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KEEPING YOU INFORMED ABOUT YOUR BEER

ISSUE No. 48

CHRISTMAS 1993/NEW YEAR 1994

FREE

Carry On Up The Froth!

Whitehall Farce Devalues Your Pint

A handful of brewers who donate £250,000 a year to Tory funds finally won the day over millions of beer drinkers who "donate" almost 50p to the Government every time they buy a pint.

In late October the Government announced it was scrapping plans to define a pint as a pint of liquid. Instead it will do nothing, leaving a status quo that has been a major source of consumer dissatisfaction for decades. And the Trade Minister who had the gall to say he was saving us money when he announced this latest U-turn — none other than West Derbyshire MP, Patrick McLoughlin. Bet he drinks Carling Black Label!

A national spokesman for CAMRA calculated that "short measure pints cost Britain's beer drinkers £400 million a year and will carry on doing so under a voluntary code which states that only 95 per cent of a pint should be liquid. In no other industry is the customer expected to have to ask for a full measure, rather than it being given as a matter of course. The Government has devalued the pint in our pubs."

Brewers' Society director Robin Simpson denied that profiteering pubs deliberately served pints with large foaming heads and added "The commitment of the trade to fair measure is demonstrated by the new Brewers' Society guidance. The law says that a pint may include a 'reasonable head' and this will not change. If a customer asks for a pint to be topped up this should be done with good grace."

So there you have it — its your responsibility to ask. Derby CAMRA will soon be considering ways of recognising those pubs who serve a full pint without you having to ask and exposing those where a top-up is given begrudgingly. If any pub you visit deserves particular praise or criticism do let us know.

Brunswick Brews

Santa's Tipple, the Brunswick's latest new beer should be ready by the time Derby Drinker is published in early December. At 1054 o.g. its not quite as strong as the 1070 o.g. planned for Old Vicarage Ale; a bottle and cask conditioned beer which should be ready for the Brunswick's Winter Warmer Week at the end of February. And I thought Santa drank sherry — Ed

"Alex" is East Midlands Pub of the Year

The Alexandra Hotel, Siddals Road, Derby is the East Midlands Pub of the Year 1993.

Derby CAMRA's nomination has won the Regional competition and goes into the National finals This free house is aiming at 600 guest beers by the end of the year and is included in the 1993 and 1994 Good Beer Guides and the CAMRA Guide to Good Pub Food.

Pubs nominated in previous years include the Woodlark in 1992 and the Brunswick which came very close to winning a national award several years ago.



The Mayor and landlord John Evans celebrate the re-opening of the Flower Pot, Derby, after extensive refurbishment. Regular beers will be Bass, Pedigree, Taylor's Landlord and Theakston's Old Peculiar, along with four guest ales.

Down by the River Something Stirs

by Nick Meakin

Or should that be; "something is being stirred?" The old Cavendish Bridge Brewery has started brewing again, in the guise of Shardlow Brewery, as reported last issue. Simon Platt has got the five-barrel plant up and running and the first fruits of his labours have hit the bartops of local free houses, with the 1042og Shardlow Bitter.

Well, it was supposed to be 1042 but one of the early ones came out at 1036! Teething troubles apart, Simon has got things sorted now and is brewing once a week. So keen are people to try the new beer that, at one point, he ran out of casks and had to track down some more at Dorset Brewers, Eldridge Pope. He is planning to do a 1050 Christmas ale and also to offer 17-pint polypins for parties.

Your dedicated correspondent dutifully traipsed round several pubs to try the new bitter, including the Old Crown at Shardlow, the Brunswick, the Flower Pot, Dolphin and Alexandra in Derby and can report that it is a full-bodied, fruity brew, which most customers seem to like. Simon has only found one pub where the regulars were less than keen, while another was told off by its parent brewery for stocking it!

The new addition to the Derby real ale scene seems to be off to a good start — long may it continue. Now, if the builders would just move their caravan out of the way, Simon says he can really get cracking!

Only 20% Happy

A recent survey of pub customers by 'Publican' magazine asked, amongst other things, "Do you think that pubs offer good value for money?" Only 20% said yes, a third didn't know and a staggering 47 per cent said a resounding "No".

That response clearly worried the magazine who wondered "How long will they remain loyal as more and more alternatives become available?"

