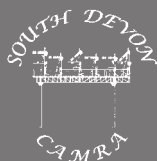


59TH EDITION

AUTUMN 2017



New to the Good Beer Guide 2018: The Totnes Brewing Co



South Devon CAMRA

Supporting Real Ale in the South West



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WELCOME

59TH EDITION AUTUMN 2017



Hello,

I've taken over from Tina Hemmings as your editor of News & Brews after her fantastic run of 43 editions over the past 10 years. South Devon CAMRA branch recognised Tina's massive contribution to CAMRA and our South Devon branch when she was presented with gifts including her favourite tipple (see below).

News & Brews is now full colour and we're aiming to cover more informative and entertaining local news and stories about the 350 pubs and clubs in our branch area.

In this edition:

- **New pubs in the Good Beer Guide for 2018** (pages 16 and 17)
- **Winners at the Great British Beer Festival 2017** (page 13)
- **News about your local pubs and breweries** (pages 6 and 7)
- **Grumpy's latest article** (pages 26 and 27)



Tina receives recognition for her fantastic contribution to CAMRA and South Devon CAMRA branch over the years

And we've been out and about visiting our pubs and breweries. Why not join us for one of these popular outings? See the diary page 5 for upcoming events.

We hope you like your new News & Brews magazine.

Cheers,
Andrew Thomson
Editor



Please enter your monthly What Pub scores
by the **6th** of the following month
for them to be included on that month's database.

NEWS FROM CAMRA

Majority of Brits think beer duty is too high

CAMRA is urging the Government to turn back the clock and freeze beer duty once again, as new research confirms that most of us think beer duty is too high.

Research carried out by YouGov has found that 55% of people who expressed an opinion believe beer duty is too high at 54p per pint. Taxes now make up a third of the cost of a pint - a situation made worse in the Spring Budget when the Government announced the first rise in beer duty in four years.

The Spring Budget U-turn undid many of the benefits of the three beer duty cuts and risks a return to the days of the much-hated Beer Duty Escalator which other research showed has contributed to 75,000 job losses, 3,700 pub closures and a 24% fall in beer sales in pubs.

Colin Valentine, CAMRA's National Chairman says: "Pubs are a huge part of many people's lives. If people can't afford to visit their local, we will see even more pubs close their doors forever - hurting jobs, the local economy and the community. We urgently need to ease the tax burden on our pubs in order to ensure that pub-going remains an affordable activity for the majority of Brits."

CAMRA calls for new business rate relief for pubs

The Campaign for Real Ale is calling on the Government to stop viable community pubs from being driven out of business by introducing a £5,000 annual reduction on their rocketing business rates.

Reviews of business rates across England are seeing many pubs hit with a massive new financial burden, which in some cases could only be covered by them selling tens of thousands of extra pints of beer every year.

The campaign follows new research conducted by YouGov on behalf of CAMRA which found that the public overwhelmingly supports an urgent tax break for pubs. More than two-thirds (69%) of people who expressed an opinion agree with the argument that pubs should receive tax relief as they provide safe, managed places for people to get together and drink responsibly.

While the Government introduced a one-off £1,000 discount scheme for some pubs in the latest Budget, CAMRA says this action does not go far enough to help keep many afloat.

Colin Valentine, CAMRA's National Chairman says: "Taxes now make up more than a third of the cost of a pub pint. Despite the fact that pubs currently account for 0.5% of turnover of the UK economy, they are still paying 2.8% of the business rates. This is frankly unsustainable, and it is the consumer that will ultimately pay the price - whether it's when their beloved local closes down or when the price of their pint goes up.

CAMRA is also calling on the Chancellor to freeze beer duty for the rest of the Parliament to help cap the price of beer, keeping more money in consumers' pockets and helping the pubs and brewing sector to grow.

WHAT'S ON

Branch Meetings and Social Events

Date	Time	Purpose	Location
20 Sept	10:30 - Bus 120 from Paignton to Kingswear	Midweek social	Starting at The Ship, Kingswear
23 Sept	Midday	Social	Abbfest
26 Sept	20:00	Social	The Ship, Kingswear
7 Oct	Midday	Regional meeting	Bideford Conservative Club
18 Oct	Midday	Midweek social	Starting at Shaldon Conservative Club
21 Oct	Midday	Social	Falmouth Beer Festival
22 Nov	Midday	Social	Starting at Minerva, Plymouth
9 Dec	Midday	Christmas Party	Totnes Brewing Co

