



the

FREE

Casket

Campaign for Real Ale

September 2015



EAST BEDFORDSHIRE

www.eastbedscamra.org.uk

casket@eastbedscamra.org.uk



Further misery as three more pubs close - see page 6

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

Page 4	Local Pub News	Page 14	In-cider Dealings
Page 7	Ye 6th Sir William Peel Beer Festival	Page 16	Engineer Arms on Tour Again
Page 8	Round up from other local festivals	Page 20	Yorky Bars part two
Page 10	Diary Dates, Cryptic Crossword	Page 24	Tour de Bedfordshire Est Stage 5

Help Charity - There is no charge for the Casket. If you enjoy reading the Casket and/or take a copy home then please consider putting a donation in the Pub's charity box.

Issue number 3

Volume 11

2015

EAST BEDS COMMITTEE 2014/15

Chairman & Pubs Database:	John Goodlet	chairman@eastbedscamra.org.uk
Vice Chairman:	Vacant	vicechairman@eastbedscamra.org.uk
Secretary:	Barry Price	secretary@eastbedscamra.org.uk
Treasurer:	Chris Foskett	treasurer@eastbedscamra.org.uk
Social Secretary:	Jacqui Binnington	socialsecretary@eastbedscamra.org.uk
Cider Rep:	Jo Freeman	cider@eastbedscamra.org.uk
Membership Secretary:	Barry Price	membership@eastbedscamra.org.uk
Webmaster:	Chris Freeman	webmaster@eastbedscamra.org.uk
Potton Brewery Liaison:	Dave Young	breweries@eastbedscamra.org.uk
Pubs Preservation Officer:	Les Ivall	pubs@eastbedscamra.org.uk
Casket Contact:		casket@eastbedscamra.org.uk
Branch Web Site:		www.eastbedscamra.org.uk

The Casket

Published and Produced by:

CAMRA East Bedfordshire

Editor: John Goodlet

The views expressed in The Casket are those of individual contributors and do not necessarily represent the policy of CAMRA, the Editors or the East Bedfordshire Branch. Contributions to the Casket are always Welcome.

Copy deadline for next issue 15th Dec 2015

Advertising Sales

by Neil Richards MBE, Matelot Marketing

Tel 01536 358670 Mob 07710 281381

www.matelotmarketing.co.uk

N.Richard@btinternet.com

Printed by Portland Print, Kettering

Trading Standards

If you have any complaints about short measure, lack of price lists or misleading promotion of products, contact:

Bedfordshire Trading Standards,

23 Gadsby Street,

Bedford, MK30 3HP

Tel: 01234 228897



A word from the Editor

At the branch AGM we came up a bit short on the number of volunteers required to run the branch effectively. At present, I have added more duties to my role as branch Chairman and Newsletter Editor by taking on the Pubs Database Officer & more media responsibility. Likewise, Barry Price has combined his Secretary role with that of Membership Secretary, plus extra media duties. We are both feeling the pressure of this extra work and would like to reduce our workload by Spring 2016. So I urge local CAMRA branch members to consider helping us out. You don't have to attend all the branch meetings. Some attend occasionally and send in an email report on their activities.

When we reviewed our Branch Goals in June, it was agreed that we need to dedicate more time to help save pubs from closure and promote pub going within all sections of the community. Members also felt that we need to organise more events within our branch. These would not necessarily be for fund raising, but aimed at raising the awareness of CAMRA - what we do and what we stand for. We may try to run some smaller events selling cider and CAMRA products, promoting membership, running tombola and pub games. But we would need more volunteers to staff the events, just as we do at the upcoming Potton Apple Day 27th September & Bedford Beer Festival 7th-10 October. So if you would like to help the branch out at committee level or in running some of the aforementioned events. Please register your interest with Barry Price at his email address on Page 2.

