

NEWS AND BREWS

***WINTER
2011***

FREE

Free Magazine of

The South Devon Branch of

THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



*The Cider Bar Newton Abbot
CAMRA National Cider Pub of the Year*



**South Devon
CAMRA**

*Supporting Real Ale
in the South West*



Welcome to

NEWS AND BREWS

36th EDITION

WINTER 2011

In the last edition of the News and Brews I reported how the Cider Bar had been judged as the South West Cider Pub of the year and was now going forward to the national stage of the competition. I am delighted, but not surprised, that it then went on to be national champion, defeating the other 3 national finalists, who were; Royal Oak, Wantage, Oxfordshire, Penrhyn Arms, Penrhynside, Llandudno, Conway, Lifeboat, Margate, Kent.

Sarah Newson, CAMRA Cider and Perry Vice Chairman and one of the final judges said " I felt that the bar showcased some of the best cider and perry that Devon had to offer, which was served by friendly and knowledgeable staff that went out of their way to find a cider that the customer was happy with. All this, combined with the wonderful, very rare example of a traditional cider house setting which harks back to a bygone era, but which is welcoming to all ages and both locals and visitors alike, made this a truly deserving winner."

As far as I am concerned this says it all. The presentation took place on the 30th of September and Richard Knibbs (the licensee) was keen to stress the part played by the hard work, enthusiasm and knowledge of the staff. Indeed, he was insistent that all the staff should be there in the presentational photograph.

The only mystery to me is why the Cider Bar had not won before!

Well done everybody.

Bob Southwell (Branch Chairman)

COVER—Richard Knibbs and his staff celebrate their award.



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Colin and Heather welcome you to the Ship Inn. Our traditional Village Pub & Restaurant offers a selection of real ales, good food, together with a wide choice of popular drinks and first-class wines.

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Pub News

Beer in the Waterside at Goodrington is reported as superb in this classic Courage, Barclay and Simonds pub.

The Nelson Arms in Kingskerswell re-opened on 14 October – the ale is described as very good.

The Parkers Arms in Collaton St Mary is closed for refurbishment.

One well-travelled member has found the beer worth trying in the following pubs – The Haywain in Chelston, The Kents' The Buccaneer, Chelston Manor, all in Torquay; The Old Manor Inn, Preston, The Drum at Cockington.

Due to less demand in the winter, The Wild Goose at Coombeinteignhead has reduced its ale range to five. This has ensured a more consistent quality.

The Torbay Inn in Fisher Street, Paignton is selling Butcombe Bitter and St Austell Tribute and is worth a visit.

The Palk Arms at Hennock has recently been taken over by a family concern. When one of our group called in, the Dartmoor Legend was excellent and St Austell's Dartmoor Ale was good.

The Union Inn at Moretonhampstead serves very good Red Rock ales.

The White Hart in Chudleigh is worth a visit.

Recent visits to The Vigilance in Brixham (Wetherspoons) have proved popular with several of our members, and ales are consistently good.

The Clay Cutters Arms at Chudleigh Knighton has reopened and is serving St Austell beers. Rumour has it that it has been taken over by the man who ran Chudleigh's Highwayman's Haunt.

Brewery News

Hunter's Brewery recently won the gold award for its Black Jack stout at Falmouth CAMRA beer festival, coming top in the Porters, Stouts and Dark Ales section. The Brewery has recently entered a competition with Sainsbury's supermarket and its Christmas ale, named Dasher's Dinkle, will soon be in your local pubs.

Gidley's Brewery – Its Dartmoor Ostler at 3.8% is going ahead and it is likely that beers around 5% would also be brewed.

Dartmoor – The brewery has recently put in a huge new fermenter and will be upping production due to customer demand.

Quercus Brewery has been sold recently, but the brewer, Pete Walker, will brew for the new owners until they get their own brewer organised. Pete's main interest remains the King's Arms in Kingsbridge.

Cider Report

The Cider Bar in Newton Abbot has won the National Cider Pub of the Year.

The Open Arms in Chillington serves a real cider and will go on the national list. The Blue Anchor in Chudleigh Knighton also serves real cider.



The Tradesman's Arms
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 01364 631206

A real ale pub, this very friendly local serves great food and fantastic Sunday lunches. Make this pub your stop as you walk or ride the Moor.

(www.beerinevening.com)

Good Beer Guide Listed

4 Real Ales. Local ciders.

Thursday Quiz night

Accommodation Available,

Dogs and Well-Behaved Children Welcome.

