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AUTUMN 2003

FREE

Haywood Brewery gathers momentum

Derbyshire's newest craft brewery at Callow Top near Ashbourne, is getting its ale around somewhat. Haywood Brewery is progressing well with one four-barrel brew per week, helped along with the aid of a

qualified chemist. Derby beer festival took the two beers Bad Ram Ale and Dr Johnson's. They also appeared at Peterborough beer festival as well as being one of the tastiest at the popular, 90-plus beers

Dolphin festival in Derby. A couple of Ashbourne pubs have taken the Haywood brews and one north London inn has also featured them. The brewers are considering extending the plant and installing a bottling line.

Greyhound Beer festival



The Greyhound in Friar Gate is enjoying a new lease of life under the expert guidance of Matt Radbourne, formerly mine host at the Old Silk Mill, where he helped make a food-driven pub a place to drink a wide range of real ales.

Matt has become manager for Jim Harris of the Dolphin, and has installed Deuchers IPA, a former Champion Beer of Britain and Adnams Bitter alongside the Bass and Pedigree at the Greyhound. Guest beers have also been a feature with Abbot, Inverlmond Celtic Black and Thrappldouser amongst the recent residents.

For the continental beer fan Hoegarden is available on draught. Now the Greyhound will stage a beer festival

from 2nd-4th October. There will be around 30 ales on offer, plus six festival specials are being brewed, including two from Tower at Burton. Food is served 12-7, with an Indian BBQ from 7pm. On the Saturday there is the usual free bus to Pride Park for the Rams v West Ham (first come first served). Matt said: "Match day trade has trebled at the pub, it really buzzes". Entertainment is Arthur Billington (Thur), DJs Jimmy Jewel and Stevie Weavie (Fri) and Leavon Archer on Saturday. Dining is highly recommended also as Matt and Jim seek to build the reputation of what has always been an attractive looking pub, and these days has some great cask ale to sup as well.

Microbrews galore in cask ale gain at Mickleover's brave Robin

The Robin at Devonshire Drive, Mickleover has become a haven for microbrewery guest ales under the guidance of David and Mary Snape. They have been at the pub for a year after formerly running the Hunting Tower Arms at Grantham, where they regularly had Newby Wyke microbrewery beers on the bar - the brewer Rob Marsh was a regular in their pub. On at the Robin, when the editor called, were Cotleigh Tawny Bitter and Grand Union Gold.

Forthcoming beers for the autumn include Wolf Coyote, Buffy Hopleaf, Hebridean Celtic Black, O'Hanlon's Red, Thrappldouser from Inverlmond and Goffs White Knight, amongst many others.

The Unique Pubco-owned Robin has constantly changing independent beers from the SIBA list and although David

admits it can be difficult to get some regulars to shift from Bass and Pedigree, he hopes to install two more handpumps shortly and expand the guest range.

All in all it's well worth the trip up to Mickleover to sample the choice on offer at the Robin, in what represents a brave move by the licensees to encourage variety and choice.

David & Mary
welcome you to

THE ROBIN

Devonshire Drive
Mickleover

Always two changing
independent guest beers from
the SIBA list

plus Bass & Pedigree

Home style cooked food

Thu/Fri/Sat lunch 12-2, same
evenings 6-8.30

Sun lunch 12-2.30

Play area/beer garden
large car park

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Jan and Steve
City Pub of the Year 2001

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CAPTION COMPETITION

Dear Ed

Sitting around on a hot summers night drinking Olde Tripe (sic) we decided to kick around one or two captions for the picture of Rollerworld (right) - the possible venue for the 1982 Beer Festival (Issue 95). Here's our choice with the best of the rest:



"Meanwhile down at a deserted parking lot in Gotham City..." and

"Architects required - no experience necessary"

"Stormy protest over proposed pub name change"

"Rolls-Royce open new car showroom, ample parking space"

"Save Britain's architectural heritage - you vote"

"Happy hour 6 while 7 bouncy castle at rear"

"When the wind blows- the sequel - at a venue near you"

"There are ten teddy bears hidden in this picture can you spot them?"

John Slaney, Whatstandwell

Thanks John, you really deserve some free beer from Hardy & Hanson's for this sterling effort, I'd vote for the bouncy castle one myself-Ed

Ten Up At the Pot

On a fine summery Saturday in August the Flower Pot in Derby invited all (!) of its many regulars to a celebratory party to mark its first 10 years under the banner of the Headless Beer Company. The invitation was also extended to regulars of the Smithfield down Meadow Road, under the same ownership. It was free beer all evening and needless to say a very jolly occasion.

