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Campaign
for
Real Ale

IRON BREW

MAGAZINE OF SCUNTHORPE & DISTRICT
CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



Campaign
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Real Ale

MAY – JULY 2023



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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



Welcome to this spring/summer edition of the branch magazine Iron Brew. In this issue we report on the CAMRA Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) Winter, which was attended by some members of the branch, ask if Craft Beer is still a thing, given all the changes in the UK brewing scene, bring you up to date with local and national pub and brewery news and a whole lot more! We hope you enjoy reading it. Look out later in the year for several local festivals including the Pink Pig Pigfest on 20 May, Party in the Park at Valley Park, Bottesford on 15 July, the Cafe Independent event on 22 & 23 July, St Peter's Church 3rd Beer Festival from 21 – 23 September and a new beer festival at St Lawrence's Church scheduled for October. Whew. A lot to pack in!

CONTRIBUTORS:

Mark Elsome, A Beergeek, Christine Andrew, Seven Bro7hers, Brewer & Distiller Intl., Morning Advertiser, Protz On Beer, CAMRA, Punchdrink

CRAFT BEER CONNOISSEUR

Is Craft Beer Still a Thing?



A pertinent question to ask I think, given that the Craft Beer Revolution, or whatever epithet you may wish to hang on that particular phenomenon, is now around 40 years old and has changed immeasurably since it first began. The deregulation of brewing in the United States in 1979 was the trigger for amateur brewers to start making their own home-brewed concoctions as a reaction against the bland American mega-brands, leading to many microbrewers setting up in the States in the early 80's and kick-starting craft beer.

The emergence of small, independent, craft brewers spread both Stateside and in the UK, helped over here by the introduction of

Progressive Beer Duty by Gordon Brown in 2002. This gave tax breaks to small brewers and fuelled the explosion of microbrewer set-ups in the UK, with breweries now reaching over 2,000. Such an insatiable demand for craft beer was created that it's now established across the globe.

A lot has happened since those early, heady days of craft beer. Global brewers have tried to grab a piece of the action by buying into or taking over craft breweries. UK examples include the Heineken buyout of Beavertown, the Asahi takeover of Fullers and Dark Star, the acquisition of Magic Rock and Fourpure by Lion (although now sold on to the UK's Odyssey Inns) and many others. Brewdog, in their quest for world domination, have not so much distorted the notion of craft beer, but broken it into pieces and jumped up and down on the shards as they expand ever further, with incursions into India and China now on their radar.

If craft beer still means anything to an old craftie like me, it should encompass independent brewers making small batch, high quality, innovative brews. Does this type of brewery still exist in today's highly

competitive market? Thankfully the answer to that, in my opinion, is "yes, they do". While many have fallen by the wayside (and continue to do so from the effects of the energy and cost-of-living crises), others are managing to thrive. Think Cloudwater, Siren, Northern Monk, Thornbridge, Moor, Abbeydale, Marble and Tiny Rebel amongst others.

With the realisation that good cask beer also qualifies as craft, some craft brewers have a foot in both camps and produce quality beers for cask *and* keg. All of the above do this and recently Verdant in Cornwall have begun marketing a series of four cask beers and Orbit in London has just released a cask IPA.



Even the old, seemingly unloved British beer styles such as mild and bitter, the latter sneeringly dismissed in some craft quarters as "boring brown beer" (actually was that Brewdog deliberately stirring things

up again for their own benefit?), have had modern makeovers and appeal to a new generation of drinkers. Such beers as Arbor Blue Sky Drinking, Five Points Best and Original, Blue Monkey Primate and Boxcar Mild fit nicely into this category.

As the UK craft beer scene has grown and matured, it has merged with the cask beer ethos championed by CAMRA since the early 1970's under the umbrella of "quality beer", no longer being seen as an impudent outsider rocking the boat on perceptions of what does and doesn't constitute good beer.

