



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

opening times

**Huntingdonshire Branch of CAMRA Issue 131
the Campaign for Real Ale Summer 2007**

**Full Pint
Petition**

**Take It To
The Top**

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breweries**

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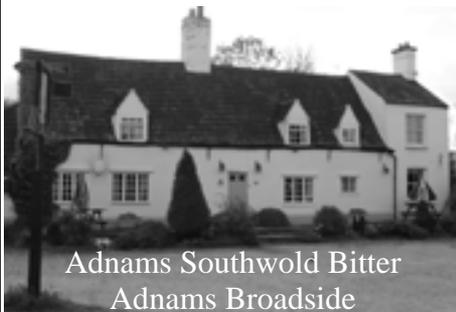


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2 Support your local pub - don't give them an excuse to close it!

Take it to the Top

Sign CAMRA's Full Pints Petition.

Pub customers were robbed of £481 million in 2006. Beer drinkers are being mugged of £1.3m a day! How and why are these crimes against beer drinkers happening? The answer – short measure.

Recent CAMRA surveys of local authorities' trading standards departments have revealed that 26.6% of all pints are served over 5% short. And the worst example found by officers was 13% short.

CAMRA is calling on the Government to stop this legalised robbery. 76% of pub goers want the Government to stick to its promise, made in 1997, to ensure that drinkers get a full pint. Since Labour made that promise beer drinkers have lost an estimated £4.5 billion.

CAMRA's chief executive Mike Benner said "It is a disgrace that up to a quarter of all pints served in the UK are less than 95% liquid when customers are paying for a full pint. The inaction of the Labour government in allowing this unfair practice to continue has cost beer drinkers billions of pounds".

CAMRA is launching a national petition calling on Government to define a pint of beer as a pint of beer and to require licensees to endeavour to serve a full pint every time. Beer drinkers can sign up by clicking on the web site www.takeittothetop.co.uk. CAMRA has also produced eye catching posters and petition cards that drinkers can sign and return for the PM's attention. Credit card sized short measure cards are available so drinkers can check by how much they are being short changed.

It is not just real ale drinkers that get regularly mugged at their local. Lager and Guinness drinkers also suffer from short measure. Pub managers are often under pressure from their bosses to squeeze extra pints from their casks and kegs. The training manuals of some pub companies advise licensees to serve 95% pints.

The current code of practice issued by the trade body The British Beer and Pub Association recommends that its members serve a 95% pint to customers but advise that if they ask for a top up it should be given with good grace. But when was the last time you shopped for a kilo of potatoes or a dozen eggs and had to ask the shop keeper to give you more because they had originally given you short measure?

So let's end this short measure disgrace. Go to www.takeittothetop.co.uk and sign up to the petition.



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Enjoy a good pint of traditional ale in traditional surroundings.
Reasonably priced lunchtime bar snacks available Mon to Sat

Huntingdonshire CAMRA Pub of the Year 2006

4 Support your local pub - don't give them an excuse to close it!

REAL ALE INVASION OF SMOKE-FREE PUBS

CAMRA is urging publicans to prepare for a boost in demand for real ales following the banning of smoking in all pubs in England from 1 July this year.

And pub goers will now be able to savour the flavour of real cask ales as the fog of tobacco smoke is finally blown out of pubs and bars throughout the UK.

In Wales, CAMRA reported a boost in demand for real ale after the earlier ban of smoking there from 1 April.

CAMRA research has indicated that smokers are typically lager drinkers – of 1500 adults surveyed in England and Wales, only 25% of real ale drinkers smoked, but 43% of lager drinkers were smokers.

Locally, voluntary smoking bans have already been successfully introduced in a number of pubs, including the Three Horseshoes at Graveley, the Cock at Hemingford Grey, and in Somersham, the Windmill and Rose and Crown. Huntingdonshire CAMRA's press officer Paul Moorhouse expects to see many similar success stories. 'We are expecting an invasion of pubs by real ale drinkers who will be keen to savour the flavours of cask beers in smoke free environments. It is much easier to appreciate and enjoy the various flavours of different real ales in smoke-free pubs'

And a smoke ban has been good for business at Hook Norton pub the Marston Inn in Oxfordshire. Licensee Nigel Davies said: 'Half of our regulars who smoked have given up, including one who had been smoking for over 50 years – and the rest still come to the pub.'

The research also indicated that after the smoking ban over 6 million pub goers in

England and Wales expect to visit pubs more often and 840000 people who never go to pubs said they will do after the ban. And 68% of smokers said the ban will not affect their pub going habits, with only 3% of adults saying that they would not visit pubs as a result of the ban.

Paul Moorhouse continued: 'We expect a minority of smokers to be put off going to the pub. But this will be offset by more use of pubs by others who will welcome the smoke-free environment. And with over two thirds of real ale drinkers being non-smokers, we expect it to be real ale that will benefit the most from this new trade. Any pubs that do not offer real ale are encouraged to stock one to attract this new clientele.'

