



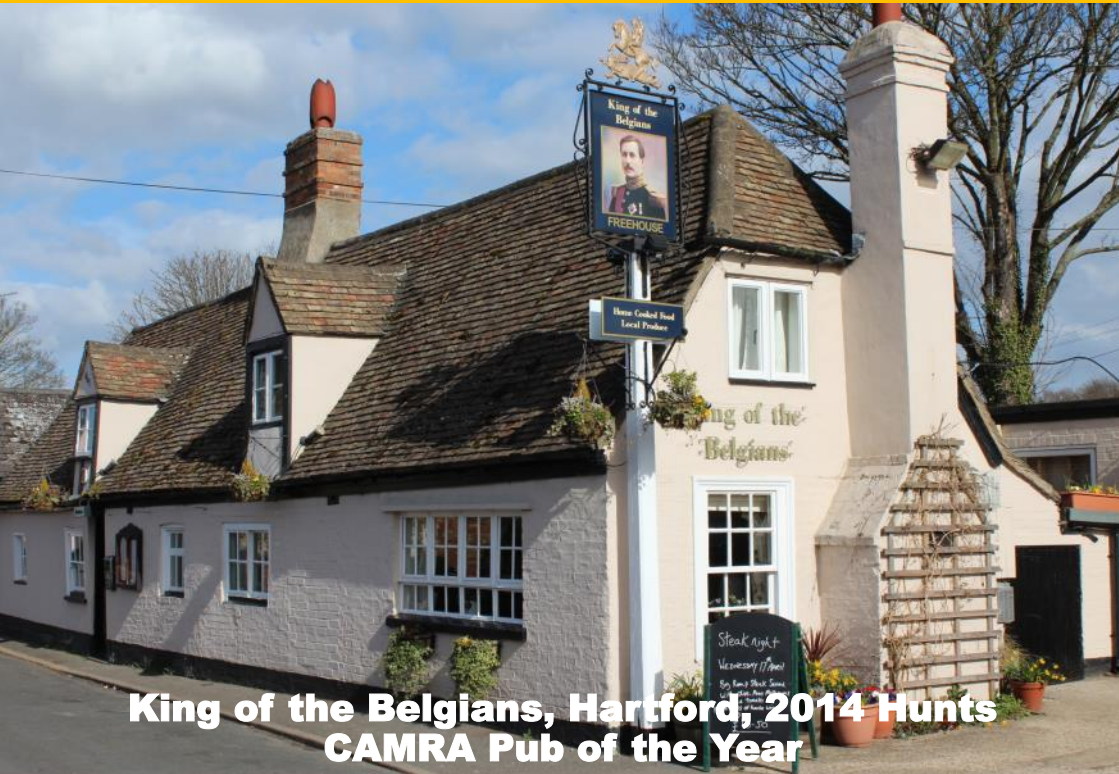
CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Opening Times



Huntingdonshire Branch of CAMRA
The Campaign for Real Ale

Issue 159
Summer 2014



**King of the Belgians, Hartford, 2014 Hunts
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**Booze on the Ouse
St Ives Beer & Cider Festival
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Chairman's Chatter



A warm welcome to this issue of Opening Times. As I write this, the Huntingdonshire branch of CAMRA has just held its AGM and I celebrated completion of my first year

as Chairman. There have been some challenges during this time, but overall it has been a good year for the branch.

In line with national trends, branch membership has continued to grow. We started 2013 with just over 700 members and at the beginning of April 2014 this had increased to 910. Welcome if you are one of the new members! Half of the new recruits were signed up at the 'Booze on the Ouse' Beer and Cider Festivals and I would like to commend the membership team for their achievements.

These two annual festivals have continued to run well, with the recent festival at the Priory Centre in St Neots being our most successful yet at that venue. A big thank you is due to all the volunteers who freely gave their time to help out. Comments received from customers were almost exclusively positive, particularly on the quality and range of beers and ciders available. The venues also met with approval. The increase in the food offering, with a daily hot choice, was also popular, although we do aim to further enhance this in future.

