

DURHAM DRINKER



AUTUMN 2000

ISSUE 83

DURHAM CAMRA LIVES ON!

Despite fears that the Durham branch of CAMRA would disappear because of a lack of interest which would also have seen the end of Durham Drinker, the branch lives to fight another day.

A new branch chairman and committee have been formed to take the branch forward and although some things take a little time to sort out the future looks rosy.

Since the extraordinary general meeting was held in The Woodman on 17th June a further branch meeting held at The Tap And Spile saw a record attendance. Also events are planned for the future including a visit to Border Brewery, Berwick on 7th October.

Encouragement has also been received from the local press and

Durham CAMRA would like to thank both The Durham Advertiser and The Northern Echo for their time and efforts.

The last edition of Durham Drinker carried an article by Jim McCaffery, Durham CAMRA's former chairman, entitled "Would you trust your local council?" The article has generated some debate and I would like to thank John Jennings, Durham City Council's Director Of Environmental Services for providing the following article in reply.

DURHAM'S FUTURE

Bringing major new developments to a compact city such as Durham is an exciting, vital part of the work of Durham City Council which will ensure the city continues to thrive during this century and beyond.

Millennium City, a £29 million civic, cultural and leisure scheme by Durham City Council, will be a new

landmark in the city, and is designed to answer the needs of local people and attract tourists.

However, there are always people who distrust change, and distrust the reasons for change. One of these appears to be Jim McCaffery, who wrote an inaccurate, mischievous article for Durham Drinker.

At the heart of his complaint is a concern that the City Council meets in secret, and is irresponsibly allowing as many new licences for pubs to be granted as possible. Absolute rubbish on both counts.

Durham City was one of the first to open up all its meetings - including Cabinet meetings - to the public. We aim to be transparent in all our dealings, and have put a great deal of time and effort into ensuring anyone who would like to know more about our work is able to do so. All minutes of committee meetings are available for people to read, and we're happy to talk to people individually about specific concerns. This might have been a better first course of action for Jim McCaffery than splashing his ridiculous assertions across the Durham Drinker.

Millennium City, which Jim McCaffery equates with a drinking den, has no licensed

premises within it. AMEC Developments' Walkergate development, which will be built next to it, does have licences - for 7 cafe/restaurants and one pub. The demand for these was the subject of extensive research by Knight Frank, agents to AMEC, who found that most residents would enjoy a greater choice of places to eat in the city centre. Mr. McCaffery accuses the licence applications for these outlets to have been conducted in "utmost secrecy". Not so, the plans, planning application and model clearly identified these by size and location. They were also extensively advertised in the press (a legal requirement) and consultation took place with all the statutory authorities. Furthermore, the Walkergate/Millennium proposals had been the subject of two major exhibitions in the Town Hall and a travelling exhibition to Durham's villages. Over 5800 people visited these outlets. The Council also had discussions with informal and formal public bodies.

The City Council has driven forward a powerful licensing strategy with Durham Police which means there is no way the city will be over-run with new pubs, and that any new licences which are granted are in appropriate areas of the city. It is a responsible, controlled

response by the City Council which seeks to protect the special atmosphere of the city, while allowing flexibility for occasional changes within it.

Mr. McCaffery again misrepresents the facts when he asserts that new licensing will ignore the present safeguards. These are only at a white paper stage but indicate quite clearly what a council can and can't do, and the representation of the licensing panel so it will not just contain Councillors but all shades of opinion.

The unsubstantiated outpourings of the Jim McCaffery do little to

foster a reasonable debate on Durham's future. They are, of course, totally untrue, and insult many hundreds of people working with the City Council, who are committed to improving all aspects of life for everyone in Durham. We have a lot to be proud of in Durham City, so let's start promoting the positives rather than putting up with bar-room whingers who can be found moaning at the end of many bars - alone.

John Jennings

Director Of Environmental Services
Durham City Council

HOGSHEAD PUB CO.

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CONGRATULATIONS GREY HORSE

Consett's brew pub, The Grey Horse, has picked up Durham CAMRA's Pub of The Year Award for 2000. The pub which is home to the Derwent Rose Brewery was chosen in recognition of it's own brewed ales and friendly atmosphere. Well done to all involved as it is simply a brilliant pub!

Also it has launched a new cask lager called 'The Works'. The name was chosen as a result of a competition devised by The Grey Horse's landlord and brewer, Paul Conroy. After 280 entries were received, The Works proved a clear winner when chosen from the short listed eleven names. The title refers to the historic reference to Consett steel works as well as meaning simply, "The Best". Our congratulations are extended to Stephen McCallan, who suggested the winning name.

VARSLITY PUB APPROVED

On 6th July Wolverhampton and Dudley obtained a provisional licence for their proposed Varsity development in the former University Archaeological Department building situated on Saddler Street.

This was granted only after the concerns of The Salvation Army had been considered. Their meeting hall is situated close to the new development. No objections were received from the police as certain conditions were placed on the licence provision including W & D making no application for a public entertainment licence for at least two years thus prohibiting live music and dancing and customer controlled music such as juke-boxes.

The development is estimated to cost £1.3 million and indications are that real ales such as Camerons Strongarm, Marston Pedigree and Bank's Bitter may be available. Once the probable range of ales can be confirmed this will be published in Durham Drinker.

