

THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

THE HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

FREE



JUNE 1984

CIRCULATION 5000

NUMBER 73

ALL'S WELL AT ASHWELL

The good news that Greene King IPA is now available on handpump at the **Rose and Crown** at Ashwell, means that all four of this pretty village's pubs now serve real ale. The first return to the fold, a few years ago, was the **Bushel and Strike**, close to the church, a Charles Wells house well known for its good food and serving handpumped Eagle Bitter and Bombardier. Next came the **Three Tuns Hotel**, serving Greene King KK, IPA and Abbot on handpump, and the **Engine**, the locals' local, where Flowers Original is on sale. Ashwell has more than its share of historic buildings, and has a proud history of brewing as well (its last brewery, Fordham's, disappeared only in the 1950s). The village, and its four pubs, are well worth visiting.

Local MP supports flexible licensing hours

CAMRA representatives are shortly to make contact with Tim Wood, the Member of Parliament for Stevenage, who has recently declared himself in favour of flexible licensing hours. Hitchin MP Ian Stewart is also reported to have "an open mind" on the matter. In CAMRA's view, any attempt to improve upon the present outdated and antiquated licensing laws, dating from the First World War, will be in the interests of pub-goers, landlords and brewers alike, and should be supported. In the words of another MP, Greg Knight of Derby North, "Our archaic licensing laws should be brought up to date to bring them more into line with the rest of Europe." And so say all of us.

BROCKET ARMS

Ayot St Lawrence

*Drink in the rural atmosphere of
George Bernard Shaw's haunt*

A well-sampled real ale pub
with beers from

**Everard • Greene King
Marston • Wadworth**
plus guest beers

Meals available seven days a week

Enquiries welcome ☎ Stevenage 820250

BLACK DAY FOR THE EAGLE

A small back-street boozier in Baldock, the Black Eagle, has been closed by its owners Greene King. Baldock is a particularly poor area for choice, with ten of its twelve pubs owned by the Biggleswade brewery, who also supply their beers to the local steakhouse. Of these, only four sell real ale, and the closure of the Black Eagle is the loss of a good opportunity to improve this state of affairs.

The local CAMRA branch suggested to Greene King that they might swap the Black Eagle with another brewery, to give Baldock drinkers more choice. The brewer's reply was that this would be 'detrimental' to their other licences.

This is a clear case of a brewery protecting its monopoly, and thus denying other brewers the opportunity to provide a choice of real ales and a small degree of competition in the town. Surely far more detrimental to Greene King's other licencees is the brewery's own refusal to provide real ale to their houses? If they are determined, as they appear to be, to retain their stranglehold on Baldock, then a few more handpumps here and there would at least give their other landlords a reasonable chance of survival, and give their customers more opportunity to sample Greene King's fine ales at their best.

THE BARLEY MOW



TYTTENHANGER GREEN

WE HAVE THE LARGEST SELECTION OF
REAL ALES IN HERTFORDSHIRE

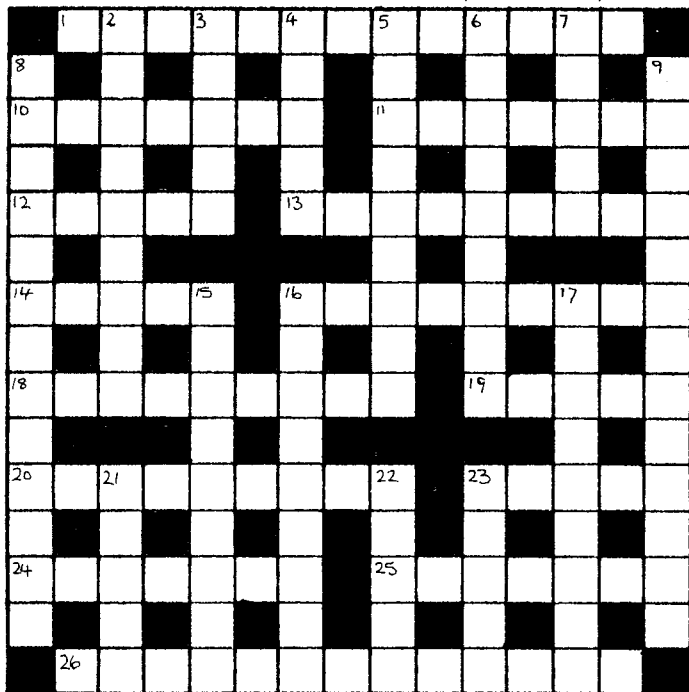
We also pride ourselves that they are all in
the best of condition. Our barbecue is now open
every night, weather permitting.