Beer Festivals

Date	Event	Location
22 - 24 Sept	Abbfest	Fermoys Garden Centre, Newton Abbot TQ12 5TN
7 Oct	Yeo! Cider	Yeoford Community Hall EX17 5HY
19 - 21 Oct	Falmouth CAMRA Beer Festival	Princess Pavilion, Falmouth TR11 4AR
26 - 28 Oct	Swindon CAMRA Beer Festival	The Steam Museum, SN2 2EY
24 - 25 Nov	Bath CAMRA Winter Ales Beer Festival	Widcombe Social Club, BA2 6AA
8 - 10 Dec	The Queens Arms Charity Beer Festival	The Queens Arms, Brixham, TQ5 8BN

Please check individual events prior to attending.

PUB NEWS

In **Brixham**, **The Blue Anchor** gives CAMRA card carrying members £0.50 off the price of a pint. **The Queens Arms, Brixham** hosted a charity auction of art work in aid of the Golden Vanity Trust and £2,128 was raised over the course of the weekend which also involved bands and raffles.

In **Dartmouth**, **The Cherub** is offering £0.60 price reduction for a pint while **The Ship in Dock Inn** has 10% reduction for card carrying CAMRA members. On a recent visit our reporter enjoyed Tribute, Proper Job and Sharps Atlantic.

The Lord Nelson in **Kingskerswell** offers three changing beers. Recently, St Austell Tribute, Proper Job and Timothy Taylor Landlord were sampled with their excellent Sunday lunch.

The Tally Ho in **Littlehempston** ran their annual beer festival recently. 20 beers and ciders were offered alongside a delicious food menu and talented local musicians.

In **Malborough**, **The Old Inn** has re-opened with a full pub offer listing Sharps Doom Bar, Otter Ale, and Exmoor Gold. A comprehensive food menu features local produce. We wish new landlords Glyn and Shan Bann well.

The Clifford in **Shaldon** replaces the Clifford Arms. The continental style cafe/bar will serve three real ales all day. The new owners are well known in the village as they previously owned The Coffee Rush cafe across the road. We wish them well with their new venture.

Apologies were proffered at the **Crown and Sceptre** in **St Marychurch** at a recent branch meeting. A busy previous evening had exhausted supplies of one of the beers, so we had to enjoy the mere seven remaining! And, enjoy them we did, together with the tasty unexpected buffet.

New folks at **The Maltsters Arms** in **Tuckenhay**. Rob Dawson and his son Tom have taken charge. Our best wishes to them running this gem on the river.

A change of ownership for the **Ring 'O' Bells** in **West Alvington** with the Bells departing after six years. They hand over to Ryan and Hayley. We wish them the best for the future.

BREWERY NEWS

Happy 10th Birthday **Bays Brewery**!

In July 2007 Bays Brewery made their first delivery. They would like to thank everyone - their great team, their customers, their suppliers and of course to their drinkers.

They have been overwhelmed by your support over the last decade. Here's to the next 10.

Devon Rock Craft Lager has won Silver at the National SIBA Independent Beer Awards in the premium lager category. The SIBA Independent Beer Awards represent the very best beer from the UK's independent brewers and are judged by fellow brewers and industry experts making these awards the "Brewers' Choice" awards in the UK.

BREWERY NEWS.... CONTINUED

Devon Earth will be at Abbfest with a variation of Grounded IPA which was popular at Tuckers Maltings Beer Festival. Grounded IPA is dry hopped with hop cones in the cask providing ample time for volatile oils to permeate through the ale. The additional flavour and aroma justified the challenge of clearing the hops from the empty casks but an alternative approach is now being investigated.

The hop gardeners of the **New Lion Brewery** Hop Club in Totnes have been comparing notes of their potential harvests ready for hop-picking day, which is likely to be 9 September. The original 46 growers have been added to, and the first lot of hop plants are a year older, so a better crop is expected this year. With this the brewery will produce a green-hopped ale and all the growers will get a small share of the brew. The latest brew in the brewery's White Label series is an unfiltered pilsner, Kosmology, a crisp refreshing beer flavoured with Saaz hops.

Red Rock has installed a brand new bottling machine. Up until now all their beer has been hand bottled so this investment will reduce the bottling time significantly.

