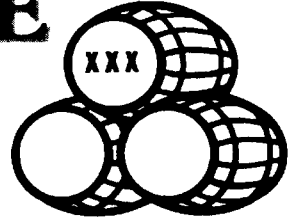




# THE HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER



A bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker

APRIL/MAY 1992

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## ALLIED DEALS TRUMPED?

The deal negotiated by Allied Breweries with Brent Walker under which 734 pubs are to be leased to Brent Walker has run into a problem. Part of the deal involved a trading arrangement under which the pubs would continue to take a large amount of their beer from Allied for the next seven years. The reason for Allied getting rid of the pubs was so that they didn't count as tied pubs for the purposes of the MMC inspired Beer Orders, under which they had to free some 2300 pubs from the tie. However the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) ruled that the trading deal meant that as far as they were concerned the pubs should still be classified as tied.

Despite the OFT misgivings, the deal was signed in mid-February and Allied officials are confident that the deal is structured in such a way that it will meet the legal requirements of the Beer Orders (if not the spirit). As the Beer Orders do not need to be complied with until November, the OFT cannot challenge the deal in the courts until then.

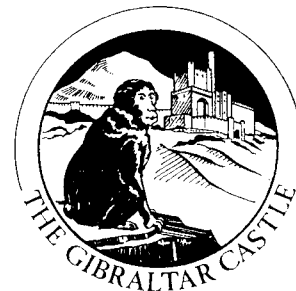
At the time of writing none of the landlords we contacted whose pubs are being leased off had seen a written contract from Brent Walker. However some were now being told verbally that their real ale range could now be chosen from any of the beers supplied by Courage or Whitbreads. Although this might reduce the level of supplies from Allied down to a level acceptable to the OFT, it's certainly not the opening up of the guest beer market that the MMC report intended. In the South West of the county, it is liable to have the opposite affect as one of the genuine guest beers available, Glennys, is liable to disappear from the pumps.

Allied's other big plans for a merger of their brewing interests with Carlsberg have also hit a problem. The Trade and Industry Secretary, Peter Lilley, has announced that the proposal must be examined by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. The MMC are scheduled to report by June 12. The reasons for the referral are those we've already quoted in these columns: a further

concentration of the brewing industry and its outlets into fewer hands producing less choice for the customer.

If the MMC refuses to sanction the merger, or imposes conditions that no longer make the deal viable, Allied are likely to pull out of brewing altogether, possibly selling off their breweries to Carlsberg, and remaining solely as a pub operator. Well, that's the story 'highly placed officials' at Allied are reportedly putting about.

Gordon and Sorrell  
invite you to try their award-winning  
**Fuller's Chiswick, London Pride  
& E.S.B.**  
at the



**Gibraltar Castle**

**Lower Luton Road, Batford, Harpenden**

Meals now available all opening times

## LOCAL LINES

Grand Met closed the **Kings Head**, London Colney 2 years ago, tried to get planning permission to build offices and failed. They have now re-opened it with Mick and Tina Hill (formerly of Gems Nightclub) as managers. The pool tables and juke box have been thrown out, and the emphasis is on creating a friendly local. Real ales installed are Websters Yorkshire and Courage Best and Directors.

The **White Horse**, Park Street has been sold by Whitbread to the St Albans LVA chairman Richard Jacobson, currently of the White Swan, St Albans.

The **Red Lion**, Borehamwood is the latest acquisition of the J.D.Wetherspoon chain of pubs.

The **Station Hotel**, Ware, is being closed by McMullens in September, apparently due to subsidence! The South Herts branch will be holding a branch meeting there in May.

No more Burton Ale in Shenley: the **White Horse**, London Road, Shenley is now selling Ansells Mild instead of Burton Ale. Ansells Mild has been a guest in the old Benskins tied estate for a little while now, and appeals to both the thrifty and the drinker looking for a lower alcohol real ale. In the White Horse sales have been so good it will be kept on permanently, we, of course, always commend the introduction of a Mild Ale, especially a Dark one as this is.

