

The Past Month

With 68 people present, the September Branch Meeting at the Liversage Arms, Derby, was a somewhat crowded affair. We certainly hope that attendances will keep up to, or exceed, this sort of level, but we are running into real problems with finding big enough rooms in real ale pubs. Terry Morton will welcome all ideas.

Noticed anything different about your draught Bass recently? You might well have because its original gravity has been increased, reputedly from 1039 to 1043. The reason for the change is as yet unknown, but it is possible to conjecture that it may not be entirely unconnected with the problems that have been experienced in keeping Bass during the last two hot summers. Why Bass is not publicizing the increase is more difficult to comprehend. We hope to have the answers soon.

Preparations for the 1st edition of the forthcoming Notts/Derby public newsletter are proceeding well, but it's not quite too late for your articles, cartoons, illustrations, etc. In any case there will be a continuing need for good quality, generally interesting, material. If you would like to contribute, or find out more of what's involved, just contact Rog Robinson or Eric Whitehouse (see Who to Contact - page 7).

The newsletter will appear initially every other month, and will probably appear in the form of a 12 page A5 size booklet, price 6p. It will be mainly aimed at the general drinking public, and, if sales go well, it will be a major weapon in our campaigning armoury - potentially more important even than the local beer guide.

On the subject of the local guide, the current overall sales situation is not very clear. Around the pubs the impression is that, while the main rush is over, there is still a steady trickle of sales. Some outlets have yet to be fully exploited, so there seems a reasonable chance of clearing the re-print stocks before the new year; but it is important to keep the momentum going - and that message applies to all members, not just the guide salesmen.

There now follows an appeal on behalf of the Treasurer Please will you get all money and receipts to him (Nick Potter) as soon as possible. There is an unreasonable amount of money yet to be handed in. Next month's appeal is likely to be on behalf of the Godfather squad (sorry, Sub-Committee) who will be anxious to recruit all members over 15 stone for the purposes of leaning.

(The Past Month - Contd.)

One disappointment during the month was the poor turn-out for the first official meeting of the Handpump Sub-Committee, the main purpose of which will be to repair and renovate handpumps so that they can be used again for serving real ale. This service is much needed to counter the decline in the use of handpumps in this area. So far a lot of basic spadework has been done, mainly by John Broadbent, but the main problem has been in finding redundant handpumps for sale. If you know of any, please have a word with John (see Who to Contact page 7). In the past a lot of people have expressed an interest in getting involved in this campaigning area - if you are one, again please contact John, the more involved, the sooner things are likely to get moving.

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The Committee Meeting on October 4th was a historic occasion; the first that has not been held in a pub. The next day the chairman felt distinctly off-colour, and the following two days was off work. The following decisions were made:-

- 1) Despite the zero support received from branch members, the committee would try to continue with the Allied Campaign, as individual time allowed.
- 2) A Sub-Committee of C'tee members would be set up to examine the present pub liason and beer guide information system, and to draw up proposals as necessary for improvements. (Would all members with views on how to improve our contacts with local pubs, on disseminating the necessary information, and on taking action where needed, please see John Kearney, Dave Johnson, or Reg Newcombe).
- 3) That neither the branch nor the committee had so far produced any item that warranted general formal discussion at the Regional Conference. All suggestions would however be raised privately with the national officials concerned.
- 4) That the branch should keep separate General and Projects Accounts, each of which should be independant and self-supporting. Regulations governing the use of these accounts would be drawn up.
- 5) That the December Branch Meeting would be a Special General Meeting to approve a new Branch Constitution as require by CAMRA achieving Limited Company status.

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The Beer Guide Sub-Committee has taken a well earned rest during the last month, but even now thoughts are turning towards the next guide. Reg Newcombe is having a special meeting at 8pm on Wednesday 20th October at the Sir Robert Peel to discuss the lessons to be learnt from the present guide, and the next edition. All those concerned with any aspect of the guide (survey, compilation, production, and sales) are invited. If you have not received your invitation/agenda - please see Reg.

