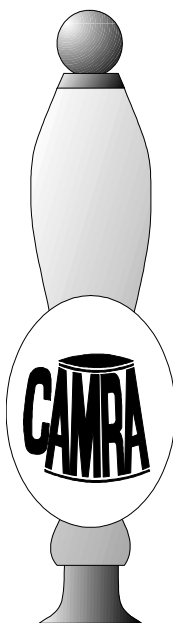


Branch Diary

- Tues Jan 11**
8pm Branch Meeting & Social,
Blue Bell, Scunthorpe
- Sat Jan 22**
10am Trip by train to Manchester for
National Winter Ales Festival
- Sat Feb 12**
12 noon Pub of the Season presentation to
Dying Gladiator, Brigg
- Sat 5 March**
10am Trip to Oakwood Beer Festival,
Magna, Rotherham. Meet at
Scunthorpe rail station
- Sat 12 March**
10am Trip to Toad Brewery, Doncaster
+ crawl of town centre pubs.
Meet at Scunthorpe rail station



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Iron Brew

Newsletter of Scunthorpe & District

Campaign for Real Ale

FREE

Winter 2011



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

FREE

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

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Album Reviewed

Page 6: National Winter
Ales Festival, Manchester

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Wakefield Beer Festival

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Place to Talk

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Publishes Localism Bill

Tax Cut for Low Strength Beers a Boost for Pub-Goers

At the end of November the Government announced the outcome of its Alcohol Taxation review. As part of this, the Government is to introduce a reduced rate of excise duty for beers at or below 2.8% ABV (once popular as 'lunchtime ales'), but will increase tax on beers above 7.5% ABV. CAMRA will be pushing for a duty reduction of at least 50% for these low strength beers.

This decision follows a campaign launched by CAMRA in 2009 at the Great British Beer Festival when research was published showing that 55% of all drinkers supported a lower strength beer option in pubs. Current EU rules mean that the UK Government can only reduce duty on low strength beers at or below 2.8%. These rules are under review and CAMRA has a meeting with the
(cont. on page 2)

IRON BREW

Published quarterly by Scunthorpe & District Campaign for Real Ale. Edited by Mark Elsome

**29 The Dales, Bottesford
who would be pleased to receive
comments for publication
e-mail:**

mark.elsome@ntlworld.com

Copy date for next issue

20 March 2011

Web Site:

<http://www.scunthorpecamra.org.uk>

**Opinions expressed in this newsletter
are those of the author, and may not
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Branch Committee

Branch Chairman: Mark Elsome
(Tel: 01724 331056)

Branch Treasurer: Chris Lyon
(Tel: 01724 761217)

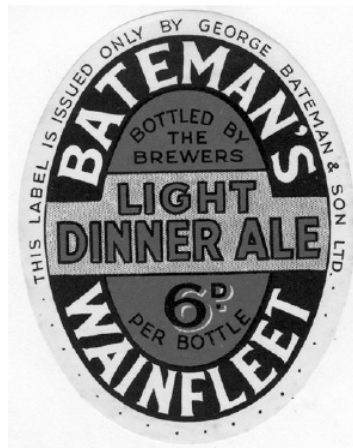
Branch Secretary: Bev Branton
(Tel: 01724 357009)

Membership Secretary:
Paul Williams (Tel: 01673 818109)

Social Secretary:
Sarah Wullink
(Tel: 07840155637) (m)

European Commission in early December where they will push for the 2.8% ABV cap to be increased, potentially up to 3.5% ABV.

Mike Benner, CAMRA Chief Executive said, "News that tax will be increased on beers above 7.5% ABV is disappointing. However we are pleased that this widely expected increase will be counterbalanced by a tax cut on low strength beers. Reduced tax on low strength beers is good news for pub goers at a time when 29 pubs are closing every week. This move will incentivise brewers to invest in producing new low strength real ales packed full of flavour."



PUB & BREWERY NEWS

The Dolphin at Bottesford has been featuring Marston's EPA (English Pale Ale) at 4% ABV recently. I trudged through last year's late snow to try it and was pleasantly surprised by the taste and quality of this beer – the price of £2.20 a pint wasn't bad either.

