

# OPENING TIMES



Issue 116

Autumn 2003

HUNTINGDONSHIRE BRANCH NEWSLETTER

## FLEXIBLE PUB HOURS A STEP AWAY

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, has welcomed the progression of the new Licensing Bill through both Houses of Parliament. The Bill will now go forward for Royal Assent.

Mike Benner, CAMRA's Head of Campaigns, said "After years of campaigning we're only one step away from dumping Britain's archaic licensing laws and moving to a more flexible system. Pubs will soon find it easier to extend their opening hours to meet the needs of their customers."

CAMRA is calling for all sectors of the beer and pubs industry to embrace the Bill and work with the Government and Licensing Authorities.

Benner added "It's essential that the transition to the new system is made as smooth and painless as possible and this will require a partnership between the authorities and the trade."

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## HUNTINGDONSHIRE NAME CHANGE FOR CAMRA

The Campaign for Real Ale is changing the name of its local branch to 'Huntingdonshire Branch'. The branch agreed to make the change from the old 'St Neots and District Branch' in April this year at its annual general meeting and CAMRA's National Executive agreed the change at its meeting on June 28<sup>th</sup>.

A founder member of the branch, George Cottam said: "When the branch was formed in 1974, Huntingdonshire had recently been abolished as a political area, and the name 'St Neots and District' was chosen, although it was agreed for the new branch to take the old Huntingdonshire county area. Now only 50 of our 300 branch members live in St Neots and the name 'Huntingdonshire Branch' reflects the branch area and its membership more accurately."

The Branch organises annual beer festivals in St Neots and St Ives. The St Neots Winter Ale festival is currently looking for a new venue in the town. The 'Booze on the Ouse' event in St Ives at the Burgess Hall, St Ivo Centre runs from Thursday 11 September to Saturday 13 September. Last year's event was so successful that the beer almost ran dry on the Saturday evening. The Branch is ordering more beer to ensure a full range of beers throughout this year's event.

## BRANCH DIARY

- **Tuesday 12th August** - Open Meeting, **Unicorn, St Ives** (ex Greyhound - Unique Inns - PubCo)
- **Friday 29th August** - Real Ale Ramble around **Fenstanton - Crown and Pipes** (Charles Wells) at 8:30pm, **George** (Enterprise - PubCo) at 9.15pm finishing at the **King William IV** (Greene King) 10pm.
- **Tuesday 2nd September** - Open Meeting, **Prince of Wales, Hilton** (Free)
- **Thursday 11th - Saturday 13th September** - **St Ives Beer Festival**
- **Friday 19th September**, visit to **Letchworth Beer Festival**, via train from Huntingdon and St Neots. 19:34 from Huntingdon, 19:42 from St Neots, via Hitchin to Letchworth. Returning either on 22:30 or 23:21 from Letchworth.
- **Friday 26th September New Members Social** A Real Ale Ramble around St Ives, starting at the **Aviator** (Free) (at 8:30pm), continuing at the **Floods Tavern** (Elgoods) (at 9:15pm), and finishing at the **Oliver Cromwell** (Free) (at 10pm). A **free pint** for all new members who join at the St Ives Beer Festival!
- **Wednesday 1st October**, Branch visit to **Bedford Beer Festival**, via mini bus from St Ives, Huntingdon and St Neots. Contact Kathy Hadfield to book your place!
- **Tuesday 7th October**, Open Meeting, **White Horse, Eaton Socon** (Enterprise - PubCo)
- **Friday 24th October**, Social and Branch Pub of the Year Presentation, **Cock, Hemingford Grey** (Free)
- **Friday 7th November**, Friday Four tour of **Huntingdon**, starting at the **Market Tavern** (8.30), **Cromwell** (Wizard Inns) (9.00), **Samuel Pepys** (Free) (9.30), **Old Bridge** (Free) (10.15)
- **Saturday 22nd November**, Tour of National Inventory Pubs in London, details to follow (check branch web site or What's Brewing).
- **Tuesday 2nd December**, Open Meeting, **Oliver Cromwell, St Ives** (Free)
- **Friday 12th December**, Social, Real Ale Ramble of **Eaton Socon**, starting at the **Bell** (Charles Wells) (8.30), **White Horse** (Enterprise) (9.00), **Millers Arms** (Greene King) (9.30), and **Rivermill Tavern** (Free) (10.00)

All meetings start at 8:30pm unless otherwise stated. Further information: Kathy Hadfield, Social Secretary, tel 01480 496247, e-mail [socials@stneotscamra.org.uk](mailto:socials@stneotscamra.org.uk).

For updates check on-line at <http://www.stneotscamra.org.uk> (select News from the menu).

## OPENING TIMES

Opening Times is published by the Huntingdonshire Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale (Copyright 2002). Views or comments expressed in this publication may not necessarily be those of the Editor or of CAMRA.

**Deadline for Winter 2003 issue (117) is  
Tuesday 18th November 2003.**

Contact Andy Shaw, on (01480) 355893, or [news@stneotscamra.org.uk](mailto:news@stneotscamra.org.uk).

