



WRITTEN BY & FOR DISCERNING BEER
DRINKERS IN & AROUND NEWARK

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Beer Gutter Press

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Wolves at Mansfield's Door

Drinkers in the East Midlands have stepped up the campaign to protect Mansfield's prized brewery and the beers it brews. The call to action follows the recent announcement that the sale of Mansfield Brewery to Wolverhampton and Dudley has now been agreed.

Following campaigning by local CAMRA members and the 'Save the Brewery' action group led by Alan Meale MP, W&D has pledged to keep the Mansfield Brewery open for at least two years while it completes a strategic review of its brewing business.

Mike Benner, Head of Campaigns and Communications said, "This take-over promises to offer shareholders a good deal, but the loss of Mansfield's independence is unlikely to offer benefits for consumers. It's a welcome development that Wolves intends to keep brewing

at Mansfield for at least two years and CAMRA will be pushing for them to keep the brewery open long-term."

CAMRA is concerned for the future of favourite beers such as Old Baily and Riding Bitter and will be seeking a pledge from Wolves to keep these beers alive.

Mr. Benner added, "W&D will undoubtedly be reviewing its beer portfolio and we want to make sure that East Midlands drinkers don't lose out. We will also seek assurances that the Mansfield pubs will get the investment they deserve."

Following the take over, W&D will be by far the biggest re-

gional brewer in Britain with four breweries.

Mike Benner said, "We are concerned that consolidation is crippling Britain's regional brewing sector and reducing choice for consumers. Take-overs like this cannot be viewed in isolation as W&D's competitors will be keen to maintain their market position."

The sale remains subject to a high court sanction (to be held mid December) with regards to the FB Baily Thomas Provident Fund. CAMRA supports any moves to maintain the independence of Mansfield Brewery through a management buy out.

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Ramble on..

Saturday dawned bright, clear and crisp. A quarter-to-ten saw a few hardy souls board a bus to nearby Upton to link up with the rest of our CAMRA group outside the French Horn ready to tackle Bob Boozley's latest CAMRAMBLE.

The idea behind these rambles is not so much a challenge or a muscle burning, sinew stretching 'yomp' across countryside so uninviting that the only persons one encounters are mountaineers or lost S.A.S. troops or Lyke Wake walkers on a stroll, No No No! A 'CAMRAMBLE' is a much more civilised event which conjures up words like social, friendly, pub, and DRINK! (get the drift).

Bob, however, has become expert in plotting these walks. They not only give certain members of our group some much needed exercise, but also blow the cobwebs from your brain, fill

your lungs with good clean air and work up a thirst.

So what's this "meet outside a pub but set off without going in" all about? Oh well, trust in Bob; and it was a little early!

Off we set down lanes and across fields towards Rolleston (there's a pub in Rolleston, but we didn't see it!), through the village and picked up the Trent



Valley Way towards Fiskerton. Will the Bromley Arms be open? Didn't get the chance to look!

On to Morton and The Moon (might as well have been Mars). You guessed it - straight past. HELP! I should have had more faith.

Another half-hour's pleasant

stroll across country and we were descending into Southwell, through a few streets (to reacclimatize us to civilisation) and then we were outside The Hearty Goodfellow.

A quick clean of our boots and we were in! Like a victorious band of adventurers, we huddled round the bar. This is where the serious work started. We still had some walking to do though, as we managed to take in the Bramley Apple, the Crown, the Reindeer, the Dumbles and the Admiral Rodney, before making our way back to Newark and finishing the day in any one of several hostleries.

A great walk & great day out. Many thanks to Bob Boozley and here's looking forward to the next CAMRAMBLE.

Mad Dog Merfy

NOTE:
Newark CAMRA run several CAMRAMBLES a year. Anyone interested in joining in, please contact the BGP for details.

Congratulations

A 'match the quotes' competition was printed in the programme for Newark's 4th Celebration of Beer, whereby one had to match the quotes to the 'quotee'.

We had several entries, but the lucky winner was Mr Phil Robinson of King George Road, Loughborough. He wins a free day out at the next festival, in May.

Well done Phil, and thanks to all that entered.

