

C A M R A Best Pub

Readers of our last issue will recall that Trail Magazine readers voted Clachaig 'Best Outdoors Pub in the UK'. Hot on the heels of this award, we were extremely pleased to receive 'Best Pub in the Region' from our local CAMRA branch.

Once more we are extremely pleased that all of the hard work put in by our managers and staff has again been recognised by this consumer led organisation.



Clachaig partners Edward & Guy Daynes along with Customer Services Manager Donny MacRury

WIN

some Rab 'Downpour Storm' Salopettes.

Our fundraising for Glencoe Village Hall has been steadily progressing towards our £1000 target, and we would hope to achieve it by the mid summer. We're now in the process of inviting applications from other worthy local causes which would benefit from some additional funding. Recent projects have included both the refurbishment of St. Mary's Church Hall in the village and Glencoe Mountain Rescue.

So, if you happen to be in the Boots Bar one night and see Jimmy 'The Bush' demanding money with menaces, make sure you have some loose change available.

To help loosen your pockets we've acquired 6 pairs of Rab salopettes and will be offering these as the star prize in our raffles and will of course be offering the usual range of mugs, t-shirts, bottles of beer and other assorted goodies as runner up prizes.

OCTOBERFEST

Friday 18th - Saturday 26th
October inclusive

Once again, our highly successful October beer festival promises to be one of the highlights of the autumn. Expect lots of quality live music, quiz nights, tasting sessions, and more hand-crafted cask-conditioned ales than you can shake a stick at; everything from old favourites like Fraoch Heather Ale and Skye Red Cuillin to some that even we don't know a lot about yet!

Atlas Brewery, our local micro-brewery in Kinlochleven has had great success this year with their Bavarian-style Tempest wheat beer, so expect a bona-fide Bierkellar ambience, albeit with a distinctly Scottish flavour.

Our chefs will be preparing a number of Highland specialities in addition to our usual full and varied menu.

If you think you can last the pace of the full week, or if you just fancy stopping for a day or two and perhaps enjoying some late season hill-walking or climbing at the same time, click onto our website at www.clachaig.com/specialoffers.htm for some great deals on accommodation, either in our newly refurbished hotel rooms or our on-site self-catering chalets.

Highland Hogmanay

We like to think that the Scottish Highlands is the best place to see in the New Year, and the traditional friendly welcome will be in evidence as always at Clachaig.

From Boxing Day onwards we expect to be extremely busy, with hordes of visitors heading for the snows and for the warmth and hospitality of our bars. There will be live music on most nights, and a selection of over 120 malt whiskies should help you to thaw

out after a day on the hills!

We are offering an exclusive package of dinner, bed and breakfast for four nights or more over the Hogmanay period, with prices from £230 per person for a four night stay.

Please note that this is very much subject to availability, and that it would be advisable to book as early as possible, as this is an extremely popular time. For further details go to www.clachaig.com/specialoffers.htm.

Champion!

Atlas Brewery's Latitude Pale Ale has got off to a flying start at the recent Fife Beer Festival. At the first outing to such an event, Kinlochleven brewery owner, Neill Cotton walked away with the title of 'Champion Beer of the Festival'. Not a bad start for a brewery that has only been around for a couple of months. However, the title of Scotland's Newest Brewery hasn't lasted very long.

In May, Clachaig Inn and The Grog and Gruel took in the first deliveries of An Teallach Ale, the first brew from the An Teallach Brewing Co.

The initial response from those who got the chance to try it was very positive, with the first 9 gallon firkin selling in under 2 hours at Clachaig! Don't worry; there'll be plenty more available throughout the summer.



some beer.....

We also hear word that Houston Brewery are launching a brand new beer in June so expect this to be on a bar near you by the time you're reading this. Rumours are that it will be made from the crystal clear waters of Loch Lomond and will have an ABV of about 3.9%. And with Edinburgh Crystal also at the official launch, we've a sneaky feeling that we know what the name might be. Expect to see a good choice of Houston ales available this summer as they have a sound range of beers and the pushiest telesales out there!

Never trust a politician

Nothing new there then! Remember the budget and Chancellor Brown stating in his budget that a reduction in beer duty at small breweries would mean a reduction of 14p a pint? So what happened to the price cut we hear you ask?

In essence, there isn't going to be one. What it does mean is that the many small breweries, many of which supply the wide variety of cask ales to our Glencoe & Fort William premises, will in fact be a little more able to compete with the bigger breweries on an even footing. The saving is more likely to be spent on allowing small breweries to be able to find funds for developing and marketing their businesses, rather than the duty saving simply being passed on to the customer.

Of the duty reduction, Ken Brooker of Harviestoun Brewery is quoted as saying, "We applaud the decision but not the way it was delivered ... it has sent out the completely wrong message and created a false expectation."

