



Solihull drinker

free

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOLIHULL BRANCH OF
CAMRA, THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

Issue No: 17

Summer, 2001

In this issue

- ◆ A pub crawl of classic Peak District pubs
- ◆ Solihull CAMRA celebrates May Mild Month
- ◆ Colebrook and Woodman real ale celebration
- ◆ Spotlight on Bernies Off License
- ◆ A pleasant late Saturday afternoon pub crawl in Warwick

Boat, Catherine De Barnes does it again!!!

Having been voted Most Improved Pub of the Year 2000, the Boat has been voted Pub Of The Year 2001 by Solihull CAMRA.

The Boat part of the Millers Kitchen pub chain stands near the Grand Union Canal in Catherine De Barnes. A large garden makes it popular for families in the summer. Very much a food orientated pub, it serves a surprisingly imaginative range of guest real ales from micro's and regional breweries, sometimes offering five real ales, including two guests. The pub is run by Nigel Cooke and Elaine Rogerson. Dave Hobbs Chairman of Solihull CAMRA said on announcing the award, "It's fantastic

news for the Boat and I'm happy to announce their success. Nigel and Elaine have put a lot of work into the Boat. Awards like ours recognise both their commitment to real ale and how much they have put into the pub". The award will be presented on the Thursday evening the 21st June



Editors round:

Following the Mild article in the last edition of the Drinker I was reminded via an e mail from Phil Wigley that the Case is Altered, Five Ways stocks Brains Mild, served straight from the barrel. Unfortunately the Case, a superb pub is not in the Solihull branch area, but like Phil, I would recommend a visit to anyone... and keeping on the subject of Mild. The branch's recent campaigning social featured elsewhere in this edition of the Drinker proved to be, maybe a little disappointing. Both Ansell's Mild and M&B Mild in their heyday would be difficult to beat, but to be beaten by Greenall's Mild is indeed worrying. I was on that social and well, frankly I voted for Greenall's too, it was the best beer... what a shame.

Moving on next to brewery ownerships. Interbrew has won its High Court appeal and will become owners of Bass's breweries making them one of the largest beer suppliers in the country. Meanwhile we seem to be in the end game over who will own Wolverhampton and Dudley with Pubmaster being the only contender left in the scrum, if they pull it off. But, look at the cost, both Mansfield and Cameron's closing or maybe the Cameron's brewery will be sold to Castle Eden who, in turn will close the historic Castle Eden Brewery, transferring to Cameron's in Hartlepool. And then there's Whitbread Breweries, now owned by investment bankers Morgan Grenfell. According to a report by the BBC News Online's Orla Ryan these investment bank takeovers should be good news for pub customers as only large investment companies have the cash for major refurbishments. The sting in the tail is that the range of drinks available in the pubs will decline as everything will be down to price. Quality beers that cannot compete on price will not find a place on the bar. It's up to us as real ale drinkers to suggest that maybe we don't mind paying for quality.

Sad to reflect the loss of the GBG Forest at Dorridge, where a guest was always on the bar. Also disconcerting is the sale of the Navigation, Lapworth to Nomura. The Forest will probably reopen looking a little like the Malt Shovel at Barston, remember what a super little pub it used to be with its lounge, snug and public bar not to long ago. If real ale is available it will probably be a bland national brand. As for the Navigation, I know no publican as determined to make a success of his business like Andrew Kimber despite overwhelming odds against him. He has always come through before and will need our support as real ale drinkers, so why not pop down there more often and raise your glass to the work Andrew has put into promoting real ale.

The Solihull Drinker is the newsletter of the Solihull & District Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign of Real Ale. The views expressed are those of the individual contributor and are not necessarily the views of the Solihull Branch, or the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd., or at least of the Editor.

All contributions, comments and enquiries should be sent to:

The Editor, Solihull Drinker, c/o 79, Walsgrave Drive, Solihull B92 9PP
or e-mail steve_dy@yahoo.com

For advertising contact Dave Hobbis on 0121 706 0162 who can offer very competitive rates!

