

MILD & BITTER.

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DERBY BRANCH OF CAMRA



ISSUE 14

DECEMBER 1976

The Past Month

A most inopportune bank of fog descended on Derby just in time for the November Branch Meeting. The Meadows is not the easiest pub to find at the best of times, and on that night it was totally invisible from the road (so was the road). So many thanks to the 45 (and the dog) who managed to get to the meeting - presumably by means of some homing instinct. Thanks also to those who tried but got lost; we hope you eventually came across some suitable hostelry. Second disaster of the evening was that the heating in the Meadows had broken down, but there was consolation in that the Marston's Pedigree and No 5 mild, specially arranged to be straight from the cask for the meeting, were at a good temperature.

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On Monday 15th November there was a Branch Officers' Meeting. After some time on problems in individual Officer's and Sub-Committee's jobs, the discussion turned to Branch problems generally. Amongst those identified were: communication with members (a month between meetings is time for a lot to happen); apathy amongst members; lack of publicity in the press and other media to get the ordinary drinker better informed; and CAMRA's sometimes poor image with the public. As far as CAMRA nationally was concerned, the need was emphasized for an explanatory handout for all members explaining their role in the organization. It was also suggested that it was still too difficult for the average person to get in touch with CAMRA, and that there should be more local branch news in What's Brewing.

The Derby Branch seems to have taken little or no notice of CAMRA's Autumn Membership Drive. The figures up to 10/11/76 show that we have recruited two new members since the beginning of October. Loughborough, on the other hand, have recruited 14. Nick Hawkins, our RO, reporting these figures, says that it will be rather a sad reflection on our future as a campaign if there are branches who cannot recruit at least ten by Christmas. But we are a relatively big branch, and surely at least 30 of us can sign someone on. (Don't forget to put Derby Branch on the top right of all application forms you hand out or send off). One thing that seems to have gone badly wrong is the distribution of the enrollment posters to pubs by members. These were given out in October, but few seem to have gone up in pubs - will the culprits (and that word is not being used lightly) who have still got them lying around at home, please do what you agreed to do with them, or hand them back. CAMRA needs members badly.

The Notts & Derby Drinker was duly launched on Friday 12th November, and thanks to the help of members taking them away to sell to their mates and to deliver to allocated pubs, seems to have become an instant success. At the last

(The Past Month - Contd.)

* count there were just 20 of the 500 left (in reserve for the December Meeting). Some pubs who have asked to be supplied or for further copies, have had to be turned down. So if you have any unsold copies, please would you see Dave Johnson as soon as possible.

The Drinker made the headlines in the Derby Trader, which carried a large article on it, and the news it contained, on the front page. It was also featured in the Trader for other areas. It may also have been the trigger for the Radio Derby documentary on CAMRA (see next item). All most satisfactory.

The next Drinker should be out in January, and it's been decided that we should have 750 copies this time. The standard of presentation should be much improved, assuming we have help forthcoming for the Lettraset etc. Anyone with articles, drawings, or production help, please contact Rog Robinson; those who can help in the distribution to pubs, please see Dave Johnson.

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Those who listened to Radio Derby at 9.10am on Wednesday 8th December, or at 6.15pm on Thursday 9th, will have heard a 30 minute documentary on CAMRA and its local impact on the brewing industry. Unhappily, at the time of writing, I haven't heard it, so I'm not sure if it's been a disaster or a success, but it's certainly our biggest bit of publicity from Radio Derby yet. Our part of it was taped on Monday 22nd November, with Reg Newcombe, John Kearney, and myself meeting Nigel Kay in the Greyhound, Friargate, at 6pm. Our thanks to Radio Derby for their interest and the beer.

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On the same night as the interview there was an Allied Campaign Meeting in Loughborough. It was agreed that the main objective of the campaign - the preservation of Ind Coope (particularly) and Ansells ordinary real ales - still needed urgent persual, despite the introduction of Draught Burton Ale. (see p 2). The meeting welcomed the new beer, but would have preferred to see more of the average price and gravity real ales available from Allied. It was agreed to try to set up another meeting with Ansells, Leicester, early in the new year to pursue this point. In the meantime we will be keeping a close eye on the sales of DBA, and watching in particular for any signs of withdrawal of the ordinary Allied beers in real ale form. If you hear anything, please phone Tim Williams immediately.