Playing host at the party was company boss John Evans, who acquired and extensively extended the Flower Pot in 1993. Being well schooled in the building trade, John did much of the work himself, along with long-time associate Loll Stevenson. Between them they had previously built the tower brewery at the historic Brunswick, of which John was co-owner with Trevor Harris.

Although the Brunswick was not Derby's first brew pub, nor the first free house, it was this pub, together with the Flower Pot which spearheaded Derby's free trade

expansion in the 1980s and 90s. Other important outlets for the new wave of microbreweries were the Alexandra and the Smithfield. Between them, these pubs and others that followed made Derby a Mecca for real ale drinkers drawing them in from far and wide.

Too much of a good thing?

In those early years the Flower Pot enjoyed huge popularity and has been a regular entry in CAMRA's National Good Beer Guide. More recently, however, it has attracted some criticism for the quality of some of the many beers it has on offer.

Some of the variability is, of course, down to the brewers themselves, not all of whom win awards for excellence. Then again, we don't all have the same preferences do we? You pay your money and take your choice.

That's not all of it though, and it's been suggested that part of the problem is the very reason for the Flower Pot's original success: the exceptionally wide range of beers on offer. As every good publican knows, cask ale will not be at its best if it takes three or more days to move it, and it takes a lot of dedicated drinkers to keep so many beers moving fast. In the early years this was no problem. The very novelty of having so wide a choice attracted appreciative drinkers in droves and made the Pot one of the Midlands' most popular ale houses.

It still is, but the novelty has waned and not quite so many en-

The Furnace Inn Duke Street, Derby



Kimberley Mild,
Bitter, Olde Trip

Derby Winter-fest 2004

It may have been a scorching summer but the next Derby Winter-fest will soon be with us, take it from me! February 4th to the 7th in the Darwin Suite of the Assembly Rooms are the dates to pencil in to your diaries for some Winter delights. More info in subsequent issues of *Derby Drinker*.

Fourth annual Beer Fest for Ockbrook's Royal Oak

The Royal Oak at Ockbrook is to hold its fourth annual autumn beer festival from Thursday 9th to Sunday 12th October. Around 40 beers feature and the theme this year is North Yorkshire brews. There are plenty to choose from. Steve Hornbuckle says that among the beers showcasing will be brews from Cropton, Ossett, York Brewery, Rudgate, Black Sheep and Marston Moor.

There is a barbecue on the Saturday night and evening meals from Thursday to Friday from 6-8pm. Opening hours are 11.30-3 lunchtimes and 6-11 evenings. There is an excellent bus service up to the Ockbrook pub from Derby bus station on the hour. No 9 from next to the park and ride. The last bus back to the city leaves the Oak at 11.35 pm.

Queen's Head

Chesterfield Road, Belper

**Burton Ale,
Deuchars IPA, Tetley**
plus up to five guest ales

01773 825525

thusiasts now flock to its door. The growing popularity of the Smithfield (Derby CAMRA current Pub of the Year) has no doubt played its part, attracting more than a few of the Pot's former regulars.

The man chiefly responsible for the choice and quality of beers at the Flower Pot is Loll Stevenson, an experienced publican well connected to the brewing trade. Loll had this to say:

"The Flower Pot is the flagship of the Headless Pub Company and it has built its reputation on the wide range of cask ales it has on offer. Brewers well-established and lesser-known are represented and the beer-board is constantly changing. This is what we are about and what we are known for and I would not like to see that change.

Of course we consider seriously any feedback we get from our customers and if there's anything we need to do differently, we'll do it! Our chief aim after all, is to keep our customers happy!"

Reg Newcombe

J.C.

Derby lost a great character and real ale supporter in late August when John Carruthers - universally known as J.C. died outside the Alexandra on Siddals Road. With his floppy hat and handlebar tash, J.C. (51) was a familiar sight in places such as the Smithfield, Friargate (Bishops Blaise), York Tavern, Exeter Arms and New Bridge Inn (lunchtimes). Like many people from Birkenhead he supported Tranmere and Liverpool but was well at home in his adopted city, where he worked for Rolls-Royce. He will be much missed by many.

