

(Award winning)

What's yours then?



CAMRA Highlands & Western Isles | FREE Magazine | Autumn 2014



- Belladrum festival bar report
- **POTY Presentations**
- Skye trip
- **Breweries News**
- Pubs news
- **Scottish Real Ale Festival**
- **North Hop Craft Beer Festival**



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Welcome... to the Autumn issue of our quarterly magazine. In this edition:

not only, but also:

- > Belladrum Festival CAMRA bar report
- > POTY presentations
- > Skye Beer trip
- > Brewery and Beers news
- > Pubs news
- > Updated Real Ale pubs list
- > emails
- > Focus on ... Arnold Stout
- > Other festival reports
- > Updated branch diary

If you would like to place an advert, please contact one of the branch officers (see Diary page).

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We can help you in preparing your advert if you wish.

Please be aware that the CAMRA logo is copyrighted and should not be used in pub adverts.

An average of 4500+ copies are distributed to CAMRA branch members, to Highlands & Islands brewers, to Good Beer Guide listed and Real Ale pubs; plus extra copies to advertisers.

We welcome your letters, news, views and opinions. Let us know what is happening at your local, or tell us about pubs you have visited.

Thanks to all who have taken trouble to send in pub and beer reports, or articles, keeping us up-to-date with brews and what is happening in local pubs.

Please note that the editor reserves the right to edit contributions sent for publication.

Articles copyright © Highlands & Western Isles CAMRA

Winter edition **deadline** is Sunday 23rd November, with publication by mid December.

Autumn is here after another fabulous summer. And, along with the Commonwealth Games, the feel good factor seems to be catching. Breweries are expanding, some people are thinking of starting one from scratch – although it isn't clear if their “world wide, exhaustive” research has thought it all out – for breweries, often miscalculated issues are transportation and sales.

We have enjoyed plunging in to running a big, real ale bar at a major event and been successful. Another major, craft beer led, festival has taken place successfully. Both events will hopefully be repeated – benefitting from the lessons learnt during these first attempts.

More venues are offering at least 1 real ale, at least for the summer here in the Highlands.

This magazine is attracting more advertisers – this edition carries adverts for Stage Plays in Pubs and an Architect whose practice includes work for pubs and similar venues. So, all in all, things are generally looking up for those who enjoy real, tasty ale.

In this issue, space has again been at a premium and some articles have had to be squeezed by reducing the font size. Apologies for this, as some of us who are more visually challenged may need a magnifying glass to read those pages while enjoying our ale.

Cheers,

Ed.

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Real Ale at Belladrum 2014

Tom Jones, Razorlight, Billy Bragg, Capercaillie and over 50 other acts filled the stages at this year's event near Beaulieu. A sell out 16,000 attended over the weekend of 8th and 9th August, making this the largest music event in the north of Scotland since (*the misnamed*) RockNess at Dores was cancelled this year. We were asked to run a bar in a new area called the Walled Garden, as the organisers extend the festival outwards.

The bar was called "The Burke and Hair Real Ale Theatre Pub" and had a Victorian Steam Punk atmosphere to it. Period costumed artists roamed around and formed the house band which played in the bubble and steam spouting organ-monstrosity to one side of the bar.



At the other side of the bar there was a stage which had a variety of acts



The view across to the Theatre Pub stage

alternating with the house band; mime artists, poetry reading, folk group, rock group, DJ, harpist etc. Excellent entertainment and real ale, what more could you ask for?

This is the first time the Branch has done anything on this scale. We got together a few casks of 16 different beers to give a good variety of styles, two each from 8 of "our" Highlands and Islands brew-

(Continued on page 6)



Some of our "house band" in the "monstrosity".



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(Continued from page 4)



Dressing up was encouraged

After a few teething problems we

seemed to have the ales flowing, not as fast as we had hoped but this was the first year and if we are back, we know some alterations we need to make for the future.

The Walled Garden was a bit away from the main arena area but it was well advertised in the programme, in press releases and in this summer's magazine.

On the plus side, because people had to find us, we

were never overwhelmed with customers and we were able to gently guide drinkers to a suitable ale when they rocked up to the bar and asked us; "Got any lager?" Many girls asked us for cider and most were pleasantly surprised and happy to drink Windswept **Weizen**. The first beer to sell out was Windswept

eries; Loch Ness **LightNESS** and **Mad-NESS**; Isle of Skye **Young Pretender** and **Skye Red**; Black Isle **Porter** and **Yellow Hammer**; Cromarty **Atlantic Drift** and **Happy Chappy**; Cairngorm **Stag** and **Tradewinds**; Highland **Dark Munro** and **Scapa Special**; Windswept **Weizen** and **Blonde**; Orkney **Dark Island** and **Raven**.

Blonde, closely followed by Cromarty **Happy Chappy**.

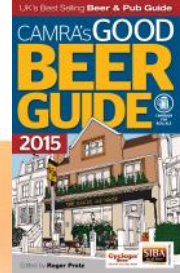
Real ale was also at the long established, Black Isle Bar, between the Grass-roots Stage and the Main Stage, where they had **Yellow Hammer** and **Red Kite**.

A big thank you is due to those that volunteered to serve the beers and the breweries for loaning us equipment and their support.



Volunteers waiting for the first customers

(Continued on page 8)



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(Continued from page 6)

A special thank you to The Loch Ness Brewery who helped with all the setting up and taking down as well as being a

logistics centre for the beers and equipment.

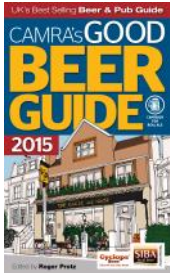
So, remember the Walled Garden next year and you might find us there.



Steve modelling one of our bar t-shirts

(For our first attempt at running a real ale bar at a major event, we did very well. This gave us a major platform to promote Real Ale to a huge number of people. We had just enough volunteers through personal contacts with committee members and the branch committee. Along with Loch Ness, Chairman Eric deserves a very well done and a "Gold Star" for his efforts. As mentioned, the "Burke and

(Continued on page 9)



The Castle Tavern

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Most of the costumed performers at the stage (Craig is at the front wearing the bowler hat)

Hare Real Ale Theatre pub” was imaginative-ly and very well put together—as you can see from some of the photos—being master-minded by Craig, a festival volunteer. The weather was pretty kind as well which also helped. Most of us who were there are already looking forward hopefully to next year.—Ed.)

Ale Awards

So far, in the 2014 Champion Beer of Scotland competition, several of “our” breweries have done well.

Cairngorm has won the Strong Bitter award for **Wildcat**. Cromarty was 2nd with **Rogue**

Wave. Highland (Aberdeen and Northern Isles branch) came 3rd with

Orkney IPA. Cairngorm won the Stout category with **Black Gold**.

Highland came 2nd with **Sneaky**

Wee Orkney Stout. Cromarty won the Speciality category with **Red Rocker**.

Cromarty also gained a 2nd place in the Golden Ale category with **Happy Chappy**. In

the Barley Wine category, Highland and Isle of Skye

gained equal 2nd place with **Old Norway** and **Cuillin Beast** respectively.

Dark Island Reserve gets 3 Gold Stars

Orkney brewery’s Dark Island Reserve, a bottled,

10% whisky cask matured version of Dark Island, has gained a 3 Gold Star Rating for a 2nd time at The Great Taste Awards—the “Oscars” of fine food and drink in Britain. The brewery has also started supplying it in smaller, 330ml bottles. Available in all good stores including Tomlinson’s Beer Shop.



Stop Press!!

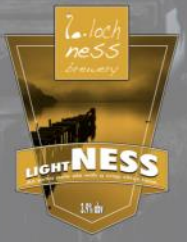
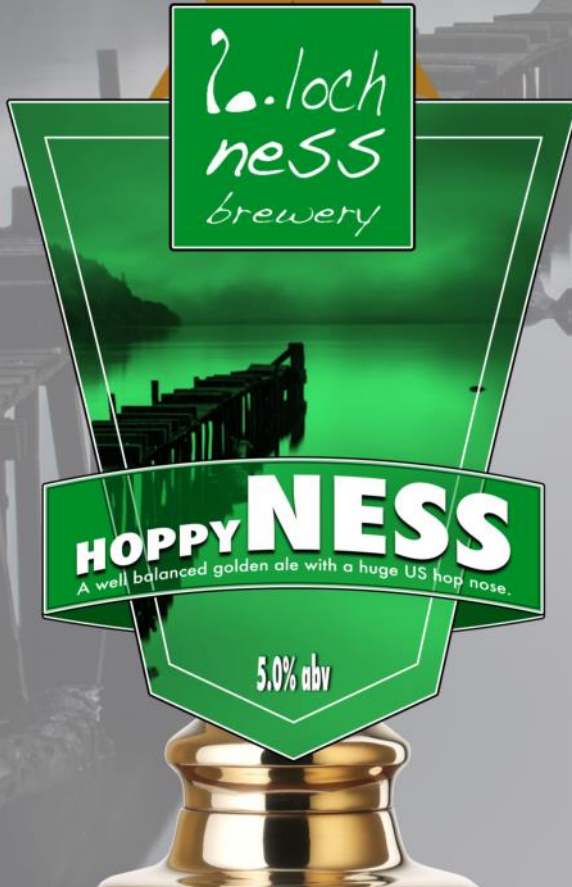
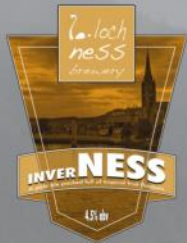
Another new bar in Academy Street?

