

# Swan Supping

FREE

Issue 28



Campaign for Real Ale

Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch

FEB/MAR 2002



## THE BEST BITTER IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE BEST BITTER



It was with a great deal of regret that we heard of the final demise of *Benskins Bitter*!

Although it was not too often seen at the northern parts of our branch, it was very easily found the closer you got to Watford where it was originally brewed.

At an original gravity of 1037, it was very similar to *Friary Meux Bitter* which has also ceased production, and some wags maintained

that they were the same beer!

Several pubs in the Watford area, especially the **Red Lion** at Chenies felt, however, that the loss of their standard tittle was too much to bear and so *Vale Brewery* from Haddenham have stepped into the breach to see if an alternative could be provided!

Mark and Phil Stevens, the brothers who run *Vale Brewery*, did a test brew using the original recipe for

*Benskins Bitter* and are now producing a very similar beer with the same malt and hops.

This new beer is called *Vale Brewery Best Bitter* and has an ABV of 3.7%.

It is now available from the brewery for takeout (see the advert on page 15 for prices).

At the moment, we have only heard of one pub in the branch where it can be tried and that is the **Bird in Hand** in High Wycombe.



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**ASKETT**

The **Black Swan** is to revert to its original name of the **Black Horse**.

**ASTON ABBOTS**

The **Bull & Butcher** is under threat of closure - see the article elsewhere in this issue.

**AYLESBURY**

The **Buckinghamshire Yeoman**, on Bedgrove, re-opened in early January following over two months closure during 'improvements' which have cost around £420,000. The whole pub has been opened out make it one large area and it now has only one long bar instead of the two previous ones. The entrance has been completely remodelled and hopefully the roof has been sorted out as previous landlords had had problems with it. If you want to watch sport on TV all day, this is the pub for you. There are 11 (yes eleven) TV screens, in varying sizes including a television screen solely for the people at one table (whether they can watch another channel to everyone else was not ascertained!). There are also five pool tables (in four different colours!) and the pub has the sign *Q's*, which we believe is the new name for the *Mr. Q's* style of pubs which the **Duck** was before

its latest refurbishment. Also an amazing choice of real ale: *Tetley Bitter!*

The **Duck**, also on the Bedgrove estate, now offers one real ale after a long time without any; it is *Tetley Bitter*.

The **Emperor** has reopened its Thai restaurant as well as continuing its popular range of English food in the drinking area of the pub. In February they will be replacing the *Brakspears OBJ* with *Pride of the River*.

Les Shardlow at the **Kings Head** is planning to hold another beer festival. More information will be announced in our next issue. *Timothy Taylor's Landlord* has been on sale recently at the Kings Head, among several tasty bitters.

A fire has damaged the **Lantern** (formerly the **Dark Lantern**). Smoke was spotted in the early morning by market traders who managed to rouse the family inside who were lucky to get out alive. Even their three cats got out alive, although one of them, a black male appropriately named Sooty, has not been seen since! The fire started in

the loft and an electrical fault is suspected. Most of the damage was done to the roof and the upstairs part of the pub and it is expected to reopen shortly.

The **Market Tavern** has changed hands and there is talk of a major refurbishment. This news only arrived as we were going to press so we will give more details in our next issue.

The **Six Grapes** is due for refurbishment soon, one result of which is that the upstairs room will no longer be available for functions or meals.

**BIERTON**

The new landlord at the **Bell** is Pete Thomas. He has come from *Vintage Inns* where he, together with his wife Angie, has managed the **Duck In**, Aston Clinton as well as, at one time or another, the **Bugle Horn**, Hartwell and the **Five Bells**, Weston Turville. Some years ago they were at the **Ninepins**, Hazlemere near High Wycombe.

**Bob's Barn**, the bar for the Golf Club is reportedly changing hands. No further news at this stage, but

we will keep you up to date in *Swan Supping*.

It is 'All Change' in Bierton as Derek and Carol French are to leave the **Red Lion**. They have handed in their notice and couples are currently being interviewed for the pub. They are hoping to buy the **Phileme Hotel** in Newquay, Cornwall, in a joint venture with some of the local residents there. The hotel has 33 bedrooms including eight apartments and faces both the beach and a golf course! Derek and Carol have supported *Swan Supping* for a long time and we wish them the best of luck for the future!

**BURROUGHS GROVE**

The **Three Horseshoes** is now owned by *Laurel Inns* and is currently leased to *Harefield Leisure Limited* with Kieron and Hillary Higgins as managers. They are offering *Old Speckled Hen* and *Flowers Original* with two guest beers, currently *Timothy Taylor's Landlord* and *Ringwood Best Bitter*.

(Continued on page 19)

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## ANNIVERSARY AT THE RED LION

### THIRTY YEARS ON AND STILL GOING STRONG

On the 6th of December 2001, Clarence and Enid Robinson celebrated thirty years in charge of the **Red Lion**, Haddenham.

Enid and Clarence married in 1965 during the time when her father, Philip Montague, was landlord. Following his death in 1970, Enid's mother Joan took over as licensee, so Enid has been associated with the pub for 36 years. As they have signed up for another three years, neither of them seem to be growing tired of the business.

Although there has been a building on the site since the 1600's (the original building was made of Witchert), the current Red Lion only dates back to 1938. The Church End part of Haddenham where the pub was built used to boast seven pubs, but there can only be a few people around who will remember the **Anchor**, **Six Bells**, **Duck & Donkey** or the **White Hart**!



Since the **Red Lion** was built, there have only been four landlords. Charlie Anderson ran the pub from 1938 until 1950 and he supplemented his income by doing bicycle repairs in a shed at the back which was later converted into the Lions Den function room. The next landlord was John Hedge who also did work as a council civil servant and as a mason. Philip Montague took over in 1965 and he continued the dual income route by making tools for Morris

motors. Even today, Clarence and Enid add to their income by doing outside bars and catering, and as their family have moved out, they often let their spare bedrooms for bed & breakfast guests.

The pub has a very loyal following, none more so than one long standing customer who used to regularly do a 440 mile round trip from his (then) home in Cornwall. He has since moved and his round trip has been cut to a mere 16 miles!

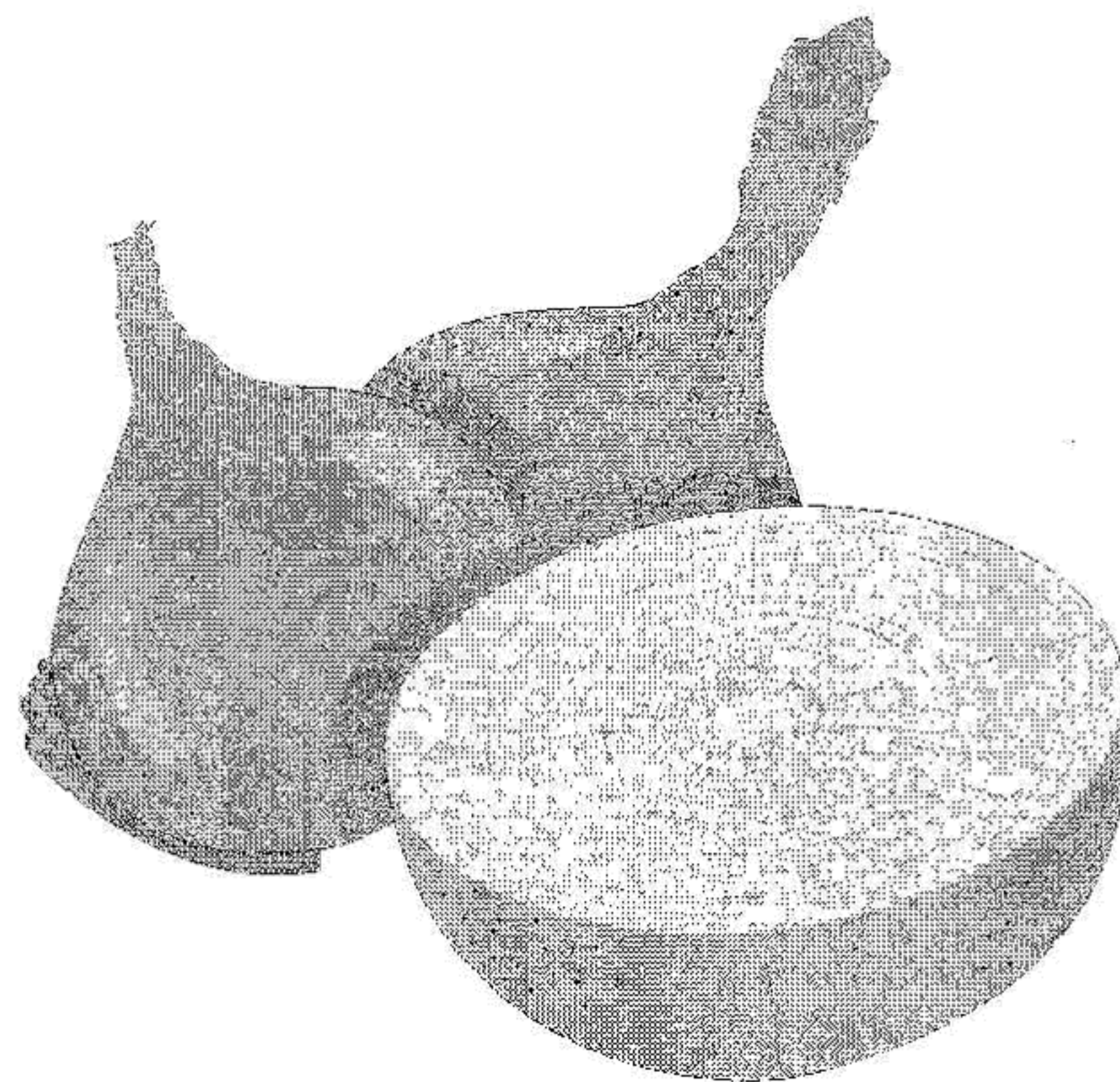
The pub is very much into games with very strong dominoes and cribbage teams. Their quiz team is also top of the league despite having me as a member!

Regularly in the *Good Beer Guide*, the **Red Lion** currently serves *Ansells Mild*, *Adnams Bitter*, *Young's Bitter* and *Marstons Pedigree*. The Lions Den at the rear of the pub is where we will be holding our **Branch AGM** on Monday February 4th (see Branch Diary).