### Advertising Rates

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## PINTS SUNK



In June we had a meeting at the **Chequers, Eynesbury**, a restaurant and free house that always offers two constantly changing

guest beers, typically from small independent East Anglian brewers. On this occasion we were treated to **Elgoods Double Swan** and **Mauldon's Moletrap Bitter**.

Also in June we had a trip to **St Peters Brewery** in Suffolk, reported on in a separate article.

In July our meeting was held at the **Chequers, Little Gransden**. Landlord Bob Mitchell's regular, **Adnams Bitter**, is a yardstick for Adnams Bitter "as good as it gets", and Adnams Bitter gets pretty good, so this is no mean accolade. Bob's guests on this visit were **Triple fff Pressed Rat and Warthog**, and **York Yorkshire Terrier** – two beers that could not be more contrasting. "Pressed Rat" (the brewer is a Cream fan) is dry, roasty red-black mild with a good body and hints of blackcurrant and caramel (that's what it says in the Good Beer Guide and I'm not going to disagree). Yorkshire Terrier is an uncompromising hoppy bitter – a classic "Northern" bitter.



Also in July we enjoyed a Sunday stroll around the village of **Great Staughton** (this Shaw's Stroll was in OT 114 in Spring and can be accessed on our

web site [www.stneotscamra.org.uk](http://www.stneotscamra.org.uk)). After the walk we enjoyed the beers at the **White Hart**, a Bateman's tied house. We were delighted to find **Batemans DM** dark mild alongside the regular **XB** bitter, and **XXXB**.

After the White Hart we called in at Great Staughton's other pub, the **Tavern**. New landlords Sue and Graham have continued to make improvements since arriving in March, with a cellar refurbishment already completed and a cellar expansion to increase capacity planned for the future. They have also started to experiment with guest beers, and alongside the **Greene King IPA, Morland Old Speckled Hen**, and **Courage Directors**, they were offering the **Greene King** seasonal beer, **Summer Suffolk**, which has a wonderful spritzy citrus character, perfect as a summer cooler.



We have lots of interesting socials planned for the Autumn, so we look forward to seeing you all!

**THE RED HOUSE**  
Old North Road  
Longstowe, Cambs.  
Tel: 01954 718480

**A GENUINE  
FREE HOUSE**



Real ales feature local breweries including Potton Brewery. Ever changing guest beers

Food available seven days a week and all day on Sunday. (closed Monday lunch)

## MEDIEVAL BREWERY VISIT



On a sunny Summer Saturday a minibus took local CAMRA members on a merry jaunt to Suffolk to visit St Peters brewery. The

medieval St Peters Hall at South Elmham forms a dramatic backdrop to the brewery and opens every weekend as a bar and restaurant attracting locals and visitors to the brewery, which is open for public tours.

The brewery was set up in 1996 using water from a natural deep water well on the site that was the main attraction for the owners in locating their brewery there. In 1280 a priory existed on the site, as well as a farmhouse that was extended in splendid style when the owner bought salvage rights to the priory and used the materials to extend the house. Parts of a moat dating from the 11<sup>th</sup> century are also a feature of the site.

Another attraction enjoyed by the party was the ducks.

A vast range of cask conditioned and bottled beers is produced on the site, many using novel brewing ingredients such as fruits or fruit juice concentrates, honey, and nettles. Pale, crystal and chocolate malt are more conventional ingredients, although wheat is used in speciality beers. The hops are Goldings with some Challenger, and organic hops from New Zealand go into the two organic products, Organic Best Bitter (4.1% alcohol) and Organic Ale (4.5%).

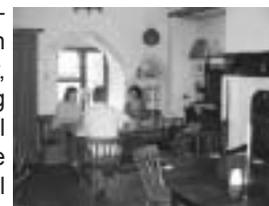
The copper uses electrical elements as a direct source of heat for boiling



the worts. The beers are fermented in four 400 gallon vessels and five 800 gallon vessels. Three conditioning tanks hold up to 1500 gallons. An old storage barn has been re-thatched and renovated with new beams fabricated from old ships' timbers.

An automatic bottling line on site specially made to cope with the characteristic medicine bottle shape used by St Peters, is augmented by a manual bottling plant when necessary. The bottled beers are filtered and heat pasteurised in bottle.

St Peter's Best Bitter, which was on draught in the bar, is a quality drinking bitter with a full body and distinctive fruit and caramel notes. Grapefruit



Beer was the pick of the bottled beers sampled. Wheat beer is the base, and the zesty, pithy grapefruit is in complete harmony with the hops and the malt. Another favourite was Lemon and Ginger Spiced Ale, whilst Cream Stout, with its aromatic dark chocolate character and satisfying bitter-sweet aftertaste and an alcohol content of 6.5% could be the perfect end to the day.

After the brewery visit and the session in the tasting room, we enjoyed an excellent lunch in the brewery's dining room, with more beers of course.



But there was more to come, and after a restful return journey to Cambridgeshire our party enjoyed a stop at Fulbourn for the Six Bells, with Adnams Bitter and Highgate Beezone the pick of a comprehensive range.

# Come and Enjoy Our Great German Beer Festival 19th - 28th September

**Traditional German Fayre**  
Bratwurst and Bockwurst (German  
Sauage), Sauerkraut, Pretzels,  
mixed German salads, selection of breads.

