

# **WIGHTWASH**



THE ISLE OF WIGHT BRANCH  
NEWSLETTER NO 10, DECEMBER 1994



**DON'T FORGET THE AGM - 8.30 FRIDAY 13TH January, Travellers Joy**

## **BREWERY NEWS**

### **Goddards**

A new beer was launched at the recent IOW Beer Festival in Binstead (see next page). Fuggle De Dum is a single malt beer using a single hop variety (Fuggles), a bit of invert sugar and yeast, that's it. A very simple recipe, but a terrific taste, with hops predominating. At 4.8% ABV it complements the Special Bitter, which continues in excellent form. At our suggestion, Goddards are considering publishing their ingredients, either on pumpclips, beer mats, or posters. This could be the start of national movement to persuade brewers to be more open about what goes into their beers.

### **The Kingston Arms**

**NEWPORT ROAD**

**COWES**

**Tel: 293393**

- **Good selection Gales Real Ales**
- **Good Pub Food - Gourmet Menu available**
- **Food served all day**
- **Large Car Park**

*Adrian & Jackie welcome all CAMRA Members*

## **BREWERY HISTORY**

Further to the information in the last issue about former Island breweries, the following extracts come from the newsletter of the Brewery History Society:

"The remains of Dashwood's Vectis Brewery in Trafalgar Road, Newport have followed the brewery tap (The Grapes) under the bulldozer and housing is being built on the site. All that remains is the old wall plaque which says 'HW PARTY WALL 1860' -HW being Henry Waterman who owned the brewery before it became Dashwood's."

"The one time Crown Brewery in Newbridge is up for sale as part of Lower Calbourne Mill, to which it is attached."

"Marex House at 88, High Street, Cowes is up for sale. This was once the John Eames Brewery and was then used as offices by W.B. Mew Langton for many years."

Anyone interested in this subject may like to contact the Brewery History Society, Manor Side East, Mill Lane, West Byfleet, Surrey KT14 7RS.

## If You've Got the Bottle

by Brian Jacobs

Now, I would be the first to admit that real draught ale is the second best thing in the world, and certainly the finest thing you can put in a glass. And, if pressed, I would divulge the earth-shattering opinion that you can enjoy it no better place than an English pub. But what if you get to the pub and find that the pump clip's turned around on the only handpump on the bar, or that the most interesting real ale on offer is Strong Country, or that the pint of Tanglefoot you've been served is in less than lustrous condition? Worse still, what if you can't get to the pub at all (You're not going down the bloody Prince again, that's the third night in a row!)? On such occasions, the only thing to do is.... hit the bottle.

Let me openly confess at this stage that I am no expert on the subject, as the content of this article will doubtless bear out! What I offer is information as to what is available locally, and my opinion thereof.

On the Continent, bottled beers have always enjoyed a rather higher profile than in Britain, where they first became prominent when the duty on glass was repealed in 1834. They were probably at their peak in the 1950s, when the quality of draught ale was not always what it should be, and subsequently declined in popularity in the face of competition from more consistent draught beers, initially keg and lager (sorry about the bad language), and then from real ale; most importantly, of course, the off sales market became dominated by canned beer, which must represent the absolute nadir of the brewer's art. More recently, however, bottled beers, both real and pasteurised, indigenous and foreign, seem to have enjoyed something of a renaissance, and the variety available in your local pub, supermarket and off-license is quite prodigious. Should you travel to the Continent, then the choice is even more spectacular, and that will be the subject of another article.

It must be said that whatever the ethics and philosophy of naturally-conditioned versus brewery-conditioned bottled beer, the difference between the two is nowhere near as marked as with draught keg and real ale. No doubt I will be shot down in flames for such an assertion, but, in my experience, both types of bottled beer are equally fizzy, which makes variations in palate more difficult to detect. Whereas I would avoid draught keg and lager like the plague it is, I must confess to finding many pasteurised bottled beers not only palatable, but, in several cases, positively rewarding.

### **TONY'S**

*Garden Service*

**26 Nodes Road**

**Cowes - tel: 292309**

- **Landscaping**
- **Fencing**
- **Experienced Gardener**
- **Prompt and Personal Service**

So what interesting bottled beers are you likely to find in your Isle of Wight local? Guinness, of course, is readily available, although its acceptability has declined somewhat since its change to pasteurisation. The superb bottle-conditioned Worthington White Shield, with its complex, nutty palate and lingering bitter aftertaste, is widely available, and no serious harm seems to have come to it after the recent introduction of a bottom fermenting yeast for the secondary fermentation in the bottle.

