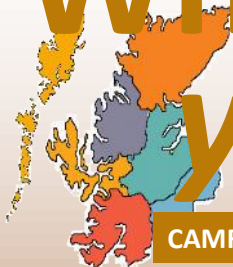


(Award winning)



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CAMRA Highlands & Western Isles FREE Newsletter | Autumn2013



Our branch POTY 2013—runner up for Scottish & Northern Ireland POTY—again!

- GBBF reports
- **Fort William trip**
- News from the Hebrides
- **More POTY presentations**
- Orkney Brewery Visitor Centre



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FOR
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www.cairngormbrewery.com

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

- > HebCelt festival report
- > GBBF reports
- > Tasting Course
- > Fort William Trip
- > POTY presentations
- > Updated Real Ale pubs list
- > Visit to Corroir Station House Restaurant
- > Focus on ... Maurice Valley
- > Visit to Orkney Brewery Visitor Centre
- > Brewery and Beers news
- > Updated branch diary

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

Advertising rates

Full Page Advert..... £87.00

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There is a discount on placement of your fourth consecutive advert. Adverts are accepted on condition that inclusion does not necessarily imply an endorsement or approval of content.

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

An average of 3,500+ 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, who keep 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.

Winter edition **deadline** is 29th November, with publication by late December.

Autumn has blown in and (adopt a Private Fraser accent) "thi nichts anrr fairrr drnrrawin in!". But the hoped for Indian summer in September is, so far, going well and warm. In our Highlands and Western Isles CAMRA branch, over the summer, we have been enjoying the fruits of the labour of our local and regional breweries. Indeed as you will read, one of our Western Isle breweries is back brewing again. We were able to try quite a wide variety on our bi-yearly bus trip down the A82 to Fort William. As you can see from the cover, The Benleiva Hotel has missed out on winning the Scottish and Northern Ireland Pub Of The Year for the 2nd year in a row but is still one of the top 3 CAMRA pubs in Scotland. As always, we need more reports from drinkers in our real ale pubs across the length and breadth of our huge area. Please use WhatPub or email us (contact details on the diary page).

Cheers!

Trading Standards Office:

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Hebridean Celtic Festival 2013

Celebrating it's 18th year, this family friendly HebCelt Festival was a 4,500 sell out on the Saturday and very nearly that on the Thursday and Friday. The weather did help with a hot sunny 25°C each day. There were other events around the Island but the main arena was in the grounds of Lews Castle, just across the river from



Stornoway town centre, where the two large marquees were set-up. Van Morrison was the headline act on the Thursday evening with Blasta, Rusty Shackle and the popular local group Face the West in support. On the Friday it was a 14:00 start with 12 groups alternating in the marquees, including Lau, The Dirty Beggars, The Hot Seats, Iain Morrison with Capercaillie closing the evening. Twelve more



groups entertained on the Saturday including The Boy Who Trapped The Sun, Karine Polwart, The Maclean Project and The Red Hot Chilli Pipers who brought the Festival to a close. Also on site was entertainment for the children with a magician, 'Rock the Lab' experiments, clowns, jugglers, ninjas etc. There were also a local crafts tent, merchandise tent and a state of the art recycling machine plus of course food and drink. The Loch Ness Brewery were asked to supply a real ale bar and took over their HoppyNess, RedNess,



WilderNess, DarkNess, LochNess and LightNess. The bar shared a tent with a Pimm's bar and also had a seated (hay bales) garden area. Slowly as more people found the bar, there was a good set of regulars coming back to try all the beers or their favourite. These regulars were locals from the Outer Hebrides as well as from Dundee, Stonehaven, Perth, Broadford, Germany and America. The ferry and accommodation gets filled very quickly and next years' dates are 16th to 19th July.

A great effort and good to make contact with Real Ale enthusiasts on Lewis who were pleased to try some more ales as well as the few that are usually available to them. The fantastic, summer weather helped.



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Hebridean Brewery now re-opened

Due to ill health, the Hebridean Brewery has been closed for quite a few months. They started brewing again on the 10 barrel plant at the beginning of June 2013. Bottles are out in many Tesco, Co-op and local stores around the Islands and some mainland stores. Cask beer is gradually getting out into pubs again. An Lanntair, the arts centre in Stornoway, has one handpump and Islander was on when I was over in July. The Brewery has undergone a restructuring with Mrs Christina Ribbens now the owner; Rebecca Smith the Brewery Manager and Sales; and Andy Ribbens the Brewing and Technical consultant.



Cuillin Brewery trying bottles

Due to demand, Cuillin brewery have tried bottling their Skye Ale. Designing the label in house and having the brew contract bottled has led to a very positive response. This will allow cafes and restaurant across Skye to offer their diners a further choice to drink all year round. They were considering running a 2nd brew to be bottled to build up a stock which they hope will last into the New year.

Loch Ness Brewery flat out!

Hardly have they settled in to their new, much expanded brewery than Loch Ness are considering further expansion. Such is the success and demand for their ales in a growing numbers of outlets in more places, that they are trying to find the time to plan further expansion.

Carlton Bar in Stornoway

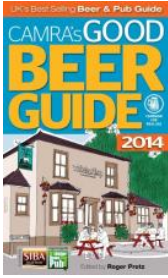


Once known as The Whalers Rest, this unspoilt and classic, old fashioned Scottish street pub stands on the corner of Francis and Keith Streets. They have one or two real ales on in rotation, all from The Isle of Skye Brewery.

When I visited in July there were very good **Cuillin Gorm** and **Cuillin Beast** (yes - on handpump!) with a couple days later, **Red Cuillin** replacing the **Gorm**. With delivery logistics, a price of £3.40 a pint seemed reasonable (all the malts were only £2.50 each).

Interestingly, in the gents toilets there were hand rails by the urinals!

The Carlton and the An Lanntair are the only real ale places in Stornoway at the moment.



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CAMRA Tasting Course 29th June 2013

This summer, ten CAMRA members turned up to learn a bit more about real ale and all the good and bad tastes that go with it. Branch Chairman Eric Mills took the course which is based on the original course devised by Dr Keith Thomas, head of Brewlab which is based at The University of Sunderland. The Benleva Hotel in Drumnadrochit hosted the event and owner Steve Crossland was able to have available a good selection of beer styles and strengths.

This is an informal course which CAMRA members with an interest in real ale could attend. We started with the basic tastes of sweet, sour, bitter and salt and which parts of your tongue detect which flavour. Then onto how beer is made and it's ingredients of water, malt, hops and yeast. Different hops and malts were handed around to smell and taste.

Where do all the flavours in real ale come from? Well some of these questions were answered as we looked at bitterness, astringency, roast, sweetness, medicinal, fruity etc and talked about what causes these flavours and

are they good or bad. One way of getting real ales into CAMRA competitions, is for trained tasters to fill in CAMRA tasting cards on the beers and these were explained. There then followed a discussion on beer styles- milds, bitters, best bitters, strong bitters, golden ales, speciality beers, old ales/strong milds, porters, stouts and barley wines/strong old ales. Throughout this informal course there were real ales to taste and discuss; Strathaven **Craigmill Mild** (3.5%), Loch Ness **LochNess** (4.4%), Cromarty **Happy Chappy** (4.1%), Isle of Skye **Hebridean Gold** (4.3%) and Loch Ness **Prince of DarkNess** that had been put into a Caol Ila whisky barrel to mature (12%). Plus we had the blindfolded tasting (see *photo*) of Cromarty **2 Craigs** (2% yes,



2%) and Loch Ness **Ness Club 7** (7%). Thanks to Benleva Hotel owners Steve and Allan Crossland for their hospitality and letting us have the event there.

