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 CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE	<h1>The Giant Dongle</h1>
	<h1>Christmas 2011 Issue</h1>



West Dorset CAMRA Membership Surges

Over the last 12 months membership of the West Dorset Branch of CAMRA has increased from 338 to 448 – its highest level in CAMRA’s 40 Year history. This is as a result of unprecedented numbers signing up at both Dorchester Beer Festival back in February and Weymouth Octoberfest in October, as well as a steady stream of other new members joining throughout the year.

Membership Secretary Andy Patterson said: “Drinkers are concerned about the Beer they drink and the Pubs they drink in, and CAMRA membership is now better value than ever before - for £20 as an individual member, you receive a monthly Newspaper, reduced price admission at CAMRA Beer Festivals and £20 worth of Wetherspoons vouchers.” Nationally CAMRA Membership stands at over 130,000, again its highest level ever. To join CAMRA please see the form inside the back cover of this newsletter or go to www.camra.org.uk/joinus.

REMEMBER

DORCHESTER BEER FESTIVAL

ALWAYS SELLS OUT - GET YOUR TICKET EARLY

The 2012 festival will be held on February 3 & 4 in the Corn Exchange
 Tickets will be available from Friday, 16 December from the Blue Raddle and Tourist Information in Dorchester and from the Boot in Weymouth.
 For more information go to www.camrawdorset.org.uk

Giant Dongle Print Run Rises to 1500

With the arrival of Pub Link (of which more inside) it has become possible for the Giant Dongle to reach even more pubs across West Dorset. So we have increased the print run by 20%. The additional cost has been funded by the support of our advertisers. To maintain the balance between written content and adverts the page count has been increased to 20. Of course many of our members read the Giant Dongle online to save on printing and postage costs, so our true circulation is even higher than the number printed.

Five in a Row for Fab Five

Five West Dorset pubs have achieved the accolade of being selected for inclusion in **the Good Beer Guide** continuously for five years from 2008 to 2012. These are: the **Blue Raddle** in Dorchester, the **Digby Tap** in Sherborne, the **Royal Portland Arms** on Portland, the **Volunteer** in Lyme Regis and the **Weatherbury** in Weymouth.

Five more pubs have been selected for the 2012 Guide for the first time in the same five year period. These are Portland's **Corner House**, the **Globe** in Weymouth, Thornford's **Kings Arms**, the **Royal Oak** in Chetnole and the **Royal Oak** in Dorchester. This last is the first Wetherspoons pub selected by West Dorset branch. The **Swan** in Weymouth was also included in the reserve list – a change in branch sentiment towards the giant pub co perhaps.

Weymouth's **Boot** has regained its place, having been omitted in 2011 following a change of landlord. The **Crown** in Bridport has also returned to the Guide after having been left out in 2011.

Given that the branch's allocation of space in the Good Beer Guide has remained 30 pubs, the new arrivals inevitably mean that other pubs have been excluded. This does not necessarily mean that beer quality in these pubs has declined. Rather it is an indication of the competition for the limited number of places available – "See Where Next for the Good Beer Guide" later in this newsletter.

Adrian Patterson's description of how we choose our entries in the Guide indicates how all CAMRA members can contribute to this process and perhaps secure the inclusion of their own favourite pubs.

Weymouth Octoberfest 2011

Holding the Weymouth October Beer Festival at the Pavilion's Ocean Room was a runaway success for the annual two-day event. In four sessions over two days, 1300 drinkers consumed around 4200 pints of real ale and cider, as compared to 1100 tickets and 3400 pints at Brewers Quay last year. As in previous years, all the tickets were sold out with increased numbers attending.

