

NEWS AND BREWS

*Spring
2013*

FREE

Free Magazine of

The South Devon Branch of

THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



Celebrate May is Mild Month



**South Devon
CAMRA**

*Supporting Real Ale
in the South West*



Welcome to

NEWS AND BREWS

41st EDITION

Spring 2013

Are mild ales among your favourites? Or are you a publican who plans to embrace the annual CAMRA campaign 'May is Mild Month'? If so, you can help us here at S. Devon CAMRA. The Mild Month campaign aims to raise awareness of the range of Milds brewed, and to encourage pubs that don't usually stock a Mild to try serving at least one during the month and to get drinkers who haven't tried Mild beer before to sip a pint or two in May. So even if you are not a very active member, you can encourage your local to get involved and supply milds to their customers during May. Then let me know at tinahemmings@hotmail.co.uk so I can pass the information on to those of us that might rightly be called 'mild mad'. This will help your local pub as mild trippers are known to travel long distances for their favourite sup! We will also try to get details on our website to increase exposure.

Looking at the number of beer festivals that are coming up soon, it seems the real ale business is performing well in austere times. The last report I read detailed cask ale sales for independent breweries up by 2% in the year and the brands being produced are also up by 5%. Good news all round.

Cheers, Tina Hemmings



The Ship Inn Kingswear

Good Food, Good Beer, Good Company



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A dedicated Otter bar, Adnams Bitter, and a selection of guest beers.

The SHIP INN is a traditional village pub, with a restaurant serving fresh seafood and steaks, using varied, seasonal, local and very fresh produce.

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Flying the flag for the region's beer.

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Pub News

The Ness, Shaldon closed temporarily due to refurbishment from the 28/01/2013 and is due to reopen on the 14/02/2013.

The Welcome Stranger in Liverton is doing well at the moment. It's very popular with locals. The Dutch landlady serves a couple of real ales which recently included Otter Ale and a good range of food including some Dutch specialities. They offer B&B and camping and have a function room in the barn with its own skittle alley.

The Griffin in Torquay has two beers from Hunter's Brewery on gravity.

The Chelston Manor, Torquay, The King's Arms in Buckfastleigh and The Vestry in Newton Abbot have all re-opened.

The Queen's Arms at Brixham recently held a pig-racing fundraising event to support Brixham Gig Club, who is raising money for a new gig. Prior to the racing, the British Legion presented the landlord, Chris Simmonds, with an award to thank him for the best 2012 Poppy Appeal collection in the town.

The Hope and Anchor at Hope Cove has received good reports from members.

The Waterside at Goodrington is offering 20 pence off per pint for card-carrying CAMRA members.

The Union Inn in Mortenhampstead has Red Rock beers at £ 2.20 per pint.

The Bridford Inn in the Teign valley has changed hands – the new landlord previously ran a pub which appeared in the GBG for 2011 in Scotland.

Palmer's Brewery have taken over the Swan's Nest Exminster

Our reporter found good beer and a friendly welcome at The Church House Inn at Stoke Gabriel on a recent visit.

The Shipwrights Arms at Shaldon has recently reopened. They are selling Hunters beer in good condition and have a lovely open fire.

Open Arms Chillington has closed, as has The Teign House Inn at Christow and The Polsham Arms in Paignton.

Teign Cellars Beer Shop in Newton Abbot are now the preferred online partners for sale for Clearwater Brewery, Bays Brewery and recently Art Brew. They are hoping to expand their range of " Bag in Box" Beer & Cider sales, and have ventured into trade sales which include Bag in Box Cider and Cask Ale from both Harbour Brewing Co in Cornwall, and Art Brew in Dorset.



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(www.beerinevening.com)

Good Beer Guide Listed

4 Real Ales. Local ciders.

Thursday Quiz night

Accommodation Available,

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www.thetradesmansarms.co.uk



The Manor Inn
2 Stoke Gabriel Road Galmpton, Brixham
 TQ5 0NL Tel: 01803 661101

www.manorinnngalmpton.co.uk

Discount for card-carrying CAMRA members

Good beers (Otter Ale & Bitter, Butcombe Bitter, Skinner's Betty Stoggs, Exmoor Ale).

Good food, function rooms, accommodation, patio, large car park, good company.

