



## Mine's a pint !

Question: When's a pint not a pint?

Answer: When it's less than 100% liquid and that is exactly what you the consumer pay for-100% liquid. Imagine going to a supermarket and purchasing a pint bottle of milk, you would not accept it if it only contained 95% milk. The same can be said for beer.

Unfortunately some unscrupulous landlords have been getting away with this for years; it isn't fair, and you're the one paying for it! Before I go too far and get lynched most landlords' serve an honest pint containing a good 100% liquid, some even use oversized lined glasses to allow for a head.

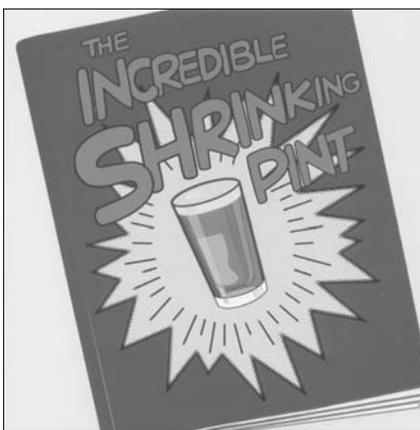
However some alarming facts and figures have recently been discovered in a survey conducted by Trading Standards Officers.

- In the U.K. 89.4% of pints are less than 100% liquid.
- 27.7% fall short of the industry's accepted measure of 95% (This 5% margin allows for a head on a pint.)

and the most surprising of all

- pubs which serves a full 100% pint, on average charge 14p less than those that don't!

One major factor for short measures is big brewing corporation's greed for profit. The less wastage there is per barrel the more



**THEY SAID....**

*When I order a pint, I am determined that I will get a full pint.....* Dr Kim Howell, Minister for Competition & Consumers 14 Mar 2001

money can be made. Some wastage is unavoidable. An example of this can be seen when a landlord taps a new barrel, he usually pulls through a couple of pints to give fresh beer. However to recoup his loss he could then short measure your pint, gradually replacing the wastage.

If you feel you're being short measured you can always ask for a 'Top-Up', and most genuine barstaff will gladly oblige. However why should you feel the embarrassment of having to ask for what's yours by rights? If you feel you're persistently being short measured you can always contact your local trading standards office, they will investigate further on your behalf.

Before the 1997 general election the labour party stated '**We will tighten legislation to ensure consumers are protected from short measures and get a full pint**'.

Secondary legislation, which doesn't have to go through parliament, has already been drafted and the impacts assessed, all it needs is Trade Secretary

Patricia Hewitt's signature. So why doesn't she sign the act? Perhaps she fears the wrath of

industry lobbyist opposition declaring it too much red tape legislation and of no beneficial consumer use. Whatever, a change in the law is called for, after all its me and you it effects.

Come on Tony put your hand in your pocket; it's your round and mine's a full pint!

*Rich Gabe*

## Full pint promises broken!

Since Rich wrote the above article Trade Secretary Patricia Hewitt has announced her intention to adopt the industry guidelines which recommend that every pint need only be 95% liquid. This is despite continual Government promises to introduce full pint legislation.

Until very recently the Labour Party web site promised '**We will tighten legislation to ensure consumers are protected from small measures and get a full pint**'. Visitors to that site will now find that the words 'and get a full pint' have been deleted.

Ms Hewitt declared 'Pulling a pint is not a precise science but at the moment, the worst offenders are consistently giving customers a short measure. This change will give consumers better value for money'. No wonder the Morning Advertiser is hailing this as a victory for the licensing industry!

The idea that if I am not happy with the amount of liquid in my glass I can always ask for a top-up is at best misguided. I've already asked once for a pint – what part of pint don't they understand? And try asking for a top-up in Wetherspoons on Friday night!

We've included here the 'Aleshop guide to your 95% pint – exercise your rights and do ask for a top up. Do not be put off, these are the industry's own guidelines. Unfortunately I have little faith in self-regulation; witness the Press Complaints Committee or the insurance industry.

A final thought. You've all heard the arguments comparing a 95% pint of beer with an eleven egg dozen or short measure pint of milk. Let's keep it in the industry. If a landlord orders 20 casks from his supplier, finds only 19 are delivered but is invoiced for 20 will he complain or will he accept it because Ms Hewitt and his trade organisation have decreed that 95% is really 100%?

*Editor*



*Legally correct but open to improvement—you are entitled to politely ask for a top up.*



*Definitely below standard. Politely request a top up and if a frequent occurrence phone your Trading Standards office.*

## Dorset Trading Standards

Do you think you have been served a short measure ? Is the standard of service not up to reasonable expectation. Is your pint not of 'merchantable quality'? Your local trading standards office wants to know. Contact them at: **01305 224701**

Castle Eden has moved to the old Cameron's brewery in Hartlepool. Its old site in Castle Eden is to be sold for housing.

