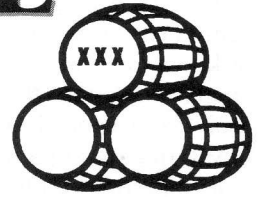


FREE



THE HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

LINED GLASSES
GUARANTEE
FULL PINTS



A bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker

APRIL/MAY 1996

CIRCULATION 4000

NUMBER 156

SHORT MEASURES (YET AGAIN)

A few years ago the government were considering legislation to make the use of oversize glasses compulsory. Unfortunately, opposition from within the trade, led by the Brewers and Licensed Retailers Association (BLRA), led to this policy being dropped. As a compromise, the BLRA said they would issue guidelines on what was an acceptable 'pint'. These have recently been revised and the summary 'Guidance to Bar Staff on the Dispense of Draught Beer' now read:

1. A measure of beer served with a head must include a minimum of 95% liquid.
2. The beer should not be made available to the customer until bar staff are satisfied with the measure.
3. Requests from customers for top-ups should be received with good grace and never refused, subject to avoiding spillage of liquid.

This still means that on a £1.80 pint, the customer could still regularly be paying 9p for the froth, and in all too many places point 2 is simply not being adhered to all the time.

However, it would seem that much comes down to staff training and experience. On a recent visit, on a busy Saturday night, to Wetherspoons' Moon Under Water in Watford (in its early days a persistent offender), it was noticeable that several bar staff were ensuring that the glass wasn't handed over until there was a (near) pint (though why the Enville Ale was being served through a tight sparkler in the first place is another question - a looser sparkler would have improved staff efficiency no end!). However, reports from the same pub earlier the same day indicate that other staff were handing over pints with between a 1/2 inch and an inch of froth, and then walking away.

As the Allied Brewery Traders' Association stated in a booklet back in November 1977 which urged the use of oversize glasses (and metered dispense): 'Not only must the customer be protected against short measures; the Licensee must also be safeguarded against unwittingly infringing the law'; 'Oversize glasses... have hygienic advantages in that... spillage can be avoided'. All these years later, with the increasing use of sparklers on beer, oversize glasses still represent the best way customers can be assured of getting a full pint (which is why all CAMRA run beer festivals use them).

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:

SUN RUNNER: 4.1%

DARK HORSE ALE: 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 01992 501950

BEER FESTIVAL IN ST ALBANS

1996 is CAMRA's 25th Anniversary Year, and for 23 out of those 25 years, the Campaign has had its national headquarters here in Hertfordshire, in St Albans. What could be more appropriate, therefore, than for CAMRA to hold its official 25th Anniversary Beer Festival in its home city?

Make a date in your diary to come to the Alban Arena on 10th, 11th and 12th of October this year. More than 100 cask ales will be available, including all the winners of the Champion Beer of Britain Awards since 1978, together with beers from every brewery in Hertfordshire and other cask ales from around the United Kingdom.

Ciders, perries and foreign beers will be available, and there will be a variety of musical entertainment.

The whole festival will be given a tremendous start with the biggest ever parade of brewers' drays around the historic city on the preceding Saturday, 5th October. The drays will parade through the city centre and also past the three locations where CAMRA's national offices have been located.

The St Albans Anniversary Beer Festival is being organised by CAMRA in conjunction with the St Albans Lions and with the full support of St Albans City and District Council. This will be the biggest and best Beer Festival that Hertfordshire has ever seen, and the historic city of St Albans will be waiting to welcome you.

OTHER BEER FESTIVAL NEWS

The West Middlesex branch of CAMRA will be holding their ninth annual Beer on Broadway festival at **Ealing Town Hall**, New Broadway, W5 from Thursday evening, 18th April through to Saturday 20th April. Entry is free to CAMRA members. As well as 48 different real ales there will be cider & perry, bottle conditioned British beers and draught and bottled foreign beers. There's also a family room.

The Dunstable Beer Festival will take place at the **Dunstable Young Persons Centre**, Manchester Place, Dunstable (off High St North) on Friday and Saturday 12th & 13th April. About 30 beers and ciders will be available. Entrance free to CAMRA members.

