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IRON BREW

MAGAZINE OF SCUNTHORPE & DISTRICT
CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



FEBRUARY – APRIL 2022



Christmas Comes But Once A Year!

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



Welcome to this new edition of our Iron Brew online branch magazine. If it's not too late I'd like to wish all of our readers a very Happy New Year. So what's new in the wonderful world of beer?

Thankfully pubs in England escaped the festive restrictions due to Covid imposed in other areas of Britain. However the Government's "lockdown by stealth" approach decimated pubgoing and many pubs struggled over what should have been their busiest period. We hope for better in 2022.

Good news of a new brewery setting up in our area – the Shadow Bridge Brewery in Barton – we wish them well for the coming year. More details on Shadow Bridge in this issue.

The branch is aiming to restart social events once more, but this will depend on the current Omicron wave diminishing, which thankfully appears to be happening. Cheers!

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

Mark Elsome, A Beergeek, Beerwulf, Paul Ainsworth, CAMRA, BBC News, Morning Advertiser, Gavin Richards

CRAFT BEER CONNOISSEUR

A Brief History of Stout & Porter



So, which came first, stout or porter? Opinions differ, but it now appears that stout was first used to define a strong version of porter called 'stout porter' rather than a style in its own right.

Porter as a style began in London in the mid-18th century where brown beer was the order of the day and was available in 'Mild' or 'Stale' versions, the stale being an older version of the younger, sweeter brown. In those days brewers delivered beer to the pubs soon after primary fermentation was complete and the pubs matured the beer themselves. The beers became popular with London's street and river porters.

As the industrial revolution reached brewing, those brown beers matured into porter as breweries began to age the beer themselves.

Porter became the first industrially produced beer, brewed in very large volumes inside huge wooden mash tuns. Porters also became popular across the world and production had commenced in Ireland, North America, Sweden and Russia by the end of the 18th century.

These dark beers were left for around 6 months as the beer slowly 'staled' and were robustly strong at around 7% ABV. The long maturation allowed the yeast to convert more of the malt sugars, producing a tarter and drier beer than the sweeter, milder version. By the 1800's the typical ABV had dropped to around 5% as beer taxes



rose, but was still matured for months in porter tuns – in 1823 porter production topped 1.8 million barrels in London.

Shortly afterwards porter went into decline as mild beers grew in popularity and other beer styles like pale ales became more prominent. A

century after its peak, porter had effectively disappeared and stout became the most popular dark beer on the bar.

Stout and porter are intertwined throughout history, and although very similar it's their flavor profiles that set them apart. Porter is known for notes of caramel, chocolate, cappuccino or liquorice, are slightly sweet with a malty body and range in colour from dark copper to dark brown. Stouts are known for their more coffee forward flavor and balanced bitterness.



Over time, and through a hard-to-trace dilution, stout came to refer to a strong dark beer and then just a family of dark beers, with breweries producing a range of stouts from

‘single’ weaker ones through to Imperial-strength.

All of this would change through the World Wars when beer production was impacted by roasted barley rationing and a general change in taste, in part brought about through the commonly-held belief that ‘stout is good for you.’

As the wartime recovery took place, stout became the fashionable and ‘healthful’ beer while porter, much weakened by rationing, became an old-fashioned relic that was left behind – indeed, it suffered a temporary extinction, disappearing for decades, until new microbrewers of the 1980s brought porter back.

Now porter *is* back and it sits with stout on bars and in fridges once again, where the modern brews taste nothing like those from the 18th century.

A BEERGEEK

Adapted from:

<https://www.beerwulf.com/en-gb/articles-about-craft-beer/porter-stout>

WHAT ON EARTH?

No. 77: Kombucha

Another new drink that you may not have heard of but which is growing in popularity is Kombucha. What on earth is that Beermeister?, I hear you ask, so let me explain! Kombucha is produced by fermenting sugared tea with a

SCOBY, an acronym for symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast. It has its origins in China, where it is consumed as a traditional drink, but by the early 20th century its popularity had spread to Germany, Russia and other parts of Eastern Europe and is now produced commercially worldwide.