Champion Beer of Britain 2013

The annual Great British Beer Festival (2 reports to be found later in this issue) included



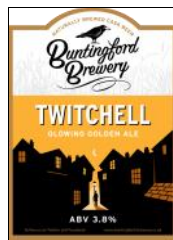
the final judging and announcement of the year's winning ales.

The overall CBOB for this year is, very unusually, West Yorkshire, Elland Brewery's **1872 Porter** of 6.5% abv. Described as a

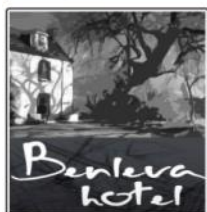
rich, complex and dark Porter from an original 1872 recipe, with an old port nose, and coffee and bitter chocolate flavours on the palate.

The Silver award went to Hertfordshire, Buntingford Brewery's **Twitchell** - a 3.8%

golden ale. It is described as a golden fruity bitter with a floral aroma and malty / hoppy aftertaste. Brewed with Maris Otter pale & wheat malts, and English Goldings hops, plus Cascade hops from the USA.



Scotland got in on the act as the Bronze award was won by Argyll's, Fyne Ales, highly regarded, **Jarl** - another 3.8% golden ale. It's description is; light and golden colour with a strong citrus and hop aroma. Citrus and grassy hop flavours dominate the palate with a light and refreshing dry finish. A superbly drinkable beer.



Just a few reasons to visit the Benleiva Hotel by Loch Ness
CAMRA Highlands and Western Isles PUB of the YEAR 2013
12th Loch Ness Spring Beer Festival - 20th to 28th September 2013

Home of the Loch Ness Brewery Gift Shop



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POTY Presentations

Another 4 of our 8 area POTY's have been presented with their awards



Simon, behind the bar of The Dornoch Castle Hotel, chuffed to receive their area POTY certificate for this year to add to their previous certificates.

Gareth presents Gareth, the owner of The Cairn Hotel at Carrbridge with his area POTY certificate, also adding to his POTY tally.



The very keen barmaid at the Grog & Gruel, Fort William receiving their POTY certificate for this year from your editor.

Chairman Eric presents Nigel at The Argyll Hotel, Ullapool with his area POTY certificate in the revamped bar.

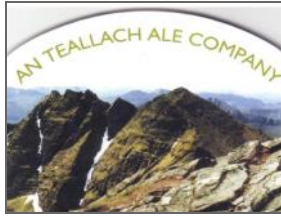


That leaves the Stein Inn on the far side of Skye to be presented with their POTY certificate for this year which will add to their extensive tally of POTYs.

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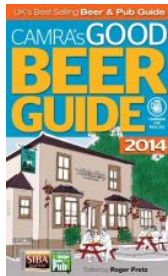
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GBBF 2013 Report 1

As we at the Loch Ness Brewery had our first beer on the bar at the Great British Beer Festival, in the shape of **HoppyNESS**, it was decided that someone should go down to try it.



After much soul searching, I reluctantly (*yeah, right!* - Ed) agreed to take on this onerous task. Fortunately the lack of a ticket wasn't a problem (*breweries supplying GBBF are usually given a couple of free tickets but these had not appeared this year—Ed.*) as Merlin from Cairngorm Brewery was lurking outside Olympia with spare tickets. On entry it was decided that our first stop would be to try the **Trade Winds** and very good it was too. The other Highland beers

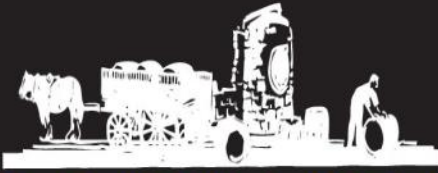
which made it down to The Old Empire Bar were Isle of Skye - **Hebridean Gold**, An Teal-lach—**Beinn Dearg**, Cairngorm - **Black Gold**, Cromarty - **Hit The Lip**, with other Scottish ales from just outwith our area in the shape of Fyne Ales—**Jarl & Maverick**, Orkney - **Corncrake** and Highland Brewing Company - **Pale Ale & St Magnus**.

I think I managed to try most of the Highland beers and they were all on good form - and proving very popular with the huge crowds of thirsty ale fans.

Tuesday was the trade session and also the announcement of the Champion Beer of Britain. After winning the Golden Ale category, **Jarl** was strongly in the running for the overall prize but just came up short this year finishing in third with the Bronze Medal. Still a fantastic achievement. The overall winner



was **1872 Porter** from Elland Brewery in West Yorkshire. I made a brief visit on the Wednesday to sample some more **Hoppy-NESS** and it was even busier than the Tuesday with all the Highland beers selling well. First to sell out was the **Hebridean Gold** and all of them were gone long before the Festival finished up on Saturday afternoon. Reports from the bar staff were very good and we can hope for an even better showing of Highland beers in next year's GBBF. S C



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Another award for Orkney



Brewery

Dark Island Reserve won the Drinks – Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic category of the Scotland Food and Drink Excellence awards 2013. The competition is run in partnership with the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland. Orkney Brewery was the only Scottish brewer with a drink product in the finals.



the Brewers, where 8 breweries (Stewart Brewing, Williams, Harviestoun, Cairngorm, Inveralmond, Fyne Ales, Elixir Brew Co and Alechemy Brewing) supplied a 5% summer golden ale for customers to blind taste their favourite. The winner was Stewart Brewing. Loch Ness launched their new 4% beer '**MadNess, one hop beyond**'. Sandy's Cider and Perry bar was again laden with real cider and perry from all over the UK including, Thistly Cross' **Jaggy Thistle** from East Lothian and **Waulkmill** from Dumfries and Galloway. Folk singer Andrew Gordon entertained on Friday night and The Caledonian Pipe Band (pictured) on Saturday afternoon.

Scottish Real Ale Festival 2013

This year's Festival was again held at the Corn Exchange in Edinburgh but this year's event happened a bit later than before, during July. There were 158 beers from 58 Scottish Breweries. The Champion Beer of Scotland was judged from all the category winners and Fyne Ales **Jarl** was the winner, runner up was Cairngorm **Black Gold** and third was Highland Brewing Company's **St Magnus Ale**. Included this year was a Battle of

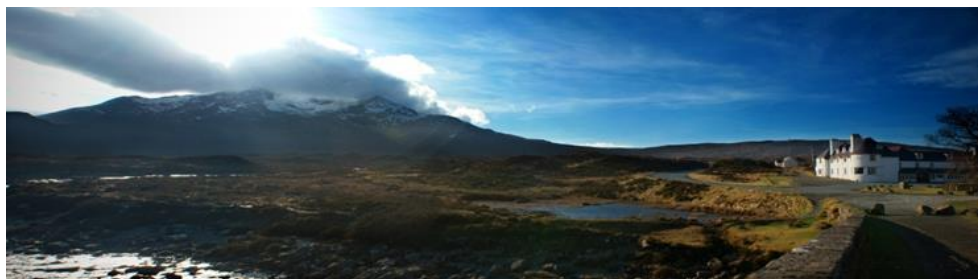
New hotel owners

Billy and Ann Harley have taken over



the Uig Hotel on the Isle of Skye. They plan to continue selling real ale from the Isle of Skye brewery. We wish them every success at this lovely hotel.





