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HERTFORDSHIRE'S

# Pints of View

The bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker

February/March 2006

Circulation 5000

No. 215

## A New Guide Launched



free

February 2006 sees the publication and launch of our new free fold-out guide: "Real Ale in Hertford – Real Ale in Ware".

This free colour guide has been produced by CAMRA South Hertfordshire Branch members.

The colour guide offers the drinker descriptions of all of the pubs in Hertford, Ware and the surrounding villages that are currently selling real ale.

Included in the guide are:

- Town and area maps
- Short articles on local breweries
- General information about CAMRA and its local activities.

See page 6 for further details.



free

A Guide to Hertford overleaf

### Historic Ware

Why not take some time out to sample the great selection of pubs and beer that Ware has to offer. 20 miles north of London, Ware is situated on the River Lee where its geology, streams and rural beauty complete the river scene. Once a significant crossing point for stage coaches travelling between London and Cambridge, its main street is marked with many historic coaching inns. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century Ware had become the largest malting town in Europe and many of these buildings remain, as do some of the brewery buildings from the past. Amongst its impressive array of pubs Ware, surely, has one for you.

### Travelling to Ware

Ware Railway Station connects with Hertford East and with Liverpool Street and Cambridge via Braintree.

Local buses include the 310, 351, 395, 395 and 524 services and the cross Hertfordshire 724 route. By road Ware is located just east of the A10, north of the A614. Hertford lies 2 miles to the southwest.



Also In This Issue:

- A New Brewing Chapter at McMullens
- Pubs A-Plenty in Ware
- Watford & District's London Pub Crawl

# THE BITTER END

## New Licensing Hours - What the Papers Said

The papers have been full of outrageous articles about "binge drinking" to coincide with the relaxation of licensing hours. They picture the country invaded by crowds of inebriated hooligans of both sexes roaming around causing mayhem, allowed and encouraged by the new licensing hours. Sadly for the press 24th November came and went without incident, so let's print again some of the things they predicted.

*Metro* 24th October "Drink up so we get our £20,000 bonus". Publicans could earn up to



£20,000 a year in bonuses by encouraging people to binge-drink under the new licensing laws. Dave Daley of the National Association of Licensed House Managers is quoted "How we make our money is to make people binge drink. The more alcohol you sell, the more bonus you get".

The article continues with a threat issued by Licensing Minister James Purcell (I didn't know one existed - Ed) "Pubs with irresponsible drinks promotions could lose their licences".

It was also predicted that 1,000 pubs who had not made applications for the

new licenses would have to close. The ban on smoking in public places is more about the possible litigation by employees if their health suffers, than the customer. Once the all-out ban on smoking in public places comes into effect what will be next? I predicted the nanny state giving out alcohol tokens to ensure people do not drink too much and burden the National Health Service. The Metro opens up a new threat that half a million pub workers risk permanent hearing loss when opening hours are extended. It claims that deaf charity

RNID and the Trades Union Congress (TUC) are pursuing the issue and examining existing rules on noise levels. So let's look forward to a ban on high decibel music in public places.

Metro 21st November "Time it was safest to binge drink" The article makes comparisons between drinking in medieval times and the present day. "Round the clock drinking may launch in pubs in England and Wales on Thursday, but 700 years ago London had more than 1,300 ale-houses - one per 50 people. The boozers were filled with idle, lewd, young, lazy customers". What brings them



to this conclusion I do not know where did all the older people drink?. Another comment was "immoderate quaffing by fools is the plague of life in the capital". Obviously something we could look forward to on Thursday.

*Herts Advertiser* 24th November "Binge or cringe as pub hours increase". "Today is the day we find



*No binge-drinking hordes as yet spotted*

out if our district will be held to ransom by late-night drinkers causing alcohol-fuelled mayhem as new licensing laws come into force". Never let it be said that the Herts Ad can't be as inflammatory as the rest of the Press. District councillor Tony Swendell is quoted: "There are many in our community

who will no longer use pubs or go out late at night for fear of what might happen".

Local residents and the police had succeeded in stopping some of the extended hours applications, but when Armageddon arrived, Thursday 24th November and the weekend following passed without incident.

How disappointing for the press and the temperance society. The only complaints came from bar staff who quite naturally had reservations about working the extended hours, and in some cases were not happy about the pay and conditions



on offer. *What's Brewing*, CAMRA's national newspaper, summed up the change admirably under the banner "Carnage as longer hours come in". A photo shows a deserted Luton town centre just after 11pm. Owen Morris who has lived in the town for seven years writes: "Normally at this hour on a Friday the street would be thronged with drinkers making their way en masse to the nightclubs and would sweep through the town like a tidal wave. I can honestly say I have never seen it so quiet. The pubs were still busy with people enjoying their drinks without rushing to get the last round in. Instead of a throng of drunken bodies, people were filtering out in small groups and couples. It made the Cassandras who predicted that civilisation would end look pretty silly. Hopefully some of the people who used to stay away from the town centre on Friday and Saturday nights will be tempted back".

Of course the binge drinking debate continues. *Telegraph* 27th December "Binge drinking takes toll on health of young". Un-named experts are quoted "...binge drinking culture, the relative cheapness of alcohol and longer opening hours have all played their part in the toll that alcohol is taking on the health of the young". The article then goes on to give figures showing a 15% increase in hospitalised alcohol related cases for people less than 18 years of age. One wonders what the extended licensing hours have to do with this; firstly under 18's should not be in the pub and secondly the figures are for 2004-5 - before the new legislation came into effect. The 30% increase in adult admissions is worrying but still based on the same criteria. The licensing laws in this country did not consider customer requirements and were introduced first by Oliver Cromwell in the "Sunday Observancy Act", which banned nine-pin bowling and pubs opening whilst a church service was in progress. The second set of restrictions were introduced during the First World War in an effort to increase productivity and stop people getting drunk at lunchtimes in the munitions industry. Hopefully we are in more enlightened times.

