

FREE

Swan Supping



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

Issue 52

FEB/MAR 2006



THE BIG DEBATE



As we are going to press, the government has not yet announced the date for the debate on the Health Bill. This is the bill that will decide whether smoking will be allowed in our pubs.

MPs on the House of Commons Health Select Committee are to table an amendment to the Health Bill on smoking in pubs and clubs. The amendment would remove exemptions from the proposed smoking ban for pubs that do not serve prepared food and for membership clubs.

The amendment was announced by Kevin Barron MP (Labour), Chair of the Select Committee. The Government is also considering a free vote for Labour MPs on the amendment and the Conservative Party has already announced a free vote on the issue for its MPs. Comprehensive smokefree legislation is also supported

by the Liberal Democrats. The Commons Report Stage of the Health Bill is likely to take place in early February.

The exemptions for non-food pubs and clubs were heavily criticised by the Health Select Committee in December. They said that it would leave a law that would be difficult to enforce, would fail to protect the health of vulnerable workers exposed to secondhand smoke and would increase health inequalities between different parts of England, because non-food pubs are concentrated in poorer communities.

Landlords in our area are very concerned with the outcome of the debate. A partial ban affecting pubs that serve food could result in the job centres being full of unemployed chefs as the pubs consider that the risk of losing their drinkers who smoke is too great. A total ban might result

in a large number of drinkers staying away from the pub and drinking at home.

It might help if there was a full definition available of what counts as food. Is it hot, cold, in the form of a sandwich, and what is the status of nuts and crisps?

The **Kings Head** in Aylesbury went completely no-smoking last year when **Chiltern Brewery** started running the **Farmers' Bar** for the National Trust. This move has proved very popular with some, including many people who used to avoid pubs because they did not want to end up smelling like an ashtray. However, some regular customers who did smoke have found other places to drink.

Whatever the decision, the law of unintended consequences will ensure that someone will lose out!

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Three real ales always on rotation

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

Local News

AYLESBURY

Martin Heather has left the **Hop Pole** and the new people in charge are Richard and Jan Wiles. They have been in the pub trade for eleven years, mainly in the south east. There are still ten real ales available including both mild and porter which have been so popular that they frequently run out! This proves that the usual mantra put out by pub groups that there is no demand for dark styles of beer is a load of rubbish! The new opening hours are from 12-11 Sunday to Thursday and 12-12 Friday and Saturday. Plans include regular quiz and comedy nights, live music on Saturdays, and there is even talk of a mini beer festival in the function room at the back. **Vale Brewery**, who own the **Hop Pole**, are thinking of ways to commemorate the 500th different real ale to be available in the pub since it opened, a milestone which will be reached very soon. Work has now finished on the five letting rooms (singles) which are available for Bed & Breakfast at £49.95 per night.

The pub which used to be called the **Greyhound** which was renamed the **Priory** before becoming the **Skinny Dog** has been renamed the **Greyhound**! Figure that one out! Still no sign of real ale!

The **Kings Head** is due to be closed at the start from Sunday 29th January until Monday 6th February for minor refurbishments to the wooden floor and the bar. The **Chiltern Glad Tidings** and the **Lord Lieutenant's Porter** proved very popular over the Christmas period and recent guest beers have been **St Austell Tribute** and **HSD**, and **Frog Island Shoemaker**.

BEACONSFIELD

The renovation work being carried out on the **George Hotel** is reputedly for a future Thai restaurant.

The old **Prince of Wales** has now reopened and is trading as an Indian restaurant.

BENNETT END

In November, Simon Crawshaw, took over at the **Three Horseshoes**. He is an award winning chef who has worked at many places including the Connaught, Chez Nico, Garroche, and the Sloane Club in London.

HADDENHAM

John and Kris Mulqueen have taken over at the **Rising Sun**. Their last pub was the **Coach and Horses** in Ebbley, Stroud in Gloucestershire. They

intend to continue with the selection of four real ales including at least one from nearby **Vale Brewery**, and hope to be offering lunchtime food in the near future.

HIGH WYCOMBE

The **Dolphin**, Totteridge, is currently closed and its future is uncertain.

The **Friend at Hand** on West Wycombe Road is a historic building and it is sad to see it in its current state. Is there no way to save it?

Sands sole pub the **Hour Glass**, which was reported to have real ales on offer in Swan Supping No. 51, *IS A FACT!* Recent visits unearthed **Old Mill Bitter** (3.9), **Rebellion Roasted Nuts** (4.6) and **Theakston Best Bitter** (3.8), as changing guest beers grace the bar at this football friendly watering hole. With Wycombe Wanderers top of Division 2 and this nearest (only) pub serving real ale, and guest ales to boot, things are definitely on the up in Sands.

The **Micklefield Inn** is now closed and looks set to be closed forever. This means that there is now no pub at all in the whole of the Micklefield estate!

The **Pride**, previously the **Nags Head**, is now called the **Office**.

ICKFORD

The fire which devastated the **Rising Sun** is covered in detail on page three. We will, of course, keep you up to date with progress on the rebuilding.

LITTLE HAMPDEN

The **Rising Sun** is a rather neglected pub by **CAMRA** members but popular with walkers and diners. The **Adnams Bitter** was amongst the best **Adnams** tasted at a branch visit last November. The food looked good too!

LACEY GREEN

Nick Smith, landlord of the **Whip**, has informed us that his pub missed out on its 200th guest ale by about 20 pints in 2005. The 200th guest was **Beartown Bearskinful** which was finished on New Years day, so they can only claim 199 for the year! Nick also reports that since he took over on 1st January 2004 he has reversed the downward trend in ale sales for the pub. In 2003 lager sales outstripped sales of real ale and now the pub sells 200% more ale than lager and this includes an increase of real ale barrelage of 55%. Good news indeed!

(Continued on page 22)

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Black Swan Dark Mild	3.3%	77.00	45.00	23.75
Vale Best Bitter	3.7%	77.50	45.00	24.00
Wychert Ale	3.9%	78.00	46.00	24.25
Edgar's Golden Ale	4.3%	80.00	48.00	25.25
Black Beauty Porter	4.3%	81.00	49.00	25.75
Vale Special	4.5%	82.00	49.50	26.00
Grumpling Premium	4.6%	82.50	50.00	26.25
Hadda's Head Banger	5.0%	85.00	51.00	27.00

Bottle Conditioned Beers

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

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DISASTER IN ICKFORD



worse as it is the only pub in the village since the closure of the Royal Oak in 2004.

The top left picture shows the pub draped in plastic sheeting which hides the damage. The picture bottom right shows the pub in its original glory and all of us hope that it will not be too long before we can see it looking like that again.

The branch had planned to have a social at the Rising Sun on the day after the fire. The news was spread using email and alternate venues were arranged in Easington, Chilton and Worminghall. All branch members who have registered their email addresses on the branch website (www.swansupping.co.uk) were kept up to date. If you live in the area and are not registered, why not do it today!



On Wednesday 4th January real ale drinkers in the branch were devastated to hear that the **Rising Sun** in Ickford was on fire.

Fire crews came from two counties to try and save this Grade 2 listed pub, parts of which date back to the 13th century. The damage was extensive but the hopes are that it will only be closed for a few months. The main constraint appears to be the availability of the thatcher who only replaced the thatch two years ago.

Landlord, Paul Honour, has done a fantastic job over the last few years and the pub has featured in the *Good Beer Guide* since 2001. His emphasis on offering great beer and getting the locals involved in quizzes, darts, crib and Aunt Sally has made the **Rising Sun** a magnet for drinkers from all the surrounding villages. Its loss is made all the

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TASTED ON MY TRAVELS

The occasional jottings of an ardent real drinker.

HOLIDAYS AGAIN!

In early September I went off to the Welsh borders once again. I met my friend in the **Old Boot** at Whittington and enjoyed some **Robinson's Unicorn** and very nice it was as well.

