

Beer Tiz



CAMRA North Devon Branch



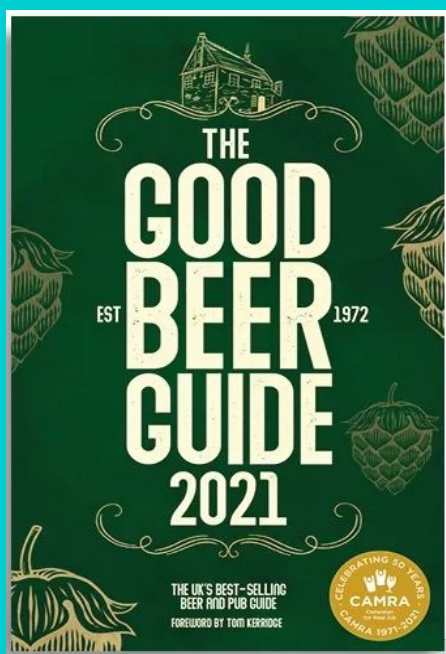
Campaign
for
Real Ale

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FREE



In this issue, Pub news around North Devon, Good Beer Guide, interesting statistics from our web site and other news relevant to North Devon Pubs and Breweries.



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Beer Tiz : the magazine of the **North Devon branch of CAMRA**, the Campaign for Real Ale, brought to you entirely by **unpaid** volunteers. Distributed free to hundreds of pubs in and around the North Devon area.

Also available on-line at **northdevon.camra.org.uk**.

CAMRA Good Beer Guide suggestions for future entries (and comments on existing ones) can be made to our GBG co-ordinator Alan Edgecombe. If you have any pub updates please enter them via **whatpub.com** or e-mail to **pubs.group@northdevon.camra.org.uk**.

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Chairman's Chatter

I hope that by now all of you have been able to get back out to your local and had the opportunity to enjoy a pint or two in the company of friends? My wife Christine and I have managed to visit a number of pubs across our region and in the process were able to sample many of the delights of our locally brewed ales. Living on the edge of Exmoor, as we do, not all of these beers are readily available to us which is why I have decided on a quest in my role as branch Chairman to visit every brewery under the North Devon umbrella.



I always try to have the branch Brewery Liaison Officer (BLO) with me on these visits, and the brewers that I have already met are invariably delighted to see that CAMRA is taking an active interest in what they do. It has also taught me, as Chairman, just how important these BLO's are as a link between CAMRA and our local breweries.

I've absolutely no doubt that in years to come the question people will ask us all is "What did you do during the Lockdown?" As a CAMRA member I'll be proud to say that during Lockdown, along with my CAMRA committee colleagues, I was kept busy phoning our breweries and pubs in order to collate and publicise information about their current situations. It was incredibly rewarding to find out just how resilient brewers and landlords were being and continue to be during these unprecedented times.



While some establishments had understandably decided to close and so were unavailable for comment, many more were continuing to provide for their local communities, offering take-away or even door-to-door delivery of drinks with some providing take-away food as well. Quite a considerable number were taking advantage of the unexpected lull in business to get on with painting and decoration - often extremely difficult if your pub is usually open 365 days a year! - while at least one landlord I talked to was taking the opportunity to enlarge their outside patio area before covering it in paving slabs.



"We have been here for four years and have yet to take a holiday" I was told by another landlord, so this was time for him to take a step back and actually do very little for a week or two before the inevitable urge to get on with those little nagging jobs - such as rebuilding the kitchen and refurbishing the swimming pool!

Now the final landlord I'd like to mention will not mind me saying that he is officially registered as blind. At the beginning of the year he had acquired a horse so this was the perfect opportunity for him to spend the first couple of weeks of Lockdown improving his equestrian skills, while at the same time waving to the numerous police vehicles that apparently seemed attracted to the pub.

By the end of Lockdown this particular landlord was ready for his next move – launching Exmoor’s first International Airport, with an application for Retrospective Planning permission from the National Park Authority!

Obviously, as Pubs Officer for the establishment I was compelled to go and check this out. On my visit I was told that the Authority was moving at Jet speed to parachute in a planning inspector to assess the situation on the



ground. Unfortunately for me, at the time of my visit the departure lounge was closed and therefore I missed out on the duty-free shopping, although I did cheer myself up with a visit to the bar where I’m pleased to report I was able to partake in some excellent ale.



For those of you familiar with the area and the story, may have guessed I am talking about the Poltimore Arms. For this summer only, Steve Cotten, the landlord, has renamed the pub ‘Yarde Down International’, installed wind socks to monitor the weather along with proper radio communications equipment. Regular flights are taking place in a yellow 3-Axis Microlight piloted by ‘Wing Commander’ Dave Karniewicz.

