

Swan Supping

FREE

Issue 43



Campaign for Real Ale

Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch

AUG/SEP 2004



COUNTRY PUBS OR COUNTRY RESTAURANTS?



Recently, we have heard that two more of our branch pubs are to be converted into restaurants. These are the **Rising Sun**, Aston Clinton, and the **Three Pigeons**, Milton Common.

Let me make this clear, we have nothing against the fact that they will be serving food. What we object to is the loss of yet more places where we can enjoy a drink without having to have a meal.

The pressures on running a country pub are immense. The price for which they are sold is astronomical as property developers get involved. To exist by serving drinks to passing (and local) trade is impossible. Therefore, we all understand that the food trade of the

establishment must be paramount. If only this was the only problem.

However, a large number of country pubs are owned by pub companies (pubcos). **CAMRA** is calling on Britain's pubcos to give greater freedom to their tenants.

CAMRA claims that consumers are faced with less choice and higher prices because of current pubco practices and is calling for:

- * Guest beer right for all pubco tenants.
- * An option of a free of tie tenancy for prospective tenants.
- * An end to above inflation increases in beer prices.
- * An end to upward only and RPI rent reviews.

Pubcos are protected from competition in supplying their tied estates as other parties are denied access to the estate as a result of the 'beer tie'. This system is manifestly failing tenants, as they are unable to source interesting local and regional beers in response to consumer demand. The market is increasingly foreclosed to small brewers, which raises serious competition concerns. These concerns should be addressed by allowing pubco tenants to source one cask-conditioned beer outside of the tie and take advantage of free trade prices.

The country pub is one of the great assets of this country. We must look at every possibility of saving them!

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ASTON CLINTON

The beer festival at the **Oak** in July was a great success despite the weather and they managed to sell out of the festival ales on the Sunday evening. The first to go was **Skinner's Cornish Blonde** and the **Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild** and the **Fullers Vintage Ale** proved to be very popular.

The **Rising Sun** is currently closed and is being converted into an Indian restaurant.

AYLESBURY

Just as we were going to press, we have heard that **Vale Brewery** is hoping to take over the **Hop Pole, Vale** are also after the **Victoria, Poole Street**, in Northampton. Full details will appear in our next issue.

The **Kings Head** is offering a 20% discount on its three real ales to **CAMRA** members during the week from Monday to Thursday. Just imagine, you get change when using one of those new £2 beer tokens!

BLEDLOW

Sole village pub, the **Lions of Bledlow**, offered five real ales, two from Eccleshall, at a recent branch

meeting. A dozen or so local **CAMRA** stalwarts especially enjoyed **Slaters Light Weight** (3.4) as well as the **Slaters Supreme** (4.7), **Wadworth Summersault** (4.0) and the **Loddon Ferryman's Gold** (4.4).

BUTLERS CROSS

After having been closed for renovation, the **Russell Arms** has now reopened and been renamed as the **Russell**. It has a large front bar and a restaurant at the back. There were three handpumps with two beers when checked, namely **Adnams Bitter** and **Greene King IPA**. It is open all day every day.

CHINNOR

The **Black Boy** has reopened after a short closure. Let's hope for a more stable future for this village pub.

Greene King tied house, the **Kings Head**, is flourishing under the new management. Real ale sales and quality have vastly improved by all accounts from the locals. Some good news for all concerned. Brian and Barbara Law, previously at the **Chandos Arms**, Long Crendon, are currently serving **Greene King IPA** and **Ruddles County** on handpump there.

CUBLINGTON

The **Unicorn** is now being run by a group of villagers. A full description of this free house will appear in a future issue.

HAMBLEDEN

A twelve ale beer festival is being held at the **Stag and Huntsman** on the 4th and 5th of September weekend at this **National Trust** village gem. (see ad in this issue). The pub continues to offer a rotating guest beer alongside stalwart brews **Rebellion IPA** (3.7) and **Wadworth 6X** (4.3). Recent imbibes include **Butcombe Bitter** (4.0), **Cottage Golden Balls** (4.6), **Butler's Granary Bitter** (4.2) and **The Pipers Purse** (4.2) from **West Berkshire**. Landlord Andy also serves **Thatchers Dry Cider** from the hand pump as a reminder of his West Country origins.

HIGH WYCOMBE

The **Belle Vue** has been in the **Finest Cask** scheme since March. Two or three guest beers are available at any time from a wide range. A particularly tasty drop of **Bateman's Dark Lord** (5%) was sampled recently. The beers available during early August will be **Marston's**

Burton Bitter and **Wadworth's Henry's IPA**. Next will probably be **Skinner's Cornish Knecker**, **Hall & Woodhouse Tanglefoot** and **Wychwood Fiddler's Elbow**. During the rest of August, September and October, ALL of the following will be available at some time: **Belhaven's Hunters Traditional Ale**, **Archer's Best**, **Black Sheep Special**, **Highgate Copper Nob**, **Hop Back Crop Circle**, **Exmoor Gold**, **Everard's Original**, **Elgood's Pageant**, **Thwaite's Thoroughbred**, **Titanic White Star**, **Cain's Triple Hop** and **York IPA**.

