

NEWS AND BREWS

*Winter
2013*

FREE

Free Magazine of

The South Devon Branch of

THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



*The Globe at Chagford - A new Good Beer
Guide entry for 2014*



**South Devon
CAMRA**

*Supporting Real Ale
in the South West*



Welcome to *NEWS AND BREWS*

44th EDITION

Winter 2013

We are heading up to the dark winter months, and I'm looking forward to several good winter beer festivals. In January, Exeter CAMRA are holding their Winter Ale Festival at Exeter football ground. This is always a good occasion and something to enjoy in the quiet period after Christmas.

If you're quick you might get to the Celtic Festival put on by St Austell brewery in their brew house on 24th November, a huge affair with 130 ales (35 new or limited edition) from Scotland, Ireland, Wales and Brittany and other Celtic (and some non-Celtic) regions of Europe. At that festival, I'm looking forward to trying for the first time a mild ale I helped to brew at St Austell in October. This was made primarily for the Queen's Arm's 1st Beer Festival, but will be available at the Celtic festival too. It has been offered already in a couple of pubs in Peterborough, and we have heard it is rather nice.

See What's On on page 18 for more details of all these festivals.

Cheers, Tina Hemmings



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Pub News

The ale at the Maltsters Arms in Tuckenhay is looking good. The pub has been bought by David Welsh who used to own The Ringwood Brewery.

The Watermans Arms in Totnes has various beers being served on gravity.

The George and Dragon in Dartmouth is currently being refurbished.

The Toby Jug in Bickington has fallen into such disrepair that it will have to come down. So Heavitree achieved their original aim to demolish it, they have only had to wait a bit longer.

The Bridford Inn on the Teign Valley at Bridford has been receiving some praise from CAMRA members on the quality of its beers.

Good ale has been reported at The Millbrook at South Pool.

The Polsham Alms in Paignton is being changed into flats.

The Teign House Inn at Cristow is under new ownership

The Kings Arms in Kingsbridge closed in November having been up for sale since June.

Teignmouth report.

The Blue Anchor changed hands in early June with the previous licensees (Bev and Paul) having been there for 24 years. The new owners (Nick and Kim) have made a few cosmetic changes but have not altered the general ambience and specialise in West Country beers and always have a rotational cider which recently included Ashridge from Ashburton. On a recent visit a selection of 6 beers included Glastonbury Ales and Old Familiar (new from O'Hanlons). A successful beer festival was held in late September with some excellent beer from Bristol Beer Factory and the dangerous O'Hanlon's Secret Squirrel (12%) Further down Teign Street Molloy's is selling Platform 5's Wheel Tapper in good condition. The King's Arms is very friendly and worth a visit for the excellent Jail Ale (plus Doombar) and the nearby Dicey O'Reillys serves good quality Hunter's Devon Dreamer which was somewhat of a surprise for a sports bar with a young person emphasis. The Brass Monkey arguably sells the best beer in town with the HSD generally exemplary, although on our midweek outing the beer was below par, but two subsequent visits showed this to be a blip.

Brewery News

Black Tor Brewery will be selling their beers directly to the public in Exeter at the Christmas market this winter.

In the summer Bays Brewery brewed a limited edition ale, Great Gorilla Ale, to support gorilla conservation in Nigeria. This initiative through collaboration with Paignton Zoo raised over £1000. The brewery has won Gold Star status in this year's Great Taste Awards which is organised by the Guild of Fine Food and has been described as the Oscars of the food world. In another taste-off Gold and Devon Dumpling once again achieved bronze awards at this year's Taste of the West Awards.

Red Rock Brewery have 3 Christmas ales on sale, Christmas Cheer 5.2% (with hints of cinnamon nutmeg & cloves) Stocking filler 4.5% and Santas Surprise 5.8%



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Good Beer Guide Listed

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Dartmoor Brewery Re-Brand

Dartmoor Brewery has unveiled a new brand identity as part of an on-going expansion programme, which aims to reinforce Dartmoor Brewery as the definitive, authentic brewery on the moor. A simplified recognisable logo featuring the iconic Staple Tor has been introduced across Dartmoor Brewery's full range to bring a consistency to the branding and reflect each beer's unique flavour and identity. New-look pump clips, glassware and posters will be rolled out through pubs and restaurants across the region from mid-October.



Sales Director Tim McCord said that the secret to the brewery's success so far lies in their focus on 3 high quality ales and their unique position on Dartmoor. He believes the new branding will reinforce these messages, strengthening our connection to the moor. He concluded 'Simply, it's the same great beer but with an exciting new look'.