So, if you are missing out on your local ale then simply get in touch with your nearest pub or brewery, full lists of which are now available on the branch Website. Despite the absence of the usual program of Branch meetings and Social Events, the Committee is still working hard behind the scenes, keeping the branch affairs ticking over whether by use of email, Zoom or phone, to ensure that when the time comes, as it surely will, when things return to something more like ‘normal’ the Branch will still be there fighting for all that CAMRA stands for.

Until that time stay safe and support your local pubs and breweries!

Chairman Snuffy (*aka Steven Lock*)





Good Beer Guide 2021

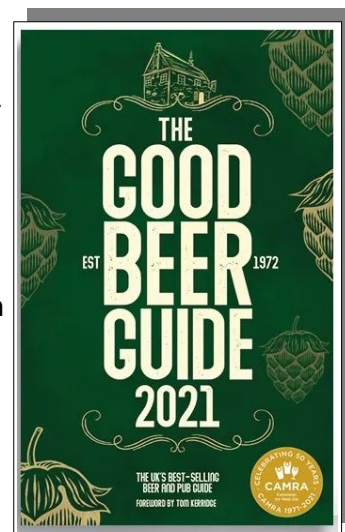
The Good Beer Guide for 2021 is due for publication on 29th October 2020. This year's guide has been delayed due to Covid-19 but will still contain all the great information on what are considered to be the best pubs in Britain.

Those North Devon pubs that have been fortunate enough to either remain or be added to the Guide will be informed by their Pubs Officer prior to that publication date.

For those that have missed out, please do not get disheartened, but rather continue to strive to meet customers' expectations or better still, exceed them!

All CAMRA branches throughout the country have a set amount of pubs that are able to be included in the Guide and for North Devon our allocation is 27. As we have about 265 pubs in the North Devon Branch of CAMRA's area, that means only about 10% have the chance of being included.

To be in the Guide, therefore, is a great accomplishment and one which pubs should be proud of. The winner of North Devon CAMRA's Annual Pub of the Year competition is included in the GBG. They are then put forward to compete in the South West Regional awards and, if successful, then they, along with the other Regional Winners, will compete for that ultimate accolade – CAMRA's National Pub of the Year!



These awards can only happen if our members, together with members of the general drinking public, recommend the pubs they feel should be included. It is also useful if those same people would utilise the Beer Scoring System that is available on the Whatpub application as scores registered here can also be taken into account when the Branch comes to make decisions about GBG entries or one of its own annual awards. For this reason we would ask all drinkers to assist us in our deliberations.

Further information about surveying, scoring and the decision making process will be part of another article, hopefully in the next issue of Beer Tiz. Our aim is to be as transparent as possible and so we shall be reviewing the current awards structure and with your input we shall advise all as to how we arrived at our decisions.



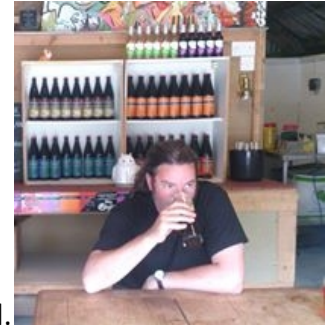
Art Brew Brewery and Tap Room.

Nestled in a small valley in the tiny village of Sutcombe, just outside of Holsworthy Beacon, sits a small brewery, tap room and camping site, which if you blinked you would miss. However, this tiny, 1,200 litre a week brewing machine, distributes to over 20 venues locally and further afield.



Art Brew's Becky

John and Becky have been brewing their own beer for over 12 years in various places, after running a number of pubs in towns such as Reading. They finally decided to set up a brewery where they could produce the style of beer they wanted, in Dorset. This was not necessarily the best move for them, as it turned out, as the sales they expected did not materialise as quickly as they would have wished.



Art Brew's John

The move there was based on reasons they thought at the time were reasonable but, like with all of us, hindsight has 20/20 vision. With family illnesses hitting them, they decided back in 2014 that a move to a more accessible site was called for and so the search began. This search ended when they found their site in Sutcombe, culminating in November 2015 by them launching a bottle shop and tap room. The brewery followed very quickly with them opening it in Spring of 2016.

The brewery and tap room is definitely a place to visit, being housed in an old but small barn with enough seating and standing space to comfortably hold approximately 15 people (pre Covid distancing!) making it a very cosy and intimate venue, where conversation is the order of the day and good beer accompanies it. The local villagers and farmers have welcomed the family and brewery into their community and this is shown by the excellent support they receive from them.