The Inverness Courier reports that Bruce MacGregor, the well known, local, folk musician is seriously looking at opening a licenced venue at the end of Academy Street opposite The Iron-Works. This might be in conjunction with Brew-Dog. The building, with a very large cellar, is owned by Bruce’s father, Brian. Planning permission has still to be sought, so this could take some time. Along with the renewed Phoenix Ale House and Cairngorm’s A I Welders building (where disappointingly, nothing has happened yet) Academy Street should become the happening area of the town centre and Blackfriars will surely be re-vamped as well.



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Hebridean Celtic Festival 2014 (HebCelt)

For the second year running, Loch Ness Brewery had a bar at this event. This time they took 9 of their beers over; **LightNESS**, **DarkNESS**, **SaaziNESS**, **RedNESS**, **HoppyNESS**, **WilderNESS**, **MadNESS**, **LochNESS** and **CaithNESS**, putting them on in rotation on 6



Main Bar

handpulls. Also this year two casks were put on gravity in the VIP bar.



Gravity beer in the VIP bar

The event was headlined by Donnie Munro on Thursday, Big Country on Friday and Levellers on Saturday. There were 36 acts on in the main area over the 3 days plus some other concerts around the Island. This year there were 3 stages; Main stage,

Islands Stage and new for this year, Acoustic Stage which was in the Loch Ness Brewery tent.

A group called Boomerang which was formed as part of the Commonwealth Games cultural events and featured Scotland's Breabach with musicians from New Zealand and Australia were particularly good with pipes playing alongside the didgeridoo and Gaelic and Hakka chant together.

The other artists included Cara Dillon, Duncan Chisholm, Rura and Larkin Poe.

Amongst those on the Acoustic stage was guitarist Sophie Rogers who had just won a competition to sing her own songs at HebCelt and Keith Meisner who had his Andy Murray songs made famous on BBC recently.

Excellent beer, music, kiddies entertainment and good food plus the sun shone for most of the event - an enjoyable few days in Stornoway.

There are rumours that Loch Ness Brewery will be back again next year.

CBOB award for Loch Ness

As you can see on the advert opposite, Loch Ness Brewery have won a place in the ultimate CAMRA awards — the Champion Beer of Britain. They won 3rd place in the Strong Bitter category with **HoppyNESS**.

This was the only Scottish ale to get a place this year. As you can read in this magazine, getting an ale to be judged at CBOB is a long process



Old pumpclip design for Hoppyness.

but it starts with CAMRA members voting for them in their regional voting.

For us in H&WI branch, this year we get the chance in October and November online (possibly) at camrabreweryinfo.org.uk/cbobvoting/login.asp to vote for our favourite ales from our favourite breweries.

Scottish Real Ale Festival 2014

159 beers from around Scotland and a wide selection of Cider and Perry, were brought together at The Corn Exchange in Edinburgh in July.

CAMRA volunteers from all over Scotland helped make this another successful event.

Champion Beer of Scotland final was judged during the Thursday and



Fred putting more Wyt? out on the products stall

Catering (following some comments and suggestions for improvement last year) included Spiced Portobello Mushroom and Vietnamese Belly Pork.

Folk singer Andrew Gordon performed on Friday night and The Caledonian Pipe Band played on Saturday.

The photos give you a flavour of the festival.



Kelburn Dark Moor—judged Champion Beer of Scotland at SRAF

Kelburn **Dark Moor**, a strong mild, won.



Edinburgh volunteer Charles pouring a Cairngorm Black Gold

"A beautifully balanced dark, fruity ale with undertones of liquorice and blackcurrant."



The second time for this family run brewery, as **Cart Blanche** won in 2006. 2nd was **Rabbies Porter** from the Ayr Brewery and 3rd **Jarl** from the Fyne Brewery.

Very good food this year by Bankhouse





Local branch member Jim Bruce from Lewis enjoying a beer



Edinburgh Volunteers Paul and Sarah who had Loch Ness beers at their recent wedding in Dornoch



Sandy running the cider/perry bar



View of Bar

Score the Ales you drink

As you know from reading CAMRA publications, including this magazine, it is important that as many scores as possible are done. CAMRA has produced 2 short information videos that explain why beer scores are needed and how they can be submitted.

1. Why you should score your beer:

<http://youtube.be/LKNBGsyQ1Ak>

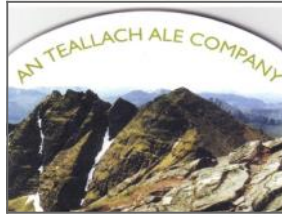
2. How to submit a beer score:

<http://youtu.be/hPXtRnV6vko>

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Isle of Skye trip

On a day that dawned bright it was a little disappointing to only have eleven places filled for a trip that was always a sell out before, but good to see a couple of new faces. Nevertheless, it was a happy bus that left the Inverness Townhouse at 9am to pick up a couple more at Drumnadrochit before aiming for an 11am stop at the Sligachan Hotel on Skye. The Slig is the home to the 5 barrel Cuillin Brewery and a few folk had a brewery tour with head brewer Eric Jones. It was good to see the full range on show in the bar, namely **Black Face**, **Eagle**, **Skye** and **Pinnacle**. I opted for the **Black Face** which is a 4.3% dark ale and described as stout like but one which I would say is more like a mild, albeit a bit stronger than the norm for that style. On good form it was worthy of a solid 3 on the CAMRA beer scoring scale. I think all the other beers were tried by the party with the 4.7% **Pinnacle** being particularly well received.

Time was pressing to leave for a brand new ale outlet, the Flodigarry Country House Hotel at Staffin. This magnificent country house commands fabulous views over Staffin Bay and offers 18 guest rooms, 11 in the main house and 7 in the adjoining Flora Macdonald cottage. The bar area has recently been tastefully restored and refurbished with respect. Three ales feature from the Isle of Skye Brewery and as a change from mass produced lager there is **Eilean Or** keg from the brewery. On cask there were the rebranded Isle of Skye ales **Skye Red** and **Skye Black**. To be fair I would say they were still finding their feet on the ale front and both ales scored 2.5 from me but the enthusiasm about the ales and the care that has gone into the refurb is worthy of 5 out of 5.

As ever it was time to press on and for me, onto one of my two favourite places on Skye, namely the Isle of Skye brewery.

I only joined CAMRA since moving to Scotland some twelve years ago and despite drinking only ale from my late teens never felt the urge to join until I arrived here, really on the back of picking up a Highland CAMRA newsletter all those years ago (I liked the cut of their jib then, because, as now I would like to think, they focused on the ale, the breweries and the pubs. All of which are at the heart of what really matters on the ale front.) Sorry, went off at a tangent then, reminiscing, due to seeing a photo of me from some ten years ago on the brewery shop wall looking decidedly younger and thinner.

Part of the fun for me at the brewery is the Leann Faighte, the "welcome ale". This is two Isle of Skye ales blended in an unknown proportion which we have to guess from taste alone. Needless to say, all the trained tasters present failed miserably and it was our magazine editor who got the least wrong answer, winning for himself a case of beer. The ale was a blend of two thirds **Hebridean Gold** and one third **Skye Black**. As well as a tasty buffet, generously laid on by Angus &

Pam from the brewery, there was a brewery tour for those who had not been round before, accompanied by a brand new ale, **Skye IPA**. This 4.5% brew has been made with sorachi hops and unlike a few recent IPA styles which have been very hop dominant, this one was much closer to style being very well balanced with a good malty background and body complimented with the flavoursome hops. As the number of pubs that we visit on the island has increased over the years (good) our time spent at the brewery has got less (bad) and it was soon time to move on.

A quick stop to the nearby Uig Hotel found three IOS ales on. The **Heb Gold** was past its best and was happily swapped for **Skye Black** (2.5). **Young Pretender** (1) was also on. Maybe a bit early in the season to run with three ales or we were just unlucky, as a few weeks later I was sent a glowing report from a visiting CAMRA member who took the time to tell us how much he enjoyed "the wonderful pint of IOS IPA he had at the Uig Hotel".

A bit of a journey to our next stop, the Stein Inn at Waternish, my other favourite place on Skye. Supping an ale on a warm, sunny day sitting in front of the Stein is one of the great pleasures in life! After presenting owner Angus with his certificate for North Skye & Hebrides Pub of the Year 2014, we enjoyed **Skye Black** (3.5) and Harvestoun **Schiehallion** (4.5).

A slightly shorter journey to our next stop, the Old Inn at Carbost, a cosy inn on the shores of Loch Harport near to the Talisker distillery. Here they had brews from both the Skye breweries, IOS **Young Pretender** (2) and Cuillin **Black Face** (3) and I think Cuillin **Skye Ale**. Onto our final stop of the day which was the Cluanie Inn. We were greeted with two LocAles from Lochness Brewery and they were on fine form with **HoppyNess** (4.5) and **WilderNess** (4). All too soon it was time to leave again for the long drag home, stopping in Drum to offload the folk we picked up on the way out, enjoying a couple more excellent ales in The Benleva, before arriving back in town for around half eight. Many thanks to our driver from Fraser's coaches who, as always, gave us a safe and pleasant journey. Our usual thanks & appreciation to Isle of Skye Brewery for their hospitality, thanks also to Cuillin Brewery and to all the visited pubs for a splendid day out. HBH



Praise for the Bandstand

An Easter Surprise

We thought we had plans for Easter but they fell through. Where should we go instead? Last year we went to the North East but there were some loose ends—so let's go back. Consultation of the Good Beer Guide suggested Nairn would be a good base but could we find a B&B near the GBG pub, preferably with a sea view? First one we called had a room. He said we were lucky because they were rather full—not just Easter but because of the beer festival! Beer Festival? Yes, at the Braeval Hotel!

