

# DERBY Drinker

KEEPING YOU INFORMED ABOUT YOUR BEER



No. 4

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1983

FREE

## DRINKER COMMENT

IN DRINKER COMMENT it will be this news sheet's intention to ask pertinent, constructive questions of the breweries and their methods.

There is all too little consultation of customers, particularly by the big brewers before decisions which affect every pub goer are taken. If this column elicits a reaction from the breweries questioned, then at least there is some form of communication between brewer and customer - for we will be more than happy to print replies from brewers.

We have done this in this issue. Last time out we attacked Bass over the issues of profits and pub closures - the reply from Mr Maurice Lovett, the brewery's public relations officer, is printed in full as this issue's Page Three Point of View.

This time we have a few questions for Ind Coope, a brewery which has embarked on an admirable policy of installing traditional cask conditioned beer into many of its pubs. Unfortunately there are several areas in which the policy has fallen down - and there is an alarmingly high turnover rate among Ind Coope licensees in Derby.

Perhaps the most frustrating point for drinkers aiming to try out newly-installed real ale in many Ind Coope pubs (a move encouraged by the current Golden Trail promotion) is that several which have appeared in the extensive advertising campaign have not actually had the beer put in. In some cases they are still waiting for their handpumps or their beer literally months after the advertisement has appeared.

As the advertisements appear only weekly at most, would it not be possible for Ind Coope to ensure that pubs featured were actually selling the product advertised?

This is a matter the Derby branch of CAMRA has taken up with the Advertising Standards Authority.

It appears that the brewery's installers of pumps suddenly (perhaps understandably) cannot keep up with the enthusiasm of the advertising campaign.

It also appears, even more unfortunately, that a few Ind Coope landlords can't keep up with the situation either. Whilst it is necessary to stress that the vast majority of pubs serve a perfectly adequate pint of traditional beer, it is also true to say that a few pubs either serve it in poor condition, or not at all.

Several pubs, advertised in the current Ind Coope campaign, began to serve the beer - then had to take it off, in some cases because of trouble with keeping the beer cool in the cellar.

The question for the brewery here is: why were some pubs which were ill-prepared to serve the beer given it to serve? And if it's argued that they were adequately prepared, why is the beer in some pubs no longer?

Our final straight question to the brewery is about their rating policy for tenants. What is the brewery's explanation for increases of well over 100% (this in at least one widely reported case) to some tenants?

Derby Drinker knows of around a dozen Ind Coope landlords who are considering leaving their pubs as a result of rent increases. For that and possibly other reasons there have been at least six changes in Ind Coope licensee in the city of Derby in the last two months - examples are the Melbourne Bar, Norman-ton Road, Duke of York, Burton Road, White Horse, Morledge, Wardwick Tavern, Drill Hall Vaults, Newland Street, and Ye Old Spa Inn, Abbey Street.

## Festival success

AS THE sixth Derby Beer Festival faded away into just nicely blurred memories, the organisers, the Derby branch of CAMRA, were left to reflect that this was the year, perhaps more than any previously, when everything went perfectly smoothly.

Without being complacent, CAMRA members are now able to claim that they have the running of the local festival virtually off pat.

After a successful four years at the King's Hall, last year's first visit to the Assembly Rooms was also a huge success. Which meant that 1983, to a certain extent, was the crunch year. The Assembly Rooms had to prove itself as more than just of novelty value.

By all the accounts the proof was there. There were more beers, at times more people, and unsurpassed good naturedness. The Assembly Rooms has been accepted by the drinkers of Derby as the home of their annual festival.

In all 9,017 people passed through the doors to drink all but three of the 106 barrels, although three and a half barrels also had to go back to their breweries as undrinkable.

The pattern this year was for quieter lunchtimes and busier evening sessions - unfortunately leading to one or two queues outside the great hall. On Friday night a remarkable all time best 1,750 people passed through the hall, a figure that would not have been possible at the King's Hall. Overall, 300 more people visited the Assembly Rooms this year than did last.