For those unfamiliar to the area, the **Belle Vue** can be found by crossing the bridge over the railway, turning immediately right into Totteridge Road, bend to left, turn right at the **Iron Duke** and round the corner by the railway. The easy way on foot is to exit the rail station from the London bound platform (3) and the pub is straight in front of you.

Congratulations to Peter and Ann Purkiss who celebrate 25 years at the **Gordon Arms** on Sunday 15th August. A full article about this appears elsewhere in this issue.

(Continued on page 15)



Stag and Huntsman Inn

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STILL GOING STRONG AFTER 25 YEARS

Congratulations to Peter and Ann Purkiss who celebrate 25 years at the **Gordon Arms** in High Wycombe on Sunday 15th August. I spoke to Peter over a pint of **Greene King IPA** one Sunday lunchtime. This fact itself is a sign of the changing times. In the 1980s, the pub would have been packed and Peter too busy for a chat between 12 and 2 on a Sunday. There was a queue outside the door at midday and staff pulling pints ready for customers before the pub was open. What's more, the men (back in the old sexist days) would return with their wives for the 7pm session. Now takings for the whole of Sunday are less than for that frantic lunchtime session.

Peter took over as tenant in 1979 when the **Gordon Arms** was a **Courage** tied pub with **Courage Best** and **Directors** on the handpumps and **Draught JC** and **Tavern** keg beers. The pub had a central 'Bottle & Jug' and two rooms off, these were knocked through into one room in 1981. After the Beer Orders, **Courage** sold the pub to **Morland's** brewery so **IPA** and **Old Speckled Hen** were served, with guests such as **Shepherd Neame Spitfire** and **Charles Wells Bombardier**. Then in 1998, **Greene King**



took over so the handpumps have **Greene King IPA** and, for a time, **Ruddles Best Bitter**. Peter reckons that the most popular traditional beer during the 25 years was the **Bombardier**.

The pub has acquired a cupboard full of silverware, from competitions in darts, dominoes, football, bar billiards (table still in use) and netball. Back in the 1980s the pub had four darts teams. There is a thriving Bed and Breakfast trade all year round, mainly with contract workers, sometimes staying for months and providing good customers for solid and liquid refreshment five evenings a week. The **Gordon Arms** has been involved

with many charity functions over the years. The stretcher run involving several local pubs for St John Ambulance in the mid 1980s is one example with many other events for the annual Mayor's appeal and raising money for **LVA** schools.

The strong **LVA** in High Wycombe in the 1980s is one of Peter's fondest memories. The loss of that strong community sense amongst local landlords is one of his regrets, others are the changing of long-standing pub names and ever increasing rents.

On the positive side, the strength of the pub and the reason for its continuing survival are the ever present commitment shown by Peter and Ann, the very opposite of the absentee landlord and landlady, and the support from many local, loyal and frequent customers.

The weekend of 14th/15th August is likely to be busy at the **Gordon Arms**. Many former and current customers and fellow publicans are expected to pop in to congratulate Peter and Ann and to share in the usual conviviality and warm welcome.

Wycombe Wanderer



Creative Chalkboarding

Clare Marie McIntyre

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A 'BRILL' PLACE TO DRINK



barn, is of the oldest known in Brill and from locally made bricks.

In October of last year the pub was taken over by Tom and Carol Burton. The previous popular landlord, Ted Houghton, retired after 24 years in the pub and is still continuing as president of the Oxford and District Aunt Sally League

Following a settling in period over Christmas and the spring Tom and Carol embarked on a series of modifications and improvements culminating in a substantial refit in May which involved closing the pub for a month until completion in early June. This refurbishment has been carried out in a very sympathetic manner with great care taken to retain the traditional feel without change for change's sake. Wise choice of colour has resulted in a light and airy atmosphere. Fresh, welcoming and tasteful are other words that spring to mind.

The main drinking area has been greatly enhanced and enlarged by moving the bar back several feet and with the floors of wood and stone being re-laid. The restaurant area is quite distinct from the drinking area and does not dominate. Local historical and character pictures feature on the walls together with tasteful prints.

Three ales are currently always available, with **Greene King IPA** being the regular quaffing ale. The guests at the time of visit were **Caledonian 80/-** (4.1%) and **St Austell Tribute** (4.2%). All were in excellent condition. Tom is very keen to develop the Real Ale side of the business and will be looking to change or increase the range as demand permits. Imminent guest ales at time of going to print include **Highgate Black Pig** 4.4%, **Tom Woods Bomber County** 4.8% and **Greene King's own Suffolk Summer Ale** 4.3% and **Triumph Ale** 4.3%.

