



# THE HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER



A bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker



AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1998

CIRCULATION 4000

NUMBER 170

## The Bull Sawbridgeworth



See article on next page for further details:-

**St Albans Beer Festival**  
**Alban Arena 30th Sept to 3rd Oct**

## Proof Read Competition

After much deliberation it has been decided to award two "T"shirts for the competition in edition 168. they go to Mr B.Smith of Wheathampstead and Mr. C. Wilson of Cheshunt.

Both entries left a couple of mistakes in their submissions so the newsletter in keeping with the National press will never get it exactly right. E.S.

## Cheeky theft at Cross Keys

Police are searching for a thief who spotted an open kitchen door at the "Cross Keys" public house in Harpenden, nipped in and went upstairs to the manager's living quarters between 10.40 and 10.50am Friday 26th June. he then went into a bedroom which is also used as an office , and picked up an envelope containing £530 cash in takings from a desk. Manager Tony Johnstone said: "We do not normally leave cash lying about but the envelope was about to be banked. The thief was very lucky indeed but it won't happen again."

A member of staff who spotted him on his way out challenged him and he told her that he was looking for the toilet.

There is no further news on the proposed pub extension, South Herts branch CAMRA intend to hold their monthly meeting in the Cross Keys in September. information from Herts Advertiser.

## Cellar award for wagon & Horses

Congratulations to Geoff and Susan Earnshaw of the Wagon & Horses, Watling Street, Medburn, nr Elstree. Who have won the Greenall's Southern Cellar Award. A variety of guest beers rotate through the pub with a good amount of input from the regulars. The pub has genuine oak beams and an Inglenook fireplace, with the garden overlooking farm land, it is well worth a visit. Ed

## "Good Intent" at the "Bull"

I have been contacted by Betty Beck the Tenant of the "Good Intent " in Station Road Sawbridgeworth who with her husband John are the owners of the "Bull"at the north end of the town. Those of you who read edition 169 will have noticed the entry in the Down Your Way section, saying that the reopening of the "Bull" had been delayed due to financial problems. This is incorrect.

Information for Down Your Way comes from a variety of sources and I did not know who the owner of the "Bull" was before going to print.

The facts are as follows:-

The "Bull" was purchased by the Becks in 1997 when it had been closed for over a year. The building was in a state of dereliction and it was an ambitious project to return it to a working Pub.

The building is Grade II listed and planning applications for three extensions to accommodate new Kitchens, Toilets and Stairwell, have taken a long time to be arranged. The work is being undertaken by the family and is proceeding well, considering that they still have a pub to run. There is still no definite opening date and the local grapevine has been spreading rumours in abundance (one of which was unfortunately printed by us).

When the work is completed Sawbridge-worth will have a genuine family run Free House with a firm commitment to Real Ale. I thank Betty for taking the time to correct us and apologise for any inconvenience that was caused

Ed

## BEER QUALITY and CASKMARQUE

### Problems with Real Ale Quality

There is no doubt that a large amount of sub standard Real Ale is being served in a large number of Pubs across the country. This is for a number of reasons and is persuading customers that the only draught drinks they can trust are either Smooth Flow ( Keg Beer under a carbon dioxide nitrogen blanket pressure ) or pasteurised Keg Lager.

The main reasons for poor quality Real Ales are lack of turnover, in many cases too many different beers are on sale at one time. Dave Goodwin the new National Chairman commented in the July "What's Brewing" "CAMRA shouldn't be about availability at all costs. We should be about beer kept and sold in good condition so that we can encourage drinkers to go on drinking it".

Bad cellarman ship is another main contributor to bad Ale. The return of Ullage (Slops) into the cask (this is illegal but not unknown) for obvious financial reasons, does nothing to enhance the quality of the Ale. Not pulling off the beer left in the pipes at the beginning of each session, ensures that at least two bad pints are given to customers. The storage of beer at Depots around the country, especially in winter months sometimes leaves a lot to be desired. It is a fact that some beers do not travel well and there is no substitute for local beer for local drinkers.

