

The Cleveland CAMRA Branch Committee ...

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Issue No. 92

June / July 2006

It's Your Round!!

Bi-Monthly FREE

2700 copies of this magazine are distributed to over 200 real ale pubs and other Campaign supporters. If any real ale licensee in the Cleveland Branch area does not receive copies of this magazine directly, and wishes to do so, *free of charge*, please contact (01642) 654158

This is the bi-monthly newsletter about ...

Real Ale in the Cleveland Area

Inside this Issue:

Latest news about local pubs

Forthcoming events

Pub reviews

Interesting historical stuff !!!

Good Pub Food Guide review

The Causeway at Hartlepool is voted the Cleveland CAMRA Pub of the Year 2005

Congratulations to the Causeway on attaining this award.

Presentation at the Causeway on Saturday 13th May

Gathering at 12 noon, presentation at 1pm.

Tax on Beer ...

Disappointed with the increase in duty on beer ?

See inside for details

News from the Thomas Sheraton, Stockton.

And a visit to the Ship at Low Worsall



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It's Your Round is published by the Cleveland Branch of CAMRA. Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of CAMRA or the editor. Articles may be reproduced if source acknowledged. **If you have news or views, suggestions or complaints**, then Andy is our Branch contact on 01642 231351 or Email adbellcamra@f2s.com Please contact him if you want your news circulated.

Diary Dates ... Committee Meetings commence at 7.30 pm and Branch Meetings/ Socials commence at 8.30 pm on the 1st Monday of each month, and are held throughout the Cleveland Branch area.

May 13th (Sat) Pub of the Year Presentation at the Causeway, Hartlepool. Gathering at 12 noon, presentation at 1pm.

May 18th-20th (Thu-Sat) 16th Doncaster Beer Festival. The Dome, Doncaster Leisure Park, Bawtry Road, Doncaster, DN4 7PD. Approx 80 ales.

June 5th (Mon) Tap & Spile, Guisbrough. Committee meeting at 7:30pm followed by Branch Social Meeting at 8:30pm.

June 15th-17th (Thu-Sat) Tynedale Beer Festival 2006. Tynedale Rugby Club, Corbridge, Northumberland. 90 ales. Phone 0191 375 3051 for further details.

July 3rd (Mon) Wellington, Wolviston. Committee meeting at 7:30pm followed by Branch Social Meeting at 8:30pm.

August 1st-5th (Tue-Sat) Great British Beer Festival. Approx 450 ales. Check www.gbbf.org for further details.

CAMRA members can email Denise to be added to branch email list for additional / last minute activities. Branch website www.clevelandcamra.btinternet.co.uk

For more info, to book local events and transport needs, please contact Beth beth_carss@hotmail.com for details of latest social events, or see entry in 'What's Brewing'.

CAMRA National Beer Scoring Scheme ...

As a Camra member, you can help when you go to a pub selling real ale by submitting a beer score. You may have heard about this or read about it in What's Brewing. We have finally changed over to using HQ's 1-5 scoring system (see below). You can easily send your scores in by email to camra@critchie.co.uk. These scores help Cleveland CAMRA to decide which pubs deserve a closer look for nominations in our Pub of the Season awards and entries in the next Good Beer Guide.

0 Undrinkable. No cask Ale is available or so poor you have to take it back or can't finish it.

1 Poor. Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.

2 Average. Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.

3 Good. Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You may want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.

4 Very Good. Excellent beer in excellent condition.

5. Perfect. Probably the best beer you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

CAMRA members are invited to send scores to the pubs officer Campbell at camra@critchie.co.uk

Andy C - get rid of this frame and stick the same old CAMRA membership form here thanks.

It makes the size of the PMD file email-able.

.....Dan.

That's the Way to Do It!

As the old Punch & Judy man on Seaton Carew beach used to say. Travel not too far away and you can experience another example of how to do it ... right.

The Cleveland Branch of CAMRA is proud to announce the winner of its prestigious Pub of the Year award for 2005. And the winner is ... The Causeway in Hartlepool. Licensee Geoff Eccleshall and partner Elaine are no strangers to CAMRA awards. So what makes the Causeway stand out as a pub? Like many, we look for various things in a pub. Does it sell superb Real Ale? Of course! Listed in the Good Beer Guide, the Causeway sells several Real Ales to the tune of over 500 barrels a year - and a barrel is 36 gallons! Go on, work it out in pints! Does it sell local ales? Situated next to Camerons Brewery, it couldn't be more local! Oh, and Strongarm outsells all other beers put together! Has it a no-smoking room? Yep, had one for years. Does it support local charities? Yes, all the time! Is there live music? Most nights - and usually local musicians. What about food? Trina serves real food and real chips every day. Can I hear myself think? Two separate rooms make sure you can. Will I be welcome? One of the friendliest pubs I know. Worthy winner? You bet!!!!


