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IRON BREW

MAGAZINE OF SCUNTHORPE & DISTRICT CAMPAIGN
FOR REAL ALE

AUGUST – OCTOBER 2025



IN THIS ISSUE

Craft Beer Connoisseur: Emperor's New Clothes; What On Earth?
No. 117: Grisette; Book Review: The Meaning of Beer; Pub &
Brewery News; Pub Tour of Liverpool; Barton Lions Beer Festival;
5th St Peter's Beer Festival
... and much more!

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



Welcome to this Summer/Autumn edition of our branch magazine Iron Brew. As usual of late, the national beer news is rather gloomy and focuses on the number of pubs closing and the continuing failure of the present government to support the hospitality industry in any meaningful way.

You can read more about this in any of many online forums covering this sector, but let's not get too downhearted and think instead of one of our local highlights in which Scunthorpe & District CAMRA play a significant role – the upcoming 5th St Peter's Church Beer Festival.

This event goes from strength to strength and if last year is anything to go by, is on course for another successful festival. The choice of real ales and ciders is second to none in our locality and with the ornate interior of the church in which to enjoy them, it draws people in from far and wide. Dates are 18-20 September. Hope to see you there!

CRAFT BEER CONNOISSEUR

The Emperor's New Clothes



The Craft Beer Revolution in the UK is now about 30 years old I can confidently say with almost no research whatsoever. And after all that time we still have no all encompassing definition of what craft beer actually means.

The Brewers Association in the USA had a decent try at defining "Craft Brewer", based on small size, independence, and appropriate licensing*, plus supplementary conditions such as innovation and community involvement. But for various reasons, their definition doesn't translate very well to UK craft operations.

Interestingly in their notes they state that "the majority of Americans live within 10 miles of a

craft brewer", a fact so bizarre, it must be true. Given the size of the United States, I must have seriously underestimated just how many craft brewers there are over there!

The late Simon Johnson produced "The Craft Beer Manifesto", a wry set of rules poking fun at the pretensions of some craft brewers, which included instructions to brew craft beer such as "only use distilled otter's tears" (Thornbridge even brewed a beer of that name in homage to Simon), but that doesn't get us any further down the road towards a definition!



But as a fellow craft beer fan, I ask you – does the lack of an official definition really matter? Most of us can implicitly recognise what is and isn't craft, at least for the purpose of

personal choice and spending preferences. And I, being ever helpful, have devised a personal listing (below) which should help further when making that distinction.

In the intervening period since craft beer got a foothold in the UK, it has changed significantly in the face of familiarity and market forces. Craft beer is no longer seen as an impudent invader challenging the status quo of British brewing. Instead, through evolution rather than revolution, it has become a complementary part of the UK beer scene, adding interest and more variety for consumers. Some craft brewers have even embraced classic UK beer styles such as mild and bitter and given them a fresh persona – a million miles from Brewdog's (God bless 'em) initial uncomplimentary putdown of UK brewing as producers of "boring brown beer".

Even CAMRA, faced with becoming a stick-in-the-mud organisation with their initial disinterested reaction to craft beer, rightly decided to modernise and now accepts craft beer in keykegs containing live yeast as "real ale", albeit in a different packaging format.

When craft beer first appeared there was a headlong rush for breweries to demonstrate their craft credentials as craft was the new kid on the block with a trendy appeal. As we know the nature of trends is that they come and go and as the craft beer market has stabilised many of the original craft breweries have fallen by the wayside and others, who tried to embrace craft in the hope of maintaining or increasing their sales, have had mixed success. For a number of traditional cask brewers it was a case of “the emperor’s new clothes” and drinkers saw through their thinly veiled attempts to become trendy. Ironically cask beer is now accepted by most commentators as craft beer and many craft brewers have a foot in both camps.

So here to help you through the confusing craft beer maze is my listing of UK brewers who I believe are and aren’t craft (whatever they may say). It’s not an exhaustive list, but simply serves as examples of the various categories:

Bona Fide UK Craft Breweries

Cloudwater, Track, Sureshot, Kernel, Pressure Drop, Northern Monk, Brew York, Burning Sky, Burning

Soul, Siren, Electric Bear, Verdant, Deya, Howling Hops, Beak, Black Iris, Arbor, Neptune, Vault City, Unbarred, Five Points, Anarchy, Anspach & Hobday, Fierce, Forest Road, Mad Squirrel, Neon Raptor, Left Handed Giant, Gypsy Hill, Gravity Well, Lost & Grounded, Polly’s Brew Co, Pomona Island, Redemption, Signature, St Mars of the Desert, Thornbridge, Tiny Rebel, Vibrant Forest, Vocation, Wiper & True, Magic Rock (deceased), Wild (pre-takeover) etc

