

# MILD & BITTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DERBY BRANCH OF CAMRA

ISSUE 10

AUGUST 1976

## The Past Month

The July Branch Meeting (at the Victoria, Cowley St, Derby) was characterized by good beer, good attendance (50), and a good crop of new faces. It had been expected that holidays would take their quota of our regular attendees; and this did indeed occur, but their absence was amply compensated by the re-appearance of several old friends, and by the very welcome arrival of a good half dozen newcomers. All a bit of a relief to the committee, who had feared a poor turn-out at a time when the branch most needs support for a number of campaigning activities. We'd worried about the beer too - Bass often has problems in the hot weather - but the landlord had a cooled cellar and an excellent pint.

The Branch's Beer Exhibition Sub-Committee has met no less than three times in the last five weeks. Apart for a near-miss in Matlock, they've just had no luck in finding a show where we could have a beer tent this year. They are now looking into the possibility of a small 'contrived' event, perhaps a real ale folk evening (any ideas to John Griffiths or Mike Butler etc). One of the main aims now is to provide practice and experience for a major show next year.

Prompted by the late news that all entries for the 1977 National Good Beer Guide must be in by 30th August our Good Beer Guide Sub-Committee has got together again to begin the difficult task of selection. The difficulty, of course, is not in distinguishing between good and indifferent beer, but between good and best.

Of about 450 real ale pubs in our area, of which 168 are in the local good beer guide, only about 45 may be entered in the National. So the selection must be very critical. Obviously the existing entries will not be deleted without good reasons; but we should not adopt a soft policy of "once in, always in".

Although there was no shortage of volunteers to help with the ale-coming, the first meeting was poorly attended. Fortunately the second had a very impressive and enthusiastic attendance, and the work is now fairly well in hand. Anyone else wishing to join the GBGS-C on a regular basis (it will go on next to thinking about next year's local guide) is welcome to turn up at the next meeting - 8pm Monday 16th August (note change) at the Sir Robert Peel, Derby.

All members of the Branch not on the GBGS-C have a duty to help with the compilation. This newsletter has a National Guide Entry Recommendation Form attached. If you have any views on what should, or should not, be in, it's a very painless task to fill in this form and hand it to Reg Newcombe at the meeting. It's important that you do so.

(The Past Month - Contd)

The East Midlands Allied Campaign is beginning to get underway again. A handout for pubs, explaining CAMRA and the reason for the above campaign, has been printed, and the Branch Committee (in the absence of volunteering members) is starting the job of going round to Allied houses (just in Derby for the moment) to find landlords interested in having draught beer once more. (We may have a carbonated committee in the near future).

There are some promising indications that Ind Coope Draught Buxton Ale, at least, may be coming to Derby pubs; we hope to have something to report next month. In the meantime - any volunteers to help? (See Tim Williams)

What with everything else, the proposed Handpump Renovation Group has not yet got off the ground (nothing to do with over-indulgence on their part, I hasten to add). We hope, however, to find the time shortly to arrange a meeting for those interested.

Spyke Golding, the largest of the Nottingham Branch ex-Chairmen, is our new Area Organizer, and Nick Hawkins, our Regional Organizer, has now been co-opted onto the National Executive. Dave Dickens has taken over from Spyke at Nottingham.

Branch funds stand fairly statically at £120, except that we owe £375 to members financing the guide. Nick Potter reports that the main source of income so far this year has been from sales of CAMRA guides and other items.

The committee has decided in principle to support a joint Nottingham and Derby Branches public newsletter for sale in pubs. A professional looking big circulation publication is envisaged, and it could become the next major weapon in our armoury to promote real ale to the ordinary drinker. We must, however, find a suitable volunteer to obtain and edit contributions, and to serve on the Netts/Derby editorial committee to be chaired by Spyke Golding. A most important venture - those with journalistic tendencies please see Tim Williams.

Three committee members will be delegates at the Regional Conference at the end of October. All aspects of CAMRA organization and direction will be discussed. We will be calling for branch members' views, suggestions, and questions shortly - something to think about.

