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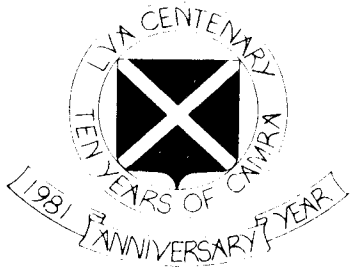


The Campaign for Real Ale HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

JULY 1981

CIRCULATION 4500

NUMBER 41



Happy Birthdays!

Don't miss the Anniversary Year '81 celebrations taking place in and around St Albans between Sunday 5th July and Saturday 11th.

This week of charity fund raising is being organised to celebrate two anniversaries; CAMRA's tenth birthday and the centenary of St Albans Licensed Victuallers'

Association. Money raised will be going to the International Year of the Disabled, Asthma Research and the LVA Homes.

The week kicks off, literally, with a charity football match on the Sunday afternoon starting at 2pm at Westminster Lodge with Dennis Waterman's XI versus St Albans City F.C. There'll be a Tug-of-War competition also, and entries are welcome. There will be things for the kids too. During the week there will be fancy dress evenings, a disco, a three-legged pub crawl and much more, ending with a ticket-only beer festival on the Saturday.

For details of all the events, copies of the programme or entry to the Tug-of-War and Three-legged race, tickets plus the pub passport scheme contact CAMRA HQ or Eric Sim (see Branch Contacts). Copies of the programme will also be on sale in pubs, the tourist office in Chequer Street, and also at the CAMRA market stall on Saturday 4th.

It is hoped that the first beer, Victoria Bitter, from the county's new brewery in Ware, will be making its debut at the Saturday beer festival.

QUICK ONES

Hertford survey

A SURVEY of all the pubs in Hertford was carried out by Hertfordshire South Branch on May 12th, following on from a similar survey of St Albans earlier in the year. The numbers of real to top pressure pubs is as follows:

McMullens	7 real	8 top-pressure
Ind Coope	2 real	2 top-pressure
Benskins	6 real	0 top-pressure
Whitbread*	0 real	1 top-pressure
Greene King	2 real	0 top-pressure
Free Houses	4 real	0 top-pressure

**Since the survey this pub has since become real*

Considering the number of pubs they have, and that Ind Coope and Benskins are both part of the same group, Macs' performance is by far the worst. Only 4 out of their pubs offer AK on handpump.

A SURVEY OF PUB PRICES was also made. As would be hoped for Macs' beers proved the cheapest, averaging 47 pence for AK and 51 pence for Country. Other beers averaged:

Ind Coope KK mild - 51p, bitter - 54p, Burton Ale - 65p.
Greene King XX mild - 50p, IPA - 53p, Abbot Ale - 62p.
Bass - 56p.

Young's bitter - 56p.

OF THE PROCESSED BEERS, if your preference is such, then you'll need to dig a little deeper with DD and Long Life averaging 61p and Guinness 67p per pint - someone has to pay for all that promotion and advertising!

Good value pubs include the Great Eastern Railway where AK is 46p and Country 50p. The White Lion is lowest for Benskins at 51p and the Old Barge for Burton Ale at 62p. The Reindeer's Ind Coope bitter was 50p a pint, while the White Horse was serving Abbot Ale, straight from the cask at 59 pence.

Readers should note that recent price increases may have slightly altered the above information.

Morris On

Fans of Morris Dancing may like to know that St Albans Morris will be dancing at the Tin Pot, Gustardwood and the Brocket Arms, Ayot St Lawrence on the 6th July; the Green Man, Mill Green and the Wrestlers, Hatfield on the 20th July; the Abbot John, Wheathampstead and the Elephant and Castle, Amwell on the 27th July and the Bull, Watton-at-Stone and the Woodman, Chapmore End on 3rd August. Times are 8.15 and 9.15 for the two venues respectively. August dates will be given in the next newsletter.

Plenty of bottle

Beer bottles galore will be on sale in Knebworth Park this month - though few will still contain any beer.

The park, and the stately home of Knebworth House, is the host to the Knebworth Bottle Collectors Weekend on Saturday and Sunday July 18 and 19, from 11am to 6pm. As well as bottles of all sorts, there will be breweriana and other antiques on sale at more than 130 stalls, entry, which covers entry to Knebworth House itself, is £1.20, parking is virtually limitless - and there is a real ale freehouse, the Lytton Arms, nearby.