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Disappointing start at Sir John's

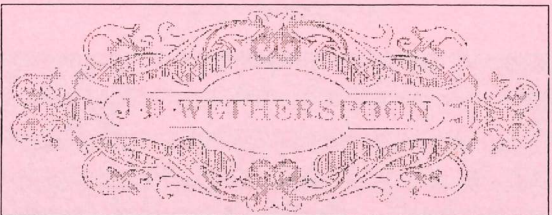
The recently opened pub in the corner of Newark Market Place) is the Sir John Arderne, so named after the doctor who lived in Newark in the mid 1300's and who was dubbed the first English surgeon.

The pub belongs to the Wetherspoon's pub group - a national pub group with pubs also in Grantham and Lincoln. A couple are to open in Nottingham very shortly. The Managing Director, Mr Tim Martin is a keen supporter of Real Ale.

In a word, this is almost a typical Wetherspoon's establishment, having three or four regular real ales, one of which is usually at £1 a pint. They often have one or two guest ales, sometimes from small breweries. The pub serves a reasonable standard of meals, having an Italian night and curry night as well as serving 'two for a fiver' from a special menu,

which is good value. However, don't expect to find them in the Michelin guide. The only Cordon Blue you are likely to find is on route to the toilets (corridor blue... oh never mind!)

Another thing that seems to be in common with the Wetherspoon's, is that the toilets are upstairs (about half a mile from the bar!) but I must say they are always spotless.



Over the Halloween period they held a beer festival and were selling up to thirty real ales (about eight at a time), many with a Halloween theme, some specially brewed for the festival. The price of these ales was £1.29 a pint, although when I went in on the Saturday evening they were reduced to £1 a pint (and again on Monday) - you can't knock that, beer at nearly half price.

- Now the downside:
- i) Beer quality is disappointingly variable.
 - ii) The staff do not seem clued up on real ale and need some training.
 - iii) I have been in on several occasions when the eight real ales displayed on the bar are not available, having to go through three or four selections before finding one that is actually on.

Why don't they turn the pump clips around?

iv) Some of the clientele seem to be ... let me try to be diplomatic... of a certain kind. Mainly drawn by the cheap beer, usually of the bottled variety.

v) The pub is stark, bright and very open - not what you could call a homely local. More of a supermarket.

In summing up I would say the Sir John Arderne is not up to the Wetherspoon's usual high standard and could do better. Hopefully it will.

Blod

Broadstone aims for gold

Not heard of it yet? Well, if you are a fan of quality real ale you soon will.

Launched at the recent Retford beer festival, this new brewery has been set up by master brewer Alan Gill (former founder of Springhead brewery), together with partners Richard Osbourne and Steve Pendred. Their long-term aim is to convert an old warehouse, situated alongside the Chesterfield canal in Retford, into a showpiece brewpub, an ambition that Alan has had for a number of years now.

Their exciting plans for the three-storey building include large, strategically placed mirrors, to enable the public to ob-

serve all of the brewery from the bar area. Outside, raised decking will provide customers with a pleasant area by the canal in which to enjoy a relaxing pint. If all goes well, they hope to be up and running by August 2000. In the meantime, a temporary home has been found in an old railway shed in Tuxford, where Alan is currently brewing a range of four beers - Stonebridge Mild (4%), Broadstone Bitter (3.8%), Charter Ale (4.6%) and Broadstone Gold (5%).

They have been very well received by the trade and, evidently, by the discerning drinker, as Broadstone Gold was voted champion beer, with Charter Ale and Stonebridge Mild joint third at the Retford beer festival. Stonebridge Mild was also awarded reserve champion at the Nottingham beer festival in October.

Watch out for Broadstone beers in pubs around Nottinghamshire, including the Fox & Crown and the Mailcoach in Newark, and the Great Northern at Carlton on Trent. Alan Gill and Broadstone brewery can be contacted on 01777 719797.

Bob Boozley

Quick 'alves

The Fox & Crown, Appletongate, Newark, has just been voted Newark CAMRA's 'Pub of the Season' for Winter 1999.

This makes the pub the first to win the award twice, the certificate previously having been awarded for Autumn 1998.

Previous 'POTS' winners include the Woolpack, Mailcoach, Horse & Gears, and the Admiral Rodney.

Important addresses....



- For complaints concerning adulteration, substitution and short measures contact: **The Trading Standards Department, 2 Middlegate, Newark, NG24 1AG.**
- For complaints about deceptive advertising, write to: **Advertising Standards Authority, Brook House, 2-16 Torrington Place, London, WC1E 7HN.**
- To complain about proposed pub alterations or to view the plans of future developments, contact: **The Planning Department, N&SDC, Kelham Hall, Newark, NG23 5QX.**
- CAMRA HQ can be found at: **CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, AL1 4LW**

ANYONE CAN ADVERTISE...

in the Beer Gutter Press - We currently have a circulation of 2500 copies, distributed free to around 90 pubs, clubs and shops in and around the Newark and Southwell area.

