



ISSUE No. 34

Solihull BORO BANTER



NOVEMBER, 1986

The new Lodge

**Yardley Wood Road,
Solihull Lodge.**



Ansell's

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

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



SAVE OUR BREWERIES!!

For several years now, there has been increasing and sometimes frantic takeover activity involving regional independent breweries but now the national breweries are well and truly involved. Grand Metropolitan (Watneys to most people) and Scottish and Newcastle have recently given fearsome body blows to drinkers by taking over Ruddles and Home respectively. It is reported that both breweries will stay open for the foreseeable future but this is far from heartening from CAMRA's point of view. Ruddles was one of the most famous names in the country for real ale and Home have long been respected for good

beer at cheap prices. CAMRA would like to remind drinkers that brewery takeovers almost always means bad news for them in the long term. More money for less people is usually the outcome.

A special report has been made by CAMRA for the Office of Fair Trading expressing our grave concern regarding the current state of takeovers. The figures speak for themselves. 126 breweries taken over since 1960.... 108 closed down! In recent times Border, Yates and Jackson, North Country, Simpkins, Norwich, Wilsons and Darley have all closed after being bought up. Home, Ruddles, Theakstons, Davenport's, Hartleys, Oldham and Higsons have all lost their independence. Batemans, Burts and Castletown could be up for sale and Theakstons (Carlisle) and Lorimers are about to close. All this means choice and competition will be words of the past if something is not done. We have asked the Office of Fair Trading to refer the Ruddles and Home cases to the Monopolies Commission. In addition we would like to see an urgent review of the state of competition in the brewing industry and a complete halt to further takeovers while the Monopolies Commission are investigating.



ANOTHER NEW PUB FOR SOLIHULL

The Shelley Farm on Monkspath's new housing estate opened its doors to the public for the first time in early September. Ansell's have turned the old actual farm into quite a pleasant "Olde Worlde" country pub using traditional

features such as stone slabs and genuine wooden beams. One room is in the main farm building, while another is adjacent in a converted barn.

In keeping with the surrounding area, the pub has a fairly up market feel and there is no public bar. However, the architects have put a great deal of thought and effort into their design which is obviously a good thing for all concerned. The range of beer is also good, for an Ansell's House, comprising of Ansell's Mild and Bitter, Tetley Bitter and Burton Ale, so the place is definitely worth a visit!



BERNIES

**The Real Ale Off Licence
SCOTTISH MINI BEER FESTIVAL**

COMMENCING
FRIDAY 31 - OCT - 86
COME ALONG AND TRY THE
REAL ALES FROM
NORTH OF THE BORDER

* STRATHALBYN	*
* BELHAVEN	*
* MACLAY	*
* BROUGHTON	*

ALSO ON DRAUGHT

Whisky, Brandy, Gin, Sherry, Port, Wine
& Somerset Scrumpy Cider.

IMPORTED BEERS FROM COUNTRIES
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

BEERS, WINES & SPIRITS IN
ANY QUANTITY FOR ALL
PRIVATE OR PARTY FUNCTIONS
AVAILABLE

FREE GLASS HIRE AVAILABLE
**EARLSCOURT ROAD,
HARBORNE. TEL: 021-427 5796**
**266, CRANMORE BOULEVARD,
SHIRLEY. TEL: 021-744 2827**

SEE YOU THERE

Red Lion Hotel

HIGH STREET, KNOWLE,
SOLIHULL, WEST MIDLANDS

Telephone KNOWLE (560) 2461



TRADITIONAL
TETLEY'S
BITTER



BURTON ALE

LUNCHTIMES ★ **BAR SNACKS – HOT AND COLD**
3 DIFFERENT SELECTIONS OF HOT
FOOD TO CHOOSE FROM MON-FRI.

*We also have a great selection of
Sandwiches.*

WINE BAR ★ **WINES, COCKTAILS ETC.**

FUNCTION ROOM ★ **CATERS FOR:**
★ 21st BIRTHDAYS
★ WEDDING RECEPTIONS
★ PRIVATE FUNCTIONS

HOT FOOD ★ **Now available between
7 pm-10 pm daily**

★ **GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED** ★



GBBF COMES GOOD AGAIN!!