Thursday evening May 2nd through to Sunday 5th sees the Ongar beer festival at the **Budworth Hall**, High St, Ongar. CAMRA members get in free, there's an hourly bus service from Epping tube station, and a family room at lunchtimes.

The **Croxley Green Community Centre** will be holding their fourth annual beer festival between Saturday 25th and Monday 27th May. Entrance is free to CAMRA members and it is expected that there will be a CAMRA products stall at the event, although it's unlikely to be open at all times.

The **Lower Red Lion**, St Albans, will be holding beer festivals on Friday 3rd to Monday 6th May, and Friday 23rd to Monday 26th August. Both are bank holiday weekends.

1.00pm
to
11.00
pm

Folk Dance
& Music Day

Woodmanstock 96

Saturday - 1 5th July

- Main stage marquee
- Special guests
- Food available
- Any singers, dancers or musicians welcome to come and join in

- FREE PARKING
- Full range of Greene King beers
- Ceilidh at 6.00 pm Bring your instruments for a Scratch Band

• Entry Only £1.00 (free to performers)

THE WOODMAN

CHAPMORE END WARE 01920-463143

BEER HALVES

A new home brewery has opened in Hertfordshire. This one is a bit different in that it is part of the new Woodside Leisure Park in North Orbital Road, Garston. Owned by Bass, the 'Original Brewing Co' currently produces two bitters and two lagers. The bitters are VSP (4.4% alcohol by volume) a slightly sweet, fruity, malty beer and Disciples' Brew (5%) an amber coloured, fruity beer, which seems a bit bland and thin for its strength. Both had a slightly cloying aftertaste. The bitters are stored in cellar tanks and served through swan-neck dispense. The brewery can be seen from the semi-circular, well-designed bar, which also offers views of the slot machine area and the bowling alleys. With non-stop music it might not be to everyone's taste, however it is certainly something different for the area and is worth checking out.

The first of McMullen's 1996 Special Reserve ales is Skipper's Celebration Bitter, brewed to mark McMullen's Head Brewer's Tony Skipper being awarded the title of 'Brewer of the Year' by the British Guild of Beer Writers. The beer is 4.8% and brewed from whole leaf hops, and doesn't use hop pellets.

Greene King's seasonal beers are being marketed under the King's Court logo. Their latest is Royal Raven a 4.5% abv stout which will be available until the middle of April. Based on an old Greene King recipe it's described as being dark and malty, and was brewed using a selection of black, chocolate and amber malts.

After Mystic Meg we now have Zodiac Mystic Beers, which is the name given by Batemans to their new range of beers each of which will only be available for a month. For March and April there's Aries Aphrodisiac Ale (with ginseng - whether it will alleviate brewer's droop is to be discovered, but then again it might be aimed at the female of the

IN 200 YEARS WE'VE NEVER SOLD OUT.



Since 1799 the name Greene King has been synonymous with fine ales. Over all those years, we've fiercely defended our independence and our brewing traditions. It means we've been able to consistently produce some of the finest ales in the country. We haven't sold out. But our beers often do.

REAL BEER FOR REAL PEOPLE

Real ale is a living beer. It continues to ferment and develop its full flavour in the cask.

Not only does it take care and skill to brew a good pint, but what happens afterwards matters too. In particular, beer must be treated with care and skill in the pub cellar to make sure that it is just right when you come to drink it.

Real Ale is not the same as keg beer. Keg beers are processed to give them a long shelf-life. Unfortunately, that gives them less character: they are made fizzy with extra gas and then served cold to kill off the unpleasant taste that pasteurisation gives them.

Recently brewers have produced new keg beers emphasising the smoother taste of a new process (but as the Courage Best advert says, cream is for strawberries). These beers are not real ale and do not taste like it. They tend to be extremely cold and bland, but are less obviously fizzy than the old kegs, although some still have the disconcerting metallic taste of the old top pressure and keg beers. These beers have been dubbed nitrokeg because they are served using nitrogen gas rather than with carbon dioxide as the old keg beers used to be. Additionally, they tend to be sold at a premium price (up to 30p more than real ale), and they also take time to settle, which can mean a short measure. (The guidelines on the front page apply to keg beers as well!).

