

DURHAM DRINKER!

News for Discerning Drinkers in the City and County of Durham



ISSUE 27

MARCH/APRIL

FREE

LION ROARS IN

On the 7th March for three months Camerons of Hartlepool are to test market their "new style" Best Bitter we are informed by brewery sources.

The proposed name for the brew is LION BITTER and it is expected to be on sale at thirty selected outlets throughout the marketing area.

In Durham the beer will be available at:-

The Sportsman - Canny Hill, Bishop Auckland.

The Timothy Hackworth - Shildon.

LION will retail at the same price as Best Bitter and will, if successful during its trial period replace Traditional Best Bitter in all outlets.

It can be seen from the inset that the brewery have used the company logo to endorse the rechristening of the beer. CAMRA for their part have campaigned long and hard for there to be a differentiation between traditional and non traditional Keg and Bright beers. We are therefore very happy at this move by Camerons.



If the trial is successful Best Bitter as a traditional beer will disappear, to be replaced by LION. In addition LION will only be dispensed by handpull therefore ending confusion and the "is it, is'n it" questions regarding electric metered dispense.

We are also hopeful that the rebranding exercise will also help in extending the distribution of Best Bitter/Lion Bitter and thus end the geographical snobbery which exists between Strongarm and Bitter drinkers which links Strongarm with the North of the County and Bitter with the South.

STILL THE UNBELIEVABLE 50p PINT

The branch, and we are sure, beer drinkers everywhere, were overjoyed to hear the news this month that Samuel Smiths were again to make themselves the toast of TADCASTER and all points hence by keeping the price of their beer pegged to 50p a pint



"The 'Marquis of Granby', Framwellgate Moor"

until "the early summer at least". This further extension of the "two for a pound" policy means that this popular North Yorkshire brewery has been able to keep the price of its beer static for over eighteen months during a difficult financial period which has forced "across the board" price rises amongst the other major breweries. This endeavour and loyalty to the average beer drinker by what is a relatively small brewer is heartily applauded by the Branch and we hope that real ale enthusiasts throughout Durham County at least will show their appreciation by visiting one of the, sadly, only three Samuel Smith cask outlets in the county in the near future.

SIGN UP FOR FLEXIBLE HOURS

CAMRA has recently launched a major national campaign to try to persuade the Government to make the licensing hours in England and Wales more flexible. The idea is **not** to allow pubs to stay open all day, but to keep the daily opening hours around the same (i.e. 9 or 9½ hrs.) and to allow the licensee to choose when he opens for this number of hours at any time between 10 a.m. and midnight. These opening hours would have to be clearly displayed. As an example, a licensee in the City of London could choose to open non-stop from 11 a.m. to 8.30 p.m., catching the tourist trade during the afternoon and shutting at a time when the City becomes deserted. A pub in an area near a factory which shuts at 4.30 p.m. could choose hours of 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., 4.30 p.m. to 6 p.m., 8.30 p.m. to 11 p.m. in order to catch the home-from-work trade. And so on.

This campaign seems commonsense as pubs would not have to open at times when they will be empty and would not have to shut at times of high customer demand. In addition, wages and other overheads would not be significantly increased as the total hours of opening would not increase.

The idea of flexibility is supported by the NULY, the NALHM (provided their members' interests are protected) and a number of MP's. Even Home Office minister Timothy Raison, has called for a public debate on the subject, influenced, no doubt, by the Scottish experience of afternoon and late night opening: a decrease in drink-related offences and no increase in alcohol consumption.

The main part of the campaign is a petition stating "we urge the Government to change the law so that landlords can choose opening hours to satisfy their customers". Posters advertising the petition are appearing in local pubs and other suitable places now.



RON TERRY
(Regional Manager
Bass North)

EDIE SHOTTON
(Landlady of the
Lord Seaham)

BARRY NEWMAN
(Camra Chairman)

JOHN HUNTER
(Manager Happy
Wanderer)

THE STATE OF THE NATION

Chairman's Report 1982/83

1982/83 has been the most successful year so far for the Durham Campaign.

Progress has been made on all fronts, membership, outlets, fund raising, campaigning and publicity. Membership currently stands at 225 and at the time of writing we have 197 outlets.

