

HOP PRESS

FREE



SPRING ' 88

BRANCH ACTIVITIES:

Saturday, March 26th.
"Romsey walkabout", starting Tudor Rose
7.30 pm.

Tuesday, April 12th.
Branch meeting, Bay Tree, Southampton.
8.00 pm.

Tuesday, May 10th.
Branch AGM, venue to be arranged.

For details of these and other activities,
contact Derek Markell on Southampton 37263.

The Weyhill Fair

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YORKSHIRE BEER FORTNIGHT!

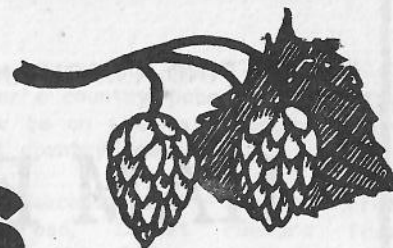


Weyhill Andover Hampshire.

Telephone Weyhill 3631



HOP PRESS



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Editorial

Drinkers will soon be able to sample some new brews in the area, great, you might think, just what we need to bring a little more variety to our pubs. Sadly the changes all come down to the usual machinations of the 'big (bad) Seven' who like to fiddle with the nations favourite tipples.

The latest plans come from two of the worst offenders, Watneys and Whitbreads. Watneys, as reported later in Hop Press are to market Ruddle's Best Bitter. This is certainly a gain in our area as Ruddle's Best is a fine beer, however, so is Usher's Best Bitter, which is also available through Phoenix houses, Ruddle's have insisted that their Best Bitter is not being used to push Usher's out of the market but how many pubs, one wonders, will have enough sales to keep two best bitters? With this switch and the

Ruddles Best

During the next few months Ruddle's Best Bitter will be finding its way into many Hampshire pubs.

The Rutland brewery is well known to real ale drinkers throughout the country for its County, a strong bitter with a deservedly good reputation. Ruddle's Best Bitter is to be marketed in Hampshire through the Phoenix houses as well as being available to the free trade.

Ruddle's is a brewery of contrasts, the only ingredients seen are hops, malt, yeast and

recent sale of forty or fifty of Usher's country pubs, the writing must be on the wall for this old West country brewery.

The second story comes from Whitbread, latest rumours from within this leisure company with little interest in brewing, is that plans are afoot to remove Strong Country Bitter and to replace it with cask conditioned Whitbread Best.

There's no doubt that Strong Country Bitter is taking the back seat these days in many pubs, especially where guest beers are available.

It would seem that Whitbreads are attempting to keep up with their rivals in having a nationally available cask ale - a return to the Trophy days?

water. Brewing sugar is the only 'added' ingredient. However, although the ingredients are entirely traditional the brewery is very 'hi-tech'. There are no open fermenters, the beer can only be seen through glass portholes in stainless vessels and its progress is followed on the telemetry panels that display every detail of the brewing cycle.

The final test is carried out by the drinker and samples pass with flying colours. Let us hope that the quality is not lost during the journey South.

John & Heather Snellgrove

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Welcome Old and New Faces
to this.*



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BURTON Bitter
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Roger & Denise

Welcome you to

**THE
LINDEN
TREE**

School Road Bursledon

Wadworths Ales

Home cooked lunches

Goalden Nectar

Last November the Daily Mirror broke the news that the Football Association were considering sponsorship of the F.A. Cup by the brewers, Courage. Under the proposed agreement the competition would have been renamed the Foster's F.A. Cup.

The revelation brought a great deal of criticism from many areas and has now been abandoned. Perhaps somebody told Courage about the last time a Foster made an impact on the F.A. Cup. This was in the 1983 final when Steve Foster returned to the Brighton side for the replay after missing, through suspension, the first match against Manchester United, which had finished 2-2.

The introduction of Foster's great defensive expertise to the Brighton team led to United winning the replay 4-0.

One of the main criticisms of Courage's proposed sponsorship was that it would be wrong for the F.A. to accept money from a brewer when much of football's hooliganism is blamed on the effects of alcohol.

However, with the advent of advertisements on shirts there is already a great amount of sponsorship of football by breweries.

Currently twenty Football League clubs spread through all four divisions have brewery sponsorships on their shirts.

The extent of this form of advertising is not perhaps obvious to the general public, since of the clubs who appear regularly on television only Tottenham

sponsored by Holsten and Nottingham Forest, who are sponsored by Shipstones, appear on the box. The failure of the majority to get much TV coverage must be quite galling to our big brewer's advertising agents!

