

## **AN ORAL HISTORY OF BREWING IN 3 LONDON BREWERIES**

INTERVIEWEE: Henry Coward  
DATE OF BIRTH 1953, Hampstead  
PARENTS' OCCUPATIONS Father: plasterer Mother: housewife (6 children)  
INTERVIEW LOCATION Young's Brewery, Wandsworth  
DATE OF INTERVIEW March 20 2019  
INTERVIEWER: Chris Conway SUMMARISER: Celia Holman

Henry worked as a deliveryman from 1974-2007. He speaks with great pleasure of his work, and of his affection for the horses - it was always "nice to come to work" with "one big happy family" and it was a "sad day" when the brewery closed.

Henry came to work at the brewery via his father-in-law (many workers were related), who worked fixing machinery in the bottling plant. He remembers the "banging and clanging", lots of broken glass and the machinery breaking down as it was constantly in use.

A year later, he became a deliveryman, working with the horses. His first year was spent on general stable duties (mucking out, cleaning tack), and looking after the many other animals on site: donkeys, goats, chickens, a shetland pony, peacocks and the ram. As well as working horses, there were also show horses, who worked at the weekend, attending shows and fetes. (18 horses were on site when Henry started working in the stables). There was a farrier and a cooper on site at this time.

He then spent 1.5 years as '3rd man' (or "trouncer") on deliveries, which were all within a 3-mile radius of the brewer. 2 other men (the driver and the "mate") were also on the vehicle. 4 drays pulled by 2 horses went out each day. People would wave at them as they passed, and gather round as they unloaded. Some people collected manure. The deliverymen always spoke to the public, and had a drink at each pub after the delivery.

Barrels were loaded and unloaded by hand, and a board and rope used to roll them into the pubs' cellars. Wooden crates would be slid down also, with nails sometimes catching and crates splitting. On occasion, the wooden barrels split and flooded a cellar with beer.

There were very few accidents - the occasional wing mirror was knocked. However, on one occasion, a horse ate a Jaguar's aerial!

The work was very physical but had lots of variety (meeting people out on deliveries). He doesn't remember many disputes - "everyone just got on and did their work."

He speaks of The 35 Club, for employees with over 35 years' service, and of the football and cricket teams, that played pubs, other breweries and local teams.