

Available from all good bookshops or  
Campaign for Real Ale <https://camra.org.uk/>  
Tel: 01727 867201 Released 29/10/20 Price £15.99

## IRON BREW

MAGAZINE OF SCUNTHORPE & DISTRICT  
CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

FEBRUARY – APRIL 2021



### IN THIS ISSUE

- CRAFT BEER CONNOISSEUR – THE RISE OF NITRO BEERS
- CHRISTMAS BEERS
- MARSTON'S TO TAKE ON BRAIN'S WELSH PUB ESTATE
- LITTLE BIG DOG MICROBREWERY OPENS UP IN BARROW
- REVIEW OF PETE BROWN'S BOOK 'BEER BY DESIGN'
- BRITAIN'S SMALL BREWERS DEMAND URGENT GOVERNMENT ACTION
- GBBF WINTER BEER FESTIVAL GOES VIRTUAL
- CAMRA AT FIFTY

... AND MUCH MORE

## **ESSENTIAL INFORMATION**

BRANCH CHAIRMAN & IRON BREW

EDITOR

Mark Elsome

Tel: 01724 331056

e: [mark.elsome@ntlworld.com](mailto:mark.elsome@ntlworld.com)

29 The Dales, Bottesford, Scunthorpe  
DN17 2QF

BRANCH TREASURER

Lisa Robson

Tel: 01652 661222

BRANCH SECRETARY

Keith Dixon

Tel: 01724 346023

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Paul Williams

Tel: 01673 818109

WEB MASTER

Sarah Morgans

Tel: 07840 155637

SOCIAL SECRETARY:

Position Vacant

[www.scunthorpe.camra.org.uk](http://www.scunthorpe.camra.org.uk)  
f/scunnycamra

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE (CAMRA)

230 Hatfield Rd, St Albans, Herts  
AL1 4LW

Tel: 01727 867 201

e: [camra@camra.org.uk](mailto:camra@camra.org.uk)

[www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk)

DISCLAIMER – views expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the editor, branch committee or CAMRA nationally. The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten articles for publication. All editorial copyright Scunthorpe & District CAMRA

## **CHAIRMAN'S CHAT**



Well it's goodbye to 2020 (some would say good riddance) and hello to 2021. After a difficult year for everyone, there does at least seem to be light at the end of the tunnel with the mass Covid vaccination programme, for which we can all be thankful.

Britain's pubs and breweries continue to struggle as their livelihoods are threatened through enforced closure and compounded by an inadequate financial compensation package offered by the Government. Unless this is quickly rectified many permanent closures of businesses are predicted. Once again it has been difficult to avoid reference to Covid-19 within the pages of Iron Brew as it's been Covid doom and gloom for months now, but we've tried to bring you some good news stories as well, such as the opening of two new breweries during the pandemic, one of which is in our branch area. We hope you enjoy this issue!

### **CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:**

Mark Elsome, A Beergeek, Morning Advertiser, Geoff McCaughtrie, The Scotsman, DrinksRetailing News, Keith Dixon, Campaign for Real Ale

## **CRAFT BEER CONNOISSEUR**

**N IS FOR NITROGEN**

**The Rise of Nitro Beers**



And what new trick has the craft beer fraternity foisted upon us now? In case you didn't know, nitro beers are the new kids in town and their popularity is growing. You mean those cans with a widget, right? That little hollow, spherical piece of plastic with a hole in it which adds nitrogen to the beer once it's opened and rolls around noisily in the can afterwards? Actually, no! Although many commercial beers packaged in cans still use widgets, things have moved on since then. And this next bit is how. To explain this I shall attempt to usurp the great Bill Bryson (now that he's announced his retirement), as a populariser of 'sciencesy' stuff and delve into what's behind the notion that nitro beers are different. A big ask, but worth a shot, so here we

go!

Most beers are carbonated with carbon dioxide, either naturally from the fermentation process or artificially from the addition of the gas externally when on draught or during the bottling or canning process. Carbon dioxide forms carbonic acid when dissolved in water, which is very weakly acidic. This helps to give beers their signature sharp, prickly sensation in the mouth when you drink them (the carbonic bite) – perfect for hoppy beers such as pale ales and bitters.

Latterly craft brewers have been experimenting with infusing a gas mixture comprising 70% nitrogen and 30% carbon dioxide, which changes the character of the beer. Unlike carbon dioxide, nitrogen is virtually insoluble in water and forms smaller, more profuse bubbles, which help to buoy up the creamy head and give a smoother mouthfeel.

