

FREE



HERTFORDSHIRE'S Pints of View

The bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker

April/May 2003

Circulation 5000

No. 198

GREENTYE BREWERY



ST MARGARETS

Brewed using Caragold Malt from Stanstead Abbots.

4.1% abv

The first of a series of eight beers brewed to commemorate the Buntingford branch line.

*A joint promotion by
Buntingford Brewery Co Ltd & Green Tye Brewery*



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BREWERY CO LTD
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FOR
WARESIDE**

Brewed with a dash of treacle,
in honour of the Wareside Treacle Mines

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The second in a series of eight beers brewed to commemorate the Buntingford Branch Line.

*A joint promotion by
Buntingford Brewery Co Ltd & Green Tye Brewery*



Full steam ahead for local brewers

full story on page five

Also in this month's issue

Mac's increase profits by 28%

The best pub in the country

THE BITTER END



CAMRA says "Save Mac's"



McMullens Annual Report 2002

The annual shareholders' meeting of McMullens was held on 18 February and as readers will know the continued ownership of the brewery and its tied estate has been under review for the last year.

Chairman's Statement

In the report Chairman David McMullen highlights how well the company has performed, with an increase in profits of 28%. Profits increased in 1999 by 12%, in 2000 by 19% and in 2001 by 21%. Over the last four years profits have doubled from £4.4 million to £9.1 million and David pays tribute to the company's employees who have made this possible. It is therefore even more disappointing that this stable viable brewery is under threat of being sold off to the highest bidder and asset stripped if certain members of the family are able to break up their trusts. Wet sales (drinks) are up by 7% and the special reserve beers such as Harvest Moon and Stronghart continue to be brewed and are well received. Dry sales (food) are also up by 14%.

Additions to Tied Estate

The Wheatsheaf at Waltham Abbey has had a major extension and a second Baroosh has been opened in High Street, Uxbridge, in

June. Mac's have acquired the Angel in Staines and another site in Chelmsford High Street for Baroosh conversion.

Industry Changes

David McMullen laments the government's



Let's hope that Mac's look at the bigger picture!

Hertfordshire's Pints Of View is produced by the Hertfordshire South, Watford & District and Herts-Essex Borders Branches of the Campaign For Real Ale. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor, CAMRA Ltd or its branches. Any articles or letters for publication should be sent to Steve Bury, 14 New Road, Shenley, Herts WD7 9EA.

Subscriptions: £4 for 12 issues. Send to John Lightfoot, 66 Dryfield Road, Edgware, Middx, HA8 9JT. Cheques made payable to CAMRA South Herts Branch.

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THE BITTER END

refusal to introduce Progressive Beer Duty which would reduce taxation to that of the continent, but applauds the new licensing bill which should modernise and simplify this country's ancient licensing laws.

The Valuation

The last paragraph is worth printing in full and reads as follows:

Following an indication from certain major shareholder groups during the year that they wished to realise their investment in the Company, the Board appointed Close Brothers Corporate Finance Ltd to advise the Company in considering options for providing liquidity for these shareholders. The Board commissioned a professional evaluation of the Company's freehold and leasehold properties as at 12 September 2002, which is referred to further in the Directors' Report. The review of available options is proving complex and the Board continues to work with its advisers towards

developing a solution which will meet the requirements of the shareholders. It is likely, however, to be some months before resolution is achieved.

In the report under "Fixed Assets" it states that the company's freehold and leasehold properties were valued at 12 September 2002 at £176 million. The original estimate was £200 million. ➔

WANT TO COMPLAIN?

Local Trading Standards exist to protect the interests of consumers.

If you are experiencing short measure after politely asking for a top up, if you find pubs do not show an accurate price list or if you feel a pub is deliberately ripping you off Trading Standards will investigate.

