

Camra Calling

Summer 2012-Autumn 2012

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Member's Newsletter for the North Devon Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale

New Branch Email Address

We now have a new email address for the branch which is at the top of this newsletter for any information you may want to send to the branch.

Witterings of the Wizard

As you are no doubt aware the Branch Annual General Meeting has gone by and I am still wittering! I am happy and proud to continue as Branch Chairman. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Bob Goddard as Pubs Officer Group Coordinator, Lee Sycamore as Website & Database manager and Fiona as Membership Secretary. We are still in need of a Press Officer and Social Secretary. If anyone would like more details of what this entails and would like to volunteer to try out these roles I would be very pleased to hear from you.

The highpoint of the past 3 months was certainly the National AGM and Members' Weekend. As Deputy Organiser of the event I found the whole process very interesting. The 'wash-up' meeting held a few weeks ago was very positive too. I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend which was inspiring and raised the profile of North Devon Branch. We are looking forward to attending next year's event in Norwich. I would encourage all of you to consider attending.



I have to confess to attending several beer festivals recently; most notably the Society of Independent Brewers [SIBA] festival at Tucker's Maltings, this being the biggest festival in the South West with around 270

beers; also the Ales From Devon at the Devon County Show. Working at these two events earns very necessary income for the Branch and I would like to thank all members who were able to do so. I believe they all had as much fun as I.

Our Morris dancing season began on 1st May dancing in the dawn at Nine Maidens, Belstone and now I am compelled to visit a different pub each week – it's a tough job but someone's got to do it.

Regional Pub Of The Year [POTY] judging has been completed by our team. While interesting it also involved considerable travel. The pubs being judged varied considerably.

So my Witterings are a little shorter this time (that will please the Editor). Quote seen on a t-shirt at the Bodmin beer festival "Frogs drink water & croak. Drink beer!".

The Wiz [Morris]

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Membership

Having just spent 2 days at the Devon County Show working on the CAMRA membership stand in the Contented Cow (Ales From Devon) marquee I feel I must pursue membership issues via the newsletter, as this is the only means I have of contacting ALL branch members.

How involved with your Branch do you feel?

How informed about Branch events and issues do you feel?

Whatever your personal level of commitment to the Campaign for Real Ale (your reasons for joining in the first place) your membership is the most important thing to CAMRA and to me as Membership Secretary. It is part of my role to endeavour to inspire you to be as active in your membership as you are willing to be. To achieve this I need to be in contact with you. The opportunities available for this are limited by cost as we are not a wealthy Branch.

- Option 1 - by post - quarterly: Branch Newsletter, Minutes of full Branch meetings & Information Update (calendar of events)

- Option 2 - by email - quarterly:- Branch Newsletter, Minutes of full Branch meetings & Information Update (calendar of events)
- Option 3 - by email - monthly: Information Update (calendar of events updated monthly), Local & national information as it occurs, Minutes of Branch meetings & Newsletter (quarterly)
- Option 4 - No contact at all

If you would prefer not receive any (choose what you want to receive) or all (Option 4) of the above please let us know so that we do not waste postage, paper and printing. Also, please bear in mind the cost of postage compared to the no-cost of email.

- If you have an email address but would prefer CAMRA HQ not to have it you can be included on a separate mailing list
- If you have provided CAMRA HQ with an email address when you joined then I am able to access that mailing list
- You may choose, at any time, not to be contacted by post or electronically. Your membership and support is still valued, and should you change your mind I am only a phone call/stamp/email away.

I need to know what you want. If I do not hear from you then I will assume that you would like to receive all the information available (Option 1 or 3). Therefore, if you do not wish to receive post or email you need to let me know.

I sincerely hope that by keeping you informed of what is going on you will feel more involved and may even like to be more actively involved.

Your voice counts. Please help us to support CAMRA aims, to support local brewers, to support local pubs, to choose the best pubs in our Branch for inclusion in The Good Beer Guide, to choose the best pub in our Branch for nomination for Pub of the Year, to ensure that CAMRA continues to be one of the largest and most influential consumer pressure groups in the country.

Fiona.

Membership Secretary

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POGOFF

The Pubs Officer Group are continuing to gather relevant and interesting information about the pubs in our area and to enter it onto our Branch database. By the end of this year we aim to have most of these on the radar; with details of the real ales and ciders

they usually have on offer, opening times, food availability, facilities, etc all easily accessible to both locals and visitors alike on the North Devon CAMRA website.

Our branch encompasses a significantly larger geographical area than that covered by most others, so we Pubs Officers really appreciate any help that can be provided by other members, either with database information or with reports and tip-offs about what may be happening at your local. So please e-mail me, or advise your local Pubs Officer if that is easier, with any information or news concerning the pubs in our area that you frequent. We must also, of course, ensure that the database is kept as up to date as possible, so it is an ongoing, albeit enjoyable job for us all to "check things out" on a fairly regular basis.

It is always sad when a pub closes, particularly so when it is the only pub left in the village. This was the case with the Ring o' Bells at Prieford which, after serving the locals for more than 170 years, finally closed the doors and ceased trading on 8th April. Perhaps all may not be lost in this case though, as a spirited campaign has been mounted by a group of former customers to preserve the pub for future use by the community. For more information on this please see the link to them from the Pubs Preservation page of our web-site.

While it is reckoned that nationally some 12 more pubs are closing every week, it is not of course all one-way traffic. In our own area it has been interesting to note that a number of previously closed pubs have re-opened in recent weeks, in some instances rather unexpectedly. The future success or otherwise of these establishments will depend on numerous factors, not the least of which will be their ability to serve a good pint. We hope to raise a glass of the same to them when we next visit.

Bob Goddard.

Pubs Officer Group Coordinator

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Beer Festivals, Meetings & Socials

Can be found on the attachment with this newsletter.

Any Future Events

If you know of any events or Beer Festivals taking place between September 2012 and November 2012, please inform Fiona.

The Branch has tried to ensure that the information contained in this newsletter is accurate at the time of creation. All opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of individual Branch members and not necessarily those of the Branch or of CAMRA.