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CAMRA
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Newsletter of Scunthorpe & District
Campaign for Real Ale

www.scunthorpecamra.org.uk

FREE

Winter 2014

FREE



Jolly Miller, Wrawby, Wins Autumn Pub of the Season

CAMRA member Barry Williams (centre), presents the award to managers Jenny Harding and Adam Pearson

IRON BREW

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Edited by Mark Elsome

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Comment

You may be aware of the debate that's been raging in beer and CAMRA circles about craft keg beer. The term craft keg has been used to describe the new generation of craft beers brewed by microbreweries in the USA, and this has been picked up by enterprising UK brewers. Chief among these are Brewdog, who started off by developing both cask and keg versions of their products, but have now gone wholeheartedly 100% keg. Now Brewdog, in my opinion, lead the way in pretentiousness about keg beers, and they've been very critical of CAMRA, probably because it suits their marketing ploy of being 'new wave beer punks'. However the whole craft beer 'revolution' has set CAMRA something of a conundrum, in that these beers are not classed as real ale, but nevertheless are still better than the old mass-produced keg beers that triggered the formation of CAMRA in the first place. So far they've buried their head in the sand, and said that CAMRA campaigns for real ale, and therefore it will make no comment on craft keg beers. In fact the craft keg movement is growing so rapidly, with London as its focus, that some kind of accommodation of craft keg beers may soon be required. [2]

Branch Diary

- Wed 8 Jan 8 pm** New Year 'Icebreaker' social at the Blue Bell Inn, Scunthorpe
- Wed 22 Jan 8 pm** Branch Meeting, Malt Shovel, Ashby
- Wed 5 Feb 8pm** Winter Pub of the Season presentation to Yarborough Hunt, Brigg
- Sat 22 Feb 10 am** Trip by train to National Winter Ales Festival, Roundhouse, Derby
- Sat 8 March 10 am** Trip by train to Rotherham Real Ale & Music Festival, Magna, Rotherham
- Sat 12 Apr 10 am** Branch AGM, Yarborough Hunt, Brigg
- Sat 26 Apr 10 am** Trip by train to Doncaster Beer Festival, The Hub, Doncaster

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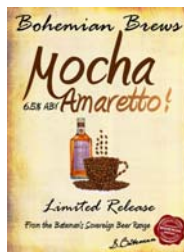
0105

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Pub & Brewery News

Batemans Brewery recently announced their seasonal beers for 2014, and among them are a range of Bohemian Brews, which are strong, craft ales, with each one available for three months of the year. Hot on the heels of Hazelnut Brownie comes **Mocha Amaretto**, a 6.5% ABV heavyweight, brewed with Goldings and Challenger hops, and released from December to February. Batemans describe it thus: *'The perfect blend of coffee pot aroma, almond and chocolate indulgence. This deliciously prepared beer is a true homage to all that is wonderful about Italy's cafe culture'*. Sounds great! Look out for it at **Pooleys** in Messingham, and other Batemans outlets in the county.



Tom Wood Brewery of Melton Ross recently released an old favourite, with **Lincolnshire Legend** (4.2% ABV), brewed with Target hops, available as a special in the run-up to Christmas.

Peter Carter and wife **Vida**, formerly mine hosts at the Dying Gladiator in Brigg, have purchased the **King William IV** pub in Scawby Brook from Punch Taverns, and are planning to improve the restaurant facilities, and hopefully the real ale choice!

Long standing licensee at the **Nelthorpe Arms**, **Gavin Richards**, who's been at the helm for nine years, is leaving the trade after failing to agree improved tenancy support with pub owners Enterprise Inns. We wish Gavin all the best for the future.

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Pub of the Season Winter 2014

The Yarborough Hunt, Brigg

Our Winter Pub of the Season award goes to the Yarborough Hunt at Brigg. The pub opened in 2003 after a sympathetic refurbishment of buildings which originally formed the Sargeant's Brewery Tap, the latter having closed down in 1967.

The Manageress at the Yarborough is **Lucy Fensome**, who has been at the helm for the last five years. The pub has always promoted real ale from day one, and has an impressive array of eight handpumps on the bar. One of these is devoted to a real cider, this being Westons Old Rosie at the time of writing. Other beers on during my visit were Tom Wood Best Bitter, Lincoln Gold, Mill Race and the stronger Bouncing Bomb, plus Jennings Redbreast and Wells Bombardier. One of the walls of the bar is impressively adorned with pumpclips of previous guest beers at the pub. They also offer a large range of malt whiskies.

The Yarborough is open plan in design, with four distinct drinking areas, three of which have real fires. It is simply but tastefully decorated in country inn style, and has retained some original features such as the hanging timber beams over the bar.

Unusually the pub relies solely on wet sales for its income, although customers are permitted to bring their own sandwiches and snacks to consume on the premises – there is a handily placed small baker's shop across the street just for good measure!

