



KEEPING YOU INFORMED ABOUT YOUR BEER

ISSUE No. 49

EARLY SPRING 1994

FREE

HOME AND AWAY...

CROSS-CHANNEL BREWS BAD NEWS

by Nick Meakin

The trade in cheap beer brought back by cross-channel trippers to France is still growing. No-one knows exactly what the figures are but all agree that the total amount is making significant inroads into British beer sales. One estimate from French sources is that British people brought back 400 million litres of beer in 1993. If true, this represents a staggering 2.4 million barrels, equivalent to over six per cent of British beer production. The Brewers' Society stated recently that up to a fifth of all beer drunk in British homes over the Christmas period had been bought in France, by Britons taking advantage of the deregulation of border controls.

The reason, of course is price. Because of lower duty rates in France, beer costs up to 75% less to buy on the continent. Derby may be rather a long way from Dover to contemplate nipping across to Calais just to stock up for a party, as people in the Southeast now do regularly but some of that beer is still turning up in this area, as black marketeers cash in. Customs and Excise officers have made a number of seizures in Derbyshire recently, as people try to offload their illicit beer through car boot sales, markets and even pubs. A vanload of beer can turn a tidy profit and undercover investigators working for the Brewers' Society recently logged no less than 119 vans setting off from Calais in one 24-hour period. The amounts of beer they contained made it fairly obvious that it wasn't just for personal consumption! A party of MP's on a fact-finding trip was shocked to discover pressurised kegs of Stella Artois being sold openly - only a pub or club would have the specialist equipment to

dispense these. In practice, the only risk the bootleggers run is being stopped by Kent Police on the M2 for having an overladen vehicle. After that, they disperse all over the country, where local Customs and Excise officers try to trace the beer as it is re-sold illegally.

UK duty rates on beer are the second highest in the European Community, after Ireland. France's are among the lowest. Unless the Chancellor acts to harmonise duty rates, the trade in cross-channel booze will continue to grow, posing an added threat to small and rural pubs, already beleaguered by brewery rent increases and the growing take-home market. Since 1979, sales of beer through pubs have fallen by 25% overall and the likelihood of cheaper cross-channel fares after the Channel Tunnel opens in May will only encourage the trade in cheap beer.

Before the Autumn Budget, the Independent Family Brewers Association of Britain pledged to

match any reduction in duty with an equal reduction in the wholesale price of beer, in an attempt to stem the flow. Their plea fell on partly-deaf ears — the Chancellor didn't increase beer duty — but then he didn't decrease it either. Perhaps in his next budget, Mr. Clarke, who likes a pint himself, may be persuaded to take action, before we drown in "le cheap fizz francais."

HEINZ HAD 57!

Mark Robbins of the Alexandra Hotel claims to have served 619 draught beers last year, while next door, at the Brunswick Inn, Trevor Harris got through 708!

Just for a bit of fun, we asked them both to name their choices of "Beers of the Year." What they came up with should set some conversations going. What do you think?

"Quaffing" Bitter: Butcombe Bitter (Mark), Cheriton Pots Ale (Trevor). **Best Bitter:** Bridge-water Coppernob, Timothy Taylors Landlord. **Strong Bitter:** Bathams XXX, Kelham Island Pale Rider. **Mild:** Cains, Arkells Mash Tun Mild. **Stout:** Both agreed: Freeminers Deep Shaft. **Porter:** Pioneer Zulu, Brunswick Railway Porter (surprise, surprise). **Christmas Ale:** Coach Houses Three Kings, Hook Norton Twelve days (though it only took Trevor 12 hours to sell it!). **Speciality beer:** Caledonian Golden Promise Organic Beer and Eldridge Pope Old Spiced Ale (Mark) and Enville Ale (Trevor) in which honey was used instead of sugars in the brewing process.

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NEWS

Money, Money, Money...

Pat and Marilyn Dare have left the **Coach and Horses** at Horsley after 30 years in the pub following their refusal to sign a new lease which would have massively increased their rent. Pubs (and not just Marston's pubs) are being assessed on potential rather than performance. "Potential" includes food and entertainment.

The Tiger, Lock-up Yard, Derby has been extended and has a mid-week, early evening cheap beer (£1.10/pint) policy.

Ansells are about to spend £100,000 on **Mr. Jorrock's** and re-name it **The George**. Other pubs having some alterations include the **Liversage**, Old Nottingham Road, Derby and the **Malt Shovel**, Aston on Trent.

