

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

ST. NEOTS & DISTRICT

OPENING
TIMES



BRANCH NEWSLETTER

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**BOOZE
ON THE
OUSE**

Only four
months to go

The 18th 'Booze on the Ouse' will be held at the St. Ivo Centre, St. Ives from 17th - 20th September. Once again around 60 real ales for your delectation.

This years logo which appears on our posters and is printed on the commemorative glasses that can be purchased at the festival is based on the Seven Wives rhyme.

**CELEBRATING 21 YEARS OF
BEER DRINKING**

This year CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale's Great British Beer Festival is 21 years old. It is the biggest beer festival in the UK and has a larger variety of beers on sale than the famous Munich Beer Festival. with over 1000 volunteers from all over the country serving over a quarter of a million pints it will again be a celebration of good ale.

The Festival started off in Alexandra palace in North London where it stayed for several years until the venue burnt down in 1980. At one of these events. the Monty Python comic, Terry Jones, opened the Festival by pouring a pint of beer over his head!!

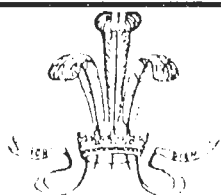
The Festival then moved to Leeds and into an ex tram shed called the Queens Hall where it stayed for two years 1981 and 1982. There was then a one year sojourn to the Bingley

Hall in Birmingham which burnt down in 1984. Birmingham saw the introduction of a family area which really came into its own when the Festival moved to Brighton in 1985 after having a year off. The family room (as it then became known) became famous for the runaway rabbits that escaped from a children's magician.

At this time, there were no all day licensing and the volunteer staff used to enjoy a break between sessions on the beach. Brighton hosted the Festival for three years before the event went north again to Leeds. Unfortunately, the hall closed in 1990 to make way for a car park. this led to the Festival going to Brighton for a fill in year before heading to the capital.

In 1991 the Festival was held in the Arena, in London Docklands.

GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL LONDON OLYMPIA 4 - 8 AUGUST



The Prince of Wales

'That nice pub at Hilton'

(01480) 830257



ADNAMS BEST BITTER ELGOOD'S BLACK DOG MILD GUEST BEERS GOOD FOOD ACCOMMODATION

although a great venue for seating, poor transport led to the organisers considering a different venue. From 1992, the Great British Beer Festival has been held at Olympia. It started off in the Grand and West Halls and has now migrated into the National Hall as well. Over the years in London, the imported beer bar has grown, the entertainment and food is more varied. But one thing that has not altered is the commitment to British real ale.

At the early Festivals it was possible to have every brewery that produced real ale. There were around 90 brewing companies in Britain in 1977. Now, the estimates are that there are over 400 breweries including the growing number of pub breweries. And, with most breweries having at least three beers, there are now over 2,000 real ales. The 1998 Great British Beer Festival will have over 300 of them providing a good selection of the best real ales in Britain, there can be no better way to celebrate real ale than by joining in the celebrations at this year's Great British Beer Festival and trying one or two!!

Now having read our article it should help you to enter our crossword competition. Good Luck

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST PUB

ADVANCE TICKET SALES

New for this year...

Season Tickets to all sessions plus entry to the exclusive trade session at 3pm on Tuesday just £12.50 to members (Full price £20)

Plus

New for this year...

All day tickets for Wednesday or Thursday £4 (Full price £5)