Further down London Road, we would like to give a very late welcome to Maggie and Steve White of the **Black Lion**, Shenley. Again no Burton Ale, but Marstons Pedigree and Adnams Bitter are the regular guests alongside Benskins Best in this classic two bar country pub.

The **Guinea** at Ridge has Weston's Old Rosie draught cider.

The landlord of the **Fox**, Kinsbourne Green, Anthony Szpak, received a 'highly commended' in the Burton Ale Cellarman of the Year awards.

The **Red Lion** at Marsworth, near Tring has been sold by ABC to the tenant. The pub, which has been in all the GBGs since 1976, is being run as a free house and has been serving Hook Norton and Banks & Taylor beers. The pub has been the Mid-Chilterns branch CAMRA pub of the year on several occasions.

The **Estcourt Arms** in Watford has added a guest beer alongside Benskins Best and Tetleys. Abbot and London Pride have so far been available.

Apologies to the **Black Horse**, Chorleywood, for confusing it with the pub of the same name at Colney Street. It is the latter pub which is being leased to Pubmaster. However, as we were going to press, Allied announced that they were selling 40 of their pubs in the Northern Home Counties to Greenalls for £10 million. The **Black Horse**, Chorleywood, is definitely one of them, and we understand the **Unicorn** at Abbots Langley is another.

New conversions to real ale include the **Bull**, Cottered, with Greene King IPA; the **Checkers**, Baldock, also selling Greene King IPA; and the **White Lion**, Baldock, now has Greene King IPA, Abbot and Rayments Special, all on handpump.

The **Arena Tavern**, Letchworth, now sells Nethergate Bitter instead of Theakstons Bitter. Incidentally, Nethergate Brewery (of Suffolk) now have a pub of their own in Cambridge, having bought the **Cambridge Blue** from Banks & Taylor.

The only real ale on sale at the **Victoria**, Baldock, is now Morland Old Speckled Hen, which has replaced Flowers IPA.

**Edward the Confessor**, Stevenage, now sells Worthington Best Bitter on handpump instead of Adnams Bitter.

Additional beer on sale at the **Bricklayers Arms**, Hitchin, is Wells Bombadier, and the **Plume of Feathers**, Little Wymondley now sells Rayments Special.

The **New Found Out**, Hitchin, is under temporary new management, and is offering Tetleys Bitter, Ind Coope Burton Ale, and Aylesbury (ABC) Bitter.

More pubs reported as having changes of landlord include the **Red Lion**, Woolmer Green; the **Cricketers**, Hitchin; the **Sir John Barleycorn**, Hitchin; the **Red Lion**, Stevenage; the **Cock**, Baldock; and the **Anchor**, Weston.

McMullens are currently trying to sell the **Cricketers**, Benington, and the **Banyers Hotel** in Royston.

The **Greyhound**, St. Ippollitts, is likely to reopen soon, having been refurbished following a long period of closure.

The **Cricketers**, Redbourn, recently given an award to celebrate 10 years in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide, has been sold by Allied and is now, technically, a free house. You might not believe it though, as it is now selling Charringtons IPA, Worthington Best Bitter and Bass.

## APRIL FULL

A pint of beer will have to be just that from April 1st, 1994. That's the date the government has announced that section 43 of the Weights and measures Act will come into effect. From that date, when a pint is ordered, a pint of liquid is what should be supplied. Brim measure glasses are not being outlawed as long as a full pint of beer is supplied.

The need for such measures have been highlighted in a recent court case where Greenalls were fined £2000 for serving Tetleys Bitter with 'excessive heads'. Two pints were measured as being 12.5% and 9.5% short.