Quiz nights Thursday (general knowledge) and Sunday (music). Children and dogs welcomed in a real village pub.

www.manorinnngalmpton.co.uk

CAMRA Campaigns

Beer-Duty Escalator

Following the December mass lobby of Parliament, when hundreds of CAMRA members took part, and the successful e-petition when over 100,000 signatures were achieved, CAMRA is keeping up its pressure on the government to scrap the beer duty escalator. Leading up to the March budget, CAMRA will submit that, to avoid irreparable damage to the country's community life, an urgent change needs to take place. Pubs should be recognised as the community assets that they are and the government should be making efforts to help the hard-pressed hostellers. Since 2008, tax on beer has increased more than 40%, 5800 pubs have closed and pub goers have declined by 3 million. The UK suffers one of the largest tax rates in Europe on their ale. CAMRA will continue its campaign by lobbying MPs, and holding meetings with the Treasury.

Pubcos face sanctions

Vince Cable, the government's business secretary has started making plans to change the law curtailing unfair practices by pubcos. His strategy is to provide an independent adjudicator and a statutory code to address iniquities such as beer being sold to tenants at hiked up rates, and excessive rents. The code would ensure that a tied licensee is no worse off than a free-of-tie landlord. Vince Cable gave the industry 2 years to make progress on a voluntary code, but as not enough has been done by the industry, he has decided that the law now needs to be changed to shift behaviour.

Brewery News

Red Rock—The Brewery remains very busy and is delighted to have been chosen to supply Wetherspoon's with ales for their forthcoming beer festival. Cock Hop at 4.5 ABV 4.5% is a light hoppy beer with a crisp finish, and is one of their most recent brews. It be accompanied by the launch of new ale, 4.8 % ABV, Farmer's Folly that has been designed and brewed exclusively for Wetherspoons.

On the brewery site, The Old Workshop is a recently completed rustic bar providing a unique brewery tap serving two Red Rock ales and able to accommodate up to 30 customers. The outside space is also currently being expanded and the beer garden will soon have a large enclosed area which is a wonderful sun trap, great for families with far-reaching views of the Devon countryside.

The brewery tap is open Thursday - Saturday 17.00 - 20.00, Sunday 12.30 - 15.00 and food continues to be available on Sundays. Themed evenings are continuing to be successful and a calendar of future events can be found on the website, www.oldworkshop.org

Geoff Phillips, Owner and Brewer of the Ringmore Craft Brewery in Shaldon, announced his retirement with effect from the end of 2012. The brewery produced the popular Oarsome, Whistling Bridge and Rollocks Ales both on draught and in bottles. However the beers will not be gone for long as the brewing plant and recipes have been bought by Tim Bouget, Chef/Patron of the award winning ODE Restaurant in Shaldon. The new brewery is called Two Beach Brewing Co. and will be operated from the new ODE Café on the Ness at the Eastern end of the village. Geoff be will assisting the new brewer, Andy Cope, for a few months to ensure the continuity of beer quality and with the development of some organic ales.

At Dartmoor Brewery sales are up by 25%. Dartmoor IPA is now made with 100% Dartmoor barley, grown by a local farmer and malted for them at Tuckers Maltings. A new beer named Burrator will be added to the portfolio and is based on the Christmas Ale (5%) which sold very well. Initially the brew run will be small and will be available by request. As access will be limited we guess that it may be available at The Burrator Inn although we cannot guarantee it.

On Sunday February 3rd the award winning Hunters Brewery of Ipplepen launched two beers at the former National Pub of the Year, the Tom Cobley at Spreyton, Devon. The two beers were Devonshire Dreamer and Hunters Best. They are now going to be part of the brewery's regular line up and available for customers to enjoy all year round. Paul Walker, who runs the brewery presented the beers to the customers along with a light buffet. Everybody enjoyed themselves and many compliments were made about the quality and taste of the beer. Originally the beers had been brewed for two pubs which were local to the brewery. Denbury Dreamer was supplied to the Union Inn at Denbury, and Butchers Best to the Butchers Arms, Abbotswell, but they proved so popular with customers that he kept getting requests from other publicans who wished to stock them themselves. They are now available throughout Devon and the parts of Cornwall and Somerset that are in the brewery's distribution area as Devon Dreamer and Hunter's Best. Hunters are currently installing a new, improved bottling plant

The Railway in Newton Abbot has obtained official planning permission to start a brewery at their premises.