The 'BIG 7' brewers, not surprisingly, are responsible for twelve out of the twenty shirt logos. The brewers with the greatest involvement in shirt sponsorship are the Warrington based Greenall Whitley.

Whilst Greenall Whitley do not have any tied houses in our area, they are gradually making their presence felt in the free trade.

Newcastle, Huddersfield and Chester all have the word "GREENALLS" emblazoned on their shirts. Forest's sponsors Shipstones are also a part of the Greenall empire. The fifth team with which Greenalls are involved is Shrewsbury Town.

'The Shrews' currently advertise "WEM ALES" on their shirts. However, the Wem brewery, located in the Shropshire town of that name, is just being closed by Greenall's. Although beers with the Wem name will continue to be brewed in Birmingham, it will be interesting to see what appears on Shrewsbury's shirts next season.

In fact there appears to be a bias towards the sponsorship of teams in towns where the local brewery has been taken over or even closed and Greenalls are responsible for many such cases. Perhaps the breweries see it as a way of getting the local community back on their side after they have, in

some cases, made hundreds of workers redundant.

When it comes to results on the field, promoting lager doesn't seem to do clubs a lot of good.

'Spurs and Norwich are hardly setting the first division alight, whilst in the third division Mansfield (who advertise Mansfield Brewery's "MARKSMAN LAGER") are in 18th place and York City (Cameron's "HANSA" lager) are firmly rooted to bottom place.

Locally, at The Dell, as well as the long standing advertisement for the New Forest Brewery on the west stand there are a number of advertisements for the Phoenix Brewery, the local arm of Watneys, following their involvement with the changes at the social club.

This marks a return to The Dell for Watneys as for many years the East stand was disfigured by an advertisement for Red Barrel.

Nationally Saints' strongest link with the brewing industry was Lawrie McMenemy's television promotion of Barbican non-alcohol lager. After his efforts at Sunderland I doubt if any company would now want him within a million miles of any of their products!

A somewhat sinister new development in the links between football and breweries is the arrival of lager sold in personalised cans, bearing the club name. At present Devenish are brewing the lager for three clubs: Liverpool, Everton and Manchester United.

Links between football and alcohol advertising appear to be on the increase. It is interesting to

contemplate what effect, if any, possible Government action on the banning of alcohol advertising on TV would have on such links. Certainly the ban on cigarette advertising has not stopped the tobacco companies sponsoring televised cricket and snooker tournaments.

P.S. Two chaps go into a bar and one asks the other what he wants to drink. "I think I'll have a Graham Souness" comes the reply. "What's that?", asks his companion. "I'll just have one half, then I'll be off."

Blessed Pope

WEST Country independents, Eldridge Pope, ordered 700 red roses on the fifth of last month, the day of their AGM, but there appears little chance of management developing red faces to match, as the brewery appears to be going from strength to strength. Their 150th year in the trade saw them carry off several awards for beer, pubs and, from the Wine Guild, the title of best merchants of the year. Wine sales for the year were up a healthy 24 per cent.

Chateau Shep

KENT independents Shepherd Neame has also taken a sip of good wine with the acquisition of Todd Vintners Ltd for an undisclosed sum. Todd runs a wines wholesaling business from a noted food shop in Tunbridge Wells. Their up-market customers, mainly City banks and insurers, include the Savoy and Harrods. Who knows — before long draught Sheps at the Savoy?

