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MAGAZINE OF SCUNTHORPE & DISTRICT
CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

AUGUST – OCTOBER 2024



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CRAFT BEER CONNOISSEUR

A Tale of Ale



The story of India Pale Ale (IPA) is one that's often been told – indeed I've alluded to it in previous columns of mine. However in recounting the tale of IPA a whole mythology seems to have arisen around it and with my renowned forensic attention to detail (especially after two or three pints of Jaipur), I thought I'd take on the task of telling the true(ish) tale of this particular ale, so here we go. There was a need in the 18th century, during the days of Empire, to send beer by sea to India for British troops and staff via vessels of the East India Company. This was before the invention of refrigeration and it was too hot to brew there, so beer had to be imported instead.

The journey took six months, so a robust beer that was highly hopped and strong in alcohol was thought to be suitable as both helped to preserve beer for longer.



Hodgson's Brewery in London is often credited as the inventor of IPA in 1785 and thanks to its proximity to the East India Docks achieved a large amount of distribution of IPA in India, although records show that pale ales from Burton-upon-Trent were supplied to India from as early as 1717. It's thought that the IPA style evolved from "October Ales", which were brewed for keeping and were high in alcohol and hopping rates. There is also some evidence that the long sea journey had a profound impact on the beer as it was hailed as being "of superior

quality" on reaching India, and often compared favourably to wine and champagne.

IPA certainly became popular with Anglo-Indian colonists, being mentioned in accounts of life in India more than any other beer.

Nevertheless porter beers were also shipped to India in large quantities as these were well liked by British troops, while IPA was drunk more by the officers. Other types of beer such as brown ale, table beer and even cider were also consumed.

The East India Company traders eventually began looking for other brewing partners and Allsops, Bass and Salt breweries of Burton improved on Hodgson's recipe for hopped pale ale and took over the Indian market. This was mainly due to the fact that Burton water is much higher in sulphates than London water and the resulting beer was brighter and more sparkling, the hop character crisp and sharp. This is the variant that would make IPA world-famous.

By the early 19th century IPAs were gaining in popularity as exports increased and by the 1830's beer drinkers in England were able to taste this export style pale ale for the first time. By 1840 IPA became

one of England's best selling beers. The fondness for India Pale Ales waned in England by the start of the 20th century as new styles of pale ales (known as "bitter" in the pub) and mild and stout became more popular. Higher gravity beers also drew higher levels of taxes and it was not economic to brew them as often. That would be the end of the story until the early beginnings of the craft beer revolution in America during the 1970s & 80s.

Brewers in America revived the original recipes created 150 years earlier in England as they looked to Europe for inspiration. By restoring IPA to its original strength, and brewing with aromatic US hops that were celebrated for their flavour characteristics, the US reinvented the style as an incredibly aromatic beer that also showed assertive bitterness. They were traditionally balanced by a solid malt backbone and tended to be orange-brown in appearance. The result was the first examples of American IPAs. From there creativity took over with brewers as they added more and newer hops and upped the alcohol content. This led to the various styles of IPA that we enjoy today and there are still new ones being

created.

The first American IPAs were brewed on the West Coast with new hop varieties such as Cascade and Chinook. These beers were very hop forward with piney, floral and citrus notes and a strong bitterness. Later East Coast IPAs arrived from breweries in New England that balanced the strong hoppiness with an equally strong malt component and these IPAs were normally in the range 5.5 – 7.5% ABV.



A subset of New England IPA (or NEIPA) is also known as Hazy IPA. The haze comes from the fact that they are unfiltered and often include the addition of wheat or oats. New England IPAs have extremely low bitterness, and a citrus flavour that might remind you of drinking a glass of juice. These have become very popular with craft beer enthusiasts,

but are often (wrongly) blamed for the decline of the craft beer market as other styles got squeezed out. These beers will range in ABV from 6.5-9%.

And let's not forget the good old English IPA - I'm showing off my patriotic credentials by writing this article while draped in the Union Jack flag, with the muted strains of *There'll Always Be An England* playing in the background – and these include beers such as Marston's Old Empire and Thornbridge Jaipur, the closest you'll get to experiencing the original India Pale Ales that were exported to the British colonies. If you're a regular drinker of American style IPAs, then the first thing you will notice is that English IPAs have less intense hop flavour and are more balanced by the malt in the beer. Colours range from golden to deep amber with an ABV range of 5-7%.