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 2001 ©

HAMPTON WINES

42 High Street, Hampton-in-Arden

01675 442305

Come and browse our extensive choice of wines, beers and spirits

Over 200 carefully selected wines and 30 bottled beers
always in stock

Polypins of Church End beers available to order

Glass Hire * Sale or return for parties

Cash discounts * Home delivery * All major cards
accepted



Opening times:

**Mon-Thur 11.30-2.00, 5.00-10.00, Fri/Sat 11.30-10.00,
Sun 10.00-3.00, 7.00-9.30**

LOCAL CAMRA CONTACTS

For information on CAMRA and details of your local branch's events, contact the appropriate person in your area from the following alphabetical list:

Birmingham	Pete Clarkson	0121 420 1901
Burton on Trent	Dick Allen	01332 865790
Coventry	Paul Hamblett	024 7641 7675
Dudley and South Staffs	Steve Amos	01384 252266
Heart of Warwickshire	Dave Rosling	01926 431376
Kidderminster	Gill Waller	01562 824760
Lichfield & Mid Staffs	Ray Jennett	01543 255195
Nuneaton & Bedworth	Les Hall	024 7631 1835
Redditch and Bromsgrove	Stuart Dench	01527 501175
Shakespeare	Vaughan Hully	01789 778726
Solihull & District	Keven Parker	0121 242 5548
Stafford & District	Dave Hill	01785 252546
Stourbridge	Patrick Bird	0121 422 5394
Tamworth & Sutton Coldfield	Andy Cooke	0121 359 1100
Telford & East Shropshire	Peter Arden	01952 244954
Walsall	Rob Bentley	01922 861626
Wolverhampton	Dave Powell	01902 620013
Worcester	Peter Bottomley	01684 573018

If you have any complaints about short measure, contact Solihull Trading Standards on
0121 704 6844.



THE BULLS HEAD

Barston Lane, Barston

TEL: 01675 442830



VISIT OUR 15th CENTURY VILLAGE INN
WITH A SELECTION OF REAL ALES AND
REGULAR GUEST BEERS

Listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2000 and 2001

Solihull CAMRA Pub of the Year 1998 and 2000

HOME COOKED MEALS AVAILABLE
LUNCHTIMES AND EVENINGS
IN THE PLEASANT SURROUNDINGS OF THE PUB,
OR IN OUR SEPARATE RESTAURANT

(No meals Sundays)

TELEPHONE RESERVATIONS WELCOME

SUMMERS DEFINATELEY HERE, RELAX IN OUR GARDEN SOAKING
UP THE SUN AND OUR GOOD BEER!

Spotlight Inn...

BERNIES

Bernies Off Licence on Cranmore Boulevard in Shirley has been in 18 editions of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide.

Off Licence,
Shirley

Brian and Dave Queenborough have been there since 1986. Both founder members of CAMRA Solihull having joined CAMRA in 1979, Brian's career to then was in the engineering industry, whilst Dave worked at a local plant nursery. Their interest in real ale stemmed from walking holidays in England, Wales and Scotland when the opportunity came to sample beers from small local brewers.

When the council put up for sale the row of shops in which Bernies stood, Brian fearing that a new landlord would put up rents organised the other shopkeepers to buy their properties. This was a substantial investment for both Brian and Dave who by this stage in Bernies



Brian and Dave man the pumps in Bernies

development was organising the range of real ales available at the shop.

Bernies is an excellent outlet for small independent breweries to whom both Brian and Dave are firmly committed. Indeed they feel that they are privileged to have one of the best jobs in the country. When new beers arrive on the market Bernies smell them out and get them for their loyal followers as soon as they can. Brian on beer, "The first look, smell, taste and after taste can be absolutely wondrous on occasions. I have a well used saying that there is more to life than white bread, white bread or white bread and it is truly born out with some of the brews we sell such as Osset, Oakham, Rooster, Rat and Ratchet, Church End, Castle Rock, Slaters...the list is endless".

Because of the long hours they work they get to know their customers well, their likes, dislikes and interests, so as Brian said "It provides the biggest point in our social lives". I asked Brian to give me a list of the beers on offer at Bernies during the last few months... what better way to show what Bernies has to offer...