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Cuillin Brewery

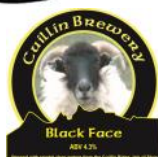
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June Fort William bus trip

On a bright, Saturday morning, 10 of us gathered at the townhouse to get in the usual Fraser's minibus driven once more by our favourite driver, Sandy—back in the saddle after a year off. Down to Drumnadrochit to collect 5 more day trippers including CAMRA chairman, Colin Valentine and his wife Aileen. Sandy then patiently drove us on the fairly long and frustrating A82 down to Spean Bridge and our first stop of the day—The Stronlossit Inn at Roy Bridge. We were able to enjoy our first ales outside in the sunshine. Orkney **Corncrake**, Highland Brewing **Island Hopping** and Cairngorm **Stag** were on and



all in good nick, scoring 4s across the board. Owner Maurice drove up having been to the local supermarket in part preparation for the days activities at the inn. He stopped for a wee chat with us. Retrieving one of our number from the nearby woods where he was manfully working to overcome his hangover from the previous night, despite being very much old enough to know better, we continued to the Ben Nevis Inn beside the main path up the mountain. It was quite busy and the path was never quiet. There

were 3 golden ales on the bar—Isle of Skye **Skye Light** which unfortunately was past



it's best and our discussion with the bar staff persuaded them that it should be replaced, Cairngorm **Caillie** and **Mountain Blue** which were in pretty good condition.

After admiring the lovely building and the mountain views, we drove down Glen Nevis to the Glen Nevis Restaurant which is a modern, 1982 built establishment next to several large caravan and camping parks. Inside, it is like stepping back in time to the 1980's and the bar area and lounge/restaurant area are dominated by many glass display cases filled with hundreds of polished copper kettles. Upon finding the information plate, it turns out that this is a huge collection of "dram kettles" which apparently were kept constantly warm on the ranges in the local cottages in the highlands and helped keep the folks warm—inside and out! The staff were very keen and we enjoyed 3 well kept ales—An Teallach **Crofters**, Cairngorm **Mountain Blue** and **Wildcat**.

Into Fort William proper and we split in to

(Continued on page 17)



CAWDOR
TAVERN

Cawdor Nairn IV12 5XP

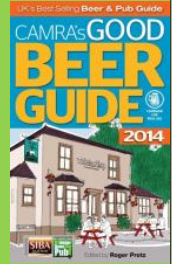


Atlas range

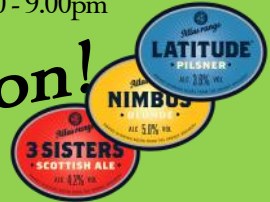
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(Continued from page 16)

groups to cover all the ale pubs in the town centre. The Grog & Gruel had 5 ales on as well as a real Cider—Cairngorm **Wildcat**, Glenfinnan **Standard Ale** (the first time most of us have ever seen a draught Glenfinnan ale) which was ok, Cairngorm **Mountain Blue** and **Caille** and Orkney (Atlas) **Latitude**. The quality of the ales was good on the whole. The new Wetherspoon pub, The Great Glen was visited for the first time by most of us—an anonymous looking place from the outside, it is very modern and contemporary inside with various different areas and all using natural and possibly local materials. 6 ales were on—Milk Street **Funky Monkey**, Hook Norton **Old Hookey**, Caledonian **Summer Pale Ale**, **Deuchars**, Fyne Ales **Vital Spark** and **Abbot Ale**. Most of the

ales were good.

The Ben Nevis Bar offered Orkney **Dark Island**, **Corncrake** and Caledonian **Deuchars**. Several of us enjoyed our Dark Island or Corncrake on their outside tables in the sunshine with views across the water.

In The Crofters Bar, they offer 1 standard ale—Caledonian **Flying Scotsman** which only a couple of us were able to enjoy as the cask ran out and the line had to be cleaned before the next cask went on. Cobbs at Nevisport had 5 good ales on—Loch Lomond **Bonnie N' Blonde**, Orkney (Atlas) **Three Sisters**, **Corncrake**, **Red MacGregor** and Isle of Skye's new ale, **Otter Ale** which was very good and raises money towards helping the otter population. Time ran out so it was back on the bus,

(Continued on page 18)

(Continued from page 17)

eventually for some, and back up the A82 to the Old Station Restaurant at Spean Bridge. Very comfortable converted station rooms where we all enjoyed the “house ale” **Commando** a 4.5% golden ale from Cairngorm.

On up to the “pub on the water”, The Eagle Barge. 4 ales were on—River Leven **Blonde**, **Dark** and **IPA** with An Teallach



Beinn Dearg. All 4 ales were struggling against a lack of any cellar cooling. Returning to Drumnadrochit, we couldn't resist visiting The Benleiva to try several Loch Ness ales in perfect condition. Sandy then drove the 10 of us back to Inverness to bring to an end another excellent beer trip.

1st Elgin Beer Festival

The 4 Moray based breweries have organised a 2 day beer festival at Elgin Town Hall on the 4th and 5th of October. The beers will be predominantly NE and Highland cask ale (36), some keg(4) and a bottle selection. There will also be local bands (including oompah!) and a sausage competition for local butchers. In short, it will be beer, bangers and bands.



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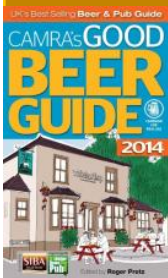
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I have now recovered from my 5-day, 82 mile walk from Fort William to Aviemore. Here follows my ale findings:

Saturday 16/03/13 - Birmingham to Fort William. Stopped off at the Clachaig in Glencoe for lunch. 8 of the 15 handpulls were in use:- Isle of Skye Hebridean Gold and Cuillin Beast, Loch Ness Red Ness and Wilder Ness, Fraoch, Alloa Midnight Sun, Kelpie Organic Seaweed Ale and a scrumpy cider. Not a bad start!

Cobbs Inn at Nevisport had Atlas 3 Sisters and Cairngorm Black Gold.

Grog + Gruel only had Fraoch and Caledonian 80/

Started walking on Sunday. 23 miles to Tulloch Station, where the bottles of beer I had requested were waiting. Fraoch and Old Speckled Hen but nectar nevertheless!

28 miles on Monday, arriving in Laggan at 6pm. Too knackered to go looking for the Laggan Gaskmore. The Monarch (as it is now called) was closed for alterations.

A leisurely Tuesday, only 9 miles, into Newtonmore. There by 2pm and our bunkhouse was just across the road from the Glen Hotel. 2 handpumps, Ben Nevis and Cairngorm Tradewinds, present. Excellent.

Wednesday saw us walk the 15 miles to Kincaig where we stayed at the Loch Insh Watersports Centre. We arrived as the restaurant and bar closed! My colleagues were not up for the 20-minute walk to the Suie Hotel, so I went on my own. Only had Cairngorm Stag but on excellent form.