Since then all manner of IPA variants have been concocted by craft brewers eager to maintain a commercial advantage over other breweries. These include Session IPAs brewed to a lower, more "sessionable" strength, Milkshake IPAs, Cold IPAs, Brut IPAs, DIPAs & TIPAs (double and triple strength

IPAs), and even Black IPAs. As beer author Pete Brown says in his conclusion to the IPA Learn & Discover feature referenced below: "What seems to endure forever is a fascination with the IPA beer style – with the character of the beer itself and the history, romance and myth around it – that no other beer ever seems likely to match." I'll drink to that!

A BEERGEEK

This feature was compiled with the aid of the following with thanks: <https://content.kegworks.com/blog/kegworks-guide-to-ipas> <https://camra.org.uk/learn-discover/discover/india-pale-ale-a-history/>

Footnote: As ever, more on this topic can be obtained for the price of a pint in my local *The Hanging Bat*, where I reside most lunchtimes. That's me in the corner enjoying their fine ales and engaged in quiet contemplation. Just an update from my last column before I go - I've been allowed back into the vinyl record sessions at the pub, but only after digging out my old James Taylor and Joni Mitchell albums. Their folksy warbling and acoustic guitar strumming seemed to find more favour than my original peace

offerings to the group of Captain Beefheart and Frank Zappa. When I played the latter they caused those attending to cover their ears and grimace extravagantly as if in excruciating pain. Why people should react so badly to *Willie the Pimp* with its near eight minute electric guitar solo I have no idea. Very strange - there's just no accounting for taste! Enjoy your beer. Until next time!

SPRING PUB OF THE SEASON

The Crown Inn, Glentham

On a sunny day in mid-May, members and friends gathered at the Crown Inn, Glentham, to present them with the branch Spring Pub of the Season award. The pub had been



nominated by branch Membership Secretary Paul Williams after a Good Beer Guide survey earlier in the

year. Hence it was only fitting that Paul presented the framed Pub of the Season certificate to Crown Inn licensee Adam Garmory on the day. The Crown Inn is situated on the main road through the village of Glentham, a short distance from Caenby Corner, right on the fringe of our branch area. It contains a comfortable bar area with seating for drinking or dining, a separate dining room, an area for pool and a beer garden overlooking the road containing swings and a slide for children.

The bar offers four handpulled real ales plus a selection of keg beers and ciders. Adam tries to put on local beers such as Batemans, Milestone and Beermats as much as possible, but includes occasional beers from further afield from time to time. Real ales on the day of the presentation were Batemans 5G and Dark Mild, Pennine Amber Necker and Timothy Taylor's Landlord. Taylor's Hopical Storm was also available as a craft keg.

Adam took over as licensee at the Crown Inn two years ago after a period of closure and the pub has since gone from strength to strength. Adam is an experienced licensee having previously run the

Duke William and Horse & Groom in Lincoln and pubs in Jersey. The Crown Inn is now owned by the small pubco Harper Inns.



They also offer good quality food throughout the week, with daily specials displayed on a blackboard by the bar. Most of our group ate there on the day of the presentation and all agreed the food was excellent. They also offer portions of warm pork scratchings from a vending machine (with optional apple sauce), which we also tried and enjoyed while there.

The Crown Inn is a very welcoming village local with good food and a varied selection of real ales kept in tip top condition and is well worth visiting. The Spring Pub of the Season award is well deserved and we congratulate Adam and staff on their success. Long may it continue!

MARK ELSOME

WHAT ON EARTH?

No. 81: West Coast Pilsner

What is this strange concoction of which you speak? A West Coast Pilsner – is there such a thing in the vast, infinite expanse of heaven and earth? Well, yes, dear reader, apparently there is and this is the lowdown on it.

You won't be surprised to learn that this trend started in the USA when Highland Park Brewery of Los Angeles were looking around for an unusual cask of beer to contribute to an anniversary event at another LA brewery to which they'd been invited (*if the word "cask" is used as in the UK, then probably the most unusual thing about it is that they were contributing a cask beer – almost unheard of, even in America – Ed*). They didn't have time to brew a new beer specifically for the event, so decided to blend a couple of beers they already had in their tanks. The beers they blended 50:50 were a Pilsner called Refresh and Hello LA, a West Coast IPA hopped with Mosaic and Citra. It didn't on the face of it make sense, but the Pilsner lightened up the body and the hops shined through.

They were surprised to find that the cask went in no time at all and was enthusiastically received as "tasting really good".

Fast forward a decade and Highland Park now produce a commercial West Coast Pilsner called Timbo Pils, named after ex-Highland Park brewer Tim McDonnell. Although the recipe has been tweaked slightly, it's remarkably similar to that first hybrid brew. The beer is structured like a pilsner with the appropriate malts, yeast and hops, but dry hopped like a West Coast IPA with the hop intensity.

