

Beer Gutter Press

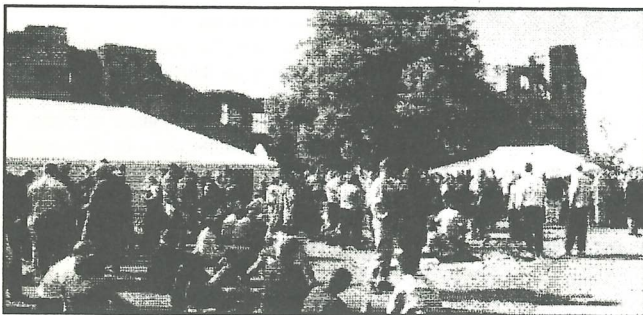
Issue 7 - July '97 - FREE

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

Festival frenzy!

Newark's drinkers prove they're up to the job (almost).



Newark's second annual CAMRA beer festival was a resounding success. Drinkers will recall that last year's event ran dry a day early. The organisers were determined not to do the same this year and expanded the beer choice from just 42 last year, to a staggering 128 this year.

When the festival was opened at Friday lunchtime by record scoring England rugby international, Dusty Hare, 1300 gallons of quality real ales were available. By closing time on Sunday night, over 20,000 half-pints had been quaffed and there were only around 15 gallons left. The weather was again very kind and although staff were kept very busy, the atmosphere was relaxed and the festival had a real carnival feel to it.

Bands played throughout the festival, with the highlight being on Saturday afternoon with the brilliant Hicksville Bombers.

The increase in size this year is a remarkable achievement for only its second year of running.

CAMRA spokesman, Chris Constantine said: "There is certainly a feeling that after the latest success Newark could become one of the top five festivals in the country." "If visitors had any particular favourites, there is no reason why they shouldn't try to persuade their local pub to stock it as a guest beer".

Choosing a favourite would be a difficult task, with this year's brews containing such diverse flavours as oranges, coriander and rosemary. This year's festival brew, named 'Hare of the Dog' for obvious reasons, came from Maypole brewery, just down the road at Eakring.

Other local micro breweries were also well featured, with beers from Bramcote, Mallard, Oldershaw's and of course, Springhead.

Next year's festival has been pen-

cilled in for the same May bank holiday weekend, although the venue is not so clear.

The castle grounds are about to be landscaped into a Victorian garden and may be unable to accommodate 98's event. However, the area on the other side of the canal, opposite the castle is also being landscaped and may provide an alternative suitable venue.

Either way, drinkers can rely on the third Newark CAMRA festival improving on the previous events to make May a notable month in the diaries of discerning beer drinkers everywhere.

A few 1997 beer festival T shirts are still available, at the bargain price of just £4 each, obligatory XL size only.

To get yours, call number below.

Old, improved formula!

Due to production problems, this edition of the **Beer Gutter Press** is the first since December. Hopefully we can now publish more frequently and so give you more up-to date postings of all things beery happening in Newark and the surrounding area.

As usual, we welcome any contributions, so if you have any beer-related news, gossip, stories (humorous or factual), or simply want to sound off about something, call us on **687013** or e-mail philthy@bigfoot.com

Anorak's guide to beer drinking Pt.3

by Blodwin

Blod is back! Blod is back! (Gary Glitter eat your heart out.)

After all the excitement of the beer festival we're back to normal. Normal? What is normal? Whoa! there Blod, let's not get into this philosophy crap. Let's get straight on with our next tippy toeing step into 'The Wonderful World of Beer' (that sounds good doesn't it? Possibly title for a TV series - any agents reading?).

Following on from last time, I'm now going to explain exactly what real ale is. Here's the novices guide....

Real ale is a living beer. When the beer is put into the barrel, it is still fermenting and undergoes what is known as secondary fermentation. Carbon dioxide is produced, preventing air reaching the beer, which would otherwise go off. Real ale is usually dispensed through a handpump - that long stiff thing at the bar (no, don't titter!). When the beer is pulled through the handpump, the beer will have a natural head which stays with the beer to the end of the glass.

The subject of the head can be very controversial, since generally in the north of the country a large head is favoured on their beers, while in the south they prefer their beer with less of a head (or even no head at all). Whatever your own preference, the beer should really be presented to the customer as the brewer intended. Another factor that should be considered is the temperature that the beer is served.

If the beer is stored in a cellar there is not normally a problem, although

the temperature can also be down to personal preference. I like the beer at just below room temperature, where some like it quite a bit cooler than this, but certainly not as cold as the 'amber nectar'. The temperature of the beer does in fact affect the taste of the beer, hence the fact that artificially cooled lagers taste like cold cat pee (not that I've tasted that, of course!).

