

OPENING TIMES

ST. NEOTS & DISTRICT



BRANCH NEWSLETTER

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BEEREX APATHY

The recent CAMRA Beerex held at the Kings Head, St. Neots did not prove to be the success we had hoped for. Although the 'attendees' were exactly the type of people one likes to attract to a beer festival, unfortunately, there just were not enough of them!

We are unable to pinpoint the reason for the public's lack of interest, because certainly everything in the way of advertising was done. The bad weather that we seem to get at every festival was again very much in evidence, with rain at every drinking session.

We felt that moving the festival to a town centre site would promote extra interest. Perhaps in retrospect, with the town centres growing reputation as a potential trouble spot, it was this that kept people away.

Certainly, it would appear, that as we thought, St. Neots as a town does not want and will not support a beer festival run as an event in its own right. So it would seem that, if and when any future festivals are run, they will have to be in conjunction with other events, where we have potential drinkers over and above our festival audience.

The editor would welcome any letters from you, our readers, offering any views on the topic of running a local beer festival.

JAMES PAINE LEAVE TOWN

James Paine have moved their base in the centre of St. Neots to the new industrial estate site at Alington Road, Eynesbury. After 150 years on its old site, the new location will give easier access for the larger number of delivery drays that are in evidence now that brewing has ceased and the company is concentrating on the beer agency wholesale business. The purpose built base obviously lacks the character and history of the former brewery, which is still awaiting approved plans for its redevelopment.

AND SO DOES SID! Not only are James Paine vacating the old brewery, so is Sales Manager Sid Johnson who is leaving the company to take up a new post with beer wholesalers, Scotgrange of Shefford. This is worthy of note because Sid (who is 60) has been with the brewery since he left school at the age of 14. He started work in the spirit room (those were the days when breweries blended their own spirits), before starting an apprenticeship as a cooper. Later he learnt the art of the brewing, and in latter years did much of the brewing himself - **James Paine Final Brew** is one of Sids. He finally ended up as Sales Manager. Over the years he has been a good friend to the local CAMRA Branch doing us many favours and for that we thank him and would like to take this opportunity to wish him well in his new job and for the future.

CHEERS SID!.

Future Meetings & Socials

Wednesday 13th July
SOCIALS

8.15pm **Pear Tree** (Free) Bassingbourn
then 9.45pm onwards
Downing Arms (Free) Tadlow.

Wednesday 27th July
Pub crawl of Ramsey.

Start **Jolly Sailor** (Manns) 8.30pm

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT:
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LOCAL NEWS

Kisby's Hut, Papworth Everard, a Tolly Cobbold house is now closed. This was on a lease from the owners - Papworth Settlement - which has now expired. The village is now without a pub and it remains to be seen whether or not this will be rectified by a new pub on another site.

There are new faces at **The Crown, Earith** a Manns pub, with Cyril and Shirley Massey taking over.

For those of you that tried Adnams Broadside at our Beerex and liked it - we can tell you that it is available in **Potton** at **The Rose and Crown**.

Raymond and Rose Hubbard from the East Midlands have taken over the running of **The Pickled Skittle** in **St. Ives**, with 10 years experience in the trade to assist them. The pub still sells Tetley and Burton Ale, with another addition to the range being considered.

Recent incumbents at **The Globe**, Huntingdon Street, **St. Neots** are Brian and Melany Ward, who were previously at The Barley Mow, St. Albans.

We hear that **The Pear Tree, Bassingbourn** now has Wilkins cider available, and also has replaced its Adnams with Arkells BBB.

Free Houses undergoing changes are the **Coneygeare, Eynesbury, St. Neots** which has been sold to as yet unnamed new owners who will take over this busy pub on September 19th.

Rumours abound about the future of **The Cockney Pride** on the Longsands estate, **St. Neots** which is up for sale. It could well be that with only a short term remaining on its lease that it is unviable as a pub and will be sold for redevelopment.

