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**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

HERTFORDSHIRE'S

Pints of View

The bi-monthly publication for every discerning drinker

October/November 2010

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Beer Festivals Special Feature

Read about or beer festivals happening in Bishops
Stortford, Letchworth and St Albans – *pages 14 - 20*

PLUS MORE ON: BEER ♦ NEWS ♦ PUBS ♦ BREWERIES ♦ EVENTS ♦ FEATURES

I have received short measure, what can I do about it?

As regular readers will know the newsletter has vigorously supported CAMRA's "Full Pints" campaign since its inception over ten years ago. Short measure has existed ever since alcoholic drink has been sold or bartered whether it is sold in pints, quarts, litres, gills or millilitres.

The story behind this latest article started at the **St Albans Beer Festival** in 2009 when I met up with an old drinking pal, Bill, who was complaining about institutionalised short measure, even though he was constantly complaining to staff and customers in a particular pub in Borehamwood. I knew the pub as it is not more than three miles from my home but admitted that I did not visit it on a regular basis. My advice was to get the evidence and approach the owners and Trading Standards.

In July 2010 a large white envelope arrived on my doormat which initially made me burst into laughter, but then upon reading its contents in more detail it made me determined to investigate and publish my findings in *Pints of View*.

Bill, who I have known for the best part of thirty years is a quiet, genuine beer lover and the sort of customer any pub would cherish as a regular. He had taken my advice of almost a year earlier and had written to J.D. Wetherspoon, the owners of the pub in question, with thirty six photos of short pints taken with a mobile phone, each dated, between a period from 11th February to 26th June 2010. As Bill had complained regularly and asked for top ups he admits that some of the photographs were of pints served to other customers whom he does not claim to know. Having seen the photos the evidence seems conclusive, though some are less short than others. In his letter he makes the point that although the pub is retailing the beer at £1.99 per pint (JD's are very competitive on price) the real cost to drinkers dependent on how full the glass was is between £2.089 and £2.487 per pint. He also claims that some pints are only 75% full or 15 fluid ozs. The letter sent 29th June did receive a prompt reply from JD's on 5th July, promising an investigation and that someone would be in touch in due course.

Trading Standards were equally as prompt replying on 6th July. They informed Mr Sturt that his complaint had been passed to the enforcement team for their information and that as they had received no other complaints about the

Establishment, and that this would have a bearing on any decision that is taken as to appropriate action by this department. They also add that guidelines for licensed premises suggest that a measure of 95% is acceptable in the first instance, in order to allow pubs to provide customers who wish to have a head on their beer. At the same time, the advice we give to customers who do not like a head on their beer is that they can ask to have their pint topped up to the full amount. A pub should not refuse that request.

This does pose the question; how many complaints are needed to get Trading Standards to act?

Bill felt his evidence was conclusive and was concerned that it was just going to be logged and not acted upon. Following up on this I spoke to Trading Standards and they assured me that a Weights and Measures officer had investigated the case.

There is no legislation, only guidelines, so when you enter the pub and ask for a pint they are entitled to assume that everyone wants a head equivalent to 5% of the fluid on their pint. So why are pints served below 95%?

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THE BITTER END

If you do not want a head are you entitled to demand and receive 20 fluid ozs (100%)? This is supported by the Trading Standards' letter quoted above.

The problem is that the response you get when complaining about short measure is not a welcome one. I would go as far as to say in 90% plus of cases the person who has served the offending pint knows exactly what they are doing, and is expecting a certain amount of complaints. They therefore do not enjoy having attention brought to what they are doing in front of the rest of the customers.

The 10% of beer you do not get means one extra pint for every ten sold if you can get away it, with serving even shorter pints this money maker is even more effective. So why does this practice exist? If the stock is short someone is thieving, if the stock is OK then the money goes in your pocket.

Wetherspoon's pay staff bonuses based on turnover, so you can make money by selling less beer.

When a barrel of naturally conditioned beer is changed, losses will occur as the pipes will need to be cleaned or flushed through, also at the beginning of a session (say opening time) beer will have been lying in the pipes overnight and should be drawn off and disposed of. At one time this lost beer, known in the trade as ullage was accounted for and credit was given, these days this no longer exists. Talking to one of the best real ale publicans I know his adage is that you cannot serve excellent real ale without throwing some away.

Trading Standards have a wide remit being responsible for advice and regulation of all retail outlets whatever they sell. Like all government departments in this day and age of cuts and recession they could do with more resources. Immediate action on complaints of all types are not always possible.

Do not lose hope or become apathetic, I am convinced that by writing to both Trading Standards and the offending pubs' owners an investigation will take place.

Bill was rightly disappointed that following the letter all he received was a phone call from the Wetherspoon's Area Manager promising an investigation but they did not seem to be fully aware of the details of his complaint. I have contacted Wetherspoon's head office, which is in Watford and they assured me that the Area

Manager had left her details for any follow up enquiries Mr Sturt could have. I was also assured that a full investigation had taken place and that the service issues had been rectified.

I for one will be visiting the pub to check on progress. You will also notice in the *Down Your Way* section that the manager of the **Hart & Spool** has moved to the **Three Magnets** in Letchworth.

Steve Bury - Editor

Fairer Beer Tax Could Create 30,000 Jobs

Around 30,000 new jobs could be created if beer was given a fairer deal in alcohol duty, the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) has claimed.

New research, undertaken by Oxford Economics for the BBPA, shows that the current tax system is discouraging the consumption of low-strength drinks such as beer by not introducing lower tax revenues and the result is fewer jobs.

The BBPA wants the Government to use its current review to move the UK to a more balanced duty system that is much more in line with neighbouring countries.



Oxford Economics said that 29,500 jobs would be created, mostly in pubs and the wider hospitality sector, if the duty system was rebalanced between different types of drinks.

The BBPA claims the current UK tax regime penalises beer, which is both low-strength and overwhelmingly UK-produced. The Oxford Economics analysis looked at the impact on the UK economy of moving to a system more in line with Ireland, where the duty rate for difference types of drinks increases more significantly with strength.

In addition, the change in approach would bring in around £250m in extra revenues, from employment taxes and corporation tax.

"The new Government now has a great opportunity to bring fairness into our duty system – with huge potential benefits for the Treasury and the UK economy," said BBPA chief executive Brigid Simmonds.

"A fair deal for beer would create a win-win situation for all. Beer is unique among the main categories of drink, with Britain's pubs dependent on beer sales. Over 90% of the beer consumed here is brewed here".

"Beer is also a low alcohol drink of choice and should be treated differently to other stronger alcoholic beverages. There is potential for a huge success story that could be grasped by the new Government. Everyone would benefit from a new and fair approach."

Ewan Turney, Morning Advertiser 1 Sept 2010

Ed Says: The BBPA finally seem to have caught on to the argument I have been making through this newsletter for the past two years. Cut Beer Tax and kick start the economy pity Mr Osborne the new Chancellor is not listening.

Mitchells & Butler Selling Franchise Estate

It was announced in the *Morning Advertiser* that M&B are selling their fifteen franchised pub estate. What has this to do with Hertfordshire you may ask? Well some of the pubs are in our county. Chris Gerard seems to be the main man behind Innventure Limited, if you look at their website www.innventure.co.uk you will see they

run the **Rusty Gun**, St Ippolyts (left), **Foresters**, Church Cookham, **Wellington**, Welwyn, **Broadway Hotel**, Letchworth and **d'Arry's**,



Cambridge.

The first two have been run as franchises and they have now bought the freeholds from M & B. The Wellington as far as we know is still owned and tied to Greene King. The Broadway we still have listed as owned by M & B and maybe undergoing negotiations if the *Morning Advertiser* is to be believed.

Mulholland thanks McMullen for speaking out

Save the Pub Group chair and pubco critic Greg Mulholland, MP, has written to family brewer Fergus McMullen to thank him for speaking out against the big pubcos.

McMullen, tenanted trade director at brewer and

operator McMullen & Sons, said that big pubcos had become "unwieldy beasts" through a lack of management and that they had not cared about the tenants.

He blamed the pubcos for the looming threat of Government intervention. Lib Dem Mulholland (pictured above) has invited McMullen to speak at the next Save the Pub Group about these issues and how family brewers maintain fair relationships with their tenants.

