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# IRON BREW

MAGAZINE OF SCUNTHORPE & DISTRICT  
CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

AUGUST – OCTOBER 2022



CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE



## ... a success!

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## **CHAIRMAN'S CHAT**



Rising costs of energy and raw materials are pushing up prices for our pubs and breweries and as a result some people may prefer to reduce going to the pub to a minimum.

UK breweries are also not faring all that well either with well-established businesses such as Kelham Island (Sheffield), Woods (Shropshire) and Exe Valley (Devon) all ceasing to trade and others such as Weird Beard and Trumans (London) up for sale. A challenging time for the industry!

On a more positive note the recent Jubilee events at Bottesford (Party in the Park), Winterton (All Saints Church beer festival), Barton (Lions beer festival) and Barrow (Barrowfest) show that interest in real ale continues at an all-time high in our area. Long may it continue!

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## **CRAFT BEER CONNOISSEUR**

### **Craft Beer Desert Island Pints**



When the editor got wind of the subject of my column in this issue, he became all nostalgic, saying that when he was a boy (he must have a long memory), the early editions of Iron Brew carried this self- same topic for a few issues.

Things have changed a lot since then of course, including the editor and my take on the Desert Island Pints subject matter (shamelessly ripped off from the popular BBC Radio 4 programme), will feature the top ten craft beers I'd take to a desert island (I know the programme only features eight choices, but who's counting?).

Hopefully I'd be able to take a case of each to sustain me through the long, lonely days and nights on my remote idyll – I'd hate to go full-on

Tom Hanks and start drawing faces on volleyballs and calling them 'Wilson'!

If you wish to engage with me on my choices, please come and find me at the corner table in The Hanging Bat, where I reside most lunchtimes invariably nodding off while watching the cricket and enjoying the pub's fine range of draught beers.

So strap in because here we go ...

### **1 Siren Broken Dream (6.5% ABV)**

Probably my favourite dark beer with its delicious flavours of chocolate and more than a hint of coffee. As Siren themselves quote, 'Broken Dream is smooth, unctuous and moreish' (although I've never used the word 'unctuous' in a sentence before now!).

Their nitro version is even smoother, Described as a Breakfast Stout, I can categorically say that I've *never* drunk this beer with my cornflakes.

### **2 Marble Lagonda (5%)**

A beautiful pale ale with an understated bitterness. Always a pleasure to drink, my go to beer whenever I'm in Manchester or in a bottle shop that stocks it. But is it a pale ale or an IPA? Even Marble themselves can't seem to decide, so

forget about labels and just enjoy on its merits. You won't be disappointed.

### 3 Pressure Drop Pale Fire (4.8%)

Pressure Drop is one of London's finest craft breweries who have made their name with their range of hop forward pale ales and IPAs. Pale Fire is their flagship beer and is a superb, juicy pale ale with a tropical fruit aroma and a balanced bitter finish from the Mosaic and Amarillo hops used. A really well-crafted beer and one of my favourite pale ales to drink whenever I venture south to the capital.

### 4 Magic Rock Cannonball (7.4%)

My goodness, Magic Rock Cannonball took my breath away with its extreme hoppiness when I first tried it; the modern equivalent of the original, strong IPAs sent to India in the days of Empire. But it wasn't just the bitterness from the four American hops used that made it such a great beer – it also had good balance from the carefully selected malt bill. I even participated in the annual 'Cannonball Run', where Magic Rock released different, one-off versions of this beer, requiring me to hover

over my keyboard in the early hours on the morning of its release to ensure I got my order in, such was the demand from beer geeks everywhere.



The Magic Rock star has faded somewhat since they were taken over by Lion and subsequently put up for sale again, with innovative head brewer Stuart Ross leaving to join Kirkstall Brewery, but Cannonball is still a fine beer and more widely available these days.

### 5 East London Brewing Co. Foundation (4.0%)

A man walks into a pub in Leyton, London, sees only one handpump in use on the bar, decides to try a pint anyway and is rewarded with this amber nectar. That man was me and the pub was the Coach and Horses on Leyton High Road.

This was such an unlikely find that I've remembered it ever since. The beer was fantastic, full of flavour with a great balance of malt and marmalade fruitiness with a refreshing crisp, bitter finish from the blend of English and New Zealand hops.

A modern best bitter of the highest order and a sure sign that craft brewers were no longer dismissing the bitter style as 'boring brown beers'.

### 6 Wild Beer Co Millionaire (4.7%)

A rich, salted caramel milk stout; probably best to let the Wild Beer Co. describe it themselves: *'Sometimes a drink can make you feel so decadent it's like you're a millionaire; this beer wraps you in a velvety cocoon, dresses you in a smart suit and takes you out for a special night on the tiles'.*



Thanks guys, but a bit over the top even for me! No doubt though that this dessert stout is a real winner. The addition of Cornish sea salt only adds balance to the luscious flavours. It may be a tad too sweet for some palates, but a first class example of the style nonetheless.