An excellent, diverse line-up of social events was arranged, including a post-Christmas social, a mild month social, a pub history walking tour in St Ives and a pub quiz in St Neots. In addition, three campaigning coach trips to visit pubs across the branch area were organised and we visited the Nene Valley Brewery in Oundle, which gave us the opportunity to check-out some pubs outside the branch area. Our branch website shows an up-to-date list of social events, most of which are also open to non-CAMRA members.

CAMRA's most prestigious publication has to be the Good Beer Guide (GBG), which is issued in September each year. This area contains lots of great pubs, but we have space for only 17 entries in the GBG. We use a beer scoring system to rate pubs and assist with

their selection. The guidelines for this were reviewed and revised late in 2013. Whilst we acknowledge that no system can be perfect, the new guidelines have worked well and have given us an increased confidence that the ratings are appropriate.

Each year, the branch sets campaigning objectives. For 2013-14, these were:

1) List Your Local - Get at least ten pubs listed as Assets of Community Value within the branch area and stimulate the idea of community ownership of pubs. This objective was not fully achieved, but should be soon as we are actively working on this with St Neots Town Council. We are also supporting local activists to save the Eight Bells at Abbotsley and the Mermaid at Ellington.

2) Pub News - Generate sufficient pub news to exceed a quarter of the editorial space available in each issue of Opening Times. We came close achieving this target, but more pub news is always welcome - see the contact details on page 16.

3) Ale Trail - Establish and run at least one successful 'Ale Trail' with the aim of encouraging more people to visit a wider range of pubs. This objective was achieved with the successful LocAle pub trail during summer 2013. A similar trail, based on real cider and perry, is starting with this issue of Opening Times. Please do take part – see the centre pages for more details.

A new branch committee was elected at the AGM, although there still is room for more members to join. There are plenty of challenges for us to tackle. We need to actively campaign against pub closures, particularly the major threat that comes from pubs being converted into supermarkets. We must also continue to support our branch members with a high quality social events programme and to ensure that we have sufficient volunteers to make our two annual beers festivals go from strength to strength. So please get in touch if you would like to volunteer!

Cheers, until next time.
Richard

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Pub of the Year 2006

The Cock Hemingford Grey



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Friday-Sunday
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National Pub of the Year 2013 (Good Pub Guide)

Cambridgeshire Dining Pub of the Year 2013 (Good Pub Guide)

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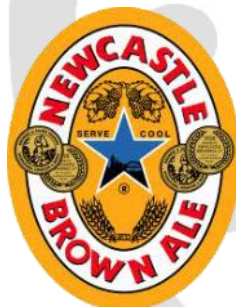
BREWERIES SUCH AS...

**Five Points
Hardknott
Mallinsons
Redemption
Summer Wine
Weird Beard**
(open to requests)

Brewery list constantly changing

A Look Back In Time 10 Years Ago

A pub leaseholder was awarded £250,000 in damages when a court upheld his claim against pub company Innpreneur and its owners, Japanese bank Nomura, for unfair pub lease conditions that made it impossible for his two pubs to remain competitive. The case fuelled political pressure for reform of pub company leases and ties for supply of drinks. A Trade and Industry Select Committee had begun an investigation of the pub company tie, focussing on levels of rent and the profit margins involved in supply of beer to tenants.



National brewing group Scottish and Newcastle closed its famous Tyne Brewery, the home of Newcastle Brown. S & N were planning to transfer production of Theakstons beers and Newcastle Brown to the John Smiths

brewery at Tadcaster and Federation brewery in Gateshead respectively. CAMRA objected to an application by S & N for the revocation of Newcastle Brown's Protective Geographical Indication status. Revocation would allow them to continue to use the brand name even if it were no longer brewed in Newcastle. CAMRA's John Holland said that revocation 'would undermine the whole system'.