*Steve Bury*

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# Hail a New Brewing Chapter at McMullens



*The latest developments at Hertfordshire's oldest brewery. By Les Middlewood*

Since emerging from the company difficulties of 2003, McMullen's have been planning for a new and exciting future as an integrated brewing and pub company. As McMullen's have reorganised along these lines, the first notable milestone was the construction of a new management development centre, opened in 2004 at a cost of £350k. Now with over 100 training courses having taken place, the centre is playing a major part in the development of McMullen's staff and in the company's pursuit of quality. As we go to press, Mac's training scheme has just won best development programme for a managed estate in the National Industry Training Awards. Presented at the House of Commons by John Grogan, the Labour MP for Selby, the award was an acknowledgement of the company's genuine investment in training and developing its staff.

The second milestone was to be the construction of a new brewery. Over the last few months construction work has been pressing ahead. Now completion has arrived and a splendid new £1m brewery has been formed, all within existing and extended storage buildings off Hartham Lane. The gleaming new equipment is set out on three floors, almost in a traditional tower brewery layout, where the brewing process starts on the top floor and takes its course to the ground floor, where it is casked and made ready for despatch to the pubs. With commissioning

also largely complete, trial brewing is now underway and commercial production is likely to transfer here in the spring when an official launch is being planned to celebrate the event. We hope to bring you more detailed information on the brewery in a forthcoming issue of *Pints of View*. In time, it is probable that McMullen's activity will be restricted to one side of Hartham Lane, the future of the landmark and listed Victorian brewery and the subsequent 1980s brewery being still subject to development and planning discussion.



*McMullen's Hartham Lane Brewery*

McMullen's stalwart beers *Country* and *AK Bitters* will continue to be in the mainstay of the company's cask beer production, along with the popular seasonal beers. These will initially be brewed to the same pattern to which we have become accustomed - still interspersed with beers from

other breweries. *Butt's Jester*, *Woodforde's Wherry* and *Deuchars IPA* have signalled a more adventurous range of guest beers of late - and well received too, as have been Mac's recent seasonal brews, including the excellent *V1805*. The current seasonal beer is *Sweet Chariot* (4.8%ABV) brewed to coincide with the Six Nations rugby tournament. As the new brewery settles in, for us it will be watch this space - we would love to see more beers coming out of Hartham Lane. McMullen's are keen to spread their name in the world of cask beer - and to do that we anticipate that Mac's will want their cask beers to do the talking!

Recently we have seen the re-emergence of bottled *Castle Ale*, renamed as *Hertford Castle*.



This is likely to be an occasional visitor to McMullen's pubs – bottling still being undertaken by Hepworth's south of the M25.

Presently there is little to report on the pub front. McMullen's have a small team of "pub finders" actively searching for new acquisitions but nothing positive yet to impart. There have been a number of significant refurbishments – notably at the **Peahen** in St. Albans. Others have been previously mentioned in *Pints of View*.



*The Peahen in St Albans*

Planning hurdles have been overcome in Chelmsford to commence work on the latest **Baroosh** and the former **Slug and Lettuce** in Windsor is now under direct Mac's management, operating as **Bar 4**. Expect other Barooshes to emerge over the next few years. Activity in the free trade has increased. Fergus McMullen now has responsibility for this area of business and he is keen to see Mac's beers well-represented not only in the Free Trade but also at CAMRA beer festivals across East Anglia and the South-East.

Publicity remains rather low-key with very little advertising and no merchandising. McMullen's prefer to adopt a policy of local targeting. Consequently, to find out about their seasonal beers you probably already need to be in a Mac's pub – where posters describe the forthcoming beers.

Under the new licensing arrangements, new licences have been secured for all pubs and extended hours obtained for those pubs which wanted them though, as has been widely reported, the cost burden of going through this process has been an

unwelcome drain on company resources and finance. McMullen's were in favour of some relaxation in evening closing hours – perhaps an

hour or so but they are also very conscious of the social responsibilities that go with it and show an admirable determination to undertake these.

The threat of an all-out smoking ban in pubs is a worry to Mac's – as to many other brewers. In a recent article on McMullen's in *The Publican* (and available

on the Web), Peter Furness-Smith, McMullen's Managing Director, is quoted as saying "We must be allowed to trade on a level playing field. With clubs being exempt, I believe 30% of my businesses will become unviable. If the objective is to protect employees, the logical conclusion has to be an all-out ban. Self-regulation was working and you have to ask what gives politicians the right to interfere?".

This potential problem aside, McMullen's have a clear view of how they want to move forward and this is to a future where production of cask beer is firmly

set high on the company's agenda.

**And to that we raise our hats!** CAMRA looks forward to sampling the brews from the new brewery and wishes McMullen's the very best of luck with its new venture. We hope to continue working with Mac's locally and at beer festivals in 2006.



*Peter Furness-Smith*

**Subscriptions for Pints of View**  
£5 for 18 issues. Send to: John Lightfoot, 66 Dryfield Road, Edgware, Middx., HA8 9JT. Cheques payable to: CAMRA South Herts.



## New Guide Launch

...continued from front page.

Produced by CAMRA South Hertfordshire Branch members Jan Ordon, Tony Dawes, Linda Howe, Brian Page and Les Middlewood, the "Real Ale in Hertford – Real Ale in Ware" Guide is the culmination of surveying work carried out between October and December 2005.

