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**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

HERTFORDSHIRE'S

Pints of View

The bi-monthly publication for every discerning drinker

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South Herts CAMRA celebrates its 35th anniversary at a special event held recently in the Farriers Arms, St Albans. From left to right are five founder members of the branch – Kevin Collins, Fran Nowak, Steve Bury, Richard Steward and John Green



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Are DPPOs the End of Outside Drinking?

Following the takeover of licensing by the Councils from the Magistrates last year, much has changed and complaints about excessive paperwork and bureaucracy have come from brewers and licensees alike. We are now in a position where the use of public places - in this case pedestrianised areas, along with licensing, are now both under the control of one authority.

The old exclusion zones have been replaced by DPPOs - Designated Public Place Orders - which are areas of a town or city designated by the District Council. Orders have been made in St Albans and Hertford and it is quite possible that other areas in other parts of the country, let alone Hertfordshire, are also affected or are about to be covered by these controls.

The objection is not to regulation - all sensible people understand that there must be rules - the problem is that these must be reasonable and necessary.

Problems have arisen in St Albans and I have received the following piece:-

Drinking in Public? Even educated fleas do it.

All around the world, it seems, men and women of drinking age are allowed to consume alcohol in public, and since the introduction of Designated Public Places - we've been allowed to do it, too. Or have we?

Designated Public Places (or DPPs) are public places that have been, well, designated. Doesn't mean much does it? Essentially, as part of an overhaul of licensing in the UK, traditional byelaws banning the consumption of alcohol in public were scrapped. Since then grown voters have had the right to drink in public, with the caveat that certain areas with a supposed history of trouble-making could become a DPP - the whole of St Albans City centre has become one. Anti-social behaviour within a DPP could result in a police constable asking you to cease drinking: refusal would be an offence and your alcohol could be confiscated and tipped down the drain, and you could face a fine.

This legislation was part of the 2001 Criminal

Justice & Police Act aimed at tackling anti-social behaviour, not to stop drinking per se.

The Act explicitly states that there should be no blanket bans on drinking in public and no new byelaws to create alcohol-free zones.

The message therefore seemed very clear: don't be anti-social when you're exercising your right to drink in public. A bit like 'don't speed when exercising your right to drive': all very laudable and nothing any reasonable person would be troubled with.

Unless, it seems, you are Albans & District City Council.

For suddenly at the beginning of September a diktat came out to four city centre pubs: **Harry Smith's**, the **Boot**, the **Snug** (at the Fleur de Lys) and the **White Swan**. Apparently responding to numerous complaints of intimidation from local residents, the Council's new message was equally clear: absolutely no drinking in public outside these premises.



Now if councils believe they can create mini alcohol-free zones outside these pubs (none of which could be called a den of iniquity), what's to stop them doing the same outside, say, the **White Horse** in Castle Street, Hertford which has had a bench on the pavement outside for 40 years? Or any pub within a DPP? Or even **your** local?

Fortunately, it seems, what could stop them is the law. A Hertfordshire Constabulary inspector has confirmed that "the creation of 'mini no alcohol zones' ... would be unlawful". Armed with this and the news that there weren't numerous complaints of intimidation after all (God bless the Freedom of Information Act!), steps are now being taken to try and get the ban on drinking outside these premises lifted to be replaced by a huge dollop of common sense.

It's our right to enjoy a pint or two in public just as they do all around the world. Wherever you are, please don't allow your local council to take that right away. If you're in St Albans, please consider writing to the Council's Licensing Department or Community Safety Team now to ask them to lift this "unlawful" ban.

Brian Parker

THE BITTER END

It is fact that certain pubs have been allowed for a long period of time, in some cases living memory and beyond, to give customers the option to drink outside. This is not an issue about areas they own, such as gardens and patios but about drinkers on the street, whether seated at tables or otherwise. Are these customers causing a nuisance? Well no more than those using a coffee shop or for example the Cornish pasty shop opposite the Boot public house, whose tables have spilled out onto the street. As Brian has stated quite clearly in his article there have not been a large number of complaints as first reported, and the public houses, which now have to eject their smokers onto the street in all weathers now cannot let them take their drinks with them. Town centre pubs often do not have gardens and private areas for smokers and many are under threat of closure due to reduced trade already.

We need our town pubs as social centres as much as those in the villages and countryside, so why can't we carry on using them in the time accepted manner?

Please take Brian's advice and write to St Albans District Council opposing the restrictions, we hope to hear before the next edition that the status quo has been returned.

Steve Bury

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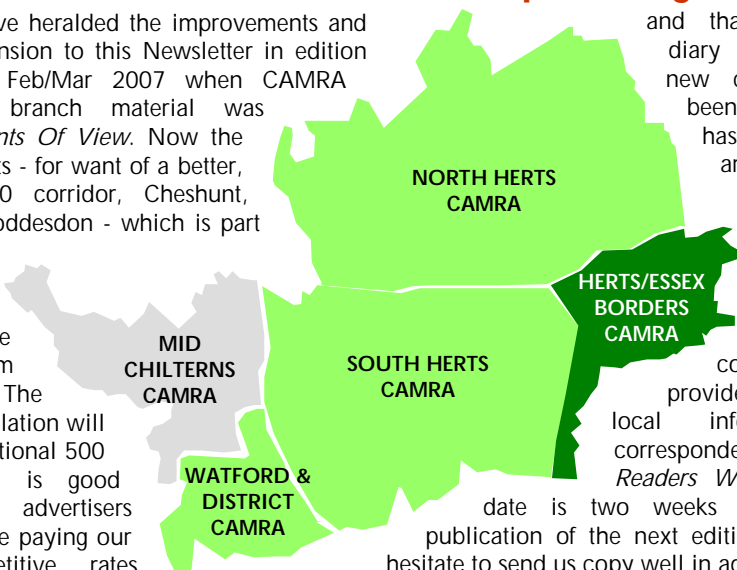
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Pints of View Newsletter Expands Again

We have heralded the improvements and expansion to this Newsletter in edition 221 Feb/Mar 2007 when CAMRA North Herts branch material was included in *Pints Of View*. Now the last part of Herts - for want of a better name the A10 corridor, Cheshunt, Waltham X, Hoddesdon - which is part of CAMRA Herts Essex Borders branch - will be included from this edition. The additional circulation will require an additional 500 copies, which is good news for our advertisers who will still be paying our highly competitive rates unchanged. Some of you may have noticed that the *Down Your Way* section covers a wider area,



and that features and diary dates from our new colleagues have been included. This has meant that we are printing larger editions - now usually 32 pages of full colour. A reminder to our many contributors who provide us with lots of local information and correspondence for *Herts Readers Write*: the closing date is two weeks in advance of publication of the next edition. Please don't hesitate to send us copy well in advance as it helps with editing and layout.

Steve Bury - Editor

See Herts/Essex Borders on the internet at: www.heb-camra.org.uk

Beer Festival Returns to Herts/Essex Borders

After a break of several years there is once again a CAMRA beer festival in the Herts and Essex Borders branch. The recent **HEBFest** took place in Sawbridgeworth Memorial Hall on the 26th and 27th October. Around 30 beers were available on draught, along with 3 ciders, a perry, and a selection of bottled beers from England and the Continent. So there was something to keep most people happy. The beer



was in very good condition throughout, and maintained a very pleasant coolness despite not being artificially chilled - one of

the bonuses of holding a festival in October. Eight new members joined CAMRA, and the **Queens Head** (above) and the **Old Bell** (below) in Sawbridgeworth were interested enough to consider widening their choices of real ales. Three new outlets will also be distributing *Pints of View* as a result of the festival. Branch Chairman Brendan Sothcott was pleased with the results of the festival, saying "A profitable beer festival makes Herts/Essex Borders a real CAMRA branch again".

With the experience gained from this year's festival, next year's will be even better. Make sure you look out for the details in this publication and your local pub during 2008.



Graham Perry

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

Hertford Ale Trekkers on the Autumn Ale Quest

Forty Hertford and Ware drinkers took to the streets of Hertford on 30 October to sample seasonal real ales laid on by the **Black Horse**, **White Horse**, **Old Barge** and **Old Cross Tavern**. Beers featured included Old Mill's *Halloween Surprise*, Okell's *Autumn Dawn*, Greene King's *Swing Low*, Sharp's *Eden*, St. Austell's *Proper Job*, Litton's *Gold Crest* and Mighty Oak's *Supernatural*. Not



bad at all for a quiet Tuesday night. Look out for our next event in Ware being planned for February in support of **Community Pubs Week**. Many thanks to all the publicans

who have hosted the local Hertford and Ware events this year – and to all of you who have supported us – we raise a glass and look forward to seeing you again in the New Year. Happy Christmas.

Les Middlewood
South Herts Branch – Hertford and Ware

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Greene King's New Beer with a Not-so-New Name

Greene King is investing in a major ale launch it believes will take the category into new territory - by combining the best

attributes of leading lager, stout and cask brands.

St Edmunds is 4.2% abv blonde ale, brewed to be served between 6°C and 7°C through a unique dispense system that allows customers to choose between two pours - a northern version with a creamy head, or a southern version without.