Dartmoor Brewery began in 1994 at the Prince of Wales pub, Princetown and produces only cask conditioned real ale. It now operates from a purpose built brewery which is the highest brewery in England and every year produces more than 2.5 million pints of real ale, using traditional brewing techniques and local ingredients. Dartmoor Brewery is now Devon's second largest brewery.

Wednesday Wanderers

As is usual when our outings encompass our Torbay/ Newton Abbot heartland, numbers for the October trip were well up-7 or 8 compared with September, when Chairman Southwell and I met at Exeter Bus Station for a limited assault on the Teign Valley that saw us visit the worthy Teign House Inn, but get no farther thanks to an, at best, erratic bus service (fortunately the beer at the Teign House was well worth the visit). Anyway, the October vintage left Newton Abbot by bus, bound for Kingsteignton and the Old Rydon Inn in Rydon Road, a pub with a very small bar (almost swing-a-cat size) and a large attached conservatory used for dining, as well as a lawned garden with picnic tables. On offer were good Jail Ale, along with Black Sheep Bitter and a house beer brewed by Hunters.

Disembarking from our next bus, we walked across Shaldon Bridge to Shaldon, where we headed straight for the Clifford Arms in Fore St., always a good bet when in the village. Here we sampled Oarsome (now from the new Two Beach brewery) and Jail Ale and I.P.A from the Dartmoor range; all on good form and, it being a nice sunny day, taken out into the rear patio/beer garden.

Just across the road and round the corner in Dagmar Street is Shaldon Conservative Club, our next port of call. The club welcomes CAMRA members, or merely turn up brandishing a copy of The Good Beer Guide (the club features this year). We were rewarded with possibly the best beer of the day, Golden Age from Celt Experience, along with the regular Reel Ale from Teignworthy.

Back over the river in Teignmouth, stop number 4 was the back-street Brass Monkey, a St Austell pub whose regular offerings are Tribute and the stronger H.S.D. Unfortunately for us, on this occasion they were adrift of their usual high standard, so it was off to our final destination, the Blue Anchor (Teign St.) highly regarded for the range and quality of its ales. Today these 6 ranged from the Cornish (Betty Stogs) to the local (Reel Ale) to the much farther afield (Abbot and Fullers Red Fox), and made a pleasant end to a day enjoyed by all who came along.

Peter O'Nions

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Pressure still on for Beer Duty Freeze

After a year-long campaign in 2012 CAMRA achieved a huge campaigning win at this year's Budget as the Chancellor axed the beer duty escalator and announced a 1p cut in beer duty, the first time beer duty has been cut since 1959.

This campaign was won thanks to an incredible effort by CAMRA volunteers, who amongst other things helped to obtain 109,000 signatures on an e-petition to force a debate in Parliament, and attended CAMRA's first mass lobby of Parliament. Increases in tax on beer and the VAT rise are fuelling a shift in beer consumption away from pubs. Almost half of all beer is now sold in off licences and supermarket chains as beer drinkers seek to avoid tax rises. In only six years there has been a 30% collapse in the volume of beer sold in pubs as more than 7,000 pubs have closed forever.

Beer supports over 1 million occupations; generates over £21 billion in taxes and is vital to the survival of pubs. Despite this, unfair beer duty hikes are forcing the beer sector to shrink.

Winning the campaign to scrap the beer duty escalator and earning a cut in beer duty was a fantastic step forward in this campaign but now CAMRA must continue to ensure this work is not undone at future Budgets. Currently the tax on a £3.00 pint is £1.04, a massive 35%.

Good Beer Guide 2014 - New Entries

The process of choosing entries for the Good Beer Guide (GBG) goes on throughout the year and competition for the 29 places allocated to South Devon CAMRA is fierce. This is the only guide in which the entrants are recommended by CAMRA members who submit score sheets based wholly on the quality of the beer. Pubs with the best scores make it into the GBG; a listing is a valuable free advert as the book has a very large circulation. This year there are four new entries.



For the first time in many years a club has been selected. Shaldon Conservative Club is a small club, but the steward, Kevin Wilson, has many years' experience of pub work having trained with Bass Taverns in the nineties and was a trouble-shooter for the company. He has been at Shaldon Conservative Club for two years and after installing better racking for the ales was able to add a guest ale to Teignworthy Reel, the house beer. He has a free hand in selecting the guest, but often asks the club members for their ideas and preferences. Previous guest ales have been Celt Experience Gold Age and Wadsworths Blunderbuss. When we called in the guest was a very nice Two Hoots from Holts. Rosie's Pig and Cheddar Valley were the cider selection.