Although some in CAMRA refuse to acknowledge craft keg beer at all, many others appreciate the variety and breadth of flavours that craft beer offers. OK, sometimes craft brewers occasionally overstep the mark in their search for something new and veer off into wholesale silliness (pastry stouts anyone?), but on the whole I believe the choice afforded by craft beer in the UK is a positive attribute.

Craft beer is all about attention to detail, unique flavours, experimentation, heritage, and community. It's no surprise that the craft beer community is so

collaborative, a complete contrast to how the big, global brewers operate. So, in conclusion and to answer my own question, I said earlier that the craft beer scene had changed markedly since its inception, but it's still definitely "a thing" nevertheless and continues to grow. I for one look forward to seeing where it goes next. As always, further discussion on this topic is always welcome for the price of a pint at my local, *The Hanging Bat*. I'm there most lunchtimes – that's me in the corner with a beer and a daily newspaper, probably grappling unsuccessfully with that day's crossword. Until then, good drinking!

A BEERGEEK

With thanks to:

<https://www.sevenbro7hers.com/the-craft-beer-movement-where-it-all-came-from/>

A VISIT TO THE GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL WINTER

What Was It Like?

This year's Great British Beer Festival Winter, an annual beer festival run by CAMRA as a seasonal counterpoint to the Great British Beer Festival, was held in February at

the Town Hall at Burton-upon-Trent. This is located about two hours cruising time along the Trent & Mersey Canal from where our narrowboat, Sheila May, is moored at Mercia Marina. We thought this was an opportunity too good to miss, so we bought tickets for the Thursday of the festival and my wife and I, with our friends Anne & Stef on board, set off for Burton.

We arrived at Burton in the late afternoon on the Wednesday and moored at the Shobnall Fields site, a short walk from the town and decided to explore a couple of Burton pubs in the vicinity. We went to the Weighbridge Inn first, an excellent, busy micropub featuring beers from Muirhouse Brewery and guest beers. We also took in the Devonshire Arms (the former Ind Coope Brewery tap), which had Burton Bridge beers and guests before returning to the boat.

The next day we eagerly anticipated a day at the festival and walked the 15 minutes or so it took to reach the Town Hall just before the 12 noon opening time. Imagine our surprise when we saw that a massive queue had formed to get in and it took about 35 minutes of standing in the cold before we gained entry.

The Town Hall comprised a large floor space with a stage at the front, with other rooms accessed from one side. You won't be surprised to learn that the people in front of us in the queue had bagged all the tables and seating in these offshoot rooms, leaving us a choice of standing in the main hall or seeking out a seat "in the Gods" overlooking the main floor.



We plumped for the latter, but it was far from ideal as the seating was similar to that you'd find in a theatre and there was nowhere to put your pint, apart from the floor while you perused the programme, with a high probability of it being kicked over. It was also a long trek to the downstairs bars and toilets down two flights of stairs - I wondered if they'd got the idea from Wetherspoons?

Worried that I might get vertigo or a nose bleed at this height I opted for

mostly standing in the main hall, but this was very busy and it was tricky to get to the bars I wanted without bumping into others. Most people were gracious when I pushed past them, although one individual gave me the evil eye in disgust when I bumped his elbow in passing!

I don't remember all the beers I



tried, although the Siren Suspended in Centennial was an excellent pale ale, if not a typical winter beer. They were all in very good condition though, which

should be a given at a national CAMRA festival.

Things improved after the announcement from the stage of the Champion Winter Beers (won by Elland 1872 Porter) and the Lingen Room was opened up, which housed all the beers judged in the competition. This thinned out the main hall somewhat to everyone's benefit, but I couldn't help thinking why they hadn't concluded the beer judging the day before to allow the

Champions Beer Bar to be open from the start?

The rest of the afternoon passed away amiably and some good beers were sampled. Paul & Beverley, our friends from Scunthorpe & District CAMRA, had arrived earlier by train and plumped for standing like me.