John Goodlet

38th Bedford Beer & Cider Festival

Wednesday 7th to Saturday 10th October 2015
Corn Exchange, St Paul's Square, Bedford MK40 1SL

Open: Wed 4-11, Thu-Sat 12-11

Admission before 4pm £1

After 4pm: Wed £2, Thu £3,

Fri £4, Sat £2

CAMRA members free

No one under 18: ID
required

Souvenir glass £2.50 sale
or return

Hot and cold food



Free soft drinks

Tombola, clothing, books

Engraver

Short street pass-outs

Wheelchair access to all
floors

Entertainers:

Wed eve – Acoustopea

Sat lunch – Bedford Morris

Sat eve – Hair of the Dog

More than 100 real ales + 40 ciders and perries, English wines
Wide range of draught and bottled imported beers



facebook.com/nbcamra



northbeds.camra.org.uk



LOCAL PUB NEWS

March Hare, Dunton

Thursday 13th August marked the 5th Anniversary of the re-opening of the **March Hare** in Dunton, John and Janice rescued this village pub in 2010, and through their hard work have transformed it into one of Bedfordshire's very best Real Ale venues. It is now a thriving local, hosting numerous events, including beer festivals, folk music nights and regular quizzes.



The March Hare continues to form strong ties with the local community including the launch of a new magazine. A quarterly publication called 'Dunton News' is being underwritten by the pub and produced by co-editors Janice Pritchett and Julie Hills, a local pub customer.

Members of the pub's 'Hare Beer Bunch' and other regulars were at the March Hare on the anniversary to make a presentation to John and Janice to congratulate them on their achievement, and to thank them for providing such a welcoming pub, with excellent ales. Nigel Coomber commented *"We wish them every success for the future - here's to the next five years."*

Chequers, Stotfold

It was all change at the **Chequers** on 17th April, where the new tenants were local Stotfold residents John & Charlie Hyde, plus business partner Doug Bollen, who himself was a former licensee at the Chequers some 20 years ago. In conversation with Doug, he said the new opening hours were 9am-midnight every day, as the pub now incorporates a morning coffee shop and tea room. Food is also served daily from 9am -10pm a mixture of main meals and lighter bites, including specials—Monday burger night, Tuesday streak night and the Sunday Roast.



At the bar, GK IPA is the permanent ale at £3.30, plus two other rotating ales from the GK guest list at £3.50 regardless of strength. There is still a traditional public bar with TV, darts and fruit machines. There is regular live music and a monthly quiz. An outside bar has been refurbished and is used to support barbecues and other outdoor events. The garden is child friendly with play equipment, helping the tenants to aim for a successful family and community pub. Good luck to the new tenants at the Chequers.

Kings Arms, Sandy

Olly Reynalds pulled out of the lease of the **Kings Arms**, Sandy during the spring. The pub has reverted to owners Hawthorn Leisure. A new tenant Samantha Dalton took over the pub in April on an open ended lease. She has been overseeing changes to the pub's operation and a much needed refurbishment of the kitchen.

At present the opening hours are Mon & Tue 5-10.30pm, Wed & Thu 12-11pm, Fri & Sat 12-midnight and Sun 12-10.30pm. At the bar GK IPA and Sharps Doom Bar are permanent ales, plus there are up to three guest ales. On a recent visit the guests were St Austell Tribute, GK Abbot and Adnams Broadside. These ales will likely continue to be nationally sourced as the pub uses supplier Matthew Clark. The staff hope to build up the real ale trade and offer a 30p CAMRA discount for card carrying members [full pints only].



Currently food is served only on weekends Fri 6-9pm, Sat 12-9pm and Sun 12-4pm [roast dinner] and although the menu is basic for now, it will be expanded in the future. Monthly live events are back in swing with karaoke usually on the first Friday and Open Mic on the third Friday.

Inside this spacious inn you will find a jukebox, darts, pool table, quiz and fruit machines. Petanque is played at the rear and there are plans to develop the garden as a child friendly play area. It is also good to see the Chalets in use again by staff and customers. A new pub website is under construction. Good luck to Sam and her team at the Kings Arms.

Admiral, Clifton

In September 2015 we reported that the Admiral had become a freehouse. The following month the owner brought in a family friend to run the pub and live on the premises. His name is John Goodhew and over the last nine months or so has been gradually improving the Admiral. There is a new garden area at the rear and the toilets have been refurbished. A new kitchen has been fitted and work continues on the staff accommodation.