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Here are some spine-chilling extracts from the Bass Worthington and Bass Production newspaper 'Roundabout'. "Total UK sales of Traditional Draught were down from 40% of the market in 1965 to 20% in 1975, and a steep decline to 4% (almost negligible) is forecast by 1985. Bass Charrington's current 32% of its own market (almost double the rest of the industry and incidentally the reason for comparative satisfaction with our company by CAMRA) is expected to decline to only 10% of our sales but this will still be well in excess of our competitors." And later "the great future for us [in Barton on Trent], the real justification for a well-earned livelihood, is in lager - some 60% of output by 1981."

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Keg Buster Needs You

Dwindling membership threatens the future of the campaign. For the reasons, and for the achievements that could be more quickly won with a massive increase in membership, see Chris Bruton's article on page 3 of this month's What's Brewing.

The Autumn membership drive is now on, and we have an important part to play. We have just received stocks of the new, much improved, membership form, and of two types of new poster. One of these is an enlistment poster, and the idea of this is to get copies displayed in pubs which are prepared to stock membership forms behind the bar.

Most members will know of at least one real ale pub within the branch area which they visit regularly, and which would be willing to help the campaign in this way. Those that do (and to paraphrase the immortal words of Terry Morton, that does mean you, not the bloke sitting behind you) please help,

Stocks of posters and membership forms will be kept by Nick Potter, who will also keep a list of who is doing which pubs, to avoid duplication. All that's needed is to get the landlord to put them up (if he does not mind doing so) and then re-visit the pub every week to collect any completed membership forms and money left behind the bar. (If the landlord or applicant prefers, they may of course be sent directly off to St Albans by the applicant). Completed forms and money should be returned without delay to any committee member, or sent off directly (postage refunded by the branch) after noting the name and address of the new member for Nick Potter's register. Any unused posters and forms should be handed back as we have a limited supply.

In addition, all members should set themselves a personal target of recruiting one new member by Christmas, but ensure that every form you hand out or send off has 'Derby Branch' written in the top right hand corner. This is because Nick Hawkins and the AO's will be presenting a pin of beer of our choice to the branch in the region that recruits the most by Christmas.

One other thing that we have received is a list of lapsed members in our area. We will be getting in touch with these to try to get them back into the campaign. There are one or two familiar names on this list, which may be due to the fact that if you renew on a membership application, rather than a renewal, form, the system does not always pick it up. On the other hand now may be the time for one or two people to get that £2 off to St Albans.

A Cautionary Tale

Four so-called Real Ale drinkers recently visited The Wheel Inn, Ashbourne. Their first mistake was to order Worthington E; this was dispensed from behind a handpump. Their second mistake was to compliment the landlord on his "Real Ale" which was their reason for drinking there; the landlord and locals were most impressed !

(Keith 'Raffles' Normington)

The Social Scene

CAMRAWAY RAIL ALE SPECIAL (Sat 18th Sept)

A full day's programme was in store for our coach load of 28 as we sped up the M1 towards Leeds. The Eagle, North St, saved from the demolition hammer by CAMRA Investments Ltd, was our first stop. It has a tastefully decorated bar and lounge and a welcoming bank of 5 handpumps; Timothy Taylor, Bateman, Old Peculier, and Sam Smith's Old Brewery Bitter and 4x mild. The graffiti in the Gents were amusing too. We also had time to sample handpumped Tetley's at two National Guide pubs nearby.

At 1.30pm our coach departed for Keighly railway station. There was a mad rush for the bogs but a few minutes later we were aboard the 2.50pm for Oxenhope. Not by pure co-incidence the buffet car serves handpumped Matthew Brown's bitter and (for the Camra-kazi members) Lees' Moonraker strong ale. A whistle from the guard and our train chugged out of the station with the smell of smoke and steam bringing back childhood memories. Those who insisted on looking out of open windows quickly retired with sooty faces on entering an unexpected tunnel. The train winds through the Yorkshire countryside and calls at Haworth, where there was a chance to look around the collection of old steam locomotives. Haworth is a long established literary shrine for its associations with the Bronte family, and Oakworth station, another stop, has been restored to period condition, and has become more recently famous as the stage for the film 'The Railway Children'.

By 3.30pm we had cleared the 9 gallons of Matthew Brown, and this was instantly replaced with Timothy Taylor's bitter. At this point Ron Beddoes reports that he is still upright. Back at Keighley we boarded our coach this time for the Kirklees branch beer exhibition at the town hall Batley.