### 7 Fyne Ales, Jarl (3.8%)

The flagship beer from Fyne Ales in Scotland, it will make you wonder how they packed so much flavour into such a modest strength. A showcase for the American Citra hop, this blonde session ale has pronounced citrus flavours and a clean bitter finish - a brilliantly crafted beer. I've also had the pleasure of drinking this beer at the rural brewery tap in Argyll, where the crisp Scottish air and rolling landscape seemed to enhance the taste even further.

### 8 Blue Monkey Chocolate & Amaretto Guerrilla 4.9%

This is a variant on Blue Monkey's award-winning Guerrilla Stout, itself a fine beer, where they ramp up the chocolatey goodness and add a subtle hint of almond from the addition of Amaretto. I love the smell of almonds in the morning!



To get the full flavour profile it's probably best drunk fresh when in cask, but whatever packaging format you try it in, you'll get a superb stout treat.

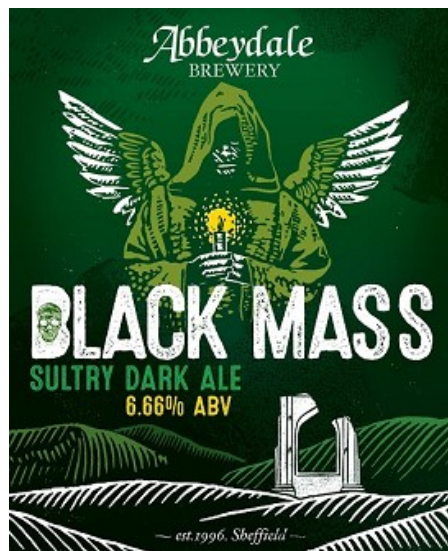


#### 9 Tiny Rebel Cwtch 4.6%

The best thing to come out of Wales since Tom Jones or the Stereophonics! The beer name is Welsh for 'cuddle' and drinking this hoppy red ale is akin to a comforting hug. The three American hops used give an assertive bitterness to complement the caramel sweetness of the malt and the beer has been so well received that it has won many awards. Worth being marooned for!

#### 10 Abbeydale Black Mass 6.66%

This devilishly strong stout is a real pleasure to drink - full-bodied and warming and generously hopped with a mixture of American and Australian hop varieties. It's cleverly marketed using the spooky overtones of the name to the full – even the strength of 6.66% is 'the number of the beast', a symbol of old Beelzebub himself!



However you can safely ignore the mumbo jumbo and instead enjoy the full chocolate, fruitcake and roast goodness of this superb, well-crafted beer.

Well those are my choices to sustain me while on a desert island as I furiously build a raft from driftwood, coconuts and creepers in a desperate bid to escape. Now,

where's Wilson? W-i-l-s-o-o-o-n! If you wanted to draw up your own list of Desert Island Pints, please go ahead. Until the next issue of Iron Brew!

**A BEERGEER**

### SUMMER PUB OF THE SEASON

#### Award goes to Nelthorpe Arms, South Ferriby

Our first Pub of the Season accolade for two years was awarded to the Nelthorpe Arms in South Ferriby in early July.

Branch Chairman Mark Elsome presented licensee Gavin Richards with a framed certificate in the Wilson's Snug area of the pub flanked by CAMRA members and friends.



The branch committee unanimously decided to select the Nelthorpe for the award for not only being a fine pub, but also for Gavin having played a major role in the development of the new Shadow Bridge Brewery based in Barton.

Gavin had the three Shadow Bridge core beers on the bar for the presentation – Battle Standard (3.8% ABV), Dragon Slayer (4.1%) and Elvish Fury (4.3%), which all proved to be tasty and very drinkable. The brewery operation is going well with a number of local pubs taking the cask Shadow Bridge beers and bottle sales at the Brewery Tap proving popular. We congratulate Gavin and all staff at the Nelthorpe Arms on their well-deserved award and we wish them continued success in the future.

**MARK ELSOME**

### KELHAM ISLAND BREWERY CLOSES ITS DOORS

#### Brewery Ceases Trading due to Perfect Storm of Lockdowns and Rising Costs

*Beer writer Roger Protz reflects on the sad closure of Kelham Island Brewery in Sheffield. Its beers were popular in our area through their regular appearances at the Blue Bell in Scunthorpe and a few other local pubs – Ed.*

The closure of Kelham Island brewery in Sheffield – famous for its Pale Rider beer – sent shock waves through the industry and the ranks of beer lovers. The brewery was 32 years old and its success was an inspiration for other aspiring small, independent beer makers.

