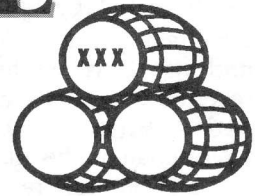


FREE



# THE HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

A bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker



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## A PINT IS NOT A PINT – OFFICIAL

The government has done a remarkable U-turn and has decided not to implement its proposals to ensure drinkers get a full pint. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that it has done so to keep its friends in the brewing industry happy, why else would they ignore the demands and recommendations of consumer groups and trading standards officers?

The Brewers' Society have come out with their usual rhetoric claiming that providing a full pint every time would add 7p to a pint, which is a basic admission that we are being short changed: trading standards officers have estimated that drinkers are ripped off by about £400 million a year. Wolverhampton & Dudley (Banks) would appear to disagree with the Brewers' Society the majority of their pubs sell their beer either by measured dispense into oversize glasses, or by hand pull into lined glasses, and they remain competitive in the cheap West Midlands trading area. If they can do it, why can't the rest?

When you go to a greengrocers and ask for a pound of apples and get underweight, you'd expect a discount, why should it be any different when you ask for a pint of beer?

As a sop to the government not implementing the full pub regulations, the Brewers' Society, in co-operation with various Licensed Victuallers societies, have agreed a code of practice. This states that when using brim measure glasses, after the head has 'totally collapsed', the amount of liquid should be at least 95% of a pint. If it doesn't, any request for a top-up should 'be received with good grace and should never be refused'. When using line measure glasses, a full pint should always be delivered.

So it's back to normal, the brewing industry remains the only one where the customer is expected to ask for a full measure rather than it being given as a matter of course.



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## DOWN YOUR WAY

Recent sell offs have included the Black Lion at St Albans which Bass has let go and is now a free house (McMullens AK, Tetley Bitter, Castle Eden and Boddingtons) and the Cottage, Welwyn Garden City, has gone from Bass to Greene King.

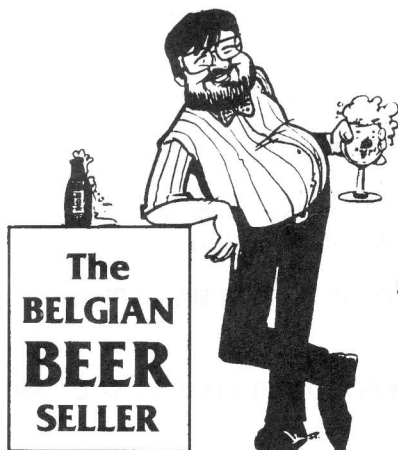
The Three Oaks, between Normansland and Amwell, has gone real at last, selling McMullens AK, Country and Porter, and also Bass, while the Prince Henry, Great Offley has reverted to real ale and is now selling Marstons Pedigree, Tetley Bitter, Wadworth 6X and Websters Bitter. Unfortunately, the Black Squirrel, Letchworth, has dropped real ale, but may return to the fold after refurbishment, due at the end of 1993.

Changes to beer ranges carry on a pace. Notably the Fox and Hounds, Barley, is brewing again and Tring Brewery's trading area is expanding with their Old Icknield Bitter being available at the Hollybush, Redbourn. Other changes include: the Rose and Crown, Chorleywood replacing Tetleys by Tolly Bitter (a welcome reversal); the Woodman at Wildhill extending its range, Greene King IPA and Abbot, McMullens AK and Porter, and Butcombe Bitter being available; the Great Eastern, Hertford, and the Candlesticks, Essendon, now selling Bass alongside their McMullens range; the Stag at Chorleywood now doing the full range of McMullens beers; Ye Olde Greene Manne, Batchworth Heath, has five draught beers from the Ind Coope supplied range, while the Rose and Crown, Woodcock Hill, Rickmansworth has four from the same range; the Black Lion, Shenley, now has six handpumps, currently dispensing Greene King IPA, Tetley Bitter, ABC Bitter, Wadworth 6X, London Pride, and Flowers; the Woodhall Arms, Stapleford, is selling Charles Wells IPA and Bombadier, and have introduced a fourth handpump; the Harrow, St Albans, has Batemans XXXB on sale; the Carpenters Arms, Harpenden, has had Crown Buckley and Jennings beers on sale; the Five Horseshoes, Berkhamstead has been selling McMullens AK at £1.55 a pint.

