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Iron Brew



Newsletter of Scunthorpe & District
Campaign for Real Ale

www.scunthorpecamra.org.uk

FREE

Spring 2014

FREE



Yarborough Hunt Wins Winter Pub of the Season Award.

Licensee Lucy Fensome (left), receives the certificate from branch member Dawn Paddison

IRON BREW

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Edited by Mark Elsome

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COMMENT

Well, it's only Spring, but already Scunthorpe & District CAMRA are busy planning the 17th Scunthorpe Beer Festival. Although one of CAMRA's smaller beer festivals, we still have to jump through the same hoops that CAMRA's bigger events have to, including preparing a festival budget and getting it approved by CAMRA HQ, selecting and ordering the beer and cider, booking the venue, getting sponsorship and volunteers and all the other jobs that go hand in hand with organising the festival. So, dear reader, by the time you come along to the Scunthorpe Beer Festival in late September, we have already spent the best part of 6 to 8 months putting it all together. Despite the hard work, we think it's worth it, and judging by the response we got from visitors last year, you think so too! The 2014 festival will once again be staged in the function room of the Bridge Hotel in Scunthorpe, which drew much praise from those attending in 2013. Our beer theme this year will be to feature real ales from Scotland and Wales alongside a new selection of Yorkshire and East Midlands beers. It promises to be another cracking festival, so we hope you will be able to come along. See page 12 for more information on the festival. [2]

Scunthorpe & District Branch Diary

- Wed 7 May 8 pm** Spring Pub of the Season presentation to the Berkeley, Scunthorpe
- Wed 14 May 8 pm** Mild in May Social, Blue Bell, Scunthorpe
- Sat 24 May 10 am** Trip by train to Newark Beer Festival. Meet at Scunthorpe Station.
- Sat 7 June 12 noon** CAMRA East Midlands Regional Meeting, Malt Shovel, Ashby
- Wed 25 June 8pm** Beer Festival Meeting and Social at the Stables, Barton
- Sat 12 July 10 am** Trip by train to Sunfest Beer Festival, Rising Sun, Sheffield. Meet at Scunthorpe Rail Station
- Sat 26 July 12 noon** Annual Members Barbecue at Barton. Contact Sarah for details.

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Pub & Brewery News

The Marquis of Granby in Waddingham has been opened up again after its recent closure, with Russ Abbott and partner Geraldine Ellison at the helm. Russ offers three real ales – John Smith's Cask, Wells & Young's Bombardier and Sharp's Doombur, as well as a rotating guest beer. We wish Russ and Geraldine well with their stewardship of this attractive village local, which they are leasing from Punch Taverns.

The lease on the **Honest Lawyer** on Oswald Road has been sold to Nicole and Bobby Chatha, who were previously mine hosts at the **Mary Rose** on Frodingham Road. One of their first changes was to knock 40p off a pint, which was welcome. We also hope they will sort out the beer quality issues which have plagued the pub in recent years, and return the Lawyer to its rightful place as one of our best local real ale pubs.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



36th Hull Beer Festival, 24 – 26
April, Holy Trinity, Hull

Brigg Lions Beer Festival, 16 –
19 May, John Reid Transport
Depot, Atherton Way, Brigg

Lincoln Beer Festival, 22 – 24
May, Drill Hall, Lincoln

Barton Lions 18th Beer Festival,
30 – 31 May, Baysgarth Park,
Brigg Road, Barton-upon-
Humber

Two more of our local pubs have closed and are under threat – the **Dolphin** at Althorpe and the **Royal Oak** at North Kelsey. Local residents in Keadby and Althorpe have logged their protest with the council, objecting to the application for a change of use to a private house. Local opinion in North Kelsey suggests that the Royal Oak is unlikely to open up as a pub again, having struggled for some years.

The White Swan at Barton-upon-Humber reopened in the autumn on 2013, and is now family run and free of tie, offering one ever-changing guest ale, real ale in a bottle, two real ciders and one perry.

The Haven Inn in Barrow is undergoing repairs after the recent flooding and hopes to reopen the bar in the not too distant future while these repairs are ongoing.