Ed Wickett, who ran the brewery following the death of his father Dave in 2012, said the closure was “a whirlwind of problems, with Covid and lockdowns having a massive impact.”

“We’ve had a tricky couple of years and they could have got worse. The brewery is getting old and some bits were falling off. It needed investment but we’ve been faced with surcharges for gas, fuel, malt, hops and delivery charges. “We’ve done our best to absorb increases as much as possible but we had to pass some of the price rises on to stay viable. But if you tell a publican who’s been taking your beer that the price of a cask that was £75 last month is now £85 they put the phone down on you.”

The brewery was launched in 1990 by Dave Wickett, who was active in CAMRA and a member of the Campaign’s Industry and Economics Committee. Dave taught economics in Sheffield but when he tired of “this dismal science” he put his love of good beer into practice by buying a pub in the Kelham Island district in 1981 and renaming it the Fat Cat. The pub, close to the River Don that once powered the local steel industry, attracted beer lovers from near and far, especially when Dave brought Timothy Taylor’s Landlord to Sheffield for the first time.

In 1990 Dave built a small brewery next to the pub to augment its cask ales and he restored brewing to a city that had lost the local brewer Ward’s and plants owned by Bass and Whitbread.



The success of Kelham Island led to Dave building a bigger plant close by. He designed one of the first golden ales called Pale Rider (5.2 % ABV) that achieved national sales when it was named Champion Beer of Britain in 2004 at CAMRA’s Great British Beer Festival.



It was one of the first beers to use hops from the United States and introduced British drinkers to the

citrus notes of the Willamette variety. The brewery cashed in on the success of the beer with such brews as Easy Rider (4.3% ) and Riders of the Storm (4.5%) but it didn’t neglect Steel City’s older traditions with such beers as Best Bitter (3.8 %) and Pride of Sheffield (4 %). Dave Wickett became a powerful force in the region. He was an advisor to Thornbridge brewery in Derbyshire when the owner of Thornbridge Hall, Jim Harrison, opened a small 10-barrel plant in the grounds. The success of Thornbridge beers, Jaipur IPA (5.9%) in particular, led to a 30,000-barrel plant being built in Bakewell.

The original Kelham Island brewing kit was donated by Dave to the Welbeck Estate near Worksop in Nottinghamshire. Claire Monk, who studied biochemistry at Sheffield university and then learned brewing skills with Dave Wickett, moved to Welbeck to brew beers for the estate’s acclaimed school of cooking and food preparation. Her beers became available in pubs in the area and include pale ale, bitter and porter.

Dave Wickett had a generous spirit. When a derelict pub near the Fat Cat reopened as the Kelham Island

Tavern he said he didn’t mind if the name caused confusion with his brewery. “People will go there and then they’ll come to the Fat Cat,” he said. He was equally happy to allow a pub in Norwich to be called the Fat Cat: “It’s outside my trading area!” he laughed.

Kelham Island brewery won’t be forgotten as Ed Wickett says he will keep the Fat Cat open and it will continue to sell his beers until stocks run out.

He says he’s had enquiries from as far away as Scotland from brewers interested in buying his brands. No decisions have been made but it’s possible that Pale Rider could live again. Ed Wickett, who ran the brewery for 10 years, says he’s “proud to have been part of the Kelham Island story.” It’s to be hoped that the long arm of Covid won’t strike down other equally proud brewers of fine beer.

**PROTZ ON BEER**

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

## **PARTY IN THE PARK**

### **Real Ale & Cider Bar Contributes to Success**

Scunthorpe & District CAMRA were approached by Bottesford Town

Council earlier in the year about running a real ale & cider bar at a Platinum Jubilee event they were planning for early June. After some preliminary discussions the branch agreed to help out and planning of the beer & cider bar got underway. The Party in the Park was to be held at Valley Park in Bottesford and would be a one day event to be held on 4 June from 12 noon until 6 pm.

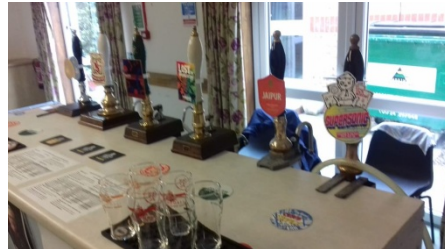
Bearing this in mind we proposed to the council that we put on six handpulled real ales and three bag-in-the-box ciders, equivalent to around 68 gallons in total or 540 pints .

After some discussion about plastic glasses (many of the planned attractions would be outside), we decided in the end to use the branch's stock of old half and pint festival glasses and charge a refundable deposit.

