

CAMRA
Highlands
and
Western
Isles
No 56
Summer
2018

What's Yours Then?



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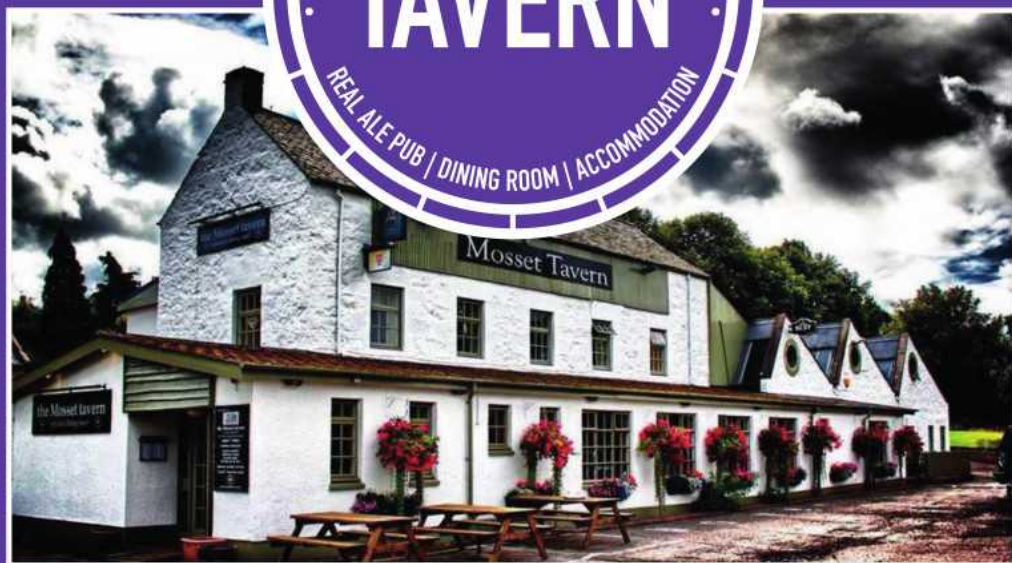


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From the Editor



Welcome to this Summer 2018 edition of What's Yours Then? and, if you're a visitor to our beautiful region, 'ceud mile fàilte'.

As I write this, the weather has been unbroken glorious sunshine for what seems like weeks on end; if you can't remember the last day of serious rain, you're not alone! Swings and roundabouts, it won't be long before breweries and distilleries are making announcements about "focussing on core products" so as to have enough water to go round.

CHAINED TO A LAMP-POST

If you've ever had the misfortune to awake to find yourself naked and attached to some street furniture in an unfamiliar country, then you and I were probably on the same stag-do. This was also the feeling a month ago when I awoke to an email informing me that What's Yours Then? had been runner-up in a branch magazine competition that I'd no idea we had entered. Long story short, Regional Director Sarah had selected two mags from her Scotland and Northern Ireland patch and the other mag won. Not a bad haul...

There was also an honourable mention for Mike Whittall, our former web-master, who received a 'Website of the Year' award in the same compo for H&WI CAMRA mini-site.

CARBON DIOXIDE

If ever there was a demonstration of integrated supply chains, the recent

shortage of carbon dioxide for drinks carbonation and other food purposes was it. TV and radio was chockablock with doom-sayers warning of spoiled food and flat lagers. Now if you're of the real ale persuasion you were sitting pretty, knowing that fizziness of our preferred beverage is an inherent by-product of fermentation. If only there had been an appropriate CAMRA campaign ready to roll along the lines of 'CAMRA - our CO2 is real too'.

REVITALISATION

Yep, again. Or rather, for the last time in a while. It'll take a year or two for the changes to bed in, in the meantime as an organisation we are slightly in limbo as we digest what happened at the AGM and conference. I've summarised everything as best I can in the following article, written as an ordinary punter, not with my editor's hat on.

WHAT'S YOURS THEN IS CHANGING

Having given other aspects of the branch a 'refresh', forced or otherwise, it's time for a Spring Clean at WYT? as well. From early next year the magazine will be called something else, and you can determine what that something else is. Please take time to read the short piece on the name change.

Enjoy this very busy issue, thanks to all contributors and as ever, if you pick up the mag and are reading this as a visitor please score the beer, and consider penning an article on your experience of the hostelries in the branch!

Ad multas cerevisias

Tony Vernon
editor@highland.camra.org.uk

From the Chair



Other than the Highlands & Western Isles being in one of the most scenic parts of the UK, it is also the biggest CAMRA branch by area with 10,000 square miles of the Highlands (including Skye) and 1,600 sq miles of the Western Isles. Within the branch area we have 229 places that sell real ale and just 259 members.

Accordingly, "policing" all the pubs with such a small membership can be a challenge and listings on CAMRA's free-to-use www.whatpub.com website, which features nearly 36,000 real ale pubs in the UK, can be out of date. The WhatPub website also has filters that allow selection of a town or village, or get a list of pubs that are dog- or child-friendly, or have outside seating.

Annually, the Highlands alone attracts more than 2 million visitors and other than being the Chair, I have been getting some valuable feedback recently from visitors, including CAMRA members, about updates and indeed "sightings" of places which have recently sprouted a hand-pull on the bar. All of this "intelligence" helps us to maintain the listings for each pub and I would warmly welcome and encourage any feedback via the link at the bottom of the page.

All CAMRA members can score the beers at listed pubs via their logins on the WhatPub website, and so far this year a large proportion of scores (298 of 533) are from CAMRA members

outwith the branch area. Scores and particularly allied comments are reviewed regularly and used to select H&WI's allotted 35 entries in The Good Beer Guide; naturally the scores also guide H&WI in choosing our Pub of the Year (PotY), which for me represents the 'ambassador' for the branch.

This year our PotY is Dore's Inn, just South of Inverness on the North-Eastern tip of Loch Ness. Dore's' four handpumps offer a selection of Scottish and English beers, normally including Old Speckled Hen.

The inn has now been catapulted to international stardom - for a short while it is shown on the new Old Speckled Hen advertisement which can be seen at <https://www.oldspeckledhen.co.uk>.

Other than Dore's Inn, there are one or two other recognisable Highland locations; interestingly, and in the spirit of Schrödinger, there are consecutive shots of a motorbike simultaneously approaching and leaving Kinlochewe!

Our deserved runner-up this year is Clachnaharry Inn, probably one of the first pubs in Inverness to have real ale, and which has continued to delight both locals and the many thousands of visitors over the years.

Interestingly, both Dore's and Clachnaharry offer 'free' local Collect & Return 8-seater minibus services, you just have to phone and book it! Dore's Inn 01463 751203 - Clachnaharry Inn 01463 239806.

Simon Urry
chair@highland.camra.org.uk

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Revitalisation: Decided?

This article represents the personal opinions of the author, and does not necessarily reflect the official views of Highlands & Western Isles CAMRA



A New Hop(e)

April's AGM and Conference at Coventry saw the culmination of a near-three year process to decide CAMRA's way forward in the post-millennial world. Whether the exercise genuinely ushered in an 'era of revitalisation' probably depends on your point of view.

Change aplenty there was indeed, but when the dust had settled those 'in the know' were sagely commenting that the Special Resolutions adopted into our Articles of Association merely codified and formalised what CAMRA had

already being doing for several years.

The organisation was already acting to promote a wide variety of beer styles, how and where they are consumed and crucially standing up for both independent and tied publican in a somewhat-belated rearguard against those seeking to re-purpose or remove altogether an ever-dwindling number of pubs and bars selling the Precious Brew.

Fact: CAMRA is an ageing organisation, and our love of real ale is by and large not being passed to the 18-35 age group. The younger generation are

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intimidated by increasingly-draconian drink-drive alcohol limits and distracted by the rise of social media rather than the local watering hole as the default friends' meeting point. Neo-prohibitionists and government zealots have all but priced young people out of pubs with a ruinous succession of duty increases on all styles of alcohol.

Fact: the tipples of choice for this younger demographic (if they drink at all, and that's a whole other article) tend to be kegged fizz, which is respectable again, and various fluorescent/iridescent vodka-based shots plus an ever-growing selection of gins and botanicals that have appeared out of nowhere in the last decade.

Fact: CAMRA as an organisation are not very good at engaging the latter with the former; in recent years the ubiquity of pub-based and other beer festivals has diluted the unique selling point of the many and varied festivals run by local branches, which should be the prime crossing-point for potentially interested young drinkers and interesting ales.