## Inn On the Green Datchworth

Large selection of  
cask conditioned ale including mild

Home made food available every  
Lunchtime & Evening

Opening Times:

11.00 – 3.00	5.00 – 11.00	Mon – Fri
11.00 – 3.00	6.00 – 11.00	Saturday
12.00 – 3.00	7.00 – 10.30	Sunday

Brewery Trips organised periodically.

Current trip: Batemans  
– phone Ian Miller for details

Almost Live Music some of the time

Telephone: 0438-812496

## BREWERY NEWS

**Burts** on the Isle of Wight have gone out of business. Brewing ceased in mid-February, but the receivers are hopeful that the brewery will be sold as a going concern and several offers have been received. Three of Burts four tenancies are currently getting their beer from the island's newest brewery, **Hartridge's** of Newport.

**Grolsch** have completed the purchase of **Ruddles** brewery from Courage, and have a trading arrangement to supply Courage for the next 5 years. In return Holland may have to suffer Grolsch distributing Fosters.

Despite stories to the contrary, not all brewers are out to fleece their customers: **Jennings** from Cumbria have extended their year long freeze on price increases, probably until the end of the summer. Despite that, they've still found enough money to buy 13 pubs from Marstons and to take over Marstons free trade business in east Cumbria.

Scottish & Newcastle's **Theakston's** subsidiary have introduced a new mild with an og of 1034.8. It will be brewed initially at Masham, but, if successful, production will also take place at Newcastle, as is the case with most of the Theakston's beers.

The **J.D.Wetherspoon** chain of free houses have off-loaded 5 pubs to Inn Leisure. 4 of the pubs are in North London, the other in east London, and were amongst the smallest pubs in the estate.

**Watney's** name has just about disappeared from the bars with the news that Watney's Special is being phased out. Only a mild brewed for a few East Anglian outlets now bears what was once a famous brewing name before the Red revolution made it so despised.

Paul Theakston, who stepped down as managing director of his family brewery when Scottish & Newcastle took them over in 1988, is currently setting up a new brewery in Masham to be called the **Black Sheep Brewery**.

In a trading agreement, **Fuller's** London Pride and **Youngs** Bitter will be on sale in **Bass** pubs alongside their own beer brands. In return the London Independent brewers will be taking some Bass produced lager. The deal will see the demise of Fullers K2 lager to allow for increased Pride production.

The new **Hampshire Brewery** at Andover is producing a 1037og (3.8% abv) bitter called King Alfred's Hampshire Bitter. A winter warmer is planned for later in the year.

**Ushers** of Trowbridge, newly independent following a management buy out, are reintroducing Founders Ale, their premium bitter discontinued about 5 years ago.

## 'SAILING AWAY'

Following the recent departures of John Wells from the **Harrow** and Bill Gass from the **Old Kings Head**, another long-serving St Albans landlord has reluctantly decided to call it a day. At the **Jolly Sailor**, Ken Adams and his wife Sylvia will put the towels on the pumps for the last time sometime in April.

It is 16 years since they moved into the pub as Charles Wells tenants when the Bedford brewery first took it over from Ind Coope. They quickly introduced real ale, so joining the **Farriers Arms**, the **Lower Red Lion** and the **White Hart Tap** as the only pubs in the city serving the real thing. To start with the beers were IPA and Fargo, the latter being replaced by Bombardier when Fargo was discontinued.

