

DURHAM DRINKER!

News for the Discerning Drinkers in the City and County of Durham



Issue No.5

FREE

JUNE~JULY—1979

Peterlee Festival Edition

The Durham Branch of CAMRA is launching its first ever beer festival in the east of the county. The festival is being held on Saturday July 14th in the community centre at Peterlee as part of a week-long Peterlee Arts Festival. The venue is only a few minutes walk from the town centre. Over 15 different beers will be available. The festival is open to the general public from 11 – 3 p.m. and from 6 – 10.15 p.m. As a later article points out, the east of Durham County is starved of real ale and for many residents of Peterlee and surrounding districts, this festival will represent their first opportunity for sampling the delights of cask-conditioned beer. Entrance is only 10 pence and we are hoping to have food available. See you there.

**FIRST PETERLEE BEER FESTIVAL, EDEN LANE COMMUNITY CENTRE,
SATURDAY JULY 14th**

How to get there — Head for the Town Centre and follow the signs.

What Real Ales — Marstons Pedigree, Theakstons Best Bitter — Theakstons Old Peculiar, Darleys IPA, — Wards Best Bitter — Sam Smiths OBB — Castle Eden Ale — Jennings Bitter — Kellys Golden Bitter (KGB) — Draught Bass — Vaux Samson, Lorimers Scotch — Vaux's Sunderland Bitter — McEwans 80/- — Camerons Strongarm — Durham Charter Ale.

VAUX SAMSON — COXHOE and SACRISTON

One of the most popular Real Ales in the County is now available in the Commercial at Coxhoe and the Robin Hood at Sacriston. The Commercial has always sold Real Ale (Lorimers Scotch) but the Robin Hood is a conversion as it previously only dispensed Keg Beers. Give your support to both these landlords by giving the beer a try — ASK FOR CASK!

WHITBREAD DURHAM CHARTER ALE (o.g. 1056)

Look for this special beer in the following pubs during and following the 800 Celebrations (Its the strongest thing since Durham Castle say Whitbread) — Stone Bridge Inn (bottom of Nevilles Cross bank) Stone Bridge, Dun Cow, Old Elvet, Durham, Three Horse Shoes, Gilesgate Durham, Buffalo Head, Saddler Street, Durham.

MIDDLETON IN TEESDALE — Beer Desert

With the withdrawal of Camerons Beer at the Talbot there is no longer any Real Ale in Middleton in Teesdale. Why not try the Rose and Crown in Romalldkirk (Theakstons and Camerons) or the Strathmore Arms in Holwick (Theakstons)

CAMRA — North East New Local Guide

The new local guide covering the counties of Northumberland, Tyne & Wear, Durham and Cleveland is in preparation, Look out for this fully revised edition of all known Real Ale Outlets.

CAMRA — In Alnwick

A new sub-branch was formed in Alnwick at the beginning of June in the Tanners Arms near the Hotspur Gate which is a new addition to the growing list of Real Ale pubs in the region. The First Alnwick Beer Exhibition was held on the last weekend in June.

CAMERONS and CAMRA — A NEW ERA?

It seems that the Durham Drinker is having some unexpected but welcome benefits. In our last edition, we strongly criticised the attitude of Camerons towards real ale. One of the main problems with Camerons has been the fact that in the past they have declined to have much contact with CAMRA. Consequently, we have had very little idea of what they were up to and what their policies were for the future.

A reporter from 'The Northern Echo' picked up our comments and ran a series of stories in the paper. Subsequently, Camerons marketing manager, Mr. Andrew Dundas, got in touch with local CAMRA officials and intimated his desire for much better contacts with the branch. Camerons, he said, now recognised CAMRA as somewhat more than a minority interest group and they intend to establish much better relations between the brewery and local CAMRA branches. CAMRA are delighted with this change of policy by the brewery and look forward to establishing new, friendly links with Camerons. Lets hope that their excellent cask-conditioned products will soon be appearing in more pubs.

SPECIAL FESTIVAL BEER FROM VAUX

Vaux Breweries may have been the subject of a lot of criticism from CAMRA in the past, but for once they have delighted local CAMRA officials by agreeing to brew a special beer for this years Durham Beer Festival. The festival is being held as part of the celebrations to mark the 800th anniversary of the granting to Durham City of its first charter and the name of the beer, which is at present being kept a strict secret, will reflect those festivities. Unfortunately, there are too many problems involved in putting the beer on general sale. throughout the summer, so the beer will only be available to those people lucky enough to attend the Festival on August 31st and September 1st. Unlike other Vaux cask-conditioned products, the beer will be dispensed from wooden barrels. The Head Brewer is currently experimenting with the new beer and we can't wait for a sample.

