

# MILD & BITTER

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

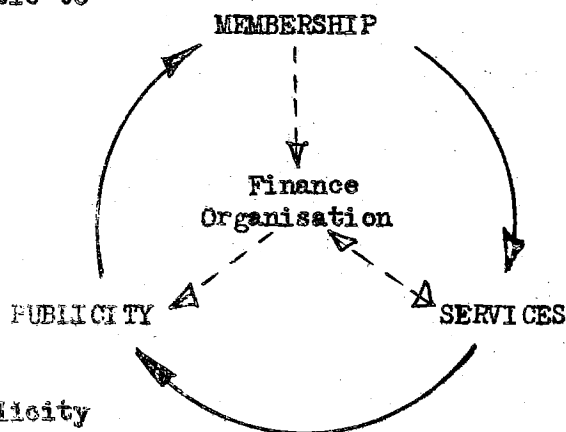
ISSUE 5  
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## ANNUAL REPORT

### Introduction

The Derby Branch has come a long way in the last year. Last March, after eight months existence, the branch had reached the stage where it could be said that its survival prospects were good, but not much more. The original committee had shrunk to about four, but, thanks to their efforts, a good 'hard-core' of active members had been built up. With this firm foundation, the branch has developed over the last year into one of the larger and more active CAMRA branches. This year of development has not seen any dramatic campaigning successes, but it has brought the branch to the stage where such successes must be only just around the corner.

It is difficult to measure progress in an organisation like ours. We don't have the figures to show the relative consumption of draught and processed beers, and we haven't seen any significant change in the number of draught beer outlets. It would, in any case, be unrealistic to claim that any changes, or lack of changes, were necessarily due to the branch's efforts. We can, however, examine how our various activities have developed, assess whether they have developed in the right direction, and whether we are using our limited resources (both money and manpower) to the best effect.



We can divide our campaigning activities into three main areas - publicity, membership, and services. The three are inter-dependent; publicity leads to increased membership, increased membership allows the branch to provide more in the way of services (what we do for the benefit of draught beer drinkers, for example producing a Good Beer Guide, or protecting draught beer outlets), and the provision of services leads to publicity. At the hub of the circle finances and organisation act as lubricants to keep the whole process turning.

### Publicity

There are two main types of publicity: first, the basic publicity to let people know that the Derby Branch of CAMRA exists, and how to get to meetings; second, 'educational' publicity to explain what real ale is, why we prefer it, and where to get it. At the beginning of the year the branch was concentrating almost exclusively on the former. Two principle means of making ourselves known have been advertising meetings, and through posters in pubs. Until recently the latter process has been limited by the restricted availability of the national posters. However the branch poster is now available, and, with the help of members the process should speed up considerably.

(Publicity contd.)

During the last few months we have been able to direct our attention more towards educational publicity. Earlier in the year we had some success in this direction in the local press and on local radio. More recent approaches in these directions have been disappointing. On the credit side, however, sales of What's Brewing to the public have been steadily built up to their current level of around 200 copies a month. We are one of the relatively few branches selling What's Brewing, and the committee very much welcomed its availability for sale; it's good publicity material, and selling it provides an unrivalled opportunity for talking to interested members of the public about beer. Frequently we come across people who don't appreciate that the beer they are drinking, and would vigorously defend as the best beer, is real ale. The branch poster, the new handout, and the pub window sticker, currently being designed, are intended to make people more aware of what they are drinking. The most important piece of educational publicity for the future is, of course, our local beer guide. In view of its publicity value, the committee have seen maximum sales as one of the most important aspects of its production.

### Socials

Socials don't conveniently fit into any one of the campaigning areas defined above, but amongst other things, they contribute to the publicity effort. They provide an opportunity to show draught landlords that there is support for the beer they are proud to serve. They also show the public that, contrary to whatever prejudice they subscribe, CAMRA is neither a group of drunken students, nor nostalgic old men. Within limits, the bigger and more often the socials, the better, and certainly the trend has been in these directions. At the beginning of the year we were struggling to fill a minibus for the one social of the month; now we have socials almost weekly, and have had up to 35 on coach trips. Socials are also useful because they improve communications, providing an opportunity to get together to exchange ideas and information; and, of course, they are where the fun is. The campaign needs to be fun, and by trying to provide it the committee hopes to keep the membership level up.

