

Beer-Gutter Press

NEWS FROM THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE FOR DISCERNING
BEER DRINKERS IN AND AROUND NEWARK-ON-TRENT

Gone for a Burton?

Newark's drinkers may soon be downing their last pints of Stones and Burton Ale if the latest round of brewery take-overs is allowed to go ahead.

Brewing giant, Bass, has started talks regarding the purchase of Allied Domecq's share of Carlsberg-Tetley, brewers of Ansell's, Benskins, Burton and Tetley. Such a buy out would give Bass a 40 percent market share, making the company Britain's biggest brewer. The move would also create vast over-capacity within Bass which would lead to brewery closures.

As well as Draught Bass, the company currently produces Worthington Best and Stones Best, both enjoyed in this area and both likely victims in any streamlining programme.

CAMRA has vowed to fight the take-over which will almost certainly see the demise of the Ind Coope Brewery in Burton-on-Trent.

For a long time now C-T has neglected to promote Burton Ale, preferring to spend national advertising budgets on Tetley Bitter in an attempt to regain the pole position from John Smith's.

Lesley Alexander, licensee at The Mail Coach in Newark has also noted worrying new ploys.

"Because sales of Burton Ale are now declining C-T have decided to push Green King's Abbot Ale. They say it's less



Lesley Alexander salutes Burton Ale, judged 'Champion Beer of Britain' in 1990 and now an endangered species.

expensive to promote and hope to do with Abbot what Courage did with Moreland's Old Speckled Hen, making another Southern beer a national brand, this time at the expense of Burton Ale.

"I think that's wrong. Abbot Ale is a good product but lack of choice is never a good thing. It shouldn't be up to breweries to decide what we drink."

Ind Coope Burton Ale was the first real ale to be launched by a national brewer back in CAMRA's early days in the 1970s. Now its days are numbered. Drinkers in The Mail Coach in Newark, The Rose & Crown in Balderton and at numerous pubs in surrounding

villages will be sorry to see such an historical beer go. As Lesley Alexander says

"Burton Ale has always been a good pint. One which would be a shame to lose."

**Newark's
newest pubs,
Brussels threat
to real ale
and, as usual,
MORE BEERY
NEWS INSIDE...**

Nitrokeg. Is it a Red Revolution?

David Kirrage voices his fears.

The latest thing on the brewing scene is the ubiquitous nitrokeg. So called because the beer is brought from the keg by nitrogen, rather than carbon dioxide.

Keg beers are pasteurised products, and don't let the adverts convince you any other way. Contrary to the marketing man's ploys these are not traditional beers. Caffreys, Kilkenny's et al are simply keg beers under a new guise.

There is a place in the market for really cold, bland bitters. They appeal to a whole group of consumers, mainly existing lager drinkers. If this introduces more drinkers to bitter, that's no bad thing. The problem is that these nitrokeg beers are inferior products to well kept, well produced real ales. They also appeal to outlets where a modicum of care for the ales is the limit and where the beer is

merely rolled down the cellar, plugged in and pulled. No care or training is required for looking after these kegs and, in some cases, that can be a benefit. At least you can guarantee a clear pint!

But... and it's a big but... don't let's fall for the gimmick or be conned by the image pushed by the adverts, these beers are simply keg beers. Nothing more, nothing less. Clever advertising can't make a product something it isn't. Marketing is a powerful tool. Take your hat off to the company that can convince drinkers to pay premium prices for a product that is not of the same quality as a decent real ale.

Consumerism is all about choice and the more choices drinkers have, the better. However, there will be many outlets who may not have a huge beer turnover and will take real ales from the bar and replace

them with nitrokeg products. That limits choice, doesn't improve it and, as happened in the 60's with the Watney's Red Revolution and the advent of keg beers, choice will be whittled down.

It's vitally important that the lobbying and education by CAMRA is maintained at this time, and we personally welcome the opportunity to add our support for this campaign.

