



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

opening times

Huntingdonshire Branch of CAMRA
the Campaign for Real Ale

Issue 142
Spring 2010



Pig 'n' Falcon
Most Improved
Pub of the Year

Also inside:
Potbelly Brewery Trip
Good Beer Guide Tour
Beer from Brampton Wood

Booze on the Ouse, St Neots Beer Festival
Thursday 18—Saturday 20 March 2010

Pig n Falcon - St Neots

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Huntingdonshire CAMRA
**MOST IMPROVED
PUB OF THE YEAR
2010**

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

MOST IMPROVED PUB OF THE YEAR

The Pig 'n' Falcon in St Neots has been selected by Huntingdonshire CAMRA for its latest 'Most Improved Pub' award. The Pig 'n' Falcon, formerly the Falcon, on New Street, was taken over in March last year by local CAMRA member and retailer John Nunn in a new type of tenancy agreement with Greene King that allows a virtually free choice of suppliers for cask beers to be sold alongside an extended Greene King range. Since the opening day in early April, the 'Pig' has won wide acclaim amongst local cask beer drinkers for its wide and constantly changing choice of typically up to ten guest beers and great atmosphere.

John keeps most of his cask beers in a 'tap room', where beers are served on gravity direct from the cask. The beer range always features beers from local breweries, and the Pig 'n' Falcon is in the Huntingdonshire branch's LocAle scheme. With at least 8 beers available all of the time, beers from Potbelly are regularly stocked, complementing the porcine theme of the pub, and these are supplemented by beers from Oakham, Buntingford, Elgoods, Milton, and many others. In the last 9 months the Pig has offered over 220 different cask beers.

On the evening in January when CAMRA presented its award, the Pig was in the middle of a week long winter ales festival, with over 20 seasonal beers being available over the period.

The Pig also does real cider and perry and always has two choices, often from local suppliers like Pickled Pig and Cas-sells, but also from Herefordshire and South Wales, like the award winning Gwyny Draig, Gwatkin, and Hartland.

Unusually these days, the Pig does not

serve food, but the range of snacks is extensive including 3 varieties of pork scratchings, and biltong. John has plans for more substantial snacks in the future, but the Pig will remain first and foremost a 'wet' pub, focussed on drinkers.

In the last 9 months the Pig has become very well established on the local music scene and live bands perform typically three nights a week, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Local CAMRA member Nick Moore runs an 'open mike' session each Wednesday.

The Falcon was a small one bar pub, but John has imaginatively created an extended beer garden, and on a busy Friday evening it's not uncommon for there to be more people in the beer garden than in the pub!

The Pig is very much a family business and is jointly run by John and his son Brett. John is pictured below receiving the award from CAMRA committee member Sonia Clarke.

Huntingdonshire CAMRA will announce the winner of its latest Pub of the Year award in March.



ACTION ON PUB ANTI-COMPETITIVE PRACTICES

The Government is to revoke legislation that exempts the pub industry from banned anti-competitive practices. CAMRA has been urging the revocation of the Land Agreements Exclusion Order 2004 as part of its campaign to reform the beer tie to improve competition in the pub sector in order to deliver a fair deal to pub users. Large pub operating companies, principally those with 500 or more pubs, will now need to work to prove that their beer tie agreements are fully compliant with competition law. Currently tied landlords are unable to buy beer from brewers of their own choice and are forced to pay prices inflated by around 50 pence a pint. The Government consultation response states that revocation of the Order will promote fairer and more open markets and a better deal for consumers through improved prices, wider choice, greater investment and higher standards of cus-

tomers service. Mike Benner, CAMRA's Chief Executive, said: 'This is very positive news for pub-goers, small brewers and struggling lessees. The Order is an anomaly which has for too long given legal cover to companies which are party to potentially anti-competitive agreements. The large pub owning companies will now have to review their existing beer tie arrangements in the full knowledge that they will be liable to severe penalties if it is subsequently proven that they have breached Competition Law. 'CAMRA remains supportive of the beer tie model provided that it offers a fair share of benefits to consumers through greater choice, price competition and quality. We now urge the large pub owning companies to publicly commit to delivering on the basic principle that a tied tenant should be no worse off than they would be if free of tie.'

WICKSTEED'S WINTER WARMER

BEER FESTIVAL

Thursday February 18th ~ 7pm until Closing
Friday February 19th ~ 4.30pm until Closing
Saturday February 20th ~ Noon until Closing
Sunday February 21st ~ Noon until 4pm



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To allow settling out all beers will be available at any one time.
Also some beers will become 'SOLD OUT' as the festival progresses.
Entertainment is on evening sessions only.

Entry ticket £2.00 per session (CAMRA card carrying members £1.00)

CASK ALE WEEK

Cask Ale Week, 29th March to 5th April, is a celebration of Britain's national drink, and there is no better time to encourage people who have never tried real ale to see what they have been missing.