### Membership

A high branch membership (and attendance at branch meetings) is important for several reasons. First because sheer numbers do impress (and encourage the committee); and second for the simple reason that the more members the branch has the more we can all achieve. All members of CAMRA do contribute in several ways: financially (both to branch and central funds); by drinking, and encouraging their friends and colleagues to drink, the right beers; by saying the right things to publicans; and in many other ways. The amount of time individual members have available for active involvement in the campaign varies considerably, but the greater the total membership, the greater the number of those much needed members with time to spare for the campaign. Over the year membership has increased reasonably. The days when 30 was considered a good turn-out have gone, and over the year the average at branch meetings has risen to 50. One disappointment, however, is that some of our regular supporters of 6 or 12 months back are now rarely seen.

The branch is now using its members more effectively. This year saw the formation of the Belper Area Sub-Committee under Ian Grimshaw, and the Matlock Area Sub-Committee under Trevor Peacock. These have helped considerably in achieving better coverage of the area, and both groups have already made important contributions to the campaign. Excellent work has also been done by the Good Beer

(Membership contd.)

Guide Sub-Committee, which was started in June, and the committee was relieved of one area of responsibility by first Chris Markham, and now Chris Gale, taking on the post of Historic Pubs Officer.

### Services

The area of services has perhaps seen less publically obvious activity than is desirable. It is definately not the case that all is perfectly well in our area and there is nothing for the branch to do. However, the branch has not in the last year had much in the way of major problems with protecting the beer we have. On the other hand, the effort that might have been devoted to looking for, and pursuing, campaigns to improve the choice and availability of beers, has been seriously reduced by the amount of work that has been required to compile our local beer guide. The guide will be a very important and, we hope inflential, service to the beer drinking public, but the job of surveying some 750 pubs has been a long one. The credit for its completion must go mainly to the GBGS-C.

Nevertheless, it is worth recording that the branch has over the year tried to improve the beer drinker's lot in various ways. In June we sought to get draught beer installed in the new Derby Playhouse. Not much came of this, due to cellar limitations, but it produced a useful contact with Status Taverns Ltd, which we were able to pass on to St. Albans. In August we mounted a major campaign to try to protect the draught bitter in the Wagon and Horses, Ashbourne Road, Derby, from the unwelcome attention of Allied Breweries. The campaign failed, but we did get a lot of useful publicity from it. More recently the Belper AS-C has had cause to remind Bass Worthington Ltd. that their customers, and many of their landlords, do like handpumps.

### Finances and Organisation

Little needs be said about finances and organisation. The branch now has £123 in the kitty, compared with £49 a year ago. This surplus has been built up to help fund the beer guide, but thanks to the generosity of members we have not been short of cash to carry on the routine campaign activities. On the administration side a major coup was the acquisition of a duplicator for £5. So far it has saved the branch about £40 compared with commercial duplication rates. It's thanks to the duplicator that we were able to introduce the branch newsletter in November.

### Conclusion

The branch can look back with some satisfaction on a reasonably successful year, but we must not lose sight of the fact that the need for a campaign for real ale remains as acute as it ever was. A quote from NE member Andrew Cunningham is appropriate: "..... CAMRA is currently suffering from an element of complacency and apathy, both within the campaign and outside. This reflects in lost branch attendance, less of the campaigning spur, a weaker What's Brewing, and a general feeling of inertia and self-satisfaction tinged with uneasiness. Initial limited successes have dulled the rapier and disguised the fact that much remains to be done and is being done at present. This is true both with members and press and public at large." In Derbyshire, with our comparatively good choice of Draught Beer Pubs, it's easy to sit back in one of them, and be lulled into a false sense of security by the excellence of the beer and the CAMRA poster on the wall. The harsh reality lies elsewhere - in the crowded keg palaces, and in the

(Conclusions contd.)

rocketing sales of lager. So let's look back on the last year, not as a success, but as a gathering of strength for the hard campaigning to come.