*David Roe*

# Derek Pigott

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## CAMBRIDGE COACH TRIP

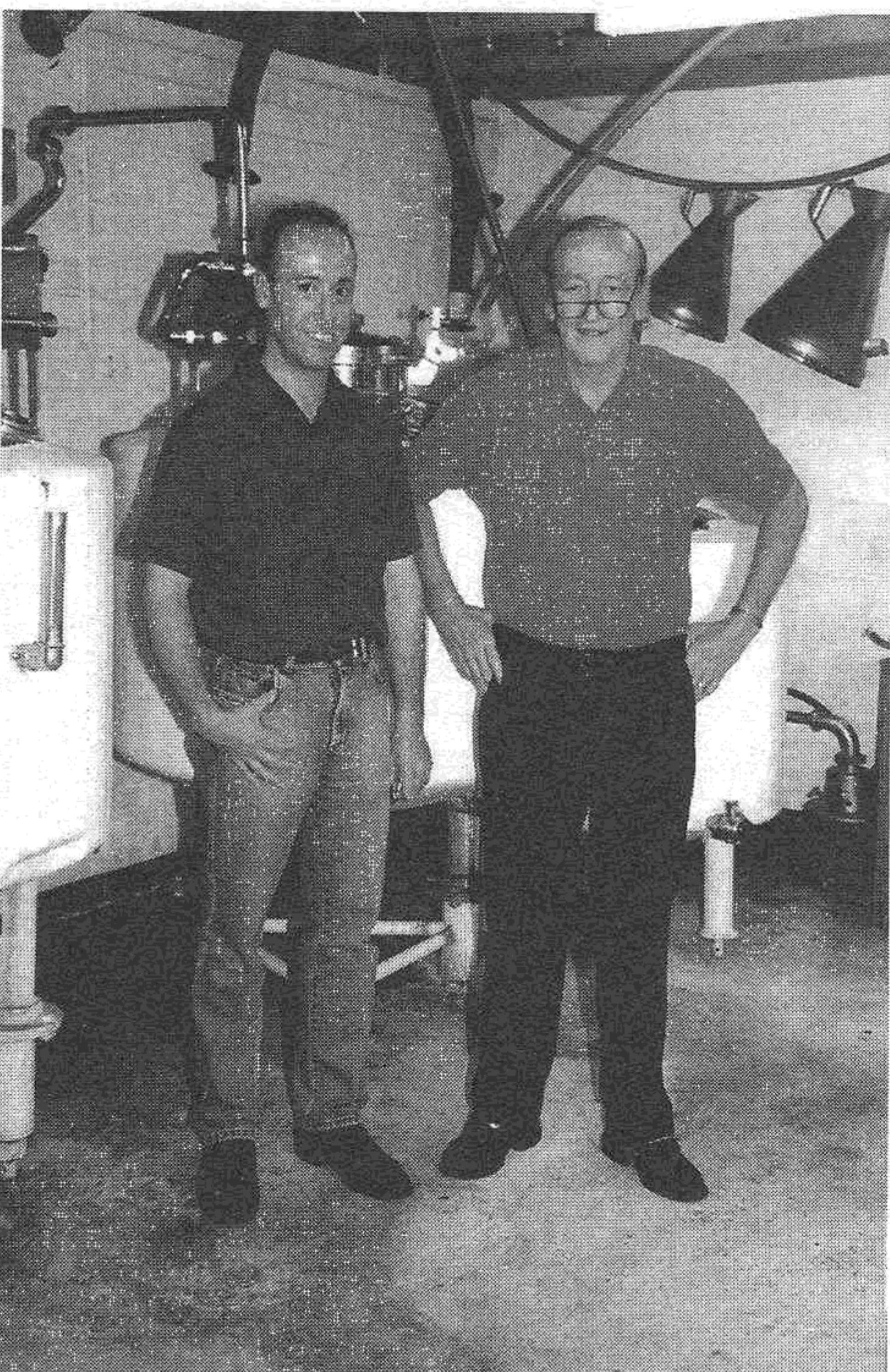
Due to the continued success of our annual coach trip to the Black Country, which seems to sell out earlier each year, it was decided to add an extra venue this year at the end of the Summer, namely the historic seat of learning and pub wealthy city of Cambridge.

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> September was chosen, the idea being to aim between the end of the main tourist season but before the university students return from their holidays.

Twenty five of us set off on the day which turned out to be one of those mild but misty drizzly days of early Autumn. Though it doesn't look it on the map, Cambridge by road is longer timewise than the Black Country so a good oasis en-route was essential. This came in the form of the **Gate** at Sawbridgeworth.

What a gem! Thanks to John Williamson for suggesting this absolutely fabulous pub with its own brewery at the rear. Landlord Tom Barnett has a selection of about nine ales all from independent brewers and including their own as availability permits. A wide ranging food menu was taken advantage of by everyone, the orders being telephoned to the pub twenty minutes before arrival to save queuing and VDT (Valuable Drinking Time). After the meal we were shown round the brewery with still a little time left for another pint of *Beartown Bear Ass* or a *Triple Screw* before departure. The Gate is the home of **RACS** the *Real Ale Club of Sawbridgeworth*, which is affiliated to the *Society for the Preservation of Beers from the Wood*.

We left Sawbridgeworth slightly ahead of schedule but found the going slower than anticipated with heavy traffic full of returning students as we entered the city. This will be a consideration when choosing a date for any future trip. However we still managed to arrive at our first Cambridge pub – the **Alma** – within ten minutes of our plan.



The **Alma** is a large modernised **Ridleys** pub about a mile from the city centre. After taking a picture of our entire group outside the drinking continued in earnest. Over a pint of *Rumpus* some played pool while others searched for the **Alma's** unique point of interest, an old red phone box containing a tank of live piranha fish.

On leaving here we had a short but



slow trip on the coach to the city centre, at which point we split into two groups for the afternoon crawl. Smaller groups are easier to accommodate and all of the five pubs involved are small backstreet locals but all only a short walking distance from the next. Three hours were allocated to visit the **Champion of the Thames** and **St Radegund** (both in King Street), also the **Elm Tree**, the **Cricketers** and the **Free Press** which are clustered around Prospect Row, a narrow street just behind the main Police and Fire stations. All were enjoyable and had their own unique character and well kept ales. The interior of **St Radegund** is virtually a museum with its collection of reference books, ties, memorabilia, messages to customers pinned around the bar plus a complete set of the recent "*Bottle of Britain*" ads for *Shepherd Neame*. Whilst taking all this in, I also took in an excellent pint of *Spitfire* followed by one of *Batemans XB*.

A fifty yard stroll then took us over the road to the **Champion of the Thames**, a **Greene King** pub with comfortable wood panelled bars and a boating background, as shown in the name, the etched glass windows and the many boat racing prints on the walls. A good deal of *Abbot*, *County* and guest *Adnams Broadside* was consumed here over a steadily increasing level of banter.

Another short walk then took us through narrower streets to the **Elm Tree**. A small pub with a very relaxing atmosphere it is like drinking in a private sitting room. Guest beers change regularly and I tried a very pleasant pint of *Ryder Cup* but cannot remember who makes it. Almost next door is another **Greene King** house, the **Cricketers**. Smartly decorated and comfortably laid out, yet more *Abbot* was consumed here.

A longer stagger of nearly 150 yards took us to the final instalment of our afternoon crawl, the **Free Press**, just after it opened at 6pm. Again a small pub of character and an even smaller snug. No smoking throughout and **Greene King** ales including *Mild* complete the picture except I can't remember what I drank here. (probably *Mild*).

By the end of the afternoon session most participants were beginning to feel fairly relaxed after their intake. Others fared differently. Some decided to make a quick visit to Kings College to add a cultural tone to the day, but after finding it to be closed, couldn't find a decent pub open nearby either



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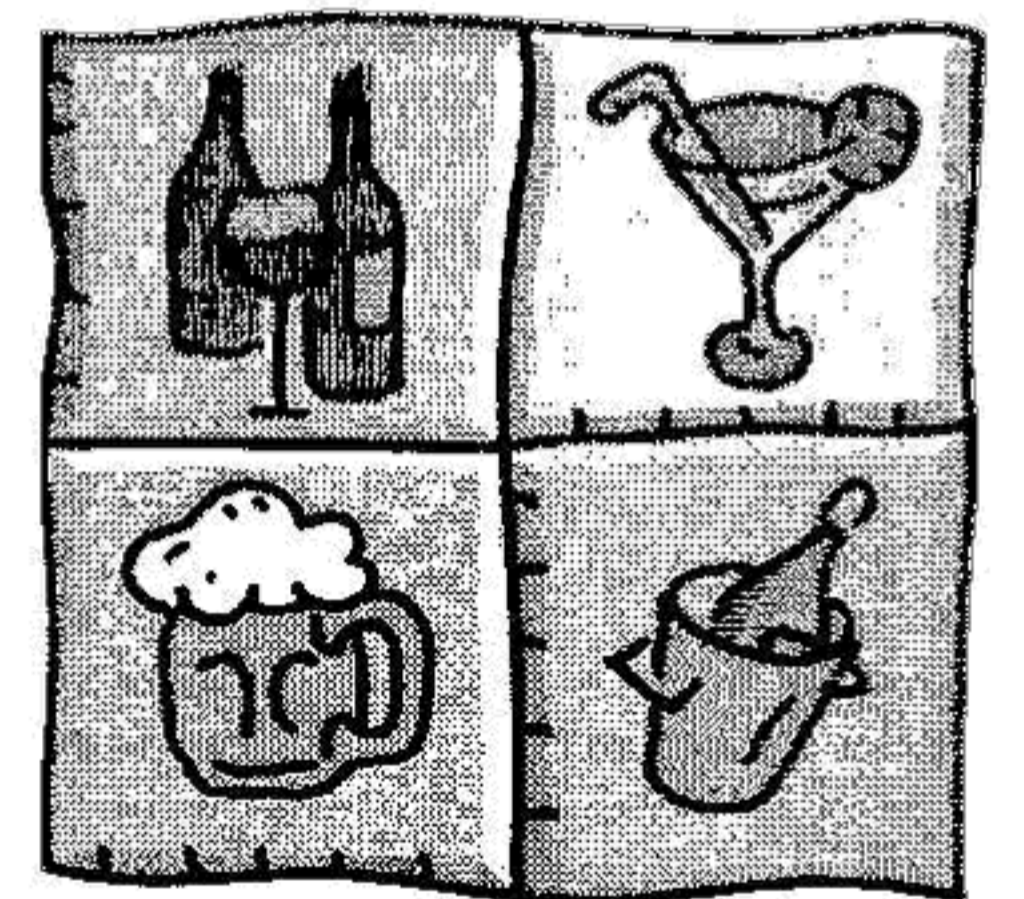
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## Cambridge Coach Trip (cont.)



lighting and a wide range of ales including *Adnams Bitter*, *Batemans Mild*, *B&T Shefford Bitter*, *Everards Tiger* and *Nethergate Umbel Ale*.

Next the **Cambridge Blue**, and another wide selection from mainly small independent brewers including *City of Cambridge Hobsons Choice* and *Woodfordes Wherry*. The décor reflects its links with rowing, in fact it has its own rowing club.

Last but not least the **Kingston Arms**, recently acquired by *Lidstones Brewery* as their first pub it has been so successful as to be voted *Cambridge CAMRA Pub of the Year 2001*. Run by Jane and Peter Fairhall there are usually about nine ales consisting of the *Lidstones* range and other micro-brewery beers.

which must have added insult to injury. However everyone made it back to the rendezvous point in time for another shortish coach trip round to the **Castle Inn** on the north side of the city centre. Here we spent best part of an hour trying the *Adnams* range plus guests – a total of nine ales. With a good range of bar meals (I had an excellent and very welcome Shepherds pie) and its many separate drinking areas the **Castle** became one of the day's highlights.

At 8pm the coach set us down in Mill Road, back on the south side of town for our evening "Top Up" crawl. First the **Live and Let Live**, a friendly backstreet local with gas

Each of the three pubs are unique in character and this makes it difficult to leave when the time comes. In my case I must have spent a little too long at one or both of the first two, as when I arrived at the **Kingston Arms** a young barmaid declined to serve me as in her opinion, (quite rightly), I had absorbed enough already. Fortunately landlady Jane recognised me from the previous week's exploratory visit and allowed me a pint on probation.