Derby Drinker

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Memories of 1982 and the first Assembly Rooms Derby Beer Festival

Former Derby CAMRA chairman Chris Gale remembered how the first beer festival at the Assembly Rooms was launched 21 years ago. He related the tale at the opening ceremony and we reproduce it here for a larger audience. Many of you will clearly remember the atmosphere of the King's Hall, which had been our home for the first four festivals. It was, in the coded words often used to describe *Good Beer Guide* pubs, something of a backstreet boozery. A single large, echoey hall, with a few trestle tables and folding seats by the stage, a small entrance foyer, an upstairs office or two and a set of toilets that would not have been out of place at the old Baseball Ground. But it was central, highly visible, relatively cheap to hire and robust enough to withstand a few knocks with scaffolding poles, the rolling of heavy beer barrels, the stamping of feet to the Oompah Band and the occasional(!) eruption of beer from a lively cask or an enthusiastic audience. In other words it wasn't posh but it had a great atmosphere.

So when the decision was taken to close the King's Hall, the branch was understandably worried that its new pet monster wouldn't survive. The council offered Moor Lane as an alternative but from the outset we were unhappy about somewhere so far from the City centre. We looked at a number of venues closer to town including, I remember, the old Greyhound Stadium - my one and only visit to the dogs in 50-odd years - as well as what was then Rollerworld. We also began to hold tentative discussions with the Assembly Rooms management, who, I think it fair to say, were initially as wary of CAMRA as we were of them!

Then the possibility of a summer festival was mooted. This is a quiet period for the Assembly Rooms, which meant that the long period of hire we needed would not be quite so expensive as in March, though still considerably more than the King's Hall. Even so, the smart carpets and the dire warnings of the impact that a teaspoonful of beer would have on the sprung dance floor, not to say the summer temperatures, seemed, to us, to be huge barriers.

Then two things happened that began to sway thinking on both sides of the negotiations. The first was the brainwave of Trevor Walker, the former Baths Manager for the council, who suggested that the heavy wooden structures which converted the swimming pool to a hall might be laid out on the Assembly Rooms floor for protection. Step forward the branch's resident engineer Jeff Fletcher, who designed Derby's biggest jigsaw puzzle and proved that they would indeed fit.

The second was a comment that may well have come back to haunt Alf Fullerton, the Assembly Rooms'

Manager on many occasions. When challenged about the qualities of the Great Hall's cooling system, Alf memorably promised that "We can make it snow in here!" Well that clinched it and from then on negotiations proceeded with increasing enthusiasm on our side and a gradual acceptance of the inevitable on the part of the council, sweetened by the promise of a big boost to their summer income.

Thus it was that, on a hot sticky summer Saturday in July 1982, a corps of willing CAMRA volunteers, working in two gangs with one small lorry, heaved the floor sections from their storage area in the bowels of the King's Hall and relaid them over the Great Hall, on top of acres of lining paper and polythene sheeting. At the end of that first day not a single barrel of beer had been lifted into the Hall and hardly any scaffolding had been erected - the floor had taken up all available effort and energy. But somehow, the rest of the show followed on and we opened on time the following Thursday. Now the wooden floor is a distant memory,

long since burned on the Markeaton Park bonfire. The rest, as they say, is history.

Well, I've never seen it snow in the Great Hall yet, but we have all seen how the move enabled the Festival to expand and improve to reach the status and popularity it now enjoys. The Assembly Rooms has given us more space and more capacity, now of course taking in the Darwen Suite as well. It provided Festival-goers with proper seats, a place to eat (even a BBQ on the terrace, how upmarket can you get!), a chance to escape the music, a foyer full of interest and exciting retail opportunities and, above all, decent toilets - all in the heart of the City centre. Perhaps, like Glastonbury, the Beer Festival has now become mainstream. It has certainly lost the tense, edgy, pioneering feeling of the first four events. But overall, the resulting professionalism and quality win out and, in any case, it's the people that create the atmosphere and they still come in their thousands.

I mustn't finish without saying thanks to all the Assembly Rooms staff involved in that first Festival and to the people within the council who supported the Branch behind the scenes. Since then, every Festival Committee right up to the present has benefited from continued good relations with the Assembly Rooms management and staff. But it would be wrong of me not to acknowledge the huge efforts and foresight of everyone who helped make that first festival a reality. Without them all, we might have held the opening reception of the 2003 Festival in a tent on the River Gardens!

Real Ale alive and well in Bishops Blaise

The former Friargate pub in the street of the same name has been a GBG regular for many years. Fears that cask beer would be restricted when Tony Williams of the Bless changed the name and layout of the pub have been well and truly allayed.

