

# Derby Drinker

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ISSUE No. 19

SPRING '87

FREE



## Derby's Cheapest Pint?

The cheapest pint we discovered in our recent prices survey (see page 2) was at The William Caxton in Sunnyhill, an Everard's house. Bitter at 70p a pint and 68p for mild ensure a healthy turnover for landlord Derek Hopper, who has been behind the bar of the Caxton for 15 months, having previously run a free house in Margate.

Derek is firm in his view that keen prices attract more customers and, to ram this home even further, he offers bitter and mild at 64p and 62p respectively on Wednesday and Saturday lunchtimes.

Regular entertainment also helps boost the popularity of this otherwise unremarkable estate pub (which, to be frank, has an exterior like an industrial unit!) but this belies its comfortable interior and Derek's policy of getting to know his regulars certainly pays off. He is justly proud of the quality of his ale, which includes Sam Smith's Old Brewery Bitter at 78p, as well as the three Everard's beers.

Talking to us, Derek said that he judges his prices by the customers' reaction and has even refused to pass on a brewery price increase in the past, because he felt the timing wasn't right. His main worry at present, as it must be for many Derby landlords, is this year's rates increase, which will push his annual bill up by around £600.

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MICKLEOVER

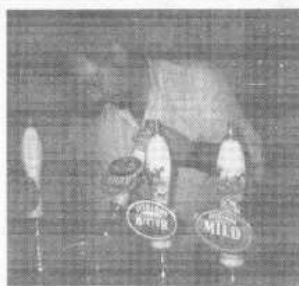
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## LOCALS MOVE TO REAL HOME

Home Ales of Nottingham have said there will be no price increase until May at the earliest. Spokesman, John Crofts, said that there is a possibility of the annual price review moving from November to May in line with their new parent company, Scottish and Newcastle but that prices in Home's managed houses were likely to remain the cheapest locally as a new managed house price list, without increases, was currently being printed.

Mr Crofts went on to deny there was a danger of Home Ales losing their identity as it was S&N's policy to retain regional identity. Apollo, Home's soft drinks subsidiary, for example, would continue to supply all their pubs and there could be a bonus for drinkers with other S&N beers becoming available locally.



Derek Hopper pulling one of the cheapest pints in Derby.

It's certainly refreshing, in more ways than one, to meet a landlord like Derek. More power to his pint-pulling elbow, say we and let us hope that others will follow his example in a time of declining pub attendances and beer sales.

The sting in the tail is that whilst many tenants are paying a Registered Fair Rent those paying less are likely to be faced with rent increases. One Home tenant told DERBY DRINKER that "many well established tenants are paying a low rent as this has been the brewery's long established method of keeping prices low." As the buying in price of Home Bitter is only 4.5 pence less than Bass, lovers of Home Bitter could find themselves paying 4 or 5 pence more for their favourite tipple in the near future. (See PRICES, Page 2).

Mr Crofts also stated that there was no policy to replace Home Bitter by keg Green Barrel except in individual cases where a need to do so, such as cellar conditions, is proved, and concluded with the motto "in our business our customer is the most important person".

Many customers at the Coronation, Baker Street, Alvaston wish that were true. After the last tenant left, Home installed a manager and replaced their Home Bitter by keg Green Barrel as well as making other changes. One ex-regular, who did not wish to be named, said that "no-one ever complained about the beer before but now there are a lot of disenchanted locals and there has been talk of a petition to the brewery". After drinking in the Coronation for over twenty years he now frequents the Roundhouse (Alvaston Hotel—a real ale Home pub) and only calls in his ex-local to see friends. He cited the Saturday lunchtime trade on the day he spoke to DERBY DRINKER as an example of the feelings of the locals. "At 1.15 the Roundhouse was packed and at 1.30 I called in a virtually deserted Coronation".