All too soon it was 10pm and most of us met the coach within a minute or three of the deadline. Three more minutes and most of us were dead to the world as the driver decided to

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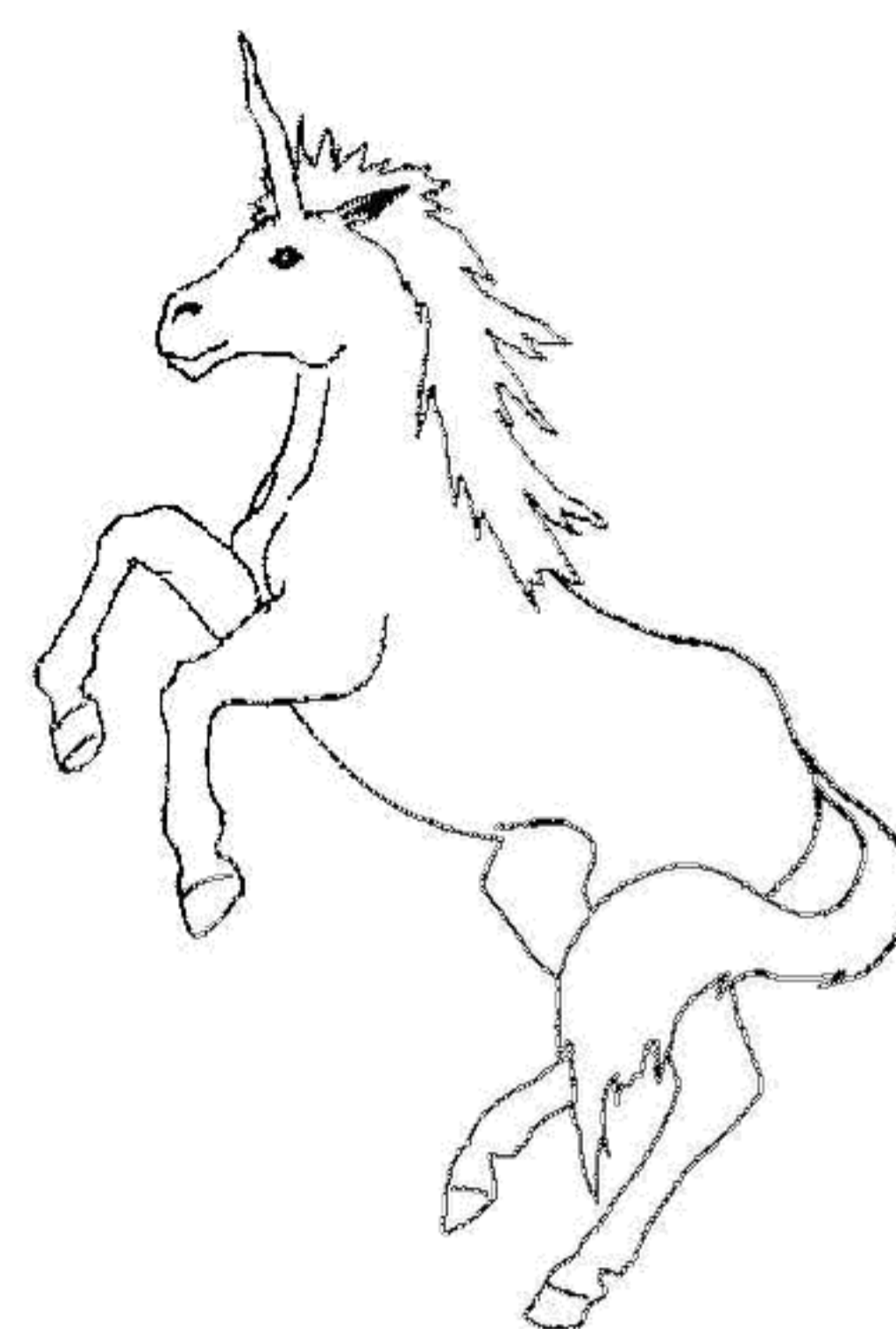
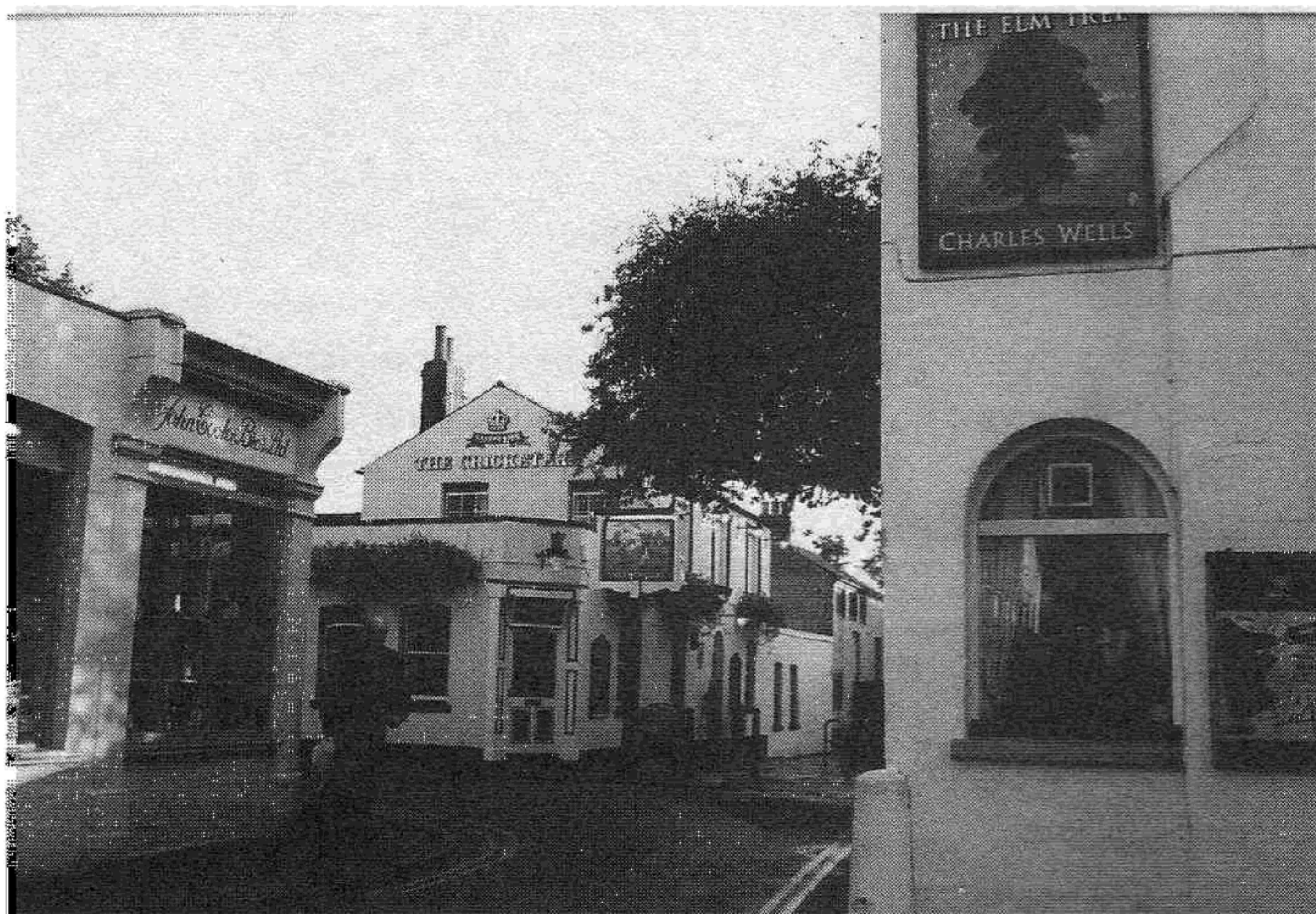
## Cambridge (cont.)

depart from the plan and took the motorway route back complete with 25 minute stop at South Mimms.

In my view it would have been much quicker and more direct to go the cross-country route via a couple of lay-byes at that time of night. This and any other problems will be resolved before our next visit.

I hope everyone enjoyed the trip as much as I did and would like to thank all the publicans and staff of the pubs visited for their hospitality.

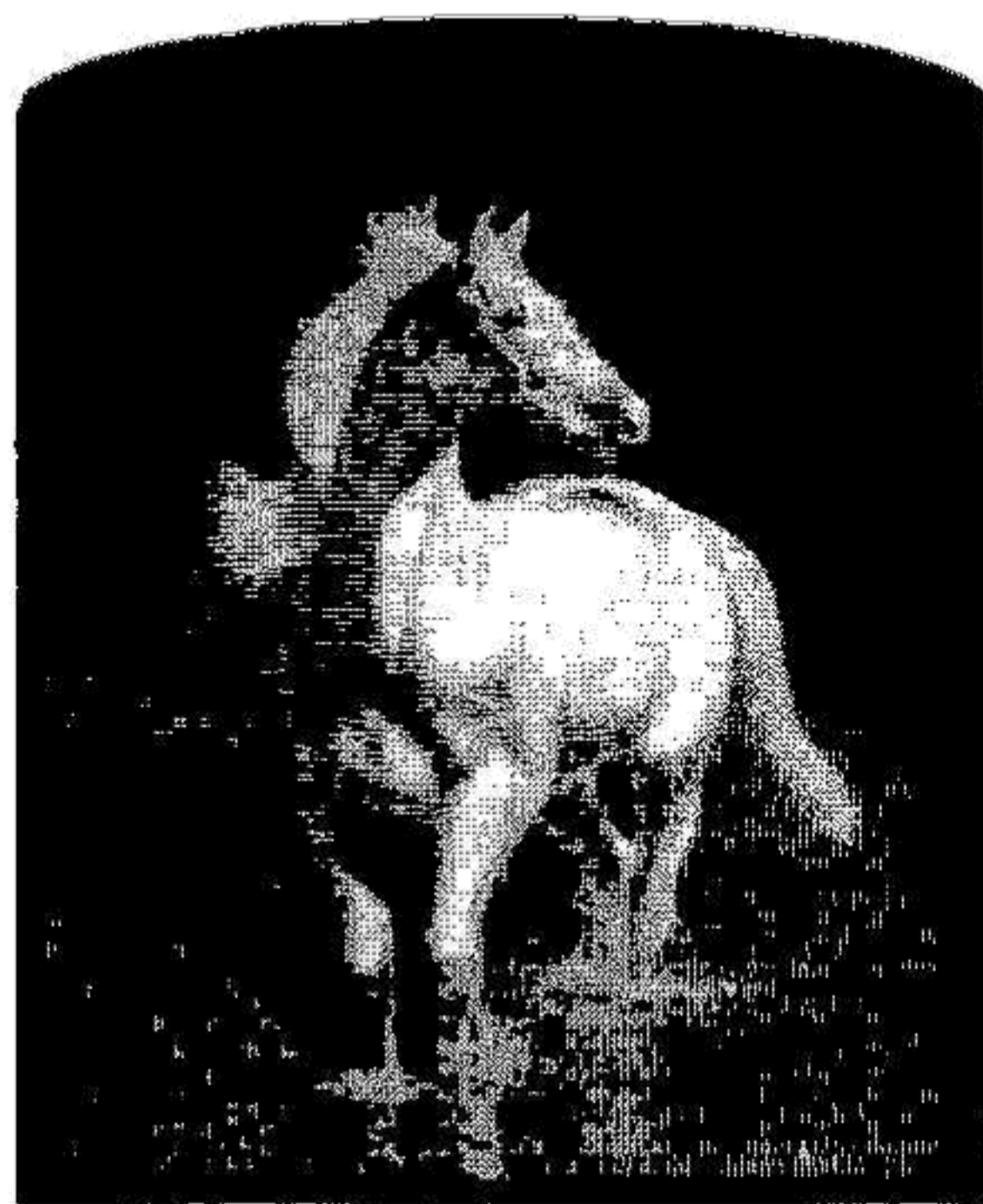
*Mick White*



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## LAST ORDERS AT THE BULL



The **Bull and Butcher** has stood at the heart of the little Buckinghamshire village of Aston Abbots for longer than most people can remember.

Although no one seems to be quite sure when the pub first started, former landlord Frank Humphreys tells us, "The **Bull and Butcher** has a very long history. My grandfather occupied these premises as a local publican and baker in 1912... carried on by my mother and father for over fifty years." Now this long-serving village pub may be forced to call last orders for the final time.

The *Aylesbury Brewery Company* ran the pub for many years, but

for most of the past decade it has been privately owned and operated. Citing non-viability of the pub, the current owners have applied for planning permission to redevelop the site as a housing development.

A few years ago 'The **Bull**' appeared to be flourishing, but the opening of new entertainment and restaurant complexes in nearby Aylesbury was just one major factor that saw custom fall off. As trade dwindled, so did **The Bull's** ability to provide the variety and quality of ales normally enjoyed by its regulars.

The **Bull and Butcher** has ideal facilities for a village pub: a saloon bar; a public bar big enough for pool, discos and live entertainment; a restaurant area; bed and breakfast accommodation; a large car park; and sufficient land at the rear for expansion.

These might have allowed it to carry out the diversification that so many village pubs find necessary for survival these days. However, attempts to sell the pub failed and the sale value of the proposed six flats and four houses is guessed to be far greater than that which could be expected from sale as a pub alone, so it is hard to deny the attraction of redevelopment to the owners.

Undeterred, both villagers and the Parish Council have resolved to vigorously oppose the change of use application. Whether or not the pub can be saved is far from certain, but one thing is for sure: should the **Bull And Butcher** be lost then a little of the soul of Aston Abbots will be lost with it.