The Bishops Blaise is a smart bar, tastefully decorated, serving beers from Oakham, Hartington and Tim Taylors amongst others, and it opens until midnight.

As we become more continental by the day it is a great place for real ale drinkers to relax into the early hours. If other sections of our drinking society can sup late why can't we?

Derby CAMRA Pub of the Year 2003

The Smithfield
Meadow Road
on the banks of the
Derwent

Quarter mile from Railway Station
Quarter mile from Market Place

More names change to protect the guilty?

On the corner of Curzon Street and Wardwick/Friargate two ancient Derby pubs are to receive new identities under the drinkers witness protection scheme. The Lord Nelson a.k.a. Horatios is to be Aqua Bar whilst the Buck in the Park (only the city's crest) will be Bespoke!

This cynic feels fit to say no more and looks forward to being proved incorrect in thinking that real ale will have little to feature when these establishments open.

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Please send your remittance (payable to CAMRA Ltd) with this completed form to: Membership, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW
Derby Drinker



DERBY BEER FESTIVAL 2003 – WERE YOU THERE?



Back in July the Derby Beer Festival was in full swing as usual. Attendances were tremendous and the event confirmed it's status amongst the very top few British Beer festivals.

The seaside beer theme proved very apt as we basked in the hottest summer for years, helping the many different styles of beers go down famously. Pictured here are just a couple of the colourful characters which graced this year's festival. A rainbow tinted girl at one of the stalls in the foyer and Herbert Spencer himself, looking quite dapper on the centenary of his death! So if you missed out this year, make certain that you don't do so in 2004 and get yourself down to Derby's two great beer drinking events.

Bean in here lately?

Following Madonna's trip to her local cask ale pub, DD is on the lookout for well-known people in our regions cask ale pubs. Spotted recently in the Hollybush at Makeney was actor Sean Bean, enjoying a pint of the Tower Brewery Hollybush Special. This pub is also rumoured to hold the World I-Spy championships in the family conservatory!

Any other reports of such characters (please don't call them celebrities,) will be gratefully received!

Rose reopens and Shardlow at Lawns

In Chellaston the **Rose & Crown** reopened after a refurb as a 'Bostin' Local'. The bar has been knocked through although the area it occupied has been allocated as a drinking area. Marston's Bitter is on offer - a rarity these days - alongside Pedigree and Banks's bitter. Up at the **Lawns**, Shardlow Brewery Revd Eaton has been a regular guest and the Cavendish Bridge brewers are to supply the hotel with a house beer shortly.

DOVERIDGE VILLAGE CLUB

(2 miles from Uttoxeter on the A50)

2nd Annual Beer Festival 24th/25th October 2003

7.30-11.30 pm

Admission Free

Quality Real Ales

Food Available

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BEER FESTIVAL DIARY

Local beer festivals come thick and fast in autumn starting with **BURTON** at the Town Hall from 25-27 September (Thur-Sat). Opening is 7-11 Thur, 12-3 & 6.30-11 Fri and 11.30-5 & 7-11 Sat. Derby CAMRA will be defending the Barrel Rolling trophy it has held for three years on the Sunday at the Bass/Coors brewery. Also John Otway plays the festival on the Friday evening too. What more could you desire!

WHEEL Festival at Chapel Street, Holbrook is on 26-28 September.

The **CLOCKTOBERFEST** at the Clock, South Normanton runs from 3-5 October.

NOTTINGHAM follows October 16-19 (Thursday-Sunday) at the Victoria Leisure Centre, Sneinton, with all-day opening Thursday-Saturday.

The 8th **EREWASH VALLEY** beer festival takes place on Friday and Saturday 14th and 15th November.

NUNSFIELD HOUSE COMMUNITY CENTRE will be holding their 2nd beer festival, at the Jubilee Hall, 33 Boulton Lane, Alvaston on November 14-16, with around 25 Ales, from local microbreweries to national favourites. Entertainment on Friday 14 the Mighty Houserockers, and the Trevor Burton Band on Sat. Sessions Fri 7 pm-11 pm £3, Sat 12 to 3.30 (Free) and 7 to 11 (£3) Sunday 12 to 3.30 (Free).

Blake turns Blue

The Captain Blake on Agard Street (once the Golden Eagle) has become the second Derby pub in Simon Marriott's Blue Dog chain. Following his successful introduction of Timothy Taylor Landlord into Sadler Gate at the former Shakespeare, Simon hopes to breathe new life into the Blake which has been rechristened Union Blue. Real ale will stay with initially Pedigree and London Pride.