

Issue No: 38 website: www.solihullcamra.org Autumn 2006

Revving up for Festival no.8!!!

The next Solihull & District Beer Festival approaches fast.. We are at the Royal British Legion once again, in Union Road, central Solihull, opposite Beatties' store, and times and dates are as follows:

Friday 29th September 6.00 pm—11.00 pm

Saturday 30th September 12.00 noon—4.00 pm, and 5.30 pm—11.00 pm

Costs are: Friday evening: £2.00; Saturday lunchtime: £1.00; Saturday evening: £2.00 (concessions for card-carrying CAMRA members). There is also a refundable £2.00 deposit on glasses.

We have a great line-up of beers planned for you, including subject to quaffability on the day), Copper Dragon's 'Black Gold'; Hopback's 'GFB'; Kelham Island's 'Gold'; Durham's 'Magus''; Ossett's #Pale Gold'; Pictish' 'Alchemist'; Phoenix' 'White Monk'; Timothy Taylor's 'Landlord'; plus beers from our nearest breweries Weatheroak (always a festival stalwart), Church End, and Purity Gold.

In addition there will be a barrel each of medium and dry cider, and a barrel of perry. Soft drinks for the drivers amongst you can be purchased from the Royal British Legion's own bar in the room next door to our festival.



Food will be available at all our sessions, and there will be music on the Saturday evening provided by the band 'Time after Time'.

We will again be using a token system for the purchase of drinks at the festival bar, and any unused tokens can be donated to charity: we will be collecting for Macmillan Cancer Relief, so if you have the odd 10p or 20p left over which won't buy you another pint, you can depart knowing that you have helped towards this deserving

cause. Last year we raised £210

for this charity; it would be great to beat that total.

You will also be able to vote for your choice of 'beer of the festival': the winning beer, announced towards the end of Saturday evening, receives a certificate from the Branch to mark the occasion.

So, come along, sup some ales, have a great time—we really do look forward to seeing you!

Julia Hammonds, Festival Organiser



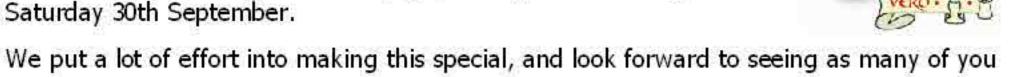
Inside: Don't miss the Dates for your Diary

Message from the Editor

Autumn's coming—welcome to the season of mellow fruitfulness, wet and windy weather, and a new crop of seasonal beers (I'm sure you all have your favourites). As we bid farewell to the summer, no regrets: just think of the things that Autumn and the winter season brings: Halloween; Bonfire night (and bonfire/toffee flavoured ales, for those who like them - I know at least a couple of people that do); walks in the countryside, fiery with autumn leaves, glazed with frost and showing up every spiders' web, where the crisp air gives you an appetite for a good pint of ale (seasonal or otherwise), drunk in a comfy pub before a roaring fire; and looking forward to Christmas — perhaps a gift of a year's membership of CAMRA would help ease your Xmas shopping list?

If the weather proves inclement and you're stuck indoors, then why not check out our **new-look website**—go to **www.solihullcamra.org** and check out the new look, revised layout for easier browsing, and more for information. Our Solihull branch Gryphon heads up the site—let me know what you think and I'll publish any comments next time.

But before all that, it's the 8th Solihull & District Beer Festival, which as you will have seen from the front page, takes place on Friday 29th and Saturday 30th September.



Julia

there as possible.

Pub, Beer & Brewery Watch

Beers around at the moment:

At the end of August, the following beers were reported:

- at the Red Lion, Earlswood: Hook Norton Hooky and Old Hooky (the latter had just gone at the time of arrival)
- at the Drawbridge, Shirley: Pedigree; Black Sheep; Deuchers IPA; Landlord (just gone but with the pump clip still showing) and Bombardier. All the beers tried were in good condition.

Solihull digs Tunnel!

Anyone out shopping in Solihull when the Farmers Market is in residence is recommended to look out for the Tunnel Brewery stall which is proving to be very popular.