Green or black tea is generally used and the finished product also contains probiotic bacteria and is gluten-free. The fermentation process produces alcohol but the content is usually less than 0.5% ABV, although this can increase with extended fermentation times. Some rather dubious health benefits have been claimed for the product but a 2003 review concluded that these unsubstantiated health benefits did not outweigh known risks and that Kombucha should not be recommended for therapeutic use.



All well and good so far I hear you say, but why is this of interest in a beer magazine? The reason is

because some brewers, particularly in the United States, have started to produce Kombuchas with more than 5% alcohol, using open air fermentation techniques akin to Belgian Lambic brewers. Flavours include raspberry, ginger, bourbon peach and even a KPA (Kombucha Pale Ale), ranging from 3.2 – 8% ABV. With these levels of alcohol they are more generally known as ‘hard Kombuchas’.

A difference of opinion has occurred between brewers over whether hard Kombuchas still contain viable probiotic bacteria, with some claiming that the bacteria are added in a dormant state and then activate when consumed (seems unlikely), while others state that the alcohol content of the product kills the bacteria. What is clear is that producers will not be able to suggest beneficial health effects anyway because of the high alcohol content and will need to advertise them as they would a normal beer or wine. They remain popular drinks in many countries because they’re pleasingly sweet and sour and effervescent like a sparkling wine. In the States many bars serve hard Kombucha on tap alongside cider and other alternatives to beer. As long as producers don’t try to claim that hard Kombucha has health benefits, otherwise Advertising Standards may just require a word in their ear!

A BEERGEEK

Based on:

[Kombucha - Wikipedia](#)

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/food/wp/2018/12/13/is-boozy-kombucha-good-for-you-its-getting-so-popular-it-might-not-matter/>

PUB COMPANIES - WHO THEY ARE AND WHAT THEY DO? PART 2

The Current Pub Company Scene

A pub company is simply a company that owns pubs and there are literally hundreds of them, many with only a handful or even just one pub. We'll concentrate here, though, on the bigger companies who, between them, own over half the country's pubs.

Stonegate

Founded in 2010 with the purchase of 333 pubs from Mitchells & Butlers, Stonegate grew quite slowly over the next ten years, making a series of acquisitions including brands like Slug & Lettuce, Walkabout and Be At One, until its pub numbers totalled 765. All the pubs were managed houses. A seismic change came in 2020 when Ei Group was bought for £1.27bn, making Stonegate the largest pub company in the UK with 1,270 managed pubs and, as a result of the

Ei purchase, 3,200 leased and tenanted businesses.

Ei itself had been founded, as Enterprise Inns, in 1991, initially with 333 pubs from Bass. The company built up its estate, gaining 2,200 pubs in batches by buying them from other companies or taking them over. In 2002, 1,864 pubs were bought from Whitbread and in 2004, 4,054 from Unique. By this time, it owned nearly 10,000 pubs and was in the FTSE 100 list of top companies. However, it was loaded with debt and the 2008 financial crash required a good deal of retrenchment. Ei also started building up its managed estate, including pubs on retail agreements under the Craft Union brand (we'll look at this operating model in the next article). By the time of the sale, it was down to fewer than 4,000 pubs.

Punch Taverns

The first article included a brief history of Punch to illustrate the volatility around pubco development. In summary, it grew quickly to around 8,000 pubs, suffered under the crash, sold a lot of pubs including its managed division and was taken over in 2016. 1,900 pubs went to Heineken and 1,300 to Patron Capital, who retain the Punch brand. At takeover time, all pubs were leased or tenanted but

it's also now pushing retail agreements (which it calls Management Partnerships). Some pubs were sold but in June 2021 it announced the purchase of Youngs' tenanted division, bringing the current total to 1,282. *(Punch itself was acquired in December by US-based investment company Fortress Investment Group for an undisclosed sum - Ed).*