The Barracuda in Scunthorpe High Street has begun to feature real ales and held an Autumn beer festival last year. Beers on my visit included Brains SA, Wychwood Hobgoblin and Wells Bombardier – worth a visit.

The Six Bells at Barrow-on-Humber has opened again under new management, and is now selling real ales. During Christmas, Batemans Rosey Nosey and Wells Bombardier were available.

The Hope & Anchor at South Ferriby was promoting cask Theakstons XB in the run-up to Christmas. Theakston's beers have been ousted by the ubiquitous Black Sheep Bitter in many pubs in our area, so it's good to see XB back on the bar. Definitely worth trying!

IF YOU DRINK OR SELL REAL ALE AND HAVE ANY INFORMATION YOU'D LIKE TO IMPART TO IRON BREW READERS ABOUT YOUR PUB OR CLUB, PLEASE LET THE EDITOR KNOW.

TRADING STANDARDS

If you are concerned about short measures or any other aspects of pub service, contact: -

SCUNTHORPE TRADING STANDARDS

TEL: 01724 297664

Beer Jokes

INHERITANCE BLUES

A man in a pub sees a friend at a table, drinking by himself. Approaching the friend he comments, "You look terrible. What's the problem?"

"My mother died in August," his friend replied, "and left me £25,000. Then in September my father died, leaving me £90,000."

"Losing both parents in two months. No wonder you're depressed."

"And last month my aunt died, and left me £15,000." His friend continued.

"Three close family members lost in three months? How sad."

"Then this month," concluded, the friend, "absolutely nothing!"

A CHRISTMAS CRACKER!

Most of these Christmas Cracker jokes are wince-inducing, but I found this one over the festive period, and it made me laugh (maybe it had something to do with copious draughts of alcohol consumed with Christmas lunch ...!)

Q: A barrel of beer fell on a man's head but he wasn't hurt. Why?

A: It was a light ale.

UNDER THE STREET LIGHT

Late at night, a drunk was on his knees beneath a street-light, evidently looking for something. A passer-by, being a good samaritan, offered to help. "What is it you've lost?" he asked.

"My watch," replied the drunk. "It fell off when I tripped over the pavement."

The passer-by joined in the search but after a quarter of an hour, there was still no sign of the watch. "Where exactly did you trip?" asked the passer-by.

"About 100 yards away up the street," replied the drunk.

"Then why are you looking for your watch here if you lost it 100 yards away up the street?"

The drunk said, "Because the light's a lot better here."



PUB OF THE SEASON

WINTER 2011

THE DYING GLADIATOR, BRIGG

Our Winter Pub of the Season is the Dying Gladiator in Brigg. Located on Bigby Street just behind the High Street, this uniquely named, attractive, community pub has come back from the brink in recent times. Once boarded up for over two years, it was bought by local farmer Robert Borrill, and in 2010 was leased by first-time licensee Peter Carter, who runs the Gladiator helped by wife Vida and son Stuart. Peter previously ran a transport company for thirty years, but has been at the helm at the Dying Gladiator for the last eight months.

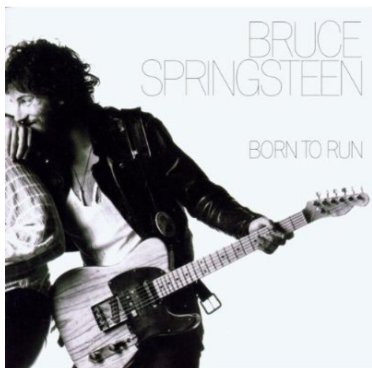
The pub has a statue of the aforementioned gladiator over the entrance, and this is often sought out for a souvenir photo by visiting tourists. Inside, the pub is open plan in design, but with four discrete drinking areas, one of which has leather sofas. The bar area has a tile floor, and the pub is simply, but tastefully decorated, and displays vintage photographs of Brigg on the walls. They also have a real coal fire for the colder months of the year.

Four real ales are sold – Dying Gladiator (4.0% ABV), a house beer brewed by Tom Wood, Black Sheep Bitter, Tom Wood's Bomber County and Batemans XXXB, all kept and served in good condition. The pub is a free house, but seems to have settled on these beers as they are very popular with customers, and is open all day from 11am – 11pm (later on Fri/Sat). The pub relies almost exclusively on wet sales, but does produce daily sandwiches. A poker night is held on Wednesday, and Peter is currently developing a snooker/pool hall in a large room at the rear of the pub.

