



Issue 2

FOR

Spring 2014

FREE



The Ship and Pilot
in Ilfracombe
Branch Pub of the Year 2013





TOWN ARMS HOTEL



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WE ARE IN THE GOOD BEER GUIDE (first listed in 2009)
CASK MARQUE ACCREDITED
CAMRA MEMBERS GET 10p OFF A PINT



Witterings of The Wizard

Welcome to the second edition of the new version of our North Devon CAMRA Branch Newsletter - Beer Tiz. I hope you enjoyed the first one; feedback to me seems to show that it was well received by members and non-members and was available to a much wider audience than had been the case with our



previous newsletters. If you didn't see a copy in your local then please let one of our Branch Pubs Officers know as we want to encourage as wide an audience as possible.

Going to the pub is a good way to support CAMRA's four campaigning issues:

- Stop tax killing beer and pubs
- Secure an effective government support package for pubs
- Encourage more people to try a range of real ale, cider and perries
- Raise the profile of pub going and increase the number of people using pubs regularly

At the end of September the Branch played a vital role in the first RHS beer festival held at Rosemoor Garden in Torrington. We provided advice on the beer and cider, managed and manned the bar, advised visitors on their choice of beer, cider and perry, introducing many to a new drinking experience and recruited new members to the Campaign. A national beer festival in all 4 RHS Gardens is planned for June 2014 and I know that once again we will be asked to provide bar staff and management as well as advising on beer and cider.

In December the Branch enjoyed their Festive Lunch hosted by our Branch Pub Of The Year – The Ship and Pilot, in Ilfracombe. Despite the fact that Nick the landlord does not 'do food' we had a fabulous meal and were well entertained. Santa also paid us a visit to do the raffle!

In January the branch was well represented at Exeter and East Devon's Festival of Winter Ales with 8 members working and many more enjoying the other side of the bar! We often work closely with our neighbouring branches and enjoy being part of a Regional team.

We are looking forward to several big events this year:

The SIBA beer festival at Tucker's Maltings in April National AGM and Members Weekend in Scarborough in April The Great British Beer Festival at Olympia, London in August.

If you are interested in joining CAMRA and supporting their campaigns or you just want to get involved more sociably then there is an application form to the rear of this magazine. If you require any further information on branch activities then please email our

 $Membership\ Secretary\ -\ fion a.nd camra@icoud.com$

Best wishes.

Morris Chairman

From the Editor's Arm Chair

What's The Score?

We are certainly blessed with some excellent pubs within our region. From busy town pubs to traditional country pubs, North Devon CAMRA Branch has 'em all.

The period from November to February is always a busy one for Committee members and Pubs Officers. Forget the Christmas and New Year festivities, this hectic three month period is filled with pub visits as we strive to find the best pubs to be considered for the Good Beer Guide and our own, Pub of The Year. With over 300 pubs, clubs and hotels in our branch area, the search can initially appear extremely daunting but after an initial planning meeting in November, the Pubs' Officer Group coordinator, Bob Goddard, allocates pubs to individuals to survey.

These surveys are determined by a number of factors that include recommendations from members, reports from pubs officers, previous reputation from already being in the GBG and finally, from the scores on the What Pub website.

These National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) is an excellent system that provides a very objective method of monitoring the quality of the beer served by a local pub. The more scores that are submitted from a range of visitors helps to improve the overall objectiveness of the data. So if you don't already submit scores, please have a look at www.camra. org.uk/nbss for a fuller explanation and a link to the NBSS scoring portal at www.beerscoring.org. uk. To submit a score you will need your CAMRA membership number and a password. The latter is your postcode.

While we're talking about quality beer, people often ask what should the best temperature be for a pint? Too cold and you can't taste it and too warm and it tastes like dishwater.

CAMRA states that beer should be served at between 12-14 degrees Celsius. Cask Marque has a wider range and say that beer should be dispensed at between 11-13 degrees Celsius but broaden their audit range to between 10-14 degrees Celsius.

Regards to all and don't forget to Score!