Finally the committee would like to give their wholehearted thanks to all those who have helped over the last year: to all who have attended meetings and socials, and in particular those who have helped in the various sub-committees, in selling What's Brewing, and in all the various other activities. It's not possible to name all names, but it's appropriate to mention Mervyn Herod, who was our branch Chairman until August, David Watkins, who was Secretary until September, and Simon Stokes, who was Membership Secretary until about the same time. Thanks everybody.

The Committee

### ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

#### Simplified Balance Sheet for the period 28.2.75 to 27.2.76

<u>INCOME</u>		£.p	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		£.p
Sales		249.61	(250) National GBG		137.50
(12) Meeting Levies		52.70	Other GBG's		11.04
(12) Raffles (Net)		39.94	(550) What's Brewing		27.50
(8) Donations for Advertising		21.16	(80) Lapel Badges		20.00
Other Donations		3.25	Beer Mugs		<u>1.00</u>
Socials (Net)		9.45			197.04
Duplicating		1.00	Advertising		58.15
			Printing		11.52
			Duplicating Machine		5.00
			Duplicating Materials		17.26
			Card Index		4.71
			Postage		8.18
			Envelopes		1.52
Opening Balance		49.22	Closing Balance		122.95
		<u>426.33</u>			<u>426.33</u>

Keith Normington  
Treasurer

## BELPER AREA SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Okay then, how long is it? Well it's about 6 months since the start of the glorious Belper Slobs Committee ! On the face of it we might not appear to have done much. In fact we haven't done much.

But, we have consolidated the Belper and area CAMRA members. This means that at this moment in time (this means now) most of the Belper members are actively, yes actively involved with some aspect of the general running of Derby CAMRA.

We've built up a good relationship with quite a few of the Real Beer landlords in the area, offering support, encouragement, and advice if needed.

We have also been active on a more general level. The rumour that Bass may have been removing handpumps in the Derbyshire area was first found in Belper, and followed through by Belper members.

Doubts about the conception of CAMRA Ltd. were expressed by members from Belper and thrashed out, not entirely to our satisfaction, one evening.

Two or three social events were executed during this period of time (this means then) and went with a bang or a wimpey depending on your point of view. That is everybody seemed to enjoy themselves (both CAMRA and non-CAMRA members).

But, at most of the events the majority of non-Belper CAMRA members seemed to be the hardy committee. So that means that we are getting nil support from most of the CAMRA people outside Belper. Which really means that if there are any other people out there that could help, please help !

But help at what? What do we envisage for the future? With the long hot summer stretching (not too dry in every respect I hope) before us we would like to organise a loose local social team that would also, besides the usual exciting darts/dommies, encompass bar and American billiards, tug of wars, rugby (Ashbourne style) and things like this. Is it a good idea? You tell me (alright there's no need to be so rude !)

Well that's about it, the drum banging of the past and future Belper area members of Derby CAMRA (this means Belper Sub-Committee).

That only leaves me to put down a few points that have been raised by this area's members over the past year that either haven't been fully gone into or want airing again!

- 1). There seems to be very bad public relations with the LVA. In their organ (this means newspaper) there has been some very bad press both in the editorials and in the views expressed in the letter columns against CAMRA generally. Whether we support the LVA or not seems immaterial, we think that an interview ought to be arranged to clarify CAMRA policy which seems to be misrepresented.
- 2). There is still no definition of Real Beer.
- 3). There seems to be, even in the Derbyshire area, some slagging of landlords who don't follow CAMRA policy. Whenever this happens in the name of CAMRA it must be thoroughly investigated.
- 4). As has been mentioned earlier, a lot of CAMRA members don't seem to like to travel, that is North members don't like going South, and vice-versa. So, apart from declaring UDI on one side, what do we want to do? (Oh aren't we good at asking questions, see if we get any bloody answers though !)

Ian Grimshaw

### GOOD BEER GUIDE SUB-COMMITTEE

The GBGS-C has chosen the final list of pubs for the area guide, and written brief descriptions of each one describing the pub and the facilities provided. Now for more hard work - anyone interested in helping with production and sales to contact myself or any committee member a.s.a.p.

Almost everyone can help with finance by lending a few blue beer vouchers (£5 notes) for a very worthy cause. The publication of an area beer guide is an important landmark in the life of the branch and if we can finance it ourselves we shall have a greater surplus to use for local campaigning and publicity.

