

FREE



HERTFORDSHIRE Pints of View



Autumn Edition 2024

Issue No. 311



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Specials in this issue:
Regions Review - Good, Bad, or Ugly?
Herts CAMRA Awards 2024 - All Good!



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Herts & Essex Borders Branch of CAMRA Survival Appeal



I'm not asking
for money!

Hi All

I was about to walk away from CAMRA after 43 years, as a consequence of the Regional Review, but, thankfully, after pressure from CAMRA Members, the National Executive (NE) has now agreed to PAUSE its implementation for a bit of a re-think.

However, as far as abolishing cross-border branches is concerned, the NE should be hitting the STOP button and not closing down a branch just because it happens to be in 2 counties.

Hopefully, they'll see sense.

Cheers

Brendan Sothcott

Ex chair

Herts & Essex Borders Branch of CAMRA

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Bryan Bird	Les Middlewood
Cliff Caswell	Norman Samuels
David Lewis	Paul Ainsworth
Dean Barrett	Roger Protz
Georgina Donatantonio	Steve Bury
James Clarke	Steve Thompson
John Crowhurst	Tim Webb

... and advertisers, without whom this magazine would not exist!

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Starting Pint

Recognising the need for change

Paragraph 96 of CAMRA's 'Regions Review' starts:

"CAMRA's lengthy aims and objectives, its primary focus on real ale, its name, and even the very concept of 'an organisation', seem dated to younger people..."

and then continues:

"...who might relate more warmly to a socially-focussed group which simply wants to preserve and promote good pubs and good beer (in that order). We need to welcome them on their terms, not ours."

I could not agree more. What a perceptive and forward-thinking statement.

Sorry!

Are you one of the many drinkers who love our country's pubs, but are not (yet) a CAMRA member? Or maybe you are a CAMRA member but do not (yet) get actively involved with your branch's activities? If so, you deserve my apology, because four of this magazine's 52 inner pages are given over to CAMRA's above-mentioned 'Regions Review', which is principally to do with the internal structure of the organisation. As such, this will probably be of limited interest to the vast majority of pub goers, beer drinkers and, quite probably, readers.

For those still with me...

What is the Regions Review (RR)?

Well, nearly three years ago, CAMRA's National Executive (NE), decided "to set up a review of the structure, governance and operation of CAMRA at the regional level, including the number and territory of our regions". As a consequence, the five-strong Regions Review Group (RRG) was established in spring 2022 and reported back to the NE later in the year. The NE evidently liked what it saw and decided



that the recommendations should be implemented.

Dissemination of the report to the 200+ Branch Committees could have been handled better, but, eventually, by April 2023, every CAMRA Member up and down the country had access to the 24 page document - you do too, by going to <https://camra.org.uk/regional-review/>, scrolling down and clicking on **READ THE REVIEW**.

Curate's Egg - good in (most) parts

I can honestly say that I thoroughly enjoyed reading it one evening (whilst quaffing a bottle or two of Oakham Citra) as it is extremely well researched, very clearly and logically presented, and makes numerous sensible recommendations for change.

However, a few would certainly be contentious, and in particular:

63. The first principle is that **'Regions should consist of complete ceremonial counties'**.

as this would necessitate the ripping apart and consequential closure of branches whose boundaries cross county borders.

However, as the RR also stated:

13. Our view, therefore, was that **our proposals should be as simple, uncontentious and easy to implement as possible...**

and CAMRA's website made it clear that:

The report produced by the Regional Review Group sets out general principles and national policy. However, **implementation can only be effected at a more local level. It is therefore vital that everyone is able to comment on the content of the report to reflect local concerns before implementation is started.**

I anticipated a degree of 'watering down' in the Review's implementation and interpreted

“everyone is able to comment on the content of the report to reflect local concerns” to mean that comments would form the basis of a consultation in cases where there are potentially mitigating circumstances known to the local branch but, understandably, not the RRG.

Furthermore, I suspected that any cross-border branches would escape closure if their Branch Committee could demonstrate both administrative viability and a genuine appetite for the branch to continue.

No room for compromise

The reality has been very different in that the current position at the time of writing is that the full content of the RR is to be implemented without exception.

Branch areas - defined by county boundaries or transport links?

The RR recognises:

22. Regions post-date the formation of Branches, which were often established simply because of the energy and enthusiasm of a small number of activist members in a locality, and some members became ‘serial founders’ of Branches as they moved around the country.

and:

APPENDIX 5: CROSS-BORDER BRANCHES
d) ...there are other instances of cross-border Branch areas...which are both long-standing and possibly justified on ‘centre of gravity’ models of transport and economic activity.

In a nutshell, branches sprung up where a group of

like-minded souls were able to meet-up and drink. I.e. transport was key, with branch areas being loosely defined by bus or train links and walking distance thereto. If a road or railway ran North/South, so be it - and no matter that a county boundary might run East/West through the middle. That principle won’t have changed and, unless there has been some dramatic improvement in an East/West public transport route, the ‘natural’

branch area will run along the original North/South lines of communication.

Where’s the benefit?

I have used CAMRA’s website forum, Discourse, to ask the RRG’s main lead and unofficial spokesperson, what massive benefit CAMRA will derive by closing cross-region branches. No response has been received.

What I find so frustrating is that

the RR recognises problems that CAMRA is facing and provides the framework for a solution, but rather than everyone getting behind the uncontentious 99%, so much time and effort is being wasted due to entrenched positions regarding the controversial 1%. Meanwhile, longstanding, loyal, active members are resigning - not just their positions on branch committees, but from the Campaign itself.

I urge the National Executive to take a pragmatic approach and adopt a degree of flexibility. To not do so is a classic example of ‘The Perfect being the Enemy of the Good’.

Paul Donatantonio
Editor

Footnote: The National Executive paused the review on 26th August and is meeting 21st September.



Readers Write

Tim Martin and the Borehamwood Beer Desert

I was interested to read the article from the editor's meeting with Tim Martin in edition 310. It is pleasing to note that Sir Tim still goes out and engages with his customers, which, of course, gives invaluable information about what they actually want.

Unfortunately, when it came to discussing the opening of new pubs, Tim was somewhat disingenuous when he says he would like to open pubs in Borehamwood, Welwyn Garden City and Cheshunt. The Hart & Spool, the Borehamwood Wetherspoon's, has now closed after the lease was not renewed and had been shabby and in need of attention for ten years - one particular example being the state of the toilets. I started to raise the issues with the area manager as long ago as 2013 when the freehold of the Crown, opposite Elstree & Borehamwood station, came on the market after the Barracuda Pub Co went into receivership. This large pub with eight letting rooms, a large bar area, and a car park & garden could have been purchased freehold for £900k. Although the pub had an ACV, the private owner succeeded in selling the pub to Sainsbury's and it became a convenience store.

As I delivered the *Pints of View* to both pubs (Crown and Hart & Spool) and lived about four miles away, I knew the customers well, and have written articles about the Borehamwood cask ale desert on several occasions.

I don't believe that Wetherspoon's have made any real effort to find new premises in Borehamwood. The opportunities to find suitable premises in Shenley Road (the High Street) over the past ten

years have been numerous and a larger pub with better facilities by Wetherspoon's would make good business sense.

I don't take exception to anything else in the article and appreciate and use Wetherspoon's pubs regularly, including my 50 pence-off vouchers.

Steve Bury
Isle of Sheppey

Ed says: *Maybe either Sir Tim or someone else 'in the know' at JDW HQ will respond...*

In the meantime, the table below confirms that Welwyn Garden City, Cheshunt and Borehamwood are all in the top ten of Hertfordshire's towns ranked by population, yet each place suffers from a dearth of cask ale pubs - including 'Spoons'.

POPULATION		CITY/TOWN/VILLAGE	PUBS WITHIN 0.5 MILE OF STATION	
21/03/2021			Spoons	Other Pubs Selling Cask
1	131,326	Watford	1	10
2	95,961	Hemel Hempstead	1	5
3	94,456	Stevenage	1	3
4	75,537	St Albans	1	19
5	51,524	Welwyn Garden City	0	2
6	43,680	Cheshunt	0	1
7	41,555	Hatfield	1	3
8	40,909	Bishop's Stortford	1	10
9	40,630	Hoddesdon	1	(No town-centre station)
10	39,765	Borehamwood	0	1
11	35,224	Hitchin	1	11
12	33,986	Letchworth	1	7
13	30,966	Harpenden	0	9
14	28,802	Hertford	1	12
15	28,418	Bushey	0	(No town-centre station)
16	26,291	Rickmansworth	1	9
17	23,398	Potters Bar	1	2
18	21,245	Berkhamsted	1	11
19	19,622	Ware	0	11
20	17,448	Royston	1	5
21	12,625	Chorleywood	0	1
22	11,961	Tring	0	(No town-centre station)
23	11,947	Waltham Cross	1	3
24	10,614	Baldock	0	5
25	10,479	Sawbridgeworth	0	4

Webb - world-wise?

So young attendees at the 2016 Cambridge Beer Festival reckoned you drank cask ales 'when you need something good but don't want to get pissed'. [PoV310] Really? Let's see them down a few pints of:

Tring Death or Glory ABV 7.2%, or McEwan's Champion Bitter, ABV 7.3%, or Theakston Old Peculiar, ABV 5.6%, or Fuller's ESB, ABV 5.5%.

Not to mention 5 percenters like *Greene King Abbot Ale*.

Hopefully they're all older and wiser now.

Michael Fuller
Harpenden

Ed says: *I think Tim was making the point that he would much prefer cask ale had the image of a 'session' beer, however misguided, than one of a beer that is 'flat, dull, brown and poor condition.' If I'm wrong, you'll find out from the horse's mouth in PoV312!*

Venting (but not in anger)

Sir, I'm not surprised that John Crowhurst found his cask of Fallen Angel beer lively when he vented a week after stillaging. (Issue No. 310). Most brewers recommend venting within 8 hours of delivery to expel excess CO₂.

However, I have been informed by a knowledgeable licensee friend who knew his beers (a Master Cellarman), that Adnams used to produce a winter ale that improved in cask if held for several months before venting!

Sam Hall (B.I.I.)
Harpenden

Ed says: *Secondary fermentation will continue in the cask until either all fermentable sugars have been consumed by the yeast, or the alcohol rises to a level that kills the yeast. That being the case, the 'liveliness' of a cask, when vented, will be dependent upon the length of time and 'vigour' of the secondary fermentation, and hence how much CO₂ has been produced since the beer was casked.*

The eight hours after delivery referred to by Sam is clearly a rule of thumb.

As for a winter ale being vented after 3 months, maybe it had a very high ABV when casked, and there was, therefore, very little secondary fermentation? Or maybe Chinese whispers are at play, and the cask was actually vented after a much shorter time, but the quality of the beer continued to improve over the 3 month period prior to tapping?

I know that Greene King IPA aficionados bemoan pubs that serve the beer 'green' immediately after it's settled and been tapped. They swear that the interaction between beer and air aids the conditioning process (though, over two weeks rather than 12).

The letters B.I.I. following Sam Hall signify that he is a member of the British Institute of Innkeeping.

Whilst I can claim no such similar expertise, I do know that there are a number of variables at work and, when everything falls into place, nothing matches a 'pint of cask'.

The conditioning of ale certainly seems to be less science and more dark art!



ASK, "IS IT CASK?"

The launch of 'Fresh Ale' by Carlsberg Marston's Brewing Company (CMBC) is a handpump hijack, which misleads consumers into thinking they will be served a cask-conditioned beer - which is far from the case.

Campaign Column

Crooked House... Crooked developers???

In the summer of 2023, the iconic and much-loved Crooked House pub, near Dudley in the West Midlands, built in 1735 as a farmhouse and changed to a pub nearly 100 years later, was burnt-out in a suspected arson attack and demolished only two days later. It shocked the nation and triggered a huge uprising by campaigners and a 'Save the Crooked House (Let's Get it Rebuilt)' Facebook page which now has support from more than 38,000 members calling for the pub to be rebuilt "brick by brick".

But could it happen again?

