

**FREE**



# The Campaign for Real Ale

## HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1980

NUMBER 26

### CHARACTER ASSASSINATION

**A friend of mine recently made the observation that there aren't as many 'characters' in life as there used to be. By that he was referring to the numerous eccentrics that make life that little bit more interesting. I would go further and say that life itself has less character than it used to.**

Everything around us is becoming more bland and uniform — catering for a non-existent universal taste. Sadly this often rubs off onto people themselves. In no place is this more easily seen than the British Pub. Keg beer is a perfect example of characterlessness. Unfortunately not only our beer is under threat (although this is not as much the case these days) but our pubs are as well. **It is a great shame that at this very moment two of the county's 'little gems', the Goose in Moor Green and the Chequers in Wood End, are facing closure — or worse.** They could be given 'the treatment'. In other words they may end up tarted-up into faceless, plastic, restaurant waiting-rooms as have so many other fine Hertfordshire pubs. Talk to the brewers and they talk about turnover and the fact that most people appear to visit pubs on the strength of their toilets rather than anything else. Landlords want to make their money and anyway "our customers like our freshly thawed fried monkfish and reconstituted chips." And who can argue with them as you pass their car park packed out with Porches and Ford Capris? Not me. I'll be drinking in the Gooses and Chequers of this country until there aren't any left. But we could fight and it needs all of us to join in. I see it as CAMRA's next big battle. **We've saved the beer, now let's save the pubs to drink it in or else become a lot of stop-at-home boozers like our continental cousins who haven't got our nice traditional pubs with lots of character. At least we have some left. Let's keep them!**

Your local CAMRA branches try to fight any planning applications by brewers and tenants which threaten the essential character of our county's pubs. They need your support and assistance. Please contact them through this newsletter if you're interested. Better still — join!

**Dave Burns Herts South Pub Preservation Officer**

### End of an era at The Red Lion Stevenage

An era ended on the evening of 21st January when George and Lil Newberry pulled their last pints of IPA before entering retirement.

For the best part of the last twenty years the couple had held the license of this old coaching inn and watched as the keg revolution passed them by. Lager and Guinness were bottled beers only in their house for even those ubiquitous beverages failed to appear in their kegged varieties. This was one of those rare pubs where all the beer on draught (in the widest sense) was cask conditioned and, of course, all the better for that.

Sadly, towards the end of George's and Lil's time at the Red Lion, the only cask beer available was IPA, draught Abbot having been phased out about five years ago and mild several years before that. But the consistent quality of the bitter made up for the restricted choice.

George and Lil were presented with gifts and good wishes from all the locals, including a small representation from CAMRA. They will be missed for the campaign in North Hertfordshire grew up around their pub, and it was only latterly, as George and Lil prepared for retirement, that the pub ceased to be the central meeting place it had been.

We in CAMRA extend our best wishes to George and Lil and hope their retirement is a long and happy one.

But this is far from the end of the story as far as the Red Lion is concerned.

The next day saw the arrival of the new tenants, Neil and Sue Grundy, accompanied by their young son, Leon.

For the last four years Neil and Sue ran the Blue Bell in Grantchester, Cambridgeshire, also a Greene King house. During their tenancy this pub was renowned for its hospitality and was acclaimed by the Cambridge Branch of CAMRA as their pub of the year in 1979.

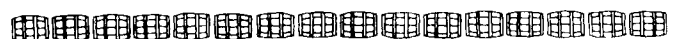
Already the range of beers at the Red Lion has increased with Abbot and KK light mild the new additions. Neil and Sue are also being "pressured"(!) by members of the social branch to have a go at selling XX dark mild (so watch out for this!).

Snacks are now available at lunchtime and it is the couple's intention to offer a full menu once they are fully settled in.

As far as the pub itself goes we understand no major structural alterations are envisaged but Greene King do plan to redecorate.

