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HERTFORDSHIRE'S

Pints of View

The bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker

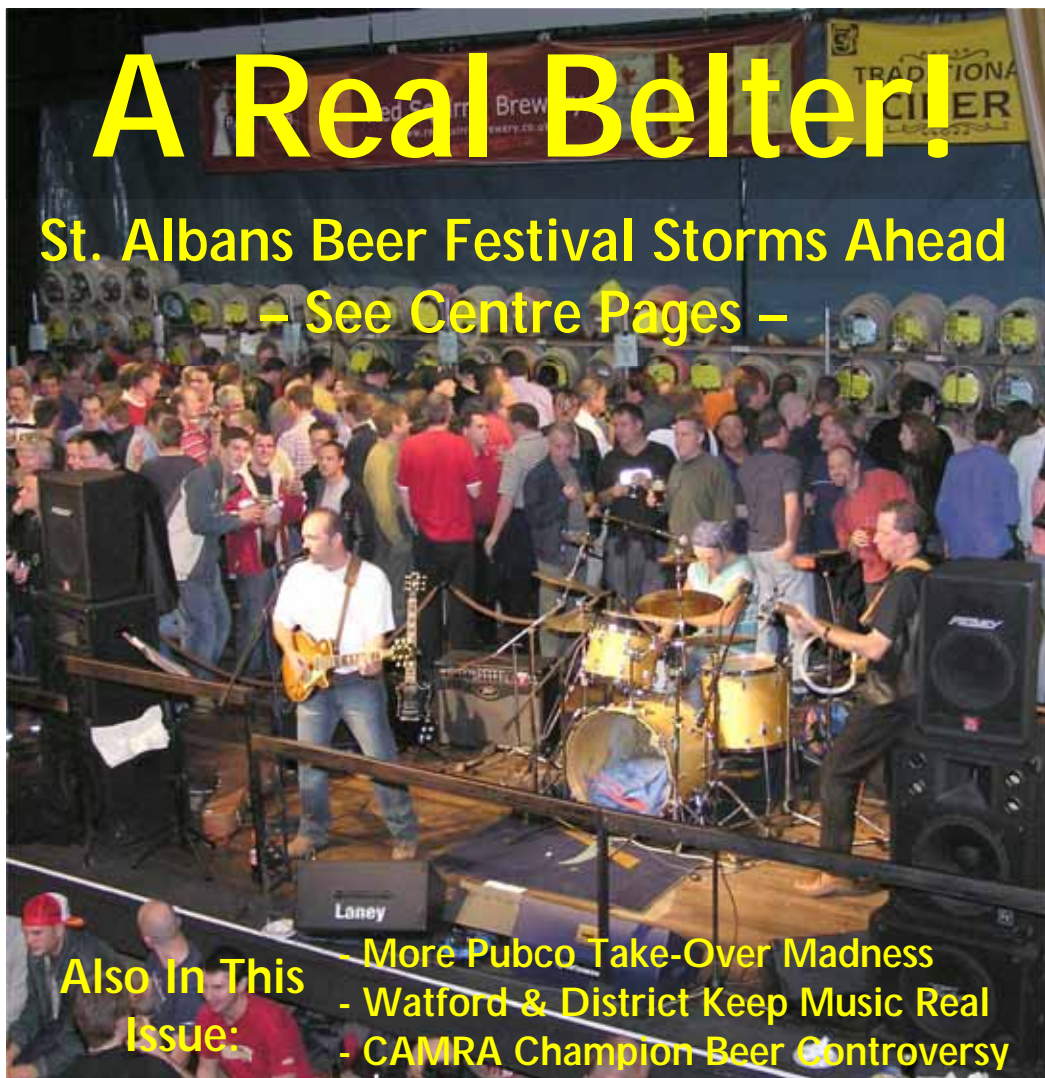
October/November 2004

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A Real Belter!

St. Albans Beer Festival Storms Ahead
– See Centre Pages –



Also In This Issue:

- More Pubco Take-Over Madness
- Watford & District Keep Music Real
- CAMRA Champion Beer Controversy

THE BITTER END

More Pubco Take-Over Madness

Following our attack on the faceless pub companies (pubcos) in last edition's 'Pints of View', Punch Taverns have now increased their empire by more than a thousand pubs by taking over the InnSpired Pub chain. All of InnSpired's 1064 pubs, owned by venture capitalists Alchemy Partners, were purchased in a £335million pound deal, which will mean that Punch controls a massive 8310 outlets. To avoid having too many pubs in some locations, which would cause problems with the Office of Fair Trading and Monopolies and Mergers Commission, Punch will sell 51 pubs from InnSpired and 37 outlets it already owns to Admiral Taverns for £22.6 million.