*Phil Spooner*

If you want to object to the application of change of use for the **Bull & Butcher**, please write to the *Aylesbury Planning Department* (the address is given on page 19).



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FRIDAY & SATURDAY – THE GATE (OPEN 'TIL 2AM)

SUNDAY – KRAZY, KICKING KARAOKE FROM 8PM





## Local Brewery News



Both of the *Vale Brewery* pubs have featured in the news recently!

From February, The **Carpenters Arms** in Slapton will be run by Andrew Loft, licensee of the

**Old Swan**, Cheddington, who is returning to the only pub in the village where he grew up.

The **Carpenters** will continue to offer its well renowned range of home made food as well as at least two beers from the *Vale Brewery* stable, plus an ever changing guest beer from Britain's independent micro-breweries.

Keith Templeton, landlord of the **Cuckoo's Nest** in Gawcott, stripped off to have his photograph taken for a charity calendar.

He appears on the page for March and his modesty is preserved by use of the cello he plays for the St. Albans Symphony Orchestra. The other eleven months are customers of the pub, each wearing only the bare essentials of their trade!

The pictures were taken by Keith's partner, Jane Cresswell, and the calendars were produced locally.

The calendars were on sale from December at the pub (priced £10 ) with the profits going to the Willen Hospice in Milton Keynes.

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## **The White Hart Quainton**

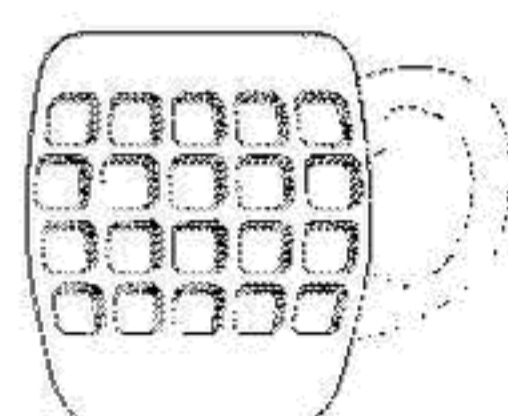
*(Nice Pub, shame about the Landlord)*

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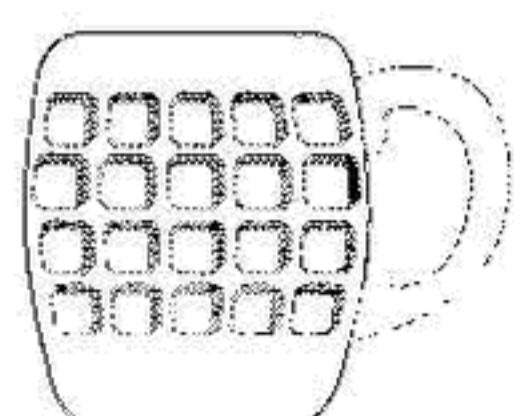
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## INN SPIRED BY NORTHERN TOWNES

Due to a conversation back in September, I was invited up to Chesterfield for their football home league fixture against North-West London based QPR.

Myself and two other football fanatics (Scott & Terry) were to be guests of JJ, a globe-trotting intellect and once native of this North Derbyshire town, as VIP's with full hospitality, as JJ recently became a shareholder in the club. The lure of this along with a chance to sample some of the local "juice" was just what was needed in the run up to Christmas.

After an arduous four hour Friday afternoon slog up various motorways, all of us were spruced up and on parade at 7 o'clock in the **Portland Hotel**, a newly converted **Wetherspoons** tavern, where I gleefully dispatched a couple of pints of the local **Townes** brewery offering, aptly a football special. Fully titled *Chesterfield 3 Rangers 0 Anglo-Scottish Cup Celebration Ale* (4.0% ABV), it was an amber coloured refreshing mid-strength beer which complemented my scampi, peas and french fries superbly.

Next port of call was a stroll across the market square marvelling at the famous Crooked Spire, England's poor equivalent to the Leaning Tower of Pisa, and into the **Market**, a **Carlsberg-Tetley** Festival Ale House. With a good selection of ales from both Nationals and micros, the majority of us plumped for a **Charles Wells** seasonal brew *Naked Gold* (4.5), a well-balanced crimson ale with a light creamy head

and late hop aroma. One of the best to be consumed over the weekend!

As time was at a premium a taxi was accosted for the short trek to Whittington Moor where the **Derby Tup** is sited, home of **Chesterfield CAMRA**. A large array of handpumps greeted us before I vouched for a *Tupping Gold* (3.5) from **Castle Rock**. A light mid-hop session beer, which was a pleasing prelude for the *Hartlington Best* from the local **Whim** brewery. This (4.0) creation is a permanent fixture at their bar, and rightly so as I have never been disappointed by this and its other stablemates from their Derbyshire paddock. A final raid at the handpumps liberated a pint of *Tower Best* (4.2) from the cellar, again another enjoyable beer in typical traditional raw beer drinkers surroundings.

A cab was summoned for the return trip into town and a visit to the **Spread Eagle**, a pleasant, friendly watering hole where the four of us could unwind and talk more freely, enjoying a couple of pints of *Banks's Original* (3.5).

On leaving this pub we crossed the street to enter the **Green Room**, a loud, thrash and bash student infested establishment where bottled refreshment and body-pierced torsos were the order of the day. Still, Scott had finally found his spiritual home, mine was the **Derby Tup**! A late, late sit down curry house appearance brought the night's proceedings to a very pleasant close.

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## The Clifden Arms



## CHESTERFIELD CONTINUED

Saturday at high noon we were "booted and suited" and walking over the threshold of the **Arkwright Arms**, a roadside gem a few miles out of town at Sutton-cum-Duckmanton. With a fine choice of ales on ceremony, I tucked into a *Daleside's Santas Progress* (4.2), a good beer, but the *Wentworth Oatmeal Stout* (4.8) was simply velvet in a glass. A superb beer which was unanimously voted "champion" beer of the weekend by the four of us. We thanked the chirpy landlord for his well kept ales vowing to return for a Sunday roast the next lunch-time.

After our endeavours at the football match, QPR were victorious 3-2, the infamous "Brampton Mile" was undertaken on Saturday night. It was twenty minutes per pub, enforced by Sergeant-Major JJ Wilkinson, as circa twelve from many more were safely negotiated. They ranged from real ale havens to discotheque drinking dens, but the mixture of both was an unexpected pleasure.

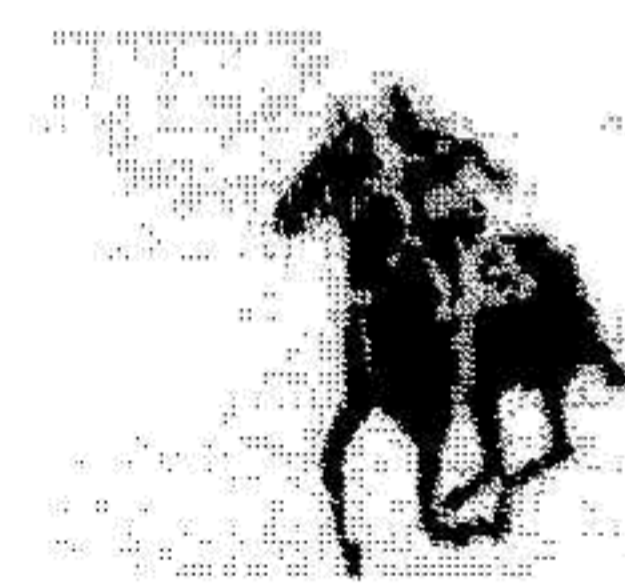
*Stones Bitter* (3.7) from the national *Bass* put in a regular appearance here, a beer not seen much in Buckinghamshire. *Camerons Strongarm* (4.0), a creamy ruby-red ale and *Best Lockoford Bitter* (4.0), another delight from the *Townes* brewery, brought up the rear before we recoiled back into town for some more *Banks's Original* at the **Spread Eagle** and risked further irreparable ear-damage at the lively **Green Room**.

Sunday roast was consumed with a classic dry, hoppy, joy in a pint pot *Wentworth Pale Ale* (4.0) and some more glorious *Oatmeal Stout* at the **Arkwright Arms** before the weekend was brought to a conclusion by being catapulted homebound down the M1, already plotting another excursion into Derbyshire in 2002.

*Alan Sheppard*

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## HIGH WYCOMBE MUSINGS

### BELL, FROGMORE

A new landlord at the **Bell** on Frogmore in the centre of High Wycombe is recreating the sort of traditional atmosphere that was a major feature of the pub in the 1980s.

Simon Daymond-Harris took over the **Bell** (now owned by *Comfortable Inn Company*) in November last year and has refurbished and redecorated it to make it more drinker-friendly. There are new partitions, a comfortable sofa and an appetising menu with some home-cooked dishes. Food is served seven days a week from 12 midday until 3pm. The choice includes French baked baguettes with a range of fillings, chargrilled gammon steak and an all day breakfast.

Accommodation is available in five good quality rooms. Even more importantly, top condition *London Pride* and *ESB* are available from *Fuller's* brewery.

Simon's last pub was the **Down Inn** in

Brighthelm in Shropshire, and before that he was a relief manager for *Bass*

It is to be hoped that his attempt to revive one of the few remaining traditional pubs (*Branch Pub of the Year* in 1982) in the centre of High Wycombe is successful.

### OTHER NEWS

Following on from the information about the range of beers on Wycombe High Street in a previous issue, a wander around Wycombe East Central area in December revealed seven beers from five breweries in three pubs and a club.

The **Pheasant** on the A40 has *Courage Best Bitter* and *Fullers London Pride*.

Opposite, Wycombe Cricket Club now has *Brakspears Special Bitter* to accompany their *Courage Best*.


Round the corner, the **Gordon Arms** has *Greene King IPA* and *Ruddles County* from Bury St Edmunds, a new

sign showing Gordon of Khartoum and a new roof.

Finally, the **Belle Vue** maintains its position of pub with top choice in this area with *Wells Bombardier*, *Fullers London Pride* and *Greene King Abbot*.

The pub was adorned with suitably patriotic signs proclaiming 'God Save the Queen'. They may have been more to do with the 1970s New Year's punk evening, but will no doubt also set a suitable tone for this Jubilee year.

*Wycombe Wanderer*



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*Haddenham's Award Winning Village Inn*



Every Tuesday and Thursday Night Special

**A two Course Meal for just £10.95**

Choice from starter and main course or main course and sweet  
As well as full Menu being available

***Booking recommended!* [www.eatatthedragon.co.uk](http://www.eatatthedragon.co.uk)**



**BRITAIN'S BEST PUB**

**CHESHIRE PUB VOTED  
'PUB OF THE YEAR'**

The **Nursery Inn** in Heaton Norris, Cheshire has been named Britain's Best Pub in the '*Pub of the Year*' competition - organised by **CAMRA**.

This 1930's pub has appeared in every edition of **CAMRA's Good Beer Guide** since 1984 and it is the first brewery-owned managed pub to win this award. It also marks a rare victory for a pub in an urban location as the majority of previous winners have been rural free houses.

Overjoyed Licensees George & Susan Lindsay said "We are so delighted to have won the Pub of the Year award and pleased for **Hydes Brewery** - they really deserve this recognition. We knew we were in the last four of the competition but never really imagined we were going to win it! I would like to thank all of the team at **The Nursery Inn** and all of our regulars for their loyal support".

Great Britain has approximately 63,000 pubs that could have entered the competition. The 200 **CAMRA** branches all nominated their own '*Pub of the Year*' for their area and these were then entered into the national competition. Four pubs made it to the final with **The Nursery Inn** being voted the overall champion.

Tony Jerome, **CAMRA's** Press Manager said 'On behalf of the *Campaign for Real Ale* I would like to congratulate **The Nursery Inn**, George & Susan Lindsay and **Hydes Brewery** on winning **CAMRA's Pub of the Year** award. This award not only considers beer quality but also atmosphere, campaigning, service & welcome, community focus, style/décor and value for money. The key to their success is that they do all of these things extremely well.'