In Gales houses you will find probably the finest example of a bottle-conditioned ale, the wonderful Prize Old Ale. Those of you who can afford to shell out around £2 for a half pint will be rewarded with a barley wine of exceptional quality, whose vinous palate is as complex as any beer I have tasted. If you do drink it at the pub, however, give your car keys to someone else - the 9% ABV will soon put you on the wrong side of a breathalyser.

Ushers houses maintain an excellent range of pasteurised bottled beers. The Dark Horse Porter (5% ABV; £1.50 per half pint) has a good, roasted flavour, but is not perhaps quite bitter enough for a classic of its genre. The IPA, at a similar price and strength, is a splendid example of the current revival of this beer style - smooth, hoppy with a marvellous, lingering bitter aftertaste. The 6.4% Old Particular is an all-year-round bottled version of the Winter Warmer, but, whilst being a pleasant, malty and sweet old ale, it is inferior to its draught counterpart. With the notable exception of bottle-conditioned Thomas Hardy Country Bitter, this seems to be the case with most bottled versions of draught ales - although, doubtless, non-real ale drinkers would say the opposite!

The variety of bottled beers available at local supermarkets and offlicenses is much more prodigious, and has increased dramatically over the last couple of years, particularly with regard to British brews. The selection of foreign beers is confined largely to mid-strength pilsners, and try as I might, I cannot get away from the view that, with one or two exceptions, pils is pils is pils. They are reasonably pleasant to drink, particularly on a hot summer day, but the variations in palate between them are far too subtle for my uneducated taste buds. Notable exceptions are the excellent Pilsner Urquell, Grolsch and Budvar, which are full-bodied, sweetish and quite malty; all are readily available in local shops at around £1.50 a pint. The premium pilsners (I hate the word lager - it reminds me of the pathetic imitations of Continental beers brewed under license in this country) like Lowenbrau are also worth trying.

Wheat beers are highly fashionable on the Continent at present, and you will find a good selection locally. The most distinctive is the superb Hoegaarden, readily available from most large supermarkets at around 99p for 33cl (but considerably cheaper on the Continent). This spiced, cloudy Belgian ale is bottle-conditioned, and one of the only beers with which you are intended to drink the sediment. A bottle of 'young' beer can be a bit disappointing, but lay it down for a couple of months and the complex citrus fruit palate overlaid with coriander really asserts itself. The brewery is a tiny part of the giant Interbrew group, which contains such names as Stella Artois, but they have wisely left Hoegaarden to its own devices. In addition, Tesco offers another two German wheat beers, as well as an interesting rye beer; Safeway also sells a German Wheat beer. Top fermented foreign beers are not too plentiful, and those which are available are generally more expensive than wine! One exception to this is Kutscher Alt from Safeway, a fruity, dark German Ale at 5% ABV and costing 99p for 33cl. Tesco and Bottoms Up offer Chimay Red (8%) at a staggering £3.65 for 75cl (around three times more expensive than in its native Belgium), which, although a bottle-conditioned beer of the highest quality, is inferior to its blue and white bedfellows. Safeway sells an excellent Biere de Garde, Ch'ti Ambree, which is a marvellous, full-bodied, fruity strong ale. Bottoms Up also sell a couple of Belgian beers; Timmermans Kriek is an over-sweet version of the classic Belgian cherry beer, but Duvel is the archetypal example of a golden strong ale, and well worth drinking.

# TRAVELLERS JOY

PALLANCE ROAD

NORTHWOOD

Tel: 298024

- **9 Real Ales (always at least 1 mild or porter)**
- **Beer Garden & Conservatory (functions)**
- **Children always welcome (animals in the garden)**
- **Good Pub Food**

*Derek and Ruth Smith are proud to be current holders of Isle of Wight*

*CAMRA Branch "Pub of the Year" award.*

Better deals come in the form of British beers, including an interesting selection of stouts and porters. The finest available is undoubtedly the recently-introduced Guinness Foreign Extra Stout (7.5% ABV), which is available from Bottoms Up at £1.19 for 33cl - not bad value. I refer you to October's 'What's Brewing' for comprehensive tasting notes by Roger Protz, but suffice it to say that the wonderful Guinness taste overlaid with a heavy fruit palate makes it one of the best things available in a bottle. Also at BU is the excellent Nethergate Old Crowler, a traditional porter which exhibits all the characteristics of its genre. Gateway will provide you with two from Samuel Smith; the renowned Taddy Porter is gorgeous, black, roasty and splendidly bitter and the Oatmeal Stout is a traditional sweet stout in the Mackeson style - not my taste, but it is a quality beer. Both are around £1.50 for 50cl.