What is a Pub worth?

Last edition we reported that Greene King had bought pubs from Laurel Pub Co at £1.5 million each. Wolverhampton & Dudley Brewery had bought Wizard Inn's pubs at £1.4 million each. Now Punch have bought InnSpired's pubs at a knock-down price of *under* £320k each. Punch then sold 88 pubs to Admiral for £256k each. Trade and location must influence the price but this disparity is baffling. Giles Thornley, chief



executive of Punch quoted: "The InnSpired takeover made a good geographic fit with half the pubs being in southern England. The new portfolio is split 50-50 between very high quality pubs and others that need a bit of tender loving care and investment". Whether Punch are willing to support and improve their less lucrative acquisition remains to be seen, the other alternative is more pub sales and closures. Mr Moulton, an industry analyst stated "Even

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Prohibition wouldn't be catastrophic. You could get close to the book value selling the estate as a collection of houses", and added that "more than half of Britain's 30,000 tenanted pubs were in the hands of two operators – Punch and Enterprise Inns. The irony is that the Beer Orders (introduced in 1989) were supposed to break up a brewers' monopoly, yet there is a far greater concentration now".

CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain Controversy

CAMRA's Champion Beer Of Britain (CBOB) awards have been announced after the final tastings, which took place on the first day of the Great British Beer Festival (GBBF) held last month at London Olympia.

This Years Winners :-

Overall Champion Kelham Island Pale Rider
5.2% alcohol by volume (ABV)

Second Greene King IPA 3.6% ABV

Third Hampshire Ironside 4.2 % ABV

Milds:

Gold J.W.Lees GB Mild

Silver Brains Dark

Bronze Hardy's & Hanson's Kimberley Mild

Bitters:

Gold Greene King IPA

Silver Oakham JHB

Bronze Triple fff Altons Pride & Whim
Hartington Bitter

Best Bitters:

Gold Hampshire Ironside

Silver Hook Norton Generation

Bronze Hop Back Summer Lightning

Speciality Beers

Gold Cairngorm Trade Winds

Silver Harviestoun Schiehallion

Bronze Yates Isle of Wight Special

Immediately following the announcement of the winners and the announcement of Greene King IPA's win, receiving some calls of derision from the beer festival guests, lightning struck - followed by a monumental clap of thunder. The ensuing downpour overflowed the guttering and areas of Olympia were flooded. The event was interpreted by some as the wrath of God. The Gold award won by Greene King IPA has brought about an avalanche of letters to 'What's Brewing' (the Campaign's monthly newspaper). The largest amount of correspondence on a single item in the paper's history caused Ted Bruning the editor to comment "Many were

unfit to print due to the language used or content that could only be considered as libellous hate mail". Many suggested that the tasting panel had been nobbled or that Greene King had submitted a specially-brewed sample.

The fact is that for a beer to reach the final tasting it must be recommended by local and regional tasting panels, and the allegation that a panel who do a blind tasting in each of the categories can be got at, is ludicrous.

The other theory that it was a special brew also does not make sense either, Greene King can no



Greene King IPA – it's not a Best Bitter

longer do short runs and contracts out its low capacity brews like XX Mild to Riddleys. Please, no rumours that Riddleys brewed the award winning beer, I assure you that could not have been kept secret. So why do Greene King beers meet with such disapproval? IPA is now the second most common real ale in the country with Tetley's Bitter being top seller. Both meet with derision because like other nationally marketed products, once they get into a large number of outlets the quality suffers. In a large number of cases this is due to the publican, who is not interested in the beer, does not clean the equipment properly or regularly does not store

the beer correctly. I must add that Greene King have done more than others to improve this situation and have made a major investment in their tied pubs. They also promote naturally conditioned Greene King IPA and Abbot Ale (In fact Abbot is my favourite tittle).

Christine Cryne, who was on the GBBF tasting panel stated; "I must admit to have never tasted a pint of IPA as good as the one at the GBBF, but I understand that a lot of effort has been made by Greene King to improve the quality of the beer in the last year. The question the customers should be asking is whether they are committed to providing the same quality in their outlets rather than the non-exceptional pint we have become used to in many pubs".

With Greene King acquiring 400 pubs from Laurel Inns we will be seeing a lot more IPA in Hertfordshire in the near future. My last word on Greene King IPA is that like the poem; 'when it is good it very, very good but when it is bad it is definitely horrid'.