Before they got their train home we suggested trying some Burton pubs near the railway station, to which they agreed. We then visited the Last Heretic (a micropub with a good range of cask and craft keg beers), the Cooper's Tavern (ex-Bass Brewery tap) and the Roebuck



Tavern before they had to depart.

We then made our way rather wearily back to our boat and reflected on the day.

While it hadn't been the outstanding success we'd hoped for – I felt Burton Town Hall was too small a venue for a national CAMRA festival, despite the historical connection to the home of UK brewing – overall it had been an enjoyable day.

Would I go next year if it's held at Burton Town Hall again? – possibly, but I'd do it differently by going later in the afternoon to avoid queuing, have more room to move about and be able to sample beers from *all* of the bars.

MARK ELSOME

PUB & BREWERY NEWS

A new licensee, Richard Montague, has taken over at the **Red Lion** in Redbourne. A good selection of real ales is offered with a rotational policy that includes Timothy Taylor Landlord, Boltmaker, Golden Best and Knowle Spring, Black Sheep Best Bitter and Ossett Yorkshire Blonde.

Speaking of Timothy Taylor's as we were, the **Thornton Hunt Inn** at Thornton Curtis has Timothy Taylor Landlord and Golden Best on permanently.



They have been awarded The Timothy Taylor Champions Club accolade denoting beer quality. They also offer a rotating guest beer, which was Shadow Bridge Wrath of the Gods on my visit.

More Taylor's news! The **Exchange** in Brigg has opened up a pub within its hotel called the **Doghhouse** and has beers from Timothy Taylor's on handpump.

The next draught beer to come from **Shadow Bridge Brewery** in Barton will be Dwarven Steel (3.6% ABV), a dark mild developed for them by **Little Big Dog Brewery** in Barrow.

And speaking of **Little Big Dog** (we're joining all the dots today!), they've recently brewed a 5th anniversary beer for the **BeerHeadZ** pub at Lincoln (part of a small chain of micropubs, with other venues in Nottingham and Newark). This is a hazy pale ale brewed with oats and hopped with Simcoe, Citra and Mosaic.

On a national note, **Guinness** has announced plans to build a microbrewery and events hub in Covent Garden, London, to be

known as **Guinness at Old Brewer's Yard**. This £73 million investment will cover an area of 50,000 sq. ft. and feature a brewery with limited-edition beers, events spaces, a covered courtyard, a Guinness shop and an open-fire kitchen and restaurant with a 360 degree glass rooftop. There will also be an opportunity to try new brews and tour the brewery with a Guinness expert to learn about the stout and its history.



This will be similar to the Dublin Guinness Storehouse visitor attraction. The new facility is due to open in autumn this year.



Spring Break.

This 4.4% ABV golden ale makes its

Something to look forward to in our local **Greene King** pubs, a limited-edition, seasonal ale called

return after first being brewed last year in collaboration with the National Brewing Apprentice Programme, Future Brewers. Described as a full-bodied, hoppy ale, with good malt character, perfectly balanced with citrus flavours, the beer is part of the Fresh Cask Releases calendar, a series of 18 limited-edition beers available throughout the year at specific times

MORNING ADVERTISER

THE SLOOP INN

Pub of the Season Spring 2023

The Sloop Inn was the first pub I ever stepped foot in aged 17. One evening after larking about on the Humber bank with school chums someone daringly suggested that we call into the nearby Sloop for a game of pool. The Sloop features in the GBG for the first time in 2006 and the description of 'a multi-roomed pub with nautically themed rooms enhanced by stained glass windows showing sailing scenes' is just how it had been 29 years earlier in 1977. There were a couple of features not mentioned; the original Delft tiled fireplace and a twee pretend pantile roof running the length of one side of the bar. Back in 2006 the three

beers on offer were from Tom Wood and this was still the case when the 2015 GBG entry was made. During the 2006 to 2015 period there was also an excellent juke box which, thanks to one regular, always seemed to be playing a Roy Orbison track.



