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IRON BREW

**MAGAZINE OF SCUNTHORPE & DISTRICT
CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE**



AUGUST – OCTOBER 2026



IN THIS ISSUE: Craft Beer Connoisseur: Mild Thing; Spring & Summer Pubs of the Season; Branch Days Out in Lincoln & Sheffield; Pub & Brewery News; What On Earth? No. 77: Imperial Beers; Preview of 6th St Peter's Beer Festival

... and more!



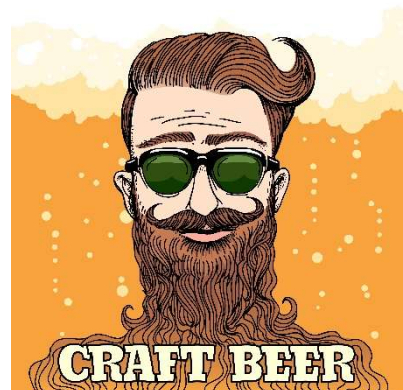
Welcome to this late summer/ autumn issue of the branch magazine Iron Brew. Well, our new Prime Minister has made a positive start to his time in office with a raft of eye-catching policy proposals. Chief among them was a 20% cut in Business Rates for pubs, social clubs and live music venues, to take effect from next April. On average this would amount to a saving of £1,100 on a pub's tax bill.

In reality, although a welcome first step for pubs, it's unlikely to make a huge difference given the various other earlier tax and cost hikes foisted on the sector. The promised further reform of business rates is more likely to have a significant effect on reducing pub costs.

Still, we have to start somewhere and the Prime Minister's stated support for pubs as the hubs of local communities, augurs well for the future. Some welcome news for pubs at last to dispel some of the

gloom that has enveloped them recently.

CRAFT BEER CONNOISSEUR MILD THING



You make my heart sing!* Yes, despite being a fully paid up member of the Craft Beer Appreciation Society**, I confess that I still have a hankering for a good pint of traditional mild. You remember mild? That dark, malty, low alcohol tippie that your dad and grandad (allegedly) quaffed with great gusto in days gone by. Yes, that one.

Mild has been on life support since the late '50's when it was replaced as the beer of choice by bitter and lager. Despite the best efforts of CAMRA with their annual "May is Mild Month" campaigns to promote mild in the UK, mild still only

accounts for just 0.5% of beer sold in the nation's pubs.

But, in my humble opinion, mild is a great drink and well worth seeking out as a change from assertively hopped IPAs and identikit cold lagers. Mild also has an interesting history, which I'd like to recount here. So, focus your visual receptors, find a comfy armchair and enjoy the story of mild in all its understated glory!

Milds are renowned for being relatively weak, dark beers, which can be consumed in quantity without inviting a humungous hangover, but it wasn't always so. Mild was around as long ago as 1700 and the original meaning of "Mild" meant a young beer sold straightaway for drinking, as opposed to "Stale" or "Keeping" ales that were retained at the brewery to condition for longer. "Mild Ale" was also a catch-all term for many ales of all colours and strengths. Far from defining a style of beer, it was essentially a description of the level of conditioning. And mild was not always the low alcohol beer it is today – in the 18th and 19th century milds were typically brewed in the range 5 – 7% ABV and sometimes higher. In fact milds were so popular

then, that it wasn't uncommon for the leading brewers of the day to brew 3 or 4 different milds. In the late 1800's legislation allowed brewers to use adjuncts in their beer and dark sugars were employed to darken beers. Allied to the introduction of new glass drinking vessels which allowed the customer to see the colour of their drink, this ushered in the gradual darkening of many mild beers.

The World Wars dramatically shaped the evolution of mild as grain shortages and legal restrictions on alcoholic strength forced brewers to brew milds of around 3%. After the end of brewing restrictions in the early 1920's, mild strengths

recovered to between 4 and 4.5%, but tax increases on beer in the early 1930's had the effect of dropping the strength of milds to around 3.5% again. After the restrictions of World War II, dark and pale milds were generally sold at low strengths of 3%, apart from some brewers who



offered a Best Mild at 3.5%. Despite this, mild still accounted for around half the beer drunk in Britain up until the late 1950's, but as a weak, low-hopped beer it was prone to spoiling, which often led to wastage before publicans could turn a profit.