So off we went and had a splendid weekend. There were 8 taps in the widely known Bandstand Bar and also (we dis-

well worth a visit—whether you were planning to be in Nairn or not! Ted and Paula Sharp.



(from the Summer 2014 issue of "Pints of View" the Edinburgh and South-East Scotland CAMRA branch magazine.

The Bandstand was 1 of the three finalists for Scottish and Northern Ireland POTY. The winner was judged to be The Steam Packet Inn, Harbour Row, Isle of Whithorn



Photo from The Steam Packet Inn website.

covered after our first pint) a tent at the back with another 19. The few (!) we had were all in great shape and the pub well deserves its pub of the year status. The beer festival is an annual event and

- on page 629 of the Good Beer Guide. Congratulations to them and well done to The Bandstand. - Ed)



**CAWDOR
TAVERN**

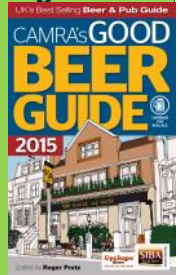
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Sir,

When is a new beer really new? I refer to the article reporting the spring Wetherspoon's beer festival (WYT Summer 2014 p13) which quoted the festival programme stating that **Meridian** from Orkney Atlas was new. As the Orkney Brewery BLO, I can report that prior to the Orkney Atlas merger under the ownership of Highlands & Island Breweries, the Atlas Brewery produced **Meridian**. The original brew was 4% ABV, tawny, toasted malty and having spicy notes - in contrast to the current 3.9% ABV, having an aroma of toasted malt and fruit notes leading to smooth, nutty malt flavours, balanced by a crisp hop bitterness. Different enough to be a new brew? You decide.

Cheers

Richard A. Jones
Orkney Brewery BLO

Thanks Richard, always happy to be corrected—this magazine wouldn't be complete without at least 1 mistake! - Ed.

..... Yes, I was up on holiday, more than happy to help out. I know in the Huddersfield area, we've got some decent pubs a bit out of the way and it's difficult to keep them all up to date (*for branch and CAMRA info*) and get enough scores to base GBG selection on. So I always try to score, and update if necessary, when visiting other areas. I have to admit that in Scotland, I don't tend to try pubs not showing as serving real ale as the absence of handpumps doesn't mean there isn't cask ale, but it'd be a drag to ask each time, particularly when some areas have a low penetration of

cask ale. I recognise the need for cask breathers when the sales are not big enough to support cask ale, though at least those I've had have been a bit stale, though certainly not off. I wonder if serving one beer normally might be better than two via the cask breather. But others might have a different view about variety over quality, and I'm only one brief visitor. But I guess there may have already been an article on that though! I'm afraid I never saw a 'What's Yours then?' I have seen one on a previous visit to the West Highlands.

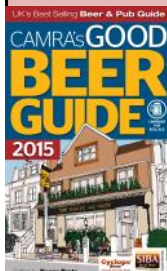
Jim.

(Thanks for that Jim. We had a wee problem with distribution to the far West of our area this summer.—Ed.)

the Old Bridge Inn - Aviemore



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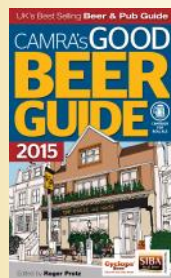
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Aberdeen and North East Beer Festival

Held again this year at Pittodrie Stadium in Aberdeen from 29th to 31st May. A couple of very late cancellations meant 98 different beers were available from the start. There were six brews from this year's featured brewery Cromarty, which

Side of the Moose and Brains *Dark*) and a sprinkling of English brews from around the country. The styles and flavours were varied, as well as the traditional brews there were some with ginger, raspberries, heather, citrus, honey, chilli, chocolate and vanilla featuring in some of the brews. How about *Devon Dumpling* from Bays or *Oatmeal Stout* from Peerless,



The casks racked and ready for the thirsty masses

had won the Beer of the Festival for the last two years with **Happy Chappy** – will it make a hat trick? Umm..... the **Ghost Town** Porter and **Rogue Wave** were very good.

There were plenty of Scottish brews (from Shetland to Dumfries), four Welsh brews (New Plassey **Midnight**, Otley **09 Blonde**, Purple Moose **Dark**

Buzz from Cairngorm, the new **Skye IPA** from Isle of Skye, **Crazy Daze** from Potbelly, **Stout Hearted** from Yeovil, **Jack Back** from Stewarts and **CaithNESS** from Loch Ness? There was also a very good selection of Cider and Perry and a large

selection of continental bottles. As the beers finished the Bar Managers were very busy bringing forward a second cask. On the Friday evening, some could go on, some needed more settling time.

At the start of Saturday there were 72 different beers, 9 different ciders/perrys and a large number of bottles still left. The Festival Charity for this

year was Inspire—empowering the life choices of hundreds of adults, young people and children with learning disabilities and additional support needs in North East Scotland.

On the Thursday afternoon the CAM-



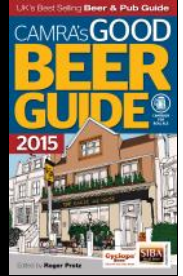
Some of the drinkers at Pittodrie by Helge Nareid via STV tv website

RA Champion Strong Bitter of Scotland final took place. Six judges went through the final 6 beers not knowing which they were and then their scores were added up. The winner was Cairngorm **Wildcat**, 2nd was Cromarty **Rogue Wave** and 3rd was Highland **Orkney IPA**. The first cask to run out was Windswept **Weizen**—a cloudy wheat beer with some cloves and loads of bananas and pear drops. **Weizen** also went on to win the Beer of the Festival as voted for by the drinkers.

A very good festival and plans are in progress for next year, which will be on between the 4th and 6th of June 2015.

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Official CAMRA Tasting Course August 2014

Our second tasting course of the year was held at The Benleva Hotel in Drumnadrochit on 16th August. One problem was an accident on A82 between Inverness and Drum with the road closed for a few hours meant some people never made it. Eric Mills went through the full tasting notes with samples of sweet, sour and salt along with different hops and malts. There was also talk on the different styles of beers and how beers get into competitions. Beers tasted were Loch Ness **InverNESS** their new 4.5% golden-amber bitter; Loch Ness **LochNESS** a 4.4% malty sweetish 80/- style brew; Loch Ness **LightNESS** a 3.9% light refreshing golden hoppy bitter; Highland **Dark Munro** a 4% malty mild; Windswept **Weizen** a 5.2% German style wheat beer full of bananas and pear drops with a hint of spices. Thanks to Steve at the Benleva for his hospitality.

*For a brewery's beer to be entered into CAMRA competitions, several things are needed. The beer has to be entered in to CAMRA's Brewery Information System by a brewery's Brewery Liaison Officer, with as much detail as possible including the beer's Original Gravity measurement. CAMRA tasting cards need to be filled in for the beer with a reasonable spread across the year and from as many establishments as possible. Lastly, the beer needs to be voted for by CAMRA members in the brewery's CAMRA region—for us here in the Highlands, that is the Scotland & Northern Ireland region. We will be able to vote on the CAMRA BOTY website from the 1st of October to the 30th of November. **Because of the hacking problems with the CAMRA website, please look in What's Brewing for details but last year's site was www.camrabreweryinfo.org.uk/cbobvoting/login.asp***

Breweries News

As part of CAMRA's support for real ale and real ale breweries, volunteers from among the branch membership can be Brewery Liaison Officers. BLOs keep in contact with "their" brewery, encouraging and if appropriate, advising.

BLOs are asked to make a progress report to CAMRA every 3 months, via the CAMRA website.

In Highlands & Western Isles branch, we now have 11 or 12 breweries. Our magazine is also quarterly so what follows is the news we have over the past 3 months.

After the last edition, when I reported that we didn't have BLOs for a few of our breweries, we have been overwhelmed with the response of 1! Many thanks for your efforts Jim.

Other CAMRA branch magazines publish news from their breweries written by the breweries themselves. This is free publicity to the very customer base that you want to appeal to.

Some of our breweries don't even have a CAMRA member on their staff but we would be happy to take any news you care to pass on to us—see the contact info on the diary page.

Cromarty Brewing Co:

Still recovering from having a presence at the Black Isle Show and sponsoring one of the very small stages at Belladrum, Cromarty were one of the local breweries at North Hop. They are also having a stall at the world sheep dog trials at Fern Farm. Craig is having a 2nd go at the Kiwi juice infused wheat beer *KiWheat* which will be available only in bottles and keg. They took delivery of a 2nd, bigger delivery van in June and the year continues to busily fly by.



Black Isle Brewing Company:

4 more conditioning tanks are arriving soon to cope



with increased export market especially to USA, Japan and Italy. Not just bottles but in the 1-way KeyCasks. Another successful Belladrum for them at their bar next to the Grassroots Stage which they sponsor. Their Moctoberfest (music, beers and food) will have happened again in September.

