

CAMRA
Highlands
and
Western
Isles
No 54
Autumn
2017

What's Yours Then?



FREE

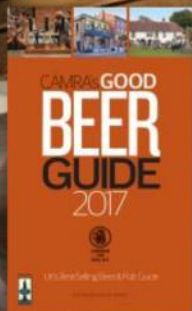


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From the Editor



Welcome to this Autumn edition of What's Yours Then? and, if you're a visitor to our beautiful region, 'ceud mile fáilte'. It's been a quiet news month at the H&WI newsdesk

and this has made room for a couple of features from holidaymakers who have visited and enjoyed the offerings from H&WI breweries. Pete Harris from the York branch entertains us with his account of a 'spirited' 185-mile slog down* the Hebridean Way with girlfriend Judith from Vatersay to the Ness of Lewis, and Roger Gentry of Gravesend and Darent Valley reflects on the brews he sampled along Loch Ness and Loch Lomond while visiting.

Special congratulations to Black Isle and Cromarty, both of whom featured highly in Champion Beer of Scotland. Andy, BI's brewer regales our front cover with a glass of Strong Old Ale category winner 'Hibernator', straight from the conditioning tank. Toward the back of this issue Craig Middleton, who is appearing so often he nearly merits his own column, is seen receiving overall silver for Cromarty's Rogue Wave. Cromarty gets even more gongs, having won the World's Best Imperial/double IPA accolade for 'Man Overboard' at this year's world beer awards, where Orkney also starred with Dark Island Reserve and Red MacGregor

Simon writes in his Chairman's piece about the 'Local Meetings' now taking

place so I'll not steal his thunder, other than to remark on what a good idea this is. The main problem that we're up against in this CAMRA branch is the perennial lack of people in a very large area. So the more opportunities we have to get together to share beer ideas or even just to score a pub, the better the system works overall.

Summer is festival season, and it's encouraging to see real ale getting a presence at HebCelt, Belladrum and the likes. One of the problems CAMRA faces nationally is an ageing profile, at this year's AGM and conference in Bournemouth I was uncomfortably aware of being one of the youngest present, at a tender age of 50... The solution is obviously to get more young people interested in great beer, but this truism falls into the same category as an entrepreneur saying "The first million is always the hardest".

Also encouraging is seeing the ever-growing number of pubs and hotels that now have at least one real ale offering; if you're popping in for a quick half, that's really all you need provided it's well kept. Thumbs up to the Tea Garden Café in Mallaig for taking the plunge with Isle of Skye Red, among the other new appearances in the Pub News section. I hope to read the happy news of many more such additions in future!

Ad multas cereviasias

Tony Vernon
editor@highland.camra.org.uk

* In Uist south="up" and north="down"

From the Chair

When reviewing the membership of H&WI by postcode earlier this year, it was clear that there were several 'hotspots' or clusters where there was a concentration of members. The current H&WI membership stands at 263 and has grown steadily over the last year.

Obviously, there is a concentration in and around Inverness with 40 members in the IV 1, 2, 3 and 4 postcode areas, but also 34 in IV12 (Nairn) and 20 in the Aviemore / Kingussie / Newtonmore corridor. After an earlier shaky start, I tried to arrange meetings in those places, but it became increasingly difficult for one reason or another. By having a single meeting in one place means that many of the membership can not attend.

At the meeting in Thurso at Weigh Inn in August, it was suggested having an 'area' get together in Wick at Mackays on 16th but this was moved to 23rd because Keith had a prior engagement. Having pencilled in Stornoway for a meeting on 23 September, Don and Jim, both from Lewis, appealed for an event in Ullapool. A plan was forming!

Rather than have one meeting, in one place, why not have several meetings in different places on the same day? Quickly, all the planets came into alignment, and using the clever branch mailout tool it was possible to target particular postcodes. In succession Plockton Hotel, Duke of Gordon (Kingussie), Cobbs at Nevisport (Fort William), Benleiva and Bandstand all became venues, the last two chosen because they had beer festivals and would be a natural draw for members.

The idea of these 'get togethers' was NOT to have a dry, dusty, boring meeting, but to allow CAMRA members (and their friends) to meet and chat about beers and pubs, and whatever the mood takes them.

Keith Morrell did particularly well with five other CAMRA members joining him at Mackays in Wick, with the surprise

appearance of John Mainprize of John O'Groats brewery bringing a sample of their new beer – Deep Groat, before they all walked to Alexander Bain.

Other than the meeting itself and the pubs

that Ullapool has to offer, I was most looking forward to meeting Don Catterall, 'our man inn Stornoway' with whom I have had many telephone and email exchanges, but like many H&WI members, had never met. The last few visits to Ullapool have been 'fleeting' and a part of a much longer day on the minibus, but with a whole day dedicated to Ullapool an opportunity to visit the pubs at a leisurely pace. One place recently added to WhatPub? is the 'new' An Teallach off-licence, and well worth the visit.

Although not a pub, Don alerted us to the Seafood Shack run by friends Fenella Renwick & Kirsty Scobie which has recently won BBC Radio 4's 'Best Street Food & Take-away' category in the Food & Farming Awards. We took advantage of the good weather to dine 'al fresco' and congratulated Don on his find.

Without suggesting that H&WI are 'trailblazers' some outwith the branch have agreed that the 'distributed meeting' is one likely to be adopted by many other branches who have a membership over such a massive area.

I am hoping to organise another series of 'get togethers' on 19 November in YOUR area. I hope you will all support this new initiative in bringing H&WI CAMRA back to the membership!



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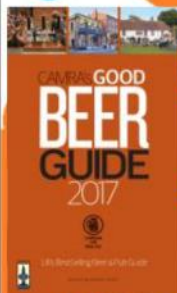
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The Hebridean Way

Pete Harris from York CAMRA was a recent visitor to the Hebrides. He recounts his experience of liquid refreshment available along the Hebridean Way



My girlfriend Judith and I recently completed the 185 mile Hebridean Way cycle route. We were fortunate to have some of the local beers and thought we'd write up our adventure for the local CAMRA magazine which we read en route.

Our first point of call was going to be the Wetherspoons in Oban, but due to a delayed train and a queue at the chippy we had to skip this to make the ferry to Castlebay. On the ferry we had our first Scottish ales of the trip - Fyne Ales Jarl and Vital Spark helped the 6 hour journey go a little quicker.

Eager to get settled we cycled straight to Vatersay, missing out the Castlebay Hotel. We pitched out tent on the dunes and then relaxed to wait for the (very late!) sunset on the beach. Luckily we

had bought a couple of bottles from Drygate Brewery when we visited in Glasgow and could enjoy Rogue's Hazelnut Brown and Santa Fe Black IPA as the sun went down.

The first day's travel included an ease into the cycling across Barra with beautiful views of the sparkling blue sea (and indeed a swim!), a view of the beach airport where we just missed seeing a take-off and then a short ferry ride to Eriskay where it would have been rude not to stop at the Am Politician. At 5pm the pub was already lively with folk musicians playing, and we enjoyed a bottle of Black Isle Red Kite in the beer garden.