## Music

Friday 19th (8-11.30pm)  
Saturday 20th (8-11.30pm)  
Sunday 21st (4-8pm)  
Friday 27th (8-11.30pm)  
Saturday 28th (8-11.30pm)  
German Umpah Band  
Skiffle Band  
Irish Ceilidh Band  
(details to be confirmed)

## Opening Times

Friday 19th (6-12pm)  
Saturday 20th (12noon-12pm)  
Sunday 21st (12noon-10.30pm)  
Monday 22nd-Thursday 26th  
12 noon-3pm, 6-11pm  
Friday 27th (12 noon-3pm,6-12pm)  
Saturday 28th (12noon-12pm)

## Belgian Beers

Kwak  
Leffe Blonde  
Leffe Bruin

## English Beers

A selection  
of real ales

## Oktoberfest Beers

Paulaner  
Hacker Pschorr  
Ayinger  
Spaten  
Hofbrau  
(all on draught)



**The Green Man**  
East Street, Colne  
Tel: 01487 840368



## PUB NEWS

The **Grange**, High Street, **Brampton**. As part of his ongoing commitment to real ale, Nick Steiger, the owner of this hotel/restaurant/free house has recently invested in new cellar equipment. He has installed a hydraulic cask tilting system. Adjustable for the size of cask – normally firkins or kilderkins – the casks rest on hydraulic pins, which adjust the tilt of the cask according to the amount of beer remaining. This completely avoids the need to manually tilt a cask when the beer level is low, and allows the cask once started to be completely drained without ever being touched again. The equipment comes with a cask lifter allowing the weaker of our society to lift and position the cask prior to tapping and spiling. Although a sizeable investment, Nick says that the added flexibility of the system and considerably reduced wastage, not to mention consistent quality, has made his investment well worth while. The Grange normally has three real ales from a variety of small breweries as well as offering bar snacks, full restaurant and hotel facilities.

The **Dragoon**, Buckden Road, **Brampton** is another pub where the landlord, John Franklin, is a keen real ale supporter. He learnt his trade running the World Upside Down in Raunds in the 1980's, which at the time was the nearest pub to Huntingdonshire that sold Marstons. The Dragoon is a Charles Wells tied house selling Eagle and Bombardier, but John has persuaded Charles Wells to provide him with two independent real ales from their impressive guest list, in addition to the Wells beers. John holds Cask Marque accreditation and is inspected twice a year to maintain it. Another landlord who is justifiably proud of his temperature controlled cellar, John says he has increased sales of real ale by 60% since he took over the tenancy two years ago.

(From our correspondent in Brampton, George Cottam.)

## PUB DESIGN AWARDS

CAMRA, in association with the English Heritage and Victorian Society, has announced the five winners of their 20<sup>th</sup> annual National Pub Design Awards, for work carried out in 2001.

The '**New Build Award**' goes to the **Manor Barn Farm, Southfleet, Kent**. This Shepherd Neame pub started out life as an 18<sup>th</sup>-century barn and has been rebuilt on its original footprint - complete with imposing new timber frame and thatched roof.

**The Test Match**, a Hardys and Hansons pub at **West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire**, located near to the famous Trent Bridge cricket ground, has won the '**Refurbishment Award**'.

The third category, '**Conversion to Pub Use**', was won by the **Gatekeeper** in **Westgate Street, Cardiff**. This building started life as a theatre in 1904 and since the war has been converted into a wholesale chemist and an auction house.

**The Bath Hotel, Sheffield** was the successful entry in the '**Conservation**' category, sponsored by English Heritage. This award is given for work on a pub which conserves what is good in the pub, improves some of the crass refurbishment efforts of the past and ensures that the fabric of the place will survive for further generations of pub goers and drinkers to enjoy. This important side-street local was recently the subject of a first-class conservation scheme, designed and executed by the landlord in conjunction with local craftsmen and suppliers.

The final award, the **Joe Goodwin Award**, goes to the best restored local - **Holt's Railway, Didsbury, Greater Manchester**. This small, single-room pub has been refitted and expanded to the rear, into the area formerly devoted to the toilets and other services. The existing work has been retained, while new elements, such as a salvaged bar counter front, have been sympathetically introduced into the mix.

# The Cock Pub and Restaurant Hemingford Grey

(01480) 463609

## Beer Festival at the Cock

Friday 15th and Saturday 16th August

### 16 Real Ales, including:

City of Cambridge Hobsons Choice, Elgoods Cambridge Bitter,  
Fenland Paranoia, Grainstore Rutland Panther,  
Lidstones Rowley Mild & Rawalpindi IPA,  
Nethergate Sheeps Eye & Umbel Ale, Oakham White Dwarf,  
and Potton Shannon IPA

**Live music** (starts at 7:30pm)

Local band Hemingford Buskers on the 15th  
Somersham Town Band on the 16th



# THE OLIVER CROMWELL

Wellington Street, St. Ives, Cambs.