[14]

Pub of the Season Spring 2014 The Berkeley, Scunthorpe

The Berkeley Hotel on Doncaster Road, just off the M181 motorway junction, is one of Scunthorpe's largest pubs. It's named in the CAMRA inventory of heritage pubs (part one), for its exceptional 1930's art deco interiors.

It has seven bedrooms, three large bars, one with a ballroom leading off, landscaped front and beer garden at the rear.

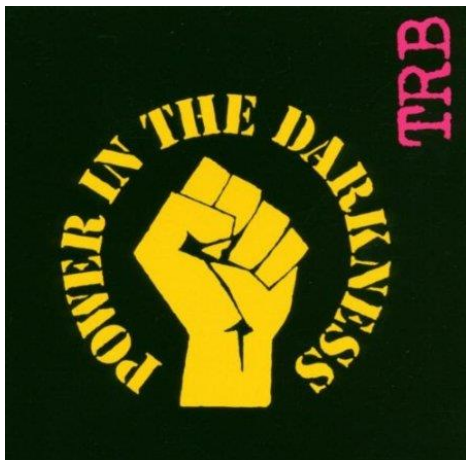
The pub has been run by Shane and Theresa Hodkin since 2008. It has a steady local community trade, does excellent pub meals and Sunday lunches, and does cater for some functions, although as a Sam Smiths pub it has no-music license (a Sam Smith's policy for all its pubs).

The brewery chain has revamped its beer sales, providing a drinks menu at each table now, and as well as serving an excellent pint of Old Brewery Bitter, some of its bottled beer range now includes Chocolate Stout, Imperial Stout and a range of fruit beers such as cherry, apricot and strawberry. With a pub quiz on a Wednesday, games such as pool, darts and dominoes in the public bar, both of which have real fires in them (a must on a cold winter's night), the pub caters for a wide range of people, and the Berkeley is well worth a visit at any time of the year.

We plan to present Shane and Theresa with our Spring Pub of the Season award on Wednesday 7 May at around 830 pm – we hope you can join us.

Beverley Branton

Classic Albums No. 47: Tom Robinson Band – Power In The Darkness (EMI)



Britain in the late 1970s was a rather sorry place. A decade of incompetent government from both sides of politics had generated huge levels of debt and an IMF bailout in 1976 resulted in savage cuts to government spending (sound familiar?). The Winter of 1978/9 was christened the "Winter of Discontent", with the dead going unburied and mountains of rubbish in the streets. Against this background, punk, with its equally bleak outlook on life, rose to become the predominant new musical

style. A number of bands rode to fame on punk's coattails (held on with safety pins). TRB, although not really a "punk" band, was one of these. However, they shared punk's political viewpoint and pessimistic world view. TRB was led by Tom Robinson, an openly gay, aggressively left-wing and seriously talented singer-songwriter, who also played the bass guitar. They first came to the attention of the record buying public with their catchy, and unusually for TRB, apolitical, single "2-4-6-8 Motorway", which was not included on their first album Power in the Darkness (although it is on CD reissues).

The album comprehensively sets out their political standpoint, and their pessimism concerning the by-then-obviously-imminent rise to power of Margaret Thatcher. There's really only one track ("Grey Cortina"), that doesn't conform to this stereotype, this being a paean of praise to Ford's sales-rep-mobile. Other tracks – "Up Against the Wall", "Better Decide Which Side You're On", "Long Hot Summer" being only three of the more obvious – set out their paranoia concerning the Tory future. "Winter of '79" is as dark a vision of the near future as anything in Orwell. Looking back from nearly forty years later, in spite (or, perhaps, in some small way, because), of them, most of TRB's more gloomy prophesies never came to pass. Be that as it may, this album is a powerful reflection of the time in which it was created, as well as containing some seriously good rock music. That it has largely been forgotten is most unjust. Check it out!

Stewart Lloyd

[4]

The Malt Shovel

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17th Scunthorpe Beer Festival

The function room of the Bridge Hotel in Scunthorpe town centre has been booked for the 17th Scunthorpe Beer Festival. This was also the venue for last year's event, and proved popular with visitors to the festival, mainly due to the extra space, the availability of seating and the outdoor terrace, which, thanks to some unseasonably warm weather, was well used for a spot of *al fresco* drinking.