Trading Standards Department
45 Grosvenor Road
St Albans, Herts. or Tel: 01992 556799



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SOUTH HERTS PUB OF THE YEAR
1999 & 2000

Beer Festival 23-26 May
30 beers - Different foods

A DRINKER'S TALE

It is 6 pm outside a genuine English village pub. The building itself is a former large red brick cottage about 150 years old but has been cleverly disguised by the brewers who have painted the top storey yellow and the bottom maroon and placed a large neon sign across the front. A car pulls up outside and a stranger gets out and looks at his watch. As it is past the opening hour he tries the door but it is locked and the inside is in darkness. He returns to his car and waits for about fifteen minutes and then tries the door again and this time knocks. From inside he hears "who the f - k s that" followed by some further inaudible expletives as our genial host comes downstairs and reluctantly opens up. The stranger enters a dark cold room smelling of stale beer. There is a hum as the strip lights in the ceiling burst into life and he realises he is in a basic public bar. He asks for a pint of bitter and from the groaning handpump receives a glass with twenty per cent head and so cloudy that you cannot see through it. Noticing our stranger looking at his pint the landlord speaks "You won't find anything wrong with that sir, cleaned the pipes this morning."

The stranger thinks better of complaining and sits down.

Shortly afterwards old Fred who has seen the lights come on early from his cottage across the road enters the bar. He is wearing a muffler and greatcoat and asks for a half of bitter, stares insolently at the stranger while the landlord gets his beer from the other bar. He enters into a conversation with the landlord that hasn't changed for 20 years.

Fred, "It's a proper booger innit George?"

Landlord "It is that an' all"

Fred "Oi seed in the Clarion that they boogered them boogers from Birmingham".

Landlord "Some of them boogers want boogering too".

Fred "They do an all. Proper boogers."

This exhausts their conversational powers and silence descends. At this point the stranger notices that Fred's beer is perfectly clear and his glass is full to the brim.

A red-faced young man enters wearing overalls and asks for a bottle of his usual. The landlord pours what looks like a flat stout which has a sour smell to it. The young man drinks and says "that's the stuff". The landlord agrees "It certainly is, Elmo" in reply. Elmo moves over to the purring fruit machine which is sitting in the corner.

Stranger: (feeling he should try and make conversation): "I expect you'll be lambing soon?"

Fred "Oi shan't, but the sheep will" (and collapses in mirth which turns to a fit of coughing). When it has abated Fred adds "You ought to be on the telly you ought"

Stranger: "I expect this is a busy time of year for you?"

Fred "Not for me, I works in the garage. Ain't never heard of no sheep owning a car have you George?" and collapses with laughter again.

The fruit machine makes a noise as if it's going to explode any second and Elmo starts to do a frantic dance in front of it "Oi did it! Oi did it!" he cries "You see'd un George, didn't you? Oi got two of them knights in armour and oi held them, and the booger comes up next time on the third line!"

Landlord "How much have you won?"

Elmo "Poond, an, you see'd me last night oi won the same, its 'avin' the right touch"

The stranger makes another effort at conversation and addresses the landlord

Stranger "Nice village you have here"

Landlord "All right if you like that sort of thing I suppose"

Stranger "Could you tell me where the toilet is"

Landlord "Outside into the road first left and left again"

After several minutes the stranger returns covered in dust and cobwebs.

Stranger "Did you know there's a car in your toilet?"



The 7th White Horse Beer Festival

(courtesy of Hector)

starts 5pm Friday 2nd - Monday 5th May at 11pm

40-50 beers, stouts and porters from the length and breadth of the country

(actually there are only two from the pointy bit and none from the Principality)

Castle Street, Hertford
01992 501950

Landlord "You'll cop it you will that's my garage"

Fred "Did you hear that Elmo, this 'ere gentleman has done it in the garage instead of the toilet oi bet that ain't done George's car no good"

Stranger "I haven't done it anywhere I came back to ask where the light is"

Landlord "There ain't no light, this ain't the Ritz you know"

Stranger "I think I'll have a change from beer. Could I have a glass of red wine, an ounce of pipe tobacco, a round of ham sandwiches with some pickled onions and a half bottle of Scotch to take away.

Landlord "Sorry sir we don't sell wine, pipe tobacco, pickled onions or spirits to take away. But we've got some lovely steak pies, fresh this morning"

The truth is the pies went fresh into the heated cabinet on the bar that morning but had been sitting in the cellar for a week after delivery from the factory before being stored in the freezer for several months.

After the plastic wrapper has been removed and the aluminium tray disposed of the stranger returns to his seat and bites into the pie. An expression of nausea covers his face as he discovers that he bitten into a thick coating of dough filled with gristle and gravy. He looks for somewhere to discard the unwanted mouthful.

