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ST.NEOTS & DISTRICT

OPENING TIMES



Issue No 83 December 1994

BRANCH NEWSLETTER
BI-MONTHLY CIRCULATION 1,000 COPIES

We wish all our readers - CAMRA members and drinking public alike a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We are glad to announce our first CAMRA 'Winter Ale' Festival which will be held in the Function Suite at St. Neots Town Football Club on the outskirts of St. Neots.

Following the continued success of our June event in St. Ives, we have decided to try another event in St. Neots despite some failures there in the late eighties.

So if you would like to see a regular event in the town then support the Winter Ale Festival.

We will have about a dozen ales available, of varying strengths, not just strong ales, so if you like real ale there should be something there for you, and the Club bar will be open to serve soft drinks for the driver.

The Football ground is situated about 400 yards from the railway station, making it easy to travel to from points north and south.

We hope to have available, some ales that are not widely available in the area, so come along and perhaps try something new.

WINTER ALE FESTIVAL

ST.NEOTS TOWN
FOOTBALL CLUB,
CAMBRIDGE ROAD,
ST.NEOTS
27 -28 JANUARY
Admittance 50p



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★★★ Best Selection of ★★★
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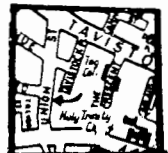
Come to

Bedford's Homebrew Centre



15 Union Street
Bedford
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Opening Times Monday to Saturday
9.30 - 5.30



This newsletter is published by the St. Neots branch of the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd. (CAMRA). The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor, CAMRA Ltd or its branches. Articles or letters for consideration for publication are always welcome. Advertising rates £5.00.psci (column width 4"). Artwork can be made up. Series discount 6 insertions less 15%. 3 insertions less 10%.

Editor: Mike Birch, 10, Squires Court Eaton Socon, St. Neots Cambs. Tel: 0480 395505

MINI-BUDGET PUTS ANOTHER 1p(?) ON A PINT

The recent mini-budget put at least another one pence on a pint and with petrol also going up, increased haulage costs could lead to an even bigger increase by the time your pint reaches you at the bar.

Reproduced below is a calculator showing the excise duty that YOU pay on a pint of beer based upon its alcoholic strength.

On top of this of course goes the VAT.

The Chancellor takes a third of the cost of YOUR pint!!

Join CAMRA in fighting for a reduction in the beer tax - not extra taxes, which consumers and the industry just does not need.

Further increases will see jobs go in the brewing and licensed trades - as breweries and pubs close. Tax on beer in the UK is the second highest in Europe (only Ireland is higher) and the large price differential is encouraging the purchase of large quantities of beer in France which is threatening our traditional pub.

As the system stands, the individual cannot be blamed for taking advantage, but each can or bottle of imported beer is a nail in this country's brewing coffin.

CAMRA of course has long campaigned for CUT in beer duty. The difference in excise duty between

England and France prior to the mini-budget was 20p for an ordinary beer and nearer 30p for a premium beer. As can be seen from the calculator, a third of the price of a British pint is tax.

The profits of the cross border trade are generated largely by the difference in tax levels. Drink is nearly 70% of the average pub's turnover, the overwhelming majority of this is beer. And the smaller the pub, the more important beer sales are to its future.



*'When you have lost your Inns,
drown your empty selves,
for you will have lost
the last of England'*

BILLIARD BELLOC, 1870-1953

HANDY BEER TAX RIP-OFF CALCULATOR

You pay EXCISE DUTY based on alcoholic strength and VAT based on sale price.

Alcohol %	Typical beer	Approx. Excise Duty
3.5	Mild /weak lager	21p per pint
3.8	Ordinary bitter / lager	23p per pint
4.2	Best bitter	25p per pint
5.0	Strong ale / Premium lager	30p per pint
7.0	Winter Warmer	42p per pint

Remember you pay VAT as well:

Price £	VAT per pint	Price £	VAT per pint
1.00	15 pence	1.50	22 pence
1.10	16 pence	1.60	24 pence
1.20	18 pence	1.70	25 pence
1.30	19 pence	1.80	27 pence
1.40	21 pence	1.90	28 pence

THE CROWN, EATON SOCON MAKES IT TEN YEARS IN THE GOOD BEER GUIDE

Ian and Sue Robinson at the Crown Free House, Eaton Socon have been presented with a certificate to celebrate their inclusion in the Good Beer Guide for ten consecutive years from 1986 - 1995.

Since they took over the pub 11 years ago the pub has always had a good range of beers with something different on in a changing selection, to test the taste buds with the quality always being to very high standard.

Branch Chair Kathy Hadfield presented the certificate and the recipients are shown below.



LOCAL NEWS

Local regional brewers, Greene King have introduced a regular seasonal ale to their portfolio. The first of which, Back Baron, a ruby coloured ale of gravity 1043 is currently available. The Spring ale will be Sourcerer at the same strength, followed by a Summer ale at 1034 gravity.

