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Here it is

The 'Opening Times' is hopefully being launched as the monthly newsletter of CAMRA South Manchester Branch. The aims of the newsletter are to

Promote communications within the branch

- B) Promote discussion for members
- C) Introduce CAMRA to non members
- D) Relay information to members unable to attend meetings on a regular basis
- E) Bring to light any interesting development in our area

To achieve these aims by running regular news stories and features 'Opening Times' needs contributions from the branch. All copy, ideas, suggestions etc. should be sent to:

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before 1st April. Photographs, drawings and cartoons would also be appreciated.

AGM Chairman's Report

The chairman was not going to relate what had happened in the year as this was in the N.E. report.

He felt that the members felt there was no campaigning spirit in CAMRA and also there was a conflict in the feeling of members as to what CAMRA was campaigning about, since campaigning in CAMRA could involve:

- a) The availability of Real Ale as a single issue.
- b) The nature of the English pub and its destruction.
- c) The quality and ingredients of beer.
- d) Licensing hours.
- e) Local monopolies.

All these different areas may emphasise that CAMRA is splitting. This, the chairman believed, was not the case. It shows that there is an active membership. There are many issues but this cannot be avoided since CAMRA is becoming more involved and aware. CAMRA is developing as a consumer organisation for people going into pubs.

What are the reasons for CAMRA's existence and growth? The chairman felt these were:

- 1) People didn't like large companies dominating their lives.
- 2) CAMRA was a natural reaction to the 60's policy of alienation of the customers by the large companies. This is why CAMRA is successful. All the things that CAMRA is concerned with are the problems imposed by the big companies. Especially as far as communications are concerned. To talk to the Big 6 one needs to go through middle men. It is almost impossible to talk to the head brewers of the Big 6, unlike the availability of the head brewers of the independents. The strength of CAMRA is because everyone basically believes in the same issues. The landlords with the large companies are the other group resenting CAMRA's presence. They (i.e. the Licensed Victuallers) see CAMRA as another group interfering with their business.

Within CAMRA there has been a definite return to a campaigning spirit. This was evident in the motions that had been put forward for the A.G.M. The 1975 motions had mostly been concerned with bureaucracy - whereas this year's are actually to do with beer. CAMRA members should realise their power with the Big 6 and should learn to use it responsibly. The responsibility must be accepted and used for pushing CAMRA policy and campaigning. CAMRA members are responsible to themselves and to the British public. They must use this power wisely because no one else is going to guard the rights of the British Drinker.

Features

Real Sam's in the North West



Having sampled Sam Smiths real ale in Yorkshire and London, many members in the North West began to wonder why they could not drink cask-conditioned Sam Smiths without a 200 mile trip down the M6 or even a 30 mile trip over the Pennines despite the fact that there are over 80 Sam Smiths houses in the area ranging from the Yorkshire Brewer in Morecambe to the Whipping Stocks near Knutsford with the largest concentration being around Rochdale. The Brewery was duly approached in early 1975. The correspondence was received by them but no promises were made at the time. Meanwhile, members in the Manchester area carried on sampling Sam Smiths excellent ales at various Beer Festivals held in their area, where Sam Smiths was always amongst the best available. This was due to the fact that they take enough pride in their beers to send along their quality controller, Mr E. Hand, to ensure that CAMRA members enjoy Sam Smiths beers at their bets.

After further communications with the brewery it was found that at the time (November 1975) the brewery were unwilling to supply cask-conditioned Sam Smiths to the North West for a number of reasons. The most important being that they wanted their cask-conditioned beers to be presented at

their best. This could not be done, in their opinion, with their then transport and depot arrangements. To understand the implications of this, it is necessary to outline the Sam Smiths set-up in the North West. At one time Sam Smiths brewed in Tadcaster and in Rochdale. Unfortunately some 2½ years ago it became company policy to close down the Rochdale Manor Brewery and use it only as a depot for distribution to their houses in the North West. Because of this it was then considered by the brewery that to transport cask conditioned beer from Tadcaster to the Rochdale depot, leaving it there for several days and then transporting it on to their outlets by dray could only have a detrimental effect on the beer. So the brewery thought that in the interest of preserving the good name of their cask conditioned beers only

filtered container beer which could be presented at its best, in the breweries' opinion, would be served in the area. Unhappily, because of this, CAMRA members in the North West were deprived of the opportunity to drink real ale Sam Smiths.

However, due to a growing demand for Real Ale in general and Sam Smiths being a traditionally-minded brewery, it was always hoped that the policy would be reviewed. Since then there has been a recent move, much welcomed by CAMRA members in the North West, to reintroduce cask conditioned Sam Smiths beers. Subsequently this decision has been put into practise and on Wednesday 18th February, Real Ale Sam Smiths mild and bitter served by newly installed hand pumps was reintroduced to the Malt Shovel Hotel in Altrincham. The brewery has also stated its intention to change back at least another five or six houses to real ale in the North West in the near future.

Now no longer is there any need for a lengthy drive to sample Sam Smiths, for thanks to breweries determination to serve their cask conditioned beers in the best condition, CAMRA members in the North West will be able to enjoy an excellent pint in their own area.

