

# IRON BREW

NEWSLETTER OF SCUNTHORPE & DISTRICT CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



FREE  
DECEMBER 2019 - FEBRUARY 2020

A photograph of a person's arm pouring beer from a tap. The person has a tattoo of three stars on their forearm. The background is a bar with several beer taps and a chalkboard menu. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange and brown geometric shape that contains the newsletter title and other text.

**IT'S THE MOST  
WONDERFUL  
TIME FOR  
A BEER!**

## IN THIS ISSUE

- GREENE KING LOSE INDEPENDANCE
- BRANCH 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS
- GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL WINTER
- CASK REPORT 2019
- PUB & BREWERY NEWS

AND MUCH MORE...



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## A LEEDS LANDMARK

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## ADVERTISING:

Quarter Page - £85.00, Half Page - £145.00, Full Page -  
£260.00, Inside Front/Back - £280.00 & Back Cover - £300.00

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Printed by KKN Print Limited, 2 North Portway Close,  
Round Spinney, Northampton, NN3 8RQ

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# CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

## WELCOME

Welcome to this Winter edition of the Scunthorpe & District CAMRA branch newsletter Iron Brew. As the Winter nights draw in we hope you'll be able to find a welcoming pub offering a seasonal Winter Warmer beer to warm the cockles (whatever they are!).

As Christmas approaches it's time for us to take a break from CAMRA activities (once we've completed our Christmas pub crawl of Sheffield and the branch Christmas party), and come back refreshed in the New Year.

For many of us it will be much the same at this festive time of year. So thanks for reading Iron Brew over the last twelve months and best wishes to you all for Christmas and the New Year. And remember - it's the most wonderful time for a beer! Cheers!

## MARK ELSOME



## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

Mark Elsome, A Beergeek, Morning Advertiser, Campaign For Real Ale, Protz On Beer, Facebook, Keith Dixon

# CRAFT BEER CONNOISSEUR

## KING LOSES CROWN! GREENE KING UNVEILS NEW VERSION OF IPA BUT LOSES INDEPENDENCE



Greene King IPA (3.6% ABV), has always been an unloved product among the beer cognoscenti – when it was announced that Greene King IPA had won the runners-up gong for Champion Beer of Britain at the 2004 Great British Beer Festival in London, it was met by a chorus of boos (I must add I wasn't there).

Greene King IPA was considered to be the antithesis of what India Pale Ales (IPAs) were all about. IPAs were originally formulated as strong, hoppy beers to be exported to India in the days of Empire, the high hop levels acting as a preservative to ensure the beer survived the long sea journey. The style was revived and expanded in the late 20th century using assertive American hops as part of the United States craft beer movement and later became popular all over the world.

However Greene King IPA had little or nothing in common with these new hop-forward IPAs. Perhaps its one redeeming feature was that it could be drunk in quantity without

forgetting who you were or where you'd left your house keys!

Surprising then to learn that Greene King have reformulated their IPA to 'ensure the flavor and freshness of the product is maintained for longer'. This includes a doubling of the hop addition to 'make the beer more robust' (although as an acquaintance of mine commented sardonically, 'a doubling of nothing is still nothing'), as well as new, cool storage facilities at the brewery to keep the beer chilled until delivery and a new, improved cellar management system for Greene King licensees.

All this is good news and in my view Greene King do produce some good beers – their XX Mild is a full-flavoured beer despite its meagre 3% ABV strength; their Heritage bottled beers have been excellent and do you remember Triumph, named after the car, which was a cracking best bitter?



I for one will be parking my craft credentials for a day, donning an impenetrable disguise and trying the new Greene King IPA myself. Other brewers such as Moor and Northern Monk can produce session strength IPAs which are still packed with flavour, so why not Greene King? Let's hope their efforts lead to a better quality, tasty pint.

Less good news for Greene King however came when they were bought out by CK Noble – a wholly owned subsidiary of CK Asset Holdings, a Hong Kong-based property business in a deal worth £4.6bn.

