



BEER MATTERS



Issue 531
February 2024

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Editor

Andy Cullen

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February 2024

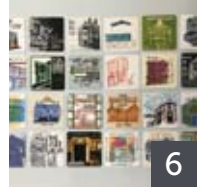
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What's on in your local CAMRA



Christmas in Crookes

Branch members' 9 Dec festive meal at the Ball

Some members sampled the delights in **Two Sheds** first of all. I met them a little later in the **Punchbowl**, where there was a good selection of beers including a True North Dry Irish Stout of 5%, and a Black Iris Snake Eyes, a 3.8% APA.

We then decamped to the **Ball**, where they had 7-8 wickets. A popular choice was a dark ale named *Rocking Rudolph*, admittedly a Greene King beer, but tasty with a little spice. For my second, I plumped for a paler ale in *Saltaire South Island*, a NZ pale ale at a sessional 3.5%. Plus 10% discount with your CAMRA membership card.

The meal consisted of three courses, soup, prawn cocktail or chicken goujons. Followed almost unanimously by a turkey dinner. For those of a sweet tooth, there was a fruit cheesecake or Christmas pudding, while a few of us had the cheese and biscuits which included a tasty blue cheese.

Kevin Thompson



January social

Good turnout for year's first event

A rather good number of 14 members attended our annual gathering of a trip round the pubs in this traditionally quiet time of early January.

The meeting point was the **Bath Hotel** on Victoria Street, a very ornate, traditional pub with interesting features. Beers tend to be from Abbeydale, Ashover, and other local sources. I plumped for a pint of Abbeydale *Deception*, a 4.1% New Zealand pale ale, before giving a half of Ashover *Light Mild*, 3.8%, a go.

We then hopped over a damp West Street to the **Red Deer**, another traditional backstreet pub frequented by both visitors, locals and students. Again there was a good choice of wickets where I went for a pint of *Citra*, a hazy pale of 4.2% from Oakham Ales, which seemed to be the choice of the majority.

Next was the short walk down to Division Street to **Vocation & Co**, a nice modern real ale and craft keg bar. Lots of their beer is on pump, keg, and in cans. Being a flavoured stout lover the *Naughty & Nice*, a

5.9% chocolate flavour stout, hit the spot.

We then walked to Orchard Square and the **Old Shoe**. This is surprisingly in an old Schuh shop and sells a large variety of ale, cider, gin and wine. Again the majority went for *Chinook in Your Heart*, a Cloudwater New England hazy pale weighing in at 4.4%.

We had around 75 minutes until last buses, so headed over the short distance to the **Head of Steam**, a pub set in the old Sheffield & Hallamshire Savings Bank. Beers on offer included Camerons *3 Kings*, a red ale of 3.8% and my choice *Clever Gyle*, a nice 5.1% APA from the excellent Brew York.

As we all said our farewells, we can reflect on a well attended, good night out, with even better beer. Roll on next year.

Kevin Thompson

Bath Hotel



Red Deer



Vocation & Co.



Old Shoe



JOIN US!

For details of future events for local CAMRA members, see the diary page.

Head of Steam





Sheffield pub coasters

Each year students new to the BA Hons Illustration course at Sheffield Hallam University are given an introductory illustration brief which helps them to find out, and report back, on aspects of the cultural heritage of the city – this year the focus was to draw our fantastic Sheffield pubs.

The underpinning intention of the brief is for students to practice and celebrate their drawing ability while coupled with getting to know each other a bit better as they are invited to draw on location together. For students new to the city this helps them to orientate the city helping them to seek and find out a little more about what it has to offer more generally.

Students were asked to produce a large body of observational drawings of their favourite chosen pub then, through selection, apply one of their designs, including the pub name, to a

drink's coaster. The designs were then digitally printed on Campus at our Fitzalan Square, Head Post Office location by our brilliant technical team.

Some of our students even returned to the pubs and took photos of them in situ with several requests to purchase a set of the designs after they were posted on the course Instagram page.

Frazer Hudson, senior lecturer on the illustration course comments, “Our pubs are special meeting places not only to share the news of the day but where ideas are formed, bonds are made, and culture is created.”

To see more examples of our Illustration student work visit [instagram.com/shuillustration](https://www.instagram.com/shuillustration).

Frazer Hudson



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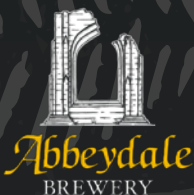


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Royal Hotel Dungworth



Anglers Rest Bamford

211 year old pub to close and go up for sale

The owners of the Royal Hotel in Dungworth have announced they are selling up and retiring, with a worry that this may become another lost pub. This pub, which also offers bed & breakfast accommodation, was built in 1813 and has been run by David Lambert and Dave & Joanne Jubb for the last 25 years. As well as real ale, the pub serves bar meals and has a reputation for their home made pies, it is also famous for being one of the North Sheffield pubs that take part in the traditional Christmas carol events as well as hosting a folk club. It also offers spectacular views over the Loxley Valley.

The owners are very much overdue a well earned retirement but have been quite frank about the situation the pub may find itself in – the location is in a small rural village where people don't really go the local pub any more and the regular business travellers that stayed in the accommodation have disappeared since Covid as well as there being increased competition from new build chain hotels in the City Centre. They point out

that as the pub comes with a separate outbuilding in an attractive location the combined site will be worth a lot of money to someone wanting to convert it all to residential use.

