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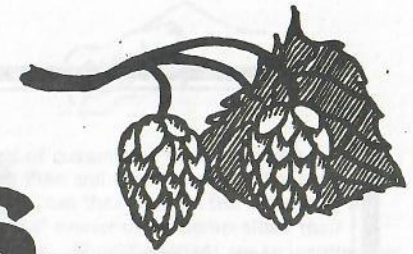
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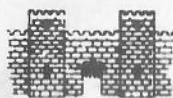
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# EDITORIAL



Going out for a jar is an expensive pleasure today; everything from the price of a pint to the price of a packet of peanuts is rising fast. Even a game of pool or bar billiards has become expensive. What marks beer out, in particular, from other leisure products is that prices at the bar have consistently risen faster than prices in general, for at least the last five or six years. Too many people are out to profit from one product; and the government also takes its (large) share.

This phenomenon is not simply due to the combination of wholesale beer price rises, tenants' large rent increases and penal taxation, as is usually implied by spokesmen of the licensed trade. It is due mainly to the brewers' ability to pass on all increases in costs to the long suffering customer, because of their market power. (They do not however pass on any savings made where costs are reduced, for example through improvements in manufacturing processes)

A very major factor in keeping prices artificially high is the tied house system, which forces landlords to buy wines, spirits and mixers at the brewers' wholesale prices, frequently higher than those found in the supermarket. For beer these are often three, four or more different prices, for different

types of customer — the publican paying more than clubs, off license and supermarkets. Apart from the effect on the customer, the brewers' avarice often demoralises their licensees. Should a tenant try to improve his premises, or achieve a substantial increase in trade, the brewers' response is often to charge him substantially more rent.

Things could change. Brewers must accept that business is finite and prices must eventually find a level at which to raise them further would cause such a big drop in sales that it would not raise revenue. In times of recession, such as now, this point might not be far away — beer sales fell considerably between 1979 and 1984

One answer to the problem of increasingly empty pubs, which some brewers seem to favour, is to sell off the least profitable ones. Another answer (which CAMRA favours) is for brewers to encourage more people to visit their local and not to try to maintain their profits by soaking the remaining customers of a few more pence.

One Hop Press correspondent discovered a pub in Manchester (in 1985) newly decorated to a very acceptable standard, selling a pint of mild and a pint of bitter for £1.07 in total. If Holts can do it, why can't the others?

## GLEANINGS

by Ken Hill

It's not often I get lucky at bargain hunting. More often than not I end up getting a tatty bargain at an inflated price. But just before Christmas I did pick up a bargain — a book bargain called "Ale and Hearty" by a delightful gentleman called Alan Wykes.

For less than a couple of quid (or two drinks at some pubs I know! But I'll leave the litigation to 'Aged Swill') I got 140 pages of fascinating facts, witty writing, and charming line drawings (over 50 of them). It's a kind of wisdom for beer-lovers: you can dip into it at any time and come up with a snippet to set you musing.

Working arse about face, to use a charming 'Ampshire Agericultural term, for instance the Appendix lists the names of vessels used for holding ale and beer. Aha, yes, you may know what Kilderkins (18 gallons) Firkins (9 gallon — hence 9 firkin gallons?) and Pins (4½ gallons) are. But wot abaht the Fuder? That's 824.42 litres in Prussia 1763.57 in Wurttemberg, and 1810.85 litres in Austria! Guess where most Germans buy their Fuders? Mind you, if you get Stuck in the Rhineland, that's 1200 litres. (What the bloody hell is a "litre"?)

Mr. Wykes gives some fascinating definitions too. "Wassail", for instance, which was on my mind at Christmas (well, it's yet another excuse for a beer) comes from the Saxon "woes hoeil" or "your health".

"Scot free" from the Middle Ages when "scot ales" were held in the forests (which were not subject to Common Law — the things drinkers will do to get a drink out of hours) and this gave rise to "scot free" when the chosen few were allowed to drink without paying ("scootan" is Old English meaning "to pay or contribute"). Then there's "taking him down a peg or two" — this derives from a law passed by King Edgar that had pegs inserted into drinking horns and anyone drinking past a peg in one draught was punished.

Good, ennit?