Trevor

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Trevor Nash
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Branch Calendar

February

15th

Branch Meeting 12:30, The Reform, Barnstaple 22nd

Regional Meeting Craven Arms, Brockhampton

March

22nd

Branch AGM 12:30, Old Market Inn, Holsworthy 29th

Yeofest 2014 Yeoford Community Beer Festival

April 5th

Branch Pub Crawl 10:00, Bideford 24th - 26th

SIBA Beer Fesitival Tucker's Maltings, Newton Abbot 25th - 27th

CAMRA Members' Weekend, Scarborough 25th - 27th

Food & Drink Festival Exeter

May

3rd - 5th

Beer & Music Festival Landmark Theatre, Ilfracombe 3rd - 5th

Beer & Cider Festival Westward Arms, Westwood Ho! 22nd - 24th

Devon Country Show Westpoint, Exeter

July

4th - 6th

Weir Beer Festival Weir, Porlock
7th - 8th

Beer & Cider Festival RHS Rosemoor 11th - 12th

Plymouth Beer Festival Plymouth Pavilions 11th - 12th

Beer & Cider Festival Old Smithy, Welcomb

August

12th - 16th

Great British Beer Festival Olympia, London 22nd - 25th

Sunwest Beer & Music Festival The Landmark
Theatre, Ilfracombe

FORGE BREWERY

LITEHOUSE

www.forgebrewery.co.uk

Best Wishes From The Forge Brewery

Forge Brewery would like to wish North Devon Camra continued success with their Beer Tiz newsletter

Ford Hill Forge, Hartland
Bideford, North Devon. EX39 6EE
Tel: 01237 440015 Email: info@forgebrewery.co.uk



Exmoor Ales, Wiveliscombe 01984 623798

Moving Times for Clearwater Brewery

Moving house is considered to be one of the most stressful things that we do but no-one appears to have measured the stress involved in moving a brewery. When we bought Clearwater it was happily ensconced in an industrial unit so we didn't even have the experience of installing one to fall back on.

Sustained growth had meant that we were renting two such units in Torrington and we were conscious that the money spent in rent and rates was dead money. We had been looking for premises to buy for a while and had considered (and rejected) a cattery and house (for humans not cats) and a barn but finally we settled on the great new home; another industrial unit, this time in Bideford! But this time it was one that we owned and one that we designed to be used as a brewery.

Sustained brewing in the weeks before the move meant that we had lots of beer (and nowhere to put it) but at least we would be able to meet demand, and, if the worst came to the worst......drink it ourselves.



We decided that the best way to move a brewery would be to carefully code and label each screw and nut, washer and rivet to ensure that they all went back in the same place. Then we thought, "bugger that" and we just started to dismantle things in the

order that they would go back together at the other end.

However the brewery had been put together over 10 years previously resulting in the fact that there were many screws, nuts, washers and rivets that were quite happy where they were, thank you very much, and the prising off of them created many scratches, scrapes and swear words far worse than anything I've written here.

One great thing about being on an industrial estate is that there is always someone to help you (especially in return for free beer) and other tenants pitched in with labour, advice – not always constructive – and, most importantly, a lorry.

Setting up at the other end was, to be honest, more complicated and we needed the additional help of a plumber and electrician. As well as the normal staff complement of Paul, Dan and Aly we had the help of Barrie, our first brewer. His sensible and competent advice, borne from years of experience of being shot at whilst he was in the Army (well that's his story anyway), helped immensely and the new brewery began to unfold before our eyes.

No longer the only brewery without a drain we looked admiringly at the channel cut in the floor as well as the well proportioned chiller, the fact that the brewery was laid out in a sensible order and the office space that meant that we didn't all have to shift round when somebody came in, or left; as only three people work here, you now have an idea of the size of the previous office.

You know that thing about painting a floor?

"My clothes are wet, tight on my skin Not as tight as the corner that I painted myself in." Bob Dylan, "Mississippi" (1997).



Finally everything was in place after three days of going backwards and forwards and it was time for our inaugural brew.

Fingers were crossed, which actually made the brewing more difficult, temperatures rose (water and humans) and it was then that we realised that the extractor fan was still at the old site.

Many people, including me obviously, would not consider an extractor fan to be a key component for a brewery. But, how one is missed when it isn't there! Now working in a wonderfully smelling Turkish bath (well there is nothing better than the smell of beer being brewed) we realised that actually being able to see the controls was more important than we had ever thought. We opened the door but that only allowed the January fog to enter and mix with the steam.

Eventually deciding that it was time to uncross our fingers we ploughed on, only tripped over occasionally and soon produced our first 40 casks of delightful and Proper Ansome. Delicious.

Our official opening is March 25th in the afternoon. All your readers are welcome. Please ring if you would like to come.