More Beer

The **Ram Inn**, Bridge Street, Derby is due to re-open shortly serving a range of real ales including Brunswick Brewing Company beers. With the Woodlark next door this will make a great area for drinking.

The **Prince of Wales**, Butterley, Ripley has re-opened after being closed for five years. They have four beers on handpump including Pedigree, Bass and Theakstons.

The **Vulcan Arms**, St Thomas Road, Peartree, Derby has Theakstons XB on handpump. Its something we're likely to see more of as Scottish & Newcastle, owners of Home Ales and Theakstons push XB as a national brand.

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Congratulations

To Jean and Alf Whitehurst who have now been at the Sir Robert Peel, Wellington Street, Derby for 40 years.

With the pub up for sale they didn't expect to be there still. Hang on in there and well done!

DRINKER Comment

Did You See...

Poor old Ron Winn. BBC2's "Midlands Report" in January did a sort of pub-swap experiment, teaming him up with a karaoke Elvis from the Blue Peter in Alvaston. Ron has been a regular at the Wagon & Horses in Bleasby, Notts. for 50 years and, confronted by a city pub, his face gave the appearance of having just been beamed up to Mars!

But is there really a world of difference between today's customer-hungry pub and the traditional focal point of the community?

According to Neil Scourse, a brewing industry analyst, Ron shouldn't be drinking in the Wagon & Horses, as "the small or back-street pub is no longer able to support a man and his wife"

I suppose old Ron could put his teeth in and give us a song at the Blue Peter or ogle the boobs at the Duke of Devonshire but oh, no, Ron; you can't just wander into your local, regular as clockwork and have your pint in front of you before you've even asked for it and have a quiet conversation about the matters of concern to your community. Why not?

"Entertainment keeps the customers coming," said the man from Bass. "Social changes are affecting the pub as they have done for centuries," said another brewing expert. "Hogsheads," say I.

The programme hit the nail on the head when it suggested that rent increases and a decrease in trade were to blame.

Trade has decreased, not only due to cheap take-home beer from the hypermarket, whether in Kingsway or Calais but also because of never-ending price-rises ahead of inflation, for which there are only two reasons; the ridiculous levels of duty levied by our government and the current tendency of brewers and pub chains to try and squeeze blood out of a stone in the form of new tenancy agreements and increased rents.

Pat and Marilyn Dare, lately of the Coach & Horses at Horsley refused to sign a new agreement. To have done so would have meant turning a village local at the heart of the community into a restaurant or importing some other such diversion to pull in the masses from far and wide. That or go bust. Luckily, after 30 years at the pub, they had a house to move to — many, many others have not.

Those who have no option use whatever gimmick they can to feed their company's greed and stave off bankruptcy, whilst those very same brewers blame it all on taxes, social changes, a desire to be entertained — anything but their rents.

Such hypocrisy!

Dave George

Certainly, Sir

Licensees happy to give a top-up!

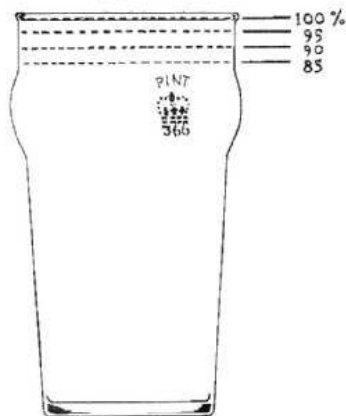
Following the publication of Brewers' Society Guidelines it is now, more than ever, acceptable to request that your pint be topped up.

The guidelines state that you should be served (in a brim measure glass) with at least 95% liquid and that, should you request it, a top-up to a full pint should be given "with good grace". Most licensees, including many who are desperate for your custom, are quite happy to top-up your pint and don't view you as complainers, moaners etc.; just customers who are there to be pleased.

If you find a pub which won't give you what you want there may be a case for reporting them to Trading Standards, who, we understand, have several prosecutions in the offing.

Where less than 95% (see diagram) is given and you are refused a top-up, Derby CAMRA will take up your case.

Employing "kitchen sink" technology we have arrived at some measurements:-



95% of a brim measure glass is around 7mm below the brim; 90% is about half an inch below and 85% is roughly 20mm below. Don't let them pinch half an inch — if the pint you are served is half an inch below the brim (in a brim measure glass) — and you are refused a top-up (with good grace!) you have cause for complaint — let us know.

Twelve Months after the Event

Derbyshire Ale has been re-launched, just a year after the Monopolies & Mergers Commission deadline. This launch, by virtue of the inclusion of the 1994 Supplement, covers the major changes concerning pubs in the county caused by the MMC upheaval. Never before have so many pubs changed ownership and/or brands of beer as in the last 18 months.

