



# THE HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER



A bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1992

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## NEW BREWERY FOR HERTS

Hertfordshire should have a new small brewery on stream in September. The Tring Brewery is intending to start brewing then, with the first deliveries to pubs taking place in October.

The company will produce a traditional bitter, with an abv of 3.8-4.0%, called Ridgeway Bitter. Their plans for the future include the production of a stronger bitter, Old Icknield Ale, with an abv of 4.8-5.0%. They also expect to produce other, specialist, beers as the company expands.

The brewery will produce the first beer brewed in Tring since about 1925, when William Jesse Rodwell & Sons gave up brewing, selling their 5 pubs to Meux's of London, seven years later. Rodwells continued as soft drink producers.

We wish the company every success.

### OTHER BREWERY NEWS

Greene King are still trying with their misguided takeover of Morlands. The deadline of July 2nd was reached with them only getting 0.2% more shares than they had at their previous deadline. It looks as though they're going to try and save face by dragging out the bid to the last date allowed by the Stock Exchange take over rules.

It's to be hoped that some of those who have previously supported the bid will now see the error of their ways and withdraw their consent.

News of other new small breweries: Judges Brewery in Rugby has started producing Barristers Bitter; there's one being set up in Leominster and there are plans for one, the Branscombe Vale Brewery, in East Devon.

Breweries expanding include Moorhouses of Burnley who are extending their plant, Brains who are increasing real ale capacity by 20%, the Burnley based Original Lion's Brews which plans to triple its capacity to 150 barrels a week (and produce a new mild) and Batemans who have invested in a new mash tun to increase capacity.



Over 200 GUEST REAL ALES per. year

Fullers; Hook Norton  
& G.K.IPA.

These HOUSE BEERS are direct from the Brewery  
(NOT WHOLESALERS)

BEERS SERVED ON GRAVITY & HAND PUMP

HOMEMADE BREAD & FOOD WEEKDAY LUNCHTIMES

20% DISC. ON OFFSALE PINS/FIRKINS

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

**Bricklayers**, Hitchin, has adopted 'all day' opening.

**Olivers**, Hitchin, now sells only fizzy beer; real ale removed due to low turnover.

**Found Inn**, Hitchin, and **Crown & Falcon**, Puckeridge, both sell varying guest beers, often from small breweries.

New landlords have moved in at the **Cricketers**, Hitchin; **Red Lion**, Woolmer Green; **Goldcrest**, Baldock; and the **Goat**, Codicote. Landlord changes expected soon at the **Marquis of Lorne**, **Red Lion**, and **Greenkeeper**, all in Stevenage.

The **Bull**, Watton at Stone, has reopened after a long period of closure caused by a serious fire.

The **Red Hart**, Hitchin, is being renovated; will it go 'real'?

We can now announce that all pubs in Stevenage High Street sell real ale. The latest and last conversion is the **Chequers**, where the new landlord has installed handpumps selling Greene King XX Mild, IPA and Abbot.

The **Rising Sun**, Stevenage, is also now selling Greene King XX mild.

The **Red Lion**, Breachwood Green, is now selling all four Greene King beers.

The **Red Lion**, Great Offley, formerly a Whitbread House, is now a Free House. On a recent visit it was observed to be offering Castle Eden Bitter, Boddingtons Bitter, and Morlands Old Speckled Hen.

The **Sir John Barleycorn**, Hitchin has been transformed into a one-bar pub with all-round carpeting, and now sells Greene King IPA, Abbot, and Rayments Special.

The **White Lion**, Watford, is selling Ruddles County in place of John Smiths.

At Brickendon, south of Hertford, the former McMullen owned **Farmer's Boy** has reopened as a free house, although all 3 real ales are from the Greene King range.

Meanwhile another ex-Mac's pub, the **Rifle Volunteer** at Ware has also gone 'free', now owned by the landlord from the **Two Brewers**, Hertford.

Other news from Ware - The **Station Hotel** looks likely to

close in September, its future role unclear at the time of writing. And the **Brewery Tap** (Greene King) is currently closed.

In Hertford the long-serving landlord at the **Blackbirds** is retiring, and Greene King are undertaking a major refurbishment at the **Duncombe Arms**. There are plans to demolish the Whitbread owned **Nag's Head**, between Hertford and Ware, and replace it with a block of flats.

At Letty Green the **Cowper Arms** has become a Whitbread Brewer's Fayre establishment and at Mill Green the **Greene Man** is passing from Benskins to Brent Walker's Pubmaster chain. At present the **Green Man** offers Greene King IPA and Adnams Bitter.

In St.Albans we welcome Colin and Mary Cassidy as new tenants at the **Jolly Sailor**. Meanwhile John Wells, formerly of the **Harrow**, has taken over at the **White Swan** and is currently offering Hook Norton Bitter as a guest at £1.20 a pint. At his old pub **London Pride** has appeared alongside the Tetley Bitter, while at the **White Lion** Greenalls Bitter has been introduced, marking the change of ownership from Allied to Greenalls. (But who brews Greenalls? Allied, of course!)

