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CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

HERTFORDSHIRE'S

Pints of View

The bi-monthly publication for the discerning real ale drinker

August/September 2006

Circulation 5000

No. 218

Hertfordshire's Best Pub



The Land of Liberty Peace and Plenty, Heronsgate has been voted CAMRA's Hertfordshire Pub of the Year. The Land of Liberty is now this county's entry for the East Anglia Regional pub of the year selection. See page 17 for more details.

Also In This 24-page
Special Issue:

- CAMRA urges rejection of takeover
- Beer Festivals Information
- Wanderings around Ware

THE BITTER END

Hardys & Hansons Shareholders Must Reject Greene King Offer, says CAMRA

The Campaign for Real Ale has called on shareholders of Hardys & Hansons to reject the takeover offer from Greene King at the Extraordinary General Meeting to be held on 14th August. The offer to buy the Nottingham-based brewery is the latest in a series of acquisitions that has seen Greene King devour ten rivals in ten years. Suffolk-based Greene King offered £271 million for Hardys & Hansons - £10.59 a share. Hardys & Hansons were formed in 1832 and 1847 respectively, and merged in 1930. Among its pub estate is the **Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem** in Nottingham – which claims to be the country's oldest tavern.

CAMRA Chief Executive Mike Benner said: "If this deal goes through, history has shown us that Hardys & Hansons' brewery and beers will not be in safe hands. Now is the time for the shareholders who truly care about this excellent brewery, with more than 174 years of history, to make a stand and reject this offer. We believe if the shareholders don't block this now, Hardys & Hansons will be chewed up and spat out like so many before it".

If Greene King succeeds with this takeover their tied estate will number 2,700 pubs. This massive ownership can only damage consumer choice, and the Guest Beer Right - abolished in 2002 - should be re-introduced to help protect small independent brewers. Otherwise, large areas of the country could end up with *Greene King IPA* as the only beer on offer.

Over the last ten years Greene King acquisitions have included the following companies:

- 1996 - Magic Pub Company: This pub

group included the Hungry Horse concept which is now one of the Greene King's pub brands

- 1999 - Morlands Brewery: closed the brewery – Ruddles beer brands acquired at the same time
- 2001 - Old English Inns: the pub estate integrated into the GK pub estate
- 2002 - Acquired the Morrells Pub company - pubs integrated with the GK pub estate
- 2004 - Laurel Pub Company
- 2005 - Ridleys Brewery - brewery closed
- 2005 - Belhaven Brewery - brewery still open (only because it is in Scotland but watch this space).



Guest Beer Right

In 2002 the Government revoked Britain's guest beer legislation. The guest beer law meant that brewers who owned more than 2,000 pubs had to give their licensees the choice of one cask conditioned guest beer.

CAMRA opposed the loss of the guest beer laws, as we predicted that their removal would result in a new round of takeovers and mergers at the regional brewery level. Since the loss of the guest beer laws Ridleys, Jennings, Belhaven, Gales and now Hardys & Hanson have lost their independence. CAMRA is now calling on the Government to reintroduce the guest beer law before any more of Britain's independent brewers are lost.

Financial Assessment

"These are 268 high-quality pubs, predominantly freehold, mainly out-of-town and community pubs with a healthy level of food sales," Greene King Chief Executive Officer Rooney Anand said. Greene King, like competitors such as Punch Taverns Plc and Wolverhampton & Dudley, is seeking acquisitions and selling more food at its pubs as Britons, whose incomes are being pinched by higher taxes and energy bills, increasingly choose to drink at home to save money.



The company expects to reap £3 million in the first full year following the purchase, improving profitability, rising to £5 million thereafter, Finance Director Ian Bull said in a recent interview.

Greene King's shares were trading at 748.5p, up 24.5p, following the announcement.

Common Sense Prevails on Glasgow Glasses Ban

CAMRA welcomes news that "nanny-state" plans to ban beer glasses in all Glasgow's public houses have been abandoned.

The Glasgow Licensing Board had planned to impose a ban on the use of conventional beer glasses in all licensed premises by the end of next year. However the licensing board has now announced the ban will only apply to late opening venues and to venues with the highest risk of glassing attacks.

When the original plans were announced, CAMRA expressed concerns that a knee-jerk ban on conventional glasses would damage the reputation of Glasgow's public houses, restrict availability of speciality foreign beers and reduce pub-goers' enjoyment of a pint of Scottish real ale.

Furthermore an insistence on pubs using plastic or toughened glass beer glasses would have increased costs and more importantly the use of plastic would have led to the creation of more plastic waste.

CAMRA Scottish Director Ken Davie said: "I am delighted that the Glasgow Licensing Board has seen sense. Banning the use of conventional glass in all Glasgow's public houses would have sent a very negative message to all visitors to the city and was bound to damage tourism. It is right and proper that a ban is imposed where a venue has a history of assaults using glass, however the vast majority of Glasgow's public houses are well run and trouble free".

He continued - "It is gratifying that law-abiding pub-goers will now be treated like adults, and a very small minority of hooligans will not be allowed to ruin the image of Scotland's superb cities".

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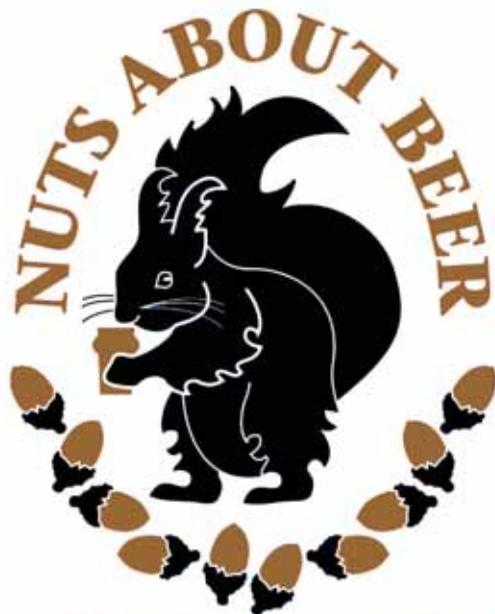


LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY

Beer & Cider Festival

September 21st — 23rd

Plinston Hall, Broadway



Cider

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50 Cask Beers - Foreign Beer Bar

Tombola
Products

Thur 21st, 5pm -11pm
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Sat 23rd, 12noon -11pm

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CAMRA, EBCU members & OAPs FREE
Family Area available Saturday till 7pm

Check www.nherts-camra.org.uk for info

Organisers reserve the right to refuse admission



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Pub of the Year Competition County Round Winners

Throughout the year excellent pubs receive awards from our members in local pub of the year awards. This culminates in the National **Pub of the Year** competition which is decided in February each year. The competition is fiercely contested by pubs around the country which are nominated by local members. Each of the 200 CAMRA branches nominates their favourite pub; these are then entered into regional finals followed by a grand final of four pubs.