Of course Greene King themselves are no strangers to brewery takeovers having bought out several middle-ranking family brewers such as Ridleys, Hardy & Hansons and Morland in the not too distant past and having little hesitation in closing their breweries, transferring production to Bury St Edmunds and incorporating their pub estates. Now in a case of 'the biter bit', Greene King has lost its own independence.

The usual hackneyed 'spokesperson said' press release has attempted to calm shocked employees and media by saying the new company had given reassurances that it would continue to maintain the Greene King name and all its existing infrastructure and planned to invest in the business. However media commentators said it was 'a terribly sad day for the industry' and were concerned that 'before we know it, the brewing side will be divested and the rest asset-stripped'. I sincerely hope not and I wish Greene King well under their new owners. They're one of the few companies who were prepared to invest in pubs in our area, and they always had a commitment to real ales even when this was not as successful as hoped for.

So, if you see a fellow in a Greene King pub wearing a large, floppy hat and flowing cape, sporting an elegant, bejeweled cane and showing off his luxuriant facial hair to all and sundry, don't worry; it will only be me trying to blend in while I sample the new IPA!

## A BEERGEEK


*Based on information from articles featured in the Morning Advertiser online  
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# BRANCH 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

## EVENTS AT DOCKS BEERS AND POOLEY'S ORGANISED

The Scunthorpe & District Branch of CAMRA was formed way back in 1979, making this year the branch's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. To celebrate this milestone, two events were organised over successive weekends in September – one at Docks Beers in Grimsby, the other at Pooley's in Messingham.

The Docks Beers event was another of their successful tap takeovers, this time by American brewery Stone. We'd been to other tap takeovers by Thornbridge and Tiny Rebel previously and really enjoyed them and the Stone Brewing takeover was also good.

A Saturday morning train to Grimsby and a moderate walk through the town centre brought us to the Docks Brewery building in time for the noon opening. We were able to get a couple of tables for our party right next to the brewing vessels and proceeded to peruse the day's beer menu.



Stone are best known for their hoppy west coast IPAs and they didn't disappoint. Among the best of those sampled was the seasonal Ghost Hammer IPA (6.7% ABV) and Tangerine Express IPA also 6.7%, the latter a fruity ale brewed with whole tangerine puree. Even

these were eclipsed by a bourbon barrel-aged version of their flagship beer Arrogant Ba\*t\*r\*d (8.1%) – you won't be surprised to learn that Stone's marketing was a big influence on Brewdog! – and a big Imperial Stout at 10.6%.

As you can see, nearly all the beers were on the strong side, so we left a little earlier than normal to preserve what little sobriety we had left and made our way home after an enjoyable afternoon.

The following weekend members met up at Pooley's in Messingham for a drinks/buffet event at one of our favourite local pubs. Licensee Neil Poole had opened up a little earlier than normal on our behalf and we sampled an excellent range of real ales including Rat White Rat, Rat Beer (a dandelion & burdock porter), Ossett Brunette, Oakham Bishops Farewell and Batemans Dark Fruits Porter.

Sharon Poole had put on a very tasty buffet and my wife Gill had baked some 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary cup cakes. Neil and Sharon also organised a surprise prize raffle which went down well with members.



To reflect on 40 years of Scunthorpe & District CAMRA we looked through two scrapbooks featuring local press clippings about the branch and the local beer scene, examined the changing face of the branch newsletter Iron Brew and recalled members old and new via a set of photographs from past branch events.



All too soon it was time for some people to catch the last bus back to Scunthorpe and for the rest of the party to head home. These were two enjoyable events, with thanks to those members who attended. Thanks also to Neil and Sharon at Pooley's for the excellent beers and buffet and to the staff at Docks Beers for the tap takeover. Here's to the branch's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

MARK ELSOME

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All for that taste of Taylor's



# 1,500 PUBS JOIN FORCES TO OFFER CAMRA MEMBERS DISCOUNTS

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Over 100 new pubs have joined CAMRA's new voucher scheme since it launched on 1 July, taking the overall number of pubs accepting the vouchers to over 1,500.



