



# IRON BREW



SCUNTHORPE  
BEER FESTIVAL  
2016

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NOVEMBER 2016 - JANUARY 2017



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# CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

## WELCOME

The third season is now upon us marking the end of some excellent mini outdoor beer festivals in our patch (see article in this issue). They deserve as much support as we can provide given the effort that goes into putting them on.

Our festival will have been and gone by the time of this issue, but what a first class event it was. Next year is our 20th anniversary festival, and we're already planning something special to celebrate. Our social diary shows more for autumn and early winter. It would be great to see more of you at some of them.

**Mike Sayers**  
Chairman, Scunthorpe & District CAMRA



**CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:**

Mark Elsome, Mike Sayers, Mike Wilsea, Campaign for Real Ale, Belfast Telegraph



## AUTUMN PUB OF THE SEASON

RIVER DON TAVERN, EASTOFT

Our Pub of the Season for Autumn goes to the River Don Tavern at Eastoft. This friendly village local is run by licensees Gordon Crowe and Karen Burdett, who have been at the helm for the past 17 years. The pub offers up to four rotating guest real ales, with the excellent beers from Roosters regularly featured, plus a real cider in summer.

The pub is renowned for its food, particularly the highly regarded Sunday carvery, which can be eaten in the in-house restaurant if required.

The River Don also offers comfortable, good value accommodation in four lodges at the rear of the pub and in rooms in the pub itself. These have proved very popular with birdwatchers using the nearby Blacktoft Sands RSPB bird reserve and others.

We congratulate Gordon and Karen on their award which will be presented on Saturday 5 November at 3.30pm.

**Mike Sayers**



The River Don Tavern at Eastoft is our Autumn pub of the season

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## PUB & BREWERY NEWS

**Axholme Brewery of Crowle** is back in business after local investment was forthcoming to save the business after it became insolvent. Owner Mike Richards is back brewing and they have taken on extra staff to help with sales and marketing.

**The Jenny Wren at Susworth** has reopened again after a period of closure.

CAMRA has given its first ever accreditation for real ale to a canned beer - from Moor Beer Company in Bristol. They carried out tests on the "micro-canned" beer from Moor Beer at the recent Great British Beer Festival and concluded that the beer qualified as real ale under its definition.

**The Britannia in Brigg** has got another temporary landlord, the third in the past few months. It is to be hoped that owners Marston's Brewery will be making a permanent appointment as soon as possible.

Does your pub qualify? If so then let us know...





## FISHY BUSINESS

CAMRA GOOD BEER GUIDE REPORTS  
MOVE TO AXE ISINGLASS

A growing number of brewers are looking at alternatives to isinglass as a clearing or “fining” agent in their beers, the 2017 CAMRA Good Beer Guide (GBG) reports. Isinglass is made from the swim bladders of fish – and as more and more drinkers today are vegetarians and vegans, brewers are looking at alternative ways to serve crystal clear pints.

Isinglass is added to casks of beer before they leave the brewery. A natural chemical reaction attracts yeast and protein and drags them to the bottom of the cask, leaving clear beer above.

Good Beer Guide editor Roger Protz says, “Drinkers shouldn’t be alarmed – there’s no fish in their beer! Isinglass is odourless and tasteless and doesn’t impact on the pint in your glass. But as it’s derived from fish, many drinkers are unhappy with its use in the brewing process.”

As a result, a number of brewers are either producing unfinned beer that is slightly cloudy or are using alternative clearing agents. The Marble Brewery in Manchester uses silica and Irish Moss as clearing agents; Irish Moss is also known as carrageen and is a type of seaweed. It is widely used by brewers to clarify beer after hops have been boiled with malt and brewers are investigating whether it is suitable as a fining agent in casks of finished beer.

Experts at the Centre for Bio-energy and Brewing Science at the University of Nottingham are analysing a new role for the hop plant as a clearing agent. The department is chaired by Katherine Smart, who has been seconded from international brewer SABMiller, with MSc courses run by Professor David Quain and Dr David Cook. There’s a fully operational micro brewery

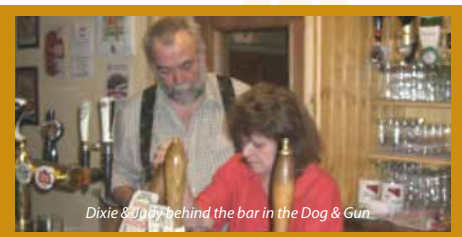
where students and young brewers can make beer and the course scientists are looking at using a blend of “spent” or used hops and fresh hops to attract yeast in cask and enable beer to “drop bright”.