Early visitors heard a plea for more flexible licensing hours from Mr Nick Raven who opened the festival on behalf of Everard's Brewery - he and the Mayor of Derby, Councillor Mrs Margaret Wood, then signed CAMRA's petition for flexible hours. By the end of the festival their names had been joined by those of 4,112 other people.

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STEP BACK IN TIME TO THE

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— INN —

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**AUGUST Bank Holiday weekend saw another small beer festival at the independent Burton Bridge Brewery in Bridge Street, Burton on Trent.**

In a small, cobbled outhouse at the end of the brewery yard, visitors could sample 14 different ales from all over the country.

Famous brews like Fuller's London Pride, Greene King Abbot Ale, Hook Norton Old Hookey and the inevitable Theakston's Old Peculier were among them.

Holden's, Archer's and Chudley's Lords Ale from Maida Vale are less widely known. Chudley's in fact comes from a brewery set up only a short time before Burton Bridge itself.

Burton Bridge brewer Bruce Wilkinson explained that the event had not been too widely publicised because there would have been problems if vast numbers of people had turned up. As it was people who had been to the brewery bar during the few weeks preceding would have known about the forthcoming treat.

Revellers enjoyed a barbecue on the Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday nights of the festival.

Theakston's Old Peculier still holds a peculiar hold over the drinking public - although there was more of it than anything else it sold out more quickly, followed by McMullen's and Archer's.

Mr Wilkinson pronounced the event a success (which he intended to repeat) but did admit that some beer was likely to be left over.

## TETLEY'S IN DERBY

TETLEY'S Bitter, that great bastion of the north, has made a welcome appearance in Derby, at last, at the Wardwick Tavern in the Wardwick.

Tetley's lines up with Ind Coope Bitter, Ansell's Mild and Draught Burton Ale, all served through handpumps.

The Wardwick has recently undergone a transformation inside - and for once, most visitors are agreed, the designers have done a smashing job, knocking up a really traditional looking spit and sawdust bar, although the somewhat trendy clientele and the bouncer on the door don't exactly reflect that image.

## DUKE OF CHANGES

THE DUKE of York, the large, imposing building on Burton Road, Derby, has gone through a bewildering number of licensees in recent times - but new tenant Ronnie Knight appears to be ready to give the pub some stability.

Ronnie, who has previously run two pubs, including one at Buxton, has seen the brewery, Ind Coope, help out with decorations and renovations throughout - from the cellar to the upstairs function room.

A pub with very distinct and separate bar and lounge, the Duke of York will almost certainly be providing some live entertainment by the time this issue of the Derby Drinker is in the pubs.

## QUICK HALVES

### EVERARD'S FULL HOUSE

EVERARD'S, the Leicester based brewers with a brewery in Burton upon Trent, were selling all four of their traditional cask conditioned beers in their four Derby area pubs as this issue of DD went to press.

It's that commitment to real ale which led to CAMRA asking Everard's to open this year's Derby Beer Festival.

The four beers in question are Burton Mild, Beacon and Tiger bitters (of which Beacon is the lighter, less strong) and Old Original the fairly strong ale advertised by Bill Maynard on TV.

The four local pubs serving them are the Honeycomb, Mickleover, William Caxton and Ferrers Arms, Sinfen and the Shakespeare, Repton.

## MILD AT DOUBLE !

SOME landlords will tell you they can't get hold of a certain beer because the brewery is reluctant to supply it.

A bouquet then for Ind Coope who responded quickly when Colin Priestley at the Jolly Colliers in Heanor told them he actually had a local demand for Ansell's Mild - demand for mild not being the most common thing a landlord will hear.

Colin is now serving a splendid pint of mild next to his splendid Ind Coope bitter - both on handpump, says our reporter.