Unfortunately palates were by now not all they might have been due to our day's imbibing, and tasting the 20 odd brews tended to be an arduous task as well as a strain on one's system. Ron Beddoes reported that he was still upright, though rather unsteady, and Eric Ashburner was woken for the second time by a St John's Ambulance man as he tried to take a nap in the corner.

At 9.30pm the exhibition closed and obviously we were ready for a drink. So many of us found the nearest Tetley's pub, the Bull, where John Kearney persuaded the landlord to turn the sparklet on one handpump down to produce a flat southerly head on the beer. It was again another very tiring but enjoyable day's outing, but again there was the problem of getting everyone back on the coach at the stated departure time. Perhaps an incentive is necessary like getting our coach operator to have handpumps fitted.

Anyway one highly anonymous member almost made this a vertical social, but after a requested emergency stop on the Borrowash by-pass was observed to fall horizontally into a hawthorne hedge. Better luck next time.

(Terry Morton)

ASHFORD IN THE W*T*R - JOINT BRANCH SOCIAL (Fri 24th Sept)

Encouragingly there were again 28 of our members and their guests supporting this coach trip to the Devonshire Arms. Inside we found the three bars buzzing with CAMRA members from Cheshire, Sheffield, and Nottingham, and more were to be found at the Bull's Head (another National Guide pub) across the road, where a great social atmosphere was beginning to build up as pints of excellent Robinson's slipped down a treat.

At 10.30pm back at the Devonshire in the upstairs room, things were really beginning

(The Social Scene - Contd.)

to liven up, as members (nearly 100 of them) from all the branches, clutching and sometimes spilling (Heaven forbid) their Stone's bitter, sang to their hearts content. Stuart Washbourne of Sheffield provided the backing on a four-stringed banjolale. Nottingham Branch stole the limelight with their excellent songs about Nottingham ale, but our Belper crowd did us proud with a few folk songs, which were also well applauded on the coach home.

All branches agreed that this was certainly a five star social, and I believe that there are plans to have one similar sometime in the future - mind that you don't miss out.

Overheard

Sheffield Branch Member "A stomach that size must have cost you some money."

Spyke Golding "If as much had been spent on your education, you'd be worth a bloody fortune."

(Terry Morton)

AND THE REST

The idea of late evening informal socials appears to have been a worthwhile one, and this month a good handful gathered in the highly attractive Malt Shovel at Spondon for a couple of pints and a chat to round off the evening. The idea is now being extended (see Derby Diary) with Tuesday night being social night. So come along and get to know your committee and fellow members, and, in particular why not bring along a prospective new member?

On the other hand, the turn out at the Horse and Jockey, Somercotes, to help get support for the Ripley/Heanor Area Sub-Committee, was dismal. The idea of producing 'Campaign for Real Apathy' badges for issue after such all-too-frequent disappointments, has however been dropped due to lack of support. But seriously, if Tim and Gill Burgess, and Mick Chambers are going to get this important venture going, they will need some support from existing branch members. It's not too late to help - see Derby Diary.

Worthy Work (in Wirksworth)

What were CAMRA members doing in a large tent in the middle of a field on a cold rainy night? You may well ask (we often did)! At the kind invitation of the local Licensed Victuallers Association the Derby Branch of CAMRA were helping at an event held in Wirksworth. This was a cricket match between the Derbyshire County Cricket Club and the LVA, the aim of which was to raise money for the club.

Why were we in the tent at night? Well, at the match there was going to be a beer tent in which the LVA were going to lay on some Sam Smith's Old Brewery Bitter if CAMRA could provide a squad to guard the beer over the two nights preceeding the event. Once the Beer Exhibition Sub-Committee were asked we readily agreed, as it would provide an opportunity to watch some experts running a beer tent.

The first night was not spent fighting off the hordes of vandals (or was it Goths) that were expected, but in preventing the beer tent from collapsing under the weight of the water settling on the roof. But apart from that and a fireworks display provided by some nearby telephone wires shorting out, the night was uneventful in the extreme. Therefore, after a breakfast of bacon and eggs kindly

(Worthy Works at Wirksworth - Contd.)

supplied by the landlord of the Red Lion, we departed to catch up on some lost sleep.