APOLOGIES to Denis Robertson and to those who read his article on Stevenage in last month's newsletter. The last bit appears to have fallen off the page somewhere along the line. It should have read:

Finally, the **Two Diamonds** where both draught beers (Macs) are served as they should be in a gem of a local. The other evening I stood at the bar listening to customers discussing whippet racing, Geoff Boycott, parsnips, and Clement Atlee - far more entertaining than Parkinson!

So now you know what you missed.

The early days of CAMRA's Hertfordshire Branch

Over the years I have read many articles written by founder members of their memories of the early days of the Campaign and I know I am not the first to consider the birth of the Hertfordshire Branch – as it then was. Although I cannot claim to be a founder member of CAMRA itself, when I joined in 1972 I was amongst the first 100. During the summer of 1972 various isolated pockets of real ale drinkers in the south Hertfordshire area were brought together by the Campaign, and in particular by the efforts of Graham Lees and John Green. This started off with informal meetings in the Fox and Hounds, Croxley Green, which was a Greene King top pressure house, and, for that matter, still is, now being the only one of seven pubs in Croxley not selling real ale. As these meetings grew in numbers protests at the quality of the ale led to a more suitable venue being chosen, this being the, now legendary, Farriers Arms in St Albans.

... the first formal meeting was held in the saloon bar of the Farriers Arms ...

It was decided that we should form the first branch of CAMRA, and the first formal meeting was held in the saloon bar of the Farriers Arms in November 1972. I volunteered to form part of the founding committee and became Branch Treasurer, a position I held until I retired at the A.G.M. in December 1976.

The second meeting was held at the Builders Arms in Barnet where several new members joined, including someone many readers will know, Steve Bury.

Following that, meetings were held on a regular monthly basis at the Farriers until the time came when support for the Branch was so great it was becoming impossible to cram everyone into the small saloon bar, and people were spilling over into the public. The Committee felt that this would not do, particularly as regulars had started staying away from the pub on Monday evenings in case there was a meeting. So the Branch moved elsewhere and now meetings are held throughout the Branch area.

During my time on the Committee branches were starting up all over the country and the formation of neighbouring branches in Mid-Chilterns, North Herts and Enfield and Barnet had the effect of reducing support at the meetings and caused the change of name to Hertfordshire South Branch.

As a young branch we were totally inexperienced as to how to behave as the responsible consumer organisation that the Campaign and its branches have become, and we were not always well received by brewers and landlords. (*Sounds little different to now! – Ed.*)

Most of the breweries had given us the beer free ...

The major Branch event during my Committee days was undoubtedly the Beer Festival held in the Market Hall, St Albans, in March 1974. This was the first time any branch had undertaken an event of this nature and the organisation was a nightmare. I was a member of the sub-committee running the festival and spent most of the week before travelling around the country collecting beer that breweries had agreed to let us have, but would not deliver. As we were not sure whether we would need a licence for the Festival we asked the local police, who said we didn't as we were going to give the beer away. Most of the breweries had given us the beer free and so we would give it away and charge 50p to cover food and the hall charges. However on the eve of the event the police informed us that a licence would be needed and so a special sitting of St Albans Magistrates was arranged by them for 5pm on the Friday. Bill Quincy of the Crown and Sceptre at Briden's Camp applied for the licence on our behalf and we paid for a taxi for him to make the round trip – a small price to pay to save the Festival!

On this basis we were able to charge for the beer and so we sold it for an unbelievable 2p a half. I still feel that at that stage of the Campaign it was a major achievement to get 14 or so different beers together under one roof for a Festival. My only disappointment was that admission had to be by ticket only and that all the tickets were sold well in advance, many to CAMRA members. We were preaching to the converted and were unable to let many of the locals in to see what the Campaign was about. This was due to the restrictions placed on numbers allowed in the hall by the local council.

... I once drove 100 miles in one night just to check three pubs ...

In addition, a lot of work was necessary in order to prepare the first Hertfordshire Guide for publication. As joint editor of this I once drove over

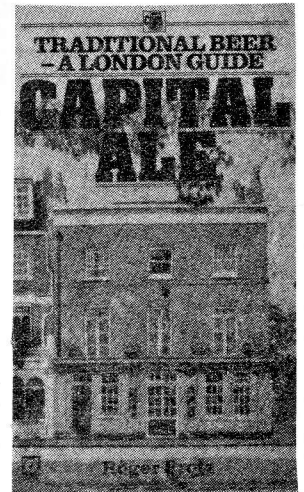
Continued in next column

Capital Ale by Roger Protz, 192pp
£1.95. Published by Arrow Books.

