



HOP PRESS



AUTUMN
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HOP PRESS



Issue No. 9 October 1983

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EDITORIAL



WHAT PRICE A PINT?

A subject dear to the heart of all drinkers today, is the price of a pint.

We seem to be clobbered by the government, the brewers and sometimes the landlord.

But, here in the south of England we pay a lot more for our beer than we would if we lived a hundred miles or so north.

It is difficult to understand why beer should be up to twenty pence dearer in Hampshire than it is in most counties north of the Thames.

Having recently returned from a holiday in Derbyshire where the average price for bitter was 56p. In Winchester

64p would be regarded as reasonable and 70p is often asked.

Whitreads so called 'free' houses start around 74p! The dearest of the fourteen brews I sampled was 61p for Davenport's and it is still possible in parts of the West Midlands to get a pint of beer for less than 50p.

I should like to learn where bargain buys are to be found in South Hants, so let's hear from anyone who thinks he has found a cheap pint of any real ale.

Perhaps we can produce a league table of which brewers give best value for money.

All nominations to be sent to me: C Excell, 105 Elder Close, Badger Farm, Winchester.

Real ale defined

A CAMRA-formulated definition of "real ale" will appear in the next edition of *A Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary* (Volume 3).

Dr. Robert Burchfield, Editor-in-Chief of the OED, has accepted a definition proposed by CAMRA's national chairman, Tony Millns, who is himself a former Oxford English scholar.

The definition will read:

"REAL ALE — a name for draught (or bottled) beer brewed from traditional ingredients, matured by secondary fermentation in the container from which it is dispensed, and served without the use of extraneous carbon dioxide; also called 'cask-conditioned' and 'naturally-conditioned' beer"

"Having this definition accepted by the OED has a wider significance than mere academic interest," Tony Millns commented. "We shall be able to refer to the definition in the Oxford English Dictionary, which is the ultimate authority for the English Language, to establish our point in those increasingly common cases where breweries try to claim that their filtered or top-pressure dispensed or canned beers are 'real ales'."

"I would like to see this definition become the generally accepted one within CAMRA by being quoted in the *Good Beer Guide*, local beer guides, and all other publications which have to explain what is real ale."

How to succeed at the bar

Ken Hill gives us his light hearted, tongue in cheek view from the other side of the bar.

That's the Lounge Bar or the Public Bar, of course. Not from behind it – the delights of keeping and serving beers, wines and spirits have been expounded before – but normally in front, as a customer. What about those on the other side? – the bar staff.

Bar staff work for many reasons. But all have one thing in common – it's just a job (or a favour to the landlord), not their livelihood, so they tend to look upon customers as either "nice" or "nasty". We've all been guilty of one or more of the following but if you recognise all the traits, you definitely won't come into the "nice" category!

My qualifications? A long-time, observant customer, of course; some past experience as a barman; and the help and advice of bar-staff I have known to a long way to answering that.

In the first place, always lean on the door at least five minutes before opening time, preferably making dull thudding noises as you kick the door panels. This will endear you to the landlord, who has to re-paint the door; to the staff, you know exactly what time it is anyway; and it will brand you as one of the first in (and probably the last out).

When you approach the bar, ask your companions over your shoulder what they will have in a low monotone and then look expectantly at the bar staff. Of course they all have bat-like hearing and will know exactly what you want. Follow this with a string of muttered names, preferably with the off "mixer" thrown in, and do mention the brand we haven't got or don't stock.

Another good start is to ask for "one of the best" whilst half-inclining the head towards the beer engines. "One what? (pint or half?) of what? (beer or whatever)" is about the most civil answer you can expect. WE don't know what YOU think of as "best". In most pubs these days you have a choice of at least three bitters (real or unreal), all of which have something to recommend them to someone or other. After a brisk dissertation on the merits of the various beers, not forgetting to query the specific gravity, ask "What's the difference?" My favourite answer is, "About five-pence a pint, guv".

Having selected your 'poison', wait until the first half-pint is foaming in the glass and ask for a straight glass (or a tankard, if we are using straight ones). You will feel the waves of bonhomie simply wash over you – or it could be warm beer!

You must, naturally, assume that every village pub has bar staff that have attended a cocktail mixing course at somewhere like the Hilton, so throw in the odd (very odd) "Tequila Sunrise" or "Harvey Wallbanger" for luck. Oh, yes, another gem – don't ever say "Do you serve Harvey Wallbangers?" 'cos you leave yourself wide open to "We serve anyone, chief, whaddya want?" You can really make the staff happy if, when asked politely "What does that consist of?" you brightly reply, "Don't you know?" If the bar is about six deep with thirsty customers at the time, so much the better.

By all means rack up a round of three or four pounds in halves and soft drinks (not at all difficult these days) and, when you see the barman's eyes cross with the strain of adding it all up, ask cheerfully what kind of crisps he's got. The ensuing litany of six different flavours will guarantee he will forget where he's got to and have to start all over again! Better still, change your mind between bottled and draught Guinness or swear he's missed someone out — that will stop his mental gymnastics in full flow.