So we all know that there is a lot of bad beer about and of course no matter how badly staff react it is always returned to be changed. If this were the case then things would change but I am amazed at how often I visit pubs and see bad service and bad beer being accepted as a matter of course.

### Caskmarque

Britains Real Ale brewers do have a vested interest in the quality of their product and although CAMRA may have differences of opinion with some of them on occasion, about certain things Cask Breather dispense being an obvious example, it was obvious something had to be done.

This is where Paul Nunny an Ex-Sales director of Adnams Brewery comes in. He has formed a company called "Caskmarque" and is supported by the Brewers Society, which although they may not like the analogy is the TUC of the Brewing industry.

The aim of Caskmarque is to improve the quality of Real Ales at the point of dispense, something which consumers and the trade should both see the benefits of.

This is a national initiative and a large number of Brewers have bought in ( it costs around £160 per Pub survey). Carlsberg Tetley, McMullen, Greene King and Whitbread who have a large number of pubs locally are all involved , Bass declined. The scheme now covers Managed, Tenanted and Free Trade and all those in the original study started in April have been surveyed. The onus presumably on the run up to summer has been on temperature, setting a target of 55 to 59 degrees. Many drinkers thought this to be too cold and too strict but on random taste checks done by CAMRA Head Office they found the temperature about right.

The plus side is that pubs owned by major brewers such as Greene King that have shown up badly have had immediate cellar improvements undertaken.

The negative side is that we do not know where the scheme is going next, it should be "Well Designed" "Well Positioned" and "Well Promoted".

As yet we do not know when or how the Plaques, Certificates etc. will be issued. The promotional material to customers seems to be very low key and without this there is some doubt as to the longevity of the scheme.

To conclude the Campaign applauds any efforts to improve the condition and consistency of Real Ale but reserve our right to constructive criticism if necessary.

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, 1 New Cottages, School Lane, Kings Walden, Herts SG4 8LH.  
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## Hooden letters

The newsletter has received two letters expressing very different views on "Hooden" pubs. Tony Hooper of Ruislip Middx was very impressed with the "Hooden in a Box" which is in Great Chart, Kent, and the "Hooden" in Boxmoor (Princes Arms). He was impressed with the food, the Ales and Cider. In his letter he says that the "Hooden Horse" is apparently something to do with Morris dancing.

The objections in the newsletter are to the wholesale loss of traditional pub names and the "Chain Branding." With this in mind our second correspondent George Ellingham of Hertford Herts, explains "You are not the only one dismayed by the "Hooden" renaming's. Three people, all unprompted, have recently mentioned to me that they will no longer patronise the (former) Reindeer in Hertford because of its pretentious new name. I especially regret the loss of its distinctive sign. Perhaps CAMRA could write to Hooden suggesting it reconsider this unpopular policy." Unfortunately lack of space does not allow me to expand the argument until the next edition

Ed.

## Landlord injured in pub theft

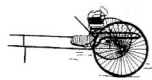
Colin and Mary Cassidy who have been running the "Jolly Sailor" in Stonecross St Albans for over six years have moved to the "Silver Cup" Harpenden. On the Sunday afternoon four days before they were due to move, Colin discovered four men attempting to steal from a machine in the rear corridor of the pub. He grabbed hold of one of the thieves and suffered a fractured elbow and severe grazing as he was dragged into the bar. As the four men fled other customers managed to get the registration number of the car in which they drove off. They succeeded in stealing about £30. Colin is quoted " I have never had anything like this happen before it could not have come at a worse time."

We would like to wish Colin a full and speedy recovery and are sure that Mary and he will have a successful stay at the "Silver Cup"

from an article in the Herts Advertiser

## TILBURY

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All day Sunday until 9.30pm*

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11.00 - 11.00 Thurs, Fri & Sat  
12.00 - 10.30 Sunday

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## THE LORDSHIP ARMS

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Fullers London Pride and ESB  
plus Youngs Special  
everchanging guest beers from  
independent and Micro Breweries  
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Mary Hamilton.

Autographs by prior arrangement.

