

KEEPING YOU INFORMED ABOUT YOUR BEER

ISSUE No. 31

AUTUMN '89

FREE

AS YOU HATE IT, SO WE DO IT?

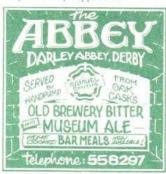


THE NEW INN A Poor Compromise

The supposed reprieve of the New Inn. Little Eaton, has turned into something of a farce. Plans now accepted by the Erewash planning committee show the pub turned into a restaurant, with the tiniest possible concession to the regulars.

With an addition which has been described as a wickerwork partition between a bar area and the main restaurant, the 'revised' plan has disappointed the battling regulars who were led to believe that the Tavern Table concept had been scrapped. Well, maybe it won't be called a Tavern Table, but whatever it is, it is not what was wanted or needed by this village, which has now lost its heart, its meeting place and a darned good traditional pub.

The New Inn's customers say that the partition could be removed very easily, leaving no segregation between bar and restaurant. Truly, we all thought Marston's had listened and acted on the needs of the people who keep their brewery in the black—the drinkers. Now it seems they came, they saw, they copped out.



AN OLD ESTABLISHED brewery, brewing a famous beer, is causing concern to CAMRA, licensees and customers. This brewery seems intent in turning their pubs into restaurants. It is handing out some salty rent rises. It seems to be ignoring the wishes of both licensees and customers. Its beer is definitely not what it used to be, and brewing giant Whitbread owns 37.6% shares in this local brewery.

Is it Bass? Greenall Whitley? Courage? Grand Met? No. The answer is enough to make Pedigree turn to ashes in your mouth. It's Marston's.

Rent rises of over 100 per cent have been handed out to some tenants. Is there any other trade where diligence is rewarded in such a way? The new tents are based on how much the brewery thinks the pub can make, not just as a pub, but theoretical food sales too. Many folk went into the licensed trade with the idea of running a traditional pub which sold good ale and provided a focus for the local community. Now they are expected to become restauranteurs.

Marston's Tavern Table concept means that even some small village locals are being ripped apart and turned into restaurants. In the name of profit and keeping up with the mega-breweries, regulars are being driven out. And what is left is a place where one can't sit down for a drink because all the tables are set for meals. Enjoyment of a pint of one of England's finest ales, is ruined by the reek of fried food and the menu shoved under one's nose.

Ordinary drinkers are reportedly not welcome in these 'un-pubs'.

The Marston's annual report gives an idea of how they think about these places. Our feelings on the matter are in italies.

"With its heavily beamed ceilings and Olde Worlde theme, the Bulls Head gives you the feeling of a step back in time." (Thank you Dr. Who). The Excavator. "Once inside you will discover the elegance of a regency garden." (What, grass?). The Mount Pleasant. "it's (sic) subtle design

will remind you of the British Colonial Empire." (Pig sticking? Slavery? Bombay slums?). The Gate. "Enjoy the cosy atmosphere of an English Country Cottage". (Mud floors? Chickens in the propagate).

What pretentious nonsense!

And food in these places — what would one expect to eat in a Regency garden — Brighton burgers? Does the English country cottage not suggest the old agricultural workers' crude bread and fatty bacon?

One thing that Marston's can do really well is to brew beer. One encouraging item is that the brewery is considering the installation of four new Burton union sets to cope with demand. Let's hope that this will stop the complaints that the beer is being sent into the trade too 'green', putting the onus on the licensee to mature it for an extra week or two—if he has the room.

The commitment of Marston's to the Whitbread view of things is increasing, due in part, no doubt, to the large shareholding. Trading agreements are putting more Whitbread men on the board and licensees say that the present chairman and managing director, Michael Hurdle, is the last Marston's man left. When he goes, Marston's could go, too. One more hurdle to win the race?

Marston's used to CARE — what's happened?