Riviera Brewing Company (RBC) is one of the smallest micro-breweries in the area and continues to build on its success reporting an increase in sales for 2017 compared to its first full year of trading in 2016. Ales are produced for local pubs, festivals and direct to the public. Beach blonde 4.1% is a seasonal ale and is currently available, it can also be sampled at Abbfest alongside RBC Devonian 4.1% Amber ale. The popular Porterhead 4.3% Ruby Ale will be brewed again this autumn available in bottle, small cask and limited trade outlets. RBC has also now produced branded pint glasses to sample your Riviera ales, these are available along with the ale direct from the Brewery.

After a quiet period from March onwards at **Summerskills**, trade finally seems to have picked up over the last few weeks. Their First Light was featured at GBBF, Dan went on the Trade Day to conduct quality control and several favourable reviews have been posted online. They are supplying JDW nationally with Guzzale, not brewed for a few years, and have launched bottled "Urban Brew" which is a blend of their Stout and Owens Fairtrade organic coffee. It is also vegan friendly as no isinglass finings are used.

Totnes Brewing Company has produced Pilgrim IPA (5% abv) using Pilgrim hops. The beer is being sold to support the Pilgrim of Brixham, one of the few remaining Brixham sailing trawlers, with 50p from each pint going to the Pilgrim Preservation Project. The brewer has also recently brewed Imperial versions of Tropango, named Pride, and Ink, named Avarice. Perhaps a theme is developing.

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MIDSUMMER MADNESS

For this ride around the county we all met in Exeter and caught our bus to the Sandy Park Inn at Chagford, which has recently reopened with new owners. The 17th century pub is delightful with its thatched roof and period interior and we all sat round a large table in a small snug supping Otter Bitter, Dartmoor IPA and Proper Job. All of the beers were in good order.

We then discussed the forthcoming general election, yes this was June, and decided to run a sweepstake on the size of the assumed Tory majority, with guesses in the range of 15 to 140 seats! How wrong can you be? Our next sweepstake was on the number of seats the SNP would lose and this time we were closer to reality. So well done Philip and the Dapper Drinker for your winning predictions. What excitement! A sad lot you may say but don't mock, when you get to our age you have to take your thrills from the most unlikely of sources. And now back to the business in hand.

A short bus ride took us into Chagford where we called in at The Globe where Otter Bitter, Devon Dumpling and Dartmoor IPA were on offer but many of us moved straight to the 5.2% Tavy Porter which was the star of the show and my beer of the day. A short walk brought us to the Ring of Bells and we were treated to Reel Ale, Jail, Dartmoor IPA and Otter Amber. No shortage of choice and all good quality beers.

At this point Philip, he who was to win the sweepstake, left us to attend to other business but the rest of our jolly bunch waited patiently for our bus that took us to The Union at Moretonhampstead where house named Red Rock beers and Tribute were offered and consumed.

It was then back to the bus, again, for the ride back into Exeter where a short walk from the bus station brought us to The Fat Pig, not too easy to find but well worth the effort. The pub has its own brewery, and was the first brewpub in Exeter. It serves three or four changing beers, all from the in house Fat Pig Brewery. Between us we tried all the beers on offer including Ting, Steam King and Phat Nancy, what a wonderful collection of beer names. The beers lived up to their billing and we were sorry that this was our last port of call but some of us had homes to go to so we trudged off to catch our buses and trains home from Exeter.

A really good day, some great pubs and very good beers, all complemented by superb company, and some scenic and hair raising bus journeys. Why not join us on the next midweek social, maybe September or October. Watch out for the social diary in What's Brewing or contact any branch official. No previous experience required!



South Devon at the Sandy Park Inn

Edgar Walton

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QUALITY SPEAKS FOR ITSELF

GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL 2017

Volunteering at Olympia

Many more years that I can remember I became a Life Member of CAMRA. To "pay" for my Membership I volunteer every year to work at Olympia for CAMRA. They claim that there are a thousand of us. I have never counted. Some volunteers arrive on the Friday before the Festival and help to assemble it and the same people stay until the Monday after the Festival to take it down. I am just there for the length of the Festival from Tuesday until Saturday.

Although there are plenty of jobs to do, I have tried the foyer and one or two bars but for the last several years I have, at my request, been put on the Tombola "Every 1's A Winner" Stall. CAMRA friends who come to the Festival know where I am and come and seek me out. Normally I get involved in the Tasting sessions. You have to pay for these but I have attended many of these that "after getting the t-shirt" I gave it a miss this year. It is tiring "working" there because I am not used to it.

Apart from being supplied with a Festival t-shirt, you have a chance of staying in Student Accommodation. At 0030am CAMRA supply Clark Coaches to take you back to your accommodation and in the morning you have to find your own way to Olympia. Myself, I am too long in the tooth for this, so I stay in a Hotel near Olympia. This suits me very well.