Well it has certainly happened before. Our research has revealed that The Crooked House was just one of dozens of pubs earmarked for redevelopment that have 'caught alight' over the last decade.

The fire is fuelled, as it were, by the fact that many pubs and inns are worth far more as development sites than they were as licensed premises selling beer, wine and spirits to their customers.

If a pub is reduced to an eyesore, or worse, the planners may be more inclined to grant permissions – though CAMRA would always argue strongly for preservation of pub use on the site. The police have often announced investigations, but the results are rarely, if ever, seen. In some cases, the finger of suspicion

points clearly in a particular direction and CAMRA would wish to see such cases investigated quickly and thoroughly.

The Government really should introduce a statutory requirement for councils to produce 'local enforcement plans' that set out clear deterrents for developers who run roughshod over planning rules.

Destroying a pub should become a specific criminal offence.

The main reason CAMRA is pursuing these changes is simply to provide greater protection for the nation's pubs, which sadly are closing in their droves. In many cases, pubs are the beating heart of their communities and often the only place where people from all walks of life can meet and socialise in safe and

convivial surroundings.

The Campaign has written to Angela Rayner, the new Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, to request a meeting.

We await her response...

Paul Ainsworth
National CAMRA
Pub Heritage Group Chair
& Planning Policy Advisor



Steve's Shout

Mind Your F#@K!%6 Language!

This July, at my new branch's Cider Pub of the Year award ceremony, I noticed they were running a swear box; the penalty rising with the severity of Anglo Saxon expletive. It reminded me of my time as editor of this esteemed periodical, when I was contacted by a concerned reader in Ware who had been experiencing excessive use of bad language in pubs around the town.



At one time, the licensees in the Cock, St Albans; the Black Lion, Shenley; and the Hart & Spool, Borehamwood had banned swearing in their pubs. This led to all sorts of problems, as in most cases no warning was given!

The Black Lion licensee at the time was Steve White. Despite being an ex-London cabbie, he refused to allow swearing in his pub and would not hesitate to come out from behind the bar and challenge customers about their language - most left without being asked. Sadly, the pub is no more, though I don't blame Steve, as other more liberally-minded publicans followed him before it became a restaurant.

The Cock in St Peter's Street, St Albans, is still a pub, though now more food-orientated. At the time of the swearing ban, I remember going along with a friend of mine, who, after a few drinks, was asked by the landlady to moderate his language. His response: *"Are you saying I'm f**king swearing?"*, ensured an early exit. The problem, of course, is that drinking tends to make some of us noisier and more colourful with their language.

The Hart & Spool, Borehamwood, also had a swearing ban that caught out many regulars, due to its introduction not being advertised in the pub. It may have been the only Weatherspoon to have such a restriction. As you may have read in the last edition, Sir Tim did not renew the lease on the Hart & Spool, which now trades independently as the Pick & Shovel.

Of course, it is not just the good old Anglo-Saxon expletive that causes problems. In the latter part of 2011, the Royal Oak, in Penrhyndeudraeth, Gwynedd was shut when the English licensee objected to customers ordering drinks in Welsh. Whilst he moved on, the pub still exists as the Oak. Another incident, also in 2011, happened in the Pack Horse, Northborough, Cambs, when Tom Sharp, ex-

Chief Yeoman Warder of the Tower of London, (and not the Wilt books author), started talking in German. Janet Pitts, the landlady, is alleged to have shouted *"You're white, you're English, you'll speak English in my pub."* This then led to a stand-off, resulting in customers being ejected from the premises.

As Mr Sharp had spent twenty years in Germany with the Royal Signals and was enjoying a drink with his half-German daughter, Nicole, he found it hard to comprehend the objection and the matter was reported to the police.

Back to bad language. A decade ago, when my correspondent in Ware was 81 and I was 63, we both agreed that bad language in public places was on the increase. If anything, I think it's got worse. Controlling or moderating bad language in a pub is clearly down to the licensee, but when the culprit is a regular who spends good money, I can understand the dilemma in these times of austerity and pub closures.

Some swearing is inevitable in a pub drinking environment (yes, I've done it myself) but I can't condone today's continual, pointless effing and blinding. Customers need to have a little more consideration for those around them but, after five or six drinks, tend to forget that they are not the only ones on the planet, let alone in the pub.

Steve Bury
Chair
Swale CAMRA



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World-Wise Webb

Will my pub survive?

Everyone likes pubs, right? The scientist in me says that this cannot be true.

Google states, with confidence, that in 1980 the UK had 69,900 pubs. The British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA), which represents the larger players in the pub and brewing trades, reports that the 1990 figure of 63,500 had fallen to just 45,800 by the end of 2022. CAMRA agrees.

Since then, pub business failures have continued apace and, despite new players entering the market, and PubCos vowing to invest heavily in their estates, openings have not kept up with closures.

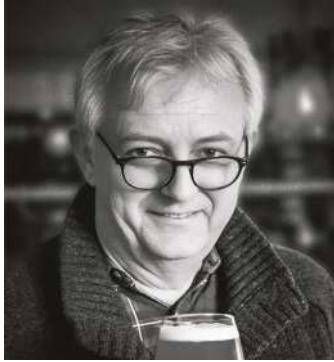
Everyone from Nigel Farage to Guy Ritchie may put their love behind the licensed trade, but the general public, via its collective backside, eschews the boozier. And who can blame them?

From about 1960, a lot of effort was put into turning pubs into dull spaces, designed around people flows, expected to earn a living by selling same-old brand-name drinks and blatantly-unhealthy foods, to customers whose conversations are drowned out by a national playlist of somebody else's musical taste, a noise often in competition with large-screen sports.

This is why, since 1980, beer drunk in pubs has fallen from 50% to just 16% of the UK's alcohol consumption.

The carefully planned decline - Most social disasters can be explained by imposed policies. Declines, even when inadvertent, are usually predictable. The catastrophic misjudgement by UK brewing, back in the late 1950s, to turn beer into a uniform, light, blond and frothy-topped, simple drink, as the leaders of the wine industry were deciding to do the exact opposite to theirs, was matched a few years later by a similarly negligent mess-up of the pub trade.

In the 1980s, huge estates of managed pubs were created, because brewery execs were dazzled by flawed analyses of pub economics, showing that food made more money than drink, and young people spent more than the old. Thus, pubs were angled towards the young, and diners of all ages - or, away from their core supporters.



Unfit for purpose - In 2024, our national pub estate is largely unfit for purpose. In cities, most are owned by property companies that force lessees to buy a limited range of goods, for supply to consumers mesmerised by brand marketing. Licensees minded to rail against the trend have their individuality clipped by contractual limitations.

In rural areas, the situation is even worse. The expectation that the village pub will supply all the social needs of a diverse community has created all-purpose businesses serving adequate food, a few OK drinks, imposing tolerable wallpaper music - but excelling at nothing.

The essential diversity of pubs gets downplayed because, to pay its way, a pub needs to be huge, which in turn either threatens its own sustainability, or that of its rivals.

In the event of there being a future - The rise of the micropub is great, and a growth in brewery taphouses is welcome too, though to last in the longer term, these will need organised support from consumer groups - that's us, CAMRA - and a business model that enables operators to own their premises.

Back in 2019, I predicted the decline in UK pub numbers was just one of those regroups that happens twice a century - the estate pub, the street corner local, and the food-heating resto-bar were reaching their sell-by date, and new forms of pub were emerging, more suited to communal drinking the modern way.

Then came COVID, coinciding with a renewed demonisation of alcohol by neo-Prohibitionists dressed up as health campaigners, and the return of obsessive control of the pub trade by a small cabal of large brewers and property companies.

Will the pub survive as an institution? I am really not sure.

But if it does, it must become smaller, far more independent, and easily accessible from, though not actually in, my back yard.

Tim Webb

Beer writer

*Co-author, The World Atlas of Beer
Exeter & Devon CAMRA*

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Brewer's View

The Four Quarters to a Perfect Pint

I enjoy drinking in a pub environment. Whilst I have been lucky over my career to visit some amazing places, a great pub with cask ale is where I feel most at home. I am often asked “*what is your favourite beer?*”. And of course, the answer should be “*the one in my hand, right now*”, though often this is an aspirational reply. So how do we answer the question? What makes that perfect beer? Well, of course brewing liquor, malts, hops and yeast are fundamental, but they alone are only one part of the jigsaw and, in any case, harnessing the beauty of these raw materials requires a skilled and experienced brewer.

These factors alone won't produce that perfect or favourite beer – because it isn't just about the beer. Sometimes people look surprised when I say this, as a brewer, so I then attempt to explain my thoughts. Beer of course is one of the four quarters; but it is often a beer appropriate for the visit – so the well-deserved pint (or three) after work on a Friday will be a lower alcohol beer; one that won't spoil my Saturday, is not too expensive when I'm in a group buying rounds, and has good drinkability. So, probably not a full-on hop-forward beer, but a balanced beer with light body, presence, and a subtle flavour. Some might say old fashioned beer, but I would challenge that generalisation. If a pint with a meal, then I'm probably looking at a fuller-flavoured beer, to, hopefully, complement my food choice; sweeter darker beers with lamb, a 5% + IPA with cheese. I am also a strong advocate for a cleansing ale post supper! I could go on, but you probably get my train of thought...

The other three equally important parts are the **company** I am enjoying a beer with, the **environment** in which I find myself, and the **hospitality** I am both enjoying, and paying for.



Company is crucial – and beer is that great sociable drink, which is why I like to drink beer in a pub. Whether with family, friends, work colleagues, or people you haven't met before, beer is the great social leveller. I have met people as diverse as the late Ayrton Senna's helicopter pilot, to Miss United Kingdom 1968 in the pub.

Environment is important – it could be the log fire on a cold winter's day, a beer garden when our weather permits, maybe a historic pub, or even a festival. I am lucky living where I do, with unspoilt Cotswold pubs to the west and the city of Oxford has some real gems.

Hospitality is key – one positive of the Covid years is that the term 'hospitality' entered our dictionary. It's part of the cost of a pint, so some recognition/welcome when entering the pub is nice – simple, but so often missed. We know we want and need a properly cleaned glass; but remember the bottom half is for the server, the top half for me. But just being made to feel a bit special is something we like; great service is an art, and one which we can recognise.

If all of these four component parts are present, it will be what a great British pub experience should be. The pub as we know it is unique to our shores, and something we should cherish, and most importantly use. Yes, the beer is fundamentally important, but so are my other three quarters.

Have a read of Pete Brown's piece “*My Favourite Beers in the World*”. He puts it far more eloquently than me, but I think we are on the same page.



James Clarke
Managing Director
Hook Norton Brewery

Ale Trips & Trails

Sunshine & Cask Ale on the New River Line

In the spring of this year, the New River Rail Ale Trail booklet was launched – featuring 18 pubs found along the railway line and listing all other cask-ale outlets en-route. The line runs close to the New River and the River Lea, stretching from Broxbourne station, through the stations of Rye House, St Margaret's and Ware, terminating at Hertford East. The booklet – a collaboration of the Community Rail Partnership with the South Herts and Herts & Essex Borders Branches of CAMRA – has been very well received. At the end of June it was time for CAMRA to put our written work to the test; time to buy a railway ticket and station-hop along the route...

We had chosen a sunny day and our first pub, the **Crown** at Broxbourne, offered the pleasant shade of a garden dressed with trees and a wide range of tables to suit any size troop of visitors – we were twenty strong, with members of North London CAMRA Branches joining our two. From the garden you can watch people hiring electrically-powered riverboats on the banks opposite, or enjoy a meal from the wide pub menu. At the bar were **Adnams Ghost Ship**, **Timothy Taylor Landlord** and **Sharp's Doombar** cask ales.



Next, a 450-yard walk to Broxbourne station and a first short hop to Rye House where the Grade II listed **Rye House** pub and its extensive garden also offer a hearty menu. A Greene King pub keen on sport, the range of



beers on the day included **GK IPA** and **False Nine** alongside **Wolfpack Sesh IPA** – but expect a rotation of beers. Opposite is the Rye House Gatehouse, a reminder of the 1683 Rye House Plot which was unsuccessful in assassinating King Charles II; the plot thwarted when the royal party changed their plans on the day of the proposed act. Also nearby are the RSPB's Rye House Meads Nature Reserve with interesting walks and a number of well-positioned hides – perhaps the most popular being that which captures views of kingfishers and their burrows. Or maybe you'll spot a bittern; a bird once extinct from the area but now making a comeback due to determined conservation.

