

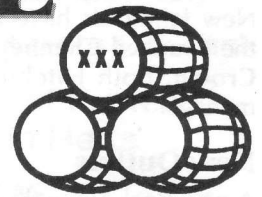
FREE



THE HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER



A bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker



FEBRUARY/MARCH 1995

CIRCULATION 5000

NUMBER 149

MORE BREWERIES TO THE PINT

Until comparatively recent times the number of breweries and the companies that owned them was in decline. In the immediate post World War II years they numbered some 1000 but by 1990 the figure had dropped to less than 200. Hertfordshire had just one survivor from those middle century years, McMullen in Hertford itself.

It looked as if the growth of large multi brewery owning companies and their habit of buying up and closing down smaller producers was unstoppable. Many local tastes and styles were lost as the major brewing companies flooded the pubs with their nationally available beers. This process however exposed a niche in the drinks market - a locally produced beer.

It was of course impossible to make such a beer unless you had a brewery in the vicinity and by 1989 these were few and far between. But, things have now begun to change, thanks partially to the resurgence of interest in Real Ale and partially as a result of the Governments review of beer supply some six years ago which allowed licensees to sell guest beers.

The result of these changes is becoming very plain to see both on a national basis and in Hertfordshire. The 1995 edition of the Good Beer Guide notes that some 85 new breweries have started up in the last three years alone, stretching from Orkney to Devon and most points in between. Hertfordshire now has seven breweries, including "Macs", with others in the pipeline. The new boys range in size from regional suppliers, such as The Tring Brewery Co., to simple brew pubs like the Fox & Hounds at Barley but their appeal is obvious. Beer produced locally or even on site has a huge novelty value and due to low transport costs should often be cheap. The small size of the operations make them ideal for experimentation and the production of "limited edition" beers with which to delight the patrons, who in turn can praise or criticise directly to whoever made it!

Of course only a limited number of pubs and their licensees have the room and the inclination to start up brewing but we should all applaud the efforts of those who do. The Hertfordshire Newsletter will be doing small features on the breweries within the County boundary over the coming months so there will be no excuse for not seeking these outlets and enjoying their wares.

Hertfordshire
South Branch
Pub of the Year
1995

Enjoy a pint at
St. Albans' Oldest Freehouse

Lower Red Lion
Fishpool Street

Excellent range of regular ales
and unusual guest beers

Hertfordshire
South Branch
Pub of the Year
1994



THE WHITE HORSE

CASTLE ST. HERTFORD

WE NOW HAVE OUR OWN BREWERY PRODUCING:

UNICORN ALE: 4.1%

LIGHT BRIGADE: 3.6%

(AS SERVED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BARS!!)

LONDON PRIDE & HOOK NORTON
AND EVER CHANGING SELECTION OF REAL ALES

FUNCTION/PARTY ROOMS AVAILABLE
UPSTAIRS SMOKE FREE ROOMS PLUS BAR

POLYPINS AND FIRKINS FROM £1 PINT FOR PARTIES

TEL 0992 501950

DOWN YOUR WAY

Renovations & Refurbishments

Pinks Hotel, Shenley, has completed the conversion of the bar area which is a great improvement.

New Incumbents

New landlords have moved in at the **George IV**, Baldock, the **Crooked Chimney**, Cromer Hyde and the **Fountain and Crown**, both Hitchin while the **Assizes** has a new bar manager.

New Outlets

A new Real Ale outlet has appeared in the rebuilt **Cromwells Bar** at the **Sun Hotel**, Hitchin. Current range is Draught Bass, Hancock's Bitter, Worthington Best and a guest. The **Blackbirds**, Hertford, has gained permission to brew and is expected to become another Firkin pub.

Additional Beer Changes

Some local Fullers' pubs were selling the brewery's Golden Pride (9.2% Alcohol by Volume) including the **Wellington Arms**, Watford, the **Harpenden Arms**, Harpenden and the **Garibaldi**, St. Albans. **Ebenezer's** in Letchworth have increased their range to include Websters Green Label, Boddington's Bitter and Draught Bass. Those of you looking for something a bit different could have done worse than go to the **Moor Mill**, Park Street, where the full range of Pontypridd beers have been on sale.

Notices

Returning to Shenley, the renowned "Pinks Tug-o-War Team" who train on the Rectory Lane site are recruiting new members to strengthen the squad for next season. Experience is not necessary, fitness and technique are as important as size and weight.