North Herts Pub of the Year 1997

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Two Course Sunday Roast £7.00

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**Telephone 01438-869665**

## DOWN YOUR WAY

Our information comes from a wide variety of sources and it is inevitable that some errors will occur. Please inform us of any mistakes and the appropriate correction, apology or retraction will be published. Ed.

### Bengeo

Greyhound to re open Aug 6th.

### Harpenden

Whitbread are planning to convert Charles Wilson contractors old premises into a **Hogshead** Ale House, and J.D.Wetherspoon are considering the vacant Iceland shop in Leyton Road for conversion to a **Moons** pub ( hopefully with a traditional name). It looks like we are heading for another Pub circuit.

The **Red Cow** no longer serves Verulam beers from the Farmers Boy, St Albans, as the tenancy has changed hands. Beers on sale are Theakstons XB, Marstons Pedigree and Tim Taylors Landlord.

### Hertford

The **Saracens Head** refurbishment is underway.

### Potters Bar

Wetherspoons are to open a new pub in the vacant Iceland shop in Darkes lane. work is due to start 20th July and be completed for opening 27th October. (a traditional name would be nice here J.D.)

### St Albans

The licensee has left the **Rats Castle** (rumours it is sinking are not true)

### Shenley

The **Black Lion** has had alterations and refurbishment completed. there is now only one main entrance and a new conservatory overlooking the garden.

### Sawbridgeworth

The **Bull** see article page 2

### Stevenage

The **Harvester** formerly the **Coopers Apprentice** no longer sells Real Ale. It is also rumoured the **Harvester**, "**Roaring Meg**" has also had its Real Beer removed. Will all Harvesters follow suit ?

### Tewin

The **Plume & Feathers** is still closed

### Watford

The **Nascot Arms** has re-opened after refurbishment. the two bars have been knocked into one, although much of the separating wall remains.

## Beer Festivals

### Croxley Community Centre

Mini Beer Fest

August Bank Holiday 29th -31st Aug  
15 Beers on sale six at a time.

### Bricklayers Arms ,Flaundon.

Mini Beer Fest

August Bank Holiday 29th -31st Aug  
10-12 additional beers.

### North Herts Beer Festival 98

Plinston Hall, Letchworth.

Thurs 17th -Sat 19th September  
open 5-11 Thurs & 12-11 Fri/Sat  
40 Beers & Festival Ale.

### St Albans Beer Festival

Alban Arena, St Albans.

30th Sept- 3rd Oct  
140 Real Ales

opening times and advance tickets  
**01727 852258**

### 4th Watford Beer Festival

West Herts Sports & Social Club  
Park Avenue Watford

Fri 11th -Sat 12th September  
open 5-11 Fri 12-11pm Sat  
30 different Beers, Perry & Cider

## National Breweriana Auction

The Auction will be held at the Bass Brewery Museum, Burton on Trent, Saturday 26th September. The CAMRA Burton Beer Festival will also be running in the town at the same time so a good variety of different beers will be available after the event. further details from CAMRA HQ 01727 867201.

## Pub Names:-

"The Red Lion, Englands most popular pub name, comes from the badge of John of Gaunt"-or does it? This is the usual explanation: but there is a problem here. Englands most popular pub name seems to commemorate someone who was once England's most unpopular man. (not David Beckham)

A red lion was certainly one of the badges used by John of Gaunt, Edward III's fourth son. He was, as well as Duke of Lancaster through his first wife, Blanche, a claimant to the thrones of the kingdoms of Castile and Leon through his second wife Constance of Castile - Leon's arms bearing naturally, a (red) lion.

John of Gaunt was one of the most powerful men in later 14th century England, the richest man in the country, with an income of £12,000 a year. He was effectively, founder of the house of Lancaster, father, grandfather and great - grandfather to Henry IV, V and VI respectively, and, through his third marriage, great - grandfather of Henry VII, first of the Tudors. He is, thus, a very important historical figure.

However, he was deeply disliked among the bulk of people and in the peasants revolt of 1381, his palace in London the Savoy, was destroyed by the rebels.