Tunnel is a new Warwickshire micro-brewery, and the stall features a range of their bottle conditioned ales plus a cheese which is made locally by Fowlers of Earlswood using Tunnel Beer.

The stall can be found on Solihull High Street on the first Friday of every month (9am - 5pm).

The Brewery itself is located in the Warwickshire village of Ansley behind a Good Beer guide listed pub called the Lord Nelson Inn. The pub and brewery are independent of one another, brewing commenced in April 2005. They have a portfolio of 3 house beers plus a number of seasonal and commemorative beers which are available in the Lord Nelson as well as the free trade. The name comes from a half-mile long railway tunnel built in 1765 that passes under the village.

The Branch will be arranging a Brewery tour in the near future, please come to one of our Branch meetings if you want to find out more.

Do you have any news for this section? If so, send it to The Editor at the address(es) given on the inside back page and I'll try to feature it in the next issue.



THE BULL'S HEAD

Barston Lane, Barston TEL: 01675 442830



VISIT OUR 15th CENTURY VILLAGE INN
WITH A SELECTION OF REAL ALES AND REGULAR GUEST BEERS
Most recently listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2006

Solihull CAMRA Pub of the Year 2000 and 2002 (Cask-Marque accredited)

HOME COOKED MEALS ARE AVAILABLE LUNCHTIMES AND EVENINGS MONDAY TO SATURDAY IN THE PLEASANT SURROUNDINGS OF THE PUB OR IN OUR SEPARATE NON-SMOKING RESTAURANT (Sundays 12 to 3pm for hunch - no evening meals)

TELEPHONE RESERVATIONS WELCOME

AS SUMMER WANES, BATHE IN THE LAST OF THE SUNSHINE IN OUR BEER GARDEN, OR COME INSIDE FOR CONVIVIAL COMPANY TO CHASE AWAY.

THOSE WINTER BLUES IN FRONT OF A COMFORTING FIRE WITH A SUPERB PINT IN YOUR HAND.

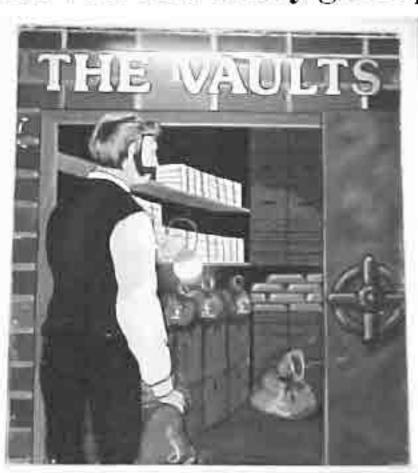
Ahl, bliss!

Nick and Gwen welcome you to The Vaults, Knowle

The Real Ale venue in Knowle with:

- ♦ Six hand-pumped beers including regulars, Ansell's Mild, Greene King IPA, Burton Ale, Tetley Bitter and two guest beers
- ♦ Real cider from Weston's
- ♦ Food available lunchtimes Monday Saturday

Solihull CAMRA Pub of the Year 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 come and see for yourself what we have to offer and why locals vote us a really great pub!



CAMRA Good Beer Guide listed since 1993



The Vaults, St John's Close, Knowle. Tel: 01564 773656

PUB OF THE YEAR 2005

On the 5th July, members of Solihull & District CAMRA gathered together at The Vaults in Knowle, to witness the handing over of a certificate to mark their winning our branch's 'Pub of the Year' competition for 2006.



The Vaults has won this award consecutively since 2003. This is a prestigious title when you think that the branch has 95 pubs in Solihull and the surrounding area to choose from and shortlist. The win even merited a mention in CAMRA's magazine 'What's Brewing'.

The pub nestles in St. A well-deserved presentation John's Close, a small road off the high

street, between seafood restaurant Loch Fyne, and the Pizzeria Napoletana, a café-cumrestaurant. It is a small, cosy friendly pub, with various seating areas on one level, and looking round one finds a wealth of memorabilia displayed in cabinets and on the walls. Six real ales plus a real cider are available at all times,



Smile for the cameras ladies and gents!

plus the pub does occasional independent beer festivals.