Derby Drinker would like to hear from Marston's. We are prepared to print any comment that they wish to make about the worries the consumers, licensees and CAMRA have regarding its future. Enjoy Derby's finest range of Cask Conditioned Beers in the comfortable surroundings of

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TRADITIONAL HOME-MADE LUNCHES NOW AVAILABLE

BAR FACTS By Phil McCarrykeg

A Jar at Jonty's

The Jonty Farmer, Banks latest pub in Kedleston Road, Derby, opened in July, coinciding with the 12th Beer Festival. The price of a pint is remarkably cheap—highly commendable! Everyone says the ceiling is too low, but that could be because it opened in the midst of a heatwave, and the heat in there was tremendous. Either that, or all the complainants play basketball!

White Horse Gee-up

Clean-up time at the White Horse, Morledge, Derby, has left the formerly dingy pub looking bright on the outside. Less drastic refurbishment inside includes redecoration in the bar, and the two other rooms have been knocked into one. The upstairs room, now renamed the gallery, scene of many a CAMRA meeting, has also been renovated.

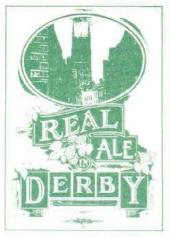
Brew News

The Honeycomb, Mickleover — guest beer Old Hookey, The Lord Nelson, Bull Bridge — now has Old Baily. The Yew Tree, South Wingfield, a double bill — Pedigree and Batemans XXXB. The Talbot, Belper — Bass, but still no handpump. It's on electric.

Welcome . . .

... the new licensees at The White Swan, Ripley. The Sportsman, Codnor. The Grange, Ingleby Avenue. George and Dragon, Albert Street. Lord Nelson, Bull Bridge. George, Ripley. Honeycomb, Mickleover. Blue Bell, South Wingfield. Red Lion, Fritchley.





"Nay, I am for the country fiquor Derbyshire Ale, if you please; for a man should not, methinks, come up from London to drink wine in the Peak,"

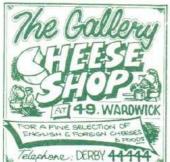
This quotation from Charles Cotton, co-author with Izaak Walton of The Compleat Angler, prefaces Derby CAMRA's latest publication, Real Ale in Derby. The 20-page booklet could be called the 'city edition' of the long-awaited revised Derbyshire Ale.

The brainchild of Derby CAMRA member and local brewery historian Jock Arguile, who is also responsible for its layout and production, the small guide was edited and illustrated by Reg Newcombe, with cover artwork by Rob Gilvary. Its clean, easily readable layout, concise but interesting pub descriptions and the provision of a clear map in the centre makes Real Ale in Derby a handy and practical pocket guide for enthusiasts and tourists.

Historical information on Derby from 874 AD to Joseph Wright and Samuel Johnson precedes the publistings, and information on some local breweries past and present ends a publication which is something more than merely a list of where to drink in Derby.

Real Ale in Derby is available at various pubs in the city, notably the Brunswick and the Dolphin, in Clulows and Fagins bookshops, and in various newsagents, price 60p. As we go to press, other distribution outlets are being approached.





WEAKNESS IN THE STRENGTH LAWS

The Food Labelling (Amendment) Regulations came into force on 17th July this year. All alcoholic drinks must now be labelled with their strength in terms of percentage of alcohol by volume (abv). This gives beer drinkers a more accurate indication of beer strength than original gravity, which indicates value for money — i.e. how much tax was paid and how much malt, etc., was used in the mash. How much of this can be converted into alcohol and how much is left as flavouring can vary.

Most beers are consistent in their og/abv relationship. The og can be converted to abv by subtracting 1008, then dividing by 8. So Pedigree's 1042 works out as 4.25%, compared with CAMRA's sample average of 4.26%.

Two beers which CAMRA tested gave way-out results, though, Mackeson Stout at 1042 should be around 4.25% but it is only fermented to 3.29% — what would you expect from a 1034 mild. No wonder it is so sweet!

