



BORO BANTER



The new Lodge

**Yardley Wood Road,
Solihull Lodge.**



Ansell's

**ENJOY TRADITIONAL
BEER AT IT'S BEST.**

**Wide range of Bar Meals
Mon. — Sat. 12.00 — 2.00**



MERRY CHRISTMAS



With this being the season of goodwill, Solihull CAMRA branch would like to thank everyone who has helped us over the past year and wish them a Merry Christmas. This includes all the people who have supported us, particularly at meetings and socials, the readers of this newsletter, the publicans who have let us use their hostilities for meetings (always free of charge) our advertisers in the Banter and its printer PAPER & PRINT OF SHIRLEY. They have always given us exceptional service. We hope all our readers take care when travelling during the festive season and have a safe journey.

A BEER THAT REALLY GOES DOWN WELL

The Travellers Rest in Burslem, Stoke on Trent is the brewery tap of one of the best new small breweries in the midlands, The Titanic Brewery. It was set up late in 1985 by the landlord of the pub, John Pazio in a nearby small industrial unit and all the beers brewed are absolutely delicious! This is largely because John seems to be very enthusiastic, dedicated and conscientious with everything that he does. To me his is just the sort of venture CAMRA should support in every way. If all brewers were the same, there would probably be no need for CAMRA to exist. A wide range of tasty beers at good prices providing welcome relief from the bland, standardised products of the big seven (and some independents) is the order of the day where Titanic are concerned. The curious name comes from the Captain of the titanic who came from Stoke. He was Captain Smith which is the name of the strong 1050 beer. Best Bitter (1036) and Premium (1042) are the other two beers but at Christmas they are joined by a special strong 1080 barley wine. Premium is my favourite, it is a full bodied, well hopped beer, perhaps not to everybody's taste, but that is where Titanic really scores in my opinion, the beers are **DISTINCTIVE** so you can immediately tell them apart from others! All the beers are sold at Bernies Off-Licence occasionally, but the total lack of free houses in our area severely limit its availability. However, many pubs in the Black Country do sell Titanic on a fairly regular basis, it is certainly worth seeking out!

NEW LANDLORD AT THE GOLDEN LION, SOLIHULL



Following the departure of Chris from the Golden Lion the branch welcomes Roger McGloughlan as the new manager. Roger was previously at The Harvester, Hatchford Brook (all keg). From our first meeting with him we can assure Golden Lion fans that real ale will continue there and Roger assures us its quality will improve. The John Smiths Bitter was extremely palatable at the time of our visit.



BERNIES

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ANY QUANTITY FOR ALL
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FUNCTION ROOM ★ TICKETS ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR
CHRISTMAS EVE £2.50 and
NEW YEARS EVE £4.50 inc. Buffet.

HOT FOOD ★ Now available between
7 pm-10 pm daily

★ GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED ★

A FINE OLD SWAN



After months of uncertainty, changing of architect's plans and building, work on the Old Swan in Netherton (Ma Pardoes) has finally been completed. In Association with CAMRA, finance company Mercia Venture brought this famous home-brew pub about two years ago to save it from possible takeover and closure from a larger brewery. The old pub while being a unique and characteristic gem was not quite financially viable so Mercia wanted to enlarge and modify the pub in an effort to bring in a wider variety of customers and also develop the free trade side of the adjacent brewery. CAMRA was keen to see that the essential charm and decor of the old pub was not lost and by and large I don't think it has been. A new lounge has been built next door to the original public bar which seems to have almost doubled the size of the overall pub. It is quite smart in a traditional sort of way with much more emphasis on food than in the old pub.

The original smoke room has been preserved and like the new lounge is pleasant but could be anywhere really. The outstanding individuality of the pub will always be in the old bar which fortunately has been revamped quite tastefully. All the classic features like the etched mirrors in the bar back, the old heating stove in the middle of the floor and the enamelled ceiling depicting "The Old Swan" are still there. One major improvement is the uncovering of the original carved wooden bar front. This was previously hidden by horrible boring sheets of formica, a move that sums up the mentality of "pub improvements" in post-war years. The old rather odd wallpaper has been swapped for some more "rather odd" flowery wallpaper but you can't have everything can you?....

Some of the brewery equipment is also new because of the recent fire and I thought the beer tasted slightly different but this is only to be expected after a long lay-off. The basic taste and light colour is the same as it has always been. Taking everything into account, the new Ma Pardoes is still a great hostelry to be in!!

CASTLETOWN TO CLOSE



It is very rare that a Boro Banter appears without some gloomy news of brewery take-overs or closure and unfortunately this one is no exception. Castletown of The Isle of Man were recently taken over by Heron and Brearley and it will be closed down. Local CAMRA members fought hard to save it but in the end over 90% of Castletown's shareholders sold out! Efforts to get the Government's executive council to hold a public enquiry which would have blocked the merger also failed. Although this closure does not affect our area, it is sad that competition is practically nil on the island. Drinkers will now be able to choose Okell, Okell, or Okell who are already owned by Heron and Brearley.



THE NAVIGATION INN LAPWORTH

Andrew & Gerd Kimber



fine traditional ales.