The Huntingdonshire branch of CAMRA, in a joint event with Greene King, is inviting CAMRA members to '**Introduce a friend to cask ale**', the theme of Cask Ale Week.

On Thursday 1st April, CAMRA members should come along with a friend (who is not a CAMRA member) to the **Pig 'n' Falcon** in **St Neots**, and their friend will get a **free pint of cask ale**, courtesy of Greene King.

The free beer will be one of the special seasonal beers Greene King are brewing

for Cask Ale Week: Hare Raiser, Morris Mayhem and Abbot Reserve.

The event starts at 8.30pm sharp: first come first served—be early to avoid disappointment.

This event is also our New Members Social, when we invite people who joined CAMRA at the St Neots 'Booze on the Ouse' Beer Festival, and volunteers who worked at the festival, to come and have a drink on us.



King of the Belgians Hartford

- Three real ales changing weekly
- Traditional pub food served
Monday-Saturday 11:30-2.30pm, Tuesday-Saturday 5.30-9.30pm, Traditional Big Sunday Roast 12-4pm
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A LOOK BACK IN TIME

25 YEARS AGO



National brewing group Watney Mann and Truman closed their Norwich Brewery production site 25 years ago. The closure of the former Morgans plant represented the loss of the last of the city's four major breweries after previous closures of Bullards, Steward & Patteson, and Youngs, Crawshay & Youngs. CAMRA's then East Anglia Regional Organiser Paul Moorhouse blamed the latest closure on an 'artificial lager demand created by mass advertising for Watney products such as Fosters and Carlsberg, whilst traditional British-style ales have received little backing'. Rodney Mann, Norwich Brewery's Managing Director, also blamed 'the swing to lager from ales' for the closure. A company statement explained that the plant was an ale brewery with no capacity for lager production. Brewing was moved to Watney group breweries in London and Manchester. Production of Norwich Brewery's cask Bullards Mild, reintroduced in 1982, ceased before the brewery closed.

Scottish and Newcastle tabled a £91 million takeover bid for Matthew Brown of Blackburn, sparking an intense CAMRA campaign of opposition, which included a protest in the streets of Southport during the national CAMRA AGM weekend.



The Biggleswade-brewed version of Greene King's cask dark mild, XX, was under threat after the brewery announced that its production was down to only 12 barrels a week. The pale mild,

Greene King KK, brewed at Bury St Edmunds, was also under threat and had recently been dropped from Eaton Socon pubs the Old Sun and George and Dragon.

Brian and Meg Walker at The Angel in St Neots won the 'Best Kept Cellar' award for the third year in a row in a competition run by owners Charles Wells (the pub is now a Thai restaurant).



Charles Wells became the first independent regional brewer to open a home brew pub. A brew house using malt extract was installed in their new Ancient Druids pub next to the Grafton Centre in Cambridge. Two beers were in production, Kite Bitter and the slightly stronger Druids Special.

There were new licensees at Charles Wells pub the Three Horseshoes at Southoe. Brian Brocklehurst, a former police inspector, took over the village local with his wife Janice. A major refurbishment had remodelled much of the interior, and work was planned to improve the garden area.

St Neots CAMRA ran a visit to Greene King's brewery at Bury St Edmunds. There were also spring socials visiting pairs of pubs at the Prince of Wales, Hilton and Kisby's Hut at Papworth Everard, the Three Horseshoes and the Bell in Southoe, and the Crown at Litlington and the Darby and Joan at Abington Pigotts (now the Pig and Abbot). A meeting was held at the Crown in Eaton Socon and the 1985 AGM was at the Falcon, Buckden.

A LOOK BACK IN TIME

10 YEARS AGO



A favourite pub of many local CAMRA members was lost in 2000 with the closure of the

Golden Miller at Longstowe, named after a famous racehorse that was once stabled nearby. The demand for food and family facilities in pubs was blamed for the closure. The Golden Miller had been one of the few rural pubs in the area continuing to focus on the drinks trade alone. St Neots CAMRA responded to the continuing threat to rural pubs by urging Huntingdonshire District Council to adopt planning protection for pubs in its Local Plan.

CAMRA struck a powerful blow against the tide of rural pub closures ten years ago with the launch of its 'Public House Viability Test'. The test provides local authority planners with a means of deriving impartial evidence concerning the viability of pubs subject to closure plans. Such pubs are often run down by owners wishing to cash in on high residential property prices. A checklist enables consideration of factors such as population density, tourist potential local competition and public transport.

Scottish and Newcastle decided to sell its leisure operations and concentrate on brewing and pubs, despite the likelihood that other national brewers Bass and Whitbread would sell their breweries to concentrate on hotel and leisure businesses.