The fact remains that providing the person looking after your beer within your public house has had the necessary training and realises he or she is dealing with a living entity (sounds like a sci-fi overload coming on), you should never be served with a bad pint of beer.

To your benefit, the tastes and permutations of a pint of bitter alone are endless. Yes, you may get a flavour, as with everything, that is not so appealing to your taste, but wouldn't life be boring if we all liked the same thing?

Next issue I will talk about the new threat to real ale 'nitro keg' - bet you can hardly wait. Well, you're gonna have to, since I'm now off the paper and halfway across the table. See you later snout nosed, multi-toothed, reptilian inhabitant of the Everglades. (Alligator to you young 'uns.)

Blod Out.

Tynemill into double figures

Pub chain Tynemill have recently opened their tenth pub, the Vat & Fiddle.

So named because of it's site between the law courts and the tax office, it becomes Tynemill's third Not-

Festival Firsts

Talking to people at the recent Newark beer festival, it was remarkable to find out how many had not visited a festival before.

It is ironic that there have probably never been so many varieties of beers available than now, yet they are so hard to sample as the micro's do not have the same distribution power or financial clout as the big boys, so their brews tend to be very localised.

It is CAMRA policy at beer festivals not to exhibit beers from the big 'Nationals', so the independents can get a look in and, of course, the micro breweries are featured heavily. If a new beer appears from one of the independents, you can almost guarantee it will make an appearance at the next beer fest.

CAMRA festivals are organised by volunteers all over the country. Entry is very cheap (cheaper or often free to members!) and there's no better place to sample the delights of many breweries, all under one roof.

If you've never been to a CAMRA beer fest, visit one. You'll not be disappointed.

tingham city centre pub (not including The Maze night-club).

On the opening night it was selling nine handpumped real ales, all but two from independent brewers, plus two real ciders. Well worth a visit.

Meanwhile, the scheduled opening of the Fox & Crown at Newark, which will become their eleventh pub, has been delayed until late August.

CAMRA:

The Next Generation

Phil Ayling contemplates the future of CAMRA

With the start of the new millennium looming, I wonder what shape CAMRA will take into the 21st century.

I can't help thinking that CAMRA may become victims of their own success. Since it's inception almost a quarter of a century ago, CAMRA has achieved many of it's original goals, with real ale available in the vast majority of pubs and a choice and diversity of beers never before seen.

True, choice and quality should be on-going campaigning issues, but I feel CAMRA is losing its way. To my mind, issues such as swan necks, sparklers, etc., are all distractions to the main cause and all this petty squabbling within is giving CAMRA an image of anoraked 'beer spotters'. If CAMRA is to be carried successfully into the next century, the respon-

Youngsters want a tasty drink, at the right price, and plenty of it!

sibility for its future must obviously land on the shoulders of its future members - that is today's young drinkers. CAMRA will not recruit young people to the campaign if they have a boring, 'uncool' image.

When was the last time you saw a

picture of a teenaged drinker within the pages of 'What's Brewing'? How can we expect them to join CAMRA when we appear to be the complete opposite of what they are, or aspire to be.

So how does CAMRA go about recruiting tomorrow's campaigner? -



New convert to the real ale army Oly Merrill, 18, at The Wheatsheaf.

It's a difficult question and, in truth, I don't know the answer. But I could take a few guesses.

Firstly, CAMRA has to 'lighten up' and stop coming over as beer bores. When young drinkers go to the pub they're not interested in swan-necks causing 'the inherent bitterness transferring from the body to the head' - They want a tasty drink, at the right price, and plenty of it. And while they're drinking, they want to have fun..... with a capital 'F'!

So I think that's the aspect we should be stressing... that drinking

real ale is FUN - After all, that's why we go down to the local ain't it?

CAMRA's message should be put over in an interesting, fun manner. Existing members should take time to talk to - not lecture - potential young members, encourage them to try the different beers and explain that it is the British tradition of pubs and hand-crafted, natural beers that CAMRA wants to protect. Our heritage.

Youngsters primarily learn by being told how to behave by their elders, and I'm sure that if the campaign is put over in a fun and interesting manner the message will be heeded.

And that's where the future of CAMRA lies.

For your diary....

Next meetings:

14th Aug: Full Moon, Morton
4th Sept: Woolpack, Newark
2nd Oct: Bromley Arms, Fiskerton
Meetings start at 8 pm, all welcome.

