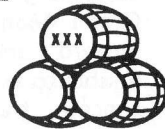




THE HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

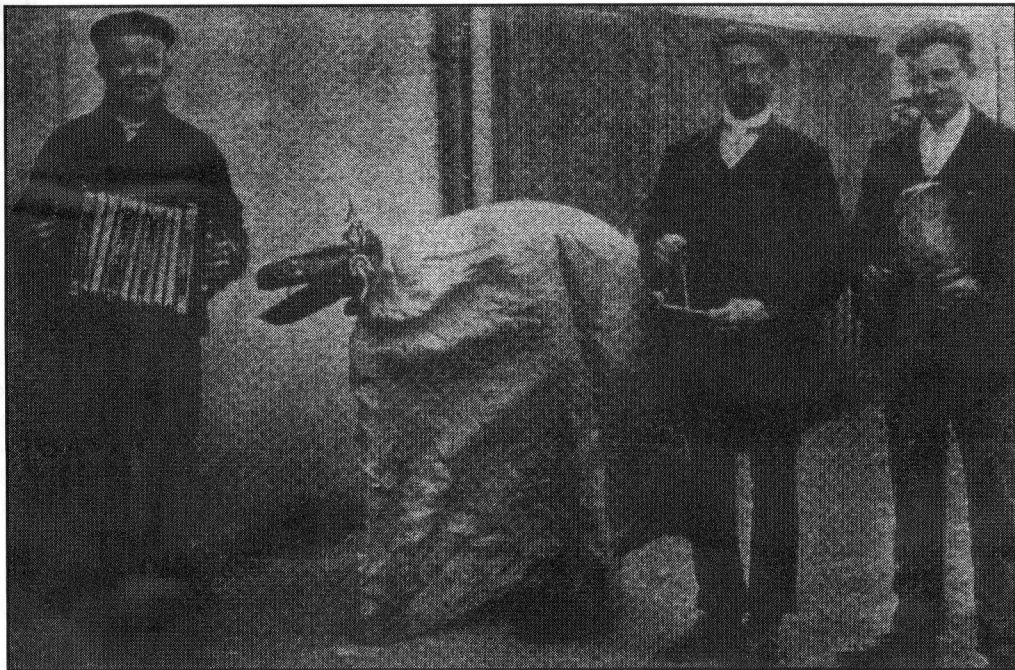


A bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1998

CIRCULATION 4000

NUMBER 171



The Hooden Horse

"Hoodeners" at Walmer, Kent Christmas Eve 1906. The Hooden Horse is accompanied by the accordion, triangle and tambourine players, collecting money for charity.

Article Page 3

Publican loses fight to keep "Green Man"

I have received a letter from Andy Speller explaining why Richard Marchant left the Green Man in Widford in September. Richard handed in his notice after being unable to keep the pub trading as a going concern, trade had been very poor for many months and has been disastrous this summer.

An independent business consultant concluded that although Richard had tried everything, the pub would only be viable if McMullen were to reduce the barrelage targets or rent. Macs needless to say wouldn't and the pub will become a managed house on six months trial after which it will be considered for sale with license as a Free House.

Richard is now moving to the Greene King Brewery Tap in Ware.

At the Green Man, even though the trade was not good the beer was excellent and the pub was in the Good Beer Guide. It is sad to see the loss of a good Tenant due to the inflexibility of the Brewer when faced with a decline in business.

Trading Standards

If you the consumer are having problems with, licensed premises that fail to give **full measure, do not display price lists, strength lists.** (Alcohol by volume) or **Business names** you are entitled to contact the Trading Standards Offices. The Hertfordshire Office address is:- 45 Grosvenor Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 3AW. Phone: 01727-813880

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. **Subscriptions:** £4 for 12 issues. Send to: 1 New Cottages, School Lane, Kings Walden, Herts SG4 8LH. Cheques payable: CAMRA Herts South Branch. **Advertising:** £12 per 2.5cm column. Artwork can be made up at extra cost. Contact Eric Sim ☎ 01462 769038 for details. **COPY DATE for December 1998/January 1999 Edition: 1st November 1998.** Composed by Swallowfield Associates on Macintosh DTP Quark Xpress Telephone 01707 390289.