Tel: 01480 465601

Serving four real ales:

Adnams Bitter

plus 3 regularly

changing guest beers



Enjoy a good pint of traditional ale  
in traditional surroundings

Reasonably Priced Lunchtime Bar Snacks  
available Monday to Saturday

## NEW 'NATIONAL INVENTORY' OF HERITAGE PUBS

### Protection For Pubs With Historic Interiors

Of over 60,000 pubs in the UK, less than 250 have interiors of outstanding heritage interest, according to CAMRA's latest survey results. The huge majority of pubs have undergone drastic alterations and less than 4% have retained features of historic significance.

The 'National Inventory of Outstanding Historic Pub Interiors' has been released by CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. It features 205 pubs with exceptional historic interiors and a further 43 pubs with particular internal features of national historic importance.

**Dave Gamston**, CAMRA's editor of the National Inventory said, "CAMRA fully appreciates that pubs have to survive in the real world of commercial pressures, adapting their business to modern needs, but all too often these pressures have led to 'change for change's sake', with wide-scale loss of historic internal features. The National Inventory is about raising awareness of this problem with politicians, local authorities, pub companies and fellow consumers. It's also about celebrating the best of the pub heritage we have left".

The third edition of the National Inventory has been painstakingly compiled by CAMRA's Pub Heritage Group. It includes pubs from across the UK including Northern Ireland. Pubs are selected purely for their internal physical fabric and things such as beer quality or 'atmospheres' are not considered.

A large number of National Inventory pubs are in statutorily 'listed' buildings - most of them at Grade II, which means their safeguarding is essentially entrusted to local planning authorities. In the past, local planning authorities have not always exercised their control powers with the same force to the insides as to the outside of listed pub buildings, and this has contributed to the loss of many valuable pub interiors.

Not all historic pubs qualify for statutory listing, but they could benefit from inclusion in 'local lists' of the kind some local authorities already operate. CAMRA is calling for all local authorities to establish such lists, which can play a major part in influencing local planning policies and raising awareness about locally important historic buildings, including pubs. CAMRA believes that, at the present time, only about a third of local authorities choose to maintain such lists.

**Dr. Geoff Brandwood**, CAMRA and English Heritage Pubs Caseworker said, "Many pubs have interiors which are simple and unsophisticated and do not qualify for statutory listing, yet they are still of value to the people who use them and help to define the sense of local community. The local list initiative holds promise as a vehicle for protecting valuable local pubs and their historic interiors so that future generations can enjoy them".

- The CAMRA National Inventory of pub interiors of outstanding historic interest is available from CAMRA, priced £2.50.
- Looking for a heritage pub in your area? Full listings of National Inventory pubs can be found at [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) under the category heading 'Historic Pub Interiors'.

In recognition of the interest in these pubs, the Huntingdonshire Branch of CAMRA has linked up with neighbouring Peterborough Branch to offer occasional rambles of some of the region's most historic pubs. These will all be organised by Mick Slaughter, a noted expert on historic pubs, a member of the team that maintains the CAMRA National Inventory, and the photographer that brings you the spectacular pictures of the pubs featured in the CAMRA members' newspaper What's Brewing Beer supplement. The first of these trips will be to a select group of pubs in London, planned for Saturday 22nd November - look for details on our web site, or contact Andy Shaw on 01480 355893.

## REAL ALE IS GREAT VALUE AT UNDER £2 A PINT!

### CAMRA Prices Survey - Real Ale is Better Value than Lager

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, have today released the results of their new prices survey revealing that real ale remains good value for money at under £2 a pint!

The prices survey was carried out during March by CAMRA members throughout the UK. In total, almost 6,500 beer and cider prices were collected from over 1,000 pubs. The pubs surveyed were a mixture of tenanted, managed and free houses and included those owned by breweries, pub companies and individuals.

The average price of a pint of real ale was £1.98, an increase of only 2.65% from the same time in 2002 (£1.92). In comparison the average price of lager was £2.17, up 2.7% since 2002 (£2.11). This is lower than inflation which was 3.1% between April 2002 and April 2003.

Mike Benner, CAMRA's Head of Campaigns & Communications said, "British real ale still offers good value for money at under the £2 mark and is on average 19p cheaper per pint than lager. There are over 2,000 different real ales on today's market and it is pleasing to see that they are generally on sale at an affordable price. Real ale is the best of British beer, brewed using natural ingredients, with more taste and diversity than any other beer style. It's amazing that it is generally cheaper than inferior mass-produced lagers."

Benner continued, "The Chancellor put a penny on a pint of beer in this year's Budget, which will have increased prices in pubs by 2 or 3 pence a pint. We'll continue to campaign for a reduction in beer duty as this will help to stamp out smuggling and encourage people to visit and enjoy British pubs on a more regular basis, rather than drinking cheap imported lager at home!"

The least expensive region in the UK for real ale was the North West where the average

price of a pint was £1.75. The most expensive was the South East where a pint costs on average £2.15.

The least expensive area for cider is, not surprisingly, the South West where it is £1.83. The most expensive was East Anglia where a pint will set you back £2.36.

Benner concluded, "The important thing for beer drinkers is to look for good value. A real ale served in proper condition at a fair price. A beer that is badly served, has off flavours or is lacking in condition is a poor bargain at any price. It's essential that pubs strike the right balance between quality, price and variety."