Admiral Taverns

Admiral was founded in 2003 by two families and grew quickly to 2,300 pubs by 2007. Many of these were 'bottom end' houses disposed of by other pub companies. The financial crash had the usual consequences for over-extended businesses and numbers were down to 1,700 by 2011 and continued to fall. By 2017 it was in the hands of Cerberus Capital Management who sold up to a joint venture by Magners cider-makers C&C Group and estate investor Proprium Capital Partners, by which time there were 845 pubs. The acquisition trail was hit in 2019 with 137 pubs coming from Marstons and 150 from Heineken.

The big one arrived in July 2021 when Admiral bought 674 Hawthorn pubs from property firm New River taking the estate to over 1,500. Admiral's pubs are all tenanted or leased and tend to be wet-led community operations. It has a relatively good reputation in the trade though there's certainly no aversion to flogging off pubs as 'development opportunities'.

Star Pubs & Bars

In 1995, Scottish & Newcastle, one of the original 'Big Six' breweries, bought another of them, Courage, making the combined group Britain's biggest brewer. By 2011, the pub arm, then known as S&N Pub Co, had 1,500 tenanted pubs and 600 in management. Come 2008, Scottish Courage was gobbled up by international brewer Heineken and the pub business rebranded as Star Pubs & Bars. Many pubs were sold but then, in 2017, as previously mentioned, 1,900 were snapped up from Punch. Again there were disposals and the estate currently stands at 2,500.

Star vigorously promote their retail agreement scheme, Just Add Talent. In 2020, it was fined £2m for breaches of the Pubs Code (which we'll cover in a later article)

Greene King

In 1995, Greene King was a long-

established family brewer with 900 pubs, nearly all in East Anglia and the South-East. It then embarked on a ferocious acquisition trail, swallowing up many breweries (the likes of Morlands, Belhaven, Morrells and Hardy & Hanson) and other pub companies. GK itself is now owned by a billionaire Hong Kong property developer. It has some 3,100 pubs, restaurants and hotels, of which 1,200 are tenanted or leased. Its strategy seems to be to move in the managed direction and the 'Pub Ready' retail agreements are pushed hard. GK was once renowned for not letting other people's beers in its pubs but now have a more enlightened attitude.

Marston's

The company was known as Wolverhampton & Dudley until 2007 when it rebranded as Marston's, one of the many breweries it had taken over in recent years. At that time, 2,500 pubs were owned but the



total is now down to 1,400.

The tenanted estate, in particular, has been reduced through sales such as 200 to New River in 2013 and 137 to Admiral in 2019. In late 2020, the company took on the running of 156 Brains pubs in Wales. Also that year, Marston's merged its brewing operations with Carlsberg but this does not directly affect the pub business.

Mitchells and Butlers

Formed originally out of the old Bass estate, M&B have 1,650 pubs and restaurants. The multitudinous brands include Ember Inns, Toby Carveries, Nicholsons and All Bar One – as can be seen, the emphasis is on food. Pubs are mostly managed though around 50 are on a lease arrangement.

J D Wetherspoon

Since opening its first pub in 1979, 'Spoons has expanded to 925 pubs and 50 hotels, all managed. Plans for 18 new pubs are in the pipeline.

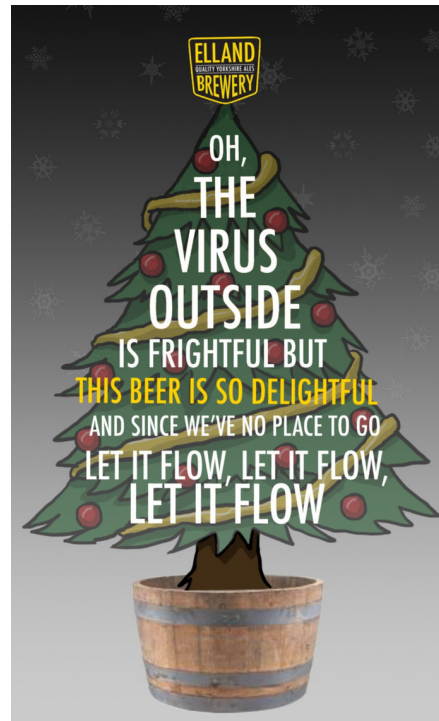


Wellington

Owned by the billionaire Reuben

Brothers, the company leases all its 850 pubs on a free of tie basis.