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

www.manorinngalmpton.co.uk

Good Beer Guide Listed.

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.manorinngalmpton.co.uk

The 29th South Devon Beer Festival

The good news is that we now have a venue for 2012 and we will be returning to Newton Abbot Racecourse after a two year absence. We have gone slightly earlier than usual to the weekend of the **17th/ 18th August** as options in September were not possible given racing commitments. This is the weekend before the Bank Holiday and very much the height of the season and should be good for attendance and also gives us a clear gap between Abbfest in late September. However, some of us are also likely to be away on holiday and so this constitutes an early plea to reserve these dates as we will need all the help we can get and especially in the evenings. I would also welcome any suggestions anybody might have with regard to any aspects of the event.

As many of you will know, we were unsuccessful in obtaining a venue for the Beer Festival in 2011 after much searching and disappointment. This year we have booked up early to give everybody plenty of notice. Please help us to make 2012 another success either by turning up and working or by being the other side of the counter and consuming the beer and cider. Bob Southwell

The Dartmoor Lodge

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Good Beer Guide Listed
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The Grumpy Old Man on Cider and Cider Drinkers.

As a regular drinker of real cider I do resent the image some people have attached to this activity. Too often we are seen as turnip chewing weirdoes fresh from the deepest recesses of Dartmoor on day release on Wednesdays to attend Newton Abbot Market suitably accompanied by a responsible adult. There is some elitism going on here somewhere. It is all very well to describe a beer as characterised by subtle flavours of ginger, cigar boxes with a hint of vindaloo powder, but the world of cider is considerably less pretentious. Nobody would dare try to describe Sam's Dry (my favourite tippie) as having a gentle floral bouquet dominated by gentle citrus notes with hints of walnut, hedgerows and freshly mown grass. A different elitism does exist within the cider world. At one level, it is to look down, with disdain, on the poor misguided souls that see the ersatz Magners and Strongbows as ciders at all. There is also the view that if you can handle really dry cider then you are somehow further up the evolutionary chain of mankind and more knowledgeable than the medium, let alone sweet, drinker. At least we are generally spared the existence of cider 'tickers', although I have come across one such person. However, a couple of years ago at a beer festival I noticed a continuous stream of well-known beer 'tickers' asking for this particular cider. It transpired that the maker had the word brewery in the title, despite the fact that it produced no beer, and what was required was a 'brewery tick'. Has the world gone totally mad?

If you ever worked on a cider bar you are likely to hear the following. A pint of cider please, *mate*. Whether you like it or not (and I don't) *mate* has become the ubiquitous address, but we have now sunk to the depths of *bruv*, *chief* or *boss* all of which seem to pass as acceptable to some elements of modern youth. For heaven's sake what next, I ask myself, *generalissimo* or *fuhrer*. (Actually I quite like the former) You are also likely to be asked some most incredibly daft questions imaginable from some equally daft individuals. Sometimes in answering I play it straight, but there is always the temptation to be sarcastic or very much worse.

1) *What is cider?* Surprisingly this is not at all uncommon but where have they been? Too much time lighting fires with the Boy Scouts maybe or over-involvement with the church choir.

2) *Have you got any cider that tastes like apples?* This is probably one of the most oxymoronic statements imaginable. No not really, most of it is made from passion fruit or melons.

Oh, that sounds nice I will have one.

3) *Have you got any cider that you can't see through, with lumps in?* Fortunately not as in this day and age you are not required to use your teeth as a sieve, but if you want I am sure I can find some lumps of something. Thank you.

Continued overleaf... ..

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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Grumpy.....cont

- 4) *Can you put some gas in this cider?* Yes, fortunately I just happen to have this handy CO2 cylinder strapped to my back which we can plug into your cider.
- 5) *Is the cider strong?* Yes and generally 6%+ .
That's too strong can I have a half at 3%?
Why not have a third at 2%?
Oh yes that's a good idea.



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6) *What have you got that tastes like Magners or Strongbow?*

At this point the cider aficionado will be going through the process of internal combustion and the reply will depend upon your degree, or otherwise, of self-control. Of course, this is the chance to explain why Magners etc. is not real cider and to embark upon some education. Alternatively, you could just reply – absolutely nothing!

7) *What is Perry?* A remarkably common question and the obvious answer is that it is made from pears. When I told this to one person he replied that those must be the apples which were left after making the cider. No, it is made from pears.

Oh, I see those are the apples that have the lowest alcohol. I then gave up and said yes.