Tax on Beer ...

Are you disappointed with the decision by the Chancellor, Gordon Brown MP, to increase duty on beer while freezing duty on champagne? If so, you can use CAMRA's new beer tax campaign website to email the Chancellor your views. You can also sign a petition and vote on which drink you would most like to celebrate a World Cup win with. Even a small increase in beer duty, such as a penny, is likely to result in a rise of up to 10 pence a pint in the pub! Visit CAMRA's new beer tax campaign website on www.camra.co.uk.

What is Real Ale ?

Real ale is a type of beer defined by its traditional production. Also known as "cask conditioned" beer; the fundamental distinction between real and other ales is that the yeast is still present in the container from which the beer is served, although it will have settled to the bottom and is not poured into the glass. Because the yeast is still alive, the process of fermentation continues in the cask or bottle on the way to the consumer ensuring a fresh and natural taste.

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Too easy to believe! **Why not get your local to include it as part of the Pub Quiz, and send in a bulk entry in one envelope?**

Pot Black! These answers all include the word black..

1. Ovine brewery in Masham.
2. Maned carnivore in Staithes.
3. Canine beers brewed by Hambleton.
4. Equine pub in Whitby.

Congratulations to winners of Competition 90, Arthur Barkley of Eaglescliffe and Miss E Green of Sheffield. All entries to the address below, or email to jo.powell2@ntlworld.com by the end of July 2006. *Current Cleveland Camra committee may not enter!*

Send to: **Competition 92, 10 Faidene Avenue, Stockton-on-Tees, TS19 7NH.**

Entries can also be made on the website - www.clevelandcamra.btinternet.co.uk.

Top of the World!

Having been to Blackpool for Camra's AGM at the Winter Gardens last weekend 8th/9th April (which might I add was a jolly good place to be!) we came upon a sign for Tan Hill on our return journey home up towards the A66, having been curious about this place for some years we decided this was a good opportunity to pay a visit. Turning off at the sign post we noticed that it didn't actually tell you how many miles away it was! Quite a few hundred feet ascended (by car may I add) we came across this building in the middle of nowhere, the temperature had dropped a few degrees by now, and outside sat 2 funny looking vehicles bright orange in colour with snow ploughs on the front. Ignoring this we ventured inside to be welcomed by a very friendly lamb and his pal, a scruffy little dog - oh and of course the landlord and landlady. The fire was very inviting but thirst things first ... Theakston's supplying 3 of their beers XB, Bitter and Old Peculiar. A chat to mine hosts was very interesting, a look at the menu ... and a glance outside ... oh time to go ... you couldn't see a hand in front of you. We had been inside for 25 mins max and left lovely sunshine, only to be met by arctic conditions. We made our excuses and headed for the car, a narrow road down to civilisation and out of the snow we reflected on our visit to the Highest Pub in England and decided we would make a return trip back some time but perhaps in June or July!!!! But well worth a visit. We now know why the snow ploughs are present at all times!!!!

Carol.

BRANCH WEBSITE

www.clevelandcamra.btinternet.co.uk
For all the latest news about beer festivals, pubs etc.

Bricky's Bits ...

On the House ...

Congratulations to the enterprising management at the McOrville in Elwick. They now have their own house beer, McOrville Ale, a 4.2% brew specially commissioned from Camerons at Hartlepool. It's literally going down a treat with local real ale drinkers. Sounds well worth a trip out!

Any Advance on Two?

Last issue we reported on Dave McCann of the Beckfields, Ingleby Barwick gaining Cask Marque accreditation. Latest news is that a second handpull is now in use to dispense his ever more popular guest ales.

Fair Enough.

Bricky keeps getting reports of people visiting the Fairfield to try the Fairfield Ale brewed for them by Darwin, only to find it and the other real ales sold out. Sounds like a recipe for an increased order to me!

The 2005 Annual General Meeting of the Cleveland Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale ...

Kindly hosted by Camerons Brewery in Hartlepool, the AGM was held in March

and was well attended, including Mick Moss the Yorkshire Regional Director. Several committee positions were changed, and the election of new chairperson was deferred to a later date - whenceupon Jill Day was duly elected as chairwoman at the April meeting in Saltburn. Thanks to Jill for taking on this position and good luck in the forthcoming year.