Most of the Special Resolutions were aimed directly at addressing the above points, and expanding the battlefield to stand behind each and every drinker against those seeking to shrink, demote and make irrelevant in the modern world our enjoyment of beer. In passing all but one of the SRs, the AGM delivered a resounding endorsement of the National Executive's direction of travel over the past years, including the failed SR6 which fell less than 3% short of the 75% majority required by the

Companies Act.

Why were Special Resolutions necessary at all? Why was all of this change not handled at conference level as usual, with a succession of motions? The reasoning was that for such a fundamental change of CAMRA's *raison d'être*, the NE had to demonstrate an overwhelming 'buy in' by those voting for change.

Company Law in the form of changes to the Articles of Association conveniently offered a 75% majority required for change to either the company's Memorandum or Articles of Association, which also had the twin effect of binding future CAMRA executives, whatever they may think of the change or the reason for it, to working to achieve the effect of the new articles. In other words, if you don't like the new direction of CAMRA enshrined in the Articles, then don't even stand for election.

Revenge of the Sixth

Now let's ponder the one Special Resolution that, at 72.6% approval, didn't achieve the required 75% to make it into the Articles. Special Resolution 6, remember, was about CAMRA working to represent all pub-goers drinking any style of alcoholic beverage: *'To approve the insertion of the following Article 2(e) in CAMRA's Articles of Association: "2(e) to act as the voice and represent the interests of all pub-goers and beer, cider and perry drinkers;"'*

This represented, indeed still represents,

"Special Resolution 6, at 72.6% approval, didn't achieve the required 75% to make it into the Articles...the traditionalists won or, rather, didn't lose badly enough"

the fulcrum around which balances those seeking to keep CAMRA as it is, and those who wanted the organisation to plough forward into tomorrow's World of Drinking, whatever that may end up representing. The traditionalists won or, rather, didn't lose badly enough.

One of the outcomes of the whole revitalisation exercise has been that CAMRA represents sharply different aims and objectives to at least two distinct camps; on the progressive front there are those who want to 'move with the times' and plan ahead for whatever is being plotted for the drinker by the politicians and neo-pros.

On the other are those who view the organisation as being the collective memory and conscience not only for drinkers of traditional cask ale, but for

the entire eco-system that works to make, distribute and serve cask. You can't introduce cask-style drinking to an area that doesn't have it already, the skills properly to transport, look after beer and serve it properly simply are not there. So the traditionalists have a point, and there's nothing wrong with that.

Listening to the background chatter of those discussing why they voted against this, one phrase was heard again and again: "Drinker's Voice". Ironically, the insurance policy that CAMRA's NE bought around the time of last year's conference in Bournemouth may have ended up being self-fulfilling; a slice of the membership, that may have been the margin of success for SR6, voted against it as they could see a closely-related cousin organisation to CAMRA that had already been established with



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the specific remit to represent all drinkers, à la the aims of the resolution.

The ensuing feeding frenzy among the mainstream media was pretty predictable; "RIP CAMRA", "CAMRA votes against change for the Future" etc etc. It did not. All that happened was that a fundamental change was not 'incorporated into CAMRA's DNA', and so can in future be changed by a National Executive opposed to beer styles other than real/cask. It does not mean that at present that is the only style for which we as an organisation are expected to campaign.

What a pity, also, that this stampede masked other fundamental changes to CAMRA's thinking, such as allowing official festivals to stock and serve high-quality non-real beers (keg or otherwise), and to permit ales dispensed with cask breathers also to be considered 'real'. Past failure to recognise both of these have resulted in the organisation being ridiculed both by influential commentators and by the beer industry and its trade bodies.

It wasn't so much that CAMRA was bullied into adopting these resolutions, it's a simple fact that high-quality ingredients and conscientious handling now mean that the quality of some kegged and cask-breathed ales is simply 'there'. It tastes as good as real ale, so should be classed alongside real ale.

The 'Landlord' calls Time

As you may have guessed from previous editorials, I have my own opinions about the whole revitalisation exercise.

My thoughts are that CAMRA as an organisation will continue to grey and thin, like a present-day church congregation. Large headline membership numbers cannot mask the facts on the ground, that committees are largely the same people they were 10 years ago and some festivals are closing because there is no-one coming up from the younger ranks to take the yoke.

Less than 10% of the official membership thought revitalisation was something worth voting about, if they were even aware the exercise was happening.

*"Exit CAMRA
slowly from the
fray, and enter
stage right
Drinker's Voice in
the nick of time,
to continue the
struggle"*

Exit CAMRA slowly from the fray, and enter stage right Drinker's Voice in the nick of time, to continue the struggle. And really, really, there's nothing wrong with that. The membership have affirmed that our purpose, for however much longer, is to preserve cask and all of its traditions and paraphernalia.

Like the ultimate, brave act of the space ship Discovery in Arthur C. Clark's '2010 - Odyssey 2' we are to turn our main dish towards Earth, and keep transmitting for as long as possible "all these brews are yours - except real. Attempt no landings there."

However you voted - or not - let's all now raise a glass to the future.

Tony Vernon
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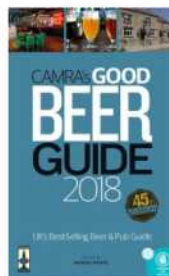
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What's Yours Then? Rebranding

Change is hard, as we have all just seen in the national CAMRA context. Our own local branch has seen its fair share of dips and crests along the road and now with the new management team firmly installed it's time to look to the future.

Part of this is giving What's Yours Then? a make-over; you'll already be familiar with the new layout and editorial style of H&WI's branch magazine, now it's time to find a new title for our main campaigning tool and point of contact with those visiting or passing through the Highlands and Western Isles region.

Rather than impose a change from above, we are putting this to a straw-poll of H&WI membership, with a request to send input and opinions to the Editor at editor@highland.camra.org.uk or [chair](mailto:chair@highland.camra.org.uk)

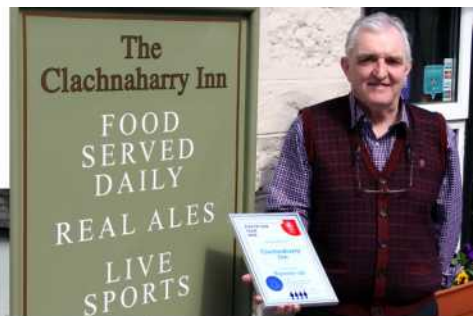
at chair@highland.camra.org.uk. Simon and I have come up with three suggestions, "**Deoch an Dorus**", "**Slàinte**" and "**Slàinte Mhath**" meaning "One for the Road", "Cheers" and "Good Health" [also = cheers] respectively in Gàidhlig.

The aim is to present these and any other potential titles submitted to the membership in the Autumn edition in a few months time, with the winner announced in the Winter magazine ready for a 'Spring Refresh' next year. So get the thinking caps on and the ink-wells filled – for the more enterprising, you are free to create a front cover showing off your suggested title. Bonus points (pints?) will be awarded for exceptional creativity!

editor@highland.camra.org.uk

Dores Inn is H&WI Pub of the Year 2018

Dores Inn is the Highlands & Western Isles Pub of the Year. It was all hands to the pump when WYT? visited to award the certificate, but we also learned the pub was being showcased in a series of Greene King ads for the FIFA World Cup and afterwards.



Henry the Greene King fox 'seeks a richer life' in Scotland in the eight 10-second ads, one of which was filmed at Dores. Clachnaharry Inn was worthy runner-up, new Belhaven manager Kenny Gardiner is pictured basking in the Inverness sunshine while receiving the award from Simon.

Use Your CAMRA Yearbook!!!

Liz Bligh recently took a trip south, armed with her trusty CAMRA guidebook...

I live near Inverness and a dear friend organised a Reunion for close college friends. The only fly in the ointment was the fact that it was to be held at her home in Canterbury, Kent.

I needed to have my car at hand and the 700+ mile journey sounded formidable, particularly as I wanted to make it part of my holiday and not just a means to an end.

Flicking through the Good Beer Guide I found "Shropshire" - an area unknown to me. "Telford" sounded most interesting, given that I like industrial architecture. One place caught my eye and I was made most welcome after the owner had consulted his wife for the availability of the one bedroom. This led to a very entertaining and comfortable night at the "All Nations" brew house, a pub rich in canal, potteries and rail transport history.

Although small, the selection of beers was excellent including the "Home Brew". The previous landlord hadn't passed on his formula, therefore the friendly clientèle told me that these were "tasters" and it wasn't until the brew had garnered their "thumbs up" that it would be put into production for the discerning customers.

