppy ale.

## Pub of the Year 2014

In the period between February and May, South Devon CAMRA branch members deliberated to choose their Pub of the Year. To qualify, the pub needs to be one of the 29 pubs within South Devon's allocation in the 2014 Good Beer Guide, and as these are initially picked (using a beer scoring system through What Pub) from the 350 pubs in our area, it can be seen that to achieve Pub of the Year is quite a feat.

The criteria on which the pubs are judged include (most importantly) beer quality, along with 5 other criteria which include atmosphere, community focus and value for money.

This year The Queen's Arms in Brixham was judged to be the winner of the five short-listed pubs from surveys by over 20 branch members. Even though not the prettiest of the premises we visited its very high standard of cellarmanship, and focus on service shone through. The pub has had a chequered history in the past, but in the last 2 years under the new landlord, has undergone a transformation, and now has thriving pub games teams, has held its first beer festival, and has served more than 260 different ales since opening.

Chris Simmonds, pictured here with his staff and Bob Southwell, was delighted to win the award and on presentation night provided some rare beers, some old favourites, and arranged a mobile pizza van to supply supper.



The Queens Arms Team.



Bob Southwell and Colin Lang

Runner-up for the Pub of the Year award was the family-run 15C Kingswear pub, The Ship Inn. Colin Lang has been the landlord here for over 7 years, and has been continuously listed in the annual Good Beer Guide. Under his guidance, the pub has won the Pub of the Year award once previously. The judges found the beer quality here to be consistently excellent, and although being tied to a Pub company Colin has managed to supply an interesting range of beers. The warm friendly atmosphere, especially on a winter's evening, is supplied

by Colin and his team. He knows everyone, remembers everyone and insults everyone (in the time-honoured fashion peculiar to the British pub).

Most of the judges agreed that it was difficult to separate these two pubs. Congratulations to both.

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## Pub of the Year 2014

The three other pubs in the running for POTY for 2014 award were

The Exeter Inn, a shiny twinkly pub where every bit of woodwork (of which there is a lot) gleams, in the centre of the town of Ashburton. This pub serves Dartmoor Legend and Dartmoor IPA, and has a great community spirit. The pub is obviously constructed of Dartmoor granite and one lovely feature is a monumental fireplace behind the bar used as a spirit dispense.

Although being in the middle of Paignton and surrounded by the 'bucket and spade' shops leading to the beach, Henry's Bar still manages to maintain a village pub atmosphere. Renowned for its beer quality, this is a welcome oasis for a pie and a pint at the end of your shopping trip.

Lying just outside the village of Widecombe in the Moor, you can't fail to be impressed by The Rugglestone Inn, a single storey Devon inn. With low ceilings and tiny bars it caters for all, locals, tourists and walkers and is especially dog friendly - even despite the pub cat. There is a small leat or stream running past the pub and one crosses this to a lovely beer garden to sit amongst the free range chickens and ducks. This pub has been our Pub of the Year in the past.

All the judges agreed that the standard this year was very high. Anyone wishing to visit these pubs should consult the Good Beer Guide or check on What Pub at <http://whatpub.com/> for opening times.

## ***Meet the Brewer. Mat Henney. New Lion Brewery***

Mat Henney has been the head brewer at the New Lion Brewery in Totnes since the brewery was founded in the autumn of 2013, although the consortium who formed it has been working on its plans for over 2 years.

Mat's history in brewing began in his home Channel Island of Guernsey, where he took up a holiday job in Liberation Brewery while studying for his degree in Marine Biology, and following his graduation this employment continued and he became assistant brewer.



He then joined Dartmoor Brewery as 2<sup>nd</sup> brewer and worked there for 18 months. During this period he began his studying for the Master Brewer qualification with the Institute of Brewing and Distilling. This is the highest brewing qualification and he is currently nearly half way through this training.