More worrying was Marston's bottled Low C, which sets out at 1030, but instead of the expected 2.75%, it has been almost completely fermented to weigh in

at 4.05% — something to expect from a 1041 strong bitter. Anyone considering Low C as part of a calorie controlled diet may as well stick to Pedigree! The Low C nametag refers to low carbohydrate, i.e. sugars, not low calorie.

CAMRA welcomes the new regulation, but is not impressed by the required accuracy of plus or minus 0.5%. Our analyses have shown that $\pm 0.05\%$ is easily achievable and would deter adulterators. For reasons unknown the tolerance is widened to $\pm 1\%$ on beers above 5.5%, and for all draught ciders it is 1.5%!

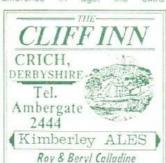
Of course this information will be displayed on bottle and can labels, but for dispensed drinks the Regulation says the abv may be put on the price list. You remember—the price list it is compulsory to display in pubs in a readable form, the one licensees can be prosecuted for not having. Seen one lately?

To date, Allied houses have added aby's to their price lists (if you can read or find them) but Bass have done nothing that we have seen Perhaps the police are even now planning raids.

TRY THE TASTE TEST

Allied Breweries continue with their money-wasting activities. Having fitted up all the pubs with £100-a-letter Ind Coope pub signs, they scrapped the lot in favour of the Ansell's logo. It's all right letting marketing and promotions people have their fun, but it has affected the beer. The excellent Ind Coope Bitter was phased out and instead we get Tetley's. Well, a sort of Tetley's.

Anyone visiting the West Riding will know that Tetley's is the local religion. It drinks smooth and wide with a hint of fruit and a splash of hops. And of course it is served with the obligatory creamy head But brewing beer for local tastes at a local brewery seems too easy for Allied, so they ship the ubiquitous Tetley's from Leeds for casking and distribution. But the stuff being sold in the pubs around Derby resembles the West Riding Tetlev's We can live without the creamy head, but the metallic twang is most unpleasant. Where does this nasty aftertaste come from? It has been suggested that a preservative is being added — such as sulphur dioxide — but Ind Coope Burton deny this. So whether it's the tankers, the difference in age, the extra



disturbance or the dispense systems, we don't know. What we do know is that people are complaining, and all the Brewery seems to do is put up more signs.

Carrying a Torch for Trevor

Trevor Harris and John Evans, of Derby's Brunswick Inn, can now add another feather to the ones already stuck in their metaphorical caps. The Brunswick is the winner of the East Midlands heat of the CAMRA National Pub of the Year Award.

The panel of judges described the Brunswick as "A true Free House, offering the drinkers of Big Brewery-dominated Derby a wide and regularly changing range of Real Ales. A sympathetic restoration of what was the derelict shell of the oldest, (built 1842), purpose-built railway pub in the world, this pub shows what can be done by a dedicated and enthusiastic licensee."

The Brunswick Inn now goes forward to the Pub of the Year Award semi-finals, with a good chance, Derby CAMRA members feel, of becoming overall winner After all Trevor and John's hard work and dedication to their customers, and to the principals involved in keeping a traditional pub, they deserve such recognition. We're keeping our fingers crossed!

ALFRETON '89

As if Derby Beer Festival were not enough, some Derby CAMRA members are even now slogging their buts off to arrange this year's Alfreton Beer Festival. Dates are 27th and 28th October, venue is Alfreton Leisure Centre. Some good beers are in the pipeline.

DRINKER! Commen

THE BITER BIT

by Jock Arguile

It is ironic that the MMC report seeks to limit the tied house system, whose very existence was the original salvation of many small browers.

Despite the early dominance of the large porter brewers in London, the ale-consuming public elsewhere were more typically served by a variety of small brewers.