The Sloop then dropped out of the guide for a few years and during this time was also put up for sale. It was eventually bought during the pandemic by Gee and Debbie Koshy who had previously been the popular landlords of The Wheatsheaf in the town centre. Gee and Debbie used lockdown time to extensively and tastefully refurbish the entire interior and also open up the rear courtyard as a beer garden. The nautical theme has gone along with the pantile roof and the décor is now very 21st Century, complete with cosy log burners. Thankfully, the Delft tiles and stained glass

windows remain – as does the character.

Gee already had a good reputation for keeping his real ale in excellent condition and this continues to be the case at The Sloop; demand is high and Gee has recently added a fifth hand pump. Timothy Taylor Boltmaker, Theakston Best Bitter, Pennine Brewing Co. Millie George and Shadow Bridge Dragon Slayer are currently the four permanent beers and there is one changing beer, usually from the nearby Shadow Bridge Brewery. Food is also in high demand (booking recommended), but there is always somewhere to just sit and have a beer.



So the next time you've been larking about on the Humber bank, visiting the Humber Bridge, Far Ings Nature Reserve, The Tile Works, The Ropewalk or Waters Edge I strongly suggest you call in. Alternatively, The

Sloop is only a short walk from Barton Interchange which is served by Barton Line trains to and from Cleethorpes and buses to and from Hull, Scunthorpe and Grimsby.

The Sloop was the branch's well-deserved winner of our Winter Pub of the Season award. The photos show the framed certificate being presented to Gee and barman Mark by local CAMRA member Olive Harland.

CHRISTINE ANDREW

THE KEYKEG QUESTION

Answers at Last!

As a postscript to the Craft Beer Connoisseur's article in this issue (very good by the way CBC – take the rest of the day off!), I wanted to broach the question of why craft brewers brew some beers only for keykegs? I have never understood this, but had thought that it was maybe some sort of craft affectation, where a refusal to offer the same beer in cask format almost added to its uniqueness and appeal (and attracted a higher price of course). Or was it that some craft beers, because of their higher strength, would struggle to sell in the three days usually allowed for real ale if

they were packaged as cask beers Well, looks like I was wrong on both counts!

Esteemed beer writer Pete Brown (whose views on the beer world generally chime with my own, apart from his firmly held belief that Taylor's Landlord is still a great beer!), suggests that some beers are actually designed solely for keg. Taking the big, hoppy American IPA's as an example, Pete says that American craft brewers used hops in a different way from British brewers by placing more emphasis on hop aroma. Carbonation tends to strip out a lot of hop flavour and delivers it as aroma. Take the carbonation out and all that hop character stays in the body of the beer and can give it an oily, cloying character. If an ale wasn't designed for cask, cask dispense will not necessarily improve it. Probably why you never see Magic Rock's Cannonball as a cask beer then?

Pete goes on to say that there are beers from some modern British brewers that do work both ways, but differently. On the whole though, if you're brewing with New World hops, with a modern approach to hopping rates and dry hopping, as a

general rule of thumb the beer will work best with the dispense method it was developed for.

He also references Timothy Taylor, who are a traditional cask brewery, but who have experimented with more modern styles and offer their triple-hopped beer Hopical Storm as a keg (and canned) beer because keg dispense suits the beer better.



So there you have it. An intriguing question finally answered by the doyen of beer writers. Thanks to Pete for clearing that up for me and hopefully some of you as well.

MARK ELSOME

Based on an article by Pete Brown in Brewer and Distiller International, October 2022

BUDGET BLUES

Mixed Bag for Pubs in Spring Budget

CAMRA responded to the Chancellor's Budget in March by welcoming the discount of 11p on

draught beer and other draught products sold in pubs (which they've campaigned on for a number of years), but were concerned that the new rate will not apply until August. They hoped that as many pubs as possible would be able to keep their doors open until then.

