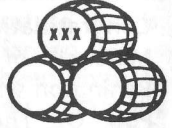




THE HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER



A bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker

APRIL/MAY 1999

CIRCULATION 4000

NUMBER 174

“Lordship Arms” Benington North Herts Pub Of The Year



**Don't miss the Ware Beer Festival
Ware Arts Centre
Friday 9th to Sunday 11th April**

Lordship Arms & Hitchin Rugby Club North Herts Winners

Congratulations to Alan & Daphne Marshall of the "Lordship Arms" in Benington who have won the North Herts Pub Of The Year again ,they were previously winners in 1997. The "Lordship" has an ever changing variety of guest beers from micro brewers, excellent homemade food and an interesting collection of telephone equipment. This immaculate country pub has also had consecutive entries in the Good Beer Guide and is as their advertisement in this newsletter says "A Pub worth finding". The presentation will take place in May.

The "Hitchin Rugby Club" in Old Hale Way, Hitchin, has won the North Herts Club Of The Year for the second time. The Club runs regular mini beer festivals. It is reported that the latest featuring Winter Beers was a great success. They also serve a good variety of cask conditioned beers on a regular basis. The award will be made in June.

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: Steve Bury, 14 New Road, Shenley, Herts WD7 9EA.

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Millstream Hertford an Apology

On page 4 of the last edition of the newsletter February / March No 173 in the article **Mac's News** there was an error in the paragraph headed **Pub Losses**. The "Millstream" Hertford should have read "Millstream" Ware.

I have received correspondence from Mr R.P.Barnes the licensee of the "Millstream" Hertford, who is concerned that the mistake has affected the Pub's business. The Millstream is a deservedly popular tenanted local which has been entered into the Good Beer Guide on several occasions. Far from the pub being closed, it is planned to extend the bar and kitchen area.

I would like to make an apology to Mr & Mrs Barnes for any embarrassment or inconvenience caused.

I hope that the previously good relations between the Licensees and the South Herts Branch of CAMRA have not been damaged.

Steve Bury Editor

Not Andy, Richard

Herts - Essex Borders Branch have brought an error on page 6 of issue 173 to my notice. Under **Widford** it should have read Richard Marchant as the ex landlord of the **Green Man**, not Andy Speller. I apologise to them both for this mistake.

Ed.

Publicans blamed for decline of cask beer

Cask Marque Awards

Britains brewers are producing the best cask conditioned beers they have ever made - and publicans are ruining them.

This was the verdict of Cask Marque director Paul Nunny, who has laid the decline in real ale sales at the licensed trade's door. He was speaking at Cask Marque's first anniversary. 279 licensees had been successful and have been awarded plaques to place on the outside of their premises. The plaques are black and silver and show a silhouette of a hand pump.

But what of the large numbers who failed "We knew the results would not be good, but we did not expect them to be so horrifying," said Mr Nunny "We found beer not just off specification by a couple of degrees but by enormous amounts. Half the pubs put forward as the best in the country failed, and some of them were serving beer at up to 70F. This is why there is such a decline. Customers are walking away because beers are being served far from the way the brewers intended."

Cask Beer Temperature

Adnams head brewer Mike Powell - Evans said that beers stored at too high temperatures would not mature properly. A cellar temperature of between 53-55F would bring out the sharpness and fruitiness intended by the brewer.

Roger Protz, editor of the Good Beer Guide, said " I get handed warm frog-spawn and told that it is what real ale is supposed to be like. Brewers can produce marvellous beers, but if they're mucked up in cellars, there's absolutely nothing they can do".

Mr Nunny warned publicans who maintained that their customers liked their beer warm that they were deluding themselves. "Too many publicans have relied on the fact that customers will take what they are given" he said.

The Inspections

Mr Nunny who left Adnams to set up Cask Marque clearly has the support of the 21

brewers and pub groups who have financed his pub inspections.

It appears that there is too much emphasis on meeting strict temperature levels. Personally I find beer at 53F far too cold.

Cask Marque awards have been given to pubs that serve all their naturally conditioned beer on caskbreather, which is not accepted as a correct method of dispense by CAMRA. (How many awards would have been given if the use of caskbreather excluded entry ?)

Other area's of concern

So what about the poor publican who seems to be getting the blame by Cask Marque and Brewer alike. There is no doubt that a large amount of poor to dreadful cask beer (not all of it warm as well) is being served up to customers. Although most of this is due to bad cellarmanSHIP, some of the beer is below standard when it is delivered.

Brewers could be more constructive and invest in better training for pub managers and staff to resolve the problem.

Ullage allowances for beer wastage when changing casks, cleaning and clearing pipes have been cut to impossible levels by the brewers. This encourages publicans to serve the warm flat beer left in the pipes between sessions, or stoop to illegal methods such as returning slops to the casks.