On the other hand a bunch of regulars are looking at setting up a community interest company to buy it as a going concern. This will be a challenge considering the asking price is over £1m! They currently hope to get enough people to pledge to buy £500,000 worth of £500 shares before proceeding further. Their website is savetheroyalhotel.com. And of course it could still be bought by a private concern wanting to keep it going as a pub and hotel.

Fingers crossed someone buys it to run as a pub and B&B and injects the appropriate energy, enthusiasm and investment to reinvigorate it and make it a huge success, opening another positive chapter in the pub's story, rather than ending over 200 years of history.

The last day of trading under the current management is 1 March 2024.

Community owned pub's management relaunch

The Anglers Rest is owned by a community interest company where all the shares are held by locals who were keen to maintain local community facilities when the pub company that previously owned it put the building on the market. The building, as well as housing the pub and restaurant, also hosts the village post office and cafe.

The pub part of the Anglers building saw a relaunch on Sunday 7 January with a new management team employed, headed by John Parsons who is a chef that is very well regarded in the Hope Valley, being local to the area and having cooked at Breedon Hope Works, Hathersage Social Club, and the Sir William in Grindlifford as well as working at the Ivy in London! He's brought a menu of comfort food of the highest quality to the pub's dining room with the Sunday roast being in high demand judging by how many are booked in for the first day!

Meanwhile, running the bar is Jo Doyle, who equally has



Jo and John

Preview night tasting menu ►



experience and a lot of respect in Sheffield's pub trade. She has moved on to her role at the Anglers from the Sheaf View in Heeley, a popular pub that regularly picks up CAMRA awards!

You may have noticed at the Sheaf View's beer festivals they are a fan of Torrside brewery, based in New Mills (Derbyshire) and Jo seems to be planning on sharing her love with the drinkers of Bamford having already taken a trip over to New Mills for a collaborative brew day to help produce a new house beer for the Anglers!

If you fancy a trip to the Anglers, bus 257 from Sheffield to Bakewell runs past the pub's front door, alternatively it is about a mile from Bamford railway station which is also served by buses 271 and 272, this is walkable in about 15 minutes (note it is uphill though!).

Inn Brief

Blue Ball in Worrall has revealed the total amount of money raised for charity in 2023 by customers and staff was £11,599.34. Well done all!

Blind Monkey in Walkley is hosting a makers market at the pub on Sunday 3 March.

You may remember back in April last year the **Hallamshire Hotel** Music Hall & Late Bar (previously **Bloo88**) on West Street in Sheffield City Centre was reopened on a temporary lease from Greene King, just at weekends, by the same management as the Washington but has been closed since Christmas.

Some good news here – the closure was for a refurbishment. This will see a dancefloor installed downstairs as part of a new decor described as something that “could have fallen right out of Stanley Kubrick's head”.

There has also been investment in a brand new sound system, restoration of the upstairs room into a gig space like the old days and improvements to the beer garden. We are told Improvements to the bar are also included including the introduction of craft beer as well as a new cocktail menu. The big relaunch is on Friday 2 February.

James O'Hara has been awarded an honourary degree by the University of Sheffield. As well as being one of the founders of Tramlines festival the businesses he is involved with include Public cocktail bar, Picture House Social on Abbeydale Road, Gatsby, Fagan's and various cafes. He's also part of the consortium that relaunched the Kelham Island Brewery brand, which is now brewed at Thornbridge.





Market Tavern

December brought news that the Market Tavern (Exchange Street, S2 5TR) is to be demolished. While asbestos removal work was in progress, it was discovered that the chimneys were structurally unsound.

The pub opened in 1797, was rebuilt to follow a new street line in 1909 and then completely rebuilt by Sheffield brewery, Thomas Berry & Co. in 1914. Opinion is divided regarding the origin of the then Rotherham House name. Either this was due to ownership by Rotherham-based, Bentleys Brewery, or proximity to the start of the Rotherham tram service.

1961 plans illustrate the installation of a Wimpy Bar on the front of the pub (NW Oldfield, Architect & Surveyor for Tennant Brothers Limited: see Sheffield Archives: MC/DC/235). Introduced to the UK in 1954, Wimpy is a multinational hamburger restaurant chain.

In 1968, the pub became the Old No.12, a Berni Inn, one of a chain of British steakhouses, established in 1955. Berni Inns, a forerunner of today's pub restaurants, provided Tudor-looking false oak beams and white walls. 1982 saw a take-over by Mecca and a change of name to the Garden. In 1995, it was sold to Whitbread and rebranded as Beefeater/Brewers Fayre.

The pub closed in 2006.

Dave Pickersgill



Thornbridge

Thornbridge are this year again running a year of beer programme with a different cask beer each month appearing as a guest in pubs partnering in the scheme (and probably a few other places too!).

The 2024 brew schedule kicks off with a cask version of **Green Mountain**, the hazy session IPA that is a regular on keg followed in February by **Coco Cocoa**, a coconut edition of their regular chocolate porter.

In March is a mild called **Grand Purposes**, to be brewed as part of the International Women's Collaboration Day then in April is **Hirundo**, a 4.5% pale ale. In May the release is **Lost in the Forest** a Slovenian hopped pale ale, June sees the return of **Wye** cucumber pale ale with a red rye IPA in July and a tropical pale ale in August.