The beer - which has been named to celebrate Greene King's Suffolk home - is initially being rolled out across 100 outlets, where the brewer will review its progress ahead of a full launch next summer. Justin Adams, managing director of brewing and brands at Greene King, said:

"Combining the choice of serve with the growing popularity of light, golden beers and the increasing demand for cooler products, consumers tell us we're really on to something here. Cask beer is enjoying a real renaissance in the UK and we hope *St Edmunds* will help boost that further.

Cask beer drinkers in the north of England prefer their beer one way while those in the south like it differently.

We wanted people to have a choice while still being able to enjoy the flavour of a quality cask beer, wherever they are".

Claiming that *St Edmunds* had achieved the "holy trinity - ale that's as easy to drink as a lager, with the premium kudos of Guinness and the traditions of cask", he added: "*St Edmunds* has the flavour and provenance of a cask beer and the dispense kit offers the theatre and choice you get from a brand like Guinness".

Price is one of the key areas Greene King will be monitoring during the tests, which it hopes will show consumers are willing to pay more for *St Edmunds* - with the aim of giving it a similar price tag to Guinness.

Adams said: "In coffee shops staff are trained to sell different types of coffee and because customers are offered choice they are prepared to pay for it - it's

the same with wine. *St Edmunds* addresses the conundrum that ale is sold for less than a standard lager".



Stockists will be given a training pack that explains how to pour the two pints as well as tips on communicating the differences to customers, which will be backed up with point-of-sale material.

Ed Says: I remember *St Edmunds* strong ale; and it was one of the beers on the Greene King lost list mentioned by Steve Kiely in POV edition 220. The bottled *St Edmunds* was certainly stronger than ABV 4.2%. Is this real ale? I don't see how

the twin pour with a Guinness-like head will work without extraneous gas pressure. Will it be a top pressure offering like those we were given by Greene King in 70's and 80's? We should be told.

Thwaites Chief in Abrupt Departure

Brian Hickman, the managing director of Blackburn brewer Thwaites abruptly left the company on 17 October.

In a statement, Thwaites said Brian Hickman (pictured) had left the company by "mutual agreement".

"The company thanks him for what he has done in the past and gives him their very best wishes for the future," said the brewer. Paul Baker, currently non-exec director, will assume responsibility for the brewery.



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.

Drinking in Shenley (or not as the case may be)

Pints of View Editor Steve Bury updates two local pubs in his home village of Shenley

It is sad to announce the death of the **Black Lion** as a pub. On my last visit in October all four handpump tops had been removed, which had previously served three real ales and one naturally conditioned cider. For quite some time there has been a public bar to the left of the entrance and a restauranted area to the right, which opens into a conservatory. The two have run alongside each other quite happily until the pub became an Indian restaurant called the Basmati. Most references to the Black Lion have been removed and the dartboard and all semblances of a pub were taken out during the renovation earlier in the year, though a large screen TV remains.



The **White Horse** (pictured above) also in London road at the other end of the village re-opened on November 9th and Paul Brown, who was previously running another pub in Cheshire, has taken over following an extensive and expensive refurbishment.

The pub is having a bit of an identity crisis as the signage on the outside says that it is a 'Free House' established in 1845. Prior to closure in September it was not free of tie, and owned by Mitchells & Butlers Pub Co of Birmingham. Now we are told it is part of Landmark Leisure, project "S", still unsurprisingly run from Birmingham. Other pubs in the chain are the **Wicked Lady** in Nomansland Common, Wheathampstead, the **Orange Tree** in Totteridge, North London and many, many others further afield. Their web site advertises the pub as the White Horse, Radlett - which is almost three miles away, and totally separate from the village. This is all the more surprising as Vintage Inns made exactly the same error in 2003 when they ran the pub (see POV edition 202). On the plus side the awful "frozen horse" pub sign has been

replaced with one showing a traditional white horse on a black background. The sign painting on the outside says "Village Pub and Dining" and a new kitchen has been installed, the food is of a very high standard with prices to match. There is an extensive menu though some of the dishes could be described as nouvelle cuisine.

The décor is contemporary and light but the lighting can be a bit subdued in some areas after dark. It is pleasing to have an area for drinking separate from the dining area, and the beers on sale are Fullers *London Pride* and Timothy Taylor *Landlord*. Over the years most of the individual historic features of this 16th Century coaching inn have been removed and we now have a classic exterior with a modern interior.

Will it suit the villagers? Is there enough new custom locally to keep this plush upmarket establishment viable? Only time will tell.

I have been delivering the newsletter to the White Horse for over twenty five years but this will now stop as I have been told by the manager that it is now policy not to take any free papers. **SB**

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McMullen's – Celebrating 180 Years of Brewing Real Ale

South and North Herts CAMRA separately visit the Hertford brewery, and revealed below is the current state of play, and plans for the future.

Our group assembled at the **Old Cross Cottage**, a fine venue to soak in McMullen's long distinguished history, decorated with pictures, paintings and posters from the past – each telling a story and reminding us of times spent in McMullen's pubs down the years. Upstairs the museum cements this sense of tradition and longevity; while McMullen's are rightly proud of their rich past, this is a company firmly with an eye focussed on the future.

We were met by Fergus McMullen, Production and Sales Director (right) and Dave Buck, Business Development



Manager. Fergus gave us a whistle-stop summary of the company which started back in 1827 when Peter McMullen opened the first brewery on Millbridge then acquired smaller breweries and bought more and more pubs. Its current holding is 135 pubs, largely in a 20 mile radius of the brewery.

There have been ups and downs, more than once the company has teetered on the brink of closure - most recently in 2003, which resulted in a major re-appraisal, and Mac's has emerged a robust, forward-looking brewery-pub company, still steeped in tradition with faith in their cask beers – *AK*, *Country*, *Cask Ale*, and their seasonal specials.

CAMRA and McMullen's detect an upturn in real ale sales (see also p26), borne out of the public's quest for quality products.

Fergus believes it is time for the big brewers to concentrate on national keg and lager brands and leave the brewing of cask-conditioned ale to the small family, regional and micro-brewers. With CAMRA promoting cask-conditioned ale, there is a bright future beckoning for real ale producers.

We took a sentimental glance at the famous Victorian tower brewery which has recently been sold to Sainsbury's (as part of a much larger sale of

McMullen's land and buildings). Listed Grade 1, star in parts, and Grade 2, these buildings will feature large in any forthcoming planning application from the supermarket chain.

The new brewery is dwarfed by its forebear, but is nonetheless compact and purposeful, operating on a form of traditional tower brewing; where the processes start at the top of the building and use gravity to transport the beer to ground floor level. McMullen's are extremely proud of how their own engineers designed and constructed the new brewery.

The Whole Hop Brewery (opened in 2006 at a cost of £1m) highlights Mac's intention to continue using only the finest traditional materials. A hopback filters the real hops allowing the delicate flavours that hop pellets and hop oil often lose, into Mac's beers. Capable of brewing between 30 and 120 barrels, it is ideal for the range of special beers by Mac's – "Saracens" being the most recent.

Mac's famous aquifer well (as deep as Nelson's column is tall) is still used to supply the liquor (brewing term for water) for all their beers with some gypsum added. Styrian hops are a feature of McMullen's Cask Ale (ABV 3.8%) and sales are likely to

reach to over 1,500 barrels – a pleasing first year. Today, it's Mac's special cask beers – of which there are six to eight a year – which fill the "premium" beer category. Maybe a dark mild for next May? Fergus said he would consider the idea. *AK* continues to be the bedrock of the company's cask-conditioned sales – still accounting for 60 to 75% of production, and is one of Britain's oldest brand names. *Country Bitter* (ABV 4.3%) is of course their other beer and each has received point-of sale updating earlier this year.

Mac's bottled beers *No.1 Pale Ale* can be found in most McMullen's pubs – sales in the Harlow area being especially buoyant, which Fergus suggests might be a legacy still allied to the movement of



Londoners to the area in the 1950s and 60s. *Hertford Castle* (ABV 5.0%) is, perhaps, less available but can be ordered by any McMullen tenant or manager should they want it.



McMullen's Website – at about £1.60 per pint – and delivered direct to your door.

This year there has been significant building work at the **Red Lion**, Hatfield (above) and, most recently, the **Crocodile** in Cheshunt. Plans for changes at the **Chieftain** in Welwyn Garden City have slowed and are, to some extent, still in the hands of planners. Most large makeovers on the present pub portfolio are now complete but the company will continue with its five year rolling programme of refurbishments and redecorations – The **Jolly Butcher** in Enfield being one of the next in line.

The **Baroosh** chain goes from strength to strength – and as opposed to other city-type bars there is draught real ale in all of them. All McMullen managers are trained to promote the company's cask ales. There are no planned pub closures across the estate although Fergus concedes that for some tenants it must be hard to make their businesses profitable in the current climate – post summer sales are down across the trade. *The issue of smoking?* Too early to say, said Fergus, we will



need to wait and see what winter's effect will be. There is now a full time member of staff searching for new pub acquisitions – ideally Mac's would like to see their estate grow by between three and

In a further innovation for McMullen's, by Christmas it will be possible to order your favourite Mac's cask-conditioned beers by box! In 10 or 20 litre boxes which will be available via

five pubs per annum, but the market price is ridiculously high at the moment and Mac's will not be making any rash bids. Though many of their pubs will be food driven (for this is how they will best grow) Mac's understand the importance of their locals - where there is a social responsibility to keep them homely and community-focused.

