

# HOP PRESS



WINTER 86/7

**Branch Activities:**

- 10th. Feb. *Branch Social and Walkabout, Winchester.*  
(Tuesday) *Start, County Arms, 7.30 (ish).*
- 18th. Feb. *Quiz match vs. the Bell, St. Cross. 8.00.*  
(Wednesday)
- 10th. Mar. *Branch Meeting, Richmond, Portswood. 8.00.*  
(Tuesday)
- 17th. Mar. *Good Beer Guide selection meeting, Phoenix,*  
(Tuesday) *Twyford. 8.00 sharp.*
- 31st. Mar. *Annual Mike King darts knockout, New Inn,*  
(Tuesday) *Bevois Valley. 8.00 sharp.*

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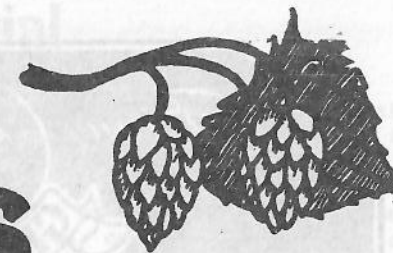


Weyhill Andover Hampshire.

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# HOP PRESS



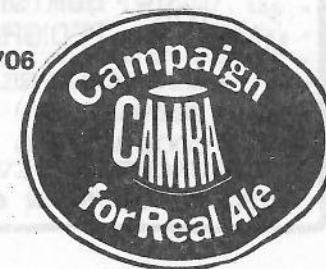
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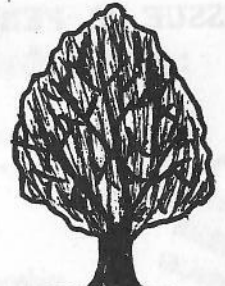
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**HOME COOKED LUNCHES**

## Editorial

With the price of a pint ever rising, in recent years in advance of inflation, most landlords play the game and do not try to rip-off the drinker. There are a few, however, who squeeze every last penny out of your pocket.

Obviously there will be variations in the prices asked for similar beers according to the facilities and comfort available. Rates and rents will be affected by pub location and beers from distant breweries, if bought through an agent, may cost more than those direct from a local brewer. Conversely, it is also true to say that very often a free house can buy at lower rates than a tied tenant would have to pay for the same beers.

In this and future editions of Hop Press we will publish the names of pubs that we feel are giving you less than a reasonable deal by charging excessively high prices, by not passing on favourable brewery terms, by not displaying prices (a legal requirement) or any other outrageousness. Look out for our "Rip-off corner".

Of course, not all of these cases are of the landlord's making, the brewers must also carry much blame; especially the big nationals. As an example, Whitbread's pricing policy means that Pompey Royal costs a licensee more than the stronger Flowers Original, a fact that cannot help our long fight for the survival of Pompey Royal.

On the matter of price listing, the law states that every pub must display the current prices of its major products in a prominent way. This does not have to be a list,

the prices can be marked on the pumps or optics, but they have to be readable by the customer.

Now to a happier topic. In the last issue we carried the story of Marston's possible relinquishment of their Winchester site for re-development. Whilst this plan is still on the cards, the good news is that the Winchester planners have 'listed' both the brewery counting house building and the adjoining 'White Swan' pub.

A redevelopment that retained the pub, the brewery office - perhaps continuing as office use - and also incorporated the H A Club with its fine bowling green, whilst still giving Marstons a modern depot on an industrial estate, could well be in everyone's interest.

.....  
RIP-OFF CORNER

• The first entry for this spot  
• is taken by a pub from the  
• Southeast of our area, the  
• Rising Sun at Swanmore. This  
• pub recently reopened after re-  
• furnishing and, at the time of  
• our visit, we found three Real  
• Ales on offer. Sadly, all of  
• these, Wadworth's 6X, Flowers  
• Original and Strong Country  
• Bitter were priced at the same  
• £1.10!

• Apart from this being a pretty  
• steep price, even in 1987, the  
• lack of any differential pri-  
• cing is of particular concern.  
• Incidentally, at the time we  
• could not see any price list.

.....

Mike and Jocelyn  
Hendrickx

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## Bars of Soap

An every day story of TV drinking coloured water which issues from folk. the Mild and Bitter fonts.

Those of you who watched the recent series of what purported to be a comedy, *Wilderness Road*, on the BBC, may have noticed that the pub used in the series was the real life *Oxford* in St Mary's Road, Southampton.

