

# MILD & BITTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DERBY BRANCH OF CAMRA

ISSUE 10  
SEPTEMBER 1976

## The Past Month

Looks like more branch meetings will have to be away matches. The coach to Matlock for our August meeting had a magnificent 48 on board, and with some of our regulars making their own way, we once again hit the 50 mark. Sadly though, actual Matlockites were sparse - most disappointing for Trevor Peacock and his Area Sub-Committee, who had put up posters advertising the meeting in no less than 60 pubs. Highlights of an enjoyable meeting were a talk by Nick Hawkins, our Regional Organizer, and the launch (just made it by two days) of our local beer guide.

Our National Good Beer Guide entries for 1977 are now safely sent off to CAMRA HQ, thanks to a lot of hard work by a number of people. Well done the GBG S-C, and all members who contributed their suggestions.

Next year will see a number of additions and deletions, but these must remain confidential at this stage; no pub should get to know that they are in, in case of disappointment due to later deletion, and in case of premature advertising.

The GBG S-C will now be having a few weeks well deserved respite, but on October 20th (provisionally) there will be a special meeting to discuss all aspects of the current local guide. Guide salesmen and all others concerned in its production and sale will also be invited. The aim will be to discuss what lessons can be learnt from our experience this time, in preparation for the next one. More details next meeting.

The Beerex S-C have turned up trumps, and come up with an event in which to get involved. It's a charity cricket match at Wirksworth on Sunday 12th Sept. followed in the evening by an Ox Roast and other entertainments including a band and (maybe) Folk Group. It's being run by the local LVA, and, naturally, involves a beer tent.

We are taking a part in this thanks to the landlord of the Compleat Angler and to Harold Rhodes, the ex-Derbyshire cricketer, who is now a representative for Sam Smiths. Both were keen to have draught beer as well as keg, providing help was available. The organizing committee see draught beer as an added attraction, and from our point of view it's an opportunity for good publicity, and good public relations, and without any financial risk.

So all we need is a good number of volunteers to help man the barrels, and in particular to help guard them on Friday and Saturday nights. And everyone else - there's 144 gallons of Sam Smiths OBB to be drunk, bring your support.

(The Past Month - Contd.)

Happy to say we have two prospective volunteers, Eric Whitehouse and Rog Robinson, to be Derby Editors of the proposed Nottingham/Derby Branch public newsletter. At the time of writing there is little to report, but it is hoped that the publication will appear before too long. Any ideas for a title, or articles or illustrative matter, will be welcomed by either of our editors.

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Now that the guide is safely on its way, we have the time to get new campaign ventures properly off the ground, and another one that we hope will take flight this month is the Handpump Sub-Committee. The first 'proper' meeting of this group will be on Thursday 23rd September at 9pm in the Victoria Inn, Midland Place. All interested in taking a regular part in repairing, restoring, acquiring, selling, or writing historical papers on, handpumps, are invited to turn up - but please give your name to John Broadbent in case of any later changes of date etc.

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With the guide just out, branch funds are in a state of total confusion, and, apart from not having had the bailiffs round, the treasurer has nothing to report.

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The 1976 Central Regional Conference will be held in Oakham on October 30th and 31st. Unlike last year, it will be mainly based on study groups, rather than being all general sessions. This should provide an invaluable opportunity for getting down to detailed and constructive discussions of the direction and problems of the campaign.

These annual conferences do not replace the National AGM and no specific motions are debated or voted on, but it is important that our three delegates can put the views and suggestions of branch members, which may then influence the future of the campaign. So we will be seeking these this meeting and probably also in October. It may be possible for other members to attend as observers - anyone interested, please see Paul Gibson.

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"The Local Brewing Industry - Its History and Developments" is the subject of a 24 week course to be held at St Helen's House (opp. the Seven Stars), Derby, starting on Tuesday 28th September. The course is jointly organized by the Workers Educational Association (WEA) and the University of Nottingham Department of Adult Education. The 24 sessions will be on Tuesday nights from 7.15 to 9.15.