The opportunity to be in at the start of The New Lion Brewery enticed him away, and once premises were obtained on Station Road, Mat was able to start the process of building the brewery's portfolio of beers. Recently New Lion have taken delivery of new fermenters, and once commissioned will have a brewing capacity of 60 casks a week. It does have a small test brewing kit of 50 Litres which allows him to make experimental brews. The first ales were launched in November 2013 with 6 test brews, from which the two present standards have evolved. He has worked to perfect these, and get consistency of his brews. The first two core ales are

**Mane Event, (OG 1038, ABV3.8%)** A balanced golden-brown modern session bitter made from a complex 6 malt grist and US hops.

**Pandit IPA, (OG 1046 ABV4.9%)** A light hoppy ale with a citrus and floral nose and flavour. The finish has a well-defined, biscuity malt character.

Mat has an ongoing commitment to research new brews, and using the small kit, he has been producing different ales each week. These are being tested for customer approval and feedback in The Bay Horse in Totnes. Recently in these test brews has been a wheat beer flavoured with vanilla, a Mild for May and Oyster Mushroom Stout. This last brew is a direct result of the brewery's interaction with local businesses as the spent grains are given to a local mushroom farmer, who donated some oyster mushrooms to go in the stout. Reports of this were favourable and the brew flew out. The unusual additive gave the ale more depth of flavour as well as a very slight earthiness. From June the trial beers will be available on both Friday and Saturday, and the weekend feeling will be assisted by there being a garden BBQ both evenings.

As well as new equipment, the brewery premises have been recently upgraded to put in a mezzanine floor and they have taken on a 2<sup>nd</sup> brewer to help Mat and to undertake some of the deliveries. From here Mat will be targeting local outlets and selling the beer to pubs in the South Hams, Plymouth and Exeter. There has been a short run of bottled ale already; all have been sold, and this option will be expanded if popular with customers. In the more distant future, Mat also has plans to research and produce key kegs. With all these different aspects to the business, Mat is certainly keeping himself occupied, if not to say very busy, but when I spoke to him he was bubbling with plans and enthusiasm for his work.

A blog on Let's Campaign for Really Good Beer gives New Lion's perspective on how they plan to fit within a thriving ale market. See <http://www.camrgb.org/category/brewery/> 20<sup>th</sup> May



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## ***CAMRA National Winter Ale Festival***

When I heard that the National Winter Ales Festival was being held this year at the Roundhouse in Derby for the first time, I thought it would be a superb opportunity to sample some excellent ales in a historic venue in my home town. The Roundhouse at Derby is the world's first and oldest surviving railway roundhouse. Engineered by Robert Stevenson, it dates back to 1839 and is a Grade II\* listed building, sympathetically restored in 2008. It still contains the original engine turntable.



The festival was held from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> February. I arrived for the trade session on the Wednesday afternoon and soon spied a very happy Devon brewer. Guy Sheppard's Exe Valley Brewery had just won the gold award in the 'Old/Strong Mild' category of the Champion Winter Beer of Britain competition for 'Winter Glow' a warming traditional winter ale brewed with crystal, chocolate and black malt and four varieties of hops. As I was congratulating Guy on his success, it was announced that the beer had also been judged the overall bronze award winner. The overall winner was Dunham Porter (Dunham Massey Brewery, Altrincham) with the silver prize going to the Cairngorm Brewery for Black Gold.

Faced with a choice of over 400 beers, I decided to concentrate on the IPA style beers (once I had enjoyed a sample of Winter Glow). There were plenty to taste - Empress IPA (Salthouse); Revisionist Dark IPA (Marston's); King's Wall IPA (Malmesbury); Mount Doom IPA (Middle Earth) and Intergalactic IPA (Black Iris) to name but a few. My favourites were South Coast IPA (Brighton Bier), Ale Ceaser IPA (Corinium), Titan IPA (Titan) and, best of all, Jaipur IPA (Thornbridge).

It was a great pleasure to take my 93 year old father to the festival, which, believe it or not, was the first beer festival he had attended. Well, better late than never.

As one would expect, this National CAMRA festival was very well organised and most enjoyable. I am already planning a return visit next year: 11<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> February 2015.