Back to the cottage we had time to sample all of Mac's cask ales and bottled beers – all in terrific condition. A buffet lunch was provided and Fergus and Dave dealt with questions and ideas put forward by the visitors. We all felt this was a wonderfully open exchange of ideas and views.

McMullen's will not be spending huge amounts on advertising campaigns. They hope that word will spread that the quality of the beer presented at the bar, the quality of food prepared and the experience enjoyed in a Mac's pub. A poor pint in a Mac's pub, if you should come across one, is certainly not acceptable – Fergus is very keen to hear from anyone who should find this. Work with Cask Marque a few years ago has led to a big investment in training and modern cellar equipment, which Fergus and Dave say is paying dividends in their pubs.

Many thanks to Fergus, Dave and the catering staff at McMullen's for their hospitality – CAMRA and its South Herts Branch support



Mac's in their quest to provide quality real ales in quality pubs. We want to get behind their pubs in CAMRA's forthcoming **Community Pubs Week** (16 - 23 February 2008). We want to achieve our common goal – to make real ale a first choice for everyone when surveying the alternatives on the bar.

In time honoured fashion we sampled a few of Hertford's pubs and another pint or two of Mac's cask beers, some visiting the **Salisbury Arms Hotel**, **Baroosh** (above), and some, finally, the **Great Eastern Tavern** (left). Tradition mixed with modernity – somehow fitting at the end of a brilliant day.

North Herts Visit to McMullen's Brewery

Fifteen North Herts members also had the pleasure of visiting the new brewery at the end of October.

We were welcomed by Dave Buck, who gave us a brief talk about the reasons behind building the new brewery and met head brewer Chris Evans who explained the brewing processes as we viewed the various vessels that were actually being used that day.

Back at the **Old Cross Cottage** we sampled the beers, on offer which were *AK Original*, *Country* and their relatively new brew, *Cask Ale*. In addition to the beer, a hot and cold buffet was provided with the world famous 'Braughing Bangers', which are produced in the little butcher's shop at Braughing, on the B1368. We thank Dave and McMullen's Brewery on behalf of the North Herts Branch for their hospitality and kind invitation.

Brian Mason © 2007

Sharp's Wins National Brewer of the Year

Sharp's Brewery, the brewer of Cornwall's favourite beer *Doom Bar*, has scooped one of the premier accolades in the brewing industry by being chosen as National Brewer of the Year in the 2008 Good Pub Guide. This award is akin to a Michelin Star in the restaurant trade. Sharp's now joins the ranks of previous winners like Timothy Taylors and Black Sheep. This is the first time that a South West brewer has been chosen for such a prestigious award, and follows another South West first in 2006 when *Doom Bar* won joint bronze Bitter at the CAMRA **Great British Beer Festival**. Joint editor of the guide Fiona Stapley remembers trying her first pint of *Doom Bar* at the **Crown Inn**, Lanlivery, in 1994, where she saw a delivery van dropping off a cask of an unknown beer. She recalls: "We tried it and we liked it. It turned out to be from a Cornish brewery which had just started, called Sharp's. Now Sharp's beers are widely available right across the south of England. We have thousands of readers write to us every month, and in the South West and the south, *Doom Bar* is mentioned most regularly".

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Behold - The Trusty Handpump

By Les
Middlewood

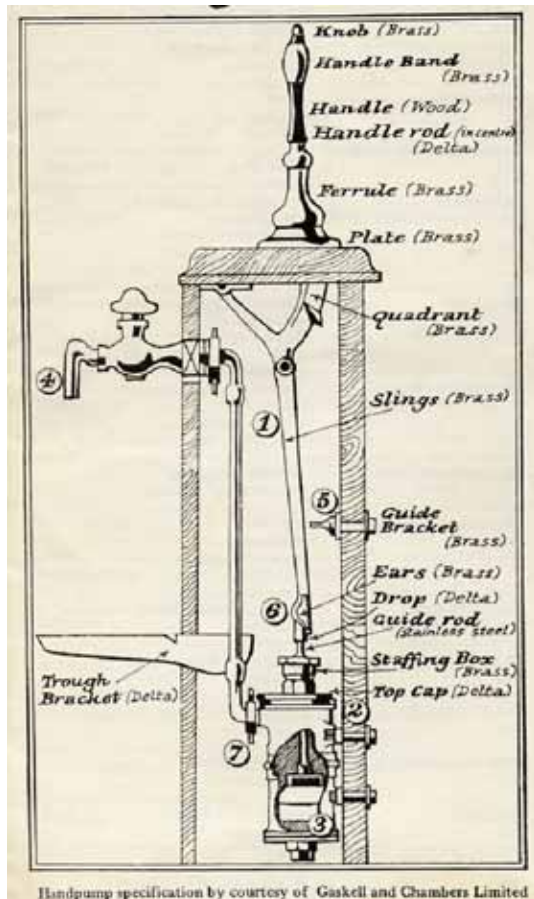
If there is one image that has become synonymous with the words "real ale", it is surely the handpump. Not always well-kept real ale it should be said - that is in the skills of mine host - but, used properly, the handpump is the perfect tool to draw beer from the barrel in the cellar to the glass on the bar, serving beer at cool cellar temperature. So what is a handpump and how did this simple piece of equipment become the standard method for dispensing real ale in England? Put simply, the handpump you see on the bar is part of a larger piece of equipment called a beer engine. It operates a suction pump/piston assembly which sits under the bar and which draws beer from the barrel, often in half pint measure, through pipes to the glass. Back in the eighteenth century all beer was dispensed directly from the cask (or tuns) requiring a potman, or more often a pot boy, to fill jugs in the cellar and speed the beer upstairs to the bar - a task oft repeated throughout a session - and a labour intensive exercise ripe, in the spirit of the late eighteenth century, for mechanisation.

The first person to set his mind to the task was Joseph Bramah (below), a Yorkshireman who is also accredited with inventing a type of flush toilet. Bramah was a cabinet maker who later became a locksmith. The lock business grew and became Bramah's main source of income but along the way in 1785 he patented a contraption called a 'beer engine'. Bramah's patented engine involved the use of sand pressure. Heavy boxes of sand, with an accompanying pulley-system, operated a crude piston forcing the beer through pipes. But was it a labour saving device? The beer in the barrels that was delivered to the pub first had to be transferred to open vessels before the new invention could be utilised and the size of the machinery was often too big for the smaller cellars. Bramah's unwieldy and incongruous beer engine only achieved limited success, but had nonetheless stirred the imagination of other inventors. By the



1820s, further beer pumps were in use. These early pumps would have been constructed with lead pipework and leather pistons. Lead was replaced with porcelain or glass with segments held together with rubber joints. Leather succumbed to brass or gunmetal pistons. Today's modern equivalent is largely made of stainless steel and plastic with pipework made of food grade micro-bore plastic. The handpump, via connecting rods and a pivot, operates a piston contained in a cylinder. At the base of the piston and cylinder there are non-return valves to ensure a one-way flow of beer to the glass. By the early 19th Century one of the leading manufacturers was Gaskell and Chambers - see the construction of their pump in the diagram shown below.

There are, of course, regional differences and preferences in how beer should be presented in the glass. In the north many drinkers prefer a thick



creamy head. The handpump is fitted with a sparkler to force the beer through small holes, thus providing the desired collar on the beer.

The modern porcelain pump handle, or sleeve, is 9" tall and up to 2" in diameter at its thickest point. Often plain black or white, the ceramic handles sometimes were adorned with the blue and white of 'Wedgwood-style' designs but more often than not it was the plain black or white that were prevalent. The hunting scene, so often seen on Hertfordshire handles, became popular in the 1960s – at a time when real ale was losing favour with the big brewers – yet has somehow remained popular through to today, despite the arguments for and against fox hunting. These days there are a number of companies offering different sleeve designs.

Pump clips are a surprisingly late addition. In some pubs the colour of the sleeve in a bank of handpumps, would indicate the beer – perhaps black for stout, brown for mild or red for bitter. Metal or ceramic pump clips have largely been replaced with more cheaply-produced plastic. Not surprisingly pump clips have become highly collectable featuring at many a CAMRA breweriana auction. In using the handpump the secret in dispensing the perfect pint is, of course, first down to the quality of the beer leaving the barrel. The publican's skills in nursing the real ale to perfection remain paramount. Alongside this, the beer engine and its pipes must be regularly cleaned and flushed through.

In the Midlands you might find electric pumps dispensing the beer. In Scotland you might find the tall font where air pressure is used. And though, locally in Hertfordshire, Greene King once flirted with short handle electric pumps, here and in the rest of England and Wales it is the handpump that says real ale. Around Britain there are a number of pubs called the Beer Engine – there's even a brewery with this name – but only one pub is specifically named after the inventor of the first beer engine – the **Joseph Bramah**, a new Wetherspoons Lloyd's No.1 pub in Barnsley, South Yorkshire.

