

# Beer Tiz



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Issue 17  
Winter 2017

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CAMRA North Devon Branch



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# Witterings of The Wizard



It is that time of year when I shake out the creases from my red suit and prepare to 'Ho Ho Ho' in a jolly way! It is also the time for carnivals, parties, carol singing and celebrations of a festive manner.

Visitor numbers to this wonderful part of the country are not declining as people travel to enjoy the beauty of the South West, to be with friends and family. My local is often full of people I don't know! Now my grumble....why do they have to talk so loudly? Am I the only person who finds other people's loud conversations annoying? I know Fiona enjoys listening to gossip when we are in the pub but the other evening I actually had to move from where I was sitting because I couldn't hear my own conversation over that of the two men sitting at the next table. I realized then that, despite my hearing loss and the ability to vary the volume on my hearing aids I still find this intrusive behavior a pain in the proverbial!

Am I alone in this I wonder? Whilst I appreciate that the pub is somewhere people go to enjoy the company of others, generally, this can so easily be spoilt by what I consider to be selfish behavior. Noisy conversation, noisy & unsupervised children, drunken behavior, abusive language, these are all things which aggravate and cause me to grumble.



I love a busy pub and don't mind waiting at the bar to be served but a little consideration goes a long way. I don't want to waste my pint being jostled by inconsiderate people unwilling to wait their turn. I don't want to hear rude remarks flung at overworked bar staff trying to do their best. I don't want to be tripped up by young children running around because they are bored and their parents are nowhere to be seen (or outside polluting the doorway) and I don't want to have intelligent intercourse overpowered by a trivial cacophony.

Happy Christmas

**Morris Elsworth**  
*Aka Grumbledore*



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# Branch Calendar

## DECEMBER 2017

Sat 9th

Branch Meeting /Brewery of the Year Award - The Crown Inn,  
West Down, EX34 8NF

## JANUARY 2018

Sat 13th

Branch Meeting - The Panniers, Barnstaple, EX31 1RX

Fri 19th/ Sat 20th

Exeter Festival of Winter Ales (11am-11pm) - Exeter City FC,  
St James Park, Exeter, EX4 6PX

## FEBRUARY 2018

Sat 10th

Branch Meeting - The Muddiford Inn, Muddiford, EX31 4EY  
(to be confirmed)

Sat 17th

CAMRA South-West Regional meeting : Bath and Borders  
(venue TBA)

Tues 20th - Sat 24th

Great British (Winter) Beer Festival, Norwich NR3 1AU

## MARCH 2018

Sat 10th

Branch AGM - The Ebrington Arms, Knowle, EX33 2LW

## APRIL 2018

Sat 14th

Branch Meeting (venue to be arranged)

Fri 20th - Sun 22nd

CAMRA Members' Weekend, AGM and Conference,  
University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL

## COMMITTEE CONTACT INFORMATION

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vacancy

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### PUBLIC TRANSPORT OFFICER

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### TASTING PANEL CHAIR

Fiona Elsworth  
fiona.ndcamra@icloud.com



# Real Ale in a Can!

## You must be having a laugh...?



When in September members from North Devon CAMRA ventured across the county border to visit the Bude brewery, we knew there would be a warm welcome and some excellent beers for us to sample. We weren't disappointed. Summerleaze (4.7%), Porthbud (4.0%) and Blackrock (5.1%) were all in fine form. But what we hadn't anticipated was an introduction to the novel idea of real ale in a can! Having acquired a mobile canning facility (Ringpull), it seems the brewers at Bude are now diversifying their successful bottling activity by also packaging their ales in 330cl cans for sale in

a wide variety of outlets across the region.

But, I hear you say, can this actually qualify as 'real ale' as CAMRA would define it?

Well, apparently so. In

September 2016 tests carried out at the Great British Beer festival confirmed 'micro-canned' beer from the Moor Beer Brewing Company based in Bristol as the first to qualify as Real Ale under CAMRA's own definition - the beer containing live yeast with its carbonisation created by natural secondary fermentation. 'Micro-canning' is a term coined by the brewing industry to describe ways of conditioning beers in a sealed can.

National CAMRA chairman Colin Valentine said at the time "I'm delighted that we've been able to show that 'micro-canned' beer under the right circumstances can qualify as real ale, which means that more drinkers can get access to what we believe is the pinnacle of brewing skill - live beer which continues to ferment and develop in whichever container it's served from.

On reflection, it's not so surprising CAMRA have taken this step, having long since recognized bottle conditioned beers as 'real ale', so it would have been inconsistent not to do likewise for beer which contains live yeast but just happens to be in a

container made of a different material.