For some years many people locally have been apprehensive of what the brewery might do to the pub when George and Lil left. It would appear from the arrival of Neil and Sue that there is no cause for worry whatsoever. Indeed, the opposite is true and all good wishes for success in their new venture are extended to this vivacious couple. Better still, why not visit the Red Lion in the High Street and enjoy the excellent beer and friendly atmosphere for yourself?

**by Steve Done**



# SANTA FE SAM AND THE COUNTY CONNEXION

by Martyn Cornell

**Pull yerselves closer to the campfire, pardners, and put down them pints o' Wells Fargo. I'm agonna tel ya 'bout a Britisher brewery with a REAL Wild West hero in the family tree.....**

Heard of Santa Fe Sam Wethered, friend of Kit Carson, the Indian fighter, and one of the men who opened up the West in the days before the railroads came?

Well, Santa Fe Sam's ancestors came from Berkhamsted, in Hertfordshire, as did the brewing Wethereds of Marlow in Buckinghamshire. Francis Wethered, founder of the Marlow branch, left Berkhamsted for Buckinghamshire around 1630. His second cousin, also called Francis Wethered, stayed behind. But in 1719 Francis II's great grandson Samuel died after losing his fortune in the South Sea Bubble collapse, and the following year Samuel's widow Dolly emigrated with her family to Boston.

## Almost Foxed

One of Dolly's sons, another Samuel Wethered, kept a tavern in Boston called the Bunch of Grapes. His brother, Richard settled in Maryland, and it was his grandson Samuel Wethered, born just two days after the signing of the American Declaration of Independence, who fathered Santa Fe Sam in 1814.

Santa Fe Sam was a pioneer trader in the wild territory west of the Pecos River that later became the states of New Mexico and Arizona, and it was just as well that he befriended a man like Kit Carson. In 1851, for example, Carson rescued Sam from being robbed and murdered by a man called Fox and 30 armed desperadoes.

Years later, when Santa Fe Sam had retired back to Baltimore, on the East Coast, Kit Carson came to visit him along with a whole tribe of pet Red Indians — which must have created quite a stir.

## Mighty fine girl

Back in England the Berkhamsted Wethereds had died out in 1703. But in 1758, or thereabouts, the Marlow Wethereds, who already ran a malting business, began brewing in Marlow High Street. The present brewery was built by Thomas Wethered in the 1790s, and three generations of the family ran it as a partnership until 1899, when they formed a limited company.

Santa Fe Sam's daughter, Lilly, actually visited her Marlow cousins, as a young girl in the 1870s, making quite an impression by all accounts, and other members of the American branch have come over to Marlow more recently. But the family links with the brewery were severed in 1949, when the brewery was bought by Strong and Co of Romsey, in Hampshire.

Wethered's kept its separate identity under Strongs, however, together with the company's other brewery, Mews of the Isle of Wight — the family who once owned the Welwyn brewery, incidentally. But in 1969 Strongs became yet another victim of the voracious Whitbread crocodile. Mew's brewery was closed down, and the Strongs brewery became simply part of Whitbread Wessex.

Yet for some strange reason Wethereds emerged from this second takeover with its own identity still intact — the only brewery takeover by Whitbread to do so. And thanks to its traditional nature the Marlow brewery is now better known than it ever was.

## Go for your pumps

The real ale boom in the second half of the seventies came after Whitbread had closed down its original London brewery, and concentrated all its eggs in the Luton brewery, built in 1968, which could only brew keg, processed beers. The nearest Whitbread-owned brewery brewing real ale was Wethereds — and so handpumps serving Wethered bitter began appearing in pubs as far away as Norwich.

Hertfordshire has always had one Wethereds tiedhouse the Royal Oak at West Hyde, in the extreme south west of the county. But pumpclips for Thomas Wethereds bitter are now to be found in more than 30 Herts pubs.