"Fergus McMullen voiced many of the issues that the Save the Pub Group highlights in its campaign to protect the pub industry and the tenants who are so vital to it," said Mulholland.

"I hope Fergus will be able to speak to the Save the Pub Group. Working together with responsible and respected family brewers will strengthen our efforts in Westminster to protect the pub and equalise the playing field for tenants."

Ewan Turney, Morning Advertiser 11 Aug 2010



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Wetherspoon threatens Diageo Boycott

JD Wetherspoon boss Tim Martin says he'll throw out Diageo products if the drinks giant stands by its 'anti-pub' stance on alcohol duty. Martin (pictured below) labelled Diageo a "bunch of morons" for its call for the alcohol duty escalator to remain for all products except spirits, which it made in its submission to the Treasury's review of alcohol taxation and pricing.



Diageo, owner of eight of the world's top 20 premium spirit brands, as well as the iconic stout Guinness and Blossom Hill wine, called

for a unit of alcohol to be taxed at the same rate for all products. This argument is known as "equivalence".

Diageo said the "simplest way" to do this would be to freeze spirits duty. The controversial duty escalator – 2% above inflation – would be added to other categories until they reach the level of spirits.

The company said this would generate between £524m and £1.9bn a year for the Treasury, with no additional impact on the industry than will already result from the Government's planned RPI+2% escalator and 2.5% VAT rise.

Diageo Great Britain managing director Simon Litherland said: "Our recommendation to the Treasury is the fairest and most transparent way to approach taxation of alcohol. It will bring revenue to the Government and will mean that the more alcohol in the drink, the more tax it will pay."

Damaging

Martin said "I think Diageo should consult their customers more before they make these sorts of statements".

"The escalator is damaging for pubs. We feel that, as a matter of extreme urgency, tax and regulation of pubs needs to be reduced. We are paying 40% of our sales as tax. At the current time tax on a typical pint of beer in a pub that sells for £2.50 is a quid. And we've got a complete bunch of morons at Diageo who say it should go up – but not for them!

"Their lobbying is so transparent – that everybody else pays, but not Diageo.

"When our contract comes up for renewal, unless Diageo radically changes its tune, it won't be renewed."

In response to plans to tax "problem drinks" more, Diageo urged that ready-to-drink brands be left out, saying they're "not the drink of choice" for underage drinkers or bingers.

Shepherd Neame chief executive Jonathan Neame also rejected Diageo's equivalence argument for duty.

"I think the tide has turned away from this argument, and in that context it seems a rather foolish position.

"I find it a largely impossible position that Treasury ministers would wish to make vodka relatively more cheap than beer or other products."

The current system "penalises" beer, the BBPA said – alcohol in the form of beer costs 42p per unit on average, compared to 37p for vodka and 33p for cider.

John Harrington, Morning Advertiser, 3 Sept 2010

Cameron may let Councils ban Cheap Booze

Prime Minister David Cameron has hinted that he may let councils set their own minimum price on alcohol as part of his "localism" agenda.



He was speaking in Manchester, which is spearheading a bid by 10 authorities in the region to use a by-law that

makes it illegal to sell for less than 50p per unit, which would curb rock-bottom alcohol sales.

The Government would need to approve such plans and the Prime Minister told the Manchester Evening News he was "very supportive" of the idea.

He promised to "look at the details", adding: "Where there can be local decisions we are very happy for that to happen".

"It may be that we need to do something to help deliver the localist answer."

Cameron admitted that the idea could break competition law. He also said he didn't agree that

tax should be raised to increase the price of alcohol for consumers.

"I think if what you're trying to do is stop supermarkets from selling 20 tins of Stella for a fiver that's what we've got to go after," Cameron said.

"Where I want to try and help is ending the deep discounting on alcohol.

"People going and 'pre-loading', having bought from a supermarket where they were attracted by a price designed to bring them into the store."

John Harrington, Morning Advertiser 11 Aug 2010

Ed Says: There is still this strange idea that minimum pricing per unit will put pubs back on a level playing field with the off trade and supermarkets. It must be recognised that many pubs' prices are too expensive due to taxation and restrictive practices by the brewers and pub companies. Until the tie is broken there will be no relief for the hard pressed publicans. Also the government will gain extra VAT if minimum pricing is brought in so may be tempted to allow levels to be set even higher than 50pence per unit to raise funds. Having seen some of the stupid things that Councils try to implement and their lack of knowledge about pubs and pub users do we want them controlling alcohol pricing?

Biggest fall in Drinking for 60 Years

The British Beer and Pub Association's (BBPA) new Statistical Handbook reveals that there was a 6% decline in alcohol consumption in 2009 – the sharpest decrease since 1948.

It was also the fourth annual decline in five years and UK drinkers are now consuming 13% less alcohol than in 2004. The UK consumption remains below the EU average.

The new book also reveals that the UK is one of the highest taxed on beer with the second highest duty rate in the EU – 10 times higher than Germany and seven times higher than France.

Key stats in the book:

- The UK ale market increased its market share of all beers in 2009 for the first time since the 1960s.
- Ale's success is also reflected in the number of UK brewers, which is now at its highest since 1940.
- Beer is by far the pub-goers favourite tippie,

making up 60% of all alcohol sales in pubs, hotels, and restaurants compared to second-placed wine at 17%.

- The total beer spend is £17bn per year – 41% of all spending on alcohol.
- The average price of a pint of bitter is £2.58 and lager £2.95. London is the most expensive region to buy a pint, with prices 35% higher than in the north east.
- Beer is a vital contributor to the Treasury, with £5.5bn paid in duty and VAT. In total, alcohol contributes £14.6bn to UK tax revenues.
- Over one billion pints of British beer are now exported, a UK success story worth over £460m to the UK economy.

"These figures will confound many pundits, as yet again they confirm that as a nation, we are not drinking more," said BBPA chief executive Brigid Simmonds.

"Those who suggest otherwise need to focus on the hard facts.

"This handbook also reminds us of just how vital a role beer and pubs play in the UK economy, in terms of turnover, jobs, and tax revenues.

"The new numbers show just how closely linked

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beer is to Britain's struggling pubs, with beer accounting for around 60 per cent of on-trade sales. Policy-makers should take note."

Ewan Turney, Morning Advertiser, 3 Sep 2010

£12 pint - is it a Record?

Fancy a £12 pint? Well, hundreds did at the renowned **White Horse** in London's Parsons Green – which sold 576 half pints of special American ale at £6 a pop.

Goose Island's *Bourbon County Stout*, sold to mark the pub's annual American Beer Festival, sold out within two days.

Another Goose Island brand, 312, was famously given as David Cameron's present from Barack Obama last month.



White Horse general manager Dan Fox (above) said: "American lagers and ales are expensive to bring across the Atlantic, and their generally higher alcohol levels attract more duty. Their beautifully defined flavours have allowed us to price them more like wines, served often by the half pint and in special glassware."

"The pricing of our bottled American ales ranges from £4 to £22 a bottle, and our customers are guided more by quality and interest than they are by price.

"If Champagnes can range from £8-£200 a bottle, it seems illogical that all beers should be priced equally, regardless of quality or heritage".

John Harrington

Ed Says: Having published a letter in edition 239 Feb/Mar complaining about the £7 pints being sold in the White Horse's Winter Ale festival, I felt this article from the Morning advertiser to be pertinent. We also have an article on Brew Dog's £500 per bottle *End of History* special ale in this edition - where will it all end?

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.

AK Has the XXX Factor

If you are a Tesco or Waitrose shopper you may have recently been surprised to find a new McMullen's bottled beer on the shelves – AK XXX. The new 4.1% ABV beer has been receiving a good level of demand and was produced following approaches from supermarkets. Fergus McMullen says "We considered the request and, after trials, decided to press ahead. Initial sales have been going well and we are receiving repeat orders. The project will initially last for one year but this will be extended if the beer goes well".



Mac's are also hoping to supply the beer to other independent off licence chains and, in the lead-up to Christmas, are also hoping to produce bottles of the revered *Stronghart* winter ale.