St Neots CAMRA held meetings at the

Exhibition at Godmanchester and the Lord John Russell in St Neots, and there was a curry



Rivermill Tavern

evening at the Kushiara in St Ives following beers at the Royal Oak. The branch's 2000 AGM was at the Rivermill Tavern in Eaton Socon and there was an April Friday Five at Catworth Racehorse and pubs in Ellington, Spaldwick, Old Weston and Leighton Bromswold.

Greene King attacked the trend towards nitro keg beers and accused national brewers of dumbing down drinkers' taste buds. Brewing and Brands MD Brian Field said in an interview with the *Brewers' Guardian*, 'Their focus is on nitro kegs and lager. Whether they have made a mistake only time will tell. I do not want this smooth rubbish. I want cask ale'. Mr Field emphasised Greene King's commitment to cask beer and hoped that as the nationals continued to ignore real ale a gap would open in the market for regionals to prosper.

Oxfordshire CAMRA members gathered in Abingdon to hand over a petition to Greene King's brewing director John Redman in protest against the closure of the town's Morland brewery by owners Greene King, scheduled for February 2000.



HALF PINTS



The Molson Coors brewing museum in Burton on Trent, formerly the Bass Mu-

seum, has been saved after a campaign run by CAMRA, local councils and Burton's Civic Society and Chamber of Commerce. Molson-Coors had closed the museum in 2008 as a cost-cutting measure to save £1 a year.

Minimum pricing for alcoholic drinks could be on the way. The Government's Health Secretary is calling for a minimum price of 40-50p per alcohol unit to be a major part of the Labour election manifesto. This follows a report by a Health Select Committee of MPs that called for minimum pricing to tackle alcohol problems after finding prices in some supermarkets as low as 10p a unit. The report claimed that the move could save over 3000 lives every year. Minimum pricing is supported by CAMRA as a powerful means of supporting pubs and encourage sensible drinking as a social activity in a supervised environment as part of the pub's role in providing valuable community services.

Meanwhile the Shadow Health Secretary has announced a plan to drop the alcohol units system. A future Conservative government would provide labelling of alcohol content in centilitres as they believe this would be less confusing. The current alcohol unit is actually equal to a centilitre of alcohol. The Tory plan would also provide calorie labelling for all alcoholic drinks.

A new use for pubs in South Cambridge-

shire is 'Pubs4Kids', a new initiative in which participating pubs are used as youth clubs between 5.30pm and 8pm. Teenagers are allowed to use a dedicated room in the pubs where they can order soft drinks and snacks and use facilities such as pool tables and juke boxes. This is a new example of the multiple use of pub buildings to provide wider ranges of community facilities, including shops and post offices, which has been widely cited as a useful way of maintaining the viability of small rural pubs.

A bid to ban supermarkets from selling alcohol has been launched on the 10 Downing Street website by Gary Hunt, the owner of a chain of bars in northern England, who admits that a ban is unlikely but hopes that the petition will raise awareness of the problems caused by bulk sales of heavily discounted alcoholic drinks by the off trade.

A Scottish pub licensee is acting against local supermarkets by calling for licence reviews for three local premises licences. Jeff Ellis of the Bear Tavern in Newburgh, Fife, claims that discounting of alcohol products by the shops fails to protect and improve public health, which is an objective of the Scottish Licensing Act.

Darlington council has used the Sustainable Communities Act to propose changes in the law to support pubs by restricting irresponsible under-pricing of alcohol by supermarkets and banning restrictive covenants that allow pub owners to prevent the continued use of properties as pubs after sale.

A private member's bill to help local communities save pubs and other local businesses has been laid before parliament. Leeds MP Greg Mulholland is tabling the

HALF PINTS

bill, which calls for a change in planning law to prevent the loss of community amenities without public consultation.



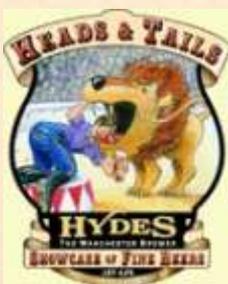
Greene King has launched a free application for iPhone, providing a virtual brewing game and a map system to guide consumers to pubs that have been awarded the Greene King Head Brewer's Club seal of approval for the quality of their cask beers.



Kent brewers Shepherd Neame have lowered the strength of their Spitfire real ale, the company's leading brand, from an ABV of 4.5% to 4.2% in an effort to boost its nationwide appeal.



Thornbridge Brewery has launched a low alcohol cask ale named Pearl, a 3.3% ABV gold beer with a floral hop character from dry hopping with German Perle hops.



Manchester brewer Hydes has launched six new seasonal ales for 2010. The new range is named after circus themes. Heads and Tails (ABV 4.6%) is the first new brew, and every other month will see the launch of a new cask beer,

with Over a Barrel (ABV 4.1%) to be the next brew in March.

Hook Norton Double Stout was the first of the Oxfordshire company's 'Brewers' Selection' range of eleven seasonal cask beers for 2011.