Burton Ale, Tetley's Best Bitter, Ansell's Mild and Greene King IPA all feature, plus two regularly changing guest beers often from, small breweries. The pub takes a pride in how the beers are kept, and a glance round the walls will reveal old pump-clips that show the range that has been on offer over the years. Of

A very welcome snack

course, the standard range of lagers, wines and spirits are always available, and the pub does bar meals between 12 and 2, Mondays-Saturdays, with bar snacks available at all times. Visit in December and you may stumble upon the Pickled Onion Competition!

The Vaults kindly demonstrated its thanks for the

award and our attendance by

providing a buffet, which was quickly consumed by the hungry CAMRA members

If you haven't been to The Vaults before, do try to visit—its range of real ales is great. You will soon know why it has been voted our branch's. Pub of the Year for 4 years running!



Local Beer Festivals

ROWINGTON

It was a pity to see the change of landlord at the Rowington Cock Horse - I enjoyed the beer and music in August 2005, let's hope that the new landlord is as good at keeping the beer.

However all is not lost - CAMRA often tries to encourage private clubs to offer real ale, and Rowington Village Club - as found on the old Solihull CAMRA site - was certainly worth a visit. They have started an August Bank Holiday beer festival to fill the gap left at



the Cock Horse. I went on Sunday, which was warm and sunny - there was music and a pigroast laid on, both good.

The beer was excellent - I started with a Purity Pure Gold - under 4% - and it was excellent after a 10-mile cycle ride to get there. (I then noted that it had won a silver medal - well deserved)

I sampled a few more - all in good condition, with varying styles to suit differing tastes, and a couple of draft ciders that obviously met with

approval. This isn't a 1-hit wonder either - I noted 4 real ales on tap in the bar. The locals were very welcoming: an annual membership fee is a mere £10, but a day membership is only £1.... or FREE to card-carrying CAMRA members. I shall certainly go there again!

Robert Cawte

EARLSWOOD

In the middle of August, Nigel and Elaine held an excellent beer festival at the Reservoir Inn, Earlswood. The beer was set up under canvas on the pub's rear terrace on Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th August, and several CAMRA members enjoyed their visit!

There was a good atmosphere with a pig roast all day and live music provided by popular Leicester band *Roadkill*, supported by *Roger Dean & the Music Machine*, himself a local CAMRA member. Younger children enjoyed the Wacky Warehouse whilst their Parents enjoyed a pleasant pint.

About 20 real ales were on offer, mainly from smaller regional breweries such as Caledonian, Butcombe and Wychwood. There were some pale hoppy beers ideal for Summer drinking including Coach House Green Bullet, Harviestoun Bitter & Twisted, Wye Valley Leggers and Mauldon Mid Summer Ale – some of these being 'new seasonal' brews.

The weather was rather unsettled and rain did it's best to dampen spirits on the Saturday evening, but Sunday stayed dry. The slightly cooler conditions however ensured that the quality and condition of the beers was superb.

Congratulations and thanks to Nigel and Elaine for organising such an enjoyable event!

David Queenborough

It takes all sorts to campaign for real ale



Join CAMRA Today...

Just fill in the form below and send, with a cheque (payable to CAMRA ltd) or for Three Months Free membership (for those renewing or joining by Direct Debit) complete the Direct Debit Form. All forms should be addressed to membership secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW. Alternatively you can join online at www.camra.org.uk. Rates for single membership are £18 and joint £21. Concession rates are available on request.

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Tel. no.(s)		*********				***************************************
I wish to join the Camp	aign for Real Ale,	and agree t	o abide l	y the Men	orandum	and Articles of Association.
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Postcode Name (s) of Account Holder (s)	FOR CAMRA OFFICIAL USE ONLY This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society Membership Number Name Postcode				This Guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that take part in the Direct Debit Scheme The efficiency and security of the Scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society. If the amounts to be paid or the payment dates change CAMRA will notify you 10 working days in advance.	
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copy of your letter to us.