We congratulate Peter and family on this award, which will be presented on Saturday 12 February at 1230 pm. We hope you can join us.

Mark Elsome

Classic Albums, No. 34: Bruce Springsteen – Born To Run (Columbia)



On its release in 1975 Born To Run to me seemed 'old fashioned' and out of step compared to other music I was listening to at that time. Springsteen embraced the sound of Phil Spector with the energy of Elvis and the heartbreaking melodrama of Roy Orbison, to produce a reworked 'traditional' sound that seemed fresh and full of energy and now seems timeless.

Although initially the album was to be a concept (with possible titles 'The Legend of

Zero' or 'Blind Terry'), the album does still contain a theme of the struggle of growing up, to be independent and to discover what life means. Springsteen created a collection of songs that appear to be happening in the same place on the same night, a fight to reconcile Springsteen's big dreams against the crushing realities of adolescence, powered by youthful optimism and energy. For Springsteen the album represented a journey of both hope and despair a theme which he continues through the rest of his career.

The recording process for the album was slow. Recording began in early 1974 and the song 'Born to Run' took six months to perfect. In the early recordings sound effects such as street cars and drag races were included and for a time synths, horns and strings. Eventually Springsteen ditched those sounds in favour of the guitar, claiming that the strings took away 'some of the darkness'. Springsteen's desire for perfection in terms of the sound spilt the band (two members left), but once the new members were broken in they fell in with Springsteen's demands and disciplines. Springsteen's ambition was to achieve a complete sound in which the power of the songs was paramount. He said 'the idea was to be tight and bare and the arrangement minimal'. As the months progressed recording not only 'ate up everybodys' lives', the costs started to grow. Engineer Jimmy Lovine had to hide the mounting recording bills from the record company.

Springsteen gave everything he had: patience, energy, time and endurance. He said he found it difficult to transfer the sounds in his head on to tape, but with the support of the E Street Band and his own determination he produced a timeless and inspiring album. *Chris Lyon* [4]

Government Publishes Localism Bill

The Coalition Government has recently published details of its Localism Bill, which aims to devolve greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and give local communities control over housing and planning decisions. The bill would make it easier for pubs, shops and libraries put up for sale to be bought by a community group. Locals will be able to place certain buildings on a "most wanted" list and if they are put up for sale, they would have to be given time to develop a bid and raise the money. This bill is expected to pass into law in November 2011.

The Government also recently announced its response to almost 200 proposals submitted under the Sustainable Communities Act. The Act allows councils and communities to drive the actions of central government to promote sustainability locally. CAMRA has been campaigning for this Act to be a success since 2002.

As a result the Government is now considering banning restrictive covenants, which is one of the proposals put to the Government under the Act. Restrictive covenants are used by the seller of a pub to prevent the buyer from continuing to run the premises as a pub. This practice is used to restrict competition in local areas and deprives our communities of their pubs. Between 2004 and 2009 almost 600 pubs were sold with restrictive covenants. These are great steps forward to help pubs under threat, and a significant success for localism. The move shows that the Government recognises that pubs are vital community assets that need to be protected. *CAMRA* [13]

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**Two Guest Beers,
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WITH GREAT
REAL ALES!**

Autumn Pub of the Season



Branch Chairman, Mark Elsome (centre left), presents the Pub of the Season certificate to Blue Bell manager, Paul Ferguson, with branch members and Blue Bell staff toasting their success

CAMRA Christmas Party

The branch Christmas party was held in December at the Malt Shovel in Ashby again this year. Around 25 branch members enjoyed a seasonal pub quiz, followed by an extensive buffet produced by the pub, and a Christmas raffle with lots of beery prizes – the latter was thrown open to other pub customers, who did very well in winning prizes! The beers were top notch as always, and included a trio from Abbeydale Brewery – Winter (5.2% ABV), Reindeer Repellent (4.2%) and the powerful Black Mass (6.66%). A very enjoyable evening, with thanks to Belinda and Simon at the Malt Shovel for the buffet and beers



The Malt Shovel

219 Ashby High Street
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Quiz nights Tues & Thurs – win beer & loose change
Live music every other Saturday from 8.30pm/check press
& blackboards

