

WINTER 2000/01



ISSUE 34

BREWING'S "STRONGARM" UNDER THREAT

Cameron's Lion Brewery in Hartlepool is facing an uncertain future as it is facing closure or sale by owners Wolverhampton and Dudley (W&D).

W&D were subject to a take over threat from equity group Botts in August. W & D's business was valued at around £472 million and is now under review. And it is thought that by off loading parts of it's business it will be able to hold off further threats.

As a result an announcement on Cameron's future is expected within weeks. It is known that W & D have alerted other brewers both locally and nationally and hopes are that the brewery which is working to capacity will be sold off as a going concern. Any other outcome would be a slap in the face for all drinkers as well as the dedicated workforce of 150.

Although the future of Strongarm may be under threat it is expected that W & D's sites in Burton and Wolverhampton will be safe as well as brands such as Marston's Pedigree and Bank's.

TRIMDON CASK ALES

Durham Drinker has made much mention in previous issues of our local breweries such as Durham and Derwent Rose (Grey Horse). However these are not the only two to be found in the county.

Tucked away in Trimdon Grange is the Dovecot Inn which is the regular outlet for ales from Trimdon Cask Ales. This brewery was set up in March 1999 by Dovecot landlord Steve Thompson in a nearby industrial unit using equipment from the now defunct Butterknowle Brewery.

Regular beers are Busty Bitter (4.4%), Pit Prop (6.2%) and Harvey Bitter (5.0%). An occasional brew



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is Tinney Bitter (3.6%). The beers are named after old coal seams at Trimdon Grange Colliery which closed in 1967.

The Dovecot is a friendly and comfortable pub and you can be assured of a warm welcome. Up to three beers are on sale including possibly two of the pub's own beers and guests. The pub can be reached easily from Durham by hourly Arriva service 235 (Stockton/Middlesbrough) which stops nearby and runs until late at night. Please check with Arriva for up to date times. A reminder also for people who haven't yet been but The Grey Horse at Consett is served by regular Go Ahead Northern service 765. The 766 service stops nearby as well. Again buses (765) run until late night between Consett and Durham.

Durham Recreate Historic Brews

Durham Brewery launched two new beers at The Ship, Middlestone on 13th November. This real ale haven created by landlord Graham Snaith played host to Whitaker's XXXX and Whitaker's Old Tom.

Whitaker's Brewery was based in Halifax having commenced brewing there in 1849. The brewery was housed in a cottage purchased by founder Richard Whitaker. Eventually the cottage became The Stannery Inn. Richard was able to sell beer from his cottage by virtue of the 1830 Beer Act which upon payment of a two guineas excise fee allowed him to do so.

In 1867 production moved to a new purpose built brewery on

nearby land. The brewery was then to be known as the Cock o' the North Brewery.

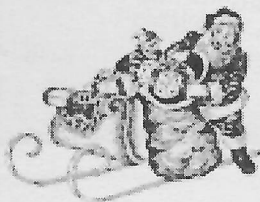
Four years later Richard died and the brewery passed to his sons. The business thrived and by 1898 was producing 44,000 barrels a year. In 1959 Whitaker's joined the Whitbread stable. This was an arrangement attractive to breweries who were finding the going difficult. Whitbread helped out on the understanding that the breweries own houses stocked their beers. Whitaker's board was joined by two Whitbread directors and as a result Whitaker's houses started stocking Whitbread bottled beers and later Tankard. By the end of 1969 Whitaker's were no more having sold out to Whitbread who closed the brewery down.

Old Tom has been brewed to a recipe supplied by David Maule, son of a former Whitaker's head brewer. The recipe sourced from a genuine 1937 document is an example of brewing techniques from bygone age. The resulting Whitaker's XXXX weighs in at at 5.0% and has similarities to Theakston Old Peculiar and Marston Owd Roger. Although the recipe contains exact quantities and types of ingredients there was some difficulty for Durham in deciding how to incorporate them in the recreation. Caramel and malt extract are processed.

Obviously the original extract and colour qualities of the 1937 products could not be determined but an estimate of what the beer would have been like at the time was obtained from technical data such as gravities etc. The specified hops, Auscha, had never been heard of by Durham but were identified as a Czech hop after an internet search. However about the only type of hop available from the area specified is Saaz so this is the variety used. The result is a sweet, dark ruby, heavy beer which is balanced by a generous hop bitterness. Luscious toffee notes abound in this characterful winter warmer.