Traditional UK Cask Breweries Who Have Successfully Embraced Craft

Abbeydale, Marble, Buxton, Moor, Bristol Beer Factory, Fyne Ales, Roosters, Little Critters, Blue Monkey, Castle Rock, Vocation, Ossett, Salopian, Acorn, North Riding

Traditional UK Cask Breweries Who Tried Unsuccessfully To Embrace Craft When They Didn’t Really Need To

Batemens, Hall & Woodhouse (Badger), Adnams, Black Sheep, Brains, Fullers (for their parent company Asahi’s unnecessary buyout and closure of Dark Star), J W Lees

UK Cask Breweries Who Successfully Ploughed On Regardless And Mostly Ignored Craft

Brewsters, Butcombe, Harveys, Hog’s Back, Holts, Hydes, Shepherd Neame, Greene King, Woodfordes, Robinsons, Timothy Taylor, Titanic, Hook Norton, Hobsons, St Austell, Sharp’s (Cornwall), Theakston

UK Breweries Who Are Not Craft, No Matter How Many Times They Tell Us They Are (Special “Pantomime Villain” Category)

Brewdog, Beavertown, Camden, Sharp’s (Burton-upon-Trent)

No doubt you’ll have your own opinions about which UK breweries should fit into each category or even whether the categories themselves are accurate and fair, but that is the beauty of listings. I won’t be offering up any more explanations of my selections – if you don’t agree with them you can always compile some of your own!

I for one am pleased that craft and cask beer have unified as two sides of the same coin as it gives beer fans a much wider choice of quality beers to enjoy. There are still craft beer events happening all across the UK,

so there must still be a demand for all things craft. Craft beer is generally priced above the norm as a mark of its supposedly higher quality and cost of production, although I’m no longer sure that is still justified (if it ever was), so maybe the higher premium on craft beer is still a commercial attraction to many event organisers?

These days lots of people (me included), choose to drink both cask and craft i.e. non-cask, whenever the mood takes them or the drinking establishment they’re in leans towards one or the other, which is as it should be. Although the loss of breweries, whether they identify as cask, craft or both, is always regrettable, the craft beer revolution of the late 90’s that spurned many of today’s surviving breweries has resulted in a much better choice of quality drinks than ever before. Long may it continue!

*

<https://www.brewersassociation.org>

A BEERGEEK

POSTSCRIPT

More on the topics covered in my column (apart from this one), can be had for the price of a pint in my local *The Hanging Bat*. That’s me in the

corner enjoying my beer, poring over that day's newspaper crossword or engaged in quiet contemplation.

It's a little quieter around here at the moment as Big Sid has taken his brood on a family holiday to Magaluf for two weeks. Should I alert the Spanish authorities?

The Hanging Bat licensee "Chocolate-box" Dave (*see last issue for explanation of nickname*), has recently introduced live music at the weekend. Much as I like listening to local bands murdering cover versions of popular songs of the day, I can't help feeling that when the music is so loud that it drowns out normal conversation, one of the main joys of going to the pub is lost in the process. I am, it must be said, in a minority of one on this issue, judging by the enthusiastic support that these music nights are receiving! Or I might just be getting old? Agreement is *not* required by the way, thanking you!

Dave has also recently increased his offering of draught still ciders and perries and is now up to 7 on at any one time – even these are listed as "craft ciders" these days as everyone's in on the craft thing at the moment. I don't mind the odd

traditional dry or medium cider - even the strongest 8.4% ABV ones always seem to slip down very easily!

By the way does the general rule about not mixing beer and cider in a session to avoid later digestive malfunction have any truth in it, or is it just an urban myth? I'm afraid I haven't (fortunately) drunk enough cider to be able to verify that.

Maybe you're able to shed light on that particular conundrum yourself? I do draw the line at all those 3.4% fruit ciders for myself though. To my palate they are weak, overly sweet concoctions with weird fruit combinations like guava and mincemeat or marmalade and raisin (*I've just been told that no known fruit ciders actually have those particular combinations of ingredients, but you get my drift?*).

They're very popular though, especially with younger drinkers, so Dave still needs to stock them. Each to his own of course, but I prefer to gravitate away from them onto less sweet alternative drinks that suit me better. *C'est la vie!*

Enjoy your beer (and cider). Until next time!

STATUS UPDATE

By now regular readers of the Craft Beer Connoisseur feature will have realised that some of the content is imaginary. While I don't want to give away the identity of the Craft Beer Connoisseur, (although you've probably worked it out for yourself by now), the column was intended to be a sometimes sardonic, but more often than not affectionate commentary on the UK craft beer scene.

