

DURHAM DRINKER

SPRING 2000

ISSUE 81

Anything to tell?

Welcome to the spring 2000 edition of Durham Drinker. There are certainly plenty of things going on it seems in the pub and real ale scene.

As outlined by Jim McCaffery in our last issue the subject of more licensed premises in Durham has certainly caused controversy. It is to be hoped that additional licensed premises will offer the real ale drinker a wider choice of quality ales. Unfortunately only a handful are likely to offer this. The majority may not stock real ales or will simply stick to heavily discounted national brands, (sorry brands) if they do.

County Durham now has brew pubs to tempt the real ale fan. Try the Grey Horse at Consett reached easily from Durham by buses 765 or 766. Alternatively you may like to try the Dovecote Inn at Trimdon Grange which can be reached by Arriva service 235.

There may be other things happening out there that have not come to our attention. Also you may find that your immediate area does not get mentioned. If this is the case it is because people are

not sharing news with us. After all we at Durham Drinker cannot be everywhere all of the time. But we try to do our best.

Anyway, keep enjoying the decent pubs and beer and tell people about them!!

All the best!



Micro brewery gets approval

Proposals to convert the former Victorian police station in Court Lane, Durham, have been approved. The scheme will incorporate a restaurant, delicatessen, coffee shop as well as beers brewed on the premises. What form the beers will take is not yet known.

Objections had been received from local residents and businesses including the neighbouring Court Inn but planning officials conceded that the building's current state of disrepair was a cause for concern and that the conversion would be beneficial. The premises will be known as Cathedrals and a November opening date is planned.

Meanwhile plans to build and open a 2000 capacity nightclub in the Walkergate development have been

dropped. But plans for a 600 capacity super pub have been approved.

Also by the time this article appears the Neville's Cross Hotel should have reopened it's doors. At present the ale situation has not been confirmed.

Durham CAMRA AGM

Durham CAMRA will be holding their AGM at the Victoria, Hallgarth Street, Durham city on 11 April. The meeting starts at 8.00 pm and members are asked to bring their membership cards for voting purposes. Please attend if you can.



Beer festival news

Two major pub chains are once again having national beer festivals.

The Hogshead chain are running theirs from 13 April to 27 April. Up to 25 different ales will be served during this period including Roosters Cream, Cains Dr. Johnsons, Harviestoun Schiehallion, Goose Eye Pommies Revenge and Hook Norton Old Hooky. Big Lamp Bitter, Hambleton Bitter and Mordue Workie Ticket provide local interest. The beers on offer differ depending in which operating region the Hogshead is

situated. So if you are out and about around the country you may find the choice varies considerably. Prices are from around £1.60 a pint.

J D Wetherspoons are holding their festival from 27 to 30 April. Up to 30 beers are available for £1.49 a pint and include finalists in the Brewing Industry International Awards. Most Wetherspoon free houses are now cask marque designated which means they have been independently assessed for beer quality.

The Tap and Spile, Bondgate, Darlington is having a festival from 11 May to 14 May.



Durham Brewery News

Our friends at Durham Brewery have been full of busy as usual and continue to produce new offerings alongside the good old favourites.

Mollys Magic is now available in bottles from Mollys Wholefoods store. This 4.5% abv brew is exclusive to this shop situated in Front Street, Framwellgate Moor. Other beers from Durham's bottled range are sold here as well.

Newcastle Gold (or Elvet Gold if you have it in the Half Moon) is a new offering in cask at 3.9%. It is superb!

A new cask lager was due to be launched at Newcastle CAMRA Beer Festival on 5 April. Called Facade it weighs in at 4.6%.

The Half Moon in Durham is now officially the Durham Brewery tap which cannot be bad for a Bass pub. So if you fancy trying a Durham beer then pop in.

Other regular outlets for Durham beers are The Tap And Spile, Framwellgate Moor and The Woodman Inn, Claypath.



Pub news

The Grange at Carrville now offers a weekly guest beer alongside the

Castle Eden Ales on sale. Meals are available and are excellent.

The Market Tavern has been serving up to three guest beers at a time and the likes of Butcombe Gold and Harviestoun Ptarmigan have appeared.

Pubs, which do not serve real ales, include the Coach and Eight, the Pot and Glass, The Redhills, The Saddlemarket, O'Neills and The Big Jug. Some of these had handpumps but have had them removed. Yates is an example of a new addition that does not cater for real ale drinkers.

The Seven Stars at Shincliffe, now designated a freehouse has been serving mainly Courage Directors,



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and continuing production of Hodges Original 4.0%abv	

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Marston Pedigree and Ruddles County.

The Newton Grange serves Pedigree and Camerons Creamy Bitter. Unfortunately Bank's Bitter has been removed through lack of sales, which is a pity.



Ale trail Edinburgh

Edinburgh is a real ale heaven for those who take the time and trouble to explore it. Amongst it's many distinctive streets you can find a lot of pubs/bars which stock an interesting array of well kept ales from both north and south of the border.

Using a GNER apex bought in advance for £22.50 (check for current fares and availability) the opportunity was taken to have a look at what was on offer.

The first gem is the Guildford Arms

found tucked away at the Waverley end of Princes Street behind Burger King. After taking care with the revolving doors an impressive array of decent ales awaits.

Amongst the guests on offer were Backdykes Malcolm's Ladykiller, Kelham Island Candyman, Aviemore Ruthven and Belhaven 60/-. Regular beers include Caledonian 80/-, Deuchars IPA and Orkney Dark Island.

