

# Donny Drinker

Free

 159

Spring 2025

CAMRA Doncaster &  
District Branch

## Annual Award Winners 2024



Doncaster  
Hallcross



District  
Jemmy Hirst , Rawcliffe



Club  
Coronation Club, Norton



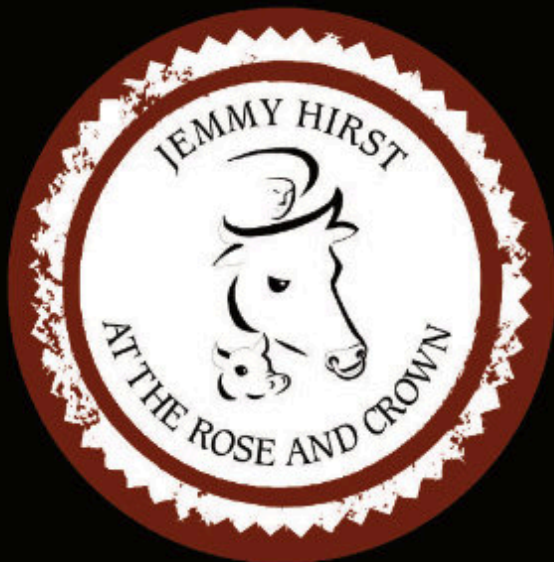
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## Editorial

This is a significant issue in the history of Donny Drinker as it features a series of articles celebrating the 50th anniversary of the branch. We have been very fortunate to receive information and articles from Peter Judge, who was not only a founder member but the first chairman of the branch.

The previous 158 issues of Donny Drinker act as an archive for anyone researching the life of the branch and the expansion of real ales in the branch area. Many of the pubs and breweries that are mentioned are now confined to history.

In the early days you get a feel for the desire of local CAMRA members to bring back real ales from the edge of extinction. Barnsley Bitter was a very important real ale at the time the branch was set but within a short space of time Oakwell Brewery was closed and branch members actually held a wake for the loss of the beer.

Today the real ale scene is much more vibrant and the memories of possible extinction are virtually lost. Locally, we have some exceptional independent brewers. We are lucky enough to have some independent pubs that can source beer from wherever they want and at a decent price. There are still, however, many publicans that are tied to large scale owners of pub real estate and beer choice is declining through large-scale brewery operations buying up smaller breweries and either moving the brewing operations or closing them down.

The branch, like CAMRA at a national level, has widened its scope by supporting the needs of pubs and breweries on a more general level. CAMRA is a very effective campaigner and rises to the occasion when necessary. It is quick to highlight problems with legislation or regulations.

Part of its strength is through a national network of branches with dedicated volunteers who, amongst many other things, monitor what is happening to their local pubs and breweries.

We are proud to be part of that network and through this magazine we aim to keep drinkers informed of what is happening in our branch area.



## Donny Drinker Spring 2025

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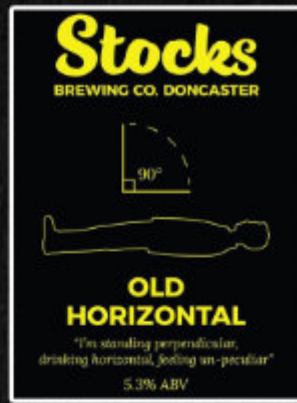
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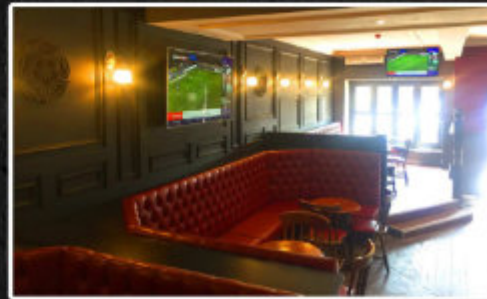
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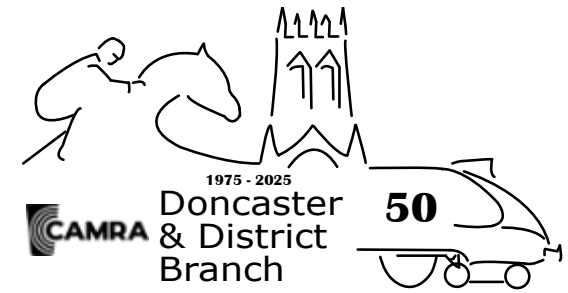
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## Doncaster Pub of the Season - Little Plough (City Centre)

Dean Southall



The cask beers are always in good condition and there's always a friendly welcome at the LP. It's part of CAMRA's LocAle scheme so the beers are brewed locally. Acorn's Barnsley Bitter is brewed in Wombwell and the other is White Rat. These are the 2 staple cask beers as well as Gorlovka stout on bottle, which is one of my favourites and he sources in generally every 3 or 4 a month from a couple of small breweries. As if to prove a point, 3 reps of Shipstone's walked into the Plough, while I was chatting to Dave

I asked Dave what the difference was between a historic pub and a normal pub. Dave said "Not much change

from a normal pub, you just can't change anything." It's got a good family feeling when you walk in, which is part of the reason why Dave and Ruth love running the place and it shows in his enthusiasm.

Congratulations to licensee Nick Griffin, who has now won POTS 4 times at the Plough. Dave, the friendly manager, has been in the pub trade for 25 to 30 years and seems to know everyone's name. There must be a lot of locals in here. I always feel welcome! Dave posts the new beers on the Plough's Facebook page. Nick, Dave and Ruth, would like to thank the fabulous team for all their hard work. The pub is cash-only. There is free Wi-Fi. There's also a pub quiz on a Sunday.

The presentation of the CAMRA award will take place on the 26<sup>th</sup> April at 8pm. Everyone welcome.

The Plough (known as the Little Plough to regulars and travellers alike) is a Donny Dozen pub. It is a must visit for any visitor to Doncaster. It's like travelling to yesteryear, with the only obvious giveaway the two TVs in the front room! It's a Heritage Trust listed building, so the interior is not allowed to be changed. The pub was built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is largely unchanged since 1934. It's also featured in CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors. It's the last original unspoiled ale house in Doncaster. It's worthwhile to take your time looking around both rooms (while having a pint of course :-)) to properly appreciate the pub! Without the Doctor's Tardis, it's the closest place I can think of to travel through time. Talking of time, let's travel back in time, to just before the pandemic. Dave and Ruth were going to leave the Corner Pin and Nick was going to stop running the Little Plough. They got in contact with each other and the rest is history!

## District Award and District Pub of the Year - Jemmy Hirst - Rawcliffe

Steve Pynegar



One of the great peculiarities of the Jemmy Hirst is its location. This pub is a multi-award-winning pub in the branch and has even been CAMRA's Yorkshire Pub of the Year on one occasion. This is despite not being on the main road in a busy village but situated well out of sight and away from other businesses.

When I was a casual member of CAMRA the pub was often spoken about so once I became active, I took a trip on a minibus social to find out where it was. I've included some information for you that may help you to find it, should you make the wise decision to visit the pub.

Jill, the landlady, came from the nether regions of Yorkshire to run the pub knowing of its reputation. The previous licensees were a hard act to follow but she approached the task cautiously and made the minimum changes to what is a very traditional, characteristic pub. I know that in the case of painting one of the walls she involved the regulars in coming to a decision on the colour.

The high standards and variety of real ales has been continued. You are always sure to find a good selection and ones that you might come across for the first time. My only grief is when one of my favourites run out just before I get there.