Before such fame came its way this pub did not serve Real Ale, but on the screen a set of handpumps were prominent dispensing an anonymous brew. Since the series was made the pub has undergone renovations and now serves the real thing - Flowers Original Bitter - a nice reversal of the old adage that art mirrors life. So for all you telly addicts, what do they drink in all those other TV pubs?

The *Rovers Return* has undergone 'refurbishment' following the disastrous fire and is now, predictably like so many pubs, furnished with maroon curtains, dinky wall lights and cream patterned wallpaper. Equally predictable is the loss of the snug; we have yet to discover the fate of the 'select,' which used to make occasional appearances.

But what of the beer? With the fire a great opportunity to make the series more realistic was lost since after the rebuilding the new 'Rovers' still only sells keg beers from the imaginary *Newton and Riddleys* brewery. Given that the story is set not a million miles from Manchester, a city with abounding Real Ale, this seems a strange omission. The Guinness draught is, we are informed, the genuine stuff, rather than the

coloured water which issues from the Mild and Bitter fonts. On for the days of Jack Walker and his bank of hand pumps, last seen in the recent tribute to Pat Phoenix.

So much for *Coronation Street*; what about *Crossroads*, another bar that lacks Real Ale? Once there was Davenport's keg Drum Bitter but now guests can only escape the neurotic staff by drinking either Ansell's Bitter or Castlemaine XXXX. Bring back Amy Turtle and Drum Bitter, even if it was keg!

By the way, has anybody ever seen anything *actually come out of the fonts* in *Crossroads*?

Down at the *Queen Vic* in Walford the BBC have come up with *Luxford* and *Copley Bitter* and *Churchill Strong* for the residents of Albert Square, however, in this case whilst the breweries are fictitious the beer used on the set is actually the real thing.

CAMRA's own *Eastenders*, our East London and City Branch, wanted to sell beers under these names at their 1985 *Pig's Ear Beer Festival*. The BBC objected, using the quite amazing argument that they could not be seen to be promoting alcohol! Presumably the twenty odd million viewers avert their eyes for the bar scenes.

Possibly the best TV pint is to be found up North, in the village of *Beckindale* at the *Woolpack*, where *Amos Brearly* serves his *Ephraim Monk's* brew with pride. Beer has often featured strongly in

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WHITTE  
HARTIE**

• HAMBLE •

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**GALES ALES**

• AND

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Emmerdale Farm, even to the plot including a new small brewery (White Rose Brewery), and a visit by the Tetley dray horses.

Although the Woolpack has many of the qualities we look for in a pub, it is the radio that may have the perfect pub, The Bull in the famous village of Ambridge. With Shire's Bitter (brewer unknown) at 84p, the only fly in the ointment is the likely presence of Joe Grundy!

Brookside doesn't have its own 'local' but a number of real Liverpool pubs have been featured. These include; The Crown in West Derby and a city centre Peter Walker pub, Ye Hole In Ye Wall, which has been nominated for a CAMRA pub preservation award.

Holmfirth in Yorkshire is where Last Of The Summer Wine is filmed. Many of the local pubs have received the attentions of the terrible trio; folks who know the area may have spotted the fact that very often inside scenes are shot in a different pub from those taken outside.

Hampshire pubs have featured in several long running series, best known must be the Jolly Sailor at Bursledon which has appeared regularly in Howard's Way. Unusually for a pub that is regularly featured, The Jolly Sailor kept its real name.

The Bear and Ragged Staff near Michelmersh was a favourite haunt of Wurzel Gummidge. This series is currently being repeated on Channel Four and for those of you who cannot understand the complexities of 'Wurzelese,' three pints of Owd Rodger will guarantee fluency!

Travelling North West we come to St. Mary Mead, well known to Miss

Marple fans but better known to us 'Ampshire 'Ogs as Nether Wallop. The Five Bells was transformed with the skittle alley becoming a village shop of the 1930's

Finally, anyone interested in the history of pubs, beer and drinking habits could do worse than to study the pubs that appear in the old films of the thirties and forties. Usually the backgrounds and the 'business' in these black and white oldies are far more interesting than the plot. Next time you see one take a note of things like the glasses (many real 'straights' and 'flower pots'), the beers (lots of mild and much more bottled beer) and the handpumps (no huntsmen and almost never any pump-clips).

Pubs in general make very convenient settings for TV and radio producers, the local pub is the one place in a community that most characters can be made to visit without too many implausible contortions of the plot! Hopefully this situation will remain for many years to come. Even so there is a lot to be said for sitting in a bar with a pint rather than watching others doing the same thing on the box (but absolutely nothing to be said for doing both at once!).