With the increasing popularity of bitter and lager in the 1960's, this proved to be the death knell for mild, which all but disappeared from large swathes of the country apart from one or two geographical areas like the north-west and the midlands, where it hung on as a well-liked tippie. And that is how mild has remained since, loitering on the periphery like the least popular guest at a swanky party.

A few breweries produce a mild all year round such as Batemans with DM (Dark Mild), Brains with Dark, Holts with Holts Mild, Hook Norton with Hooky Mild, Moorhouses with

Black Cat, Elgoods with Black Dog and Taylor's with Golden Best, the latter a rare example of a light mild. All of these are low gravity beers – Hooky Mild is only 2.8% - but stronger milds are also available. Rudgate Ruby Mild comes in at 4.4% and the well-regarded Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild weighs in at an impressive 6%. I well remember the Malt Shovel once putting on an Imperial Mild from Rat Brewery, punningly titled Dark Ratanic Mills at 9%! It was so good that I took in a 2-pint container to the pub the next day to enjoy the beer at home. That's where mild might have stayed, just happily bumbling along without complaint, until our friends in the craft beer community started to become interested in heritage beer styles. First out of the blocks was the now defunct Boxcar Brewery with their excellent Dark Mild (3.6%) and their Double version at 6.3%. Kernel Brewery also produced a Victorian Mild at 5.6% strength and many others followed suit. And with the plethora of milds produced in May, mild has been given a welcome boost to highlight its importance as a UK heritage beer and an enjoyable quaffing pint in its own right.

So, what are the characteristics of a mild? Referring to my CAMRA "Beginners Guide to Mild" pamphlet, I've come up with the following: first thing to notice is the lightness of body, bitterness and alcohol, leading to an easy drinking, refreshing beer. Generally the ABV is up to and including 4.0% - above this the beer may be considered a strong mild. Hops are not as important as in other styles, but may add a light fruitiness. Malt is dominant throughout and a slight toffee flavour may be present. Milds come in dark and less common pale varieties. The subtle flavours are more nuanced than the big and brash flavours of many modern beer styles.

So, there you have it. Mild may not be the matinee idol of UK beers, but it has an important and often overlooked supporting role. Look out for milds in the pubs you visit and be sure to give them a try. It will be worth it!

A BEERGEK

*with apologies to the Troggs & Jimi Hendrix

**a completely fictional organisation

This feature was compiled using

information from the following sources with thanks:

Beer Advocate: A Short History of Mild

<https://www.beeradvocate.com>

Beer Styles – Mild, Pale – Learn & Discover

<https://learn.camra.org.uk>

POSTSCRIPT

More on this topic can be had for the price of a pint in my local *The Hanging Bat*, where I reside most lunchtimes. That's me in the corner grappling with that day's newspaper crossword or quietly contemplating the universe.

Pub games at *The Hanging Bat* continue to be popular with the regulars. I myself have dropped out of darts as my regular poor scores at the oche would make Luke Littler himself blush.

Instead, I was offered a place in the dominoes team the other night when "Whispering" Ted had to drop out due to an ingrowing toenail. It was a grudge match against our rivals from *The Flying Horse*, so there was a lot riding on my performance. It was a tense evening of 5's and 3's and Big Sid was holding his tiles very tightly as though they were little blocks of gold bullion! Fortunately

we managed to keep it together in the deciding match and I played what I thought were some inspired dominoes for us to reach the required 61 points. Cue much cheering, high fiving and flying beer foam (this was competitive dominoes after all) and necking of celebratory pints. In fact, Sid and one or two others got a little carried away in all the excitement and drank a lot more than was probably recommended. No doubt they'd be looking forward to the mother-of-all hangovers the next day!