Similar hop-forward beers like Cold IPA and India Pale Lager (IPL) ferment with either colder temperatures or lager yeast, but their names can be confusing. West Coast Pilsner rang true as a good descriptor of the beer and is a beer that's fermented with lager yeast at a little bit warmer temperatures than a traditional lager beer. Highland Park admitted that they didn't think it would be this big and that they were just making something they knew they wanted to drink. Tim McDonnell says: "It's crazy; it was almost a happy accident."

Timbo Pils is today one of the beers that Highland Park brew and sell the most and consumers have bought into it, but it is still a niche product, mostly in the Pacific Northwest, compared to the more ubiquitous hazy IPAs. Highland Park is sure it will eventually make its way around the country. The brewery even celebrates Timbo Day every year when they offer a handful of different Timbo Pils iterations such as DDH Timbo Pils and Jumbo Timbo.



The style challenges what craft drinkers have been going for lately which is higher ABV and sweeter beers. West Coast Pilsner is a dryer, crisper type of beer. Nevertheless, although it's still a niche beer over the pond, don't be surprised if it gets picked up by UK craft brewers and becomes a "thing" over here too. I for one stand ready, willing and able to give it a try!

A BEERGEEK

Footnote: I've just found out that it's

already here in the UK! Never knowingly letting the grass grow under their feet, Wiper & True of Bristol have brewed a 5.8% ABV West Coast Pilsner called Prism in collaboration with Siren Craft. The beer is available in 440 ml cans from their webshop if you wanted to try it?

<https://wiperandtrue.com/collection/all-beer>

This feature was based on the following, with thanks:

<https://www.hopculture.com/west-coast-pilsner-timbo-pils/>



TETLEY BITTERMEN (& WOMEN) FOR THE DAY!

A Branch Visit to Leeds

When I saw in the beer trade press that Kirkstall Brewery was to open the iconic Tetley Building in Leeds as a bar (the former offices of the Tetley Brewery), showcasing Leeds beers and breweries, I immediately felt that this was a chance for a branch day out that was too good to miss. The building duly opened in

May (although only the ground floor as it turned out) and we quickly arranged a branch visit at the end of that month. However it appeared that my enthusiasm for a day trip to Leeds was not widely shared by other members and only four people from the Scunthorpe & District Branch, plus our friends Anne and Stef from Grimsby & N E Lincs CAMRA decided to strike out for the fair city of Leeds.

After we were able to catch a delayed LNER train to Leeds at Doncaster Station rather than our scheduled connection later on, the six of us pitched up at Leeds Station earlier than the noon arrival we had planned. This presented a slight problem as most of the city centre pubs weren't even open yet! Consulting Google we managed to find that Tappd near the station opened at 11am, so went there for the first beer of the day. I don't know if we caught them slightly unprepared as one of the beers we purchased was off and had to be replaced, one was served in a cracked glass and they seemed to be in the process of making wholesale changes to the beers on offer. The pub is owned by the same company that runs the Tap at

Sheffield Station and as at Sheffield, beer is brewed on site and the large cellar tanks used in the process (see photo, below), form a backdrop to the interior.



Once over the initial glitches the beer tasted fine, but having spotted that the Banker's Cat over the road suspiciously seemed to be open despite the earliness of the hour, we made a beeline for this Thornbridge pub as quickly as we could. Here the pub interior was attractive to the eye with dark wood fittings, comfortable seating and a good range of Thornbridge beers on cask and keg. Despite there being no Green Mountain IPA on cask (a current quest of mine is to sample the cask version), there were other beers that peaked our interest including Fruits of the Forest, a Slovenian hopped pale ale and a dry Irish stout, all excellent.

Moving swiftly on, we headed to the main attraction, the Tetley Building on Hunslet Road, a ten minute walk away over the River Aire (via a bridge, obviously!). This large edifice could be seen from some distance away and once we got there, the obligatory group photograph was taken (*see cover*). The Tetley Building is part of the Aire Park regeneration scheme and the building itself and the surrounding area all looked shiny and new. Once inside it was apparent that new owners Kirkstall Brewery had done a good job with the interior which was bright and spacious with a carefully curated display of Tetley and other brewery memorabilia, vintage sofas and chairs and an attractive bar. The upper floors are still being worked on.

Unfortunately our initial positive experience dipped a little after that when we saw that the draught beer choice was limited mainly to Kirkstall beers plus Leeds Pale and Tetley Bitter, when the publicity blurb beforehand had indicated it would be a showcase for the breweries of Leeds. To add insult to injury, one of the Kirkstall beers went off and wasn't replaced until much later when we were about to leave. To

make matters even worse there was a mix-up over our food order causing a very long wait which prompted an apology from the bar manager before the food eventually arrived about an hour or more after ordering.