Landlord "Thought you'd enjoy that, sir. You cant beat a bit of good old English cooking".

A sudden deafening sound fills the pub and rocks the village, Elmo has put the proceeds of his fruit machine win into the juke box. The landlord and Fred are apparently impervious to noise, and remain unmoved except for Fred nodding his head in a rhythmic manner.

The stranger can find nowhere other than the ash tray to dispose of his pie, nods his head in farewell and leaves quickly.

Landlord "Look at that dirty booger, Left his bleedin steak pie all over the ashtray. Some people don't deserve good food."

Fred "I new'd he was a dirty booger soon as oi seed un"

The stranger by this time is back in his car and racing to the nearest City.

SWIFT HALVES



It's the best pub in the country

The Swan, Little Totham, just over the border in Essex, has been named CAMRA's National Pub Of The Year.

The pub, a delightful Grade II listed cottage pub offers a selection of beers including a house ale from Mighty Oak. The cosy saloon with its low ceiling and beams is complemented by a traditional public bar with a 1950's bar billiards table. The pub is the hub of the village and supports many local activities.

Licensee, John Pascoe was overjoyed with the award. "Today I'm the happiest publican in the industry. To be awarded the highest accolade by CAMRA has been my aim since buying the pub in 1996. I'd like to thank all the villagers in Little Totham for supporting The Swan".

The award not only considers beer quality but also atmosphere, campaigning, service and welcome, community focus, style/decor and value for money.

Tony Jerome, CAMRA's Press Manager, said: "The key to the Swan's success is that they excel in all these areas. It's a fine example of a pub that markets itself to its local area".

Nearly 63,000 pubs are eligible for the competition. All CAMRA branches nominate their own "Pub Of The Year" for their area than these are then entered into the national competition. Other finalists were the Monknash, Gwent, Wales; and The Railway, Stockport, Cheshire.

Red Lion gets a silver

Getting nominated for the annual awards of "The Morning Advertiser", the licensed trade's magazine, is an honour, but to win bronze in 2002 for "Pub of The Year" and now silver in 2003 leaves licencees Tim and Jane Hunter of The Red Lion, Preston, wondering whether 2004 will be their year. They were presented with their silver award at The Hilton, in London's West End in January.

The pub is a previous winner of "Hertfordshire's Pub of The Year."

Anyone who knows this pub, on the outskirts of Hitchin, can only hope that next year really is their year.

New report on weights and measures

A recent report from the National Audit Office claims that licensee are selling an extra 200 million pints of beer each year than they buy in with a wholesale value of £130 million.

CAMRA's own research shows that 9 out of 10 pints sold in British pubs are less than 100% liquid and that 1 in 4 pints are less than the industry's own guidelines of 95% minimum liquid.

Mike Benner, Head of Campaigns and Communication's said. "It's quite clear that new legislation is needed to protect Britain's 15 million beer drinkers from short measures in pubs. The current system of self-regulation has failed and consumers are paying through the nose for beer they are not receiving. We need a law which protects consumers by defining a pint of beer and cider as 100% liquid, making it an offence to serve short measures."

CAMRA has been campaigning for "an honest pint" for many years, but current Government proposals for a 95% minimum pint rule will still leave beer drinkers short-changed by millions of pounds every week and will be difficult to enforce.

CALLING ALL BEER LOVERS

Love Beer? Want to help protect it as well as drink it? Want to make sure you can continue to enjoy your favourite pint of real ale in your local pub? Well, you may be interested to know that's what the Campaign for Real Ale, CAMRA, is trying to ensure. We are one of the most successful consumer organisations in the country. We campaign to help protect consumer rights, promote quality, choice and value for money as well as campaigning to save local pubs and independent breweries.

So why not become part of CAMRA and help us continue our fight for consumer choice and diversity?

Membership and its benefits

Membership costs just £16 a year and for this you receive:

- ☐ Our lively monthly publication "What's Brewing", giving hard news from the world of pubs and beer as well as providing information about festivals and special events.
- ☐ Free or substantially reduced entry to all CAMRA beer festivals throughout the UK, including the Great British Beer Festival.
- ☐ Discounts on many CAMRA publications, including our best-selling "Good Beer Guide".