Changes to pubs include Greene King planning to revamp the Cottage, Welwyn Garden City; the long closed Red Lion, Borehamwood being turned into a MacDonald's Drive Thru; Greenalls have submitted plans to extend the saloon bar of the White Lion, St Albans; and the Cock at Hitchin will be closing at the end of December for about 3 months for extensive refurbishment and will cease to trade as a hotel.

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The Horse & Groom in Hatfield has been taken over by a team of ex-British Aeospace workers.

## ODD BITS

Manns Original Brown Ale, now brewed by the independent brewer, Usher of Trowbridge, won a Gold Medal in the 32nd annual selection organised by the Monde Selection International Institute for Quality Selections based in Belgium.

Whitbread have opened their first cider bar, the Cider Gate in Exeter. No beers are stocked. A Whitbread pub worth going to?

Bunces Brewery of Netheravon has been bought by Stig Andersen a Danish millionaire. He used to be the managing director of the Danish Albanie brewery.

Greene King have bought 44 pubs in London and the South East from Bass for £17.6million. Bass also flogged 46 pubs to Marstons for £10.8 million, 28 of the pubs are 'in the south'.

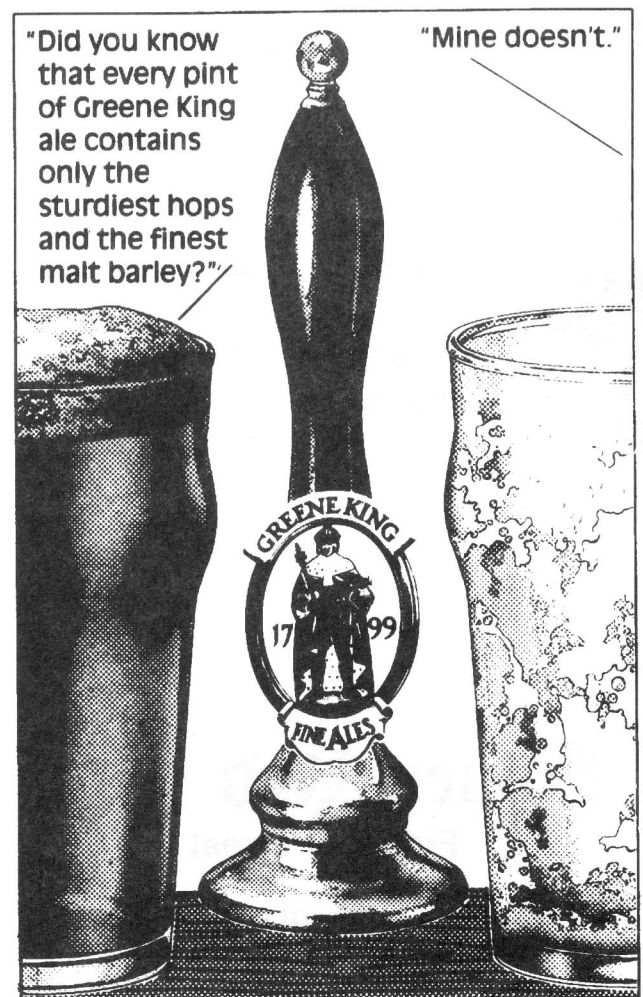
To celebrate their 150th anniversary, Arkells have produced an Anniversary Ale, abv 6%, which is expected to sell at about £1.80 a pint.

Crouch Vale were asked to brew a beer for a dinosaur exhibition so Terrydact Ale (4.2 abv) was produced.

3 million bottles of Heineken Export were recalled after some batches were found to contain glass fragments. Thought it was Harp that was meant to stay sharp. . .

There's a new brewery on the Isle of Wight: Anthony Goddard previously the owner of the Barton Manor vineyard on the island has started producing Goddard's Special Bitter a 4% bv beer.