Using nitrogen is particularly applicable to stouts and porters by smoothing them out, and these are the category of beers most often found as nitro versions. Adding nitrogen softens their edges, adds more body and enhances the feel of the beer in the mouth. However for hop-driven beers infused with nitrogen, the hops often get stripped down and the bitterness clashes

with the creaminess created by the nitrogen. Even so, a few craft brewers still offer nitro versions of IPA's and may even extend this to nitro fruited sour beers in the near future.

Almost inevitably though, some couldn't leave it there and have introduced the notion of the 'hard pour'. Here it's recommended that the beer is poured hard and fast, often fully inverting the bottle or can while filling the glass to get the full nitro effect. A few breweries now offer standard and nitro versions of the same beer and provide detailed instructions on how to pour nitro beers correctly.



I myself have tried some nitro stouts and feel it makes a marked difference (and yes, I did use the hard pour). Not sure how successful the nitro technique would be for other styles of beer, but for stouts and porters it's fine. Maybe it's not

just another crazy idea dreamt up by a group of hirsute craft brewers on a slow day at the brewery!

So, do you think it's craft beer innovation at its best or just an annoying craft fad with little merit? In order to solve that conundrum may I suggest trying some nitro beers yourself and making up your own mind?

And while I remember, if you're reading this and you're Bill Bryson, sorry about the attempted dethroning, but on this evidence your exalted status as a national treasure is perfectly safe!

#### **A BEERGEEK**

With help from:

<https://www.foodandwine.com/news/nitro-beers-explained>

<https://beerandbrewing.com/a-perfect-match-nitro-and-stout/>

<https://vinepair.com/wine-blog/what-the-heck-is-a-nitro-pour-and-why-should-i-care/>

### **CHRISTMAS BEERS**

#### **Ales for the Festive Season**

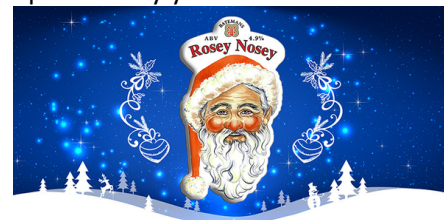
In a bid to have as normal a Christmas as possible in these strangest of times, did you, like me, try and stock up on Christmas beers? Christmas is one of those times when brewers roll out special brews for the festive season, ranging from hoppy blonde ales to dark beers stuffed with spices.

Belgium is the acknowledged king

of Christmas beers, but with little chance to visit this year, I decided to concentrate on UK brewed beers.



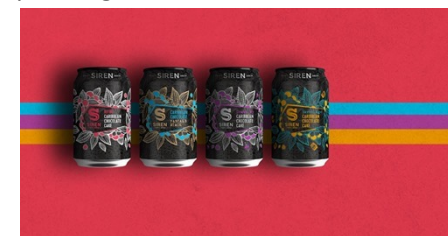
Generally our local supermarkets are underwhelming in their stocking of Christmas ales – the usual suspects include Hardy & Hansons Rocking Rudolph, Batemans Rosey Nosey, Brewdog Hoppy Xmas and Greene King Festive Pudding. And if you're very lucky, you might find Hook Norton Twelve Days, a dark beer, in bottles. Not bad beers in their own way, but they seem to be the only option every year.



Unless you were able to visit some specialist bottle shops during your Christmas shopping, the internet

provided the best choice of some unusual Christmas beers.

I obtained four different varieties of Caribbean Chocolate Cake from Siren Craft Brew. These were strong, rich, dark, luscious stouts ranging from 7.4 to 10.2% ABV, perfect for drinking on a dark, cold, winter's day (of which we had many), or especially good as an accompaniment to Christmas pudding.



OK, they don't have the word 'Christmas' in their title, but they're always brewed around the end of each year to cater for the Christmas market, so to my mind they can be classed as bona fide Christmas beers.

I also obtained a couple of cans of Origin Story from Siren, an imperial stout at 10.0% ABV, which was also delicious. Again not identified as a Christmas ale, but ideally suited for sipping slowly at this time of year. My other internet purchase was Christmas Kitty from Brass Castle in Malton. This was a 5.5% ABV festive spiced version of their Bad Kitty porter, the Christmas brew originally being a collaboration with North

Riding Brewery. Again rich and delicious with a hint of Christmas spices such as cinnamon, clove and



ginger overlaying its normal vanilla and coffee flavours. Also the more forgiving strength allowed quaffing of a few cans over the

Christmas period.