There are over 180 branches and 66,000 members nationwide. Between campaigning, beer festivals, brewery trips, and pub visits there is plenty going on. So find out more about what's going on in your local area and join online at

www.camra.org.uk

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DOWN YOUR WAY

Our information comes from a wide variety of sources and it is inevitable that some errors will occur. Please inform us of any mistakes and the appropriate correction, apology or retraction will be published. Ed

▣ **BRAMFIELD:** Further to our report in a previous POV the **Bramfield Social Club** now has a regular real ale on the bar on gravity dispense, which by all accounts has been a great success with members.

▣ **HERTFORD:** Steve and Kim Dow have been at the **Harts Horns** for two years and are long overdue a welcome by Pints of View. The pub underwent a major refurbishment in 2000 after being flooded by the River Lea, which runs along the bottom of the garden. The bar has a pleasant light pine finish and there is a discrete eating area, evening orders finish at 9.30pm. The beer range is Theakston's Best, Greene King IPA and Fuller's London Pride.

On the other side of town the **Reindeer/Hooden/Rocking Horse** has now reopened as "**The Hillside**". Now very much a restaurant pub, with 100% non-smoking throughout, the refurbished pub has been extremely well done, revealing attractive old oak beams and brickwork, providing a good bar area for drinkers, a compact restaurant on one side and a charming recreation of the old bar parlour of yesterday on the other. The new owners who are from the north are not surprisingly offering two northern real ales on a proper northern dispense.

▣ **REDBOURN:** After months of speculation the gem that is the **Hollybush** has finally gone on sale. For anybody interested it's priced at £525,000 freehold and advertised as "making an ideal destination gastro pub", whatever that is.

▣ **ST ALBANS:** Nigel Crofts and Paul Day of the **White Horse**, Hertford have taken on the responsibility of a second tenancy and taken over at the **Garibaldi**, Albert Street, St Albans from 1 April. The pub will be closed for a



week. There are no plans at present to convert the pub to a "Fullers Freestyle". There is a lot of competition for pub trade in St Albans and we wish them all the best with the venture.

Sean, the licensee at the **White Lion** is considering having a St George's Day celebration at the pub on 23 April. He wants to put on beers from all Herts brewers.

APOLOGY

Paul Kirsten, of Morden, London, has been good enough to write and inform POV that our reference to the "Castle Rock Brewery being defunct" in the article "Brewing in Buntingford" was incorrect. He informs us that the plant came from the Nottingham-based brewer as it was redundant after expansion. I am sorry that we did not publish in edition 197 but the letter arrived after we had gone to press. I hope Castle Rock will accept that it was a genuine error and that it has not caused them any problems. Editor

Beer names Wordsearch

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P	O	L	L	A	W	E	E	C	A	O	T	I	Y	S
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T	U	C	N	U	I	O	O	K	A	B	L	G	I	M
A	Y	O	B	H	O	R	Y	R	F	S	E	A	A	G
T	H	I	S	M	N	D	T	K	A	A	W	R	K	N
P	R	T	L	Y	H	C	E	A	W	N	L	A	G	I
T	U	L	A	G	E	N	T	X	N	D	O	G	U	L
D	U	L	I	U	T	M	E	O	V	S	U	N	T	K
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A	P	U	S	S	L	T	B	O	C	H	L	K	M	U
D	O	H	T	D	S	R	O	T	A	N	I	M	O	D
C	V	E	R	A	G	A	L	I	N	G	A	L	E	T
E	J	O	B	L	A	C	K	M	A	S	S	W	A	Y
A	L	T	S	U	D	D	E	R	U	M	P	U	S	N

Beer Names: AGENT X, AXOLOTI, BASTION, BLACKMASS, CRIFFEL, DOMINATOR, DUCKLING, ELECTRA, FAWN, FULLMOON, GALINGALE, HORNY ALE, HIGH DYKE, ICEBERG, JETSAM, KENTISH, KING, LORD LEE, MARLD, NIAGARA, OH BOY, PYTIAK, RED DUST, RUMPUS, SANDS, SHIRES, STUD, TRIBUTE, UNCUT, WALLOP

Completed entries should be sent to Steve Bury, 14 New Road, Shenley, Herts, WD7 9EA.

The first correct entry opened on the 1st June 2003 will receive a copy of the latest "Hertfordshire Guide To Real Ale".

