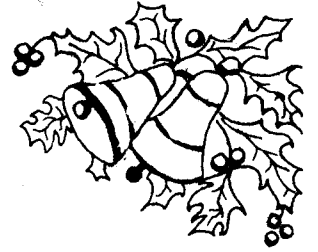


THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



# SOUTH HERTS.

# NEWSLETTER .

number 6

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FREE. CHRISTMAS ISSUE. DECEMBER 1976

## Only 22 pubs and all's not well.

I'll start with the corny line of 'Happy Christmas to all our readers' although, of course it's very true. I know I'll be doing my bit to promote the cause - perhaps more in the way of consumption than campaigning. My motto for a New Year's Eve spent in a friendly Suffolk pub will surely have to be 'sink eleven before seventy seven!'

Although some of the big brewers have made concessions to real ale drinkers this year, (notably Ind Coope - who have made big steps in Hertfordshire), Whitbread, Watneys, Bass-Charrington and Courage, in Hertfordshire, can still muster only a paltry 22 pubs between them. This truly appalling statistic brings us back to earth after a year of relative success. True, the door is open for more Whitbread landlords to introduce Whitbread (Marlow) Draught Bitter if they so wish - but what of the rest.

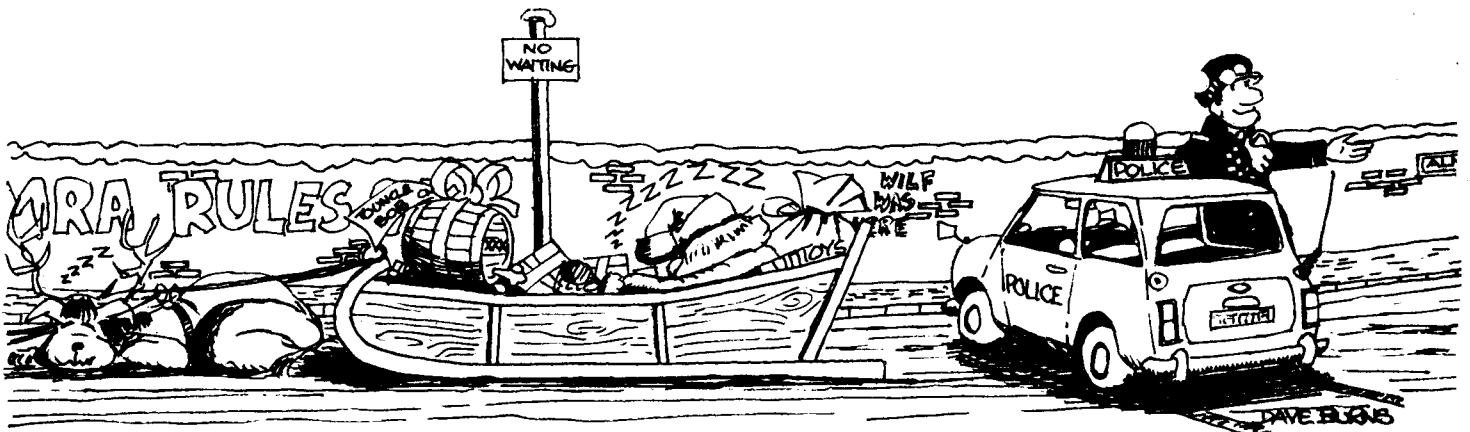
It amazes me that such large concerns cannot adjust to the demands of drinkers, both locally and nationally - on second thoughts perhaps it is because they're so large; and what's more they miss a golden opportunity to make a name for their beers and to make money on a really viable venture - (Ind Coope have proved it). More fool them! So while resisting comparisons between these breweries and a certain Yule Tide character - Scrooge - I'll bid them a happy Christmas too and hope that we have more real ale from them in 1977 and especially more real ale in Hertfordshire.

Meantime, goodwishes to all publicans in the County selling real ale and may they have a very happy and prosperous New Year.  
EDITOR.

### Christmas Ale

Something to warm the cockles of your heart on these dark and frosty days is the Winter or Christmas Ale that appears around this time of year. This is traditionally dark, fruity and usually strong.

