



ISSUE No. 24

# “ Solihull BORO BANTER ”



MARCH, 1985

## WHITBREAD SWING THE AXE (AGAIN)

As a change from closing breweries the heavy handed giants have discontinued one of their beers and the end could be in sight for another. The one to go is Fremlins Tusker from Faversham, a strong 1046 bitter which was available around here before Christmas as a guest beer in selected tied outlets. It will be replaced in pubs with Flowers Original. Pompey Royal, another strong bitter (1044), is brewed at Cheltenham and has a doubtful future. It too seems to be giving way to Flowers Original.



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## The new Lodge



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**Wide range of Bar Meals available:  
Mon. — Sat. 12.00 — 2.00 p.m.**



## MORE CHOICE AT THE BULLS HEAD

The Bulls head at Earlswood now sells COATES Medium and Dry cider in addition to the Ansell's Mild, Bitter and Burton Ale. It was introduced in January by the enthusiastic landlord, Ray Franklin and is proving very popular. It is served by gravity from plastic barrels behind the bar and costs 68p per pint which is fairly expensive compared with most farmhouse ciders but is cheaper than other national brands which are available in other pubs in the Solihull area. As an enthusiast, I am particularly pleased to see traditional cider being made more widely available.



## BLACK DAY AT THE RED LION

This Whitbread pub near the far end of Henley in Arden has lost its Flowers Original and is now all keg. Fortunately it is rare for pubs in our area to lose their real beers.

## MA PARDOES SAVED

After several weeks of uncertainty, the future of The Old Swan Home Brew pub in Netherton seems assured. After Mrs. Doris Pardoe's death last spring, her family put all the property up for sale and finally an offer has been accepted from a finance company, Mercia Venture. The good part about this deal is that in order to raise capital, Mercia Venture want CAMRA members to buy shares in the new company. In fact we will have first refusal. If not enough members respond, the shares will be offered to other investors but obviously we hope many CAMRA members will respond, in order to make the future of the Old Swan as secure as possible. Members are asked to make relatively small investments, hopefully around £10.

Mercia Venture and CAMRA'S accepted offer was £110,000 but this was only for the brewery and the adjacent Old Swan. It is believed Courage are buying The White Swan in Dudley, which was Mrs. Pardoe's only other pub.

Expansion plans are already being made for The Old Swan. I only hope these will NOT be detrimental to the pub's unique atmosphere and character. It is surely one of the most outstanding home-brew pubs in the country!

ENJOY THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE

## ORANGE TREE INN

CHADWICK END

Lapworth 2458

FOR TRADITIONAL FOOD FROM THE

# Inn~Kitchen

GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED

### A GEM OF A PUB

Mention must be made of the venue for our April Open meeting. The Case is Altered is just outside our area but is such an outstanding pub we feel the drive out to it is well worth the effort. The pub is just off the Warwick Road at Five Ways which is a few miles beyond Chadwick End. In the editor's opinion The Case is far and away the best pub in the area and one of the nicest unspoilt, rural pubs in the country (or world!?) Time seems to have almost by-passed this pub which has real fires, wooden beams, tiled floors, barrels behind the bar and a bar billiards table that still only takes six penny pieces! The great atmosphere is completely undisturbed by music or electronic distractions and the Ansells Mild, Bitter and Flowers Original are usually in wonderful condition. However, the real point in its favour is that people of all classes and ages can feel completely at home there. Pubs like this can last for centuries while establishments nearby such as Cuddles come and go. Anyone would be very welcome to join us at the meeting. It is on Monday 1st April, 8.00 p.m. onwards

YOUR HOSTS  
BOB AND ANN COPPACK  
WILL GIVE YOU A  
WARM WELCOME



### HOLT, PLANT AND DEAKIN

The March Branch meeting held at The Lyndon, Olton was an enjoyable occasion that will be remembered for some time to come. Holt, Plant and Deakin Director, Bob Smith and

beginning of 1984 the operation has grown from only a handful of pubs to fifteen at present. Initially only mild and bitter was available this being brewed in Warrington. In late 1984 Holt's own brewery opened in Station Road, Oldbury and the locally brewed Entire has been very well received. Last winter Deakin's Downfall was brewed as a winter ale and hopes are high it will be seen again this year. The Branch were most impressed by Bob and David. They are clearly two men dedicated to making Holt's a success. Having tasted the Entire available at the meeting everyone agreed that success was as good as guaranteed. On asking if it is envisaged that the Mild and Bitter would be brewed at the Brewery, Bob said that it was very remote that that could happen as space was not available.

## Bluebell Inn

Colin & Ann  
Squires

93 HIGH STREET HENLEY IN ARDEN  
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Telephone 05642-2646



his Head Brewer, David Rawstone gave a lively talk about the progress of their new brewery set up in the Black Country. The brewery is part of the Allied group, being an attempt to give the large combine a human face within the Black Country, emulating the popularity of Simpkins, Bathams and in the long run Banks's. Set up in the

Turning to the decor of the pubs, Bob emphasised how they had tried to retain and enhance traditional features, and, although not all of the Branch were convinced, it was unanimously agreed that Holt's pubs were 100% better than M and B's Vintage Taverns

Could we expect to see this type of operation set up local to us? Bob of course could not answer for other areas but he did say that many executives from within Allied had visited the brewery with open minds. Solihull branch know only too well the local Allied management to come to the well founded conclusion that such a possibility is nil at the moment.