The Windmill Somersham

*"Where food
is our
passion"*



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A LOOK BACK IN TIME

25 YEARS AGO

National brewers Watneys brought real ale back into more of their trading areas. Cask Websters Yorkshire bitter arrived in Sussex and Ushers Best Bitter was introduced in Hampshire.

CAMRA's Norwich Branch published the first issue of its branch newsletter 'Norfolk Nips', with mixed news of many Watney pubs in Norfolk stocking cask Websters in place of the threatened local-brewed real ale Norwich Castle. The news of the arrival of cask Websters from Yorkshire was also dampened by reports of a processed keg version of Websters confusingly being marketed in the area.

The European Commission banned brewery ties on wines and spirits, but backed down from a ban on beer ties. CAMRA had been lobbying for improved choice and hoped that pub tenants would at least be given the right to buy bottled beer from brewers of their choice. CAMRA pledged to continue pressing for what eventually became known as a guest beer right for tenants.

St Neots CAMRA met at Kisby's Hut, Papworth, the Bell at Eaton Socon and the Globe in St Neots and Bassingbourn's red Lion. A social was held at the Axe and Compasses in Hemingford Abbots. The



Bell at Eaton Socon

Bell is currently closed with an uncertain future.

One of the last remaining UK brewers producing no cask beers, Mansfield brewery, returned to the real ale fold after producing only brewery-conditioned beers for ten years. Four XXXX, cask-conditioned ale with an original gravity of 1045, was launched in 14 pubs in the East Midlands.

CAMRA Investments, the chain of model real ale free houses set up by CAMRA but run independently, looked likely to change its name at the request of CAMRA's Annual General Meeting, to avoid confusion with the campaign.

CAMRA feared for the future of cask beers from Oldham Brewery following its takeover by neighbour Boddingtons, then an independent regional brewer. Boddingtons was to survive for another two decades but was eventually taken over by Whitbread and subsequently closed by new owners, the global brewer InBev.

In June 1982 CAMRA celebrated 10 years of publishing its members' newspaper 'What's Brewing'. The first two page issue in 1972 had brought news of CAMRA fact-finding inspections of London breweries owned by Youngs and Guinness to discover 'the difference in production of true draught ale and keg'. There had also been news of a 'CAMRA list' of pubs serving high quality beer, to be available to members only at a price of 25p.

National brewer Whitbread's 'brewery tour of destruction', as CAMRA put it, rolled on, with announcements of closures of their plants in Liverpool and Leeds, bringing their brewery closures since June 1981 to six.

6 Support your local pub - don't give them an excuse to close it!

A LOOK BACK IN TIME

10 YEARS AGO

The summer of 1997 saw a victory for CAMRA in heading off a threat to the Guest Beer Law, which gave tenants of pubs owned by big brewers the right to stock a guest real ale from another brewer. The European Commission had complained that the law discriminated against foreign imports and wanted keg beer and lager to be allowed as alternatives to a cask ale. British MPs and MEPs supported CAMRA and the commission accepted Britain's case for the guest cask ale.



Queens Head, Needingworth

St Neots CAMRA met at the Queens Head at Needingworth, the Blue Ball in St Neots and the Nelson's Head

in St Ives. There was a joint social with Peterborough branch at the Bell Inn, Stilton, a walk around Huntingdon pubs and a minibus trip to pubs along the A14 west of Huntingdon.

CAMRA urged the new Labour government to block the proposed merger of two national brewing groups, Bass and Carlsberg-Tetley.

Labour's new Consumer Affairs Minister Nigel Griffiths backed full pints for pub customers, saying that he had 'been calling for a change in the law for a very long time'

CAMRA's Peterborough branch introduced its Gold Award scheme for its local pubs 'doing something positive' for local people. The first of the regular awards went to the College Arms in the city for its natural interior construction materials,

careful layout, large no-smoking areas, a clean glass for every drink and good access for disabled people, as well as its well kept range of beers.

CAMRA's rising membership topped 50000. In 2007 CAMRA has over 85000 members.



Adnams of Suffolk launched a new summer ale Regatta, a pale 4.3% ale designed to compete with beers such as Woodforde's Great Eastern. Regatta has remained as a popular cask ale produced every summer.

Crouch Vale brewery of Essex won the National Hop Association's 'Beauty of Hops' award for its single varietal hop cask beer First Gold, brewed with the hop variety of the same name.

A CAMRA seminar on the Future of the Rural Pub cited rigid planning laws as a major enemy of the British pub and resolved to produce guidance for publicans facing closure. Speakers at the seminar, hosted by St Peters brewery in Suffolk, included Kathy Hadfield, chairman of CAMRA's Pubs Group, St Albans chief planner Peter Lerner, Bernard Segrave-Daly of Adnams and Tony Dadaoun of the Rural Development Commission.