A comprehensive menu is available and it was very apparent on our visit that the range suits all walks of life, with some parties of three

The village of Brill occupies a hilltop position between Long Crendon and Blackthorn with views overlooking five counties. During its long history it has been associated with the hunting kings of England and the hillside, showing much evidence of old clay workings is dominated by a seventeenth century post mill.

The **Red Lion** is located near the village centre opposite the green on the Long Crendon road. A **Greene King** tenancy, the building dates back to the sixteenth century and has been used as a pub since 1540. Once a **Halls** pub, it became an **Allied** house until about 1990 when it was purchased by **Greene King**. Much local history is in evidence and some of the brickwork in the function room, which was once a

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RED LION

generations all obviously enjoying their Sunday lunch. Set meals of three courses are available including home made soups. Roasts and specials also feature as well as ploughmans, various salads, Thai, vegetarian and fish dishes, not forgetting the Codfather – a 16oz battered cod fillet with chips. Bar snacks include ham egg and chips, duck and bacon salad with plum sauce and chicken paprika. To complement all this there is a good choice of wines including red, white, rose, sparkling and champagne at reasonable prices and a tasting guide. House wine is £9 a bottle.

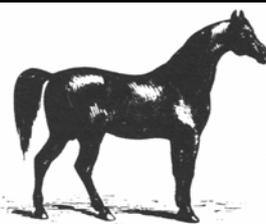
At the rear of the pub is a substantial function room which can seat 30-40 people and a large well kept garden complete with an Aunt Sally pitch. This popular local game is played every Wednesday in local league competition. Dominoes are also played and a live Jazz band is now featured every second Tuesday of the month.

Tom and Carol are well known to us as when at the Crown at not so far away Sydenham in the late 1990s they were regularly in the *CAMRA Good Beer Guide*. Again it was a village pub that they really put on the map, catering for all ages and tastes. I am sure they are well on their way to achieving similar recognition at the **Red Lion** and wish them all the best for the future.

Mick White

NOTE: A branch social has been set to visit both pubs in Brill, namely the **Pheasant** and the **Red Lion**, on the evening of Wednesday 25th August from 9 ish. BE THERE!

As with all our socials (listed on the back page) everybody is welcome and you do not have to be a *CAMRA* member to join in the fun. However, if you do drink smooth beer or lager, you will be taken outside and sniggered at!



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GBBF LAUNCH FOR REAL ALE IN A BOTTLE

CAMRA, is to launch a pilot accreditation scheme for bottle-conditioned beers.



'Real Ale in a Bottle' will be launched at the **Great British Beer Festival** on 2nd August, after CAMRA's Bottled Beer Competition.

'The scheme has been devised in response to an increased number of enquiries from both CAMRA members and the general public about what constitutes a bottle-conditioned beer, how they can be identified, and most importantly where they can be bought' said CAMRA's Georgie Howarth. 'Many more people are learning to appreciate the brewer's art to the full by savouring the complex, fresh taste of a beer that has been allowed to mature naturally in the bottle.'

To coincide with the pilot launch, CAMRA will highlight the consumer demand for bottle-conditioned products. The aim of the scheme is to recognise bottle-conditioned beers as a separate category to other bottled beers, and encourage buyers to stock and promote them in their retail outlets.

Ms Howarth continues, 'All breweries listed in the CAMRA's **Good Bottled Beer Guide** are eligible to join the scheme and of those surveyed 90% think that it is a good idea.

The general consensus appears to be that once consumers understand that they are drinking bottled real ale, they really appreciate and enjoy exploring different tastes, styles and products.'

The accreditation markings form two parts to be used on the label artwork: a method of dispense and a clearly identifiable hallmark 'CAMRA says this is real ale'. The logo is to help consumers easily differentiate products. The objective of the method of dispense is to create a better understanding of how to look after and serve bottled real ale.

Real Ale in a Bottle (RAIB) is the bottled equivalent of the draught real ales you enjoy at the pub. The beer is unpasteurised and contains yeast and enough fermentable sugars to allow for a slow secondary fermentation in the bottle. Care should be taken when pouring a RAIB to ensure that the yeast remains in the bottle and the refreshing flavoursome beer ends up in the glass. It is important to note that though a particular beer is a real ale in draught form this is not a guarantee that the bottled version

will be real also. Most real ales will be clearly labelled but a quick check to see if there is any yeast sediment will confirm if the beer is a RAIB.

GBBF Competition Answers

Last issue, we offered pairs of tickets for the Tuesday trade session of the GBBF for the best answers to the following questions:-

1. Which member of the Royal family is involved in a campaign to save rural pubs? HRH Prince Charles.
2. Approximately how many members does CAMRA have? 72,000.
3. Which cockney duo will be playing at the GBBF this year? Chas n Dave.
4. How much does it cost to join CAMRA as a single member? £16.
5. How many pints of beer in one gallon? 8.
6. Which famous British brewery is based in Southwold? Adnams.
7. What was the average price of draught bitter in 1994 according to the British Beer and Pub Association? £1.42.
8. Approximately how many pubs are closing down in Britain every month? 20.