At the bar, two extra handpumps should now be installed, allowing four real ales and two 'real ciders'. John moved south from the Blossoms pub in the Heavily area of Stockport, where he had earned a CAMRA Pub of the Month award in 2013.

Being a fan of Robinson ales, he introduced Double Hop to the Admiral and it has proved popular enough to keep on permanently. There will be three rotating guest ales, some bottled craft ales, plus ciders from Westons, e.g. Wyle Wood 6%

The Admiral is now open longer Mon-Thu 4-11pm, Fri & Sat 11-1am and Sun 11-10.30pm. Food is now being served Mon-Thu 6-8pm, Fri-Sun 11-8pm. The menu offers Great British pub food, a mix of main meals and lighter snacks with a 'big breakfast' and Sunday Roast weekend specials. There is regular live music, a monthly quiz and both BT & Sky sports TV. Pub games of dominoes, darts and cribbage remain popular. The clientele is more mixed now and children are allowed in until 7pm.

Wrestlers, Langford

By the time this magazine is issued, there will have been a change at the **Wrestlers** in Langford. Bob and Val are due to leave the pub on 11th September after 24 years in charge, following the sale of the pub by Greene King to a new owner. We don't yet have any details of the sale, but we understand the building has been sold as licensed premises. So we look forward to hearing what the new owner is planning for the pub.

We will also try to find out whether any land belonging to Greene King at the rear of the property has also been sold. There are some new signs in the area suggesting that some of the land may have been released for property development.

More pubs close down

The future of the **White Horse**, Broom remains a mystery. It closed in early spring after the managers/tenants left. Olly Reynolds who was leasing the pub is no longer involved, so we presume that the pub has reverted to its owner. We are trying to confirm if it was sold last summer by Greene King to Hawthorn Leisure.

In Biggleswade, the **Coach & Horses** has also closed down. A report on Facebook by outgoing landlord James Turner said: *"Unfortunately Greene King have now put the pub up for sale and we were unable to come to an agreement with them on the purchase as the lands to the rear are being developed which makes the property untenable as a public house."* The pub closed down on 5th July 2015.

The **Pig & Whistle**, Stotfold closed for good in May 2015. The area is boarded off and we expect site development to start soon. The former **Bricklayers Arms** in Potton was demolished during May to make way for building two new houses. The former **Boot Inn**, Langford is undergoing major development. plus there are more new houses going up on the site.

Late News

At the **Golden Pheasant**, Biggleswade ex branch secretary John Walsh has moved into semi-retirement. The tenancy has passed to his son Patrick. Although John will still be involved behind the scenes, he will no longer be working behind the bar. We wish Patrick well with his first pub.

Ye 6th Sir William Peel Beer Festival

Yea and forsooth as foretold by Ye Court Astronomer, ye *Tempis* has *Fugitted* once again and Ye Sir William of Peel opened its portcullis for Ye Olde Mediaeval Beere Festival, (this years' theme), complete with moat (blue plastic sheet, but it did fill with water when it rained), wenches, sword in stone, a medieval monk with plenty of filthy habits, a pillory and other paraphernalia reminiscent of Merrie Olde Englande, with, at ye business ende, 32 beers and 8 ciders provided for the nourishment of ye Goode Peeple of ye Parishe and ye Pilgrims from afar with a dry throat.

Available not only in traditional pestles of halves & pints (no charge for glasses like so many of ye legge-up festivals), but also the inviting six thirds for £7.50, which gaveth ye moderate drinker a chance to taste a fair few beers without suffering *Ye Ague of Ye Ratte*.

In keeping with the theme, (as in festivals of yore), the strong waters all had, therefore, a mediievally inspired name, some examples of Ye Court Jester's art being Broadsword (calling Danny Boy?) 4.7%, Dragon's Fire (4.0%), Saxon Archer (4.0%) and Castle (3.8%), with Four Kings from Battledown Brewery weighing in at a considerable 7.2% ABV for the adventurous of palate and strong of bowel; beer strengths provided for Ye Tickers, Scratchers & Sadde Varlets.

A special mention for Ye Olde Misty Maiden, a 4.1% chestnut coloured, sweetish session bitter brewed by Bexar County just for the Festival with all proceeds of sale going to the coffers of Clic Sargent, the Pub's charity.