Paul Stewart-Reed *Head Brewer, Clearwater*



Exeter's 25th Festival of Winter Ales 10th - 11th January 2014

As North Devon Branch don't run our own beer festival, our nearest festival is the Exeter and East Devon branch's Festival of Winter Ales (FOWA). It was great to see (as always) so much support for the festival from North Devon branch members. No less than eight members were working on the Friday and some, including myself, came back for more on the Saturday.

Some 66 real ales and 12 ciders/perries were available across the two bars at Exeter City's St James Park in Exeter. Having worked behind the bar at a couple of festivals before, and being in front of the FOWA bar once or twice in my student days, I thought I knew what to expect; a fairly quiet day followed by a hectic evening. This changed from the moment I arrived.

Having made good time to the venue I donned this year's festival shirt, blue with a picture of a penguin bursting out of a cake, and sought out my role for the day; bottom bar on day one and top bar on day two. Sorted. Having no serving to do until opening at 11am I started looking at the beers on offer and chatted away with a number of the Exeter branch members that I hadn't seen for some time. However, whilst occupying myself with general prefestival chores I was cajoled into helping to set up the tasting session for the judges in the Executive box. To everyone that thought I disappeared for a couple of hours I apologise, I wasn't skiving I was hobnobbing with the judges in the board room and tasting the Champion Beer of Britain entries.

For those that don't know how this works (I had to look some of this up) the Champion Beer of Britain (CBOB) judging is a long process of selecting and tasting/judging beers at regional level across a number of categories before final judging of the regional champions at the Great British Beer

Festival (or national winter festival for some beers). It would not be fair to compare the taste of say, a best bitter with a stout, so there are categories for various styles of beer. The Exeter FOWA has the privilege of awarding the South West regional champion for the Old Ale/Strong Mild and Barley Wine categories.

With the judges all seated in the boardroom with their crackers, mineral water and vast selection of glassware making it look like the gift shop at Dartington Crystal, we began. It was the job of a small group of volunteers to get the selected beers that had been put forward as CBOB competitors ready for the judges to drink. A flagon of each beer was poured from the firkin in the bar and delivered to the boardroom, each ominously numbered but otherwise indistinguishable apart from a subtle difference in colour.

The first beer was poured and the judges set to work, swirling the glass, lifting to the sky to check the colour, smelling, swirling again and finally tasting. Some discussion was made about flavours "Malty but with a hint of coffee?" one proffered. "Cabbage?" another joked. This went on for some 10 minutes before each had scored the beer on clarity, aroma, taste, and aftertaste.

This process was repeated for each of the 6 beers in both categories. With each taking so long, and there being little else to do, after the judges had finished with their share of each flagon us meagre volunteers divided the remaining beer, tasting each as if judges ourselves. All were very good beers, served to perfection thanks to the hard work of CAMRA members over the previous few days setting up the festival.

After a couple of hours the scores were tallied and

the winner of each category announced. The judges had chosen Wessex, Beasts of Zeals as the best Barley Wine and Ramsbury, Deerhunter the best Old Ale/Strong Mild.

With the judging finished and the washing up completed it was back to the festival with everyone else for a day and half of working the bar. As always this was a great experience, the bar was constantly well in demand, but not as hectic as I expected, even in the evening where on the second day, working the top bar we sold out of all beer by around 9pm and managed to pack away the bar and dismantle the stillage before closing of the bottom bar at 11-which had only small amounts of 3 beers remaining.

I'm sure next year will be just as successful and hopefully I will see even more North Devon members helping out.

CBOB nominations were:

Old Ale/Strong Milds

Box Steam – Dark and Handsome

Ramsbury – Deerhunter

Summerskills – Indiana Bones

Wadworth - Old Timer

Exe Valley – Winter Glow

Driftwood – Alfie's Revenge

Barley Wines and Strong Old Ales

Exmoor – Beast

Wessex - Beast of Zeals

Cottage - Normans Conquest

Moor – Old Freddie Walker

Battledown - Four Kings Ale

RCH – Santa Fe

Matt Collins



Pub News from around the Branch

January and February are often difficult months for pubs, but while some do seem to be rather quiet, others are reporting that trade is actually a bit better than expected. Perhaps this reflects the fact that we are visiting some of the better pubs at present, in order to carry out the GBG surveys that are undertaken at this time of year, and discretionary spending is indeed being spent with some discretion. I have also noted that this year more pubs have quite sensibly reduced the number of real ales they are trying to keep during the inevitable post Christmas lull.