### New Pub in Huntingdon

The **Cromwell, Huntingdon** - the new Wizard Inns pub - will be opening on August 4th. The Cromwell has 2 handpumps, one for Greene King IPA, and the other for a changing guest beer.

**THE CHEQUERS**  
71 Main Road Little Gransden  
Tel: 01767 677348



St. Neots  
CAMRA  
Pub of the  
Year 2001

Bob and Wendy Mitchell  
invite you to try their unique  
unspoilt village local with its  
own special atmosphere

Different Real Ale each week

## A LOOK BACK IN TIME

### 25 YEARS AGO

In the Autumn of 1978 the revered real ale brewers Theakstons were on the verge of losing their independence as 48% of the brewery was sold to a City investment company. Theakstons denied that the deal was half way to a full take-over. Theakston's Yorkshire brewery and its brands eventually became part of the Scottish Courage conglomerate, where they remain in 2003.

St Neots brewers Paines launched 'Lunchlight', a new light mild, into its 24 pubs. George Cottam of CAMRA St Neots branch felt that the beer would 'suit the drinker who does not want to fall asleep in his office after his lunchtime session'. But the optimism surrounding Lunchlight could not disguise the troubles within the company with boardroom feuding, low profits and high dividend payments bringing uncertainty over the future of the company.

CAMRA claimed that the Courage cockerel was 'in a flap' as Courage dropped cask mild from Kent and East Sussex.

Greene King were under attack from CAMRA at their AGM for their policy of serving cask beer using carbon dioxide gas top pressure in most of their pubs. The brewers believed that most of their customers preferred the beer that way, but CAMRA disagreed, believing that most people prefer cask beer with lower levels of carbonation. But the company did concede that they would consider applications for handpumps from pubs in areas where a choice was not offered. In 2003 Opening Times knows of no Greene King pubs in the local area using gas pressure to dispense cask beer.

Joe Goodwin was newly elected chairman of CAMRA at a meeting of the National Executive in Liverpool.

Wisbech brewers Elgoods launched Centenary Ale, a dark ale with a strength of 1050 (5% alcohol). It was put on sale in all their 58 pubs on draught, many without gas top pressure, alongside their mild and bitter.

Independent brewer Darleys of South Yorkshire were taken over by Vaux of Sunderland, who insisted that Darleys would continue unchanged, and pointing out that Wards of Sheffield had retained its brewery and brands for 5 years since being taken over by Vaux. In 2003 all these breweries and brands (including Vaux) are no more than names from the past.

CAMRA discovered a cask ale called PMA (Pale Mild Ale), brewed by Kimberley brewers Hardys and Hansons for many years and available in just two outlets in a Nottinghamshire mining area. The beer had never been listed in the Good Beer Guide and the brewers explained that it was a slightly weaker version of their Best Bitter.

St Neots CAMRA held their August social at the Half Moon in Kimbolton. The Half Moon after having been in the Good Beer Guide for 10 consecutive years 1975 - 1984, was closed in August 1988.



Half Moon, Kimbolton

In October 1978 the branch met at the Falcon in Buckden and the Green Man, Gamlingay. The Green Man closed in 1989, and the Falcon in 1995.

## A LOOK BACK IN TIME

### 10 YEARS AGO

- CAMRA were outraged at Government plans to drop a new 'full pints' law after a pledge to stop short measure for beer drinkers appeared to have been scuppered by pressure from the brewing industry. CAMRA promised to use over-sized lined glasses for full pints at its Great British Beer Festival at London Olympia, CAMRA's second annual festival at the venue.
- By the Autumn of 1993 CAMRA's newly formed East Bedfordshire branch had increased its membership by 35% in just 3 months. Branch Secretary John Walsh said 'Local publicans have shown an enormous interest and many have joined CAMRA'.
- CAMRA submitted its pilot inventory of unspoilt pubs for consideration as listed buildings after meetings with English Heritage, who had agreed to consider listing pubs (including their interiors) on their merit as intact classic pubs, rather than just worthy buildings that happen to contain pubs.
- Protesting villagers at Steppingly in Bedfordshire set up a drinks marquee outside their pub the Drovers Arms, closed by Charles Wells, who had sold the pub for non-pub use in the face of a bid by villagers to buy the pub as a going concern.
- CAMRA were urging a cut in beer duty in the Autumn of 1993, to prevent the demise of brewers and pubs threatened by a 37% increase in beer duty since 1979 and a 15% drop in beer sales over the same period. CAMRA claimed that its Great British Beer Festival would save £40,000 if held in Calais.
- CAMRA slammed a back-track by the national Trading Standards body allowing brewers to use the term 'draught' for canned beers. CAMRA said that 'if canned draught beer is acceptable then so is 'fresh' frozen vegetables'.
- Adnams Extra won CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain award, the first win by a regional brewer after wins by a national brewer and microbrewers Woodfordes and Mauldons in the previous three years.
- An Innpreneur pub was stripped by bailiffs after a dispute between owners Grand Metropolitan and its lessee, Tricia Boyce, leader of a national association of Innpreneur lessees, NAIL. In a case typical of pubs owned by the new non-brewing pub companies, the rent for her pub had been increased from £4,250 to £18,500 when she had taken over. The dispute was over a contested demand for rent arrears.
- Bass axed its Springfield Bitter, 2 years after closing their Springfield brewery in Wolverhampton. Bass blamed the loss on 'people moving towards national brands'.

