

OPENING TIMES

ST. NEOTS
& DISTRICT



BRANCH
NEWSLETTER

Issue No.14

BIRTHDAY & CHRISTMAS EDITION
Free-Monthly
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Editor: Dave Cox, 41a, Kings Road, St. Neots, Huntingdon, Cambs. PE19 1LD
(Tel; Huntingdon 72250)

All material for inclusion in the January 1980 newsletter must be in the Editor's hands not later than 20th December.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wed 5th Dec: Social at the Swan, Old Weston.

Fri 7th Dec: Social at the Three Shuttles, Tilbrock.

Fri 14th Dec: Christmas party at the BELL, Eaton Socon (not as shown in What's Brewing)

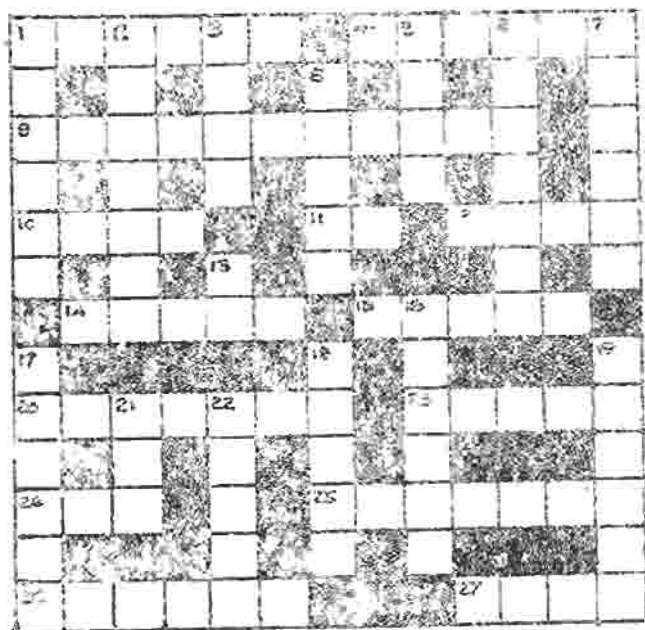
Tues 18th Dec: North Beds branch Christmas party at the Windsor, Bedford.

Wed 3th Jan: Social at the Bell, Great Paxton.

Social and branch meetings begin around 8pm.

CROSSWORD (No 5)

This month we return to the usual crossword. Entries shown be given or sent to the Editor by the 20th December when there will be a draw. The name of the winner will be published in the next newsletter and the prize as usual is £1.



Clues - Across

1. A ruby wine-er? (6)
4. There's no Everards Beacon here (6)
9. Now the Longbow (11)
10. Don't have one for it (4)
11. National Trust (2)
12. Minty sport? (4)
14. Ales and Stout etc. (5)
15. Alcohol producer (5)
20. The only one with a pedigree (7)
23. Eldridge oak (5)
24. Peters' sediment? (3)
25. He's happy in Houghton (7)
26. Village on A1 selling Paines in Bell (6)
27. I've had enough (4)

Clues - Down

1. Delivered daily (6)
2. It's what it's all about (7)
3. Always (4)
5. Stale smell (4)
6. Holiday makers pay up as a matter of duty (7)
7. Motorbikes get hooked on it (6)
8. Single out the giant (5)
13. Heraldic gold (2)
16. The place with a River view (6)
17. Happy Ales (6)
18. They are self opinionated (5)
19. More than one (6)
21. A herb (3)
22. "Shut that door" it's vicious. (5)

(R.O.)

BEERMATS

Don't forget to enter your beer mat design. The prize is a pin (4½ gallons) of beer and entries should be sent to the Editor by the end of the month.

The Cross Keys at Molesworth is now selling Paines XXX on handpump.

The Peartree at Bassingbourn now sells Courage Directors bitter and Adnams Bitter.

The Red Lion at Bassingbourn now sells Tolly Original and Bitter.

The King William at Fenstanton now has Tolly Old Strong.