Landlords and landladies are well covered too in the book. Some are praised, some are pilloried (like an invention of Mr. Wykes called "the Major" who runs: "A hostelry . . . which lies in the stockbroker belt and caters for the Jaguar trade . . ." Really wicked observation, this one) and some are written about in a way that would delight Aged Swill. For example, the Poet Laureate of Henry VII, John Skelton, wrote thus about 'Elynoure Rummyng of Leatherhead' —

"Face all bowsy,  
Comely crinkled,  
Wondrously wrinkled,  
Like a rost pigges eare,  
Brystled with heare,  
Her nose somdele croked,  
And camously hoked,  
Her skin lose and slacke,  
Grained like a sacke;  
With a croked backe . . ." and so on

But her beer was good, apparently. Perhaps after four or five, she didn't look too bad . . .

Also featured is a short section on the root words of ale and beer (never the twain should be confused, the author states) ranging from Gallic "cervisia" through Hebrew "bar" (corn), Saxon "beor" (barley) to good old Gaelic "beere-lec" (beer plant) which became "barley". He goes on to list all the potables that are lumped together under the title "beer" and ends with 'export' beer. This, he reckons, is an adjectivally elevated beer prepared specially to impress foreigners!

He also covers the brewing process — but we all know about that, don't we (cries of "yawn, yawn", "boring, Hill" etc.). But he does mention the Beloved Boston that fabled Richard of that ilk, who "leads the Campaign for Real Ale" (cries of "cheers", "get 'em in" and "namedropped").

Pub signs get good coverage, and a full page

print on p.89 features — yes, "The Hampshire Hog" sitting on a barrel (or is it a Firkin?) of "KKKK" stands for "Kor, Kills Kwik, Kokker"! Oh, you figure it out.

Anyway, recommended reading for all you real ale buffs or plain ordinary boozers. Mind you, be warned, Alan Wykes is a catholic author: he's written books on many subjects: he's not just a real ale man: his humour can be sardonic: he does begin with the immortal phrase "I don't drink beer"! You'll have to read on to find out how he gets away with it!



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# Pubs In The Island Ports

by Brian Jacobs

This is the second in a series of three articles about drinking in the Island ports — those pubs you can get to conveniently from the Ferry for a lunchtime or evening session and still get home the same day. Whether or not you are capable of finding the Ferry after such a session is your problem, not mine.

Ryde is probably the easiest of all the crossings to the Island (though hardly the most picturesque); the present boats are quite frequent and take around 25 minutes to cross from Portsmouth. Those whose intentions either are, or have been, bibulous, are strongly advised to undertake the journey above deck and so avoid the stomach-turning diesel fumes which permeate the boats' nether regions. The time and comfort of the journey should be improved by the new craft which should soon be in operation.

In the meantime, you could take the hovercraft, though you will find that the cost of so doing will make deeper inroads into your beer money.

Ryde is, and almost certainly always has been, the best town in which to drink on the Island. For numbers of pubs and variety of ales it is unsurpassed by any island town, a legacy from earlier days when up to 11 breweries were listed in the area. These are, alas, no more, but Ryde still offers a greater availability of beer from the Island's only remaining brewery, Burts, than in Ventnor where Burts is situated!

If your intention is to take in all the pubs within walking distance of the Ferry, then make an early start — there are 13 described in this article and another 3 besides. Start your tour by turning left from the pier — a wise move as this avoids negotiating the dreaded railings which stretch along a good part of Ryde Esplanade, separating one traffic lane from the other. These were installed, presumably in the misguided belief that they perform an aesthetic contribution towards local road safety. In fact, they give the Esplanade the appearance of a cattlepen, besides which traffic along the Esplanade is so light that pedestrians are in more danger of receiving a hernia from vaulting the railings (finding the one gap is rather time-consuming).

A brisk walk to the Canoe Lake brings you to the Appley Bars, a comfortable watering hole in a Victorian Hotel which still retains much of its original character. An open fire welcomes you in winter, and landlord Roy Ball, who bears a passing resemblance to colonel Gadaffi (although we understand he has never been known to take hostages), welcomes you at any time. Flowers Original and BurtsVPA are dispensed from two very elegant wooden-handled pumps, although the Flowers pump produced only water when we were there, much to the barmaid's surprise. I hesitate to say that this confirms the view recently expressed in these pages that Flowers is a bland beer (I can guess who said that, Mr. Wallis), as, apart from this occasion (when at least we were dispensed with real water), I think Flowers is an excellent and tasty beer, and one which has converted at least five of my keg-drinking friends to real ale. Which is more than can be said of the ubiquitous Strong Country Bitter, which I find is about as exciting as watching paint dry.