THE KENTS

Kents Pub, 1 Ilsham Road, Wellswood, Torquay. TQ1 2JG

Tel: 01803 292522 Email: info@kentstorquay.co.uk

Website: www.kentstorquay.co.uk



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Charity Donation

During the South Devon Beer Festival at Newton Abbot Racecourse in August, the branch followed its usual plan of having a designated charity. From beer tokens that festival-goers cashed in and a donation from the branch, a cheque for £ 256.90 was presented by Bob Southwell to the RNLI, at a recent charity quiz.



GEORGE INN, BLACKAWTON Devon Village Inn

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South Hams Minibus Trip 2013

Every January, S. Devon CAMRA hires a minibus and sets off to visit some of the pubs in the South Hams which makes up a large part of our branch area, but one that is often under-visited by us. This year, 11 of us left Newton Abbot on a wet Saturday morning, headed for Ipplepen where the 12th was picked up, en route to a rendezvous with the 13th, who had been driven up from his home in Slapton to meet us on the main road. Thence we proceeded to Salcombe, and our first stop of the day - The Victoria, a St. Austell house by the estuary. We were met here by another colleague, who lives nearby. The party thus complete, we sampled good Proper Job and Tribute, and a few of us also tried the Dartmoor Best. After a while, some of the party went over the road to the Ferry Inn, a Palmers pub right on the river, and reported good Best Bitter and Copper Ale. Reunited, we boarded the minibus and headed for Kingsbridge, where our destination was the King's Arms, a listed coaching inn at the top of the main street, with tables for diners accompanied by a variety of comfortable chairs. There are usually 4 ales on offer, and you can try any 3 of these in third of a pint glasses in lieu of a pint. On this occasion, the choice was Teignworthy Neap Tide and Devon Shire Dark; Wickwar B.O.B.; and O'Hanlon's Yellowhammer.

From here, we set off for The Globe, at Frogmore - our stop for a light lunch. Our victuals were washed down with S. Hams Eddystone - that in hindsight was agreed to have been the 'beer of the day' - Betty Stogs, and Otter Ale. Suitably fortified, we moved on to The Millbrook, at South Pool, which has a pretty stream at its rear that drains into the nearby river. The 3 beers on offer were from Red Rock, and elicited mixed reviews. The Open Arms, at Chillington - owned by South Hams Brewery - offered up Eddystone along with their Christmas beer, the 5.6% Sleighed - a homage to Santa Claus, or a statement of intent?

Final stop of the day meant Full Circle for one of us, as we descended on The Queens Arms in his home village of Slapton. It also meant Otter Bitter and Bright - and tasty hot sausage sandwiches.

Thanks to Pete Lister for driving the minibus, Tony Woodward for planning the itinerary, and Phil Stevens for hiring the minibus - even though he couldn't join us.

Peter O'Nions

SUMMER MOON FESTIVAL

21st to 23rd JUNE 2013

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Now in its sixth year, a well established beer and wine festival showcasing dozens of the South West's finest real ales and ciders, plus wines from around the world and local food produce.

Live local bands/groups will be playing throughout the weekend.

The fun starts at 5 pm on Friday 21st June.

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

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*Featuring Oarsome Ale from
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Special menu*



It's Phil's Ale

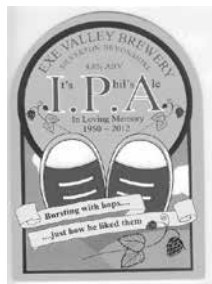
At the successful Exeter & East Devon CAMRA Festival of Winter Ales in January one of the fastest selling ales was a very special IPA (It's Phil's Ale). The festival was dedicated to Phil Roberts their late chairman who sadly passed away in 2012, and the beer was brewed at Exe Valley Brewery using Phil's own recipe. A large contingent of Exeter CAMRA club members went along to the brewery to help make the beer.

Phil was a home brewer, a lover of hops and Phil's Ale contained 5 different varieties. The strong golden ale made a great impression when it was revealed at the festival and there is now a rumour that another batch will be made and we may even see it at this year's GBBF.

26 brewers barrels were produced and the ale has been available in numerous Exeter pubs during late January and February. It has also made its way to South Devon where it has been on sale at Isaac Merritt Paignton, Queens Arms Brixham, Union Inn Newton Abbot and London Inn Torquay.