Iconic real ale brands Brakspear's Bitter and Special returned to their home county of Oxfordshire. They had been brewed by Burtonwood

brewery in Cheshire since the closure in 2002 by Brakspaeer of its Henley brewery

and sale of its beer brands to Refresh UK. In the latest twist to the tale, space had become available for Refresh to expand its Wychwood brewery at Witney, Oxfordshire, and the original Brakspear copper was installed there along with a new separate fermenting room for the Brakspear beers. Production began in the summer of 2004.



A real draught cider, Gwynnt Y Ddraig Medium, made in

Glamorgan, became the first Welsh cider to win CAMRA's national Cider of the Year competition.

Huntingdonshire CAMRA held meetings at the King William IV, Fenstanton, the Royal Oak at Hail Weston and the Woolpack in St Neots. There was a summer outing by rail to Alton, visiting the Triple FFF brewery tap and Watercress Railway. There were also trips by road to the Rushden Historical Transport Museum and Victorian bar, and some riverside pubs in the Ouse Valley.

Production of the historic bottled real ale



Worthington White Shield returned to its home in Burton as Coors UK decided to relaunch White Shield and brew it at their Museum Brewery at the Coors Visitor Centre, formerly the

Bass Museum. For the previous two years, White Shield had been brewed under licence by King and Barnes at Horsham, Sussex.

Global drinks group Diageo closed its Guinness brewery at Park Royal in London and transferred production to its Dublin brewery.



A Look Back In Time 25 Years Ago

Property and leisure group Brent Walker closed Ipswich brewery Tolly Cobbold just a few months after buying it, along with Hartlepool brewer Camerons, from David and Frederick Barclay. The Barclay Brothers had bought out the owners of the two breweries, Ellerman Lines, in the early 1980s. Brent Walker claimed that the Ipswich brewery had been uneconomical because it had been brewing at only a third of its capacity. The group planned to concentrate production in Hartlepool.

CAMRA became the owner of its administrative headquarters at 34 Alma Road, St Albans by buying the freehold of the office it had rented since 1975, when it moved from an office over a bicycle shop in Victoria Road, St Albans. Prior to that, CAMRA's nerve centre had been, notoriously, a shoebox and later a bedroom belonging to founder members of the Campaign.

The government allayed fears of Britain's smaller brewing companies by announcing that their plans to reform the beer and pubs industry would focus on the dominant market position of the national brewers. Independent brewers would be largely exempt from any break-up of brewery tied pub estates or guest beer requirements in response to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission report following its major investigation into the supply of beer in the UK.

Revered Peterborough pub the Still remained the subject of a dispute between its owners, the Norwich Union group, and Peterborough CAMRA. Norwich Union's redevelopment plans would mean that the Still would be locked inside the Westgate shopping centre, also owned by Norwich Union. This would lead to the enforced closure of the pub at 9pm each evening owing to vandalism issues associated with a right of way.

In the summer of 1989, St Neots CAMRA held 'double pub socials' in May at the Riverview in Earith then the Pike and Eel at Needingworth, and in June at the Pig and Abbot at Abington Pigotts then the Downing Arms at Tadlow. July outings were to the Rose and Crown then the Windmill at Somersham, and later in the month the Racehorse at Catworth followed by the White Horse, Tilbrook.

CAMRA reported 'Glasnost at Greenall' as the major brewing group Greenall Whitley entered the premium cask beer market with the launch of the 4.5% ABV Thomas Greenall's Original Bitter. The brewery had also separated cask from keg beer production, with 100% malt mashes and the end of high-gravity brewing for cask beer. Sixty CAMRA members attended the launch, which followed many years when CAMRA's relationship with the brewery had been virtually non-existent, according to CAMRA.

Ye Olde Sun



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Pub Pieces

What's On in Your Local? Reports in Pub Pieces are provided by our branch pub contacts, licensees, local CAMRA members and Opening Times readers. Further news of changes at local pubs is welcome.

Please send news to news@huntscamra.org.uk

The **Black Bull** in **Godmanchester** closed in



February for a major refurbishment. Owners Enterprise Inns are revamping the pub following the ending of a

short term lease on the pub. A manager had been appointed by the previous tenant. Enterprise is hoping to arrange a long term let following the reopening of the pub.