The Wethered arms traditionally incorporated three flesh pots, large cooking vessels of the sort that missionaries were supposed to have been cooked in by cannibals. The fleshpot is still used today as a trademark, sporting a Whitbread tankard flash, and occasionally a brewmaster figure in place of a missionary! It's nice to think that Wethereds, far from being eaten alive like so many small breweries, are still cooking up their traditional brew.

## Cutting of the month.....

The Carlsberg brewery said that it had patented a new non-alcoholic beer which it plans to export to Saudi Arabia and other Muslem countries. Carlsberg say the drink called NAB, Non-Alcoholic Beer, is exported in powdered form and then mixed with soda water to produce a beer-like liquid. The drink looks and tastes so much like real beer that Carlsberg predicted drinkers would have trouble telling the difference between NAB and alcoholic beer.

The Guardian — 16/2/80

*"Not too keen on the "real beer" bit, but don't suppose I could tell the difference between NAB & Carlsberg either!" Ed.*

## Well, well, well

I have read your October 1979 (Number 21) Newsletter and think you might be interested in another ironic aspect to the end of Fordham Brewery when they were taken over by Whitbread. It was in 1796 when Fordhams first sought and leased land in Ashwell. The lease was bought from Samuel Whitbread, a brewer.

David Short  
Ashwell Field Studies Centre

## MEMBERSHIP

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 / / 80 Signature .....

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

# SIGNS OF THINGS TO COME IN HARLOW

I was having a glass of real ale (Abbot) at my local Greene King pub the other day and the Landlord gave me a copy of your CAMRA Hertfordshire Newsletter, which I may add I found very interesting.

In particular I note that you do not know why Pubs in Harlow New Town are named after Butterflies and Moths. I can inform you.

When the Ministry of Housing and Local Government set up the team to build Harlow New Town, I was appointed Chief Estates Surveyor forming part of the team with Sir Frederick Gibbard and others to design and build the new town.

Names are all important, whether it is naming a variety of beer, a street, housing state or a pub. In order to preserve the old field names the first thing we did was to name all the housing estates in the new town after the tithe areas on which they stood. We collected these names from the old tithe maps of the Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds and Waltham which are held by one of the colleges at Cambridge. The tithes formally belonged to the two Abbeys.

## Break with tradition

When we built the first shopping centre, The Stow (Anglo Saxon for Market Place) we had to provide the first Pub which was allocated to Mann Crossman and Pauline.

The Pub clearly had to have a name, and the Officers and Board of the New Town Corporation thought that it was time to break with tradition and have something new for a New Town. We thought that "The Queens Head", "The Crown" etc., was a little unimaginative.

The idea of the moths and butterflies, was to use the name to form a "pun" on the Inn sign. The insect painted on one side and its pun on the other. Now there is an insect called "The Essex Skipper", which is pretty rare, it is only found on the coast and curiously enough up the River Stort between Stanstead Abbots and Bishop's Stortford, and it was thought appropriate that the first named pub should be the "Essex Skipper". I was given the task of selling the idea to Sir John Mann. At first he was a little sceptical, but then entered into the idea with enthusiasm. My father being a barge owner and lighterman, so I suggested that the appropriate Skipper (Essex Skipper) should be a bearded old salt at the helm of his barge sailing up the Essex Coast. Mann Crossman and Pauline sent their sign writer to the Natural History Museum to copy the butterfly and you will see it one side of the sign and the artist's own version of an Essex Bargee Skipper on the other.

Other names came naturally, such as, the Painted Lady, with the Painted lady Butterfly on one side and Nell Gwyn on the other side. The White Admiral with the White Admiral Butterfly on one side and Earl Howe, who was known as the White Admiral on the other, and so on,

There were obvious pitfalls, for example it would be unwise to have the Non Conformist as a moth, but I really think the name of Archer's Dart is a splendid name for a Pub, Darts being particularly associated with pubs. Archer's Dart is a pretty little moth and I am sure the Greene King's sign writer will have a lot of fun with the pun.

