

# FREE



# THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE SOUTH HERTS. NEWSLETTER

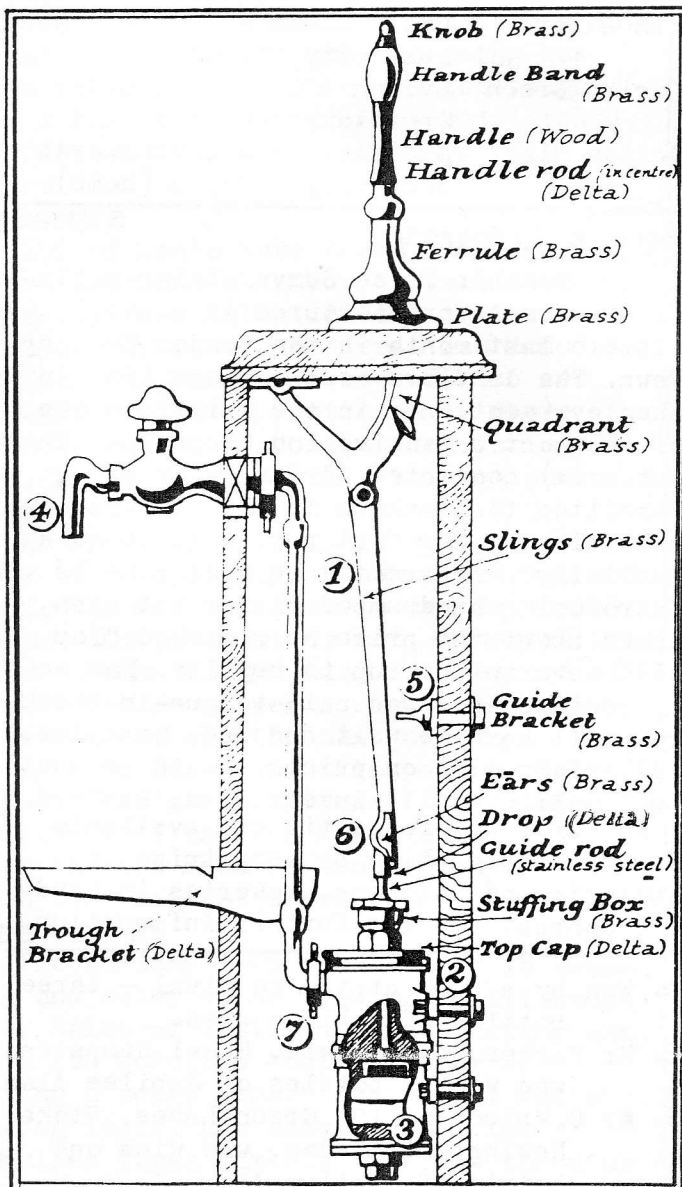
JULY 1977

NUMBER 13

## HERTFORDSHIRE BEER GUIDE

The 1977-78 'Real Draught Beer in Hertfordshire' guide to real ale pubs in Hertfordshire is now on sale price 30 pence. The 36-page guide includes comments on over 300 pubs, lists the brews available in each and the general facilities available. A history of brewing in Hertfordshire (with special articles on McMullen's and Rayment's) is present with a list of the now defunct breweries of the county

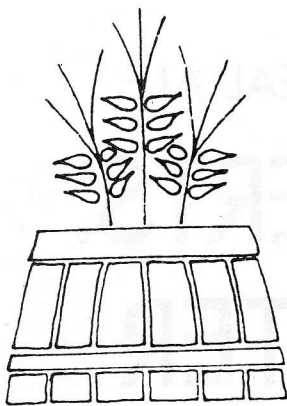
and how they met their end. Information on the brews now available and a centre spread map, locating towns and villages where real ale is available help to make up a guide which is a must for beer drinkers in and around the county. It will be on sale in many Hertfordshire pubs in the coming weeks but for those desperate for a copy they will be on sale at branch meetings and events (see back page) or are available from Dave Burns, 44 Torrington Drive, Potters Bar or Russell Patten, 60 Hillside Crescent, Cheshunt. (please send a large stamped addressed envelope plus 30 pence - cheques/postal orders to be made out to CAMRA Hertfordshire South branch). Pictured opposite is the cover of the guide - a return to the popular design of the 1975 edition.