The festival will take place from Thursday 25 to Sunday 28 September, with a 3.30 pm start on the first day. On Friday and Saturday the festival is open between 11 am and 11 pm, while on Sunday there is a 12 noon – 4 pm final session.

The choice of beers will be in line with the

regional theme that has served us well over the past two or three years, and this year we have decided to feature Scottish and Welsh real ales alongside a new selection of beers from Yorkshire and the East Midlands. Among the Scottish and Welsh breweries we hope to feature are Fyne, Inveralmond, Stewart, Tryst, Williams Brothers, Brains, Celt Experience, New Plassey, Otley and Purple Moose. Beer styles will include lots of hoppy IPA's, two rye beers, a wheat beer, a ginger beer, fruit beers, a black IPA and an elderflower ale, as well as the ever popular dark beer trail featuring a selection of milds, stouts and porters. It promises to be as good as, or even better than, last year's range of beers, which drew lots of praise from drinkers at the festival.



Other attractions will be the festival tombola, which will be stuffed full of beer related prizes, CAMRA membership stand, where you can join CAMRA on the day, souvenir pint glass featuring the festival logo (above), and hot and cold food at all sessions, when pie & peas, burgers and filled rolls will be available to help soak up the beer! It should be another great event, and we hope you'll be able to attend. Watch out for further details in *Iron Brew*, on the branch website (www.scunthorpecamra.org.uk), and in local magazines such as *The Scunthorpe Entertainer* and local press. If you're interested, why not put the dates in your diary now? See you there!

Mark Elsome

[12]

If You Ever Find Yourself In ...

Llangollen

This is a very well visited tourist spot and deservedly so. Not only does it have a marvellous preserved steam railway but a goodly number of real ale pubs, two of which I can recommend following a visit in December.

The Cornmill (www.brunningandprice.co.uk/cornmill/beers)

Situated opposite to the Llangollen steam railway station the Cornmill is right next to the river Dee 'rapids'. On my visit there had been several days of heavy rain and it was lashing down on the day. The Dee rose steadily as we watched from the warmth of the pub window and made an impressive sight. The pub/restaurant is on at least 3 levels with an outside terrace for calmer and drier days. Food is top notch and whilst you can get cheaper fayre 'you pays your money and you gets your goods' stands true here.

Beer choice is good from the ground floor bar and ranges from £2.80 - £3.20 per pint based (so it appeared to me), on the ABV's. Generally four real ales are available.

Disabled access is fair, but only on the ground floor and booking for the restaurant may be advisable at peak times. Whilst it is not (yet) in the GBG, nevertheless it is well worth a visit. Check out their web-link for the beer review – very informative.



The Ponsonby Arms (LL20 8RY)

On the other side of the river to the Cornmill about a 5 minute walk. Already in the GBG (2014), and so it should be. At the time of my visit on a filthy wet and very windy day there were still 12 (TWELVE!) operating hand pumps. The rear of the pub overlooks the River Dee through the trees. Summer leaves would hamper the view of the river but would still make for a pretty vista. The landlord seems keen (also runs the Sun Inn in Llangollen), and when all the internal refurbishment is complete there will be little to find wrong here.

Llangollen has a number of decent pubs and eateries and is a great place to have a few particularly out of the main tourist season when accommodation and parking is easier to find.

Mike Sayers

[5]

Rise of the Brewster

I saw on a news website recently that the number of professional women brewers, or brewsters as they're known, is on the rise in the UK, and in a male-dominated industry, women are being credited with reinvigorating the brewing business.

From a historical point of view, brewing is coming full circle, as the earliest evidence of beer in Britain dates back roughly 4,000 years and women were the primary brewers from the start. Beer was regarded as food back then, and as food preparation was the domain of females, ale was traditionally made in the home and brewed for the family as part of the daily diet for everyone – including children! It provided nutrition and was a safe source of drinking water (the brewing 'liquor' usually having been boiled as part of the process).