Jill has also ensured that the pub operates as a hub for the community. It always takes part in community events and has a reputation for raising funds for charity. When there are major events on the television the TV is wheeled out, so the regulars don't miss a thing. Live music is also a feature, along with quizzes. Whilst not providing meals regularly a recent addition to services is home-cooked food on a Sunday lunchtime. In recognition of her community work the pub was a finalist in the Community Pub Hero Awards.

Whilst Jill manages the pub on her own, she has a happy band of staff and helpers, either helping behind the bar or organising social events. She also has regular contact with other local licensees.

In conclusion, this pub thoroughly deserves being a double award-winning pub as both our District Pub of the Season and our District Pub of the Year. To sum things up I asked Jill what was her greatest pleasure in running the pub to which she replied, 'Just being part of other people's families'.

The Presentation is on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February at 3pm.



## Doncaster Pub of the Year - Hallcross (City Centre)

How appropriate that a building associated with the early days of the branch should be our Doncaster Pub of the Year. The re-birth of the Hallcross has been very successful and the name of 'Stocks' and some of their former beers lives on.

This pub caters for all ages and drinkers. It features ever-changing guest real ales along with the regular Stocks beers. There is a large lounge and sports enthusiasts are well catered for with a number of screens. At the back is a function room which is used for live entertainment, beer festivals, socials and is the venue for our branch meetings.

The memorabilia wall contains many memories of Doncaster life from the past and is well worth an examination.

Congratulations to the pub and its staff on becoming our Doncaster Pub of the Year 2024.

## Club of the Year - Coronation Club, Norton

There are about a dozen clubs in the Doncaster Branch area that serve a real ale and each year we celebrate this with an annual Club of the Year award. For the second year running this award has gone to the Coronation Club at Norton. A welcoming club on West End Road the single hand pump is busy showcasing a variety of cask beer styles, most often a pale ale from the likes of Old Mill Brewery.

Beers are also frequently sourced from Jolly Sailor at Selby and Theakstons. Amongst the club members are several people who are also CAMRA members, and because of this, with the club wanting to look after them, the beer quality is always in good condition. On a recent CAMRA social to the club, we were not disappointed with the beer. A welcome is made to passing visitors, just ring the bell to access the club. Arriva bus 51 stops opposite the club.

## Cider Pub of the Year - Doncaster Brewery Tap (City Centre)

Cider and perries tend to get a low profile in our local pubs and when you do find some it does not often meet the requirements of a traditional cider as defined by CAMRA and featured in the last issue.

One notable exception to this can be found at the Doncaster Brewery and Tap. It's thanks to the dedication of Alison Blaylock, whose made cider a life's mission at the pub. There is no other pub in the branch area that offers such a large selection of traditional ciders and perries. Care needs to be taken as cider can sometimes have a higher percentage of alcohol. A customer once chose a stronger cider and Alison quickly asked him if he was driving to which the reply was that he certainly was not.

Quite rightly, the pub is a regular winner of the branch's Cider Pub of the Year.

## Chairman's Notes

Further to my announcement in the previous edition of *Donny Drinker*, the countdown to an absolutely amazing event, has now begun. As you read this, plans are being put into place for Doncaster to stage one of the region's biggest and best beer festivals. Yes, that's right! The city is about to host, what I know will be, a phenomenal festival of real ale in Sir Nigel Gresley Square and Doncaster CAMRA have been asked to take part. So, diaries at the ready everyone (asking people to switch on their electronic devices just doesn't sound the same I'm afraid) it's almost opening time!

The beer festival will be held on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May and Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May, and will also tie in with the Doncaster Council Food Fortnight. Using a series of marquees, the festival will be open on Friday and Saturday 12.00 (noon) until 22:30 (with last orders at 22.00) and on Sunday 12.00 (noon) until 21:00 (last orders at 20.30). Please take a look at the advert which appears in this edition for details of admission fees, there is a special admission rate of £3.00 for card carrying CAMRA members – simply show your membership card at the 'gate'.

All the usual beer styles will be represented, including: milds, stouts, porters and pale ales, to ensure that those who seek out new beers will not be disappointed. There will also be a festival programme and a token system for the sale of the beers.

Some time ago, the Doncaster Council Major Events Team was contacted by Showtime Events who were keen to stage a beer festival in Doncaster. The events team put the people at Showtime in touch with us, and after having meetings with Showtime Events and the council, we realised that we had been given the opportunity, once again, to showcase the very best in traditional ale, cider and perry in the city centre. Something we had not been able to do since COVID.

**I feel it would be a great shame if we find we are unable to 'play our part' and be involved in this event. Can I therefore appeal to members to volunteer to work at the festival. Your help, in any way, would be appreciated. We need people to help out both behind the scenes as well as**

behind the bar, as we have been asked to take charge of the many tasks involved in racking and keeping the beer. Our experience in beer keeping and staffing an event of this type has been called upon, so please remember to put the dates in your diary, or put it in your smartphone. Whatever you do, please respond as soon as possible by contacting the membership secretary (e-mail [membership@doncaster.camra.org.uk](mailto:membership@doncaster.camra.org.uk)) to let him know when you're available.

Thank you in advance for your support.

I was reminded recently that the branch celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. We had originally hoped to mark the occasion at the Leopard, which was where the inaugural meetings took place all those years ago. Unfortunately, I have been unable to obtain any information regarding future plans, and no-one working there seems to know anything either. We know the pub has been relieved but that seems to be as much as anyone is prepared to say when they've been asked.

We've had other venues offering to look after us but we are hanging on for the Leopard as we feel this is the right place to celebrate our Golden Anniversary. Can someone in authority at Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust please get in touch. Just to put us in the picture so we can make some plans to mark our 50<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The death was announced last month of Gordon Sharpe, who passed away after a long illness. Gordon was well known to branch members, as he served on the committee and helped us make contact with DCLT. This resulted in our return to the Dome and being able to use the sports hall for our last few beer festivals. He was also the former manager of TMCR FM, a community radio station in Thorne, and his experience with electronics and computers was a great help to the branch. Our condolences go out to his family at this sad time.

The Spring Doncaster Pub of the Season award and the corresponding District Pub of the Season award have both been announced recently. I shall be delighted to be presenting these awards to Dave at the (Little) Plough and Jill at the Jemmy

Hirst. Why not come along and join me as we celebrate the achievements of these two excellent pubs? More information about these events and all our meetings and socials, can be found in the Branch Diary section of this magazine.

I look forward to seeing you there!

*Jan Jones:* Branch Chairman.

## Yorkshire Wander

Lynn Attack

January 2020 was the last time the branch had a day out on the Yorkshire/Lancashire Rail Ale Trail as it had been hijacked and ruined by hordes of stag and hen parties. The banning of fancy dress and large groups, plus participating pubs not serving lager, shots or double spirits favoured by the groups between 12noon and 8pm has returned the excellent day out to Real Ale lovers once again.

The route stretches from Stalybridge in the West on the Huddersfield, Batley line to Leeds in the East. The beauty of it is there are excellent pubs either on the stations or very close to them. I had the route planned out last year but, on checking the train times after the timetable change, I found to my dismay there were major engineering works on the line near Huddersfield which meant replacement buses, and longer journey times (losing valuable drinking time!) so a reschedule was called for.