'Goodbye cruel world'

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## Free and not so free

BREWER/BEER	GRAVITY	PUBS
Wadworth 6X	1040	37
Flowers Original*	1044	21
Gale HSB	1051	20
Draught Bass*	1044	17
Courage Directors*	1046	13
Ringwood Best Bitter	1040	10
Marston Pedigree	1043	9
Courage Best Bitter*	1039	8
Wadworth IPA	1034	6
Ringwood Old Thumper	1060	6
Eldridge Pope Royal Oak	1048	6

The term 'free house' may give the impression that the pub is neither owned by nor under the influence of any brewery, and is therefore free to serve whatever products the proprietor chooses. Unfortunately, a rude awakening awaits us in many of our so called 'free' houses, where the same old national products are offered.

Not content with a near monopoly of tied trade outlets, the Big Six are determined to install their products in as many free houses as possible.

One method used by the brewers to gain a 'tie' is to give seemingly generous loans at favourable rates of interest but in return for a barrellage agreement - limiting the landlord's freedom to choose. Another way of having their cake and eating it is by leasing out uneconomic pubs, complete with barrellage clauses, which force the lessee to commit himself to selling a large quantity of their beers.

Happily, some pubs still manage to offer a selection of ales despite the pressures to establish such 'ties'.

Southern Hampshire still has quite a few free houses and CAMRA has conducted a survey of the draught beers that can be found in them. The table shows the most popular of the beers that you will find.

\* denotes a 'Big Six' brewer.

This list of the top ten beers available in local free houses was compiled from the survey taken for the latest Hampshire Real Ale Guide. Copies of the local guide, which gives full details of every Real Ale pub in the county, can be obtained from the Hop Press Editor for £1.90 post free.

It is encouraging to note that several regional breweries are in the top ten, although of course Wadworth's 6X and Gale's HSB are distributed by Whitbreads and Phoenix as well as being available direct from their brewers. Ringwood are making a fine stand with two of their beers in the list.

There are 77 free houses, offering beers from some 241 hand-pumps in the Southern part of the county. Free houses, with their individual approach to food, drink, entertainment and pub decor can offer a welcome relief from the increasingly stereotyped images of many tied pubs. It would be a great pity if they succumb to the blandishments of our larger brewers.

Joan & Bill Welcome you

GOOD BEER GUIDE

# MASONS ARMS

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## The Woodman's Tale

The Woodman's Tale, a pantomime in several acts and cast of hundreds.

Once upon a time there was a pub, a large, modern, estate pub. Trade was good and all the locals came to drink their fill, be it Real Ale or the other stuff; on several nights each week live music could be heard, there was singing and general happiness even. For those in need of sustenance, fine homemade food was generally available and at reasonable cost. Indeed, all was well at this inn, the landlord was happy, his locals were happy and trade was good...

happy drinkers return to find that all is not quite the same, the food is more important, more prominent, than before, though by all accounts its quality is no higher, and out has gone the live music, much to the disgust of many customers.

Sitting over their pints in the unaccustomed silence it was decided to appeal to the better nature of the big baddies and ask if a modest musical instrument, colloquially known in this tale as 'an old joanna', could be purchased to fill the air once more with music and jollity.

Now, any good panto has to have a baddy and - *Boo! Hiss!* - here he comes, all the way from Cheltenham, via Romsey with the head of a white hart on his shoulders and lots of filthy lucre to pour into this profitable little business.

"We want a piano, please". "Oh no you don't". "Oh yes we do". "Oh no you don't".... "You don't, because your pub isn't a live music pub so all you lot don't really want to listen to music, so there". (Exit to chorus of boos and hisses)

Out go all the locals and the landlord for a few weeks whilst the usual 'renovations' are carried out. Comes the re-opening and our

Sadly, unlike a real panto there is no happy ending....yet!

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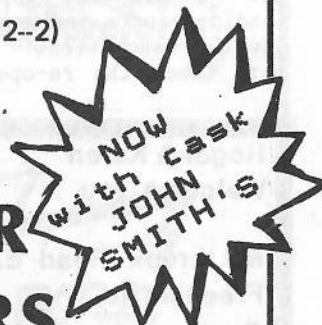


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## Ringwood Brewery

Ringwood is a historic market town set in the New Forest and straddling the river Avon.

The town has a long history of brewing, dating back at least to the eighteenth century. A map of 1780 shows a hop garden in nearby Poulner which supplied the town's breweries, the water came directly from the river. The town boasted six breweries and their associated malhouses at this time.