It also appears that some brewers do not leave beer to condition at the brewery as long as they used to, saving storage space. This puts an unwelcome burden on the cellarman having to find space on the stillage for longer periods of time before it can be served. Perhaps Mr Nunny could investigate some of these brewery related issues as well as exposing bad cellarmanSHIP.

To finish on a positive note I do understand that Cask Marque inspections have instigated a large number of cellar improvements in pubs by the brewers to bring them up to standard.

Steve Bury Editor

Budget Beer Tax Disaster!

Urgent action was needed by the Chancellor Gordon Brown in the March Budget to stop declining beer sales in the licensed trade. Unfortunately no help was at hand.

Excise Duty

An immediate cut of 20% from beer duty was recommended which would have paid for itself within two years by increases in demand. The Chancellor avoided the issue by announcing no change, which means the bootlegging will continue unabated and will no doubt increase on the run up to the Millennium.

Kent brewer Shepherd Neame is still challenging the Government in the courts to make them introduce duty levels at the EU average, obeying the Treaty of Rome.

Progressive Tax/sliding scale:

There are 400 small local brewers who brew beers of high quality for local markets and local tastes. Many are in rural or economically marginal areas and support local jobs.

The competition is clearly unfair. Large national brewers spend millions each year marketing and advertising. Four large companies control 85% of the market. Without a sliding scale of excise duty small brewers find it increasingly harder to compete with the regionals and nationals.

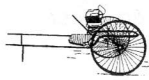
CAMRA wants a lower rate of beer duty for smaller brewers based on production. The principle should be like other taxes. Companies below a certain threshold pay no VAT or Income Tax where the lower the income, the lower the rate levied.

The Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) has been campaigning for a sliding scale of duty which exists in other European countries.

They are being supported by Hammersmith & Fulham MP Ian Coleman and Alan Simpson Labour MP for Nottingham South. There was no help in the Budget even though the chancellor would only lose 0.1% of the £11 billion raised in excise duty by the Treasury. The Chancellor has been very short sighted by declaring no change. Drinkers, brewers and licensee's will all be losers in the long term.

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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.

ASTON:

The **Pig & Whistle** has new licensees.

AYOT GREEN:

The **Waggoners** has a new owner "Red Rooster Pub Co" and has four handpumps in use.

BALDOCK:

The **Engine "B"** quiz team have become the first ever to retain the Greene King IPA Masterquiz "Champions" title.

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

BELLINGDON:

In Bucks Pubmaster have submitted plans to close the **Bull** and redevelop the site and building. Locals are campaigning to save the pub.

BISHOPS STORTFORD:

We would like to welcome Nick Oliver, as the new licensee of the **Boars Head**.

BOREHAMWOOD:

The public bar (or should I say the bar open to the public) of the **Oaklands Hotel**, Studio Way has been refurbished. Bass is the only real ale served on handpump.

BUNTINGFORD:

The **Crown** has Mole Trap as its regular guest beer.

CHARLTON:

Tim & Jane Hunter who have been licensees at the **Windmill** for twenty years have moved to the **Red Lion** Preston.

EDLESBOROUGH:

Although over the border in Bucks it is worth mentioning that the **Travellers Rest** has become the latest on a long list of pubs that have closed.

GOFFS OAK:

The **Goffs Oak** has reopened after refurbishment.

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD:

Another new pub **The Wishing Well** is due to open at the end of May on the site of the old Midland Bank in the Marlowes. (Wishing Well is a pub chain which provides real ale in its premises.)

HERTFORD:

The tenants at the **Ram** have left after 24 years. The landlord of the **Harts Horns** has retired. Frank and Jan Wilkins tenants of the **Great**

Eastern for 21 years are to leave. They are moving to the "Halfway House" beside the golf course at Thundridge, we wish them all the best with their new venture.

Work on the **Old Cross Tavern** is well under way it is hoped to open at the end of April.

HITCHIN:

The **Corn Exchange** a new pub owned by Regent Inns has opened in the town centre.

The **Wishing Well** has had a change of landlord. The **Bricklayers Arms** is closed whilst a rear extension is built and should reopen in April.

The **Cock** is having a minor refurbishment including installation of a dartboard.

The **Red Hart** has had a paint job.

The **Cromwell Bar** has had a minor refit and will be serving guest beers.

New landlord in the **Cricketers Bedford Road**.

HARPENDEN:

Our reporter says that the **Plough & Harrow**, Southdown is not closing (we had not heard any rumours).

It is also reported that the **Hooden off the Rails** has derailed and no longer serves any real ale.

ICKLEFORD:

Ian Reeves of the **Cricketers** has moved to the **Stag** at Stotfold, Beds.

LEVERSTOCK GREEN:

The **White Horse** which Whitbread built in the sixties totally out of keeping with the area has been demolished.