Only available from Karen Lynch at CAMRA HQ on 01727 867201 in advance



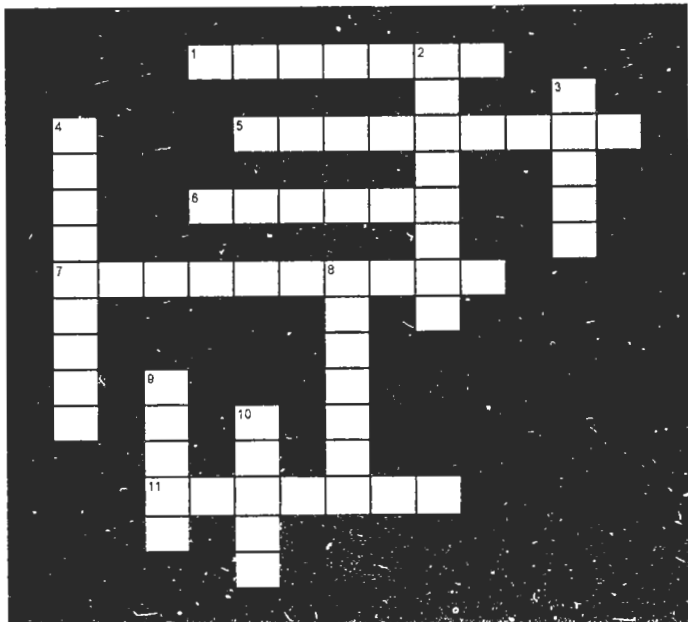
Win free tickets to the 21st Great British Beer Festival by completing our crossword. Send your entry to the editor. First correct entry drawn wins Two Season Tickets for the Festival.

Across

1. What escaped from the magician?
5. The Palace where it all started
6. The name of the hall in Leeds
7. The Monty Python comic who opened a Festival
11. What the Leeds hall was turned into in 1990

Down

2. What the Leeds hall originally was
3. The name of the hall in London Docklands
4. The number of Great British Beer Festivals that have taken place
8. Where the Festival is now
9. Where the staff used to go between sessions
10. The number of hundreds of real ales at this year's Festival



MAKE MINE MILD

May is traditionally CAMRA's Mild month with a special Mild day held this year on May 16th.

Locally, **The Royal Oak, St. Ives** participated in this by offering Bateman's Dark Mild. **The Prince of Wales at Hilton** of course continues to offer Elgood Black Dog Mild. **The Mad Cat at Pidley** now has Greene King XX Mild (and Greene King IPA) permanently.

In **St. Neots**, the **Bulls Head** and **Millers Arms, Eaton Socon** both serve Greene King XX Mild.

MIXED NEWS ON TWO FAMOUS BOTTLED BEERS

THERE IS GOOD AND BAD NEWS FOR LOVERS OF QUALITY BOTTLED-CONDITIONED BEERS

First the good news, **Worthington White Shield** has been saved. Bass has now commissioned Sussex brewers King and Barnes to brew this fine strong ale. This is a much needed boost for the beer with brewing volumes having fallen below 1,000 barrels a year.

King and Barnes obtained two traditional yeasts - one for primary fermentation, the second for bottle-conditioning - from Bass and cultured them at their Horsham brewery. Trials were successful and the first batches of K & B brewed White Shield went on sale in March.

King and Barnes has all the rights to White Shield and can market it, but cannot change the specification without consulting Bass.

The bad news is that one of the most venerable and strongest bottled beers in the British brewing industry, **Imperial Russian Stout** has been axed by Scottish and Newcastle. This rich, dark, chocolaty treat at 10 per cent ABV, was originally produced by London brewer Barclay's for the Baltic trade in the mid-18th century. After Barclay's was taken over by Courage, production was eventually shifted to Tadcaster, and batches were generally brewed every two years.

But the last brew was in 1993 and there will probably never be another. It hasn't been brewed for five years because Scottish and Newcastle have a warehouse full of it they can't sell. (The Jug and Firkin in Cambridge usually stocks it if you are interested.)

A glimmer of hope is that the beer may be brewed again for the international market, but not sold in the UK.

LOCAL NEWS

Greene King have further endeared themselves to drinkers in St. Neots by closing the former Good Beer Guide listed **Wheatsheaf** in St. Neots.

This follows the recent closure of the Blue Ball in the town as the brewery continue their policy of **shedding** low-barrellage pubs, which at the same time they refuse to sell on the open market, but de-license. There could still be others to follow!!

