



Beer Festival comes to Knowle

Solihull is to have it's first beer festival for some 10 years this month. Organised in conjunction with the Vaults in Knowle and the Solihull branch of CAMRA it will take place from Friday 27th. to Sunday 30th. January 1994.

Festival Organiser Steve Dyson said, "this will be the first time in many years that real ale drinkers will be able to sample some 25+ real ales and ciders all under one roof. It will probably be the greatest choice ever made available in the Solihull area". Nick Worrall, manager of the Vaults has been so impressed with the take up of his guest beers at the Vaults that he was keen to see a beer festival at the Bank Hotel in conjunction with CAMRA.

Festival opening times are 12 - 2.30 and 5 - 11 Friday and Saturday and Sunday 12 - 3 (if the beer lasts out). All card carrying CAMRA members will be entitled to a reduced entrance fee, free lunchtime, 50p evenings. As usual there will be a returnable glass hire of £1.50. To supplement the beer, entertainment will be provided by the Artesian Hall Stompers on Friday evening and Full Circle on Saturday night. Hot and cold food will also be available.

The beer range includes some familiar favourites such as Adnams, Hook Norton, Fullers and Bathams as well as some of the more rarer beers like Preston Atlas, Oak and Coach House. With over 25 to choose from there should be something to suit all tastes including milds, bitters, stouts and strong beers.

There will also be a CAMRA stall with local guides, the Good Beer Guide 1994 at a reduced price and CAMRA goods for sale, together with a package deal for new members joining at the festival which includes free beer!



Editors Round

Unless you've skipped the front page you be aware that the branch will be holding it's first beer festival at the end of January. We hope that you will take the opportunity to sample some beers that you have never seen before.

You may recently have seen that some Ansells pubs are running a range of 'guest' beers. Welcome though these are, they are still beers from breweries Carlsberg-Tetley own. The Alloa, ABC, Benskins and Entire are not from some small independent brewery and in the case of ABC and Benskins come from the same brewery as your Ansells mild and bitter.

The beers at our festival do come independent breweries and range from mild's through to strong ales. So don't miss out this chance to try something different. There are only a few pubs in the Solihull area where you can get a true guest beer from one of the independent breweries and you certainly won't find 25 different ones under one roof in Solihull unless you intend to wait for our second festival in January 1995!

I recently received a letter that asked a question that I have often been asked about CAMRA and only too happy to answer.

...so please send my Good Beer Guide to the above address. I understand that CAMRA publish a wide range of books on beer and pubs and so on, will you please enclose a list.....

Apart from publishing around 25 local guides CAMRA can offer over 20 publications. BEST PUBS FOR FAMILIES, with a forward by Nick Ross gives a list of the pubs that apart from serving a decent pint will give families the welcome they deserve. BEER BED & BREAKFAST now in it's fourth edition lets you know where to stay for that weekend or roving holiday. Why stay at a Hotel when there are so many interesting (and cheaper) pubs to stay at. If you really want to know what goes into your beer and it's not always only barley, hops, yeast and water, then the REAL ALE DRINKER'S ALMANAC is for you. I could list them all but space prohibits it. The simplest way to get a list it to drop me a line at 34, Harwood Grove, Shirley, Solihull. B90 4AS and I will send the details to you.

All the best.....

Malcolm Field (secretary).

11 years in the Good Beer Guide

Bermies Off Licence in Cramore Boulevard Shirley, which by the way is run and owned separately from the Harborne and Acocks Green Bermies is now celebrating 11 consecutive years in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide, following the launch of the 1994 edition.

They continue to sell good beers, predominantly from the small independent breweries from around the country. Beers like Black Sheep from Masham, Hadrian and Hambleton from Northern England and Oak Brewery from near Rochdale are among those that have appeared recently. Alongside these are bigger regional's like Adams, Fullers, Greene King, Timothy Taylor, Eldridge Pope, Wadworth and Marston's.

A Galaxy of interesting beers were lined up for the Christmas period. Beers from most of the regional's mentioned above will be joined by some local Breweries like Bathams and Holdens. Powerful winter ales are always popular (you can take them home and not worry about the car!) such as the Smiles Exhibition, Burton Bridge Festival, Old Peculiar and Old Hooky. Draft barley wines are rich and warming, such as Marston's Old Roger and Titanic Wreckage, but these need to be treated with respect.