Last day of walking on Thursday, to the finish at Aviemore. Had an hour in the Cairngorm Hotel to sample the Cairngorm Stag and Gold. Missed out on the Old Bridge Inn. Caught the bus back to Fort William and collected the car. Drove to our overnight accommodation at the Ben Nevis Inn. Three beers here, An Teallach Kildonan, Cairngorm Stag and River Leven Dark. All on good form. Shame about the storm force winds trying to blow the windows out of the wall!!

Had planned to climb Ben Nevis on Friday but the wind was far too strong and the situation too dangerous. Instead had a trip to the Stronlossit Inn at Roybridge. Cairngorm Stag and Tradewinds on good form.

Drove home on Saturday, leaving at 6am. Fun on the A82 on a snow-covered road through Glencoe! Strange to see all of the motorhomes and vans trashed amongst the rocks and boulders as a result of the winds we had experienced previously. What a week!!!

Best regards,

Eddie Povey.

Always good to get reports from members of other branches. Due to space and publishing timings, I wasn't able to use this earlier so it is a bit out of date but still useful —Thanks. Ed.

the Old Bridge Inn ~ Aviemore



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



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GBBF Report 2

A long weekend trip to London coincided with this year's GBBF—the "biggest pub in the world". (Honestly, it wasn't planned!) So the opportunity was taken to visit on the Friday evening. This allowed me to compare it to my last GBBF visit back in 2010 when it was at Earl's Court.

Olympia was a bit more awkward to get to as it has its own underground station but this is only used when events are on.

Being a Friday evening, it was busy as the photos show but having booked tickets, it



was a smooth entry. Buying our festival glasses and scanning through the thick, 82 page, festival guide, we started to make our way to the

bars in an anti-clockwise direction. As my preferred beer style is porters, my first beer was a third of a pint of **Rabbie's Porter** from Ayr Brewing—lovely! The huge hall was crowded and it was almost overwhelming but perseverance was needed—especially when wanting a beer from any of the many CAMRA bars. These were always busy requiring squeezing through chatty drinkers to then wait to catch the eye of one of the busy volunteer servers.

Every so often a cheer would echo round the hall and this was puzzling until much later when I realized that it was just one of those big festival "ethos" things. Presumably a group of drinkers would start the cheer and it then ran round the hall like an audio "Mexican wave". Amazing!

Val chose a light, golden ale for her first beer then switched to various ciders from the Weston's bar which we found half way round. My next beer was **Black Diamond** from Gower followed by a **Dark Mild** from Bank Top. Passing a seating area, it was easy to spot the seasoned festival goers who had brought their own camping chairs.

Hearing quite heavy music coming from the stage, we went back to discover Alvin Star-



rust in full flight performing to the receptive crowd a range of good old rock and roll numbers—Excellent!

Many drinkers were treating the festival as a boys and girls day out and were in various costumes some quite bizarre.

With the legs getting tired and achy, we ascended to the gallery where there were many tables and seats although, of course, never enough. After a rest and toilet break, it was back down for another



beer and some food. But which to choose?



There are many and varied food stalls and I eventually chose a kangaroo burger. It was delicious and not too hoppy! (*all together now—groan!*) Val later tried a

chicken tikka dish which was also lovely and sneakily hot.

I had by this time tried some **Umbel Magna** from the Growler Brewery, a wonderful stout with coriander added - bought for me by a complete stranger who was queuing beside me getting a round in for his group — we got talking and he advised me to try it! Fantastic!

Wandering round to the smaller hall, after some window shopping at the CAMRA souvenir shop and CAMRA brewery shop, we found

the German and Czech bar where I tried a refreshing **Dark** from Bernard and Val had a lovely **Raspberry** beer from Matuska. I followed this with a **Special Ox** also from Bernard.

Tiredness (and drink) was taking its toll so that was enough and we had to watch our time to get one of the last tube trains back to the city centre. We wandered past another of the brewery bars which were always quieter than the CAMRA bars and I realized that I had missed easy access to some great beers which we never see up here in the Highlands. At almost 10 pm, Olympia was much less crowded and the tube was not too busy. I found Olympia more confusing to navigate than Earls Court but it was as usual, a great experience and every real ale enthusiast should try it.

In 2010, with my brother, between us we tasted 22 different beers in 6 hours (1/3 pints). This time it was only about 10 but it was, what's the word again? ... Oh yes, - Excellent!

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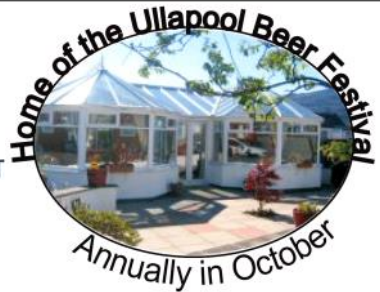
Email: stay@morefieldmotel.co.uk

Proprietors: Mr & Mrs A.D. & B.J. Oulton

Accommodation bookings accepted online

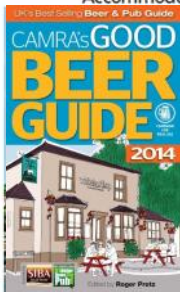
Listed in the Good Beer Guide for the 6th year.

A warm welcome & quality Ales available from Tony & Bev.



www.ullapoolbeerfestival.co.uk

Real Ale in the Real Highlands



Supporting Local breweries

Highlands & Islands Brewers in 2013



Isle of Skye Brewery - Based at Uig, by the Western Isles ferry terminal, brewing since December 1995. Ales include Red & Black Cuillin, Young Pretender Hebridean Gold, and Blaven. Seasonal, House, and special event ales are also brewed.

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.

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

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 expanded in 2012.

Cairngorm Brewery 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 expanding again in 2012.

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).

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. 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.

Highland Brewing Company - Located in the old Swannay cheese factory at Birsay, on Orkney Mainland. 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 commenced 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. (see advert)

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

Cromarty Brewery - First brews in December 2011. Happy Chappy, Brewed Awakening, Red Rocker, Hit The Lip, AKA. Increased brewing kit in early 2013. Brewery shop now open.

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 and Wolf are proving popular.

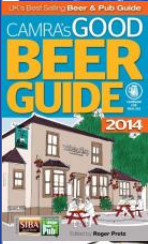
Speyside Craft Brewery—started commercial brewing at Forres in 2012. Bottlenose is main ale.

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. Similarly for Highlands & Islands pubs listed in the GBG, pubs in Orkney and Shetland are submitted by the Aberdeen, Grampian & Northern Isles Branch, and the Clachaig Inn somehow falls within the Glasgow & West Scotland branch area!

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FAX: 01971 502423

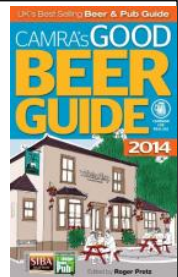
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Cask Ales and Real Cider are served

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 (S) basis.

(TP) - ale served using top pressure.

We have taken the liberty of listing some pubs which fall within adjoining Branch Area - Glasgow & West of Scotland, (G&WS) - but which are not very far from our "border" and merit a visit.