For weapons-grade nausea and that "barn door in a gale" banging headache, Dr Geek recommends drinking lots of Adam's Ale, consuming a "bellybuster" fried breakfast, taking the prescribed dose of pharmacy painkillers on the morning after and a long, meandering walk in the park (moaning to yourself at all times that you'll never do it again), to cure any self-induced overindulgence. It usually works for me – at least until the next time it happens! That's all from your favourite beer geek. Until the next games night, enjoy your beer!

SPRING PUB OF THE SEASON

HONEST LAWYER, SCUNTHORPE

The Honest Lawyer in Scunthorpe town centre was the recipient of our Spring Pub of the Season award. Social Secretary Steve Martin presented the framed certificate to Honest Lawyer licensee Dan Wilson on Saturday 2 May, with local CAMRA members, staff and pub regulars in attendance.

This well-established pub offers up to three real ales and a selection of keg beers alongside an extensive



food menu. Real ales on for the presentation were Acorn Blonde (4.0% ABV), Acorn Pink Idaho (5.0%) and Titanic Plum Porter (4.9%), all in tip-top condition.

Originally styled on a legal theme, the long narrow interior has a well-stocked bar with high stools and tables along one wall as you enter,

with tables and chairs towards the rear, plus a number of large screen TVs, popular with sports fans. Outdoor tables and chairs are also available at the front when the weather allows al fresco drinking. The pub is a regular pre-match meeting place for Scunthorpe United supporters and hosts the annual Flag Day end of season celebration of the team.

A relatively new feature is breakfast at the pub, offered from Wednesday to Sunday from 8 am – noon. The food menu also offers tasty items such as pizza, hot sub rolls, jacket potatoes and a range of meat and vegetarian pies, which unusually are advertised at the bar on pumpclips as you enter the pub!



They have a room upstairs which can be hired throughout the year for small gatherings. Live music and open mic nights are regularly featured.

We congratulate Dan and all staff at the Lawyer on this well-deserved award. Thanks also to Steve Martin for making the presentation and to the local CAMRA members who came along to support the award.

MARK ELSOME

BRANCH VISIT TO LINCOLN TRYING SOME OF LINCOLN'S FINEST PUBS

On a sunny day in the middle of May, a small group of Scunthorpe & District CAMRA members made their way over to Lincoln by diesel locomotive to visit some of the city's finest pubs. Arriving at Lincoln Station just after 11 am, some of the group opted for the Walk & Ride bus service up to the cathedral area, while the more hardy in the group decided to walk to our first pub the **Morning Star**.



Once we had all joined up again, we had our first beer of the day from a choice of six handpumps. I plumped for Taylor's Boltmaker, while others went for a Salopian seasonal beer.

Although we were the only customers due to the early hour, we all liked the Morning Star and would definitely visit again when next in Lincoln. The friendly licensee even took a group photo when we asked her. A good start to the crawl!

Next was the relatively new **Organ Grinder** pub, once the **BeerHeadz** venue, but now taken over by Blue Monkey Brewery. They are one of my favourite breweries and the choice of their beers was good as expected, although their new Coconut Mild was waiting to come on once their Guerilla Stout ran out. We had to be content with trying a can of the mild, which was very nice with a hit of coconut in the finish.

The Cinder Toffee Stout also proved a hit with the group, although our enjoyment was slightly spoiled when a fetid aroma suffused the pub. This we took to be from the presence of two farting dogs – a dalmatian and a bulldog – on the table adjacent to ours. Silent but deadly! After two occasions of these rank pongs, we were able to remove the clothes

pegs from our noses as the dogs and their owners left the pub and we enjoyed the remaining beers in a sweeter smelling environment.



Our next pub was the renowned **Strugglers**, which had an array of handpumps to choose from, including a couple of dark beers. I selected the Oakham Midnight Mild, a very tasty dark mild at 4.0% ABV. The pub was fairly busy and with available seating being absent, we



made our way to the sunny beer garden at the rear of the pub to enjoy a couple of beers.