8) *What is your strongest cider?* This one really winds me up. What I should say, and often do, is along the lines that we sell cider by taste rather than alcoholic strength and you are welcome to taste before you buy. Let us explore some possible reasoning behind this request. They could be good classical economists, or utilitarian thinkers, seeking to make a rational decision by evaluating inputs in terms of price against outputs in terms of alcoholic strength in forming a value for money index. No, I didn't believe it either. Alternatively, they are morons seeking the quickest way to get blitzed and inevitably this proves to be the case. Why are they so stupid? A colleague of mine tackles this problem by asking for proof of age on the basis that only a 14 year old would make such a request!

9) *What is your sweetest cider?* For some reason the British assume that cider is always sweet. As a general principle, I do not sell sweet cider and find that many mediums are sweet enough. What I usually do is to give them a taste of a medium-dry and they love it which says it all about the indoctrination of modern advertising. Amazingly, this request often comes from the most macho type of rugby player. I now take my life in my hands, look him up and down, and point out that this is a very 'girly' request and enquire whether he would require a cherry with that. Inevitably, with deepening voice, he asks what I might recommend as being manlier! So far, I have always got away with it without requiring the services of the local A&E.

There's none so queer as cider folk ... or does that also apply to me!

Bob Southwell

Aka the Grumpy Old Man

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News from Award Winning Brewery

Teignworthy Brewery is still running at full capacity following their winning a silver medal at this year's GBBF for their Reel Ale, and on the 22nd October they went up to Burton-on-Trent to collect their GBBF award.

They have just expanded their already impressive bottle conditioned ale range by adding Russet Port Ale (abv 6.5%). It's a warm, rich, brown ale with some port added at the end to give it a nice glow!

During a recent visit in mid-October they were busy brewing their dark, sweet Pumpkin Ale (abv 5.2%) for Halloween.

For the time being they've decided to drop Harvey's Special Brew (abv 4.6%) from their seasonal ales/bottle conditioned beer range. Although it's a lovely golden ale, sales have slowed in recent times. However, it may well make a reappearance in the future.

Ant Veal

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Thanks to all our contributors , Peter O'Nions, Bob Southwell,
Richard Wilson, Tony Woodwark, Colin Staines, David Lockley, Ant Veal

Last date for submission for the SPRING magazine – 15 Feb 2012

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Branch Meeting at Pig's Nose



S. Devon CAMRA usually meets on the second Tuesday evening of each month (see 'What's On' in this newsletter - all are welcome) but we occasionally have a meeting on a Saturday lunchtime instead. Such was the case this October when the venue was our current Pub of the Year, The Pig's Nose at East Prawle. So it was that a group of us set off in a minibus for the South Hams.

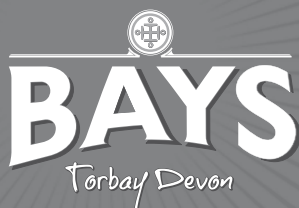
Having traversed Kingsbridge (it wasn't yet opening time) we headed for The Tradesman's Arms, tucked off the main road at Stokenham. This village pub is now fairly food-based, but we were greeted with a choice of Otter Bitter and Ale; and Tribute and Dartmoor Best from St. Austell. All were deemed to be very acceptable.

Thus it was on to East Prawle, and the minibus filled with the sounds from the Squeeze Box that one of our number had brought with her. On arrival at the remote pub, we were greeted with a sign at the door saying 'The Pig's Nose welcomes S. Devon CAMRA' and, on entering, we were told our first pints were on the house. As well as the usual S. Hams Devon Pride and Eddystone, Peter, the landlord, had laid on the current Champion Beer of Britain-Mighty Oak's Oscar Wilde Mild - to mark our visit. We also met up with four of our members who had stayed overnight in a nearby field in their camper vans, and who told of an equally warm welcome the previous evening. Glasses recharged, we moved into the pub's adjoining hall (which usually hosts live bands) for our meeting. We were met by the arrival of our previously-ordered lunches, which added to the informality of the occasion.

Meeting and lunch complete, we repaired into the bar for a while, until it was decided we should move on. Our final port of call was The Open Arms, at Chillington. Since acquiring the pub a while back, the South Hams Brewery has generally revamped it. Our arrival meant some impromptu late-afternoon musical entertainment for the 3 or 4 locals and the girl behind the bar. We sampled good S. Hams X.S.B., Eddystone, and Devon Pride - as well as a local cider made in the village for the past 10 years, but as yet unnamed -although we were told they would get round to a name 'Dreckly'. The stop here made a pleasant end to our day spent visiting just a few of the many good pubs in the S. Hams - a large part of our branch area, but one often under-visited by us.