David Lockley

## *From B to Y.....*

Okay, it might not have quite the cachet of, say, From Aberdeen to Zennor, but on Saturday 17th May three of us from Brixham were part of a group from South Devon CAMRA which visited Yeovil Brewery in Somerset. This meant leaving Brixham on the 7.15a.m bus to rendezvous with the minibus in Newton Abbot. In due course 13 of us arrived at the outskirts of Yeovil, and parked outside the brewery at its Trading Estate home. As we were a bit early, there was time to visit the snack bar over the road.

Yeovil Brewery was established in 2006. It has an 18 barrel plant (a brewer's barrel contains 36 gallons - four times the capacity of the casks you will mostly see at local Beer Festivals). This means it can produce 5,184 pints at a time. Declan, the brewer, produces a range of beers of various styles and strengths. We were each given a glass, and let loose on: Spring Forward, a 4.5% classic bitter; the light and quaffable Sungrazer (3.6); Ruby (4.5); citrus-scented Glory (3.8) and Stout Hearted (4.3). A variety of finger-snacks were laid on to soak this lot up, and Declan showed us around the brewery. When it was time to leave, Declan drew off a large plastic bottle of one of the beers for Peter, our driver who'd had to watch the rest of us imbibing, to enjoy later.

About 5 minutes' drive away we came to the Quicksilver Mail, a pub named after a high-speed Mail Coach. On pulling into the car park, the omens weren't good, as we faced a boarded-up facade. Fortunately, this was a building next door, and we were soon in the pub's beer garden with glasses of Otter Amber, Jail Ale, and Butcombe.

Just over the border in Dorset we next visited the Rose & Crown at Trent, a Wadworth's pub with a nice garden complete with a raised pond fed through wooden barrels, and a view back over fields in Somerset. The beer was lovely, too - Wadworth's Henry's IPA and Horizon; Butcombe Bitter; and Everard's Sunchaser (no need to chase it - it was a glorious day). After a while it was on to Odcombe, and the Mason's Arms, which has its own brewery - a miniscule affair tucked into a room not much bigger than the proverbial broom cupboard. It produces beers just for the pub - usually 3 available, but the brewer was on holiday, so we were only able to try the light, hoppy, Spring (4.1%). Another nice garden - this one complete with a smoker-friendly covered Pergola including heating and seating.

So far, so very good, but every silver lining must have a cloud, and ours appeared in due course in the form of the Stonemason's Arms at Ilminster - a Marston's Roadhouse with a heavy bias on dining. Being full of families with often-young children is not a crime - it's when the youngsters are free to roam all over the pub that it gets annoying (Oh dear, I'm getting like The Grumpy Old Man here). What was more disappointing was that, after a day spent in drinking excellent ale in civilised surroundings, we were suddenly subjected to 3 stone-cold beers in poor condition served through tight sparklers (to the uninitiated, that's the awful devices that give a pint more foamy head than there is liquid underneath).

So, despite the obvious 'blip' at the end, I'd like to thank Tony Woodward for organising the day's itinerary; Yeovil Brewery for making us most welcome; and Peter Lister for driving us all that distance. I hope you enjoyed your beer, Pete!

Peter O'Nions

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There seems to be a resurgence of interest in pub signs as the recent CAMRA publications, *What's On and Beer*, have featured articles on this. In *Beer*, our local beer sommelier, Sophie Atherton, looks at the importance of these landmarks, and the pub sign creators. *What's On* examines the origin of the most common pub name (and sign) the Red Lion, which owes its existence to heraldic symbols of John of Gaunt and later James VI of Scotland (James I of England and Ireland).

Many signs are derived from heraldic references: The Spread Eagle and The Griffin among them. Others refer to famous people: The George; The Duke of York; The Queen's Head: The Nelson. A couple of the common ones also refer back to an ecclesiastical starting point: The Cross Keys; The Saracen's Head; The Hope and Anchor and the very common Church House Inn which was the lodging for the artisans building the church next door. The Bell, a common name, is also associated with churches which used to brew ale in a nearby building to boost funds.



Pubs named The Quiet Woman commemorate a barmaid or landlady who gave away the customers' (or smugglers') secrets and lost their heads for their trouble. Pubs called The Good Woman, or The Headless Woman also refer to this legend.