Some bottles were donated by Branscombe Brewery and 18 gallons of the ale was bottled. Phil's daughter designed the bottle labels and pump clip for the beer, which celebrated Phil's love of red shoes.



Trading Standards Office Devon 01392 382818
Torbay 01803 208080

Contact them if you are dissatisfied with service
or quantities and are unable to resolve this with the service
provider.

Micropubs

A name mentioned in a pub which sounded just like my sort of place.

But what is it? I had not heard of it before so I did a bit of research and found there had been some CAMRA discussion in early 2012 but it had not filtered through to me. I know of normal pubs. These are the ones I normally frequent, big chain pubs which are too noisy, too busy, fast food and cheaper beer that is not always that good. And small pubs which are usually sporty and not very quiet either. So what is a Micropub? I bet you all know, but I did not, and neither do most of the people I have asked.

Now just as I start to write this, the CAMRA Beer magazine drops through my door and it has an article about Micropubs but still does not tell me what they are.

My research shows they are likely to be:-

Licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises

Obviously small and probably very small, only room for 20 or so people

No bar but beer served from the back room.

No amusement machines juke box or TV.

No keg beer or lager

No spirits

No food

A lot of no's you will notice but it does have:-

Real ale, cider and wine

Seats, comfortable and plain

Conversation and chat

Maybe cards and dominoes

It has short opening hours just lunchtime and early evening.

It is often tucked away at the back of somewhere so not too many people can find it.

There is now a Micropub Association!

My research showed that the first mention said there were only six in the country but the latest news says there are fourteen, so they are growing. They seem to be mainly in Kent (9), and the north of England, and at least six are listed in the 2013 Good Beer Guide. Beer magazine says there is one in Tiverton.

It seems the only thing to do now is find one. So I feel a visit to Tiverton or Kent is needed.

Roger Adams.

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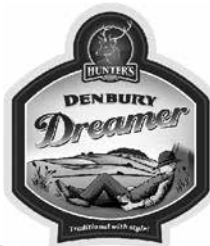


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The Beertalkers

A monthly podcast - called **The Beertalkers** - is being launched by Devon beer writer and CAMRA member Sophie Atherton with fellow writer Sam Hill. The programmes will have a different theme each month and will feature interviews, or guests, and 'on air' beer tastings relating to that month's theme.

The pilot edition of the show poses the question, "Is beer posh?" and includes an interview with St Austell Head Brewer Roger Ryman and tastings of two potentially posh brews.

Hungerlust blogger Sam, a former quality control technician for Hall & Woodhouse, and journalist and beer sommelier Sophie are aiming the podcast at current and future beer-lovers and hope it will especially appeal to those who want to hear about their favourite drink while they're on the move. They are currently working on the second edition of the show, the theme of which is The Great ABV Debate.

The podcast can be heard or downloaded at www.thebeertalkers.com and listeners can share their views on what's being discussed in each programme on Twitter by following/tweeting @thebeertalkers.

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Bristol BeerO.G.

Okay, so there's no such thing as a BeerO.G., but it was such a good day, it deserves its own designation. Twelve good men, women, and true from S. Devon CAMRA journeyed by train to Bristol on 2nd February to pass judgement on the many and varied ales that city has to offer. We started the day with a beer afloat - on the Grain Barge, owned by Bristol Beer Factory and moored alongside the wharf at Hotwells. This converted boat literally puts the *bar* into barge, and has banquette seating along with tables for diners, as well as seating on the partial roof for finer weather. The compact bar offered Beer Factory Sunrise, Acer, and #7; as well as the 5.5% Saison Obscura from Pontypridd brewery. A short walk then took us to the tiny Bag O'Nails, serving beers from Prescott, Stocklinch, and Bristol's Ashley Down, along with Exmoor 'Fox'.

The Three Tuns, owned by the city's Arbor Ales, dispensed their Triple Hop #2; Crafty Dave vs CAMRA; Hunny Beer; and London Porter - with Stella Burst from Alchemy as a guest. From an Arbor pub to a Butcombe one - The Colston Yard, that brewery's renovation of the old Smiles Brewery and Tap site. Their Bitter, Rare Breed, and Old Vic were accompanied by Taylor's Landlord. Next up was The Seven Stars, a recent local Pub of the Year dispensing 8 ales of various styles, and featuring live Acoustic music. Mindful of the time of our return train, we were still able to visit The Cornubia, again with a great variety of beers and styles - no less than 10 beers here - with the added bonus of England's 6 Nations rugby encounter with Scotland on large-screen T.V.