Quite. What do you think?

HOW TO GET A FULL PINT

1. Order your pint
2. Before putting it anywhere near your mouth check that you are satisfied with the measure you have been given.
3. If you are not satisfied politely ask the person who served you, "could I have a full pint of liquid please?"
4. If this is refused you could try offering a few pence less than the stated price but unless you are looking for an argument we suggest you make a note of all the details and inform the Trading Standards office at the County Council in Matlock.

Disabled Drinker's Access Guide — Surveyors Wanted!

Derby CAMRA, co-operating with Derby Mayor, Robin Wood, Mayoress, Ann Webster and City Council Access Officer, Mick Watts are planning to publish a guide on access to Derby's pubs for disabled people.

The initial survey and publication will concentrate on city centre pubs and will be available free of charge to disabled people. The Guide's organisers are looking for disabled people — and not just wheelchair users — to help carry out the survey. If you would like to help, contact David George on 702867 or Mick Watts (255925) or Ann Webster (255384) at the City Council.

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Forty Not Out

Nick Meakin visits the Royal Oak, Ockbrook.

"That stepladder's been here as long as I have" said Lew Wilson, landlord of the Royal Oak, Ockbrook, as I teetered on top of it to photograph the spectacular floral hanging baskets. Now he tells me. Lew and his wife, Olive, recently celebrated forty years as hosts of this popular village pub. Fortunately, I can report that the stepladder is still in excellent condition, as indeed are Lew and Olive!

The Royal Oak has been a hostelry since the 1760's, soon after it was built on foundations of stone taken from the ruins of nearby Dale Abbey. Recent renovation work indicated that it may once have had a thatched roof and has undergone many alterations in its two and a half centuries of history. Prior to its acquisition by Offilers at the turn of this century, it brewed its own ale in the outbuilding to the right of the front door, drawing water from the well underneath the big flower-tub outside. The double doors to the left housed three horses, whose wooden manger still survives, though the legs have been gnawed by pigs which were kept by Lew's predecessor! It boasted the first water closets in Ockbrook (for many years the ladies had to use the loo at the end of an adjacent cottage garden).

Offilers built the function room at the rear in 1911 to house the meetings of the Ockbrook Friendly Society, which provided assistance to farm workers when sickness prevented them from working. The vicar of Ockbrook preached a sermon condemning the fact that women had to enter the sinful premises of a pub to pay their weekly subscriptions!

In June 1953, just six weeks after Lew and Olive moved in, the room was packed with over 100 slightly damp locals, sheltering from the pouring rain of Coronation Day, as they watched the event on a tiny 14 inch black and white television borrowed for the occasion! Three hundredweight of precious rationed coal was burnt in the room's twin fireplaces to keep everybody warm.

Lew collects anything to do with the history of the pub and is hoping to compile a folder of information for the benefit of visitors. He already has some

of his Offilers memorabilia on show in the tap room and plans to extend this shortly by converting a cupboard into a display cabinet.

Outside, there is a children's play area, as well as a separate, quiet spot, known as "Dick's Garden," in memory of a neighbour, whose vegetable patch it once was. Not many pub gardens can boast rhubarb and currant bushes in the borders!

We wish Lew and Olive continued success as the much-loved hosts of this friendly village local, known for its fine ale.



The Royal Oak, with its prize-winning flower baskets. The former brewhouse can just be seen on the extreme right.

Essential Books for Beer Drinkers

1 1994 Good Beer Guide

The 21st annual edition of the Good Beer Guide details around 5,000 pubs and all Britain's breweries and beers in 512 pages of essential reference material for beer lovers, business travellers and holiday-makers alike.

Pub entries, selected by local branches, and listed county by county, give details of their real ales plus facilities such as family rooms, no-smoking areas, accommodation and meals. Around a third of entries have changed since the 1993 edition.

Over 30 new breweries and brew pubs feature this year — the independent brewers section has grown by 30 per cent in two years —

indicating that real ale is the drink of the 90's.

This year's editorial features include 'Beer Around Britain', a traveller's guide to enjoying the local flavour of British beer, the 'Beers of the Year' and the 'Beer Festival Calendar'.

Priced £8.99 (discount to CAMRA members), it is available from all leading bookstores, several pubs including the Alexandra and Brunswick or from CAMRA, 34 Alma Road, St Albans, Herts. AL1 3BW (post free).