Into the autumn and the flavours start to change with the seasons – in September **Lucaria** ice cream porter puts in an appearance, this time a Biscoff flavoured version, and for Halloween in October of course pumpkin is involved! November has a chai latte flavoured stout then for Christmas in December it's a gingerbread pale ale.



Thornbridge have also been involved with the brewing of a couple of Titanic Brewery collaborations. The away fixture (brewed at Titanic in Stoke) was an extra special bitter called **Carpattia** whilst the home fixture (brewed at Thornbridge in Bakewell) is an IPA called **Britannic**, brewed using Galaxy and Simcoe hops. Both beers are 5.3% ABV.

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Abbeydale

Abbeydale Brewery were celebrating twice at the end of last year after two of their permanently available beers scooped medals at the prestigious Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) Regional Bottle & Can Awards (North East Region).

Heresy Lager (a 4.5%, gluten free continental style lager) received a bronze medal, and black IPA **Black Mass** received a top class gold award in the speciality IPA category, meaning it scored over 90/100 and will go forward to the national finals, due to be held in March. Just three of the gold awards were given out across the whole region.

This is the second year running that **Black Mass**, a 6.6% ABV, gluten free and vegan friendly black IPA, has come out as the top speciality IPA in the region. Following the award in 2022, the beer subsequently went on to win national gold in category before being declared overall champion beer in can in the whole of the UK – so the team at Abbeydale

will be eagerly waiting to find out if it can defend the title. **Black Mass** has been one of Abbeydale's permanently available beers since the business was founded in 1996, and the team believe it to be one of the world's first and longest standing beers of this style in existence. Lead brewer Jim Rangeley says of the award, "**Black Mass** has always been one of my favourite beers to both make and drink, and it's great to see that the judges agree! I'm looking forward to celebrating with a can of it."

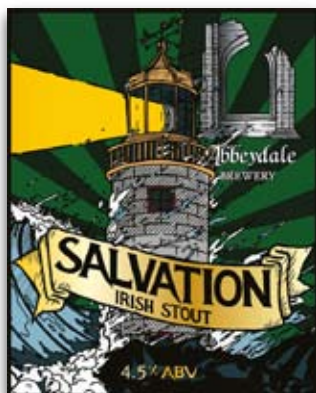
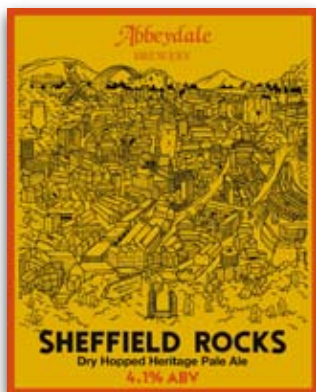
The SIBA awards see beers marked against internationally recognised style guides for the different beer award categories – looking at appearance, aroma, flavour, aftertaste and saleability. The awards are judged by beer sommeliers, experienced beer judges and fellow brewers. Neil Walker, SIBA head of comms, praised this year's winners: "This year's SIBA Independent Beer Awards Bottle & Can competition was our biggest ever, including

seven regions of the UK and hundreds of individual beers. The expert judging panel only give awards where deserved, so the winners listed really are the very best beers in the region."

In other news, **Doctor Morton** is back with a new brew, it's 100% reliable **Fake News** (4.1%)! Juicy Idaho 7 hops are balanced by delicately resinous and earthy Savinjski Goldings. Completely ineffective against truth seekers, flat earthers and mardy Yorkshire folk who have already made their bloody mind up.

The "travel poster" inspired series which we launched last year continues by staying right at home – **Visit Beauchief Abbey** (4.1%) is a classic pale ale, single hopped with Galaxy. We also have more collaborations with other fantastic cask-led breweries to follow from this range, planned for a little later in the year.

And rounding off a trilogy of new pale ale specials this



month, we have **Through the Hopback Belma** (4.0%) on the way. A new hop to us, Belma promises notes of melon and strawberry with a clean citrusy character alongside.

Onto returning beers and we see **Sheffield Rocks** (4.1%) back on bars, inspired by our wonderful city's long heritage. And from our **Brewers Emporium** range, **Irish Stout** (4.5%) from our **Salvation** series makes a welcome return along with Sheffield Beer Week collaboration **Cloud Peak** (4.8%). Look out for more news on our plans for Sheffield Beer Week itself coming soon!



Issue 531
February 2024



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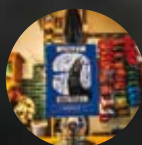


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Emmanuales

It's hard to believe it but 2024 marks ten years of biblical brews for Emmanuales. A lot has happened over that period for brewing, balding, modern monk Nick Law.

Starting off in his cellar in 2014 with a humble fermentation bucket, his first beer, *Ale the Lamb*, fermented hot and tasted like old hymnals with an aroma of fusty-churches thrown in for good measure. After honing his beers of biblical proportions and gaining local popularity, Nick assumed the role at Sheffield Brewery Co. as the head brewer.

By January 2018, was apparent that he could no longer support both Emmanuales and Sheffield Brewery Co. simultaneously and decided to put Emmanuales on hiatus whilst he figured out what to do next.