A roastynge-barbeque supplied ye local peasantry with gratification for the inner serf (it being declared a Feaste-Daye by Ladye of ye Manor, Lindsey D'Pub) and a band of wandering minstrels, including *Seasicke Shugge* provided musical diversion to the delight of ye lower orders and groovers foregathered on Sunday after Vespers.



As usual, a cracking time had by all, busy but not crowded, prices reasonable, friendly & knowledgeable service, well-kept (and served) beer and all ages having a good time and a few beers – which is what it's really all about, is't notte?

Chris 'De Burgundy' Bunyan

Round Up from other local festivals

The local pub festival scene is very healthy and some pubs tried their first festival in recent months. First up the **Chequers, Wrestlingworth** on the late May bank holiday weekend, with an impressive offering of 20 ales on a covered stall in the patio area outside, plus a few more ales at the bar. It was a mix of regional and national ales, featuring Woodfordes, Adnams, Wells and Potton in excellent condition. Real cider was available too with Weston's Old Rose, Franklins Gasper & Fuddle, plus Sheppy's.



The Friday night session was extremely busy with the barbecue proving popular, a sign that the festival would probably sell out. I visited on Saturday afternoon for a while and bumped into local member Ian with a work colleague Mark from California.

Mark was trying some of the ales and telling us about the US micro-brewery scene. I returned on Monday afternoon to see one of the many live music sets over the weekend and noted some of the barrels had finished and many more were well tipped. The festival was winding down and I helped to mop up by purchasing some of the cider to take home. Well done to Dave and the crew - I hope this becomes a regular event.

In July there a swift return to the **Sir William Peel, Sandy** for their 4th Cider Festival. An excellent range of 30+ ciders and a few perries proved very popular in the summer heatwave with ice available on the side. I had another function on in the evening, so it was just a quick afternoon visit for me. I love real cider but sometimes find it too strong for daytime drinking, but staff were quick to point out various ciders of a fruity nature that were only about 4%. Plus they said, why not try the palette of Six Thirds for £7.50 to sample them. I was hooked and order a batch which included Blackberry, Farmyard Fruits, Raspberry Twist and my favourite of the day Rhubarb from Westons. With a wistful glance at the 'burger bar' I made my exit, but vowed to have a longer visit next year.

I had some holiday time in mid summer and missed the Broomstock, Stratton House and Hitchin Beer Festivals. But I managed to persuade March Hare regular, Nigel Coomber to update us on the Hitchin festival before I returned to catch a new festival at the Coach & Horses in Stofold.

Around 25 members of the Hare Beer Bunch, and friends took a coach to the **Hitchin Beer Festival** on the afternoon on Saturday 13th June. It was a first visit to this event for many of the group, and after getting to grips with the token system - which seemed overly complex to start with, though we soon got used to it - we settled down to a very pleasant session. By all accounts the Friday night had been much busier than in previous years, and so the range of beers available by the time we got there was slightly reduced. Those of the group who were looking forward to sampling the darker end of the scale found that choice was particularly limited - the 8XT and Leeds Midnight Bell were the pick of those still on offer.

The rest of us worked our way through the many golden ales and standard bitters, including Great Oakley's Walter Tull and Roosters Birdman, but agreed that the relatively local Brock Bitter from Tring was the unofficial HBB beer of the festival. The *street food* on offer was also enjoyed by many of us and was very good value. All in all, an excellent day out, not at all spoiled by the torrential rain, which we rounded off, of course, with an evening at the March Hare.

In mid July it was the first beer festival at the **Coach & Horses**, Stotfold. It was a brave move for bar manager Karen Ward, but it all worked out extremely well. The event was well attended particularly by local families, where the children enjoyed the garden play area affectionately known as "Coach Towers". There was an outdoor barbecue and live music, with the Cardinals Kings providing a fantastic set on the Sunday afternoon. At the bar, the late addition of a 5th handpump allowed Karen to run 4 rotating festival ales, plus Eagle IPA and several ciders served from the cellar.