Eric & Julie Evans have been running this stall for about 11 years now. They display above our Stall the flags of Wales, Carmarthen and St David's. I display the Devon Flag. Our stall sells tickets at 50p a ticket or 5 for £2.50. It still confuses members of the public although I have been on this stall for most of the 11 years.

This year we collected just over £10,000 for CAMRA. We get rid of most of beer mats, bar towels, t-shirts, hats, books, glasses and beers that CAMRA needs to get rid of because most of our "produce" has passed its used-by-date. A bar manager always make sure we have a supply of beer during the day. The Volunteer Arms is open upstairs and you can always fill your glass with different beers that are not for sale to the public. At meal time, upstairs you can eat breakfast, lunch and dinner for £4 a meal. You can still go round to the numerous Food Stalls in the Festival and try several different foods to test your taste buds. Cider and foreign draught and bottle beers and English Wines were also for sale.

Every Year I tell myself that I have "volunteered" at one too many GBBF's, so if anyone wants to take my place next year I am only too happy to relinquish my place to them. I am happily retired but many people take part of their annual holiday to come and "volunteer" for CAMRA at the GBBF. I have heard people complain about how much it cost to come and be a customer at the GBBF. I say come and volunteer and it will be far cheaper for you to drink your favourite beer.

Colin Staines

GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL 2017

Winners at the GBBF 2017



Goat's Milk by Church End is crowned Champion Beer of Britain

A Warwickshire brewery, originally located in an old coffin shop, has won the Campaign for Real Ale's prestigious Champion Beer of Britain award on the opening day of the Great British Beer Festival at Olympia London.



Goat's Milk by Church End scooped gold in the competition thanks to its blend of pale barley, crystal malt oats and aromatic hops.

Bishop Nick from Essex took silver with **Ridley's Rite**, a pale ale with a floral aroma and satisfying bitterness, while Welsh brewery Tiny Rebel - former Champion Beer of Britain winner - won bronze with **Cwtch**, a red ale with a blend of six caramelly malts and three citrusy American hops.



Nick Boley, CAMRA's National Director responsible for the competition said: "Congratulations to Church End for winning the Champion Beer of Britain award for Goat's Milk, which is the highest beer accolade in the country. Goat's Milk is a stand out beer - it has a lovely balance of malts and hops and a full flavour. It is a very fine example of a bitter and incredibly refreshing."

Paul Hamblett, sales manager from Church End says: "Goat's Milk is our biggest selling beer - it's a nicely balanced beer with a hoppy edge. We originally brewed and named it for a festival taking place in the Goat pub, and the beer just caught on. It's the first time we've won the competition, and we expect it to put us on the map."

South Devon CAMRA Pub of the Year 2017



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A SOMERSET SOJOURN

On Saturday 5th August, 15 of us left Newton Abbot by minibus, bound for a day's exploring some of the standout pubs in Somerset. Our first stop was Norton Fitzwarren, where we picked up our guide for the day, Somerset CAMRA's Phil Edmonds. With him safely on board, we set off for Upton, and the Longtrow Cross Inn, which had opened early for us. This had a white panelled beamed ceiling and an oak plank floor. Old local photos and a line drawing of the village church featured on the walls, along with a couple of oil paintings. Our first beers of the day were Exmoor Ale and Gold, and Hobgoblin.

Soon it was off to Brompton Regis, where The George Inn was our stop for a buffet lunch. The pub once housed a Cobbler's and Butchers in its courtyard, and was also home to the village Post Office. The spread they laid on included hot sausages and roast potatoes, along with rare beef sandwiches, and for our two vegetarians they knocked up a risotto; all rounded off with a slice of coffee and walnut cake. This was all washed down with good Exmoor Ale and Sharp's Atlantic.

On to The Royal Oak, at Withypool, a country inn with two bars and an interesting array of prints, old photos, and even even antlers on the walls. A small stone fireplace was laid with logs, and one wall housed a display of hunting-related buttons of various shapes and sizes. Once again, Exmoor Ale and Gold were the beers of choice.

The White Horse, at Exford, had a long bar with large benches, and a beamed ceiling. Wild animal heads adorned the walls. There was also a wider beer choice, the ubiquitous Exmoor Ale and Gold being accompanied by Morland Old Golden Hen and Old Hoppy Hen, and Cotleigh Tawny.

