

FREE

THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

SOUTH HERTS. NEWSLETTER

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Pub Swops - Are We Better Off ?

Most readers will by now have heard of the pub-exchanges between Allied, Courage and Bass-Charrington, which are to be put into effect in the New Year. Altogether, 437 pubs are involved in the exercise which is designed to bring a wider choice of beers to areas where one company at present holds a large monopoly. From the brewers point of view, the breaking of new ground should boost trade and profits, increase the efficiency of existing distribution systems and give them a wider representation in England. The swops roughly fall into five areas: 1. Bristol and 2. The Thames Valley, where Courage lose pubs to Bass and Allied, 3. The West Midlands, where Bass and Allied lose pubs to Courage, 4. Merseyside, Allied to Courage and 5. The Chilterns and Environs, where Ind Coope, Allied's southern subsidiary, will lose pubs to Courage and Bass-Charrington. The last category will immediately affect this branch, the Herts South area will lose 24 Ind Coope houses (8 of which already sell real ale) to Courage (16) and Bass-Charrington (8). Both companies have not been well represented in our area in the past. CAMRA applauds the increased choice but the changes may well prove to be a set back for real beer drinkers, especially in the north, where Courage are to gain pubs and where their John Smith brewery, which does not produce real beer, will no doubt be supplying. With Courage's policy seemingly headlong towards keg and top pressure beer, it is difficult to see them wanting to supply real beer, on handpumps, in the pubs they are gaining in Hertfordshire - and will they continue to use the hand-pumps which are at present dispensing Ind Coope beers?

More Real Ale Please

The branch will be doing its utmost to keep handpumps working and will be striving for the introduction of Courage cask-conditioned beers in the other pubs. Bass, on the other hand, seem more amenable and we would hope that they install handpumps for their IPA and Bass.

Opposition

The swop has its opponents, which include the National Union of Licensed House Managers, who were not consulted. They are concerned that the managers (contd. page 4)

Sold Out

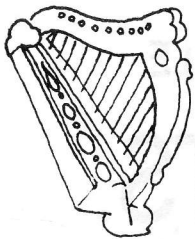
The Hertfordshire Real Beer Guide is now sold out, although some pubs still have a few copies left for sale. Work is in hand on the 1978 edition - aimed for publication next February. Any amendments that you've noticed would be gratefully received by the Guide Editor, Dave Burns at 44 Torrington Drive, Potters Bar. Tel: 77 51492 (Home)

Whitbread

A current rumour circulating, is that Whitbread are seriously considering investing a large amount of money (said to be around £3¹/₂ million) in a new building and equipment at their Luton brewery, to produce cask-conditioned beer. We'll have to wait and see if there is any truth in it. At present Whitbread's 'Draught Bitter', available in a small amount of pubs in South Hertfordshire, is being transported from Marlow - Luton is not able to produce real beer at the moment.

Festival Profits

The festival was a great success in all respects and is expected to have raised approximately £10,000 for the Campaign. The volunteer staff, who set up and ran the festival, helped to show the brewing world just what CAMRA is capable of, and most of the beer was in top condition.



Guinness: A Visit to Park

Royal by Jim Axford

This, the last of this year's brewery visits, proved to be as different as all the others. Having negotiated the North Circular Road at Hanger Lane, it is difficult to miss the brewery. Built 1934-1936 on a 120 acre site, it is vast in size, functional in design (ie. ugly) and dominates the area. By using the natural fall on the ground, Guinness have cunningly built in a gravity feed system for the brewing process. Our Irish guides (who else would know enough about the stuff) took us first to the hop store, an enormous brick hall, containing American (!!) hops, although English hops are also used. Their malted barley is brought from maltsters throughout the country.

Brewing

Our guide explained the principles of the brewing process and we passed into the mash tun hall and it was here that the size of the operation was put into perspective. Park Royal distributes through the other Brewers throughout England and Guinness will unofficially admit to a daily consumption in excess of five million glasses a day. Customs and Excise duty amounts to £1 million per week.

The Details

Although seeming more like something from a refinery, the divisions of the brewing process are separated in walking from one building to another. Only once do we actually see the lovely black liquid (and that in glass tubing) as all vessels are enclosed - which dispels any truth in the story of Paddy, who fell into the fermenting vat and climbed out six times for a pee! After boiling and cooling, the gravity is taken (1044) by H.M. Customs, and the yeast added. This particular yeast strain has descended from the strain first used in 1759. After fermentation has finished, the various fermenting vessels are blended and the liquid passes to racking vats (the same brew for bottled and keg beer) where unferment beer and yeast are introduced in small quantities. This gives the condition to the beer and takes some 6-8 hours. From here, the beer goes to the storage and keg filling plant. The CO2 given off in the fermentation is retained and used in filling the 'draught' Guinness kegs (no separate gas bottles). The beer for the bottled Guinness is then pumped into bulk containers, either on railway waggons or road transporters and taken to other breweries who store, bottle and distribute

to their own outlets. The tour then concluded in the Toucan Inn, where sampling and 'inspection' of the products were much enjoyed. During the imbibing session, I learnt from our guide that Guinness is brewed by Guinness breweries, or under contract, in many countries throughout the world. The Dublin brewery brews 3 grades: X for home consumption, XX for export to Europe and XXX for export outside Europe. The new XXX Guinness is being test-marketed in the Midlands prior to general sale in England. As a final treat we were shown the Toucan Inn's cellar room where there are bottles of Guinness from the worldwide network - a bottle collectors paradise.