There is a tendency to regard real ale as 'warm', or 'flat': it shouldn't be. It should be served at a pleasantly cool temperature, but just because the beer hasn't got a head doesn't mean it's 'flat'. Many beers, particularly in the South, are sold without the additives used to prolong the head, and are brewed to be served without the tight sparkler dispense which knocks much of the flavour out of the beer. It was an eye-opener (perhaps that should be taste-bud opener) to recently be served a pint of Marstons Pedigree straight from the barrel, it was far superior in flavour than any of the pints of the same beer I've drunk for a long time.

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, is a consumer pressure group made up of ordinary drinkers. We campaign for a choice of good tasty beers and decent pubs to drink them in. We also campaign for the pub customer on everything from pub hours to full measure pints. CAMRA is now 25 years old, and to celebrate there's a special offer: if you join before the end of April using the form below, there's £2 off the normal membership fee. As a member you'll get CAMRA's monthly newspaper, What's Brewing, and discounts on entry to CAMRA beer festivals and on many CAMRA goods, including the best selling Good Beer Guide: if you're an active beer festival attendee, the membership can pay for itself!

THE LORDSHIP ARMS

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

REAL ALE OASIS for the DISCERNING
DRINKER

Youngs Special, Fullers ESB
everchanging guest beers from independent
and Micro Breweries also Traditional Cider

Homemade Bar Food served Daily
Two Course Sunday Roast £5.95

A Pub worth finding

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SECOND HALVES (cont)

species), to be followed by a ruby beer, Taurus Ale, and then the double fermented Gemini Double Trouble. The range finishes next February and March with Pisces Fishing Tackle Ale. Only 250 barrels of each beer will be produced and they will only be available through the Beer Seller wholesaler.

A real ale has been brewed for the first time at Guinness's brewery at Park Royal. Harwood's Porter (4.8%) is named in honour of Ralph Harwood, who reputedly brewed the first porter at his Bell Brewhouse in Shoreditch in 1722.

Bucking the trend, the newly independent Highgate & Walsall Brewery are reintroducing the name 'mild' back to their main product which now becomes Highgate Dark Mild. A new beer, Saddler's Celebrated Bitter (4% abv) is also being produced, shaking off the brewery's dark-beer only tradition.

LOCAL LINES

At the end of January, Grant and Tracey Whyte left the Fox, Kinsbourne Green for the **Long Island Exchange** at Rickmansworth (currently no real ale). Over the last three years Grant has supported the ideals of CAMRA through serving a fine range of well-kept ales in his managed house that would put many so-called free houses to shame. Tracey provided an excellent selection of delicious home-made meals almost around the clock. Between them they ran a series of very popular beer festivals. The South Herts Branch are sorry to see the departure of one of their most enterprising landlords, and wish them both all the best for their future together.

Welcome to Stephen and Tina Malyon who are taking over the tenancy of the **White Lion**, Baldock.

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.

TITLE SURNAME

FORENAME (S) DATE

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

SIGNATURE..... TELEPHONE NUMBER(S)

SPECIAL OFFER! Before 30th April 1996

I/We enclose remittance for individual/joint membership for one year:

U.K. full membership £12 £10

U.K. joint membership £14 £14

THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, CAMRA LTD., 230 HATFIELD ROAD, ST. ALBANS, HERTS. AL1 4LW

BRANCH DIARY

HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

Tuesday 16th April, 8.00pm Branch Meeting at **CAMRA HQ**, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans.

Tuesday 23rd April trip to **McMullens** Brewery, places limited, ring contact for details.

Tuesday 21st May, 8.00pm Branch Meeting at **White Horse**, Hertford.

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

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE BRANCH

Wednesday 3rd April, Whitwell crawl: **Strathmore Arms**, St Pauls Warden; **Bull**, Whitwell; **Eagle & Child**, Whitworth; **Maidens Head**, Whitwell.

Wednesday 17th April, darts evening, **Lilley Arms**, Lilley.