Whilst a highly successful beer festival has tended to overshadow other events, mention must be made of several advances that have been made over the last year. Firstly a membership sub-committee under Harry Kennedy's Chairmanship has been an unqualified success. Not only has it brought "sleeping members" into an active role it has stimulated some useful ideas for forthcoming campaigning. Through the efforts of John Dobison we have resurrected CAMRA Corner in the Durham Advertiser Series, a more than useful way of getting the message across. It has also done an immense amount of good in increasing and sustaining our credibility with the Press in general. Additionally we now appear to be getting together with regard to communication and distribution, particularly of Durham Drinker, thanks to Dave Heslop, John and the Pubs Officers.

In line with recommendations made at last year's A.G.M. we have endeavoured to "brighten up" socials by incorporating darts, dominoes, quizzes, etc. These have proved most successful and have increased attendances dramatically. Additionally, we have also tried to involve locals at the various venues, this has proved particularly successful recently at West Cornforth W.M.C. and the Black Bull, Ferryhill.

The brewers have also played their part, both Whitbread and Theakston have brought out new beers. Tetley and Drybrough have gradually increased their distribution as have Vaux and Cameron. Bass have successfully introduced Cask Stones into the area and Matthew Brown has at last crossed the Pennines, plus the Counties first "in pub brewery" has arrived in the personage of the Kings Arms, Bishop Auckland.

Finally reference must be made back to the 1982 Beer Festival. Last year's Festival was not only a financial success, it resulted in an excellent "all hands to the pump" comradery which brought a lot of hitherto unknown CAMRA members out of the woodwork. This was definitely a catalyst in increasing membership this year and sustaining interest over the remainder of the year.

Finally, I have enjoyed my year as Chairman and I thank the membership generally and the Committee in particular for support given over the last twelve months.

Barry Newman
Chairman Durham County Branch - CAMRA

AWARD GOES A HAPPY WANDERING

Winner of this month's coveted PUB OF THE MONTH award is Mr. JOHN HUNTER, manager of the HAPPY WANDERER at FRAMWELLGATE MOOR, who was one of the first outlets for cask STONES in the County and who has long been a friend of the Campaign. Following large scale improvements at the pub JOHN has gone from strength to strength in building up the sales of his cask conditioned beers which include draught BASS and STONES BEST BITTER. JOHN has combined this with value for money meals and bar snacks and a warm friendly atmosphere to woo a large following of regulars.

The award was especially pleasing to JOHN as "THE WANDERER" is the first BASS house to win the award since its inception, and Mr. RAY TERRY, REGIONAL MANAGER for BASS NORTH was on hand to see JOHN receive his trophy and framed diploma from last month's winner MRS. EDIE SHOTTON of the LORD SEAHAM at GILESGATE. The Branch wishes JOHN and BASS every success in the future and warm congratulations on their award.

FLASS HARRY IN USHAW MOOR

Further investigation by Pubs Officer HARRY KENNEDY, following a report that members had been asked to pay 72p for a pint of Castle Eden at THE FLASS in USHAW MOOR, revealed that THE FLASS in fact does not charge such prices for their excellent brew but that the members in question had been paying for their cask cider. If they were drinking cask cider and Castle Eden the confusion is understandable! but our apologies and best wishes go to all at THE FLASS.

TO THE MANOR BORN

PENELOPE KEITH has absolutely no connection whatsoever with the HENKNOWLE MANOR pub, but if she did, we are sure she would be pleased, if not absolutely thrilled, to hear that it has recently become the latest real ale outlet in BISHOP AUCKLAND. Formerly a CAMERONS house, it now serves an excellent pint of TETLEYS BITTER from hand-pumps and although it has only been a pub for 2½ years it has been thoughtfully designed with comfortable lounges and well equipped games area.

DURHAM ALE?

Whilst the brewery still maintain there is no threat to the future of this beer and they they are happy with its progress albiet slow, CAMRA is a little apprehensive.

The brewery continue to state both the quality and quantity of the beer produced is acceptable. Whilst we have no worries over the quality of the product its availability gives cause for concern. The Red Lion, Bishop Middleham is the latest pub to withdraw the brew due to poor sales, perhaps it price or competition with Castle Eden was to blame. This may well be the reason for its slow take off elsewhere in the County. Hopefully a few more outlets in the area, particularly in Durham City (its namesake), where it is not in direct competition with Castle Eden Ale will help its chances of surviving.

