

The Past Year

INTRODUCTION

The past year has been, to use a traditional phrase, one of steady progress. There have been three main highlights: first, the sale of over 5,500 copies of the widely praised 'Real Ale In And Around Derby'; second, the launch of 'The Notts And Derby Drinker'; and third, the re-introduction of real ale into about 25 Allied Breweries pubs in our area.

These, and other, successes are described below in this Annual Report. So too are some of the Branch's failures. Now is the time to stand back and look carefully at what we are doing, and to decide how best we can further the Campaign in the new year ahead.

THE LOCAL BEER GUIDE

The first print of 5,000 copies of 'Real Ale In And Around Derby' went on sale in August last year. It was an instant success, justifying the vast amount of time, thought, and effort, that had gone into compiling it, making it an attractive looking publication, and devising means of selling it in large numbers. Many thanks are due to the Good Beer Guide Sub-Committee and to the members who between them lent £400 to help finance it.

Within a month a reprint of 2000 had been ordered. In retrospect this looked to be a slightly hasty move, since we still have around 1,200 copies left. But, with only three or four hundred more sales, we will reach the point of retaining maximum profit on the original 5,000, and breaking even on the reprint. The rest will be pure profit.

The guide was not, however, particularly intended as a means of making money; it was to get people interested in beer, and drinking the right stuff. We have no 'before and after' figures, but the guide does appear to have made some impact, and we have had pubs specifically telling us that it has significantly raised their sales.

Many thanks must go to the pubs, wholesale newsagents, and bookshops, who have had the confidence in us to stock guides for sale to the public. No less than ten pubs, some quite far from Derby, have sold over 50. (See also p.7). Many thanks must also go to members who have sold copies privately, or distributed them to pubs for resale. (See also p.7)

The guide has been a success, but there are failures associated with it. First, there have been one or two public complaints from landlords not included in the guide, that no-one ever visited their pubs. This was

not true, but it is an understandable, if unfortunate, complaint, since surveying was done anonymously. Second, sales could have been even better. There was a significant decrease in members' enthusiasm to help sell the guide after the first couple of months, and we were never able to get enough volunteers to distribute to pubs and bookshops in all parts of our area. Naturally, public demand did drop after the first few months, but even now we are still getting approaches from sales outlets for more copies. The market is not yet dead, but we have few people still trying to exploit it.

THE DRINKER

'The Notts and Derby Drinker' is of course a joint venture with the Nottingham Branch. The project is still in its infancy, but it is hoped that it will prove an invaluable means of keeping the ordinary drinking public aware of what is happening locally and nationally as far as beer and pubs are concerned. Such information is ill-covered in the press.

So far things are going well. The first edition (November/December) had sales of 450 in our area, the second (January/February) is now over the 500 mark. It is reckoned that the sales potential is considerably greater than this, and we should be able to reach several thousand pub customers in the course of a year.

The editorial committee have great plans for enlarging and further improving the Drinker; whether this will be possible will depend entirely on the help of members, both in supplying articles and other material, and in helping with sales distribution to get the circulation up.

THE PUB SCENE

The main event of the year has been the current test-market of Ind Coope DBA in 26 of our pubs. This represents a marked about-turn on the part of Allied Breweries, and although we cannot claim it as a Branch success specifically, we have helped to create the right conditions for Allied to make this move.

The long-term future of DBA in this area is not, however, assured. We know that it has been going very well in some pubs, but in others sales have not been good enough. Its high price is a major factor in this, but at least some of the blame must be placed on lack of Branch support. One sad example is the Wilmot at Chaddesden (a reasonably smart pub) where the manager reports that very few CAMRA-type new customers have come to try it. Only a few months ago it was suggested that the Branch try to do something about the Chaddesden real ale desert, now it seems that Chaddesden members have lost their chance to have some improvement, since the Wilmot has not been selling enough DBA to make it viable.

It is not suggested that members can single-handedly sustain a real ale pub, but a few extra people going in, asking for DBA, and being seen to enjoy a few pints of it, might just have provided that extra stimulus to get the locals drinking it. This is the sort of simple way in which all members can help.

