

DERBY Drinker

KEEPING YOU INFORMED ABOUT YOUR BEER



No. 3

JUNE/JULY 1983

FREE

Prince of Wales charity aces!

DRINKER COMMENT

PROFITING FROM CLOSURE

THE recession in the brewing industry has hit national combine Bass so hard they have been able to announce profits only 45% up on previous figures.

The massive leap was announced for the 28 weeks to April 9 and surprised the brewery themselves.

National observers put the tremendous success down to cost-cutting programmes, and noted that Bass price increases had been held below inflation level in the said period.

Cost cutting programmes include the closure of a large number of "unprofitable" pubs in areas where there are lots of pubs - this, it could be argued, without making any real attempt to make the pubs profitable.

The Derby area has not seen many examples of this policy in action. There have been several examples in Burton on Trent itself. The premises now occupied by the Burton Bridge Brewery in Bridge Street, Burton, used to belong

to Bass, who closed down the Fox and Goose pub there. That the potential for profit existed is now being proved, emphatically, by the new owners.

In Loughborough, once again, not far away, the brewery closed down a pub which was so unpopular its locals had only managed to raise some £3,000 for charity inside a year. The reason given: simply that there were too many Bass pubs in the vicinity.

As for beer prices: one reason Bass have not had to put them up too much recently is that they were already ahead of other breweries serving beers of similar strength. They are now falling somewhat back into line and claiming to hold prices.

It is appreciated that the company must be viable - but at the customer's expense?

Derby Drinker is determined to be fair on the issue - and if Bass would like to put their side of the story, we'll be happy to print it, in the next issue's Point of View column.

SPONDON'S Prince of Wales pub is selling the Derby Drinker - for charity. The Drinker is free - but every 5p or more handed over for it at the Prince of Wales goes into the pub's phenomenal charity fund.

Guide Dogs for the Blind, Multiple Sclerosis, the Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Appeal and Derbyshire Royal Infirmary are among these good causes to benefit from the efforts of the Prince regulars.

Their latest efforts are aimed at helping the newly-formed Derby and District Cancer Relief fund based at the Derwent Hospital.

The pub's second fancy dress three-legged sponsored walk will be held on Sunday July 10 in the early evening. As Derby Drinker went to press the event had been announced

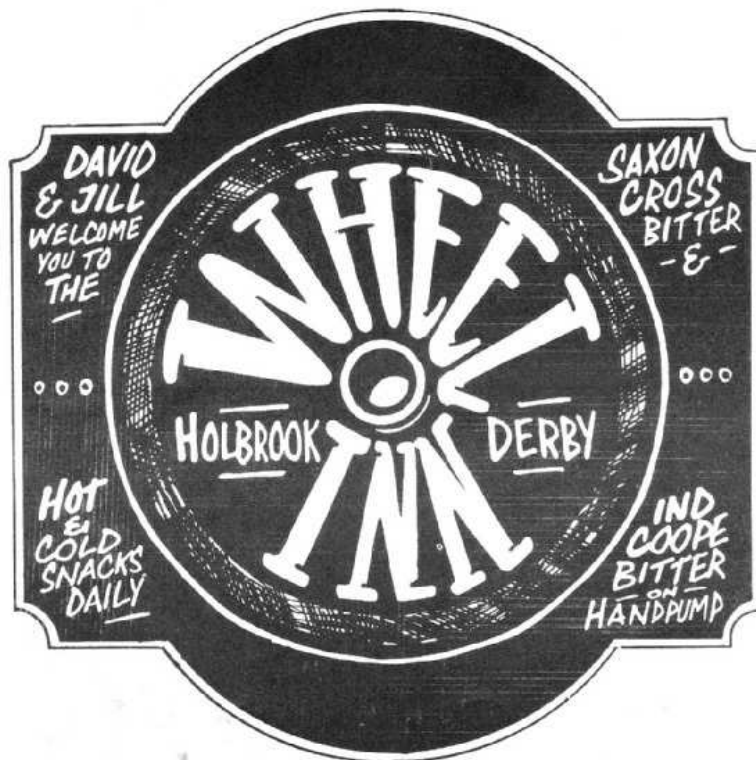
for a week - and had attracted 100 walkers, with 200 - 300 expected.