It started originally as a part of the Morning Advertiser website, where they cast a rather jaundiced view over the emerging craft beer phenomenon. But they quickly seemed to lose faith in it and retired the feature after a few months. I liked the concept, and after including the original posts in Iron Brew (with appropriate acknowledgement of course), I suggested we should co-opt it and develop it further ourselves. We also gave the Craft Beer Connoisseur a fictional, traditional local pub to frequent as a counterpoint to his often flowery descriptions of craft brewing and beers - any resemblance to a local real ale pub in our area was entirely coincidental! This was shortly after the Covid pandemic when the media

were scratching around for a scapegoat to blame for the health crisis. At one point bats were in the frame as the guilty party - although since not proven - and to try and offset the bat's bad press we called the Craft Beer Connoisseur's pub *The Hanging Bat*.

Imagine my surprise then to find that there's a *real* pub called *The Hanging Bat* in Edinburgh, which has just been acquired by Northern Monk (*see picture below*) – apparently the families of the brewery founders are from the Edinburgh area.



<https://www.facebook.com/NORTHERNMONKBREWCO>

This is an iconic craft beer bar already, with a great selection of craft ales and microbrewery beers

plus bat-shaped taps, so looks a good fit for Northern Monk to have as their first Scottish pub. It sounded like an opportunity too good for us to miss. So in the future you may find the Craft Beer Connoisseur donning the tartan, tucking into tatties and neeps, sinking the odd Tennent's lager, reciting Rabbie Burns poetry, reading Rebus novels and reporting on craft beer from the comfort of a corner table in a new Scottish outpost, complete with a pint of heavy and a whisky chaser! Or maybe you won't? Who knows? - Ed

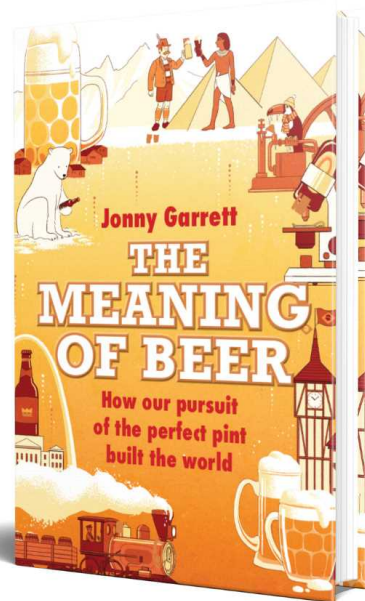
BOOK REVIEW: THE MEANING OF BEER BY JONNY GARRETT

Entertaining and Thoughtful Read by the Creator of the Craft Beer Channel

This is a book I received as a Christmas present last year and it's taken me until now to read it. I'm glad I did as it's an entertaining and thoughtful read about how beer forms an important part of human life.

Jonny Garrett is a trained journalist, author and film-maker, well known for the creation of the Craft Beer

Channel on YouTube. He's a fervent supporter of all types of beer, particularly UK cask ale and is the co-instigator of the recent campaign to recognise British cask beer as worthy of UNESCO Heritage recognition. In this book he deals with aspects of beer that have been important through thousands of years of human history and the book is divided into the following chapters:



- Civilization – Or how beer built our first cities and cultures
- Science – Or how beer spurred us on to new

technological heights

- Politics – Or how beer has influenced the way the world is run
- Identity – Or how beer defines who we are as individuals and nations
- Culture – Or how beer is a key part of everything from TV to sport
- Cuisine – Or how beer changed what and how we eat
- Community – Or how beer brings people together
- Entertainment – Or isn't beer supposed to be fun?
- The Future – Or how beer will continue to change – and even save – humanity

Garrett writes in an easy, readable style and is able to explain the scientific concepts covered in a way that the layman can easily understand. He also writes with humour which helps to make the whole experience enjoyable. I got bogged down with some of the detail in the German and Czech breweries history sections, but that says more about me and my low boredom threshold with historical details than it does about the

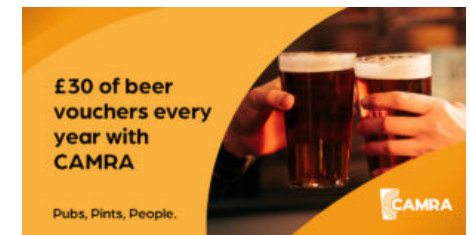
writing.

My one criticism is that the book is 322 pages of text and to my mind, for a non-fiction book, is crying out for a few photographs of the places and breweries Garrett visited to add interest or some explanatory diagrams to help with understanding or illustration of the points covered. Notwithstanding the lack of photographs and diagrams, the book is an excellent read and details, with warmth and good humour, mankind's enduring fascination with and enjoyment of beer in all its myriad forms. Its importance to civilisation should never be underestimated.

Overall a very good effort and well worth exploring yourself if you have even a passing interest in beer and would like to expand your knowledge of it.

MARK ELSOME

The Meaning of Beer by Jonny Garrett; published by Allen & Unwin 2024; hardback £16.99



WHAT ON EARTH? NO. 117: GRISSETTE

Hi again! Your favourite craft beer nerd here at your service. In this latest "What On Earth?" feature I'm exploring the wonderful world of a style of beer you may not even have heard of, so here goes!