I digress. The Appley Bars also provide live music, a restaurant and a loquacious minah bird which has done well to survive intact. Leaving the pub, walk along in the direction of the Ferry until you find a little public garden which gives you pedestrian access to Monkton Street. A short walk up this street will bring you to the Solent, a rare 2-bar town pub offering hand-pumped Pompey Royal and Strongs, and regular live music. Time presses, so leave this excellent establishment and retrace your steps, turning left into Simeon Street to find the Simeon Arms. This ex-Gales pub is now a Free house, and providing as good a drop of Burts VPA as you'll get anywhere. Ignore their van outside which pronounces the place to be the "trendiest, friendliest pub on the Island"; landlord Dave Chapman keeps a very pleasant, friendly locals pub where you can play crib or darts (not both at once as it ruins the cards) while admiring the barmaid.

Back to the Esplanade, still heading Ferrywards, and the next port of call is the Hotel Ryde Castle, a battlemented Victorian edifice housing a complex of restaurants, bars and a dance floor. A drop of Pompey Royal in the comfortable front bar will keep you

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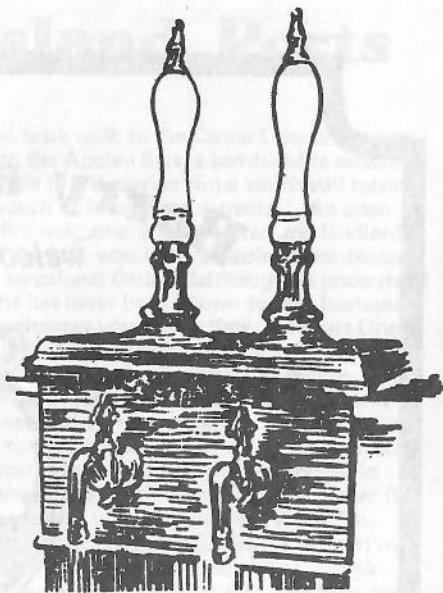
going until you cross to the opposite corner to have a pint of Hancocks Bitter at the Solent Court. This establishment caters mainly for private parties, but is often open to the public in summer.

There's still a lot of drinking to be done, so proceed from here to my favourite Esplanade pub, the Esplanade Bars. This delightful hotel bar, with its panelled walls and flagstone floor, only opens during the summer. Lean on the bar and contemplate the enormous murals of old Island maps, whose cartographers, judging by their curious concept of the Island's shape, had clearly sampled more of the establishment's handpumped Burts and Courage Directors than was good for them. This is also a good family pub, as they have a children's room opposite the bar, and snacks and meals are available at all times (except winter, of course).

It is but a short walk, or a protracted stagger, to the Marine Hotel, whose impressive, regency exterior belies an interior which is rather less than elegant. On our last visit, it was full of fruit machines, space invaders and young gentlemen of a fairly basic social standing, for which the indifferent Strong Country Bitter offered less than adequate compensation. But chacun a son gout, as some philosophical drinkers might say as they wend their way to the King Lud, directly opposite the Pier. Landlord Bob Jones bestows a friendly ambience upon this comfortable town pub where the town planners' predilection for iron railings is reflected in the extensive use of decorative wrought iron. Sensitive souls might find the loud juke box, space invaders and fruit machines rather less to their taste than the hand-pumped Strong Country and Pompey Royal, though there are some very interesting photographs of old Ryde around the walls. This pub, with its mock-Tudor facade, is the nearest to the Pier, and is handy place to enjoy a snack and a pint while you're waiting for the Ferry.

A short stroll around the corner into Union Street brings you to the Redan, a very elegant town pub serving Strong Country and Pompey Royal on hand-pump. The comfortable interior has a distinctly Edwardian flavour and provides a calm oasis in the middle of Ryde's bustling summer activity.

Just up from the Redan is the Royal Squadron, a former hotel, now just a large, very comfortable bar decorated with Tudoriana (is there such a word? — Ed.). It serves



Burt VPA to a clientele among whom we fogies from CAMRA felt decidedly geriatric. Certainly a pub for the younger set (the canned music was also quite loud), but one which, I understand, provides good food.