Back to the station and the ride to St Margaret's and the adjoining Stanstead Abbots. Stepping off the train, we encountered the fun of a departing charity tractor procession through the village and an unconnected 1950's RAF jet thrusting overhead. There are three pubs, perhaps the best positioned being the **Jolly Fisherman**, with tables next to the River Lea, well-kept McMullen beers (including the seasonal **Ivel**) and a wide menu of meals and snacks. Along the High Street, the **Oak**, caught in transition after a recent sale by Fuller's to Admiral Taverns, still offered **London Pride** and **ESB**. Perhaps this will continue. The small suntrap courtyard at the rear offers an alternative to the busy bar. And at the end of the High Street, the **Red Lion**, a large timbered

and characterful multi-roomed pub with garden and a comprehensive menu, sold **Sharp's Doom Bar** on our visit.

Back to the station and on to Ware; the former maltings town having many pubs near to the station. To concentrate on the pubs that are the closest, there's excellent **Mac's AK** kept in the drinker's **Spread Eagle**, real cider in the craft-keg specialising **Hop Box**, a wide range of cask ales at the riverside **Waterside Inn**, tasty **Dark Star Hophead** (plus two) in the **Quiet Man**, a **Tring** beer (plus three) at the **Brewery Tap**... but, sadly, no real ale at the busy **Saracen's Head**. But this is where the booklet will definitely help as it includes a map of the town showing the position of the pubs, along with details of the beers you are likely to encounter.

It's a similar story at our final stop, Hertford, the county town and home to McMullen's brewery. There's not space to mention all of the many good pubs, nor the wide variety of cask ales on offer - after all, the town is worthy of a cask-ale exploration all of its own. There's the **Lord Haig**, **Hertford Bell**, **Salisbury Arms**, **White Horse**, **Black Horse**, **Blackbirds**, **Quiet Man**, **Old Cross Tavern**, **Six Templars**, **Woolpack**, **Great Eastern Tavern** and the **Old Barge** - oops, I've just listed most, but by now our party had splintered amongst them and some were enjoying a final beer in the tranquil, sunny, walled-garden of the **Hertford Club** in Bull Plain.

It may now be autumn, but go on, there's always time for a pint - and surely time to let the train take the strain? If you have an afternoon free, buy a ticket, hop on the train and enjoy the New River Rail Ale Trail.



Back at the start. Enjoying a pint in the garden of the Crown, Broxbourne.

As stocks of the booklet in the pubs deplete, maybe your best chance of securing a copy will be from the tourist offices in Ware and Hertford. But have no fear, the booklet can also be found on-line at <https://www.newriverline.org/news/new-rail-ale-trail/> or via the South Herts Branch website at <https://southherts.camra.org.uk/>

Les Middlewood
South Herts CAMRA

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Beer & Cider News

65 years old, but not about to retire

In April 1959, Fuller's first brewed their new premium bitter, London Pride. Introduced on draught to replace their SPA, the beer had previously been available as Chiswick Pride, only available in bottles.

The name 'London Pride' was first suggested by a member of the public, after the plant of the same name, *saxifraga x urbium*. This small, ground-spreading perennial, producing summer-pink spotted white flowers, had thrived in the bomb craters and rubble of WWII London and inspired the patriotic song 'London Pride' written by Noel Coward that includes the lines:

*There's a little city flower
Every spring unveiling
Growing in the crevice
Though it has a Latin name
In town and countryside
We in England call it London Pride*

The plant symbolised the resilience of the people of London, so what a great name for the beer! Sixty-five years on, not only has it shown resilience, but it has blossomed into a consistent fourth-place ranking in the Top Ten of Britain's cask beers, with an annual production of almost 72,000 hectolitres [13 million pints], sitting only behind Sharp's Doom Bar, Timothy Taylor Landlord and Greene King IPA.

The beer was rarely seen in Hertfordshire until the arrival of CAMRA, when members persuaded the landlord of the popular Barley Mow in Tyttenhanger Green (sadly, long-since converted to a house) to give it a try. Other enterprising Free



Houses soon followed. In the ensuing years, Fuller's have amassed a dozen tied pubs in Hertfordshire and the brew is a regular feature in many a Pub Company-run pub.

Over the years, the beer has been marketed as a Special Pale Ale, a Best Bitter, a Premium Ale, an Original Ale and, currently, an 'Outstanding Amber Ale'. There may have been minor alterations to the brew contents, but, through

the years, it has always been brewed at ABV4.1% (bottled ABV4.7%).

The cask beer was awarded Champion Beer of Britain - Best Bitter Class - by CAMRA in 1979 and 1995; its impressive finish achieved with Pale Malt and Target, Challenger and Northdown hops. Some might pause to consider CAMRA's Good Beer Guide description of London Pride which says "*Aromas of malt and hops. Well-balanced, smooth bitter with biscuity, orange-citrus fruit flavour lingering into a bitter aftertaste*". But others just enjoy the excellent beer for what it is and 'get it down their necks'. Either way, London Pride, when presented in top condition, is a full-bodied and satisfying beer - worth revisiting if it's been a while...

Happy 65th to London Pride!

NB. Since 2019, Fuller's Chiswick brewery has been owned by the Japanese international brewer, Asahi - they own and brew all of the Fuller's beer-brand titles. Fuller's still own their tied estate of pubs which Asahi now supply.

Les Middlewood
South Herts CAMRA



South Herts CAMRA Awards 2024

1 Branch, 3 Clubs, 5 Pubs, 11 Awards!



*SH Club of the Year GOLD
Royston Club, St Albans - Barrie Lloyd*



*SH Pub of the Year GOLD &
SH Cider Pub of the Year GOLD
Robin Hood, St Albans - Liz Draper & Jim Pratt*

Here is a photographic account of presentations to some of the best clubs and pubs in South Hertfordshire, by the county's best branch (OK, so *perhaps* I'm biased).

The first awards were presented on 2nd April to double-winner Robin Hood, St Albans, and the last on 19th June to serial Pub of the Year winner, the Woodman, Wildhill. A couple presented in between and worthy of special mention are the Dave Burns Award presented on 18th May to Steve McConnell in recognition of his 25 years championing excellent cask beer at the outstanding White Hart Tap, St Albans, and the Most Improved



*SH Pub of the Year BRONZE
Woodman, Wildhill - Vicky & Tom Craig*



*SH Club of the Year BRONZE, North Mymms
Social Club - Michelle Collings & Dawn
O'Gorman (with Paul Woodhouse, SH CAMRA)*



*SH Club of the Year SILVER
Hertford Club - Rob Bryan*

Pub Award presented on 22nd May to the John Bunyan, Coleman Green. All except one of the presentations were made by South Herts CAMRA Chair, Ian Boyd, which is why he is not mentioned in any of the photo captions!

There may be some debate within CAMRA regarding whether we should be promoting good beer generally, or real ale specifically, however, when it comes to appreciating our wonderful pubs and clubs, the organisation is united.

PD



*SH Pub of the Year SILVER &
SH Cider Pub of the Year SILVER
Mermaid, St Albans - Mark Powell*



*SH Dave Burns Award
Steve McConnell*



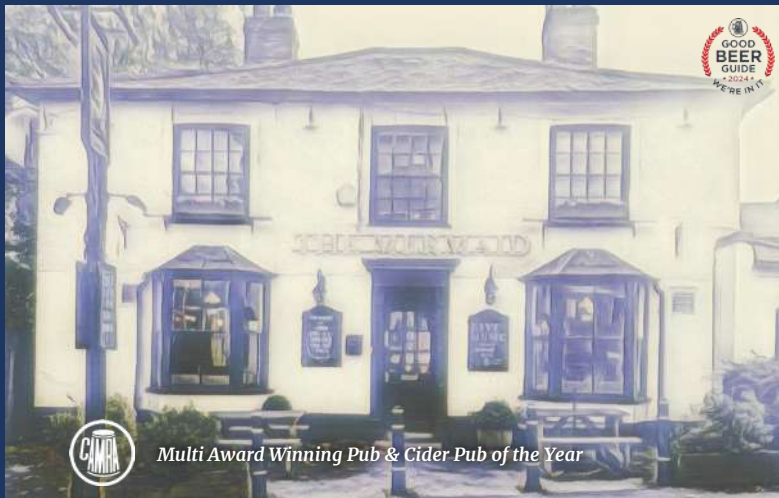
*SH Most Improved Pub Award
John Bunyan, Coleman Green
Anthony & Faith Denoronha*



*SH Cider Pub of the Year BRONZE
White Hart Tap, St Albans - Steve McConnell*

The Mermaid St Albans

98 Hatfield Road, St Albans AL13RL 01727 845700



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CAMRA North Herts Awards 2024

Awards, aplenty!

50th anniversary and plenty of other celebrations in North Herts with late spring kicking off on 8th May at **Ickleford Sports Club** (Chambers Lane, Ickleford, SG5 3YA), to present an award for the second year running, this time Runner-up Club of the Year. Situated



just to the north of Hitchin, and local to ex-committee member Brian Mason, who still strongly supports the branch and is the most prolific festival-attendee. Always a friendly welcome for CAMRA members, who enjoy the real ale rotation. Ale of the Day was **Purity's Mad Goose**.

Next event was on May 17th for our Pub of the Year, the **Orange Tree in Baldock** (Norton Road, Baldock, SG7 5AW), where licensee



Rob Scahill was delighted to welcome the stag trophy 'home'. He explained, to those who didn't know, that the original stag had been damaged while resident during a previous Pub of the Year win, so he actually replaced it with the current trophy. Let's jump in the time machine now and fast forward to July 31st when we kicked off our branch meeting back at the Orange Tree by presenting Hertfordshire County Pub of the Year to Rob. When learning of the news, Rob was overwhelmed, but quickly



bounced back by saying: *"It's just starting to sink in. Thank you so, so much! Please let me know how we can be better."* Amazing! The Orange Tree is home to more than 10 local clubs & societies, a long-standing Good Beer Guide entry and amongst branch favourites. Plenty of changing guest beers supplement the two **Greene King** staples, **Tring Mansion Mild**, **Titanic Plum Porter** and **Brewsters' Hop Head**. Also a good choice of Real Cider.

We now jump back to 14th June, just after Hitchin Beer & Cider Festival, where we ran our 50th festival (see Paul Coard's article in *PoV310*, pages 38-39) and were to be found at the **Half Moon** (57 Queen Street, Hitchin, SG4 9TZ) in Hitchin presenting Cider Pub of the Year to Freddy & Emily Best. This town centre local is another frequent award-winner in the



branch, with its strong selection of real ciders and ales, as well as events throughout the year.

Then, on 21st June, we brought together the volunteers from Hitchin Beer & Cider Festival to recognise everyone's fantastic help in making the event a success. The venue? The festival's home, and CAMRA North Herts' partner, **Hitchin Rugby Club** (Old Hale Way, Hitchin, SG5 1XL), to whom we awarded Club of the Year. Bar Manager and Past President, Ger Morgan, accepted the certificate. He keeps a regular changing selection of Real Ales & Ciders – a thoroughly deserved award.



The last celebration was for ourselves. 50 years ago the Stevenage Branch, which quickly morphed into CAMRA North Hertfordshire, was formed in the **Old Red Lion** in Stevenage Old Town. There are no founders resident locally now, but Steve Barber, now CAMRA's South West Regional Tasting Panel Coordinator, was the first Minutes Secretary. He provided the very '70s photo and explained: "One of



our first campaigning events was at the British Bottle Collectors' Rally in Knebworth Park. The rally organiser was sympathetic to CAMRA's aims and let us have a double stand for free. We listed some local real ale pubs, sold some CAMRA books and talked to as many people as possible. From left to right are Derek Hester (Branch Secretary), John Herlihy (Founder Chairman), Del Turner (Products Secretary), Nigel Watkins (Committee Member) and Pete Blundell (Social Secretary). I am behind the camera but was also wearing a CAMRA t-shirt. I still have it!"