Old Solihull Pub Names (Part Six)

We're getting there!! Another episode in our occasional series concerning the origin of and changes to pub names in the Solihull and District area.

Old Solihull Pub Names R—S

RAISON D'ETRE

High Street, Solihull

A high street wine-bar style pub, it closed in 2000 before opening as a shop as part of the development of the Touchwood shopping centre in 2001. One of Solihull's oldest buildings, it had originally opened as a wine bar called BYRON'S in 1973.

RED LION

Henley in Arden

Closed to become a private dwelling in 1992.

RING O BELLS

Hampton in Arden

Closed in 1939, now a garage.

RISING SUN

Knowle

Renamed the WILSONS ARMS in 1838. The change in name was probably in honour of Jane Anne Eleanor Wilson, the joint Lord of the Manor with her cousin Henry Greswolde Lewis who owned the nearby GRESWOLDE ARMS.

ROSIE O'BRIEN'S

High Street, Solihull

Originally a pub called the MALT SHOVEL, it was called the SNOOTY FOX in the 1980's before becoming an American 1950's theme bar called ROSIE O'BRIEN'S PUMP HOUSE in the 1990's (variously referred to as ROSIE O'BRIEN'S or the PUMP HOUSE). After a brief spell as the LOAF, it was renamed POP WORLD earlier this year.

ROYAL OAK

Drury Lane, Solihull

On the corner of High Street & Drury Lane, where the travel agent is now. It was demolished in 1963 when Mell Square was built.

SHAKESPEARE

Elmdon

One of the bars at Birmingham Airport, it became the ABRAHAM DARBY in 1999. Previously called the AVIATOR BAR.

STABLES

Hillfield, Solihull

When HILLFIELD HALL became a restaurant in 1974, the adjacent old stables building was converted into an unusual pub called, unsurprisingly, the STABLES. It was converted to kitchens in 1999. The whole complex was closed in 2002 for conversion to flats.

SWAN INN

Station Road, Solihull

This pub stood on the corner of Poplar Road & Station Road, before becoming a private house in the 19th century. The nearby Wetherspoons adopted the name WHITE SWAN in tribute when it opened in 2004.

How many do you remember? Watch future issues for the conclusion to this series.

OCTOBER IS CAMRA HQ'S CIDER MONTH—read all about the POMONA AWARD NOMINATIONS

Each year CAMRA invites nominations from members or branches for the Pomona Award – for the person place or thing which has done the most for cider & perry in the last twelve months or for their ongoing work in the field. The nominations are considered and a decision taken as to whether any of them merit the prize. This year saw such a bumper crop of aspiring notables that I thought I'd share them with you as it might inspire you to put someone or something forward for consideration next year. We received seven nominations for the Award this year. They were made by individual CAMRA members and by Branches – thanks to everyone who submitted them. Without you there would be no competition.

Stockport Branch and John Clarke, editor of the Branch's award winning newsletter 'Opening Times' were proposed for their 16 pub cider passport trail called "The Cider Circuit". The pubs included were spread from Manchester City Centre South to Cheshire & North Derbyshire. The scheme attracted wide praise from both publicans & consumers alike. While being a fun event it also broadened the appeal & availability of cider & perry in the area.

CAMRA's Newcastle Beer Festival was nominated for 25 years of supporting real cider & perry in one of Britain's 'cider wildernesses'. In the last few years the range has been steadily expanded and due to the 'evangelising' work done at the Festival their cider & perry range bears favourable comparison with that available at virtually any CAMRA Festival in the country,

Another nominee was the National Cider & Perry Collection at the English Farm Cider Centre, Middle Farm, Firle. Rod Marsh and his wife offer the widest selection of British ciders & perries available to the public. Their wonderful establishment allows you to browse and sample what is on offer before choosing anything from a pint to a 5 gallon polycask.