The course is being run by Maurice Lovett, a PRO for Bass, and will cover "all aspects of brewing, including history, brewing techniques, pubs, brewing personalities, legislation, inn signs, effect on other industries and transport, architecture and the development of different beers and their advertising." It will also include visits to a brewery, maltings and tours of pubs.

Looks like it could be most interesting, and those wishing to enrol (fee £ 4.90) can do so at St Helen's House Monday to Friday 10am to 2pm and 4pm to 8pm (or 9pm from Monday 20th to Friday 24th September). You are advised to enrol as early as possible, but no later than the 24th. For further details see Tim Williams, and if anyone is going, we would be interested to know.

# Sales Boom

We thought we were being ambitious to print 5000 copies of our local guide, but expected to reach the break-even point of about 2750 sold in a couple of months. Poor judgement - the latest figures show around 3800 'sold', and these are for 1.9.76, just three weeks after publication. Where they have all gone is outlined below; the figures in brackets show how many of the total in each category are out on sale or return rather than firm sale.

Listed pubs	2000	(750)	
Wholesale Newsagents	1100	(600)	
Private and Postal	500	(0)	(Estimate)
Other Branches	<u>200</u>	<u>(100)</u>	
	3800	(1450)	
Known Stock	800		
Unaccounted	<u>400</u>		(Unreported stock or sales)
	5000		

These figures are approximate, and since there has been some delay in getting results in from the various sources, it is expected that the actual sales position on 1.9.76 was better than shown above.

One pleasant surprise has been the large number of copies sold through pubs, Orders of 50 have been quite commonplace and thanks must be due to the landlords and landladies involved for their enthusiasm. Thanks also to our intrepid band of salesmen (and woman) many of whom have been rushed off their feet meeting orders and re-orders. Naturally some areas have fared better than others, and the final figures may give some idea where CAMRA is known and popular; interim results are below:

Area	Guide pubs in Area	Sales (SOR in brackets)	Date	Guides per pub
Ashbourne	10	86	1.9.76	8½
Longford & Hilton	7	0	No salesman	
Repton & Melbourne	12	102	1.9.76	8½
Shardlow & Sawley	10	80	1.9.76	8
Long Eaton & Draycott	10	12	1.9.76	1
Matlock and area	24	405 (90)	1.9.76	17
Duffield & Wirksworth	10	174 (35)	25.8.76	17½
Belper & Area	16	234 (60)	1.9.76	14½
Ripley & Heanor	16	150 (80)	25.8.76	9½
Ilkeston	12	184 (124)	1.9.76	15½
Derby North	8	62 (41)	25.8.76	8
Derby East	9	293 (230)	25.8.76	32½
Derby West	10	141 (65)	25.8.76	14
Derby South	<u>10</u>	<u>135</u>	25.8.76	13½
	164	2058		

The guide has had a lot of publicity on Radio Derby and in the local press; we have cuttings from the Derby Evening Telegraph, the Derby Trader, the Derbyshire Times, and the Ilkeston Advertiser, but if anyone has found any more, please will you lend the cutting to Gill Burgess to copy for our records. It is also worth noting that the guide has caused a large increase in National Guide sales.

The committee's judgement is that we have by no means exhausted the potential market for the guide, and a reprint of 2000 copies has been ordered. Sales of these won't go so quickly, but we have at least six months in which to clear

(Sales Boom - Contd.)

them. The reprint will take about four weeks, and as we are already having problems with the 'supply dumps' exhausted, please return any surplus copies so that we can keep our existing stockists happy.

#### Note to Salespeople

Please get the money with appropriate receipts in to Nick Potter as soon as possible, and please continue to monitor the sales progress in your pubs. Although your sales may temporarily dwindle to nil due to lack of stock, it remains vital for you to keep in touch with Paul Gibson at the appointed times. Otherwise we will have no idea where we are.

## The Social Scene

### NOT QUITE HOME FROM HOME

Robin Hood and Little John, prehistoric creatures and modern hedgehogs, and a rare brewery animal which, like the whale and the tiger, has been pushed to the edge of extinction by the advance of modern technology: just a few of the things we came across on our visit to Home Brewery last month.