At the July 13th celebration we were delighted to be joined by a few committee members from the years that followed foundation, and asked some current local members to join us for this photo with today's bar manager Sophie Cheung, before a troop of us celebrated with a trail around the old town. The photo was kindly taken by Emma Haines, Managing Editor of the Good Beer Guide, who lives walking distance away.

Okay, what shall we celebrate next?

Dean Barrett
Chair
CAMRA North Herts

Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA Awards 2024

Have I Got Awards for You 2024!

One of those big jobs of the year is to present the awards for the previous year. So, with all the beer scores in, it was time to book the minibus and head off to the best outlets for cask beer in the area. Handing over the plaques in a single evening would be a rush and so we tried to combine with the monthly branch meetings.

First took place on 13th March when we turned up at the **Bishop's Stortford Sports Trust**, the winner, once more, of Club of the Year. Situated on the north side of town, which is a bit of a hike for those like me who went by train, it has three or four local real ales - no national brands here - and flash your CAMRA card for the discount. Free to enter and watch the TV sports as you down a few beers (paid for by card only). A smiling Brendan handed the award to a very happy Lyn Obeney (Senior Bar Staff Leader), Bella Richards (Bar Staff) and Billy Wise (Senior Bar Staff).



Next on the list was our old favourite the **Woodbine Inn**, and so on 13th May it was a trip just across the border to the east end of Waltham Abbey in Essex. Owner, Manager and general pint puller Rob Chapman welcomed and received the award for HEB Cider Pub of the Year for Essex, from Janet Bullerwell. This was then followed by Rob giving us his usual long thank you speech. On the evening, apart from six beers, there were 20 real ciders and three perry ciders on offer. The Woodbine is a friendly pub serving excellent food as well as a good range of beers, with at least one dark on offer. The no. 66 bus that runs from Waltham

Cross bus station to Loughton stops right outside, with the last service at around 21.30.

The final night of award presenting took place on 31st May at another regular location, the **Queens Head** in Allens Green, a couple of miles of country lanes west of Sawbridgeworth. A very handy spot on the walking and cycling routes. The pub scooped three awards this year: the HEB Pub of the Year, where Brendan presented this to Cliff Caswell. It was then time



for the HEB Cider Pub of the Year and the Herts Cider Pub of the Year and here Cliff (and Monty the Cider Bear) received the awards from Janet Bullerwell, our Cider Officer. The Queens



Head normally has three or four beers on hand pumps and many more on gravity fed for special events, as well as over thirty real ciders. If you haven't been there, you're missing out!

Norman Samuels
Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA

Watford & District CAMRA Awards 2024

Two Trees Micro – Two Big Awards!

18 Vicarage Road, Watford, WD18 0EH

<https://twotreesmicro.com> Facebook: [twotreesmicro](https://www.facebook.com/twotreesmicro) X: [@twotreesmicro](https://twitter.com/twotreesmicro)

On the evening of Thursday 16th May, branch members joined pub regulars to celebrate **Two Trees Micro** being awarded *Watford & District Pub of the Year 2024* and *Cider Pub of the Year 2024*.

Pioneers Kat Perry and Michael Ash converted a hairdresser's shop on Vicarage Road and opened the pub in March 2022 after a slight delay due to concerns about sound insulation, but with overwhelming support in Watford Borough Council's planning comments.

In common with other micropubs, the emphasis at Two Trees is on the quality and range of beers. You won't find any of the usual suspects; just a wide variety of exciting beers from small brewers, commonly supplied by Pig's Ears Beer Ltd. The bar has a tap wall serving four keg beers from small craft brewers and four handpumps for cask real ale which is often unavailable in craft beer bars. Watford & District branch applauds Kat and Michael's commitment to cask beer – a style unique to British brewing and in danger of being sidelined in a market of bars and pubs supplied with beer brands from multinational brewers. Two Trees is also one of the few local pubs to regularly stock dark beers and milds, in both cask and keg formats. Whilst recent reports in the trade press indicate that dark beers are becoming more popular, you wouldn't know it from looking at the bar in most pubs!

Free-of-tie pubs like Two Trees are an essential outlet for small brewers who find it difficult to get their beers onto bars in a market dominated by pub companies operating restrictive beer ties, often when they don't produce beer themselves. Recent cask ales at Two Trees include beers from Elusive Brewing, New Bristol Brewery, Burning Sky and Thornbridge. Some of these breweries have tap rooms but none has a pub estate, and so all are reliant on pubs stocking their beers.

This also goes for producers of real cider and



perry, which are even rarer in the area. You might get a still cider from Westons in the local Wetherspoon, but real cider and perry fermented from 100% apple or pear juice, and nothing else, is a rarity. Luckily Michael and Kat have CAMRA's list of real cider and perry producers and regularly stock their products. Suppliers have included Hogan's, Ascension and Nightingale Cider Company.

The range supplied is impressive given that Two Trees really is 'micro'. Open the front door and you can see about 90% of the entire establishment! The WC and beer fridge are stashed around the back, whilst the cellar is next to the bar in a cupboard cunningly hidden behind a chalkboard advertising the current beers. Despite its small size the pub has a big local following and is packed on alternate Wednesdays for the bi-weekly pub quiz and the recent 'Bring Your Own Cheese Night' was a success. Kat and Michael also regularly arrange meet the brewer evenings with guided beer tastings – Jamie Kyle from Hammerton Brewery being the most recent.

So congratulations to Michael and Kat on their well-deserved double-win. If you haven't yet tried the excellent beer, cider or perry at the Two Trees Micro, I recommend a visit!

Andrew Vaughan

Chair

Watford & District CAMRA

The Orange Tree

Norton Road, Baldock, SG7 5AW



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Hertfordshire County Pub of the Year 2024

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Herts Pubs, Clubs & Breweries

A wander around the pubs of Baldock – follow-up

Following on from my article in *PoV309* regarding the pubs of Baldock, I received an email from Martyn Cornell, a former chairman of North Hertfordshire branch. In my article, I referred to Baldock having 50 pubs just over a hundred years ago. Martyn was kind enough to provide details from the Hertfordshire licensing magistrates' survey of 1905 which lists only 14 public houses and 10 beerhouses. Interestingly, 7 of these establishments had lost their license by 1911.

I have lived in Baldock for almost 50 years and often heard the figure of between 40 and 50 pubs quoted. In light of the information provided by Martyn, I was keen to find out how many pubs Baldock has supported over the years. Fortunately help was at hand from local landlord Rob Scahill from the Orange Tree, who had organised an old pub walk as part of the recent Baldock festival. Also, local historian Doug Neath has undertaken considerable research into this subject. The list below includes name changes (last/previous) and instances where pubs were completely rebuilt. The names in capital letters refer to those which are still trading:

- **Church Street** – Blue Ball, Bulls Head, Six Bells (rebuilt as Eight Bells), George & Dragon, George Tap Room, Pretty Lamp, Red Hart, Stag, Star (rebuilt). Keffords beer house and 2 more run by Messrs Clark and James.
- **Clothall Road** – BUFFS CLUB
- **High Street** – Angel, Arrow, Beehive / Swan, Boot (rebuilt), COCK, Goldcrest, Simpsons brewery (staff tap room), Templars, Three Horseshoes, WHITE LION. Beer house run by William Trigg.
- **Hitchin Street** – Bell Hotel, Vintage Wine Bar, WHITE HART (rebuilt)
- **Icknield Way** – Black Eagle, Swan
- **Jackson Street** – Bushell and Strike
- **London Road** – Crown and Anchor, Old George, GEORGE IV (replaced the old George when the new coaching road was built).
- **Mansfield Road** – Working Men's Club / Harvey's / Venue

- **North Road** – Black Horse, Compasses / Cross Keys / Bell
- **Norton End** – Poultons Beer House and an unnamed one which was destroyed by fire in 1857. Norton End was an area of Baldock covering the north end of Church Street and parts of the current Icknield Way and Norton Road. The area was demolished and rebuilt about 100 years ago.
- **Norton Road** – ORANGE TREE
- **Royston Road** – Talbot, Toll Bar
- **South Road** – HEN & CHICKENS (rebuilt)
- **Station Road** – Crown, Falcon, OLD WHITE HORSE, White Horse Tap
- **Sun Street** – Coopers, Saracen's Head, Sun / Old Victoria, VICTORIA
- **Wallington Road** – Beer house run by P Rudd.
- **Whitehorse Street** – Checkers (rebuilt), Greyhound, Plume of Feathers, Rose and Crown, White Horse Hotel
- **Unknown Location** – Hog (possibly in Pembroke Road), Starr (17th century), Swan (16th century), King's Head (17th century, believed to have been in Hitchin Street), Red Lyon (16th century, could be connected to the Stag which was previously The Red Lion), Robin Hood & Little John, Travellers Rest, Plough.

This gives a total of 69 establishments, including the rebuilds.

There is a Facebook site entitled '*The Old Baldock Pub Scrapbook*' which has photographs of some of the pubs mentioned above.

I understand that Doug Neath intends to publish a book about the pubs of Baldock and Martyn Cornell will be publishing a book later this year regarding brewing in Hertfordshire.

My thanks to all those named above for their invaluable assistance with this article.

Bryan Bird
Pubs Officer
CAMRA North Herts

French & Jupps - The Maltster in our Midst!

When you consider that Ware was once the biggest malt-producing town in Europe, it is perhaps surprising that none now remains – in fact, there is only one commercial maltster in all of Hertfordshire, and barely ten in the whole of England.

That Hertfordshire maltster is French & Jupps, in the village of Stanstead Abbots, just three miles from Ware. They are proudly independent and the oldest maltsters in Britain, specialising in roasted malt.

French & Jupps reputation for the production of top-quality malts has been earned over centuries - company records from around 150 years ago show that longstanding family brewers, McMullen of Hertford and Harvey's of Lewes were customers. They still are today.

The company's story started in the 18th century when the Jupp family were farmers and maltsters in Sussex. In the late 1790s, William Jupp was malting at Kew and despatching malt by barge on the Thames to the large Whitbread and Truman breweries in East London. The carrier was often Margaret French who would be taken into partnership in 1867 - the same year when the firm opened a new roasting plant in Spitalfields, to satisfy the burgeoning demand for dark malts used by brewers in London Porter.

In 1864, William Jupp Jnr bought maltings either side of the River Lea in Stanstead



Abbotts and St Margaret's, following an auction at the Saracen's Head in Ware, and, by 1890, other sites in the village had been purchased leading, in 1902, to the whole malting operation being moved there from London. Local high-quality barley was malted and lightly kilned at one end of the village (the present site on Roydon Road) before being bagged and taken by horse

& cart to a maltings by St Margaret's station, for roasting.

Come 1963, production was consolidated to Roydon Road and concentrated on roasted malts. In 1990, a new drum was so large it had to be accompanied to site by a police escort and in 2005 a further drum was acquired from Guinness' Park Royal brewery when it closed.

French & Jupps' current range of malts includes Crystal Malt varieties; notably Cara Malt, popular with brewers for lagers and light, refreshing ales and Patent Malts; associated with ales, milds, porters and stouts.

So, what is the current malting process? Much of the following is borrowed from French & Jupps' informative website, which is well worth a visit: <https://www.frenchandjupps.com>

"Cleaned and dressed, the barley is loaded into the steep ready for the steeping process, which takes approximately 2-3 days. This allows the grain to absorb moisture, encouraging embryonic growth. The grain is regularly aerated whilst underwater to ensure even hydration throughout the batch. Periodically the water is drained, allowing the barley to have an air rest. Through this time, the air is drawn through the batch to control the temperature and remove carbon dioxide. The steep is then drained and the grain moves to its next step in the process.

For Patent Malts, it's on to the kiln for drying, but for the Crystal Malts, the grain is released into germination drums. During the germination phase (4-5 days), humidified air is blown through the drum to control the temperature of the grain and to remove carbon



Former F&J maltings and granaries at Brentford on the Thames prior to their move to Hertfordshire.