Aberdeen brewer Brew Dog is claiming to be brewing the world's strongest beer. 'Tactical Nuclear Penguin' (TNP), at 32% ABV will be priced at £30 for a 500 ml bottle.

British Pie Week runs from 1-7 March and, as a promotion supporting a major staple of typical pub food menus, is likely to feature strongly in pubs. Jus-Rol Professional are staging the promotion, which will include a competition to find the best pub pie. www.britishpieweek.co.uk will carry information about the promotion, recipes and promotional material for pubs.



www.huntscamra.org.uk/gigs

GOING OUT LIVE
Live event guide, Huntingdonshire and surrounding areas

To find out about live music events in Huntingdonshire and surrounding areas go to www.huntscamra.org.uk/gigs.

To subscribe to our weekly newsletter send an email to: camragol-subscribe@yahoogroups.co.uk

To submit an event to the guide, send the details to: gigs@huntscamra.org.uk or (01480) 477118

PUB PIECES



'F Word'.

Congratulations to the Pheasant in Keyston, which won the 'British' section of Channel 4's



Crown & Cushion

A number of local pubs have reopened following periods of closure. The Bell at Sawtry, the

Crown and Cushion, Great Gransden and Alconbury Mill are all trading again. Initials reports indicated that no real ale was available at the Mill but better news is hoped for on that front.

In St Neots, Punch Taverns' pub the Kings Head is expected to reopen as a traditional pub later this year after a major refurbishment. This follows the closure of



the venue, then known as the Unique Bar and Nightclub, before Christmas after a number of incidents which led to a closure order and licence review by the District Council's licensing committee. The pub is now banned from operating after midnight or offering certain drinks promotions.

Opening Times has received reports of new managers at two pubs in Eaton Socon, Charles Wells pub the Wheatsheaf and Enterprise Inns pub the White Horse.

There is also new management at the Royal Oak and Black Bull in Godmanchester and the



Black Bull

Market Inn in Huntingdon. Shepherd Neame Spitfire has been noted at the Black Bull. At the Market Inn the range and quality of the real ales appears undiminished, with Potbelly brewery's 'Pigs Might Fly' and Youngs Bitter as regular beers and a changing beer on a third pump has included Hobgoblin and Oakham Bishop's Farewell.

There is a new licensee at the Addison Arms in Glatton and good reports have been received of the quality of the real ale here.

Charles Wells pub the Woolpack in St Neots has been in the hands of a new manager, Peter



Butler, who plans to take on the tenancy. Peter and his partner Sue Gilliband ran the Woolpack some years ago, at which time the pub was in the Good Beer Guide.

The Plough at Eynesbury is for sale freehold and the leases of the Crown and the Riverview in Earith are also understood to

PUB PIECES

be on the market.



Batemans' pub the Lord John Russell in St Neots was expected by early in the New Year to be in the

hands of new tenants who were previously in charge of the Willoughby Arms, near Alford, Lincolnshire.



The Mermaid, Ellington is offering a broader range of real ales than previously and

they are being sourced from a number of suppliers. Coming soon are Batemans Miss Scotland, Wychwood January Sale, Fullers London Pride and Wooden Hand Cornish Mutiny. Between 6-8 guest beers are planned each month. The Mermaid has a quiz every Sunday, and special game dishes are served on Thursdays.



Milton Brewery have acquired their first pub in Cambridge after buying the Devonshire Arms in the Mill Road area. It reopened in January. This takes the Milton estate to 5 pubs, with existing pubs the

Coalheavers Arms, Peterborough; Oakdale Arms, North London; Pembury Tav-

ern, East London, and the White Lion, Norwich.

Favourable reports are being received concerning Marstons pub the Prioxy in St Neots. A



Prioxy

good range of four real ales from the Marston range is now stocked and has been noted to be in good order.

A planning application has been submitted for repair to the roof and windows at listed pub the White Hart, Bythorn following severe fire damage last year.

Real draught cider appears to be gaining more local outlets. Weston's Old Rosie



Mad Cat

has been noted at the Crown at Broughton and real cider has been tried at the Mad Cat at Pidley.

Local Son of Sid brewer, Bob Mitchell, of the Chequers, Little Gransden, is brewing a special Chequers Ale from the berries of trees of the same name in Brampton Wood. The berries were supplied by local CAMRA branch founder member George Cottam, who is the warden of Brampton Wood. Bob hopes the beer will be ready for his annual St George's Day celebrations (see page 20 for more details).



31st BOOZE ON THE OUSE



selling a range of Belgian, Dutch, German, and Czech bottled beers including examples of the most distinctive individualistic beer styles in the world, such as Trappist, lambic and wheat beers.

CIDER AND PERRY

The traditional cider bar will be serving a selection of tasty traditional cider & perry,

focussing on Cambridgeshire suppliers.

FEATURES

VENUE

The festival is being held at the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, close to the Market Square, in the centre of St Neots.