The club held a mini beer festival with 9 ales, during Shaldon Regatta Week in August and he hopes to make this a regular event.

He was delighted that the club got into the GBG, and agreed that it was a good achievement for a small club. He has had quite a few CAMRA visitors already, some on the first day that advance copies of the guide were out.

The Blue Anchor in Teignmouth is another new entry. On our visit there were 7 beers available and 2 ciders. The new landlords took over in June and removed the cask breathers, thus making them eligible for selection for the GBG. They added a new hand-pump and lowered the keg T-bar to make the bar more accessible and friendly. The family has a history as publicans, as Kim Rackley, the landlady, also runs The Ship in Teignmouth as did her mother before her. Of the ales on selection we tried Clearwater Proper Andsome and Dartmoor Dragons Breath, but ales from Fullers, Teignworthy, and Greene King were also on tap. Ciders consisted of Green Valley and Weston's Family Reserve. A recent beer festival was a great success. Unfortunately we were not able to speak to Kim who was busy with paperwork, but her staff members were very informative.



The Globe at Chagford is a lovely cosy establishment, furnished in an eclectic style. The landlords, Mary French and Graham Flight have been in charge for 5 years in which time Graham has been keeping good beer and building community spirit. He is keen on beer on gravity, and two regular Otter beers, Ale and Bitter were being served in this method. The regular Dartmoor IPA, and the guest Dartmoor Legend, which we tried, came through hand-pumps. *...continued*

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Good Beer Guide 2014 - New Entries

Graham's philosophy on guest ales is to keep them coming from Devon, as there are enough excellent breweries within the county. Previous guests have come from Red Rock and Exeter Brewery (Fraid Not was particularly popular.) Old Rosie cider is also a regular on the bar.

There are 4 dart teams and Mary and Graham encourage live music. There is an open mike night the last Wednesday of the month, and a musician jamming session on the first Thursday. The pub boasts a cinema in an upstairs room, and a cinema club meets monthly to watch films democratically chosen by the members. This must be one of the most comfortable viewings in the country, furnished as it is with big squashy leather sofas. Another plus is that Graham brings a huge tray of ice creams up at midway.

The couple were very pleased to be included in the GBG. It is nice that their hard work in the Globe is recognised. See photo on the cover.



The Queens Arms in Brixham has only been open in its present format for 20 months, when Chris Simmonds took over, and has since become a popular community pub. There are usually six ales on hand-pump and these vary from local favourites such as Teignworthy Gun Dog to beers from breweries further afield such as Oakham, J W Lees and Brains. Two pumps are always used for the full Hunters beer range. The pub now has 2 darts teams, a euchre team, and other events include a supper club, meat draw, BBQs and quizzes. Live music at the weekend sees the

pub rocking on a Saturday night and there are also folk evenings. The pub was recently voted the 1st runner-up in The Herald Express Pub of the Year competition. When I spoke to Chris he was finalising his plans for The Queen's Arms 1st Beer Festival which is taking place from December 6th to 9th with 20 plus ales and live music throughout. He was not too busy to thank everyone who had submitted beer scores and said he was delighted that The Queen's Arms and Brixham had been recognised by their entry in the Good Beer Guide.

Brimblecombe's Cider

One Saturday in early November- cider making time of the year - a group of S. Devon CAMRA members set out by minibus for the Teign Valley, the home of Brimblecombes Cider near Dunsford. Entering the Cider Barn at ground-floor level, a pervading aroma of apples was immediately evident, and we were struck by the history of the place - wooden beams; old machinery; rusting scythes and two-man saws (presumably unused for ages). It was not surprising to learn that cider has been made on the site for about 500 years. Our resident Botanist pointed out the walls of the barn, covered with *Torula*, a fungus that he informed us lives only on alcohol produced by evaporation through all the wooden barrels in the vicinity and which only occurs after literally hundreds of years exposure.

