

FREE



The Campaign for Real Ale

HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 1979

NUMBER 19

ALLY PALLY ROLLS AGAIN

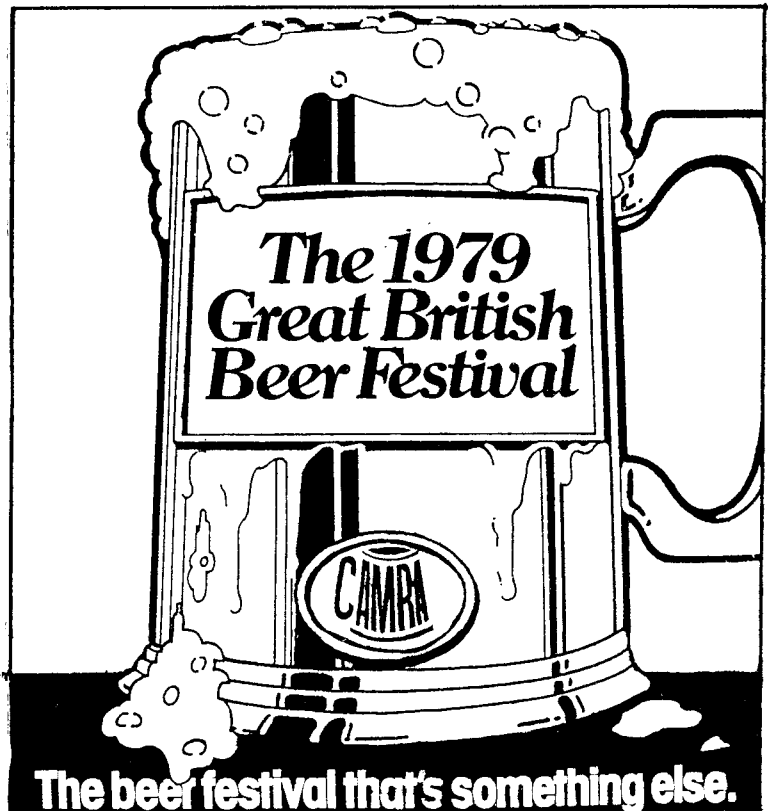
From Hatfield Poly to Ally Pally! After the sell out success of the Hertfordshire Beer Festival, here's hoping to a repeat performance at Alexandra Palace for the Great British Beer Festival, which opens on September 3rd.

'The beer festival that's something else' promises to be a greater array of delights than the impressive rows of casks. There's a rally of old vehicles on the opening Sunday, A firework display on the Monday, a German evening (featuring European beers) on the Wednesday, a parade of horse-drawn drays on the Friday, and a special concert by the Ronnie Scott Quartet to wind up the event on the Saturday.

'This is by far the largest, most varied and most adventurous beer festival ever organised in this country', said organiser Denis Palmer. 'The Festival is CAMRA's major public showpiece and is the best chance for us to get our message over to the public.'

However, the event is still desperately short of staff, particularly on the delivery morning (Monday 10th September). If you are keen to lend a hand your branch contact is on page 4.

●Continuing the festival theme, staffing organisers at the Herts Beer Festival, Wendy Casey and Denis Ward, extend their thanks to all the members of the 7 CAMRA branches who helped staff what was a very successful event. If you were a customer, we all hope you enjoyed it.



The beer festival that's something else.

Sunday, Sept 2 (limited range of beers)	12-2pm; 7-10.30pm
Monday, Sept. 3 (full opening day)	5.30-10.30pm
Tuesday, Sept. 4	5.30-10.30pm
Wednesday, Sept. 5	5.30-10.30pm
Thursday, Sept. 6	5.30-10.30pm
Friday, Sept. 7 (bars closed one hour afternoon)	11am-11pm
Saturday, Sept 8 (bars closed one hr afternoons)	11am-11pm

SAVING REAL PUBS

What is a real pub? Perhaps it has a lively public bar and a darts board; perhaps it has a garden where you can take the kids; perhaps it offers a friendly word and a quiet pint....Only you, the customers, know what makes a pub real for you — but we all know how quickly a favourite local can be ruined — the public bar can turn overnight into a restaurant; the garden can be transformed into a car park, and friendly words can't be heard above the unstoppable din of hidden loudspeakers. We have all seen it happen — and your local could be the next to get the treatment.