Robin Hood, of course, is this brewery's well known trade mark (even better known since the publication of our best-selling beer guide), and Little John in case you draught ale-drinkers don't know - is the strong ale contained in the regimented bottles we saw clinking round the bottling plant. It takes only ten days to produce - a far cry from your old fashioned barley wine, which required a very much longer conditioning.

Home Brewery have about 460 tied houses, of which some 380 serve cask-conditioned beer and the rest (including the Noah's Ark, Derby) serve it filtered or kegged. The old Daybrook Brewery, built in 1885 has recently been demolished to provide a site for a new lager plant (alack-a-day !) and is replaced by the most modern brewery in Europe which began production 18 months ago.

Despite the drought and its effects on the hop harvest, Daybrook are not troubled by shortages, having their own adequate water supply and a plentiful stock of pocketed and pelletized hops. According to Home's head brewer, the traditional English Fuggles and Goldings hops are now giving way to cross-breeds such as Whitbread Golding Variety and Bramling Cross, which have similar (?) properties, are easier to grow, and more resistant to disease. Home Brewery, like some others, are now using pelletized hops in their coppers, because with loose hops there is always the possibility that bits of hop bine, or nuts and bolts, or even a dead hedgehog might be hidden in the hop pocket and thrown in, which - while they might contribute to the flavour - could well cause the ultra-modern plant and equipment to malfunction.

What a contrast it was to come out of the bright new brewery with stainless steel fittings and panel controls, costing well nigh £2M, and go across the yard into the dingy little cooperage, the floor covered with oak shavings, where - apart from a little machining - the tools and methods were much the same as they had always been. The last cooper in the Company's employ, Clive Wallace, learned his trade with Bass and did a bit in between for Mansfield. At the end of the week, however, he was going to Theakston's and would not be replaced at Daybrook, where no more wooden casks would be made or repaired and which will be all metal by next February. (Wood is considered too dear, too dirty, and not

(The Social Scene - Contd.)

durable enough - the working life of a typical tight cask being only 25 years) Some of us would have liked to linger there much longer, but we were dragged away to see the big new boilerhouse of which the brewery is apparently much prouder.

And the prehistoric creatures? Oh, yes .... nothing very exciting, really. They were tiny aquatic organisms called diatoms, a kind of algae, the fossil shells of which occur as a fine white powder which, because it is chemically inert, is a highly efficient filtering agent (not to be confused with isinglass finings, made from the sturgeons swim-bladder).

Unfortunately, this otherwise enjoyable visit ended on a somewhat disappointing note. In the plush visitors' lounge where we received the traditional brewers' hospitality we were offered not gravity-drawn or handpumped or even electric pumped draught, but chilled pint chased out by compressed air. Since we all agreed with our guide that chilling kills flavour (if there is one to kill), we could not understand why this prize-winning brew should be served at a disadvantage in the brewery. Even a few minutes in the Gas Chamber (CO<sub>2</sub> Room) had not conditioned us to prefer it this way. That apart, this visit was both interesting and enjoyable. Thanks again, Home Brewery.

(Reg Newcombe)

#### APATHY SOCIAL AT THE SIR ROBERT PEEL WITH THE NOTTINGHAM BRANCH

Firstly I would like to thank everyone who was unable to attend; I'm afraid owing to illness I was present on this occasion, but even so it was gratifying to see how many weren't able to make it.

Three Derby members and four committee turned up, and it was suggested that taking on the Nottingham Branch at darts would be a rather cruel idea, seeing that we had seven more people than them. Still we enjoyed the evening anyway, and later had a walk round to the Alexandra via the Victoria Inn.

Maybe we could have a phantom social at some unknown venue in Nottingham, without giving a date, in case of any lukewarm response from the local branch. We would at least save the bus fare.

I'm only joking really. Anyhow, how about a Derby/Notts social at the Sir Robert Peel?

(Terry Morton)

#### APATHY SOCIAL AT BELPER

Firstly I would like to thank all members from Derby who were able to join the dozen or so Belper members for this evening of Marstons and free sandwiches. We both enjoyed ourselves. Since Belper refused to play us at darts for fear of losing, we won the dominoes.

