

FREE

HERTFORDSHIRE'S

Pints of View

The bi-monthly publication for every discerning drinker

April/May 2010

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Cheers to the 2010 Hitchin Beer and Cider Festival!

See special report on pages 10 - 11



Also inside:

← A new lease of life for the Waggon & Horses, Elstree

Tie-up with Herts brewer → gives the Sportsman in Croxley Green its own beer

← Beer of festival awarded to Gates brewery in Wigan

Award made to Baldock → cider maker, Apple Cottage



Office of Fair Trading Reviews its Findings

Pints Of View went to press in early February edition 239 with the banner headline "Office of Fair Trading Faces Legal Challenge From CAMRA and Consumers".

The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) reached agreement with the OFT, on 5th February, to stay its appeal to the Competition Appeal Tribunal, until August 1st 2010. This will enable the OFT to consider further evidence of anti-competitive behaviour by the large pub owning companies. The OFT will now conduct an open public consultation before reaching a final decision.

CAMRA in a super-complaint argued that anti-competitive practices are inflating pub beer prices by around 50 pence a pint, restricting consumer choice and leading to chronic under-investment in the nation's pubs.



Mike Benner, CAMRA Chief Executive (pictured below), said:

"We are delighted that the OFT has responded to our appeal by agreeing to conduct an open consultation and I encourage all parties to use this opportunity to submit further evidence of anti-



competitive practice. The consultation will lead to a new and final decision from the OFT. We are hopeful that on re-examination of the pubs market the OFT will decide to act against anti-competitive behaviour in order to deliver a fair deal for consumers. CAMRA looks forward to working with the OFT to deliver reform of the beer tie so that the pub market works in the interests of consumers".

CAMRA's fundraising appeal for the reform of the beer tie, which raised over £8,000 since January, will be suspended during the consultation period. The funds will be put towards CAMRA's legal fees. CAMRA reserves the right to re-activate its appeal should it be dissatisfied with the OFT's final decision following the consultation.

Last Chance for Large Pub Companies to Reform

In March CAMRA welcomed the Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee Report on Pub Companies, which demands major reform in the way the large pub companies operate and threatens statutory intervention, if these reforms are not implemented voluntarily by June 2011. The Committee also urges the Office of Fair Trading to look more carefully at the issues involved when it responds to CAMRA's super-complaint for the second time.

In addition to today's Select Committee Report the Liberal Democrats have indicated that they will pursue radical reform of the Beer Tie in the next Parliament, including a free of tie option and a guest beer right.

Mike Benner, CAMRA Chief Executive, said: "The large Pub Companies are now in the last chance saloon. The pub sector has had long enough to deliver self regulation and failed. They either voluntarily reform to ensure a fair deal for consumers or risk potentially punitive intervention from the Competition Authorities and Government. CAMRA is demanding that the large pub companies act immediately to allow their licensees the option of selling one guest real ale purchased at free market prices. Given the popularity of locally brewed real ale it is simply crazy that most pub licensees are prevented from buying beer from their local brewers. The large pub companies should also agree to a legally binding code of conduct and move quickly towards offering all their lessees a free of tie option at a fair rent.

Over half of the UK's pub licensees are prevented from buying beer on the open market at freely negotiated prices and the large pub companies are exploiting this to charge licensees between 40% - 45% more than free market prices. These artificially inflated prices are passed onto consumers in the form of higher prices, reduced investment in pubs and pub closures".

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.

Welcome to Sawbridgeworth Brewery's Newest Brewer

On Tuesday February 2nd, Caroline and I were delighted to meet Bob (below), the new brewer with the Sawbridgeworth

Brewery on his weekly visit to **The Gate** and delayed him for a short while from his brewing.

Bob retired 5 years ago from Nethergate Brewery and has been asked by a number of other different up-and-coming breweries for help so Sawbridgeworth is very privileged to have him. He is tweaking and perfecting Gary's recipes and has already produced two new brews of RACS and Selhurst Park Flyer. When we visited, he was brewing a new recipe for St Valentine's Day, which was planned to be a light-coloured ale at 4%ABV. We tasted the new brew of a Mild, named *Mead's Mild* (in honour of the RACS Chair, but she's too modest to mention it), and although not usually mild drinkers, we found it was very palatable, probably due to the 3kg of muscavado sugar added to the recipe for the sweet, mild taste. Bob gets his supplies of malt and hops through Nethergate's Brewery, and he mills the malt at his home.

He has used pale crystal hops and torrefied wheat (for head retention and for the fact that it converts more easily than normal malt) for the brew of the Valentine's ale.

The brewery behind The Gate pub is now running very efficiently so if you haven't tried the local ale yet, come and give it a go – it's well worth a visit.

Ivan Bullerwell

Ed Says: The article was taken from the RACS Real Ale Club of Sawbridgeworth) magazine. They are affiliated to the SPBW - Society for the Preservation of Beers from the Wood, which was formed eight years earlier than CAMRA. Both had the same aims to promote traditional real ale and protect traditional pubs, but it was inevitable that one organisation would become larger and have much more of a public voice. This was CAMRA and it happened without any conflict. The SPBW and CAMRA work together well and long may it remain that way.



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CAMRA Condemns Tetley's Cask Transfer Move

CAMRA is dismayed by the announcement in March that Carlsberg UK is to move production of its iconic *Tetley's* cask brand from its Yorkshire heartland to be brewed under licence by Marston's of Wolverhampton.

The decision to shut the historic Hunslet site in Leeds was made in November 2008, and CAMRA has attacked Carlsberg UK, owner of the Tetley's Leeds site, for failing to promote Tetley's beers at a time of increasing consumer interest for real ale. A campaign called 'Save Tetley's' was previously launched at the **Great British Beer Festival** in August 2009, see picture below.



Bob Stukins, CAMRA Vice-Chairman and Yorkshire resident, said: "Carlsberg don't do geography lessons, but if they did, they'd clearly realise the impact this move will have on the pub-going community in Yorkshire.

It's unbelievable to think that a long-standing global brewer would make this move at a time when the real ale industry is enjoying year-on-year growth, and CAMRA's annual research is showing a steep increase in the number of consumers trying real ale for the first time.

While it is comforting to know that Tetley's iconic cask brand will continue to be brewed by an experienced party, it is difficult to comprehend how this latest move will be received positively by pub-goers when this historic brand is stripped of its provenance and tradition in 2011 and shipped over 100 miles away from its Yorkshire heartland".



St Albans MP Champions Local Pubs

During a debate on the future of the British Pub in the House of Commons in March, Anne Main (below), MP for St Albans, called upon the Government to recognise the role of well-run community pubs.

During the debate, Anne said:

"Some people dispute this, but St. Albans apparently has the most pubs per square mile of any place in England, and pubs



are part of the historic street scene. Anybody who has been to St. Albans will have seen the historic pubs, and there can even be two or three in one short road. Those pubs traditionally supported people on the many pilgrimages to St. Albans, so they go back a long way.

The smaller pubs are finding life hard. The bigger pubs, which can bring in the clubbers and people interested in the dance scene, are not struggling so much and they have benefited from extended licensing. However, the smaller pubs, where people go for a quiet drink and to chew the fat or to debate the issues that my hon. Friend raised, have been struggling".

Anne continued:

"I pay tribute to pubs for the fact that they are not only the heart of the community, but put things back. I have regularly done the prize draw with Cilla in the **Three Hammers** pub (Chiswell Green), and all the funds raised go to our local hospice. Pubs are not just drinking dens. Every time a VAT rise goes on to the price of a pint of beer, the assumption is that it will be on the pint in the pub".

Upon leaving the chamber, Anne said:

"This debate was so important, as a chance for backbenchers to press the Government on what it is doing to help the community pub, and local publicans, who are struggling more than ever. I hope this debate gave the Government a lot to think about. It is essential that we take action if we are to ensure that the local pub remains at the heart of our community".

CAMRA Launches National Real Ale Pub Discount Scheme

CAMRA has launched a unified, national real ale discount scheme to help boost trade for community pubs and increase the membership benefits for CAMRA members.

In the past, many pubs across the UK have offered CAMRA members discounts at the bar, but such initiatives have not always been clearly promoted to all members. Therefore some licensees have not always fully benefited from the increasing CAMRA member traffic into their pubs.