Roger Protz says, “The easiest solution is not to use any clearing agents. I have seen at first-hand how brewer Justin Hawke produces his ales at Moor Beer in Bristol. Justin is an American from California who fell in love with cloudy wheat beers in Germany when he was stationed there doing military service. He moved to Britain and bought Moor Beer where he doesn’t use isinglass as he believes it strips some of the flavour from beer. As a result, his IPAs and other beers are served naturally cloudy in pubs and he says there has been no consumer resistance. Not only are drinkers happy – but so are fish!”

### Campaign for Real Ale

## WELL KNOWN LOCAL PUB & MICROBRWERY CHANGES HANDS

As we went to print we received news that a popular local real ale pub the Dog & Gun at East Butterwick and the on-site DarkTribe microbrewery, had been sold by owner and brewer Dave ‘Dixie’ Dean. The pub and brewery have been sold together and as we understand it the DarkTribe beers will continue to be produced and sold at the pub. At the time of writing we don’t know who the new owners are, but will report back on this in the next issue. Dixie and wife Judy now intend to put their feet up for a while and enjoy their retirement!



Dixie & Judy behind the bar in the Dog & Gun

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# A TALE OF TWO FESTIVALS

EXCELLENT LOCAL ALE FESTIVALS

The weekend of 3rd and 4th of September served up two excellent festivals in and around our area. The first visit was to the Crown at Belton (see photo above). Already recognised as a pub of the highest quality with six hand pumps in daily use, landlord John has held regular beer, cider and music festivals over the years. Add a spectacular hog roast and activities for the kiddies and you have all that you need for a family (including the dog) day out.

This year saw the usual nasty weather which was a repeat of the May event. Eight ciders and six cask beers were available in the marquee. Despite the rain it was well attended and lived up to expectations. A number of bands and acoustic artists helped keep the drinkers entertained.

On the Sunday I travelled to Burton-upon-Stather to the Ferry House, aka the bottom pub. Their festival had been in full swing since Friday and many of the beers had sold out. Happily for me two great porters had not and the local brew, Harry's Ale at 5% ABV, was a cracker. Tug of war competitions took place on the side of the Trent whilst the pub had its usual strong support for its Sunday carvery.

Look out for these next year and have a think about attending. They are both well worthy of our support.

**Mike Sayers**

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# INTERVIEW WITH A LANDLORD

GREG ROBSON, WHITE SWAN

The White Swan is Greg and Lisa's first pub. The family moved from Cleethorpes to Barton and looked for a business to house them all and opened at the White Swan in November 2013. The family matriarch Lois (Lisa's mum) has since retired to Withersea. In his spare time (of which he has little), Greg plays golf.

**What makes the White Swan a long term survivor?**

It is family run with a good customer base and excellent regulars.

**What are the pub's best features?**

The customers, the hanging baskets (a wonder to behold), the beer garden, good food, Lisa's winning smile, reasonable prices and three rotating guest beers on handpumps.

**What is your career highlight since starting out?**

Apart from winning the White Swan Golf Society, CAMRA pub of the season in summer 2014 is what



Handpulled real ales on the bar at the White Swan in Barton with Greg Robson, the Landlord of the pub

Greg remembers and vinyl record nights once a month.

**Greg's personal favourite?**

Dancing Duck's Waitangi rates highly as do Merrie City's range especially Cascadian and Clark's Swan bitter.

**How would Greg develop the pub?**

More flowers, more lighting and more comfort.

*If you would like to see your pub on these pages, then please contact us at Scunthorpe & District CAMRA.*

Mike Wilsea

**Merry Christmas!**

To all our readers from Scunthorpe & District CAMRA



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# SCUNTHORPE BEER FESTIVAL

## A REVIEW OF THE 19TH FESTIVAL

The 19th Scunthorpe Beer Festival took place at the Royal Hotel in the town centre from 29 September to 2 October. If you were there you'll have your own ideas about how it went, but if not here's my own view of proceedings.

The real ales we put on were well liked by the majority of people attending – in fact more than one person thought this was our best range of beers ever. Our main focus was on beers from Greater Manchester and the North West, and Cloudwater Session IPA (4.5% ABV) from Manchester itself, was voted the beer of the festival by those attending. The handpulled beers on the front bar from Manchester, including Marble, First Chop and Seven Brothers, as well as Cloudwater, proved to be among the most popular.