Wheddon Cross is the highest village on Exmoor, and home to The Rest And Be Thankful, where the village fete was taking place in the area behind the pub. Family-friendly, the pub was busy, and featured a collection of water jugs, naming breweries and distilleries, hanging from the ceiling. The landlord's elderly mother was resolutely asleep on a sofa facing the bar. The Exmoor Ale, Bath Gem, and St. Austell Tribute obviously held no appeal for her whatsoever.

Our final pub stop of the day was The Royal Oak at Luxborough, an ancient village Free House, that was once the village shop and Post Office to boot. It is on at least 6 different levels, and has a collection of vinyl L.P.s in a room at the back. The nice garden leads down to the river. It also had the best beer choice of the day with Exmoor Ale being accompanied by Butcombe Pioneer, Quantock QPA, and Thornbridge Hirundo.

Our actual final stop was Quantock Brewery, which has a bar open to the public. Tables and chairs were outside the modern unit on this lovely day, with more seating inside by the bar, which dispensed the brewery's Will's Neck; Plastered Pheasant; QPA; and Nightjar. They'd also laid on a light buffet for us.

With thanks to Phil Edmonds for guiding us around some great pubs, and, as always, to Peter Lister, our intrepid driver who never seems to mind sobriety while the rest of us enjoy the ales.

Peter O'Niours

NEW PUBS IN THE GOOD BEER GUIDE 2018

There are six new South Devon entries in the Good Beer Guide for 2018 that you have chosen by visiting and scoring their beers over the past year. Continue to influence the guide by updating your whatpub.com scores after visiting any of our 350 pubs and clubs in South Devon CAMRA area.



Albert Inn, Totnes

Home of the Bridgetown Brewery, brewing Alberts Ale, Bridgetown Bitter, Cheeky Blonde and Shark Island Stout. A small two bar pub with beamed ceilings, stone walls and timber panelling. An interesting feature is the collection of old snuff boxes that can be found in the lounge. In the passage that leads out past the brewery to the pretty beer garden, there is a bar billiards table. The view from the beer garden, is over the fields to the River Dart at Brutus Bridge. Third of a pint taster glasses are available. The pub hosts various weekday themed food nights. Quiz nights Tuesdays, open mic Wednesdays, music alternate Saturdays. Brewery tours by prior arrangement.

For more check out whatpub.com.



The Artichoke Inn, Christow

Lovely old 12th-century thatched pub in the centre of this tranquil Teign Valley village, that abounds with thatched properties. A warm welcome and comfortable interior with warming wood burner in the winter months and pleasant beer garden to enjoy in the summer. Breakfasts are served weekday mornings, and a good range of menu options are available at lunchtimes and evenings and all day Sunday. See whatpub.com for more.



London Inn, Shaldon

Located opposite the Bowling Green and close to the beach in the quaint estuary-side village of Shaldon, it is a well-established gastro pub offering a quiet, relaxed and informal atmosphere popular with locals and visitors alike. 3 local ales feature with a comfortable bar area with stools, seating and a sofa. Also accessible by foot ferry across the river from Teignmouth. With other pubs in close proximity the London Inn makes an ideal lunch stop when visiting the area.

For more information see whatpub.com.

NEW PUBS IN THE GBG 2018.... CONTINUED

Pigs Nose Inn, East Prawle

An old smugglers inn on the village green, which attracts birdwatchers and coastal walkers. Gravity beers are stored on a specially made rack behind the bar. Home cooked locally sourced food is served. Children and dogs are welcome and have their own menus. The maritime themed interior is cluttered with objects, children's games and knitting for adults. Local CAMRA Pub of the Year 2013. There is more on whatpub.com.



Royal Seven Stars Hotel, Totnes

Charming olde worlde former coaching inn, dating for the most part back to the 1660's, it is situated in the centre of the town close to the River Dart. It has two bars, a la carte restaurant with an adjoining champagne bar and two function rooms. The 'Saloon Bar' is traditional with its copper topped 'L' shaped bar, timber beams, exposed stone walls and warming open fire in winter, whereas 'Bar 7' with its al fresco terrace is contemporary, having a slate floor, leather sofas and stylish soft furnishings. There is live music every Friday evening from 8pm.

See whatpub.com for more detail.



The Totnes Brewing Company, Totnes

Situated at the top of the High Street, this two room bar houses the brewery at the back of one room, and there is always at least one of the brewery's own beers available on up to seven hand pumps. The other ales are generally a bit different, as are the bottled selection and the wines. Little nooks and old-style wooden furniture go with the wood flooring, real fire and rustic feel. The courtyard has a heated area, and the pub is accessible for disabled with the toilet on the same floor level but would be a little small for wheelchairs. A full list of ales and ciders are published on their website.