Les says "We wanted to do some campaigning specific to our local area and to promote real ale and CAMRA in this part of Hertfordshire. We hope that the guide will encourage people to get out there and into some of the terrific pubs in the locality, and to sample some of the excellent real beers that are on offer. If it stimulates discussion on real ale and pubs in the area or creates interest for those coming across real ale for the first time, then the task has been worthwhile. We hope, too, that it's handy "back-pocket" size will make it a compulsory companion for those who want to put on their shoes and explore a bit.

Nowadays, the production of an all-Hertfordshire guide would be a monumental task. This localised approach has been more manageable and really enjoyable – taking just over four months from inception to completion. Perhaps this might be a way forward for other towns in the county. Now, whose round is it?"

The guide is being distributed to every pub that has been included in it and to many others that stock *Pints of View*. You may also find it in local libraries, museums and tourist offices and as far away as London train termini. However, because the Guide is free we suspect that it might be snapped up quickly. So, later this month, it will be possible to be downloaded from South Hertfordshire's website [www.hertsale.org.uk](http://www.hertsale.org.uk).

*Hertfordshire's Pints of View* is produced by the South Hertfordshire and Watford & District Branches of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). Views expressed are not necessarily those of the editor, CAMRA Ltd or its branches.

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# Herts Readers Write



Editor Steve Bury replies to correspondence we have received from our readers.

## Wrong Duke

I have received correspondence from Chris Saunders of St Albans, as follows below.

"I expect that many Albanians are aware of the doughty Sarah Jennings and her famous husband. Had your writer been drinking too much strong beer in the Lower Red Lion?

I append some notes below to clarify matters.

### *The Duke of Marlborough*

The Duke of Marlborough was born John Churchill, at Ashe in Devon. He became a page to the Duke of York (later James II). In 1678 he married Sarah Jennings Maid of Honour to Princess Anne (later queen), whom he had first met in 1675. Sarah was the daughter of Richard Jennings Lord of the Manor of Sandridge; some reports say that she was born at Waterend by the River Lea, then part of Sandridge (and where St Albans' **Waterend Barn**, now a Lloyds Bar, came from). Others have it that Sarah was born at Holywell House in St. Albans.

This house was originally built by Ralph Rowlatt (died 1543) when he acquired lands following the dissolution of St. Albans Abbey. His daughter Joan married Ralph Jennings (Sarah's great-great grandfather) and through this line the house eventually descended to Sarah and her husband. Holywell House was enlarged by the Marlboroughs in 1684-5 and in 1686 Holywell Hill was diverted around the present Grove Road to provide greater privacy.

John Churchill joined the Army and was to become one of Britain's greatest generals. He was made a baron in 1678 and received the Dukedom of Marlborough from William III in 1702. His greatest victories were achieved during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701 - 1714) and following his great victory at Blenheim in 1704 he was granted by a grateful nation the Royal Manor of Woodstock and the means to build there Blenheim Palace (built between 1705-22).

The Marlboroughs fell from favour in the later

part of Anne's reign although royal favour returned with accession of George I.

Because John had no sons, the title was allowed, by special Act of Parliament, to pass to his daughter Henrietta in her own right. A younger daughter, Lady Anne Churchill, married Charles Spencer, 3rd Earl of Sunderland, and from this marriage descend the modern Dukes. They therefore originally bore the surname Spencer, but, George Spencer, the 5th Duke of Marlborough, obtained a Royal Licence to assume and bear the additional surname and arms of his famous ancestor, the 1st Duke of Marlborough, and so became George Spencer-Churchill."

**Ed Says:** Hands up, the error was completely mine, as you have clearly pointed out. The error did not arise from drinking too much strong ale but the fact that John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough and Charles Spencer, 3rd Earl of Sunderland, both died in the same year – 1722. The Churchill's right to female succession, Charles Spencer married Anne Churchill.

## More Soap

Also received by e-mail was the following update on the "Soaps" article in 215 from John Crowhurst of St Albans, who writes as follows .

"I must stick up for Marjorie Antrobus in 'The Archers'. She is the lover of afghan hounds and is currently a resident at "The Laurels' old peoples home. The local busybody who wanted to turn the **Cat & Fiddle** into a heritage centre for the village of Ambridge has been Linda Snell. (*I was obviously so enthralled with the show I have mixed the two up. Ed.*) The owners are intending to turn the ex pub into housing. Haven't we heard this 'strange' idea somewhere before?

Linda is married to computer buff Robert Snell. She works on reception at Grey Gables, a country club with accommodation, a restaurant AND a bar; although we don't hear of any specific products or prices. Beer on sale in **The Bull** is 'Shires' but I haven't heard a price for a pint lately. I'll keep an ear open.

*Continued over*



In Borchester, the county town, Shula Lloyd (nee Archer) used to meet friends in The **Feathers** or **Nelson's** Wine Bar (no real ale) run by Nelson Gabriel, a longstanding friend of hers. (Well I thought Nelson died mysteriously in South America years ago. Ed.)

There is a pub, run by an ex policeman, which regularly features in ITV's *Heartbeat*. I don't remember the name but the licensee and barmaid are both key characters, so I'm sure that the February price check could be applied by watching a few episodes. (The show is supposed to take place in the 60's so we would expect a pint to be about 1s 3d - just over 6 new pence. The pump clips are from Camerons last time I looked.)

**Ed Says:** "Family Affairs" has now been mercilessly finished - obviously the viewing ratings fell to an all time low. For those who were interested the pub was called the **Black Swan**.

### Telegraph visits Chapmore End?

I also received a letter from John Green of St Albans about an article in the *Sunday Telegraph* 19th November 2005 who writes: "This may be a bit late for Edition 214 but might be of interest to readers. Last time I looked, I don't think Chapmore End could be described as a 'commuter village'. How else did such a pretentious git expect to be treated?"