PAUL AINSWORTH



An online advert from Elland Brewery in the run-up to Christmas. Very apt!

LONDON FIELDS BREWERY PUT UP FOR SALE

Owners to Sell Brewery Taproom and Brand

The London Fields Brewery in Hackney, London, was closed and put up for sale by owners Carlsberg Marstons Brewing Company (CMBC) just before Christmas, despite recent investment of £2.1m in 2019, which

included a new brewkit. The brewery, taproom and the brand are all up for grabs.

The company has had a chequered history, including a controversial tax evasion case in 2014 in which the brewery founder Jules de Vere Whiteway Wilkinson was given more time by the courts to repay a total of £3.2m to Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs. At the time London Fields looked doomed, but Whiteway Wilkinson convinced the court that the best way to pay his debts was by continuing to sell beer.

In 2015 it was revealed that brewing staff had been made redundant and production shifted to our own Tom Wood Beers, despite them having no connection with London.

In 2017 Carlsberg bought the brewery outright in conjunction with Brooklyn Brewery.



At the time, Julian Momen, Carlsberg UK's chief executive, said, "Our customers, and specifically those in London and other major cities, are looking to us to offer them the best possible range of interesting craft beers, and we think

that, with nurturing, London Fields Brewery has huge potential. It's the right move for us as we build a credible craft portfolio."

How times change and Camerons Brewery in Hartlepool will now brew some of the beers for on-trade customers.

CMBC CEO Paul Davies, said the company would enter into a period of consultation with the London Fields team. It would also explore market interest in the business.

Mr Davies said, "After several months of careful review, it is clear growing London Fields Brewery will require significant time, resource, and marketing investment.

"We understand this news will be devastating and disappointing, but we cannot shy away from making the difficult choices that we believe are crucial to investing in scaling the right brands for the future and making CMBC a stronger industry-leading business."

MORNING ADVERTISER

<https://www.morningadvertiser.co.uk/>

BOAK & BAILEY'S BEER BLOG

<https://boakandbailey.com/>

ANSPACH & HOBDAY SMASH CROWDFUNDING TARGET

**Brewery Expands Production
Facilities to Take on Guinness**

Better news of another London brewer, as Anspach & Hobday exceeded their recent crowdfunding campaign to raise £300,000. They plan to expand their production facilities in Croydon in order to take on Guinness with their new nitro stout London Black. They also have a taproom in Bermondsey.



The campaign was started in mid-November, but by 15 December a total of £575,000 had been raised through the Crowdcube platform. The London Black beer, which launched in April, has so far sold around 35,000 pints.

Chairman and co-founder Jack Hobday said, "We have been overwhelmed by the support we've received. It's incredible to see the support for choice at the taps. I hope others will join our campaign before it finishes. Together we're bringing London beer back to Londoners and the wider country."

MORNING ADVERTISER

<https://www.morningadvertiser.co.uk/>

CAMRA LAUNCHES SEARCH FOR UK'S OLDEST CASKS

Part of the Drink Greener Campaign

CAMRA is looking for the UK's longest serving casks as part of its ongoing campaign to highlight ways for consumers to 'Drink Greener'. Cask beer is one of the greenest



**Drink
GREENER**

choices that drinkers can make at the bar because every element, from brewery to bar, can be reused.

In order to highlight the durability and sustainability of this traditional system, the Campaign is on the hunt for four champion casks:

- The oldest cask still in circulation.
- The cask with the highest number of reuses.
- The cask with the highest number of refills each year.
- The cask with lowest number of 'beer miles' for each refill.

