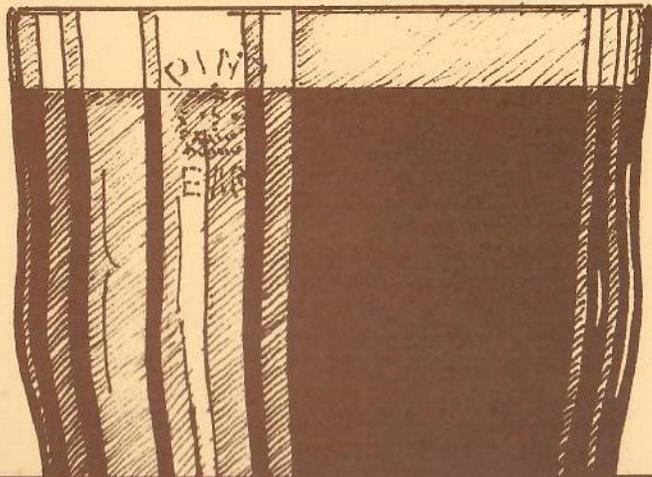


# HOP PRESS

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The brewer's  
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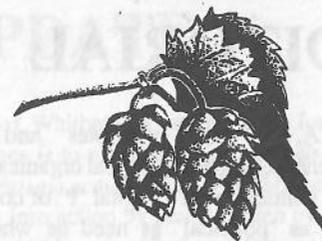
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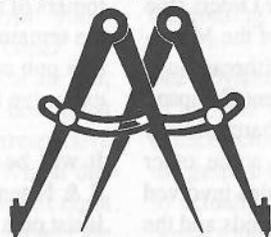
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## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

*Rob Whatley*

On entering an unfamiliar pub, the real ale drinker's first instinct is to scan along the clips on the bank of handpumps. The thirsty visitor will then either choose a trusted favourite or, if in adventurous mood, perhaps try the taste sensations of some exotic stranger. Unhappily, though, these anticipated explorations into new realms of taste so often turn out to be a no more than unwanted reunions with all too familiar brands. The 'house beer' con has been pulled again!

A recent successful court case has highlighted the increasing problem of false house names for beers. Although the evil practice has been with us for a number of years there seems to be ever more deceit involved.

The licensee of the Three Tuns at Silverton, Devon was fined £1,500 after prosecution by local Trading Standards Officers. He was selling Courage Directors as 'Three Tuns Ale' and claiming that it was brewed locally. Radio advertising, encouraging drinkers to visit the pub for this 'local' beer, was heard by Richard Barron, partner in Silverton's Exe Valley Brewery. He contacted the Trading Standards Officers after complaints to both the pub and the radio station were ignored.

Pumpclips are a recent innovation, unknown before the fifties. Until then customers knew just to ask for Beer (mild), Bitter, or perhaps Best. The first pumpclips designs were very basic – brewers were putting their design

efforts into garish plastic fonts for the new keg beers and lagers. Now, with real ale the growth market, breweries and landlords are in a 'presentation war' of the pumpclip – designs have become so large and ornate that they almost dwarf the pumps! With these frantic efforts to catch the customer's eye, and through that to the pocket, it is less than surprising that chicanery creeps in.

Locally, the first appearance of a beer masquerading under house names came in the late seventies when Bass pubs started selling the bland, Welsh-brewed Worthington PA, unwanted under its true name, as the pubs' own private brews. CAMRA was vociferous in opposition to this misleading practice and after a few years Bass grew tired of the exercise and the pumpclips gradually disappeared.

After this initial occurrence, the practice all but stopped for some years but now we are seeing a very worrying resurgence in its frequency and even more so its deceptiveness.

Generally, there are two types of pubs in which the 'house beer' problem is most likely to appear: free houses and pubs belonging to the new non-brewing pub chains. Free houses tend to name the beer after the pub, some local landmark or even the licensee. Pubs which are part of a chain are more likely to offer customers a product with a name associated with the chain and sold under the same label in each pub of the group.

Once a name has been chosen, the beer sold is usually either a well known national brand

or a local small brewery product. In a few cases the name on the handpump remains fixed but the beer served varies from week to week! Generally the beer is the cheapest available, often by a large margin. So why do they do it?

In the case of an individual pub selling a beer under a house name, it may be nothing more than an ego trip by the licensee. More likely it is a deliberate attempt to suggest to customers that here is a beer specially brewed for (or even *in*) the pub and thus unavailable elsewhere. Even if just an egotistical fancy it is still deceiving the unsuspecting customer, it falls within the scope of the laws against 'passing off.'

Readers should be aware that it is almost impossible for a beer to be *specially brewed* for a single pub or even a small chain. No big brewer has the ability to produce such a small batch of beer and the 'minimum brew length' of all but the very smallest brewers make the production uneconomic. In any case, if a pub was selling a truly unique brew from a well regarded brewery then surely it would sell well on its own merits? If the beer is a national brand, being sold at a low price, then why not concentrate advertising on the relative cheapness of the beer? The only plausible answer is that the licensee does not think the beer would sell so well on its own merits. A publican should be proud of the quality of the beer he sells, not ashamed of its origins.

Two local pub groups that have sold beers under group names are Star Hotels and Surrey Free Inns. Star Bitter has appeared at The Grange, the Humble Plum, the newly acquired Builder's Folly and other pubs in the group. Customers have been given various

evasive answers when asking about the beer's origin. Suggestions have been that it was a Bass brew or the product of a small local brewery. A letter from CAMRA to the company's headquarters, has gone un-answered. Is it the same beer in every pub, and which beer (or beers) is it? We invite Star Inns to tell us.