J D Wetherspoons was nominated for their commitment to cider and perry since it was introduced in the summer of 2005. They have brought cider & perry to a new audience by offering a range of varying range of products supported by specialist features in their in-house magazine.

Jon Hallam & Merrylegs are two small distributors who supply real ciders & perries nationwide and both offer a range which would not otherwise be available to pubs, beer festivals and the like. They were nominated jointly for their sterling work. The cider and perry sold via Merrylegs and Jon Hallam plays a large part in encouraging producers to continue making it. Cider and perry makers enjoy nothing more then knowing their products are being savoured and enjoyed hundreds of miles from where the fruit is grown.

Dave Matthews the outgoing Chairman of the Welsh Perry & Cider Society and a previous editor of CAMRA's Good Cider Guide (2000). The Welsh Perry & Cider Society won the Pomona award in 2003 but this time round Dave was nominated in his own right. His perry is the current National Perry champion and he recently established the Welsh Perry & Cider Championships at The Clytha Arms. Dave's commitment, enthusiasm and dedication to raising the quality, awareness and appreciation of cider and perry and to orchard preservation is remarkable.

CAMRA's Reading Beer and Cider Festival 2006 was presented for consideration for their tremendous range of well presented ciders and perries, sourced from all over the country. The unsurpassed variety is outstripped only by demand from the consumers who are delighted by the choice available to them. This year's Reading festival sold almost twice as much cider and perry as it did in 2005 - which kept the knowledgeable staff very busy indeed!

Full consideration was given to each entry; winners will be announced by CAMRA in October 2006. Check out http://www.camra.org.uk for more details and to see if you agree with the decision.

Gillian Williams



BREWING Cº

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Dates For Your Diary

Socials

Friday 29th & Saturday 30th September: Solihull & District Beer Festival 19—22 October: Weekend away in Harrogate (contact Branch Secretary

for details/costs)

Saturday 25th November

Xmas meal, The Church Inn,

Hockley, Birmingham

Sunday 10th December Xmas pub crawl, Solihull

Branch Meetings

Monday 4th September Royal British Legion, Union Road, Solihull

Monday 2nd October Black Swan, Henley in Arden

Monday 13th November B. Meeting & AGM, Bulls Head, Barston

(starts 8.00pm)

Monday 4th December Red Lion, Shirley

Monday 8th January Field House. Monkspath (tbc)

Monday 5th February Harvester, Olton (tbc)
Monday 5th March Rowington Club, Rowington (tbc)

Monday 2nd April Reservoir, Earlswood (tbc)

(NB. All Branch meetings start at 8.30pm except where noted otherwise)

Special Events

Wednesday 27th September Beer Festival staffing meeting, Royal

British Legion

Friday 29th September \ Solihull and District Beer 2006 Festival,

Saturday 30th September}the Royal British Legion, Solihull town centre February 2007 National Pubs Week: details & venue tbc

For meetings/socials yet to be confirmed or if more details are needed please contact Branch Secretary Steve Wood on 0121 704 5258.

Stuck for ideas for Christmas presents?

CAMRA membership is a really great idea for a loved one who likes their real ale! Single membership is £18 and Joint membership £21 per annum. Use the membership form on page 7 of this magazine, or visit the CAMRA website at **www.Camra.org** which has details of other gifts you can purchase—there is a wide selection of items, including books—the traveller might appreciate a copy of The Good Beer Guide, which lists all those pubs voted into the Guide by local members right across the UK. Have a browse and reduce your shopping list!

ALISON AND ADRIAN WELCOME YOU TO The Rowington Club

Rowington Green, Rowington, Warwickshire CV35 7BD Telephone: 01564 782087

Opening hours: Weekdays: 2.00 pm – 11.00 pm
Weekends and Bank Holidays: 12 noon – 11.00 pm
Large car park

Come and relax playing dominoes, cards, snooker and pool

Three real ales available

(With your support we can even increase the range of ales!)

