

MILD & BITTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DERBY BRANCH OF CAMRA

ISSUE 7
MAY 1976

THE LAST MONTH

The April branch meeting was held at the Victoria in Cowley Street, the first time we've had one in a Bass pub. The attendance figure was 45, which was not bad considering that What's Brewing had only come out the day before. It was the first time also for our new meeting format - a smaller agenda, less chat from the committee, and more time for general discussion. It may be co-incidence, but it seemed a much more lively meeting than usual, and a number of interesting and useful ideas came out. Incidentally we still need ideas for venues for these meetings - let us know. We need a (free) room for 70 plus people, good beer, and reasonably central.

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Good news from the Tech; the Social Club will soon be opening a new bar building, and this will serve real ale, they hope from handpumps. Our committee have been invited to meet their committee to sample some, and at the same time we expect to discuss holding a joint beer exhibition with them. It's nice to see that Derby students are getting real ale orientated.

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Good news from the Borough Council (it's nice to have two bits of good news in one month); as you may have read the new pub in Sinfen will be Marston's, despite a slightly higher tender from Allied. Allied were alleged not to look after their pubs. We shall be writing to Councillor Mick Walker applauding the decision, and expressing the hope that future such decisions will continue to take freedom of choice into account. The only gripe on this item is that we did not know, and were therefore not able to put our views, in advance. Is there anyone in a position to give us warning of relevant council decisions?

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What's Brewing sales, under our new organiser Clive Moore, were 190 for the month, an excellent total. Although the NE has given up pushing branches to sell WB, we will be carrying on. After all we can in this way get to about 2,500 people per annum. It's still only a minority that's helping out in this area of our publicity, and Clive and his Merry Men put in a lot of drinking hours to clear the copies. On Monday 26th, for example, they had a special trip round Shardlow, selling 26 copies round three pubs. They report a good response from landlords and customers alike, reflecting the local enthusiasm for draught beer. Anyone wishing to sell a few copies should see Clive, but we are having a rest from sales this month with no copies ordered.

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We have a new Regional Organiser, Nick Hawkins, formerly Loughborough Secretary and Area Organiser for Leicestershire and Northants. Nick is not a member of the National Executive, but will be able to attend and speak at their meetings. In many ways it's better that Nick is not a member of the NE, which is normal practice for RO's, since he should have more time to visit us and to organise regional campaigning. Nick is very keen on such ventures (he started the present Allied Campaign), and produces a superb home brew.

(The Last Month Contd.)

The Beer Guide Sub-Committee has been temporarily disbanded as most of the present work is being done on an individual basis. Apart from a few loose ends, the guide has now been written, and is being typed up ready for printing. The illustrations have been drawn, and advertising money has been promised by three breweries. The publication date has not yet been finalised.

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The month's committee meeting was held on Monday 3rd May with Terry Morton in the chair since I had been suddenly dispatched away on business. Some of the points discussed or agreed are as follows:-

- (i) The committee would make special note of pubs with high prices and those still not displaying a price list.
- (ii) In accordance with views expressed at the last branch meeting, Keith Normington would be asked to provide alternative raffle prizes.
- (iii) It was proposed that a branch meeting be held in Matlock.
- (iv) Camra NE were compiling a national survey of pubs gained and lost to real ale each quarter. An appeal was to be made to members to report all such changes - so please let Reg Newcombe know anything you hear or find out.
- (v) A special effort would be made to publicise the Derby Camra/Morris event in Shardlow.
- (vi) In view of the problems involved, the local guide would not contain descriptions of the taste of the local brews.

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The Allied Campaign meeting was held on Wednesday 5th May in Kegworth. Allied had not given an answer to the letter sent to them by Nick Hawkins, although they had written to say that the man who should answer it was away. Derby had produced a handout for pub managers and landlords for use during the campaign. This described what Camra is about, and attempts to undo some of the bad publicity in the Morning Advertiser. The handout was agreed with a few modifications. So far we have a few landlords tentatively in favour of the campaign, but the course of action depends on what Allied eventually say.