A hundred yards up the hill are two adjacent drinking establishments, one named Yelf's Hotel and the other confusingly called Yelf's Cellar and Tap. Despite this and the fact they both serve Bass and Burt VPA on handpump, they are quite separate concerns both in terms of ownership and character. The Hotel is a plush Trust House with a large, brightly lit bar and adjacent restaurant. The beer, having gone through an indifferent spell, is now back to its former high quality — the Bass is normally excellent. Opposite, the Cellar and Tap make up in character what they lose to the Hotel in sumptuousness. Originally the taproom of Yelf's Hotel, the pub now consists of two excellent bars. The cellar has a splendid atmosphere and offers a most enterprising menu at the food bar. It tends to be inhabited by a lot of younger drinkers (not quite so young as those in the Mary Rose Bar on our visit), whereas the upper bar, the Tap, caters for the more sedate imbibers who prefer to remain above ground for as long as possible. Both bars are very tastefully decorated, and the quieter de-

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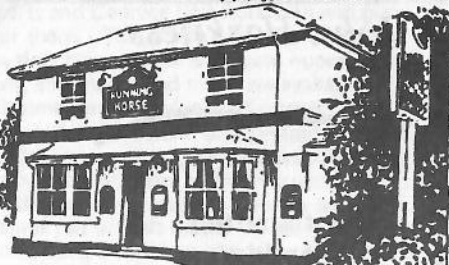
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meanour of the Tap is underlined by a framed quotation which exhorts the reader to "Do all things without murmurings and disputings", obviously coined in the days before trade union demarcation disputes. Fortunately, the Bass and Burts on offer do not tempt you to contravene this advice.

The serious drinker, if he is still erect at this point (as well as being on his feet) will surely want to visit one last pub. The Castle is about five minutes walk up the hill (although the distance increases in direct proportion to the number of pubs visited) and is one of the two remaining Gales houses on the Island. It is all you would expect a basic town local to be, with the added bonus of some splendid etched windows. The noisy, single bar dispenses the entire range of Gales brought beers (with the sad exception of cask dark mild), including the splendid winter ale in season. Those tottering on the edge of temporary oblivion can complete the job with a pint of GBH, happy in the knowledge that it is possible to actually roll down the hill from here to the Pier. This is not a practice I recommend, however, as it has been demonstrated under laboratory conditions that collision with non-stationary motor vehicles can damage your health. Not that this will worry the committed real ale drinker, as he will already have developed a terminal liver complaint.

Those familiar with Ryde pubs will have noticed a significant omission. The Prince of Wales on the High Street sadly closed its doors last year on a remarkable piece of Ryde history. Probably the scruffiest, untidiest and least economic pub on the Island, a drink in the Prince of Wales was like a trip in a time machine — I can honestly say that we will never see its like again. But major brewers are not in the business of maintaining museum pieces, and its closure was inevitable following the retirement of its delightfully truculent landlord, Bill Pine.

There is no doubt that Ryde has much to offer the real ale drinker, as he will discover the following morning. Once again, I strongly advise against undertaking the return ferry trip below deck — the diesel fumes seem so much more pervasive after a drinking session, besides which you will undoubtedly wish to remain within hearing distance of the handrail. One further piece of advice — Burts' reputation as an effective laxative is not misplaced . . . .

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# KEG BUSTER

BY BILL TIDY



KEG BUSTER appears every month in "What's Brewing" the monthly magazine for CAMRA members

# Pub News

By Aged Swill

From a distant corner of our empire, far away Locks Heath, comes news that work has started on building a pub in the new shopping centre. Not for lucky Locks Heath a Courage, Whitbread or Host Joke pub, but one from Hall and Woodhouse. They plan it to be a traditional pub — we hope it will also sell their excellent traditional beers. Down the river to Hamble where we bid farewell to Stanley and Vi Burton who have retired after pulling pints in the King and Queen for 31 years. We wish them a happy retirement.

Southampton has seen a number of developments. Several pubs were refused licence renewals at the recent brewster sessions, but all but two have now been granted. The Red Lion, Below Bar, it seems, requires some repairs to be made before regaining its licence, but the Painted Wagon has been closed with its future uncertain.

The Marsh, by the old docks, (which used to be a lighthouse) no longer serves pedigree. At the Richmond in Portwood, however, they've put Merrie Monk on trial — it's going well by all accounts. Another Real Ale gain — the Southerner in the High Street, previously an all Keg pub, now serves Hall and Woodhouse Real Ales. And it's happy evening on Wednesdays at the Bay Tree, where BBB sells for 60p and HSB for 70p.