Check it out at whatpub.com.





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SOUTH DEVON CAMRA SUMMER BBQ AT HUNTERS BREWERY

Our annual BBQ took place as usual, ably conducted by Hunters brewery liaison officer Tony Woodward, Mr Darcy, and his trusty equipment. At the end of last year the usual BBQ was pensioned off and a new machine took pride of place in the brewery yard.

Early arrivals noted BBQing in full swing with a proud chef flipping burgers and preparing rolls and



South Devon CAMRA at Hunters BBQ



BBQ on BBQ!

relish. Keen to showcase his acquisition, the chef turned the machine off to demonstrate its many features.

Unfortunately, despite many, many attempts, it failed to reignite. It was at this point we discovered it was a £3 purchase from the tip with its usable life behind it! Cue the chef to disappear to buy a disposable BBQ, so as not to let down hungry CAMRA members. Cooking BBQ on BBQ is something of an innovation.

Nonetheless, the gathered throng enjoyed their meal, accompanied by complementary Crispy Pig from Hunters.

Is the moral of the story that we should have had a whip round earlier to fund a new machine? Guess this will run and run...

GEORGE INN, BLACKAWTON

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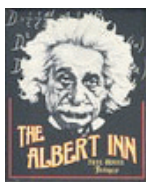
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HAND CRAFTED BY

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SOUTH DEVON CAMRA ON TOUR – BAYS BREWERY

Bays Brewery hosted our latest trip. A coach full of South Devon CAMRA members made the short journey from The Isaac Merritt to Aspen Way, at the invitation of one of the South West's most popular breweries.

We visited a brewery in full production, with our tour followed by a comprehensive introduction to the chemistry of beer and brewing, and copious product samples of award winning Topsail, Gold, Devon

Dumpling and recently introduced Crocod-ale, accompanied by tasty locally made pasties.

Great interest was shown by our party, and the thought provoking and informed questions produced comprehensive answers from our hosts. We learned of Bay's support for the local community, charities, sports teams and events and commitment to local sourcing and a comprehensive concern for carbon footprint, ensuring solar panels on the roof power production and local farms utilise production waste. They support numerous local festivals, including Brixham Pirate Festival and Summermoon, and over the years have raised thousands for endangered species with Paignton Zoo benefitting this year from a donation from sales of Crocod-ale.

All too soon our time at the brewery was up and the coach returned us to The Isaac Merritt well in advance of last orders.

Many thanks to Bays for a great evening and Wetherspoons for organising the transport.



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CIDER BAR PRESENTATIONS



Richard Knibbs receives his award from Ian Packham, South Devon CAMRA vice chair and Sarah Newson, Cider pub of the year organiser



Bob Southwell presents the award to the Cider Bar's Jon McCool and Kim Leonard

Two presentations have taken place at the Cider Bar in Newton Abbot during the summer. Firstly a national award to the long standing, and now retired, licensee Richard Knibbs for his contribution to cider and perry over many years. Secondly in Mid-August to the new licensees Jon McCool and Kim Leonard for winning the South West Cider Pub of the Year. The Cider Bar now goes on to the national stage of the judging.

The pub in East Street is no stranger to this award and only a few years ago went on to be the national winner. This year it fought off competition from 12 other pubs from as far north as Gloucestershire and Wiltshire and down into Cornwall. It is the last true cider bar in the country to be open on a regular basis and serves only cider and fruit wines with no beer or lager. It has an impressive, and changing, range of cider and perry (made with pears) being served on gravity from large wooden barrels. The judges were impressed by the quality of the cider and perry, the welcome and knowledge of the bar staff and the range of clientele and age groups that it caters for.

The Knibbs family ran this well-known institution for many years before it passed on to the new owners Jon McCool and Kim Leonard who, fortunately, have not made any drastic changes to the pub and it remains largely a traditional and unspoilt hostelry. Photographs adorn the walls of previous generations of drinkers who would still recognise their pub of their past.

Bob Southwell

MEET THE BREWER – RIVIERA BREWERY AT THE TALLY HO, LITTLEHEMPSTON

The Tally Ho pub was runner up in the South Devon CAMRA country pub of the year. CAMRA run this to choose from all the pubs in each branch area the ones that they consider the most outstanding from many nearly as good.