Art Brew's Tap Room

Outside seating is plentiful and the area that the brewery occupies allows Art Brew to hold their own beer festivals, twice a year; one at Easter the other in August, both of which are very well attended.

Opening hours are also not conventional with Art Brew's Tap Room being open for business on a Friday evening from 6:00pm till late and on Saturday from 12 Noon till late. Food is not always available but every so often they have a food wagon visit them where Pizza or Curry is on the menu.



Beers are both casked and bottled, with some lovely examples of a brewer not allowing his enthusiasm to get the better of him. Apart from usual range of beers, such as a lovely IPA called AB6 they also produce other beers that some would say are more akin to a Belgium flavoured beer. Beers with Orange Peel or hints of Lemon or Raspberry, vie against the Black Cherry Chocolate Porter, all of which tickle the taste buds and cry out for more.

We must not forget some of the other speciality beers that Art Brew produce, especially at Christmas when a Christmas Ale utilising local pine needles is brewed. Such is the subtlety of the pine needles that it is a very lovely beer to drink.

Once a year, the villagers gather apples for the brewery to produce a cider, but this is limited and not surprisingly is sold out very quickly.

If camping is your thing, then what better place to enjoy it? Art Brew have their own camp site attached to their brewery! Normally, (again pre-Covid) there is space for 10 tents and 4 Caravans/Motorhomes where you can enjoy peace and tranquillity in beautiful surroundings.



Overall, this is not your usual brewery. It is one that is run by a husband and wife team who value a good dash of bonhomie, great tasting beer and all of this set amid scenery that is tranquil and restful. Even their children contribute with many labels being produced from drawings their youngsters have produced themselves.

In September of this year, the Independent named Art Brew as one of 'Britain's Best Beer Destinations for a Hoppy Getaway'.

If you have a bucket list, then I would strongly recommend that you add Art Brew to it. If not, then go anyway and enjoy your beer, chatting with the locals.

You can find Art Brew on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ArtBrewBrewery/>.



Round and about North Devon – News on various pubs

The Covid-19 pandemic has been brutal for all of the Pubs and Restaurants, not just in our area of North Devon, but around the country. However, whilst many closed their doors to customers others took this time to reinforce their presence in the communities they serve whilst others used the time to make long overdue repairs and redecoration to interiors and exteriors, ready for the, hopefully, steady influx of customers once re-opened.

Here are just some of the stories about what has happened in our area during their time of lockdown and ultimately their re-opening for business.

At the **Bickford Arms, Brandis Corner**, new owners Keith and John took over this pub at the beginning of the year. During the lockdown, they took the opportunity to repaint and add features such as a bubble machine and laser lighting, to be used at functions in the large restaurant. Having replaced all the beer lines and pumps recently, they currently are offering Sharp's Sea Fury and Doom Bar along with Dartmoor's Jail Ale although some may change. Sam's cider is also on offer in bottles. They still offer very good accommodation and meals throughout the day. If you are into Fishing and/or hunting then they are in the right place to satisfy your hobby.

A visit to **The Globe Inn at Beaford** is a definite must, having recently been voted North Devon CAMRA's Pub of the Year. Although the announcement was made at the beginning of the year, the presentation only recently took place. Hearing what they also took on during the lockdown justifies even further our decision to award them this accolade. An item from Jim and Sam appears elsewhere in this communication.



Sam and Jim at The Globe being presented with their Certificate by Stephen Lock, our Chairman.



Not all pubs are able to offer the same sort of experience to their customers. Whilst some pubs will require you to book a table, even for a drink, others will welcome you providing there is space for you to sit. It is important, therefore, that you check what is required, either by looking at their website, if available, their Facebook page or using CAMRA's Whatpub application. The main reason for doing this is to ensure there is no embarrassment on either side when you arrive. One such venue, is **Lacey's Ale and Cider House in Bideford**, who are restricting entry to those who have a EX39 post code. This is being done due to space limitations and to ensure that their regular customers are able to enjoy their local.



The North Devon CAMRA Club of the Year 2020 is **The Royal British Legion Club in Hartland**. A presentation took place there on the 7th. September where our illustrious Chairman, Stephen (aka Snuffy), presented them with their certificate.

By all accounts the members were really chuffed about getting this award. It goes to show what commitment and hard work can achieve within a community.

(L to R) Tony Crossley, Robert Parsons, Marcel Jeffrey of Royal British Legion being presented their award by Stephen Lock

The **New Inn at Roborough** has closed with the landlords, Aaron and Naddie, apparently being given 48 hours to leave. A note on their Facebook page gives no reasons for the sudden departure and at the moment we have no idea as to when the pub will reopen. Any news of reopening will be communicated once we know what is happening.