Cask-conditioned draught AK is, of course, brewed at 3.7% but previous attempts to bottle at this ABV have proved unsatisfactory. The ABV has therefore been increased but Mac's are confident that AK drinkers will recognise the familiar signature of the beer in its stronger cousin. Mac's say "Our Head Brewer has combined the finest East Anglian Ale, chocolate and amber malts with McMullen's own pure spring water. The careful addition of the very best English whole leaf hops gives a rich brown beer, with well balanced maltiness and subtle bitterness from the hops".

The new bottled beer will not be available in McMullen's pubs but brings the current bottled collection to three, alongside "Hertford Castle" and *No.7* light ale. Robinsons of Stockport continue to bottle for McMullen's. None of the bottled beers are currently available in bottle-conditioned form.

Recent cask-conditioned specials have included *Tooty Fruity* at 3.8% ABV and *Harvest Moon* at 4.5% ABV. Fergus reports that sales of cask-conditioned beers in McMullen's pubs continue to be encouraging. The "boxed" cask-conditioned beers continue to be available via the company's website.

On the pub front, Mac's are still looking to



increase the size of their pub estate and have an active team looking for the right acquisitions. Work at the Grade 2 Listed **Nag's Head**, Bishop's Stortford has been a little delayed whilst the proposed work is approved – Mac's are making sure that the pub's impressive 1930s art deco features are carefully retained. It is hoped that the pub will now re-open in early 2011. Their other new acquisition in Stortford – a former furniture store – has received its Change of Use approval and a Licence but opening will be some months away once alterations have been completed. Mac's will also be rolling out a new programme of pub refurbishments over the next year *Les Middlewood*

Bitter Category

Gold - RCH, *PG Steam* (3.9% ABV, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset)

Silver - Moor, *Revival* (3.8% ABV, Pitney, Somerset)

Joint Bronze - Orkney, *Raven* (3.8% ABV, Stromness, Orkney)

Joint Bronze - Purple Moose, *Snowdonia Ale* (3.6% ABV, Portmadog, Gwynedd)

Best Bitter Category

Gold - Timothy Taylor, *Landlord* (4.3% ABV, Keighley, West Yorkshire)

Silver - St Austell, *Tribute* (4.2% ABV, St Austell, Cornwall)

Joint Bronze - Evan Evans, *Cwrw* (4.2% ABV, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire)

Joint Bronze - Great Oakley, *Gobble* (4.5% ABV, Great Oakley, Northamptonshire)

Golden Ale Category

Gold - Castle Rock, *Harvest Pale* (3.8% ABV, Nottingham, Notts)

Silver - Marble, *Manchester Bitter* (4.2%, Manchester, Gtr Manchester)

Bronze - St Austell, *Proper Job* (4.5% ABV, St Austell, Cornwall)

Strong Bitter Category

Gold - Thornbridge, *Jaipur IPA* (5.9% ABV, Bakewell, Derbyshire)

Silver - Fuller's, *Gales HSB* (4.8% ABV, Chiswick, Gtr London)

Bronze - Beckstones, *Rev Rob* (4.6% ABV, Millom, Cumbria)

Speciality Beer Category

Gold - Amber, *Chocolate Orange Stout* (4% ABV, Ripley, Derbyshire)

Silver - O'Hanlon's, *Port Stout* (4.8% ABV, Whimple, Devon)

Bronze - Breconshire, *Ysbrid y Ddraig* (6.5% ABV, Brecon, Powys)

Winter Beer of Britain Winner

(Announced in January 2010)

Elland, *1872 Porter* (6.5% ABV, Elland, West Yorkshire)

Bottled Beer of Britain Winners

(Sponsored by Travelodge)

Gold - St Austell, *Admiral's Ale* (5% ABV, St Austell, Cornwall)

Silver - Pitfield, *1850 London Porter* (5% ABV, Epping, Essex)

Bronze - Great Oakley, *Delapre Dark* (4.6% ABV, Great Oakley, Northamptonshire)

CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain

The Champion Beer of Britain CBOB competition takes place on the first day of the Great British Beer Festival in August this year's winners were as follows.

Overall Winners

Champion Beer of Britain - Castle Rock, *Harvest Pale* (3.8% ABV, Nottingham, Notts)

Second - Timothy Taylor, *Landlord* (4.3% ABV, Keighley, West Yorkshire)

Third - Surrey Hills, *Hammer Mild* (3.8% ABV, Guildford, Surrey)

Mild Category

Gold - Surrey Hills, *Hammer Mild* (3.8% ABV, Guildford, Surrey)

Silver - Greene King, *XX Mild* (3% ABV, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk)

Joint Bronze - Golcar, *Dark Mild* (3.4% ABV, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire)

Joint Bronze - Nottingham, *Rock Ale Mild* (3.8% ABV, Nottingham, Notts)

Beer to be sold in dead animals

A £500 a bottle super-strong ale is to be sold inside the bodies of dead animals. The stunt has been condemned by animal rights groups as "cheap marketing tactics".

Twelve bottles of *The End Of History* ale have been made and placed inside seven dead stoats, four squirrels and one hare.



Photo: Universal News and Sport

And at 55 per cent volume, its makers claim it is the world's strongest beer.

A taxidermist in Doncaster worked on the animals, which were not killed for bottling the new drink, with some having been killed on the roads.

Outfits featured on some of the animals include a kilt and a top hat.

BrewDog, of Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire, created the ale, which is stronger than whisky and vodka.

The brewer recommends the beer should be served in a shot or whisky glass "to be enjoyed like a fine whisky".

The firm's co-founder James Watt said: "In true BrewDog fashion, we've torn up convention, blurred distinctions and pushed brewing and beer packaging to its absolute limits.

"This is the beer to end all beers. It's an audacious blend of eccentricity, artistry and rebellion; changing the general perception of beer, one stuffed animal at a time.

"The impact of *The End Of History* is a perfect conceptual marriage between taxidermy, art and craft brewing. The bottles are at once beautiful and disturbing - they disrupt conventions and break taboos, just like the beer they hold within them."

The blond Belgian ale, infused with nettles and juniper berries, was created by BrewDog's brewers by freezing the liquid to separate water from the solution.

The process was then repeated dozens of times, requiring hundreds of litres of beer to be reduced through the process to produce just enough for a 330ml bottle.

BrewDog drew criticism from industry watchdog the Portman Group last year when it unveiled a 32% beer, Tactical Nuclear Penguin.

It has also faced claims that its 18.2 per cent Tokyo beer promoted excess.

In February, the firm launched *Sink The Bismarck!*, a 41 per cent volume ale.

The End Of History can be bought through the BrewDog website.

But animal campaigners and others hit out at BrewDog's latest offering.

Ross Minett, campaigns director for the charity Advocates for Animals, said: "Using shock tactics to get attention is terribly out of date, especially when this involves exploiting or degrading animals.

"The modern approach is to celebrate the wonders of animals and respect them as individual sentient creatures. I'm sure this would have much greater appeal with the animal-loving public.

"We will be getting in touch with BrewDog to advise them on what people today really think about animals and how a positive caring approach and appreciating live animals is the best way forward."

Barbara O'Donnell, director of services at Alcohol Focus Scotland, said: "This is another example of this company pushing the boundaries of acceptability, all in the pursuit of cheap marketing tactics."

However, Mr Watt argued that criticism of the beer's high strength was "totally misguided".

He said: "This artisan beer should be consumed in small servings whilst exuding an endearing pseudo vigilance and reverence for Mr Stoat.

"The real catalysts for a binge-drinking culture are not well-crafted beers but the monolithic corporate machines that have cultivated a culture of quantity rather than quality amongst UK beer drinkers."

He also responded to criticisms of the packaging of the product and stated: "I can think of no grander way to celebrate these animals than for them to be cherished by the lucky owners.

"The animals used to bottle *The End Of History* all died of natural causes - better to be celebrated and valued than left to rot.

Daily Telegraph News

Hitchin Champion – Brown Cow Captain Oates Mild

Just as the last issue of *Pints of View* went to print at the end of July a band of members travelled up to East Yorkshire where, just north of the village of Barlow, you'll find the Brown Cow Brewery. The occasion was the presentation of the Beer of the Festival award from the **2010 Hitchin Beer and Cider Festival**. Brown Cow's, Captain Oates Dark Mild (4.5% abv) was voted for by the festival goers winning by a clear margin.