Another play is to stroll in during the middle of a session, say around 1 p.m. on a sunny afternoon, ask for half of shandy (meanwhile jumping the queue) and proffer a £20 note. Without a word of apology, of course. Talking of queue jumping, always remember that YOU rarely get blamed for it. The bar staff are always at fault for serving people in the wrong order. WE always keep you waiting" . . . for at least ten minutes . . ." — on purpose, too. All the others who reckon they were first had nothing to do with it.

Having secured your drink with the minimum of fuss (!), lean on the counter at the busiest point — there's always one section of the bar where you can obstruct most effectively. If possible, light a fag and casually drop the ask on the counter, in the ice bucket, in the drink of the bloke next to you or on the floor. Never, ever use an ash-tray except the still-wet, clean one that has been placed near you ready for drying.

Once you have established your "territory", don't budge, especially for staff trying to clear glasses. If you can, talk loudly to a friend, wave your arms about, or discuss matters of personal hygiene or diseases you have known within earshot of the staff. They won't mind. Everyone knows we go deaf the moment we step behind a bar counter. When ready, simply push your empty glass forward two millimeters and mutter "Same again, luv/mate". Never mind if it's a different server, we're psychic, too.

Another good ploy is to offer a glass with about an inch of beer in it and ask for a half "to top that up". You then have grounds to complain (you think) when we serve the other half in a fresh half-pint glass. But we really don't know all the professions of our customers by heart — YOU could be the Local Customs and Excise Inspector for all we know.

Conversely, always, when ordering a complete refill, expect a clean glass. Better still, leave the empty, dirty glass on your table when you re-order. We do have a washing-up machine, after all, and when we run out of clean glasses, we can always come round to "your" side and collect them. That will give us the welcome chance to listen to your complaints about the state of the beer, the country, the draught down the back of your neck, and the prices. So please don't let the sight of a table-full of empties detract from your pleasure.

On the subject of tables, you may have to use one if the bar is full. First, make a great play of re-arranging all the seating, preferably blocking off tables into the room. Then ask all round what everyone's going to have (not forgetting to miss one or two out) before bustling to the bar. When you have stumbled through the round, with many repetitions and "No, no that's not right, Doreen has a Port and Lemon, doesn't she?" you can then return to your seat, remember the missing ones, and push to the

front again – after all, you haven't finished your order, have you?

Once settled, you can pass the fags around and play the "Missing the Ashtray" game. Five points if it goes on the table, ten if it goes on the carpet, and bonus points for putting the messy bits of food you didn't want in the ashtray.

Finally, ignore the "Last Orders" call (you can impress your friends with the lofty explanation that it isn't legal anyway) and only come up for the last one as "Time" is called. If you're lucky and slide in with "But I've been waiting for five minutes" that gives you the opportunity for at least quarter of an hour after closing time. It's quite fun to listen to the calls for "Glasses, please", watch the lights flicker on and off, and watch as we wipe the tables down.

It's at that point – usually about 11.30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays – when you can have the biggest laugh of all. Nip out to the loo while we're busy, and as we shepherd the last of our happy customers out of a darkened bar, tap us on the shoulder and say "Boo"! With any luck, we'll jump a foot in the air, foolishly thinking we were all alone at last. Then you can regale your companions with the story in the quiet street outside among gales of laughter.

You might, after all this, like to know who doesn't feature on our "List of Least-Loved". It's the person or persons who come in quietly, return our greeting, ask clearly and sensibly for the drinks, finds a space to stand or sit that's in nobody's way, enjoy themselves, re-order in the same way, in their turn, and treat us like human beings.

Tell you what – keep your eyes open next time you're in a pub or bar and try to spot who gets the fastest service. It will be hard, for they will be quiet, pleasant, unobtrusive people who wait patiently until we see them. And they will be noticed, for we have a kind of radar that picks that kind out. Watch how two or three staff converge on that spot with a pleasant smile and hand outstretched to take the glass.

Mind you, it's not unknown to get the same reaction even if you have been a little "difficult" provided you utter the magic words, "And one for yourself"!

WANT TO ADVERTISE?

3,000 quarterly Hop Press magazines are distributed free to pubs all over Southern Hampshire, (excluding the Portsmouth area) and as far north as the A30. Why not take advantage of this wide distribution to advertise? The cost is little – a full A5 page is only £30, half page £18 and a quarter page £10. Next issue is the Christmas Edition – Please contact Ged Wallis on Winchester 54666 (home) or during working hours Winchester 54433 (extension 6449) before November 20th, or send the artwork to: 1 Monks Road, Winchester.

INN-SIGHT

Ye OLDE WHYTE HART, HAMBLE

At the head of Britain's famous yachting village stands one of the South's fine old pubs, the Olde Whyte Hart, a picturesque building standing alongside the main road into the village.



Although it has been a pub for over two hundred years it was originally built as a private residence on the site of an old priory. At this time it was a somewhat smaller building following the line of the present bar.