Steve Bury

Congratulations go to all the CBOB winners.

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*We have recently moved from the
GBG 2004 & 5 listed Fullood Arms
in Winchester and look forward to
meeting the good people of Hertford.*



Cask Marque Update



We haven't mentioned Cask Marque in the newsletter since the Oct/Nov 2003 edition and although we in CAMRA have some reservations about their assessments, our aims are broadly the same. Both CAMRA and Cask Marque are trying to improve the quality of real ale at the point of dispense. For those of you who are observant the number of blue Cask Marque accreditation signs and diplomas appearing in pubs shows that they are here to stay, and more brewers are signing up.

Issue 6 of the Cask Marque newsletter contains an article "Working With CAMRA", which might have been better titled "Sponsoring CAMRA" as it states that they have in fact sponsored the Good Beer Guide for four years and have now included the "London Drinker" a local CAMRA publication. They have also supported the Derby Beer Festival and again had a stand at the Great British Beer Festival. What work we do together remains to be seen; there are definite disagreements about beer temperature and Cask Marque's acceptance of the cask breather (a beer dispense method). In fact we seem to run a parallel course towards the same goal.

Pubcos Criticised

Another feature in the newsletter is highlighting an interest in clean glasses, again getting full support from CAMRA, stating that their audits have exposed 40% of outlets have dirty glassware - which is a serious problem.

- 25% have dirty beer lines which causes major problems with beer quality due to bad cellar maintenance (laziness).

- 28% operate poor stock rotation.

- 38% do not serve cask ale within their temperature specification of 11-13 degree centigrade. Although I do not want beer like lukewarm tea, I also do not want my teeth to

go on edge at the first mouthful and, with winter approaching, I don't want to have wait while the beer warms up after being passed through flash coolers.

The newsletter makes the following point: "The reason for these poor results, which affects both yields and beer quality, is the distinct lack of training and knowledge. Traditionally the gap was filled by brewers' inspections and on-site training, but with the advent of Pubcos who now own the majority of pubs, this has been neglected".

Steve Bury

Welcome to one of
St Albans' friendliest pubs



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PUBS UNDER THREAT

Old English Gentleman

Although not in Hertfordshire - in fact just across the Essex border, the **Old English Gentleman**, situated on the canal bank in Eleanor Cross Road between Waltham Cross and Waltham Abbey, has been closed. The pub on the River Lee is owned by McMullen's but is under threat from those who should be protecting it - British Waterways, who plan to demolish the pub to extend moorings and build a larger new pub alongside. We have received correspondence from S.Carter of Edmonton who says he has used the historic pub for many years and is saddened by the prospect of its loss. John Simpson a CAMRA member and co-author of "The Best Waterside Pubs" agrees with Mr



The Old English Gentleman by barge

Carter that the 200-year-old pub is exceptional and has always been well run; it is delightfully situated in a classic bridge side location, and is an architectural gem. He states that the pub could be sympathetically extended whilst leaving the frontage and main bar intact. To prove his point he has sent drawings to British Waterways showing how the pub could be refurbished. British Waterways' Commercial Director James Froomberg said "While the Old English Gentleman does have a certain charm, its main problem is that it is too small to offer the sort of facilities that most people now demand from a pub that has limited seating and eating areas".

The King Harry

There is concern for the future of the **King Harry** in St. Albans if proposed road changes go ahead. Developers Hallam Land Management have proposed several options for traffic management as part of its planning application to redevelop the former St. Albans School playing field with 300 new homes. Whilst one option is to construct a link road along St. Stephen's churchyard opposite, the other involves moving or demolishing the pub. The purpose would be to improve the bottleneck junction of Watling Street, Watford Road, and King Harry Lane.

St. Albans Civic Society has voiced concerns to St. Albans City Council relating to the proposed changes and the loss of the pub, which is a listed building. They argue that as the council is currently undertaking a survey of playing fields, the proposed scheme is premature: "It is going too fast", Eric Roberts, chairman of the Civic Society commented.

Verulam Residents Association voted unanimously against the scheme, at a recent meeting reportedly attended by 250 people, preferring to see the land involved as public open space. Concerned that the shallow foundations of St. Stephen's Church might affect the possibility of road construction, equal concern was raised about the future of the King Harry.

Barrie Mort, chairman of the association remarked on the hardening Government guidelines relating to the selling-off of playing fields to developers, adding: "There is a shortage of playing fields in this area so it is going to be needed". Mr Mort quoted nearby St. Columba's College as being short of playing fields.