Small room for private functions available
Maximum 20/25 people

**PLEASE NOTE NO COACHES
INCLUDING MINIBUSES**

COMPETITION

The sender of the first correct solution opened on July 13th will receive a CAMRA knitted 'bobble hat'. Please mark envelopes June Competition.



Across

- 1 Alton brewery where plighted swain is disengaged (3,3,7)
- 10 Staggering swimmer in arena (7)
- 11 Item in church hall ending recent development (7)
- 12 What greedy person will do when 'e leaves Harpenden pub (5)
- 13 Light ale to be drunk with a meal (5-4)
- 14 Service centre often resorted to if two articles are returned (5)
- 16 Willingness to have seeds sprinkled with rain (8)
- 18 Unrestrained or bad computation of a nautical measure (4-5)
- 19 Eat the wrong way in Berkhamsted or Elstree (5)
- 20 Renovation is just about appropriate (9)
- 23 Bomb's ultimate and final effect? (5)
- 24 Very cold punch familiar to the *White Bear*? (3-4)
- 25 Being somewhat extrovert, I got into a dizzy state (7)
- 26 Scanned recent violence — it's going too far (13)

Down

- 2 One bar, an' it made me drunk (9)
- 3 Brewery that makes Inverness a wonderland? (5)
- 4 What fan would do with a particular number (5)
- 5 Alf has personal problem in firm — lunch not provided (4-5)
- 6 Southport's wingers receive terrible hiding (9)
- 7 Tell a story about, say, a continental town (5)
- 8 I have difficulty in finding ark for Lewisham brewery (4,3,6)
- 9 Thinking of myself, port is not nice, it's horrible (13)
- 15 The *Halfway House* is a pub in which you have a little flutter? Quite the reverse (2-7)
- 16 It's clear I could be representative (9)
- 17 I fancy myself although I manage company badly (9)
- 21 One who unleashes dread sound — that's about right (5)
- 22 Imparted information about central delivery (5)
- 23 Pub, for example, recalled — there's an old one in Hertford (5)

The winner of the April competition was Neil Campbell of Croxley Green. The correct solution was: Across — Bread and Butter, Engrasp, Overlap, Thorn, Inn-keeper, Inswinger, Agent, Gripe, Beer-house, Percolate, Sorts, Confirm, Atelier, Begging Letters. Down — Breathing Space, Elgoods, Drainpipe, Napping, Browner, Theme, Eclipse, Spirit Measures, At his best, In range, Boatman, Eyeball, Upraise, Owing.

THE ROYAL OAK, BUSHEY

Free House

★ 6 Real Ales □ Food ★
★ Guest Beers ★

Restaurant and carvery now open
Reservations preferable ☎ 01-950 2865

SPARROWS HERNE ★ ON THE A411

PUB OF THE MONTH

The Plough, Datchworth

Hertfordshire North Branch's Pub of the Month for June is the **Plough** at Datchworth, a Greene King pub which has the distinction of serving all of the company's draught ales on handpump — Abbot, IPA, and both XX Dark and KK Light milds.

The **Plough** is a small, cheery and usually crowded pub, looking from the outside like one of a terrace of cottages. It's nicely located at the edge of the village green, next to the post office, and has its own car park opposite. Inside is as homely as you would expect, with a welcome for regular and stranger alike, and the certainty of a good pint.