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All change...

All of the following pubs in the Newark area have been subject to recent licensee transfer:

- Lord Nelson, Winthorpe
- Vine Hotel, Newark
- Sir John Arderne (Wetherspoons), Newark
- Chesters, Balderton
- New Inn, Newark
- Kelly's Tavern, Newark
- Nag's Head, Sutton-on-Trent

In addition, the *Newcastle Arms*, Newark has been subject to a change of both licensee and ownership.

The following pubs are having structural alterations:
Hearty Goodfellow, Southwell. Closed for major refurbishment. It will reopen with a new licensee.
Muskham Ferry, North Muskham -building a conservatory.
Angel Inn, Kneesal - extending the licensed area.

Other news:
 The on-going project at the old Post Office, Kirkgate, Newark, has been taken over by the 'Ambishus Pub Company'. It is still not clear when work is due to commence.

Branching out

In 1994 a small band of men gathered to resurrect the Newark-on-Trent branch of CAMRA. What was formed was a sub branch of Nottingham CAMRA. Under the guidance of the stalwarts of the Nottingham branch, the sub branch became popular and rapidly gained fame as a very 'social' branch, with regular outings to festivals and pubs etc., as well as rambles and other events including our own legendary 'Balti Bashes'.

On the back of four successful beer festivals (well three successful and one not quite as) it was deemed by higher authorities that Newark should stand on it's own two feet. To that end, on 4th July 1999 Newark was granted full branch status. This was a tremendous accolade & testimony to all the hard work put in over the years by our active membership and of course we are all delighted.

Now, as well as having fun, we must control our own destiny. We are on course for another successful festival in May, on our new home, the Riverside Park.

Various functions are being planned for next year including

our trip to the Great British Beer Festival, and of course there will be the AGM in February. I am certain, as time passes, we will become proficient in the tasks that make a successful branch.

So, ever thought of joining CAMRA? Now is a really exciting time for us and we do need help. Why not come along to a meeting and see what we are about? You will enjoy yourself I'm sure. And what about all you 'sleeping' members? Can I issue a personal plea to you all to get active. You don't have to commit yourself to any long-term sentence of anoraks, woolly jumpers or beards, but we are, after all, a campaign so lets get campaigning!

As we start the new year, please help us make Newark the ' slickest' campaigning 'fun' branch in CAMRA.

A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

Mad Dog Merfy (Chairman)



DON'T SIT ON THE FENCE... JOIN CAMRA NOW

Just fill in the form below and send, with a cheque (payable to CAMRA Ltd) to Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW. Rates are Single £14, OAP £8, Joint £17, Overseas single £18, Overseas joint £21, U26 single £8 and U26 joint £11

Name.....Address.....

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I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memoran-

Letters

Cardigans optional...

Is it just for bearded, pot-bellied men wearing cardigans?

This question had stuck in my mind before taking up my membership. Well this 'new' member has no beard, pot-belly, nor cardigan and is female. Hardly your 'stereotypical' CAMRA member.

Having taken the time to attend my local meeting, I was greeted by a group of people of various ages, who had a common goal, promoting an awareness of real ale. No longer will I be taking a back seat, this member will definitely be attending more meetings and giving CAMRA the support it needs.

So I guess the answer to my lingering question is a definite NO!

Jackie Bedford, Newark.

Festival thanks...

I managed to get to the Newark Beer festival on Friday afternoon. Yet again it was by far the best festival over the bank holiday weekend with quite a lot of competition to contend with.

Anyway thanks again for running a good festival see you again next year.

Steve Fulcher, Birmingham.

Good guide...

Many thanks to the compilers of the 'Discerning Drinkers Guide to Newark-upon-Trent' (available for free download from Newark CAMRA's web site).

I was in the town last weekend for the Live and Direct Music Festival.

The guide provided an honest and clear summary of the real ale pubs. I was able to highlight those that appealed to me and get food and drink as required.

As a mild drinker my favourite was the Newcastle Arms with its Young's Mild and excellent Sunday lunchtime atmosphere.

My only disappointment was that the Wing Tavern was closed when I tried to visit it.