Following a couple of further meetings with the council secretary to discuss other aspects of the beer side of things, we were able to order the beer and cider from local wholesalers Small Beer of Lincoln and selected the following:  
Atom Tidal Forces (4.5% ABV)

Brewsters Dragon Street Porter (4.9%)  
Castle Rock Majesty (4.3%)  
Salopian Lost in Translation (4.6%)  
Thornbridge Jaipur (5.9%)  
Tiny Rebel Supersonic (4.0%)

Scrumpy Wasp Hibernate Cider (5.0%)  
SeaCider Raspberry Ripple Cider (4.0%)  
Snails Bank Very Perry (5.0%)



When it came around to setting up for the event, our call for local members to come and assist didn't elicit much of a response. Apart from some help with transport and building the bar, my wife Gill and I set the whole thing up by ourselves over a period of three days. We had a brief tasting session on the Friday morning (all in the name of quality control you understand) and with the exception of the Castle Rock beer which was still conditioning vigorously, all the beers and ciders were ready to go.

And so the day came and the bar was very busy from the start – in fact overall attendance was far higher than we had imagined, particularly as the weather outside was a little overcast and cool – hardly ideal for the intended outdoor picnics. We did also get help serving on the day from local CAMRA members and others.



All the beers and ciders proved popular and the stream of customers never died down until the end. With a much higher demand than we'd expected it was perhaps

inevitable that we'd eventually run out and sure enough at around 4 pm there wasn't a drop of beer or cider left to sell and we had to close the bar earlier than planned.

One comment we heard was that 'CAMRA didn't order enough beer'. While undeniably true in isolation, the context was that we ordered enough for what we thought a one day event of this nature would require, so felt that this comment was a little unfair. Hindsight is a wonderful thing of course and demand was much higher than anyone anticipated.

We may well be involved again next year when Bottesford Town Council celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and if we are we'll make sure we have substantially more beer and cider available!

Other attractions at the event such as the cake & coffee stalls, the baking competition, the classic car show, the bonnie dog competition and the prize raffle proved popular and overall the event was well attended despite the slightly gloomy weather. All profits from the event were donated to the Lindsey Lodge Hospice charity and we believe the branch played a significant part in its overall success.



Thanks to all who came along to enjoy the beers and ciders and support the event. Hopefully we'll see you again next year for more great real ales, ciders and perries. Cheers!

**MARK ELSOME**

## ST. PETER'S CHURCH 2<sup>ND</sup> BEER FESTIVAL

### Scheduled for September

Bottesford continues to consolidate its title as the real ale centre of Scunthorpe as planning for the 2<sup>nd</sup> St Peter's Church Beer Festival continues apace. Their 2<sup>nd</sup> festival is scheduled to take place between 22 – 24 September (*see poster, right*). This festival has a twofold purpose – to raise funds for the upkeep of the church and to attract local people into the church itself. Also to enjoy a great range of real ales and ciders of course! Supported by Scunthorpe & District CAMRA, an expanded beer and cider range is envisaged this year, with 22 beers (six on handpump) and up to 8 ciders. Last year's successful blueprint will be followed again, so there will be food provision at all sessions, including a barbecue on the Friday and Saturday evening, plus the



festival tombola will be well stocked with all manner of beery goodies, so a chance to spin to win!

The festival has the superb backdrop of the Gothic styled church and is a great venue to meet up with friends during the festival for a chat over a few beers.

There will be a modest entry fee of £1 to all sessions and opening times are: Thurs 22 Sept 530 – 1030 pm; Fri 23 & Sat 24 Sept 12 noon – 1030 pm.

Last year the festival was staged in late September and the weather was good for the time of year – hopefully it will be warm enough again for a spot of al fresco drinking in the

outdoor gazebo.



We hope you'll be able to make it again this autumn to enjoy a great range of real ales and ciders. See you there!

**MARK ELSOME**

## WHAT ON EARTH? No.51: GOSE

### Maltese Island or Ancient Wheat Beer?

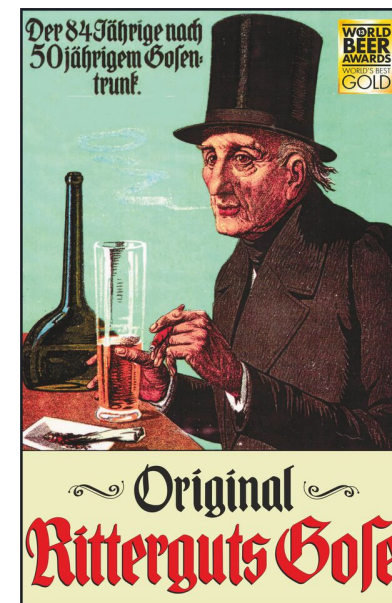
Null points to anyone who thinks they've been on holiday to a Maltese island of that name (it's Gozo). An easy mistake to make!

