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THE

LONDON DRINKER

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



**The Bass story - Mainlining with
Ind Coope - Spot the pub - Letters**

Towards 1981

WITH THIS issue, 'London Drinker' reaches its first birthday. It's a great feeling to have survived for one year, especially as there were times when we believed the knacker's yard was just around the corner. We should like to thank all our supporters - distributors, stockists, advertisers - and especially you out there who read us every month.

What has particularly pleased us is that more of you are writing. Keep it up, because we depend on articles, letters, news items, cuttings, ideas without these, our part-time editorial team could not sustain this level of monthly creativity, multi-talented though they may be! And let us know what you think of the 'Drinker', good and bad.

Pub crawls, pub entertainment, pub food, clubs which sell real ale, curry houses (for those strange beings who prefer to round off a session with a steaming Vindaloo), reviews of books on beer, T.V. shows or whatever. This is just a selection of topics in search of an author. We are also in the market for cartoonists and illustrators.

Our copy deadline for major articles is usually the middle of the preceding month. As articles of this nature seldom become out-of-date from one month to the next, this deadline should cause no difficulty. News items and letters lose their impetus more quickly, but here we can normally accept contributions right up to the last week in the month.

Look forward to hearing from you.

LONDON DRINKER

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Real Grotnys

IN OUR Christmas issue, writes MOSTYN LEWIS, we examined the present state of the Grand Metropolitan brewing empire. Here in London we are concerned with two parts of that empire - Watney's and Truman's.

Walk into one of their pubs and as likely as not you will see what seem to be a couple of handpumps. Look at your prized copy of any of the CAMRA guides and you will look in vain for these pubs - because these 'pumps' are not what they seem. Watch carefully and you will soon be aware that there is no 'pulling' of beer taking place: instead of rippling muscles and all the associated benefits of a real handpump, the Grotny barmaid requires only a flick of a nail-varnished finger and the amber liquid gushes forth.

This miracle of technology is of course a fake handpump, the 'County' or 'DCL' (after the manufacturers, Distillers Company Limited, better known for Whisky and Thalidomide) pump. It is a switch that turns on an air pump that pushes air into the cask, thereby forcing beer out of the cask and up to the bar.

What's wrong with that, you ask? Surely around the country there are plenty of electric pumps serving up cask beer? There are indeed, especially in the Banks's pubs in the West Midlands, many of the Manchester pubs of Robinson's, Boddingtons', or Holts', or the Nottingham pubs of Kimberley, Home or Shipstone's. The difference between their electric pistons and the DCL pump is that the DCL pump forces air into the barrel - the others do not.

This isn't hair-splitting. By forcing air into the barrel you reduce the escape of the Carbon Dioxide bubbles that are produced by the beer working away in the cask - and the beer tastes fizzy. I'll allow that it's sometimes less fizzy than others, especially when large amounts of beer are being drawn off (sorry - pushed out) in a short time, and the beer is being removed from the cask considerably faster than it can create Carbon Dioxide in quantity. However, would you recommend anyone a beer that's only presentable now and again? The DCL pump is just not up to the job.

Fortunately, there are now signs of improvement. After going through successive modifications (Now up to Mk V, or is it IIIb (ii) ?) of the pump because of 'Technical problems inevitable with Revolutionary New Technology' (i.e. unreliable because too complex?) the top management of Grand Metropolitan have put aside their gin-and-limes and sanctioned 'limited experiments' with straight, honest, real, handpumps to find out what all London's other beer barons have known for years: that handpumps don't bite, aren't likely to frighten the horses or turn into Ayatollahs overnight. Let's hope they turn out to be addictive.

The following list is based very largely on information given to IAN CHRISTIE by the breweries concerned. The beers are:

- Truman TAP bitter (O.G. 1039.5 degrees)-brewed in London
- Watney STAG bitter (O.G. 1044 degrees)-brewed in Norwich
- Watney LONDON bitter (O.G. 1037.5 degrees)-brewed in London

REAL WATNEY (Hand-pump)

BLIND BEGGAR	337 Whitechapel Road, E1.	LONDON/STAG
SHIP	Main Road, Gidea Park, Essex.	LONDON/STAG
ADAM & EVE	81 Petty France, SW1.	LONDON/STAG
CLARENCE	Whitehall, SW1.	LONDON
IMPERIAL ARMS	577 Kings Road, SW6.	LONDON
PRINCESS ALEXANDRA	95 Portobello Road, W11.	LONDON/STAG
DUKE OF YORK	Victoria Street, SW1.	STAG
NORFOLK	Westbourne Grove, W2.	LONDON/STAG

"Tombstone" electric pumps

PRINCE OF WALES	10 Fairholt Street, SW7	STAG
WATERLOO DESPATCH	Britannia Hotel, Grosvenor Sq. W1.	STAG

REAL TRUMAN (hand-pump)

FIVE BELLS	165 East End Road, E. Finchley, N2.
RAILWAY HOTEL	Station Road, Edgware, Middx.
THREE HORSESHOES	28 Heath Street, NW3.
TALBOT	64 London Wall, EC2.
SAXON HOUSE	Air Street, W1.
HAND-IN-HAND	Pinner, Middx.
BUCKINGHAM BAR	Victoria Station, SW1.
DICKENS INN	London Street, W2.

Scottish & Newcastle pubs serving TAP

PILLARS OF HERCULES	7 Greek Street, W1.
WINDSOR CASTLE	98 Park Road, NW1.
THREE CROWNS	Babmaes Street, SW1.
STAGS HEAD	New Cavendish Street, W1.
GOLDEN LION	51 Dean Street, W1.
FOUNTAINS	2 Porchester Street, W2.
THE GEORGE	250 Haverstock Hill, NW3.
YE OLDE LONDON	42 Ludgate Hill, EC4.
SUN IN THE SANDS	123 Shooters Hill Road, SE3.
THE CLACHAN	Mitre Court, Fleet Street, EC4.
CRYSTAL PALACE	1 Anerley Hill, Upper Norwood, SE19.
MITRE TAVERN	38 Fish Street Hill, EC3.
HORSE & GROOM	Westminster Bridge Road, SE1.
THREE COMPASSES	146 High Holborn, WC1.
BLACK BULL	199 Whitechapel Road, E1.