I intend to recommend that my own branch, Halifax and Calderdale, creates a guide in a similar style.

Congratulations and cheers,
Margaret Swain.

Letters and short articles are welcome for inclusion, subject to space and editing. Submit all material to the usual address, or email philthy@bigfoot.com



Fantasy rounds

Readers tell us their perfect 'fantasy round' of six drinks, past or present. This issue by Tony James from Nottingham:

Hoskins & Oldfield - Reckless Raspberry

A wheat beer, flavoured with raspberries. My all time favourite.

Mallard's Duck and Dive

A fine, distinctive bitter, brewed with first gold hops. Dry finish and very moreish.

Castle Rock - Elsie Mo

A pale coloured premium bitter.

Oldershaw - Ermine Ale

A pale and refreshing hoppy session bitter, using First Gold and American Cascade hops.

Shipstone's Bitter

No, not the p**s brewed by Greenall's, but the original 'Shippos', brewed at the Star brewery. A very hoppy beer, now sadly missed.

Woodforde's Wherry

An award-winning beer.

Send your fantasy rounds to the usual address. No prizes - just for fun.

Branch diary..

Next branch meetings:
 Thurs, Jan 8th, at the Woolpack, Newark
 Thurs, Feb 3rd, at the Vine Hotel, Newark (AGM)
 Thurs, Mar 2nd, at the Great Northern, Carlton-on-Trent. Commence 8pm, all welcome. For details, ring 01636 659902



A personal view from a phar

Paul HA Ruthven investigates
another of our finest locals.

The Spring House



Newark CAMRA branch covers over 85 public houses in its local area, so which pub do I choose? Problem solved when the monthly meeting for December was held at The Spring House, Millgate. The Spring House was built in 1797 on the edge of the then Lord Middleton Estate as one of the first coaching houses.

The present landlords, Paul and Michelle Hunt, took over The Spring House in September '97 and immediately made improvements, opening their cottage style restaurant in November.

Paul is a qualified chef and has worked at top hotels including The Royal Garden in London. He has been in the licensed trade for twenty years and ran various real ale pubs which include the Crown at Glinton, the Royal Oak at Warboys and latterly the popular eating place of the Stilton Cheese near Peterborough.

This was my first visit to the

Spring House although I had passed by many times on my way to and from Nottingham.

As the saying goes "Don't judge a book by its cover." - I found the Spring House to be an excellent watering hole. Three beers are always available, usually Ruddles Bitter, County and a guest beer - on this occasion Gibbs Mew Bishop's Tipple. Paul's cellar-manship was certainly complimented that evening, as our 20 strong party downed plenty of all three excellent quality ales before the 11 p.m. watershed.

What makes a good pub? Well, it is probably different things to different folk but the basics for me are quality ale and company. The Spring House definitely has that. The Spring House is a typical late Georgian style building and it's name stems from the spring which is just across the road in front of the pub. Old tunnels from Newark Castle are still in existence, which once allowed the then castle residents to draw water in relative safety.

Amongst the many visitors to the Spring House are the residents and visitors to the nearby Marina. There is also the lady in white, the pub ghost. Several of the regulars have seen her enter through the wall from the spring side on Farndon Road, float across the pub and exit through the bottle store wall heading off towards the castle!

The restaurant specialises in competitively-priced traditional English food including vegetarian and all are very popular. Their reputation for excellent quality and variety of home cooked food is spreading quickly. Theme nights happen regularly and include Burns,

French, Italian, Valentine and Taste of the sea. Steak night is every Tuesday. Tasty bar snacks are also available.

The drinking area is a good sized one room carpeted public bar with comfortable leather seating, homely fireplace and pleasing decor and is a peaceful resting-place with unintrusive background music. I have been back on several occasions now and the bar staff, Kevin and Mark and locals are friendly plus the beer quality is excellent.

The pub has its own car park and skittle alley, which can be booked on request. In the summer there is an out door drinking area for 30-ish overlooking the river Trent and live music on Sunday evenings. Traditional pub games of cards, dominoes and darts are played. The Spring House men's and ladies darts team play in the league and the WVS ladies play social darts. The Spring House is a hidden gem so next time you are passing by, step into Olde Newark on Trent's history and visit this friendly family pub with a warm welcome, excellent food and quality beer. Cheers!



WANT TO KNOW MORE? - CAMRA ACTION LINE - 0845 6030 208