



BEER GUTTER PRESS

FROM THE NEWARK BRANCH OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

SPRING 2026



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WELCOME

Welcome to Beer Gutter Press Issue 75.

There's plenty to talk about in this issue of your Newark CAMRA branch magazine, and lots happening locally.

Since we last went to press we have had the wonderful Newark Beer and Cider Festival Winter Edition. Held in November in The Town Hall it featured 50 beers and 20 ciders. And its pleasing to note that we are having another one in November this year. There's a full report on page 8.

Unfortunately, with the ongoing work in the Castle grounds, we are again unable to hold a May beer festival there. But fear not, our local pubs have rallied around again to bring you their 2026 Not the Newark Beer Festival, held over our usual weekend 22nd-25th May. You may well be reading this sipping one of the many cask and craft ales on offer.

Also since our last edition, we have announced the 2026 Pub of the Year awards. Congratulations to our worthy winners and runners-up:

DISTRICT PUB OF THE YEAR AND OVERALL WINNER

The Final Whistle, Southwell.

Runner-up: Milestone Tap, Cromwell.

TOWN PUB OF THE YEAR

The Organ Grinder, Newark.

Runner-up: The Fox and Crown, Newark.

CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR

The Organ Grider, Newark.

Runner-up: The Final Whistle, Southwell.

We do hope you enjoy your beer, and enjoy the read. If you do, you can also visit our branch website where you will find among other things all of our previous issues.

www.newark.camra.org.uk/branch-magazine/

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LEEDS 50TH BIRTHDAY BASH



Birthday Boy

Eleven folk gathered eagerly at Newark Northgate to get the LNER train to Leeds, on a bright if slightly breezy day in April.

With seat allocations on a Group-Save ticket we were comfortably ensconced all in the same carriage for the

approximately one hour journey north and arrived, exited the station, and arrived at our first venue of the day at almost exactly 12:00 noon. Called **Northern Guitars**, it was a pub downstairs and a guitar shop upstairs, one of the musicians amongst us couldn't resist the opportunity to buy new strings as, apparently, you can never have enough spare strings. The bar had five ales on tap: Leeds Pale 3.8%, Saltaire Blonde 4%, Kirkstall Three Swords 4.5%, Anthology US Session IPA 4.5% and Tim Taylor Landlord 4.3%. Having missed the Bradford Beer Festival, in Saltaire, a few weeks ago I thought I'd try the Saltaire here but it was very lively and took a long time to pull so I swapped to Leeds Pale.



Northern Guitars

From here we took a short walk round the corner to **Salt Calls Landing**, owned of course by Salt

Brewery. Despite the slightly confusing signage outside declaring it to be a Craft & Cocktails bar, it did have three ales on tap from its sister company Ossett: Blonde 3.9%, White Rat 4% and Barghest 4.3% stout, plus a Lilley's pineapple cider. The bar is located next to the River Aire with pleasant views over the water.

Our next stop was the **Duck and Drake**, another short stroll away. This is a magnificent example of a Victorian Hotel now turned pub with impressive Victorian urinals, which are important when faced with 15 real ales on the bar. I'm afraid I didn't list them all. The pub is clearly a popular music venue with a massive frieze of many famous musicians across the wall. I enjoyed a Kirkstall Pale Ale 4% here and whilst it would have been easy to stay and try more of their beers on offer we had a schedule to keep to, so crossed the road to our next venue, the **Wapentake**.



Wapentake

The curious name comes from "wapentakes" which were the administrative subdivisions of the Ridings in Yorkshire and also served as a local court.



When assemblies were held, votes were cast by the showing or clashing of weapons. This small café bar had four hand pulls but sadly two of the pump clips were facing the wrong way so we were left with Kirkstall Three Swords again or Celtic Tiger cider 3.4%. The food menu was very interesting and a few members of the group did refuel here.

From here it was a five minute stroll to our next port of call, **Whitelocks**, which is very well hidden with just a narrow door from the main street leading into a crowded narrow beer patio with two or three doors into an equally narrow and crowded pub. A fascinating venue, clearly very successful but not very comfortable to visit, which made me wonder if it's simply a self-perpetuating story of it being busy because it's always busy. The venue hit the news recently due to reintroducing the old brand of Double Diamond, which I wasn't tempted by, but instead I had a Zapato Oro 3.8% which was very nice indeed.



