

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

ST. NEOTS & DISTRICT

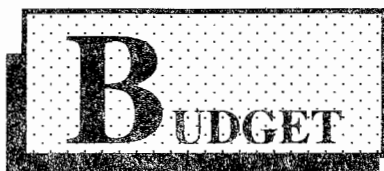
OPENING
TIMES



BRANCH NEWSLETTER

BI-MONTHLY CIRCULATION 2,000 COPIES

Issue No 101 March/April 1999



GOOD NEWS
FOR DRINKERS??

In case you missed it. Chancellor Gordon Brown gave the British Brewing industry a minor boost by not increasing beer duty in his March Budget, with duty frozen until the Millennium.

Whilst CAMRA called for a 20% CUT in duty, at least things have not got any worse. It is disappointing that this call was ignored. The benefits of such cuts if passed on to the consumer would boost pub going enough to increase Government revenues and would fund investment in pubs, making them more welcoming for women and families. The job creating aspect of lower beer prices would benefit the women and young people who make up the bulk of the pub trade's workforce.

CAMRA also reminded the Government that Customs & Excise have also publicly pledged to detect and deter Cross-Channel smuggling which is currently running out of control. Some 1.5 million barrels of bootleg beer entered the country last year, with prosecutions reaching merely one a day. With duty at Dover 33p a pint, eight times higher than it is in Calais it is clear where the problem and cause lies.

So far the Government has taken no action in taking the only really effective action against the smugglers - reducing the duty differential.

However, there is now evidence of a fall in Treasury revenue from beer: in the year to July 1998 it was £2,722 billion down to £2,701 billion in the year to the end of September. So a duty cut would mean higher revenue from increased sales as well as giving a massive boost to jobs in the brewing industry and its obvious spin-off effect. CAMRA has also launched an appeal for a progressive duty system, in line with many other European countries - this sliding scale

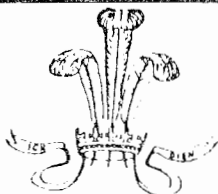
of beer duty would assist small brewers to compete on price as effectively as they already do on quality.

Small brewers are rapidly being squeezed out of the market as pubcos and regional brewers mop up the free trade and abolish landlord's guest ale right. The Small Independent Brewers Association say that without fairer tax the enormous range of beers will disappear along with future opportunities for development and employment.. **The Government should act now to protect jobs, consumer choice, and local economies!**

19th
'BOOZE ON
THE OUSE'

16th - 19th September 1999

The 19th 'BOOZE on THE OUSE' will be held at the Burgess Hall, St. Ivo Centre, St. Ives from 16th -19 th September 1999



The Prince of Wales

'That nice pub at Hilton'

(01480) 830257



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

BREWERY NEWS Nationwide

WARDS AND VAUX SAFE?

The future of brewing at Vaux of Sunderland and Ward's of Sheffield, looks increasingly secure after the board of newly-renamed parent company Swallow granted the management buy-out team four weeks "exclusivity" That means that the board would not talk to other bidders for four weeks, so if the buyout team can get finance together by then, then the two breweries and 350 tenanted pubs are theirs.

MANAGEMENT BUY-OUT?

CAMRA is certainly in favour of a management buy-out, other bidders would only want parts of the package, and while there is no guarantee that they can keep both breweries open they have a better chance than most.

Vaux and Ward's are still highly regarded, and Vaux is good at supplying decent beer to places like Northumberland and Wearside.

WOLVERHAMPTON & DUDLEY SUCCESSFUL IN MARSTON'S TAKEOVER BID

Wolverhampton & Dudley have won the bitter battle for Marstons after a Marston's counter bid for W & D in an effort to turn the tables, failed. The Marston's bid offered no benefit to consumers, probably resulting in two fewer breweries and the loss of beer brands.

The Wolverhampton & Dudley victory will mean a new life for leading premium bitter brand Pedigree which is seen in many of the pubs in our branch area.

The last beer to be fermented in traditional Burton Union sets, Pedigree has achieved wide national distribution and its sales have been catching up on the neglected leader of the sector, Draught Bass.

However, wide distribution has meant consistency problems for a beer which is notoriously difficult to keep, and W & D says the brand is in line for some heavy investment, with unswerving commitment to the beer.

The take-over will mean an immediate shot in the arm for Marston's Brewery - currently working at about three-quarters of its 400,000 barrel capacity as Pedigree will now be distributed throughout the entire 1,700 strong joint estate.

Greene King will strengthen its presence in the South-East area as part of its deal with Wolverhampton & Dudley to partition the Marston's estate.

PEDIGREE SAFE

Around 80 of the 170 Marston's pubs which have fallen into Greene King's lap are in Hampshire where the Burton brewer had a tied estate. Greene King's involvement in the county has so far been mainly free trade, although it does sponsor Hampshire County Cricket Club.

The other 90 pubs are widely scattered across the East Midlands and home counties, although there is 25 in Gloucester and Somerset, where Greene King established a presence with the acquisition of the Magic Pub Company.