One of the items that made the Tally Ho stand out was its range of events regularly taking place. I attended one recently where the owner and brewer of the Rivera Brewing Company was there for one of their meet the brewer nights.

There were two of Riviera's beers on at £3.00 a pint, RBC Best and Gold. Alan the brewer had several more for tasting, one of which was Torbay Express a golden beer he brews only for beer festivals and his Portishead stout, tried them all and thoroughly enjoyed them. Alan happily ran through the brewing process for those interested and showed us the various hops he used which needed to be in varying degrees of quantity and flavour to obtain the type of beers he brewed. This sort of event is always well worth attending if for no other reason than tasting different beer at a lower price!



Riviera brewer Alan Waldron with attentive students Roger Adams and Tony Woodward

Tony Woodward

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THE GRUMPY OLD MAN REFLECTS ON LANDLORDS AND SOME STUDENT EXPERIENCES

Have you noticed that the pub landlord these days is increasingly being referred to as a manager or licensee which often gives them a corporate and more impersonal image. They all seem to read from the same script on greeting you on arrival which is usually "how are you today" which I find annoying enough, but beware there is a far worse trend on the way. Some supermarkets are now asking you what have you been doing today and heaven forbid that this should enter in to the pub vernacular. They don't care of course whether you have been cutting the hedge or feeding the donkeys, but have been told to engage with the customer and to share empathy and to enhance the total retail experience. If you are eating, then expect the obligatory quarter of an hour, on the dot, enquiry as to whether everything is OK. I once witnessed someone who said no and the poor person was perplexed as to what to do next. Clearly the corporate instructions give the impression of customer care, but how to follow it through was a totally different matter.

Quite recently being a little bored I picked up a menu to see what 'gems' of nonsense it contained. There was the usual rubbish about 'lovingly cooked', 'delicious', 'succulent' and 'gently mashed' which I have had a go at in previous editions, but then my brain jarred when I saw the phrase that all the food had '100% flavour'. What in the name of sanity can that ever mean? Time to be bold and inquire, but a word of warning that if there is going to be any 'discussion' it is always best to have a near empty glass as you may well be asked to leave. On the other hand, is there any point in attempting to discuss the idiocies of the marketing mind? "Excuse me but, I don't think I am up to 100% flavour, would it be possible to have just 60%, but I am a little worried as to what exactly constitutes the remaining 40%?"

He seemed to freeze and gave me that look suggesting that I might just have escaped from some not so very secure home, and I was mentally prepared for the imminent removal, and then to my amazement he laughed. "That's my wife's idea and she follows it hook line and sinker from the suggestions we are given from the Pub Co. I know its rubbish, but probably best not to discuss the matter with her and most customers don't seem care or perhaps notice. She's also the one who puts out all those reserved signs on the tables, which is not really the case, as she believes it gives the impression of being fully booked and therefore the food must be good which encourages future bookings." That was incredibly honest, but the more I thought about it was more likely to be a clever way of handling a difficult customer rather than getting in to an argument which in all probability would have seen me ejected. I then had a quick look at some of the Pub co websites and there were plenty of empty mission statements and pithy phrases including exhortations 'to enhance the visitor's experience' and tips as to do so.

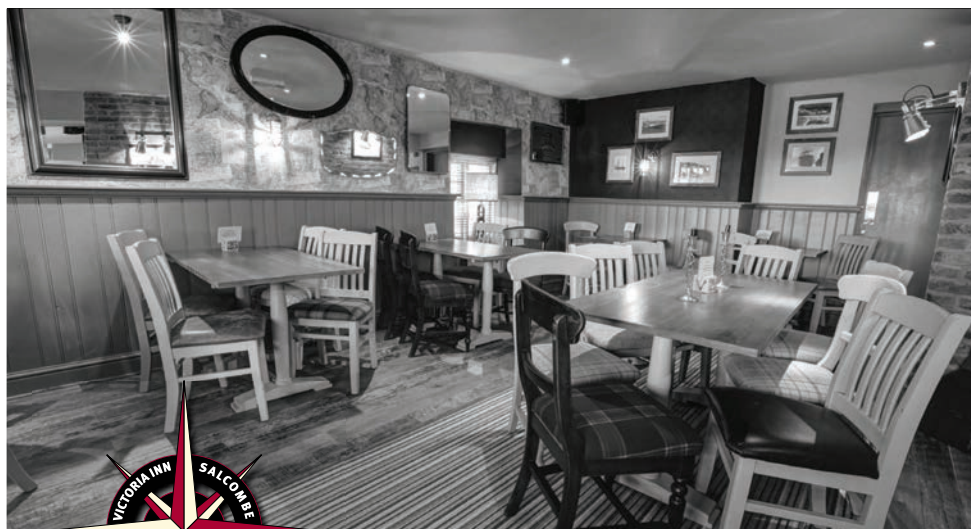
All of this reminds me of another very subtle landlord from my student days whose name was Brian. When you walked in he would always ask "mild or bitter", but occasionally he would follow up your answer with "bad choice" and instantly poured a pint of the other. »