The future of the **Old Falcon** in **St Neots** is still uncertain, but owner Dennis Whitfield has indicated that he is no longer looking to sell the property and his son has now taken on the project. Mr Whitfield had wanted to turn the Old Falcon into a new development with shops, restaurants, bars and flats, but a stumbling block had been that the district council would not allow the demolition of a 19th century boathouse on the site unless a public walkway was opened.

The **Axe & Compass**, **Hemingford Abbots**



is under new management. The previous licensees Nigel and Jenny retired at the end of January. The pub re-opened following some

re-decoration in February and the pub is now run by three partners, Neil and Tracy Peck, and Emma Tester - the daughter of Nigel and Jenny.

The **Cock**, **Hemingford Grey** has fully re-opened after a major refurbishment. Their

regular annual beer festival will be held this year on 15th-17th August.

The Comrades Club in Godmanchester is holding a beer festival, Friday 16th—Sunday 18th May.

Tilfest, a beer and music festival held in the



gardens of the **White Horse** in **Tilbrook** (near Kimbolton) will take place from Sat 24th -

Mon 26th May. Entry is free and the event is held under cover. The chosen charity is the Huntingdon branch of the MS Society; so go along and give support to this worthy cause.

The Pig & Hog Summer Beer Festival will be from Thursday 10th July—Thursday 24th July.

CAMRA
CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

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Huntingdonshire CAMRA

Cider Trail

Join our Cider Trail!

Visit great pubs! Drink great cider & perry!

Support local community pubs!

Support local cider producers!

Win prizes donated by Cromwell Cider!



What is a Cider Trail?

Our Cider Trail aims to encourage local drinkers to visit local pubs, especially ones they might not know, and ideally sample real cider and perry. The Trail features pubs which (usually) sell locally produced cider.

How Does it Work?

Go to a participating pub and order a pint or half of real cider and ask to have your form marked with a sticker.

Collect at least fourteen different stickers on the Trail to qualify for the prize of one or more bottles of cider from **Cromwell Cider**. (14=one bottle, 16=two bottles, 18=three bottles).

Send your entry, by 31 October, to Cider Trail, 13a Peppercorn Lane, Eaton Socon, St Neots, PE19 8HL.

Everyone visiting all of the pubs on the Trail will go into a draw for a very special prize - a 10 litre box of **Cromwell Cider!**

Public Transport

Most pubs on the Trail are accessible by public transport, though buses are few and far between to some of the rural pubs. For more details, visit our website at www.huntscamra.org.uk.

Please don't drink and drive.

Want to Learn More About Cider?

On Tuesday, 22nd July there will be tutored cider tasting at the Hog & Partridge, St. Neots, starting at 8pm.

There will be a charge of £5 which will get you about a dozen samples of cider and a buffet.

To book your place, please send an email to cider@huntscamra.org.uk or phone 07941 435195.

My favourite cider was:

.....

in (Pub)

My Name

Address

Postcode

Email

Phone

I would like to collect my cider from:

Huntingdon

St Ives

St Neots

Huntingdonshire CAMRA Cider Trail

White Hart, Alconbury Weston,
PE28 4JA (Westons)

Crown, Broughton,
PE28 3AY (Glebe Farm)

Racehorse, Catworth,
PE28 0PF (Westons)

George & Dragon, Eaton Socon,
PE19 8BL (Westons)

Rivermill Tavern, Eaton Socon,
PE19 8GW (Cromwell)

Cock, Gamlingay,
SG19 3JH (Westons)

Addison Arms, Glatton,
PE28 5RZ (Oakham)

Three Horseshoes, Graveley,
PE19 6PL (Westons)

Bell, Great Paxton,
PE19 6RF (Cromwell)

King of the Belgians, Hartford,
PE29 1XU (Cromwell)

Huntingdonshire CAMRA Cider Trail

Axe & Compass, Hemingford Abbots,
PE28 9AH (Cromwell)

Cock, Hemingford Grey,
PE28 9BJ (Cromwell)