HOME AFFAIRS

Good news - the Shakespeare at Shardlow is in the 1976 National GBC. Sad news for the Derby branch - the licensees, Vic and Joyce Clarke will be pulling their last pints there on Friday 21st May (two days after our social). After a holiday they will take over the White Lion at Beeston (near Nott'm University) on Tuesday 8th June. This is a somewhat neglected pub, which they hope to make popular with students and Nottingham Camra.

The new licensee at the Shakespeare is the son of the landlord at the Blue Bell, Attenborough. Let's hope he will prove a worthy successor to Vic and Joyce.

The new landlord at the Old Oak in Horsley Woodhouse is slowly having the pub repaired and re-decorated. He sells only real mild (very good sales), real bitter and Home Lager; no other kegs, no Guinness. This pub is already very popular with the locals and is well worth a visit.

(Keith Normington)

THE SOCIAL SCENE

Willington and Repton (Sat 10th April).

A good dozen met in the Boot Inn to give the name of Camra another airing in the local pubs, namely the Mount Pleasant, the Red Lion, and the Green Man and the Rising Sun in Willington. We got Marston's No 5 mild in the Red Lion, and a good reception everywhere except at the Rising Sun, which is a National GBG pub. The landlord, Alan Earp, did not want a free copy of What's Brewing, didn't like the 'type of customer Camra was attracting and wanted deleting from the guide. He appears to have changed his tune since I last spoke to him. Perhaps we should keep out in case of brother Wyatt.

Seriously though, although this attitude does tend to knock the wind out of one's campaigning sails, the landlord does have a right to say what he likes in his own pub, and our good behaviour is very important to the name of Camra.

Nottingham (Sat. 17th April)

An overloaded Derby tandem (just three of us) met up with members from Nottingham and Loughborough in the Peacock, proceeding to a few other Home and Shippo's pups. (Sorry about this Ed, home brewed brown ale blouds the crain).

Ripley (Sat 24th April)

About a dozen turned out for this northern trip. We were not much pleased by the Wards in the Three Horse Shoes, but the four other pubs had four different brews well served. In the Talbot a local character took over What's Brewing sales for us and did very well. Our darts players lingered too long and never found the last pub. It may have been misdirection or it may have been the sample of Black Beer provided by the landlady of the Talbot - she claimed it would cure all ills.

In all we were well recieved in the town, and it shows that we must visit the whole of our area to show that the local branch of Camra is active.

Derby (Weds 28th April)

This was a pub crawl from the Garden City with an opportunity for those just wanting a quiet later drink to meet in the last pub. Three members who haven't had the opportunity to attend a branch meeting saw this social in What's Brewing and came along, making about a dozen (again!) in all. The crawl did the Duke of Clarence, the Furnace, and the Liversage (some diverted to the Exeter also), and the final meeting place was the Peacock.

We must thank Jill Burgess as our What's Brewing super salesgirl of the month. Well done Jill hope you can keep it up.

Black Country (Sat 8th May)

As usual the month's coach trip proved to be the best attended social. Since it was only yesterday at the time of typing, the report will be in the next issue. To clear up one question, non-members are welcome, but it's advisable to book early.

(Terry Morton)

I forgot to put it on the back page, but the Sunday lunchtime sessions at the Coach and Horses, Horsley, are of course still going on. Anytime after 1.30 will find usually about half a dozen in the bar. The pub is still under renovation, but the worst of the brick dust has abated.

TW

A PUB TO VISIT

The Three Horseshoes, Morley is on the main A608 road to Heanor, and is handily situated being only five minutes drive from Derby. The pub seems to suffer slightly in terms of business, perhaps because it is a little far out of the Breadsall suburbia. However it is on the right route to a good real ale area and, as a first stop, shouldn't be missed. It has the ever popular Marston's Pedigree and No. 3 mild on handpumps, served in plain but friendly surroundings.

(Paul Gibson)

SUNDRY SNIPPETS

Keith Normington tells us that over 180 Morris and Sword Dancers and Mummers will be gathering on Saturday 22nd May to form eight tours in a large part of south Derbyshire, meeting up for Massed Dancing 4.30 to 5.30 in Derby Market Place. The tours have been planned to give the visitors Real Ale wherever possible, including an evening do at the Tech. See Keith for further details, or phone him on Derby 674446.