Late morning saw our party greeted at Selby railway station by Brown Cow proprietors Sue and Keith Simpson, our exemplary hosts for the day. First port of call was the GBG listed **Wheatsheaf** at Burn where we sampled Simpson & Simpson **Celestial Light** - our first Brown Cow brew of the day - and good it was too!

After lunch we moved on to the brewery, which is situated in an outbuilding in the garden of Sue & Keith's home, and at one time was a country estate pub before being later closed by John Smith's Brewery in 1956. Here we learnt that 14 years ago a conversation with Chris Wraith, landlord of the **Chequers** at Ledsham (North of Castleford between Selby and Leeds), went along the lines of 'You brew it and we'll sell it'. A short while later the Brown Cow Brewery was born with Sue brewing on a 2½ barrel plant whilst Keith continued to work in the information technology industry. Today both Sue and Keith work the brewery business in what can only be describes as a 'lifestyle business' – they live in idyllic country house, work in their garden brew house and are easily able to sell all that they brew. There's neither desire to expand nor any need to go and ask the banks for expansion capital!

After presenting the award and copious sampling late afternoon saw Sue & Keith take our party over to Selby Cricket Club, where there just happened to be a beer festival for a very pleasant couple of hours sampling Brown Cow and other local brews. Could get used to this lifestyle!

Andy Rawnsley, Hitchin Beer Festival Organiser

Pictures from top right, then down:

1. Lunch stop - *Wheatsheaf* at Burn
2. Sue & Keith Simpson - Proud of their brewery
3. Andy Rawnsley (right) presenting Cert to Sue & Keith Simpson
4. Rounding the day off at Selby Cricket Club



Photos by John Law

A Warm Welcome awaits at
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where we offer a wide selection of well kept real ales that change on a regular basis, alongside draught lagers and ciders and a range of fine wines. We offer delicious homemade food prepared to order, including a Sunday Roast, a wide range of specials and a children's menu.

There is plenty of parking - for cars and cycles! and as well as the main pub we have a family room and large garden with children's play area - so there's somewhere for everyone.

We look forward to seeing you soon

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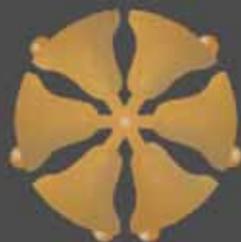
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Presentation at the Holly Bush, Potters Crouch

Those who weren't in the **Holly Bush**, Potters Crouch on the evening of 30 June 2010 missed a most enjoyable, entertaining and informative evening. The main event of the evening was to meet Fuller's head brewer, John Keeling.

Before his presentation, John made an award to Steve Williams (right), the new licensee and Ray's son-in-law, of his first certificate for the brewery's Master Cellerman. Simon Emeny, Managing Director, Fuller's Inns, then praised Ray and Karen



Taylor's efforts and hard work over the last 28½ years in the Holly Bush making it such a special pub. Simon then presented Karen with a bouquet of flowers and Ray (below) with a case of Fuller's Vintage Ale. They have actually been in the pub for 32½ years.



After all the photographs had been taken, John Keeling commenced his presentation with a brief history of Fuller, Smith & Turner brewery. Brewing has taken place on the Chiswick site for over 350 years. John Fuller came into the business in 1829 after being

approached for finance by Douglas and Henry Thompson and Philip Wood of the Griffin brewery until 1841 when the partnership was dissolved and Douglas Thompson fled to France with the company's money leaving John Fuller on his own. Fuller, having no brewing experience then approached brewer Henry Smith, of Ind Smith, Romford Brewery, to come into partnership with him. Smith agreed on condition that his brother-in-

law John Turner should also come in as a partner. John Fuller agreed and Turner became the first head brewer of the newly formed 'Fuller, Smith & Turner' in 1845. Octavius Edward Coope and George Coope joined Edward Ind at the Romford Brewery which became 'Ind Coope'. The two breweries had a trading agreement whereby Ind Coope didn't trade in west London and Fullers didn't trade in east London and the City.

John then went on to describe the brewing process and ingredients used. Samples of the beers were provided to those assembled as the different beers in Fuller's portfolio were described. *Chiswick* (3.5% ABV), *London Pride* (4.1% ABV) and *London Porter* (5.4% ABV) were the main beers available until *Golden Pride* (8.5% ABV) and *ESB* (5.55% ABV) were added in 1966 and 1971 respectively; to be joined by Gales beers on the takeover of their brewery in 2005.

After John's presentation, a generous buffet was provided in the pub.



Above – Ray and Karen Taylor

Your writer would like to thank Ray and Karen Taylor and Steve and Vanessa Williams of the Holly Bush for their kind hospitality also to Emma Watts, Technical Services Manager, and others on the brewery team for keeping us topped up with beer so efficiently during the evening.

John Crowhurst

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

Don't Miss the Fourth HEBFest

The fourth annual **HEBFest beer festival**, will be held at Sawbridgeworth Memorial Hall on Friday 29th and Saturday 30th October 2010.

This year there will be 35+ real ales, as well as ciders and perries. Last year the 'Beer of the Festival' was *Pretoria*, from All Gates Brewery in Wigan, with *Jarrow Red Ellen* as runner-up. Tony Davies, of Bishop's Stortford said of last year's festival, "Festival goes like the smaller festivals such as this where there is plenty of seating; they are able to talk to the volunteer staff, who are very knowledgeable, and relax. There are a high percentage of listed beers available, unlike many of the larger festivals, where it is coming later or gone!"



Last year there was a wide range of visitors from local towns and villages, London, Ipswich and even as far afield as Sweden; with the more distant drinkers staying in local hotels. A group of cyclists had come from Romford and were very happy to have made the effort to pedal all that way. We hope they will all come again! Sawbridgeworth is easily accessible by rail and bus, our foreign visitors use the 510 from Stansted Airport to Sawbridgeworth!

Several real ale aficionados commented on the cheerful atmosphere, the easy and well signed access, the large choice of beers and the good range of snacks. We hope you will come and join us at this year's festival; for more information please see our website, which will be updated with the beer list etc. nearer the time.

www.heb-camra.org.uk/hebfest

Chris Sears, Publicity Officer, Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA

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Good Beer Guide 2011 - We're In It!

Tony & Linda are CAMRA members

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The Second Bishop's Stortford Beer Festival

The festival, held in the beautiful house and walled garden of the Royal British Legion, on Windhill, started on Thursday evening 29th July this year finishing on Saturday 31st July. There was a much larger marquee than last year, able to house the 39 different beers from 18 breweries, 5 ciders, 2 perries, and a ginger beer plus a larger number of people! Well over 1,000 people attended, with visitors from Holland, Finland, Italy, Germany...Hampshire. Festival Organiser Graham Darby said, "The festival was a big success this year, we were thrilled with the number of visitors and the multi-national contingent, with our closeness to Stansted making day trips possible from Europe!"



Above: The lovely garden of the RBL Club, Bishop's Stortford Beer Festival

The extra evening, on the Thursday, was popular with groups of drinkers and the equivalent of 8 firkins were drunk. The Friday was a very busy day with 400 visitors, and Brendan Sothcott, our Chairman, had to twist the arms of some local brewers to get some extra beers at short notice! On the Saturday it was busy again. 16 String Jack, a local folk group, played and the beer eventually ran out towards the end of the evening. The group were very popular and it was a lovely way to end a tremendous beer festival.

Brendan said, "This was a very well attended festival, building on last year's, with a much bigger marquee and a better layout, making it much easier to serve the customers".

Chris Sears, Publicity Officer, Herts/ Essex Borders Branch of CAMRA



Above: The beer was running low on Saturday evening, but Doug was still serving

Luckily we had very little rain, so most of the time everyone was able to make good use of the chairs and tables, set out in the large garden. The festival was run jointly with the British Legion, who provided a general bar, cold food and an excellent barbecue, with the locally-sourced burgers and sausages being really delicious.

This year the beers ranged from local breweries, such as Saffron, Shalford and Green Tye, to a very wide range of British ales. These were from as far afield as Falkirk, Scotland to St. Day, Cornwall. West was best from Newtown, Powys, Wales and from the east, Essex beers came from Mayland and Coggeshall. The 'Beer of the Festival' was Buntingford's *Chinook*, with Crown *Stannington Stout* as runner up, so a local beer was the favourite!