There is, curiously enough, a sequel to this pub naming business in that at Pye Corner — Gilston, on the A414 just on the outskirts of Harlow, McMullens had a pub called the Railway Inn. Railway pubs in general do not have a very high reputation and when McMullens decided to refurbish it they changed its name to the Dusty Miller, a pub on the name of the salmon fly, Dusty Miller, and a Dusty Miller in his smock as the pun on the Salmon Fly.

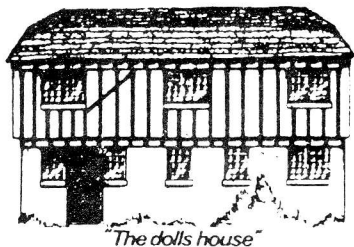
I shall certainly go and have a look at Greene King's sign when they have got it up, and I might add, have a glass of Abbot.

Richard Relf FRICS  
Chief Estates Surveyor  
Harlow New Town

## Bishops Stortford Crawl

The Herts/Essex Borders branch of CAMRA organised a Saturday lunchtime crawl in Bishops Stortford during January. A small number of hardy drinkers turned out in the freezing conditions and met in the Three Tuns in London Road — a comfortable pub with excellent Greene King Abbot and Rayments BBA on handpump for those who wanted some. The next stop was just down the road at the Tanners Arms. Here, pints of McMullens AK and Country were consumed with relish together with freshly-made sandwiches. This house was an unspoilt pub at the time of our crawl but Mac's are due to 'improve' it shortly.... however we are assured that the beer will remain real. Our next stop was one of our newer real ale pubs — not in the 1979 Herts Guide — the Jolly Brewers. The pub has a good public bar, comfortable lounge and fine Ind Coope Bitter and Burton Ale on handpump. We received a warm welcome and comment was passed that it was good to see CAMRA pub crawlers drinking pints. Rolls were purchased here to soak up the liquid and then off once again to the Rose & Crown for some more Rayments. Our final stop was the Railway Hotel for more Ind Coope beer and a chat with the friendly governor, who is trying to get rid of his dreaded DD — no public demand. This may sound quite a short crawl, but pints were consumed at each stop — and at some pubs, more than one! If we had stuck to a single jar in each, we would have had time for a visit to around three extra pubs. There are over a dozen real ale outlets (and almost that many brews) in Bishops Stortford, so why not plan your own crawl!

John Hurrell



The dolls house

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# AROUND THE PUBS

## A focus on the eastern portion of the county

It's crazy! We start with a pub that's stopped selling real ale. The 'well-known' crazy pub now unfortunately only sells bottled beer, due to the fact that the pub only opens on Saturdays, and has a 'restricted clientele'. For those of you who do not know the crazy pub, it is the **Turkey Cock** in **Hunsden** — a Rayments house.

Suppose we'd better get the rest of the bad news out of the way as deletions lead the way this month. The **Black Lion** in **Epping** no longer sells Ind Coope Burton Ale, the **Crown, Garden Tiger** and **Phoenix** — all in **Harlow** are no longer real, and the **Three Horseshoes** in **Spellbrook** is another casualty. Some good news for Harlow drinkers is that the **Shark** now has real McMullen Country Bitter on handpump, and the town's newest pub the **Archers Dart** (read how it got its name on page three) is well and truly open now and selling real Greene King beers.

Two new real Ind Coope houses are the **Crown** in **Bishops Stortford**, which now has Bitter on handpump, and the **Queens Head** in **Sawbridgeworth**. Perhaps a rarer real ale for the area is Wethered's Bitter, which is now available at the **Plough** in **Waltham Cross**.