As craft brewers scrabble around trying to find the next big thing in the craft beer world, they're often turning to obscure historical beer styles for inspiration. One style that's more obscure than most is Grisette, originally brewed in the mining regions of the French-Belgian border close to Belgium's Hainaut Province. Grisettes are considered to be a subset of a slightly better known Farmhouse Ale, the saison and also related to another speciality Farmhouse Ale of the region, Biere de Garde.

Grisette means "little grey" in French, which is possibly a reference to the coal dust on miners as they emerged from the pits in that region, although another school of thought is that the name comes from the grey dresses worn by barmaids in the local taverns who served the beer.

Grisette was formulated as a low

alcohol (3-5% ABV) Farmhouse Ale, which was very dry with a crisp, tart, refreshing bite. The inclusion of malted wheat in the grain bill allied to a low fermentation temperature also differentiated it from other Farmhouse Ales. There is a broad consensus that historically Grisette should be light, dry and have a citrusy presence.

The heyday of Grisette came to an end in the 1960's when cheap, mass-produced lager became the prominent international beer.

These days only one Belgian brewery – Brasserie St Feuillien – currently produces

Grisette (*above*). They relaunched the style in 1985 and now sell four contemporary varieties.

New Grisettes are regularly brewed elsewhere nowadays for the growing craft beer market. These include Sierra Nevada's Gristette D'Orge and Fyne Ales collaboration with Swedish company Bibliotek Brewing called Beer/Life Balance.



At Sierra Nevada they wanted to showcase a traditional, rustic beer style but with an American twist – using malted corn as an adjunct instead of wheat.

At Fyne Ales they decided to keep the beer as authentic as possible and brewed the beer with a high percentage of wheat, some continental hops and fermented the beer at a fairly cold temperature with a saison yeast strain to avoid too much peppery spice.



Kernel Brewery of Bermondsey in London also brew a Gristette, varying the type of hop used. Grisettes using Huell Melon, Mandarinina

Bavaria and Nelson Sauvin hops have been produced for example and these come in at an ABV of around 4.6%. It's subtly grassy and spicy on the tongue, with a smooth mouthfeel and signs off with a clean, dry finish.

While craft brewers continue to

pursue the brewing of heritage styles to stay ahead of the crowd, there may well be a regular place for the Gristette style of beer. I for one would certainly like to try them.

A BEERGEEK

This article is based on a more extensive feature by Ruvani de Silva in CAMRA's online Learn & Discover platform;

<https://members.camra.org.uk/learn-discover/the-basics/introduction-to-grisette/>

Reference was also made to the following:

<https://www.allagash.com/discover/about-beer/what-is-a-grisette/>

<https://store.kernelbrewery.com/products/grisette>

and

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gristette_\(beer\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gristette_(beer))

MARTYN CORNELL; BEER WRITER AND HISTORIAN

Martyn Cornell, the acclaimed beer writer and brewing historian died suddenly at the beginning of June aged 72. I knew of his reputation and had enjoyed reading some of his

books, including *Amber, Gold & Black*. Here beer writer Roger Protz pays tribute - Ed

Martyn Cornell, beer writer and acclaimed brewing historian, died suddenly at the age of 72 on the eve of the publication of his major study of the history of porter and stout. Martyn was born in London and studied at the University of Sussex, where he graduated with a BA Hons. He then worked as a journalist for several years, starting with the Stevenage Comet, before joining a number of national papers, including the Times and the Daily Telegraph.

He left Britain to work on newspapers in Abu Dhabi and Hong Kong, including the English-language South China Morning Post. When he returned home he devoted himself to beer writing and research. *Beer: The Story of the Pint* was published in 2003 and traces the roots of brewing from the Old World of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia to the present day. It won him a trophy that year from the British Guild of Beer Writers and he went on to win several more awards from the guild. *Beer* was followed by *Amber, Gold and Black*, a history of beer styles, and *Around the World in 80 Beers*, a

further and exhaustive survey of world beer styles. His blog Zythophile became a major part of his work and was a must-read for beer lovers. It was a daily discourse on all aspects of beer and in particular on the origins of such important styles as porter, stout and IPA.



Martyn was in demand around the world and he lectured at universities and food and drink festivals. When he died on 1 June he was preparing to fly to Iceland to visit breweries there.

Four years ago he moved to Cromer in Norfolk where the Poppyland microbrewery is based. It's run by Martyn's brother Dave (pictured above, on right, with Martyn) and his wife Mandy. As well as beers brewed with herbs foraged from the cliffs of the seaside town, Poppyland also brews mild, stout, pale ale and IPA, where Martyn was on hand to advise

on recipes. His final book *Porter and Stout: A Complete History* was due to be published in June and will be eagerly read by his legion of supporters. While he could be a stern critic of other writers, he was a most companionable person to meet for a beer and he will be much missed.