At long last it is a pleasure to report on a Great British Beer Festival that was successful in every sense of the word. Last year it was disappointing from a financial point of view and it had to be cancelled the previous year due to the fire at Bingley Hall. However, all hard work by many people over the last couple of years has finally been rewarded! The GBBF was held in August at Brighton's Metropole and over 30,000 people attended, a 25% increase on last year. They drank 90,000 pints of real ale which meant the beer ran dry just before the end of the final session ensuring a healthy profit for the campaign. Equally satisfying over 400 new members were recruited. Some people thought (before the festival) the GBBF was becoming 'tired' and had outstayed its welcome. I think the recent success has proved them wrong. It has been described as CAMRA's "Shop window" and as such it must continue, hopefully at Brighton again next year. This should mean another profit-

making event. Most Midland and Northern CAMRA branches would like to see a more central location but their allegiance must surely be with the well-being of the movement as a whole. Hopefully our turn will come in 1988



A BREWERY VISIT WITH A DIFFERENCE

Following their decision to close it, the old Everards brewery in Burton is now part of the National Brewery Museum Trust and it is going to be turned into a working museum. Old Original is brewed at a modern plant in Leicester but the museum still brew Tiger

Bitter and Everards Mild. They are in the process of getting off the ground and to help out, Solihull CAMRA have become members. All it costs is £5 per annum and groups and individuals can join. Bearing this interest in mind we decided recently to go on a trip around the brewery. The Chairman of Burton CAMRA acted as our guide and we were made to feel very welcome. The building is a late 1800s traditional tower brewery and is well worth seeing. Many have been lost over the years because of closure and demolition. It is well worth preserving and this would have been unlikely if the NBMT had not stepped in to help after Everards decided to shut it down. We saw plans for the future development of the site which seems to have enormous potential. A traditional Victorian pub is planned which will be next to a restored 19th century brewery worker's cottage. A shop, cafe and display area will be built too. Eventually there will be improvements to the brewery itself, including the addition of working, antique brewery equipment such as a steam engine and a friction hoist! Although the museum is not open to the public yet (there is nothing to see until more work has been carried out) parties can go around the brewery. Ring Burton 69226 for more details. I know from personal experience it is well worth while. It costs £2.50 per head but for that you get liquid refreshment. We enjoyed the Tiger very much indeed!



THE NAVIGATION INN LAPWORTH

Andrew & Gerd Kimber



fine traditional ales.

Selection of light bar snacks available
Attractive Canalside Garden

GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED



There was an unprecedented development in the British Brewing industry in September when Elders IXL of Fosters fame bought Courage from Hanson Trust for around £1.4billion. Elders are the Australian company who wanted to buy Allied Breweries but they have now lost all interest in that direction. Allied and CAMRA will be pleased about that but it must be said that the Courage purchase may hold grave connotations for the future. More overseas breweries could follow Elders.....e.g. Budweiser merge with Watneys perhaps, they already have links together. Give the big six more financial muscle and they will find it even easier to "rub out" the regional and mini breweries. The bigger they get will also mean they will be even more distant and less tuned in to their customers requirements and needs. We drinkers will lose out on all fronts.

ANOTHER NEW BEER TO SOLIHULL



The Golden Lion in Solihull has started selling traditional John Smiths Bitter by handpull. It is not the most exciting beer in the world but it does mean 3 draught beers are now available at the pub, not a bad range. Also John Smiths must be encouraged now they are producing real ale. For many years they were under attack from CAMRA because of their anti consumer, keg only policy.

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

Bluebell Inn

Colin & Ann
Squires

93 HIGH STREET HENLEY IN ARDEN
WARWICKSHIRE

Telephone 05642-2646



LIDDINGTON LAYS LITCHBOROUGH TO REST

The only brewery in Warwickshire, Liddingtons of Rugby is to close. It has had an eventful history and has seen several different owners and sites since 1974 when it was started as Litchborough brewery by Bill Urquart. It was quite an important, move then as it was one of the first new small breweries. Many have come since so it can be said that pioneer brewers of the last decade were very influential and helped significantly to increase the range of new and exciting beers that we enjoy today. Three years ago, wholesalers John Liddingtons took over the Litchborough brewery and moved it from Daventry to Rugby. In that time they say that sales of beer have not maintained a reasonable level so the brewing must stop. The wholesale side of the business is to continue. Litchborough Bitter (1036) and Tudor Ale (1043) are the two beers being lost. It is sad to think that a reasonably successful brewery can go on for nearly ten years and then be taken over by a larger company only to be closed down.....



THE DUOPOLY IN BRUM IS BUSTED - FOR THREE DAYS!!