No space this month to report the results of the branch questionnaire in any detail. But, briefly, Paul Gibson reports that a disappointingly low number of 34 completed forms were received from the June and July meetings. Even so, he thinks they will help a lot in future planning. For nine it was their first time at a branch meeting, but most of the rest attended over  $\frac{3}{4}$  of branch meetings. Non-attendance was caused mainly by family ties, though a few stated they had something more interesting to do. Clearly Wednesday and Thursday were the best for branch meetings; and Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays for socials. The latter had a good number of regulars, although many others are hardly seen at all. There was a plea to do something about the Chaddesden real ale desert.

# Chesterfield, Matlock, & Derby

Two years ago, in August 1974, the Derby Branch of CAMRA was just one month old. At that time it was one of about 60 branches, less than a quarter of which were north of Derby itself. Now there are around 140 CAMRA branches, and, although the south remains the main stronghold of the campaign, it is the north that has the greatest potential for future success and development.

When the Derby Branch was formed its title would more accurately have been the 'South Derbyshire Branch of CAMRA'. The branch area was the whole of the county south of a line from Hartington to Bolsover. We've managed to lose small chunks to the Burton and Uttoxeter Branches, but even so this left the impossibly large number of about 800 pubs to police and campaign in. To overcome the many problems of a large branch area we've tried to set-up local 'Area Sub-Committees' with responsibility for local members and campaign activities. The Matlock AS-C, with Trevor Peacock as chairman, is one of these and has done very valuable work for the branch.

During our two years existence we have always hoped that a strong and successful Chesterfield Branch could be started, and would be able to take over part of our area. This hope now appears to be about to be realised. The sounding out meeting at Chesterfield on 6th August was a successful one, and within two or three months the new branch could be officially in existence. This will provide the opportunity to make 'The Derby Branch of CAMRA' a reasonably accurate title, as originally intended.

One question, however, is whether Matlock will fall within the Derby or the Chesterfield branch area. This is an issue which can only be properly determined by CAMRA members living in the Matlock area, and is one which will be decided at the August Branch Meeting.

Without wishing to pre-empt the voting, it has been geographically logical to assume that Matlock will join Chesterfield, and therefore a tentative boundary has been drawn from Pinxton to Brassington to Hartington. Boundaries exist only for administrative convenience and to prevent embarrassment caused by two separate CAMRA groups descending independantly on some unfortunate spot for some campaigning purpose. Nor are boundaries fixed; if one branch finds it cannot effectively cover a particular area, it is logical to transfer it to one that can.

A Chesterfield Branch will fill an important hole in the CAMRA map. The area is largely one in which there is a great deal of campaigning yet to be done. There are some members of CAMRA who apparently believe that the battle is won. It's not true. In Derby the real ale situation is static, there's been no significant changes in the number of real ale outlets. Maybe we are helping preserve the status quo, but that's not good enough. To preserve a long term future for real ale, the brewers and publicans must see evidence for a greatly increasing demand for it from the general public. When the keg pubs are always empty, they will know what they have to do.

There should be no illusions that to get a new branch going is easy. Derby is now established, but this has not happened overnight. The biggest problem is finding enough people with enough time to build up an effective organisation. And in this no-one should assume that there will be someone else to do the job, or who will be better qualified to do it; they won't, and they probably aren't. In Derby, as anywhere else, we all started off as rank amateurs, and when thrown into the deep end I think most of our active members have been pleasantly suprised to find we could float quite effectively and even swim a bit. There's a lot of interest in, and goodwill towards, CAMRA from the public, publicans and brewers. Being involved can be a very rewarding and enjoyable experience, albeit fattening.

# Take Five

So - at last - and after many months of blood sweat and beers, our local guide is out. Very many thanks are due to dozens of people; the elbow men who ventured out to taste hundreds of pints of ale between them, often at great risk to their taste buds, their bank balances, and their marital relations; to all who helped on the production side; and to all who lent money to help finance it.

Build a better beer guide and the world will beat a pathway to your door - in theory perhaps. In practice it's going to be a little harder, and without a lot of sales effort, someone is going to be lumbered with up to a quarter of a ton of waste paper.

Plans are in hand to sell guides to newsagents, bookshops, and pubs, but on top of this we are depending on a large number of direct sales by members to their friends and acquaintances at work etc. All members are therefore asked to take five or more copies away with them to sell privately. Unless you have lent money to finance the guide, we would prefer you to pay the full cover price in advance. We will refund for any unsold copies returned within two months. However, if you've spent all your cash on ale, we can let guides out at 10p deposit each (Members only). We are asking these things to reduce the chance of guide lying around unsold for too long.