Meanwhile, plans for the festival are progressing steadily. The event looks like becoming the biggest of its kind ever held in the north-east. Nearly 1800 gallons of beer will be available for consumption over the two day period including many such as Holdens, Hansons, Simpkins, and the exotically named Goose Eye Bitter and Ma Pardoe's Old Swan which have never been on sale in the area. There will be more room available this year and we are hoping to organise exhibitions of traditional arts and crafts as well as providing more music and more food than last year. Its certainly going to be an event not to be missed at any cost.

DURHAM CHARTER ALE

Whitbread's are following the lead taken by Vaux and are producing a special beer to mark the 800th anniversary celebrations in Durham City. The beer is called Durham Charter Ale and will be an extremely strong beer brewed to a traditional recipe. The beer will be available in 'The Dun Cow', 'The Buffalo Head', 'The Stonebridge Inn' and 'The Three Horseshoes' all in Durham City from about the end of June and of course will also be available in vast amounts at the Durham and Peterlee Beer Festivals. The beer will only be found in cask-conditioned form and although it is only planned at present to sell the beer until the end of the year, we are hoping that if sales figures are promising Whitbread may be persuaded to make the beer available on a permanent basis, at least during the winter months. Make sure that you visit these pubs and ask for Durham Charter Ale.

Whitbreads have made a highly commendable effort to get this beer off the ground. Lets hope that they will soon show the same enthusiasm for Castle Eden Ale.

PUB OF THE MONTH

Our Special Trophy will be handed to the landlord of the Marquis of Granby, Newcastle Road, Framwellgate Moor on Wednesday 4th July. A chance to sample Sam Smiths Old Brewery Bitter (OBB) (o.g. 1041) – ask for Cask! Why not take the chance of forwarding your nomination for future Pubs of the Month to any Committee Member.

CAMRA – In North Yorkshire

Congratulations to Members of the Richmond and North West Yorkshire Branch who during 70 hours of opening time sampled a product from each real ale brewery in Great Britain something like 120 pubs and 2,000 miles of travel. The money raised by the venture was given to the St. John of God Hospital, Scorton near Richmond.

OPEN CAST COULD RUIN WARDLES BRIDGE INN

The panoramic views from one of Durham's picturesque real ale pubs, 'The Wardles Bridge Inn' at Holmside, are threatened by an open-cast mining scheme. The plans, if implemented, will involve an almost total destruction of the plantation at the back of the pub and the resulting noise and dirt will seriously affect the trade at this popular free house. However, what really worries landlord Barry Gunn and other villagers is the fact that the mine will be built over a 12" pressure pipe carrying north sea gas from a local pumping station. Residents fear that the pipe could easily be fractured causing an explosion even more disastrous than the one which rocked Staindrop a few months ago when a smaller pipe was fractured.

DURHAM 800

The branch have been pleased to be involved in the celebrations for the anniversary of the granting of Durham Charter. Last week the new Whitbread Charter Ale was launched, on Friday July 6th CAMRA will have a stall in Durham Market Place stocked with 'Beerana'. The climax will be the Beer Festival at Dunelm House on August 31/September 1st. 40 Real Ales, Craft Stalls, live music and many other attractions.

WATERING THE EAST DURHAM BEER DESERTS

Whilst real ale blossoms in Durham City, other areas of the county have been less fortunate, none more so than Peterlee. There is not a single pub in either Peterlee or Easington which sells real ale. This absurd lack of choice means that lovers of real ale in the eastern regions of the county must often travel considerable distances to enjoy a decent pint of beer. The one consolation is that the five nearest real ale pubs all offer an excellent pint of beer and different brews can be obtained in each pub. 'The Times' at Dalton-le-Dale sells Camerons Strongarm and Best Bitter and this excellent local just outside Seaham, will be the venue for a CAMRA meeting on July 26th.

Both pubs in the village of Seaton, on the road between Houghton-le-Spring and Seaham, offer real ale. CAMRA member Doug Clifford serves Castle Eden Ale at 'The Dun Cow' and just down the main road, Peter Hutton presides over the Seaton Lane Inn where he offers San Smiths Old Brewery Bitter, Theakstons Bitter and Old Peculier and Jennings Bitter from Cockermouth. With the exception of the OBB, the beer is dispensed directly from barrels in the cellar, an unusual phenomenon in this part of the country. Both landlords keep an excellent pint of beer and also stock a wide variety of lunchtime snacks.