John's comments refer to a piece headed "Pint to Pint" - a guide to British pubs by Adam Edwards, who that week had written about the **Woodman** at Chapmore End. The pub has been a regular entry in the CAMRA **Good Beer Guide** for many years, and although it is obvious that the author of the piece had visited the pub or knew someone who



*The Woodman at Chapmore End*

had, several things mentioned are ludicrously wrong.

Adam starts well, describing the Victorian pub by the duck pond, but then he mentions that it is in a pretty commuter village. Not so. Chapmore End, north-east of Bengeo off the B158 to Wadesmill is a good few miles from any of Ware, Hertford North or Hertford East railway stations.

He then goes on to call the area *urban*, an insult to those who live in this self-contained village in the green belt. Having started down the urban road Mr Edwards then gets fixated with Arsenal and North London, both of which are fortunately twenty miles away. He does save himself by commenting that the pub has a decent reputation for ale and food, and comments on the gravity dispensed Greene King *Abbot Ale* and *IPA*. (Which have assured the many Good Beer Guide entries.) He then proceeds to criticise the barmaid for being

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churlish, and not providing wholegrain mustard with his ham sandwich. The writer then eavesdrops the reason for his problems, which is that the woman is getting divorced (she had in fact received the papers that day). He then notes that one of the customers leaves the pub to take an incoming call on his mobile, which he concludes, shows how good manners are in North London (yes he's missed by 20 miles again!). We invite Adam Edwards to visit Hertfordshire and our classic pubs like the Woodman at Chapmore End, but please try and get your facts right.

**Adam Edwards' original article can be read on the Internet at:**

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/wine/main.jhtml?ml=/wine/2005/11/19/edpint19.xml>

**Any comments, articles or letters for publication are welcome. Please send to: Steve Bury, 14 New Road, Shenley, Herts, WD7 9EA.**

**Or Email us at: [pintsofview@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pintsofview@yahoo.co.uk)**

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## Beer Advert Banned for Sex Link

**A** beer advert has become the first to fall foul of rules banning any link between alcohol and sexual success.

The *Young's Bitter* billboard poster of a man with a ram's head surrounded by scantily clad women had the strapline "This is a Ram's World".

The Advertising Standards Authority said it and a second Young's poster breached rules introduced on October 1 last year and they should be withdrawn.

Young's denied implying drinking its beer led to sexual or social success.

Industry watchdog the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) said the strapline on the poster featuring the women implied Young's drinkers were personified by the ram, who was the focal point of female attention.

Another "Ram's World" poster showed the same figure dressed in a suit and surrounded by well dressed men at a gentlemen's club.

The ASA told Young and Co's Brewery to ensure it did not link its product with success

at a social occasion or seduction in future adverts. The tighter rules affecting broadcast and non-broadcast adverts came into force in response to public concerns about under-age and irresponsible drinking. ASA spokesman Matt Wilson described the Young's ruling as a "benchmark" for others in the industry to work from.



*The ASA said the advert linked alcohol with social success.*

Young & Co's Brewery said the ram in the adverts related to one which had appeared on the brewery's logo for more than 150 years.

It said the idea of a ram being in the social situations shown in the posters was so preposterous that people would understand it was not real.

Spokesman Michael Hardman said: "These advertisements were introduced as part of a light-hearted campaign in 2004, well before the rules on the advertising of alcohol were tightened.

"They were repeated last year but we had already taken the decision not to run them again when our case went before the ASA."

*BBC News, 11 January 2006*

## Spirit Sold

**S**peculation about the future of Spirit Inns ended just before Christmas when the £2.68 billion offer from Punch and Mitchells & Butlers was accepted. The pubs changed hands in January 2006 and make Punch the UK's largest pub owner again with 9,600 premises. The only question is will the mega-pub group offer better choice and competitive prices to customers? It seems very unlikely.



# Pints of View Beer Sudoku

O	E			R				
		T	L			E		A
		G					S	N
G			A		E	N		
S	T	R				A		
		E	S		R			T
E	S					T		
L		N			T			
				S			A	G

Fill in all the squares in the grid so that every row, column and each of the nine 3x3 squares contain all the letters of the word **STRONGALE**.

**Completed entries by 1 April to:**  
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-----  
**1<sup>st</sup> winner drawn wins a**  
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**2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> winners drawn win a**  
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The Winner of the Pub Names  
 Wordsearch in Edition 213 was  
 Miss M. Cooper of Sheffield.

## Answers to and winners of the Pubagram Competition in our 2005 Beer Festival Programme

### Pubs in order as printed:

Tudor Tavern, Cross Keys, Portland Arms, Duke of Marlborough, Lower Red Lion, Fleur de Lys, Black Lion, White Hart Tap, White Swan, Spotted Bull, Rose and Crown, Garibaldi, King William IV, White Lion, Blue Anchor, Hare and Hounds, Great Northern, Verulam Arms, Bunch of Cherries, Farmers Boy.

**Winners:** Mrs Lynda Tarpey and Lucy Potter, both of St. Albans each won £25.

## Want to Advertise in Pints of View?

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# Ware – Pubs A-plenty!

To coincide with the launch of our guide to real ale pubs in Hertford and Ware, guide co-author Jan Ordon gives us a sample of just some of the pubs to be found in Ware.

Ware is a lovely country town sitting astride the banks of the River Lea and on the old A10 trunk road, now by-passed by a viaduct, which traverses the river meads. Ware was once Britain's foremost centre of malting and many of its buildings bear architectural witness to this part of the town's rich history.