Toucaning

And finally why should a toucan be connected with an Irish brewery anyway? For details send a SAE to Hard-to-believe-but-Straight-Up-Stories Limited, or listen attentively: A boat, laden with grain for Ireland, was caught in a storm on its way from Australia and was blown off course, having to shelter in the River Plate. 'Twas there, me hearties, that a man at the quay, with a large bird on his shoulder was seen beckoning to the Captain. The man asked the Captain if he could get a lift back to Britain and offered the bird, a toucan, as payment but the Captain said he would only give him a lift if he was prepared to work his passage, to which the man agreed - taking his toucan with him. Many days later the ship reached port and lo and behold, who should be on the quay but a certain person from Guinness who was purchasing grain. The man, then happy at landing home again offered the Captain the toucan in gratitude but again he refused, so he offered it to the man from Guinness (who was obviously partial to Toucans), who proudly accepted - which is why to this very day Guinness still use the Toucan as a symbol (remember the famous Toucan lamps). Now, hands up all those who believe me?

In Future

If you would like to visit a particular brewery in the future let me know, via the Editor, the brewery of your choice, but please remember that you have got to get home somehow - so no long distance ones! Fullers, Youngs, Greene King, Ind Coope, Charles Wells, Wethereds, Theakstons, Hook Norton are just some of the breweries that we have visited in the past year.

Changes

there have not been many changes in South Hertfordshire pubs in the last few weeks but North Herts presents a different picture entirely with ten 'new' pubs in the last month:

Brent Pelham The Black Horse
Cottered The Bell is now selling Ind Coope Burton Ale.

Furneux Pelham The Star is now experimenting with Greene King Abbot Ale on gravity at weekends.

Hitchin i) The Cricketers is now selling Ind Coope Bitter on handpumps.

ii) Hitchin Rugby Club is now selling Greene King IPA and Abbot Ale on gravity at weekends.

Old Bricket Wood The Old Fox has introduced all three Ind Coope real beers: Burton Ale, Bitter and KK Light Mild.

Old Hall Green The Bay Horse has Courage Director's Bitter on handpump.

Royston The Coach and Horses, -ex-Whitbread, but now a Free House, is selling Ind Coope Burton Ale and Bitter by handpumps.

Stevenage The Pied Piper is now selling Abbot Ale by gravity - but only at weekends.

Titmore Green The Hermit of Redcoats now sells Greene King Abbot Ale by gravity.

Whitwell The Maidens Head is now selling McMullen's Country Bitter on handpumps.

E.G.M.

The E.G.M. held recently in Manchester to discuss the air pressure issue was well attended and 17 people went from Herts South and Herts/Essex Borders branches by train. After much argument, the result, in effect, leaves it up to the individual branches as to whether this method of dispense is to be accepted and included in local guides and publications.

Congratulations to Del Turner, our Area Organiser and Maggie Dorothy, formerly on the South Bedfordshire branch committee, who are getting married later this month.

When in Scotland....

Beware! Not only do they talk funny (get a phrase book from Smith's) but they also change words around! For example, ask for a pint o'light and you get dark mild (only in Belhaven's and a couple of Tennent's pubs); ask for a pint o'heavy and a pint of bitter is produced (although much of this is fizzy beer and requires a copy of the Scottish Good Beer Guide for excluding nasty experiences); ask for a pint 'natural' and you get real ale (don't ask for real ale or you will just get blank looks).

Export

Export is normally keg and should be avoided at all cost. Ask for a half and you will probably get whisky - $\frac{1}{3}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$ gill and much cheaper than in the south. Half and a half is a half pint with a whisky, still very much a traditional drink(s) and not one to be indulged in by Southerners.

A take-away is a 'carry-out' - but not available on Sundays, until the traditional licensing laws change this month, to allow Sunday opening for the first time (up to now only hotels could open).