Kate Nicholls, Chief Executive of UKHospitality said that it was vital brewers passed the relief on to pubs to ensure it delivers against government objectives. If it wasn't this would rather defeat the government's objective of boosting pub trade over the purchase of cheaper alcohol from supermarkets. For some it could also get swallowed up by duty increases on non-draught beer, wines and spirits in line with inflation come August. CAMRA were also positive about the freezing of duty rates until the draught relief came in. However they decried the lack of help for hospitality businesses with energy costs, which will end on April 1, despite the support being extended for households. This could result in many communities losing their pubs because energy support is ending. They were also less than enamoured not to see the extension of help for pubs and breweries with the burden

of business rates. With current support schemes due to end in 2024, these rates bills could be the difference between continuing to trade or having to close for good. CAMRA said the Government urgently needed to reform the whole business rates system to fix the issues with this unfair system and help to protect our pubs. So overall, a mixed bag for pubs. The Chancellor appears to have given with one hand and taken away with the other. Wasn't it ever thus?

MARK ELSOME



Based on press release information from CAMRA/Morning Advertiser

BILL TIDY

Death of Kegbuster Cartoonist

Bill Tidy, the UK cartoonist famous for the Cloggies, the Fosdyke Saga and the Kegbuster cartoon strip in What's Brewing, passed away aged

89 in March. In this excerpt from Protz on Beer from 2020, beer writer Roger Protz pays tribute ...

Bill Tidy is more than a beer hero. He's the comic genius who has tickled the nation's ribs for decades with such hilarious strips as the Cloggies, the Fosdyke Saga and, most importantly where beer is concerned, Kegbuster in CAMRA's newspaper What's Brewing.



Month after month, Kegbuster and his faithful whippet have fought the good fight for cask ale against the machinations of

big brewers, pin-striped executives and steely-eyed marketing men, all the time finding time for a pint or three of his beloved Crudgington's 6X.

Now at the venerable age of 86, Bill is packing away his easel and pens and deservedly putting his feet up. He had no formal training as an artist but he worked for an advertising agency in Liverpool where he did illustrations for clients. His first cartoon was bought by a Japanese newspaper and he then started to

draw strips for the Daily Mirror and Daily Sketch. Working for daily newspapers took him to London where he also sold cartoons to the satirical magazine Punch. He linked up with fellow artists to form the

re-working of the John Galsworthy novels and TV series the Forsyte Saga that followed the sexual misadventures of upper-class families living in Dorset and London. The Fosdyke family in sharp contrast



Cartoonist Club of Great Britain and he became the club's chairman. His career took off and some of his strips had astonishing longevity. The Fosdyke Saga ran in the Daily Mirror from 1971 to 1985 and stopped only when the paper's owner, that well-known humorist Robert Maxwell, said he didn't find it funny. Millions did and loved its wry working-class

ran a tripe factory in the North-west. The background was soot and chimneys and was described as "a classic tale of struggle, power, personalities...and tripe". Bill's fascination with dark satanic mills is perhaps inspired by F S Lowry in Manchester, but Lowry, unlike Bill, was not exactly a bundle of laughs. The Cloggies appeared in Private Eye

from 1967 to 1981. It was an affectionate send-up of the radio soap *The Archers*, billed as “an everyday story of country folk” whereas the *Cloggies* were “an everyday story of clog-dancing folk”. The strip followed the misadventures of a team of clog dancers who took on rival teams and developed such tactical foot manoeuvres as the Triple Arkwright. The dancers had a legendary capacity for beer and would repair to the nearest pub for a gallon or two after every epic contest.

Bill enjoyed beer, too, but he admits he “drank any old rubbish, like Double Diamond” until he came into contact with CAMRA in the 1970s. Memories are hazy but Michael Hardman, one of the Campaign’s founders and first editor of *What’s Brewing*, thinks a member in Nottingham spoke to Bill, contacted Michael and said Bill might be willing to contribute to the paper.

“I phoned Bill and he said he’d been waiting for a call and would love to draw a strip,” Michael recalls. “Then he said my name had given him an idea for some characters.”

