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IRON BREW

MAGAZINE OF SCUNTHORPE & DISTRICT
CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

MAY – JULY 2024



GBBF Winter 2024

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ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

BRANCH CHAIRMAN (P/T) & IRON BREW
EDITOR

Mark Elsome

Tel: 01724 331056

e: chairman@scunthorpe.camra.org.uk

29 The Dales, Bottesford, Scunthorpe
DN17 2QF

BRANCH TREASURER

Neil Patchett

Tel: 01724 647755

BRANCH SECRETARY

Keith Dixon

Tel: 01724 346023

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Paul Williams

Tel: 01673 818109

SOCIAL SECRETARY:

Mark Elsome

www.scunthorpe.camra.org.uk

f/scunnycamra

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE (CAMRA)

230 Hatfield Rd, St Albans, Herts

AL1 4LW

Tel: 01727 867 201

e: camra@camra.org.uk

www.camra.org.uk

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



Welcome to this summer edition of the branch newsletter. Hopefully as the weather warms up you'll be tempted to spend time in your local pub or pub garden, enjoying the sunshine and at the same time supporting the great British pub. Our pubs and breweries are currently struggling under the weight of a cost-of-business crisis with 1 in 4 businesses having no cash reserves. The recent closure of Elland Brewery, the takeover of Purity and the transfer of Brew By Numbers and Brick to Black Sheep reinforces this view.

The hospitality industry was desperately hoping for help from the Chancellor in his March Budget with reductions in VAT and draught duty but got neither. Apart from a freeze on alcohol duty, this was an opportunity sadly missed.

CONTRIBUTORS:

Mark Elsome, A Beergeek, Paul Ainsworth, Beverley Branton, Beer Today, Morning Advertiser, The Drinks Business, Protz on Beer, Ian Packham, What's Brewing

CRAFT BEER CONNOISSEUR

Stout v Porter



I like stout and I like porter, but which is better? There's only one way to find out. Fight!!! (*Stop that! I've told you before we're not doing it. Harry Hill has a lot to answer for! – Ed*). Apologies, I digress. In the following feature I'm indebted to the London craft brewer Anspach & Hobday, who have posted a lengthy online piece on this topic, itself informed by the knowledge of beer historian Martyn Cornell. The full article and two others are referenced at the end of this column should you wish to explore the subject in more detail. Right, let's get started. They say nostalgia's not what it used to be, but nonetheless we'll need to delve into the sepia-tinged backstory of Stout and Porter in order to understand their shared history. Porter beer got its name in the 18th

century when it became the tippie of thousands of London porters who worked on the docks and rivers and in postal and transport services. By the end of the 19th century most porter jobs had been taken by others and the trade of "Portering" went into steep decline.

Up until then London Porter as it became known, was immensely popular. It was a dark beer made from brown malt with hops, harvested in Kent, added for bittering. Porter was usually available in Mild or Stale versions, the Stale being an older version of the younger, sweeter Mild.

At the start of the 18th century brewers were struggling under pressure from higher taxes to help the war effort against France and the increasing costs of raw materials. To keep costs down they lowered the strength of porter, added more hops and used the cheapest wood-dried malt. This gave the beer a smoky tang, requiring it to be stored longer for up to six months until the smoky taste faded. This resulted in a full-tasting, creamy, smooth dark beer which was very popular with London's working classes. So popular in fact that storage of the beer necessitated

using huge wooden vats holding thousands of gallons. Woe betide anyone who got in the way of the flood of beer from these if they fell apart, as happened in 1814 when eight people were killed!



So far, so good. Hope you're keeping up? And how does stout fit into all this I hear you ask? Stout was originally just a stronger version of Porter – the word “stout” employed to mean strong. Stouts could also be pale or dark and Brown Stout and Pale Stout were offered by many brewers of the time such as Trumans in Brick Lane (also taken up by some craft brewers in the 21st century). Brown Stout or Stout Porter was brewed with the same grain bill as ordinary Porter but with more malt in the mash tun to produce a stronger drink. Gradually the name was shortened to Stout with Stouts clocking in at around 7% ABV, with Porter slightly weaker at 5.5 – 6%.

Some commentators state that, apart from the difference in strength, Stouts and Porters are essentially the same. Others point to the use of roasted, unmalted barley in Stouts leading to subtle differences in smell and taste. The heyday of Stout and Porter lasted until the onset of the First World War, when beer strengths plunged due to higher taxes and restrictions on raw materials. Porter went down to 3.5% and Stout to 4.5 – 5%. As the wartime recovery took place, Stout became the fashionable and “healthful” beer (through a commonly held belief that “Stout was good for you”), while Porter, much weakened by rationing, became an old-fashioned relic that was left behind. Within twenty years Porter had disappeared altogether. When interest in historic beer styles resurfaced in the 1970's and 80's, some brewers resurrected Porters and made them to their post-First World War strength, while others went for the 19th century strength, the same as modern Stouts, again blurring the differences between them. And now with the popularity of dark beers at an all time high, thanks in part to the experimental zeal of craft

brewers across the globe, there are more Stouts and Porters available than ever before. For the most part Porters have less alcohol than Stouts and have a slightly lighter colour. They're known for aromas and tasting notes of chocolate, caramel and coffee.

Stouts are typically very dark in colour, with bitter and roasted flavours and a creamy texture. Some retain those chocolatey flavours, while others use oats in the grain bill and other adjuncts such as fruit or coffee to add to the richness and complexity of the taste. The historic brown barley and unmalted barley distinction was perhaps the most clearly defined difference between the two. These days, the lines between Stout and Porter are blurry, and there's a lot of crossover between both styles. Nevertheless they're both great beers, come in all manner of guises and are well worth trying. Off the top of my head (a strange place to keep anything, apart from a hat), Siren Broken Dream, Kernel Export India Porter, Acorn Gorlovka and Titanic Plum Porter are modern day Stouts and Porters that I recall enjoying on many occasions and there are more great examples of the styles out

there waiting for you to sample and decide for yourself which is better.



More on this topic can be provided for the price of a pint at my local *The Hanging Bat*, where I reside most afternoons. That's me in the corner enjoying the pub's fine draught ales and engaged in quiet contemplation. I've retired from pub games for a while (so intense) and was hoping to take part in this week's vinyl record evening. Unfortunately I'm temporarily suspended from attending after I insisted on playing my obscure blues records by Peg Leg Johnson and Cross-eyed McGhee last time (the best blues singers always seem to have a physical infirmity), which nobody seemed to like apart from me. I'm hoping to curry favour with the

group when they let me back in by playing something easier on the ear and less demanding like Captain Beefheart or Frank Zappa. I'll let you know how that goes!