Out of town the **Plough** at Tyttenhanger has added Timothy Taylor's Landlord from Keighley to its regular range. The **Black Lion** at Shenley now offers London Pride alongside Benskins and Burton, and at **Pinks**, Shenley, Cook's Yardarm Special has been a recent guest beer.

At Batford, Harpenden, Bill and Jan Potter, along with Mark Collings, have arrived from Hoddesdon to take over the Intrepreneur-owned **Marquis of Granby**. They hope to offer a varying range of real ales.

There is also a new landlord at the **George IV**, Harpenden, although still no real ale.

## HUNTSMAN

Lord Street, Goose Green, Hoddesdon

### BEER FESTIVAL

70 Different Real Ales

*FREE ENTRY*

Friday 28 August 7.30 to 11.30

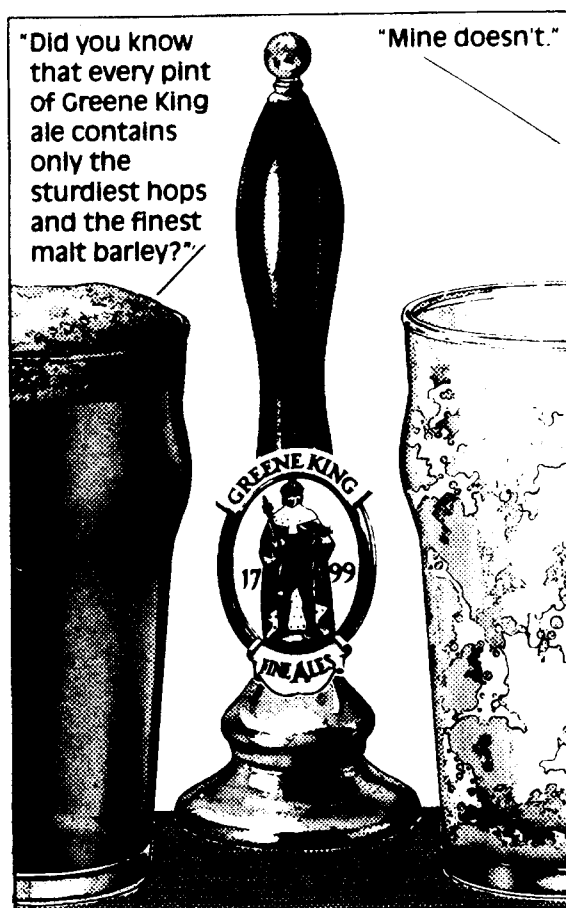
Saturday 29 August 7.30 to 11.30

Sunday 30 August 12.00 to 10.30

Monday 31 August 12.00 to 11.30

**For further information**

**Phone 0992 443294**



## MMC – DOES IT MEAN MORE CHOICE?

Just over two years ago, as a result of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission report, tenants of the big brewers were allowed, in principle at least, to take a guest beer of their own choice. In addition the big brewers have been selling off their pubs to comply with the new regulations and we have seen some major changes such as the deal between Courage and Grand Metropolitan and offers of unreasonable leases to tenants who have been forced to leave. So how has this affected the choice of beers available in Hertfordshire?

To find out all the pubs in St. Albans were surveyed in June 1992. St. Albans has the largest number of pubs of any Hertfordshire town – 51 in all. The results of this survey were compared with a similar one carried out in June 1988 – well before the MMC report was implemented.

24 pubs have taken a guest beer with the result that Independent Breweries' beers are now much more widely available in St. Albans. In addition to the beers available in the **Lower Red Lion** (the town's only free house), which has a regular changing guest, the 4 Inn Leisure pubs, and the Fullers, McMullens & Charles Wells tied houses, the following are now available as guests: Fullers London Pride (2 pubs), Adnams Bitter (2), Greene King IPA (2), Greene King Abbot (4), Hook Norton Bitter (2), Wadworth 6X (4), Marston Pedigree (6), Brakspear Bitter (2). More unusually, Bateman XB Bitter is available in the **Verulam Arms**, Glenny beers such as Hobgoblin in the **Tudor Tavern**, and Dark Mild is regularly served at the **Jolly Sailor** (Mansfield Riding Mild) and the **Boot** (Ansells).

However, the trend towards National Brands in big brewers pubs is reflected in that, for example, Tetleys was available in only 10 Allied pubs in 1988 as opposed to 16 in 1992, while Benskins outlets dropped from 17 to 10.

Overall then, for St. Albans at least, the MMC report has resulted in more choice, both in the number of beers available and the variety of brands being sold.

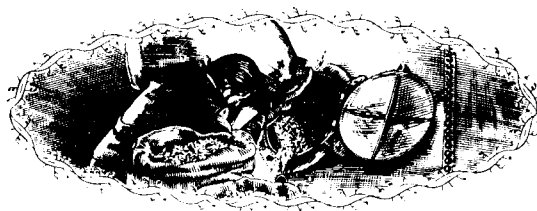
## ANOTHER BEER FESTIVAL

The second North Hertfordshire Beer Festival will be held on Friday 18th and Saturday 19th September, again at the **Plinston Hall**, Broadway, Letchworth (about two minutes walk from the railway station).