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Sales of 'Good Beer In And Around Derby' have now reached around 5,500, leaving us with 1,500 unsold. Our stalwart band of sellers have now been officially released from their duties (if they so wish) except that of collecting the money from the pubs. (There have been complaints from several pubs that no-one has been back to collect the money). Many thanks to the sellers for their great efforts, which in some cases have resulted in sales of 50 or even 100 copies to individual pubs. We have now got four to six months to clear the remaining copies, so we need to keep sales going at a reasonably fast tick-over. Anyone who would like to take a few away to sell to their mates, or for Christmas presents, or who would like to go round to the pubs who could stand taking some more, but where the area salesman has retired, please see Paul Gibson. The cash side is not so good - there must be around £250 owed to the Branch, please ensure that Nick Potter gets what you owe by Christmas at the very latest, complete with receipts.

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YOU CAN HELP

Going For A Burton ?

CAMRA, as has been said often enough, is not particularly anxious to see new high gravity real ales. For good reason the campaign is more concerned about beer for the average drinker, to whom price counts, and who would like to enjoy a few pints in an evening without falling over.

Yet (and this is a personal view) we should not look the gift horse of Ind Coope DBA in the mouth, nor be over-concerned that it is some kind of Allied plot. First, the coming of real ale to around 10% of the Allied pubs in our area is a great step forward in terms of freedom of choice. Second, if the test market is a success, it will demonstrate to Allied that there is a demand for real ale, and this may pave the way for the re-introduction of more ordinary gravity real ales. One thing is certain - if DBA is not a success, there will be little chance of a further softening of Allied's attitude to traditionally served beers.

So I believe that we must individually do all we can to promote DBA by letting people know about it and where they can get it. Here we should mainly aim at the keg, or uncommitted, drinker, with the emphasis that this is not a typical real ale (if such a thing exists) but just one example, and one they can enjoy in the Allied style of pub.

Very limited evidence suggests that, in some pubs at least, the new beer is going very well, but in pubs where the landlord is not doing much to promote it, sales could be low. In these cases a few members quietly relishing a pint could stimulate demand amongst the locals (the British are always suspicious of something new unless it's advertised). The Branch Committee and Area Sub-Committees will be doing a comprehensive survey of all outlets over the next few weeks, but if you come across anything interesting in DBA pubs, let us know.

Two final points - there seems to be quite a variation at present in taste and condition of the beer. This is pretty inevitable in the early stages - so wait till the landlords get used to keeping it before coming to any firm conclusions on whether you like it. And on price, just compare the cost of DD in the same pub ! The pubs in our area having DBA are below - all should now be serving it.

Derby

The Broadway
The Friary Hotel
Great Northern, Junction Street
Osmaston Park Hotel
Panther, Littleover
Pear Tree Tavern
Prince of Wales, Spondon
Sir Robert Peel
Vernon Arms, Spondon
The Vine, Mickleover
The Vine, Abbey Street
Wardwick Tavern

Belper White Swan

Codnor The Clock

Heanor Nags Head

Melbourne Blue Bell

Ockbrook Queens Head

Repton Bulls Head

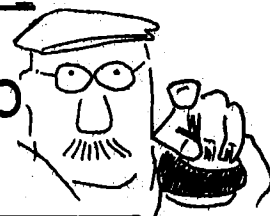
Shottle Railway

Turnditch Tiger

Wessington Horse and Jockey

West Hallam Newdigate

Stars Show Where YOU Can Help



Can CAMRA Survive ?

In its short life, CAMRA has apparently made great steps in the cause of traditional beer, so it might seem ludicrous to ask this sort of question. But it's now that we must look around us, and try to get things into perspective. There are several dangers threatening CAMRA's future, let us be aware of them.

1. The big brewers are far from being won over to traditional beer production. Witness Bass' predictions in 'Roundabout' - foreseeing real ale falling to 'about 4% of the market' in ten years. Some of them are attempting to jump on the 'real ale bandwagon', whilst their motives may be suspect. We must welcome such new brews as Ind Coope Burton Bitter and Watney's Fined Bitter, as being better than nothing, but what are the chances of the spread of these ales from their limited areas of sale, and of further cask-conditioned brews being introduced ?

2. A frighteningly vast number of people are still ignorant of the existence, aims, and activities of CAMRA; and even of the difference between real and keg beers. The average drinker is still our main line of attack - it's his money filling the Big Six's coffers, and it's only when he (or she - sorry girls) starts demanding real ale that they'll take notice.