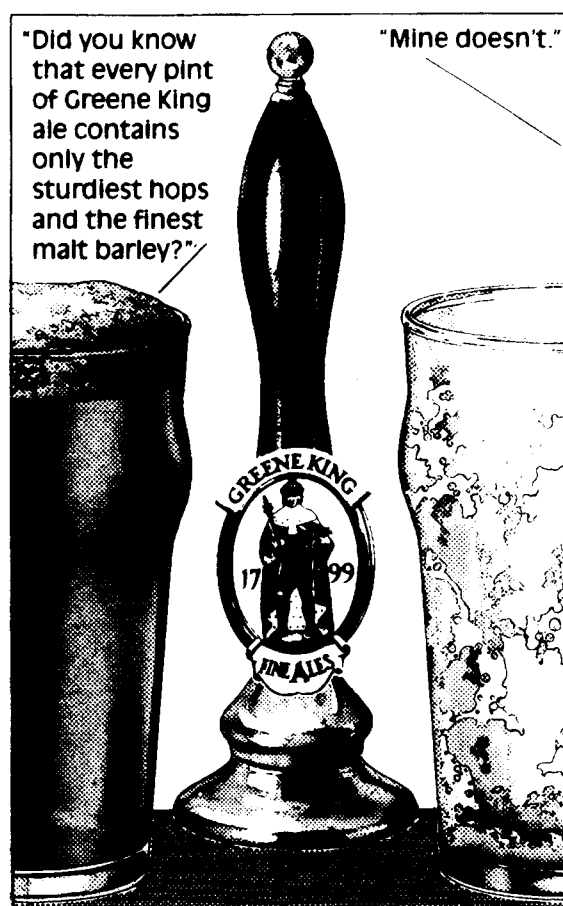
In recent times Ken has been able to take advantage of the brewery's guest beer policy by regularly offering 4 different strength ales. Alongside the two Wells beers have appeared Mansfield Riding Mild (the only real dark mild in St Albans) and the potent Adnams Broadside.

However Charles Wells are proving as greedy as the big brewers in their pursuit of profit, imposing on their tenants crippling rent increases at a time of declining beer sales. So, after 16 years Ken and Sylvia are planning to take a well earned break. Under their stewardship the Jolly Sailor has been a very successful traditional pub with a strong appeal to lovers of real ale. Let us hope it will continue as such in the future.

## SOUTH HERTS BRANCH VISIT TO McMULLENS BREWERY

Many thanks to McMullens for providing South Herts with a visit on Monday 2nd March 1992. Three years have past since our last Trip and I am pleased to say that Denis Routledge was as sharp witty and informative as we have come to expect. McMullens are renowned for their hospitality and Josie supplied us with an excellent lunch washed down with equally good Mac's AK and Country Bitter. The lunch was attended by Furgus McMullen and Roy Shadbolt who answered questions from the guests on policy and the section 43 short Measure issue. An excellent time was had by all and we look forward to our next opportunity to enjoy what is accepted as one of the classic visits. Even after such generosity some of us managed a few extra pints in the Salisbury Arms and thanked our hosts for their consideration.

Steve Bury



## BRANCH DIARY

### HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

Tuesday 14 April, Branch meeting, **Pinks Hotel**, Shenley, 8.30pm

Monday 4 May, lunchtime social with North Herts branch at the **Lytton Arms**, Old Knebworth.

Tuesday 19 May, Branch meeting at the **Station**, Ware, 8.30pm.

Contact: Bob Norrish: 0582 763133 x2554 or 0582 769923

### NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Wednesday 8 April, 8.30pm Branch meeting at the **Crown**, Buntingford.

Wednesday 22 April, 8.30pm, minicrawl, starting at **Hermit of Redcoats**, Titmore Green, then on to the **Fisherman**, Fishers Green, Stevenage, and **Crooked Billet**, Symonds Green, Stevenage.

Wednesday 6 May, 8.30pm, countryside crawl, starting at **Fox**, Darleyhall, then on to **Red Lion**, Breachwood Green, and **Harrow**, Bendish.

Wednesday 20 May, 8.30pm, minicrawl, starting at **White Hart**, Puckeridge, then via **Crown and Falcon** to **Axe and Compasses** then **Golden Fleece**, Braughing.

Wednesday 3 June, 8.30pm, branch meeting at **Lytton Arms**, Old Knebworth.

Wednesday 17 June, 8.30pm, countryside crawl, starting at **Moon and Stars**, Rushden, then on to **Bull**, Cottered, and **Jolly Wagonner**, Ardeley.