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Celebrations all round at the 2010 St Albans Beer Festival

John Bryan, Production Manager of Oakham Brewery with colleagues shown holding the Beer of the Festival 2009 certificate for Oakham *Attila*



It may have been damp and dismal outside, but the atmosphere inside this year's **St Albans Beer Festival** was anything but, with 9,053 visitors setting new records for attendance and beer sold by enjoying 32,000 pints of British Real Ale, over forty Ciders and Perries, as well as over 100 different foreign beers. This was the 15th time that the biggest bar in Hertfordshire had opened its doors at the Alban Arena, in the heart of St Albans City Centre, and with an extra session tagged on to opening day, drinkers from near and far, wasted no time getting stuck into 350 real ales on offer.

Continues on page 18. The Letchworth Festival follows on pages 16 and 17.

The 2010 Letchworth Beer & Cider Festival

Many years ago, long long before I was a CAMRA member, let alone Branch Chair, I remember a friend and I arranging a lift to Plinston Hall (as it was then called – now “Plinston”) in Letchworth. He'd seen adverts that there was a beer festival on. Neither us had ever been to a CAMRA festival so we thought we'd give it a go. It was Friday night and we stood in the stationary queue for what seemed to us thirsty folk like an inordinately long time before word got to us: “They're not letting anyone else in!!! We've got to wait until people leave, as they've reached the capacity of the building.” Something about number of fire exits, in those days, if my memory serves.

I ask you – who on Earth is going to leave a beer festival early, on a Friday night, in Letchworth – infamous in those days for its few pubs. And, anyway, surely the beer would put out any fire...? So we abandoned the queue and went to the newly-opened **Tavern**. That tells locals how old this story is! We decided we'd try and get a couple of square feet in there before the rest of the queue did! On the Saturday, we returned in the evening.... to find that the beers started to sell out about 7pm.

Talking to long-established members of our committee, this was the only time in living memory that **Letchworth Beer Festival** actually did sell out significantly early . . . but, unfortunately, attendees have VERY long memories.

Hitchin, yes – that generally does sell out; so our last few write-ups have reflected that. Although even that one didn't sell out last year. Again, it's a long time since we closed unduly early.

It seems a shame, therefore, that almost everyone thinks, “don't attend on the last day – there's not much beer left.” It's not true – but it's a rumour that results in us having to throw beer away! For dedicated CAMRA people, that's like cutting your own throat! So next year, please make a special effort to attend on Saturday, so we don't waste any!!



In spite of this rumour, in 2010 we had a more successful Letchworth Beer Festival than most. We sold a lot of beer – more than the past few years, in fact. We also gained a large number of members, which is what it's really all about. And, of course, a very good time was had by all, as the pictures opposite show! If you came, we sincerely hope that you enjoyed yourself too.

The Lynn Kefford Memorial Bar (16/08/1949 – 03/12/2009)

As a very active Camra branch we always like to remember our colleagues that pass away, so it is with great regret that this year we have to name one of our bars at the Letchworth Beer Festival, the Lynn Kefford Bar.

Lynn was an active member of Camra and came on our minibus trips and helped out at our beer festivals. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her. Lynn suffered from several health problems but did not let that get in the way of a good time. She loved her real ale and at many a beer festival I had to restrain her from wanting to start off on the 5% beers, saying why not have a few weak ones first, but this restraint only lasted a couple of beers! According to the “Girls” she used to go on holiday with in Magaluf, Lynn was always the last one on the dance floor at 6am.

Lynn was born and grew up in the Stratford area of East London before moving to Stevenage where she lived for most of her life. She made friends easily and at her funeral there were many people from as far back as her school days that helped to give a lively send off for a much loved person. Her ashes were placed in her daughter's grave, who had died aged just 6 months. The vicar said that usually about 8 people attend these events, Lynn had 25 turn up more than had ever been seen before!

*Colin Yates, North Herts CAMRA Branch
Chairman*

See our festival pictures opposite

The venue filled up rapidly



The Lynn Kefford Memorial Bar



The Gask Ales Bar, manned by busy volunteers



A good selection of ciders



Some festival staff have a well-earned break



Stuart Willoughby



The Foreign Beer Bar



Malcolm Mills, our Membership Secretary, at the Products & Membership stand



The 2010 St Albans Beer & Cider Festival



The appropriately-named Right as Rain



The Runaway Boys



The Climax Blues Band

Continued from page 15...

Champion Beers: This year, there were two beer judging competitions. The first, to find the best beer in Hertfordshire, took place on Wednesday night following the official opening. The five Hertfordshire branches of CAMRA nominated two beers from each of the brewers within the county and then judged them in a blind tasting. The winners were: 1st - Buntingford *Royston Red*, 2nd - Red Squirrel *London Porter*, 3rd - Tring *Colley's Dog*.

The "Beer of the Festival" is traditionally judged from a short list, by local publicans and brewers over the Thursday lunchtime session. This year's winners were: 1st - Dark Star *American Pale Ale*. 2nd - Greene King *XX Mild*. 3rd - Fullers *ESB*, with Triple F *Alton Pride* being a very close runner up.

Entertainment: Music in its many forms has always featured prominently at St Albans and this year's guests on the Thursday night were local three-piece rockabilly trio, "The Runaway Boys". Meanwhile over the Saturday lunchtime, contemporary folk trio "Right as Rain", from Luton, perfectly matched the laid-back atmosphere of the festival. That just left "The Climax Blues Band" to rock the Saturday night audience, with a great set that saw many of the guests abandoning their pints and dancing along. This was one of only five appearances by the band in the UK this year and we felt it was very special that we were lucky enough to get the band that would fill 20,000 seater stadiums in America in the 70's to play at the festival for us.



The breweriana auction in full swing



The Stage Bar on Thursday night



The Main Bar on Thursday night



The table football was in constant use

The breweriana auctions held every evening are also worth a mention with a large variety of collectables being sold to the highest bidder all good fun and to aid local charities. In the Foyer was a display presented by the St Albans Museum, the Tombola run by the St Albans Leo's group, and the CAMRA products stand - which as well as selling festival Polo shirts alongside our regular stock and publications signed up 152 new CAMRA members.

Sponsors: The layout of the beer range was slightly altered this year, with Oakham Brewery sponsoring the upper foyer bar, and up to eight of their beers were available throughout most of the festival. "The Hertfordshire Bar" moved down a floor to share the stage bar with the Cider and Perry bar sponsored again this year by Millwhites Cider.

We also thank Fullers for sponsoring the Main Bar and Tring who sponsored the Stage Bar. Both brewers also provided the prize bottles of beer for the Charity Quiz held on Saturday afternoon. We had a large number of banners on display including McMullen, The **Woodman** Wildhill, Taylor Walton Solicitors amongst others.

We would also like to thank our Barrel sponsors and those who advertised in the programme including Caledonian, Greene King and Kashu who ran the Hog Roast for the second year.



Top, right and below: Some of our happy festival-goers



Left: One of our festival stewards takes a well-earned break



The pint festival glasses were sponsored by the **Good Beer Guide** pubs of St Albans and again this year we must thank Roger Protz the Editor of the Guide for attending book signings of the 2011 edition released in September. The half pint glasses were sponsored by Harviestoun brewers of Alva, Scotland.

Staff Thank You: It must be remembered that the festival relies on volunteers to do all the work in preparation, the duration, and as important the clear up afterwards. The only reason that the festival will not continue is if this help dries up. Those who give a small amount of their time are very important because it all adds up to making the event the success it is year on year. Please make every effort to volunteer for future events - it can also be good fun. On behalf of the committee can I thank all those who helped this year.

Enthusiastic Feed Back: Both regular visitors and first-time attendees were complimentary as they made their way home each evening. For three young visitors from Hitchin, it was their first experience of a beer festival. Lager drinkers, they had visited on the Thursday night and been surprised at the range of tastes and styles available. "We'll definitely be back Saturday night," one said. "This stuff is great" – Job done!

St Albans and Harpenden Beer Festivals continue raising Money for Local Charities

A selection of local charities, continue to benefit from both the St Albans and Harpenden beer festivals that are organised by the South Hertfordshire branch of (CAMRA).