Freemantle Amble

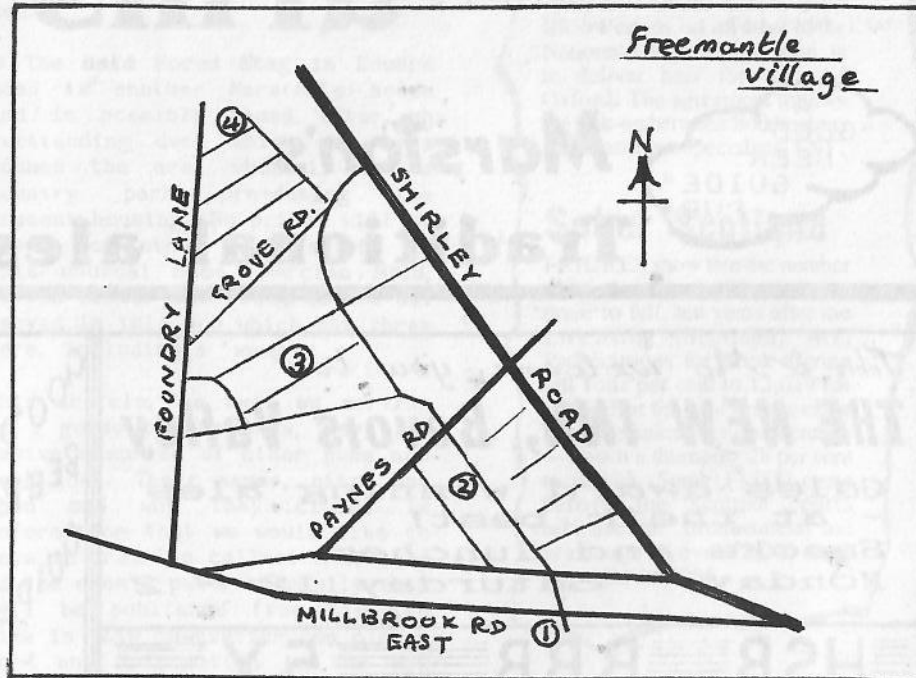
The Freemantle district of Southampton is relatively fortunate in its stock of pubs. With one or two exceptions, they have not, so far, been targetted for the 'improvements' of the brewery whizz kids. So if you are the type who longs after one-bar caverns, full of plastic beams, plastic bar-staff and selling over-priced poorly kept beer, Freemantle is not for you.

Practically all of the pubs in the area can literally be described as 'back-street, corner locals', fulfilling their age-old roles as social centres and meeting places. Sadly, many of them still only serve keg beers but there are enough real ale outlets to make a pub crawl worthwhile. Apart from the obvious prudence it would be

best to approach such a crawl on foot since extensive "traffic management" schemes may make them hard to arrive at by vehicle.

The following guide is the writer's choice of the pick of the pubs in the area.

① The Key & Anchor in Millbrook Road East, is a Whitbread house, a small two-bar corner pub, one of the rare Pompey Royal outlets in Southampton, Flower's Original is also available. This pub is well worth a visit, especially on a Saturday evening when there is a 'happy hour' and the boisterous public bar often competes with the jukebox! An unusual feature is the pub name etched into the bar windows — it is to be hoped that this might ward off any attack of



Joan & Bill Welcome you

GOOD BEER GUIDE

MASONS ARMS

ST MARY'S ST SOUTHAMPTON
GALES MILD · B.B.B. · H.S.B.

•• HOME COOKED FOOD ALWAYS AVAILABLE ••

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the FULFLOOD arms

CHERTON ROAD, WINCHESTER



Marston's
Traditional ales

John & Mo welcome you to:

THE NEW INN, Bevois Valley

Gales award winning ales
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Snacks and lunches
Monday - Saturday 12 - 2

HSB BBB 5X

GOOD BEER GUIDE

pluralitis and we will not see a 'Keys' or an 'Anchors'!

• The Wellington Arms in Park Road is the best value-for-money freehouse in Southampton. There are two bars, although neither can be called a public. The Wellington tends to get very crowded at times but if you do happen to visit at a quiet time have a good look around, the place is a shrine to the Iron Duke. The surroundings are complimented by a fine range of real ales, from Wadworth's IPA to Ringwood Old Thumper. In between are; Ringwood Best, Courage Directors and Gibbs Salisbury Best Bitter.

• In Albany Road, you will find The Freemantle Arms, a Marston's two-bar house serving Mercian Mild and Burton Bitter. Unusually for a town pub there is a small beer garden at the back for customers' use.

• The Bald Faced Stag in Edward Road is another Marston's house and is possibly named after an outstanding deer which may have roamed the area when it was a country park pre-dating the present housing. No prizes will be given for other explanations of this unusual name. Mercian Mild, Burton Bitter and Pedigree are all served in this pub which has three bars, including a 'snug'.

This article, as well as serving as a guide to the area, may also revive memories of other pubs now long lost. Their names, sites and when and why they closed is information that we would like to have in order to collect a history of the area's pubs; hopefully this will be published from time to time in this newsletter, so please send any information to the Hop

Press Editor, (address on the front page), or leave it behind the bar where you found this copy, addressed to CAMRA.