Adnams Best Bitter and Broadside; Archers Best Bitter and Golden; Bathams Bitter; Batemans Hop Bine Bitter; Brakspear Resolution; Cains Black Out Porter; Castle Rock Rolling Rock and Hemlock Church End Anchor Gold, Avon, Cracker Ale, Stocking Filler, Afterale, Vicars Ruin, Thing-ee and What the Fox's Hat; Dent T'Owd Tup; Exmoor Gold; Fullers London Pride and ESB; Hambleton Nightmare and Goldfield; Hampshire Wild Thing; Holdens Bitter, XB, Golden Brew and HSB; Hoskins Toms Gold; Hook Norton Best Bitter, Old Hookey, Double Stout and 12 x Days; Hop Back Summer Lightning; Moorhouses Black Cat Mild and Reindeer; Oak Pale Moonlight, Old Oak and Wobbly Bob, Oakham Black Hole Porter, Harlequin, Bishops Farewell, Toss Pot and JHB; Oakhill Mendip Magic; Ossett Brewers Pride, Pale Gold and Exalcior; Rat and Ratchet Big Nipper; RCH Pitchfork and Old Slug Porter; Roosters 5 Horseshoes, Outlaw, Ringo, Special, Yankee, Drunken Duck and Oyster Stout; Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild; Sharps Cornish Coaster and Special; Slaters Bernies Festival Ale, Original and Shining Knight; Skinners Cornish Knocker, Figgy Brew, Spriggin and Who Put the Lights Out; Timothy Taylor Landlord and Best Bitter; Wadworth 6X; Weatheroak Ale and Toby's Tripple Tipple; Wye Valley Golden Ale; Woodfordes Wherry and Nelson's Revenge; York Yorkshire Terrier, Brideshead, Centurion's Ghost and Stocking Filler; I make that nearly 80 beers. I asked Brian if any of these beers were disappointing, apparently only one was dud!

So, Bernies is not a pub and usually would not appear in this column, but not to tell local drinkers of this gem would be criminal

Steve Dyson

A classic Peak District pub crawl...

Solihull CAMRA recently took the high road to the Peak District for a minibus day trip to the best pubs in the area. Our first stop took us through Ashbourne to the pretty village of Fenny Bentley known for its brook and trout fishing. The Bentley Brook Inn is a large country pub known for its superb views, good food, regular beer festivals and Leatherbitches Brewery beers which are brewed at the rear of the premises. Today we tasted Belter and Bespoke Bitters both very quaffable, even at eleven in the morning. The brewer and owner gave us tall and amusing tales of the brew house and then it was back to Ashbourne and on to Hulland Ward.



Leatherbitches Brewery talk...

Hulland Ward is known for beautiful scenery and quagmires where it is said that sheep and horses have been known to be swallowed up whole over the years. We stopped at The Black Horse Inn for lunch. This is a traditional 300-year-old coaching inn in the Derbyshire Dales close to Carsington Water, noted for its warm atmosphere, good guest beer range and home cooked food.

Now we headed north and through the lanes to Kirk Ireton an olde worlde village overlooking the Ecclesborne Valley. The nearby village of Wirksworth is built with local limestone, yet Kirk Ireton is built of local gritstone marking the geological change within two miles. The Barley Mow, Kirk Ireton sells Hook Norton Best Bitter and Old Hooky straight from the barrel although I opted for Slaters Top Totty which was top notch. The pub is on CAMRA's national inventory of unspoilt pubs and is a tall Jacobean building notable for its twin gabled front and mullioned windows. The intimate interior features three rooms with low-beamed ceilings, slate tables and well-worn woodwork. Not many pubs around like this! Next port of call past was Brassington.

The village is surrounded by rocky outcrops which signify its past as a once thriving centre for the lead mining industry. The Old Gate Inn, sells Marstons Pedigree only but it was in top-notch condition. It is also on CAMRA's national inventory of unspoilt pubs. We only had a quick stop here to take in the impressive range,

A real gem.... The Barley Mow, Kirk Ireton



collection of ornaments and the timeless character of the place. The pub, family run, is reputedly haunted and was built in 1616. It's a shame that the pub is now more of a restaurant with the emphasis on expensive food. We were back on the bus now for a drive north into the hills to Wardlow Mires.