So, armed with our day return from Doncaster to South Elmsall and a West Yorkshire Day Saver ticket in hand (available in single, family or for groups of up to 5 adults), we caught the 10.26 from Doncaster To Leeds. We managed a quick connection to Dewsbury so arrived on platform 2 at the Grade II listed West Riding Licensed Refreshment Rooms at 11.34. They have 2 regular beers and had 6 others varying in style and strength along with 2 ciders on handpump.

From there we caught a train to Mirfield from the same platform. We decided to visit the Flower Pot first. This is not on the usual rail trail as it is slightly further away. It's an Ossett pub built in 1807 that had 8 Ossett beers on and a mulled cider. Very welcome in the freezing temperatures we had that day. Then on to the Navigation, just 175 yards from the station to enjoy some of the 6 beers on offer.

We then crossed over the tracks for a train to Batley. Here we found the Cellar Bar,



another grade II listed curved building that you can see as you leave the platform offering 4 different beers. From the same platform, back to Leeds where we had a much-needed meal in the Scarborough Hotel. Not quite as easy to get to with the building work, but they are big enough for us all to find tables comfortably with a welcome choice of 7 beers.

The revised plan meant we had chance to visit the excellent Junction pub in Castleford. A pub that has served all its beers from their own wooden casks for many years. The owner Neil has done all the renovations himself, including working on the rare tiled frontage to the building. Here we found 3 Stancil beers, and, unusually, 7 different Sam Smiths bottled beers.

From there we caught the 20.04 to Leeds, which very conveniently became the 20.29 to Wakefield, so we didn't even have to change trains to visit Harry's Bar that is quite close to Westgate station. Choosing between their 9 beers was a fine way to end the evening, arriving back into Doncaster at 22.07.

An excellent day out with only 3 beers duplicated, so we had a choice of 42 different beers throughout the day. We were careful to drink responsibly - and having halves means you can try twice as many different beers. The beauty of this trip is you can make it as long or short as you wish. Give it a go, I'm sure you will have a good day out.



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**CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year**  
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**Yorkshire Cider Pub of the Year**  
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## Pub & Brewery News

The branch team of reporters

**Editors Note:** We take every effort to make sure that everything is correct when this article goes to the printers. However, with the current volatile situation with pubs, clubs and breweries throughout the country the time between writing, printing and distributing may result in the situation changing. If your visit to a pub is important then check before you travel to make sure the situation has not changed.

### South Yorkshire

The **Royal** at Norton has a new licensee and on a recent visit they were serving Theakston's Best Bitter and a pale ale from Kirkstall Brewery.

The **Crown** at Barnburgh is now managed by Steve. There was a very good pint of Timothy Taylor's Landlord available when we paid a visit. At the Harlington Inn in November we found Theakston's Best Bitter which is proving popular at this pub.

At the **Marr Lodge**, following extensive fire damage, we can report that repair work has started. It may be several months before they open again.

The **Anne Arms** at Sutton is under new management and we were pleasantly surprised to find Bradford Farmer's Blonde and Timothy Taylor's Boltmaker available.

**Lennys Micropub** at Conisbrough seems to now sell real ale on a very occasional basis.

The **Green Tree** at Hatfield has re-opened following refurbishment work. We don't know if has continued to not sell real ale.

At the **Grazing Hart** in Micklebring they had Bradford Farmer's Blonde and Timothy Taylor's Landlord on offer. At nearby Braithwell, we believe the **Butcher's Arms** are restricting real ale to one barrel a week, which is usually from Bradfield.

In Bessacarr we found Wainwright Gold at the **Flying Childers** and Doombur at the **Punch's Hotel**.

In Bawtry we discovered that the **Turnpike** is now a Craft Union pub. It's changed into a sports bar with pool table, multiple TVs and fruit machines. All signs of food have gone. Hobgoblin Amber was available at the bar.

### City Centre

We continue to monitor events at the former **Corner Pin** pub. Work seems to have re-commenced on the building.

### North Yorkshire

We have received a report that both **Owston Hall** and **Darios** have no real ale.

**Kellington Manor** and the **Red Lion** at Kellington also had no real ale available which is a great shame. Thankfully, both the **Jenny Wren** and the **Shoulder of Mutton** had 2 cask ales on sale. At the Shoulder of Mutton we found Black Sheep bitter and Bradford Farmer's Blonde on offer. The long-standing bar manager, Christine, informed us that she was to retire in the next few months after many years at the pub.

### Isle of Alxholme

On a recent visit to the **Crooked Billet** three cask ales were available – Don Valley's Citra Session Pale Ale and Isn't Life Joyous and also Bad Kitty, a vanilla porter brewed by the Malton-based Brass Castle Brewery.

This year's Haxey Hood game was won by **The Loco**, Haxey. The Hood will be on display in the Loco's bar for the next year. But, a word of warning to visitors – don't ask the staff to take it down so you can look at it. Local tradition says that anyone taking down the Hood is obliged to buy a drink for everyone in the bar!

### Brewery News

The ever-expanding **Don Valley Brewery** shows no signs of slowing down in 2025. Following the extension of opening hours at their tap bar at the Sandtoft brewery site, which began opening on Saturdays from 12–7pm in December, the bar will

now also open on Wednesdays from 11am–10pm starting 5th March. They are also planning to announce an exciting new venture this Spring—stay tuned for further updates.

February marks the beginning of a series of special cask ales. This month sees the return of 'Mardy Bum,' a fruity 4% session pale ale. March will bring another a brand-new special, 'Respect,' a golden session IPA brewed by the ladies of the brewery pub group in celebration of International Women's Day (IWD), observed on 8th March each year. This brew honours women's achievements and promotes gender equality. Tested as a pilot brew in recent weeks, it was met with high praise by those lucky enough to sample it—one to watch out for in the future!

After a successful December when **Pig Barn Brewery** beers sold very well at local Christmas fairs, owner Chris Layton has temporarily

## Local Transport

### Micropub Adventures

We've said many times in Donny Drinker that members like to make good use of public transport to many of the far-flung corners of our area. In recent times the Isle of Axholme has had its services reduced, although recently there is a short time of availability to get to some parts of the Isle from Doncaster.

We have recently become aware of a blog called Micropub Adventures whose website is ([www.micropubadventures.co.uk](http://www.micropubadventures.co.uk)) and what caught our eye was that the writer had found a way to get from the city centre to the Don Valley Brewery Tap at Sandtoft. Details of the Justgo bus service for North Lincolnshire can be found at [www.justgonorthlincs.co.uk](http://www.justgonorthlincs.co.uk). It's certainly a novel way to get about.

Below are the contents of the blog and we thank Scott for giving us permission to reproduce it in this issue of Donny Drinker

#### Don Valley Brewery Tap

I hopped on a train from Doncaster to Crowle and had pre-booked a "justgo" bus. It's a fantastic service in North Lincolnshire that lets you book a ride when there's no regular bus route. The fare

suspended operations to have a major clean-up of the brewery premises – and a well-earned rest. Brewing will recommence in March.

Just before Christmas, Chris introduced a new beer for the Crooked Billet in Owston Ferry. It's a 5% IPA called Ferry Water which takes its name from a song by local singer-songwriter Peet Jackson. Peet, who is credited on the pump clip, regularly plays at the pub's music nights. He also held his most recent album launch at the Crooked Billet. Licensees Rachel and Jonathan Scott tell me that the new beer has proved popular with regulars.