On the next day we journeyed out to a canal side pub called the **Narrow Boat**. As I was not driving I felt that I could indulge myself so I opened the batting with some **Titanic Triple Screw**. I carried on my researches with a fine drop of **Northern Allniter** and finished up with some superb **Timothy Taylor Landlord**. We had a few calls to make but on the return run I was coerced to go in to the Jack Mytton where I consumed some **Westwood Golden Bitter**.

On the next day we paid a visit to the Llangollen Railway. This is a preserved railway, which uses steam locos so that was most enjoyable. As we were rather dry, we walked up the hill from Carrog station to the **Grouse (GBG)** where I applied a pint of **Lees Bitter** to my parched throat. That is a very comfortable and welcoming establishment, which



which was killed off by **Greene King**. She used to have a delivery of a case of **Rayments Pelham Ale** each week, which really enhanced the enjoyment of visits! We decided that we should have a break of a week or so and the first establishment we stayed in was the **Crown Hotel** in Helmsdale (**GBG**) near Pickering. This is the home of the North Yorks Moors Railway which, of course, we were destined to visit!

Once the luggage was unloaded and 'Auntie' Rover safely parked we repaired to the bar for some sustenance. There we partook of a pint (or three!) of **Black Sheep Bitter** served in lined glasses. It was in superb nick and slipped down too easily! We took a walk around the interesting village then after planning our day on the morrow we slipped into the bar, just to check on the consistency of the quality of the ale, you understand! A very nice dinner followed.

The next day we went to the railway and ended up in the **Station Inn** at Grosmont where we sampled a good pint of **Camerons Strongarm**. We took some lunch there and then wandered back to the railway. When the last train had run we returned to the **Crown** for some more **Black Sheep Bitter** and a fine dinner. I really do recommend a visit to this family run establishment if ever you are in the area.

The next day we had to point the Norseman (the emblem these classic rovers carry on their bonnets) in a northerly direction to Denholm, near Kelso, where we were booked in to the **Fox and Hounds (GBG)**. This small, friendly pub is in a terrace and like so many small village pubs isn't that imposing from the outside. When you go in, however you get a really warm greeting. When I introduced myself as the person who had booked accommodation, a look of concern came over the landlady's face. 'I'm running late today because we had to cater for a funeral party of over 100 this morning. I'm afraid your room is not ready yet'.



serves good food as well as immaculate beer. Well worth stopping for a lunch break as it is just a short way off the A5. As we journeyed back to Whittington I was coerced to call in to the **Narrow Boat** where some **Archers Farmers Boy** was consumed.

Back home again I journeyed to London for a Gramophone Society meeting and as I was walking along Southampton Row I realised that I was rather early so how could I lose half an hour? As I walked past the open door of the **Ivy House** a solution came rushing to mind. In I went and there I enjoyed a nice pint of **Shepherd Neame Late Red**.

YET ANOTHER HOLIDAY!

As well as Real Ale I have a great enthusiasm for classic cars. I have owned my 1961 Rover 100 since 1976 and for various reasons she has not had much exercise over the last couple of years. Last summer I had a couple of necessary jobs done on the car. I determined that it was time for her to see more use and so it was that she was scheduled for a week away, the ultimate destination to be the Scottish borders. Bruce Seymour was happy to join me and be my trusty navigator. The reason for choosing the southern edge of Scotland was that some friends had moved there some years previously and I had not seen them since. Incidentally, John and Jean had lived in **Furneaux Pelham**, near Bishops Stortford. Jean worked in the **Rayments Brewery**, of hallowed memory,

TRAVELS WITH 'AUNTIE'

The concerned expression relaxed when we reassured her that we were in no hurry and we would happily sit and enjoy a pint. Two pints of *Wylam Gold Tankard* were speedily dispensed. Three hours and five lovely pints later we had been joined by mine host and a number of the villagers. We felt as if we were regulars! Our accommodation turned out to be the cottage next door and very comfortable it was too.

The next day we spent with my friends then the following day we set off on the last leg of our journey, to the **Lyth Valley Hotel** on the edge of the Lake District. Bruce and I have been there many times before – I was looking forward to the roast duck with plum sauce, which George, the proprietor and chef does so well. We got there in time to get some refreshment I knew from past experience that the ale is up to **GBG** standard though the hotel does not feature in the 'Good Book' We were not disappointed as we were served some very nice *Courage Directors*.

While we were staying at the Lyth Valley we journeyed forth and on one day went to the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway. We had lunch in the **Ratty Arms (GBG)** where Bruce sampled the *Theakstons Bitter* pronouncing it very good. Also on offer were *Ruddles Bitter* and *Websters Bitter*. I was being good and had a J2O!

On another day we went to the Lakeside and Haverthwaite Railway, took a trip on the boat on Lake Windemere, and visited the Steam Boat Museum. The next morning we visited the Lakeland Motor Museum. They did not have an 'Auntie' in their collection but our one graced the car park with her presence! We returned to the hotel for lunch where we enjoyed some immaculate *Timothy Taylor Landlord*. The next morning we pointed the Norseman homewards to remember a fine autumn break and to contemplate our proposed safari to Oxford – of which more anon.
Mike Clemence

The Millwrights

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A little pub with a big smile!

CREATING YOUR OWN GASTROPUB!

The Guide for Complete Idiots

Rule one: Location, location. The ideal gastropub-to-be is in a picturesque location in a desirable village sitting on a large plot of land – essential for a large car park and in case of contingency (see rule ten). (The strategy can also be implemented in an up-and-coming cool urban “hood”.) Take plentiful advice from local estate agents – especially as their profession is likely to number high among your customers. Look for a pub associated with some quaintly amusing local oddity that can be used to generate PR. Alternatively make something up – connections with old kings or queens usually go down well or, in desperation, you can use well-worn haunted pub tactic.

Rule two: Target your demographic. Your target market will be those people of a high disposable income who routinely drive 50 miles to partake of their fine dining experience in bucolic surroundings. They consult glowing write-ups in magazines and rustic, lavishly illustrated pub guides. What is great about these suckers is that, for them, variety is the spice of life and they like to visit a different pub every time. They won't come back in a hurry no matter how good the experience so you don't need to worry too much about 'going the extra mile' to get repeat business. In fact, don't even bother going the extra yard as, frankly, once they're through the door the battle is won. Excellent service is too expensive – pump up your marketing budget to compensate.

Rule three: Manufacture your genuine, centuries-old ambience. Put your stamp of individuality on the appearance and décor of the pub but watch your budget. Only spend enough to make the requisite splash in your publicity photographs. Paint the exterior a quaint colour and put enough hanging baskets outside to fill a garden centre. Inside, clear out all the clutter from previous centuries – you want a 21st century look. Liberally apply bright orange paint all over the internal walls – or some other modish colour. When everything is nice and minimalist, bring in a job-lot of house-salvage tat and strategically position a few mouldy old books and scatter random bric-a-brac about the place – peculiar items stuck on the ceiling will provide a talking point.

Rule four: Eradicate the locals. Take a robust approach to the locals. Leave them in no doubt that you don't want them loitering around the place and putting off the customers you really want. Only make an exception for those locals who appear rich enough to dine at your establishment several times a week. Disband any cricket, darts, Aunt Sally or other sporting

teams. Find spurious reasons to bar anyone who doesn't fit into your cool-yet-relaxed, hip-yet-comfortable ambience. Ban beards, old people, cardigans, children, people who read books, slow drinkers, excessive breathing or take a leaf out of *Greene King's* book and make life difficult for pensioners with hats.



Your chef will gain most experience in the culinary skill of programming the microwave

Rule five: Tablecloths. Lay out tablecloths over 90% of the tables with place settings for a four course meal – so people will get the hint that this is, indeed, a foodie paradise. Get a couple of comfy sofas for punters while they peruse your carte du jour. If you must, leave the boozers a few old rickety chairs and a wobbly table in a draughty corner by the door. Ensure that the bar serving area is as small as possible. Signpost the majority of the bar as 'ye olde food servery' or 'glass collection area – no service here'. Also place as many bar stools as possible in front of the little bit of bar area you're prepared to serve drinks from and permanently install a bunch of your cronies there. This will create a genuine 'pubby' atmosphere as punters five-deep jostle and jump up and down for the bar staff's attention. You don't want to make it too easy for people to buy a drink. They're no use to you unless they're buying your expensive food.