The Grotny Hardmen were born, grim-faced keg salesmen who were determined to foist their fizzy brews

on drinkers and publicans and were repulsed by Kegbuster. The Hardmen were followed by Twitbread, another giant keg brewery that attempted to phase out cask ale with inferior gassy products.

Kegbuster continued on his merry way until April 2020 when Bill decided to call it a day. Rosa, his wife of close to 60 years, died in December 2019 and Bill has had a mild stroke and been diagnosed with Parkinson’s. If anyone deserves to take it easy, it’s him.

In 2000 he was awarded an MBE “for service to journalism”. It wasn’t the best citation. It should read “for keeping the nation – and beer lovers – laughing”. Keep supping Crudgie’s 6X, Bill, and watch out for Grotny Hardmen.

PROTZ ON BEER

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

GOOD BEER GUIDE SURVEYS

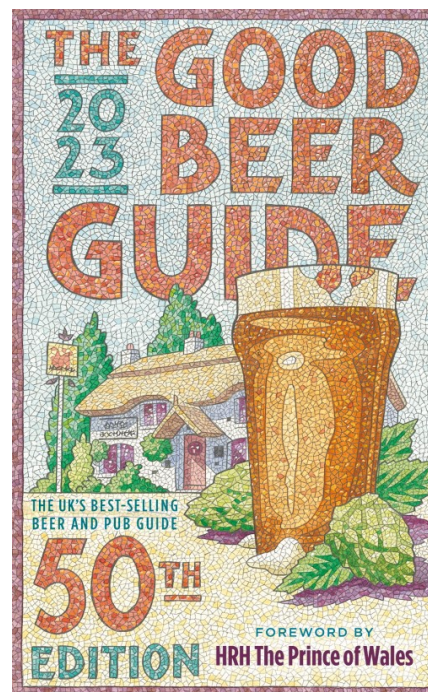
Surveying for the 2024 Guide

Doing pub surveys for the annual CAMRA Good Beer Guide (GBG) is one of those tasks incumbent on all CAMRA branches so that local up-to-date pub information can be fed into the next edition.

The fact that branches all over the

UK do these pub surveys and select the pubs for inclusion each year is one of the GBG’s unique selling points.

There’s a long lead in time between supplying the pub information and the actual printing of the GBG (normally it’s printed in October each year), and Scunthorpe & District Branch normally start the surveying in February (some zealous branches appear to start again as soon as the new GBG comes out).



There are many ways for a branch to select the pubs for inclusion in the GBG, and believe me we’ve tried

most of them! After many years of doing this, we settled on the branch committee selecting the 16 pubs we’re allocated for our area and circulating the pubs list to other local members by email for them to suggest any other deserving pubs that we may have missed.

This year, because of time constraints due to the deadline for submissions being brought forward by a month (and catching many branches by surprise, including ourselves), we didn’t circulate the list around for scrutiny, but fully intend to do this again next year.

The surveys are carried out by willing volunteer members (although the pool of pub surveyors seems to shrink each year), who visit the pub and fill out a CAMRA survey form which captures the essential pub features, including the beers on offer. Hopefully it will be possible to taste the beer as well (with a designated driver on hand of course if needed). In most cases we will have tasted the pub’s beers at various times throughout the year, so will already have a good idea about quality.

The completed forms are then returned to the Branch Chairman who enters the details into an online

CAMRA pub database called Pubzilla. Once checked the completed entries are signed off to the Lincolnshire Branches Area Organiser to be forwarded to CAMRA HQ. All the returns from branches are then compiled by the GBG editor into the next Guide.

We receive proofs of the Lincolnshire entries later in the year as a final check that everything is correct and then the information goes back to HQ for eventual printing of the Guide.

All in all a mammoth undertaking each year, but a real team effort at local branch level. We could always do with more volunteers to survey our local pubs, so if you like the idea, please get in touch.

