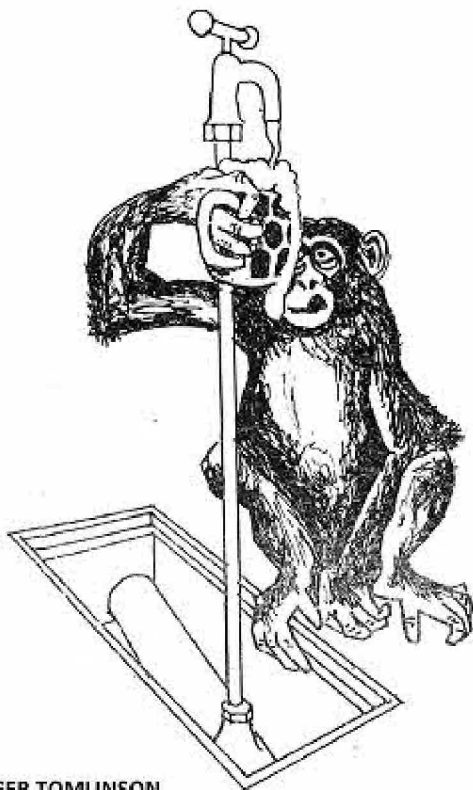


Vol.5 No.2
MARCH
1983

12p

LONDON DRINKER

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



DRAWING BY ROGER TOMLINSON

BRANCH DIARY

Another skimpy month. If your branch is not mentioned below, please ring the Branch Contact. Events for March of which we have been notified are as follows:

NORTH LONDON: Tue 1 (8.00). *Two-Pub Social, NW1. Queens Tavern, 1 Edis Street and Princess of Wales, 22 Chalcot St.* – Tue 8 (8.00). *Two-Pub Social, N6. Bull, 13 North Hill and Wrestlers, 98 North Rd.* – Tue 15 (8.00). *Social, Eastnor Castle, 145 Chalton St. NW1* – Tue 22 (8.00). *Joint Social with West Middx. Norfolk Arms, near North Wembley Stn.* – Tue 29 (8.00). *Two-Pub Social, NW1. Sols Arms, 65 Hampstead Rd, and Exmouth Arms, 1 Starcross St.*

RICHMOND & HOUNSLOW: Wed. 9 (8.00). *Open Committee. Queen Victoria, Bath Rd., Hounslow* – Mon 21 (8.00). *Branch. Griffin, Brook Road Sth., Brentford* - Thu 31 (8.30). *Social. Shakespeare, Lower Richmond Rd., Richmond* – Mon. 18 Apr. *AGM (Advance notice). White Bear, Hounslow.*

SOUTH-EAST LONDON: Mon. 7 (8.00). *Open Committee. Summerfield, Baring Rd., SE12* – Mon. 14 (8.00). *Branch. Railway Tavern, Tranquil Vale, SE3* – Wed. 23 (8.00). *Darts. North Pole, Greenwich High Road, SE10.*

SOUTH WEST LONDON: Thu. 3 (8.00) *AGM. Kings Head, Merton, SW19* – Thu. 17 (8.00) *Social. Woodman, Battersea High Street, SW11.*

EAST LONDON & CITY: Tue 1 (5.30). *Social. Hand & Shears, Middle St, EC1* – Fri 11 (8.00) *Anchor & Hope, High Hill Ferry, E5.* – Tue 15 (8.00) *Auction. Windmill, Tabernacle St. EC2.*

WEST LONDON: Tue 8 (8.00) *Pub of the Month. Angel, St. Giles High Street, WC2* – Thu 17 (8.00). *Branch. 241 Fulham Road, SW3.*

CAMRA BRANCH CONTACTS

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

News & Views ●

● NEW FROM THE BIG SIX

THERE HAVE BEEN some developments on the part of the major brewers, with two of the so-called Big Six marketing a cask-conditioned beer that is new to London and another engaged in a spot of research. First, Charrington seem to be trying out their Springfield Bitter from Wolverhampton, which is available in the White Horse, Parson's Green, SW6. As we pointed out last month, all Charrington IPA is now brewed at the Springfield Brewery, so you can now taste the two beers to see if there is any difference.

The second big brewer is Whitbread, who are test-marketing their Castle Eden Bitter in some pubs. This is fairly strong beer from the North East which has been creeping further and further south, while at the same time Whitbread withdraw other cask beer to make room for it.

Finally, Courage seem to be thinking about joining the move to bring back the old names. They have been dragging people off the streets and asking them to try beer dispensed from fittings that bear such names as 'Barclay' and 'Simonds'. A great step forward, but one wonders about the beers. Courage are less equipped than Allied to produce a flurry of beers and one has the nasty feeling that they may decide to take the easy way out and turn out nothing but a range of keg beers from their new brewery.