**Swift halves**

In the last issue we reported that the Laurel Pub Company, owners of the Hogshead chain, were to reduce their Real Ale selection in all their pubs to a maximum of four. This was taken to extreme last weekend when there was no real ale at all!

Spring certainly seems the time for change.

Landlord Clive Emill has sold the *Rest & Welcome* at Melbury and a casual glance through the license trade press reveals many more West Dorset pubs on the market. These include *The Hine Bar*, *Beaminster*, *New Inn*, *Littlemoor*, *Black Dog*, *Broadmayne* and *The Inn for all Seasons*, *Charminster*.

Welcome to new licensees at The Old Castle, Rodwell (Weymouth) and the Cutter, also Weymouth.

Hall & Woodhouse have just acquired the *Rose & Crown* at Longburton. So farewell to the Cornish Coaster and Ringwood Best which have been replaced by Sussex Bitter, Dorset Bitter & Tanglefoot on my visit at Easter. I remember in the 80's when this thatched free house was owned by Eldridge Pope and featured in one of their TV adverts.

Having only recently re-opened the *Mermaid*, Sherborne is for sale. In Weymouth the redevelopment of the Rendezvous night club near the town

bridge has engulfed the *Anchor* which has lost its separate identity and is now just part of the complex. The adjoining Royal Oak purpose is a mystery. It remains closed and I believe Quay Brewery would dearly like it as a brewery tap.

Welcome and good luck to *the Hunter's Moon* at Middlemarsh (the ex-White Horse). Landlord Brendan Mahon has spent three years in refurbishing this country pub and it

opened for business in **M a r c h**. Currently four real ales are kept

Palmer's IPA, Directors, Sharpe's Doobar and the delicious Timothy

Taylor Landlord. Food pretty good too!

The Fairhaven Bars, or Victoria Bars on Weymouth Esplanade have been extensively refurbished during the winter. The emphasis is still heavily a family pub.

Quay Brewery's Weymouth Bitter (4%) is proving immensely popular. Packed with Cascade hops it's definitely this writer's favourite Quay beer. With the growing interest in all things organic, the Organic Gold (4.7%) is also a good seller.

Congratulations are due to our Social Secretary Richard Gabe who is marrying Fiona on 11<sup>th</sup> May. One presumes this date was fixed before the Hop Back brewery visit (see Branch Social Diary).

The Dolphin, Weymouth, is still boarded up at present but we hear a brewery could be interested.

*THEY SAID.....  
I thoroughly applaud Dennis Turner's campaign to make sure that the British pint is a good, honest pint Tony Blair, Prime Minister 25 Jun 1997.*

**Branch Social Events**

**Sat 20<sup>th</sup> April – Maltings Beer Festival, Newton Abbot**

The third year we have been to the biggest festival in the West. Unfortunately we are fully booked at going to press but please ring Tony on 01305 789906 in case of cancellations.

**Sat 11<sup>th</sup> May – Hop Back Brewery, Salisbury**

15<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations of this famous micro. I'm afraid the numbers are extremely limited (by Hop Back as it's their party!) and it is open to CAMRA members only. Cost £5 plus transport. Ring Tony for availability.

**Sat 18<sup>th</sup> May – Wessex Regional Meeting, Royal Standard, Upwey**

Our turn to host this quarterly meeting of all the Wessex Region branches from Hampshire, Wilts, IOW, Dorset & Channel Isles. Come and see the boring bit of CAMRA activity. Names beforehand to Tony as space is limited.

**Fri 17<sup>th</sup> May – O'Hanlons Brewery, Devon**

A welcome second trip to this marvellous small brewery set in an extremely remote area of Devon. Presentation of Champion Beer of the Dorchester Festival certificate for their Port Stout. Contact Rich Gabe for booking 01305 257914

**Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> Jun – Berrow Brewery, Somerset**

First time visit for us to this West Country brewery to present Dorchester Beer Festival runner-up certificate for their 4Bs Bitter. Contact Rich for booking 01305 257914

For other events, trips and meetings read the Branch Diary section of What's Brewing, the CAMRA members monthly paper—worth the membership fee alone. Why not join us ?

*'THEY SAID...  
We will make sure that a pint of beer is a pint of beer' Stephen Byers, Trade Secretary 22 Jul 99*

**JOIN CAMRA TODAY**

Just fill in the form below and send your remittance (payable to CAMRA) to : Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Rd, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW. Alternatively, contact the editor.

Rates are Single: £16, Joint: £19 (at same address), Over 60/Unemployed/Disabled: £9, Joint Over 60 or under 26: £12 (at same address), Under 26: £9 Date of Birth.....

For life/Overseas rates please ask for details.

Name(s).....

Address.....

Post Code.....



**THEY SAID...**

*Any short measure is a clear public scandal.....we will seek to bear down as hard as we can*  
Robin Cook, Leader of the House  
24 Jan 2002

## Weymouth Beer Festival is ON!

Readers with good short-term memories will recall the first and only SIBA Octoberfest held in Hope Square in late 1998. Due to a variety of circumstances the event was not repeated. Until now!