Roger Protz's latest offering to pub goers is a guide to 200 or so London pubs serving real ale. Roger, Editor of CAMRA's Good BeerGuide, has come up with a neat little gazetteer of what he considers to be the best, or at least most interesting, of the Capital's public houses. These are all categorised not only under the various areas of the City but also as Riverside Pubs, Station Bars, Historic Pubs and so on. Under each is a brief description mentioning any interesting features that the pub may have, plus an indication of opening hours and facilities offered. The nearest underground or BR station is also given, and some nice illustrations complete the guide.

The introduction points this book fairly and squarely at the tourist – the foreigner in particular. It details everything from British Drinking Habits to CAMRA. Nonetheless, it will prove a useful publication for anyone who drinks in London and would like to be directed to some interested and varied hosteleries. As Roger says, though, not all the pubs will be to everyone's taste – that can be said of any guide – but he welcomes suggestions for future editions.

My only complaint is the cover price which I consider to be rather steep, even by today's prices. A similar publication produced by the local branches could have substantially undercut the price. Nevertheless Capital Ale is recommended to anyone interested in London and its pubs. Copies can be obtained by CAMRA members from CAMRA HQ at the special price of £1.75 including postage and packing.

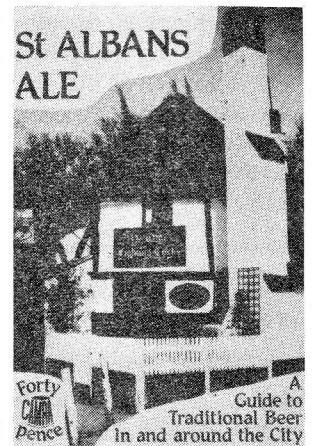


St Albans Ale devised and produced by Nick Page, price 40 pence. Published by CAMRA Hertfordshire South Branch.

Subtitled "A Guide to Traditional Beer In and around the City", this fold-open map is just that; a comprehensive guide to everyone of St Albans' 45 real ale pubs. Each entry has a small paragraph about the pub giving the beers, interesting facts and details of food and pub games. On the map itself each pub is identified by its photograph. The introduction, by the ubiquitous Roger Protz, a local brewing history by our own Martyn Cornell, facts about the beers, brewers, real ale and CAMRA complete this informative and well produced little guide to one of the country's best and most pleasant drinking cities.

Again this guide is aimed at the visitor to the City but it should prove interesting to local imbibers as well and perhaps induce them to try a few different ale houses.

Copies of St Albans Ale are available from local pubs, CAMRA headquarters in Alma Road and the tourist information office in Chequer Street. Its publication has been timed to coincide with the anniversary celebrations (in fact a portion of the cover price will be going to Anniversary Year '81 charity funds) and so should prove invaluable for locating the various venues for the week's events.



Ten years On

100 miles in one night just to check three pubs in North Hertfordshire that we had been told might be selling real ale – fortunately all of them did! The stories one could tell of early campaigns and drinking sessions are never ending and I know that my recollections of the early days of the Branch may not be quite the same as some other people's, as different events stand out in one's mind as being the most significant. The above, however, are just a few highly personal memories of a Campaign which has had a considerable effect on the course of my life.

HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH is organising a reunion for all those original members, many of whom have dropped out of the "front line" of CAMRA over the years. It's planned to take place at the Farriers Arms (where else?) on Tuesday, July 7th, starting 7pm. Contact Steve Bury on Radlett 3106 for details.

Picking Flowers Again

Twenty years ago there were less than a dozen Whitbread pubs in the whole of Hertfordshire. The two big names locally were Benskins of Watford, and Flowers of Luton and Stratford on Avon.

But Benskins had been taken over by Ind Coope in 1956, who were gradually replacing the Watford company's name with their own on pub fronts. Then in 1962 Flowers were bought by Whitbread, who rapidly planted their own name on the Luton firm's 200 Hertfordshire pubs.

Now, however, the Benskins name has returned to the scene – and a beer called Flower's Original is also on sale in bars in the county. There are reports that the Luton operation could change its name back to Flowers – and maybe even the much older name of Greens, which disappeared back in 1954.

Flower's roots lie in Hertfordshire, for Edward Fordham Flower, founder of the Stratford brewery, was born in 1805 at Marden Hill, near Tewin. His father, Richard, was a farmer and banker, though he too had run a brewery, down what is now Brewery Lane in Hertford.