Rather than loot the palace the attackers threw the Duke's gold and silver onto a bonfire and his jewels into the Thames, as they refused to steal from such a hated figure. One man who tried to pillage was also thrown onto the fire. It is difficult to see, therefore, why such an unpopular man should have had his badge on so many pubs.

In addition John only had the right to the red lion of Leon between 1371, when he married Constance, and 1388, when he gave up his claim to the Spanish thrones in return for £10,000 and a pension. The linking of John to so many pubs looks like an attempt to explain the widespread use of Red Lion by finding the best known user of a red lion badge. Perhaps the truth is that lions are powerful and charismatic animals, red is a powerful and charismatic colour, and red lions were regarded as a good brand image by a lot of landlords.

Perhaps the Red Lion commemorates the many other users of the same badge. The Russell family, Earl's and Duke's of Bedford, have a red lion on their arms, and widespread landholdings. Landlords often named pubs in honour of the local "great family", several White Lions in Hertfordshire commemorate the Cecils. Marquesses of Salisbury. There was a Red Lion in Bedford, and it is recorded that in 1689 the fifth Earl of Bedford stayed in state at the Red Lion, Cambridge, surely not a coincidence. On his way there he stopped for a night in Royston - where one of the biggest Inns, was, again, the Red Lion.

## End of an Era at Candelstick

After 18 years at the Candlestick, Essendon, West End. Stan and Carole Nichols are to retire on October 14th. Previously Carole's father had been the licensee from 1949-1980 and her grandfather from 1938-1949. The Candlestick was changed from the Chequers in 1966 as it had been the nickname of the pub for many years.

Rumour has it that the pub had only one candle and when the landlord went to the cellar to draw off some beer the bar was plunged into darkness. Visitors to the pub will know that there is now no shortage of candlesticks.

Stan and Carole have always made the Candlestick a welcoming, no nonsense pub and will be greatly missed by locals and visitors alike. It is hoped that McMullens will be able to find another couple to keep up the tradition.

Don't wait until October to say your goodbyes, pop in any time for a warm welcome.

The Hertfordshire branches of CAMRA wish Stan and Carole every happiness in their retirement. E.S.

CAMRA ESSEX PUB OF THE YEAR 1998

## CARPENTERS ARMS

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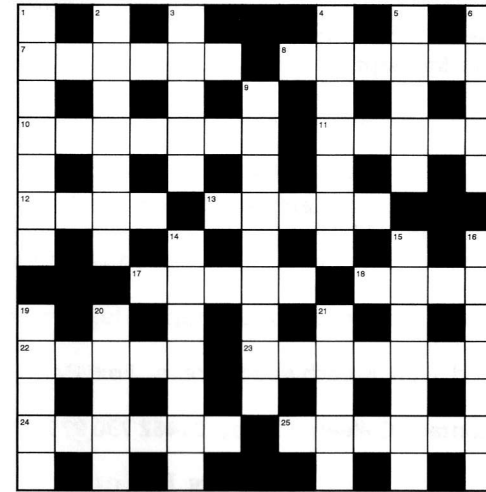
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## Crossword Competition



The WORDSEARCH in edition 169 as well as having the BELL INN and HORNS spelt wrongly in the clues, did not have the BOOT or the EAGLE in the grid. We arese errors and have extended the closing date for entries showing the 28 Pubs until 14th August. All entries for the Wordsearch and Crossword should be sent to : Paul Ruane, 15 Turpins Close, Hertford, Herts SG 14 2EH. (crossword by 5th October)

### Clues Across:

- 7) King & Barnes county. (6)
- 8) Half beer that's handy. (6)
- 10) I'm someone who enjoys a drink with a bib on Er ! (7).
- 11) No thin beer.(5).
- 12) India College Arms direction. (4).
- 13) Don't drink this fish fornicate in it.(5).
- 17) Jar brewed by Daleside, mare brewed by Hambleton, not during the day.(5).
- 18) They used to brew the Union way in Burton on Trent.(4).
- 22) No north in Greene King Arms in Watford and you will find a race-course near Windsor.(5)
- 23) county Brewer under threat.(7).
- 24) Return to Chiswick and find brewing family.(6)
- 25) O'Margo a funny name for a horse keeper.(1-5).