Since 1975 the **Plough** has appeared in most editions of the national *Good Beer Guide*, and licensees Nigel and Charlotte Meadows, who are well known to CAMRA members throughout the county, are determined to keep it that way. They have maintained the pub's function as a centre of local life, encouraging pub games teams such as darts and dominoes, and several local clubs meet there. At lunchtimes Charlotte's highly-recommended home cooking comes into its own, and visitors can enjoy the pub garden.

Come to the **Plough** on 27th June and see why it has been selected as Pub of the Month.

PL

BLAKES

96 Queens Road, Watford

5 Real Ales ● Draught Cider ● Wines

GOOD FOOD AT ALL TIMES
Open pub hours, 7 days a week

HAPPY HOUR

Sunday 12 — 2 pm
25% off all drinks

Traditional Sunday lunch £3.95 Children £1.95

QUICK ONES

Bakers Dozen

The **Bakers Dozen**, Bishops Stortford's enterprising free house, is shortly to undergo a change of ownership.

According to local press reports, the Simmonds bakery complex in North Street, of which the pub forms a part, is about to be sold to a property developing firm in Braintree, who are planning to convert the bakery and adjoining restaurant into a new shopping complex. It is reported that the **Bakers Dozen** pub, along with the adjoining Granary Grill, will probably continue as they are under their new ownership — let's hope that this proves to be the case.

Anyone for pigeons?

Gavin and his team at the Farmers Boy, Langley would like it known that they will challenge anyone to a clay pigeon shoot, any Sunday lunchtime. Bring your own weapons — and pigeons!

Pub gardens — the truth

As the summer arrives, our intrepid columnist "Groundsman" will be touring the gardens of Hertfordshire pubs, inspecting their floral delights and animal attractions, and fearlessly reporting to our readers as to whether or not they are suitable for family visiting. Watch this space.

FIVE YEARS AGO

In June 1979, CAMRA's Hertfordshire branches presented the third Herts Beer Festival, at Hatfield Polytechnic. To coincide, a new edition of the county's real ale guide was published, listing over 450 pubs. (Copies of this historic work are still available for collectors, at the cost of a small donation to CAMRA.) One of the listed pubs, the Goat at St Albans, had just been sold for £115,000 — a bargain at the price.

LETTERS

In response to the article "Quiet, please!" (April Newsletter), Peter Yates of Hatfield Polytechnic argues the case for real live music:

Dear Editor,

Whilst the musical taste of the contributor of the article may differ widely from mine — I suggest our ages differ widely as he is proposing the merits of Gracie Fields and the Andrews Sisters — I largely agree with him on the subject of music in pubs.

What does sadden and annoy me is the trend away from live music with the advent of the video. One pub, to its credit, did attempt to merge both, but it would appear the "easy option" of video has won in that case.

Hertfordshire seems to be sadly lacking in pubs that are prepared to put themselves out slightly for the benefit of local musicians and those who prefer to watch a live local band. There is a potentially thriving local music scene, and I believe it is part of the local pubs' responsibility to at least offer the option of live music to their customers, if only once a week.

Local musicians spend a great deal of money and effort in pursuing what is essentially a pastime, and deserve at the very least the opportunity to play to a local audience.

REAL ALE AND REAL MUSIC!!

Yours,

Peter Yates

P.S. Perhaps those pubs we do offer live music could be listed in the Newsletter? (See 'What's On' column — Ed.)

From P A Hall Esq, Benskins' Area Manager:

Dear Madam,

I was most interested in Brian Callaghan's chart (April Newsletter) showing Ind Coope takeovers/mergers since the turn of the century. There is certainly a number of, alas, erstwhile breweries of whose existence I was unaware and I commend Mr Callaghan for his diligence.

However, at the risk of stating the obvious, the chart does not show, as your heading states, 'the breweries taken over by Ind Coope since the turn of the century', but only those acquired via Benskins and Taylor Walker. There are, of course, several others in different parts of the country — e.g. Burton-on-Trent, Manchester, Newcastle, Derby, Stoke, Oxford.