The second night was spent in the mouthwatering company of a roasting ox. This had to be done overnight to be ready to be sold at the match. The enormous coke fire over which it was being roasted provided a welcome haven from the cold night.

As day dawned it was obvious that it was not going to be ideal cricketing weather, but preparations carried on apace. When the match eventually started a fair size crowd had gathered despite the weather. It was good to see that a large number of CAMRA members had turned up to help drink the OBB (Thanks all).

In the end the event made about £400 for the Cricket Club, which, although not the sum hoped for by the organizers, was quite good considering the weather. I would like to thank the LVA for inviting us along to the event, and also those members who braved the elements to help stand guard over the beer.

(Mike Butler)

(It is good that we have been able to co-operate with a local branch of the LVA in this way, and I gather that they are pleased with our efforts. Many thanks are due to the Beer Exhibition Sub-Committee who put in a considerable amount of time and effort on our behalf - Tim Williams.)

Pub News

"He goes not out of his way, that goes to a good Inn" is a quotation aptly used in the letterheading of the Red Lion at Birchover (near Matlock). The visitor to this free house is now greeted with a large notice reading "Yes, real ale is back here". The real ale in question is handpumped Tetley's and it's the only example of this brew unpressurized in the branch area.

Paul Gibson reports that the pub, an ex-Mansfield house, is old and characterful, and caters for those who would like a snack as well, with sandwiches appetizingly prepared behind the bar. The beer, at 24p a pint, is apparently going down well with the locals, which must please the proprietor, who is a draught beer enthusiast himself, and who mourned the passing of cask-conditioned Mansfield.

While you are up in the area you might like to know that the Square and Compasses at Darley Bridge now has Robinson's Old Tom on gravity for the winter, and don't forget the Sam Smith's now on sale at the Compleat Angler at Wirksworth.

Back in Derby it's nice to hear that the Globe in Sacheverell Street is apparently no longer threatened by demolition. The area is to be re-developed with high density housing, and the pub will be altered and enlarged, but still retaining its handpumps. Good news too for cider drinkers - at the Golden Eagle, Agard Street, you can now get what Keith Normington describes as a 'rather smooth rough cider', Bulmer's West Country Dry, on draught without gas. Keith also reports that the landlady of the Lifeboat, Wilson Street (which is between Abbey St and Gerrard St, not as shown in our guide map) is pleased with an increase in trade, which she attributes to the guide.

This month's blot on the landscape is that the future of the Greenall Whitley at the Green Man and Blacks Head, Ashbourne, is under threat.

Who To Contact

BRANCH COMMITTEE : Tim Williams, Chairman, Derby 676027 (H) Derby 61461 Ext 3152 (W); Paul Gibson, Secretary, Guide Sales, M&B Subscriptions, Wayside, Main Road, Brailsford, Brailsford 365 (H); Nick Potter, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, 4 Eastleigh Drive, Mickleover, Derby 511355 (H); Terry Morton, Social Secretary, Derby 674025 (H); Dave Johnson, Pub Liason, Derby 61422 Ext 2405 (W); John Kearney, Publicity Secretary, 5 Ormskirk Drive, Spondon; Reg Newcombe, Beer Guide Secretary, Derby 45399 (H).

OTHER OFFICERS : Ian Grimshaw, C'man Belper Area S-C, Belper 3270 (H/W); Trevor Peacock, C'man Matlock Area S-C, 62 Dale Road, Matlock; Tim Burgess and Nick Chambers, C'men Ripley/Heanor Area S-C; Chris Gale, Historic Pubs Officer; Keith Normington, Raffles; Clive Moore, What's Brewing Sales; Jeff Fletcher, CAMRA Sales; John Broadbent, Handpump S-C, 8 Bloomfield St, Derby; Mike Butler, M&B Sub-Ed; Gill Burgess, Press Cuttings; John Griffiths, Beer Exhibition S-C C'man; Rog Robinson, Nott'm 865007 Ext 35 (W) and Eric Whitehouse, Derby 62974 (H), Notts/Derby New Letter Editors for Derby Branch.