The Heart of England Beer Festival was held at Digbeth Civic Hall from 11th to 13th September and yet again turned out to be a marvellous event. Previously called 'Not the Great British Beer Festival' it was just as successful as the last two festivals held on that site and possibly more so. Around NINETY different beers and ciders were on sale but we nearly ran out on the last session. Thousands of people came through the doors and consequently a fair profit was made, nearly £3,000. This will go into a "West Midlands fighting fund" because many West Midland CAMRA branches helped organise and staff the festival. There was a great atmosphere at all the sessions and it did much to improve and promote the good reputation of CAMRA. Most of the beer was in good condition and new members signed up to help the cause. Particularly notable beers included Strathalbyn Stout, Franklins Bitter, Belhaven 60 Shilling, Lees Moonraker and Traquair House Bear Ale. The only bad part about this celebration of variety and beer was closing time on the last night! Sadly Digbeth Civic Hall is to be closed so there will not be another festival next year unless a suitable new venue can be found. Fortunately we are working on that already, hopefully with some success!





One of the several pleasant parts of Solihull CAMRA's area is Earlswood where there is some attractive country and some varied pubs. On a late summer, sunny afternoon I walked around one of the reservoirs and found some very scenic, peaceful spots. The adjacent woods are also worthy of mention and the whole area is surrounded by rural countryside. (except the new M42). Near the lakes is the Red Lion, a big M & B pub that has changed dramatically in recent years. It sells Brew XI and Mild on electric pumps along with reasonable bar snacks. Unfortunately it lost the public bar a few years ago when it was modernised to the current smart standard. A short distance along the dam brings you to the Reservoir a Davenport's pub on acrossroads. It has a pleasant if plain public bar and Davenport's Traditional Bitter served by electric pump. It seemed fizzy to me, there could be a touch of blanket pressure. The lounge is dominated by a fake handpump that dispenses Scrumpy Jack cider which tastes like keg and is expensive, so beware! On a cider theme is the Blue Bell Cider house which is near Earlswood on the banks of the Stratford canal. Only keg beer I'm afraid but traditional Bulmers Medium and Dry Cider. Just down a little country lane is the Bulls Head, probably the best of the several pubs in the vicinity. This Ansell's House has a smart rambling lounge and a good, small basic bar,

friendly and no frills! It is sited amidst very pleasant fields and is scenically quite attractive especially from the little courtyard on a nice day.

Inside you will find traditional Mild, Bitter, Burton Ale and Coates Cider, all handpulled. The branch note with sadness the departure of Ray and Jane, the landlords but obviously wish their successors the best of luck.



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

The views expressed in the Boro Banter are intended to inform the general public, in and around Solihull of changes, or happenings, with the ever changing Real Ale and pub scene. They may not necessarily reflect the views of CAMRA nationally.

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 £9 (£10 overseas) for full membership for a year.

Any additional amount will be welcomed as a donation

FULL NAME (Block capitals)

FULL POSTAL ADDRESS (Block capitals)

SIGNATURE

DATE

Cheques should be made payable to Campaign for Real Ale Limited, 34 Alma Road, St. Albans, Herts

BRANCH DIARY



TUESDAY, 11th NOVEMBER - OPEN MEETING AT THE REGENCY at MONKSPATH on the A34 just south of Shirley. Large modern lounge that will soon be only one part of a large hotel complex. It sells good beer and is the only BANKS'S pub in the whole area, a welcome change from M & B and Ansell's!

WEDNESDAY, 19th NOVEMBER - 4th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING to be held at THE LYNDON, BARN LANE, OLTON. We would appreciate as much support as possible for this meeting, obviously it is our most important of the year. If anyone who has never met us before would like to come along we would make them especially welcome. The business is usually over as quickly as possible which leaves time for a social with food and a raffle.

Any Solihull CAMRA members wishing to vote for committee members will have to bring along their membership cards. If anyone wishes to stand for election onto the Committee or would like to nominate someone, could they please tell Steve Dyson (see contacts address and phone number).

The Bulls Head

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

Wide range of
Bar Meals available.

GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED

SALTER STREET,
EARLSWOOD
Tel: 021-728 2335



BURTON ALE



has been published
by Solihull CAMRA branch
and printed by

Paper & Print

PHOTOCOPYING
PLANPRINTING - INSTANT PRINT

387, STRATFORD ROAD, SHIRLEY, SOLIHULL
021-745 3214