Help required delivering the IYR newsletter ...

If anyone is interested in helping deliver this newsletter to Real Ale pubs in the Cleveland area, please contact a committee member or come along to a meeting. Particular areas that would be a help are the Stockton villages and southern end of the branch area (Whitby villages etc.).

The Causeway

Hartlepool (01429) 273954

Cask Ales
5 Minimum

CAMRA
Good Beer
Guide Listed

*** Pub of the Year 2005 ***

Real food with real chips from Trina's kitchen at the Causeway.

Mon-Sat 12-3pm

Live music

in our new extension ...

Folk Club - Sundays

Acoustic Guitar & Vocals - Tuesdays

Jazz - Wednesdays

Blues Club - Thursdays

Guitar & Vocals - Saturdays

--- all music is 8.30 for 9.00 ---

History of Brewing part 6. The Early Monasteries.

A light-hearted look at brewing, through the ages, to cut out and keep.

Imagine the scene, it's 600AD, ah, now here's a problem, there's no Mrs Anyone. We're talking monasteries and monks, they didn't have women living there, well - not usually. Anyway on with the story, Mr Monk, having been called to the first prayers of the day, Matins, at about 3am, decides to busy himself putting the first brew on. First of all he, ah now here's another problem, now as then, the recipes for these monastic brews were a closely guarded secret, so we can't really take a peek at exactly how they made the ale, unlike in the previous "History of Brewing" articles. It could have been any monastery across Europe, not just in Britain. Almost all monasteries had a brewery, curiously enough, even in cider making areas. Of all the monasteries and monks the ones who took the brewing for outsiders most seriously, were the Benedictines, even though they chose to live in isolation from the outside world. St Benedict had taught that the order should welcome guests - hospitality is a key component of their life-style, often they had lodging houses attached to the monastery and it would provide food and drink to travellers - the drink being ale, as the water was often not wholesome to drink in those days. Although the monks themselves tended to devote their time to learning and prayer, the lay brothers usually attended to the day to day requirements of living. They would work in the fields and workshops and attend to the more menial tasks and probably assist with the beer making without actually being aware of all the technicalities and recipes of the process. The monasteries produced the best beers (or ales) as some of those brewing today still do and some of the monks became real experts at brewing. In some instances, the ale brewed by the monasteries was so superior, the monks were able to sell it or trade it for items needed by the monastery. (About this time, tax on beer became a useful addition to someone's coffers - no change there then!) It was still made with water, grain and yeast - hops hadn't been discovered as a suitable additive and preservative of beer yet, so other herbs, fruits and spices were used instead. The ale was probably still thick, more like a malted porridge, and stronger than it would be brewed today.

In case you're interested, the difference between ale and beer, is that ale is made without the addition of hops, beer does contain hops, which clarify the beer and help to preserve it, meaning that it could be made weaker, with a lower ABV (alcohol by volume) or gravity. Although today the two words are more or less interchangeable. It has been suggested, that considering their extensive knowledge and understanding of herbs and medicines, the monks were probably the first to use hops in brewing - but that comes in the later Medieval period, you'll have to wait until the next issue to read all about it!

Cerridwen.

Cleveland Camra Roll of Honour ...

2004 Spring POTS & POTY: **Horseshoe Hotel**,
Egton Bridge.

2004 Summer POTS: **Capt. Cook**, Staithes.

2004 Autumn POTS: **Spread Eagle**, Stokesley.

2004 Winter POTS: **White House**, Hartlepool.

2005 Spring POTS: **Dolphin**, Robin Hoods Bay.

2005 Summer POTS: **Cross Keys**, Upsall.

2005 Autumn POTS: **Crathorne Arms**,
Crathorne.

2005 Winter POTS & POTY: **Causeway**,
Hartlepool.

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Dedicated No-Smoking Room

Good things happening at the Thomas Sheraton - Wetherspoons pub in Stockton ...

Phil, Duty Manager at the Thomas Sheraton, who has come back from working at the Tanner Hall at Darlington, has introduced a weekly beer menu - what is on and what is coming next week. He is also arranging for test brews from Mordue and Darwin for a 'house beer' at the T. Sheraton, following a similar arrangement at Darlington involving a beer called Andy Cap. He has brought back Directors & Spitfire as guests following local requests.

In medieval times barley was often given to the churches as a gift, it was malted and brewed into beer and sold to pay for the upkeep of the church.

A family visit to The Ship Inn at Low Worsall for lunch ...