At the time of writing, we have not yet made our final decisions on the range of beers which will be available, but we can guarantee an interesting range of at least 40 beers, all from small breweries and established independent breweries from all over Britain. You should be able to find something to suit your taste, whether your favourite is bitter, mild, stout, porter, or strong ales with silly names. We also hope to have a supply of this year's Champion Beer of Britain, whatever the award winner turns out to be.

Since the 1991 festival sold out far too early, we will be stocking a greater quantity of beer, and expect to be able to offer a full range to customers at all sessions, including Saturday evening. We will also be offering a variety of ciders and perries.

Opening times on Friday are 11.30am to 3pm and 5pm to 11pm, and on Saturday from 11am to 3pm and 6pm to 11pm. Admission will be 50p at lunchtimes, £1 for evening sessions, and free to CAMRA members.



**McMULLEN**  
**ORIGINAL** **AK**

*Fine Hertfordshire Cask Ale*

An abundance of the finest malted barley. Whole hops from the gardens of Kent. Gentle fermentation in the renowned copper-lined oak fermenting vats at the Hertford Brewery. That's what gives McMullen Original AK its unique malty taste. That's what makes AK one of today's great cask ales.

AS BREWED FOR OVER 100 YEARS

## BRANCH DIARY

### HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

Tuesday 18 August, 8.30pm Branch Meeting **Farmers Boy**, Brickendon.

Tuesday 15 September 8.30pm Branch Meeting, **Moor Mill**, Smug Oak Lane, Colney Street. (Off Park Street).

Contact: Bob Norrish: 0582 763133 x2554 or 0582 769923

### NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Wednesday 12 August, 8.30 Branch Meeting at the **Star**, Furneaux Pelham.

Wednesday 26 August, 8.30 Minicrawl, starting at the **Three Horseshoes**, Hinxworth, then on to the **Engine** then **Bushel & Strike**, Ashwell.

Wednesday 9 September, 8.30 Minicrawl, starting at the **Greyhound**, St Ippollitts, then on to **Plume of Feathers** then **Bucks Head**, Little Wymondley.

Friday 18 & Saturday 19 September North Hertfordshire Beer Festival, **Plinston Hall**, Letchworth.

Wednesday 23 September, 8.30 Branch Meeting at the **Highlander**, Hitchin.

Contact: Paul Coard 0462 437249.

### WATFORD & DISTRICT BRANCH

Sunday 16 August, Lunch time social at the **Plough**, Belsize.

Wednesday 19 August, pub crawl of Harefield, start at the **Plough**, 8.30pm.

Wednesday 9 September, Chorleywood social, **Black Horse** 8.30pm, **Old Shepherd** 10.00pm.

Tuesday 15 September, **Otter**, Watford, 8.30pm, **Estcourt Arms**, 9.30pm.

Tuesday 22 September, branch meeting, **Fox & Hounds**, Rickmansworth, 8.30pm. With guest speaker (to be confirmed). Note change of date.

Contact: Martin Few 0923 252412.

### MID-CHILTERNES BRANCH

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

### HERTS-ESSEX BORDERS

Contact: Angie Wright 0277 225815

## DOBBO MBE

As he's a member of one of the Herts branches, we couldn't let this edition go without adding our congratulations to Iain ('Dobbo') Dobson, CAMRA's Chief Executive, on his award of an MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list. It is another mark of recognition for the campaign, now celebrating its 21st Birthday, following closely on a special award from Glenfiddich for its contribution to consumer affairs.

It is rumoured that Iain's next ambition is to have a pub named after him . . .

### **The Greyhound** (Free House)

St. Ippollitts Nr. Hitchin

Now Open Selling Real Ale & Real Food  
EVERY DAY

Boddingtons & Flowers IPA  
Plus Guest Beer

## 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.

## NORTH HERTS PUB OF THE YEAR

The Lytton Arms is situated in Old Knebworth off the B197 and is approximately 1½ miles from Knebworth Station (about 25 minutes walk) OS 229202.

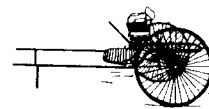
The pub was built in about 1887 and was one of the first to start serving 'real ale' again in 1978. The current landlord Stephen Nye took over in 1988 and being a free house it has served over 400 different beers.

Two bars currently boast 11 hand pumps together with a large selection of foreign beers.

There are various beer festivals held during the year, the next one will be on 8 to 11 October 1992.

The presentation will be held on Wednesday 23 September 1992 at 8.30pm.

**Inn On the Green**



**TILBURY**

**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.  
Coming Soon Hogsback Brewery  
– phone Ian Miller for details*

*Almost Live Music some of the time*

**Telephone: 0438-812496**

The Hertfordshire Newsletter is produced by the Hertfordshire North, Hertfordshire South, Watford & District and Mid-Chilternes 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.

**Subscriptions:** £3.50 for 12 issues. Send to: 10 Heron Way, Hatfield, Herts. AL10 8QL. Cheques payable: CAMRA Herts Campaigning Fund

**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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