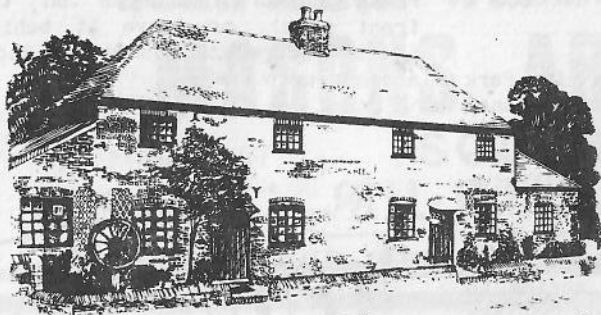


Allied off the waggon

ALLIED has become the latest brewery to hand over part of its beer distribution to a private company. Under a £7m deal, BRS Western, an offshoot of the National Freight Corporation, is to deliver beer for Halls of Oxford. The agreement follows the link-up between Boddingtons and transport specialists TNT.

Sober Scotland

FIGURES show that the number of drink crimes in Scotland continue to fall, ten years after the Licensing (Scotland) Act. Prosecutions for drink-driving fell four per cent to 12,019 for 1986. But the best results came in prosecutions for drunkenness - down a thumping 28 per cent to 3,815. Some 17,000 came before the Scottish courts because of drunkenness ten years ago - over 13,000 more than did in 1986.

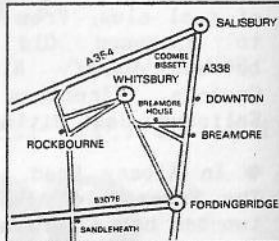


- * SIX REAL ALES from a selection of twenty
- * BAR MEALS
- * CANDLELIT RESTAURANT
- * SUPPER LICENCE
- * BEER GARDEN
- * CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA with tunnel slide and climbing frame

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Morning Coffee Lunches

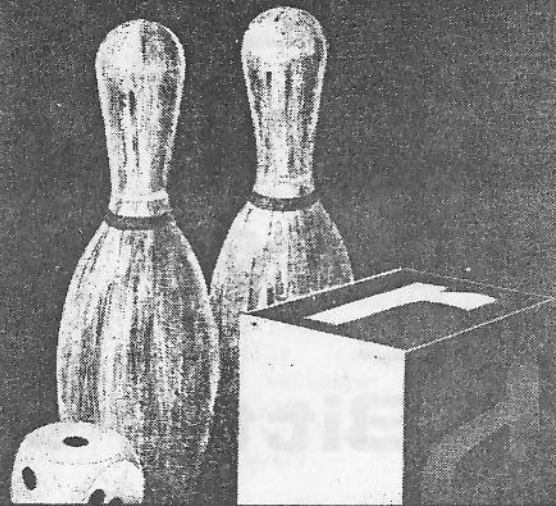
Sunday Roast Evening Meals
a speciality

Bed and Breakfast

Strong Country Bitter
Flowers Original Bitter
Sam Whitbread

PUBS FOR FAMILIES

A CAMRA GUIDE



HOW often have you been to a pub with a 'Family Room' that had all the warmth and atmosphere of a British Rail waiting room . . . and none of the facilities? *Pubs for Families* brings you pubs that don't just tolerate families, they positively welcome them.

Pubs for Families gives you all sorts of information to make your day out a pleasure instead of a nightmare. Best of all, the pubs we have selected also provide the pleasures of a good pint of traditional beer in a proper pub atmosphere.

Brought to you by the team that produced the 1988 Good Beer Guide, Jill Adam and Neil Hanson, this indispensable book will cost £4.95 in the shops, but only £3.50 to CAMRA members. Order your copy now from *Pubs for Families*, 34 Alma Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3BW (cheques payable to CAMRA Ltd).

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Any future for the pub ?

Do you ever ask yourself; what is the future of the great British pub?

Pubs come in all shapes and sizes, from tiny village locals to the largest of the centuries-old coaching inns, in between are town pubs, new estate pubs, victorian gin palaces and many other styles which together make up that unique institution, the British pub.

Sadly, in recent years, our larger brewers have found themselves awash with excess profits. In disposing of these, the way chosen has often been to invest vast sums in pub 'refurbishment' programs.

All too many of our favourite drinking houses have been converted to 'identikit' inns of one sort or another. Here in Hampshire, one of the favourites is the 'Whitbread Laura Ashley' style, with frilly curtains, matching patterned wallpaper and old books by the yard (in fact they *are* bought by the kilo, 20p/kilo in Hay-on Wye!)

The latest addition to the range of Host Group's (Watneys) collection is the 'cafe' style, which is being introduced in anticipation of relaxation of the licensing laws.