**The Fox**

CATWORTH

**The Fox, Fox Road  
Catworth, PE28 0PW  
The RAF Molesworth /  
Kimbolton exit of the A14  
Tel: 01832 710363**

**Traditional Pub Food**

**Regularly guesting:  
Greene King IPA, Abbot,  
Old Speckled Hen, and,  
Adnams Broadside**

## 2 DAY BEER FESTIVAL CARNIVAL WEEKEND AT

# ST NEOTS RUGBY CLUB

## Clubhouse on the Common

Featuring our Regular Beers :- Guinness, Eagle Smooth, Red Stripe, Fosters & Strongbow

Plus Guest & Real Ales such as :- Abbot, Adnams Broadside, Bombardier, Everards Tiger, Marstons Pedigree, Speckled Hen and many more.

*Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> August from 12:00 noon till 11:00pm  
Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> August from 12:00 noon till 10:30pm*

See You There !!!

Join the club to play Rugby in East Midlands Div II or Cricket in the Beds League & enjoy club prices & other membership benefits, ask for details or contact Sean Radley on 07796 935505



In Association with Charles Wells, Eagle Brewery, Bedford

## SHAW'S STROLLS

### *The Hemingfords and St Ives*

**Introduction:** The walk starts at the **Cock, Hemingford Grey**, passing along the riverside, then through the delightful Hemingford Abbots, continuing across meadows and the River Ouse to Houghton, and along a wooded path to St Ives. After refreshments in St Ives, the walk returns via further meadows and the back lanes of Hemingford Grey to the Cock.

Hemingford Grey was originally owned by Ramsey Abbey in 1041, but eventually passed into the ownership of Reginald de Grey. Hemingford Abbots dates back to 974 and the church of St Margaret of Antioch dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Houghton has many fine Georgian buildings.

**Distance:** 11 km (7 miles).

**How to get there:** From the A14 going from Huntingdon towards Cambridge, take the turnoff for Hemingford Abbots, then follow the signs for Hemingford Grey. From the south approach via the A1096 road between the A14 and St Ives, turning left at the roundabout opposite the Vindis VW garage.

**Parking:** The Cock has a car park.

#### **The Walk:**

From the front of the Cock, facing the road, turn right along the High Street, following the road towards the river; passing many fine buildings from Glebe Cottage, a timber framed thatched cottage dating from 1583, to the attractive yellow brick River House, built in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

When you reach the river, go left along the riverside footpath, passing the gate to the Manor House. Originally a stone Norman Hall, built by Payn de Hemingford in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, it has since had many additions in varying styles. The original moat surrounds the house on three sides. Believed to be the oldest inhabited house in England, it is presently occupied by the family of the famous children's authoress, the late Lucy M. Boston.

Passing through a kissing gate, and continuing alongside the river, you pass across the

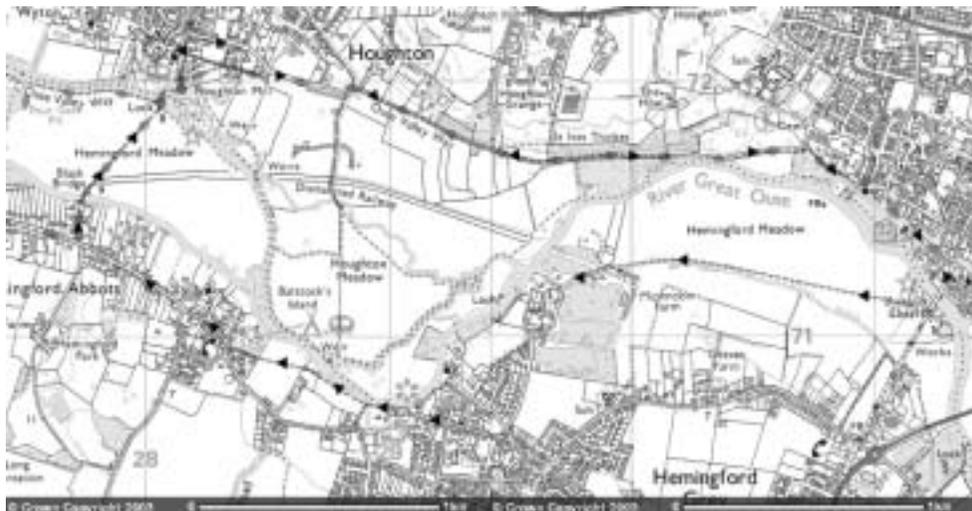


Image produced from the Ordnance Survey Get-a-map service. Image reproduced with kind permission of Ordnance Survey.

Regatta field, site of a popular annual event, the last of its kind to still use ordinary pleasure craft rather than racing boats.

Pass through another kissing gate, through a small wood, and across a field. Now the path passes between houses and holiday chalets. At the road turn right, passing through the centre of Hemingford Abbots, branching left at the Axe and Compasses. Continue past even more delightful thatched cottages, and along Common Lane at the end of the High Street. Note the Old School House – how many thatched schools do you know?



Turn right into Meadow Lane, crossing a bridge leading to Hemingford Meadows.