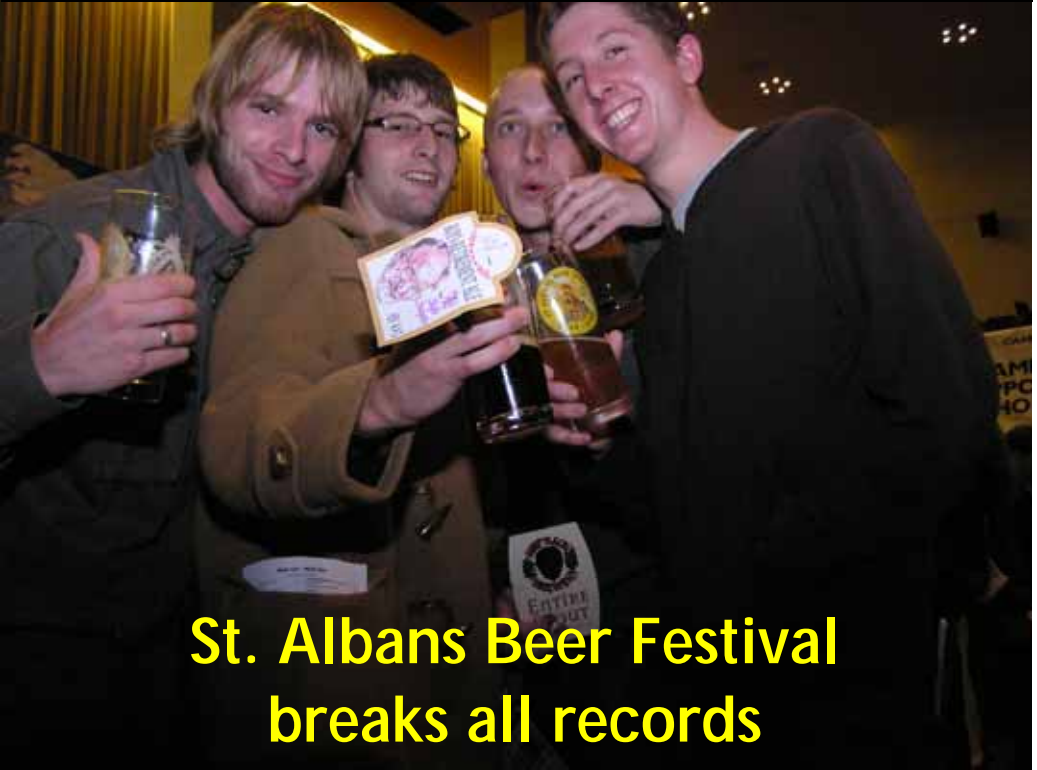
A St. Albans District Council spokesperson has acknowledged a number of objections it has received to the scheme, but until the district's playing fields survey is complete, the application in question has still to be determined

Source - Herts Advertiser, Sept. 16, 2004

Do **you** know of any pub under threat? We want to hear of any local South Herts. pub you know is under threat of closure, conversion to non-pub use or demolition. Contact our editor, **Steve Bury** (see page 4) or e-mail us at: realales@yahoo.com

Subscriptions for Pints of View

£4 for 18 issues. Send to: John Lightfoot, 66 Dryfield Road, Edgware, Middx., HA8 9JT. Cheques payable to: CAMRA South Herts.



St. Albans Beer Festival breaks all records

More was the story behind this year's St. Albans Beer Festival. **More** visitors, **more** sessions and **more** beers.

And with St. Albans festival now firmly established as the biggest festival in the South-East, setting aside the annual bash at London's Olympia, visitors flocked to the city to pay homage to the holy trinity of malt, hops and water.

Nearly seven thousand customers poured through the doors during the four days of the festival. The choice was immense: over 300 real ales, ciders and perries in the main auditorium and a wide selection of Austrian, Belgian, German and Czech bottled beers in the Foreign Beer Bar in the lower foyer.

Held in conjunction with the St Albans Leos at the Alban Arena in the heart of the city, the event raised money to further the Campaign and to benefit local charities.

Visitors were quick to sing the festival's praises

"I generally come most years and the range of beers and the way the festival is organised always impresses me," said Martin Walters who travelled to the festival from Kidderminster in the Midlands.