The same question can also be asked of the Surrey Free Inns chain which include the Bridge at Shawford, the Bugle at Hamble and the Sir Walter Tyrrell in the Forest. These pubs have featured one or both of the beers labelled "No Name Bitter" and "Old Soxx". These are probably Courage products – the 1994 *Good Beer Guide* suggests they are John Smith's and Directors. If this is so then at The Bridge you can get the same beer under two names from two pumps!

Individual pubs selling house labelled beers include Milbury's at Beauworth and the Rockingham Arms at West Wellow, both pubs have sold different beers under a single house name. A newcomer to the game is the Tollhouse at Lymington with "Tollhouse Bitter." Older hands are the Fox and Hounds at Crawley and the King's Head at Hursley.

At CAMRA's 1993 A.G.M. a motion was passed stating our policy only to support house beers truly produced specifically for the outlet concerned. In addition the brewery of origin should be clearly shown at the point of sale. CAMRA will be working to get the law strengthened and enforced so that customers get a fair deal and know what they are buying.

In the mean time, if you spot a house beer, ask where its from. *Hop Press* would be more than delighted to hear the replies.



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## THE FLOWER POTS, CHERITON

### The Pub and the Brewery

*Seb Timeaus*

The local CAMRA Branch recently visited the new brewhouse at the Flower Pots in Cheriton. It probably says something about the membership that this time, rather than use a coach, we took the train. The drawback is that from Shawford, the nearest BR station, there is the slight matter of a nine mile walk!

It is a good way to reach the village; the rooftops of Cheriton appear in the valley as you cross the last down and thoughts of a pint quicken the stride wonderfully. Cheriton is a focal point for walkers – the South Downs Way and the Wayfarers Walk cross near the village. Other tourists are attracted by the site of the important Civil War battle, less than a mile away, and by Alresford with the “Watercress Line” which is only three miles to the north.

Set back from the road, the early Victorian pub with its orchard, cottage garden and flint and brick outbuildings presents a picture postcard view of a perfect country inn. Enter the bar and this image becomes reality – an array of beers served straight from the cask, no fruit machines, no juke box, substantial plain tables to sit at for a good home-cooked meal and an atmosphere conducive to conversation and to enjoying a pint, or two ...

Those who have not visited for some years will find that a recent extension has allowed

the bar areas to be enlarged and has uncovered an old well – now a feature. These changes have not detracted in any way from the ambience.

The origin of the pub’s unusual name is believed to lie with the builder. The pub was built as a beerhouse, around 1850, by one Frederick Mould. As Mr. Mould had previously been head gardener to the Duke of Buckingham, the suggestion that he chose the name seems entirely plausible.

The pub, as built, also had a brewery and a market garden serving both the village and the local farming community. It remained as just a beerhouse for a century, only getting its full licence in 1950. Strongs, the Romsey brewer, acquired the Flower Pots in 1968 but almost at once they were then absorbed by Whitbread. Remarkably, in its twenty years under Whitbread, it avoided all attention from their ‘improvers’ – as a result it was one of the few Whitbread pubs that we consistently entered in the *Good Beer Guide*. The pub was put up for sale in 1990 in the first throws of the Monopolies Commission shake-out. Happily, Pat Bartlett, landlady for twenty years, with her daughter Jo and partner Paul Tickner had the good sense to see the pub’s potential.

Sensitive developments began at once – in addition to the bar extensions already mentioned one of the outbuildings was rebuilt as a block of five self-contained bedrooms and finally, this year, another building was

opened as the new brewhouse. The Flower Pots had returned to its roots, brewing for the community.

The brewery (The Cheriton Brewhouse) is run separately from the pub by Paul Tickner and two other partners, Ray Page and the brewer, Martin Roberts. The first brew, Pots Ale – a hoppy, 3.8%, 'session' beer – was launched in March and was an immediate success. Pots Ale was quickly followed by Brandy Mount Bitter, a much stronger (4.8%) and more complex brew. With its smoky, toffee flavour it is really aimed at the winter market. The third brew is 39 Special, midway in strength (4.3%) between the first two but nearer in flavour to the Pots Ale. The Special was quickly followed by Diggers Gold, a strongish 4.6% bitter, consciously designed to participate in the current fashion for pale 'designer beers.'

At the time of writing a new fifth beer is in the fermenters, it is the strongest and darkest, a 5.4% porter, brewed to a classic recipe dating from around 1800. The new brew, which will be on sale when you read this, will be called Old Grumblebelly's Porter, just possibly alluding to a crass advertising campaign by a certain large brewer.

A brewery 'tour' at Cheriton is something of a misnomer, it is more a case of standing in the tiny brewhouse and turning your head to take in the whole process! The plant is all new, the gleaming stainless steel contrasts with the cool whitewash of the walls. Brewing is a batch process; as the beer passes from vessel to vessel through the mashing (steeping), boiling and fermenting stages, the vessels must match in size and it is this size that sets the brewery's daily production capacity. The Cheriton Brewery

is a 'ten barrel plant' able to make 360 gallons of beer each day (a barrel, to a brewer, is a 36 gallon cask).

The brewer at Cheriton uses a full malt mash and aims to avoid the use of adjuncts or added sugar, the malt is usually from the English grown Halcyon variety of barley. Pale malt provides the alcohol producing sugars, the slightly more roasted *crystal* adds colour and body and small amounts of the almost charcoal-like *chocolate* malt gives the smoky flavours noticeable in beers like the Brandy Mount Bitter.