Private sales are just that, and may not be made in pubs or any retail outlet we are already intending to cover. These sales must be made at the full cover price of 25p, with the one exception that fully paid up members of CAMRA living in the Derby Branch area need only pay 20p. If you find any other possible retail outlets please let Paul Gibson know. (Brailsford 365). We naturally want the money back as soon as possible to repay our financiers.

Finally, although about a dozen members have volunteered to help sell guides in pubs, we still cannot cover two areas. One is the Hollington/Longford area, the other the Melbourne area. Please see Paul Gibson if you can help.

## The Social Scene

THE ENGINE, DONISTHORPE, WEDS 14th JULY

The event started out disappointingly with only 9 aboard the coach from Derby. Luckily we had arranged to share our coach with Burton and this made the party up to 17. The Engine is an Allied pub serving Ind Coope bitter and Ansells mild by headpump. In the cosy lounge we were greeted by our Regional Organizer, Nick Hawkins, and soon members of the Loughborough and Nottingham branches arrived, together with our Area Organizer, Spyke Golding.

The evening was mostly spent chatting with a four piece folk group playing in the background. This created a great social atmosphere as the pints slipped down. The landlord, Ken Luxton, wearing a K9P badge fizzed up a half of DD for Mike, our driver - it's comforting to know that we had a man at the wheel who does not take alcohol.

This was an exceptionally enjoyable evening as a joint social and must be repeated sometime. In the meantime let's brush up on our folk singing.

(Terry Merton)

(The Social Scene - Contd)

### CAMBRIDGE ALE DAY SAT 24th JULY

This pilgrimage was well supported by members from Derby and Nottingham. On arrival at the Corn Exchange it was grab a half pint glass and sample the 21 beers available. One noticeable problem, however, on this very warm day was the temperature of the beer, despite large blocks of ice wedged between the casks.

During the afternoon break (3.30 to 5 pm) our members dashed off for a meal (including an after hours curry) or enjoyed the Morris dancing and folk singing performed in the grounds of Kings College. Dezing on the river bank was another favourite, or cheering the odd punter as he overbalanced from his craft.

After a few more halves in the exhibition we made our way to the recently opened CAMRA Investments pub, calling at the Ferresters on the way for a pint of Telly (not bad either). The Salisbury is not a very spectacular pub, nor particularly traditional either, but it does have an appetizing bank of 5 handpumps, each with a different brew.

At 8.30 our coach departed for the Golden Ball, Bexworth, for a choice of 11 real ales. There was alas a certain amount of clumsiness with glasses in the darkness of the garden, and perhaps some members need to curb their enthusiasm for trying all the ales available on these long trips, or to eat more carrots for better night vision.

Have you got your name down for the Batley Exhibition trip?

(Terry Merton)

### AND THE OTHERS

A half dozen members joined a Nottingham day trip to the Manchester area, and by all accounts had a great time, visiting the White Gates, and touring sunny Oldham. In the former, Paul Gibson reports, they literally bumped into a couple of members from the National Executive. I hope they weren't the heavier ones.

The late evening social at the Sun, Middleton St, proved a great success with members turning up from far and wide for what was supposed to be a quiet chat and drink with perhaps a game of darts. Next time we will try to find a slightly less popular pub. Some did manage to play bar billiards, others get bruises as a result. They should have padded cues.

## WybmadiItY

When you realize that this is a recommendation for a Kimberley pub on the quality of its beer, don't turn to the next page, because the bitter (we've not tried the mild) really is excellent. This view is supported by CAMRA members from both Loughborough, who have been back there after first finding it by accident.

and Coventry

The landlord, who has recently joined CAMRA, takes great pride in the beer he serves. He has resisted the brewery's attempt to put up his electricity bill, firmly believing that the best way to serve beer is by handpump.

(Wybmadiity - Contd)

When we first 'discovered' the place he had stopped selling mild because he felt he could not serve a consistently good pint due to low demand (another indication that the bitter is good), but recently a few more mild drinkers have moved into the area, and he has started selling it again.

Good beer, however, is not the only thing the pub has to offer, and any visitor should feel at home due to the friendliness on both sides of the bar, and the varied ages of the customers. It has a large bar with a 'scale corner', a pleasant lounge, and a small bar billiards room. As well as the usual games the bar has cheese skittles. Another interesting feature is the juke box, which is something of an antique and plays 78's (not really, but some of the records are a bit old to say the least).

