

**FREE**



# THE HERTFORDSHIRE NEWSLETTER

MAY 1985

CIRCULATION 5000

NUMBER 83

## VITTLE INNS IN TROUBLE?

An article in a recent edition of the trade magazine *Pub Leader* suggests that Vittle Inns, a division of Allied Breweries (proprietors of Benskins and Ind Coope) is having some difficulty with its chain of American-style bar lounges. One of this group's five Exchange bars is in Rickmansworth, and although 10 of these were programmed by 1987, there are now no further plans for any more. There have apparently been particular problems with management and menu selection.

The other branch of Vittle's activities includes the **Calendars** chain, of which only one actually exists, in Watford. This cost more than £1 million to set up, but has only recently started to be successful. The second **Calendars** has never materialised.

Allied Breweries' new managing director, Richard Martin, is well known for having a particular interest in the beer and brewing side of the company's operation. While the future for Vittle Inns and their American fantasies might not therefore look too bright, Vittle's John Lee is denying all rumours and is quoted as saying of his boss Mr. Martin, "He is likely to have a retail edge strategy". The Newsletter will offer a prize of an imitation American cocktail stick to any reader who can translate that quotation into English . . . and we will offer a round of applause to Allied Breweries when they put Vittle Inns out to grass and concentrate on good beer and good pubs.

## WHAT PRICE CHOICE?

As most Newsletter readers know, magistrates' courts throughout the county have recently been deliberating whether or not to allow drinks to be served in pubs up to 11pm, rather than the present 10.30pm, Mondays to Fridays.

CAMRA members were present at three of the hearings, and listened to evidence from some pub licensees who felt that an extra 30 minutes would improve their trade, and to some who thought that it would create more trouble than it was worth. The evidence from the customers' side was that a few were against any change, many more could not really care what time the pub closed, but that a substantial number would appreciate an extra 30 minutes social drinking, darts playing or whatever.

The results, as we have reported elsewhere, were that some of the local courts agreed to allow the change, but that rather more refused to allow any alteration to the status quo.

CAMRA is in support of the increased flexibility of licensing hours, as proposed. It is important to realise that the licensing hours agreed by the courts are permitted hours, not obligatory hours. We know that very many landlords do not open their pub doors at the permitted hours of 10.30am and 5.30pm, presumably because they do not feel that the trade warrants it, so there is no apparent reason why pubs in Hertfordshire should not continue to close at 10.30pm if they wish, in spite of any change permitted by the magistrates.

CAMRA stands for choice, and we say that customers and licensees alike are intelligent enough to choose whether or not drinking till 11pm is appropriate for their pub. We congratulate those courts which were adventurous enough to make the change this year, and to the others, we say that we are sure that the matter will be debated again next year.

To help us contribute to that debate, we would like to hear from our readers - drinkers and licensees alike. Has your pub been granted the extra half hour? Has it helped you, or the pub? If your pub hasn't benefited from the change, do you think it should?

Please write to the Newsletter now (see editorial address on back page).

**Peter Lerner**  
Hertfordshire Area Organiser

**UNIQUE NEW PRODUCT!**

**ALREADY PREPARED**

# kebabs

A tasty variety of best quality, marinated, cooked and frozen kebabs.

**Great FOR PUBS AND CLUBS**

'Deli-Stiks' are an all year round food, which can be easily prepared in a variety of ways, eg. Frying, grilling, by micro-wave oven and even indoor & outdoor B.B.Q.'s.

The minimum cooking time from frozen is only 4-5 mins. Cooking and serving suggestions are given in our FREE information sheets.

**DELI-STIKS LTD.,**  
53A Park Street Village, St. Albans, Herts.  
Telephone: (0727) 74363.

See for yourself as cooked on the new indoor Barbecue at the Barley Mow, Tyttenhanger Green.

## 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. Why not try our menu of hot and cold meals at lunchtime?

Indoor and outdoor barbecues, weather permitting, now in full swing

**PLEASE NOTE NO COACHES INCLUDING MINIBUSES**

## LETTERS

Jenny Greenhalgh, chairman of CAMRA's Pub Preservation Group, replies to the landlord of the Letchworth keg-only pub:

Dear Cathy,

Bill Jamieson's letter in your March edition in reply to 'Roundsmen's' December article is thankfully not typical of most licensees' attitudes to the work of CAMRA.