Although beer in a can has always had something of a bad reputation (not least for tasting 'tinny') this may be about to change. Indeed, in strictly packaging



terms cans could potentially be the ideal container for take-away beers as not only do they block all light and air from contaminating the product, but cans are lighter, safer and more recyclable than glass. Plus the use of modern materials to provide an ultra thin, water based lining to the inside of the can has surely gone a long way, at least in theory, to eradicate any chance of the metal imparting any unwanted flavour to the beer and so overcoming that unpleasant metallic taste we associate with beer in a can? (In actual fact most cans have been made from aluminum rather than tin for decades now!)

The down side of the argument is that unlike bottles, cans aren't see-through so it's impossible to check that the yeast has properly settled and the beer will be crystal clear - and yes, I know there's another debate to be had here about the use of finings, but rightly or wrongly most consumers still expect their beer to be crystal clear, especially when poured from a can!

So - you pay your money and make your choice. For Bude it seems that canning has provided an extra string to their bow, helping them increase sales and reach new markets. They even have plans to increase can size to 440cl and transfer their canning facility from the mobile unit to the main body of the brewery. Whether any brewer in North Devon has plans to follow them down the 'Real Ale in a can' path awaits to be seen ... so watch this space.

Peter Thompson

# GT ALES

## North Devon CAMRA Brewery of the Year



### The story so far...



GT Ales began life in September 2013, brewing and selling small batches of their products in the Barnstaple area. Very quickly this required a move to their current premises at Chivenor Business Park. With a purpose built 5 barrel plant, GT are now in their fourth year of production. Owned and run by lifelong friends Gary Jarvis and Toby Marsh (hence the name!), with each bringing their own distinct but complementary business skills to the enterprise, theirs is a down to earth approach to brewing. Above all, both are passionate about what they do, committed to producing only the highest quality ales.

The brewery's initial line-up was just three ales. A premium Best Bitter (**Thirst of Many**); a Golden Ale (**Blonde Ambition**); and a Speciality beer (**Copper Rye'd**). These proved to be so successful that three more ales have since been added to the GT production line - a Milk Stout (**Dark Horse**); an American style IPA (**North Coast**); and most recently a Speciality Copper Ale (**Battleaxe**). Brewed exclusively for the Panniers Inn at Barnstaple, Battleaxe is currently the only permanent real ale (not a Guest beer) that J D Wetherspoon buy from a Micro Brewery anywhere in the country. This is a tremendous achievement for GT Ales, and has come about as a direct result of the huge demand for their beers whenever they have featured as guest ales in the various local Wetherspoon outlets. So very well done the lads! (You'll also be pleased to hear that the entire GT range of ales with the exception of Battleaxe is available all year round in cask and bottle conditioned form).

The reputation of GT Ales has already begun to stretch beyond North Devon, with beers selected for the Great British Beer Festival, and featured in both the National Winter Ale festival at Derby and the recent RHS Festival of Real Ale held at Rosemoor. GT have also found success nearer home, claiming the Champion Beer award at the Uffculme Beer & Music festival, and winning joint best beer at this year's Barnstaple Food and Drink festival. Active in many local community and charitable events, GT ales can regularly be found at Summer or Christmas fairs, while the donation of Ale to CAMRA's South West regional campaigning day was greatly appreciated, helping as it did draw attention to the paucity of rural transport to some of our pubs.

Needless to say, all this hard work and success has not gone unnoticed. GT is now the beer of choice for many local pubs and features as a regular 'guest ale' in many more. More recently GT ales have successfully penetrated many of the prestigious 'higher end' hotel and restaurant bar outlets in the area, and can increasingly be found in speciality food and drink shops throughout the region. In recognition of these achievements, GT were voted 'run away' winners for the North Devon CAMRA branch Brewery of the Year. We look forward to their continued success in brewing such a wide range of outstanding real ales - long may it continue. So cheers to Gary and Toby - well done both!



## GT ALES DRINKING NOTES

**Thirst of Many:** Best Bitter (ABV 4.2%) GT's flagship ale. Amber in colour, fruity taste, slight caramel, medium hop and malt finish. Excellent session beer.

**Blonde Ambition:** Golden Ale (4.5%) Originally described as a Summer Ale, its popularity means it's now brewed all year round. Bright pale Gold/Yellow, floral aroma, citrus and slight gooseberry notes with a good hop finish. Very refreshing.

**North Coast IPA:** Golden Ale (ABV 4.3%) American style IPA Golden Ale with strong fruity aroma, slightly sweet taste, hints of tropical fruits, triple hops give a complex and lingering hop finish.