CAMRA branches residing in each county nominate its overall winner for the East Anglia Region entry. The one chosen winner is submitted for nomination for the national final.

County winners nominated are:

Bedfordshire - The **Stone Jug**, Clophill (below)



Cambridgeshire - The **Live and Let Live**, Cambridge

Essex - The **White Horse**, Ridgewell

Hertfordshire - The **Land of Liberty, Peace & Plenty**, Heronsgate (see front cover)

Norfolk - The **Kings Head**, Norwich (below)

Suffolk - The **Dove**, Ipswich.



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Sky Premiership Football

Publican Features Local Landlord

Being a responsible newsletter editor I read from time to time *The Publican*, which is the Licensed Trade's weekly journal. It is full of information and it sometimes includes freelance articles from our own CAMRA editorial team. It was pleasing to see Mike Gaire of the **Silver Cup**, Harpenden featured in the *Cask Ale Champions* section full page article headed "Good Practice".

The PROUD OF PUBS Publican

Mike, who has only been a licensee for four years, admits that he was serving poor quality beer until his friend Bob Muir from the **Elephant & Castle**, Amwell (a long-time CAMRA **Good Beer Guide** Listed pub) gave him a one-hour training session.

Bob, who has previously run the **Moor Mill** at Bricket Wood and another pub in London, has a wealth of experience. Mike claims to have a retentive brain and since then has not looked back. The Silver Cup's ale sales have trebled since and they are one of Charles Wells' top cask beer pubs.

this can lead to beer not being sold over a four or five day period, after which it will begin to deteriorate. This I find is a pity as some of the best and most interesting beers are in fact the ones that come from smaller producers, and which go on to win a lot of CAMRA awards. That aside I accept that his range of beers - Charles Wells *IPA*, *Bombardier*, Marstons *Pedigree* and alternating Wadworth *6X* and St Austell *Tribute* should give a variety of strengths, flavours and gravities to suit any palate. He says he needs to stock beers he knows he can sell, and I am all in favour of that. For any pub it is worse to have four or more real ales all in bad condition, as opposed to serving just one or two in excellent condition. Mike is also very conscious about the quality of his glassware (something that I highlighted in Edition 213). He also likes sparklers, which are OK on beers specifically brewed for that method of dispense - whether they are applicable on Charles Wells *IPA* is debatable. My advice is go to the Silver Cup and give the beer a try. It is pleasing to read about such a positive commitment to real ale.

Steve Bury



The Silver Cup in Harpenden

Mike makes some very good points about the misguided ideas some licensees have: let's say you save six pints a week by improving your standards -that's £780 per year (at £15 per week) which is a lot to make up in other products. He highlights that staff who don't clean the pipes (from cellar to handpump) because two pints are wasted have a very sad attitude. If the beer is of better quality your sales will also increase, and he says that publicans look at the wrong ways to save money, and poor practice does cost. Mike says he does not stock obscure beers as

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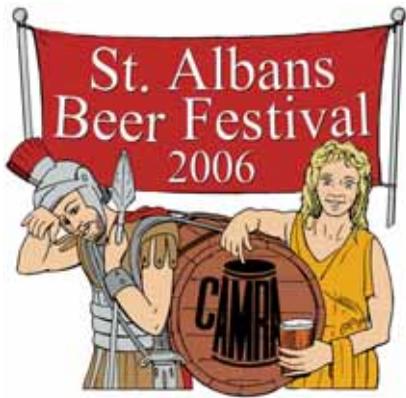
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Send your comments to us. See page 12 for details



St Albans Beer Festival 2006

Drink Beer & Feelgood!

This year's beer festival will once again be held at the Alban Arena, from Wed 27th – Fri 30th September.

Up to 300 different British real ales will be available for customers. The beers will come from all over the UK and will range in style from milds and bitters through old ales, porters and stouts, to barley wines, not forgetting speciality wheat beers, fruit beers and many others. The Festival this year will be hosting the CAMRA East Anglia Stouts and Porters competition to find the best Porter or Stout in the region so look out for the appropriately labelled barrels.

As well as all those beers from Britain there will be many beers from other countries: Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany and USA to name but a few. Ciders and perries will also be available.

Entertainment from classical to rock and a team quiz on Saturday afternoon. This year's special guests are one of Britain's top rhythm and blues bands, **Dr Feelgood** (www.drfeelgood.org), who will be wowing

the audience on **Saturday evening** with a 90-minute set including classics such as *Milk & Alcohol*, *Down at the Doctor's*, *Baby Jane* and *Roxette*. Other acts booked to appear are; **Thursday evening** - Verulam School Band, **Saturday lunchtime** - St Albans City Band. **Wednesday and Friday evenings** are quiet nights this year with **no music**.



The Festival is situated just off St Peter's Street in the heart of the City. Max admission price is £3.00 (**CAMRA members free**). Further details of opening hours and admission prices are on the back page of this newsletter. For those coming from further afield

St Albans is easily reached on the Thameslink railway line and there are plenty of local buses for those travelling cross county or from the railway station. Late trains will also run during the festival on the St Albans Abbey to Watford line - please check with operators for times. See page 23 for more travel information.

For further information on the festival see back page or e-mail realales@yahoo.com. Limited Advance tickets are now available for all sessions including Saturday night. Box Office 01272 844488.



Beer Gut Bill Tops Four Figures

The average British male spends £1,144 per year cultivating his beer gut, research shows.

That equates to 5% of the average take home pay spent on beer and post-booze snacks such as kebabs.

The study, by private medical insurer PruHealth, found salesmen are the biggest boozers, spending £1,560 per year on drink and snacks.

Obesity is linked to a range of health problems, including heart disease and diabetes.

AVERAGE WEEKLY SPEND ON ALCOHOL

London: £22

Rest of South: £18

Midlands/Wales: £17

Scotland: £17

The research, based on interviews with 2,476 men, shows nearly a quarter (22%) of men go out drinking at least two nights a week - and among those aged under 29 the figure rises to 31%.



Men say they spend an average of £22 on booze and junk food in a typical week.

However, 7% - around 1.7m men nationwide - say they regularly down £40 worth of drink a week, and over £10 on fast food.

One in seven Londoners spent over £40 a week on alcohol alone on average - with 2% admitting to spending at least £80 a week. The Scots are keen boozers too, with 4% regularly spending between £100 and £150 per week.

Single Boozers

Single men on average tend to spend more on booze - £25 - during the week than married or co-habiting men.

BIG BOOZERS

London: 13% spend more than £40 a week

Rest of South: 8%

Midlands/Wales: 6%

North: 8%

Scotland: 5%

Men who are in a relationship but who don't live with their partner spend an average of £23 per week, while married men say they spend just £15 on average.

Salesmen spend noticeably more than any other profession, with one in 20 shelling out £80 to £150 every week.

They are also the profession most likely to be found in the pub most nights of the week.

Dr Chris Dark, medical director at PruHealth, said: "We asked men whether they were worried about having a beer belly and over a third said they were.