David George

### HANDY HINTS DEPT

Useful things to do with lager. (No. 1 in an occasional series): Karen Harrison, an administrative assistant with Whitbread Wessex, found herself stranded recently, when her frosted Ford developed a radiator leak in wintry weather. Luckily, she happened to have a four-pack of Heineken to hand, with which she topped up the rad, and drove to the nearest garage, ten miles away. An AA spokesman said: "Any bland liquid could have got her car going."

## BAR FACTS

By Phil McCarrykeg

### Pleasant Pheasant

The Golden Pheasant, Chellaston Road, Shelton Lock, has undergone extensive refurbishment and is now open as a bar, as well as a restaurant, serving draught Whitbread Castle Eden Ale on handpump.

### £25,000-worth of fun?

The Three Horseshoes, Market Place, Ripley, is to undergo alterations later this year, at a reported cost of a quarter of a million pounds, to transform it into a "fun pub".

### Lion free in Ashbourne

The White Lion, Buxton Road, Ashbourne, is now a free house, selling Ind Coope Draught Burton Ale and Tetley Bitter on handpump.

### Nice Staff, Great Landlord!

The Staff of Life, Ticknall is selling a range of real ales and as we go to press has Timothy Taylor's Landlord as a guest beer.

### Strutt your (REAL) Stuff

On Mondays and Tuesdays during March, Strutts, London Road, Derby, was offering 10p a pint off Mansfield 4X. Could this be the start of a general move to attract drinkers early in the week? Many pubs now have games nights on Mondays and The Golden Eagle, Agard Street, has started a quiz tournament every Monday from 23rd March.

### Blue Bell Rings the Changes

The Blue Bell, Melbourne, an entry in this year's National Good Beer Guide, is now selling Tetley's Bitter, in place of Draught Burton Ale.

### Club together

Asterdale Social Club, Spondon, now has Ruddles County, as well as Wilson's Bitter.

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# PRICES

Recently, Derby CAMRA concluded a prices survey in over 80 pubs in the southern half of the county to see what effect the past year has had on your pint. The results show that the prices of beers from Burton's three major brewers plus Nottingham's Home Ales have all risen faster than the rate of inflation.

The biggest increases are for Ind Coope's Draught Burton Ale and Marston's Pedigree which have both increased by a whacking nine per cent in the last year. Bass, Ind Coope and Home Bitter have risen by five per cent, whilst the Notts. brewers, Kimberley and Shipstones, have kept increases to four and one per cent respectively. Overall, the price of your average pint, locally, has gone up by six per cent,

against inflation of about four.

In general the cheapest pints in Derby are still to be found in Home Ales managed houses such as the Peartree on St Thomas' Road and the Norman Arms, Village Street, where the bitter is 72p and the mild 66p.

The most expensive, not surprisingly, is Marston's Owd Roger at £1.20 a pint. This was to be expected but prices as high as 90p for Bass and Pedigree as well as £1.00 for Draught Burton Ale in certain places have helped push the average up.

For the statistically minded, the figures appear below, with last year's survey results in brackets.

Beer	High	Low	Average	% increase
Bass	90 (82)	79 (76)	84 (80)	5
Ind Coope Bitter	84 (82)	80 (75)	82 (78)	5
DBA	1.00 (90)	86 (82)	92 (84)	9½
Pedigree	90 (80)	82 (74)	85 (78)	9
Home Bitter	82 (76)	72 (67)	76 (72)	5½
Kimberley Bitter	78 (77)	75 (70)	77 (74)	4
Shipstones Bitter	76 (76)	74 (72)	75 (74)	1

## What is a Local?

by Nick Meakin

—our man in the corner with the half of mild.

A local is more than just the nearest pub to wherever you happen to live, it is the pub to which you choose to go, knowing that you will be welcomed as a friend, by customers and landlord alike, conversation, convivial company, games if you so desire, in short, a local is what you want it to be and what the people who go there make it.

George Orwell once wrote a description of his favourite pub. It was called The Moon Under Water. It was a solid Victorian hostelry in a quiet side-street, with traditional Victorian fittings, "no sham roof-beams, inglenooks or plastic panels masquerading as oak," but cast-iron fireplaces and a ceiling turned yellow with years of tobacco-smoke, altogether typifying what Orwell called "the solid comfortable ugliness of the 19th century." The customers went there for the beer, the conversation, the games, the friendliness of the bar staff. All in all the perfect pub, you might think.