A unique sign that I came across in Kent refers to the 7<sup>th</sup> C monk St Botolphs whose body was being carried to safety from desecration by the heathen Danes. There was water to cross, and the night was black. Then suddenly a shaft of light, not the moon, shone down from heaven to guide the escort on their journey. The sign for Botolphs Bridge Inn is pictured.



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## *Teignmouth Tipples*

What do you do on a baking hot day at the end of March? Why, you head for Teignmouth, there to sample some of the ales on offer in the area around the Docks.

First port of call was the Blue Anchor- a street-corner local offering 6 ales and one real cider. From today's beers, we tried Betty Stogs; Box Steam 'Chuffin'; St. Austell 'Ruck & Roll'; and Fuller's 'Front Row'- anyone detect the proximity of a Rugby tournament?

A short walk later we were at The Queensbury, now run by the owner of the highly-regarded Gresham House Inn in Dawlish, who kindly opened early for us, and who, despite not serving food, was quite happy for us to fetch some pasties from a nearby bakery to accompany his well-kept local Harvey's Special Brew from Teignworthy and St. Austell 'Tribute'. Thence on to the Ship Inn, abutting the river via a detritus-strewn small beach (a reminder of the recent bad weather) where we found two St. Austell beers - good Proper Job and Tribute.

We rounded off our afternoon at the Jolly Sailor- a 'national' beer here, but also the much harder to find Purity 'Mad Goose' .

Peter O'Nions

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## *Regional Pub of the Year*

The judging is currently being undertaken to find the Regional South West Pub of the Year. Adjudication is between the winners of all the different regions (south) as listed below, and this pub will then be judged against the northern winner, and thence onto a chance to win National Pub of the Year 2014.

Cornwall - Star Inn, Vogue

Exeter & East Devon - Pony & Trap, Cullompton

North Devon - Red Lion, Exbourne

Plymouth - Fortescue, Plymouth

Somerset - Ring of Bells, Taunton

South Devon - Queens Arms, Brixham

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## Midweek May-hem

Wednesday May 14th. Four of the usual suspects rendezvous in Kingswear prior to crossing the river to Dartmouth. On arrival, they realise they've missed the bus they were hoping to catch, meaning an hour's wait until the next one. Oh well, I can think of worse places to be if you've got an hour to kill- so it's off up the hill to the Cherub- arguably Dartmouth's oldest pub, and certainly in its oldest building. They partake of Proper Job and Cottage 'Pacific' (a locomotive, not an ocean, on the pump clip). But there's no time to waste, so it's drink up and off down to the Royal Castle, opposite the Boat Float. This hotel bar offers Jail Ale, Otter Amber, and Doom Bar - the latter two are tried, and 3 of the 4 of them strike it lucky. Their hour will soon be up, though, so it's back to The Embankment for the Plymouth-bound 93 bus; their destination being Slapton. The top deck of the bus is preferable, as it offers by far the best views of the glorious stretch of coastline that is to follow. There is the bonus that this bus goes right into Slapton, instead of stopping way back down the lane on the main road. On arrival at the Queen's Arms it is my round- the others repair to the beer garden while I order toasted sandwiches for the two of us who require sustenance at lunchtime. The Otter Bright and Dartmoor Legend are very well received, and we are tempted to stay for more, but there is another pub in the village that should receive a visit and we are beholden to the bus timetable. So we find ourselves in the garden of the Tower- once an ale Mecca, but these days dispensing Proper Job and Doom Bar. All too soon, it's time to head back to the bus stop- best not to miss it, as there's an hour's wait for the next one, and both pubs will soon be closing. Steps are retraced, and on arrival back in Kingswear there is time to pop into the Steam Packet before buses to Paignton and Brixham.

