

'I'm going to be a boy for a few years yet!'

Veteran pub-goer still pops in for his daily pint at 99

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HE'S the drinker for whom the term "pub regular" could have been made – after popping into the same pub for the past 85 years.

Meyrick O'Connor, 99, started drinking at The Bear Hotel in 1924 and still has at least one pint of Carling there every day.

He first visited the alehouse, in Cowbridge High Street, with his father Cornelius when he was just 14.

Despite being just a year off his centenary, Bridgend-born Meyrick, who lives in the town's Longmeadow Court, is young at heart.

The ex-farmer said: "It was not so nice in here when I first came in. There was an old wooden board floor.

"Mondays were a big day. The farmers would be by the bar. My father would be by the window. They used to deal in their cattle from the bar. But no, he didn't bring the cows in here."

He recently gave up snuff because of a breathing problem and packed in his 60-a-day Woodbine habit in 1970.

The lifelong bachelor says he plans to live until he's 120.

He laughed: "I'm going to be a boy for a few more years yet. I started drinking when I was 14 and it's not done me any harm.

"There used to be 32 pubs in Cowbridge. I used to be a farmer here but that was a long time ago.

"Cowbridge is a lovely old place. I came back here after I came out of the Army after World War II."

Meyrick grew up on Wolf House Farm, in Llysworney. He was one of 12 surviving children – he had seven brothers and four sisters – but another four siblings died when very young.

He is the last of his family.

Yesterday Meyrick joked the Queen had requested he visit her at Buckingham palace on his 100th birthday.

He said: "I told her 'No madam, I can't travel all the way up there. You come down here to see me.'

"Hopefully we'll sit here at this very table. I'll call her Lizzy. I'll



The Bear Hotel in Cowbridge

MEYRICK AND THE WORLD

- April 19, 1910 – Meyrick is born in Bridgend
- 1914-18 – World War I
- 1924 – Meyrick has his first pint in The Bear
- October 29, 1929 – The Great Wall Street Crash happens, which brings on the Great Depression
- 1939 to 1945 – World War II
- November 22, 1963 – JFK is assassinated
- August 9, 1974 – Disgraced US president Richard Nixon leaves office
- May 4, 1979 – Margaret Thatcher comes to power
- May 18, 1980 – Mount St Helens, in Washington, erupts
- April 19, 2009 – Meyrick celebrates his 99th birthday with a cake in The Bear
- May 19, 2009 – Meyrick has a pint with the *South Wales Echo*

shake her hand and say 'I'm pleased to meet you Lizzy'.

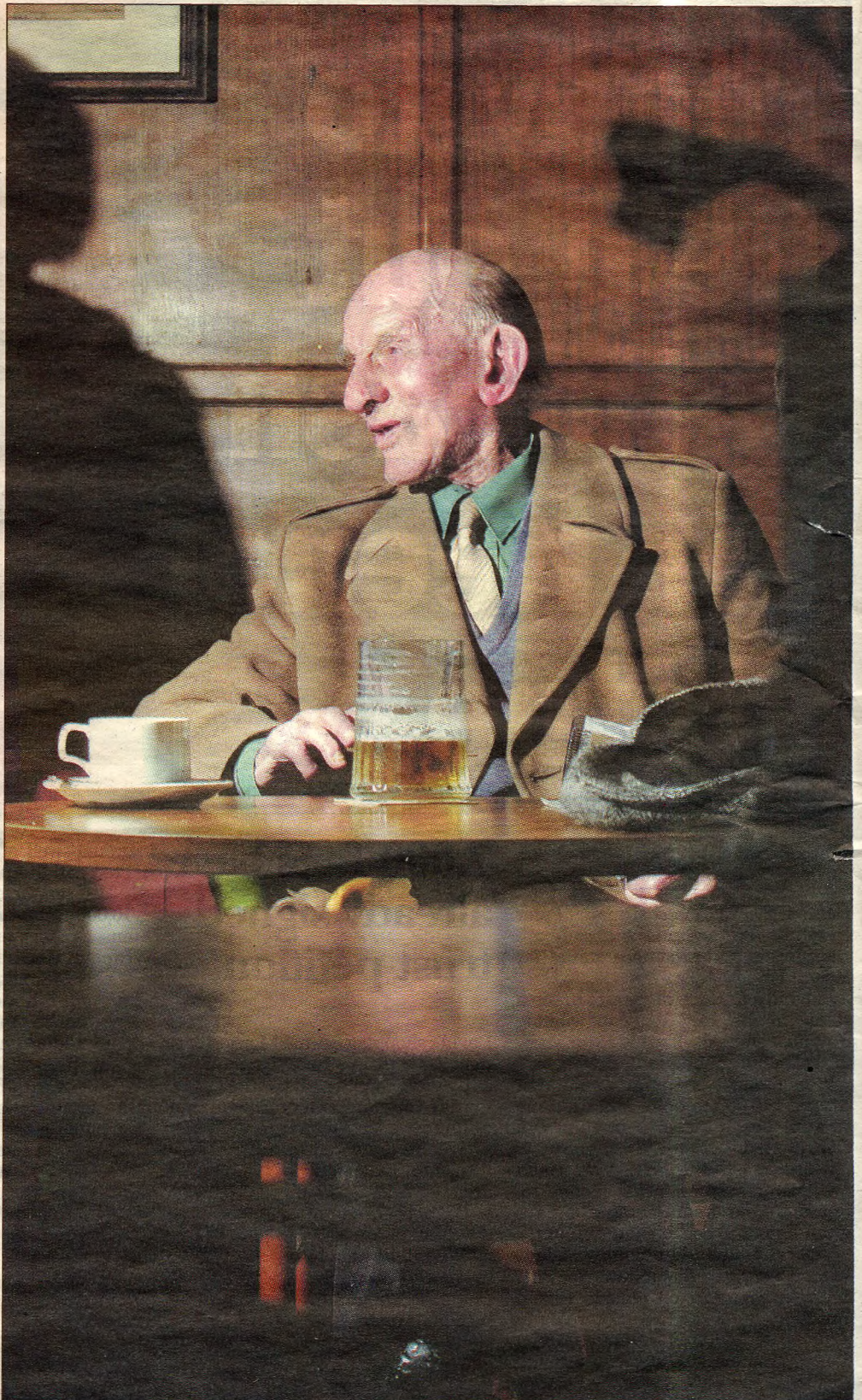
"I'll have a Bloody Mary but I'll buy her a lemonade."

His last sister Blanche died last year aged 98.

Sometimes he regrets never having children.

He said: "It's one of those things isn't it? But I was a terror for dancing. I would have one date and never turn up again."

Julian Hitchcock, managing director of Town and Country Hotels, which owns the Bear Hotel, said: "Meyrick's got plenty of Irish blarney passed down from his dad."



Meyrick O'Connor, 99, has at least one pint in The Bear Hotel, Cowbridge, every day