We were soon sent up to the orchard behind the barn to collect sackfuls of fallen apples from beneath the trees- we subsequently learned that more than 50 varieties of apple are used- which we took back to a mezzanine floor above the Pound Room- the ground floor where the cider is made. We went back downstairs, to be put to work as the cider-making began in earnest. Back upstairs, the apples were loaded into a machine called a Scratter which pounds them into a pulp, which comes down a chute to the floor below. Even the Grumpy Old Man appeared to be happy in his role of Scratter Scraper, using a long-handled paddle to help the pulp on its way. At the bottom of the chute, the pulp was shovelled onto the pressing area- measuring about 5 feet by 4 - with the press itself poised some 6 or 7 feet above. After reaching a height of about 6 or 8



inches, the whole area was covered with a layer of straw, and more of these layers then built up until the Cheese as it is called was not far short of the press above. Meanwhile, in the room below the pressing area, apple juice was already trickling down the chute from the pressing area and into a massive wooden half-vat. Once the press was applied to the cheese, this trickle became a torrent. An average pressing will produce about 220 gallons - more is a bonus - and this is transferred to fermenting vessels, to emerge as cider after about 5 or 6 months. We, of course, couldn't wait that long, so we repaired for a welcome glass of cider.

Peter O'Nions

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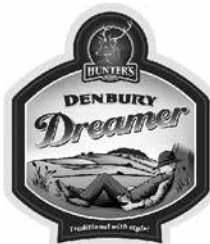


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Beery Quotes

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Abraham Lincoln

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Frank Zappa

I work until beer o'clock.

Stephen King

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Beery Quotes

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Let a man walk ten miles steadily on a hot summers day along a dusty English
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Back to the Future?

On a recent visit to Kent, I arranged to meet family members in the Firkin Ale House in Folkestone. We had the address and duly found it. It proved to be a shop in the middle of a row of shops – in fact it used to be a hairdressers shop. There was a single small room, no bar and seating for 16 people. The only other furnishings were a hogshead barrel in the middle, for people to stand their ale on. A large window in the back wall showed a view into the cellar where 6 beers were on the still. The owner stood by the corridor leading to the cellar and would bring your order which he served straight out the barrel. This was my first experience of a micro-pub.



The Firkin Ale House

Twenty five people would have been a bit of a crush in there, so all those that came in were included in the room's conversation, making for a friendly atmosphere. No food, no music, no children, only a range of 3 real ales from local small breweries (most of which were unknown to me), and 4-5 real ciders. In other words, returning pubs to how things used to be, sociable and basic.

We started a conversation about micro-pubs, and learned that the advantages to the landlord were low rates, low business rates, lower rents and generally lower overheads (lighting, heating, staff etc.). The discussion included locations of other micro-pubs in Kent and we were given details of one in Margate where we were staying. A small net store on the quay is now called The Harbour Arms, and if anything this one is even smaller but still had 4 real ales and 9 local Kentish ciders. Too small to have a toilet, the loos are provided by public facilities next door, and the décor is basically the fishing equipment left behind by the previous tenant, who still drinks there.



The Harbour Arms



This trend towards micro-pubs appears to be gathering pace, and although the larger number seem to be in Kent, they are springing up all over the UK. The website <http://micropubassociation.co.uk> gives details of about 30 country-wide. On my next trip to Kent I must detour to Broadstairs to visit The Four Candles, which logic suggests is a converted hardware store.

George Hemmings

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What's On

Branch Meetings and Social Events

Date	Time	Purpose	Location
12 November	20:00	Branch Meeting	Paignton Conservative Club
16 November	10:47	train from N Abbot to Crewkerne– Branch outing returning via Axminster	
21 November	11:10	(173 bus, Exeter bus station) Midweek outing to Sandy Park, Chagford and Moretonhamstead.	
14 December	12:00	Christmas Social	Teign Cellars Newton Abbot.
14 January 2014	20:00	Branch Meeting	Crown and Sceptre St Marychurch.
30 January 2014		Challenge Quiz at Exeter Inn, Ashburton (evening event, time TBA)	

Beer Festivals

- 6-8 December -1st Queens Arms Charity Winter Festival. 20 plus ales, live entertainment and winter BBQ.
- 10-11 January 2014 - Exeter Winter Ales Festival at Exeter City Football Ground.
- 24-26 April 2014 - Tucker's Maltings SIBA Beer Festival, Newton Abbot.
- 1-5 May 2014 - George Inn Beer Festival , Blackawton on Worm Charming weekend with many extra attractions.

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Black Country Tour

Every year I try to meet my previous CAMRA Branch (Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe) on their Black Country Coach Trip at the end of June, and this year I made it.