## 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:

Single £14  
Joint at same address £17

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.,  
230 HATFIELD ROAD, ST ALBANS,  
HERTS AL1 4LW  
OR RING 01727 867201

### Clues Down:

- 1) Pub in Hitchin where judgement is given.(7).
- 2) Riddleys brew(3-4)
- 3) Spices found in sherbet (5).
- 4) Made with malt in Ireland (7)
- 5) Nosey person in Wetherspoons (5)
- 6) Cyclists ends with painful spots.(5).
- 9) Aspirators on casks are the bears.(9).
- 14) dealer in wine (7).
- 15) Full of hot air? not our ball, without rut.(7).
- 16) South East mouse is the answer.(3-4)
- 19) There are two in St Albans both white.(5).
- 20) A pub from which oak trees grow.(5)

## BRANCH DIARY

### Hertfordshire South Branch

Tuesday 11th Aug, Branch Meeting, Garibaldi, St Albans. 8pm.  
 Tuesday 8th Sept, Branch Meeting, Cross Keys, Harpenden 8pm.  
 Contact John Bishop 01582 768478 (h)  
 0171 477 7700 (w)

### Watford & District Branch

Fri 7th Aug, Social Great British Beer Festival meet hourly from 6pm at membership stand.  
 Wed 12th Aug, Good Beer Guide social: 8.30 Kings Head, Hunton Bridge, (322 bus from Watford junction).  
 Tues 18th Aug, G.B.G. social 8.30pm, Coach & Horses, Croxley Green.  
 Wed 26th Aug, Bushey social, 8.30pm Stag, 9.30pm Horse & Chains. 10.15pm Swan.  
 Wed 2nd Sept, GBG social 8.30pm Black Boy, Bushey Heath.  
 Contact :Tony Smith 01923- 221155 (w/h)

### North Hertfordshire Branch

Wed 19th Aug, social Stevenage, Woodman's Arms, Fisherman, and Crooked Billet.  
 Wed 2nd Sept, Branch meeting Windmill Charlton. 8pm

### Beer Fest Publicity Crawls:-

Sat 5th Sept, Stevenage Old Town Mallard 11am  
 Wed 9th Sept, Baldock Hen & Chickens, 8pm.  
 Sat 12th Sept. Hitchin Sunrunner 11am.  
 Wed 16th Sept Letchworth, Hogshead 8pm.  
 Thus-Sat 17-19 Sept North Herts Beer Festival Plinston Hall Letchworth. Opens 5pm Thurs.  
 Wed 30th Sept, Social Bright Star Peters Green  
 Red Lion Breachwood Green, Fox Darley Hall.  
 Contact: Colleen Holiday 01462 730 975 (h)

### Herts-Essex Borders Branch

Mon 24th Aug, Branch meeting Moon & Cross Waltham cross 8.30pm.  
 Mon 14th Sept, Branch meeting Forest Gate Epping 8.30pm.  
 Contact: Graham Darby 01279 680233 (w)  
 01279 415895 (h)

### Mid-Chilterns Branch

Mon 10th Aug. Plough Hyde Heath 8.30pm.  
 Queens Head. Chesham, 9.45pm.  
 Fri 28th Aug, Bricklayers Arms, Flaundon 8.30pm  
 Contact: Chris Pontin 01442 834899 .

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30 September  
 - 3 October

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FOREIGN BEER CIDER & PERRIES ENTERTAINMENT

#### OPENING TIMES:

Wed. 30 September (Preview) 5 - 10.30pm  
 Thurs. 1 October 12 - 3pm & 5 - 10.30pm  
 Fri. 2 October 11am - 3pm & 5 - 10.30pm  
 Sat. 3 October 11am - 10.30pm

#### ADMISSION PRICES:

Wednesday (Evening) Free Entry  
 Thursday (Lunch) Free Entry (Evening) £2.50  
 Friday (Lunch) £1.50 (Evening) £2.50  
 Saturday (All day) £3.00

CAMRA MEMBERS £1.50 REDUCTION ON ALL SESSIONS AND £2 REDUCTION SATURDAY

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