To be fair the Kirkstall Bitter and Black Band Porter that I tried were both very tasty as was the Tetley Bitter, even though it's no longer brewed in Leeds. I felt that the arrangements at the new Tetley Building needed a bit longer to bed in, and although our visit was disappointing, I would like to return once everything has settled down as potentially it's a great addition to the Leeds beer scene.

Our next port of call was the Northern Monk Refectory at the Old Flax Store, a ten minute walk away.



Here the original Northern Monk Brewery is housed on the ground floor (they now have a newer brewery elsewhere in Leeds, although they brew at both), with

the Refectory on the first floor. On the day of our visit they had three Northern Monk beers on handpull and around twelve craft keg taps featuring their own and guest beers. I tried the Little Faith (4.0% ABV) on cask and a couple of craft kegs in thirds including an 11% Imperial Stout from Brewski, all very good. It was very chilled and relaxing until some children started making an almighty racket playing on the giant Connect 4 game near us! Unable to converse over the din, we decided to move on to our next pub, Whitelock's Ale House back in the city centre.



By now it was late afternoon and Whitelock's was very busy, but we managed to squeeze around a small, vacant table inside the pub. I decided on the Railway Porter from owning brewery Five Points which was excellent (as always), plus a 6.5% Imperial Porter also very good. Whitelock's doesn't change much from year to year, but doesn't need

to as it's ornate tiled bar, stained glass windows, good service and great range of beers all add up to a brilliant place to drink which people flock to time after time. The steep, narrow stairs to the toilets are not for the faint hearted though! With the afternoon moving on, we decided to try our next pub, Foley's Tap House on the Headrow. I knew that Foley's had been closed when owners Black Sheep Brewery had been taken over by a finance company, but saw online that it had reopened under new management. I assumed they wouldn't change a winning formula and the great range of real ales and ciders and craft kegs that had always featured would be the same or similar. Big mistake! The pub had been converted into a nondescript, uninspired boozier with a range of standard keg ales and lagers that you can find in any number of UK pubs in virtually any town or city. Despite the presence of two handpumps we were told rather gruffly by the landlady that these were not in use, so we left without ordering a drink. Such a shame that a once great Leeds ale house had been reduced to this and our advice would be to give it a wide berth if drinking in Leeds.

Fortunately we knew of the Salt Hub bar just around the corner and hurriedly made our way there. Although fashioned as more of a cocktail bar, it did feature a good range of Salt Brewery beers on keg including Serge, a Citra IPA which was very tasty, as well as Huck A Back and Jute pale ales and Ikat an 8% IPA. There were also two handpumps featuring Ossett Yorkshire Blonde and Lilley's Mango Cider.

After a couple of halves it was time to go back to the station to make our way home, pausing only at the Draughtsman's Alehouse at Doncaster for a last half. Overall it had been an enjoyable day out, although not without its minor disappointments. Leeds is still a great place to drink and I would recommend it wholeheartedly to anyone interested in good beer. Thanks to those who came along on the day – we eagerly look forward to the next branch day out, wherever that may be!

MARK ELSOME

PUB & BREWERY NEWS

James Watt, craft beer's favourite pantomime villain, announced in

May that he was stepping down as CEO of **BrewDog** after 17 years to spend more time with his money. Ouch! That was a bit mean, even for us – he actually said he wanted to spend more time with friends and family. He will stay on the BrewDog plc board in the role of “captain and co-founder” and remains a major shareholder. He is replaced as CEO by James Arrow, former managing director at Boots Opticians.



Ever a divisive figure and like him or loathe him (and you probably know where we stand on that one), there's no doubt that he shook up the complacency of the beer world and with Martin Dickie grew BrewDog from humble beginnings into the world's leading craft brewer, employing 2,350 people across its head office, four breweries and 120 bars worldwide.

News from MORNING ADVERTISER

Some of the **Burton Union** sets discarded by **Carlsberg Marston's**

Brewing Company (CMBC) (covered in the last issue), have found a new home at **Thornbridge Brewery** in Bakewell.

Discussions between CMBC and Thornbridge began in February, to look for a way to provide a new future for the Union sets. CMBC gifted the set of union barrels to Thornbridge and has also provided expert guidance and advice on maintenance and set-up for the system.



The union system dates back to the 1800s and is a beautiful wood-barrel fermentation system that has been used continuously in the production of different beers over the decades. This transfer was completed in May.



The union sets will be used for brewing special edition cask beers

utilising the historic method first created in Burton-on-Trent in the 19th century. The first brew was a Union version of Jaipur. This version scored highly when sampled by drinkers using the beer rating website Untappd.