New purchasers of the guide get the 1994 supplement for no extra charge. The supplement by itself costs 50p.

For that sum, there is also information on 7 new gazetteer entries (Denby, Eyam, Heath, Owl Bar, Pilsley (near Bakewell), Snake Inn and Whitehough), though 2 entries, Bolehill and Wensley, have, regrettably, been lost.

The supplement, which includes a map of the county and grid references for all entries, gives useful data on 283 pubs. Of these, 117 are new entries and 20 are losses, the remainder being revised entries in terms of name, ownership, brew or other local detail.

New entries increase the coverage

of the guide and supplement to nearly 900 selected pubs in 297 places. To put this into perspective, Derbyshire Ale, with the 1994 supplement, contains nearly nine times the number of Derbyshire pubs that appear in the current Good Beer Guide and, at £2.95, it is less than half the price.

Derbyshire Ale and the 1994 supplement, published jointly by the Burton, Derby, Chesterfield, High Peak, Nottingham and Sheffield branches of CAMRA are both available from local bookshops and newsagents, as well as from Norman Ratcliffe, 7, Strutts Park House, Chevin Road, Derby, DE1 3EX.

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**July 13 - 17
Assembly Rooms**

*Make a note in
your diary*



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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 Roaring Twenties — beer was sixpence a pint and a pair of Celanese knickers was four and six in Barlow Taylor's sale. At the Picture House in Babington Lane, "The Prisoner of Zenda" was showing ("Notwithstanding the enormous expense attached to this production — prices as usual.") An 8-roomed house in Chaddesden would set you back £450, similar in more fashionable Spondon would rush you an extra £20. The papers carried daily reports of Howard Carter's sensational excavation of the tomb of Tutankhamun at Luxor — already wild stories were being peddled about an ancient curse striking down those desecrating the pharaoh's last resting place. Derby County went out of the F.A. Cup to Newcastle in the 3rd. Round. Not a lot changes, really.

Back in those days, we still had an empire and Bass got the contract to supply beer to the British Empire Exhibition in London. The Old Bell in Sadlergate announced the

Time Was...

Thoroughly modern Nick Meakin adjusts his homburg and steps back 70 years to 1924

opening of their new Buffet, Oyster and Snack Saloon. "Waiter, I have a complaint — last night I had six oysters and only four of them worked!" (Well, it wasn't such an old joke in 1924 . . .) Officers advertised their Nut Brown as "Jolly Good Ale." Why can't we get back to such honest simplicity? The Matlock Licensed Victualler's Association petitioned the Brewster Sessions to amend Sunday licensing hours — Matlock opened 6 pm to 9 pm on Sunday evenings, while everywhere else opened from 7 pm till 10 pm. The plea was rejected after an impassioned speech from the Rev.

G. H. Russell, a well-known figure in the local temperance movement.

Shrove Tuesday Football at Ashbourne saw the ball "turned up" by the Duke of Devonshire, watched by "thousands" of spectators. Rather a contrast to today, since all-day opening means that the event is less of a draw than it used to be when Shrovetide was the only day in the year on which you could legally drink all afternoon! After an epic struggle in deep snow, the ball was eventually goaled at Clifton by Joseph Harrison.

Poor George Tyler of Darley-lane was sentenced to four weeks' hard labour after admitting his 36th offence of being drunk and disorderly. In mitigation, he said he hadn't been the same since he was gassed in 1917!

WINTER WARMERS

The Brunswick Inn, Station Approach, are holding their second "Winter Warmer" week, starting on Friday, 18th. February, for as long as stocks last. Brunswick Old Vicarage Ale (o.g. 1074), dedicated to Graham and Mary Holbrow of the Old Vicarage School, Darley Abbey, will make its debut.

"It's the first beer dedicated to members of the teaching profession," claimed proprietor Trevor Harris, "for turning our son, Paul, into a human being."

With help from Bruce Wilkinson at Burton Bridge Brewery, 864 pints will be available in limited edition pint bottles.

What's the difference between a barrel and a tub? Are they different terms for the same thing?

The accepted terminology for beer containers differentiates between casks (for draught beers) and kegs (for keg beers and lagers).

The usual definition of a tub is an open, flat-bottomed vessel; but it is sometimes colloquially used in the south east Midlands to describe a cask.

Although casks are commonly called barrels, a barrel is one of several sizes.

Hogshead: 52 gallons. Barrel: 36 gallons. Kilderkin: 18 gallons. Firkin: 9 gallons. Pin: 4.5 gallons.