Despite our misgivings on its promotion and limited outlets it is an excellent product and well worth seeking out.

WELCOME

Welcome and best wishes to Jim Taylor the new manager of the Fat Cat' in Chester-le-Street. This Whitbread pub sells a magnificent selection of cask beers including Castle Eden, the new Whitbread Durham Ale, Theakstons Old Peculiar, and Bulmers West Country Cider.

Welcome and best wishes to Dave Brown, the new manager of the Jovial Monk' of Newton Hall, Durham. This pub owned by Allied Breweries sells excellent cask Tetleys Bitter.

Welcome to William Barry the new licensee of the Bridge Hotel, North Road, Durham. This Scottish and Newcastle pub has been completely refurbished and is now very warm and friendly and lively. An excellent pint of cask Youngers No. 3 can be bought.

Welcome to Cask McEwant 80/- at the Redhills Hotel, Crossgate Moor, Durham. This large hotel has been completely refurbished and re-opened just before Christmas with real ale.

Welcome to three further traditional cider outlets. Bulmer medium draught cider is now available at The Black Bull, Ferryhill, The Kestrel at Seaham and the Wheatsheaf at Bowburn. It definitely seems that cider is the drink of the moment, particularly amongst the ladies, so well done Bulmers and thanks for giving us the choice.

Welcome to Youngers No. 3 recently discovered in excellent form at the MARKET TAVERN in the Market Place in the City Centre and an ideal accompaniment to the value for money food also served in this lively renovated pub.

CAMRA/CAMERONS PROMOTION

Starting on April 1st prospective members will be able to join CAMRA at any Cameron's pub serving traditional beer.

In addition to being able to join the most successful consumer pressure group in the country the new member will get **two pints entirely free**. Watch this space for more details.

CORRECTION

Contrary to the report in the last Durham Drinker, it is the Best Bitter and not the Strongarm which has been withdrawn from the NEWTON CAP in BISHOP AUCKLAND. The Strongarm is still available and is an excellent example of the beer.

VIVA VAUX

The steady flow of traditional beer from Sunderland brewers Vaux continues. Recent additions now give drinkers in Easington Village, West Rainton and Haswell a chance to sample the benefits of cask conditioned Samson and Sunderland Bitter.

Accordingly our congratulations and support are due to Peter Smith at The Greyhound, West Rainton for the addition of Samson, Dave Walton at the Pemberton Arms, Haswell for Sunderland Draught Bitter and Eric Brooks at the Half Moon, Easington Village for Sunderland Draught Bitter.

Our thanks are also extended to Tony Hoffman of Vaux for the information.

ONE NEARER TWO HUNDRED

HARRY KENNEDY, Pubs Officer for the Durham Area, made a welcome discovery this week when, acting upon information received, he visited the THREE HORSE SHOES in GILESGATE Front Street and confirmed that the pub was indeed selling the very popular cask conditioned WHITBREAD CASTLE EDEN ALE from handpump. Landlord JOE MYLES is keeping the ale in exceptional condition and reports that it is selling well and winning a lot of friends amongst his regular customers. JOE will also be happy to serve you a very tasty meal to go with your pint and coupled with the Victorian pubs lively and friendly atmosphere all real ale fans are recommended to drop in and sample the pubs hospitality if they find themselves in the area.

The acquisition of the THREE HORSE SHOES brings the total of pubs in DURHAM COUNTY, selling cask conditioned ales to 197 only three short of the magical figure of 200. With this in mind and in view of the celebration and special award CAMRA is planning for the 200th 'REAL' PUB. Would any member or reader who's local has recently acquired real ale or any landlord or publican who has recently installed cask conditioned beer please contact the Campaigns PRESS AND PUBLICITY OFFICER JOHN DOBISON on DURHAM 69347 (Home) or 61361 (Work) and let him have details. The Campaigns Pubs Officer for that area will call and confirm the details.



"The Three Horse Shoes, Gilesgate"

"WHITE OUT" HITS CLUB SOCIAL

Durham CAMRA's historic first social evening to be held in a working mens club, selling cask conditioned beer, was dealt a killing blow by the weather last month, when the Social Evening at the WEST CORNFORTH CLUB was decimated by the blizzard conditions that hit the county. A large contingent of CAMRA members had been looking forward to the event for weeks and were all set to descend upon the Club for a great nights entertainment before the weather took a hand and resulted in only Branch Chairman BARRY NEWMAN, Pubs Officer, RONNIE WOODS, and one stalwart and very determined member from COXHOE, managing to reach the Club, and even then they had to dig a path for their cars!