The Pavilion Ocean Room has been booked for next year, for Friday and Saturday 12 and 13 October. West Dorset CAMRA Chairman Dave Harris thinks another 50 tickets per session could be offered for sale next year, lifting the total attendance to 1500. "There was plenty of space in the Ocean Room, one reason this year's festival was so successful." he said, "We think by some rearrangement, more chairs and tables could be made available to drinkers. We're grateful to our core of about 40 volunteers, who help the Committee run this event so well. We now run three festivals: October in Weymouth, July at Wykefest in conjunction with Value House aid of Julia's House, and, with Round Table, the Dorchester festival at the Corn Exchange on 3 and 4 February 2012. There is no doubt these beer festivals are important campaigning tools, involving more people in drinking Real Ale and promoting it."

CAMRA Bar Manager Rich Gabe commented "We're considering featuring the real ales of the South and South East next October. Perhaps increasing the range to 75 casks - this year we had 68. There will also be a dozen ciders and perries. We can feature many of the new breweries which have sprung-up from Dorset all the way east to Kent."

A Campaign of Two Halves

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I enclose a cheque for _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Applications will be processed within 21 days

12/10

Campaigning for Pub Goers & Beer Drinkers

Enjoying Real Ale & Pubs

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Branch diary

Business meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at locations around the branch area. All members are welcome to any of these meetings.

December	Wed 14th	8 pm	Weymouth – Red Lion, Old Rooms + Others
2012			
January	Wed 11th	8 pm	Dorchester – Tom Browns (Good Beer Guide Nominations and Pub of the Year)
February	Wed 8th	8 pm	Cattistock – Fox & Hounds (Good Beer Guide Final Selection)

Branch contacts

Main contact: Tony Egerton tel. 01305 789906; Email tony@camrawdorset.org.uk

Social Events and Trips - contact: Rich Gabe tel. 01305, email rich@camrawdorset.org.uk

Contact details for other branch officials can be obtained from Tony or direct from www.camrawdorset.org.uk

Editor's contact details: Kevin Launder, 33 Dowman Place, Weymouth DT4 9XR; Email gdeditor@camrawdorset.org.uk; tel 01305784303

Editor's note: Opinions expressed in the Giant Dongle are those of its contributors and do not purport to be or necessarily conform to official CAMRA policy

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St Austell Brewery has been brewing beer and real ale in Cornwall since 1851 and runs 174 of the most popular pubs in the South West.

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**St Austell Brewery, 63 Trevarthian Rd, ST AUSTELL, Cornwall PL25 4BY
Telephone: 0845 241 1122**

Weymouth Octoberfest 2011 – A Volunteer’s View

I was on the bus heading to our new festival venue when I saw the Dorset Echo A-board on the pavement “Calls for demolition of costly Pavilion” it read. “Just what we need!” I thought.

The loss of quirky but cramped Brewers’ Quay had triggered a move to Weymouth Pavilion’s Ocean Room. After several successful years in familiar surroundings, renting the Ocean Room was a step outside our comfort zone in a lot of ways. Chairman Dave had put in a lot of work with the powers that be at the Pavilion to agree arrangements that met our needs while complying with their requirements. These last were more demanding than we had previously experienced, but, of course, the Pavilion management are custodians of a public asset (not a liability as some would have it).

By the time I arrived at the venue the Echo’s panic mongering had given way to a more urgent consideration – “Where are the Glasses”. My instruction was to report 30 minutes before opening, which I did. However, when I got there it seemed everybody else had been there for hours and initially I felt a bit of a spare part. Everything had been set up without me.

My reticence was cured as soon as I solved the biggest dilemma of the day – “What beer shall I try first? (This of course before 11am on a Friday morning). The answer was “Rough Tor” from Penpont brewery in Cornwall, chosen only because I had climbed Rough Tor in my youth. This turned out to be an excellent choice – 4.7% alcohol and 100% flavour.