The winners of the tickets were Jill Greenfield and Alan Sheppard.

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(no meals Sunday evening)

Bar open all day Saturday and Sunday

The Clifden Arms

FRESH AS A DAISY



welcome news for the non-smoker has spanned the Irish Sea to ever-increasing popularity on our shores.

This is a new concept adopted locally at the **Hand and Flowers**, with its fresh new look interior, comfy sofas, broadcasting related artefacts and moreish real ales. Once a **Courage** owned pub, latterly **Morland** (RIP) and now **Greene King**. It offers the brewery's **IPA** (3.6) and the stronger **Old Speckled Hen** (5.2) in tip-top condition. A selection of

The **Hand and Flowers** is the perfect antidote for the smoke layered, alcopop, ear-rupturing, anti-social, pariah filled, drinking dens that seem to infect our streets of late. The crystal clear atmosphere, is enhanced by soothing background music, to accompany the pubs fine **Greene King** ales and comprehensive menu. Paul and Sallie, I wish you well on your new enterprising venture, an archetype that I am sure more ale houses will commission.

Ralph Spadean

Buckinghamshire's first total *non-smoking* public house has been introduced to the **Hand and Flowers** in West Street, Marlow. After been closed for a short term, the roadside watering hole has been redecorated with a tasteful, subtle makeover in this interim, to reopen this Spring with new landlords at the helm.

Paul and Sallie Adams, formerly of the **Bottle and Glass**, Gibraltar, have launched locally, the new vogue in smoke-free pubs installed at town and cities around Britain. Only recently, Southern Ireland made a total non-smoking ban in their pubs. This

wines and malt whiskies supplement their food, served in a separate dining area, but sharing the same congenial aura from the main bar.

Outside consists of a sizeable car park, beer garden and sandwiched in between is a petanque court. Keenly contested matches are often undertaken here.

Whether this new perception is a trend setter of the future for our real ale heritage, remains to be seen, but it certainly is a breath of fresh air for the non-smoking community. Time will be the only deciding arbitrator here.



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BLACK COUNTRY P*SS-UP!



Coach and Horses, Weatheroak

With summer apparently behind us and only a lousy weather forecast in front thirty five keen drinkers set off up the M40 on July 3rd. Most with liver damage in mind but possibly more concerned that our enjoyment may have been curtailed by all of us having to cram into potentially busy bars due to the threatened downpours. Perhaps we have been spoilt by the generally warm and dry weather that has prevailed on our last few visits. Our fears were unfounded as although it was a little blustery at times, and Dave's faggots and chips nearly got a soaking during a brief shower at the first port of call, the day at least stayed bright and therefore created a cheerful ambience to events.

The **Coach and Horses** at Weatheroak was again our first venue and apart from a short delay getting our first drink (perhaps we arrived before some of the staff), it again lived up to its reputation with meals being produced in no time and quality of both food and drink being excellent. As well as their own ales were guests bringing the total on offer to about nine. I started off with the *Weatheroak Ale* 4.1%, with the usual intention of working slowly up the Richter Scale, and then as we had plenty of time, followed it with one of the **Woods Shropshire Lad**. Before we left there was just time to sample the *Redwood* 4.7%, which I missed last year, so it would have been very rude not to. Very tasty! Before returning to the bus some of us stocked up with some cheese and ham rolls in order to soak up what was yet to come. Interesting to see they have Belgian **Kreik** beer on draft.

Much refreshed we set off for the **Beacon Hotel** at Sedgley, a regular favourite and the **Sarah Hughes** brewery tap. This was eventually reached after a slight ohmigosh by the navigator (exactly the same as last year). After a pint of the *Ruby Mild* 6% taken over a quiet game of crib, the world started to take on a more relaxed appearance.

Next was the **Park Inn** at Woodsetton, the



Beacon Hotel, Sedgley

Holdens brewery tap which we have not been to for a few years. Though the exterior looks a tad tacky the interior proved very smart as did the conservatory. Here I tried a pint of the *Golden Glow* 4.4%, and one of the *Beeze* 4.8%, both **Holdens** and both under £2. (*Mild* was £1.40). These made even the ladies tennis seem more interesting though Maria Sharapova may have had something to do with the number of bodies crushed in front of the widescreen TV.

This was swiftly followed by the Upper Gornal walkabout, with some trying the **Bathams'** run **Britannia** and others the **Jolly Crispin** – a genuine freehouse with up to nine guests, mostly micros. I settled for the



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Bombay Aloo, Channa Massalla, Pillau Rice,
Nan and Green Salad
Adult £ 7.50
Child (under 12) £ 4.50

THE BEST DAY OF THE YEAR!