Loch Ness Brewery:

At the beginning of July Loch Ness Brewery took on Rob Jenner as their Sales Director. Rob is well known in the real ale world and has been selling mainly in the central belt for many years. Previously with Harvieston, Caledonian, Isle of Skye, Inveralmond and Fyne, he retired in 2013. His other passion is Jaguar cars which takes up a lot of his time. However, he had some spare time and decided to take on the role with The Loch Ness Brewery on a part time basis. Mentioned elsewhere in the magazine, their 5% *HoppyNESS* came 3rd in the British finals of the Strong Bitter category at the Great British Beer Festival this August—the only Scottish beer to get an award this year. A new beer called *InverNESS* is now out. It is a 4.5% golden semi-sweet bitter. The brewery has taken on local man James MacLennan on a part time basis to help out with their increasing workload. They had a bar at North Hop at Eden Court at the end of August. Along with the Windswept Brewery they are sponsoring a once a month, lunchtime theatre called Play-Pieces (see advert) which highlights artists, all from or based in the Highlands. These are to be held at the Pheonix in Inverness and the Drouthy Cobbler in Elgin over the next 7 months and cost £10 a ticket which includes a local beer and lunch. Their first export to Singapore is imminent.



Cairngorm Brewery:

No News.



Cuillin Brewery:

The brewery and Sligachan Hotel are building

Caillin Brewery

an extension, filling the gap between the hotel/ brewery and Seamus's Bar. It is planned that this will give more room for the hotel kitchen, hotel and the brewery. The brewery needs more space for storage as they continue to increase their bottling, building up stocks and bottling more of their range of beers.

Hebridean Brewing Company Ltd;

Andy has confirmed to us that the Brewery has moved a short distance to much larger premises at 10 Shell St. It is all set to start brewing again with greater capacity and has permission to open a visitor centre.

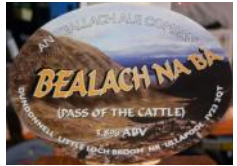


The relocation comes after a few years when Andy was unwell, and the brewery was essentially closed.

Now trading as the Hebridean Brewing Company Ltd, the premises will be called "Edge of the World Brewery", and is directly across from the CalMac ferry terminal and Andy is hoping that visitors may make the new Brewery one of their first (or last?) ports of call!

An Teallach Ale Company;

The new ale, **Beallach Na Ba** (which is Gaelic for Pass of the Cattle (see photo)) has



been out for a while now and has been very well received. This year, they have added more fermenters/conditioners to increase brewery capacity.

Isle of Skye Brewery;

Isle of Skye Brewery are very busy brewing and selling their beers both at home and overseas. The Brewery expansion



is still on-going. The new re-branding with the changes to the beer advertising with Skye Red, Skye IPA etc has been completed.

Plockton Brewery;

No report.



Old Inn Brewhouse;

No News. The micro brewery which is housed behind the Old Inn at Gairloch. We don't have a BLO for this brewery so if anyone in the area could keep in contact and update us, it would be appreciated.



Glenfinnan Brewery;

No News. Another of our small, remote, Highland breweries. Again, we don't have a BLO for them so don't hear much. The only time we come across any of their ales is occasionally in the Grog & Gruel in Fort William. Again, anyone in their area who could keep us in touch would be really useful.



River Leven Brewery

Newly transferred to our branch, hopefully we will have news from them in the Winter magazine.



Highlands & Islands Brewers in 2014



Isle of Skye Brewery - Based at Uig, by the Western Isles ferry terminal, brewing since December 1995. Started major expansion and re-branding in 2013. (see advert)

Valhalla Brewery - Most northerly brewery in the UK, brewing on Unst since December 1997. Ales include White Wife and Auld Rock.

Black Isle Brewery - Started brewing in December 1998 in converted farm buildings. Ales include Red Kite and Yellowhammer. Organic ales are a speciality. Much enlarged, new brewery opened 2011. Concentrates on large scale bottling.

Isle of Arran Brewery - Located close to Brodick Castle. Opened in late March 2000. Ales include Blonde, Dark, and Sunset. Expansion and re-branding started in 2013.

Fyne Ales Brewery - Based in Argyll, at the head of Loch Fyne, brewing started on St Andrew's Day 2001. Ales include Jarl and Maverick. Brewery refocused and expanded in 2012. Further expansion underway.

Cairngorm Brewing Company - Set up in late 2001. Ales include Trade Winds, Wildcat, Stag, Highland IPA, and Black Gold. Seasonal ales are regularly brewed. Expanded in 2011 and still expanding in 2013. Much expanded and improved brewery shop opened in late 2013. (see advert)

Hebridean Brewing Company - Based at Stornoway in the Outer Hebrides. Brewing since January 2002. Beers include Islander Strong Ale, Berserker Export Pale Ale, and Clansman Ale (first ale ever brewed in Stornoway) and now Seaforth. 2014—Not currently Brewing—moving.

River Leven—Brewing in one of the old Alcan smelter buildings in Kinlochleven since 2011.

An Teallach Brewery - Moved to the family's croft, near Dundonnell, in March 2001. Ales include An Teallach Ale, Beinn Dearg Ale, and Crofter's Pale Ale among others. Greatly expanded in 2012.

Islay Ales Co Ltd - Established in an old Tractor Shed in Bridgend, in March 2004. Ales include Finlaggan, Black Rock, and Dun Hogs Head; plus seasonal brews.

Cuillin Brewery - The brewery was born on 10th September 2004, in the old public bar of the Sligachan Hotel. Skye, Eagle, Pinnacle, Black Face, and Glamaig Ales are brewed. Started offering bottled beer in 2013.

Highland Brewing Company - Located in the old Swannay cheese factory at Birsay, on Orkney Mainland. Well regarded ales include Scapa Special, Orkney Blast, Dark Munro among others.

Sinclair Breweries Ltd - Formed in 2006 by local hotelier and restaurateur Norman Sinclair, who purchased the **Orkney** - which originally com-

menced brewing in 1988 at the Old Schoolhouse in Sandwick on Orkney mainland—and **Atlas Breweries**. Ales regularly brewed include Three Sisters, Latitude, and Nimbus from Atlas; plus Raven Ale, Dark Island, Red MacGregor, and Skull Splitter from Orkney. Much expanded in 2011—12. (see advert)

Glenfinnan Brewery - Irregularly brewing on a 4 bbl plant since October 2006 - Regular brews are Glenfinnan Gold, The Standard Ale, and Glenfinnan Dark (for the Winter).

Colonsay Brewery - First brews in March 2007. IPA, 80/- and Lager (Limited real ales).

Plockton Brewery - The first brew was produced on 1st April 2007. Craggs Ale and Starboard IPA may usually be found in Plockton, and at other local outlets.

Oban Bay Brewery - Brewing since mid 2009. 5 barrel brewery attached to Cuan Mor.

Old Inn (Gairloch) Brewery - 100 litre micro-brewery. First brews in February 2010.

Loch Ness Brewery - First brews in September 2011. RedNess, HoppyNess, Dark..... Etc. New, bigger brewery in 2012. Expanding again in 2014/15. (see advert)

Cromarty Brewery - First brews in December 2011. Ales include Happy Chappy, Brewed Awakening, Red Rocker, Hit The Lip, AKA and a growing portfolio. Increased brewing kit in early 2013. Brewery shop now open. (see advert)

Spey Valley Brewery—a "nano brewery" started in 2012 producing 5 cask conditioned real ales—found round and about the Keith area.

Windswept Brewery—started commercial brewing in 2012 in the Lossiemouth area. Blonde, APA and Wolf are proving popular along with Tornado and Weizen.

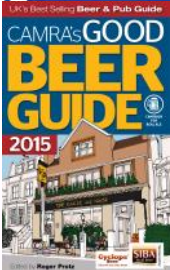
Speyside Craft Brewery—started commercial brewing at Forbes in 2012. Bottlenose Bitter, Randolph's Leap, Moray IPA and Bow Fiddle Blond are the ale portfolio so far.

Not all of the breweries listed are in our branch area: the Highland Brewing Co, Valhalla, Orkney, Spey Valley, Windswept and Speyside are all in the Aberdeen, Grampian & Northern Isles area; the Arran Brewery falls in the Ayrshire & Galloway area; while Fyne, Islay, Colonsay & Oban Bay Breweries are covered by Glasgow & West Scotland.

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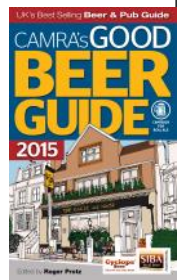
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Cask Ales and Real Cider are served

An ideal base for game fishing, hill-walking, bird watching (Handa Island is nearby), or exploring the famed empty quarter of Western Sutherland, a lunar landscape of lochs and mountains.

Overlooking Scourie Bay and with views to the distant tops of Ben Stack, Arkle, and Foinaven.



To connoisseurs of game fishing there is simply nothing to compare to the 25,000 acres of Loch, River and Hill Loch fishing held for the guests of Scourie Hotel. The Hotel has 36 fishing beats held exclusively for guests, plus 3 beats on Loch Stack and Loch More for sea trout and salmon. Additional salmon fishing is taken on local salmon rivers.

Real Ale Pubs List

These Pubs, Inns and Hotels are known to sell (or to have recently sold) cask-conditioned ale.

They are listed in geographical area and area lists are in an order that would allow a continuous pub crawl if you have safe transport.

Please let us know about the quality of real ales on offer, particularly if you think Good Beer Guide inclusion is merited.

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).

(TP) - ale served using top pressure so not fully real ale.