There is one good thing about Caffrey's advertising. In the 70's any pub with a Watney's Red Barrel sign was an indication that this wasn't the pub for us. A nicely placed illuminated Caffrey's sign now serves the same purpose.

David Kirrage and his wife, Lesley are licencees of The Mail Coach in Newark, one of the local entries in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide.

Levellers drink Leveller

A Springhead beer is receiving much praise and guzzling from Top 20 combo, The Levellers.

The Brighton outfit, who describe their music as folk-punk, and have scored hits with "Hope St" and "Fifteen Years" are recent converts to The Leveller, Springhead's premium brew.

Ben Gill, the eighteen year old son of brewers Alan and Eyvonne is a member of the band's fan club and sent beer mats, t-shirts and pump clips to Brighton. In return the band sent their own t-shirts and an order for the beer so that they could quaff the stuff at their recording studio, the Met Way.



"If you're going to the bar..."

Alan Gill has since joined them for a boozy barbeque or two and with a UK tour due to start in September, The Leveller is set to be on draught backstage at venues up and down the land.

On the 22nd they play Doncaster's Dome and the brewery are expecting to host a pre gig slurp. Sutton-on-Trent is likely to be besieged with 'crusties' for the occasion. You have been warned.

Incidentally, the Beer Gutter Press office has been tapping its feet to 'Headlights, White Lines, Black Tar Rivers', The Levellers' latest live CD release. Highly recommended.

Springhead Brewery recently became a limited company. With investment from the owners of Nottingham's City Bar, the business now hopes to open its first Springhead pub in the city sometime soon.

Packed Inn

A year and a day after taking over the Pack Horse the Nice family have sold the business.

The Albert Street pub had earned itself a reputation amongst real ale enthusiasts as a place for a quality drink, yet as Steve Nice told Beer Gutter Press "Running a pub is very hard. We had the Pack Horse for a year and a day too long!"

Freemans Inns are the new owners and have managers Colin Slight and Maria Howell at the helm. Guest beers will now come from the William Younger's portfolio.

Make that Trip now

Hardy & Hanson is to close Nottingham's Trip To Jerusalem on October 23rd.

The closure is to allow development work to take place but fans of England's oldest inn will be able to sample Kimberley beers again when the Trip reopens in the new year.

A Perculier practice

Neil Raynor nips up the A1 to sample the delights of North Yorkshire ...at a price.

Whilst on a short weekend break in North Yorkshire I took the opportunity of visiting the brewery town of Masham.

My main aim was to visit the Black Sheep Brewery. However, you cannot and should not forget T & R Theakston's.

My liking for Old Peculier goes back quite a few years now, having to drive from Ollerton to Darlton to sample the mysterious, seriously strong, dark brew. It's a taste that's never left my palate.

Imagine the scene. Armed with the '96 Good Beer Guide, wife offering to drive and visiting Masham. Heaven! The GBG-listed White Bear in Masham seemed the obvious choice, "in the courtyard of Theakston's offices" screamed the Guide.

On entering the White Bear I was faced with the full range of Theakston's products; Best Bitter, XB, Trad Mild, Lightfoot and OP. "If you can't get it good in here, you never will" was the

thought I had. Sure enough the dark fluid seemed to fight back up the pump rather than be poured. "Yes!"

"Let it settle" said the barmaid. "Yes!" A quick top up followed. "Yes!" Almost at peak orgasmic state I raised the glass to my lips. I could smell the unique aroma. All the miles I'd travelled seemed worth while. "Yes!"

"That will be £2.10 please, Sir." A tourist trap or what!? Black Sheep's Riggwelter here I come.

New at the Shovel

Rudgate Brewery of York is brewing a house beer for The Old Malt Shovel in Newark.

Light and fruity, the novelly named 'Malt Shovel Ale' is reported to be selling well at the Northgate watering hole.

Do you have any hot news for the Beer Gutter Press? Is your local about to be turned into an Irish theme pub? Has the landlord just started to stock guest beers? Are you starting your own brewing empire? Don't ring Reuters! Call the Beer Gutter Press newsline and let the imbibers of East Notts know all about it.....01636 77246



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I wish to join the Campaign For Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign. I enclose a cheque for £.....

