

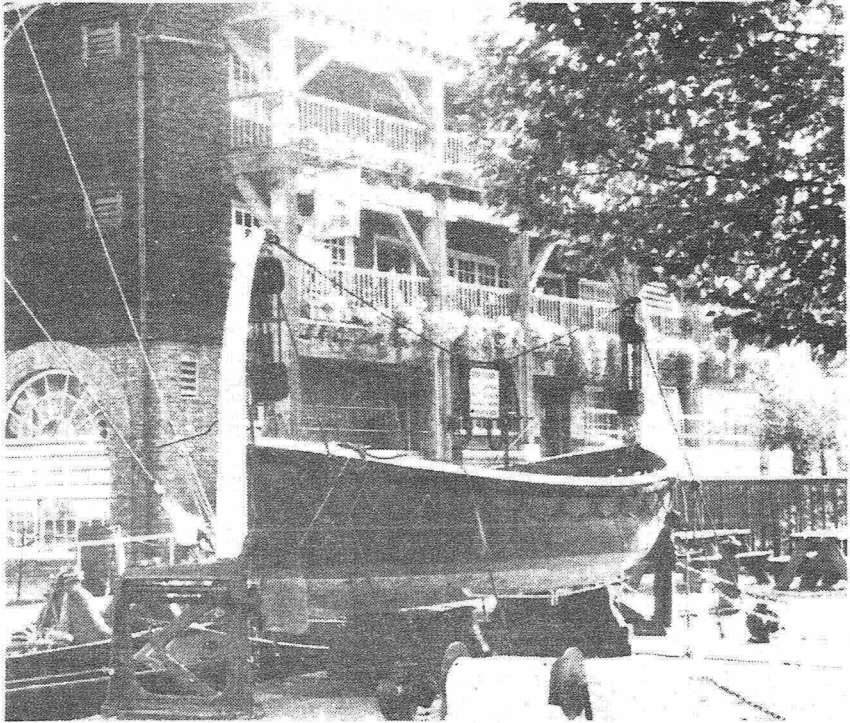
Vol 1 No8

November 79

THE LONDON DRINKER

10p

Produced by the London branches of the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd



RIVERSIDE CRAWL · PRICES · PUB NEWS ····
THREATENED SOUTH LONDON LOCALS ·····
TENANTS IN TROUBLE · REVIEWS & LETTERS

Apologies

Sorry about the October issue which wasn't. Some of us were battle-weary after working and/or drinking at the Great British Beer Bonanza. The main reason, though, was that this aura of general inadequacy was intensified when our editor, Brian Sheridan, resigned, so that the state of chaos at the 'Drinker' became even more than usually pronounced.

As printing over the end-of-year break is a problem, we have decided on a combined December-January 'Drinker', a bumper Christmas edition which should hit the hostelrys early in December. After that it is back, we trust, to monthly publication.

We should like, in the meantime, to pay tribute to Brian, on your behalf as well as ours. He has been the mainspring of the 'Drinker' ever since it started; indeed, without his enthusiasm and dedication it is unlikely that the magazine would have got off the ground. We hope that his new commitments will still enable him to find the time to write for us.

LONDON DRINKER is published by the London Branches of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the individual contributors and are not necessarily the views of either the London Branches of CAMRA or the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd.

Advertising in LONDON DRINKER is not expensive - and the magazine is reaching an increasing number of Beer Drinkers and pub users every month. For details, contact our Advertising Editor, Caroline Bennett at 11 Bettridge Road, SW6 or telephone 977-8787 ext. 326 (Tuesday to Friday only, please)

THE LONDON DRINKER

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The cheaper pint~ Has it arrived?

A pint of ordinary bitter in a London free house costs 33p. This is not fantasy, nor a throwback to the last price rise but five. For some months now (see August's 'Drinker'), the Nag's Head in Hampstead has each week put on a guest beer which they sell for a nominal profit. The price depends on the usual variations of outlay, gravity and so on, but it has so far swung between 33p and 38p a pint.

Another pub selling beer at pre-historic prices, at least for part of the time, is the Sun in Lamb's Conduit Street. In his letter which we printed in our September issue, owner Roger Berman pointed out that he reduces his rates in the morning so that, for example, Brakspear's PA sells at 30p.

There must be other examples. Please, landlords and drinkers, send us the details and we shall be delighted to print them.

Meanwhile, a few comments on price cutting. As a means of attracting customers, old and new, we much prefer a fixed charge for the beer to the practice of changing the price according to the clock. Provided the beer does not disappear immediately - Steve Ellis, landlord of the Nag's Head, reckons 3-4 days is his average - a customer knows he has a reasonable chance of getting a (comparatively) cheap pint whenever he chooses.

Mr. Berman's approach is obviously intended to draw people in during those fleeting moments at daybreak when you can see one end of the Sun from the other. He may, of course, argue that a pub with an enormous turnover based on a panoramic range of beers could not solve the logistics of selling one of them consistently at a low price, even with three or four barrels in reserve.

The thought of hundreds of Sun-worshippers simultaneously feeding off the same handpump is frightening indeed. Whether that would happen depends on the drinkers, and we suspect that the regular patron of the average London beer exhibition either sticks to one or two brands or