CAMRA 2011 Not a Beard or a Sandal in Sight



Men (and Woman) in Hats

Now I was set to “meet and greet” our clientele, well, hand them their glasses actually. The doors opened promptly at 11am and in they came. Friday morning is always a quiet session, providing an opportunity to tweak arrangements before we get busier in the evening, particularly necessary this year as we were operating on unfamiliar territory. By 3pm when “last orders” was called we had admitted close to our target of 150 people, who had started to make inroads to our supply. Following a brief shut down, which accommodated a trip to the Fish and Chip Shop, it was stand by for the evening opening. With all 400 tickets sold (including a dozen or so returns) and music from the talented Dolmen, we were in for a much busier and louder session. In these conditions the benefit of a longer bar with more room behind it became very obvious. Customers did not have to struggle to reach the bar and be heard and staff could operate more calmly and efficiently than at Brewers’ quay – a more comfortable atmosphere for all concerned.

(Continued)

the increase in the number of successful Real Ale pubs leads to abbreviated entries in the Good Beer Guide, so be it.

[The article above is an abridged and slightly amended version of one by Andrew Swift in the Summer 2011 issue of “Pints West”, the newsletter of Bristol and District CAMRA under the title “Reasons to be Cheerful”.

To my mind the current brick format looks increasingly dated and unattractive. To be fair, although I have never found a reason to buy a good Beer Guide, I know a number of people who would not leave home without it. I did look at one in Smiths while on holiday in Devon last year, but did not find any inspiration regarding the local area. Nonetheless I found a number of good pubs simply by moving about.

Apps, E books and GPS versions are progress of a sort, but simply replicate the limited information contained in the paper version ignoring many good pubs. Might the answer be a series of more comprehensive regional guides? This would perhaps better serve Real Ale pubs generally, and provide users with more relevant information. The series could even include a smaller national guide containing only each branch’s pub of the year. – Ed.]

**You are cordially invited to join our annual
Weymouth Quayside Pub Crawl**
Meet at the Red Lion at 8pm on Weds 14 December

Super Colliton Club Wins Super Regional Award

The Colliton Club in Dorchester does not appear to face much competition in the West Dorset Club of the year award. Devotees of the British Legion on Portland and Wyke’s Welworthy Club (among others) may beg to differ, but locally no club can match the Colliton’s range of Real Ales. CAMRA’s Wessex Regional competition is a different story. None the less the Colliton has again won this competition this year, and has since gone on to victory in the southern “Super Region”. The Colliton now enters the National competition, facing the giants of Northern club land. “Good Luck guys.” Although the Colliton is a local authority staff club, admission to the club and access to its superb range of beers is available to all card carrying CAMRA members.

A Belated Welcome to Teri

Teri took over Wadworths’ **Plume of Feathers** in Sherborne in August as Tenant Licensee, having previously managed Bournemouth’s **Dean Park**. When I called the Henry’s IPA, 6X, Horizon and the seasonal Strong in the Arm were all in very good condition.

Lugger’s new Landlord joins CAMRA

Ralph joined CAMRA when we held our September branch meeting at the Lugger. An experienced hotelier, he professed himself new to Real Ale. He certainly seemed to enjoy it on the night.

Unlucky for Some

The 13th Poole Beer Festival sold out 3 of its 4 sessions more than a month before the event. Reportedly many Ale lovers missed out on the popular festival. [Fortunately I was not one of them – Ed.]

150 Guest Ales at Royal Standard

(Not all at one time!)

The Upwey pub has chalked up 150 different Guest Ales since reopening 20 months ago

Where next for the Good Beer Guide?

The accelerating decline in the number of pubs is well documented. But, while it is impossible to overemphasise the threats to our pubs, there is, alongside the doom and gloom, some cause for celebration.

The number of pubs may be dwindling, but the number of top quality Real Ale pubs is increasing. This, however, creates another problem – given that the number of entries in the Good Beer Guide has remained constant over recent years, which pubs do local branches nominate for entry? While it is obvious that they will aim to select the best, it is increasingly the case that, as the number and standard of Real Ale pubs has increased, some pubs that a few years ago would have been almost guaranteed a place in the Guide are left out.