Rule six: Regular opening hours are for wimps. Only open the pub when you feel like it. Predictable opening hours will only encourage undesirables like locals and rambles to walk in. Anyone who's anyone will phone ahead and make a reservation anyway.

Rule seven: Staff. Recruit a bunch of gap year Aussies as your 'hospitality team' – they'll work for beer money and you can use their unfamiliarity with local custom to your advantage. Tell them that short measures are a British tradition and that drinkers will be terribly offended if you don't allow a good inch of space at the top of their pint for a foaming head. Also instruct them in the art of elegantly doing nothing – it takes a particular aptitude to stare off aimlessly into the middle distance while customers are waiting to be served. Dress the bar staff in identical T-shirts emblazoned with the name of your gastropub – this will remind people where they are

(in the absence of any other defining local characteristic in the pub).

Rule eight: Real Ale. Try some real ales a marketing gimmick. It doesn't cost much to stick a few handpumps on the bar and they look great in your marketing material with some gnarled local supping from a pewter tankard. However, make sure your ales have exceptionally silly names, preferably referring to bodily functions – give the ladies a giggle. It doesn't matter that you haven't a clue how to keep the beer – all you need do is keep serving it up until the barrel's empty. After the barrel has been on a few weeks, if some awkward sod complains it tastes like a cross between vinegar and Minestrone soup then tell him THAT'S WHAT IT'S SUPPOSED TO TASTE LIKE. Don't worry too much about changing the barrel when it's empty. In fact don't even bother to turn the pump clip round if there's none left. You don't want people to actually drink this stuff when you can mark up a bottle of wine by £25. If word gets around, the local *CAMRA* branch might turn up once for a social. Take no notice if they don't like your beer. They're known for being a bunch of whingers and they're not the sort of people you want in your pub anyway.

Rule nine: Oh yes, the food. Don't waste money on nurturing an aspiring Gordon Ramsay – the wonders of modern industrial catering mean your chef will gain most experience in the culinary skill of programming the microwave. Similarly, ignore any competitors who believe all this Jamie Oliver stuff about the virtues of fresh, locally sourced produce – it's much easier to fill your freezer up every fortnight with a delivery from Brake Brothers. Let's face it – just stick a few judiciously placed pieces of garnish here and there on a boil-in-the-bag standard and your average punter will be sending back compliments to the chef. Chalk up a huge menu on an even more massive blackboard. The dishes on the menu will change once in a blue moon but, if something is selling a bit too well, you can rub out the price and add an extra pound or two.

Rule ten: Play the endgame to win. If you chose to buy a pub in a good countryside location and made sure you got the freehold there's a huge silver lining to be had if your inept and incompetent management ends in bankruptcy. Close the pub and apply for planning permission for a small development of luxury, executive 6 bedroom houses. After all, if your brilliant innovations like gastropub food, lucky dip opening hours and exorbitant prices haven't done the trick then surely that proves no-one can make a go of it. On second thoughts, it would be best to knock the pub down first, preferably in the middle of the night, before bothering the planning department!

Charlie Mackle

BOTTLED BEER REPORT

While CAMRA is most well known for its championing of draught real ale served in a pub, it is equally committed to campaigning for the availability of great beer that can be drunk at home. CAMRA have introduced an accreditation scheme to mark out those beers which undergo bottle conditioning – exactly the same process as happens in the barrel with real ale whereby live yeast converts sugars to alcohol and, in the process, produces natural carbonation to give life to the beer.

Bottled beer has been enjoying a renaissance recently – providing a quality alternative to the massed ranks of aluminium tins of lifeless fizz to be found in supermarket aisles. Retailers have, in turn, realised there is a market for quality beer in a bottle and most offer a varying, but usually reasonable, selection of British ales with sometimes an effort to source locally brewed beer. Many small breweries find that the take-home trade offers an invaluable way of reaching drinkers outside their immediate locality and selling directly to drinkers removes some of the unpredictability of dealing with large pubcos.



Over the festive period I sampled a number of beers – some obtained direct from the brewery and also a representative sample of what Morrison's in Aylesbury offered in its 3 for £4 multibuy offer. Most of the beers below are bottle conditioned.

Morrison's takeover of Safeway has caused some anxiety in beer circles – as pre-takeover Safeway had a fairly adventurous beer offering. This was rationalised in the immediate aftermath of the Morrison's acquisition but informed sources say the situation is now improving.

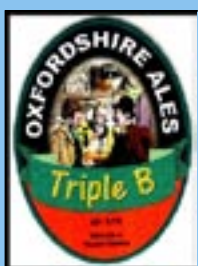
The first bottle from Morrison's was a classic

– *Coniston Bluebird – Champion Beer of Britain 1998*. The label unashamedly proclaims its bottle conditioning. While the original beer comes from the Lake District, the *Good Beer Guide* suggests that the bottled variety is actually brewed by a brewer from Ridgeway using equipment from *Hepworths* of Horsham, Sussex. Despite its provenance, the beer had an excellent balance of citrus fruit from subtle hopping and a robust body for its gravity of 4.2%. However, its light colour confirmed the impression that it would be enjoyed even better if slightly chilled at a summer barbecue.

Marston's Oyster Stout (4.5%) was pleasant but unmemorable. Some historical versions of *Oyster Stout* have been brewed with real oysters – or at least the shell. At one time the *Marston's* version was bottle conditioned but on my sample the multi-lingual label disappointingly made no mention of this – appearing to be aimed at the export market. It had the hallmarks of a stout made from roasted malt – full bodied and with restrained hop character – a pleasant alternative to *Guinness* but lacking depth.

(Continued on page 8)

OXFORDSHIRE ALES



Triple B – 3.7%

An Autumn leaf brown session bitter, well hopped, with Styrian and English Golding Hops. Available in bottles from the end of February!



Marshmellow – 4.7%

A classic, deep amber, strong beer with a generous, warming flavour. The taste is deliciously fruity and malty with a lingering bitter aftertaste.

Available in bottles from the end of February!

IPA – 4.1%

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All of the above beers are available racked bright and in different barrel sizes, ranging from polypins to 18 gallons, thus making them perfect for any party or celebration.

Please contact the brewery to discuss these options.

Oxfordshire Ales & Bicester Beers & Minerals,

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Tel 01869 278 765

Fax 01869 278 768

Email bicesterbeers@tiscali.co.uk

Fancy a drink at home? Real Ale in a Bottle always hits the spot!

MORE BOTTLES!

(Continued from page 7)

At 5.1% and so much more in keeping with the winter season was **Jenning's Sneek Lifter** – the stout's new stablemate (due to **W&D's** recent acquisition of **Jennings** following its purchase of **Marston's**). This beer tasted like Christmas pudding in a glass – an amazing mixture of resinous and malty flavours with a long finish. The bottled version made no mention of bottle conditioning – which means the real version must be even more flavoursome. Seek out a pub in which to enjoy the cask version before the winter's over.

I was also lucky to receive as presents a few bottled beers from microbreweries. I sampled a couple of beers from Derbyshire's **Thornbridge** brewery – established very recently in 2004 with advice from previous **Champion Beer of Britain** brewers **Kelham Island**. Their **Blackthorn Ale** is in the style of **Kelham Island's** excellent **Pale Rider**, though



lower in gravity. It has a floral, hoppy aroma and pale body – an excellent beer but maybe better for summer outdoor drinking. **Lord Marples** is **Thornbridge's** best bitter – a very pleasant drink which lives up to the description on its label as 'a noble bitter with an elegant finish'. Both **Thornbridge** beers were clearly bottle conditioned – not declared on the label but evident from the slight yeasty sediment left in the bottle after pouring.