The award ceremony took place on Tuesday 22nd January at **The Nursery Inn**, Green Lane, Heaton Norris, Cheshire (the pub is on the junction between Green Lane, Bowerfold Lane and Mount Road).

The runners-up in the competition this year were:

**The Ship Inn**, Middlestone Village, Co. Durham (01388) 810904

**The Shipwright's Arms**, Hollowshore, Faversham, Kent (01795) 590088

and the winner of our *Regional Pub of the Year 2001* - **The Bell**, Aldworth, Berkshire (01635) 578272

Please note that the annual **CAMRA Pub of the Year** competition is under way again.

Any suggestions for the *Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe* choice will be welcomed; please contact a member of the local committee.

The choice has to be made by the end of April.



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VALENTINES DAY  
February 14th*

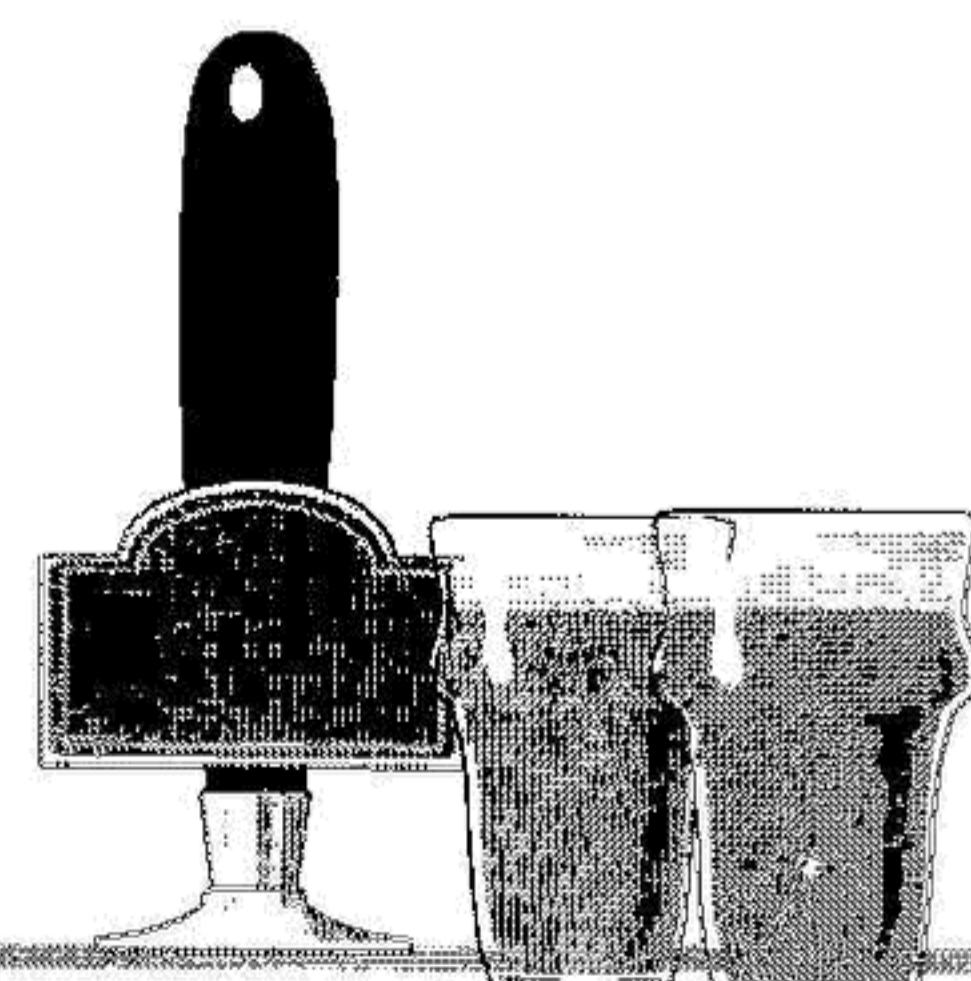


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2000, 2001 AND 2002 EDITIONS**

**BEER STILL AVAILABLE  
FROM ONLY  
£1.20 PER PINT**





## Getting Festive!

As the season of goodwill came upon us, so did various Christmas beers, which were only available for the short space of time during the festive period. It's a time to seek out and ye shall find, especially where the pubs have a good 'guest' beer rotation.

On my real ale trail around my home town of Marlow, I've encountered some *Rebellion Roasted Nuts* (4.6) at the low beamed **Ship**, and an *OBJ* (4.8), (*Oh Be Joyful* to clarify any embarrassment) at **Brakspears Chequers**. **Sam Truemans Crown and Anchor** offered *Smiles Holly Hops* (5.0) as a 'guest' to accompany their exclusive ales.

Top of the Christmas tree though, was the **Hogshead** with its large array of real ales. Of those on offer over the Xmas holiday included *Robinsons Robin Bitter* (4.5) and *Good King Legless* (4.5) from Scotland's *Harviestoun Brewery*.

*Thwaites* of Blackburn's December brew constituted as *Good Elf* (4.9) and neighbored *Santa Claus* (5.0) from *Wychwood* at the nine handpumps. These festive four reside alongside further Winter ales and several permanent beers at this High Street alehouse.

Christmas comes but once a year as do the Christmas beers. Roll on next Christmas for some more liquid spice.

*Santa's Little Drinker*

## National News

**CAMRA mourns sad loss of a great campaigner**

Jim Fox, a key *CAMRA* activist for many years died suddenly of a heart attack on New Year's Eve. He was aged just forty nine.

Jim joined *CAMRA*'s National Executive in 1996 and used his in-depth knowledge of brewing, dispense and all things technical to drive forward the work of *CAMRA*'s important Technical Advisory Group.

Jim will be remembered for his outstanding sense of humour and his commitment to high quality British Beer. He was always good company, supportive of his colleagues and a great friend.

In 1995 Jim played a key role in building a greater understanding of the ever-controversial cask breather issue and has been involved in many national and local campaigns.

He will be sorely missed by all who knew him. I'm sure all *CAMRA* members will join me in sending our deepest sympathies to Jim's family at this difficult time.

*Dave Goodwin*  
National Chairman



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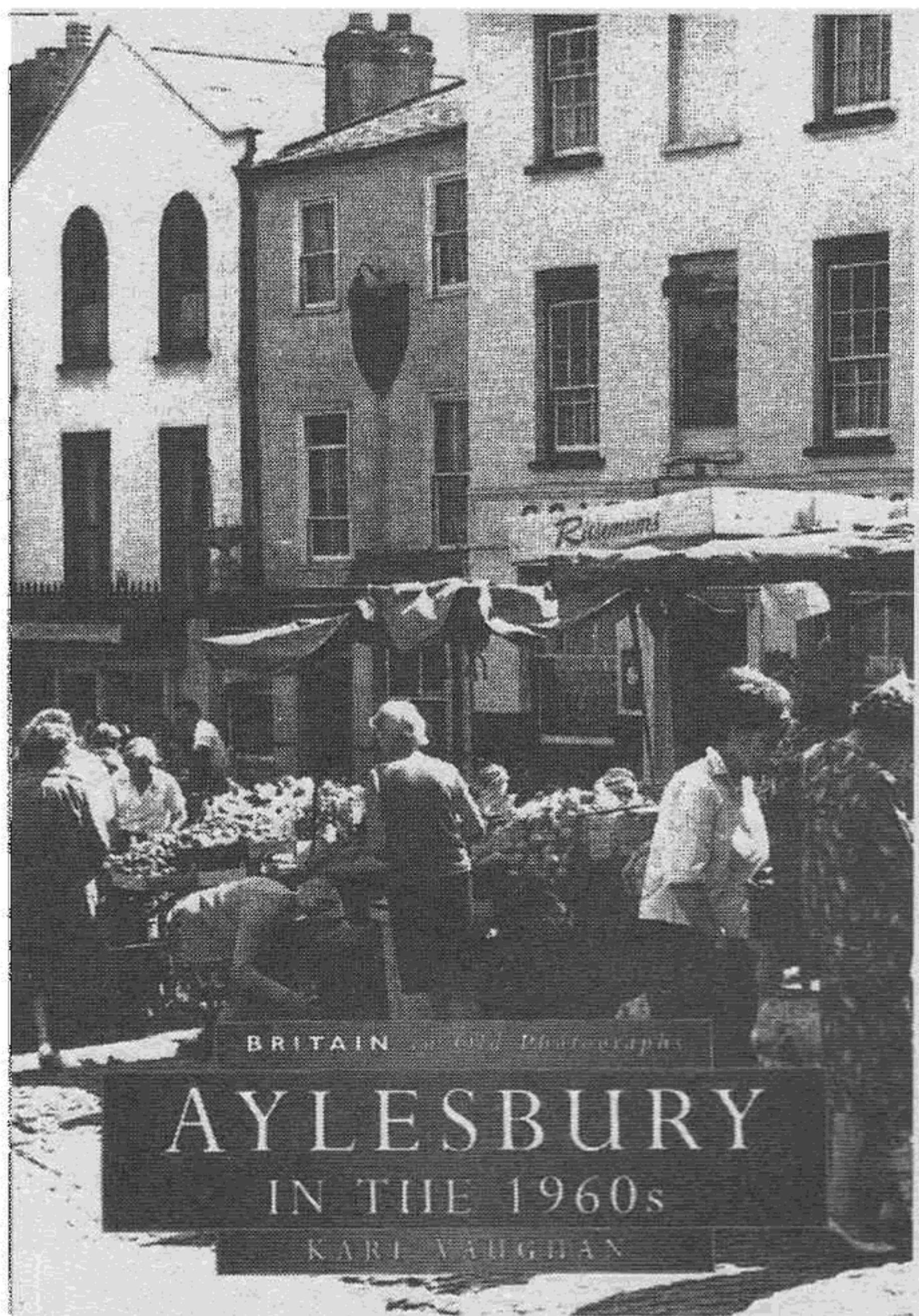
01296 682784 (24hr)



## Book Review

## AYLESBURY IN THE 1960s

by Karl Vaughan



This fine book is a photographic record of how Aylesbury changed in that dynamic decade, the 1960s. Although the book was published about a year ago, I have only just bought a copy and found it absolutely fascinating – and that's not just because there are so many pub photos.

There is a whole chapter on pubs with 50 splendid photographs. The **Kings Head** can be seen after the shops in front of it were demolished. The author explains that the Borough Council decided against keeping the area clear because they thought it would be too expensive to do so. The **Queens Head** looks as tranquil as ever in Temple Square; the **Red Lion** (now **Hobgoblin**) is painted in the livery of *Friary Meux*, a defunct Surrey brewery; the **County Arms** and the **Hop Pole** seem to have changed very little.

The pubs that were newly built in the late 50s or early 60s – **Plough**, **Duck**, **Borough Arms** (now **Weavers**), **Greyhound** (now **Priory**), **Steeplechase** – all look very plain but have been modified since then to soften the stark architecture of the time.

What is very obvious is the considerable number of pubs that are no longer with us – over 20, either demolished or closed and put to another use. The **Bear** in Walton Street has a wonderful polar bear sign. The **ABC Brewery** behind the **Bear** is also pictured. Although **ABC** stopped brewing before the war, they had a bottling line until the 1980s and in the 60s distributed beer from *Ind Coope* in Romford. You can see the **Harrow** and **Barleycorn** when they were separate pubs; now merged as the **Farmyard and Firkin**. The **Star Hotel** started life as a coaching inn, then served the railway trade from the Cheddington line and was finally demolished to make way for Hampden House; it was situated at the entrance to the underground car park.

Elsewhere in the book are chapters on the long frozen winter of early 1963, the destruction of large parts of the old town centre to make wider roads and build the county offices, the bus station and Friars Square shopping centre. The brutalist

architecture of the latter was short lived and was torn down and rebuilt in about 1993.

Throughout Karl Vaughan's narrative one is aware of his sadness over so much destruction. He describes the demolition of some fine buildings on the site of the new county offices as "pure vandalism".

Whether you are a pub-goer or not, I am sure you will enjoy browsing through this excellent book.