3. There is far too much complacency amongst CAMRA members. Even worse, many are actively damaging our reputation, and our unity. Our attitude and behaviour in pubs is, to many drinkers and bar staff, their only contact with CAMRA. It doesn't help when members are abusive to landlords (of both good pubs and keg palaces), or when they act as if, by displaying CAMRA ties or shirts, they deserve some kind of special treatment. If you must go into a keg palace and refuse to drink the beer, at least be polite about it - the landlord will probably talk about it long after you've gone; if you get stropky you're not going to do the cause any good at all.

It's a sad fact that CAMRA has its fair share of moaners - those delightful people who, whilst unwilling to do much in the way of organizing things or helping out, are always the first to complain if dissatisfied.

So ask yourself - what are you doing to spread the word ? We're lucky to be in an area with a good selection of traditional beers, and active branches with hard working committees. It's good - but it could be better. Complacency and apathy can be fatal. If CAMRA is to survive, then we must not rest on our laurels. The battle is far from won.

(Rog Robinson)

Ripley & Heanor Report

Around a dozen of the hardier members of the Branch, braving the elements, ventured forth through the outback to Ripley and the Greyhound on Butterley Hill, where began this area's major event (and all the minor ones too) of the month.

After a pint or three of handpumped Worthington BB, on up to the Albion, an interesting Shippo's pub consisting of a front room with handpumps on the sideboard and Slim Whitman LP's at 78 rpm. Then a slight, but worthwhile, detour for some excellent handpumped Bass at the White Swan, which everyone managed to find this time. Continuing uphill via the Talbot (Shippo's again) we eventually reached the Sitwell, our final point of call where the bar was found to be propping up none other than Mr Stewart Argyle. The evening was concluded when a certain member of the R & H S-C proved that well known law of physics, by demonstrating the free-fall of a pint pot, that gravity always seems greater by the time you reach the top of a hill, especially when you've had a few.

Only three pubs with DBA in this area. Nags Head, Heanor at last visit hadn't received any owing to strike. Clock at Codnor: selling reasonably well. At the Newdigate at West Hallam the reception so far has been very enthusiastic both from the landlord who claims it has restored his interest in the job, and from the patrons. It is a busy pub with a large varied trade, and the initial rate of consumption in the first week of DBA was one kil (18 galls) per day.

Last but not least, our congratulations to Pat Dare, landlord of the Coach and Horses, Horsley on his No 3 child, also Marilyn, who did most of the work.

(Tim Burgess)

Belper Bulletin

Being a person of wit, charm and intelligence, you will have stopped skipping thro' M&B to read thoroughly this part of it. But do you know what an important literary find you have made? The following lines are a transcript of the legendary live beer scrolls, found inscribed on the sides of wooden beer barrels in ancient Offilers cellars exposed on the banks of the Derwent, when the unusual drought of '76 lowered those mighty and ancient waters.

Well actually this is all lies 'cause what you are really reading (if you've got this far, which I doubt) is the new improved Belper Area Sub-Committee news report. It just seems such a long time since we had one that we feel one must be written to stop everybody suffering withdrawal symptoms. (That is if you don't read it I'll withdraw your beer

(Here the transcript has been rudely interrupted by the editor who is having some small difficulty condensing a 1000 word contribution to the 300 words needed. The nub of the next three pages is that the Bullfinch in Belper (LBC) has lost its handpumps - maybe the property of the previous landlord - and the beer is suspected of being on top pressure. The Grapes in Belper now has a well-kept pint of Marston's No 5 mild, while the Coach and Horses Horsley now has four draught Marston's beers - Pedigree, Owd Roger, No 5 mild, and Burton Bitter.)

"..... All are of course kept in superb condition by that witty handsome and intelligent landlord, Pat Dare (and if I don't get a free pint for that, I give up) Oh yes while we're on about it, congratulations to Pat and Marilyn for recruiting a new member on Friday 26th 6.20pm. Mother and baby girl are doing well.

(The next two pages - or barrels - report that so far it seems that DBA is doing well in the area, and taking some customers away from DD, and that local guide sales, which have been fairly good, are now quiet with the loss of the summer tourist trade. A conversation with the landlord of the Cliff at Crich revealed that CAMRA officials have apparently talking to the Tramway Museum about real ale there, without the Branch knowing about it.)