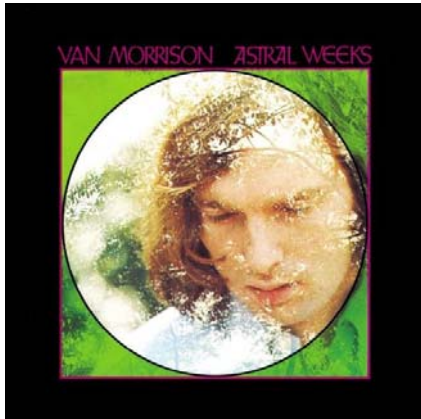
The Yarborough is open from 11 am – 11 pm most days, with an earlier 10 am opening on Thursday and Saturday, and later opening to midnight on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The pub is a perfect place to practice the art of conversation while supping a tasty pint of real ale.

We congratulate **Lucy** and staff on their award, which will be presented on Wednesday 5 February at 8 pm.

Mark Elsome

Classic Albums No. 46: Van Morrison – Astral Weeks (Warner Brothers)

Van Morrison was in his early twenties in 1968 when he released this groundbreaking album. Reflecting the social and political upheavals of the time, Morrison is in fine vocal and songwriting form, using his gospel and blues based



inflections to wring every last nuance of emotion from the often sparse songs. Backed by an all-star band of jazz musicians, its poetic complexity earned favourable responses from many critics, and Morrison would weave these and myriad other influences into the albums that followed in quick succession. However *Astral Weeks* had minimal commercial success at the time. Like many classic albums its reputation grew over the years, and it's now regarded as one of the greatest records ever made.

Living and working in America had inspired Morrison to give of his best (despite contractual difficulties with his record company), but the album's theme, in so far as one can be discerned, is of a yearning for the streets of Belfast, where he grew up, adding a poignant element to the eight songs on the album. On the superb title track, and others such as *Cyprus Avenue*, *Ballerina* and the brilliant *Madame George* (the latter about an Irish transvestite now you ask), Morrison takes time to develop the song and draw you in, and the whole hangs together as a rich cycle of songs, almost having an operatic quality.

If you're new to Morrison (and if so, where have you been all these years?), you might want to start with some of his other albums from this fertile period such as *Moondance* or *Tupelo Honey*, which are a little more upbeat and commercial. If you like those, give *Astral Weeks* a try – you'll find that it's very different to his later albums, and may take a few repeated listens to appreciate it fully, but it will be worth the effort.

Of course Van Morrison has had (and is still having), a long and varied career, with a recorded output second to none. But after the tough, early R n' B of Them in his native Ireland, it was on *Astral Weeks* that Morrison started to define his distinct style that would endure throughout his professional life. Give it a listen!

Mark Elsome

[4]

The Malt Shovel

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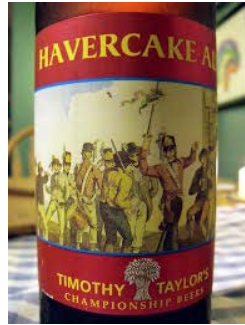
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Timothy Taylor 'Meet-the-Brewer' Night at the Jolly Miller, Wrawby

In mid-November, the Jolly Miller at Wrawby, hosted a Timothy Taylor 'Meet-the-Brewer' night at the pub. At fairly short notice, three members of Scunthorpe & District CAMRA went along to see what it was all about. When we arrived we saw that three Taylor's beers were set up at the bar – Golden Best, Landlord and the seasonal offering Havercake Ale. The Taylor's representative, Robert Oxer, introduced himself, and we had a good chat with him about the brewing processes at Taylor's Brewery in Keighley, the



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relative merits of the beers on offer, and the local pub scene. We even agreed to contact him around the time of the 17th Scunthorpe Beer Festival next September, to see if Havercake Ale was available for the Yorkshire Brewers' Bar.

I tried the Golden Best first, which was a pleasant, tasty, light mild, followed by the Havercake, which I really enjoyed, with notes of fruit and malt, plus a gentle bitterness. One of our number said he thought he detected a hint of oranges in the flavor – I wasn't so sure, but we all agreed the Havercake was a fine beer. The evening was rounded off with a raffle, drawing tickets which were provided free when purchasing a pint of any of the Taylor's beers on offer. I duly won a very nice polo shirt with the Taylor's logo on the front, so worth coming along! An enjoyable evening was had by all, and the Taylor's beers were all on fine form. With thanks to Adam and Jenny at the Jolly Miller for organising the event.

Mark Elsome

[12]

Visit to Cantillon Brewery, Brussels

I've been a member of CAMRA now for more years than I can remember, and during that time have been on any number of UK brewery visits. While there's always something of interest to be had when talking to brewers and listening about the brewing process (as well as being able to sample their beers at source), after a while these visits all seem to run into one, as the basic brewing method is more or less the same.