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While we have been struggling with descriptions for our local brews, Les Lowe, a Burton committee member, has come up with the following for keg Ansell's - Squirrel's Piss.

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The Nottingham Branch are appealing for helpers for their 17th to 20th June Beer Exhib. Beer Exhibitions are friendly and fun, whichever side of the counter you are on, if you'd like to help out and find out what life is like on the other side, contact Dave Dickens - Nottingham (97) 872821.

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We are grateful to Jeff Fletcher for volunteering to look after the sales of Camra items at future meetings.

ST LOUIS AREA SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Last week, and with all of three days notice, I was sent to the U.S.A. This was despite my protests that I would miss two Camra committee meetings, a trip to Doris Pardoe's and the Borough Council elections.

America is of course no place for any self-respecting beer drinker, nor is any compensation to be found in their bars. In all my researches I found them to be just that - single room places, generally dimly lit, 'smartly' decorated, and with little friendliness. You ask for a beer (it's lager of course) and get presented with a small glass and a 3/5 pint tin or bottle of fizz. This will cost anything between 25 and 50p. Many bars do have 'draft' (keg), but there is no proliferation of illuminated plastic dispensers, usually just a foot high, broad metal cylinder, with two taps on top for two different brews. In my investigations I did try various brands of beer, all were ultra cold, fizzy and tasteless. I'm sure I couldn't tell any significant difference between them.

They do do some things better than us though: their standards of cleanliness are higher; if you're drinking spirits (and they drink little beer compared with us - who can blame them) there's a massive choice, and plenty of ice if you want it; and of course you can get a drink more or less anytime. The worrying thing, though, is whether the American situation is the shape of things to come here. We've already got Colt 45, and pubs done up as plush extensions to the suburban lounge, where customers can sit in carefully isolated groups. We're already seeing keg beers (inevitably) being increasingly drunk in halves. Could we eventually see a wholesale switch to spirits, and signs like the one I saw in St Louis, proudly announcing 'Darts played on Thursdays'?

(Tim Williams)

HELP, HELP, HELP.

(This is going to be a regular feature, in which you, the reader, will be put on the spot and asked what (else) you can personally do to help the campaign - a sort of paper armtwist. If you are of a nervous disposition, you are advised to skip this item)

Situations Vacant.

Special Publicity Materials Officer. The branch has excellent printing services available for the production of small posters etc (including colour printing). We need an artistically talented person to work in conjunction with the Publicity Secretary in the production of such things as posters, handouts and letterheads.

Handpump Officer. We need an engineering minded person to look after our handpump interests. These include providing a repair service, tracking down and obtaining redundant pumps, and finding pubs which want them (for legitimate use). We don't expect an instant expert or instant success, just someone who will stick with it and build up an effective and reliable service to our local pubs.

Other Help

Poster Distribution. Branch posters and handouts will normally be available at every meeting. The idea is that members can take them away and get them put up whenever the opportunity arises. The rules are: no approach to keg pubs; check the pub has not got a poster already; make sure you give the right version (there's one for pubs, one for elsewhere); and none to go up without permission.

Newsletter Subscriptions. Keep in touch via Mild & Bitter. When you can't make the Branch Meeting we will send you a copy - three times for 50p, six times for 85p. In this way you won't miss out on socials and scintillating prose, and the campaign won't miss out on your chance to help on campaigning events. Contact Paul Gibson at the meeting or at Wayside, Main Road, Brailsford.

What's Brewing. None this month for sale, but put your personal copy to good use, give it to a lager drinker at work, leave it on a train, or have it auctioned at Sotherby's.

Your Own Thing. Countless must be the possible Camra project that can either be done as a one off or over a period of time as and when other activities allow. For example we could do with exhibition material - a map showing pub distributions by brewer and real ale, a collection of relevant material, beer mats, etc? What about doing an opinion poll, or writing an article for Mild & Bitter (even a letter to the editor - and it's a lonely life being an editor without letters). Bring your ideas for projects to us, and we'll give official blessing and help where appropriate.

Information. We hope all members will see themselves as reporters, and will pass back to the appropriate committee member all snippets of Camra relevant information they pick up on their travels. Even if it seems trivial it may well be worth a quick phone call to let us know. In particular of course it's changes happening in pubs, we will just not get to hear about the majority of these until too late, unless someone tells us.