After moving away from Sheffield Brewery Co, Nick sought to help other brewers through his many skills in branding, marketing, and business and set up consultancy and agency Hop Forward to help a variety of businesses, includ-

ing Lincoln Green Brewing Co, Great Beyond Brewing Co. in Hoxton, Nigeria's first craft brewery Bature Brewery, and filmmaker Guy Ritchie's Gritchie Brewing Co.

During Lockdown, Nick felt it was time to resurrect Emmanuales and set up a fully functioning nano-brewery in his Walkley cellar, where it resides today.

To celebrate ten years of Emmanuales, Nick is kickstarting the year with two beers: *Ale the Lamb* (6.0%) - a homage (and much superior version!) of his first beer, an extra special bitter; and the second incantation of *Swinging the Incense* (9.6%) - a peated quadruple with sweet smoky flavours and fruity undertones.

As ever, the beers will be available from local stockists including Beer Central, The Green Shop, Walkley Beer Co. and The Dram Shop. For more info on Emmanuales and where to pick up these divine beers, head over to emmanuales.co.uk or follow us on all the socials @emmanuales.



Champion Beer of Sheffield

Back in October at the opening night of our Steel City Beer & Cider Festival we judged a cask beer from most of the breweries in the CAMRA Sheffield & District branch area in our Champion Beer of Sheffield competition.

We mentioned the winners in our festival review last issue, but here is a closer look at them.

BRONZE

Little Critters *Great Danish*

This is a 7.4% ABV pecan and maple stout that brings you chocolatey richness, bolstered by a subtle hint of pecan and finished with sweet maple. It is brewed with English malt grains, pecan extract (nut allergy free) and maple syrup.

SILVER

Tapped *Brook*

A porter called *Brook* (Porter Brook – the Sheffield river, get it? Groan!). This 5% ABV London porter is brewed with a generous mix of brown malt and chocolate malt to give depth in flavour and colour, dark brown with ruby hints when held to light. The mix of the dark malts give aromas of chocolate, caramel and subtle notes of coffee which develop in the flavour. Hopped with two UK hops, Phoenix and Goldings.

GOLD

Heist *The Bad Part of Gnome Town*

A 4.6% ABV hazy session IPA. It is juicy and refreshing and the aroma is an immediate explosion of citrus and tropical fruits thanks to the generous use of Citra hops. Balance by subtle pine and earthy undertones from the Simcoe hops. As well as the usual keg and can this beer saw a limited quantity go into cask for the beer festival with Heist really proving they can also do that well!

Brewery Bits

Bradfield Brewery now have two gluten free beers in their bottled range, available from their on site shop. The bottled versions of *Farmers Blonde* and *Farmers Brown Cow* are now suitable for those needing a gluten free option!



Meanwhile on cask the first half of 2024 will see a similar calendar of monthly seasonal specials from Bradfield as last year with a rotation of *Light Ale* (January), *Irish Dexter* (February), *Plum Bitter* (March), *Crucibull Ale* (April), *Cherry Beer* (May), *WimBullDon* (June) and *Elderflower Ale* (July).

Grizzly Grains released another beer just before Christmas, meaning they had three ales plus mead out in the pubs over the holiday season. The latest beer was *Lustre*, a citra hopped golden ale.



Tapped Brew Co, based at the Sheffield Tap bar, celebrated their 1000th brew with *Grand*, a 5.9% ABV classic IPA with a hop bill that delivers some pronounced bitterness.

A recent brew from **Triple Point** has been *Cappadocia*, a 4.6% pale ale. Soft and fruity, with peach, tangerine, and pineapple flavours. Using El Dorado, Cashmere, and Wolf hops. This beer kicks off a new series of bucket list inspired beers, with this one based on a hot air balloon ride in sunny Cappadocia, Turkey, apparently!





Flying into the eye of the storm

A perfect storm is hitting the pub trade, but some have the formula to fly right through it!

Trading conditions are incredibly challenging right now for pubs and bars – along with the breweries that supply them. Having racked up debts during Covid, for much of which trading wasn't permitted, now they are faced with skyrocketing overheads whilst customers increasingly cannot afford to go out and socialise as much due to the cost of living crisis driven by huge energy bills.

At this time of year we've also just got through the quietest time for hospitality businesses, when apart from people being skint after Christmas and New Year celebrations there are dry January campaigns and people make new years resolutions to detox and get fit, go to the gym and generally improve themselves! Pubs these days do rise to this challenge though, with a much better range of non-alcoholic drink options than just the usual pops and cordials, for example no and low alcohol beers from craft brewers and sparkling hop waters.

In the economic climate like it is now, people still go out and socialise but less often and tend to seek good value or special events

– and by good value, that doesn't necessarily mean cheap, it may mean getting more for your money, such as entertainment. There are many pubs in Sheffield hosting live music and in most cases entry to see the bands are either free or the tickets are quite reasonably priced. For example the Washington regularly put on bands with free admission, these are mostly younger less well known acts, while down at the Dorothy Pax there is quite a mixture of artists, generally leaning towards blues, with the ones that have cost them a bit to put on requiring a ticket to see whilst others you can just turn up at the bar to watch and chuck a few coins in the bucket to support the music. There are also various jam sessions of various genres in pubs like the Dog & Partridge and Gardeners Rest, various venues hosting open-mic events and then of course those hosting classic rock tribute bands for example the Church House, White Lion and New Barrack Tavern.