Enjoy your beer. Until next time!

A BEERGEER

Based with thanks on the following online articles & features:

<https://www.anspachandhobday.com/blog/porter-history>

<https://www.beerwulf.com/en-gb/articles-about-craft-beer/porter-stout>

<https://shop.greeneking.co.uk/blog/news/what-is-the-difference-between-stout-vs-porter>

<https://shop.greeneking.co.uk/blog/news/what-is-the-difference-between-stout-vs-porter>

<https://shop.greeneking.co.uk/blog/news/what-is-the-difference-between-stout-vs-porter>

THE CROOKED HOUSE

Six Months On

It's now been six months since the Crooked House, Himley, was badly damaged by fire, with a bulldozer then completing the destruction. The results of the Police investigation into the events are still awaited, as is the decision of the Council's Planning Department on action regarding the unauthorised demolition.

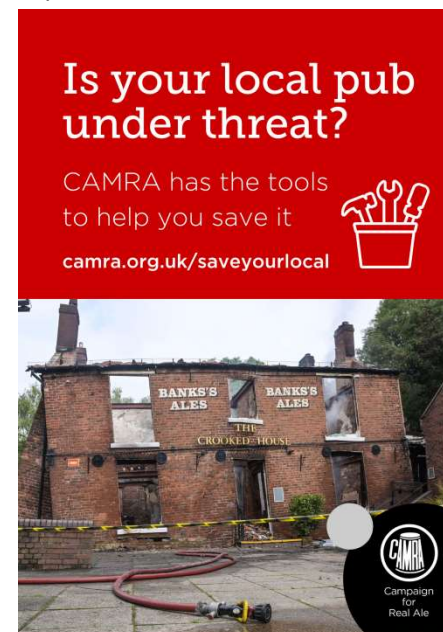
In the meantime, CAMRA developed its own follow-up campaigning strategy and we have also worked with the local MP, Marco Longhi,

and the West Midlands Combined Authority and Mayor Andy Street, on measures they have been pursuing. Part of our strategy is to try and secure legislative changes that would further strengthen pub protection. To this end, on 31 January, a CAMRA delegation met with the Housing and Planning Minister, Lee Rowley MP, and his officials to discuss our potential policy solutions. As background, we presented an update on the exercise we carried out shortly after the Crooked House destruction which found 32 apparent recent instances of pubs being demolished or having their uses changed without the necessary planning permission having been obtained.

We focused in particular on two areas: the need for enforcement action to be more effective and the importance of a legal definition of a pub being introduced into planning law.

Currently, Councils have discretion on whether to investigate reported breaches of planning control and we consider this should be a statutory duty. Also, with the Crooked House in mind, we feel that enforcement should be extended to requiring the complete restoration of unlawfully

demolished pubs - a Brick by Brick Order. In this context, demolition of a pub should be made illegal, as against unlawful as at present, so that stronger penalties could be imposed.



Many of the cases we identified involved the conversion, without permission, of pubs to restaurants, despite these being in different use classes. This highlights a grey area between where a pub stops and a restaurant starts. Clear definitions would greatly assist the enforcement task.

Mr Rowley listened very sympathetically to our concerns and agreed that we should now discuss

our proposals in detail with his officials. Those discussions will also cover other areas that we had no time to go into including the permitted development rules in Wales and Scotland, the High Street Rental Auction proposals, the Assets of Community Value regime, and unauthorised residential occupation of closed pubs.

We will of course report further on these discussions once they get under way.

PAUL AINSWORTH

WHAT ON EARTH?

No. 93: Milkshake IPAs

What on earth are milkshake IPAs? Are they just a crude mash-up of milkshakes and pale ales drunk through a straw? No, thankfully they're a lot more subtle than that! Read on!

Milkshake IPAs were first brewed in 2015 when Swedish brewer Omnipollo started producing what they termed "smoothie IPAs" such as Wild Strawberry/Rhubarb/Vanilla Smoothie and Raspberry Smoothie IPA. That same year they teamed up with American brewer Tired Hands in Philadelphia on an IPA brewed with oats, wheat and lactose sugar.

It was fermented on strawberries and vanilla beans and strongly hopped with Mosaic and Citra. They called their creation “milkshake” and a style was born.

The real drivers of the milkshake IPA style are the use of lactose (which is an unfermentable sugar found in milk, which adds sweetness – there’s no actual milk in this type of beer) and various fruits, often in the form of fruit purees. This gives these beers a very pleasant mouthfeel, akin to what you’d expect in a milk stout. The use of fruit produces a silky, creamy texture, but can also add tartness, tropical flavours or candied sweetness to the beer.

Further details come from Kevin Vincent, Parish Brewing Co. of Louisiana’s lead cellarman, who says: “The style is defined by an above-average haze that gives the impression of viscosity. Lactose is a staple ingredient that lends some confectionery sweetness under the usually high dry-hopping rate.” Vanilla is also a consistent flavouring added to milkshake IPAs to enhance the taste of the fruit or other adjunct such as chocolate, peanut butter or coffee.

For many brewers, smoothie and milkshake IPAs represent a real

evolution of the New England-style IPA; for others, it’s just another way to make an IPA! As with all beer, milkshake IPAs do contain hops, but they are fruit-forward instead of being bitter or hoppy in taste. Rather than creating a balance between malts and hops, milkshake IPAs strike a balance between the sweetness of the lactose and the tartness of the fruit or adjunct.



In a case of putting my money where my mouth is I decided to try a Milkshake IPA for myself. I had a couple of cans of Wilde Child’s Opaque Reality (5% ABV), a mango and passion fruit Milkshake IPA left over from a Wilde Child Brewery beer box I got at Christmas, so thought I’d give them a go. I’d expected a sweet, gloopy mess to be honest, but imagine my surprise when I found the beer was very

clean, crisp, fruity and refreshing with a pronounced aroma of fruit and strong mango and passion fruit notes in the taste and finish. No real bitterness to speak of, but I think this is a characteristic of the style anyway. A really well-crafted, tasty beer that I would recommend to anyone.

So are Milkshake IPA’s just a passing fad destined to be overtaken by the next on-trend craft beer? Some American brewers such as Rob McCoy, Production Manager at Great Notion Brewing in Portland, Oregon think not and says: “At the end of the day, whether it’s Milkshake IPA, Hazy IPA, Pilsner, Lambic or ESB, I want people to be excited about beer.”