Bar Manager Mizan Sabur at the **Pheasant, Keyston** tells us that as well as its regular Adnams Bitter they have a changing menu of three guest ales which usually are on for three days at a time.

The **Three Horseshoes at Gravelly** continues to serve Fenland Best Bitter.

The **Crown at Little Staughton** has welcomed new landlord Martyn Smith. Charles Wells Eagle and guest beers are available on handpump.

The **Wait for the Wagon at Wyboston** also has new landlords in Trevor Lane and Walter Hicks. Charles Wells Eagle available on handpump.

The **Brown Bear at Biggleswade** is fast gaining a reputation for good real ales since CAMRA life members Alan and Mary arrived last November.

JOIN CAMRA NOW

Just fill in the form below and send your remittance (Payable to CAMRA) to The Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230, Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW

Hates are Single £14, Joint £17 (at same address)
 Student/OAP/Unemployed/Disabled £8 Joint OAP £11 (at same address)
 Under 26. £8 date of birth
 For Life/Overseas rates please ask for details

NAME..... Opening Times 97
 ADDRESS..... St. Neots
POSTCODE

I/We wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Rules.

I enclose a cheque for

Signed..... Date.....



ACTION GROUPS FIGHT BREWERY CLOSURES

SAVE THESE BREWERIES

Britain's brewers face an unprecedented level of campaigning as CAMRA demands an end to the madness that has seen nine brewery closures threatened in under a year.

MORLANDS ANNOUNCE RUDDLES CLOSURE

Morlands of Abingdon have announced the closure of their Ruddles, Langham brewery in the Autumn.

This follows quickly on the news that Castle Eden and Cheltenham Breweries were to close in the Autumn, with the beers being moved to the Boddingtons, manchester plant where they will no doubt die a lingering death for a year or two.

Action groups have been formed to fight all three of the latest round of closures, with lobbying at national level, to Morland shareholders as well as politicians.

Now Morlands have proved the theory that they only purchased the Ruddles brewery in September last year to obtain the brand names, by shutting the Langham, Rutland plant. Morlands needed the Ruddles brands to supplement Old Speckled Hen, which had widespread distribution but was hardly delivering in terms of actual cash money sales.

Ruddles of course, has a special place

in CAMRA members hearts as 25 years ago when the Campaign was first formed there were but a handful of brewers who remained true to the old ways against the cavalry charge of the keg brigade.

Right up there with Adnams, Bateman's, Banks's, Youngs and the rest was a tiny country brewery with 30-odd pubs and a funny name ... Ruddles.

Since then of course the brewery has been sold to Grand Met -Watney's, then by virtue of the 'pubs for breweries' swapped to Courage who

in turn sold it to Grolsh in 1992.

Morlands owe CAMRA a debt of gratitude: they had escaped a hostile bid by Greene King in 1992, cheerfully admitting that CAMRA's vigorous support had helped vastly.

Langham would cost so much to clear that its asset value is almost nil. A better solution would be either to keep the brewery open, a management buy-out or to sell to an outside buyer.

Certainly the site has greater potential than the smaller Abingdon town centre, site and Morland are showing a lack of faith in its own future by limiting the possibility of expansion. Langham is well placed logistically and has room for a bottling hall. The group's bottling is presently contracted out, but will be of growing importance in the next decade.

BRANCH DIARY

All are welcome to attend our socials and meetings, which are held usually every other Tuesday at different pubs throughout our branch area.

Friday 12th June - **Curry Night** meet **White Horse, Eaton Socon** 8.30pm

Friday 19th June - Coach trip to **Gransdens/Arrington** . Contact Kathy Hadfield 01480 496247

Tuesday 23rd June- SPECIAL A.G.M.Branch - **White Hart, St. Ives** - 8.30pm All members are requested to attend.

Tuesday 9th July- Open Committee meeting - **Prince of Wales, Hilton** 8.30pm

Friday 24th July- Coach trip - **Keyston and Leighton Bromswold**. Contact Kathy Hadfield 01480 496247

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