Sneaking metrication has seen two further sizes introduced recently of 11 and 22 gallons: near as dammit 50 and 100 litres.



The Beer Boffin
answers your queries

The hogshead is, alas, not much seen these days. Holt's Brewery of Manchester is about the last to use them. Other brewers are getting jumpy even about barrels since Health and Safety regulations began to be applied to cellars. The problem is not so much dropping the casks into the cellar, but having to extricate a full one that needs to be returned: a 37 stone (240 kg) hogshead takes some handling.

Keg beer containers are sized at 11 gallons.

When licensees or brewers talk of turnover and output, they talk in terms of barrels (36 gallons). So a pub selling 20 kilderkins a week is referred to as a 10 barrel pub.

Ivor Clissold

Send your queries to *The Beer Boffin* at *Derby Drinker*, 62 Morningside Close, Allenton, Derby. Go on, put our expert to the test!

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So, get your thinking caps on and send us your ideas. We'll publish a selection of the best and send a tenner to the person who's caption most tickles the editorial team.

Just fill in your caption below and send your entry form to: Caption, Derby Drinker, 62 Morningside Close, Allenton, Derby DE24 9JP by 19th March.

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

22nd February - Dolphin, Queen Street, Derby (Bass). **1st March** - White Swan, Littleover (Carlsberg-Tetley). **8th March** - Gate Inn, Swanwick (Courage). **15th March** - The Friargate, Friargate, Derby (Hoskins). **22nd March** - Rose and Crown, Nottingham Road, Ripley (Carlsberg-Tetley). **29th March** - Corner Pin, Chellaston (Carlsberg-Tetley). **5th April** - Smithfield, Meadow Road, Derby (Bass). **12th April** - York Tavern, York Street, Derby (Free House).

Branch Meetings - 8 pm

Thursday 10th March - AGM at the Station Inn, Midland Road, Derby. **Thursday 14th April** - Brunswick Inn, Station Approach, Derby (Free House).

WINNER!

Well, we were underwhelmed with entries this time. Most of you spotted that Ken Clarke is a member (I'd hate to think what would become of our pubs if he were NOT on OUR side!) although we did get some other answers. Now we're not saying that the Marquess of Bath or Plácido Domingo are not CAMRA members — they are just not the answer we wanted.

And the winner is **Mr P O'Shaughnessy** of Waingroves Road, Ripley who picked up his Derby Drinker in the Smith's Tavern in Ashbourne. A tenner will shortly be on its way to you, sir.

Caption

Name

Address

Pub where you picked up your *Derby Drinker*

A Derwent Classic

Roving reporter, John Carrington reaches parts of the area other writers don't.

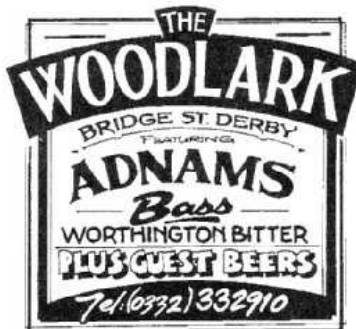
Travelling out along the A6 towards Matlock, the 17th century traveller would stop a while at an old inn at Whatstandwell; The Bulls Head. The horses would be changed and re-shod at the forge next to the inn, fresh horses would be collected from the field and the travellers would be refreshed with ale served by the landlord. The next day the coach driver would pay a toll to cross the river and the coach would be gone. The tolls were collected by a chap called Walter Standwell, after whom the bridge was named, so legend has it.

Nowadays the horse has been replaced by the car and the present innkeepers are Barrie and Marietta Jackson. The old forge is still next door looking like a private house and the price of crossing the bridge comes in the form of a small paper disc with a Swansea address. the name of the inn changed around the turn of the century to the Derwent Hotel but it is still popular with travellers and walkers en route to Matlock and beyond. Kimberley Classic is served by handpump and there is an outdoor play area and pet's corner for the kids.

As in days of old when the greedy sheriff would demand ever increasing taxes from the poor hard working serfs, so it was with Barrie and Marietta. Two years ago they were 'tilling the land' at the Swan and Salmon in Alfreton when the Intentrepreneur Sheriff demanded more than twice the annual taxes. Deciding enough was enough, they moved lock, stock and handpump to the Derwent Hotel where changes were made for the better! A happy ending ...

BREWS NEWS

Another new brewer, High Peak Brewery, have launched their first brew — Bagman's Bitter. It's being brewed at Lloyds Brewery at Ingleby whilst they seek premises.



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