FOOD AND DRINK

A variety of hot and cold food will be available at all sessions. Free soft drinks will be available from the cider bar for the designated driver of your party.

CHILDREN AT THE FESTIVAL

Whilst lunchtime is the ideal time to bring the family to the festival, we do allow children into the hall up to 8pm in the evening.

CAMRA PRODUCTS STAND

Come along and chat to our staff and learn about CAMRA, beer brewing and pubs. CAMRA and brewery products will

OPENING TIMES

Thursday 5pm–10.45pm

Friday all day from 12 noon–10.45pm

Saturday all day from 12 noon–10.45pm.

Entry Including Programme:

Before 7pm: £1

After 7pm: £2 Thu, £3 Fri, £1 Sat.

Families welcome until 8pm.

No entry or re-admission after 10.30pm.

Free entry to CAMRA Members at all sessions - A good reason to join CAMRA!

BEERS

REAL ALES

We hope to serve over the course of the festival over 50 real ales from all over the UK, both from the well-established independent breweries and the newer, smaller micro-breweries, with a strong focus on local East Anglia breweries.

FOREIGN BEER

The popular Foreign Beer bar will be

ST NEOTS BEER FESTIVAL

PROVISIONAL REAL BEER LIST

MILDS

- Blackfriars Mild
- Milton Minotaur Mild
- Son of Sid Muckcart Mild
- Elgoods Black Dog
- Dark Star Over the Moon

BITTERS

- Potton Shannon IPA
- Devil's Dyke Bitter
- Bartrams Butchers Hooks
- Brewster's Hop-head
- Spire Overture

BEST BITTERS

- Spectrum 43
- Cambridge Moonshine CB1
- Belvoir Beaver Bitter
- Thornbridge Lord Marples
- Tring Ridgeway Bitter
- Potton Village Bike

STRONG BITTERS

- Humpty Dumpty East Anglia Pale Ale
- Digfield Merrie Monk
- Hopshackle Special No.1 Bitter

GOLDEN ALES

- Digfield Fools Nook
- Wolf Golden Jackal
- Castle Rock Harvest Pale
- Waveney Lightweight
- Son of Sid Golden Shower
- Oakham Inferno
- Elgoods Golden Newt

- Oldershaw Caskade
 - Milton Sparta
 - Oldershaw Isaac's Gold
 - Digfield March Hare
 - Potbelly Pigs Do Fly
 - Stewart Edinburgh Gold
 - Potbelly Yeller Belly
- ### OLD ALES/STRONG MILDS
- Son of Sid "Festival Ale"
 - Woodforde's Norfolk Nog
 - B & T Shefford Old Dark

STOUTS

- Spectrum Black Buffle
 - Grain Blackwood Stout
 - Cambridge Moonshine Chocolate Orange Stout
- ### PORTERS
- Elland 1872 Porter
 - Oakham Black Hole Porter

WHEAT

- Blackfriars Whyte Angel
- Milestone Raspberry Wheat

HONEY

- Bartrams Bees Knees
- Cotleigh Honey Buzzard

LAGER

- Milestone Crusader
- ### SPICED

- TSA Ginger Explosion

BARLEY WINE

- Hopshackle Double Momentum

be on sale, including sweatshirts, t-Shirts and polo shirts, as well as books, pens, badges and beer mats. Adjacent will be the fabulous 'Every One's A Winner' tombola stall.

OTHER DETAILS

THE WORKERS

The festival is organised and run by members of CAMRA who are all unpaid volunteers. We always need more helpers, so if you can help at any session please contact Andy Shaw (see below).

CONTACT NUMBER

Festival Organiser, Newsletter & Festival Programme Editor, Andy Shaw - 01480 355893 - festival@huntscamra.org.uk. Also visit our Web Site for updates www.huntscamra.org.uk/festivals.

ADVERTISERS

A 32-page programme will be produced for the festival. Advertising at competitive rates. Contact the Programme Editor for more information.

Thursday 18th –
Saturday 20th
March 2010
Priory Centre,
Priory Lane, St
Neots, PE19 2BH
50+ REAL ALES
(over the duration of the Festival)
plus Bottled
Foreign Beer
and Cider

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A traditional old country pub

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Menu on Saturday 13th February

Two Courses for 19.99 per head.

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a special menu designed to treat
that someone special in your life!

The White Horse Tilbrook prides
itself on providing a friendly wel-
come, great Real Ales with ever



*changing Guest Ale's, a large
wine list and fantastic food. Sit
in our conservatory and enjoy
the views of the Cambridgeshire
countryside and our large gar-
dens. We are sure you will have
a great time.*

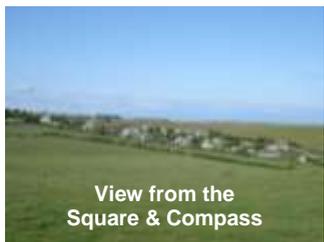
White Horse, High Street, Tilbrook, Cambridgeshire, PE28 0JP
Tel: 01480 860764

GOOD BEER GUIDE TOUR

CONTINUED ...