The man behind the pub's charity work is Mike Staniforth, son of landlord Patrick. Mike's been working behind the bar for four years and is keen to promote the pub as a centre for community activities.

"A pub is the ideal place to raise money for charity without having to pester people," he says. "The Prince of Wales is a very busy pub, and everyone seems to want to join in."

Charity events last year included sponsored walks, a fun football match, carol singing and stocks at Christmas, in which two locals had all sorts of nasty things thrown at them to raise cash.

This Ind Coupe pub - with two real ales - shows exactly how a village pub can be the centre of the community. As such, it's an example to all pubs!



**BEER FESTIVAL
PREVIEW: PAGE 4**

Drinkers' dream ...

IVOR CLISSOLD AT BREWEX '83

THE last week in April saw the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham hosting the International Brewing, Bottling and Allied Trades Exhibition - more conveniently known as Brewex.

It used to be a brewer's only convention, but hard times have forced a tie-up with the packaging people to keep the event going. This has worked - the last two events have generated much interest and the event is now three-yearly rather than four yearly.

Exhibiting at the NEC is a costly business and tends to be a hospitality/PR exercise with little expectation of instant sales. After all a brewer who needs a new bottling machine hardly expects to plod around the shops - the reps will beat a path to his door soon enough.

When it comes to brewery plant, Britain is not in the race. Just about every firm still in business is Germanic - even the ones with British sounding names. Robert Morton at Burton on Trent is an exception.

Demand for bottled beer, or lack of it, thinned the exhibitors ranks a lot this year, with canning firms from the continent and America stepping into the gaps.

The most interesting part of any Brewex of course is the beer and lager competitions. A record 881 entries this year took up over an acre of double-tiered casks and racks of crates.

How the panel of 36 judges got

through the lot amazes me. But each of them were members of the Brewers' Guild, so who is to doubt their judgement or indeed their capacity?

Surprisingly missing from the prize-winners this time was Timothy Taylor's, who usually win everything. Of course things can go wrong and perhaps even now a dray of Taylor's joy juice is negotiating an M1 contra-flow system, Birmingham bound. Here are some of the winners in the British cask-conditioned beers section anyway.

The supreme champion was Thwaites Bitter, with Theakston's XB the runner-up.

Pale ale, or bitter, was judged in three strength categories based on original gravity: 1030 - 1037 - 1st Thwaites, 2nd Moorhouses, 3rd Shipstones. 1038 - 1043 - 1st George's (Courage, Bristol), 2nd Home, 3rd Wadsworth. 1044 - 1054 - 1st Theakston's XB, 2nd Arkell's Kingsdown, 3rd Eldridge Pope Royal Oak. Mild - 1st Border, 2nd Julia Hanson, 3rd Highgate (Bass).

Six of those (Thwaites, Moorhouses, Shipstones, Home, Theakston's and Highgate) are likely to be available for second opinions at the Derby Beer Festival this month.

On the bottled lager front, having got over the gassiness, I was very impressed with most of the eastern European entries, especially some from Bulgaria.

None of these won awards though. But when you're next in the Indian Ocean, watch out for Mauritius Breweries Ltd's knockout lager.

Anyone interested in fixing up a coach trip...

COUNTY OF BEERS

DISCERNING drinkers passing through Matlock Bath invariably look for County and Station free house, where the only thing that's certain about the beers is that there will be lots of them and they'll be pretty good.

The latest list of beers at the pub is: Ward's Best Bitter, Marston's Pedigree, Winkle's Saxon Cross Bitter, Ruddles County, Theakston's Old Peculier and Burton Bridge Country Porter.

John Thompson's beers from Ingleby,

and Home bitter are among those that have previously been served at the pub. Don't take the above list as an absolute guarantee of availability - but rest assured a good pint is available!

A TRIP out towards Ashbourne should be well rewarded if you visit the Shire Horse at Wyaston.

The pub is now reported to be selling Ruddles County, Theakston's Old Peculier and Marston's Pedigree, all on handpump. A driver is not, however, advised to try all three ...

REV

BY ROB



Point of view

THIS ISSUE

COLSTON CRAWFORD ON
CONFUSION AT THE BAR

GETTING YOUR DRAUGHT!