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.

CALL US NOW TO PLACE YOUR ORDER - 01803 555004 - www.baysbrewery.co.uk

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month.



Roving Group ...out and about.

We have made two trips, both organized by Roger, this summer and autumn. In August we took the Tamar Valley line for a day out leaving from Newton Abbot and changing at Plymouth. This varied and scenic line follows the river Tamar through its valley, a place of outstanding natural beauty and crossing the splendid Calstock viaduct en route. The first station we stopped at was Bere Ferrers, where we walked down the hill to the Olde Plough Inn which was on the waterside, and in the garden over-looking the river we all enjoyed a pint of Cottage Brewery's dark creamy bitter, Britannia. Catching the train again we went to Bere Alston where we strolled to the Edgecumbe Hotel. We enjoyed several beers, Wye Valley HPA, Courage Best, Doom Bar with a decent pasty and chips. Our next stop was Calstock where we sat outside the Tamar Inn by the river and underneath the viaduct, watching the trains and enjoying Tenants' Cornish Arvor and Brains Best. Then it was back to Plymouth and home; all in all a very satisfying day out.

The October trip was by car, with Peter driving to Honiton, where we stopped at the Otter Brewery Tap, The Holt, which had the full range of Otter Beers, expertly pulled by a young bar maid and all in tip top condition. Next we were off to Kilminster, firstly to the New Inn, a Palmers Pub, which had three of their beers on, Copper Ale, Dorset Gold and Best Bitter. We sampled them all and they were of excellent quality. Next stop was the Old Inn, Kilminster just down the road, where we ate and I had a very good pint of Branoc. All three of these pubs are in the latest copy of the CAMRA Good Beer Guide. Peter then took us out to Luppitt which is near Dunkerswell. The Luppitt Inn is a CAMRA *National Inventory Pub* which has been in the same family for over 100 years. An unspoiled farmhouse pub of the type that was common years ago but now virtually extinct, it is still part of a working farm run by other members of the family. When we eventually found it, the landlady, Mrs Wright, gave us a warm welcome as we sat in her front room and had Otter Best Bitter and she told us about the pub. This small village local is one of the few remaining of its type in the country and really should be visited.

Tony Woodwark



Dartmoor Brewery
Station Road
Princetown
Dartmoor
PL20 6QX

Tel: 01822 890789

Fax: 01822 890798

Email: ale@dartmoorbrewery.co.uk

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

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Visit our award-winning Web Site at www.southdevoncamra.com

What's On

Branch Meetings and Social Events

Date	Time	Purpose	Location
6 Dec 2011	19:30	Christmas Social (see below)	Richard Hopkins Newton Abbot
14 Dec 2011		Paignton Crawl	To be advised
10 Jan 2012	20:00	Branch Meeting	Blue Anchor Teignmouth
14 Feb 2011	20:00	Branch Meeting	Tucker's Bottle Shop, Newton Abbot

Beer Festivals

20-21 Jan 2012
(provisionally) Exeter & East Devon CAMRA Festival of Winter
Ales, St James Park, Exeter.

Members' Weekend/AGM Torquay 30 March to 1 April 2012
Riviera International Centre, Torquay

17-18 Aug 2012 29th South Devon Beer Festival Newton Abbot Racecourse Kingsteignton

Branch Christmas Social.

This year we have broken with tradition and gone for a buffet which should enable us to mix and socialise more. The date is Tuesday December the 6th and the venue the Richard Hopkins in Newton Abbot from about 19:30 onwards. Newton Abbot is obviously very central with late night trains and buses back towards Torbay and Teignmouth/Dawlish. The raised area on the right hand side has been reserved and we have been promised some interesting beers.

So long as you are a CAMRA member then all are welcome to attend and it would be excellent to see some new faces. Oh, and as another incentive the buffet will be free!

Many thanks must go to the management of the Richard Hopkins for putting on the event.