But the company's local predominance owes much more to another man, John William Green of Luton. Green, who was educated at Hertford, was born in 1847, and in 1865, aged 18, he was apprenticed to the small Phoenix brewery of H and F Pearman in Park Street, Luton.

Four years later, aged only 22, Green bought the brewery from the Pearmans, who had founded it in 1857. From then on he never looked back. He lured away the master brewer of his chief rival in Luton, Thomas Sworder, and in 1897 he bought out Sworder and his 58 pubs for £139,000 – although his own business at the time, with 40-odd pubs, was worth only £85,000.

For the next 15 years Green concentrated on totally rebuilding the Phoenix brewery, so that when beer taxes after the First World War rose to more than ten times their pre-war level, and small breweries began folding everywhere, Green was in a position to take advantage.

In 1919 he bought Glovers, the Harpenden wing of the Hatfield and Harpenden Breweries Ltd, together with some 25 pubs (The Hatfield side, Pryor Reid, was bought by Benskins).

A year later Green's took over W and S Lucas Ltd of Sun Street, Hitchin, an old-established Quaker brewery with 52 pubs. The Lucas brewery was run as an independent concern for some time, but in 1923 it was closed and its pubs incorporated into the Luton tied house estate.

Morris of Ampthill, with 72 pubs, were bought in 1926, bringing Green's up to the 250-pub mark. Six years later, in 1932, J.W. Green died, mourned by the whole of Luton. But the expansion continued, – in 1936 Adey and White of Chequer Street, St Albans were taken over, adding another 56 pubs.

The Second World War brought a halt to the take-overs, though there is evidence that Greens were making overtures even then to some of the local brewers. But in 1948 the Luton company started a four-year spate that was to make them one of the biggest brewery concerns in the country.

First to go were E.H. Kelsey of Tunbridge Wells, Kent, with 84 pubs. Then came J and J.E. Phillips of Royston in 1949, with 149 tied houses. A brewery in Sussex and two in Lincolnshire, plus 363 more outlets, followed, and in September 1952 Green's came closer to home with the takeover of E.K. and H. Fordham of Ashwell, with 95 pubs. Finally just before Christmas 1952 Green's bought a brewery in Sunderland.

Green's now controlled 1,100 pubs. But the company's managing director, Bernard Dixon, was determined that his firm should be nationally known. He was trying hard to push Green's premium bottled beer, Brewmaster, but the Green's name just did not seem to have that ring about it.

The answer came in 1954 – a merger with Flower's of Stratford on Avon. Flowers was much smaller, with just 350 pubs, but it was a much better-known name. A new company was set up to run the two breweries together, and although the Luton men took two-thirds of the seats on the board, it was known as Flowers Breweries Ltd, and all the 1,450 pubs carried the Flowers name.

The following year the company introduced Flowers Keg, not the first beer to be put into a pressurised "aerosol" cask, but the first to bear the "keg" name, a name which stuck to all the nasty imitators which followed.

But no more takeovers took place after 1954, and Bernard Dixon left the company's board to be replaced by Edward Fordham's descendant, Sir Fordham Flower – a relation by marriage of the Ashwell Fordhams. In 1958 Flowers had gone under the infamous Whitbread "umbrellas", and Colonel Whitbread had joined the Flowers board, and in 1962 Sir Fordham asked Whitbreads to make a formal takeover bid.

The old Luton brewery closed in 1969, when the massive new keg-only Whitbread brewery opened in Oakley Road, Luton, near the M1. Since it opened it has suffered at least two industrial disputes every year – something which never happened at Park Street West – and traditional beer currently has to be shipped in from Buckinghamshire to supply thirsty real ale drinkers in local Whitbread pubs. Even the Flower's

Original, an old name revived, is now brewed in Cheltenham, for the Stratford brewery was pulled down in the 1960s.

But the old Park Street West brewery site is now the headquarters of Whitbread London – and there are signs that the traditions of the area are infiltrating up into the minds of the men in charge in Luton. Here's to that!



Copies of Real Draught Beer in Hertfordshire are still available from your local CAMRA branch (see Branch Contacts below), CAMRA HQ and bookshops. Price 60 pence. Please enclose a large stamped addressed envelope (20p stamp) if ordering by post.