Ringwood gained a reputation for strong ales and exported them to such far away places as Gosport. By 1847, the number of breweries and malhouses was down to three of each. One, owned by a local banker Stephen Tunks, stood on the site of the old Armfield workshops in Christchurch Road (just opposite Wellworthy's offices). His maltings still stand, converted into cottages in Duck Island Lane.

The beer trade fluctuated throughout the Victorian age although the town's strong beer continued to be held in high regard. A Post Office Directory for the year 1855 records twenty inns or beer sellers in operation whilst only four years later the number of pubs was up to twenty-eight together with eight beer sellers. In contrast, by 1878, the number of outlets had dropped to only ten; however, the three breweries were still working.

The last brewery to operate in the town was Alexander Carter's in West Street. This was taken over in 1923 by Strong & Co. of Romsey, who immediately closed the plant down (nothing changes). The site is now the town bus station.

After a lapse of 54 years, a new brewery was set up by Peter Austin. Ringwood brewery opened in 1978, situated in Minty's Yard behind the 'Lamb'. Its opening marked the beginning of a new generation of small breweries and it is very encouraging to see that it continues to thrive and go from strength to strength.

Last year, the brewery moved into new premises in Christchurch Road. The buildings are believed to be part of the old Tunks' brewery described earlier and dating back to the eighteenth century.

Peter Austin is something of an inventor and although the brewing process is traditional, many novel pieces of engineering are in evidence. One of these is a cask cleaning device that has been sold to several to other brewers, both at home and abroad. A large part of Peter's time is now taken up by consultancy and design work and in selling equipment as far afield as France and China.

In the Ringwood Brewery the main technical innovation is the use, for the copper, of a device called an external calandria. This is a gas-fired heat exchanger - like a giant central heating boiler - that boils the wort and hops as they are continuously cycled round from the copper. The water, which currently comes via the mains, is also heated up by this device prior to the mashing. Quality control is strict and one corner of the brewhouse is fitted out as a small but well equipped laboratory.

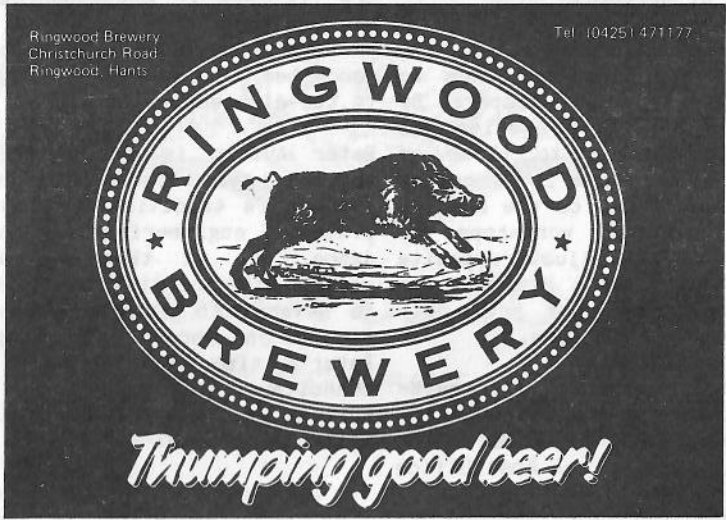


Alongside the well-known hops and malt grains, several 'adjuncts' are also added to the brew - wheat flour and maize syrup are the commonest. The flour is rich in the proteins needed to aid head retention and the syrup is a sugar source which also helps to improve the beer's settling without haziness.

ensure that Ringwood beers are always sent out in top condition.

Three beers are regularly brewed: Best Bitter (1040), Fortyniner (1049) and Old Thumper (1060). A strong dark beer, 4X (1049), is also brewed for the Christmas period.

Ringwood brewery is one of the cleanest that that you could visit; this cleanliness, combined with a highly motivated staff, ensure that these beers can be sampled in two tied houses, The Inn On The Furlong in Ringwood and The Old Thumper in Bournemouth, or in many free houses in Hampshire.



**IN BRIEF**

**What's Brewing**

**Morland brau**

MORLANDS of Abingdon are set to become the next regional to move into lager brewing. The exact brand has not yet been chosen, but it is felt that the Oxon brewers may follow fellow 'Whitbread Umbrella' company, Boddingtons, in brewing Kaltenberg Braumeister under licence.