During its early days a tunnel was bored from the building to Hamble Common some 600 yards away (several sections remain intact today) and a priest hole was constructed in the chimney. Although there are no formal records, the theory is that the house was once used as a smuggler's store. The tunnel was probably an escape route, whilst the priest hole offered a secondary means of getaway across the roof-tops.

The structure of the building was formed from ship's timbers, with oars being used for the rafters. Due to deterioration through age many of the timbers have been replaced with some from a farmhouse, even older than the pub.

The Olde Whyte Hart was purchased 170 years ago by the Hooker family who extended it to its present size. The building was also used as a bakery and many of the implements are still displayed in the bar. Also on display is an autographed oar used by the pub goers in a sponsored cross channel row.

The low beamed main bar features a fine inglenook fireplace with an original George I fireback. Although this is a fairly rare antique, the landlord had to worry little about losing it because of its great (grate??) weight!

Apart from the long but cosy lounge there is also a quiet functional room with no bar, but where darts can be played.

For those who spend the night, there is a chance of seeing the ghost which haunts the living quarters and has been spotted on a number of occasions.

After being a free house for most of its pub days, it was taken over by Gales some 16 years ago. Today in this popular venue your hosts Mr and Mrs Colin Partridge serve a wide range of Gales Real Ales in inviting surroundings. And of course, it has been in the Good Beer Guide for many, many years.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE?

From an article in a leading newspaper we learn that 'people are now less concerned to get smashed. Drinking habits are lighter. People are drinking lager not beer.' We don't know what age group was surveyed, but lager accounts for only a quarter of all 'beer' sales. We do agree, though, that it's difficult to get smashed on British gnats-pee lager!

You are always welcome at

The
RACK & MANGER



4 MILES FROM WINCHESTER
ON THE STOCKBRIDGE ROAD

MARSTONS REAL ALES

Pub News

NEW GRAPES ON THE OLD VINE

The Old Vine in Winchester has at last opened its doors again after a long period of closure. The pub had to undergo major surgery on its structure, after it was discovered to be in danger of collapse during a routine refurbishment. Extensive dry rot was discovered in its old beams and one wall was found to be leaning out eighteen inches! It spent months under a huge frame covered in polythene—aptly dubbed 'the largest tent in Winchester' without roof and most walls dismantled.

Today it stands as a good example of how a pub can be modernised without being destroyed in the process.

Although it has sadly long been a one bar pub, the designers have maintained the two bar feel by separating the two wings with a half width wall. Its character has been nicely preserved by accenting its genuine old features, and there's a real fire to invite you on chilly winter evenings.

It was disappointing to see that the dartboard had vanished — perhaps one will appear before long. So too has that Victorian porcelain masterpiece, the gents loo; although the architects wanted to keep it the local health 'jobsworths' said it had to go. One thing that was saved, though, was the famous vine of the pub's name, which grows over the frontage.

Your hosts Dave and Jo Adams recently left a good Real Ale and music pub in Caversham, so visitors can expect to find the Courage Best and Directors in fine condition. The newly converted cellars should help to ensure that.

With its splendid site, overlooked by the cathedral, the policy is doubtless to attract tourist trade, rather than becoming a 'local'. It promises, however, to be a pleasant, friendly Inn — why not give it a try?

LONG LIVE THE KING

Last edition of the Hop Press announced the re-opening of the Canute in Southampton. We didn't have much information then but now we have a first hand report.

For all those lovers of traditional raunchy dock-side ale houses, it was a sad day back in July when the truckers' spit and sawdust paradise 'The Canute' in Southampton was finally scuttled by 'Whitreads'; one of an increasing number of their victims.

Initially, the Victorian building was offered for sale or lease as office accommodation but surprisingly one of the few non-dormant employees at Whitreads came up with the novel ideal of a 'cider palour'.

Wheels started turning and the brewery sent in their troops to raise the king from beneath the waves.

Canute once again saw the light of day on the 25th August, featuring the delicate look of driftwood and orange-crate panelled walls, the sophisticated feel of a bare reinforced concrete floor, not to mention

SALISBURY ARMS

SHIRLEY SOUTHAMPTON

Bill & Jean invite you to try their Marston's Pedigree, Burton Bitter and Mercian Mild — All on handpumps

♦ 1982 GOOD BEER GUIDE ♦

The Salisbury Arms

the 'Dulux' brilliant white plastic coated cast iron patio tables and chairs.

Upon the faced blockwood bar is mounted the feature itself, a solitary hand pump. The remaining twelve feet of available space is taken up with two keg dispensers, one monthly guest cider (the first is Hexams Traditional Cask Cider) and empty space.

Although cider is the main theme, Manager Steve Hartley hopes that the introduction of Flowers Original Bitter will bring in a few more customers.

If you can overcome the initial shock of the spartan interior and lack of facilities, by the time you have downed a few pints of Bulmer's Traditional, the new Canute is, surprisingly enough, almost bearable.

The conversion is purely an experiment at this stage but it does possess a certain fascination that makes it at least worth a visit.