Ridley's have added to their range of beers, as well as Mild, IPA and a Winter Ale there's also now SX Best and Witchfinder Porter (both 4.3% abv).



## **PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE – A story of two Ware Pubs**

Stephen Clegg, landlord of the Brewery Tap for the last few months, who had hoped to take a long lease, has had to give up for health reasons.

In the short time that he has had this fine old town pub he has completely revitalised it, realising its true potential.

Too many brewery refurbishments end up as the imposition of the 'house style' regardless of its suitability. Steve, however, rightly started with the building itself and went from there, an object lesson on how to do it. At the same time he kept an excellent pint of beer!

Best wishes to CAMRA member Steve and a welcome to the new landlord, Bill Murphy from the Waggon & Horses, Steeple Morden.

Meanwhile, over at the Albion in Crib Street, we see that Whitbread Pub Partnership PCL proposes new signs 'in keeping with new Whitbread Corporate Image'.

It is about time that the brewery suits learned that the locals value the Albion not because it's a Whitbread pub but because it has an excellent landlord who knows what he is at.

Forget the off-the-shelf corporate image, start with the excellent old 16/17C timber framed building and take it from there, giving the landlord what he wants to run his pub in his own way.

## **THE LAST OF ENGLAND**

Hilaire Belloc wrote "When you have lost your inns down your empty selves, for you will have lost the last of England". October saw yet another nail hammered into the coffin of England's heritage with the loss of the Cock, Sarratt.

The Cock was probably the last genuine, unspoilt, country local in the Watford area. Despite the protestations of villagers, it will now become another desirable residence in one of the loveliest villages in the area. Its inn-sign will remain, however, mocking the former customers and no doubt bitterly reminding them of a much-loved local facility now lost forever.

The last of England? We're certainly losing it fast.

MB

## **SOUTH HERTS BRANCH VISIT TO KING & BARNES BREWERY**

In recent years the Cask Breather has been a major contentious issue for CAMRA. Peter King joint Managing Director with his brother Bill of King & Barnes Brewers in Sussex and active CAMRA Member has taken an active role in the debate.

His views are not mine Peter is in favour and myself against. We have both made our case at CAMRA AGMs on and off the rostrum and have had some interesting discussions on the subject.

So what has this to do with the Brewery Trip. At this years AGM in Salford it was mentioned that King & Barnes were undertaking a Blind Tasting Experiment so I selflessly volunteered the Branch Members as Guinea Pigs. A date was set 29th September (too late for the last edition) and as we were to travel to the Horsham Brewery a tour around the site was a mere formality.

After the visit we were given four samples (by no means the sum total of the hospitality) one naturally conditioned one CO<sub>2</sub> one Cask Breather and one CO<sub>2</sub> & Nitrogen mix. Eight of the party of fourteen got all four right, myself being one; what conclusions can be drawn from this I leave to you.

Our task completed pint glasses and the full range of King & Barnes Beers were provided for the remainder of the Hospitality session. Unfortunately neither Peter or Bill King were available but the Head Brewer Andrew Hepworth attended and answered all our questions most ably. After this we visited the Brewery Tap and collected some Bottle conditioned pints of Festive Ale from the Off Sales department before leaving. The trip back took us to several Good Beer Guide listed Pubs in Sussex and Hertfordshire which rounded off a pleasant day out.

Thanks again to King & Barnes for giving us a visit especially as we are not strictly in their trading area. In the New year we have Visits to Fullers and McMullens attend the Branch Meetings to obtain a chance of filling the limited number of places available.

Steve Bury

## **DOWN YOUR WAY – 2**

A Belated welcome to Jakie and Terry who we hope will have a long stay at the "White Horse" Shenley. As reported in the previous edition it had been suggested by Ind Coope Retail that the Function Room behind the Pub be converted to a Pool Room.

This would have seriously changed the character of this 16th Century Coaching Inn and now appeals to have been put on the Back Burner and bookings will continue. In keeping with the festive season a "Children's Disney / Santa Day" is planned using the room on Sunday 5th December 1993 .