The only other real ale in this part of the county is found in Haswell, a small mining village in between Durham and Easington. 'The Oddfellows Arms' sells Bass Extra Light Bitter and 'The Grey Horse' dispenses Vaux Samson. The Oddfellows is a typical friendly village local and The Grey Horse is a plush, tastefully renovated pub, although you may find the price of the beer a little expensive.

When you consider that Durham City alone has over 20 pubs selling real ale, the paucity of choice in this part of the county becomes even more obvious. There are a number of reasons why this deplorable situation has arisen. CAMRA has only a few active members in the region and they have not been able to regularly get round many of the small villages in the area and seek the support of licensees. Secondly, a large number of the pubs which were constructed alongside the new town of Peterlee have inadequate cellar facilities which make the conditioning of real ale difficult.

Whitbread's have made a half-hearted attempts to introduce Castle Eden Ale into one or two pubs but many CAMRA members felt that the pubs chosen were unsuitable for a variety of reasons and were not in the least surprised when inadequate sales forced the removal of the beer. When consumers are subjected daily to an unending fare of multi-million pound larger advertising, it is hardly surprising if many of them are conned into drinking the wretched stuff. If the brewers spent only a fraction of this sum in promoting real ale, then sales would soar overnight and areas of the county like Peterlee would get a decent choice of beer.

We do not believe that by holding a beer festival in Peterlee we can change the situation at a stroke. However, we do hope that by introducing people to the pleasures of drinking real ale, we may persuade them to ask for the beer in their locals and thereby slowly increase consumer choice in this driest of beer deserts.

BOOKS on BEER and PUBS

CAMRA BEER GUIDES (most areas)

PUB GUIDES

BREWING HISTORIES AND MANUALS

BOOKS ON THE HUMOUR, LITERATURE, MUSIC, ART AND POLITICS OF BEER & PUBS

A wide selection available from:—

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50 SADDLER STREET, DURHAM CITY

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BRANCH ACTIVITIES

July 6th Stall in Durham Market, Framwellgate Moor Mediaeval Fayre
July 14th Peterlee Festival, Eden Lane Community Centre
July 26th The Times, Dalton-le-Dale
August 8th CAMERON BREWERY TRIP (Fully Booked)
August 15th Blue Bell, Lanchester
August 31st Durham Festival, Dunelm House

DURHAM 800 MEDIAEVAL FAYRE

Why not visit the CAMRA Stall in Durham Market on Friday July 6th – Details of CAMRA Activities. Up to date news and information, Display of Casks, Spiles and Taps. For Sale some Good Beer Guides, Local Guides and Books. But NO beer unfortunately. But Beer will be available from the many pubs in the City now selling Real Ale, Lists will be available FRIDAY JULY 6th.

BEER FESTIVALS

July 14th Peterlee (Eden Lane Community Centre) 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
17 real ales available – Part of the Peterlee Festival 1979.

Aug 31/Sept 1 Durham (Dunelm House) 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. about 36 real ales available – Part of the Durham 800 celebrations

COME EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT – organised by the Durham County Branch of CAMRA.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

HIGH BRIDGE, NEWCASTLE.

Real Bellhaven 70/- and 80/- –

*Camerons Best Bitter and Strongarm,
Jennings and Sam Smiths Bitters available
on pump or carry out.*

A CAMRA INVESTMENTS PUB

N.O.R.A.

– Northern Real Ale Agency –

*Real Ales for all occasions available
from Dick Atlee*

Telephone Newcastle 816393

between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m.

All types of Real Ale Beer Equipment
for Hire

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I/We wish to become a member(s) of the Campaign for Real Ale Limited.

I/We agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign.

I enclose £4.00 for full membership
or We enclose £5.00 for husband and wife membership

APPLICATION FOR ASSOCIATESHIP

I wish to become an Associate of CAMRA Ltd.

I agree to abide by the aims of the organisation and enclose my fee of £1.00

FULL NAME (Block Capitals).....

FULL POSTAL ADDRESS (Block Capitals).....

.....

.....

Signature.....Date.....

Cheques should be made payable to Campaign for Real Ale Ltd.

Applications to CAMRA, 43 Alma Road, St. Albans, Herts. AL1 3BW or to the Branch Secretary Denise Bending, 6 Eden Close Hurworth Place, Co. Durham.