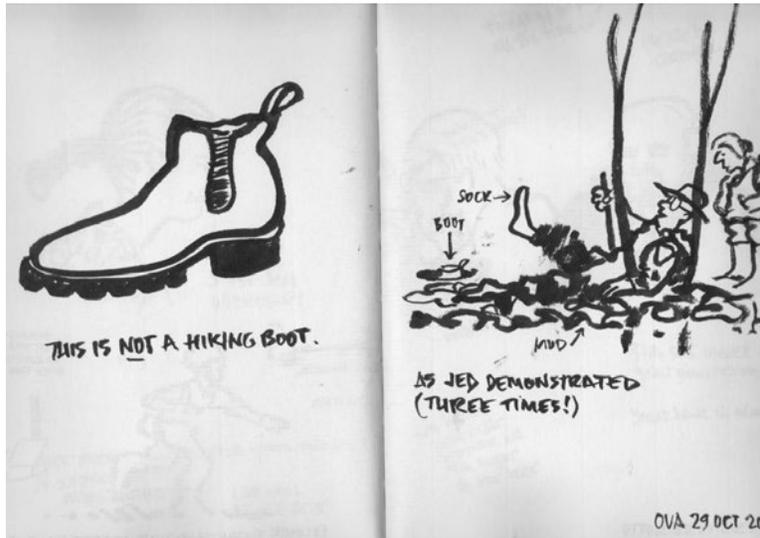


## Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015, A Walk around Luppitt and a Visit to the Otter Brewery with Andrew Beresford

A thirsty coach load set off for the wilds of the Blackdown Hills, with one querying why we were heading for Honiton, as he thought that we were going to Ottery St Mary. It had been raining in the morning, but had now cleared, leaving a cloudy and grey afternoon.

Our spirits lifted when we eventually got to Mathayes Farm, near Luppitt, and saw the gleaming tanks, and sniffed the air. Fortunately, we had been warned



in advance that the afternoon walk would be wet and muddy under foot for at least the first mile as we set off down the valley to cross Hense Moor. So when we entered the quagmire, some of us were very pleased that we had chosen to wear our wellies, as we stepped into mud up to

our knees. The first part of the walk was full of incidents, what with three impressive attempts at mud wrestling by Jed, and others almost getting stuck in the mud and losing their boots.

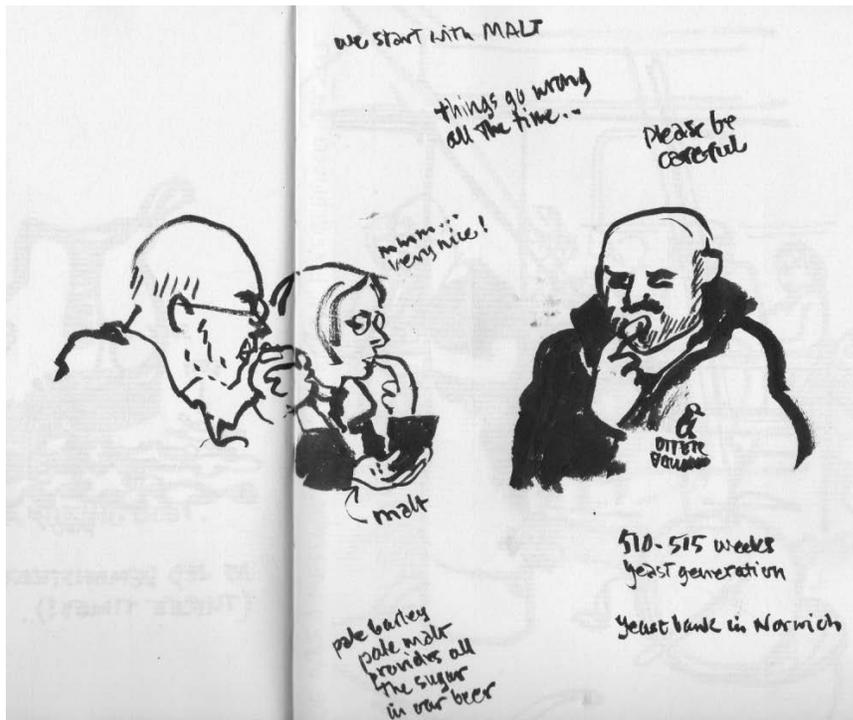
There was a pheasant shoot in progress adjacent to the footpath, and one of the beaters told us that the footpath was always closed on Thursdays for the shoot. Well, did that deter us? No, as it was clear that the Devon County Council Highway Authority had not closed this public right of way, or it would have been clearly signed as such, which is a legal requirement.