On Good Friday my wife and I decided to treat ourselves to lunch out, so we took the kids, aged 10 and 8, to the Ship at Low Worsall for lunch and it turned to be a good choice. The signs outside say "a warm welcome awaits", and this was what we got. The staff were all great, I think it must be one of the friendliest pubs that I've ever been to. And with regards to keeping the kids amused, they were able to go outside where there is a play area and also a small animal compound with rabbits etc. The interior of the Ship is excellent, with lovely decor, separate restaurant-type dining area, separate no-smoking areas, and plenty of interesting Ship-related artefacts. The food menu is excellent, we stuck to fish and scampi dishes (with it being Good Friday), the quality was excellent, including the well-dressed side salad and highest quality chipped potatoes. The real ale available was a choice of Camerons Trophy Bitter or Black Sheep Bitter and I went for the Trophy, which was in excellent condition. I would recommend this Good Beer Guide listed pub to anyone who is wondering what pub to go to, for food or otherwise. Situated on the B1264 between Yarm and Richmond. Ample car park space. **DC.**

In a Monastery of St Benedict there was ration of ale that was twice as much as the wine allowed. At the Council of Aix Chapelle the canons were allowed four litres of ale a day, were we allowed as much in Britain? Some nunneries allowed their sisters up to seven litres per diem, so it's not true beer was always seen as a man's drink!

Britain's Oldest ...

The oldest brewery in Britain is Shepherd Neame in Faversham, Kent, which has been in existence for over 300 years, since 1698. Incredibly, it is still family owned, the chief executive being Jonathan Neame, the fifth generation of Neames to run the brewery (the family bought out the Shepherds in 1877). One of their well-known brews is Bishop's Finger, which has a fascinating historic significance, being named after the signposts that directed pilgrims to Canterbury. Establishing the oldest pub in Britain is not quite so straightforward as there are numerous contenders for this title. Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem in Nottingham is a winner if you consider that the rock face into which it is hewn is 143 million years old. A castle brewhouse occupied the site before 1189, the year Richard 1 became king, and history tells us that this is where the crusaders gathered before heading off to slay the Saracens in the Crusades. But there are other impressive contenders. One of these is The Fighting Cocks at St Alban's, with documents that indicate that a pub stood here in 795, having been rebuilt in 1485. This is one of the strongest contenders, located in the shadow of St Alban's Abbey, and has a fascinating history. It originated as a medieval dovecote and it is believed that Oliver Cromwell kept his horse in the bar when he stayed here. Also one of the bars is on the site of an illegal cockfighting pit of long ago. The Fighting Cocks is recognised by the Guinness Book of Records as the oldest in the country. However, archaeological digs have suggested that the foundations of The Ferryboat Inn at Holywell in Cambridgeshire, with its thatched roof, may date back to 460, liquor being served as early as 560. Rumour has it that Hereward the Wake stayed here, fleeing survived the ravages of time, history and its upheavals for so long from the Norman Invasion. It is also said that the Inn is haunted, the ghost of a girl called Juliet who dies from unrequited love, being seen on March 17th each year, the anniversary of the date on which she died. If you search further you will find other pubs and inns that have equally relevant claims. In a way, does it really matter which is the oldest? Each has its own fascinating history which gives us an insight into times past and an admiration for those who have survived the ravages of time, history and its upheavals for so long. **Tony Doyle.**

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Beer Guide
2004, 2005

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** 5 Real Ales **

Cleveland Pub of the Season
Spring 2003

Do you enjoy eating in pubs? Or do you take the view that they are essentially for drinking? Barrie Pepper reviews a newly published book that might change your view – whatever it might be.