"..... Any road up (quaint Derbyshire expression) that's about it other to mention a pub that we've recently discovered. It's called the Stanton Arms at Snelston, just outside Ashbourne to anyone who likes nice old village pubs run by nice old village people its a very nice pub to go to. Ask for Bass tho' as it is served by gravity from out back (?)....don't go in a great coachload as it is very quiet and if you go on a Sunday you Won't get a drink as it's a six day licence. And the thing above the door in the bar is a heart of oak.

So tune in next year on the same channel for another thrilling episode of the story of the Belper Area Sub-Comm.

(Ian Grimshaw)

Matlock Matters

Due to an editorial drop-off, the Matlock Area Sub-Committee were not asked to submit a report until it was too late to do so. However, Trevor Peacock reported the following by 'phone.

The situation concerning a new Chesterfield Branch is still unresolved, but Matlock are in touch with the Chesterfield people, and hope to have a meeting with them soon. In the meantime Matlock are in something of a limbo, not knowing whether in future they will fall in the Derby Branch area still or whether Chesterfield will actually get going. Nevertheless they are still pursuing Derby Branch interests though there is something of a shortage of members with a bit of time to spare.

Guide sales have gone very well in Matlock but, as elsewhere, have slackened off a lot recently.

November Branch Bulletin Summary

This was somewhat shorter than usual and dealt in the main with internal clerical matters. The Macclesfield and East Cheshire Branch are reported to have gained some good publicity through their having written articles on their activities. These were printed in no less than four local papers, obviously this medium helps to advertise the campaign and its aims and ideals.

Individual Brewery Liaison Officers are being designated for all breweries. The Derby Branch has been asked to handle Allied (Burton) and Reg Newcombe is the Liaison Officer designate. This is a National rather than a local appointment.

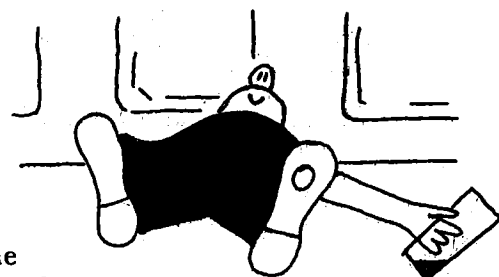
Judging by the outcome of a National Executive Meeting, cider will not feature in the 1977 Good Beer Guide, although the chairman hoped it might be included in the 1978 edition. It seems likely that a hardback version of next year's guide will be available to members. A working party has been set up to organize a national beer exhibition to be run over 4/5 days, at the Alexandra Palace in 1977.

(Paul Gibson)

Pub News

Apart from DBA coming to 22 Allied pubs (page 3) there's not a lot to report this month. The return of No 5 mild to the GRAPES, BELPER, and the loss of handpumped Bass at the BULLFINCH, BELPER, have already been noted on page 5. As you will have seen in the paper, Bass are threatening to sell the QUEEN'S HEAD, HILTON, and there are indications that the SIR FRANCIS BURDETT, MELBOURNE, may be the next to go. We ought to be involved in these closures, but time does not permit. Something else that we have not been able to do much about yet is the building of a Greenall Whitley and a Hardys and Hansons pub in Sinfin. Last month we reported that the ROSE AND CROWN, ZOUCHE and the HOPE AND ANCHOR, WANLIP (both outside our area) had Watneys Fined Bitter. This was a misunderstanding; both have been told they can have it, but neither has done so (so we are told).

The Social Scene



SOCIAL WITH BURTON, THE UNICORN, NEWTON SOLNEY.

Suprisingly there was a good turn-out of 16 from the Derby Branch for this social on the 24th November. The Burton Branch had arranged the evening for the purpose of defeating us at pub games. We held our own at crib and dommies, but where were our best dart throwers? We only won one game.. In all a very cosy social evening over a few pints of Bass.

(Terry Morton)

AND THE REST; The enjoyable Ripley pub crawl on Sat 20th is reported on page 4. Apart from that the Tuesday night informal socials visited a variety of pubs spread around the town, and a coach load of 30 paid a visit to Marston's. This will be reported next month.