Handpump specification by courtesy of Gaskell and Chambers Limited

## Trumans Out

CAMRA's National Executive have given the controversial air pressure system the big 'E'. The controversy came to a head with the launching of Truman's Tap Bitter, which as a result of the veto, does not fall within CAMRA's definition of real ale. Distillers Company have developed the new form of beer engine, with traditional handpump, but instead of drawing the beer from the cellar it pushes it by forcing air into the converted keg. There are already 300 Charrington pubs in the London area which are excluded because they use air pressure. As a result of the decision, all of the Scottish branches have disaffiliated from the Campaign - in Scotland the system is widely regarded as the traditional method of dispense.



# Beer Festival 500-Up

For those who missed the memorable event, the Hertfordshire Beer Festival took place at Hatfield Polytechnic over the weekend 1 - 3 July. We tried to make the event appealing to not just the hardened beer drinkers by hav-

The branch has notched up its 500th 1977 Good Beer Guide sale which has merited a special letter from CAMRA Chairman, Chris Bruton. In his letter to the branch he says "this is more than twice as many as any other branch in the country and I would like to congratulate the Committee and all branch members who have contributed to this magnificent effort."

ing live musical entertainment and pub games. This made the festival a great success even if some were distracted for a while from the main purpose of the event.

## Beer and Cider

Between 7 and 8 thousand pints of beer were drunk over the weekend, as well as 30 gallons of real cider. I hope that from the thousands of people that attended, we have gained some support for the cause of Real Ale (and Cider for that matter).

Unfortunately there were one or two people present who thought they would get their kicks out of breaking windows. This will mean that we will be less able to finance other CAMRA events in the future because our profits were reduced considerably as a result of this vandalism. Despite this incident we have every intention of running a similar event next year and hope that we can have your support.

## Credits

I would like to convey my thanks, on behalf of the organising committee to all those who helped staff the festival and especially to Nic Wincott of the Hatfield Polytechnic Student's Union and John Blackwell of the Barley Mow who arranged for the license and gave up much of his time - even on his 25th wedding anniversary! Congratulations to John and Betty. Thanks also to the many groups etc. who entertained: The Steamboat Stompers, The Tippen Family, Steve & Jerry, The Knock Knead Knacker Band, Roy Adams and English Miscellany - the clog and Morris dancers.  
by ADRIAN GREEN.

## Winners

Finally, the winners of the raffle held during the festival are as follows:

1. Mr Wyndham of Hatfield Road, St. Albans, who won 9 gallons of beer
2. Chas. Boden of Baker's End, Wareside who won 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> gallons of beer.
3. Ian Blay of Langford Road, Cockfosters who won a hardback copy of the Good Beer Guide.

continued opposite...

## Committee

With the resignation of Tony Burns from the branch Committee, we are left with a space to fill - anyone who feels they could spend a little time each month to help the branch and the Campaign, please contact branch Chairman Bob Morrish, Tel. St. Albans 59507 (home). The rest of the present Committee reads:

|                |                        |                               |
|----------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Dave Burns     | Secretary              | Potters Bar<br>51492. (home)  |
| Russell Patten | Treasurer              | Waltham Cross<br>49707 (home) |
| Jim Axford     | Press and<br>Publicity | 117 Queens Road<br>Watford.   |
| Adrian Green   | Events<br>Organiser    | 01 882 6406<br>(home)         |
| Marion Birch   | Social<br>Secretary    | Rickmansworth<br>73913 (home) |

## PRICE SURVEY

The branch's Price Survey being collected by Jim Axford featured in a small article last month in the London Evening News. The landlord of the Black Lion in Shenley (mentioned in the survey as one of the most expensive Ind Coope pubs in our area) contacted Adrian Green of the Committee to thank us for the adverse publicity saying "All publicity is good publicity". Apparently he will soon be introducing handpumped Bitter but when asked about the price he remarked "You will have to save up to buy it". Now we appreciate this was said tongue-in-cheek, so we'll have to wait and see. Meantime, all information on prices should be sent to Jim Axford, 117 Queens Road, Watford.