Live music most Saturdays and Quiz Nights every month

Being a dub, we charge £1.00 per visit (free to card-carrying CAMRA members) (full membership: £10.00 per annum)

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 7th September: live music (60's, 70's, 80's)
Tuesdays 12th & 19th September: Bingo
Saturday 23rd September: Live music (Matt Roberts duo)

Sunday October 1st. Marrow Sunday - a cornucopia of vegetables!
Competitions for Heaviest Marrow, Heaviest Onion, Longest Runner Bean,
Longest Carrot, Best Jar of Chutney, Best Jar of Jam, Best Fruit Cake
and Best Victoria Sandwich Cake. Ferret racing and Pooch race.

10 am start for competitors.

Saturday 7th October: live music (60's, 70's, 80's)

Tuesdays 10th & 17th October: Bingo
Saturday 21st October: live music (60's, 70's, 80's)

For full details of all forthcoming events, please ring Adrian or Alison at The Rowington Club

The Golden Acres

Rowood Drive Damsonwood, Solihull Tel. 0121 704 9002

Joint Solihull & District CAMRA Most Improved Pub the Year 2005

Three guest real ales plus a regularly-changing traditional cider



Sports coverage a regular feature Children welcome

Traditional Sunday Lunches 12.00 - 4.00pm

Try our authentic Chinese food Eat in and/or Take-away

Mondays-Saturdays (except Tuesdays) 5.00-11.30pm Sundays: Eat-in 5.00-10.30pm Take-away 5.00-11.30pm

The Word on the Street...

Pub Signs

Part of our living tradition that is the British pub includes the inn sign. Unfortunately, there is a real danger to our traditional pub signs, signs that we too often take for granted or even ignore. Like good real ale, the classic pub sign is hand crafted by a real artist. As our traditional ale was undermined by keg beer, so too are traditional hand-painted pub signs being undermined by computer generated plastic screen prints.

In the past most signs were commissioned by the brewery, but now, when they need to be replaced, the cost often falls to the hard pressed landlord. Small wonder then that many have been tempted to go for the cheaper plastic alternative. Using modern computer graphics the picture is usually composed of three self-adhesive laminate strips that are stuck onto a baseboard. But beware, though this type of sign looks good initially it ages far more quickly than the traditionally hand painted sign. Plastic signs often fade or change colour in strong sunlight, and wet conditions can causes the laminate strips to separate leaving lines across the picture - not exactly a good advert for the publican's business.

Ed's note: if you know of any really good pub signs in the Solihull & District area worthy of mention in this magazine, send me details and I'll try to feature them

The lunchtime pint

Is the lunchtime pint facing extinction? Only a minority of companies now allow staff to drink during the working day. It's a sunny Friday lunchtime, the kind of weather that brings on a thirst for a long, cold drink. After a week spent hunched over a computer monitor, it's easy to feel like the dust-encrusted, thirst-crazed soldier who's driven across the desert in the classic film Ice Cold in Alex. You can almost see the condensation running down the curves of a pint, the sun glinting on a wine glass... But hold on. Re-wind the tape, because that lunchtime pint - a cultural tradition in its own right - is disappearing. A survey from law firm, Browne Jacobson, says that 57% of businesses now ban drinking during the working day.

There have always been drinking restrictions on safety-sensitive jobs, such as anyone driving or operating machinery, but now the booze ban is being extended much more widely. In many parts of the country, particularly outside London, an even higher proportion of companies don't allow staff to drink. In the West Midlands, the survey says that 75% of businesses don't allow drinking during the working day. "If you'd carried out such a survey 10 years ago or more, it would have been a much lower figure," says employment lawyer at Browne Jacobson, Peter Jones. The trend has been driven by a combination of changing attitudes to alcohol - and a fear of litigation among employers.