There are two IPAs worth trying. Marstons' IPA (5.5% £1.39 for 50cl) is available at BU, and is a superb example of this genre, clean-tasting, very hoppy and excellent value. Better even than this is Tesco bottle-conditioned IPA (5%, £1.29 for 50cl); it hits the tongue with a massive smack of fruit balanced by a good portion of hops, which makes this IPA dangerously drinkable, and leaves you panting for more. I think this is a more a strong bitter than a classic IPA, but, either way, it's a marvellous beer. And speaking of strong bitters, there is an very good bottled conditioned version available from Safeway (5.3%, £1.49 for 550ml).

If you are in the vicinity of a Sainsburys' on the mainland, they do an excellent range of bottled beers. Among those worth trying are Paul Theakston's Black Sheep Ale, an amber beer which has a strong taste of dark malts, and an excellent German Rauchbier (smoked beer) which complements superbly the Mesquite Chicken available elsewhere in the store; in their own brand range are a Belgian Cueuze, quite pleasant but a little sweet, a French Biere de Garde and a Blackfriars Porter.

What I have given you is a personal selection rather than an exhaustive list. There are many other bottled beers available, and new ones are constantly appearing. The best rule is - try them and make up your own mind. I need hardly remind you that the best place to enjoy any beer is in a pub - don't let your supermarket purchases interfere with your visits to the local!

# **JOHN NICHOLSON LTD**

**108 PALLANCE ROAD**

**COWES**

**Tel: 290342**

- **Specialist Roofing Services**
- **Long Guarantee Flat Roofing Installation (up to 25yrs)**
- **Building & Roofing Supplies (felts, plywood, sand, cement etc.)**
- **2, 4 & 5yd Skips**

*A Registered Quality Assured Firm to BS5750 : Part 2*

## **BEER FESTIVALS**

### **The 4th Annual Isle of Wight Beer Festival**

The 4th Annual Isle of Wight Beer Festival was held on the 18th & 19th November at Binstead Community Centre. Some 40 beers were on offer, several of them new, including Goddards Fuggle De Dum, which as mentioned earlier is excellent. Other interesting beers included Brakspear OBJ, Black Sheep from Masham and the ever popular Summer Lightning. The star of the show, however, was the Eldridge Pope Old Spiced Ale, which was superb, with hints of cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg - not to everyone's taste, but certainly different.

Congratulations to Derek Smith on the excellent organisation, to Derek and Andy for the fine condition of the beers. Derek's thanks to the Binstead Community Centre and to all those who helped.

Looking forward to the next one.

### **FOR THE PRICE OF A PINT**

Did you see the article in the daily papers about the average price of a pint of beer by county?

It quoted the Isle of Wight as being the seventh highest with the average pint being £1.59. Being inquisitive I wanted to find out how they had achieved this figure. My first step was to buy a copy of the Good Pub Guide. This is a fairly thick book, but after much searching I still could not find the table with the county prices. I decided to ring the publishers and find out why. I telephoned Vermilion and spoke to their PR person Jill Pullen, who confirmed that the table was not in the book, it had been made up by the Press Association and several different papers had different versions. However I was able to confirm that from their data the figures were correct. So the next question was how had

they got their data? I was able to learn that forms had been sent to a number of pubs on the Island, how many I was unable to ascertain, but only 11 had been returned! Using that information this wonderful figure had been achieved. I was unable to find out whether this was for Real Ale or keg. I am convinced that this figure is incorrect, would anybody like to give me figures from their local pubs, giving name of beer as well as cost. I will compile a proper average for beer on the Island. My telephone number is 874562.

Richard Sussex Branch

## **FROM OUR AFLOAT CORRESPONDENT - Tim Marshall**

We are just coming to the end of our summer Mediterranean cruising season and I've just had my last beer stock up. This time in the Spanish port of Vigo.

Vigo, like many of Spain's larger towns and cities, has a branch of a chain of department stores called "El Corte Ingles" (or The English Cut - no I've no idea why); and they all have a food hall with a comprehensive selection of local and imported beers.