Arriving toward the end of the afternoon, I was greeted by a vista of overalled men enjoying foaming beer and a roaring fire. When I came down from my room later, the nature of the pub had completely changed to couples wanting excellent beer with their home-made egg and bacon butties to order. Later still looking down from my bedroom window, it was smartly-dressed him-and-her out for a relaxing, sociable drink together.

Next day the journey south continued,



via a stop-off at a cousin's for hospitality in Oxford before reaching my destination and reunion. Starting out after that, the return journey took me under the Thames to friends in Essex and Suffolk for a few days.

I then headed to North Yorkshire, to an old family friend who was unable to accommodate me. In the middle of the Moors I consulted my Independent Youth Hostel Book. On reaching the nearest Hostel, the first thing visible was the warning "Beware Killer Geese" on the five-bar gate! Luckily things didn't continue as they had started and the kindly farmer's wife showed me to the upper storey of her barn, equipped with sleeping bag and the hot water bottle which I requested. She explained that I'd be alone apart from a man in the next cubicle!

The two nights there were very comfortable, costing £10 per night and £1 for the hot water bottle. In the morning I met my fellow traveller over a cuppa; he was walking the Coast to Coast from West to East.

The following day my old family friend gave me a comprehensive tour of the local countryside and the next day I set off for home via Glasgow. I felt that my trip was extremely interesting, exciting and very cheap.

It was thanks to consulting my CAMRA Guide that I was pushed out of my 'comfort zone', to explore Britain far away from the "plastic" tour guides and brochures.

Liz Bligh
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The Hot Seat of Nairn

Andy Rogers took the Road to Nairn and summarises his experience of the Bandstand May Beer Festival

With the Met Office predicting a dreich West Coast and a sunnier aspect to the East, the spur-of-the-moment decision was made to make the trek from Fort William to the Bandstand Beer Festival in Nairn. A combination of Citylink and Stagecoach buses got me there for just after 11:30 on the Saturday morning, to be greeted by a member of staff just

poured was duly presented to me, a very agreeable Angus Pale Ale from the Two Thirsty Men brewery in Grantown-on-Spey (3.5). Picking my seat on the empty terrace, I settled down to enjoy the day. Our venerable Chair, Simon, spotted me and the table was then filled by George from Aberdeen and Duncan from Forres, with Jim from Newtonmore putting in a late afternoon appearance. The place was beginning to fill as other beer-lovers flooded in to make the most of what was on offer. As chat and beer both flowed,



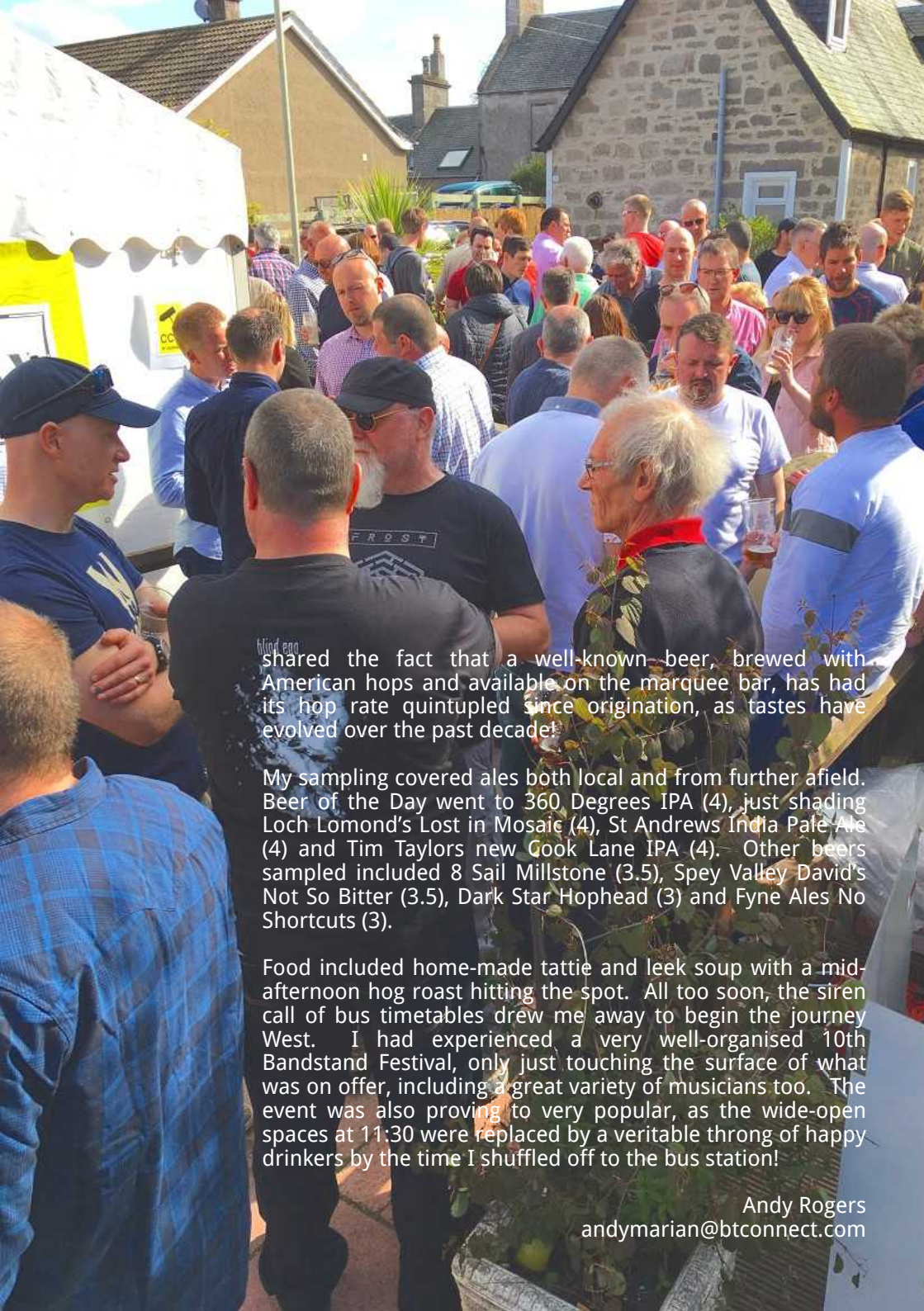
rolling up the canvas to open out the marquee.

Being a first time visitor to the Festival, I took some time to peruse the programme; a fairly incredible range of no fewer than two hundred ales and ciders was on offer during the Festival, along with a multiplicity of whiskies and gins for those so inclined. Not bad for a 10 room hotel!

The first half-pint of the day to be

we sallied back and forth to the bars (and other facilities) and took turns to rotate around the 'hot' seat, which was in full glare of the Nairn sun.

One of the highlights of the day was meeting up with Nigel from Windswept brewery. He was offering samples of both Aurora and Weizen to folk, along with some time to answer any questions. It was good to hear that the brewery is about to open a Tap and visitor centre in the next couple of months. He also



shared the fact that a well-known beer, brewed with American hops and available on the marquee bar, has had its hop rate quintupled since origination, as tastes have evolved over the past decade!

My sampling covered ales both local and from further afield. Beer of the Day went to 360 Degrees IPA (4), just shading Loch Lomond's Lost in Mosaic (4), St Andrews India Pale Ale (4) and Tim Taylors new Cook Lane IPA (4). Other beers sampled included 8 Sail Millstone (3.5), Spey Valley David's Not So Bitter (3.5), Dark Star Hophead (3) and Fyne Ales No Shortcuts (3).

Food included home-made tattie and leek soup with a mid-afternoon hog roast hitting the spot. All too soon, the siren call of bus timetables drew me away to begin the journey West. I had experienced a very well-organised 10th Bandstand Festival, only just touching the surface of what was on offer, including a great variety of musicians too. The event was also proving to be very popular, as the wide-open spaces at 11:30 were replaced by a veritable throng of happy drinkers by the time I shuffled off to the bus station!

Andy Rogers
andymarian@btconnect.com



An Ubhal as Àirde

The Highest Apple

Firstly, I feel like I should introduce myself, I'm Ryan and I'm the new cider representative for our local CAMRA branch (H&WI). In addition to enjoying a glass or two of cider I am also a cider maker (Caledonian Cider Co. in Conon Bridge).

I started making cider in Somerset at Thatchers back in 2005 where I spent most of my days working alongside an old guy called Ken who by that time had been making cider for over 30 years. He started at Champneys just up the road from Thatchers - legend has it that when John Thatcher bought the enormous oak vats from Champney in the 70s that upon delivery Ken was found to be hanging off one and decided to stay rather than walk back again.