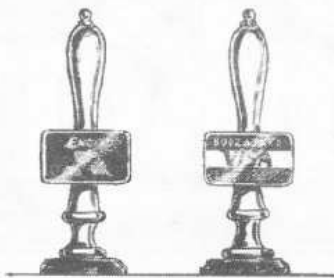
But The Moon Under Water never existed. Orwell was doing what most of us do from time to time; dreaming of the perfect local. Each of us has a vision in our minds of the ideal pub. Each of those visions differs slightly, as we do, one from another. Can the perfect local ever exist?



The Crompton Tavern. Modest exterior hides a real "local".

Derby is better served than many cities with some superb back-street locals, which are well worth getting to know. One which I frequent of a week-end is The Crompton Tavern in Crompton Street, off Green Lane. The Crompton is indeed just such a solid Victorian back-street pub, with no fancy trimmings, although recently decorated within. What struck me about it, apart from the excellent Ward's Bitter, was the fact that I see the same faces in there every week, people for whom this is their local.

The Crompton has that indefinable something that makes it a local, rather than just a pub. Landlady Sheila Lewis and husband Brian have transformed



## Chancellor lays off the drink

Mr Nigel Lawson spared the drinker the usual increase in taxation on alcohol in his budget this year, which must be welcome news for both drinker and brewer alike, whatever you may think his motives may have been.

This means that the average 82p pint is divided up as shown below.



it in the space of less than two years into a true meeting point. In one corner, a group of students are engaged in earnest discussion. Dotted around in small groups are middle-aged couples, enjoying quiet conversations. On the other side of the pub, a few of the regulars cluster around the dartboard, enjoining Sheila to throw the odd "arrer". She obliges. Someone asks her how the ghost is. "He's been quiet this week," replies Sheila. The Crompton, in its earlier days as The Queen's, used to be a boarding house for theatricals appearing at the old music hall. Apparently one of them still hasn't checked out.

Behind the solidly built bar, Dave, the solidly built barman, pours a pint of Darleys, before picking up his pool cue to rejoin the game in the back room.

One of the regulars taps my arm as I approach the bar to replenish my pint. "You're one of those CAMRA types, aren't you? Why don't you do an article about this place; show people what a local should be like?"

Good idea. Maybe I will at that. Maybe readers will write in and tell us about their local, or what, in their view, makes a pub special. You never know.

## DRINKER Comment

### The Whole Story?

Home Ales say they will only take out Home Bitter and replace it by Green Barrel where a need is proved — such as poor cellar conditions. What has changed down in the cellars of the Coronation and the Garden City, to name but two? What is it about pubs which for years have sold a decent pint, that suddenly renders them unsuitable for real ale.

It is certainly not the cellars. Could it be that they employ managers and let their pubs to tenants who know nothing of cellarmanship? Home licensees would, no doubt, dispute this argument and it would reflect very badly on the brewery if proven.

This leaves economics. Could it be that Home Ales make more money from employing a manager to serve filtered and pressurised beer? If the answer is 'no' then the brewery don't even have the flimsiest excuse for alienating Mr X of Alvaston and others who are sorely missing their favourite pint in their local.

The only other possible explanation is that someone with influence in Home Ales has a phobia of real ale.

### The hint of a story

In all modesty, for DERBY DRINKER to receive an anonymous 'phone call is a sign of recognition. To get three on the same subject is either planned or a sign of panic. Are these rumours true? we were asked. Is Home Bitter going up by 10p a pint? We've done our best to investigate and the result is here to be read but, as in the case of Mr X of Alvaston, we are bound to take more notice if a caller identifies him or herself. The people we talk to won't find their names in print unless they agree — so if you do wish to call us please tell us who you are and what your interest is — we aren't fools and we're not the Sun.