We called at the nearby **St Paul's Café** next, ostensibly for a lunch stop, but most of the group had been tempted by the hot sausage rolls as we passed the Redhill Farm Shop on the way, so a half of Thornbridge Crackendale sufficed. After some discussion we decided to head for the **Joiner's Arms** on our way downhill, but when we arrived the pub was still shut despite it being about twenty minutes past its advertised opening time. We nearly gave this up as a bad job, but then someone spotted what we took to be the licensee hovering inside. After some frantic knocking on the window, we got his attention and he opened up the pub for us. Despite the effort made to get in, I was underwhelmed by the choice of beers and I selected a half of Cropton Bitter as the best of an uninspiring bunch.

We didn't hang around very long and moved on to our next pub. This was the **Treaty of Commerce**, which I thought was a Batemans pub, but they only had on two Batemans beers, with the other three being guest ales. I say two, but

the XB pumpclip was turned around and the XXXB also went off as we tried to order it. Another beer that we tried to order then went off as well, leaving us a choice of Adnams Ghost Ship and Taylor's Landlord. I picked the Ghost Ship, which was OK, if a little ordinary.

Not sure if we caught them at a bad time, but the choice at the bar was a little disappointing. The pub interior was perfectly serviceable and it's handy for many of the city centre shops – maybe on a return visit the choice would be improved?

Hunger had now reared its head again among the group and a quick pit stop at Greggs did the trick. Our next pub was the **Tiny Tavern**, about a ten-minute walk away down the High Street. This was a new pub to me, but I was aware of the protocol to get in where you have to ring the doorbell to gain entry. With the doorbell duly rung and the landlady (presumably) deciding we weren't undesirables, the door was opened and in we went. My faith in Lincoln's pubs was restored and the Tiny Tavern proved to be a great little gem. The bar boasted six handpumps with some interesting beers on offer, including some from Ashover Brewery in Derbyshire.

Some premade rolls were washed down with a couple of excellent beers and our stay here was very enjoyable.



Our final visit of the day (if you discount the **Whistle & Flute** at Barnetby while waiting for our connecting train), was the **Imp & Angel** micropub on the other side of the High Street back towards the station. A couple of handpulls on here including an Abbeydale seasonal and it was a very friendly, welcoming pub.

So, a great day out (despite the smelly dogs), enjoyed by all. I'm not sure if we planned to visit eight pubs in a day, but that's how it turned out! We'd definitely like to repeat this crawl of Lincoln pubs in the not-too-distant future. Thanks to all who came along on the day for their good company and to Steve for organising the crawl and the transport.

MARK ELSOME

WHAT ON EARTH? NO. 77: IMPERIAL BEERS

WHAT ARE THEY?

OK beermeister, what exotic beer style are you set to bamboozle us with this time around? Well, dear readers, I'm being a bit more down to earth than usual, but while the name is more familiar, there is much confusion about what these beers actually are, so allow me to elucidate further. I'm talking about Imperial beers. You've probably heard of and seen examples of Imperial beers, but how are they categorised?

Imperial beer is a style characterised by a high alcohol content and strong flavour profiles, often featuring a higher level of malt or hops or both. In essence it is an amped-up version of an existing beer style, to offer a bolder, more complex drinking experience.

The term "Imperial" is often associated with stouts, but can be applied to any type of beer to indicate a heightened version such as Imperial IPAs, Imperial Milds, Imperial Porters, Imperial Wheat Beers and even Imperial Pilsners. A high alcohol content, usually in the range 8 – 12% ABV, is the most

consistent characteristic, but can vary depending on the specific style. The higher alcohol content contributes to a fuller body, an increased flavour experience and a warming sensation.