Only whole hops are used, the variety is Challenger, a modern strain bred at the Wye agricultural college in Kent. Presumably Frederick Mould in his day would have used hops grown locally in Hampshire, perhaps even in the Cheriton parish, sadly Hampshire hop fields are now all but a memory.

Yeast is not an ingredient of beer, only the instrument of its production, yet it is perhaps more important than the materials themselves. The yeast used originated at Morlands brewery in Abingdon, they provided yeast to the Wychwood (Glenny) brewery at Whitney and from there it came to Cheriton. The yeast is propagated by skimmings from the Pots Ale.

As a conclusion, it is a pleasure to report that the weekend of November 13th-14th was cause for great celebration at Cheriton. After only eight months of brewing, a Cheriton beer won first prize at a major brewing industry event! The Diggers Gold took the Champion Beer of the Festival award at the SIBA (Small Independent Brewers Association) show at the Brighton Centre. What better excuse could you need for a nine mile hike than to join in the festivities?

**JOE & MAGGIE**  
*invite you to visit*

# THE FORESTERS ARMS

SALISBURY  
PREMIUM



WILTSHIRE  
DEACON

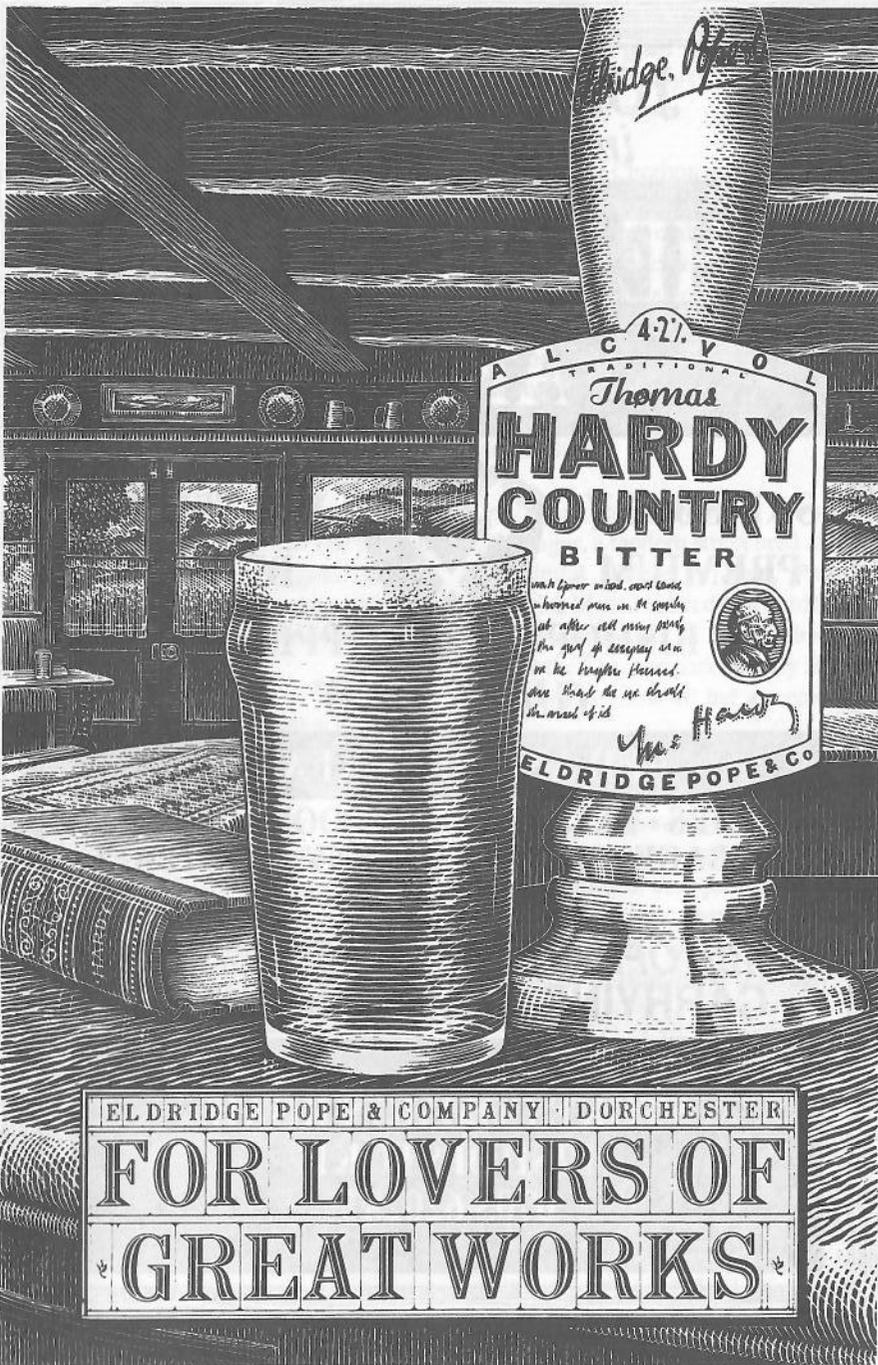
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## EDITOR'S POSTBAG



Our last edition prompted so many letters that some have had to abridged. The first came shortly *before* the Tories' pusillanimous retreat on full measures – I imagine the writer is now even more incensed!