Two beers from Bedfordshire's **Potton** brewery were also sampled. There was no doubt about their bottle conditioned origins – both had to be decanted carefully from their healthy yeast residues. There must be some irony behind the naming of **Potton's Shambles Ale** – as it is anything but a shambles. Like some of the beers above it falls into the nascent **Golden Ale** category – golden in colour and very well hopped – but it has enough weight even at 4.3% to be enjoyable whatever the season.

The other **Potton** beer was a real curiosity – **John Cunningham Night Fighter** – named after a World War II flying ace and leader of the Comet development team. As might be guessed this is a dark coloured bitter. It shares many of the characteristics of a good mild – predominantly malty with a very light hop characteristic. It is slightly stronger (4.0%) and more bitter than mild but this unusual style of

beer would probably be the first barrel to run dry at a **CAMRA** beer festival. It serves as a good recommendation for visiting any nearby pubs serving **Potton** ales.

Pick of the bunch for me, however, was the **Duchy Originals Organic Winter Ale** (available at Morrisons and Waitrose). The **Duchy Originals** beers follow the philosophy of HRH The Prince of Wales of producing high quality and environmentally sustainable products – with any profits donated to charity. The beer is brewed by **Wychwood** in Witney, Oxfordshire using malt from the Home Farm at Highgrove and organic hops from the only two growers in the UK. At 6.2% it is a beer to be slowly savoured but perfectly complements the season. One cannot really argue with Roger Protz's description in www.beer-pages.com 'It has a really lovely nose: in a sumptuous mélange of burnt toffee and dark chocolate, with orange and red fruit aromas, and a nice stripe of nettle hops. On the palate it is full, creamy and rich, with immediately bitter flavours of oily hops but also a bittersweet dark chocolate. It has lovely body through the mid-palate, and finishes with spice and hints of dried fruits in abundance. A lovely winter beer'. I'll drink to that.

Mike Clarke



The Red Lion

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*CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2006 listed
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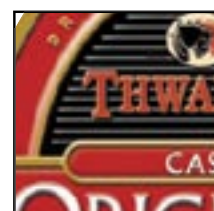
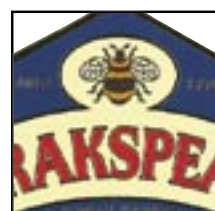
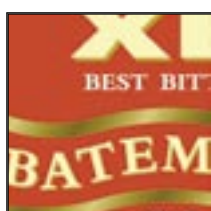
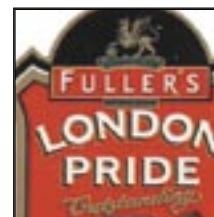
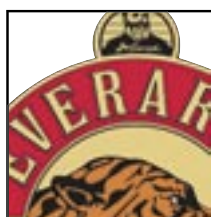
2006 Good Beer Guide!

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LOCAL BEER FESTIVALS



Winslow Beer Festival March 17th-18th (Friday-Saturday)

The Lions Club of Winslow, with the help and support of the *Milton Keynes & North Bucks Branch of CAMRA*, have organised their first beer festival. This will be at the Winslow Public Hall and will run across two days (including St Patrick's day). Both days will commence at 6pm and finish at 11pm.

Entrance will be priced at £10 which will include £5 worth of the beers of your choice, as well as a commemorative souvenir pint glass (£2 refundable if not retained). All profits from the festival will go to charity and it is hoped that it will become an annual event.

Tickets are available from the Goblin Market, High Street, Winslow. Attendance each session is limited by law to 250 so you are urged to buy tickets in advance to avoid disappointment!

16th Battersea

Beer Festival

February 8th-10th (Wednesday-Friday)

Grand Hall behind Battersea Arts Centre, Town Hall Road, Lavender Hill, London SW11 (near Clapham Junction). Over 100 kils of beer from around the country, plus traditional ciders and perries, country wines and Belgian, Czech, Dutch, German & Polish beers. Hot and cold food. Soft drinks available. Open daily from Noon to 11pm. Admission £1 on Wednesday and £2 on Thursday & Friday (£3 after 5pm each day), £1 discount for *CAMRA* members at all times. Contact Geoff Strawbridge on 020 8481 3691 after 5pm or email geoff@coherent-tech.co.uk.

London Drinker

Beer & Cider Festival

March 22nd-24th (Wednesday-Friday)

Camden Centre, Bidborough St, WC1. Open: Wednesday-Thursday 12-3pm, 5-10.30pm. Friday 12-10.30pm. No admission after 10pm. Food all sessions, Breweriana Auction Wednesdays night, Imported Beer, Smoking Area. Admission £3, *CAMRA* members £1.50. Wednesday & Thursday lunchtime Free. Further info see www.camranorthlondon.org.uk



Haddenham Real Ale Festival 2006

Haddenham's third *Real Ale Festival* will take place on Saturday 1st July 2006 at the Youth and Community Centre in Haddenham.

As well as excellent food and entertainment there will be an even bigger selection of fine Real Ales from Independent Brewers. And plenty of it – the Committee have vowed not to run out this time!

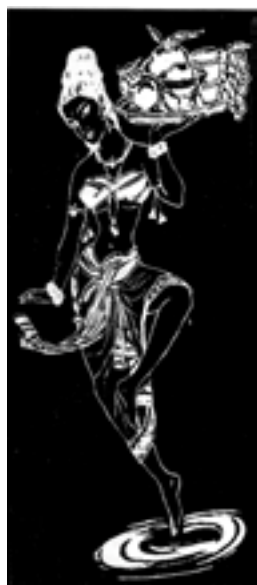
The main beneficiary this year will be Upward Bound Trust, a Charity which teaches gliding to young people, and whose gliders are a familiar sight above Haddenham Airfield, especially at summer weekends.

Make a note of the date to come and support this worthy cause – full details at www.haddenham-beer-festival.co.uk.

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The Chiltern Brewery, Terrick, Aylesbury

LOCAL BREWERY NEWS

Oxfordshire Brewery, which is based in Marsh Gibbon, have announced that they will be producing bottled versions of two of their brews. These will be available in shops and supermarkets at the end of February.

The two beers are *Triple B* (3.7%), which is described as an autumn leaf brown session bitter, well hopped, with Styrian and English Golding Hops, and *Marshmellow* (4.7%) which is a classic, deep amber, strong beer with a generous, warming flavour and a taste that is deliciously fruity and malty with a lingering bitter aftertaste.

We are intending to organise a visit to the brewery in the near future and we will keep you up to date with the plans on the website.

Of course, you can always try the *Oxfordshire* brews in their handpumped form at the **Plough**, Marsh Gibbon.



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GREENWICH LEAN TIME



This is a cautionary tale, the moral of which is: do not always rely upon the *Good Beer Guide* when planning a day out.

Recently I needed to make a visit to the library of the Maritime Museum in Greenwich. Research in such libraries can be time-consuming thus it was important that I planned ahead to get the most out of a day in the great metropolis; it can also be very dry and dusty in such places so it is essential to keep the palate well lubricated. I consulted one of the most thumbed tomes in my own library therefore, and with the aid of the internet and *Streetmap.co.uk* plotted out the locations of the four Greenwich pubs listed in *GBG 2006*.

The train connections from Aylesbury, the underground and the DLR

to Cutty Sark worked faultlessly such that I arrived at my first call the **Plume of Feathers**, to the east of the museum, nicely in time for lunch - or so I thought. As a pint of **Fuller's Jack Frost** was served I consulted the menu and tried to order lunch, only to be told that the bar staff don't take lunch orders - I had to wait for 'Denise' who would be "just a second". So I settled down to my pint and newspaper - the beer was OK but I have tasted much better on many occasions.

Having completed the first 'elementary' Sudoku, and started on the 'intermediate', another beer was needed - no sign of 'Denise' - perhaps 'just a second' was shorthand for 'you'll just have to have a second pint'. I had waited long enough, however, I was hungry, and decided I could do better elsewhere on the ale front; also I noticed that two others who had been in before me were still waiting to place their order - so I left.