Pubs that offer a choice of only one or two Real Ales because of low turnover, or pubs whose range is limited by breweries or pubcos will increasingly fail to be included, not because their standards have declined, but because the competition has intensified.

Of course, the increase in the number of good Real Ale pubs is to be welcomed, but it is a pity that many excellent Real Ale pubs are falling off the radar.

The lamentable decision of the editors of the Good Pub Guide (a commercial non-CAMRA publication) to charge pubs for inclusion means that the Good Beer Guide (CAMRA's publication) is now the only guide that lists pubs solely because they are good enough to warrant inclusion. [It's also frustrating that sloppier elements of the media confused the two and attributed the "pay for inclusion" decision to CAMRA. – Ed].

It has been suggested that it might be better to scale back Good Beer Guide entries from 50-80 words to the sort of laconic entry, often no more than half a dozen words, which once characterised the Guide. Given the current size of the guide, there is no scope for expansion and a slimmed down, lighter version would be welcomed by many.

The problem is that, while the Good Beer Guide remains a reliable guide to many of the very best Real Ale pubs, it omits the "runners up" – pubs considered for inclusion on merit by local branches, which ultimately had to be excluded simply because of lack of space.

It can be argued that the Good Beer Guide is failing to respond to or to reflect the growth in the number of good Real Ale pubs. This inevitably means that Real Ale drinkers may miss out on good pubs. It also means that the contribution of many landlords to the ongoing Real Ale revival is not being adequately recognised or rewarded. Publicans who support CAMRA's aims not only deserve but need CAMRA's support. If they fail to attract Real Ale drinkers in sufficient numbers, they may be forced to find other ways to keep their business profitable or to survive at all.

The traditional pub is not the only viable business model for licensed premises. The gastro pub, the vodka shot pub, the music bar, the sports pub, the family pub – all feature more prominently in the trade press than the old fashioned local. In fact many people in the industry claim that the traditional pub has no long term future.

Landlords selling well kept Real Ales in friendly community oriented pubs deserve all the support and publicity we can give them – both for their benefit and that of Real Ale drinkers. If



Londis Westham Road, Weymouth is the home for any bottled beer enthusiast.

Over the past 2 years we have been successfully sourcing local, national and international bottled beers.

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We offer all CAMRA members a 10% discount on all bottled beers on production of a valid CAMRA membership card.

The Giant Dongle - Issue 7– Christmas 2011

Weymouth Octoberfest 2011 – A Volunteer’s View (Continued)

On Saturday morning I suffered until the end of England's defeat by France before taking my slightly delicate stomach back to the Pavilion, deciding on the way to keep it simple today and nothing above 4.5%. This session would be more pressured with a queue forming well before opening time headed by East Dorset CAMRA en masse, probably looking for tips on running a proper beer festival in anticipation of their own gig traditionally held at the end of October.

Come 3pm and I had done (and drunk) my share, including setting up a family area in 3 minutes flat. I wimped out of the evening session and music from Ska band Boy Le Monti. According to their website I'll get another chance to see them in Weymouth at the Queens Hotel on New Year's Eve.

We were fortunate that all the beers and ciders/perrys in the programme arrived and all but one were drinkable –not always the case at festivals. Those I tried seemed particularly good, as they should be at a beer festival, where all the barrels are tapped at the same time just a couple of days beforehand and are served over a short period under the supervision of a skilled bar manager.

The beers this year were billed as “West Country and Wessex Ales” in succession to our Yorks and Derby theme in 2010. With a selection of 68 beers in a range of styles drinkers were certainly spoilt for choice. As a Cornish exile I gravitated towards beers from the Duchy. In addition to the afore mentioned Rough Tor, these included Potion No 9 from the Star Inn, Crowlas and Middle from the Blue Anchor, Helston; as well as beers from Skinners, Keltek, and Tintagel. All these were trumped by St Austell, who provided their own bar and staff to serve a range of 6 beers donated free to the festival, including my hoppy favourite Proper Job and Proper black - a new black IPA. This last was a revelation.