OFFLEY:

The **Red Lion** a free house is closed.

RADLETT:

The **Railway** has a new licensee Sam Van Den Borne who seems to be settling in nicely at the lively local. A guest real ale is still available alongside the Tetley Bitter.

RICKMANSWORTH:

The **Halfway House** has been refurbished and should open in March.

A new **Hogshead** has opened in the High Street.

ST ALBANS:

The **Goat** Sopwell Lane has new landlords John & Josie Griffiths who arrived in January having previously run **The Longboat** in Penzance. They will be running a music quiz on Tuesday nights and reintroducing the Sunday Jazz afternoons in the back bar. A variety of guest real ales will be available from the Greenalls portfolio.

The **Philanthropist & Firkin** is still getting its beer from the **Flag & Firkin** Watford until the new

... DOWN YOUR WAY

brewer from Nottingham arrives.

The **Great Northern** is selling a house beer called Great Northern Express GNE for short, brewed by Mauldon's. The beer is 3.5% ABV and sells at a very reasonable price of £1.10 per pint.

The **White Hart**, Holywell Hill, however is reported as selling Greene King IPA at £2.28 per pint.

Martin Brown who has previously run the **Duke of Marlborough** has taken over at the **White Hart Tap**.

The **Rats Castle**, Hatfield Road, the nearest pub to CAMRA's national headquarters has ceased serving real ales. (After the last pint I had in there this comes as no surprise.) In the last issue we were assured that the **Acorn** would still be featured when the pub was renamed the **Clannad**, now that the new signs are up this appears not to be the case. I also cannot understand why have they painted golden boots all over the outside.

STEVENAGE:

The **Novotel A1(M)** now has one handpump serving Hancocks HB at £2.25per pint!

The **Old Red Lion** and the **Rising Sun** have had a change of landlord.

TEWIN:

The **Plume & Feathers** is owned by "Straightforward Inns" and is serving Marstons Pedigree, Timothy Taylors Landlord and Black Sheep Bitter.

WARE:

We welcome Keith & Carol new landlords to the **Rose & Crown**.

WATFORD:

The **Rat & Parrot** a new pub in the High Street owned by Scottish Courage is selling Theakstons XB at £2.16 and Courage Directors (don't ask).

The **Artichoke** also in the High Street no longer sells real ale.

The **Golden Lion**, Estcourt Road will be closed during refurbishment.

WELWYN GARDEN CITY:

A new Beefeater **The Stanborough** has opened opposite the Sports Stadium.

WHEATHAMPSTEAD:

The future of the **Nelson** is uncertain hopefully it will be confirmed by the next edition.

Worpell & Albion help Charities

Over the last year two Ware pubs have raised considerable sums for charity.

George & Pat Ward the licensees with the help of the regulars at the **Worpell** (previously the **New Rose & Crown**) have raised £400 from the Christmas raffle and £600 in change in a whisky bottle on the bar. This has been donated to the NSPCC National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Rhoda Beales chair of the NSPCC's Ware branch said when receiving the £1,000 " I think it is amazing that one pub can raise this amount of money, all of which will be spent within Hertfordshire".

Rhoda Beales may have been amazed but Dick Tunnard and the locals of the Albion pub which is one of Ware's smallest ,also raised £1,000, which has been donated to the British Red Cross "holidays for disabled youngsters appeal". The money was raised by running a monthly quiz night and donations from customers.

THE LYTTON ARMS Old Knebworth Herts

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50 malt whiskies
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Beer Names Wordsearch

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Drug den pub landlady pleads guilty

Mary Parker the landlady of the Bull & Tiger Manor Way, Borehamwood, pleaded guilty to knowingly allowing her pub to be used for supply of class B drugs. The pub was raided by 160 police officers on 10th October 1997 and has been closed ever since. Several others have been charged with supplying cocaine, ecstasy, amphetamines and cannabis.

The Bull & Tiger is a large pub on a good site and it is rumoured that it will be completely refurbished and have a change of name before being reopened. It is still unclear when work will start.

The 30 Beer Names are:- ABBOT ALE, BIBI, BONNEVILLE, BULLRING BEST, CHOCOLATE ALE, CLIFFHANGER, DEUCHARS IPA, ENOCH'S HAMMER, ENTIRE, ESB, FARGO, FARMERS JOY, FESTIVAL ALE, GOLDEN GATE, GRIFFIN, HART, HENPECKED, HOBGOBLIN, KNOBWILTER, LANDLORD, MAE WEST, RINGO, SBA, SCORPIO, SHAMROCK, STUD, SUMMER DAZE, THUNDERFLASH, TOBY CASK, WHITE BOAR.

Completed entries should be sent to Paul Ruane, 15 Turpins Close, Hertford, Herts SG14 2EH.