Amber Taverns is the latest pub chain to come on board, offering discounts on pints of real ale served at its 89 regional pubs (although these are sparse in our area, but can be found in Hull and Doncaster). See [www.ambertaverns.co.uk/pubs](http://www.ambertaverns.co.uk/pubs) to find the nearest Amber Taverns pub to you.

It joins JD Wetherspoons, Stonegate Pub Company (recently took over EiG [Enterprise]), S.A. Brains, Castle Rock Brewery and 15 or so independents, to extend the new vouchers to even more CAMRA members.

CAMRA members are entitled to £30 worth of vouchers worth 50p off a pint on joining or

at their next renewal, which has replaced the previous £20 worth of Wetherspoons discounts which were only applicable in those 880 venues nationwide.

In addition, CAMRA provides a platform for independent pubs to offer promotions through its Real Ale Discount Scheme. Over 3,500 pubs offer CAMRA members variable discounts to be promoted via the member benefit and WhatPub sites.

The new discounts were brought in to make pub-going more affordable for consumers while helping to raise the profile and footfall at participating venues.

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# BRANCH DIARY

## FRIDAY 6 DECEMBER CHRISTMAS PUB CRAWL OF SHEFFIELD

CATCH 1008 TRAIN FROM SCUNTHORPE TO SHEFFIELD, THEN SUPERTRAM TO SHALESMOOR FOR CRAWL OF KELHAM ISLAND AREA PUBS. CHRISTMAS HATS AND JUMPERS RECOMMENDED!

## FRIDAY 13 DECEMBER BRANCH CHRISTMAS PARTY AT YARBOROUGH HUNT, BRIGG

INC. DIY BUFFET. START 5 PM

## THURSDAY 23 JANUARY TRIP TO MANCHESTER BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL, MANCHESTER CENTRAL

CATCH 1008 TRAIN FROM SCUNTHORPE TO MANCHESTER

## SATURDAY 15 FEBRUARY WINTER PUB OF THE SEASON PRESENTATION TBC

*FURTHER DETAILS FROM MARK*

# PUB AND BREWERY NEWS

North Lincolnshire Council has given approval for the conversion of the **Pied Piper** in Scunthorpe into a Heron Food supermarket, despite objections from the community.

The Pied Piper has been serving customers for over 50 years and while it would be no-one's

idea of a salubrious drinking establishment, it represents a loss of something of value to the local community. The change of use has been deemed unwanted and unnecessary by local people as there's already a Co-op supermarket in the area.



Speaking of North Lincolnshire Council, we've received news from them that the **Britannia** in Brigg is likely to be sold by the owner. They notified us because the Britannia is listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). An ACV listing has an option for a 'community interest group' to bid for the property and retain it as a pub. However at the time of writing we were not aware of any local interest and after a six week period, if no community bid is forthcoming, the owner is then free to sell the property, with the possibility of change of use to something other than a pub.

**Lincolnshire Craft Beers** has purchased and installed a new bottling machine at their Melton Ross brewery. Once this is up and running they will be able to bottle more of their range of beers.

**The Honest Lawyer** in Scunthorpe is offering members a 10% discount on real ales on production of their CAMRA membership card.

Better times ahead for the **Marquis of Granby** at Waddingham which opened up again during the summer under the stewardship of new licensee Stefan Moverley. Offers two real ales from Welbeck Abbey Brewery plus a changing guest beer and food is available all week. Worth a visit.

# CASK REPORT 2019

## CASK ALE SHOULD BECOME PREMIUM PRODUCT SAYS REPORT

Cask beer (real ale), needs some tender loving care, according to the 2019 Cask Report. It says too many pubs are serving cask ale at the wrong temperature and often in poor condition, which deters drinkers from returning to the category. The report calls for cask beer to be 'premiumised', which means it should cost more than standard lager and says it's absurd that cask ale is sold cheaper than craft keg considering the effort and cost of materials that go into its production.