Inverness

Blackfriars
Bog Roy, Kirkhill
Caledonian
Castle Tavern
Chieftan Hotel
Clachnaharry Inn
Corrigarth Hotel
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
The Room
Snowgoose
Tomlinson's Beer Shop
Waterfront Bar

Muckrach Lodge Hotel, Dulnain
Bridge
Boat Hotel, Boat of Garten
Cairn Hotel, Carrbridge

Aviemore

Glenmore Lodge
Dalfaber Country Club
Ben Macdui
Winking Owl
Cairngorm Hotel
Old Bridge Inn

Aviemore South

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

Easter Ross

Black Isle

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

Dingwall Area

Conon Bridge Hotel

Inchbae Lodge Hotel, Garve
Aultguish Inn, Garve

Strathconon

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

Loch Ness

(c/w from INV)

Dores Inn, Dores
Whitebridge Hotel, Whitebridge
Bothy Bar, Fort Augustus
Caledonian Hotel, Fort
Augustus (S)
Lock Inn, Fort Augustus
Lovat Arms Hotel, Fort Augustus
Glenmorriston Arms Hotel,
Invermorriston
Loch Ness Inn, Lewiston
Benleva Hotel, Drumnadrochit
Loch Ness Lodge Hotel,
Drumnadrochit
Steading Country Pub,
Kilmartin (S)

Speyside

(route from N to S)

Inverness Airport (D'Lish)
Braeval Hotel (Bandstand), Nairn
Cawdor Tavern, Cawdor
Haugh Hotel, Cromdale
Seafield Lodge Hotel, Grantown
on Spey
Craig Bar, Grantown on Spey

Fort William

Fort William

District North

Invergarry Hotel
Eagle Barge, Laggan (S)
Old Station Restaurant, Spean
Bridge
Stronlössit Hotel, Roy Bridge

Real Ale Pubs List

Corrour Station House
Restaurant, Corrour Estate

Fort William

Moorings Hotel, Banavie
Alexandra Hotel
Ben Nevis Bar
Ben Nevis Hotel
Ben Nevis Inn
Cobbs @ Nevisport
Crofter Bar & Restaurant
Glen Nevis Restaurant
Grog & Gruel
Great Glen
West End Hotel

Fort William

District South

Four Seasons, Onich
Onich Hotel, Onich
Loch Leven Hotel,
Ballachulish (G&WS)
Laroch Bar, Ballachulish
(G&WS)
Clachaig Inn, Glencoe
Kings House Hotel, Glencoe
(G&WS)
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
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

Plocton to Gairloch

Plockton Inn, Plockton
Plockton Hotel, Plockton
Strathcarron Hotel
Lochcarron Hotel
Applecross Inn
Tigh an Eilean Hotel, Shieldaig
Torridon Inn, Lochailhort
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)
Am Fuaran Bar, Achiltibuie

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

Ben Loyal Hotel, Tongue
Tongue Hotel, Tongue
Weigh Inn (Ashes Bar), Thurso
Commercial Hotel, Thurso
Central Hotel (Top Joes), Thurso
Holburn Bar, Thurso
Ulster Arms Hotel, Halkirk
Castletown Hotel, Castletown
Seaview Hotel, John O'Groats
Alexander Bain, Wick
Mackays Hotel, Wick
Norseman Hotel, Wick

East Coast

Bay Owl Restaurant, Dunbeath
Belgrave Arms Hotel, Helmsdale
Sutherland Inn, Brora
Golspie Inn (Sutherland Hotel),
Golspie
Trentham Hotel, Dornoch
Eagle Hotel, Dornoch
Burghfield House Hotel,
Dornoch

Real Ale Pubs List

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)
Isle Ornsay Hotel, Sleat
Ardvasar Hotel, Ardvasar

Western Isles, N to S

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

Tarbet, Harris
Isle of Harris Inn,
Tarbet, Harris (S)
Tigh Dearg Hotel (Lochmaddy),
North Uist
Lochmaddy Hotel, Lochmaddy,
N Uist
Langass Lodge, Loch Elport,
N Uist
Westford Inn, Kirkbost, N Uist
Dark Island Hotel, Liniclate,
Benbecula (S)
Borrodale Hotel, Daliburgh,
S Uist (S)

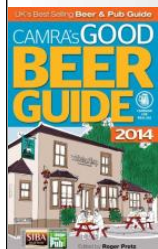
Stein Inn

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angus.teresa@steininn.co.uk

Corrour - A Grand Day Out

This CAMRA branch, like many others in the UK, have been very busy these last few months completing our part of the WhatPub database of just over 200 pubs, hotels and restaurants locally, and nearly 36,000 nationally. The database went live to the general public on 23rd September. Although it had previously made an appearance only to disappear, we were advised in June that The Corrour Station House Restaurant (CSHR) was open again and serving real ale. After some investigating, we were pleased to find that CSHR was very much back in business!



So as to include CSHR on WhatPub, the details were entered as a "desktop" exercise which were confirmed by email exchange with the new

to get to it is to walk or cycle (mountain bike) there or go by train. There is no public vehicular access on the private estate roads.

Corrour Station was opened in August 1894 to serve the Old Shooting Lodge at the far end of Loch Ossian. The lodge was initially used as a "gentleman's

playground" for stalking, hunting and fishing, and is still used today.

proprietors Lizzie MacKenzie & Ollie Bennett who had reopened on 4 August 2012 after taking the place on and completely refurbishing it. All that was needed now was a visit.

Now, the CSHR sits on the Rannoch Moor plateau on the Fort William to Glasgow main line with the summit marked 1350ft, 411m, making it the highest mainline railway station, and possibly restaurant too, in the UK. The only way

Although my train started out from Fort William (Mallaig actually) I elected to join it at Roy Bridge (£9.60 return) and called in at the Stronlissit Inn for a welcome pint of **Belhaven IPA** (score 3.5) before boarding the 12:02, one of the four trains a day, with my mountain bike (free cycle ticket / reservation essential) and



(Continued on page 30)

(Continued from page 29)

took the spectacular half hour journey to Corrou Station in brilliant sunshine, alighting on the platform which was genuinely in the middle of nowhere!

Although I was the only one to get off, there were about six people who got on the train which went onto Glasgow and all points in between. As the train pulled out, other than the CSHR, there was absolutely nothing!

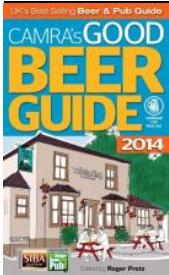
I walked the 50 paces to the door

of the restaurant and found Lizzie behind the bar. I was expected and we introduced ourselves. Lizzie poured me a pint of Cairngorm **Corrou Gold**, a “badged” version of their “Gold” (score 3.5).

At £4.10 it might seem more expensive than some places which was not unreasonable and, unlike some, is not gross profiteering given the circumstances and remote location. Ollie, Lizzie’s partner came

through and introduced himself before returning to the kitchen to do “chefy” things. As the pint glass emptied we talked about the restaurant and their first anniversary party on 4 August and the challenges and rewards over the past year. Lizzie told me that on a

(Continued on page 31)



The Castle Tavern

Taigh-òsda à chaisteil

Open all day, food served all day, a great range of Real Ales
At the top of Castle Street, Inverness, overlooking the River Ness
at the start/finish of the Great Glen Way Tel: 01463 718178

(Continued from page 30)

Tuesday they drop off the empty casks in a "garden shed" at the end of the seventeen mile estate road and collect full ones that Cairngorm drop off on their return from the re-supply run to Fort William.