Twenty – six of us set off in a 50-seater coach setting off from Buckinghamshire on the 23rd Annual Day Trip. Our first stop, after a two-mile detour off the M42 was the Coach & Horses at Weatheroak. On the corner of Icknield Street and Weatheroak Hill, this is the home of the Weatheroak Hill Brewery. I tried a pint of their Bitter (WHB) 4.2% ABV and also the Weatheroak Hill at 3.8% ABV, both at £ 2.80. A traditional meal of faggot and chips was consumed to sustain me until I could eat again. Our next stop-off was in Halesowen at the Wagon & Horses where there were their usual 14 hand-pumps. I first tried the Byatts Country Bitter 3.8% ABV (£ 2.80) and then the Brew Company Treacle Stout 5% ABV (£ 3.00). I had a half of the Bat Brew Anarchist Party Bitter at 7.2% ABV (£ 3.70 a pint).

Next call was at the Waterfall in Blackheath. Here they provided us with bread and chips and Holdens and Batham's Beers. Then it was on to Brierley Hill to visit The Vine (Bull & Bladder). The only beers were their own brews - Batham's Mild and Batham's Best Bitter. A real treat as both beers went down extremely well and they also sell their own pork pies and scratchings. Off next to the famous Olde Swan (Ma Pardoes) at Netherton. This is home to the Olde Swan Brewery; Old Swan Original, Dark Swan, Entire and Bumblehole Bitter went down well here. This was followed by Upper Gornal and the Britannia on Kent Street. Batham's Mild and Best Bitter are the choices here and once again were superb. We then walked to the Jolly Crispin on Clarence Street where there were 8 pumps to choose from. Last October, a brewery called Fownes opened at the pub, returning brewing to the pub after 150 years. We were shown round the brewery and sampled some of their beers.

Our last visit was to the Beacon Hotel in Sedgley, the home of Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild at 6% ABV. This pub is a real treat with beers poured into handled glasses. The bar area is unique - a central servery with hatches. Other favourites here were Sarah Hughes Pale Amber and their Sedgley Surprise, which are brewed in their Victorian tower brewery. Alas it is now 9.15pm and we must be away and back in the coach to Buckinghamshire. This ends the beer consumption for the day and we all agree that it has again been a wonderful day enjoying a small sample of what the Black Country has to offer in pubs and good quality beer.

Colin Staines



The Vine (Bull & Bladder), Dudley



Beacon Hotel, Sedgley, Dudley

A Brewing Day Out

Due to a happy set of circumstances, we were invited to St Austell Brewery in October to help Chris Simmonds brew a beer for his festival at The Queen's Arms in Brixham. The name had already been chosen by a team of customers who held a brainstorm and came up with The Queen's'Mild. So the recipe to fit was formulated. Actually an old friend, James Vincent, who is a brewer at St Austell Brewery, formulated the recipe once he knew what was wanted. So the recipe included 8 malts in all, including dark malt, chocolate malt, smoked malt, dark crystal, and torried wheat to make a dark ruby ale with a creamy white head of about 4.2% abv. The hops were fuggles.

We travelled down to Cornwall early, getting there slightly after 7a.m. and set to make the mash straight away. The malts were added to hot liquor (brewery term for hot water) in the mash tun and during the mashing we had a tour of the brewery and lunch. The brew was drained into the copper, and hops were added during the second boil. A late addition of more hops just before the brew was cooled and passed to a fermentation tank were included to give some lasting hop characteristics. Yeast was pitched once the temperature was correct, and our task was complete. Except we had made a big mess of all the equipment and a mammoth cleaning mission ensued.

We had all tasted the brew and even before the fermentation, the wort tasted good, so we left that afternoon with great hopes for a flavoursome ale. James gave us progress reports, and once fermented, the brewery put a small barrel in their tasting room, so we were told of its characteristics. As hoped the colour and creamy white head were there, and the flavours are reported to be of chocolate and roasted malts, a full bodied ale with a clean finish. Can't wait to try it! *Tina Hemmings*



3 Men and a Baby (Beer)

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01/06

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Grumpy Old Man examines a Growing and Pernicious Evil.

Rumours have been abroad for some time now that a pervasive and insidious evil is gathering pace in our pubs. What could this be, you rightly ask? Read carefully gentle readers as I unveil what is best kept secret from more delicate souls as I lift up the curtain to reveal some truly awful events in graphic detail. The very themes that so many of you have complained about, and implored me to give them the Grumpy Old Man treatment, now follow in all their lurid detail, but beware they are not for the faint hearted. I refer, of course, to CHILDREN IN PUBS. Those of you with a sensitive disposition should read no further.