Moving westwards across the county, next stop is the **Chaise & Pair** at **Barkway**, where Everards Old Original is back on handpump, but watch out for further changes in the strong beers available in this free house. Back to Wethered's again, this time to a fine thatched inn near the borders of Bedfordshire, the **Raven** at **Hexton**. The pub has Marlow Bitter on handpump. Still more Wethered's to come! The **Robin Hood** in Victoria Street, **St Albans** (opposite the Indian) is another real Whitbread pub (are there any left that aren't in St Albans now?). Although looking pleasant from the outside with its 'tudor style' decor, the Robin Hood suffers badly from the plastic disease inside. Still, the beers under 50p a pint, and the governors a friendly chap. Staying in St Albans for a minute, the **Crown Hotel** has swapped its Sam Smiths for Mac's Country.

Finally congratulations to the **Three Horseshoes** at **Flamstead** for winning the Hertfordshire section of the 'Warmest Welcome' nationwide competition. The pub now goes through to represent the county in the finals of a competition, last held in 1977, that is searching for the pub that provides the best cosy atmosphere on those cold winter evenings. For those of you who do not know the Three Horseshoes, it is situated in a village in the west of the county, and is one of the few Watney houses that serves the beer on actual handpumps, and not those daft air pressure imitations that the company now appears to be getting away from. **Why not see if the pub gives you a warm welcome by coming along to the Herts South social there on Monday 24th March?**

## 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.

**P.S. Don't forget copy deadline 20th of preceding month.**

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## WHAT'S ON

### HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

#### Tuesday March 4th

Darts match and social at the Baron of Beef, Welwyn, 8.00pm (McMullen)

Please note there was a typesetting error in the February newsletter; the day is definitely **TUESDAY**

#### Sunday March 9th

Football match against the White Lion, St Albans. Kick-off 10.30am., meet in the museum car park, Verluamium, St Albans, at 10.15am. Social at pub after, (Ind Cope)

#### Tuesday March 18th

BRANCH MEETING at the Dimsdale Arms, Fore Street, Hertford, 8.00pm (McMullen)

#### Monday March 24th

Mixed pairs darts match and social at the Three Blackbirds, Flamstead, 8.00pm. (Watney)

#### Saturday March 29th

Day trip to Cambridge. Likely to start around 9.30am. and cost about £3. Contact Tony King for more details. (01 952 6080)

#### Tuesday April 1st

Snowball fight v Enfield and Barnet Branch outside Builders Arms, New Barnet at 8.00pm. Social after at the Railway Bell.

#### Tuesday April 22nd

BRANCH MEETING at the Garibaldi, Albert St., St. Albans 8.00pm. (Ind Coope)

### HERTFORDSHIRE NORTH BRANCH

#### Monday March 3rd

Pub Of The Year Presentation and social at the Plough, Ley Green. 8.00pm. (Greene King)

#### Thursday March 6th

Social at the Cricketers, Ickleford. 8.00pm. (Adnams, Paines, Everards, Wethereds)

#### Wednesday March 12th

BRANCH MEETING at the Sun, Hitchin, 8.00pm. (Charrington) Guest Speaker Roger Protz.

#### Monday March 17th

Joint social with North Beds at the Thornton Arms, Everton, Beds. 8.00pm. Watch the Branch handpump in operation!

#### Monday March 18th

Social at the White Horse, Weston. 8.00pm. (Greene King)

#### Wednesday March 26th

KK Campaigning Social at the Cock, Stocking Pelham. 8.00pm. (Ind Coope)

#### Wednesday April 9th

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

### HERTS/ESSEX BORDERS BRANCH

#### Saturday 8th March

Ramble in the Hadhams area. Start at Widford — meet at the church at 10.00am. Walk to cover around 10 miles. Good walking boots required.

#### Monday 17th March

Social and darts at the Jolly Brewers, Bishops Stortford. 8.00pm (Ind Coope)

#### Monday 24th March

BRANCH MEETING at the Bell, Ongar. 8.00pm (Bass)

#### Wednesday 2nd April (Provisional date)

Visit to Courage Brewery, Southwark. Names to Branch Contact asap.

#### Wednesday 21st May

Visit to Bass Brewery & Museum. £5 deposit to Branch Contact asap.

## CONTACTS

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