This new initiative seeks to promote pubs offering discounts to CAMRA members by providing participating pubs with FREE 'empty belly' posters to help them publicise the discounts. These posters have space for the licensee to write in the discounts they would like to offer CAMRA members. These can then be displayed behind the bar and around the pub.

All real ale pubs are eligible to participate in this simple new scheme, with participating pubs using the promotional posters to advertise discounts to CAMRA members on pint and half pint measures.

The level of discount is completely at the discretion of the pub.

"The main thinking behind the scheme is to help drive more trade to real ale community pubs and in return our members will receive a small discount on the beer they buy," said Tony Jerome, CAMRA's

Senior Press and Marketing Manager. "But it must be stressed that participation in the scheme will not influence any decisions to include pubs in local or national guides.

"However, if a pub is able to participate in the scheme, any discount is at the discretion of the pub and can be as little or as large as the licensee feels suits the business".

For more information on the CAMRA Discount Scheme please visit:

www.camra.org.uk/discountscheme. In order to maintain the scheme effectively, only the pub licensee and a CAMRA branch official - who must get the licensee's approval - can sign up pubs.



Nevertheless, if you are a CAMRA member but not a branch official, then have a chat with your favourite pub licensees, see if offering a small discount to CAMRA members is of interest to them and pass on the above details!

Pub licensee/managers and CAMRA branch officials can also order promotional material by calling CAMRA Head Office on 01727 867201.

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Waggon and Horses Rejuvenated

The **Waggon and Horses** in Medburn, Elstree was literally weeks from permanent closure when Darren and Rob took over the lease from Enterprise Inns. That was December 2007 and just over two years later the Grade II listed pub that was completely run down and had little or no trade has become a thriving community local.

The Waggon (below) has none of the advantages of urban pubs with very few houses within walking distance and is set on the A5183 (Watling Street) with impressive views of the green belt at the rear.



When Darren and Rob took over the pub it needed a large amount of work done to it including the chimney and roof on the rear extension.

Inside the previous tenants had knocked out an original wattle and daub wall to gain access from the bar into what was the old bottle store. When it was established with the council that they were not the vandals responsible, permission was given and the area was incorporated into the pub as part of a tasteful refurbishment, which enhanced the pub's traditional features. Because of the low ceilings the pub had a unique sunken darts area, which unfortunately had to be removed for safety reasons when the bar was extended.

The Waggon also has a famous inglenook fireplace, which featured in the "Solid Fuel Advisory Board's advertising campaign and as they sponsored the 1999 CAMRA **Good Beer Guide** it was also featured in that edition. The inglenook also took pride of place on the front cover of the then *CAMRA Hertfordshire Newsletter* No. 172 Dec/Jan 1998/99.

The most recent improvement has been the new bar, which gives easier access for both customers and bar staff. Built of oak it is perfectly in keeping with all the other fixtures and fittings in this genuine beamed pub with the original building dating back to 1471. As well as the classic interior there is a large garden and conservatory at the rear plus ample car parking.

As I have said many times before a pub is as good as the people who run it and it is the live acoustic music sessions, good food and real ales from Greene King plus one guest normally from a Cornish brewer, Skinner's at present which is drawing the customers in. The Waggon and Horses is a true success story and well worth a visit.

Steve Bury

www.thewaggonandhorseselstree.co.uk

Red Squirrel Brewery and the Sportsman join forces

Hertford's Red Squirrel Brewery and the **Sportsman** Pub Croxley Green have joined forces. Spurred by the success of the CAMRA Locale initiative the two businesses have become one. The partnership gives a helping hand to brewer Gary Hayward, who since 2004 has run the brewery single-handedly.



The Sportsman (above), under the ownership of Jason and Tracy Soden, has gone from strength to strength, winning a local CAMRA outstanding achievement award in 2009. Red Squirrel beer has been consistently available in the Sportsman since Jason and Tracy took over, and Gary brews his CSB beer specifically for the pub. The popularity of CAMRA's LocAle scheme, where pubs regularly stock beers from local brewers, meant that a merger with the brewery was a sensible option for the pub. As far as the brewery is concerned the extra staff and distribution options open up the potential number of outlets Red Squirrel can deliver to.

Gary can now concentrate on meeting demand and working on new brews because the business has a new operations director in Beth Baird, who will take care of administration and distribution from purpose built offices at the Sportsman and



the new company has three delivery vans, providing coverage all over London and the Home Counties.

Tracy said, "These are difficult times for the pub trade and small independent breweries alike. It

seems a natural progression to work closer with Gary, as his beers are such a success at the Sportsman".

Gary said, "With our core range of award winning beer supplemented with seasonal specials, all at competitive rates with fast deliveries, we hope to offer better value and service than ever before".

Jason and Tracy take pride in the fact that the Sportsman is a traditional family run local pub. Jason said "We're very pleased to have Gary and Beth joining the family. We have a lot of work to do especially against taxation issues and cheap booze offers from supermarkets. We would like thank everyone for continuing to use their local pubs, and for drinking locally produced beer".

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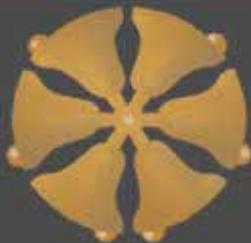
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Save the Great British Pub

My new year resolution is a simple one: I intend to go to the pub more often. It's part of my one-man campaign against the killjoys, the moralising do-gooders and the snooty medical profession that unite in their dislike of alcohol.

Their message is that anyone who enjoys a drink is going to hell in a handcart. They are backed by a malignant part of the media that endlessly fulminates against pubs and paints a distorted picture of problem drinking in this country.

My determination to occupy the bar stool in my local on a more regular basis is backed by two sensible articles from radically different sources, the right-wing *Spectator* magazine and the liberal *Guardian*.

In the *Spectator* (30 December), Leah McLaren castigated the Drinkaware Trust, a body funded in part by two supermarkets, Tesco and Waitrose, which is spending £100M on a campaign to highlight alcohol misuse. Among the trust's suggestions are serving water at dinner parties, starting the day with a long walk and eating more bananas.

You have to admire the brass-necked cheek of Tesco, which piles its aisles high with cut-price booze, in supporting such a laughable campaign. But no doubt the group will hope to sell more bottled water and bananas as a result.

As McLaren points out, these suggestions would have no impact on a serious alcoholic while the Drinkaware campaign ignores the fact that the overwhelming majority of British people drink sensibly and moderately.

McLaren also points to the muddled and confused messages that come from the medical profession. Pregnant women used to be encouraged to take moderate levels of alcohol – *Guinness* in particular was considered a beneficial tonic – but now the message is don't touch a drop until the umbilical cord is cut.

What are now called "dangerous levels" of drinking in Britain, McLaren adds, would be considered normal consumption in France and most other European countries.

The constantly changing attitudes of the medical profession was underscored last year when one of the "experts" who in the 1980s handed down the number of units of alcohol it was safe to drink each week admitted they had no idea and just plucked some figures out of the air.



**By Roger Protz – Editor
of the CAMRA Good
Beer Guide**

In the *Guardian* on 8 January, Richard Reeves of think tank Demos says there's no denying economic and social costs associated with drinking alcohol, but "there is another side to the ledger. Alcohol brings significant benefits... In the UK, taxes on alcohol and the sector provide £15bn to the Exchequer (far more than the costs of the NHS). The hospitality industry employs 650,000 people. Alcohol is a long-standing ingredient of human societies. Our Lord didn't turn the water at Cana into refreshing carrot juice."

Back in the *Spectator*, Leah McLaren stresses the healthy benefits of alcohol and quotes Professor David Hanson, a sociologist at New York State University where he is an expert on the sociology of drink. Hanson says the British Government's statistics on unhealthy drinking are wildly exaggerated.

"There's this idea that almost any alcohol is bad. You've got this idea that alcohol is poison and that we need to reduce consumption and that will solve all our social problems. That simply doesn't bear out historically. In the US, for example, Prohibition actually introduced the practice of heavy drinking by making liquor an illicit substance."

McLaren's wisest words concern the pub: "Britain's finest institution... the local pub might well be the Government's best weapon when it comes to getting young people to 'drink safe' or 'know their limits'."

As the British Medical Association has started the new year with a call for a complete ban on alcohol advertising and there's no let-up in the media obsession with binge drinking, let's marshal our arguments against the killjoys.