"Yet these findings reveal that a significant number of men are clearly investing time and money on cultivating their guts.

"While it is fine for everyone to enjoy a drink and snack in moderation, my concern is that men are not realising the long-term implications for their health that storing excessive fat around the belly can have.

"The notorious beer gut can be the start of much more serious health problems, like diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease".

Dr Ian Campbell is medical director of the charity Weight Concern, and author of fatmanslim.com, a free service to men who want to lose weight.

He said: "For many men the fat around their waist is the most dangerous.

"In addition to adopting a healthy diet and becoming more active many men would do well to cut down on alcohol.

"Alcohol is highly calorific and all that unused energy is quickly turned into fat around the gut".

BBC News, Friday 14 July, 2006

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.



Want to Advertise in Pints of View?

Page Size and Cost (excluding VAT)

Note - Pints of View is now full colour throughout

Back page: 148 x 210 mm = £160.00 - now booked out until Oct/Nov 2006.

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Half Page: 148 x 105 = £90.00

Quarter Page: 74 x 105 mm = £50.00

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BEER TASTING

with

Roger Protz



Editor CAMRA Good Beer Guide
Glenfiddich Drink Writer of the Year

7.00 pm Thursday 28th Sept at the
11th St Albans Beer Festival
(see back page advert)

Tickets from the CAMRA products stand in the Festival lobby £5.00 (excludes entry to the Festival)

Advance booking details Tel: 01727 867201 or e-mail: realales@yahoo.com

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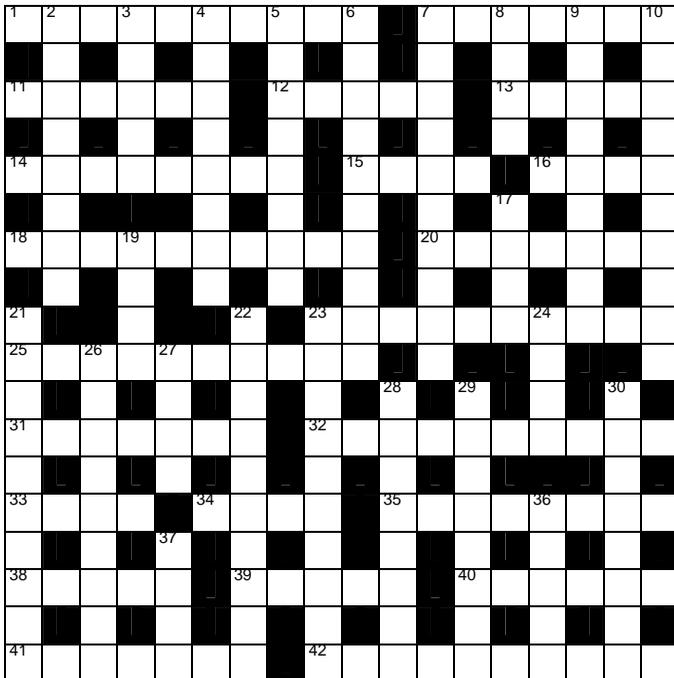
R4 Bus Direct from Watford & Rickmansworth

2/3 mile M25 Junction 17, Follow sign to Heronsgate; 1 mile Chorleywood station



Prize Crossword

Win free Beer at our St. Albans Beer Festival



1 pair of tickets **plus £10** worth of beer tokens for any single session of the **11th St. Albans Beer Festival** at St. Albans Arena (27 – 30 Sep) will be won by the first **3** correct entries drawn after the closing date of **9 September 2006**. Photocopies are acceptable.

Send Entries to: J. E Green, 63 Green Lane, St. Albans, Herts, AL3 6HE

A familiar and appropriate four-word phrase must be discovered and highlighted in the completed grid.

Your Name:.....

Your Address:.....

Postcode:.....

CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Bats are a pain in the neck and get in trouble (10)
- 7 Kind of ale that is used for making cake (7)
- 11 Part of interim damages returned, with respect (6)
- 12 Queen goes after Tom, perhaps, to make provision (5)
- 13 Having to get married was a drag (5)
- 14 Rifles managed to fire straight at first (8)
- 15 Old artist making a comeback shortly (4)
- 16 Just sounds like 26 (4)
- 18 Very well behaved when odd goals go astray (4, 2, 4)
- 20 One allowed in the blue? (7)
- 23 Game involving ale knocked back by pirate (10)
- 25 He'd put on a show, I promise – a right medley (10)
- 31 Drunkard returns to see another (7)
- 32 I.e. dirtless, after treatment (10)
- 33 Sounds like beer should be making you dance (4)
- 34 Some quiche from him? (4)
- 35 Short of cash, goes back to pick up penny (8)
- 38 Bird takes lead off dog (5)
- 39 Loud jumper that's often damp? (5)
- 40 Jostling at queue is non-U – agree? (6)
- 41 Somerset cider you initially found around the rear? (7)
- 42 One of a pair mistakenly deleted water's surroundings (10)

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.



Your free Pints of View is now in full colour throughout!

CLUES DOWN

- 2 Heater torrid – AA repair it (8)
- 3 With an accompaniment, these might be cooked in spinach (5)
- 4 Queen involved in tax activity (8)
- 5 In trick, is one taken in by cut? (8)
- 6 Sway on frog and toad, stumbling (2, 2, 3, 3)
- 7 Lager bears analysis in pub turnovers (10)
- 8 Macs perhaps lose their head – they're often wild (4)
- 9 Kind of wine produced from dry real beer, without alcohol initially (10)
- 17 Bear's returned headless? Get away! (4)
- 19 Does one occasionally revolve at first? (4)
- 21 Property of beer found in street bins for recycling (10)
- 22 What's milky after shaking? This isn't (4, 6)
- 23 Initial benefit of the Biblical apple, perhaps? (5, 5)
- 24 Former East German in middle of crossing (4)
- 26 Traveller's an idiot to live in London suburb, right? (9)
- 27 See what's in someone's pyjamas (4)
- 28 Can be employed again when blues are dispelled (8)
- 29 As far as one can walk over water? (8)
- 30 After street is destroyed, the French move elsewhere (8)
- 36 The Feathers goes up in smoke (5)
- 37 Light or heavy piece of wood (4)

Winners of the Pints of View Pub Sudoku in Edition 216: **2006 Good Beer Guide** John Kempton of Napsbury, **2005 Beer Festival T-Shirts** – I Johnson of Woking, Surrey and N. H. Young of Baldock, Herts. **SOLUTION BELOW:**

G	R	A	E	U	L	O	N	B
U	B	L	R	N	O	A	E	G
E	N	O	A	B	G	R	U	L
N	A	E	B	L	R	U	G	O
L	O	U	N	G	E	B	A	R
B	G	R	U	O	A	E	L	N
A	E	B	G	R	N	L	O	U
O	U	N	L	E	B	G	R	A
R	L	G	O	A	U	N	B	E

The White Lion



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**Black Sheep Bitter & Young's Special,
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Herts Readers Write



Real ale at the Harrow? I should M'koko!

