



# Swan Supping

Campaign for Real Ale  
Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch  
[www.swansupping.org.uk](http://www.swansupping.org.uk)

**FREE**

Issue 59

APR/MAY 2007



## TEN YEARS OLD THIS MONTH!



Ten years ago, in early 1997, the then Branch Secretary, Bryan Spink, volunteered to start a fledgling **CAMRA** newsletter for the *Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch*. With the help of joint editor, David Roe, it was to be published quarterly and *Swan Supping* started life as a six page black and white magazine with an initial print run of 1500 with issue 1, dated Spring 1997. Today, it is still under the helm of David Roe and it has grown to an eagerly awaited bimonthly magazine

*Swan Supping* has steadily grown in size and now regularly has 24 pages and the print run for this issue has grown to a massive 5000! The most obvious change, which has been the move to colour, accelerated the increase as the last black



and white issue (issue 44) had a print run of 3600. There are twelve pages of colour in all the issues since number 50, but we can only sustain this with the generous support of our advertisers as we only try to cover our costs.

Copies of most issues are still available. Just send a list of copies you require to the editor (details are on page 22) plus 50 pence per issue to cover postage (or come along to a Branch Social and get them for free!).

With the advent of the internet, *Swan Supping* is downloaded all over the world with up to 500 people taking their own copy off our website and printing it out for themselves. The latest issues are available on the net roughly two weeks after publication along with many back issues.

We always welcome articles and help distributing *Swan Supping* to all our loyal readers! Enjoy your beer and join us in looking forward to the next ten years!

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A newsletter with a print run of 5000 for the discerning drinkers of Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe

# Local News

## AYLESBURY

The **Hobgoblin** will be holding a beer festival over the Easter weekend (Friday 6th – Monday 9th of April). They will have ten real ales on offer, mainly from local breweries.

The **hog's head** has become the **Slug and Lettuce**. There are now only two handpumps, tucked away at the end of the bar. When in operation they should have *Deuchars IPA* and *London Pride*.

The **Hop Pole** is to have its own bitter! Brewed by *Vale Brewery*, *Hop Pole Bitter* will be a crisp 4% bitter, dry with a subtle taste of summer fruits and lychees. It will be launched at the pub on Thursday 5th April when you will have an opportunity to discuss the new beer, and other topics, with the brewer. This forms the first event of a long weekend of their first Easter Beer Festival. As well as the usual impressive range of ten handpumps, there will be twenty beers on stillage in the function room, including *Mix 96*, another new (dark) beer from *Vale*.

The **Kings Head** will officially start doing evening meals from Tuesday 17th of April (although you may be able to take advantage of the half price training meals on the 4th and 5th). This will be the start of a busy week as on

the evening of Thursday the 19th there will be the launch of the brand new seasonal beer from *Chiltern Brewery*, *Nut Brown Mild*, a luxuriously smooth, dark and slightly sweet 3.9% mild with a beautifully balanced hop aroma. The next day (Friday 20th) is the start of a St. George's weekend beer festival. If all this is not enough for you, the Towersey Morris Men will be appearing at the pub on the 9th of May.

The **Market Tavern** has become the **Square**. Run by the landlord of the **Bell**, Cheersley, it is being managed by Dillon Berry and it is his first pub. The real ales available are *Marston's Pedigree* and *Adnams Bitter*. It opens 8am to 10pm Monday to Saturday and is closed on Sundays.

Colin and Alison Beland will be leaving the **Rockwood** on Monday 14th of May. They are taking over the **Bell** in Stanlake which is near Witney in Oxfordshire. This is a *Greene King* pub which has seen better days and they are looking to build up its trade. We wish them luck in their new endeavour. There is no news yet about who is taking over at the **Rockwood**.

The **Plough** is currently undergoing a major transformation and is now to be run by *Ember Inns*, which is a brand of *M&B* that not long ago ran a real

ale promotion but there were none of their pubs in our area. We will check the availability of real ale when it reopens after its refurbishment.

The **Ship** has had a temporary reprieve. It has reopened under the control of Danny McGrath who runs the **Huntsman**. *Adnams Bitter* and *Fuller's London Pride* are available. The council would like to incorporate the pub into their development plans, but still no decision either way.

## BEACONSFIELD

The **Greyhound** on Windsor End has had a dramatic refurbishment and is now called the **Greyhound Bar** -- which really says all one needs to know. Real Ale is still served - including a *Rebellion* beer at the end of March -- but there is little else that is traditional about the refit. This leaves the **Charles Dickens** as the only traditional pub in the centre of Beaconsfield Old Town. More details in the next *Swan Supping*.

The **Royal Saracens Head** reopened recently after a major £700,000 refurbishment. The pub is owned by *Mitchell & Butler's*, but the handpumped beer spotted there is *Timothy Taylor's Landlord*.

## BOURNE END

A new wine merchants, **Bertrand and Nicholas**, has recently opened in Furlong Road, which sells some of the more enterprising bottled real ales.

After 18 years at the **Firefly**, Ray Bristoll has decided to retire from the trade and sold his leasehold interest via *Fleurets* London office. The purchaser, Belinda Flemming is new to the trade, although she has been a local to the pub for many years. Indeed Belinda has spent the last three months working at the **Firefly**, getting some much needed experience and to ensure a smooth handover from Ray. The **Firefly** was sold at an asking price of £75,000 for the leasehold interest

## BROUGHTON CROSSING

The **Doghouse** usually sells *Fuller's London Pride* and *Greene King Old Speckled Hen*. The Doghouse is also the new venue for Wendover Jazz Circle which meets there on the first Thursday of every month to listen to jazz records from all eras. Newcomers are always welcome.

## CHINNOR

Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway are holding a St. George's  
(Continued on page 23)

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## A TAXING PROBLEM

In the budget at the end of March, the Chancellor once again raised the duty on a pint of beer. As it was only one penny, do we really have any reason to complain?

As beer never goes up by one pence a pint, then the obvious answer is YES!

**Vale Brewery** are extremely disappointed in yet another duty rise as they have in the past absorbed many duty increases. There comes a point when margins can no longer be eaten into. Especially when the prices of raw materials, diesel and utilities are all rising.

Buckinghamshire is a county with many rural pubs that struggle to survive. It is very unfortunate that the cost of real ale will have to rise and again that the punter will have to pay more for his pint of excellently brewed local ale.