A short hop across the causeway to our campsite at West Kilbride. Thankfully we didn't have far to walk for our evening meal at the Polochar Inn. Joe, the jovial landlord was able to seat us for dinner, and we had our first taste of the Isle of Skye Brewing Co. beers (which would be familiar by the end of our trip). Bottles of Skye Red and Skye Black went down very well.



Shortly after setting off the next morning we passed the Borrodale Hotel, sadly too early to stop in [It's my local, you're not missing much - Ed.]. We



Sunset over Vatersay

Brewery ales in bottles, and Skye again - and thanks to the warm welcome we decided to take their one available room for the night and spend the evening in the bar chatting with locals and tourists.

No more pubs available on day 6 our trip to Callanish standing stones (no shops open on a Sunday for bottle sales) and day 7 was similarly dry when we visited the Gearrannan

planned to end our second day of cycling at the Westford Inn due to their entry in Camra's WhatPub website. We arrived not being sure where to camp and the helpful landlady not only pointed us towards an excellent camping spot but also squeezed us in for dinner. We made use of the time before food propping up the bar and sampling the great range of beer. Two cask beers - Jarl and Skye Red - were both in excellent condition, and the range of bottles beers was the best we experienced on the islands. Colonsay IPA and 80/- were the winners this evening, and perhaps of the whole trip.

No pub stop on day 3 or day 4 on our journey across Berneray and South Harris.

Day 5 was the wettest day, which also included the climb over the hills of Harris so we decided not to stop in Tarbert in order to get the cycling over with. Tired and wet around 4pm we stopped at the Loch Erisort Inn on Lewis for refreshment - Hebridean

Village Blackhouses so it wasn't until our final day that we had our next beers.

Day 8 we passed a shop to pick up food and bought bottles of Inveralmond Thrappledouser and Wooha IPA which we enjoyed on the beach at the Butt of Lewis to celebrate the end of the official route.

That night we had the Hebridean



Am Politician, Eriskay

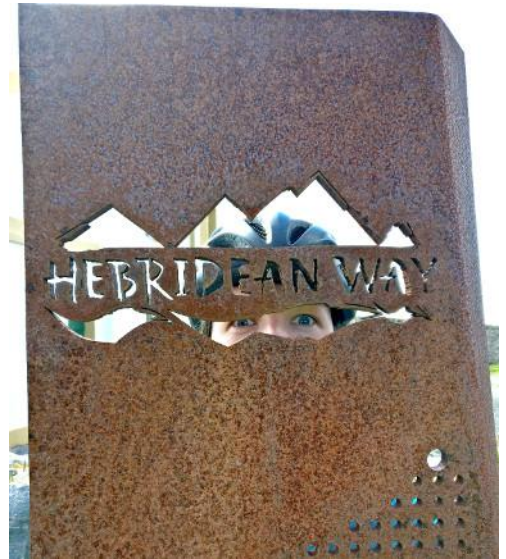
Brewery Berserker in the B&B at South Galston, hearing the story of its namesake the Berserkers from the Lewisian Chess Set.

Our final evening on the islands was spent in Stornoway. Having read the CAMRA magazine we had a list of pubs to visit - starting at the Carlton Lounge which had nothing local, so we stopped at the Crown Inn for a bottle of Joker IPA from Williams Bros. We also checked out an exhibition in the An Lanntair arts centre where we had a bottle of Orkney Dark Island.

We ate at the Thai Cafe where we were able to BYOB from the nearby Co-op. Unfortunately we accidentally chose the Caledonian Outpost IPA which was a rebadged Tennents beer and was difficult to finish.



Our final beer destination was End O' The World which is a great setup and lively tap room for the Hebridean Brewing company which offered their range, five cask and two duplicated on keg, none of which were to our taste.



Sadly we missed the Stornoway beer festival due to take place the week after, but nevertheless we were pleasantly surprised by the range of local ales available, and always enjoyed great hospitality on the islands.

pete@beerfestivalapps.co.uk





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A Visitor from Kent

Roger Gentry from Gravesend and Darent Valley Branch in Kent offers feedback based on his holiday visit to the Highlands

I picked the 'what's yours then' magazine up at the Eagle Barge, South Lagan during my holiday in the Highlands. Unfortunately, I couldn't sample their beer as I was driving but hope you find this feedback about my visit useful.

the Glenspean Lodge hotel just outside Roy Bridge where I stayed. They were selling a very good pint of Isle of Skye Red on handpump in the bar that appeared to be open to non-residents. Worth keeping an eye on. I'm informed that this is now included on WhatPub? but closes November to February.

At the Benelva, Drumnadrochit I tried both of the Hanging Tree beers on offer and was very disappointed. Both were pretty flat and ordinary. Both 2 out of 5 at best, but early days yet!



A well-stocked bar
at The Barge, South Lagan

When I booked my cottage, I hoped to sample the Loch Ness beers, which I'd loved at beer festivals, but they went bust before I got here. Having said that I found the Loch Ness bottled beers a lot tastier than the Cairngorm beers, from the brewery that now brews both.

One location selling real ale not included in the list in your magazine is

Loch Ness Inn, just down the road in Drumnadrochit had three beers on. The landlord said his aim is always to keep a light, mid range and dark beer on rotation. Green King IPA was the mid range beer which coming from the South where it is ubiquitous I didn't try. A couple of Morland beers (golden hen and hoppy hen) were both in top



condition and the two guests during my stay, a Windswept wheat blackcurrant beer and an excellent 'Ghost Town' stout from Cromarty were very well kept. (All probably 4 out of 5). It felt like a pub that looked like a restaurant but really cared about its beers.

Last on the list but first for quality, Dore's Inn. Three Swannay and one Cairngorm beer on, I tried the Swannay pale ale. Excellent pub, excellent beer 5 out of 5. The last couple of weeks on Loch Lomond and Loch Ness have been a revelation beer wise. I can remember when Scotland was a beer desert and it's great to see so many breweries in existence or being set up.

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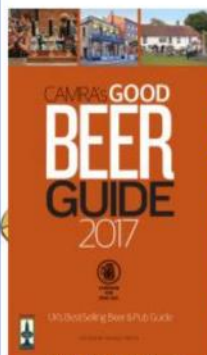
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A Wedding Tale

Keith Morrell, our man in the North, muses on an odyssey to attend friends' nuptials

Would you drive a 1310 mile return journey on overcast September days to attend a wedding? When it's the wedding of the daughter of a long-standing mate, my answer was yes. Mind you, I made sure it wasn't in one go and just happened to coincide with staying in places with real ale outlets.

Setting off on the first leg to Longtown, Cumbria, what was thought to be an easy run initially proved easy driving, shame about the roadworks, cyclists time trial, rain and more roadworks – a seven hour drive became eight and a

half. Still, the Graham Arms Hotel proved hospitable with a comfortable bed and excellent breakfast. The ale was Eden Gold at £3.30 a pint (£1.70 half) which was not on form, only worth a 1.5.