Branch Secretary Keith Dixon appears to have had more success than me in sourcing true Christmas beers as the photos below show:



Although I've shown a preference for dark beers in this article, I did stock up on a few pale ales as well

such as Tiny Rebel Clwb Tropica, Wild IPA and Magic Rock Saucery for myself and others. My Christmas beers were very enjoyable and helped the Christmas celebrations along nicely. Hope you managed to enjoy the 'reduced' Christmas this year, with or without some festive beers. Cheers!

**MARK ELSOME/KEITH DIXON**

## REVIEW OF BEER BY DESIGN

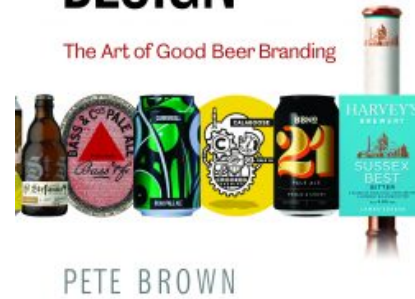
### Pete Brown's New Book

Acclaimed beer writer Pete Brown brought out a new beer book last year, just in time for the Christmas market. Called *Beer by Design*, it's a very niche book, but a niche I was interested in, so I bought a copy and wasn't disappointed.

In this lavishly illustrated book he traces the history of beer label design from the UK's first-ever trademark (Bass) to the present day. He explores the conventions of successful beer design (and how they are now being shattered by the craft beer sector) and explains the tricks and secrets of great design in his usual, highly readable style. Pete Brown's first job was in marketing, so he's well qualified to break down beer design into its component parts. He references each element, from brand types to logos to packaging with extensive examples from the world of beer, shot through with his trademark wit.

## BEER BY DESIGN

The Art of Good Beer Branding



For instance when discussing how established, traditional brewers often try to imitate the branding of modern craft he says, "They're always in danger of committing the sin of 'dad dancing', as if they're suffering a midlife crisis."



As an example of someone who avoided this pitfall, he uses Adnams Brewery, who gave a

contemporary look to their 'Jack' brand which was gathering dust in their archive.

Of course many decades ago, when

beer choice was limited to just mild, bitter or 'mixed', beer design and branding wasn't so important. But over the last ten to fifteen years, craft beer has confronted the established conservative tradition of beer design and turned it on its head.

Much of the book's appeal is showing how craft beer broke all the rules using designs that didn't need a big agency to tell them how to do it and which said to the consumer this is different and it has more hops, more integrity and more flavour (*disagree here if you wish – Ed*).

The advent of modern cans around 2002 which didn't impart a metallic taste to the beer inside, gave craft brewers a larger canvas to design all around the packaging, not just on the front and back as in bottled beers.



Many cans are now almost works of art, often designed by local artists and some like Wild Card above, eschew clear brewery branding for a more surreal look that they hope will prick people's curiosity enough to pick up a can to find out what's

inside.

Using breweries from the UK, USA and Europe Pete Brown discusses the rationale behind their branding and packaging and how it makes those brands stand out in an increasingly crowded field.

To round off the book he assembles a panel of design industry experts and using a selection of six beer designs featured in the book asks them to judge the design work on its own merits. Their comments are interesting and it's worth checking to see if they chime with your own. In conclusion, this is a thoroughly researched and well-written book on beer design, maintaining Pete Brown's usual high standard. If you've ever wondered why brewers select the beer branding they do, this book could be for you! Available from CAMRA Books, price £15.99

**MARK ELSOME**

## **BOSS BREWING LAUNCHES PROTEST BEER**

### **Dripford's Prohibition Takes a Bow**

Swansea brewery Boss Brewing launched a protest beer in December aimed at the restrictions crippling the hospitality industry in Wales.

Called Dripford's Prohibition, the 4.2% ABV beer comes with a label showing a grim reaper character and is described as a 'death of the pubs pale ale' inspired by 'short-sighted

decisions and industry scapegoating'.



The new beer takes a swipe at Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford who has overseen restrictions on Welsh pubs, restaurants and cafes which ban them from serving alcohol and forces them to close at 6pm.

Boss Brewing director Sarah John said that Dripford's Prohibition was born out of frustration that the hospitality industry is "constantly being victimised despite little evidence."