Yours faithfully,

P A Hall

(The phrase was ill-chosen — my apologies. Ed.)



WHAT'S BREWING

The latest news from the national brewery scene is that the epidemic of takeovers, which caused the loss of so many good and individual brewery companies in the '50s, '60s and '70s, is spreading through the country once again.

Last year the small Cumbria brewery of **Hartley's** was taken over by Robinsons of Stockport, who already own more than 300 pubs. Hartley's brewery is still in production, but the future must be less optimistic for the Wrexham, North Wales brewery of **Border Breweries**, recently swallowed up by Marstons of Burton upon Trent.

Two further take-overs are threatened. At the time of writing, it looks as if **Cameron's**, possibly the brewers of the best beers in north-east England, may be bought out by Scottish and Newcastle breweries, a major national company. CAMRA is referring this take-over to the Office of Fair Trading. Another famous name, **Theakstons**, is the subject of rival bids from Blackburn brewers Matthew Brown, and Scottish distillers William Grant. Again, CAMRA is doing its utmost to ensure that Theakstons remain independent of control by another brewing company.

A brewery expanding in another way is **Hoskins** of Leicester, who have increased their chain of tied pubs by 200% by opening two new pubs! Another small and entirely traditional brewery is that at the **Old Swan**, Netherton in the West Midlands, whose famous proprietor, Mrs Doris Pardoe, has recently died at the age of 84. The family brewing tradition is to be carried on, and this superb pub is well worth a visit.

Meanwhile, new breweries have recently opened up in Kent, Somerset, Sussex, Herefordshire . . . and the Isle of Lundy, previously more famous for its puffins! So despite the efforts of the bigger companies, wherever you go you can still find some individual and different local beers. CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide* can help you to find them.

WHAT'S ON AT YOUR PUB

- 10 June **St Albans:** Garibaldi. Lunchtime traditional music session.
13 June **Abbots Langley:** Unicorn. 8pm. Woodside Morris Men.
Royal Oak. 9.15pm. Woodside Morris Men.
Chiswell Green: Three Hammers. 9.30pm. Cottonmill Clog Morris and Grand Union Morris.
St Albans: King Offa. 8.30pm. Cottonmill Clog Morris.
Welwyn: White Hart. 9pm. Traditional music by Galadreef.
- 14 June **St Albans:** Rose and Crown. 8.30pm. Traditional music session.
15 June **St Albans:** Beehive. 8.30pm. Beehive Folk Club. Guest: Chris Snook.
Stanstead Abbots: Crown. 8pm. Hoddesdon Folk Club. Guest: Cathie O'Sullivan.
Woolmer Green: Chequers. 8pm. Stevenage Folk Club. Club Night.
- 20 June **Croxley Green:** Fox and Hounds. 8pm. Woodside Morris Men.
Nomansland Common: Wicked Lady. 9.30pm. Cottonmill Clog Morris.
Welwyn: White Hart. 9pm. Traditional music by Galadreef.
Wheathampstead: Abbot John. 8.30pm. Cottonmill Clog Morris.
- 21 June **St Albans:** Rose and Crown. 8.30pm. Traditional music session.
22 June **St Albans:** Beehive. 8.30pm. Beehive Folk Club. Guests: George Norris and Helen Royal.
Stanstead Abbots: Crown. 8pm. Hoddesdon Folk Club. Guest: Gordon Tyrall.
Woolmer Green: Chequers. 8pm. Stevenage Folk Club. Guests: Sam Stephens and Ann Lennox-Martin.
- 23 June **Letchmore Heath:** Three Horseshoes. Evening morris dancing with Woodside Morris Men, Hereford Morris Men, Old Bull Clog Morris etc.
24 June **St Albans:** Garibaldi. Lunchtime traditional music session.
27 June **Heronsgate:** Land of Liberty. 9.15pm. Woodside Morris Men.
Mill End: Whip and Collar. 8pm. Woodside Morris Men.
Welwyn: White Hart. 9pm. Traditional music by Galadreef.
- 28 June **St Albans:** Rose and Crown. 8.30pm. Traditional music session.
29 June **St Albans:** Beehive. 8.30pm. Beehive Folk Club. Guest: Leon Rosselson.
Stanstead Abbots: Crown. 8pm. Hoddesdon Folk Club. End of season extravaganza.
Woolmer Green: Chequers. 8pm. Stevenage Folk Club. Guest: Cathie O'Sullivan.
- 30 June **Hatfield:** Wrestlers. 1pm. Cottonmill Clog Morris.
- Please send details of events (in no more than 15 words) by the 12th of the previous month to Peter Lerner, 14 Hazeldell, Watton-at-Stone, Herts.