Part of our Heritage

CAMRA, as the only consumer group for the pub user, is trying to do something to help. It has recently formed a Pub Preservation Group to organise action to fight pub closures and alterations made without any reference to the customers. We want to ensure that all that is best in British pubs is preserved, as part of our tradition and heritage, alongside real British beer.

You will be hearing more of the Pub Preservation Group, meanwhile, if you think that your local is under threat, whether it sells real ale or not, please contact your local CAMRA branch and let us try to help you save it.

**I NEVER KNEW
THERE WAS SO
MUCH IN IT!**

D. Burns



Available in good pubs & bookshops

FROM ALE TO BEER IN HERTS



Genuine real ale — the sweet, unhopped brew our medieval forefathers drank — was pushed out, as everybody knows, by the arrival of the hopped drink from the continent called beer.

But ale stayed around in its original form for more than two centuries after beer first arrived in England. It also seems that ale, as a separate and distinct drink from beer, was still being brewed in Hertfordshire as late as the eighteenth century.

Immigrants drink

The very first known mention of beer in Herts is in a Ware will dated 1504 — exactly 475 years ago — which refers to 'the Dutchman, the bere bruer'. Clearly beer was still an immigrants' drink, even though hopped liquor was first imported into this country in 1400, and beer brewers are mentioned at Hythe, in Kent in 1419.

Real English ale without hops proved remarkably tenacious in the face of the alien invader, however. In 1606 the Corporation of St. Albans decided that the large numbers of brewers in the borough was pushing up the price of fuel too much. Accordingly they agreed to restrict the number of brewers to six — four for beer and two for ale. A century after it first arrived in the country, beer was now the most popular drink — but at least one pint in three being brewed was still old-fashioned unhopped ale, it seems.

Four of the six men allowed to carry on brewing under the 1606 ruling, incidently, were ex-mayors of St. Albans! Not surprinsingly, this caused more than a few comments in the city, and the corporation had to issue a special statement denying that the bye-law had been passed solely to protect the financial interests of its own members.

Advantages

The new brew had many advantages over ale — hopped beer kept longer, it was less likely to go hazy, it had a better head and it almost certainly tasted better — it is difficult to see why ale lasted alongside beer for so long. The answer seems to be that ale was considerably cheaper than its hopped rival. In 1598, for example, the brewers of St. Albans agreed to brew 'good quantities of drink' for the poor of the borough. The beer was to be two pence a gallon — but the ale was only a penny a gallon. Whatever disadvantages unhoped ale had, it was clearly much lighter on the pocket than beer.

Kids stuff

Reflecting on the continental origins of the hopped drink, the St. Albans brewers in the days of Queen Elizabeth 1, measured their beer in 'kilderkins', this was the Dutch word for an 18 gallon barrel, meaning literally 'small child', and from which our kilderkin is derived. Ale however, as befitted a proper English drink, was measured in the Anglo-Saxon 'tub'. Exactly how much a tub represented is not clear, but it seems to be the equivalent of 12 gallons. At any rate, the maximum prices laid down by the City's Corporation back in 1598 were 4/4d. for a kilderkin of best beer, and 1/8d. for a tub of ale.

Riotous disturbances

Ten years earlier, in 1588, 14 people had been hauled before the Mayor of St. Albans for brewing and selling 'extraordinarily strong ale against all good law and order'. Exactly what kind of riotous disturbances took place after the ale went on sale are unfortunately not recorded — and sadly, neither are the recipes! Even though good strong ale had the backing of no less than William Shakespeare — he was frequently rude about 'small beer' in his plays — the hopped brew gained popularity everywhere as time wore on.

Barred

Yet the two drinks were still regarded as separate. In 1700 the St. Albans Corporation decreed that 'anyone found harbouring and lodging vagrants, rogues and other old and disorderly persons' was to be barred from selling beer or ale. Hopped or unhopped, ale lived on, 300 years after hops first arrived in England.