HOME FROM HOME

Eastleighs Home Tavern is another pub that has recently re-opened. It closed in August to allow alterations to be carried out and to have an external facelift.

In comparison to the other Whitbread 'modernisation' recently reported this one is not quite so disastrous, yet once again, both rooms have been knocked into one. The big brewers seem to be obsessed with this dubious practice; which more than anything destroys that feature unique to the British pub, the segregation between the lively 'public' and other bars.

The revamped Home Tavern has the usual wall-to-wall carpeted through lounge with food as the main feature; replacing darts and other pub games and all things characteristic of a proper pub. Presumably, they intend to attract lunch-time office trade, shoppers and lounge lizards.

Fortunately, the developers did not go completely berserk and much of this 18th century coaching inn remains intact. It's at least nice to see that several Real Ales are well promoted: Stong Country, Pompey Royal, Flowers Original and Wadworth 6X all available on handpump. But, as usual they are offered as 'specialist' beers at Whitbread premium prices.

Although what was a rather scruffy pub has been smartened up, it does little to improve Eastleigh's poor 'real' pub scene.

OTHER PUB NEWS

It's sad to report that the Sportsman in West End has reverted to a 'Fizz' pub. In the face of an ever growing demand for the real stuff, let's hope the landlord rethinks his decision. In Southampton city centre, the Painted Wagon is under new management. The landlord Mike Baxter will be pleased to serve you from a mind-blowing array of Real Ales, including Courage BB and Directors, Gibbs Bishsops Tipple, Badger, Waddies 6X and Huntsman Royal Oak. Four of these can be found on stillage behind the bar.

In Sholing, the Muddled Man now serves Ushers BB.

Winchester's small bank of fizz pubs could

GREEN MAN

INN

WINCHESTER

MILD

PEDIGREE

BURTON BITTER

by hand pump

+ "In excellent condition"

Marston's

HIGH ST.

EVENING
CAR
PARK

SOUTHGATE ST.

GREEN
MAN

ST SWITHUN'S ST.

Hot and Cold Food. Monday-Saturday

+ 1983 Winchester Beer Festival Programme



soon be losing one of its members. The Prince of Wales has changed hands and new tenants Lee and Jenny Gritt are keen to install handpumps once they've settled in. Having just spent 20 years in Australia swimming in a sea of cold tasteless lager, we're not surprised they want to serve the decent stuff. Welcome Lee and Jenny!

The Mash Tun's most celebrated character Ron Purse, recently won third prize in Winchester Carnival, entered as a 'political activist' — namely a jumble sale version of 'Sid Snot'!

Part of Winchester Guildhalls major overhaul included the installation of a new lounge. The franchise was granted to the licensee of the Fulflood Arms, Ray Lawrence, who in keeping with his belief in Real Ale, serves Flowers Original, Marston's BB and Pedigree by handpump.

We've learnt to our astonishment that the Exchange is now serving BREAKFAST to the bleary-eyed public! The pub opens at 8.30 every morning — unfortunately his excellent Real Ales are not available at that hour.

Further North still, the 'Extra' reports that the regulars of the King Charles at Kingsworthy had a 'smashing time' when Radio Solent's Peter White and Robin Wormer broke the charity bottle. The bottle's contents together with the proceeds of a contest to guess their value and a raffle topped £210. A cheque was presented to the Assoc. for the Children with Artificial Arms. Westwards and the Running Horse at Littleton — an unspoilt village pub — has a new landlord and is also selling Usher's BB.

Hursley is not often in the news but we're told that the Dolphin now offers Wadworth 6X — but pricey.

Finally some news from Ringwood. The town's celebrated Real Ale brewery has been unsuccessful in obtaining permission to convert a former Ringwood antique shop and cottages into a pub, but we've learnt that their Southampton home brew pub, the Frog and Frigate has been put on the market. This is to enable them to acquire the capital to find another suitable site for a pub in Ringwood.



The Musketeer

Free House

Pennington, Hampshire,

Lymington 76527

GALES - H.S.B. & B.B.B.

RINGWOOD - Best Bitter

CHRISTMAS PUDDING WITH GUINNESS

Prepare for the festive season with this recipe for Christmas Pud.

Ingredients:

10 ozs fresh breadcrumbs, 8 ozs soft brown sugar, 8 ozs currants, 10 ozs chopped seeded raisins, 8 ozs sultanas, 2½ ozs mixed peel, 10 ozs shredded suet, ½ tsp salt, 1 tsp mixed spice, the grated rind of a lemon, 1 Tbsp lemon juice, 2 large eggs, ¼ pt milk, ½ pt GUINNESS.

Mix the dry ingredients together in a large basin, stir in the lemon juice, beaten eggs, milk and GUINNESS. Mix well and turn into one 2-pint and one 3-pint well greased pudding basin, cover tightly with foil or pudding cloths leave overnight then steam for 7½ hrs. Cool, re-cover and store in a cool place until required. Steam for a further 2-3 hours before serving in the traditional way.