There are more breweries in Britain than there have been for decades – around 2,300. They supply over 50,000 pubs, bars, hotels, restaurants and clubs with cask beers, making more than 10,000 different beers available each year.

However there is an ongoing decline in on-trade beer consumption, with 14 pubs a week closing and the average number of cask brands on the bar reducing from 4.4 to 2.8 in two years as the competition for space on the bar becomes more intense.



Matt Eley, editor of the Cask Report said, "Given the sheer scale of competition and the level of support from reputable brewers, it's perverse that there are still pubs that serve cask ale in poor condition. 70% of cask drinkers have at some point been served an off pint, which can deter them from going back to

the pub and puts them off the brand".

The report adds that premiumisation – in terms of quality, strength and price – offers significant potential to the industry. "This is where the Cask Fight-Back begins" he said.

Paul Nunny of Cask Marque concludes, "If you can't get the quality right, please don't stock cask. Get it right - and build a name for your pub on the back of it. Get the selection of beers right for the type, size and location of the pub that you run. Involve your staff, making sure they are well trained, knowledgeable and enthusiastic and watch your sales grow. Our research shows that's what's happening in successful cask pubs where licensees care about their beer".

## PROTZ ON BEER / CASK MARQUE PRESS RELEASE



# SUMMER PUB OF THE SEASON

## NELTHORPE ARMS, SOUTH FERRIBY

In early September members met up at the Nelthorpe Arms, South Ferriby to present the branch's Summer Pub of the Season award. When pub closures get so much bad publicity, it's nice to report a good pub news story for a change. Not so long ago the Nelthorpe Arms was closed and boarded up and in a state of considerable disrepair, awaiting a sale which would probably have seen it demolished to make way for new housing. Fortunately a local benefactor stepped in, bought the pub and together with former licensee Gavin Richards, began an ambitious restoration project to return the Nelthorpe to its former glory. After a lot of hard work, the Nelthorpe Arms opened up again early in 2019 and has become a thriving community pub for the village to enjoy.



It comprises a well fitted-out bar/lounge with pool table and darts and a cosy snug called 'Wilson's Snug' at one end. It retains an attractive restaurant with an enterprising food menu and has several rooms let out on a B&B basis. Gavin has recently decided to offer three handpulled real ales at the pub – one will be Brew XI as a stock beer with two rotating guest beers and a changing craft keg beer.

Real ales on for the presentation were Lincolnshire Craft Beers Harvest Bitter, Crafty Little Brewery Silk Stout and Sharp's Six Hop IPA.



It's good to have the Nelthorpe Arms back in the real ale fold and we congratulate Gavin and all staff at the pub on their award.

MARK ELSOME



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# GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL WINTER

## NEW HOME IN BIRMINGHAM

This seasonal counterpoint to the Great British Beer Festival takes place at the New Bingley Hall in Birmingham from 4 – 8 February 2020 (Tues – Sat).

CAMRA invites festival lovers to enjoy 'ales of every season' at Birmingham's first Great British Beer Festival Winter. Not to be confused with a festival for winter beers alone, beers of every style and shade will be available, served in cask, KeyKeg and bottle – from dark to ruby brown and golden ales, plus world beers, real ciders, gins and more!



After three successful years in Norwich, a team of volunteers from across the West Midlands are now in the process of bringing this festival to the New Bingley Hall in Birmingham.

As always, the Great British Beer Festival will include a wide range of beer styles, from stouts and porters to bitters and golden pales. For those looking for something different, we will also have a range of ciders, perries, world beers, spirits and soft drinks available.

Alongside a fantastic range of drinks, the Great British Beer Festival Winter will also feature:

- A range of local food vendors
- Tutored tastings and talks

- A stage packed with music acts and entertainment
- The announcement of the winners of the Champion Beer of Britain Winter style categories

And much more!