That all changed recently when on a short break in Brussels, I had the pleasure of visiting the Cantillon Brewery, located a short walk from the Gare du Midi Eurostar train station. Cantillon is a traditional lambic brewery, producing beers



which are fermented by wild yeasts naturally present in the air. This initially leads to an acidic/sour beer, but lambics are matured for up to three years in oak barrels, and this rounds out the sourness somewhat, although the beers even when mature and with various fruits added, are still an acquired taste. Cantillon are steadfastly carrying on a tradition of making beer that lasted for hundreds of years until the advent of controlled reproduction of yeasts in the 19th century made brewing more of an exact science. Each batch of Cantillon beer is slightly different to any other due to the random nature of inoculation by wild yeasts, unlike in modern brewing where the conditions are meant to be replicated exactly every time to produce a uniform product. To survive the whims of popular



taste, Cantillon have turned their brewery into a living museum, open six days a week to visitors, and can expect up to 30,000 people to visit the brewery every year. Founded in 1900 and run by successive generations of the Cantillon family, the brewery is an homage to antiquity, with much of the original brewing equipment still in use today. While most of the equipment, such as the mash tun (*see picture*), was recognisable as similar to modern equipment, one of the biggest differences was the use of the 'coolingship' up on the third floor, a shallow, open, copper-lined vessel into which the hot wort is pumped. This floor was surrounded by adjustable shutters which could be opened or closed to assist in the cooling of the wort down to 18-20°C. This cooling process only takes place at night and is only possible in cold weather, which restricts the brewing season from October to the beginning of April. (*cont. on page 6*)

[5]

(cont. from page 5) Once the wort has cooled sufficiently, the natural fermentation begins, and the next morning the cooled wort is pumped into oak or chesnut barrels where the fermentation process really gets underway. The brewers don't want to disturb the natural micro-organic fauna that exists in the brewing areas, so it's not unusual to see cobwebs hanging from roof timbers, and spiders are viewed as natural predators, and killing them is frowned upon! After the tour we assembled in a seated bar area to drink and buy the Cantillon products. I enjoyed the Gueuzes most of all, which are blends of one, two and three year old lambics, and these were pleasant to drink with only a hint of acidity. Trying a one year old lambic gave me a chance to try out my best 'sucking- on- a- lemon-face'! The Cantillon Kriek (cherry) beer was also very palatable, although with no hint of the sweetness that you might expect from the addition of fruit. All in all a very interesting and enjoyable tour, and highly recommended if you're planning to visit Brussels. In these days of big brewery takeovers, it was gratifying to know that Cantillon has managed to remain fiercely independent for over a century, one of only a handful of traditional lambic breweries in Belgium still producing this high quality Belgian speciality beer. Long may they continue to do so!

Mark Elsome

[6]



Visit to Axholme Brewery

In mid-November a small group of Scunthorpe & District CAMRA members caught the slow train to Doncaster, alighting at Crowle for the short walk to the 7 Lakes leisure complex at Ealand. This is the new home of the Axholme Brewing Co. set up by former Abbeydale and Thorne brewer Mike Richards and wife Jules. The brewery is part of a building used for social functions and meetings, and is adjacent to the 7 Lakes pub where Axholme beers are also on sale. Mike welcomed us into the brewhouse, and after supplying us with some of Axholme's Elderberry Stout, gave a brief history of the company, and described the brewing processes used. All of the brewing vessels looked brand new, and most were attractively clad with wood, which also helps to insulate the vessels. Mike brews twice a week at present, and that is sufficient to meet current demand. Most of his output goes into the brewery's two core beers – Best Bitter (3.8% ABV) and Isle



Pale Ale (4.3%), but Mike also finds time to brew an eclectic range of specials. He was also planning to brew the brewery's strongest beer, Special Reserve (7.2%), in the run-up to Christmas, including a special festive bottled version matured in whisky

casks (I got my order in early!).

The brewery was very clean and tidy, with plenty of space to brew, a welcome improvement on Axholme's previous home in an industrial unit on the South Park Industrial Estate in Scunthorpe, which was very cramped by comparison. Mike delivers his beer to pubs all over Yorkshire, the Midlands and Lincolnshire on his non-brewing days, and his beers are also listed with wholesalers such as Small Beer, who distribute his beers far and wide. Mike would eventually like to have his own pub to sell Axholme beers, but for now things are ticking over nicely. In conjunction with the 7 Lakes management, Mike was also planning a beer festival on the site, possibly in the Spring.