Plush Flush at "Old Fox"

Congratulations to Paul and Erica Cooper of the Old Fox, Old Bricket Wood who have won the Inn Partnership, Greenalls "Plush Flush" Award. The award is given not only for cleanliness but overall appearance and attention to detail. The Ladies is carpeted and a variety of toiletries are provided, with dishes of pot-pourri and potted plants it is a plush flush indeed. The amount of time that women spend in there it is obviously money well spent. My wife has her own good Loo guide and avoids certain pubs another that she likes is the Robin Hood, St Albans, any other nominations or comments will be gratefully received and reported on.

Champion Beers of Britain

The Champion Beers of Britain, CBOB's are nominated by the members of CAMRA and the winners are decided by a panel of experts who sample all the beers. The Awards are announced at the Great British Beer Festival in the first week of August. This years winners were:-

Mild: Moorhouse, Black Cat.

Bitter: Coniston, Bluebird. **(Overall winner).**

Best Bitter: RCH, Pitchfork.

Strong Bitter: Mordue, Radgie Gadgie (where do they get these names)

Speciality Beer: Freeminer, Shakmantle Ginger Ale.

Bottle Conditioned Beer: Fullers, 1845.

Congratulations to all the winners

What is the "Hooden Horse"?

A Fearsome Mythological Beast?:-

No-one knows what the origins of "Hoodening" are, but it is believed to have been brought to Kent over a thousand years ago by the Jutes who venerated the horse. The "hooden horse" was originally the Woden (or Odin) Horse that featured in ancient Saxon ritual.

Others favour the belief that the horse originated much more recently as nothing more than a threatening "prop" used by a group of labourers to help extract gifts at Christmas time. Often charity was not easy to come by and the Hooden Horse became an aggressive figure not to be refused.

Today at country fetes and town fairs in Kent you will find a group of dancers with a hooden horse. The Hooden Horse is now sometimes seen as a member of the Morris Dancers so beware refuse a donation at your peril.

Hooden Horse the Pub company:-

The Hooden Horse pub chain of six pubs was taken over by Inn Business nearly two years ago. They are still a separate section of the larger 500 outlet business expanding to fifteen pubs with the aim of increasing to thirty. The size of the venture and the way it is run allows for a certain amount of individuality as was described by Tony Hooper in our last issue. The pubs when taken over are refurbished and generally provide a variety of smaller independent brewers beers which can't be a bad thing. It is still a great pity about the loss of the original names, the branding of pubs has been one of the bad things introduced in the last decade (though this is hardly the worst example).

To the customer I suggest that you try the pubs and see what they have to offer, reports are good.

To Hooden Horse be warned, when all your pubs have one name you are only as good as your worst outlet!

No to More "Moor Mill"

The environmental group St Albans Community Forest Association are mounting a campaign against plans to turn the "Moor Mill" Smug Oak Lane, Bricket Wood, now a restaurant and pub into a Travel Inn and Beafeater. As the name suggests the building was originally a water mill and the original mill wheel is still working inside the building. Plans are to extend adding more than 2,000 square meters of new building and car parking. Chris Pudsey for the association said " If the restaurant becomes a Travel Inn it will encourage traffic. We want to preserve the Green Belt and it is not just about nice pretty woodland, even though the site is near the motorway that does not mean that it has no intrinsic value, the building will destroy it."

Lots of Fun

Watford Breweriana Auction

On Wednesday 11th November, The Watford & District branch of CAMRA will be holding their annual breweriana auction at the West Herts Sports Club, Park Avenue, Watford. Amongst the varied range of brewery related lots will be a Sedgwicks of Watford embossed bottle, a McMullens stone bottle and a framed receipt featuring a colourful Wells of Watford heading. The Auction will start at 8.00pm, with viewing from 7.30pm.

National Hogshead Festival
at the **Blacksmiths Arms, St Albans**
50 Beers from a variety of Brewers
including **Micro's**
19th -30th October 1998

Veggie puts dampers on Pig Roast

John Andrews of High Street, London Colney saw red when he returned home to find a pig on a spit being cooked in readiness for the Bank Holiday festivities at the "Green Dragon". The 100lb pig which had been - nicknamed "Babe" by pub landlord Dave Jacklin - had to be cooked for a minimum of fourteen hours.