We still have some tickets available for the approaching brewery trips to Fuller's and Guinness breweries in London. Contact Jim for further information.

4. Won by a lady at the festival - three bottles of Jubilee Ales.
5. Mr Parker of Melstead, Hemel Hempstead who wins 2 bottles of Jubilee Ales
6. Mr C. Watson of 157 Green Lanes, Stoke Newington, London, who wins one bottle of Jubilee Ale.

# Mac's are fighting fit

For those who are not members yet (membership form on back page) I thought it might be interesting reading to reproduce excerpts from a recent article in "What's Brewing", the Campaign's monthly newspaper - on Mac's, after a meeting between "What's Brewing" editor Roger Protz and Ian McMullen, production director for the company.

In the company's 150th year Mr McMullen points to two major reasons for the survival and success of the firm (profits were £1.2 million last year). Firstly the expansion of the county and secondly the family's control of the shares (75% owned directly by McMullens, the rest by a company pension scheme). After looking hard at putting shares on the open market, McMullen's have decided to hold on to the shares and they are confident of fighting on against the big firms.

Mr McMullen says "If we are forced to sell shares they go on to the market and 'other brethren' take an interest and one day come knocking on the door with a substantial holding.". But the going has been tough and is likely to get tougher for a family concern hedged and ditched by Capital Transfer Tax and Capital Gains Tax.

## Pressure

75% of Mac's pubs serve only pressurised beer and a number of pubs have recently been 'plasticated' to the great distress of some customers. Ian McMullen is firm on pressure "We prefer to see blanket pressure, particularly where turnover is slow. Consistency is important. I don't accept that blanket pressure changes the palate of the beer."

Mr McMullen said there was a move back to handpumps in managed houses, but while tenants are free to decide whether to use CO2 pressure or not, managers are told to use a light blanket pressure of gas of one pound per square inch - although not all the managers are thought to carry out this policy. Gassed or not, Mac's 'traditional' beers are selling well and Ian McMullen expects them to sell more in proportion to lager than the national average.

## Beer sales

The company's Country Bitter is booming and sales of AK Mild are still buoyant. Sales of Castle Keg are falling and, said Ian McMullen "bottled beer is having a rough time." Steingold, Mac's strong lager, has about 10% of the McMullen lager market, the rest taken up by Harp, which is kegged in Hertford.

Mr McMullen supported the pub modernisation scheme, "We had to bring some of our houses up to date. We have invested £2.8 million on our trading properties and we have to expand our business" but he is firmly committed to maintaining village pubs, "They are the centre of the community and are essential to the village. We have a duty to maintain them."

## Reasonable prices

With bitter at around 26p per pint and mild at 24 pence Ian McMullen is convinced that their prices are sharply competitive because they haven't followed the vast investment programmes of the brewing giants, specially on lager equipment, which he believes is reflected in the price of their beer.

## In the brewery

Head brewer Weston Edwards has been with Mac's for 22½ years with 17 in his present position. He is short of capacity at present, producing 112,320 pints of beer a day, and would like to produce more. He uses 79% barley malt for beer, with 5 - 6% unmalted cereals and the rest made up of sugars. He thinks the distinctive flavour of Country Bitter owes something to the high quality of flocculent yeast used and the high hop rate. He uses whole hops with a small percentage of hop pellets: he won't touch hop extracts.

The brewhouse is a traditional "start at the top, finish at the bottom design." Mr Edwards likes it that way: "If there were only push button breweries, I'd rather work in a bank."

He has two mash tuns, three wooden fermenters lined with copper and two post-war copper fermenters. He is keenly awaiting a new fermenter to allow him to produce more. Mac's are just as keen to go on brewing beer and to stave off the big keg corporations.

As Ian McMullen puts it "It is essential that small brewers continue to exist. We offer a variety of choice and we are closer to what the public wants."

Thanks to "What's Brewing" editor Roger Protz for allowing us to print parts of the original article.

Another first for the West Herts Sports and Social Club in Watford who now sell real draught cider from the wood - Bulmer's Dry Cider at 28 pence per pint.