Britain is a moderate country where alcohol is concerned – number 16 in the world table of consumption. Moderate drinking can have health

benefits: both red wine and beer can help counter heart attacks and strokes while the natural chemicals present in the hop plant may play a part in preventing some forms of cancer.

Increasing the price of alcohol won't stop the tiny minority of alcoholics, who will look for cheaper and

possibly lethal alternatives. And, as Richard Reeves points out in the Guardian, increasing the price of alcohol will hit the poorest members of society: "the bottom 10% of the income distribution who spend just £5 a week on alcohol.

"Meanwhile, the richest would see little or no change, since their £28 weekly drinks bill is made up of purchases well above the proposed minimum per-unit price."

Reeves ends with a call to arms: "The 19th Century temperance movement was defeated by an alliance of liberals and the working class, and it looks like a repeat performance might be required.

"A prohibition bill was quashed in the Commons in 1859, the year in which John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* savaged the 'beer house purism' of the religiously inspired anti-alcohol lobby. Mill, not exactly a binge-drinker himself, recognised the costs of alcohol in terms of some disorder and lessened security, but thought that these were costs 'which society can afford to bear, for the sake of the greater good of human freedom'."

I'll drink to that. Mine's a pint. What's your poison? *RP*

Ed Says: No doubt South Herts branch activists have and will be seeing a lot more of Roger as he lives in St Albans, which has no end of good pubs to visit.



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Hitchin 2010 CAMRA/Round Table Beer Festival Report

Fri – Sat 12-13 March 2010

I started attending the Hitchin Beer Festival, in the Old Town Hall, before I became a CAMRA member, and for several years, the festival ran out of beer before closing time on the last day. Now I'm a much more experienced beer-festival-goer, I realise that's not unusual for CAMRA festivals who always try to run out just as the event closes. This is to keep down costs and as real-ale-aficionados, we HATE pouring beer away unfortunately due to exceptional demand on previous occasions, the festival generally closed early. Our success was Hitchin real ale pubs' gain with the wide variety of local boozers having a busy Saturday evening.

Since I joined CAMRA, the record of this annual event has varied. Last year was exceptional and we unfortunately ran out at 5:30 on the Saturday!!! So we were determined to set up a contingency plan to ensure the same did not happen in 2010. We ordered 20% more beer than last year, so thought we'd manage to lose the "dry second day" festival reputation. When we did a count-up after close on the Friday, we thought we might still run out, as sales were 25% up! The Friday entrance had been boosted by free advertising on local BBC *Look East*, when they ran a feature on the Churchgate Shopping Centre just after our banner was put up!

But, despite the supreme efforts of all imbibers, we just made it to closing time on the Saturday, with a reasonable selection of ale on offer with only a few pints left in each of ten or so casks for the thirsty workers!!!

The REALLY GOOD NEWS was that, when the festival was opened on the Friday, it was announced that, "...we look forward to your festival you've booked in 2011..." – at last an official positive sign that the redevelopment of the building has, in reality, been deferred, as we've

been hoping. Long-term, we have no doubt the building will be redeveloped... but we can only hope that, given the probable significant extension before that begins, the existing customers (including others as well as ourselves) will be better catered for if more time is allowed for further consultation and planning.

So... yet another successful festival – and, as always a massive Thank You to

Andy Rawnsley, our Beer

Festival Organiser! Not, of

course, forgetting the

masses of willing help we

receive from the

CAMRA and Hitchin

Round Table

volunteers. We

opened, as usual, on

the Friday with people

eagerly awaiting entry

to our festival. By early

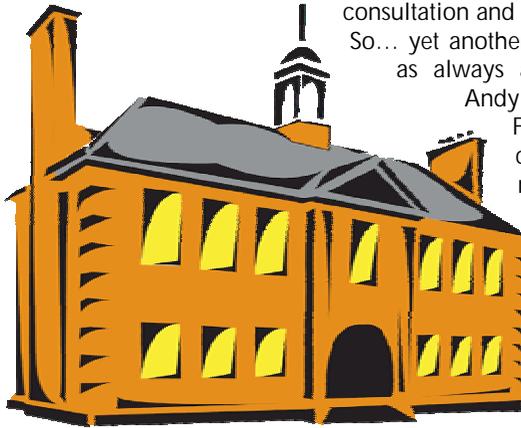
evening, the venue was

packed – and became

even more crowded as

the event progressed, as

the photographs show.



Hitchin Beer & Cider Festival 2010 Still Supporting Our Town Hall

Many had travelled great distances, from London, Enfield and further.

As usual the Food facilities were busy and we had full use of the Town Hall kitchen. Wobbly Bottom Cheese (familiar to many local Farmers Markets) for our event, provide toasted cheese meals and cheeseboards; the Olive Suppliers proved ever-popular with drinkers; and a variety of snacks were sold from behind the different bars.

Festival facts:

- 2000 visitors – up 11% on last year
- Beer consumed: 6,800 pints of real ale, 950 pints of foreign beer, 790 pints of cider and perry
- Beer of the festival: Brown Cow Brewery's *Captain Oat's Dark Mild*

I hope the accompanying photographs give a flavour of the good time being enjoyed by all. It really was – as always – a truly wonderful atmosphere.

Festival pictures next page:

Words and Pictures: Colin Yates



Pictures on left from top down:
 1. Serving the festival crowds
 2. The crowded main room
 3. Food in the gym

Pictures on right from top down:
 1. Cheers! From one happy customer.
 The Stage, as seen from the balcony

Herts Beer of the Year 2009: Runner Up and Third Place

On 29th January 2010 we at North Herts CAMRA took a minibus trip out to the **Moon and Stars**, Rushden to present two certificates to Catherine, Steve and Dave from Buntingford Brewery – and to enjoy a good spread kindly provided by the landlord. (It's a tough job but...) We were joined at the pub by a good number of representatives of the other Hertfordshire branches and a great time was had by all.

Buntingford Brewery would have liked to be voted winner – an honour which, as reported *in Pints of View* 239, went to Tring for *Colley's Dog* – but were extremely pleased to receive both Runner Up for *Polar Star* and Third Place for *Golden Plover*, as you can see in the photographs below.

Article - Colin Yates, photos by Ashleigh Milner

Steve (left) and Dave (right) receiving certificates from North Herts Branch Chair Colin Yates



Steve with Catherine



Cider of Letchworth 2009 Presentation

Paul Edwards and Gayle Whinray have been making their own beers and cider at Apple Cottage, just off the High Street in Baldock, for many years. A few years ago, in response mainly to demands from their friends for more of their cider, they decided to get licensed to produce and sell cider, and to increase output to satisfy this additional demand and, as a consequence, be able to supply local beer festivals. Their first commercial cider was launched at the first **Baldock Beer Festival** in 2008, to much acclaim (it all ran out on the first night!).

Locally grown apples of mainly two varieties are used, some of which go into Gayle's very popular fresh apple juice. No additives or chemicals are used, they use only natural ingredients.

Below: Colin Yates (N. Herts CAMRA Chair, left) presents Gayle and Paul with their award



They also experiment with mixing other fruits into the ciders producing their own cordials from locally picked produce. Not only does this mean the creation of the becoming-legendary *Black 'n' Wild*, 6% ABV, with the addition of a small amount of home made blackberry cordial, but also a new Elderflower cider 6% that is proving equally popular.

Apple Cottage's main cider, *FTJ*, also known as "Filthy Tramp Juice", is the mainstay of their production with a slow fermentation to retain as many natural flavours and tastes as possible. It is available in Dry, Sweet and Medium, at 6%.

They also make *Apple Crumble*, 6% with a hint of ginger in its flavour, *Vintage Perry* 6% from their own pears, *Simple Sider* 5.5% - an excellent quaffing cider that always goes down well, and an ever increasing number of experimental brews!

Hertfordshire CAMRA Events

CAMRA members Paul and Gayle are key members of the Baldock Beer Festival team, as well as being on the Committee of the Baldock Festival. They have two girls and can often be seen in the autumn driving an old series III Land Rover, full to the brim with freshly picked apples!