Today, there are a number of manufacturers still producing beer engines – all too much the same design, though clip-on varieties have become popular, so avoiding any adaptation of the bar. So, long live the trusty handpump, as growing real ale sales demand this method of beer dispense.



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North Minibus Rambles – Codicote and Rabley Heath

Will we or won't we go, will they or won't they turn up on such an auspicious evening as the semi-final of the Rugby Union World Cup starring England v France? Well we all did and once again we had an almost full bus for our Saturday Ramble. This month's trip was to Codicote and Rabley Heath and because of the game we based ourselves in Codicote from just before kick off to final whistle. The only thing we had to remember was to be at the pick-up point just after the final whistle; extra time or not. We were there, but our illustrious bus driver had to be called from the drop off point!!



The drop off point being the first pub of the evening, the **Bell** (left). In the 1920's there were two inns side by side; the Bell established in the early 18th century

and the much more recent Queen, which was closed in 1905. On offer tonight and just before the kick-off were Greene King *IPA*, Fuller's *London Pride* and Adnams *Bitter*; the London Pride being the better of the two I tried. The game started so we stayed put and watched most of the first half.

In order to get to the next pub we had to walk past what was the fourth pub in the village until it closed a few years ago. This was the George & Dragon, known as the Greyhound in 1481; but certainly an inn from 1279. The present building, now a restaurant dates from about 1550. It was at this inn that recruits from Mid-Herts were enrolled to defend Hertfordshire from the Young Pretender in 1745. However, tonight we passed it by, a great shame, because at one time, this could have been Hertfordshire's

oldest licensed house - unless you know different?

Our second pub of the evening was the **Goat** (right).



This pub is early 17th or late 16th Century, but it is probably on the site of a 15th Century inn. W & S Lucas brewers of Hitchin leased the pub in 1816. For our delight tonight were Adnams *Bitter*,

Greene King *IPA*, Greene King *Abbot* and Morlands *Old Speckled Hen*. All the beers were quite nice, so we stayed there until half time, with England still leading.

Leaving the Goat we made our way on foot again to the third pub, the **Globe** (below). The previous name of this pub was **Help me through the World**,

(very quaint). It was established as a beer house in the 1860's and was owned by Lattimore, of Wheathampstead before being acquired by McMullen in 1881. Being a McMullen



pub, *AK*, *Country Bitter* and *Cascade* were on offer. All the beers were in very good condition and we drank and nervously watched England come out on top with a drop goal from Jonny Wilkinson with minutes to go, although the author was hiding to avoid the last few 'really' nervous minutes, arriving back just as he scored.

The bus driver arrived at the pick up point and we made our way to the fourth and final pub of the evening. On arrival, the 'merry gang' below



trooped into the **Robin Hood and Little John**, (no jokes this time), at Rabley Heath. We were expecting that the beer in this pub to be really good, as it is now run for

McMullen's by Steve Nye, the former landlord of the **Lytton Arms** for many years. The pub was established in 1779 by Underwood Males and was previously two 18th Century cottages. Originally owned by W & S Luca, brewers of Hitchin, before 1818. On offer were McMullen's *Hope & Glory*, (*on gravity*), *AK*, *Country Bitter* and *Cascade*. All as expected were in excellent condition and it is here we finished the evening and the celebration of England's win over France.

Next month will see us in the Watton-at-Stone area, which will be reported in the next issue.

Brian Mason © 2007



Smoking Ban Developments



Smoking Ban Rebels Ready for Fight

Nick Hogan, who runs two pubs in Bolton, the **Swan** and the **Barristers**, and has never acknowledged the smoking ban, was due in court on 12th November for allowing smoking in his premises. He had said that he would appeal if found guilty by magistrates and commented "Why doesn't the government ban the product? Because it makes billions in tax revenue. If I treated a gay or a black person in the way I am expected to treat a smoker, 'telling them to drink outside' I would quite rightly have my arse kicked all over town." Hogan also said "The government should compromise and have smoking and non-smoking pubs like they do in the majority of Europe". The strange thing is that Hogan's future at the pubs is in doubt, as another local licensee Paul Kiely claims to have bought the pubs with vacant possession.

Other Smoking Refuseniks:

Tony Ewyas of the Dog Inn, Herefordshire:

Tony pleaded not guilty to three charges relating to the smoking ban at Hereford Magistrates on 25 October. The case was adjourned to 21 Jan 2008. Picture, courtesy of Hereford Times.



Hamish Howitt of the Happy Scotts, Blackpool:

Hamish was found guilty of flouting the smoking ban and was fined £500 and ordered to pay £2,000 costs, as well as a £15 victim surcharge - a fee which funds services for crime victims. He confirmed his pub is on the market and that he had "no choice" but to sell. Hamish previously changed his name to Hamish Guy Fawkes Howitt in protest at the ban.



Dave West of Hey Jo nightclub, in London's West End:

Dave West (left) is dubbed by the *Independent* newspaper as the 'Mr Big' of the pro-smoking movement: He made £100m fortune from booze warehouses in Calais and Zeebrugge, and opened his own £6m nightclub in Jermyn St, in

London's West End after he was turned down for membership of other nearby nightclubs. He has employed Cherie Blair (Cherie Booth QC) to challenge the Government's smoking ban, as an infringement of his human rights.

Landlord Facing Smoke Pollution Rap

Jeff Castledine - landlord of the Queens Head, Boreham, nr Chelmsford, Essex is facing becoming the first in the country to be prosecuted for allowing cigarette smoke to pollute a neighbour's property.

When he applied to Chelmsford Borough Council to erect a smoking shelter, he was shocked to discover the council's environmental health team had been contacted by one of the pub's neighbours, claiming odour from smoking in the pub garden was affecting her.



Mr Castledine, pictured above on *(Cont'd over)*



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Smoking Ban Developments



the left with some of his regulars, has moved garden benches away from the fence of the neighbouring property, but said he had been left frustrated by the events.

He said: "What more can I do? I understand the council must investigate, but this is a scurrilous complaint. What next? No smoking in the streets? Legislation has forced us outside - what are we supposed to do?"

He said it was rare to have more than seven or eight people lighting-up in the garden, and the smoke generated was considerably less than that coming from nearby chimneys.

Mr Castledine has been told he could be served with an

abatement notice if the records show that a "statutory nuisance" exists.



We would let you smoke if it wasn't against the law.

Punch Blames Smoking Ban and Bad Weather for Drop in Profits

Punch Taverns is expected to warn that any honeymoon period from the smoking ban is firmly over and that it is likely to affect future profits when it reports full-year results on Thursday. The pub operator said at the beginning of September that full-year profits would be two to three per cent – £6M to £8M – below previous expectations due to the dismal summer weather. But analysts are now expecting pre-tax profit of around £279M, down from the previous consensus forecast of £285M.

Smoking Ban Results North of Border

Heart attacks amongst smokers in Scotland since the non smoking laws were introduced in March 2006 have dropped by 17% of smokers and by 20% of non smokers. Yes those figures are the right way round.

Elliot Furniss

Steve Bury

Keith, Yvonne and Carla would like to welcome you to the **6th Annual Beer Festival**

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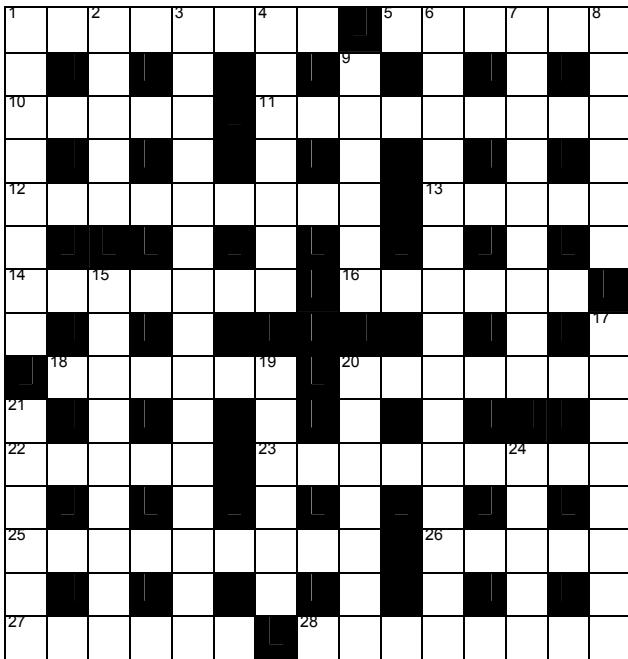
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CLUES ACROSS

- 1 Quietly objects to gifts (8)
- 5 Impede one of the above? (6)
- 10 Small peg – it limits effusion initially (5)
- 11 In Herts, slow fermentation is of no value (9)
- 12 A feature of St Albans halted car diversion (9)
- 13 Bury, an Italian club? (5)
- 14 See 20 across
- 16 Isolated injury not showing (3, 3)
- 18 Four appear to 3 in 6 (6)
- 20,14 He was responsible for 6, among others (7, 7)
- 22 For this reason, beer half-heartedly not drunk (5)
- 23 A good ruction created here in 1415 (9)
- 25 Outgoing type edits text about dog (9)
- 26 Fire inaccurately with learner involved? This might (5)
- 27 Bits of dish these French put together (6)
- 28 Strip tease hot in relative's embrace (8)

CLUES DOWN

- 1 Portsmouth, Stafford, Colchester and Derby all have one or two of each (8)
- 2 To live in Essex is tempting (5)
- 3 He was visited by four 18 in 20 across 14's 6 (8, 7)
- 4 In the direction of a road, pulls round (7)
- 6 Production of 20 across 14 featuring 3 and four 18 (1, 9, 5)
- 7 Fill up with ten brews – that's more than enough...(9)
- 8 ...otherwise take it easy around Brighton, say (6)
- 9 Play from central characters in short film (6)
- 15 Each one to be reallocated a housemate? (9)
- 17 We get involved with satire, in a way (2, 2, 4)
- 19 AK with less hops is satisfying (6)
- 20 Bushes surrounded his office (7)
- 21 (Do not) disturb please – if I'm this (6)
- 24 Out of condition, one drinks Fuller's at first (5)

Winner of Beer Name Prize Sudoku in 225:

- To be announced in edition 227 -

Thanks to all who entered.