For those who have previously visited **The Earl of Portsmouth Inn at Chawleigh**, you may have noticed that it has been closed since the beginning of this year. Following on from that closure, planning permission was being sought to convert it into a residential dwelling. However, the residents of Chawleigh grouped together to form a committee to object to the change of use and managed to have The Earl of Portsmouth designated as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). This effectively delays the change of use and allows the committee time to either find a purchaser or buy it themselves - either way the villagers feel it imperative that the pub remains open and at the heart of their community. North Devon CAMRA wishes them the best of luck in their endeavours.



The Tally Ho! in Hatherleigh is again regularly stocking ales brewed by the Tally Ho! Brewery. *Ruby*, which the brewery had stopped producing, is now back on the scene along with *Tally Ho! Pale*. Ownership of the brewery has changed hands and is now owned by Julian Smith with the previous owner, Bradley Horne, acting as an adviser.

The Appledore Inn, Bideford, has reopened for business. Due to the Covid regulations they felt unable to restart the business in July but it now appears they have overcome those restrictions and are welcoming old and new customers to the Pub.



The pub is typically at the heart of a village. As such, much of village life revolves around meeting your neighbours and friends in a pleasant atmosphere, enjoying a pint (or two!) and putting the world to rights. The Covid-19 pandemic put a stop to all of that. So what did pubs do to remain that focal point and, more importantly, improve that focus so when pubs reopened, the work, effort and time spent helping their community could be repaid.

There are a great number of pubs that did so much to support their local communities during lockdown, but there is just not enough space to mention them all and indeed it would be unfair to pull out one or two as all played their part. From a CAMRA point of view, we salute all those Landlords and Landladies who were able to focus their efforts on the community whilst those unable to do so, possibly due to their own vulnerabilities to the virus, we hope will enjoy a revival of fortunes now that you are open.

Having said that, however, there are still a few pubs that remain closed due to shielding or not being able to meet the Government guidelines for opening and for those few we sincerely trust that you are able to re-open soon and see your customers return.

The Globe at Beaford – Through Lockdown and Beyond!

(Publicans Jim Thomas and Sam Clegg tell their own story)

It really feels great to hear the pub filled with laughter again, and amazing to see people relaxing and enjoying themselves. It has been a tricky six months but we are fortunate to have been able to survive the lock-down and have managed to re-open! Maybe even in a better position than ever.



We had decided to close just before the government had mandated all pubs to shut their doors but had no real plan of how to cope – panicking, on that Friday night, with the prospect of an empty pub I applied for a number of delivery jobs. Sam calmed me down. We spent the Saturday planning and the following day we had delivered our first 50 roast dinners. It was Mother's Day.



From then we just made the most of what we had. The kitchen had fresh stock that needed using so we set up a regular community lunch delivery service and offered take-aways on Tuesday and Thursday evenings alongside the Sunday roasts.

All of our staff were furloughed so it kept the two of us very busy. I spent Saturdays peeling potatoes and the rest of the week prepping for the following evening's menus. Looking on the plus side, we did manage to get some early nights and see more of the local countryside. It has meant we now feel more refreshed and eager to crack on with some new projects and ideas.



It also gave us time to get on top of some of the jobs we had been putting off, so we now feel like we are, for the first time since opening, actually making some real progress. I've actually started brewing in the pub and Sam has been working on the garden and new recipes (so do get booked in for food!).



You'll be glad to hear we wasted very little beer. People were still after cask ale so I set up a delivery service where I'd deliver refillable bottles around the village every evening. Fortunately, enough people signed up to keep casks moving and the beer fresh.

When the announcement was made that pubs could re-open, we were excited but cautious. We decided not to re-open on Saturday the 4th July. There was a risk of pubs being over-crowded and although this didn't really materialise, we felt it was better to start on a week night. We had been closed for 4 months, an extra couple of days didn't seem to matter.

It was a slow start; we were both anxious on the eve of opening but were hugely relieved when everyone fully respected the rules and behaved really sensibly.



From the start we have tried to make the new measures seem as natural as possible and people tell us that they have genuinely felt relaxed. Whilst customers are not allowed at the bar, we have an area set aside where 'locals' can be distanced yet still 'socialise'. Whilst it's not the same, we've found people actually quite like being 'waited' on.

We are asking people to book in advance thus allowing us to collect data for track and trace purposes and we have subtle hand sanitisers on each table. The great news is that everyone is still being sensible, following the rules and being respectful to everyone else in the building.



We will miss things like darts, live music and quizzes this year but for now it is better that we are open. I'm sure these will be back better than ever next year.