Today, relative to its population of c20,000, Ware has a huge number of pubs and bars, around 25, with the vast majority selling real ale. The town is famous for the number of inns that existed in the 15th and 16th century – approximately 140 – remarkable for such a small town. This was largely due to its position on the Old North Road,

Ware being the most important stopping point for coaches moving between London and Cambridge and to places beyond. With the 17th century opening of the Great North Road (now the A1) via Welwyn, there came a reduction in the number of pubs in Ware (coachmen now having an alternative route to the north) and by 1920 the number had reduced to 70.

Nowadays there is a wide variety of pubs in Ware – something for everybody - but a list of those 140 pubs can be found mounted on to one of the exposed timbers in the Old Bull's Head. Look out for CAMRA's new free fold-out guide to real ale In Ware and Hertford, available locally in pubs, libraries and

museums and which lists and describes all of Ware's current real ale outlets. In the meantime, here's a taster – why not come over to Ware and sample some of its pubs?

## 1. Albion, Crib Street

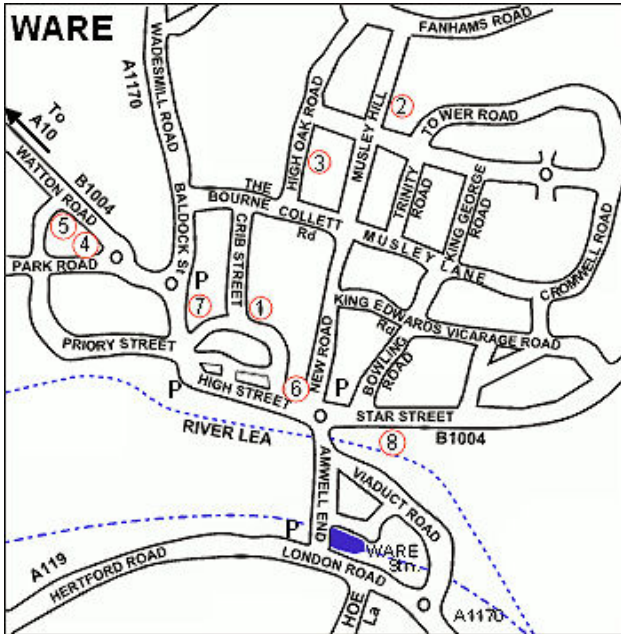
With England now full of 'super' pubs selling 20+ ales or sumptuously converted from banks or department

stores, what a joy to walk into the small and cosy Albion, dating from the 17th century but in no way 'olde worlde'. They say that one of the exposed timbers was taken from the Albion sailing ship. Once owned by Flowers, *Adnams Bitter* now sits alongside the *Flowers IPA* and occasional guest ale, which are

served in perfect condition. Open all day, food is available between 12 and 2pm, Monday to Friday. Street parking.

## 2. Crooked Billet, Musley Hill

Well worth the walk up New Road from the town centre, this is a fine, lively pub where two distinct drinking areas create saloon/public bar-style options for the drinker. Landlord Stuart is well known on the local pub scene and takes pride in serving Greene King ales (plus a guest) in tip-top condition – deservedly rewarded by inclusion in the 2006 Good Beer Guide. For all you mild drinkers, XX is available between October and April. There's darts and pool and for the Sports viewer there's Sky Sports. It's the unofficial home



to the Ware Branch of the Carlisle United supporters club. No food here and the pub closes on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday lunchtimes. Open all day Friday to Sunday. Street parking.

### 3. High Oak, High Oak Road

Formerly the Windsor Castle, the High Oak has had new owners for two years, improving the pub beyond recognition. Located almost mid-terrace, it has a central bar as you enter and a backroom and garden, but it is not your average backstreet local. There's an almost cosmopolitan feel to the place where everyone is welcomed and made to feel comfortable. Recently a genuine guest ale has been added to complement the *GK IPA* and *Charles Wells Bombardier*, a move well received by local drinkers, and the pub is gaining fame for its annual Bonfire Night Beer Festival. Again, no food here and the pub is closed Monday to Friday lunchtimes, but open all day Saturdays and Sundays. Street parking.

### 4. Worppell, Watton Road

Once owned by Simpsons of Baldock, Greene King acquired the pub from them in 1954. Until 10 years ago the pub was called the New Rose and Crown but the name was changed to the Worppell so as not to confuse it with the **Rose and Crown** which is just yards up the road. The unusual name is taken from Matthew Worppell who purchased the land back in 1804 and 'built' the pub. Much-loved present licensees, George and Pat, have been there for over 20 years, running a lovely cosy local with a small patio. All of the regulars know that the *Abbot Ale* here is as good as anywhere in the country. IPA and an occasional guest from the GK stable are also on offer. Food is available Monday to Friday lunchtimes. The Worppell closes at 2.30pm Monday to Thursday but is open all day Friday to Sunday. Street parking.

### 5. Rose and Crown, Watton Road

By far, over the last five years, Ware's most improved pub. Richard and Liam are well respected McMullen licensees – Richard



1. Albion, Crib Street



2. Crooked Billet, Musley Hill



3. High Oak, High Oak Road



4. Worppell, Watton Road



winning numerous Mac's cellarman'ship awards over the years (rumour has it that he hoovers the cellar!) and Liam producing superb home-cooked food which is available 12-2pm Monday to Friday, 5.30-8.30 Wednesday to Friday, 12-8.30 on Saturday and 12-3.30 on Sunday. The pub was constructed with famous local Hitch bricks and has a large colourful garden, secluded from the main road. There's a covered and heated conservatory, children's play area, an aviary and a Petanque piste for sides that play in the local leagues. Say hello to Becks the dog – even though he's a champion scrounger! Closing at 2.30pm Monday to Thursday the pub is open all day Friday to Sunday. Pub car park.