Gose is in fact a spontaneously top-fermented German wheat beer brewed with lactic fermentation and flavoured with coriander and salt.

It originated in the German town of Goslar in Lower Saxony, home to the Gose River as long ago as the year 1,000. However it wasn't until the

mid-18<sup>th</sup> century that it became popular with new markets found in nearby Leipzig and Halle, with over 80 *gosenschenkes* or Gose taverns opening in Leipzig alone.

The beer experienced a modern revival in the 1990's with the formation of the Bayerischer Bahnhof Brewery in Leipzig and was then picked up by the craft beer revival as an example of a hitherto almost unknown world beer. Today Gose is brewed as a basic wheat beer with half Pilsner malt and half wheat malt plus coriander, salt and lactic acid added at the wort step.



Gose beers brewed in Leipzig have a very distinct flavour profile – a green apple aroma, a ripe plum fruitiness, a herbal coriander finish and a refreshing hit of salt with medium sourness that makes it moreish and easy to drink.

Craft brewers across the world, but particularly in the UK and USA, have dabbled with the style, but in the UK only one (as far as I know), Magic Rock in Huddersfield, has made a Gose beer one of their core offerings. This is Salty Kiss, a gooseberry Gose of modest 4.1% strength.



The beer is based on the Gose style and flavoured with gooseberry, sea buckthorn and sea salt to give a tart, slightly sour, fruity beer. And fair play to them; they've pushed hard at what is in reality a niche style and

made Salty Kiss almost a mainstream beer – it's even turned up in that well-known craft beer emporium that is the Iceland chain of stores! I have tried the beer on draught in the company of CAMRA friends on a visit to the Magic Rock Brewery Tap, where reaction within our group varied from 'refreshing' to 'tastes like TCP!' (although who's taste testing TCP these days?). Why not try it yourself and make up your own mind?

Fair play to Magic Rock though for promoting the Gose style of beer in the way they do. It's certainly an acquired taste, but well worth acquiring. Give it a go – you'll probably find the canned version in your local supermarket.

So there you have it – all you'll ever need to know about Gose beer and its place in the craft beer firmament!

**A BEERGEK**

Based on information from: -

<https://www.eater.com/drinks/2015/10/30/9643780/gose-beer-germany>

## **PUB & BREWERY NEWS**

New beers from **Little Big Dog** in Barrow include **Little Sunshine** (4.2% ABV), a session IPA hopped with Simcoe, Galaxy and Cascade giving

Pine, citrus and tropical notes and inspired by a Californian summer (or a Scunthorpe heatwave perhaps?), plus **Schnauzers in the Mist**, a hoppy, hazy IPA dry hopped with Mosaic and Citra at 6.8%, pushing the boundaries between a double and triple IPA.

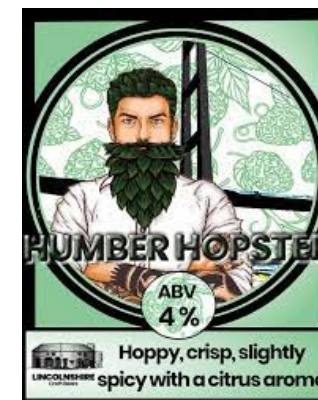
Due to staff changes at the **Dog & Gun** pub in East Butterwick, the food service will now be restricted to a series of one-off days, which will be a combination of Sunday roasts and themed evenings each month, publicised well in advance. The beers from the on-site **DarkTribe** microbrewery will continue as normal.

The first of a number of seasonal brews from **Shadow Bridge Brewery** should appear in September. This will be **Wrath of the Gods**, a 4.5% strength pale ale.

**Weird Beard Brewery**, a leading light of the London craft beer scene (although they produce a substantial amount of beer in cask), has been sold and the brewery in Hanwell, West London closed because of excessive costs.

The brewery will now move north to Bury in Greater Manchester and the head brewer and founder will continue to have day-to-day involvement in the business. Hopefully they'll thrive in the vibrant brewing scene that already exists in that region.

**Lincolnshire Craft Beers** of Melton Ross are planning a series of new beers this year, the first of which is **Humber Hopster**, available in cask and bottle.



The fight to prevent the **Lincoln Imp** in Scunthorpe from being demolished to make way for housing continues, with over 200 objections to the planning application logged on the North Lincolnshire Council website including support from local MP Holly Mumby-Croft.