Jim and Sam

Dark Ale is Not Just for Christmas!

By Mark Dyer (The Old Ale Man).

Is it beer or is it ale? Well, one definition is: Lager and Ale are both Beers – lager is fermented with yeast at the bottom of the fermentation vessel (bottom fermentation) and ale is fermented with yeast at the top of the fermentation vessel (top fermentation). In the early days, ale did not have hops in it for the



simple reason that we didn't have hops in the UK. It was known as small beer and drunk by almost everyone – young and old as it was safer than the water. The Europeans introduced hops into the UK in 1524. At one time, the British were famous, across the globe for their warm dark ale.

We were renowned for our unique taste in beers. Dark and warm and consumed on even the hottest day of the year.



Things have certainly changed. We, or should I say others, have now embraced a paler style of beer, lighter with citrus flavours, possibly served slightly chilled

or sometimes ice cold! Something less heavy, easier to drink, cool and refreshing on a hot day, or all year it seems.

I was raised on and enjoyed some fine dark beers, here are a few:

Theakston's Old Peculier (5.6%) - Old Peculier is brewed using a very generous blend of finest pale, crystal and roasted barley with two bitter hops combined with the majestic and noble 'Fuggle' hop to produce a beer of awesome full-bodied flavour with subtle cherry and rich fruit overtones. Smooth, strong and mellow. Dark, Rich Ruby Red.



Marston's Owd Roger (7.6%) - Owd Rodger, brewed to a recipe believed to be over 500 years old, is Marston's award winning strong ale. Brewed using malted barley, whole leaf English aroma hops and well water, Owd Rodger offers an explosion of rich fruit flavours with a dry bitter-sweet finish. From 2014 the bottled beer reduced to 7.4% from 7.6% ABV.



Wadworth's Old Timer (5.8%) - A classic winter warmer, popular with beer drinkers for over 50 years. A deep chestnut in colour with a strong malty aroma and full bodied complete flavour. Brewed using Pale Ale, Crystal and Black malts with Fuggles, Goldings and Sovereign hops. So, what's happened and why?



From mild to bitter and thence to pale ale....



Mild was the “working man's” drink for the first half of the twentieth century. The only choice was between mild and stout; bitter came along later and was something of a luxury. In 1900 best bitter was almost unknown and in 1929 it was still only a tiny fraction of total beer sales.

At the start of the sixties, mild was the dominant ale. It wasn't mild in flavour but tended to be milder in gravity, making it perfect for session drinking without seeing the problems stronger beers cause. Around 40% of the output of Charrington (later Bass Charrington), Britain's largest brewer at the time, was mild. By 1967 this had fallen to 30%.



Mild was losing favour, though it was still the cheapest ale. It did have strongholds in the Midlands (notably M & B Mild), but by then the majority chose best bitter. Best bitter on draught and its bottled equivalent, best pale ale, were the favourite ales of the 60's. Pale ale was sold as a premium beer; it was a popular luxury.

This reputation of pale ale being a premium beer remains with us and the view of darker beers being somehow inferior also remains, however unfairly. Another image problem is that dark beers are often presumed to be too strong and best reserved for Christmas and winter months.....OK

my favourites above are a bit on the strong side but there are plenty of delicious lower gravity dark ales (including milds, porters, stouts, best bitters, etc.) to quaff!

Don't get me wrong, I can enjoy a pale ale. I really like St. Austell's Tribute. It is a nice pint and there are lots more to choose from. My concern is **we are losing our choices**. Something that CAMRA cares deeply about and actively campaigns to support – giving drinkers a good quality and variety of ales. When you walk in a bar to be confronted by several pumps all serving a “delicious light golden beer with slight citrus notes”, it makes me a tad sad. What about a better variety including an interesting, complex darker ale???

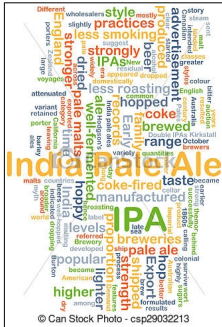
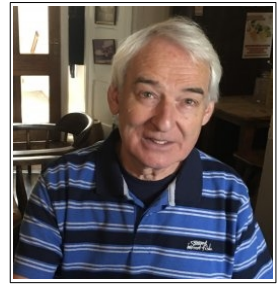


If we don't ask for it, people will say there's no demand and no one will brew it. Then we'll lose it until another generation “rediscover” it in years to come. So, go on, take a walk on the dark side – try a pint that not only tastes different, but looks it too!