Current kiln

dioxide. Here, enzymes are activated which break down the cell walls, allowing additional enzymes to break down the starch/protein matrix. To stop the germination process, the green malt is kiln-dried. A constant flow of heated air is passed through the malt to dry it to the desired moisture level. This malt is then stored before moving to the roasting drum. Roasting takes between 2-3 hours.



Current roasting drums

For Crystal Malt roasting, the first stage is to stew the malt, which allows enzymes to convert the starch into sugars. The grain is then dried and roasted to caramelise the sugars which deliver a fine range of colours and flavours.

For Patent Malt roasting the kiln-dried malt is loaded into the roasting drum and heated by gas-fired burners to a high temperature to achieve a unique flavour profile. Once the grain is sufficiently heated, the burners are turned off and the airflow is reduced to a minimum and the grain is allowed to heat spontaneously. The grain is then quenched with water to stop this process to maintain the desired colour. The finished Patent Malt is then discharged to a cooler and once at ambient temperature is sampled and moved to a storage bin."

The Jupp family connection to the company continues to this day with former MD David Jupp in the Chair. Current MD since 2020, Paul King has over 30 years' experience in the world of brewing and says of the company:



Today's maltings and offices based at Roydon Road in Stanstead Abbots.

"We have a truly dedicated and passionate team focused on making the very finest roasted malts. Our team of roasters are true craftsmen, each batch remaining hand crafted to this day. We look forward to supporting our brewing friends for many more years."

The next time you are enjoying a pint of cask ale in a Herts pub, just imagine, it might stem from Hertfordshire barley, malted in Stanstead Abbots, brewed in the county and dispensed from a handpump direct to your glass. Now that truly is Locale!

Les Middlewood
South Herts CAMRA

Hardline: Watford's latest brewery

Real ale production in Watford has been given another boost with the arrival of **Hardline Brewery**.

Watford & District CAMRA volunteers were first alerted to rumours of a new brewery in the area when a promotional beer can was brought into **Wishful Drinking** in Rickmansworth early in 2023. Unfortunately, nobody could remember the name printed on the can, so the local CAMRA branch had to do a bit of digging on the web, where we quickly found reference to Hardline Brewery and an address on Sotheron Road in the heart of Watford.

For a while, all the information we had was a name and address.

Beer production hadn't yet started, and the company website was in a very early stage of development. None of this was a surprise, since many small breweries can suffer from lengthy and complicated gestations. So, we had to wait a little while longer for Hardline to get off the ground.

When more information started to appear on the website, there were lots of images of branded cans and bottles, so initially we assumed that there would be no cask beer produced. However, reports eventually started to come in of casks going into various pubs in the area. Over time, more members reported that they'd seen the beers around and about, and eventually, in March 2024, I finally got to try a pint of Hardline cask ale myself in the **Land of Liberty, Peace & Plenty** in Heronsgate.

The head brewer at Hardline is Andrew Caird. When we spoke, he told me that he had been working in financial technology in the City but got fed up with the commute and decided a change of career was in order. He started a successful wine business and after that decided to move into beer. So obviously he



needed somewhere to set up the brewery; but where?

It turns out Andrew is a friend of the Salamone family who owned Tonino & Son, a well-known Watford ice cream producer. They were looking for something to do with their old factory on Sotheron Road, and the solution seemed obvious.

Setting up the brewery presented some problems. The installation did not go to plan, with missing parts, incorrect installations and incomplete software programming. In the end, Andrew completed the installation himself, which now means he's in a better position to fix it if it breaks. Installation was, finally, completed in August 2023

and the first brews went out of the door that month.

Hardline is a brewery with a philosophy. Andrew has lived an active life. He has a background in cycling, mountain biking, mountaineering and skiing, amongst many other activities, so the ethos behind his brewery is to have a hard line on healthy living by making beer with improved nutrition and fewer residual sugars. He produces about 8 brews a month and 80% of the beer produced goes into casks, so it pops up in pubs fairly frequently. Pubs that have been supplied in the local area include the **Coach & Horses** in Rickmansworth, the aforementioned Land of Liberty, Peace and Plenty in Heronsgate and the **Wellington Arms** in Watford, together with many other pubs in Berks, Bucks, and Surrey. The regular cask beer is a pale ale, **Another Midnight (4.2% ABV)**, but Andrew's other brews also pop up in cask as well as bottles and cans. At the time of writing, we're hoping to get some of Andrew's beers for the Watford Beer Festival in August.

Andrew Vaughan
Watford & District CAMRA

New Hertford Booklet!

Hertford Museum's new booklet "*On The Sauce - Life and Death in Hertford's Pubs*" is a discovery of how the town's pubs have been at the centre of everyday life over the last 300 years.

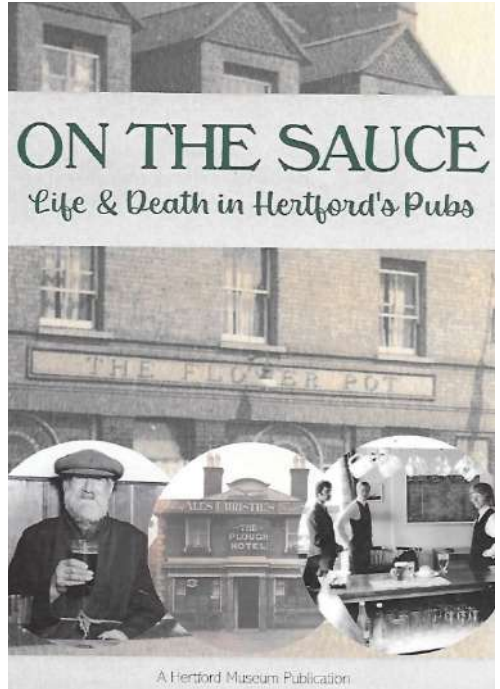
The 28-page booklet tells us of how pubs have contributed to the passing of time in Hertford - not only part of everyday life, but, for some unfortunates, their final destination!

With features that include Transport, Theatre, Politics, Inquests, Women in Pubs, Work, Drunkenness, Clubs and Breweries, the booklet also includes commentary from local residents with their tales of fun and games in more recent times.

Available for £4 from the Museum foyer.

Alternatively, phone 01992 582686 or go to www.hertfordmuseum.org (plus p&p).

Les Middlewood
South Herts CAMRA



The Hertford Halloween Witches Brew Tour

31st October - 3rd November

THE HERTFORD CLUB

OLD CROSS TAVERN

The WHITE HORSE

Over 40 Beers!

Wow! - Plough now Community Pub

Plough Lane, Ley Green, Hitchin SG4 8LA

www.theploughkingswalden.com

In *PoV309*, I reported on the Ley Green locals' battle to save the Grade II listed, Plough.

Well, the battle has been won! On May 24th, the pub, located near King's Walden, was bought for the community by the Pilkington Farm Partnership and re-opened after 10 weeks following refurbishment and restoration. With 4 hand pulls and 8 keg lines, the offering has substantially improved - an Adnams and Greene King Abbot are regulars, along with two rotating guest ales.

As one happy customer, Andrew Marshall, said: *"This place is the beating heart of our village and I'm so glad it's been saved and made so much better."*

Not changed are the stunning views towards Preston village from the pub's two acre garden. Absolutely beautiful!

PD



**THE
PLOUGH**
KINGS WALDEN

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Real Ales | Adnams | Abbot | 2 rolling guest hand pulls
(Oakham, Barsham, Tring, Harvey's etc)

Wild Wave cider | Ghost Ship 0.5% | Ease Up IPA gluten free
4 lagers including Bitburger

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October 17th - 20th, 2024 (naval themed beers)

Large 2 acre garden with the best view in Hertfordshire

Children and dogs welcome | Children's outdoor games room

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Pints of View 311 Autumn 2024

Quotes Quiz Competition by David Lewis

**First TWO correct entries drawn, each win:
2025 CAMRA Good Beer Guide**

Write the name of the person who said, or wrote each of the following quotes.

1. "All we are saying is: 'Give peace a chance.'"
.....
2. "The greatest glory in living, lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."
.....
3. "Let us never consider ourselves finished nurses. We must be learning all of our lives."
.....
4. "We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing."
.....
5. "Do one thing every day that scares you."
.....
6. "A life spent making mistakes is not only more honourable, but more useful than a life spent doing nothing."
.....
7. "The way to get started, is to quit talking and begin doing."
.....
8. "Life is what happens when you're busy making other plans."
.....

Entries by Fri 1 Nov 2024 to:

PoV Competition, 5 Manor Way,
Potters Bar, Herts. EN6 1EL

Name.....
Address.....
.....
.....
Postcode.....
Telephone.....

9. "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."
.....
10. "Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier."
.....
11. "If I had eight hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend six hours sharpening my axe."
.....
12. "When you reach the end of your rope, tie a knot in it and hang on."
.....
13. "My mother has always been unhappy with what I do. She would rather I do something nicer, like be a bricklayer."
.....
14. "Dear 338171 (may I call you 338?)"
.....
15. "The way I see it, if you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain!"
.....

Wether Report

Short measures at 'Spoons'?

I saw this on Discourse, CAMRA's web forum, and emailed Wetherspoon with an invitation to comment. Their response is below, which I'll be posting on Discourse after Pints of View readers have had a chance to see it first!

PD

The screenshot shows a forum post on Discourse. The title is "Flawed Full Pint Campaigning (again!)" and it is categorized under "Campaigning" and "general-election". The post is from a user with a yellow profile picture, dated 25 Jun. The text of the post reads: "Short measures is company policy at JDW I'm not going to name the individual pub but here is a pic of the staff notice board in a Spoons local to me." Below the text is a photograph of a whiteboard with handwritten notes. The whiteboard text includes: "Well Done!! We got 4 greens on our audit, which means the end of the month is bonus time!", "Going forward" followed by a list of instructions: "- Please keep up the hard work we have all put in the past few months.", "- All Staff food and drink must go through the till and be paid for or put through as Staff feeding.", "- Tell a manager if you break (mispour / something is spilling so it can be rechecked or dealt with)", "- Be careful when you are serving - Remember, 5% head on everything", and "We have had a good result but now we want an easy stock period instead of chasing our tails again!". Below the whiteboard photo, the post continues: "Now they offer you a choice of glasses, a pot or a straight. Reason? A pot has a wider rim. 10mm head on a pot saves them more volume than 10mm on a straight." and "Roll on full pint legislation." The post has 1 Reply and 24 / 64 comments as of 25 Jun. The interface also shows a 14-day timer and a notification bell icon.

Hi Paul,

Here is the official Wetherspoon "standard operating procedure" for draught beer, quoted verbatim from our training documentation:

"Ensure the drink is poured with no more than 5% head. Present the drink to the customer with the brand logo facing forwards where applicable. Top up the drink if requested by the customer".

Thanks

Jen Swindells | Marketing

Wetherspoon refreshes the buildings other pubcos cannot reach

In last issue's *Pints of Interview* (no. 310 Summer 2024) Sir Tim Martin confessed to me: "I suppose, if you like buildings, there's always a temptation to take one which requires mammoth investment to convert into something special - almost a desire to make a statement of the building."

But what about when it comes to refurbishments, as opposed to new openings?

Well, this caught my eye in *London Drinker* - the excellent bi-monthly magazine published on behalf of the Greater London branches of CAMRA and edited by Tony Hedger.