In my experience, of all the Mediterranean countries, Spain produces the best (or possibly the least worse) beers.

My favourite is Voll Damm - a dark lager coming in at 7% abv. Also worth a mention are the "premium" versions of some of Spain's better known brews:

San Miguel Selecta

Aguila Reserve (5.7% abv)

Estrella Extra (7.2% abv)

Of the beers I bought this time, two I found of special interest:

one from European city of Edinburgh - Gordons Finest Blond; and one from La Coruna (which you may remember as the reluctant host to a leaking oil tanker last year) - Estrella Galicia.

Gordons because it was good. My notes at the time, which I can just read, say - "Strong, warm, thick butterscotch" followed by two ticks. So you can see I was pretty impressed. I just wonder if there is a rather less convoluted way of getting hold of this splendid British ale than buying it in a Spanish supermarket after it has been imported (or should that be exported?) via Belgium by John Martin of Antwerp.

Estrella Galicia is not a particularly noteworthy beer. What is noteworthy, however, is the glue (animal in origin) that they use to stick the gold foil round the top. If you, like me, open a bottle and sniff, then you'll be greeted not by the bouquet of the beer, but by the pong of the glue. It almost defies description, the nearest I can get to it is regurgitated gorgonzola.

# **LAKE SUPERIOR**

**MARLBOROUGH ROAD**

**RYDE**

**Tel: 563519**

- **Variety of Real Ales**
- **Regular Live Music & Entertainment**
- **Twice Runner-up Island CAMRA Pub of the Year**

## **And now the good and bad news:**

Those of you who read my bit on Naples may be interested that I can now walk to and along the esplanade without risking life and limb as the police have stopped the illegal parking on the pavements, now making these accessible to walkers and joggers.

The bad news is that as well as removing the illegally parked cars, they've also removed what I suspect were the illegal kiosks that I wrote about last year - the ones that sold Chimay Red and Biere du Demon etc.

The really good news, however is that this time I visited Naples, no one picked my pocket the last time I was there someone deftly removed 64,000 lire from my jeans.

Editor's note:

In Tim's last piece some words were lost in the transcription process. The penultimate paragraph should have read:-

"In all but a couple of states it's illegal to print the strength

of the beer on the label. This seems a little ironic considering that the Surgeon General has sent me a little message on every bottle of beer I've so far purchased in America warning me that I shouldn't drink too much alcohol if I become pregnant, but fails to tell me how much alcohol is in the bottle."



## 1995 GBG LAUNCHED

Being new to the area I decided to attend the Portsmouth and S.E. Hants Branch launch of the 1995 Good Beer Guide at the Queens Hotel in Gosport. Having seen an advert in the Portsmouth Branch magazine for this venue saying that Coronation Street had "nicked their wallpaper" I did not know quite what to expect!! Having arrived at the pub, the wallpaper revealed itself as being heavily striped and velvet in origin, still I had come for more serious reasons and walked up to the bar, where I was warmly welcomed by Sue the landlady. I ordered a pint of Cheriton Pots Ale from a choice of 7 real ales and one real cider.

For the promotion launch the brewers had knocked 20 pence off the price of the beer and provided a buffet. I was one of the first to arrive so as I sipped my pint, I admired Sue's collection of beer pumpclips and commented on the varieties of beer mats on the tables. Sue asked me if I collected beer mats, to which I replied yes. She disappeared and returned shortly with some beer mats for me (thanks again Sue).

So to the beers - as well as the Pots Ale, I was offered Archers Village Bitter, Ringwood Fortyniner, Ringwood XXXX Porter, Hook Norton's Old Hooky, Hampshire King Alfred's, Hopback Power House and Inch's Cider. The Queens Hotel also uses oversize lined glasses so you get a full pint and the landlord does not get a wet floor.

The bar quickly filled up with CAMRA members and I was introduced to Jim Fox, the Portsmouth Branch contact and to most of the committee. Everybody was issued with a computerised label which made talking to people very easy as we all knew each others names. Sales of the Good Beer Guide 1995 were good, being sold at cost price £5-50, it was hardly surprising!

At nine o'clock some speeches were made to thank everybody who had turned up, members, publicans and brewers. The buffet was unveiled and what a spread that was, with lots of different sandwiches, chicken pieces, chicken drumsticks, salad, pork pies and bread.