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Thirteen Derbyshire breweries have been swallowed up and closed since 1897 and a further three have been wound up leaving only Clive Winkle's Saxon Cross Brewery in Buxton and John Thompson at Ingleby to continue the county's brewing tradition. Here's what happened to Derbyshire's long lost breweries.

**CHAPEL EN LE FRITH** — John Simpson taken over by Stancliffe Brothers of Macclesfield in 1910.

**CROMFORD** — Hills Cromford Brewery. Registered in 1866 to acquire the business of Matthew Hill, taken over by Offilers and liquidated in 1914. The brewery was used as a depot until 1926.

**DERBY** — Derby Brewery Co, Nottingham Road. Registered in 1893 and taken over by Strettons in 1899 with over 57 pubs.

Altons Wardwick Brewery. Founded in 1788 and taken over by Strettons in 1903 with 154 pubs. The brewery operated as a separate concern until 1922.

Strettons Derby Brewery. Ashbourne Road. Registered in 1890 and taken over by Samuel Allsopp of Burton in 1927. The brewery was closed in 1929 and sold to mineral water firm, Burrows, Sturgess and Severn.

Offilers, Normanton Road. Registered in 1890 to acquire the Vine Brewery established in 1876 by George Offiler. Taken over by Charringtons in 1965 with 238 pubs and closed in 1966.

**CLIFTON** — Wilson, Allaway & Co. Registered in 1886 and taken over by Bingley & Co of Burton in 1897.

# Derbyshire's Long Lost Breweries

By David George



**CHESTERFIELD** — Scarsdale Brewery, 1865-1958. taken over by Whitbread & Co.

Chesterfield Brewery, 1897-1934. Taken over by Mansfield Brewery.

Brampton Brewery, 1897-1955. Taken over by Warwicks and Richardsons of Newark together with 142 pubs.

**SHARDLOW** — Z. Smith & Co. 1865-1930. Taken over by Marstons in 1922 with over 80 pubs.

**MELBOURNE** — John Hair & Son, 1851-1954. Taken over by Offilers.

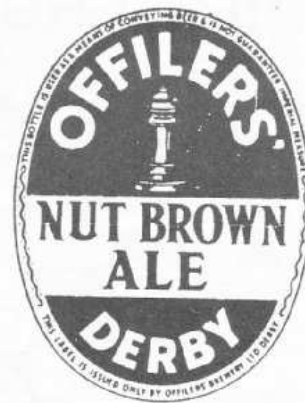
**WOODVILLE** — Brunt, Bucknall & Co. 1832-1928. Taken over by Thomas Salt & Co of Burton circa 1919.

**LITTLE EATON** — Little Eaton Brewery. Registered in 1906 to acquire the business of H. A. Seale. Dissolved in 1911 after the Receiver was appointed in 1909.

**ILKESTON** — Fletchers Eerewash Valley Brewery, registered in 1899. Receiver appointed in 1904 and company dissolved in 1909.

Ilkeston Brewery Co, founded circa 1900 and wound up in 1923.

The family trees of three of the big seven breweries and two regional independants have roots in Derbyshire. Bass (Charrington) took over Offilers who had in turn swallowed Hair of Melbourne and Hills of Cromford. Allied (Ind Coope and Allsopps) bought Strettons who had gained the Derby Brewery and Altons around the turn of the century.

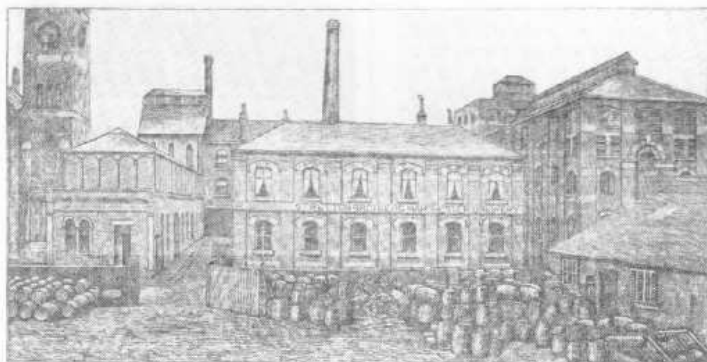


Nationally . . .