**Beer and chips**

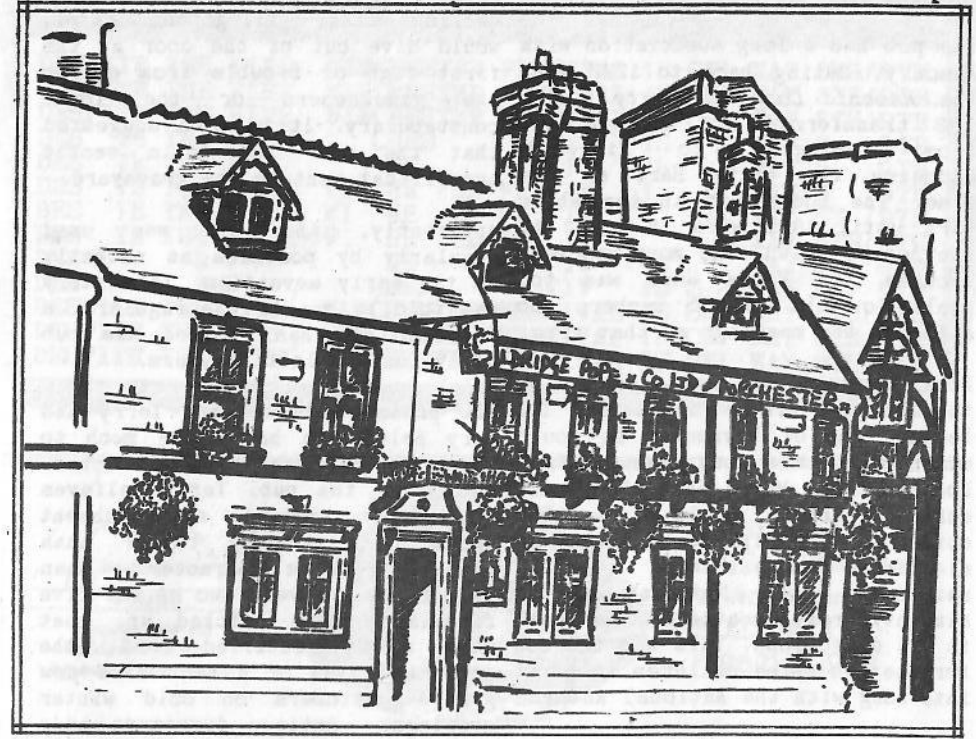
ALLIED is to spend £8m on installing new computerised till and stocktaking equipment in its managed houses. The new terminals will replace traditional bar top cash tills, and will allow the brewery to update price lists in its 2,000 managed houses automatically.

*WHEN a foreign official was heard on radio saying British beer ought to carry a skull and crossbones, because of all its chemicals, one English brewer was forced to smile.*

*For the Wiltshire Brewery's best-selling beer is Weedkiller (1049) which proudly displays a skull and crossbones on its pumpclip. "Drinkers like the strange name and its macho image," said a spokesman. "We only introduced the beer four months ago, and sales have already overtaken our other ales."*

**INN-SIGHT**

**The Original White Hart Ringwood**



Ever since 1226, when Henry III gave the town its market charter, Ringwood has thrived, and over the years has picked up more than its share of history and folklore. Royal connections with the town have always been strong, Henry VII often stayed in the town whilst on nunting trips in the New Forest.

Albert. The noble animal proved hard to catch and it was only after a long and exciting chase that the stag finally gave up, standing at bay in a meadow. As he had given such a good day's sport, the hounds were called off and Albert was spared. A gold collar was placed around his neck and he was taken to Windsor Great Park.

It was after one such sortie that the 'Original White Hart' reputedly got its name. An old Forest legend, never verified, tells of a tale related by Sir Halliday Wagstaffe, keeper of the King's woods and forests: Henry VII, accompanied by his nobility, gave chase to a celebrated white hart called

To celebrate their great day out, the King and his guests repaired to a Ringwood inn, where the name was promptly changed to that of the White Hart. It is suggested that it was the first inn to be so named, this would explain why the name has

recently been amended to the 'Original White Hart'. The pub sign proudly depicts Albert wearing his shining gold collar.

The pub had a long association with Masonry, dating back to 1777 when the *Masonic Lodge of Unity Number 132* transferred its headquarters from Lymington to Ringwood, choosing the White Hart as its base. The Lodge met in the White Hart until 1895 when it moved to the nearby Crown. The move was made because the White Hart was too small to hold the 35 members who attended the meetings at that time.

Royal connections continued during the Georgian era. When George III became fond of Weymouth, he would often break his long journey from London at the White Hart. The local schoolchildren would assemble outside as the King took a quart of ale from the landlord, he then raised his royal elbow and with an almighty breath scattered the froth in all directions. This was the cue for the assembled children to burst into song with the National Anthem.