A lot of good beer pubs also recognise what people are looking for on the beer front varies between different people when they aren't going out as often and cater for this by offering both simple, affordable options (session bitter, session blonde etc) alongside really fancy craft beers you don't see in a supermarket and offer a smaller third pint measure to sip!

Whatever kind of night out, venue or drink you like, we would encourage you to keep going out and supporting the pubs, bars and clubs if you can – partly because we don't want to see the good ones going out of business but also being out socialising, enjoying yourself and being around people is actually quite good for the mental health too! Something we intend to focus on this year in *Beer Matters* magazine is to inspire people to go to pubs and also to discover interesting new beers whilst as a CAMRA branch we have a new social secretary who will be organising monthly trips for our members to pubs, beer festivals and brewery tap rooms in different areas as well as keeping our now traditional RambAles going! Check out the diary pages in *Beer Matters* and on our website for details throughout the year.

Andy Cullen

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Wadsley Bridge
- ☐ **Rutland Arms**
City Centre



sheffield.camra.org.uk/potm



Cider Pub and Club of the Year

Our **Cider Pub of the Year** and **Club of the Year** competitions are now underway.

Within the Sheffield & District CAMRA branch area, any pubs that serve real cider/perry and clubs that serve real ale are eligible for these two awards.

Cider Pub of the Year is designed to celebrate pubs that make the effort to serve and promote the proper product and encourage drinkers to visit them and try the real thing.

As for **Club of the Year**, CAMRA campaigns to protect and promote clubs, which are important community assets that promote the social well being of their local area. The

competition is run with the simple aim of finding the best clubs with the greatest commitment to quality real ale – those which offer a fantastic atmosphere, welcoming surroundings and most importantly, top quality real ale served in great condition.

Both are being run as a two part process. Nominations were received until 8 January and initial voting took place at the January branch meeting. Members still have until **20 February** to vote online using the links below.

The winning pub and club will be presented with a certificate and entered into the regional rounds of the national competitions.

VOTE

for

Cider Pub of the Year



sheffield.camra.org.uk/cpoty

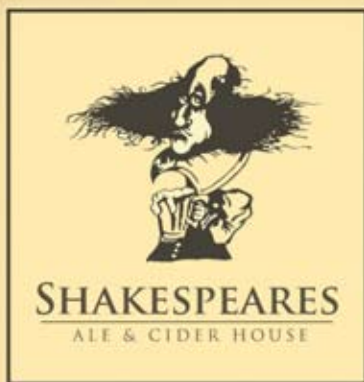
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for

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Pub of the Year 2022



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Shakespeares

Gibraltar Street

Pub of the Month
February 2024

I'm getting a sense of déjà vu writing about Shakespeares for Pub of the Month... There have been a few changes since my last piece, not least manager Lucienne moving on to a career on the brewery side of the trade, and Tom stepping into her place. The pub has also just won another accolade in the form of the annual Pints of Sheffield Battle of the Boozers on the Instagrams.

One of the things I love about the local beer scene is that while other cities have some great craft bars and some

great traditional pubs selling trad beer, Sheffield is almost unique in having proper pubs selling top tier craft beers (as well as superb cask of course). Shakespeares is a perfect example of this, being a proper old school pub with cask beers from across the country rubbing shoulders with some of the biggest names in craft from around the world (and some more obscure of course!).



Only a few of the more senior members of the branch will remember the pub's opening in 1821, since when it has passed through various breweries' (notably Wards) and pubcos'