Peter O'Nions





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# What's On

## Branch Meetings and Social Events

Date	Time	Purpose	Location
10 June 2014	20:00	AGM	Crown and Sceptre, St Marychurch
14 June 2014	12:00	Trip up Teign Valley. Meet 11.30 opposite Newton Abbot Railway Station (mini-bus nearly full)	
18 June 2014	12:00	Mid-week Crawl. Starting at Clifford Arms, Shaldon.	
19 June 2014	20:00	Quiz. CAMRA Verses The Queens Arms Brixham	
14 July 2014	20:00	(NB Monday) Branch Meeting. The Tally Ho Littlehempston	
16-17 August 2014	all day.	South Devon CAMRA assist at Seale Hayne Beer Festival	
19 August 2014	20:00	Branch Meeting. The Durant Arms, Ashprington.	
October TBA	Trip to Chagford, Moreton Hampstead, and the moors		

## Beer Festivals

20-22 June 2014	SummerMoon Beer Festival, Kingskerswell.		
11-12 July 2014	Plymouth CAMRA Beer Festival, Plymouth Pavillions		
19 July 2014	Ipple Tipple at Ipplepen Playing Field		
16-17 August 2014	Beer & Music Festival. Seale Hayne College, Newton Abbot		
21-25 August 2014	August Bank Holiday Beer Festival. George Inn, Blackawton.		
23-26 August 2014	Devon Diesel Society Rails and Ales Beer Festival, Staverton Station		
13-14 September	Somerset CAMRA Beer Festival, Minehead Railway Station		
19-21 September	AbbFest 2014. Fermoys Garden Centre, Newton Abbot		

## *Roger has bought a pub!*

Well actually I have only bought a little bit of a pub and whenever I start spouting that I've bought a pub someone pipes up "it's only a share in a pub". This is South Devon's first Community Pub, the Tally Ho at Littlehempston, of course. I popped in just after the purchase was completed in March to find a hive of activity as shareholders, friends, the new landlady Holly and others were working hard cleaning, painting and weeding in a rush to get ready to open on 28 March and it was still looking a bit of a mess. But on the shareholders opening night it was all spick and span and better than I remembered it in its heyday.



For those of you who have yet to visit it is a long room with fireplaces at each end, the ceiling is low and beamed, the walls are bare stone and furnished with cosy settles and dark tables and chairs. The bar is in the middle of one side opposite the front door. There is another door from the large car park and yet another out to the beer garden. This is a lovely sun trap; good for the kids and a fine view of all passing trains on the mainline to Plymouth.

The beers have been Dartmoor Legend, Hunters Devon Dreamer and Bays Topsail all on hand-pump. Holly is keeping these in good form and Pete the chef is doing excellent food. I have visited alone, with Mary, with CAMRA members and with my family and it has always been great; I do love a good pub!

So please help my investment and visit the Tally Ho

Roger Adams

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## ***Roll up, roll up, to Britain's Biggest Pub***

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CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival will be bringing a carnival atmosphere to London's Olympia exhibition centre this summer with an extravagant circus theme complete with live-action circus performers.

But fantastic beer will of course remain the star of the show, with over 350 different breweries offering 900 different real ales, ciders, perries and international beers to over 50,000 thirsty

beer lovers throughout the week-long event.

The festival will feature 29 bars including 11 brewery bars run by the Nation's biggest and best brewers of real ale, plus food and merchandise stalls as well as a full schedule of entertainment on the GBBF music stage.

The event is set to be one the biggest and best Great British Beer Festivals ever, so don't miss out on your place at the festival and buy a ticket now via [www.gbbf.org.uk/tickets](http://www.gbbf.org.uk/tickets)

## ***CAMRA Approves Frozen Cider***

CAMRA has welcomed the Government's decision in the Budget to freeze cider duty.

Making the announcement, the Chancellor highlighted that some cider producers in the West Country had been hit hard by recent weather conditions so needed additional support.

This duty freeze will apply to cider with a juice content of 35% or higher, and will not apply to sparkling cider between 5.5% and 8.5% abv.

This is a welcome move which will support Britain's real cider and perry producers - a vital traditional British industry. Andrea Briers, Chair of CAMRA's Apple Committee commented: *"Cider is a traditional British product and I welcome the Chancellor's decision to freeze cider duty to help those who keep this tradition alive. I would encourage you to help real cider or perry makers thrive by visiting a pub and trying some."*

CAMRA has cautioned that small cider producers (making below 70 hectolitres each year) already pay no duty, so the benefit of this duty freeze will primarily be felt by slightly larger producers.