The first ale to sell out was Buntingford Chinook, followed by Nethergate Sweeney Todd and Theakston XB. Seven more festival ales went, plus 4 barrels of Eagle. The hot weather also helped increase the sale of lager, wine and real cider too. Charles Wells were impressed with the event and have promised Karen a specially brewed house ale at 4% called "Pull 'Em Up". Karen was also planning a 'real cider' event for the late August bank holiday weekend. Well done to the Coach & Horses, we look forward to the new house ale.

John Goodlet

DIARY DATES

- SEP.** 15th, Branch Meeting, Sir William Peel, Sandy, 8 pm
27th, Cider stall @ Potton Apple Day, St Mary's Hall, Potton 12-4pm
- OCT.** 7th-10th, Branch members running CAMRA tombola & products stand at Bedford Beer Festival - volunteers wanted, contact Barry Price
31st, All Beds Branches Social in London, meet Bayswater Arms, 11.30am
- NOV.** 10th, Branch Meeting, Plough, Langford, 8 pm
- DEC.** 4th, Branch Xmas Social, Engineers Arms, Henlow 8 pm

BEER FESTIVALS

- Sep.** 25th-27th. The 4th "Grin and Beer It" Beer Festival, March Hare, Dunton
30th-3rd Oct. St. Albans Beer Festival, Alban Arena, Civic Centre **CAMRA**
- Oct.** 7th-10th. The 38th Bedford Beer & Cider Festival, Corn Exchange, St. Paul's Square, Bedford **CAMRA**
8th-11th. Rising Sun Beer festival, Everton Road, Potton
16th-17th. Cambridge Octoberfest, University Social Club, Mill Lane **CAMRA**
22nd-25th. Trafalgar Beer Festival, Half Moon, Queen Street, Hitchin
21st-25th. Engineers Arms Beer Festival, High Street, Henlow
26th-31st. Norwich Beer Festival, St. Andrew's & Blackfriars Halls **CAMRA**
- Dec.** 25th-29th. Pigs Ear Beer Festival, Round Chapel, Powerscroft Road, Hackney **CAMRA**

Magna Carta
1215-2015

Booze on the Ouse
St Ives Beer &
Cider Festival



Booze on the Ouse Beer & Cider Festival
Burgess Hall, Westwood Road, St. Ives

Thurs 8th to Sat 10th October 2015

Opening times:

Thurs 8th 5 -11 pm

Fri 9th 12 noon to 11 pm

Sat 10th 12 noon to 10 pm

Casket Cryptic Crossword

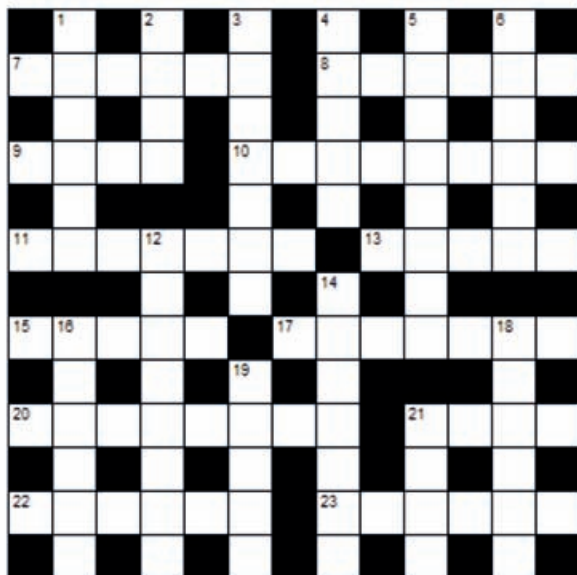
As before, all answers have been used as names of beers and/or breweries at some time somewhere in the world or have some other connection (however tenuous) with the wonderful world of beer and drink.