Peter O'Nions



DEVON'S BEER^{OF} CHOICE

SIBA award winning brewery



BAYS BEST
Alc 3.7% Vol

A Devon best bitter, amber in colour and a multi award winner. Bays Best is a well balanced, clean and crisp beer with a dry and hoppy finish.



DEVON DUMPLING
Alc 5.1% Vol

A strong golden beer with a fresh hop character. This ale has a smooth taste with a balanced sweetness throughout. Devonshire through and through!



BAYS GOLD
Alc 4.3% Vol

An easy drinking, light golden ale and Bays biggest seller. It's unique blend of hops create lemon citrus overtones which tantalise and refresh the palette.



TOPSAIL
Alc 4% Vol

Launched in June 2010, Topsail is a well balanced beer, deep amber in colour with a subtle sweetness throughout.

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Well kept Ales, 8 en-suite rooms
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Folk Nights every 3rd Thursday of the
month.



London 2012

It is November again and is time for my winter London pub crawl. The usual starting place is Greenwich and the O2 arena. This year I decided to add some pubs in the new CAMRA book Great British Pubs as well as the Good Beer Guide and National Inventory of Pub Interiors book.

We started at the Old Brewery (GBP) a Meantime Brewery pub. Their own beers were in keg form but they did have on Dark Star and Adnams as real ales. However I went for Meantime's London Porter, truly magnificent but gassy. The food was very nice too but it was all a bit expensive for someone from Devon.

Next we tubed to the Borough Market area where I knew there were some great places. First the George (GBP and NI), a very famous pub set in a courtyard off the high street, It has a very interesting galleried front and an excellent Parliament Bar, dark old black wood panels and furniture, some of the other bars had fewer, if any, old features but all worth viewing. It was busy, even more so when it rained and drove people inside. The beers were from the Greene King range so not very interesting but I forced down a pint of London Glory which was in fine condition.

Not far away was the Lord Clyde (NI). It has great windows and a superb tiled front showing the eagle emblem and names of the long past brewers, Truman Hanbury and Buxton. Inside, the furniture is very smart in red leather and there are some nice old touches but a bit less ornate than some London pubs. The gent's toilets had smart white and red striped tiles red painted pipes and highly polished copper water pipes. The beers were Hogsback Tea, Adnams Southwold bitter and the inevitable Doom Bar, all in good form.

So on to the Royal Oak the only pub in London owned by Harveys (GBG & GBP). A very helpful and charming barmaid guided us through the beer range - all Harvey's of course but I had to go for the Mild. The Sussex Best Bitter was also very good. The bar serving area divided the two bars and the toilets were on the other side but unusually you were allowed to actually walk through the serving area to get to the gents after asking the barmaid for permission.

Next on to find another NI pub the Wheatsheaf but it was closed and had been for a little while. There were posters outside which seemed to say that it may reopen in due course. I do hope so it looked as if it should be good.

LONDON 2012 continued We had to move on because just around the corner was the Market Porter (GBG). It was just the sort of pub I would expect at a busy market, dark and crowded, nowhere to sit but lots of interesting beers. Too many to list, but I had Black Dub from Wensleydale brewery.

Time flies and so did we, on to pub number six at the other market entrance, The Rake (GBP & GBG). This was very different from the others, quite small, very crowded, and more modern. I don't think it had always been a pub. There was a courtyard area under a tent giving more room and comfortable outdoor seats. The beers were unusual, most of them I had never heard of, hoppy American style beers. The one I chose was excellent but I cannot remember its name.

Too soon we had to move on to meet the rest of the crowd back at the Pilot in Greenwich (the Fullers pub that started last year's hunt for Black Cab Stout). They have not brewed it for draught this year so I had to resort to a bottle - it wasn't too bad but I do prefer less gassy draught beers. Finally food and a pint of London Pride, a good London beer in a good London pub a fitting way to end a Good Pub Day.