Surveying for the 1995 Good Beer Guide is under way - if you would like to help, telephone David George on 702867.

2 CAMRA Guide to Good Pub Food

Stop the con of factory-made pub food says Guide author, Susan Nowak. She believes that more factory-made food is being propelled towards the public than ever before — and diners are conned into buying meals that have arrived at the pub in microwave containers.

She says pubs should be forced to state on their menus which dishes are brought in "ready made" instead of being freshly prepared in the pub's kitchen.

"I would like to see pubs forced, by legislation if necessary, to put a symbol against all dishes on their

menus that have been bought in as pre-prepared dishes whether frozen, chilled, or boil-in-the-bag; whatever has not been created by a cook on the premises" she said.

At the same time Nowak says she is encouraged by the standards being achieved by good pub cooks featured in her new guide book, from traditional to more eclectic cuisine, following the principles of real ale and real food. There are pubs producing the traditional dishes of their regions, building smokeries, keeping cattle and goats, growing vegetables and herbs, creating vibrant, modern cuisine from fresh ingredients. The guide book also contains recipes from some of them.

Listed locally are the Old Crown, Cavendish Bridge, which has a menu full of strange names such as Pollygosh Pie, Thatchers Little Meatballs and Hotty Steak, and the Alexandra, Derby, which is praised for its cheeses, "Recession Busters", soups, pies, curries, vegetarian dishes and a casserole of continental sausages.

The guide is priced £9.95 and is available from leading bookshops and CAMRA (see review above).

DRINKER!
Commentary

William's Woe

It has been estimated that short measure costs drinkers £383 million a year, or three breweries the size of Magor. The industry is ripping us off and the money they pay into Conservative Party funds looks to be well spent.

The very first law to reach the statute book was the Assize of Bread and Ale: "one measure shall there be throughout the land". It is still an important issue, perhaps too important to leave to politicians and their brewery paymasters.

"From 24th June 1700 publicans are required to retail and sell their ale and beer by the FULL ALE QUART or PINT, in vessels duly marked with WR and CROWN be they made of WOOD, GLASS, HORN, LEATHER or PEWTER."

William III

"Unless you'd rather not"

Elizabeth II

A Right Collection

A local landlord was overheard recently, bemoaning the number of charity collection boxes on his bar, after a tweedy lady had deposited yet another one on the bar.

"It's getting so you can't move for the things," he grumbled. "The other day, somebody asked for a pint of 'that lager over there' and I had to tell him that was the Sooty box for the blind."

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Further information on all aspects of Derby CAMRA can be had from David George or Rob Gilvary (see above).

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The town of Derby — we tend to forget these days that we've only been a city for 15 years — was blessed in 1893 with no less than four commercial breweries: Offilers on Whittaker Street, Altons in the Wardwick, Strettons on Ashbourne Road and the Derby Brewery on Nottingham Road. Offilers progressed by taking over small breweries such as Cavendish Bridge in 1896 and Matthew Hill of Cromford in 1914, remaining independent till 1965, when they sold out to Charringtons (now Bass).

The other three breweries became one around the turn of the century, as Strettons Derby Brewery Co., until taken over by Allsopps of Burton in 1927, later to become part of Ind Coope and latterly Carlsberg-Tetley.

The writing was on the wall for individual pub breweries, however, as

Time Was...

Good old Nick Meakin (Nick who?) — a Great Historian Bloke — casts a bleary eye over the Autumn of 1893 — 100 years ago.

the larger companies struggled for market share. Strettons in particular, embarked on an aggressive campaign of pub acquisitions. The last pub in Derby to brew its own ale (until recently) was the Exeter, in 1969.

Strettons lost a legal action for compensation against Derby Corporation for allowing the Ashbourne Road sewer to flood their cellars. This may account for the large amount of beer returned as bad by

landlords over the past year, resulting in poor financial results; shareholders complained that "£15,925 12s 9d profit is not satisfactory for a trading company." Hear, hear — resign!

Licensees were clearly not averse to augmenting their profits: the landlords of the Durham Ox, Morledge, the Sitwell Tavern and the Angel, Burton Road were all fined for watering their spirits. They'd probably had a visit from one John Lane, who got 14 days hard labour for stealing a quarter pint of whisky from the Gallant Hussar while the barman was out of the room. Well, it was his tenth offence.