**Dear Sir,**

I am increasingly incensed by the fact that it is now exceptional to be given a full pint in a pub. I estimate that most pubs serve about 18.5 fluid ounces, ie, 92.5% of a pint [*just wait!* – Ed.]. In other words, with a beer at £1.55 a pint, they cheat the customer of about 12p every time.

The LVA's stock reply, that the customer has only to ask and his glass will be topped up, is wholly unsatisfactory. One shouldn't have to ask; in my experience this invariably leads to ill-feeling, often to sarcasm or hassle, the opposite of what most people go to a put for. Recently I was served a conspicuously short pint in the Toll House at Lymington. When asked, the landlord topped up my glass without question but when I returned for another order, I found I had become invisible. I left.

Short measure is a national scandal. CAMRA should escalate it to a primary campaign issue.

**Stephen Harvey  
Chandler's Ford**

CAMRA certainly has this high on its agenda (see the Editorial, for example) and we will not let it drop. A change of Government is probably the best hope but meanwhile public pressure must continue – ask for a top-up!

Next a little mis-  
sive from the MD  
at Gales.

**Dear Sir,**

Further to "Pub News" in the Summer edition of *Hop Press*, I feel I ought to correct the statement made concerning the Star Inn, East Tytherley.

Gales did not "*prevaricate over our response to Bass*" nor were we "*less than pleased*"!

I can confirm that we were offered the freehold at the same time as we purchased six other houses, however we declined the offer immediately and it was subsequently sold to our successful Tenant, Carol Mitchell.

**N. J. B. Atkinson  
Managing Director, George Gale & Co.**

Now a lengthy letter, from a manager at Whitbread's head office, taking us to task on points made in an article about Whitbread in the Summer issue.

**Dear Sir,**

Start with a truism – Whitbread, as any company, exists to make a profit. A retailer must obey the demands of the market, hence Whitbread continually updates its properties, in line with customer demand. Contrary to the article, there has been no "lull" in the amounts lavished on our houses in any of the recent years.

As real ale is the only beer growth market, naturally we are concentrating resources on

so-called real ale pubs. The wisdom of this is shown by the huge success of the Hogshead and other cask ale concepts, some of which have doubled turnover. Far from us *demanding* flagstones and bare boards, over and over again it has been shown that the customers in this style of pub want them. What else explains Whitbread's increase in market share? An increase that also belies your view of the public's opinion of our pricing policy.

There is no "dreadful myth of the real ale pub" in the Whitbread managed estate. Almost all of our pubs sell real ale, the highest real ale turnover is not even in a 'real ale' pub! [name names - Ed.]

We certainly know our real ale developments are not for everyone so we have retained a diversity of outlets to suit all tastes, *where the market demands it*. This includes niche markets like the Tut 'n' Shive, a novelty pub, massively successful since its 'down-grading', with many regulars. In the Monks' Brook, the "low quality decor" so pleased the locals that they now use it 50% more than before. Flat Foot Sam's and The Tavern are the most popular pubs in their areas.

Your complaint that Whitbread's managed estate only sells ales brewed or endorsed by Whitbread is unreasonable - selling the Company's products is our *raison d'être*. Such criticism is like slating Burger king for not selling Big Macs! Whitbread has 21 real ales available to *all* licensees and managers may purchase a percentage from another source.

To sum up, whilst Whitbread has a vast number of pubs in the area, there are also excellent non-Whitbread pubs, some managed

by other brewers as well as many outstanding tenanted and free-trade houses. In this healthy, competitive market, Whitbread continues to grow turnover, market share and variety. Isn't your article the jaundiced view of a minority with a long-standing grudge? You deny supporters the opportunity to sample excellent, traditional houses, run by expert managers and staff serving some of the finest ales in top condition - surely a disservice to all who read *Hop Press*.

**F. Cornhill  
Whitbread, Southampton.**

Finally, we have a letter from France (careful with the phrasing there), from someone perhaps not un-connected with a certain 'students pub' near Bevois Valley.

**Dear Sir,**  
Congratulations on another thought provoking and well-balanced newsletter. However, I must take issue with some points in the curiously titled "Effy's Round".

The author has an outmoded view of the traditional pub with oak beams and real fires. Far from being "most people's ideal pub" the one described fulfils the desires of only a small minority. If an ideal pub can be defined then perhaps the concept of social need would be the proper basis.

Pubs have always served a diverse, evolving population and may be seen as a snap-shot of the diversity of culture that exists at any moment. This culture is influenced by numerous sociological factors such as fashion, attitudes and prosperity, to name just a few. Currently, a popular trend happens to be the noisy, young persons' pub with loud music

and lively atmosphere. Its customers represent the next generation of ale drinkers and have it within their power to save or destroy the future of the British brewing industry. Who are we to deny so large a group decent beer in an environment of their choice?

Far from denigrating such places, CAMRA should encourage them. If it fails in this duty, the future drinking habits of the population will be dictated by the half-crazed marketing executives of "Bottle Pushers Incorporated." British brewers will be denied an essential market, resulting in the loss of many favourite beers.

Finally, let me say that I do sympathise with Effy's viewpoint, I just feel that it is a little narrow minded. As an investor in licensed premises both in Britain and on the continent, my portfolio has a wide variety of establishments, some of which comply with Effy's model, others don't. All, however, give prominence to traditional ale [what of the continental ones? - Ed.]. Collectively they all have their part to play in a more general model of the pub we all seek.

**N. Chumleigh-Warner  
lauzum, Bergerac, France.**

Certainly a good customer response to the Summer edition! Not everyone sees eye-to-eye with our views of course but this is quite inevitable - CAMRA is after all a campaigning organisation and campaigning implies that we want to *change things*.