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PUB OF THE YEAR

2009 and 2007

Five (later six) go wild on Dartmoor

Five intrepid adventurers arrived at Exeter bus station having travelled by three different routes for the latest mid-week bus social. Bus 173 then headed via Cheriton Bishop, Tedburn St. Mary and Drewsteignton where we were very tempted to throw the schedules in to total disarray and pay a flier to the delightful Drewe Arms. Resisting that temptation and passing Castle Drogo we arrived at *The Sandy Park Inn*. The landlord reminded us that they had been in the first ever Good Beer Guide in 1974 and, on checking, found that it had been under-described as a “pleasant unassuming country pub at crossroads” selling Whitbread



(Tiverton) on gravity. Anybody remember those days? It was certainly very pleasant with a magnificent fireplace and nowadays selling three beers on hand pump. Unfortunately, only Otter was available but very good it was too at £2.70 a pint. A delivery was expected shortly and one of the turned round pumps was showing Branoc Draymans. Bus 178 from Okehampton then beckoned to take us into Chagford.

For a relatively small town it has four pubs although the *Crown* was closed (reasons unknown). Our starting point was the *Globe* with two contrasting bars. The excellent public bar had another magnificent fireplace and a globe in stained glass by the entrance. Three beers were on hand pump with Otter on gravity. There was an enterprising choice of Fraidnot from Exeter brewery, but it was a little cold and the beer was probably not the brewery's best product.

continued overleaf... ..

Hole in the Wall



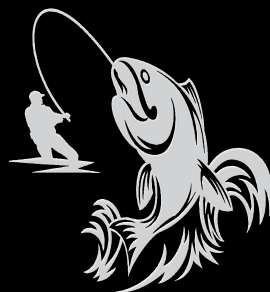
6 Park Lane. Torquay, TQ1 2AU

01803 200755

Tucked away in the centre of Torquay, only a few yards from the harbour is Torquay's oldest inn. For hundreds of years, smugglers, men of the sea, businessmen, locals and visitors alike have enjoyed drinking in this authentic establishment with its listed cobbled floors, beamed ceilings and warm atmosphere.

Bays, Otter, Butcombe, 6X, Doombar, Spitfire
and Guest Ales
Fine food, our chef having worked on the QE2

The Teign House Inn



Good Food, Good Beer, Good Wines, Good Fun!

Peter and Sue welcome you to The Teign House Inn.

We hope our friendly service, good real ales, wines and relaxed atmosphere will remind you of good times past, present and future!

The Teign House Inn, Teign Valley Road, Christow, Devon EX6 7PL

T: 01647 252 286 E: inquiries@teignhouseinn.co.uk



SOUTH
DEVON
PUB OF
THE YEAR
2010

The Wild Six!continued

The Courage Best was reported as being very good at £3.00 a pint. Incidentally, the saloon bar is more of a dining area and was very quiet by this time of the afternoon. Now on to the **Ring of Bells** which is a friendly one bar and relatively small pub selling Teignworthy Reel Ale and Princetown Dragon's Breath at £3.20 a pint. Strangely, some pints of the same beer came out cold whilst others were the right temperature. The landlady was aware of this problem, but at a loss to explain the phenomenon which was in all probability caused by the line going too close to the cooler for beer still in the pipes. Finally, to the relatively small bar in The Buller's Arms, named after a Boer War General sent home in disgrace. Dartmoor Legend was the beer and very good too at £3.00 a pint.

We then caught the next service to Moretonhamstead with the bus stopping outside the Union Inn. You enter via a corridor with the main bar off to the right hand side and a function room to the rear. Three of the hand pumps dispense re-badged Red Rock beers (Breakwater, Lighthouse and Capstan) and I tried the Pale (Lighthouse) at the incredible price of £2.20 a pint! The beer was a little cold, but not as cold as in previous pubs and is probably the least malty of the Red Rock range. We were then joined by a sixth member who gave some excuse about being confused by time zones or something. I have heard of Western Pacific time, but have never encountered the South Dartmoor equivalent! Some of the party now visited the Bell which was serving Otter in reasonable condition.

We now assembled for the return bus to Exeter with two of the party getting off at the Sawyer's Arms (Wetherspoons) to catch the last of the beer festival beers and thence to St. Thomas station for the trip home. Bob Southwell

A Campaign of Two Halves

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For Young Member and concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk or call **01727 867201**.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association

I enclose a cheque for _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Applications will be processed within 21 days

12/10

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& Beer Drinkers**

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Record Attendance at Abbfest

Drinkers flocked in their thousands to this year's Abbfest to sample a selection of over 150 real ales and ciders, all produced in Devon. Abbfest, which is based near the village of Abbotskerswell, Newton Abbot, promotes Devon food and drink and in the process raises money for local charities. This year's festival was opened by the Devon resident, former MP and star of Strictly Come Dancing, Ann Widdecombe, who, although confessing that she did not like beer, willingly demonstrated her skills behind the bar.