Ringwood is a popular venue for freshwater anglers, "The White Hart Fishing Book" was recently discovered behind a fireplace by the present landlord. The book, now on display in the pub, records the fish caught in the river Avon by the guests between the years 1885 to 1916. During this period, 675 fish with an average weight of 24lbs were taken on rod and line by residents of the hotel. Anglers still stay today and there are many fishing pictures and antique reels on display.

The pub is not without its own folklore or legends. If you walk in the front door and turn immediately left you will notice a

door in the wall adjacent to the fireplace. This is known locally as the 'bolt hole'. It got its name because local poachers, intent on selling their ill-gotten gains, would dive out of the door at the first sign of trouble from either the gamekeepers or the local constabulary. It is even suggested that the door led to a secret tunnel that went to the graveyard.

Apparently, the pub was used regularly by poachers as recently as the early seventies. This story was told by one of the regulars, a forester who has visited the pub daily for the last 22 years.


The present tenants are Terry and Mary Bales who have done much to restore the original characteristics of the pub. Terry believes that most modern refurbishment tends to destroy rather than enhance a pub's character. When they first arrived, two of the five fireplaces were bricked up, that was soon rectified and the welcoming glow of a real fire now greets customers on cold winter evenings. Antique furniture adds to the pleasant atmosphere and character of the pub.

As a one-time coaching inn the White Hart provides accommodation in ten rooms and food in a restaurant with a highly deserved Egon Ronay rating.

Finally, what about the beer? Terry and Mary serve excellent pints of Eldridge Pope's Dorchester Bitter, Dorset IPA and Royal Oak, dispensed by handpump using cask breathers.


It only remains to congratulate Terry and Mary for their efforts in maintaining such high standards in running one of Hampshire's most famous and historic inns.

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 DESPITE THE FIRE, WINCHESTER FESTIVAL IS ON! MAY 8TH/9TH.  
 DESPITE THE FIRE, WINCHESTER FESTIVAL IS ON! MAY 8TH/9TH.  
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 DES TE THE F HE IV IS ! MAY 8 9TH.  
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## KEG BUSTER

BY BILL TIDY



KEGBUSTER IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY IN CAMRA'S NEWSPAPER "WHAT'S BREWING".



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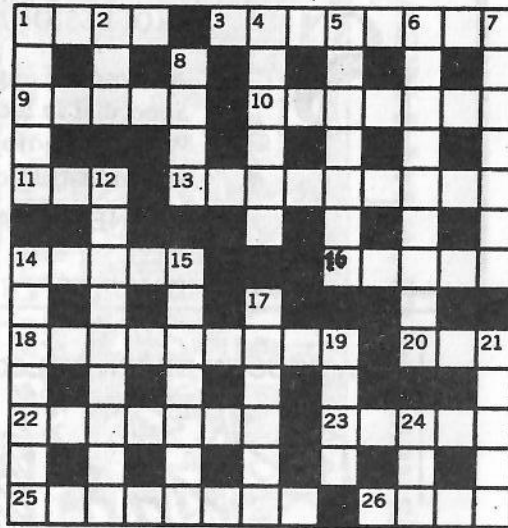
17th Century Village Inn  
Car Park & Beer Garden

## MARSTON'S Traditional Ale

# Competition Crossword

## ACROSS.

- 1 Might be caught in Burton (4).
- 3 Not an hour glass, but a brew from Wiltshire. (3,5).
- 9 Do they use glasses this big in France? (5).
- 10 Delays a king in his attempts. (7).
- 11 Gibbs' other half reflected in Salop. (3).
- 13 Bare spark often drunk in the Thames Valley. (9).
- 14 Arts graduate upsets 2 for West Country brewer. (5).
- 16 Would you find the miniature version of this in a teacup? (5).
- 18 Mixed holly scar for intellectual. (9).
- 20 Black eyes contain the answer. (3).



- 22 Indirect - boil soup before end-less quest. (7).
- 23 Right hop-oven for the Sunday joint? (5).
- 25 Sly tries to change - hardly brotherly! (8).
- 26 Cooked eels from Middleton Junction. (4).