Inverness

Blackfriars
Bog Roy, Inchmore
Caledonian
Castle Tavern
Chieftan Hotel
Clachnaharry Inn
Corrigarth Hotel
Exchange
Fairways Loch Ness Golf Course
Gellions
Glen Mhor Hotel (Nicos Bar)
Heathmount Hotel
Hootananny
Innes Bar
Johnny Foxes (TP)
Kings Highway
Lauders
Mercure Hotel (TP)
Number 27
Palace Hotel
Phoenix Bar
Room
Snowgoose
Tomlinson's Beer Shop
Waterfront Bar

Speyside (route from N to S)

Gun Lodge, Ardesier
Inverness Airport (D'Lish)
Braeval Hotel (Bandstand),
Nairn
Cawdor Tavern, Cawdor
Haugh Hotel, Cromdale
Seafeld Lodge Hotel, Grantown on Spey

Craig Bar, Grantown on Spey
Muckrach Lodge Hotel, Dulanain Bridge
Boat Hotel, Boat of Garten
Cairn Hotel, Carrbridge

Aviemore

Cairngorm Brewery
Dalfer Country Club
Mackenzies Highland Inn
Winking Owl
Skiing Doo (Doo Below)
Cairngorm Hotel
Roos' Leap
Ben Macdui
Old Bridge Inn

Badenoch

Glenmore Lodge, Glenmore
Pine Marten Bar, Glenmore
Loch Inch Boathouse, Kincaig
Suie Hotel, Kincaig
Kingussie Golf Club
Topsy Laird, Kingussie
Silver Fjord Hotel, Kingussie
Duke of Gordon Hotel, Kingussie
Glen Hotel, Newtonmore

Easter Ross

Royal Hotel, Cromarty
Cromarty Arms, Cromarty
Plough Inn, Rosemarkie
The Anderson, Fortrose
Allangrange Arms, Munloch

Dingwall Area

Conon Bridge Hotel
Inchbae Lodge Hotel, Garve

Aultguish Inn, Garve
Strathconon

Glen Affric Bar, Cannich
Slaters Arms, Cannich
Struy Inn, Struy

Loch Ness (c/w from INV)

Dores Inn, Dores
Craigdarroch Inn, Foyers
Whitebridge Hotel,
Whitebridge
Stravaiger's Lodge, Fort Augustus
Bothy Bar, Fort Augustus
Caledonian Hotel, Fort Augustus (S)
Lock Inn, Fort Augustus
Lovat Arms Hotel, Fort Augustus (TP)
Glenmorrison Arms Hotel, Invermorrison
Loch Ness Inn, Lewiston
Benleva Hotel, Drumnadrochit

Fort William

Fort William District North

Invergarry Hotel
Great Glen Water Park, South Laggan
Eagle Barge, Laggan (S)
Old Station Restaurant, Spean Bridge
Stronlossit Hotel, Roy Bridge
Corrou Station House

Real Ale Pubs List

Restaurant, Corrou Estate

Fort William

Moorings Hotel, Banavie
Alexandra Hotel (S)
Ben Nevis Bar
Ben Nevis Inn, Achintee
Cobbs @ Nevisport
Crofter Bar & Restaurant
Glen Nevis Restaurant
Grog & Gruel
Great Glen
Volunteer Arms
West End Hotel

Fort William District South

Four Seasons, Onich
Onich Hotel, Onich
Loch Leven Hotel, Ballachulish
Laroch Bar, Ballachulish
Clachaig Inn, Glencoe
King's House Hotel, Glencoe
Ice Factor, Kinlochleven
MacDonald Hotel, Kinlochleven

Fort William District West

Glenfinnan House Hotel, Glenfinnan
Lochailort Inn, Lochailort (TP)
Glenuig Inn, Glenuig
Glenuig Village Hall, Glenuig
Loch Shiel Hotel, Acharacle
Salen Hotel, Salen
Ariundle Centre, Strontian
Lochaline Hotel, Acharacle
Arisaig Hotel, Arisaig
Chlachain Inn, Mallaig
Steam Inn, Mallaig
West Highland Hotel, Mallaig
Old Forge, Inverie

Wester Ross Cluanie to Kyle of Lochalsh

Cluanie Inn, Cluanie

Glenelg Inn, Glenelg
Kintail Lodge Hotel, Glensheil Bridge

Jac-o-bite Restaurant, Glensheil
Dornie Hotel, Dornie
Clachan Bar, Dornie

Plockton to Gairloch

Plockton Inn, Plockton
Plockton Hotel, Plockton
Strathcarron Hotel
Lochcarron Hotel
Applecross Inn
Tigh an Eilean Hotel, Shieldaig
Torridon Inn, by Annat
Kinlochewe Hotel
Ledgowan Lodge Hotel, Achnasheen
Loch Maree Hotel, Talladale
Badachro Inn, Badachro (TP)

Gairloch

Old Inn
Steading Restaurant (S)
Myrtle Bank Hotel (S)
Millcroft Hotel
Melvaig Inn

Gairloch to Ullapool

Poolewe Hotel, Poolewe
Aultbae Hotel, Aultbae
Drumchork Hotel, Aultbae (S)
Dundonnell Hotel, Dundonnell

Ullapool

Arch Inn
Argyll Hotel
Ceilidh Place
Ferry Boat Inn
Morefield Motel
Seaforth Bar & Restaurant

Ullapool North

Summer Isles Hotel, Achiltibuie (S)

Caithness and Sutherland

West to East Coast (clockwise) West Coast

Altnacealgach Inn, Ledmore Junction (S)
Inchnadamph Hotel, Assynt (S)
Caberfeidh, Lochinver
Kylesku Hotel, Kylesku
Scourie Hotel, Scourie

North Coast

Sango Sands Oasis, Durness (S)
Smoo Cave Hotel, Durness (S)
Ben Loyal Hotel, Tongue
Tongue Hotel, Tongue
Weigh Inn (Ashes Bar), Thurso
Commercial Hotel, Thurso
Central Hotel (Top Joes), Thurso
Holburn Bar, Thurso
Ulbbster Arms Hotel, Halkirk
Castletown Hotel, Castletown
Northern Sands Hotel, Dunnet
Seaview Hotel, John O'Groats

East Coast

Alexander Bain, Wick
Mackays Hotel, Wick
Norseman Hotel, Wick
Bay Owl Restaurant, Dunbeath
Bannockburn Inn, Helmsdale
Belgrave Arms Hotel, Helmsdale
Sutherland Inn, Brora
Golspie Inn, Golspie
Trentham Hotel, Poles Nr Dornoch

Real Ale Pubs List

Eagle Hotel, Dornoch
Dornoch Castle Hotel, Dornoch
Dunroamin Hotel, Bonar Bridge
Invershin Hotel, Invershin
Achness Hotel, Lairg
Crask Inn, Lairg

Skye

Sligachan Hotel, Sligachan
Old Inn, Carbost
Taigh Ailean Hotel, Portnalong
Old School Restaurant, Dunvegan
Stein Inn, Waternish
Edinbane Inn, Edinbane
Lodge at Edinbane, Edinbane
Uig Hotel, Uig
Bakur Bar, Uig
Ferry Inn, Uig
Flodigarry Country House Hotel, Staffin

Bosville Hotel, Portree
Isles Inn, Portree
Royal Hotel, Portree
Sconser Lodge Hotel, Sconser
Broadford Hotel, Broadford
Dunollie Hotel (Redhills Lounge), Broadford
Claymore Restaurant, Broadford
Hebridean Hotel, Broadford
Saucy Marys Lodge, Kyleakin (S)
Kyleakin (S)
Isle Ornsay Hotel, Sleat
Ardivasar Hotel, Ardivasar

Tarbet, Harris
Isle of Harris Inn, Tarbet, Harris (S)
Hamersay House (Lochmaddy), North Uist
Lochmaddy Hotel, Lochmaddy, N Uist
Langass Lodge, Loch Elport, N Uist
Borrodale Hotel, Daliburgh, S Uist (S)
Polochar Inn, Lochboisdale, S Uist
Am Ploiciian, Isle of Eriskay, S Uist

Western Isles, N to S

Carlton Lounge, Stornoway, Lewis
An Lanntair Arts Centre, (S) Stornoway, Lewis
Hotel Hebrides (Mote Bar),

Stein Inn

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Highland & Western Isles area winner since 2007

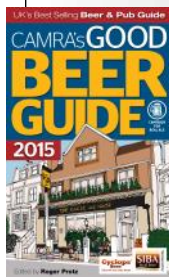
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Presentations

The **Torridon Inn** was presented with their area POTY certificate in the summer. New manager, Alan Paterson was very pleased to accept the award.

(our last minibus, beer trip of the year includes the Torridon Inn beer festival on the 4th of October—Ed.)



Angus McGhie, co-owner of the **Stein Inn**

on Skye, accepts his latest area POTY certificate from branch committee member Steve Wilson to add to his large collection.



The other area winners will be presented with their certificates over the next few months when they can be done in person. They are;

Stronlossit Inn;

Joint winners: **Suie Hotel, Old Bridge Inn, Cairngorm Hotel;**

Dornoch Castle Hotel.

Brewer Craig and administrator Jenni at **Cromarty Brewing Co.** accepting their latest CAMRA awards for **Happy Chappy** and **Brewed Awakening** both gaining 2nd place in 2 categories of the Champion Beer of Scotland last year.



Several CAMRA certificates were presented to **Black Isle Brewery's** Mike Gladwin when we bumped into him in The Anderson at our last, well attended, branch members meeting. Hopefully, we will have a photo for the next issue.

Pubs news

Just as the copy was being finalised for the summer edition, we had reports that Sango Sands and Smoo Cave Hotel, both in Durness (not far from Cape Wrath), now had real ale.