Mr Andrews was so upset by 2am that he went out and tried unsuccessfully to douse the flames. A guard had been placed who called the police. Mr Andrews wife Marion said "We are vegetarians and animal lovers. To us it is just barbaric the smell and sight of it was very upsetting. People might laugh but pigs are very intelligent creatures and I dont know how anyone could bear to do this." (She obviously wasn't aware that the pig was dead). Mr Andrews had considered making a stand and spending a night in the cells, but instead the police gave him a roasting and let him go.

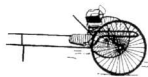
Mr Jacklin confirmed that he has barred Mr Andrews from his pub for life. He said "OK I can laugh about it now but it was really annoying at the time. Basically Mr Andrews has made a laughing stock of himself.

White Hart Centenary

The **White Hart**, South Mimms will be celebrating 100 years ownership by McMullens in October, at the time of going to press the exact date had not been set. The pub still has genuine separate public and lounge bars and two different prices for drinks. The White Hart is a classic and is due to be refurbished in the new year, we hope that none of the unique features will be tampered with. It is a lively establishment and well worth a visit.

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

What do Landlords knit on train journeys?
Ask Alan for photograph

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DOWN YOUR WAY . . . 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.

Abbots Langley

The Swan is to be converted into a single bar.

Apsley

The **Albion**, Durrants Hill, has been demolished by property developers who acquired it from Greenalls. (not averse to a bit of demolition themselves).

Ashwell

The **Rose & Crown** has new licensee's.

Baldock

The **Orange Tree** has a new landlord.

Berkhampstead

The **Old Mill House** is closed.

Bovingdon

Mr & Mrs France have left the G.B.G listed **Wheatshaf**.

Bricket Wood

The proposed re-development of **Moor Mill** into a Hotel complex (article page 3).

Chorleywood

Flood relief works are obstructing the view of the common from the **Old Shepherd** and, perhaps more important for passing trade the view of the pub from the common.

Elstree

The **Edgwarbury Hotel** no longer sells Real Ale.

Hertingfordbury

The **Prince of Wales** has now been sold.

Hertford

Congratulations to Nigel Bevis and Terry Bell who have finally received a license for the proposed **Old Cross Tavern** which will open early 1999. (Further details next issue).

Hitchin

Regent Inns has begun work on the **Corn Exchange** in the Market Square. It has taken a long time to sort out problems with the site and an up market restaurant type pub is expected. The **Coopers Arms** has a new landlord.

Goffs Oak

The **Goffs Oak** could be converted to a Big Steak house, locals are not happy about the proposed change.

Ikleford

The **Green Man** has a new Licensee.

Northaw

The **Sun** is to have a change of licensee.

Rickmansworth

Allied Domecq has plans to convert the **Western** into a theme bar, understood to be a MrQ's. Local residents are unhappy and, I quote, at the thought of attracting "hoards of boisterous drinkers."

Ridge

We welcome Peter and Allison Campbell to the **Old Guinea**. The range of beers will stay the same:- Benskins Best, Flowers IPA, and Youngs Special. A new menu has been introduced.

Stapleford

The **Woodhall Arms** is now to have "Papillon" added to its name presumably to give it a french flavour, does anyone know why?

St Albans

The **White Lion** Sopwell Lane has changed hands and it is sad to see licensee's who did everything right, forced out by a bad lease.

The **Philanthropist & Firkin** is now getting all its beer from the Flag & Firkin Watford.

The **Fighting Cocks** has a vastly improved range of beers available at premium prices.

Sarratt

It is reported that the **Cock** has been acquired by Hall & Woodhouse, at any rate, it is selling their beers.

Walkern

New landlord in the **Robin Hood**.

Waltham Cross

The **Queens Head**, has been demolished to make way for a Kentucky Fried Chicken, fast food "Restaurant".

Watford

Welcome to Sam and Martin Stone at the Greene King, **Nascot Arms** in Stamford Road.