OLD habits die hard, they say, and the adage certainly seems to apply to some of those licensees and their barstaff for whom traditional cask conditioned beer is something new.

Such has been the growth in popularity of real ale over the last couple of years or so that many pubs and landlords are serving cask beer for the first time.

In such pubs the difficulty of explaining that you want the beer from the handpump is annoying and frustrating.

If you are not being served by an enlightened member of the barstaffing profession in a pub which offers both keg and traditional beer the chances are they make straight for the keg when you ask simply for a pint of bitter.

It helps little to ask for a pint of draught bitter. Logically this request should send the bar staff directly to the nearest handpump. Usually they make straight for the keg - again.

A request for traditional ale, or real ale, meanwhile, is likely to bring a look of distaste from

the average barperson, wondering why anyone should question the reality of all the pub's wares.

So the only remaining answer for the real ale drinker in these circumstances is to ask for the "one from the handpump."

The biggest irony of all this, at a time when the average landlord is complaining about falling profits, is that making straight for the keg pump when someone asks for bitter is blatantly uneconomic.

It may be far easier for the weary (or lazy) barman or barmaid to press the button on the keg pump and see the fizzy stuff ooze obligingly into the glass, devoid of life, but it is putting the profits at risk.

Traditional cask conditioned bitter, once the cask is started, will last about a week. Keg beer will last much longer.

So if, when an unsuspecting customer asks just for bitter, the policy is to pull it from the handpump unless asked otherwise, it stands to reason that the beer which MUST be sold fastest will be. Little matter if little keg is sold in an evening -

it'll still be in the same condition in a month.

We have surely passed the time when breweries might instruct licensees to serve keg whenever possible to try to prove a lack of demand for real ale - so why are so many of those pubs serving real ale for the first time seemingly so unenlightened?

By far the most sensible policy, of course, is to ask the customer who requests bitter which bitter he wants. I know of one pub at least where that happens. There should be more.

AN ALLIED topic (no pun intended?) is the annoying number of cases in which an advertised traditional beer is not available.

Ind Coope East Midlands ran into trouble when they began putting real ale, on handpump, into most of their Derby pubs last year. The advertising chaps rushed out smashing full page ads with pictures of local landlords next to their brand new handpumps.

Yet in several cases the men fitting the handpumps couldn't keep up and visitors in search

of real ale were disappointed. Often the handpump itself wasn't there, because the photographer had taken along a false one just for the sake of the picture!

But now they've got the beer into their pubs it is starting to disappear all too often from some when the licensee finds he can't keep it properly.

In cases where the licensee had never served traditional beer before, there has to be some sympathy from the man in the street. The conclusion has to be that the brewery hadn't issued sufficient instructions.

It is only fair to point out that in the majority of cases licensees adjusted to the change comfortably - but the exceptions give the brand, the pub, real ale in general and the brewery in particular a bad name.

The breweries must realise that it is simply not good enough to put in a handpump, deliver the casks and turn round to say: there you are, we do favour traditional beer.

They must also ensure that those licensees who haven't served real ale before are taught just how different it is to keg...

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Beer Festival Special

MORE BREWS AT SIXTH DERBY EVENT

ORGANISERS of the sixth Derby Beer Festival, the second to be held in the Assembly Rooms, were aware of the need to find something new or different this time round.

There is little that can be done to a formula which has been so successful - such is the nature of a beer festival. Whatever the costs and problems it still comes down to setting up the beer and letting people drink it.

The answer is - more brews! There were 34 different brews last year, and the average has been something like 32 - 35 beers every year so far!

This year it's hoped the selection will total over 40. Many of the favourites of previous festivals, including the locally brewed beers, will be available, and this year's selected area for "foreign" beers is in the north west of England.

Mitchell's, Yates and Jackson, Webster's are just a few of the names you won't have seen at a Derby Beer Festival before.

Another change in format is the opening of the festival - there's now an extra evening, Wednesday, when the festival will be officially opened, as ever, by the Mayor of Derby.

Also making history is the fact that a female Mayor will be opening the festival for the first time - Councillor Mrs Margaret Wood. Mrs Wood has been involved before, of course, as Mayoress to Bob Newton in 1980.