And this year's Scunthorpe & District Branch selections? Sorry, but you'll have to purchase a copy of the 2024 GBG in October to find out!

MARK ELSOME

WHAT ON EARTH?

No. 73: Rauchbier

"So, Beermeister, what strange and exotic beer style are you trying to foist on us this time?", I hear you ask. Fear not dear readers – this is more straightforward than many of

my other "What on Earth" posts, although still challenging in many ways! Rauchbier (literally "smoked beer"), is steeped in history and tradition, but is only now having its moment in the sun. The style is brewed with malt or wheat that's been smoked over beechwood or oak, giving it a smoky character ranging from faint wisps of smokiness to full-on campfire flavours depending on the quantity of smoked malt used in the mash.

As an aside, I recall some years ago visiting the Eight Jolly Brewers in Gainsborough when the landlord had put on a smoked beer from Roosters Brewery (who even then were experimenting with different styles). They'd maybe overdone it on this occasion though as the beer tasted like very strong smoky bacon crisps and of all those in the pub only the landlord and I liked it!

Bamberg in Germany claims to be the birthplace of the style and to this day remains the cultural epicentre of rauchbier, even though it's now gaining popularity in other brewing regions.

Modern rauchbiers come in all varieties of colours and flavours from delicate straw-coloured lagers to

pitch black stouts. The most famous example of the category is the 5.1% ABV amber Märzen lager from Bamberg's famed Aecht Schlenkerla, which tastes bold and assertive with a dry, in-your-face smokiness, balanced by a touch of malty



sweetness. It has gained a cult following in the UK and can often be found at beer festivals with a bottle bar or at many specialist bottle shops.

Although UK craft breweries rarely seem to experiment with traditional German-style smoked beers, quite a few have added a touch of smokiness to porters or stouts, usually to good effect.

The same quality that sets rauchbier apart from other beer styles is what

makes it so polarising. Most detractors describe the beers as tasting repulsive, like overcooked bacon or stale ashtrays. Enthusiasts, on the other hand, fully embrace the smouldering earthiness.

Today, smoked beers are more popular than ever, and there are even groups dedicated to boosting the profile of this esoteric style. For example, *This Week in Rauchbier*, is a Facebook group with over 1,000 members, many of whom are brewers and is dedicated to spreading the gospel of smoked beer.

So wherever you stand on the notion of smokiness in beer, you might want to try one or two for yourself. You could even join the growing band of Rauchbier enthusiasts that have sprung up in recent years.

A BEERGEEK

Based on information by Justin

Kennedy, with thanks, from:

<https://punchdrink.com/articles/anti-ipa-rauchbier-smoked-beer-having-moment/>

FRESH START FOR CASK

BEER CAMPAIGN

Drink Cask Fresh Initiative

A cross-industry campaign to literally

refresh the image of cask ale launches in selected pubs this week. Drink Cask Fresh seeks to make real ale more relevant and attractive to younger drinkers by positioning it as the freshest drink on the bar. Younger drinkers, who are currently less likely to drink cask, claim freshness is important when choosing what to drink. But they're less likely to associate freshness with cask than with almost any other drink. In fact, well-kept cask ale is



only on the bar for a maximum of four days. Campaign kits developed by agency Ape Creative include bright wraps for hand pumps (pictured), branded glassware and bar runners, and beer mats with different messages about cask ale that link to: www.drinkcaskfresh.co.uk Here drinkers can learn more about how cask ale is not only the freshest

beer on the bar, but also has a variety of flavours, is skilfully brewed and kept and has strong sustainability stories. The pilot campaign runs for 10 weeks until 8 May, with the intention of winning more backing from the beer and pub industry for a national roll-out later in the year.

CAMRA/WHAT'S BREWING

POTPOURRI

A fragrant offering of last minute snippets from the world of beer ...