Camerons brewery of Hartlepool won CAMRA's Dan Kane Award for technical innovations in brewing. They won the award for bringing back original Camerons recipes and investments in the brewing process following their takeover by Wolverhampton and Dudley Breweries.

HALF PINTS

Following complaints over their new corporate pub signs, **Greene King** plan to replace them over the next few years with more traditional pictorial pub signs illustrating each pub individually, and carrying a less prominent Greene King logo. The new offending signs had been installed mainly at pubs with little existing Greene King signage, such as the George Hotel in Huntingdon, acquired as a part of the Old English Inns chain.

Scottish and Newcastle have assured their investors that it is business as usual, despite takeover speculation. S&N have denied that they are in discussions with any bidder despite reports of talks with SABMiller and Diageo and interest from Danish brewer Carlsberg, already the owner of the UK's Tetleys brewery. In line with the other global brewers operating in the UK, S&N appear to following a strategy of withdrawal from the cask beer market. John Smiths Bitter is their only cask beer following their recent disposal of the Courage cask brands to Wells and Youngs of Bedford.

Harveys cask beers have returned to Greene King's Lewes Arms in Lewes, Sussex, following an outcry at their removal. Greene King have admitted that they underestimated the level of local feeling about Harveys beer at the pub, formerly a member of the Beard's chain, all of which sold only Harveys beers for many years. The 'Friends of the Lewes Arms' group, which had mounted a vigorous campaign, including a boycott, won praise from their local MP but are now happy to have returned to the pub to drink Harveys.

Japanese lager **Sapporo** is set to be launched into UK pubs in 650ml cans, following a new distribution deal with importers SDB. Sapporo has been mainly

only available in restaurants in the UK but the new deal is expected to see the brand become much more visible in pubs.

Meanwhile, in Japan, a milk beer has been launched by brewers **Abashiri**. The beer, Bilk, has been reported to be made from as much as 30% milk, in a move aimed at using up surplus milk from local dairy farms.

Adnams is to open new branches of its wine Cellar and Kitchen Stores in Stamford, Norwich, Halesworth and Saffron Walden to add to its existing chain of stores at Southwold, Woodbridge and Holkham in North Norfolk.

The cask beer **Morland Tanner's Jack** is appearing as a regular beer in local Greene King pubs, including the King William IV in Fenstanton. Although Tanner's Jack was once brewed by Morlands of Abingdon before its take over and closure by Greene King, it is good to see an honest labelling policy – the pump clips clearly state 'brewed in Bury St Edmunds'.

Local cask beers won prizes in the National Beer competition run by the Small Independent Brewers Association. **Milton** brewery carried off a silver category award for Mammon and Bedfordshire brewers **B&T** and **Potton** won bronze for Edwin Taylor Stout and Pride of Potton respectively. **Potbelly** of Kettering won the overall bronze prize for Crazy Daze (5.5% alcohol by volume).

The **St Neots Breweriana Bash** is being held on Sat 16th June at the Bull's Head, 96 Cambridge Street, St Neots starting at 12 noon. Turn up on the day and buy, trade or sell items of unwanted beer and brewery memorabilia. Contact Maxine Chantry, Tel: 01480 381030 or email Maxine@bbpcs.co.uk.

The Dragoon Brampton



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every day, families
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- Cask Marque approved real ales, Wells Eagle and Bombardier plus two guest ales changing weekly, good selection of wines and spirits.
- Food served daily lunch times and evenings, Sunday Lunch served from 12.00 noon all afternoon (No food service Sunday night).
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**Traditional Sunday Lunch.
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**Open all day Saturday and
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**4 real cask ales served including Adnams Bitter, Fullers London
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**The menu caters for all tastes including vegetarian and
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Telephone: 01763 853515

LOCAL PUB & BREWERY NEWS

The latest Cambridgeshire brewery has been on stream since late last year. The **Kilderkin** Brewery in Impington (www.kilderkin.co.uk) is producing one beer - Kilderkin Double, in the Belgian Abbey style. All the production is sold in bottles through local farmers markets and the bar of the Regent Hotel in Regent Street, Cambridge. The beer may be available in cask at CAMRA's Cambridge Beer Festival, at Jesus Green from May 21-26.

Another good outlet for local bottled beer is the **Three Horseshoes** at **Madingley**. Four bottle-conditioned ales from the City of Cambridge brewery are offered here, as well as Adnams Bitter and a guest cask beer, plus excellent food. CAMRA would like to see more local pubs stocking real ale in bottle. Their long shelf life means that a wide range can be offered without compromising quality.

Huntsbridge, based at the Old Bridge Hotel in Huntingdon, has disposed of its chain of pub-restaurant businesses.