The rise to fame of Bass and Allsop was due to their prime concern with product quality. Their tremendous growth, following the passing of the Beer Act in 1830, was done WITHOUT the assistance of the tied trade. By 1876 their annual production was nearly one million barrels of beer each, higher than any other UK brewer. In the same period the number of commercial brewers rose from 1,550 to c.2,500.

This increased competition led many small brewers to buy up outlets to extend their retail trade, the consequences of which was to freeze out the larger breweries. Bass began buying but by 1900 only owned 500 premises. Allsops took until 1915 to own 461 properties. By today's MMC standards both would be classified as small brewers.

The cost of buying trade, previously theirs, was enormous and it bankrupted Allsops. They were only one of a spate of financial crises amongst Burton brewers.

The subsequent disappearance of the small independent brewer occurred for many reasons, but perhaps had they not tried to control the trade in the first place this would have led to a better pint for the customer and still left the door open for new brewers.



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Plus home-cooked Lunches Monday to Saturday



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Further information on all aspects of Derby CAMRA can be had from any of the following contacts: Chairman— Sigel Barker. The Dolphin, Derby (Tel-Derby 49115). Secretary: Steve Radford, 21. Cubthorne. Drive. Allestrae. (Tel-Derby 38013).

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AFTER THE PARTY'S OVER

Derby Beer Festival organisers were faced with a sad task after their first-ever Sunday lunchtime session. They had to discard 400 gallons of prime beer!

Due to industrial action, the 12th Festival was unable to open for the traditional Wednesday, night session. Derby City Council were unprepared to allow the public into the Assembly Rooms in case the ventilation system tripped out while no engineers were available to restart it. There was no choice. The opening had to be postponed until Thursday lunchtime, with the result that 15% of beer sales was lost. (Thirsty lot, that Wednesday night crowd!)

Still, the remaining sessions were a lot of fun for the punters, and a lot of hard work for the volunteers. The situation was not helped, however, by a series of ornible incidents. The head cellarman's car was pinched, and found two days later minus radio. The chairman sprained her ankle and spent the entire week hobbling around swathed in bandages from

the knee downwards. Our new brewery signs, designed by CAMRA stalwart Dave George, hit a small snag when the white plastic tape he'd used to outline the signboards peeled off in the heat of the foyer. Oh, how we laughed!

On the plus side, an extra day to settle made the beer pratty good overall, with Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild being exceptionally popular, particularly with blues pianist Benny Gardstein, who appeared to be attempting to drink the lot singlehanded!

The Sunday lunchtime session, an unknown quantity to the organisers, proved to be a pleasant, uncrowded session. Derby CAMRA members guessed at how many would attend the session, the gloomier members predicting around 115. In fact, 600 drinkers turned out for the free-entry session, and were entertained by Mad Jocks and Englishmen, who had switched from their Wednesday night slot at very short notice.

And next year? Don't worry. Here's to 1990!

The Big Brewers, having danced on Lord Young's political grave, published bloated profit figures and, to add insult to injury, announced a massive price hike.

INTOLERABLE!

How much longer will customers tolerate this? If Marston's can sell 1042 Pedigree for 97p, why does Allied have to charge almost a guinea for 1036 Tetley's? And £1.10 for 1047 Burton Ale almost puts it in the wine bracket.

Where are these economies of scale which led to the establishment of the megabreweries? Why is it that a 4-man outfit like Burton Bridge can produce quality beers at reasonable prices while the big boys struggle to produce anything tasty for less than £1?

Footnote

An article in the last issue of Derby Drinker spoke of an increase in gout amongst lager drinkers, so when Derby CAMRA's Ivor Clissold turned up with a big, red, throbbing, (I say, steady on! —Ed.) big toe, questions were asked at the bar. Sorry, Ivor, we know it isn't funny. (Hee Hee!). No really....