Youngs Winter Warmer can be found at Pink's Hotel, Shenley and the Crown and Sceptre, Water End. Adnams Old is making its first appearance in Herts., at The Cabinet in Reed. Wethereds (Whitbread, Marlow) are re-brewing their Winter Ale, called Winter Royal. It will be interesting to see if it makes its way into the County. This also goes for Ruddle's Draught Rutland Barley Wine which is extremely strong. Wells Fargo and Theakston Old Peculiar are now available all year..



— 200 MILLIGRAMMES OVER THE LIMIT, AND SAYS HE'S FATHER CHRISTMAS!!

# 1976, A Good Year In Herts.

1976 has been a good year for beer and the drinker. So good in fact, that the branch has often been left monitoring the changes, while the campaigning has gone by the board. It started with Watney's introducing their new brew from Norwich to London and it's surroundings, while leaving Norfolk virtually dry. However it took Ind Coope to show what a really committed policy to real ale is all about - and it does seem eventually that real ale may be the norm rather than the exception in their houses. Both these companies insist on shipping their beers over long distances, whereas there must surely be some sense in having more local brews. Even Whitbread are shipping their Marlow brews up to five miles from their Luton factory. Charles Wells continued brewing their Christmas Ale, Fargo, all year round, when they moved into their new brewery - which coincided with their century of brewing. In the free trade, Adnams, Theakstons and Ruddles have been making big inroads into the County. The emphasis has been on the higher gravity (stronger) beers and sadly we have lost Ind Coope Dark Mild and not so long ago, Rayments Dark Mild. It is definitely time we got campaigning for some cheaper wholesome brews!

## Guides

The National Good Beer Guide and The Hertfordshire Real Ale Guide continue to be good sellers and a major revenue source for the branch. We hope the new, improved and even bigger Hertfordshire guide due to be published early in the New Year will have the same popularity.

## Events of '76

The branch ran 2 brewery trips this year, to Courage (Reading) and Ind Coope (Romford) and we were involved with the running of 2 bars at charitable events this year. First was the Inland Waterways Assn. Rally, where we were told to expect thousands of people. We ordered lots of beer, but with a mix-up over the license, and Police restricting the opening hours, we were left with one brewer's beers, only one-third of the people expected and were lucky to make a profit. The second was a Round Table Fete and Adnams Bitter. We felt very guilty charging Double Diamond prices - but it was for charity. Our offer to help at the Campus West Beer Festival was however turned down, although it was rumoured that real ale was available; how you can

by Chairman Bob Norrish

have a beer festival without CAMRA, I don't know.

Our reports on McMullens handpump experiment did not meet with much success, but I shall not dwell on our failures too much. The Social side of things has gone well. In darts we have won 10 and lost only three (and our team is going to win £100 in a local competition?). I personally hope to get a cricket team together for next season - names later please.

## Strength in Numbers

As to the future, I think it is essential we keep the membership at a high level. Although CAMRA is now a limited company and the administration is more streamlined, it is a fact of life that costs are for ever increasing and everyone's money is needed if we are not going to go broke. It is also important to have a lot of people knowing what is happening in the brewing world, so that the breweries cannot prey on our ignorance as before. And as one landlord put it - what's 30,000 in a drinking population of X million - so our supporters must stand up and be counted.

## The Future

I see the future of the Campaign as to continue to get real ale into pubs, to reduce the local monopolies some companies hold in some areas and to increase the choice of beers offered by trading premises - perhaps by allowing landlords to stock an alternative brand of their choice (not the breweries'). We certainly don't want to threaten the jobs of any landlord as has been mistakenly reported.

We must continue to expose the frauds in the brewing and licensing trade and must do everything in our power to stop the ludicrous price rises in what traditionally and basically is a cheap commodity - a basic food and our heritage.

## Brewery Trips

A number of brewery trips have been arranged for the New Year:

1. Whitbread, Marlow. 7.30pm. Wed. 9 Feb.
2. C. Wells, Bedford. 8.00pm. Tues 15 Feb.
3. G. King, Biggleswade. 2.30pm. Tues 5 Apr.

Trips to Hook Norton (May) and Fullers (September) will follow. Tickets for the trips will cost 50p. These and further details are available from Jim Axford, 117 Queens Road, Watford, Herts. There will be a maximum of 15 people on most of these trips.

# Pub Crawl: St. Albans.

Four years ago, St. Albans had only 1 real ale pub, The Farrriers Arms in Lower Dagnall St. Today, there are about 20 in and around the city selling real ale.