The complete range of Apple Cottage ciders, including a brand new "secret" version, will be on sale at this year's Baldock Beer Festival on the May Day Bank Holiday weekend of the 30th April to 2nd May. **See advert page 16.**

So on behalf of the Baldock Beer Festival team; congratulations to Paul and Gayle on winning the Letchworth Beer Festival cider of the festival award. *Rob Scahill*

Herts and Essex Borders CAMRA Visit Wigan

Back in October 09, the **HEBfest Beer Festival** was held in Sawbridgeworth. There were excellent beers from near and far, and, as usual, drinkers were invited to vote for the 'Beer of the Festival' and the winning beer, by quite a margin, was 'Pretoria' by All Gates Brewery, Wigan. It was decided that the CAMRA certificate should be delivered in person, to be polite and as there might be some more good beers to sample!

Five committee members volunteered for this onerous task, including Brendan Southcott, our esteemed chairman, and Mark Sears, HEBfest organiser. We set off early by train on Sat 6th February and were there before opening time, to meet the owner, brewers and 24 Wigan CAMRA members, including their chairman, Ken Worthington. We had plenty of time before the brewery trip set for 1pm, to find out what an attractive town Wigan is (yes, we were surprised by this, as it is an old cotton mill and colliery town). The fact that the sun shone brilliantly both days that weekend helped a lot, I'm sure! Some of the town's hostelrys were investigated, as well as the canal side area and the replica of the famous Wigan Pier. This is a pair of curved rail tracks, used to tip coal into barges!

At the appointed hour we were all at the brewery, which is up a narrow alley right in the centre of the town. We found our way to it by smell, as the aroma of brewing was floating over Wigan, and they are brewing seven days a week at the moment. It is a very old tower brewery on the

outside, with a high tech 5 barrel plant inside this attractive building, with a roomy bar overlooking the church gardens. David Mayhall, a local businessman, had bought the derelict brewery and after renovation etc. started selling beer at the brewery tap, the Anvil pub, in 2006.

The beers flowing from the bar were *Pretoria*, our winner, *California*, a pale citrusy beer and *Hung, Drawn and Portered*, a porter originally brewed for Guy Fawkes Day. California will be featured in the House of Commons Strangers' bar this month. The two Johns, the brewers, were there and a good time was had by all. Yes, Mark did get round to presenting the certificate; David was especially thrilled, as it was their first CAMRA award.

At about 5pm the assembled throng returned to the Anvil, for Lancashire Hotpot and a few more beers. The HEB group were overwhelmed by the generosity of the brewery and the friendliness of the Wigan CAMRA group, who insisted on accompanying us after the meal to some of the other pubs in the town and making sure we got back safely for the night in the Wetherlodge, about 20 minutes walk from the town centre.

After a good night's sleep and a hearty breakfast, we headed back down South. We all had a wonderful time and have happy memories of our time in Wigan.

Chris Sears, Publicity Officer - HEB CAMRA



*Left to right:
Mark Sears,
John
Woodhead
and John
Spedding*



*Left to right:
Ken Worthington, John Woodhead, John Spedding
and Brendan Sothcott (HEB CAMRA Chair)*

Forthcoming CAMRA Events

Sweet Mild of Mine

Hertford's fifth annual Mild Night takes place on Tuesday 11 May with our four regular pubs once again providing a fine array of dark milds for the inquisitive, reminiscent, knowledgeable or just plain thirsty drinker. Starting at the **Black Horse** in West Street (8pm) for Greene King *XX Mild*, we walk on to the **White Horse**, Castle Street (8.45pm) for Gales *Festival Mild*. We continue to the **Old Barge** (pictured) on

the Folly (9.30pm), where the pub's new free house status will allow something special, and



finish at the **Old Cross Tavern**, St. Andrew Street (10.15pm) for another exceptional mild. There's only one way to find out what the final line-up of beers will be – come and join us on the 11th. All our readers are welcome.

Look out for Mild around the county as many of our pubs promote Mild during CAMRA's "Make May a Mild Month" campaign.

Les Middlewood

Old Cross Tavern

"The Way Pubs Used to Be"

8 St Andrew Street, Hertford 01992 583133

South Herts CAMRA
Pub of the Year 2008



4 Regular & 4 Guest Ales
Including a Mild, Stout or Porter

An Excellent Selection
of Belgian & Bottled Beers

End of May & Early October Beer Festivals

THE HALF MOON



QUEEN STREET HITCHIN
FOR GOOD BEER & FOOD
NEXT BEER FEST 22ND-25TH APRIL

ALWAYS AVAILABLE

ADNAMS BITTER, YOUNG'S SPECIAL
PLUS 4 CHANGING GUEST ALES
OFTEN FROM LOCAL MICROS
REAL CIDER AND PERRY

CAMRA NORTH HERTS POTY 2010

CAMRA HERTFORDSHIRE

PUB FOR THE YEAR 2009

OPEN

MONDAY - THURSDAY 12-NOON - 2.30PM 5-12PM

FRIDAY, SATURDAY 12 NOON - 1AM

SUNDAY 12NOON - 11PM

FOOD AVAILABLE

NOON TILL 2.15PM EVERY DAY

6PM TILL 9PM THURSDAY - MONDAY

TAPAS MENU SERVED TILL 11PM EVERY NIGHT

CURRY NIGHT 3RD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH

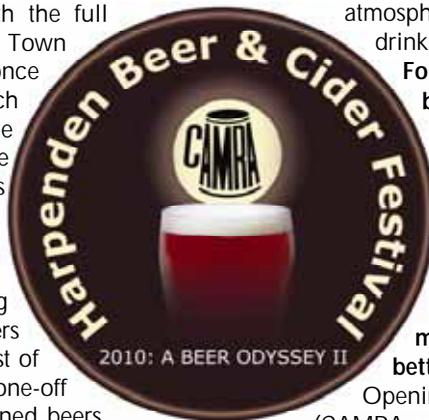
BEER GARDEN, PATIO, CAR PARK

TEL: 01462 452448 EMAIL: howen.halfmoon@btconnect.com

Harpenden Beer & Cider Festival 2010 – A Beer Odyssey II

Thursday 10th to Saturday 12th June 2010

The second **Harpenden Beer & Cider Festival** will be held at the Harpenden Public Halls Southdown Road from Thursday 10th June at 5.00pm to 11.00pm and then all day on Friday 11th and Saturday 12th June. Organised by CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale) with the full support of Harpenden Town Council, it is hoped that once again the festival, which attracted nearly 3,000 people in 2009 will be even more popular. And an extra day has been added this year to meet demand from thirsty drinkers. Up to 70 different real ales will be available including many champion winning beers from Hertfordshire and the rest of the UK, plus new and one-off special brews, bottle conditioned beers and other beers from around the world; including Germany, Czech Republic, America, Scandinavia and Australia to name a few. Ciders and perries will of course also be available along with festival fodder to help soak up the beer. For a taste of what's in store take a look at the highlights of last year's festival at: www.harpendenbeerfestival.com All draught ales, ciders and perries will be available in oversized marked glasses to ensure you get a full pint/half pint each time.



But it's not just about beer you will be able to enjoy. The festival quiz is on Saturday afternoon as well as a breweriana auction in a lively friendly atmosphere. Catch up and socialise with friends, unwind after work or just soak up the festival atmosphere in the indoor and outdoor drinking areas.

For World Cup followers we will be projecting in the main hall England's first match against the USA live on Saturday evening. We believe it will be the biggest screen in Harpenden to enjoy all the action. So, with the biggest selection of beer and cider for miles around - what could be better?

Opening Times & Admission Prices (CAMRA members free at all times) are:

Thursday 10th June 5.00pm to 11.00pm £2.00

Friday 11th June 11.00am to 11.00pm £3.00

Saturday 12th June 11.00am to 11.00pm £3.00

Special deals for large or corporate groups of 10 or more, including fast track entry to the festival, can be arranged. Please e-mail:

corporate@hertsale.org.uk for details quoting "HBF 2010 Corporate" in the subject line. All other enquiries see website above or e-mail realales@yahoo.com. See also back page advert.



Come and join us!