This is the third beer Chris has brewed for local pubs. One of his first beers was Kings Ale, a 3.8% session bitter named after the King's Arms, Haxey, where his first ales were launched back in 2020. Then last year he marked the re-opening of another Haxey pub, the Duke William, with a 4.2% pale ale called the Duke's Return.

*from Crowle Railway Station to Sandtoft was just £2.50 each way. Check out their website for more info.*

*While I was there, I checked out Don Valley Brewery. They kicked things off in 2013 in Cadeby, near Mexborough, fuelled by a love for great music and quality beer, which still drives their vibe today. In 2018, they moved to Sandtoft, taking over a vacant spot at their parent company, Liberty Group, which has been around since 1982. This move allowed them to build a brand-new brewery with all the modern amenities.*

*It was awesome to meet Cody at the tap today. The taproom is bright and airy, looking fantastic with plenty of seating, including an outdoor area. They currently serve food on Fridays, with plans to expand that to all open hours.*

*The bar boasts an impressive lineup of 7 cask ales and a wide variety of keg beers. I tried three of their cask options, starting with "Session," a delicious pale session ale, then moved on to "Parklife," a juicy and hazy New England IPA packed with flavour. I wrapped up with "Isn't Life Joyous!," an Extra Special Bitter that was bursting with taste.*

# THE LEOPARD DONCASTER

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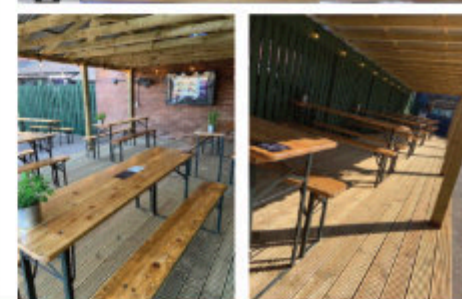
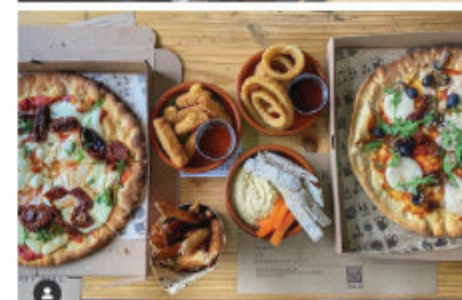
including small plates, pizza and pub classics.



scan the qr code to view our food & drinks menu



SAVE 5%  
WHEN YOU ORDER  
ON OUR APP



In the next few issues of Donny Drinker we will include articles and information covering the 50 years of the branch.

### Genesis - In the beginning - Part 1

Peter Judge

What led to a small group of us, 50 years ago or so, wanting to form a branch of CAMRA in Doncaster and why did we choose the Leopard for the first meeting?

As it happens, my mum had been a barmaid for Jim and Mary Clark, the licensees of the Leopard, a couple of years before that, Mum had served me a pint (or two) of Barnsley Bitter in the early 70's. Like any good bar staff, she made sure the pint was full to the top, with just a couple of millimetres of very tightly constituted froth on top of a full pint of liquid.

Nectar. Not because mum pulled, it, but because it was superbly kept Barnsley Bitter, kept by a tenant couple who had years of experience of serving beer, and trained their staff well.

In the early 1970s, a lot of the pubs around the Doncaster wider area were John Smith's pubs, usually tanked beer but there were still some Barnsley Brewery pubs, usually selling real Barnsley Bitter, but these were now owned by John Smith's (itself owned by Courage). There was a handful of Tetley pubs (Allied Breweries), mostly at that time still real ale, one or two Whitbread pubs and Sam Smith's was often represented in clubs.

In 1971 I went off to Nottingham for higher education and discovered Shipstones, Hardys and Hansons, and Home Ale, which were usually served through electric pumps of varied descriptions. In 1972 I heard about the impending closure of Barnsley Brewery in 1975 or 1976. I must have written a letter to the press – because I got a letter from Terry Pattinson, a journalist at the Daily Mirror, who told me about the Society for the Preservation of Beers from the Wood (the SPBW – founded in 1963) and the fledgling Campaign for the Revitalisation of Ale (CAMRA). CAMRA wrote back asking for 25p which they had to charge as they sent out a newsletter every month. So I

joined. I then became a bit of an evangelist for CAMRA, persuading my friend, Jim Butcher and a few more to join.

I got involved with the Nottingham branch of CAMRA, and in my vacations back in Donny noticed that handpumps there were disappearing in favour of electric pumps. In spring 1974 Jim and I joined the Nottingham branch's coach outing to the York AGM of CAMRA – there we asked what we could do to try to save Oakwell. And we discovered beers straight from the cask at the AGM's "Beer Exhibition" in the De Grey rooms in York. These beers were from long-established breweries in Yorkshire and across the Pennines in Lancashire (where the ale scene was less affected by the takeover madness).

Finally returning to Doncaster in summer 1974, I wasn't sure how to continue with my CAMRA activities but knew I still wanted to try to save Barnsley Brewery. But not long after I returned, there was a knock on the door. Dave Vickers, who had been in the year below me at school (as had Jim Butcher – and Andy Mosby) stood there – I was kind of bemused as we hadn't known each other well. "We're both members of CAMRA", he may have said – and then told me that two or three of them travelled over to Sheffield, taking it in turns to drive, for the Sheffield branch meetings. Was I interested? Obviously I thought that was a great idea. At least three of us travelled over, myself, Dave and Phil Pitcher, and I think Norman Worthington too.

We started discussing the possibility of setting up a branch in Doncaster. In the town centre, we had discovered Ward's in the Three Horse Shoes (Town End), Tetley's in the Masons Arms, Home Ales in the Old Castle, Shipstones in the Coach and Horses and St Leger Tavern (Biscuit Billy's), Darley's in the Vine (Balby Road) and, of course, Barnsley Bitter in the Leopard and the Cheshire Cheese (Wheatley Hall Road).

Our aim to establish a branch in Doncaster was fully supported by members and officers of Sheffield branch and we also had the support of Roger Jay, who was the Regional Organiser for the North at that time. In a letter to me in August 1974,

he advised on such matters as calling the meeting to test support, advertising it in What's Brewing, and on the constitution which branches needed to adopt.

Following a meeting to test support on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December, 1974 in the Leopard, West Street, the Doncaster Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale was inaugurated on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 1975. The inaugural meeting was again held in the Leopard, where the members enjoyed a choice of Barnsley Bitter served through spheromatic metered pumps, or Barnsley Bitter...

### Beer Festivals

The branch has organised a number of different types of beer festivals over the years but the big major ones, fully organised by us, are the ones we look at in this article. The first one was in 1991 at Bentley Pavilion and had the posh title of the 1991 Doncaster Beer Exhibition. This was reduced to the title of Doncaster Beerex which was the familiar name used for many years. Breweries represented included Bateman, Greene King, Kelham Island, Old Mill, John Smith's, Samuel Smith's, Stocks, Woodforde, Taylor (Timothy Taylor), Tetley and Theakston.

With each year the festivals got bigger as did the venues. The major venues used were Doncaster Racecourse, the Dome and the Hub. These events were not just about real ale. Continental lagers, cider and perries were included. There were food stalls and all sorts of entertainment. Beer tasting was a popular event with winners chosen for different types of beer and an overall best of festival beer. The festivals were given themes such as

The branch got off to a reasonable start. I was conscripted in as branch chair, with Phil Pitcher as secretary and Dave Vickers as treasurer. For whatever reason, we started to hold our formal meetings in the back room of the St Leger Tavern. We were still on good terms with Jim and Mary at the Leopard and Jim was dreading the day they would install the dreaded cellar tanks, dispensing what he described as beer that had been "paralysed and fertilised".