We have received e-mail correspondence from Tim Holman as follows. "In the latest POV you write about the new bar, **Mokoko** (formerly the **Harrow**): 'We doubt if it will have real ale'. I can confirm that you are absolutely correct!

I live nearby and checked the new bar out a few weeks ago; lagers and wines are the order of the day. The customers are also different - now exclusively a young, 'smart' crowd. I suspect that the Harrow's old customers have fled to the nearby **Spotted Bull**, **Farriers Arms** and **White Swan**. In fairness, the refurbishment of Mokoko is fairly tasteful and must have cost a fortune, but from a CAMRA point of view this place is a no-go area. I'll keep an eye on Mokoko and let you if things improve (but don't hold your breath)".

There was also an interesting letter in the local press from R. Sparrow of Watling Street. I quote "If people want to set up establishments like 'Mokoko' and attract the sort of unpleasant nouveau-riche customers such a place will no doubt appeal to, why can't they do so from scratch, instead of destroying a traditional and perfectly viable meeting place for ordinary people? St Albans pubs are part of its heritage. It is time the district council recognised this and found a way to put a stop to this blight before any more of our city pubs go the same way".

- **Mokoko is a village located in Congo, Central Africa (pop approx. 103).**

Nelson be Praised

Paul Newman of Wheathampstead wrote. "I am a regular reader of 'Pints of View' but feel that the mention given in your last edition regarding the **Nelson** P.H. Wheathampstead will mislead readers. Steve and Wendy are tenant licensees as opposed to managers - as stated in your report. Their success in 'turning this pub around' was in no way reliant on the failure of other establishments but due entirely to their own hard work.

I understand that your organisation is against

pubs falling into the hands of property developers; the Nelson has been saved from becoming another casualty

Plough and the have changed dirty, listed clean, pretty, house, without entering into



(remember the **Three Oaks**. They a small dingy, building into a thriving public playing safe by the restaurant

market. One can only imagine that your report was founded on hearsay rather than by a visit, and I would ask that you remedy this at your earliest convenience".

Ed Says: I remember when the **Abbot John** and **Cherry Tree** were also still open as pubs. Unfortunately the disclaimer in *Down Your Way*, which reads "This section contains information from a large number of sources and occasionally errors occur. Comments or additional information should be sent to our contact details given" has not appeared since Edition 214.



The Nelson, Wheathampstead – now thriving

My view is that any inaccuracies in this case are minor and the information given, such as the licensees' surname, the list of beers on sale and the rotating guests, plus the fact that Steve and Wendy took over the pub in January are all correct, shows that a representative of CAMRA did visit the pub. They also left newsletters (only delivered by CAMRA representatives) although on our follow-up visit they were still there but not on display.

As far as the **Swan** is concerned we have now had a report that not one but three real ales are now back on sale there.

**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**



Bedford Beer and Cider Festival

Corn Exchange,
St Paul's Square
Bedford MK40 1SL



Wednesday 4th to 7th October 2006

Savour the opportunity of tasting over 60 real ales — local and national

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- ▶ Clothing, gifts and books for sale, plus Tombola & Shut the Box game!
- ▶ Souvenir festival glass (limited edition)

This year we are offering the opportunity of sponsoring a cask of beer!

Opening times:

Wed 4.00-11.00pm, Thurs, Fri & Sat 11.30am-11.00pm

Admission charges:

Admission is **FREE** to CAMRA members at all times

(please show your CAMRA membership card)

also **FREE** admission to all on all days before 5.00pm

After 5.00pm on Wednesday, Thursday & Saturday – admission is £2

After 5.00pm on Friday – admission is £3

We always need festival volunteers to help staff the event

For further information please contact festival organiser

Peter Argyle on 01234 822698 or

email festival@northbedscamra.org.uk

www.northbedscamra.org.uk (check regularly for updates)





In and Around St. Albans



I was pleased to receive the following e-mail from Tony Billings which I am happy to publish in full:-

"At a recent licensing appeal the (excellent, friendly and cheap) **Harrow** (Verulam Road) case was heard. At no time was it ever mentioned that, gutted, it would reopen as "The **Mokoko**". This was really underhand. I share your doubts about real ale there. Now, three months on, a threat to the famously historic **Fleur de Lys** in French Row (pictured below) which, after a "refit" wants to reopen as The **Snug Bar**. I ask you, what the hell does this tell us about pub management, however much they (rightly) argue that the pub was run down before?



And what history does this convey? Similarly the lager-lout-infested **Casa** (Victoria Street) wishes to reopen as The **Slug and Lettuce**, to attract a better kind of clientele. Slug and Lettuce? Surely this brand name went out 10-15 years ago. Just how "unwilit" can they get?

Nonetheless there is good news of St Albans pubs even if the number of beer houses and beer shops no longer caters at the rate of one per 100 men, women and children. There are some excellent pubs, particularly in Verulam Ward, near to the city centre. I recommend three for friendly and courteous service and very good beer quality. These are The **Spotted Bull** (Verulam Road), The **Boot** (Market Place) and the The **White Swan** (Dirty or Mucky Duck to drinkers) in Upper Dagnall Street. And NONE is mentioned in the GBG.

Signs of their times

However pubs are not just about service and

beer quality; many have important elements of local or national history inherent in their inn signs. I have just completed a photographic survey of around 100 pubs in a 10 mile radius of St Albans.



The Spotted Bull is recommended...

The result is alarming. In addition to the "labels" which are replacing inn signs on new food-oriented "bar/restaurant" premises, and further labels at other pubs which are obviously cheaper than paying a proper artist, many are fading, in disrepair or missing altogether.



... as is the Boot

Shenley is a case in point with only three signs for four pubs, two of which are fading away badly. The **Queen Adelaide** has to be viewed from both sides in order to verify that it is a Queen's head at all. Where do we go from here? Fortunately there are still some very good signs such as The **Old Chequers** at Gaddesden Row or the faded but REMAINING **Rose and Crown** at Trowley Bottom (near Flamstead).

Because of my current interest I joined The Inn Sign Society to learn more. I think the total national membership of around 400 puts a very realistic and dismal situation into perspective.

Cont'd



Before it is too late, Steve, how about featuring a good and a bad inn sign in each future edition of Pints of View? I should be happy as a local historian and writer to oblige. I could offer, say, a 1970s version of The **Mile House** (that was knocked down in 2000 without planning permission and, yes, there is to be an appeal)".

Ed. says: Public opinion, press interest and an enlightened new owner for the Fleur De Lys: see below. It is now in doubt whether a name change was ever envisaged, but what wizard publicity. You will find the **Boot** in the 2006 Good Beer Guide, by the way. Yes I would like to publish an article about pub signs (with pictures preferably). I recently saw the original London Colney "**Bull**" Ind Coope pub sign on a shed roof at the back of the Sainsbury's Savacentre. As I live in Shenley I would agree the signs are a disgrace, the only one in a reasonable state of repair is on the **White Horse** depicting a frozen "horse's head"-very historic.