At the festivals CAMRA is assisted by the St Albans Leos club, which is the youth wing of St Albans Lions club, and the beneficiaries received their donations at a presentation at CAMRA headquarters in July (just too late for the last *Pints of View* edition).

In return for the Leos' help in staffing the glasses stand and running the Tombola at the **St Albans Beer Festival 2009**, South Herts Chairman Phil Defriez presented Leos President Peter Buckledee



with a cheque for £1,400.

Since 1996, over £25,000 has been donated through the St Albans Leos by CAMRA South Herts branch to charitable causes.

South Herts branch donates 50% of the

Festival barrel sponsorship to charity. Pictured above, Doreen Beattie of Grove House Hospice receives a cheque for £200 from Phil Defriez, raised through barrel sponsorship at the Harpenden Beer Festival 2010.



Pictured above; St Albans Leos along with grateful recipients (from left to right): Guy Seavey of Youth Talk (£250), Lara Davis of Home Start (£250),

Peter Buckledee of St Albans Leos with his cheque for £1400, Teresa Gore of Earthworks (£500), Doreen Beattie of Grove House with her cheque for £200, Ami O'Neill of The Willow Foundation (£400) and St Albans Leos member Andrew Tuppen holding a cheque for Keech Cottage (£250). Leos members Laura Dunks, Felicity Bawden, Simon Gargrave kneel in the front row.

The Estcourt Arms: The Long Goodbye

It's rare these days to find a publican who has been running the same pub for more than a handful of years, so it was the end of an era on 1st June when Pat and Maureen Lynch stood down from the **Estcourt Arms** in Watford after more than 30 years in charge.



The pub had already had two Irish landlords when Pat moved in, and over the years the Lynches reinforced the Estcourt Arms' reputation as an authentic Irish pub, free of the phoniness seen in Irish theme bars. The consistent management, loyal clientele and unfussy decor helped the Estcourt Arms maintain its status as a community local in a world where chain pubs and sports bars were taking over. Eventually the pub became alternatively known as **Lynch's** in recognition of Pat's time in charge.

Perhaps untypically for an Irish pub Lynch's served up a decent pint of real ale, and appears in several editions of the **Good Beer Guide**. This together with the fact that the pub retains a separate public bar/snug made Lynch's important for Watford & District CAMRA as the usual venue for branch -

meetings. Pat and Maureen made the branch very welcome, and our AGMs would always end with chips, sausages and other hot food from Maureen's kitchen.

After a goodbye party on Friday 21st the Lynches' last week in charge became an extended send off, with plenty of customers in every night and free buffet food being laid on for the pub's important lunchtime clientele. CAMRA branch members were in almost every night, but by the last night all the real ale had run out so we had to make do with bottles of Guinness. That's when Maureen wasn't forcing us to drink from an ancient bottle of gin. Earlier in the week Pat had been down to the darkest recesses of his cellar and found some old cobweb-covered bottles of beer that he couldn't resist offering to branch Treasurer Bill Austin. It's amazing what can sit unnoticed in a pub's cellar for years.

Eventually we bid an emotional farewell at about 2 AM. I don't think Pat was too concerned about the opening hours on his licence by that time. One of our branch members popped in for a breakfast pint the next morning, and then that was it. The branch thanks the Lynch family and all their staff for their years at the Estcourt Arms and all the help they've given to the branch, and wishes Pat and Maureen all the best for their retirement in Ireland.

The story of the Estcourt Arms goes on, though. New landlord Saimir Gjini moved in on 2nd June, and we wish him all the best running this historic Watford pub. If you'd like to know more about the history of the Estcourt Arms, look at page 29 of Pints of View #231. A pdf version can be downloaded from the following web page:

www.hertsale.org.uk/newsletter/pov231.pdf

Andrew Vaughan

Below: Watford & District CAMRA's Bill Austin helps with removals as Estcourt Arms landlord Pat Lynch looks on.



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	E	F		A		B	
N	D					E	I
F			D				A
		F	D		L	A	
							F
		R	N		I	E	
A				E			B
D	F						A
	I		R		F		D

Winners of Festival Prize Crossword in Pints of View edition 242:

Christian Carden-Maund, Edelsborough, Bucks
Peter Ransome, Hatfield, Herts
Matt Palmer, Lamerton, Devon

Our thanks go to all who entered
SOLUTION BELOW:

T	I	T	F	O	R	T	A	T		L	I	P	R	E	A	D
E	A	N		O	R	E		I	X	E						
A	L	I	C	E	I	N	W	O	N	D	E	R	L	A	N	D
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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 **BARNFIELD** bitter brewed by Shalford.

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CAMRA National Pub Design Awards opens for 2010

CAMRA has re-opened its prestigious Pub Design Awards competition for 2010 to commend pioneering design work within the pub industry. The work must have been completed during the year 2009 to be eligible for the 2010 award.

The Pub Design Awards are held in association with English Heritage and the Victorian Society.

The aim of CAMRA's Pub Design Awards scheme is to encourage high standards of architectural design in the refurbishment and conservation of existing public houses and in the construction of the new. With particular relevance to the present day, the aim of the Pub Design Awards is to stimulate interest in the many diverse factors that contribute to the unique character of the British pub.

The 2010 Awards will be judged by the regular panel of architects, authors, historians and heritage experts. The Awards welcome entrants from anywhere in the British Isles, with the competition consisting of the following four categories:

1) New Build Pub

This category is for entirely new built pubs. The judges look for a number of details when judging

the worth of any new establishment. The pub might reflect pubs of the past but without becoming a mere pastiche of Edwardian, Victorian or even Georgian artefacts. Or it could be completely modern, using materials of the 20th or 21st Century.

2) Conversion to Pub Use

This is where an existing building is converted to pub use. Pubs are judged on the taste and restraint used on both the outside and inside of the pub.

3) Refurbished pub

Refurbishment can range from a complete gutting to replace what was crass and in bad taste with something far better to an enhancement of what was originally there. Refurbishment should suit the individual pub and not be an excuse to use uniform furnishings to brand the pub with brewery or pub Company's image.

4) CAMRA / English Heritage Conservation award

This award, sponsored by English Heritage, is usually given for work on a pub which conserves what is good in the pub, makes good some of the crass refurbishment efforts of the past and ensures that the fabric of the place will survive for further generations of pub goers and drinkers to enjoy.

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Three Threads or the Great Meux Explosion

In the Eighteenth Century the favourite tippie was 'three threads', a mixture of un-hopped sweet ale, a lighter hopped beer and 'tuppenny', a strong beer costing two old pence a quart. Three threads (a.k.a. 'entire butt') was a pain for bar staff, as they had to go to three barrels to serve each pint. In 1722 Ralph Harwood of the Bell Brewery in Shoreditch replicated the strength and taste of the mix in one cask. This became accepted and was copied by the other big brewers in the capital. Its success spread, especially among the market porters, and it was soon named after them 'porter'. Porter was a robust, substantial, dark brown beer with a creamy head. It was very heavily hopped, which meant it could be kept all year and the imbibers didn't have to put up with substandard rubbish between the optimal brewing times of October and March. Due to its increased stability, the landlords loved it. It was very strong, with an ABV of about 7%, much stronger than today's premium beers.

There were various kinds of porter and the blackest

and strongest were known as 'extra stout porters'. This name soon contracted to simply 'stout'. An Irish brewer heard about the drink's popularity and he came to London to get the recipe. He took the recipe home to his Dublin brewery and started to make it. His name was Arthur Guinness.

Porter was a great improvement on previous drinks. Its darker, drier taste was achieved by deeply roasting the malt and mashing the mixture at a much higher temperature than used previously. To be commercially viable, much larger vessels were made and only the largest London brewers had the assets to afford them. In 1760, Samuel Whitbread's Chiswell Street Brewery built a Porter Tun room which was second in size only to Westminster Hall, and held a massive beer vat. Other big brewers then started to compete. Henry Thrale's porter vat upon completion could hold a hundred people sitting down to dine. The Meux brewery was not to be outdone and built one sixty feet wide by twenty-three feet high, and had two hundred people dining inside. *Cont/d*

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They then topped the competition by building a second that was only slightly smaller. Alas, in 1814 the Meux's Horse Shoe Brewery tragedy occurred. The wooden brewery



vat, which stood at the junction of Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road, holding over a million pints of porter, developed a crack in one of its massive iron hoops. A workman noticed it, but he thought it wouldn't be a problem as each hoop weighed about a quarter of a ton and there were twenty-nine of them. A few hours later there was an explosion so loud that it was heard five miles away. The vat had burst and the force exploded the second vat. The one-foot thick, twenty-five foot high brewery walls had no chance, and the surrounding streets were awash with beer (323,000 imperial gallons, or 1,470,000 litres).