I visited on a Monday in late August, and on the two previous Saturdays Lizzie said they had had seventy turning up during the day. The restaurant

It would be equally possible to return on the 21:17 and have a wonderful meal after walking around the eight mile route. If you were just interested in the scenery and a meal, but not the exercise, you could always take the 17:37 train from Fort William which takes 48 minutes before returning on the last train.

The CSHR also offers three well appointed rooms for two for

recommend that you contact them first (01397 732236) to avoid disappointment.

More details are available at www.corroul-station-house-restaurant.co.uk.

Your visit is not like going down to your local, it takes a wee bit of planning, but is well worth visiting this "destination" real ale outlet - A Grand Day Out!

S U.

Praise for The Anderson

After a recent visit by a group of London CAMRA members, they left this note:

"The owner, Jim, was tremendously affable, attentive, and passionate about the brews on offer (and generally). Our room was nicely appointed, the facility was charming, information on local lore and general interest sites was readily available and informative. Our dinners were excellent: creative, very tasty, great menu, good prices. All in all it was a 10 out of 10 experience.

Wouldn't travel without the guide. We had great success with pubs visited from the recommendations listed in the Good Beer Guide 2013 for Highlands, Isle of Skye."



only has tabled seating for thirty people and not wanting to turn people away, Lizzie was pleased to be able to serve them provided that they were happy to eat at the bar or any surface that could take a plate and a glass!

I left Lizzie to cycle the one mile to the head of Loch Ossian before taking the six mile estate track around it and back to the CSHR which, allowing for photographs and stops to admire the stunning views and listen to the absolute silence, took just a little over an hour.

I had a final few words with Lizzie and then boarded the 15:21 train back to Roy Bridge.

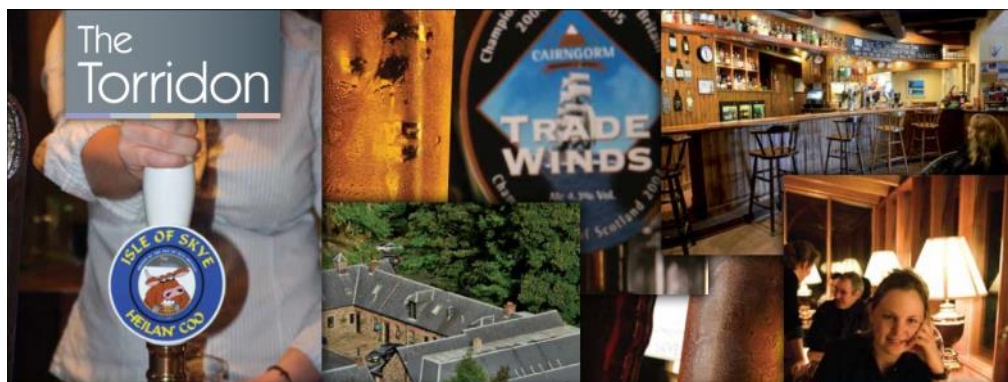
those who might be interested in staying longer. There is also a Scottish Youth Hostel a mile away at the head of Loch Ossian which has bunkhouse accommodation.

During the summer months CSHR is normally open 12:00 - 22:00 but is closed all day Tuesday and half day Wednesday.

Opening times vary during the Spring and Autumn.

CSHR is completely closed during November, January and February.

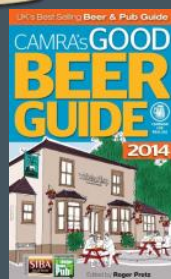
If you do travel to CSHR for a meal, or like me just to visit Lizzie and Ollie, they strongly



Join us from the 4th of October for the annual Torridon Inn Real Ale Festival 2013

Providing a wide selection of quality local ales adding 3 pumps to the bar to allow us to have 20 different ales.

-  Beers from fantastic local breweries
-  Delicious ale-related specials food menu
-  Live music every night, 3 bands playing a bit of everything
 - Friday 4th Kent Duchaine – American Delta Blues artist
 - Saturday 5th Coast Road Truckers – Local 4 piece, Americana, country, bluegrass
 - Sunday 6th BlackRock Celligh Band – Traditional Scottish Celligh music
-  Blind tasting competition
-  Pub quiz



www.thetorridon.com/inn/ale-festival



The Torridon, By Achnasheen, Wester Ross, Scotland IV22 2EY
01445 791242 | info@thetorridon.com | www.thetorridon.com

Orkney Brewery Visitors Centre

Although technically not in the Highlands and Western Islands CAMRA area, The Orkney Islands is only a short ferry sailing away from the Scottish mainland. Orkney ales feature strongly in our area and it is with pleasure that we report on the new(ish) Orkney Brewery Visitors Centre.

dropped me off in favour of Skara Brae two miles away. Incidentally, they were brewing beer at Skara Brae 5000 years ago, so she had a tour of a very old brewery as well! After gathering in the brewery shop our small group of ten was shown around by Norman Shearer. We were led through to the old school room where previous tour(s) were still enjoying the catering and hospitality.

In the old school room it was explained that



I have visited Orkney every year for the past nine years, other than pressing my nose against the window of the recently pagoda topped extension and new brewhouse building in 2011, and missing the opening last year by a few weeks, I managed to get myself (and them!) organised.

I had visited Quayloo brewery, just under eight miles North of Stromness many years ago, but like a chrysalis, it had transformed into something completely different.

Just after it came out of its winter hibernation this year I managed to arrange my first visit to the Orkney Brewery Visitors Centre at Easter.

I had already contacted Joyce Slater, the visitor centre Manager (01856 841 777 or info@orkneybrewery.co.uk), to make sure it was going to be open and duly booked myself in for a tour.

Although my wife was not so keen, she

when it was still a school, children would bring a few bits of peat with them from home every day to put on the fire.

Through the glass doors into the extension which is the bright and shiny world of the brewery itself. Norman explained what happened in the brewery and even if you did not listen, there was an excellent schematic diagram on the wall which showed the



whole process.

We all sampled the various roasts of malted barley and hops from "bird boxes" on the wall, each malted barley had been roasted at a higher temperature and would impart a different colour and flavour to the final brew.



Then on up to the mezzanine floor of the fermentation room where we saw the yeast "doing its magic" of changing the dissolved sugars in the wort from the barley into alcohol.

Retracing our steps to the old school room where Norman Sinclair was behind the bar

offering "paddles" with a choice of three, one third pint samples from the five hand pumps for us to taste. The selection changes regularly and although not registered as LocAle, it certainly has to be a contender with a supply line of just a few meters! The old school room still has its charm, but Norman has overseen the entire project and you can clearly see his hand in the design and finishing touches.

Those wanting to make a longer stay could buy additional pints for £3, and the shop



was offering bottles of the entire Orkney / Atlas range at very (very) tempting prices.

The tour is available to all, including children, although the steps to the fermentation vessel room would be impossible for the infirm or disabled. The school room is the tasting room and is a cafeteria with meals and other



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refreshments.

Would I go there again - Yes. Would I recommend the visit to others - Most Certainly.