More on the Pompey Royal saga. Until recently the only pub that was known to sell it was the Ship in Millbrook; however, it's now reappeared at the Crown and Sceptre in Bassett. The Old Farmhouse ordered Pompey but was told that it was unavailable and received Flowers Original instead, so did the Key and Anchor at Millbrook; meanwhile the Running Horse was told that it was not available because of an industrial dispute. We wonder whether the union are aware of this? It's now back on at the Running Horse but for how long no-one seems to know. The odd thing is that some Whitbread local area managers insist that it's being discontinued, whilst it's being advertised nationally as one of their prime beers (pointing out that it used to be Brickwoods best). Can this company really be the shambles it appears to be?

Some news of alterations. Gattis has closed for refurbishment and is expected to open

under new management as a (smaller) food pub. The Winston, in Archers Road has reopened after its revamp. Its three bars have been turned into one and customers can now sup Websters and HSB whilst admiring the battleship grey walls and red woodwork! In contrast to the general trend, the Ice House in Shirley Warren has extended its public bar. The White Swan in Mansbridge is closed for 8 weeks — it's going to be a Watney 'Host' pub — theme yet unknown. The Gate Inn, Swaythling's Whitbread home brew pub, is now not, it seems. The brewing equipment is being dismantled after only a couple of years and it's rumoured that it will be installed in a pub in or near Winchester (Dolphin at Hursley; Royal Oak?).

The on-off saga of St. Agnes House 'superpub' in Bishopstoke drags into its next phase. After damage by fire, flood, earthquake and nuclear holocaust and after seventy seven revised sets of plans, it now appears that the Council have given it the go-ahead again.

In jolly old Chandlers End, concern has been voiced in some circles, since the Tabby Cat wonderpub has started 'vetting' its customers at the door. What's in a name?

Striking Northwards to Winchester, where the St. James Tavern has reintroduced Farmers Glory after a 20,000 strong protest march caused questions to be asked in the House. And it's smacked wrist time, since this column forgot to mention that the Green Man now serves Merrie Monk.

The Rising Sun, Bridge Street, has almost completed its revamp and, as expected, now sells hand-pumped Best Bitter in addition to the excellent Directors. A darts marathon will be held there from 8 pm on the 30th of March until the 1st April. Entertainment on the Monday will be provided by TV famed 'Oddballs'; all proceeds go to charity.

Some landlord changes in Winchester. Sadly we say farewell to Nicci and Craig of the Ship who are returning to Australia, and also to Jeff and Laura of the Wheatshaf. Both are leaving Eldridge Pope pubs after a rumoured massive 50% hike in their rents. At the same time we welcome new hosts Jack and Chris Hinde to the First in Last Out in Wales Street. This is the first change for many years — perhaps its days as one of Winchester's last Keg only pubs are numbered?

In the New Forest area we welcome another new landlord, Nick Embley, to the New Forest Inn at Emery Down. Our best wishes go

also to Bill and Vi Hibberd who have retired from the Compass Inn after 20 years. This also ends a 67 year family association with the pub, Bill's parents were the previous tenants and he was born there.

Totton's Old Farmhouse has had the inevitable Whitbread facelift; the theme is, guess what? Farmhouse!

Two items of news from Lymington. We welcome, firstly, new tenants Jim and Alison to the Angel. The not so good news is that the fate of the excellent Londesborough Hotel has finally been sealed. It's to be closed in September and sold off by Hall and Woodhouse to become shops and offices — a sad day for Lymington. Pity they didn't let the landlord know.

And finally Ringwood. After a long campaign the Town is to get its first Free House. The property is a 17th Century listed building, with, we understand, a magnificent period interior. It is being converted! to a pub by new owners Ringwood Brewery and is expected to open at Easter as either the 'Englishman's Castle' or the 'Inn on the Furlong'. See you there!

## HILTONBURY FARMHOUSE

Chandlers Ford will soon have another pub — a welcome addition in an area starved of such institutions. The Hiltonbury Farmhouse is a magnificent example of a 400 year old farm, and although it has been allowed to fall into a sad state of repair, it is a listed building. Until it was left empty a few years ago, it had been in the hands of the Vining family since 1890.

The buildings are to be restored and the farmhouse will open as a pub this November. All renovation work will be carried out with great care in maintaining its existing style. An extension will be added but this will be designed to match the original building.

The new landlord will be Mike Sinker who runs the Bridge at Shawford and who also is tenant of the Bakers in Winchester and the Chestnut Horse at Easton. He plans to run it as a traditional pub with traditional beers.