"No one is denying that this virus is a very real threat – the point we're making is that the hospitality sector is being made the scapegoat and this has to stop."

She went on to say, "Pubs and bars which follow the guidelines shouldn't have transmissions – we haven't had any outbreaks at our taproom. Instead the Welsh Government is resigning many pubs to closure with little consideration of how these measures are affecting their livelihoods."

*Could this be the first of many*

*protest beers'? – Ed.*  
**MORNING ADVERTISER**



## **MARSTON'S TO TAKE ON BRAIN'S PUB ESTATE**

### **Iconic Welsh Brewer Up For Sale**

Pub company Marston's announced in December that it would operate the 156-strong pub estate of iconic Welsh brewer S A Brain on a combination of 25 year leases and management contract arrangements, thereby safeguarding 1,300 jobs. Brains will retain the freeholds to the pubs as well as its brewing business.

The company had been put up for sale earlier in the month, a casualty of the uncertainty caused by Covid-19 on the entire hospitality sector. The family-owned firm was established in 1882 by Samuel Arthur Brain in Cardiff and brews a number of renowned beers such as Brains SA (nicknamed Skull Attack by drinkers) and the Reverend James. The company announced in March

that it was selling 40 non-core pubs and reorganising its support centre to create a 'leaner and more agile business.'

Marston's will operate 141 of the freehold pubs under the Brain's brand and a further 15 leasehold sites under management contract. Marston's already has 106 pubs in Wales and will operate the Brain's estate under existing branding and continue to offer Brain's beers from February 2021.



Marston's Chief Executive Ralph Findlay commented, "This transaction is entirely consistent with Marston's long-term strategy as a focused pub operator and strengthens our representation in south and west Wales whilst protecting the heritage and independence of an iconic Welsh business."

CAMRA Chairman Nik Antona, said, "It's clear there has not been enough support to protect even a well-established business such as Brains. This could be the first of many hospitality businesses to take drastic action to survive."

Later it was announced that the Brain's brewery in East Moors, Cardiff was also up for sale, although at the time of writing a buyer had not been found. This opened up the possibility of the brewing of Brain's beers moving to England in the short term, with fears for its longer term survival as a brand. Brewing of Brain's would then probably be transferred to one of the breweries owned by Marston's.

#### MORNING ADVERTISER

### NEW MICROBREWERY FOR BARROW

#### Little Big Dog Opens

A new microbrewery, Little Big Dog, has opened in Barrow- upon-Humber during the last few months of 2020.



It describes itself as 'a tiny brewery based in Lincolnshire, dedicated to making high quality beers in small quantities with big tastes.' In this context 'tiny' is around 50 hectolitres per year (approx. 9,000 pints - Ed). We all know how challenging 2020

has been for the brewers and publicans due to pub closures, so it is surprising to see a new start-up brewery during these times. Owner-Brewer Geoff McCaughtrie says, "Yes, it has been a difficult time to start-up with pubs under a great deal of pressure but we hope that the restrictions can start to be lifted soon and see pubs opening again.

"With pubs closed, all our efforts are focused on getting our beers out in cans at present - everything is done by hand, so this is a lot of work.



But I am hopeful that with everyone having been forced to focus locally in 2020, we will see an increased demand for locally produced goods. We have certainly had a positive response from customers in Barrow. Our focus is very local - we are too small to have ambitions outside of our corner of North Lincolnshire.

Little Big Dog has a core range of Pale Ale, Lager, Porter and Stout, but are also brewing smaller batches which so far have included a Red Rye IPA, Citrus IPA, Brown Saison, Belgian Blonde Ale and a Barley Wine."



Geoff says "I can't compete with other breweries on price so I need to offer something different. I'm not brewing typical real ales but it's not full-on craft beer either - I'm trying to find a niche between these two. I enjoy brewing different styles of beer and the small batches will allow me to pursue this alongside the core beers. I don't expect people to like every one of my beers - we all have different preferences - but I defy you to not like any of them." *We wish Geoff all the best in his new venture and hope to try his beers*

early in the new year. Little Big Dog beers are available to buy via the brewery website:

<https://littlebigdogbeer.co.uk/>  
or from Sargeants Butchers in Barrow - Ed .