We do, however, wish Bob and Dave success with their venture as they thoroughly deserve it and we look forward to meeting them again when we visit the brewery, an invitation that was offered to us at the meeting.

## THE NAVIGATION INN LAPWORTH

Andrew & Gerd Kimber



fine traditional ales.

Selection of light bar snacks available

Attractive Canalside Garden

GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED

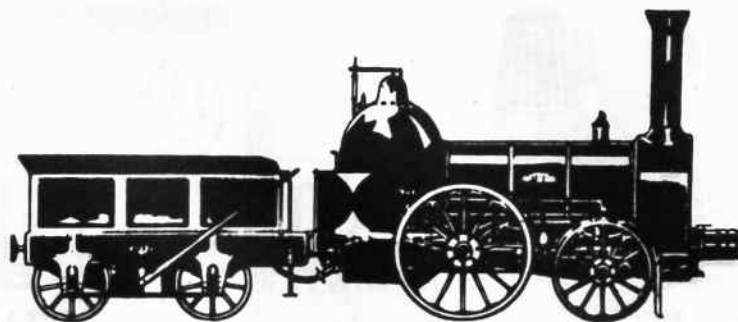
Thanks must also go to the local Ansells Management for a splendid buffet and also to everyone at the Lyndon, one of the best Ansells houses within Solihull.



#### TAKEOVER FEARS SUBSIDE

(FOR THE MOMENT!)

Three breweries in the North West of England whose independence seemed in doubt, now look less likely to be the subject of takeover bids. There had been speculation in the City that Scottish and Newcastle were poised to make a bid for Matthew Brown, but the Blackburn brewers issued a clear "hands off" warning and they are no longer under imminent threat. However, Whitbread Investments have acquired a 5% share stake in Matthew Brown which is shame. Whitbread already have shares in a large number of Britain's breweries including Boddingtons. This Manchester brewery have recently sold their 10% stake in Joseph Holts, which is excellent news as Holts are one of the breweries who are most respected by CAMRA. It would have been TRAGIC if Boddingtons had ever acquired Holts, especially so regarding the Whitbread connection. Whitbread have just closed eight breweries in less than four years. Jennings of Cockermouth feared an approach by Samuel Smiths because the Tadcaster brewery built up a stake of 18% from 7% in two months. However, things have quietened down now and Jennings are confident there will be no takeover bid. Sam Smiths will not disclose why they built up such a stake so quickly. It may have something to do with the fact that Jennings have dropped Sam Smiths lager in favour of Tennents, which is brewed by Bass. Jennings and Bass have other trading agreements and we only hope Bass don't get any ideas about swallowing up the traditional Lake District brewery.



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Tues. — Sat. 7.30 p.m. — 9.30 p.m.



#### GOOD NEWS FOR THE GEORGE AND DRAGON

For many months the branch was under the impression that the George and Dragon on the Stratford Road in Shirley was going to be turned into another fun-pub similar to Beagles in Acocks Green. However, the company who have leased it off Ansells, Tramhill Ltd., have now said this is NOT going to happen. Major renovation work is going to take place and it is hoped that the pub will be open by the

middle of summer. It is boarded up at the moment. Tramhill describe the new image as "Up-market" and the bar and lounge are to be knocked through into one room, although a "bar area" will remain. Traditional beer is definitely going to be installed so the pub will be a real ale gain. The beer will have to come from an Allied Breweries company, certainly Ansells and possibly Ind Coope. Food will definitely be available and a garden is being planned at the back on the old bowling green. Before the pub closed it was an un-inspiring place so these changes, particularly on the beer front, are quite welcome. Surely it has got to be better than another Beagles!!!!

## The Bulls Head

Ray & Jane Franklin

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HOUSE SPECIALITY  
BAKED POTATOES  
WITH VARIOUS FILLINGS

FUN NIGHT  
EVERY  
OTHER FRIDAY







## BRANCH DIARY

**MONDAY 1st APRIL - OPEN MEETING**  
at The Case is Altered, Five Ways,  
(Near Warwick).

**MONDAY 15th APRIL - BRANCH MEETING**  
at The Fleur de Lyse in Lowsonford,  
(Whitbread). There will also be a  
guest speaker from Whitbreads on  
this night. Everyone welcome,  
even non-members.

**MONDAY 13th MAY - OPEN MEETING** at  
The White Lion in Hampton in Arden.  
Very pleasant little pub serving  
Brew XI, Springfield and Bass.

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

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fight. Only £7 a year. Send cheque  
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If you want any information regarding  
CAMRA nationally or locally contact  
Steve Dyson at 79, Walsgrave Drive,  
Damson Wood, Solihull. (021.705.1168).  
or David Queenborough at 11 Upton Close  
Shirley, Solihull (021.744.3113)



### WATNEYS TO CLOSE NORWICH

Not to be outdone by Whitbread,  
Watneys are to close their large  
Norwich Brewery soon with the  
loss of 155 jobs. Five real ales  
were brewed there including  
Manns Bitter and Manns IPA,  
which are available in and a-  
round Solihull. The beers are  
not going to be dropped  
however, but brewed at other  
sites such as Watney Coombe  
Reid at Mortlake in London and  
Wilsons of Manchester. The beers  
are sure to taste different  
though and this plus the fact  
that most of their houses are  
going to be turned into stereo-  
typed, identikit theme pubs makes  
the thought of visiting a Watneys  
pub rather unexciting.

The brewery is to be closed be-  
cause it cannot brew LAGER! This  
act leaves the City of Norwich  
without a brewery for the first  
time in 900 years.

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ALAN & JANET



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