With more than three hundred licensed premises in our North Devon area, this summary of latest pub news cannot by any means be regarded as being comprehensive. Among latest developments though:

In Ilfracombe The Pier, which was acquired by the new owners of Wizard Brewery late last year, has been closed since January 9th. There is little sign of the planned major refurbishment having started as yet. The construction of Ilfracombe's new Wetherspoon pub, to be called The Admiral Collingwood, is now well underway with an intended opening date of 22nd April. The recent bad weather has delayed progress however, and that date could prove optimistic. How much effect the presence of this new Wetherspoons will have on other Ilfracombe pubs remains to be seen. It was interesting though, to read the recent comments of Ilfracombe Councillor Mike Edmunds. Any investment in Ilfracombe is a good thing he said and Wetherspoons can hardly be blamed for there being three closed pubs on Ilfracombe High Street already. Ilfracombe cafes could be more affected than pubs he suggested.

The Dolphin in Combe Martin has reopened and is reported as doing quite well. The Royal Marine, also in Combe Martin, remains closed and, although there had been a rumour that it had been bought,

this does not yet appear to be the case. The George in Braunton now has a new landlord. Although originally local, for the last thirty years he has run a Fullers pub in Buckinghamshire. First impressions are favourable. Two real ales are kept, one of which is a "guest", a new good value food menu has been introduced and the new licensee is a keen supporter of CAMRA. It is also planned to hold at least one real ale festival a year. A planning application has been made to demolish The Borough Arms, in the Forches area of Barnstaple. The pub has been closed for some time and although there have been some local objections, given the location it seems likely that it will eventually make way for housing.

It is reported that **The Champ** in Appledore has closed temporarily for a refit and that **The Kings Arms** in Holsworthy is up for sale. Meanwhile at **The Old Market Inn**, also in Holsworthy and our North Devon Pub of the Year in 2010, 2011 and 2012, landlord Lee Sycamore hopes to be back behind the bar in February following his operation. We all wish Lee well in his continuing recovery. Good reports have been received about two other Holsworthy pubs; **The Rydon Inn** and **The Golden Fleece**.

The Green Dragon at Northlew has been sold following the landlord's retirement, with a young couple due to take over this month. One pub definitely gone for good is The Tiverton Inn, South Molton. Finally closing its doors as a pub in 2012, the property will now be converted into offices following planning approval earlier this month.

The Jubilee Inn at West Anstey, which had been closed for well over a year, was finally sold last year and is currently undergoing a major refurbishment. It is thought likely to reopen before the summer.

The Castle at George Nympton re-opened at the beginning of November, following a few weeks of closure. The experienced new licensee has considerably smartened up the premises. The pub is being well supported by the village at present and there now seems to be more certainty about the long term future of the **The Castle** than for several years. A changing guest beer is kept alongside the regular Exmoor Ale, together with Sam's Medium cider.

Another pub that seems to have eventually settled down is The Royal Exchange in Torrington. When it first reopened in October, following some 16 months of closure, there were some doubts as to whether the licensee would be long term. Those doubts were confirmed within just a few weeks. The new tenants are well known in Torrington, having had much to do with the running of the town's football club in recent years.

It appears that the owners of **The Clinton Arms** at Frithlestock have decided to retire and the pub is now advertised for sale. A GBG entry in 2010, this well run pub has held some very enjoyable Easter and August bank holiday beer and music festivals in recent years.

Finally, congratulations are due to **The Bell** at Chittlehampton, which was announced as winner of the North Devon Journal pub of the year in December. The Bell has appeared in every Good Beer Guide since 1997 and was our CAMRA North Devon Pub of the Year in 2007. Last year marked the twenty fifth anniversary of Mark and Lynn Jones' tenancy of the pub, which prior to that had been run by Lynn's parents.

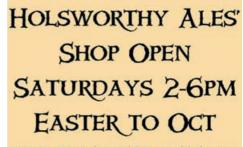




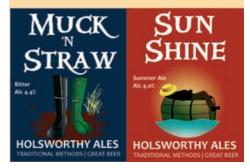
A sad site - the boarded-up Bridge Inn in Hatherleigh



The Duke of York in Iddesleigh serves three real ales



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Branch Festive Lunch

We seem to have begun a tradition of holding our Branch Festive Lunch in our Pub Of The Year, so in December 2013 we were fortunate enough to be entertained by The Ship and Pilot in Ilfracombe.