Many people drowned in the initial wave, and others were crushed in the stampede to drink from the gutters, which in turn hampered rescuers trying to save those trapped in the rubble. The dead bodies were taken to a house to be identified by their grieving relatives. Unfortunately they were accompanied by sightseers who were paying the house-owner to view the cadavers.

There were so many people there that the floor collapsed under their weight, and this killed many more.

The survivors in hospital reeked of beer, and this caused other patients to riot because they thought that they were not being given alcohol while the newcomers were.

Peter Hull - taken from the Firkin CAMRA North Beds Newsletter

- The brewery was eventually taken to court over the accident, but the disaster was ruled to be an Act of God by the judge and jury, leaving no one responsible. The company found it difficult to cope with the financial implications of the disaster, with a significant loss of sales made worse because they had already paid duty on the beer. They made a successful application to Parliament reclaiming the duty which allowed them to continue trading.

CAMRA National Club of the Year 2010

Many Real ale fans are also railway enthusiasts, so it is fitting that a historic hidden gem in a converted railway station has been crowned as CAMRA's best Club in Britain.

Rushden Historical Transport Society Social Club has taken the title outright in 2010 after the panel of judges were impressed by the Club's outstanding commitment to real ale. The club is a regular in CAMRA's **Good Beer Guide**, with a choice of 7 real ales on at all times. Back in 1986, the society transformed a disused Ladies Waiting Room into a Victorian themed real ale bar. Having obtained charitable status only two years earlier, the club was opened to raise funds for the renovation of the old Midland Railway station of 1894, in which it was housed. The Club soon built up a reputation for the quality and choice of its beer range and remains a haven for real ale drinkers across the UK.

Rushden Historical Transport Society, Station Approach, Rushden, Northamptonshire.NN10 0AW. (01933 318988; www.rhts.co.uk)

Pub Names - the Barley Mow

Following edition 241's article on the story behind the Barley Mow, Tyttenhanger I thought it would be useful to explain where the name came from. The reason pubs are called the Barley Mow is there was a Barley Mow barrel size which contained 36 imperial gallons, this has since been renamed simply a barrel. At one time the local peasants had to work unpaid for their landlord at certain times of the year, normally to get in the harvest. This was known as "Boon Work" whilst working for the master you would expect to be provided with food and drink and the quality and amount of such fare was dependent on the land owner's benevolence. Dry boon work was most unpopular and the Barley Mow barrel 36 gallons was the amount of beer that was expected to be drunk in a day by the workers cutting a field of barley by hand. In the days before painted signs a Barley Mow barrel would be hung outside certain pubs and thus the name stuck. As far as the Barley Mow Tyttenhanger goes all we are left with is the picture on the exterior wall and fond memories.

Steve Bury

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

Barley: The **Fox and Hounds** is under offer.

Baldock: The **Victoria**, having improved its beers significantly, has been selected for inclusion in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2011 – well done!

Boxmoor: The **Fishery** has had a makeover and is no longer a Mitchells and Butlers' Ember Inn, but now a Mitchells and Butlers' 'Village Pub and Restaurant'. See also Kings Langley

Buntingford: In the Buntingford & Royston Mercury, the following report can be found regarding the **Jolly Sailors** (published in August) "The Jolly Sailors, Station Road, was closed after pub chain Punch Taverns failed to find a designated premise supervisor (DPS). Last year complaints from neighbours about violence, drug dealing and underage drinking at the pub led to members of East Herts Council's licensing committee stripping the DPS of his role. A new DPS was appointed but months later was removed after police struggled to contact her. The pub has since remained closed.

In early September, a Punch Taverns spokeswoman said: "We had previously made efforts to recruit a new licensee to run the Jolly Sailors but unfortunately this was to no avail".

Cheshunt: Look out for a rotation of beers on the handpump at the **Green Dragon**. Recent beers have included Woodforde's *Wherry* and Shepherd Neame *Spitfire*.

Colney Heath: The sitting tenants of the **Queens Head** have bought the freehold and can now get away from the stifling tie to Enterprise Inns. Now being able to buy beers at market prices means they should be able to get those handpumps working again.

Datchworth: The **Plough (a Greene King pub)** is now run by the people from the **Plume of Feathers**, Little Wymondley.

Flamstead End: The **Plough** is due for refurbishment. Both the **Plough** and the **Bricklayers** currently offer McMullen's *AK* on handpump.

Harpenden: The **Rose and Crown** Southdown is now closed and up for sale at £600,000. The **Cross Keys** has been LocAle accredited, serving Herts Tring Brewery's *Jack O'Legs* as a regular beer.

Hertford: Outside garden improvements continue at the **Saracens** with new grassed and covered

areas. Adnams *Bitter*, Wychwood *Hobgoblin*, Wells *Bombardier* and Greene King *IPA* rotate at the bar. The **Harts Horns** is under new management.

Hertford Heath: The **College Arms** has re-opened with handpumps for Wadworth's *6X* and Deuchars *IPA*.

Hitchin: The **Anchor** has a new landlord, Steve Davison; the pub has been redecorated and the real ale on offer is GK *IPA* and 1 guest (currently, *Old Speckled Hen*).

Kinsbourne Green: the **Green** (formerly **Peppercorn** and previously the **Harrow**) is currently closed and the builders are in.

Kings Langley: The ancient (circa 1824) **Rose and Crown** re-opened on the 10 September as a 'Village Pub and Kitchen' a rebranding of a Mitchells and Butlers' Ember Inn. See also Boxmoor. There were three beers on the six handpumps which have some of the longest swan necks ever seen. Greene King *IPA*, *Old Speckled Hen* and Shepherd Neame *Spitfire* were on offer on preview night. Customers are invited to suggest ales that they would like to see on the bars.

Letchworth: The **Globe** has closed again, having only recently re-opened under the name of "Baby Brown's" by the owners of Mother Brown's in Hitchin, as we reported in PoV241. Currently, the pub, with 3-bedroom accommodation, is up for sale for "£45,000 plus ground-rent of £35,000 p.a. on an 87-year lease plus a peppercorn rent" on the website www.christie.com. The **Three Magnets** has a new licensee. We welcome Kim Stamp, formerly at the **Hart and Spool**, Borehamwood – another Wetherspoon's pub. Ruth Smith continues her excellent job as the Magnets' cellar manager. As a result of this continuity, as well as Kim's previous experience, the Branch wholeheartedly supports the pub's success in being included in the CAMRA **Good Beer Guide** for a second time – well done!

Lilley: The **Lilley Arms** has installed a third handpump, for guest beers.

Ridge: We welcome Kevin and Caris Jones to the **Old Guinea** who took over in early August. Beers on sale are Greene King *IPA* and Wells *Bombardier*. They have re-introduced a range of hot and cold food.

DOWN YOUR WAY

Sandridge: The **Rose and Crown** has re-opened following redecoration work. The pub has been tastefully modernised, blending in well with the pub's traditional features, whilst adding more seating/dining areas. The beer range is currently Fuller's *London Pride*, plus guests *Tring Side Pocket for a Toad*, and a *Banks & Taylor*. There are plans for up to 3 guest beers. Locally-sourced food is also available lunchtimes and evenings.

St Albans: The lease for the **Spotted Bull** is on the market. The **White Swan** was closed for refurbishment for 2 weeks in August. It has re-opened with a new name *Oscar's*. The pub is now being managed by a former staff member from the **Goat**. The pub continues to serve real ale although it is expected that there will be more emphasis on food. The pub has not changed much but sadly the bar billiards table has been removed. Apparently *Jamie Oliver* wants to reopen the **Bell** as a restaurant even though all the indications were that it would remain a pub reduced in size. The **Verulam Arms** has closed, possibly forever, it is thought planning permission will be sought to change it to residential.