Part one of my tour report ended at the Buckingham Arms in London followed by a frantic dash to Kings Cross station. I made it back to St Neots in time for the branch meeting.

The next morning I headed off to Dorset and the village of Worth Matravers. The



View from the
Square & Compass

Square and Compass is at the heart of the village with panoramic views over the Purbeck Hills to the

English Channel but my first stop was the village cafe for a restorative afternoon tea.

Then I worked up a thirst by trying out my new iPod on a walk over to St Alban's Head. Perhaps it was the afternoon sunshine but the pub was strangely quiet by day.



Square & Compass
Lounge Bar

When I returned in the early evening the coffers were being swollen by the not inconsiderable

spending power of the cricket team discussing the first day's play of the Ashes series.

The pub even has its own book on sale at the bar. According to 'The Square and Compass – a Newman Century' the earliest recorded evidence of the pub dates from 1772 and the stone floors, fossil museum, nooks, crannies and open fireplace



Square & Compass

all add to the character. As befits the 2008 national Cider Pub of the Year, drinkers had a choice of seven ciders but I refreshed myself with Palmer's Copper Ale, Dartmoor IPA and two local pasties.



Blue Anchor

My next destination was Helston in Cornwall, a 190 mile ride but under sunny skies. The Blue Anchor is a rambling 15th

GOOD BEER GUIDE TOUR

century building with what's believed to be the oldest private brewery in the country.



Keith & Pete the Brewer

I met Pete the brewer who told me about the range of Spingo beers. Spingo is believed to

be a derivation of 'stingo', an ancient generic name for very strong beer and the range includes Jubilee (4.5%), Middle (5%), Bragget (6%) and Special (6.8%). Bragget is claimed to be a 'true' ale brewed without any hops and is based on honey and apples.

The local tin miners were once paid their wages in the Blue Anchor; let's hope they stayed off the Special!



Pete at work

My penultimate day on the road had me retracing my steps back up the M5, the A38 and the A30. The village of Kilmington lies between Honiton and Axminster and the New Inn is a classic 14th century thatched Devon longhouse. After a short trip of only 113 miles I had plenty of time for a lunchtime pint before a walk into Axminster. Given the time of day I chose the Palmer's Copper Ale (3.7%), electing to leave the Best Bitter (4.2%) and Dorset Gold (4.5%) for later in the day when I was promised an excellent meal by the locals. Sure enough the meal was the best of my trip. The pub itself was proba-



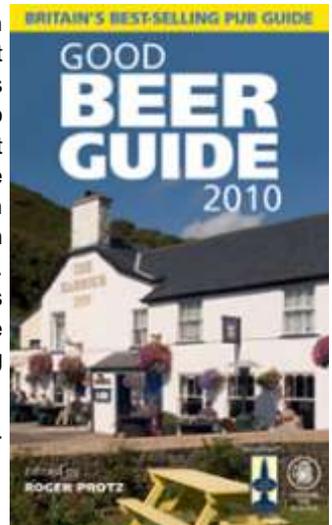
New Inn at Kilmington

bly the 'classiest' without being ostentatious and in stark contrast to places like the Queen's Head and The Square and Compass.

After just over 1500 miles my tour came to an end just before 3pm on the tenth day. Nine pubs which encompassed the complete range of what the British pub has to offer: quirkiness; comfort; history; atmosphere and not forgetting unpredictable opening hours! I'd recommend the trip to anyone but now there are only seven left. The Blue Anchor and the Sow 'n' Pigs didn't make it into the 2010 guide. If you do fancy the

trip then please let me know as I'd love to actually get inside the Star in Netherton next time. But let's check the opening hours first.

Keith Lawson



POTBELLY BREWERY TRIP



Last October, a group of volunteers from the St. Ives Beer Festival set off for a coach trip to visit the Pot-



belly Brewery in Kettering, and call in at a few pubs on the way back. Leaving St. Ives in the late morning, we called in via Huntingdon, Little Paxton and St. Neots and set off down the A14. Arriving in Kettering, the coach had a little trouble negotiating the back streets to get to the brewery, but we got there in the end.

On arriving at the brewery, we were delighted to find six pins of Potbelly beers being served - and we were told in no uncertain terms that we were expected to make good headway into finishing them before we left.

The brewery is situated in an old industrial unit in a fairly residential area of Kettering. The building houses not only the ten-barrel brewing plant, but also a separate bar area. The brewery has been operating since 2005, and in that time has won various awards for its beers, most notably 'Beijing Black'. This is a 4.4% ABV dark mild with lots of dark roast character, and in 2006 was the Supreme Champion at the SIBA National Beer Competition. We were offered a tour of the brewery and, as is usu-



ally the case found out some new and interesting little gems about the brewing process and the peculiarities of this particular brewery. The brewery is planning to expand in the future, so watch this space.