Roger Adams

Midweek Marauders - Topsham and Beyond

Why are things seldom straightforward? When getting from Paignton to Torquay by bus takes twice as long as the c.15 minutes it should thanks to road works and an accident blocking the road, meaning the express bus service to Exeter would be missed; only for the 'Plan B' train from Torquay to be cancelled and its later alternative running about 16 minutes late- all this makes for a somewhat stressful start to the day. Especially when your destination, The Bridge Inn at Topsham, is only open from 12 to 2 at lunchtime, and you have arranged to meet the third member of the party at Exeter at a certain time. As it turned out, we emerged from the train at Exeter Central a tad late, expecting to see the Grumpy Old Man waiting for us, only to see him emerge from the other carriage of our train. Whilst at Torquay station we had been informed of the first train's cancellation, it emerged that word of this had not reached Grumpy, at Teignmouth station- surely cause for his 'Grump Factor' to rise a notch or two.

Anyway, we finally arrived at the Bridge Inn, and had to choose from the 8 or 10 beers on offer- all on gravity dispense. Beer Heaven! We opted for Branscombe's light Branoc; Exeter's Fall's Over; and Moor Revival and repaired to the less busy of the two little rooms, along with a very large bag of excellent cheddar crisps from a local producer. Subsequently, over delicious Smoked Chicken and Stilton sandwiches, we enjoyed Branscombe's Summa That - a pale, easy-drinking beer that belies its 5% strength.

By now it was appreciably past 2 o'clock, so it was back out into the rain and a decision on where to go next. I suggested back into Exeter (in the general direction of home) but was outvoted by the other two, who decided they wanted to go to Exmouth (in the opposite direction) despite not knowing where they wanted to go when we got there, apart from a pub one of us had visited 'years ago'. Thus it was we pitched up at The First and Last, supposedly one of Exmouth's finest. We eschewed the Directors and Otter Ale and opted for Teignworthy's 'Neap Tide' and were struck by just how cold it was. Soon enough, Grumpy declared he had to leave to catch a train and so the two of us headed for the bus stop. The day's delays were not over, though, as flooding on the road back to Exeter held us up, and then flooding on the railway meant an hour's wait at St. David's station for a train back to Paignton.

Peter O'Nions



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SOUTH BRENT

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QUALITY FOOD

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SOUTH DEVON CAMRA

PUB OF THE YEAR

2009 and 2007

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Give to Mike Fitzmaurice, or send to him via www.beerscoring.org.uk/

St Austell Cask Ale Pub of the Year



Photo shows Marion and Steve Ricketts with Roger Ryman (left) and Keith Gathercole from St Austell.

The Buccaneer Inn, in Babbacombe, Torquay, has won the St Austell Brewery cask ale pub of the year. Steve Ricketts and his wife Marion have only been in the pub industry for 16 months and are delighted to have received this accolade.

It is believed this is only the second time this award has been given outside Cornwall, so to have the award go to a Devon pub is extra special.

What's On

Branch Meetings and Social Events

Date	Time	Purpose	Location
12 March 2013	20:00	Branch Meeting	The Lord Nelson Inn, Kingskerswell
9 April 2013	20:00	Branch Meeting	The Inn on the Green, Paignton
24 April 2013	TBA	Brewery Trip to Dartmoor Brewery.	Details TBA
24 May 2013	20:00	Branch Meeting	Staverton Station, Staverton

Beer Festivals

15-16 March– Charity Annual Beer Festival, Hookhills Community Centre Paignton, Admission £5.00 (Includes Commemorative Glass plus 3 drinks) Real Ales £2.00 per pint , plus Wine, Cider & a variety of Soft Drinks.

16 March Yeofest – Yeoford Village Hall – 12 ales

29 March to 1 April -Bay Horse Inn Easter Beer and Cider Festival, Totnes Up to 20 ales and 8 ciders (capacity will be weather dependent!). 12 to 12 every day, live entertainment Friday/Saturday/ Sunday/Monday evenings.

29 - 31 March - Queen's Arms – Tribute to St Austell. 4 St Austell ales, Proper Job, Proper Black, Trelawny, and the rare 1913 Stout . Also a limited edition Hunters brew.

18-20 April – Tuckers Maltings SIBA Beer Festival, Newton Abbot.

10-12 May – Albert Inn Birthday Festival. Pub & landlord celebrating a birthday with 8 ales chosen by the birthday boy.

20-23 June – Summermoon Festival, Kingskerswell Parish Meadow, Kingskerswell.