It's all Snug at the Fleur

I have been inundated by e-mails, phone messages and personal enquiries about the change of hands and possible change of name of the **Fleur De Lys**, French Row, St Albans. The Herts Advertiser ran a campaigning article quoting the St Albans Civic Society's Eric Roberts and local historian Chris Saunders in varying degrees of outrage. Also, a former barmaid, Natalie Bourne set up a protest site - www.savethefleurdelys.blogspot.com.

The pub which has been allowed to become dilapidated has been acquired by Giles Fry who runs two other establishments under the "Snug Bar" banner. His letter to John Bishop of South Herts CAMRA branch is as follows.

"May I reassure you that the name of the Fleur de Lys will remain as it is. The name is of great historical importance to the city and we have never had any intention of changing it.

Our plans are to conserve the more interesting features of the building, preserve its history and make the building safe for our guests. We have a project manager and architect working closely with us and they specialise in historically important listed buildings." Cont'd



THE BOOT

Five ever-changing real ales plus a selection of continental beers.

4 Market Place

St. Albans, Herts, AL3 5DG

Tel: 01727 857533

(by St. Albans' historic Clock Tower)

Food served 12pm to 3pm, and to 4pm on market days.

Recently refurbished

Extensive selections of wines

THE WHITE HORSE

33, CASTLE STREET, HERTFORD

01992 501950

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

Autumnal Beer Festival Friday 25 to Monday 28 August

Good pub food served 12.00 - 2.00pm daily.

Traditional Sunday Roast served 1.00 - 3.00pm

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!'



I have received a report from another CAMRA activist that copies of a letter from Giles Fry are now on display in all the windows of the pub. They endorse his commitment not to change the name, to supply cask beers and the sensitive uplift of the premises. He also claims the pub will have "no fruit machines, cigarette machines or alcopops" - but rather blows the last one out of the water by going on to boast of the 80 cocktails on offer!

Just in case you do not know, it is rumoured that King John of France was imprisoned near the pub in 1356. The French Row was so named because French troops were garrisoned there apparently at a totally different time. I am sure one of our readers will be kind enough to give me the detailed historical facts before the next edition. The pub is on the St Albans Heritage Trail and we look forward to the re-opening.

Steve Bury

**CAMRA Good Beer Guide 1997 - 2006
Cask Marque Certification**



**The
ELEPHANT & CASTLE**

**AMWELL LANE, AMWELL,
WHEATHAMPSTEAD, HERTS.**

Tel: 01582 832175

QUALITY FOOD

**Greene King IPA, Abbot Ale
Morlands Bitter, Guest Beer**

The Farmers Boy

Still I

- The only pub in St Albans with its own micro brewery
- Serving our own brewed Farmers Joy, Best and Clipper IPA
 - Stocking a wide selection of Belgian beers
 - Serving good quality home-cooked food
 - A great beer garden ready for the sunshine

But now you'll notice some differences.....

- A smart new décor throughout
 - Budvar on draught
- Timothy Taylor "Landlord" served from the cask
- Great lunchtime deals Mon-Weds, 2 meals for £6

Gerry and Heidi invite you to take a look at the new Farmers Boy....

134 London Road, St Albans

01727 800029



Hertfordshire's Pub of the

Year

It's getting to be a bit of a habit, but congratulations are due once again to Martin Few and Gill Nicoll at the **Land of Liberty, Peace & Plenty** in Heronsgate. Watford & District branch's Pub of the Year has now been voted **Hertfordshire Pub of the Year 2005** by the county's branches. See front page picture. Since taking over the pub in February 2005, Martin and Gill have heavily promoted cask ale, serving over 300 beers from a huge range of breweries; and it's the range and quality of cask beer, friendly welcome and committed CAMRA campaigning that are probably what swung voting for the pub in the end.

Guest beers are the order of the day at the Land of Liberty, but two regular ales are stocked, and their choice handily dovetails the pub's cask ale focus with its CAMRA campaigning. *Red Squirrel Conservation Bitter* has now been replaced Fuller's London Pride. The Land of Liberty is one of only a few pubs to regularly stock a beer from Hertford's Red Squirrel microbrewery, and the pub's sales apparently account for a significant percentage of the brewer's weekly batch of the bitter. In addition, *Shepherd Neame Masterbrew* recently replaced Young's Bitter due to the landlord's disappointment with Young's planned closure of the Ram Brewery in Wandsworth and decampment to Charles Wells in Bedford. Let's hope the above gives Fuller's and Young's, and any other like-minded breweries, food for thought. It would be nice if bold steps like this could be taken more often.

In addition to its fine range of beers the pub holds regular events, including quizzes, live music and a monthly pub games night. A beer festival is planned for the August Bank Holiday, and with 25 beers available over the weekend it'll be one not to be missed – especially if the fine weather continues.

The Hertfordshire branches will be presenting their Pub of the Year award to the Land of Liberty on Friday 18th August, an event that promises to be well attended.

Andrew Vaughan.

12th Watford Beer Festival

The **12th Watford Beer Festival** takes place at the West Herts Sports Club, Park Avenue, Watford, WD18 7HP on Thursday 9th November through to Saturday 11th November. Over 60 Real Ales will be available, plus cider and perry. Entrance will be £2 per person, but is free to CAMRA and EBCU members, and members of the Sports Club. Opening hours are 5 – 11pm on Thursday and 11am to 11pm on Friday and Saturday. Food will be available in all sessions. The branch will be warming up for the festival at a special Cider Month social in October (see Branch Diary).

BRANCH DIARY

WATFORD & DISTRICT

Fri 4 Aug: Great British Beer Festival social; meet at membership stand at 6pm and every hour thereafter.

Sun 13 Aug: Clarendon Arms, Chandler's Cross, from 1pm.

Fri 18 Aug: Herts Pub of the Year presentation, Land of Liberty, Peace & Plenty, Long Lane, Heronsgate, 8.30pm.

Mon 21 Aug: Branch meeting at the Estcourt Arms, St. Johns Road, Watford, 8.15pm. All members welcome.

Sun 27 Aug: West Hyde walk. Meet at the Oaks, Coppermill Lane, West Hyde at 1.15pm. Catch number 6 bus from Watford Town Centre Stop C at 12.30pm.

Wed 13 Sep: Metropolitan Police Sports Club, Aldenham Road, Bushey, 8.30pm.

Mon 25 Sep: Branch meeting at the Estcourt Arms, St. Johns Road, Watford, 8.15pm. All members welcome.

Wed 27 Sep: St. Albans Beer Festival social. Meet at 7pm at the CAMRA products stall, and every hour thereafter.