Tickets for the event will be available from the CAMRA website at: [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk), or ring 01727 867201

More information on the festival can be found at: [www.winter.gbbf.org.uk](http://www.winter.gbbf.org.uk)

## CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE

# WE'RE ONLY MAKING PLANS FOR NIGEL

## PUB'S 'NIGEL NIGHT' ATTRACTS HUNDREDS!



Did you know that the name Nigel was nearing extinction? Me neither, but the Fleece pub in Bretforton, Worcestershire is well aware of this unusual fact and organised a 'Nigel Night' in September which attracted 432 people!

Pubgoers with the name had to prove it with a form of ID to receive a drink and a 'Nigel' badge.

Customers could choose from a range of Nigel-themed drinks including a scrumpy cider called Narky Nigel and four specially brewed ales which included NigAle and Nigel's Best.

Licensee Nigel Smith said, "It made me think of what the Great British Pub is all about, coming together, having a laugh, meeting new people and falling into conversation. We had people from all walks of life, all happy to talk to each other simply because they were called Nigel and celebrating the fact".

A great example of what the pub should be all about!

Although this was the first time a record had been attempted for a gathering of Nigels, it was not an official Guinness World Record so could not get into the famous book.

*Based on an article in the Morning Advertiser online.*

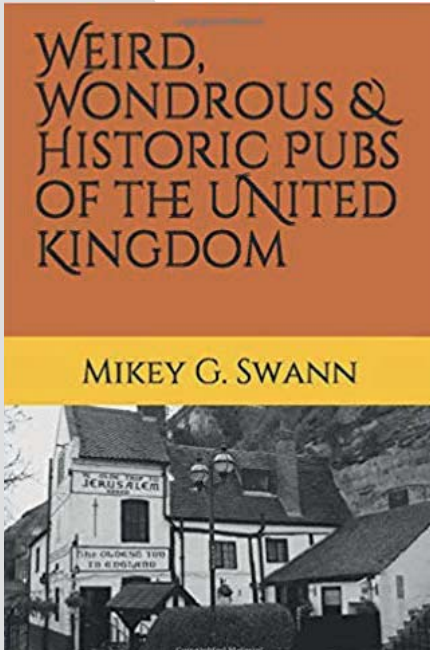
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# NEW BOOK OUT ON WEIRD & WONDERFUL PUBS

CHRISTMAS STOCKING FILLER?



This new book has popped up on our radar and may be worth considering as a festive stocking filler for the beer fan in your life.

It's written by Mikey Swann who hails from Filey and describes himself as 'a curious and passionate travel writer'. The book features 40 of the UK's quirkiest pubs including one that is four feet lower on one side than the other and another where the discovery of DNA was announced.

The featured pubs are scattered around England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. From Hull to Hathersage, Belgravia to Belfast, the book acts as your quirky pub journey companion.

The paperback version is priced at £6.99 and the Kindle version £2.49, both available from Amazon.

More information is available on Facebook:  
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# CASTLE ROCK AND CAMRA DECRY USE OF REAL ALE IMAGERY IN BBC PROGRAMME ON BINGE DRINKING

## WRONG SECTOR TARGETED



Castle Rock Brewery, supported by CAMRA, has protested against the use of imagery showing the brewery's Harvest Pale beer being dispensed in a pub in a BBC programme about binge drinking.

An evening news segment on the BBC's East Midlands Today programme showed images of unconscious drinkers in the street being treated by paramedics alongside a picture of Harvest Ale being poured.

Castle Rock said, "This ill-considered use of a library shot of one of our beers is just one example of many used by the media. It represents a small part of a big problem in which pubs, bars and cask beers are demonised via association with binge drinking. If this issue of alcohol abuse is going to be explored thoroughly and fairly then we can think of more suitable places to look than well-run pubs, bars and hard-working breweries, starting with ultra cheap supermarket booze".