Old Swan, Netherton

shortish walk away. Opting to be lazy and put up with a selection of a mere fourteen ales I stayed in the **Waggon**. Finding a table near the bar and within sight of that amazing list, I tried a pint of **Abbeyle Absolution** 5.3%. It proved so good that it was decided that if I were to have anything else it would be safest to have the same again and consider myself well absolved (sorry).

Altogether another exemplary day out. Many thanks to everyone at the pubs involved, and to Dave Roe for organising the event and not (quite) getting us lost. *Mick White*

Don't forget – Cambridge trip on Saturday 21st August (Tickets £20 are still available).

Pickups will be made from High Wycombe, Princes Risborough, Wendover, Aylesbury and Bierton (starting at 10am in Wycombe) and returning via the reverse course to end up in Wycombe around midnight.

Further details can be obtained by contacting Tony Gabriel on 01494 527884.

There is no excuse for missing another of our wonderful coach trips!

Jolly Crispin and firstly tried the house bitter, **Crispin Ale** 4.5%, from **Church End** brewery. This was extremely drinkable and I followed it with a pint of **Phoenix White Monk** 4.5%. At this point I was joined by Sam, who recommended trying the **Stonehenge Danish Dynamite** 5.1% (it's all his fault!). Whilst knocking these back, Sam and I got chatting to the owners, Stuart and Julie Griffiths, and learnt that the impressive collection of aircraft photos on the walls was obtained by Julie who worked for British Airways in marketing for fourteen years.

My next pint was taken very cautiously when we arrived at the **Old Swan** (I stopped listening to Sam – that **Danish Dynamite** lived up to its name). I had a pint of their own **Dark Swan Mild** 4.2% and started on a cheese roll. However, before we left I was just about up to trying a pint of the superb **Bumblehole** 5%. This pub is full of character (and characters), and particularly welcoming with many locals joining in conversation.

On to the **Bathams** brewery tap, the **Bull and Bladder**, at the top of the Delph Run of canal locks near Brierley Hill. At this unmissable multi – roomed establishment I had a pint of their **Best Bitter** 4.3%, accompanied by a hot scotch egg that was so fresh that I can only imagine that the hen dropped the egg straight into the sausage. It was so good I had to get another on the way back to the coach, thereby upsetting our timekeeper.

That second egg lasted almost as far as our next destination, the **Waterfall** near Blackheath. Recently taken over by **Holdens**, it still has a good range of guest ales to complement their own brews. A pint of **Brecon Discovery** 4.5% was tested with most satisfactory results. It was reassuring to find I could still stand up without ill effect at this late juncture, though I decided to treat our final port of call with some caution, as well as the respect it deserves.

So, on to our final venue in Halesowen, the superlative real ale shrine known as the **Waggon and Horses**. Here also was the option of trying the **Hawne Tavern**, a

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BEER FESTIVAL REVIEWS

Hadda Vale of a Time in the Village

Three cheers for the First Haddenham Village Real Ale Festival! Hip-Hip Hooray! Saturday 10th July saw the first village ale fest at the Walter Rose Room, Village Hall, Haddas, the proceeds swelling the coffers for the Haddenham Parish Council tree-planting programme. Mark Houston and his band of willing volunteers put on an intimate cosy imbibe session with sixteen, mainly local brews and a cider (particularly popular with the ladies).

The choice of beers was both well balanced and well appointed. Home village brewery, *Vale*, supplied a quarter of the barrels with four of their best. The brewery also acquired beers from further afield



with beer swaps, to give the event better choice and for us 'tickers' some more 'scoops for our collection'.

Swan Supping editor and *Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe CAMRA* chairman, Messieur Dave Roe was in full attendance to ensure fair drinking and support such a worthwhile cause as this. Ben Walter and his good wife, along with (first customer of the day) Michael Lock, were other noted *CAMRA* dignitaries all enjoying the day.

Entertainment was in the form of a lunchtime saxophone soloist, evening dancers 'The Hoofers',

Towersey Morris Men and all day musical chairs regularly enforced by the Great British summer weather. Houston we have a problem! NO! All the intermittent rain achieved was for people about to leave, returning inside to fill their special festival glasses with another pint! I fell into this category and the second farewell pint, *Vale Black Swan Mild* (3.3) was one of the best of the day.

The catering was home-made rolls, baps and wedges together with hot sausage rolls, hot dogs and bacon rolls. The three welcome egg mayonnaise with cress baps certainly soaked up my *Frog Island Shoemaker* (4.2), *Grand Union Union Bitter* (3.7) and *Houston Rambo the Mighty Midge* (3.6) with great aplomb. Soft drinks were available for the chauffeurs.