All was not lost however as the intrepid trio had a smashing evening as guests of the Club Committee and there was a symbolic exchange of membership with Club Chairman DEREK ELTRINGHAM becoming a CAMRA member and Branch Chairman BARRY NEWMAN being affiliated! BARRY'S voice is now two octaves higher and his wife YVONNE is considering suing the committee! On a more serious note however, members will be pleased to hear that another social evening has been arranged for TUESDAY, 15th MARCH, 1983, weather permitting! We wish the Club every success and assure them that we will arrive on the 15th come what may.

VICTORIA GETS "THE PIP"

Scrumpy or draught cider, in the true sense of the word, came to Durham with the introduction of Bulmer's Draught Cider into the Victoria public house in Hallgarth Street.

Licensor, Michael Webster, is the first in the area to install this potent brew more usually associated with the southern counties of Devon and Cornwall but becoming more popular here in the north east.

Michael is serving the cider from its own handpump and it lines up with his cask conditioned McEwans 80 shilling and Youngers No. 3 to complete a formidable team of real brews.

The introduction of draught cider is welcomed by the branch as it will satisfy a growing section of the drinks market which was highlighted at last year's Beer Festival when all supplies of cider and perry disappeared at an alarming rate.

If You Care About Quality
If You Care About Choice
If You Care About The Future Of
Real Ale

then

JOIN  NOW

AND FIGHT
TO PROTECT
YOUR PINT!

FULL MEMBERSHIP OF CAMRA

- * A member's handbook.
- * 12 copies of "What's Brewing" - the Campaign's entertaining and highly regarded monthly newspaper.
- * Generous discounts on a wide range of CAMRA products and publications (including the best selling GOOD BEER GUIDE).
- * An invitation to join in all CAMRA activities such as brewery trips, branch meetings, socials, conferences and beer exhibitions.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I/We wish to become a member(s) of the CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE LTD.

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

I enclose £7 (£10 overseas) for FULL MEMBERSHIP.

We enclose £7 for HUSBAND AND WIFE MEMBERSHIP.

Full Name
(block capitals)

FULL POSTAL ADDRESS
(block capitals)

Signature Date

Cheques should be made payable to Campaign For Real Ale Ltd. Applications should be sent to Membership 34 ALMA RD. ST. ALBANS, HERTS, AL1 3BW.

CAMRA PERSONNEL 1983/84

Chairman

Barry Newman.
Ferryhill 52818 (Home)
Easington 270501 (Work)

Secretary

Sue Garfield
Spennymoor 819517 (Home)
Durham 64900 (Work)

Treasurer

Mike Garfield
Spennymoor 819517 (Home)

Publicity Officer

John Dobson
Durham 69347 (Home)
Durham 61361 (Work)

Durham Drinker

Paul Dobson
Bishop Auckland 605571
(Home)

Pubs Officers

Harry Kennedy (Durham,
Easington, Chester-le-Street)
Durham 61379 (Home)
Durham 61361 (Work)

Dave Heslop (Derwentside,
Weardale)
Dipton 570350 (Home)
Consett 34228 (Work)

Ron Woods (Sedgefield, Teesdale)
Ferryhill 52424 (Home)
Bishop Auckland 772541
(Work)

DIARY DATES

All meetings start at 8.00 p.m. - unless otherwise stated.

8th March, 1983 - Committee Meeting - The first for the New Committee - The Three Horse Shoes, Gilesgate.

15th March, 1983 - Social Evening at Cornforth United Social Club - A Branch first!

27th March, 1983 - Sunday Lunctime Social at the Travellers Rest, Witton Gilbert - Another Branch first!

6th April, 1983 - Pub O the Month at the Victoria, Hallgarth Street - Extension - Presentation - Food.

21st April, 1983 - Social Evening at the Bay Horse, Evenwood.

2nd May, 1983 - Quiz Evening - CAMRA v Centurion at the Centurion, Langley Park - Bring you membership card for cheap beer!

12th May, 1983 - Social Evening at the Black Lion, Wolsingham.