CHARLES WELLS ON SPENDING SPREE

Charles Wells has paid £ 2.8m for 18 pubs from the Heron estate. Tenants in the former Manns pubs suddenly found that they were to have their third landlord in four months, the 18 being among the 210 pubs which Heron purchased from Grand Metropolitan in February of this year. These additions bring the Wells tied estate up to around 320 houses, giving them a presence in and around the Peterborough area for the first time.

Pubs in our local area which are affected are **The George at Spaldwick** and **The White Lion, Ramsey St. Mary's. The Three Horseshoes at Wistow** which was part of this original package has now been bought by its sitting tenant, who will run the pub as a Free House.

Other local Manns pubs sold to Heron and retained by them at this moment in time are:

Cross Keys - Upwood, Crown - Broughton, Mad Cat - Pidley, Royal Oak - Sawtry, Three Horseshoes - Abbots Ripton, Unicorn - Ramsey.

At the moment we understand they are continuing to sell the previously stocked Grand Metropolitan range of beers.

Also on the Charles Wells news front, we hear that they are experimenting with a new form of dispense. A new device is being fitted to give a "Northern" head to the beer when it is poured. Whether it will prove to be popular with drinkers in this area remains to be seen.



A MESSAGE FROM TONY RUDDLE

We have now completed our Brewhouse enlargement, more than doubling our output. There are some important points that I thought would interest you.

Firstly we have retained tradition. Traditional mash tuns and whole hops in the traditional coppers.

Secondly, we have spent heavily on all aspects of quality control.

Thirdly, we have retained our highly successful recipes.

Our famous 1050° County is now available in most corners of England and Wales, whilst our 1037° Best Bitter will be found in nearly 2,000 accounts by Christmas.

Ruddles Brewery Ltd
Langham, Oakham, Rutland LE15 2JD

ARE YOU READY FOR A RUDDLES?

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

On a recent outing I passed the boarded up "Kisby's Hut" at Papworth Everard and thought what a shame if a pub with a unique name like that were to close forever. This prompted me to look through the records for more unusual names and some quite odd ones there are too.

Little Staughton just over the Bedfordshire border had its "Kangaroo" at one time. Huntingdon its "True Blue", that closed during a Liberal Government in the reign of Edward VII.! St.Ives had its "Parrot" and also a "Spare Rib". Godmanchester boasted one of my favourite names, "The Uncle Toms Cabin", it's a pity that's not still there.

Pidley's only pub is the "Mad Cat", still going strong, but over in that part of the world many strange names have long gone. Warboys has lost its "Pelican", "Blue Dog" and "Golden Drop". Nor does the wind whistle at the "Whistling Pig".

Ramsey no longer has a "Shovel and Spade", "Spotted Dog" or a Recruiting Sergeant" (Pictorially shown) and the splendidly named "Rose, Shamrock and Thistle" is but a memory.

In nearby Whittlesey, they allegedly had so many pubs they started to call them after letters of the alphabet and "The Letter B" public house still stands, but I think it was probably a lack of imagination on the part of the local citizens.

Cambridge has many pubs and it was once possible to see four pubs with unique names in a matter of a few hundred yards. The "Zebra", "Fort St. George in England" and "Champion of the Thames" all still stand dispensing good Greene King beers. But the "Rhadegund" was a wine bar the last time I saw it.



**The Recruiting Sergeant in the Gt Whyte, Ramsey.
Taken in the early 1930's**

So on your travels keep a look out for different names.
and add a little more interest to your drinking!

STEVE LEADER

COUNTRY FREE HOUSES IN HIGH DEMAND

It is reported that there are record numbers of people looking to buy 'Free House' in our region. Although East Anglia generally is a booming growth area, property prices compared to London and the Southern Counties are still very favourable, albeit significant increases are taking place - there are now very few Free houses with a value of less than £ 150,000. With the licensing trade retaining its financial mortality rate there still seems to be an endless queue of would be buyers prepared to take the chance.

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