While casks can remain in use for decades, the reality is that casks are often taken out of circulation far sooner through theft, misappropriation, or being unnecessarily scrapped for raw materials. Containers falling out of use early represents not only an

environmental cost, but also a financial one too – with brewers bearing the loss of millions of pounds worth of casks and kegs each year.

Brewers who want to get involved



and promote their casks' green credentials just need to get in touch with CAMRA through social media. Commenting, CAMRA Chair Nik Antona said, "There is innovative and exciting work happening across the brewing sector, creating new solutions to tackle the environmental impact of brewing but, like many traditional processes, cask beer is an inherently 'green' choice for consumers.

"For example, our friends at Broughton Ales have casks that have been in use since the 1950's – and they're still going strong! Powderkeg Beer delivers some of its beer just 1.3 miles from brewery to bar, saving resources every time they do. "Cask beer is the ultimate no-waste option, and we hope brewers will take this opportunity to not only celebrate this, but also help CAMRA

highlight just how much potential there is for consumers to 'Drink Greener'!"

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

ADNAMS BREWERY CITE 50% LOSS OF CHRISTMAS TRADE DUE TO OMICRON

Call for Further Government Support for the Hospitality Sector

The boss of Adnams Brewery said prior to the New Year that the sector had lost about 50% of its Christmas custom amid concerns over the Omicron variant.

Andy Wood, chief executive of Adnams, said the hospitality industry was facing the "economic equivalent of long Covid".

The brewery, which is based in Southwold, Suffolk, owns 50 pubs and hotels and supplies many others.

Mr Wood urged the government to provide the industry with "clarity and consistency".

"We need that so we can rebuild consumer confidence but also have the confidence ourselves so we can invest in our businesses again," he said.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Mr Wood described the festive season as a "lifeline" that helped the hospitality sector through "the dark months of January, February and March".

"There is going to need to be government support," he said.

"We have lost most of Christmas where the industry usually makes cash that sees it through January, February and March.

"The coffers are empty. This is an industry that has been in and out of lockdown and restrictions for 22 months now - it really hasn't had a chance to rebuild profits and loss accounts and balance sheets.



"It is suffering the economic equivalent of long Covid."

Mr Wood said to help the sector in the short-term the government could continue with the VAT reduction, while in the long-term it could look at "structural realignment of business rates".

He said there had been a 50% drop in visitors to pubs and hotels after the chief medical officer for England, Prof Chris Whitty, urged people to be cautious about socialising.

A HM Treasury spokesperson said: "We've supported people's jobs and

incomes throughout the pandemic through our £400bn package of support, and will continue to do so through our additional £1bn support package for the hospitality and leisure sector.

"Hospitality businesses are also still benefitting from a 75% cut in business rates over the year, reduced VAT, eviction protection, government-backed loans, Time to Pay and our reintroduced Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme."

BBC NEWS

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-suffolk-59818723>

37 PUBS A MONTH LOST IN 2021

Over 400 Pubs Disappear During the Year

More than 400 pubs have disappeared from communities in England and Wales in 2021, figures from analysis of Government data by real estate adviser Altus Group has found.

The number of pubs liable for property taxes and business rates, including those vacant and being offered to let, dropped by 444 to 40,173 in December 2021, against 40,617 the previous year. This equates to about 37 pubs a month being demolished or converted to other uses such as homes or offices. Over the past four years a total of 2,277 pubs have vanished.

Altus Group broke down the figures into regions and found the south west and the north west have the highest number of pubs – 5,738 and 5,361 respectively – while the north east and Wales have the fewest at 1,983 and 3,060 respectively.



Altus Group UK President Robert Hayton said, "Pubs continue to bear the brunt of coronavirus restrictions but have thankfully proved remarkably resilient. However it remains to be seen what impact the Omicron variant has on numbers next year, as this could be the straw that broke the camel's back for many".