CAMRA has campaigned long for the relaxation of our antiquated drink laws, now with that relaxation around the corner we must fight to retain the individuality of our pubs. All day opening could well provide the impetus to finally convert many into third rate, over-priced, fast food joints, with drinks only as a side line

Too many pubs are now moulded to attract only a certain corner of the market, be it lunchtime food trade, the young drinker, or even the so called 'family' pubs. In the current 'ad-speak' of the marketing men, the quest for the *segmented market!* I am only in my mid twenties, yet I certainly feel old in one or two of our local 'theme' pubs.

Pub life is unique to this country and we must fight to preserve it from the ravages of brewers with too much profit to get rid of, it is a pity that some of the money isn't spent on the tenanted trade, where it is almost impossible to get a lick of paint put on, let alone any major repair work done. If brewers need some suggestions as to what they might do with their excess profits, I would suggest that they look at their price lists, if they can find them that is.

Lucky dip

THE Consumer Association's *Good Pub Guide* gets fatter, wordier and more inaccurate with each passing year.

Three years ago it included a Dublin pub that had been closed since 1968. This year it has excelled itself by including a pub that never existed.

So if you are thirsty in the region of Littleworth Common in Buckinghamshire and don't manage to track down the Breakwell Arms, you might care to purchase a Good Beer Guide and use the other tome to prop up the piano.

The Globe, Alresford



The Globe is found at the bottom of the broad main street (Broad Street!) of the small town of Alresford, just around the corner as you leave the town by the Candover valley road.

Parking space outside the pub is virtually non-existent and it is best to park in the centre before walking down to the pub which is found in the part of the town known as the 'Soke'. This name refers to the ancient ecclesiastical court which once ruled the area.

There has been a pub on the site

continuously since the eleventh century, although the present building replaces one burned down in 1689. Although it was a coaching inn on the old Winchester to London road its position at the edge of Alresford pond may also relate to another form of transport, the river Itchen navigation. Alresford was the highest point that could be reached by water and the pond was created to provide the 'flash' to enable boats to pass over shallows, an early form of lock.

The pond, once more than five times its present size is now a

wildlife preserve, where better to watch the birdlife than from the garden of a pub.

The close proximity of the pond caused the untimely demise of one unfortunate local, when, sometime in the eighteenth century he left the pub after a lunchtime session and walked straight into the pond; you have been warned!

The pub itself has one bar with a lounge style area at each end, heat is provided by two log fires. Outside, the garden runs down to the pond, in the summer this is a very popular venue.

A range of Watney's ales are on sale, Usher's Best (shortly to be replaced with Ruddle's Best), Webster's Yorkshire Bitter and from Gales, HSB. Needless to say all are kept in good condition by mine hosts Paul and Karen Tooke. Paul and Karen have only run the Globe for three months and see the pub as a traditional style pub serving good beer and providing good value, home cooked food, prepared from fresh meat, fish and vegetables. Try the Sunday roast. Children are allowed in the restaurant.

Although parking outside is impossible today, there used to be a strong link with motoring in the early days of the horseless carriage when the pub served as a garage and early petrol station cum car hire agency.

Alresford is a pleasant place to visit, with the Watercress line steam railway, many interesting shops and lots of country walks. What better way to end a visit than with a pint in the Globe.

Lager Lines!

Pils popping

MEL SMITH and Griff Rhys Jones have worked together for most of their successful TV years, but of late have become adversaries in the fun-packed world of lager adverts.

However, not everyone becomes corrupted by such low-life, it seems. According to Smith: "Nobody at all drinks the (Kaltenburg) lager I advertise. I certainly don't."

Not to be outdone, Jones agrees with the claim that people remember the ads but cannot recall which lager (Holsten Pils) was being promoted.

He adds: "All the lager producers are looking for a way of distinguishing what is completely indistinguishable as a drink."

Strewth

A PRICE hike may be in the offing for Foster Lager drinkers. Last month's celebration of the 200th Anniversary of Australia's penal colony, was seized upon by the company as an excuse to give away 11 gallons of the amber spectre from each Watneys, Courage and Mansfield pub. The press release claimed that this was a £5 million offer.

Now 12,000 pubs times 88 pints divided into £5m makes it £4.75 a pint.

So that's the aim.

Miles Brewster

Give us strength at last!

ALL beers, draught and packaged, should by next year be carrying their alcoholic strength by volume as a result of moves at the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food.