Of the five other beers on offer during our visit, the Aisling and Crazy Daze were both particularly enjoyable, the latter dangerously so at 5.5% ABV.

On the journey back from Kettering, we called in to visit a few pubs. First stop was the Pheasant at Keyston. This fantastic pub is set in an idyllic rural village, and seems a world away from the busy A14 we had just left. As always, they had a range of good local beers on sale (which have earned it LocAle accreditation), including Oakham Baja. Carrying on back down the A14, we also called in to the Fox at Catworth. A familiar sight to anyone who regularly travels that way, the Fox is a really convenient place to stop for some good beer and good food. It was recently awarded LocAle accreditation for stocking locally brewed beers such as those from Digfield, although on this occasion I enjoyed the Abbot Ale on offer.

Carrying on our way, we made further brief calls in to two more LocAle accredited pubs. The White Horse at Tilbrook and the Royal Oak at Hail Weston are both Charles Wells pubs serving their beers in fine condition. A good time was had by all and we're already looking forward to the next thank you trip following the St. Neots Beer Festival!

Melanie Ellis



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Potbelly, Wolf, Oldershaw, Great Oakley, Milton,
and Oakham. Cromwell Cider.

National and Regional Dining Pub of the Year 2010 – Good Pub Guide.

In a continued effort to source all of our produce locally we have adopted
a policy of only using breweries for our real ale within a one hour drive.

Call 01480 463609 or see website cambscuisine.com

BEER FROM BRAMPTON WOOD

One of the more unusual plant species found in Brampton Wood is the Wild Service Tree (*Sorbus Torminalis*). There are three introduced specimens close to a barn near the Major Oaks that stand at the entrance to the main ride.

In the past, Wild Service Tree berries were regularly used to flavour ale and used on their own to produce an alcoholic beverage called chequers, which was used to treat colic and dysentery. Quite what it tasted like, no-one really knows. When well ripe the berries are sweet tasting, but tend to be somewhat gritty.

Wild Service Tree is an unusual name for a tree and a plausible explanation is that the word 'service' derives from the Latin word *cervisia*, meaning beer and the Spanish for beer is *cervesa*. *Sorbus torminalis* can be translated as 'tree good for colic'.

Many people know these trees as chequers trees. Some say that the bark tends to peel off in rectangular strips to give a chequered effect, but this is not readily evident. Another possible explanation is that the chequer board was an emblem for a drinking house that originated in ancient Egypt, which could explain why many pubs in Britain are called the Chequers.

Wild Service Tree wood is very hard and was used in the Middle Ages to make crossbow stocks, whilst in the 19th century the wood was used to make gun stocks. However the majority of the trees were used to make charcoal.

It is now generally considered to be an ancient woodland indicator species, especially in oak and ash woodland, but the three in Brampton Wood were introduced along with the nearby wild cherry trees.

So why, 'Beer from Brampton Wood'?

Some time ago, I advised Bob Mitchell, the landlord of the Chequers pub in Little Gransden, that he should have a Wild Service Tree on his pub sign. He now has a micro-brewery at the back of the pub, called 'Son of Sid'. Bob's father, Sid, ran the pub for 42 years. Bob decided that he wanted to re-create an old fashioned 'Chequers Ale' and asked me to source Wild Service Tree berries. Although Bob's pub is midway between two wonderful Wildlife Trust woodland reserves in Hayley and Waresley and Gransden Woods, checks with the reserve wardens revealed that they had no Wild Service Trees. Gamlingay Wood has a few, but it was easier to collect the berries from the three in Brampton Wood. They are near the entrance and are not fully grown, so the fruit was easier to pick. At the beginning of December 2009 we upset the local chaffinches and collected the fruit in brewer's buckets. (We did leave a lot for the birds).

Bob has now sourced some spelt (an old fashioned wheat variety often used in ale production) and some autumn honey and with this, together with the Wild Service Tree fruit has brewed the first 'Chequers Ale' in this country for probably two hundred years. It will need a couple of months fermentation and conditioning but the Chequers pub is hoping to have Chequers Ale available in bottles in the spring.

Bob has also bought several Wild Service Trees from the Huntingdonshire District Council nursery at Godmanchester to plant in the pub's garden, so that his grandchildren will be able to repeat the exercise with their own 'chequers'.

George Cottam

27th Luton Beer & Cider Festival

Hightown Sports & Arts Centre, Concorde St, Luton LU2 0JD

Thurs 18th - Sat 20th February 2010

Up to 100 real ales plus ciders, perries and imported beers

Opening times and admission prices		CAMRA Members	Non-CAMRA
Thurs	5pm-11pm	Free	£2.50
Fri	Noon-6pm	Free	£2.50
Fri	6pm-11pm	£1.50	£3.50
Sat	Noon-11pm	Free	£2.50
Sat	6pm-11pm	Free	£1.50

Live music from 8.30pm in Theatre Hall:

Thursday - No music
Friday - Giant Haystacks
Friday - Cerberus

(Main hall is music free at all times)



Bought to you by:

South Bedfordshire CAMRA in association with Active Luton



CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

No admission to persons aged under 18. Proof of age may be required. We reserve the right to refuse admission. Last admission 10.30pm. All details correct at time of publishing and may be subject to change.