In over ten years of working for this organisation (and be it known that this is a labour of love - we don't get paid) thousands of us have met thousands of licensees. As in any industry they come in all shapes and sizes, and have a variety of views about the Campaign. Some are faithful, dedicated soldiers who never seem to escape from the bar, are ever ready to talk 'shop' with members of the local CAMRA branch who they know are informed members of the public on the state of the licensed trade, and gain our immediate respect for their dedication. They have even encouraged some members of CAMRA to enter the trade themselves. Some successful licensees find the opportunity to escape and hand over the day to day running to other staff - perhaps Mr. Jamieson is one of these. There is a fine line to be drawn between the pub run just as a money-making concern, and that combined with service as a social centre where contact with the licensee and his/her public is an essential ingredient of the true public house.

We recognise that with mass-media advertising there are going to be many pub goers who think cold fizzy lager and bright beers are preferable to a local product that only has point-of-sale advertising and a reputation that can only be appreciated by tasting the product. It is part of CAMRA's campaign to ask licensees to make available those brews that are not nationally advertised, and let the public have the opportunity of making their choice. It is the licensee's duty to present the product as the brewery would like it presented. We will therefore make our views known if the beers are withdrawn or served in poor condition: it is not unreasonable to ask why such conditions prevail.

We recognise that those in the licensed trade are seeing more bankruptcies every year. It doesn't seem to stop some members in the trade from ruining their reputation by indifferent service. And it doesn't seem to stop new people entering the trade.

I might add that I have never seen a "beautiful crumpet": a lump of grey clammy dough full of holes that only becomes remotely appealing when lightly toasted on both sides and smothered in butter is hardly my idea of beauty, and I've never seen this in a pub...

Yours,  
Jenny

## PUB OF THE MONTH

### Red Lion, Stevenage

May sees CAMRA's North Herts branch back in Stevenage Old Town for their Pub of the Month Award. The **Red Lion** is the third Old Town pub to win this award, and shows what an excellent drinking haven it is. One can trace the history of a public house on the site back to 1648, then called the Holly Bush. The name was changed to the Redd Lyon some time later, with the current spelling being adopted around 1800.

The adjoining building was also a public house called the Falcon, now a sports shop. Neil and Sue Grundy have been the licensees for five years, and the pub has changed during this time from a quiet local into a lively boozery, with the range of Greene King real ales increased, although regrettably the Mild is no longer available. The good news for traditionalists is that no changes to the building have been made, and it retains its fine character. A regular in CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide*, the pub is well worth a visit, so come along and celebrate with us on May 29th.

Peter Clarke

Peter & Lesley Reynolds welcome you to



**THE STAR INN**  
**FURNEUX PELHAM**



**Rayments BBA ★ Greene King KK & Abbot**

**GOOD HOME-COOKED FOOD**  
**MONDAY TO SATURDAY**

☎ Brent Pelham 227

## BRANCH NEWS

### New Heart for South Herts

It's often the way with successful organisations - their very success holds the seeds of their own demise. CAMRA - the Campaign for Real Ale - is no exception. For many people the battle for Real Ale has been won. Certainly the majority of pubs in Hertfordshire offer at least one, and sometimes several traditional beers; a far cry from the early 70's when CAMRA was formed. In those days a few tens of pubs in the county sold unpressurised beer. The figure now is nearer 800. Because of this many previously keen campaign members have drifted away, content that their local now sells the real thing at last. Attendances at local branch meetings have fallen to very low levels over the past year or so and the Hertfordshire South Branch itself was in imminent danger of folding. The matter even attracted some attention from the local press, especially since South Herts was virtually the founding branch of the Campaign.

#### Things are set to change however

The recent call to local members, both old and new, to help revitalise the flagging fortunes of the branch appears to have worked. Hertfordshire South now has a new full committee dedicated to putting the "Fizz" back into the area's campaign. A good sign is that several new faces have appeared to take up positions. A full programme of events and meetings for the coming months has been put together, details of which will appear in due course.

#### Much to be done

If there are now so many outlets for Real Ale in the county, why do we need CAMRA? The Campaign has, during the years, begun to realise that the fight to preserve traditional beer is not enough. Members not only want to drink real ale, but want to drink it in good condition, at a reasonable price, in pleasant surroundings. Consequently, much of the Campaign's efforts are now directed in these areas. We all know of the pubs selling inferior quality beer at inflated prices; of the beautiful old pubs lost to the developer's bulldozer or converted to plastic fun palaces at a whim. As well as keeping an eye on the future of our national beverage - and drinking it too! - CAMRA, and the rejuvenated Hertfordshire South branch, have much to keep themselves occupied with in the 80's.

