

Beer-Gutter Press

NEWS FOR DISCERNING ALE DRINKERS IN AND AROUND
NEWARK-ON-TRENT & RETFORD



FESTIVAL FEVER!



Nottinghamshire is being swept by beer festival fever. All over the county drinkers are getting the chance to sample Britain's ever increasing range of real ales at exhibitions run by CAMRA as well as at mini festivals held in numerous pubs.

Here in East Notts two more CAMRA festivals are to become annual events in the diaries of real ale buffs and novices alike.

This November Retford Leisure Centre plays host to the town's first festival in fourteen years. Seven months later we'll hopefully see Newark's first CAMRA event at the Town Hall or, more likely, a marquee in the Castle Grounds. Discussions are currently being held between Newark CAMRA and the Town Council who, it is expected, will be providing entertainment at the event.

In Retford the North Notts branch of CAMRA is one of the smallest in the country with only half a dozen active members. Founded in the town in 1980 when just a handful of pubs sold real ale, the branch is now set to run two real ale exhibitions a year, a feat not matched by even the biggest branches of CAMRA.

Every March for the last four

years the branch has run the Dukeries Beer Festival at Ollerton in conjunction with Newark & District Council. This event has become such a success that now the branch has teamed up with Bassetlaw District Council to run the Bassetlaw Real Ale Festival.

The festival will run for three sessions starting on Friday 17th November at 6pm, on Saturday lunchtime from 11am to 4pm, and Saturday evening from 6pm to 11pm.

North Notts CAMRA have ordered forty real ales from all over the country with the emphasis being on variety. There will be something for everybody including low gravity milds, light bitters, premium bitters and strong dark ales. In addition there will be some unusual bitters plus a small selection of traditionally made ciders. Also ordered are beers from the well known local breweries, Springhead and Maypole.

Apart from the draught beers the festival will have a section for the connoisseur of bottled beers with samples from all the main European and UK breweries. There will also be live entertainment at all sessions.

Back in 1981 when North Notts CAMRA had a beer tent in Kings Park only six real ales were on offer, the beer ran out half way through the event and urgent supplies had to be shipped in. There is no danger of that happening this year with strategic reserves of ale on hand just in case of problems.

Festival goers will find Retford Leisure Centre on Ollerton Road, just one minute's walk from the mainline railway station. See you there.

...And a pint for the pyromaniac

The third of Mr George's Unique Flavour beers was released by Bateman's brewery to coincide with Guy Fawkes night.

Waynfleete Smokey Joe is made from malt roasted over fires of oak wood. The result, according to the Lincolnshire brewery, is a rich dark-coloured beer with a subtle aroma of bonfires.

**MORE BEERY
NEWS INSIDE...**

Beer Monster Booze Cruises to France.

Fizzy French lager beer, well that's what we call it in our house. French bottled bieres, you either love or loath them but either way they're here, and it looks like they're here to stay.

Even before the trade barriers were swept away in 1992 the duty free allowance for beers and



cidars was fifty litres encouraging Channel hopping instead of popping to the offie.

Since these restrictions were lifted, hiring a van and nipping over to the hypermarkets of Calais and Boulogne seems to have become something of a national pastime. Even the local supermarkets appear to be full of crate upon crate of the stuff.

In among the endless lists of labels some are worth looking out for. These can be divided into three types:-

First up there is biere blonde, the classic fizzy French lager beer. It is light crisp golden and very fizzy. ABV is normally about 5%. The best biere blondes come from the Alsace region on the Franco-German border. The Kronenburg brewery in Strasbourg produces many of them, not all of them under their own name, so a supermarket own-brand from Strasbourg is most likely to be Kronenburg.

Next comes my personal favourite, biere brune, older than the more popular fizzy French lager beer and stronger with an average ABV of about 6.5%. Biere brune has a lot in common with German altbeer with its darker colour and heavier flavour. Our closest equivalent would be a nut brown. Most popular and with good reason is Pelforth Brune, well worth a try.

Last, but not least, is biere rouge, more a barley wine than a beer and increasingly hard to find in what appears to be an internationally led lager conspiracy.

So, if you are thinking of hopping over The Channel for your Christmas booze, remember that while you are saving yourself a few quid, you're not doing a great deal for the British brewing industry. Mine's a pint of bitter.

Beer Monster for this issue was Andy Macintosh.

Feeling good in Slaughterhouse Lane

by Ben Vidler

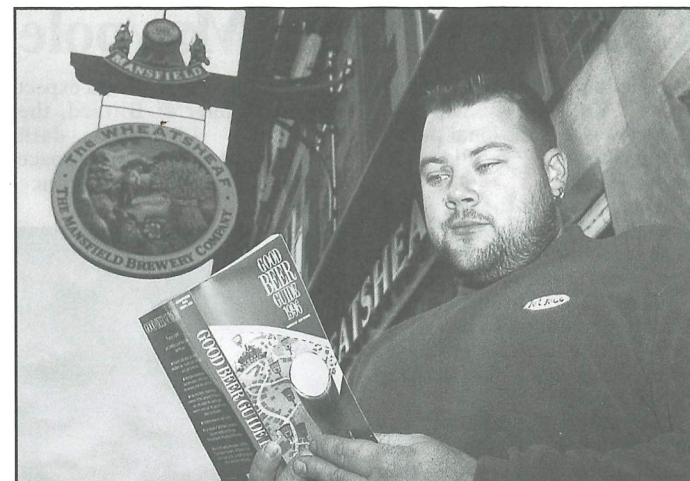
Bit odd, really, that I should be feeling good about being included in this year's Good Beer Guide.