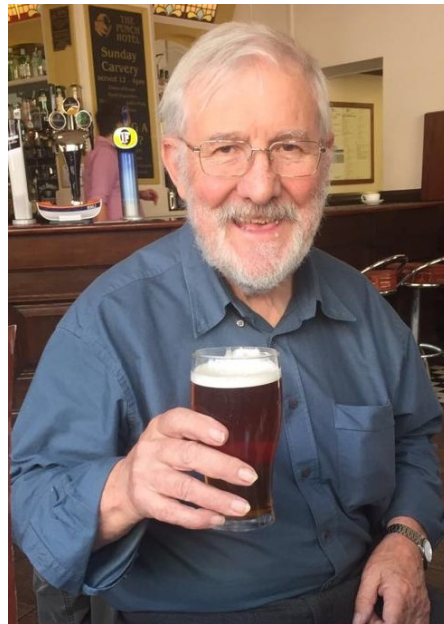
The pub has also recently been granted Asset of Community Value (ACV) status by the council, which gives it some further protection under planning laws. Scunthorpe & District CAMRA were pleased to help in this process by providing ACV templates and guidance notes.

## **OBITUARY: MIKE WILSEA**

### **20/12/47 – 22/04/22**

It is with sadness that I report the recent death of branch member and friend Mike Wilsea. Mike became involved with CAMRA in its very early days in the 1970's and remained so for the rest of his life. He was living in Cambridge at the time and was 'well known in the branch and instrumental in the organisation and running of the first Cambridge Beer Festival'. When career moves necessitated geographical moves, Mike also moved CAMRA branch and enjoyed membership spells in Oxford and Hull, the latter where he served as branch chair for two years in the 1990s. Friends in Hull branch remember Mike as 'a soft spoken man' who 'brought a welcome spell of stability to the branch'. It was

during his time in Hull that he met and married Sue – despite organising their first date to 'a little pub by the river' which turned out to be The Whalebone; not quite what Sue had envisaged! When Mike and Sue moved across the Humber to Barton in 2014 Mike quickly became involved in the Scunthorpe branch. Scunthorpe branch chair Mark Elsome comments that 'Mike was happy to help out whenever he could and was supportive of what we were trying to do as a branch'. I had the pleasure of Mike's company at several beer festivals; his knowledge of beer was clear and his



tasting notes always spot on and, of

course, methodically recorded. Sue recently came across Mike's hand written A4 log detailing every pub visited and every pint of beer drunk during 1978 – more than 200 of both; this typifies Mike's quiet attention to detail as does his copy of the 1975 GBG (non-plague edition) which he had updated and corrected as he visited the listed pubs.

Mike is sadly missed.

**CHRISTINE ANDREW**

## **CLUBLAND – A NEW BOOK**

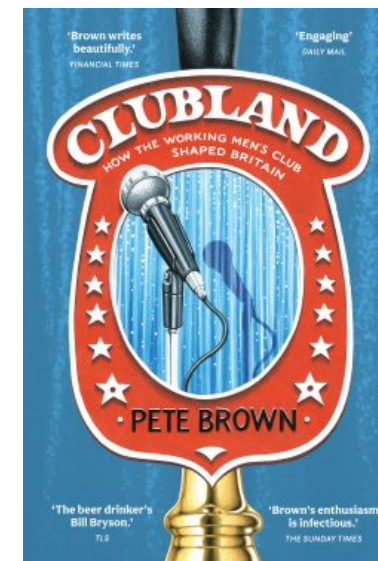
### **FROM PETE BROWN**

#### **How the Working Men's Club Shaped Britain**

*One of our favourite beer writers, Pete Brown, has a new book out on a neglected part of British culture. Given Pete's pedigree on other beer subjects, it should be a good read – Ed*

Pete Brown is a convivial guide on this journey through the intoxicating history of the working men's clubs. From the movement's founding by teetotaler social reformer the Reverend Henry Solly to the booze-soaked mid-century heyday, when more than 7 million Brits were

members, this warm-hearted and entertaining book reveals how and why the clubs became the cornerstone of Britain's social life – offering much more than cheap Federation Bitter and chicken in a basket. Often dismissed as relics of a bygone age – bastions of bigotry and racism – Brown reminds us that long before the days of Phoenix Nights, 3,000-seat venues routinely played host to stars like Shirley Bassey, Louis Armstrong, and the Bee Gees, offering entertainment for all the family, and close to home at that. Britain's best-known comedians made reputations through a thick miasma of smoke, from Sunnyside to Skegness. For a young man growing up in the pit town of Barnsley this was a radiant wonderland that



transformed those who entered. Brown explores the clubs' role in defining masculinity, community and class identity for generations of men in Britain's industrial towns. They were, at their best, a vehicle for social mobility and self-improvement, run as cooperatives for working people by working people: an informal, community-owned pre-cursor to the Welfare State.