Signed.....Date.....

Beer Monastic in Bavaria

Beer Monster had non-beer business in Bavaria. On a (rare) free day, he and a client decided to enrich their souls with matters spiritual and cultural.

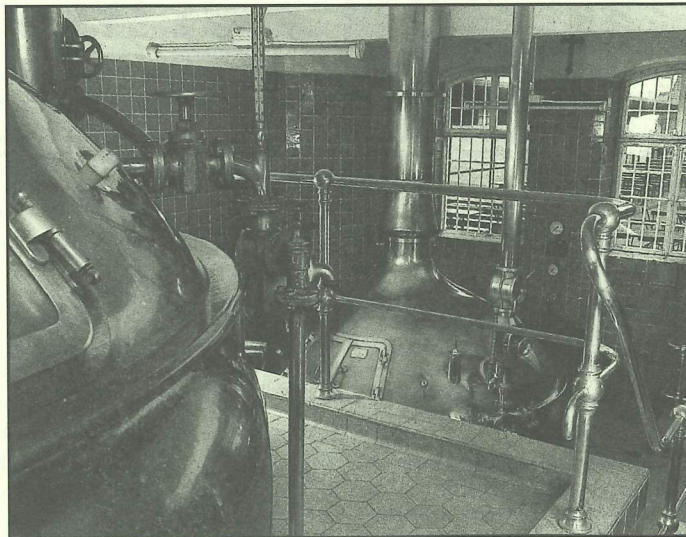
What better way to do this than seek out a monastery, such as the 15th century Benedictine Kloster Andechs on Sacred Mountain which lies between Augsburg and Munich and is surrounded by magnificent alpine scenery (visible only on a clear day).

In the tradition of the pilgrims of bygone days, we trudged up the steep slope which leads to the ornate rococo monastery chapel, in the crypt of which, as everybody surely knows, lie the remains of Carl Orff, the composer of 'Carmina Burana'. (Everybody? Come off it). Believe me, dear reader, it is pure coincidence that we should also happen upon a holy order which has been brewing the most divinely inspired bottom fermented bock beer imaginable for over five centuries. Of course we had heard rumours about this before setting out but.....

Much to our dismay, the beautiful chapel and the wall plaque commemorating Carl Orff were basked in solitude. By contrast, the adjoining vast beer hall and beer garden were overflowing with worshippers, devoutly downing glass litre jugs of foaming beer, brewed on the premises and served by master brewer monks. Phrases like, "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" and "the line of least resistance" sprang to mind and we joined the throng of German visitors, many shipped in by the coach load, to slake our thirst (spiritual, of course). The celestial brew was a divine revelation and we were soon converted.

Bock beer, of course, is nothing like Pils (which we, in the UK quite wrongly call Lager), but, instead, is a heavy, very substantial, invigorating and satisfactory libation. There are five varieties, of which we sampled the two most popular beers:

Light (in colour- not in substance-6.8% alcohol) and dark, (in colour, like a porter or stout-7% alcohol). The German for light is 'hell'. Surely this is a misnomer. Kloster Andechs hell is sheer heaven. This bock beer is so full bodied and flavoursome that, with eyes shut, one might imagine one were drinking something much darker. Be warned, it is both moreish and addictive and glides as smoothly as a top of the range BMW, another Bavarian. The dark version (Dunkelbock) has the same smooth characteristics entirely untrammelled by any intrusive side flavours. Both the 'hell' (sorry, heaven) and the



A lot to polish at the foot of Bavaria's Sacred Mountain.



'dunkel' are beers which are pure (and cool) as the driven snow, the result of a joyous union between a recipe formulated in 1455 and the latest brewing technology of 1996

Alack and alas, Beer Monster had to drive and was denied the pleasure of any in depth study of all that was on offer. Now comes the tragic and really sinful bit -confession time.