So what effect will the duty cut have? Well, it means that all these small independent brewers, some well established, others just starting up, have more of a chance of competing longer term with "the big boys". And that means more choice for us all. Our list of regular guest ales, the vast majority from the west of Scotland, is now bigger than ever, with yet more expected to be added in due course. So, to Gordon Brown, a wee thanks, and cheers.

14p

Anagram Competition

BORED? DRINK BEER?

Then try our anagram competition and win a prize!
Make some rather tasty beers out of the following:

1. knavery enor
2. annie egg piker
3. adept genes morris
4. bet title tyre
5. eye lap lay
6. abroad end sadism

Answer all 6 correctly by 31st August and we'll put your entry in our draw for a bottle of booze.

NTS CENTRE

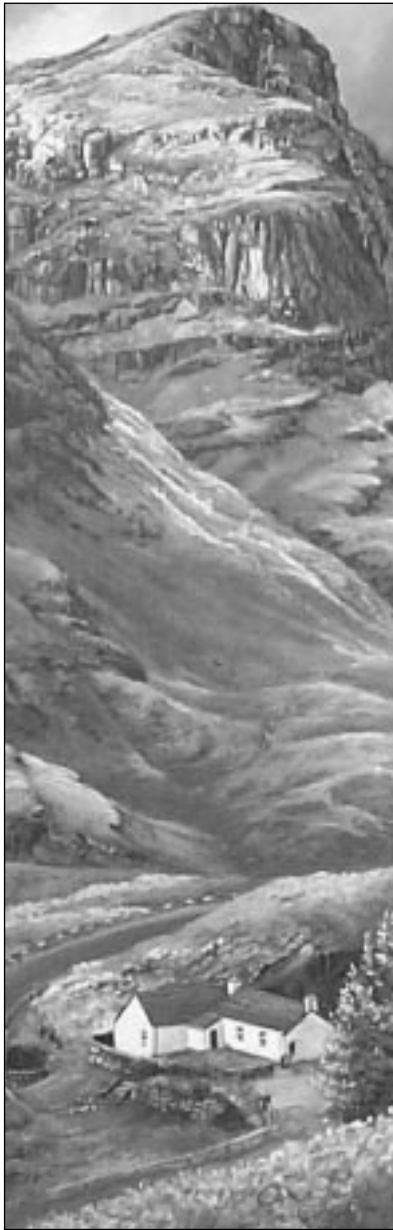
The more astute visitors to the glen will have noticed that where there used to be a visitor centre there is now open countryside. The NTS Visitor Centre has relocated just a mile further along the A82 next to the

campsite. The new centre opened on May 1st and the old centre was demolished and the area landscaped shortly afterwards, leaving a small parking area to allow the public access to the riverside and across the bridge into Signal Rock and An Torr (and a pint at Clachaig if you wish).

There was a degree of controversy over the commercial elements of the new centre but the consensus of opinion so far seems to be that the concerns have been addressed and

that the centre should not pose an unfair competition to existing local businesses. The new building is very impressive and is well worth a visit.

We believe that it is an asset to the area, but that certain issues remain, not least of which is the integration of the new centre into the rest of the glen. A new footpath has been constructed along the A82 linking the woodland walk at the campsite to the village. However, there is still a feeling that it stands in isolation from the glen that it is trying to represent.



Caroline Cooke has responded to customer demand and recently relaunched her art gallery web site. Caroline's work can be viewed in many of Clachaig's bedrooms, and her reputation as a local artist is growing all the time.

The new web site can be found at www.carolinecooke.com and provides a full eCommerce facility making it both easy and safe to buy online.

The site has managed to capture the mood and atmosphere of her work, which varies from scenes of Glencoe through to her favourite - the beaches and spectacular sunsets on the west coast.

Based in a converted croft by the sea loch at Tighphuir, Glencoe Studio Gallery is a popular stopping off point for anyone looking for a reminder of this special part of the world.

In addition to constantly changing original artwork, Caroline has now expanded her range of Fine Art and Limited Edition prints bringing the total available to over 50. Caroline occasionally finds time to exhibit her work elsewhere, being a regular contributor to the Lochaber Art Exhibition and recently exhibited at the Banff Mountain Film Festival in Fort William.

www.carolinecooke.com

Chalet Autumn Offers

If you've still got some holiday time to play with, and fancy a short off-season break in Glencoe, our self-catering chalets could be just the ticket.

Spacious, well-appointed and just a two-minute walk from the bar, they offer all the advantages of hotel accommodation with the freedom and flexibility of self-catering.

Between the beginning of November and the end of January (excluding Xmas and New Year) we are offering three nights or more at the bargain price of £50 per night for a 4 bed chalet or £62 per night for a 5 bed option.

There are no hidden extras; the price includes heating, bedding and clean towels. If you are interested or require further details, please give us a call or visit our website.

