

Barrier wins at world Irish pub awards

DIANA WORTHY

The owners of a remote Irish pub on a Hauraki Gulf island are celebrating a global award from thousands of miles away.

Maire Burns and Phill Judd, who own The Currach on Great Barrier Island, were astonished when they learned from a friend in Ireland the pub and its craft beer were on a competition shortlist.

"We received an email and phone call from Dublin telling us about it.

"I thought it was a wind-up from an Irish friend," Kerry-born Burns said.

The list had been compiled by Irish Pubs Global, located in Galway, Ireland, from more than 16,000 nominations for various awards.

Called the Irish Pub Oscars, the independent trust's annual awards recognise outstanding businesses in Ireland, the UK, Europe, USA and the Rest of the World.

The Currach, at Barrier's Pa Beach, Tryphena, had been placed among the top 10 for Best Community Irish Pub and Best Craft Beer Experience Pub in the Rest of the World.

The final shortlist was judged by an independent industry panel.

"We were invited to the awards ceremony in Mansion House, in Dublin, on October 12, but thought it was a bit far to go for the night.

"When we received word that we had won the Best Craft Beer Experience Pub in the Rest of the World we were blown away,"



Phill Judd and Maire Burns raise a toast after winning an award for Best Craft Beer Experience.

SUPPLIED

Burns said.

"It is a huge accolade."

Irish Pubs Global is supported by Irish Tourism and the Irish Food Board.

Phill Judd said while he and Burns were living on Waiheke, he

met up with craft beer brewers Alan Knight and Ben Middlemiss, who he calls "New Zealand brewing legends".

He was able to learn about brewing with natural malts and hops before returning to Great

Barrier in 2013.

"We brought craft beers back with us to The Currach and we now have eight draught beer taps - including Guinness, of course.

"We also have a traditional hand pump dedicated to some

superb hand crafted beers that we sail over to the Barrier from Boogie Van Brewery on Waiheke Island and other NZ boutique breweries.

"This is complemented by an array of NZ bottled craft beers."