The prat only brought 10 bottles back home and is holed up in purgatory for his lack of foresight. But salvation is at hand. Of the 85,000 hectalitres produced annually, bottles are supposed to be available all over Germany and Beer Monster does get to Germany a lot, all in the line of duty, of course...

Beer Monster for this issue was Peter Colin.

Newark's latest proves pricey

Phil Ayling investigates The Swan & Salmon Tap.

Mixed feelings about this one. Entering the recently reopened pub via the Swan & Salmon Yard (off Castlegate), one has to first negotiate several raised obstacles on the timber decking to the front of the pub with the deftness of Red Rum. Whilst it is commendable that wheelchair access has not been ignored, the actual woodwork needs tidying up somewhat before someone gets hurt.

Once inside, the pub has a strangely unique feel to it. The style of decor has thankfully not followed the trend of other recently refurbished pubs in Newark (The Old Market and The OKA). The old and new mix,

with pre-war bill boards, pictures and trays etc adorning the walls, but the lighting provided by ultra-modern shop-style spots. Overall it has (I think deliberate) an unfinished feel to it, with mix 'n' match sets of tables and chairs which I suspect may have been pillaged from some school demolition site, judging from the height of some of them! There is no juke box but piped music is on most of the time. There is no 'quiet room'.

The upstairs 'Locker Bar' has an altogether different feel to it, with sporting memorabilia, Sega Virtual Racing, a 48" large (not wide, as advertised) screen TV which was showing 'Sid The Sexist' videos on my visit, and a 'Shot Chair' where punters are invited to sit and see who can chuck an exotic lager or cider based cocktail (costing about a fiver) down their neck the fastest. Mmmm...nice!

A decent range of beers line the (too) small bar, those available at last visit being Mansfield Riding (£1.60) and Old Baily (£1.90), Charles Wells

Bombadier (£1.80), Adnams Bitter (£1.80) and Moorland Old Speckled Hen (£1.96), all delivered by handpump. Several pints were consumed (purely for reasearch purposes) and quality varied from average to excellent, but as personal tastes come into this I'll say no more. Go and decide for yourself. Service was polite but generally slow and top ups had to be requested on each subsequent trip to the bar. Presumably they are all on that 'learning curve'.

What I will comment on is pricing. Whilst I understand there are many influences on pricing policies, and the pub has to try and claw back its outlay, I cannot see any justification in charging £1.80 for a pint of 3,6% ABV Adnams Bitter. In these days of diminishing pub-goers, surely the best way of encouraging new clientelle is to charge reasonable prices in comparison with their competitors.

Overall, I like the place and consider it to be a welcome addition to our 'weekend crawl' roster. Check it out.

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Brussels threatens real ale choice

A European ruling could destroy guest beer as we know it. And CAMRA has stepped forward to fight the action.

Brussels is threatening legal action unless Britain widens the 1989 'Beer Orders' to include beers other than real ales.

Since '89 the law has allowed tenants of large brewers the right to a guest beer, one cask conditioned draught beer bought from an independent supplier. Because of a complaint from a small lager importing company the commission has ruled that UK law discriminates against other European brewers, claiming that cask conditioned

beer is unique to these islands. This is, of course, nonsense.

The current law is widely seen as one of the few successes of Government intervention in the UK brewing industry. It has encouraged wider choice for customers and allowed new markets for many small brewers - nearly one hundred new companies have started in the last two years. If it is scrapped at least 200 UK brewers would be at risk.

If tenants could take any beer from any source, the guest beer business would be dominated by nationally available, heavily promoted and heavily

discounted brands. We would see Caffreys, Guinness and Fosters replacing traditional real ales at the guest beer pumps.

At present British pubs offer a wider choice of draught beers than any other European nation. We have more types of foreign beer on sale and we import more foreign beer than any other beer loving nation. Therefore CAMRA calls on you to fight this action. Write to your MEP at 2 Queen Anne's Gate, London. SW1H 9AA and your MP at The House of Commons, London. SW1A 0AA. Join the campaign to retain real ales as guest ales.