In Potters Bar, the Green Man, in High St. will shortly have Ind Coope handpumped Bitter alongside the Burton Ale. The Robin Hood, along the road will soon become a managed house selling Bitter and Burton.

# Changes

Elstree The Waggon and Horses has introduced Ind Coope Burton Ale and Bitter.  
Hawridge The Rose and Crown now sells Ind Coope Burton Ale and Bitter.  
Hemel Hempstead The White Lion in Queensway is selling Ind Coope Burton Ale and Bitter.  
Hertford The Blackbirds now sells Ind Coope Burton Ale.  
Little Gaddesden The Bridgewater is now selling Greene King Abbot Ale and IPA on handpumps, with a Greene King Mild to follow along with Fuller's and Truman's.  
Wadesmill The Feathers now has Bass and Courage Directors on handpumps with Watncy's Fined Bitter on electric pump. Regular readers will know that until now fake handpumps, which activated pressure pumps, were used for dispense.  
Welham Green After renovation and some minor alterations, the Hope and Anchor has re-opened. All 3 Ind Coope cask conditioned beers are available on handpump. The old Benskin colours have been used in decorating the exterior of the pub - a pleasant change from the yellow and white of most Ind Coope pubs.

# DIARY of EVENTS

## HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

- July 19 July Branch Meeting  
 The Cricketers, Redbourn  
 (Ind Coope) 8.00pm.
- July 21 Brewery Trip to Young's. Tickets now sold out.
- Aug 2 Folk and Beer Evening  
 The Crown, Hatfield Road,  
 St. Albans. 7.30pm. (free house:  
 Bass, Sam Smith's, Greene King,  
 Charles Wells, Ruddle's)
- Aug 23 August Branch Meeting  
 The Garibaldi, Albert Street,  
 St. Albans (Ind Coope) 8.00pm.

## Hertfordshire North Branch

- July 23/24 The branch is running a beer tent at the Mechanical Restoration Society's Steam Rally being held at Colliers End on the A10. Contact Pete Lerner for further details: Tel: Watton-at-Stone 616.

## Herts/Essex Branch

- July 25 July Branch Meeting  
 The Crown, Old Nazeing Road,  
 Broxbourne (Charrington) 8.00pm.
- July 30 Day coach trip to Henley-on-Thames (home of Brakspear's). Contact Rob Candlish: Tel: Waltham Cross 32045 (home) or Potters Bar 44351 ext.29 (work).
- Aug 15 Informal Meeting at The Willow Beauty, Holdings Road, Harlow. (Rayment's) 8.00pm
- Aug 22 E.G.M. to accept constitution  
 The Cock, Hatfield Broad Oak.  
 (Ind Coope) 8.00pm.
- Aug 30 Brewery visit to Greene King of Biggleswade. Contact Rob Candlish (see above).



## MEMBERSHIP

CAMRA is an independent organisation fighting to improve the quality of beer and pubs throughout the country. Why not join and help us improve the lot of the drinking person?

For your £4.00 subscription you will receive a copy of the monthly 'What's Brewing', CAMRA's newspaper on what is going on in the world of beer.

### SOUTH HERTS NEWSLETTER

I wish to become a member of CAMRA Ltd.  
 I agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign.  
 I enclose £4.00 as my annual membership subscription (Any additional amount will be welcomed as a donation).

Name . . . . .  
 Address . . . . .  
 . . . . .  
 Telephone Number . . . . .  
 Signature . . . . . Date . . . . .

Please send to: The Membership Secretary,  
 The Campaign for Real Ale, 34 Alma Road,  
 St. Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3BW.

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This Newsletter is produced monthly by the Hertfordshire South branch of the Campaign for Real Ale. All contributions should be sent to the Editor by the first day of the month: Les Middlewood, 81a Linden Way, Southgate, London, N.14 4NG. Further copies are available from the Editor or the following pubs:  
Harpenden: The Queens Head; Hatfield: The New Fiddle; Hertford: The White Horse; New Barnet: The Railway Bell; St. Albans: The Jolly Sailor; Shenley: Pink's Hotel; Thundridge: The Windmill; Tyttenhanger: The Barley Mow; Watford: The Victoria Tavern.