The first correct entry opened 7th June will receive a 1998 St Albans Beer Festival Polo Shirt.

Winner Dec/Jan issue 172 Dave Wilson, Lightwater, Surrey.

Dark Horse Brewery receives CAMRA praise

Congratulations to Ian and Jan Harvey of the Dark Horse Brewery in Maidenhead Street, Hertford who have had their beers praised by CAMRA.

Fallen Angel ABV 4.2% received five stars for quality and came third out of 112 Real Ales tasted in a survey completed by the East Anglian Branches of CAMRA (which includes North and South Herts). Dark Horse Ale ABV 3.6%, Death Wish ABV 5% and Sunrunner ABV 4.1% also featured in the five star category.

Short Measure!!

Lets make the point again CAMRA's 1997 survey of Trading Standards departments showed that 8 out of 10 pubs serve short measure.

Allied Domecq Leisure appealed in the High Court against a Bradford conviction for short measure. The judges agreed with the magistrates decision that *a pint means a pint of liquid and that the onus is on the supplier to provide it, not the customer to ask for a top up.*

Full Pints in Bass Taverns: Bass have set up a working group to ensure that their pubs are meeting British Licensed Retailers Association BLRA guidelines i.e. that a pint should be at least 95% liquid!

Anyone refused a top up in a Bass pub should contact Bob Cartwright, Communications Director, Bass Taverns, Cape Hill, PO Box 27, Birmingham, B16 0PQ. CAMRA HQ would like to know of any abuses as well

BRANCH DIARY

Hertfordshire South Branch

Tues 20th April, Branch meeting, **Cat & Fiddle**, Radlett, 8.00pm.

Tues 27th April, Pub Of The Year, Runner- Up Award **Woodman**, Wildhill, 8pm

Tues 11th May, Branch meeting, (**And Mild Night**) **White Horse**, Hertford, 8.00pm.

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

Watford & District Branch

Thurs 1st Apr, social **Dumb Bell**, Horn Hill, 8.30pm, **Rose & Crown**, Woodcock Hill, 9.30pm, transport from Watford Junction 8.00pm.

Sun 4th Apr, stroll to Chandlers, meet at "park gates", Cassiobury park, Rickmansworth Road, 11.30am, **Clarendon Arms** 12.30pm.

Prices Surveys: Wed 7th, Croxley. Thurs 15th Watford Heath / Oxhey, Tues 20th Batchworth Heath / Mill End, Thur 29th, Bushey. details branch contact.

Fri 23rd Apr, **Branch Darts Tournament**, **West Herts Sports Club**, Watford 8.30pm.

Wed 5th May, social at the **Kings Head**, Huntonbridge, 8.30pm.

Wed 12th May, club social, Rickmansworth **Royal British Legion**, Ebury Road, 8.30pm.
Contact **Tony Smith 01923 221155 (w/h)**

North Hertfordshire Branch

Fri 2nd Apr - Social- Beer Festival, **Sunrunner**, Hitchin.

Sat/Sun 10th -11th Apr- Weekend in Tyne &

Wear- Brewery visits to Four Rivers, Big Lamp, Mordue and Federation.

Wed 14th Apr- Social- **Farmers Boy**, Langley, **Bull/Maidens Head**, Whitwell.

Sat 24th Apr- Outing to lunch session of the Beer Festival, **Lytton Arms**, Old Knebworth.

Wed 28th Apr- Royston Social- **Coach & Horses** 7.30pm, then **White Bear**.

Wed 12th May-Branch Meeting- **Red Lion**, Preston 8pm.

Sat 29th May- Outing to Cambridge Beer Festival.

Contact **Colleen Holliday 01426 731058 (h)**

Herts-Essex Borders

Mon 19th April, Branch Meeting, **Tap & Spile** Bishops Stortford. 8.30pm.

Thurs 29th April, to Sat 1st May, 12th Ongar Beer Festival, Budworth Hall, Chipping Ongar.

Mon 10th May, Branch meeting, **Forest Gate**, Bell Common, Epping 8.30pm.

Branch Contact **Graham Darby, 01279 415895(h) 01279 680233 (w)** or e-mail grmdarby@easynet.co.uk

Mid-Chilterns Branch

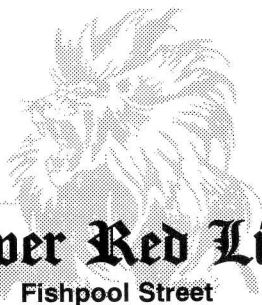
Sat 10th April, A.G.M. at the **Royal Oak**, **Chipperfield**, 7.30pm for 8.00pm start.

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

Herts Liaison Meeting

Flag & Firkin, Watford Thursday 20th May 8pm (next to Watford junction station).
Upstairs Room

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
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