Old Bridge, Huntingdon

The Old Bridge is to continue to operate under its existing ownership and managing director John Hoskins, with plans to add a wine shop at the hotel. The Falcon at Fotheringay has been sold and the businesses at the Pheasant, Keyston and the Three Horseshoes at Madingley have been taken over by the restaurateurs who have been running them under the Huntsbridge banner. The high standards of food, wine and real ales are expected to continue as before.

At **Brampton**, the **Grange Hotel** has closed its bar and restaurant following the sale of the business by Nick and Susannah Steiger. The Grange is continuing to operate as an eight-room hotel.

New licensees have taken over at the **Three Horseshoes** at **Graveley** and the **Vine** in **Buckden**. At the Vine, Black Sheep Best Bitter and Fullers London Pride are regular cask beers..

Following CAMRA's successful first Community Pubs Week in February, CAMRA is sponsoring a new **Community Pub Award** in Cambridgeshire. The Community Pub of the Year Award will be a part of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Community Life Awards 2007, organised by Cambridgeshire ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England). The pub award is being jointly run by ACRE and the four CAMRA branches in the county and the most important pub to its local community life will be judged over the summer. The award will be presented at a prestigious event in September at the St Ivo Centre along with numerous other category awards for people, activities and facilities in communities around Cambridgeshire.

Since acquiring the **Horseshoe** in **Offord Darcy** last summer, owner Ian & chef Richard Kennedy have made major changes, including redecoration inside and out. They regularly keep Scottish real ale 'Ossian's Ale' from Inveralmond Brewery in Perth, and Fullers London Pride. Typical guest real ales are Potton Village Bike and Gold and Shepherd Neame Spitfire, and there

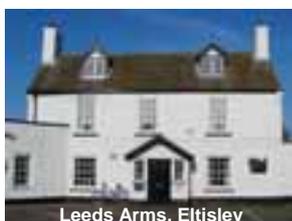


Horseshoe, Offord Darcy

LOCAL PUB & BREWERY NEWS

are beers from Batemans and Greene King. The garden has a kids' play area and plenty of seating. There is an 'a la carte' menu lunchtime and evening and a Sunday carvery (booking advised). The Horseshoe is planning a local beer festival later in the summer. An external smokers' area in the back garden is planned.

The new licensee at the **Leeds Arms** at **Eltisley** is Steve Kingston, a Manager for On Tap Pubs Limited, who have leased this pub from Charles Wells. The previous licensees policy of stocking a good range



Leeds Arms, Eltisley

of real ales will continue, with Wells Eagle IPA, Youngs Special and two guest beers being

available. Steve wants to re-establish the Leeds Arms as a community village pub, and will be organising pub games teams and quiz nights to encourage the locals back into the pub.

The **Marsala** Indian Restaurant in **Brampton** is being converted back into a pub, and renamed as the **Harrier**, the name of this community village pub before it was converted into a restaurant. Real ale had been re-introduced here some months ago, and the old public bar converted back to it's original purpose, and now the lounge is also reverting, indicating that the people of Brampton have need of a local pub.



Harrier, Brampton



North Brink Brewery, Wisbech,
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SEASONAL ALES

Thin Ice 4.7% Jan/Feb Old Wagg 4.0% March/April
 Double Swan 4.5% May/June Mad Dog 4.4% July/Aug
 Barleymeal 4.8% Sept/Oct Old Black Shuck 4.5% Nov
 Snickalmas 5.0% Wenceslas Winter Warmer 7.5% Dec

It takes all sorts to campaign for real ale

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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 _____

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Applications will be processed within 21 days

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12 Join 80,000 members of CAMRA and fight for Britain's beer heritage

CAMRA LAUNCHES BEER CLUB

CAMRA LAUNCHES BEER CLUB TO INCREASE KNOWLEDGE OF BEER STYLES

CAMRA is delighted to announce the launch of the CAMRA Beer Club – a new scheme that will deliver a case of 20-top quality bottled real ales direct to your door for just £39.99 a month plus postage and packing.

This new initiative is a major step forward in our promotion of real ale in a bottle and in offering greater benefits to CAMRA members.

As a member of the CAMRA Beer Club you will discover and enjoy a whole range of specialist beers that are currently not widely available in supermarkets or pubs. Every British beer included is bottle-conditioned and some collections will feature authentic 'World Explorer' beers. It's a great way to expand your knowledge of beer!

Every three months the CAMRA Beer Club will put together a collection of five different beers (four bottles of each). You will also receive tasting notes written by our resident and guest experts.

All those chosen will be high-quality examples of their type, will have distinctive character, and will come from brewers who are committed to diversity and quality.

CAMRA Chief Executive Mike Benner said: "CAMRA would always prefer that people enjoy cask ale at the pub. However we also accept there are many occasions when people do drink at home. In these instances we would prefer that people drink real ale in a bottle rather than canned beer products.