The Lion at Ramsey has recently started selling guest beers straight from casks on the bar. This is in addition to the handpumped Greene King IPA and Abbot. A 9 gallon cask of bitter in the 1035-1045 OG range such as Everards Beacon and Tiger, Paines XXX, Marstons Pedigree, bitter and Courage Directors have been on sale so far. Each cask is usually sold in one or two days and is immediately followed by another beer.

The Riverview at Earith now sells Tolly Cantab straight from the cask.

Geoff Capes will be at the Wheatsheaf, St. Neots on 12th December cracking open the Senior Citizen collection bottle.

NOVEMBER WORD PUZZLE

The winner of the puzzle was Sue Taylor of Huntingdon. Did you get the 30 brewers hidden in the puzzle? For those of you who did not, here they are:- Hall & Woodhouse, Vaux, Watney, King & Parnes, Young, Tolly, Home, Elgood, Welsh, Mendip, Pollard, Pass, Brain, Hook Norton, Burt, Marston, Raven, Selby, York, Old Swan, Lees, Holt, Taylors, Ind Coops, Gale, Okell, Ward, Paine, Blue Anchor and Crown. The two NON-Real brewers in the puzzle were Skol and Harp.

OLD ALES

Now we are into the winter months, it's time to go searching for the winter specials. Tolly Old Strong and Adnams Olde are usually found in Cambridgeshire. Adnams also brew a draught barley wine around the Christmas fortnight. One also wonders if Whitbread (Luton) may be able to supply Winter Royal to the increasing number of 'Real' Whitbread outlets. Let's hope some enterprising landlord tries. (C.P.)

ST. NEOTS BRANCH 5TH ANNIVERSARY

It is now 5 years since the St. Neots branch had its first meeting in the lounge bar at the Blue Ball, St. Neots. In those days Frank, the landlord, served Greene King Abbot by handpump. Unfortunately when he retired Greene King did the usual and removed the four handpumps replacing them with top pressure fittings.

However since that meeting many gains have been made. Paines have changed more than 50% of their pubs back to real ale and introduced two new beers, EG and Lunchlight. Charles Wells have increased the number of their outlets with handpumps and introduced a new beer called Fargo although cask mild was replaced by keg mild. Whitbread and Ansells have installed handpumps in the area serving Wethered's Bitter and Ind Coops's Burton Bitter respectively. Watneys, now Manns locally, have reintroduced two real ales (Stag and Marns IPA) served mainly by air pressure pumps and occasionally by electric pumps. Tolly have just launched a new beer called Original which will be served using handpumps or gravity only. Greene King sadly maintain their top pressure policy with less than 20% of their pubs in this area selling real ale.

5 years ago there were approx 30 real ale pubs in the area covered by this branch now there are nearly 60 which must show that the Campaign has achieved something.

A big event for the branch over the past 4 years has been the Riverside Festival Bar where the branch has provided many real ales not normally available in the area plus all the local beers. The 1979 Festival had the largest selection so far with over 40 real ales available.

Why not come along to branch meetings and help make the next five years as successful as the last five years. (Ed)

THE DRINKERS FAULT FINDING GUIDE

Into the life of most of us there come little moments of crisis when the only solution is to get down to the pub at opening time and make a really heavy session of it. It may all start with something quite simple: the wife has run off with the milkman, with the result that there's nothing but Guinness to pour over the breakfast cornflakes, or the budgerigar has eaten the cat, and the kids are refusing to be fed on the four dozen tins of "Cattysnax" which you bought cut-price last week, or, mother-in-law has fallen downstairs, and the bill for new glass for the front door will be over £2.50.

Whatever the reason for setting out on such an evening, its results can be disappointing in view of the many pitfalls which can occur. To overcome these, Opening Times is pleased to present, as a service to the average drinker, the following guide to the problems that may be experienced when drinking beyond your normal quota, and the means of solving them.

