



Solihull BORO BANTER



ISSUE No. 29

NOVEMBER, 1985

The new Lodge

**Yardley Wood Road,
Solihull Lodge.**



Ansell's

**ENJOY TRADITIONAL
BEER AT IT'S BEST.**

BURTON ALE

**Wide range of Bar Meals
Mon. — Sat. 12.00 — 2.00**



THE GOOD BEER GUIDE, 1986

The 13th edition of The Good Beer Guide has at last been printed and it should be arriving in the shops now. As usual it lists about 5,000 of the very best of British Pubs and is an indispensable guide for all beer drinkers and pub goers alike. It gives details of many pub facilities apart from beer, such as food, accommodation, games, entertainment etc. There are many good campaigning articles

on matters like brewery take-overs and closures, pub preservation, misleading lager commercials and the manipulation of so called "free houses" by large breweries. There is also the comprehensive list of all the breweries in Britain with details of their beers.

Personally, I think it is a better guide than the 1985 one and would recommend it highly. Stocks are expected to run out quicker than usual so don't hang around, get one before Christmas! They cost £4.95 in the shops but Solihull CAMRA is selling them considerably cheaper. Why not come along to one of our meetings and buy one from us?

TAKEOVER RUMOURS, STILL DEPRESSING READING

Sorry to keep boring readers with takeover news, I only wish there wasn't so much of it about! Batemans of Skegness are in most trouble and it is possible they will have actually been bought up by the time you read this. Two of the three family owners want to sell out and the future looks bleak. It is reported elsewhere that Allied Breweries are in some trouble. Another big six giant, Scottish and Newcastle are also the subject of speculation in the City. It is obvious that even our national companies, for so many years the predators, are no longer safe. Greenall Whitley have not ruled out the possibility of another purchase in the Midlands, following their Simpkins caper. Davenports could be the target.

James Paine of St. Neots are a new name to the "under threat" list. There seems to be a lack of confidence concerning them with reports of declining quality of their beers and the selling of tied houses.

"MOST IRREGULAR"

(Sign in window of Black Country pub).

'Only regulars served in the bar'
(If you can't get served how can you become a regular?)



BIRMINGHAM'S No. 1

Real Ale Off Licence

**WE HAVE A SELECTION OF
BOTTLED AND CANNED
BEERS THAT'S SECOND TO
NONE!**

Our range of Imported Beers includes Kirin from Japan ... Molson Beer from Canada ... the famous Pelican from France ... and that's only to name a few

**A TERRIFIC SELECTION OF
GOOD OLD FASHIONED
TRADITIONAL BRITISH BEER ON
DRAUGHT —**

Containers Supplied

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The Bulls Head

Ray & Jane Franklin

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**TRADITIONAL CASK CONDITIONED ALE
ANSELLS MILD AND BITTER, BURTON ALE,
TRADITIONAL COATES CIDER**

Wide range of Bar Meals available:

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**HOUSE SPECIALITY
BAKED POTATOES
WITH VARIOUS FILLINGS**

**FUN NIGHT
EVERY
OTHER FRIDAY**



C A M R A

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT ANYWAY?

Fed up with your Local Pub and its bland beers and boring company? Perhaps you need a change; so why not take up the CAMRA challenge and meet new people, move around a few pubs and find out something about what you are actually drinking.

What is CAMRA all about - What can it do for you? or more important, what can YOU do for CAMRA?

CAMRA is the only beer drinkers union of any sort that campaigns against brewers, about keg beers, high priced lagers, pub closures, outdated drinking hours, short measure, hidden and missing price lists, drastic alterations likely to ruin a pub's character, brewery take-overs and closures along with pub closures and other endless challenges and battles. Without CAMRA's intervention some 11 years ago most traditional beer would probably be obsolete by now and many small breweries extinct; we were actually at the time in danger of drowning in a sea of mediocre National Brand Beers of the keg variety (CO²) and tank beer products - tasteless and gassy.

So what benefits are to be gained by joining CAMRA? You could, if you wish, become involved in your local Solihull

Area Branch; come along and be made welcome and feel free to indulge in the social activities like.....occasional brewery

visits (Find out about the brewing process, plus free sampling!) Pub crawls, hiking and pub touring, cycling and pub touring and inter-branch sports challenges including - 'Aunt Sally' (rare Oxfordshire country pub garden game), indoor cheese skittles (classical Northamptonshire pub game), indoor bowling and the occasional darts, pool, etc. etc.