We are always looking for new recruits

If you:

- Enjoy the sound of a Male Voice Choir and wish you could be a part of it
- Can sing in tune (you don't need to be able to read music)

Welwyn Garden City Male Voice Choir could be for you

We:

- Come from all walks of life and span a wide age range
- Sing a varied repertoire and are friendly and sociable

Want to know more? Phone:

Hugh Smith – Chairman 01438 215727
Les Rayner – Conductor 01707 271054
Alan Cain – Publicity 01992 589355

www.wgcmalevoicechoir.org.uk

2010 East Anglian CAMRA Beer Festivals Calendar

The beer festivals listed below are all organised by East Anglian CAMRA branches their names are in the brackets []. The size and venues vary greatly and most have got web sites so that you can get more details or even volunteer to help. Remember when you are enjoying a pint at one of these events that CAMRA beer festivals would not exist without staff giving up their time free of charge. Many festivals also make donations to local charities and even small amounts of time helping add up and give other staff meal breaks etc.

Hertfordshire CAMRA branches' beer festivals are highlighted.

- Maldon Beer Festival**, 7-10 April 2010 [Dengie Hundred]
Bury St Edmunds - East Anglian Beer Festival, 21-25 April 2010 [West Suffolk]
Elysian Beer Festival, 14-15 May 2010 [Ely & District]
Cambridge Beer Festival, 24-29 May 2010 [Cambridge & District]
Colchester Real Ale and Cider Festival, 1-5 June 2010 [Colchester & North East Essex]
Thurrock Beer Festival, 8-12 June 2010 [South West Essex]
Harpenden Beer Festival, 10-12 June 2010 [South Hertfordshire]
Chappel Cider Festival, 11-13 June 2010 ["Essex Branches of CAMRA"]
Braintree Real Ale Festival, 17-19 June 2010 [North West Essex]
Beer In The Gibberd Garden, Harlow, 19-20 June 2010 [Herts & Essex Borders] Festival of Beer and Brewing.,
Stowmarket, 1-4 July 2010 [Ipswich & East Suffolk]
Chelmsford Summer Beer Festival, 13-17 July 2010 [Chelmsford & Mid-Essex]
Bishops Stortford Beer Festival, 29-31 July 2010 [Herts & Essex Borders]
Peterborough Beer Festival, 24-28 August 2010 [Peterborough & District]
Clacton-on-Sea Real Ale and Cider Festival, 25-28 August 2010 [Tendring]
Chappel Beer Festival, 7-11 September 2010 [Essex Branches of CAMRA]
St Ives 'Booze on the Ouse' Beer Festival, 16-18 September 2010 [Huntingdonshire]
Letchworth Beer & Cider Festival, 23-25 September 2010 [North Hertfordshire]
St Albans Beer Festival, 29 September – 2 October 2010 [South Hertfordshire]
Ipswich Beer Festival, 6-9 October 2010 [Ipswich & East Suffolk]
Bedford Beer & Cider Festival, 6-9 October 2010 [North Bedfordshire]
Norwich Beer Festival, 25-30 October 2010 [Norwich & Norfolk]
HEBFest Beer Festival, Sawbridgeworth, 29-30 October 2010 [Herts & Essex Borders]

The 3rd Independent Baldock Beer Festival



50 Local & National Real Ales
20 Real Ciders & Perry
10 Continental Draught Lagers
Plus....
Soft drinks & a wide range of hot & cold food.
Live music. Family fun.

Fri 5 - 11, Sat 12-11, Sun 12-8

Fri 30th April – Sun 2nd May
at Brandles School, Baldock
www.baldockbeerfestival.org



Real Guinness I think not

Last night I was bemused to see the latest television advert for Guinness, which amidst an ocean of froth claims that Guinness is 'Alive Inside'. As all discerning beer drinkers will know Guinness is anything but. It is a completely dead beer served on gas dispense usually in short measure, at an extortionate price and at a temperature so cold that any vestige of taste remaining after the kegging process completely disappears. Fortunately there are a few brewers in Ireland brewing stout as it should be and this year for the first time these brewers are listed in the **Good Beer Guide**. Ironically the accompanying music for the Guinness advert is Mason Williams' 'Classical Gas'. At least they got that right!

Phil Defriez

Teenage drinking: Time for some home truths

The subject of young people and alcohol is rarely out of the headlines these days, so it was refreshing to see a bit of honesty from a Government department on the true picture about teenage drinking. It also pointed out a less-emphasised part of the law - that underage drinking is not actually illegal.

A survey reported in the *Morning Advertiser* found that 53% of under-18s who drink alcohol say they are given it by their parents. Most teenage drinking is done in their own or someone else's home, with only 17% claiming to have drunk alcohol in a pub or bar and 11% at a club or disco.

This suggests to me that parental responsibility for the mixed messages on alcohol is a considerable factor. Judging also from newspaper columnists and commentators - not to mention Tim Martin (chief of JD Wetherspoons), who always has a point to make - the attitude towards underage drinking is far from condemnatory even among the older generation, who well remember their first attempts and their first hangover - in every case well before they were 18 years old.

So we do not have a consistent message to give to the young. They do not see the attempt at buying alcohol as anything more serious than a game. They also do not differentiate, as society appears to do, between something that is legal if they do it at home, but illegal if they do it in a pub.

The minimum legal age for the consumption of alcohol is five years old. Below that age it is an

offence to give a child alcohol, except in emergency or on the order of a medical practitioner. Above that age, however, neither the child nor the parent or friend who gives them alcohol to drink is committing any offence, as long as that supply and consumption takes place in a domestic situation.

It is only in controlled areas such as the pub or club, or the high street that action can be taken to prevent youngsters drinking. In fact, the fine for permitting consumption of alcohol by someone under 18 on relevant premises is now set at a whopping maximum of £5,000, not to mention the prospect of having your licence reviewed.

The irony is that what parents appear to do regularly at home, cannot be done in the controlled environment of the pub, because it is a criminal offence and will go on the licensee's record.

Legislators at the Home Office are twisting the English language to suit themselves. The word "persistently", according to the dictionary, means "continued steadfastly or obstinately", or "constantly repeated". Not in the Licensing Act, it doesn't. It means twice. So next time someone is shown a red card in a football match, we should call it "persistently fouling opponents". Actually, most aggrieved managers call it unlucky.

So why do we in this country persist in having these double standards? Apparently, the Government is going to launch some football competitions to give kids an interest other than alcohol. With respect, that is hardly the point. We can either forbid consumption below a higher specified age or we emphasise to the young that what they are doing in pubs, clubs and shops is a serious criminal matter for which they can be punished.

It goes against my liberal tendencies to sound so punitive, but I am fed up with seeing the licensed trade pilloried as the only villains in this piece. It is about time some home truths were spelled out to these young drinkers and their parents.

Peter Coulson - taken from the *Morning Advertiser*

Any comments, articles or letters for publication are welcome. Please send to:
Steve Bury, 14 New Road, Shenley, Herts, WD7 9EA. Or send an Email to us at: pintsofview@hotmail.co.uk

Pints of View Beer Name Prize Sudoku

	E	R				B		
I				E	D	H		
	U		B					G
		E		R				U
			U		I			
D				N		G		
E					U		G	
		N	R	D				E
		G				N	B	

Fill in all the squares in the grid so that every row, column and each of the nine 3x3 squares contain all the letters of **EDINBURGH** ale brewed by Belhaven brewery.

Completed entries by 21 May 2010 to: Steve Bury, 14 New Road, Shenley, Herts, WD7 9EA.
1st winner drawn wins a CAMRA 2010 Good Beer Guide.

Your Name:.....

Your Address:.....

Postcode:.....

Winner of Pints of View Beer Name Prize Sudoku in edition 239 is: Gerry Hogan of Stevenage who wins a **CAMRA 2010 Good Beer Guide**. Our thanks to all who entered. **Solution on page 23.**

The Farmers Boy

134 London Road, St Albans, AL1 1PQ, Tel: 01727 860535

Five real ales, including a weekly guest ale.

Food served every day between 12 and 3pm, and between 5pm and 8pm on weekday evenings.



Quiz nights every Wednesday.

Live music every Thursday night.

Informal acoustic night 1st Sunday of every month.

Family run pub, with St. Albans' only micro brewery, selling our own Clipper IPA and Farmers Joy ale, both brewed on the premises.

Also stocked are Timothy Taylor's Landlord, Fuller's London Pride, plus other guest ales. Wide range of bottled beers with a good selection of Belgian beers.

Extensive menu of home cooked food, including our famous home made, hand-chopped chunky chips.

Pleasantly laid out Beer Garden and a damn fine welcome for all those who enjoy a decent pint!