THE GREAT BRITISH

BEER FESTIVAL

... from a punter's point of view



CAMRA'S annual major event THE GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL was held at Bingley Hall, Birmingham from 6-10 September. Steve 'Gubby' Allen from Winchester relishes memories of his visit . . .

After hours of travelling, confusion over accommodation (where to put our tent) and braving torrential rains, we finally arrived at the GBBF.

My first impression was that the layout was very good, with several bars set up in the central hall and two adjoining rooms with various food stalls, pub games and supplementary bars.

Sam Smiths seemed a fine way to start the evening, so wasting no time we filled up and got stuck in. Seeing as we had a couple of days to savour the delights we scouted round for a while.

One of the next beers we came across was the very popular Blue Anchor, a strong brew from a Cornish pub. It certainly let me know I'd arrived! Next to the Blue Anchor was Gales and Ringwood – I wiped a tear from my eye as I thought of home, but as we were in Brum we delved into the local brews, sampling Davenport's, Aston Manor and Ansell's.

Before last orders were shouted, we explored the food. A very good variety included hog roasts, health foods, good old sausages and mushy peas with lashings of mint sauce not to mention the burgers, hot dogs and so on.

There was just time to sample a few more northern brews before retiring to our soggy tent.

Saturday came soon, complete with hangovers, coughing fits and breakfast.

The order of the day was to visit a few recommended local pubs and rejoin the festival at around 3 p.m. – seeing as it was open all day!

The first stop was the Prince of Wales which served a nice drop of Tetleys and very presentable Ansell's mild. Somehow the quality and surroundings reminded me of the King Alfred – a very good pub indeed.

Another mile or so down the road we found the White Lion, which was voted 'Pub of the Year' by the local CAMRA mob. And we soon discovered why . . . the first few slugs of the Davenport's proved the reason for the award, so the best part of the afternoon was spent there. But we did leave just enough time to hurry through the rain past Davenport's brewery to the Old Bulls Head, which fortunately was a nice warm pub.

And so on to the festival where we came across the fourth member of our merry band armed with a pint of orange juice! Turning away in horror we took to the pork rolls and Batemans – a pleasant little brew which became affectionately known as 'Bat-Man's beer'!

After testing a few more beers it all became too much so we retired to rest and prepare ourselves for the evening's onslaught.

Although some beers were running a bit scarce by the evening, the enthusiasm was in abundance, especially for the raucous singing that accompanied the various different bands.

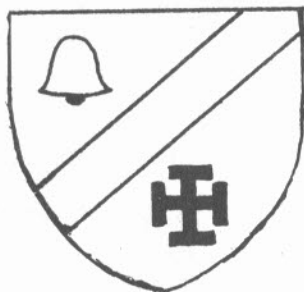
The general idea was to go round and taste beers we'd left out on previous visits, but I don't think we managed them all as things became very wobbly as time progressed.

A CAMRA curry may have helped the great influx of beer, as one of us found out when he took his first mouthful, screamed and was forced to bathe his tongue in three pints of Shipstones Mild.

But after many a song and beer juggling contest, brain cell casualties and flatulence, it all came to an end – a very good end to a great festival.

P.S. He's started saving his pennies for next year . . . how about you?

The BELL INN



ST CROSS RD

WINCHESTER

Alan & Denise welcome you to The Bell
MARSTON'S Traditional Ales

Hot and cold food Beer garden

Car Park

♣ We're in the 1983 Good Beer Guide

THE BLACK BOY

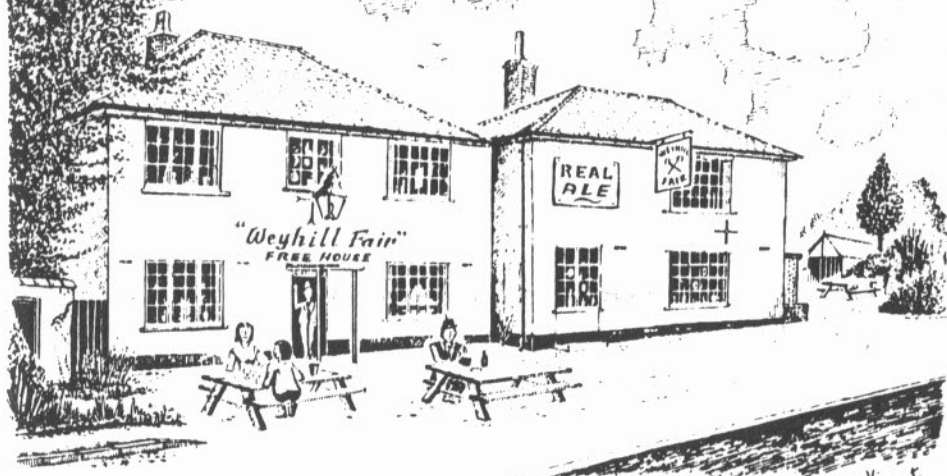


WHARF HILL

WINCHESTER

GALES HSB
WADNORTH 6X
BADGER TANGLEFOOT
MARSTON PEDIGREE
RINGWOOD BB
GOOD FOOD AT LUNCHTIME

Dave & Jan. Rayner
Welcome you to sample MORRELLS
& BOURNE VALLEY Real Ales...