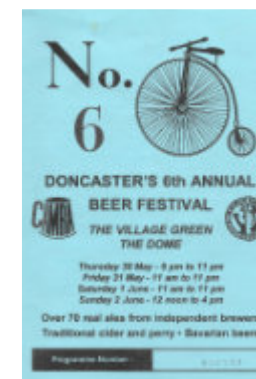
*To be continued.....*

James Bond, the Sinking of the Titanic and the first man landing on the moon.

They were great fun and very well attended but behind the scenes a lot of work was put in by volunteer CAMRA members. The expertise of certain members was really put to the test for choosing and ordering beers, keeping the beers in good condition, booking entertainment and food, liaising with sponsors, organising first aiders and security staff, producing documentation such as health and safety guidance, managing the volunteers, controlling the finances and much more. Nothing could be left to chance.

The festivals also raised money for the branch's chosen charity which changed each year. These charities were often chosen because they had supported a member or their family in some way.

In the next few issues of Donny Drinker we hope to bring you stories from some of the beer festivals.





**DONCASTER BREWERY**

www.doncasterbrewery.co.uk

# TAP

**OPENING HOURS**  
 Thu April 17th 5-11  
 Fri April 18th 12-11  
 Sat April 19th 12-11  
 Sun April 20th 12-5  
 Mon April 21st 12-5

## EASTER BEER FESTIVAL

**10 NEW & OBSCURE GUEST CASK ALES**

**6 DONCASTER BREWERY CASK ALES**

**6 TRADITIONAL CIDERS**

**13 SPECIALLY SELECTED KEG BEERS**

**150+ CRAFT BOTTLES & CANS**

**BEER BRATWURST & OTHER FOOD**



[/donnybrewery](#) [@Donny Brewery](#)

7 YOUNG ST, DONCASTER DN1 3EL MOB: 07921 970941






### Branch Time Line

Date/Year	Event	Avg Beer Price Source ONS
10th December 1974	A small group of like-minded real drinkers met informally on 2 occasions to discuss the possibility of setting up a CAMRA branch.	15p
7th January 1975	The first formal meeting of the branch was held at the Leopard to elect officials and formalise a set of rules.	20p
1975	The first beer tent was set up at Bentley Park during a community event. Barnsley Bitter and Sam Smith's 4X were available.	
1976	The branch held a wake for Barnsley Bitter which ceased production. They had to have meetings in other pubs because the Leopard no longer sold Barnsley Bitter real ale. Other pubs that they could no longer visit because of the Barnsley Bitter issue included the Cheshire Cheese, Railway and Market Tavern.	23p
1976	A beer tent was set up at Sandtoft for the first time and that tradition continues to this day.	
1979	The very first town centre beer festival was set up at a vacant shop that belonged to Cooplads. The shop became the original Hallcross pub and the home of Stocks Ales which were originally brewed there.	34p
1970s/80s	Tap, snug and smoke rooms were being replaced by open plan areas and out-of-tune pianos were replaced by piped music.	
1983	The very first edition of Donny Drinker was produced on a typewriter. Cartoons were drawn by hand and copies produced on a duplicating machine. They were then folded and stapled by hand. In one of the very early issues we see the first notification of a Pub of the Season. It was the Crooked Billet at Owston Ferry.	62p
1991	The first Doncaster Beer Exhibition (Doncater Beerex) was organised by the branch at Bentley Pavilion.	£1.26
1993	The Beer Exhibition moved to Doncaster Racecourse.	£1.37
1994	The Beer Exhibition temporarily moved to the indoor bowling green ( Village green) at the Dome and then back to the racecourse the following year.	£1.42
1994	In the autumn a first pub games match was arranged between the branch and the Leopard. The Leopard won 4-0.	
2004	The Garth Nicholls award was given for the first time to Ian Murray at the Wheatsheaf at Burn.	£2.03
2005	The Dome became the regular venue of the Beer Exhibition.	£2.13
2007	The Beer Exhibition moved to the Hub.	£2.31
2016	Dn1 Beer Festival involving many of the real ale pub in the town centre	£2.99
2018	The Beer Exhibition moved back to the Dome.	
2020	Everything stopped because of the Covid pandemic	£3.58
2021	The branch started to get back to normal.	£3.73



**The Royal Hotel**

West End Road, Norton DN6 9DH  
01302 702950

Food (Tuesday to Sunday)

Family/dog friendly

Hand-pulled Beers

Beer Garden

Live Music

Sports TV





## Branch Area Real Ale Pubs/Clubs

**Adwick upon Deame**  
 Manvers Arms  
**Airmyn**  
 Percy Arms  
**Armthorpe**  
 Horse & Groom **GL**  
**Auckley**  
 Eagle & Child **WLG**  
**Austerfield**  
 Mayflower  
**Balby (Woodfield Pltn)**  
 Maple Tree  
**Barnburgh**  
 Barnburgh WM Club \* **LWG**  
 Coach and Horses **LDCG**  
 The Crown Inn **WTGD**  
**Barnby Dun**  
 The Olive  
**Bawtry**  
 Ship **WT**  
 Turnpike **WG**  
 White Hart **WD**  
 Bar and Brasserie **CDL**  
**Beal**  
 Jenny Wren  
**Belton**  
 Crown  
 Wheatsheaf  
**Belle Vue**  
 Town Moor Golf Club **LW**  
**Bentley Town End**  
 Three Horseshoes **L**  
**Bessacarr**  
 Flying Childers  
 Toby Carvery  
**Blaxton**  
 Blue Bell  
 Station

**Burghwallis**  
 The Burghwallis Pub  
**Cadeby**  
 Cadeby Pub & Restaurant  
**LDCTG**  
**Clayton**  
 Clayton with Frickley Club  
**LWTGD**  
**Conisbrough**  
 Hilltop **LWG**  
 The Terminus **TWG**  
**Cusworth**  
 Old Brewhouse **GCLD**  
**Doncaster**  
 Black Bull **L**  
 Doncaster Brewery Tap  
**LCWGT**  
 Don Valley Tap **LDCTG**  
 Gate House **LW**  
 Hallcross  
 Leopard **DLTG**  
 Little Plough **L**  
 Marketplace Alehouse **LC**  
 Masons' Arms  
 Queen Crafthouse **C**  
 Railway  
 Red Lion **WDL**  
 Salutation **LC**  
 Social  
 The Draughtsman Alehouse  
 The Mallard **DT**  
 Town Field Sports Club  
 Tut 'n' Shive **DT**  
 White Swan **L**  
 Yates  
**Dome/Lakeside**  
 Beefeater Lakeside  
 Cheswold

**Edenthorpe**  
 Eden Arms **DG**  
**Eggborough**  
 Horse & Jockey  
**Epworth**  
 Old School Inn  
 Queen's Head  
 Red Lion  
 White Bear  
**Fenwick**  
 Baxter Arms **W**  
**Finningley**  
 Harvey Arms **W**  
**Fishlake**  
 Hare & Hounds  
**Goole**  
 Aire and Calder  
 City & County **LDT**  
 North Star Marina Club **LG**  
 Old George  
 The Viking  
 Tom Pudding **LCG**  
 Victoria Hotel  
**Great Heck**  
 Bay Horse **L**  
**Harlington**  
 The Harlington  
**Hatfield**  
 Bay Horse  
 Hatfields  
 Hatfield Chace  
 Ingram Arms  
 Jack Hawley at the Grange  
**DL**  
**Haxey**  
 Duke William  
 Kings Arms  
 The Loco