For more information contact the Press Officer - Dave Burns, 25 Wellington Street, Bengoe, Hertford SG14 3AN. Phone 553903 (home), 01 636 8333 extn 7342 (work).



## QUICK ONES

### Farewell to Cathy, hail Nadine

This month's Newsletter will be the last to be edited by Cathy Totman, who has been your Editor since issue No. 58 in February 1983. Readers will, I am sure, agree that Cathy has splendidly maintained the high editorial standards of this premier amongst CAMRA's local newspapers, whilst introducing a number of popular new features and columns. A particular achievement during Cathy's term of office has been the substantial increase in advertising revenue, reflecting the Newsletter's wide readership amongst beer drinkers and pub goers.

Although she will be taking a much deserved rest from the strains of editing this Newsletter, Cathy will continue to be in CAMRA's service as Production Editor of its best-selling national *Good Beer Guide*. We wish Cathy well for the future, and, in thanking her for her services, extend a warm welcome to her successor, Nadine Fynn, also from CAMRA's Hertfordshire North Branch.

Peter Lerner, Area Organiser

### BBA – Skye's the limit!

We know that local brewers Rayments have been expanding their free trade recently, but Hertford local government officers Pete Watson and Andrew Whitaker must have caused a new entry to be written in the Pelham Book of Records.

Real ale-drinkers Pete and Andrew recently led a party of friends over the water to the Isle of Skye and, aware of the fact that most bars in the remoter part of Scotland serve nothing other than gassy Tartan and fizzy lager, decided to equip themselves, before departing, with a polypin of Rayments BBA.

The two explorers report that the beer travelled well and add that the tourist trade on the island would be boosted were Rayments to make available regular supplies.

### AA to the rescue

The following article appeared in the *Brighton and Hove Leader* recently: "A thousand people are expected to attend an Alcoholics Anonymous conference in Brighton this year - less than a month after the Great British Beer Festival. The Campaign for Real Ale reckons that 100,000 pints of beer will be drunk at the Metropole by 30,000 visitors between August 13 and 17. They will turn the hotel's conference halls into 'the world's largest pub'.

No wonder we need organisations like Alcoholics Anonymous, whose delegates will be making sober talk along the seafront at the Brighton Centre from September 20 to 22."

### No extension at Welwyn

At the last of this year's licensing hearings, Welwyn magistrates threw out a proposal, supported in court by the Licensed Victuallers Association and CAMRA, to extend pub hours till 11pm on Monday to Thursdays.

### Situations Vacant

Do you live in North Herts and enjoy reading the Newsletter? If so, have you considered becoming a Newsletter distributor? If you can spare a couple of hours once a month to deliver the Newsletter to a couple of pubs in your area I would like to hear from you. Give me a ring on Stevenage 65957 and let me know the pubs you could visit.

Peter Clarke

### FIVE YEARS AGO

In May 1980 the Newsletter's Editor was feeling pretty sick, as were many drinkers in Hertfordshire, as McMullens had just announced the impending closure of the superb Goose at Moor Green, near Ardeley.

Meanwhile, Greene King had just issued a rulebook to their pub managers, including the advice that they should change their socks daily ...

### Horn to keep blowing

St Albans' controversial music pub, the **Horn of Plenty**, has been allowed to retain its late music licence courtesy of the local Council, who over-ruled local objections. The local newspaper reported that one local Councillor admitted that he had never visited the pub until after the hearing - such faith we have in those who make decisions on our behalf!

## PUB OF THE YEAR

### Rest and Welcome, Haultwick

The Hertfordshire North Branch of CAMRA is pleased to present its coveted Pub of the Year Award for the first time in eight years to a McMullens pub, and is especially pleased that the pub which topped its members' poll is that old favourite, the **Rest and Welcome** at Haultwick.

Many readers will have heard of the **Rest and Welcome**, but very few know how to find it. The easiest way to join in the celebrations on Wednesday 22nd May is to aim for the hamlet of Dane End, in the country between Watton at Stone and Puckeridge, and to follow the village street outwards to the east, taking a clearly marked left turn (signposted Haultwick) after about a quarter of a mile. The **Rest and Welcome** is an unusual low building close to Haultwick's small green, with a car park and pretty garden adjoining.