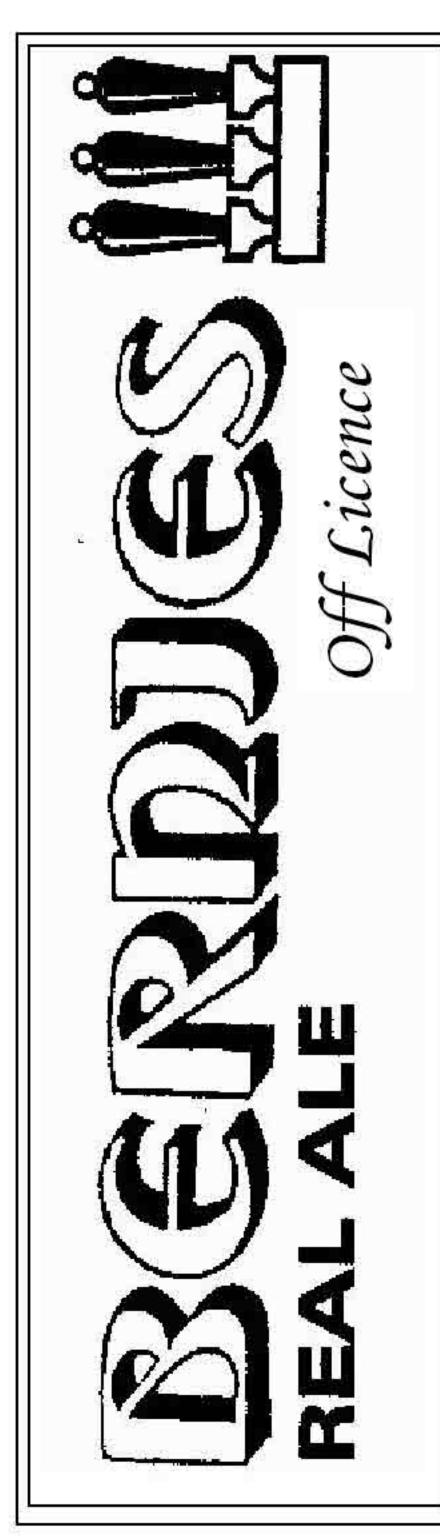
"If you went out for a business lunch, it would once have been unusual if you didn't have a drink."

"If you went out for a business lunch, it would once have been unusual if you didn't have a drink. Now it's more likely to be a round of fizzy water and fruit juice," says Mr Jones.

It's a Funny Old World

10 more reasons why English can be confusing to learn:

- 1. The insurance was invalid for the invalid
- 2. There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row
- 3. They were too close to the door to close it
- The buck does funny things when the does are present
- 5. A seamstress and a sewer fell into a sewer
- 6. To help with planting the farmer taught his sow how to sow
- The wind was too strong to wind the sail
- 8. Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear
- I had to subject the subject to a series of tests
- 10. How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend



*AN EVER CHANGING SCENE OF EXCITING DRAUGHT BEERS THROUGHOUT THE SEASONS

* 200 DIFFERENT BEERS DURING THE YEAR

* CAMRA GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED CONTINUOUSLY



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* ORDER EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT!!

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ENJOYING YOURSELF WITH GOOD FRIENDS AND A PINT OR TWO?

Great—we hope you' re having a really good evening.

However, if you're thinking of driving—STOP!!!
Play it safe, ask someone else to drive.

 ANGELS CARS of Damson Wood Estate is waiting for your

call—we are open 24 hours a day on 0121 704 4400 CALL US NOW!!

The Solihull Drinker is the newsletter of the Solihull & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign of Real Ale.

All contributions, comments and enquiries should be sent to Julia Hammonds: The Editor, Solihull Drinker, c/o 4, Kendrick Close, Solihull, B92 OQD or e-mail julia.hammonds@blueyonder.co.uk

The Editor reserves the right to amend or shorten any contributions in the Solihull Drinker, but will always honour the spirit of the contribution.

Solihull CAMRA 2006 ©

Complaints about short measures: Contact Solihull Trading Standards on 0121 704 6844

The 39th edition of *Solihull Drinker* will be published on Monday 4th December, 2006. Copy deadline for advertising and contributions will be Sunday 19th November, 2006