While insolvencies in the sector had been reduced as a result of the support measures for businesses to mitigate the impact of the pandemic, Altus predicted the phasing out of financial aid in recent months and the "limited nature" of the Chancellor's latest support package in response to the Omicron variant, could mean more hardship on the horizon.

The latest round of business grants mean that eligible pubs can claim up to £6,000, depending on rateable

value of each premises. Pub Operators hit out at the announcement, with one likening it to “sticking an Elastoplast over a gaping wound” while another said it was a “twinkle of sunshine in a very bleak outlook”.

MORNING ADVERTISER

PUB & BREWERY NEWS

Good news of the **Penny Bank** in Scunthorpe High Street which has reopened earlier than expected and now offers Batemans XB and Gold on handpump.



Our area has a new microbrewery – the **Shadow Bridge Brewery** based in a couple of business units at the Old Tile Works in Barton.



The brainchild of Gavin Richards, licensee of

the **Nelthorpe Arms** in South Ferriby, they’re currently conducting trial brews with a view to having the

brewery open in April 2022. The beers will be available at the Nelthorpe and a brewery tap. See the longer article on Shadow Bridge in this issue for more details.

An upcoming cocktail bar is destined for Brigg named **the Vault** and will be taking over the redundant HSBC premises on Market Place in the town centre. Should feature a range of craft beers, so worth dropping in once open.

The **White Hart** also in Brigg was bought by White Venues in 2021 and is being extensively refurbished into what is described as a “luxury waterfront celebration venue”, which can be hired for birthdays, anniversaries, weddings and other special events. Plans are to open in Spring 2022. More details on: <https://www.facebook.com/whitehartbrigg/>

Neither a pub nor a brewery ... but worth a mention here is a heads up for the Beer Festival & Ale Trail, centred on **All Saints Church**, Winterton on 3rd & 4th June 2022. Will feature craft beers, real ales & cider, sausages, live music and family games in aid of church funds and part of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee.

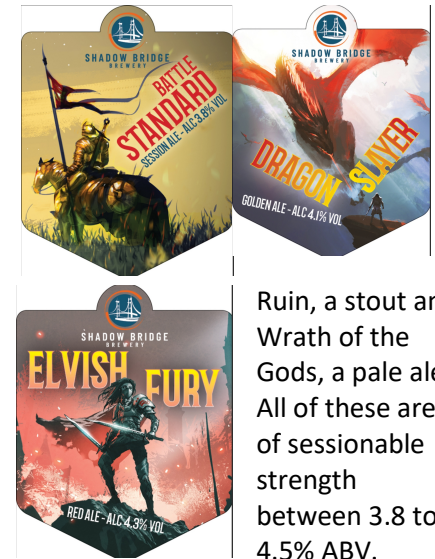
Details from 01724 734285. Well worth a visit!

SHADOW BRIDGE BREWERY STARTS UP

New Brewery in Barton

Gavin Richards, licensee of the Nelthorpe Arms in South Ferriby, says he has been toying with the idea of opening up his own brewery for a couple of years. Having worked in the pub trade for seventeen years as a licensee and drayman, he felt he had a good idea of what sort of beers would work in terms of taste, colour, design and price and so in 2021 he set the wheels in motion. He sourced a new 6 Brewer’s Barrel (BBL) capacity kit (equivalent to 216 gallons or 24 firkins) from PBC Brewery Solutions in Salford, set this up in two units at the Old Tile Works in Barton-upon-Humber and named the brewery Shadow Bridge due to its proximity to the Humber Bridge. As Gavin is a full-time licensee at the Nelthorpe he will not run the brewery himself – rather he will oversee operations and has handed over the day-to-day running of the brewery to Heather and Leigh, a couple who have been in the drinks wholesale trade for many years. Gavin and Leigh have been on a brewing course over at Salford and with help from Geoff McCaughtrie at Little Big Dog in Barrow have devised recipes for three core beers and some monthly seasonals. The three core beers will be Battle Standard, a bitter, Dragon Slayer, a

golden ale, and Elvish Fury, a red ale. The first two seasonals are Wizard’s



Ruin, a stout and Wrath of the Gods, a pale ale. All of these are of sessionable strength between 3.8 to 4.5% ABV.