Opening Times

Southerners with wives/girl-friends are advised to use the lounge and not the bar, thus avoiding frosty stares and the quaint free-flow language. During my last visit, last month, the new extended weekday licensing laws (5pm-11pm) have had a mixed reception. Some pubs open at 5pm but others as late as 7.30pm. Others close at 10.00 or 10.30 - so check your times with the barman to avoid going dry. It is a most peculiar feeling to see a Scottish pub almost empty at closing time, although I actually did see one stalwart, carrying out an age-old Scottish tradition, by maintaining his half 'n' half till 11pm, staggering to the door, taking a deep breath of the cold, damp air and nose-diving to the tarmac. So if you'll take the high-road..... by JOCK O'WATFORD. (And I thought Scotland was a pretty good place - Ed).



THIS UPPER CLASS PUNTER COMES UP TO MY BAR AND SAYS: I SAY, LANDLORD, POOR US A JAMMAR!

I SAYS, METAPHORICLY: QUV'WOR, NO CHANCE! 'T WAS THEN THAT I NEAR COLLAPSED IN A TRANCE

I MUSED TO MYSELF DO MY EARS DECEIVE ME? FOR A MOMENT I THOUGHT HE SAID: HAVE ONE ON ME!

NO SQUEETER SOUND'E'ER PROCEEDED THE BELL-LAT'S FACE IT, PUNTERS: BREEDING WILL TELL!

DRAWINGS BY RICHARD PIGE; POEM BY SOMEONE ELSE ENTIRELY DISCLAIMERS OF RESPONSIBILITY ALL AROUND - HEH HEH!

Pub Swops contd.

will receive no extra payment when they begin working for a new company. However, the National Union of Licensed Victuallers have been involved in negotiations and are pleased with the deal they have secured for its members. Allied's Burton brewery supplies have been hit by industrial action, following the announcement of the swop plans. All in all the changes just remove the tip of the iceberg - the monopolies are still there, just slightly reduced and the Big Six's domination of brewing scene remains untouched. If Bass and Courage do tackle the changes with the considerations of all interested bodies taken into account, everyone could be satisfied. We, the drinkers, should have more of a say in what we are to drink and the clear message in Hertfordshire is that drinkers want more real ale not less! The following pubs are listed to change hands in January:

From Ind Coope to Courage:

The Hope and Anchor*	Welham Green
The Great Northern*	St.Albans
The Midland Railway*	St.Albans
The Holly Bush	Elstree
The Horns	Watford
The Stag, St.Albans Road	Watford
The White Lion, St.Alb.Road	Watford
The Sun*GBG	Lemsford
The Horse and Groom	Hatfield
The Chequers	Potters Bar
The Fox and Hounds	Rickmansworth
The Windmill	Bushey Heath
The White Bear*	Rickmansworth
The Three Crowns*	Bushey Heath
The Rifle Volunteer	Oxhey
The Half Way House*	Rickmansworth

From Ind Coope to Bass-Charrington:

The Horse and Chains	Bushey
The Hammer in Hand	Leavesden
The Hare*	Leavesden
The Red Lion	Bushey
The Happy Man	Rickmansworth
The Harbour Lights	Bushey
The Otter	Bushey
The Happy Hour	Oxhey

*denotes a real ale pub.

GBG. In 1977 Good Beer Guide.

DIARY of EVENTS

HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

- Oct. 18 October Branch Meeting
The Cricketers, Redbourn.
(Ind Coope) Starting 8.00pm.
- Oct. 26 Social with Herts. North branch
at The Old Rose and Crown in
Watton Road, Ware (McMullen's)
Starts around 8.00pm.
Why not come along for a few
pints and a game of darts!
- Nov. 15 November Branch Meeting
The Crown, 1 Shenley Road, Bore-
hamwood. (Ind Coope) 8.00pm.
We are hoping to have a speaker
from Ind Coope at the meeting.

Hertfordshire North Branch

- Oct. 26 Social with Herts South (see
above).

Herts/Essex Borders Branch

- Nov. 16 Joint Social with Herts North at
The Star, Furneux Pelham. 8.00pm.

Mid-Chilterns Branch

- Oct. 26 Social at The Cock, Sarratt.
(Ind Coope) 8.00pm.



MEMBERSHIP FORM

CAMRA is an independent organisation fighting to improve the quality of beer and pubs throughout the country. Why not join and help us improve the lot of the drinking person?

For your £4.00 subscription you will receive a copy of the monthly 'What's Brewing', CAMRA's newspaper on what is going on in the world of beer.

SOUTH HERTS NEWSLETTER

I wish to become a member of CAMRA Ltd.
I agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign.
I enclose £4.00 as my annual membership subscription (Any additional amount will be welcomed as a donation).

Name
Address
Signature Date

Please send to: The Membership Secretary,
The Campaign for Real Ale, 34 Alma Road,
St.Albans, Herts, AL1 3BV.

Newsletter

This Newsletter is produced monthly by the Hertfordshire South Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale. All contributions should be sent to the editor by the first day of the month: Les Middlewood, 81a Linden Way, Southgate, London, N.14.