"The WEYHILL FAIR", Weyhill, ANDOVER, Hampshire.
(formerly the "SUN INN") re-opened and modernised

Quick Halves

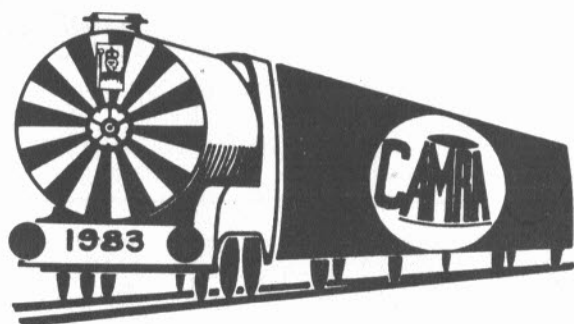
TIMOTHY TAYLORS... LANDLORD'S BEST

Timothy Taylor's, of Keighley the West Yorkshire brewer, won the top prize at the Campaign for Real Ale's beer festival in Birmingham for the second successive year with its premium bitter, Landlord.

A correction to last month's Pub News. The landlady of the County Arms in Winchester is named Helen, not Ellen as reported. Well we can't 'elp being 'amphsire can we? Our apologies Helen.

Do you disagree with anything in Hop Press? Angry about brewery policies, prices or bad beer? Do you have any pub news? If so, let us know. The Editor will be pleased to publish your letters or information.

THE 1983 EASTLEIGH BEER FESTIVAL



**CRESTWOOD CENTRE, SHAKESPEARE ROAD
OCTOBER 28 & 29**

* LOCAL TRADITIONAL ALES * BEERS FROM THE BLACK COUNTRY
* LOTS OF GREAT ENTERTAINMENT & MUCH MORE TO ENJOY

ADMISSION (by ticket only) £1.65 EVENINGS (Fri & Sat 7-11p.m.)
...OVER 16'S ONLY... £1.25 AFTERNOON (Sat 12am-4p.m)

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM:- Mash Tun, Winchester • Green Man, Winchester •
Theatre Pub, Winchester • Bellemoor, Hill Lane, So'ton • New Inn, Bevois Valley, So'ton •
The Mount, Chandlers Ford • Stilts, Eastleigh • Golden Eagle, Eastleigh • Longmead Arms,
Bishopstoke • Leicester Building Society, Chandlers Ford • Leicester Building Society,
163 High St., So'ton • Lloyds Bank, Chandlers Ford • Nalder Cox, 18 High St., Eastleigh

John Harbridge-Rose - Sept '83.

IRONBRIDGE

IRONBRIDGE ALE EXPEDITION

by Derek Markell

For anyone interested in the industrial history of this country, a visit to Ironbridge Gorge, the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, is a 'must'. Situated south of Telford in Shropshire, it is not only an interesting and attractive part of the Severn Valley with several modern museums, both indoor and open-air, but what is probably of more concern to the readers of this publication, it has a very good selection of real ales available from several very pleasant unspoilt pubs for the sustenance of the weary traveller.

A total of 15 beers from 11 breweries are normally available; all can be found on handpump although electric pumps are more common in Bank's and Wemhouses.

This route will enable the enthusiast to fill his/her boots with the minimum of door-opening!

Starting almost opposite the entrance to Blist's Hill Open-Air Museum, try first a pint at the "All Nations", a home-brew pub which until 1972 was one of only four in England; the beer is a low gravity one but would you believe 47pl! Down the hill, turn right along The Lloyds to the roundabout and right again up Madeley Hill, off to the right is the "Golden Ball", a free house with Marstons Pedigree and Bank's mild and bitter. Retrace your steps to the roundabout left along Waterloo Street and right across the Free Bridge to the "Black Swan" another free house serving M & B Highgate Mild and Draught Bass.

Continuing along the road (Coalford) fork left to the next stop, the "Half Moon", a popular pub with a riverside garden and selling Ansell's Mild and Bitter. Back up to the fork, left along Salthouse and Ferry road to the Coalport Footbridge. If you

can't face the perilous river-crossing without a booster, pop into the "Boat" for more Banks', notice the flood-level markings in the corner! About 50 yards east of the "Boat" is a camp-site, a bit basic but who'll notice after this trip!

Cross the bridge, turn right along Coalport High Street, past the China Museum to the "Brewery" for your Wem Mild and Bitter before crossing the river again via the Coalport Bridge to the "Woodbridge", named after the first bridge here, replaced by the present one in 1818. This is a GBG pub on the river-bank serving Courage Director's, Simpkins Bitter and Supreme and more Banks's,

The last port of call on this Marathon (15 beers + 11 breweries = 26l) is a couple of miles up the road towards Broseley. At the crossroads, turn left and there is the "Foresters" with Batham's and usually either Holden's Bitter or Best of the Lot - Timothy Taylors!