BRANCH CONTACTS

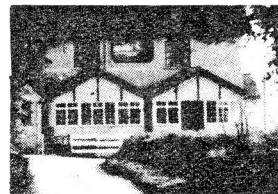
Hertfordshire North Branch Martyn Cornell ☎ Stevenage 60675

Hertfordshire South Branch Eric Sim ☎ Hatfield 60647

Herts-Essex Borders Branch Terry Smith ☎ Epping 73677

THE BARLEY MOW

VARIETY IS
THE SPICE
OF LIFE



TRY OUR
14 REAL
ALES

TYTTENHANGER GREEN

In addition to our normal range there will always be a cask on the bar from our range of guest beers which could be one of the following: Eldridge Pope, Bourne Valley, Donnington, Arkell, Archers, St Austell or Brakspear's 6X.

ANNIVERSARY YEAR '81 CELEBRATIONS

COME AND SEE

THE ALAMO COUNTRY & WESTERN BAND AND MORRIS DANCING ON THURSDAY 9th JULY

¼ of the evening's takings will go to the
Anniversary Charities

All expenses of the Band and Morris Dancers paid by the pub

BARBECUES EVERY EVENING
(weather permitting)

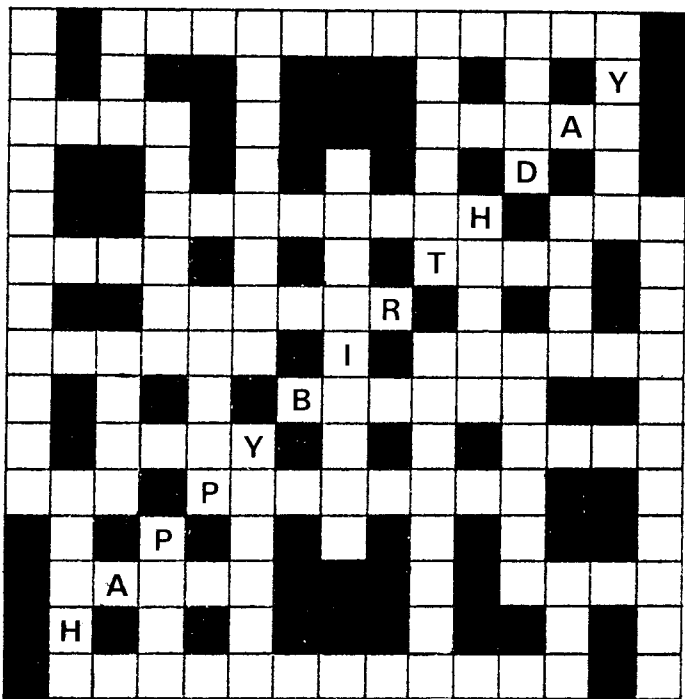
Come and cook for yourself:
Steak 75p, Sausage 12p, Hamburger 20p,
Rolls 12p, Butter 4p, Sauces 6p, Mustard 2p.
Salt and pepper free!

8.30-10.30 (Mon-Fri eves); 12.-2.30 and 8-11 (Sat)

Our aim is to sell the best beer in the county – if ever you are dissatisfied with it we will change it without question.

COMPETITION

Winner of last month's competition was Robert Martell of Berkhamsted. The answer was Mary (oldest), Kathy, John, Charles (youngest). This month's Anniversary prize crossword is a little different from usual, the prize being copies of Capital Ale and St Albans Ale – plus a little surprise extra – to the first correct entry drawn. There are no numbers to the clues and they are listed in no particular order – you have to decide where they go. To start you on your way I have filled in the diagonal with a message to CAMRA in its anniversary year.



ACROSS

- Sounds like a bird going round (4)
- After Leyland there's no use for item of clothing (6)
- Remain and support (4)
- Remains of a burnt tree? (3)
- An elephant without love renders one speechless! (4)
- Behind in a payment (6)
- Still he toils about, the farmer does (5,3,4)
- These flags sound like an act of repentance (8)
- There's nothing like one, Edna (4)
- Pointless (6)
- Gets hit on the head a lot (4)
- Game, or an insect wedding? (7,5)
- Central topics (6)
- This brewer is shive end about (8)
- The profits are in gainsaying him (5)
- Fear (5)
- Animal home is only partly nasty (3)
- Close in, none are (4)