ROGER PROTZ

Read the full article at:

<https://protzonbeer.co.uk/comments>

PUB & BREWERY NEWS

The popular **BeerHeadZ** pub in Lincoln was closed permanently on June 5 after seven years of operation. They cited rising overhead costs and expenses from closing their other outlets in Nottingham and Newark.

Although every cloud ... a couple of weeks after the closure, **Blue Monkey Brewery** of Nottingham announced that they had purchased the ex-BeerHeadZ pub in Lincoln and were going to open it at the beginning of August as another of their **Organ Grinder** pubs. Definitely one to revisit!

Jennings Brewery has re-opened its doors, bringing back historic, award-

winning beers to Cockermouth, adding two new beers, and launching a new on-site taproom. The new owners have pledged to return Jennings to its roots, reviving old favourites like **Sneck Lifter** and **Cocker Hoop**, alongside new additions such as **Derwent Mild** and **Back Yam** — the latter a nod to the Cumbrian dialect phrase meaning “back home”.



Newly-appointed head brewer, Buster Grant (ex-Batemans), is bringing Jennings beers back to life using the on-site well that draws from an aquifer beneath the brewery, the original yeast strain, and traditional ingredients like Fuggles and Goldings hops, along with the reintroduction of Maris Otter malt.

Thornbridge Brewery has collaborated with Garrett Oliver, brewmaster at **Brooklyn Brewery**, on a fundraising beer brewed on the world's only operational Burton Union set.

Proceeds from this limited-edition release — a strong, dark mild — will benefit The Michael James Jackson Foundation for Brewing and Distilling (MJF).



Strong Dark Mild (5.5% ABV) is crafted with Maris Otter, premium crystal and chocolate malts, and West African fonio, an ancient grain that contributes creaminess and subtle fruit character. Dark brewing sugars further enhance the beer with complex layers of caramel and richness. The beer will be available in Thornbridge bars and Free Trade pubs around the UK.

Co-op has boosted its craft beer offering with exclusive listings from

seven independent breweries. These beers will be available nationwide. The brewers involved include **Lakes Brew Co**, a Kendal-based brewery creating progressive and modern beers, and **Boundary Brewing**, a co-



operative brewery from Belfast which recently celebrated its tenth anniversary.

They are also offering a collaboration, **Hazy Pale** (4.5% ABV), between **Toast Brewing** and **Tiny Rebel**, brewed from surplus bakery bread.

BEER TODAY

A reminder that national daily **The Telegraph** has published its online guide to **The 500 Best Pubs in England**. The Guide was compiled by beer writer Will Hawkes, who claims to have visited every pub on the list. Two of our local pubs made the list — the **Dog & Gun** at East Butterwick and the **Berkeley** in Scunthorpe. The pubs overall were chosen for their charming character, welcoming staff, rich history and award winning beer. The full list can be viewed at:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/best-pubs-england/>

T&R Theakston is bringing an extension of its iconic Old Peculier brand to pubs, with the on-trade launch of Peculier IPA. The beer was created by head brewer Mark Slater to meet the brief of brewing a beer which was worthy of the 200-year-old brewery's "Peculier" name.



It's made with 100% British ingredients and the 5.1% ABV beer pays homage to the origins of India Pale Ales, bringing together the strength of alcohol with the antioxidant character of hops to robustly withstand lengthy voyages. Peculier IPA is brewed using the finest British malted barley and three English-grown hops — Harlequin, Jester, and Olicana — delivering a zesty fruitiness with a full-bodied malty undertone, finishing with a hop-forward flourish.

It launched in retail in bottles in 2023, achieving listings in many leading supermarkets.

This new draught product might just make it into one or two of our local pubs – Ed.

Brew York have unveiled the next phase in their expansion plans with the launch of two new venues, in **Scarborough** and on the **Carlton Towers** estate. In Scarborough, Brew York will be launching its third Brew+Bao, following openings in Chapel Allerton and Knaresborough. Later this year, the fourth and largest Brew+ site is set to open at the historic **Goole Market Hall**. Later this summer, Brew York will launch Carlton Towers Taproom (*below*), a collaboration with the Carlton Towers Estate, in North



Yorkshire.

Set within a grade I listed estate with more than 1,000 years of history, the tap venue was formerly home to **Little Black Dog Brewery**.

A full refurbishment is scheduled for early 2026, but Brew York plans to re-open the venue in the coming weeks under its management.

BEER TODAY

Little Big Dog of Barrow-upon-Humber have recently rebrewed their strong **Baltic Hound** porter (6.2% ABV), one of their best beers in our opinion. It's produced by fermenting at a lower temperature than normal ales using lager yeast and is a full-bodied beer with lots of roasty and chocolaty goodness.