**BASED ON PERSONAL COMMUNICATION FROM GEOFF MCCAUGHTRIE**

### NEW BREWERY LAUNCHED IN WEST YORKSHIRE

#### Amity Brew Co. Opens in Leeds

Following on from the good news about Little Big Dog, another new UK brewery decided to launch in Leeds at the start of a national crisis. Amity Brew Co. was launched at Christmas 2019 in Farsley, north-west Leeds, by Russ Clarke and a group of friends from the craft beer scene, having worked in some of the UK's best breweries.

Amity is a Celtic word and stands for friendship and community, not just the town in *Jaws* experiencing shark problems!

Having secured the brewery space they were in the process of setting up when the pandemic hit in February. Rather than continuing to add bricks and mortar to the brewery building they decided to opt for contract brewing to get their name known. This turned out to be a fortuitous decision as there was no furlough support for new businesses and no end in sight.

They wanted to make modern interpretations of classic beer styles such as Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, Fullers ESB and Augustiner Helles lager, reasoning that these didn't get old and always tasted good, as well as experimenting with the new. It was either pretty brave or foolhardy to try and do this at the start of a pandemic, but they felt it was now or never and pushed on with four core beers.



These were: Bigger Boat (8.0% ABV), a double IPA, Red Lane (4.5%), an Extra Special Bitter (ESB), Zest (4.6%), a citrus pilsner lager and Bessy (5.0%), a milk stout. Fortunately the response and feedback from the local community in Farsley and the beer community online was phenomenal, as people chose to support them even without trying the beers. They continued to contract brew throughout the summer and steadily built on the positivity. By December 2020 their brewery and 60 capacity taproom was open,

although being in Tier 3 they could only offer takeout beers. They say they've been blown over by the support of the local and beer communities, which helped them to keep going through some dark days. They're also looking forward to the day when they can host people properly at the brewery site. Their beers can be purchased online from:

<https://www.amitybrew.co/shop>

*Great to read two good news stories about new breweries in a year when good news of any kind has been a bit thin on the ground – Ed*

**MORNING ADVERTISER**

## **BRITAIN'S SMALL BREWERS DEMAND URGENT NEW YEAR ACTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT**

### **Greater Support Demanded For Sector Decimated by Lockdown**

More than 320 independent brewers from across the UK have signed a joint letter from the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) to Boris Johnson asking for urgent support.

The breweries have faced harsh restrictions on their businesses over the past ten months and have seen sales plummet by an average of 80 per cent during lockdown. They argue that much of the support given to the wider hospitality sector

has failed to filter through to them. The firms also say that the UK government is planning a tax increase for brewers with changes to Small Brewers' Relief (SBR) – a scheme that helped make it viable for small businesses to compete against global beer makers.

The letter follows the Scottish Government pledging £1.8m for small breweries in Scotland.

James Calder, Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) chief executive, said, "Over three hundred small breweries coming together to write to the Prime Minister will, we hope, convey the depth of feeling from the independent brewing sector that it has constantly been overlooked, but more so that it is imperative this government acts now or risks setting the British brewing industry back a decade with widespread business closures.

"The hugely important Christmas period has been a joyless one for brewers as the vast majority of their market was closed, yet there has been no compensation and little support forthcoming. The Prime Minister needs to make it his New Year's Resolution to help small breweries."

SIBA is calling on the Prime Minister to firstly, extend the hospitality support to cover small breweries, including the Business Rates holiday; Secondly, compensate small brewers

for the millions of pints that have to be thrown away when pubs are forced to close; and finally to scrap the proposed changes to Small Brewers' Relief to create a sustainable future for the industry.

**THE SCOTSMAN/DRINKSRETAILING NEWS**

## **LOCAL PUB & BREWERY TAKEAWAYS DURING LOCKDOWN AND TIER 3**

### **What Was it Like in Our Area?**

To get an overview of this during the second national lockdown and North Lincolnshire's subsequent placement into Tier 3, I first consulted the CAMRA Brew2You app to see what was available locally in this area.

Typing my postcode into the app brought up eight businesses, a mixture of pubs and breweries, although none in North Lincolnshire. These ranged from the Yorkshire Brewhouse, Atom Brewery and the Bone Machine Brewing Company in Hull to the Hallcross Pub and Doncaster Brewery Tap in Doncaster and Pheasantry Brewery in East Markham near Newark. Not that local then I hear you say!

Either North Lincolnshire pubs and breweries chose not to offer takeaway beers and other drinks or possibly were unaware of the CAMRA Brew2You app.