● 8,000 brewery and malting jobs have been lost since 1982 — over 850 in the last two years.

● In 1900 there were 1,466 brewing companies with 6,447 breweries — there are now 68 established brewery companies within 118 breweries, 84 new small breweries and 73 pub breweries.

● In 1971 there were just four pub breweries and in 1981 there were 49 new small breweries.



Strettons Derby Brewery — a print from 'Derby Illustrated' of 1891 to be found in the Local Studies Library off Irongate, Derby.

## Germans caught on the hop

West Germany's centuries-old Beer Purity Law fell foul of the EEC recently, when the European Court of Justice determined that the law, originally drawn up in 1516 to state that only barley, hops and water may be used in brewing beer, was effectively a barrier to free trade.

The Germans had argued that the law was merely a safeguard against foreign beers, which often contain additives, being sold to the detriment of der public health, ja? The EEC decided that it was being used in fact as a trade barrier, to protect German brewers from foreign competition.

The British Brewers' Society welcomed the news but conceded that it was unlikely the Germans would immediately start guzzling imported

beers, as they have always been fiercely loyal to the domestic product in the past.

Public opinion in Germany seemed to support this view. "I'd rather pay a few pfennigs more and know what I'm drinking," said one teutonic tippler. "I don't like the idea of chemicals in beer."

Neither do we, which is why CAMRA is pressing for labelling of contents on beers sold in this country, as will be required of breweries wishing to sell their products in Germany. Up till now, the Germans could be sure all they were consuming was malt, hops and water. We've never had that assurance. Isn't it about time we were told what we're drinking?

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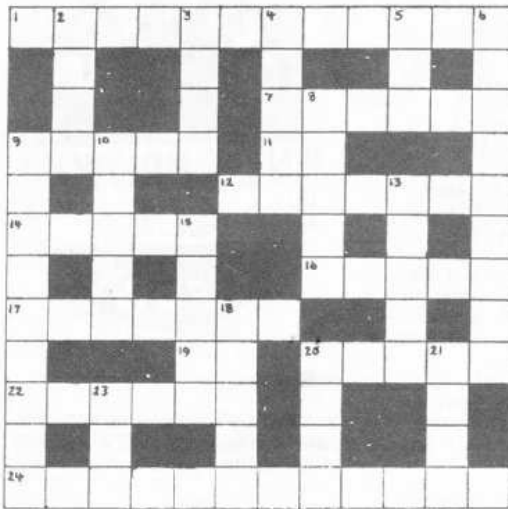
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# PRIZE CROSSWORD — WIN A FIVER



## ACROSS

1. Victorian local may be sold? (3,9)
7. Strike a happy one to reach the spirits (6)
9. My normal tippie, please, landlord (5)
11. Alan's been cut short (2)
12. I worship real ale (7)
14. Futuristic literature is out of this world (3,2)
16. The beginnings of excellent cellarman'ship are what you need to do this as a landlord (5)
17. Sunburnt gentleman goes off at odd angle? (7)
19. Don Camillo's river reminds one of the post office? (2)
20. Danish name for Roman Derwentio (5)
22. Spark off a riot (6)
24. Pub near station, named after the Czar's missus (3,9)

## DOWN

2. These put a spring in your pint (4)
3. Yes, but is it genuine? (4)
4. Does tribesman ramble after a few pints? (5)
5. I've heard of chemicals in beer, but a sheepdog?? (1,1,1)
6. Gem of a pint from Notts. (9)
8. Run away with me to Gretna Green (5)
9. Beer annoyed at being knocked over? (5,4)
10. Bass had a lot of these but it's a closed shop now (5)
13. Run up expense (5)
15. Incompetent. A pint of E may help (5)
18. Her name reminds me of Christmas (5)
20. Prima donna joins sub-aqua club? (4)
21. Ale is what it's all about (4)
23. Sebastian does a runner (3)

It was red face time at Derby Drinker, as the first entries for the last crossword trickled in. Only then did we discover that the clue for 7 Down had mysteriously disappeared. Still, it didn't prevent a number of you from completing it correctly, as, once you had all the other clues in place, the answer was fairly obviously REVOLUTION, although REVELATION would also have fitted.