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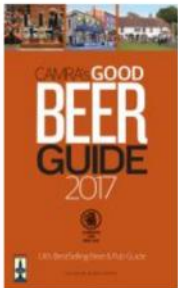
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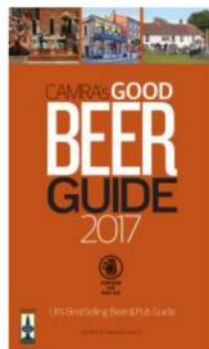
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Just along the road at Springfield is the Queens Head which had Strathaven Duchess Anne meriting a 3.

The second day showed more promise with sunshine to start. It continued that way and I was grateful for the aircon when more roadworks on the M6

slowed me to a crawl and the M5 almost stopped me with a horrendous accident; I was 5 minutes ahead of where it happened, closing north and south carriageways.

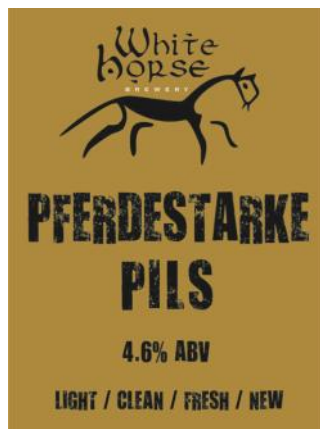
I arrived at 3.30 pm at the King & Queen, Longcot, to find the place closed until 5pm - a barrel had a notice to ring a number if I wanted to book in before! Ignoring this I went a mile down the road to the College Farm in Watchfield and sampled a couple of halves. These were



Brains Rev James (3.5) and Brakspear Oxford Gold (3), both at £1.65 half. They also had Marston's EPA and Pedigree.

Back to Longcot to book in followed by a 1.5 mile walk to the Woodman Inn at Fernham for food and more ale. The pie was good and the ale varied – Belhaven

Bridge to Nowhere at 3.5 and White Horse Pferdestarke Pils at a 2 (something I'd never heard of and on handpull), Abbot ale was also available.



WhatPub says the beers are on stillage but that was discontinued early July.

Returning to the King & Queen, 3 ales and 2 ciders were available. These were Ramsbury RPA, a 4% Pale Ale, Deerstalker, a 4% amber and Loose Cannon Gunners Gold, a 3.5% Golden Ale, all at £3.60 a pint. These scored a 2.5, 2.5 and 3 respectively. I tried a Merry Monkey Scrumpy (4.5%) to finish although before that I had a taster of Lilleys Mango Cider, something I wish I hadn't done (both on handpull).

The wedding day was the usual blur of happiness and congratulations. One of the many highlights for me was that the reception venue, the Watermill Theatre in Bagnor, near Newbury in Berkshire, had bottled real ale from the Indigenous Brewery at Chaddleworth, West Berks.

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The three sampled were Ammo Belle American Pale Ale, Old Cadger Best Bitter (my favourite) and Foragers Gold Golden Ale. A good night's sleep followed.

The return journey began well enough under overcast skies. I'd decided against travelling the eastern route past Birmingham due to the continuing aftermath of the fatal accident on the Friday before, guess what, an accident reported with road closure and long delays on my proposed route. Luckily I'm good at map reading and threaded my way through smaller



roads keeping good time.

Arriving in Moffat, Dumfries & Galloway for my overnight B&B, I went in search of food finding a good Honey & Venison pie with mustard mash at the Black Bull. They also did a £3 Theakstons Black Bull Bitter (3.9%) worth a 4. Having checked WhatPub? I went in search of the other

five establishments it showed as having real ale. It took all of 30 seconds as all are visible from the village centre!

The Star Hotel had a good (3) Campbell's



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finished the night as the Balmoral Hotel and Moffat House Hotel had pumps but no ale on. Inveralmond Ossian at £3.50 a pint (3.5) went down well at the Stag but the barmaid busy chatting to regulars was indifferent to the

Gunner blonde ale (4.5%) for £3.30. They also had Speckled Hen on hand pump. Next up was the Annandale Hotel with two disappointing halves, Broughton Merlin's Ale (4.2% and a 2) and Greenmantle (3.9% and a 1.5). Whilst a pint was £3.75 a half was £2.10 – quite a mark up. The Stag Hotel

short pint pulled and not too pleased at having to top it up after my request to do so.

The following days journey home ended after the least troublesome leg with a cup of tea.

northcoast.news@highland.camra.org.uk

Real Ale Pubs List

These Pubs, Inns and Hotels are known to sell (or to have recently sold) cask-conditioned ale. They are listed by geographical area and in an order that would allow a continuous pub crawl if you have safe transport. We make no claims as to the quality of the beer and you should note that some of the pubs listed may only stock real ale on a seasonal basis (S) or have only (bottles) available. Please let us know about the quality of real ales on offer, particularly if you think Good Beer Guide inclusion is merited. Please e-mail us or fill in WhatPub scores (CAMRA members). (TP) = ale served using top pressure, i.e. not according to CAMRA guidelines for 'real ale'. Additional notes show last-known discounts for card-presenting CAMRA members.

INVERNESS

Black Isle Bar
Caledonian
Castle Tavern (30p)
Clachnaharry Inn
Corrigarth Hotel
Encore Une Fois
Gelleons
Glen Mhor Hotel (Nicos Bar)
Heathmount Hotel
Hootananny
Inches Gate
Innes Bar
Johnny Foxes
Kingsmills Hotel
Kings Highway (JDW, 50p)
Lauders
Mercure Hotel (Arts Bar) (TP)
Number 27
Palace Hotel
Phoenix Bar
R&B
Snowgoose
Gunsmiths Bar
Tomlinson's Beer Shop
Waterfront
White House (bottles)
SPEYSIDE (N TO S)
Nairn
Gun Lodge
Inverness Airport (D'Lish)
Golf View Hotel & Spa (TP)

Braeval Hotel (Bandstand) (rooms 10%)
Cawdor Tavern (20%)
Strathspey
Haugh Hotel, Cromdale
-Grantown on Spey-
Ben Mhor Hotel (Jacobean Bar)
Craig Bar
Garth Hotel and Restaurant
Grant Arms Hotel
High St Merchants
Muckrach Lodge Hotel, Durnain Bridge
Boat Hotel, Boat of Garten
Cairn Hotel (Rowanlea Bar) Carrbridge (20p)
Aviemore
Ben Macdui
Cairngorm Brewery
Cairngorm Hotel
Dalfaber Country Club
La Taverna, restaurant
Macdonald's Highland Hotel (Laggan Whisky Bar)
Mackenzies Highland Inn
Old Bridge Inn
Ptarmagan (top of funicular) (bottles)
Roo's Leap
Skiing Doo (Doo Below)
Storehouse (bottom of funicular) (bottles)

Winking Owl (20p)
Hilton Coylumbidge Hotel (Woodshed Bar)
Topsy Laird
Silver Fjord Hotel
Duke of Gordon Hotel (Ghillies Rest Bar)
Scot House Hotel
Glen Hotel
BADENOCH
Glenmore Lodge (Lochain Bar)
Pine Marten Bar, Glenmore
Loch Inch Boathouse (Quarter Deck Bar), Kincaig
Suie Hotel, Kincaig
-Kingussie-
Topsy Laird
Silver Fjord Hotel
Duke of Gordon Hotel (Ghillies Rest Bar)
Glen Hotel, Newtonmore (20p)
EASTER ROSS
Black Isle
Royal Hotel, Cromarty
Cromarty Arms
Plough Inn, Rosemarkie
Crofters Bistro, Rosemarkie (bottles)
Anderson, Fortrose
Station Hotel, Avoch

