

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
BURTON RETIRED GENTLEMEN'S CLUB
HELD ON TUESDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2010, FEATURING
A VISIT TO GRAFTERS BREWERY, WILLINGHAM FOLLOWED BY
LUNCH AT THE CROSS KEYS, STURTON BY STOW**



Present:

Derek Fuke (President), Eric Bell, John West, Andy Johnson, Mike Wilson, John Bird, Graham Whitehead, Gordon Hickmore (scribe for the day)

Apologies: John Copeland, Steve Chadderton, Don Hanson, Ronnie Malloy

The President assembled the group in Willingham at 1100 hrs where we were met by our host and landlord of the Half Moon Inn, Phil Troop. Ushered into the brewhouse (a converted garage) he explained that inspired by a healthy appetite for Real Ale, he attended a brewing course at Brewlab in Sunderland in December 2007 and made his first brew in March 2008. In a very short space of time, his excellent Ales have already been recognised as some of the best in their categories. Taking us through the stages of the brewing process, he explained in detail the recipes for the various types of ales, mashing, sparging and fermentation. His equipment, purchased second hand cost £20k but having made the investment, it has proved a winner for his own pub and he now supplies beers to several locals including the Welton Sports Club, the Plough at Sturton and the Black Horse at Ingham. Modestly he explained that having won 2 awards for his beers in the 2008 Beer festival in Peterborough, his Moonlight beer was declared overall champion beer in the 2009 Beer festival beating Batemans into 3rd place!



By now we had built up a thirst and leaving the wonderful hoppy aroma behind we were invited back into the Half Moon for a tasting of Phil's excellent ales, including Moonlight, Traditional, Golden, Wobble Gobble and the delicious Darker side of the Moon, described as:

"A very dark beer as the name suggests. Made from Pale, Crystal and Chocolate malts with torrefied wheat. Single hopped with Progress hops and late hopped with Northdown for aroma. 30 EBU. A smokey taste with a slight after-taste of chocolate."



The brewery



Andy, John, Eric and Graham



Adding the hops



Barrelling up - A firkin (72pints) retails for £60 of which £13 is excise duty

Unfortunately the Half Moon does not serve lunches on Tuesday so reluctantly we bid farewell to Phil and Tracy departing to the Cross Keys at Sturton having thoroughly enjoyed our micro-brewery tour.



We received a warm welcome at the almost empty Cross Keys, and Eric fortunately was not recognised by management following his double booking of the restaurant for Lunch in Xmas 2008. Having rearranged the furniture we ordered main courses (Roast beef proved a popular choice) washed down with ale and/or a glass of wine. Conversation ranged around the usual topics but in the absence of Brother John, the state of the economy and the pound/Euro conversion failed to get a mention. Puddings were enjoyed by several members. Calculating the cost of an outing is now an art form with Derek and John Bird agreeing after discussion that £22 a head was about right being £5 each for the brewery tour plus £17 for the meal and drinks at the Cross Keys.

Called to order by the President, all agreed that the minutes of the last meeting were indeed a comprehensive record although the length was beyond the attention span of several members who are more used to reading the tales of Janet and John. It was agreed that the duty of writing minutes should rotate between members to relieve the President of this onerous chore. Gordon Hickmore gallantly offered to lead the field and write a report of the brewery visit. The meeting continued in leisurely manner and ended without a fight at 2.45pm



*The BRGC lunch at the Cross Keys
- The President is out of focus having made an Olympic
100m dash before the camera's auto timer fired.*

Next meeting Tuesday 9th March

Visit to the Cathedral with conducted tour of the roof by Prue Chadderton.

Meet 1000 at the entrance

Lunch: To be decided - Castle Club unavailable

Suggestions: Widow Casey's Well in the Bail (beer 1.50 a pint) or the Queen Victoria

Post Script:

As you may have heard, John Copeland had an accident with White Van Man whilst riding his bike into Lincoln. Fortunately he is OK but John is bruised and may not be fit enough to attend the meeting on 9 March. The driver might have been forgiven had he'd been a graduate of the LSE but John is claiming 5 billion Euros in compensation. He intend to buy a new super bike from the nice girl in the shop