MAFF last month issued a series of proposed amendments to the Food Act 1984, so that the UK can comply with EEC directives. Among the proposals set out for comment were:

- All alcoholic drinks over 1.2 per cent by volume to be strength marked.
- All pre-packed drinks to be strength marked "in the same field of vision as the name of the drink".

For bottled and canned beers, the matter is simple. If over 1.2 per cent the container will have to carry a strength marking by volume. But with draught beer, the matter is not so clear.

Either strengths must be marked on a separate, clearly visible, list — or else carried on an existing list such as a price list or menu. A MAFF spokesman said that strengths would

not be carried on handpulls or cowels "because we were informed that it would be prohibitively expensive".

Nonetheless, the MAFF initiative should at least mean that in future all alcoholic strengths of drinks should be available in the pub. That is welcome news to NE member Tony Millns. "This is exactly what we have been pushing for, for two years.

"If implemented fully, this should give anyone who walks into a pub full information on the relative strength of all alcoholic drinks". CAMRA will be making its own submission to the MAFF proposals.

● Another CAMRA suggestion will also shortly be on its way to MAFF, this time concerning the words 'Real', 'Traditional', 'Natural' etc, another area of concern for a great variety of consumer groups.

Tony Millns adds: "The field of terminology on foodstuffs and drinks is very complex. But we are hopeful that some firm guidelines will be laid down."

THERE'S ALWAYS A
WARM WELCOME AT:

GOOD
BEER
GUIDE



The Richmond Inn

BEER
GARDEN

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BAR
SNACKS

FUNCTION
ROOM

MERCIAN MILD
BURTON BITTER
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"Frogham"

FORDINGBRIDGE 52294
FREE HOUSE
in the New Forest

THE
FORESTERS
ARMS

LUNCH TIME BAR SNACKS
CHOICE OF REAL ALES
"SCRUMPY" CIDER
LARGE GARDEN — CHILDREN'S ROOM
— AMPLE CAR PARKING —

Best Real Ale in the Forest



"AN OLD FOREST PUB FULL OF NOSTALGIA"

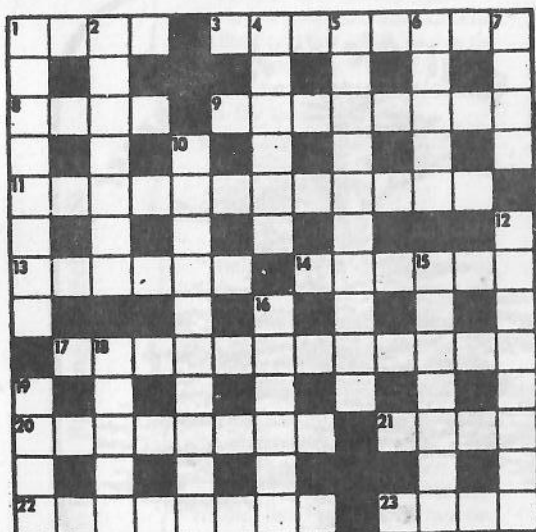
Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 & 3 Site charges right for making a till. (4,8)
- 8 Briefly unknown writer. (4)
- 9 Occupations of former half-back. (8)
- 11 Becomes PM perhaps, and finds a toy. (4,2,3,3)
- 13 Nakedness is unusually untidy. (6)
- 14 Opt to take a mixed vegetable. (6)
- 17 Normal path for flour production? (3,2,3,4)
- 20 Aged prince is the devil himself. (3,5)
- 21 How a gas turns into a long story... (4)
- 22about the first year spoiling the wedding. (8)
- 23 Historian is part of a necklace we hear. (4)

DOWN

- 1 & 19 Where sportsmen make building alterations? (8,4)
- 2 The oldest and first to become fitted into a groove. (7)
- 4 Makes law, and almost can't see the change. (6)
- 5 Well off among the contents of 1 across. (2,3,5)
- 6 Musical time in temporary environment. (5)
- 7 The grating of a king snake. (4)
- 10 Still sounds like pen and paper! (10)
- 12 Tell goat to romp around the barrier. (4-4)
- 15 Enliven a partner from Ulster. (7)
- 16 Turn Africa's extremes to move fast. (2,1,3)
- 18 Below, a French revolutionary climbs.... (5)



A suitable prize will be awarded for the first two correct entries opened on April 25th.

Please remember to mark your entries with your name and address, we have had them without!

Entries should be sent to:

The Editor,
Hop Press,
105 Elder Close,
Badger Farm,
Winchester.