**Crimson Rye'd:** Speciality Beer (ABV 4.8%) Distinct red colour. Made with Rye malt and a mixture of unusual hops. Strong fruity malted taste with a full residual hop finish.

**Dark Horse:** Milk Stout (ABV 4.5%) Very smooth mouth feel, slightly sweet taste, fruity with hints of blackcurrant. Very slight coffee bitterness in the finish. Excellent example of how to brew a stout!

**Battleaxe:** Speciality (ABV 4.7%) Loosley based on Copper Rye'd, red in colour, fruity and a slight woody aroma with apricot and peach notes. Unusual hops give it a medium fruity hop finish.

(GT contact details : Gary Jarvis, Toby Marsh. Tel. 01271 267420. Email: [info@gtales.co.uk](mailto:info@gtales.co.uk))

Chris Smyth



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# Congratulations to...

## Champion Beer of Britain 2017 goes to Goat's Milk from Church End brewery

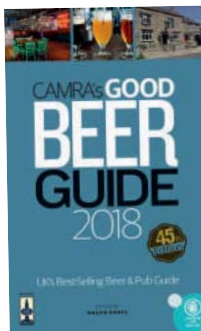
Congratulations to the Church End brewery in Warwickshire for their Goat's Milk which has won CAMRA's prestigious Champion Beer of Britain award for 2017. Described as 'golden yellow nectar' this 3.8% ale is a delicious blend of pale barley, crystal malt and aromatic hops. The



award is the culmination of almost a year of tasting panels and regional heats, with the finalist beers from across the country being invited to compete at the Great British Beer Festival held at Olympia in London in August.



## 5 North Devon pubs enter the CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2018 for the first time



Congratulations to no less than 5 North Devon pubs appearing for the very first time in the 2018 CAMRA Good Beer Guide. Each year the branch gets to select just 27 pubs from the several hundred in our area. All the pubs are nominated, evaluated and reviewed by local CAMRA volunteers, making the GBG the only publication of its kind where landlords can't buy a place - not for love nor money!

With the competition fierce, there simply isn't room for all the great pubs in North Devon, which makes the achievement of those pubs making their breakthrough entry to this year's GBG all the more remarkable.

So very well done to all the following:

The **Blue Lion** at Lewdown  
The **Windsor Arms** at Bradiford  
The **Ebrington Arms** at Knowle  
The **Pint and Post** at St Giles on the Heath  
The **Admiral Collingwood** at Ilfracombe

For a full list of the 27 entries for North Devon (plus the 4,500 pubs listed nationwide!) then why not treat yourself to a copy of the GBG this Xmas?



## Devon Life Food and Drinks Awards

Congratulations to Ellis and Amie Pannell of the **Pyne Arms** at East Down for winning the Best Pub award in this year's Devon Life Food and Drinks Awards.

## *CAMRA's National Cider Pub of the Year title goes to Ye Older Cider Bar, Newton Abbot*

Congratulations to **Ye Olde Cider Bar** in Newton Abbot on being awarded CAMRA's national Cider Pub of the Year title. This traditional pub which sells only cider, perry and fruit wines is the only one ever to win the prestigious title twice, having first won the award in 2011. With its vast array of local ciders sourced from independent producers, Ye Olde Cider Bar is an historic landmark in Newton Abbot and attracts visitors from all over the world as well as being hugely popular with us Devon folk!



## DARTMOOR'S FINEST

The UK's highest brewery at 1,465ft above sea level, Dartmoor Brewery creates handcrafted cask conditioned real ales with authentic Dartmoor character from its heartland in Princetown. Since its formation in 1994, Dartmoor Brewery has gone from strength to strength producing top quality ales using the finest local ingredients, which remain highly regarded across the South West by licensees and real ale drinkers.



Dartmoor Brewery Ltd, Station Road, Princetown, Devon PL20 6QX  
Telephone: 01822 890789 Fax: 01822 890798 [www.dartmoorbrewery.co.uk](http://www.dartmoorbrewery.co.uk)



# Pub News

## from around the Branch



After being closed for almost exactly 12 months, the **Globe Inn** at Beaford reopened in October, since when new owners Jimi and Sam have been very warmly received by the villagers. They are currently



stocking up to four very well kept ales along with around 40 craft beers in either can or bottle. They are hoping to start serving good honest pub food before Christmas, while getting the four bedroom accommodation up and running before Easter. They are also offering a beer discount to CAMRA members.