Something I wholeheartedly agree with. Milkshake IPAs are sweet, confectionary, trendy beers but seem to meet consumers’ needs and allow brewers to flex some creative muscles. Hopefully they’ll be around for a long time to come. After all this talk about these beers I’ve developed a thirst! Maybe it’s also time to try a Milkshake IPA yourself? Cheers!

A BEERGEEK

In compiling this feature I drew on information contained in the links

shown, with thanks.

<https://thegrowlguys.com/milkshake-ipa/>

<https://vinepair.com/articles/milkshake-ipa-guide/>

<https://www.hopculture.com/best-milkshake-ipa-style/>

GBBF WINTER 2024

What Was It Like This Year?

Once again a few hardy CAMRA souls from local branches ventured out to the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) Winter, held in February this year at Burton-on-Trent Town Hall. My wife Gill and I and our friends from Grimsby & N E Lincs CAMRA Anne & Stef, were planning to travel to Burton on our narrowboat *Sheila May*, handily berthed at a marina a short two hours cruise away. Unfortunately some water had got into our diesel fuel after three months overwintering, which meant the engine wouldn’t start. So it was the local bus for us, a short fifteen minute ride through pleasant countryside.

As the bus got us into the centre of Burton about an hour before the festival opened, we popped into the Last Heretic for a swift pre-festival half. Suitably refreshed we joined

the queue to get in for the noon opening. CAMRA had promised that there'd be no repeat of last year's lengthy queuing and so it proved, as we got into the Town Hall after about ten minutes to take our seats in the Gods overlooking the main hall.



Another improvement was that the Champion Beer tasting had been completed the day before, so the Lingen Room housing all the Champion Competition beers (54 in total), was open from the start, allowing customers to roam freely between this room and the main hall. This thinned out the main hall agreeably and there was no problem getting served, unlike last year when

the Lingen Room was closed for the first couple of hours as the competition beer tastings were still in progress and it was a bit of a rugby scrum in the main hall. There were two brewery bars in the main hall – Thornbridge and Titanic – plus a range of other bars with a good selection of winter beers. I tried and enjoyed Blue Monkey Aaah Biscoff (5.5% ABV), Tollgate Affogato (3.4%), Iron Pier Cast Iron Stout (4.7%), Titanic Black Ice (4.1%) and Carpathia ESB (5.3%) as well as thirds of Sarah Hughes Snowflake (8%), a pale barley wine which was voted Champion Winter Beer of Britain and Allsop's Arctic Ale (11%), a recreation of a beer sent out on past polar expeditions.



As it was the opening session of the festival, the winners of the Champion Beer competition categories were read out from the stage to provide a little theatricality

and awards made to any of the winning brewers who were present. Thereafter the Wurlitzer organ on the stage was played until mid-afternoon to give a "Last Night of the Proms" atmosphere which was very agreeable.

By the late afternoon it was time to move on and we finished off the day in Burton with a visit to the Weighbridge Inn micropub and enjoyed a couple of beers from the Ampersand Brewery, before catching the train at the nearby station back to the marina, a marathon journey lasting just six minutes!

A very enjoyable visit this year, much more so than last. Many of the problems that occurred last year had been addressed and the delays and overcrowding that were prevalent previously were thankfully absent.

It appears that the festival will move to a new venue for 2025, rumoured to be in Yorkshire but unconfirmed. If the new location is accessible by train (or boat) I

might just go again, but we'll have to wait and see.

The winners in the Champion Beer of Britain Competition were:



Gold: Sarah Hughes Snowflake (8%)
Joint Silver: Elland 1872 Porter (6.5%)
Muirhouse Magnum Mild (4.5%)

MARK ELSOME

CRAFTY BEER FESTIVAL

Craft Beer Comes to Cleethorpes!

This beer festival featuring craft beers took place in the Memorial Hall, Cleethorpes, which was a ten minute walk from the station. Here we met up with friends to sample the beers at the Crafty Beer Festival.



Using a token system for buying beer, each token was £2, which bought a 1/3 pint. Glasses were marked as 1/3, 2/3 and 1pint measures.

The hall was large and well set up with plenty of tables and chairs. A smaller room off the main hall was serving Mexican street food such as quesadillas, nachos, burgers and fries.

There were three handpulled ales, three real ciders and 25 keg beers, with breweries such as Luda , Cloudwater, Atom, Fierce, Pressure Drop and Exale. Differing ranges and styles (stouts, IPAs, hazy and sours) available with ABVs ranging from 3.4% to 9%.



Acoustic live music was on whilst we were there, which was a bit loud in the hall, but breaks in the sets were ideal for conversation.

All the beers we sampled were of excellent quality and taste.

Good beer, good friends and seaside fish 'n chips on the way back to the station, what's not to love!

BEVERLEY BRANTON

PUB AND BREWERY NEWS

A time of turmoil for many UK brewers as rising costs of energy and raw materials contribute to balance sheets shooting into the red.

The renowned **Elland Brewery**, brewers of the award-winning **1872**

Porter, announced in February that they would have to go into liquidation and look for a buyer.



This was about the time that they won Joint Silver in the Champion Winter Beer of Britain awards at the Great British Beer Festival Winter,

so very much a bittersweet success! We sincerely hope that a buyer can be found and this great brewery can continue to produce its excellent range of ales.

Even **Adnams** of Suffolk, an outwardly successful, large regional brewery, announced it was having to explore funding options to pay down bank debt and fund growth initiatives. Options included an injection of capital or the sale of some freehold pubs.

Tatton Brewery based in Knutsford, Cheshire, is the latest brewery to close its doors for the last time, when it ceased trading in February. Its beers were created on a custom-built modern brewery and a local yeast was utilised.



As with many others in the same position, the closure is blamed on increases in the cost of living, fuel, and raw materials. Owner Gregg Sawyer has also decided to take a step back for family reasons.

The brewery said on social media: "We've had a good run, with great times, great staff, great customers - and, of course, great beer. We're truly saddened to be sending out this statement, making us part of the current decline in the industry, but we've got to call it a day."

BEER TODAY

Greene King is bringing back two seasonal beers — **Spring Break** (4.4% ABV) and **Hopping Special** (4.2%) — after they proved popular with drinkers in previous years. Spring Break is a full-bodied 4.4% ABV ale with a balance of citrus flavours and malt character. It was created in 2022 through a partnership between Greene

King and the National Brewing Apprentice Programme, called Future Brewers, which offered students the chance to be involved with the process of creating the beer.