Crossword Winners

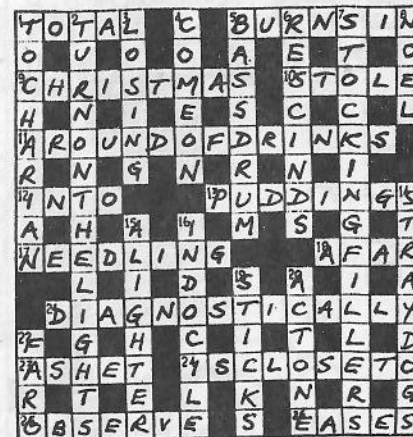
Not a very large entry to the Christmas crossword and a couple of the entries were not completely correct. However here are the lucky winners:

D Scaife, 10 Victoria place Old Orchards Broad Lane Lymington.

R Knott, 8 Woodford Close Ringwood.

Prizes will be delivered as soon as possible.

Why is it, I ask myself, that most entries come from Lymington and the Forest area?



MAKE YOUR OWN REAL ALE

WE HOLD A VAST RANGE OF GRAIN HOPS YEASTS TO MAKE DAVE LINES BEERS LIKE THOSE YOU BUY

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MARSTON'S TRADITIONAL ALES

KEG BUSTER

BY BILL TIDY



KEGBUSTER IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY IN CAMRA'S NEWSPAPER "WHAT'S BREWING"

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St. Cross, Winchester



LARGE CAR PARK SNACKS AT THE BAR
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BED & BREAKFAST
LUNCHES
OUTSIDE BARS

WADSWORTHS

THE PLOUGH

BURSLEDON - Tel: Bursledon 2743

Business Luncheons - Pub Grub

Beer Garden - A PHOENIX HOUSE

Friendly Atmosphere - Mine Hosts: Neville & Ginny Guard

WEBSTERS YORKSHIRE BITTER

GALES HSB



Pub News

We are sorry to have to begin this edition of pub news by reporting the sad death of Tony Cavalier, licensee of the Bear and Ragged Staff at Michelmersh.

He had been licensee of this welcoming country inn for almost nine years. Our condolences go to his widow, Kay, and their two sons.

One of our area's most notable pubs may soon lose its novel position if certain councillors have their way. The Red Lion at West Dean is currently situated on the county border so that half the pub is in Hampshire and the other half in Wiltshire and the hosts, Mr. and Mrs. Sharp, would like it to stay that way. Unfortunately this division applies to much of the village, an anathema to the tidy official mind, so an opinion poll is to be conducted to establish the views of the villagers as to which county they would like to call home before a final decision is made.

Staying in the Romsey licencing district, the new pub on the Valley Park estate (on the south-western edge of Chandler's Ford) is called The Cleveland Bay. This pub is a Wadworth's tied house and opened in the second week of March. The Cleveland Bay is a type of carriage horse and they are bred by Major Chamberlayne-Macdonald, the original owner of the Valley Park land.

The Leigh Hotel in Eastleigh has recently been refurbished. The pub sign now depicts the Eastleigh coat of arms and is one of a number of more imaginative signs Whitbread have produced recently.

What a pity they cannot show some similar imagination in the way they treat their ever-more uniform interior 'design'.

One pub which won't be undergoing proposed alterations is the Fox and Hounds at Old Bursledon. Eastleigh planners said that a proposed kitchen extension would breach the local plan and that the pub was in an area of 'special constraint'.

The White Swan at Mansbridge is the latest local pub to be turned into an eating establishment, in this case a Barnaby's Carvery.

In Southampton there has been another outbreak of that contagious disease which hits pub names, pluralitis. The latest victim is the Davis's Hotel in Terminus Terrace which has been renamed Turpins.

The advertisement announcing the re-opening in the local press gave no indication of any reason for this choice of name but it did give a new insight into period furnishings and PR men's historical knowledge.

It claimed, "The pub is designed along olde worlde lines with exposed timbers and brickwork, plenty of mirrors and rich carpeting and soft furnishings reminiscent of the days when Dick rode to infamy."

I'm sure we can all imagine Dick tying up Black Bess outside a tavern on the York road and then entering to be greeted by two inch pile Wilton and a comfy Dralon settee....

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A quick gallop across the Forest brings us to Lymington and The Ship Inn where we welcome new managers John and Pat Coles.

Another newcomer is Tony Talbot at the Black Boy in Winchester. Tony previously ran a pub in Putney.