You couldn't ask for a better place than Somerset to get a good grounding in the fine art of cider making, it's jam-packed



full of old cider makers who are generally more than happy to pass on their knowledge and in a field with no



college courses or qualifications (such as beer, spirits and wine have) this is invaluable; the skills of cider making have been passed down orally for hundreds of years. This informal training is one of the things that actually differentiates the identities of the traditional cider making areas, making each region distinct and interesting.

After 5 years at Thatchers I went to Brittany, a region with an arguably even older tradition of cider making. By the time I left, Thatchers had become a very large concern indeed and was moving ever further from its traditional cider roots - the now almost ubiquitous Thatchers Gold - so it was good at Rosquijeau Cidre in Finisterre to get back to using obscure, unpronounceable local apple varieties and ancient equipment.

I helped out there for the next few years while simultaneously making cider in Cornwall at Healey's in Penhallow. The cool thing about Healey's was that they had a 1200 litre copper pot still, which

we used to produce not only cider brandy but also Cornish whiskey (starting in 2002 this actually predated by several years the “first” English whiskey made at St George Distillery in Norfolk but was a better-kept secret). So now my job title had grown to rather grand ‘Cider Maker and Master Distiller’. Gradually my interest in distillation grew and in 2013 my wife (from Nairn), our new born son (Fin) and our cat (Tilly) made the long drive up to the Black Isle where I started my new job making whiskey at Glen Ord Distillery in the Muir of Ord.

property just outside Brora. This collection of 40-odd hardy wee trees



constitute, we believe, the most northerly cider orchard in the Europe! I then planted another 50-odd trees (a mix of traditional cider and Scottish heirloom varieties) in a patch of abandoned land over my garden wall. And, because I hate to see apples go to waste I started collecting them from local gardens and estates in exchange for cider.

After a while my cider making hobby began to outstrip my cider drinking hobby and so I started selling it to a couple of bars and festivals. Currently I supply MacGregors on Academy Street and the Black Isle Bar on Church Street in Inverness.

This foray into cider making in the Highlands represents a new chapter, not just in my cidery background but also in the wider cider making tradition. Each place I've made cider has its own unique methods that have grown up over the centuries to suit the local tastes and climate (Terroir if you like) but the Highlands had none of that, cider



One of the first things I did upon settling in was to start planting cider trees in my garden, keen to keep my double barrel job title! Shortly after that my parents started planting cider apple trees at their



they ferment slowly and steadily over the course of 4 to 6 months creating ciders with wonderful aromas of the orchard. They also frequently leave varying levels of residual natural sugar in the cider allowing us to create ciders which are naturally sweet, medium or dry without the need to add any sugar or artificial sweeteners.

Cider at its best reflects where it was made and for me the key to that is using locally-grown, unsprayed fruit, allowing the juice to ferment naturally without the need for commercial yeast, allowing the weather to dictate the temperature of the fermentation and maturation. I also use ex-whisky casks for both fermentation and maturation purely because it makes sense within a regional context and because of my day job.

making up here was a clean slate, an unknown, and that's a very exciting thing for a cider maker! A chance to create a new tradition.

It took a few years to get it right, the apple season is later this far north. This later ripening period then means you're fermenting through the coldest part of the year which has a big impact on the final cider. For example, commercial yeasts which are almost universally used elsewhere in the UK simply don't work at our winter temperatures. This stumbling block was overcome with a cider making epiphany when I realised that the naturally occurring yeast on the locally grown apples themselves has already survived our winters and so must be able to ferment the juice at extreme temperatures; local yeasts, like our famous Highland cattle have evolved slowly over hundreds of years to flourish in our often quite harsh environment.

And flourish they did! These local and unique yeasts have proven themselves to be excellent natural cider makers,

So, that's who I am and what I'm doing. Hopefully through my role on the committee as Cider Representative I'll be able to promote real cider and perry to the pubs in our region and try and get some excellent ciders and perries for us all to enjoy from cider makers both near and far. I'm looking forward to sharing my progress with you, until then Slàinte.

Ryan Sealey
caledoniancider@hotmail.com



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 (☺☺) or have only bottles (Δ) 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 via the contact details on the penultimate page or fill in What?ub scores (CAMRA members). 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)
Gunsmiths Bar
Heathmount Hotel
Hootananny
Inches Gate
Innes Bar
Johnny Foxes
Kingsmills Hotel
Kings Highway (JDW, 50p)
Lauders (10%)
Loch Ness House
MacGregors
Number 27
Phoenix Bar
Platform 8
Snowgoose
Three Witches
Tomlinson's Beer Shop
Waterfront
WoodWinters Δ
White House Δ

SPEYSIDE (N TO S)

Nairn

Gun Lodge
Inverness Airport (D'Lish)
Golf View Hotel & Spa

Braeval Hotel (Bandstand) (rooms 10%)
Cawdor Tavern (20%)

Strathspey

Haugh Hotel, Cromdale
-Grantown on Spey-
Craig Bar
Garth Hotel and Restaurant
Grant Arms Hotel
High St Merchants
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) Δ
Roo's Leap
Skiing Doo (Doo Below)
Storehouse (bottom of funicular) Δ
Winking Owl (20p)
Hilton Coylumbridge Hotel (Woodshed Bar)
Tippy Laird

BADENOCH

Glenmore Lodge (Lochain Bar)
Pine Marten Bar, Glenmore
Loch Inch Boathouse (Quarter Deck Bar), Kincaig
Suie Hotel, Kincaig
-Kingussie-
Tippy Laird
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 Δ
Anderson, Fortrose
Station Hotel, Avoch
Allangrange Arms, Munlochy, (20p)

Tain to Inverness

Platform 1864
Edderton Inn (hotel)
Castle Hotel, Portmahomack
Mallard, Dingwall
Highland Hotel, Strathpeffer

Richmond Hotel,
Strathpeffer Δ
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 ☼
Lock Inn, Fort Augustus
Lovat Arms Hotel, Fort
Augustus
Glenmorriston Arms
Hotel, Invermorriston
Cobbs at Urquhart Castle,
Drumnadrochit
Loch Ness Inn (Brewery
Bar), Lewiston
Benleva Hotel,
Drumnadrochit

FORT WILLIAM

Fort William (N)

Invergarry Hotel
Great Glen Water Park,
South Laggan
Eagle Barge,
South Laggan ☼
Old Station Restaurant,
Spean Bridge

Roy Bridge Hotel (Roy Bar)
Stronlossit Hotel, Roy
Bridge
Glenspean Lodge Hotel,
Roy Bridge ☼
Corrour Station House
Restaurant, Corrour
Estate (restaurant, Δ)
Moor of Ranoch Hotel,
Rannoch Station (hotel, Δ)

In Fort William

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

Fort William (S)

Four Seasons, Onich (10p)
Onich Hotel
Loch Leven Hotel,
Ballachulish (N)
Ballachulish Hotel,
Ballachulish ☼
Laroch Bar, Ballachulish ☼
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 Δ
Glenuig Inn

Branch

HebCelt Beer Tent
plus Stornoway Sea
Angling Club Beer
Fest, Stornoway,
18th-21st July

Belladrum Beer
Pavilion, Tartan
Heart Festival,
Belladrum Estate,
Inverness 2nd-4th
Aug

Westford Inn Beer
Festival, Claddach
Kirkibost, North Uist
3rd-5th August

Great British Beer
Festival, London
7th-11th Aug

Tasting Social Fri
17th Aug Corrie-
garth, Inverness
5.30pm start

Scottish and
Northern Ireland
Branches Meeting
Sat 25th Aug
Kingdom of Fife

Diary

Benleva Hotel
Autumn Beer
Festival, date tba,
call 01456 450080

Tasting Social Fri
28th Sept Black Isle
Bar Inverness
5.30pm start

Autumn Beer
Festival, Braeval
Hotel Nairn
28th-30th Sept

Tasting Social Fri
19th Oct Castle
Tavern, Inverness
5.30pm start

Ullapool Beer
Festival, Morefield
Motel 25th-27th Oct

Scottish and
Northern Ireland
Branches Meeting
Sat 17th Nov
Ayrshire &
Wigtownshire

Glenuig Village Hall
Loch Shiel Hotel,
Acharacle
Salen Hotel
Ariundle Centre, Strontian
Lochaline Hotel Δ
Arisaig Hotel (Crofters
Rest)
Chlachain Inn, Mallaig
Steam Inn, Mallaig
Tea Garden Café,
Mallaig ☼
West Highland Hotel,
Mallaig ☼
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 Δ
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
Glendale House, South
Erradale Δ