We have received figures that originated from the **Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA)** which highlight what appear to be some anomalies in the system for taxing alcoholic drinks and how they are biased against Britain's national drink – beer.

In recent years, beer has been in the front line for tax increases, while other alcoholic drinks have enjoyed more favourable tax treatment. The impact of such a policy over the last

decade (the new change is not included) can be seen in the table below:

### DUTY RATE CHANGE CONSUMPTION

Beer	+23%	-11%
Cider	+8%	+30%
Wine	+12%	+46%
Spirits	+3%	+20%

Under this approach to alcohol tax policy, the amount of beer we drink has fallen by 11 per cent since 1997. Last year alone, sales of traditional British cask beer fell by an alarming 7.5 per cent. This has placed beer producers under exceptional pressures, as witnessed by the growing number of brewery closures and job losses in the sector.

Research undertaken by Oxford Economic Forecasting shows that the Treasury underestimates the impact of tax increases on beer sales and as a result, Treasury revenues from beer consistently undershoot projections. Last year, there was a £150 million shortfall in revenue from beer and this year is on course to record another £100 million shortfall. In contrast, those drinks that have benefited from duty freezes have grown in popularity and boosted tax revenues.

A possible explanation for the underestimates is that supermarkets can use beer and lager as a loss leader. Only last issue we covered the

fact that drinks promotions over the Christmas period meant that beer and lager was available to the off trade at a ridiculously low price.

A large proportion of drinkers are social drinkers. This means that they want to go out to the pub and enjoy a few beers (not binge drink!). However, they are penalised for doing this. With all the employment that is involved in the pub trade, there are knock-on benefits across the country by encouraging this practice.

Pubs are under enough pressure with the smoking ban about to become law. They are spending a lot just to make sure that they do not lose custom and this will be reflected in yet more price increases unless trade increases.

The benefits that have been enjoyed by other drinks from a tax freeze should be extended to Britain's national drink. A decrease in the tax on beer is perhaps too much to hope for, despite the evidence from the rest of Europe; but however a tax freeze for a number of years would not only help reverse the current decline in beer, but would also improve Government revenues from beer.

It should be Government policy to encourage and support Britain's winning businesses. British brewers and beer are of world renown. It's time to give beer a break.

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## LOCAL BREWERY NEWS



### Chiltern Brewery

As we hope your palate will have hopefully confirmed, over the last couple of years **Chiltern Brewery** has worked very hard to give polish and shine to their beers - at the same time they have been adding properly researched, genuine new brews so that they have seasonal beers too.

To date they have *Cobblestones* for the Summer, *Copper Beech* in the Autumn, *300's* at winter time and *Glad Tidings* during Christmas.

The only season that was still waiting for a

beer is Spring!

But not for much longer, because you will be delighted to hear that their new Spring brew, **Chiltern's Nut Brown Mild** will be available in April.

As with all their beers, they are not cutting corners and have sourced the full ingredients in order to brew a genuine, traditional Mild. It will be slightly sweet, smooth on the palate with a hint of roast malt, and very gentle bittering. Colour will be ruby/nut brown and it will be fermented to the upper end of strength for most Milds at 3.9% abv.

The launch of the beer will be at the **Farmer's Bar, Kings Head**, in Aylesbury, on Thursday 19th April.

### Vale Brewery

The flagship pub of the **Vale Brewery**, the **Hop Pole** in Aylesbury, is getting its own beer! This is to be launched at the pub's first Easter beer festival which starts on Thursday 5th April with a 'meet the brewer' evening.

*Hop Pole Bitter* is a single hopped beer brewed with Bramling Cross. Said to be a crisp 4% bitter, dry with a subtle taste of summer fruits and lychees.

The pub is renowned for being a permanent



beer festival. However, over Easter there will be twenty beers on stillage in the function room as well as the customary ten handpumps in the bar.

The **General Elliot**, in South Hinksey, has been voted **Oxford City CAMRA Pub of the Year**. It's excellent news for the Vale tenanted pub run by John Westendorp. John carries four beers and is a passionate devotee of real ale.



## The Red Lion

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## SCOTTISH HERITAGE

**CAMRA** is proud to announce the release of *Scotland's True Heritage Pubs* – a guide to pub interiors of Special Historic Interest.

*Scotland's True Heritage Pubs* is **CAMRA's** pioneering initiative to bring greater appreciation of the most valuable historic pub interiors in Scotland for locals and tourists alike. The aim of the guide is to encourage appreciation of the rich variety of architecture that still exists in genuine Scottish pubs.

*Scotland's True Heritage Pubs'* author, Michael Slaughter, said: 'This guide is the culmination of over 10 years of surveying by **CAMRA** members to identify the last remaining pubs that are still much as they were before the mid 1960's when a trend for pub refitting and opening out began.'



The guide is a celebration of the uniqueness of Scottish pubs compared to other parts of the UK. The guide includes a comprehensive introduction covering such subjects as: Island serving counters, Ornate gables, Tenement Pubs, and Ladies Sitting Rooms.

The guide also features details of public transport for each pub, and information about those that serve food.

*Scotland's True Heritage Pubs* is available in all good bookshops, or direct from **CAMRA**. Priced from £4.99 (excluding p&p).

## OLD LUXTERS

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## BEER FESTIVAL THE WHIP INN

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\*\*\*\*\*

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## UNIQUE PUBS THAT REFUSE TO BE 'CLONES'

**CAMRA** has announced the winners of its annual Pub Design Awards, which celebrate the very best in vision, imagination and restraint in Britain's pubs.

The winners were given their awards at a ceremony in Halifax at the **Three Pigeons** – winner of the **CAMRA/English Heritage Conservation** award and joint winner of the Joe Goodwin Award, on Thursday March 22nd.

Pub Design Award judge Steven Parissien – Head of Heritage at leading independent planning and urban design consultancy Turley Associates – said: 'Pubs change hands with bewildering frequency, with each successive owner determined to impose a corporate identity or 'theme' on the hapless fabric.'

'Amid this sea of change, with pubs being passed from owner to owner like Monopoly houses, the Pub Design Awards remains a beacon of impartial common sense. The awards' aim is to promote the best in pub design, and to identify how we've been able to create and perpetuate one of the nation's best-loved, most strikingly individual and most intrinsically British building types.'