You may recall March 17 as St Patrick's Day when many celebrated the Irish nation with a pint of the black stuff. This is not a new



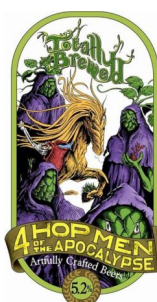
phenomenon though, as the picture shows that "famous" Irish brewery

Schlitz extolling the virtues of its beer in 1964 with the tag line, "Ah! The Irish sure know how to make beer".

<https://mastodon.beer/@brewedculture/110039315427882852>

The well-regarded Nottingham brewery **Totally Brewed** sadly folded in March due to what it says was a "massive increase in costs".

They had an enterprising range of



cask and keg ales including the flagship 4 Hopmen of the Apocalypse, a hoppy IPA and Papa Jangles Voodoo Stout, both were featured at the Scunthorpe Beer

Festival.

The brewery's popular micropub in Beeston will stay open as a stand-alone venue offering other beer lines.

Back in February, those loveable rogues at **Brewdog** decided to take on Guinness and introduced a nitro draught, dry Irish stout called **Black Heart** at 4.1% ABV (the same strength as Guinness). Available now at a Brewdog bar near you.



The recent budget raised the upper threshold of the lower band of alcohol duty from 2.8% to 3.4% ABV from August. This means that



brewers will pay a lower rate of duty on beers up to 3.4% ABV. Expect to see an upsurge in

lower ABV beers such as Adnams Secret Springs (a collaboration with Siren), described as a "Tropical Pale Ale" and brewed to a strength of 3.4%.

Missing that cold, fizzy lager you enjoyed while on holiday in Spain?



Well, miss it no more as Heineken UK has announced

that it is introducing Cruzcampo (4.4% ABV) to the UK on-trade.

Heineken said (*I'd like to think in a tongue in cheek way, but probably straight off the bat - Ed*), "Cruzcampo offers consumers an opportunity to taste something really authentic, a really great quality beer with lots of heritage, but at a price point that isn't going to break the bank".

MORNING ADVERTISER

But not quite the end ... there's just time for this brief report of a branch day out in Sheffield

DAY OUT TO SMOD

Branch Trip to Sheffield

On an overcast mid-April day, a small group of CAMRA members, Chris, Ian, Steve and myself, travelled to the great city of Sheffield to partake of pubs and taprooms.

First up was the Sheffield Tap at the station where we all met up to sample the day's beers, bizarrely at the same time as a member of staff had decided this would be a good moment to clean all the handpumps on the bar! After a couple of halves we ventured out into the drizzle for the short walk to the Rutland Arms. This traditional Sheffield boozier had a good selection of cask ales from Blue Bee, Brew York and Vocation as

well as the new Hop City collaboration beers from Northern Monk.



With lunch duly taken here, we were set up for the tram journey to Attercliffe and the St Mars of the Desert (SMOD) Brewery Taproom. Despite a misstep on the journey where we failed to get to the tram doors in time and had to get off at another stop, we pitched up at SMOD, based in an old industrial area of the city, slightly late and damp, but ready for the fray. We were shown to our pre-booked table in the Taproom and eagerly perused the beer menu. I plumped for 2/3 of the Fluffy Rabbit, a smooth pale ale with good flavour, while others went for the IPA's. At SMOD you don't get up and head for the bar to get your drink – it's all done by table service and is very civilised as a result. The Taproom (and brewery) is

housed in an old ex-Steelworks unit, making it hard to find if you have no prior knowledge of its location, but is welcoming, warm and cosy.



We enjoyed other beers from their range such as Bobobelle and Crumbling, although Steve was taken aback by the tartness of Sisypheus, a sour Stingo beer, but came to like it in the end!

Even these were eclipsed by the mighty 10% ABV Imperial Stout, Barbapapa, reckoned to be the beer



of the day by all. There was just time to grab some SMOD souvenirs, before the journey home.

With thanks to all

at SMOD for their hospitality. We had a great day out despite the dismal weather. Hope to see you again soon.

MARK ELSOME

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