**Hickleton**  
 Hickleton Village Hall \* **WG**  
**Kirk Sandall**  
 Glasshouse **DTG**  
**Kirk Smeaton**  
 Shoulder of Mutton  
**Mexborough**  
 Gorilla Beer Hall **LTGDW**  
 Imperial **LTG**  
 New Masons  
 Old Market Hall **LW**  
 Pastures Lodge  
 The Falcon **WD**  
**Micklebring**  
 The Grazing Harts  
**Norton**  
 Coronation Club  
 The Royal Hotel  
**Owston**  
 Darios  
 Owston Hall & Golf Club  
**Owston Ferry**  
 Crooked Billet  
 White Hart  
**Pollington**  
 King's Head **L**  
**Rawcliffe**  
 Jemmy Hirst **LC**  
**Rawcliffe Bridge**  
 Rawcliffe Bridge Club\*  
**Sandtoft**  
 Don Valley Brewery Tap  
 Reindeer **W**  
**Scawsby**  
 Scawsby Mill **DT**  
 Sun (Inn)  
**Snaith**  
 Bell & Crown  
 Black Lion  
 Brewer's Arms **L**  
 Mansion House Bar  
 The Plough Inn **LDC**

**Sprotbrough**  
 Boat Inn **W**  
 Ivanhoe **WT**  
 Newton  
**Sutton**  
 Anne Arms  
**Sykehouse**  
 Old George Inn  
**Thorne**  
 Barge Inn **G**  
 Canal Tavern  
 Punch Bowl **LTG**  
 The King's Chamber  
 Windmill **LGWD**  
**Tickhill**  
 Carpenter's Arms  
 Travellers Rest  
 Royal Oak  
 Scarbrough Arms **L**  
 Tickhill Cricket Club  
**Wadworth**  
 White Hart  
**West Butterwick**  
 Ferry Boat  
**West Cowick**  
 Ship **W**  
**Westwoodside**  
 Carpenter's Arms  
**Wheatley**  
 Strawberry Island Boat  
 Club \*(Private Club)  
 The House Martin  
**Wheatley Hills**  
 Wheatley Golf Club  
**Woodlands**  
 Woodlands Snooker Club  
**Wroot**  
 Cross Keys

### Abbreviations

- L Locale registered
- D CAMRA discount available to members
- C Traditional ciders and perries served
- W Wheelchair access
- T Wheelchair access + toilets
- G Dogs allowed in all or part of the pub
- Pub/Club may have restricted opening times



Boat Inn,  
Sprotborough



Brewer's Arms, Snaith



Jenny Wren, Beal



Scarbrough Arms,  
Tickhill

It's been around for a few years and is on a lovely spot on the marketplace. The current owner took over in the spring of 2023. It has 5 hand pumps of regularly changing ales, mostly from local breweries. A personal favourite is the Drone Valley, who, in my opinion, produce some pretty solid beers (including a very nice porter). I do like sitting outside ( on the 1 day of the year when we have summer ) Stuart, the always-beaming owner, is always chatty to me and his other patrons. He won a CAMRA Pub of the Season recently. He has been grateful to all the local craft beer pub owners in Donny who have been supplying him with support and useful advice I did manage to twist his arm ( don't worry, he can still pull a pint ) to start listing his beers on Realalefinder so people can check out what's on from the comfort of their own home or the pub. They can also find the best real ale places in Doncaster and around the UK. Not forgetting that Whatpub contains loads of general information on pubs in the UK.

An advertisement for Bradfield Brewery. It features a wooden background with several beer labels hanging from a rack. The labels include 'BRADFIELD BREWERY SHEFFIELD', 'FARMERS BLONDE', 'YORKSHIRE FARMER', 'FARMERS BROWN COPE', 'ROCK & RIBBLE STOUT', and 'FARMERS PALE ALE'. In the foreground, there is a glass of beer with a label that says 'BRADFIELD BREWERY' and a bottle of 'FARMERS ALES'. The text 'try a taste of tradition' is written in a large, white, serif font. Below it, it says 'Farmers Ales from Bradfield Brewery'. At the bottom, there are social media icons for Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, and contact information for the on-site brewery shop.

try a taste  
of  
tradition

Farmers Ales from Bradfield Brewery

On-Site Brewery Shop open Monday – Saturday 10am until 4pm.  
info@bradfieldbrewery.com • 0114 2851118 • www.bradfieldbrewery.com  
Bradfield Brewery Limited, Wait House Farm, High Bradfield, Sheffield, S6 6LG

# The 'Little' Plough

Doncaster's local pub in the town centre

- Four real ales - Acorn Barnsley Bitter, Bradfield Farmer's Blonde and 2 changing ales.
- Located on West Laith Gate, a couple of minutes walk from Doncaster railway station.
- Sports fans well catered for.
- Awarded on numerous occasions Doncaster CAMRA's Pub of the Season.
- Listed on CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors.
- Sunday 8pm: Quiz-a-thon with DJ Cev to include quiz/music quiz/unlucky dip and Irish Bingo.

## Opening Hours

Mon - Thu 11am - 11pm

Fri/Sat 11am - 11.30pm

Sun - 11am - 11.30pm

8 West Laith Gate  
Doncaster DN1 1SF  
Tel: 01302 738310

 @TheLittlePlough

 @Littleplough



# Horse and Groom

Pub and Restaurant

Nutwell Lane : Armthorpe

DN3 3JU



Home-cooked  
pub food

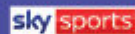
Real Ale

(In Good Beer Guide 2024)

Beer Garden



Quiz - Sunday &  
Thursday



Sports TV

Sky + TNT + Racing UK

Phone 01302 831658

Facebook : Horse & Groom Armthorpe

## It's easy to see why our beer is head and shoulders above the rest!

AVAILABLE FROM 1st NOVEMBER 2024



Brewed in Yorkshire.

Inspired by the life of the famous martyr of Rome, St Laurence, Grilled Saint is a legendary beer from the family-owned, Old Mill Brewery in Snaith, East Yorkshire.

Under the watchful eye of head brewer, Micheal Wynnyczuk, we craft every drop using traditional skills and the finest ingredients. The result is an outstanding pint that's nothing short of heavenly to drink.



The Gatehouse  
(City Centre)



The Cadeby Inn and  
Restaurant  
(Cadeby)

## Ale Talk

DD CARTOONS



I didn't realise a branch mystery minibus trip involved playing musical instruments!

# THE OLD BREWHOUSE CUSWORTH

## THE HOME OF 1086 BREWERY

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Housed in the original brewhouse of Cusworth Hall, The Old Brewhouse serves ales direct from the 1086 Brewery, so you can enjoy a choice of IPA, Pale Ale or Bitter.

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and can be enjoyed at discerning venues across the borough of Doncaster and Cusworth Brewhouse. All members of the family are welcome including the wee ones and the dog.

### ORDER ONLINE FOR COLLECTION



Enjoy all your Brewhouse favourites in the comfort of your home. Place your order online and collect from the Brewhouse.