<u>SYMPTOM</u>	<u>FAULT</u>	<u>ACTION TO BE TAKEN</u>
Drinking fails to give satisfaction and taste, shirt front wet.	Mouth not open while drinking OR Glass being applied to wrong part of face	Buy another pint, and practice in front of the mirror. Continue with as many pints as necessary until drinking technique is perfect.
Drinking fails to give satisfaction and taste, beer unusually pale and clear.	Glass empty.	Find someone who will buy you another pint.
Feet cold and wet.	Glass being held at the incorrect angle.	Turn glass the other way up so that open end is pointing towards the ceiling.
Feet warm and wet.	Incorrect bladder control.	Go and stand next to the nearest dog-after a while complain to its owner about its lack of house training and demand a pint in compensation.
Bar blurred.	You are looking through the bottom of your empty glass.	Find someone who will buy you another pint.
Bar swaying.	Air turbulence unusually high - maybe due to darts match in progress.	Insert broom handle down back of jacket.
Bar moving.	You are being carried out.	Find out if you are being taken to another pub-if not complain loudly that you are being hijacked by the "salvation army".
You notice that the wall opposite is covered with ceiling tiles, and has a fluorescent light strip across it.	You have fallen over backwards.	If glass is still full and no one is standing on your drinking arm, stay put. If not get someone to help you up, and lash yourself to the bar.
Everything has gone dim, and you have a mouthful of dogan's and broken teeth.	You have fallen over forwards.	See above.
Everything has gone dark.	The pub is closing.	Panic.
You have woken up to find your bed hard cold and wet. You cannot see your bedroom walls or ceiling.	You have spent the night in the gutter.	Check your watch to see if it is opening time-if not, treat yourself to a lie in.

DEARER PINTS

The announcement of new price rises has, as always, hit hard the drinker, who appears to have no protection against the continual increase in prices. The culprits this time are again, of course, Courage & Watneys who have increased their prices by 3p. This is the third rise this year, 3p in February, 3p in June with our friendly Government's VAT increase and now the latest rise. Guinness & Scottish & Newcastle prices have also increased, but Allied, Bass and Whitbread have, at least, decided to wait until the new year.

How can Watneys and Courage, who always seem to lead the charge, justify more for the price of a pint. Courage are building a large new brewery at Worton Grange near Reading, which is geared for keg beers only: are their drinkers paying for this white elephant? We know very well that Courage ignore all customer needs and feelings. They are part of a large autonomous company and treat customers as mere statistics.

It is estimated that in some cases the price of a pint has risen by 26% this year.

With the prices commission now disbanded we have nobody to watch and monitor these increases, it proves to the Government that there is a need for a similar body, we - the beer drinkers - need some protection.

If all these Nottingham brewers, Home, Shipstones and Hardy & Hanson can peg their prices at 28 - 30p there is something wrong with the system. Perhaps we should all move to Nottingham. (Pa)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I was talking to a head brewer recently about the use of gas pressure on beer. He said that as carbon dioxide is a natural product of beer, it could not possibly be of detriment to pressurise cask beer with it. I must say this sounds logical and sensible to me and I cannot see why you disagree with the system.

Confused,

Daton Socon.

Dear Confused,

CO₂ is a natural product of a pig, but would you serve it with your pork chops? Seriously though, carbon dioxide is naturally present dissolved in all beer at a certain level. However, if the gas is applied to the beer under pressure, then more of it dissolves in the beer - a bit like a Sparkletts Soda Syphon - making it more fizzy than it should be and impairing the flavour. If you don't believe me compare the Greene King IPA in the Wheatsheaf, St.Neots with the same beer in any other Greene King pub in St.Neots. (N & S)

MEMBERSHIP FORM

I wish to become a member of CAMRA. I agree to abide by the Memorandum and articles of association of the campaign, and I enclose £4 (£6 for overseas members) as my annual subscription.

FULL NAME (Blocks).....

SIGNATURE

ADDRESS (Blocks).....

Cheques should be made payable to the CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE LTD.

Sent to -Roy Fudersby, 39, Gayfield Court, Sandy, Beds.

Published by the St.Neots & District Branch of CAMRA.