In recent years stout and porter has made a great comeback but most of the stuff sold around the country is keg and pasteurised. Bermies has bucked this trend by selling many traditional draught stout's which make a great change from the more usual type of ale. This December, stout's from Smiles, Titanic, Burton Bridge, Oak and Archers should be available. They are all wonderfully rich and satisfying beers, ideal for reviving jaded or cold drinkers!

Whatever your tittle, Bermies usually have a wide range of different beers to suit the most educated taste buds. They can supply beer in various quantities. Up to date they have supplied from as little as half a pint to a staggering 1,008 pints on one order.

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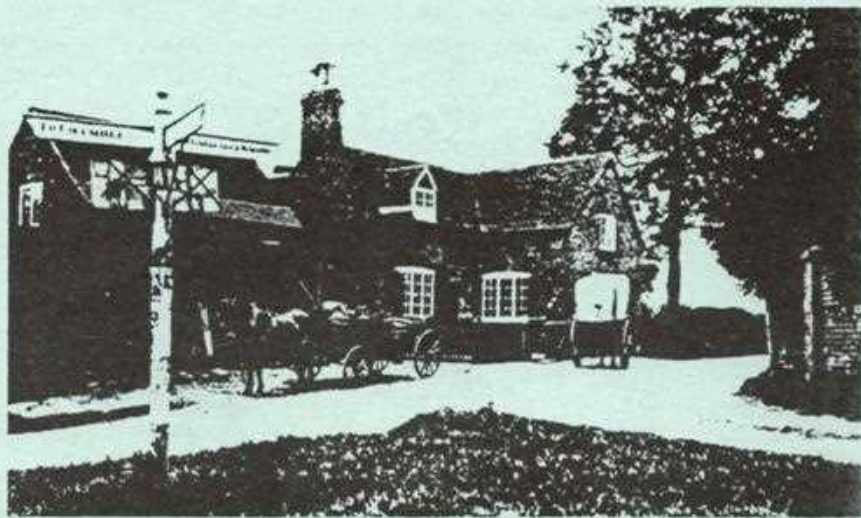
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The Griffin Inn

Shustoke

*A very traditional Inn
serving a wide variety
of well kept ales.*

Excellent homemade food available
12.00 - 2.00 Monday - Saturday



Calling at the Griffin Inn, Shustoke, 1897, when William Ancott, who was the farmer - publican, advertised good trout fishing from a nearby stream.

LAGER DRINKERS PRAISE CAMRA...

The Czech beer newspaper, Pivni Kurýr, has given CAMRA and end of the year award for it's work in safeguarding the beer heritage of the Czech Republic.

In 1990 CAMRA started a campaign aimed in stopping the American brewing giant Anheuser Busch getting their hands on Budweiser Budvar. More recently CAMRA criticised the deal whereby Bass bought into a consortium of three Prague breweries, threatening their independence. Intervention by CAMRA stirred debate within the drinking public and helped strengthen the hands of those Czechs who wanted to defend their brewing traditions.

The Czech Government has now told CAMRA that Budweiser Budvar will not be privatised until the longstanding trademark dispute with Anheuser Busch is resolved.

"We're very grateful for the award and hope that we've helped the Czechs value their brewing tradition. In the long term we hope that the Czech will establish their own independent beer drinkers organisation." commented CAMRA Chief Executive Iain Dobson - a well known lover of Czech beer. "We've always said that it is up to them to make their own decisions about the brewing industry."



The second of this series comes from a little further away than Keven's report on the Griffin at Shustoke. All the way in fact from the U.S. of A.

Out & About



Last Summer I took a fly drive holiday to the east coast of America. Not the place I expected to find any real ale. By good fortune I meet a fellow CAMRA member who gave me a comprehensive list of some 90 brew pubs across America. As luck would have it two of the Cities I planned to visit had brew pubs.

BOSTON

The Commonwealth Brewery in Boston is situated on the outer edges of the City and is surrounded by offices and factories. Inside the decor is pleasing to the eye and the bar laid out in the traditional American style with long expanses of chrome.

Behind the bar stands the giant mash tuns and brewing kettles and in front an impressive array of handpumps, unfortunately all unmarked. The jovial barman provided a list of beers on offer, split into cold and traditional draught beers. The cold draughts included Golden Ale, Blond Ale, Famous Porter and Commonwealth Light. The traditional draughts being Boston Burton Best Bitter, Amber Ale, Classic Stout and Special Old Ale.