To everyone else I had better explain that Belper is a town just five miles north of Derby. It has houses made of brick (they gave up wattle and daub years ago) mostly with roofs, and its inhabitants speak English (sort of). The town is connected to Derby via the A6, which, contrary to popular belief, is tarmacadamed all the way.

I'm only joking too, I think, but many thanks and apologies to Roy Boam of the Grapes for his hospitality, and our lack of support.

(Tim Williams)

There was however also a very successful late evening social at the Vine, Mickleover - and the beer was at its best.

# Calling Ansell's Bittermen

Members with tact, tolerance, and the occasional thick skin, are required to help us with the East Midlands Allied Campaign, which is beginning to get geared up as our main Autumn campaigning venture.

The story so far is that Allied have given non-answers to Nick Hawkins' (our Regional Organizer) letters requesting clarification of whether they will supply real ale to pubs that want it. Nick will now be requesting a meeting with Allied at senior level, but, to back this up, evidence must be produced for a demand for traditional beer amongst Allied landlords and customers.

Meanwhile the committee have started visiting Allied pubs to collect this evidence, and our colleagues in Nottingham and Loughborough have been doing the same. Results are promising and it seems that maybe 1 in 4 Allied landlords will turn out to want real ale back. It's also been pleasant to find that most Allied landlords have been friendly and generally willing to chat even if they are not particularly convinced about real ale.

With a ridiculous total of 90 Allied pubs in Derby alone, we've got a big job on our hands just to get round to sound them out. That's where members can help. Volunteers will be asked to tackle a small number each of specified pubs. It means going round reasonably early in the evening and having a tactful word with the publican to discover whether they would like to serve real ale. A printed handout is available to help smooth the process, and guidelines detailing the situation will be issued. All who would like to help out in a bit of direct campaigning are asked to leave their names, addresses, and phone number (if possible) with Tim Williams, together with the number of pubs they would like to do in the next month.

## Pub News

Last month we had a couple of bits of good news, this month the situation is rather gloomy. Those that think the campaign for real ale is won - please read on.

First of all some changes to guide pubs. The Wheel, Ashbourne, described in the guide as difficult to find, has now been closed down, and, also in Ashbourne there is a threat to the Greenall Whitley in the Green Man and Black's Head. In Middleton by Wirksworth, the Duke of Wellington has already been knocked about and converted to electric pump, while the Nelson's Arms is also about to receive a facelift. At Quarndon, the Joiner's Arms is temporarily closed for alterations, and at Ripley the King William IV has changed to pressure.

The question of pub alterations is a worrying one; they do not necessarily mean the end of the draught beer (and it must be to the good to have draught beer available in 'smart' pubs) but all too often the pubs' character is unnecessarily spoilt.

The hope for real ale in the Forresters, Borrowash, when it changed from Allied to Home have been dashed. Apparently this eight year old pub was built with such a small cellar that there is hardly room for the kegs let alone cask conditioned. (Presumably Allied don't expect to sell much beer). The new landlord has tried to find some way round this problem, but without success.

(Pub News - Contd.)

There is, however, some promising news from Marston's pubs. The Alma at Melbourne and the Nags Head, Borrowash, are both reputedly keen to change from electric to handpumps, while the new landlord at the Victoria, Draycott, is contemplating changing from top pressure to electric pump. John Harold, landlord of the Crown, Spondon, is featuring 'recommended by CAMRA' in his Telegraph advertisements (he's in the guide as are the Alma, and the Nags Head) and has signed on as a member.

## Who To Contact

BRANCH COMMITTEE: Tim Williams (Chairman) Derby 676027; Paul Gibson (Secretary, Guide Sales, M & B Subscriptions) Brailsford 365; Nick Potter (Treasurer, Membership Sec) Derby 511355; Terry Morton (Social Sec) Derby 674025; Dave Johnson (Pub Liason); John Kearney (Publicity Sec); Reg Newcombe (Beer Guide Sec) Derby 45399.