"CAMRA's policy is also to promote real ale in a bottle (British bottle-conditioned

products). We believe that this is the next best thing to cask ale that you enjoy at the pub. The club aims to make available beers that might have not previously or easily have been available in bottle-conditioned form.

By increasing people's knowledge, and by widening their awareness of different beer styles, we hope that they may also have the confidence to try different styles of cask ales at the pub."

Many of the beers selected will be previous CAMRA award winners or champion beers.

Each case is hand picked by a panel of experts from both CAMRA and our partners the Beer Club of Britain. We ensure beers are of the highest quality by having brewing experts on hand to advise.

Beers are selected for consistency, quality and diversity. In the future there will be opportunities for Beer Club members to make their own personal recommendations to the Club.

As a member of the CAMRA Beer Club you will receive details of the latest selection. If you decide to accept it you need do nothing more – delivery to your door is automatic. Of course, you're not obliged to take any of the cases. You can 'miss' as many cases as you like, or if you decide the CAMRA Beer Club is not for you, you can cancel at any time - just tell us.

You can order with complete confidence because every bottle is covered by our full, money-back guarantee.

Non CAMRA members can join the CAMRA Beer Club for £44.95 (plus p&p). For more information on how the beer club works, to place an order, or view our current case, visit www.camrabeerclub.co.uk.

ROY RIDES SOUTH

Introduction:

It's been a while since the last Roy's ride. My winter hibernation is over and, now that spring has sprung, it's time to get on the road again. After looking at the map I decided that it was time to visit the southern part of the branch area. Problem being it's a long way there and back. Time to use the rail network again, but where to start and finish?

An Ordnance Survey map is handy for working out gradient profiles to determine the best starting point. After some checking it is clear that Ashwell provides the best profile, being at the highest point of the journey. Rather than return to St Neots adding another 10 miles to the trip, an excursion into the East Beds CAMRA branch area seems more appropriate, finishing in my old home town of Sandy.

Trains to Ashwell from St Neots or Huntingdon involve a change at Hitchin. Ashwell only has 1 train an hour, so check your times to avoid a long wait at Hitchin. The 11:51 arrival is perfect for opening time.

Distance: 15 miles. (From Ashwell railway station to Sandy railway station) The ride should take around 4 hours, depending on how many pubs you visit and how long you stay in each.

The Ride: The first pub can be found on exiting Ashwell station. So it's time for a beer before the ride starts. The **Jester** is the most southerly pub in our branch area.



It has been extended over the years to include accommodation, but the original building is flint

faced and easily distinguished.

The pub has a reputation for food and there is plenty of evidence when entering the bar. There are backboard specials and a couple of dining areas, including a conservatory. A typical range of real ales is Everards Sunchaser, Adnams Bitter and Broadside and Morlands Old Speckled Hen.

On leaving the pub turn left. Interestingly, this area is not actually Ashwell village, but Odsey. Ashwell Village could be reached by turning left after a few hundred metres, but that's for another time. So for now, put your feet up and coast downhill into **Steeple Morden**. The **Waggon and Horses** (2.5 miles) is the last of eight pubs that once graced the village. It is easily found opposite the village church.



The pub has many facilities, including a large garden, which can accommodate camping and caravans. Check out their web site for the full list: www.waggonandhorsessteplemorden.co.uk.

The Waggon & Horses is a rare outlet for Greene King XX Dark Mild and it's always worth coming here to sample one of Greene King's better beers. The mild is accompanied by IPA and a beer from the recently acquired Hardy and Hanson beer range, Olde Trip.

Back to the bikes and continue into the village along Hay Street to a turning on the left signposted **Guilford Morden**. Follow this road until you reach the **Edward**

ROY RIDES SOUTH

VII (3.7 miles). Again, it's opposite the village church.



This is very much a locals' pub, with plenty going on. The landlord even runs the village

shop next door, which was added when the only shop in the village closed a few years ago. Beers on offer are Greene King IPA and Courage Best Bitter.

Guilden Morden has two pubs - something that's becoming quite rare for small villages. Take the road opposite the Edward VII (Church Street) then turn left into the High Street. A few hundred metres further on is the **Three Tuns** (4.1 miles), a two bar pub with a restaurant in the old lounge. The pub is much improved over recent years

and features an extensive menu. Being a Greene King pub, the real ales are house beers - IPA,



Abbot and usually a seasonal beer.



A rare feature of the pub is the old jug & bottle entrance as you enter, displaying the name of former brewery Simpsons of Baldock, who once owned the pub.

Retrace your route, but instead of going up Church Street, carry on along Pound Green until you reach the junction with Fox Hill Road. Continue on this road until you reach the crossroads with the B1042. Go straight across and into **Wrestlingworth**. A little further on is the **Chequers**

(7.0 miles),

another Greene King pub which dates from the 16th Century and features



plenty of oak beams, a large garden plus IPA and Abbot Ale.