Brewers generally use a bigger and more complex grain bill to achieve the high alcohol content and intense flavours. Although Imperial beers have been around for a long time – Imperial Stouts were originally exported from London to Catherine the Great of Russia in the 18th century – the developing worldwide interest in craft beer has led to many new Imperial beers being brewed. There's nothing your average craft brewer likes more than brewing a new style or tweaking an old one! In brewing an Imperial version of a beer, the brewer has to choose high quality malts that enhance the beer's profile, allow longer fermentation times to develop complex flavours (2 – 3 weeks for imperial stouts is not uncommon) and monitor temperature carefully during fermentation to prevent unwanted off-flavours. The high alcohol content doesn't overshadow the flavours, but rather adds depth and complexity making Imperial beers ideal for sipping. Serving

Imperial beers at a slightly warmer temperature of 10 - 13 deg C is also better to emphasise their flavours.

Imperial is often confused with other beer terms. For example double beers are similar in strength and the term is often used interchangeably with imperial. However, double focuses more on increased ingredients, while "imperial" emphasises strength and richness. Similarly Extra Strong is mainly a marketing term and does not follow consistent brewing standards in its production.

Imperial beers are particularly suited to aging and barrel aging, where the flavour is enhanced over time. So, a beer for connoisseur's and enthusiasts, but firmly established in the pantheon of beer styles due to its history and importance and its take-up by the craft beer community. Often wincingly expensive to purchase because of the high alcohol content, but worth it for the richness and complexity of



the flavours. So, the next time you see a bottle of Goose Island Bourbon County Stout (14.8% ABV) on display, ignore the GBH of the wallet and enjoy the vanilla, cherry, cocoa, toasted almonds and caramelised sugar flavour notes that come with 14 months of aging in bourbon barrels. Worth every penny!

A BEERGEK

This article was produced with reference to the following with thanks:

<https://thedrinksproject.com/what-is-an-imperial-beer/>
<https://wordnexus.com/the-meaning-of-imperial-in-beer/>

6TH ST PETER'S BEER FESTIVAL

PREVIEW OF THIS YEAR'S EVENT

This year's beer festival at St Peter's Church in Bottesford will take place from 17-19 September (Thursday – Saturday). This eagerly awaited event will feature 26 real ales, 15 ciders and four craft keg beers. Scunthorpe & District CAMRA members will be lending a hand again with selection of the beers and ciders, helping to set up the stillage

and ensuring the beers and ciders are served in tip-top condition, as well as helping with the bar service from time to time. Church employees and supporters will also be there to staff the festival and help to ensure everything runs smoothly. A wide variety of beer styles will be on hand including bitters, pale ales, IPAs, golden ales and milds, stouts and porters in a range of strengths. Four craft keg beers from Eyam Brewery in Derbyshire, who have kindly loaned us the dispense equipment, will also be on offer including a lager and a plum porter. A mix of traditional and fruit still ciders make up the main offering at the bar.



In addition wines, pre-mixed gin and tonics and alcohol-free beer will be available as an alternative to the beer or cider.

Hot and cold food will be available at all festival sessions and this year will

all be in one location. A barbecue featuring hot dogs and burgers will be present on the Friday and Saturday evenings.

The beer festival tombola will also be there, stacked high with beer and drinks-related prizes, so don't forget to spin-to-win while there!

The attractive backdrop of the historic St Peter's Church has always been a strong draw for those attending and we aim to promote a relaxed, community event where people can enjoy sharing a beer or two with friends. And if you prefer the great outdoors, a large gazebo will be set up in the church grounds to enjoy an al fresco drink, weather permitting!

It all points to another great weekend and we hope to see you there. Look out for further details of the beers and ciders on the branch Facebook page a little nearer the time.

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

Opening times are as follows:

Thursday 17 September: 530-1030 pm

Friday 18 & Saturday 19 September: 12 noon-1030 pm

Admission is £1 and a half pint or pint hire glass costs £2 (refundable).

Beer and cider tokens will be priced at £2.20 per half.

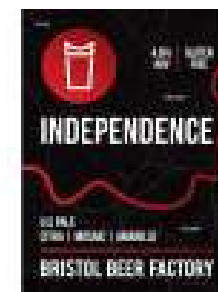
Cheers!