A new addition to the calendar last year, Hopping Special is a 4.2% ABV amber ale. It incorporates the process of late hopping, to enhance the fruity flavours. Greene King took inspiration for the name from the train service put on for hop-picking families in the 19th and 20th century.

(Look out for them in a Greene King pub near you! – Ed)

BEER TODAY

We've managed to visit the recently reopened **Berkeley Hotel** in Scunthorpe. The **Old Brewery Bitter** was spot-on (the last remaining Sam Smith's outlet in town to offer it) and the stylish drinking areas were just as we remembered them.

However there's still a lot of work ongoing in the kitchen and the upstairs accommodation rooms as much of this was trashed by squatters during the enforced closure of the pub.

*In another lap on the brewery merry-go-round, **Asahi UK**, the owners of Fullers Brewery, is to close its brewing facility in Greenwich and move production of **Meantime** and **Dark Star** brands to the Fuller's brewery site in Chiswick, London.*



(It's not that long ago that Fullers closed the Dark Star Brewery in Partridge Green, Sussex and moved production of Dark Star beers to Meantime in Greenwich. Now they'll all be brewed under one roof, presumably for the benefit of saving costs – Ed) .

The company insists that the Dark Star and Meantime brands would retain “their own unique brand identities”.

Asahi acquired the Meantime brand in 2016. Dark Star had been bought by Fuller's in 2018 and moved to Asahi when the Japanese brewer purchased Fuller's brewing business in 2019.

Asahi says plans are under way to create a “standalone consumer retail experience” in Greenwich celebrating the heritage of the Meantime brand.

CAMRA described the decision as “a further blow to British Brewing”.

BEER TODAY

The London breweries **Brick** and **Brew By Numbers**, bought by the **Breal Group**, are in the process of closing down, with staff being laid off and brew kits being moved to Black Sheep's site in Masham.

The private equity firm Breal Group, recently bought struggling British breweries including London's Brick, Brew By Numbers, Yorkshire's Black Sheep and Warwickshire's Purity Brewing Co, saving each of them from facing administration.

A spokesperson from Breal Group confirmed: “The brew kits are being moved to Masham. The equipment will be relocated in both Masham and, potentially, Purity.”

(Didn't take Breal long to close some

of the breweries they acquired in the name of consolidation, but at the same time losing the ethos and provenance of each brewery along the way and turning them into just more unloved, faceless beer brands – Ed).

THE DRINKS BUSINESS

*In what appears at first sight to be a friendly takeover **Rooster's Brewing Co.** acquired their Harrogate neighbours **Daleside Brewery** in March - Ed.*

The business will continue to be run independently using the Daleside brewing team to brew their range of well-loved beers such as Monkey Wrench, Morocco and Daleside Blonde using their own dedicated yeast strain.



Daleside was founded in 1991 by Bill Witty, who passed away in 2007. Eric Lucas joined the brewery in 1993,

eventually becoming Managing Director. He will now step down to enjoy retirement. For over 30 years, Eric Lucas and the Daleside team ensured that the Daleside brands were drunk across the UK and abroad.

The operation of the Daleside business will eventually transfer across Harrogate to Rooster's HQ at Hornbeam Park and fill spare capacity at Rooster's.

Picture shows Ian Fozard of Rooster's (left) shaking hands on the deal with Eric Lucas of Daleside.

<https://www.roosters.co.uk/blogs/blog>

Cider maker **Sandford Orchards** has partnered with scientists from Bristol University to identify and preserve ancient apple varieties across the UK. Following on from a small-scale trial, they've now won a competitive bid to receive a grant from DEFRA to expand this research, including heading up a project at Royal Horticultural Society Rosemoor.

BEER TODAY



SPRING BUDGET PROFOUNDLY DISAPPOINTING FOR PUBS

Pub Sector Underwhelmed by Provisions for Hospitality

The Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, held his Spring Budget in early March. He announced alcohol duty would be frozen until 2025, to “back the Great British Pub”. No announcements were made regarding VAT or business rates, which were needed to make a real difference.



UKHospitality chief Kate Nicholls said: “The Chancellor had a chance to accelerate and unlock hospitality, but instead he has delivered a cut-and-paste Budget which continues to act as a drag on recovery”. She added: “The Government needs to take a different approach. It needs to bear down on the never-ending rising costs that are forcing businesses to shut their doors for good – taking away people’s livelihoods and robbing communities of a vital asset”.

Theakston’s Brewery managing director Simon Bradbury said: “The UK already has one of the highest excise rates in Europe and against a backdrop of continually rising running costs for pubs, we welcome the duty freeze on alcohol announced in the Budget”. Young’s Pubs chief executive Simon Dodd said the Government has “once again kicked the can down the road rather than implement much-needed support for the hospitality sector”.

He said: “While we welcome the extension of the alcohol duty freeze, it is simply not enough to secure the long-term future of our sector and the livelihoods of the millions that work in it”.

MORNING ADVERTISER

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

MICROPUB ADVENTURES

Lincoln and Doncaster

*Scott Spencer has an interesting hobby travelling around the country visiting micropubs, breweries and pubs and writing an online blog about it termed **Micropub Adventures**. To give this a local angle, here’s an abridged version of*

his trip to Lincoln and Doncaster from May 2022. Enjoy!

A trip over to Lincoln for their yearly



beer festival held at **The Drill**, before heading round some of the pubs and micropubs that Lincoln

has to offer.

After getting to Doncaster, caught a direct service through to Lincoln operated by East Midlands Railway. Over 100 beers were available at the festival, from local breweries and ones from further afield to choose from.

After finishing at the beer festival, I headed up Steep Hill and firstly called in at **Cardinals Hat**. Built in the 15th Century, this timber-



framed building was as an inn during the 16th and 17th centuries. It is reputedly named after Cardinal Wolsey, Bishop of Lincoln 1514-1515. The Grade II listed structure was restored 1952-53 by St John Ambulance Brigade.

A good selection of cask and keg beers available here to choose from. I decided on White Squall from Newby Wyke brewery.

Another walk uphill to **BeerHeadz**. I’ve visited their pubs before at Nottingham and Retford but not managed to get around to doing



Lincoln before.

A good range of three cask, two ciders and ten keg beers available here. Decided on a Thornbridge sour beer (Floresta) which I hadn’t had before.

Another walk this time heading to the Cathedral Quarter to **The Strugglers Inn** (known to locals as The Struggs). A choice of seven cask

ales here (it was too busy to get a photo of the other bank, but included Great Newsome, Small World and Rooster's).