Across

- 7 Local cider is served in jug as per usual (6)
- 8 Cut after backing rule gets one a thump (6)
- 9 Backyard drinks service (4)
- 10 German cyclist has go at being a driver (8)
- 11 A long trip means not seeing Karen in donkey's years when touring (7)
- 13 Is it okay to have a sweet wine in here? (5)
- 15 Dark and from the wood but could be flat? (5)
- 17 Has-been brew said to be for men only (7)
- 20 No thanks to Magna Carta, fancy brandy (8)
- 21 Several served in a glass is fine but one on its own can be a problem (4)
- 22 See 21 Down
- 23 So lord collapses and dribbles in anticipation (6)

Down

- 1 Young beer, available to order, mail order - no lie! (6)
- 2 Flower of Scotland, with a few whiskies on the side (4)
- 3 Nethergate gardener takes on apprentice. (7)
- 4 Enthusiastically drinks syrups after getting the point (5)
- 5 I hear drunken old men were blamed for getting youngsters boozing (8)
- 6 Predict Georgia will buy wine here (6)
- 12 Not a butch beer? (8)
- 14 A tumble as American hops (7)
- 16 During prohibition branch will provide you with beer (6)
- 18 Safe for consumption but I bleed freely (6)
- 19 Have a swift one, maybe a rum, after changing the gas. (5)
- 21/22 Morris man performing at a jam? (4,6)



Compiled by Chris Freeman

The solution is on Page 26



THE ENGINEERS ARMS

Over 100
Traditional real ales
Ciders & Perries



Open All Day
Everyday from
12pm
Free Admission

● 20TH BEER FESTIVAL ●

Wednesday 21st – Sunday 25th October

Wednesday Night "The Incredible Dr Busker" + Sunday "Boo Sells" (Singer/Guitarist)
Snacks Available Daily, Food Wednesday to Saturday Evening

Local Hotel offering Special Festival Rates - Call
 The Airman Hotel, 01462 850853 Quoting Ref: Ref Fest. 20
 Nearest Train Station:- Arlesey (Kings Cross - Peterborough)
 For Camping or caravanning facilities - Henlow Bridge Lakes,
 Arlesey Road, Henlow - Call 01462 812645

www.engineersarms.co.uk 01462 812284



Beer Festival

ENTRY
£3.00
per person includes
unlimited pint glass
& beer guide







Thursday 5th November - Sunday 8th November 2015

Join us at **The Bedford Swan Hotel** to enjoy a choice of over 30 local & national award winning cask ales, ciders & perries, with Live Entertainment & locally sourced food."

FREE entrance for CAMRA Members (£1 charge for branded glass if required)

Call us on **01234 346 565** or email info@bedfordswanhotel.co.uk
 Visit: www.bedfordswanhotel.co.uk

 The Bedford Swan
  @BedfordSwan

THE BEDFORD SWAN
 BEDFORD
 ★ ★ ★ ★

BORN AND BREWED IN BEDFORD

Official Beer of
BEDFORD
BLUES



Brewed in the heart of Bedford with the finest Red Tractor accredited malted barley and natural mineral water from our well, sunk by Charles Wells himself in 1904.

Wells Eagle guarantees a quality pint, every time.

Come and visit Eagle's nest!

To arrange a brewery tour, please contact
01234 272766 and ask for the Brewery
Tour Representative.



www.facebook.com/eaglebeer

BEDFORD'S BEER FOR THE BEDFORD BLUES

In-Cider Dealings

The last few months saw two key victories in the National Campaign to protect and promote Real Cider and Perry. In the spring I signed a petition to support the government continuing to make small cider producers exempt from paying taxation, a measure which has been in place since cider duty was introduced. However, the European Commission have lobbied the UK government to abolish the tax break and place a £2,700 tax burden on the UK's smallest producers, who make up to 70 hectolitres per year, usually with sales of less than £10,000.

By June, the CAMRA petition had raised 26,000 signatures and was sent to 10 Downing Street. In the July budget, chancellor George Osborne gave a firm commitment to upholding the current tax exemption. But the battle is not over, as the exemption cannot be legally upheld unless the European directive on excise duty is reviewed and amended. The threat to this tax break may return in a few years.

Within CAMRA circles there has been a growing debate in recent years over the definition for 'Real Cider and Perry'. We need to combat some of the larger cider producers who mass market new products, with non-traditional ingredients and unusual methods of dispense. The main discussion has revolved around the use of fruits and other additives and indeed the CAMRA definition stated that 'no added flavourings to be used'. Some purists would say that only apples be used in cider and pears in perry, but we needed a more modern and practical approach.