**Refurbishment Award**  
**The Prince of Wales, Herne Bay, Kent**

The judges said: 'A no-nonsense late Victorian town pub. Here the new conservation work has been blended excellently with the features and finishes which survive from the 1890s. In this basic local boozer – no gastropub pretensions or ash-topped tables here – the attention to detail and atmosphere is faultless.'



**CAMRA/English Heritage Conservation Award**  
**The Three Pigeons, Halifax, West Yorkshire.**

On the **Three Pigeons** in Halifax, the judges said: 'Opened in 1932, the original architects Jackson and Fox opted for an eclectic mix of neo-Georgian and then highly-fashionable Art Deco. Sold as a free house in the 1980s, the pub was resold to the Izakaya Pub Company, trading as **Ossett Brewery**, in 2005.'

'The careful refurbishment recently carried out is exemplary. The original multi-room plan has been retained – as has the engaging painted ceiling in the central hall – and the splendid tiled fireplace insets and oak-veneered bar counter, all dating from the 1930s, have been given a new lease of life. The whole effect is distinctly warm and welcoming, conjuring up exactly what visitors to Britain would imagine a pub to be. Perhaps most impressively, all of the new work has been executed on a shoestring budget, demonstrating that enthusiasm and sensitivity are often far better for old buildings than bulging corporate wallets and planning strategies.'



**Conversion to Pub Use Award**  
**The Works, Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire**

Of the **Works**, Sowerby Bridge, the judges said: 'Originally an engineering workshop dating back to the end of the nineteenth century, this basic interior has been treated simply but effectively by local architects Hawden Russell. There is no artifice here, nor any fake history, but merely a very individual, multi-functioning building. The whole interior has been brought together visually by the well-chosen historic fittings bought by the owner on ebay. Altogether a good example of what can be done to bring a problem building, which seemed to have no obvious future, back to a highly successful commercial life.'

**Joe Goodwin Award for the best street-corner local**  
**Shared between Three Pigeons and Prince of Wales**

The judges said: 'This award in memory of the former **CAMRA** chairman, goes jointly to the **Prince of Wales** in Herne Bay and the **Three Pigeons** in Halifax. These two old pubs, which together epitomise the best in traditional pubs, show how updating an old interior need not mean eradicating its unique charm or ignoring local customers in favour of imposing a short-lived corporate identity derived from national focus groups. This proves a small budget, wisely and thoughtfully applied, can do wonders.'

Disappointingly, the judges felt there were no worthy entries for the New Build award in this year's nominations. Only one in every four yearly awards has seen a prize being given in this category, a sad comment on the vision and ambition of today's pub owners.

# *The Royal Oak, Oakley*



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- *We have a wide range of Real Ales on list including a variety of Guest Beers*
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## **MAY BEER FESTIVAL**

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## LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

### *Old Luxters*

As the present BLO (*Brewery Liaison Officer*) for *Old Luxters* brewery in the Hambleden hills, I felt compelled to comment on their splendiferous news on their recent *Royal Warrant of Appointment* honour. Since I have been associated through *CAMRA* with this

Buckinghamshire full-mash craft brewery, proprietor Mr. David Ealand has been striving for this award for the last circa five years. And well deserved too! *Old Luxters* are convinced that they are the first micro brewery to ever to have been granted with this coveted accolade.

*Old Luxters* have brewed and supplied the Royal Household Farm Shops (*Windsor, Sandringham, Balmoral etc*), continually for the last five years, the criteria for consideration for a *Royal Warrant of Appointment* to Her Majesty the Queen.

Their now legendary bottled beers, *Barn Ale* (5.4), *Dark Roast Ale* (5.0), *Damson Ale* (7.0), but especially the *Windsor Gold Ale* (4.5), allegedly a favoured tippie of HRH Prince Charles, have become increasingly popular over the last year or so.

*Windsor Dark Ale* (4.5), exclusive to the *Old Windsor Farm Shop*, and *Old Luxters* variant *Winter Warmers* (*Gingered, Mulled, Spiced*) (all 4.5), gives the modern discerning drinker a wide choice in the spectrum of real ale nowadays.

Their brewery shop is open seven days a week, but it is best to phone the brewery first to check for seasonal changes to opening hours.

*Alan Sheppard (Old Luxters BLO)*

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Sunday lunches are a speciality with food being served until 4.30pm.

Bookings for Easter now being taken

JAZZ  
THE BOBBY ORR TRIO  
plus guests  
Alternate Sundays



## MORE NEWS

### *Rebellion*

Thriving local brewery, the **Rebellion Beer Co.**, continues to enthrall, with the past year being their busiest year so far. The brewery brewed a total of 1.5 million pints of beer in 2006, and are currently brewing at full capacity at 37,500 pints per week. The increase in volume at the brewery is from the growth of their local pub trade and from their shop sales.

On the subject of the **Rebellion** shop, their flagship beer, *IPA* (3.7), which achieved *Supreme Champion Best Bitter* at the Society of Brewers National Final last year, is always available for purchase here. Two further **Rebellion** beers are usually on offer in cask form, one a seasonal/monthly special.

Their new 2007 monthly specials by the way, have a 'spy theme' this year and are as follows;

April-*Conspiracy* (4.2), May-*Undercover* (4.4), June-*Interrogator* (4.2), July-*Defector* (4.4), August-*Shaken Not Stirred* (4.2), September-*Booby Trap* (4.4), October-*Spooks* (4.4), November-*Deception* (4.2), December-*Santa's Surprise* (4.2).

A new bottling line is due for completion in 2007, in a newly acquired barn which has been obtained at the brewery site. Most of their brews will then be available in bottle form, with a Czech Lager (**Rebellion Lager**) ( ? ), which is hoped to be created shortly.

The ever-popular open brewery tours are again taking place on the first Tuesday of the month in 2007. Tours start at 7.20pm, £10 per person, with seven **Rebellion** ales to drink and you get to keep your **Rebellion** beer glass!

*Alan Sheppard (BLO) and Rebellion Members Mailout.*

## DE-WANIUM

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(The Good Curry Guide)

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## The Farmers' Bar

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+ + +

## Beer & Cider Festival

20th, 21st & 22nd April

+ + +

Come to the launch of our new  
**Chiltern's Nut Brown Mild**

7pm on Thursday, 19th April

+ + +

**evening food starting 17th April**

Tuesday to Saturday 6pm until 8.30pm

+ + +

**The Chiltern Brewery**  
**Terrick Aylesbury**



## CAMRA BUCKS BRANCH 1973 - 74

I attended an early meeting in 1973 at the renowned **Rose and Crown**, Saunderton. Mine host, Robert Watson, became Treasurer I believe, while Pip Elton was Secretary. I was on the Committee for a while and became Chairman in 1974. Meetings started before Sunday lunch opening time so that Robert could give full attention to branch matters and we did not unduly disturb patrons. Of course, some libation encouraged discussion...