WE'RE ALSO ON deliveroo

### OPENING HOURS

MONDAY	CLOSED FOR BREWING
TUESDAY	CLOSED FOR BREWING
WEDNESDAY	10AM - 9PM
THURSDAY	10AM - 9PM
FRIDAY	10AM - 11PM
SATURDAY	10AM - 11PM
SUNDAY	10AM - 9PM



CUSWORTH HALL DONCASTER DN5 7TU  
01302 639880



SAVE 5%  
WHEN YOU ORDER  
ON OUR APP



## The Last Traditional Pub



"It's a nice little legacy to carry on" is how Bill Burton, describes his role. Bill is the licensee of the Queen's Head, Epworth, in the Isle of Axholme, which can lay claim to being the town's only remaining traditional drinker's pub.

Bill, who took over the Queen's Head in November 2023, describes himself as a third-generation Epworth publican. His grandfather was landlord of the now-closed Mowbray Arms for 35 years from 1964 while his mother was in charge of the White Bear from 2000 to 2009. It was a logical step for Bill to follow in the family tradition when the previous licensee Linda Chapman retired. And he intends to keep the pub's unique character.

Situated on Queen Street in the town centre, the Queen's Head is very much a traditional pub. Unlike Epworth's other pubs, no meals are served. Instead it has traditional pub games – darts, dominoes and pool, real fire, a juke box and a one-armed bandit which you don't often see those in many pubs these days! ).



So what about the beer? Well, cask ales have always been available at this pub. It has won a number of CAMRA awards for the quality of its beers during the branch's 50 year history. The most recent was in Summer 2019 when it was named as our District Pub of the season. At present three real ales are on offer : Timothy Taylor Landlord and Black Sheep Bitter are a permanent feature while there's a monthly-changing guest beer. When I visited the pub to research this article the current guest was Brains Reverend James. Other recent guests have included Bradfield Blue and Farmer's Blonde and St Austell Tribute. To maintain its reputation for beer quality the pub has recently acquired a new cellar and new pipes.

The Queen's Head is open every day from 12 until late. It's a friendly local where visitors are always welcome. There aren't so many pubs of this type nowadays and they are worth preserving. So if you're in Epworth why not call in?



Your No.1 Choice for your Bottled Gases



- Rent free cellar gases
- A full range of CO2 & mixed gases
- A top level delivery service



- Doncaster's leading Calor Gas Supplier
- Full range of Propane, Butane & Patio Gases
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- We are main stockists and distributor of Buse industrial gases
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Email. [info@dongas.co.uk](mailto:info@dongas.co.uk)

PUTTING YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR TASTEBUDS ARE

Have you ever wondered how you could possibly combine your love of real ale with potentially increasing your savings and getting a financial reward? Well, your answer might be to join the CAMRA Members' Investment Club!

Although borne out of and aligned with the Campaign, sharing the same ideals and values, it is not part of the Campaign and receives no financial support from it. The investments are solely owned by the Club's membership and nobody else. CMIC has grown into what is probably the largest investment club in the UK with roughly 3000 members and assets roughly valued at around £20m.

The Club aims to provide its members with an attractive total investment return derived from a portfolio of companies involved in the production or retailing of real ale and allied trades ie; it seeks to protect and increase the value of members' funds over the longer term whilst remaining true to the objectives of the Campaign. To achieve that aim it invests in a variety of stocks and shares (quoted and unlisted) in companies, including large and small breweries, pub-owning companies and property businesses operating in the pub sector.

Currently there are over 30 companies in the portfolio, ranging from the giants of UK brewing to smaller long-established family-controlled brewers such as Adnams and Shepherd Neame. Micro-breweries represented include first generation firms such as Hop Back and younger businesses like Loch Lomond or Twickenham Fine Ales. Other

investments include some international brewers who have interests in UK cask beer, such as Asahi, Carlsberg and Heineken, and pub-owning companies, like Marston's, Mitchell & Butlers and Wetherspoons. Some of the smaller pub groups such as The Beer Consortium and Heavitree also feature.

The Club is organised along the lines of a unit trust with minimum and maximum contribution rates (from just £5 per month), payable monthly or annually, and each investor attending the AGM has one vote irrespective of the size of holding. Day-to-day administration is contracted out to a regulated chartered accountancy firm (Allens) and the quoted investments are securely held in nominee names managed by the Club's stockbrokers, who are regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The accounts are inspected annually by independent accountants. It is, therefore, run in accordance with financial best practice.

The Club hosts an annual meeting and lunch with guest speakers – Simon Theakston spoke this year- and frequent brewery trips are arranged. If you are a member of CAMRA and want to learn more about the Club please contact CMIC at 123 Wellington Road South, Stockport SK1 3TH,

info@cmic.uk.com : 0161 359 3976 or view the website www.cmic.uk.com.

The Club looks forward to welcoming new members so why not visit the website to get further information.

CAMRA's New Logo



CAMRA have gone through a re-branding exercise and has now got a new logo which you can see on the left.

As a result of this and the fact the branch is 50 years old, we have incorporated the new CAMRA logo and the number 50 into our branch's own logo. This can be seen on page 5.

JACK HAWLEY at the GRANGE

NAMED AFTER THE HATFIELD ECCENTRIC OF 1828



ROTATING REAL GUEST ALES  
TIMOTHY TAYLOR'S & HOFMEISTER LAGER  
LOCAL REAL CIDER, 50 PLUS GINS, WINES & SPIRITS



Welcoming · Quiet · Comfortable · Friendly Atmosphere

MONDAY to FRIDAY - 5pm to 11pm

SATURDAY & SUNDAY - 1pm to 11pm

Doncaster & District CAMRA  
Pub of the Season - Autumn 2019  
Pub of the Season - Summer 2023

Doncaster & District CAMRA  
Pub of the Year - 2020 Joint Winner



Live music, last Sunday of every month



10p off for members

The Grange, Manor Road, Hatfield DN7 6SB

facebook jackhawleyatthegrange | Telephone: 07769 927603



## Volunteer Staff Required

We are looking for CAMRA members to help us at this festival. There are a number of opportunities in which you can make this event a success. Please contact the membership secretary for further details.

[membership@doncaster.camra.org.uk](mailto:membership@doncaster.camra.org.uk)

See advert on the back page for festival details.

Further news and information will be posted on our Facebook and website

## CAMRA Winter Great British Beer Festival 2025

Magna Science Adventure Centre, Rotherham  
12th February - 15th February<sup>th</sup>  
Fri/Sat Middyay - 10.30 Sun Middyay - 9



This is a major national beer festival that will be on our doorstep in Rotherham from the 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> February at the Magna Science Adventure Park.

This year's Great British Beer Festival Winter showcases a stunning lineup of fantastic breweries from across the UK, all with their own exclusive bar. From household names to exciting new craft breweries, you'll have the chance to explore an amazing range of expertly crafted beers, and chat to the teams that make them.

Whether you're looking to try your favorite brews or discover something new, our brewery bar lineup guarantees something for every beer lover. Join us at Magna in Rotherham and celebrate the very best in brewing!

For further details go to the website at [winter.gbbf.org.uk](http://winter.gbbf.org.uk).

To get there on public transport is easy. From Doncaster Interchange catch the X3 Sheffield bus (used to be X78) from Stand B7. It travels via Balby, Conisbrough, Thrybergh and Rotherham then stops outside the Magna site. Runs every 20 minutes daytime, hourly at night.