Also on a rebrew is **Atomic Kiwi**, a 5% ABV pale ale made using New Zealand Hops. It has a new name – **Atomic K** – because customers mistakenly thought it contained Kiwi fruit, when it was in fact an homage to pioneering New Zealand physicist Ernest Rutherford. Both beers and others in their range are available at:

<https://littlebigdogbeer.co.uk>

Now it can be told! The new owners of the **Malt Shovel** in Ashby are the **Lam Pub Company**. They are a family run business set

up to run alongside their existing accountancy business, specialising in the public house and hospitality sector.

They operate a small managed house estate of fifteen public houses throughout North-east Lincolnshire, Lincoln, Nottingham and Yorkshire. You may not be familiar with many of the pubs in their estate, but the **Nottingham House** in Grimsby and **Fellows, Morton & Clayton** in Nottingham stand out. The company is registered in Grimsby.

This is better knowledge than the first time we asked across the bar who the new owners of the pub were and were told “Four Men”! After a few missteps early on in Lam’s stewardship of the pub, the beer and cider range is almost back to its excellent best and the meals are continuing to prove popular.

5TH ST PETER’S BEER FESTIVAL

This Year’s Festival Eagerly Awaited

Not long to wait now for one of the best local beer festivals in our area – the St Peter’s Church Beer Festival. Organised by the church with help from Scunthorpe & District Branch, it’s now in its fifth year.

Dates for this year’s festival are 18-20 September (Thurs – Sat), with opening times of: **530-1030 pm, Thurs 18 Sept, 12 noon-1030 pm, Fri 19 & Sat 20 Sept**

This year we’ll have one or two extra beers on offer plus up to fifteen different ciders and perries after the latter absolutely flew out last year, which required a hasty restock on the Saturday of the festival. Six beers will be served from the front bar via handpump fitted with slotted sparklers, with the rest on gravity dispense straight from the cask. The ciders are supplied as bag-in-box products for gravity dispense. We already have a few ideas about which beers and ciders to feature this year, but the full list will not be known until nearer the time as wholesalers adjust their listings to reflect seasonal offerings.



Beer and cider will be offered in half or pint measures as required and

measured glasses of wine and pre-mixed gin and tonics will also be available. A small range of non-alcoholic beers in cans and soft drinks will be on hand for non-drinkers or designated drivers.

Food will be available at all sessions and the popular outdoor barbecue will be fired up on the Friday and Saturday evenings offering burgers and hot dogs.

We’re hoping for some fine autumnal weather during the event as a large gazebo will be erected in the grounds to allow customers to enjoy a spot of alfresco drinking. The festival tombola will be on hand again and will be well stocked with bottled beers and other prizes. All monies raised from the festival will go towards upkeep of the church and to support the valuable work the church does in the local community.

It all adds up to another great event which we in Scunthorpe & District Branch are eagerly looking forward to. A perfect place to meet friends for a weekend drink or two! Cheers!

MARK ELSOME





LIVERPOOL CITY CENTRE PUB CRAWL

Local CAMRA Members Steve & Jane Martins' Tour of Liverpool Pubs using a Guide to Historic Pubs So this story begins and ends with drinks in a Wetherspoons pub ... Back in 1982 when I had recently started drinking real ale, I spent a couple of nights in Liverpool with Jane who would become my future wife. A few months back, over a pint in the Blue Bell with Jane, discussing plans to go back to Liverpool, by chance, a regular overheard us and said he would offer us his copy of the **Liverpool Historic Pub Guide** (containing 18 pubs in the city centre). This

we decided would be the basis of our two night stay. As you will see we managed to visit eight of



the pubs listed during our stay, having halves as we didn't want to get giddy! The first pub we visited after our train journey was **The Vines**. After a good look around this great historical pub's many architectural features, we sat outside (with a fine half and hot pork pie), under its impressive outside clock made by the same company that built Big Ben. The second pub we visited a short distance away was **The Globe**, where in the back room is a wall plaque to commemorate the inaugural

meeting of the Liverpool CAMRA branch, 18th January 1974.

On next to the **Baltic Fleet**, a flat iron style building not far from Albert Dock. We tried Spitting Feathers 4.4% ABV Old Wavertonian, a dark beer with plenty of flavour.

A little walk from the centre, our next stop was the **Blue Plaque Philharmonic**, now a popular pub for tourists to view, especially the ornate brown marble toilets. Of course Jane had to have a look!



We also visited the **Central Commercial Hotel** with a lovely interior with many cut glass mirrors. Just round the corner from the hotel we were staying in was the **Lion Tavern** (only one of eight public

houses in Merseyside listed in the CAMRA National Inventory). Unfortunately we were unable to visit **Ye Cracke** a pub which John Lennon frequented in the late 50's as this was sold in April this year and has still not reopened. Next was **The Roscoe Head** (Liverpool CAMRA 2024 pub of year). During our visit only 3 taps were in operation on this Monday evening. However the Timothy Taylor Landlord was exceptional in my mind.