Moving on, the Cambridge Bar in Young Street is a little gem. Typical of Edinburgh's quieter back streets this is an extremely friendly pub offering a constantly changing range of guest beers, some quite unusual. This is also Edinburgh CAMRA's pub of the year for 1999. Guests on this visit were Heather Kelpie Organic Ale (made with seaweed), Clark's Rams Revenge, Smiles March Hare and Harviestoun Liberation.

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Bert's Bar on William Street is a small but typically Scottish pub with a friendly staff and a good selection of ales. As well as the Scottish offerings of Harviestoun Ptarmigan, Caledonian 80/-, Broughton Clipper IPA, Caledonian Deuchars IPA, Hop Back Summer Lightning and Fullers ESB were guesting.

The Cask and Barrel on Broughton Street is a typical alehouse, which on match days (both football and rugby), gets quite full. Beers on offer were Arran Isle of Arran Ale, Maclays Tartan Scrum and Hop Back Cuckoo pint. Butcombe Bitter had also crept its way in.

As you can see the choice so far is starting to resemble a good cask ale festival!!

The Standing Order accessible via both Rose Street and George Street is a rather large Wetherspoons bank conversion job. Available were Tomintoul Wild Cat, Aviemore Wee Murdoch and the usual two Caledonian beers. (Bet you can't guess which ones!!). The usual food menu was not available due to a serious kitchen fire, which successfully removed the roof.

The Hogshead on Rose Street offered a more mundane selection but Fisherrow's Emerald Oil was on the bar. This was an extremely unusual tasting beer to say the least.

The Bow Bar is always a favourite and is situated between Grassmarket and the Castle on West Bow. On offer were Wychwood Alchemy Gold, Harviestoun Turnpike and Morrell's Oxford Blue. Hardy ales now of course brew Morrell's beers. Ales are served via fonts and not handpumps.

Further pubs are to be found in the good beer guide 2000

If you plan a trip to Edinburgh then would advise you to purchase a decent city plan that is invaluable for finding some of the pubs off the beaten track. I marked the map with the locations of the pubs for future reference.

There are other pubs of note as there are several large chain alehouses such as Festival Alehouses, TJ Bernards and Mathers. Many places offer Caledonian beers as regular beers.

Accommodation is plentiful and there is something to suit most tastes and pockets.

Happy hunting!!!

Trans Pennine ale trail

For those who like to do a bit of travelling and also appreciate decent ale then the Trans-Pennine rail trail may be of interest. You may join the train at Durham and travel to York, Leeds, Dewsbury, Marsden, Huddersfield and Stalybridge by Trans-Pennine express.

At York the Maltings, Tanners Moat (by Lendal Bridge) is but five minutes from the station and always offers something a bit different. Excellent food is available lunchtimes. Their next beer festival is running from 7 to 9 May. For further information telephone 01904 655 5387 or check out their web site on www.maltings.co.uk

selection of well kept beers. Those lucky to have visited in the past may have stumbled on a mini festival of Durham Brewery beers showing that our local brews do have a good following outside the north east. Linfit beers from the Sair Inn, Linthwaite, feature regularly.

At Leeds feel free to check out the Scarborough Festival Ale House (outside the station) or have a wander to the Duck and Drake or The Palace. Hogsheads and Wetherspoons outlets are also to be found. The Good Beer Guide gives additional information.

The Head of Steam, Huddersfield, one of Tony Brookes ventures is always guaranteed to make your visit worthwhile. Good food and interesting ales, including local beers such as Kitchen are available. This very impressive pub which holds regular beer festivals is but a few seconds wander down the platform.

The West Riding Refreshment Rooms at Dewsbury offers a further

Stalybridge Buffet is a gem. Saved



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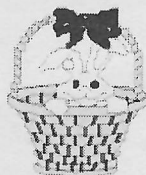
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230 Hatfield Road, ST. Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW.

from closure by the former occupants of the Station, Ashton under Lyne, this is a haven of rare beers. Again it is conveniently situated on the station. Regular beer festivals are a feature - a Bank Holiday festival is being held jointly with The Station at Ashton. Up to 90 ales will be available between the two venues between 27 April and 1 May.

The Riverhead Brewery Tap at Marsden is the home of the Riverhead Brewery and offers their full range plus one off specials. It is not open daytime during the week being open only from 5.00 to 11.00 Monday to Friday. All day opening hours apply though on Saturday and Sunday.

Of course you can always have a pint in Durham when you get back if there is time.

For further details pick up a leaflet at your local station (subject to availability) for information on train times and fares. Or you can ring 08457 484950.

(A rover ticket is available valid as far as Huddersfield for 7 days travel or 4 out of 8 days travel. Just ask for a North East Rover or a North East Flexi-Rover.)



Ex Vaux Pub News


The beer range in the following ex Vaux pubs has been confirmed as follows: The Rose Tree, Shincliffe now stocks Marston Pedigree, Wells Bombadier and Morland Old Speckled Hen. The Avenue, High Shincliffe which is being refurbished stocks only Tetley Bitter. The Lambton Hounds, Pity Me stocks Worthington Bitter, Theakston Black Bull and Wells Bombadier. The Elm Tree, Durham City now stocks Camerons Strongarm permanently together with a changing guest beer. Other permanent ales include Tetley Bitter. Greene King Abbot was also being stocked.

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