I decided to try one from each section and plumped for the Boston Burton Best Bitter described as 'smooth and laced with the fragrance of hops in the manner of a traditional English bitter.' My impressions were on the whole favourable, though not as hoppy as the Ind Coope variety it definitely had the look of a traditional English Ale and appeared in excellent condition.

Whilst my companion enjoyed his first and only pint of cider in America I continued my tasting with a pint of 'Blond Ale' described as 'a medium bodied straw coloured Ale made with a touch of wheat malt and Lister hops to create a smooth aromatic Ale'. I couldn't argue with the description and though not as pleasing to the palate as Burton Bitter it still contained more flavour and life than much else on offer in America.

NEW YORK

The Zip City Brewery Co. (3 West 18th Street) is situated slap bang in the middle of Manhattan just off 5th Avenue. Designed similar to the Boston establishment it appeared to attract the smart and trendy of New York and this was quickly confirmed by the price of the beer. At roughly \$4.00 a pint i was offered a selection on European style Lager beers with names such as Helles Vienna, Marzen Dunkel and Pilsner.

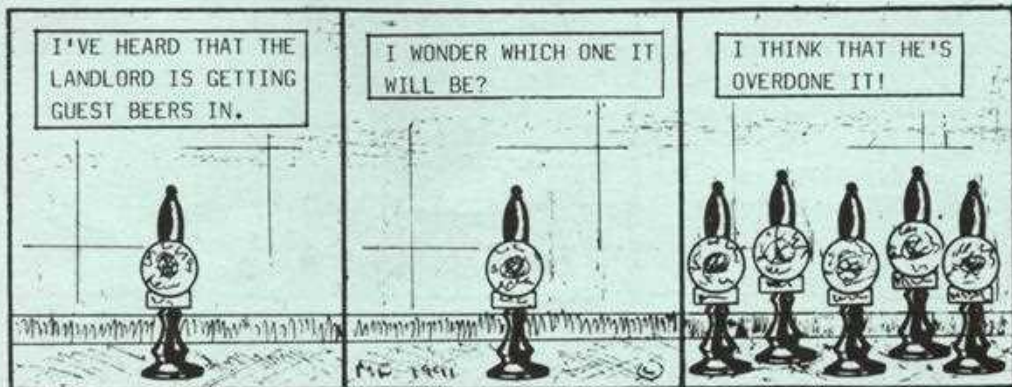
Zip City were keen to emphasise that its beers were unpasturised, unfiltered and naturally carbonated and with the temperature outside around 90°F I did not waste time in sampling them.

The beer named Dunkel was described as a typical Munich style mild beer with a roasted malt charactor and though it certainly was a smoth drink with a pleasant malty aroma I felt that much of the flavour was diminished by serving it at about minus 20°C, too cold even for an oven like New York in August.

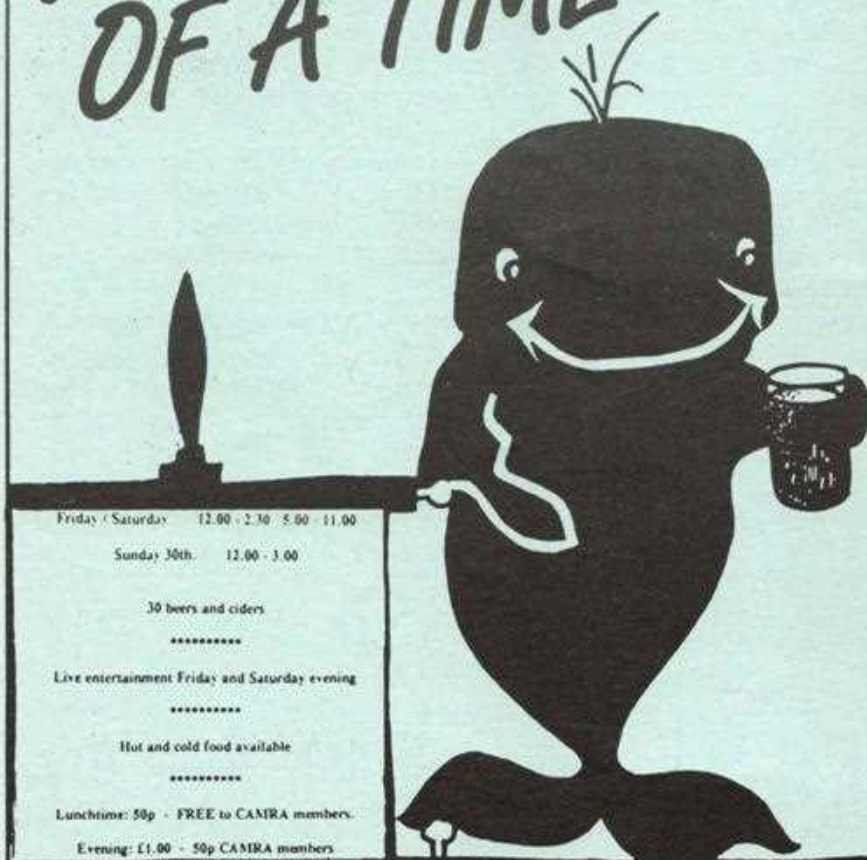
Due to the very tight schedule I was only able to try one more beer and was encouraged by comments from a fellow Brit beside me, plumped for Marzen. This got the thumbs up from me, my taste buds being awakened by a good bitter flavour and also the fact that it appeared to have been served at a much more reasonable temperature.