Places were limited and we were soon fully booked, sadly I even had to turn members away. The menu looked superb but none of us were prepared for how good the food would be. Nick had really prepared the skittle alley well too and it looked very festive.

Members attending had been asked to bring along a raffle prize – these ranged from a crate of 12 beers from the Wizard Brewery group to a hand-made hop pillow. The raffle raised £50 for branch funds and selling raffle tickets was quite entertaining!

At the end of our meal Santa arrived to do the raffle. Unfortunately Morris, our Chairman, missed all this as he had stepped outside to see if the tide was in! I can't remember how long we were there but it was well worth the journey from the far south of the branch to the far north. I'm sure all those who attended would like to join me in thanking Nick and his staff for providing such a wonderful event for us.

Fiona Elsworth



Santa passes amongst the members dispensing festive cheer and presents!



Fiona on raffle ticket sales duty.



Membership - What's in it for you?

Hello members of North Devon Branch and Hello non-members

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, is run by its members supported by a small team of paid staff at HQ. Without our members we would never have achieved our successes and seen the phenomenal growth of real ale and brewers.

Most members would like to do something to help but don't know where to begin. But you can make a difference, whether you have only 10 minutes a month or could spare an hour a week. It all counts towards driving the Campaign forward.

What's in it for you?

- A chance to use your skills in a different environment.
- Satisfaction that you are helping to protect pubs and campaign for good beer.
- A chance to learn new skills such as writing, lobbying, project planning, tasting, people management and even public speaking – to name just a few.
- Sociability needless to say we like to meet in a pub.
- Chance to go on brewery trips, meet brewers and understand more about beer.

So what could you do?

Not much time?

- Be a beer scorer use the National Beer Scoring Scheme on line to record the quality of beer you have drunk.
- Adopt a pub let us know about the pubs you have visited e.g. change of landlord, refurbishment, change of beer stock, introduction of real cider.

A little time?

- Write an article for this newsletter maybe on a local pub-crawl. Or help to distribute the newsletter.
- Join us on Facebook and write about the pubs you visit, the beers you drink etc.

- Contribute to a local guide of pubs in our branch.
- Assist with the prices survey of pubs in the branch.
- Do some lobbying write to your local MP or local councilor.
- Volunteer at a beer festival its not all about serving beer and cider; there is front of house, glasses, membership, products and even sometimes games and catering.
- Work at a national beer festival you don't need any experience to help at one of CAMRA's national events such as The Great British Beer Festival.

A little more time?

- Become a Brewery Liaison Officer or Pubs Officer. This entails meeting representatives, writing reports to keep the rest of CAMRA up to date and giving relevant information to the representatives.
- Join the branch committee. We have lots of jobs such as the usual ones – Chair, Secretary, Treasurer but also Press Officer, Public Affairs Officer, LocAle coordinator, pubs officer, Webmaster, newsletter editor, cider coordinator, social secretary, membership secretary and young members rep. So there's plenty to choose from.
- Join a National Committee. Some committees are on the lookout for people with specialist skills including IT, planning, finance, marketing, sales, PR, publishing and lots more.

CAMRA has over 5,000 volunteers all over the country involved with doing everything from running branches, running beer festivals, lobbying MPs, liaising with breweries, surveying pubs and much, much more. Some involve going to meetings, many do not, There is something to suit everyone.

Why not get involved?

Fiona Membership Secretary Fiona.ndcamra@icloud.com







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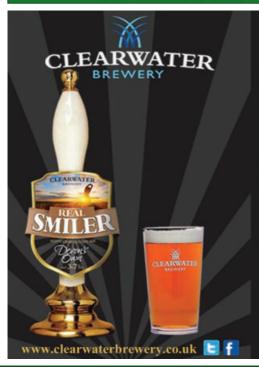
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Chittlehampton, Umberleigh, North Devon. EX37 9QL



Clearwater, 'Devon's Own' brewery, makes easy drinking mellow English ale from our new site in Bideford. Regular beers include Real Smiler, Devon Dympsy, Proper Ansome and Dark Night ranging from 3.7 to 5.2ABV. We produce seasonal beers and can make a house beer for any pub. All our range is available bottled.

We pride ourselves on being nice people to do business with and we will do all we can to make sure you are happy with the beer, the price and the service.

Brewery tours available – please phone for an appointment – but we're always happy to see people so if you want to, pop in.

01237 420 492

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