There are approximately 15,000 members and 200 branches spread throughout this country and on joining you can visit any branch - anywhere! In addition, you can visit numerous beer festivals, buy local Real Ale Guides and Newsletters for virtually all areas of the country; plus the prestigious "Good Beer Guide" at a handsome discount.

Additionally, like all volunteer organisations it is also a great social leveller with people from all walks of life and ages participating. A few examples in the Solihull Branch are; a clerk, librarian, storeman, executive, instrument assembler, social worker; to name but

a few. I know of students, a dustman, bank manager amongst numerous others - woman too have important roles; there are three on the committee of one branch and one lady is Chairperson of the Cambridge outfit. So, if you are a discerning beer drinker and fancy a change of environment and a rewarding hobby come and join us. The Solihull branch move around as many of the decent pubs in its allocated area as possible and provide some transport often on request:

For further details contact:

Steve Dyson 021.705 1168

Dave Queenborough 021 744 3113

"THE NAME GAME OR A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE CAN BE DANGEROUS"

(Father and son enter Marstons pub in Worcester)

(Gent) Two pints of bitter please....(Barman) Pedigree, or Burton sir? (Gent) What? oh, bitter please. (Barman) The Pedigree's the stronger one... (Gent) Well, two pints of bitter then. (Baffled Barman retreats to Burton Bitter hand-pump)...(Son) I didn't know they had two types of bitter.. (Gent) That's only what he said, actually I don't think they do. It's like petrol - all the same brand under different names and grades! (Fuel for thought no doubt!?)

"BARE FOOTING"

(Sign outside Monmouthshire pub)

'HIKERS - Please leave your boots outside' (Holy socks!)

ENJOY THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE

ORANGE TREE INN

CHADWICK END Lapworth 2458

Your Hosts Bob & Ann Coppack

FOR TRADITIONAL FOOD FROM THE

Inn-Kitchen

Attractive Garden

GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED





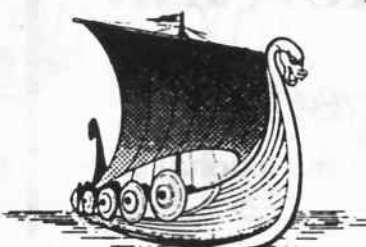
NOT THE GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL

For the second successive year Digbeth Civic Hall hosted the West Midlands premier beer festival which was held from 5th - 7th September. Like last year it was very successful and even more enjoyable. About 80 different beers were on sale and although I only managed to sample about half of them, they seemed to be in very good condition. Some were extremely unusual and hard to find around here such as Belhaven, Big Lamp, Clarks, Elgood, Franklins, Old-Mill etc. Davenports Top Brew De Luxe was sold in traditional form (o.g.1074) and so was Traquair House Ale from Southern Scotland (o.g.1079). This was one of the highlights in my opinion and also one of the quickest to sell out. It is a superb full bodied exclusive beer brewed by Peter Maxwell-Stuart, the Laird of an ancient manor house.



In addition to the beers were a dozen or so traditional ciders which sold out long before the end of the festival. Plus the usual tombola, CAMRA products stores, food and excellent live music.

I think I enjoyed the festival so much because I worked there a lot more than usual, while still managing to get plenty of time drinking too! Like with everything, the more you put in the more you get out of it. Many branches from the West Midlands helped with the organisation and running of the festival and most of the profit made will go into a "campaigning fund" for the West Midlands area. This should be very useful with all the takeovers in the offing. There may well be yet another regional festival next year, if so, I'm sure it will be as superbly run as this year's. Something to look forward to!!!!

the viking



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THE
 VIKING
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TRADITION FARM CIDER.....

A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO BEER?

I make no apologies for mentioning real cider in a CAMRA publication. Many real ale guides and newsletters make "token gestures" to cider but after a recent sampling holiday in Somerset, I feel it deserves much more. Generally, cider sales are on a high at the moment but some people think it might slump again in the future. I want to make sure it doesn't. At its best, traditional cider has a full body and strong tangy flavour that few beers can match. Somerset is the mecca for cider

drinkers and while I was down there I visited a wide variety and range of cider mills and farms. Some have excellent museums and facilities for visitors while others are tiny sheds in a farmyard, buried deep in the remote countryside. Some seemed better than others but it is probably a matter of personal taste. There is a wide variety of flavours and obviously something for everyone.

Some small traditional cider makers think promotion of keg cider by the large companies is quite a good thing as they get "dragged along" with the general hysteria. There may be truth in this, but I feel rather bitter about the exorbitant prices charged by the large companies such as Bulmers and Taunton.