From there it was back to sightseeing but the two establishments mentioned have given me some hope that more Americans will realise sooner rather than later that there are alternatives to that beer in a red and white can.

Dave Hobbis.



HAVE A REAL whALE OF A TIME



Friday / Saturday 12.00 - 2.30 5.00 - 11.00

Sunday 30th 12.00 - 3.00

30 beers and ciders

Live entertainment Friday and Saturday evening

Hot and cold food available

Lunchtime: 50p - FREE to CAMRA members.

Evening: £1.00 - 50p CAMRA members



1st. Knowle Real Ale Festival,
Bank Hotel, High Street, Knowle
28th. - 30th. January, 1994



BRANCH MEETINGS



FEBRUARY.

14th Monday. Branch meeting at the Lodge, Yardley Wood Road, Solihull Lodge. In the Lounge 8.30pm.

25th Friday. Beer & Balti social. Brewer & Baker, Camp Hill, B'ham then meal

MARCH.

(T.B.C.). Branch meeting at the Case-is-Altered, Five Ways. 8.30pm.

18th Friday. Leamington Spa crawl. Black Horse (7.30)....Newbold Corn Arms in the stables bar (7.45)....Avenue (8.45)....George (9.30).

APRIL.

11th Monday. Branch meeting at the Lyndon, Barn Lane. In front room 8.30pm



MAKE MINE
* *Real* *
MILD



APPLICATION FOR CAMRA MEMBERSHIP

I/We wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale Limited, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign.

NAME(S) DATE

ADDRESS

..... POSTCODE

SIGNATURE TELEPHONE NUMBER(S)

U.K. full membership £12 UK joint membership £14

Overseas full membership £16 Overseas joint membership £18

Concessionary single membership £6 I enclose £

(Students/Retired/Unemployed/Disabled) Please underline which

Please send your remittance (payable to CAMRA Limited) with this application form to:

THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, CAMRA LTD., 34 ALMA ROAD, ST. ALBANS, HERTS. AL1 3BW

BERNIES REAL ALES

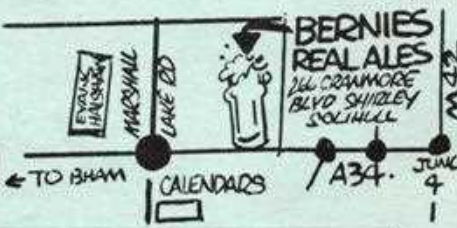
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Ion Priddle. Tel: 0905 774835(h). & 0562 822511(w).

SHAKESPEARE

Vaughan Hully. Tel: 0789 778726(h). & 021 544 5050(w).

SOLIHULL

Malcolm Field. Tel: 021 745 8981(h). & 021 622 2323/3619(w).

TAMWORTH & SUTTON COLDFIELD

Val Ellis. Tel: 021 354 3584(h). & 921 331 5289(w).



The Boro Banter is the newsletter of the Solihull branch of CAMRA. The views expressed in the Banter are those of the individual contributor and are not necessarily the views of either the Solihull branch of CAMRA or the Campaign for Real Ale Limited. Editors: Steve Dyeon & Malcolm Field. Advertising rates are available from Peter Hinks on 021 773 3080.

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