## DOWN

- 1 Under instruction to get down. (5).
  - 2 Adjust in Chinese take-away? (3).
  - 4 Allow Henry V - that's deadly! (6).
  - 5 Pushes forward when unfinished thing tarnishes. (7).
  - 6 Can't be real - young lady on old tree in Londonderry... (6,3).
  - 7 ...or going up the street to drink on a platform. (7).
  - 8 Hesitation within Keg Buster (initially) beside the road. (4).
  - 12 Are they independent or dependent on Butlers? (9).
  - 14 Head brewer is an ingredient in Somerset. (7).
  - 15 Mustard pod is rising above the end of 22. (7).
  - 17 Rake upset two pounds in Swindon. (6).
  - 19 Short distance for large beer measure. (4).
  - 21 Yeast makes Jackson's partner in Lancashire. (5).
  - 22 Vale for lumberjack without a saw? (3).
- A recent, or better still a current edition of The Good Beer Guide will be useful as 12 answers are beers or breweries.*
- Two Gale's "Corkers" to the first two correct entries received by March 15th. Entries to the Editor please.*

DENISE AND ALAN WELCOME YOU

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### MARSTON'S

REAL ALE TRADITIONALLY SERVED

# Pub News

Hampshire pubs have been really busy with changes since the last edition, so we apologise for any pub news that may be missing from this edition due to lack of space.

We start over in the West at Lymington where we welcome Eric and Catherine Howe to Ye old English Gentleman together with the good news that the brewers have decided to lower prices by up to 6p a pint! All of Devenish's beers are available: John Devenish Bitter, Wessex Stud and GBH. Down in the town at the Red Lion a new sign hangs outside the refurbished pub where Flowers Original is now available and the Coach House now has Wethered's Bitter plus the welcome addition of a bar billiards table. Bateman's XXXB (ask for "triple XB") is making a showing in two of the town's free houses; the Musketeer at Pennington and at Long's Wine Lodge. Not all of the news is good however, disturbing rumours from Lymington talk of possible closures of Eldridge Pope's Angel Hotel and Whitbread's The East End Arms at East End, let's hope these rumours are ill-founded.

Nearby at Woodside, The Fisherman's has been bought by a company called Grosvenor Inns who own around ten pubs in London and the South East. We welcome new landlord Leslie Walker who previously ran a pub in Petersfield. The Fisherman's currently sells Flowers Original, Strong Country Bitter, Wadworth's 6X and Ringwood Best. Along the coast we also welcome new licensee Bill Morris to the White Horse at Keyhaven, Bill has done a swap with the previous landlord Jim Newnham

who has taken over Bill's old pub, the Iford Bridge Hotel near Christchurch. At Barton-on-Sea the Marine has closed, rumours suggest that it will be turned into flats.

Inland at the Woodpecker in Ashley we welcome a newcomer to the trade, Gordon Coe. The previous landlord, Jim Cooper has taken a pub in Kent. In New Milton Hookey's Wine Bar is reported up for sale with a 17 year lease and the New Milton Rugby Club now has Flowers Original served on gravity.

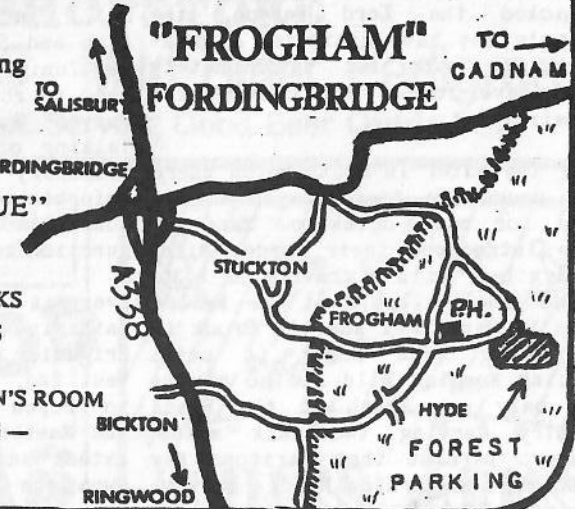
In the Northwest of the Forest at Ringwood we wish a happy retirement to Cyril Browning who ran The Star for many years and we welcome Kevin and Carol Mansell who took over in November. At Stuckton, The Three Lions has replaced Eldridge Pope beers with Halls' Harvest and Wadworth's 6X, the Bat And Ball at Breamore has Wells' Bombardier and John Smith's Bitter and nearby at the Cartwheel in Whitsbury Wiltshire Brewery's Regency Bitter, Stonehenge Bitter and Old Devil are on offer.

In the heart of the Forest the Beaulieu Road Hotel has somewhat confusingly dropped the 'Road' from its name, the accent is now on food and Flowers Original is £1.10 a pint. Down the road in Beaulieu itself The Wine Press has replaced Spats Bar in the Montagu Arms Hotel Flowers Original and Strong Country Bitter are both on sale.

Changes in the Waterside area include new management at The Old Mill Inn in Holbury, welcome to Mrs. Maddy Crosby who is now in charge at this popular old inn. In

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Hythe the name-changing plague sweeps on with Wattles now the Fountain Court (Ushers' Best has replaced New Forest Real Ale and Younger's IPA) and Jesters now Gleneagles. Death Watch Beetle has attacked the Lord Nelson, the insects may have exhibited a great taste in pubs but unfortunately they have forced its closure for repairs!