The **Bedford Arms**, Langley Road, is understood to have won the Vanguard Inns Pub of the Year award. In the High Street is a new outlet **Bar Risa**, a bizarrely designed "cafe bar" with a "Jongleurs Comedy Club" upstairs-Brakspear bitter and Boddingtons are available on handpump.

The **Flag & Firkin** will be brewing a 5.5% IPA in September.

The conversion of the **Hertfordshire Arms** into a McDonalds is well underway.

Further down St Albans Road, No 188 is due to be converted into the **Wander Inn** further details awaited.

Widford

The **Green Man** has a new licensee. (See article page 2).

Cut Tax on Beer Now

A third of the price of your pint is tax

The UK Treasury makes more from the sale of beer than the pub or brewer put together.

We pay more than six times more beer tax than French drinkers.

Over 1.5 million pints of beer a day are brought across the channel from Calais - the equivalent of the weekly sales of 1,000 community pubs.

Customs and Excise estimate that 70% of this beer is illegally smuggled.

Pubs are closing

Many smaller pubs are under threat of closure as a direct result of the UK government's high tax policy.

The industry supports more than 900,000 jobs in Britain. These people deserve the security a cut in beer tax would offer.

The economic argument

Studies by Oxford Economic Forecasting have shown that a 20% cut in beer tax would pay for itself within two years through increases in demand. There would be no losers - other than the smugglers and Calais warehouse owners.

Smaller, community pubs would benefit the most from a cut. Larger pubs can often make more money from food, but beer represents around 60% of the turnover of an average small pub.

The social argument

The high level of smuggling is supporting a criminal black economy and undermining efforts to promote sensible drinking. Smuggling leads to increased problems with underage drinking, street drinking and other alcohol related problems.

Pubs provide the best socially controlled environment for the sensible consumption of alcohol. A cut in tax would be passed on to consumers (literally every brewer in the UK has pledged that they will pass any tax

reduction on beer directly to the customer) this would encourage more people to drink in pubs.

What does CAMRA want?

We want the government to move towards harmonisation of beer tax with our European neighbours over a three year period, starting with a five pence per pint cut now.

What you can do

Join CAMRA a membership form is below. Write to your MP if you don't know who, then the Commons information service is on :- 0171- 219- 3000.

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

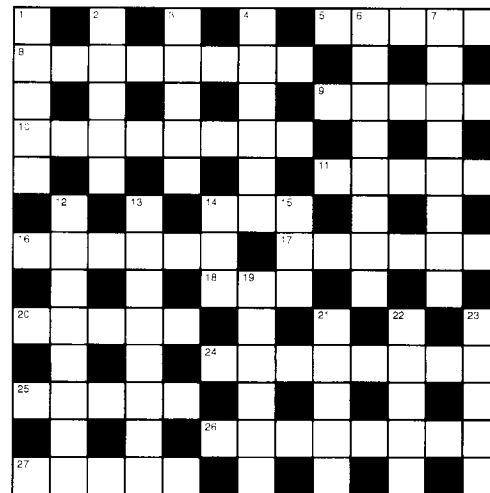
I/We would like to receive further information about CAMRA

* 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

Crossword Competition



Clue 21 down was missing from the crossword in edition 170 the answer was ADAGE. A copy of the Good Beer Guide is useful in solving these puzzles. Winners of the wordsearches were:-
168 Apr/May B.Elman, Stevenage.
169 Jun/Jul P.McNickle, St Albans.

Completed entries to:
Paul Ruane, 15 Turpins Close, Hertford, Herts
SG14 2EH. by 4th December 1997.