In Gairloch

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

Gairloch to Ullapool

Poolewe Hotel
Aultbea Hotel (Convoy
Tavern)
Drum-a-chork Hotel,
Aultbea ☼

In Ullapool

An Teallach Shop
Arch Inn
Argyll Hotel (20p)
Ceilidh Place
Ferry Boat Inn (20p)
Morefield Motel
Royal Hotel
Seaforth Bar & Restaurant

Ullapool North

Summer Isles Hotel,
Achiltibuie
Am Fuaran Bar,
Achiltibuie

CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND

West Coast

Altnacealgach Inn,
Ledmore Junction
Inchnadamph Hotel,
Assynt ☼

Caberfeidh, Lochinver
 Kylesku Hotel ☼
 Scourie Hotel
 Kinlochbervie Hotel

North Coast

Sango Sands Oasis,
 Durness ☼
 Smoo Cave Hotel,
 Durness ☼
 Ben Loyal Hotel,
 Tongue ☼
 Tongue Hotel ☼
 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 ☼
 Castletown Hotel Δ
 Northern Sands Hotel,
 Dunnet
 Seaview Hotel, John
 O'Groats
 Storehouse,
 John O'Groats Δ

East Coast

Alexander Bain, Wick (JDW
 50p)
 Mackays Hotel (Cocktail
 Bar), Wick
 Bay Owl Restaurant,
 Dunbeath
 Bannockburn Inn,
 Helmsdale
 Belgrave Arms Hotel,
 Helmsdale
 Sutherland Inn, Brora
 Golspie Inn (Sutherland
 Hotel)

Trentham Hotel, Poles nr
 Dornoch
 Burghfield House Hotel,
 Dornoch (hotel, Δ)
 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 ☼
 Old Inn, Carbost
 Taigh Ailean Hotel
 (Munros Bar), Portnalong
 (20p / B&B deal)
 Old School Restaurant
 Dunvegan ☼
 Stein Inn Waternish
 Edinbane Inn
 Lodge at Edinbane
 Uig Hotel
 Bakur Bar, Uig
 Ferry Inn, Uig
 Bosville Hotel (Merchant
 Bar), Portree
 Isles Inn, Portree (10%
 food discount)
 Royal Hotel (MacNab's
 Inn), Portree
 Sconser Lodge Hotel
 Claymore Restaurant,
 Broadford
 Hebridean Hotel,
 Broadford
 Saucy Marys Lodge,
 Kyleakin ☼
 Isle Ornsay Hotel (Praban
 Bar), Sleat
 Kinlock Castle, Isle of
 Rhum Δ

EILEAN SIAR / WESTERN ISLES

-Leòdhas/Lewis-

Crown Inn (Harbour Bar),
 Stornoway, Lewis
 Edge O' the World,
 Stornoway
 Stornoway Sea Angling
 Club

-Na Hearadh/Harris-

Hotel Hebrides, Tarbert ☼
-Uibhist a Tuath/North Uist-

Hamersay House,
 Lochmaddy
 Lochmaddy Hotel Δ
 Langass Lodge, Loch
 Elport Δ
 Westford Inn, Claddach
 Kirkibost

-Beinn na Faoghla/

Benbecula-

Dark Island Hotel Δ
 Isle of Benbecula Hotel,
 Creagorry Δ

-Uibhist a Deas/South Uist-

Borrodale Hotel,
 Daliburgh Δ
 Lochboisdale Hotel,
 Lochboisdale Δ
 Polochar Inn Δ
-Eirisgeidh/Eriskay-
 Am Politician Δ

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Scotland Real Heritage Pubs: Pub Interiors of Historic Interest



pubheritage.camra.org.uk/rhp/Scotland

This publication, the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) guide about Heritage Pubs in Scotland, is available as a free download. Edited by Mick Slaughter, it aims to create an up-to-date snapshot of the Pub Heritage picture in Scotland.

Paul Ainsworth, Chair of the CAMRA National Pub Heritage Group: "Over the past 25 years, CAMRA has developed its national and regional inventories of historic pub interiors. These highlight the crème de la crème of interiors which have either escaped much alteration for many years or contain features of exceptional interest."

For example, built in 1894, the Phoenix Ale House (Inverness) is of classic Scottish island bar-style whereas the Plough Inn (Rosemarkie) is a small pub rebuilt in 1907 (as with a delightfully fitted-out, virtually intact front room. This has its original semi-circular counter and simple gantry.

Included is detailed comment on all the pubs in Scotland listed on the CAMRA Pub Heritage website. The guide is freely available from the CAMRA Pub Heritage website.

Grateful thanks are given to numerous individuals, the National CAMRA Pub Heritage Group and local Archives: the latter for providing access to unique historic documentation.

"KeyKeg" it is!

Real Ale: what it is, what it isn't, and how it can be served

The following article was originally intended as an explanatory note in the Good Beer Guide by Nick Boley of CAMRA's National Executive and Technical Advisory Group, and is here expanded into a full article.

The Revitalisation Project has resulted in a greater interest in beer, with real ale and other beers being discussed and debated at length. But what exactly is real ale? And what isn't? How are these beers served?

CAMRA's definition of real ale is a beer which is allowed to undergo secondary fermentation in the container from which it is served and is served without extraneous carbon dioxide*. It is also technically defined as a beer which contains at least 1 million live yeast cells per millilitre – it sounds a lot but yeast cells are microscopic in size – and where the secondary fermentation after the beer has been put into the container can be demonstrated by the specific gravity (or density) of the beer decreasing over time, showing that more dense sugars are being turned into lighter ethanol.

Beer which is not considered real ale will not conform to ALL the above criteria. So, if a beer has been filtered to remove some or all of the yeast, or it has been pasteurised (which kills off the yeast), or it is served by applying extraneous carbon dioxide, such as in keg beer, then it is not real ale. So, a beer can be unfiltered and unpasteurised, can still ferment in the container, but if it is served under CO₂ pressure, is not real ale.

The eagle-eyed will notice I have used the word container – because real ale can come in a variety of containers. Of course, there is the traditional cask – firkins, kilderkins and so on, whether steel, wood or even plastic. Then there is the polypin or mini-cask from the brewery shop, but some of these containers contain bright beer (i.e. beer with most of the yeast removed).

Real ale in a bottle we are all familiar with and now we have real ale in can, such as the beers from Moor Brewery. Real ale in a can is just like real ale in a bottle but in a can – no different but light cannot get to it, which some claim is an advantage.

But perhaps the container which has caused the most discussion and controversy is the small (20 or 30 litre) container consisting of a plastic bag inside a flexible

outer case, where the beer is served by applying gas pressure into the space between the outer casing that then becomes rigid, and the still-flexible and compressible inner bag so the pressurising gas doesn't come into contact with the beer. These non-traditional containers are made by a small number of companies, but the

best-known is KeyKeg, made by Lightweight Containers B.V. of the Netherlands.

The beer inside these containers can be real ale as per our definition, or it can be brewery-conditioned (e.g. keg). Where previously we as CAMRA had been promoting the term "KeyCask" for the



container when it contains ale that is real as per the official definition and "KeyKeg" when it contains beer that does not meet all of our requirements, the National Executive meeting on 12th May this year resolved that both shall now be referred to as "KeyKeg". The reality on the ground had been that the bag-in-bottle had informally been referred to uniformly as KeyKeg anyway, so we'll now be able to put this time of minor confusion bet-

ween CAMRA and the industry behind us and get on with promoting this promising new dispense method.

nick.boleyn@camra.org.uk

* At the AGM and Conference 2018, a motion to allow CO2 cask-breathers to be used was passed.

What's Yours Then? Contributions

We are always looking for pub and brewery news and "travelogue" contributions with pictures for WYT? and you do not have to be a CAMRA member or live in the H&W1 branch area to contribute. The Highlands has in excess of 2 million visitors every year, and if you are one of those visitors and have picked up a copy of the magazine, please share your experiences with others, good or bad. Contact our editor Tony Vernon at editor@highland.camra.org.uk. If we do publish your item we will contact you to arrange a "vanity" copy of the magazine to be sent to you free of charge!

By Post

As much as we would like to mail out copies all over the UK free of charge to anyone who has picked up copies in the past, this has proved to be a wee bit costly, particularly at 56p (from April 2017) per edition. However, we are more than happy to send four copies to you for the charge of £2.50 per year which covers the cost of four 2nd class stamps. (currently $56p \times 4 = £2.24$). We will buy the appropriate number of stamps and print up the same number of addressed envelopes but NOT sticking the stamps on until that edition is published. When we use the last stamp, we will add a note in with the mailing. If for any reason we discontinue the "offer", we will place any unused stamps in one of the addressed envelopes and mail them to you at OUR expense. Please contact info@highland.camra.org.uk for more details. Alternatively, you can read the current and back copies as far back as Winter 2003 free of charge, <https://www.highland.camra.org.uk> and click on the 'branch magazine' link.