November brought heavy snow and a tragedy: Mrs. Ann Eyre, 67, a widow, was found frozen to death in a ditch having left the Dolphin at 3.00 pm to walk home to Smalley, as she did every Saturday! Mrs. Gilbert, landlady of the Dolphin, swore that Mrs Eyre had only had one glass of beer before leaving, as the weather was turning nasty.

Perusing the small ads, Offilers Nourishing Stout could be had for 1s. 4d. a gallon in a "handy family container." If you were strapped for cash, Derby Brewery's A.K. Light Dinner Ale was only one shilling a gallon. If that took the shine off your gnashers, Cracrofts Arca Nut Tooth Paste would polish them up for a shilling a pot.

Situations vacant: Pianist and barmaid required for the Central Hotel, Market Place — apply William Boosey, proprietor!

"I Can Add Up" — Bass Head Brewer

Steve Denny, Head Brewer at Bass takes columnist, Ivor Clissold to task over his article about Bass's ingredients in the last issue of *Derby Drinker*.

"Dear Ivor, Imagine my surprise to read in Derby Drinker 47 that I needed to attend remedial arithmetic classes. I think perhaps it should be remedial use of the English language as I clearly failed to adequately express myself when answering the CAMRA questionnaire.

My, albeit, hazy recollection is that I was asked to specify the barley variety I use which is all (100%) Halcyon for Draught Bass. I was also asked to specify the grist composition which is 90% from Malted Halcyon barley and 10% from Maltose syrup. Confusing isn't it?

I shall fortify myself with a suitable intake of Draught Bass next time I fill in a questionnaire in the hopes that I can reach common accord with its author.

I hope this clarifies the position for you. Best wishes and cheers!

S T C Denny, Head Brewer, Bass

Oxygen's first effect is to produce acetaldehyde by oxidising the alcohol. This has a sharp, apple-like tang. The second reaction turns this into acetic acid: better known as vinegar.



Beer Boffin

answers your queries

But these reactions take time and if the cask is sold quickly enough they will not be detectable. But incessantly filtering back from the cask will steadily build up the contamination until complaints pile up and a whole cask has to be written off.

Many licensees find that efficient cellar management reduces beer wastage to a couple of pints a day, for which it is not worth the risk of contaminating a cask of good ale. And most punters would be happier to pay an extra copper a pint to see pull-offs poured down the sink. Ivor Clissold


Your piece about bad beer in the last layer of a barrel did not explain how some pubs manage to sell beer that tastes dodgy all evening.

Infected beer can arrive that way, but the infection is more likely to be the result of DIY.

A far too common reason for off flavours is the practice of filtering beer back into the cask. Breweries are ambivalent to this process, condemning it on one hand while issuing instructions on how to do it with the other.

There is always some wastage when changing to a new cask or after pulling warm beer through the pipes before opening time. Although this beer is sound it has picked up oxygen during dispense.

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Spot the CAMRA Member — Win £10



Six well known people and at least one of them is a member of CAMRA — but do you know which one? Just in case you don't recognise some of them they are: from top left: The Marquess of Bath, Ken Clarke, John Cleese, Danni Minogue, Ebbe Dinesen (Carlsberg-Teitley Deputy Managing Director) and Placido Domingo.



Just fill in your answer below and send your entry form to: **Spot the CAMRA Member, Derby Drinker, 62 Morningside Close, Allenton, Derby DE24 9JP.** There's a tenner for the first correct entry out of the hat on January 22nd.

The CAMRA Member is.....

Name.....

Address.....

Pub where you picked up your Derby Drinker.....

DERBY CAMRA DIARY

Everyone is welcome at Derby CAMRA socials and meetings. For more information about these events 'phone Sally Winterton on Derby 773459.

Tuesday Socials — from 9 pm

21st December — Silk Mill, Full Street, Derby (Whitbread). **28th December** — Exeter Arms, Exeter Place, Derby (Marstons). **4th January** — Flower Pot, King Street, Derby (Free House). **11th January** — Sun Inn, St Giles Road, Peartree (Kimberley). **18th January** — Kings Highway, Kingsway, Derby (Banks's). **25th January** — Portland, London Road, Wilmorton (S&N/Home). **1st February** — Royal Oak, Ockbrook (Free House / Bass). **8th February** — Woodlark, Bridge Street, Derby (Free House / Adnams).