Further research by CAMRA has identified clear and unequivocal historical evidence, as documented in *vinetum britannicum a treatise on cider*, that the addition of various fruits, herbs, spices etc, to cider has been a tradition dating back as far as 1676. My own research into local pub history has revealed that many pubs still had orchards during Victorian & Edwardian times. Some pubs were producing their own cider on a small scale. As such, there may be little recorded documentation about local cider recipes and ingredients, but I firmly believe that whatever seasonal fruits were available, they would have ended up in the cider.

So I welcome the new definition of traditional cider and perry that was accepted by resolution at the National AGM in April. It states that "*no added flavourings to be used, except pure fruits, vegetables, honey, hops, herbs and spices, yet no concentrates, cordials or essences*".

The last part of the definition is important as this does relate to mass producers of cider. They often cut corners by using fruit concentrates instead of the real fruit juice or flesh. However, some of those ciders end up with a single heavily sweetened overpowering flavour. I have occasionally found this with beer too, as I am a lover of dark beers such as Plum Porter or Vanilla Stout and the use of concentrates can sometimes be overwhelming to the point, you are not sure that you are drinking an ale at all.

I love a traditional pint of cider or perry, but in recent years have been annoyed that most ciders are too strong. As a driver, trying to visit pubs in this rural area, I am quite rightly and willingly constrained to a pint or two of a low gravity beer. But this means I cannot drink scrumpy style cider and remain within the legal limit. I accept that the production method for making cider means the product will be at least 6% and often higher. However, the range of ciders has dramatically increased now that many cider makers are adding fruit juices, a process which dilutes and reduces the gravity. As mentioned on page 8, whilst attending a local pub festival, I was able to sample thirds of six 4% ciders, giving me with more choice, yet remaining within the limit.

I am pleased that cider producers are making lower gravity ciders now, as it will become more important in the future. As a Scot, who still ventures north of the border frequently, I now have to modify my drinking culture in light of the lower drink driving limit, which is just less than a pint of normal strength beer. This new limit may well come to England and Wales in the coming years, so cider makers may be ahead of the curve. However, breweries too need to consider a return to Victorian times, when Table beer or Luncheon ales, were available to the masses at about 2%-3%. The difficult challenge is how to get flavour into low gravity beers—a topic for another day.

Back on the local Real Cider front, the branch is preparing to run their annual cider stall at the Potton Apple Day. So why not come along and sample some local cider & perry or even better volunteer to man the stand. The event is on Sunday 27th September from 12 noon to 4pm at St. Mary's Hall, Potton. We will have a range local ciders, hopefully including the lowest gravity one available.

John Goodlet

Engineers Arms on Tour Again

On 24th June, landlord Kevin organised a minibus trip primarily to visit the **Black Lion** at Leighton Buzzard, which is the current holder of CAMRA Bedfordshire pub of the year, but also to try some other nearby pubs. Our first port of call was at **Axe and Compass** at Heath and Reach. There was a limited choice of beers, just Greene King Abbott and IPA, plus Jennings Best 3.8%. The pub had a large garden, a restaurant and was situated in pleasant countryside.

Next pub was **The Anglers Retreat** situated alongside the Grand Union Canal at Marsworth. On tap were Jennings Snecklifter 5.1%, St Austells Tribute 4.2%, Tring Side Pocket 3.6% & Marstons Help the Heroes 4.2%. The pub had a large garden with an aviary in very pleasant surroundings. Sadly, I noticed the other pub next to the canal is now closed, a sign of the times.



Onwards to another pub situated by the canal, **The Grove Lock**, Leighton Buzzard. This is a very large and busy Fullers Pub with plenty of garden space, clearly focused on food, but also selling real ale. The available beers were Fullers London Pride 4.1%, ESB 5.5% and a new golden ale called Oliver's Island 3.8%. Now to the object of our trip, **The Black Lion** at Leighton Buzzard owned by Gary Burlison. The building dates from 1676 and has been completely refurbished by Gary. It is a very pleasant town pub although it doesn't offer food.