You may be wondering what the place is called, it's the Hilcote Arms near Blackwell. It's most easily found by getting to the South Narmanton M1 intersection (28) and taking the Mansfield road. After about half a mile (where the carriageways diverge) turn left down the B6406, and it's on the left after another half mile.

Now you've read about it, go and find it - we don't think you'll be disappointed, even if, like us, you're not usually very keen on Kimberley. And WYBMADIITY? you'll have to go there to find out what that means.

(Mick Chambers, and Tim and Gill Burgess)

## Pub News

For the first time we are able to report two new real ale outlets in a single month. Most interesting is that the Compleat Angler at Wirksworth now has the first Sam Smiths OBB in the branch area, and served from a brand new handpump. Also significant is the introduction of handpumped Marstons Pedigree to the Hardings Arms a smart old pub near Melbourne. The new co-owner is not a real ale enthusiast, but he has it to supply choice - so go there and show a market exists. But don't think it's all going our way - the Miners Arms at Marshay, featured in Issue 6, may soon change to keg.

There are at the moment a lot of pub changes to monitor. Dave 'Keg Buster' Johnson, our Pub Liaison Officer, in particular, has had a busy month. He's campaigned in a chippy, inadvertently caused a near riot, and been lured into a brewery. His and others' news follows.

The new landlord at the Shakespeare, Shardlow seems not a great handpump enthusiast, but has kept them for use when asked. The Forresters, Borrowash will soon transfer from Allied to Home under a trading agreement. At the Stanhope Arms, Stanton by Dale (a lovely pub) the new landlord has been persuaded that the handpumps should stay. The landlord at the Bateman Arms, Stanley Common is retiring, and the proprietor of a Borrowash chippy taking over. The currently top pressure Marstons Victoria Hotel, Draycott is changing hands - maybe a chance here. The Shire Horse (New Inn) Wyasten is still on keg pending cellar alterations. The new owner of the Barley Mow, Kirk Ireton has been contacted, it's believed it will retain real ale when it re-opens. Renovations at the Coast and Horses, Horsey (many say best Marstons anywhere) are finished.

The near riot occurred in the Bull's Head, Breaston. Dave went for a quiet chat with the landlord about his intentions to change to top pressure on his Marstons. Some locals overheard, and soon the whole bar was up in arms about it, and threatening to walk out. To be fair, there have been problems with

(Pub News - Contd)

the weather, but maybe now the landlord will persist in trying to find means to overcome them, rather than abandon real ale.

It wouldn't happen to anyone else, but Dave just happened to be standing outside Hanson's brewery in Dudley, inhaling the steam, when a voice said "Come in and have a drink".

## News From HQ

The main topic of the July Branch Bulletin was the 1977 National Beer Guide. It is to be extended by 32 pages, with an additional 600 entries, including for the first time the Channel Islands. Guidelines for selection were defined; entries are due by 30th August. A north-easterly campaign has been started against the major fizz-merchants in the area; all branches with Scottish and Newcastle pubs have been asked to help by pressing for real ale in them.

The National Executive will be drafting codes of practice to advise and guide branches on various aspects of branch activity. The Bulletin reminded that the quarterly summary of real ale pubs in our area is due; in turn we would like to remind all members of the continuing need to let Nick Potter know of all changes they come across (form attached to this Newsletter).

The August Branch Bulletin, unlike July, arrived before our meeting, and is bigger. An article summarizes the EEC directive on beer, and CAMRA's comments submitted by request to the Ministry of Agriculture. CAMRA objects mainly to the directive's laxity in the specification of both ingredients and processes. There is a plea for help in finding a (preferably London) site for the 1977 national beer festival. Much space is devoted to procedures for getting loans from the campaign fund, and guidelines for publicity and for local beer guides (1) The latter must be right - it's more or less as we've done.

There is an interim report on the investigation to streamline the administration at St Albans (some changes already made), and details of Executive decisions and information: the NULV is interested in meeting a small delegation from CAMRA; all real ale brewers are to be approached with a view to finance a film on the production of real ale; a meeting being arranged with Scottish and Newcastle; profit on CAMRA pints competition was £6,320.