Branch Meetings — 8 pm

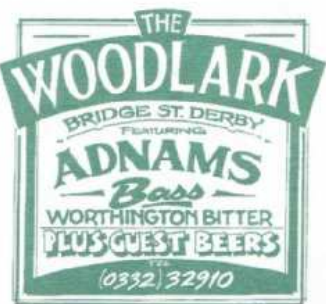
Thursday 13th January — The Abbey, Darley Abbey (Sam Smiths). **Thursday 17th February** — Norman Arms, Village Street, Derby (Normanton / Sunnyside) (S&N/Home).

SOLUTION 47

S	O	U	T	H	W	O	L	D	E
	W	A	K	E	F	I	E	L	D
W	E	A	S	T	O	N	R	I	
E	A		U		O	B	A	N	
M	M	R	J	E	R	S	E	Y	B
A		D	D	E	V	I	Z	E	S
S	P	I	C	K	E	R	I	N	G
H	F		Y	D	R	K		G	
A	F		E	X	E	T	E	R	H
M	A	N	C	H	E	S	T	E	R

Winner of last time's little brain teaser is Martin Savage of Ashby de la Zouch who picked up his Derby Drinker in his favourite pub, the Staff of Life at Ticknall. A tenner will soon be on its way!

I needed a pint after picking out Martin's card from 112 entries. The Alexandra tipped the Brunswick as our competitor's favourite pub by 12 votes to 11 — both way ahead of any others. (Not that these votes mean anything — Ed!)



Baynton's Blisters

Walk 5: Markeaton — Vicarwood — Meynell Langley — Markeaton.

Real ale drinkers do not usually venture too near noisy children's playgrounds some distance from a friendly bar. This walk, however, starts from the Mundy Play Centre car park at Markeaton Park.



Shutting our ears to the screeching of tiny people at play we leave the car park, turn right and proceed along the lane which is a short way along the road to the left. This leads past Markeaton Stones Farm, and turns into a green lane which we follow through a gate and wind up and down to a tarmac farm road. We now turn left and climb the open road towards the distant trees and Upper Vicarwood Farm. On a hot day you will be visualising the cool lunchtime pints as you march up the road. There are also good views to the North of Derby. We pass through the farmyard on to a rough farm track leading on. Beyond the woods on our right, but sadly out of sight, is Kedleston Hall. We emerge eventually on the Kirk Langley / Kedleston Lane and turn left. A little way up the road by Meynell Langley Lodge we turn into a field by a footpath sign and an old pill box. We follow the hedge through a number of fields on our way back to Markeaton.

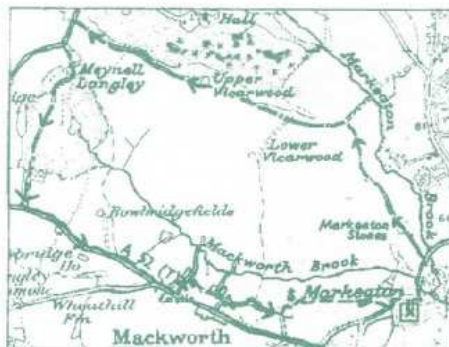
In Summer you will be waist high in yellow Rape plants; what a pretty photograph this made... the boys and girls of CAMRA half hidden

in the rolling fields of Derby. You will eventually see a farm on the opposite hillside. Head to the left of this after crossing Mackworth Brook by a small bridge. If you navigated correctly you will emerge through a stile on to the Ashbourne Road. Turn left along the main road to a left turn leading to Mackworth Village. Walk through the village past the ancient gateway of Mackworth Castle to reach Mackworth Church. At the front of the church we come to a dilapidated kissing-gate that leads to a well worn footpath leading back across the fields to Markeaton Village and the car park.

Keeping to a theme of natural beauty, now get in your car and head for the floral delights of the Woodlark in Bridge Street and its charming pub garden. As the Adnams ale slowly creeps down your veins, your eyes feast on the wondrous flower arrangements and all is well!

Rambling Les Baynton

Written with Summer in mind but I'm sure equally satisfying on a bright Winter's day — Ed



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BY ROB



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