GRUMPY.... CONTINUED

» He would then say that the other beer was for the saloon bar where apparently they would not be able to discern good from bad. Looking back on it he would have probably have said exactly the same thing in reverse claiming to the saloon bar people that he was serving the inferior beer to us in order to get rid of it. The two bars were only separated by a bizarre wild west-type swing door, but it might as well been triple locked reinforced steel as the intercourse between the two bars was virtually zero such were the social divisions of the day. After all this time I don't remember much about my fellow public bar drinkers except that they were a little on the taciturn side being preoccupied with their newspapers and the racing (the days before big screens). What I do remember is Mortimer the dog (apparently named after a Sherlock Holmes character) who was getting on a bit and slept on this dreadful old rug covering the only large seating area. Now and again he would get up for a wander around and had the charming propensity to pee on the back of your leg and especially if he did not like you. The saloon bar people were almost all so characteristic of the era. There was a retired Major almost identical to the one from Faulty Towers who wanted to whip, thrash or hang everybody and especially students and really was best avoided. However, my radical socialist friend George would insist on winding him up and driving him to apoplexy. There were also plenty of 'stuffed shirts' wearing cravats (remember them) who were marginally less reactionary than the major and there was RTMS. He was a posh student and a 'dead ringer' for a younger Captain Mainwaring who was hard working, but was somewhat pompous, dim and boring who unbelievably became Chairman of the University Conservative Club (surely there was somebody better!). One day having spotted me in the other bar he burst through the swing doors and exclaimed in his usual insensitive manner "Southwell what are you doing slumming it in the public bar". Taciturn they might normally be in that bar, but the invective which followed saw him scuttling back to safer territory with the Major and co. I then heard Brian giving him a right 'going over' for upsetting both customers and Mortimer who became quite agitated and was obviously looking for his trouser leg. He would only have to wait a few more weeks until the local by-election when RTMS and others attempted to hand out leaflets and explain their political cause. Mortimer pounced and duly peed up his leg and the invective gave way to laughter before RTMS had realised that the back of his leg was soaked. Brian then threw them all out for upsetting Mortimer.

It's all gone now of course. The brewery is no more and by definition so are the beers with the whole area becoming gentrified which as far as I am concerned is a euphemism for social cleansing. Mortimer has long gone to the woof land in the sky and I would also imagine that Brian is no longer with us. George, despite his apparent radical socialist principles threw them all away and joined the international money machine that is Goldman Sachs. I would not have had a clue what happened to RTMS, but in a chance conversation years afterwards I found out that he was the Council Leader for a large northern urban local authority. As for myself, obviously I am still around churning out 'Grumpy Old Man' articles on historical experiences such as those above.

Bob Southwell
AKA The Grumpy Old Man



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MIDWEEK MARAUDERS – SALCOMBE

Wednesday 19th July was atypical of our annual jaunts to Salcombe. For starters, the sun wasn't shining. Instead, we were blessed with persistent drizzle, which somewhat dampened the spirits of the 3 of us that made it to the start in Totnes- a much lower number than would normally be expected for this trip. Indeed, we had to wait until we got to Malborough before we were joined by resident Robin. Bus 144 in due course took us to Kingsbridge, where the first stop of the day was the Creek's End, adjacent to the bus station. Here we sampled Castle Rock

Harvest Pale, Greene King Abbot, Tribute, and South Hams Wild Blonde. Suitably refreshed, it was on to bus 606 for Salcombe, where we met up with 2 local and one visiting CAMRA members in the Victoria for a light lunch, and St. Austell's Proper Job, Tribute, Cornish Best, and Trelawney in this flagship pub of that brewery.

Moving on, our next port of call was the Ferry, abutting the estuary. This Palmers pub's garden was very busy, but we managed to find a free table down towards the river to partake of the brewery's IPA. A photograph taken by Andrew later- thank goodness our photographer was one of the three of us who made it- it was off to finish the day with Otter Bitter and a notably good Courage Best at the Kings Arms.



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