CLUES ACROSS

- 5) Team found at seaside outside South East, goes without saying (5).
- 8) The Bulls Head and New River Arms may make you change direction at this river crossing (8).
- 9) Small bit found in pie centre. (5)
- 10) Naturally these are what CAMRA is all about. (4-4)
- 11) A call at cards?-near Loxwood in West Sussex. (5)
- 14) Beer without Hops. (3)
- 16) Southwold Brewer. (6)
- 17) Brewer in Romsey closed by Whitbread (6)
- 18) Letherbitches, Steamin' Billy bitter. (3)
- 20) Bristol is the home of a happy brewery, so forget the last letter for the photo please.(5)
- 24) Not light, Celebrity, brewer in Brighton (4-4)
- 25) Does this brewer give you one in the necke (5)
- 26) Fast plus slack. (3-5)

- 27) Malt,hops,water and.... dough boys raising friend.(5)

CLUES DOWN

- 1) This could be shelved spares or the name of an Old Ale.(5)
- 2) Horse adornment often used to decorate the pub. (5)
- 3) Animal innards found in off Ale. (5)
- 4) Did Noah have something to do with this Swindon brewer.(6)
- 6) Shepherd Neame brew for battle of Britain fliers.(8)
- 7) Very young Mallard brewed in Nottingham (8)
- 12) Another name for H₂O? (5-3)
- 13) A Hotel in Borehamwood and a college in St Albans (8)
- 14) A mule, a fool (3)
- 15) Premium beer from Chiswick (3)
- 19) What we want in Cardiff.(6)
- 21) Manx brewer,OK Ellis (5)
- 22) This can help you relax at the bar.(5)
- 23) Might be used to describe ten pints a night (5).

CAMRA ESSEX PUB OF THE YEAR 1998

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BRANCH DIARY

Hertfordshire South Branch

Tues, 20th Oct, Branch meeting, **White Horse**, Hertford, 8.00pm.

Tues 17th Nov, Branch meeting, **Lower Red Lion**, StAlbans. 8.00pm.

Contact **John Bishop 01582 768478 (h)**
0171 477 7700 (w)

Watford & District Branch

Tues 6th Oct, Oxhey Village Crawl: **Railway Arms**, 8.00pm, **Villiers Arms**, 8.30pm, **Haydon Arms**, 9.00pm, **Rifle Volunteer** 9.30pm, Victoria, 10.00pm.

Wed 14th Oct, Good Beer Guide Launch and Pool tournament: **West Herts Sports Club**.

Thurs 22nd Oct Watford Survey: **Red Lion** 8.30pm, **Old Westminster**, 9.00pm, **Moon Under Water** 9.30pm, **Ice-O-Bar** 10.00pm, (with look into the **Cafe Risa** next door)

Contact **Tony Smith 01923 221155 (w/h)**

North Hertfordshire Branch

Wed 14th Oct, Branch Social- **Red Lion**, Preston, 8.30pm, then the **Bull, Bird in Hand**, Gosmore.

Sat 17th Oct, Joint Social with neighbouring Branches. All-Day Royston Crawl meet Hitchin station 10am, or the **Jockey**, Royston 11am.

Sat 24th Oct, Tutored Beer Tasting (Hosted by Bill Austin) **Lytton Arms**, Old Knebworth (12 noon start).

Wed 28th Oct, Branch Social, **George IV**, Baldock, then **Fox, Three Horseshoes**, Willian.

Wed 11th Nov, Branch Meeting, GBG Nominations, voting for Arnold Memorial Award. **Sunrunner**, Hitchin. 8.00pm.

Fri 20th Nov, Belguim Beer evening, book through Brian Mason.

Herts-Essex Borders Branch

Monday 19th Oct, Branch Meeting, **Hop Poles**, Great Hallingbury, 8.30pm

Wednesday 21st Oct, committee meeting **Carpenters Arms**, Thornwood Common, 8.30pm.

Monday 16th Nov, Branch Meeting, **Chequers** Wareside.

Real Ale Bus to all Branch Meetings. Various Pick Up's in Harlow, Sawbridgeworth.

Branch Contact **Graham Darby, 01279 415895(h)**
01279 680233 (w) or e-mail

grmdarby@easynet.co.uk

Mid-Chilterns Branch

Thurs 15th Oct, Hooden in a **Box**, Boxmoor 8.30pm.

Thurs 29th Oct, Crawl, **Full Moon**, Hawridge, 8.30pm, **Rose & Crown**, 9.15pm, **Black Horse** Chesham Vale 10.00pm.

Contact **Chris Pontin (h) 01442-834899**

Hertfordshire
South Branch
Pub of the Year
1995

Enjoy a pint at
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or firkin for parties from our Brewery Tap