In deference to IPAs (India Pale Ales)

(Elsewhere in this edition is a heartfelt plea not to ignore the delights of Dark Ales. As someone blessed with a very broad palate when it comes to ales I'm always more than happy to indulge in the Dark Arts. But in the interests of editorial balance I felt I just ought to include the following piece!)



Whether or not you choose to believe the various creation myths surrounding the IPA style of beers - first brewed for the troops in 18th century India either to prevent them getting too sozzled on strong ale or dying of contaminated local water - India Pale Ale had certainly become a well established style of beer during most of the 19th century. Despite being somewhat in the doldrums for much of the 20th century, there is no question that with the new millennium, IPA is right back up there with the best of ales.

So what is India Pale Ale (IPA)? Traditionally it's always been a well-hopped high-gravity (strong!) beer style within the broader category of Pale Ales. For a variety of reasons, IPA has now evolved into perhaps the most aggressively hopped beer style of them all - largely due to our North American cousins reinventing IPA (Americans don't do things by halves!), such that American style IPA as we now know it, has returned home across the Atlantic (a bit like the British rock and roll invasion of America in the 1960s only in reverse?)

More than this, India Pale Ale is largely credited with being the prototype for most of the Craft Beers currently in vogue on both sides of the Atlantic. (The Oxford Companion to Beer goes so far as to describe IPA as being 'the signature of all craft brewers worldwide'.) Initially brewers in the US and Canada relied upon original English recipes created over 150 years ago, but since then adding ever increasing quantities of New World hops while upping the alcohol content considerably in the process! Some of these beers are now the closest you'll get to experiencing those original Pale Ales once exported to the British colonies!

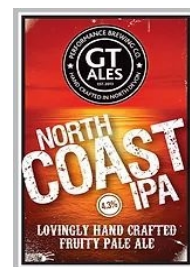


So what can we expect when sampling a modern IPA? Certainly there's a bitterness, but it's mostly balanced with a clean, crisp and clear body, and not unusually a large dose of tropical fruit notes. Having said that, on this side of the pond our brewers mostly opt for a more restrained approach to modern IPAs - yes OK I hear you say, but what about Brewdog's Punk IPA at 5.6% ABV, which was the UK's best selling Craft Beer in 2019 and no doubt 2020?

Personally, my preference is always to go for locally produced Real Ales - and no less so when it comes to IPAs - and what a fantastic selection we now have brewed right here in North Devon!

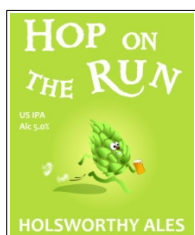
Whilst the following list is by no means exclusive, I feel it does represent a fair cross section of what local brewers are currently offering, listed as it is in order of increasing strength:

First up comes the aptly named **North Coast IPA** from our current branch Brewery of the Year - **GT Ales**. At 4.3% ABV this golden coloured ale is described as a 'Fruity Pale Ale' with strong aromas of mango and passion fruit but with a sweet tasting finish of guava and lychee. So what's not to like?



Next on my local IPA list, also weighing in at 4.3% ABV is a relatively recent creation from **Clearwater Ales** - simply called **RIFF** - apparently named for its musical connotations by head brewer *Dayle Helsby* who has developed this Late Hopped ale to be full of flavour with a refreshing bitter edge - perfect to accompany live music at the brewery tap - **The Champ** at Appledore..

Next we have an IPA with a name that rather gives itself away - **Hoppy Dog** from the **Grampus Brewery** at Lee Bay - which at 4.5% ABV does exactly what it says in the tin - despite being styled a 'session IPA'?



One of my personal favourites, again with a clue in the name, is the award winning **Hop On The Run** from **Holsworthy Ales**. At 5.0% ABV this has a kick with its unashamedly American hops and distinct citrus flavour - great on the nose as well as on the tongue . . .

Not to be outdone, at 5.1% ABV we have **Madrigal's North Coast Voodoo** - with its New World hops and 'Old World soul' this is well worth searching out, not least for the exquisite artwork which adorns this ale's pump clip and bottle label, as with all of Madrigal's very unique ales.



Now I could go on and on - there are others beers available in a similar style as almost every brewery now produces something akin to an IPA if not in name - but let me just finish with mention of one of our most eclectic breweries - **Art Brew** based at Sutcombe near Holsworthy, who excel at small batch seasonal offerings.

When last I heard they had been brewing, amongst many other unique ales, an **Orange IPA** at 6.0% ABV, a **Ginger and Chilli IPA** also at 6.0%, and something strictly for the IPA connoisseur perhaps, an **Anarchist Party Bitter** (yet despite its name is described as an IPA) coming in at 7.2% and reputed to offer not only a chestnut colour and creamy head but lemon peel nose and cereal undertones no less! Personally I just can't wait to get out there and sample some of these exotic creations for myself!