I have visited a number of breweries and distilleries before, but this was probably one of the best. If you have the opportunity to visit Orkney, either this year or some time in the future, I can assure you it is well worth it.

The brewery visitor centre is open from 10:00 to 16:30 (10:30 to 16:00 for tours) every day between March and October, and costs £5 including the "samples". The cost for children (u18) is £2.95 and have three soft drinks in a paddle and have a quiz / worksheet to fill in during the tour.

More info at www.orkneybrewery.co.uk

Scottish and Northern Ireland CAMRA Pub of The Year 2013.

Congratulations to **The Cobbles Inn** in Kelso for winning a very tight competition. The Cobbles Inn is an award winning gastro pub and although the focus is on food, drinkers are welcome in the lounge bar where beers from their own micro-brewery, Tempest, are served. The other two finalists were **The Benleiva Hotel** in Drumnadrochit and **The Cavens Arms** in Dumfries.

WESTFORD INN Claddach Kirkibost, North Uist HS6 5EP Telephone 01876 580 653

A small, traditional pub (established 1896), part of a historic listed eighteenth century house set in its own grounds on the west coast of North Uist in the Outer Hebrides. Opposite Kirkibost Island on the A865, between the Kirkibost Centre and Balranald bird reserve, 15 minutes drive from Lochmaddy ferry terminal.

Real ale from the award winning Isle of Skye Brewery. Range of bottled ales and malts. Simple home cooked pub food. Good Beer Guide Listed every year from 2008 to 2013

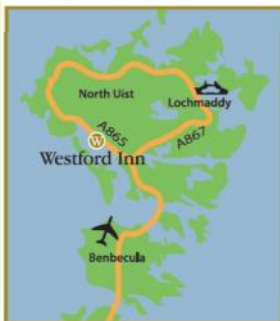
Open noon (12.30pm Sunday) to 3pm and from 6pm to 10.30pm; closed Saturday lunchtime.

Food served 12.30pm to 2.30pm and from 6pm to 9pm each day (closed Sat lunchtime).

Outside seating; real fires in inclement weather.

Accommodation available in small stone cottage in grounds.

Dog friendly



wetherspoon

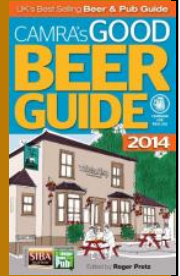
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www.jdwetherspoonhotels.co.uk

Facebook; King's Highway



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Regulars include Houston, An Teallach, Strathaven,
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Also, Weston's Old Rosie cider.

Meet the brewer evenings monthly—see notices near bar

Open at 7am for breakfast with kitchen open
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Get a free pint of ale with any steak or burger at any time,
or with a curry on a Thursday, or a roast on a Sunday or
a deli item Monday to Friday lunchtimes.

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Find us on Facebook; King's Highway.

Focus on

Maurice Valley



Maurice Valley, together with his wife Sandra, own the Stronlossit Inn in Roy Bridge.

Q. Where are you originally from?

A. Our family are from N. Ireland and had connections with Scotland from way back. My own parents came to Scotland in 1946 and I have been in Roy Bridge from a year old.

Roy Bridge has always been my 'home', and except for various years in between, I lived and worked in the village and at Stronlossit during all my days.

Q. What is your background?

A. A fine education at St. Joseph's College, which was a boarding school in Dumfries, and then at the Scottish Hotel School at Strathclyde University for a year in 1969 - 70, followed by 8 years at 2 Art Colleges in London with a post-graduate degree. I had become a long-term student, and I was working at the Stronlossit Inn during breaks, and finally took over the Hotel in 1986.

Q. How/when were you introduced to real ale?

A. It was a nice day out at a pub with a beer garden on the Thames, in 1975. "I got you some of this 'flat' beer, you'll like it." It was newly fashionable pub food with real beer, and this was an unexpected gastronomic delight, and I always looked out for 'real ale' pubs from then on.

(Continued on page 38)

(Continued from page 37)

Q. What are your favourite real ales/styles?

A. I have wide taste and like lots of different ales. There is a fantastic choice available in the highlands these days, and there seems to be innovation everywhere. Although I could discuss this, I will admit that I have had a long term affair with the traditional 'Three Sisters' from Orkney Brewery, and have recently much extolled the virtues of Orkney's Corncrake. That said, Cairngorm Brewery is always superb, the recent 'Ceilidh' on the bar was truly excellent. Highland Brewing 'Island Hopping' and all Loch Fyne Ales are unmissable. We also had a very nice An Teallach which sold off the bar in one night!

Q. What is the best part of your work?

A. I have never been a 9 to 5 person, and hotel life provides a buzz that suits my way. Over the years, I enjoyed improving the property to achieve a good standard. The best is when we see return guests and visitors to the hotel and bar. You can set your watch each year for some, and it is great to see folk come back again. We know a lot of

people, with many friends, and I enjoy the nonsense, and we usually have somebody fixing and tweaking the world to keep it going.

Q. What is the worst part of your work?

A. Coping with an occasional bureaucratically minded or miserable person, and although I can sometimes take an odd turn myself, this is normally only when dealing with the above.

Q. What are your interests/hobbies?

A. The hotel is almost my full time interest and I found that it leaves little time for other pursuits. My previous artistic career has been locked away in a box and waits to be re-opened some day, and the hotel garden is another grand project which will never be finished, and I have a lot of entertainment with landscaping projects and endless new plans. Then I have the wild mallard ducks and tame Muscovies, which can understand everything I say, and this is a lot clearer than the hotel staff. Most things that I plant seem to thrive

(Continued on page 40)



The Old Inn

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FOR GOOD FOOD AND ALES - NATURALLY!

(Continued from page 38)

and flourish, and I am hopeful that progress should continue.

Q. What is your favourite book?

A. I got a Kindle last year and managed to download a couple of books which I never got round to reading. I can't remember the last book I actually read, but I can delve into a newspaper or some weird economic news journal.

Q. What is your favourite song/group?

A. You will find me listening to many types of music and I have a wide and varied taste, from Roy Orbison, and Buddy Holly to Waggers' Ride of the Valkyries, but you can't beat a good Ceilidh band, and I love the bagpipes. One of my sons is very musical and goes to music college, and we are very proud of him, and we hope he does well.

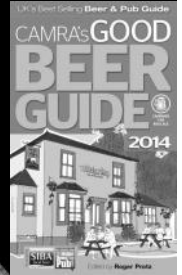
Q. What is your favourite film?

A. The Shawshank Redemption. This is about how a plain, decent man with self-conviction can win through. It gives me hope that the world is not completely beyond recovery or 'doomed', after all.

(Continued on page 41)

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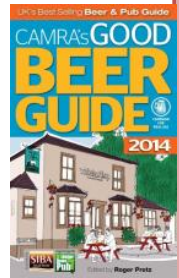
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A popular Rendezvous for Inn Guests, Outdoor
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E-mail: stay@stronlossit.co.uk



(Continued from page 40)

Q. What is your favourite part of Scotland?

A. It must be the scenic West Highland Line, which travels from Glasgow to Mallaig, and it is often cited as 'one of the ten most scenic rail journeys in the world'. The line runs past our door at Roy Bridge Station, and it is all mostly unspoiled, and I think the people who built the line around 1890 could still recognise the fence posts and station platforms from the day it was built.