THE DERBY BRANCH OF CAMRA.

Committee: Tim Williams (Chairman; Newsletter Ed.) Derby 676027; Paul Gibson (Secretary; M&B subs.) Brailsford 365; Nick Potter (Treasurer; Membership Sec; Pub Info.) Derby 511355; Terry Morton (Social Sec.) Derby 674025; Dave Johnson (Pub Liason Sec.); John Kearney (Publicity Sec.) 5 Ormskirk Rise, Spondon; Reg Newcombe (Beer Guide Sec) Derby 45399.

Other Officers: Ian Grimshaw (Belper Area Sub-Committee C'man) Belper 3270; Trevor Peacock (Matlock Area Sub-Committee C'man) 62 Dale Road, Matlock; Chris Gale (Historic Pubs); Keith Normington (Raffles); Clive Moore (WB Sales); Jeff Fletcher (Camra Sales).

DERBY DIARY

Saturday 15th May, Loughborough. The Nottingham and Loughborough branches are having a walkabout around Loughborough. Anyone interested meet 8pm at the Greyhound, Nottingham Rd. (Loughbore'). There is quite a reasonable train service.

Wednesday 19th May, Shardlow. MORRIS AND ALE EVENING. This is a Morris-Camra event, which Keith Normington, the local Morris Bagman (Secretary/Treasurer) will be advertising. The Morris men will be dancing and mumming, and according to Keith like their ale almost as much as we do. (How many p.p.p. will the Morris-Camra achieve?). It should be a really traditional evening, and we are hoping for some publicity from it, so please let's have massive support. The itinerary is as follows:-

- 7.30 New Inn (Bass) and Malt Shovel (Marston)
- 8.15 Navigation (Davenport) (And if you've not tried it yet - you ought to)
- 9.00 Shakespeare (Home) (Nearly last night for present landlord)
- 9.45 Dog and Duck (Marston) (In the Tudor Room)

Saturday 22nd May, Little Eaton. PUBCRAWL. Meet 8pm in the New Inn, Little Eaton, and from there to Duffield, Hazelwood, and Quarndon. Anyone just after a quiet pint, or who can't find a non-drinking driver, meet us in the Joiner's Arms, Quarndon, after 10pm.

Wednesday 26th May, Derby. INFORMAL SOCIAL. Specially arranged for those who've been having a strenuous evening mowing the cat, re-tiling the Honda, or investigating the relationship between Crossroads and the philosophy of Descartes. Just come along to the Sir Robert Peel, Park Street, anytime after 9.30, for a quiet pint and free DIY hints.

Thursday 10th June, Derby. WHAT'S BREWING SALES CRAWL. Meet in the Green Man, St. Peter's Street, 8pm. Going to try our luck with some of the town centre fizz freaks, this has had some good results in the past - so come along and help give Camra a boost.

Saturday 12th June, COACH TRIP. A full day's outing to the Beer Exhibition in Glossop (afternoon) and the White Gates in Hyde (evening) calling in at a pub or so on the way back (maybe on the way there too if the journey proves long and arduous). The White Gates is a Camra Investments Ltd pub, we've arranged to visit it early in the evening to avoid the crush of fellow Camrades later on. Coach will leave Derby Market Place at 11am, picking up en-route from its depot before there, and at Belper and Matlock thereafter. For times in these other places see Terry Norton.

Wednesday 16th June BRANCH MEETING. The Mitre Hotel, Allenton (on the ring road) at 8pm. Please note that this is later in the month than usual. The Mitre has Marston's BB as well as Pedigree, and if you need any more enticement, it's our first time there, so we could do with an impressive turn-out.

TRAILER We expect to be arranging visits to the Nottingham (17 to 20 June) and the Cambridge (23 to 25 July) Beer Exhibitions. Details next month.

MAY MEETING AGENDA

1. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising
2. Branch Bulletin (News from the NE)
3. Branch News and Matters Arising. (Your comments requested on current branch business)
4. Social and Other Notices.
5. Beer Break. (15 minutes)
6. Discussion and Any Other Business.