An advantage of volunteering at the festival is the opportunity to have “three fingers” of a beer rather than buy a half pint. While this enables you to try more beers, it can result in a bit of a mix in the system. To my mind three fingers was more than enough for Wessex brewery's Russian Stoa. At 9% it was just too strong for festival consumption. I would have preferred a bottle at home on a winter evening. Apparently it will not be made in future due to recently announced duty increases for very strong beers, which is a pity. I did feel happier with slightly larger measures of several other beers, including Tolly Pot Porter from Cheddar Ales, which seemed to have the edge over DBC's Portland Bill Porter. I also enjoyed Bays Best (Paignton) and Otter Bright.

“So many beers; so little time” – of course there were far more beers available than I could sample. I missed out on the Beer of the Festival Scott Wayland's Sixpenny IPA and both runners up: Yeovil's Posh IPA and Dorset Piddle's Leg Warmer Ginger, as well as a host of old friends such as Bath Spa, Beer Engine's Sleeper Heavy, Dartmoor Jail Ale (a trip to the Duke of Cornwall will soon put that right) and Exmoor beast.

Tribute must be paid to Pavilion Manager Andy (who joined CAMRA during the festival) and all his staff, who smiled through the demands of a beer festival (a bit different to their usual bookings), and everybody else who contributed to the success of our festival, including all the paying customers – especially the young couple who had the faith to travel overnight from Manchester without tickets. Fortunately, we did have a few returns and were able to admit them. We also managed resell almost all of the other returns, so please don't rely on getting your ticket on the door. You will probably be disappointed if you do so.

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and perry on offer - 6 ciders and two perries. The sun was out so we sat outside, well to be truthful it was overcast and the pub was so popular with younger drinkers we couldn't get a seat, must be all that cider!

Next up was **The Well House**, built opposite the cathedral. This was a pub I'd visited several times in the past. The pub's interior could be described as cafe style, old wood panelling, tables and chairs symmetrically aligned and a recently installed vinyl floor. A local selection of East Devon beers of which I chose an average pint of O'Hanlon's Yellow Hammer. Judging by the modern music playing I would say this pub is on the night circuit.

A short walk and we were at **The Fat Pig**; a recently refurbished side street pub. It was very quiet when we entered, but every table was reserved for the evening trade. The beer was excellent, in fact our pint of Exeter Avocet was so good we stayed for another.

It was now starting to get towards tea time and the first chance of the day to get to Newton-St Cyres by train. We left St David's station on the Barnstaple branch and within 10 minutes were at **The Beer Engine**. As you may know the Beer Engine was one of the early brew pubs within the Real Ale renaissance and on this occasion its 4 regular beers were on. By this point of the day I was on half's, but still managed to sample Rail Ale, Piston Bitter, Silver bullet and a Sleeper Heavy, which was enough for me. The pub is very popular and it's a shame that trains don't stop in the day, even in the evening Newton-St Cyres is a request stop.

When we got back to Exeter St David's it was time for the last pub of the day, **The Great Western** sat in the shadow of St David's. There were about 8 ales on offer and to be honest I was beat! At this point I got Andy a beer. He ordered some supper whilst I chickened out, going back to the station for a cup of tea and a chat with a friendly guard as our train was already in and waiting. We both dozed to Sherborne and got a taxi back to Bradford Abbas. Andy's sofa never felt so good!

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Trading Standards

If you have a dispute with a pub, such as it failing to serve full measures or not displaying price lists, beer strengths or business names, and you are unable to resolve this informally on the spot, CAMRA encourages you to contact Trading Standards.

For details of services offered by local Trading Standards Officers in Dorset see www.dorsetforyou.com/tradingstandards. You can email Trading Standards at: tradingstandards@dorsetcc.gov.uk or call 01305 224012 (Fax: 01305 224297). Alternatively you can call Consumer Direct on 08454 040506.