Unless you have the capacity of a stoker and a lemonade-drinking chauffeur, you'll need more than one session for this tour but best of luck and enjoy yourself - I did, (so I was told). While you're up there, you might just as well visit some of the museums, after all, that was the original excuse for making the trip.

Pub Information Leaflets with maps are available from some pubs in the area or from CAMRA, Dave Cromarty, 7 Laburnum Drive Madeley, Telford, Shropshire. (Ironbridge or Madeley, 10p each plus S.A.E.).

A VISIT TO KING AND BARNES

Southampton Station 7.30 on a foggy September morning. An epic journey for fifteen members of the South Hants branch was just beginning.

This journey was not to the far Himalayas or even the near ones but took a more perilous route, the A272 and then further into darkest Sussex in the hopes of finding the fabled brewery of King and Barnes.

The following account was related by one of the few who survived to return to Hampshire.

On arrival at Horsham, the coach driver announced that he had no knowledge of King & Barnes brewery and that we would have to act as guides. Careful use of the olfactory sensing organs soon directed us to the brewery where we were given a comprehensive guided tour.

King and Barnes is a small brewery owning 58 tied houses all of which serve real ale. There are five draught ales produced XX Sussex Mild 1034.9; PA Sussex Bitter 1034.9; Draught Festive 1050.5 and XXXX Old Ale 1047.5.

During the tour we quickly realised that even a small brewery with a long tradition must invest in modern equipment.

Stainless steel 'coppers' were much in evidence and used for brewing the bitter.

The older copper vessels are now used for brewing mild.

All the liquor used comes from a deep well within the brewery itself.

After an hour and a half, the time came to leave the glistening coppers and pipework along with the heady smells of the brew-house and visit the sampling room where we relished the final product. Each member of the party was supplied with pints of Bitter and Festive Ale.

We finally stumbled to daylight at about 12.45 and explored the pubs of the town, strangely enough most of which were King & Barnes.

Returning in the early evening through the Sussex countryside a stop was made at Midhurst for refreshment. The Wheatsheaf (King & Barnes) and The Angel (Gales) both being visited.

The party then made its way back to Southampton station where we arrived tired and thirsty.

Later refreshed and with a pint in our hands we were able to marvel at the skill of the brewer who is able to turn simple ingredients into such nectar.



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6 Draught beers on handpump
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Come and try Mash Tun Bitter
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THE MASH TUN

THE BEER STARTS HERE

A Load of Ullage

Of all the mysterious arts of pub cellar work, there is one significant function that is never publicised, never written about and never discussed by publicans that is the delicate subject of returned beer.

We are often told by beer connoisseurs that one of the joys of real beer is that it varies in flavour from barrel to barrel and from pub to pub. However, keg beers including lager and Guinness also vary from pub to pub. Why should this be? One brew of Carlsberg or Holstein is identical to another, the quality control at the brewery is rigorous and meticulous records are kept as to the ingredients, brewing temperature etc. So how can an excellent brew be either good, bad or indifferent?

Once we dismiss the obvious suspicious candidates such as dirty pipes (often a major factor), unhygienic cellars (in the minority) or dirty glasses, we are left with the most undesirable alternative of the lot. Something has been added to the beer in the cellar to alter its taste or colour.

There are still publicans who water down their beer, especially tempting to those who order beer in cellar tanks, barrels (36 gallons) or other large bulk containers, where, for example, one gallon of water would not noticeably alter the taste of the beer (especially if its lager!) I know this practise still continues because cases are scrupulously reported in the trade journal "Morning Advertiser".

Breweries allow a certain amount of beer per container which is free to the publican; that which is left at the end of the barrel, and the new which has to be pulled off before the "clear" beer is reached. These pints are described as "ullage" by breweries, and they are often indescribably mean to their tenants. Anyone who has brewed at home or has drunk at a party from a barrel knows that there is often more than 4 pints of wasted beer at both ends. Yet, this is the limit some breweries allow. Little wonder that the publican feels the need to protect his profit margin by pouring all his "ullage" back into the same or a fresh container for resale.

However, there are many publicans who do not stop there. To create fresh profits for their own pockets (away from the accounts), they resell beer that has already been sold. The contents of noxious drip trays (under the pumps) are either poured into glasses and sold as fresh (often to another bar); or, more often, to avoid complaint, the stale beer is simply poured back into the barrels after closing time.

If you sit at the bar after "close taps" it is often an education to watch bar-staff in action. See if the contents of these trays are poured down the sink.

However, this practise is insignificant when compared to "returns". This occurs when a new barrel is connected and the old contents of the pipe are pulled into a bucket together with the first pints of the new. This bucket is then taken to the cellar, where it is

poured back into the keg/barrel, usually through a filter, the like of which are openly advertised in trade journals. Many breweries and publicans would defend this practise openly even to the point of providing stainless steel buckets to assist the perpetrator. Most seeing the bucket of slops, immediately assume it is taken away to be disposed of. Nothing of the sort! It is all returned to those customers under the guise of fresh beer at a later date. This, notwithstanding the fact that it has been exposed to harmful bacteria in the bar atmosphere.