Allangrange Arms,
Munlochy, (20p)

Tain to Inverness

Platform 1864 (TP)
Edderton Inn (hotel)
Castle Hotel,
Portmahomack
Mallard, Dingwall
Highland Hotel,
Strathpeffer
Richmond Hotel,
Strathpeffer (bottles)
Inchbae Lodge Hotel,
Garve
Aultguish Inn, Garve
Conon Bridge (hotel)
Bog Roy, Kirkhill

Strathconon

Slaters Arms, Cannich
Tomich Hotel
Struy Inn

Loch Ness (c/w from INV)

Dores Inn
Craigdarroch Inn (Am
Fuaran Bar), Foyers
Whitebridge Hotel
Stravaigers Lodge, Fort
Augustus
Bothy Bar, Fort Augustus
Caledonian Hotel (Corbie
Bar), Fort Augustus (S)
Lock Inn, Fort Augustus
Lovat Arms Hotel, Fort
Augustus
Glenmorriston Arms
Hotel, Invermorriston
Cobbs at Urquhart Castle,
Drumnadrochit
Loch Ness Inn (Brewery
Bar), Lewiston
Benleiva Hotel,

Drumnadrochit

FORT WILLIAM Fort William (N)

Invergarry Hotel
Great Glen Water Park,
South Laggan
Eagle Barge, South Laggan
(S)
Old Station Restaurant,
Spean Bridge
Roy Bridge Hotel (Roy Bar)
Stronlossit Hotel, Roy
Bridge
Glenspean Lodge Hotel,
Roy Bridge (S)
Corrour Station House
Restaurant, Corrour
Estate (restaurant,
bottles)
Moor of Ranoch Hotel,
Rannoch Station
(hotel, bottles)

In Fort William

Moorings Hotel (Neptune
Bar/Mariners Lounge),
Banavie, nr Ft William
Ben Nevis Bar
Ben Nevis Hotel (bottles)
Ben Nevis Inn, Achintee
Cobbs @ Nevisport
Crofter Bar & Restaurant
Glen Nevis Restaurant
Grog & Gruel
Great Glen (JDW 50p)
Loch Iall
Volunteer Arms
West End Hotel

Fort William (S)

Four Seasons, Onich (10p)
Onich Hotel
Loch Leven Hotel,
Ballachulish (N)

Branch

Clachaig Trip
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Branches Meeting
4th Nov 2017
Volunteer Arms
(Staggs)
Musselburgh 1pm

'Get Togethers'
Sat 18th Nov 2017
Various locations
(check website)

Christmas
Walkabout
Sat 9th Dec 2017
Meet Hootenanny
at 1pm

Branch AGM
Sat 20th Jan 2018
Castle Tavern 1pm

A9 'Drinkover'
tentative either Feb
2nd or 9th check
website in Jan

Diary

Scottish and
Northern Ireland
Branches Meeting
Sat 3rd Mar 2018
Forth Vally (check
website)

Scottish and
Northern Ireland
Branches Meeting
Sat 12th May 2018
Tayside (check
website)

Scottish and
Northern Ireland
Branches Meeting
Sat 25th Aug 2018
Kingdom of Fife
(check website)

Scottish and
Northern Ireland
Branches Meeting
Sat 17th Nov 2018
Ayrshire &
Wigtownshire
(check website)

Ballachulish Hotel,
Ballachulish (S)
Laroch Bar, Ballachulish
(S)
Glencoe Inn (Gathering)
Clachaig Inn, Glencoe
Kings House Hotel,
Glencoe
Ice Factor (Bothan Bar),
Kinlochleven
MacDonald Hotel (Bothy
Bar), Kinlochleven

Fort William (W)

Glenfinnan House Hotel
Lochailort Inn (bottles)
Glenuig Inn
Glenuig Village Hall
Loch Shiel Hotel,
Acharacle
Salen Hotel
Ariundle Centre, Strontian
Lochaline Hotel (bottles)
Arisaig Hotel (Crofters
Rest)
Chlachain Inn, Mallaig
Steam Inn, Mallaig
Tea Garden Café,
Mallaig (S)
West Highland Hotel,
Mallaig (S)
Old Forge, Inverie

WESTER ROSS

Cluanie to Kyle of Lochalsh

Cluanie Inn
Glenelg Inn
Kintail Lodge Hotel (Kintail
Bar), Glenshiel Bridge
Jac-o-bite Restaurant,
Glenshiel Bridge
Dornie Hotel
Clachan Bar, Dornie

Plockton to Gairloch

Plockton Inn
Plockton Hotel
Strathcarron Hotel
Lochcarron Hotel
Applecross Inn
The Potting Shed,
Applecross (bottles)
Tigh an Eilean Hotel,
Shieldaig
Torridon Inn, Annat, by
Torridon
Kinlochewe Hotel (Beinn
Eighe Bar)
Ledgowan Lodge Hotel,
Achnasheen
Loch Maree Hotel,
Talladale
Badachro Inn, (TP)
Glendale House, South
Erradale (bottles)

In Gairloch

Old Inn
Steading Restaurant
(bottles)
Myrtle Bank Hotel
Millcroft Hotel (Fish Box
Bar & Stags Head Lounge)

Gairloch to Ullapool

Poolewe Hotel
Aultbae Hotel (Jam Jar Bar)
Drumchork Hotel, Aultbae
(S)

In Ullapool

Arch Inn
Argyll Hotel (20p)
Ceilidh Place
Ferry Boat Inn (20p)
Morefield Motel

Seaforth Bar & Restaurant

Ullapool North

Summer Isles Hotel,
Achiltibuie

Am Fuaran Bar, Achiltibuie
(bottles)

CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND

West Coast

Altnacealgach Inn,
Ledmore Junction

Inchnadamph Hotel,
Assynt (S)

Caberfeidh, Lochinver
Kylesku Hotel (S)

Scourie Hotel

Kinlochbervie Hotel

North Coast

Sango Sands Oasis,
Durness (S)

Smoo Cave Hotel, Durness
(S)

Ben Loyal Hotel, Tongue
(S)

Tongue Hotel (S)

Central Hotel (Top Joes),
Thurso

Commercial Hotel (Comm
Bar), Thurso

Holburn Hotel (Bar 16),
Thurso

Weigh Inn (Ashes Bar),
Thurso

Ulbster Arms Hotel
(Anglers Nook), Halkirk
(S)

Castletown Hotel (bottles)

Northern Sands Hotel,
Dunnet

Seaview Hotel, John
O'Groats

Storehouse, John O'Groats
(bottles)

East Coast

Alexander Bain, Wick (JDW
50p)

Mackays Hotel (Cocktail
Bar), Wick

Bay Owl Restaurant,
Dunbeath

Bannockburn Inn,
Helmsdale (TP)