As the movement approaches its 160th anniversary, this exuberant book brings to life the thrills and the spills of a cultural phenomenon that might still be rescued from irrelevance.

Published by Harper Collins  
Hardback, price £16.99

<https://www.petebrown.net/>

## COMEDIAN MAISIE ADAM JOINS BATTLE FOR CASK ALE

### Creates 'Mean Tweets' Style Video Piece about Cask Beer

In the latest instalment of its year-long campaign to encourage more people to 'Drink Cask Beer', Black Sheep Brewery has enlisted the help of comedian Maisie Adam to dispel some of the common misconceptions that surround cask

beer, and tackle the cask trolls, head on!

With numerous comedy shows under her belt, such as *Mock the Week*, *Have I Got News for You*, and *8 Out of 10 Cats*, the Masham brewery has partnered with fellow Yorkshire comedian Maisie to create a "Mean Tweets" video, reading some of the negative, false and downright hurtful things that people have said about cask beer online – before Maisie retorts in her usual, blunt style to explain exactly why they're so wrong.



Despite being the 'original craft beer' – rich in flavour, variety and heritage – cask beer has experienced a steady decline for several years due to changing consumer habits, the growth of other drinks categories, and repeated pub closures during lockdown. However, the Masham-based brewery is on a mission to change this, with the brewery launching its high profile 'Drink Cask Beer'

campaign in February this year. Since the launch, the brewery has worked with spoken word artist, Matt Abbott, to commission a bold, powerful poem detailing the history, tradition, and relevance of cask ale for all. Abbott's poem was then performed in a thought-provoking video production, featuring Bradford actress, Chantelle Pierre.

The full Maisie Adam video can be watched at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocs4xUPj2BI>

**PROTZ ON BEER**

## KEYKEG RECYCLING SCHEME NOW IN OPERATION

### Norfolk Beer Distributor Jolly Good Beer Joins with OneCircle

*These non-returnable plastic containers for keg beer have been a blight on our green and pleasant landfills since their introduction in 2006. Good to see a Keykeg recycling scheme is now in operation. Here are the details – Ed*

Once empty, KeyKegs can be recycled into the actual raw materials used to produce new KeyKegs. Each month, Jolly Good Beer collects around 750 empty KeyKegs for recycling, that may

otherwise have ended up as landfill. It aims to collect many more across the regions.



The company started collecting empty KeyKegs, in partnership with producer OneCircle, after local waste management companies were unable to guarantee that circular materials are recycled correctly. Hospitality professionals across the country can now help the environment by returning all their empty KeyKegs through Jolly Good Beer. The amount of recycled material in each new KeyKeg will steadily increase as more empty kegs are collected.

Yvan Seth, owner of Jolly Good Beer, said: "Jolly Good Beer is proud to be a part of the OneCircle recycling programme, through which we can offer our customers a better service whilst contributing to the reduction of single-use plastic waste in our industry. Through OneCircle we are sending tonnes of plastic keg

materials back to the manufacturer, to be made into more kegs.”

Jolly Good Beer collects empty KeyKegs during deliveries, limiting the number of unnecessary journeys and reducing its carbon footprint. It then crushes and bundles the empty kegs for OneCircle to collect.

OneCircle shreds, separates and sorts the different plastics on an automatic recycling line to recover the raw materials. As much recycled material as possible is used to produce new KeyKeg parts, while the remainder is recycled for other uses.

Other producers/recyclers/ breweries such as ELISE Alsace in France, Williams Brothers in Scotland and First Mile in London have also joined the scheme.

**BEER TODAY**

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

## THE LIFECYCLE OF A CRAFT BREWERY

### Can Breweries Stay Relevant?

*American beer writer Jeff Alworth recently penned a thought provoking article online on the lifecycle of a craft brewery, triggered by the recent takeover of Stone by Sapporo (a global Japanese brewing*

*company). This extract is written from the perspective of craft breweries in the United States, but could apply to any number of UK craft brewers; think Brewdog, Cloudwater or Tiny Rebel and see how neatly they fit - Ed.*

Everyone loves a new brewery. Plop a new one down on the street today, and I’m the first in line tomorrow. Back in 2009, then-brewmaster Karl Ockert of then-existing BridgePort Brewery (RIP) introduced me to a phrase I’ve been using religiously ever since that describes this impulse: the novelty curve.

“Every brewery that comes along goes through a novelty curve. Ninkasi is the current big one on the streets. They’re going through a novelty phase where people are out there trying and sampling. All breweries go through that. If I left BridgePort now and went out and started a new brewery, I could do the same thing. I could take tap handles right and left and get a lot of sampling. But it’s that “stayability” — being able to develop loyalty. That’s the tough part.”