● UP AND AWAY

WE SUGGESTED last month that the current round of increases was over. We had forgotten about Young's who have just slapped 4p a pint on their beers. Their Public Bar prices are still among the cheapest in London, but the fact that they have gone for an increase that is above the current rate means that there is less chance that the brewers as a whole will keep to modest increases next time round.

● THE CAMRA MENACE LURKS

TIME WAS when representatives of the brewing and licence trades used to fall over themselves to abuse the Campaign for Real Ale. Not that CAMRA wasted any time before abusing them back. Relations have got much friendlier on both sides, so it comes as a surprise when a bit of the old needle breaks out.

A Mr. Bill Martin, London's Northern Suburban LVA Chairman, feels that CAMRA

are a week and insipid bunch of amateurs, according to the *Morning Advertiser*. We are also a menace to the licensed trade. The odd aspect of Mr. Martin's attack is that it arose in the context of CAMRA's campaign for flexible licensing hours, which the Licensed Victuallers are supporting at national level! It is not clear whether Mr. Martin's ire is directed solely against CAMRA or whether it also takes in the move for more sensible hours.

The fact is that while the National Union of Licensed Victuallers are in favour of the idea they know perfectly well that pockets, perhaps substantial pockets, of their members find the idea difficult to grasp beyond a simple knee-jerk "they want us to work longer hours for no more profit" response. There is no way that the NULV could take the lead in organising a petition, which is why they are delighted that an outside body is doing the dirty work.

Which reminds us that if the petition is still going round and you have not signed it, please do so. It makes very good sense, especially for London.

● WE WUZ RONG

AS WE CONGRATULATED ourselves last month on our accurate predictions, it is only fair that we should confess when we drop a clanger. There is apparently no truth in the story that Fuller's beers are to be sold in some Charrington pubs. We apologise for raising false hopes and are dealing with our informant in the appropriate way.

● LAGER, ANYONE?

WE HAVE BEEN asked by Mr. T. Baker of Highbury whether we would consider giving information about what he calls "real imported 'draught' lagers" in the *Drinker*. Our view, expressed before is that cask-conditioned traditional British beer receives virtually no publicity from those who brew it (just imagine, by contrast, how much is currently being spent on Guinness) so that a magazine such as ours has a duty to make up some of the deficit.

However, there is probably a case for giving some information about the better foreign brands. This would be best done in the form of an article, which perhaps Mr. Baker or someone of similar persuasion may wish to write.

● NON-EVENT

OUR COMPETITION to find the cheapest etc. pint in London turned into a damp squib. We received only four replies and one of these came in after the deadline.

The most popular category was the one

where we asked for mis-pricing. Even here, one of the two entries was not current. Rod Prince of Stockwell wrote that "last summer" the cost of Charrington IPA in the Coach & Horses, Whitefriars Street, EC4 was 82p a pint. Against this, John Conen of Muswell Hill quoted 84p for Taylor Walker Mainline in the Flask, Highgate West Hill, N6, which is 19p above the price charged in the nearby Bull.

Mr. Prince also mentioned the Duke of Cambridge in Battersea, which was our one entry in the 'cheap' section (Young's bitter at 58p).

The most expensive pint in a London pub may not be Arkell's Kingsdown at £1.04 at the Kingston Mill, High Street, Kingston, but that was the only one we heard about. Thanks to Mr. Marshall of Kingston.

In the circumstances, we decided to declare the contest void and to offer a small prize to the three entrants as a consolation. So Messrs. Conen, Prince and Marshall will each receive the sum of £1.10, which should enable them to drink at least one pint in any pub in the Greater London area.

We have rightly or wrongly, drawn the following moral from the poor response. One, people in London have at last realised the

futility of getting worked up over the exceptionally expensive pubs. Two, the *Drinker* does such a good job in keeping you up-to-date with the bargains that further comment is deemed unnecessary!

● FAREWELL AND HAIL

THIS IS A sad occasion for us, as it marks the last time that an edition of *London Drinker* will be produced by the old firm of Hammersley and Atkins. We have been involved in some form or another since the beginning four years ago and have seen the thing grow from nothing to the magnificent organ you can read today!

We shall miss the excitement, but we certainly need the rest. So while we may be back as contributors from time to time, the editorial work will be done by others. We wish them and the magazine every success and would like to thank all those – readers, writers, distributors, stockists, advertisers – who have helped to make the *Drinker* the force in London that it has become. Please keep up the good work.

● LICENCE TO BREATHE MONEY

NOT SURPRISINGLY, much interest has been aroused by our mention in the February

REAL ALE and REAL JAZZ

AT THE

Prince of Orange

118 LOWER ROAD

ROTHERHITHE

SE16

237 9181

LIVE JAZZ SEVEN NIGHTS A WEEK PLUS SUNDAY LUNCHTIME

RESIDENT REAL ALES: TRUMANS MILD, BITTER AND BEST BITTER.

3 MINUTES FROM SURREY DOCKS UNDERGROUND

BUSES 1, 47 and 188 PASS THE PUB