Belgrave Arms Hotel,
Helmsdale

Sutherland Inn, Brora

Golspie Inn (Sutherland
Hotel)

Trentham Hotel, Poles nr
Dornoch

Burghfield House Hotel,
Dornoch (hotel, bottles)

Eagle Hotel, Dornoch

Dornoch Castle Hotel

Dunroamin Hotel, Bonar
Bridge

Invershin Hotel

Achness Hotel, Rosehall
(SW of Lairg)

Crask Inn, N of Lairg

SKYE

Sligachan Hotel (Seumas'
Bar), Sligachan (S)

Old Inn, Carbost

Taigh Ailean Hotel
(Munros Bar), Portnalong
(20p / B&B deal)

Old School Restaurant
Dunvegan (S)

Stein Inn Waternish

Edinbane Inn

Lodge at Edinbane

Uig Hotel

Bakur Bar, Uig

Ferry Inn, Uig

Bosville Hotel (Merchant
Bar), Portree

Isles Inn, Portree

Royal Hotel (MacNab's
Inn), Portree

Sconser Lodge Hotel

Broadford Hotel (Gabbro
Bar)

Claymore Restaurant,
Broadford

Hebridean Hotel,
Broadford

Saucy Marys Lodge,
Kyleakin (S)

Isle Ornsay Hotel (Praban
Bar), Sleat

Ardvasar Hotel (Hideout
Bar)

Kinlock Castle, Isle of
Rhum (bottles)

EILEAN SIAR / WESTERN ISLES

Crown Inn (Harbour Bar),
Stornoway, Lewis

Edge O' the World,
Stornoway

Hotel Hebrides (Mote Bar),
Tarbet, Harris (S)

Isle of Harris Inn, Tarbet,
Harris(S)

Hamersay House,
Lochmaddy, N Uist

Lochmaddy Hotel, N Uist

Langass Lodge, Loch
Elport, N Uist (S)

Westford Inn, Claddach
Kirkibost, N Uist

Borrodale Hotel,
Daliburgh, S Uist (bottles)

Polochar Inn,
Lochboisdale, S Uist (S)

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Michelin Pub Food Guide 2012/13

the
lochness inn



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EASTER ROSS & LOCH NESS

Guy Warren reports that the Highland Hotel, Strathpeffer has graduated from selling local bottled beers to a full hand pump offering. He enjoyed a very pleasant Cairngorm Stag at £4.30/pint.

News from Dave Goulder that the 'Platform 1864' restaurant in Tain Station has a top-pressure offering in the bar, where he enjoyed a very welcome half of Bitter & Twisted.

Having been closed for two years, the Castle Hotel in Portmahomack has re-opened with a bar that now sports a hand pump, offering beers from various breweries, according to local member Jack Drake.

A film crew appeared at The Allangrange Arms, Munlochy on Tuesday 19 Sept. Apparently, they were filming a US 'foodie' programme, and George the chef was demonstrating how to cook venison, from haunch to plate!

INVERNESS

Sad news that Blackfriars closed its doors for the last time on 25th September. The notice "RIP Del" was seen on a blackboard posted outside.

Happy news is that there's now a 30p CAMRA reduction at the Castle Tavern.

FORT WILLIAM

Roy Gentry recently visited the Loch Ness and Loch Lomond area (see feature elsewhere in this issue) and discovered that the Glenspean Lodge Hotel in Roy Bridge is offering Isle of Skye Red on handpump in the bar.

The Tea Garden Café in Mallaig is now

offering Isle of Skye Red on cask, in addition to a range of bottled beers, according to Kirk Burton.

CAITHNESS & SUTHERLAND

The Ben Loyal Hotel in Tongue now serves Cromarty beers.



Mackays Hotel in Wick has its maiden entry in the 2018 Good Beer Guide. Keith Morrell recently handed over the CAMRA Licence Pack to owner Murray Lamont.

NAIRN

Chairman Simon attended the recent Autumn Beer Festival at Braeval Hotel's Bandstand Bar and reports: "Gordon always does a good job with both his major Spring festival which extends to the marquee and the Autumn event which is just (!) 10 HP on the bar with a rotation of interesting beers. This year forty three cask ales and three Thistly Cross Ciders were on offer.

"The four day event, Friday to Monday, really starts on Friday evening when the music begins. Availing myself of an early start I was leaning on the bar at 12 noon on Friday, eager to try my first beer.



THE TIPSY LAIRD

Situated in the village of Kingussie, just off the A9, the Topsy Laird is a friendly and popular pub with 2 Handpulls & 1 Craft Rotation tap on all year round, as well as a large selection of Malt Whiskies & Scottish Gins.

- Beer Garden
- Dog Friendly
- Contemporary Scottish Pub Food served all day
- Log Burner
- Bunkhouse with accommodation from £20 per night Bed & Breakfast

The Topsy is holding a Beer Festival on the 2nd, 3rd & 4th of June, with a range of draught & bottled ales available, as well as a BBQ, Beer Festival Themed Menu and Live Entertainment from Tweed Ceilidh Band, Ailsa Villegas & Keith Mair throughout the weekend.

Visit our website for more details!!!

The Topsy Laird
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Kingussie PH21 1HZ
www.thetipsylaird.com
Ph: 01540 661 708



Stein Inn

THE OLDEST INN ON SKYE



Highland & Western Isles Pub-of-the-Year 2015
Skye & Western Isles area winner since 2007

Magical places do exist ... just journey down a narrow winding road that leads to the sea and nestled in a charming hamlet is the very place of your dream: the Stein Inn.

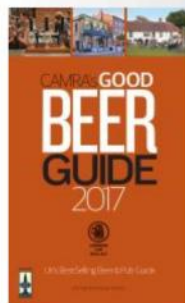
An eighteenth-century inn on the sea shore that will have you yearning to visit again and again to experience the warm Scottish welcome, fine food, superb accommodation, traditional highland bar offering real ales and over 125 malt whiskies.

The finest and freshest seafood and local produce is readily available and is skilfully transformed at the Stein Inn into mouth-watering, home-cooked dishes.

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Stein Inn, Watemish,
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angus.teresa@steininn.co.uk



"Gordon had managed to source beers from Green Jack, Lowestoft, Suffolk, just over 550 miles away. Their 'Gone Fishing' was a pleasant surprise, although at 5.5% a bit of a strong start to the day. The other beer available was Orange Wheat which I did sample. Surprisingly it was clear and did not have the haze normally associated with wheat beer, but not being a fan of fruit flavours, I was wise just to have a mouthful.

"Although the brewery is just 5 miles away from me, I had not seen the American IPA seasonal 'Raptor' from Cromarty before. As with all of Cromarty beers it was good. Apparently, Gordon tapped it on Thursday night, and I may have had some of the last of it because it was so popular.

"Next on my hit list were the two Rothes beers, Dounie Ale and Conrock, a pale ale. Rothes only started brewing in 2014, and our paths had not crossed before, but I will be looking out for these again.