Stevenage: The **Pear Tree** has recently changed hands. **Our Mutual Friend** is now back fully in the capable hands of *Andy Rawnsley* (North Herts CAMRA's *Letchworth* and *Hitchin Beer Festival* Organiser) and his business partners *Mick Saunders & Martin Ford*. The **White Horse**, High St has been sold freehold. The **Woodmans Arms** is up for sale for £285,000 on a "Free House" contract – Jan 09 to Jan10; 2 months notice either way. The licensee wishes to leave before winter, due to trade issues. The Best Western **Roebuck Inn** has become the *Roebuck Nursing Home*.

Ware: The **Old Bulls Head** is under new management.

Watford: Welcome to *Saimir Gjini*, who took over the reins at the **Estcourt Arms**, St Johns Road, WD17 1PT on 2nd June. The **Verulam Arms**, St Albans Road, WD24 5BJ has been converted into a restaurant.

Welham Green: The **North Mymms Mens Club** in Station Road, (opposite **Sibthorpe Arms**) is open to card carrying CAMRA members and has three handpumps. Recently they have been selling *Tring Mansion Mild*, *Wadworth Horizon* and *Greene King IPA*, though the range does change. Phone 01707 263275 open Mon-Fri 12-2; 7.30-11 Sat 12-12 Sun 12-11.

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BRANCH DIARY

HERTS & ESSEX BORDERS

Mon 1 Oct: Branch Meeting - **Crown**, Much Hadham.

Fri 29-Sat 30 Oct: HEBFest Beer Festival, Sawbridgeworth Memorial Hall. See page 13.

Mon 8 Nov: Branch Meeting - **Crown**, Sheering

Friday 10 Dec: Christmas Meal, venue tba.

Mon 13 Dec: Branch Meeting - **Forest Gate**, Epping.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE

Wed 6 Oct: Beer Ramble - Royston: **Green Man**, **Banyers Hotel**, **Chequers**, **Old Bull Inn** and **North Star**. Meet at Royston Railway station at 20:00.

Sat 16 Oct: Minibus Ramble: South West of Stevenage: **Bull Whitwell**, **Maidens Head Whitwell**, **Globe Codicote**, **Bell Codicote**, **Goat Codicote**. (See BOOKING NOTES below).

Mon 18 Oct: Branch Meeting - **Highlander** Hitchin.

Wed 20 Oct: Beer Ramble - Willian: **Fox** and **Three Horseshoes**. Meet in **Fox** 20:00.

Wed 3 Nov: Beer Ramble - Old Knebworth **Lytton Arms**. Meet at Knebworth Railway station 20:00 for shared Taxi.

Wed 17 Nov: Beer Ramble - Woolmer Green: **Red Lion**, **Fox**, **Chequers**. Meet **Red Lion** 20:30 or Knebworth Railway station 20:00 for shared Taxi.

Sat 20 Nov: Minibus Ramble - South West of Hitchin: **Windmill Charlton**, **Plough** Ley Green, **Red Lion** Breachwood Green, **Strathmore Arms** St. Paul's Walden. (see BOOKING NOTES below).

Mon 22 Nov: Committee Meeting: **Lordship Arms**, Benington.

Wed 1 Dec: Beer Ramble - Hitchin: **Highlander**, **Sir John Barleycorn**, **Coopers Arms** and **Bricklayers Arms**. Meet at **Highlander** 20:00.

Wed 15 Dec: Beer Ramble - Baldock: **White Hart**, **Cock**, **Victoria** and **Engine**. Meet at **White Hart** 20:00.

Fri 17 Dec: Pre-Xmas Beer Ramble – Hitchin: **Nightingale**, **Victoria**, **Sunrunner** and **Half Moon**. Meet in **Nightingale** 20:00.

Sat 18 Dec: Minibus Ramble – Graveley and Little Wymondley: **Highwayman**, **George & Dragon** and **Waggon & Horses** Graveley, **Plume of Feathers** and **Bucks Head** Little Wymondley. (see BOOKING NOTES below).

Mon 20 Dec: Branch Meeting: **Venue To Be Advised: Contact Branch** – details on page 30.

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 xxx.

SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE

Sat 9 Oct: 1st North West zone country pubs trip. Minibus seat booking via Socials Contact.

Tue 12 Oct: Branch Meeting - **Red Lion**, Radlett 8pm.

Thu 21 Oct: Herts Liaison Meeting - **Wenlock Arms** London N.

Sat 23 Oct: 2nd North West zone country pubs trip. Minibus seat booking via Socials Contact.

Friday 29 Oct: Sawbridgeworth Beer Festival Trip by minibus. Details from Social Secretary

Tue 16 Nov: Branch Meeting - **White Horse**, Hertford 8pm.

Thu 25 Nov: New CAMRA Members Night - **Goat**, Sopwell Lane, St Albans 7pm onwards.

WATFORD & DISTRICT CAMRA

Thu 14 Oct: Quiz Night - **Southern Cross**, 41-43 Langley Road, Watford, WD17 4PP, 9pm.

Sat 23 Oct: Branch Social - **Rose and Crown**, Woodcock Hill, Harefield Road, Rickmansworth, WD3 1PP, 12pm.

Mon 25 Oct: Branch Meeting - **Estcourt Arms**, St Johns Road, Watford, WD17 1PT, 8pm.

Thu 4 Nov: Branch Social - **Druids**, 205 High Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1BB, 8.30pm; **Fox & Hounds**, 183 High Street, WD3 1AY, 9.15pm; **Pennsylvanian**, 115-117 High Street, WD3 1AN, 10pm.

Thu 11 Nov: Beer Festival promotion crawls – meet at the **Estcourt Arms**, St Johns Road, Watford, WD17 1PT, 8pm

Thu 18 to Sat 20 Nov: Watford Beer Festival, **West Herts Sports Club**, Park Avenue, Watford, WD18 7HP.

Wed 24 Nov: Post Beer Festival Meeting, **West Herts Sports Club**, 8.30pm

Mon 29 Nov: Branch Meeting, **West Herts Sports Club**, 8pm.

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Watford & District CAMRA

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Late Extra...

Deep-fried Beer Invented in Texas

A chef in Texas has created what he claims is the world's first recipe for deep-fried beer. Inventor Mark Zable said it had taken him three years to come up with the cooking method and a patent for the process is pending. He declined to say whether any special ingredients were involved.

His deep-fried beer will be officially unveiled in a fried food competition at the Texas state fair later this month.



Ravioli like pieces of pretzel dough...



... are deep fried for about 20 seconds...



... to create the finished product - but you must be over 21 to eat it.

Herts Readers Write

Wells publicans with corkage deals could be better off

Re your comments in *Pints of View* 242, I think your calculations are wrong. You say that the "corkage" will cost 20p per pint. What you didn't take into account is the difference in price between what a brewery charges a tenant and what a micro brewer charges. For example, a tenant will be charged around £90 (ex VAT) for 9 gals of bitter. The equivalent from a micro will be around £70. So, Charles Wells will charge £16.25 corkage for a 9 gal, making the total cost £86.25. This means a saving of £3.75 on a 9 gals or 5p a pint.

Tony Dawes

Ed Says: If what Tony says is true I have made a gaffe and I am very surprised not to have heard from Wells or a Wells licensee. I did not know that publicans were getting deliveries direct from micros, and if what Tony says is correct, a beer like Dark Star *Hop Head* should be retailing at 5 pence per pint less than Wells *Eagle IPA*. No wonder they want to keep tabs on how much beer the participating pubs are selling.

Five ravioli-like pieces will sell for \$5 (£3) and the Texas Alcoholic Commission has already ruled that people must be aged over 21 to try it.

Mr Zable has so far been deep frying Guinness but said he may switch to a pale ale in future.

He said: "Nobody has been able to fry a liquid before. It tastes like you took a bite of hot pretzel dough and then took a drink of beer." Mr Zable previously invented dishes including chocolate-covered strawberry waffle balls and jalapeño corn dog shrimps.

Last year's winner of the Texas state fair fried food competition was a recipe for deep-fried butter.

Nick Allen, Daily Telegraph, 31 August 2010

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

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