Whitelocks

Another five minute walk brought us round to the bar called **Tapped**, a venue that actually refused us entry ten years ago when we were celebrating a 40th birthday. No such problems with the door staff this time and we made our way into another busy, crowded room with eight real ales on offer: Titanic Plum Porter 4.9%, Bini Brew Co Cats Eyes 4.3%, Brew York Merchant Bitter 4%, Weekend Project

Brewery Afternoon in China 5.2%, Sambrook's Brewery Powerhouse Porter 4.9%, Full Circle Brew Co Waves of Simcoe 3.4% and two from the Tapped Brew Co - El Camino 4.4% and Pacific Surfliner 5.3%. We were starting to lag a little behind schedule now so needed to get a move on to our next venue, **The Banker's Cat**, which was just diagonally across the road, in attractive corner premises and offering at least eight real ales on hand pull. After a quick pint here, we took another diagonal route across the road to the opposite corner at the other end of the same road to **The Head of Steam** where, again, we found at least another eight real ales on hand pull spaced around a central, octagonal bar.

The difficult decision was taken to cut the intended final pub, the **Leeds Brewery Tap**, off our itinerary as we simply didn't have enough time for two more pints before the train, so in a slight rush, we headed to **The Scarborough Hotel**, a Nicholson's pub, a long way from their original base in London but well worth a visit.



The Scarborough Hotel

What this trip has shown is that spending an afternoon in Leeds is not long enough to take full advantage of all the great venues and beers on offer and a long weekend would be a much better option. Given the last time I was here was for a fortieth and this trip was for a fiftieth, I hope I last till the sixtieth.



THE HALF MOON BREWERY, BRUGES

Bruges is a small town in Belgium famous for its well preserved medieval architecture, and is a UNESCO world heritage site. Reason enough to visit. But as any beer lover knows, its also famous for its beer. The Bruges of the past was home to several breweries, but unfortunately only one now remains. The Brouwerij de Halve Maan (Half Moon Brewery) is tucked away in a square to the south of the historic centre, and offers a shop, brewery tap and brewery tours. We paid it a visit to see if it was worth it, and the answer was a resounding "Yes".

The tour cost €16, lasts 45 mins and is available in English. The entry fee includes a free beer. We didn't pre-book but I imagine in peak season that would be advisable. We started as many brewery tours do, with an explanation of the brewing process and a look at some mash tuns. Interesting though this is, having been on a few brewery tours as a CAMRA branch committee member, I was hoping for some thing more and different, but this was a good start. The process explanation was accompanied by interesting facts about the brewery history, the family that runs it.

From the mash tins though, the tour entered some of the old brewery buildings, now used only for the tour. A key point to note here is that the tour is definitely for the able-bodied and those not of a claustrophobic disposition. We ascended to the top of the brewery gradually being shown the brewery history, the family history (they are currently on their 6th generation), and rather interestingly a tribute to fellow breweries in Bruges who are longer here. The beer range was explained, which includes Zot, Straffe Hendrik and Blanche de Bruges, and the characteristics of each one. By the time we had learnt all that in successive rooms, we had climbed some distance and finally emerged at the top of the brewery tower with fine views across the city. Something that in other cities you would pay the entry fee for alone.

As we descended we were taken into a strange looking room, and treated to a multi-screen video presentation (projected onto floor, walls and ceiling) giving a glimpse into the bottling plant that is on the edge of the city. The video is innovative, immersive and entertaining. And here you learn about the latest innovation, which is a beer pipeline. To save fuel, traffic pollution and carbon footprint, the brewery has installed a 3.3km beer pipeline linking the town brewery with the bottling plant, taking beer there and bringing water back.

We ended the tour in the brasserie where we sampled our free beer and could refresh ourselves further with a fine choice of food and drink. All in all, well worth a visit.