So undeterred by shots going off all around us, we trudged on through the mud for what felt like several miles until we reached a farm road. At that point the mud wrestler decided to head back to the Brewery for warmth and comfort, along what appeared to be a possible route back. The rest of the group carried on and the going got easier as we eventually reached the small village of Luppitt with some relief, as we hoped that we were half way round

the walk, because it was starting to get a bit dark. So with renewed energy we walked up the steep road out of the village and onto a good easy track along the ridge, where we were rewarded with excellent views to the south and west towards Dumpdon Hill fort in the fading light. We walked on quickly with Chris promising 'only another mile' as it got darker. Eventually we dropped off the ridge, and some of us got out torches as we headed steeply downhill and onto a road. Surely we were close to the brewery now? Oh no we weren't! We started to cross fields as it started to drizzle. After another mile or so trudging in long wet grass we were relieved to find ourselves back at the Brewery, where a very welcome pint or two was waiting for us.

After recovering from the rigours of the walk, we were ready for the tour. We found out that Jed had only just got back before us, having had several misadventures with barbed wire blocking his route back. Andrew had been on his own little walk to Upottery, and bravely managed to blag a pheasant from the shooting party.

The Head Brewer took us around the site, explaining the complexities of the

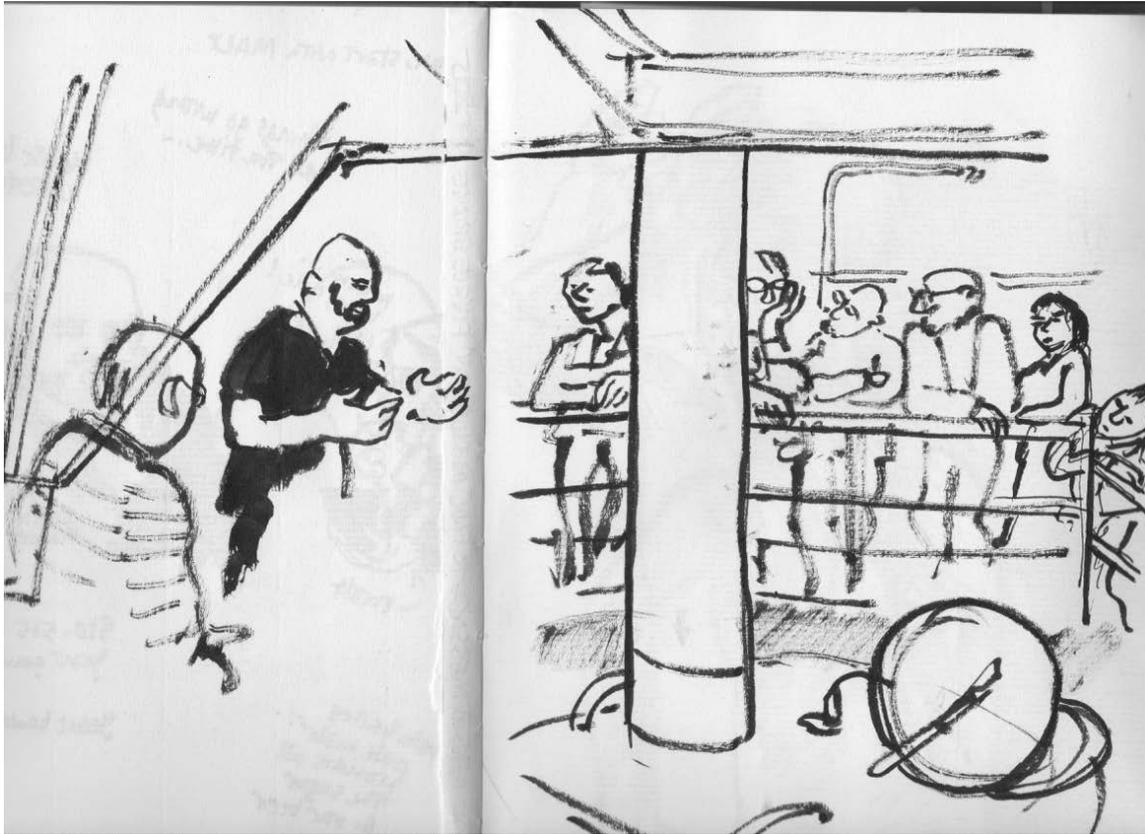


brewing processes in detail. The brewery has been going for 25 years, and uses the natural spring water, which is particularly good for the larger that they have recently started brewing.

They also have an award winning eco designed

cellar building, where the beer is stored at just the right temperature for most of the year without having to be cooled.

It was a fascinating tour, by the end of which we were again eager to sample the different brews and eat our promised dinner.



We tried the amber ale, which was very good, but the Wych ale seemed popular and soon ran out. Fortunately there was Otter Bright a plenty, and other bitters to try. The meal did not disappoint either, with burgers, chicken and sausages a plenty. Paul 'the sausage-slayer' managed to eat about 10 of them. After a few more pints we merrily climbed back on the waiting coach and promptly fell asleep, to get off the coach at our home destination and stumble home happily.

Everyone agreed that it was a most enjoyable outing, and we are indebted to Andrew for all the trouble he took in organising it for us.

**SO CONGRATULATIONS TO ANDREW BERESFORD - THE MAN WHO CAN ORGANISE A \_\_\_\_\_ IN A BREWERY**

*Dee Woods*  
*30<sup>th</sup> October 2015*