Decided on Baby-Faced Assassin from Rooster's Brewery in the

end, a favourite of mine!

Down the hill next towards **The Joiners Arms**. The front of the pub looks very 1960s in style from the front but is very traditional upon entering. Even houses Lincoln's only bar billiards table!



Two beers from Phipps Brewery and one from Hereford Brewery available on the bar (my choice was the H.L.A from Hereford Brewery). Yet another walk downhill back into the town centre to visit **Mailbox**.

The pub is a conversion of the former city main Post Office building and is very well done.

Three cask ales available here, all of which are from Pheasantry Brewery in East Markham, Nottinghamshire. Went with the Excitra, a delicious 4.3% Golden Ale, along with a lovely seat out at the front in the sun!



Over the railway and through town to **The Golden Eagle**, an old coaching inn now run by Castle Rock Brewery from Nottingham.



Great, large outside seating areas with two rooms inside. Choice of four real ales

available including their own beer Harvest Pale. Decided to go with Fresh Coast from Durham Brewery, a

delicious and fresh tasting US IPA.

Next to the **Imp & Angel** on the High Street, formerly the Hop & Barley, this was Lincoln's first micropub. It has been fully refurbished into a lovely bright and modern style.

Had four real ales, four keg lines and a can and bottle fridge packed full, so lots to choose from and something for everyone. Pragmatic by Beermats Brewing Co was my drink of choice, a traditional English bitter.



The **Tiny Tavern** micropub opened in March 2020 in what was originally two of the 17th century cottages in the Grade II listed St Andrew's Row. Ring a bell on the right hand door to gain access to the pub (*and now Lincoln CAMRA's 2024 Pub of the Year - Ed*).

A good range of cask ales available here. Started off with Brimstone by Great Newsome and moved on to Monarch Ale by Kings Clipstone



Brewery, both really good choices. There was a lovely outside area at the back of the pub as well. The unique name of the next pub, **The Treaty of Commerce**, refers to an Anglo-French free trade agreement signed in 1860. Was formerly a Tea Trader which opened in 1862, and is one of the last independent high street pubs.



Five cask ales available here alongside a range of Rosie's Pig ciders. Choices

from Batemans, Oakham and Hook Norton breweries. Went with Batemans Gold. After finishing here time to head back to Lincoln Central station, for a train to Retford and change for a

train to Doncaster.

Just around the corner from Doncaster Railway station is **The Leopard**, with a lovely tiled front from its days as a Warwick and Richardson's house.

Five cask ales available here, decided to go with American Pale Ale by Dark Star Brewing Co.



Doncaster Brewery Tap on Young Street is a great brewery tap serving a range of Doncaster Brewery beers alongside guest ales, a number of keg beers and a large line-up of real ciders.

Went with Same Chit Different Day



from Doncaster Brewery. A pale ale made using Chit malt and CF247 experimental hop, fermented with Verdant pale ale yeast. Really enjoyed this beer!



Last call of the day before heading home on the train was **The Little Plough**.

The interior of this pub dates from 1934 and is mentioned in CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors. A two room pub on entry, very cosy.



A choice of four real ales here, three from Yorkshire – Acorn, Little Critters and Bradfield, alongside one from Phoenix Brewery in Heywood, Greater Manchester. Hadn't seen

the Shire Horse English Best Bitter from Little Critters before, so went with this. Great tasting bitter!

MICROPUB ADVENTURES

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

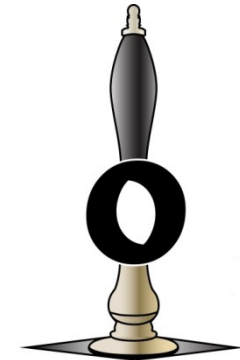
CMBC TO SERVE KEG BEER THROUGH HANDPUMP

Handpump "Hijack" Will Confuse Consumers Says CAMRA

Carlsberg Marston's Brewing Company (CMBC) risks confusing drinkers about cask conditioned beers, warns CAMRA, in reaction to a new beer launch which plans to hijack the iconic handpump. CMBC has announced its plans to start serving keg beer through handpumps, which beer drinkers widely understand as usually being exclusively used for cask conditioned beer.

Keg beer is not a "live" beer, in that once it leaves the brewery it contains no viable yeast, and does not undergo further conditioning, unlike cask-conditioned beers which continue to develop flavour and carbonation in the pub cellar. While CMBC has indicated that, following feedback from CAMRA, it will label so-called "fresh ale" served

through handpumps as "brewery conditioned beer", the Campaign fears this will still confuse customers and erode their long-held understanding that only cask beer is served in this way.



The Campaign is also concerned that CMBC's plan will reduce choice to consumers

and by taking up handpump space elbows out genuine cask beers produced by smaller, independent brewers.

Beer handpumps on bars have long been the easily recognisable sign of the freshness and quality of cask beer – and CAMRA fully intends to enforce its long-standing policy that beer drinkers should not be misled at the point of dispense through the sale of non-live, non-cask beer through handpumps.

CAMRA National Director and Chair of the Real Ale, Cider and Perry Campaigns Committee, Gillian Hough said: "It's baffling why CMBC feels the need to serve a keg beer through cask ale handpumps in the

first place, when it would seem to be simpler and more honest to simply serve it through keg taps, as with all other keg products.

“It would be even better if this company, despite claiming to be incredibly proud to be a leading brewer of cask ale, actually invested in producing new cask ales and supporting its existing beers. It’s particularly ironic that instead it has spent time closing the historic breweries in their portfolio and now wants to cash in on that cask heritage with a keg product which hijacks the handpump.



“Even with additional labelling, our fear is customers – especially those who perhaps don’t understand a term like “brewery conditioned” or don’t notice the small print- will be confused. It also seems likely that over time this potentially misleading approach will erode the image of the iconic beer handpump as a clear symbol of cask conditioned beer.

“We believe that beer drinkers should be fully informed at the point of dispense and we will continue to condemn dispense practices that seek to mislead the consumer, particularly by selling non-live, non-cask beers through cask beer handpumps.