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NATIONAL APPLE DAY



Apple Day takes place in October each year and is a celebration of one of the world's most beloved fruits – the apple. This annual event pays homage to the diversity of apple varieties, their history, and their culinary versatility. It's an occasion to enjoy the flavours of apples in various forms, including cider.

BRANCH CIDER TASTING EVENT AT THE ORGAN GRINDER, NEWARK

As part of the celebrations for National Apple Day, our Branch Cider representative organised a Cider Tasting event at the Organ Grinder in October. The Organ Grinder is our branch Cider Pub of the Year. There was a selection of 5 ciders and a perry on offer and a few bottles of cider handmade by our members. A total of 14 members attended the event to sample and learn more about cider and perry. The overwhelming favourite drink of the evening was Sanford Orchards, Devon Red. The event was very well received and not to be missed by anyone who likes cider or wants to know more about the very traditional British drink.

SO WHICH CIDERS & PERRY ARE REAL?

For those unsure about what exactly is "real cider", it is a traditional drink produced naturally from apples. As cider is made from apples, perry is made from perry pears. In order to be real, cider and perry should never come from concentrate and then diluted. 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 word 'chaptalised' in this

definition refers to a process where the alcohol level in a cider/perry is increased by the addition of sugar to an unnatural level for storage, before it's diluted with water to the desired alcohol content for sale.

A map and list of producers can be found on the CAMRA website <https://camra.org.uk/producers> A glass of real cider represents generations of production dating back hundreds of years. There are also many new producers of cider and perry who use traditional process (albeit in some cases with more modern equipment) which still creates a traditional product. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for many of the well-known ciders sold in the UK that are not produced using the natural process from apples and pears. Some well-known ciders & perries may be served from boxes and look like they should be "real" but aren't eg Lilley's / Westons / Thatchers

We do have several real cider producers in Nottinghamshire and in our branch we have Daisy Farm Cider based in Upton. They are a husband and wife team who last year produced 3 ciders; Dry, Sweet and Summer (made with home grown plums) and a Perry. Their production is very much on the small scale and depends on their harvest - they don't bring any other apples into mix.





BEER FESTIVAL 2025 WINTER EDITION

The beer festival committee had hoped to have a third consecutive festival in the Castle Grounds in May 2025. However, due to the upcoming 'gatehouse works', we were told by the council that we could not hire the site in 2025. What was very frustrating about this was that by 28th May, when we would have held the festival, no work had started.

As an antidote to this some of the great pubs in town, led by Dan from the Fox and Crown, came forward and said they would arrange a festival around the pubs to coincide with the May date and this became 'Not the Newark Beer Festival'. As the local CAMRA branch we assisted with some publicity and supported the event as much as we could. We were not involved in any further way as by this stage we had another idea brewing away.

Having contacted the Town Hall, run by Newark Town Council, they were very enthusiastic about us booking the first floor of the building to hold a beer festival later in the year. Between 2009 and 2012 a 'winter' beer festival had been held at this venue and it seemed the best option to keep our festival going in 2025 and to bring back what had been a popular event in the town. Going 'inside' would have its pros and cons. We would obviously have a lot less space and therefore capacity and would miss the 'outdoor vibe'. As an indoor venue though the ballroom and council chamber are a spectacular space and a far cry from being in a sports hall or more mundane indoor venue. From an organising point of view what an indoor venue gives you is an easily secured space, on site toilets and no need for a marquee and fence. This does take a bit of pressure off the volunteers who do the set up and take down but we still had the logistical challenge of getting all our bars, racking and 50 odd full casks up to the first floor of the town hall in a pretty small lift. We also needed to hire and set up a cooling system for the beer as we were inside and didn't want warm beer - nobody does!

Set up went well with the help of our great volunteers and by the Thursday afternoon we were pretty well up and ready for the Friday sessions.

Due to the limited capacity we decided to sell tickets in advance and three out of the four sessions sold out before the day. We had an eclectic beer list despite having half the number of beers we would when in the castle grounds. It was not designed to be just 'dark winter beers' but to offer a range from both local breweries and ones that you wouldn't come across down your 'local'. My two favourite beer names were 'Shagweaver' from North Cotswold Brewery and 'Personal Jesus' from Twisted Barrel. Both were very popular. We did offer a nice range of darker beers such as the always popular Blue Monkey 'Cinder Toffee Stout', Golden Duck 'Udders Stout', Wibblers 'Stouty McMilkshake Stout' and a couple of milds in the form Green Duck 'Bostin Mild XXL which was 6% and Dark Vanilla Mild from the excellent Twisted Barrel brewery.