John Skinner, of 16, Ward Street, Derby, wins the fiver, for guessing correctly and also supplying his own clue: "Crossword without clues sets startling new trend." Nice one, son. John picked up his Drinker at The New Flower Pot, King Street.

Send your entry for this issue's crossword, together with your name, address and pub where you picked up your copy, to: Derby Drinker Crossword, 40, Weston Park Gardens, Shelton Lock, Derby DE2 9EU.

## SOLUTION — DD18



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## Brunswick Developments

The Brunswick Inn, the Victorian local at the end of the refurbished Railway Terrace, opposite Derby Station, was renovated externally, along with the cottages adjacent to it, by the Derby Historic Buildings Trust. Since then it has been awaiting a buyer prepared to spend the considerable amount required to bring the interior up to the original splendour of a classic street-corner local. The main deterrent, apart from the cost, has always been the lack of car parking facilities nearby and several prospective purchasers have cried off at the last minute.

Recently, the Derby Evening Telegraph reported that a deal had been struck and an unnamed private buyer, backed by a brewery, was going to take it on and re-open the former Kimberley house, which closed in 1970.

Reliable sources have informed Derby Drinker that the Telegraph report was rather premature. No deal has been made at the time of going to press, but

we are given to understand that negotiations are well advanced for a limited company to be set up to acquire The Brunswick and open it as a free house, following the necessary fitting out work, which would probably take about three months.

We hope to bring you more news in the next issue of Derby Drinker.

## HARTY FOLK

Mike Duffield, of the White Hart Folk Club, Duffield, writes to tell us that the club is still thriving and welcomes friends old and new. Also, would we publish the following dates: (all 7.30 pm start).

- Sun. Apr. 26th: Dave Burland plus Marziband. £2
  - Sun. May 24th: The Yetties £3
  - Sun. June 14th: Liam Weldon & Pol Huellou plus Mabsant. £2
- Contact Mike at 75, Barley Close, Little Eaton for details.

## DERBY CAMRA DIARY

Everyone is welcome at Derby CAMRA socials and meetings. For more information about these events phone Social Secretary, Terry Morton on Derby 674025.

### TUESDAY SOCIALS - 9.15pm

**21st April** - Peacock, Nottingham Road, Derby (Marstons); **28th April** - Old Plough, Weston on Trent (Ind Coope); **5th May** - Exeter Arms, Exeter Place, Derby (Marstons); **12th May** - The Abbey, Darley Abbey (Sam Smiths); **19th May** - Fisherman's Rest, Broadholme, Nr. Belper (Marstons); **26th May** - Boaters, Friargate, Derby (Wards); **2nd June** - Grampian, Sinfen (Marstons); **9th June** - White Swan, Spondon (Bass); **16th June** - Duke of Clarence, Mansfield Road, Derby (Kimberley).

### BRANCH MEETINGS - 8.00pm

**Thursday 14th May** - Alexandra, Siddals Road, Derby (Shipstones); **Wednesday 10th June** - Bulls Head, Openwoodgate (Kimberley).

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## Ye Olde Spa Inne

## REV



PS. IF YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF FLOWERS BEERS - GET INVOLVED, FIND OUT MORE! P.24.

Further information and details on all aspects of Derby CAMRA and the Campaign for Real Ale can be had from any of the following local contacts: Chairman: Philip James, 82, Peel Street, Derby. MILD & BITTER editor: Mike Meara, 61 Borrowash Road, Spondon, Derby (Tel: Derby 663332).

Artwork by Rob Gilvary, 130 Green Lane, Derby (Tel: Derby 43497)

Opinions expressed in DERBY DRINKER are not necessarily those of the Editor, nor the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd.

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