But social and economic changes gradually took beer production out of the home and into factories, where beer started to be made by men largely for men. So why the resurgence in brewsters now? Well a number of factors seem to be involved, including the increased visibility of females already in the industry, opening up brewing as a career choice to a new generation of young women, the increased interest in what people eat and drink, and the reflection of that interest in the whole 'craft beer' revolution. Men can get tied to the more traditional ways of doing things, whereas female brewers can bring new ideas outside the mainstream to develop a range of flavoursome ales, not just confined to stronger, hoppier beers. "Women brewers can take a lot of credit for craft beer's huge success," says Tim Hampson, chair of the British Guild of Beer Writers. "They're making some of the best beer in the country."

Among this legion of female brewers is Sarah Barton of Brewster's Brewery in Grantham, who is not only the owner and head brewer, but has founded Project Venus, which brings together women who brew professionally to showcase the best of female brewing. So far the group has produced eight of its own beers. I can personally vouch for the excellence of Brewster's beers as we've featured Decadence and Hop-A-Doodle Doo at the Scunthorpe Beer Festival, and very good they were too! So, in the interests of balance, I should say that male brewers make many fine beers too, but the rise of female brewers can only result in more women in all areas of the industry, helping to increase the diversity of beers for us all to enjoy. And I for one will drink to that! [BBC News/ Mark Elsome](#) [6]



Pub of the Year

Every year CAMRA runs a Pub of the Year competition for all real ale pubs in the UK – you may remember the Kelham Island Tavern in Sheffield winning the national Pub of the Year title two year's running, not that long ago. However the competition begins with a branch nomination, and Scunthorpe & District CAMRA have chosen the Malt Shovel in Ashby as our Pub of the Year.

The Malt Shovel has been the leading real ale pub in Scunthorpe for some years now, thanks largely to the excellent stewardship of Simon and Belinda Hall. The variety and quality of the pub's real ales has consistently been top notch, and although there is now an increased focus on food with the building of a conservatory dining area at the front of the pub, the real ales have held their own, and are still as good as ever.

Simon hails from Barnsley, and as a fully paid up Yorkshireman, likes to feature a range of real ales from the White Rose county. Yorkshire breweries that are regularly featured include Abbeydale, Acorn, Elland, Great Heck, Hop Studio, Mallinsons and Wentworth, as well as other real ales from Oakham, Exmoor and Tom Wood. A great range of real ciders is also available, with most served straight from the cellar.

Belinda looks after the food side of the pub's business (as well as helping out behind the bar), and there's a fantastic range of good quality, good value meals available, including the very popular teatime specials. Live music is also featured on alternative Saturday evenings, and taken together it all adds up to a very busy, but friendly pub, which is a pleasure to visit.

We congratulate Simon, Belinda and all staff on their award, which will be presented on Saturday 15 March at 12 noon. [11]

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Batemans Meet-the-Brewer Night

The Jolly Miller at Wrawby staged another of its 'Meet-the-Brewer' nights at the pub during January. This time it was the turn of Batemans Brewery to attend, and Head Brewer Martin Cullimore, together with Sales Representative, Dawn Bunch, came along to describe the beers and brewing processes at Batemans Brewery. Martin handed out samples of different malts and hops during his talk to illustrate



the range of raw materials that go into brewing their beers, and also conducted a tasting session to highlight particular flavours inherent in their ales. Beers tried in the tastings were

bottled Combined Harvest and three draught beers put on for the evening – XB, Yella Belly Gold and Mocha Amaretto. Using a good measure of wry humour, Martin gave a very entertaining talk and tasting session, before he and Dawn joined us for a social drink. Another very good evening, with thanks to the Jolly Miller for organising the event. [10]

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May Is Mild Month

May is the month when CAMRA celebrate the endangered beer style called mild. But what is mild?

Milds are black to dark brown to pale amber in colour and come in a variety of styles from warming roasty ales to light refreshing lunchtime thirst quenchers. Malty and possibly sweet tones dominate the flavour profile but there may be a light hop flavour or aroma. Slight diacetyl (toffee/butterscotch) flavours are not inappropriate. Alcohol levels are typically low.

Pale milds tend to have a lighter, more fruity aroma with gentle hoppiness.

Dark milds may have a light roast malt or caramel character in aroma and taste.