Published by Sutton Publishing, 2000, ISBN 0-7509-2383-0, £9.99.

Nick Holt



The Bear in Walton Street.



Vale Brewery of Haddenham offer Award Winning local ales, made from only the finest malted barley and whole English hops, in ready to drink party packs. To order, telephone 01844 290008 giving a minimum 24 hours notice for "bright" beer.

Price List (Inc. VAT)	(72 pt.)	(36 pt.)	(16 pt.)
	ABV Firkin	Poly-pin	2 Gal
Notley Ale	3.3% £72.00*	£42.00	£22.00
Best Bitter	3.7% £73.00*	£43.00	£22.50
Wychert Ale	3.9% £74.00*	£44.00	£23.00
Edgar's Golden Ale	4.3% £76.00*	£46.00	£24.00

#### Speciality Beers

Black Swan – Dark Mild	3.3% £73.00*	£43.00	£22.50
Black Beauty – Porter	4.3% £77.00*	£47.00	£24.50

The range of Hadda's Seasonal Beers are also available!!

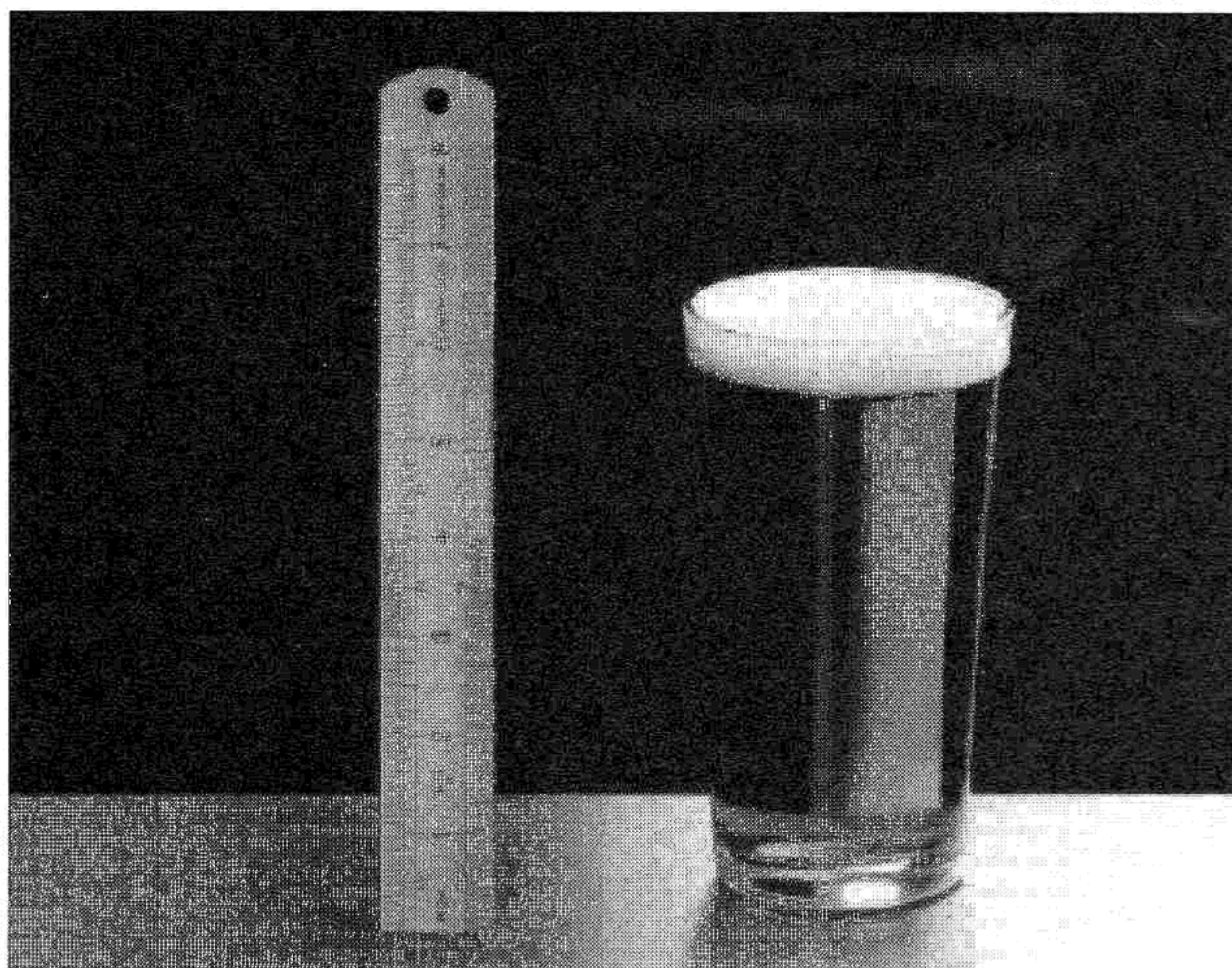
#### Others

Mixed Cases 12 x 500 ml from our range of 8 different bottle conditioned beers (3.3% to 5% ABV) £20 per case

Please phone for further details



## 100% Liquid - Demand an honest pint



**HOW DOES YOUR PINT MEASURE UP?**

- Short beer measures cost drinkers £1 million a day
- 8 out of 10 pints are less than 100% liquid
- Pledge your support for an Honest Pint Law at

[www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) or  
call 0845 60 30 20 8



Getting what you pay for is a basic consumer right. Whether you are buying bread, potatoes, petrol or thousands of other everyday products, a kilogram should be a kilogram, a litre should be a litre, and a pint should be a pint.

It's fair to expect that when you order a pint of beer in a pub you should get exactly that - 100% liquid - an honest pint.

Unfortunately, because of loopholes in the law, the reality is quite different.

Research carried out by Trading Standards Officers shows that many pubs serve short measures. The results are startling.

*8 out of 10 pints served are less than 100% liquid  
The average liquid served is less than 95% of a pint  
Short measure is costing drinkers over £1 million every day.*

### The industry view

The huge majority of publicans are honest people who work hard to keep their customers happy.

But some unscrupulous pub companies place unreasonable demands on pub managers to get as much beer from a barrel as possible to increase profits. The only way to achieve this is by serving short measures.

The *British Beer and Pubs Association*, which represents the pubs industry, denies that there are consumer complaints and thinks it is acceptable to serve 95% liquid pints and give a top-up only to those who demand it.

# THE BELL

## Real Fire Real Food Real Pub

(Shame about the Landlords – Bob & Harold)

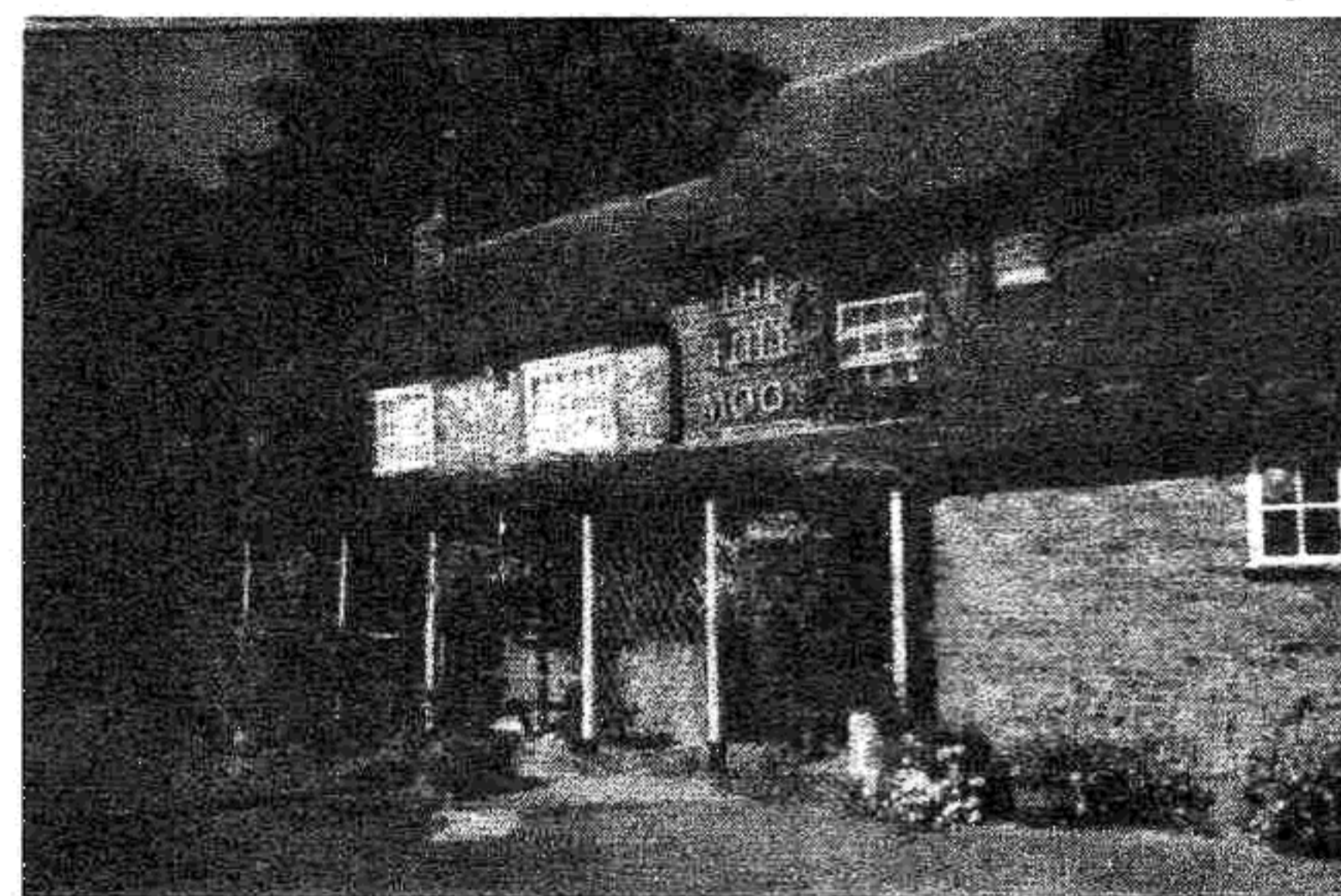


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Licencees, Alan & Pam Sandell, welcome you to a pub with good food, good beer & good company.

An English country pub, set in the Buckinghamshire countryside, full of character and offering a fine selection of real ales, **Adnams, Ringwood Best Bitter** plus up to six **Guest Beers** that change weekly including four served straight from the barrel, lagers and wines, a food area and a real fire in winter.

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# Happiness is a FULL pint!

**CONSUMERS MAKING  
SUBSTANTIAL LOSSES  
IN ALL CONSTITUENCIES**

We believe the law must be changed so that it is the publican's responsibility to serve you a full liquid pint every time. It should not be up to you, the consumer, to ask for a top-up - you've asked for a pint once already!

**The Government view**

The Government has pledged its support for new laws to protect consumers from short measure. It is a Labour party policy to tighten legislation to ensure you get a full pint.

But despite detailed and realistic proposals, this promise has not turned into action and it is us as consumers who are losing out to the tune of £1million a day.

**How you can help**

If **CAMRA** is to be successful in our campaign for an Honest Pint law we need your support. Write to your local MP at the House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. Call 0207 219 4272 if you don't know the name of your MP.

Write and complain to your local trading standards office. You'll find the address for your local offices on page 19, or you can look in the phone book or on the Internet at [www.tradingstandards.gov.uk](http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk)

If you are not happy with the amount in your pint pot that is served to you, complain politely to the bar staff and demand a top-up.

Remember, if you do nothing, you can expect nothing to change!



**CAMRA**, the beer consumer's champion believes this is unacceptable and there is a clear need for consumers to be protected in law.

**Your rights today**

If you are served a short measure you should ask the bar person for a top-up, which they should give with good grace. **CAMRA** thinks this is an unsatisfactory solution to a growing problem. In a busy pub on a Friday night, it would cause chaos if everyone asked for a top-up.