Public Transport in Dorset

For public Transport information for Dorset contact traveline south west: call 0871 200 2233 or go to www.traveline.info.

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The Art of Bottling

Look out for Art Brewery bottled beers in the run up to Christmas. The range is planned to include: Art Nouveau, I Beer, Hip Hop, Blackcurrant Stout, Monkey and Spanked Monkey.

X-rated Exeter Antics

By Rich Gabe

Saturday, September the 24th saw my mate Andy Patterson treat me to a birthday excursion to Exeter and the surrounding beery attractions in return of my organised Bristol crawl for him last January to celebrate his birthday. So off I went to his house in Bradford Abbas, dumped my wheels and tooth brush as I was sleeping there that night. His wife and children were at my house (Sensible woman – Ed.). As the weather was fine we opted to walk about a mile and a half along a public footpath across the fields to Yeovil Junction railway station. The dew was pretty heavy on the grass and as we walked amongst the cows, it suddenly dawned that there was a huge bull staring at us. Andy’s choice of a bright red fleece was perhaps not the best coloured garment to wear!

On arrival at the station I was taken back in time to 1984/5 when I would regularly travel to the West Country. In those halcyon days I would purchase a Devon Explorer ticket, valid from Axminster all the way to Plymouth and Paignton giving unlimited travel within Devon by rail. Today for a mere £10 we did the same. Rail companies still offer great Rover tickets, but don’t like to advertise the fact! Totally bizarre when you think about the cost, as a return from Yeovil to Axminster was £9.70

Our first destination was in fact Topsham on the Exmouth branch. We changed trains at Exeter Central and made the short trip to Topsham, a small town that is still trapped in a by-gone era. The three pubs to visit are all in the 2011 Good Beer Guide as are all the pubs visited that day.

First up and to kick off, a pint of Teignworthy Beachcomber in **The Exeter Inn**, a free house that also had beers from Branscombe and Yeovil on offer. The pub was a real old man’s local with a distinct 1970’s decor about it. Judging by the other Teignworthy beer (Harvester) on offer and the amount of Teignworthy beers sold in the past, it’s a regular outlet for the brewery.

A five minute stroll up the road and we walked into **The Globe**, home of the Topsham and Exminster brewery. I went for a pint of Topsham Brew 12 and wished I hadn’t. It was rank! The beer was changed for a great pint of Otter Amber, yet the former beer was still left on. On talking to the bar maid she informed me that the brewery was owned by 60 shareholders who all volunteer to do various task and she throws away more pints than she sells!! On the plus side I ate a 3 cheese ploughman’s to set me up. The pub is a good example of an Elizabethan coaching inn, with oak panelling and beams from a forgotten age.

The next pub **The Bridge** was only minutes away. The Bridge is the sort of place you want to be on a cold winter’s night, sat in one of the Victorian parlour rooms by a fire. This pub is in the CAMRA National Inventory, has been in the same family for years and is the only pub that the Queen has officially visited. All of the beers are served from a hatch in a tap room, as there is no bar to speak of. A good selection of ales were on offer. We started with a pint of Blue Anchor IPA, then a couple of half’s- Hunters Pheasant Plucker and a really hoppy Coastal Sea King. The last time we were at the Bridge was at the start of Andy Pat’s stag do! I could have stayed all day, but we were on a strict timetable and had to depart. On arrival at the station the train to Exeter was just pulling in, fortunately we left the Bridge when we did, because Andy read his timetable departure time as the Exeter arrival time!

At Exeter Central station we alighted with a brisk walk through the city gardens to the first of three pubs, **The Old Firehouse**. There were only two ales on offer with others racked and spilled. We both had a Hunters Crack shot- delicious. We were amazed at the amount of ciders

West Dorset Pub Guide



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**



Third Edition – Reprinted with updates June 2011

Buy from local outlets RRP £3.99

or

by mail order from:

West Dorset CAMRA, 32 Mellstock Avenue, Dorchester DT1 2 BQ

Price £5 (inc. p&p) or £4 quoting CAMRA membership number

**The West Dorset Pub Guide is an
Ideal Christmas Present
for any Real Ale Drinker**

CAMRA MEMBERS

Please remember to submit your beer scores to assist CAMRA in monitoring the quality of beer in our pubs. It also helps us to choose pubs for inclusion in the Good Beer Guide. If you visit the same pub more than once, please score each time as we need to check for consistency of quality throughout the year.