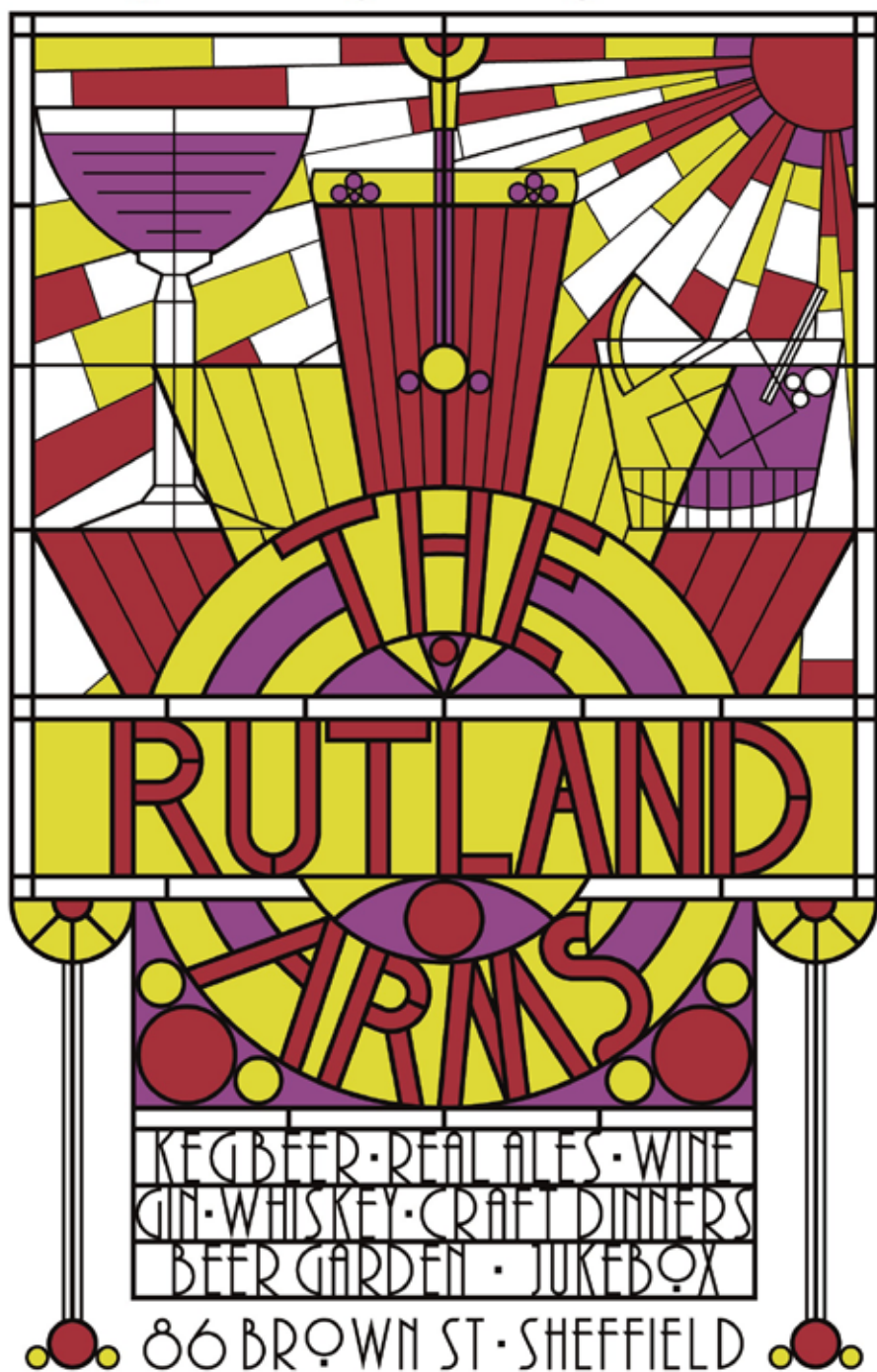
ownership, and closure, before opening as a fully independent free house in 2011. In its current guise over 7,500 different cask beers have been sold plus about 2,000 keg. Permanent fixtures on cask are Red Willow *Feckless* and Abbeydale *Deception* while the rest of the handpumps host the ever-changing guests. The keg taps feature beers from within a mile to the other side of the planet, almost always including an imperial stout, a sour or two, various IPAs and usually some crazy ****. If that really isn't enough there's a large list of cans and bottles available from the cellar. There is also an impressive selection of whiskeys and a smaller selection of whiskeys and rums (the latter needs to expand, hint hint...).

The pub itself retains a multi-room layout with rooms on all four sides of the central bar area, including a bustling front bar area, a (usually) quieter 'clock room' to the side, and the 'long room' with bench seating and a dartboard. Upstairs are two function rooms, a larger one regularly featuring live bands and a smaller one sometimes used for pub games and a couple of times a year for the festival cask bar, often including beers not seen anywhere else on cask (or in some cases at all!). Outside is a large paved beer garden which catches the evening sunlight, with a small covered area for more typical British weather...

Oh, and the sofa is still my Spot, so anyone who isn't me should keep out!

Dave Szejewski







A Grand Birthday Day Out

▲ Very central: Old Bridge Hotel

Andy looks for good autumn beer in *Last of the Summer Wine* country

To mark my 65th birthday last November we decided to spend a night in Holmfirth and chose the very centrally located **Old Bridge Hotel** for our stay.

All the pubs and bars on our list are easily accessible from this very smart hotel, which does have a limited free car park and overlooks the River Holme and Holmfirth bus station. It also sells real ale, but more of that later. Fortunately my birthday fell on a Thursday for had we come on a Monday, Tuesday or even a Wednesday some of the pubs and bars were closed. Even on a Thursday opening in some was not until 3pm/4pm.

After an extensive wander around the streets and shops, including morning coffee at Bluebird Bakery we headed to **Harvey's Bar & Kitchen** with a view to having something to eat. Unfortunately only one cask beer was available and

we didn't fancy anything from the food menu so moved on to the **Tap House**. A selection of beers were available from the nearby Nook Brewhouse but on entering we were told that the bar was closing at 1pm and would reopen at about 3:30pm. It was now 12:45, so I just had a half of Nook *Session IPA* (3.8%).

We decided to lunch at Holmgate Fish & Chip shop but had to eat them outside as the advertised inside seating was closed off. In order to walk off our lunch we went to the furthest pub on the list, the **Postcard Hotel** on the main Huddersfield Road through Holmfirth. This was a fairly large roadside pub and half of Theakston *Best Bitter* (3.8%) was enjoyed. This pub was not on the tourist trail around the town and our stay was somewhat spoilt by the sometimes loud and colorful language of some of the local punters.

Returning to the centre we sought out the **Elephant & Castle** with a view to looking at the food menu for a meal later in the day as this was advertised as being available until 6.45pm. My Adnams *Ghost Ship* (4.5%) was pleasant enough but on enquiring about food we were informed that hot drinks and food was not available as the kitchen was being refurbished, although I must say that there was no sign of any activity in the kitchen at all.