Contact: Paul Coard 0462 437249.

### WATFORD & DISTRICT BRANCH

Friday 3 April, Branch's 10 year celebration at the **West Herts Sports Club**, 8.30pm.

Wednesday 8 April, Oxhey social: **Happy Hour** 8.30pm, **Victoria** 9.45pm.

Tuesday 28 April, Mill End Social: **Happy Man**, 8.30pm; **Tree**, 9.15pm; **Whip and Collar**, 10.00pm.

Wednesday 6 May, branch darts tournament, **West Herts Sports Club**, 8.30pm.

Wednesday 13 May, social at the **Sportsman**, Croxley Green, 8.30pm.

Wednesday 20 May, Watford social: **Beaver** 8.30pm; **Essex Arms** 9.15pm; **West Herts Sports Club** 10.00pm.

Tuesday 26 May, **Moon and Sixpence**, Hatch End, 8.30pm, **Partridge**, South Oxhey 10.15pm.

Contact: Martin Few 0923 252412.

### MID-CHILTERN BRANCH

Contact: Chris Pontin 0494 78624(w), 0494 775409(h)

### HERTS-ESSEX BORDERS

Contact: Angie Wright 0277 225815

### ALL HERTS LIAISON MEETING

Monday 13 April, **West Herts Sports Club**, Watford, 8.30pm.

### EAST ANGLIA REGIONAL MEETING

Saturday 9 May, in Herts, venue to be confirmed.

## CIDER FEST

The successful campaign to prevent the European Parliament whacking up the tax on cider and hence devastating the British cider industry, produced the interesting (?) fact that the second largest European cider producer is Spain, and that they along with Greece, Italy and Portugal impose no duty on their cider producers. Norman Lamont didn't do his bit for tax harmonisation by reducing British cider duty to that level but at least he didn't increase the duty. You'll have the chance to taste a fine range of what CAMRA was helping to fight to preserve at the **3rd Cider & Perry Exhibition** at the Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, London, WCl. Opening times are Thurs May 14, 5-10.30pm; Fri May 15, Noon-10.30pm; Sat May 16, 11am-6pm. A few milds will also be on sale and there will be a family room available, as well as a cider information desk.

## REAL DRAUGHT BEER IN HERTFORDSHIRE

The guide to the counties pubs for the discerning beer drinker; available from Eric Sim, 10 Heron Way, Hatfield AL10 8QL. £3.50.

### YOU COULD BE ADVERTISING YOUR PUB OR COMPANY HERE TO OVER 4000 BEER DRINKERS

For details see bottom of this page.

### APPLICATION FOR CAMRA MEMBERSHIP

I/We wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale Limited, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign. I am/We are over 18 years of age (AGE )\*

NAME(S) .....

DATE .....

ADDRESS .....

SIGNATURE .....

TELEPHONE NUMBER(S) .....

I/We enclose remittance for individual/joint membership for one year: **U.K. £10**

**Overseas £14**

I/We would like to receive further information about CAMRA

\* Knowledge of the average age of our members would be helpful. The information need only be given if you wish ALL MEMBERS MUST BE AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE.

Please send your remittance (payable to CAMRA Limited) with this application form to:

**THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, CAMRA LTD.,  
34 ALMA ROAD, ST. ALBANS., HERTS. AL1 3BW  
OR WHY NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DIRECT DEBIT?**

The Hertfordshire Newsletter is produced by the Hertfordshire North, Hertfordshire South, Watford & District and Mid-Chilterns branches of the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor, CAMRA Ltd or its Branches. Any articles or letters for publication should preferably be typewritten and double-spaced; handwritten items should also be well spaced and as legible as possible please. Send to: Eric Sim, 10 Heron Way, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 8QL.

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**Advertising:** £10 per 2.5cm column. Artwork can be made up at extra cost. Contact **Eric Sim** ☎ 0707 260647 for details.

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