

THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE
SOUTHERN HAMPSHIRE
NEWSLETTER

HOP PRESS

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

CAMRA, The Campaign for Real Ale, is coming to the end of its 6th year and if we look back over the last year in the Southern Hampshire area we can see just how Real Ale is still becoming more and more popular than its fizzy enemy Keg. The number of Real Ale outlets in Southern Hampshire has grown by about 80 in the last year.

Nearly half of these are Watneys. Yes WATNEYS! - who would have thought 5 years ago that Watneys would brew Real Ale again. The beer available in our area is Tamplins Bitter which is served by Air Pressure. Watneys Fined Bitter is also available in one or two outlets in the area.

Two new breweries have recently opened in Hampshire. One at Ringwood, which is doing very well, and the other at Andover, which opened in November. Both beers are available in the free trade only, but the Andover Ale is not yet available in our area.

The outlets for Whitbread Pompey Royal have more than doubled in the last year - but beware of gas (CO2) pressure! The sad news of course is Courage. We still do not know if we will get any cask conditioned beer from the new Multi-Million Pound Fizz Factory at Worton Grange, which is due to open next year. You certainly won't be able to drink the cask mild after next year. A new guide to Real Ale in Hampshire will be on sale early next year, so make sure you get a copy - its well worth it.

We would like to see more new members and new faces at our meetings in 1979. So don't hesitate to contact us or come along to one of our regular meetings. Our branch meetings are held at the Joiners Arms, St Mary St, Southampton, on the 1st or 2nd Tuesday in the month (ask the landlord he will tell you).

Finally, if you are getting beer in for Christmas make sure its Real Ale. I would like to wish everybody, on behalf of the Committee, a very happy Christmas and New Year and good drinking in 1979. Don't forget always ask for Real Ale!

NICK WILEY
CHAIRMAN

SMALL BREWERS

In the 1870's there were in existence over 12,000 pubs brewing their own beer. One hundred years on, in 1974, the total had fallen to just 4 and it seemed just a matter of time before another British tradition disappeared into the history books. Those 4 pubs, the All Nations, the Three Tuns, (both in Salop) the Blue Anchor at Helston and the Old Swan at Netherton in the West Midlands have long since become real ale meccas with drinkers travelling long distances to sample their brews.

But now, against all the odds, history is reversing itself. From those 4 houses in '74 there are now 18 and emerging alongside them are another breed of brewers. They are the small independent firms that have sprouted up in the last couple of years. We here in Hampshire are extremely lucky to have one of the pioneers of this 'new wave' of brewers right on our doorstep. I refer, of course, to Peter Austons Ringwood Brewery. He sees the way ahead for real ale in the formation of a network of small local breweries. Only last month we saw the emergence of Andover's first brewery for many years, the Bourne Valley Brewery, run jointly by prominent CAMRA members John Featherby and James Lynch. It all adds up to more choice for the consumer and what is CAMRA if not a campaign for freedom of choice.

SOUTHAMPTON BEEREX

The Camra Beer Exhibition in November was a great success. In 2 days 1500 people consumed over 9000 pints of real ale. This was the 4th such exhibition held by the Southern Hampshire branch of CAMRA and as usual it was held at Blighmont TAVR Centre in Southampton.

From the moment the doors opened on Friday evening until closing time on Saturday the hall was filled with drinkers sampling the products of the 20 brewers exhibiting, a total of 42 real ales. The most popular brews, not surprisingly were those from outside our immediate area, Belhaven, Hook Norton, Fuller, Brakspeare and Morland. These beers were on ration throughout the exhibition to ensure an adequate supply for Saturday night drinkers.

The Southern Evening Echo ran a fairly lengthy, if somewhat misleading article on the exhibition. Radio Solent and Radio Victory covered the event, the former running an interview with chairman Pat O'Neill. Unfortunately Southern Television were of the opinion that real ale, although very nice to drink, had already received too much T.V. coverage, an opinion we all found a trifle confusing.

Apart from being a night out for the boys it must be remembered that any CAMRA beer exhibition is a campaigning venture and as such ours was very successful with quite a few people joining CAMRA.

BOURNE VALLEY BREWERY

Brewing returned to Andover for the first time in more than 50 years with the opening of the Bourne Valley Brewery last month.

Former CAMRA chairman James Lynch and partner John Featherby, chairman of the North Hants branch of CAMRA, produced the first drops of Andover Ale, reviving a name which disappeared with the closing of Hammans Brewery in 1921.

They are aiming to produce a truly local beer. All pubs taking early trial brews have been given note pads for customers to make their own observations, which in itself is quite an innovation. They will also be the very first brewery to put the original gravity of the beer on pump clips.

Already 30 free houses in the Andover - Newbury area are selling the beer. Some previously never sold real ale.

GALES ARRIVES IN WINCHESTER

Winchester beer drinkers were delighted by the reopening of the Theatre Bar at the end of October as it brought a new brew to the city. Gales of Horndean had finally arrived to satisfy the demands of the many Gales devotees who have waited years for a promised Winchester outlet.

The Theatre Bar is part of the Theatre Royal in Jewry Street, which was a cinema from 1923 until its closure in 1973. The Theatre was under threat of demolition in 1974, but later saved when it was registered as a Grade II listed building. Today, it is owned by Winchester Theatre Fund who have reopened the pub to provide a useful income towards restoration of the theatre.

The pub, formerly a free house, has been tastefully restored and its only real alteration appears to have been the addition of a bank of three handpumps. Gone are the mass of keg beer dispensers which covered the bar in the years just prior to closure and today Bitter, HSB and 5X are cheerfully served by Edith the manageress and her staff.

Our congratulations to the Winchester Theatre Fund on the opening of their 'pub on the corner' and welcome to Winchester Gales Ales!

For information on membership, branch activities or any aspects of Real Ale in Hampshire, contact

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