Other well liked beers included Brewsmith Bitter (3.9%), Coach House Blueberry (5.0%), Millstone Tiger Rut (4.0%) and Vocation Bread & Butter (3.9%), plus the beers on the Dark Beer Trail including Bingham's Vanilla Stout (5.0%), the current CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain.

The tombola got people spinning and winning and our prizes of bottled beers, books, beer glasses and other beery stuff had to be restocked on Saturday morning, but we did manage to keep it going until late on the Saturday evening. We sold out of the

limited edition stemmed half pint souvenir glasses, and we intend to offer a limited edition festival glass again next year. The new 2017 CAMRA Good Beer Guides also sold very well, and the beer of the festival free prize draw for one of the guides was won by Bob Burns of Barton.

Food sales didn't seem to go as well as last year and this may have been as a result of the Royal Hotel's decision not to offer a beer festival menu this time around - instead food had to be ordered from the normal hotel menu.

We experimented with playing of recorded music this year at some festival sessions, with careful attention to both the playlists and the volume control to keep it in the background, but at the same time adding a little bit of atmosphere. Most people attending seemed to like the music, or at least didn't appear to be overly concerned about it, so this is something we may try again.

There was a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere throughout the festival, and a chance to discuss the merits of the beers on offer with customers. We had many favourable comments about the beers, which were appreciated and a vindication of all those hours spent poring over suppliers' beer lists to select the festival beers! Having said that the overall number of people attending over the four days was well down on last year, and this aspect was particularly disappointing. We put a lot of effort as a branch into bringing you the best beer festival we can within our budgetary strictures, and hence the old adage, 'use it or lose it', could apply!

Before I start sounding too despondent, we'll be working hard on the 2017 Scunthorpe Beer Festival with this being our 20th anniversary event, and hope to bring you one or two surprises – watch this space for further details.

It just falls to me to thank all those who came along to the festival this year, our suppliers and those who lent us equipment. And special thanks go to all the CAMRA volunteers who gave up their time to set up and run the festival, often working long hours in the process – we couldn't have done it without you.

**Mark Elsome**



*Ladies enthusiastically looking after the entry/glasses desk at the festival*



# VISIT TO FERNANDES BREWERY TAP IN WAKEFIELD

## BACK TO BASICS BEER FESTIVAL

Towards the end of September a friend and I made our way to Wakefield and the Fernandes Brewery Tap, to attend what must have been the world's most relaxed beer festival. Fernandes had the idea to put on twenty of their own beers covering most styles of beer, and have them for sale across two floors of the Tap.

This was a clever idea and one I don't remember having been done before. Thus they had several categories such as Pale Ales and IPA's, Bitters, Milds, Porter & Stouts, Fruit Beers, New World IPA's and Brown & Belgian Whites.

In some cases there were variants of the same beer such as the pale ales which were named Pale Ale #1 to #5, all the same ABV but brewed with different hop combinations. Strengths across the whole range varied from 3.4% up to 6.2%.

Despite such an interesting idea the Tap was sparsely populated on the Friday lunchtime when we were there, and there was no razamatazz or fanfare to announce that a beer festival was going on. Instead it was up to the drinkers to try the beers and make up their own mind, with Fernandes quietly confident that their beers were good, with which you would find favour.

And they were right! The beers were uniformly tasty with several, such as the Belgian White, Light Mild and Black IPA, outstanding, and we spent an enjoyable afternoon there before moving on to try some of Wakefield's other fine pubs such as the Bull & Fairhouse, Beer Exchange, Black Rock and the Hop.

So no frills, no spills, but a really good, solid beer festival, which any discerning drinker would almost certainly have enjoyed. Many thanks to Fernandes for having the idea in the first place, and special thanks to the barman who gave me a Fernandes T-shirt free of charge for our beer festival tombola. If Fernandes stage this beer festival again next year, we'll be back!

**Mark Elsome**

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### FOOD SERVED

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*plus tea time specials served 5.30 pm - 6.30 pm*

**Sunday:** 12 pm - 3 pm & 6 pm - 8 pm



## Bird in the Barley

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# NEW HANGOVER FREE ALCOHOL DISCOVERED

CAN IT REALLY BE TRUE? WE TAKE A LOOK AT SYNTEHTIC ALCOHOL

I must admit when I first read this online I hastily checked the date to see if I'd woken up on 1 April! But it seems to be genuine, and was a news story originally from the Independent picked up by several news agencies. Anyway here's the gist of it ...