During a visit to Applecross we found The Potting Shed (restaurant) were offering bottled beers. If you eat there try the seafood platter. Staying on the West Coast, Gille Brighde (the Gaelic for Oyster-catcher) at Lower Diabaig were offering two keg Loch Ness beers, and an excellent selection of bottled beer. A fantastic drive to get there.

One of our members from Nairn was in Fort Augustus and found Loch Ness available at Stravaigers Lodge. Loch Ness ales can also be found at The Great Glen Water Park, South Laggan. You do not have to be a resident to call in at either bar.

Loch Ness ales can also be found at Polchar Inn and its sister pub, Am Politician, both South Uist. Loch Ness ales are also now available in the Caledonian in Inverness.

We understand that almost 2 years after their refurbishment, The Gellions, one of the most popular pubs here in Inverness, has at last put in an ale pump again and is offering Cromarty **Happy Chappy**. As mentioned elsewhere in this magazine, Eddie MacRae at Golspie Inn has confirmed he has had

Loch Ness **CaithNESS** since the beginning of August. The Winking Owl in Aviemore was closing but we have been told that Cairngorm Brewery (or a connected company) have bought it from Star Pubs and Bars (Heineken).

In a hugely ironic (*and amusing for us*) move, Blackfriars has had it's Heineken font removed as it just didn't sell! (*Blackfriars is owned by Star Pubs and Bars*)

Kings Highway now open until 1 am every day joining the Castle Tavern, The Pheonix Ale House, The Gellions and Johnny Foxes as post midnight ale pubs, although Sunday closing may vary at some of these. The Westford Inn at Kirkibost, North Uist is on the market and whilst still open, it is at irregular times. We understand that food is no longer available. If you are going to visit, please phone them (01876 580635) first.

Sadly, The Station Hotel, Avoch, one of our pubs in the 2014 GBG, after more than a year of increasingly strange alterations, closed its doors as a pub on Wednesday 6 Aug and is now a guest house. We understand that the premises is on the market and we are hoping that if it is bought, it may reopen as a public house again and be restored as the only pub for the Avoch community.

Simon Urry, Branch Pubs Officer.

BEER WORTH BELIEVING IN

CROMARTY BREWING CO.
BEER WORTH BELIEVING IN

AKA IPA
BEER FOR THE FLAVOUR
6.7%

ATLANTIC DRIFT
AMERICAN HOP COASTER
3.5%

HAPPY CHAPPY
NEW WAVE PALE ALE
4.3%

BREWED AWAKENING
COFFEE INFUSED STOUT
4.7%

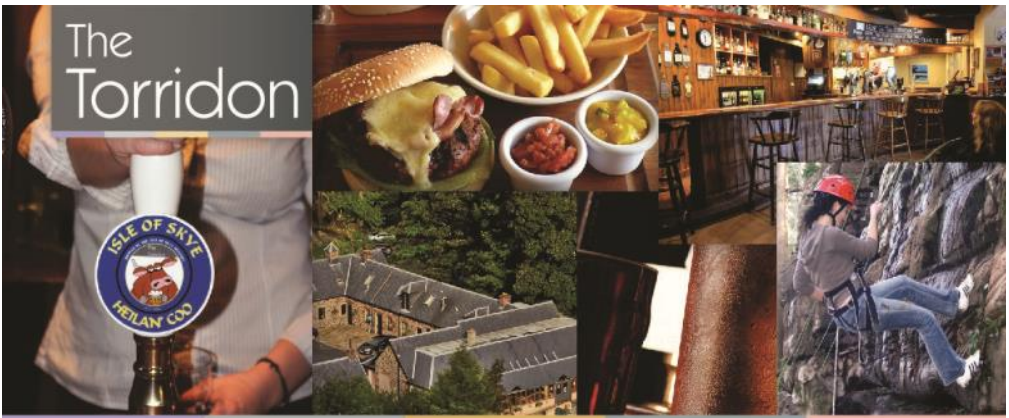
HIT THE LIP
BITTY HOPPY HEAVEN
3.8%

ROGUE WAVE
EXPLICITLY HOPPED EXTRA PALE ALE
5.7%

GHOST TOWN
INVERTEDLY MALTY PROTER
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Inverness BID Ltd, is a not for profit limited company funded by the City Centre businesses to deliver a number of projects under the following areas – Advocacy, Marketing and Events, Attractiveness of the City Centre, Business Development and Safer City Centre.

Under the Safer City Centre banner, Inverness BID administers and manages the Business Crime Reduction Partnership called ‘**Safeinverness**’.

Safeinverness is a **free**, non-political, non-profit making, proactive information sharing partnership between Inverness City Businesses, Police Scotland, Highland Council and other business crime reduction schemes within Scotland. It presently has over 120 local members.

We service Inverness Pub Watch, are partners in the Inverness Community Safety Partnership and Operation Respect -the multi agency city centre based festive period safety initiative.

We also run and coordinate the Best Bar None Award Scheme.

It is a national Award Scheme which is aimed at promoting responsible management and operation of licensed premises. The Scheme has lots of benefits for all parts of the licensed trade, it

- gives you a chance to show to your staff and customers that your venue is a safe and secure place for a night out, thereby increasing trade
- supports crime reduction and fear of crime in licensed premises
- improves the communication between the premises and key partners such as Police, Fire Service, Licensing Board and others

In 2011 two premises in Inverness were awarded National Awards – Johnny Foxes and The Gellions.

Presently the Scheme only runs in Inverness, with 21 premises taking part in 2013. Discussions are ongoing to extend the scheme to other towns in the Highland Area

So, if you are proud of your Pub, Bar, Club or Venue then why not shout about it and sign up for Best Bar None.

Contact Malcolm Raeburn, Inverness BID Community Safety Manager on 01463 714550 or safe@inverness.uk.com for further information about the **Best Bar None Award or membership of Safeinverness**

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Focus on Arnold Stout



Arnold is our Social Secretary and lives in Inverness.

Q. Where are you originally from?

A. From Rotterdam in the Netherlands.

Q. Why/when did you move to the Highlands?

A. I moved to the Highlands 6 and a bit years ago for work.

Q. How were you introduced to real ale?

A. I had my first pint of real ale on a holiday about 35 years ago, a pint of Watney's Bitter. (*NOT Red Barrel! - Ed.*)

Q. When and why did you join CAMRA?

A. I was enticed by our secretary, Gareth, when we started being drinking buddies and he persuaded me to join on one of

the trips (a Skye trip 4 years ago).

Q. What are your favourite beers/styles?

A. I have no specific favourites, any beer can be wonderful at the right time, in the right condition. I tend to not go for malty beers, or the mass produced English golden ales that seem to have flooded 'our' market. My favourite breweries are Cromarty, Windswept, Loch Ness and York. You can always wake me up for a pint of Red Rocker though.

Q. What is your favourite style of pub?

A. A pub with good beer and live music. I have to also say I am impressed with the feel of the 'new' Phoenix.

Q. What hobbies/interest do you have?

A. Beer, wine, reading, but most of all listening to music, going to gigs and finding new bands/ genres.

Q. What is your favourite song/singer/group?

A. Impossible to say. I go through prolonged phases. What I can guarantee is that none of our readers will have heard of most of the musicians I listen to. At the moment I am in a pagan-folk phase (just went to a 3 day music festival in Holland with our esteemed editor, it was wonderful) and listened to Faun from Germany, The Moon and the Night Spirit from Hungary, Cesair from Holland, and Euzen from Denmark, amongst many others. The two constants in my life are prog rock (way too many to mention, but White Willow are my absolute favourites) and classical. I immensely dislike rap and hip hop.

Q. Favourite film?

A. The World According to Garp (with Robin Williams).

Q. Favourite book?

A. Ratner's Star by Don DeLillo
(An early novel from much celebrated DeLillo, in which his characteristically powerful prose invites the reader into the mysterious, mind-blowing, mathematical world of the future—Amazon)

Q. What is your favourite part of Scotland?

A. Without a doubt Inverness and the Highlands.

Q. Is there much real ale in Holland?

A. No, real ale as such does not exist. There are quite a few craft breweries in Holland and one working trappist, La Trappe, which is widely available on draught and in bottles through Holland's biggest supermarket chain. But all craft beers are on the market in keg or bottle, not as real ale.

Arnold, thank you.

Change in Branch Boundaries

The Scottish & Northern Ireland Branches of CAMRA have recently carried out a review of postcodes associated with each branch. The review has corrected minor (admin) errors, anomalies and minor “tweaks” have also been made.

Now formally included in the Highlands & Western Isles CAMRA area are:- Morven Peninsula (PA80), was Glasgow & West of Scotland (G&WoS) but has been in the Highland Council administrative area since 1976. It was thought that the 200 places forming the community were all homes. However, a quick search revealed Lochaline Hotel

which although does not sell real ale (yet) does have an excellent selection of bottled beers.

Ballachulish, Glencoe & Kinlochleven (PH49 & 50) as with a realignment of the civil boundaries in 1976, these postcodes have historically been in G&WoS although the Clachaig Inn has made a regular appearance in the H & WI section of the Good Beer Guide—it was not in “our” section but it is now!

Accordingly, we now **welcome**:-

Laroch Bar, Ballachulish;
Ice Factor, MacDonald Hotel and River Leven Brewery, Kinlochleven;
Clachaig Inn and Kings House Hotel, Glencoe to The Highlands & Western Isles CAMRA area.