We organised regular committee get togethers: they included the **Derby Arms**, Aylesbury, which served a beautiful pint of **Courage Reading Best Bitter** (from the old **Simonds Brewery**). This was one of the finest brews I ever tasted. We also went to the then infamous **Bell** at Winslow. It was well known that the landlord often refused to admit or serve people unknown to him, so you can imagine our pleasure when we entered accompanied by our wives via the back door and sat at a vacant table without comment. No one came in the front door, it had not been opened since the death of Winston Churchill in 1965. The gents was out the back, in the stables; the ladies used the landlord's toilet at the top of the stairs. It had a beautifully decorated bowl so I was informed. The beer was Bass, I believe, but that was almost irrelevant, though today I reminisce about that beautiful nutty taste of a pint of well-kept Bass, gone but not forgotten.

Another memory concerns Sunday trips across the fields from our farm labourer's cottage in Rowsham to the **Royal Oak** at Aston Abbots, for a game of skittles (long gone I would think) or the **Rose and Crown** at Wingrave. A couple of pints of **ABC Bitter** went down a treat, before the trek back home.

We also used to visit the **Five Elms** at Weedon, a magic destination. On a Saturday night, the landlord, well into his seventies, would say: 'Well I'm off to bed now folks. I'll leave the till open, just serve

yourself.' The only beer was **Worthington E**, on a quaint quarter-pint handpump, the only one I ever remember seeing. If the cask ran dry, patrons were encouraged to go into the cellar and change the line over, with instructions shouted down by mine host. An excellent hostelry. I remember one lunchtime occasion when we were drinking outside, because we were watching the morris dancers there, probably the Whitchurch Morris Men. Anyway, I was leaning against the pub wall, my feet on the wet wooden cellar hatch doors, nursing a pint, when I lost my footing. I slowly slid down the wall, my feet going faster and faster, until I landed with a soft bump: not a drop was spilt! Silence. Then spontaneous applause from the morris men. That must have slowly stirred something in me, because 20 years later I became a morris man myself.

After Bucks, it was Sussex. Penny and I moved to Lewes where we refamiliarised ourselves with **Harvey's** beautiful **Sussex Best Bitter**. Our local was the **Swan** and we did a fair bit of **Swan** supping, believe me, especially as it was only 150 paces from our back gate! Our two quart jugs could have found their own way there too, I think.

Anyway, in 1984, we moved to Australia and have been here ever since. The beer situation was dire then, **Coopers** being the only beer worth drinking. Things have improved no end; there are now several good bottle-conditioned ales, in addition to **Coopers**, notably **Little Creatures Pale Ale** from Fremantle, near Perth in the west. Cask-conditioned ale is a rarity, but it can be found, e.g. at the **Wig and Pen** in central Canberra. I took up full-mash brewing so I get by!

All the best, Wayne Burt

PS I'd be very interested to hear from Robert Watson or Pip Elton, if they are around. They could be **CAMRA** members still, as I am.

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## EDEN ALE

The Eden Project in Cornwall is one of the country's top tourist attractions. It promotes the benefits of conservation, eco-friendliness and all things natural and plant related – including, of course, that most natural of products: real ale.

With its main attractions being two enormous 'biomes' (space age greenhouses) which recreate major world ecosystems, the Eden Project is definitely not a theme park. However, on a recent visit it was reassuring to note that it hasn't adopted the policies of other large scale tourist attractions and events, which are often dominated by mass-produced fizz, if not totally dry.

On the contrary, the Eden Project even has an exhibit devoted to beer. This is in the 'outdoor biome' – which is actually an eco-marketing term for the outdoor gardens surrounding the real greenhouses. Being an authentic display, there was little plant activity in the beer exhibit in February but there were some fascinating hop poles designed by a local artist.



Come the summer, hop vines will be climbing up over the poles, accompanied by a planting of the new, dwarf organic hop varieties. Alongside the hops will be a planting of barley – to remind the 90% of people who don't know (according to an Eden Project statistic) that barley is the main ingredient in beer.

One of the nice things about environmentalists is that most do like a drink. Many eco-friendly objectives are happily consistent with

CAMRA's aims. For example, local beer drunk in local pubs reduces food miles as does local sourcing of ingredients – with virtually everything needed to produce real ale available to pristine standards in the UK (the only exceptions being a few unusual aromatic hop varieties).

A sign in the beer exhibit reminds visitors of beer's heritage and emphasises that real ale is the most traditional style of beer. It also mentions that authentic continental lager is matured for several months – not like the accountant-designed, fast-turnover rubbish that is churned out of the UK's lager factories.

Realising that real ale is a perfect product to promote the values of natural ingredients and local sourcing, the Eden Project has gone into partnership with **Sharp's** of Rock to produce **Sharp's Eden Pure Ale**. This is available on draught throughout the Eden Project and in bottles in the gift shop (rather expensive at £2.45 a 500ml bottle – and I didn't notice any claims for it being bottle-conditioned).

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*Moderate in strength, but packed with flavour.*

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## MORE EDEN

**Sharp's** is a local Cornish microbrewery, based in Rock, and is well known for its *Doom Bar* bitter – which is widely available in the West Country, along with Eden Pure Ale and Atlantic IPA. The brewery's web site also emphasises its credentials as an appropriate partner for the Eden Project by listing a rogues' gallery of common chemical additives, which they make a point of avoiding using in their beer.

The even more local **St. Austell Brewery's** ales are also available at Eden. **St. Austell's** brews, particularly their *Tribute* best bitter, are currently distributed widely in the free trade, providing another example of the renaissance of Cornish producers of traditional food and drink.

As last year's branch visit to Salisbury showed, the West Country in general is becoming a hotbed of activity in the small regional and microbrewery sectors.

So, cut your summer holiday carbon emissions and get down to Cornwall instead – and get a satisfying feeling from an educational day out that emphasises all that's good for the environment. To get an even warmer glow, you can also show your eco-friendliness by getting a theoretical and practical education in the benefits of real ale.