Chris Adkins - Obituary

It is sad to report the death of Chris Adkins aged 55, after a long spell of ill health, on the 2nd February. He had been an active member of CAMRA South Hertfordshire branch since the early 1980's during his long association with the Lower Red Lion, St Albans, where he was the licensee until having to give up the job due to ill health. He was a major supporter of the regular Lower Red Lion Beer Festivals and was also a staff member at all the CAMRA St Albans Beer Festivals since inception in 1996, and was also able to help at the first CAMRA Harpenden Beer Festival last year. In addition to being a dedicated real ale campaigner and supporter of micro- breweries, he also opposed the Radlett Rail Freight Terminal proposals and attended every session of the Public Enquiry.

Chris was a well-known Albanian and one of the City's real characters. He will be missed by all his friends and colleagues.



THE WOODMAN

30 Chapmore End, Ware SG12 0HF
A Real Country Pub
 01920 463143 OS Ref: TL328164



£5 Supper Special

Last Wednesday of the month 6 - 8pm
April 28th, May 26th, June 30th

Bank Holiday BBQs
Sunday May 2nd & 30th

Lunches: 12 - 2 Tuesday to Sunday
 Evening meals: Wednesday to Saturday 5:30 - 7:30
 Closed Monday until 5:30

Large garden with children's play area
 Dogs welcome

Every Sunday: Quiz 8:30
 2nd Thursday of the month: Pop Quiz 8:30

www.woodmanpub.com
Good Beer Guide 2010 - We're In It!

The White Lion

91 Sopwell Lane, St. Albans
 Herts, AL1 1RN Tel: 01727 850540



SOUTH HERTS CAMRA
PUB OF THE YEAR
BRONZE AWARD

www.TheWhiteLionPH.co.uk

Serving:

Black Sheep Bitter & Young's Special
Plus

5 ever-changing guest beers

Food Served:

Lunchtimes: Mon to Sat 12 Noon – 2pm

Evenings: Mon to Fri 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Sunday lunches served 1pm until 4pm



Open all day: Monday – Sunday 12 Noon to 11pm

Wine Causes Crime

The favourite tippie of fictional Gorbals social pundit Rab C Nesbit, tonic wine Buckfast has been mentioned in 5,000 crime reports by Scotland's biggest police force in the last three years, a BBC investigation has revealed.



Almost one in 10 of those crimes in the Strathclyde Police force area was

violent, according to figures obtained by the broadcaster under Freedom of Information legislation.

Police said the figures suggested there is an association between Buckfast and violence.

During the BBC programme "The Buckfast Code" Superintendent Bob Hamilton of Strathclyde Police was asked whether the figures mean that Buckfast can be said to be associated with violence.

He replied: "The figures are fairly clear; Buckfast is mentioned in a number of crime reports and the Buckfast bottle was used as a weapon 114 times." Buckfast is produced by Benedictine monks in a Devon monastery.

The investigation also looked at the ingredients of the drink and how they may affect the behaviour of consumers, potentially making them anxious and aggressive if drunk in large quantities.

Ed Says: Better stick to good honest real ale. I don't know how they drink that fortified wine - it tastes like cough syrup to me.

Picture from the *Daily Telegraph*

Have another Round with Hangover-Free Booze

The dreaded morning-after feeling could be a thing of the past after scientists in Korea came up with a technique that allows drinkers to avoid a hangover.

A team of researchers in South Korea added extra oxygen to drinks and found that the body was then able to metabolise the booze quicker and eliminate the alcohol quicker - cutting down the after effect.

Healthy humans were given 240ml and 360ml drinks containing 19.5% alcohol by volume - all

drinks with different amounts of oxygen added. The results, documented in the journal *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, showed those who consumed the more highly oxygenated drinks recovered quicker and saw their blood alcohol levels return to normal more speedily.

Researchers In-hwan Baek, Byung-yo Lee and Kwang-il Kwon of Chungnam National University's College of Pharmacy concluded: "Elevated dissolved oxygen concentrations in alcoholic drinks accelerate the metabolism and elimination of alcohol."



"Thus, enhanced dissolved oxygen concentrations in alcohol may have a role to play in reducing alcohol-related side effects and accidents".

The only downside the boffins found was that the process also reduced the amount of time drinkers were actually drunk for.

A Korean drinks company is now launching an oxygenated "soju" drink called O2 Lin - a drink that "helps clarify your brain, energises your body cells, and maintains healthy and resilient skin".

From Sky News

Beer Can Help Prevent Weak Bones

Beer is a rich source of a nutrient that can help prevent weak bones - but it depends what type you drink.

As one of the nation's favourite drinks, beer is a rich source of dietary silicon, which can help cut the chance of developing diseases like osteoporosis, they said.

However, not all beers are the same, with those containing malted barley and hops having higher silicon content than beers made from wheat.

Some light lagers made from grains like corn have the lowest levels of silicon while beers made with hops come out on top.

The research, published in the *Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture*, involved examining 100 beers and their production methods.

Continued on page 22/

THE WOODMAN WILD HILL

45 Wild Hill, Hatfield, Herts, AL9 6EA
Tel: 01707 642618

BEER FESTIVAL 2010

SATURDAY 5TH JUNE
11.30am - 11.00pm

SUNDAY 6TH JUNE
12 noon - 7.00pm

24 REAL ALES

FOLK BAND - 'KISS THE MISTRESS'
SATURDAY 8pm

BARBECUE SATURDAY & SUNDAY

The Mermaid

The St. Albans Bareboard Alehouse.
Real Ales, Real Cider, Real Food, Real Music.
Listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2010

Opening Times: 98 Hatfield Road,
Monday to Thursday: St. Albans,
12 - 11: Food: 12 - 2:30pm AL1 3RL
Friday & Saturday: ☎ +44 1727 732346
12-12: Food: 12-3pm contact@mermaidalehouse.com
Sunday: 12-10:30pm: Food: 12-3pm www.mermaidalehouse.com

2 Permanent Ales, an Oakham Ale, 4 constantly changing Guest Ales
Plus Real Cider and always a Mild, Stout or Porter Available

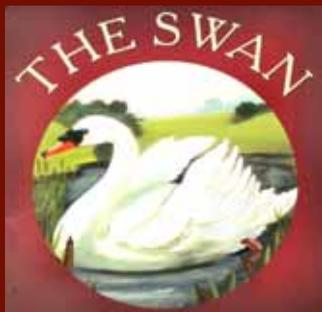
May Bank Holiday Beer Festival Thursday 29th April - Monday 3rd May

40 Real Ales during weekend, BBQ and Live Music:
Saturday 9pm: Elephant Shelf
Sunday 4pm: Runaway Beys



Supporting
Hertfordshire Brewers

Mermaid Alehouse: Sauvign So Good 4%, always available.
Guest beers from Tring Brewery regularly featured.



56 High Street
Wheathampstead
Herts, AL4 8AR
TEL: 01582 833110

Five Real Ales:

St. Austell Tribute, GK IPA

With 3 guests from: Old Peculier,
GK OSH, Brains Rev James,
Black Sheep, Hooky Bitter, Adnam's
Broadside



Open All Day

Good Beer Guide 2010
Cask Marque Accredited
Home Cooked Lunches Every Day
Pool Room and Darts Area
Quiz Wednesday Evenings

See us on the village Web site: www.wheathampstead.net/swan

People, Pubs and Places

The experts said beer was a major source of dietary silicon - roughly half of the silicon in beer can be readily absorbed by the body.



Charles Bamforth (pictured above), lead author of the study, said: "Beers containing high levels of malted barley and hops are richest in silicon. Wheat contains less silicon than barley because it is the husk of the barley that is rich in this element".

Dr Claire Bowring, from the National Osteoporosis Society, said: "These findings mirror results from previous studies which concluded that alcohol consumption could be beneficial to bones".

Yahoo News

Ed Says: Case proven again, stop drinking all that Lite beer/lager made with wheat and rice and enjoy a decent quantity of good real ale made from British barley and hops. The recipe for longevity and fitness.

Study Links Violence to Take-away Alcohol

US scientists have shown a direct link between the number of shops selling alcohol in an area and the violence occurring there.

The study was conducted in Cincinnati and considered all types of outlet, including bars and restaurants.

The more shops selling alcohol in an area, the scientists say, the more assaults were recorded there.