Whom To Contact

BRANCH COMMITTEE: Tim Williams, Chairman, Derby 676027 (H), Derby 61461 Ext 3152 (W). Paul Gibson, Secretary, Wayside, Main Rd, Brailsford, Derbys, Brailsford 365 (H). Nick Potter, Treasurer, Membership Sec, 4 Eastleigh Drive, Mickleover, Derby, Derby 511355 (H). Terry Morton, Social Sec, Derby 674025 (H). Dave Johnson, Pub Liaison, Derby 61422 Ext 2405 (W). John Kearney, Publicity Sec, 5 Ormskirk Drive, Spondon. Reg Newcombe, Beer Guide Sec, 14 Vicarage Av, Derby, Derby 45399 (H).

OTHER OFFICERS: Ian Grimshaw, C'man Belper Area Sub-C'tee, Belper 3270 (H&W). Trevor Peacock, C'man Matlock AS-C, 62 Dale Rd, Matlock. Mick Chambers and Tim Burgess, C'men Ripley and Heanor AS-C. Chris Gale, Historic Pubs Officer. Keith Normington, Raffles. Jeff Fletcher, CAMRA Sales, John Broadbent, Handpump S-C C'man. Gill Burgess, Press Cuttings. John Griffiths, Beerex S-C C'man. Rog Robinson, The Drinker Derby Sub-Ed, Nottm 865007 Ext35 (W) 30 Harrington Av, Borrowash.

Keep Informed

Not all members have the time to play an active role in the running of the Branch, or to attend all meetings. But one thing everyone can do is to keep themselves informed about what's going on. Our friends who are non-members expect us to be knowledgeable about the local beer scene. Much as we would like to, we cannot afford

to send everyone a copy of Mild & Bitter each month, but it costs little for you to subscribe to it yourself - 30p for three and 50p for six issues. This money is not wasted when you attend meetings because you can cancel that month's edition by ticking a column on the signing-in sheet. To join our subscribers contact Paul Gibson (address above) or see him at the meeting.



Derby Diary

NON-MEMBERS ARE WELCOME AT ALL BRANCH SOCIALS AND MEETINGS EXCEPT AS SHOWN. ON COACH TRIPS NON-MEMBERS WILL BE SURCHARGED 20p (EXCEPT WIVES AND GIRLFRIENDS)

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| Tuesday 14th December
INFORMAL SOCIAL | From 9pm at the Alexandra, Siddals Rd, Derby. Handpumped Shippo's at the friendly birthplace of the Derby Branch. Finish your evening with us. |
| Wednesday 15th December
BURTON'S XMAS SOCIAL | The Angel, Swadlincote (Nat Beer Guide) 8.30pm. Burton have invited us along but would like to know numbers in advance. See Terry Morton. |
| Monday 20th December
CHRISTMAS SOCIAL | The Crown, Nottingham Rd, Spondon from 8pm. Some tickets left, 60p from Terry Morton. Undoubtedly the event of the decade - get there early not to miss the start of the star-studded entertainment. Buffet and late finish. |
| Monday 27th December
NOTT'S XMAS SOCIAL | At the Newmarket, Parliament St, Nottingham from 8pm. We don't know what's happening, but you could contact Dave Dickens - Nott'm 872821. |
| Tuesday 4th January | Committee Meeting (C'tee only) |
| Thursday 13th January
BRANCH MEETING | The Victoria, Cowley St, Derby, 8pm. Gravity Bass specially arranged for this evening. |
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| Thursday 27th January
BREWERY TRIP | Afternoon visit to Davenports, Birmingham, followed by evening round the Black Country, including Doris Pardoe's. Book now with Terry Morton to avoid disappointment. |
| Wednesday 9th February | Branch Meeting (Provisional) |
| Thursday 17th March | Branch AGM (Provisional) |
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| Every Sunday 1.30pm
INFORMAL SOCIAL | The Coach and Horses Horsley. Four Marston's ales. |

December Branch Meeting Agenda

1. Introduction to Special General Meeting
2. Appointment of Tellers
3. Adoption of New Branch Constitution
4. Appro[] of Branch Subscription Rate
5. Closur[] of Special General Meeting
6. Beer Break
7. Minutes of Last Branch Meeting and Matters Arising
8. Branch Notices and Matters Arising
9. Any Other Business.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION (TO DRAFT VERSION AVAILABLE AT MEETING)

1. Delete line 2 and insert "the name shall be 'The Derby Branch' "
2. Add at end of line 7 "Derbyshire, south of a line between Hartington and Bolsover, excluding the areas west of a line between Mayfield and Hatton and south of a line between Clay Mills and Calke."