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**Helpers wanted for this Autumn's
Inverness college Freshers Fair.
Contact Simon Urry on 07973 284137**

Annual Bandstand Festival - Nairn

Morag Holding of the Braeval Hotel summarises their May celebration

May heralded the 10th anniversary of the Bandstand Beer Festival in Nairn. Over five days (3rd - 7th May), thousands of visitors flooded to the Bandstand Bar to enjoy the best of UK beers. The festival is now the largest independent beer festival in Scotland.

This year's range was the best ever with 200 real ales and ciders from 70 Scottish and English breweries.

The fastest selling beer was Orkney Brewery's Cliff Edge IPA (4.7%). The best selling porter was Titanic's Plum Porter (4.9%). Campervan Brewery's Leith Juice (4.7%) fruity session ale proved popular and first time that the Edinburgh brewery had been at the festival. Cromarty Brewery's award winning ales including 3 seasonals of which Raspberry Whiteout (5.0%) was best received. Visitors enjoyed 2 seasonals from Timothy Taylor, rarely in Scotland, Cook Lane IPA (5.8%) and Knowle Spring Blonde (4.2%). Also included was Tiny Rebel brewery's Cwtch (4.6%). Popular ciders were enjoyed from Caledonian Cider Co., Conon Bridge and Cairn O'Mohr brewery, Perth.

Talented professional musicians



entertained throughout the event with an exciting cocktail of country blues and rock'n'roll. Visitors were thrilled by the unexpected addition of special guest star, JUSTIN CURRIE (lead singer of Del Amitri), who performed with Los Supremos, Ted McKenna, the Charlie McKerron Trio and other Scottish talent.

Due to popular demand, dates for 2019 festival have already been announced: 2nd - 6th May 2019, but if you can't wait

until next year, the Bandstand Bar will be holding an Autumn Beer Festival 28th to 30th September. At this we shall present around 50 ales and ciders, with live music throughout. CAMRA members can claim a 10% discount off bed and breakfast at the Bandstand Bar/Braeval Hotel. Rooms are limited and you need to contact them direct to claim your discount.

info@braevalhotel.co.uk



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Dark Island Reserve wins Gold at SIBA BeerX



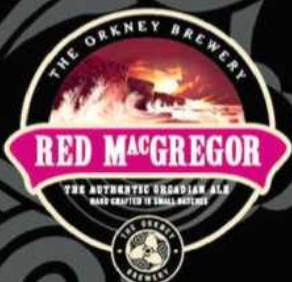
Orkney Brewery returned from this year's 'BeerX' event, staged in Liverpool by the Society of Independent Brewers in March, with two very creditable

golds. The keynote was the award for their Dark Island Reserve in the 'Cask Champion Speciality Mid to Dark Beers' category, described by the brewery itself as "a rich strong Orcadian Ale which, after gentle fermentation at our brewery in Quoyloo, is finished in old oak casks formerly used to mature fine scotch malt whisky. This unhurried process creates a timeless classic full of fruit, spice, oak and roast malt flavours." Mouth-watering... For the technically-minded, the hops are a doublet of First Gold and East Kent Goldings and the malt is a blend of Maris Otter, Crystal, Chocolate and Malted Wheat. For the designated driver, it's 10% ABV! Orkney's Commercial Manager Craig Steven commented: "Receiving these awards on behalf of Orkney Brewery team is a great honour and an incredible testament to our meticulous approach to recipe, brewing methods and ingredient selection. We have now picked up 17 awards overall inside 12 months".

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Much of our news comes from visitors to H&WI sending in reports - all of which are welcome irrespective of the length of the report. Even if it is just what beers were available during their visit, it helps the branch to build a picture.

Accordingly, no matter how insignificant it may seem, please send in reports of what you find. With such a big area to "curate" sometimes we may not have the opening times as up-to-date as we would like.

WESTER ROSS

One such report advises that **Royal Hotel in Ullapool** now has An Teallach available on Handpump. We have generated a WhatPub entry with a proper survey (and picture) pending.

Whilst delivering the Spring edition of WYT? we found out that **Aultbea Hotel** has a new owner, David Chalom. In a follow-up call, the bar also has a new An Teallach handpump.

EILEAN SIAR/WESTERN ISLES

On the Southern Islands of the Western Isles, Real Ale is a wee bit "scarce" and the only pub with hand pumps is **Westford Inn**. Eilidh and Colin are holding their third summer beer festival between 3rd and 5th August at Claddach Kirkibost, North Uist. At time of writing they had Skye Gold on tap with Skye Red and Fyne Ales Yarl waiting to come on. For the summer, they will again be getting in some Tryst ales, that recently sold well.

Am Politician, on Eriskay in the southern Hebridean isles, is under new management since the beginning of June. At the time of writing there are no

plans to progress beyond bottles although as they are within 'whinge range' of your good editor, let's call that one 'work in progress'...



Don Catterall reports that in Stornoway, there is now no real ale at the **Sea Angling Club**. However the **Harbour Bar at the Crown Inn** has started serving two ales from the list that they are obliged to use. Down the road in North Harris, Don also mentions that the **Hotel Hebrides in Tarbert** has Deuchars IPA on for the summer.

There are other Hebridean pubs and hotels that have bars and have bottled beers, some of which are 'Real Ale in a Bottle', e.g. bottle-conditioned. Although they may not be a hand pump, all of the places where bottled beers are available are listed in the centre-fold.

SKYE

On Skye, **Ardvasar Hotel (Hideout Bar)** and **Broadford Hotel** have both taken out their Isle of Skye handpumps, but still have bottles.

Mike Godfrey reports that **The Shieldaig Bar & Coastal Kitchen at the Tigh an Eilean Hotel**, Shieldaig has replaced An Teallach ales with those from Strathcarron Brewery. When last visited,



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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.

Stein Inn

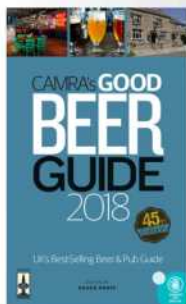
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Red Cow (ABV 4.2%) and Golden Cow (ABV 3.8%) were on the two hand pumps and Black Cow (ABV 4.2%) was available in bottle-conditioned (RAIB) form.

The Kintail Lodge Hotel at the foot of Glen Shiel has added a second handpump to its bar. In doing so it joins the **Glenelg Inn** as the second hostelry in the area to serve beers from the new Dun Brewing brewery near Glenelg. (See article elsewhere in this edition). The Glenelg Inn now has four hand pumps, two serving various brews from the Caledonian stable and the other two serving rotating Dun Brewing ales.



The Plockton Hotel held it's now regular 'Scottish Real Ale & Gin Festival' over the late May Bank Holiday weekend. Colin and Oscar the Strathcarron dray horse are pictured above doing their delivery!

Glorious weather ensured a steady flow of customers sampling the 50+ real ales from 14 different breweries and the 70 gins from various parts of Scotland. Combined with live music, good craic and wonderful scenery, this is an event not to be missed!

BADENOCH

Following a short closure of the **Scott House Hotel in Kingussie**, it has re-opened as McInnes Hotel, but as yet no hand pump. Also in Kingussie, it is understood that **Siverfjord** no longer

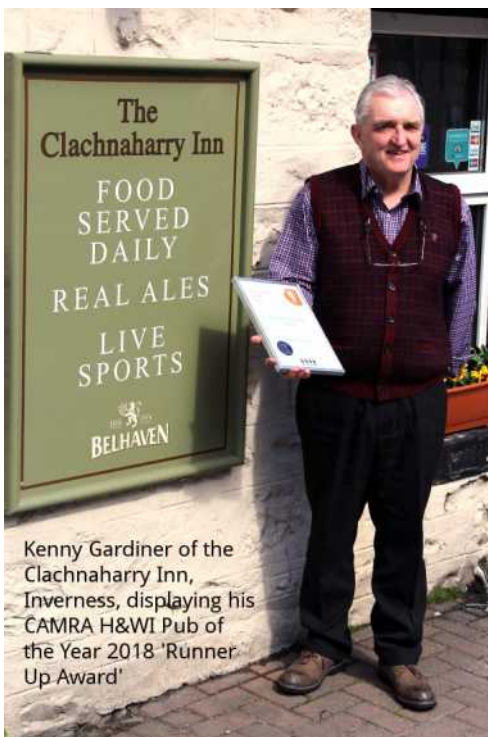
has any hand pumps.