We returned to the hotel to book in and freshen up before setting out again. The first port of call after this was about a two minute walk from the hotel and what a breath of fresh air this place was. **Magic Rock Tap** was light, airy and had a fresh feel to it and with pleasant staff and customers. I had a half of the dark and tasty cask Magic Rock *Dark Arts Honeycomb Surreal Stout* (6.6%). All three handpumps were in operation here which was in total contrast to our next port of call, **O'Briens Bottle Shop & Beer Cafe** just around the corner

from here on Huddersfield Road. This had several keg taps on the wall and three hand-pumps on the bar. On enquiring about cask beer I was told that they had none on as the lines were due to be cleaned. I would have thought that they had plenty of time during their closed hours (3pm opening even on a Thursday) to clean the lines so that they could at least serve cask beer when they actually opened. I was disappointed and underwhelmed by this establishment.

Anyway, on to the next bar, **Oscar's Café & Wine Bar**. This was brightly lit and looked welcoming, but again no real ale was available so we then sought solace in the very busy **Rose & Crown**. This is also known as the **Nook** and is the home of Nook Brewhouse. Many cask Nook beers were available and I sampled both *Elder Flower* (4.5%) and *Choco Orange Stout* (5.2%) followed by a half of their guest ale, *Wensleydale Angels Touch* (4.0%). This pub was bustling with regulars and visitors and

we chose to eat in here. There was only one staff member behind the bar but he was doing a sterling job.

Next we were hoping to go in **Y's Bar & Snap**, but it was closed. After this further disappointment we decided to head back to the **Old Bridge Hotel** bar which had six handpumps of which five were in operation. I finished with a rather nice half of Recoil *White Snake* pale ale (4%).

Given the number of closed/late opening pubs/bars it occurred to me that maybe Holmfirth had it's hey day during the many years of filming for *Last of the Summer Wine* and is now suffering a little as filming has ceased. Even Sid's Café was closed on a Wednesday and Thursday.

Another Grand Day (and night) Out but was hoping for a slightly better choice of cask beer in some of the pubs/bars, when they were open that is!

Andy Morton



▲ A breath of fresh air: Magic Rock Tap



RambAles

Our RambAles combine a gently paced walk in the countryside with a real ale pub or two and CAMRA members are invited to join us. All the walks have start and finish points that are possible to reach from Sheffield by public transport.

The 2024 programme kicks off in April. Our co-ordinators, Malcolm and Jenny, are still working on the finer details but the calendar is currently planned as:

April

Lodge Moor & Redmires

May

Eyam, Foolow, Bretton and Grindleford

June

Dronfield, Apperknowle and Hundall

July

Stanton in Peak, Birchover, Darley Bridge and Bakewell

August

Bradwell, Brough and Hope

Festival guide

January

Chesterfield CAMRA

Fri 26 – Sat 27 Jan

The annual CAMRA beer festival at the Winding Wheel theatre in Chesterfield town centre is back with beer, cider and food across three rooms on two floors plus live music in the evening. More information and tickets online. The venue is just across the road from Cavendish Street bus stops (buses 43/44/50/50a/X17 from Sheffield) or a short walk up from Chesterfield railway station.

February

Mallard (Worksop)

Thu 1 – Mon 5 Feb

One of the regular beer festivals held at this pub located at Worksop railway station (on the Sheffield-Lincoln line) where a list of extra beers are hosted on a pop up bar in the basement function room.

GBBF Winter (Burton CAMRA)

Thu 15 – Sat 17 Feb

Back again at gothic Burton on Trent town hall building, a short walk from the railway station there, with a great

range of beer and cider spread across a number of rooms. As Burton is currently the host of the smaller winter edition of Great British Beer Festival, which moves around the country every few years, the Champion Winter Beer of Britain is also judged here. More information on their Facebook page. Regular trains run to Burton on Trent via Derby.

Liverpool CAMRA

Thu 15 – Sat 17 Feb

Held in the crypt of the Metropolitan Cathedral with over 200 real ales and ciders. Advance tickets advisable. More details on their website.

Bradford CAMRA

Thu 29 Feb – Sat 2 Mar

Held at Victoria Hall in Saltaire. You can get there on the train by changing at Leeds.

March

Indie Beer Feast

Fri 1 – Sat 2 Mar

This event held at Trafalgar Warehouse in Sheffield City Centre is organised by Jules Gray of Hop Hideout and Sheffield Beer Week and sees a number of independent craft brewers hosting bars alongside other attractions. Advance tickets advisable as capacity is limited.

Rotherham Real Ale & Music

Thu 7 – Sat 9 Mar

Back at Magna again in 2024, this charity fundraiser features a large range of beers on handpump and a busy programme of live music. Bus X1/X10 (Sheffield-Rotherham-Maltby) goes there.

Loughborough CAMRA

Thu 7 – Sat 9 Mar

Held at the Polish Club. Direct trains run from Sheffield to Loughborough.

International Brewing & Cider (Manchester)

Fri 22 – Sat 23 Mar

This is a new festival that has been added on to an established annual industry award event offering you the chance to try beers and ciders from around the world that have been entered into their competition. The venue is Depot Mayfield which is a short walk from Piccadilly station in Manchester, tickets and information about the festival can be found at ibcfest.com.