Over the water in Southampton there is, unusually these days, good news for mild drinkers. Marstons have introduced their Border Mild, a dark beer with a gravity of 1030. It is now available at the Exford Arms in Harefield and the Brook in Swaythling. The Brook is still selling Mercian Mild and so may be the only pub South of the Black Country serving two dark milds. Rumours persist that Marstons may kill off the Mercian Mild, so make the most of it while you may.

In the city centre the Lord Roberts, which used to be a Watney's tied house, has reopened as a free house now known as the Strand, Courage Directors is served on handpump at £1.05 a pint. The pub now has a central serving bar with plush, soft furnishings more reminiscent of a boudoir than a boozier. Outside, memories of the past are rekindled with a sign consisting of a red barrel with the word Watney's written on it. Where have we seen that before? Nearby, the Royal Oak and Limelight have reopened as has the Telstar over in Northam.

The new landlord of the Bargate Inn (previously the Southerner) is Keith Nesbit. He is quoted as saying that Southampton needs a pub dedicated to maritime history, amongst the memorabilia is a ten foot long model of the Queen Mary. The irony of this is that the pub

opposite, the Classic Corner, used to be called the Queens and had pictures of the Queen Mary, the Queen Elizabeth and the QE2 on its walls.

Still in Southampton we welcome Alan and Sheila Ross to the Castle (ex Juniper Berry), Alan and Sheila used to run the Magnum Club in St. Mary's Road a few years back. Talking of castles, the Castle in Midanbury has reopened after refurbishment. There is now a conservatory which doubles as a function room and children's room.

Over in Horton Heath we welcome Catherine and Paul Scully to the Brigadier Gerrard. Down the road in West End, the Crown and Thistle is to reopen at the end of January as The Master Builder. It will be the latest addition to the group that owns the Humble Plum in Bitterne. Non-smokers will be pleased to know that a smoke-free area is included in the plans.

In the TV village of Tarrant, better known as Bursledon, landlord Jack Mallen has put the Jolly Sailor on the market, reportedly for a cool £1/2M. The new owners of the Jolly Sailor will have some competition if Eldridge Pope have their way. The Dorchester brewers are hoping to succeed with plans to convert Hound Farmhouse, in Hound Road at Netley, into a pub. There is also talk of a new pub on the Valley Park Estate in Chandler's Ford, though we understand it would not be for some time yet.

Ham Farm, at the North end of Twyford Road in Eastleigh, now serves John Smith's Bitter on handpump. Look out for this beer appearing in many Courage houses. At Horsebridge, Mike and Kim Stacey have just taken over the John O'Gaunt. There is a new manager at

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**WEBSTERS YORKSHIRE BITTER GALE'S-HSE**

the Dog and Crook Braishfield, we haven't heard his name yet but we offer our best wishes.

Miles away to the East we come to Alresford where there is an 18 year lease up for grabs on the Globe, a fine old pub with a rare lakeside setting.

Last but not least, good news for Winchester drinkers. The new manager of the Eagle at the bottom of Station Hill has introduced an evening 'happy hour' with Marstons Burton Bitter at 70p a pint.

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**By Mary Brasier**

Courage yesterday announced a major reorganisation of its 1330 strong chain of managed pubs, in a move designed to improve profitability.

The brewers intend to turn more than 900 managed houses over to tenancies and is closing down the administrative arm of the managed house operation with the loss of up to 300 jobs. Imperial Inns and Taverns which ran the managed houses will be integrated into the Courage operation.

Managers are being offered loans to become tenants at a cost of between £10,000 and £30,000 per pub and if they refuse they will be made redundant.

The moves follow last year's £1.4 billion deal by Hanson Trust to sell Courage, which it bought when it took over Imperial Group, to Australian brewers Elders. The current plan was devised by Courage managers and does not preclude a further move by Elders to refinance the entire Courage business, using the property value of the pubs.

Over the next five years the Australian group also plans to explore the idea of selling tenants an equity share in pubs.

Courage said yesterday that their plans which will come into effect from next month offered managers of Courage and John Smith pubs a "rare and exciting opportunity to run their own businesses without a heavy immediate investment."

Courage said it followed a house by house analysis during 1986 and was expected to improve pubs' performance. Managers will be offered a six month interim agreement after which they can convert to a normal tenancy. The company is retaining 400 managed houses for training and as flagships.

**THE GUARDIAN**

Wednesday January 21 1987

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