Remember the Brighton 12

(Or what we did on our holidays)

Twelve hardy and only slightly unsound of mind members set off on their wanderings to Brighton (in the deep South - past Watford Gap even). There were many illustrious passengers in this group including Frank Baillie (writer extraordinaire), Mr David Hall (hereinafter referred to as the driver), Trev Hatchett (Beer Guide Man), Richard Greenhalgh (the money man), and five City supporters (including your social secretary Gre) and 1 United supporter (no one knows how he got in).

The driver having found the motorway - without too much difficulty, pointed the bus south towards Birmingham. After a quick vote it was decided that we would stop for a lunchtime pint (surprise, surprise). A suitable hostelry was discussed and by another unanimous decision it was decided to stop at Mrs Pardoes Home Brew House in Dudley - excellent, no more need be said. So good was it that there was great difficulty in persuading the party to move onto Brierly Hill in order to sample some Bathams at the Vine - but with the promise of more beer it was managed.

From there our intrepid explorers set off on their journeyings once more into unfamiliar countryside, i.e. the M5, where the beer wasn't very good but the facilities were most welcome. The driver continued serving us excellently until we reached Cheltenham, where, narrowly missing a red car he was heard to say, "I thought he was overtaking the van."

After this I think everyone went to sleep because no-one remembers anything until it was dark and we were drawing up in front of the Horse Guards Inn in Millington, Sussex - for some more beer (Kings & Barnes) where a happy hour was spent.

Finally it happened - we had arrived in Brighton. No longer was it a name on a motorway signboard, but a real live cardboard replica of Blackpool. What happened during the next two days was relatively unimportant - something to do with an A.G.M. in Brighton and

something called CAMRA. There was lots of beer.

At approximately 3 o'clock on Sunday the explorers once again boarded the vehicle for the return journey to civilization. This was attempted by a rather devious route. The first stopping off point was not a pub but an Asiatic take-out in Croydon where everyone refuelled for the coming experience. The first beer stop, (and very nearly the only stop) was the CAMRA service station on the M1, i.e. The Sow and Pigs at Toddington - a Greene King house. The landlord was more than welcoming. After many, many pints of Abbott & I.P.A. (and the odd tomato juice by some of our number who had had an excellent weekend) and even packets of Walkers crisps. Two containers were filled with 16 pints of beer and we managed to set off again.

After a necessary stop on the motorway for petrol (where the pump attendant was given $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of I.P.A.) and emptying purposes we arrived at a Marstons pub in Coventry which we left with another 8-pint container (full) at closing time.

So apart from anything else this weekend the Brighton 12 are proud to announce the founding of CAMRA's first mobile pub - 'The Drunk Inn Transit' - serving real ale, Greene King and Marstons. This pub which has a relatively modern interior, but is quite pleasant, with its beer served by gravity, has music and a limited amount of food, can be found travelling the M1 & M6 once a year.

Future Branch Events

Saturday March 27th (provisional)
Coach Trip for much Boozing in
Ulverston and Lancaster. Depart Mersey
Square 09.30 am. Fare around £2.
Return around 11.30pm.

Thursday April 15th
Branch Annual General Meeting
Gateway Hotel, Parrswood 8.00pm.

Friday & Saturday 28th/29th May
Twenty-four hours getting legless in
the Isle of Man. Cost? that's up to
you!

We would like to hear from you if you
have any ideas for coach trips, pub-
crawls, brewery visits, or anything to
do with mass boozing.

Back Page

FEATURES THE 'OPENING TIMES' WOULD LIKE TO SEE STARTED INCLUDE:

Ads & Info

Cheap classified advertising for readers.

GRAFFITI RULES O.K.

The best from
Manchester
lavatory
walls.

Odes to Ale

& Beer Ballads



Hangover Cures

Suggestions on
how to avoid the
curse of the drinking classes.

CAMRA Widow

'Opening Times' would like to give CAMRA members' wives/girlfriends the opportunity to air their views.

Atrocity

If your local is about to be ripped apart or pressurised, tell the 'Opening Times'

Home Brew

Members views on
methods, the local
suppliers etc.



PUBlicity

the present .

Beermats,
bottles etc.,
from the past to

Remember

AGM

The next branch meeting on April 15th will be the annual General Meeting. Any motions, nominations for committee, abuse or insults should be forwarded to Pete Simmons (see committee members list for address details) as soon as possible.

Committee

Committee Members: South Manchester

If you are not a member and feel you would like more information about CAMRA, including membership forms, contact any of the following:

Chairman: Alan Kellett, 59, Patch Lane, Bramhall. Tel. 439 3684

Treasurer: Richard Greenhalgh, 9, Brogden Grove, Sale Tel. 973 6193

Secretary: Peter Simmons, 24, Cuthbert Rd. Cheadle Tel.(home): 428 9464 (work): 998 5341

Social Secretary: Graham Lister, 40, Randolph St. Levenshulme Tel. 225 8916

Public Relations (N.E. member) David Hall, 14, Waterloo St West, Macclesfield.

Good Beer Guide: Trevor Hatchett, 26, Moorfield Road, West Didsbury. Tel 445 2369

Functions: Geoff Errington, 194, Urmston Lane, Stretford Tel. 865 1342

or:

Membership Secretary,
CAMRA,
34, Alma Road,
St. Albans,
Hertfordshire AL1 3BW

PRESENTATION: In future we hope to have 'Opening Times' IBM Typeset to get more into the same space and to improve the general look of the paper. An improvement in content depends largely on you.