What finally seems to have done for ale as a separate drink from beer is the invention of porter in 1722. The thick black bitter beer that rose rapidly to almost universal popularity first in London and then throughout the country, was probably first produced after some anonymous Hertfordshire malster had accidently over-dried his malt, producing the dark brown grains ideal for making porter. By the time the porter tide had ebbed, ale and beer were merely different words for the same stuff — and hops were on top.

Martyn Cornell

TEW PASTURES

Those well known faces behind the hand-pumps at the Rose & Crown, St. Michaels, St. Albans, Paula and John Milligan, have not been pulling so many pints in person recently. So where have they been hiding?

Just over an hours drive from St. Albans sleeps the picturesque village of Great Tew. Set in a Cotswold valley, a mile off the A361 between Banbury and Chipping Norton, 'Tew' presents a perfect picture of rural life. However, during the past 6 months one important thing has been missing - the village pub. During the spring, the Falkland Arms, facing huge restoration problems, was put up for auction and seemed destined to loose its licence. Paula and John, together with good friend and master carpenter David Wilkinson, took up the challenge of restoring the 15th century pub, and as from late August the Falkland will be open again to provide villagers and visitors alike, once more, with some fine ales. Hook Norton Bitter and Mild, plus Donnington's Best Bitter, will be on sale initially, with more beers to follow shortly. We all wish Paula and John every success with their new venture.

NB Herts South branch are running a series of coach trips during the Autumn. The first of these is to the official opening of the Falkland Arms in September. Other planned outings are to the Brewery Museum, Stamford, Lincs, Wethered's Marlow brewery, and the Young's brewery and managerie (they now have two giraffes!) For further details about these, or any of the South Herts social events ring Wendy Casey on St. Albans 65928 or Tony King on 01 952 6080.

The
Falkland
Arms

THIS WELL'S A DESERT

The real ale revival has certainly taken Hertfordshire by storm. It is now difficult to name a town or large village in the county that does not have at least one pub selling good real ale served traditionally. Difficult, but not impossible. Take a look at Ashwell, a village in the far north of Hertfordshire close to the boundaries of Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire, and a village which indeed is always worth a second look.

Source of concern

Ashwell has a lot in its favour; picturesque streets and old buildings; an imposing church, dating from the 14th century; a spring, which gives the village its name, and which is the source of the river Cam; a history dating back to the Stone Age; and four pubs — with not a drop of real ale between them. A shame, and even more so when you remember that Ashwell was one of the county's brewing centres, with the best remembered of its breweries, Fordham's, closing only as recently as 1952.

Possibility

The four village pubs are all houses of character. The two Greene King pubs on the main street, the Rose & Crown and the Three Tuns, are both lively old establishments, and the latter, a small hotel, is especially popular. So too is the Charles Wells house, the Bushel & Strike, in a beautiful setting close to the church. Here the main object appears to desperatley try and ensure that all comers are consuming enormous platefulls of food. Hidden away in a back street is the fourth pub — Whitbread's, the Engine — more of a local, being friendly, clean and well run.

So, the possibility is there for villagers to have a choice of eight excellent traditionally served draught beers ...instead of none at all.

Blind

It makes you think. Are the residents content to have to drive elsewhere to seek out real ale? Are the landlords of Ashwell's four pubs, and the breweries who own them, blind to the opportunity of attracting both locals and visitors with the promise of a jolly pub *plus* a decent pint of gass-free beer? Should the beer lovers of Hertfordshire not make it their business to gently persuade the villagers and licensees alike to discover the delights of a pint or six of the real stuff? Or are we all content to let this ancient village remain a museum piece; a unique monument to the bygone days of fizzy beer?

Peter Lerner

KK OK?

The campaign to save Ind Coope's KK mild is being stepped up by local CAMRA branches, led by South-West Essex whose area includes Romford and the Allied brewery. Publicity material, similar to that successfully employed to Greene King XX Dark Mild, is to be produced. In fact, badges depicting the slogan 'KK OK?' are already being distributed to pubs currently selling the brew. Much-needed pump clips, plus beer-mats, will follow soon.



