

MILD & BITTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DERBY BRANCH OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

ISSUE 3
JANUARY 1976

REPORTS

Camram Draf-Tales (News from the pubs)

DON'T be bam-booze-led (Help! Ed.) by Worthington Bitter (brewed by Bass's big brewery at Burton) Big and Bold, brazenly emblazoned on the borough bill-boards, and beneath bars behind bright boxes, because, besides electric, there's B. keg and B. top pressure, and be worse, there's B. bright beer. What a B. brewery! (Help, Help, Help! Ed.)

The new tenant at the Crystal Palace, Rosehill St. has an agreement with Bass that he can sell one other draught beer. The first weekend after installation of Hardy and Hanson's bitter alongside an electric Worthington bitter box, he sold four times as much Kimberley than Worthington, which did not greatly please Bass's. But it's not suprising if people associate the Worthington boxes with keg!

Old Bell, Sadlergate, is on lease from Bass's and the licensee hopes to encourage beer drinking by having a beer garden and installing other draught beers when alterations have been completed.

A nasty rumour is that the New Inn, Derby Rd, Heanor, will lose it's handpumps on the retirement of the longest serving licensee in that area, especially as Home Brewery serve their bitter by electric pump to anyone fortunate enough to visit their brewery. The New Inn has a beer only licence, and the new land(lord)person is..... Mr. Beer.

The Staff of Life, Ticknall, has let down some of our members who have arrived before 8pm, by refusing to serve their handpumped Marstons Pedigree until there is sufficient demand for it. This is not a policy we recommend, except in those houses which serve only keg. Ruddles County has replaced the Ruddles ordinary bitter at the Staff.

(Dave Johnson)

The Derby Handpump Pub Crawl (Weds 17th Dec.)

Arriving in ones and twos, about a dozen Derby members turned up at the Exeter Arms, and ordered pints of Bass. Shortly afterwards a mini bus pulled up outside with an equal number of thirsty looking members of the Uttoxeter branch. After a few introductions, and another pint, we made off in search of other beers.

At the Sitwell Tavern (Shipstone's) the group split (so we could get quicker service); some went to the Globe (Kimberley) first, some tried the Rutland (also Kimberley) as well, but we all met up again at the Sir Robert Peel for an excellent pint of Ind Coope, and perhaps a cheese cob. Then it was time to stagger round to Flo's for a couple more pints of Shippo's.

At the Alexandra Dave Johnson led the singing from the Nottingham branch 'songs of praise' book (I'm for ever drinking Ruddles, etc.). For the opposition Martin Wilks (the one with the other tea-cosy hat) led the Uttoxeter branch in their version of 'Once on a High and Windy Hill'. Alas, closing time came all too quickly, but, for our first Derby crawl, this was a highly successful evening.

(Terry Morton)

What's Brewing Sales (The Confessions of a Pub-to-Pub Salesman)

Last month the Derby branch set a new sales record for What's Brewing. After supplying the Area Sub-Committees, holding a sales crawl with the Uttoxeter branch in Derby, and a pub crawl around Long Eaton's best pubs, the number of copies sold reached the massive total of

.... nil. This was not entirely due to the Committee being pissed throughout the whole of December, as a minor contributory factor could have been the non-arrival of the copies from St Albans. (We haven't found the culprit yet, but the fault wasn't at this end. Ed.)

But seriously though folks, the Long Eaton tour showed the difference that sparklers make to Shipstone's; handpumped Kimberley was enjoyed; and the Tiger Inn provided the Marston's Illustrated Touring Guide, and hot bar snacks. (Good quality too. Ed.) At the Railway Inn the handpumped Shipstone's was still only 18p a pint, but when one of the bar 'novelties' got out of Tim's control, the land(lady)person gave him a hand, and with a knowing touch relieved his embarrassment! (How was I to know you had to push it down, not pull it up? Ed.) Better sales are hoped for this month as the copies HAVE ARRIVED! Hooray!