*A Family Firm celebrating 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary • 1851 to 2001*

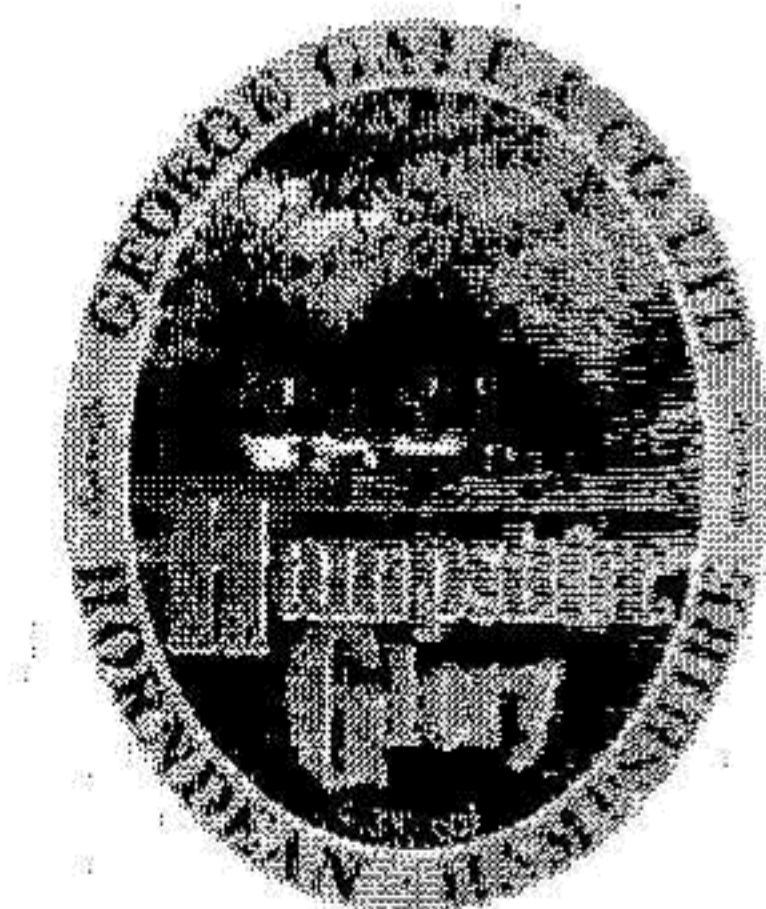
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**MORRELLS**

*Morrells Varsity  
& Bitter*

**Notice to Advertisers**

Next issue will see us entering the fifth year of publication for 'Swan Supping'!

We started off as a small magazine of six pages (Spring 1997) and with a circulation of only 1500. Advertising was only a small part of the equation as our printing was (very kindly) done by the **Hogshead** in Marlow.

However, interest in the magazine grew and so did its size and print run. The page count went from six to ten, then to twelve where it remained for many issues. Our first twenty page issue was, appropriately enough, issue number 20 (Oct/Nov 2000) where it has remained for most of the subsequent issues.

Our print run has gone from the initial run of 1500, when we had no idea of the possible circulation, to the current run of 3000 where it has been since issue 18 (June/July 2000).

The frequency has also increased from quarterly to bi-monthly.

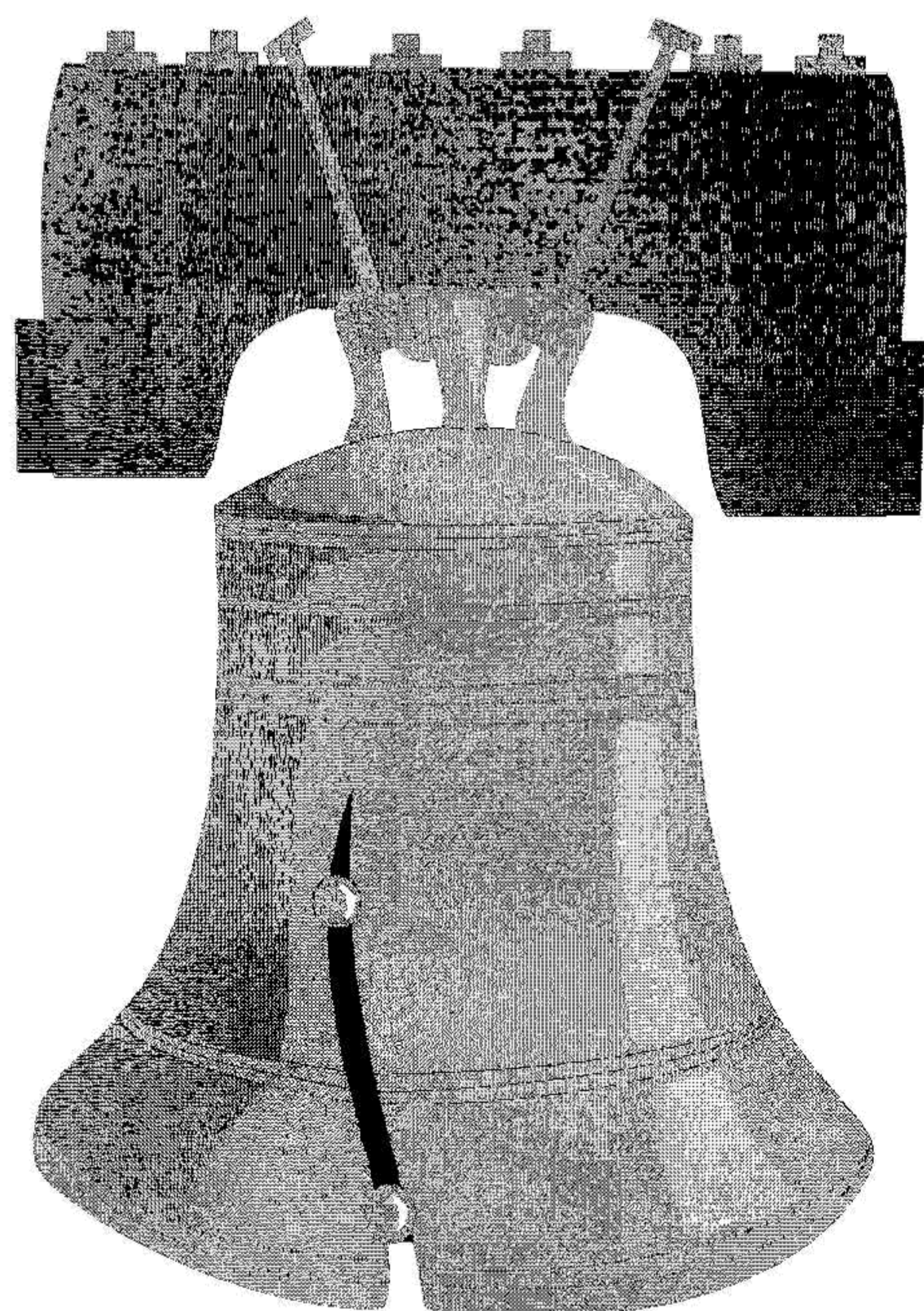
In fact, everything has increased except the cost of advertising!

We need to break even with the magazine or we will be draining **CAMRA** resources which can be used for campaigning elsewhere.

It has therefore been decided to raise some advertising costs.

The costs for a full page or an eighth of a page will remain the same but the cost of a half page will rise to £55. Quarter page adverts will rise to £27.50 and the cost of a sixteenth of a page will go up to £6. The 10% discount for prompt payment will continue for the time being, as long as it is not misused.

These modest increases will rectify some of the anomalies in the prices and allow us to break even. Letters explaining the changes will go out with the invoices for this issue and the changes will come into effect for next issue (April/May 2002).



***The Bell at Waddesdon***  
***Traditional Country***  
***Public House & Restaurant***  
***Close to Waddesdon Manor***

**Cask Marque approved**

***Real Ales***

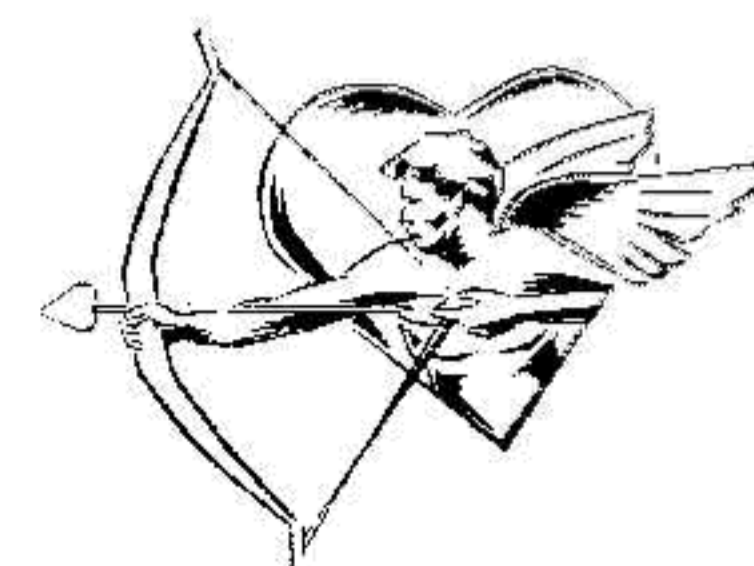
***including Wadworth 6X***

***and Adnams Bitter***

***Valentines Day bookings now being taken***

***We can cater in our restaurant for parties up to thirty***

***To make your reservation, please contact Nigel on 01296 651320***





**Local News**

(Continued from page 2)

**CUBLINGTON**

A fifth handpump has been added at the **Unicorn** and although they have replaced *Brakspears Ordinary* with *Greene King IPA* they are still serving *Shepherd Neame Spitfire* and three regularly changing guest beers.

**HADDENHAM**

On the 6th of December 2001, Clarence and Enid Robinson celebrated thirty years in charge of the **Red Lion**. See the article on page 3 for further details.

**HIGH WYCOMBE**

The **Bird in Hand** on West Wycombe Road is replacing *Vale Notley Ale* with *Vale Best Bitter* from February. They will continue to serve *Courage Best Bitter* and *Directors*.

**MARLOW**

The **Crown & Anchor** will close all days Mondays and Tuesdays until the end of March (Easter). This means the cellar will need to be emptied of all open casks on Sunday evening (close 20:30).

To ensure all the beer is properly disposed of there will be a reducing charge as Sunday opening progresses. So if you want some cheap take away beer for Sunday night to Wednesday bring along a carry keg and fill your boots! Some beer may be sold for 10p per pint!!!

They also have some 500 ml bottles of 4.5% bottled conditioned lager for sale at only £1 per bottle.

Fans of the old Granada TV series 'The

Comedians' may be interested in the news that Pat Dempsey who appeared in the show will be at the **Crown & Anchor** on Thursday 21st February.

**TETSWORTH**

Licensees Steven & Elizabeth Scowen of the **Shepherds Crook** at Crowell have acquired an additional pub - **The Lion on the Green**. This is now being run by Darren and Peggy who will have a minimum of two regular real ales and should have a guest beer as well in the future. Food will also be a feature of the pub.

**TURVILLE**

Nick Abbott is expecting to leave the **Bull & Butcher** sometime this spring and move to a new pub in the West Country. We wish him all the best in his new venture and he will be a loss to our branch of **CAMRA** as the pub has been in the *Good Beer Guide* for four years.

**WENDOVER**

In January, **Chef & Brewer** re-opened the **Shoulder of Mutton** after a long refurbishment.

**WING**

The **Queens Head** has new people in charge, John and Gloria Brown took over in November last year.

**WORLDS END**

The **End of the World** has a new French Chef and there is a new menu available.