SOLUTION BELOW:

U	O	L	E	D	B	I	S	X
D	B	S	I	O	X	U	E	L
X	E	I	L	U	S	D	O	B
L	X	O	S	B	I	E	U	D
S	D	E	X	L	U	O	B	I
I	U	B	O	E	D	L	X	S
E	L	D	B	S	O	X	I	U
O	S	X	U	I	L	B	D	E
B	I	U	D	X	E	S	L	O

Deliberate Fire Destroys Woodcock

Exclusive By Janaki Mahadevan

A fire that ripped through a Borehamwood pub in the early hours of Tuesday morning (30 October) is thought to have been started deliberately.

Neighbours saw flames and smoke rising from the **Woodcock** pub, in Croxdale Road, at around 2.30am.

The building has been boarded up and disused since August. The site had been earmarked for demolition and planning permission was granted in June for a new development of flats to be built.

Firefighters were called to the disused pub just after 2.30am. Seven engines arrived on the scene, from Borehamwood, Bushey, Garston, Potters Bar, Welwyn Garden City and two from Watford. The first from Borehamwood arrived within six minutes.

No one was hurt and investigations into the cause of the fire are ongoing.

One resident described the intensity of the fire and said: "I was woken up with the noise of the fire brigade. I could feel the heat of the flames through my window. "I was pretty scared, I thought we might all have to be evacuated. The wind was fanning the flames towards the houses. This morning it was still smouldering. My car and garden were completely covered in ash.

"Ever since that pub has been boarded up there have been gangs of youths hanging around vandalising the place. At least now they can't do anything more to it.

"A lot of us have been complaining about this pub for years. We were expecting something like this to happen."

A spokeswoman for Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service said: "The fire was quite severe. When firefighters arrived in the early hours of the morning, the flames (pictured here by a neighbour) were coming out of the roof.



"The firefighters tackled the fire from the outside of the building as it was derelict and there was nobody inside. We carried out a fire investigation this morning and at this stage we believe the fire was started deliberately".

On August 6, fire crews were called to the pub following reports of a small fire which was also suspected to have been started deliberately.

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North Herts Branch CAMRA Cider Trip

By Gemma Collins – N. Herts CAMRA Young Members Officer

It's not many things that will get me down to a meeting point at 10am on a chilly October Saturday morning, especially after a long working week, but cider is one of them! As part of CAMRA's Cider and Perry Month, a trip was organized by North Herts CAMRA to Cassels in Cambridgeshire to see cider in the making, and we were lucky enough to get there in time to watch the last of the apples to be pressed for the day. Drinking cold pure apple juice with literally nothing added was almost as good as the cider we were promised...

James and Lucy Cassels in Shelford founded Cassels cider in 1995 having starting out experimenting making cider with local cooking and eating apples as a hobby. Initially their cider was made from any available apples, but James quickly realised that the unique properties of real cider apples had a profound affect on quality and strength. This led to a philosophy of sourcing unsprayed English apples from small producers both local to Cambridge and from the West Country. This policy is still followed today and Cassels cider prides itself on having no additives or pesticides in its stock apples. The business has developed from a cottage industry, producing a few bottles to 1,500 gallons of cider (just under what you can produce before paying excise ☺). With the country going mad for everything organic and a low-carbon-footprint, we concentrate on real ales, yet cider is one of the most simply-produced, unaltered and natural products sold in this country, and it doesn't half taste good. Oh, and it's pretty alcoholic ☺.

After relieving Cassels of a fair amount of their rather tasty cider, we moved on to our first pub of the day – the **Queens Head** in Harston, below.

Being only about midday we stopped for some lunch and some of the group tried the pub's

'legendary' soup; which evolves daily from a jealously guarded recipe, so we were told. After another pint of Cassels we visited another pub which only sold Weston's *Country Perry*, but,



given that we'd been drinking since before lunchtime, something a bit lighter was advisable. By now the weather had picked up and we were sitting out in the beer garden.

Moving on again, we headed out for a bit more al fresco drinking, this time at the **Lazy Otter** in Stretham, right. Here they had brought some Pickled Pig's *Porkers Snout* which won the East Anglian Cider Competition 2007 because they knew we were coming.

By this point, I think it's fair to say that everyone was rather happy, so we were in a sensible mood to watch the Rugby World Cup final. So, an eventful day, finished off with a bit of shouting at the TV (it was a try!!!). Not a bad Saturday really.

See Cassels at www.casselscider.co.uk

Results of 2007 East Anglian Cider Competition

We are delighted to announce that this year's winners are:-

- 1st *Porkers Snout*, Pickled Pig Cider (Stretham, Ely, Cambridgeshire)
- 2nd Castlings Heath, *Dry Cider* (Groton, Sudbury, Suffolk)
- 3rd Hereward Brewery, *Medium Dry* (Ely, Cambridgeshire)

The winning cider, by Pickled Pig, is produced using apples grown locally to Stretham where they are based, some from very old orchards. The quality of the fruit obviously comes through to the finished products, with judges describing their *Porkers Snout* as "A delicate, well balanced cider with a floral aroma which develops into an evenly rounded, slightly sweet finish. A serious session cider".

On hearing of his success, Charles Roberts of Pickled Pig Cider said "This award brings a fantastic end to our 2006 cider season being the 4th gold this year. We source all our fruit and make our cider in East Anglia, so to be judged top in this particular competition really means a lot to us".

The runners up in the competition; Castlings Heath and Hereward Brewery, also use locally-grown



Dreaming of a Lager-free Christmas



fruit to produce their ciders.

Castlings Heath of Groton in Suffolk has been producing cider for 20 years and only produces organic cider. The winning cider was matured in a barrel which had previously been used for rum, something which was picked up by the judges who said it was "An easy drinking rum flavoured cider in which the apple character comes through in the aftertaste".

The winner of the 3rd prize in the competition is based in Ely, not far from where Pickled Pig cider is produced. Michael Czarnobaj of Hereward Brewery, whose winning cider was described as "A dry cider with an initial character of an old fashioned ginger beer, becoming more apple-ish as you drink", has been producing cider since 2002, using fruit from friends, relatives and local commons.

Andrea Briers, CAMRA's Regional Cider Co-ordinator for East Anglia said "The winners of the competition are helping keep the tradition of cider production in East Anglia alive. They also demonstrate the diversity of tastes in real cider. So, if you see real cider available, why not give it a try?"

See also Supreme Cider Pub article on page 24

The Australian Manufacturers Workers Union (AMWU) have

predicted industrial action at the Foster's

Yatala brewery south of Brisbane if the management continues to lock the union out of pay talks. Union organiser Darren Trask said "If they force workers into accepting something they don't agree with, they're not going to have a very productive or happy workforce, who may take their option to pursue industrial action against the company".

Well, it's only Foster's and it would be a big step if the employees who produce the lager under license in this country were to join the dispute. There is of course still a lot of other lager produced in this country: Stella Artois (Belgian) lager at Wrexham, Herefordshire. Budweiser (American) at Mortlake, London as well as Carlsberg, (Danish) in Northampton, and of course Carling - as well as many others who would no doubt make up the shortfall.

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Alehouse praised

I heartily agree with "Drink Real Ale: Save the World" (POV 225) and supporting local breweries and local pubs to help sustainability and diversity. As a new St Albans CAMRA member I was particularly pleased to see "St Albans Beer festival goes from strength to strength" (POV 225). I was interested by credit being rightfully given to Fuller's sponsoring the main bar and Wells and Young's who sponsored the stage bar and glasses. Indeed, to them much thanks.

What was missing was similar credit for the Alehouse Brewery; for it was them that sponsored the upper foyer bar (The Hertfordshire Bar) supporting our 20 local micro and major breweries, as well as supplying nearly a dozen outstanding Alehouse brews.