Nearby the Riverside Inn also has new faces behind the bar (after a temporary change of occupants when squatters took over the pub whilst it was closed!). John And Barbara Walcroft are overseeing a number of alterations to the pub which offers a full range of Huntsman Ales.

Next we bring you news (bad) of The Sportsman at West End. You may recall that the pub was reopened two years ago by Emlyn Hughes after major alterations, including a very large investment in family facilities.

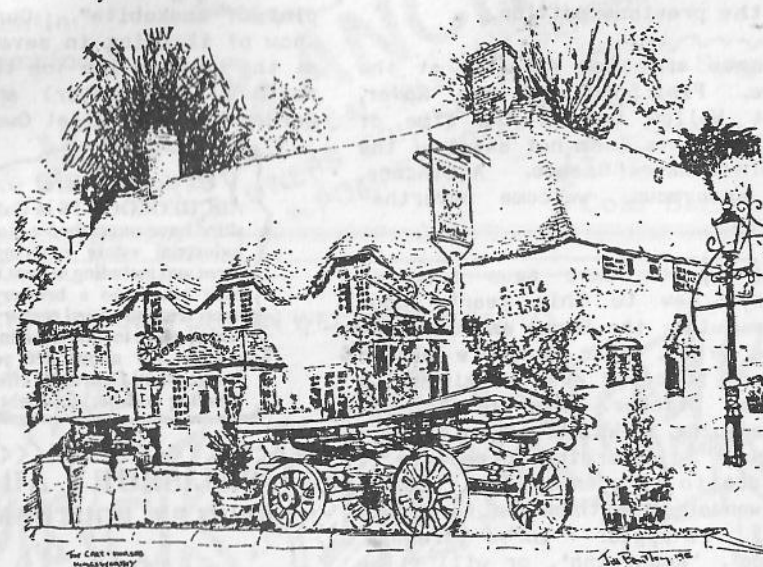
At the time, Stewart Miller, general manager of Whitbread Westward Inns said, "...the new pub will cater for a social requirement in Southampton. People will travel to a good tavern, particularly if it has something of interest to everyone, regardless of age."

Obviously not enough people have been travelling to this tavern as it is to be turned into a restaurant called The Collared Dove.

Pub news now hands over to that ancient from the arborial western regions, known to us as 'The Forest Ferret'.

A very belated welcome is extended to Alan and Angie Pickett at the Bald Faced Stag and to Pete and Phyl at the Park Inn in Shirely, taking over from Ron and Pat who

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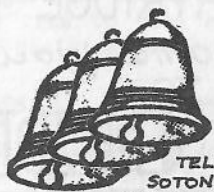
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have moved on to the Great Western in Yeovil. Our last belated welcome is to Lee Paul and Nicky, at the Village Bells in Eling. Unfortunately these were left out of the previous edition.

Changes are also reported at the Shoe, Plaitford and the Rover, West Wellow but at the time of writing this I am not aware of the new licensees' names. A sincere, if anonymous, welcome nevertheless!

More up to date news now; an entry, new to this year's Good Beer Guide, the Horse and Groom at Wood Green, near Breamore closed before it could even be given its window sticker. The pub is now undergoing a Whitbread 'refurbishment'. According to reports it is due to re-open in early March. We wonder what theme or format it will re-appear in: 'Brewers' Fayre', 'Roast Inn', or will it be a 'Grilled Aardvark'? Whatever the style, we can expect that another old country pub will have fallen victim of the continuously rising tide of the boring one bar plastic pub.

We get the feeling that the locals won't welcome the changes and they certainly don't like the fact that their boozier has been closed for so many months.

Late news from the Winchester area is that the Hop Inn has recently changed hands and now serves Bunce's Bitter and Adnam's Bitter. New licensee is Peter Bernfeld, returning to Winchester after flying helicopters around various exotic parts of the globe. A warm welcome to Peter and his wife.

On the brewery front, New Forest Brewery at Cadnam have expanded

their range of traditional beers by the addition of a third brew. A powerful 1048 OG beer, it is aptly named Old Venom - giving a whole new meaning to the order of "...a pint of snakebite". Currently we know of it being in several clubs, at the Lunways Inn (on the old A33 north of Winchester) and at the Garden House Motel at Ower.

Very old ale

ARCHEOLOGISTS in Oxfordshire have unearthed a Roman industrial estate covering 50 acres and including at least three malt kilns and a brewery. It dates from the third century AD and appears to have been in production for about 200 years. Longer than Courage's effort at Reading will be, no doubt.

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Good Beer Guide

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