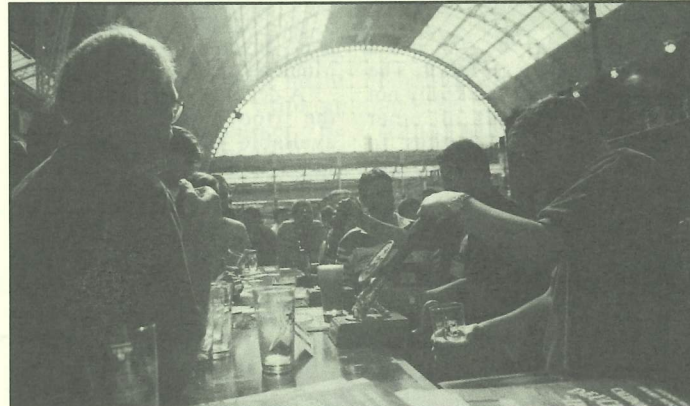
Maypole pipped at post

Maypole Brewery's Mayday Bitter came close to scooping a prize at this year's Great British Beer Festival.

The Eakring brewed beer was one of fifty finalists in a competition, held at Olympia, to find the best of individual classes and an overall Champion Beer Of Britain. Unfortunately, Maypole lost out to Butterknowle's Banner Bitter in the best bitter class.

Woodfords Wherry was applauded as Champion Beer Of Britain 1996. The Norfolk brewery had previously won the title four years ago with their Norfolk Nog.

The festival, held each year by The Campaign For Real Ale, was visited as usual by the Newark Branch. Thirty seven thirsty punters took a coach to The Smoke and sampled some new and interesting brews. We also got a taste of our own medicine as stocks were dwindling severely by the time



Olympia drinkers clamber for the last few pints at GBBF '96

we arrived on the fifth and final day of the festival.

Readers are probably aware of the overwhelming success of Newark's First CAMRA Beer Festival which sold out of beer a day early! 9,000 half-pint measures were drunk in just 20 hours.

The success of this year's bash was put down to a number of uncalculated factors including the date clash with Lincoln's Beer Festival which actually worked in both events' favours. The East Midlands became Beer Heaven for the weekend and real ale samplers from all over the UK converged on our marquee! A last minute break in the bad

weather and more than enthusiastic media coverage also helped.

Steve Darke CAMRA's local festival organiser said "The event for '97 is already being planned and we can promise it will be bigger and better.

"A larger marquee will house two bars and twice as much beer."

Lower limit

Don Touhig, chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Alcohol Misuse, has called for the drink-drive limit to be cut from 80 milligrams to 50.

Lord Ted, early doors early October

Another addition to the area's watering holes opens in early October.

Building work on The Lord Ted, Farndon Road, Newark is almost complete and ready for interior fixtures and furnishings to be fitted.

The pub, which will be the latest in Tom Cobleigh's chain, is a £1.6 million venture bringing a family orientated atmosphere to the town's licenced trade. Customers (with or without sprogs) will be able to sample from a range of real ales which include the likes of Marston's Pedigree, Stones, Boddingtons, John Smith's and the omnipresent Old Speckled Hen.

Speaking for the company, Phillip Redyard told Beer Gutter

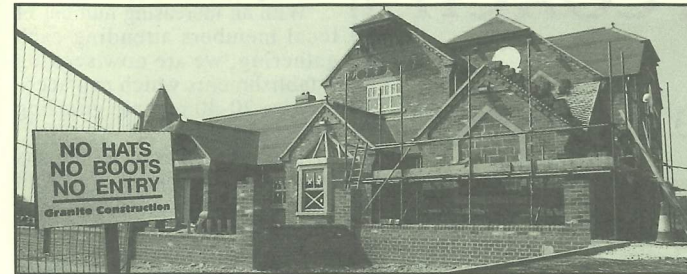
Press that The Lord Ted would also feature beers from smaller breweries and that Maypole's recent success at The Great British Beer Festival would be recognised.