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

Email: branch@watfordcamra.org.uk

Internet: www.watfordcamra.org.uk

SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE

Tue 15 Aug: Branch meeting, **White Horse**, Hertford, 8pm

Wed 23 Aug: Branch social to **Peterborough Beer Festival**. Minibus leaves St Albans City station 7pm

Tue 12 Sep: Branch meeting, **Green Man**, Sandridge, 8pm.

Continues end of next page



DOWN YOUR WAY

This section contains information from a large number of sources and occasionally errors may occur. Comments or additional information should be sent to our contact details on page 12.

Elstree: The **Hollybush** has changed hands.

Flamstead: The **Spotted Dog** has changed hands again. Neil & Anna left on 26 May. A visit on 4 June to try to meet new landlord etc. found it was closed with newspaper over the windows and no indication of when it would reopen. So watch this space.

Harpenden: The **Old Cock Inn** (Punch) changed over to leasehold in June.

Hertford: The **White Lion** in Bengeo reopened following refurbishment in June. A single L-shaped bar with up to four real ales including *Greene King IPA* and *Shepherd Neame Spitfire*. Much improved pub with an increased emphasis on food. The **Bridge House** (opposite Hertford North station) is promoting its family-run approach. 'Happy hour' 4.00-7.00 with eg 50p off Mac's *Country* and *AK*. and some entertainment provided. Our reporter thinks this pub may have 'turned the corner'.

Kinsbourne Green: Apparently just over the border in Beds is the **Peppercorn** (previously the Harrow) which re-opened as planned on 1st June. We were informed that the name change will stay and real ales on sale at present are *Deuchars IPA*, *Theakstons Old Peculiar* and *Tetley Cask bitter*.

London Colney: The lease on the **Golden Lion** is up for sale.

Patchetts Green: Real ale has been discontinued at the **Three Compasses** and we are informed it will stay that way until a new permanent landlord is found.

Shenley: We are pleased to announce that all the pubs in the village are stocking real again as the **Queen Adelaide** is now selling Fullers *London Pride*.

St Albans: It was reported in the last edition that the **Land of Liberty Peace and Plenty** in Heronsgate had removed its Fullers *London Pride* in protest at the Gales take-over. We now note that the **Lower Red Lion** in Fishpool Street had also removed the beer at the same time, and is now using the free handpump to dispense a variety of real ciders. The **Peacock** in Hatfield Road is still closed as is the **Fleur**

de Lys in French Row (see article page 14).

Wheathampstead: The **Swan** is now selling real ales again. Three ales are now being served; *GK IPA*, *Wadworth's 6X* and *Shepherd Neame Spitfire*.

Watford & District News

Bushey Heath: The **Devonshire Arms** has had its premises licence revoked by Hertsmere Council after complaints of antisocial behaviour.

Hunton Bridge: The **King's Head** has been renamed the **Riverside**.

Rickmansworth: Punch Taverns have applied for planning permission to make external and internal alterations to the **Happy Man** on the Berry Lane Estate. The plan is to reopen the pub, which was badly damaged in a fire. From the plans it looks like they want to knock it into a single bar.

Watford: Mitchells & Butlers have made an application for listed building consent to make alterations to the **Flag** next to Watford Junction station. They plan to turn it into a 35-bedroom hotel with carvery. A bar area will be retained. The **Robert Peel** in the town centre, one of a number of leases put up for sale by Punch Taverns, is now boarded up.

West Hyde: The **Oaks**, a Whitbread pub, is up for sale.

BRANCH DIARY

South Hertfordshire Continued...

Sat 16 Sep: Beer Festival publicity crawl, Harpenden. Meet in the **Harpenden Arms** at 6.30, **Cross Keys** 7.00, **Cock** 7.30, **Oak Tree** 8.00, **Skew Bridge** 8.45, **Plough & Harrow** 9.05, **Carpenters Arms** 9.30.

Fri 22 Sep: Branch social to the **Letchworth Beer Festival**. Details from our Branch contact.

Sat 23 Sep: Beer Festival publicity crawl. Meet in the **Mermaid** at 6.00, **Farmers Boy** 6.45, **White Hart Tap** 7.15, **Garibaldi** 7.45, **White Lion** 8.15, **Goat** 8.45, **Boot** 9.15, **Verulam Arms** 9.45, **Lower Red Lion** 10.15, back to **Boot** if there is time.

Wed 27 to Sat 30 Sep: 11th St Albans Beer Festival, St Albans Arena – see back page.

Branch Contact: John Bishop 01582 768478,
Email: realales@yahoo.com
Internet: www.hertsale.org.uk



LION-HART IS BACK

28th August (Bank Holiday Monday)

...for Beers, Barbecues and Bands

Once again the White Hart Tap and the White Lion have joined forces to bring you St. Albans' premier beer and music extravaganza.

♥ Bands start at 2pm

♥ B-B-Q all day

♥ FREE ENTRY

The day will be a charity event: all money raised to go to ASPIRE: Supporting people with spinal injury.

Also that weekend

BEER FESTIVAL

At the White Lion

♥ 30 different Ales

♥ Ciders and Perries

♥ BBQ all weekend

White Hart Tap
4 Keyfield Terrace
St. Albans
AL1 1QJ
01727 860974

White Lion
91 Sopwell Lane
St. Albans
AL1 1RN
01727 850540

Ware Wanderings

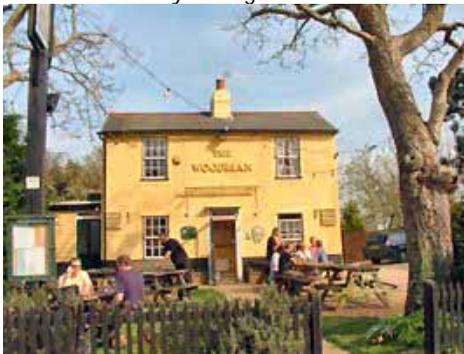
On Saturday 22nd April a small group of CAMRA Enfield and Barnet members used Hertfordshire County Council's Intalink Explorer tickets (2 adults for £7) to visit some rural pubs in the Ware area.

"We started at Waltham Cross Bus Station on an Arriva 310, alighting at Ware College. We then boarded a Golden Boy M2 in the station forecourt for a very pleasant journey to Wareside about 3 miles away.

Here we visited the Good Beer Guide listed **Chequers Inn** where the cask beers are on a gravity stillage behind the bar. The beers are cooled by spile water circulators and the casks have insulating jackets.

Unfortunately the *Red Squirrel* beers were not available at the time of our visit - only the ubiquitous *Greene King IPA* and *GK Riddleys Prospect*.

We were informed of the pub's history with different rooms being open up/added to over the centuries. Also there were seven pubs/alehouses recorded in the village, though only two survive. The last to close was **The Red Lion** immediately to the rear - and that was over 30 years ago.



The Woodman at Chapmore End

Across the road we visited the **White Horse** a GK pub with a guest of *Smiles Heritage*. Here we hailed the M3 back to Ware.