Ann also ably assisted local celebrity Michelin Star Chef, Michael Caines, in one of his cookery demonstrations.



Almost 14,000 pints of real ale were consumed from 24 Devon breweries, including Great British Beer Festival silver medal winners from the Country Life and Teignworthy breweries. The cider also proved to be rather popular as all 300 gallons were dispatched before the end of the festival.

Thanks to all our sponsors and supporters, this year's festival has raised about £30,000 for local charities and good causes.

David Lockley.

Ad Size	1 issue	2 issues	3 issues	Year
1/4 page	45	60	75	90
1/2 page	60	85	110	130
full page	80	120	160	200
back page				270

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Cornish Ale Trail

I travelled down to Penzance on 27th August for the Bank Holiday weekend arriving at 11:45 am. After a quick lunch at Shiens Cafe, opposite Wetherspoons, I met a fellow ale lover at the R.A.O.B. Club, and we went on to sample some of the delights of Penzance. My first pub was The First & Last, a true Cornish pub, and I would recommend any visitor to Penzance to pop in. We received a warm welcome, and as we had our CAMRA cards we got a discount on Ales. The landlord is very much involved with the local CAMRA branch, and gave me one of their branch magazines. The beers were Bays Gold, Skinner's Ginger Tosser and the guest ale was Bucket & Spade, an amber ale from Gray's in Stoke on Trent. I then walked about a mile up the road and came across the Pirate Inn, a 17C coaching inn, where you enter at the rear through the beer garden. This is very much a family oriented pub with a play area for children, and children's menus are also available. On offer here were, Doombar, Betty Stogs, and Broadside. Outside there I waited for the no. 5 first bus to Mousehole where I arrived a few minutes later. It took me to the Ship Inn, a real fisherman's pub with good sea food, to sample Tribute, Trelawney, Proper Job, and HSD. On my return to Penzance I called at The Crown Inn. The beers were Doombar, Heligan Honey, and Otter Ale.

The following day I went to Newquay and visited the zoo, then went on to Wetherspoons. They had eight hand pumps for six ales and two ciders, not all of which I sampled. I then caught a train to Redruth, and found a delightful pub called The Miners Arms. The beers were Skinners beers, Ginger Tosser and their golden Porthleven. From there to The Oxford Inn, where the Doombar was rather cold. On the final day of my break, the Bank Holiday Monday, I called into the Wetherspoons in Penzance, but was not impressed with their pint of Titanic. To round off my short holiday I went for a strenuous walk up St Michael's Mount, and then had to catch the train home again.

Richard Wilson

Hunt's Cider Visit

For centuries Paignton was famous for its cider orchards; alas these are now nearly all gone to post-war housing developments along the ring road, resulting in much of the keg and bottled cider being made from imported concentrate.

One survivor of this clearance is the cider maker Richard Hunt of Yalberton, who is still making quality cider in the traditional manner in his 100-year-old custom-built works. We had a minibus trip to see the apples being pressed on his old water hydraulic press. It was fascinating, watching chopped local apples being crushed, pressed and the juice extracted, accompanied by the super apple smell. While this was happening Richard gave us information on the works, his farm, how his splendid 82-year-old Grandmother sold at least 50% of the output from her farmhouse - 7,000 gallons a year in jugs and bottles. His extensive plantings of standard trees include an old variety called Paignton Marigold that he is adding to expand his orchards. Standard cider apple trees, which give the best flavour take 20/30 years to mature, so there is obviously a long-term commitment to keeping Paignton's cider making heritage alive.

As a horticulturist, I was surprised to discover a very rare fungi (Torola Compniacenes) covering the barn walls with its unique dark brown growth. When cider, cognac or whisky is matured in traditional oak barrels the alcohol evaporates slightly, (known as The Angels Share). This fills the air enabling Torola, which uniquely feeds only on alcohol, to grow all over the walls. Being slow growing it takes a long time to cover and although I have seen it in Cognac I really didn't expect to find it in Paignton; obviously because Hunts have been cider making in the same barn for such a long time it has taken hold. Spectacular it isn't, but for anyone interested in horticulture, brewing, or cider-making it is rare and remarkable. It goes to show that living only on alcohol is possible.

To complete our visit we had a hot pasty and several pints of the excellent Hunts Cider, both draught and bottled, in amongst the cider-filled oak barrels to round off a truly memorable evening.

Anthony Woodwark.

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