Other guests came from further afield. Joe and Gwen Styles were visiting friends in St Albans and read about the festival in the local press. "This is quite an education to us both," said Joe, a teacher from Sonoma, north of San Francisco. "We occasionally get the odd cask conditioned beer in the brew pubs up and down the coast, but the size and breadth of your festival is quite outstanding.

St. Albans Rocks

Music always features heavily at the festival and this year the Verulam School Big Band entertained a packed Arena on Thursday evening with a programme of jazz standards and big band swing. Friday and Saturday night bands were welcome returnees to St. Albans, Straight Life



Top: a packed festival saw a record crowd on Friday night. Guests could enjoy from over 300 different ales.

Bottom: Licensee and resident auctioneer Steve Bury (right) whips up bids for the charity auction while Bill Austin (left) and Colin Hunter assist.

(featured on the front cover) on the Friday and The Penang Lawyers on Saturday. Both bands soon had guests dancing.

Sponsors

The festival attracted a number of big name sponsors. Adnams Brewery kindly sponsored the souvenir festival glasses, Charles Wells of Bedford brought along their brewery bus on Wednesday lunchtime, and McMullens were in evidence Saturday lunchtime with their famous steam wagon. A new name at St Albans was Red Squirrel Brewery who sponsored the Stage Bar and exhibited several of their beers. The brewery, based in Hertford, and who only started brewing at the beginning of the year, were one of the hits of the festival, with their Gold being the first beer to sell out on the first night.

While the volunteer staff in the main auditorium and lower foyer were kept busy filling empty glasses, in the foyer customers could have their

★★★ St. Albans Beer Festival 4-Page Special ★★★

glasses engraved, play pub games, join CAMRA (over 70 guests joined in the four days) and purchase the brand new Good Beer Guide. Guests at Thursday night's session could get an autographed copy of the new guide from editor Roger Protz, as well as choose between a vast selection of 90 different bottle conditioned beers.



Above: Top Festival supporters Gary Hayward of Red Squirrel Brewery (centre) joins with St. Albans City mayor, Gordon Myland (right) in a celebratory pint at the festival's launch.



Above: CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2005 editor Roger Protz was on hand to sign copies Thursday night.

Below: Bar staff on the Main Bar at full stretch on the Friday night



Beers of the Festival as voted by brewers and publicans were as follows:

- 1. Chardonnale**
Red Lion, Ossett
- 2. Chesapeake**
Newby, Wyke
- 3. Brewers Gold Extra**
Crouch Vale

★★★ St. Albans Beer Festival 4-Page Special ★★★



Downstairs in the lower foyer, (see picture above) was the Foreign Beer Bar. Featuring beers from mainland Europe and beyond, sales were brisk. The Austrian beer was the most popular, with people particularly commenting on its taste and unusualness. Also credited by festival goers

was the relaxed atmosphere of the bar, the wide range of knowledge of the staff, and the high speed of service. Wendy Casey, Foreign Beer Bar Manager commented "We sold out of beer at 9pm on Saturday night and I would say this was our most successful bar yet". Wendy would like to extend her particular thanks to colleagues Douglas Hamilton and Bob Norrish, who were magnificent coping with difficulties, and making endless trips up to the chiller van for beer re-stocking. Thanks also go to the Friday evening staff for getting the beer served at top speed.

Join CAMRA now to get into next year's St. Albans' festival for free!
- See below to become a member -



McMullens drove their vintage steam wagon from Hertford to St. Albans on the Saturday lunchtime to join in the celebrations.

APPLICATION FOR CAMRA MEMBERSHIP

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SIGNATURE.....

TELEPHONE NUMBER/S.....

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SHE POV#207



The Penang Lawyers returned after a four-year gap to rock the Arena on the Saturday night.

Keep Music Real – Open House at the Colne

Local sources will tell you that Watford's Lower High Street used to boast more than its fair share of pubs, as well as being the site of Benskins Brewery. Sadly, none are left and instead car dealerships, retail parks and premises awaiting redevelopment mostly occupy the route from the ring road to Bushey Arches. However, it is here that you will find an establishment that's one of Watford's cultural beacons as well as one of its more unusual outlets for real ale.

Tucked away at the end of Local Board Road, in buildings that once housed a water pumping station, is the **Pump House Theatre & Arts Centre**. Opened in 1972, the Pump House was and is a self-supporting co-operative, run and maintained by volunteers. It comprises the theatre, home to the Pump House Theatre Company, and the Colne River Room, which acts as a base for the local Jazz Club, the Woodside Morris Men and the Pump House Clog Morris team, as well as being the venue for other events throughout the week.