"We would expect to order Mayday Bitter within the first few weeks of opening. We like to support micro breweries by including them in our range of guest beers.

"Managers at the company's pubs are allowed to order two guests from a list of thirty-six beers. The list changes every month."

Mr Redyard also explained the origins of the pub's name.

"Lord Ted was Lord Bishopston, Ted Bishop, Labour MP for Newark from 1964 to 1979."



The Lord Ted, setting dress code trends for Newark pubs.

Gone Home

This September the gates to the Home Brewery in Daybrook, Nottingham will close after 120 years.

Brewing stopped at the site back in May and Home Mild & Bitter is now produced under contract up the road by Mansfield.

Ten years ago Home Brewery was taken over by Scottish & Newcastle who

pumped £5 million into the plant, claiming, four years later, that "Home Brewery is fitter and leaner than ever before. The company is even more committed to taking the business to new heights, and to strengthening still further its role as a major force across the whole of the Midlands area."

Six years further on, S&N, now merged with Courage, is closing the site along with Webster's in Halifax and 1000 jobs will be lost. The brands,

Beer 'n' Burritos

Crocker Bingo's Mexican Restaurant is one of the latest venues in Newark to welcome Springhead's beers.

Since July, drinkers and diners have been able to enjoy the Sutton-on-Trent products from hand pump in the cellar surroundings on Northgate.

Local CAMRA members did notice a few early hiccupps with the quality of the beer served but thankfully this has now been resolved. The initial slow turn over has picked up and the brewery is replacing casks every five days to ensure optimum quality.

Just down the road, Newark CAMRA has been pleased to observe The White Swan also featuring Springhead Bitter as a permanent fixture. At last locals know they can find a pint of 'local' locally!

Dwarfs on trial locally

Mansfield Brewery is helping research one of many new hop varieties.

First Gold, developed by Horticultural International at London University, is a dwarf hop, said to have distinctive orange flavours.

too, are not expected to remain indefinitely. With national domination sought by Theakston Bitter, Scottish Courage is more than likely to lose smaller names at the earliest opportunity and Home will become just a memory. So savour those last few, albeit displaced, pints of Home Ales while you still can.

NEWSLINE
(01636) 77246

Anorak's guide to beer drinking

by Blodwin

In the light of some of the questions asked at Newark's First CAMRA Beer Festival it became obvious that most of the people in Newark have no idea about real ale or CAMRA.

Although there were CAMRA members at the festival who obviously know about real ale, these are not the people I aim to target with my column.

This column is aimed at informing the uninitiated so they may become enlightened and make a decision whether they wish to drink high priced posing fizz and be a target of advertising men, or drink a work of art.

Over the next few issues of Beer Gutter Press follow Blodwin's column and take a light hearted look at the real ale scene. You may not become a 'trainspotter' but you sure can have a few good times practising.

Next issue will explain the difference between real ale and the unreal, followed by the history of CAMRA. So get ready, don your anorak, bobble hat and milk bottle-bottomed glasses and cling tight to the

white-knuckle experience of Blod's column.

A word of warning - don't just read this after six pints and a curry or the excitement may be too much.

See you next issue as I am just off to polish my set of beer pump clips.

Toodal loo. Blod out.



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, 78 Harcourt Street, Newark-on-Trent, Notts. NG24 1RF

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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Venue search

Newark CAMRA are searching for more venues to host our popular monthly meetings.

With an increasing number of local members attending each gathering, we are now seeking establishments which can accommodate 20-30 real ale guzzling enthusiasts.

The pubs, clubs or restaurants must, of course, be stocked with a supply of cask conditioned ale and welcome lively discussion on all things beery.

Can you receive Newark CAMRA on the first Thursday of the month? Yes? Then give Chris a ring on Newark 77246 and book us in.

Next meetings.

Thursday September 5th, 8pm.
Crocker Bingo's Mexican
Restaurant, Northgate,
Newark.

Thursday October 3rd, 8pm.
Willow Tree Inn, Barnby-In-
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