And so, you pays your money and you makes your choice . .

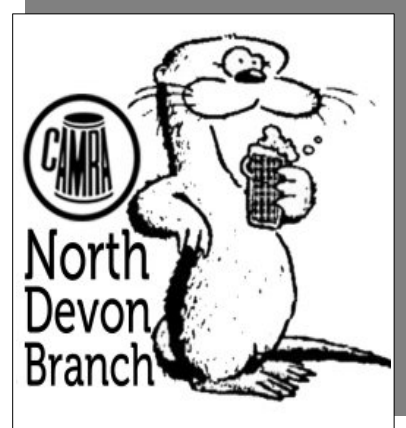
Peter Thompson *(Editor)*



Web Site Updates.

Some of you may have noticed that we have started to clean up the North Devon CAMRA website. Changes that are visible include the List of Pubs within our area, the list of LocAle pubs and a new list which details all the Breweries within North Devon.

Our current webmaster Sara Dyer has done a fantastic job in setting up the existing site almost from scratch and getting it to where it is today has been a great achievement, particularly as she is largely self-taught! However, Sara has now had to relocate from North Devon and so understandably feels the time is right for a new hand to take over the reins - someone with the knowledge and skill to take both our website and Social Media presence forward to the next level. Until we find that person Sara will continue in that role. Needless to say, we extend a heartfelt vote of thanks to Sara for all she has done for North Devon Branch over recent years.



So, is there anyone out there in CAMRA land that would like to take on this role? It does not have to be a CAMRA member, per se, but should be someone who has an empathy with CAMRA's core purpose which is to promote real ale and cider. Ideally the person would have some existing connection with a CAMRA member - friend or relation - but this is not essential. In looking at North Devon's requirements, we are looking for a person with the following skill-set, although it may be possible to acquire some of these skills on the job! It is not a list where all skills are required, but it should help to identify someone who would enjoy doing this work in their spare time. Like all of CAMRA's jobs and positions, this is a voluntary position so please do not ask for a salary!



So what skills are we looking for in a person to take on this role?

Whilst not exhaustive, if you feel you are close to meeting our requirements listed below and would like to find out more, then please do not hesitate to contact Alan Edgecombe at Pubs.Group@northdevon.camra.org.uk for an informal chat - we would love to hear from you.

1. IT skills but not necessarily web site design (We use Beer Engine from CAMRA). Facebook administration would be beneficial but not necessary
2. An inquisitive nature - someone who will try things to see what they do and how it will benefit the site; to not be afraid to try new things - Willingness to learn
3. Time - it doesn't take much time to keep the site up and running
4. Be a good administrator - chase up those members who have promised content
5. Produce statistics that show the use of various pages (we use Google Analytics)
6. We have a Twitter account that is unused and skills in that product would be nice to have too
7. Willingness to learn
7. Access to a PC (obviously!)

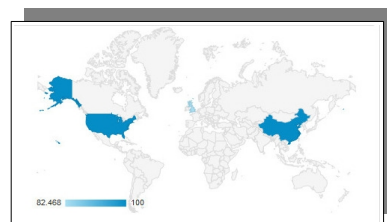
We look forward to receiving those responses!



So who looks at our web site?

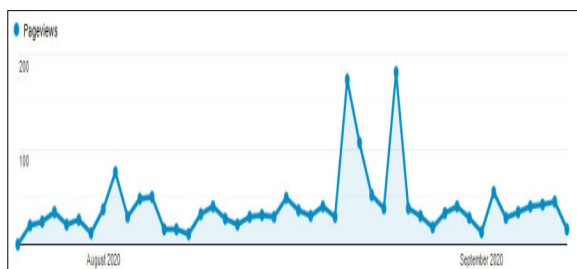
Recently, we implemented Google Analytics on our web site to try and understand what people are accessing and where they are accessing it from in the world. This was started on the 25th. July and to the 8th. September the following interesting statistics have been gleaned.

Total number of Users who have accessed our site	781
Users accessing from the UK	703
China	31
France	16
Japan	10
USA	7
Unknown	4
Netherlands	2
New Zealand	2
Germany	1
Hong Kong	1
India	1
Nigeria	1
Ukraine	1
Uganda	1



A truly international crowd, although I do wonder how many of them were actually trying to hack us!

Access from the UK was also interesting in that London had the greatest number of Users accessing our site with 173, Barnstaple with 51, Bristol with 37 and Bideford 20. In total we had hits on our site from 183 towns and cities within the UK.