In 1815, for a pair of fancy shoes to give to his sweetheart, Tony Linguard, aged 21, murdered the local toll keeper. He was hung at Derby and his body was taken to Wardlow Mires to be gibbeted. His body was the last to be hung in chains in England by the wayside. The name of Gibbet Field still survives nearby today. The Three

Stags Heads, Wardlow Mires, again on CAMRA's national inventory of unspoilt pubs and is a carefully restored quaint farmhouse pub with two small rooms and a stone flagged floor. There was a good selection of Abbeydale Brewery beers (a micro from Sheffield) the best one being Matins Bitter This pub is rare in that it does not sell draught lager, a sign on the back wall saying, "do not ask for keg lager as a smack in the gob often offends!"

Now we headed south, a quick hop to the next village but one to Monsal Head a village with a pub, a row of cottages and sheep, but that's all. The Monsal Head Hotel sells Whim Hartington Bitter, Timothy Taylors Landlord, Theakstons BB and Old Peculiar, Courage Directors, Marstons Pedigree and guest beers. I found the TT Landlord in particularly good condition. It's a 150-year-old hotel with an elegant lounge exuding genteel charm. The house beer is from the Lloyds Brewery near Swadlincote. We sat in the Stable Bar at the rear, dominated by a large inglenook fire and breweriana bric-a-brac. Apparently trout fishing is available for residents staying at the hotel.

On the bus again and off to Buxton famed for its seven natural springs, which feed the local swimming pool. We decided to avoid the Old Sun Inn, as it only offered local fayre from Banks's and Marstons and headed for the Swan, further up the High Street. Here three themed rooms surround a central bar. On tap was Whim Hartington Bitter in excellent form.

Now it was south to Leek to an unusual venue. The Den Engel, is an authentic Belgian style single room beer café with waiter service and a large range of bottled and draught beers always served in the correct glass. I was in my element here trying all those lovely Belgian brews – just like back in Bruges! Apparently there is a Flemish restaurant upstairs, which sells beer-based specialities, but sadly we did not have time to sample. Whilst in Leek we also popped into the Wilkes Head, which is one of Whim's tied houses. Whim is a small microbrewery brewery in the Derbyshire Dales who own a handful of good basic boozers. We found the full range of Whim, Magic Mushroom Mild, Hartington Bitter, Hartington IPA, plus one or two guests. Roger Dipple, one of our crew, decided to sample the local curry house while we stopped in Leek but the silly bugger left his camera behind. After a quick about turn to retrieve said item headed for home through the town of

Kev making a quick exit from another classic, The Three Stags Heads at Wardlow Mires



Stone in South Staffs having just enough time to make a last call of the day at the Swan, an 18th century canalside warehouse converted into a pub in the mid 19th century. It was restored in 1999 to become a Stones free house and served eight cask ales and two real ciders. I had such a good day that I can't remember what we drank at the Swan, sorry! We were home in time for Match of the Day and planning is in progress for the next trip. Happy drinking. Keven Parker, Social Secretary.

two swift halves...

The Golden Lion, Solihull is soon to close for a couple of months to undergo refurbishment

Some of the pubs in the Solihull area are featured on the website www.midlandspubs.co.uk. If you're on the internet, then check them out, it's a good site

BERNIES



REAL ALES

- AN EVER CHANGING SCENE OF EXCITING DRAUGHT BEERS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR
- CAMRA GOOD BEER GUIDE LISTED CONTINUOUSLY SINCE 1983
- PARTY BEER BARRELS AVAILABLE FOR ANY OCCASION!
- SALE OR RETURN ON SEALED GOODS
- EXCITING RANGE OF BOTTLED BEERS

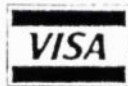
THE OFF LICENCE THAT IS REFRESHINGLY DIFFERENT SERVING HUNDREDS OF DRAUGHT REAL ALES FROM NATIONAL AND MICRO-BREWERIES FROM THROUGHOUT

VISIT OUR WEB SITE:

<http://www.yell.co.uk/sites/real-ale-at-bernies/>

OPENING TIMES	MON 5.30-10.00	TUE-FRI 12.00-2.00 5.30-10.0	SAT 11.00-3.00 5.00-10.00	SUN 12.00-2.00 7.00-9.45
---------------	-------------------	------------------------------------	---------------------------------	--------------------------------

PAY BY
CREDIT



266 CRANMORE BOULEVARD, SHIRLEY, SOLIHULL TEL: 0121 744 2827

A Game of (more than) 2 halves...

