

**Aberdeen, Grampian & Northern Isles CAMRA AGM Minutes
Zoom – Wednesday 17th November 2021 at 7.30pm**

1) **Attendance**

Ian Chapman (IC), George Howie (GH), Richard Jones (RAJ), Ian Stewart (IS), Bob Frost (BF), Euan Fraser (EF), Scott Wilson (SW), Dave Lee (DL), Nick Marshall (NM), John White (JW), Christian Stolte (CS), Alan Harrison (AH), Lesley Thompson (LT), Terry Lock (TL), Ruth Sloan (RS)

2) **Apologies**

Mike Burton (MB), Jas Bagrath (JB)

3) **Minutes from 2020 AGM on 17th November 2020 on Zoom**

a) **Accuracy of 2020 Minutes**

Approved (IC/RAJ)

4) **Committee Reports**

a) **Chairman**

- 1) Not a lot done due to lockdown
- 2) No presentations still outstanding

b) **Treasurer**

- 1) Branch Accounts were audited and thanks given to Mike and Lesley
- 2) Minimum amount of transactions throughout the year
- 3) Accounts will be appended to the minutes when issued

c) **Membership Secretary**

- 1) Current membership 363
- 2) 16% are female
- 3) 4 members over 80 and 4 members under 30
- 4) Report distributed

d) **Secretary/Contact**

- 1) Nothing really to report apart from communicating with Banff members and non members re Ship Inn and permission to turn into flats

e) **Magazine Editor**

- 1) Discussions held saying that it appears that pubs do not want magazines to put into pubs due to Covid although there did not seem to be a restriction on this
- 2) IC not keen on doing an online version as he did not think that anybody would read it although this could be advertised via social media and Comms tool to members

f) **Pubs Officer**

New/Re-opened Outlets

- 1) **Under The Hammer, Aberdeen** - Re-opened on Friday 5th November 2021 after an extensive, expensive refurbishment. Initially selling TT Landlord and Boltmaker but hopefully having a guest beer eventually. Also doing sharing platters and selling a range of designer cocktails. It was a shame that McGintys did not see fit to invite CAMRA to their opening a couple of days earlier.
- 2) **Howff, Aberdeen** - After long time closed during Covid restrictions etc. re-opened late October but with no ale. However, Calum Grant, trouble-shooter with P.B. Devco, is to try and introduce ale back in the pub with the beer near the bar and suitably cooled, to avoid the large wastage they had before. There will be no ale in the Drafy Project which is now licensed by the Howff as opposed to Soul Bar previously.

Closed Outlets

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- 1) **Hop & Anchor, Aberdeen** - This pub has failed to open once pubs were allowed to again serve alcohol and restrictions eased to their current level. Our contact with BrewDog, Steve Armstrong, made enquiries and was told that they had not decided whether or not to open again and if they would sell ale again if it does open. It is one of the chain of Draft Houses that BrewDog took over a few years ago and most of the ones in London seem to have now reverted to the BrewDog branding.
- 2) **Illicit Still, Aberdeen** - It was announced that it would be closed from Christmas 2020 and would not be re-opened after lockdown. It still appears to be closed.
- 3) **Stromness Hotel, Stromness** - Hotel was closed for a long time even after most restrictions were lifted. However, it has been purchased by Paymán Investments, which own several other hotels and do not sell alcohol. This is a bit of a disaster for Stromness as the Ferry Inn has also closed for the winter and is not expected to open till Spring next year and will be getting a refurbishment while closed.

Situation with Existing Outlets

It seems that most of our regular outlets, GBG and non-GBG, appear to be almost operating as normal again. Whilst it is still compulsory to 'Check-In' to pubs using the appropriate QR code, wearing a mask whilst entering the pub or going to the toilet or moving about, many pubs are a bit lax in applying these rules and leave it up to individuals to obey the rules. Certainly, the ruling that you can now stand at the bar, mask-less when drinking, has led to a situation where bar staff no longer can really control this rule and usually make no attempt to do so.

Some pubs are not yet selling ale on as many pumps as before. The Prince of Wales, Aberdeen, usually only has 4 or 5 of their 8 handpumps in use at any one time, Krakatoa does not have as many beers as previously. Wetherspoon outlets seem to be doing ok and the Globe and Grill are more or less back up to normal number of beers.

Some pubs are maybe shortening their hours by closing at 11pm or midnight instead of midnight and 1am respectively. It may well be the case that the hours on WhatPub will have to be checked and updated. Hopefully by the time we get the annual surveys for the next GBG that the hours will have settled down again.

Real Ale Losses/Changes

- 1) Had a report from WhatPub that the Cults Hotel, Cults, no longer has any ale. Any confirmation of this would be appreciated if anybody has been there recently.
- 2) **Aitchies Ale House** appears to be selling Dark Island again after not selling any during the warmer months.
- 3) **Blue Lamp, Aberdeen**, seems to be doing well with 2 Cromarty beers on sale in the lounge - usually Happy Chappy on the handpump and a varying Cromarty beer on the air pressure system. Lewis Brown, Sandy's grandson, has said he is getting another handpump installed in the lounge. The Thursday evening jazz sessions are attracting large

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crowds with the 1st Sunday of the month afternoon sessions also doing well. Wednesday evenings feature a blues jam with local musicians.

4) Drouthy Cobbler, Elgin - Has now ceased doing ale after a change of ownership. Seems unlikely that they will resume doing it.