MARK ELSOME

PUB & BREWERY NEWS

Independence from **Bristol Beer Factory** was voted the Champion Beer of Britain for 2026 at the Cambridge Beer Festival in May. This 4.6% ABV American-style pale ale won the title after a series of blind tastings at the event.

Champion
Beer of
Britain
Judging
Co-
ordinator
Christine
Cryne



described Independence as "A pale, strong beer, with an enticing citrus nose and piney hops. Tangerine and grapefruit flavours with biscuit notes lead to a dry, peppery, bittersweet finish, which lingers".

Look out for this beer at the upcoming 6th St Peter's Beer Festival.

CAMRA



Greene King has sold its **Old Speckled Hen** brand to Spanish brewer **Damm** in a surprise move in which Greene King state that it will allow them to concentrate more fully on the on-trade business through their pubs.



Damm is best known for its leading Spanish lager **Estrella Damm**, but appears to want to establish a foothold in the UK making and marketing British beer, especially with the current interest in “heritage” ale styles such as Bass and Boddingtons. They own the former Charles Wells Eagle Brewery in Bedford.

BOAK & BAILEY

<https://www.boakandbailey.com>

Redemption Brewing of North London recently entered administration as it seeks new investment or ownership. It was founded in 2010 and was among the breweries that helped shape London’s modern craft beer scene.



Redemption plan to continue trading throughout the administration process while options for the future of the business are considered. Their beer brands include Trinity, Hopspur, Fellowship and Big Chief.

MORNING ADVERTISER

<https://www.morningadvertiser.co.uk>

Adnams Brewery of Southwold in Suffolk has announced that it is to reduce the strength of some of its beers such as **Ghost Ship** and **Southwold Bitter** down to 3.4% ABV in order to save costs on beer duty. Adnams insist the flavour profile of these beers will remain uncompromised due to the expertise of the brewing team. The brewery has faced challenging market conditions and recently reported a drop in revenue.

Our favourite pantomime villain, **James Watt**, he of **Brewdog** fame, has announced on social media that he plans to start a new beer

Citing rising operating costs and sharp increases in industrial rents following Covid,

company called (ironically) **Second Best**. No date was given for the launch of the new business, but it was planned that it would enter the market when all relevant licenses and legal consents were in place.



Watt also promised that all Equity Punks who invested in Brewdog’s crowdfunding schemes could claim the same equity stake they once held in Brewdog for free in the new business. Bizarrely he subsequently made an offer to buy back Brewdog from new owners Tilray, but the offer was soundly rejected.

MORNING ADVERTISER

A follow up on our news item in the last issue about **Lidl** building a new pub next to its supermarket in East Belfast. A name has now been agreed for the pub, which is to be called **The Middle Ale**. A very good pun we think, better than any of the ones we thought up!

Three more of our local pubs have been lost recently. Demolition of the **Crosby Hotel** in Scunthorpe began in June. The building had remained empty for many years and was in a dilapidated state, but in its heyday was one of the town’s most popular hotels and public houses. It first opened in 1911 and ceased operations in 2008.

The **Jolly Sailor** in Gunness could be turned into a residential care home for the elderly if planning permission is approved by North Lincolnshire Council. This seems likely due to the fact that the premises has stood vacant since November 2022. The former **Cocked Hat** pub in Scunthorpe has been earmarked for conversion into ground floor retail units and first floor apartments, subject to planning permission being granted. The pub originally opened in 1953 and closed its doors for the final time in 2024.

The **Crown Inn** at **Glentham** has reopened under family ownership after previous owners Harpur Inns closed it in August 2025. New licensees Phil Patton and Charlotte Lyon opened up the pub again in January 2026 after some internal refurbishment.



Good to see this excellent little pub open again. It's a previous Pub of the Season winner of ours and was also selected for the CAMRA 2026 Good Beer Guide.

New licensees at the **Horn Inn, Messingham** from July 3. Tom and Wayne (no surnames known, sorry). The pub comes under the ownership of the team at the **Cross Keys** at Grasby and now has a stronger emphasis on food, but still offers real ales including the new Taylor's Blonde (3.8% ABV).