Bill and Evonne of the **William IV** (Shenley again!) raised money over a week in November for the Special Needs Unit at Lyndhurst School, Borehamwood. Andy and Julie of the Roundbush, Aldenham, have raised funds for the local Disabled Riding Group and the Radlett Autistic Centre. None of this could have been achieved without the generosity of the customers at both pubs which sell a good variety of cask conditioned beers and are well worth a visit. The **Philanthropist & Firkin**, St. Albans, held its second beer festival starting on January 19th. With over 80 different beers available from around the firkin country a jolly good time was firkin guaranteed. Notable brews included in the catalogue were Organ Grinder, Birmingham, Son Of A Bitch, Cardiff, Dizzy Dick, Middlesborough and Baz's Bonce Blower, Leicester. Silly firkin names apart, events such as these can only stimulate firkin interest in Britain's expanding brewing industry. Lets hope it's not too firkin long until the next Firkin event.

PUBS OF THE YEAR

The Watford & District Branch are pleased to announce that the Fox and Hounds, Rickmansworth has been selected as their Pub of the Year for 1994. After a closely fought contest, this award reflects the high standards found by the selection panel.

The Fox and Hounds has retained two separate bars as well as its traditional pub atmosphere. It provides a focal point for the local community with a well used meeting room and pub games. The friendliness and efficiency of the staff was commended and the real ale consistently served in good condition.

The award was presented to John and Sue Parry on Tuesday January 10th. Both the local community and CAMRA members turned out in force to join in the celebrations and the local press also made an appearance to mark the event.

THE LORDSHIP ARMS

THE INN IN THE STICKS
Benington Nr Stevenage.
formerly The Cricketers

Recently refurbished

REAL ALE OASIS for the DISCERNING
DRINKER

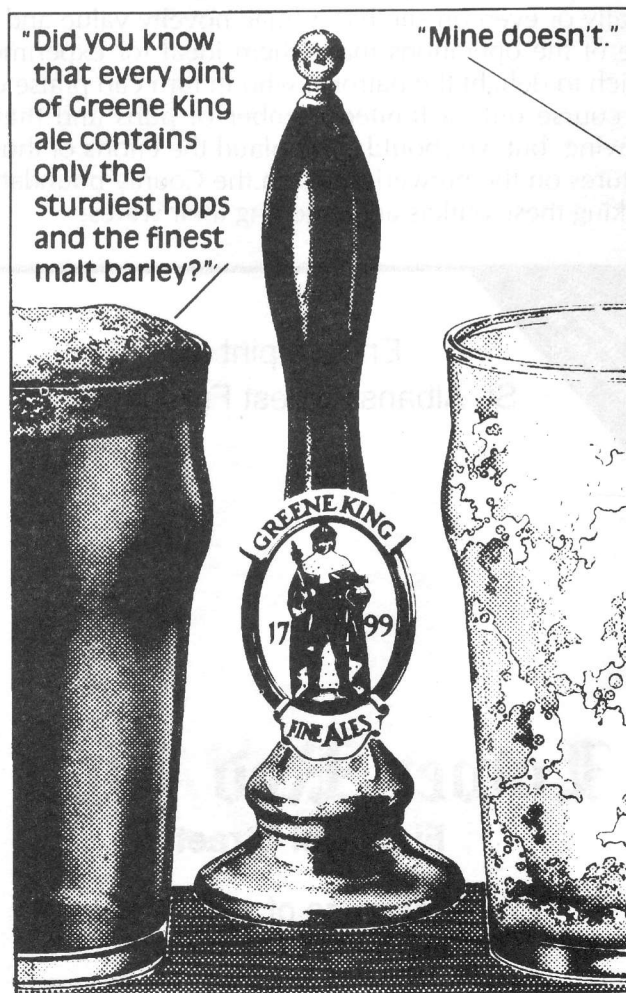
Youngs Special, FullersESB, Sam Smith's OBB
plus Guest Beers & Traditional Cider

Homemade Bar Food served Daily
Two Course Sunday Roast £5.50

Telephone 0438-869665

The proceedings were aided by the availability of Courage and Moles beers in top notch condition at happy hour prices. The South Hertfordshire branch awarded their annual Pub Of The Year prize to the White Horse in Castle Street, Hertford, on December 6th. Ian & Jan Harvey along with Ellie Rose accepted a commemorative plaque in recognition of the pub's outstanding service to Real Ale in the South Hertfordshire area. Beers from the the pub's own brewery were much in evidence along with their creator Rob Jones and representatives from the Gibbs Mew Brewery in Salisbury.