Sadly it was time to go, I had thoroughly enjoyed myself and had been made to feel most welcome by the Portsmouth group. My thanks must go to the brewers who sponsored it: Cheriton, Ringwood, Hook Norton, Hampshire, Hopback and the Beer Cellar, but most importantly to Sue and Eddie, the landlords of the Queens Hotel.

(1995 GBGs available to IOW Branch through the Travellers Joy - Ed)

Richard Sussex Branch

## CIDER & PERRY

As promised in the last issue we list below outlets for cask conditioned cider on the Island:-

Prince of Wales	Newport	Bulmer's West Country	H
Sun	Hulverstone	Bulmer's Medium	H
Travellers Joy	Northwood	Inche's	G
Row Barge	Bembridge	Addlestone's	H
Terminus	Ventnor	Addlestone's	H

## JOHN NICHOLSON LTD

108 PALLANCE ROAD

COWES

Tel: 290342

- Specialist Roofing Services
- Long Guarantee Flat Roofing Installation (up to 25yrs)
- Building & Roofing Supplies (felts, plywood, sand, cement etc.)
- 2, 4 & 5yd Skips

*A Registered Quality Assured Firm to BS5750 : Part 2*

## **AFFORDABLE ALES - A list of (known) pubs selling at least one real ale at £1-40 or less. Further contributions welcome.**

STAR INN, Wroxall

WOODMAN, Wootton

ROWBARGE, Bembridge

FOUNTAIN HOTEL, Cowes

CENTRAL HOTEL, Ventnor

VOLUNTEER, Ventnor

WOODVALE, Gurnard

*Cheers,*

*the beer punter*

# W<sub>IGHT</sub> B<sub>USINESS</sub> S<sub>ERVICES</sub>

Unit 3, DAISH WAY

DODNOR

Tel: 822229

- From Pencils to Word Processors
- The Island's Leading Stationary Service

*A Registered Quality Assured Firm to BS5750 : Part 2*

## Committee:

Chairman	Chris Coleman	521494
Secretary/Branch Contact	Derek Smith	298024
Treasurer	Derek Nicoll	525797
Press Officer/GBG Co-ordinator	Brian Jacobs	527093
Social Secretary	Debbie Lane	616809
Membership/Branch Diary	Nick Ward	299477
Committee Member	John Nicholson	299436
Committee Member	Ken Matthews	294377
Committee Member	Ray Scarfe	298726
Honorary Auditor	Roger Barlow (CSE Woodwork)	297722

## ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

Wightwash is produced at about three-monthly intervals and is distributed free through a number of pubs, including the Travellers Joy, the Castle, Ryde, Prince of Wales, Newport, Star, Wroxall, Wight Mouse, Chale. Anybody who would like to receive copies of future newsletters by post can do so on payment of £1 (per year).

The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editors or the Campaign for Real Ale, either locally or nationally.

If you have any adverts or material: articles, information, pictures, recipes, please contact Nick Ward (299477) or John Nicholson (299436)

## STAGE STRUCK?

COWES AMATEUR OPERATIC AND DRAMATIC SOCIETY

~TRINITY THEATRE~

**NEW MEMBERS WELCOME**

On Stage, behind scenes, etc.

**MUSICALS, PANTO'S, PLAYS**

**BAR FACILITIES AVAILABLE**

Contact Mrs J Wood tel: 291714

### Dates for your Diary:

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL	Fri 9th Dec	8.30	Sun, Hulverstone
AGM	Fri 13th Jan	8.30	Travellers Joy, Northwood
WINTER SOCIAL	Fri 24th Feb	8.30	Anchor, Cowes
BRANCH MEETING	Wed 22nd Mar	8.30	Chequers, Rookley

There are likely to be special beers on at some or all of these meetings. Transport will be arranged for the Christmas Social and could be provided for the other meetings if there is sufficient demand.

### PROTECT YOUR PINT - JOIN CAMRA NOW

Membership costs £12 (individual) £6 OAP, £14 (joint). For this you receive the monthly newspaper "Whats Brewing" and concessions on many CAMRA products and events. You can also attend the monthly meetings or social events on the Island, details of which are given in this newsletter, mailed to all Branch members.

To join fill in the form below and send it with a cheque for £12/£14, payable to CAMRA Ltd., 34, Alma Road, St Albans, Herts. AL1 3BW.

**Name(s)** .....

**Address** .....

..... **Post Code** .....

I/we wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association. I/we enclose a cheque for £

**Date** ..... **Signed** .....