A new type of synthetic alcohol has been discovered which could allow people to enjoy the sociable effects of a few pints, but skip the hangover that usually follows. The new drink, known as 'alcosynth', is designed to mimic the positive effects of alcohol but doesn't cause a dry mouth, nausea and a throbbing head, according to its creator Professor David Nutt.

The Imperial College professor and former government drugs advisor told The Independent he has patented around 90 different alcosynth compounds.

Two of them are now being rigorously tested for widespread use, he said – and by 2050, he

hopes alcosynth could completely replace normal alcohol. They go very nicely into mojitos and even into something as clear as a Tom Collins. One is pretty tasteless, the other has a bitter taste.

By researching substances that work on the brain in a similar way to alcohol, Professor Nutt and his team have been able to design a drug which they say is non-toxic and replicates the positive effects of alcohol.

Advocates of alcosynth believe it could revolutionise public health by relieving the burden of alcohol on the health service. However the huge cost of funding research into the drug and the regulatory concerns mean that it could be a long time before people can order an alcosynth cocktail at their local pub.

To me this smacks of the temperance movement and rigorous daily alcohol guidelines all over again and Neil Williams from the British Beer & Pub Association brought some much needed common sense to the debate when he said, "Alcosynth was not necessary as there are other ways of avoiding a hangover. There are plenty of low strength drinks, particularly beers, out there. We should all drink in moderation so we shouldn't need to have a hangover anyway. I'd want to know more about it before I tried it myself".

To which I heartily agree!

**Belfast Telegraph / Mark Elsome**



## BRANCH DIARY

For further information on any branch events please check out the website [www.scunthorpe.camra.org.uk](http://www.scunthorpe.camra.org.uk)

**Saturday 5th November**

Autumn Pub of the Season presentation to the River Don, Eastoft; meet 3.30 pm when the pub opens

**Friday 25th November**

Trip to Grimsby Beer Festival, Matrix Bar, Grimsby

**Friday 9th or Sat 10 Dec**

Trip by train to Leeds for Xmas Pub Crawl & Leeds Christmas Market

**Friday 16th December**

Branch Xmas Party – venue to be decided; possibly Dexter's or Britannia, Brigg. From 6pm.

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**A**pologies in advance to anyone who's fed up to the back teeth reading my ramblings about craft beer, but here's an interesting (fairly short) postscript to my article about how elusive a universally accepted definition of craft beer is proving to be.

Renowned beer writer Pete Brown (Three Sheets to the Wind, A Man Walks into a Pub, Shakespeare's Local), found a definition simply by looking it up in the Oxford English Dictionary! From the 2003 edition (so it was there all the time), 'Craft Beer' is defined as 'craft beer (also craft brew) noun (US) a beer with a distinctive flavour, produced and distributed in a particular region.'

Sorted you might think because dictionaries provide unambiguous, precise meanings of words, right? Err ... not quite, because the 2016 edition of said tome doesn't even include the above definition, but instead provides this alternative: 'craft beer n. orig. N. Amer. a beer made in a traditional or non-mechanized way by an individual or a small brewery.'

As Pete Brown says in his on-line blog page (<http://petebrown.blogspot.co.uk/>), 'This may not solve many of the issues in craft beer, but it does hopefully mean an end to the fatuous argument that the problem with craft beer is its lack of a strict definition. If you have a problem with craft beer, it's probably not about the definition of the word, but about what you feel is being done to the concept'

The Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA), has since reinforced the notion of craft beer by introducing a craft beer accreditation scheme for its members. In order to qualify to use the new stamp of approval on their packaging or pump clips, breweries must be truly independent of any larger controlling brewing interest and pledge to abide by SIBA's Manual of Good Brewing Practice, which seeks

to ensure quality throughout the independently brewed beer market.

The move comes after years of controversy and debate surrounding how 'craft' beer is defined in the UK. Though the US has a rigid classification system set down by the Brewers Association, the UK has so far lacked guidelines. Although SIBA has neatly sidestepped a definition of craft beer in their classification scheme, it shows that the UK brewing industry takes craft beer seriously, and is another step in the right direction in recognising what is and what isn't craft beer.

**Mark Elsome**



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