**Mike Clarke**

## RE-RISEN SUN!



The **Rising Sun** in Ickford, is on schedule to re-open on Thursday evening, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2007!

You will recall from previous updates that the **Rising Sun** suffered a devastating fire in January 2006. The damage was extensive but this Grade 2 listed pub, parts of which date back to the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, has been beautifully restored. During refurbishment some of the pillars have been removed, making it more spacious, the bar area has been greatly improved, there is a new darts area and the pub has a bright and airy feel to it.

Thanks to the hard work of the landlord, Paul Honour, the **Rising Sun** regularly featured


in the *Good Beer Guide*. The emphasis on great beer will continue with an offering of four real ales.

The pub has been greatly missed by customers from all the surrounding villages. Once again numerous activities and events in and around the village will be supported together with Darts, Crib, Aunt Sally,

Quizzes and sponsorship of Ickford Football Team.


When the **Rising Sun** re-opens its doors, on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2007, it will be 'No Smoking'. Having said this, customers who do smoke have been provided with an extremely comfortable outside smoking area. The area has a roof, lights, heating and is easily reached from new patio doors.

Paul and Jan very much look forward to welcoming you all to the grand reopening on Thursday evening, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2007!



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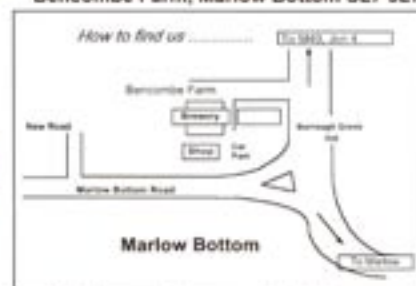
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## CORRECTIVE REAL ALE PROGRAM

The criminal justice system in Buckinghamshire is to try a modern approach to solving its endemic problems with juvenile alcohol-related crime. This innovative attempt will involve weaning the youngsters on to real ale rather than their current favourite tipples.

The principle is very similar to that of prescribing methadone for heroin addicts argues Mica Hall Creek, chief social outreach worker for Bucks Underprivileged Minors. 'We find that the lawyers engaged by anti-social youths have successfully argued that the kids' human rights allow them unlimited access to alcohol and then to go around mindlessly smashing things up. We need to manage this self-expression. If we provide them with a form of alcohol that perhaps reduces the desire to commit wanton acts of violence then we have a non-confrontational solution to the problem.'

Behaviour of real ale enthusiasts seems to bear this out. Assistant deputy chief constable Lea Mark Chiclé explained 'CAMRA run beer festivals with up to several thousands of beer drinkers all in a large hall or tent. They drink massive quantities of ale but you don't see them going around glassing each other or



kicking innocent bystanders' heads in. Those guys are impeccably behaved so you've got to think there's something in the real ale itself that helps that.'

A pilot scheme has been set up, known as the Corrective Real Ale Programme whereby persistent young offenders with known alcohol problems are given vouchers to spend in pubs – but only on real ale. These vouchers, known as Community Help Ale Vouchers, are popular with the landlords operating the scheme as they provide a steady income in challenging times for the local pub.

Is the scheme proving to be a success? Ms Hall Cheek said it would be several years before conclusive results could be proved and, she added, 'For example, we have targets of 25% of the hoodies acquiring a beer belly in the first six months, 15% to grow a beard and 33% to start wearing T-shirts with amusing slogans on them. We hope 5% will learn to read and write so they can tick off the microbreweries in their notebooks. If any of them take up smoking a pipe, preferably the tobacco version, then I get a 10% bonus!'

The *Campaign for Real Ale* has mixed feelings about this initiative. A spokesman said 'On the positive side,

it's fantastic that we're achieving our objective of getting youngsters interested in real ale and it's great to see the benefits of real ale as a natural drink being promoted in this way. On the other hand, we'd like to think that it's not just our members' choice of drink that makes them upstanding citizens but that their love of real ale derives from their generally superior intelligence and sense of taste'. He paused. 'On the other hand, you may have a point'.

The CRAP scheme is due to roll out across the whole county from 1<sup>st</sup> April onwards.

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# I.O.W.



When the fixture list for my Non-League football home town club, Marlow FC, was issued, a welcome inclusion was Newport, (IOW) Isle of Wight. Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March was the date in our diaries as a real ale laced Jolly Boys weekend was forming on the taste buds. Nine months later, Marlow's discerning drinkers (beer monsters) evacuated South Bucks for South Hampshire.

Marshalled expertly by Brigadier Oram, Marlow's famous BBGG (Behind Both Goals Gang) travelled by road, rail, foot and ferry, (I think some even swam) to rendezvous at the **Prince of Wales**, Newport for a Friday night appraisal. Earlier that day, I had caught the 10.08am Marlow train, along with others, on the first leg of our expedition. I was able to purchase a return ticket from Marlow to Lake (IOW), changing at Maidenhead, Reading, Guildford and Portsmouth seaport.

On departing the foot passenger ferry at Ryde (IOW), I had become a bit dry, so first pit-stop was the **Solent Inn (GBG)**, for three swift pints. This **Punch Taverns** pub offered five ales, one an island brew. The **Yates Blonde Ale** (4.5) was light, refreshing and lasted approximately four minutes in my glass. I was thirsty! The landlord, Graham, (if I recollect), was friendly and informative as we discussed beer, **Punch Taverns** and oh beer. My other two imbibes were **Banks Bitter** (3.8) and **Highgate Lone Wolf** (4.6). I bid farewell to catch the train to Lake, where my Ashleigh Guest House sanctuary was awaiting my arrival for a luggage drop and a freshen up.

Because of the inclement weather conditions, and the fact that I missed the Shanklin train by some thirty seconds that evening, I cut my losses to visit Brading and a certain **Yarbridge Inn (GBG)**. I hadn't realised that this was **IOW CAMRA Pub of the Year 2006**, but on seeing the eight handpumped ales on parade waiting to be explored, I could be inclined to see why.

**Ringwood Best** (3.8) was the only permanent fixture here, while the other

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## FOOTBALL AND REAL ALE

seven were ever-changing micros, some I've never heard of before. **Three Castles** Liddington Castle (3.5), **Sheffield Brewing Co.** *First Brew* (4.2), **Falstaff** *Charlie Chaplin* (4.2), **Toll End** *Father Angelo* (4.4), **Quartz** *Perle* (4.5), **Peakstones Rock** *Black Hole* (4.8) and **Three Feathers** (5.0) from the **Great Orme Brewery**. A ticker's temple! Not falling into that category never stopped me sampling, admittedly in halves, all of them. A pleasant pub that since February 2003 has served some 1295 different real ales as the pump clips on view show.