SPORTS REPORT

The Herts branches of CAMRA have made a concerted effort in recent weeks to work off ever-expanding beer-guts, by managing to participate in competition a little more strenuous than dominoes or drinking.

Crushed

In a hastily arranged 5-a-side football tournament, held in Harpenden on July 10th, Herts South crushed opposition from Herts North (beaten 3—2), Enfield & Barnet (beaten 4—1) and CAMRA HQ (beaten 5—0). Your favourite Newsletter editor nabbed 5 goals, but other stars in the side were Ralph (Jimmy Greaves) Lawday and Les (Pat Jennings) Middlewood.

Smashed

Herts South continued on their winning ways by defeating Herts North at cricket on July 22nd in Verulam Park, St. Albans. After a disastrous start, the visitors, batting first, made 69 all out off 25 overs. After some fine batting by Chris Storey, coupled with slightly erratic bowling, South Herts reached the required total with 3 wickets to spare. They emphasised their superiority on the day by winning an extremely exciting beer match, after which the teams drank the Goat Inn out of Adnam's Dark mild and got smashed.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

'Far Sawrey, between Hawkshead and Windermere in the Lake District, is well known as the home of Beatrix Potter, that most overrated of children's writers. It is less well known as the home of Ed Green, president of the Tricycle Association which, along with the Campaign for Real Ale and the Latin Mass Society, is one of the few institutions worth preserving in these islands.'

Article by Richard Kelly in the 'Grassroots' section of the Guardian, Wednesday July 18th, 1979 The article was on Ed Green, the president of the Tricycle Association, who was extolling the virtues of the tricycle.

CAMRA—WORD SOLUTION

Solution to July's CAMRA—WORD

Across 1) Whitbread 6) I.P.A. 8) Meter 10) Untrue 11) Little 12) Smiles 14) Invert 16) Each 17) Firkin 19) Let 20) Everards

Down 1) Wem 2) Inter 3) Barrels 4) Except (we did take exempt as an answer too, although except is strictly more appropriate) 5) Dismal 7) Ajar 9) Nutshell 13) Incite 14) Infra 15) Tun 18) Rid

Congratulations to those people who completed the crossword, especially Pete Foy who finished it in 15 minutes!

THIS EDITION

The Hertfordshire Newsletter is produced monthly by the Herts North, Herts South and Herts/Essex Borders branches of CAMRA. The editors would gratefully receive any item of news for future editions, but due to the improvement in type layout of late, may we ask for typed articles if possible to help shorten production time. We are now considering applications for ¼ page advertisements (current newsletter distribution is 3000) and can be contacted at the following address for further discussion Val or Nick Page, 28 Inkerman Road, St. Albans ☎ 33810.

PUB NEWS

Bengeo— Although not recognised as real ale by CAMRA, air pressure Watney's Stag Bitter (the new name for Fined Bitter), is on sale at the Warren House.

Bishops Stortford— The Bakers Dozen has extended its range still further to include Adnam's mild and Westcrown Regal Ale. The Rose and Crown has reopened in the best way possible, by having Rayment's BBA on handpump.

Chipping— The Countryman has withdrawn Burton Ale at the expense of Courage Directors (which means the huge Burton Ale advert will have to be removed!).

Colliers End— The Lamb and Flag (McMullens) is now under the new management of George and Elaine Prime, who have moved across from Romford.

Flaunden— Arkell's BBB has replaced Ruddle's Bitter at the Bricklayers Arms.

Hatfield— Better late than never — the Horse & Groom has had Courage Directors on handpump for a couple of months now.

Hertford— Handpumped Ind Coope Burton Ale is now on sale at the Royal Oak, while the brewery's Bitter is now on handpump in the Reindeer. Although there is no change to the ales on sale at the White Horse, there is a change in the telephone number — to readers of the Herts Beer Guide, it no longer exists!

Hitchin— The Cock now serves Greene King IPA and Abbot Ale on handpump. Ickleford — The excellent Wethered's Special is now available at the Plume of Feathers.