“CAMRA calls on CMBC to either provide a genuinely live and fresh beer to be served through handpumps, to give the drinker what they expect and want, or to be honest and serve this so-called “fresh beer” through keg taps. *Implied in this article, although not stated explicitly, is that any pub serving this CMBC ale through a handpump would not be eligible for entry in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide, as it is classed as misleading dispense – Ed.*

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

<https://www.carlsbergmarstons.co.uk/newsroom/carlsberg-marston-s-brewing-company-unveils-fresh-ale/>

CARLSBERG TO AXE HISTORIC BURTON UNIONS

Another loss of Britain’s Brewing Heritage

Another feature on CMBC and it’s not good! Leading UK beer writer

Roger Protz makes an impassioned plea for the unique Burton Union system to be retained – Ed

The Carlsberg Tour of Destruction goes on. Not content with closing three breweries, the Carlsberg Marston’s Brewing Company is now wielding the axe at the famous Burton Union System of fermentation.

The Union method was devised in the 19th century as a method of cleansing beer of yeast and it gave beer not only clarity and sparkle but an aroma famously known as the “Burton snatch” – a powerful waft of sulphur from the mineral-rich waters of the Trent Valley used in the brewing process.

Carlsberg is in the driving seat at CMBC. It controls 60 per cent of the business with a chief executive drawn from its ranks. It has little or no interest in either ale or Britain’s brewing heritage.

Since the merger between the Danish lager giant and Marston’s in late 2022, it has closed Jennings, Ringwood and Wychwood ale breweries and now plans to abandon the Unions. Once again, CMBC lays the blame on the decline in the ale sector of the beer market

and the costs of retaining the Unions.

The alleged decline depends on who you talk to. Timothy Taylor in Keighley, West Yorkshire, brewer of award-winning Landlord pale ale and producing 70,000 barrels a year, says it’s back to pre-Covid levels. A similar message comes from Robinson’s in Stockport, who produce 80,000 barrels a year with a pub estate of more than 250 outlets. It has had enormous success with its Trooper ale.

In Surrey, Hogs Back Brewery, whose TEA – Traditional English Ale – is a major brand in the South-east – also reports sales back to pre-Covid levels. It has just launched a new subsidiary brewery, One Planet, run by solar power.

Arkells in Swindon, a family brewery dating from 1843, is adding three seasonal ales to its core range this year and is brewing a collaborative beer with Donnington Brewery in Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire. On 25 January the major pub chain JD Wetherspoon reported that sales in the 25 weeks to 21 January were 10.1 per cent higher than for the same period the previous year. Chairman Sir Tim Martin said: “In the

last year there's been a noticeable resurgence in real ale."

These breweries and pubs, along with many others, are run by people with a commitment to cask beer. Carlsberg, in sharp contrast, has no such commitment and it underscores this by closing three ale breweries and rubbing salt in the wounds by investing £10 million in its lager factory in Northampton. The case for closing the Burton Unions is a familiar one: "time, labour and energy". There was a time, prior to the creation of CMBC, when different priorities governed production at Marston's. A message on the website – now taken down – declared: "Pedigree is the only beer to come through the Burton Union System. It gives Pedigree its one-of-a-kind taste. No Burton Unions, No Pedigree. End of".

End of, indeed. This is an important piece of British brewing heritage that CMBC is pouring down the sluice. The Union system was designed in 1838 by a Liverpool brewer, Peter Walker. He turned an old method known as the carriage cask on its head. The method was messy and unhygienic: fermenting beer rose from the bung holes of casks, ran down the sides and was

collected in troughs. The beer was returned by jugs to the casks while



the yeast was used for future brews. Peter Walker's act of genius was to move the troughs above the casks and link them by pipes. With the carriage system, casks were sent to pubs but Walker developed large oak casks that remained in the brewery in what became known as Union Rooms. Each union cask holds 150 gallons of beer. The term "union" comes from casks, trays and pipes being linked together or "held in union" as the Victorians said. The pipes are connected to the bung holes of the cask and then rise up to the troughs. The pipes have swan necks at the top in order that

fermenting beer and yeast, driven out of the bung holes by the force of fermentation, drip into the troughs. The troughs are held at a slight angle: the beer runs down the incline and returns to the casks via further pipes, while most of the yeast is retained in the troughs. Not all the yeast is cleared from the beer. Sufficient is left to ensure a powerful secondary fermentation in the casks when they leave the brewery.

The development of the unions coincided with brewers from many parts of the country, including London and Peter Walker from Liverpool, rushing to Burton to open second breweries there. The brewers were desperate to use Trent Valley water to make the new pale ales that were replacing porter and stout in popularity. And drinkers wanted clear, sparkling beer, free from yeast. Commercial glass blowing meant pewter tankards were replaced by glass containers. Drinkers could now see the beer in their glasses and murky beer was not acceptable. Before other methods of cleansing yeast from beer were invented, the Burton Unions played a vital role in

producing beers with clarity and fine aromas and flavours, complete with the "Burton snatch".



The closure of such major Burton breweries as Allsopp, Bass, Ind Coope and Worthington means only Marston's now uses the Union System. Should the system become just a museum piece or kept in production? The answer should be a resounding yes for maintaining the system: as the Marston's website once proclaimed, it gives Pedigree its unique character. CMBC says the system is expensive to run, employing coopers to repair oak casks and a team to oversee production. But the best things in life are worth paying for. Single malt Scotch whisky has to stay in casks for three long years before it can legally be called whisky and released for sale. Is it worth waiting for and paying a premium? Think of Highland Park, Glenmorangie and Laphroaig and you have the answer.

But, argues CMBC, a large amount of water is used to brew in the Unions and clean them and we must be careful to conserve water supplies. Agreed – but water can be cleaned and recycled as a number of breweries, including Adnams, Otter and Purity, prove.

The case for dumping the system doesn't stack up. The Burton Unions played a key role in developing the modern brewing industry and making pale ale and IPA not only national treasures but also the envy of the world.

The Unions must not die. Here's a memo to Carlsberg, purveyor of Eurofizz to the masses: don't dump on our proud ale heritage.

PROTZ ON BEER

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

WHAT ARE REAL CIDER & PERRY?

An Explanation

We don't feature cider and perry in the pages of Iron Brew as often as we should, so here's an attempt to put that right – an article on what constitutes real cider and perry by Ian Packham, Vice Chairman of CAMRA's Real Ale, Cider and Perry Campaigns Committee - Ed.

Real cider and perry are long established traditional drinks, which in certain parts of the country were supplied as part of the payment for farm labour up until 1887.

Traditional Cider and Perry are completely natural products, unlike most of the cold fizzy commercial products we are used to seeing, which are far from the real thing. Real cider and perry is produced naturally from apples (cider) and pears (perry) and is not normally carbonated or pasteurised. The harvesting of the fruit normally happens around October although this can vary dependent on the weather throughout the growing season.