OTHER OFFICERS: Ian Grimshaw (Belper Area Sub-C'tee) Belper 3270; Trevor Peacock (Matlock Area S-C) 62 Dale Rd, Matlock; Tim Burgess & Mick Chambers (Ripley & Heanor Area S-C); Chris Gale (Historic Pubs); Keith Normington (Raffles); Clive Moore (What's Brewing Sales); Jeff Fletcher (CAMRA product Sales); John Broadbent (Handpump S-C); Mike Butler (M & B Sub-Ed); Gill Burgess (Press Cuttings); John Griffiths (Beer Exhibition S-C); Rog Robinson & Eric Whitehouse (Notts/Derby Newsletter Editors)

## News From HQ

CAMRA is launching a nationwide recruitment drive to attract both new and lapsed members. Chris Bruton, the national chairman, writing in Branch Bulletin, states that in the last year membership has fallen from about 30,000 to 27,000, and an increase is necessary both for continued financial well-being, and continued effectiveness.

Chris goes on to say that although the campaign has had its successes (including restoring traditional beer to over 1000 pubs), the campaigns long-term future need to be secured. He lists 11 major issues to be tackled over the next year (including persuading Allied to bring real ale back to their Midlands pubs). To deal with these will require money and a large and active membership.

That's the message: so now is the time to go back to those borderliners you know, who prefer real ale but don't support the campaign by joining, and get them to sign on. Let Nick Potter know of your successes for our records.

\* STOP PRESS \*

EXTRA SOCIAL Tuesday 5th October from 8pm at the Horse and Jockey, Leabrooks Road, Somercotes. (near Ripley). A chance to try first class Home Ales on handpumps ( and there's not many of them about). Well worth the trip out.

# Derby Diary

NON-MEMBERS WELCOME TO ALL THESE EVENTS

Sunday 12th September  
BEER TENT

Sam Smith's Old Brewery Bitter available at Wirksworth all, with cricket, ox roast, etc, to provide diversion. Further details at branch meeting, and on page 1. Come and support real ale.

Saturday 18th September  
BEER EXHIBITION

Full day coach trip to visit the CAMRA Investments Ltd pub in Leeds, the Keighley and Worth Valley steam and real ale railway, and, in the evening, the Kirkstall Beer Exhibition (20 brews) at Batley. Coach leaves 10am from Derby Bus Station (excursion platform). Book with Terry Morton.

Friday 24th September  
SOCIAL EVENING

Joint social with a number of neighbouring branches at the Devonshire Arms, Ashford in the Water (NBG listed). Extension till 12.30 applied for. Coach arranged if enough support.

Wednesday 29th September  
LATE EVENING SOCIAL

At the Malt Shovel, Spondon, from about 9pm. Come along and finish off your evening with a couple of pints and a chat in this characterful old pub.

Wednesday 13th October  
BRANCH MEETING

The Bridge Inn, Shelton Lock, Derby, 8pm. Derby Corporation No. 60 bus from the Market Place every 15 mins direct to pub. Return 22.15, 22.30, 22.40, or 23.00.

Every Sunday  
INFORMAL SOCIAL

About 1.30 in the Coach and Horses, Horsley, various members meet for a lunchtime pint.

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FUTURE EVENTS : Weds 20th Oct Beer Guide Meeting; Thursday 11th November Branch Meeting; Monday 15th November Branch Officers' Meeting; Wednesday 1st December Afternoon visit to Marston's Brewery (names at October Meeting) Thursday 9th December Branch Meeting.

## Branch Meeting Agenda

1. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising
2. Branch Bulletin News
3. Branch News and Matters Arising
4. Social and Other Notices
5. Beer Break
6. Discussion - Regional Conference (see p 2). Aob.

## Advert.

Mild and Bitter is your newsletter, produced, with no expense spared, to keep members in touch with branch activities and local news. It's available free at branch meetings. But if you miss a meeting you may miss out; maybe on a social, or maybe on a chance to explain to a non-member some aspect of branch activity. The remedy is simple - subscribe. For 30p or 50p you will get your copy sent to your home on the three or six occasions you can't get to the meeting. Complete the attached form and give to Paul Gibson (or send to him at Wayside, Main Road, Brailsford, Derby.).