I decided to do a News of the World style expose, but not, on this occasion, to reveal the lurid goings on of randy vicars or transvestite judges as more pressing behaviour was under investigation. I went equipped with notepad and camera and a range of suitable disguises in order to blend in and get close up to the action, but where were these evils to be found? I did not need to look for long, as a pub with a phalanx of pushchairs right inside the front door was a dead giveaway. Entering I bought a pint and worked my way into range. Straight away I realised that I was in danger of blowing my cover as I had neither a soft drink nor a bowl of cheesy chips and stood out like the proverbial sore thumb. The children, of various ages from toddlers to teenagers, were agitated and constantly on the move with one poking a chip in another child's face whilst others were walking around with the food, dropping it on to the floor, or the table, and picking it up again to eat it. Another had to be restrained from climbing up on to the table. The parents were talking amongst themselves, but were constantly being interrupted by the younger children with requests for this or that and were generally told to go away. There appeared to be a birthday party going on for a four year old. Yes that is correct as the numerous balloons testified, but who in their right mind would hold a party for a four year old in a pub? They looked as they had recently decamped en masse from an adjoining burger house which was surely a more suitable venue for a child's party. Suddenly there was a loud bang followed by a blood curdling scream. What heinous crime was this? One of the balloons had burst and all mayhem had broken loose. The scream was from a terrified youngster alarmed by the loud bang and who promptly started crying quickly stopped by having a dummy thrust in her mouth. Meanwhile, some of the boys attempted to burst further balloons and needed some restraint. A more chaotic scene could not be imagined with feeding time at the zoo looking tame by comparison. I had seen enough and moved on.

Retreating back twenty yards from the crèche enclave I experienced a short lived interlude of sanity and tranquillity apart from a baby crying in the distance. However it did not take long before normal chaos was resumed. Close by, two boys on children's scooters were chasing each other around the tables without any apparent parental restraint. A small girl was also on the move with what appeared to be rollers on the bottom of her trainers emitting fluorescent flashes. I was forced to hold on tightly to my beer as an enforced spillage was imminent. This was ridiculous and I seriously considered having to blow my cover and complain about this nonsense. However, somebody must have beaten me to it as a manager appeared to remonstrate with the father.continued....

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Grumpycontinued

Manager – “Could you please ask your children to be seated and stop them running around as they are likely to upset other people?”

Father – “What do you expect from 6 year olds?”

What do I expect? I expect 6 year olds who are likely to behave in such a manner not to be taken to the pub in the first place and once there to be kept under strict parental control. That’s what I expect, as indeed would the vast majority of people visiting pubs, including sensible and considerate parents.

Notice that there was no apology and certainly no embarrassment from the father as this state of affairs seemed perfectly normal to him. Unfortunately, the supine manager could only repeat his request and retire, possibly fearing an escalating confrontation.

Watching all of this was a couple with a languid Staffordshire bull terrier who looked as if he had seen it all before. Suddenly a speech bubble appeared at the side of his mouth.

“ If I ran around a pub like that I would be thrown out. If my owner threw my ball to chase then they would be thrown out. How come that there’s one rule for children and another for dogs? Woof”

He had a point. Recognising that I might be sympathetic to his cause he continued. “ If I can’t bring my ball in how come that boy can bring in his scooter? It is ridiculous. Woof” . I was now warming to his logic and more was to come.

“ I am not allowed in to many pubs because they serve food and they say that I am unhygienic. Have you seen the disgusting state of the personal hygiene of many of the customers and how few of them wash their hands after using the toilets? And they say that I am unhygienic! What about those kids eating food off the floor” ? He was now in full flow.

“ They say that we slobber and look revolting, but I have never slobbered in my whole life and am deeply offended by the comment. Mind you, Roxy the Boxer slobbers, but his owner will not let him go to the pub as a result. My owners recognise that I am expected to behave myself and would not let me near a pub otherwise. If only more parents were like my owners. Woof” . Having said his piece his eyes closed and he appeared to be asleep, but not for long as he came back for a final salvo.

“ In any case, if my owners were asked to correct my behaviour would they be so stupid as to suggest that’s how dogs behave. I think not. Woof. Woof” ?

He had made the case for well-behaved dogs to be allowed into pubs, but the arguments also apply to well-behaved children. I recently did a Whatpub survey and asked the landlord whether dogs and children were allowed into his pub. He replied “ only if they are both kept on leashes” ! The Staffordshire bull terrier would surely have agreed.

Bob Southwell, aka the Grumpy old Man with thanks to Ned the Staffordshire bull terrier.

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