Please keep your letters coming, dialogue is the first ingredient necessary for mutual understanding (mutual agreement is quite another matter!).

"Effy's Round," by the way, which was introduced in the Summer edition, is a personal viewpoint from one of our long-standing Branch members. He (for Effy is indeed a 'he') prefers to remain anonymous. I have not yet been able to get him to divulge the origin of his curious pseudonym.

## Summer Crossword: Winners

There were five correct entries in the competition in the last edition. Two names have been pulled from the hat. The winners were:

**John Moodie, Lymington.  
Gordon Tack, Eastleigh.**

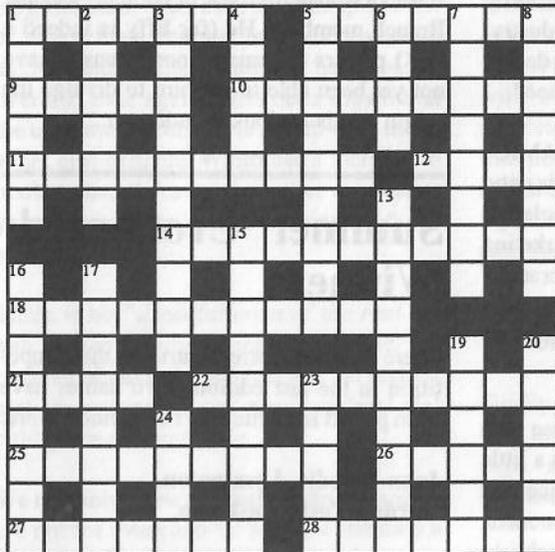
The other correct entries came from:

Miss M. Moxon, Freemantle.  
A. J. Siggery, Lymington.  
Howard Bell, Christchurch.

Solution:

	B	I	S	H	O	P	S	T	I	P	P	L	E	
P	N	O	O	I	I	U	C							
I	N	S	I	G	H	T		M	O	N	A	R	C	H
G	U	S	S	P	T	C	A							
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	L	Y	M	I	N	G	T	O	N	P	I	E	R	

# COMPETITION CROSSWORD



QUETZALCOATL

Prizes to the first two correct entries drawn from the hat.

Entries, by January 14th, to:

The Editor  
Hop Press  
1 Surbiton Road  
Eastleigh SO5 4HY

## ACROSS

- 1 Kittens and puppies do make a mess (7)
- 5 Leave a nautical type? You're mad! (7)
- 9 Stones of an ornamental use (5)
- 10 Record a beat sound, a clever number (9)
- 11 Piano in need of a dose of valium? (10)
- 12 Queen, fit, right over the water (4)
- 14 A rigger tea – it may make you sick (11)
- 18 Some of the ins and outs of folk or country music? (11)
- 21 The Admiralty was responsible for this bird's extinction (4)
- 22 Some ambition! – Just to draw breath (10)
- 25 Thanks to being sober I head for a poor state (9)
- 26 Where Livy lived (5)
- 27 Signalled again: "connections have been repaired" (7)
- 28 Male H.R.T.?? Outright hot air! (7)

## DOWN

- 1 A cosmetic charge on the airline (6)
- 2 He will surely steer the plough! (6)
- 3 Avoiding life's hard road – perhaps by using the reverse? (4,6)
- 4 It's a system, if it's so large inside (5)
- 5 This film provokes languor N and S! (6,3)
- 6 The navy-blues broke out here (4)
- 7 Out lout! Rita is being educated (8)
- 8 I hear one must arrive wealthy to be collected (8)
- 13 Overlook a king in a tree? Call yourself a sleuth! (4,6)
- 15 Attendances are best in Geordieland (9)
- 16 A section of the Arctic Ocean? (3,5)
- 17 In big waves a vessel could be (8)
- 19 Funny sort of Norman (6)
- 20 Lead to a letter at the end (6)
- 23 Fashionable group, in the picture (5)
- 24 Sounds like ale will carry you off! (4)

# It was a pretty odd name for a motor car, too.

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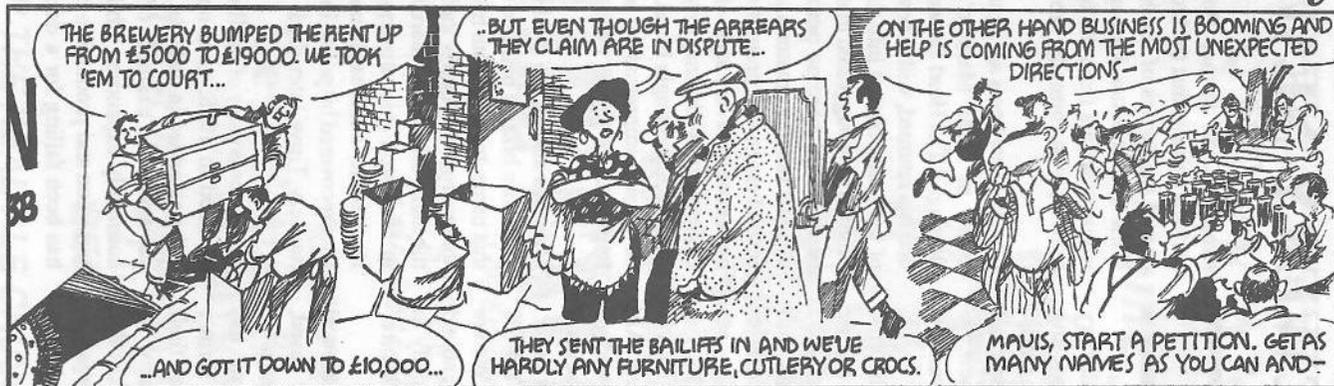
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KEGBUSTER is published in CAMRA's monthly newspaper *What's Brewing*.