Upcoming socials:

August: Coach trip to the Great British Beer Festival, Olympia
Sept: York brewery visit (with Grantham branch)
Oct: Bateman's brewery weekend
Details: Ring Neil Raynor on 610473

NEWSLINE: 687013

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Phil Ayling, 27 Kingsnorth Close, Newark, Notts, NG24 1PS.

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Protect your pleasure 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.

Name.....Address.....
.....Post Code

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

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

QUICK 'ALVES

Pub Overload?

The next few months will potentially see six new pubs and restaurants opening in Newark, which have either been granted planning permission or are in the pipeline, five of which are within two minutes of each other.

The Fox & Crown on Appletongate and Cromwells, a continental-style wine-bar and restaurant on Kirkgate are definitely going ahead. Kirkgate may also see two more pubs - another continental bar at the former post office, and an Irish theme pub at the corner of Queen's Head Court.

A further application has been made for another pub and restaurant where Church Street meets the Market Place. Add to these the Travel Inn 'Brewer's Fayre' on the Lincoln Road by-pass and the back end of '97 will see a new pub overload. Invariably some of the longer established publicans will suffer and whether the consumer will benefit is questionable. However, our team will give a fair review of each pub in BGP, as they open.

Spring clean for Mucky Duck

Nine months after being taken over by Ben and Tracey Vidler, the White Swan has been treated to a major refurb. The pub has been closed for a fortnight, although the work will take about six weeks to complete.

Outside, damage has been rectified and the beer garden improved. Inside, the kitchen and the bar have been totally refitted, and throughout the pub wood panelling and low-key lighting is the order of the day. Out goes the jukebox, to be replaced with piped easy listening. In comes the full range of Mansfield handpulled beers.

The main bar area has been re-carpeted, the walls re-timbered and settle seating installed. The existing darts room has gained a hardwood floor and become a traditional games room with table skittles, shove ha'penny and of course, darts.

Says Ben: "The kitchen refit will allow an improved menu offering excellent quality and value. "We are aiming for a village pub atmosphere in a town centre location".

Time called on short measure?

CAMRA has welcomed recent reports that the Government was to support a backbench bill for full measure pints..

Ben Wardle of CAMRA said, "We would welcome the Government's support for Dennis Turner's bill. Drinkers have been ripped off for far too long. If you buy a pint of milk you expect to get a pint, why should beer be any different? Our research shows that 8 in 10 pints served aren't pints at all, this costs drinkers a million pounds a day."

He continued "The introduction of lined, oversized glasses is the only way drinkers can be guaranteed a full and fair pint. If there is a phased-introduction then glasses can be replaced through natural wastage and the cost to the industry will be minimal."

He added, "We've seen no real evidence that prices would have to rise. Midlands brewer Wolverhampton & Dudley uses lined glasses in over 1000 pubs yet charges lower prices than its competitors."

A CAMRA survey of Trading Standards Officers earlier this year found that 8 out of 10 pints were sold as short measure and 1 in 4 contained less than the industry guideline of 95% liquid..

CAMRA has campaigned for the introduction of lined-glasses for many years. A lined and oversized glass has room for a pint of liquid with any head as an addition. CAMRA has used lined glasses at all of its beer festivals for over 4 years with great success.....

Parrot's new perch

Malc Scrimshaw reviews the Rat & Parrot at Lincoln

This is a newly built pub recently opened in Lincoln. It is part of the St. Mark's Development in Lincoln. For those unaware, St. Mark's was the old railway station. My first impression was 'what a stupid name for a pub', but on reading the paperwork around the bar I discovered that the Rat & Parrot is actually a chain of pubs (approx. thirty, predominantly around the London area).

The building, from the outside, does not look out of place in the St. Mark's development, which I must say, has been tastefully been designed, incor-

rated with Greek styled framed paintings at high level. Generally the place has a light and airy feel to it, reminiscent of the Yates' Wine Lodges only on a much smaller scale.

The beer on sale was Courage Directors, Morland Old Speckled Hen, John Smith's Bitter and Theakston's Best, all on handpump. I had a pint of Directors which was £1.79, a pint which was well presented (although slightly short measured) and of reasonable quality. The usual poser bottle beers were greatly in evidence behind the bar at eye/high level. There was also a keg arrangement with two lagers and two ciders available.

The staff were smart in appearance, young and consisted mainly of ladies who acted as waitresses, since the emphasis of the place is clearly on meals (this was a lunchtime visit). The



porating the old station building together with the new buildings which have subtle touches from rail back-grounds.

However there always has to be an exception and in this case it is the Debenham's building, which I must confess I thought initially had rail arches built into it only to discover that the building is based on a cruise liner, since it is supposed to be Debenham's "flagship" - what this has got to do with the station theme God (and a few greasy palms) only knows.