Saturday morning, match day, a 3 o'clock kick-off, so I'm off to Ventnor for a meander around the town and a pint or three. This picturesque coastal town hosts an island brewery, imaginatively titled the Ventnor brewery. I was hoping for some of the local juice in the local pubs. A brewery shop visit sourced a bottle of *Oyster Stout* (4.5) and *Sand Rock* (5.6). For later!

The **Volunteer Inn (GBG)** had me as their first customer on the stroke of 11am, but alas the one beer that I craved, the **Ventnor Golden Ale** (4.0), was 'off' and another barrel wouldn't be appearing until much later. Bah! Five other mainstream ales were available, tried the **Taylor Landlord** (4.3) and the **Adnams Broadside** (4.7), OK, but I expected a bit more of the wow factor at this tiny one bar pub, reputedly the smallest pub on the IOW.

Their 'rival' pub in Ventnor is allegedly the **Crab and Lobster**, no GBG accolade in the **2007 Guide**, but I thought worth a visit. Well worth a visit! A quirky, eccentric, must see gem of a pub, where the **Exmoor Hound Dog** (4.0) was in superb condition and the best pint of beer that I drank in IOW. A truly, friendly back-street boozer, nice music too. Food was being served in the rear dining room as I departed.

I hopped on a bus to Newport for a pre-match pint of **Goff's Joustier** (4.0) at the **Prince of Wales (GBG)**. The football match was a rout,



Marlow trouncing Newport 4-0, so it was back to the **Prince of Wales** for some more **Goff's Joustier**, in very good nick too. Their other ale on at this **Punch Tavern** pub was **Marston's Old Empire** (5.7). A good solid town centre local, well worth its **Guide** entry.

Saturday night celebrations constituted a 'ruby' at the local Tamerind Indian restaurant, before we 'hotted' off in a taxi, to the **Travellers Joy (GBG)** in Northwood. A mecca for real ale drinkers, a great locals atmosphere with eight real ales taking centre stage.

Starting with the **Downton Polish Porter** (4.4) we moved onto two island beers, **Yates Front Row Firkin** (4.6) and a personal goal achieved when imbibing **Goddards Special Bitter** (4.0). Quote of the weekend while supping this beer was from one of the 'Gang', Dave Lay, who stated that it was 'a social ale'. Priceless! The weekend was made complete with an eclipse of the moon, overhead in the crystal clear skies.

Heading back to South Bucks on Sunday, we were already planning next season's excursion 'over the water' for some more 'football and real ale'.

*Sgt. Sheppard*



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## THE TURN ROUND OF THE WHEEL

Amid the current doom-mongering in the pub business, it is reassuring to report a pub that is being transformed from a previously unremarkable village local.

The **Wheel** in Naphill has been under the management of Mark and Clare since last year who have made great strides in putting the pub on the map.

The pub itself is an agreeably well-preserved country local maintaining a traditional multi-roomed layout around a central server.

A no-smoking area is to the rear with a small dining area to the side. The front bar features a splendid bar billiards table – quite a rarity these days. The games theme is continued through the pub sponsoring the High Wycombe Colts rugby team.

The pub has two beer gardens, including a large drinking area adjacent to the main road (but separated from the traffic by a fence). The pub



is situated in excellent walking country and bird spotters regularly hold red kite spotting walks in the woods nearby.

In real ale terms, the four beer festivals that are organized per year have turned the Wheel into a burgeoning destination in itself. A joint festival was run last autumn with the **Whip** in Lacey Green, which was well supported

and highly rated by local **CAMRA** members. The next beer festival, which will feature local brewers, will take place 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> April.

Four real ales are normally on offer. As the pub is a **Greene King** house, three of these are from the **Greene King** portfolio – **IPA** is a permanent fixture but the two others vary. At the time of writing these were **Greene King LBW** and **Morland Tanner's Jack**. Unusually, the fourth ale is a guest, unassociated with **Greene King**. This has recently been **Bateman's XXXB** but will regularly change.

The pub is just down the road from RAF Strike Command from where, apparently, the four minute warning of nuclear attack is declared. Maybe that would give just enough time for the RAF boys to nip into the **Wheel** for a final drop of fine ale?

*Mike Clarke*

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## BEER FESTIVAL



Haddenham's fourth Real Ale Festival will take place on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June, in the Youth and Community Centre, Haddenham.

This will be your opportunity to take your pick from a choice of over 36 real ales, also ciders and lagers.

There will be entertainment, including a Jazz Band, and hot or cold bar food, including an all-day BBQ.

All proceeds will go to local projects to benefit young people in the community.

It is possible to sponsor a barrel at the festival. Details on this and any more information as it comes in can be found on their website [www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk](http://www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk).

Why not join us at our Branch Social there! If the weather is a good as last year there is no excuse for missing out!

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Just fill in the form below and send your remittance (made payable to CAMRA) to Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW

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I/We wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale,  
 and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

I enclose a cheque for £.....

Signature .....

Date .....



Swan Supping  
 (Aylesbury Vale &  
 Wycombe Branch)



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To: The Manager		Bank/Building Society	
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Name(s) of Account Holder(s)			
Bank/Building Society account number		Originator's Identification Number	
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Signature(s)			
Date			



## BRANCH ACTIVITIES

### *Brewery Visit*

The branch will be visiting the **Loddon Brewery** on Saturday 28th of April in the early afternoon. This trip should be done via public transport, so the cost should be minimal (and there will be no problems with drinking and driving).

Arriva run an hourly bus (329) which drops people within a short distance of the brewery. There are plans to continue the evening in Reading, although some may have fallen by the wayside by then.

All Branch members are welcome. However, numbers are limited, so please book your place with the Editor (details on page 22) as soon as possible.

### *Black Country Coach Trip*

The date for our very popular annual trip is Saturday 7th July.

We will, once again, be sampling the delights of the **Beacon Hotel** in Sedgely, including the wonderful *Dark Ruby Mild*, and the **Bull and Bladder** in Brierley Hill.

Over the last two years we have managed to visit some brand new breweries and we hope to have some more new places to enjoy this year, as well as visiting as many old favourites as possible.