On leaving the pub turn left and continue to **Potton**. After a moderate climb, it's generally a downhill ride. The **Rising Sun** in Everton Street (10 miles) is one of six



pubs in Potton and was a free house until a few years ago when Charles Wells purchased it. Previously two

bars, the pub has been extended and opened up and features a 60 foot well in the bar! Eagle IPA, Bombardier, Youngs Waggledance and St Austell Tribute are on sale.

The Old Coach House Hotel in the Market Square is a large grade II listed 17th



Century coaching inn, a Good Beer Guide entry and an unofficial brewery tap for the Potton brewery. Shannon

IPA and a seasonal beer from Potton are stocked and typically three others, such as Oakham JHB, Woodforde's Wherry and Robinson's Old Stockport. Lunches and evening meals are provided. It is hard work to tear yourself away from such a

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ROY RIDES SOUTH

good choice of beer, but there are still more pubs.

The **Royal Oak** is in Biggleswade Road, and is the oldest pub in Potton. It has a



h e a v i l y beamed interior, most of which was opened up and uncovered in the early 70's. An extension

was made into the adjacent cottage at the same time. Before this was done it must have been one of the worst ever examples of a 1950s formica cover up with original beams and features hidden behind wallpaper and false boarding. Two Greene King beers are available here.

On leaving the Royal Oak return to Station Road and turn left. As you pass the Red Lion, the old

Potton railway station is across the road, still showing a little of its former glory - but sadly no trains.



Further on the **Brickmakers Arms** is another



Good Beer Guide pub - a former Greene King pub that has been turned into a successful family-run

free house. Jennings Cumberland Ale is worth a try.

The final leg of the journey leads to

Sandy. On leaving Potton it's downhill into Deepdale. On the right hand side is a closed pub, formerly the Locomotive, with an old railway signal still to be seen outside the building. It's a bit of a climb out of Deepdale but it's back on the level towards Sandy.



On the way you will pass the RSPB HQ on your left hand side. Stop and have a look at the shop if you have time. One more downhill charge, over the railway bridge and into Sandy. You can either call it a day at the railway station or continue down the High Street - there are a few more pubs worth visiting.

The **Sir William Peel** (13.8 miles) was



previously named the Lord Nelson and more recently the home of the Old Stables Brewery, which

sadly closed a year ago. Two beers worth a try on my last visit were Nethergate Bar Fly and Mighty Oak's Simply the Best. No food here, but there is a fish and chip shop on one side of the pub and a curry restaurant the other.

Continue down the High Street to the Market Square. Turn right and past the Lord Robert into Cambridge





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ROY RIDES SOUTH

Road. **The Queen's Head** (14.0 miles) still shows Greene King signage, but has recently been acquired by Admiral Taverns. It's a great locals' pub and still retains many splendid older features, notably the bench seating in the bar. The pub has been extended over the years and now has a number of cosy drinking areas. I have a particular soft spot for this pub, as it's only a hundred metres from my childhood home. Yet in the past I walked past it many times, not realising that it served real ale. Three real ales are from Greene King, including Hardy and Hanson's Olde Trip and a seasonal beer.

Back to the railway station and time before the train for a quick half in the nearby **Bell** - another Greene King house and very much a locals' pub. It also happens to be the first pub that I ever had a beer in. (No - I won't tell you how old I was). A fitting end to a great trip down memory lane.

Roy Endersby

The Pubs:

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(01763) 852829

info.waggonandhorses@btconnect.com

www.waggonandhorsessteeplemorden.co.uk

12-3, 7-11 Mon-Fri; 12-11 Sat; 12-10.30 Sun

Greene King XX Dark Mild, IPA, Speckled Hen [H]

Deep in the heart of the South Cambridgeshire rambling countryside this traditional 300-year-old country pub in the centre of the village pub makes a welcoming retreat. The public bar has a tiled and wood floor. Turn right through to a cosy

lounge boasting a large Inglenook fireplace, Children are welcome here. The garden features various animals, a children's play area, and a petanque pitch.

Potton

Old Coach House

12 Market Square, SG19 2NP

(01767) 260221

www.pottoncoachhouse.co.uk

12-2.30, 5-11; 12-11 Sun

Adnams Bitter; Potton Shambles, Shannon; guest beers [H]

Large Georgian coaching inn facing the market square. The tap for local brewery Potton, the pub is known to regulars as the Shambles—also the name of one of Potton's ales. Recently redecorated, it has a large front bar, a smaller bar and dining area at the rear, and a restaurant.

Potton

Bricklayers Arms

1 Newtown, SG19 2GH

(01767) 262332

www.thebricklayerspotton.co.uk

12-11 (12.30am Fri & Sat); 12-11 Sun

Adnams Broadside; Greene King IPA, Abbot [H]

Recently refurbished locals' pub with a large bar and garden with a welcoming atmosphere. Three real ales are served with pride by the landlord. Pub games include darts and a petanque team has recently been formed.