PUB NEWS

Following on from last month's column: the **London Vintners** off-licence at 41, Abbey Avenue, St Albans has become the next in the chain to sell Ruddles Rutland and Adnams Bitter.

Rayments' **Brewery Tap** at Fumeux Pelham has been repainted in the smart new railway station-style livery to match the brewery opposite, and now has Greene King KK and Abbot on handpump, as well as the local BBA. The rear garden has been attractively laid out for outdoor drinkers, and includes a do-it-yourself barbecue.

Recent local press advertisements indicate that the **Bell** at Standon is now, after a change of landlord, once again serving real Benskins Bitter and Ind Coope Burton Ale.

The current range of real ales in the **Jester**, at Ashwell & Morden station, is Ruddles Bitter, Webster Yorkshire Bitter and Adnams Bitter.

Rumour has it that there are plans to convert the **Station Hotel**, Knebworth into a one-bar, food-orientated establishment. This would be a great pity, as it's the only pub in the village.

The **East India College Arms**, Hertford Heath has Burton Ale on handpump.

The **Townshend Arms**, Hertford Heath now sells Benskins plus a guest beer from the Allied range, currently Friary Meux. The guest beer has replaced the Burton Ale. The current range of traditional beers in the **Lord Louis**, Stanstead Abbots is Victoria Albert Ale, Flowers Original, Tolly Original & Ruddles County.

The **Plough**, Hertford (Ind Coope) no longer sells real ale.

The **Castle**, Waltham Cross, an Ind Coope pub, is now closed. The future of this pub is unknown.

The **Bird in Hand**, Gosmore, near Hitchin, has re-opened and now sells Greene King Abbot, IPA & KK mild, all on handpumps.

The **Woolpack**, Hitchin has replaced Wethereds with Flowers Original, but if the latter is not available for any reason, Wethereds will be sold instead. The landlord insists that real ale will always be available.

The **Adam & Eve**, Hitchin no longer sells real ale, due to "lack of demand".

A new convert to real ale is the **Chequers**, Bragbury End, Stevenage, with Benskins Bitter on handpump.

The **Coach & Horses**, Cheshunt also sells Ind Coope Bitter, alongside its Burton Ale.

The **Victoria**, Cheshunt (incorrectly listed in the Herts Guide as the **Queen Victoria**) has added Hammerton's Porter and Truman Sampson to its range. Truman Bitter is also on sale at the **Crown & Anchor**, Barnet. The **Warwick** in New Barnet is selling Charrington IPA. The **Albion**, also in Barnet, no longer sells real ale.

The **Lytton Arms**, Stevenage, is having handpumps installed. Real ales will possibly include Mickles. This beer is also now available at **James I Restaurant**, Moor Street.

Following all the speculation in this Newsletter, a sign outside the **Rising Sun**, Halls Green, announces that it will be re-opening late 1984.