Back to the pub, which is a large open one room pub with a central bar area. A decorative mosaic floor surrounds a chipboard veneered bar. There is a raised gallery with ornate cast iron railings and the wall is deco-

food varied from snacks at £2 - £3 to main courses at a max. of £6 (I couldn't comment on the quality of the food, since the editor has a limited budget, tight git).

The clientele varied from your 'suits' to casually dressed teenagers and kids running amok on the upper level. The day was sunny and quite a number were taking advantage of the paved patio which leads to the river-side.

The Lord Ted would be the nearest equivalent in Newark, but it is worth nipping in if you are passing, if only for curiosity. Not a drinkers pub, but I bet your bottom dollar it is crowded with youngsters in the evening.



Tales from THE BAR

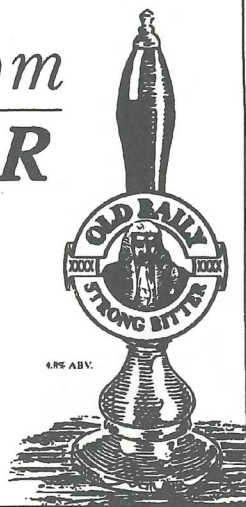
Are you being served?

The Judge Is there any reason you could not serve as a juror in this case?

Juror I don't want to be away from my job that long.

The Judge Can't they do without you at work?

Juror Yes, but I don't want them to know it.



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**Pints , pillows and
platters.**

Neil and Nicola Raynor take a week-
end break in Bucks and Oxon.

Armed once again with the trusty
Good Beer Guide, we set off to our
overnight stay at The Gatehangers
Ashendon, Bucks.....

Alright, the journey down the A/
M42-M40 is hardly spectacular but
the approach to Gatehangers certainly
made up for it.

On driving through the village of
Westcott you then begin to rise
through high country hedges up a
fairly steep hill until you reach Ashen-
don. Taking a fairly sharp right turn
opposite a chocolate box cover
thatched cottage, you enter a road
(Lower End). The car park is approx
50 yards on the right hand side.

The description of the pub in the '97
GBG is quite accurate (see page
39/40). The beers have changed
slightly, serving that particular week-
end Wadworth 6X, IPA and Bate-
man's XB.

Prices for a double room (en-suite)
b&b £50.00. Dinner - from a very
varied selection that weekend approx
£12.00 per head including starters.
Breakfast - excellent, ranging from
cereals, fresh fruit, to the traditional
English cooked breakfast (great
sausage).

Our late Sunday morning departure
took us through into Oxfordshire. Still
armed with the GBG, we visited and
would recommend the following est-
ablishments.

Souldern - The Fox. Range of beer
has changed but very picturesque vil-
lage.

Deddington - The Crown and Tuns.
Has been in every edition of the guide.
Very welcoming. Excellent Hook Nor-
ton beer range.

Steeple Aston - The Red Lion. A gem.
Again very welcoming. No music, pool
table or gaming machines. Serious
wine vaults to accompany serious eat-
ing, but not cheap. Wadworths,
Wychwood and Hook Norton, all in
good order.

Please try to make the effort to
sample establishments further than
your own doorstep. You might be

pleasantly surprised.

Addresses:

Gatehangers Inn, Lower End,
Ashendon, Aylesbury. Bucks.
(01296) 651296
The Fox, Fox lane (off B4100), Soul-
dern, Oxon. (01869) 345284
The Red Lion, South Street, Steeple
Aston, Oxon. (01869) 340225
The Crown and Tuns, New Street,
(Main Road), Deddington, Oxon.

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**THE
BRITISH
PUB**



**Springhead
Reborn**

There was a very real possibility
that the delivery of 27 gallons of
Springhead beers to the recent
Newark beer fest would be the last
appearance of Springhead brews
anywhere. At that time, the brew-
ery was in the hands of the rece-
ivers and the future of the com-
pany in doubt.

Springhead, brewing since 1990
had quickly established itself as one
of the regions best independent brew-
ers with it's excellent portfolio of over
half a dozen quality real ales, includ-
ing The Leveller and Roaring Meg.
Indeed, the Festival brew at last year's
inaugural Newark beer festival was it's
Hole-in-Spire stout, so the uncertainty
of the breweries future was, of course,
sad news.

Happily, the brewery has bounced
back (pun intended) as Springhead
Fine Ales Ltd - a new consortium,
again fronted by brewer Alan Gill,
which has bought the brewery and will
continue to mash at the same
premises at Sutton-on-Trent.