Please fill in the form provided and hand to myself or Keith Normington.

Nick Potter

### WHAT'S BREWING SALES

With four local socials, the Brighton weekend, and numerous beer guide meetings, it's been a busy month, and something of an uphill struggle to dispose of our 200 copies of What's Brewing. Nevertheless all but a few were sold.

Matlock started the ball rolling by taking 25 copies for their area, and, on the Saturday after the branch meeting, 11 members turned up in Ilkeston and helped sell about 40 copies around a number of pubs. This social ended, of course, in the Durham Ox, where we met up with members of the Nottingham and Loughborough Branches. The following Wednesday (18th February) turned out to be a bad night (it clashed with Derby County) and only 5 turned up at the Buck in the Park for a crawl around the Friargate area. Only about 20 copies went, but posters were got up in 3 pubs. The Belper social on Saturday 21st was a great night out for the dozen or more there, and a reasonable number were sold.

That was the end of the official socials, so Terry and Roger Morton ventured out on Monday 23rd and sold 20 copies around Beeston and Borrowash; and on Wednesday 25th with Keith Normington as well, they sold about 30 in three pubs in Aston and Shardlow.

Selling What's Brewing is something that everyone can help in. If everybody attending a branch meeting took just 3 or even 2 copies to sell to people in their office or workshop, it would help enormously in spreading the word of CAMRA and in raising money for the production of our local beer guide.

Tim Williams  
Terry Morton

### THE BRIGHTON WEEKEND

Eight of us from the Derby branch met up at the Beer Exhibition on the Friday evening, and when we discovered that there were 24,500 pints to be drunk with a 'late shout' at 2am, we soon realised that there was a bit of drinking to be done. About 20 brews were on display from about 10 breweries, including Watney's Fined Bitter; of course they had to be different with their electric pump method of dispensing, but with an OG of 1044 perhaps it's a beer to be reckoned with.

(Brighton contd.)

That night though, back at the guest house, was something of a fiasco, I left my room to pay a visit, and came back to find that my bedroom door had sprung to; so I went to share with John Kearney, and he made exactly the same mistake. The trouble this time though, was that I had gone to sleep, and John, despite knocking on the door, had to go and share Dave Johnson's room!

Apart from the exhibition in the Metropole Hotel, there was a particularly good free house, called the Walmer Castle, in Brighton. This had such a large selection of draught beers that we were able to do a 'crawl' within the confines of one pub. It also sold Harvey's Elizabethan barley wine, which we shared between us due to the price tag of 5lp (yes 10 shillings) a pint.

One of the funniest incidents of a very enjoyable break, occurred on the way back when we stopped off in Market Bosworth. Whilst playing a game of pool we started chatting to a couple of lads who were watching. When they said that they knew Castle Donnington and the Jolly Potter we told them about the gravity Bass there, to which they enquired "Is that real beer, you could have fooled me 'cos what about Colt 45?" What about it?

Paul Gibson

#### ASHBOURNE SHROVETIDE FOOTBALL

About 20 CAMRA members from Ashbourne, Uttoxeter, Belper, and Derby enjoyed what the local paper described as a carnival atmosphere in the town on this sunny afternoon. Those whose thirst was not satisfied before the start of the game, were relieved when the ball disappeared after 20 minutes, enabling them to return to one of the many real ale pubs which were open all day. Some who were in the Green Man witnessed the BBC camera team interviewing for Blue Peter. (It's a pity we couldn't get in on it).

Meanwhile, those who had followed the ball to the Clifton end of the town, stood watching the game as it entered the Henmore Brook. What makes a person battle for a ball in four feet of water for the sake of tradition? The ball made its way back to Ashbourne, which was a good job as a few of us were getting thirsty again.

During the evening Marston's, Bass, Home, and Greenall Whitley, beers were sampled. Well done the Belper lads for putting up such a spirited struggle for the ball in the streets after dark (this is when the game is at its toughest). I'll bet they got a few bruises between them, I certainly got my share.

