

GROG & GRUEL

Summer, 2001

Gazette

News of Summer Brews

Shocked, stunned and not a little amazed beer drinkers who found that Kelpie, the seaweed beer from Heather Ale, is in fact a very palatable pint will be pleased to hear that it's back again for summer 2001.

Made from real Lochaber seaweed, Kelpie is not only good for you it tastes good too. Described as well balanced full rich chocolate ale with a crisp more-ish flavour, and weighing in at 4.4% we expect sales to boom!

And if the thought of a beer made from seaweed is simply too much then how about a cask conditioned wheat beer? The Summer Wheat Beer is brewed with 50% wheat malt, 50% lager malt for a very light, fresh beer, lightly hopped and infused with meadowsweet flowers. Perfect for those long hot Fort William summer days.

Swallow IPA, one of the winter Stone Kettle specials, is likely to be back for a period through the summer months due to the high demand. Making the most of the Clyde Valley hops, this light fresh ale is due to be available through the mid summer while supplies of the hops last.

STOP PRESS.....

Oktoberfest back again - the final fling of the season. More details as the season progresses. Check the diary page at www.grogandgruel.co.uk/news.htm

Lochaber based brewery?

The potential to establish a microbrewery in Kinlochleven took another step forward last month when detailed research on the local demand for such ale was carried out by the Kinlochleven Land Development Trust.

The Highlands now boasts seven independent microbreweries serving a thirsty local market and we now know that plans are afoot for an eighth operation in Stornoway.

Consistency and quality control are two of the key ingredients required and there's a lot of help available. If you can smell the potential for success in the Mamores contact:

Scott Dingwall
Lochaber Enterprise
(sc.dingwall@hient.co.uk)



Guide to Good Beer



Once more we're proud to say that we're Fort William's only pub listed in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2001.

Word is that the competition for an entry in 2002 will be hotting up a bit, with a move towards fewer entries but more information about each pub that does make the grade. Needless to say we're doing our best to bring as many of the best beers in the best condition as we can. And just about all of them are brewed in Scotland (except McTetley's of course).

Media Frenzy

'Yanks a lot, beer is on the mouse' and 'Village web of deceit' were just some of the headlines carried by the finest national newspapers earlier in the year.

And then there was the live interview with Fred MacAulay on BBC Radio Scotland. Neil felt more like a famous footballer than a pub manager, such was the intensity of the media frenzy when we launched our web cam in February.

The camera still continues to attract a lot of attention, particularly when someone actually buys a round. Strange that. Must be something to do with who the lucky recipient might be I suppose.

We've had all sorts of reactions. The favourite one being ringing your mates back home and getting them to log on while you wave at the camera. Then there's the people who sit there with their "I'm very thirsty signs" hoping that someone on the Internet will take pity and buy them a round. (The weird thing is it does work!) And there's the women's rugby team, but that's an 18's and over only site. Definitely not for the feint hearted!



Online Grog

We're gradually getting there! Hopefully by the time you read this we'll have this Newsletter available as a download from the site. If you'd like to receive notification of future copies of the GGG just send an e-mail to:

news@grogandgruel.co.uk

and leave the rest to us.

In addition to our Newsletter you'll find details of our live music, beer festivals (including Oktoberfest), the web cam, useful links and all sorts of other goodies on our web site.

We're doing our best to keep it up to date and we know that you're doing your best to keep us on track. Thanks for all your messages. If we get behind a little then it's either been another one of those bank holiday weekends and we're all collapsed in a heap or the sun is shining yet again and we're all out in the beer garden topping up the tan.

Beer Garden

Regular readers will know that there have been plans to develop the area to the rear of the High Street for either parking or to further expand the possibilities for commercial development of High Street businesses.

A feasibility study has recently taken place with various options for the so-called "Backlands" being produced as a result. These have now been presented to the Highland Council Area Planning Committee for their consideration.

The recommended scheme allows for a rear service road from Fassifern Road and the creation of 31 private car parking spaces, and may promote some limited possibilities for further pedestrian access to MacRae's Lane and beyond.

If these plans go ahead then it's bye-bye beer garden. We've long since accepted that this sacrifice might be the best option in achieving the greater good for the town. Just take a look at the traffic jam on a summer's morning on the **pedestrianised** High Street. However, we are far from happy with the plans as they stand at the moment. There are several reasons for this with the main one being that the entire beer garden is earmarked as a turning circle for all traffic using the road. We know how big some of the delivery lorries can be.

With no commitment to remove all traffic from the High Street and a severe loss of amenity we shall continue to work towards a more satisfactory solution to the problem. Meantime, drink beer while the sun shines. You might not get chance next year.



Now catering for weddings..!

If you're looking for the perfect venue for your wedding then perhaps we can help. Plenty of atmosphere, you can be sure of the catering and plenty of refreshments to hand too!

Well, maybe. It's not really something that we had planned on here at The Grog & Gruel but for some the lure of our great beers is just too much to resist. Pictured are Mr & Mrs. De Boer of The Netherlands who were married in Fort William and fancied a wedding photograph pulling a pint of Orkney Raven Ale together. It's a bit different to cutting the cake but why not!

Live Music & What's on.....

- Frid 1st June** **John Colletta**
Formerly with the Humpf Family and now on his own bringing contemporary folk and his own music and lyrics.
- Frid 15th June** **Flint**
See our homepage for a quick look at what happened last time this popular traditional folk duo popped in for a tune or two.
- Thurs 26th July** **Pete Jagger**
Pete makes his annual Highland pilgrimage and brings his usual distinctive mix of blues and soul.

Summer....

Lots more live music. We're just waiting to confirm some more dates and we'll be posting full details to the web site as soon as confirmation is received.

- Sat 1st Sept** Carbo load on our fresh home cooked pasta in preparation for today's Ben Race. Join Ed 'Run Daynes Run' as he drags his Big Boss ass out of the office and up Britain's highest.

October....

Oktoberfest returns following the success of last year. A week of Beer Fest, music, quiz nights, whisky tasting and anything else we can throw at you.

- Frid 7th Dec** The Grog & Gruel reaches its 7th birthday. We missed the birthday party last year so maybe we ought to make it a double celebration this year?
- Frid 21st Dec** The Hogmanay Beer Festival kicks off with plenty of warm up time before the big night.
- Tues 25th Dec** **Our next day off!**

You must be joking

A man walks into a pub, obviously in a rush, and asks for 10 vodkas, no ice. The barmaid duly fills the glasses and the guy drinks them in rapid succession. The barmaid asks why the great hurry, to which our man replies, well you would drink them fast if you knew what I had in my pocket. Okay the Barmaid says, what is in your pocket? About 25p answers our man! Boom, boom, drum roll, exits stage left!

All Change

After 4 1/2 years as General Manager, Alan Dodds has moved on to pastures green, well, er, granite. No doubt Alan will be staying in touch with all his Fort William friends on the web cam and will be buying a round for us all regularly. (Hint, hint, nudge, nudge, etc...) We're still waiting, Alan!

Neil takes over as General Manager, having been at The Grog & Gruel for some 5 years now. A familiar face, Neil started as a part time general assistant back in 1996 and has been working his way through the ranks ever since. We also welcome Carol Ashley (a familiar face from Glen Nevis) to the team as she takes up the position of Assistant Manager.

The Adventures of Horace the Hog