FORT WILLIAM



Ken Paul from Sunderland and South Tyneside branch reports that the **Chlachain Inn, Mallaig** currently has Skye Red and Skye Black on hand pumps. He also complains that the pool table is too close to the wall and they need shorter cues!

INVERNESS



Kenny Gardiner has taken on **Clachnaharry**, one of the real ale icons



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of Inverness, and has no intention of changing the beers currently available. Clachnaharry was this year's Pub of the Year Runner-up. Kenny is pictured on the facing page with award in hand, outside the pub. Gratifyingly, the award image has already been uploaded to the Clachnaharry website front page.

Peter Carroll, the manager at **Lauders** has contacted the branch and has offered card-carrying CAMRA members 10% off real ales. With this in mind, their famous revolving door is liable to be spinning at its maximum rate, irrespective of Orkney Northern Light and Red MacGregor being their regulars.

Also in Inverness, the **bar at the Palace Hotel** has been remodelled and is now against the far wall. As part of the move the hand pump, which was seldom used, has been removed but bottles are available.

The Whitebridge Hotel, Whitebridge on the self-proclaimed "quiet" shore of Loch Ness is under new management, according to a recent mail from Lesley, one of the new owners. No word yet on what their real ale policy will be going in to the future.

CAITHNESS & SUTHERLAND

After a closure of what seems forever, up the east coast on the A99 just after the A9 junction to Thurso, **Portland Hotel at Lybster** should be open by the time this magazine is circulated. Although probably not available from "Day 1", new owner Sian's preference is to get at least one hand pump in as soon as possible.

Technically, an "offie", **Bin Ends on River Street** (just along from Mackays Hotel) in Wick is selling bottled beers from John O'Groats Brewery.

Brewery News

Most of the recent activity has been associated with checking the proofs of the 2019 GBG, and particularly the brewery listings.

Jon at Fiddlers in Drumnadrochit advises that work is progressing well on the "brewery around the back" and he is hoping to be producing beer towards the end of August - more in the Autumn edition.



Also in Drumnadrochit, Hanging Tree, under the control of Allan Crossland, is now in regular production with the beers available at Benleva.



Keith Morrell reports that John O'Groats Brewery had two cask ales going to Scottish Real Ale Festival (5th -7th July), Swelkie and Deep Groat.

The brewery also now produces three bottled beers - Golden Groat, Amber Groat and Deep Groat and will be selling them from their own outlet at JoG.



GLEN SPEAN
BREWING CO

Andy Rogers reports that Glen Spean have added Garrison Red (4.5% ABV) to their range. This amber ale is currently being supplied exclusively to Garrison West in Fort William. Sales of their original range of Pale Blonde and Highbridge IPA continue to be strong and can be found in outlets across Lochaber, from Ballachulish to Mallaig.

Those who know Cannich will recall the two pubs there, Slaters and Glen Affric, the latter closed down about 3 years ago. The pub and hotel were bought and there was supposed to be a brewery replacing it. Glen Affric Brewery is currently in production in.... Birkenhead, but the co-owner, Craig McCormick is hoping to relocate some or all of the production facility back in the Highlands.



Strathcarron Brewery beers are continuing their march across the local area. One or more of the colourful herd (Red Cow, Golden Cow and Black Cow) are now regularly available on draught at the Lochcarron Hotel, Applecross Inn, Torridon Hotel, Kinlochewe Hotel, Plockton Hotel and the Shieldaig Bar & Coastal Kitchen at the Tigh an Eilean



Colin and Oscar the dray horse delivering to Plockton Hotel

Photo: Jackie Parsons

Hotel, Shieldaig, as well as the Strathcarron Hotel.

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print is a key part of the Brewery's ethos. Only barley grown and malted in Scotland is used in the brewing process and their hops come from Kent and Worcester rather than from America, Germany and the Czech Republic. This even extends, where possible, to the delivery of their beer – the photo (courtesy of Jackie Parsons/Paula Leslie) shows Colin Parsons with Oscar delivering beer for the Plockton Hotel Real Ale & Gin Festival! OK we've used this image elsewhere in this issue, but it's not every day you see a brewery dry.



We are also pleased to advise that Dun Brewing have been up and running over near Glenelg since January. They supply the local Glenelg Inn, and since mid June,

Kintail Lodge Hotel.

Mike Godfrey reports: Another new Brewery has started production in our area and, like Strathcarron Brewery, it is located on the site of a former farm building.



Dun Brewing, based in Glen Beag on the Glenelg peninsular, takes its name from the two well-preserved Iron Age brochs (forts) next to the brewery - Dun Telve and Dun Trodden – and the beer names also play on this theme.

Four beers are currently being brewed in the 4BBL Dave Porter set up: Dun Light (3.8% ABV) – a golden session

beer; Dun4 (4.2% ABV) – an amber pale ale; Dungeon (4.6% ABV) – a traditional porter and Dun & Dusted (5.6% ABV) – a traditional strong IPA.



The opening of the brewery fulfils a long-held ambition for owner, brewer and currently sole employee, Neil Hammond, to produce local beers that he wants to drink in his local pub. All ingredients are organic, with the sole exception of the hops. Organic hops are apparently extremely difficult to source and ones from the UK are virtually non-existent – New Zealand being the major supplier – leaving an environmentally difficult choice between being 100% organic and using UK hops, thereby reducing air miles! The turf roof and energy-efficient insulation are further evidence of the green credentials here.



By the time of publication, Neil hopes to have a brewery tap – the 'Dun Inn' up and running. Two hand pumps are ready waiting....!

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Brewery Awards



Black Isle have scooped first prize in the "Golden Ales" category with their "Yellowhammer" and **Cromarty** a third in the Porter category with "Ghost Town".

Sticking with **Cromarty**, against others on the World stage, they have only just gone and won Gold in the rye beer category at the Beer World Cup in Nashville, USA with "Red Rocket". A spokesman said "We're totally over the moon with the award! Red Rocket was our third ever beer, and still remains very much at the heart of our range. We're absolutely delighted by the news!"

"Local Rocket" from **Caledonian Cider Co** won a silver medal at the biggest cider competition in the World - British Cider Championship - in Somerset in June. A very reserved Ryan Sealey advises - "absolutely delighted!"

Just announced at the Scottish Real Ale Festival in Glasgow as we went to press were **Gold award and Champion Beer of Scotland 2018** for **Orkney IPA** from **Swannay Brewery**. Silver award goes to **Black Isle Brewery** for Hibernator. Bronze award goes to **Orkney Brewery** for Red MacGregor.