Other local brewery beers on parade were from *Rebellion*, *Tring*, *West Berkshire* and the ever-excellent *Chiltern*. Their ales (apart from their shop) are only seen at the occasional beer festival, so the *Golden Sovereign Ale* (3.7) and the *Beechwood Bitter* (4.3) (my beer of the festival) are always a must and a privilege to savour.

So, all in all a very enjoyable day, run tirelessly by Haddenham folk for their village's benefit. Let's hope there will be sun on the horizon to accompany another real ale festival next year.

Rambo-The First Festival Midge

Mark Houston, the leading light of the festival, also wrote to say that the festival was a great success with an estimated 350 people attending during the day.

The first beer to go was *Rambo the Mighty Midge* from the *Houston Brewery* (no relation!) in Renfrewshire. This beer also won the *Beer of the Festival* award and the brewery will receive a small commemorative prize in recognition shortly.

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MORE FESTIVAL FUN!

The second to go was *Chiltern Golden Sovereign Ale*, and in the end all the beers sold out well before the scheduled finish of 11pm. A victim of their own success perhaps! The estimated profit for the festival is £1,750 which will go to Haddenham Parish Council for its tree-planting programme. A big 'thank you' to all who supported the first Haddenham Beer Festival and worked so hard to make it such a success. The organisers are pleased to confirm that there will be another festival next year, at around the same time, which, it is hoped, will be bigger and even better!

Boxmoor Beer Festival

To celebrate thirty years in existence, The *Mid Chilterns Branch of CAMRA* held a beer festival at the Camelot Rugby Club in Boxmoor, which is near Hemel Hempstead. Two members of our branch made the bus journey there from Aylesbury and had a very enjoyable time, which included winning the quiz that was held in the afternoon (with help from Kevin, a member of the local branch) with a prize of a trip round *Hook Norton* brewery.

Over 500 people attended the festival and all 30 firkins of beer were sold along with two ciders and one perry. The first beer to sell out was *Loddon Hornets Nest* and the *Beer of the Festival* (voted for by the visitors) was the excellent *Fuller's Vintage Ale*.



The Red Lion

3 High Street, Chinnor (☎ 01844 353468)

CAMRA Listed with a choice of four real ales with the following guest ales in August:-

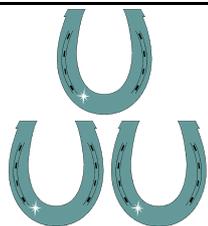
Wychwood Midsummer Night 3.7%,
 Arundel Warm Willy 4.7%,
 Gales Summer Hog 3.8%,
 Butcombe Blonde 4.3%,
 Exmoor Hart 4.8%,
 Hampshire Greece Lightning 4.2%,
 Arundel Summer Daze 4.7%

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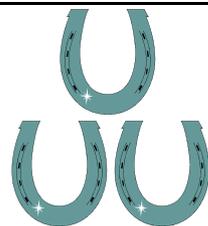
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Black Swan Dark Mild 3.3%	76.00	44.50	23.50
Vale Best Bitter 3.7%	76.50	44.50	23.75
Wychert Ale 3.9%	77.00	45.50	24.00
Edgar's Golden Ale 4.3%	79.00	47.50	25.00
Black Beauty Porter 4.3%	80.00	48.50	25.50
Vale Special 4.5%	81.00	49.00	25.75
Grumpling Premium 4.6%	81.50	49.50	26.00

Bottle Conditioned Beers

Black Swan Dark Mild 3.3%	500ml
Wychert Ale 3.9%	500ml
Edgar's Golden Ale 4.3%	500ml
Black Beauty Porter 4.3%	500ml
Grumpling Premium 4.6%	500ml
Hadda's Head Banger 5.0%	500ml

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BEER DRINKER AWARD

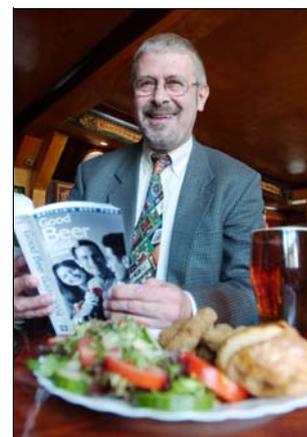
*Good Beer Guide Editor is named
'Beer Drinker of the Year'*

Roger Protz, the editor of CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide*, has been voted 'Beer Drinker of the Year 2004' by the *All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group*. The announcement was made by John Grogan MP at the Group's annual dinner.

Roger is one of Britain's leading writers on beer and pubs. He appears regularly on radio and TV. He has written a number of ground-breaking books on beer and pubs including the '*Real Ale Drinker's Almanac*' and '*Britain's 500 Best Pubs*'. He is a Judge and Master of Ceremonies of the *Champion Beer of Britain* competition held each August at the *Great British Beer Festival*.