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If they are carefully nurtured until you have been thrown into the street be sure they will finish as "returns". Also watch what happens to unfinished pints left by departed customers. In two pubs near me these half-empties are lined up on the bar, graded according to colour and then returned to be sold fresh the following session. Little wonder that beer in some pubs is not as it should be! It is not always the late Indian meal that is to blame for the early morning toilet session.

As with the problem of underfilled glasses, dealt with last month, the answer to dodgy returned beer, is to forsake the pub and find one of the few which have a caring devoted and conscientious licensee who plays fair with the customers as a matter of course. Hopefully some of these pubs can readily be found in the annual "Good Beer Guide" published by CAMRA, though we are by means infallible!

One last word; don't believe a landlord who tells you that it is impossible to return beer to certain kegs. During my bar working days, all was revealed as possible by an honest, unscrupulous club steward with an eye for a fast buck!

Chris Cobbold

Reprinted from 'London Drinker'
August 1983.



CAMRA NEEDS YOU!



As a member you will receive a copy of the national magazine 'What's Brewing' every month, which keeps you in touch with the world of beer and brewing, and CAMRA activities. You will also, be able to join in local branch activities (South Hants branch includes the New Forest and is bounded in the east by the A32 and the north by the A30); most of all, for less than the price of a pint per month, you will be doing your bit to help ensure that real draught beer and traditional pubs don't get 'phased out' in the name of progress.

CHAIRMAN: Derek Markell SECRETARY: Grahame Josland
16 Dyer Road, Shirley, Southampton Southampton 559122 (extension 590)

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I/we wish to become a member/members of the Campaign for Real Ale.

- I enclose £7 for full membership for a year
- We enclose £7 for joint husband and wife membership for a year

Name (block capitals)

Address (block capitals)

Signature(s) Date

Please make cheque payable to *Campaign for Real Ale Ltd* and send completed form to Membership, CAMRA, 34 Alma Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3BW.

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Branch Activities

18 October	Darts Match (vs County Arms) Winchester
21 October	Eastleigh Walkabout, Starts Home Tavern 8 p.m.
15 November	10th Anniversary Branch Meeting, Bay Tree Inn, Southampton
22 November	Mike King Darts, Railway Inn, Winchester
Early December	Annual Christmas Party

For more information contact: Derrick Large, Social Secretary, 139 Chalvington Road, Chandlers Ford. Telephone: Chandlers Ford 25220

BEER FESTIVALS

October 28-29

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Tickets: £1.65 Friday & Saturday evenings

£1.25 Saturday afternoon

AVAILABLE FROM:

Winchester: The Green Man, Mash Tun,
Theatre Pub

Eastleigh: Stilts, Golden Eagle, Longmead
Arms, Nalder Cox (18 High Street)

Chandlers Ford: Leicester Building Society,
Lloyds Bank, Mount

Southampton: Bellemoor, Masons St Marys,
Leicester Building Society (163 High St.)

Ticket price includes free programme and a
GLASS

Entertainment:

Friday Evening: Alice, Mike Garner's Dirt
Road Blues Band

Saturday Afternoon: Fried Sock Skiffle Co.
King John's Morris Men

Saturday Evening: Phoenix Jazz Band

October 20-22

8th SWINDON BEEREX

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Tickets: £1.50

Obtainable from: N Miles, 32 Mill Close,
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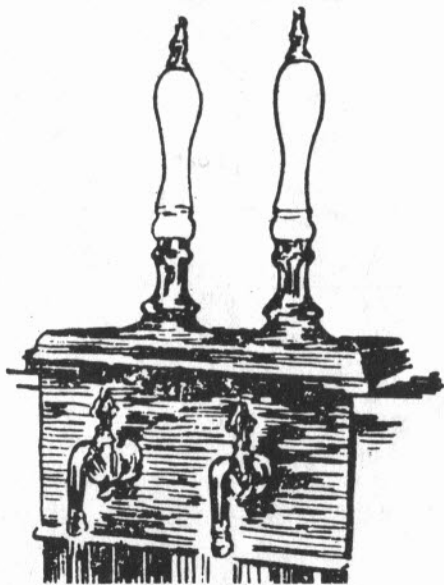
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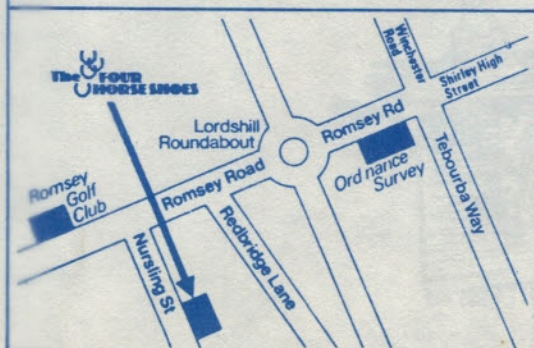
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