The first pints of Springhead should
be arriving at the bar now. BGP
wishes Alan and everyone at Spring-
head well in their latest venture.

Don't drink 'n' drive - Newark CAMRA trips use....

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Bob's Beery Breaks Around Britain, Pt.1

By Bob Boozley, *'The Beer Punter'*

My drinking 'career' began back in the early seventies when there was very little real ale around. I was weaned on pints of Courage Taverner and J.C, which we supped in rather large quantities at the back of The Royal Oak in Newark. How naive I was in those dark and distant days. A pint of beer was just a cheap (13p!) way of getting piddled and having a good laugh.

Then in 1977 my whole attitude to beer suddenly changed.... The Old King's Arms re-opened! I finally saw the light and it was a revelation!! I was introduced to real ale.

No more fizzy, bland pop. Real ales had character, flavour and they were all different. I was having a pint 'cos I enjoyed it and it was no longer just an excuse to get pi**ed (well, not all the time anyway!).

It wasn't long before I became aware of CAMRA and then, in 1979, on a visit to my cousin who lived in Edinburgh, I attended my first beer festival - the inaugural Scottish Beer Festival, held at Leith. I was now hooked!

All that was eighteen years ago and since then I've seen breweries come and go, the birth and death of many micro breweries and I've attended many more beer festivals. The choice of real ales is tremendous and I've tried a hell of a lot of different brews in that time. But one of my favourite breweries has been around since 1828 and is still thriving. That is Jennings & Sons, of Cockermouth in Cumbria.

So when Mrs Boozley, baby Boozley and I had a week's holiday in Penrith, it was an ideal opportunity to 'sample' a few pints of Jennings's beers. In particular, to search out one of my all time favourite ales.... **The Sneck Lifter.**

T.B.C.....

No change at Trip

After several months of controversy and debate, Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem at Nottingham has retained its status on CAMRA's National Inventory of outstanding pub interiors.

The controversy followed after the work, carried out on The Trip during a five-month closure earlier this year, was deemed to be "beyond essential maintenance work" by Nottingham CAMRA member, Mr Brian Howes.

Mr Howes then wrote a letter to CAMRA's National Pub Group in March, recommending the pub's removal from the national inventory.

His actions drew an angry response from many local CAMRA members who approved of the sympathetic refurbishment of the pub. The resulting debate culminated in the visit this month of nine national delegates to decide whether the Trip still deserved its status.

Their verdict - 12th century inn remains on the national inventory, the matter has been laid to rest and deservedly so. It is, of course, a unique and outstanding pub and if you've never visited it, you should do so and see for yourself.

QUICK 'ALVES

The Queen's Head

is now a Hoskin's house, serving the excellent Hoskin's Prize Old Ale (3.7%), as well as Draught Bass and Stone's bitter.

The Woolpack

Stodman Street has recently undergone a transformation, with new decor and seating, and a much improved 'music' room. Beers available on visit were John Smith's and Mansfield Riding bitter and Marston's Pedigree.

The Cross Keys

at Upton is, we understand, still owned and run by Mike Kirrage, despite all manner of rumours to the contrary.

The Wheatshaf

Slaughterhouse Lane is now serving Deakin's 'The Golden Drop', which replaces the discontinued range of Deakin's seasonal beers. Pale and very quaffable, it weighs in at around 4.3% ABV.

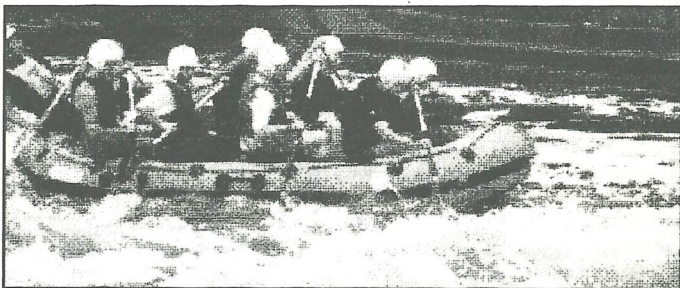
Ye Olde Market

on Castlegate is currently closed undergoing a major refit, including a relocated bar area. It should reopen late July.

The Zoo

is to revert to its former name of The White Hind.

Camrafting for Charity



Faster, faster....pub's open in five!!

In between organising the beer festival, compiling the newsletter and vigorous campaigning, the intrepid BGP team still find time to raise money for charity.

Pictured above, ten members of Newark CAMRA *The 'Camrafts'*

brave the white water course at Holme Pierrepont to raise money for LEPROA - The British Leprosy Relief Association.

Although the team got knocked out in the second round, at least they were all in the pub for opening time!