Roger said, 'This is an award not only for me but also for CAMRA and all the writers who champion the cause of quality beer and defend Britain's beer heritage against the onslaught of global brewers.'

Mike Benner, Chief Executive of CAMRA, said, 'We're all delighted for Roger. He's no stranger to awards having been named as the *Glenfiddich* Drink Writer of the Year and winning a silver tankard award from the British Guild of Beer Writers in the last two years alone. Roger has held centre stage as a journalist who never pulls his punches and always puts the views of the beer consumer first.'



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BEER AND STEAM

One of my recent steam trips was going from London to Skegness. Very kindly the organisers had arranged for the train to stop at Wainfleet, home of *Bateman's Brewery* with the added bonus of a discounted price for the Brewery Tour.

We arrived at Wainfleet about midday and were met outside the station by man with a couple of children who had come to see the train. He introduced himself as Stewart Bateman and advised us that they were waiting for us at the brewery to give us a tour when required, rather than the official time of 14.30.

A 200 yards walk found us in the visitor centre where we arranged a tour for 13.00, which gave us time to have a drink in the bar that is housed in the base of the famous windmill. A selection of *Bateman's* beers was available, namely *Dark Mild*, *Dark Lord*, *Summer Swallow*, *XB Bitter* and *XXXB*. I sampled the *Dark Lord* at 5%, a dark ruby beer with a spicy finish.

The tour was done by a young lady who knew all the normal spiel but was a bit stumped when we asked a couple of technical questions. The brewery had both old and new equipment. The old equipment is used occasionally but the main brewing was done on the new equipment, which is housed in its own brewhouse, all stainless steel and computer controlled. The fermenters were of the open type but strangely contained no beer!

After the tour we returned to get our free pint that was included in the price. I sampled the *Summer Swallow* (3.9%), which was very light and refreshing. All the brewery staff were exceptionally friendly.

We then proceeded into Wainfleet town centre to sample some *XXXB* in a *Bateman's* tied house before catching a normal train to Skegness to rejoin our steam train back to London.

Dick Moore

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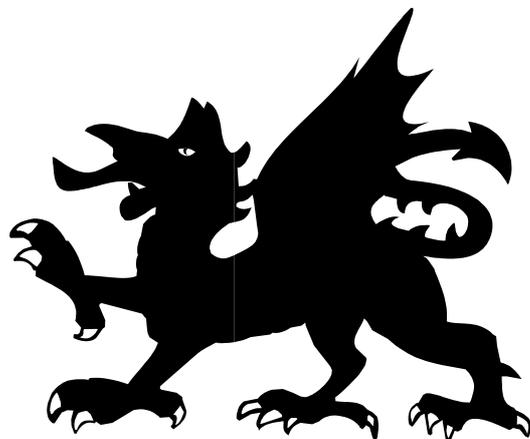
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IMBIBER RETURNS!

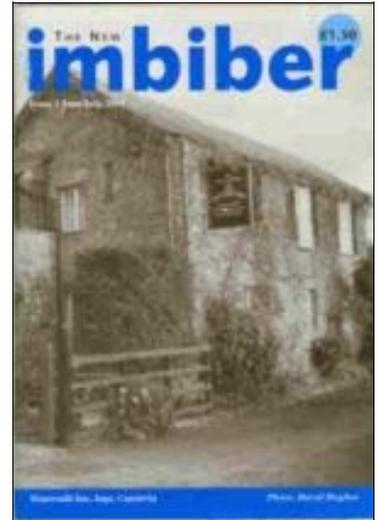
**The King is Dead!
Long Live the New
Imbiber!**

It's official! It's back! After 53 issues 'The Independent Imbiber' ceased to exist and the October/November 2003 issue was the last after many years (early 1990's) of reporting the latest breweries, brews and brewing news. Now the phoenix has risen from the flames as 'The New Imbiber' Issue No. 1 June/July 2004 has hit the streets in a pleasing resurrection.

The new publication is run on very similar format lines as its predecessor. Alex Hall set a very tough precedent to follow, but I am sure that 'The New Imbiber' team can scale the heights if issue number one is anything to go by. The extensive reports on pub crawls and exploits carried out by committed discerning drinkers, highlight what the fun of real ale drinking is all about.

Subscriptions are on an annual basis as per usual and £10 will obtain six bi-monthly issues as they come hot off the press. Well done to all at 'The New Imbiber' and best wishes for future real ale imbibing.

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* Source – Estates Gazette.



Local News



(Continued from page 2)

LACEY GREEN

The **Black Horse** has been sold to **Admiral Taverns**, which appears to be more of a property company, by **Enterprise Taverns**. The future of the pub should be secure for at least three years while the current tenancy lasts.

The **Whip** is continuing to offer four beers on handpump: **Fullers London Pride**, **Courage Best** and **Greene King Old Speckled Hen** plus a guest beer which has changed around fifty times already this year!