The **Butcher's Arms** in Winterton also reopened on 5 June after a period of closure. New tenant and licensee is Cath Gillie, formerly mine host at the **Lord Roberts** in Scunthorpe. It currently doesn't offer real ale.

There's uncertainty over the future of **The Anchor** pub in Scunthorpe,

close to the Lakeside retail complex, following owners Whitbread announcement that it intended to phase out its Brewers Fayre and Beefeater venues over the coming years. Whitbread intend to replace these with hotel-integrated food and beverage offerings, although no specific plans for The Anchor have been revealed.

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE MATTERS – FACEBOOK

Samuel Smith's Chairman **Humphrey Smith** died on 29 June aged 81. Described by the Times as a blend of Basil Fawlty, Ebenezer Scrooge and Willie Wonka, Smith leaves a mixed legacy of a successful company but with a large number of shuttered pubs, draconian rules and deep-rooted traditions. More on his life can be read online, but it should be noted that his son Samuel is set to take over the business. He already runs the London operations where the company rules are relaxed somewhat, so it's to be hoped that he's able to drag the company into the 21st century.

Geoff McCaughtrie, owner and brewer at **Little Big Dog** in Barrow-upon-Humber, has decided to call

time on the brewery after six years of operation. Geoff produced some exceptional beers during his tenure at Little Big Dog including **Baltic Porter, Impolite Stout, Schnaison** and **Schnauzers in the Mist** and many others and provided Little Big



Dog cask beers for the St Peter's Beer Festival from the start. We would like to thank Geoff for all the great beers and we wish him well for the future.

SUMMER PUB OF THE SEASON THE DOG & GUN, EAST BUTTERWICK

Our summer Pub of the Season was the Dog & Gun at East Butterwick. This village pub lies on the main road alongside the River Trent and its riverbank seating is very popular during the summer months. The current owner is Andy Clarke, who, with his family, is the owner of the renowned fish and chip shop at Upton. Andy purchased the pub

from Dixie Dean in 2016 and the sale included the DarkTribe onsite microbrewery and beer recipes. Brewer Richard Storrs, who had worked at the brewery with Dixie previously, stayed on and still brews the DarkTribe beers for the pub to this day. The DarkTribe brewery at the Dog & Gun is the only working pub brewery in the branch area. Currently they produce a core range of DarkTribe 3.6, Terrier and Albacore, with other DarkTribe beers featured occasionally throughout the year.

Landlord Joe Nash took on front of house duties and is a welcoming presence for customers old and new. The pub offers monthly food weekends featuring home-cooked fish and chips on Friday and roast lunches on Sunday. These have proven to be very popular and booking is essential.



The pub has three rooms and is traditionally styled with a warming open fire in the main bar for the colder months. An unusual feature is the vintage rock band posters which adorn the walls.

The presentation of the award took place on Saturday 18 July. Branch member Beverley Branton presented Joe Nash with a framed certificate to mark the occasion, supported by other branch members and pub regulars. Congratulations go to all at the Dog & Gun on winning this prestigious award.

MARK ELSOME



BRANCH PUB CRAWL OF SHEFFIELD

A TOUR OF CITY CENTRE PUBS

On another sunny summer's day in July a small group of local branch members boarded a diesel locomotive running in the direction of Sheffield for a pub crawl of city centre hostelrys.

The day didn't get off to a great start when a points failure between Hatfield and Doncaster delayed the train for one and a half hours.

With our late arrival in the city we decided to head straight for the **Rutland Arms**, a short walk from the station, where they had their usual good selection of cask and craft keg beers.



While there, one of our party, Brett Driver, sampled his 10,000th unique beer, which he'd been recording on the drinkers' app Untappd since 2015. Fittingly, given Brett's fondness for stronger beers, it was an 11% ABV imperial stout!