One such event is the Tuesday night Open House; an open mic night for local musicians where entrance is free and members of the public can wander in and enjoy the evening's entertainment.

As I found when I visited the Colne River Room, between the entrance hall and the stage area there is a small bar room with up to three real ales available. On the Tuesday I visited, the choice comprised of RCH PG Steam, Eastwood & Sanders K6 and Hidden Brewery's Hidden Pint, all highly drinkable. The ales are ever changing and tend to be from a range of small breweries seldom seen in Watford. The bar room itself is a gem; signed photographs, music posters and brewery mirrors adorn the walls and the Pump House staff lay on a table of filled rolls for 80p each. Musicians due on stage use

the bar area to practice, jam and chat to their colleagues, which adds to the relaxed atmosphere. The management are highly supportive of real ale and old pump clips are proudly displayed at the back of the bar. Even the small refreshments bar in the theatre has a hand pump, usually supplying a Tring beer.

On the night I visited, the music onstage varied from acoustic Americana, through piano led ballads and Latin-American music to the duo of Dave & Simon playing haunting tunes on Native American flutes. The performances were

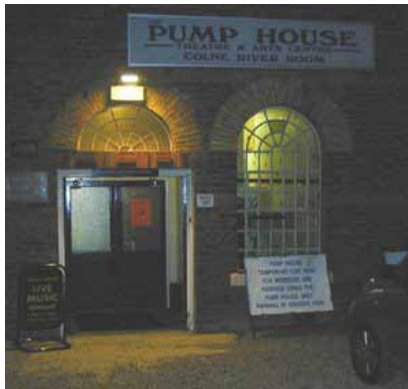
punctuated part way through by the weekly raffle, with accompanying music provided by Martin on the piano.

There's a real sense of community to the night. The visitors seem to be from all walks of life and plenty of the musicians and staff are regulars. I was told that Pump House members with particular skills would muck in to provide repairs on

essential services like electrics and plumbing, all in the spirit of self-sufficiency. The Pump House is a registered charity and would find it hard to survive without the generosity of public donations and of members giving their time for free.

While sipping my pint and listening to the music in these surroundings, I couldn't help but contrast the scene to that of Watford town centre on a weekend night. I was having the best night out I'd had for ages and I wondered how many weekend drinkers, jaded with the trawl from bar to bar, wouldn't rather transfer their night out to the Pump House on a Tuesday.

Details of events at the Pump House can be found on their web site, www.pumphouse.info. Alternatively, telephone 01923 241362, fax 01923 222792 or email info@pumphouse.info.



Pump House Theatre

Andrew Vaughan

Beer Names Anagram Wordsearch

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

Clues to the 31 Beer Names in the grid above:-

- 1) Dark Tribe bear coal.
- 2) Sea main in Wales.
- 3) Rare bats in Rochdale.
- 4) Anchor ban in Houston.
- 5) Damn bad lock in Wigan.
- 6) Can Rob in Devon
- 7) Pat can in Cumbria.
- 8) Sand Mary found in Devon.
- 9) Desire Ray in S.Yorkshire.
- 10) Live fast in W.Sussex.
- 11) Calf Pat found in Bolton.
- 12) Hit cog in W.Midlands.
- 13) Joy hole in Bolton.
- 14) Beg rice in Burslam.
- 15) Our jest in Cheltenham.
- 16) Killing by Cropton.
- 17) Dream in Wales.
- 18) Rod chum in Aviemore.
- 19) Put UN ale in Gosport.
- 20) OK load in Somerset.
- 21) Won in Cornwall.
- 22) Tin pears in S. Wales.
- 23) Dear Sir in wales.
- 24) Rap tram in Newcastle.
- 25) SS agent in Norfolk.
- 26) Sex at Renfrewshire.
- 27) Try hop in Manchester.
- 28) All due in Newmarket.
- 29) New toes in Redruth.
- 30) Hit men wok in Manchester.
- 31) Aye Ken in N.Yorkshire

Completed entries should be sent to Steve Bury, 14 New Road, Shenley, Herts, WD7 9EA. Please don't forget to include your name and address details.

The first correct entry opened on the 1st Dec. 2004 will receive a copy of the new "2005 Good Beer Guide".