Wednesday 1st May, Hinxworth & Ashwell crawl: **Three Horseshoes**, Hinxworth; **Three Tuns**, Ashwell; **Rose & Crown**, Ashwell; **Bushel & Strike**, Ashwell.

Wednesday 15th May, Branch Meeting at the **Sailor Boy**, Hitchin.

Wednesday 29th May, petanque evening, venue to be arranged.

Contact: Colleen Holiday 01438 314333 x5512 (w), 01462 730975 (h).

WATFORD & DISTRICT BRANCH

Tuesday 2nd April: 9.00pm GBG social at the **Villiers Arms**, Oxhey.

Tuesday 16th April: Ricky social: 9.00pm **Western**; 10.00pm **Coach & Horses** (public bar).

Tuesday 23rd April: 8.30pm Branch darts tournament at the **White Lion**, Watford (open to all local branch members).

Wednesday 1st May: Watford social: 9.00pm **Estcourt Tavern**, 10.00pm **Pennant**.

Thursday 9th May, 8.30pm, Croxley Green social: 8.30pm **Artichoke**, 9.30pm **Coach & Horses**.

Tuesday 14th May, 9.00pm GBG social at the **Plough**, Belsize. Transport available from Watford Junction 8.30pm.

Wednesday 22nd May, social: 8.45pm **Swan**, Pimlico, 9.4pm **Bell**, Bedmond.

Contact: Tony Smith 01923 221155 (h & w)

HERTS-ESSEX BORDERS BRANCH

Contacts: Graham Darby 01279 415895(h) or Derek Wisdom 01279 414200(h)

MID-CHILTERNS BRANCH

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

ALL HERTS BRANCHES

Herts Liaison Meeting: Monday 22nd April, 8.30pm West Herts Sports Club.

LOCAL LINES (cont)

The comparatively new 'Bank' in the Parade, Watford, has been revamped by Allied-Domecq to become **Scruffy Murphys**, an imitation Irish pub, the latest trend in theme pubs. Unlike some others in the chain, there's no real ale, but, typically, there's plenty of reproduction 'Irish' items around. It's in competition with several pubs in Watford which have an authentic Irish atmosphere: try the Estcourt Arms on a Sunday night for example, which has the added advantage of serving a decent pint.

The **Iceobar** also in the Parade, Watford has now been going for a few months. It sells Morlands IPA and Old Speckled Hen on hand pump, but also sells over 80 different bottled beers from around the world including Duvel, Chimay and Timmermans. A few of the small American breweries are also represented as are German and Dutch breweries; there's also Guinness Special Export (8% abv). (A bit worrying to see a blackboard with Belgian beers listed under East Europe: West Europe ends at Dover?). This isn't a traditional pub however, the decor is a bit outlandish, there's flashing lights, the music can be a bit loud and there's plenty of TV screens.

The **Barley Mow**, Tyttenhanger, is selling its house beer at £1.20 per pint. It has an abv of 3.8% and is believed to be brewed in Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

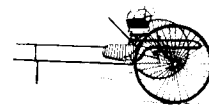
Whilst in Essendon, the **Rose & Crown's** house beer has an abv of 3.5%, sells at £1.25 per pint and is believed to be brewed in Ipswich.

The **Crown & Sceptre**, Great Gaddesden, has reopened after a £200,000 refit by its owners Greene King. This pub was once one of the pioneering free houses in Herts, and Greene King claim to have tried to keep the pub as a traditional rural local 'emphasised by the open fires and country-style decor, incorporating historic farm equipment. There is a strong equine theme with lots of horse brasses and Clydesdale equipment on show'.

The **George IV**, Harpenden, has closed, and its future is uncertain.

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
cask conditioned ale including mild**

Over 1240 ales from over 295 brewers

*Home made food available every
Lunchtime & Evening until 10pm
All day Sunday until 9.30pm*

Opening Times:

11.00 – 3.00 5.00 – 11.00 Mon – Wed
11.00 – 11.00 Thurs, Fri & Sat
12.00 – 10.30 Sunday

Almost Live Music some of the time

Telephone: 01438-812496

The Hertfordshire Newsletter is produced by the 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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