BURTON

A ten minute train trip between September 21st and 23rd can put you two minutes away from this year's Burton-upon-Trent Beer Festival. It is of course run by the local CAMRA branch: the local leviathans Allied and Bass having little of interest to show.

Opening times are Thursday and Friday: noon to 2.30, 7 to 11, admission £1 Saturday 11.30 to 2.30, 6.30 to 11, admission £1.50.

The quaffable goodles this time will be mostly from Scotland and the North East.

BELL LATEST

The Bell Hotel, Sadler Gate, Derby seems to have won a reprieve. A twelve-month stay of execution means that plans to turn the 300-year old coaching inn into yet another set of shops have been stopped for the time being.

The reprieve is due, no doubt, to the many letters of protest received by the City Council from concerned citizens, including many CAMRA members. So what happens now? Watch this space — but don't give up the fight. With determination, the drinkers of Derby can save this inn for our grandchildren to enjoy.

PLEASE PASS THIS COPY OF DERBY DRINKER TO A FRIEND.

LONDON CALLING

by the Sun's Deputy City Editor John Coppock

(ves. honest!)

Who said southern beer was rubbish? Real ale in the smoke is often better than you'll find in some Derby pubs, if you know where to look.

Deep in the heaving Metropolis, the City where freedom of choice was born, lie havens of drinkers' delight. The only trouble is drinking in London can be a frille expensive, although real ale tends to come cheaper than the standard brews sold to tourists.

The best beers are made by Fullers, whose traditional ale London Pride is one of the most popular in the Capital Its stronger sister ale, ESB, is also served on hand-pump, but make sure you know the way back to the tube station before trying it. Courage, the market leader in the south, only has one real ale worth a look. Directors Bitter (beware of keg imitations) has plenty of body, and you won't get Board of it (geddir?).

London's most famous free house is Bruce's Brewery, founded by David Bruce. He has since sold his company to Midsummer Leisure, but that hasn't affected his ten Firkin pubs spread across London. They each sell a hand-pulled, though top-pressured, Firkin ale as well as extra-strong Dogbolter. I had six pints of it once and fell over. (Idiot!—Ed.)

Another solid London brew is Charrington's IPA, found mainly in the south east. Young s, brewed in Wandsworth, isn't bad either. Many London pubs have guest beers from the north, including Burton Ale, which is becoming quite fashionable in central London. Prices average at around £1.25 a pint for real ale.

PUB to check out. The George, near London Bridge station. Wide range of real ales:

BASEBALL HOTEL

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DRAUGHT BASS - M & B MILD

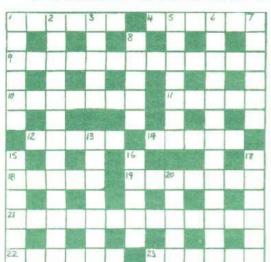
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ACROSS

- 1. Next to mild in most bars (6)
- 2. Time for ancient Harvest Festival ale? (6)
- Derby CAMRA has just produced one of these (4, 3, 6)
- 10. Bad beer should be (7)
- 11. Bud beer is almost awful, I hear! (5)
- 12. A team whispered on stage (5)
- 14. One slang Bilk to spend? (5)
- 18. Musicianty speeds (5)
- Initially Thomas Hood should, another way to an idea (7)

- 21. Historically between gravity and electric (10, 3)
- 22. The last place to get a coastal drink (6)
- 23. Lots of sports venues (6)

DOWN

- 1. Twice the size of a kilderkin (6)
- 2. Silently dedicated Belgian brewers (8, 5)
- 3. Pupil brewers must pass them (5)
- 5. Growing in lager? (7)
- 6. Most top fermented beers are (4, 2, 7)
- 7. Female relation of 22 (6)
- 13. Dodgy tap at the beer festival (7)
- 15. Artist or acidic beer spilt on copper table (6)
- 16. . . . and deliver to Derby Scouts (5)
- 17. Zeus' girl (6)
- 20. In over the top, for all to see (5)

The Derby Drinker got a slap on the wrist after last issue's comments about far-flung places. A letter arrived from the Shetlands pointing out that Bakewell isn't a far-flung part of Derbyshire, neither is Surrey the edge of the world! Signed by a Ms. J. Worsdell, who hais from Derby originally, and has Derby Drinker posted to her in North Mavine, the letter also says that living up there means she is an ex-real ale drinker. Nice to hear from you Ms. Worsdell, and we'll try to remember that the rest of the world exists from now on.