Three Horseshoes, Houghton,
PE28 2BE (Cromwell)

Chequers, Little Gransden,
SG19 3DW (Pickled Pig)

Queens Head, Needingworth,
PE27 4SA (Westons)

Oliver Cromwell, St Ives,
PE27 5AZ (Cromwell, Glebe Farm)

Royal Oak, St Ives,
PE27 5EB (Westons)

Hog & Partridge, St Neots,
PE19 1BA (Cromwell, Westons)

Pig 'n' Falcon, St Neots,
PE19 1AE (Cromwell, Westons)

Weeping Ash, St Neots,
PE19 1AD (Gwynt y Ddraig, Westons)

Information about local cider producers

CROMWELL, Hemingford Grey, Cambridgeshire. www.cromwellcider.co.uk

Award winning cider maker and Huntingdonshire's main producer. They use culinary and dessert fruit which is predominately from their own trees.

Cromwell produces a wide range of ciders including Oliver's Choice, Oliver's Sweetheart, Oliver's Last Gasp, and Oliver's Revenge, plus Roundhead Perry. Oliver's Choice is the most popular and most widely available cider.

Available in a variety of containers including 750ml bottles, 10 litre cubes, and 5 gallon polycasks.

PICKLED PIG, Stretham, Cambridgeshire. www.pickledpig.co.uk

Based in Stretham, Cambridgeshire, these

ciders are widely available in the eastern part of Cambridgeshire, but one outlet is in our area, the Chequers, Little Gransden.

Pickled Pig offers the following: New Season Porker, Porker's Snout, Old Spot, Sweet Little Pig, Rum Cask, Single Variety Ciders, Gareth's Perry and Jewels Perry.

GLEBE FARM, Kings Ripton, Cambridgeshire. www.glebe-flour.co.uk

Side-R is fermented by Glebe Farm and also from collaborations with various traditional orchards in North and South Cambs. They also use cider from other small producers such as Cam Valley Orchards.

Side-R is made using well known varieties such as Cox's, Discovery and Bramley and some lesser known varieties such as Howgate Wonder and Russetts.



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Half Pints

CAMRA raises a glass to George Osborne as beer duty cut for second year running.

CAMRA branches across the country celebrated in March as Chancellor George Osborne announced a cut in beer duty for the second year running. Thanks to the incredible efforts of over 6,500 CAMRA members who lobbied their MP ahead of the Budget, consumers have yet again raised a glass to the Chancellor to toast another Budget for British beer drinkers. Beer supports nearing 1 million jobs and contributes £22 billion to the UK economy. The further cut in beer duty in 2014 will help maintain a healthier pubs sector. This is an incredible success thanks to another year of fantastic campaigning by CAMRA members on this issue.

Camerons brewery is ensuring that customers can benefit from the penny a pint cut in beer duty. When customers at Camerons' twelve managed pubs buy a pint, they can choose to receive their penny back as cashback or donate it to the WaterAid charity - and Camerons will match every penny donated with a penny of their own.

We reported in error in the last edition that **Potton Brewery** was closed, and we apologise for that mistake. Nothing could be further from the truth. Potton Brewery was sold as a going concern in December in 2013. Since then the new owner has made numerous investments, with sales booming. It is great to see this award winning brewery 'back in the pink'.

CAMRA's annual Mild in May campaign will as usual encourage pubs to stock a draught mild ale throughout the month. Milds range from black to dark brown to pale amber in colour - most are low in strength with mellow malty tastes but they come in a variety of styles from light refreshing lunchtime thirst quenchers to warming roasty ales. Previous successful May campaigns have fuelled a resurgence of interest in the beer. Cambridgeshire-brewed Black Dog by Elgoods and Minotaur by Milton are amongst

the most popular milds in the UK, but watch out also in local pubs for Greene King XX and others from further afield.

Mild has also been given a massive boost through a major award by the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA). Cotswold Spring Brewery's 3.9% ABV Old Sodbury Mild (OSM) was named SIBA's supreme champion at its BeerX event in Sheffield in March. According to CAMRA's Good Beer Guide, OSM is initially dry with a little sweetness, chocolate notes and a long finish.