South Herts. branch have also decided to mark the achievements of the runners up in the 1994 competition with similar momentos. See the Diary Dates section in this Newsletter for details of forthcoming events at the Garibaldi and Lower Red Lion (both St. Albans).



NEW BREWERY FOR ELSTREE

The "Fishery Inn" overlooking the reservoir at Elstree is a Free House owned by McNicolas the builders who have their head office further down the lane.

In mid October '94 brewing commenced from the equipment installed in a room attached to the cellar. Paul Cheetham the cellar manager is now head brewer running the 660 litre capacity plant.

The brewing is full mash and in its early stages with changes to the recipes ingredients and range of beers taking place to meet demand. At present Muntons provide all the malted barley and some flaked maize is used but no added sugars. Also the Challenger hop pellets may be replaced by leaf hops to give the beers a better nose especially as none of them are currently dry hopped.

The Lismmeraine Stout was discontinued before Christmas and replaced by a Winter Warmer at 8.2% ABV, all the other beers retail at £1-45 per pint, the list is:

McNicolas Bitter	ABV 3.9%
Pickled Trout	ABV 4.2%
Moby Dick	ABV 4.3% (the film was made at Elstree studios.)
Shipwreck	ABV 4.6%

The Fishery Inn has been on this site since before 1817 when the first records were taken. The original Elstree Brewery came sometime later and was attached to the rear of the pub which was one of a row of cottages.

Benskins bought the pub and brewery in the 1950's and closed it in 1960. The cottages and brewhouse were demolished as part of a road improvement scheme and the new pub was built to give a panoramic view of the reservoir. Allied Breweries had by this time taken over Benskins and their brewery in Watford suffered the same fate of closure.

It is fitting then that this pub bought from Allied several years ago should now reintroduce the brewing tradition to Elstree.

THE OXFORD YARD

In the dark and distant past when stage coaches were the only way to travel around the country, many an arduous journey at average speeds of twelve miles per hour was undertaken. The horses had to be changed at regular intervals to keep up with the timetable, this was normally done at a Coaching Inn and the passengers, driver and guard were not always allowed to disembark.

It was customary for the coach company to provide two pints of beer for the driver and guard at each stop but handing these up without spilling them was not easy. In an effort to get around the problem a tall two pint glass was made. But the problem then was that whoever the glass was handed to promptly drank both pints. The Inn would not provide more beer without payment and the arguments that followed seriously slowed the coaches progress.

In a further effort to solve this problem the licensed trade turned to that great seat of learning, Oxford University. They produced a solution of a two pint glass from which you could not drink more than one pint without removing it from your lips. Those foolish enough to continue found that the remainder of the drink would rush out leaving them soaked. The glass was an odd looking thing a yard in length, thin with a bubble at the end. It was easily passed up to our thirsty coachmen who soon found ways to beat the trick and got both pints as usual. This is why the glasses ended up spending more time hanging up over the bar than being used.

Those of us who have tried to drink the Oxford yard and failed or succeeded will admit that it is no easy task. Some can do it easily and many cannot, allow plenty of space and ceiling height and don't use a pub with a new carpet, it can sometimes offend!

THE WOODMAN

CHAPMORE END

Our motto is Quality not Quantity

Greene King Ales direct from the cask

Come and visit one of the few traditional pubs in Herts

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LATE NEWS

Premier John Major has just announced that the licensed hours for Sunday (in England & Wales) are to be extended to fill the "3pm gap". By this summer, pubs who wish to do so will be allowed to remain open between 3pm and 7pm. Some groups have condemned the move as they fear it will put an added strain on family life.

Not all public houses are dens of inequity and with the relaxation of the rules governing children in pubs, one might hope that the new extended hours will be useful for families to be together in a convivial atmosphere. North of the Border, the longer Sunday hours have been legal for many years and social anarchy has yet to break out.

Despite the good news about Sunday hours you cannot help feeling that they are almost a form of compensation for yet another duty hike in the last budget. The Chancellor has added a penny to a pint which, as past experience shows, means between a 2p and 5p price rise at the bar.