BEER TODAY



Speaking of **Thornbridge**, they brewed a Black IPA version of Jaipur in late May called

Jaipur Noir. Apart from a DDH (Double Dry Hopped) Jaipur brewed some time ago, this is the newest variant of Jaipur that Thornbridge have come up with.

As fans of dark beers we look forward to trying it locally at outlets such as the **Malt Shovel** or **Blue Bell**.

Great Newsome Brewery, relatively local to us just across the Humber in Winestead near Hull, is the latest brewery to join the takeover merry-go-round when they acquired the **Little Valley Brewery** brand in June. Little Valley was originally based in Cragg Vale, West Yorkshire.

Little Valley was set up in 2005 by Dutch master brewer Wim van der Spek and his English partner, Sue Cooper, who met while cycling in South Asia and the Middle East. Little Valley quickly became known among beer lovers for its continental slant on beers, from wheat beers to saisons, as well as the stalwarts of the range, Tod's Blonde, Python IPA, Withens Pale, and Stoodley Stout. These were often seen in bottles on the shelves of local supermarkets.



Matthew Hodgson, director at East Yorkshire-based Great Newsome Brewery, said: "Our intention is for it to be business as usual for fans and customers of Little Valley Brewery beers. The whole Great Newsome Brewery team is looking forward to brewing the fantastic Little Valley beers with the same passion that both Wim and Sue have."

Little Valley beers will now be brewed at the Great Newsome site.

(Photo shows staff from both

breweries after announcing the takeover)

BEER TODAY

In a similar vein, **Squawk Brewing Co.** of Manchester, which closed earlier in the year, has been resurrected in a takeover by **Moorhouses Brewery** in Burnley. The Squawk beers will now be brewed at Moorhouses for cask and keg under the supervision of Moorhouses' Head Brewer Dan Casaru and distributed around Manchester and beyond.

FACEBOOK

A storm in a pint pot has blown up over the faux Spanish lager **Madri**, after Aitor de Artaza, the international managing director of **Estrella Galicia**, criticised the makers of Madri for using "a big famous city in Spain" for marketing, even though "they don't produce here", which is "confusing for the consumer". He continued: "People think they are drinking a Spanish beer, but they are not very clear and not, to my point of view, very honest."

Despite the Madri logo featuring "a man adorned in the distinctive 19th-century chulapo style associated with the Spanish capital", and the

bottle displaying the phrase "el alma de Madrid" – "the soul of Madrid", the beer is actually brewed in Tadcaster, Yorkshire, by **Molson Coors**, prompting accusations of dishonesty from the Spanish beer boss.



Molson Coors, a US global brewer, has a history of marketing its beers with a geographically ambiguous origin story. It also makes Blue Moon, a Belgian-style wheat beer that's produced in Denver, Colorado (*not that unusual – Ed*). Molson Coors countered by saying Madri is made in collaboration with La Sagra, a Spanish brewery near Madrid. However any qualms about authenticity have not hindered the remarkable rise of Madri which recently topped £100 million in UK supermarket sales.

THE WEEK

<https://theweek.com/culture-life/food-drink/madri-row-brews-over-yorkshires-spanish-lager>

More new beers from Geoff McCaughtrie at local micro **Little Big Dog** in Barrow. First up was a 4% ABV oatmeal milk stout called **Cilla** (*Cilla Black - geddit – Ed*). Also brewed was a 4.5% black lager named **Schwarz**, both delicious.

The third new beer was **Atomic Kiwi**, a 5% New Zealand pale ale, hopped with Motueka and Kohatu hops from New Zealand. Geoff has named this one in honour of Ernest Rutherford, a Kiwi physicist who did pioneering research into atomic structure and radioactivity in the early 20th century.

<https://littlebigdogbeer.co.uk/>



The Hop Inn in Brigg has expanded its operation into an adjacent business unit and now has more space to offer its enterprising range of craft beers.

Look out for its special events such as Meet-the-Brewer nights, tap

takeovers and a free cheeseboard for customers on a Sunday.

ZEBRA STRIPING

New On-trend Behaviour

Now here's a new phrase to impress your friends or even to indulge in the practice. Zebra Striping is the name given to alternating between alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks in a single visit to the pub.

Particularly popular and on-trend among the young, moderation of alcohol is now a year-round habit for UK adults, an industry report by research consultancy KAM and alcohol-free beer brand Lucky Stripe found. Three out of four UK adults who drink alcohol have said they are currently actively moderating their consumption of it across 2024.

According to KAM Insights, more than one in five 18 to 24s claim to not drink alcohol, the highest of any age group. The report also found that 53% of 18- to 24-year-olds report visiting a pub or bar once a week or more, showing that while younger people's consumption of alcohol declines, the pub remains as the most important place for social connection.