Sandy

Sir William Peel

39 High Street, SG19 1AG

(01767) 680607

11-11; 12-10.30 Sun

Everards Beacon; guest beers [H]

Traditional pub with a single U-shaped bar, which can be smoky at times. Two guest beers, from micro-breweries, change often.

A TALE OF TWO BREWERIES

What is better than a brewery visit? That's easy – two brewery visits on the same day! Based on the success of the Hunts branch's recent visit to Masham, we may have established a branch precedent!

On a wintry weekend in February, a couple of dozen branch members trekked up the A1 to North Yorkshire. Our destination was the location of two important names in UK brewing – Theakstons and Black Sheep. My own Friday evening journey included driving through a blizzard – (such dedication) – and we were relieved to arrive in Masham and head to the Theakstons brewery tap – the GBG listed White Bear – for some hot food and delicious ale.

Saturday morning at 11am found us outside Black Sheep Brewery, founded 15 years ago when the Theakston family decided to sell the old family firm of T & R Theakston Ltd to Scottish and Newcastle, and Paul Theakston chose a different path from becoming an S&N executive.

Since then Black Sheep has grown into a major brewery and invested £5.5m in the last 2 years, including a new £1.5m brew house. This has doubled brewing capacity from 100 to 200 barrels. A new fermenting room has a capacity of 900 barrels and is



totally automated. £1m has been spent putting a lot of unsightly apparatus underground, including effluent and oil tanks. This very compact brewery is currently producing 1,400 bar-

rels a week.

The brewery was based on the buildings of the old Lightfoot brewery, bought by



Theakstons in 1919, but which had not been used for many years when Paul Theakston took it over in 1992. The new brew house is in the old maltings and has its own artesian well.

Black Sheep beers are made with Maris Otter barley. 2,000 tons per year is supplied under contract from local farmers, and mostly malted by Forcetts, with some by Simpsons. Pale, crystal and chocolate malt are all used. Hops are supplied from Hereford and Worcester, including Fuggles, Goldings, Challenger, and Progress. The yeast strain is over 100 years old – source unknown!

Black Sheep primarily uses Yorkshire Squares for fermentation, a system similar to the Burton Union system in that the fermentation vessel is in two halves. Fermenting beer, or wort, is pumped from the bottom half of the vessel



through a spout into the top half. This aerates the wort to give the yeast vital oxygen. The wort returns to the bottom half via an "organ pipe". Most of these vessels are made from stainless steel, but Black Sheep has a small number of the



A TALE OF TWO BREWERIES

traditional Yorkshire Squares made from 2 inch thick Welsh slate, acquired from Darley of Thorne and Hardys and Hanson of Kimberley. The Yorkshire Square system was invented by Timothy Bentley and the only other brewery still using it is Samuel Smith of Tadcaster.



The cask washer and filler is unique and was installed by the inventor. It is capable of handling 200 casks in 4 hours in one automatic process.

After lunch at the visitors centre and a chance to sample the beers, we walked briskly a few hundred yards to the Theakston brewery for our 2pm trip.

Theakston is a tower brewery, and in the past barley and hops were lifted to the top of the tower by a sack lift driven by a steam driven beam engine that is now in a Bradford industrial museum. The steam engine also powered the grist mill, which dates from 1911 and has been in the brewery since 1926.

Like Black Sheep, malt comes from Forcetts and Simpson. Six varieties of hops are used: Target, Challenger, Fuggles, Bramling, Goldings and Progress.

The brewery's artesian well is not used because of the risk from agricultural nitrates. The 80-barrel cast iron mash tun dates from 1879 and is used for three brews a day. Fermentation is in a vari-



ety of vessels including open squares and two slate squares, although these no longer operate using the frequent rousing and aerating process employed at Black Sheep.



Three new conical fermentation vessels have recently increased capacity to 75,000 barrels per annum. Best Bitter is currently produced under license by John Smith at Tadcaster, with all other beers being brewed at Masham. Theakston beers are bottled by Marston PLC in Wolverhampton.

Theakston is famous for its cooperage, and 50 wooden casks are still used to supply local pubs.



In the visitors' centre, where we sampled all the ales, we saw an interesting "puzzle" – the wooden staves of a cask which visitors can attempt to assemble – a task that no doubt gets a lot more difficult after a few pints of Old Peculier!

The remainder of the afternoon and evening was happily spent in Masham's many excellent pubs, including the Kings Head Hotel on the Market Square, and a return trip to the White Bear.



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MILD MAKES A MAY COMEBACK

Previous medal winners in the Champion Beer of Britain Mild Category are being celebrated by The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) to mark the resurgence of this delicious beer style.

CAMRA has developed a map of the UK which shows 11 previous medal winners in the national Champion Mild Category, as well as six highly recommended milds, so drinkers can find out where their nearest recommended mild is brewed and ask for it at their local.