## REV

## BY ROB





# Point of view

## WE NEED A PROFIT

OH DEAR, oh dear! Once again, we have the "shame" of making a profit rearing its head. Do all CAMRA members really work for non-profit making organisations?

Profits are important to us both to guarantee security for our

employees (well over 60,000 at the last count) and to allow for real investment, particularly in our pubs.

Most of the savings have in fact come from more efficiency and cost cutting within our brewing and distribution operations, but we feel

that greater efficiency in our company has a benefit, particularly long term.

We do occasionally sell off pubs, not necessarily because they are unprofitable, but where we do have a number of houses within the same tight area.

In most cases, they are sold licensed, so we can hardly be accused of limiting choice! And to relate the sale of Burton's Fox and Goose to the current profit announcement is a tortuous journalistic line - the Fox and Goose was sold in 1980 so it has taken a long time to filter through! In any case, has not CAMRA's own pub offshoot sold some of its own houses in the past - is this a case of "don't do as we do, do as we say?"

Overall, our current trade investment in the Midlands area alone is over £10-million (that's in one year) and most of that is going into our pubs - proof surely that we believe that the future backbone of our business is the pub!

As to prices: industry research figures show that our prices are below the average taking all the breweries operating in the Midlands area - hardly justification for claims that they are already ahead of other brewers.

Is it really that the "comment" is politically motivated and was based on the fact that we had made a profit?!

Surely the days when profits were considered a dirty word are past - after all - a company that makes a profit is one that will continue to invest, spending money with local companies, creating employment and still paying its employees a dividend.

Perhaps CAMRA should remember that we have no fewer than four breweries in the Midlands area, all brewing traditional beer, with around 50% of their total output in this category and traditional beers are sold in over 75% of our houses.

How many of our competitors can claim the same?

### THIS ISSUE

**BASS PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER MR MAURICE LOVETT REPLIES TO ISSUE THREE'S PAGE 1 COMMENT ABOUT THE WAY THE BREWERY ARRIVES AT A PROFIT**

### TRY AN ADVERT

**LICENSEES** - an advertisement in Derby Drinker can boost your takings.

We expect Derby Drinker to take a firm hold as a bright, snappy, informative FREE read for pub-goers in and around Derby.

With a single advert on the front and back pages and no more than two to a page inside there's bound to be a big demand. You can discuss details with Keith Normington, 4 Nearwood Drive, Oakwood, Derby (tel: Derby 832392).

**FEEL STRONGLY ABOUT SOMETHING? WE'LL PRINT IT IN "POINT OF VIEW" IF YOU'LL PUT YOUR NAME TO IT. WRITE TO: POINT OF VIEW, DERBY DRINKER, 1 LOWER ELEY STREET, DERBY.**

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## NO FREEDOM FOR LICENSEES FROM THE TIE

**NEW EEC regulations regarding "exclusive purchasing arrangements" - that includes the tied-pub system in Britain - have carefully avoided drastic changes to the old systems.**

The EEC report concludes that a tied system means better distribution, more competition and helps small and medium sized companies.

How the tied system helps the small independent brewer with no pubs of its own in which to sell its wares is not explained.

In all the brewers are seen to retain virtually the same grip over their licensees that they've always had.

A glimmer of hope for those who would like to see more choice and variety in pubs does show itself in the rather ambiguous wording of part of the regulation, however.

Not surprisingly, in spite of CAMRA representations to the EEC, the wording does not differentiate between traditional and non-traditional beers.

Under the new legislation tied licensees can't sell products from another company "which are of the same type as the beers... supplied under the agreement."

"Same type" is defined as

"those which are not clearly distinguishable in view of their composition, appearance and taste."

And there is the possible ambiguity - for not only the Campaign for Real Ale, but many brewers and licensees too will agree that a keg beer is distinctly different to a traditional beer in "composition, appearance and taste."