Apart from DBA, the pub scene has been relatively static. As far as is known, we have gained four real ale outlets, and lost three. This is not particularly inspiring, but there are grounds for hope that the tide may be gradually turning back to real ale. Of the three lost pubs, only one is a genuine permanent conversion to keg, one was a closure, and the other is a temporary change, we hope. In addition, a number of pubs have successfully introduced a second, third, or even forth. real ale, and there are hopes for one or two new real ale pubs in the near future.

Our contact with pubs and relationship with landlords have considerably improved over the year. Our sales of our local guide and of the Drinker, via pubs, and the large number of socials, have been particularly helpful in this respect. However we are still getting too much of the news of pub changes via the local press, rather than via members. A lot of information must be escaping our attention altogether.

To try to improve this problem, and to try to take some of the load of pub visiting away from the small handful involved at present, the Committee have been working on a pub contact scheme, in which many more members can get involved without needing to devote too much time to it. It is planned that such a scheme be the subject of a major branch debate in April.

MEETINGS AND SOCIALS

With 12 Branch Meetings (including two outside Derby) and around 60 social events, it can scarcely be said to have been a quiet year. The highlight for many must have been the Christmas Social at the Crown, Spondon, which attracted a total of 130 people, a Branch record.

But for those who prefer coach trips, there were 12 to choose from. Four went to breweries, three to Beer Exhibitions, four went to joint branch social evenings, and one had a look round the Black Country. These trips managed to pull in two CAMRA Investments Ltd pubs, the Keithley and Worth Valley steam and real ale railway, and the Black Country for the second time.

Nearer home there were 15 social events in towns and villages north, south, east, and west, of Derby; five of them were just outside our area in the company of our neighbouring branches. At Horsley there was the regular Sunday lunchtime do, and in Derby itself 23 events. Most of these were the weekly Tuesday evening informal socials started in October. These have grown in popularity, and have proved invaluable as an informal means of exchanging news and views between members, and very pleasant occasions to boot.

Socials are where the fun is, but they also act as a sort of living advert for CAMRA, with members happily and responsibly enjoying the right stuff - far more convincing than those pseudo pub scenes in the TV ads. They also provide the means of meeting the people that matter most - the public and the landlord - and of showing the latter our support.

Perhaps there is one small way in which future socials could be improved, the occasional appearance of some of those members who don't normally get to them. The more the merrier

PUBLICITY

We have not done too badly this year for CAMRA publicity in the local press, with about 15 to 20 mentions in all. Some of these were generated by our own press releases, some came from other sources, known and unknown. We are indebted to one or two individual members for taking opportunities suddenly presented to them to give us a bit of a plug. The publication of our beer guide, and the launch of the Drinker, created the best coverage of all, without friends in the Derby Evening Telegraph and the Trader giving us a good splash, and quite a lot of coverage elsewhere.

On a slightly different aspect, it has been good to see a few pubs beginning to use reference to real ale in their advertising.

However, things have not been as good as they might have been, perhaps because we have not had, or not generated, enough earth-shattering stories,

perhaps because we have not done enough in preparing press releases (a chore which brings infrequent reward). In any event it seems that the Telegraph is more prepared to print a snippet about the Allestree Ladies Conservative Coffee Club, rather than a snippet about our last Branch Meeting.

We have spent quite a lot of money in advertising in the press, but the present Committee's view is that this, in retrospect, has probably not been particularly cost-effective.

On the radio side we get Radio Derby's free advertising for meetings in their events diary, and had an interview as a result of the publication of the beer guide. The major event, however, was a half hour documentary on CAMRA and the local brewing industry.

MEMBERSHIP

Things have not been as good as they might have been on the membership front. At the beginning of the year we had an average attendance of about 50, at the end of the year we are still at about this level. We have not done too well on recruitment either, with only 12 new members recruited to CAMRA in the three months of the Autumn Recruitment Drive. One significant change during the year was that the new Branch Constitution now allows us to recruit Branch Members.