It is worth mentioning that the Alehouse Brewery is easily the festival's 'local', being all of two blocks away at the **Farmers Boy**, and so surely is unbeatable for doing its bit for sustainability - only half a 'beer mile' at the most!

John Gunner

Speckled Hen not so Old

Can I please put you straight on the above named pub which appears in your Oct/November edition. The pub is called 'The **Speckled Hen**' and not 'The Old Speckled Hen' as your writer would imply. We do of course sell 'Old Speckled Hen' as brewed by Greene King! Cheers.

*Ray Holmes, Business Development Manager
Local Pubs – East, Greene King*

Ed Says: Firstly it's nice to know that Greene King actually read the newsletter. Ray is correct, the pub *is* called the Speckled Hen - but he has missed the point. What are GK going to do about the awful corporate faceless pub sign? Having changed the name I was there on the pub's re-opening night and was informed that it was to celebrate the re-launch of



the *Old Speckled Hen* beer (albeit at a lower gravity), thus my error. A pictorial pub sign would and should have been appropriate. I did suggest

that a picture of the Old Speckled Hen MG sports car owned by the head brewer of Morland brewery, who actually wrote the recipe for the beer to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Abingdon Brewery. Of course Greene King closed the brewery and moved production of Old Speckled Hen to Bury St Edmunds. Hopefully this has put the record completely straight.

Clarendon missed

Do you know what is happening to the **Clarendon Arms** at Chandlers Cross? The pub has been boarded-up since April/May this year. At first I assumed it was for refurbishment but, as time goes by and as work seems to be at a standstill, I'm not so sure.

We used to drink there a lot in the 70s and now we usually go there before and after Watford FC home games, as it is ideally placed between various friends' homes.

Roy Platten

Ed Says: As reported in edition 224, a planning application was being made to extend it and its associated stable building, with landscaping too.

The White Lion



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Drinking outside - is there a problem?

There have been reports in the local press during the last week or so about the **Boot** being told that it cannot have drinkers on its own frontage outside the pub although people, sometimes with noisy children, can sit outside the Cornish Pasty Shop opposite. The same restriction has been imposed on the nearby **White Swan** (right) and **Barneys**. It appears, however, that it is quite acceptable to sit in the area between the Arena and Barclays Bank drinking under-priced take-away alcohol.



This is blatant hypocrisy, which urgently needs to be stopped. I go past the Clock Tower area of the city centre at various times of the day and evening and have never encountered rowdy or anti-social behaviour emanating from either the Boot or the White Swan. I do however perceive the area alongside Barclays bank, to be intimidating. If licensees of any pub do not run a 'tight ship' they are liable to incur heavy fines or even loss of licence - and therefore livelihood; this heavy-handed attitude is unwarranted and against the wellbeing and atmosphere of the city centre. I am asking both local CAMRA and Pubwatch to take up the cudgels on this matter. If we allow this to continue unchallenged what will be the next restrictive move against local livelihoods and culture?

John Crowhurst

(South Herts. CAMRA pub-watch liaison rep.)

Horse & Groom Remembered

The Harvester (**Ancient Briton**) was closed, with metal fencing and safety signs for a long period in October having a major refit and re-opened 1st November.

On the Harvester Website it is referred to as:-
At the Ancient Briton crossroads. On A1081 towards Luton and Harpenden.

If any of the reviews of a refitted Harvester are anything to go by I'll not be setting my compass route. The only review I can relate to is reminiscing about when it was the Horse & Groom.

Rob Strachen

**Land of Liberty, Peace & Plenty
– East Anglia Pub of the Year**

Yet more congratulations are due to Gill Gibson, Martin Few and all the staff at the **Land of Liberty, Peace & Plenty** in Heronsgate, which has been voted **CAMRA Pub of the Year for the East Anglia region**. Regional Director Mike Harvey presented the certificate to the pub on a packed Saturday night in October. The pub now goes forward to the next super-regional stage of the national competition, where it will be up against pubs from Kent, London and Surrey. I'm sure all the Hertfordshire branches would like to wish the pub's staff the best of luck in the next stage of the competition. Here's hoping to see a **National Pub of the Year** from Hertfordshire!

Below: Regional Director Mike Harvey (left) presents Land of Liberty licensees Gill Gibson and Martin Few with the award for East Anglia Pub of the Year.



**Sixty Pint Beer Binge Leads to
Four-week Hangover**

It may be the longest hangover in the history of binge beer drinking. When a 37-year-old man walked into a hospital emergency room in Glasgow, Scotland complaining of "wavy" vision and a non-stop headache that had lasted four weeks, doctors were at first stumped, the British journal *The Lancet* reported.

The unnamed patient "had no history of head injury or loss of consciousness; his past medical record was unremarkable, and he was taking no medications," Zia Carrim and two other physicians from Southern General Hospital said in a case report.

13th Watford Beer Festival



The 13th Watford Beer Festival took place from Thursday 8th November to Saturday 10th November at the **West Herts Sports Club** on Park Avenue, Watford. Around 60 different beers and a wide selection of ciders were available over the three days, and the festival was as popular as ever. The festival's increasing popularity has been a bit of a problem in the past, with the venue getting uncomfortably packed on Friday nights in particular. Not this year however, as the decision was taken to hire a heated marquee, which proved to be a very popular overspill area, with seats and tables away from the hubbub of the bar. The Saturday sessions coincided with a Watford FC home game against Colchester United, and several Colchester fans (and CAMRA members) turned up before the match on Saturday. Their team banner on the side of the marquee led one wag to remark that it was the first beer festival he'd ever been to with an away end. Once again beer and cider sold well, with drinkers sampling the full range rather than concentrating on a few brews. Several comments were made about the festival having a good range of beers for its size. Eventually however it was possible to discern through drinkers' votes the most popular beers of the festival.

These were:

1. Tryst *Carronade IPA*
- 2= Garton *Liquid Lobotomy* / All Gates *Bright Blade*
4. Marble *Ginger Marble*
- 5= Hambleton *Nightmare* / Castle Rock *Harvest Pale* / Sarah Hughes *Dark Ruby*



Tryst Brewery is located in Falkirk and now joins an illustrious list of Scottish breweries, including Harviestoun, Kelburn and Heather Ales, that have claimed the top spot at the Watford Beer Festival. Carronade IPA is a light, zesty ale made using Washington State hops, pale malt and Carron

Valley water, and is a deserved winner. The branch congratulates Tryst Brewery on its success, and hopes to see just as many if not more visitors at our next beer festival.

Andrew Vaughan

THE LAND OF LIBERTY, PEACE AND PLENTY FREEHOUSE

Beer & Cheese Night
Thursday 20th December

Kozmik's Kristmas Kwiz
Sat 22nd December

Winter Ales Festival
1st - 3rd February 2008



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Cider is Supreme in Scarborough

Pub

October was CAMRA's National Cider Month which coincided with the announcement of the winner of the best pub serving real cider and perry (pear cider) award in Britain.

The **Valley Bar** in Scarborough, Yorkshire (below) has been given the prestigious title of **National Cider and Perry Pub of the Year** for their tireless efforts to champion cider and perry, in the modern friendly pub which is a semi cellar bar below a small hotel.

Licencee Linda Soden, who runs the pub with her husband John, said: "Yorkshire is hardly a county known for cider and perry, but we are extremely passionate about it



and it is wonderful to have been given this award."

"The people to thank are the small ciders producers for continually providing such a superb product. Other publicans should sell real cider and perry as their customers will thank them for it."

Gillian Williams, Chair of CAMRA's Cider and Perry campaigning said: "It was a treat to find such helpful enthusiasm for cider and perry with six on sale".

The National Cider and Perry Pub of the Year competition is now in its third year. CAMRA asked its 87,000 members and the public to nominate their favourite pubs in Britain that feature real cider and perry. The entries were then whittled down to four finalists.

The joint runners-up were:

- The **Bell Inn**, Caerleon, Gwent
- The **Square & Compass**, Worth Matravers, Dorset
- The **Pembury Tavern**, Hackney, London

Real cider is a long-established traditional drink which is produced naturally from apples and is neither carbonated nor pasteurised. As cider is made from apples, perry is made from perry pears, which tend to be smaller and harder than dessert pears.

As the fruit ripens throughout September and October, it is milled and pressed. The juice is then left to ferment and mature until April/May when it is ready to drink.

The Red Lion

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'Simply a Proper Pub!'

Duchy Originals Ale Available Exclusively at Ember Inns

Duchy Originals, the natural and organic food and drink company established by HRH The Prince of Wales, has chosen Ember Inns as the only pub group to exclusively preview its first-ever draught organic ale.

Available nationwide until 30 September, Duchy Originals chose Ember Inns to preview the ale because almost all of its pubs are Cask Marque accredited and boast an impressive selection of weekly rotating cask ales.

Matthew Deane of Ember Inns comments: "We've worked hard to ensure our cask ale offering is first class, and it is great to be given this opportunity by Duchy Originals. We're sure it will appeal to all of our guests, from expert ale drinkers to those looking to try something new".