In the Good Beer Guide 10 years running

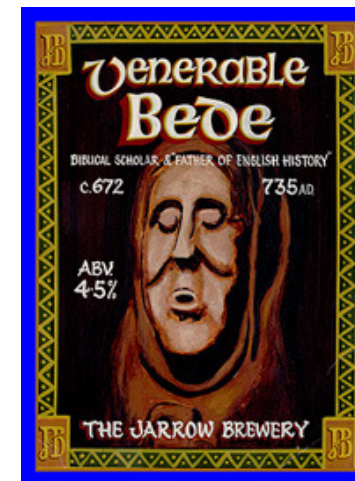
National Winter Ales Festival 2011

We in Scunthorpe & District CAMRA will be undertaking our annual visit to the National Winter Ales Festival in Manchester. This takes place between 19 – 22 January. This is one of two CAMRA national festivals organised every year, and is almost a Great British Beer Festival for the north! It takes place at the Sheridan Suite on Oldham Road in Manchester's northern quarter, and will be featuring over 200 British and foreign draught beers, plus bottled beers and cider and perry. Of course being a festival of winter ales, there is a focus on the stronger beers that tend to define this style, but these are available in 1/3 pint measures if preferred, so you don't necessarily have to over-indulge. There's also a selection of beers of more modest alcohol contents to provide an alternative to the rocket fuels! There's always a good atmosphere at the event, and it's a great way to start the New Year. There are also many fine pubs in this area of Manchester, and we generally try a few old favourites such as the Marble Arch and the Smithfield Hotel during our day out. With rail travel from Scunthorpe to Manchester being so convenient, it's an event not to be missed. For more details go to the festival website using the link:
<http://www.alefestival.org.uk/winterales/>



Beer of the Festival

Apologies for missing this out of the last *Iron Brew*, but the beer of the festival from the 13th Scunthorpe Beer Festival was Venerable Bede (4.5% ABV), from Jarrow Brewery. This received the most votes from people attending the festival, drawing many positive comments, and was a golden, fruity tasting beer. The brewery is located at the Maltings pub in South Shields, but we were unable to arrange a visit at short notice. Instead we produced a commemorative certificate, which we sent to Jarrow by post. They were very pleased to receive the award, and responded by inviting us to the brewery if ever in the area.



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12.00 to 15.00 Sundays

Holydyke
Barton-upon-Humber
DN18 5PS
01652 633292

Booking advisable at weekends

Pubs Still The Place To Talk

A survey commissioned by Courage Beer suggests drinkers in Britain still consider the pub the best place outside of home for conversation. Fifty percent of those quizzed have made new friends by talking to people in the pub, and the pub (43%) is also the place where you are most likely to strike up a conversation with a stranger, followed by long haul flights (38%) and nightclubs (27%). The Courage Beer Conversations survey of 3,000 British adults for Courage Beer found that Geordies are the UK's most gregarious with the North East weighing in with an average of 33 conversations per day – closely followed by the Welsh on 32, whilst the Northern Irish are least outgoing with an average of 22 conversations every day. However, whilst the survey illustrates the convivial nature of British pubs, the survey also points to a worrying aspect of Britain's sociability, with 43% of our daily conversations deemed pointless! Those questioned were split on whether modern technology has caused the art of conversation to wane in recent years, with 52% believing people don't talk face to face any more, whilst 48% think technology means we actually talk more, but through a different medium. Only a third of people count the conversations they have on social networks such as Twitter and Facebook as 'proper conversations'. Marriage & relationships (74%) head the list of conversation topics that we consider meaningful, closely followed by money (60%) and work/ job happiness (55%). Politics comes in fourth at 34%, followed by food & drink (27%) and religion and property prices on 22%. [10]