A feature of the static attendance figures is that, although we seem to be attracting new faces, many of the older ones seem to have fallen by the wayside. This is in line with the very poor renewal rate for CAMRA subscriptions, a phenomenon that has been one of the main causes of CAMRA's present financial problems.

While the 'hard-core' of active branch members has undoubtedly grown over the year (we now have more Sub-Committees and Branch Officers doing Campaign work than ever before) the Committee seemed to have failed to motivate the bulk of the membership into any firm commitment to the Campaign. One symptom of this malaise is that so far only 15 members have considered it worthwhile to spend 30p to receive Mild & Bitter by post when they cannot get to Branch Meetings, and thus keep in touch with Branch affairs.

It is not to be expected that every member will wish to get actively involved in Campaigning tasks, but it has been very much an uphill struggle over the year to get the various jobs done. The new Committee must provide the extra motivation to get more members involved, with this the Branch will be able to start tackling the tasks left undone this year. It may be that a pub contact scheme, as mentioned above, will be one of the things that will help.

SUB-COMMITTEE AND BRANCH OFFICERS' ACTIVITIES

The Branch's ability to get things done was ^{however} improved over the year by the gain of three new Sub-Committees, and three further Branch Officers. They, and the previously existing S-C's and Branch Officers have been invaluable in taking work away from the Committee, enabling more to be done. Their activities are briefly summarized below, except for the work of the Good Beer Guide Sub-Committee, which has already been featured in this report.

We gained one new Area Sub-Committee this year, Ripley and Heanor, but this, as the other two (Belper and Matlock), suffered mixed fortunes. The small nucleus of each has done a tremendous amount of work in surveying pubs for the guide, selling guides and Drinkers, and keeping an eye on local pub changes. However the problem has been that they have not been able to recruit more active help to carry out the Campaigning activities in their areas.

It had been hoped that we could build up a complete set of what would effectively be Sub-Branches in our area, each with a large and active hard-core of members. In retrospect this seems over-ambitious, as the relatively small areas involved do not contain sufficient population to make it likely that sufficient keenly committed members can be found to form an extended group.

The Beer Exhibition Sub-Committee have had a bit of an uphill struggle of late. Their major success was to co-operate with the Wirksworth LVA in running a beer tent at a charity cricket match. Without them it would have been a keg only do. Since then they have laid plans and made contacts, but the fruit of this work remains to be harvested,

The Handpump Sub-Committee has been a much more informal group, and has of necessity concentrated on the repair and restoration side of the business. This includes the renovation of the handpumps for the Derby Museum Pub Project. Very recently however, John Broadbent's labours have been rewarded by the acquisition of a set of three handpumps at a very reasonable price. These will now be restored, and a good home will eventually be found for them.

Our five other Branch Officers have been carrying out a variety of tasks from looking after our historic pubs interests to helping raise money at Branch Meetings. Some of this work involves rather more mundane chores, but nonetheless very important. Specific acknowledgements are given on page 7.

OTHER BUSINESS

It is worth recording some of the other things which went on during the year. On the national front we have of course helped compile the CAMRA Good Beer Guide, and we have participated in the Pubs Gained and Lost survey, and the Prices Survey. Reg Newcombe was appointed National Liaison Officer for Ind Coope, Burton.

Nearer home we participated in the East Midlands Allied Campaign, and members helped in the Nottingham Branch Beer Exhibition. We also helped swell the numbers at the abortive sounding-out meeting for a Chesterfield Branch.

We gave a talk on beer to the Derby 18+ Club, and help to individuals involved in two separate Derby Tech projects on the brewing industry, and answered numerous written and telephoned enquiries about CAMRA, beer and other matters. We wrote to breweries, pubs and individuals expressing concern, thanks, or best wishes, on beer related topics. But still there is a lot that we could have done, but never managed to get round to it.

FINANCES

With our new constitution, our financial year now ends on the 31st December. The account below is therefore for the ten months 1.3.76 to 31.12.76. The comparative figures for 1975 to 1976 from our last Annual Report are for a twelve month period, care should therefore be taken when comparing them.