CAMRA is continuing to campaign for a new cider duty system to support real cider with a considerably higher juice content.

For more information on real cider and perry, visit [www.camra.org.uk/cider](http://www.camra.org.uk/cider)

**A Campaign**

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I enclose a cheque for \_\_\_\_\_

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## Grumpy Old Man examines Tradition

Do you like breathing air? Well, of course you do. Do you like tradition? Instinctively the answer would probably be another resounding yes, but is it that simple? On reflection not everybody supports the monarchy or fox hunting but they are certainly ultra-traditional. By what criteria and from what period do we assess the word? Is it from when I first knew pubs, from the era of my grandfather or from the period of the early Crusades or Robin Hood? Of course, this is to assume that traditional merely means historical. However, not all that was traditional or historical was necessarily good. Typhus was endemic in much of the 19th century urban environment, including the pubs, but we would hardly look back at that with nostalgia. The principal problem is that the word traditional has become meaningless in the hands of those butchers of the English language - the marketing folk. The word 'traditional' is used freely all over the pub trade. Pubs themselves are described as 'traditional' often with a 'traditional' welcome or a 'traditional' family atmosphere and even 'traditional' food including 'traditional' Sunday roasts etc. It is of course all rubbish and the word has become a nonsense merely conveying consumer warmth and security and possibly nostalgia for times past. It has a favourable connotation, but its actual meaning is more illusory. Last month I passed a pub which described itself as 'traditional' and then went on to list its traditional credentials. One such claim was for 'traditional barista coffee'. How, and by what criteria, could that be described as traditional? I felt like rushing in to confront the barista (if there actually was one!) and enquire about their coffee policy and ask at what point in the evolution of the pub had this marketing nonsense appeared. I recently spoke to the mother of a friend and asked her what she thought a traditional pub actually was. Her reply was "a nice pub" which is merely to replace one meaningless word with another, but perhaps I should not be surprised from a Daily Mail reader!

*Continued .....*



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**Last date for submission for the Autumn magazine – 12.8.2014**

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back page				330	

## ***Grumpy Old Man ..... Continued***

What on earth does a traditional welcome mean? I would hardly expect an avuncular Falstaff to greet me stentorally with the words "sooth, well met, gentle sire". We have all moved on from the days of Shakespeare, but neither do I like welcomes from a modern day 'script'." Good morning sir and how are you today?" Do they really care how I am and would they listen sympathetically if I replied - not too good actually, just had the dog put down and still in pain from my broken knee and my wife has just left me. I am also more than irritated by phrases like - "Hello buddy and what can I do for you today" Actually, the best thing you can do is stop calling me buddy! Why is this ridiculous, and very un-traditional, colloquialism so common in Devon, but not elsewhere? Let's continue with an oxymoronic statement- a pub calling itself traditional with one large bar. What happened to the multi-roomed establishments of the past with saloons, snugs, vaults etc. which were certainly traditional and had been for many a year? What is traditional about pine flooring, bookcases, televisions, loud music and fruit machines? And if it was really traditional then the only food was likely to be the humble packet of crisps, with the blue twist of salt inside, or possibly a pork pie. Nowadays, in these so-called traditional pubs, you seem to be able to have virtually anything and I have encountered snake, ostrich and alligator on the menu and all with (or rather accompanied by) chips of course. I have written many times about some of the stupid marketing used to conjure up an image of the food. Succulent and sizzling Lincolnshire sausages served up on a bed of finely mashed New Jersey potatoes and drizzled with specially prepared caramelised red onion juices. It is of course sausage, mash and gravy dressed up in the modern, and totally meaningless, vernacular. In my youth anybody who talked about food in such a manner would have been regarded as a real weirdo. If it was really a traditional pub we would probably not be able to see the bar for cigarette smoke and the walls and ceilings would all be light brown. I used to think that there was a specially made wallpaper of that colour for pubs until a less naive colleague told me that it was nicotine staining! Finally, what happened to the traditional range of beers which invariably was mild, bitter and possibly a best bitter? There are now so many different types of beer which go way beyond this range including gold beers and a plethora of other drinks as well as speciality bottled beers and ciders.