Scottish cask beers may have mild characteristics with a dominance of sweetness, smooth body and light bitterness. Of course even many of the brewers who continue to brew milds do not use the term mild in their point-of-sale publicity, preferring to use terms like 'dark' or 'black' e.g. Brains Dark, Batemans Black & White or Moorhouses Black Cat, but these delicious beers are still milds. Why not ask your local licensee to stock a mild during May? [7]



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Batemans Rebranding and Launch Evening at Wainfleet



A small group of Scunthorpe & District CAMRA members attended one of the Batemans Rebranding and Launch Nights in February, by invitation to their brewery in Wainfleet. This was Batemans chosen method of publicising the rebranding of their core range of beers and promotion of new 'craft beers' to the trade and other interested parties.

When we arrived at the brewery we walked into a tented bar area where XB, XXXB, Yella Belly Gold and the new, stronger mild, now termed Black & White (3.6% ABV), were available. We all partook of the mild and then proceeded into the Visitors Centre to find a table and sit down. More draught beers were available in the nearby windmill bar, including the new winter seasonal, Chocolate Biscuit Beer (4.1%), which was delicious with a pronounced chocolate and malt flavour. In other rooms there was a chance to sample their range of bottled Bohemian Brews such as Hazelnut Brownie and Orange Barley, as well as their English Bock and Black Pepper PA, which had been entered into a bottled beer competition run by Sainsburys (which was won by the Bock beer).

As we worked our way through the beers, Lincolnshire sausage hot dogs were produced for consumption, and a live band played some energetic cover versions of popular tunes to generate some atmosphere. Stuart Bateman gave a short talk about Batemans and their approach to the craze for craft beers, even mentioning the beer of the festival award won by Hazelnut Brownie at the Scunthorpe Beer Festival (which provoked a cheer from our group). His point was that Batemans had always been a brewery producing craft beers, and would continue to do so. By now the Visitors



Centre was packed to the rafters, and the assembled throng took the opportunity to have a 'knees-up' before closing time, after which it was time to head back to hotels in Skegness and Wainfleet. An enjoyable evening! [8]

To Hull and Back

Recently my better half and I spent a couple of nights in Hull, and as well as enjoying a spot of culture at the Ferens Art Gallery and the Streetlife Museum, we also visited a few of Hull's pubs in the city centre. Our first port of call was Walters in the Old Town area, a very welcoming, comfortable pub with an impressive array of about 20 handpumps (I didn't count them), offering a wide range of real ales and ciders. I tried the Titanic Plum Porter and Slaters Premium here, finding both very tasty and in excellent condition. Next stop was the Lion & Key, a short walk away from Walters, and again having a great range of beers, and with the 'subdued' lighting, very atmospheric – candles were placed on tables just after we arrived! Here I plumped for a half of Spire Coal Porter, which was excellent and a chocolate stout (sorry, forgot the brewery).

From there another short walk took us to the Olde Black Boy, again another dimly lit pub, but with bags of atmosphere. Not such a good beer selection this time, as a couple of the pumpclips were turned around, but I enjoyed a half of Clark's Westgate Gold, before we decamped to an old favourite of ours, the Three John Scotts on Lowgate for a bite to eat. This Wetherspoon house had an oatmeal stout from one of their American guest breweries, which was excellent, and we finished off the evening with a couple of halves at the Admiral of the Humber close to our hotel, another Wetherspoons with a much improved beer range. Here we tried Tabatha from Partners Brewery, a version of a Belgian Tripel beer, plus Roosters YPA, both very good.

The next evening we ventured out to the William Hawkes in the Old Town, a superbly atmospheric pub with another great range of real ales, including Wentworth Black Sabbath, before walking to the Minerva in the Marina for a meal and sampling of Kelham Island Blondie and Marstons Old Empire. Some great pubs, all within walking distance of the city centre. Mark Elsome [9]

The Jolly Miller Presents Our Easter Extravaganza!

Children's Bouncy Castle – Friday through till Monday!
Beer Festival – Saturday from 2pm all the way through to Monday!

Food Available on Friday, Saturday and Monday from 12pm till 9pm
(Sunday will be the usual 12pm-7pm time slot)

Our local Open Mic artists will be playing outside Saturday afternoon from 3pm!

A Brilliant Jazz Band will be playing on Sunday Afternoon* Pending Booking

Various amazing Children's activities will also take place on Easter Sunday from 1pm!