Meanwhile The Nevilles Cross Hotel reopened it's doors in June and the public bar was offering three real ales mainly from the Castle Eden portfolio. Nimmos XXXX, Castle Eden Conciliation, (not to be confused with the defunct Butterknowle product) and Castle Eden Bitter have all been reported. Unusual guest ales seem non existent but we'll keep an eye on the range in the weeks to come.

Peter and Mary welcome you to

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BEER, BIRDS, BED AND BREAKFAST.

How often have you tried a half at a beer festival or as a guest beer in a pub and thought I really fancy a good session on that. With the help of the Good Beer Guide you can do it.

Beer holidays staying bed and breakfast give you the chance of a night on a beer without the dangers of drinking and driving. Here are the notes from one of our trips this summer.

Our first stay on the trip was at the Cartford Hotel in Little Ecclestone in Lancashire, which is about 10 miles from Blackpool. The Hart Brewery operates from

the back of the pub and the pub always sells two Hart beers and four other real ales. From Hart we tried Squirrels Hoard., which is a Hart Brewery standard, and Summer Knights, one of their seasonal beers. We also had the opportunity to try Bedlam Bitter from the Red Lion Hotel, a brewpub in Accrington.

Little Ecclestone is about two hours drive from North Durham. The pub is in a small village, next to a river with a toll bridge and good easy walking. On route we called in at the RSPB reserve at Yealand Conyers where we saw a fine display of Marsh Harriers.

Our next stopping off point was Dent on the Yorkshire/Cumbria

border. For people who have not been there, it is a tiny village which has remained much as it was in the last century. For car drivers this means interestingly narrow cobbled streets! There are only two roads into the village, and for those of a nervous disposition we recommend using the one from Sedburgh. The other one is narrow, gated and next to a ravine! On the way we stopped for an hour to watch a family of buzzards in a wood high above Orton.

The Sun Inn at Dent does Dent Bitter, Aviator, Kamikaze and T'Owd Tup.

Dent is an excellent place to walk from - the pub has books suggesting walks from the pub door which can be borrowed. I am reliably informed by more energetic walkers than us that there are lots of challenging (uphill) walks. We opted for a nice four mile stroll along the river.

Our final stop was in Ingleton, a few miles from Dent into Yorkshire, where there is a scenic circular waterfall walk. Ingleton is also close to the entrance to White Scar caves, which offers a 90 minute tour underground. Also not far away is Cowan Bridge where the school that Charlotte Bronte based Lowood in Jane Eyre on still survives as a private house.

We stayed at the Wheatsheaf, which is not a brewpub but does Black Sheep and Moorhouses Pendle Witches Brew. The pub also has a collection of birds of prey, hawks and eagle owls. While there we tried the Bridge, which is also listed in the Beer Guide, where the guest beer was Bushy's Piston Brew from the Isle of Man.

Three nights of good beer!

Andy Plant & Debbie Lamb

BEER FESTIVAL NEWS

Darlington CAMRA are holding another Rhythm n Brews beer festival at Darlington Arts Centre from Thursday 14 September to 16 September as part of the 21st Darlington beer and musical festival.

Approximately 45 beers will be featured from independent and micro brewers. Tickets are available from Darlington Arts Centre. The telephone number is (01325) 486555. Tickets are priced at £3 (Thurs), £4 (Fri) and £2 (Sat). A £1 discount is available to CAMRA members.

The Hogshead pub chain is holding another National Beer Festival from 29 September to 14 October featuring over 30 beers. Beers on offer include Robinsons-Cooper Bell, WoodfordesWherry,

Mauldons-Blackadder and
Cotleigh-Old Buzzard.

In addition to the festival a sponsored walk has been organised to raise funds for The National Autistic Society. The walk, as part of a national event will cover route two of a larger network of routes converging on Nottingham. The North East leg will cover the 21 miles from Durham Hogshead to Middlesbrough Hogshead. If you would like to take part the walk will be on 5 October and forms and further details are available from Matthew at The Hogshead,

Saddler Street, Durham. N.B. You don't have to do the full 21 miles but every little contribution will help toward the target set of £100,000.

THE SHETLANDS COME TO CROXDALE

Visitors to The Daleside Arms in Croxdale were in for a surprise in July when the full range of beers from The Valhalla Brewery, Shetland appeared over the bar. The beers Auld Rock, Simmer Din and White Wife seemed to be well received and the Daleside has to be congratulated for it's efforts.



Time to join the CAMRA crew



- Europe's most successful consumer organisation.
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I/We wish to join the campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by its rules.

Name(s)

Address

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Signature(s) Date

I/We enclose remittance for membership as follows:

Single £14 ☐ Joint (both at same address) £17 ☐

Concessions (please supply proof). Student/Unemployed/Disabled/Under 26:

Single £8 ☐ Joint (both at same address) £11 ☐

Send a cheque (payable to CAMRA Ltd.) to Membership Secretary, CAMRA,
230 Hatfield Road, ST. Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW.

**For Forthcoming CAMRA events
contact:**

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(Discounts for multiple bookings).

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Published by the Durham Branch of CAMRA.

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Layout and typesetting by
Lesley Lumley.

Printed by Paul E May Printing.
Telephone 0191 373 2589.


Circulation 2000

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