A sunny April afternoon next to Warwick Racecourse watching a local football match - Racing Club Warwick v. Solihull Borough, followed by a pub crawl. Well that was the plan anyway, unfortunately the football was defeated by British weather of the soggy underfoot variety - match postponed.

Undeterred by this setback, a small contingent from Solihull braved the elements to at least salvage the pub crawl. We kicked off at the New Bowling Green. An old favourite of the Branch, this is an old-fashioned pub and long may it stay so. On offer Charles Wells Eagle & Charles Wells Bombardier, both in fine form. One-nil. Encouraged by this solid start we pushed forward deep into the opponents half. The Old Fourpenny Shop was next, where we met further support from Solihull plus local CAMRA members from Warwick. Not surprising to find them in here, the 4d Shop is the current Warwickshire Pub of the Year, and an essential stop on all our tours around the town. Frankton Bagby Barnstormer, Ryburn Rydale & RCH Pitchfork certainly got the crowd going, we hoped the half (and pint!) would never end. However end it did, so off to the Globe Hotel for the second half. An unusual pub, and unfamiliar territory for myself. Brakspears Special & Wychwood Dreamcatcher were well received, but the other beer from some obscure Cape Hill Brewery was left on the bench. After a quiet opening, the atmosphere livened up considerably in our next port of call, Lloyds No.1 (a Wetherspoons establishment). Timothy Taylor Landlord and Skinners Betty Stogs proved to be the buys of the season (£1.29 a pint), no wonder the crowd was in good voice at this point. Tiredness was now beginning to show, so we retreated to the relative quiet of the Tilted Wig, where Warwickshire Best Bitter and Adnams Broadside were certainly on the ball. The match had almost finished, but we managed to reach the Punchbowl in injury time. Unusually for the area this is an Oakwell pub, the Barnsley Bitter was accompanied by some complimentary entertainment from the management. We hadn't expected such showboating at this late stage.

The final whistle found us at Warwick railway station. What a result. Join us for the return leg next season. PS Thanks to the Warwick Crew who played a blinder and escorted us around town.

Steve Wood

in brief....

GBBF 2001

Two months to go... from Tue 31st July to Sat 4th August at Olympia, London. The festival to be at! Over 300



beers, seating for 1000+. Family room until 9pm. Live entertainment. Hot and cold food at all sessions and a concession entrance fee for CAMRA members. More details via CAMRA website www.gbbf.org.uk

...and then there's Stoke Beer Festival

Wed 12th to Sat 15 September is the date, venue Staffordshire University, Leek Road, Stoke, only 5 minutes from Stoke station. 170+ cask ales, 30 ciders and perries. British and foreign bottle-conditioned beers available. Hot and cold food at all sessions. CAMRA members free admission. Free admission to non members at lunchtime. More details? Contact Ken Lee on 01782 783713, e-mail: treasurer@camrapotteries.co.uk

Forest, Dorridge

In the GBG for many years, the Forest, Dorridge is now closed and undergoing extensive building work to reopen as an upmarket restaurant. No doubts the bar will be lost and the availability of a guest beer or any real ale is open to question. Let's hope your scribe is proved wrong

in brief....

Vaults, Knowle

The Vaults in Knowle, a consistent GBG entry has added an extra handpump to the bar. The new beer to be added to the range may be Ansells Bitter, an unusual choice, as normally this beer is disappearing from the bars of Solihull and Birmingham

Navigation, Lapworth

When Bass sold its pubs to Punch Taverns it retained a few including the Navigation. Andrew tells us that the pub has now been sold to investment bankers Nomura. At the moment he has no idea how that will affect him. Let us hope they give Andrew the opportunity to develop the Navigation in his own style without too much interference

Falon and Firkin, Knowle

Presently closed. When it reopens in June it will be renamed... The Red Lion. Strange, wasn't that its original name