<p>Or does it?</p> <p>Stonegate still have their problems and, as you will note from the <i>WhatPub Update</i>, they are converting a lot of pubs to their Craft Union format. Punch however are on the up, having acquired 24 pubs in the north-east and Yorkshire from the pub chain Wear Inns for a reported £15 million. Perhaps the most significant story is that, in May, Heineken, owners of Star Pubs & Bars, announced that they were to spend £39 million on their pubs. This includes reopening 62 sites which have been closed long term and refurbishing 612 others. They are aiming in particular to reopen suburban pubs to attract those who are working from home. Some are looking at this market. The Justin Platt, told the <i>Propel News</i> the 'local pub segment' 'is built for those who get it right'. The work include energy efficiency measures insulation and low-energy lighting which they hope will reduce energy costs by 15%. Some examples were given but only one was in London, the Roxie Steak & Tap (formerly the Black Dog) in Twickenham (TW1 3SX). There was one interesting quote from a Star spokesperson, "It would be unrealistic for any major leased and tenanted pub company to have all its pubs open at any one time."</p>	<p>Pub News column) while the Holland Tringham in Streatham (SW16 1HJ), which was once up for sale, has just reopened after an £800,000 refurbishment. It looks worth a visit just for the new toilets!</p> <p>JDW appear to have given up on the site next to Charing Cross Station (11 Strand WC2N 5HR), having withdrawn their appeal against the City of Westminster's refusal of planning permission. This follows their having been refused permission to convert the former TGI Friday site in nearby Bedford Street (WC2E 9HZ) into a pub.</p> <p>The Barking Dog (IG11 8TU), by the station, closed in 2022 to allow the building above it, Trocoll House, to be converted into a 'gateway to Barking', it was due to be converted but little progress has been made. The Barking & Dagenham Post, is to reopening the pub. There are plans on the date the developer opens. Wetherspoon is not in control of that'. The current estimate is early 2026.</p> <p>JDW's pub inside Victoria Station (SW1V 1JT), simply called Wetherspoon's, has reopened after a £1.3 million refurbishment which has seen it expand into adjacent premises.</p>
---	--

A complete collection of all issues of *London Drinker* back to 1979 is available at: www.london.camra.org.uk, scalable to read in larger print

Courtesy of: *London Drinker* Jun/Jul 2024 / Trade News

By my calculations, Wetherspoon's £2.1 million refurbishment of the two pubs compared with Heineken/Star's £39 million spend across 674 pubs works out, on average, at a near 20 times greater investment per pub - £1.05 million v £57,864.

... and probably accounts for Tony's comment re the Holland Tringham in Streatham: "It looks worth a visit just for the new toilets!"

PD

CAMRA Member Benefits include £30 (Single) / £40 (Joint) vouchers redeemable in all Wetherspoon pubs

Travelwatch

'All change' for Hertfordshire's Bus Fares Policy

Below is a summary of the changes to multi-journey tickets effective from 14 July 2024. The explorer and BUSnet tickets were all withdrawn and replaced with 14 zones of Intalink Connect tickets:

- Bishop's Stortford
- Borehamwood & Potters Bar
- Buntingford & Royston
- Cheshunt & Hoddesdon
- Harpenden
- Hatfield
- Hemel Hempstead
- Hertford & Ware
- Hitchin & Letchworth
- St Albans
- Stevenage
- Tring & Berkhamsted
- Watford
- Welwyn Garden City

The new adult fares are £5 (one zone), £6 (two

zones) and £8.50 (three or more zones). which means an increase in ticket prices for many journeys. Reduced fares apply for children and Saver Card holders. In many cases, where a route crosses the county boundary, travel is permitted to and from the end of the route. For exact details please see www.intalink.org.uk/connect.

It's going to be a tough challenge for bus drivers to know and remember the boundaries between the 14 smaller areas!

Separately, most bus operators are applying the £2 maximum single fare which is due to end 31st December 2024.

Finally, there are also a number of timetable and route changes across the county from September 2024.

John Crowhurst
South Herts CAMRA



DYLAN'S AT
THE KINGS ARMS

7 George Street, St Albans

Follow us
on Untappd:



Brewery Visits & Tours

Buntingford Brewery – joint branch trip

On Saturday 15th June, North Herts CAMRA were invited to join our East Bedfordshire CAMRA colleagues on a trip to Buntingford brewery.

The trip included a tour of the brewery with visits to the bore hole, which provides the water supply, and the reed bed, which is used to treat wastewater. There were 7 beers to try, which were all served in excellent condition. A light-hearted quiz was held with all questions based on the brewery and its beers.

Many thanks to Andy, Charlie and the rest of the brewery team for a very enjoyable day.

Bryan Bird
Pubs Officer
CAMRA North Herts



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The Big Limburg Beer Tour 2025 3–7 September 2025



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Bits 'n' Pieces

Back then, 25 years ago...

ews News of the Brews...News

Bottle job at Brakspears

Brakspear's Brewers of Henley Upon Thames are to take over bottling McMullens' beers after they closed their bottling plant earlier this year. Regular faults and a strong contract brewers' replacement.

Mac'

Congrat Johnson, Horse, K "East of Year 1995 the pub's the help-stagger in the la Horse w the other National

Over

We have Anita w Overd year. The commer 175, has the impr been dic informat by Inn B

Punch Taverns (see page 3). The beers on sale are Wardworths 6X, Marstons Pedigree, Tetley Bitter and Ansells Bitter with one alternating guest. We apologise for the inaccuracy of our report and hope that the licensees can accept that it was a genuine mistake. Steve Bury Editor.

Drinking Quotes

Hopefully you will find the following quotes from famous drinkers as amusing as I did

Ambrose Bierce

Abstainer: a weak person who yields to the temptation of denying himself pleasure.

David Moulton

"Why is American beer served so cold? So you can tell it from urine."

Henny Youngman

"When I read about the evils of drinking I give up reading."

Tom Waites

"I'd rather have a bottle in front of me than a frontal lobotomy."

Lady Astor and Sir Winston Churchill had many a set to over his excessive drinking. Two of the most famous are:

Lady Astor:

"Sir, if you were my husband I would poison your drink."

Churchill:

"If you were my wife I would drink it."

Lady Astor:

"Sir you are dreadfully drunk."

Churchill:

"Madam you are ugly. In the morning I will be sober, but you will still be ugly."

The Hertfordshire Newsletter
No. 176 – Aug/Sep 1999

Hitchin for Bar Billiards!

Further to Les's article in *PoV310*, two readers answered his call to let us know of any other Hertfordshire pubs or clubs with a table. Thanks to both John Franklin and Alex Le Baigue for citing the **Bricklayers Arms** in Hitchin, which, according to Alex, has a 'four-mushroom' version.

PD

GBG2025 – Let's Celebrate with HEB in Bishop's Stortford!

Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA would like to invite you to help us launch the 52nd edition of the Good Beer Guide. We will be celebrating all the pubs and clubs included in this year's Guide with an event at a GBG2025 pub in Bishop's Stortford on Thursday 26th September at 8.00pm. Watch out for the name of the pub being revealed on social media and our branch website the day before the event!

This will be a chance to congratulate the venues included in the Guide, and meet on a social level, whilst raising awareness of CAMRA to the pub's regulars. There will be copies of the guide available to buy and a few "nibbles" to help the beer go down.

Kathryn Flagner

Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA

Pints of View 310 Crossword Solution

B	A	R	G	A	I	N	S	T	A	L	E	M	A	T	E											
I	E	F	E	W	S	N	U	V																		
N	I	G	H	T	M	A	R	E	P	A	L	E	T	T	E											
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E	N	T	E	R	B	R	E	A	D	C	R	U	M	B	S											
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E	L	E	V	E	N	S	E	S							S	T	R	A	N	G	E					

PINTS OF VIEW 310 COMPETITION

Congratulations to our two winners!
Matt Jeffries, St Albans
Rachel McKay, St Albans

Each will receive in the post a copy of 2024 CAMRA Good Beer Guide.

Down Your Way

This section contains information from a large number of sources and occasionally errors may occur or the information may be out-of-date upon publication. Comments or additional information should be sent to the editor (see page 49 for contact details).

PUBS IN TOWN

PUB EVENT & BEER GUIDE



PUB FINDER



EVENT GUIDE



BEER ALERTS



APSLEY: Fuller's have sold the **White Lion** to Admiral Taverns. See other similar Fuller's pub sales in the listings below.

ASTON: No firm opening date for the now community-owned **Rose and Crown**, but a pop-up opening for local residents was planned for 3 August. For updates go to <https://astonparishcouncil.chessck.co.uk/RoseCrownLatestNews>.

BALDOCK: Despite reopening earlier this year, the **Engine** in Station Road has once again closed. Planning permission has been granted to convert part of the former **George** restaurant into four hotel rooms and a delicatessen/wine bar.

BAYFORD: "The Friends of the **Baker Arms**" Community Share Offer to raise £200,000 has been launched to secure the future of

the McMullen pub closed for over 12 months. To check on progress go to <https://www.friendsofbakerarms.org/>

BENINGTON: The longtime closed **Bell** remains up for sale.

BOREHAMWOOD: The **Pick & Shovel** has opened in the former **Hart & Spool** Wetherspoon's pub building at 148-150 Shenley Road in the town centre, with up to four real ales, breakfasts, lunches, evening meals and Sunday lunches. The **Toby Carvery** on Studio Way is offering Sharp's Doom Bar on handpump and in Theobalds Street, the **Wellington** has a handpump with Timothy Taylor Landlord.

BOXMOOR: Fuller's have sold the **Post Office Arms** to Admiral Taverns.

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Timothy Taylor's Landlord

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www.lordshiparms.co.uk

BRAUGHING: The **Axe and Compasses** stays closed and up for sale.

BRICKET WOOD: Following refusal in May of a further planning application for a Change of Use to residential, the long-closed **Old Fox** in School Lane, is now being marketed for sale at £850,000. Fingers crossed a buyer can be found and the pub eventually re-opened.

BUNTINGFORD: The former **Jolly Sailor** is to reopen as a Turkish restaurant.

DANE END: We understand that the **Boot** closed in August and await any news of a reopening.

EASTWICK: The **Lion** remains closed. McMullen still seek new leaseholders and plan to renovate and redecorate the pub's internals.

ELSTREE: With plans agreed for a major refurbishment of the **Plough** in place, we await news of work starting and the appointing of licensees. Before its closure seven or eight years ago, the pub had operated as a restaurant - an Italian called Kiss Kiss and, prior to that, a Chinese called East.



Cross Keys

Harpenden

39 High Street
Harpenden
Hertfordshire
AL5 2SD
Tel: 01582 763989

Warm welcome
Beautiful beer
Green, peaceful garden

EPHING GREEN: The **Beehive** continues with its excellent menu of fresh food, a speciality being fish, including scallops and sea bass, which is received daily from Billingsgate market in London. The fish supplier, S&J Shellfish has now been supplying the **Beehive** for over 25 years. Greene King beers are available at the bar.

GOSMORE: The **Bull** is still closed and is offered up for freehold sale or leasehold.

GREAT HORMEAD: The **Three Tuns** remains closed. The leasehold is available. The Parish Council are aiming to achieve Asset of Community Value status for the pub with an application to East Herts District Council. Hopefully this will assist in providing a future for the pub.

HARPENDEN: Fuller's are advertising the lease at the **Gibraltar Castle** in Batford.

HATFIELD: The **Airfield** is a casualty of Whitbread's decision to close many of its Brewer's Fayre Inns - now only open for adjacent Premier Inn residents.



HERTFORD: Fuller's have sold the **White Horse** in Castle Street to Admiral Taverns. Also, popular landlord Dave Kirby (who had previously steered the pub through a successful fourteen months of well-kept cask ale) has left to be replaced by James Ashbourne, a familiar publican in Hertford who is also currently the landlord at the **Old Cross Tavern**. The cask options at the **White Horse** are now wider than the Fuller's standard range, though London Pride is retained. The **Lord Haig** in South Street is the latest in Mac's annual programme of pub refurbishments and redecorations - inside and out - with handpumped cask ales at the bar. Live cover-bands on Saturdays continue to rock the pub and there's a quiz on Thursdays. Mac's have undertaken a similar programme of improvement works at the **Golden Griffin** in Windsor Drive where AK Original Mild can be found on handpump. The **Hummingbird** pub/restaurant in Fore Street (no cask ale) has closed for the second time in five years to become a steakhouse.

HERTFORD HEATH: The **Silver Fox** on London Road re-opened in early June with

new leaseholders offering a "pub grub" menu and Greene King IPA on handpump along with an occasional GK seasonal ale.