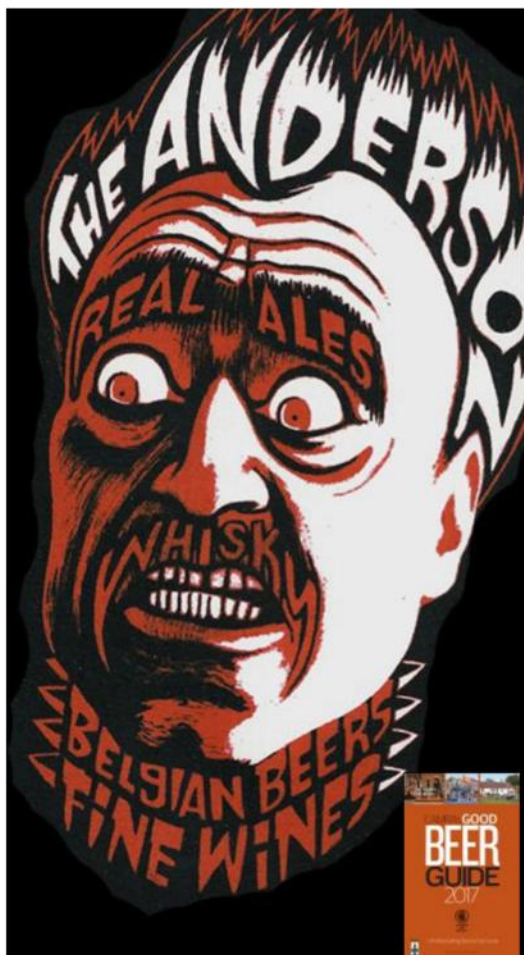
"Of course, I had to try the Orkney Blast (Swannay) and Skull Splitter (Orkney) to round off a very pleasant, visit.

WESTER ROSS

Not strictly a pub news item, but An Teallach Brewery's new off-licence, tasting parlour and online shop can be found at 26 West Street, Ullapool.

EILEAN SIAR / WESTERN ISLES

The Westford Inn in North Uist, in GBG18 for H&WI, celebrated summer by repeating last year's successful beer festival. Fyne, Skye, Orkney, Wychwood and Swanny were all available on cask, with a bewildering variety of other ales available in bottles and cans.



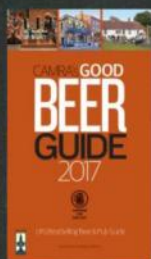
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Plockton Brewery Celebrates 10th Anniversary

Celebrations for Plockton's 10th year of brewing, with street mini-fest

A gazebo erected in the lane outside the Brewery – and held down with 14 water-filled beer casks – housed a bar with 3 hand pumps and tables with food and bottled beers.

On draught were Starboard (5.1%), Ring Tong (5.6%) and a special 10th Anniversary session beer Summer (3.8%), all ably served by Andy

Will's son Cameron. The beers were under cover but Cameron sadly was not. Despite a soaking, he remained cheerful throughout.

skye.news@highland.camra.org.uk



Brewery News



An Teallach now have a shop in Ullapool with all their bottled products, including "Golden Nessie". Also gins and local crafts. Find it just up the brae from Seaforth.

APPLECROSS BREWING COMPANY

The building is built, and is being "fitted out". Trial "cuckoo brews" have been available at Applecross Inn over the Summer.



Cairngorm won a raft of medals at the recent SIBA awards including Gold for Wildcat in the Cask Strong Bitters & Pale Ales category, a Silver for Cairngorm Gold in Premium Bitters & Pale Ales and a Bronze for the same beer in Small Pack Premium Bitters & Pale Ales.

Black Gold won a Silver in the Small Pack Porters, Stouts, Old Ales, Strong Milds & Strong Brown Ale.



Following on from the success reported in the Summer edition for Rogue Wave winning Championship Speciality Beer of Scotland in the heats, it has gone on to be awarded Silver in the overall Championship beer of Scotland held in Edinburgh.

To top it all, Red Rocker won joint Silver in the Speciality category at CBoB and Cromarty also scooped the Best Imperial/Double IPA award for 'Man Overboard' in the Pale Beer Category of the prestigious World Beer Awards.

On a "non brewery" note, congratulations are in order as Walter, their second child, recently joined the brewing team.



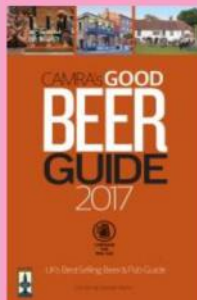
the Old Bridge Inn ~ Aviemore

Roaring log fire, cheerful atmosphere, excellent food and fine selection of wines, cask ales and malt whiskies. The varied menus, featuring the very best of Highland produce from river, sea and land, are carefully designed to tempt every palate.

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We believe that our passion, enthusiasm and quality beer brewing skills, blended with the finest locally and globally sourced ingredients, make beer that is truly worth believing in.

Join us every Saturday morning at 11am for a tasting tour, and learn more about the craft of brewing. We also offer a wide selection of beers and gifts in our shop, please visit www.cromartybrewing.co.uk for our opening hours.

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E: enquiries@cromartybrewing.co.uk
www.cromartybrewing.co.uk



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The HANGING TREE Brewery

Hanging Tree have started brewing in a byre next to the Benleiva Hotel. The first brews on the two-barrel plant have been First Light (4%), Hangmans IPA (5%) and After Dark.

The 2 barrel brewery has been built in a bothy in the grounds of The Benleiva Hotel. In fact the brewing equipment comes home, as it was the first equipment that the Loch Ness Brewery used in the same bothy.

Allan Crossland is running the brewery and the beers will be on sale at the Benleiva Hotel. The brewery name comes from the 400 year old tree that

grows in the hotel grounds, that was used as a hanging tree.

The Benleiva Hotel also held its annual Loch Ness Beer Festival from 15th to 23rd September with the full Hanging Tree range available on cask, and also bottles from other local breweries.



The Edge o' the World brewery bar continues to do well.



ISLE OF SKYE BREWING CO.

Having won Gold for its Young Pretender (3.8%) in the heat stage of the Championship Beer of Scotland, YP went on to get a well deserved Bronze in the overall CBoS competition in Edinburgh.



Plockton Brewery celebrated its 10th Anniversary on 15th July, see small feature article in the preceding pages.

The sun shone when the official opening ceremony was held in June 2007. The weather for the anniversary could hardly have been more different with torrential rain and gale force winds!!

Proprietor Andy Wills enjoyed himself playing fiddle under the band gazebo with fellow members of local folk group 'Iron Midden'; a second gazebo was dedicated to the brews regular and special for the day.

The music drew in a variety of wet passers-by and the gazebo was filled with accents ranging from German through Chinese to Australian – many

trying Scottish Real Ale for the first time. A collection for MacMillan Cancer Support raised a tidy sum, adding to a worthwhile and very enjoyable day.

At the time of writing there are still a few bottles of the Anniversary beers and Commemorative glasses available (collection only) – details on the Brewery website www.theplocktonbrewery.com.

STRATHCARRON BREWERY

Skye and Lochalsh rapporteur Mike Godfrey is delighted to report that Black Cow (ABV 4.2%) is now available in cask form as well as RAIB.