We still had our traditional quiz each day thanks to Mark Taylor, but space meant we had to downsize our musical offering and have more of an acoustic vibe rather than full bands. I think this suited the festival and worked in the new space.

One day we hope to return to the Castle Grounds but this will depend on when the works are complete and what events the council will then allow. The good news is that we will return to the Town Hall this November for another 'Winter Edition'. The two-day festival will be on 20th and 21st November 2026 so please save the date in your diary and please come along and join the fun. If you missed it last year do come and give it a go and if you came last year and enjoyed it then we look forward to welcoming you again. CAMRA have announced that members will be eligible for free entry to all CAMRA beer festivals so we will be honouring this. A good reason to join CAMRA if you are not a member already or have let your membership lapse. Tickets will go on sale nearer the time so please keep an eye on our



website and social media for updates. We will also need volunteers to help both with set up, take down and during the festival itself to work on the bars, token stalls and door. If you are interested in getting involved as a volunteer then please check out our socials where information on this will be posted over the coming months.

Sponsors are required for the festival, with many opportunities at different prices in the form of glasses, beer mats, t-shirts and banner displays. A big thank you must go to our sponsors past and present who contribute to making the festival financially viable.

Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to the beer festival committee. We all do this for free and a small number of us spend many hours planning the festival in the months before and working hard during the event each year.

Cheers and I really look forward to the continuation of the Beer Festival.

Sam Lucas

Newark Beer and Cider Festival Organiser

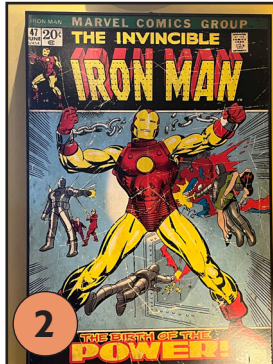


PICTURE QUIZ

Can you match these five pictures to the five pubs that feature in the Newark entry of the 2026 Good Beer Guide.

The pubs are:

- A. The Flying Circus
- B. The Fox and Crown
- C. More Than Just Beer
- D. The Loose Cannon
- E. The Organ Grinder





A DRY(ISH) JANUARY IN PUBS

After the excesses of the Christmas and New Year, it's very tempting to have a bit of a break from alcohol and good food, and pare things back. This CAMRA committee member is no exception, but while my liver is crying out for a holiday, there's another voice in my head saying 'A pub is for life, not just for Christmas'. The answer to this dilemma is clear. Have a dryish January, and keep on visiting our locals. So on the 2nd of January, I resolved to go on a journey of discovery, and see just how well these two concepts would mix.

I spent the first weekend mostly in. Giving me something to occupy my drinking hand while binge-watching box sets was Guinness Zero from the supermarket and a concoction called Impossibrew Pale Ale, available online direct from the manufacturer. Guinness has long been the real ale drinkers last point of refuge in a pub with no proper beer, and Guinness Zero is acknowledged as a pretty decent no alcohol alternative. I've taken habitual Guinness drinkers to task before about the lack of flavour and that mass produced aftertaste, usually to no avail, despite pointing out alternatives such as my local favourites Guerrilla stout from Blue Monkey (always available at the Organ Grinder) or Black Pearl from Milestone (usually on at their Cromwell brewery tap). But while other low or no alcohol alternatives usually have something missing, Guinness Zero is a pretty good version of its full-fat counterpart. Maybe it's a low bar, I don't know. Very popular in Ireland too I gather, so I'm not on my own here.

Impossibrew Pale Ale is on the face of it a fairly ubiquitous 0.5% Pale Ale, similar to say PunkAF, but with some secret ingredient that they say provides a little buzz similar to alcohol. I have to say, there's some element of truth to it, and it manages to satisfy my alcohol craving in these early days. Whether that's the 0.5% alcohol or the secret sauce, who's to say?

