



KEEPING YOU INFORMED ABOUT YOUR BEER

ISSUE No. 73 CHRISTMAS '98/NEW YEAR '99 FREE

CITY OF CHOICE

Survey confirms "Real Ale Capital" status

The biggest survey of Derby pubs ever undertaken in one night has confirmed Derby's status as "Real Ale Capital" of Britain and led to claims that nowhere in the world has so much choice.

Over 40 members took part in a survey of 63 pubs on a cold, wet and windy Tuesday night at the back end of October. What they found was an astonishing 119 different real ales on sale in the city. Amazingly those 119 beers could have been found in just 33 pubs.

The widest choice was at the **Flowerpot** (12 beers), followed

by the **Alexandra** (11), **Brunswick** (11), **White Swan** (9) and the **Friargate**, **Smithfield** and **Silk Mill** (8 each). A further 8 pubs were selling 5 or more beers.

£1.72 Average

If a pint of each beer in each pub had been consumed the surveyors would have downed 231 pints between them. They managed to

note the price of 160 of them and the quality of 80. The average price was £1.72 per pint with the cheapest being Blackdown Porter at the **Ram Inn** and the dearest being Kelham Island Grande Pale Ale at the **Friargate**. Apart from special beers and strong expensive ones it is reassuring to know that you can find Mansfield Bitter for £1.20 in the **Noah's Ark** and Sam Smith's Old Brewery Bitter for £1.23 at the **Abbey**.

More Pedigree than Bass

Marston's Pedigree has overtaken Bass as the most widely available beer in town. 41 pubs were serving it compared with only 13 selling Bass. Tetley Bitter was available in 7 pubs while Courage Director's, Fuller's London Pride and Worthington Cask were all to be had in 5 pubs.

Quality - can do better

Of the 80 beers whose quality was noted 33 were within 10 per cent of average, 28 were more than 10 per cent above average and 19 more than 10 per cent below average. Only 4 were deemed "superb" and only 3 were "almost undrinkable". Conclusion? A lot of average beer - we'd like to drink more "superb" beer please.

6 per cent short

On a more encouraging note; of the 48 pints where the measure was noted only 3 were recorded as short measure - 6.25% or 1 pint in 16. That's still too many but it's up to you to make sure you get a full pint of liquid to persuade more brewers and licensees to follow Bass' lead and give us what we pay for.

Grape & Grain get the taste



Members of Derby University's Grape and Grain Society at a recent 'beer tasting' at the New Zealand Arms organised by Derby CAMRA. There were prizes (of beer) for those who were nearest to putting 8 beers in order of strength.

Derby CAMRA's web site editor, Graham Smith knew all the answers - he was serving!

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NEWS

Marstons keep Wolves at bay?

Burton brewer, Marstons, may have averted a takeover bid by Midlands rivals Wolverhampton and Dudley (Banks's) by selling their tied estate of 549 tenanted pubs to Japanese bankers Nomura in a £137 million deal. The pubs will be run by the Criterion pub group.

Shareholders can expect a £60 million dividend if they approve the deal. *Will this be enough to keep the wolves at bay?*

Wetherspoon's U-turn

JD Wetherspoon who own the **Standing Order** and **Babington Arms**, Derby have called off their full pint promotion which left customers confused over their "5% more" offer. Does that now mean 5 per cent less beer per pint?

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S'wonderful- a winner & a first for Littleover

It's been a great year so far (CAMRA mistakes apart) for Kevin & Alison Neale of the **White Swan**, Littleover.

They started by winning £300 in a 'First Impressions' competition run by Allied Domecq Inns (Midlands); but beat this taking the top award (and a handsome cheque) in a national campaign to find the Company's best-kept cellar. At the same time the White Swan couple also achieved the highest UK beer sales for any of the Company's pubs.

Given the many thousands of licensees involved - Allied Domecq has nearly 1500 such pubs in the Midlands alone - this was a terrific achievement for them and their staff. Kevin and Alison duly received the *Master of Cellarcraft* award from Tommy Docherty (former Rams manager), last month at Tetleys' Leeds brewery.

Though the White Swan is their first pub neither Kevin nor Alison are strangers to the 'trade'. Alison's father was head brewer for Everards, her brother is head brewer at Morlands and Kevin has worked on the engineering side of Everards.

In January 1995 they had the choice of the Swan or the Masons' Arms, Mickleover. The Swan won out because it represented more of a challenge. It was, Kevin says, 'rather tired'. Gradually they have turned the pub round, and in so



doing have also earned a well-deserved reputation for beer quality. One recognition of this was the Branch's selection of the White Swan for inclusion in the 1999 CAMRA *Good Beer Guide* - a first for any Littleover pub. A great pity then that for reasons unknown the Guide didn't include the entry.