NELTHORPE ARMS

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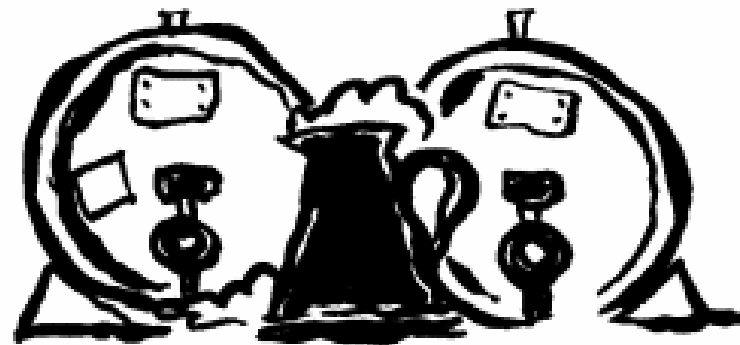
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Rotherham Beer Festival Moves To Magna

Scunthorpe & District Branch always try and get across to the Rotherham Beer & Music Festival held at Oakwood School in Rotherham during the February half-term holiday. With over 200 real ales, this event has been one of the largest local festivals in the north of England. One of the biggest draws to Oakwood, apart from the beers, was the way the festival made use of the main halls and classrooms to set up regional bars both large and small, which allowed customers to wander from bar to bar to their heart's content. Having attended a rock concert in the main hall at Magna the new venue, this is the exact opposite, comprising a cavernous open space (a former steelworks rolling mill), which will allow lots of beer stillage to be erected, but seems unlikely to recreate the unique Oakwood atmosphere. The festival website states that different areas will be available, but it remains to be seen how this will work. Another change is that the CAMRA members and guest/sponsor nights have been abandoned, and all sessions will now be open to the public. Nevertheless we



plan to visit on the Saturday, using public transport to get there. This year's event is called the White Rose Festival, and the organisers' plan is to feature Yorkshire beers and those from other counties with a white rose in their crest, and it takes place from 2 – 5 March 2011. Evening sessions run from 6 -11pm from Wed – Fri, while the festival is open all day on Saturday between 12 noon – 11pm. For more details see website:

<http://www.magnarealale.co.uk>

VAT Rise Adds 6p on a Pint

The increase in VAT to 20% which came into force on 4 January, is expected to add 6p on your pint. The British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA), voiced concern over the rising taxation of beer, which includes a 26% rise in duty over the past two years, saying that the tax rises are shackling the pub sector at a time of recession, with another annual excise duty rise also due shortly. Research from Oxford Economics predicts the VAT increase alone will lead to the loss of around 8,800 jobs related to the sale of beer. The BBPA wants the Government to consider a lower rate of VAT for the hospitality trade after similar moves across Europe proved to be a winner in creating jobs and boosting tax revenues. They also warned that the VAT rise will hit pubs much harder than supermarkets because most are small family run businesses and are unable to absorb the increase. The Federation of Small Businesses said 70% of its members believe the VAT rise will have a negative impact on trade.

(Morning Advertiser)

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Branch Trip to Wakefield Beer Festival, November 2010

We travelled to Wakefield on the first Saturday in November to visit their 20th Beer Festival at Lightwaves Leisure Centre not to mention stopping for "award-winning pies" as we made our way there from the station. The festival promised 130+ cooled Real Ales, Cider, Perry, Fruit wines plus foreign and British bottled beers. We were very pleased to see there was a much better selection of beers than the previous year, when we had found these had been picked over by the Saturday, so our members were able to sample many of those selected from the programme rather than finding them sold out. There had been some rearrangements however in the venue, and although there was plentiful seating we didn't find the layout of long rows of chairs with no tables comfortable or conducive to drinking or conversation. The range of food, which had previously been substantial traditional fare, was much reduced to a cold selection which may have been a factor in our becoming inebriated somewhat early in the day! Following on from the festival we made a tour of some well known Wakefield establishments, once we had navigated the challenging maze of town centre building developments. We first made for the Red Shed, home of CAMRA award-winning Wakefield Labour Club. We were sure this was on a main road when we last visited a couple of years ago but now, after directions from locals, seemingly almost inside a multi-story development. The beer quality was superb and the lingering aroma exactly as we remembered.

This was followed by our old favourite of Fernandes where we enjoyed live music and the Cherry Stout went down a little too well unwisely followed

by a Belgian beer in the beautiful Bier Keller. Our final port of call was the newly titled Bull & Fairbrass, formerly O'Donoghue's, now owned by Great Heck Brewery. Here they also had a beer festival underway with about 20 beers. By this point our reporting ability was seriously reduced, but a good day was had all round. *Sarah Wullink [9]*