Next I scanned through Facebook to

see who had posted about takeaways there.

At the beginning of the lockdown in early November the Hope & Anchor in South Ferriby announced that they were giving away their draught real ales for a donation, but this was simply to avoid it going to waste. Sure enough, it all went!



The Sutton Arms in Scawby advertised their Sharp's Doombar and Milestone beers at around £70 per cask, again with the intention of not letting it go to waste, but was otherwise closed.

Their sister pub, the White Swan at Scotter (which was located in the West Lindsey Council district), did offer takeaway Christmas meals over the festive period, as well as a takeaway food menu at other times.

The Nelthorpe Arms at South Ferriby had a strong Facebook presence throughout lockdown and beyond, mainly offering takeaway meals, but also some local beer packages. Both Great Newsome Brewery from South Frodingham in East Yorkshire and Spotlight Brewery from Goole kept up their roving commission of North Lincolnshire during lockdown and were willing to deliver their beers to customers' own homes on certain days when ordered via their websites.

The Black Door in Scunthorpe town centre adapted to lockdown and Tier 3 restrictions very well, with an excellent website offering takeaway cocktails, spirits, beers and ciders and Charcuterie Boards delivered to your door within an eight mile radius, as well as gift cards and Door Date cocktail and wine packages.

<https://www.theblackdoor.uk/door-2-door>

I was interested in the beers they had to offer and although these were initially only available as 'Lucky Dip' beer & cider boxes (see picture, below), this developed quickly into



individual beers selected by the customer, which was much more to my liking.

In the end I ordered twice from the Black Door and got craft beers from Magic Rock, Fourpure, Lost & Grounded, Tiny Rebel, Wild, Wiper & True, Brewdog and some dark lager from Budweiser Budvar, most of which went into storage for Christmas.

The service was quick and efficient and you had the not unpleasant feeling that you were helping out a local business to survive at a difficult time.

Docks Beers in Grimsby and the Message In A Bottle beer shop in Cleethorpes, although just outside our area, also maintained an online ordering service. However the latter only offered home delivery in the Grimsby and Cleethorpes areas, a fact I realised too late when I had to drive over to Cleethorpes one December Sunday to collect my order!

Later click and collect alcohol was banned for pubs in the new ball of confusion that was the January lockdown rules (now delivery only), although breweries were exempt. Hence only a few local pubs and breweries decided to run with the takeaway option allowed under the late 2020 lockdown and Tier 3 restrictions which applied in North Lincolnshire. We give our thanks to

those who offered this local service for either beer or food or both. We hope it proved beneficial and we look forward to the time in 2021 when pubs are allowed to reopen and breweries once again have outlets for their products other than online sales.

**MARK ELSOME**

## GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL WINTER GOES VIRTUAL

Online Festival This Year



Unfortunately due to Covid-19, CAMRA are unable to host the Great British Beer Festival Winter in Birmingham this year as planned (This is a great shame as I went to the New Bingley Hall in Birmingham with a small CAMRA group for last year's event and thoroughly enjoyed it - Ed). However, it will still be possible to share some of the very best beer, cider and perry the UK has to offer in the Great British Beer Festival Winter at Home. This is an interactive, immersive and on-demand virtual festival that you can enjoy where you want, when you want.



Included in the price of a ticket is a box of fantastic beers, ciders or perries and a login code to a number of beer tastings, recipe ideas, industry Q&As, pub history talks and so much more.

You can register your interest at:

<https://winter.gbbf.org.uk/>

to receive the latest news and ticket information. The virtual festival runs from 19 – 21 March 2021.

### CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

## CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE AT FIFTY

### CAMRA Celebrates its Half Century

CAMRA celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and celebrations will be in order, Covid-19 restrictions permitting! CAMRA was formed in 1971 as the Campaign for the Revitalisation of Real Ale after four friends, on a UK holiday, were outraged at the appalling state of British Beer at the time.

They invited others to join them and the response was encouraging such that a campaign newspaper, What's Brewing, was published in 1972 and the first Good Beer Guide appeared in 1974.

Things really started to take off after the first national beer festival was held at Covent Garden in 1975, and the organisation, now with its name shortened to the Campaign for Real

Ale (also know by the acronym CAMRA), grew rapidly.