At the time we were speaking, BridgePort was 25 years old, and Ninkasi was two. BridgePort was

struggling to find its identity more than a decade after they’d released an IPA that had once defined the brewery. Meanwhile, Ninkasi is 15 years old now, and they’re suffering from being on the other side of that whole novelty curve thing. Their IPA, Total Domination, was giving Karl fits back then, and now it’s years past being the IPA people talk about.



Breweries have different business models, and they age at different rates. Roughly speaking, however, successful breweries go through something like this:

### Honeymoon Period.

The period when people come with open minds to see what’s shaking.

### Cool Phase

(a day and many comments later, perhaps “buzz phase” would be a better name here). It takes some time for a brewery to get buzz, but following that honeymoon phase, successful breweries often enjoy the

best periods of their lives. Whether they’re a niche brewery doing open-fermentation lagers, a buzz brewery doing IPAs and pastry stouts, or a slick place with great branding and a cool hang, for a period of time, they seem like shiny new paragons of whatever it is people associate with them.

### Established Phase.

Once a brewery has figured things out, good ones enjoy an established phase where people think of them as being reliably awesome. They maybe don’t have the most buzz anymore, but they have loyalty and respect. Growth seems automatic and effortless.

### Awkward Phase.

I don’t know a single elder brewery that hasn’t gone through an awkward phase, though they can look very different. Some breweries may suffer declining quality or a lack of the kind of invention that marked earlier stages. They may get awkward in the way dads do—using slang (or marketing pushes) that are cringey. Maybe they don’t even shift what they’re doing much, but their relevance slides and they don’t seem to have an answer. (This describes



Stone.) It happens to super cool little breweries and big breweries alike. No brewery can age without hitting a wall eventually.

### **Death, Sale, or Revival.**

Breweries can weather the awkward phase, but it's a dangerous point. Some breweries illustrate how to do this well: Sierra Nevada and New Belgium jump out. Others, like Ommegang and—well, BridgePort is an obvious example—haven't or didn't figure it out.

It doesn't stop, either. Old European breweries constantly cycle through different phases. They even may return to the cool phase—Cantillon was barely hanging on when beer nerds discovered them in the mid-aughts and turned them into an international darling, to cite one example. Leadership, quality, trends, and reinvention all play a role. No brewery stays cool forever. Business is really hard, and those who manage to survive into their third or fourth decade do so because they've managed to make good choices and avoid too many bad ones.

**Jeff Alworth**

<https://www.beervanablog.com/>



*And finally, a bit of levity to finish ...*

### **SIGHTS TO MAKE THE HEART SINK**

#### **Pub Features that are a Turn-off**

North-west blogger Curmudgeon recently posted a blog about features of pubs that made his heart sink. These included:

- 1) Charges a substantial premium for half pints
- 2) Place settings on all or most of the tables
- 3) Motivational quotes on the walls
- 4) Uniformed bar staff
- 5) Deliberately curated “mellow” music

This got me thinking that we could revisit this topic ourselves. But with the inclusion of the ‘Desert Island Pints’ feature also in this issue, you

might think we're like an ageing rock band who simply churn out their Greatest Hits instead of anything remotely new or original; to which I would argue that after 40 years of Iron Brew it's nice to come back now and again to previous topics with a fresh perspective!

So here's a (new) random selection of pub features that might persuade you to vote with your feet\*:

- 1) Sky Sports on the TV with the volume at ear-shattering levels
- 2) Beer kept on sale after you have had your pint of vinegary liquid replaced with something drinkable
- 3) People sat at the bar 'effing and jeffing' loudly while you're trying to order a pint
- 4) Groups of people standing or sitting at the bar who are reluctant to move aside and allow you access to order a pint
- 5) Jukebox and TV both on at the same time
- 6) Pool table jammed close to one wall of the pub requiring vertical cue action to hit the ball at that side or having to go outside to the adjacent car park and play your shot through an open window
- 7) Bar staff partially filling your glass, taking your money and then

serving someone else without topping up your beer

- 8) Toilet paper running out in the Gents (or Ladies) and there are no replacement rolls in the loo
- 9) Pubs with toilets up three flights of twisting stairs, requiring a map, a sherpa and carrying of an emergency oxygen cylinder to reach the facilities at base camp
- 10) Beer gardens where the ashtrays on tables are full to the brim and don't seem to have been emptied for about six weeks

*\* These pub features are written for comedic purposes only – most of the pubs I visit are (thankfully) not at all like this!*

**MARK ELSOME**

**With thanks to:**

<https://pubcurmudgeon.blogspot.com/>