There's a lot to be said for visiting the area off-season, with quieter roads and a lot less hustle and bustle; just what you need if you want to get away from it all for a bit.

visit for details:

www.glencoeholidays.com/specialoffers.htm

ROCKFACE

The jury is still out on the first series of the BBC's mountain rescue based drama, Rockface. With a rare combination of rock climbing monks, hijacked helicopters and a rescue team that seems to spend more time drinking coffee than rescuing, Glentannoch certainly seems to be more than your ordinary Highland town. Love it or hate it though, anything that gets Fort William on the telly has got to be a good thing and a boost to the local economy. Good news then that a second series has been commissioned and we can expect to see a few more stars around town later in the summer.

" 'Ere isn't that bloke over there 'im off the telly..."

Glencoe Skyline Round

If you've been coming to Glencoe for a number of years and are still trying to tick off all the major tops then perhaps this one is for you? Anyone with an interest in fell running may well have heard of The Bob Graham Round in the Lake District or Ramsay's Round here in Lochaber. By comparison, the Glencoe Skyline Round is a doddle!

As yet, it's little more than a personal challenge to cover all the major tops in the glen in a day, lacking neither time limit nor formal route. Recent information reveals that there are at least 4 people who have given it a go - though we're sure there will be plenty more.

The favourite route appears to be:

Start and finish at Clachaig. Ascend the gully path to Sgurr nam Fionnaidh, traverse the Aonach Eagach and keep going all the way until you rejoin the A82 at Altnafeadh. From there, ascend Buachaille Etive Mor (via Curved Ridge) and then take in the summit of Stob Dearg. Descend to the Lairig and then back up the other side to the summit of the wee Buachaille at Stob Dubh. From here descend to the Lairig Eilde Bealach and then climb up to Stob Coire Sgreamhach and traverse the ridge to the summit of Bidean nam Bian. From here descend to the Bealach and take in the summit of Stob Coire nan Lochan before dropping into Coire Beith and back to Clachaig for a well earned pint.

If you want to rise to the challenge, log in at Clachaig and we'll gladly hold the stopwatch. The hall of fame extends to Bobby Shields (31/5/80), Ros Coates (19/9/81), Ed Daynes (25/9/86) and Nick Carter (19/9/01) with times varying from 7 hours 5 mins to 13 hours 4 mins.

The Grog & Gruel

issue 12

Summer 2002

Gazette

Management in perspective

A man in a hot air balloon realised he was lost. He reduced altitude and spotted a woman below. He descended a bit more and shouted, "Excuse me, can you help? I promised a friend I would meet him an hour ago, but I don't know where I am."

The woman below replied, "You are in a hot air balloon hovering approximately 30 feet above the ground. You are between 40 and 41 degrees north latitude and between 59 and 60 degrees west longitude."

"You must be an engineer", said the balloonist. "I am", replied the woman, "How did you know?" "Well," answered the balloonist, "everything you told me is, technically correct, but I have no idea what to make of your information, and the fact is I am still lost. Frankly, you've not been much help so far."

The woman below responded, "You must be in management." "I am," replied the balloonist, "but how did you know?" "Well," said the woman, "you don't know where you are or where you are going. You have risen to where you are, due to a large quantity of hot air. You made a promise which you have no idea how to keep, and you expect people beneath you to solve your problems. The fact is you are in exactly the same position you were in before we met, but now, somehow, it's my fault."

...should we be concerned that this was actually submitted by an ex member of staff?!



BEER GARDEN

If we ever get around to shifting the mountain of beer barrels outside our cellar, then expect the Beer Garden to reopen again this summer.

Not only is it a pleasant place to have a cool pint on a balmy summer afternoon, it's one of the few alfresco locations where you can enjoy a pint in Fort William.

As of October last year, local by-laws now make it illegal to consume alcohol in any public place in Fort William, Inverlochy, Claggan, Caol and Kinlochleven.

And as for that mountain of barrels, we understand that there's a desperate shortage of casks amongst brewers, and with each one costing some £50 you'd think they'd be glad to get them back after we've emptied them.

Anyone want to start a brewery?



Web Cam

The web-cam at the Grog and Gruel is being moved to a new position at the bar, which should give all you surfers out there a better view of our regular live bands.

We're not sure whether we should tell them that they're reaching a worldwide audience, as they might get stage fright!

The web-cam is also an excellent way of annoying your office-bound friends back home, by posing at the bar with foaming ale in hand as you enjoy your holiday in the Highlands.

If you want to know who's propping up the bar right now, check out www.grogandgruel.co.uk/webcam.htm

And we take no responsibility for any marital disagreements that this might cause!

Letter to the Editor

Dear Ed(itor)

Please find enclosed a photograph of me at the top of Ben Nevis advertising the best pub in Fort William to all the thirsty hillwalkers to be found on the Ben path. Do I win a free pint, ken?

Yours
W.W.A.



Dear W.W.A.

Looks like you've had enough already! That shirt's on back to front.
Ed

The Adventures of Horace the Hog.....