The figures given under the Annual Account for the first two months of this year, are given for information purposes only and are not constitutionally part of the annual account. They do however serve to show that the local beer guide surplus will eventually be quite healthy, and that our current balance is good.

The Annual Account itself shows that the rise in our expenditure has not been matched by a sufficient rise in income. In this context it has been the current Committee's view that surplusses made on major projects like the local beer guide should not be used to subsidise general expenses (contd. on p 7)

Income and Expenditure Account 1.3.76 to 31.12.76

<u>INCOME</u>			<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
			<u>SALES ACCOUNT</u>		
	£.p	('75/'76)		£.p	('75/'76)
Total sales income	203.71	(249.61)	(120) National GBG	120.00	(137.50)
			Other GBG's	25.39	(11.04)
			(600) What's Brew'g	30.00	(27.50)
			Lapel Badges	7.50	(20.00)
			Other	--	(1.00)
			Sales surplus	20.82	(52.57)
	<u>203.71</u>	<u>(249.61)</u>		<u>203.71</u>	<u>(249.61)</u>

LOCAL BEER GUIDE ACCOUNT

Loans from members	400.00	Loans repaid	400.00
Sales income to date	568.91	Guide printing	385.00
Advertising revenue	70.00	Posters	28.00
		Guide reprint	190.00
		Guide surplus	35.91
	<u>1038.91</u>		<u>1038.91</u>

CONSOLIDATED INCOME & EXPENDITURE

Opening Bank Balance	122.95	(49.22)	Advertising	23.53	(58.15)
(10) Meeting levies	52.90	(52.70)	Duplicating machine	--	(5.00)
Raffles (nett)	24.69	(39.94)	Duplic m/c repairs	45.02	(--)
Donations	5.00	(3.25)	Duplic m/c matls.	19.43	(35.01)
Socials (nett)	0.50	(9.45)	Stationery & printing	70.97	(8.18)
Sales surplus	20.82	(52.57)	Postage & telephone	43.15	(--)
Local guide surplus	35.91	(--)	Regional conference	15.00	(--)
Donations for advts.	--	(21.16)		<u>217.10</u>	<u>(106.34)</u>
Other	--	(1.00)			
	<u>262.77</u>	<u>(229.29)</u>	Closing balance	45.67	(122.95)
				<u>262.77</u>	<u>(229.29)</u>

NOTES

1. At 31.12.76 we had £22.65 worth of guides (not incl Derby) in stock.
2. Due to difficulty in cost allocation, stationery and postage for the local guide is included in the general expenses.
3. Duplicating machine materials consist of inks, solutions, master sheets, etc, but not paper.

Account to 28.2.77 (for information only)

Opening balance	45.67	N & D Drinker No 1	54.80
Social surplus 1967	23.00		
Meeting levies (2)	9.61		
Raffles (2) nett	9.30		
Total sales income	173.65	Current balance	206.43
	<u>261.23</u>		<u>261.23</u>

but be retained to help fund future projects, which in turn should aim to make a surplus. Thus the funds available to back beer exhibitions, future guides, etc, should build up, with surplusses going into national funds.

On the income side we lost out to a certain extent compared with last year from not distributing the National GBG to pubs ourselves. CAMRA did this directly, and we sold only 120, compared with 250 the year before. This coming year the system has reverted to branches distributing guides. Other sources of income have shown little change.

As far as expenditure is concerned, we did cut down on advertising (but did not collect voluntary donations for advertising either), otherwise costs have gone up in all departments. The duplicator repairs were regarded as an investment as the machine gives us tremendous scope for producing our own material very cheaply. Over the last year we have produced very approximately 10,000 A4 size sheets, mostly printed both sides, at a cost of about 0.6p per sheet, including the cost of the paper, which is the main item. Commercial rates for runs of 150 double-sided (about our typical run) would be at least double this, even assuming we cut our own stencils. Net saving for year about £50, alternatively less printed matter issued. Postage costs have also been high, but a good part of this is explained by circulars put out in connection with the beer guide, and to lapsed members as part of the recruitment drive.