Active moderation (where people

are actively changing their behaviour in order to consume less alcohol) is happening across all age groups and all days of the week — one in four UK adults say they moderate their alcohol consumption to some extent.



Luke Boase, founder of Lucky Saint, said: "There is a great opportunity for alcohol-free drinks to have a huge positive impact on the health of the nation, and the report shows that continuing to improve the availability and visibility of quality alcohol-free options will be critical in making that happen."

BEER TODAY

COVER STORY

Choice of Covers for the 2025 Good Beer Guide

CAMRA have recently announced a choice of covers for their flagship publication, the Good Beer Guide (GBG), in 2025. This will feature two

fictional pubs in UK soaps – the Rovers Return and the Woolpack from Coronation Street and Emmerdale respectively.



The representation of pubs on television is vital at a time when the trade is under significant pressure, says CAMRA. Statistics for 2023 show that 194 pubs were lost forever due to conversion or demolition, and some 1,293 pubs closed their doors to their communities.

"Working with ITV to celebrate the Rovers Return Inn and The Woolpack is a great honour for CAMRA," said national chairman Nik Antona. "The pubs and the soaps themselves reflect many of CAMRA's values, including the importance of community and the preservation of UK culture and traditions."

All well and good you might say, but after controversially adopting an iconic Iron Maiden symbol for the current GBG, the use of two soap

pubs for the next edition will probably divide opinion again. Personally I don't watch either programme. The last time I saw Emmerdale it had "Farm" in the title and was mostly about the lives of sheep farmers scrimping and scraping to make a living. Today's programme (I'm told), is a very different animal.

No doubt CAMRA will argue that using well known pubs from two popular long-running TV programmes to front the GBG will focus people's attention on the new guide and this will outweigh all the naysayers, but it's definitely not my cup of tea!

The new GBG will be published in September.

MARK ELSOME

(Based on article from BEER TODAY)

ST PETER'S BEER FESTIVAL

4th Festival to Take Place in September

Don't forget that the 4th annual beer festival at St Peter's Church in Bottesford is due to take place this year from **19 – 21 September** (Thursday – Saturday).

After a record attendances last year (resulting in an early sell-out), we

will have more beer and cider for the festival this year. If all goes to plan there should be 26 real ales and 10 bag-in-box ciders, plus wine by the glass and pre-mixed gin & tonics as well as low and no-alcohol beers in cans available for drivers.

Scunthorpe & District CAMRA members are once again selecting the festival draught beer and cider, helping to set up the bar and ensuring the beers and ciders are kept in tip-top condition.



Church staff and supporters will be organising a varied food menu including a barbecue on Friday and Saturday evenings as well as a well-stocked tombola. An outdoor gazebo will also be erected to allow some outdoor drinking if the weather is kind.

It all adds up to another great festival, which seems to get more popular year-on-year.

So, remember to put the dates in

your diary and join us at the church for one of the best local beer festivals around. Opening hours will be:

Thurs 19 Sept: **530 – 1030 pm**

Fri 20 & Sat 21 Sept: **12 noon – 1030 pm.**

Entry is a modest £1 and beer and cider will be priced at £4 per pint, the same as last year.

We hope to see you there!

MARK ELSOME

DRINKING DOWN UNDER

An Australian Travelogue

Here's an interesting travelogue from ex-Branch Chairman Mike Sayers about his drinking experiences while on holiday in Australia and New Zealand. Read on - Ed

My fading memory does recall a report from Mark when he visited Australia quite some time back. My visit was in January and started in Perth then to Sydney (by train) followed by Tasmania and New Zealand by ship. Whilst the cruise was all inclusive with fine wines and top brands available on demand rootling out land-based pubs was equally as enjoyable.

Australian beer is offered in three

sizes – schooner (425 ml), a pot or middy (285ml) or a pint (570ml). Unlike the UK the smaller measures are comparatively more expensive than a pint. Over here a half means 50% of both volume and price – not so down under. Buy pints! It is also, by North Lincolnshire standards, quite expensive at around \$Aus 10-15 per pint. New Zealand was slightly higher in \$NZ terms. But, so what? You're on holiday and have come a long way!

Only one day was available in Perth and nothing of note was found. The Indian Pacific train journey had a few bottled beers which were all quite hoppy lager type brews. Sydney, however, has some great venues including **The Fortune of War** (below - which claims to be one of the oldest in Australia - 1828) and is near the harbour ferry port opposite where the large cruise ships dock.



Smaller ships like ours berth the other side of the bridge.