Terry Morton

NOTES NOTES NOTES This Newsletter (normally two sheets) can be sent to you by post whenever you miss a Branch Meeting. It's only 50p (two pints) for three issues, or 85p for six issues, and well worth it if you wish to keep in touch and help support the branch. A subscription form is attached, contact Paul Gibson at the meeting or at Wayside, Main Rd, Brailsford. (Tel 365). Members are invited to take copies of the branch poster away with them for draught beer pubs or other places that are willing to have them. Note that there are two different versions to suit different sites. Branch Committee Tim Williams (Derby 676027); John Kearney 5 Ormskirk Rise, Spondon; Keith Normington (retiring) (Derby 674446); Terry Morton (Derby 674025); Nick Petter (Derby 511355); Dave Johnson (Derby 61422 Ext. 2405); Paul Gibson (Brailsford 365). Other Officers: Ian Grimshaw (Belper 3270) (Belper AS-C); Trevor Peacock (62 Dale Rd, Matlock) (Matlock AS-C); Chris Gale (Derby 58847) (Historic Pubs).

## DERBY DIARY

Saturday 13th March. PUB CRAWL around Long Eaton with the Nottingham Branch. Meet at the Bell 8pm.

Wednesday 17th March. VISIT TO SHIPSTONE'S BREWERY. Limited places - see Terry Morton. Bus leaves from the Alexandra Hotel at 1.30pm.

Monday 22nd March. GBG Sub-C'tee. Sir Robert Peel 8pm.

Wednesday 24th March. REAL ALE TRAIL in the Normanton area of Derby. We hope to sell some What's Brewings en route. Meet at the Mafeking, Porter Rd. at 8pm.

Saturday 27th March. COACH TRIP to the New Inn at Wyaston (near Ashbourne). CAMRA members from Nottingham and Uttoxeter are also joining us as this will be the last chance to drink THWAITES' beers in this area. The pub is being sold. Nottingham reckon they already have a full bus load, so it should be a big occasion. Our coach leaves Derby Market Place at 7.30pm. - names to Terry Morton.

THURSDAY 8th APRIL BRANCH MEETING 8pm at the Victoria, Cowley St, (off Kedleston Rd.) Derby. A new venue, and the first meeting of the year, so please try to come along, particularly if you wish to get more actively involved in the campaign.

Every Sunday 1.30pm the Belper AS-C and friends get together for a pint in the Coach and Horses at Horsley, all welcome.

Non-members of CAMRA are welcome at our socials and branch meeting though if places are limited members may get precedence.

### MARCH BRANCH MEETING AND AGM

#### A) BRANCH BUSINESS

- 1) Minutes of Last Branch Meeting and Matters Arising.
- 2) Branch Notices.

#### B) DERBY BRANCH OF CAMRA 2nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 1) First Derby Branch AGM held on Wednesday 12th March 1975.
  - (i) Minutes of the meeting.
  - (ii) Matters arising from the minutes.
- 2) Committee Report for the Year 1975/76. (See this issue of Mild and Bitter)
  - (i) Chairman's statement.
  - (ii) Matters arising from the report.
- 3) Accounts for the Year 1975/76. (See this issue of Mild and Bitter)
  - (i) Treasurer's statement.
  - (ii) Matters arising from the accounts.
  - (iii) Appointment of Auditors.
- 4) Election of Committee.
  - (i) Nominations.
  - (ii) Appointment of Tellers.
- 5) Beer Break and Voting.
- 6) Address.
- 7) Report of Auditors and Tellers.
- 8) Other Business.



MILD AND BITTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

I wish to subscribe to three / six issues of Mild & Bitter at a cost of 50p / 85p.

NAME .....

delete as appropriate

ADDRESS .....

(BLOCK CAPS PLEASE)

.....

.....

DATE .....

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LOCAL BEER GUIDE LOAN

I am prepared to lend the Derby Branch of Camra the sum of £..... (minimum £5) for the purpose of publishing a local Good Beer Guide. I understand that I will not receive interest on this loan, and that, while the Branch Committee will make every effort to repay the loan as soon as possible, it cannot guarantee repayment. (It is expected that the sums promised will be collected in April, and returned within three months. Part repayments will, however, be made as soon as possible.)

Signed .....

NAME (Block Caps) .....

ADDRESS .....

.....

PHONE NO. ....

DATE .....