Mild is one of the most traditional beer styles, and is enjoying a revival in today's real ale market. Varying from black to brown to amber in colour, it is less

hopped than bitters and is lower in calories than most beers. But milds have distinctive and impressive flavours, often with a light roast malt or liquorice character or nutty flavours. Paler milds often have a gentle hoppy and fruity character.

But despite finding favour among breweries and real-ale drinkers, Mild can be difficult to find at the handpump in many parts of the country.



In Huntingdonshire the Lord John Russell on Russell Street stocks Batemans Dark Mild with its fruity and roasted nut character. The Wheatsheaf on Great North

Road in Eaton Socon always stocks a real mild, often the dry and liquorice flavoured Black Dog from Elgoods brewery at Wisbech.

Greene King's excellent XX Dark Mild can be found at the Waggon and Horses in Steeple Morden, and CAMRA would like to see more local Greene King houses

taking this beer.

May has been designated as Mild Month by CAMRA and the consumer organisation is urging beer lovers to seek out milds in their local pubs and rediscover this wonderfully flavoursome beer. Mild can usually be found in more pubs in Huntingdonshire during May, so seek it out and let us know what you find.



Mild was once Britain's most popular style of real ale, but has fallen out of fashion in favour of other beers. However there are still many brewers who are enthusiastic about the future of Mild and CAMRA is dedicated to making sure their beers get the credit they deserve.

View the map or download it at www.camra.org.uk/mildmap

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Huntingdonshire Branch

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EVENTS AND SOCIALS

May 2007-Cambridge Beer Festival

Wed 23rd Visit to the **Cambridge Beer Festival**, Jesus Green (meet at Foreign beer counter at 7:30pm). County bus services from Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots.

June 2007-London Pubs Tour

Tue 5th Open Committee Meeting, **Dragoon, Brampton** (8.30 pm).

Sat 16th **London Pubs Tour**. Travelling down by train to tour the pubs of inner London in conjunction with the London Pubs Group. Returning late evening.

July 2007 – Tour of St Ives Pubs

Tue 10th Open Committee Meeting, **The Old Bridge, Huntingdon**, (8.30 pm).

Fri 20th **Local pubs of St Ives**. A trip around the pubs of St Ives starting in the Floods Tavern 8:30 / Nelsons Head 9:15 / Dolphin 9:45 / Oliver Cromwell 10:15.

August 2007 – Peterborough Beer Festival

Tue 14th Open Committee Meeting, **The Horseshoe Inn, Offord Darcy**, (8.30 pm).

Thu 23rd Evening trip to **Peterborough Beer Festival** (Trains from St Neots and Huntingdon). Meet at Tombola at 8 pm.

September 2007 – Booze on the Ouse Beer Festival

Tue 4th **Pre-festival meeting**, at the **Oliver Cromwell**, St Ives (8.30 pm) for all those helping with the St Ives Beer festival. If you would like to help at the festival, please contact Andy Shaw, on 01480 355893.

Thu 13th to Sat 15th **Booze on the Ouse** – St Ives Beer Festival, Burgess Hall, St Ivo Centre. Opening Times: Thurs: 6-10.45 pm; Fri 5-10.45 pm; Sat 12-10.45 pm. FREE ENTRY to CAMRA members. VOLUNTEERS WELCOME!

For further information contact Pete Godfrey, Social Secretary (see below).

WHO TO CONTACT

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TRADING STANDARDS

Your local Trading Standards organisation is Cambridgeshire County Council Trading Standards. If you have any complaints about trading standards issues at local pubs please contact them.

They 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.

Contact **Cambridgeshire Trading Standards** helpdesk on 08454 040 506, or at Trading Standards Division, Sackville House, Sackville Way, Great Cambourne, Cambridgeshire, CB3 6HD. The local trading standards web site is www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/trading/. The national trading standards web site is www.tradingstandards.gov.uk.

OPENING TIMES

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To contact the Editor Andy Shaw, see "Who to Contact" opposite.

To Advertise

To place an advert or enquire about our rates please contact:

Neil Richards: 01536 358670 or
N.Richards@btinternet.com

**Deadline for Winter 2007 issue (132) is
Friday 18th July 2007.**

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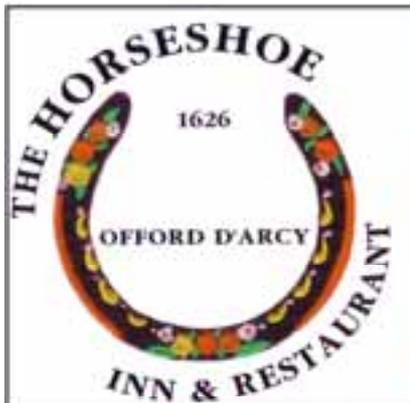
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Table booking on 01480 810 293
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