The beer names have a fantasy theme chosen by Gavin and the pumpclips are very striking as a result.

The beers will feature at the Nelthorpe Arms, which will also have a small shop to buy the beers for home consumption – dispense



equipment will be available to hire if required – and packaged beers in bottles can be purchased too. The brewery will also have a small

tap where Shadow Bridge beers can be purchased for consumption on site or to take away. Beers for the trade will be available in firkins, pins and bottles.

The brewery is scheduled to open in April and the beers should be available locally shortly afterwards. This is great news for our area and we wish Gavin and team all the very best in their endeavours.

We look forward to sampling Shadow Bridge beers as soon as they're available.

MARK ELSOME

Adapted from personal e-mail from Gavin Richards

ANYTHING BUT BITTER

Bitter Renamed as Pub Ale?

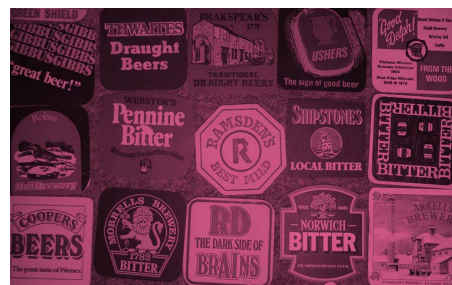
Leading beer writers and bloggers Ray Boak and Jessica Bailey have been musing in their online blog about the marketing appropriation of the term Pub Ale in order to sell beers formerly known as Bitters. Here's their article – Ed:

Young's London Original. Fuller's London Pride – an outstanding amber ale. And, of course, Boddington's Pub Ale. All these are ways of talking about bitter without saying bitter.

"Pub ale" is a new one to us and cropped up in a recent conversation on Twitter, with reference to the US market:

"Is "pub ale" (whatever that means)

becoming a new trend? Seems to be popping up all over the place lately." (Sam Tierney @intothebrew Jan 4 2022)



At least we thought it was new until we remembered that Boddington's had been using that tag in the American market for decades. This struck us as especially interesting, though – evidence of why marketing people come up with these tortured and/or twee alternatives.

"We have an Ordinary Bitter that has never sold well. That word "bitter" is a huge turn off for customers, even though the staff explains the style. We love the beer, rebranded it as a "Pub Ale" and it's currently one of our top sellers."

(Andy Ruhland @ruhbrewer Head Brewer, Bad Weather Brewing, St. Paul, MN Jan 4 2022)

Some people aren't happy about all this, though. Why?

Partly resistance to change, of course, especially when it is driven by, as we suppose they see it, pandering.

But that resistance is also partly

down to nostalgia: the word "bitter" speaks of pubs and dads and granddads – of the receding 20th century to which so many of us are clinging with whitened fingertips. Bittersweet memory, as it were.

The funny thing is, it's not as if "bitter" is exactly an age-old traditional term. In a piece we wrote for Beer Advocate years ago we said: "A widely reprinted 1855 parody of aristocratic politician Charles Greville's controversial memoirs has Queen Victoria serving the Duke of Wellington "a foaming jug of bitter" and this form, without modifiers, became common in the 20th century. By the 1930s, advertisements for Yorkshire brewery Tetley headlined two types of beer, Mild and Bitter."

So, it's about as old as "wireless" or "cinema".

If you really want to keep it trad, Dad, then "pale ale" is the phrase you're after.

In itself, though, the word "bitter" does have a certain appeal.

It is plain and unpretentious to the point of self-deprecation. Two simple syllables you can mutter with only a slight, discreet movement of the mouth. No need to show off or make a fuss.

And, thinking about it, isn't "pub ale" (still US only, everyone – relax!) close to "real ale", another relatively new term that speaks of good,

honest beer?