After a couple more pints of the excellent Elderberry Stout, we decamped to the 7 Lakes pub to try the Axholme Mild that was on, and also to get a bite to eat. Mike also joined us, and the conversation ranged from beer and brewing to the keeping of ferrets! A very enjoyable afternoon was had by all - many thanks to Mike for letting us visit the brewery. We wish Mike and Jules continued success in their venture at 7 Lakes.

Mark Elsome

[11]

The Bird in the Barley

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Would Sir Care To See The Beer List?

With beer going through a renaissance, more and more restaurants are offering a beer-matching menu, and even employing beer sommeliers. Le Gavroche, the most exclusive of London restaurants, is among the few that now offers a beer matching menu. Cherry beer with seared tuna perhaps, or Butcombe Rare Breed Bitter with veal shin. Perhaps something Trappist with Guinness cake? Steve Livens is one of a new breed of sommelier, helping customers to choose the beers that will complement all kinds of flavours in all kinds of settings. Equally at home with Michel Roux Jr as he is in a pub - so long as the beer is well kept - his aim is as much to evangelise for the idea of beer in new settings as it is to promote the growing number of new breweries.



And with those new flavours, from fruit beers to a renewed interest in treacly black London Porter, come new possibilities. "The culture around brewing has been a little bit in-house. Over the 20 years I've been in the industry I've never seen beer as a fashionable thing, but today's attention

is exciting and new. And it makes sense to gather people together to talk about it – you've not had that in the UK but you've had it in the USA and other parts of Europe. So beer is about more than the excellent Campaign for Real Ale, it's unexpectedly cool, too".

That means beer-matching menus across a range of restaurants, and also a wider range of ales and lagers than on sale in traditional pubs. One consequence of that renewed interest is in courses to encourage people to become beer sommeliers, and the new appearance of beer in more interesting glasses. "In a given situation the pint glass is fantastic," says Livens. "But in other situations a wine glass is better, a shot glass is great for a heavy beer for a dessert. There's no difference between wine and beer in this sense."

And as with wine, the aim of creatively matching beer with food is to create a greater contrast or complement. "You get that pop when beer and food match up," says Livens. "You create a new flavour and it's a very obvious thing when you get it right. Indian food is traditionally matched with lager but there's a great opportunity to look at ales. Try Doom Bar with a lamb curry." *Well, that's just what leading beer writers like Roger Protz have been saying for years. And beer is a robust enough drink to be enjoyed in a restaurant to accompany food or as a thirst quencher in a local pub.*

Adapted from the Daily Telegraph

[10]

Beer of the Festival Presentation to Batemans

In late November we made our Beer of the Festival presentation to Batemans Brewery. This was held at Pooleys in Messingham, a local outlet for Batemans beers. CAMRA member Mike Sayers (*left in picture*), presented a framed certificate to Batemans Managing Director, Stuart Bateman, to commemorate Hazelnut Brownie being voted the favourite beer of drinkers attending the recent 16th Scunthorpe Beer Festival. Batemans also provided some bottled samples of their Bohemian Brews range, which were enjoyed by those attending, and Stuart Bateman gave an interesting talk on brewing. A good night!



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A Visit to Pig's Ear!

During early December, when my better half and I were on a weekend visit to London to see our eldest son, we partook of the Pig's Ear Beer Festival in Hackney. A feature of the London beer scene for over 30 years, the festival is held in the ornate Round Chapel, and features over 200 beers. Many of these were from new London breweries with which I was not that familiar, such as London Fields, Five Points, Crate, Partizan and Weird Beard, reflecting the upsurge in microbrewing in the capital since Youngs upped sticks and left. Most of the ones I tried were excellent, although weighted towards the higher ABV's, necessitating a third of a pint measure on the souvenir glass.



We had an enjoyable afternoon there in a very attractive venue, only let down by the fact that all the seating was in the upper tier, which meant clambering up and down stairs every time you wanted to refill your glass. By the time we left about 6 o'clock, the main standing area downstairs was already filling up, with long queues forming outside. One to try again though!

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Branch Christmas Party at the Malt Shovel

We held our annual Christmas party at the Malt Shovel this year, having booked the pub conservatory for the evening. As usual there was a great selection of real ales including Abbeydale Christmas Cheers, Elland Three Kings and Acorn 11th Noel. We had the usual brainteasing Christmas quiz, and as last year the all female team of Karen Applin, Gill Elsome and Sarah Wullink triumphed again to win the prize of a box of bottled Christmas ales. A superb Christmas buffet was then laid out, which we all enjoyed. Finally we ran our Christmas raffle, with lots of beer related prizes and invited other customers in the pub to try their luck with a few tickets.



There was a mix of winners from the CAMRA group and the rest of the pub, so it worked out well. We rounded off the evening with a few more draughts of the excellent beers.

A very enjoyable evening – with thanks to Simon for the Christmas beers and Belinda for the fantastic buffet. Same time next year? [9]

MEET THE BREWER

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