DOWN

- Little Desmond is humble with Tom around (6)
- Organic matter (5)
- I'll say that again: Put his hat back on (5)
- Taut (6)
- Top and bottom describes two of them (5)
- Opposing relative, we hear (4)
- Blamed about the row (6)
- Blast them in the steel works (8)
- Sounds like everything you need to make holes (3)
- Not relaxed after a few drinks? (5)
- Many houses are (4)
- Amazingly, DD and Boots gin, mixed, makes a great brew (11)
- Is their brewery difficult to find? (5)
- Are there beers never taken away? (4,7)
- About yeast starters – they're a doddle (4)
- This is sometimes difficult to swallow (4)
- Involves (7)
- Although only two thirds of CAMRA, it has its followers (3)
- Corpses, the rotter suggests (8)

BRANCH DIARY

HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

Sunday July 5th to Saturday July 11th
Anniversary '81 celebrations – see page 1
Sunday July 19th

Cricket match – meet in the Farriers Arms, Lower Dagnall St, St Albans at lunchtime or Verulamium Park 2.30.

Thursday July 23rd

BRANCH MEETING at the Pre Hotel, St Albans. The Hotel is on the Redbourn Road (the old A5) just north of the City. 8.00pm start. (Free House)

Sunday July 26th

Car Treasure Hunt starting at 2.00pm. Contact Bob Norrish on St Albans 65928 for details.

Sunday July 26th

Barbecue at Crooked Billet, Colney Heath after treasure hunt. 7.30pm. (Free House)

Tuesday July 28th

Bar Billiards match versus Mid Chilterns Branch at the Sportsman, Croxley Green. 8.00pm. (Benskins)

Sunday August 2nd

Cricket match – details as above.

HERTFORDSHIRE NORTH BRANCH

Wednesday July 1st

BRANCH MEETING at the Roebuck, Stevenage. 8.00pm. (Free House)

Wednesday July 8th

Good Beer Guide survey meeting at the Plume of Feathers, Ickleford. Branch members only. 8.00pm.

Wednesday August 5th

BRANCH MEETING at the Marquis of Lorne, Stevenage Old Town. 8.00pm start. (Greene King)

HERTS-ESSEX BORDERS BRANCH

Monday July 20th

BRANCH MEETING to discuss entries for the 1982 Good Beer Guide at the Bell Motel (THF Post House) at Bell Common, Epping in the upstairs room. 8.00pm start. (Youngs beer available)

Monday August 17th

BRANCH MEETING at the Axe and Compasses, Aythorpe Roding. 8.00pm. (Ind Coope)

PUB NEWS

The **Green Man**, Old Harlow, a Courage owned Anchor Hotel, has been closed for a month for complete renovation and has reopened recently still selling real Courage Best and Director's Bitters. The Best is still only 55 pence a pint. The **Fox and Duck** in Therfield has recently added another beer to its Adnams and Benskins bitters; Tolly Cobbold mild. Benskins bitter recently ousted KK mild but it's nice to see another mild, and an unusual one at that, returning.

In Stevenage the **CAMRA Investments' Off Licence**, the opening of which was opposed by some local publicans, has finally established itself after winning an appeal in St Albans Crown Court. The shop, which is in Albert Street should have a selection for take-home from the following: Greene King IPA and Abbot, Adnams bitter, Batemans bitter, Everards Old Original, Marstons Pedigree, Sam Smiths and Farmhouse cider. Containers are available if you don't have your own. You can also order barrels of Jennings, McMullens, Paines and Charles Wells beers.

More goods news on the McMullens front is that the new landlord of the **Steamer** in Welwyn has installed a handpump to sell AK mild. If Greene King would only get a few ideas in that direction regarding the Wellington then that little village could become quite a good mini pub-crawl with McMullens, Wethereds, Benskins and Ind Coope already available on handpumps in some very pleasant pubs. Just up the road in the excellent **Waggoners**, Ayot Green, I was informed of a mistake in the Herts Guide. The pub does not, in fact, overlook the A1(M). Well it does if you stand on someone's shoulders and peer over the back garden fence . . . Incidentally, there is another mistake in that the name is also spelled incorrectly.

Another of the few fizz-only villages left in Hertfordshire, Kimpton, has fallen to real ale. The **Boot**, one of the two pubs in the village, is selling handpumped Ind Coope bitter.

The Hertfordshire Newsletter is produced by the Hertfordshire South, Hertfordshire North and Herts-Essex Borders Branches of the Campaign for Real Ale Limited. The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of CAMRA or its branches. The Editor gratefully receives articles or letters for publication. These should preferably be typewritten and double spaced, handwritten items as legible as possible please. Send to D. Burns, 11 Turpins Chase, Oaklands, Welwyn, Herts.

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