Another pub close to the railway station, **The Crown** (a fine example of a Victorian Gin palace) was Jane's favourite due to the comfortable seating, however we had walked a significant amount by this time.

Whilst resting our feet in this lovely establishment I came across Liverpool and District CAMRA's City Centre Pubs Map on the bar featuring 64 City Centre real ale pubs ... so we decided to try a few more. These included ...

The Monroe (good selection), **Head of Steam** and the **Pump House** (Albert Dock), the latter popular for tourists having meals

My favourite pub was the **St Peter's Tavern**. This was a converted church, with a great selection of beers and recently voted 'Newcomer Liverpool CAMRA Pub of the Year 2025'



Here I tried a Higsons 4.5% pale ale named Champions 2024/2025 to celebrate Liverpool's premier league

win.

So after a thoroughly enjoyable trip which also included a visit to the Albert Dock, an evening in the Cavern Pub, an emotional Liverpool FC Anfield tour, almost 20 miles walked and fantastic pubs, our story finishes in a Wetherspoons. Awaiting our train back to Scunthorpe, we nipped into the **North Western** (connected onto Lime Street station) and had a final pint of Jaipur!

STEVE MARTIN

Some good recommendations there Steve for anyone wishing to visit Liverpool and its many fine pubs - Ed

BARTON LIONS BEER FESTIVAL

Review of This Year's Event

The 27th Barton Lions Beer Festival, held on Friday 30 and Saturday 31 May, was, yet again, a most enjoyable and successful event, attracting over one thousand well-behaved visitors over the two days. There are currently only eight members of the Barton Lions so it is no mean feat for them to organise and hold an event of this magnitude; indeed it would not have been possible without sponsors, the muscle power support provided by the apprentices from

Siemens Gamesa and volunteers undertaking bar duties.

There had been heavy showers earlier in the day but the last one cleared at 330pm and by the time the festival opened at 5pm the weather was "beer festival in the park" perfect; dry, sunny with intermittent cloud cover, not too hot with a gentle breeze - and it remained that way for the whole festival.

Local bands Scrapyrd Dogs and Chapter 2 created a party atmosphere on Friday and Saturday evenings and Steve Smith added to a good vibe on Saturday afternoon.

It was good to see beer drinking friends from Grimsby and Hull CAMRA branches and Caistor Lions enjoying some new ales and also pleasing to see that some young drinkers, both male and female, were keen to sample, enjoy and come back for some more real ale, particularly the pale ales.

HB Clark of Wakefield supplied all forty two of the festival ales which came from thirty three different breweries. Alongside ales from Well known national breweries - such as Greene King and

Tetley - and others from more locally well-known breweries - for example Great Newsome and Brass Castle - were ales from breweries further afield and much less well known.



The most popular beer (as in the first one to sell out), was also the beer sourced from the geographically most distant brewery, Bristol Beer Factory. The 4.4% ABV IPA Power Slide was described in the tasting notes as "Bringing the Aussie energy, Vic Secret kicks off with power levels of tropical and pineapple goodness. Motueka follows up with fresh citrus depth".

My personal favourite of the festival was Bowness Bay Brewing's Fell Runner a 4.6% golden ale brewed using a blend of Cascade, Simcoe, and Citra hops, combined with extra pale and biscuit Munich malt.

Friends who prefer darker beers were impressed by Wilde Child's 4.9% Brownie Hunter, described as a chocolate fudge brownie stout and Bridgehouse Brewery's 4.5% Porter, a dark ruby colour with strong toffee & malt flavours, with a smooth after-taste. Timothy Taylor's Dark Mild was as popular as ever. There was the usual "domino effect" of beers selling out later on Saturday afternoon, but there were still a few casks with some beer remaining in them at the end of the festival, interestingly being mainly beers from the nationals. Well done Barton Lions! See you again next year (Friday 29 and Saturday 30 May 2026).

CHRISTINE ANDREW

RETURN OF BEERS FROM YESTERYEAR

Popular "Iconic" Beers Return From Oblivion

Boddingtons cask, the legendary 'Cream of Manchester', is returning to pubs across the North West, being brewed close to its original home.

J W Lees, Manchester's oldest brewer, is now brewing Boddingtons Cask Ale, and distributing it, too,

under licence from brand owner Budweiser Brewing Group. First brewed in 1778, this well-known ale became a symbol of the city's spirit and Northern pride. From pub posters to TV ads and pop culture moments, Boddingtons left its creamy mark far beyond the bar. It disappeared from cask handpumps in 2012.



With a new 4% ABV recipe, Boddingtons is due to reappear in pubs across the North West in December.

The return of another iconic beer, Double Diamond, one of the UK's most memorable ales, which had been away from pubs and bars for almost 30 years, actually took place late last year (*although I've only seen it recently on supermarket shelves – Ed*).