The next stop was the **Trafalgar Tavern**, a historic pub by the Thames. Appropriately enough **Nelson Brewing Co. Trafalgar Bitter** was on offer as was bar food. The pub was busy and unpleasantly smoky but I was lucky to find a corner seat by the window. The beer was a disappointment, poorly presented, cloudy and lifeless. Somehow for the £7.50 I paid for the food I was expecting a substantial meal; it was quickly served and very nice but all over in about three mouthfuls. It was time to go to the library.

Later on, and after a strenuous climb up to the Royal Observatory, I headed for the **Richard I** (pictured top left) to the south of Greenwich High Road. My pint of **Young's Winter Warmer** was well, warmish, but seemed to be appreciated more by sundry tiny winged creatures flitting about the bar. Undaunted I headed for the last *GBG* port of call.

The **Ashburnham Arms** (pictured top right) is a little further south

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west, tucked away in a residential area. It was definitely worth the walk. Sometimes you can tell just as soon as you walk into a pub that all is well with the world. No doubt the four *Shepherd Neame* handles had something to do with it: *Late Red*, *Spitfire*, *Master Brew* and one I hadn't come across before, *Kent's Best* were the ales on offer. I only had time for three (!) so I tried all but the *Master Brew* - they were immaculate, beautifully presented, full of taste. My brain cells were immediately stimulated into finishing the 'intermediate' and polishing off the 'advanced' Sudoku.

The GBG was forgiven!

Giles du Boulay



Richard & Jan



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IPA - 3.7%	£77.45	£42.95	£22.95	£5.00	£7.50	£14.00
SMUGGLER - 4.1%	£80.95	£45.45	£24.45	£5.25	£7.78	£14.50
SEASONAL - 4.2% - 4.5%	£84.95	£47.95	£25.95	£5.50	£8.25	£15.00
SEASONAL - 4.6% and above	£89.95	£50.95	£27.45	£6.00	£9.00	£16.00

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CASK INFO AND SHELF LIFE

- All beer comes racked bright, ready to drink.
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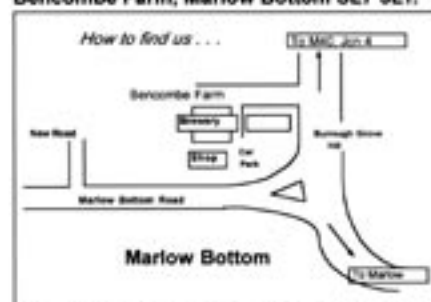
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A CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR TALE

Having been 'off the beer' for three months due to medical reasons I finally got the all clear in about the middle of December.

I started off tentatively with a few halves over the next week but on the Tuesday before Xmas I went for broke in the **White Swan (GBG)** in Whitchurch and had three and a half pints of *ESB!!* The beer was absolutely superb and it was good to see my 'beer buds' were back on form.

After a dry day on the Wednesday, I went to London for a Christmas 'booze-up' with some of my railway mates, held in the **Archery Tavern (GBG)**. On arrival at the pub I was astonished to find about a hundred people drinking in the street. I thought this must be as a result of a fire alarm but no; the inside of the pub was just as full. It appears that the Everest Double Glazing Co had been having a meal in the restaurant opposite and had then migrated to the pub. After about ten minutes I seized a 'window' of opportunity and struggled to the back of the pub to find my mates drinking in relative calm. Determined to have a good drink I consumed four and a half pints of *Badger Tanglefoot*, my largest intake for many years. Unfortunately the **Archery** closed on Jan 5th with its future unknown.

Friday was another dry day but on the Saturday I had arranged to meet a mate of mine, Dave Thornhill from Nottingham (who has been mentioned several times in dispatches) in the **Kings Head** (pictured). I started off with a pint of *Glad Tidings*, which I had never had on draught before followed by two halves of the *Bodgers Barley Wine*, which was also on draught. It was rather hazy but still drinkable.

Christmas day dawned bright and clear and after opening presents and putting the Turkey in the oven, I set off for the **Millwrights** for my regular Xmas Day drink with my son. I had observed the previous day that *Brains Reverend James* was on as a guest beer and I was not disappointed as it was still on. I had three fabulous pints, which set me up for cooking the rest of the Christmas dinner, which was a doddle (I don't know why women make such a fuss).

On Boxing Day I picked up my mate Dave again and we set off for the **White Horse** at Hedgerley (*GBG*). I had been the previous year and found it a very enjoyable experience. As I was driving I only had one and a half pints, from a selection of about nine beers (sorry didn't write them down) but made sure I took a takeaway for drinking when I got home. I went for the *Eastwood I.S.A.* at 12% but they only had a pint left! I took this pint but then had three pints of the Belgium Beer on draught which was *Regal Christmas* at 9.5% - a reasonable substitute. Dave and I consumed these as soon as we got back to my place.

Tuesday was a quite day with just a trip to the **Kings Head** with Dave for a couple of pints of the *Bodgers*.

Another dry day on Wednesday and then on Thursday I had a pint of *Fullers Jack Frost* at the branch social at the **Pack Horse (GBG)** in Wendover.

Friday saw me off on one of my steam hauled rail tours to Chester. I tried a new pub in Chester called the **Old Harkers Arms (GBG)** where I had a pint of *White Horse Christmas Ale* and some very fine ham, egg and chips. Eight other beers were on offer mainly from micros and were *Cottage Christmas Ale*, *Osset Nervous Turkey*, *Flowers Original*, *Thwaites Original*, *Fleetwood Old Dog Bitter*, *Lancaster Lancaster Blonde*, *Purple Moose Glasyn Ale* and *Roosters Yankee*.

I then went to the **Mill Hotel (GBG)**, which is an old favourite of mine, to find eleven beers on which were *Exmoor Exmas*, *Wychwood Santa Claws*, *Slaters Elsie Mo*, *Moorhouses Santas Piste*, *Derwent Stocking Filler*, *Weetwood Best Cask Bitter*, *Phoenix Cornmill Bitter*, *Roosters Leghorn*, *Coach House Gunpowder Strong Mild*, *Rudgate Battleaxe* and a house bitter. Due to pressure of time I only sampled the *Exmoor Exmas* before returning to the station.

I had a dry day on Saturday until the evening when I consumed large quantities of red wine to see the New Year in.

New Years Day saw me going for my regular new years outing to Didcot Railway Centre. Following a good look round I met a mate of mine who lives in Didcot and we went to the Red Lion at Britwell-cum-Sotwell. A very nice village pub where I had two pints of *West Berks Decadence* (4.6%), brewed to commemorate their tenth anniversary. It was a very fine beer and we would have liked more. Other beers available were

West Berks Mr Chubbs Lunchtime Bitter and *Loddon Hoppit*.

To finally round off the New Year/Christmas celebrations I went for a ride on the Chinnor & Princes Risborough on Monday and then ended up in the **Shepherds Crook (GBG)** at Crowell (very strange how steam trains and beer are so closely intertwined). I had a pint off *Archers SSB (Swindon Strong Bitter)* and some of the delicious warm Goats Cheese.

As I am writing this I am in a drying out period for a few days before starting out on my travelling and drinking adventures again.

Dick Moore



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AGM GUEST SPEAKER



We are pleased to announce that we will be having a guest speaker at our Annual General Meeting which is to be held at the **Red Lion**, Haddenham on Monday 6th February at 8pm.

George Jenkinson from **Chiltern Brewery** will be speaking about the brewery which has just celebrated 25 years since it was founded by his father. He will also discuss the **Kings Head** (the picture above was taken during the official opening) in Aylesbury which **Chiltern Brewery** run for the National Trust. He will then be happy to answer any of your questions.

George (shown left) will be joined at the meeting by his brother, Tom (right) and their father, Richard.

The business side of the meeting will decide the direction of the branch for the coming year, so it is vital that as many branch members as possible should come along. There will be a buffet, a bottle raffle and, of course, lots of beer (including mild!).

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

Rates are Single £18, Joint £21 (at same address), Student/Unemployed/Disabled £10
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Swan Supping
(Aylesbury Vale &
Wycombe Branch)



ICONS ONLINE

On Monday January 12 the government launched The Icons Online project, designed to allow the public to nominate and vote for what symbols best represent England.

Within hours of the website being set up both Real Ale and pubs had been nominated and **CAMRA** are asking people to vote and ensure they secure their rightful place on the list.

CAMRA Press Officer Owen Morris said: 'The brewing industry in England is a proud and vital part of our heritage and it would be extremely surprising if a pint of real ale or the traditional English pub did not make this list. Pubs have been regarded as the focal point for the community for centuries and it is hard to imagine an England without them.

'Pubs themselves are associated with any number of iconic images. The swaying pub sign, the hand-pump from which your favourite real ale is poured, but very little can compare with the pint of beer itself. **CAMRA** was founded by people with a passion for traditional brewing, beer, and pubs, and today boast around 80,000 members who believe in the same thing. When that many people can be so passionate about something they wish to see preserved for the future how can it be thought of as anything but iconic?

'I would definitely encourage people to vote for real ale and the English pub to be included. No doubt this list will encourage quite a bit of debate – which will of course take place in the pub.'

The list is will be changed every three months according to online votes received for each item. Once in the top 10 that nomination will then be an official English icon.

To vote, link to <http://www.icons.org.uk/nom>.

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Pub open all day Saturday & Sunday

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LAST ORDERS!

ALL CHANGE AT CHEARSLEY

The **Bell** at Chearsley changed hands shortly before Christmas. Peter and Sue Grimsdell have left the pub after 13 years tenancy and will be greatly missed by all.

Peter and Sue took over the **Bell** not long after it was purchased from **ABC** by **Fullers** in the early '90s and built it into one of the most successful village pubs in the county. It became a regular entry in the **CAMRA Good Beer Guide** and won the **Aylesbury Vale Council's Village Pub of the Year** on two occasions. They now plan to concentrate on their own cleaning company (POPS Cleaning Services 01296 201319) and hope to be spending a bit more time on the other side of the bar.

The new landlord is Oliver Babington, who also runs the **Market Tavern** in Aylesbury. He plans to run the pub much as before and hopes to have work done to renovate the thatched roof and the beer garden before the summer. **Gales HSB** is to accompany the **Fullers** range of ales. **Mick White**.



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OUT AND ABOUT IN DORSET

The **Worlds End** is to be found (in this case) just off the A31 near Almer in Dorset. It is an impressive thatched building facing the main road. It can't be missed, as its yellow paint work stand out among the green fields nearby. This **Cask Marque** inn is owned by nearby **Hall and Woodhouse**, responsible for well known **Badger Beers** such as *Tangle Foot*.

I have stopped at the **Worlds End** many times over the years, and driven past many more. It has seen a steady increase in standards of both its food and beer quality. On this particular occasion, I was passing with my wife and daughter, on the way to Devon to visit relatives. Yes, I know its a bit off the beaten track from Aylesbury to Devon, but it was a good excuse to have lunch in a fine establishment such as this one.

Those serious about the taste of their beer and food will note that they are a non smoking establishment throughout, the better to appreciate their offerings. The landlord is serious about his **Cask Marque**, and is



certainly not going through the motions. On offer was *Badger First Gold*, *Tangle Foot* and their latest seasonal, *Festive Feasant*. A Gold and a *Tangle Foot* (and an orange juice for my daughter - though I think she would have liked to try the *Feasant*) we settled down to choose from the extensive menu.

Now, I know that some people have differing opinions, but I absolutely hate 'Children's Menus' that consist of 'sausages and mash',

'unidentifiable pieces of reformed chicken and chips' and the rest of the sorry choices normally provided. Anyone who has watched Jamie Oliver's 'School Dinners' will know how this fare is a poor feast for our children, and, quite frankly, not fit for pigs.

Luckily there is none of that at the **Worlds End**! Instead, children are offered small portions of most of the especially fine adult menu. There were simple sandwiches, broccoli soup, pheasant pie, a warm sardine salad, a fillet of bass as well as many other nice things. Various fish dishes are a speciality.

Our chosen dishes were excellent, and washed down with sadly too little fine ale. I shall have to remember to make another trip past the nearby brewery on a future visit.

Worlds End Inn, Almer, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 9EW

Tel: 01929 459671

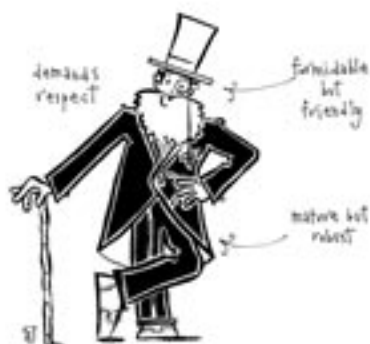
Alexander Wright

6X less?



You'll find more 6X at a pub near you!

BEER WITH PERSONALITY!



Old Ale

A new campaign to show that beers have real personalities too has been launched by **CAMRA**.

Leeds based illustrator Christine Jopling has come up with quirky cartoon characters that represent Porters, Stouts and Old Ales – three of the most traditional and flavoursome beer styles.

The campaign was devised after **CAMRA**'s research showed that 42% of the old ales, stouts and porters varieties brewed in 2000 are no longer in existence. **CAMRA** has grouped these beer styles together for this promotion as they are often referred to as winter warmers and most widely available at this time of year.



Porter & Stout

Tracy Saunders, Chair of **CAMRA**'s **Light and Dark Supporters Group** which campaigns specifically for Britain's endangered beer style, said: 'We often talk about the bland nationally produced brands and we wanted to show some of the characteristics of real beers.'

'Stout, Porter and Old Ale are considered by many to be the most traditional of beer styles, and yet they are often misunderstood by those unfamiliar with their taste or under-represented in pubs. Drinkers are often uncertain of different beer styles so stick with what they know – but we hope that these characters will give them an insight into what they might be drinking.'

The Old Ale character demands respect, is formidable yet friendly, and is mature but robust. Stouts and Porters are distinguished dudes with smooth characters, thick creamy heads and rich, dark bodies.

All three characters feature on beer mats, posters and pump clip crowners that were unveiled at the National Winter Ales Festival held at Manchester's New Century Hall in January. Visitors were able to choose from over 200 ales, foreign beers, ciders and perries.

However should you not have been able to get to Manchester it would be worth looking out for Stouts, Porters and Old Ales in your local.

In 2000 there were 66 old ales brewed (58% of which are still brewed, 42% no longer brewed) compared with 122 in the **Good Beer Guide** currently (an increase of more than 85%).

In 2000 there were 99 stouts and porters brewed (58% of which are still brewed, 42% no longer brewed), compared with 215 in the **GBG** currently (an increase of over 110%).

Tracy Saunders added: 'We would encourage publicans to come on board and display the promotional material which is available from **CAMRA** free of charge.'

Licensee packs are available to order from **CAMRA** by contacting cressida.feiler@camra.org.uk or calling one of the admin team on 01727 867201.

DE-WANIUM

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Due to huge demand we extend our Special Offer to 2006.

Special offers: Five Course Meal £10 per person (Sunday-Thursday)

Special Offer Menu

1. Papadoms and Chutney and Pickles

2. *Starters (select any one from below)*

Onion Bhajee, Vegetable or Meat Somosa,
Sheek Kebab, Chicken Tikka

3. *Main (select any one from below)*

Lamb, Chicken or Vegetable Rogon
Lamb, Chicken or Vegetable Malayan
Lamb, Chicken or Vegetable Khurma
Lamb, Chicken or Vegetable Dansak

(select any one from below)

Pasta, Cous Cous, Noodles, Boiled Rice, Pillao Rice
Nan, Peshwari Nan, Keema Nan, Kulcha Nan

4. *Desserts (select any one from below)*

Fruit Cocktail, Kulfi, Ice Cream

5. *Coffee (sitting only)*

**Sunday Buffet Served 1pm-5pm
(over 10 items)**

£7.95 per person, £4.95 per child (U12)

PUB CRAWL DETAILS

Pre-Lent

City and East London Pub Crawl

Friday 24th February

Following the popularity of his pre-Advent pub crawls, longtime Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe branch member, Nigel North, has organised another trip round some pubs of note in London. As usual, we start off at a couple of old favourites:-

5 p.m. - 5.30 **Lamb**, Leadenhall Market, EC3
Young's Bitter and *Special*.

Then round the corner to:-

5.35 - 6.00 **Swan**, Ship Tavern Passage, 78
Gracechurch Street, EC3

Fuller's Chiswick, *London Pride* and *ESB*.

Back through passage and right into Fenchurch Street:-

6.05 - 6.25 **Wine Lodge**, 145
Fenchurch Street, EC3. *Young's Bitter* and *Special*.

6.30 - 6.50 **Elephant**, 119
Fenchurch Street, EC3
Young's Bitter and *Special*.

Continue along Fenchurch Street and onto Aldgate, keeping on right hand side.

Then take Exit 8 under the road and emerge at Exit 11 for Middlesex Street. Walk past the **Market Trader**, past the **Poet** pub, past the Buddha Thai restaurant, past the **Puzzle** pub, and left round the bend to:-

7.05 - 7.30 **Shooting Star**, 125-29 Middlesex Street, E1

Fuller's Chiswick, *Discovery*, *London Pride* and *ESB*.

(The pub can easily be found from Liverpool Street station by going along the street between **Dirty Dicks** and **Woodins Shades**).

Back towards the east, along alley at bend, straight along Whites Row and Fashion Street to :-

7.40 - 8.10 **Pride of Spitalfields**, 3 Heneage Street, E1

Fuller's London Pride & *ESB*, guest beers.

This pub is just off Brick Lane so we will be well placed to go for a curry to complete the evening's entertainment!

All pubs listed above are listed in more detail in the 2006 *Good Beer Guide*.

Continuation of the

Round London Pub Crawl Friday March 31st

We are rapidly approaching the end of our crawl round London which started many years ago at the **Head of Steam** at Euston Station. We will end up at the same pub at the conclusion of our next crawl later on this year.

We start at the Victoria & Albert (5:30pm) which is on Marylebone Station (so there is no excuse for not using public transport).

We then go via the Hobgoblin, Feathers, Metropolitan to end up at the Dover Castle which will be the starting point for the final crawl. Full details of the pubs will appear on the website (www.swansupping.org.uk).



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Broughton Crossing

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07919 202113



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- **Bed and Breakfast**
- **Real Ales**

Swan Supping

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Copy deadline for next issue, due to be published on 1st April 2006 is 14th March 2006.

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

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

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

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Opinions expressed in Swan Supping are not necessarily those of the editor, or the *Campaign for Real Ale*.

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

Branch Diary



Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

FEBRUARY

Wednesday 1st MARSH GIBBON SOCIAL

8:30pm Greyhound, 9:30pm Plough.

Monday 6th BRANCH AGM

8:00pm Red Lion, Haddenham (in the Lion's Den) Meeting, bottle raffle, buffet and a guest speaker from *Chiltern Brewery*.

Wednesday 15th QUAINTON SOCIAL

9:00pm George & Dragon.

Wednesday 22nd LACEY GREEN SOCIAL

9:00 pm The Whip

Friday 24th PRE-LENT LONDON CRAWL

Start at 5:30pm Lamb, Leadenhall Market. Details on page 21.

Tuesday 28th GOOD BEER GUIDE SELECTION MEETING

9:00pm Swan, Great Kimble.

MARCH

Monday 6th GBG FINAL SELECTION MEETING

9:00pm Bull, Stoke Mandeville.

Wednesday 15th HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIAL

9:00pm Hour Glass, Chapel Lane, Sands,

10:00pm Downley Donkey, Plomer Green Lane, Downley.

Wednesday 22nd FORD AND DINTON SOCIAL

9:00pm Dinton Hermit, Ford, 10:00pm Seven Stars, Dinton.

Saturday 25th JOINT SOCIAL WITH MID CHILTERN

Noon Kings Head, 2:00pm Hop Pole, Aylesbury.

Monday 27th BRANCH MEETING

8:30pm Shepherd's Crook, Crowell (Venue to be confirmed)

Friday 31st LONDON CRAWL

Start at 5:30pm Victoria & Albert, Marylebone Station. See page 21.



More Local News



(Continued from page 2)

LITTLE MARLOW

The quaint **Queens Head** pub is due to close for six weeks for refurbishment. An extension to create an extra room for functions and disabled access is to be carried out. Further details in the next *Swan Supping*.

LONG CRENDON

The **Chandos** now has a new landlord. Jason Pettis took over in early October and has been busy implementing improvements including refurbishment of the kitchen and redecorating the bar areas. He plans to introduce an Italian theme to the food side and will continue with two ales to start with, *Courage Best* and *Greene King Abbot*.

LOUDWATER

There is currently no real ale at the **Happy Union**.

MARLOW

Recent *Greene King* portfolio beers *Fireside* (4.5) and *Ridleys Rumpus* (4.5) have featured at the **Carpenters Arms** lately.

Queens Road local pub, the **Duke of Cambridge**, is alternating from *Rebellion IPA* (3.7) to a guest ale. On parade during late December and January were *Brakspear Bitter* (3.4), *Gales Robin's Revenge* (4.0) and *Brains Bitter* (3.6). A breath of fresh air on the Marlow real ale scene!

High Street pub the **hog's head** offered *Black Sheep Bitter* (3.8) and *Yongs Bitter* (3.7) on a recent visit, alongside *Brakspear Bitter* (3.4).

The **Rebellion** 2006 drunken range monthly special, *Sloshed* (4.4), was available in January, at the **Prince of Wales**, amidst their three regular beers. February *Rebellion* brew *Well Oiled* (4.2), should appear this month next to *Brakspear Bitter* (3.4), *Adnams Bitter* (3.7) and *Fuller's London Pride* (4.1). March *Rebellion* monthly special is *Sparko* (4.3).

PENN

The **Queens Head** has new owners. It is currently closed for a refurbishment which will result in a restaurant. We do not hold out much hope for real ale being available.

(Continued on page 23)



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The Chiltern Brewery
Terrick Aylesbury



More Local News



Beer Festival Diary

(Continued from page 22)

PENN STREET

Michael Macken, who has two pubs in the village, has contacted us to request that *Swan Supping* be available there. Both the *Squirrel* and the *Hit or Miss* are in the *Mid Chilterns Branch* area, but we were happy to oblige. Both pubs between them serve a minimum of seven casks and recently have started a range of guest ales at the *Squirrel*.

POUNDON

The *Sow & Pigs*, which was a Free House, has been bought by *Brakspears* and will serve *Brakspears Bitter* and a seasonal beer. When visited they had the *OBJ* available. The new tenants are Chris and Shirley Bamber and have been away from the trade for ten years having previously run pubs in Oxford. They took over on the 29th November after the previous landlady retired. The only change they will be making immediately is to open every lunchtime.

PRINCES RISBOROUGH

The *Bell* has still got its act together and doing quite a nice pint of *Greene King IPA*.

The *Bird in Hand* is still doing its guest beer policy. It was *Batemens XXXB* recently appearing with the usual *Greene King IPA* and *Abbot*.

Still no real ale in the *Black Prince*.

Adnams Broadside and *Greene King IPA* at the *George and Dragon*.

No change at the *Whiteleaf Cross* with *Greene King Morrells Original* and *Abbot* available.

STONE

Work has started on the *Waggon & Horses* to convert it into a restaurant offering 'contemporary Indian cuisine'.

TYLERS GREEN

At a recent branch visit to the *Red Lion*, the *Fullers London Pride* was on top form.

WADDESdon

The *Bell* has been reported as currently closed! We will try to find out more for our next issue.

WENDOVER

The *Red Lion*, which used to be run by *Regent Inns* and had an interesting selection of well kept beers from *Mauldons*, *Tring* and others, is now run by *Wolverhampton & Dudley*. Nowadays the range of beers is down to three: *Banks' Bitter*, *Marston Pedigree* and *Shepherd Neame Spitfire*.

The *White Swan* has a new manager. She is Amanda Connolly, an Aylesbury lass. She has always been working with real ale and is looking forward to looking after the cellar herself. The beers the *White Swan* keeps are *Fullers Chiswick*, *London Pride* and *ESB*. She hopes to be able to extend the range with a guest beer at some future time.

WYCOMBE MARSH

The *Disraeli Arms* had *Rebellion IPA* on when visited. They had no beer at all when previously visited, so this is a step in the right direction. The area that was dedicated to dining is so no longer and this area now houses the pool table. The simplified menu options are proving popular at lunchtimes, but generally there is less emphasis on dining. Things were looking bad before Christmas but trade has picked up very well in January. There is going to be a refurbishment when the two areas will be made into one by knocking down an internal wall. A chiller will replace three of the hand-pumps so that colder lager can be stocked. The televisions will be staying but are to be up-graded and one will be moved into what was the dining area.

Fullers Anniversary was available before Christmas in the *General Havelock*.

As has been said before, the *Halfway House* looks unlikely to ever open again. As it is a listed building, it appears that the owners would like to see it fall into such a state that it has to be knocked down.

The *Red Lion* has recently had four *Rebellion* beers on. The best range of *Rebellion* outside Burroughs Grove!

The *Swan* has an uncertain future. The tenant's lease is up for renewal and the pub needs work on it to keep it going. It seems unlikely that anyone would take on such a task.

FEBRUARY

2-4 (Thursday-Saturday): 7th CHELMSFORD WINTER BEER FESTIVAL, Triangle Club, Essex County Council, Duke St.

3-4 (Friday-Saturday): DORCHESTER BEER FESTIVAL. Corn Exchange.

3-5 (Friday-Sunday): 10th ASHFIELD WINTER BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL, The Festival Hall Leisure Center, Hodgkinson Rd. Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Notts.

3-4 (Fri-Sat): 11th TEWKESBURY WINTER ALES FESTIVAL at the WATSON HALL Barton Street, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire.

3-4 (Fri-Sat): SALISBURY WINTERFEST, CASTLE ST SOCIAL CLUB, SCOTS LANE, SALISBURY CITY CENTRE.

3-4 (Fri-Sat): CHESTERFIELD BEER FESTIVAL, THE WINDING WHEEL, HOLYWELL STREET, CHESTERFIELD, S41 7SA (5 mins from Railway Station).

3-4 (Fri-Sat): 13th WHITE CLIFFS FESTIVAL OF WINTER ALES AT THE MAISON DIEU (TOWN HALL), DOVER

8-10 (Wed-Fri), 16TH BATTERSEA BEER FESTIVAL, GRAND HALL behind Battersea Arts Centre, Town Hall Road, Lavender Hill, London SW11 (near Clapham Junction).

9-11 (Thursday-Saturday): 24th FLEETWOOD BEER FESTIVAL. THE MARINE HALL THE ESPLANADE, FLEETWOOD, LANCASHIRE.

15-18 (Wed-Sat): ROTHERHAM OAKWOOD REAL ALE & MUSIC FESTIVAL PRESENTS A FESTIVAL OF BRITISH HEROES. Oakwood Technology College, Moorgate Rd, Rotherham S60 2UH

16-18 (Thu-Sat): CLEVELAND'S ALE & ARTY, STOCKTON BEER FESTIVAL, ARC, DOVECOT ST, STOCKTON (2 mins walk from Stockton High St).

16-18 (Thu-Sat): BOOZE ON THE OUSE, ST NEOTS Beer Festival at the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, Cambs.

17-18 (Friday-Saturday): WINTERFEST XIV, Gosport, Thorngate Halls, Bury Rd.

23-25 (Thu-Sat): BRADFORD BEER FESTIVAL, VICTORIA HALL, SALTAIRE

24-25 (Friday-Saturday): 30TH ANNIVERSARY CARLISLE BEER FESTIVAL, BRICK YARD, FISHER ST, CARLISLE.

MARCH

2-4 (Thursday-Saturday) 30th LOUGHBOROUGH BEER FESTIVAL, POLISH CLUB, TRUE LOVERS WALK, OFF WILLIAM STREET, LOUGHBOROUGH.

3-4 (Friday-Saturday): 4th ELYSIAN BEER FESTIVAL, LARKFIELDS RESOURCE CENTRE, HIGH BARNES, ELY, CAMBS.

9-11 (Thursday-Saturday): 16th SUSSEX BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL, Hove Town Hall, Hove.

15-18 (Wednesday-Saturday): LEICESTER BEER FESTIVAL. CHAROTAR PATIDAR SAMAJ, OFF ST MARGARET'S WAY, NEXT TO ST MARGARET'S CHURCH.

17-18 (Friday-Saturday): WINSLOW BEER FESTIVAL, Winslow Public Hall, Winslow, Bucks. Organised by the Lions Club of Winslow, with the help and support of the Milton Keynes & North Bucks Branch of CAMRA. All profits will go to charity.

17-18 (Friday-Saturday): HITCHIN BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL AT HITCHIN TOWN HALL, BRAND ST, HITCHIN.

22-24 (Wednesday-Friday): LONDON DRINKER BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL. CAMDEN CENTRE, BIDBOROUGH ST, WCL.

23-25 (Friday-Sunday): 19TH WIGAN BEER FESTIVAL. ROBIN PARK INDOOR SPORTS CENTRE, LOIRE DR (OPPOSITE JJB STADIUM) WIGAN.

23-25 (Thursday-Saturday): 2nd PENDLE BEER FESTIVAL, Colne Municipal Hall, Colne Lancashire BB8 0AE.

24-25 (Friday-Saturday): COVENTRY BEER FESTIVAL 2006. PLEASE NOTE NEW VENUE. Coventry Rugby Football Ground, The Butts Park Arena, Butts Road.

24-25 (Friday-Saturday): 9th BRISTOL BEER FESTIVAL THE BRUNEL SHED TEMPLE MEADS STATION APPROACH.

OCTOBER

27-28 (Friday-Saturday): 13th AYLESBURY VALE BEER FESTIVAL, Stoke Mandeville Community Centre, Eskdale Road, Stoke Mandeville. Our annual charity beer festival for the 'Friends of Florence Nightingale House'.

BRANCH AGM

Monday 6th 8:00pm

Red Lion, Haddenham (in the Lion's Den)

Guest Speaker from Chiltern Brewery!

All branch members are urged to attend!

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Brewery tours are available for parties of fifteen or more people. Please contact us for further information.

Kite Mild (3.2% ABV):

A traditional medium dark mild. An aroma of roast malt and a smooth body. Tasty for its strength.

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Moderate in strength, but packed with flavour. Smooth malty body, quite bitter with the aroma and taste of east Kent Golding hops.

Hullabaloo (4.2% ABV):

A copper coloured Best Bitter with a rich, nutty malt balanced by the dry herby flavour of English Fuggle hops. Guaranteed to cause a stir!

Ferryman's Gold (4.4% ABV):

Golden, smooth body with masses of zesty, aromatic Styrian Golding hops.

Bamboozle (4.8% ABV):

A straw coloured strong pale ale with a pure malty body and a smack of refreshing hops. Have you been Bamboozled?



The Loddon Brewery Ltd
Dunsden Green Farm
Church Lane, Dunsden
Oxfordshire RG4 9QT



Telephone: +44 (0)118 948 1111

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