5. Rose and Crown, Watton Road

#### 6. The Vine, High Street

Leased from Enterprise Inns by Bright Leisure three years ago, here's another pub which has vastly improved. Formerly the Bell, a Whitbread pub desperately in need of a makeover following years of indecision and false dawns, the Vine is popular and at the upper end of the market with contemporary décor and `vibe` to match - which is no bad thing. Beers are *GK IPA* and *Abbot* but recent guest beers, which have tended to be between 4% and 5% ABV, have included "*Summer Lightning*", "*Landlord*", "*Fortyniner*" and "*Old Hookey*" (perhaps common elsewhere but rare for Ware; very well received indeed). Check the Vine out when you're on the Ware trail – it's open all day but can be very busy at weekends. Food is available at lunchtimes, then in the evenings until late. Public car park to the rear.



6. The Vine, High Street

#### 7. The Old Bull's Head, Baldock Street

Owned by Scottish and Newcastle but leased to the It's My Local company, the new licensees have been there a year now and as a result the pub is feeling more settled and welcoming. Highly timbered, the building is part 17th century with later (some 20th century) extensions. Internally it is famous for its rare parliamentary clock and the list of former Ware pubs. Older drinkers of Ware still bemoan the strip-out, which 'open-



7. The Old Bull's Head, Baldock Street



8. The Victoria, Star Street

planned the pub from its former 2-bar layout, and meant the loss of the well-used first floor function room. Darts and pool feature and there's Sky Sports. With occasional weekend live music on offer, the pub can seem loud at times but, hey, some people like it that way! And the large garden can be an alternative drinking area. Three regular real ales are available, supplemented with three guests – Ware's widest choice of beers and reasonably priced as well. Food available every day until 6pm. Public car park next door.

#### 8. The Victoria, Star Street

Special mention for the Vic – Ware's only genuine surviving 2-bar pub – and contrasting they are with a busy public bar and quiet sedate saloon. A good pint of *McMullen's AK* is assured and the long garden terminates canal-side where you can moor your narrow boat. The pub has B&B to offer and is open all day but food is restricted to Sunday lunches. Street parking.

#### Directions (See map on page 11)

Ware railway station is situated on the Hertford East branch line with connections to Hertford and Liverpool Street, Harlow, Bishops Stortford and Cambridge via Broxbourne.

The 724 Greenline bus connects Ware to Harlow, Hatfield, Welwyn Garden City, St. Albans and Watford. The 310 bus operates along the Lea Valley from Waltham Cross, through Cheshunt and Hoddesdon.

By road Ware is just off the A10 and just north of the A414. By canal Ware is on the Lea Navigation.

**Celebrate National Pubs Week!**  
18 to 25 Feb - See Page 19 for details



	<p><b>Old Cross Tavern</b> <i>"The Way Pubs Used to Be"</i> 8 St. Andrew Street, Hertford Tel: 01992 583133</p>
<p><b>Ales</b> 4 Regulars &amp; 4 Guests incl. a Mild, Stout or Porter</p> <p><b>Good Home Cooked Food</b> Daily Specials &amp; Lunch Menu Mon-Sat 12:00-3:00 Sun Roast 12:00-4:00 optional 3 courses incl. Vegetarian option</p> <p><b>Beer Festivals</b> End of May Bank Hol. &amp; Early Oct.</p> <p><b>Log Fire – Patio Garden</b></p> <p><b>"Hertford's Premier Real Ale Free House"</b></p>	

<p>Tony &amp; Linda Welcome You To <b>The Black Horse</b> 29-31 West Street, Hertford 01992 583630</p> <p>Greene King Ales &amp; Guest Beers Home Made Meals and Soups, Sandwiches &amp; Toasted Baguettes</p> <p>Daily "Specials" and Desserts Sunday Roasts from 1pm Quiz Night Sunday 8:30</p> <p>Closed Tuesday until 5pm Food available until 10pm Friday &amp; Saturday Large garden, traditional pub games Less than 5 minutes walk from town centre <a href="http://www.blackhorseherts.co.uk">www.blackhorseherts.co.uk</a></p> <p>Good Beer Guide 2006 – We're In It</p>
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# Watford & District's Post-Christmas *Pre-Christmas* Crawl (Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2006)

Watford's proximity to London, as well as easy transport links and the number of local members who work in the capital has contributed to the development of an annual branch Pre-Christmas London Pub Crawl. Originally this really was 'pre-Christmas' but the busy nature of the festive season led to the fixture being shunted further back until, finally, it found itself on the wrong side of New Year's Day. Every year organiser Rick Clark plots a new course through the A to Z for our party to follow and this year we found ourselves winding our way from the Barbican, through Smithfield and up to Holborn.



*The Hand and Shears, Barbican, EC1A*

Proceedings began for many at the **Shakespeare** (2 Goswell Road, EC1) before officially getting underway at the **Hand & Shears**, tucked away down Middle Street just around the corner from Barbican tube station. The road itself is little more than an alleyway and looks like it may be one of the ancient London streets that have survived on the ground while the buildings of the City have climbed into the sky. The pub is listed in **CAMRA's National Inventory of Pub Interiors of Outstanding Historical Interest** and still retains four separate bars, which were all packed with post-work punters when we arrived. The Watford branch contingent, swelled by members from London branches, packed itself into what was perhaps the smallest bar in the place and proceeded to enjoy the atmosphere of an old-time back-street pub just minutes away from the modern

high-rise world of the Barbican.