DBC means Delicious Beer at Crossways



An invitation to visit the new Dorset Brewing Company (DBC) brewery at Crossways by minibus on a September Friday evening was not to be spurned. The bus driven by Tony (the only person in the picture above without a glass in his hand – how did he manage to smile?) started from Portland and made a number of pickups in Weymouth. Despite Tony's abstemiousness on the evening, he still attempted to pick up Hedley at the recently reopened **John Gregory**, when he was waiting at the **Marquis of Granby**. Nonetheless we reached Crossways in good time to meet up with other members, who travelled independently, and be greeted by owner Giles, together with Sophie and Mike from his sales and marketing team.

Having encouraged us all to grab a beer from a selection of three cask ales on offer (of which more below) to be consumed in very posh souvenir glasses, Giles climbed a gantry to preach to the converted. He expressed himself well pleased with new brewery development. They started building in January and for four months were reliant on friends in the industry for brewing facilities. Giles admitted that this had inevitably resulted in inconsistencies with the beers. He believes that, now that DBC is using its own equipment a again and water (liquor to the aficionados) from its own bore hole, the quality and consistency of the beers is back to what it should be. Certainly evidence on the night supported this view.

Giles explained that his new Chinese manufactured equipment gives the brewery greater capacity and flexibility in the brewing process. The new gear includes rakes in the mash tun

(Continued)

How are pubs selected for CAMRA's flagship Good Beer Guide? By Adrian Patterson

This process varies for each local branch of CAMRA. Although the Good Beer Guide is published annually in September, the publisher needs all the information by the beginning of March each year.

So we in West Dorset CAMRA start work on the Guide in January when a shortlist of pubs is compiled. At the following meeting, members vote to fulfil the branch's allocation of 30 pubs serving the best beer, geographically spread across the western half of the county.

We try hard to be as objective as possible, so members are encouraged to base their vote on the results of beer quality scores submitted for each pub by CAMRA members during the previous year.

Nationally, all CAMRA Members are encouraged to assess each pint they drink. The quality of a pint of beer is scored between 0 and 5 (with half marks allowed) using the following guidelines:

- 0 - Undrinkable. No cask ale available or so poor you have to take it back or can't finish it.
- 1 - Poor. Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to 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 - Perfect. Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

In our area, the scores for each pub are collated, taking into account the number of different dates on which scores were submitted and the number of different scorers. This helps us to ensure that the overall results can be interpreted in a meaningful way.

All the pubs short listed for the Good Beer Guide are surveyed by branch members to record the location, opening times, facilities, available beers along with a short description of the pub. The completed surveys are edited within the branch, and then the details of those 30 finally selected are passed to CAMRA's regional director for review before being edited nationally and sent to the printers.

The 2012 Edition of the Good Beer Guide is available to purchase from CAMRA's website (www.camra.org.uk) at a discounted rate for CAMRA members

A New Pub for Sherborne

We hear that a new pub - **The Cutty Sark** - operated by the same management as Docherty's Bar has opened next to the Chip shop in Westbury. This is a very small pub apparently (the smallest in the world?). Maybe it will sell Small Paul's beers. Good luck anyway.

DBC means Delicious Beer at Crossways (Continued)

facilitating the production of “interesting” beers. He now has three thirty barrel fermenters as well as two ten barrel fermenters salvaged from Brewers’ Quay (the only equipment retained from the old brewery). Everything else is new and up to date.