# KEGBUSTER

Bill Tidy



# LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

**Rob Whalley**

Bunces Brewery at Netheravon on Salisbury Plain has been bought by Dane, Stig Anderson, who learnt his trade at the Carlsburg Brewery in Copenhagen. The original beers are still being produced and a new 5% Christmas brew, **Rudolf**, is just announced.

One of the Stig's competitors in the free trade is aptly, **King Alfred Bitter**, from the Hampshire Brewery. These Andover based brewers have kept up the regal theme with their second beer **Lionheart**, named after Richard of that ilk.

As if one brewery is not enough for Andover there is now a second one! The New Ale Brewery started operations at the end of September and already there are several brews on stream. The first is a 4% bitter, **Anna Valley Ale** and the second is a 4½% premium bitter, **Balkesbury Bitter**. We are promised in the future a strong bitter, an old ale and a mild. So far, outlets are mostly in the North of the County and in Berkshire.

New beers under old names are being brewed on the Isle of Wight. The Newport based, Island Brewery, which is closely connected with the Hartridges soft drinks firm, has purchased the *name* of Burts, the former much loved Ventnor brewers, from their receivers. The Island Brewery will now be known as Burts Brewery (Newport). The present **Nipper Bitter** is likely to survive but other beers will almost certainly take the

names of the former Burts' brews. It is perhaps a shame that the brewery has adopted one of the tactics of the big brewers, even if the beer is better. Perhaps the acquisition is just nostalgia from the Island Brewery's brewer, who formally brewed at Burts.

Genuine new beers are again making appearances in local Marston's pubs, if only fleetingly! The Head Brewers Choice promotion has returned, with a new fortnightly range of ten beers, lasting into the New Year. The original plan suggested that the most popular beers would become permanent brews but this has failed to materialize. With the new second range this promotion would seem to have covered every style of beer imaginable. Unfortunately, the majority have been somewhat disappointingly bland. Almost all would have been improved by an increase in the hop rate.

Marstons also hit the local headlines recently in a more bizarre manner when a macaw of that name, together with his mate Topsy, were stolen from Paulton's Park!. He was given the name after being reared at a Marston Pub in Nuneaton (his subsequent translation to Hampshire is not explained). The pair were later recovered by police in Yeovil but unfortunately Topsy later died.

The success story of the Ringwood Brewery, founded in 1978, goes on. The brewery is to be extended in order to increase capacity yet again. An example of a small brewery constantly expanding whilst both beer consumption and production by the big brewers has been falling for a decade. (p23) =>

## STEVE AND LYN

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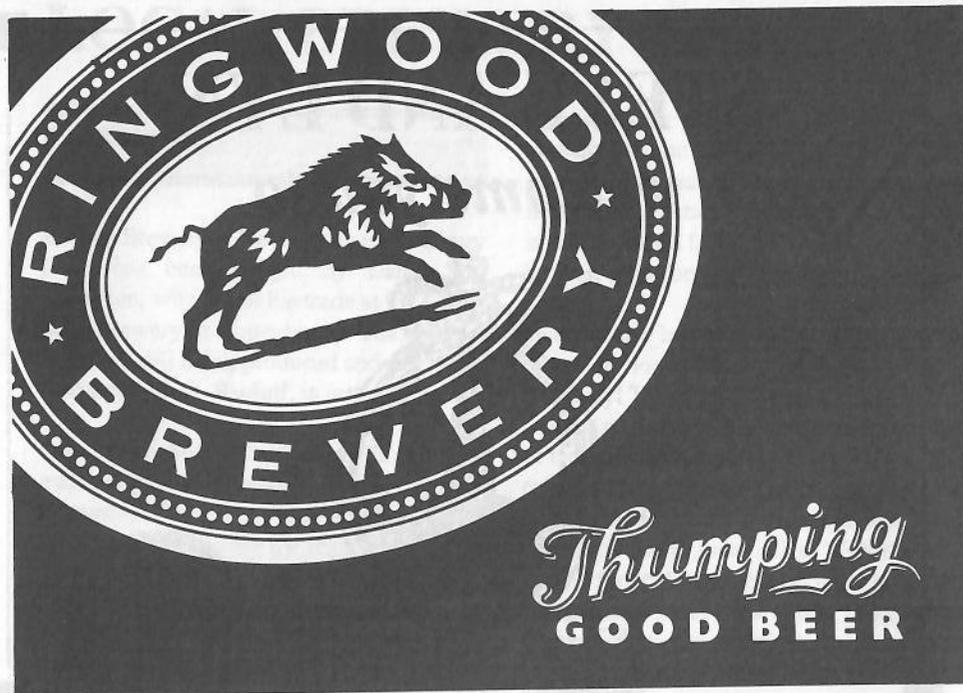
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The major brewers seem unable to solve this mystery but it could be explained by any discerning drinker.

Big and small have come together in an agreement in Dorset where Carlsberg-Tetley, the brewing sector of Allied Lyons, are distributing Eldridge Pope beers within the Wessex Area and throughout the Allied estate. The deal is unlikely to have any great effect on local real ale drinkers in our area although we might expect to see some Eldridge Pope beers on the counters of our rather sparse number of Allied tied houses.