The last lady Mayor, Flo Tunnicliffe, actually missed out on opening a beer festival, because the time was moved to later in the year. Flo was invited to the opening performed by Norman Glenn anyway.

Each year a brewery is invited to preside over the opening, and Everard's are this year's choice. The organisers found popular approval in the choice, in view of the great efforts Everard's have made in recent years to reintroduce real ale into so many of their pubs.

Whether or not TV personality Bill Maynard, who advertises the Brewery's Old Original ale on TV, will be able to attend the opening was not known as this issue of Derby Drinker went to press.

There's another festival first on the entertainment scene, with twin town Osnabruck's Dark Town Jazz Men coming over for a gig - and hopefully bringing some beer along.

After Wednesday evening, the festival will be open morning and evening on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. As ever, there will be a commemorative glass and souvenir programme. Watch out for further details in the local press - and a full review in the next Derby Drinker.

WHETHER or not there would have been a Derby Beer Festival at all had it not been for the granting of city status for Derby in 1978 is a matter for speculation.

For the first Derby Beer Festival was organised by the Derby branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, as just one of the many events celebrating the city charter in the Queen's Silver Jubilee year.

So successful was that first beer festival that the format has changed little since, even with the necessary move to a new venue last year.

Fingers were safely uncrossed at the end of the first King's Hall festival as it became clear that just about the right amount of beer had been ordered.

A second festival was a must and the King's Hall was re-booked as soon as possible. With the possible exception of the toilet facilities it was an ideal venue - a solid step either side of the hall to rest casks on, a large stage at one end and a floor capable of swallowing up any amount of spillage.

Fears that the first event's success may not be repeated proved unfounded. This time so many people turned up that the queuing problem became a major consideration. But there was little that could be done - the King's Hall's fire limits couldn't be exceeded and the organisers had to let people in only when others left.

Visitors may not have realised that they were always being counted on the way in - another of the unglamorous, inconspicuous jobs performed voluntarily by CAMRA members.

Inside the hall things were going very smoothly - the blueprint provided by the first year was being followed closely, although more beer was being provided, and there were conscious attempts to build up a certain "feel" to the event through the entertainment. So there was brass and jazz and pub piano and folk - and then the rousing Oompah band on the last night.

After the fourth Derby Beer Festival came what appeared to be the bad news. The King's Hall was needed as a baths the year round and a new venue had to be found. At one stage there was a serious shortlist of about six venues, but in the end the Assembly Rooms was the inevitable choice.

It posed problems - particularly in that the carpeted floor had to be adequately protected from the inevitable spillage, something which was achieved by humping the King's Hall's wooden floor to the Assembly Rooms and adding layers of absorbent material.

Now the forced move looks like a blessing in disguise. The queue problem is virtually eradicated by the larger venue, which was never too full for comfort last year, the fifth festival. More beer again, too. More sideshows and more music, better toilets and easier food facilities.

It seems likely there would have been a Derby Beer Festival before long with or without the charter celebrations of 1978 - many smaller branches of CAMRA around Britain manage to put on beer festivals.

But it doesn't really matter now how the event was started - it's here to stay!

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Presenting ...

EVEN in the darkest days of traditional beer, the late sixties and early seventies, when so many pubs had gone over to keg beer, Derbyshire was something of a haven for the traditional beer drinker.

There was always Marston's of course, keeping people with real taste buds happy, and a handful of other breweries and individual pubs still serving cask conditioned beer in the traditional way.

It was in the early seventies when the Campaign for Real Ale was formed - and within a couple of years they had come up with the National Good Beer Guide, an annual publication which celebrated its tenth anniversary last year.

The 6,000 pub guide has become a best-selling bible for the traveller who likes his pint - and it's a very good pub indeed that has been in all ten issues.

Over the last couple of months the Derby branch of CAMRA has been presenting framed certificates to the four pubs in the area which have made it into all ten guides - the first of these presentations was featured in the last Derby Drinker, to the Exeter Arms in the city.

Three of the pictures on this page show Derby CAMRA chairman Mike Meara making the presentations to the present licensees at the Durham Ox, Ilkeston (Ward's beers), Olde Gate, Brassington (Marston's) and the Tiger, Long Eaton (also Marston's).