South West SIBA (Small Independent Brewers Association) already organise the highly successful festival at the Maltings, Newton Abbott in April. They have now joined with Brewer's Quay and West Dorset CAMRA to stage a reciprocal festival in Weymouth in autumn.

However the style of this event will be different to its predecessor. Gone is the tented area in Hope Square, we are moving inside. The intention is to provide 60+ beers from all over the South West within the old Devenish brewery buildings, now called Brewer's Quay. As the complex is a functioning shopping village, numbers at lunchtime sessions will be limited but in the evening the intention is to expand throughout the covered area. Entertainment and food will be provided.

Dates for this event have been set as Fri/Sat 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> October. More details will be published in Aleshop when known. Tickets will be available from West Dorset CAMRA, Brewer's Quay, Quay Brewery and many other outlets. If SIBA and CAMRA combined can't organise a p\*\*\* up in a brewery then all hope is lost. Make a note in your diary, create a window, knot your handkerchief or simply remember –

### Weymouth Octoberfest. 4th/5th October 2002

All correspondence concerning this newsletter should be addressed to:  
The Editor, Aleshop, 13 Williams Ave, Wyke Regis, Weymouth DT4 9BW.

Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Editor, or the Campaign for Real Ale.

### Do I hear £3 a pint?

*Alex Bardswell ponders on the price of a pint in West Dorset*

Now that the £2 pint is commonplace we tend to be pleased to pay less than that for our favourite tipple but in fact many pubs are charging under £2, and, equally, some pubs are charging extortionate amounts. CAMRA are at the moment carrying out their annual price survey and it will be interesting to see the results, both locally and nationally.

We pay more for our beer in Southern England than those living in the North – a fact of life. But Dorset is not a rich county like Surrey or Kent yet many beer prices here seem to be on a par with those in the South East, and friends from London express surprise at being charged London prices in Dorset village pubs. One wonders whether this is due to high rents, market forces, or just plain greed.

Market forces don't seem to have played a part in this. In recent years JD Wetherspoons, well known for their cheap food and drinks policy, have opened houses in Weymouth, Dorchester and Bridport but prices in neighbouring pubs remain as high as before. Eldridge Pope, who used to sell their own and then Hardy Brewery beers at reasonable prices, now seem to be hiking up their 'foreign' beers. In Dorchester one can purchase a pint of Courage Directors in Eldridge Pope's refurbished Little Ship for £2.30 whilst in Wetherspoons two doors away it is £1.49.

Equally in Bridport and the more rural West of the county the Greyhound (Wetherspoons) has had no effect on the prices in Palmer's pubs whose beers are often 20p or 30p per pint higher than the same beers elsewhere. Public houses in sought after coastal villages quite possibly have higher rents than those in inland situations which could well account for these differences but this policy is detrimental for the residents, and isn't very fair on the holiday makers either. With the dwindling supply of village pubs these days, it is difficult to vote with your feet and choose the

### A view from the bar

cheaper pub up the road.

The excellent policy of charging the same price for all real beers regardless of ABV should catch on in more pubs. Two we know that do this are the Smugglers (Pubmaster) in Wyke Regis and the Rose and Crown (Free) at Longburton; one sets the price at £2 and the other at £1.90. How refreshing! (I agree that a weak beer drinker shouldn't subsidise the drinking habits of others; but as £1.90 or even £2 a pint is a good price in this area (apart from JDW!), you wouldn't get your weaker beer much cheaper and it is a very good price for the strong stuff).

However the Brewers Arms in Martinstown (Pubmaster house) Ringwood Best is £2.20 whereas the Sun (Buccaneer Inns) at Lower Burton has the same beer at £1.90. The Sun also sells Directors at £2.25 but the Spa (Eldridge Pope) in Weymouth feels it needs to put another 15p on the same pint.

The Chalk and Cheese (Pubmaster) at Maiden Newton has Bass at £2.30; and the Smugglers (Hall & Woodhouse) at Osmington has always charged more in its favoured position on the coast. Perhaps some village pubs close because the prices they charge are above what is sustainable in a small community so should we protect the local at all costs or raise objections to the cost of popping in for a couple of pints in the evenings?

It's not always so sociable and fun drinking at home, but with the cost of bottled real beers from the supermarket up to £1 a pint less than in the pub, never mind the 10p a bottle of the French imports, is it surprising we usually indulge in our favourite beverage as penny pinching couch potatoes?

*Editor's Note*

*Since this article was written the Rose & Crown at Longburton has been bought by Hall & Woodhouse of Blandford. It is unlikely that the aforementioned pricing policy will remain.*

**THEY SAID.....**

*'When the consumer asks for a pint and is charged for a pint, that is the quantity that he should be served'. Nigel Griffiths Minister for Competition & Consumers 18 June 1997*