A development which may well have more impact on choice for local drinkers is the takeover of Devenish (Inn Leisure) by Greenalls. Greenall Whitley was a long established, Warrington based, brewery which during the 1980's was very predatory. They took over, and closed, a number of good Midlands breweries before turning their back on brewing in 1991. They are now one of the huge and fast growing pub chains that have been the most dramatic outcome of the Monopolies Commission investigation of the brewing industry.

The takeover of Devenish, who also quit brewing in 1991, gives the company 550 new pubs in the South and West, where it had previously been unrepresented. The total estate now numbers around 2000, but having no breweries they are totally exempt from any regulation on their monopolisation of the beer supplies to this vast market. In recent times the beers available in our local Devenish pubs have been largely indistinguishable from those in Whitbread pubs. The situation is hardly likely to improve now Greenalls are in charge!

The Hop Back Brewery, which moved a year or so ago into new, enlarged premises at Downton, after out-growing its rather cramped start in the outbuildings of the Wyndham Arms in Salisbury, has decided to go public. The brewery, started by John Gilbert at the Wyndham Arms in 1987, now has two pubs (the Waterloo in Freemantle was purchased from Whitbread in 1991) and is hoping to raise money for further expansion of this estate. The share issue will take advantage of the last few weeks of the Business Expansion Scheme - scheduled in last year's budget to be withdrawn on December 31st.

Whilst the small brewers continue to expand, Whitbread is moving out of its almost new, purpose built distribution depot at Hedge End. A number of smaller scale depots are likely to replace the giant beer warehouse. With some 250 employees at Hedge End, there will almost certainly be quite a number of redundancies.

The Hogsback Brewery at Tongham, near Farnham, which featured in an article in the last edition of *Hop Press*, also continues to grow its beer range. New beers that are now in production include a **Dark Mild** (3.4%), a **Special** (4.6%), **Rip Snorter** (5%) and a ferocious 7½% Christmas beer, **Santa's Wobble**. All of these beers are available at the brewery in quantities down to 17 pint 'minipins'

Finally, we were saddened to hear of the death of Peter Gibbs, chairman of the Salisbury brewers Gibbs Mew. Mr. Gibbs, who was 71, joined the family firm 'as a lad' in 1939! Last year he successfully defeated takeover overtures by the New Zealand conglomerate Brierly Investments.

## PUB NEWS

*Rob Whitley*

The last edition of *Pub News* began with the news that Paul and Elizabeth Hockey had left the Abbey Hotel in Romsey, after seven years, due to a huge increase in their rent. We are pleased to report that they are now running the **Wellow Wine Centre** and overseeing the management of the vineyard.

Another ex-Grand Metropolitan licensee is Chris Lewis-Jones who has left the **Albion Inn** near Winchester station after six years in charge. The pub is up for sale but may not remain as licensed premises. Fortunately the **Eagle Hotel**, opposite, has been refurbished and was serving Old Speckled Hen, Tetleys and London Pride when we last visited. The situation in this part of Winchester could have been improved much further if the County Council had decided to re-open the South Western Inn, so expensively bought by their predecessors. The County Council, in their wisdom, have decided instead that the pub will become a registry office!

The city's drinkers have gained another watering hole however as the "dead" Electric in Upper Brook Street has been re-opened by Devenish as the **Porterhouse**.

Bishop's Waltham has also seen a re-opening with the **Priory** trading again. There was a good selection of real ales available when we visited, which makes it strange that their recent advertisements have concentrated on

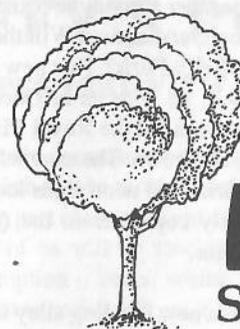
the mouth-watering delights of Whitbread Best, Heineken and White Label.

Not far away, in Botley, the Garrison has fallen and Morlands, the new owners, have returned to the previous name of the **Dolphin**. The pub is leased by Mr. E. J. Allen and managed by Brian and Pam Kingsbury, we wish them a warm welcome. The three Morland beers - Original, Old Masters and Old Speckled Hen are accompanied by a guest beer, currently Adnams Broadside.

A pub that is less likely to revert to its former name is the **Builder's Folly**, previously known as the Brigadier Gerrard and originally as the Old New Inn. It has been bought by Star Hotels who also own the Master Builder and the Humble Plum. It is being run by Kevin and Anne Dickenson who were previously at the Brushmakers at Upham.

One pub that is unlikely ever to see any more customers, is the **Maypole** at Hedge End as permission has been sought to build 27 houses on the site of the derelict pub which was gutted by fire in 1991. Another plan for housing is threatening the **Speckled Trout** at New Milton. Alternative plans for flats were first submitted in 1990 and both have now been re-submitted as they had lapsed after being approved. Town councillors are now against the plans and are to try to get the landmark building listed.

The **Crown and Stirrup** at Lyndhurst is now in the hands of Mark and Kim Pycroft, who were previously working at the New Forest Inn at Emery Down. The pub has undergone



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extensive refurbishment. Staying in Lyndhurst, congratulations are in order for the **Bolton's Bench Inn**, where members of an Eastleigh disabled group were made to feel most welcome after they had been refused entry to two other pubs on their way to Weymouth earlier in the day. To the West, we welcome Mike and Kath Lawton to the **Elm Tree** at Hightown, Ringwood having moved from the Chestnut Tree in Andover.