In the intervening years, through its national and regional branch structures, CAMRA has campaigned tirelessly on behalf of the consumer, tackling many important issues such as the big brewers stranglehold on pubs, the regulation of pub companies and planning protection for pubs and was recognised as one of the most successful consumer organisations in Europe.

Among other things, it also campaigns for traditional cider and perry, reductions in the level of beer duty to European levels and



following

its Revitalisation Project in 2018, promotion of both real ale and craft beers. In a normal year CAMRA volunteers organise over 180 beer festivals around the UK to promote the best beer, cider and perry in Britain and beyond.

It has endured the slings and arrows of many critics over the years, but still plays a vital role in securing fairness and value for consumers and as a protector of the British pub.

CAMRA, to its credit, has been very vocal during the Covid-19 pandemic in trying to persuade the government to provide adequate compensation to pubs and breweries which have been forced to close or lay off staff.

So, let's raise a glass to CAMRA on its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and wish it well for a bright future. Cheers!

**MARK ELSOME**

## WHAT ON EARTH?

### No. 37: The Breakfast Stout

So, what on earth is a breakfast stout? First of all it's *not* an alcoholic beverage you drink to accompany your cornflakes! Self-evidently consumption of alcohol at breakfast time is not recommended. The one exception seems to be when you're jetting away on an early morning flight to sunnier climes (remember when we *could* go on holiday?). On reaching the airport buffet area you proudly announce to anyone within earshot that, 'My holiday starts here' and order a pint with your full English, despite it only being 5 am! Good luck to those brave souls who attempt this, but I've never fancied a cold pint of Doombar in an airport Wetherspoon's at such an ungodly hour. How about you?

I digress! To return to the theme of this article, it transpires that breakfast stouts are so named because of a clever piece of

marketing by some craft brewing companies to give a stout with added coffee beans some extra pizzazz. As coffee is a breakfast staple for many and as stouts may also contain oats, the term breakfast stout was invented as it probably sounded more appealing than simply calling it coffee stout. Having said that there are some excellent breakfast stouts out there such as Siren Broken Dream (a CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain award winner), Dark Star Espresso, Fixed Wheel Cafe Culture, Nook Brewhouse Grumpy Mule and even imperial versions such as Founders KBS (Kentucky Breakfast Stout) from the USA, which weighs in at an impressive 12.3% ABV!



I'm a big fan of stouts in their own right, whether or not they're infused

with coffee. The style can act as an adaptable canvas for additions of other complementary flavour components such as chocolate



(through the use of chocolate malts and cacao nibs), hazelnuts, fruits such as blueberries, oranges and cherries, sweeter elements such as salted caramel, maple syrup and

marshmallow, spirits like rum and even additions of lactose (milk sugar) to produce a milk stout, the latter having a recent resurgence of popularity. Stout is robust and adaptable enough to cope with these additional flavours without ruining its basic 'stoutishness' and more often than not is enhanced by them. Breakfast stouts and stouts in general are smooth, delicious dark beers that are well worth trying, particularly in the colder months. And in this case I don't mind the term breakfast stout, even if it can be a tad misleading to those not quite so familiar with naming conventions in the craft beer

community . Cheers!  
**A BEERGEEK**

## BREWDOG GIVE AWAY NEW BEER



### Launch of Lost Lager

So, as we often do, let's finish with a light-hearted feature on our old friends, the craft behemoth that is Brewdog! Yes, the publicity-shy Scottish brewer has done it again, this time a noisy offering of four free cans of their new beer, Lost Lager, to all, when ordered from their website. In a video posted on Twitter in January, co-founder James Watt said, "For thousands of years good beer has helped people celebrate the best of times and also get

through the worst of times" (*has he been reading Dickens again?* - Ed). "2021 hasn't started that well, so we're giving everyone in the UK a free four-pack of this amazing new beer. Hope you enjoy the beer and together we can get through this".



The 4.5% ABV beer is described as a hopped-up version of a classic German

Pilsner.

People flocked to the website to claim the free beer, although some were critical on social media about the wait times of more than an hour to claim the free cans. Claimants also had to pay the £1.95 shipping fee for the beers.



So, a philanthropic gesture for these troubled times or a cynical marketing ploy? Answers on a postcard ...

**MARK ELSOME: BASED ON A MORNING ADVERTISER ARTICLE**

<https://www.morningadvertiser.co.uk/Article/2021/01/11/How-to-claim-BrewDog-free-beer>

*And as it's a New Year...*



*from all in Scunthorpe & District CAMRA*