There's hope for merry Chandlers End yet!

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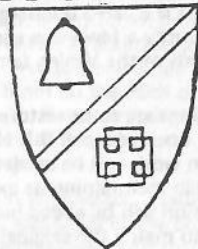


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## DRINK DRINK DRINK!

There have been many newsworthy happenings in the numerous White Horse pubs in our area over the last year. The White Horse Inn at Milford-on-Sea was refurbished and had a visit from the Whitbread shire horses in April.

In July we heard that the well known White Horse at Droxford, where Prince Andrew and Winston Churchill have been amongst the patrons, was up for sale.

October brought the news that the tenant of the White Horse at Otterbourne had been given notice by Whitbread who wanted to turn it into a managed house.

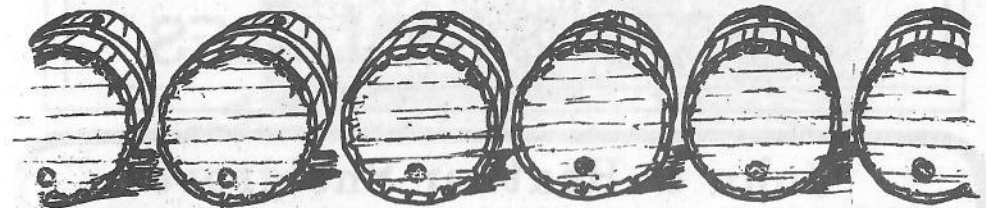
In the same month a Romsey youth was convicted of causing actual bodily harm to the licensee of the White Horse at Amp-

field, following an incident at the pub.

Nearby in Romsey, October 1984 saw the 50th anniversary of the Romsey Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society which was formed in 1934 at a meeting in the town's White Horse Hotel.

As the name of the White Horse has appeared so often in the local press during the previous twelve months, perhaps it's not surprising that Southern Theatre Productions decided to put on the musical "White Horse Inn" at the Gaumont from 19th - 23rd February.

With all the incidents mentioned above there seems to be sufficient material for a new version based on the pubs of Southern Hampshire!



## Branch Activities

Tuesday 12th March  
Saturday 16th March  
Tuesday 26th March

Tuesday 9th April  
Tuesday 16th April  
Tuesday 23rd April  
Tuesday 7th May  
24th, 25th MAY

Branch Meeting, Shearers Arms, Owslebury.  
Skittles, Green Man, Winchester.  
Committee Meeting, Bald Faced Stag, Shirley, Southampton.  
Branch Meeting, Wykeham Arms, Winchester.  
Games evening, Rack and Manger, Crawley.  
Committee Meeting, Ham Farm, Eastleigh  
Branch AGM - venue to be fixed  
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# CRUDGINGTONS

The Unbelievable traditionalists



Little enough has been said in the pages of CAMRA publications about one of the breweries that, while small, has found a place in the hearts of all beer enthusiasts - Crudgingtons of Blagdon.

Though largely ignored by the London free trade - their beers are still unavailable outside the pleasant Derbyshire dales - their beers are spoken of with reverence. Indeed CAMRA has been reluctant to spotlight its virtues in the past for fear of encouraging a massive descent upon Blagdon by the sort of people who have made Theakstons what they are today. The brewery has long been omitted from the Good Beer Guide, as the Crudgingtons' Chairman, Thomas Crudgington Snr., succeeded in copyrighting the address. However, past misunderstandings and caution are now cast to the winds as now all can be told.

Crudgingtons' brewery lies at the North end of Blagdon in a picturesque angle of the small river Widdel. Whilst the river no longer supplies the brewery with water

direct, the oxen that pull the Crudgington "Town dray" often water there and seem to thrive. Not for long, though as Leatherette and Macassar and their fellows must soon become the victims of progress. On April 15th the oxen give way to mules and their sad passing will be marked with due solemnity in the traditional way with a Grand Supper at which guests will be served ample portions of roast beef, beef stew, beef steaks. . .

Time stands still in Blagdon; we shall not.