The new licensees at the **Coach and Horses**, Horns Cross are also settling in nicely. They too are stocking four real ales. In Langtree, the freehold of the **Green Dragon** is being offered for sale after 14 years under its current ownership. In Barnstaple the **Panniers** reopened following a major refurbishment, although I think it's a pity the refurb budget didn't stretch to improving access to the gents toilet. However, on a more positive note, they are now stocking **Battleaxe** from GT Ales on a regular basis exclusively to Wetherspoons.

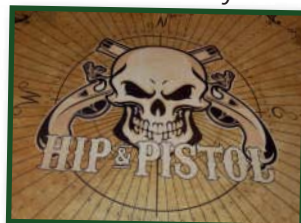


On the beer festival front, there was as usual an adventurous line-up of beers and ciders at the recent Rough Hills annual beer festival held at the **New Inn**, Roborough. Successful festivals were also held over the Bank Holiday weekend at the **Golden Lion** in High Bickington and the **Duke of York** at Iddesleigh.



To add a note of glamour, Hollywood icon Hugh Grant was seen in October filming at the **Bell Inn** at Chittlehampton, recreating the career of MP Jeremy Thorpe. Scenes for the new three part BBC drama "A Very English Scandal" were filmed in the village square and in the Bell.

The **Ship and Pilot** in Ilfracombe closed briefly and was then reopened under the new landlord. Nick Walters (the Ship and Pilot's previous landlord) has now opened his new pub, the **Hip and Pistol**, in the town no more than a stone's throw from the Ship! The **Second Stage**, also in Ilfracombe, continues to surprise and please CAMRA members with the quality of the ales on offer. Recent guest ales have included Cotleigh **Barn Owl** and **Tawney**, plus Brakespeare's **Oxford Gold**. All of these were found to be in good order and drinking very well alongside the house beer, Marsden's **Lancaster Bomber**.



New landlords Paul and Lorraine are settling in nicely at the **Laurels** in Petrockstow and reportedly the locals are flooding back in.

Finally this month I thought you would like to hear about a new brewery. It's called **Two Tone Beers** and they are based at Shebbear behind the chapel in the home of co-owner Gary Seaton. Together with his business partner Paul Scantlebury from Merton, they are currently brewing in Gary's garage, although at present each brew only produces 20 litres at a time. However, a new brewery 'shed' is soon to be built in the garden. While Paul is originally from Bristol, Gary comes from Coventry, hence the Two Tone record label is the reason for the brewery's name - Coventry being home to the Specials and Selector, both on the Two Tone record label owned by Specials keyboardist Jerry Dammers.

The three beers they currently produce give reference to the music that influenced them. **Rude Boy IPA**, an American style IPA with five American

hops weighs in at 5.6%. **Judge Roughneck** is a strong American Pale Ale with three hops, mainly Citra, and is 6.6%. **Nite Club** is a delicious 5% German style Kolsch which will possibly include an anti-lager reference on its labelling! All their beer is unfiltered and therefore vegan friendly.

Gary and Paul plan to sell to the public at fetes, fairs and markets for the time being, with planned appearances at both the High Bickington and Barnstaple Pannier Market Xmas markets. But surely it is only a question of time before we will be seeing Two Tone beers on sale in North Devon pubs?

**Andy Grant**

*Pubs Officer Group Co-ordinator*

## Pub Company Changes

### How do they affect your Local?

CAMRA is investigating the impact of changes to our pubs as the big pub owning companies react to the Pubs Code, put into force in 2016 after years of campaigning by licensee groups and CAMRA.

In the last two years the number of pubs run on traditional long-term tenancies has fallen as some tenants are replaced by managers. Licensee campaigners are concerned that this may encourage management turnover, all to avoid pubs being covered by the Code. The impact on customers is less clear.

Our Pubs Campaigns Committee is looking, confidentially, for information. It is particularly interested to see if changes in management to pub company pubs result in more or less choice after a change in tenant? Or do you work in a pubco pub and have seen changes? The Committee would also like to know about any changes in prices and in the quality of the beer being served.

Please send information to the Committee's Chair.

**Paul Ainsworth**

[paul.ainsworth@camra.org.uk](mailto:paul.ainsworth@camra.org.uk)  
or phone him on 01226 217195

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# The Muddiford Inn

## What a difference a road makes!



Since taking over the Muddiford Inn almost three years ago, Hayley and Gareth Chastney have worked hard to build up their business. During this time they have turned this friendly village pub into a popular destination for both locals and visitors alike. So the decision of Devon County Council's highways authority to close the main road into Muddiford from Barnstaple for no less than three months came as a bitter blow. The timing, which meant that the closure would coincide with the run up to Christmas, did not help. Neither did the signposted diversion which involved a detour of no less than 20 miles!