We waited for the Sovereign 383 to Tonwell opposite the McMullen **Spread Eagle**. Some managed a quick half of Mac's AK.

At Tonwell we arrived too late for a drink - the pub closes at 3pm and by 3.05 it was locked! We took a footpath to the picturesque village of Chapmore End to the Good Beer Guide

2006 listed **Woodman**.

This GK pub has the cask beers in a cooled cellar behind the public bar. *GK IPA*, *Abbot*, and *Prospect* were available.



The Spread Eagle at Ware

Returning on the footpath we were at the **Robin Hood & Little John** at tonwell for opening time.

GK IPA was again on the bar, but with three guests, including *Red Squirrel*.

However we were not able to stay long as we had to catch the last bus back to Ware - the 384 at 6.26pm!



The Chequers Inn at Wareside

We made a quick change at Ware with less than 5 minutes to spare for a 311 back to Waltham Cross. Thanks to Owen Woodliffe for organising the trip - we managed it in spite of some bus times changing since the event was originally planned.

In fact the return journey from Tonwell to my home in Chingford took 1 3/4 hours with 4 buses, as having alighted from the 311 at Waltham Cross, Owen and I stepped straight on to a 279 to Edmonton, and there just caught a 444. If only all bus journeys worked out so well!" *Ron Andrews*



It takes all sorts to campaign for real ale



Join CAMRA Today...

Just fill in the form below and send, with a cheque (payable to CAMRA Ltd) or for Three Months Free membership (for those renewing or joining by Direct Debit) complete the Direct Debit Form. All forms should be addressed to membership secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW. Alternatively you can join online at www.camra.org.uk. Rates for single membership are £18 and joint £21. Concession rates are available on request.

.....
Title Surname Forename(s) Date of Birth

.....
P'tner Surname Forename(s) Date of Birth

.....
Address Postcode

.....
Tel. no.(s)

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

I enclose a cheque for..... Signed..... Date.....

Applications will be processed within 21 days



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Cheers as Festival Aids Charities

The article below was published by the St Albans Review & Observer on 7 June 2006.

THOUSANDS of pounds raised by last year's St Albans Beer Festival have been presented to local charities and the Campaign for Real Ale (Camra).

The Campaign's South Hertfordshire branch, which organised the festival at the Alban Arena in September, held a presentation evening at the national headquarters in Hatfield Road.

Branch chairman Phil Defriez said: "Last year broke all records yet again.

"We sold a record amount of beer and made a record profit".

He presented a cheque for £9,500 to the national campaign, saying it was doing good work fighting brewery closures and lobbying the Government about beer issues.

Kate Haynes, 17, of the St Albans Leos, a fundraising organisation which helped organise the festival, presented £2,250 in total, donated by the branch, to various local charities.

A local girl with cerebral palsy, Hannah France known as Hannah Banana will get a special bicycle, the environmental charity Earthworks was given cash for a new lawnmower and £400 will be put into training guide dogs for the blind.

Other beneficiaries include the Elizabeth Foundation, which helps local deaf children, Chiltern Dog Rescue, Talking Books for the Blind, the Centre 33 homeless drop-in centre, the Centre for Voluntary Service and St Albans Mencap.

Mr Defriez said he was optimistic this year's festival, boosted by a performance by the rock band Dr Feelgood, would burst the 7,000 visitor mark for the first time. He said: "I am sure we will get the most people ever, I think we will have to order more beer".

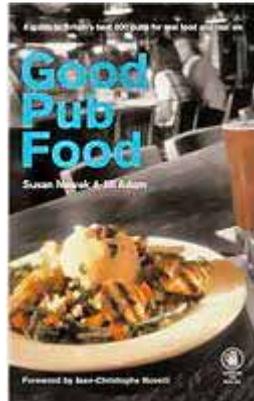
For more information about the St Albans Beer Festival, which will be at the Alban Arena from September 27 to 30, see www.stalbanbeerfestival.com.

Alex Lewis

New CAMRA Book Celebrates Beer With Food

Good Pub Food by Susan Nowak & Jill Adam is a definitive guide to fine cuisine and excellent beer.

Author Susan Nowak said: "There are 600 entries UK-wide featuring the pubs serving excellent food and, equally important, excellent real ale within this guide. Apart from food, the emphasis is on beer rather than wine, and this is still the only guide where a pub qualifies for the quality of its ale as well as its food".



The foreword to Good Pub Food has been written by Michelin - starred celebrity chef Jean-Christophe Novelli, who recently opened his own first gastro-pub, the **White Horse** in Harpenden.

This is the sixth edition of Good Pub Food and it has been seven years

since the last edition. Susan Nowak says pub food has gone through an incredible revolution in that time.

The **Portland Arms** St Albans has gained a mention and star rating for its food in this edition.

Some of the topics that are included are the rise of the gastro pub and celebrity chefs, pubs using local produce, cooking with beer and pairing beer with food and the unfortunate occurrence of poor food for children in pubs.

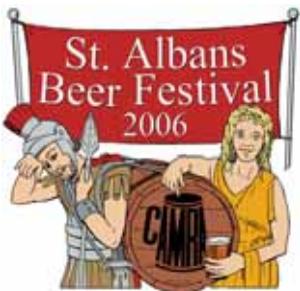
So many beer recipes were donated by publicans for the guide they could not all be used. Try them, you'll find them much more inventive than the standard steak and ale casserole.

About the authors: Award winning beer writer Susan Nowak has made numerous appearances on television and radio talking about cooking with beer and pub food.

Jill Adam has been Deputy Editor of the CAMRA Good Beer Guide for more than 20 years.

Good Pub Food – priced £14.99 - is available from CAMRA by calling 01727 867201 or by logging on to www.camra.org.uk.





Travelling to the St. Albans 2006 Beer Festival

Please don't drink and drive - it is perfectly possible to get to St. Albans easily and economically by public transport.

By train: The main station **St Albans City** is on the **Thameslink** cross London route from Bedford to Brighton. This is now operated by **First Capital Connect**. The venue, the Alban Arena is up to 10 minutes walk west of the Thameslink station – exit via platform four. There are, at the time of writing, two special offers available.

The **Daysave** ticket at £11 for one person or £25 for 2, 3, or 4 people travelling together offers unlimited travel on First Capital Connect Thameslink trains for a day. On Monday – Friday it is not valid before 09.30 and **MUST** be purchased in advance on the internet at www.firstcapitalconnect.co.uk or in person at tourist offices in Bedford, Luton or St. Albans; One Stop Shop in Edward Street, Brighton or the Transport for London office at Liverpool Street station. It is **NOT** sold at stations!

The other bargain ticket, **Groupsave**, is sold “on-demand” by most rail operators in the south east and on Midland Main Line. This allows three or four people together for the price of two.