The brewery building itself calls for little comment, being merely a typical element of New Blagdon (the part of the town rebuilt after the Peasants' Revolt). Its cruck-built ceilings and pendant garderobe are unexceptional features characteristic of "Brewers for sale" building for centuries until Queen Elizabeth's time. The thatched roof, often the home of the otherwise rare Lesser Flying Shite, gives its own distinctive nuances to the wattle-and-daub open fermenters below. But the brewery does not stand still. The new beam engines an order from Messrs. Boulton



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So if you think you know your beer and have never known Blagdon and Crudgingtons perhaps now is the time to think about a visit. Remember it is an awkward journey by road as the Turnpike Trust has been in financial difficulties and is behind with its potholes. It will be a little easier when the railway branch line is brought into use (delays in locomotive deliveries by Hackworth & Stephenson), but the more usual route (the only one in Winter months when the local section of the Pennine Way is impassible) is by National Express 572 from Matlock Bath. There is usually room on the back of the wagon behind the fish-boxes for one or two casual travellers on the mid-morning (9.05) service. The journey is quite comfortable as the wagon now has rubber tyres and springs and the extra horse power has reduced the twelve-mile journey to less than five hours. I think you will like Blagdon and Crudgingtons; the air of the old-fashioned service was best summed up by Marketing Director Samuel Crudgington on my last visit:

"If yer don't like Crudgie yer can get stuffed"

*Mostyn Lewis, Crudgington BLO.  
(With Best Wishes to Bill Tidy.)*

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& Watt will soon boom into life and allow the horse-gins to be dismantled, with Fox-hunter retiring to his new home at the Kenno-meat Farm in Clapham.

But we go there for the beer itself. Crudgington Gold Medal Bitter (1049og) has been brewed to the same recipe for generations. Locals say that the distinctive, full-bodied, well-balanced, pleasant flavoured beer tastes much better now that the brewery uses hops. Then there is the Mild "Widdeljuice" (to the cognoscenti), (1035) a popular dark, wholesome flavoured, fruity, nutty brew available in one pub; and the famous "Old Crudgie" (1169) a dark, wholesome flavoured, fruity nutty brew sold during the winter months and the 1976 draught. We sample these famous tipples at legendary hostleries in Blagdon like the Brewery Tap, the Kings Arms, the New Inn, the Clog and Bells and the Thatchers Inn (soon to be renamed the Down and Out). First we will be struck by the unchanging nature of these pubs - even the Space Invaders are hand-cranked, though the rebuilt Clog and Bells has been much criticised for introducing handpumps and glasses.



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## QUICK HALVES



At the Highwayman in Camberley an Irishman decided that it was unfair that the two bars of the pub were divided in more sense than one; Irish in one, English in the other. So he decided to do something about it. He knocked down the dividing wall with a sledgehammer and walked through to the other bar ...

### BAR FOOD

IN our story on London Hosts, the Grand Met managed house operation, it was stated that the "Pub 80" concept probably appealed more to the younger drinker or those looking for bad food.

This should, of course, have read "Bar food". We apologize for any embarrassment caused.

Morning Advertiser

Whitbread Marlowe have, with red faces, handed over a sum of money to CAMRA for breach of copyright. It seems they made a number of photocopies of CAMRA's book on 'Cellarmanship', (written by local member Pat O'Neill) for distribution to their pubs. We are pleased that Whitbread should choose this excellent work but at 50p each, surely it would have been cheaper to buy them in the first place!

The Government has not received any complaints about higher beer prices in the South of England. After being asked what recent representations had been made alleging that brewers were making excessive profits on beer sales in the South as a result of charging higher wholesale prices there, Mr. Alex Fletcher, Consumer Minister, replied that he had received none. Perhaps our readers would like to redress this situation.

## Real ale pig-swillers

PIGS are getting legless on real ale down on the farm. Five pints of waste beer from Adnam's Brewery in Southwold, Suffolk, mixed with yeast and barley are fed twice a day to each of the 600 pigs at the brewery's own farm less than a mile away. Farm manager Peter Mace says: "They fall asleep about an hour after supping the ale, and in 10 weeks grow from 66lb to 165lb."

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## INN-SIGHT

### The Lord Nelson, Hythe



ing dates back to the Fifteenth Century; it's been a pub since at least the late Nineteenth Century, but when it became one is not clear. Time has, unfortunately, prevented us from researching its history. If it weren't for the pub sign, you might easily mistake it for just another shop front, tucked away in the terrace of buildings of mixed styles and antiquity.

Step inside and immediately you're back fifty years.

A narrow passageway, adorned with prints of wooden ship designs and other nauticana, leads you to one of three small bars. Small they may be, but each one has a character of its own.