Moving on after a couple of halves, we next went to the **Triple Point Brewery & Taproom**, where we enjoyed a couple of their tasty beers

in the very pleasant beer garden. Our next stop was **Kapital**, a very modern European beer-centred establishment with a good range



(albeit expensive) of German, Belgian and Czech beers, plus a smattering of UK craft kegs.

Just the one beer here as **Vocation & Co** were calling

and so off we headed for a short uphill walk to their premises. A very good range of Vocation's cask and craft keg beers was on offer and a truffle stout was judged to be the beer of the day up to that point. We then crossed over to the **Hop Hideout**, a craft beer bar and bottle shop in an enclosed retail area. A small range of craft kegs were available here, with the Neptune Cherry Stout being the outstanding choice. An opportunity to purchase some craft cans was also taken from those on display in the well-stocked fridges.

Moving on we walked to the newly opened **Fargate**, the anticipated highlight of the day. This large Thornbridge pub had an impressive array of ten handpumps, mostly

Thornbridge beers plus one or two guest beers and didn't disappoint. Hunger had kicked in by now and the pub offered a varied selection of mouth-watering pizzas which we eagerly ordered and enjoyed alongside the beers.

Our (almost) final port of call was the **Old Shoe**, a converted former shoe shop with an excellent range of beers. A date stout from Abbeydale



was enjoyed here and after a final visit to the **Station Tap**, we made our way home.

There were thankfully no holdups on the return journey and we were able to reflect on an enjoyable day out with good company and good beers. With thanks to Steve and Brett for guiding us around the city centre and to Neil for devising the crawl. One to definitely repeat in the future!

MARK ELSOME



Well, that's about it for this issue.



You might like to know that I've retired my "lucky" **World Cup** pint glass, a limited edition special offered by Marstons

PLC, even though it kept England in the competition right up to the semi-final. There it let me down rather badly in the final few minutes. Mind you it was touch and go in some of the earlier rounds too! I enjoyed the ride while it lasted, but the glass will now be going to a local tombola somewhere near you.

My compatriot, the Craft Beer Connoisseur, eschews most sport apart from the darts at Ally Pally. He prefers (or so he says), more cerebral pursuits such as University Challenge or reading the Guardian. He did once confess to me, after one too many shandies, that his secret celebrity crush was the hostess on Only Connect, a fact I regularly remind him of whenever we get together in *The Hanging Bat*! Oh, hang on, his ears must be burning. He's just popped his head around the door and asked me if I've read the new CAMRA report *Beer in*

the UK?

I've browsed through it but haven't read it in detail, but from what I've heard the report has ruffled a few industry feathers. You can read the full report on the CAMRA website: <https://camra.org.uk>

Here's a few choice snippets from the report and industry comments, courtesy of the Craft Beer Connoisseur, who *has* read the report from cover to cover.

In a generation the UK beer market has halved but still sees among the biggest year-on-year beer volume declines in Europe.

In the UK we pay beer duty at 1,000% of brewers in Germany – the UK brewing industry in essence is being taxed to death.

Transparency of beer branding and ownership is almost non-existent in large parts of the brewing sector and your continental lager is almost certainly made just off the M1.

Seven of the UK's best-selling craft beers are made by four global giants. CAMRA backs SIBA's Indie Beer Campaign to give beer drinkers the information they need to support independent British Beer, but wants consumer legislation to go further. Consumers want more independent beers to be available, but the market

is tilted in favour of the big four brewers through pub company contracts, maintenance deals and supermarket listings, leaving 1,600 UK independent breweries with just 7% of the market.

CAMRA are calling for a market investigation from the Competition and Markets Authority to free up the market for smaller independent brewers.

Revamping of product labelling to ensure this shows clearly the name of the company owning the brand and the place where the beer is brewed.

Beer taxation should be (and is being) reviewed and should be made competitive with other major brewing nations.

Well thanks CBC, very interesting and hopefully more people will now be prompted to read the report.

Do you fancy a quick pint at *The Hanging Bat*? I thought so! And do you still have that crush on Victoria Coren-Mitchell? What do you mean I'm not supposed to bring that up? Until next time - Ed

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