Those of you coming on **Silverlink** or **Virgin** services can reach us via Watford Junction and the local train to **St. Albans Abbey**. **Groupsave** is available on Silverlink while Virgin has its own range of cheap fares. A word of warning – there is often engineering work on the main line north of Watford. **Silverlink have worked with us on Rail-Ale trail along the line from Watford.** They are also running a late train back to **Watford at 23:00 during the beer festival.**

If you are coming down the Kings Cross line

then **First Capital Connect** offers **Groupsave** tickets. Book to Hatfield as there is a good bus service (8 per hour daytime, 2 per hour evenings) into St. Albans. The journey takes 20-25 minutes and the bus drops you right by the festival.

By bus: We are well served by local bus and coach services most of which run during the evenings. The main connections are set out below:-
Barnet and Potters Bar (**84**), Watford (**321, 724**), Rickmansworth and Uxbridge (**724**), Hemel Hempstead (**300/301**), Dunstable (**34 & 35**) (not beyond Markyate in the evening), Harpenden and Luton (**321** and **Thameslink/FCC**), Wheathampstead (**304 & 320**), Hatfield, Welwyn Garden City (**300/301, 602, 655, 724**), Stevenage (**300/301**), Hertford, Ware and Harlow (**724**). St. Albans can be reached from Hitchin by **304** but not in the evening.

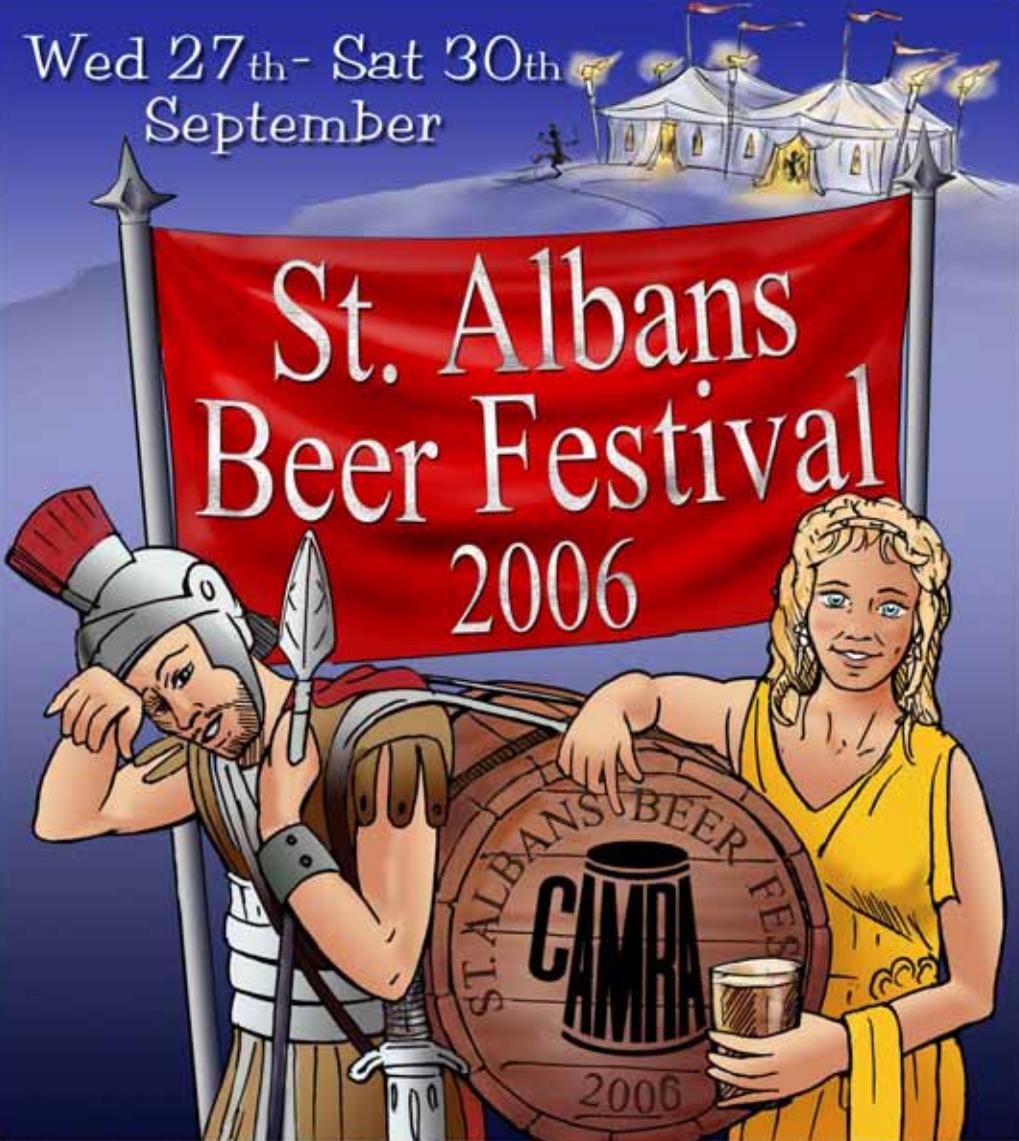
The Intalink Explorer at £7 allows one or two adults to use MOST buses within Hertfordshire and many in surrounding counties. If two people come together then this is the cheapest ticket for most journeys of more than 5-6 miles.

A bit further out: For another visit it's worth noting that, for **£2.00** more than a return train fare, the local buses can be added to your ticket. This allows unlimited travel from either St. Albans station to Colney Heath, Redbourn, Sandridge, Sleapshyde, Tyttenhanger and Wheathampstead. Wheathampstead is also the nearest point for Amwell. This add-on fare is not available with **Daysave** and **Groupsave** tickets.

All the above information is believed to be correct and is given in good faith. Neither CAMRA Headquarters nor South Herts Branch is responsible for any inaccuracies or any changes since we went to press. To check on train times, fares and details of engineering work please contact **08457 48 49 50** or www.nationalrail.co.uk. Bus and train information is available on **0870 608 2 608** (0700-2200) or www.traveline.org.uk. Hertfordshire journey planning, maps and timetables can be accessed on www.intalink.org.uk. Up to date bus and train timetables should be available at the festival. **Happy travelling!**



Wed 27th - Sat 30th
September



St. Albans
Beer Festival
2006

ALBAN ARENA  ST ALBANS

OVER 300 REAL ALES plus FOREIGN BEERS, CIDERS & PERRIES

Wed 27th Sep 5.00 pm - 10.30 pm Thu 28th, Fri 29th, Sat 30th Sep, 11.00 am - 10.30 pm

Admission prices: Wed £2.50 Thu-Sat before 4.00 £2.00 after 4.00 £2.50 (Fri & Sat £3.00)

CAMRA MEMBERS FREE EVERY DAY, ANY TIME. NO ONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 CAN BE ADMITTED
www.stalbanbeerfestival.com Box office: 01727 844488 Contact: realales@yahoo.com



Dr FEELGOOD - Our Saturday night entertainment
Late trains from St Albans Abbey to stations to Watford