This is necessary presumably, to pay for all the TV ads. A round Solihull and even in Somerset, (where people are used to paying much less) national brands like Blackthorne are sold for 80p or 90p. While on holiday I was paying as little as 28p per pint and 40p was almost a rip off! This shows what good value the real stuff is compared with keg and it also tastes a lot better. Beer drinking is expensive in comparison too!

Finally, "Cider farm crawling" takes you into old barns and farms that have great charm and atmosphere. You meet some rustic old characters too while trying your free samples. Some farms like Hecks, Perrys, Plum Tree etc., are almost worth visiting even if you don't like cider. If you do, then its better still!!

STOP PRESS - Remember Bernie's Off Licence in Cranmore Boulevard sells cider which is comparable to what I was drinking in Somerset and at 43 pence per pint it is almost as cheap.



Oyez

Oyez...

"Why not advertise in the Boro Banter?"

Circulation 500 copies
 Distributed free throughout the local pubs in the Solihull area.
 Charges - 4½ x 4½ £12-00 per issue
 4½ x 2½ £6-00 per issue
 Contact- B. Queenborough on
 021-744 3113

THE NAVIGATION INN LAPWORTH

Andrew & Gerd Kimber



fine traditional ales.

Selection of light bar snacks available

Attractive Canalside Garden

GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED

"MEASURING UP" (Solihull pub)

Elderley customer arguing with young barman about short measure pint....(Man) Can you fill it up son?....(Barman) It's full, you can't have a head on it as well because there isn't room..... (Man) It ain't! Tell you what, put the head in the bottom of the glass first, then the beer on top and it'll be full (EXIT BARMAN BEMUSED)



PROGRESSIVE BEER SWAP ARRANGEMENT

Camerons of Hartlepool and Everards of Leicester have recently signed an agreement where they will sell one of the other's beers in all their own pubs. Camerons will take Everards Old Original throughout their tied estate while Camerons Best Bitter will be available in Everards pubs. In addition to this, Everards may soon be taking other brewers' products as guest beers. This sort of enlightened attitude

gives the public a very fair deal and stimulates interest in the breweries pubs which will hopefully be reflected in their takings.

It is a pity more breweries with pubs in our area do not operate similar policies. The Chairman of M and B has said that selling someone else's beer means you have no confidence in your own product. Could it be he is concerned that Brew XI drinkers might go off it when they discover how good other beer tastes?



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CONTACTS

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 Ufton Close, Shirley, Solihull. (021 744 3113)



BRANCH DIARY

TUESDAY 19th NOVEMBER - CAMRA (Solihull) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING to be held at THE LYNDON, BARN LANE, OLTON. Will all branch members please try to attend, this is our most important meeting of the year. New faces will be even more welcome!! The 1986 committee will be elected here and we will have a brief look back at the previous year, which has been very successful, especially from a financial point of view. Card carrying CAMRA (Solihull) members can vote for the new committee at this meeting.

The pub is GBG listed, serving excellent Ansells Mild and Bitter. There will also be a raffle, food and the opportunity to buy the 1986 Good Beer Guide considerably cheaper than in the shops so there are plenty of good reasons for you to turn up!

WEDNESDAY 27th NOVEMBER - BREWERY VISIT ROUND DAVENPORTS in Birmingham. Unfortunately, there is only a very limited number of places left. For tickets ring Steve Dyson (see contacts) well before the date of visit.

TUESDAY 10th DECEMBER - OPEN MEETING at THE GREVILLE ARMS, Cornyx Lane, Nr. Damson Lane, Solihull.

Mitchells and Butlers: Mild and Brew XI

SATURDAY 14th DECEMBER

Annual CHRISTMAS PARTY with Shakespear branch at the National Vegetable Research Centre near Wellesbourne. There are **PLENTY** of tickets for this event. Ring contact for details and price of tickets.

FRIDAY 20th DECEMBER

Informal pub crawl around the centre of Solihull. Here is a rough schedule but times are approximate. The pubs visited and times are flexible and depend very much on the individuals, on the night.
George Hotel 8.30
Snooty Fox 9.00
Barley Mow 9.30
Golden Lion 10.00

I wish to become a member of the Campaign for Real Ale Limited. I agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign.

I enclose £7 (£10 overseas) for full membership for a year. ☐

Any additional amount will be welcomed as a donation ☐

FULL NAME (Block capitals)

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