Full details have not yet been finalised, but the cost is expected to be around £25. Numbers will be limited and places accepted on a first come, first served basis. As this is the most popular trip of the year, early booking is advised!

Further information will be available from the Editor (details on page 22) or the website ([www.swansupping.co.uk](http://www.swansupping.co.uk)).



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# Branch Diary

*Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!*

## APRIL

### Monday 2nd MEANDERING SOCIAL

8.45pm, Crown, Granborough; 9.30pm Bell, North Marston; 10pm Black Boy, Oving.

### Friday 6th GOOD FRIDAY SOCIAL

Hop Pole (Easter Beer Festival), Aylesbury 12 noon

### Wednesday 11th COUNTRY PUBS SOCIAL

8.30pm, Stag and Huntsman, Hambleden; 9.15pm Frog, Skirmett; 10pm Bull and Butcher, Turville.

### Thursday 19th CHILTERN BREWERY MILD LAUNCH

Farmer's Bar, Kings Head, Aylesbury (Please check website for time)

### Friday 20th WING CRAWL

8.30pm Queen's Head, 9.30pm Cock, curry to follow.

### Wednesday 25th BRANCH SOCIAL

9.00pm, Royal Standard, Wooburn Common.

### Saturday 28th BREWERY VISIT

Loddon, Dunsden, Oxfordshire (Contact the editor for details)

### Monday 30th BRANCH MEETING

8.30pm, Bull, Stoke Mandeville.

## MAY

### Friday 4th LONDON PUB CRAWL

Starts 5.30pm Lamb, Leadenhall Market (see website for full details)

### Wednesday 9th JOINT SOCIAL

9.00pm Red Lion, Knotty Green; 10.00pm Royal Standard of England, Forty Green.

### Saturday 12th CRAWL AND BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

12 noon Wheel, Naphill; 1.00pm Black Horse, Lacey Green; 2.00pm Whip, Lacey Green (for beer festival).

### Tuesday 15th QUANTON SOCIAL

9.00pm George and Dragon, Quainton.

### Tuesday 22nd MARLOW SOCIAL

9.00pm Duke of Cambridge, Marlow.

### Wednesday 30th OXFORDSHIRE SOCIAL

8.30pm Red Lion, Chinnor; 9.30pm Shepherd's Crook, Crowell.

## JUNE

### Monday 4th BRANCH MEETING

8.30pm Wheel, Naphill

### Friday 8th LONDON PUB CRAWL

Final instalment of our long running crawl.

Starts 5.30 pm at the Dover Castle and finishes at the Doric Arch (was Head of Steam), Euston. Full details next issue.

### Saturday 30th BEER FESTIVAL SOCIAL

12 noon onwards Haddenham Beer Festival

## JULY

### Saturday 7th BLACK COUNTRY COACH TRIP

Please contact the editor for details.

**FOR THE LATEST ON BRANCH NEWS AND  
ACTIVITIES, CHECK ON THE BRANCH  
WEBSITE:**

**[www.swansupping.org.uk](http://www.swansupping.org.uk)**

We are always looking for ways to encourage our non-active **CAMRA** members (over 500 of you!) to get involved with branch activities.

All **CAMRA** members and potential **CAMRA** members (and anyone else who enjoys real ale) are welcome to join us at any of our socials.

## Swan Supping

Swan Supping is distributed free of charge to pubs in the branch area.

**Circulation 5000 copies.**

Edited by David Roe

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**Copy deadline** for next issue, to be published on 1st June, is 14th May 2007.

**Subscriptions :-** Swan Supping is distributed to over 250 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 have to do is send 50p for each edition you wish to receive to the Editor and leave the rest to us! This applies to single copies to UK addresses only.

We can mail overseas, but the price will vary depending on the country to which it is to be delivered.

Remember that most issues of Swan Supping can be downloaded from our website ([www.swansupping.org.uk](http://www.swansupping.org.uk)).

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

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## More Local News



(Continued from page 2)

celebration on Sunday 22nd April. There will be a beer tent and Morris Dancing.

### DINTON

The **Seven Stars** reopened at the beginning of March and **Fullers London Pride** is on offer. There is a refurbishment planned and we hope to have more information next issue.

### GIBRALTAR

The **Bottle and Glass** looks ready to open soon. More details next issue.

### GREAT KIMBLE

The **Swan** has launched a new menu and is scheduling a series of themed evenings. English evening on the 21st April is a celebration of both the Queen's (real) birthday and St. George's Day. This can be toasted with **Adnam's Bitter** or **St. Austell Tribute**. As yet we have no information on which real ale would be appropriate for Mexican night on the 23rd May.

### HADDENHAM

The **Red Lion** has been refurbished, with the two main bars having direct access between them. The **Reverend James** has been reintroduced – you could enjoy a pint or two playing chess on the giant outside chessboard recently installed.

The **Rose and Thistle** now has an extra ale – **Tanner's Jack** ideal to wash down their excellent food on the theme nights every Thursday. Disabled Access to the garden is now available.

### HIGH WYCOMBE

The town centre **Wetherspoons** outlet, the **Falcon** continues to offer at least one local brewery ale from **Loddon**. A recent visit found **Hocus Pocus** (4.6), **Evan Evans Warrior** (4.6) and **Nethergate Old Growler** (5.0), have also featured lately.

The **Friend at Hand** has finally been knocked down. Another historic building in the county has disappeared. Is there no call for a pub (or a railway station) halfway between High and West Wycombe?

The **Hobgoblin** (aka **Three Tuns**), meanwhile take beers from the local regional brewer the **White Horse** in Oxfordshire. **Best Bitter** (3.6) and **Black Horse Porter** (5.0) are among six beers that have been seen of late.

Crendon Street pub **Scorpio Bar** (aka **Finn McCouls**, **White Lion**), still have real ale on hand pump. **Fuller's London Pride** (4.1) was on view when

last visited. Acting on behalf of the owner, Ian Field, **Finn McCouls** was sold off an asking price of £95,000 by **Fleurets**, and Peter Clements took occupation just prior to Christmas. Peter is new to the trade and brings with him some fresh ideas, not to mention promptly changing the name to his star sign.

### ICKFORD

The **Rising Sun** is due to reopen on 5th April. Full details on page 13.

### KINGSWOOD

The **Plough & Anchor** now serves its real ales via handpump rather than gravity. **London Pride** is the regular and **Adnams Bitter** was the guest on a recent visit. There are live jazz or blues sessions every Sunday from 4.30-7.30pm.