For the record Whitaker's XXXX is a light bitter and is a dry hopped brew not dissimilar to Green Goddess. However the addition of Goldings hops makes this a delightfully drinkable beer at 3.7%

The launch at The Ship was very enjoyable and Durham Drinker can testify to the excellent quality of both beers. Look out for similar launches from Durham in the future as there will hopefully be many more.



The Daleside Arms, Croxdale, Durham

A comfortable rural location 3 miles south of Durham City just off the A167 surrounded by lovely countryside and central for some excellent walks.

Cosy public bar with a sporting theme and traditional pub games. A regular changing guest list, quality casks in the last two months include: Valhalla, Skye, Arran, Inveralmond, Titanic, Greene King, Darwin also the superb Mordue's range, and regular Caledonian and Northumberland ales.

A superb restaurant serving quality home cooked food with specials on Thursday, Friday and Saturday (including 2 for £8) also reputedly the best Sunday lunch available locally.

*****Senior citizen special 2 for £5*****

En-suite accommodation also available

The Daleside is also the home of the Croxdale folk club meeting every Tuesday evening at 8pm with singarounds and guest nights alternative weeks hosted by the Incomparable Age Old Travellers' other guests include 'Prelude', 'Jez Lowe', 'Marie Little' and 'Eddie Walker'

For more information and bookings please:

Tel/Fax. 01388 814165 OR e-mail - daleside@croxdale94.fsnet.co.uk

*'The Daleside Arms - the little pub with the big reputation.
' You'll never know until you've tried-it!*

STOP PRESS

Castle Eden are launching their Christmas beer 'Orange In Your Stocking' at The White Tun, Witton Gilbert on 5th December. The beer is a 4.5% version of the Tesco Challenge winner and the launch is open to CAMRA members. There will be other Castle Eden beers available as well as a buffet. The launch starts at 7.30 pm.



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Beer Festival News

Cleveland CAMRA are holding a beer festival at ARC, Dovecot Street, Stockton from 22 - 24 February 2001. For further information contact Cleveland CAMRA on (01642) 829032.



"DURHAM CAMRA PUB OF THE YEAR 2000"

GREY HORSE CONSETT

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Newcastle bus 46A to Door.

Also "Evening Chronicle Best Beer Pub 2000"

News and Brews

The White Tun, Witton Gilbert, The Victoria, Spennymoor and The Cattle Mart, Tow Law have been added to the Castle Eden stable. Some pubs in the Castle Eden estate are now offering a guest beer from Bateman's, Belhaven or Everard's at present.

Castle Eden hope to start building the hotel, pub, bistro (hospitality bar) and visitor centre in the new year.

Pubs near Durham regularly offering beers from local and other micro breweries are The Ship, Middlestone Village, The Half Moon, Kirk Merrington and The Daleside, Croxdale.

The Nevilles Cross Free House has seen a wide selection of guest ales in recent weeks including Greene King Alympic and Ridley's Five

Rings. This is a place worth watching. Check out the impressive decor!!

The Court Inn, Durham is currently selling Young's Special. The Cooperage, Bowburn is now a Jennings' house.


Tap And Spile 1000

Congratulations are extended to Dave Robson from Durham CAMRA and his Customers on reaching his 1000th guest ale. The 1000th beer, Durham's Tap And Spile 1000, appeared on sale on 13th October and was very well received. At 4.2% it was a variant of White Velvet but with added caramel. The excellent beer has been available on occasions since then but if you are a beer ticker then you may well have missed this one. Good luck Dave and here's to your next 1000!

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Durham  pub of the year 1998

Pubs In The Past

Pubs In The Past is a brand new exhibition at Durham's Fulling Mill Museum on the banks of the River Wear below the Cathedral. (Closest real ale pubs are The Hogshead, Market Tavern, Shakespeare and Elm Tree).

The exhibition includes an authentic eighteenth century pub. This is what was found by Durham University archaeologists beneath the Millennium Building construction site in Claypath. As well as interactive computer

activities exhibits include artifacts on drinking, pub life and leisure in the 18th century. Examples of bottles, pottery and clay pipes (from Durham's own clay pipe factory) are also on show. Talks are also given on 18th Century pub life, brewing processes and recipes.

The Fulling Museum is open from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm and the exhibition lasts until the 10th December. Entry is a modest £1.00.

For Forthcoming CAMRA events contact:

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Half page £50 Quarter page £30
(Discounts for multiple bookings).

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