What is left of the so called traditional pub once the marketing people have finished with it? Very little actually, apart from the beer hand pumps, walls ceilings and doors. Now there are a few pubs which are truly traditional and largely unspoilt and the Bridge at Topsham immediately comes to mind with its separate bars, gravity beer and limited food provision and the banning of mobile phones. Elsewhere the marketing people will attempt to conjure up a nostalgic image using the word traditional, but it is just that, merely hollow words and no substance.

Bob Southwell, Aka The Grumpy old Man.

---

I have had a wonderful response to my article regarding the behaviour of kids in pubs and it would appear that I have touched upon a raw nerve with so many of you. I have been given a list of pubs to avoid as well as others where children are definitely not welcome. Just to update you I have come across three incidents which are worth mentioning since that article was written.

- 1) A child initially sitting, and then standing, on the bar. Admittedly, the staff intervened and stopped this.
- 2) A child circumnavigating the pub on her roller blades and not corrected by anybody.
- 3) The changing of a baby's nappy in full view of the other customers. This was a group of young mothers with a cavalry of pushchairs and their ilk and they could obviously saw nothing wrong with this. Unfortunately, there was no intervention by the staff.

From Bob Southwell AKA Grumpy



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## LETTERS

Dear Editor,

I recently picked up a copy of News and Brews at our yearly pilgrimage to the Tucker's Maltings beer fest, and punched the air in triumph after reading your article on that most lamentable of decisions, that is, to allow kids into pubs...

There is virtually nowhere now where adults can relax without the presence of children spoiling the atmos. We spend all of our holidays and most spare weekends in the pursuit of, and enjoying Real Ale and pubs, and I can definitely say in all honesty that I have yet to come across any child in a pub which has not annoyed either us or somebody else..

When well behaved dogs are taken into a pub with a responsible owner, they know who is in charge - children on the other hand, think that THEY are in charge, with no deference to any adults present, including their parents. If I were to spoil the atmosphere in a pub for the other patrons, then the landlord should quite rightly ask me to moderate my behaviour or else leave the premises. This does not seem to be the case with children as parents allow them to do as they please.

By talking to others, we have come to the conclusion that this is playing not too small a part in people choosing now to drink at home, rather than trying to relax in the local crèche that just happens to serve beer.

Keep up the good work, Grumpy.

Deborah Willis

### **The children reply.**

My mum read your article to me about children and dogs and I really felt quite disgusted and feel the need to answer back on behalf of all us children.

I believe that I am a responsible child and would never dream of scooting, or cycling around the pub without wearing my crash helmet. You make out that Ned is a nice dog but when my scooter ran over his tail he became most unpleasant. He is also very boring and refuses to join our games of tag and hide and seek as his master is far too strict a disciplinarian to allow him to have any fun at all. I accept that my younger brother does scream and shout a lot, as well as crawling off to other tables, but if a sand pit was to be provided then all would be fine. I cannot understand why the fuddy duddies objected to our music being played through our loud speakers on our phones and I thought that we danced rather well under the circumstances. Why can't we have proper ice creams heaped in cornets rather than served in boring dishes so that we can wander around whilst licking them? We only rarely throw food about and even then only in retaliation to some of the dreadful boys who seem to think it's funny to throw peanuts at us in the first place. I don't understand why the pushchairs, scooters and cycles cause so many problems as it is easy to walk around them and how else would we get to the pub in the first place and we can hardly leave them outside to be nicked can we? What possessed the old lady to get so agitated when James' nappy was changed on the table? After all we had finished the cheesy chips at that stage and how would she feel if she had to walk around in wet knickers all day?

All in all, the pub is not cool enough to be child friendly and have fun without being frowned upon by the old wrinklies who really are so very boring and need to lighten up a lot more.

Kylie (aged 6)

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