Reports from pubs that serve it suggest that this traditional dark stout has been selling well through the summer.



WooHa Brewing Company have moved from Nairn to a 6.2 acre site at Upper Hempriggs near Kinloss, in a £692,000 expansion project to cope with demand. Grant funding of £133,300 has been secured from Highlands and Islands Enterprise. Four new jobs and a five-fold increase in capacity have been created.

Real Ale in Stornoway

Eric Mills visited HebCelt on the Isle of Lewis and reports on the ale scene in Stornoway

I visited The Hebridean Celtic Music Festival on Lewis from 19th to 22nd July and while there took some time to have a look around the real ale scene in Stornoway.

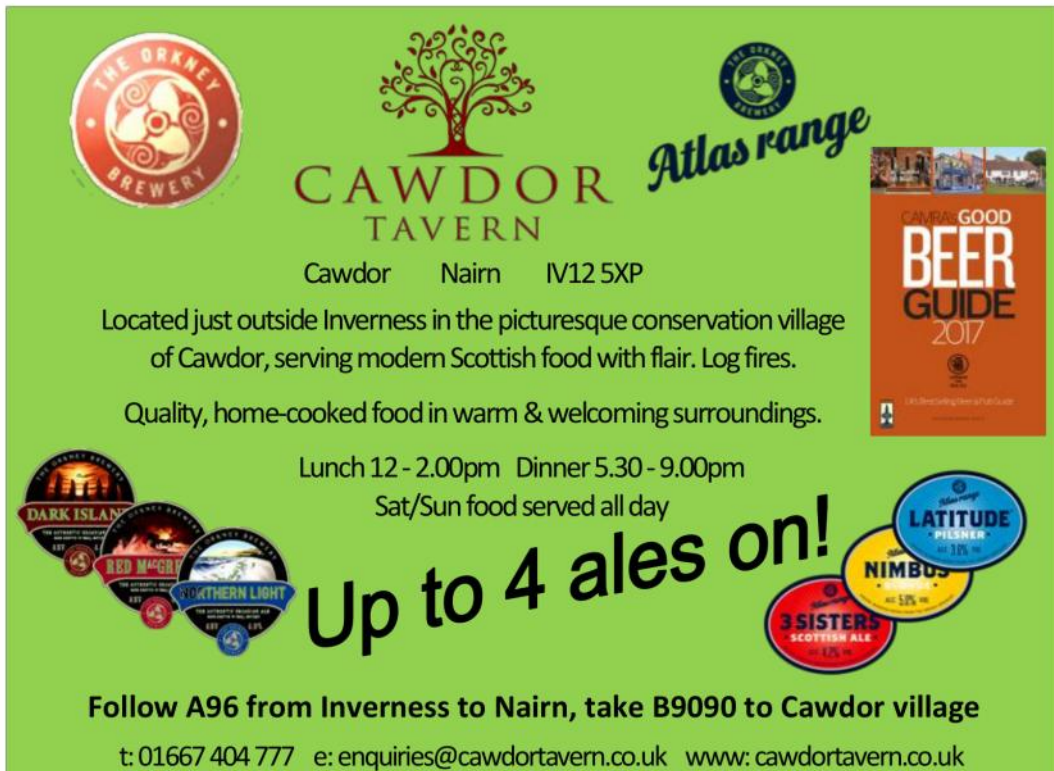
The new bar in town is the Edge O' The World bar run as part of the Hebridean Brewery, near the ferry terminal. Last year when I visited, Andy Ribbens was gradually putting the place together. This is now a very nice bar adorned with pump badges, brewery paraphernalia, regimental badges and beer posters.

Through the back is a further seated

area with viewing area into the brewery. On the night I was in there it was very busy as it was folk night, where anyone could sing or play in turn, chaired by local CAMRA member Don Catterall.

The staff were very friendly and they had other live music over the weekend. The beer available came from the brewery and Moo Coo Brew, Festive, Clansman, Seaforth Ale, Islander and the best beer of the evening, Berserker, although a bit strong to have too many, were all available. There was also Wyld Wood Cider on handpull.

Across the road at The Stornoway Sea Angling Club, they had a Beer Festival. Innes had put on forty+ beers and ciders and had live music and food. Most of



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the offerings were in bottles but there were six cask beers under cooling jackets – Inveralmond Ossian, Timothy Taylor's Landlord, Caledonian Deuchars, Isle of Skye Gold, Sharp's Doombar and Black Sheep Bitter.

The Carlton, a long time real ale pub, no longer sells any. So it was down to the other end of town to the only other bar that has real ale, The Harbour Bar which is owned by Punch Taverns.

There are two handpulls in the busy plush upstairs lounge and another two in the very busy downstairs bar. Available over the weekend were Isle of Skye's Skye Gold and Skye Red in both bars.

Along at the main festival arena they had headline acts Peatbog Faeries,

Imelda May, Skerryvore, The Waterboys and Dougie MacLean.

For the fifth year running, there was a real ale bar in Julie's Bar which also hosts the acoustic music sessions. This year there were six hand pumps selling a selection of Deeside brewery beers and real cider. There was also a cask on gravity in the VIP tent.

The Ullapool-based Seafood Shack had food at the Festival and their haddock wrap was excellent. In Stornoway, The Digby Chick Restaurant was very good and their early evening menu was excellent value. Dates for next years Hebridean Celtic Music Festival are 19th to 22nd July.

ericmills65@yahoo.co.uk

Cromarty takes CBoS Silver for Rogue Wave



More gongs for Cromarty BrewCo, this time Overall Silver at the Champion Beer of Scotland. Pictured with the certificate are omnipresent head brewer Craig Middleton and CAMRA Highlands & Western Isles Chairman Simon Urry.

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Festival Roundup

BELLADRUM, nr. Inverness 3rd-5th August

Although not really a beer festival as such, real ale was again at Belladrum in August for this top music festival, possibly the biggest in Scotland.

The Black Isle Brewery have their bar near to the Grassroots Stage, which they sponsor, and had two real ales available; Red Kite and Yellowhammer.

Down at the far end in The Walled Garden there was The Burke and Hare Victorian Theatre and Real Ale Bar. Available here were beers from Cromarty, Black Isle, Windswept, Fallen, Loch Lomond, Spey Valley and Deeside breweries plus some real cider and gin.

This family-friendly event has entertainment for everyone with Sing Along films, Wrestling, Street Theatre, Mountain bike skills, story telling, poetry, wooden instrument making, shops and if so inclined you could also have got married there!

Headlining this year were Franz Ferdinand, KT Tunstall, The Pretenders and Sister Sledge on main stage.

With numerous music and acts on the other 20 stages to suit all tastes and ages over the three days.

16th LOCH NESS BEER FESTIVAL, Benleiva, Drumnadrochit - 15th-23rd September

After a Spring refurbishment and now run by Mull-based Neil Morrison and his team, the usual format from previous years was followed. Live music on the Friday and Saturday evenings; a pool tournament from Monday to Wednesday and a quiz night on Thursday. Over the nine days, the five handpulls were busy dispensing more than forty different beers from Scottish breweries including: - Orkney, Fyne,



Swannay, and Cromarty. As one finished a new one went on.