Beer imports doubled between 1992 and 1994 and now stand at the equivalent of the yearly sales of 4500 pubs, about one third of which is thought to be sold on illegally. Duty increases can only fuel this process, just think what might have happened if the drink industry, including CAMRA, hadn't presented such a compelling case which at least kept the increases low.

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?**

BRANCH DIARY

HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

Tuesday 21 February 8.00pm, Branch Meeting at the **Woodman**, Chapmore End.

Tuesday 7 March 8.00pm, Branch Meeting at the **Baron**, Old Welwyn.

Tuesday 21 March 8.00pm, Pub Of The Year Runner Up presentation at the **Garibaldi**, St. Albans.

Tuesday 11 April 8.00pm, Branch Meeting at the **White Hart** in South Mimms.

Tuesday 25 April 8.00pm, Pub Of The Year Runner Up presentation at the **Lower Red Lion**, St. Albans.

Contact: Bob Norrish; 01582 763133 x2554(w) 01582 769923(h)

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Wednesday 8 February 8.30pm, Branch Meeting at the **Highlander** in Hitchin.

Saturday 18 February, all day London crawl.

Wednesday 22 February 8.30pm, **Branch AGM** at the **Yorkshire Grey** in Stevenage.

Friday 24 February, all day brewery visit, Belgium.

Wednesday 8 March 8.30pm, Letchworth crawl starting at **Letchworth Hall Hotel**, then **Black Squirrel**, **Broadway Hotel** and **Arena Tavern**.

Wednesday 22 March 8.30pm, Stevenage crawl starting at the **Granby**, then on to **Royal Oak**, **Almond Tree**, **King Pin** and **Squirrel**.

Contact: Paul Coard 01462 437249 (h)

WATFORD & DISTRICT BRANCH

Tuesday 7 February, Watford crawl: 8.30pm **Hertfordshire Arms**, 9.15pm **Verulam Arms** (left hand bar), 10pm **Nascot Arms**.

Monday 13 February, daytime visit to McMullen's brewery, details from contact.

Wednesday 15 February 8.30pm, darts social at the **Fox & Hounds** in Rickmansworth.

Wednesday 22 February, Bushey Heath social: 8.30pm **Windmill**, 9.15pm **Devonshire Arms**, 10pm **Black Boy**.

Friday 3 March 8pm - 10pm, social at the **Moon Under Water**, Watford High Street.

Wednesday 8 March 8.30pm, darts social at the **Croxley Green Community Centre**.

Wednesday 22 March 8.30pm, Branch AGM at the **West Herts. Sports and Social Club**.

Contact: Tony Smith 01923 221155

HERTS-ESSEX BORDERS

Friday 3 March, Minibus outing to **Prince of Wales**, Stow Maries.

Monday 13 March, Branch Meeting at the **Queens Head**, Fyfield.

Monday 10 April, Branch Meeting at the **Prince of Wales**, Green Tye.

Contacts: Graham Darby, 01279 415895(h), 01279 680233(w).

MID-CHILTERNs BRANCH

Contact: Chris Pontin 01494 78624(w), 01494 775409(h).

The Greyhound (Free House)
St. Ippollitts Nr. Hitchin Tel: 0462 440989

Bed & Breakfast now available

REAL ALE & REAL FOOD

Snacks and Meals

Handcarved Roast Beef Sunday Lunch £5.95

Boddingtons Mild & Bitter,

Morlands Old Speckled Hen - Plus Guest Beer

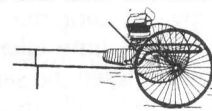
Traditional music sessions Feb 15 & March 15

FINGERPRINTING BEER

The popular science journal "New Scientist" recently carried an article on how different beers could be distinguished by a process not unlike that used to catch the perpetrators of crime. Every beer contains barley proteins, usually between 100 and 200 although only in minute quantities. Researchers at Sunderland University have perfected a technique which separates the different proteins across a thin block of jelly resulting in a pattern of spots. A particular beer will produce a unique but consistent pattern even as it ages so distinguishing it from any other beer.

The process is a powerful weapon to use against any company or individuals suspected to be adulterating their beer.

TILBURY
Inn off the Green



Datchworth

(formerly Inn on the Green)

*Hertfordshire's leading purveyor of
Real Ale to the connoisseur*

**Ever changing selection of
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Almost Live Music some of the time

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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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