Knebworth— Sold by Ind Coope, now a free-house, the Lytton Arms now has Young's Bitter and Special on handpump with more beers to follow.

Sandon— Apologies to the Chequers, which was temporarily in Standon during July.

Sandridge— The Green Man has Ind Coope Bitter on handpump.

St. Albans— Although press advertising gave indications of a dozen real ales to now be on sale at the Adelaide Wine Bar, only a maximum of three at any one time have materialised, one of which being Greene King IPA at 45p a pint. The permanent range of handpumped beers at the Goat Inn is now Everard's Old Original and Tiger, Young's Bitter, Adnam's Bitter and, great news, Greene King XX (34p a pint). The Verulam Arms is now under the keen new management of CAMRA members Mike and Liz Sweet. Ind Coope Mild and Bitter are currently available on handpump, with Burton to follow shortly.

Watford— Renovation of the Stag by Courage has included the installation of handpumps for both their Directors and Best Bitters. As predicted last month, the Ind Coope KK situation has forced a pub to drop the beer — the one this month being the Victoria Tavern in Queens Road.

Welwyn Garden City— Amazingly a deletion this month, with the Hollybush losing its pumps for Draught Bass.

Whitwell— The Maidens Head now has McMullens AK alongside Country on handpump. Let's hope other 'real Country only' Mac's pubs follow suit.

BRANCH CONTACTS

Hertfordshire North Branch

Peter Lerner ☎ Watton-at-Stone 616

Hertfordshire South Branch

Dave Burns ☎ Welwyn 7805

Herts—Essex Borders Branch

John Hurrell ☎ 01-529 7495

WHAT'S ON

HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

August 5th Sunday

Inter-branch cricket vs North Beds at Verulamium Park, St. Albans, 2.30. Meet in Verulam Arms, Lwr. Dagnall St before closing time.

August 21st Tuesday

BRANCH MEETING at the Peahen Hotel, Chequer Street, St. Albans 8.00pm. (McMullen).

August 22nd Wednesday

Mixed pairs darts match vs Queens Head, Southdown Rd., Harpenden. 7.30pm (Ind Coope).

August 29th Wednesday

Joint campaigning social with Herts North at the White Horse, Kimpton, including games challenge. 8.00pm (McMullen).

September 16th Sunday

Hertfordshire CAMRA Treasure Hunt. Starting at closing time and finishing around opening time. (pm—pm not pm—am!) OS: 1:50000 Sheet 166 needed.

September 18th Tuesday

BRANCH MEETING at the Dimsdale Arms Fore St. Hertford. 8.00pm (McMullen).

HERTFORDSHIRE NORTH BRANCH

August 7th Tuesday

Social to celebrate the 5th anniversary of formation of Herts North. At the Crooked Billet, Symonds Green. 8.00pm (Greene King).

August 8th Wednesday

BRANCH MEETING at the Plough, Great Munden. 8.00pm (Rayment, Greene King)

August 15th Wednesday

Social and Darts Championship finals at the Sailor Boy, Walsworth, Hitchin. 8.00pm (Wethered).

August 18th Saturday

Brewery trip to Bourne Valley, Andover, Hants. Contact Steve Barber on Stevenage 3212 for further details.

August 29th Wednesday

Joint campaigning social with Herts South (see above).

September 12th Wednesday

BRANCH MEETING at the Old Bull, Royston. 8.00pm (Bass, Charrington, Courage).

HERTS/ESSEX BORDERS BRANCH

August 20th Monday

Social and darts at the Nags Head, Moreton. 8.00pm (Charrington).

September 9th Sunday

Brewery Trip to Hook Norton, Oxon. Contact John Hurrell on 01-529 7495 for further details.

MEMBERSHIP



Why not join CAMRA and keep some of Britain's heritage alive.

I wish to become a member of CAMRA Ltd. I agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign. I enclose £4.00 as my annual subscription. (£5.00 husband and wife)

Name Address

Date / /79. Signature

Send to CAMRA, 34, Alma Road, St. Albans, Herts.
Ask for details from The Membership Secretary.