An easy pub crawl, including the 4 non Ind Coope pubs selling real ale, would start with a visit to the Lower Red Lion (1) in Fishpool St. Here, the drinker may partake of Young's Special in a comfortable Free House in the city's most fashionable area. A few minutes walk up the road, left into Welclose St. and right into Dagnall St. brings you to The Farrriers Arms (2) - McMullens Country Bitter and AK Mild here. Move on up the hill towards the city centre and turn right into Verulam Rd. On the left, by the clock tower is The Boot (3) where one can recover from the climb with a pint of Burton Ale. Next, proceed down to the traffic lights and turn right into Holywell Hill and pay a visit to The White Hart Hotel (4) - Burton Ale again I'm afraid but the next real beer pub, in Sopwell Lane, just down the hill on the left, is The Goat (5) - a Free House selling Whitbread (Marlow) Draught Bitter.

## Halfway House

Continue down the road from The Goat, turn left into Keyfield Terrace, and there are two Ind Coope houses, The Garibaldi, in Albert Street (6) and The White Hart Tap in Keyfield Terrace (7): both sell Ind Coope bitter on handpumps, still rare in St. Albans and worth a visit.

A footpath at the end of Keyfield Terr. brings one through into London Road - turn right and opposite the end of Alma Road lies The Great Northern (8) where one can obtain more Burton Ale if desired.

Up Alma Road, past the CAMRA offices and at the end, on the left is The Midland Railway (9) where Burton Ale is again available.

If the drinker has survived so far, (perhaps through missing one or two of the Ind Coope Houses) - he may wish to visit number 10 as a final pub for the session. This is The Jolly Sailor in Stonecross, (Sandridge Road) where Charles Wells Bitter and Fargo are available. A very popular pub, this one, just recently awarded the Evening Echo 'Pub of The Year' title. Perhaps one should start here and reverse the pub crawl, but I'll have to leave that up to you!

Other real ale pubs are The Ancient Briton (Harpenden Road), The Baton (Ridgeway), The King Harry (St. Stephens Hill) and The Pineapple (Catherine St.) - all Ind Coope pubs. - NEIL CAMPBELL.

# New Year Party

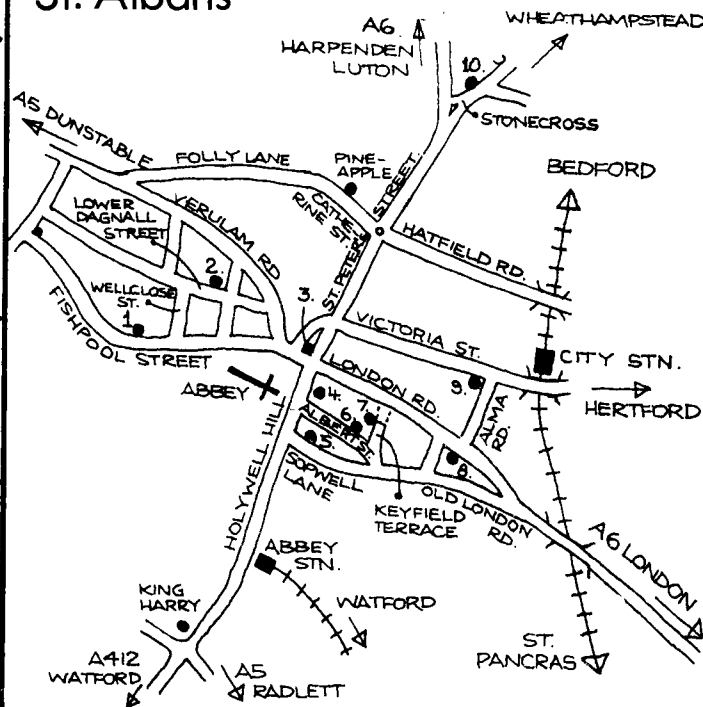
The popular branch New Year Party will follow much on the same lines as the last few years. It will be held at Bramfield Village Hall, near Hertford, on Friday 7 January 1977 starting around 8.00pm. The price is £2.50 and for this you will be able to drink a large variety of beers or wine, and of course there is a disco. We are grateful to The Barley Mow, Tyttenhanger, who are arranging the license for the occasion.