For the last eleven years (four at my present pub) I have been looking after the ale in the same way. All the time maintaining that "I didn't need a book" to tell me that I was serving good beer, the customers would do that!

So, here I am in the book. I don't do anything that is in any way out of the ordinary. I have no "secrets of the trade" handed down from Landlord to Barman through the ages. I am only doing my job.

Each week I clean all the pipes thoroughly and each day the first pull goes down the sink. I train my staff to pull a tight pint and to ensure that top ups are freely given, even insisted upon. I order carefully so that ale is always fresh and within its shelf life. The cellar is kept clean, cool and odour free. All of us are aware of the need for strict stock rotation. We also keep an eye on the clarity of the beer, changing all those end of cask pints often before the customer is aware of any wrong doing.

None of this is difficult nor can it be considered hard work.



Despite his new found fame Ben vows nothing will change.

So why am I in the Good Beer Guide?

Mansfield have done much that is good with their traditional ales, increasing the main line up, maintaining a trad mild and last but not least introducing an ever expanding range of seasonal beers. Millions of pints of Mansfield are sold every year but not all the pubs serving these fine ales are in the Guide. So why am I?

If I am not doing any more than the customer should expect, and yet I get a mention in a book promoting beer excellence, then I am left with the unhappy conclusion that it's not what I am doing, but what others are not, that has led to the need for a guide in the first place.

We are trading through hard times. Our customers are ever shorter of resources and the price exacted by the government in duty ever greater. Poor cellar practise and greed, due to an unhealthy obsession with wastage caused by pull-through will inevitably cut the quality and presentation of the product.

Modern beers are easy to keep, modern custom is not. There should be no need for a good beer guide, all beer is good when it leaves the brewery. Customers should expect no less.

I don't need a book to tell me that I am serving good beer. But it is kinda nice.

Ben Vidler is the landlord of The Wheatsheaf, Newark.

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Dark news from Maypole

The latest brew to emerge from Eakring's Maypole Brewery is a traditional porter, intriguingly labelled Old Homewrecker.

Described by the brewer as "dangerously drinkable" the beer is supposedly the darkest porter you'll see (or not see through).

The OG1050 brew has made fleeting appearances at various pubs in the area, most casks being drunk dry within hours of hitting the bar.

Apparently The Snooty Fox in Ollerton is the most likely venue to find a supply as they now constantly stock at least one of Maypole's beers.

Over the festive period expect to see Donner & Blitzed, the brewery's 4.8%ABV dark yuletide bitter, vying for a space between the turkey and mince pies.



Brewer, Danny looks for light.

Beer Gutter Press is published by the Newark-on-Trent branch of CAMRA. We welcome short, beer-related articles, puzzles or letters for publication. Our advertising rates are incredibly cheap and you can be sure of your message reaching a huge proportion of imbibers in East Notts. Contact us now to book your space in the next issue. All material should be sent to: **Chris Constantine, Beer Gutter Press, Newark CAMRA, 2 Parliament Street, Newark-on-Trent, Notts. NG24 4UR** Opinions expressed within Beer Gutter Press are not necessarily those held by the editorial staff or by CAMRA at a local or national level.



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“Where’s the F’ing letter?”

That was the question asked by regulars at The Cross Keys in Upton after completing ‘Stinker’ in the last issue of Beer Gutter Press.

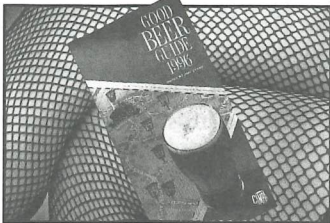
Because our proof reading sessions are conducted over several pints we are liable to come a cropper now and again.

Such was the case with that quiz. There was no letter ‘F’ used in Stinker and to add to our embarrassment Mike and the Upton crew pointed out that Owd Rodger has been spelled with two ‘D’s for the past few years. Smug 🍀🍀🍀🍀🍀🍀🍀🍀!

ANSWERS:

1. PICKLED SQUIRREL (Alford)
2. NINJABEER (Summerskills)
3. OWD RO(D)GER (Marstons)
4. TALLY HO (Adnams or Palmers)
5. VICTORY ALE (Adnams or Palmers)
6. OLD EBENEZER (Butterknowle)
7. MAGNET (John Smiths)
8. XPIRED (Litchfield)

Phwoor!



If we said “stockings” what would you think of? ‘The Good Beer Guide’ of course, an ideal filler!

This year forget sexy lingerie, buy the love of your life the ultimate guide to Britain’s best pubs and the real ales they sell. Listing around 5,000 pubs and 347 breweries, the 1996 Good Beer Guide is essential for anyone who enjoys real ale. With well informed articles as well The Guide, at £9.99 is a must for your hosiery.

the wheatsheaf

Slaughter House Lane, Newark

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