Kevin's favourite beer is Ind Coope Burton Ale (though admitting that Pedigree comes a close second). Unsurprisingly therefore he staunchly advocates retaining the CAMRA prize-winner in Allied's portfolio. A further distinction won, but yet to be presented, is that of the *Cask Marque*. This is an award made by an independent body of brewers & pub owners, after a series of unannounced, and demanding, assessments (seeking 'the perfect pint') which continue beyond the point of an award.

Kevin's interest in beer quality extends to an involvement with the Brewer's Guild. On their behalf next January he is giving a joint presentation to the Institute of Brewing on 'The Relevance of Quality to the Licensed Trade' at Kimberley brewery; or as Kevin might put it 'on good cellar practice from the horse's mouth'.

Back at the Swan there are changes planned for 1999 to

improve and extend the food side of the business and increase the range of guest beers that can be served.

It's plain that in their four years in Littleover, the Neales have also won a lot of friends among the locals as well as the respect and custom of discerning drinkers from a broader catchment. A case, perhaps, of being 'just what The Doc ordered' - for Derby CAMRA as well.

(Photo courtesy Allied Domecq Inns)

LITTLEOVER

WHITE SWAN

Shepherd Street (off Burton Rd. near village centre)

☎ (01332) 766481.

11 - 11.11.10.30 Sun

Ansell's Bitter; Ind Coope Burton Ale; Marston's Pedigree; Tetley Bitter; guest beers H

Down-to-earth local converted to Festival Ale House, providing boost to trade. Licensee (from family of brewers) keeps choice range of guest beers, many well outside usual Carlsberg-Tetley list. Good-sized car park at rear. Disabled access at side entrance.

NEWS

Full pints here

Wetherspoons may have cocked-up their full pint promotion but if you want a guaranteed pint of liquid try the **Silk Mill**, Full Street or the **Station Inn**, Midland Road both in Derby, any Kimberley pub using electric, metered dispense or any Banks's pub. Bass recently told a television audience it was going to guarantee its customers a full pint of liquid. Any more?

Name changes

The **Golden Eagle**, Agard Street, Derby has been renamed the **Captain Blake** after a local benefactor who ran a boys club in the street many years ago. Not so relevant is the change from **PJ Peppers to Casa** - that's the Irongates Tavern, Derby to you and me. It sells Liefie Blond at £1.47 a HALF.

Ex-Rams re-open Waggon & Horses

Ex-Rams stars Gerry Daly, Roger Davies, John O'Hare, David Nish and Jeff Bourne officially re-opened the **Waggon and Horses**, Ashbourne Road, Derby after a £120,000 re-vamp including a Derby County room.

Alteration anger

The **Malt Shovel** at Aston have angered locals with their plans to make internal alterations which they say will alter the character of the pub.

Burton Bridge expands

Burton Bridge Brewery have opened their third pub - the **Devonshire** - just outside the gates of Bass' Ind Coope Brewery.

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Duke Street, Derby



Kimberley Mild, Bitter and Classic

Derby Drinker

Derby Drinker is distributed free of charge to pubs in and around the city. Published by the Derby Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale and printed by J.M. Tatler & Son Ltd., Abbey Street Works, Derby.

Edited by David George, 72 Meynell Street, Derby DE23 6NH ☎ /FAX 01332 770209.

e-mail: derby.camra@dial.pipex.com

Web site:

<http://ds.dial.pipex.com/derby.camra/>

Advertising rates are - front page £35, back and inside pages £30. Discounts for payment in advance

Advertising Manager: Stephen Boa, 44 Duke Street, Derby ☎ 01332 331854

Distribution: Martin Wain ☎ 01332 735128

Copy deadline for the next issue, due to be published mid February is 20th January 1999

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Useful Contacts

CAMRA: 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts. AL1 4LW Tel: 01727 867201

Trading Standards: Derby City Council, Celtic House, Friary Street, Derby Tel: 01332 293111. Derbyshire County Council, County Hall, Matlock DE4 3AG Tel: 01629 580000

Advertising Standards Authority: Brook House, 2-16 Torrington Place London WC1E 7HN

Local Authorities to get licensing powers?

Derbyshire Police Chief John Newing favours proposals for local authorities to grant drinks licences as long as magistrates' courts still hear appeals against granting a licence.

Dolphin in CAMRA's historic inventory

There are many pubs in the country whose buildings are as old as Derby's Old Dolphin but most of them have been ruined in the last 30 years by having their guts ripped out and many rooms have been crudely converted into a single open space.

The Dolphin retains its unique arrangement not only as a pub with a snug and many other rooms but you can still see where it has covered in a street. Although it has seen changes since it was rescued by Officers in the 1920's it is that restoration which now survives as a fine example of an inter-wars refurbishment of an older building.

Dave King, Retail Business Manager of Bass Taverns who operate the Old Dolphin has given assurances that the "quaint character" of the Dolphin will be protected and he promises a beer garden to replace the current rear car park.

The full Inventory of Great Historic Pubs can be seen on pp 29-33 of the 1999 **Good Beer Guide**. Derbyshire is fortunate in having 5 entries. Three of them; the **Barley Mow** at Kirk Ireton, the **Old Gate** at Brassington and the **Three Stags Heads** at Wardlow Mires are also listed for their good beer so they are especially worth a visit.