Next year some means of redressing the general account operating deficit will have to be found. One possibility is to increase the Meeting Levy, which has remained at 10p throughout the Branch's three year existence.

CONCLUSIONS

CAMRA has shown that people who care for traditional beer, and are prepared to fight for it can succeed, even in the face of massive opposed commercial interests. Without CAMRA traditional beer would be doomed, and without active branch support, CAMRA would itself fade away.

Our job is to support the Campaign and to promote traditional beer. Over the last year we have done our bit, but we cannot yet afford to relax our vigilance or effort. King Canute believed that he could turn the tide merely by sitting on his backside in the way of it; he would have been better advised to start building an embankment.

Our own embankment against the tide of keg is still weak; an evening spent now helping CAMRA is far preferable to an evening spent 10 years hence with nothing to drink but keg.

Quote of the year: "Total [all brewers] 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." - a Bass Charrington report, published a few months ago.

Many Thanks

The Branch owes many thanks to a large number of individuals and organizations, who have given us their help and support over the year. There's not space to name them all, but the list includes breweries, press and radio, printers, and of course many scores of pubs, who have welcomed us for socials and meetings, and helped sell our products. Particular mention should go to Barbara Gibbons, Landlady of the Exeter Arms, Derby, who has sold 100 local

beer guides. We don't at present know of any pub that has sold more, but the Black's Head at Wirksworth and the Bull's Head at Breaston are not far behind with about 80 copies sold apiece.

Many thanks also to the large number of our own members, who have attended meetings and socials, given information, produced ideas, surveyed pubs, sold our various products, etc, etc. On local guide sales, special mention should go to the following:

Tim Burgess and the Ripley and Heanor AS-C, with over 350 sales.
Chas Gee with over 300 sales, the best individual pub sales effort.
Trevor Peacock and Matlock AS-C with over 250 sales.
Chris Gale, over 250 sales.
Ian Grimshaw and Belper AS-C, around 200 sales.
Clive Moore, Mike Butler, John Broadbent, and Hector Heathcote (who achieved the best private sales) each with over 80. Both John and Mike have more in the pipeline we understand.

Finally, our thanks are due to the various Sub-Committees and Branch Officers:

Ian Grimshaw and the Belper AS-C, who also helped make the Christmas Social a night not to be forgotten.
Trevor Peacock and the Matlock AS-C who have kept our interests going in the furthest reach of our Branch's area.
Tim Burgess and Mick Chambers and the Ripley and Heanor AS-C who have patrolled the Codnor Triangle, where few members dare venture.
The Beer Guide Sub-Committee, whose good works are in print.
John Griffiths and the Beer Exhibition S-C, for Wirksworth and future plans.
John Broadbent and the Handpump S-C, for hard work now bringing reward.
Chris Gale for keeping our interests in Historic Pubs alive.
Keith Normington, whose raffles have raised over £30.
Jeff Fletcher who has brought in over £20 on the sales of guides etc.
Gill Burgess who has amassed a library of press cuttings.
Rog Robinson who has edited and solicited Derby contributions for the Drinker
Clive Moore who sold Whats Brewing while we did so.

Apologies to anyone we forgot to mention in all the above.

Committee Nominations

The following nominations to positions on the Branch Committee for 1977 to 1978 had been received by 11.3.77. Further nominations may be accepted up till the time that the Branch AGM starts, but not thereafter. The names of proposers and seconders are given in brackets.

Chairman

Tim Williams (Reg Newcombe, Dave Johnson)

Secretary

Rog Robinson (Terry Morton, Reg Newcombe)

Treasurer

Nick Potter (Terry Morton, Dave Johnson)

Other Committee Members

Terry Morton (Tim Williams, Reg Newcombe)
Dave Johnson (Terry Morton, Tim Williams)
Reg Newcombe (Dave Johnson, Tim Williams)
Sam Kenny (Steve Wigley, Rob Gilvary)

Branch Meeting Agenda

A. BRANCH NOTICES

B. DERBY BRANCH OF CAMRA 3rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. Minutes of the 2nd AGM held on 11.3.76 and matters arising.
2. Committee annual report and matters arising.
3. Area Organizers report.
4. Annual accounts and appointment of auditors.
5. Branch subscription and meeting levy for 1977 to 1978.
6. Election of committee.
7. Beer break.
8. Any other business.