Castle Rock asked its followers to share the positive impact of pubs, bars and breweries on social media to counter the negative representation it felt the sector was given by the BBC.

CAMRA national chairman Nik Antona agreed that the media should "stop misrepresenting cask ale and traditional pubs by tarring them with the brush of irresponsible drinking".

He added, "Traditional pubs are the home of responsible drinking, providing a safe, supervised and social environment to enjoy a drink. The media should be more mindful of the implicit bias they are creating in their stories and should consider giving more focus to the prevalent causes of binge drinking such as the availability of cheap supermarket booze which is predominantly consumed at home".

The BBC had not commented on the response at the time of writing.

### MORNING ADVERTISER

[www.morningadvertiser.co.uk](http://www.morningadvertiser.co.uk)



# VISIT TO 11<sup>TH</sup> GAINSBOROUGH BEER FESTIVAL

## A DIARY OF THE DAY

With no 2019 Scunthorpe Beer Festival, the 11<sup>th</sup> Gainsborough Beer Festival, held in the impressive surroundings of Gainsborough Old Hall, was our 'local' festival.



Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October turned out to be a popular day for CAMRA members from Scunthorpe. Leaving Scunthorpe Bus Station at 10:30AM on the No. 100 bus, the steady trip had picked up some twelve passengers heading that way by the time the bus had reached Messingham.

Arriving in Gainsborough before 11:30AM and the festival not opening until 12 noon presented a slight problem of killing time, which was easily covered with a visit to the Gainsborough Wetherspoons – the Sweyn Forkbeard, which was taking part in the national Wetherspoon's beer festival. A quick sample of their limited offerings and a welcome bacon butty soon brought us to noon. A short walk through a now damp Gainsborough brought us to the Old Hall. Surprisingly there was no sign of a beer festival taking part, but past experience sent us to a side door where everything was ready and waiting.

Exchanging a £10 note for a festival glass and £7 worth of beer tokens we entered the fairly busy hall to be greeted with 15 ciders and 71 Real Ales, perhaps 20 or more being served through handpumps. Now the problem was what to start with? I started with an Aldwark 'Baabarian

Gold' at 3.8% ABV, a nice steady opener, quickly followed by a Brewsters 'Hophead', another 3.8% pale ale. As the afternoon progressed, the first beer was off, Thornbridge 'Crackendale' pale. Oh well, still 70 others to choose from! A sample of Great Newsome 'Holderness Dark Mild' at 4.3% was the best so far, so another dark beer was sampled, this time a Brewsters offering, 'Stilton Porter' at 4.4%, giving a strong hoppy taste. Back onto a few more pale ales before, in the interest of research, I surprised a few by sampling Beartown's 'Peach Melba'. I have never been a fan of this type, but it was an acceptable way to clear the palate ready for the final flourish.

Overall an excellent festival put on by the small band of Gainsborough CAMRA members giving you the full range of real ales to sample, from a session pale through to the local Cat Asylum 'Quince Charming' which kept you guessing on its real ABV being listed at 6.9% but the barrel showing it as

7.6%. I didn't try it so no idea on its form, although I had been warned it was a hazy beer.

The usual tombola was available plus hot food, served by the Old Hall staff, so something for everyone!



Time soon caught up with the Scunthorpe gang and the last bus home at ten minutes past five, yes that early!, was well populated with more festival goers than the outward trip, all heading home or maybe even calling somewhere else on their way back.

KEITH DIXON

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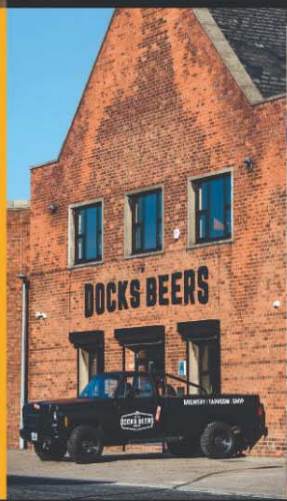
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