From Doncaster Station catch any train to Rotherham Central, stopping at Conisbrough, Mexborough, Swinton and then at Rotherham the X3 to Magna or any train to Meadowhall then change to the X3 bus towards Doncaster for about 3 stops to Magna.



Doncaster Town Field Sports Club is a little gem of a club on the outskirts of the city centre. Many people are not aware of its existence because it sits back from the main road in Bennethorpe, opposite the Earl of Doncaster hotel. If you are a fan of cricket and hockey and sports in general, then you may have visited it many times.

The cricket club is over 100 years old and work on the current club house is thought to have started in the late 1960s. There have been many improvements to it over the years, some of it funded by the National Lottery.

There is a very comfortable large lounge area with, as you would expect for a sports club, quite a few TV screens. Streamed to the screens are Yorkshire cricket club games as well as those of the many local teams based at the club. At other times all major sporting events are featured. The walls and shelves are adorned with trophies, awards and photos of past players. I asked the chairman what particular sporting successes stand out for the club and he mentioned the cricket club appearing at Lords and winning the British Clubs Champions award in 1988 and the occasion the hockey club were promoted to the premier league. The club is



proud that it is associated with a number of cricket and hockey teams covering all ages and sexes.

The well-appointed bar covers all the usual drinks you would expect and, from our readers' perspective, there are always 2 real ales available. On my visit there was Hobgoblin Gold and Ossett's Yorkshire Blonde. Both were in good condition. Ossett's Jet, Ossett's Butterly and Abbeydale Moonshine have also been available recently.

The club is open to visitors so feel free to pay them a visit. You can become a social member which entitles you to a discount on all drinks.

The club has a function room and over recent times it has increased its exposure to local communities in Doncaster. The room is now well used by various organisations. There are occasional quizzes and they aim to organise at least 4 main events a year. Recently they celebrated Octoberfest which proved very popular.

If you are looking for somewhere to spend a nice summer's afternoon, sat outside with a drink in hand then this club has a beer garden big enough for a cricket pitch and hockey pitches!



Over the Christmas holidays taking a pub walk is a popular pastime and there is one not too far from Doncaster that features an impressive bygone Victorian Brewery. Taking a circular walk from Snaith along the River Aire towards Goole and then leaving the riverside we headed towards West Cowick. We skirted around Cowick Hall and Little London and then via Finnley Lane we cut across towards Spa Well Lane. Here, hidden in the countryside, we came across an almost complete Victorian tower brewery.

In 1915 there were around 3350 breweries in England, so many small towns had several and even some villages would have at least one brewery to supply the local pubs. Many of these have been swept away by the consolidation of the brewing industry and, along with the loss of the company, the brewery itself would often be demolished. But here on the edge of the village of West Cowick, next to a farm, is a remarkable survivor of a village brewery.

There has been brewing on this site since around 1790 and in 1837 a James Latham is listed as the brewer and maltster. In 1841 the Eastern Counties Herald listed "for sale, dwelling house with malt kiln and other warehouses and buildings and the garden and yard adjoining in occupation or tenure of James Latham, maltster and brewer. Also land in Moor Hill, Cowick, containing 5 acres 34 perches on Spa Well Lane.

John and Thomas Hartley took over in 1850 and then established the Crown Brewery buying their first pub, the Wheatsheaf in Carlton in 1863. By 1888 the Hartleys owned 19 tied houses and registered the business as Hartley's Brewery Co. Ltd. The business was successful enough for a new

tower brewery to be built in 1892 to serve the almost 40 tied houses that belonged to the company at its peak.

Built at the rear of the old brewery, the new tower brewery was designed by William Bradford, a noted brewery architect who developed a distinctive decorative style, featuring ironwork and a picturesque roof line. Active from 1860 onwards, the London-based architect was involved in building or altering over 70 breweries and maltings throughout the country.

The business survived till 1957, succumbing to a takeover by the Hull Brewery Co. still with 27 tied houses. Brewing ceased soon after, although the site was used as depot for a time.

Most of the pubs owned were centred around Snaith, with the Downe Arms, Black Lion and Plough in Snaith all ex-Hartley's pubs. Closer to Doncaster the Hare and Hounds in Fishlake and the Hill Top just outside Conisbrough became Hartley's pubs in 1877 and 1930 respectively. Even Doncaster had a Hartley's pub. The Golden Lion on Cleveland Street was purchased in July 1895, situated not too far from the Corporation Brewery Taps and nearby roundabout. It was swept away when the area was redeveloped in April 1961.

The villages of East and West Cowick each had a Hartley's pub. In East Cowick there was the Bay Horse, now an Indian restaurant. In West Cowick the Ship on the High Street is a small village pub that does much to support the community. Served by the 401 bus service, the regular beer is Theakston Best Bitter and with a welcoming atmosphere it a fitting place to call at before catching the bus or finishing the walk at Snaith.



when Jimmy started at Percy Jackson Grammar School (I was in my second year).

As he (and I) grew older, Jim discovered the snooker tables in the Bomb (Woodlands Comrades Club) and the Cabbage (Adwick Allotment Holders' Club); and he discovered beer. Sam Smith's beers were available in both clubs and at least one of their beers came from wooden hogsheads. Jim also frequented the Forrester's Arms in Adwick – and relished the Barnsley Bitter there; and he sometimes visited the

Swinger (the Woodlands Hotel) which served Tetley Bitter and Mild.

At 18, in late 1972, Jim went on to Trent Polytechnic in Nottingham to study Chemistry.

Eventually returning to Doncaster in 1976, Jim went to work for Chafer's (a fertiliser company, based near Strawberry Island. It was while working there that Jim met Michael Stocks Jenkinson of the original Cooplands (Doncaster) Ltd. When the former Cooplands shop on Hallgate became empty, Jim and Mike cooked up the plan to open a pub and brewery in the premises – which became the Hallcross in 1982, with Jim becoming the Head Brewer of the in-house brewery – Stocks.

When the pub was sold off on 7th July 1996 and the brewery closed, Jim went off to pastures new – returning to work as a chemist, this time with Yorkshire Water, for several years, and was by now married to Ann and living in The Park at Woodlands. His last full-time employment was as a railway signalman until his retirement a few years ago.

I received the sad news about Jim's illness in early October 2024, and last saw him at St. John's Hospice in Balby on Sunday 13th October. Jim died in the early hours of Wednesday 16th October, and was cremated at the new crematorium at Barnby Dun on 6th November.

## More Beer Festivals



## Doncaster Brewery Tap Easter Beer Festival

April 17<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup>

Thu 5-11, Fri/Sat 12-11 Sun/Mon 11-1am

## Hallcross Beer Festival

February 6<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>

Thu 5-late Fri/Sat/Sun/Mon 11-1am

## Skipton Beer Festival

May 22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup>

[www.skiptonbeerfestival.camra.org.uk](http://www.skiptonbeerfestival.camra.org.uk)

## Eulogy - Jim Butcher

Peter Judge

Readers of Donny Drinker will have seen an obituary to Jim in the last edition, where he was particularly remembered as the Head Brewer at the original Stocks Brewery in Doncaster. He was a close friend of mine and I would like to take this opportunity to add my memories of him and how we shared time together.

James Butcher was born on 30 September 1953 when his parents, Jim and Eva, were living on Princess Street in Woodlands.

I first knew him at infants school, when he was known as Jimmy, a name by which his family still know him. We went to different junior schools but we became firm friends



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Don Valley Brewery Tap 3  
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Sandtoft, DN8 5SX



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# 25

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