Foot-Tapper Roundup

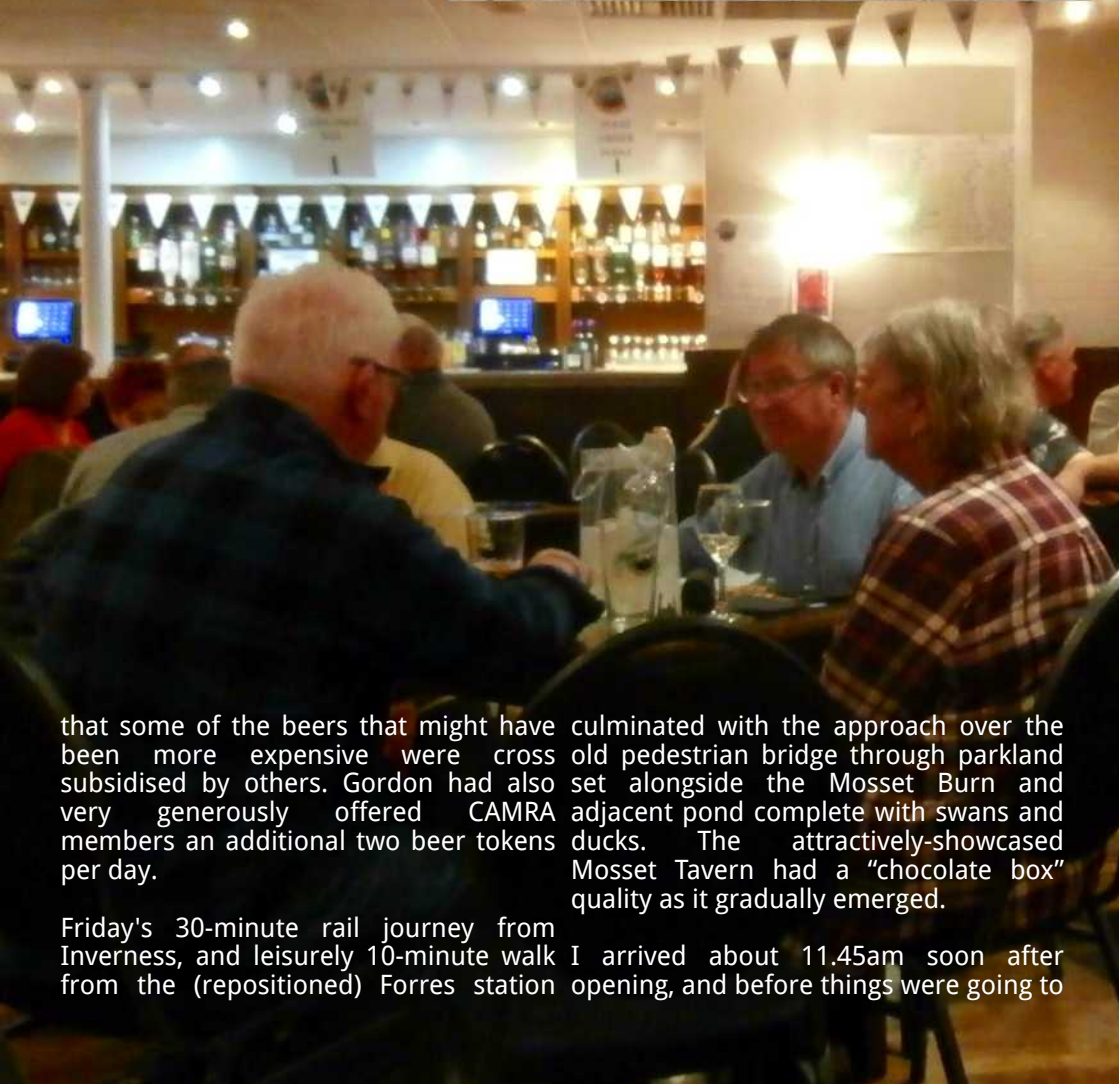
I arrived home one grey Friday afternoon in early February to find an email "Could H&WI advertise the inaugural Mosset Tavern - Forres Foot Tapper A Real Ale Festival - which will be taking place from 5th to 8th April?". YES! Although just outside the H&WI branch area, Forres is not that far away, and just a few minutes down the A96 / rails from Nairn.

Beer festivals generally fall into two camps, cash and cashless, the latter being favoured by many because at busy times service remains speedy. Gordon Brailsford, the owner of The Mosset

Tavern, had elected to go down the 'cashless' route.

The function room has a [fire] capacity of 500 each day and so to control numbers, the event was 'wristband only'; £10 bought your entry, three 1/3 pint beer tokens and a festival programme and pint glass with a 1/3 pint to line marking. The '3-day weekend' option for £20 (or £15 'early bird') gained admission for each day and the same one day allowance. Additional beer tokens could be purchased for £1.30.

Ultimately, the 'flat pricing' policy means



that some of the beers that might have been more expensive were cross subsidised by others. Gordon had also very generously offered CAMRA members an additional two beer tokens per day.

Friday's 30-minute rail journey from Inverness, and leisurely 10-minute walk from the (repositioned) Forres station

culminated with the approach over the old pedestrian bridge through parkland set alongside the Mosset Burn and adjacent pond complete with swans and ducks. The attractively-showcased Mosset Tavern had a "chocolate box" quality as it gradually emerged.

I arrived about 11.45am soon after opening, and before things were going to

get busy; inside, the pub has a sports bar area, separated from the lounge bar which is more 'families and food' oriented. A third, function room had been allocated to the festival.

After a very brief introductory chat with proprietor Gordon, Keith Morrell arrived all the way down from Thurso; Gordon showed us both through to the Function Room where his staff were all busy doing all those 'last minute' things. The L-shaped bar had some hand pumps on it, and racked casks on the stillage. Glasses stuffed with programmes sat waiting for people to arrive, and offering my receipt I was issued with my three wristbands and token allowance.

The 'beer menu' featured 84 beers from 28 breweries and three ciders which were going to be available at one time or another over the weekend, not to mention the forty gins and one hundred malts behind the bars.

Beer festivals can be likened to sweet shops – which one to choose first? Some beeries are 'box tickers' who just must try the more obscure, others stick to their 'favourites'. While not being a ticker I do like to try to sample both beers that are new to me and those that I have had in the past and “like”, but I would not turn my nose up at a beer that I do enjoy on a regular basis.

Having pre-printed the online beer list I had my sights on Oakham's Citra (4.2%), a long-time favourite of mine, but only occasionally spied venturing this far North. Yes, as good as I remember it, maybe too 'hoppy' for some, but right up my street. I was fortunate to be working my way through some bottled Swannay Orkney Porter (9%) that arrived in January; this was available on cask so I was keen to compare. Just as good!

Staying on Orkney, I tried Cliff Edge IPA

(4.8%) which was new to me, and did not disappoint.

By this time, we had been joined by George Howie from the Aberdeen branch and the room was slowly filling up. Before leaving mid-afternoon, I went on to have another four thirds one of which was Fyne Ales Jarl (3.8%). Again, a well hopped beer and for me the Winner on the day, pipping the Swannay Porter by a 'short nose'.

Returning on Saturday at about midday, it was already much busier. One thing I did notice was a tally board showing at-a-glance which beers were available. Without going on a blow by blow account of the eight I tried, my beer of the day this time was Windswept's Tornado (6.7%) although I did also try Black Rat cider (6%), which was very dry.

Summarising, I would say that although still relatively quiet when I left on Friday at 3pm many people would have been at work. By report, that evening was particularly busy. On Saturday, it was clear it was going to be a popular event and there was an eclectic mix of young and old, male and female, not all of whom were drinking beer.

Speaking to Gordon a week after the event we discussed the tally board and I suggested a 'traffic light' system of waiting, on and finished. Annie, Linda and Lorraine, three ladies sharing a table with me, were certainly looking to a repeat performance next year. Gordon assures me that a second “Foot Tapper” is on the cards.

Finally, I would observe that it is great that publicans are prepared to take the risk and put on such events, both big and small, and are to be commended.

Simon Urry
Chair

Highlands & Western Isles CAMRA

A Father's Day Treat



My wife and I were watching a documentary earlier this year that featured the Jacobite steam train journey from Fort William to Mallaig. Now, being fond of trains as well as pubs and beer, I suggested it as something to discover in the summer.

So, booking the steam train tickets and hotels – an overnighner in Glasgow and two nights in Fort William - we headed up on the Father's Day weekend. Not a bad one, that up to this point Father had paid!

On the Friday night in Glasgow we had a few beers in Blackfriars and the Wetherspoons Crystal Palace, where we had to wait ages to get served. The three of us then set off up the A82 in fairly grim, rainy weather. Despite this the scenery was spectacular, especially the desolation of Rannoch Moor and the splendour of Glencoe.

The hotel was near Fort William station and a short walk to the town centre. We made our way through the drizzle to the first pub, Cobbs at Nevisport. Bearing in mind this was 7pm on a Saturday night there no sign of life! Never mind, next on the list was the Grog & Gruel. The place was heaving, standing room only at the bar and the restaurant upstairs was full. So number 3 was The Great Glen Wetherspoons, a few yards down the street.

Although busy and full of the United Nations, I was met with a smiling face as soon as I reached the bar - a marked contrast to an earlier Spoons experience in Glasgow. A large "How to Order Food" sign instructed the reader in 10 languages!

After a couple of pints of Wooha Porter and some food we tried to book at the Grog & Gruel for the Sunday, only to receive an abrupt and rude "don't take bookings". Instead we checked out the Garrison West pub/restaurant just off the High Street. It looked ok for our Sunday night meal, so headed back to the hotel.

Next day was the steam train ride to Mallaig, through some more fantastic scenery. The train was full, so as soon as we got off we walked through the village to beat the rush and have lunch in The Chlachain Inn. I enjoyed the Skye Dark and Skye Gold along with some excellent fish and chips.

My daughter challenged me to a game of pool. It must be one of the few tables where half of the shots have to be taken with the cue held vertically, it being that close to two of the walls!

Back in Fort William later that evening, we were ready for an early night but first a quick pint and a snack; Cobbs was open, but deserted so we tried Garrison West. So despite the weather, and the issue with a couple of pubs in Fort William, a great trip with fantastic scenery and a chance to stock up on some bottled Scottish Ales – never go home without any! Hmm - not been to Inverness for a while – we will return!!

Ken Paul
Sunderland & South Tyneside Branch
ken.paul1951@googlemail.com

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