MARLOW

Spittal Street 'boozer', the **Carpenters Arms**, has **Greene King Triumph Ale** (4.3) as its seasonal beer at present.

Brakspear watering hole, the **Chequers**, parades summer brew **Beesting** at its handpumps.

A correction from Issue No.42 is that the **Hand and Flowers** serves **Greene King Old Speckled Hen** (5.2) and not **Abbot Ale** (5.0). Sorry for this error (AS). The pub is closed for business all day on Mondays.

The **hog's head** still offers four beers and manageress Vanessa Hawkes has been accredited with a **Cask Marque** certificate.

There are rumours that the **Plough** is to have new owners. Nothing confirmed yet. Watch this space in Issue No.44.

MILTON COMMON

It has been reported to us that the **Three Pigeons** is to close as a pub. After some refurbishment it will be reopening as (yet another!) Indian restaurant.

OAKLEY

There was a fire at the **Royal Oak** around midnight on the 6th of June. Landlord Simon Thomas and his dog had to be rescued from the top window and there was a lot of fire damage done to the bar area. The fire is thought to have been caused by a cigarette butt in a bin which adds to the case for 'No Smoking' pubs! The pub will be closed until the 1st of September when new tenants will take charge (see next issue for details). Whilst shut, **Vale Brewery** has taken the opportunity to carry out a major refurbishment both inside and out, stripping back to many original features of the pub.

QUAINTON

Darren Curtis has been running the **George & Dragon** on the village green for two and half years. Four real ales were on offer when we last visited: **Hook Norton Best Bitter**, **Young's Bitter**, **Fuller's London Pride** and **Hopback Summer Lightning**. The **Hook** was very tasty!

STEWKLEY

The new landlord at the **Carpenter's Arms** is Gary Conway. His predecessor, Ian, left in May to run the bar at Buckingham Golf Club.

Long standing licensees at the **Swan**, Arch and Joy Grainger, left in February. The new landlord is Jeremy Williams who previously ran a pub in Ware, Herts.

WOOBURN GREEN

Village green GBG 2004 entrant the **Queen and Albert** reopened after a brief closure for a refurbishment in early June. Three ales on still available in a smart, tidy local pub where conversation rules supreme.

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Kevin and Arlene welcome you to a pub that deserves a try!

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I/We enclose a cheque for £..... Date

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AYL (SWAN SUPPING)

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Copy deadline for next issue, due to be published on 1st October 2004 is 14th September 2004.

Subscriptions :- Swan Supping is distributed to over 200 pubs in our area but if you would prefer to receive your copy by post we can mail it to you immediately it is published. All you need to do is to send a supply of A4 size envelopes stamped 35p to:

Nick Holt, The Old Star, 163 Aylesbury Road, Berton, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 5DW.

This applies to single copies to UK addresses only. We can mail overseas, so just send us some money and we'll let you know when it runs out.

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Acceptance of an advertisement in *Swan Supping* by a pub or its availability there does not guarantee *CAMRA* approval of the outlet.



Branch Diary

Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

AUGUST

Friday 6th EVENING SOCIAL AT G.B.B.F.

Great British Beer Festival, Olympia, London.

Meet in *CAMRA* members' lounge any time after 6pm.

Thursday 12th OLD LUXTERS BREWERY VISIT

7:00pm Old Luxters, Hambleden Valley.

Book your place with the Editor (details are on this page).

Monday 16th HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIAL

8.30pm Gordon Arms, followed by Belle Vue

Wednesday 18th QUANTON SOCIAL

9:00pm Swan & Castle, 10:00pm George & Dragon.

Saturday 21st CAMBRIDGE COACH TRIP

Tickets £20 from Tony Gabriel, Tel: 01494 527884.

Wednesday 25th BRILL SOCIAL

9:00pm Pheasant, 10:00pm Red Lion.

Saturday 28th LUNCHTIME SOCIAL

12:00 Shepherds Crook (their beer festival!), Crowell, near Chinnor.

SEPTEMBER

Monday 6th BRANCH MEETING

8.30pm Horse & Jockey, Tylers Green.

Thursday 16th LOUDWATER SOCIAL

9:00pm Dereham's Inn, 10:00pm General Havelock.

Wednesday 22nd LACEY GREEN SOCIAL

8:30pm Pink & Lily, 9.15pm Whip, 10:00pm Black Horse

Tuesday 28th BRANCH SOCIAL

9:00pm Plough, Cadsden, 10:00pm Red Lion, Whiteleaf.

OCTOBER

Friday 29th/Saturday 30th AYLESBURY VALE BEER FESTIVAL

Eskdale Road Community Centre, Stoke Mandeville

Our annual charity beer festival held in conjunction with the 'Friends of Florence Nightingale House'.



OLD SHIP INN

Marlow Road, Cadmore End
 High Wycombe HP14 3PN

Tel: 01494 883496

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