The good news is, whatever labels breweries apply, there's nothing to stop us talking about bitter, or writing about it, in as much detail as we like.

And, for that matter, there's nothing to stop you ordering it in the pub. It's going to be a long time yet before someone working behind a bar is going to pretend they don't know what you mean when you ask for a pint of bitter.

(Not so sure it couldn't happen here! – Ed)

BOAK & BAILEY

<https://boakandbailey.com/>

BRANCH SOCIAL EVENTS

A Progress Report

With the Omicron virus still flying about the UK like a demented ping pong ball, normal everyday activities can sometimes get relegated into the background.

So it is with Scunthorpe & District CAMRA and our programme of social events. These have been put on hold for the time being as despite nearly everyone I know being triple jabbed, there's still a lingering reluctance to use public transport and mix with strangers in non-familiar pubs.

Our planned pub crawl of Wakefield city centre pubs for example, has had to be postponed twice already due to Covid (once because of

restrictions and the other because of Covid itself), but we're determined to push ahead with this at the third time of asking when conditions allow (and it appears, at the time of writing, that all Plan B Covid restrictions are about to be lifted). We dipped our toe in the water in the later months of 2021 on two occasions – first for a three-pub crawl of Scunthorpe town centre and secondly for the branch Christmas party at the Yarborough Hunt in Brigg.

The Scunthorpe town centre pub crawl took place on a Saturday afternoon in late November and started at the newly refurbished Honest Lawyer. Real ales on at the time were Bradfield Belgian Blue and Sixer, both excellent and we accompanied these with tapas from the Lawyer's new food menu. Next we moved on to the Black Door, Scunthorpe's new cocktail bar and the first time that some of our group had visited.



Craft beers on draught were Tiny Rebel Electric Boogaloo, a passion fruit infused IPA, Wiper &

True Kaleidoscope and Lost and Grounded Wanna Go To The Sun pale ales, all in top condition. Some of the Black Door special offers were also noted for future reference. Finally we moved on to old favourite the Blue Bell and there tried the Hop Studio Hometown Hero, a modern take on a bitter and Acorn Guiding Light, a dark fruity ale, full of flavour.



All in all it was a very enjoyable afternoon, with good beer, good company and good cheer. On a Friday in mid-December we ventured out in our best Christmas jumpers for our annual Christmas party in the back room of the Yarborough Hunt. As a concession to Covid we started proceedings two hours earlier in the afternoon than planned, when we thought the pub would be less busy (which it was) and abandoned our normal DIY buffet for a bring your own or buy your own food option, which worked well.

We staged a Christmas quiz, set by Paul & Beverley, won by team Three

Amigos (yours truly, plus Gill and Debbie). A four pack of bottled Christmas beers was our prize. A Christmas raffle also took place with prizes of bottled Christmas beers and packs of canned craft beers, all fairly equally shared out among those attending.



The Yarborough had a varied selection of real ales on offer including Theakston Christmas Ale (with Christmas spices), Lincolnshire Craft Beers Christmas Cheers (brewed to have a hint of Whisky), Woodfordes Nog (a dark ale) and later on, Acorn Cracker, a seasonal pale ale utilising American and English hops.

A very enjoyable party ensued and we thank all those who attended one or both of our events. We will be arranging further socials, both locally and further afield, in the not too distant future. If you're interested in joining us keep checking our branch Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ScunnyCAMRA/>

and branch website: <https://scunthorpe.camra.org.uk/> for details of upcoming trips and meetings. We look forward to seeing you. Cheers!
MARK ELSOME

GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL WINTER CANCELLED

Festival to be "Reimagined"
CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival due to take place in Birmingham during February has been cancelled due to Covid concerns.



There are now plans to "reimagine" the festival in a way that allows real ale and cider fans to "support their locals and producers in a safe, comfortable way". More details to be released in the coming weeks. See: <https://winter.gbbf.org.uk/>