Brewed in the traditional way at Wychwood Brewery in Oxfordshire, Duchy Originals uses a

blend of the finest UK organic hops and a rare breed of barley called Plumage Archer, harvested from selected organic farms in Britain, including

The Prince of Wales's Home Farm in Gloucestershire. The ale is a ruby-coloured, flavour-packed beer, which combines the rich caramel flavours of the barley malt with the signature ripe orange of the First Gold hops from Herefordshire, and the geranium scented



Prince Charles visiting Wychwood's brewery in October

Target hops from Kent.

Jeremy Moss, Wychwood's Head Brewer, explains: "This is the first time we have racked Duchy Original Ale into casks – it has all the character and flavour of the bottled beer but it will continue its secondary fermentation in the cask, so it has the fresh and lively character that uniquely comes from traditional hand pulled beer – we are delighted with it!"

White Hart Tap

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Hangover Cure Could be Fatal

The newsletter of late has been taking an active interest in hangovers, starting with Gary Hayward's article in edition 223, then an interesting letter in 225 suggesting foot massage as the answer. Unknown to us was that Professor Sidney Nelson was leading a team of scientists at the University of Washington researching hangover cures. One recommended cure is to combine large quantities of coffee or energy drinks with several headache tablets.



The professor said "People should know about the potentially harmful interaction caused by caffeine paracetamol and alcohol. Caffeine triples the amount of toxic by-product created when paracetamol is broken down, and this is the same substance responsible for liver damage and liver failure".

The dangerous connection between paracetamol and alcohol has been known about for years but this is the first time that caffeine has been shown to have the same effects.

On the up side the liver is one of the few organs that can regenerate tissue if it has been damaged, but 20 paracetamol tablets taken within one day can cause liver failure.

The study by Professor Nelson and his team has been published in full in the American Chemical Society's, Chemical Research in Toxicology Journal.

From the Metro Newspaper – 26 Sept 2007

Real Ale Revival as Market Heads for Growth

Industry experts are challenging suggestions that the cask ale market is in terminal decline, a new sector report, "The Intelligent Choice" written by independent author Pete Brown paints a bright picture of Britain's traditional world famous tippie. Pete Brown said: "How can cask ale be suffering when we have more brewers in the UK than at any one point in the last 50 years, many of whom are reporting soaring sales?"

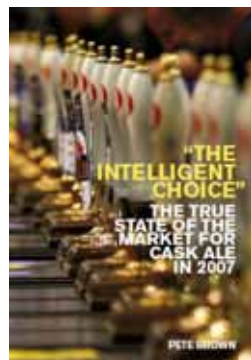
"The number of pubs stocking cask ale is increasing, while CAMRA is boasting record membership and bumper attendances at its beer

festivals". The report suggests that the five percent decline in the ale market gives a misleading impression since most of the losses come from the 'big four' multinational brewers. They dominate the UK beer market and account for 56 percent of the total ale market, but are systematically withdrawing support from their cask brands.

At the same time, where regional and local brewers are enthusiastically supporting their ales the market is seeing strong volume and growth. In fact, independent and local brewers are growing by an average of 7.5 percent year on year. If this trend continues cask ale is forecast to return to growth within the next few years, as the decline from the multinationals levels out.

- Forget style bars, the traditional pub is back in fashion, which suits good quality cask ale products.
- Consumers are starting to favour buying local produce and cask ale clocks up far fewer 'food miles' than imported lager brands or wines
- The strength of the cask ale market is its diversity; from small craft brewers producing a few barrels a week, to fast growing regionals selling hundreds of thousands every year.

A copy of the report can be obtained from the internet at: www.caskalereport.com/report.pdf



Whittlesey Straw Bear Festival

You may recall reading a report (April/May 2007) of the North Herts Branch visit to the **Straw Bear Festival**, which takes place in January every year. This coming year our visit will be on Saturday 12 January and if you would like to join us, we aim to catch a train to get us to Whittlesey in time for the procession of the Bear, numerous Morris Men and Women troupes, Molly Men and Clog Dancing troupes. This starts at 1030 hours from the **Ivy Leaf Club**, and the station is about a 15 minute walk from there. For further details of the travel arrangements, please email secretary@camranorthherts.org.uk. For details of the event, please log on to www.strawbear.org.uk

South Herts CAMRA's 35th Anniversary Event

By Phil Defriez, Chairman, CAMRA South Herts

South Herts CAMRA's birthday was celebrated on Tuesday 20th November at the place where it all started 35 years ago – at the **Farriers Arms** in Lower Dagnall St., St Albans. And as the first-ever branch to be established in CAMRA, it was even more poignant to have present five original founding members of the branch; Kevin Collins, Fran Nowak, Steve Bury, Richard Steward and John Green – as pictured on our front cover – several of whom travelled across the country especially to attend this auspicious occasion. The celebration was shared also with many current CAMRA members, including many new members who had recently joined and who were specially invited. Graham Rollings from McMullen's brewery also attended the event.

In our previous edition Les Middlewood chronicled the then poor state of the beer-drinking environment initiating the birth of CAMRA, then charted the rise of the campaign, to the current state of things today. It concluded with the activities and achievements of the branch and highlighted current issues and the road ahead. Central to South Herts CAMRA's heritage and current campaigning activities is one person, previously mentioned above, and it is for this, that (unknowingly to him before the night), a special award was made to Steve Bury, pictured above. Newsletter *Pints of View* editor for the past ten years and CAMRA South Herts Chair 1988-1996, Steve was given South Herts CAMRA's highest award, the **Dave Burns Memorial Award**. The Award, in memory of Dave Burns, a past Chairman and stalwart of South Herts CAMRA, is presented to individuals who have made outstanding efforts in the furthering of the Campaign's aims. Previous awardees have included publicans, campaigners and brewery officials.

In making this award I congratulated Steve for

being the branch's longest serving active member, and commented that his commitment to the campaign over the years had been ceaseless. As well as being Chair he had been active at all our beer festivals; from 1974 (then called the beer exhibition), to 1978-79-80 at Hatfield and the St Albans Festival in the then Building College, Hatfield Road in 1982. Steve was also part of the team which restored the festival to St Albans in 1996 and was Licensee from 1997 to 2006. He is now in charge of transport.

At branch level, as well as being newsletter editor he is also the Pub Preservation Officer and has attended every CAMRA National Annual Conference since 1974 - when he spectacularly fell into the River Ouse before the event! Steve was the first Chair of the AGM Standing



Steve Bury with his award

Event pictures thanks to Fran Nowak

Orders Committee and has been a regular speaker at the Conference since 1980.

Steve also specialises in breweriana auctions and has officiated at the **Great British Beer Festival**, the National auction and the **St Albans Beer Festival**.

He has always encouraged others to join the campaign and take part, saying you will always get out more than you put in. Lastly, he was the person who arranged for the original blue plaque (in the photograph on the front cover) to be placed on the outside of the Farriers Arms on the 10th Anniversary of the Branch in 1982.

Last word goes to the Farriers Arms for being there from the beginning to now, and for the future. Originally a grocers and butchers shop in the 19th century, the Farriers became a pub in the 1920s and is now a classic back-street local. It is the only pub in the city never to have forsaken real ale. A blue plaque on the wall outside marks the first meeting of the Hertfordshire branch of CAMRA. We thank Tony and Janine, present licensees of the Farriers for their hospitality on the night, and for preserving the pub in its largely unaltered state since George and Gladys Vardy's then Jim and Maureen Cowling's days.

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 22

Ardeley: The Jolly Waggoner has new licensees, and its name changed to the **Rabbit's Foot**. It is more of a foody pub now.

Aspenden: The **Fox** now has three real ales, including Greene King *XX Dark Mild*.

Barley: The **Fox and Hounds** has new licensees again. It looks tidier inside and is going more foody again.

Boxmoor: The shutters are off at the **Swan** and the pub appears to be having a refit.

Carpenter's Park: The **Partridge's** lease has been advertised for sale in the *Morning Advertiser*.

Colney Heath: The **Chalkdrawers Arms** has reopened after refurbishment now doing lunch and evening meals and with Greene King ales. The old sign depicting the quarrymen has gone and has been replaced with a smart coat of arms on a maroon background.

Croxley Green: The planning application to demolish the **Duke of York** has been approved by Three Rivers District Council.

Frogmore: A pub that has literally gone to the dogs; there is a plan to convert the **Red Cow**, (still listed as a pub, Class A3) to a veterinary clinic.

Hertford: Work has slipped at Wetherspoon's latest Lloyd's No.1, apparently now to be called the **Six Templars** – named, this time, after Templars who lived in nearby Bengoe in the early 14th Century. We told you right here in June that the previous name wouldn't last - so that's the fifth proposed name change and the pub is still nowhere near open. Wetherspoon's website puts opening at 4 February. Meanwhile refurbishment has stuttered at the **Sportsman**, where a planning application has now been lodged for works that will include the erection of a conservatory at the rear and significant adaptation, and refurbishment inside. Almost all of the original internal features of this pub have long since gone. Formerly known as the Blue Coat Boy, due to its location next to the former Christ's Hospital School, we would recommend that the pub returns to its former name (it was renamed as the Sportsman only 30 years ago). We hope any exterior changes are handled sensitively as the building occupies a prominent position at the east end of Fore Street. Congratulations to the **White Horse**, one of only twelve pubs nationally to receive the Good Pub Guide's award 'Bargain Pub of the Year', praising

the pub's excellent, reasonably priced food, together with its range of real ales.