**Useful Addresses**

**CAMRA HQ:**  
230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW.  
Tel: 01727 867201  
Fax: 01727 867670  
E-mail: [camra@camra.org.uk](mailto:camra@camra.org.uk)  
Internet: <http://www.camra.org.uk>

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT**  
*For comments, complaints or objections about pub alterations or developments -*  
Aylesbury:  
AVDC Planning Dept, High St, Aylesbury  
HP20 1UB  
Tel: 01296 585406

**TRADING STANDARDS**  
*For complaints about short measure, price lists, strength lists (ABV), etc.*  
Aylesbury:  
County Hall, Walton Street, HP20 1UP  
Tel: 01296 383212  
**Oxford:**  
PO Box 618, County Hall, OX1 1DX  
Tel: 01865 815000 (Mon - Fri 8:30am-5pm)

**ADVERTISING STANDARDS AUTHORITY**  
*For complaints about deceptive advertising-*  
Advertising Standards Authority  
Brook House, 2-16 Torrington Place  
London WC1E 7HN

**JOIN CAMRA TODAY**

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

Rates are Single £16, Joint £19 (at same address), Student/OAP/Unemployed/Disabled £9, Joint OAP £12 (at same address), Under 26 £9 Date of Birth .....

Name(s).....

Address .....

Postcode .....

I/We wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Rules.

I/We enclose a cheque for £..... Date .....

Signature .....

AYL (SWAN SUPPING)



**Branch Contacts**

Chairman	David Roe	01296 484551
Treasurer	Tony Gabriel	01494 527884
Secretary	Nick Holt	01296 483554
Bierton	Mick White	01296 428266
Beaconsfield	Colin Staines	01494 674427
Biedlow Ridge	Dave Thompson	01494 481492
High Wycombe	Elvis Evans	01494 511248
Marlow	John Williamson	01628 440200
Stokenchurch	John Bazin	01494 483039
Wendover	John & Tina Wood	01296 625215
Regional Organiser	Colin Lanham	01344 481305

**Quotation of the Month**

"You can't be a Real Country unless you have a beer and an airline. It helps if you have some kind of a football team, or some nuclear weapons, but at the very least you need a beer"

**Frank Zappa**

**THE LION ON THE GREEN**



**The Lion Roars Again!  
Under New Ownership**

*Real Ale*

*2 Varieties & Future Guest Ales*

**Wholesome Home Cooked Food  
Sunday Roasts**

*Open All Day Saturday & Sunday  
(No food Sunday Evening)*

*The Lion on The Green  
High Street, Tetsworth, Oxon  
Telephone No. 01844 281274*





## Beer Festival Diary

### FEBRUARY

**1-3 (Fri-Sun): 7th ASHFIELD WINTER BEER FESTIVAL**, at The Festival Hall Leisure Center, Hodgkinson St, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Notts (3 mins walk from Kirkby Stn Robin Hood Line).

**1-2 (Fri-Sat): DORCHESTER BEER FESTIVAL 2002**, CORN EXCHANGE, DORCHESTER

**1-2 (Fri-Sat): 9TH WHITE CLIFFS FESTIVAL OF WINTER ALES**, THE MAISON DIEU (TOWN HALL), DOVER.

**6-9 (Wed-Sat): 12TH BATTERSEA BEER FESTIVAL**, BATTERSEA TOWN HALL, TOWN HALL ROAD (rear of Battersea Arts Centre Lavender Hill), LONDON, SW11 (Near Clapham Junction BR). 110+ kils of beer from around country and traditional ciders & perrys, Gales country wines, together with Dutch, Belgian & German beers. Food available lunchtime & evenings. Soft drinks available for drivers. Family room on Saturday. Open Wed 5-11pm, Thu /Fri noon-11pm, Sat 11-6pm. Admission £2 (£3 Thu/Fri after 5pm) £1 discount CAMRA members all times.

Contact Stephen Blann 020 8542 3823 for further details.

**7-9 (Thu-Sat): 1ST DERBY WINTER BEER FESTIVAL**, DARWIN SUITE OF THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, DERBY MARKET PLACE.

**8-9 (Fri-Sat): CHESTERFIELD BEER FESTIVAL 2002**, THE WINDING WHEEL, HOLYWELL STREET, CHESTERFIELD. (5 mins from rail stn).

**8-9 (Fri-Sat): SALISBURY WINTERFEST 2002**, CASTLE ST. SOCIAL CLUB, SCOTS LANE, SALISBURY CITY CENTRE

**8-10 (Fri-Sun): 7TH TEWKESBURY WINTER ALE FESTIVAL**, THE WHITE BEAR, BREDON RD, TEWKESBURY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

**13-16 (Wed-Sat): BISHOP AUCKLAND BEER FESTIVAL**, WEAR VALLEY CAMRA'S 4TH FESTIVAL IN BISHOP AUCKLAND TOWN HALL (BATH)

**13-16 (Wed-Sat): 1ST YORKSHIRE CHAMPION FESTIVAL**, ROTHERHAM TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE, MOORGATE RD, ROTHERHAM,

**14-16 (Thu-Sat): 12TH SUSSEX BEER AND CIDER FESTIVAL**, HOVE TOWN HALL, NORTON ROAD, HOVE. Less than 10 mins from Hove Rail Stn.

**15-16 (Fri-Sat): GOSPORT WINTERFEST X**, THORNGATE HALLS, BURY ROAD, GOSPORT.

**20-23 (Wed-Sat): LIVERPOOL BEER FESTIVAL**, THE CRYPT HALL, LIVERPOOL METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL, BROWNLOW HILL, LIVERPOOL

**21-23 (Thu-Sat): 20TH FLEETWOOD BEER FESTIVAL**, MARINE HALL, THE ESPLANADE, FLEETWOOD

**28-MAR 2 (Thu-Sat): BRADFORD BEER FESTIVAL 2002**, THE VICTORIA HALL, SALTALRE (2 mins walk from Saltalre BR, major bus routes).

**28-MAR 2 (Thu-Sat): 5th BRISTOL BEER FESTIVAL**, at the Council House, College Green, Bristol

### MARCH

**7-9 (Thu-Sat): PLYMOUTH BEER FESTIVAL**

**7-9 (Thu-Sat): 15TH WIGAN BEER FESTIVAL**, THE MILL AT THE PIER, WIGAN (5 mins from rail or bus stns).

**14-16 (Thu-Sat): LEEDS BEER, CIDER AND PERRY FESTIVAL**, PUDSEY CIVIC HALL

**14-17 (Thu-Sun): DARLINGTON SPRING THING FESTIVAL 2002**, ARTS CENTRE, VANE TERRACE, DARLINGTON

## Swan Supping

Swan Supping is distributed free of charge to pubs in the branch area. Published by the Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe branch of the Campaign for Real Ale and printed by Computer Press (Oxford) Limited, Harrow Road Cowley, Oxford OX4 6NP Tel: 01865 747464

Circulation **3000** copies.

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Advertising rates are :- 1/16 page £6, 1/8 page £15, 1/4 page £27.50, 1/2 page £55, full page £90. Add 10% for front page adverts. 10% discounts for payment in advance. All bookings are taken as run-of-paper.

Copy deadline for next issue, due to be published on 1st April 2002 is 14th March 2002.

Subscriptions :- To receive editions of Swan Supping by post, please send SAEs to the Editor.

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

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## Branch Diary

Everybody welcome to all socials and meetings!

### FEBRUARY

**Monday 4th BRANCH AGM**

8:00pm Red Lion, Haddenham (in Lion's Den (at the rear of the pub)).

All members welcome, past present and future!

Buffet, bottle raffle and newsletter distribution

PROMPT START PLEASE!

**Monday 11th WOOBURN SOCIAL**

9:00pm Falcon, 10:00pm Queen & Albert

**Tuesday 19th KINGSWOOD SOCIAL**

9:00pm Crooked Billet, 10:00pm Plough & Anchor

**Wednesday 27th LACEY GREEN SOCIAL**

8:30pm Pink & Lily, 9:15pm Whip, 10:00pm Black Horse

### MARCH

**Tuesday 5th GBG FINAL SELECTION MEETING**

8:30pm Kings Head, Aylesbury

**Friday 8th THAME PUB CRAWL**

7:00pm Six Bells, 7:45pm Rising Sun, 8:30pm Birdcage; 9:15pm Abingdon Arms,

9:45pm Old Nags Head, 10:30pm Swan

**Thursday 14th COMMITTEE MEETING**

8:30pm Crown & Anchor, Marlow

**Monday 18th STOKE MANDEVILLE SOCIAL**

8:30pm Bell, 9:15pm Woolpack, 10:00pm Bull

**Monday 25th WHITCHURCH WANDER**

9:00pm White Horse, 10:00pm White Swan

### APRIL

**Friday 5th - Sunday 7th NATIONAL CAMRA AGM**

Scarborough SPA Complex, Scarborough

**Friday 26th LONDON PUB CRAWL**

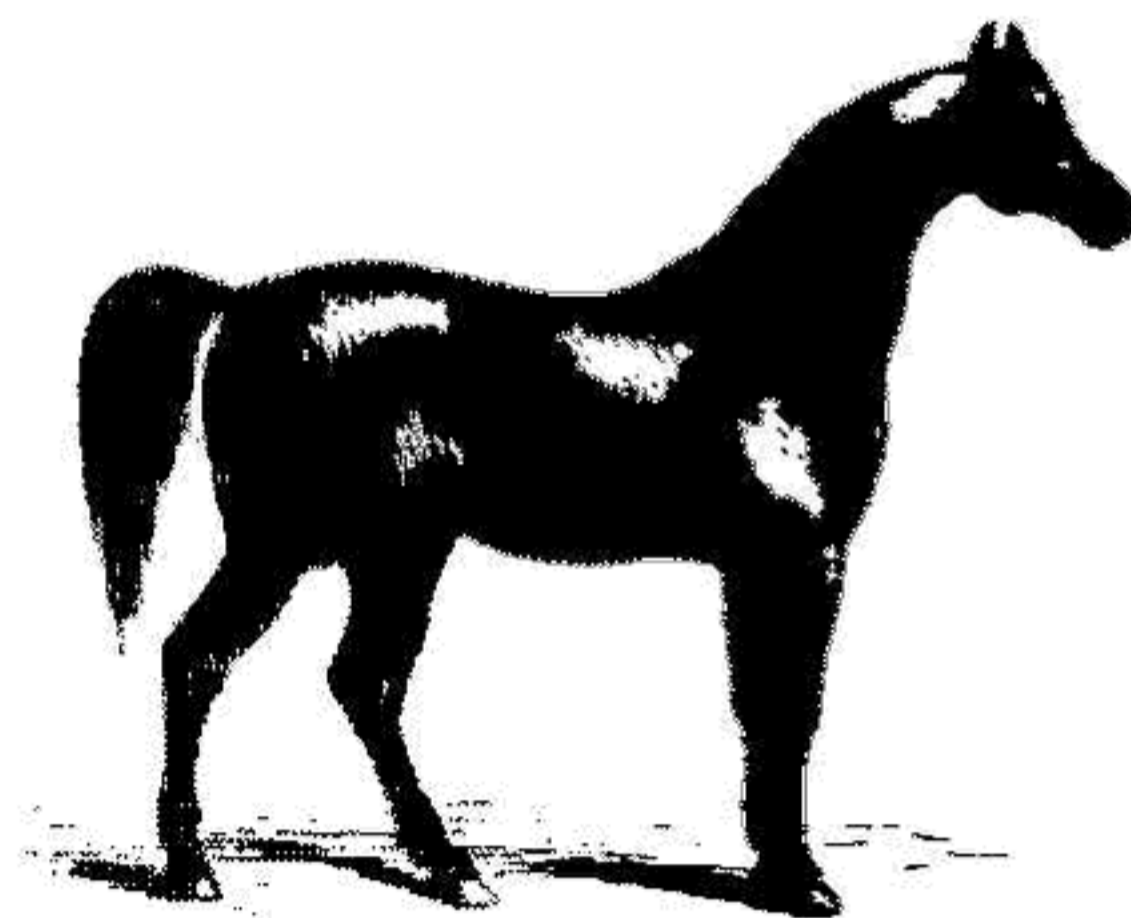
Starts 5:30pm at Fox & Hounds, Passmore Street.

Full details of the crawl will be given in our next issue

### AUGUST

**Tuesday 6th - Saturday 10th GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL**

Olympia, London



## The White Horse

Hedgerley Village, Bucks

01753 643225

SEVEN REAL ALES

Hosts:

Dot & Family

Quick Service & Civility

Good Company

Garden

Car Parking Facilities

A FAMILY RUN FREE HOUSE