Crossing the River Ouse again at Houghton Lock, you will arrive at Houghton Mill (National Trust), which is well worth a visit. Pass under the mill, and rather than

take the river path, turn left and follow the road into Houghton village. Here you will find an attractive village centre, with a central thatched clock tower, surrounded by an old post office, many old buildings, and the Three Horseshoes.

Leave Houghton down Thicket Lane at the corner of the Three Horseshoes. Further down the lane, note the somewhat eerie gothic Houghton Manor. At the end of the village, when the houses end, continue to follow the metalled road, which leads to a good path through Thicket Wood. There is a diversion through a nature reserve half way down the path. The path passes paths on the right that lead to water meadows, and a Scout hut, then the gardens of houses on the left, eventually reaching All Saints Church in St Ives. There has been a church on this site since 970, but the current building was mainly built in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries and was extensively restored in Victorian times.

Walk through the church yard round the right hand side of the church, and pass through the wrought iron gates and down to The Waits, which takes you along the side of the river towards the centre of St Ives. Our route back to Hemingford Grey will now take you past the roundabout at the end of the road, either down Crown Street past the Royal Oak to your left, or down Merrylands passed the Nelsons Head to your right, both leading to Bridge Street, where you turn right and continue over the bridge. By now however you will be thirsty and there are lots of great pubs in St Ives (please read the accompanying article for some ideas).

Continuing over St Ives Bridge, note the chapel. The last prior of St Ives priory was allowed to retire to the chapel to live out the rest of his life after the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539. In 1736 it underwent restoration work and two additional stories were added to it. By all accounts this did little to improve it, making it rather ugly in fact. Over the next 200 years it passed through many hands and amongst other things was a private house, used for toll collection and even a Public House! It is now listed as an ancient monument and has been restored to its original size.



Immediately after the Dolphin Hotel, take the public footpath on the right, signposted to Hemingford Grey. The path crosses Hemingford Meadow, and then follows the line of a tree lined ditch. Pass through 2 gates, across what was the old railway line. This leads to a rough road (Meadow Lane) beside a large garden with a lake. At the junction with Meadow Close, turn right and take the public footpath (beside the driveway to No 3), which passes between houses leading to a road where you turn left. At the next junction continue straight, and at the next turn right – you are now in Church Street walking through the heart of a quiet secluded part of Hemingford Grey, with many fine houses. At the gates of

Hemingford Grey House, turn left into Church Lane, after a short walk you will find yourself back at the Cock, where its restaurant will await you. Bon Appetit!

**The Pub:**

**Cock, Hemingford Grey**

47 High Street, Tel: (01480) 463609

11.30-3, 6-11; 11.30-11 Sat; 12-10.30 (Sun)

**Adnams Bitter; Elgoods Black Dog Mild; Oakham JHB; Woodforde Wherry (H)**



The Cock has been serving the village since 1767. An impressively revamped local, in a stylish and picturesque old village, it has an idyllic setting on the River Great Ouse. The real ales are served in a simple unpretentious small bar with basic furnishings and a solid fuel stove. There is a relaxing atmosphere and a firm emphasis on well-kept local ales. The large restaurant offers a great scope with its modern, imaginative menu; it attracts visitors from a wide area. Booking is advisable for the restaurant at all times (no food is served in the bar). No meals offered on Sun eve or Mon.

Car Park, Garden, Meals Lunchtime, Meals Evening, Quiet Pub, Real Fire.

**Other publications:**

**CAMRA's Good Beer Guide**, for more details of other pubs in this area serving excellent real ale. The Good Beer Guide can be purchased on-line at [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk), or by mail order (call 01727 867201).

**A BRIEF GUIDE TO ST IVES BEST PUBS**

**AVIATOR**, Ramsey Road. Close to All Saints Church. Interesting guest beers do not disappoint, often including **Oakham JHB**.

**FLOODS TAVERN**, Broadway. A local outpost and flagship for Wisbech brewers Engoods. A friendly welcome, well presented **Elgoods Cambridge Bitter, Greyhound** and usually a third Elgoods beer, and the best local setting for a riverside beer garden.

**OLIVER CROMWELL**, Wellington Street. Turn right onto Bridge Street and left along the old river quay. In the 18th century this was known as the Feathers, and beer was brewed on the premises until 1920. This warm, friendly wood panelled bar is the epitome of the traditional English pub and a new lease of life has followed the arrival of new owners last year. **Adnams Bitter** makes a welcome appearance as a permanent beer in St Ives, and there are three guest beers. **Oakham JHB** and **Woodfordes Wherry** were notable recently.

**NELSONS HEAD**, Merryland. This is a very busy circuit pub on weekend evenings. Formerly the Three Tuns, this pub name is an unusual local reference to the maritime hero, more common around his Norfolk birthplace. Jazz every third Sunday afternoon. Beers are from **Greene King**, with **IPA, Abbot, Ruddles County** and **Old Speckled Hen**.