The fourth picture, below left, shows a different presentation, purely a local one, being made to the licensee of the Holly Bush, the popular Makeney free house. This is Derby CAMRA's own occasional award, to a "Pub of Exceptional Merit." One was previously made to the Alexandra Hotel, Siddalls Road, Derby.



• DURHAM OX, ILKESTON



• OLDEGATE, BRASSINGTON



• HOLLY BUSH, MAKENEY



• TIGER, LONG EATON

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE TINGLE

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PUB SPOTLIGHT BLACK BOY, HEAGE

THE Black Boy Inn at Heage looks set for a new lease of life under ambitious licensees Richard and Lynne Taylor.

The couple moved in with their three children, Rebecca (5½), Mark (2) and Lisa (5½ months) just over three months ago and they're really getting things moving.

Both have come from a career in hospital catering - Richard was catering manager at the City Hospital, Derby, for six years, but it is Lynne who is supervising the important catering aspect of the operation at the Black Boy.

Richard and Lynne say the pub gives them the best of both worlds - career-wise it's a challenge, and they're going wholeheartedly into it, but as they are able to live at their place of work, they are also able to spend much more time with the children than would be possible in their previous line of work.

The first thing Richard did on arrival was to ask the brewery, Whitbread, if he could serve real ale, and they obliged. His Castle Eden ale is pulled from the hand-pump with care and pride.

Richard took a two year Brewers Society training course and gets a lot of "job satisfaction" from looking after the beer.

"It takes more looking after than keg beer - but it's worth it," he said. And he enjoys drinking it himself, always a good sign.

There's no way Richard and Lynne will turn the Black Boy into a restaurant - but they are working hard on the catering side. Lynne serves up a comprehensive range of

hot and cold foods lunchtime and evening.

The menu has proved so successful they've had to take on extra help in the kitchen - something they didn't dream of at first. And Lynne reckons they could serve anything from one to 50 people if the need arose.

Back in the bar things are as traditional as ever, with strong darts and dominoes teams, male and female. Richard and Lynne both play themselves.

Carpets may be added in the bar; the lounge meanwhile remains cosily separate.

Another aspect of this large pub Richard hopes to develop is the upstairs function room, which is available for hire and may soon have a full-scale entertainments licence.

Such is the couple's enterprise and determination to see the Black Boy succeed that they have issued no less than 3,500 leaflets to tell people what the pub has to offer.



LYNNE and Richard Taylor in the pub garden with their children.



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DERBY Drinker

No 3

JUNE/JULY

1983

PUB WITH MORE BEERS THAN MOST

LANDLORD NORMAN'S HEARD THIS
AND ALL THE OTHER JOKES ...



• NORMAN and Janet Beer with "small Beers" Cheryl (11) and Michelle (17).

BEFORE you crack any of the obvious jokes about Norman Beer's name - bear in mind that he's almost certainly heard them already.

Not surprisingly, after seven years as licensee of the New Inn, Derby Road, Heanor, a pub which used to have a Beer Only licence, mild-mannered Mr Beer has just about heard them all.

Not that he's bitter - after years of telling the locals to

"pull the other one" he reckons they might just be running out of pint-sized wisecracks.

If indeed all the jokes have been tapped, Norman's got his customers over a barrel.

Had enough? All that remains is not to tell you which brewery supplies Mr Beer's pub. Suffice to say he feels quite at Home at the New Inn...

More brews from Burton Bridge

THE independent Burton Bridge Brewery continues to go from strength to strength.

At various times four beers are being brewed on the premises - the now well-known locally Bridge Bitter, the Festival strong ale, a Country Porter and a mild called Harvester.

The Country Porter first appeared as a special brew for a beer exhibition held at the Blessington Carriage pub in Derby and it has since been available at the brewery.

So has Harvester, which brewer Bruce Wilkinson is loath to call a mild. But then, mild has never been the most popular drink in Burton on Trent.

It is hoped all four ales will be available for sampling at the sixth Derby Beer Festival in July.

Last year, at the fifth festival, Burton Bridge was a new name and only small quantities (quickly supped up) were available. Hopefully there will be more this time.

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