Q. Why should anyone go to The Stronlossit Inn?

A. Our guests are always first, the service is fast and efficient, the food is good, and you will always get the right attention at the bar. In addition, we serve the best beer, and the parking is free.

Maurice, Thank You.

Wetherspoon's Autumn Beer Festival

There is normally a beer festival on during October at J D Wetherspoon's pubs. There was no word when we went to press, but 50 different ales over 10 days is the norm.

GOOD BEER GUIDE

PUB SELECTION

Have you wondered how CAMRA selects pubs for the annual Good Beer Guide? Each CAMRA branch is responsible for the entries in its area within the county and each listed pub must consistently serve real ale (and real cider if offered) of good quality. To help us do this, we collect beer quality information through CAMRA's National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) in which members are asked to contribute scores for pubs throughout the year. It is easy to score your beers in NBSS. Log in to CAMRA's online pub guide, WhatPub (<http://whatpub.com>), using your membership number and the same password that you use to enter the CAMRA national website. Search for the pub and enter a score for each beer that you drank in the Submit Beer Scores panel on the right of the screen.

There is plenty of help and information



[Home](#) | [Beer Scoring](#) | [CAMRA](#)

Campaign for Real Ale, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 4LW (Map)
www.camra.org.uk | Email: camra@camra.org.uk | Tel: 01727 867201 | Fax: 01727 867670

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about NBSS on the Beer Scoring tab. (You'll see the tabs once you have logged in)

A version of WhatPub optimised for use on a smart phone was due to be launched in August and a downloadable app will appear later, so you can score your beer in the pub while you drink it!

Most smartphones can access the Internet

and use the WhatPub website already and the website was opened to the public on 23rd September so anybody can use it to find information on any good pubs where ever they are in Britain.

Up here in the Highlands, only a few places have free wi-fi so far.

If you don't have online access at all, then ask your NBSS Coordinator at a branch meeting for paper forms and we will enter your scores for you.

Having collected thousands (*hundreds*) of beer scores over the year, we generate a report in January giving the average, best and worst scores for each pub and a confidence factor based on the number of scores received. The Branch Committee uses these data to draw up a list of eligible pubs with the highest average score, supplemented by other sources of information — reports and visits, and then visits them to update the pub details ahead of selection meetings in January and February.

In the H&WI branch, it is geographically impossible to visit all our GBG contender pubs every year so personal reports from members across our area are very useful. All branch members are invited to that meeting at which we select our quota for the next Good Beer Guide.

To make this work better, we need many more members to enter their scores. We value the opinions of all members whether active or not and we need as many opinions as possible for as many pints in as many pubs as possible. This is so we can have confidence in the statistics. We ask members to score the pubs continually not just once or twice. NBSS works across the country not just in our branch.

If you are not a member but would like your opinions of beer quality in pubs to count, then join CAMRA!



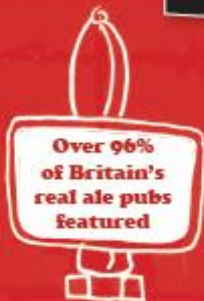
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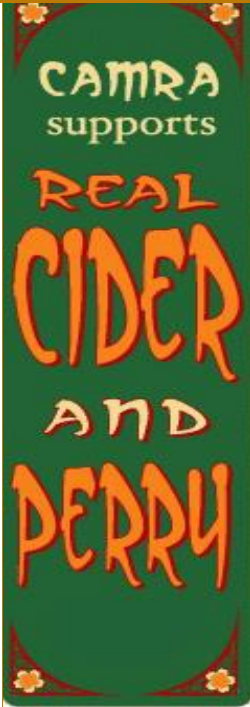
whatpub.com

Featuring over 35,000 real ale pubs



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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 Vin-

tage 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 1st Quality 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.



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Kingussie Beer Festival

18th & 19th October 2013

The beer festival is being held throughout the town's ale hostelries offering over 40 ales that are uniquely brewed in the Speyside and Highland region.

Live music at each of the venues throughout the day.

Ale promotions, Hog Roast on Saturday afternoon.

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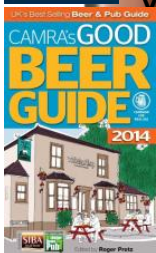
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Guide since 2010

Wester Ross Pub of
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& 2013



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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.

October

4th, 5th & 6th

Torridon Inn Beer Festival *

4th & 5th

Octoberfest "beer bangers and bands"
- Elgin Town Hall *

Tuesday 8th

Committee meeting—Bandstand,
Nairn

Tuesday 15th

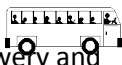
Tasting Evening social—
Kings Highway

18th & 19th

Kingussie Beer Festival *

Saturday 19th

Minibus trip, Cairngorm Brewery and
Kingussie beer festival. Book a place
with Arnold (see contacts below).
Meet at Inverness townhouse at 10.



November

Tuesday 12th

Highlands & Western Isles
CAMRA branch, Annual General
Meeting - open to all members -
Blackfriars, Academy Street.
Start 7.30 pm. (non—members
also welcome)

December

Tuesday 10th

Committee meeting - Castle Tavern

Tuesday 17th

The ever popular, pre-Christmas,
Inverness walkabout.

Meet at Castle Tavern by 7 pm.

Your local CAMRA branch

Protect your pleasure! Become actively involved with your local branch.

We need your help! Not a massive time commitment, just an hour or two will help our small committee in supporting the local publicans and brewers who together provide us with such a wonderful range of real ales to enjoy.

Please see our regularly updated on-line diary at highlandcamra.org.uk

Our web site features;

an elegant, photo-led design; Interactive Pub Map; Archive of Awards; Links to current CAMRA campaigns; Twitter feed; Blog; link to Whatpub.com to submit your beer scores.

Go to highlandcamra.org.uk

..... Needs YOU!

Contact Details

Gareth Hardman (Secretary & Branch Contact) -
01463 238462 18, Scorguie Gardens, Inverness, IV3 8SS.
contact@highlandcamra.org.uk or Secretary@highlandcamra.org.uk

Eric Mills - 01456 459343 chair@highlandcamra.org.uk
Arnold Stout - social@highlandcamra.org.uk
Gordon Streets - 01463 715637 news@highlandcamra.org.uk

A Campaign of Two Halves

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I enclose a cheque for _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Applications will be processed within 21 days

Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title _____ Surname _____
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 Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____

01/06

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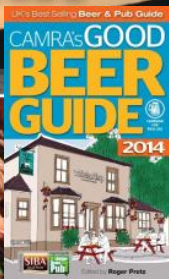
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Scottish Hotel Awards

Gold Medal for "Real & Local Food"
Rising Star Inn of the year 2011

Michelin Pub Food Guide 2012/13

the
lochness inn



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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. 1½ for an OK beer but you wouldn't have another pint)

What do the scores mean?

0 - No cask ale available.

½ - **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 fill in the boxes on the form on the right side of the web page. You can do this for any pub in the country. Thanks!



What's yours then? is a quarterly newsletter 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 newsletter. Unless you intend to keep it for some reason, 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. Newsletters are often found many miles from source! The next edition will be out by the end of December.*

Thanks to our advertisers for making publication of this newsletter possible and our wonderfully helpful local breweries that help distribute it.

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