Now that the Inventory of the very finest historic pub interiors is

in its second edition the campaign is looking out for all the remaining pubs which retain interesting historic features, but may not be totally unaltered. If your local has still got its original rooms or etched glass windows or outside toilets or a nicely panelled lounge or some other interesting features and it's not in the National Inventory please ring Julian Tubbs on 01332-701152. If you know of one which you don't go to because there's no real ale we still need to know about it.

Hours row rumbles on

Managers of pubs owned by Bass Leisure and Retail are threatening to strike after being instructed to open on Christmas Night. It is normally left to the manager's discretion. *I can think of better pubs to visit if your Bass local is closed.*

Millennium opening

Meanwhile, it looks like 39 hours open for pubs at the millennium - that's 11 am New Year's Eve to 11 pm New Year's Day. Legislation is expected to be pushed through parliament to avoid mass extension applications. Wetherspoons pubs, however, will shut at 8 pm so staff can celebrate elsewhere.

Threat to traditional City Pubs

Proposed new licensing regulations in York have been slammed by the Brewers and Licensed Retailers Association.

Seventeen New regulations are proposed by York City Council, York Police and York licensing magistrates. They are described by St. Albans planning guru and CAMRA stalwart Peter Lerner as "likely to result in the hasty demise of the traditional pub in a city where the traditional pub has survived, so far".

The worthy aim of the regulations is to cut down on violence in pubs and maintain the quality of the venues' design, which means that they want to create a more European cafe bar culture.

Apres le Waterfall c'est le deluge (as Louis XIV nearly said). Thank God for the Noah's Ark say others.

Julian Tubbs

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Name(s)

Address

Post Code

Signed..... Date

Please send your remittance (payable to CAMRA Ltd.) with this completed application form to: Tim Williams, 39 Breedon Hill Road, Derby

Quality postcards launched

CAMRA, the Campaign for real Ale, has launched a major new initiative to promote high quality beer in Britain's pubs.

Drinkers will be supplied with postcards like the one on the right to complete when they visit a pub. They can be sent (with a stamp on please) to:

Research Department,
Campaign for Real Ale, 230
Hatfield Road, St. Albans,
Herts. AL1 4LW.

Mike Benner, CAMRA's Head of Campaigns said, "It's a positive move for drinkers to let brewers know about pubs which are cutting corners on beer quality. Real Ale needs careful care and preparation in the pub cellar to make sure of a decent pint."

"The postcards will help us build a clearer picture of the extent of poor quality real ale and enable us to make sure brewers get the

Real Ale Quality Report

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



Date of visit:

Name & Address of pub:

Name of Brewery & Beer(s):

Quality of beer: Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Okay ☐ Disappointing ☐ Undrinkable ☐

Tick box

Problem with beer: Vinegary ☐ Cloudy ☐ Too fresh ☐ Flat ☐ Other off flavours ☐

Tick box

Other

Beer was returned & replaced: Yes ☐ No ☐ Beer was left on, despite complaint: Yes ☐ No ☐

General response by bar staff: Good ☐ Okay ☐ Poor ☐

I chose not to complain ☐

Name & Address of customer:

customer's views on their products. It's in the hands of the brewers to contact offending pubs and make sure they clean up their act."

The results could also highlight good quality real ale. Mike

Benner added, "The national brewers have gone to great lengths to publicise the decline in real ale sales and this suits their strategies of building the profile of their smooth flow beers which need little care in the pub, but lack the depth of flavour offered by real ale. I believe this campaign will show that real ale quality has never been better and that their strategies are misguided."

Completed postcards, or forms such as the one on this page, received by CAMRA's national headquarters will be sent on to the appropriate head brewers.

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the Flowerpot and the Smithfield

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Good Beer Guide 1999

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- Information on all Britain's breweries and the real ales they produce, from giants like Bass and Whitbread to the newest micros like Scatter Rock Brewery in Devon and Iris Rose Brewery in the Highlands. There are no less than 42 new breweries in the 1999 edition.
- Hard-hitting features on CAMRA's campaigning year, the pub design awards, the craft of brewing and who owns our pubs.

The Good Beer Guide is the book no beer lover can afford to be without and is ideal for holidays, business trips, days in the country or nights on the town.

Available from all good bookstores or direct from your local CAMRA branch, it is still priced at only £10.99. It's the perfect gift - or why not treat yourself to the beer drinkers bible!



Copies are also available direct and post-free from CAMRA at:
230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans Herts AL1 4LW
(cheques made payable to CAMRA; credit card sales on (01727) 867201).

Dewdrop Treat

The East Midlands 1997 Pub of the Year, the Dewdrop Inn, Station Street, Ilkeston is to hold a Christmas Beer Festival from December 18th to 20th. Eighteen beers will be featured. Tel: 0115 944 4385 for details.

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