1A	R	C	H	E	R	2S	M	I	L	E	3S	T	O	N
W	D	O	N	I	10A	R	R	A	11N	A	G	S	H	E
O	Y	O	A	17K	I	N	G	S	H	E	A	18D	E	H
N	T	H	A	22M	I	L	K	S	T	R	E	O	A	E
9S	H	O	L	A	N	26D	A	R	K	S	E	G	12D	N
R	G	S	S	H	C	O	T	S	W	T	23T	H	O	G
E	I	L	I	T	O	S	30E	N	O	A	E	O	L	4E
T	16M	R	M	R	R	E		V	L	27R	I	U	P	X
E	A	A	A	O	T	L	L	I	29D	E	G	S	H	M
P	H	21E	H	28N	N	E	W	R	E	A	N	19E	I	O
T	S	T	L	O	I	L	G	N	I	D	W	G	13N	O
8S	E	A	E	25K	R	O	24Y	H	T	R	O	Y	O	5R
L	V	G	R	E	H	T	E	20N	A	I	T	P	T	O
L	15E	L	O	P	Y	A	14M	A	H	G	N	I	T	B
E	7W	O	R	C	E	R	A	C	6S	N	O	S	N	I

Solution to Newsletter 205
'Cryptic Brewery Names'
Puzzle.

1st prize winner - Jean Martin of St. Albans.
2nd prize winner - Brian Burrin of Stanmore, Middx.

The solution and winners of our previous newsletter's Prize Crossword will be announced in our next newsletter.

10th Watford Beer Festival

You have about a month to recover from the St. Albans Beer Festival before the beginning of the 10th Watford Beer Festival, which is being held, as ever, at the West Herts Sports Club, Park Avenue, Watford. The festival opens on Thursday afternoon for the first time in its history and 50+ beers will be available over the three days. The beer range and volume will be greater to take account of the tremendous success of previous years, more ciders and perries should also be available.

The opening times are: Thursday 4th November, 5 – 11pm, Friday 5th November, 11am – 11pm and Saturday 6th November 11am – 11pm. We're hoping to have most, if not all, of the beers that have won Beer of the Festival over the years. A list that includes Hop Back Summer Lightning (our first winner in 1995), Pictish Brewer's Gold, Durham White Velvet and last years' winner, Grand Union One Hop Crystal. There'll be plenty of other treats available in our extended beer range, though, and visitors on the first day will have first dibs on them all, so it may be wise to book the Friday off and spend the weekend with us. **See advert on back page.**

CAMRA Good Beer Guide 1997 - 2005 Cask Marque Certification



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Roger Protz

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One of Hertford's oldest pubs, offering a fine selection of up to 10 cask conditioned ales from around the country

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NO SMOKING AREA
in the upstairs function rooms.

WELL SUPERVISED
Children permitted, upstairs only.
Bar Billiards Room and Traditional Pub Games.

'Simply A Proper Pub!'

SWIFT HALVES

A PUB company is being urged restore a unique sign over **The Rats Castle** in St Albans

The city's Mayor, Cllr Gordon Myland, is asking Spirit Inns to reconsider their latest plans for the sign at the Fleetville pub.

Last week Mr Myland stepped in to ask the company to take down a new sign put up following a refurbishment at the pub as it showed a picture of Windsor Castle complete with a Royal standard flying from the distinctive Round Tower.

Mr Myland contacted Spirit Inns after complaints that the sign was an insult to the Royal Family and the firm agreed to remove it.

Within 24 hours Spirit Inns sent Mr Myland a proposed new sign but he said: "It still looked to me a little like Windsor Castle so I have now suggested that they might like to consider reproducing something like the old sign.

"That was quite amusing and did show some rats, which, incidentally, is what most local people call the pub. They rarely use the word castle when they are talking about it."

A company spokesman said they were considering their options.

The story has also sparked a debate on the reason why the pub was called The Rats Castle. Before it was converted into a pub the building was a hardware store.

Herts Advertiser - 5 August 2004

- Following a recent visit, it was noticed that a sign is still not in place. (Ed)

Boozy Bear Plunders Campers' Beer

A black bear went on a binge at a campsite in the US state of Washington - guzzling down some 36 cans of beer.

Campground workers were stunned to come across the bear sleeping off the effects in their grounds, surrounded by dozens of empty beer cans. But this was no ordinary case of a bear with a sore head at Baker Lake resort, 80 miles (129km) northeast of Seattle. He had apparently

tried out and rejected the mass-market Busch beer in favour of local brand Rainier. The bear appeared to have got into campers' cool boxes and used his teeth and claws to puncture the cans.

Beer trap

Fish and wildlife enforcement Sgt Bill Heinck said the bear tried one can of Busch and ignored the rest - then got stuck into three dozen cans of Rainier.