Tickets will be on sale at the AGM or can be obtained from Adrian Green, 104 Selborne Road, Southgate, London, N.14.

## Darts

Two matches held recently both ended in defeat for the branch team. We lost 5 - 2 against East London with a truly appalling display and a few days later lost by the same score to The Railway Bell Darts Team in New Barnet, although we managed to play slightly better.

## St. Albans



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 £2.00 subscription you receive a copy of the monthly 'What's Brewing', CAMRA's newspaper on what is going on in the world of beer. Please send to: The Membership Secretary, The Campaign for Real Ale, 34 Alma Road, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3BW.

# Wordsworth 6X

It was Christmas day in the brewery,  
All was still and black,  
When a belch rang out, and echoed about,  
Reg was flat on his back.

o o o

What a wonderful visit we'd had there,  
The tasting room hadn't been missed,  
When some silly clot said 'Let's drink  
the lot'  
We thought that the fellow was drunk.

o o o

So we got stuck into the firkins,  
The barrels were too hard to lift,  
We'd finished the bitter by Monday,  
I was beginning to feel a bit pift.

o o o

No one complained of short measures;  
There isn't much point when it's free.  
The only thing that we moaned of  
Was the three hour queue for a pee.

o o o

The lads were really going now;  
They were pulling out all the stops,  
They were drinking so fast, as though it  
was their last,  
They were even attacking the slops.

o o o

Come Christmas Eve, on Friday,  
We decided to celebrate,  
We got the Pale and the Christmas Ale,  
And we went to work on a crate.

o o o

On Christmas morning we lay there,  
We'd drunk the last drop in the place,  
It was quiet that day as we slept it away  
There were smiles on every face.

o o o

I'll never forget that Christmas,  
And what made us especially glad -  
It was beer from the wood - it makes you  
feel good,  
It was the merriest Christmas we'd had!

By Dave (Pam Ayres?) Burns.

## Ind Coope Strikes; Bass is Up.

Supplies of Ind Coope draught beers have recently been hit by industrial disputes at both Burton (Burton Ale) and Romford (Bitter and Mild). Both have been resolved, so things should shortly be back to normal.

Those of you who enjoy a pint of draught Bass might find yourself falling over a pint early in future. The original gravity has been increased from 1039 to 1044. A smart move to rival Ind Coope and Watneys perhaps? Let's hope they don't try to rival them in the price of a pint.

# DIARY of EVENTS

## HERTFORDSHIRE SOUTH BRANCH

Dec. 14 AGM and Dec. Branch Meeting  
The Cricketers, East Common,  
Redbourn. (Ind Coope) 8.00pm.

Jan. 7 New Year Party. For further details see inside.

Jan. 18 January Branch Meeting  
The New Fiddle, St. Albans Rd  
(West) Hatfield. - just off Al.  
(Ind Coope) 8.00pm.

## Enfield and Barnet Branch

Jan. 12 January Branch Meeting: The  
King George, High Barnet.  
(Charringtons) 8.00pm.

18 Social with North London Branch  
The Two Brewers, Edmonton.  
(Ind Coope) 8.00pm.

## Charles Wells To Expand South ?

Rumours have it that Charles Wells are looking to expand into Hertfordshire and perhaps London, and that this expansion may take the form of leasing agreements with other breweries. Hopefully more news will be available in the New Year.

## Exhibition

The branch's Brewery Exhibition is still going strong at Croxley Green library and is proving to be very popular.

## Changes

Yet another Whitbread pub has installed handpumps for their Marlow 'Draught Bitter'. This time it is the Queens Head, Colney Heath, - the handpump is in the saloon bar.

The Unicorn, in Abbots Langley has introduced Ind Coope Burton Ale and Bitter, while The Plough at Belsize near Chipperton now also has Burton Ale. Another Ind Coope pub to introduce Burton Ale is The Tin Pot in Wheathampstead. The Harbour Lights in Bushey has discontinued Burton Ale - due to lack of demand.

Perhaps the best news of the month concerns The Feathers at Wadesmill. Regular readers will know that fake handpumps are used here. The good news is that early next year their handpumps will revert to selling real ale, probably Courage Best Bitter, Director's and Watney's Fined Bitter.

This Newsletter is produced monthly by the Herts. South branch of CAMRA. All contributions should be sent to the Editor: Les Middlewood, 81a Linden Way, London N14.