Anyhow, the first correct entry in our Pub Trivia Quiz to come out of the hat came from J. A. Fern, from Burton, who picked up his copy of *Derby Drinker* in Burton Bridge Brewery tap. A fiver is on its way.

Answers to last issue's pub trivia quiz:

1 (c) 2 (e) 3 (c) 4 (b) 5 (e) 6 (e) 7 (e) 8 (e) 9 (b) 10 (b).

DERBYCKMRA DIARY

Everyone is welcome at Derby CAMRA socials and meetings. For more information about these events phone Social Secretary. Rob Griffiths on Leabrooks (0773) 603892

Tuesday Socials - 9.15 pm SEPTEMBER

5th—Joint Branch Social with Chesterfield Branch Meet at Derby Tup, Whittington Moor, Chesterfield, Bus leaves the Exeter Exeter Street, Derby, 7.45 p.m.

12th—Bridge Inn. Shelton Lock Marstons.

19th—Cliff Inn. Crich. Kimberley. 26th—Ferrers Arms. Sinfin. Everards

OCTOBER

3rd—St. Helens Inn. Duffield Road. Home.

10th—Half Moon, Burton Road, Littleover, Bass

17th—Corner Pin, Chellaston Allied.

24th—Cricketers, Kilburn, Free, 31st—Red Lion, Riddings, Kimberley.

BRANCH MEETINGS: All welcome. September 14th—Baseball Hotel. Shaftesbury Crescent, Derby. Bass. October—King Alfred Hotel. Alfreton. Home.

HELPFUL FOLKS

No. 1 TREVOR HARRIS

Bateman's hope of opening the Alex in early August has proved as over-optimistic as anyone else who has to rely on British builders. Neighbouring Trevor, who had a delivery from Bateman's recently, put the drayman up to parking outside the Alex and announcing a beer 'drop'. 'We ain't ready! whined the panic-stricken builder, 'we've got nowhere to put it.' The cellar's the usual place', quoth the ever-helpful Trevor.



FAMOUS, FIVES

All these pubs have scored five points for their beer — the highest score in Derby CAMRA's grading system. A score of five means that the pint could not be bettered for that particular beer. Well done, you lot!

Barley Mow, Kirk Ireton. Baseball Hotel, Derby. Blue Pool, Derby Bowling Green, Ashbourne. Brunswick, Derby. Derwent Hotel, Whatstandwell. The Dolphin, Derby. George Inn. Lower Hartshay. Hollybush, Marehay, Miners Arms, Carsington. Old King's Head, Belper. Rose and Crown, Boylestone. Ye Olde Spa Inne, Derby. Royal Oak, Ockbrook. Swan Inn, Milton. Silk Mill, Derby. Honeycomb, Mickleover. Red Lion, Hognaston.

Soft Shoe HASSLE

As you may have read in the local press, some of our more distinguished members have been refused admission to the Steam Cafe in Gower Street — or more to the point the Old Ale House section. And why? Because their footwear didn't fit — that is it didn't fit this so-called pub's standard of dress.

Now we can understand a licensee not letting in someone who stinks to high heaven, is dressed in rags and carrying a bottle of something nasty, (where are you, Brown Bottle?), but to be bounced by large gorilla-like blokes from a bar which asked people what real ales they wanted is a bit much. Derby CAMRA would be happy to tell them what ales would sell well—if we could get in!