We thank readers for the large number of entries for the Wordsearch 197. The winner will be announced in the next issue.

BRANCH DIARY

WATFORD & DISTRICT

- Tues 8 April. Branch Social. **Southern Cross**, 8pm; **Nascot Arms**, 9.15pm; **Estcourt Arms**, 10pm.
 - Sat 19 April. Watford Social. **Moon Under Water**, 1pm.
 - Wed 7 May. Chorleywood Social. **Black Horse**, 8.30pm; **Rose & Crown**, 9.15pm; **Old Shepherd**, 10pm.
 - Fri 16 May. Mild Month Social. **Swan**, Bushey, 8.30pm.
 - Sun 25 May. **West Herts Sports Club**, 1pm. To be confirmed. Ring contact for details.
 - Sat 31 May. Hunton Bridge Social. **King's Lodge**, 8.30pm; **Dog and Partridge**, 9.15pm; **King's Head**, 10pm.
- Branch Contact: Martin Few 01923 252412**

ENFIELD & BARNET

- Tues 1 April. Branch Social. **Wonder**, Enfield, 9pm.
- Wed 9 April. Branch Meeting, **Old Mitre**, Barnet, 8.30pm.

- Thurs 17 April. Branch Social. **Sun & Woolpack**, Enfield Highway, 9pm.
 - Wed 23 April. **Railway Bell**, New Barnet, 9pm.
 - Thurs 24 April. Quiz Night, **Ealing Tennis Club**, 8pm.
 - Tues 29 April. Branch Social. **St Monica's**, Southgate, 9pm.
 - Sat 3 May. Reading Beer Festival.
 - Thurs 8 May. Mild promotion night. **Lord Nelson**, Barnet, 9pm.
 - Sat 10 May. Trip to York.
 - Tues 13 May. **Kings Head**, Winchmore Hill, 9pm.
 - Sun 18 May. **Dog & Duck**, then **Aladdin's restaurant**, both Winchmore Hill, N21. From noon,
 - Wed 21 May. **Windsor Castle**, East Finchley, 9pm.
 - Fri 23 May. Pub Crawl of Farringdon. Meet station, 6pm.
- Branch Contact: Brian Willis 020 8441 1892**

BRANCH DIARY

HERTS/ESSEX BORDERS

- Mon 22 April. Branch Meeting. **The Vaults & The Moon On The Cross** (Wetherspoons), Waltham Cross, 8.30pm
 - Mon 20 May. Branch Meeting. **Black Lion**, High Roding, Essex.
- Branch Contact:**
Graham Darby, (H) 01279 415895

SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE

- Tues 15 April. Branch Meeting. **Lower Red Lion**, St Albans. 8pm.
- Tues 29 April. Pub Of The Year winners presentation, **The Woodman**, Wildhill. From 8pm.
- Tues 7 May. St Albans Beer Festival Committee Meeting, **Lower Red Lion**, St Albans, 8pm.
- Tues 13 May. Pub Of The Year Runners Up presentation. **The Carpenters Arms**, Harpenden. From 8pm.
- Tues 20 May. Branch Meeting.

Red Lion, Radlett, 8pm.

Branch Contact:
John Bishop. (H) 01582 768478

MID CHILTERNES

- Sat 5 April. Branch Social. **Anglers Retreat Beer Festival**, Marsworth, Bucks. From noon.
 - Wed 16 April. Branch Pub review. **Jolly Cricketers**, Seer Green, 8pm; **Three Horse-shoes**, 9pm.
 - Wed 23 April. Joint Branch Social, **White Horse**, Hedgerley, 8pm.
 - Wed 30 April. Branch Social. **Kings Arms**, Chesham, 8pm; **Queens Head**, 9pm; **Last Post**, 10pm.
 - Sat 10 May. Branch Boundary Review
 - Wed 14 May. Branch AGM. **Blue Ball**, Asheridge, 7.30pm
 - Sat 24 May. **Chesham Beer Festival.**
- Branch Contact:**
John Lomax
(H) 01494 783198

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FESTIVAL**

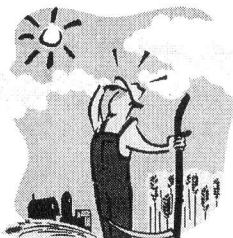
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