Inside this friendly little pub there is something for everyone - a log fire for the winter, comfortable seats, a juke box and a piano, darts, and a separate and popular pool room. Licensees Rob and Marianne Silvester have worked hard to transform the **Rest and Welcome** from a damp and down-at-heel little pub to a centre of local life, and their award is a recognition of their efforts. Not a little of the charm of the pub has to do, as you might expect, with the excellently kept McMullens AK Best Mild and Country Bitter.

Come along on the 22nd and see for yourself why the **Rest and Welcome** has this year been voted the best of the 250 pubs in the North Herts Branch area.

PL

*The Pub of the Month/Year award is limited to pubs in the North Herts branch area.*

DACORUM LICENSURE SERVICES IN ASSOCIATION WITH CAMRA  
PRESENT



30th MAY - 1st JUNE  
PAVILION, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD.  
TEL: 64451

THURSDAY 7pm to 11pm      FRIDAY & SATURDAY 1pm to 5pm - 7pm to 11pm

TICKETS IN ADVANCE £1.50 • ON THE DOOR £2.50 IF AVAILABLE

ADVANCE BOOKING IS ADVISED

### PLANNING NEWS

The **Three Harts** at Stonyhills, near Ware, is under new ownership, and is the subject of a planning application for ground and first floor extensions. Nearby in Hertford, McMullens plan to convert the **Lord Haig** into a single-bar pub. Over in Baldock, an application has been submitted to convert Greene King's closed **Black Eagle** into offices - another lost local.

## COMPETITION

There were no all-correct entries for the March 'Whitbread Breweries' competition. The correct answers were: 1. The Maltings, a shopping precinct, in Chequer Street. 2. John William. 3. Fordhams.

## PUB NEWS

A warm welcome to Duncan and Mary Campbell, new landlords of the **Hoops** at Perry Green. This pretty little village pub has been closed for some time for extensive restoration work, but is now back in business following a grand re-opening at the end of April. We wish them every success.

Rayments' long-awaited new pub in Thorley is due to open very shortly. Following a competition in the local press, this fine old farmhouse conversion now has a name - the **Harvest Moon**. Watch this Newsletter for further details!

A new real ale outlet is the **Bakers Arms** in Bayford, near Hertford, with Macs AK and Country on handpump.

Greene King Abbot Ale is no longer available at the **Woodman** in Norton Green, near Stevenage, but IPA is still on sale on electric pump. The **Blakemore Hotel**, Little Wymondley has Adnams bitter and Gibbs Mew Bishop Tipple on handpump in the Knights Bar, the latter at £1.20 a pint. The **Pear Tree** in Stevenage has finally removed its notice advertising 'cask-conditioned Wethereds bitter' - no real ales have been available at the pub over a year now, although they are planned for the summer following modernisation at the pub.

The **Fox and Hounds** in Rickmansworth is being converted into a one-bar pub, but separate 'lounge' and 'public' areas will be retained. The **Green Dragon** in Flaunden is also due to undergo alterations, with an extension to the public bar. The pub is also rumoured to have had a hotel license granted.