## Contacts

BRANCH COMMITTEE: Tim Williams (Chairman) Derby 676027; Paul Gibson (Secretary, Beer Guide Sales, Mild and Bitter Subscriptions) Brailsford 365; Nick Potter (Treasurer, Membership Secretary) Derby 511355; Terry Marten (Social Secretary) Derby 674025; Dave Johnson (Pub Liaison); John Kearney (Publicity Secretary); Reg Newcombe (Beer Guide Secretary) Derby 45399.

OTHER OFFICERS: Ian Grimshaw (Belper AS-C) Belper 3270; Trevor Peacock (Matlock AS-C) 65 Dale Road, Matlock; Mick Chambers ('Alfreton' AS-C); Chris Gale (Historic Pubs); Keith Normington (Raffles); Clive Moore (WB Sales); Jeff Fletcher (CAMRA Sales); John Broadbent/Phil Rees (Handpump Group); Mike Butler (M&B Sub-Editor); Gill Burgess (Archives); John Griffiths (Beerex S-C)

# Derby Diary

Monday 16th August  
GBG S-C Meeting

Sir Robert Peel, Park Street, Derby, 8pm. See page 1 for details. Note change of date.

Saturday 21st August  
PUB CRAWL

The Nottingham Branch are coming to Derby it seems - perhaps we can give them a thrashing at darts. Meet 8.30 pm at the Sir Robert Peel, Park Street.

Monday 23rd August  
BREWERY TRIP

Afternoon coach trip to Home Brewery Co Ltd (Members who have booked with Terry Merton only). Depart from Alexandra Hotel, Siddals Rd, Derby, 1.45pm PROMPT.

Mon/Tues 30/31 Aug  
Beer Exhibition

No official branch trip to the Leicester Beer Exhibition - but see What's Brewing for details if you are interested.

Wednesday 1st September  
LATE EVENING SOCIAL

The Vine, Mickleover, 9pm. Come along and finish your evening off with a couple of pints of the only real Ansell's bitter in our area. (see also page 5).

Thursday 9th September  
BRANCH MEETING

The Liversage Arms, Nottingham Road, Derby, 8pm.

Every Sunday  
INFORMAL SOCIAL

About 1.30pm in the Coach and Horses, Horseley, various members meet for a quiet pint, all welcome.

---●---

Saturday 18th September  
COACH TRIP

This is the big one - a full day trip to the Kirklees Beerox at Batley (over 20 brews) plus hopefully a visit to the CAMRA Investments pub in Leeds and to the Keighley and Worth Valley steam and real ale railway. Coach 10.00 from Derby Bus Station (Excursion platform). Book with Terry Merton.

## STOP PRESS

Wednesday 18th August  
SOCIAL EVENING  
(Provisional)

The Grapes (Marstons Pedigree and BB) High Street, Belper, from about 8.30 pm, a Belper Area S-C Special, and maybe Peel match.

## Branch Meeting Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Branch Business
3. Chesterfield Branch (see page 3)
4. Beer Break
5. Regional Organizer
6. Beer Guide Launch



### MILD & BITTER SUBSCRIPTIONS

Keep in touch by having Mild & Bitter sent to you when you can't get to Branch Mtgs.

I wish to subscribe to three / <sup>\*</sup>six issues of Mild & Bitter at a cost of 30p/ 50p

<sup>\*</sup>Delete as appropriate

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

..... DATE .....

### PUB INFORMATION

Let us know of any changes, rumours of changes, or other pub news.

YOUR NAME & DATE OF INFORMATION	PUB INCLUDING ADDRESS	NEWS	SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Specify any action taken overleaf

### NATIONAL GUIDE ENTRIES

A. I recommend that the following pubs be deleted from the next National GBG

PUB INCLUDING LOCATION	WHEN VISITED *	REASON FOR DELETION (If any mitigating circumstances - eg weather- state them)

<sup>\*</sup> If a regular - say approx how often you visit the pub. <sup>\*</sup>

B. I recommend that the following pubs be included in the next National GBG

PUB INCLUDING ADDRESS	BEERS AND HOW SERVED	WHEN VISITED *	COMMENTS

NAME (CAPS) ..... SIGNATURE .....

USE BACK OF FORM FOR NOTIFYING CHANGES TO NAT GBG DESCRIPTIONS, ERRORS, ETC.