There has been a change of landlord at a number of pubs: Fox, Woolmer Green; Bull, Whitwell; New Found Out, Hitchin; Cock, Hitchin; Ebenezers, Letchworth; New Inn, Holwell; Prince Henry, Great Offley; Cricketers, Hitchin; William IV, Shenley; the Two Brewers, Northaw; Brewery Tap, Ware; the Tavern and the Steamer, Old Welwyn; and the Three Tuns, Bishops Stortford.

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## BRANCH DIARY

### HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

Tuesday 7 December, Branch meeting and **Pub of the Year, Lower Red Lion**, Fishpool Street, St. Albans, 8pm.

Saturday 8 January, New Year Party, Ticket only, contact Denis Ward 0920 467463.

Tuesday 18 January, **A.G.M. White Horse**, Castle Street, Hertford, 8pm.

Wednesday 2 February, Trip to Fullers Brewery, details from Phil Defriez, 0727 842838(h) 071 430 1961(w).

Contact: Bob Norrish; 0582 763133 x2554(w) 0582 769923(h)

### NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Wednesday 1 December, 8.30pm, Branch meeting at the **Assizes**, Hitchin.

Wednesday 15 December, 8.30pm, Belgian Beer Tasting.

Wednesday 29 December, 8.30pm, West Hitchin Crawl, starting at the **Nightingale**.

Wednesday 12 January, 7 for 7.30pm, Post-Xmas Meal at the **Boars Head**, Royston.

Wednesday 26 January 8.30pm, Central Stevenage Crawl, starting at **Edward the Confessor**.

Wednesday 9 February, 8.30pm, Branch meeting at the **Highlander**, Hitchin.

Contact: Paul Coard 0462 437249

### WATFORD & DISTRICT BRANCH

Wednesday 1 December, Social 8.30pm **Fisheries**, Harefield, 9.30pm **Fishermans Tackle**, West Hyde.

Wednesday 8 December, Curry evening: meet Croxley Community Centre from 8.00pm, curry at the Standard curry house at 9.30pm.

Wednesday 15 December, Batchworth Heath social: 8.30pm **Prince of Wales**, 9.30pm **Ye Olde Greene Manne**.

Monday 27 December, Post-Xmas ramble, ring contact for details.

Tuesday 11 January, Branch meeting at the **Estcourt Tavern**, Watford, 8.30pm.

Friday 14 January, Pre-Xmas London pub crawl round Euston area, ring contact for details.

Saturday 22nd January, Trip to Shepherd Neame brewery.

Tuesday 25th January, Social at the Bedford Arms, Watford, 8.30pm.

Contact: Michael Birch 0923 773913

### HERTS-ESSEX BORDERS

Wednesday 1 December, trip to Pigs Ear Beer Festival 6.20pm at Harlow Town or 7.15pm at Festival.

Saturday 8 January, Herts Pub of the Year Presentation, **Rising Sun**, High Wych 8.00pm.

Monday 10 January, Branch Meeting **Castle**, Bishops Stortford 8.00pm.

Saturday 29 January, London pub crawl details at branch meetings.

Contacts: Brendan Sothcott, Social Secretary, 0279 429389(h) or Derek Wisdom, Chairman, 0279 414200(h).

### MID-CHILTERN'S BRANCH

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

### ALL HERTS LIAISON MEETING

January in Mid-Chilterns area.

**The Greyhound** (Free House)  
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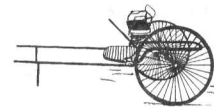


## TALE OF ALE

'Free Reed' have re-leased the 1977 double album 'The Tale of Ale' on CD and cassette. This is a collection of songs and readings on beer and drinking and is available from TALE OF ALE (WB), FREE REED MUSIC, OLD CHAPEL, BELPER, DERBY DE56 1AZ, price £12.99 (CD), £10.99 (cassette) to non-CAMRA members, £2 less for CAMRA members. Further details from Free Reed, 0773 824157.



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Brewery Trips organised periodically.  
Coming next — Cheriton Brewery  
— phone Ian Miller for details

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The Hertfordshire Newsletter is produced by the Hertfordshire North, Hertfordshire South, Watford & District, Herts-Essex Borders 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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