"We noticed a bear sleeping on the common lawn and wondered what was going on until we discovered that there were a lot of beer cans lying around," camp worker Lisa Broxson was quoted by Reuters news agency as saying.

She said the bear was chased away by wildlife agents, but returned the next day.

The agents decided to trap the bear with doughnuts, honey and, of course, two cans of Rainier beer. It did the trick and he was captured.

"This is a new one on me," Sgt Heinck said in an Associated Press report. "I've known them to get into cans, but nothing like this. And it definitely had a preference."

BBC Online News, 9 August 2004

Old Cross Tavern



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**SOUTH HERTS PUB OF THE YEAR
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Gustard Wood: The **Tin Pot** is now closed to the visiting general public. Only paying residents are being served, though we are unsure if real ale is available.

Harpenden: The **Fox** is now open following refurbishment. Essentially a restaurant, it has a separate bar area serving ales Bass and Greene King IPA. (The IPA I was served with, being dispensed through a sparkler, was truly 'non-exceptional' - see page 3/4 - Ed). The **Silver Cup** is currently closed for refurbishment and is scheduled to re-open in early November.

North Myms: The **Old Maypole** has now reopened.

Radlett: The word is that ASK the Pizza parlour chain that destroyed the **Railway** has been taken over by Pizza Express. As Pizza Express already have another emporium in Watling Street, Radlett the **Railway** was sold on before the conversion was completed to **PREZZO** - another Pizza chain who opened on 14th August. Further down Watling Street **Ryan's Bar** has now been renamed **Brookes**, Free House and re-opened early in September.

Redbourn: Planning permission has been applied for to convert the **Saracens Head**, closed now for over two years, into two houses.

Rickmansworth: The **Bell, Book and Candle** in has some interesting beers on. Okell's Bitter was available on the last visit.

Sarratt: The **Boot** is under new management. The range is still from Greene King but on the last visit included the rare XX Mild.

St. Albans: The **King William IV** has re-opened and now sells a selection of real ales.

Watford: The **Champion's Bar** on St. Albans Road has re-installed hand pumps. Beers on offer are London Pride and a changing guest. The **Nascot Arms** on Stamford Street currently has five or six beers available on hand pump

Tue 12 Oct.: Beer Festival Publicity Crawl in Rickmansworth. **Coach & Horses**, 8pm; **Feathers**, 8.45pm; **Pennsylvanian**, 10.15pm.

Wed 20 Oct.: Beer Festival Publicity Crawl in Watford. **Horns**, 8pm; **Bodega**, 8.45pm; **Lloyds No.1**, 9.30pm; **Moon Under Water**, 10.15pm.

Mon 25 Oct.: Committee Meeting at the **Estcourt Arms**, Watford, 8.15pm. All members welcome.

Thu 4 - Sat 6 Nov: 10th **Watford Beer Festival**, **West Herts Sports Club**, Park Avenue, Watford. See back page or web site for details.

Sun 14 Nov: Southern Cross Quiz Night. Meet at the **Southern Cross**, Langley Road, Watford at 8.30pm.

Fri 19 Nov: Croxley Green Social. **Coach & Horses**, 8.30pm; **Artichoke**, 9.15pm; **Sportsman**, 10pm.

Wed 24 Nov: Mill End Social. **Whip & Collar**, 8.30pm; **Tree**, 9.15pm; **Bell, Book & Candle**, 10pm.

Mon 29 Nov: Committee Meeting at the **Estcourt Arms**, Watford, 8.15pm. All members welcome.

Wed 8 Dec: King's Langley social. **Old Palace**, 8.30pm; **Saracen's Head**, 9.15pm.

Branch Contact: Andrew Vaughan. Telephone: 01923 230104.

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Website: www.watfordcamra.org.uk

SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE

Tue 19 Oct: Branch Meeting – **Red Lion Hotel**, Radlett (to be attended by the Youngs Brewery Quality Assurance Manager) 8pm. All members welcome.

Tue 16 Nov: Branch Meeting – **White Horse**, Hertford 8pm. All members welcome.

Branch Contact: John Bishop. Telephone: 01582-768478

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BRANCH DIARY

WATFORD & DISTRICT

Thu 7 Oct.: Beer Festival Publicity Crawl in Bushey. Start at 8pm in the **Black Boy**, Bushey Heath or the **Railway Arms**, Oxhey. Meet at the **Swan**, Bushey, 10pm.

Hertfordshire's Pints Of View is produced by the South Hertfordshire and Watford & District Branches of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). 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.

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