Another welcome is to Colin Chandler at the **Andover Arms** in King's Somborne. Colin takes over from Mike and Jan Neilan who are moving to the sunshine in Spain after three and a half years in the Test Valley. Colin is not moving so far, he was formerly at the village Working Men's Club.

In another part of the Forest, we understand that the Hordle parish Council is considering designs for a new badge of office for the chairman. Current thoughts include a proposal to create a badge incorporating the names of the three pubs in the parish – the **Three Bells**, the **Crown** at Everton and the **Plough** at Tiptoe. It is good to see that this council at least understands the focal nature of the pub in society. Thankfully though, Eastleigh already has an established coat of arms (to be seen well displayed as the pub sign of the **Leigh Hotel**), otherwise we might be presented with some synthesis of Hanrahans, Tuxedo Junction and Felix Park!

Mention of the Tuxedo Junction does give us some pleasure since we are glad to see that it is returning to its original name, the **Good Companions**. Fortunately the original charming sign was saved and has been rehung. The new tenant, Brian Jess, says that the reversal is due to customer demand (*Hop Press* was glad to add its twopennyworth).

Patrons of some other absurdly re-named pubs should take heart, and action. Will the same fate befall the **Felix Park**? This new apparition, which will be with us in December, is the latest persona for the Royal Mail, ex-Golden Eagle, ex-Crown. The external colour scheme and horizontal neon signs look as if they are directly copied from the (Home) Tavern next door.

Permission for a new bowling alley is being sought for Totton's **Testwood Hotel** and refurbishment is already under way at the **Crown** in Shirley where trams will be the theme of the decor! Open again after many months of work is the **Royal Standard**. The Castle formerly the infamous Juniper Berry, on Southampton's walls, is now re-named the **Bosun's Locker**. Amongst the beers is Bosun Bitter from the Poole Brewery.

The severely fire-damaged **Waterloo Arms**, in Dukes Road, Southampton, is unlikely to ever serve beer again. Permission is being sought for a new building on the site for office or light industrial use. Meanwhile another former pub, the **Cliff** at Woolston, may be converted into 11 flats. Let us hope the **Rising Sun**, in Sholing, will reopen as a pub after it is sold by Marstons.

Finally, a cautionary tale from the **White Horse** at Otterbourne which was recently fined for selling frozen, factory-made lasagna as "home-made". At a meeting with a trading standards officer the licensee, Jason Simons, and the Whitbread area manager claimed they had only served the meals for 10 days but checks with the suppliers found that the lasagna had been delivered to the pub for more than three months. Trading standards officers are keen to stop such deception and would be interested to hear of other examples.

## EFFY'S ROUND

### a personal view

The festive season approaches rapidly and I imagine that to most readers alcohol is as much a part of the scene as turkey and tinsel. Many of us will be stocking up for home consumption – beers, wines, bottles of this and that to satisfy all possible family tastes.

If the brewery marketing men have their way, and unfortunately they usually do, you will be returning from the supermarkets laden with cases of "canned draught beer." Don't be fooled, these beers are just as dead as the previous varieties of tinned beer. The attractive creamy heads, which make these beers seem different, are just the result of the tins being pressurised with nitrogen instead of carbon dioxide.

There are better products to be had. The supermarkets and off-licences have, in recent years, been taking much more interest in good quality beers – both home produced and foreign. A number of these are living beers, "bottle conditioned" with a yeast sediment. None of these beers come in tins, the beers to buy are all in glass. It's worth carrying home the extra weight for the sake of having something decent to drink (vital to offset the predictably awful television).

In our area, there will be many of you taking small excursions to Cherbourg or Le Havre prior to Christmas; returning loaded down with immense amounts of cheap Stella or the 33 Export "little green men," all for personal consumption, of course. Again there are much, much better things to buy.

The area of France between Amiens and the Belgian border is French Flanders or Picardy, it is the centre of a tradition of brewing beers known as *Bière de Garde*. These are top fermented, like English beers, they are strong (6½–8%) and usually in corked and wired 750ml bottles – like Champagne.

These superb beers are now available in almost any big French *supermarché*, at very sensible prices. The most common, and usually cheapest, is **Jenlain** (6½%), about F10 (£1.20) or less. **La Choulette** (7½%) is about F13 and the curiously named **Ch'Ti** (6½%) is a bit dearer at F14. For alcoholic value, go for the **3 Monts** (8%) at F11.50. Even if you can't resist the cheap rubbish, bring some of these for real enjoyment.

Still many of us will still be strolling down to the local for some of the traditional British entertainment of the disco or karaoke and a couple of pints of handpumped beer. Like as not, you'll then run into another Christmas problem, the entry tax.

Issuing tickets for the two winter "eves" is now rampant. The explanations are generally that "...it's to control trouble..." or that "...the buffet is thrown in..." but I think these are poor justifications. The practice eliminates one of the little pleasures of Christmas time, the stroll around town wishing "happy Christmas" or "happy New-Year" to friends, on both sides of the counters. So I will issue my good wishes through *Hop Press*; enjoy the holiday and *please don't drive to the pub*.



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| <b>Sat 11 Dec</b> | <i>Docks walk-about.<br/>Start 7.30, Queen of Clubs, Simnel St.</i>                      |
| <b>Tue 14 Dec</b> | <i>Branch Meeting.<br/>8.15pm Eagle Hotel, Winchester.</i>                               |
| <b>Wed 29 Dec</b> | <i>Post Christmas, relief at last, social.<br/>8pm Waterloo Arms, freemantle.</i>        |

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