(Dave Johnson)

The Bass Situation

As a result of information received from Belper, Paul Gibson and I, and one or two faithful helpers have checked the Bass pubs in Derby known to have handpumps. In every case the landlord said that no attempt has been made by Bass to rip his handpumps out. However the situation concerning Worthington Bitter still needs clarifying, what are the brewery doing? I have tried it delivered by handpump and gravity, very nice, but the brewery seem to love putting it on electric, or top pressure (sick!).

(John Kearney,

The Christmas Social (Saturday 13th December)

The sight of four firkins, set up to serve gravity beer, is enough to appetize the tastebuds of any Camra member. This was the sight behind the bar at the Beaconsfield Club for the 45 people who turned up. They included Mr. S Claus (a member of the Derby Branch) and his friend Mr. F Christmas, both dressed in santa outfits. (Presumably you can't be breathalysed on a reindeer. Ed.) Tim Williams received a presentation in the form of a pewter pint mug, presented on behalf of the branch in recognition of his devoted time and efforts at putting the Derby Branch on the map. (I still don't know how to thank everybody enough. Ed?)

When every crumb of the buffet disappeared, Keith Normington accompanied a few bawdy members as they sung around the piano. The Sam Smith's Old Brewery Bitter was fast disappearing as a young lady (sorry dear, we don't know your name) invited everyone to sing along with her as she played a banjo. By this time I decided to take a few photos, although it was very difficult to focus, even without the Camera. The splendid voice of Lester Simpson (a member of the Derby Morris Men) with his melodeon entertained with a selection of folk drinking songs at various stages of the evening. Thanks to everyone who took part for making this a very enjoyable occasion.

(Terry Morton)

COMMENT

Spread Thinly on the Ground

There's a chap in our office at work, who occasionally delights in telling me of the joys of drinking a pint of ~~Daxble Daxmand~~ (I won't print expletives in full) 'with ice in it'. He's not being serious I'm glad to say, but how do you reply to someone who, completely seriously, said, 'I always drink ~~Worthington~~ E, I started drinking it years ago, and it was a bloody good drink then.'

I don't think that much can be done to alter the views of the firmly entrenched keg drinker (not in the short term anyway). Many people will object strongly if you try to puncture their fondly held view that, for example, ~~Younger's Terton~~ is the ultimate in beer. But it always supprises me how amenable the average person is to being swayed in the right direction. The right word at the right time, and a whole group of people can be got to the right pub for the

lunchtime pint. Try not to wince at comments like 'Is this real beer?' usually made in a loud voice, just make a mental note that it's a few less sales for the opposition.

Camra members are spread thinly on the ground, 30,000 is less than one per pub, but what organization, or company, with 30,000 salesmen could fail to succeed? When it comes down to it I believe that's first and foremost what we all are - salesmen for real ale.

(Tim Williams)

ADMIN.

Branch AGM

We are due to hold our AGM in March (probably on Thursday 11th). This is slightly problematic, because we can't yet know if we will be using the existing constitutional procedure, or a new Camra Ltd. procedure. This could be slightly different, and we are seeking advice.

Meanwhile the committee would like to give advance warning of two important probable regulations. First, there will be a card check. (Only Camra members are allowed to vote, and if Camra Ltd is formed by then, we would probably start registering members as members of the Froby Branch). If you have lost your card, bring your latest What's Brewing wrapper, it gives your membership date. Second, nominations for the committee will probably be required before the meeting. As normal, a proposer, a seconder, and evidence of the nominees willingness, will be required. All three must of course be fully paid up members. Anyone who would like to stand, but who has no friends, please see a committee member.

Keeping in Touch (An amazing scheme)

We're not going to claim that this newsletter has reached a new apex of journalistic excellence, or even that the spelling is correct, but we hope it does serve some useful purpose in letting everyone know what's going on. The trouble is that if you miss a meeting, you could miss out on some social event, or piece of dramatic or banal news. For this reason the committee has decided to make it available on subscription.