The web page that had the greatest number of hits was our Pub Guide, getting 537 hits followed by the normal North Devon Home Page with 467 hits and North Devon Breweries with 208 hits. Overall our web site had 1,824 hits during the capture period. The average amount of time that was spent on our web site was 1 minute 21 seconds. It was also interesting

to see how many of our Pubs were accessed.

Devices that were utilised to access our site show an interesting split between Mobile, PC's and Tablets. Mobile users numbered 434, PC access was by 281 users and Tablets were used by 66 people. Browser use was also very varied ranging from Amazon Silk, through Chrome and Firefox to Safari and UC Browser.

As can be seen, a small site such as ours is important and information shown has to be as accurate as possible, given the constraints we face in being a mainly rural area. There is a plea for a new webmaster elsewhere in this publication which we hope can be filled shortly.



Pubs Officers update.

After my last request for new Pubs Officers to help look after the liaising between the pubs and CAMRA, I am happy to welcome two newcomers to our group, namely **David Corfield** from Whiddon Down and **Geoff Mitchell** from Brayford. They will be handling pubs in the Okehampton and Combe Martin areas respectively. I would of course also like to thank all those existing Pubs Officers who have confirmed that they're happy to continue in this role.

We are still looking for people to help out in a few areas. They are Woolacombe, Morethoe, Croyde, Georgeham and a few other pubs around these villages.

If you have ever wanted to do more within CAMRA then this is the ideal way to start, as a Pubs Officer. We find that Landlords really do appreciate being contacted directly by a CAMRA branch representative and the Pubs Officers themselves seem to enjoy that contact and get to know more about what is going on within the pub and the community in general.

Surveying pubs and clubs for the Pub and Club of the Year Awards reinforces the importance of the role as well as the ultimate surveying which is for the Good Beer Guide.

If you are interested or just want to know more, then please contact Alan Edgecombe at Pubs.Group@northdevon.camra.org.uk.



Witterings of The Wizard

I am excitedly waiting for the 2021 Good Beer Guide due out in October, but part of me is also worried that there may well be numerous updates in What's Brewing with too many of these great pubs closing. This forces us to consider why they are closing. These are difficult times for everyone. We are all having to make changes to the way we think, act, live.



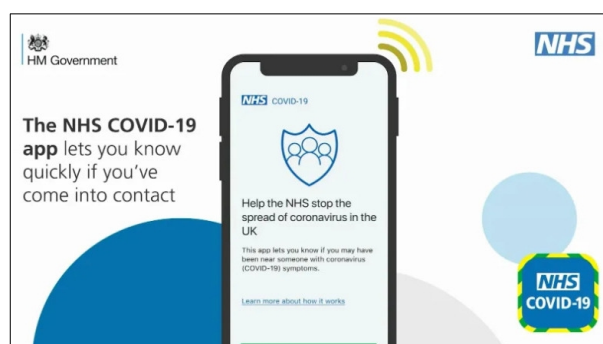
I consider myself extremely fortunate that the wonderful pubs in my local villages are all still open and being very well supported by our wonderful communities. They too have had to make changes and adapt. Opening times are different, 'facilities' are different, clientele is different – lots of visitors. But the real ales have continued to be great. It is evident that our publicans are doing the best they can to support local breweries and to keep their regular drinkers happy.

I am still able to get my daily exercise of walking to my pub, usually picking up a take-out to drink at home. I have also been able to safely visit the pub garden, sitting at a safe distance but still feel that I am with my friends and enjoying the conversation, banter and general craic of socialising.



I so admire the effort that has gone in to ensuring the safety of us pub goers – there are signs directing us to the outdoor space where there are new tables and chairs, gazebos and umbrellas (well it is Dartmoor!), lighting and music; there are sanitizer machines everywhere; the toilets have been modified to ensure safe distancing; and the barmaids have been well trained to wear masks, respond to waves and shouts, deliver orders to tables and still be cheerful and resourceful when customers get quirky!

So, drinking habits may have altered but pubs are even more vital for our mental health and well-being. Our publicans provide a service which deserves our patronage. Our brewers have an art and a skill which equally deserves our support.



CAMRA continues to campaign, with the National Executive being active on our behalf, and we must do our bit to ensure that we support in every way we can.

Congratulations to Peter Bridle our newly appointed Regional Director. Fiona and I have known Pete for many years and he will be leading us forward with enthusiasm and commitment.

We also have a wonderful Branch Committee who keep us up to date working on our behalf, for which I am very grateful.

Do your bit too – support your local pubs, drink locally brewed beers, keep up to date with what is going on within CAMRA and keep safe.

Hands, face, space!

Morris (aka The Wizard)

(Honorary Branch President)