Hitchin: The **Radcliffe Arms** has had its sign removed and appears to be closed. Does anyone know anything about this? The **Orchard and Anvil** has a new landlord but its lease is for sale. The Corn Exchange has changed its name to **Que Pasa**. The **Well** has reopened.

Ickleford: Ray Harry is the new landlord of The **Cricketers**.

Ley Green: A welcome to Mary and Colin Hill, long time regulars at the **Plough**, who have now taken over running the pub. They intend re-opening the Snug Bar after re-decoration. Sunday lunch-time meat raffles have re-commenced. Charity Events are to continue, see website for details. A Guest Beer is being offered alongside the Greene King *IPA* and *Abbot*.

London Colney: There is a planning application to St Albans Council to convert the **White Lion** into flats, demolish the out buildings and build 5 terraced houses and 2 semis in the car park & garden. The application reference is 5/2007/1880 and can be viewed on the Council's website

Maple Cross: We have had a report that the lease of the **Cross** is up for sale.

Park Street: It is rumoured that the **Swan** (Fuller's) has been sold and could be up for residential development.

Redbourn: The branding has been removed from the **Saracens Head** and a refit into housing (or offices) is underway. *Ed Says:* I understood that permission had been granted to convert to retail as a beauty parlour.

Reed: The **Cabinet**, sold to Albanwise Ltd, has new licensees, and is now a free house selling Buntingford beers. The fine dining continues with much reduced prices.

Sawbridgeworth: The **Queens Head** and **Old Bell** are both now stocking beers from the Great Oakley brewery.

Shenley: The **Black Lion** has stopped selling real ale, with handpumps removed. The **White Horse** has reopened. *See Shenley feature page 7.*

St Albans: we would like to give an unreserved apology to Andy, the licensee of **Harry Smith's Bar** for printing not one but two incorrect items in the last edition. On page 4 we stated that the bar was

DOWN YOUR WAY

closed - which of course it is not, and there is no intention by the owners to do so or make any changes. On Page 6 we stated that it was rumoured that Harry Smith's may become a Loch Fyne restaurant, which is probably where the closure rumour came from as well. As there is a Loch Fyne only a few doors away it is completely unlikely that Greene King would be opening another one in competition in the same proximity. We are sorry for publishing these errors and for any inconvenience caused. At the **Rats Castle**, South Herts says good bye and thanks to Steve Evans who has turned the pub around, and wish him good luck at the **Halfway House**. In Steve's place, we welcome from Suffolk Noleen and Tony Hugman with their son Callum. There is now another hand-pump and the regular beers are now Fullers *Gales HSB*, Caledonian *Deuchars IPA*, *Ruddles* and a guest. The pub's sign now depicts a silhouette of a rat atop a chess-piece style castle, instead of the picture of Windsor Castle infested with rats that caused so much controversy a few years ago. Does anyone know how the sign on the **Jolly Sailor** got bent?

Watton at Stone: Contrary to the report in the last edition the **Waggon & Horses** is *not* now an Indian Restaurant! In mid-October this long neglected pub had new tenants who are very much restoring the Waggon to the traditional community pub that it once was. Tenants Rachel and Kevin hail are from the North East, having latterly run the **Clarence Vaults** in Malton, North Yorkshire. The Waggon has had a real tidy up, the re-introduction of real ale (three currently) and the removal of the fruit machines. Traditional pub games, quizzes and meat raffles are all back. Plans are in hand to tidy up the garden and barns, with a beer festival planned for next spring.

ATTENTION CAMRA MEMBERS!!

South Herts pub nominations for the **GOOD BEER GUIDE 2009** are due by **1 Jan 2008**. Any CAMRA member wishing to nominate a pub in the South Herts area please ask our South Herts Branch Contact for more details.

All survey trips using mini bus are booked on a first come-first served basis.

Details from Branch contact. See next page.

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BRANCH DIARY

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE

Sat 7 Jan 2008: Minibus Ramble: Barley and Barkway – check with Branch Contact for details.

Wed 9 Jan: Committee Meeting - **Half Moon**, Hitchin 8pm.

Sat 12 Jan: Whittley **Straw Bear Fest** – see page 26

Wed 16 Jan: Branch Meeting - **Lytton Arms**, Old Knebworth 8pm.

Weekend 18-20 Jan: Manchester Winter Beer Festival. Check with Branch Contact for details.

Sat 26 Jan: Festival Workers' Party - **Our Mutual Friend** Burns Night Beer Festival, Stevenage 8pm.

Wed 30 Jan: Ickleford Crawl - Start 8pm at the **Cricketers**.

Wed 6 Feb: Committee Meeting – **Sunrunner**, Hitchin 8pm.

Sat 9 Feb: Minibus Ramble - North of Buntingford. Check with Branch Contact for details.

Wed 13 Feb: Good Beer Guide 2009 Selection Meeting - **Three Horseshoes**, Willian 8pm.

North Herts Branch Contacts:

Chairman - Andy Rawnsley, Tel 01438 816938.

Email: chairman@camranorthherts.org.uk,

Socials Contact - Graham Perry, Tel 07956 564606.

Email: secretary@camranorthherts.org.uk

Website: www.camranorthherts.org.uk

SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE

Sat 8 Dec: Branch day trip to Brussels

Tue 11 Dec: Branch Meeting – **Lower Red Lion**, St Albans 8pm.

Tue 29 Jan 2008: Branch Meeting and Annual General Meeting – **CAMRA HQ**, St Albans 8pm.

Wed 6 Feb: Good Beer Guide 2009 survey trip – Check with Branch Contact for details nearer time.

Tue 12 Feb: Good Beer Guide 2009 survey trip – Check with Branch Contact for details nearer time.

Wed 20 Feb: Good Beer Guide 2009 survey trip – Check with Branch Contact for details nearer time.

Tue 26 Feb: Good Beer Guide 2009 survey trip – Check with Branch Contact for details nearer time.

Fri 29 Feb: Good Beer Guide 2009 survey trip – Check with Branch Contact for details nearer time.

Thu 28 Feb: Beer Festival Committee Meeting – **White Lion**, St Albans 8pm

Tue 4 Mar: Good Beer Guide 2009 selection meeting – **CAMRA HQ**, St Albans 8pm sharp.

South Herts Branch Contact: John Bishop, Tel 01582 768478

Email: realales@yahoo.com

Internet: www.hertsale.org.uk

WATFORD & DISTRICT

Wed 5 Dec: Evening social at the **Pig's Ear Beer Festival** - **Ocean**, Hackney, London E8.

Thu 13 Dec: Club social - **Watford Town & Country Club**, Rosslyn Road, Watford 8.30pm.

This is a members' club and visitors may need to be signed in. CAMRA members should bring their membership cards.

Thu 20 Dec: Branch meeting - **Estcourt Arms**, St. John's Road, Watford 8.15pm

Tue 8 Jan: Mill End social - **Whip & Collar**, 8.30pm, **Tree** 9.15pm; **Halfway House** 10pm.

Fri 18 Jan: "Pre-Xmas" London Pub Crawl. Contact branch for details.

Wed 23 Jan: Oxhey social - **Villiers Arms**, 8.30pm, **Victoria** 9.15pm; **Railway Arms** 10pm.

Mon 28 Jan: Branch meeting - **Estcourt Arms**, St. John's Road, Watford 8.15pm.

Tue 5 Feb: South Oxhey/Carpenders Park social. - The **Ox** 8.30pm, **Partridge** 9.15pm, then train to the **Nascot Arms**, 10.30pm.

Thu 14 Feb: Quiz night - **Southern Cross**, Langley Road, Watford 8.30pm.

Watford & District Contact: Andrew Vaughan.
Phone: 01923 230104. **Mobile:** 07854 988152.

Email: watfordcamra@googlemail.com

Internet: www.watfordcamra.org.uk

HERTS/ESSEX BORDERS

Mon 10 Dec: Branch Xmas Meal - **Bull**, Much Hadham. 8.30pm. Must be pre-booked through chairman.

Fri 14 Dec: Branch Social - **Queens Head** Allens Green 8.30pm

Mon 24 Dec: Not the Xmas Shopping Social - **Rising Sun**, High Wych 2.30pm

Fri 28 Dec: Stuff the Turkey Social - **Queens Head**, Allens Green 8.30pm

Mon 14 Jan 2008: Branch Meeting and final short listing for Good Beer Guide choices - **Prince of Wales**, Green Tye 8.30pm

Fri 18 Jan: Branch Social - **Queens Head**, Allens Green 8.30pm

Mon 11 Feb: Branch Meeting, AGM and Good Beer Guide Voting - **Rising Sun**, High Wych 8.30pm

Herts/Essex Borders Mini Bus Contact: Gavin Chester, Tel 01279 304823 or 07825446586

Email: Secretary@heb-camra.org.uk

Internet: www.heb-camra.org.uk

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