BRANCH DIARY

HERTFORDSHIRE NORTH BRANCH

Wednesday 6th June

Social at the Rose & Crown, Aston, 8pm

Wednesday 13th June

Branch Meeting at the Bull, Watton at Stone, 8pm

Wednesday 20th June

Social at the White Horse, Stevenage, 8pm

Wednesday 27th June

Pub of the Month social at the Plough, Datchworth, 8pm

Contact Peter Clarke ☎ Stevenage 65957

HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

Tuesday 12th June

Branch Meeting at the Old Bulls Head, Ware, 8pm

Contact Eric Sim ☎ Hatfield 60647

WATFORD & DISTRICT BRANCH

Wednesday 13th June

Games evening/social at the Unicorn, Gallows Hill, Abbots Langley, 8pm

Wednesday 20th June

Branch Meeting at the Wheatsheaf, Lower High Street, Watford, 8pm

Wednesday 27th June

Watford anti-social. Meet at the Leviathan, 151 St Albans Road (nr Watford Junction station), 8pm

Saturday 7th July

Day trip to the Black Country. Phone Branch Contact for details.

Contact Tony King ☎ Watford 672587

Note: A free pint for any new member attending a branch meeting for the first time!

MID-CHILTERNES BRANCH

Tuesday 12th June

Anti-social in Chorleywood. Meet Rose & Crown, 8.30pm.

Tuesday 19th June

Pub crawl of Old Amersham. Meet Saracens Head, 8.30pm.

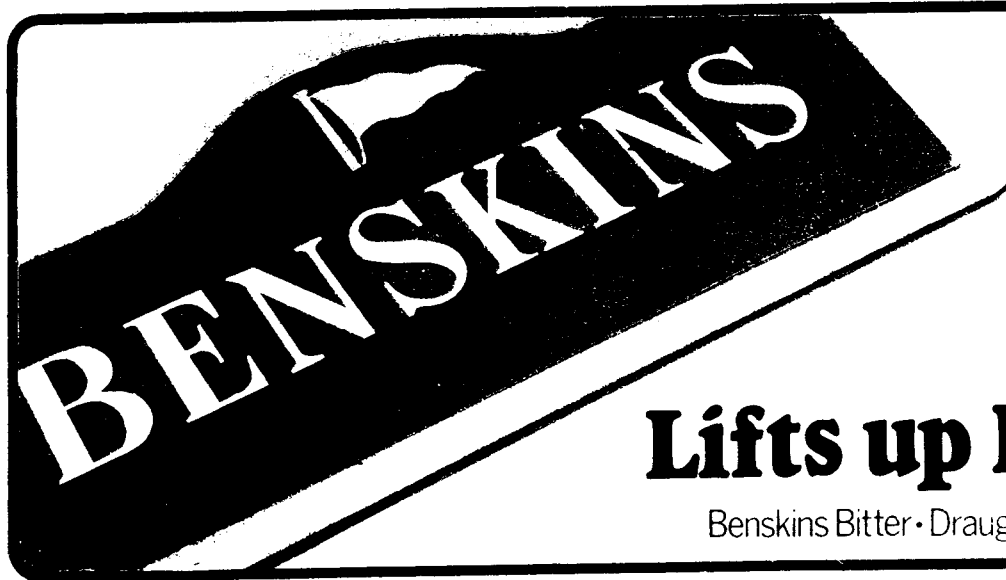
Thursday 28th June

Anti-social in Hemel Hempstead. Meet at the Bull, Two Waters, 8.30pm

Contact Pete Freeman ☎ Hemel Hempstead 69773

PLANNING NEWS

Proposals are afoot to demolish the club house at the Beehive, Welwyn Garden City, to allow the extension of a restaurant. More modest extensions are also planned for the Otter at Bushey, and the Cannon Tavern in Ware.



Lifts up Herts.

Benskins Bitter · Draught Burton Ale

The Hertfordshire Newsletter is produced by the Hertfordshire South, Hertfordshire North, Watford and District and Mid-Chilternes branches of the Campaign for Real Ale Limited. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor, CAMRA Ltd, or its branches. The Editor gratefully receives articles or letters for publication. **THESE SHOULD PREFERABLY BE TYPEWRITTEN AND DOUBLE-SPACED: HANDWRITTEN ITEMS SHOULD ALSO BE WELL SPACED AND AS LEGIBLE AS POSSIBLE PLEASE.** Send to Cathy Totman, Flat 1, The Old Stables, Woodside, Hatfield, Hertfordshire.

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