Recently I called in the Golden Lion in Settle for lunch. It was excellent, well priced, and accompanied by a first class pint of Thwaites Thoroughbred. The following morning a copy of the sixth edition of Good Pub Food dropped on my mat. I opened it and immediately sought out an entry for the pub I had so enjoyed the day before only, sadly, to find it wasn't there. According to the joint editors, Susan Nowak and Jill Adam, Good Pub Food is a guide to the best 600 pubs for real food and real ale. My reason for retailing this anecdote is that if the Golden Lion in Settle can't make it into the guide then all the successful entries must be very good indeed. I have also eaten recently at the Town Street Tavern in Horsforth and the George and Dragon in Wentworth – both first class in every respect - and they too are missing. I have used this guide over the 15 years that Susan Nowak has edited it and can say, hand on heart, that I have never been disappointed. Without ticking off the entries I have visited I estimate there are about 100 where I have enjoyed that delightful combination of a simple well cooked regional dish washed down with a local brew. Her standards are high and she encourages not just good food twinned with good real ale but also the use of beer in cooking. We are told as well of pubs where licensees offer tasting notes with their recommendations of appropriate beers. It is seven years since the last edition was published and there has been a revolution since then with the naissance of the gastropub which saved many from going under. Such places are not always popular with drinkers for they often tend to place food well before beer – more restaurants that serve an occasional beer than a pub. Beer drinking as a simple pleasure is not encouraged. Wine still remains the favourite, and often not very good wine either. But Good Pub Food does a good job and it will continue to find a place in the glove box of my car. If by chance I happen to be in Cornwall, the Highlands, Kent or North Wales at lunchtime or early evening then I will place my trust in the guide to see that I am well fed and my beer needs are catered for. Each entry contains good directions, opening and meal times, beers sold, the types of food, a brief description of the pub and then a lengthy account of the meals on sale with prices ranging from basic sandwiches to haute cuisine. It makes sense I suppose to look first at entries for Yorkshire although the use of the guide is more likely to be for pubs in other parts of the country. However, as usual, God's Own County does well with 50 entries which are pretty evenly spread although I feel the Dales could have had a few more. And dear old Leeds too, which had none at all. However eight Yorkshire pubs are 'star-rated' – out of 100 or so pinpointed as serving the best pub food and real ale in Britain. Try them. From my personal experience of six of them you will not be disappointed:

Commercial, Cleckheaton
West Riding Licensed Refreshment Rooms, Dewsbury
Seabirds, Flamborough
Old Star, Kilham
Nags Head, Pickhill
Wig and Pen, Sheffield
Spread Eagle, Stokesley
Dog and Gun, Sutton in Craven

There are some relevant essays on Beer and Food, the Gastropub Revolution, Local Produce and on Children's Food, and an introduction by John-Christophe Novelli who has just taken over his own pub in Hertfordshire. There are also some beer and cider recipes, good photography and maps.

Good Pub Food, published by CAMRA Books costs £14.99 but CAMRA members can buy it for £12.99 – use the web site: www.camra.org.uk or phone 01727 867201.

Beer Taster returns from holiday ...

Having just returned from the annual pilgrimage to see the in-laws this "Beer Taster" is more of a "Cider Taster". We do not get real cider up here, which is a shame. The enjoyable bit about Somerset is you call on the cider producer on the farm and taste the wares before buying them. At some places tasters come in half pints with refills available, but I didn't get to visit that place this year. One of the places I searched out was West Croft Cider at Brent Knoll run by John Harris. John had taken 1st prize for his Dry, Medium and Sweet cider at last years mid Somerset show. In total he came away with five awards, the icing on the cake being that the judge was John Thatcher of Thatchers Cider. I tried and purchased both the Dry and the Medium (the Medium is also called Janet's Jungle Juice) both are approximately 6.5%. West Croft cider is made using cider apples and is a deep orange in colour, translucent as a good example of this cider would be expected to be. Both ciders have a good apple taste which makes you forget the strength. I called back a couple of days later for more supplies and had to try the dry cider again as it was a new cask which John said was dryer than the first I'd bought. It was and again it was excellent. I'll definitely be calling in on my next trip down. Another cider farm visited was Crossman's Prime Farmhouse Cider at Mayfield Farm Hewish. This is close to the RCH Brewery and run by Ben Crossman. The Dry and Medium were tasted and I purchased 5litres of Dry. The cider is about 6.5% alcohol. This cider was a pale orange in colour and very dry to the taste. I enjoyed it more last year but it was probably disadvantaged in that it was being compared to the West Croft this time around. Dobunni Cider Farm at Lympsham was also visited. I tasted the Dry and Medium ciders. These were very pale in colour and thin in taste, they were also very clear. I suspect these ciders are made from culinary and desert apples possibly Bramleys and Cox's, the ciders are drinkable but not what I would call a Farmhouse cider. The shop has been extended and sold ciders from other manufacturers, such as Thatcher's and Sheppy's. I did purchase some bottles of Sheppy's Kingston Black at 7.2% that I had not tasted before. Being bottled it had a slight fizz when opened was clear, yellow with a clean dry taste with a fruity finish. During the trip I also tried a Cornish Scrumpy from Callestock Cider Farm, Penhallow, Truro. This was called "Legless but smiling" it was Med Dry and 7.4%. It was clear, very smooth, and drinkable with a good fruity taste. I'll leave telling you about the beers until next time but I would like to say we had an excellent meal at the Queen's Arms at Bleadon, which had a good range of real ales all on gravity. **Beer Taster.**

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