Selection of light bar snacks available

Attractive Canalside Garden

GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED



There is no need to wait until January 1st for the 1987 GOOD BEER GUIDE as it is in the shops and pubs now! The cover price is £4.95 but CAMRA members can claim their usual discount - £3.50 for them from headquarters in St. Albans including postage and packing. The local branch also have a few on sale at meetings. Britain's best selling pub guide is now in its 14th edition and as usual it is a must for enthusiastic beer drinkers and pub goers in general, especially those who travel around the country. It contains details of over 5000 pubs, including notes on facilities such as rooms for children, accommodation, gardens, food, camping, suitability for the disabled etc. The informative and unique breweries section also lists about 250 real ale breweries. Another CAMRA - LETTS "1987 BEER DRINKERS DIARY" has been published recently too. This costs £2.95 in the shops but again CAMRA members can buy it from H.Q. at £2.70. As





THE WINGED SPUR

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*A Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year
from*

ROGER & JACKIE WEATHERALL




Winter Royal

**Wide range of Bar Meals available.
Mon. — Sat. 12.00 — 2.00 p.m.**

a special offer they can buy the diary and GBG together for £5.95, a saving of nearly £2.00. If anyone is thinking of joining CAMRA (£9.00 per annum) bear in mind these special deals. Together with free admission at beer festivals, often you can get a lot of your initial joining fee back!

A REAL TASTE OF THE BLACK COUNTRY



One of the best "perks" of being a CAMRA member is the easy access to parties on brewery visits! In November, a few Solihull men joined up with Sutton and Tamworth branch to go round Holdens of Dudley. They only own 17 pubs but the brewery was quite large and very interesting to look round. It is a good example of a no-nonsense traditional brewery with a refreshing lack of conical fermenters and push button computerised control rooms etc. Our guide - Cliff Garner was a typical friendly, straight forward Black Country man who had worked there for over 40 years. He was a very informative and entertaining person to be with, both in the brewery and adjacent pub, The Park. Here we sampled Mild, Bitter, Special and a unique winter ale called XL. It is a dark, rich warming ale with an original gravity of 1092!! Special thanks must go to Sutton and Tamworth for inviting us. It was a very enjoyable day out, particularly so because we were also able to visit the nearby Dudley Festival of Winter Ales!

Drawbridge Inn

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ALAN & JANET



A VARIED MENU IS AVAILABLE — MONDAY TO SATURDAY

12.00-2.00 p.m. AND 6.00-8.15 p.m.

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CHEFS SPECIAL AVAILABLE DAILY

Patio overlooking Birmingham - Stratford Canal.

GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED

MONDAY, 22nd DECEMBER -

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL... pub crawl of Solihull town centre. We hope as many people as possible will join our annual stagger around Solihull. If you can't spare the whole evening, why not meet us halfway? George Hotel-Tetley and Burton Ale (7.30), Saddlers Arms - recently refurbished and changed from keg to cask M & B Mild and Brew XI (8.30), Barley Mow, Ansell's Mild & Bitter (9.00), Golden Lion with improved beer and new landlord selling Courage Best, Directors and John Smith's Trad. (10.00) but times are only approximate.

TUESDAY, 13th JANUARY.

Open meeting at The Greswold on the main Warwick Road in Knowle. Now serving Ind Coope Burton Ale in addition to the established Ansell's Bitter.

TUESDAY, 27th JAN. 1987

Social evening at The Coach and Horses, Weatheroak Hill, near Alvechurch. Pleasant country pub with wide range of real ales from Sam Smiths, Everards, Holdens, Banks's, Davenport's, Courage, Ansell's, Hook Norton etc.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Join the Campaign. Take up the fight. Only £9 a year. Send cheque or P.O. to Campaign for Real Ale Limited, 34 Alma Road, St. Albans, AL1 3BW. Marked Membership. Name

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TRAVELLERS REST

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BEST BITTER	OG 1036
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Court House - Tipton *The Wharf - Old Hill*
British Oak - Dudley *The Shovel - Lye*
The Beacon - Sedgeley *& other Midland Towns*



CONTACTS

If you want any information regarding CAMRA nationally or locally contact Steve Dyson at 79 Walsgrave Drive, Damson Wood, Solihull (021 705 1168) or David Queenborough at 11 Upton Close, Shirley, Solihull. (021 744 3113)

The views expressed in the Boro Banter are intended to inform the general public, in and around Solihull of changes, or happenings, with the ever changing Real Ale and pub scene. They may not necessarily reflect the views of CAMRA nationally.

TOM-O-THE-WOOD NEWS



Following a meeting last year with Whitbread reps., the branch was told that all pubs in our area were serving real ale under blanket pressure. However, some branch members were a little dubious as to this being 100% correct. Sad to report that this is the case at The Tom-O-The Wood, Finwood End, Rowington. It is especially sad for CAMRA members to see pressure used so indiscriminately. We do not condone it anywhere but when used occasionally or on low turnover beers or in quiet pubs with poor trade, the arguments for it are stronger. Surely a prestigious pub with a good following like the Tom need not use it all the time....

ENJOY THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE

ORANGE TREE INN

CHADWICK END Lapworth 2458

Your Hosts Bob & Ann Coppack

FULL XMAS MENU

BOOK NOW



MONTHLY GUEST BEERS

GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED

Attractive Garden



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