**WHITE HART**, Sheep Market. Re-built in the 18th century, its present layout is typical of old inns, and was conserved in a sympathetic 1997 renovation



but permission has recently given for further changes – hopefully these will not change the layout. A central cobbled covered passage, formerly a coaching arch, separates the two bars. Accommodation is available and this remains a busy pub on St Ives market days. Cask beers comprise **Greene King IPA, Tetley Bitter, Draught Bass** and the excellent **Fullers London Pride**.

**Join The Campaign For Real Ale**

Love beer? Want to help protect it as well as drink it? Want to make sure you can continue to enjoy your favourite pint of real ale in your local pub? Well, you may be interested to know that's what the Campaign for Real Ale, CAMRA, is trying to ensure.

We are one of the most successful consumer organisations in the country. We campaign to help protect consumer rights, promote quality, choice and value for money as well as campaigning to save local pubs and independent breweries.

So why not help support us and join today!

How? Just fill in the CAMRA application form or join online at [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) Membership costs just £16 a year and for this you receive:

- Our lively monthly publication What's Brewing, giving hard news from the world of pubs and beer as well as providing information about festivals and special events.
- **Free or substantially reduced** entry to all CAMRA beer festivals throughout the UK, including the Great British Beer Festival.
- **Discounts** on many CAMRA publications, including our best-selling Good Beer Guide.

There are over 180 branches and 66,000 members Nationwide. Between campaigning, beer festivals, brewery trips and pub visits there is plenty going on. So find out more about what's going on in your local area and **join online at**

[www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk)

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- Single.....£16
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I enclose a cheque, payable to **CAMRA**, for £\_\_\_\_\_.

Send to: CAMRA, Membership Secretary, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW

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



## HERTS BIGGEST BREWER SAVED FROM CLOSURE!

The news that McMullen, Hertfordshire's oldest and biggest brewer, is to stay in brewing has been well received by members of the Campaign for Real Ale. CAMRA has been battling to save the brewery from closure since 2002 when a review of the business was announced.

It was said that some of the McMullen family were dissatisfied at the return on their shareholding and wanted to sell the company's site in the centre of Hertford.

Now peace has been restored following the revaluation of the company's large portfolio of unlicensed property.

A company spokesperson said that McMullen's had picked up property piecemeal in nearly two centuries of expansion. The portfolio would now be sold and the proceeds returned to the shareholders. The company is also to sell its old

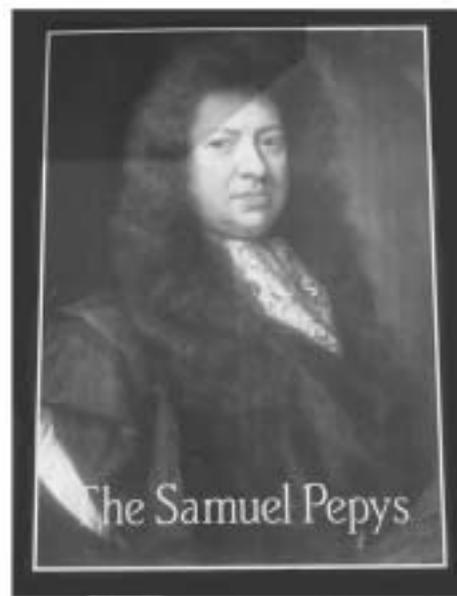
tower brewery, built in the 1890's and redundant since a new brewery was completed 20 years ago.

Mike Benner, CAMRA's Head of Campaigns and Communications said, "We're delighted that drinkers will be able to enjoy McMullen's beers in the future".

"We believe the decision by the McMullen board to stay vertically integrated, selling their fine ales through own pub estate is the right thing to do and it will secure a future for the company." CAMRA is calling for an urgent meeting with McMullen to discuss the future of their cask beers and pubs.

Mr. Benner added, "We want to show our support for what they are trying to do. We'd also like some reassurance that Mac's beers will still be available in the free trade as well as in their own pubs."

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## BRANCH CONTACTS

**Chairman: Roy Endersby**, (01480) 473364,  
[chairman@stneotscamra.org.uk](mailto:chairman@stneotscamra.org.uk)

**Secretary & Publicity Officer: Paul Moorhouse**, (01480) 496247 (h),  
[secretary@stneotscamra.org.uk](mailto:secretary@stneotscamra.org.uk)

**Treasurer & Newsletter Editor: Andy Shaw**,  
(01480) 355893 (h), (07802) 485449 (m),  
[treasurer@stneotscamra.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@stneotscamra.org.uk)

**Membership Secretary: Margaret Eames**,  
(01480) 385333 (h)

**Social Secretary: Kathy Hadfield**, (01480)  
496247 (h), [socials@stneotscamra.org.uk](mailto:socials@stneotscamra.org.uk)

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## TRADING STANDARDS

Your local Trading Standards organisation is Cambridgeshire County Council Trading Standards at Hinchingsbrooke Cottage, Brampton Road, Huntingdon PE29 6NA.

If you have any complaints about trading standards issues at local pubs please contact them.

Cambridgeshire Trading Standards have a role to protect consumers from errors or frauds concerned with quality, description or price of goods, services or facilities and to detect and rectify unfair advertising practices.

If you wish to contact them about any such matters you can telephone the **Cambridgeshire Trading Standards** helpdesk on 0845 3030666. The trading standards web site is [www.tradingstandards.gov.uk](http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk)