



Swan Supping

Campaign for Real Ale
Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch
www.swansupping.org.uk

FREE

Issue 57

DEC 2006/JAN 2007



END OF AN ERA!



The **Brakspear** family, which owns some of Britain's most historic pubs, has sold its business to another family firm, ending 227 years under single ownership.

Brakspear, which is a relatively small pub company with 104 venues, has some of its pubs are in our branch area. These are well loved and quite a few have appeared frequently in the **Good Beer Guide**.

Some, however, are famous to a much wider audience these days due to their appearances on many popular television series. The Tudor-era **Bull & Butcher** in Turville especially comes to mind in this regard.

Brakspear stopped brewing in 2002, but their beers have continued to be brewed ever since. However, it is only now

that the beers are once again brewed in Oxfordshire, by the **Wychood Brewery**, that they are returning to the delicious brews we used to treasure.

The pubs have been bought by **JT Davies** which already owns 50 pubs and a wine wholesaler and has for many years held a large stake in **Brakspear**. The deal values **Brakspear** at £106m and allows 30 members of the **Brakspear** family to share a windfall of £33m.

Hugo Pring, who is a descendant of **Brakspear**'s founder, co-ordinated the family selling its remaining 31% stake.

He called it the 'end of an era' but said with a disparate family, with 'many differing agendas and in light of what we consider to be an extremely generous bid

from **JT Davies**, it is understandable that eventually we would decide to sell out.'

CAMRA, whose investment club has a stake in **Brakspear** were not in favour of the deal.

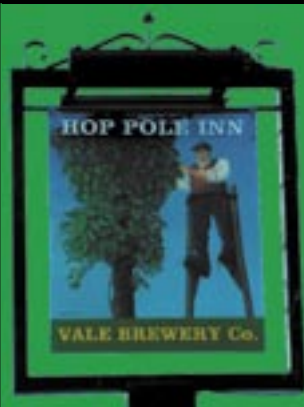
'We're very disappointed,' said **CAMRA**'s Iain Loe, who said he was worried that **Brakspear**'s reputation for selling good beer would be damaged.

Michael Davies, the chairman of **JT Davies** promised the company would be in good hands, pointing out that he was re-branding his 50 pubs as **Brakspears**.

'We're in the business for the next 100 years' he said.

We shall try and keep you up to date in **Swan Supping** with any further changes!

AYLESBURY'S PERMANENT BEER FESTIVAL



CAMRA listed Real Ale pub with 10 constantly changing traditional real ales from the UK's micro brewers. This Christmas we feature a seasonal theme to the beers. Over 40 seasonal and special beers planned in December.



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

Local News

ASKETT

The **Three Crowns** is open under new management. The pub is open for lunchtime and evening sessions Monday to Thursday and all day Friday to Sunday. The landlord said he does a constantly changing range of real ales -- which is an encouraging policy. More details should follow in the next issue of *Swan Supping*.

AYLESBURY

Tina Haynes is now in charge at the **Bell**. This *Punch* pub is now part of **Romani Inns** and will be totally refurbished in January. The beers on display were *Greene King IPA*, *Shepherd Neame Spitfire* and *Courage Directors* but they intend to rotate the ales available.

Dayla, the independent cask ales distributor, held their annual trade show at the Aylesbury Civic Centre in November and, once again, were kind enough to invite us to take part. This was a very successful day with a staggering number of regional and micro brewers that sell though *Dayla* on show and allowing us to try their beers. Once again, many thanks to Tim Cooper for the invitation.

The **Hobgoblin** has undergone a transformation. Out have gone all the tatty old seats to be replaced by settees. The pub has been painted throughout and the toilets have been totally refurbished. They had *Archers Top Tiddle* and *Wychwood Hobgoblin* available when visited. They are also doing Thai food both lunchtimes and early evening. There is a choice of lunchtime specials with a more extensive menu available at other times.

Richard and Jan Wiles have left the **Hop Pole** to take over another *Vale Brewery* pub, the **Victoria** in Northampton. The new man in charge at the **Hop Pole** is Glen Glenister who is well known to our members in the South of the Branch. He used to run the **Bell** in Waltham St Lawrence which was the *Regional Pub of the Year* in 2003. There he used to have five handpumps including a house beer brewed by *West Berks Brewery* (No.1). Perhaps *Vale Brewery* can do a house beer to fill one on the ten handpumps he now has to deal with. Cask Ale sales are reported to have increased and beers seen there recently have come from micro breweries from all parts of the country. The food menu has changed with the latest emphasis

being on traditional pub fare including homemade soups and Irish stew.

A couple of delights from the *Chiltern Brewery* have been sampled recently in the **Kings Head**. These were the *Lord Lieutenant's Porter* (ABV 6%) and the *Bodgers Barley Wine* (8.5%). These are normally only available in bottles but a barrel of each was made available to the lucky drinkers in the Farmer's Bar. Never mind if you missed them, you still have *Glad Tidings* (4.6%) to look forward to before Christmas!

The **Old Plough & Harrow** has *Shepherd Neame Spitfire* available on handpump and it is planned to have a second beer as soon as possible. The kitchen has been reopened and food is being offered daily from 12-3 and 5-9 in the evening with roasts being available on Sundays.

The **Rockwood** has recently been offering *Wychwood Hobgoblin* but the two beers spotted there on a recent visit were *Wadworth 6X* and *Jennings Cumberland*.

According to the *Bucks Herald*, a

decision on the future of the **Ship** is imminent. While you are waiting you can enjoy *Adnams Bitter*, *Fullers London Pride* and *Youngs Special*.

Shepherd Neame Bishops Finger was enjoyed recently at the **Steeplechase**. Kevin, the landlord, has been taking advantage of his new found freedom of beer choice since the demise of **London & Edinburgh** and will be offering a range of Christmas ales over the festive season.

The **Watermead Inn** has new people in charge and we have heard that the pub is to undergo a major refurbishment in February.

DOWNLEY

The **Downley Donkey** is taking advantage of the *SIBA* scheme and is regularly offering beers from the *Rebellion Brewery*.

HAMBLEDEN

Arcadian village gem the **Stag and Huntsman** still offers three real ales, *Rebellion IPA* (3.7), *Wadworth 6X* and a changing guest beer. Recent debutants have included *Eccleshall* (Continued on page 23)



CHRISTMAS specials from Vale Brewery!



Award winning real ales, direct from the brewery. Polypins contain 35 pints, minipins 17 pints. Buy a mixed case of 12 bottled beers for only £20.



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Vale Best Bitter	3.7%	£45.50	£24.25	
Wychert Ale	3.9%	£46.50	£24.50	500ml
Edgar's Golden Ale	4.3%	£48.50	£25.50	500ml
Black Beauty Porter	4.3%	£49.50	£26.00	500ml
Hadda's Winter Solstice	4.1%	£47.50	£27.50	
Vale Special	4.5%	£50.00	£26.25	
Grumpling Premium	4.6%	£50.50	£26.50	500ml
Hadda's Headbanger	5.0%	£51.00	£27.25	500ml
Good King Senseless	5.2%	£52.00	£28.00	500ml

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POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

We pride ourselves at *Swan Supping* that we produce what we feel is an interesting and informative magazine. Indeed, the amount of nice things that are said to us as we deliver the magazines to the pubs, clubs, breweries and off-licences gives us hope that that faith is warranted.

However, we get very few letters giving your opinions on the many topics that *CAMRA* feel strongly about. In order to boost this we invite letters and e-mails on the following topics:-

SMOKING BAN

Next year the government is introducing a smoking ban that will apply to all our favourite pubs.

The only voices we have heard from are the ones in favour of the ban and these are predominantly non-smokers. We have heard absolutely nothing from the smoking lobby at all. The only ones who seem to be against the ban are landlords that are afraid of losing a large proportion of their trade.

Are their fears justified? Will the smokers be happy to take their habit outside as they seem to be in California, or will they realise that global warming hasn't yet made all the cold weather, snow and ice in this country go away.

THE TAX WE PAY

Recently some enterprising people suggested that as we are all part of a European Union we should be able to buy goods in other parts of the EEC, pay tax on them in that country, then have them shipped over here.

As rates of duty are very much lower in a lot of the EEC (practically every country) this would make beer and tobacco very much cheaper and therefore very attractive. It would also have saved many thousands of miles of journeys on booze-cruises.

A great idea for all the smokers and the stay at home drinkers. A dreadful idea for thousands of corner shops, pubs and off licences whose takings would be hit.

This idea has now been stopped, but it yet again raises the question of the amount of tax we pay on beer in this country, which is among the highest in Europe.

High taxes on beer only encourages sales of white transit vans and gives the channel ferries some extra trade. Surely there must be benefits to harmonising tax rates across the EEC.

It was even suggested recently that tax should increase to help prevent binge drinking.

What do you think?

THE PUBS THEMSELVES

The collapse of the *London & Edinburgh* pub company is still having repercussions throughout the pub trade.

Many licensees have lost substantial deposits on their pubs and beer orders that were never filled.

Where can the publican get that money back from? The poor overtaxed drinker is where.

Pubs are under pressure from so many quarters. The supermarkets can undercut them savagely with cans of beer with the same name as the beer available in the pubs. However, a careful examination of the ABV shows that often they are not the same.

Country pubs are always under threat of being turned into restaurants or private houses. Will we all be happy to drink at home in front of the 'telly', or will we looking back fondly in the future and saying 'If only.....'.

HOW TO CONTACT US

We are happy to receive your comments either by writing using snail mail or email to the editor of *Swan Supping* (the contact details are given on page 23), or going via the website www.swansupping.co.uk.

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LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

Chiltern Brewery shop changes

Chiltern Brewery, in Terrick near Aylesbury, has a new counter in the brewery shop.

Nothing remarkable in that, you might say, except that it is made from barrels that used to reside in the **Brakspear's Brewery** shop.

The antique barrels were originally used for liquor blending and featured for many years at the rear of the main counter before the sad closure of the brewery in 2002.

They have now been hollowed out to provide shelving and make an attractive new counter as shown in the picture featuring Tom Jenkinson, son of the original brewer, and his wife.

Besides beer, the shop offers lots of products made with **Chiltern** beers including bread, cheese and sausages. It also has a very good selection of **CAMRA** books for sale!

Trade at the brewery shop has been very badly hit due to the recent roadworks which has restricted access to Nash Lee Road for two months. The work, which has taken twice as long as expected, was completed at the end of November, just in time for the expected increase in trade for Christmas.



Four awards for four beers in four weeks!

Chiltern Brewery, has announced that four of its beers have won four awards, in four weeks.

George and Tom Jenkinson (Head Brewer), who have taken over the Brewery's reins from their parents who founded the brewery in 1980, are absolutely thrilled with the news.

Three of the four awards were presented by the National Chairman of the British Bottlers' Institute in the Vintners' Hall, London on Monday 20th November, during a special evening dinner and ceremony.

The medals, with certificates, were awarded to **Chiltern** Brewery for three of its bottled beers: Gold - *Three Hundreds Old Ale* (5.0%); Silver - *John Hampden's Ale* (4.8%); Diploma - *Lord-Lieutenant's Porter* (6.0%).

To carry off these three awards, the Brewery beat national and international competition from brewers, cider-makers and lager makers.

The fourth medal was awarded by Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) for the Brewery's unique Christmas brew - **Glad Tidings** (4.6%) - a spiced milk stout. Although the beer is sold in barrels and bottles, it was the draught that won Silver at SIBA's regional awards. There were around 350 entries.

Tom is delighted that the recent investment in the new brewing equipment is yielding such early results, especially as it falls just after the Brewery's 25th Anniversary in 2005.



George said 'It is very apt that our Lord-Lieutenant's Porter won this award when it did. Our first brew was mashed in by the late Sir Nigel Mobbs, the then Lord-Lieutenant for Buckinghamshire. The timing is very fitting as it falls almost exactly on the anniversary of his death last year. He was a keen supporter of the Brewery, and I am sure he would have liked the thought that 'his' beer had won this recognition.'

In celebration of the above the brewery are having an open evening, with nibbles, at the **Kings Head**, Aylesbury on Thursday 7th December 6-8pm to which all are invited.



The Rockwood

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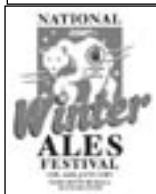
Beer Garden

Wadworth 6X & Guest Ale

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BEER FESTIVAL NEWS



The National Winter Ales Festival

The *National Winter Ales Festival* is organised by **CAMRA** to showcase a wide range of beer styles, particularly those winter warmers which are so popular with beer drinkers during the winter months.

With a selection of 200 beers, ciders and perries, drinkers will be able to find something which suits their tastes.

The Festival is held at New Century Hall, Corporation Street in Manchester, close to Manchester Victoria station from the 17th-20th January 2007.

Winter ales are typically darker, stronger beers that are at their best during the colder months. Styles of winter ale include: Stout, Porter, Barley Wine and Old Ale and many are of a higher alcohol by volume (ABV) than other beer styles.

Now in its 11th year, the *National Winter Ales Festival* began as a showcase for winter ales because brewers of old ales, stouts and porters could not enter the Champion Beer of Britain Competition – held in August when most winter ales are not available. Since then

the Festival has become a staple in the beer drinkers' calendar, attracting thousands of visitors.

Visitors to New Century Hall will be able to choose from more than 200 ales, foreign beers, traditional ciders and perries.

The beer judged to be the best at the festival will be awarded the title of *Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2007*. The competition is sponsored for the first time by Food from Britain and the announcement of the category winners and the *Champion Winter Beer* will be made on Thursday 18th January (time to be confirmed).

Along with the standard pint and half pint glasses, this year **CAMRA** is introducing a limited number of third pint glasses. This is a perfectly legal size of glass, and was once common in British pubs, being known as, amongst other things, a gill or a nip. With a glass of this capacity you can drink more modest amounts as some of the beer on offer can be as much as 8.5% alcohol by volume.

CAMRA members get £1 off entry at all times and season tickets are available from **CAMRA** HQ.

For further details, please visit the National Winter Ales Festival website at www.winteraless.co.uk.



Pigs Ear Beer Festival

Famously back from the dead after two years in the grave! Give the *Pigs Ear Beer Festival* your new kiss of life! It is said to be brighter and better with the usual renowned range of speciality, foreign and bottle-conditioned beers in the new venue with ample seating.

It runs from December 5th to the 9th (Opening Times Tuesday-Thursday: Noon-1030. Friday: 11-11. Saturday: 11-10) at the Ocean, Mare Street (opposite the Town Hall), Hackney, London E8.



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SIBA Silver - Glad Tidings

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WENDOVER WANDER



The Pack Horse

This wander through Wendover resulted from a challenge from friends in Middlesex. Despite being in deepest *Fullers'* country, they were finding it hard to get a consistently good pint of *London Pride*.

They asked if we could get a reliable pint of *Fullers* in our area. Consultation within the local branch got the resounding reply 'Of course it is – go to the **Pack Horse** in Wendover'.

So my mate Andy took up the gauntlet. Our intrepid threesome, including Simon, arranged to meet at Wendover. We would then later move on to that new real ale destination – Aylesbury (the **Hop Pole** and the **King's Head** having put it on the map)!

Yet it seemed a waste to pay a mere fleeting visit to Wendover. It is blessed with six pubs on, or at least no more than a couple of hundred yards from, the High Street. This is probably due its location at the foot of the Chilterns on a historic coaching route.

So we did all of the pubs in central Wendover – or at least the five that were open on a late Saturday afternoon.

We started furthest from the station at the **Pack Horse**. The condition of its *London Pride* carried the credibility of the *Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe branch* on its shoulders. Mercifully, the *London Pride* was in cracking form – fresh and lively.

Pride has a subtle hop character which can only be properly appreciated if the beer has enough natural conditioning to lift the hop aromas out



The George & Dragon

of the glass. Maybe this explains why it's the sort of beer that can be in sublime form on one occasion whilst depressingly ordinary on another? Of course this is where **CAMRA's** local knowledge proves invaluable, as it did in this event.

As well as *Pride*, the **Pack Horse** was offering *Fullers' Chiswick and Butser's Bitter*. Both were also well kept and very drinkable.

As its *Good Beer Guide* entry attests, the **Pack Horse** is a local's local. It both serves its local community and welcomes visitors. On our Saturday afternoon visit, the pub was boasted a healthy throng of drinkers. Maybe they had been drawn to watch the England rugby union team's narrow victory against the Springbok's scratch side on Sky Sports. Maybe it was the good beer. Or both? Why not?

The **Pack Horse** is on Tring Road and is adjacent to Wendover's famous Ann Boleyn's cottages. This row of historic cottages certainly dates back to at least 1620 – and the land they stand on was certainly owned by Henry VIII and given to Ann Boleyn at the time of their marriage.

Named after another English legendary figure, the **George and Dragon** stands near the mini-roundabout at the bottom of Tring Road. Unfortunately, at around 5pm on a Saturday, we found the pub was closed.



The Red Lion

Peering through the windows we saw *London Pride* and *Greene King IPA* available on the bar. We also saw some of the staff enjoying a pre-service meal. The staff eating in-house food must be interpreted as a positive sign – which is fortunate considering that it is said that the **George and Dragon** does a substantial trade in Thai food.

Next, on the High Street, was the **Red Lion**. This old coaching inn also dates back to the 16th century and is now a hotel, restaurant and bar. Like the **Pack Horse**, the **Red Lion** was very busy – with many large family groups clearly having just enjoyed a good meal.

The bar, which has an up-market ambience with its leather sofas and armchairs, was serving *Banks' Bitter*, *Shepherd Neame Spitfire* and *Marston's Pedigree*. We sampled each and they were all in excellent form. However, the bar counter has a pet hate of mine – a retractable shutter of the sort used to physically shut up shop at closing time in working mens' clubs or student unions. Hopefully this is another historical Wendover historical artefact and has long fallen into disuse.

Opposite the **Red Lion** is the **White Swan**. This is a narrow and fairly long, one-room pub with a low-timbered ceiling and a dartboard at the far end. It was offering the standard range of *Fullers'* beers – *Chiswick*, *Pride* and *ESB*.

FURTHER WANDERINGS



White Swan

The session bitter, *Chiswick*, is quite difficult to find nowadays – not having the brand status of *London Pride*. We sampled the *Chiswick* and *London Pride* and found them both in first-rate form.

Just off the High Street, on South Street, is the **King and Queen**. Until fairly recently this could have been a pub that **CAMRA** members would have given a miss. However, it is now under the same management as the **Bell** in Princes Risborough – and the same successful formula has transformed a previously ‘dodgy’ boozer – even the smart, modern décor is in the same style as the **Bell**.

The **King and Queen** is unusual in being a traditional multi-roomed pub rather than open plan. We chatted with Ruth behind the bar who told us that the food side of the business had been so successful – especially Sunday roasts – that a dining area had been created in the back room.

A sacrificial victim of the re-organisation was the pool table, which had been recently banished in favour of comfortable sofas in the left hand bar. An encouraging development, perhaps, but what about the most important factor – the beer? There are normally three real ales on offer. On our visit **Greene King IPA** was temporarily unavailable, which didn’t trouble us greatly. We sampled the two others on offer – **Marston’s Pedigree** and **Shepherd Neame Spitfire**. Both were in fine form – good beer rounding off this welcome tale of a pub’s re-invigoration.

Our final stop, by the station, was the **Shoulder of Mutton**. It’s a **Chef and Brewer**, so food-led, but we were encouraged by the **Cask Marque** plaque at the entrance.



Shoulder of Mutton

Inside is a warren of adjoining rooms, all furnished to be of an antique appearance. Part of the pub dates back to the 1600s and, apparently, a fragment of the original wattle and daub wall has been preserved.

The beer selection was better than we expected from a corporate chain. **Courage Best** and **Directors** might have been anticipated but **Charles Wells’ Eagle** was also on offer, which we all sampled and found to be rather good.

We headed to Aylesbury, envying the lucky inhabitants of Wendover – a place where all its central pubs serve real ale. Our challenge to find a great pint of *London Pride* had not only been met – but was surpassed by discovering several other great pints to boot.

Mike Clarke



King and Queen



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FOCUS ON THE ISLE OF MAN



Horse Tram

The Isle of Man, surrounded by the Irish Sea, is 18 miles south of the nearest point on the Scottish coast, 30 miles west of Cumbria, 33 miles east of Northern Ireland, and 45 miles north of Anglesea. The island is 30 miles long and 10 miles wide. The main port and capital of the island is Douglas.

Reg Saunders and I have long cherished the ambition to see the island and for me the spur was seeing the film, which Alan Willmott showed at one of his film presentations for the Vale of Aylesbury Model Engineering Society.

And so it was that early August 2006 saw Reg and I boarding a 'plane at Luton bound for Ronaldsway, the island's airport. By 2pm we had booked into our hotel and launched ourselves off to sample some of the delights on offer. We were booked into an hotel on the Promenade so to get nearer to central Douglas decided to take public transport. We noticed

tram tracks in the road and lo and behold a horse tram hove into sight! and we duly clip, clopped at a leisurely pace to the terminus which is right by the harbour. As both of us were 'as dry as a chip' you can guess where our first port of call might be! You probably would not be right; however, as we first made our way to the tourist office to get details of the 3-day travel cards then we hotfooted it to our real first port of call. This was the **British** and so it was that we supped our first pint of beer on the island, which was **Okells Bitter**. Once life had returned to our parched bodies we took ourselves off towards the railway station, the starting point for the Isle of Man Steam Railway where we had decided to venture on the Tuesday. On the way we nearly passed by the **Old Market Tavern (GBG)** but realising that it is in the Good Book we stopped in our tracks and entered. There we had another pint of **Okells Bitter**, every bit as good as that first one. I seem to remember that we enjoyed a further drop before we went off to the station, just in time to see a train arrive headed by one of the distinctive Beyer Peacock locos. This was the first time that I had seen one 'in real life' – very exciting! This done, we made our way to the horse tram terminus and repaired to our hotel for dinner. The meal over we took some exercise and, would you believe, our steps led us to a large hostelry on the Promenade called the **Queens (GBG)**. Here we sampled **Old Laxey Bosun's Bitter** a very nice brew then followed this by some **Okells Bitter**. I bought the first round and as I noticed the sparkler was on asked if it could be taken off for our pints. 'Ah, yes,' said the bar manager with a grin. 'You must be Southerners!' He took off the sparkler and



Bay Hotel

proceeded to dispense two fine pints with just the right head. On the following days we took ourselves off around the island. We called into the **Mines Tavern** in Laxey where we sampled some **Bushey's Bitter**. We had been for a trip on the electric tram and where it terminated, by the start of the Promenade, we realised that we would have to wait about half an hour for the horse tram to take us back to our hotel so we slipped in to the **Terminus Tavern (GBG)** for a nice pint of **Busheys Bitter**. After dinner we repaired to the **Queens Hotel** where I had a pint of **Moorhouse Pendle Witches Brew**. I have to say that was the only pint I had all week that I did not really enjoy – why this was I do not know. Probably I was having an 'off' evening.

On the Tuesday we took the horse tram into Douglas to buy a 3 day Travel card from the Tourist Information office. Then we walked round to the railway station to catch the steam hauled train. Oh joy!! We walked along the platform to the end of the long line of carriages and as I was sound recording I asked permission to occupy the Guard's compartment – the Guard would be in the compartment at the back. This was readily given, so Reg and I hopped on board. We would be next to the engine and away from the noise of the passengers. This was not to be, however, as when the engine had filled up with water it went off to a siding where it hooked on to some more carriages and proceeded to put them on the front of the train! I need not have worried as there is a steep climb out of Douglas and with the heavy load the engine was making some nice noises. All too soon we reached journeys end, Port Erin, and proceeded to go in search of refreshment. Train travel can be very dehydrating, you understand! We did no more than cross the road outside the station where we espied the **Station Café Bar**. Here we were served some excellent **Okells Bitter**. We got into tourist mode and wandered off around the town. I was looking for charity shops to prospect

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* offer valid for bookings made before 31st Jan 2007

A THREE LEGGED CRAWL?

for vinyl records (LPs) and Reg was on the look out for the **Falcon's Nest Hotel (GBG)**. We found the latter establishment so we crossed the threshold, found the bar and got supping on a pint of **Bushy's Bitter**, a super drop. We also consumed some lunch here, which was very good. We had to leave the rest of the prospecting 'till another day as we had a train to catch to get us back to Douglas.

Back in Douglas we were going towards the horse tram stop when our eyes lit upon the welcoming open door of the **Saddle Inn**. Not wishing to pass it by we nipped in and had a swift pint of **Okells Mild**.

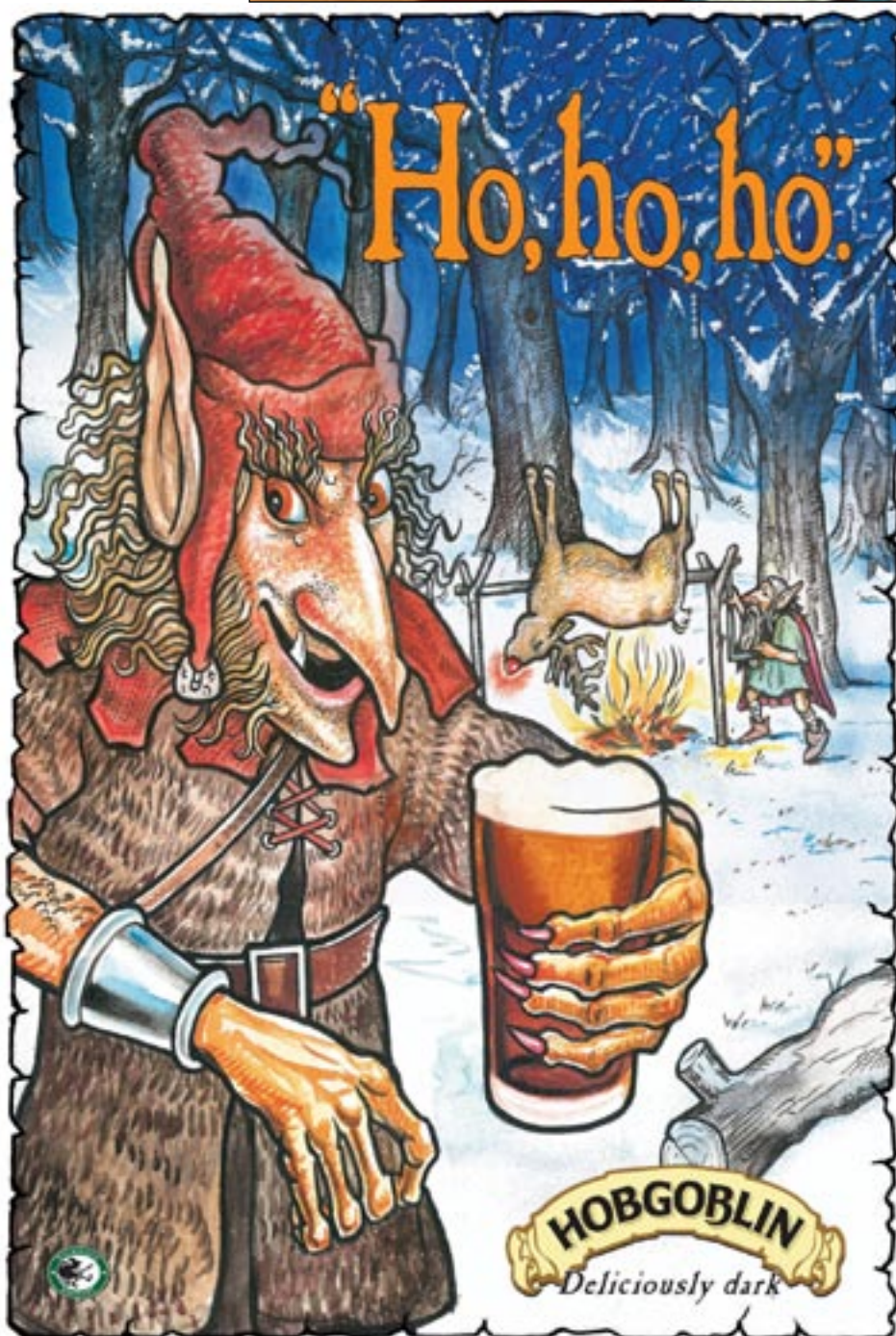
The next time we were in Port Erin, we had a sandwich lunch sat on a bench over looking the bay. Food consumed, we went off to enjoy the delights of the **Bay Hotel (GBG)**. This, as the Good Book says, has been restored with original materials and looks good inside. There we settled for a while and in a leisurely manner got the measure of **Bushy's** brews. We had **Ruby Mild**, **Old Bushy Tail** and **Triskelion**. All wonderful!

Another day we went by horse tram and electric tram to Laxey, home of the giant water wheel. There we went first to the **Queens Hotel (GBG)** where we partook of some **Bushy's Ruby Mild** and some **Castletown Bitter**. We then wandered off to find the **Shore Hotel**, Old Laxey (**GBG**) where we tried some **Old Laxey Brewery Bosun Bitter**. The beer was good but the welcome was lacking. We walked on to join the tram to get to Ramsey. There we found our way to the harbour to try out the **Ellan Vannin (GBG)**. Here we enjoyed some **Bushy's Pure Gold** – a lovely pint. We then boarded a bus to take us to Peel where we found the Royal. We had some **Okells Bitter** while we contemplated our next port of call. The lass who served us in the **Saddle Inn** in Douglas had recommended that if we went to Peel we should try the **White House Hotel (GBG)** for good ale and food. We got directions from the locals and wandered off. Destination found, we partook of some **Okells Mild** and enquired about food only to find that they no longer did it. The helpful folk pointed us in the direction of the **Marine Hotel** where we had some **Okells Bitter** to wash down the nosh. As we were talking about the day's exploits, a couple on the next table started talking to us and it turned out that they ran a pub in Douglas which unfortunately did not keep Real Ale. However they gave us a lift back to our hotel!

On our last day, we took ourselves off to Ramsey by tram. We started in the **Trafalgar Hotel (GBG)** where we supped some **Okells Bitter**. We then moved on to the **Stanley Hotel** where we had some more **Okells Bitter**. Our final port of call for the holiday was the **Britannia Bar** where we had some **Okells Mild**.

A fine holiday with lots of good ales. We only had one, which I thought was below par, which was the **Witches Brew** but that might have been my palate. Will we go again? YOU BET!! And we will probably take two friends with us.

Mike Clemence



MEET THE BREWER

On 31st October, the **Bernard Arms** in Great Kimble held a 'meet the brewer' evening with David Waller (featured in the centre of the picture with Mark, the landlord) from **Adnams**. The smartly refurbished **Bernard Arms** dining room was encouragingly packed with refugees who'd happily avoided being at home on the day of the ghastly American custom of trick or treating. However, **Adnams** and the pub had a treat of their own in store for us.

This commendable event was well supported by the local branch. Despite numbers being depleted by the Codsall trip on the same day, we mustered three committee members. However, the event was not aimed solely at real ale cognoscenti: there were even some local lager drinkers ready to be evangelised.

David Waller (aka 'the man who invented *Broadside*') was an excellent and lively



speaker. He gave a lively and interactive overview of the brewing process, going into impressive biochemical detail.

However, the most scientifically illiterate observer will have understood the key point that real ale is a unique and vital product – the work of millions of infinitesimally small microbes whose only purpose in life is to produce a beautiful pint in top condition.

Unlike dead keg beer, real ale is a living product. Fittingly, for Hallowe'en night, using **Adnams'** glass-ended firkin, the audience were able to see an almost supernatural demonstration of the hidden life that inhabits the normally dark and mysterious interior of a cask of real ale.

The dramatic action happened when David Waller vented (i.e. opened to the atmosphere) the special cask. Immediately, the beer turned into a swirling maelstrom as a large amount of pent-up, naturally created carbon dioxide created by the yeast rapidly exited through the

vent.

This is an essential part of the conditioning process for real ale, utterly unlike the process for keg beers. In normal circumstances this event happens in the pub cellar, when the spile (or plug) in the top of the barrel is removed, normally a couple of days before the beer is due to be served.

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A HALLOWEEN TREAT!

During the intervening period the beer settles out and should be clear and bright by the time it is at its peak and ready to serve. The remaining carbon dioxide in the beer gives a natural conditioning and a pleasant and lively taste.

As a living and perishable product, this conditioning lasts no more than 3-4 days in the barrel before the beer goes flat. This is the usual explanation for bad pints that sit in the glass like dirty dishwater: the beer is past its natural life and should not be sold (though plenty of landlords try to get away with it).

But back to the excellent evening's entertainment. David Waller conducted an informal tasting session with *Adnams' Bitter* and *Broadside*, provided on the house by the **Bernard Arms**.

David alluded to details that only the brewer would know. For example, while the *Bitter* has a far more pronounced hop aftertaste compared to *Broadside*, both have an identical amount of hops in the brew. It's all down to the interaction of the ingredients – yet another reason why drinking real ale is a fascinating pastime.

The evening ended with a quiz on matters real ale related. *Adnams'* generosity with the prizes (everyone received something) presented a logistical problem to your responsible, public-

transport-using **CAMRA** representatives.

Those from Aylesbury had exploited the positioning of the **Bernard Arms** directly on the route of the Wycombe-Aylesbury bus route (now number 300). There were too many prize bottles of *Adnams* ales to be easily transported back home. The pub came to the rescue with a couple of handy carrier bags.

To the credit of the **Bernard Arms**, the whole event was free of charge. This included snacks, a half pint glass to take away, tasting samples and a further free drink.

Most importantly from the **CAMRA** perspective, the *Adnams* beer was in superb condition on the night, particularly the *Bitter*. The *Broadside* was also very drinkable – so much so that our contingent stayed for well over two hours after the official festivities had finished to sample several more pints.

As mentioned in a previous Swan Supping, the Bernard Arms is now under the ownership of a family from South Africa.

Mark and Janine have instituted some welcome changes – including all-day opening on Fridays and Saturdays and extended opening during the day on Sunday. Food plays a major part in the business, both in the bar and restaurant. However, it would be fair to say the bar has a more relaxed and informal feel for bone fide

drinkers than has sometimes been the case in the past.

The pub also offers accommodation and is child-friendly, having an extensive garden with nice views to the rear.

The new owners also have had the good sense to promote the pub to the local community – for example, locals were offered the opportunity to sample the new late autumn menu in advance at a reduced price.

The pub also encourages the use of its car park for short-terms parking by parents from nearby Great Kimble primary school and worshippers at St. Nicholas's church – which avoids the adjoining narrow country lanes being jammed during the school (and church?) runs.

This established arrangement caused conflict with a previous management at the **Bernard Arms**. They failed to possess the common sense to realise that the same people they wanted to drive off their property in the morning and afternoon might also be a natural segment of the pub's market.

Of course, it is also proof of ultimate good sense to encourage real ale drinkers to visit and sample the ale. The Meet the Brewer evening was a huge step in that direction.

Charlie Mackle

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BEER FESTIVAL SUCCESS



At the end of October we held the 13th *Vale of Aylesbury Beer Festival* at the Community Centre in Eskdale Road, Stoke Mandeville.

As before, this was a charity event held to raise money for the *Friends of Florence Nightingale House*. There were 29 real ales available plus three ciders and one perry.

The festival was again staffed by *CAMRA* volunteers, some of which are pictured above, who enjoyed themselves nearly as much as the customers!

Over £4,900 was raised and if only one more barrel had been sponsored then the magic £5,000 barrier would have been broken. Local business's please note for next year!

As in previous years, we held a *Beer of the Festival* competition which was voted for by the people attending the festival. Votes were well spread between all the beers and ciders with every one getting votes. The eventual winners were as follows:-

Mild/Light Bitter

St. Austell Dartmoor

Bitters and Special Bitters

Batmans Autumn Fall

Strong Beers

Grand Union Honey Porter

Cider/Perry

Westons Country Perry



OVERALL BEER OF THE FESTIVAL

Grand Union Honey Porter

We intend to present a certificate for *Beer of the Festival* to *Grand Union* in the New Year. Please check future Branch Diaries for details.

This year we made an extra effort to provide more cider than last year. However, we still managed to have very little left at the end, with the perry proving especially popular.

Next year we intend to have an extra perry and four ciders. Please contact the editor if you have any suggested brands and the appropriate suppliers.

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BRANCH ACTIVITIES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We will be holding our AGM this year in the function room at the **Hop Pole** in Aylesbury on Monday February 5th starting at 8pm.

We are hoping to make full use of the ten real ales available soaked up by either a buffet or a curry (to be decided). There will also be a bottle raffle, so any contributions will be appreciated.

In addition to the usual business that has to be covered, we intend to have a guest speaker. Full details will appear in our next issue and on our website (www.swansupping.org.uk).

This is an important meeting as it will decide the direction of the branch for the next year. We want as many of the over 500 members of the **Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch** to attend as possible, even if it is only to say why you don't want to be more involved with the branch and its activities!

BRANCH DINNER

We once again had our Branch Dinner at the **Green Dragon** in Haddenham in early November.

This was the fifth time we have held it there and once again it proved very popular. Fifteen members and spouses enjoyed the superb food and the selection of three real ales in this new entry into the **Good Beer Guide**.

As usual our thanks go to Pete and Sue Moffat and all their staff for their sterling efforts that helped to make it such an enjoyable evening.

ON THE WAY BACK



There are signs of recovery at the **Rising Sun**, Ickford.

Following a serious thatch fire in January, work started on the rebuilding of this **Good Beer Guide** regular in September with a planned completion of March 2007.

Work is coming along well, with the oak timbered roof nearing completion, ready for the thatcher to commence work in early December. Details of building progress and the pub's re-opening will be reported in the next issue.

Let's hope that the same can soon be said for the **Bottle & Glass** in Gibraltar which suffered a similar fire in April 2003.

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Sunday 14th Dec	10.00am to 3.00pm		Sunday 14th Dec	Closed
Christmas Day	Closed		Boxing Day	Closed
Boxing Day	Closed		Tuesday 22nd Jan	8.00am to 6.00pm
Wednesday 27th Dec	8.00am to 6.00pm		Tuesday 23rd Jan	8.00am to 6.00pm
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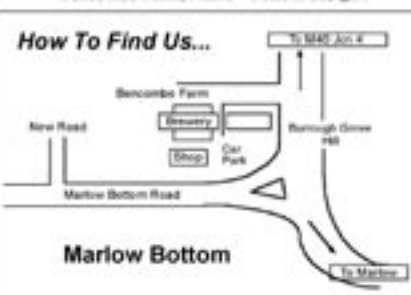
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BOOK REVIEW

Pub Beer Mugs and Glasses

Hugh Rock



A Shire Book

We think very little about it except when we are asked for a straight or a handle. However, without the humble pint pot we wouldn't be able to enjoy our beloved real ales.

Finally there is a book detailing the history of this invaluable item. *Pub Beer Mugs and Glasses*, written by Hugh Rock, is believed to be the first book to treat this subject as a whole although previous writers have dealt with beer

mugs made of ceramic, glass or pewter as part of these crafts separately.

Pub mugs have formed an interesting aspect of Britain's social history and they have been the subject of much regulation.

Profusely illustrated throughout, *Pub Beer Mugs and Glasses* covers the origin of the pint measure and the subsequent quest to have a fair measure (nothing changes!). The current role of the weights and measures departments run by our local authorities is covered as they do the best to verify that the latest mugs can contain the amount of liquid that they are supposed to. Now, if we could only get the government to understand that the head on a beer is not liquid and should not be counted as part of a pint we can go a long way to solving the problem of short measure.

There are chapters on stoneware and mochaware mugs as well as the usual pewter and glass mugs that we are all used to.

Along the way, other materials that have been used to make mugs, such as leather and horn, get covered and you can find out what spongeware is!

One area, which rightly doesn't get a mention, is the horrible recent abomination of plastic glasses, which blight so many sporting events and pub beer festivals. I can't see a book on

these any time in the future (that's a hostage to fortune if there ever was one!).

The future of the pint pot is in doubt as the pint measure is an anomaly as far as the European laws on the metric system. Following the demise of the Ravenhead and Dema glass manufacturers, our pint glasses are no longer made in Britain. The pressure will therefore increase for all of the European Union to standardise on the 500ml glass. It just wouldn't seem right to ask for 500ml instead of a pint of our traditional bitter, let alone mild!

The author is a manufacturer of organic soft drinks. A graduate of Balliol College, Oxford, he is interested in how things were made, especially during Victorian times. He has found that collecting beer mugs makes for a satisfying hobby, combining drink with manufacture and social history.

David Roe

Pub Beer Mugs and Glasses

By Hugh Rock £5.99

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GUESTS OF THE DUKE



Since the demise of the **Crown and Anchor** in Oxford Road, Marlow, my nearest public house now geographically, is the **Duke of Cambridge** in Queens Road. After Martin Bates relinquished the landlord's reins at the pub a few years back, having overseen a good drinking house with three well kept ales, the **'Duke'** went through an uncertain period with its future temporarily undecided.

Then a little over a year ago, John and Tracy Hudson exchanged the bright lights of Cressex, where they managed the Turnpike, to become landlord and landlady of the back-street local that is the **Duke of Cambridge** today. Since then they have been rebuilding the reputation of the pub steadily with a focus on the local community.

Years back in the halcyon days when town brewery **Wethered** were brewing their holy water that was *Thomas Wethered Bitter* (3.6), amongst others, the **'Duke'** dutifully served their beers as the pub was owned by **Whitbread**, which in turn owned the **Wethered** brewery. After the near apocalyptic closure of **Wethereds** in 1988, **Whitbread** fled the brewing business, selling out to **Laurel** in 2001, who in turn sold their tenanted public houses which included the **Duke of Cambridge**, to **Enterprise**, while **Laurel** choose to keep their managed houses ie the **hog's head** chain.

In the absence of the **Wethered** brews gracing the bar these days, beers can be sourced from the vast array of breweries both independents and micros which are challenging in the pub market today. Along with beer wholesalers, a new concept has proved very popular to landlords recently, which is the **SIBA (Society of Independent Brewers)** Direct Delivery Scheme. Local independent breweries signed up with **SIBA** can be contacted direct and will gratefully deliver from door to door the landlords chosen tippie, cutting out the middle man, so to speak. With this in mind, John has in the last year served fast approaching one hundred different real ales which include several dark milds.

Long gone are the myths that mild is only drunk by northern gents with flat caps who race pigeons and whippets. Both light and dark mild are having somewhat of a renaissance at present with the younger generation appreciating an alternative beer style. Although sometimes a chore to locate in Southern England, pubs like the **'Duke'** are obligingly offering the choice of both bitter and mild at their handpumps, and plaudits from the local real ale fraternity are wholeheartedly forthcoming.

Archers Dark Mild (3.6), *Vale Black Swan Mild* (3.3), *Rebellion Mild* (3.5), *Caledonian Dr. Bobs Magic Potion* (3.5) and *B&T Dark Mild* (3.8) are among some of the milds that have debuted at the town's real ale bastion. Bitters from breweries such as *St. Austell*, *Everards*, *Titanic*, *Oxfordshire Ales*, *Naylor's*, *Hog's Back* and *Loddon*, to name but a few, are beers that have been imbibed at the pub, with *Harveys Silver Supreme* *Champion Sussex Best Bitter* (4.0), a wondrous real ale, and 'top of the shop' for me!

They are a cosmopolitan bunch in the **'Duke'**, and that's not just the tropical fish and the parrots, Joey and Winnie, a grey and a green, that hold council every night over the pub clientele. The **'Duke'** boasts both a ladies and a gents dart team that challenge in the Maidenhead Darts League, while among the local Marlow celebs that frequent the pub, include local residents, local football fans and even a weekly cameo appearance from a former town mayor.

As an epilogue, I would like to thank John and Tracy for making the **'Duke'** a welcoming friendly local that many drinkers appreciate and to John for his commitment to real ale with all his 'guests' from far and wide and long may it continue. Cheers!

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COMMUNITY PUBS WEEK

CAMRA has announced plans for a national week of action in February 2007 to help preserve and promote pubs that serve as an irreplaceable asset to their local community yet are closing at a frightening rate.

CAMRA research in 2005 showed that 26 pubs a month are lost in Britain. However early indications from further research suggests that current figures may actually be much higher – and it is not theme pubs or chain bars that are under threat but pubs at the heart of the local community.

The first ever Community Pubs Week will take place from 17th February to 24th February in order to raise the profile and importance of pubs in the community and encourage people of all ages and backgrounds to support this valuable community amenity.

CAMRA defines a community pub as a pub which appeals to a wide cross-section of the local community rather than being predominantly targeted at particular social or age groups.

CAMRA Chief Executive Mike Benner said: 'Community pubs, particularly those in more remote rural areas, are often the hub of the lives of the local people. None of us want to be in a situation where the only way we speak with our neighbours is

through a car window or a stolen conversation at a supermarket many miles away. However an increasing number of these pubs are being permanently lost.'

'The smoking ban in place or coming into force shortly in different parts of the UK means

pubs face a difficult time in 2007. People need to realise that their local is a valuable asset that must be protected. The threat to the community pub is extremely dire and unless we do something to curb the trend **CAMRA** fears many communities will find their local pub torn from them.'

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with a selection of lagers**

BEARDED TITS AND BEER

If Dave puts this article on page three then he has obviously misunderstood the title! *<If page three was a colour page then I would have risen to the challenge! Ed.>* I should explain straightaway that what follows is serious ornithological stuff.

My wife and I very much enjoy our frequent combined beer and birding breaks - well, she's teetotal, so the beer bit is down to me alone, I have to drink for two, it's a cross I have to bear. One of our regular haunts is the RSPB Leighton Moss and Morecambe Bay nature reserve which, according to their leaflet, 'has the largest area of reedbed remaining in northwest England. Its special birds include the rare and elusive bittern, bearded tits and marsh harriers'.

We have been lucky enough to see bitterns (at Minsmere) and marsh harriers but not the lovely bearded tits. During the autumn these birds change their diet from insects to reed seeds. In order to digest the seeds they need to take grit into their gizzards. It is on strategically placed grit trays visible from a causeway through the reeds that one may be lucky to see the birds in the early morning. We have lurked by those darn trays for many, many hours over the years without success.

This year we decided to try our luck in late September, as one of the reserve's wardens advised, rather than our usual mid to late October. I booked a weekend at the **Maypole Inn**, Long Preston (see the *Good Beer Guide 2007* p.533) as a birthday present to my wife. Although the pub is some thirty miles from the reserve, we picked it because we like it, having stayed there a few times. It's on the borders of Yorkshire and Lancashire, with beautiful countryside in all directions. As the GBG says, "this welcoming local has been in the same capable hands for 23 years" namely those of Robert and Elspeth Palmer. Some thirty years ago Robert used to be a chef at the celebrated old **Bell** in Aston Clinton, (now the **Duck In**).



The 17th Century Maypole Inn.
Photo courtesy of Robert Palmer, landlord.

The weekend started badly. First of all we were stuck for three hours in what turned out to be a thirty mile traffic hold up on the M1 - not that the thundering great overhead signs were any help. All that expensive technology was wasted by message after unhelpful message saying



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A TALE OF TRUE GRIT

QUEUE CAUTION 40MPH when the best one can do is inch forward hemmed in on every side by huge 4x4s like Challenger tanks and dirty white vans with 'How's my driving?' on the back followed by a premium rate telephone number so that the driver coins it in every time he deliberately cuts you up.

Why can't the signs display a more human SORRY FOLKS... THIS JAM WAS CAUSED BY SOME PRAT ON HIS MOBILE... DOING 100MPH OVERTAKING ON THE INSIDE... WHEN HE WAS DISTRACTED BY AN ADVERTISING HOARDING ON A TRAILER PARKED IN A FIELD... AND CRASHED INTO A ROW OF LEFT OVER CONES ON THE HARD SHOULDER...PLEASE SEEK ALTERNATIVE ROUTES...THANK YOU FOR DRIVING WITH BRITISH ROADWAYS...which would be so much more informative?

We did actually seek an alternative route, driving about fifty miles through picturesque industrial landscape to rejoin the motorway beyond the traffic jam...or so we thought...just a few miles later and we were caught for another two hours, despite the signs saying END which clearly must have been short for ENDLESS MISERY.

It did get better for a while when suddenly on the A65 north of Skipton, just ten miles short of our destination, a rear tyre disintegrated at high speed. Changing an offside wheel in the pitch dark (yes I know I should have had a torch) in the rain, at the side of the road with cars roaring past, after eight hours on the road, is not my idea of fun.

We eventually arrived at the **Maypole Inn** at around 10.30pm. Robert's first welcoming questions were 'Have you eaten? Can we make you a sandwich?' as he took our case up to the room. Robert then went on to introduce me to a local garage owner in the bar who could replace my tyre the next morning. The welcome continued with the sight of four handpumps on the bar, and was completed in rather short order, I have to say, by a soothing three-quarter gallon, carefully graded transfusion of *Moorhouses Premium Bitter* (3.7%), *Bowland Bowland Gold* (3.8%), *Skipton Brewery Copper Dragon* (4.1%) and *Timothy Taylor Landlord* (4.3%). I was beginning to feel better already.

As the tyre replacement had to be our first priority, our plans for an early morning start to look for the bearded tits were stymied, but we did at least see a beautiful kingfisher when we eventually arrived at the reserve. The superb evening meal and reacquaintance with the four ales, all in immaculate condition, banished all thoughts of our travails of the day before. Unfortunately during the night an enormous crash woke us up, we think from the room next door, followed by an hour or so of what sounded like feverish carpet cleaning...was it a ghost?

Undaunted, but bleary eyed, we set off again on Sunday without breakfast and by 8am we had our scope expectantly trained on those grit trays. Three other hopefuls joined us. After some forty minutes two pairs of bearded tits emerged cautiously from the reeds and began carefully sorting through the grit, one pair on each tray determined not to let the other on theirs.

Success at last. Now what's next on the list?

Giles du Boulay



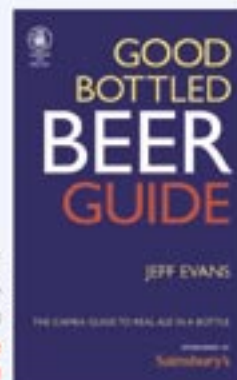
*The male Bearded Tit or Bearded Reedling .
The 'beard' is more of a moustache !*

Photo courtesy of Andy Bright (www.Digiscoped.com)

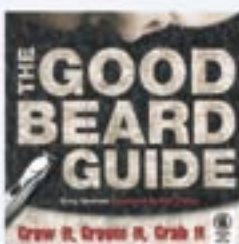
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LETTERS

Hello Editor,

Enjoy reading *Swan Supping*, and appreciate the work done by **CAMRA**.

However, I was horrified to see an article called 'Football & Real Ale' in the latest issue.

Everybody knows that the two do not go together!

The last great hurdle for the discerning British Ale drinker to overcome, is the system of destroying once great 'watering holes' by the introduction of Large Screen TV sets.

Working along the lines that TV in pub = Football on TV, Football on TV = Shaved heads, tattoos, foul mouths and lager drinking.

The last pub in the area to be destroyed (made into no-go areas) by TV, is the **Bell** in Bierton, which now resembles a Sports Cinema.

Thank the Lord that there are still 'safe havens' (TV/Football Free) where conversation rules, and an enjoyable evening may be had in company. i.e. the **Bugle Horn**, the **Bell**, Hardwick, the **Emperors Lounge**, Aylesbury, **Crown**, Cuddington, and one or two more [not a shaved head, earring (on a male), tattoo or football shirt to be seen in any of them].

Chris Webb

<As a football fan myself (as I support Tottenham Hotspur I can imagine some argument there!) I am bound to disagree with some of your assertions. I know a lot of football fans who do not fit your description who follow their teams and enjoying real ale all over the country. However, as a staunch fan of quiet pubs serving good real ale and permitting good conversation (about football?) I can understand your underlying premise. Perhaps this topic could start some letter writing by our ever growing number of readers! Ed.>



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The famous Prime Minister of the 19th century Benjamin Disraeli grew up in the manor house before purchasing Hughenden Manor following his marriage.

A friendly warm welcome waits for you here in this newly refurbished establishment. The management pride themselves on the provision of high quality home cooked lunches and evening meals.

They offer a good selection of real ales, draught lagers and cider complemented by a wide choice of wines.

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

FIREWORKS AT THE SWAN



On Saturday 4th November, the **Swan** at Great Kimble held its traditional firework display. This was no damp squib affair with a few assorted supermarket fireworks.

The many spectators enjoyed an organised display, lasting for over 20 minutes (see photography by Jean Plater). This long barrage of pyrotechnics used over a thousand pounds worth of fireworks. The display was organised by **Swan** regular, and licensed fireworks guru, Terry Duffel.

Raising the funds for such an impressive display demonstrates a

salutary tale about the pub's place in the local community. The **Swan's** is the only publicly organised display in the Kimbles and receives some financial support from the parish council. However, the main source of funding is directly from the pub itself.

Traditionally, a quiz evening is held around a month before Guy Fawkes night, in which each contestant donates a special £5 entry fee towards the forthcoming firework display. However, the quiz raises only a fraction of the cost of a large display. The shortfall is made up directly by the pub owner, Tim Woolnough, and some other generous individual donors.

Of course, the pub benefits from the trade generated by the display but, by its very nature, a firework display is not the best way to drive trade to the bar (as everyone has to be outside the pub to see it) -- and the additional profits will not cover the costs laid out on fireworks. Interestingly, economists use firework displays as a case study in 'free-rider' syndrome -- an event where it is virtually impossible to stop others benefiting who have not made any contribution themselves -- maybe not even the profit from a half of lager.

The firework display is a notable example of the value that this country pub contributes to its community. It is not the only example of the pub's community spirit. Each Christmas a children's party is held at which Santa arrives to distribute gifts to local children - again at no charge.

Therefore, in exchange for the villagers' custom throughout the year, the pub contributes something of substantial community benefit in return. Long may the **Swan**, and other similar pubs, continue to do so.

Mike Clarke

Why not join CAMRA Now?

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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Date




Swan Supping
(Aylesbury Vale &
Wycombe Branch)



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Branch Diary

Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

DECEMBER 2006

Friday 1st PRE-ADVENT CRAWL

Start 5:30pm Lamb Tavern, Leadenhall Market, London EC3.

Friday 15th ANNUAL AYLESBURY PUB CRAWL

Start 7:00pm Hop Pole followed by the Rockwood, Hobgoblin, Harrow, Kings Head and the Ship (and anywhere else that takes our fancy). A curry is suggested to finish.

Monday 18th CROYDON PUBS AND TRAMS CRAWL

10:05am train from Aylesbury to Marylebone then Victoria to East Croydon. An all zones travelcard will also cover all travel by the Croydon trams on the day. ETA East Croydon: noon - first pub the Porter & Sorter round the back of East Croydon station. Second pub for lunch the Builder's Arms, 65 Leslie Park Rd (about 10 mins walk from the Porter & Sorter) - thereafter, as desired, trams and pubs probably including the Claret Free House, Bingham, then back to Croydon centre: the Ship of Fools (Wetherspoons), Beer Circus, and the Royal Standard. Please contact the editor if you wish to come along as we need some idea of numbers for lunch at the Builder's Arms

Friday 29th WENDOVER SOCIAL

6:00pm Pack Horse

JANUARY 2007

Wednesday 3rd BRANCH MEETING

8:30pm Red Lion, Bradenham.

Wednesday 10th PRESTWOOD SOCIAL

8:45pm King's Head, 9:30pm Traveller's Rest, 10:15pm Green Man.

Wednesday 17th ASKETT AND WHITELEAF SOCIAL

9:00pm Crown, 9:45pm Red Lion.

Wednesday 24th WESTON TURVILLE SOCIAL

9:00pm Chandos Arms, 10:00pm Chequers

FEBRUARY

Monday 5th BRANCH AGM

8:00pm Hop Pole, Aylesbury

It is important that all Branch members attend in order to have their say in how it is run for the next year.

Food will be available and there will be a bottle raffle.

We are also planning to have a guest speaker. When this has been arranged details will appear on the website and in our next issue.

Saturday 24th JOINT CAMRA SOCIAL

Plans have been made for the forthcoming Community Pubs Week, when we will have a joint sports social with Mid Chilterns and South Beds **CAMRA** at the Red Lion, Marsworth, Bucks.

Full details will appear in our next issue.

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

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. We all seem to enjoy ourselves and although beer is generally part of the picture, recent snooker, cribbage and Aunt Sally events show that we do try to vary what we offer and are always open to other (legal) suggestions.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2007

MONDAY JANUARY 8 SAUSAGE AND MASH NIGHT

THURSDAY JANUARY 25 SCOTTISH NIGHT

MONDAY JANUARY 15 - BRITISH PUB FOOD NIGHT

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 14 - VALENTINES NIGHT

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 28 - PUDDING NIGHT

PLEASE BOOK EARLY TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

01844 291403

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



More Local News



(Continued from page 2)

Shining Knight (4.5), *West Berkshire Old Brown Ale* (4.3) and new brewery beer *Cheddar Ales Bitter* (4.0). *Thatchers Dry* cider is also permanently available on handpump.

HIGH WYCOMBE

Chartered surveyors, *Fleurets* have sold Finn McCoul's off an asking price of £95,000 and the new lessee is Peter Clements.

Sands real ale newcomer the *Hour Glass* is under new management. Further up-to-date news in the next issue.

LACEY GREEN

The *Whip* had a very successful beer festival in conjunction with the *Wheel* at Naphill last month with over 3000 pints being sold between them. The *Whip* is also nearing their 400th guest ale this year. This will probably occur in early December and will be sold at 40p a pint, so it will not last long!

LANE END

The *Old Sun* is currently serving two *Tring* beers at the handpumps. *Ridgeway* (4.0) is a permanent fixture at present, while the other *Tring* brew alternates with monthly specials. Recent imbibes over the last few months have been *Hooded Crow* (4.2), *Reap the Rye* (4.7) and *Huck-Me-Buck* (4.4).

MARLOW

The *Britannia* has had a new landlord for the last few months, his name is Carl Quarterman. *Rebellion* brews *IPA* (3.7) and *Smuggler* (4.1) still feature here with food now being served.

The new landlord of the *Carpenters Arms* is Chris Martin. *Greene King IPA* (3.6), *Abbot Ale* (5.0) and a 'guest' from the *Greene King* portfolio can be found, with *Ruddles Orchard* (4.2) and *LBW* (4.4) being recent *Greene King* beers that have appeared at this town centre locals boozer.

John and Tracy Hudson have recently celebrated a year at the *Duke of Cambridge*. (See article).

Henley Road pub restaurant the *Hare and Hounds* has reopened after extensive renovation work. Beers including *Brakspear Bitter* (3.4), *Timothy Taylor Landlord* (4.3) and *Marston's Pedigree* (4.5) are among some of the beers that have featured.

Top of the High Street bar/restaurant the *Market*, aka the *Crown*, has now been renamed *R:Home* and is under new management.

Bob Robson, landlord of the *Prince of Wales*, is leaving the pub on November 30th 2006. Bob kept a popular drinking house with four well presented ales where Thai cuisine is available in the non-smoking bar. Best wishes for the future Bob! The new landlord is Simon Peach, who used to run the *Jolly Farmer* at Cookham Dean several years ago.

NAPHILL

During their successful joint beer festival with the *Whip*, Lacey Green, the *Wheel* realised that the *Greene King XX Mild* was very popular and it is hoped that it will continue to be served for the foreseeable future.

OAKLEY

The new man in charge at the *Royal Oak* is Grenville Daffin. He took over this *Vale Brewery* pub on 6th October and this is his first pub although he has been in the pub trade for eight years. Beers on offer recently were *Vale Hadda's Autumn Ale* and *Broughton Clipper IPA*.

STOKE MANDEVILLE

The *Bell* is now under new management and is once again offering traditional beer. Full details in our next issue.

WHEELER END COMMON

Christine and Raymond Dunse and their son Richard, formerly at the *Falcon*, Wooburn Moor, took over the *Chequers* on 2nd October.

WOOBURN GREEN

The *Glory Mill*, aka the *Rose and Crown*, has changed its title again to become the *Eagle*. This is the second public house in the Wooburn area to have a new identity involving a bird of prey name, after the *Falcon* at Wooburn Moor used to be named the *Hooden on the Moor*!

WHITCHURCH

The *White Swan* is now being run by 19-year old Ria Lacovara who has worked at several local pubs and is attending a training course with *Fullers* on Cellarmanship. The licence is held by her mother, Lisa Jenkins, and the pub is being redecorated at present. Three *Fullers* ales (plus seasonal beers) are on handpump and food is available.

Swan Supping

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

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Edited by David Roe

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E-Mail : editor@swansupping.org.uk

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Copy deadline for next issue, due to be published on 1st February 2007 is 14th January 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).

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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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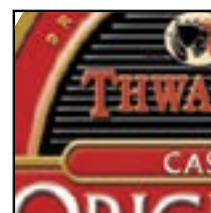
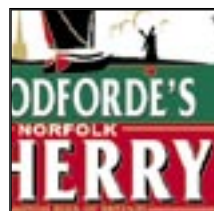
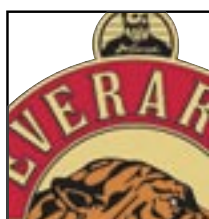
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