We squeezed out of the door and into the night and had a quick walk down towards West Smithfield and the **Butcher's Hook & Cleaver**, a Fuller's Ale & Pie house with a mezzanine overlooking the large open-plan bar area, which was decorated with marble, mirrors and plants like a Victorian hotel foyer. This pub was also busy and seemed to have its fair share of City suits with their ties loosened for an evening of winding down. Getting to the bar wasn't too difficult though, and we had access to the full range of Fuller's beers, including our first sight of the new *Anniversary Ale*, produced for the 160th anniversary of Fuller's Brewery.



*Inside the Butcher's Hook & Cleaver, EC1A*

Popping across Smithfield, and past the famous meat market, we paid a visit to the **Bishop's Finger**. It was no surprise to find that, given then name, this was a Shepherd Neame house; one which is set in two floors of an attractive, multi-storey, Flemish style building. The bar was quieter and cosier than the previous pub, but still fairly typical of the modern bare-floor and distressed furniture style: Kind of like a good Hogshead. The beer was pricey, which was also unsurprising, but the *Shepherd Neame Porter* was very good.

The next stop was the **Viaduct Tavern**, on Newgate Street near the Holborn viaduct. Another Fuller's pub, this former Nicholson's house is distinguished by three lavish Victorian paintings of 'muses' representing agriculture, banking and the arts. Legend has it that 'the arts' still bears the scar from when she received a bayonet in her behind during a scuffle involving a First World War soldier. Who knows, perhaps this was some form



of primitive art criticism? The ceiling looks like the standard embossed paper you find in many pubs but is apparently made of beaten copper!

After a brisk walk across the viaduct we ducked down the hidden alleyway known as Ely Court (you try and find it without a very good map!) and into the **Ye Olde Mitre**.

This is another unspoilt inn that can be found in CAMRA's National Inventory and is located in an area of London that once belonged to the Bishop of Ely, and has now passed to the Crown rather than the City of London. Because of this quirk I believe it is still, in some respects,

officially part of Cambridgeshire. The pub was doing a great trade despite being very well hidden. I overheard one of our number saying they'd been in the pub on a Friday a few years ago and had been one of only seven customers. Perhaps this indicates that traditional pubs are enjoying resurgence in popularity? Let's hope so.

The **City Retreat** in Shoe Lane, EC4, saw us move away from the older, traditional pub style to a more modern pub occupying the ground floor of an office building. The City Retreat is operated by Young's and is typical of many of their pubs. Open plan and aimed at a younger crowd, it seemed a little characterless to me and

I could have done without the R&B music (modern R&B, that is) and Big Brother on the

telly. Still, I got my first taste of this year's *Winter Warmer* there.



*Ye Olde Mitre, Ely Court, EC1N*

The crawl took us up Holborn in the direction of helpful public transport links. Our next stop was the **Melton Mowbray** on High Holborn, another Fuller's Ale & Pie house but with a different theme to the Butcher's Hook. This time panelling, pews and bare floorboards indicated that Fuller's were trying for an 'Olde Worlde Inne' look. The mezzanine was still there though; maybe one of their designers has a signature style? This time I decided to try the *160th Anniversary Ale*, which had an ABV somewhere over

6%. The complex, warming flavour did disappoint, so if you see it I'd urge you to give it a try - maybe just a half though, eh?



*Inside Ye Olde Mitre*

Another trip up High Holborn and we were at Wetherspoon's **Penderel's Oak**, which was quiet by the time we got there, despite advertising their 1 a.m. licence. It was a surprise to find

Mitchells & Butlers *Brew XI* on hand pumps, given that M&B became a pub



*The Viaduct Tavern, Newgate Street, EC1*

owning company a few years ago and no longer brews. I wonder who produces the beer now? A sortie downstairs found Harviestoun *Bitter & Twisted* but the bar's dance music drove us away like garlic to a vampire, so we propped up the ground-floor bar before putting the evening to bed and making a

surprisingly early break for the train back to Watford.

*Andrew Vaughan*

# DOWN YOUR WAY

**Apsley:** The **Paper Mill** not surprisingly in the old paper mill has been opened by Fullers and is a great success.

**Berkhamsted:** The **Barrel & Bottle** has opened and is selling ale and cider on hand pump.

**Bricket Wood:** The **Gate** has been bought by Charles Wells and is selling *Eagle IPA*, *Bombardier* and *Old Speckled Hen*. A general refurbishment is underway.

**Buntingford:** **Brambles** is being reported as a great success and is now selling beers from the Buntingford brewery.

**Bushey:** Enterprise Inns have applied for planning permission to make internal alterations to the **Horse & Chains**, which is currently closed. The application is to remove internal walls and the non-original bar servery, as well as to reconfigure the toilets to accommodate a new disabled toilet.

**Bushey Heath:** The **Forresters Arms** is closed for refurbishment. It is rumoured that it will become a gastro type pub upon reopening.

**Codicote:** We welcome Sarah Eagles the new landlady at the **Globe**.

**Harpenden:** The **White Horse** Hatching Green has re-opened as a gastro pub and the Herts Advertiser has announced that Christophe Novelli, the TV celebrity chef, is now in charge of the Kitchens having left the Auberge du Lac at Brocket Hall. The good news is that real ale is still on sale in the pub; it is reported to be at premium prices.

**Hemel Hempstead:** The **Rose & Crown** in the Old Town is selling *Fullers London Pride* and *Greene King IPA*. The **Beehive** is selling *Greene King IPA* and the **Old Bell Gate** is selling *Fullers London Pride*.

**Hertford:** The **Harts Horns**, Hornsmill Road, has a new manager. There has been a further change of manager (on top of that reported in our last newsletter edition, in December) at the **Ram**, Fore Street. The **Snug Bar** in Railway Street, (sister to a bar of the same name in Cambridge) is selling one real ale - the first being *Adnams bitter* - great to see a new bar giving real ale a chance. The **Duncombe Arms**, Railway Street, is selling *Greene King IPA* and *Abbot* following its recent refurbishment.

again up and properly running. *Greene King* (under a new lease) after a period of instability. GK *IPA* and one guest are available.