It has a central bar and a couple of side rooms and offers the usual wide range of Aussie brews. There is a large outside area where meals can be taken and our steaks were historic and reasonably priced. My last visit also found a lovely pub called the Push which was next door to the Fortune of War. This time it is under refurbishment and will merge premises with its neighbour in the near future. All in all this is one to visit. The Rocks area of Sydney is vibrant with venues to suit all tastes. The **4 Pines Brewhouse** can be found in Darling Harbour using one of the green and yellow harbour ferries. Beer taps in Australasia often have up to a dozen to choose from with little to guide the drinker as to



what they are.

On the whole bar staff knew more about their products than the kids behind the counter of many of our establishments. The bar staff in general and the day manager in particular were very accommodating and friendly. Try before you buy is common. My trip eight years ago found no dark stuff. This is no longer the case and some of it was mighty fine.



Their on-site brewery is clearly visible for the bar as shown above. They kindly allowed me to keep the branded 'try before you buy' glass and I also later discovered that they supplied our cruise liner with their tasty Australian pale. When I asked

one of the Filipino barman for a Four Pines he thought that I had asked for four pints - could have got messy! Their 'dark stuff' was a proper porter. It tasted as good as it looked albeit colder than you would expect back home.

There are many bars in this part of Sydney. We didn't return to either of these from an earlier trip but, still there and still famous is The Australian (image below) by the bridge and the historic Lord Nelson a short walk from the Rocks area.



Once embarked the first stop was Hobart, Tasmania where enquiries of the port shore team led me to Hobart's oldest pub. This was a cracker with the sort of ambience you would hope to find in an Aussie pub - Wet trade only bar stools and foot rails – perfect! A bit of banter with a couple of local before a trip

into town made this a very decent jaunt.



It was a 15-minute stroll from where the ship was docked. The town's busy centre was a further 10 minutes away.

A few days of cruising followed before parking up at Invercargill on the south of South Island. Too much food and drink coupled with zero effective exercise and the trip had turned me from a passenger into freight.

The town is home to two motor museums that defy description for their sheer size and the quantity and quality of the exhibits. The motorcycle one had some priceless machines including a Brough Superior, Henderson and a Benelli Sei. If you like this sort of thing then you need to give this place at least half a day.

Although it was a small town and public loos are tricky to find the local

Sports Bar was the solution. Sports bars here double up as bookmakers where there was nothing that you could not place a bet on. Wall to wall flat screens (albeit with no sound), were made bearable by a chatty and amusing barman The beers shown are very common on the South Island.



Next stop – Dunedin

The town has clearly been hammered by the post Covid shutdown and the general malaise of inflation. The pubs I visited eight years ago in the town square were both shut. Apparently staffing is a major issue here. The beautiful railway station was still evident but its souvenir shop wasn't. It's still worth a visit though.

That said I found this place by accident whilst waiting for Lesley to show up. Not only did it offer hand pulled beers but did great snacks and had a pair of friendly pub dogs. That's me sorted then.

Called the Albar mine host was very friendly and informative. The London Porter (on the right) was delightful so we had to have a couple. Note the London Pride brass drip trays on the counter. I collected three copies of a free booklet called 'Pursuit of Hoppiness'. This looks like a country wide publication and runs to over 60



pages. If such a thing as a local CAMRA archive/library exists then they can be added. It seems that the craft beer brewing



industry in New Zealand is vibrant with a huge range to go at. Doubtless the town has more to offer given its size but we didn't have that much time after our on-shore trips to explore further. We had not visited Canterbury on our last trip but what a place it is.



The list shown (left), was in one of a few places in Canterbury indoor market

where one could have a cheeky beer. Our choice was the Test Lab Chocolate Stout and one of their glass emblems adorns one of the many pint glasses in my kitchen. There is much to see in this glorious city – the 'hop on-hop off' tram is as good a way as any.

We had a short afternoon to explore Picton and stopped here for a swift one. Whilst it



advertised food a notice said the kitchen was temporarily closed. As we were about to set off the reason for this became apparent when a large and noisy crowd of Japanese tourists turned up to be fed and watered. Out came the burgers from the beleaguered kitchen which were all duly photographed before being set upon.

So that was all we managed in Oz and the South Island and the cruise finished in Auckland where we had another 3 days.

The Heke Brewery – Waiheke Island A short but fast and invigorating ferry ride takes you from Auckland to the beautiful island of Waiheke. The return ferry fare includes a hop-on-hop-off bus service on the island. A new stop since our last visit was Heke where a brewery and eatery had appeared. If you ever get to this part of the world in general and this



island in particular – come to this place. This was their paddle to choose a sample midday of their ales. Mine was a mix of light,

amber and dark ales to accompany some of the best southern fried chicken I have ever had. Views were beautiful, the staff were excellent, it was hot and the ales were superb.