So, in theory, a licensee whose brewery supplied no real ale could go to another brewery to get some if he so wished. An attempt to do so could result in a courtroom "test case."

The Brewers Society is quite happy with the EEC findings, which, they say, have vindicated the tied house system and "endorsed the principle of the tie."

The National Union of Licensed Victuallers are less happy, with one leading observer offering the opinion that the EEC had bowed to political pressure from the brewers.

And the Campaign for Real Ale's national chairman, Tony Millns, called the findings "a wasted opportunity."

A loosening of the tie would have resulted in increased competition, reduced prices and a wider choice, he argued.

Existing tied arrangements will not be affected until January 1989. New arrangements made from January 1 1984 will have to apply the new regulations.

## LOCAL CAMRA DIARY

TUESDAY SOCIALS, 9.15 pm, all welcome: September 20, Hope and Anchor, Wirksworth; September 27 Woodlark, Bridge Street, Derby.

COACH TRIP: Saturday October 1 - crawl of classic North Derbyshire pubs (fully booked.)

BEER FESTIVAL: Burton on Trent, September 22 - 24.

Pat Meara, 61 Borrowash Road, Spondon (Derby 663332) has details.

## BEERS CALL TIME AT THE NEW INN



• NORMAN and Janet Beer

**THE recession has claimed lots of victims, not least in the licensed trade - and the unfortunate tale told by the Beer family, who are to leave the New Inn at Heanor, is just one of many.**

The Beers (featured in light-hearted vein in the last issue of Derby Drinker) have decided to throw in the towel as overheads have finally become too much to cope with.

Norman and Janet Beer took over the New Inn in 1975 when it had, ironically, a beer-only license - and very little else.

Bit by bit they have built up a loyal clientele and added to the character of the pub.

But Norman had to retain a full time job as well as running the pub to make ends meet.

And finally, when a full modernisation programme had been completed the Beers discovered to their horror that they couldn't afford to pay the bill.

"We had no idea it was going to cost as much - frankly we just can't afford to pay," said Janet.

She figured the rates and electricity, gas and water bills would also be going up - and the couple decided they'd gone through enough.

### Hector is a drink!

DERBY County supporters visiting Dorset will be unable to resist sampling a new beer called Hector's Bitter.

The brew has been produced by Dorset company Hall and Woodhouse, neither of whom ever played for the Rams.

And the company has denied rumours that it will be producing an Old Ale called Gemmill...

### Burton Ale!

DATES for the fourth Burton on Trent Beer Festival, organised by the Burton branch of CAMRA, have been set at Thursday September 22 - Saturday September 24.

As in previous years, the event will be held at Burton Town Hall and there will be lunchtime and evening sessions.

## Ind Coope Golden Trail is a winner

DEDICATED drinkers in the East Midlands are busily trying out the Ind Coope Golden Trail promotion.

If the Golden Trail is still unknown to you, here's a quick description: "Passports" are available in most Ind Coope tied houses in the East Midlands.

Each contain spaces for up to fifty pubs - plus a list of the several hundred pubs taking part in the promotion. Visiting any one of these earns a stamp in one of your spaces. After 20 pubs have been visited the passport can be sent off in exchange for a free Ind Coope Golden Trail tee-shirt. Complete 50 and Ind Coope will send you a tankard and a tee-shirt.

The idea is not a new one - but is probably the first of its kind held specifically in the East Midlands. Some smaller breweries with far flung pubs have launched very ambitious schemes in which holidays are available to drinkers who go to ALL of the brewery's pubs. In at least one case this has cost the brewery a considerable amount of money, as they misjudged the determination of the participants.

But Ind Coope seem to have got it just right. Theirs is a trail which requires the collector to go just a little out of his way to get the 50 up - but it remains a bit of fun, rather than a chore or a rip-off.

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JOHN & BARBARA WELCOME YOU TO THE

# EXETER ARMS

EXETER PLACE, DERBY

## MARSTONS BEERS

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