The basics of traditional cider and perry production have remained the same for centuries – simply pick, wash, mill and press the fruit, place into a suitable container (in many cases oak barrels in the older days),

allow to ferment and enjoy, although a number of producers do use separate yeast rather than that which naturally occurs on the skin of the fruit. Either way production uses virtually no energy at all, from picking of the fruit to the product being ready for sale, meaning that the production process is very environmentally friendly. Many of these natural ciders and perries tend to be dry as they have largely fully fermented using the natural sugar within the fruit. Some of them are sweetened by the addition of fresh apple juice, sugar, or other sweetener but perry tends to be naturally sweeter than cider.

The popularity of real cider and perry is rising as more people discover how deliciously mellow and aromatic the flavours of naturally produced cider and perry can be. A glass of real cider or perry represents generations of production dating back hundreds of years. There are also many new producers of cider and perry who are using the traditional process – albeit in some cases with more modern equipment - which still creates the traditional product. Real cider was traditionally produced from cider apples which

are different from eating or cooking apples. These typically have high levels of tannin which lead to a very bitter taste. There are many varieties of cider apple which have different characteristics and vary in levels of tannin and acid. They tended to grow in the Three Counties (Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire) as well as the West Country, especially Devon and Somerset. Cider is also made in many parts of the country with producers using eating or cooking apples instead, which leads to a different taste profile again. Similarly, perry pears are different to dessert pears in that they are smaller in size and are high in tannin which tends to give an astringent taste rather than bitterness found in cider apples. They tend to dominate in the Three Counties which is where the majority of real perry is produced. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for many of the well-known ciders and perries sold in the UK that are not produced using the natural process from apples and pears but have been produced artificially using concentrated juice, chaptalised juice or syrup, some involving many processes prior to being ready for

sale that makes them far less environmentally friendly than the traditional product.

Concentrated juice is where the fruit has been pressed and then much of the water content has been removed to reduce the volume for transportation. It is then rehydrated prior to starting the fermentation process. Chaptalised juice is where the fruit has been pressed and then large amounts of sugar are added to the juice. This is then fermented to a very high ABV where it can be stored prior to being diluted with water in order to achieve the desired alcohol content for sale.

The use of these methods, plus the changing methods of dispense for traditional cider and perry, often from polypins to bag in boxes, led to CAMRA reviewing its definition for real cider and perry.

The wording of the new definition states "CAMRA defines Real Cider or Perry as being fermented from the whole juice of fresh pressed apples or pears, without the use of concentrated or chaptalised juices". The definition document also includes a number of pointers to best practice which identify the preferred options for cider and perry. These identify fruit or

flavoured ciders as a separate category, as they are for HMRC purposes, ensuring that any added fruit or flavourings are pure and not from concentrates, extracts or essences. A full copy of this document can be found on the CAMRA website.

Following this, CAMRA contacted as many cider and perry producers as possible in order to confirm their production processes and generated a list of producers complying with the definition. This is available as a map showing cider and perry producers as well as producers of fruit and flavoured ciders and perries, or as a downloadable list. These are available via the CAMRA website or directly at <https://producers.camra.org.uk/> and the map is a living document that is updated on a regular basis. One of the areas that CAMRA has concentrated on in the last year is information for people who are interested in learning more about cider and perry. The Learn & Discover platform can be found at <https://camra.org.uk/learn-discover/> and covers the Basics for beginners – available to everyone – as well as Learn More for enthusiasts and Discover for connoisseurs – which

is available exclusively for CAMRA members. You can learn about what real cider and perry are, and where to find them, an introduction to tasting cider and perry, cider and perry styles, cider terminology, how cider and perry is made, food pairing, cider apple and perry pear varieties and much more.

If you are keen on learning more about the product, enjoy drinking and supporting real cider and perry, and discovering a wide range of tastes and flavours then do go and have a look at the CAMRA website. Cheers and Wassail!

IAN PACKHAM

And don't forget that May is CAMRA's Cider & Perry Month – what better time to enjoy a glass of real cider & perry? – Ed.



TWO BEER FESTIVALS – ONE WEEKEND!

Branch Trips to the Crowle and Doncaster Brewery & Tap Festivals

With two local beer festivals scheduled over the Easter weekend what was the branch to do except visit them both? Exactly and we were up for the challenge!

The first festival was also the 1st Crowle Beer Festival, held at Victory Hall in Ealand (handy for the train if travelling from outside the village), which was organised by local solicitor Oliver Saxon, a real ale fan and supporter of the annual St Peter's event in Scunthorpe.



Oliver had selected twelve beers covering various styles and three ciders. These were to be served by gravity straight from the cask or box. Scunthorpe & District CAMRA provided some help with cooling, venting and tapping of the beer and with other local volunteers assisting it was all ready to go on Good Friday.

Seven branch members travelled to Ealand by train and pitched up at Victory Hall in the early afternoon, about an hour after opening. By now the festival was in full swing and we just managed to grab one of the last remaining tables in the hall.

The beers and ciders were in good order and there was savoury and sweet foods available from the kitchen and fish and chips from a mobile van parked in the car park. A festival tombola was also doing good business and there was background music playing at the right level to provide a good atmosphere and not interfere with conversation.

Among my favourite beers of the ones I tried were Firebird Parody (4.5% ABV), Sambrook's Powerhouse Porter (4.9%) and Thornbridge Grand Purposes (4.0%), a ruby mild. Vocation Life and Death IPA was the first beer to sell out.

Our group had several flutters on the tombola and we left with a clutch of prizes. The food offerings were very tasty as well as being useful in soaking up the beer.

By early evening it was time to wend our way back to the station for the journey home and to reflect on a very enjoyable afternoon. With thanks to Oliver for organising the



event and all those who helped out at the 1st Crowle Beer Festival. Hopefully there'll be a 2nd Crowle Beer Festival in 2025?

All monies raised were to be split between Crowle Colts Mens FC, Crowle and Ealand Regeneration Project and Friends of St Oswald's Church.

After a good night's sleep three of those who had been to the Crowle Festival a day earlier made the short rail journey to Doncaster to attend the Doncaster Brewery & Tap Easter Beer Festival. We were joined by Brett at Scunthorpe and also Anne & Stef from Grimsby CAMRA, swelling our numbers up to six.