5) Red Lion, Forres - Has been very unreliable with ale since restrictions lifted. May have to consider a deletion from the 2022 GBG.

6) Sunninghill Hotel, Elgin - Not had any report recently but they were struggling to sell even a pin before the various lockdowns. Anybody been there recently?

7) Garmouth Hotel - Now closed.

8) Edwards, Inverurie - No longer selling any ale

9) Hopeville Club, Inverurie - Pump still there but has not had any ale according to recent visits

10) Neuk, Portlethen - No longer has ale, especially since the demise of the Bodachra Brewery

11) Dutch Mill - According to IC, handpumps have been removed so no longer doing any ale

g) Social Secretary

1) Social events impacted significantly by Covid lockdown and Social distancing.

2) Majority of social events took place online at fortnightly intervals, Wed 8pm. Many thanks to Ian Stewart for acting as Zoom co-ordinator and publishing these events to the branch via email and Facebook.

3) Some members are still isolating, so as we slowly come out of lockdown there is still a reason to continue with virtual socials. They have the potential to engage the far flung members of the branch in Orkney and in the Shire.

4) Some members avoid virtual meetings altogether, either because they dislike the medium, or have technical problems. We do need to get back to having socials in the pub as well to re-engage with those people.

5) We had four virtual beer tastings, Burnside, 6DN, Windswept and Magpie. Many thanks to the BLOs who organised this and to the brewers who gave up their time.

6) Other events included one small trip to Stonehaven (3 people), visit to Bandstand beer festival (at least 7 branch members travelling independently). Excellent visit to the Seidear cidery and formal thanks to Christial Stolte for hosting us.

7) Next year, hope to organise the "Be a Brewer" event with Burnside, and a few day trips to far flung Aberdeenshire. Please raise any ideas for events with the social secretary who will attempt to gauge interest and facilitate organisation.

8) Next event Sat 27th November, 13:30 at Ferryhill House hotel to mark 40 years of Scottish Real Ale, then onwards to some of the more enduring pubs in town.

h) Webmaster

1) Website went live after last AGM. No technical problems with website this year

2) Trying to keep Branch Diary/Calendar up-to-date, and publishing a few news articles

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- 3) Engagement is key; if anyone has news then please send a paragraph to webmaster to publish
- 4) Webmaster willing to hold training session (online or in the pub) for anyone who wants to be involved in publishing news on website
- 5) The branch owns two domain names - aberdeencamra.ORG.uk and .CO.uk. They each cost £9/year. They expire on 28th December. Seeking approval to renew the ORG.uk domain for two years next month at cost of £18. Opinion sought as to whether to drop the CO.uk domain and it was decided to retain it
- 6) We Hosting: still hosted and managed by Proportion Marketing at no cost to the branch. Formal thanks to John Cornwell for his technical support, and I hope the branch can show its appreciation in kind
- 5) **Presentation/Acceptance of Annual Accounts**
 - 1) The accounts were passed round for comment
 - 2) The accounts were accepted unanimously
 - 3) Minutes approval - Proposed GH, Seconded NM
- 6) **Brewery News**
 - 1) No BLO resignations. As Rigg Robertson had not been in contact for some time, SW volunteered to take on the position of BLO for Burnside Brewery
- 7) **Election of Office Bearers**
 - a) Chairman - Ian Chapman P/IC?, S/RAJ
 - b) Secretary/Contact - George Howie P/IC, S/RAJ
 - c) Treasurer - Richard Jones P/RAJ, S/JW
 - d) Membership - Bob Frost P/IC, S/RAJ
 - e) Vice Chair - George Howie P/IC, S/RAJ
 - f) Social Secretary - Scott Wilson P/RAJ, S/DL
 - g) Webmaster - Scott Wilson P/GH, S/RAJ
 - h) Pubs Officer - George Howie with Alan Harrison becoming a 'Shadow' P/IC, S/RAJ
 - i) Students Liaison - Euan Fraser P/IC, S/RAJ
 - j) Young Person Liaison - Alan Harrison P/IC, S/DL
 - k) Public Affairs Officer - Nobody in post and still no nominations - vacant
- 8) **Suggestions for Campaigning**
 - a) SW suggested that after seeing the membership stats that we should be trying to get more members under 40
 - b) EF had been in contact with the Aberdeen University Craft Beer Society to see if any were CAMRA members or might be interested in CAMRA and asked them to get in touch
- 9) **Constitution**
 - a) No suggested alterations
 - b) GH said that if any alterations were required that would have to be given in advance and would have to be approved
- 10) **Website**
 - a) Report from Webmaster already done
- 12) **GBG Matters**
 - a) GH is to produce the list of ale pubs and get confirmation by committee etc. before creating the voting form
 - b) RAJ said that we should now go back to our rolling 12 month system for qualification to vote for GBG inclusion

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- 13) **Motions/Discussion Points**
- a) None submitted to Chair or Secretary
 - b) RAJ wanted to bring up the subject of absentee BLOs. He proposed that they should be removed from post if not submitting a report (at least once a year) via the BIS system. Lack of reporting or updating BIS disadvantages certain beer from being in CBOS if not on the system.
 - c) Most agreed with the sentiments expressed but it was thought that this should perhaps be put forward for discussion at a future SNIB meeting
- 15) **A.O.C.B.**
- a) No AOCB