This will also have the knock-on effect of slightly increasing the number of CAMRA members in our branch which currently stands at 230.

Stop Press!! (again) Another new real ale outlet in the North

The **Northern Sands Hotel** at Dunnet is now offering Highland **Scapa Special** in 1/2 casks. The Dunnet Bay caravan and camping site is nearby and Denis, the hotel owner, is hoping to offer ale all year round as the locals have quite taken to it.



Photo of Northern Sands Hotel from their web site.

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Correction:

In the Summer edition our reporter got his wires crossed and made an error in referring to the **Sutherland Inn** in Brora with what used to be called the Sutherland Arms Hotel, now the **Golspie Inn** in Golspie. The picture we used showed the Golspie Inn (see below).



The Golspie Inn, Golspie, Sutherland

To clarify the matter (or not??) Bill & Wendy Pearce now run the **Sutherland Inn** in Brora, and recently moved from Uig Hotel on Skye where they had been for ten years. There is usually 1 guest ale on in the upstairs bar.



The Sutherland Inn, Brora, Sutherland

After a long closure, The **Golspie Inn** was reopened by Eddie and Kathleen MacRae in September 2013. Eddie lived and worked in London and has returned to the village and area where he and Kathleen were brought up. By way of this correction, we are pleased to advise that Golspie Inn has had Loch Ness **CaithNESS** available since the beginning of August

Both **Sutherland Inn**, and **Golspie Inn** are listed on WhatPub where you can check out their entries for yourselves.

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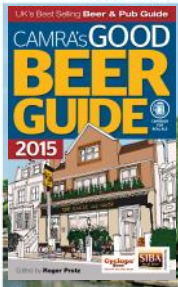
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Real Ale in the Real Highlands



Supporting Local breweries

The Travels of the “Hillman Imp” and other ramblings.

Part 1

March saw the Hillman Imp heading off to Islay & Jura to do a bit of hillwalking on Jura. Travelling on the way to the Islay ferry we just happened to see signs for the Arrochar Beer Festival and since, for once, the Hillman Imp was a good hour ahead of schedule and very thirsty, we made a wee stop. It was the first Arrochar Beer Festival and congratulations to the organisers. It was a great wee festival with, if I remember correctly, 12 Scottish ales on tap. As the Imp was driving he only got to taste 2 but Mrs Imp had at least 4. We thought at the time we really should remember these ales, but of course we didn't and so the Imp decided that from then on he would take notes on his travels and share them with other thirsty souls. Filled with horror by “Twitface” and “Faceplook” he thought why not share them with other likeminded folk who visit or stay in the Highlands and Islands.

The only place on Islay we were able to find real ale on tap was the Port Charlotte Hotel. They had 2 well kept beers



on tap. A local brew **Finlaggan Ale** 3.7% (Islay Ales) (3) and **Golden Best** 3.5% (Timothy Taylor) which was quite exceptional (4.5). This place is a wee gem. Unfortunately we didn't have time to stop in Oban but went straight on to Inverness. We were staying in the town centre and were truly spoiled. The problem here was the choice of great ales on tap. We went in turn to The Castle Tavern, Blackfriars and the newly re-opened



Phoenix.

The smell of newly applied paint in The Phoenix did little to detract from the 10



real ales on tap. The highlights were **Happy Chappy** 4.1% (Cromarty Brewing Co.) and Cairngorm **Mountain Blue** 4.3% (both 4.5). The best ales at The Castle Tavern were **Landlord** 4.3% (Timothy Taylor) and **Trade Winds** 4.3% (Cairngorm Brewery) (again 4.5). Of

those we sampled in Blackfriars, Wind-swept **Blonde** 4% (Lossiemouth) was an absolute peach and was our overall winner of the week (5).

On the way back home we stopped at the Eagle Barge, the floating pub at Laggan Locks. We had passed this many a



time and thought we should go in but we were usually travelling north and passed on. This time we stopped. It's a really cosy wee pub with 4 beers on tap. We sampled the River Leven **Blonde** 4% (3) and the **Corncrake** 4.1% (Orkney). The Corncrake was really good (4) and the chilli we had with it was brilliant! Our next trip north was at the Easter Weekend. River Leven **Blonde** at the Grog and Gruel (4), a regular haunt in



Fort Bill, fair hit the spot. Then it was on down to The Glenelg Inn. Three taps



with 2 beers on, **Deuchars IPA** 3.8%, which I find hard to rate due to early overload in my real ale conversion (3) and Caledonian **Golden XPA** (4), which was nice and fresh, washed the great grub down a treat.

The first weekend in May saw the bian-nual trip of our hill crowd to Cannich where the 16 of us and another group drank the Slater's Arms dry of both **Tradewinds** (4) and **Stag** 4.1% (4) over the holiday weekend. Both beers were in great condition. Well done to the Slaters Arms in what used to be a real ale desert.



Photo of Slaters Arms from Google Maps—street view.

So as the old saying goes “Up a hill, down a pint”

The Hillman Imp

(the first of a series of ramblings by a Southern based, CAMRA member. Also, great to get a report on the Slaters Arms.)

Guessing that your branch may find it harder than ours (Chester & S. Clwyd) to cover its area, here are a few observations & scores from a recent & very enjoyable visit to the Outer Hebrides:

Cuan Mor Restaurant Bar, Oban (not in WhatPub) (*it is on Whatpub but has a basic entry so far - Ed.*) : Brewery tap. Oban Bay **Kiltlifter** (3). Two other Oban Bay beers on tap. 3/7/14.



Photo from Google Maps street view

The Corryvreckan (Wetherspoon), Oban: Standard spoons' real ale selection. I had a coffee as I was driving onto the ferry.



3/7/14. (*Oban is in the Glasgow and Western Scotland branch area.—Ed*)

Isle of Barra Beach Hotel, nr Castlebay: No real ale. 4/7/14.

An Politician, Eriskay: No real ale. 5/7/14.

Hamersay House Hotel, Lochmaddy No real ale, pumpclip turned around. Orkney & Hebridean beers in bottles (not real). 5/7/14.

Westford Hotel, Kirkibost – looked closed when we passed (outside normal opening hours) 6/7/14.



Hotel Hebrides (Mote Bar), Tarbert: **Deuchars IPA** (2). 7/7/14. Crowded.

Isle of Harris Inn, Tarbert: Loch Ness **Red-Ness** (2) – also had **Deuchars**. 9/7/14.



Royal Hotel (HS-1 cafe bar), Stornoway: No real ale but several so called craft beers in bottles, including BrewDog & Williams. These averaged out at about £8 a pint! But good food. 10/7/14.

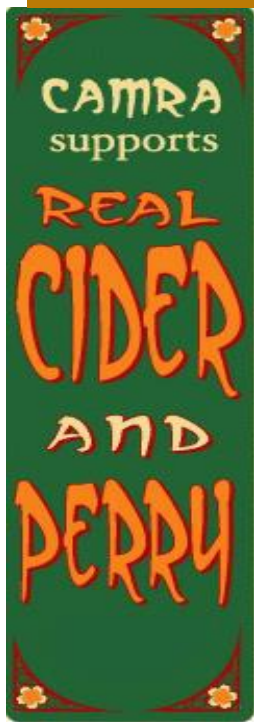
An Lanntair, Stornoway – No real ale. Pumpclip turned around. Having troubles with supplies from Hebridean as brewer has had heart attack (*Andy Ribbens had a serious hospital stay about 2 years ago—Ed*). But Hebridean bottles were surprisingly good for non real ales. 10/7/14. (*as you can read in the breweries section, Hebridean is currently closed — Ed.*)

Stein Inn, Skye – Isle of Skye **Skye Red** & Highland **Dark Munro**(3) 13/7/14.

Best regards

Pete (*always a help to get reports from visiting CAMRA members as to the state of establishments that are remote. Thanks Pete. —Ed.*)

Traditional Cider Matters



Real Cider and/or **Real Perry** is sold (or has recently been sold) in the following inns & hotels.

(Please note that some may be seasonal outlets).

Please let us know if you find additional outlets selling real cider or perry.

The Anderson, Fortrose - Thatchers Heritage Cider

Eagle - Inn on the Loch, Laggan Locks - Thatchers Original Cider

Stronlossit Inn, Roy Bridge - Thatchers Cheddar Valley Cider

Strathcarron Hotel - Thatchers Cider (rotated with cask ales)

Glen Hotel, Newtonmore - Westons Old Rosie or 1st Quality Cider

Benleva Hotel, Drumnadrochit - Westons 1st Quality Cider all year round, plus good selection of real ciders for September festival

Scourie Hotel - Two Westons Ciders on handpump

King's Highway, Inverness - Real Cider will be on draft during their 2 beer festivals each year

Alexander Bain, Wick - Westons Old Rosie & Organic Draught Vintage Cider; Thatchers Heritage & Dry Cider

Badachro Inn - Westons Cider is served here

Argyll Hotel, Ullapool - Westons ciders from the box

Torrison Inn - Westons Ciders are served in the bar.

Kinlochewe Hotel, at the foot of Beinn Eighe, is serving Westons Family Reserve Draft Cider

Clachaig Inn, Glencoe - Westons cider on hand pump.

Bandstand Bar, Nairn - Westons ciders on handpump plus wider selections at their festivals.

Grog & Gruel, Fort William - Thatchers Heritage cask cider. On tap for as long as sales make it viable - could be all year round but unfortunately sales usually drop dramatically during winter months.

Glen Affric Bar, Cannich - serving Westons Cider after requests from hill-walking customers.