The sub will be 50p for 3 issues, or 85p for 6 issues. Members attending the Branch meetings will continue to get their copy free, subscribers will have their copies sent by post a couple of days later. But when a subscriber attends the branch meeting, he or she will be asked to cancell that month's issue by ticking a column on the levy sheet. Thus for a regular attender, a subscription for three issues could well last a year.

A PUB TO VISIT

The Lord Napier, Milton Street is a small friendly back street pub, just off the Uttoxeter New Road. Its landlord is one of our members, but it doesn't seem to have the custom it deserves, particularly in comparison with the two tarted up Allied houses round the corner on Bedford Street. It's not a question of just being worth supporting on principle, because it really has an excellent pint of Bass, drawn from a pair of nice brass-banded handpumps.

(Tim Williams)

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOMED

Any contributions to this newsletter will be most welcome. The only criteria are that they should be printable, be in some way connected with beer, and be of interest to the reader. Articles can be long or short, serious, technical or humorous. There's no reason why we shouldn't have cartoons or songs or jokes, or letters to the editor, or details of your favourite pub or barmaid, or almost anything.

DERBY DIARY

Saturday 17th January. PUB CRAWL in Ilkeston. Starts at the General Havelock (front bar) 8pm. We've done Long Eaton, now come and see what entertainment we can find in Ilkeston (we must surely go to the Durham Ox, please Dave) and help sell the occasional What's Brewing.

Thursday 22nd January. PUB CRAWL in Derby. Starts at the Bell and Castle, Burton Rd. 8pm. A chance to get out mid-week, and help show the branch's face in a few more pubs.

Wednesday 28th January. JOINT SOCIAL with the Burton branch, at Burton. Coach to be arranged, book your seat with Terry Morton.

Sunday 1st February. Committee Meeting.

Thursday 5th February. Good Beer Guide Sub-Committee Meeting, Lord Napier, Milton St. 8pm.

WEDNESDAY 11th FEBRUARY. BRANCH MEETING. Sir Robert Peel, Park Street. Starts 8pm prompt. First time in the Peel since July, when it was the branch's 1st birthday. We've grown in numbers since then, hence we will be using the main bar for the meeting.

For Belper and Matlock area socials, contact Ian Grimshaw (Belper 3270) and Trevor Peacock (62 Dale Road, Matlock) respectively.

Advance Notice. There seems to be a lot of support for running a mini-bus to the Camra National AGM and BGM in Brighton. (28th and 29th February). Tentative plans are to go down on Friday and come back on Monday. Further details will be announced at the meeting, if you are interested, see Terry Morton as soon as possible as accomodation etc. will have to be booked shortly, and may be limited.

JANUARY BRANCH MEETING AGENDA

1. Register and Levy
2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising
3. Secretary's Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Sales and Publicity
6. Area Sub-Committee Reports
7. Good Beer Guide Sub-Committee Report
8. Socials
9. Branch News
10. Beer Break
11. Any Other Business

THE DERBY BRANCH OF CAMRA

Committee (Posts and additional responsibilities) : Tim Williams, Derby 676027 (Chairman; Newsletter) ; John Kearney, 5 Ormskirk Rise, Spondon, Derby (Secretary; advertising) ; Keith Normington, Derby 674446 (Treasurer; raffles) ; Terry Morton, Derby 674025 (Social Sec; posters; Camra sales) ; Nick Potter, Derby 511355 (Beer Guide Sec; pub info.) ; Dave Johnson, Derby 61422 Ext. 2405 (Membership Sec; free trade outlets; pub news collator) Paul Gibson, Brailsford 365 (Press releases)

Other Officers : Ian Grimshaw, Belper 3270 (Belper Area Sub-Committee Chairman) ; Trevor Peacock, 62 Dale Road, Matlock (Matlock Area Sub-Committee Chairman)

Branch Area : The county, south of a line from Hartington to Bolsover, excluding the area west of a line from Mayfield to Hatton (Uttoxeter Branch), and excluding the area south of a line from Clay Mills to Calke (Burton Branch)

Is there a typewriter mechanic in the house?