South Cambridgeshire District Council has agreed to lobby the government for a change in planning law to ensure that pubs that have been listed as Assets of Community Value cannot be changed to shops, restaurants, offices or other uses without consultation.

Cheshire brewery Dunham Massey's Dunham Porter was crowned CAMRA's Supreme Champion Winter Ale in February at the National Winter Ale Festival. A record-breaking 13,500 thirsty customers were welcomed to a new venue, the Roundhouse in Derby and CAMRA's team of membership volunteers were clearly hard at work as 170 festival visitors joined the Campaign.

Greene King is spending £2m on a new television advertising campaign for Old Speckled Hen, aimed at supporting its pub licensees.

CAMRA is continuing to press the Government to include a bill on pub company reform in the Queen's Speech on 3 June. CAMRA believes that this could be the last chance before next year's General Election for legislation for fairer rents and reforms to the beer tie. CAMRA members can help by signing the online petition calling for reform, which already has more than 34,000 signatures.

Marstons is planning to open five pubs in Scotland each year. A year ago, it opened its first Scottish pub, the Pine Marten in Dunbar

and since then it has opened three more, with another six on the way.

Scottish brewer Fyne Ales is more than doubling production at the family-owned farm brewery. Based on the banks of Loch Fyne in Argyll, a disused sheep shed will be home to a new £2 million brewing facility being built to meet the demand for the company's hoppy blond session ale Jarl, CAMRA's 2013 Champion Beer of Scotland. The first phase of expansion will double production to 180 barrels a week, with space to boost that to more than 800 barrels in five years' time

Whitbread are introducing a new pubs brand, Whitbread Inns, with the reopening of the Hobb's Boat pub at Lympsham near Weston-super-Mare. Whitbread, operators of a range of brands including Brewers Fayre, Premier Inn, Beefeater Grill, Table Table and Costa Coffee, say that the new chain will be more strongly focussed on local communities.

Mike Benner will leave CAMRA in June, after ten years as its Chief Executive, to become the new Managing Director of the Society of Independent Brewers. Colin Valentine, CAMRA National Chairman, said 'Whilst I am sorry to see Mike go, I am sure that we will continue to work together in the future, albeit in a different way, and I look forward to working with Mike's successor to build on the foundations that he has helped put in place.'

Property agents Fleurets are selling an increasing proportion of pubs as going concerns. 56% of their pub sales were for continued use as pubs in 2013 compared to 54% in 2012. However, at the lower end of the market, only 50% of pubs sold were for continued use as pubs, down from 52% in 2012. In the north of England average sale price for properties remaining as pubs was 33% higher than for changed use, although in the south this difference was much smaller.

Fullers have acquired the Albannach, a major London venue at Trafalgar Square and plan to convert it to their 'Ale and Pie' pub

format.

CAMRA members can play their part in the forthcoming local elections by lobbying candidates and encouraging them to adopt pro-pub policies. On 22 May, the majority of English councils and all 32 London Boroughs are going to the polls. CAMRA head of policy and public affairs Jonathan Mail said: 'Local councils have a whole range of powers they can use to protect and support pubs. With the introduction of the new National Planning Policy Framework in 2012, councils now also have a duty to safeguard and plan positively for community facilities such as pubs. The challenge for us is to persuade them to make the most of their powers, which include planning, licensing and business rates.'

The Prime Minister has overruled the Home Office and ordered a rethink to ensure pubs can stay open for England's World Cup fixture against Italy. David Cameron stepped in after pubs were refused permission to extend opening hours for the clash on 14 June, which kicks off at 11pm. A consultation with the pub trade, police and councils will explore the best ways to allow pubs to be open for the Italy game. The Home Office had refused a request from the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) asking for an extension of licensing times across the country.