A sixth handpull offered a changing main brand (real) cider.

During the event the new menu was getting very good reviews from locals and visitors.

HEBCELT, Stornoway 19th-22nd July

See Eric Mills article above for a summary of HebCelt. In the image, Anne and local CAMRA member Jim serve at the festival beer bar.



The Cairn Hotel

Main Road

Carrbridge

Inverness-shire

PH23 3AS

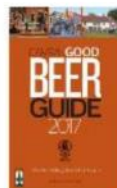
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Close to the 1717 historic pack horse bridge over the River Dulnain, and nestling in the very heart of the Scottish Highlands, the Cairn Hotel is the perfect base for exploring the Cairngorms National Park, the Malt Whisky Trail, Loch Ness, Strathspey and Badenoch; and for visiting the nearby Cairngorm, Black Isle and Cromarty Breweries.

Walkers and cyclists are welcomed, and cyclists following Sustrans NCN Route 7, which goes past our front door, can take advantage of secure dry storage provided for bikes.

Coast to Coast

On the Saturday after midsummer, some intrepid CAMRA members set out to drink from east to west of the branch

It was March 2015 we did a similar trip and many of the places along the route opened for the summer season. Once again, Dave (and his wife) from Coventry were collected from TK Maxx and joined the two of us who had set off with the minibus from Munloch, then it was a stop at the rest area North of the Kessock Bridge to collect Jim Hall and Kenny from Newtonmore.

First stop, **Golspie Inn**, 50 miles and 1 hour up the A9 where we met up with Keith Morrell who had travelled down from Thurso. The Caledonian Deuchers was a good start to the day. Next stop

Sutherland Inn in Brora which offered Orkney Corncrake.

Amazingly on schedule, we set off back down the A9 to **Trentham Hotel** and were greeted by Steve Mackintosh. The single handpump offering Windswept Wiesen is located in the back bar which was not in use so were brought through to us. On seeing the cloudiness, and smelling a banana odour, many would reject the beer as "off" but this is the way it comes, and was "just right". I must confess, it is an acquired taste, but having last sampled it nearly three years ago it was good to make its acquaintance again.

Just a short drive down to Dornoch with the first stop **Eagle** with two hand pumps, Charles Wells Burning Gol hit the spot and I sat outside in the sunshine with Alan, a friend who lives locally and delivers WYT

out to Cannich on CAMRA's behalf.

Pacing myself for the day I stayed put, others went along to **Castle Hotel** the hand pumps offering Cromarty Hit the Lip. After a mix up over the collection point, we were all on board again passing Dunromin Hotel at Bonar Bridge which does not open until 17:00. and on to **Invershin Hotel** which is virtually beneath the railway viaduct that separates Invershin and Culrain railway stations and claims to be the shortest distance between two consecutive stations anywhere in the UK.

Opening on this occasion for our scheduled arrival of 14:15 earlier than the normal 17:00, Invershin Hotel's Cheryl Connelly had two An Teallach beers on, Blizzard and Sullivan. Just as we were leaving out came a big plate with some freshly-heated sausage rolls.

Now running a bit late, we set off for Rosehall. Cheryl had phoned ahead and Elizabeth Williamson at **Achness Hotel** had stayed open for us. This is a real "huntin' shootin' fishin' place and at £3.30 a pint has some of the best value beer in our branch area. As ever the well-kept beers from the two hand pumps went down well with all.

The charm and delight of Achness Hotel is that it is where it is. Although "in the middle of no-where" and being one of the very few pubs in the area, it is a true "community pub" with a loyal local customer base, augmented by those many visitors who stay at the hotel year-round to enjoy the amazing upland landscapes. Just about a mile short of Leadmore Junction is the **Altnacealgach Inn** or The Alt, our next stop. Two hand pumps offered An Teallach.

It was now 17:00 and, running more than an hour late, we had the opportunity to travel North up to the **Inchnadamph Hotel** which does not normally open until 17:00. Every cloud, they say..... Indeed on reaching Leadmore Junction, the weather

turned and the heavens opened as we headed six miles North.

Unfortunately, one of the two beers had just been put on and was still settling, and the other one was off. To some this might have been the End of the World, but there was an excellent selection of bottled beers available to save the day. From the branches point of view, I do not think that Inchnadamph Hotel had been visited before, and although we had not seen Richard McKendrick, the owner, we were very impressed.

The intention was to spend some time in Ullapool but with the delays, we elected to check out just one pub to "catch up" with the schedule; most piled into **The Argyll** and the remainder into **Ferry Boat Inn**. As ever the Argyll was pretty busy and being about 18:00, many were dining.

Although we had been running very late, the very short stop in Ullapool meant we were nearly back on schedule as we pushed on to **Aultgish Inn**, right by the dam. The place was very busy and dinner service was in full swing so I only had a brief word with owner Dario Negri. After a nice An Teallach, we were just rising from our seats by the fireside when Dario came through during a lull in service with three large plates of chips for our party. Well, you cannot eat chips without a beer, so it was time for a top up!

Having returned to Inverness at nearly 22:00 on the last outing, and based on a "promise" to be back in Inverness for 20:00 we actually made it. Unfortunately, the last stop of the day, Leadgowan Lodge had to be missed.

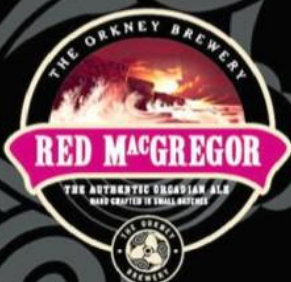
As well as a bit of fun, the other reason for the outings is to show H&WI CAMRA to publicans and obviously score the beers available which are considered in selecting our 35 Good Beer Guide entries.

Simon Urry, Chair H&WI CAMRA
chair@highland.camra.org.uk

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BRANCH CONTACTS

Editor, What's Yours Then
Tony Vernon 01878 784242/07768 662161
editor@highland.camra.org.uk

Chairman and Branch Contact
Simon Urry 07973 284137
chair@highland.camra.org.uk
contact@highland.camra.org.uk

– Area Leaders –

Badenoch & Strathspey
Simon Urry 07973 284137
strathspey.news@highland.camra.org.uk
Caithness & Sutherland
Keith Morrell 01847 895939
northcoast.news@highland.camra.org.uk
Easter Ross & Loch Ness
Simon Urry 07973 284137
easterross.news@highland.camra.org.uk
Fort William & Lochaber
Andy Rogers 01397 772926
fortwilliam.news@highland.camra.org.uk
Inverness
Alan Cragie 01463 713927
inverness.news@highland.camra.org.uk
Nairn
Liz Bligh 01667 455890
nairn.news@highland.camra.org.uk
Skye & Lochalsh
Mike Godfrey 01599 511296
skye.news@highland.camra.org.uk
Wester Ross & Lochalsh
Mike Godfrey 01599 511296
westerross.news@highland.camra.org.uk
Eilean Siar/Western Isles
Don Catterall 01851 704540
eileansiar.news@highland.camra.org.uk

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