The beers on offer were: **Durdle Door** – the renowned 5% ABV rusty golden ale, made with wheat malt as well as Maris Otter; **Jurassic** – 4.2% pale gold; and **Yachtsman** – a new 4.7% pale gold coloured ale with New Zealand hops. This one has definitely got the “Wow” factor.

These great beers were accompanied by a generous buffet organised by Sophie, which included an excellent selection of pies.

Retail Off sales are available direct from the brewery. You can choose from “bag in a box”, 9 pint tins (the modern equivalent of the “Party 7s” of my youth) and bottles. Our glasses came from presentation packs, which also contained bottles of Silent Knight and Jurassic, which we were kindly given to take away. These packs would make great Christmas presents for Ale enthusiasts.

Giles suggested we all adjourn to the brewery tap - **Tom Browns** in Dorchester. The pub, newly decorated with hops cascading from the beams, was in full Friday Night mode. New manager Joanne is from South Africa I understand, but has subsequently been seen wearing an England Rugby Shirt. On the bar that night were: Tom Browns Bitter, two DBC beers and two guests from Plain Ales.

Our thanks, to Giles, Sophie and Mike, plus Joanne at Tom Browns, for an excellent evening and, of course, to Tony our DBC BLO for setting up the visit, as well us getting us there and back safely.

West Dorset Pub Link Starts

By Andy Patterson

From the beginning of September various CAMRA members from across West Dorset have agreed to look after groups of between 8 and 12 pubs, visit them regularly and to report back on beer quality (as the first step for nomination for the Good Beer Guide) as well as any interesting pub news. The scheme is designed to ensure that all of the 270 pubs in West Dorset CAMRA area get regular visits from CAMRA members as well as giving individual CAMRA members the chance to do something in their locality.

There are 28 areas and already volunteers are in place for 23 of them, whilst volunteers for the remaining 5 areas should hopefully be found over the coming weeks.

Already we are seeing increased feedback on beer quality from all parts of the area, which should make our decisions for the next Good Beer Guide more truly reflect the best beer in West Dorset.

Look out for our new free publication
West Dorset’s Hidden Gems
 A selection of “out of the way” rural pubs to delight you.



Pre-register Now for Members' Weekend & AGM, 30th March - 1st April 2012

CAMRA Members' Weekend, including the National Annual General Meeting, is where our members discuss our future policy and direction. The weekend also offers the opportunity to members to socialise with friends, visit recommended pubs and go on organised trips.

The AGM is open to all CAMRA members and will be held at the Kinross Centre, Torquay from 30th March to 1st April 2012. If you have never been along to a Members' Weekend and AGM why not make this your first one!

Pre-register your interest today. As a pre-registered member you will receive the Members' Weekend Handbook before the event. This will be sent out the week following the cut off for pre-registration.

You can pre-register online by logging into your Self Service Section at www.camra.org.uk/login. Joint members please note you must both log in and register individually. Alternatively complete and send in the pre-registration form below. Closing date for pre-registration is Thursday 1st March 2012.

Members' Conference packs will be available at the venue.

Members attending the weekend are asked to make their own accommodation arrangements. For information on accommodation, please visit www.conferencetorquay.co.uk or call 01803 206 306.

I would like to pre-register (Closing Date for Pre-registration is Thursday 1st March 2012)

Membership Number	Joint Member Number (if applicable)
Full Name First	Surname
Joint member First (with if applicable)	Surname
Email	

Volunteer at the Members' Weekend

There are plenty of volunteering opportunities to get involved in at the Members' Weekend. If you wish to volunteer to work at the Members' Weekend please mark in the boxes below, Tuesday the 27th March to Monday 3rd April 2012, the day and times which you would be available. Your details will be passed to the Members' Weekend Staffing Office and you will be contacted nearer the time.

Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
am	pm	am	pm	am	pm
<input type="checkbox"/>					

Please return the completed form to:
 Members' Weekend 2012 Registration, CAMRA, 130 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4JW.
 Closing date for pre-registration is Thursday 1st March 2012