HITCHIN: The **Teller Bar** in Bucklersbury opened in May offering craft keg beers from Six Hills brewery as well as national brands. It is hoped that cask ale will follow on soon. Another opening in May was **Hamm**, a tastefully decorated small bar in the Arcade with three cask ales from Kelchner and Mad Squirrel breweries. The **Sun Hotel** in Sun Street no longer sells cask ale.

HODDESDON: The **King William IV**, tucked away in Lord Street is still closed with its lease advertised.

ICKLEFORD: The **Cricketers** stays up for sale with an asking price of £700,000.

KIMPTON: Villagers and friends furthering their aims to reopen the **White Horse** continue with their successful monthly pop-up pub events in the nearby Dacre Rooms featuring cask ale and music (June's event featured beers from Buntingford Brewery). To find out

A rectangular advertisement with a red border. At the top is a stag head logo above the text 'THE HERTFORD CLUB'. Below this is the text 'Dating in parts from the 15th century and a Grade II* listed building, Lombard House has been a Private Members Club since 1897.' In the center is a 'CAMRA Good Beer Guide' logo. Below that, in red text, is 'Up to 4 hand pumps plus Real Cider & Perry. CAMRA Good Beer Guide since 2014.' In green text, it says 'Enjoy the remaining sunshine in our beautiful garden.' At the bottom, in red text, is 'New members are currently welcome, although we are quickly becoming full.' Below that, in red text, is 'CAMRA members may be signed in on production of their CAMRA membership cards.' At the very bottom, in blue text, is the address 'Lombard House, Bull Plain, HERTFORD, SG14 1DT' and the phone number '01992 421422'.

about these events and progress on saving the pub, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/SaveOurWhiteHorse>.

LEY GREEN: Great news that the *Plough* near King's Walden, bought by the local Pilkington Estate for the community, has opened. See separate article on page 32.

LILLEY: After 40 years as owner and landlord, Peter Brown, at the *Lilley Arms*, has sold the pub which will remain open.

LONDON COLNEY: The appeal to St Albans City and District Council's decision to refuse an application to build flats at the rear of the *White Horse* has also been refused. The vibrant pub was awarded Asset of Community Value status in 2022 but sadly offers no cask ale.

MILL GREEN: News from Lord Salisbury at Hatfield House is that long-awaited internal re-fit at the *Green Man* by new incoming operators should by now be underway leading to an opening late this year or early in 2025.

MUCH HADHAM: Welcome to Joe Clark and Alex King new tenants at the charming Grade II listed *Bull* which will have major works in and around the building in the coming months, including new housing to be built to the rear of the garden. A planning application for the long-closed (over 15 years) but still standing *Jolly Waggoners* to be converted to housing, along with additional houses built alongside, has been refused partly citing the loss of a community asset.

PERRY GREEN: New owners of the *Hoops*, closed for some years, have declared an aim to bring new life into the pub which sits close to the former home of renowned sculptor, Henry Moore. A planning application (application no.3/24/1289/FUL) for substantial works has been lodged with East Herts District Council. Whilst maintaining the character of the original building, the proposed works include demolition of later additions and major construction works and landscaping, to bring about a larger and rejuvenated pub to operate as a local community asset and an attractive proposition for visitors to the area.

PETER'S GREEN: Following a sale by McMullen,

the *Bright Star*, a classic, rural and friendly pub close to Luton Airport is now an enterprising Free House with a changing and interesting range of cask ales that has included the likes of Otter Bitter, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker and Rebellion IPA. Open from Wednesday to Sunday. There is a wide menu of meals served Friday to Sunday lunchtimes and evenings - roasts on Sunday when the evening sitting must be booked.


PIRTON: The *Motte and Bailey* has added real cider from Saxby's of Farn dish, near Welwington.

RABLEY HEATH: The *Robin Hood and Little John*, sold by McMullen, has been bought by Steve Nye and following refurbishment reopened in mid-July with much local good will. Early beers were Tring Sidepocket For A Toad and Timothy Taylor Landlord accompanied by Saxby's cider. The pub is open all day from noon, closing at 11pm. A planning application for internal and external works has been given consent by North Herts District Council.

RADLETT: Confirmation of another pub lost. Closed for many years, the *Cat and Fiddle* will succumb to a new housing scheme following a planning decision by Hertsmere Borough Council. And cask ale has been discontinued at the *Radlett Members Club*. On the more positive side a full refurbishment has been completed at the *Red Lion* which is still offering at least one cask ale.

REDBOURN: *Farr Brewery* (currently based at Samuels Farm in Wheathampstead) is moving its brewing operation to Great Revel End Farm in Gaddesden Lane, Redbourn. Taking the keys on 1 August and having received planning permission, there follows a period of setting up - a date for an operational start at the new site to follow.

ST ALBANS: The *Rose and Crown* in St Michael's remains closed. There is growing frustration at the time being taken by St Albans City Council to decide on the planning application for the property which includes for the re-opening of the pub. At the St Albans Civic Society Awards 2022/23, held in May this year, McMullen won best commercial design in the Business Category for their refurbishment at the *Saint and Sinner* in St Peter's Street. The




**South Herts CAMRA
Pub of the Year 2024**

**ROBIN HOOD
ST ALBANS**

Real ales and ciders

♦ Beer garden ♦

126 Victoria Street, St Albans AL1 3TG
01727 856 459



Peacock (no real ale) in Hatfield Road has had another bout of temporary closure.

SOUTH MIMMS: A developer has finally submitted plans (application no. 24/0519/FUL) for the Grade II listed **White Hart**. It will include partial demolition of the property, along with modifications and new construction on the site to provide eight flats and a new house. No hint of a pub in the proposed huge development.

SOUTH OXHEY: The **Pavillion** in Green Lane, a pub closed for approaching six years, and originally formed from a golf clubhouse, has had its status as an Asset of Community Value upheld by a tribunal judge following a further appeal earlier this year by the current leaseholders, Pavillion (Watford) Ltd. Formerly known as the **Brookdene Arms**, the pub closed in 2018 apparently for refurbishment but never reopened. We await future moves.

STANSTEAD ABBOTTS: Fuller's have sold the **Oak** to Admiral Taverns.

STEVENAGE: The **Marquis of Lorne**, High Street,

re-opened in July after a major internal and external re-fit, with Mark and Tash on the tiller. Greene King cask ales are on offer. The **Emperor's Head** in Chells Manor Village has also reopened – North Herts Branch will be visiting soon.

TEWIN: The **Plume of Feathers** has a menu full of pub classics and continental options. In the meantime, why not enjoy the rock'n'roll bingo held last Sunday of each month. Greene King beers are sometimes supplemented by St Austell Tribute. In the centre of the village, it's a period of transition at the **Rose and Crown** with the pub re-opened but still being marketed for new leaseholders. Greene King are seeking planning permission for improvements to the gardens and barn.

TRING: Congratulations to Hertfordshire brewer Farr Brew who have been awarded a *Commendation* in CAMRA's national Pub Design Awards for the sensitive redesign and redecoration of the **Bell** in the High Street. The work has given the 17th-century coaching inn a contemporary feel while enhancing the pub's historic features, transforming it from a

White Hart Tap

4 Keyfield Terrace, St Albans
Tel: 01727 860974




Open Every Day 12-11pm

Serving Timothy Taylor's Landlord, Purity Mad Goose, St. Austell's Tribute. Tring Side Pocket for a Toad, Plus Hoppo Guest Beers & Traditional Cider

Freshly Cooked Food, Served Seven Days a Week, Lunchtimes & Evenings

Traditional Sunday Roasts Served till 8pm
(Inc. Vegetarian & Vegan Options)

Fresh Cod & Chips Every Day

Large, Partially Covered & Heated Beer Garden

www.whiteharttap.co.uk
email: whtpub@gmail.com

sports bar into an important feature of Tring town centre. Offering a wide-ranging menu of meals, the **Bell** proudly dispenses a full selection of Farr Brew beers.

WALKERN: The **Yew Tree** is still closed with McMullen seeking a new tenant.

WALTHAM CROSS: McMullen are advertising the tenancy at the **Wheatsheaf**.

WARE: The town's **Beefeater** in Marsh Lane has avoided the axe imposed by Whitbread on many pubs that are being incorporated into the hotel (normally Premier Inn) with the bar kept open for residents only. I.e. the pubs are being closed. The Ware Beefeater remains open to the public, and continues to sell handpumped Greene King IPA and Sharp's Doom Bar at the bar.

WARESIDE: The future of the closed **White Horse** remains unclear.

WATFORD: The **Horns** in Hempstead Road re-opened on 21st June as **Avabar**. On the most recent visit, the bar had Fuller's London Pride

THE WOODMAN — WILDHILL — Free House

South Herts Pub of the Year
2023 and 12 times previously

5 Real Ales inc. 3 guests



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and Timothy Taylor Landlord on hand pump. The **Estcourt Arms** in St John's Road has reopened but with no real ale. **The Rising Sun** in Ascot Road is now the only Brewers Fayre pub/restaurant remaining in Herts.

WELWYN GARDEN CITY: Great to see cask ale restored by Marston's at the **Bakehouse** in Bessemer Road but sad to see that the **Stanborough** has closed; another victim of Whitbread's decision to close many of their Beefeater Inns.

WEST HYDE: According to a report in Watford Observer on 22nd July, the **Oaks** has closed. The landlord had given up the lease following reports of antisocial behaviour. At the time of writing, the licencing authority is considering the suggestion of a lease transfer made by the Stonegate Pub Company.

WHITWELL: The **Bull** closed for refurbishment at the end of July and was due to reopen in early September.

Regional CAMRA Festivals

As reported in the last edition of Pints of View there was no **Great British Beer Festival** in London this year due to the venue being unavailable on the dates required. Organisers and volunteers are exploring a variety of options to ensure the festival will return in 2025.

If you are looking for an alternative 'Beer Festival fix' please see the list of forthcoming Hertfordshire and Regional CAMRA Festivals below:

SEPTEMBER 2024

St Albans Beer & Cider Festival

Wed 25 – Sat 28 September

Alban Arena, St Peter's Street, St Albans, Herts.

OCTOBER 2024

Bedford Beer & Cider Festival

Wed 2 – Sat 5 October

Corn Exchange, St Paul's Square, Bedford, Beds.

South Woodham Ferrers Beer & Cider Festival

Thur 3 – Sat 5 October

South Woodham Ferrers Village Hall, South Woodham Ferrers, Essex

NOVEMBER 2024

Southend (AKA South East Essex) Beer Festival (TBC)

Thur 21 – Sat 23 November

Naval and Military Club, 20 Royal Terrace, Southend-on-Sea, Essex

DECEMBER 2024

Pig's Ear Beer Festival

Tue 3 – Sat 7 December

Round Chapel, 1d Glenarm Road, Lower Clapton, London

Festivals & Branch Events

CAMRA runs 180+ beer festivals each year, plus many more branch events, so there's something for everyone!

Go to: <https://events.camra.org.uk/>

St Saviour's Beer & Fizz Festival – Report

The 5th instalment of the St Saviours Church festival kicked off on 12th July. Officially opened by Daisy Cooper MP and heralded by Fr Richard's proclamation that "Beer is proof that God loves us & wants us to be happy" – something that even we atheists won't argue with!

The family and community based festival again presented an eclectic range of real ales (36) & ciders (8), with an impressive supporting cast of fizz. Ales ranged from several pale/hoppy/citra offerings through classic British bitters, to a 'tropical' milk stout, with ciders covering both apple & mixed fruit varieties. All casks & cider boxes were donated by local businesses, including 16 pubs and 3 breweries, giving the event a real community feel.

Live music was on offer over the weekend from popular local bands & performers, with plenty of food options in the street food court



in front of the church – for those who don't subscribe to the 'eating is cheating' approach!

A well run and well attended event, with the weather being relatively kind (divine intervention??) and plenty of £££'s raised for good causes.

I'm already looking forward to the 6th instalment in 2025!