The B3230 road between Rose Cottages and Plaistow Mills closed on 18th September and is not scheduled to reopen until 22nd December. The works, which involve the building of a retaining wall to stabilize a failed embankment, are deemed too major to allow for temporary traffic lights. Although emergency vehicles are being allowed through, the regular Coombe Martin to Barnstaple bus service through the village has been diverted. Without passing traffic, a roadside pub can make little or no use of A-boards, so important in drawing attention to things such as Sunday Lunches, quiz nights or other special events taking place.

Unfortunately businesses affected by such road closures receive no compensation. Hayley and Gareth's experience in 2015, when the same stretch of road was closed for just a week and their trade all but disappeared, persuaded them that some difficult decisions would need to be taken if they were to keep going. They knew that without passing trade it would cost more to stay open during the day than they were ever likely to take, so the pub has had to shut during the daytime on all weekdays except Friday. Staff hours had to be cut as a result, but concerned to look after their valued team as best they could, Gareth has taken on some of the maintenance jobs around the pub thereby creating extra work for staff while saving money on necessary improvements.

Always positive, Hayley and Gareth have actually increased the number of special events taking place, particularly at weekends, and locals have responded well with their support. Rightly proud of the way they keep their beer, the number of real ales has sensibly been reduced during the road closure. There are normally two if not three,



including "Muddy Puddle", brewed for the pub by St Austell, and at least one from a North Devon brewery. For the time being though they are keeping just one real ale on at a time, but with a second being added for functions and special events.

Brenda and I visited the pub late one afternoon in early November and were certainly made most welcome. Our (unofficial!) detour via Shirwell and Berry Down was made on perfectly adequate roads and added only about six miles to the normal route. Apparently official diversions have to use roads



of equal category which is why the signposted diversion is so much longer. (A similar predicament arose a few years ago when diversion signs resulting from a prolonged closure of the A377 severely affected trade at the Portsmouth Arms despite the pub itself being perfectly accessible!). Surely in such situations there must be ways of allowing light traffic through to affected villages even if heavy goods vehicles do have to be diverted further afield?

At the time of our visit the roads works were understood to be about a week behind schedule. Hayley and Gareth remain positive however, hoping that a spell of fine weather might just allow the road to reopen on time. We wish them well and sincerely hope that they enjoy a buoyant Christmas and New Year - they certainly deserve it!

Bob Goddard



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# KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH ALL BRANCH MEMBERS

In recent years there has been a steady switch to using e-mail as the primary method of communication within CAMRA. New members have been encouraged to supply an e-mail address along with their other details when joining. With the strong growth in membership that has taken place in recent years, this means that we are now able to reach most of the membership in this way. However, there still remains a sizeable minority of members for whom we do not have a current e-mail address, particularly our longer-standing members. Unfortunately, by not receiving regular communications, these members can be left unaware of the various meetings and social events being held within the branch, as well as some of the current campaigning issues. These days they also miss out on many opportunities to play their part when it comes to such things as selecting pubs and clubs for branch awards, nominating for the GBG

and voting for their favourite beers etc.

If you are a member who is not receiving regular branch e-mail communications but do have an e-mail facility, then please let us know your contact details. Similarly, if you have joint membership but would like to have your e-mails sent to separate e-mail addresses, then we will be only too pleased to oblige. (And for those without a computer of their own, simply nominate a family member or friend and we will be happy to send communications to their address for them to pass on to you).

So, if we do not already have your e-mail contact details, or you suspect that the one that we do have is incorrect, then please do let me know.

**Bob Goddard**

*Membership Secretary, North Devon CAMRA*

**membership@northdevoncamra.org.uk**

Telephone 01769 520 514

## The North Devon Branch of CAMRA the Campaign for Real Ale

**A volunteer community organisation that:**

- cares about real ale, cider and perry
- fights to support local pubs in their communities
- lobbies government to promote responsible policies

**If you're a like-minded person who would be interested in:**

- coming along to our monthly branch meeting to discuss these issues
- enjoying visiting local breweries or joining us on an 'ale trail'
- learning from one of our tutored beer tasting events
- volunteering to work at a local beer festival

**Then why not find out more about CAMRA?**

**Contact Membership Secretary: Bob Goddard**

**Tel: 01769 520 514**

**Email: [membership@northdevoncamra.org.uk](mailto:membership@northdevoncamra.org.uk)**

**Or find us at [www.northdevoncamra.org.uk](http://www.northdevoncamra.org.uk) (or Facebook)**



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