Branch Meeting Agenda

1. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising
2. Branch News and Matters Arising
3. Social and Other Notices
4. Beer Break
5. Discussion and Any Other Business

Back to School

Temporarily subduing their thirst for ale to satisfy their thirst for knowledge, nine incorrigible Camrams climb to the top of Saint Helen's House every Tuesday night (on the inside, that is) to learn more about their favourite subject: **BEER**. The 24-weeks course which began on 28th September is organized by the Workers' Educational Association and the subject - History and Development of the local brewing industry - is ably presented by the amiable Maurice Lovett, whom some of us already know as the portly Public Relations Officer of Bass Worthington.

The course began with an elementary account of the way beer is brewed, dwelling more on the fact that barley, hops and yeast are much the same as ever than upon the recent changes in processing, storing, and serving so deplored by CAMRA members. But then, there are more in the class than members of CAMRA - among them the keeper of the new Brewery Museum at Bass Worthington (where the famous Burton Union System may one day be installed, beside mummified CAMRA members), and the official Company Historian of Marston's, accompanied by a rival PR man. With Maurice Lovett as much host as teacher, the whole thing looks very promising, with visits to the Maltings, a trad brewery (Bass Worthington) and a chosen pub or two - just so that it's not entirely theoretical.

After finishing time at 9.15 we adjourn to one of the nearby pubs to make a fitting end to the evening, where any other Camrams who do not go to school are warmly welcomed to join us. (See Derby Diary for venues).

(Reg Newcombe)

Derby Diary

Wednesday 20th October
SPECIAL MEETING

Local Beer Guide Post Publication Meeting, 8pm prompt at the Sir Robert Peel, Park Street. For Beer Guide S-C, Guide Sellers, etc. See page 2 for details.

Monday 25th October
CAMPAIGN SOCIAL

Meet 8pm in the Crown, Heanor, to help the Ripley/Heanor Area Sub-Committee attract local support. Everyone welcome - come along for a drink and a chat and help swell the numbers.

Saturday 30th October
MYSTERY COACH TRIP

Depart Derby Bus Station Excursion Platform at 5.30pm. The only information being divulged is that we are travelling about 40 miles in a direction we have not yet covered, calling at various pubs serving real ale. All welcome, 50p deposit to Terry Morton at meeting please.

Wednesday 3rd November

Committee Meeting. Sober Committee Members Only.

Thursday 11th November
BRANCH MEETING

The Meadows, New Cattle Market, Derby. (On Chequers Rd, which is off the Pentagon Island.) Starts 8pm, large room, Marston's Pedigree, bring your friends.

* REGULAR SOCIALS *

* Every Tuesday night a late evening informal social meeting up with the *
* members who attend the WEA course on the Brewing Industry. All welcome. *

* All Tuesday 19th Oct..... The Woodlark, Bridge St *
* from Tuesday 26th Oct..... Sitwell Tavern, Sitwell St *
* about Tuesday 2nd Nov St Helen's Inn, Duffield Rd *
* 9.15pm Tuesday 9th Nov Refreshment House, Curzon St *

* Every Sunday Lunch at 1.30pm members of the Belper and the Ripley/Heanor *
* Area Sub-Committees and others meet for a quiet (?) pint at the Coach and *
* Horses, Horsley (where there is now Old Roger on gravity) *

FUTURE EVENTS

Monday 15th November
BRANCH OFFICER'S MTG.

Special meeting for Branch Officers only to discuss branch problems and policy. Agenda at next branch mtg,

Monday 1st December
BREWERY VISIT

Afternoon trip to Marston's, fare £1, names to Terry Morton at this month's meeting, details next month.

Thursday 9th December
SPECIAL GENERAL MTG.

Replaces normal branch meeting and will determine the new branch constitution under CAMRA Ltd. Bring membership cards. Draft constitution to be circulated next (November) branch meeting.

Monday 20th December
CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

Note this date in your diaries now. Those who were at the last one will know that it will be an event not to be missed. This time we will have the Morris Men providing dancing and mumming, and there will be various other entertainments. More details next month when tickets will be on sale. All welcome, bring your mates.