One pub visit was squeezed in for the music at The Navigation. I sampled a Heineken Zero, which was ok as a zero drink, but given that I'm not keen on lager generally, merely did the job whilst listening to the music. The Nav also does Guinness Zero, but that was out of stock – a common thing this time of year.

Wednesday sees me venture out to the first pub on my list, The Organ Grinder. While I'd usually order an Infinity IPA or a Guerrilla stout here, shunning the Guinness Zero I opt for the Adnams Ghost Ship 0.5%. Heather behind the bar pours it into a glass for me, perhaps thinking I need to be protected from the shame of participating in this Dry January malarky. Its tastes quite satisfactory, and I drink it while chatting to folk and dipping into the quiz. Nothing like a good pint of Infinity, but not half bad in the circumstances. Other no/low alcohol alternatives here are a fruity cider, and a regular Thatchers zero. Not for me tonight.

Week 2 and Saturday and Sunday saw me do a double-header at The Flying Circus, on both days based around the music at 4pm. On offer at the Circus, as well as good old Guinness Zero, is one not seen much elsewhere – Beavertown Lazer Crush. It's a 0.3% IPA. I'm quite keen on the main Beavertown brews though much preferring the stronger and flavoursome Gamma Ray over the weaker and more insipid Neck Oil. So I'm not hopeful. While it again does the job, and does have quite a nice hoppy finish, it too is a bit insipid. I end the Sunday session on coke. As a side note, the Circus does do a good range of Lindemanns fruit beers some of which are low in alcohol – down to 2.5% - and still sharp in flavour as they are lambic beers. Good for a low alcohol break on a regular session.

Wednesday is a challenge. It's CAMRA branch meeting day, and I've got to come clean about my little experiment. I expect my resolve to be tested by both peer pressure and my own pangs of longing as I prepare to watch my favourite brew



being consumed in front of me. Especially as we are at The Prince Rupert who do a very reliable pint of Oakham Citra. Thankfully my fellow members are supportive and non-judgemental, and I go for an Old Moulton Berries and Cherries cider. The lady behind the bar isn't so keen on my choice – not sure why as the pricing by pubs should ensure that their margin is the same regardless, so why should they care? I think it's the mere mention of 'Dry January' which is the bane of pubs across the land. The drink lasts me through the meeting, and is extremely pleasant. Not being a regular cider drinker, it seems pretty much like normal fruit ciders that I have tried, packed full of fruity flavour if slightly artificial. I don't think the full-fat equivalent counts as a CAMRA real cider, so maybe that explains things, but on this occasion I'm glad of the chemicals.

We move on to the Fox and Crown after the meeting, and a few alternatives are available, though no regular beers. Of the Guinness, lager, cider and wheat beer on offer, I go for the wheat beer, Erdinger. I'm not a wheat beer fan, but it tastes pretty good. Our Cider rep tells me the low alcohol cider is pretty good here – an apple cider by Cranes at 0.5% - but that the best one around is Stowford press. I make a note to look out for it.

Finally we find ourselves at the Organ Grinder, and I plump for the Ghost Ship again, which does the job and sees me home. I reflect that I'm half way through the month and things have gone pretty well.

Week 3 and Tuesday sees us back at the Flying Circus for a musical night, held every third Tuesday. I start well on a Lazer Crush, but temptation gets the better of me and I go for a pint of Jaipur half way through the evening. Delicious, and stronger than my usual selection. No going back to alcohol free after that, I have a couple more and a nice night.

Wednesday is poker night, held monthly at Just Beer Micropub. I'm back on the wagon, and here the non alcohol alternative has shifted. It used to be Brewdog's various options last time I looked, but now its Erdinger. This beer is growing on me after

sampling it last week, and I get through the evening on it quite happily.

What was going to be a day off on Saturday turns into a weekend off. After being tempted by wine with friends on Friday taking in Not My Monkey and Ann-et-Vin, the Saturday saw us attend the wonderful Cat Asylum Brewery in Collingham. Henry throws open the brewery tap and puts on music usually once a month. We see a great band in this fantastically quirky venue, and while their Simcoe, Lager and Bitter are on offer, I spend the evening drinking their very nice Newark IPA. Sunday also sees me back at the Flying Circus for the afternoon music, and a few good pints interspersed with Lazer Crush.