They presented the study at the American Association for the Advancement of Science annual meeting.

Professor William Pridemore from Indiana University, who led the study, spoke at the

meeting in San Diego.

He and his colleagues used a mathematical technique to divide the city into blocks. They compared the density of bars, restaurants and shops that sold alcohol with police records of the number of assaults that occurred in each of those blocks.

The strongest association with violence was linked to "off-premise outlets" - shops rather than bars or restaurants where alcohol is consumed on the premises.

He explained that this was likely because there was "more social control" in bars.

Professor Pridemore suggested that a "pub culture" eases the impact that alcohol has on levels of violence and illustrated this by discussing previous research he had carried out in Russia.

"Historically, Russia has no bar or pub culture and I think that's one of the reasons there's such a strong association between alcohol and violence there," he said.

"I think it's because there's so much more drinking at home or in the yards of the apartment blocks.

There is very little social control in that setting".

BBC News, 22 February 2010



May Beer Festival At "The Prince"



**Friday 30 April (from 5.30pm)
Sat & Sun 1 & 2 May (11.00am-to-11.00pm)
Mon 3 May Midday to late afternoon.**

**30+ beers. Live music all sessions.
Pub grub.**

**Prince of Wales
Green Tye, near Much Hadham
East Herts
SG10 6JP tel. 01279 842517**



www.thepow.co.uk info@thepow.co.uk

The Ghostly Monk of Ayot St Lawrence

Sir Lionel Lyde, who was Lord of the Manor in 1775, decided that he did not like the village church in Ayot St Lawrence as it was spoiling the view from his house and began to demolish the building. His plan was to build a new Ayot St Lawrence, and engaged Nicholas Revett to design a new church resembling a Greek temple he had admired in Athens. His plans were brought to a halt by the Bishop of Lincoln when the church was partially demolished, and as the cost of repairing the building was



estimated at £ 1,256.8s10d. It is still there as an ivy clad ruin (pictured) opposite the **Brocket Arms** to this day. The Brocket Arms, like many other historic pubs in Hertfordshire, claims to be haunted, though it is unclear whether this is said to be linked to the events of 1779. Mrs Teresa Sweeney, who worked in the pub for many years as a part time barmaid, entered what she thought was an empty bar to see someone standing in the corner; she then realized it was a monk. He was a little man dressed in a brown habit, his head was bent forward so his face could not be seen below the cowl, and as she stood there he just vanished. As with many old buildings both Teresa and the licensees had heard noises and footsteps that they could not explain. In another incident Mrs Sweeney was in the dining room of the pub and saw a face at the half glazed door. She then realized it was an old man with a thin face in a monk's habit, who then disappeared. There have also been reports of more noises, like a group of people talking coming from the bar after closing time, which could be a very good cover for locals being served afters. Part of the Brocket Arms dates back to 1378 when it was originally built as a monks' hostel, and one story is that one of the visitors had hanged himself in the area that is now the bar, explaining the apparition.

I can remember the Brocket Arms back in the early 1970's when even the ladies toilet was outside across the cobbled yard, and on cold autumn and winters nights it could be quite spooky.

We visited the pub one night in November and met some other CAMRA

members, a good fire was burning in the inglenook and I will always

remember the barman who had a very large goitre on the side of his bald head, and in the fashion of the time could be very off hand with customers. My friend who was quietly enjoying a pint of Young's *Special* was hit directly on top of his head by a copper kettle that had been hung from the ceiling. Partly in pain and surprise he called out. With amazing speed the barman was out from behind the bar and picking up the kettle retorted, "Do you realize you've dented it?" and with no more ado went back to his position in the corner of the bar.

In 2009 the Brocket re-opened after a lengthy closure, which was reported on in this journal. The pub whilst keeping its listed historic features has had its facilities brought into the 21st Century, and which has been well received. Definitely worth a visit.

Steve Bury



Things Don't Change Much

It is a fact that the ancient Egyptians brewed the first beer over 5,000 years ago, and frescos in their temples show dedicated brewers producing beer for sale. It is said that a poor farm worker was walking home with a loaf of bread and dropped it in the stream outside his house. Not wishing to lose the bread he put it in a bowl and forgot about it, later he found that it had started to ferment and the fluid was tasty and also alcoholic. Another reason given for wheat-based beer being produced by the Egyptians is that the soil in the country did not produce very good grapes.

The brewers in the frescos were working in the ancient city of Pelusium, as well known for its breweries as it was for its university. There was an abundance of ale-houses across the country, and a leading reformer of the time was campaigning to have the number reduced to control the drinking excesses of the students, who were neglecting their studies.

DOWN YOUR WAY

Disclaimer: 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 17.

Abbots Langley: Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of the **Breakspear** on School Mead.

Charlton: The **Windmill**, closed since Christmas, re-opened in the first week of March. We welcome new licensee Mick Weldon, who is currently serving Wells *Eagle IPA*, *Courage Best* and *Directors*.

Colney Heath: An under new management sign is being displayed on the outside of the **Queen's Head**. Sorry we do not have any further details.

Essendon, West End: McMullens, who leased the **Candlestick**, have closed the pub and returned it back to the Gascoyne Cecil Estate. This could have been a sad end for one of South Hertfordshire's most isolated pubs, but Tom and Vicky of the **Woodman**, Wildhill, have come to the rescue, taking over the lease. They will run both pubs with the **Candlestick** having more emphasis on food, though still offering a good range of real ales. The pub is likely to re-open later in the spring once Tom and Vicky have decided how they want the pub to develop. We'll keep you posted.

Hertford: The **Hillside/Reindeer** has been lost forever with East Herts District Council approving a change of use – the pub is to become a veterinary surgery. What a poor outcome for a pub that had a 400-year pedigree – we know there were people out there who wanted to run it as a pub. Up the hill in Bengoe, the **Warren House** also faces an uncertain future. Closed now for many months, rumour is rife that the property will give way to housing. The **Duncombe Arms** (now without the Arms) has been refurbished. Gone is the live music and TV – all in favour of a softer quieter feel, with comfortable seating and a slant towards food. A mid-week evening pub quiz has been introduced. Greene King *Abbot* and *IPA* have been retained on handpump. And why not try the **Whistling Duck**, a new restaurant and bar based at the Kingfisher Garden Centre on the Lower Hatfield Road just outside Hertford? Surely one of Hertfordshire's most unlikely but very welcome real ale additions. Enterprising owner Russell Jeffery has installed handpumps for Adnam's cask ales. You can have a meal, buy some plants, seeds or pet food, a kitchen, or just sit by the Lea and enjoy a traditional pint. What a great concept. We wish the Whistling Duck well.

A quick mention for **Hertford Museum** – a regular stockist of *Pints of View*. Located in Bull Plain, the Museum has re-opened after a transforming renovation. The wonderful new layout, facilities and local exhibits include a small display cabinet on local pubs and brewing. Open Tues – Sat 10am to 5pm. Admission Free. Well worth an hour of your time when you are next in Hertford.

Hitchin: Congratulations to Howard and Wendy of the **Half Moon**, voted **North Herts Pub of the Year** for the second year running. 12th –13th March saw an amazingly successful CAMRA/Round Table beer festival in the **Town Hall**. This was scheduled to be the last Hitchin festival in that establishment before it ceases to be available for hire. However, at the opening it was unexpectedly announced that our booking for 2011 is confirmed.... So watch this space! See report page 10.

Mill Green: The **Green Man** which had been running as a Thai restaurant closed in early March. We are trying to get further details of the pub's future as we go to press.

Radlett: The **Railway Bar** has now opened its function room, which can accommodate forty to sixty people and has wide screen TV and a juke-box. They have also added an outside drinking area and intend to show the World Cup matches outside - weather permitting. Beers on sale are *Young's Bitter* and *Special*.

St Albans: The **White Hart Hotel** has apparently been bought privately from Punch Taverns. Two real ales were on sale in mid February. We are also informed that there is an imminent change to the licensees of the **Garibaldi**. The **Horn of Plenty** is selling real ale, Brakspear's *Bitter*. We hope that this is a regular feature and the beer is in constant supply.