Blackfriars - coming soon - Thistly Cross ' Jaggy Thistle—the real scrumpy cider.



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What's On

September

5 & 6 - The Rhum Plants by Mangonel Theatre Company

October

10 & 11 - Cat Plays Piano by Wildbird Theatre Company

November

14 & 15 - Beyond The Trenches by Northern Heights Theatre Company

December

5 & 6 - Warrior Blues by Bob Pegg

February

6 & 7 - Mallory: Beyond Everest by John Burns

March

6 & 7 - The Gamekeeper by Gunshow Theatre Company

Tickets available online www.playpieces.co.uk or in person at The Drouthy Cobbler or The Phoenix Ale House



/playpieces
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Very Select trip to Ullapool

As detailed in our branch diary, we planned another Friday evening social event to hopefully encourage more members to take part in branch activities.

Being a Friday in July, we were pretty confident that the weather would be good and it was! But, due to family holidays and work commitments, only 4 of us took part. It meant we had plenty of room in our usual, 16 seat minibus from Charlie Fraser of Munloch.

The run up to Ullapool was very pleasant and we headed to the Morefield Motel first. This long standing GBG entry had 2 ales on to tempt the beer palates of the several diners who were in the bar area, the conservatory and

seating outside. The beers were in good nick and we stayed for 2 rounds. An Teallach **Kildonan** scored 3 as did



Orkney (Atlas) **Nimbus**.

After catching up with Tony at the Morefield, it was down to the Seaforth bar and restaurant which was busy with diners and serving

three An Teallach beers; **Hector** which scored 2, **Crofters Pale Ale** which just managed to score 1.5 and **An Teallach Ale** which we didn't



try.

A wee walk along to The Arch Inn. The place was packed, inside and out and we made our way inside to see the single handpump on the bar empty. A sad state of affairs that this freehouse didn't have a real ale on when it was so busy at the height of the tourist season.

Along to the Ferry Boat Inn which we were interested to see how it has improved under it's new stewardship of Nigel and Franner who keep the Argyll. We were not disappointed—nicely busy and offering 4 ales from South of the border which we assume are on the

Punch ale list. We tried **Hop Fest** from Red Squirrel (1.5),



Black Sheep **Best Bitter** (2.5) and Robinson's **Trooper** (by Iron Maiden) (3).



Up the steep hill to the Argyll and the main target for our trip, as they had one of their festival weekends on. This particular weekend was their "Cider Celebration". The ales were Caledonian **80/-** (3), which used to be a very common ale across North East Scotland but



is rarely seen here, Robinson's **Trooper** (3)



and the new **McEwan's IPA** (2).



The bar area and lounge were pretty busy despite there being no sign of any cider but we did eventually spot an A4 card with a substantial list of available ciders and perrys.

There was also live entertainment laid on for the weekend which was just starting (an hour late) by the time we had to get back on the bus.

Our young lady driver, who had drawn the

short straw for taking us that Friday evening, patiently drove the four stalwarts back to Inverness.

A very pleasant evening out West and only 2 midge bites on my ankle to show, so that was a result.

The reasons for these beer trips is to get out and about our huge branch area to check out the pubs and to enable rural branch members to meet up with us — see contacts on the diary page to arrange meeting up at any of our meetings/trips.

*The Friday evening meetings which we have been doing for the past 2 years, have been very poorly attended so will probably be reviewed at the branch **AGM meeting** in November at the **Corriegarth Hotel**.*



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Branch Diary (meetings start at 7.30 pm) (all welcome)

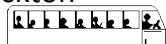
All these events are open to CAMRA members and non-members, including committee meetings. * Not all events are necessarily organised by CAMRA. This diary is as much about the local real ale scene as it is about CAMRA branch activities.

September

Saturday 20th at 14.00
Branch Social at Benleva Beer
Festival

Friday 26th at 17.30
Tasting Social at No. 27, Castle
Street

October

Saturday 4th
Minibus beer trip to Torridon Inn
Beer Festival and Plockton
(incl brewery) 

Tuesday 14th
Committee meeting -
The Anderson, Fortrose

November

Tuesday 11th
Branch AGM—all
welcome

Corriegarth Hotel, Inverness

Tuesday 21st at 17.30
Tasting Social at Castle Tavern

December

Tuesday 9th
Committee meeting -
Blackfriars, Inverness

Tuesday 16th at 19.00
Inverness Xmas Walkabout
Start at Blackfriars

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socials@highlandcamra.org.uk
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01/06

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NORTH HOP

For the 29th and 30th of August, the One Touch Theatre in Eden Court was transformed into a large, open lounge bar. Wonderfully simple seating was provided by using hay bales at lines of tables with cleverly adapted whisky barrels for verti-

endless, ongoing, arguments within CAMRA but I am just reporting my very limited experiment. There were many live, local, music acts appearing on stage throughout the festival and the whole thing was expertly and enthusiastically MC'd by STV's Nicola McAlley.

Upstairs, there was a nicely laid out artisan gins and cocktails bar with a small, "Botanical" DJ stage. The corridor had some locally produced food, including lovely, big Scotch Eggs made from rare breed pork, superb "Haggis Bobotie's" from Loch Ness Inn, ice cream and sorbets. In addition to the food there were stalls with cocktail kits and a Brew Craft Beer kit which included everything to make 4 litres of ale from a proper mash brew.

So, all in all, an excellent first attempt at showcasing craft beer to a new audience. A very pleasant, atmosphere around the whole festival with the bonus of being backed up by the excellent facilities and staff of Eden Court. There was a steady flow of people coming in—the venue had a capacity of 400. It didn't get crowded and

perhaps the entry price was putting people off (£15 for the Friday night and £20 for the Saturday—this included a festival glass and a third of a pint of the festival ale) but those that were there enjoyed themselves and it was noticeable that the majority were thirty-somethings and there were many women. Quite different from a CAMRA beer festival.

Well done, main organiser Michelle Russell and her team for putting this ambitious festival together. There is word of other, similar festivals happening at other venues. Hopefully, North Hop will be repeated next year.



cal drinking spotted about. We were invited as guests with 2 weekend tickets. Windswept brewery had a stand and provided the festival brew—a 3.7% dark, copper coloured, easy drinking ale—the lowest abv ale they have produced. "Our" local breweries were ably represented by Cromarty and Loch Ness. Loch Ness was launching their new **InverNESS**, 4.5% golden bitter. It was also good to see 6°N from Stonehaven, Eden brewery from St Andrews, Deeside Brewery from Banchory, Williams Bros Brewing Co. from Alloa, Inveralmond from Perth, Strathbraan from Dunkeld and BrewDog from Ellon. Cider was provided by the full range of Thistly Cross at their stand. One of us tried the **Jaggy Thistle**, the 7.4%, CAMRA approved, Scottish real scrumpy which had a good, sharp, dryness but with a very smooth undertone. As this festival was designed to be a showcase for Craft Beer, about 30 of the 50 available beers were on keg. This reporter tried quite a few ales and 2 or 3 of the keg beers. I have to report that the kegged beers were not too fizzy and if they were too chilled, I just waited until they warmed up a bit to get the great, full—on flavours. The "Craft keg" debate is one of the



Drink in a Real Ale Pub? - Rate the Beer!

Highlands & Western Isles CAMRA needs your help in surveying the pubs in our massive Branch area. To tell us which pubs are worth considering for the Good Beer Guide, use CAMRA's 6-point NBSS (National Beer Scoring Scheme) to record Beer Quality. The info you give us helps us judge which outlets could go in to The Good Beer Guide, which outlets merit an award of area POTY and Branch POTY and which of our local beers merits the award of BOTY. It's easy! (if you are not sure about your score for a beer—half scores are fine—i.e. $1\frac{1}{2}$ for an OK beer but you wouldn't have another pint)

What do the scores mean?

0 - No cask ale available.

$\frac{1}{2}$ - **Undrinkable.** Beer so poor you have to take it back or can't finish it.

1 - Poor. Beer that is between barely drinkable and drinkable with considerable resentment.

2 - Average. Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.

3 - Good. Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.

4 - Very Good. Excellent beer in excellent condition.

5 - Excellent. Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

Simply email us which bar, the beer(s) and your scores plus any real ale and real cider news to our Branch Contacts (see Diary page).

CAMRA members can use the new website: whatpub.com

Log in to it using your normal CAMRA login details, search for the pub and then click on "Submit Beer Scores" - fill in the boxes on the form, scrolling down and then click "Submit Beer Score". You can do this for any pub in the country. Thanks!



What's yours then? is a quarterly newsletter magazine produced by the Highlands & Western Isles Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale. The views & opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the editor, CAMRA, nor its Branches.



*We hope you have enjoyed reading our Autumn magazine. Unless you intend to keep it, please **DO NOT** throw it away.*

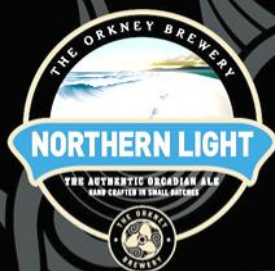
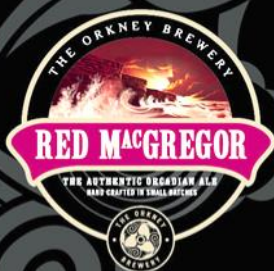
*Why not pass it on to a friend, or just leave it in a pub somewhere for others to read? Our magazines are often found many miles from source! The next, Winter, edition will be out by **mid December.***

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