### LACEY GREEN

The **Whip** is holding another of its famous Beer Festivals over the weekend of Friday 11th to Sunday 13th of May. Over 25 real ales and ciders from around the country will be on offer, plus jazz and a hog roast.

### LANE END

The **Grouse and Ale** (aka **Clayton Arms**) has won a top **Scottish & Newcastle** regional award for its fine cuisine. The pub has only reopened since September as a gastro-type pub from its old village local days.

**Tring** brewery ales can still be found at the **Old Sun**. Monthly specials, of late, have included **Pump House** (4.2) and **Georgie Boy** (4.0). **Ridgeway** (4.0) is a permanent fixture at this village centre local.

### LOUDWATER

The **Derehams Inn** are holding a beer festival at the end of June to ease the pain of the smoking ban.

### MARLOW

Back-street local the **Duke of Cambridge** sourced a couple of interesting real ales from new micros last month. **Borough Arms Bitter End** (3.9) and **Taunton Beer Co. Taunton Castle** (4.3) made a brief debut on hand pump, due to their popularity. Other ever-changing guest beers that have showcased are **Rother Valley Level Best** (4.0), **West Berkshire The Farinators Cut** (4.3) and a host of **Archers** monthly specials.

The new **Slug & Lettuce** (aka **hog's head**) still has **Caledonian Deuchars IPA** (3.8) and **Fuller's London Pride** (4.1) keeping up the real ale front at the bar. The pub has had a makeover,

attracting a more upmarket clientele, serving amongst other dishes, tapas, which are proving very popular.

### NAPHILL

There will be a beer festival at the **Wheel** over the weekend of Friday 27th to Sunday 29th of April.

### OAKLEY

The **Royal Oak** is holding a beer festival on Saturday 5th May. There will be at least ten real ales on offer, plus a barbecue during the day and live music at night.

### PIDDINGTON

The popularity of the **Rebellion IPA** has meant that the **Dashwood Arms** has removed **Greene King IPA** and replaced it with a guest beer. We held a branch social over two days (don't ask!) at the pub recently and were delighted to find **Rebellion Incognito** and **Zebedee** as well as the **IPA**, with **Hanby Ales Pure Gold** guesting. **Rebellion Brewery** are so pleased with this once lager driven pub that they offered to refurbish the cellar for them free of charge. This offer was quickly snapped up and the benefits should already be available for testing.

### PRINCES RISBOROUGH

The **Black Prince** is advertising itself as a no-smoking pub, real ale was available again there recently. The pub also has a large sign outside saying it is serving Indian food.

### QUAINTON

There is nearly always a mild on offer at the **George & Dragon**. This has included **Ansells** and **Highgate**. In the summer months the mild handpump will be used for draught cider instead. On our last visit their bitters were **Black Sheep**, **London Pride** and **Archer's Golden**. This enterprising village pub has been non-smoking for over a year and now offers Post Office facilities three mornings a week.

### THAME

The following news from Thame was missed out from our last issue.

There are two real ales normally on offer at the **Birdcage**. One from either **Deuchars IPA** or **Brakspears Bitter** and one from **Charles Wells Bombardier** or **Rebellion Smuggler**. Food Tuesday to Saturday and Sunday lunches in a no smoking area.

Christine Harris and Paula Dimmock are serving some tasty beers from **Hook Norton** at the **Falcon**. On recent visits these have included **Hooky Bitter**, **Gold** and **Double Stout**. This

small community pub on the edge of town is worth seeking out.

The **Rising Sun** serves **Brakspears Bitter** plus **Brakspears** seasonal offering. A new restaurant, where the patio area has been enclosed and opened for business in December, is serving Thai food. Patsy and Jay took over the pub a year ago when Paul Campion (**Birdcage**) decided not to continue at the **Rising Sun**. Food lunchtimes and evenings seven days a week. Thame's friendliest quiz held here every Tuesday. New patio area at back ready for the smoking ban.

**Fuller's** pub, the **Six Bells**, serves **London Pride** and **Discovery** with a third beer from the portfolio. This has been **Gales Winter Brew**, but may have changed over to **ESB**. They hold a quiz every Monday.

The **Star and Garter** is now under the stewardship of Richard and Clare Walker since November. Richard is a local lad having previously, with Clare, run the **Six Bells** at the other end of Thame. Being served is **Greene King IPA** and **Morlands Original**. Home cooked food is Richard's speciality and meals are served Tuesday to Saturday evenings (times vary). Sunday roasts are also available. A popular quiz is held every Thursday.

The **Swan Hotel** is now serving **Pride of Thame**, which is a 4.2 ABV beer brewed only for the **Swan** by the **Tring Brewery**. Two other changing guest beers each week, locally brewed if possible. Thai restaurant upstairs Tuesday to Sunday and there is live music every Sunday evening.

### WING

The **Queens Head** was chosen as AVDC Village Pub of the Year in January. Belated congratulations to Denise Redding.

### WOOBURN COMMON

Two **Sarah Hughes** ales, **Dark Ruby Mild** (6.0) and **Snowflake** (8.0), appeared side by side on gravity dispense amidst the amazing ten beers on offer at the real ale institution that is the **Royal Standard**. On offer at the end of March was the stupendous **Burton Bridge Thomas Sykes Old Ale** (10% ABV!).

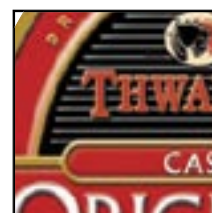
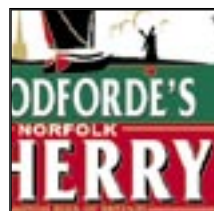
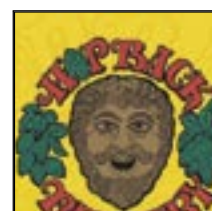
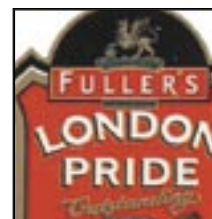
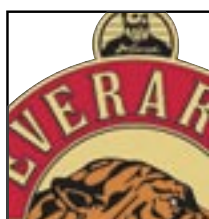
### WOOBURN GREEN

The **Queen and Albert** is under new management, as of mid-March. The new manager is Gaz and he plans to build up the real ale side by offering a regular guest beer. There are plans to rename it the **Steps** (the name that the locals know it by). The pub has a large garden to the rear, which the new management intend to exploit.





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