Monday and we are out at another music night out of town near Grantham. Driving is a great way for me to ensure I stay on the wagon, and I drink diet coke all night. After the weekend drinking, I'm glad of a day alcohol free. Wednesday however, is another Camra meeting, this time the Executive committee, and with the end in sight at the weekend, I can't resist a couple of Infinity IPAs followed by a Guerrilla Stout.

Its now the final weekend. A very pleasant month spent dry-ish, with lots of pub visiting and socials. I'm a few pounds lighter, and it's not been too much of a chore. We spend the Saturday at our local pubs' Beermuda Triangle festival, which is staged from Thursday to Sunday across Just Beer, The Organ Grinder and The Fox and Crown and features around 50 beers. Our Camra social event starts at 2pm and takes in those three plus The Circus who have a few extra casks on too. A fine way to finish the month.

And I've proved it is possible to do a dry January and still support your local pubs. Albeit I didn't go completely without alcohol, there are plenty of options for drivers, abstainers and moderation whatever your aim.



First of the day

Eleven travellers took the train on a direct route to Matlock, via Nottingham. It was considered a good idea to start at the furthest venue and work our way back toward the station, therefore our first destination was to be **The Thorn Tree**, which sits atop the far side of this steep sided valley. At least Lincoln gives you fair warning of what's ahead by calling it Steep Hill, Matlock grants no such concessions, so it was after a hard climb with rest stops and a lot of panting and wheezing, that we finally reached our second pub on the list. I say second because there was some doubt about the Thorn Tree being open so we had sent the two fastest walkers on ahead to carry out a reconnaissance mission and it proved worthwhile as the pub was shut.

We had arrived at **The Farmacy** a little ahead of their advertised opening time of 12 noon but, when it started raining, the delightful and knowledgeable Felicity kindly opened the door and let us shelter indoors and select our first drinks, in readiness for the noon time bell. I hadn't realised, until I actually saw the premises that I had been here before, a good few years ago, when it was known as Stanley's Ale House. I was actually attending a beer festival in the County Council Building across the road on

that occasion so just popped in for a short respite from the crowd.



The Farmacy

The Farmacy is a lovely micropub with a couple of small raised seating areas and a bar area with large front window. When we visited, there were four ales on the bar, all from the Aldwick Brewery, who own the pub and are located a few miles to the west of Matlock. I started with the Pale IPA at 4.8%. I don't normally advocate starting with the stronger ales but my heart needed it after the climb up the hill. I followed it with a much more sensible Elixir Gold at 3.9%. The walls were adorned with an array of ancient farming implements which could clearly be

dangerous, in the wrong hands, so were securely fastened to the wall.

From the Farmacy it is a very short stroll across the road to **The Newsroom**, which could be described as a large micropub or a small pub. Whichever description you prefer, there were four ales on tap: Thornbridge Imperial Stout 7.7%, Whim Ales Brewery Hartington Bitter 4% & Hartington IPA 4.5% plus The Rat Brewery Rat Pack 4%, which is what I went for and thoroughly enjoyed.



The Newsroom

From here it was a decent walk, fortunately downhill this time, to **The Red Lion**, a fairly large venue with a well-stocked bar. Their own onsite brewery, Moot Ales, was represented by Matlock Blonde 4.1%, Matlock Best 4.3% & Giddy Edge 5.3%. Plus Little Brew Co., Aurora 3.9%, Tiny Rebel, Cosmic Pale 4% and the ever popular Bass 4.4%.

Aware of the need to keep moving ever closer to the train station we then headed back into town to a large corner pub called **The Remarkable Hare**, a substantial operation with six ales on the bar: Bradfield Farmers Blonde 4% & Farmers Irish Dexter 4.8%, Rat Pack Archer 4.3%, Thornbridge Green Mountain 4.3% and Tim Taylor's Landlord 4.1%. There is a separate dining area and a very good menu, which was clearly very popular with locals as most bar tables seemed have food. Some of the Newark contingent decided to fuel up here too and I chose a "piece" of pork pie, which was a very large slice indeed, backed up with a few free chips from Dawn, who discovered she had over-ordered.