Other News

There is a severe lack of space in this month's M&B for the normal reports and news. However we can just squeeze in one or two items. The QUEEN'S HEAD, LITTLE EATON is reported to be back on handpumps for a limited trial period. Branch members have donated £41 to CAMRA funds: part from the collection box, and part from surplus on the Davenports trip. On the social front, about 20 members took time off to attend and participate in the Ashbourne Shrovetide Football match, and confirmed that Greenall Whitley is back at the GREEN MAN AND BLACK'S HEAD. Only six members however turned up for the excellent pub crawl around Castle Donnington. Reports from the February and March Branch Bulletins will have to be deferred, but it is worth noting that the Feb edition featured the Make May a Mild Month Campaign - we would like your ideas please. The national AGM in Blackpool was attended by about a dozen of our members.

Contacts

BRANCH COMMITTEE: Tim Williams, Chairman, Derby 676027 (H), Derby 61461 Ext 3152 (W). *Paul Gibson, Secretary, Wayside, Main Rd, Brailsford, Derby, 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 Sec, Derby 61422 Ext 2405 (W). *John Kearney, Publicity Sec, Reg Newcombe, Beer Guide Sec, 14 Vicarage Av, Derby, Derby 45399 (H).

* Retiring from committee.

OTHER OFFICERS (PARTIAL LIST): Ian Grimshaw, C'man Belper AS-C, Belper 3270 (H/W), Trevor Peacock, C'man Matlock AS-C, 62 Dale Rd, Matlock. Tim Burgess & Mick Chambers, C'man Ripley & Heanor AS-C, Derby 880656 (H) & Belper 5160 (H). Rog Robinson, Derby Branch Editor for Notts & Derby Drinker, 30 Harrington Av, Borrowash, Derby, Nott'm 865007 Ext 35 (W).

Derby Diary

Thursday 31st March
SOCIAL EVENING

Calling all darts throwers. A social evening at the Coach and Horses, Horseley, where we will take on the locals. If you can't play come along anyway for a choice of four draught Marston's ales. 8pm.

Sun & Mon 10 & 11 April
BEER EXHIBITION

Loughborough Steam Trust & CAMRA beer exhibition; see April What's Brewing for details.

Thursday 14th April
BRANCH MEETING

Help start the Branch's new year by coming along. Bridge Inn, Shelton Lock, Derby (No 60 bus from Market Place every 15 mins - back 22.30, 22.40, & 23.00) Meeting starts 8pm.

REGULAR SOCIALS THIS MONTH

EVERY TUESDAY an informal social starting about 9.15pm.

Tues 22 March	Duke of Clarence, Mansfield Rd. Kimberley.
Tues 29 March	Lord Napier, Milton St. Handpumped Bass.
Tues 5 April	Wardwick Tavern, Wardwick. Help support DBA.
Tues 12 April	Vine, Mickleover, Ansells Bitter and DBA.

EVERY SUNDAY LUNCH
informal social, 1.30
at the Coach & Horses
Horsley.

FUTURE EVENTS

Saturday 23rd April
COACH TRIP TO WIRKSWORTH

Wednesday 27th April
TALK ON HOME BREWING

Date to be finalized
EVENING VISIT TO BASS

MILD & BITTER

Edited by Tim Williams, new heading and cartoon opposite by Bob Gilvary. Contributions welcomed from all members. Deadline for next edition is Thursday 31st March. Available on subscription 30p for three and 50p for six editions. See Paul Gibson for details. No copy sent when subscriber attends branch meeting and tick appropriate column on levy sheet. Extra edition then credited.