Steve Thompson
South Herts CAMRA

Herts CAMRA Diary

The listings below are colour-coded **North Herts**, **South Herts**, **Herts & Essex Borders** and **Watford & District**. A coloured background denotes a Social Event. All CAMRA Members are welcome to attend all CAMRA Branch and Social Events. Please visit the Herts Branch Websites for up-to-date information. Addresses can be found on page 49.

SEPTEMBER

Wed 25: NH Branch Meeting

8pm. Venue to be advised to branch members and via northherts.camra.org.uk/branch-diary

Wed 25 – Sat 28: SH St Albans Beer and Cider Festival

Alban Arena, St Peter's Street, St Albans.

Thu 26: W&D Social at St Albans Beer and Cider Festival

Alban Arena, St Peter's Street, St Albans, AL1 3LD.

Meet at the Products Stand in the foyer at 6pm and every hour thereafter.

Thu 26: HEB Good Beer Guide Launch Event – Bishop's Stortford

8pm. **Star**, Bridge Street, Bishop's Stortford.

Mon 30: W&D Branch Meeting – Watford

8pm. **Essex Arms**, Langley Way, Watford, WD17 3EG.

OCTOBER

Wed 2 – Sat 5: Bedford Beer & Cider Festival – two visits

Meet in Hitchin to take a bus – dates & times will be advised on northherts.camra.org.uk/branch-diary.

Mon 14: HEB Branch Meeting – Bishop's Stortford

8.30pm. **Castle**, Castle Street, Bishop's Stortford.

Wed 16: SH Branch Meeting – London Colney

8pm. **Bull**, Barnet Road, London Colney.

Fri 18: W&D Social – Rickmansworth

8.30pm. **Coach and Horses**, 22 High Street, WD3 1ER; then 9.15pm **Pennsylvanian**, 115-

117 High Street, WD3 1AN; 10pm **Wishful Drinking**, 124 High Street, WD3 1AB.

Sat 19: SH New River Rail Ale Trail Social with North London Branch

For North Londoners meet at Tottenham Hale Station for the 11.25 train to Hertford East (arr.12.01). Walk to the **Old Barge** on The Folly for lunch and then sample beer at some of the many the pubs of Hertford. Take 14.09 train from Hertford East station to Ware (arr.14.13). Drinks at the **Waterside Inn** and other Ware pubs. Take the 15.43 train to St Margaret's (arr.15.47) – beer at the **Jolly Fisherman** and other village pubs. (An option is to take the train to Rye House for a pint at the **Rye House** pub). Take a final train to Broxbourne and a beer at the riverside **Crown**. Trains back to Tottenham Hale or to Hertford East are every 30 minutes.

Tue 29: W&D Branch Meeting – Oxhey

8pm. **Oxhey Conservative Club**, Lower Paddock Road, Oxhey, WD19 4DS

NOVEMBER

Sat 2: W&D Social - Watford

8.30pm. **Essex Arms**, Langley Way, WD17 3EG, then 9.30pm **Two Trees Micro**, 18 Vicarage Road, WD18 0EH, finishing at 10.30pm **Moon Under Water**, 44 High Street, WD17 2BS

Sat 2: NH The Royston Ale Trail - Royston

2pm. Meet at the **Jolly Postie**, Baldock Street. Then enjoy the town's pubs for the afternoon.

Mon 11: SH Branch Committee Meeting - Harpenden

7.45pm. **Cross Keys**, High Street, Harpenden.

Mon 11: HEB Branch Meeting – High Roding

8.30pm. **Black Lion**, High Roding.

Wed 13: NH Knebworth Two-Stop

7.45pm*. Meet at Knebworth station. Ride-share to the **Lytton Arms**, Old Knebworth; ride-share back to the **Station** pub around 8:45pm. Trains home around 10pm or 11pm* (*Check our website nearer the time for any train timetable changes. northherts.camra.org.uk/branch-diary)

Sat 16 Nov: SH St Albans Beer and Cider Festival Review Meeting

2.30pm. **Royston Club**, College Road, St Albans.

Mon 25: W&D Branch Meeting - Watford

8pm. **West Herts Sports Club**, Park Avenue, Watford, WD18 7HP

Sat 30: SH The Hertford Autumn Ale Trail - Hertford

1pm. Meet **Black Horse**, West Street then **White Horse**, Castle Street.....eight pubs in total Over 25 cask beers available - *it's a beer festival on the move!* See details below.

DECEMBER

Wed 4: SH Branch Meeting - St Albans

8pm. **Royston Club**, College Road, St Albans.

Fri 6: NH Pigs Ear Beer Festival visit

Train times will be advised on website northherts.camra.org.uk/branch-diary

Fri 6: W&D Social - Bushey

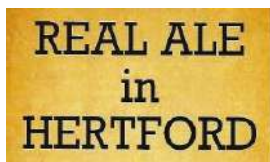
8.30pm. **Red Lion**, 50 High Street, WD23 3HN, then 9.15pm **King Stag**, 15 Bournehall Road, WD23 3EH, finishing 10pm at the **Swan**, 25 Park Avenue, WD23 3EE

Mon 9: HEB Branch Meeting - Allens Green

8.30pm. **Queen's Head**, Allens Green.

Fri 13: NH Traditional Pre-Christmas Ale Trail - Hitchin

7:30pm. Save the date! Details to follow in the next Pints of View and on our website <https://northherts.camra.org.uk/branch-diary/>



Hertford's Autumn Ale Trail Saturday 30th November



1.00pm	Black Horse, West Street
1.45pm	White Horse, Castle Street
2.30pm	Quiet Man, Parliament Square
3.15pm	Six Templars, The Wash
4.00pm	Old Barge, The Folly
4.45pm	Hertford Club, Bull Plain
5.30pm	Woolpack, Millbridge
6.15pm	Old Cross Tavern, St. Andrew Street

8 Pubs – 30 Real Ales - Everyone Welcome!

"It's A Beer Festival On The Move"


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Roger... and out

Beers from The Black Stuff

Global brewers are inflicting terrible damage on British beer. Breweries that produce traditional cask ale are closing at a rate of knots as the multi-nationals concentrate their efforts on promoting their thin and gassy interpretations of lager.

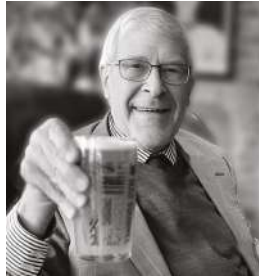
AB InBev, Carlsberg, Heineken and Molson Coors account for 88 per cent of all the beer produced in Britain. Add in the Japanese giant Asahi that now runs Fuller's in West London, and Diageo, the owner of Guinness, and the proportion of beer produced by the giants rises to 90 per cent.

The globals are using their awesome power to axe cask ale from their portfolios. Heineken, Britain's biggest brewer as a result of buying Scottish & Newcastle, has closed the Caledonian Brewery in Edinburgh that produced the award-winning Deuchars IPA. The Dutch giant claimed Caledonian, dating from 1869, needed investment. A former brewer says the money needed was tiny; yet Heineken has spent £1 million launching a new lager called Silver.

The 2022 merger that created the Carlsberg Marston's Brewing Company (CMBC) has led to mayhem on an industrial scale. Carlsberg controls 60 per cent of the new business and has used its power to close three cask ale plants – Jennings in Cumbria, Ringwood in Hampshire and Wychwood in Oxfordshire. At the same time, it's investing £10 million in its lager factory in Northampton.

In January, CMBC announced it was closing the Burton Union sets at Marston's plant in Burton. The unions date from the mid-19th century and were developed to cleanse yeast from fermenting beer in order to create the sparkling new pale ales drinkers demanded. Marston's was the last Burton brewer to use unions and the closure marks the end of a vibrant part of our brewing heritage.

Molson Coors, a Canadian-American conglomerate that runs the former Bass breweries in Burton-on-Trent, where its main brand is Carling lager, has closed the National Brewery Centre that brilliantly traced the history and heritage of brewing in this



country. The closure has forced the Heritage Brewery to leave the site and merge with the local Burton Bridge Brewery. At the same time, Molson Coors has discontinued Worthington's White Shield, the bottle-conditioned ale that's a potent link to the first India Pale Ales brewed in the Victorian period and made famous by brewers in Burton.

The most recent news is a major cause for concern. In July, Marston's, which has been brewing in Burton since 1838, said it was selling its brewing interests to Carlsberg and will now operate as a pub company. Will Carlsberg maintain the two remaining Marston's plants, or will it close Burton and concentrate its dwindling ale range in Wolverhampton?

The globals all claim they have been forced to close breweries due to falling demand for ale. However, many of our independent regional brewers have shown that if you believe in ale and promote it, then sales will rise.

SIBA, the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates, that's the voice for most of Britain's smaller producers, reports a 10 per cent increase in cask ale production this year and says the industry is returning to pre-Covid levels.

Timothy Taylor and Theakston's in Yorkshire also both say there's a growing demand for cask beer. In Manchester, J W Lees reports astonishing improvements in its pubs' performance.

And in sharp distinction to its rivals, Greene King, owned by Hong Kong listed CKA Holdings since 2019, is investing £40 million in a new Suffolk brewery. It says it's now the Number One producer of cask beer in the country, with a 14 per cent share of the sector.

I shall salute Greene King with a pint of Abbot in the Green Man in Sandridge!

Roger Protz

*British Guild of Beer Writers
South Herts CAMRA*

Cliff... near the edge

Where's the full page advert gone?

I first agreed to advertise in *Hertfordshire Pints of View* in Summer 2023. The Queens Head had recently been awarded Hertfordshire Cider Pub of the Year 2023, having been both an East Anglia Regional Winner and National Finalist, the year before.

I was keen to spread the word to pub-goers at the extremities of our county and got on well with both Brendan Sothcott our local CAMRA Branch Chair and Paul Donatantonio, who looks after the magazine.

A year on, and we've won not only two further Cider Pub awards, but also Branch Pub of the Year 2024. It's great to know that members of CAMRA gave us the most votes for our beer, as well as our cider!

So, you are now probably wondering why the inside back cover of *Pints of View* is not displaying our usual Queens Head advert, tweaked to reflect the new achievements, and has been given over to a piece of editorial. Well, despite all the good news in respect of my pub, it has been rather overshadowed by the shocking news concerning my branch - the Queens Head, Allens Green resides within Herts & Essex Borders CAMRA Branch and, as of 1st January 2025, the branch will cease to exist. The 'powers that be' in the upper echelons of CAMRA have decided that, because we've committed the heinous crime of straddling the county boundary between Hertfordshire and Essex, our branch is to be expunged from the organisation.

Of course, I can remain in CAMRA if I agree to being a member of another branch, but do I want to? Brendan clearly doesn't want to, as he's resigned his position as Chair and is considering leaving CAMRA, full stop. Whereas I knew who my contact was, I knew who delivered *Pints of View*, I knew that branch meetings would sometimes be at the Queens Head, now I don't know what to think.



Let me stress that I've got absolutely nothing *against* the other branches within CAMRA. In fact, some lovely members from both North and South Herts make a trek to the pub to enjoy our ales, ciders and hospitality, but it's never going to be more than once every couple of months, because there just aren't the transport connections. Hence why my allegiance lies with Herts

& Essex Borders. I just don't understand how shutting down our branch is going to help CAMRA. Is it a money-saving exercise? Is it a sneaky way of getting rid of strong-minded stalwarts like Brendan who will decide to leave? I thought that CAMRA was meant to be focusing its efforts on good beer, saving pubs and *increasing* its membership?

When I told Paul that I would not be renewing my run-of-four adverts as I'd lost confidence in CAMRA, he offered me the chance to fill my normal space in the magazine with an article where I could share my feelings, explain why I'm close to quitting CAMRA and loath to hand over any more advertising money. I'm being charged nothing for this so I think he must be hoping that I'll start up again next issue. Or maybe he agrees with me and thought it would be good for other readers to find out what's going on.

I sincerely hope that members of the CAMRA National Executive are reflecting on the turmoil that this is causing and will decide to reverse their decision and allow Herts & Essex Borders to live on.

Cliff Caswell
Licensee
Queens Head



wetherspoon

JUL – SEP guest ale list available now



BEER

WED 9 – SUN 20 OCT

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Five international brewers



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