Red House, Solihull

This Thwaites pub close to Solihull town centre has applied to extend the pub both at the front and side. Sounds like a big building job is on hand. Watch this space for developments

Extended opening hours legislation

It seems more than likely that within the next two years opening hours will be relaxed in Britain's pubs. CAMRA has been fighting for this for many years. Pubs will be able to apply for opening hour extensions including round-the-clock opening. This will be administered by local councils rather than the Licensing Justices. A recent poll amongst licensees showed that about 45% were keen to open up until 12 or 1am, but only a tiny percentage were keen to open later than this

Born to be Mild

In a determined effort to participate in this years national CAMRA mild campaigning month, the branch took the bold step of hiring a minibus for the occasion. Suitably equipped, we set ourselves the goal of trying all the milds available in our area - in a SINGLE evening. Actually it wasn't that daunting, there are only 6 regularly available in the area we cover. First stop the Sharmans Cross for some M&B Mild. In good condition, pleasant taste, though not the full flavour I seem to remember it having a few years ago. Next to the Red House for Thwaites Mild Unusual to find a Lancashire mild around here. Rather thin and undemanding, but quaffable nonetheless. Third stop was the Saxon in Cheswick Green for Greenalls Mild. More of a traditional dark caramel flavoured mild, this went down very well. Sunset found us at the Punchbowl, Lapworth - Banks's Original, considered by some not to be a mild at all, but its popularity is probably due to it being a stepping stone from bitter beers to the hop-less milds & stouts - a missing link if you will. The Durham Ox at Shrewley offers Greene King XX Dark mild, normally very sweet as milds go, but on this occasion was fairly bland - maybe the taste buds were starting to wilt by this time. We finished at the Bluebell, Henley for Ansells mild, which is the most freely available in our area (10 outlets at the last count), so was rather overshadowed by the Church End Gravediggers Mild which was put on as a guest by the landlord to help promote CAMRA's mild month. This is the strongest of the milds we tried, with a full flavour reminiscent of a porter or even a stout. At the end we voted on the best mild we had encountered. As expected, the guest mild (Gravediggers) was favourite, so we had a second vote to see which of the permanently available milds was preferred. The winner was the Greenalls Mild, which was surprising given that the beer has been shunted from brewery to brewery, and appears not to be in the long-term plans of its current owners. So, a successful night, thanks to everyone involved for their exemplary timekeeping (it was a pretty tight schedule as you can imagine.) PS Don't forget that another mild, Brains Mild is also available close to our area at the Case Is Altered. Maybe next year..

Steve Wood

Beers seen around here...

Callow End at Blue Bell, Warings Green; Cottage Golden Arrow and Warwickshire Kings Champion at Blue Bell, Henley; Winged Spur, Ullenhall, Cottage Broadgauge; Punchbowl, Lapworth, Marstons Double Drop, Banks's Golden Gong; Vaults, Knowle, Ringwood Fortyniner, Adnams Regatta, Cottage Wessex Spring Ale; Railway, Dorridge, Buchanans Original; Navigation, Lapworth, Shepherd Neame Early Bird; Boat Catherine De Barnes, Orkney Red McGregor, Mauldons Suffolk Pride; Hogs Head, Solihull, Smiles Original, Riddleys Essex; Red Lion, Shirley, Oakhill XXX; Harvester, Olton, Hampshire Pride of Romsey; Golden Lion, Solihull, Theakstons Old Peculier, Red Lion, Claverdon, Batemans XXXB; Three Tuns, Henley, Greene King Abbot; Drum and Monkey, Bentley Heath, Brakspear Special... plus many more, but no more space left!

JOIN CAMRA NOW

Just fill in this form and send with a cheque
[payable to CAMRA Ltd.] to:

The Membership Secretary, CAMRA,
230 Hatfield Road,
St. Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 4LW

Current rates are: Single £14, Joint £17, Under 26
£8

Name [s]:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

.....

I/We wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and
agree to abide by the Memorandum
And articles of Association

I enclose a cheque for £.....

Signature [s]:.....

Date:.....

solihull
drinker

The Anchor Inn

308 Bradford Street, Digbeth

Tel: 622 4516

Come and visit this classic Edwardian pub
with its extensive range of real ales
and bottled beers from around the world

Organic Beer Festival

27th June to 1st July.