Sheffield Folk Sessions

Fri 29 – Sun 31 Mar

Folk music sessions across a number of pubs over the weekend. More information on their website.

Hope Valley

Fri 29 Mar – Mon 1 Apr

The Easter edition of the regular bank holiday beer festival held at the Old Hall Hotel in Hope in a marquee. The festival bar has over 50 beers and ciders with most of the beer sourced from brewers in or near the Peak District. Live entertainment and food also features.



May

Hope Valley

Fri 3 – Mon 6 May

May Day edition of the regular bank holiday beer festival held at the Old Hall Hotel.

Barrow Hill Rail Ale

Thu 16 – Sat 18 May

Huge range of real ales, other craft beers, cider, perry and gin plus food traders in a working railway roundhouse. Included in the ticket price are train rides during the daytime on Friday/Saturday and live music in the evening. Tickets available on the gate but cheaper if bought in advance online. A special shuttle bus runs to the festival from Chesterfield railway station or alternatively Stagecoach bus 90 runs from Chesterfield town centre via Whittington Moor Tesco (connect there with bus X17 from Sheffield).

Hope Valley

Fri 24 – Mon 27 May

Spring edition of the regular bank holiday beer festival held at the Old Hall Hotel.

June

One Valley/One Valley Extra

Sat 8 Jun

A number of pubs and bars around Dronfield town centre within walking distance of one another put on events featuring beer, cider, food and music. This is supplemented with the “Extra” festival organised separately on the same day involving out of town pubs and clubs along with Drone Valley brewery. The town centre

venues are walkable from Dronfield railway station. All the venues can also be reached by bus – one of 15, 16, 43 and 44. Festival announcements are on the One Valley and One Valley Extra Facebook pages.

August

Hope Valley

Fri 23 – Mon 26 Aug

Late summer edition of the regular bank holiday beer festival held at the Old Hall Hotel.

October

Robin Hood

(Nottingham CAMRA)

Wed 9 – Sat 12 Oct

At Trent Bridge cricket ground.

Steel City (Sheffield CAMRA)

Wed 16 – Sat 19 Oct

We're back at the atmospheric Kelham Island Museum with a huge range of real ales and other craft beers, cider & perry, street food vendors, live entertainment, games and more.



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Branch diary

Info and bookings:

social@sheffield.camra.org.uk

Branch meeting

8pm Tue 6 Feb

All our members are welcome to come along, share pub, club and brewery news, discuss campaigning updates, get involved and more importantly enjoy a beer with us! The venue this month is the **Three Tuns** in Sheffield City Centre.

Pub of the Month

8pm Tue 13 Feb

The winner is **Shakespeares** on Gibraltar Street, near Sheffield City Centre and Kelham Island. Join us for a beer or two as we present the award certificate. Getting there: buses 57, 57a, 81, 82 and 86 stop outside.

Festival planning meeting

7:30pm Tue 20 Feb

We continue work on planning our 2024 Steel City beer & cider festival. The meeting is held upstairs at the **Gardeners Rest**.

Committee meeting

8pm Tue 27 Feb

The monthly business meeting for the committee. The venue is the **Dog & Partridge** on Trippet Lane in Sheffield City Centre. We also aim to have the new issue of Beer Matters from the printers ready for distribution volunteers to come and collect.

Pub of the Month

7pm Wed 6 Mar

Our March Pub of the Month award winner is the **Oxbow** at Woodhouse Mill. Join us there for a beer or two during Sheffield Beer Week with their quiz from 7pm and our certificate presentation at about 8pm. Getting there: bus 52 stops outside or bus X5 stops close by.

Branch meeting

8pm Tue 12 Mar

The venue this month is the **Princess Royal** in Crookes, a short walk from bus routes 52, 52a, 95 or 95a.

Festival planning meeting

7:30pm Tue 19 Mar

Upstairs at the **Gardeners Rest**.

Committee meeting

8pm Tue 26 Mar

Dog & Partridge.

Committee

Glyn Mansell

Chair

chair@sheffield.camra.org.uk

Paul Manning

Vice Chair

Committee Meeting Secretary

Pub of the Year Coordinator

Good Beer Guide Coordinator

vicechair@sheffield.camra.org.uk

Phil Ellett

Secretary

secretary@sheffield.camra.org.uk

Paul Crofts

Treasurer

Festival Organiser

treasurer@sheffield.camra.org.uk

Dave Pickersgill

Pub Heritage Officer

pubheritage@sheffield.camra.org.uk

Andy Cullen

Beer Matters Editor

beermatters@sheffield.camra.org.uk

Sarah Mills

Real Cider Champion

cider@sheffield.camra.org.uk

Neil Adgie

(and Paul Crofts)

Beer Matters Advertising

advertising@sheffield.camra.org.uk

Andy Shaw

Membership Secretary

Beer Matters Distribution

Clubs Officer

Beer Quality Scoring Coordinator

membership@sheffield.camra.org.uk

Malcolm Dixon

RambAles Coordinator

rambale@sheffield.camra.org.uk

Kevin Thompson

Press Officer

Social Secretary

press@sheffield.camra.org.uk

social@sheffield.camra.org.uk



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