FRIENDS OF THE FROTH BLOWERS

NEWSLETTER No. 41 WINTER 2016

Editorial

 I spent an hour-or-so this morning at an was not prepared for the complete shut down

Enterprise Inns’ promotion. They had in- of all but the restaurants on the Monday and

vited me as the Director of a SIBA-member Tuesday. I could have sat in the middle of

brewery to offer us the opportunity to rent the main thoroughfare without danger from

one of their “free-of-tie” pubs. Their track- traffic both days. However, this did not aff-

record as a company is so poor that, despite ect my consumption of Oatmeal Stout at

the ‘freedom,’ we are not likely to go down Brewerkz and subsequent fine meals at the

this path. The fact that the stands were occu- houses of F.O.F.B. friends - and in various

pied by Marston’s, Greene King, Heineken French-style restaurants. Before I left, Dave

and the like, made my mind up for me. List- the Blaster convened a meeting of all local

ed companies – St. Austell’s, Hook Norton, and not-so-local Blowers at the Singapore

Exmoor, Otter and others – were there, too, Vat, raising the roof (had there been one) and

as suppliers to the more enterprising of their the equivalent of £50 for this year’s charity -

generally unenterprising inns: not, I think, to be announced later in the year. All hail to

for us at this point in our development. the Vat!

Our Development

 The Froth Blowers Brewing Company is

definitely at a critical point in its short hist-

ory. Tomorrow, Andrew will begin the first

brew on the new plant – other than the ‘test

brew’ three weeks ago.

As this was different from

Piffle Snonker we market-

ed it as ‘Sniffle Plonker’ -

to the amusement of our

regulars who seemed to Artefacts

have enjoyed it. So, we are I have just taken delivery of the Piffle Snonker

running two breweries at which Ian believes to have belonged to the

the moment, in order to ensure that we can go gentleman in charge of the Covent Garden

on selling beer without a break. This is an ex- Vat. As the only other Piffle Snonker I have

pensive hobby! held belongs to an FOFB who sells cider (or

 We have, also, set on a young ex-soldier did last time I spoke to him) in Borough Mark-

who works two days a week. He is so comp- et, it suggests that market-traders needed such

etent that I hope we can increase our trade to symbols of authority to ensure that their Vat

enable us to employ him full-time. The pro- meetings did not descend into anarchy.

liferation of micropubs gives us hope that our I await the delivery of the same Senior Blow-

expansion will work out for us bit-by-bit. er’s inscribed tankard.

Singapore One other recent acquisition was an AOFB

 Having enjoyed my February visit to Singa- clay-pipe – which I was surprised to get at a pore so much last year, I decided to go again very reasonable price. Given that such break-

at Chinese New Year. I must have missed the able objects do not usually survive for ninety

two main holiday days last year, because I years, we are lucky to find such things.

The Word “Frothblower” “BEER SHIFTERS’ SOCIETY”

 The various references – frothblower, froth- *A well-dressed visitor, who was charged at*

blower, froth blower, Frothblower, Froth-  *Blackpool on Monday with having been drunk,*

Blower, Froth Blower – to drinkers of beer  *had in* *his possession a membership card of the*

appeared in print in Edwardian times, if not *Amalgamated Society of Froth Blowers and*

earlier. For teetotallers it was a pejorative *Beer Shifters*.

term for people they regarded as too fond of *The principal* *rules, as set forth on the card,*

alcohol for their own and their families’ *were that* *members should have a holding cap-*

good, but young Bert Temple and other bon *acity* *of at least 12 quarts, and not give up beer*

viveurs of those pre-War times would have *for the sake of work, and that they would be*

embraced the term with glee. It was no doubt *immediately expelled if known to go to bed*

with memories of his froth-blowing youth in *sober, or if they signed the pledge.*

mind that the naming of his spoof fraternity *(Derby Daily Telegraph – Tuesday 06 September 1910)*

gave him no trouble twenty years later. In May, 1915, Mr. Yeo, M.P., exhorting the

 One of the first references to a Froth Blower young men of Walsall (and elsewhere) to

appears to have been literal: a firm offered “Rise Up!” was reported as saying about

the drinker a simple machine enabling the those who did not respond to his call to arms

purchaser to remove the froth from the top of that he was *dead against conscription, but*

his tankard without depositing undesirable spittle *he was bound to say this that if some of the shirk*-

in the beer: *ers, the hangers-on at the street corners, and the*

 THE BEER ENGINE FROTH BLOWER *froth-blowers did not speedily come forward and*

 *The Public are respectfully informed* *that the give Kitchener his army, there might possibly*

*very unpleasant manner of Drawing Porter*  *have to be some sweeping measures taken to*

*can be entirely done away with; the usual make them (Applause).*

*way being to blow from the mouth two or* The derogatory use of the term came back to

*three times in filling a Pint Pot, and the sal-* disturb the mental peace of Bert and Sir Alf-

*iva passing with the breath into the Porter.* red, causing them to reiterate frequently the

*The practice cannot have been noticed* unconvincing statement that the A.O.F.B.

*much, or the Public would long ago have* had nothing to do with drinking.

*complained of this great nuisance; but it*  As far as the term is concerned, as late as

*now can be entirely obviated at a very* July, 1924, when, presumably, Bert was re-

*small cost. Any person can fix them to the* cuperating from his operation, a gentleman

*counter, they being extremely simple and* from Huddersfield was writing to the Press

*very lasting. No respectable Public-house* as “Froth Blower” - and as a member of “our

*can long be without them.*  Mutual Admiration Society held at the Ball-

 *(Norfolk Chronicle – Saturday 16 April 1859)* oonand Trumpet-Blowers’ Hotel.” He went on

 Onthe 22 March, 1905, the London Daily to say that “the debate (about cricket) got so keen,

News included the following report: and the members so excited, that they even drank

 “FROTH BLOWERS’ CLUB” their neighbours’ gingerbeer …”

 *Two Lambeth labourers, named Henry Dime* Events

 *and Edwin Gardiner, of middle age, were* 28th May: Swan, Fittleworth – 12:15 hrs

*charged at Westminster with drunkenness.* 8th October: Simpson’s-in-the-Strand – 12:15 hrs

 *Dime, producing a printed card, said he was* **BUT**

*a member of the Froth Blowers Club, which* **Saturday 30th  April: MUG-A-RUGGER BEER**

*met at a certain public-house. He was bound* **Rugby Crawl** (replacing 16/04/16 outing). Meet

*as a member to curse and swear every time* **Victoria Inn**, CV21 3ST **12:45 hrs** or **Lord Hop,**

*he went into the club, or he was fined a shill-* Nuneaton, CV11 5JX **12:15 hrs.** Those interested

*ing.* contact me - 07525 100644/finwood40@btinternet.com