12-13 July – Plymouth CAMRA Beer Festival, Plymouth Pavillions.

20 July – Ipple Tipple Beer Festival, Playing Field, Ipplepen

23-26 August – S. Devon Diesel Society Real Ale Festival, Staverton Station, Staverton.

7-8 September – Somerset CAMRA Beer Festival, Minehead Station, Minehead

20-22 September – Abbfest 10th Anniversary Festival, Fermoy's Garden Centre, Ipplepen

6-8 December - Brixham, Queens Arms 2nd Birthday weekend and 1st Queens Arms Winter Festival. 20 plus ales and live entertainment.

Letters to the Editor



As a CAMRA member originally from Leeds, I enjoyed reading about Roger Adam's Trip on a Train, and would like to share some thoughts on the article.

Before I moved to Devon, my local pub was Tetley Brewery's oldest surviving public house. The Fleece, Farsley, Leeds, was bought by them in 1890, the same year as they bought their first pub, the Duke William. The latter was, from 1953 when it ceased being a pub, until demolished in an act of cultural vandalism by Carlsberg in 2002, within the brewery

site, and used as a museum. This was the on-site brewery tap!

The Adelphi did not become part of Tetley's until 1962, via the Melbourne Brewery, and was not the brewery tap before that.

May I suggest that anyone visiting Leeds visits the Garden Gate pub, Whitfield Way, Hunslet, which is on the CAMRA National Inventory, a Grade 2* listed building, and which came under the Tetley's mantle in the early 1960s. It is a masterpiece of Victorian building, both inside and out! It now belongs to the Leeds Brewery.

I hope this may be of interest to Roger and any other of your members who venture north.

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Grumpy Old Man - What's in a Name?

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. 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 unsubtle 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.

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Grumpy . . . continued

There is also the possibility that there are some beer names that could be interpreted as offensive or at least embarrassing. Last year a female Labour MP objected to the name Top Totty being sold in the House of Commons Bar. I could not agree more as the name is both silly and unnecessary and hardly likely to attract women into bars whilst this male dominated boorish nonsense continues. It gets worse. What are we to make of the Dog's Bollocks with its incredibly graphic pump clip depicting a particularly hirsute pair of canine gonads staring you in the face? Just what would a female drinker make of this! There are many other examples which are very near to the knuckle including the now defunct Old Tosser and Old Fart. We can do better than this, but at least, something has moved on.

Cider branding and imagery also has its problems. All too often there is an emphasis on strength and its highly undesirable medical and social consequences. Should we really encourage names like Double or Triple Vision and especially as cider advertising is heavily directed at the younger market. The name Suicider is a clever name, but the more you think about the worse it becomes. Do we really need to encourage people to drink a pint of No Brainer with all the implications of being out of your skull. I have complained before about those who approach at a cider bar and ask for the strongest, but how can I complain when some makers encourage that attitude with the names of their ciders? Cider names can often be somewhat esoteric such as Once upon a Tree which might appeal to those attracted by the quasi philosophical nature of the title, but otherwise the origin remains a mystery. There is also an Old Bike which surely suffers from the classic English disease of the double entendre. I know what a bike is and what old means, but surely there is also a sexual connotation or is that the Grumpy Old Man's imagination?

Bob Southwell AKA The Grumpy Old Man

Icelandic Beers

I recently had an article in this magazine on the excellent Icelandic Lager from the Vifilfell Brewery, my son-in-law brought back from Iceland. Some of you asked me where they could buy it. Try looking in the specialist Beer Shops that are in our South Devon area, if they don't have it in stock they can always order it for you. The latest Icelandic Beer to hit my taste buds is the cheerfully named "BLACK DEATH", a stout from the Sigurdsson Brewery. This is a superb, well-balanced creamy headed beer. The chemical-free soft water they use has really helped bring out a fresh, crisp burnt chocolate taste with a delightful lingering taste of fruit. It is a 5.8% beer and comes in 33cl bottles and is decidedly a beer to save for yourself.

Anthony Woodwark

Ed -Teign Cellars, the beer shop in Newton Abbot has a selection of Icelandic beers. The last time I was in there Sophie Atherton, the beer sommelier, was buying Einstok Icelandic beers which are brewed in Akureyri, 60 miles south of the Arctic Circle and also the home of Vifilfell Brewery.

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