Steve Dilworth and his wife Christine are the licensees of a hard to find village pub which has been thrust into the limelight after being named the best in the UK. The Swan with Two Necks in Pendleton, Lancashire, described as a 'hidden gem', has been crowned CAMRA's National Pub of the Year. Located in an idyllic setting across from a small stream and surrounded by green fields the Swan is much more than just a pub – it's at the centre of village life.

2014 Huntingdonshire Branch



The following Huntingdonshire branch pub awards were presented during the Press and Trade Preview at the St Neots 'Booze on the Ouse' Beer and

Cider Festival on 16th March 2014. Congratulations to all winners and nominees.

The awards were presented by John Bexon, Head Brewer at Greene King.

Branch Pub of the Year Winner: King of the Belgians, Hartford.

In the photograph from the left, Jim Taylor, Bernie Taylor and John Bexon.



The King of the Belgians was last year's Community Pub of the Year.

The King of the Belgians now goes forward into the Cambridgeshire Pub of the Year competition, the results of which will be announced in late May.

Rural Pub of the Year

- 1st Addison Arms, Glatton
- 2nd= Chequers, Little Gransden
- 2nd= Pig and Abbot, Abington Pigotts
- 4th White Horse, Tilbrook

In the photo is Mick Soulsby, licensee of the



Addison Arms, Glatton, accepting the award on behalf of himself and his wife Katy.

Mick and Katy took over the Addison Arms only a year ago, and have made many improvements to what was already a successful pub.

Urban Pub of the Year

- 1st King of the Belgians, Hartford
- 2nd Pig 'n' Falcon, St Neots
- 3rd Royal Oak, St Ives
- 4th Olde Sun, St Neots

Most Improved Rural Pub of the Year

- 1st Rose and Crown, Somersham
- 2nd= Belle, Bassingbourn
- 2nd= Vine, Buckden
- 2nd= Bell, Great Paxton

In the photo, Oliver Reynolds, the licensee of the White Horse, Eaton Socon, and branch committee member Sonia Clarke.



Pub Awards

Oliver also holds the lease of the Rose and Crown, Somersham, and also the lease of the Vine, Buckden. The Rose and Crown was closed for over year before Oliver took lease from pub company Enterprise Inns and brought this community pub back to life.

Most Improved Urban Pub of the Year

1st **Royal Oak, St Ives**

2nd Hog and Partridge, St Neots

3rd Victoria, Huntingdon

In the photo are Dave and Lindsay Sanderson (and baby). The Royal Oak offers a good range of well kept real ales, including LocAles, plus real cider and perry.



Cider Pub of the Year

1st Pig 'n' Falcon, St Neots

2nd Chequers, Little Gransden

In the photo is John Nunn.



This is the second successive year that John has won this award.

The Pig 'n' Falcon now goes forward into the Cambridgeshire Cider Pub of the Year.

Club of the Year

1st Yelling Village Club

2nd Buckden Village Club

3rd St Neots Conservative Club

In the photo is Chris Walker, chairman of Yelling Village Hall Social Club. The club offers real ale, and real cider, and holds a beer festival in May.



We will be making an number of additional pub related awards at the Press and Trade Preview at the St Ives 'Booze on the Ouse' Beer and Cider Festival on Thursday 9th October 2014:

- Community Pub of the Year
- Mild/Dark Ale Pub of the Year
- LocAle Pub of the Year
- Pub Champion of the Year
- Lifetime Achievement Award

Chequers 20 years

At the Huntingdonshire branch's annual post-Christmas social at the Chequers, Little Gransden, we took the opportunity to present an award to Bob and Wendy Mitchell for having achieved the very notable accolade of twenty continuous years in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide.

In the photograph below are from the left, branch Chairman, Richard Harrison, Bob, and Wendy.



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71 Main Road, Little Gransden
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CAMRA
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Year 2008

Opening Times

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To Advertise

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

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N.Richards@btinternet.com

Printed by Portland Print, Tel 01536 511 555

Deadline for Autumn 2014 issue (160) is Friday 11th July 2014.

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Hunts CAMRA LocAle Pub 2013 / Mild & Dark Ales
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John Nunn - Hunts CAMRA Pub Champion 2013



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