15 beers including

Marble, St. Peters and

many more



**Full range of hot meals and bar
snacks available. Frequent beer
festivals**

**BIRMINGHAM CAMRA
PUB OF THE YEAR 1998/9**

Bass's Ember Inns celebration of cask ales...

Ember Inns are a pub group with outlets across the country but there are two in Solihull CAMRA's area and a few more just over the boundary in Birmingham. Normally the cask ales are relatively uninspiring like Bass or M&B, but during April and May they featured over thirty guest beers in an ever changing promotion. Our two pubs are the Woodman in Union Road, Shirley and the Colebrook on Haslucks Green Road, again in Shirley. The Woodman normally only sells Draught Bass [at £2.10 per pint!], so to see these new beers [at £1.80 - £1.90 per pint] was a revelation!

Most were from regional breweries like Adnams, Fullers, Shepherd Neame, Brakspear and Timothy Taylor. Even more welcome were offerings from small independent breweries like Black Sheep, Smiles, Hogs Back and Hop Back. With May being "CAMRA Mild Month" it was also good to see Elgoods Black Dog Mild and Moorhouses Black Cat Mild, the current CAMRA Champion Beer of all Britain!

The beers were usually in good condition and seemed to turn over with great regularity. I hope the promotion proved successful so future cask ale promotions or guest ales will come again

Dave Queenborough

▲ Bass



Solihull times

Non-members and guests are welcome to attend our branch meetings and social events. Branch members are welcome to attend Committee meetings but will be unable to participate unless invited to do so.

Branch meetings are held on the first Monday of each month and commence at 8.30pm.

Beer and Balti nights are generally held on the last Friday of each month [Balti not compulsory!]

Socials

The big one is our annual weekend away, now three days away. Dates are Fri 5/10-Sun 7/10. Staying in Rochdale, plans include visits to Saddleworth Brewery for early arrivers on Thursday evening [an extra nights B&B required]. Friday is a train journey from Rochdale to Leeds and back taking in some superb pubs at Hebden Bridge, Todmorden, Halifax, Dewsbury, Huddersfield and the famed Stalybridge station bar. Breweries include Ryburn Brewery and at Marsden the Riverhead Brewery. Saturday will be a brewery tour of Holts in Manchester. The afternoon and evening is free time to visit pubs in north Manchester or head on back to Rochdale. This is guaranteed to be a world beater weekend. Places are limited so if you are a CAMRA member get in quick! Phone Keven...now!!!

Thursday 21st June

CAMRA Solihull Pub of the Year presentation to the Boat Catherine De Barnes, 8.30-9

Saturday 23rd June.

A pub crawl of Spon End in Coventry. Visit some superb pubs; Chestnut Tree, Craven

Arms, Malt Shovel, Nursery Tavern. Meet at the Old Windmill, Spon Street at 7-7.30

Friday 13th July

CAMRA Solihull celebrates Independents Day with a visit to the Boat, Catherine De Barnes where it is hoped that six beers from independent breweries will be available

Saturday 18th August

A visit to CAMRA's Club of the Year, Somers Club, Halesowen where the bank of handpumps will make your eyes pop out!

Saturday 8th September

A social/pub survey crawl...phone Kev for details

Beer & Baltis

Friday 29th June

Lamp Tavern, Barford Street, Digbeth, Birmingham

Friday 27th July

Old Joint Stock, Temple Row, Birmingham

Friday 31st August

Tipsy Gent, Bordesley Green, Birmingham

Friday 28th September

Anchor, Digbeth, Birmingham

Branch Meetings

Monday 2nd July

Fleur De Lys, Lowsonford

Monday 6th August

Knowle and Dorridge Cricket Club. Junction of Grove Road and Station Road, Dorridge

Monday 3rd September

Reservoir, Earlswood

Keven Parker is the Branch Social Secretary and you can contact him for information about events during the evenings on 0121 242 5548

Brenda Duffy is the Branch Secretary on 01564 200 431

The 18th edition of *Solihull Drinker* will be published on 3rd September, 2001

The deadline for advertising or contributions will therefore be

Saturday 25th August 2001