Our last couple of days were land-based in **Auckland** where it was warm and busy. If you visit on one of their bank holidays then expect everything to be hiked up by 15% - cheeky!

It does, as you would expect from a large port, abound with eateries posh shops and more bars than you can throw a boomerang at.

The beer magazine referred to earlier has a map of the Auckland Free houses with 12 of them within a 500 meter circle of the famous Sky Tower. The 16Tun was closest to our hotel and did a very decent stout at big city prices.

The Shakespeare brewery (pictured, below), is one of the most established in town and a 10-minute

uphill stroll from the cruise liner berths.

This is the first pub we visited when we were last here. I mentioned my CAMRA membership which got me a tour around the brewery which is immediately behind the bar. Their pizzas are splendid.



Overall, I enjoyed the varied tipples in general but was very impressed with the porters and stouts which were amongst the best I have ever had.

It is a very long way to go but if you do make it this far south the beer choice is huge and small breweries thrive. The wine is not too shabby either!

MIKE SAYERS

LOCAL BEER FESTIVALS

Festivals in Bottesford and Alkborough

Two upcoming local beer festivals for your diary;

Saturday 10 August Bottesford Town Council Beer Festival and Fun Day at the Civic Hall, Bottesford. 12 noon – 8 pm.



A little later in the month on **24 August**, the Coronation Club in Alkborough are running their own event from 1300 until close.

OBITUARY

Brian Hutson

Brian Hutson, a well-liked local real ale fan and ardent supporter of Scunthorpe & District CAMRA, sadly

passed away on 23 March 2024.

Here Beverley Branton gives her recollections of Brian:

Brian was Scunthorpe born and bred. He worked on the steelworks at the test house in the Process Metallurgy department and I worked with him there from 1977. He was a very interesting and knowledgeable man.



and always had a copy of one or the other on his person.

He was very knowledgeable of trains and timetables and rarely needed to

In those days we would go out to lunch at the King Henry VIII pub (later the Crosby Hotel) and Brian introduced me to lager and lime. Brian generally had 3-4 pints of ale with his lunch! (*different times! – Ed*). He was an avid reader of Punch or Private Eye

look up routes or times. He used public transport to visit many beer festivals and pubs and whenever we saw him at a festival he was always surrounded by like-minded individuals, laughing and enjoying the beers and the day.

I never saw him angry or agitated; whenever there was a problem it was met with a shrug and “oh, well, do something else”, either in work or out and about.

He looked after both his parents at their home up until their deaths. He is survived by sister Sue. His favourite phrase was “Life is for living” and he certainly did that. He will be missed by all of us who ever shared a pint with him.

BEVERLEY BRANTON

STOP PRESS!

Marstons withdraws from

Brewing In July in a depressingly familiar tale, Marstons sold its breweries to Carlsberg for £206 million, bringing to an end their involvement in brewing after 190 years. Even this was dwarfed by Carlsberg’s purchase of soft drinks maker Britvic for £3.3 billion. Carlsberg say they plan a single integrated company once the deal is

finalised.



Marston's, rather like Fullers before them, will now concentrate on running its estate of 1,400 pubs. A spokesperson for CMBC said: "We plan to supply customers and consumers with a portfolio of leading brands, of which ales are an integral part. Keg and cask ales will continue to be an important part of our UK beer brand."

But since the formation of CMBC, it has shut three ale breweries – Jennings, Ringwood and Wychwood – and in January is closed the famous Burton Union rooms at Marston's where pale ale has been brewed since the 19th century. Beers from the closed breweries are now produced at Burton and Wolverhampton but it's not clear whether both plants will remain open following Carlsberg's business review.

Leading beer writer Roger Protz

summed up the mood by saying: "Would the Danes shutter such a historic site as Marston's Burton brewery? Its ruthless closures in the past two years suggest nothing is sacrosanct."

Adapted from PROTZ ON BEER



Well, that's about it for this issue. You can all breathe a huge sigh of relief as there'll be no craft beer jokes this time around – the Craft Beer Connoisseur is on holiday! (he submitted his beer column before he left, mumbling something about searching out some "off-the-beaten-track" Trappist breweries in deepest, darkest Belgium, but more than that he couldn't say).

Hang on a minute I hear you cry – did you slip in a joke there about Trappist monks and their vow of silence? Did I? Old habits die hard! Actually that's an urban myth – Trappist monks do speak to each other, but only when strictly necessary.

And on that note we bid you goodbye. Hope to see you all at the St Peter's Beer Festival. Until then

enjoy your beer! - Ed



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