## WHAT'S ON AT YOUR PUB

- 1 May **St Albans:** White Lion. Evening. Morris dancing: Cottonmill Clog Morris.
- 2 May **St Albans:** Rose and Crown. Evening. Traditional music session.
- 3 May **Stanstead Abbots:** Crown. 8pm. Hoddesdon Folk Club. Guests: GaladreeL.
- 4 May **Stevenage:** Marquis of Lorne. 8pm. Stevenage Folk Club. Guest: Doug Hudson.
- 8 May **Park Street:** Red Cow. Evening. Morris dancing: Cottonmill Clog Morris.
- 9 May **St Albans:** Rose and Crown. Evening. Traditional Music Session.
- 10 May **Stanstead Abbots:** Crown. 8pm. Hoddesdon Folk Club. Guest: Martin Carthy.
- 11 May **Stevenage:** Marquis of Lorne. 8pm. Stevenage Folk Club. Come-all-ye.
- 12 May **St Albans:** Garibaldi. Lunchtime. Traditional music session.
- St Albans:** Beehive. 8pm. Concert: John Lyons, John Garrick and Bill Daly.
- 16 May **St Albans:** Rose and Crown. Evening. Traditional music session.
- 17 May **Stanstead Abbots:** Crown. 8pm. Hoddesdon Folk Club. Singaround.
- 18 May **Stevenage:** Marquis of Lorne. 8pm. Stevenage Folk Club. Guest: Dougie Maclean.
- Stevenage:** Bowes Lyon House. 7.30pm. Barn dance: Cook and Bull Band, Morris and Sword display, Rayments BBA.
- 22 May **Tewin:** Rose and Crown. Evening. Morris dancing: Cottonmill Clog Morris.
- 23 May **St Albans:** Rose and Crown. Evening. Traditional music session.
- 25 May **Stevenage:** Marquis of Lorne. 8pm. Stevenage Folk Club. Come-all-ye.
- 26 May **St Albans:** Garibaldi. Lunchtime. Traditional music session.
- 30 May **St Albans:** Rose and Crown. Evening. Traditional music session.
- 31 May **Stanstead Abbots:** Crown. 8pm. Hoddesdon Folk Club. Guest: Gordon Tyrell.

Please send details of events, in not more than 15 words, by the 10th of the previous month to Peter Lerner, 7 Sheppards Close, St Albans, Herts. (Note new address!)

## BRANCH DIARY

### HERTFORDSHIRE NORTH BRANCH

**Wednesday 1st May**

Social at the Old George, Ickleford, 8pm

**Wednesday 8th May**

Branch Meeting at the Eagle and Child, Whitwell, 8pm

**Wednesday 22nd May**

Pub of the Year social at the Rest & Welcome, Haultwick, 8pm

**Wednesday 29th May**

Pub of the Month social at the Red Lion, Stevenage, 8pm

**Wednesday 5th June**

Social at the Squirrel, Stevenage, 8pm

**Wednesday 12th June**

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

Contact Peter Clarke ☎ Stevenage 65957

### HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

**Tuesday 7th May**

Committee Meeting at the Barley Mow, Tyttenhanger Green, 8pm

**Wednesday 15th May**

Social/anti-social, based at the Cricketers, Redbourn, 8pm

**Tuesday 21st May**

Branch Meeting at the Dimsdale Arms, Hertford, 8pm (to be confirmed)

Contact Adrian Jolliffe ☎ St Albans 69675

### WATFORD & DISTRICT BRANCH

**Saturday 11th May**

Minibus trip to Oxfordshire. Very few places left - phone contact now!

**Wednesday 15th May**

Games evening at the Unicorn, Gallows Hill, Abbots Langley, 8pm. Come and join in!

**Wednesday 22nd May**

Branch Meeting at the Sportsman, Croxley Green (back room) 8pm. All welcome.

**Wednesday 5th June**

Bushey Heath pub crawl. Start Kings Head, Little Bushey Lane, 8pm, then Blackboy, Windmill Street, 8.30. . . .

Contact Tony King ☎ Garston 672587

### MID-CHILTERN BRANCH

**Tuesday 7th May**

Northchurch pub crawl. Meet at the Cow Roast, 8.30pm

**Tuesday 14th May**

Bovingdon pub crawl. Meet at the Royal Oak, Bovingdon Green, 8.30pm

**Tuesday 28th May**

Kings Langley pub crawl. Meet at the Bell, Primrose Hill, 8.30pm.

**30th May - 1st June CHILTERN BEER FESTIVAL** at the Pavilion, Hemel Hempstead.

Contact Pete Freeman ☎ Hemel Hempstead 69773

## 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

The Hertfordshire Newsletter is produced by the Hertfordshire North, Hertfordshire South, Watford & District 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. The Editor gratefully receives articles or letters for publication. Send to **Nadine Fynn, 78 Old North Road, Royston, Hertfordshire.**

**Subscriptions:** £2.25 for 12 issues. Send to address above. Cheques/POs payable to CAMRA Herts Campaigning Fund.

**Advertising:** £7 per 2.5cm column. Artwork can be made up at extra cost. Contact **Eric Sim ☎ Hatfield 60647** for details.

**COPY DATE FOR JUNE EDITION MAY 10th. FOR JULY EDITION JUNE 14th.**

Printed and filmset by D & S Graphics, 61/63 High Street, Ware, Hertfordshire.