The festival featured six Doncaster Brewery beers on handpump in the downstairs bar, eight handpulled guest beers in the upstairs Dystopia Room, as well as a selection of ten craft keg beers here as well. The guest beers had been selected on

dinosaur/heritage themes and included Neon Raptor Launch Pad (5.2%), an American IPA, Squawk Sylvia (4.1%), an American Brown Ale, Staggeringly Good Prehistoric Creatures (4.2%), a best bitter, Beerblefish Infinite Improbability (6.7%), a saison beer as well as some high strength craft kegs such as De Leite Enfant Terrible, a 10% whisky infused Belgian Tripel and Basqueland Syrup City, an 11% dessert stout, the latter two sensibly served in third of a pint measures.



Again the beers I had were uniformly excellent and most were rare brews that I hadn't tried before.

Food on offer included pork pies and tasty bratwurst hot dogs cooked to order.

When we had arrived for opening at midday the pub had been fairly quiet and continued in this vein until mid afternoon when an influx of people suddenly filled up both the

downstairs and upstairs bars.



By late afternoon it was time for our group to move on and we enjoyed a couple of halves in the Draughtsman's Alehouse on the station before catching the train home. With thanks to Ian, Alison and Robin at Doncaster Brewery & Tap for organising such an excellent event. So, two beer festivals in one weekend completed (tick). Thanks to all who came along to one or both of these enjoyable festivals. We might even do it again next year!

MARK ELSOME



BEER RETURNS TO TETLEY BREWING SITE

Kirkstall to Take Over Iconic Leeds Building

Kirkstall Brewery has announced it is taking on the lease of The Tetley, with plans to renew its status as a “landmark of Yorkshire beer culture”.

The Tetley building is the former brewing headquarters of Tetley's brewery, built in the art deco style in 1931. In the 1980s, Tetley's brewery became the largest producer of cask ale in the world, and the site has remained an icon of Leeds beer history, even after its closure in 2011.

The building, which now sits at the heart of Leeds' newest mixed-use district, Aire Park, then operated as a contemporary art gallery from 2013 until 2023, when its lease ended.

From May, Kirkstall will be operating The Tetley as a showcase of brewing in Leeds. It will feature beers from other breweries in the area, alongside brands from Kirkstall, Leeds and Kirkstall's most recent acquisition, North breweries. Kirkstall also plans to host a number of events at the historic building.

Kirkstall owner and founder Steve Holt said: “It's a tremendous privilege to bring Leeds's most iconic brewery building into the Kirkstall fold. As a brewery that pays a great deal of respect to the history of brewing in the city, we believe we are the ideal custodians for the next chapter of this legendary building.”



In April 1960 Tetley's took over Leeds' Melbourne brewery and in 1961 it merged with Ind Coope of Burton-upon-Trent and Ansells of Birmingham, forming Allied Breweries.

Allied was the world's largest brewing conglomerate, with the Leeds site employing 1,000 people. In the 1980s Tetley's became the world's largest producer of cask ale and was taken over by Carlsberg in 1998.

The Leeds brewery was closed in 2011 and demolished in 2012, with production contracted out to other

UK Carlsberg breweries. The Tetley is expected to reopen under Kirkstall's management in May.

WHAT'S BREWING

We're planning a branch trip to the Tetley once it reopens and also taking in a few other choice city centre Leeds pubs. Check our branch Facebook page for details in May - Ed

NORTHERN MONK TO EXPAND BREWING CAPACITY BY 20%

Leeds Brewery Goes for Growth

Amid all the doom and gloom in the media about the UK brewing industry, here's some good news for a change! – Ed

Northern Monk Brew Co is set to increase its brewing capacity by a fifth following a £500,000 investment in new equipment at the main brewery site.

The 20% increase in capacity will be equivalent to an additional 8,000 hectolitres, or 1.4 million pints, of beer per year.

Last year, Northern Monk, based in Leeds, brewed around 7m pints between its two brewing sites, Sydenham Road in Holbeck, and its original home, The Old Flax Store,

just south of Leeds city centre.



“After ten years of brewing, we're entering a really exciting new era for Northern Monk,” said Russell Bisset, who co-founded Northern Monk alongside head brewer Brian Dickson.



“The increase in capacity represents a really positive period for us as we continue

to attract new customers enjoying our beers. Due to this growth, we were pushing the limit of what our current site could handle, and so this felt like the right time to make a significant investment in our facilities.

“It's been a challenging few years for the industry as a whole with Covid, rising bills, political uncertainty, and

supply challenges acutely felt by the sector. We're deeply grateful to our consumers and customers for their continued support which has allowed us to continue to grow as a company."

In the last 12 months, half of the ten best performing new craft beers in supermarkets were brewed by Northern Monk, which recently celebrated its tenth anniversary.

BEER TODAY

WHITELOCK'S COLLABORATES WITH TIMOTHY TAYLOR'S ON NEW STOUT

**New Beer Commemorates Year Pub
Was Founded**

*To round off our trilogy of features
on the Leeds beer scene, there's this
- Ed*

Whitelock's Ale House in Leeds and Keighley's Timothy Taylor's brewery have joined forces to launch a new stout, named after the year the pub was founded: 1715.

The Whitelock's team, led by general manager Beth Templeton, worked closely with head brewer, Andy Leman, to design a bespoke beer. 1715 Stout (5% ABV) has been

brewed using all-British Fuggles and Whitbread Golding variety hops, along with Golden Promise pale ale malt, roasted barley, and chocolate and crystal rye malts. The combination will leave it dark with ruby hues, while the aroma will have roasted coffee and a touch of sweetness. The taste will have both coffee and chocolate notes.



This limited-edition stout launched at Whitelock's Ale House on Thursday, 4th April, alongside a Timothy Taylor's takeover of the taps. It will also be available at the Meanwood Tavern, and in London at The Pembury Tavern*.

** Whitelocks is the northern outpost of owners Five Points Brewery, who are based in London – Ed*

BEER TODAY



Well, that's about it for another issue. Thanks for reading. Oh dear, the Craft Beer Connoisseur has just wandered in ... just when I thought we'd got away with it!



OK CBC, what craft beer jokes have you got for us this time? Anything that's actually funny? Go on then ...

What did one craft beer say to the other after their boxing match?
How's your mouthfeel?

A Roman walks into a bar
He holds up two fingers and says
"Give me five beers."

What is the definition of a modern balanced diet?
A craft beer in each hand.

I used to drink all brands of beer.
Now, I am older Budweiser!

Good Lord – the proverbial barrel has been well and truly scraped! What's that? You're off to The Hanging Bat - do I want to join you? I think after those cringeworthy jokes I might just have to! Hang on, I'll get my coat. Cheers! - Ed.