Our penultimate pub is curiously called **Bod** and is owned by Titanic brewery. According to a member of staff behind the bar, their first pub was on Bodmin Street so they stuck with the name ever since. It was pretty busy when we were there on a Saturday afternoon and quite noisy too. The beer choice was from the Titanic stable and I tried an Iceberg 4.1% and a Plum Porter 4.9%. Steerage 3.8% was also available but I decided to move just a few yards down the road to our final venue, **Twenty-ten**, which sadly did not live up to its description in the Good Beer Guide with only one ale on offer and what appeared to be a clearance sale of canned beer stacked up on the bar.

Replete and with slightly wobbly back legs, we made the final push back to the station, where our return train was already waiting. We finally arrived back in Newark at 19:19 and whilst the more adventurous amongst us went on to pubs in town, I headed home for dinner and an early night.

All in all, it was a thoroughly good day, some of us managed to miss the rain showers, some of us got a bit wet, but not enough to dampen our enthusiasm for the beer.

Sláinte



PICTURE QUIZ ANSWERS

1: D, 2: A, 3: E, 4: B & 5: C

Did you know?

Almost three-quarters of UK drinkers have tried a low or no alcohol product, with 32% choosing these products 'semi-regularly'

Source: govmartinsgroup.org.uk. *Consumer views on Low and No Alcohol products' (2022)



BRADFORD BEER FESTIVAL

Bradford beer festival is a regular date in the diary for many Newark Camra committee members past and present, and I joined them this year for my first visit to this well established festival. Held in the Victoria Hall, Saltaire across Thursday to Saturday and six sessions in late February, this is their 26th festival, and so much the same vintage as our very own in Newark. They boast of 'hundreds of beers' (I'm not quite sure of that) and I find them sold in 3 cask ale bars, alongside a craft ale bar, a global beer bar, cider bar and with fruit wines and soft drinks too.

The cask ales were all in fine form, and I was pleased to see some being dispensed from pumps which gave them a nice pub-like pour, which is my personal preference. These tended to be the more popular beers that one may have already seen and tried, such as Kirkstall Citra, Ilkley So Solid Bru or Saltaire New Horizon, each of which I tried. There were of course plenty on offer from the less well known local brewers, and I went for a Bingley Fractal and a particularly impressive Buzz Light Beer from Settle. A few more were sampled, which I won't list, but overall a great selection.

Food at the festival was also delightful. A proper Yorkshire Pie and Peas hit the spot, and apparently the scotch eggs are legendary. A fellow attendee who knows his pub grub was heard to say it was the best food he'd ever had. I'll leave it at that.

As the session came to an end, we headed off for our hotel and once checked in took in the pubs of Shipley nearby. We were able to take in The Beehive, The Fox (both being the Good Beer Guide pubs) and Reconnection. Of particular mention is the Beehive, with a great range of beers and a lovely atmosphere. Another local favourite is Fanny's Ale House, but the festival regulars informed me it was always very busy on festival weekend, so that was saved for another day.

The following day was also very pleasant with a walk along the canal and a visit to the engineering marvel that is the Bingley Five Rise - a series of five locks in the steepest staircase of locks in the Country. A spectacle indeed, still working despite being built in 1774 and well worth a visit. All that walking did work up an appetite, and we passed the time before our train with a few Bingley pubs, taking in Chip 'n' Ern, The Market Square Tavern, The Brown Cow and The Peacock.

All in all, The Bradford beer festival is a very enjoyable and well run festival, and recommended for a visit.



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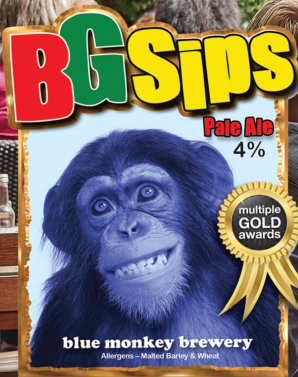


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