Solution to Pints of View 239 Beer Name Sudoku

F	L	C	V	E	A	I	K	B
I	A	V	C	B	K	E	F	L
B	E	K	L	I	F	C	V	A
K	I	E	F	L	B	V	A	C
V	B	F	A	C	E	L	I	K
L	C	A	I	K	V	B	E	F
A	F	B	E	V	C	K	L	I
E	K	I	B	A	L	F	C	V
C	V	L	K	F	I	A	B	E

BRANCH DIARY

HERTS & ESSEX BORDERS

- Mon 12 Apr:** Branch Meeting - **Bricklayers Arms**, Bishop's Stortford. 8.30 pm start.
- Fri 16 Apr:** Branch Social – **Queens Head**, Allens Green 7pm on.
- Thu 22 Apr:** Herts Liaison Meeting – **Wenlock Arms**, London N1 7pm
- Sat 24 Apr:** Day trip to Ghent - Belgium
- Mon 10 May:** Branch Meeting - **Lord Louis**, Stanstead Abbots. 8.30 pm Start
- Sat 15 May:** Essex **Pubs of the Year** survey trip, Part 1, 11 am to 7pm. To pre-book minibus see Branch Contacts.
- Sat 22 May:** Essex **Pubs of the Year** survey trip, Part 2, 11 am to 7pm. To pre-book minibus see Branch Contacts.
- Mon 14 Jun:** Branch Meeting - **The Moletrap**, Stapleford Tawney. 8.30 pm start

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE

- Wed 7 Apr:** Beer Ramble - Hitchin: **Nightingale**, **Albert**, **Molly Malones** and **Victoria**. Meet in **Nightingale** 20:00.
- Sat 10 Apr:** Minibus Ramble: **Rising Sun** Halls Green, **Rabbits Foot** Ardeley, **The Fox** Aspenden and the **Sword in Hand** Westmill. (See BOOKING NOTES below).
- Wed 21 Apr:** Beer Ramble - Stevenage Old Town: **Prince of Wales**, **2Dry**, **Standing Order** and **Marquis of Lorne**. Meet in **Prince of Wales** 20:00.
- Thu 22 Apr:** Herts Liaison Meeting – **Wenlock Arms**, London N1 7pm
- Sat 24 Apr:** North Herts Pub of the Year award to the **Half Moon**, Hitchin. Presentation at 20:30.
- Mon 26 Apr:** Branch Meeting: **Red Lion** Great Offley.
- Wed 5 May:** Beer Ramble - Letchworth: **Broadway Hotel**, **Arena Tavern** and **Globe**. Meet in **Three Magnets** at 20:00.
- Sat 15 May:** Minibus Trip - Visit all pubs in the running for Herts. Pub of the Year. (see BOOKING NOTES below).
- Wed 19 May:** Pub Ramble - Buntingford: **Brambles**, **Fox & Duck**, **Black Bull** and **Crown**. Meet in **Brambles** at 20:00.
- Mon 24 May:** Committee Meeting: **The Crown**, **Buntingford**, 20:00.
- Wed 2 Jun:** Pub Ramble - Hitchin: **Bricklayers Arms**, **Sun Hotel**, **Red Hart**, **Kings Arms** and **Half Moon**. Meet in **Bricklayers Arms** 20:00.
- Wed 16 Jun:** Pub Ramble - Stevenage: **Our Mutual**

Friend, **Chequers** and **Standard Bearer**. Meet in **Our Mutual Friend** 20:00.

Sat 19 Jun: Minibus Ramble - Aston & Benington: **Crown** (Aston End), **Rose & Crown** (Aston), **Bell Inn** and **Lordship Arms** (Benington). (See BOOKING NOTES below).

Booking Note for **Minibus Rambles**: pickups in Stevenage, Hitchin, Letchworth and **Baldock**, from 18:30 onwards; £6 members, £10 non-members; book with **Socials Contact** - details on page 26.

SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE

Each Pub Survey/Social listed below visits 4 pubs at the following times: Pub 1 – 7.45pm, Pub 2 – 8.30pm, Pub 3 – 9.15pm, Pub 4 - 10.00pm

Thu 1 Apr: St Albans Pub Survey/Social (2) - **Black Lion Hotel**, **Blue Anchor**, **Rose and Crown**, **Six Bells**

Fri 9 Apr: Branch Social to **Ware Beer Festival**, Kibes Lane, Ware. Minibus leaves outside St Albans City station at 6.30pm. Minibus £10, book via our Social Contact.

Thu 13 Apr: Branch Meeting - **Six Bells**, St Albans 8pm

Thu 15 Apr: St Albans Pub Survey/Social (3) - **Jolly Sailor**, **Cock**, **Blacksmiths Arms**, **Mermaid**

Thu 22 Apr: Herts Liaison Meeting – **Wenlock Arms**, London, N1 7pm

Thu 29 Apr: St Albans Pub Survey/Social (4) - **Lower Red Lion**, **Portland Arms**, **Verulam Arms**, **Farriers Arms**

Thu 11 May: Sweet Mild of Mine Social – Hertford **Black Horse** 8pm, **White Horse** 8.45pm, **Old Barge** 9.30pm, **Old Cross Tavern** 10.15pm.

Thu 13 May: St Albans Pub Survey/Social (5) - **Waterend Barn**, **Cross Keys**, **Peahen**, **Boot**

Thu 18 May: Branch Meeting: **Red Lion Hotel**, Radlett 8pm

Fri 21 May: Mild Night trip round St Albans. Venues to be agreed - check with Socials Contact.

Thu 27 May: St Albans Pub Survey/Social (6) - **Spotted Bull**, **White Swan**, **Beehive**, **White Hart Tap**

Thu 10 – Sat 12 Jun: Harpenden Beer Festival, Public Hall, Harpenden. See details on back page.

WATFORD AND DISTRICT

Fri 9 Apr: Watford Social - **Druids**, 17 Estcourt Road 8.30pm; **Estcourt Tavern**, 2 Estcourt Road, 9.15pm; **White Lion**, 79 St Albans Road 10pm,

Tue 20 Apr: Open Mic Night: - **Pump House Theatre and Arts Centre**, Local Board Road,

BRANCH DIARY

Watford, 8.30pm.

Mon 26 Apr: Branch Meeting - **Estcourt Arms**, St. Johns Road, Watford, 8pm. All members welcome.

Sat 1 May: Mild Month Social - **Land of Liberty, Peace & Plenty**, Long Lane, Heronsgate from 1pm.

Thu 6 May: Mild Month Social - **Black Boy**, 19 Windmill Street, Bushey Heath 8.30pm.

Tue, 11 May: Abbots Langley Social - **Boy's Home**, 1 High Street, Abbots Langley, 8.15pm; **Royal Oak**, Kitters Green 9pm; **Compasses**, 95 Tibbs Hill Road 10pm.

Tue 18 May: Mild Month Social - **Dog & Partridge**, Old Mill Road, Hunton Bridge 8.30pm.

Mon, 24 May: Branch Meeting - **Estcourt Arms**, St. Johns Road, Watford 8pm. All members welcome.

Thu 27 May: Mild Month Social - **Sportsman**, 2 Scots Hill, Croxley Green 8.45pm

HERTFORDSHIRE CAMRA BRANCH CONTACTS

Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA

Chairman - Brendan Sothcott, Tel: 01279 507493

Pubs Officer - Ivan Bullerwell, Tel: 01279 304117

Mini-Bus Bookings - Call Gavin on: 07825446586

or Email: mini-bus@heb-camra.org.uk

Socials Contact Email: social@heb-camra.org.uk

Email: Secretary@heb-camra.org.uk

Internet: www.heb-camra.org.uk

North Hertfordshire CAMRA

Chairman - Colin Yates **Email:**

chairman@camranorthherts.org.uk,

Socials Contact - Ashleigh Milner, Tel: 07930

958548, **Email:** diary@camranorthherts.org.uk

Internet: www.camranorthherts.org.uk

South Hertfordshire CAMRA

Branch Contact: John Bishop, Tel: 01582 768478,

Email: realales@yahoo.com

Socials Contact: Barry Davis, Tel: evenings and weekends only - 07719 407544.

Email: b.davis70@btinternet.com

Internet: www.hertsale.org.uk

Watford & District CAMRA

Branch Contact: Andrew Vaughan.

Phone: 01923 230104. **Mobile:** 07854 988152.

Email: watfordcamra@googlemail.com

Internet: www.watfordcamra.org.uk

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..... Postcode

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Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy)

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