**High Wych:** The **Rising Sun** (aka Sid's) is now under new management as Steve Prior has left. We welcome the new incumbents, two locals - Gary & Sharon. As the pub is the county's longest continuous GBG entry (all of them except the first) we are sure that they will maintain the standards that guarantee its well deserved place.

**Hitchin:** It has been reported (on the North Herts CAMRA web site) that the **Sailor Boy** closed before Christmas. Any confirmed report on the pub's future would be most welcome. Congratulations to McMullen's Managers of the year for 2005 Kate and Mike Prew of the **Coopers Arms**.

**Leavesden:** The **Hare** is the subject of another application to demolish the pub and build a new elderly care home. The pub is currently closed and the branch is unaware of any application for a premises licence under the new Licensing Act.

**South Mimms:** The **Black Horse** has changed hands and we welcome Renate the new landlady.

**St Albans:** The **Harrow**, Dagnall Street, St Albans was sold by Camelot to 'Reach 15' the company owned/part owned by **Jass Patel** the new licensee. The transfer took place about a week before Christmas. *GK IPA* (£2.20/pint) and *Tetley* continue to be available. Jas has already made some repairs to the staff accommodation He is going to take stock before deciding which direction the pub will go. The pool table is to go. Obtrusive background music was being played on a visit on 28/12. Shaune left the **Cross Keys** recently to take on another JDW outlet on the Wirral. The new manager will not be in situ for another month. Alistair has left the **Jolly Sailor** to take over the **Royal Oak** in Bushey. We understand that Martin from **O'Neills** in Victoria Street will be taking over at the **Sailor** - so who's going to run O'Neills? (Who cares - Ed).

**Watford:** The **Café Maximo** on Watford High Street has been refitted and renamed the **Counting House**. It's still run by Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries but has started serving real ale again. Only one beer was available on the last visit, *Marston's Pedigree*. **Daly's**, a real ale-free Irish bar on St Alban's Road, has been renamed the **Dome Bar**. The **One Bell** further down the High Street



reopened in December and is selling *Greene King Abbot Ale*, *Fullers London Pride* and *Courage Best Bitter*.

**Wilbury: (Letchworth)** The **Wilbury** is no longer selling real ale.

**Wigginton:** The **Greyhound** has been closed - more information please, where possible.

## BRANCH DIARY

### WATFORD AND DISTRICT

**Thu 9 Feb:** Bushey Heath social: **Black Boy**, Windmill Street, 8.30pm; **King's Head**, Little Bushey Lane, 9.30pm; **Lazy Fox**, Sparrow's Herne, 10.15pm.

**Tue 21 Feb:** Pop quiz social: **Southern Cross**, Langley Road, Watford, 8.30pm (for 9pm).

**Fri 24 Feb:** Pub of the Year Presentation: Venue TBA, 7.30pm.

**Mon 27 Feb:** Branch meeting: **Estcourt Arms**, St John's Road, Watford, 8.15pm.

**Wed 8 Mar:** Club social: **West Herts Sports Club**, Park Avenue, Watford, 8.30pm. This is a members' club and visitors may need to be signed in. Contact branch for details.

**Tue 14 Mar:** Open Mic Night social: Colne River Room, **Pump House Theatre & Arts Centre**, Local Board Road, 8.30pm.

**Wed 22 Mar:** Social at the **London Drinker Beer Festival**. Meet at the products stand every hour from 6pm.

**Mon 27 Mar:** Branch AGM: **Estcourt Arms**, St. John's Road, Watford, 8.15pm.

**Tue 4 Apr:** Watford High Street social: **Moon Under Water**, 8.30pm; **Counting House**, 9.15; **One Bell**, 9.45pm; **One Crown**, 10.30pm.

Branch contact: Andrew Vaughan. Phone: 01923 230104. Mobile: 07854 988152.

Email: [branch@watfordcamra.org.uk](mailto:branch@watfordcamra.org.uk)

Internet: [www.watfordcamra.org.uk](http://www.watfordcamra.org.uk)

### SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE

**Tue 7 Feb:** Good Beer Guide 2007 survey trip - Harpenden/Redbourn area.

**Tue 14 Feb:** GBG 2007 survey trip - Park Street and Radlett area.

**Tue 21 Feb:** GBG 2007 survey trip - Northaw and Wildhill area.

For survey trips, meet outside St. Albans

Thameslink station at 7pm for transport (available at cost).

**Tue 28 Feb:** GBG 2007 survey crawl - St. Albans. Meet at the **Mermaid** at 7pm.

**Tues 7 Mar:** Good Beer Guide 2007 selection meeting, **CAMRA HQ**, 8pm.

**Tue 14 Mar:** Branch Meeting, **White Horse**, Hertford, 8pm.

**Branch Contact:** John Bishop 01582 768478,

Email: [realales@yahoo.com](mailto:realales@yahoo.com),

Internet: [www.hertsale.org.uk](http://www.hertsale.org.uk)

## National Pubs Week

**National Pubs Week 2006 will take place between Saturday 18th - Saturday 25th February.**

This pubs campaign has been running for four years and is now firmly established in the CAMRA calendar.

National Pubs Week supports all British pubs by encouraging more people to visit pubs at a quiet time of the year for the industry.

CAMRA has distributed 10,000 promotional packs to pubs all over the country. Look out for special posters and prize competition beer mats.

# 1st Globe (Dunstable) Beer Festival



**30 Real Ales, Cider & Perry**

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