The **Wheatsheaf, St. Neots** has added the Black Baron to it's range and also is currently stocking the Winter Ale, 1064.

Other local pubs stocking Black Baron, that we know about are **The Millers Arms, Eaton Socon** and **The Blue Ball, St. Neots**.

On the Charles Wells front, they have also brought out a 'new' beer. This is the re-introduced Fargo at 5% ABV and is to be found in many of their tied houses locally.

The **Waterloo, Huntingdon** has started selling real ale, with a periodically changing guest beer, with Hoskins Penn's Ale available on the day of our visit.

Our gossips tell us that the **Dog & Bone** in **Huntingdon** is about to undergo a change with part of the old name of the Three Tuns being included in its new name.

Despite efforts to close it we hear that the **George** at **Spaldwick** is now safe after protests from all and sundry upon hearing about a change of use application from Charles Wells, the owners.

Roger and Tina Collins have taken over at **The Cock, Gamlingay** a Greene King house. They were formerly at The Barley Mow, Eaton Ford, St. Neots.

The **Racehorse, Catworth** a Free House is presently closed as is **The Chequers** at **Fenstanton**, a Charles Wells house.

The **Seven Wives, St. Ives** now sports a handpump dispensing Theakstons IPA.

GOOD BEER GUIDE 1995

The new edition of Britain's number one beer and pubs book is now on sale - and it's the biggest ever (528 pages)

■ 5,000 of the best beer pubs in Britain, arranged county by county, fully mapped and with all facilities highlighted, from accommodation and meals to family rooms and no-smoking areas.

■ Information on all Britain's breweries from giants like Whitbread and Bass to the newest micros like Tomintoul in the Highlands of Scotland and Sharp's on the Cornish coast. There are no less than 35 new breweries in the 1995 edition.

It's the book no beer lover can afford to be without and is ideal for holidays, business trips, days in the country or nights on the town.

Available from all good bookstores or direct from your local CAMRA branch at only £9.99, it's the perfect gift - or treat yourself.

Copies are also available direct and post-free from CAMRA at
34 Alma Road, St Albans AL1 3BW
(cheques made payable to CAMRA Ltd.)
Credit card sales on (0727) 867201.



IT'S
HERE

SUNDAY AFTERNOON OPENING ON THE WAY?

Sunday afternoon opening in pubs could be just one more push away as pressure mounts on the Home Office to take a fresh look at restrictive licensing laws.

A top-level CAMRA delegation is to meet Junior Home Office minister Michael Forsyth to discuss the way forward for licensing hours.

Support is growing from other bodies for such a move with the English Tourist Board having now said that "anything that could give pubs more freedom to appeal to foreign visitors, including longer opening hours both on Sundays and during the week, should be considered." The case had also been strengthened by deregulation of Sunday Trading last December.

The Licensing Act of 1988 giving drinkers more drinking time with all-day opening in pubs where landlords wanted to, had not led to Britain becoming a 'drink-sodden shebeen' according to the Times, who also said that a move on Sunday hours would be "as rational as it was congenial".

CAMRA 'PUB OF THE AUTUMN'

This award went to **Bridge Hotel, Huntingdon** who were recently presented with a framed certificate to mark the honour. The Bridge consistently sells a choice of three real ales in good condition, not always the case in establishments of its type and for that reason was chosen for the award.

BRANCH DIARY

January 22nd - Meeting - **The River Mill, Eaton Socon** - 8.30pm.

For further details contact: Roy Endersby (Secretary) on 01480 473364

ODD SPOTS...

The 1995 Great British Beer Festival will take place at Olympia from 1st - 5th August.

Pubs after family trade will be allowed to apply for certificates allowing children into all parts of the pub under the Deregulation Act, which gained Royal Assent in November. Pubs with certificates will be allowed to let accompanied children under 14 in until 9pm provided they always offer food and soft drinks. The certificates are expected to be available in time for next year's tourist season.

The new Guinness keg fount is causing consternation as it incorporates a tap resembling a handpump which could fall foul of both CAMRA and trading standards officials. CAMRA policy is that pubs selling keeg beer or cider by misleading dispense such as the notorious Scrumpy Jack "handpump" will not be included in the Good Beer Guide.

JOIN CAMRA NOW

Just fill in the details below and send with a cheque for £12 or £14 for joint membership (Payable to CAMRA Ltd) to The Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 34, Alma Road, St. Albans, Herts, AL1 3BW

APPLICATION FORM

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....POSTCODE

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association. I enclose a cheque for £12 (£16 if overseas).

Signed.....

Date.....

THE WHITE HART,

Sheep Market, St. Ives
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Under The New Management of
Mrs Burgess-Harper

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THE
FESTIVE PERIOD

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Wadworths 6X
Flowers IPA
Boddingtons Bitter