To the end of the corridor on the left, is the tiny 'Poop Deck', which is hardly more than eight feet square, the wood panelled walls of which are festooned with nautical pictures, a board of seaman's knots and framed testimonials to Nelson's exploits. No Ercol and Axminster here, just a few simple chairs and a couple of tables. And a low beamed ceiling, naturally.

Next door, served by the same bar, is the 'Trafalgar Room', not large, but with enough room for a game of darts, as this serves as the 'Public', the liveliest of the three rooms. Again, a multitude of fascinating odds and ends hang on the walls, which still retain the fast-disappearing 'half boarding'.

The third room, to the right of the corridor, is the 'Victory Lounge' with its own bar. It is, as its name suggests, somewhat more quiet and comfy. As you might expect; half boarding, seafaring memorabilia, photos of past pub events and a row of ship's crests above the bar. Not contrived, but simply there. All this,

If you thought that quaint village pubs only exist in remote Cornish fishing villages or are only to be seen in the Sunday afternoon 40's film on the telly, think again. Take a trip to Hythe, on Southampton Water and step back in time into one of Hampshire's finest watering holes.

Nestling in the narrow picturesque High Street, not a stone's throw from the pier, is the Lord Nelson, a well preserved example of an old seafaring inn. Once a customs house, the build-

and Nelson is reputed to have slept there too! One of the most delightful features of the 'Nelson' is the magnificent, panoramic view of Southampton water afforded by the garden. Ahead are the busy shipping lanes set against the distant backdrop of Weston Shore and Netley; to the left is the historic Hythe Pier with its fascinating, turn-of-the-century electric railway. This idyllic scene is slightly marred, perhaps, by the obvious American Naval presence just downstream. The view notwithstanding, the sheltered garden, complete with potted palms, provides the perfect suntrap for that summer Sunday lunchtime.

No pub of this character is without its tales to tell. Until the 'promenade' was built behind the garden a few years ago, it was not uncommon during flood or high tide for the front bars to be six inches under water. Unperturbed, the intrepid regulars simply wore their wellies.

The Poop Deck is not without its own story. Somewhat more recently, the landlord decided it was time to replace the well worn black lino. To his surprise, the 'lino' turned out to be a rancid prehistoric carpet. Regulars, however, incensed at its removal as it had been there since the beginning of time, ("Rose spilt her first pint over there ...") "Old George's dog crapped in that corner..") proposed that it should be cut into one foot squares and raffled!

Today, the 'Nelson' is lively and full of characters. 'Old Rose', 78, has been a regular longer than many care to remember, as have George, 'Old Douggie', Stan and so on. But, though the pub may revel in antiquity, not all of the customers do; it has a delightful mix of people of all ages. A mere stripling in his thirties, Patrick Dando regularly entertains with his fine baritone voice. No juke box needed here!

An amazing pub record was set last year. A sponsored 86 mile cycle around the Isle of Wight attracted no less than 67 participants, who between them netted £3,610 for the Guide Dogs association! Photographs in the corridor show the four dogs that the money was able to purchase. So successful was the event that it is planned to be repeated on August 17th and 18th of this year - the aim is for 100 participants, so oil your chains and get practising. All are welcome to take part.

That's the pub and its people; but what of the beer? Once a Strong's house, the Lord Nelson is now owned by Whitbread. Your hosts

Chic and Pat Malcolm serve pints of Strong Country, Flowers Original and traditional cider in excellent condition (which, of course, is why it's in the Good Beer Guide).

In short, this is what a Real Pub is all about. Full of people, full of character, genuine atmosphere, warm, friendly and welcoming. And of course the emphasis is on serving ale, rather than food. It's the sort of place mega-brewery executives might hope to find and relax in after a hard week deciding which 'Locals' to axe or disembowel. We trust that by bringing the character of this pub to Whitbread's attention, they won't be provided with excuses to 'modernise' it like they have so many others!

Oh, and a date for your diary ... an Easter bonnet parade will take place there on Good Friday. Cheers!



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© All applications should be sent to Membership, CAMRA, 34 Alma Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 3BW.



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Whitbread's policy of removing the public bar when "restyling" their pubs has, amongst other things, often led to the removal of the pool table. Since this seems to be occurring with ever increasing frequency, even casual students of Whitbread policy will be surprised to learn that the company is sponsoring the 'Heineken Pool Team Challenge'.

We can't help wondering if Whitbread's left hand knows what its right hand is doing.

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