A Warm Welcome Awaits At

The Lord John Russell

Russell Street, St. Neots

Tel: 01480 476833

Behind Somerfield Car Park **Hot Food**

Greene King IPA **Daily Specials**

Guest Ales £1.50 a pint **£3.5**

PUBMASTER

Opening Hours

Mon, Tues, Wed & Thursday	11am - 3pm & 7.00pm - 11pm
Friday	11am - 3pm & 6.00pm - 11pm
Saturday & Sunday, Bank Holidays	- Open All Day

LOCAL NEWS

Pubmaster pubs, The **Victoria** in **Huntingdon** and the **Lord John Russell** in **St. Neots** continue to offer a guest beer from the Tapster's Choice range. Forthcoming beers in rotation until the end of April are Morlands Tanners Jack, Charles Wells

ROGER'S ON TOP OF REAL ALES

Greene King licensee Roger Collins of the **Cock**, Church Street, **Gamlingay** has recently celebrated two milestones since taking over the pub four years ago - his 1,000th kilderkin of IPA (144,000 pints) and his 500th firkin of Abbot Ale (36,000 pints). In addition he always has a guest ale on offer. For a village tenancy, 200 barrels a year of real ale is certainly an achievement, considering this is more than the total barrelage of the pub before Roger took over.

Roger is known in St. Neots from his time at the Barley Mow, Eaton Ford where he increased sales in the single bar pub from 190 barrels to 330 barrels, again with sales of real ale in excess of an average tenancy.

Roger admits "Wen your favourite tipple is IPA, the customers are keen to follow suit. A lot of it is down to the confidence of the staff in recommending a product and what better advertisement than confirming the licensee drinks it!!

Well done to Roger, long may your real ale sales prosper!

DERBY LAYS CLAIM TO BEING COUNTRY'S CASK ALE CAPITAL

The battle for real ale is being won in the pubs of Derby.

Local CAMRA members surveyed 63 pubs and found a staggering 119 real ales. Top of the pops is Marston's Pedigree, available in 41 pubs compared to 13 for former favourite, Draught Bass.

Despite the wide variety, the survey concluded that pub landlords were not trying to stock a wider range of real ales than their sales justified, with only three specialist pubs stocking 10 or more real ales. As all the City's pubs were not surveyed, the actual range of real ale brands could be even wider. So if you are looking for a venue for a pub crawl then Derby must start as favourite.

HAS NITROKEG PEAKED?

New evidence that nitrokeg beer sales have peaked has come from CAMRA newsletters throughout the country. And they suggest a bounceback is beginning to take hold as landlord seek to exploit pent-up demand for real ale.

A roll call of success stories with pubs nationwide returning to cask beers after previously having gone over to keg and nitrokeg beers. We know that not all good beer is real and not all real beer is good.

However, many new drinkers in the 18-25 age group have been introduced to Nitrokeg versions of major brands and know nothing else.

If you fall into that category then try the real ale version if you see it and you will be surprised at the difference in flavour. Be aware of the difference between the two dispense methods and don't let anybody fob you off a nitrokeg version as being real ale.

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

Rates 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
101
St. Neots

ADDRESS.....

.....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.....

GREAT BRITISH LOCAL BOUNCING BACK

CAMRA's NATIONAL PUB OF THE YEAR - A TRADITIONAL , COMMUNITY PUB

The Swan in Brewood, Staffordshire has won the prestigious CAMRA award - National pub of the Year and in the process struck a huge blow for the great British local.

The Swan sells four regular real ales, plus a guest, usually from a micro, and business is booming.

The secret? A warm, clean, traditional community pub

with no restaurant, juke box or fruit machines. Just good beer and a warm welcome, done superbly.

Other previously run down pubs have been turned round by good licencees and help from the brewery. Good licencees have always been able to turn round failed pubs, but in the last few years they've been swimming against the tide, with breweries investing

in theme bars and superpubs.

Now there's evidence that the pendulum is swinging back. A review by Licensed trade property brokers Christie & Co says that 3 out of 10 High Street pubs are struggling as rents soar and major players switch their focus back to the community pub and predict a continuing revival in the community pub.

Our own Greene King, Whitbread, Bass and Scottish & Newcastle have stated that they plan to invest more heavily in community pubs. Perhaps we might even see the end of the current rash of pub closures by Greene King!!

BRANCH DIARY

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

Friday 26th March - Belgian Beer Tasting Evening in St. Neots location -For further details contact Kathy Hadfield 01480 496247

Friday 9th April - Pub Crawl, **St. Ives** - Commence **Black Bull** 8.30 - finishing at **Royal Oak**

Tuesday 20th April - Branch A.G.M. - **Millers Arms, Eaton Socon** 8.30pm - All card carrying CAMRA Members welcome

Tuesday 4th May - Open Committee Meeting - **Prince of Wales, Hilton** 8.30pm

Wednesday 26th May - Mini Bus Trip to **Cambridge Beer Festival** - Ring Kathy Hadfield for details 01480 496247

Tuesday 8th June Open Committee Meeting - **Royal Oak, Hail Weston** - 8.30pm

Friday 25th June - Mini Bus trip Northern reaches of Branch area, finishing at **Admiral Wells, Holme**

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

WOODFORDE'S AWARD WINNERS AGAIN

East Anglian brewers Woodforde's of Woodbastwick, Norfolk can lay claim to being Britain's second best brewery.

Woodforde's, who celebrate their 20th birthday next year have won a silver medal in CAMRA's national Winter Ale Championship with its 4.6% ABV Norfolk Nog.

Following on from having won CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain award with two different ales* - a record beaten only by Fuller's of Chiswick they have indeed brought acclaim to the region.

*Wherry in 1996
Norfolk Nog in 1992