Visit: www.lutonbeerfestival.com for latest details

LONDON DRINKER
10-12 March 2010
Beer & Cider Festival

Camden Centre, Bidborough St, WC1H 9AU
(Opposite Sainsbury's Supermarket)

Wednesday	10th March	12 - 11	£ - 10.30pm
Thursday	11th March	12 - 3	£ - 10.30pm
Friday	12th March	12 - 11	£ - 10.30pm

Admission Free Wednesday & Thursday (conditions, £3.50 at other times, £2.50 for CAMRA members. Last admission 10pm)
For more details see www.camranorthherts.org.uk

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Hitchin, SG5 1HX

Fri 12th March 12 - 11
Sat 13th March 11 - 11

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

ROUND 1001

www.camranorthherts.org.uk

EVENTS AND SOCIALS

February 2010 – Community Pubs Tour

Tues 2nd Open Committee Meeting, **Market Inn, Huntingdon**, (8.30 pm).

Sat 13th **Community pub tour**. Coach tour to visit and support village pubs to the west and north of Huntingdon, visiting the following pubs: Green Man, Leighton Bromswold; Swan, Old Weston; Addison Arms, Glattton; Admiral Wells, Holme; Three Horseshoes, Wistow; Royal Oak, Warboys; Mad Cat, Pidley. See website for more details. Free to CAMRA members.

March 2010 – Booze on the Ouse, St Neots Beer Festival

Tues 2nd Pre-festival meeting, at the **Pig 'n' Falcon, St Neots** (8.30 pm).

Sat 6th **Young Members Social** - a trip to Cambridge RAG Beer Festival, University Sports and Social Club, Mill Lane, Cambridge. Meet inside the beer festival from 3pm, or later! Call Helen Barnard for more information on 07866 171 176 (or if you can't find us on the day).

Thursday 18th to Saturday 20th **St Neots Beer Festival – Priory Centre, St Neots**.

Opening Times: Thurs: 5-10.45 pm; Fri 12-10.45 pm; Sat 12-10.45 pm.

Volunteers welcome, contact Andy Shaw andy.shaw@huntscamra.org.uk 01480 355893.

April 2010 – Cask Ale Week 'Introduce a friend to cask ale'

Thu 1st New members' social at the **Pig 'n' Falcon, St Neots** (8.30). Volunteers from the Booze on the Ouse festival and all new members who joined at the festival will be treated to a free pint. Also, Cask Ale Week 'Introduce a friend to cask ale' - see page 5 for more details.

Tues 20th Annual General Meeting. **Royal Oak, Warboys** (8.30 pm)

May 2010 – Trip to Peterborough

Tues 4th Open Committee meeting at the **Black Bull, Brampton** (8.30 pm)

Sat 15th Visit to the **pubs of Peterborough**, to include the Palmerston Arms, Charters, the Coalheavers, Brewery Tap, and more. Starting in the Drapers Arms at 13:00. The itinerary will be confirmed via the website.

An up to date listing of social events can also be found at the website: www.huntscamra.org.uk/diary.

For more information contact the Social Secretary (see below).

WHO TO CONTACT

Chairman: Keith Lawson, 01480 352632 (h), chairman@huntscamra.org.uk

Secretary: Richard Harrison, 0774 0675712 (m), secretary@huntscamra.org.uk

Treasurer: Edric Ellis, 01480 492213 (h), treasurer@huntscamra.org.uk

Membership: Margaret Eames, 01480 385333 (h)

Socials: Melanie Ellis 01480 492213, socials@huntscamra.org.uk

Pubs Info: Roy Endersby, 01480 473364, pubs@huntscamra.org.uk

Campaigning: Kathy Hadfield-Moorhouse, 01480 496247 (h)

Going Out Live Event Guide: Chris Knowles, 01480 477118 (14:00-22:00)

22 Updates to Branch Diary - www.huntscamra.org.uk/diary

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, such as short measure or misleading product promotion, 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, CB2 6HL. 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 Advertise

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

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

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OPENING TIMES

Thu 5pm-10.45pm, Fri 12 noon-
10.45pm, Sat 12 noon-10.45pm

Families welcome until 8pm

Foreign beer

Food & soft drinks

ADMISSION (including programme)

Before 7pm: £1

After 7pm: £2 Thu, £3 Fri, £1 Sat.

*CAMRA members free admission all
sessions*

www.huntscamra.org.uk/festival for more details