It has been resurrected by Allsopp's Brewery, gradually making its way to pubs around the country and making

its home at the recently-opened The Blue Stoops, in Kensington, London. Three years ago, Samuel Allsopp's & Sons Brewery, known for its pioneering Burton India Pale Ale, was revived under the leadership of Jamie Allsopp, a direct descendant of Samuel. After finding the only remaining ledger containing authentic and original Allsopp recipes, Jamie believed these beers should not be consigned to history books. He set upon a mission to uphold the brand's 300-year-old legacy.



Now, Jamie has breathed new life into Double Diamond, once the best selling beer of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s. Taking inspiration from the original 1822 IPA, the next iteration of Double Diamond uses an all-new recipe to bring a fresh and contemporary vision to the historic beer.

At 3.8% ABV, Double Diamond is a bright and hoppy session pale ale,

made for easy drinking. And although it never disappeared completely, Draught Bass has been given a recent makeover and promotion by owners AB InBev, following tireless campaigning work by Draught Bass aficionados. At its peak, Draught Bass, brewed in Burton-on-Trent, accounted for close to a million barrels a year and was the biggest-selling premium cask beer in the country.



But Bass left brewing in 2000 and the brand ended up owned by the world's biggest beer group, AB InBev, best known for American Budweiser and Stella Artois. It said it had little interest in such "low volume" beers as Draught Bass and sidelined it.

Production was moved to Marston's in Burton. While the quality of the beer remained high, the beer became difficult to find outside its heartland of Burton and Derby and

sales dwindled to around 30,000 barrels a year.

Worried that the beer in AB InBev's hands would continue to decline or even disappear, its supporters launched a spirited campaign to bring it to the attention of fellow beer lovers.

A National Bass Day was organised every year, with drinkers encouraged to visit pubs and consume generous quantities and a register of all known pubs that served Draught Bass was compiled. AB InBev eventually responded and announced in June that it would invest in and promote the beer, "which will remain in Burton". There will be new pump clips, stamped glasses and merchandise. AB InBev will include the red triangle trademark in its promotion with the slogan "Trademark No 1: true quality that stands the test of time".

Regular Bass drinkers agree that the Marston's beer is well made and has a fine palate of biscuit malt, peppery and spicy hops and a pronounced note of sulphur on the aroma from the Trent water.

AB InBev's decision to promote Draught Bass is proof that even global giants can be forced to listen to consumers.

BEER TODAY/WHAT'S BREWING

SUMMER PUB OF THE SEASON

The Hop Inn, Brigg

On a Saturday lunchtime in late July, we gave the branch Summer Pub of the Season award to the Hop Inn in Brigg.

CAMRA member and Hop Inn regular Bob Walker presented licensee Andrew Corcoran with a framed Pub of the Season (POTS) certificate with local CAMRA members and pub regulars in attendance (*see picture below*).



Also on hand was the Vanarama North promotion trophy won by Scunthorpe United last season, which is currently on a tour of North Lincolnshire.

The Hop Inn is the creation of Andrew Corcoran, born in Scunthorpe but moved to Brigg early

in his life. An accountant by training, Andrew has run various businesses including the Bottle Box bottle shop in Barton.

Always wanting to have a business in Brigg and being a big craft beer fan, Andrew was able to open the Hop Inn in the centre of town in July 2023 utilising an ex-florists shop. It proved to be a success from the start as there was nothing else like it in Brigg and in September 2024 they were able to expand further, taking over an ex-dry cleaners shop next door.

In 2025 planning permission was granted to refurbish the upstairs space to provide more seating and to develop a pop-up kitchen.

The Hop Inn has a busy programme of events such as Meet-the-Brewer nights every six weeks, a free cheeseboard on the last Sunday of each month, wine tasting nights, a craft social club and occasional live music. The ethos behind this is to provide a social space for the local community and beyond.

The pub is free of tie and can select what beers to put on and at the same time support local independent breweries as much as possible. The beers on offer are a mixture of craft kegs and keykeg

beers. Traditional ciders are also stocked, mainly in Bag-in-Box packaging.

The pub also offers a well-stocked beer fridge and a bottle shop to drink in or take out and are in the process of setting up a webshop to sell these items online.

The Hop Inn is well worth a visit and their opening times are:

Mon/Tues: Closed

Wed: 5 – 9pm

Thurs: 11am – 9pm

Fri/Sat: 11am – 10pm

Sun: 12 – 6pm

We congratulate Andrew and all Hop Inn staff on this well deserved award.

MARK ELSOME

Well that's about it for this issue. Oh, hang on, here's the Craft Beer Connoisseur wanting a word. Are we really moving you to Scotland? Not if you don't want to go CBC. You're allergic to haggis? Better stay in your current local then. Mi casa es tu casa! Until next time - Ed

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:

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