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

LONDON DRINKER



THE BREWERY TAP
Brentford High Street, Brentford
Photo: Roy Hurry

VOL 21 • No.11

DECEMBER 99/JANUARY 00

Gary & Nicky wish all customers

 *Merry*
CHRISTMAS

A constantly changing selection of ales from micro breweries up and down the country. Over 2000 different ales served to date with always something new to try. Some specials lined up for Christmas and the New Year.

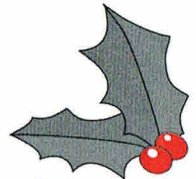
Adnams Bitter & Broadside plus Harveys Best always available. A good selection of German bottled beer including Wheat beers, Kolschbier and smoked malt Rauchbier. Thatchers traditional cider, Belgian beers and Fruit Wines.

Function room for hire. Quiz on Sundays.

Cask Marque quality award.

Now booking Christmas lunches.

January 25th Special Burns Night
(Tatties, Neeps & Haggis etc)



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Fifteen years is a big slice out of anyone's life and now the time has come for me to step down from the editorial team. I have often described this magazine as a 'beast', like a rollercoaster which you can't get off.

I have met some wonderful people over the years. The pub and brewing trade is a cut-throat business, but brewers from large and small companies have given me their invaluable time and encouragement. Two of these have, unhappily, passed away. Peter King of King and Barnes was a wonderful character and was so proud of his brewery and pubs. Brian Cowie was instrumental in saving Tolly Cobbold from the asset-strippers and still found time to be full of praise for our efforts and so enthusiastic about his company. We had many a happy drink together. Rest in peace, both of you. From Fullers and Youngs we have Reg Drury and Ken Don plus John Gilbert from Hop Back and Miles Jenner from Harveys. All have shown that brewing is not just a serious business but can be a lot of fun too. I have met literally hundreds of publicans and, almost without exception, they have been generous and genial; full of hope for the future and taking a real interest in their customers and their beer. Many are again, sadly, no longer with us, or have left the trade, becoming disillusioned or finding family commitments more pressing. Some have moved out of London, but many of the characters still remain, though in reduced numbers.

My fellow editors and all members of our team have become personal friends. Andy, Ian, Martin, Stan, Dave, Barry, Lin, Roger and Geoff are all active rather than passive people and what characters! I thank you all for your unstinting efforts and support over the years.

You, the readers, are a very varied bunch. I have met many of you at beer festivals, in pubs all over Europe or in odd places at odd times. Many of you have been with us from the beginning, well before my time, and what loyal readers you have been! Our many letter writers, crossword enterers and those intrepid souls who have criss-crossed London to produce our

articles and have fed us information to keep this magazine going. Many loyal CAMRA members have also given up their time to deliver this magazine far and wide and without their efforts we would have had no readers.

I have griped and groaned about many things and occasionally given praise. Most companies have taken it in good part, though some have taken umbrage. But, when you consider the criticism is from an amateur, they have been amazingly tolerant.


I've had a great time overall and wouldn't have missed it for the world. This has, of course, resulted in excess weight and grey hair!

But remember what it has all been about. Tasty beer, brewed by experts, not chemists. A quality product produced by people who care - not by those held hostage to accountants. A complex drink created by individuals and not bland, sweet, fizzy muck concocted by marketing executives for youngsters who live/exist for image. This fine beer to be served by people who care about quality and who respect their customers who are the life-blood of the industry. Long may they continue to do so, in pubs that look like pubs and not in trendy bars which will fade away as fast as they have appeared.

Chris Cobbold

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 **The Editorial Team**
wish all their readers,
contributors and advertisers
A Merry Christmas
&
Prosperous New Year 