At the bar were Partners Tabatha 6%, Milestone Rich Ruby 4.5%, North Cotswold Best 4%, and Nethergate Suffolk County 4%, plus 3 ales from Leighton Buzzard Brewery - Centennial IPA 6.8%, Black Buzzard 5.8% & Restoration Ale 4.6%. Nikki the licensee put on a very tasty buffet for us in the garden, watched over by a very inquisitive pub dog looking down from a rooftop above. Gary joined us for the rest of our trip.



Our next call was **The Cuckoo** at Toddington, in the building that used to be the old town hall and an art gallery. The landlord of the last 8 months Ben Martin claims that is a micropub, but it is far from it, as it had two spacious rooms and also served four keg Craft beers. Pubs smaller than this for example The Birch Hall Inn at Beck Hole has now recorded 35 people and 2 small dogs into the pub and they realise they are not a micropub. Anyway beers on handpump were Leighton Buzzard Cuckoo Ale 3.8% and Rebel Yell 5%, Wadsworth 6X 4.1%, Slaters Top Totty 4%, Oakham JHB 3.8% and White Park Moonshine 5.2%.

We went to The Plough at Wingfield but we did not receive a friendly welcome. Perhaps they thought we were noisy or they didn't like our dress attire. The pub was very quiet, yet we were asked to go to the garden after we got our drinks. Beers on were Fullers ESB 5.5%, Gales HSB 4.8% & seasonal ale Redwood 4%. We did try to visit another pub on the way home, but it had closed early (Perhaps they heard we were in the area!). Instead we called in to The Old Transporter Ale House on our way back to The Engineers Arms after a very enjoyable trip.

Clifford Luff



www.oakhamales.com Tel 01733 370500
2 Maxwell Road, Woodston, Peterborough. PE2 7JB

THE THORNTON ARMS

01767 681149



The Thornton Arms would like to welcome you to try our great food nights and superb selection of fine real ales.

It's like a pub, but different...

1 Potton Road, Everton, Sandy,
Beds. SG19 2LD

www.the-thornton-arms.co.uk

The Chequers, Wrestlingworth

Great Food, Great Beer, Great Service

'CAMRA's Most Improved Pub of the Year 2015'

Steak Night — Saturday, 19th September:

2 Steak Meals and a
Bottle of House Wine for £25.00

Open Mike Night — Sunday 20th September:

6 - 9pm

Tapas Night — Saturday 26th September:

5 Tapas Dishes and a
Bottle of House Wine for Two - £25.00

Curry Night — Saturday 10th October:

Curry, Rice, Naan, a Side,
Poppadoms and Pickle - £11.95

Italian Night — Saturday 24th October:

Pizza, Herb Potatoes, Italian Salad and a
Bottle of Wine for Two - £25.00

43 HIGH STREET, WRESTLINGWORTH, SANDY, SG19 2EP
WWW.CHEQUERSFREEHOUSE.CO.UK 01767 631818

Bedfordshire's
Premier Micro-brewery



Traditionally Brewed
Fine Real Ales



Other Specials including; Pablo's Princess, Potton Gold, Penny, Phoenix, Porter, chestnut and many more.....

**OPEN TO THE LICENCED TRADE AND PUBLIC
SUPPLIERS OF FINE ALES IN:
CASKS, BOTTLES AND 10 OR 20LTR POLY-PINS**

10 Shannon Place, Potton, Beds - www.pottonbrewery.co.uk - Tel. 01767 261 042



East Beds have selected breweries within 30 miles of Biggleswade. The pubs listed sell at least one local ale of good quality on a regular basis. The benefits of the LocAle scheme are to improve consumer choice, enable local breweries to sell more ales so they can expand and benefit the local economy & an increase in local identity and pride.

Breweries in the scheme

Potton, Potton, Beds.	B&T, Shefford, Beds.	White Park, Cranfield, Beds.
Red, Gt. Staughton, Hunt'don	Buntingford, Royston, Herts.	Red Squirrel, Potten End, Herts.
Wells & Youngs, Bedford.	Alehouse, St Albans, Herts.	L. Buzzard, L. Buzzard, Beds
McMullen, Hertford, Herts.	Concrete Cow, Milton Keynes.	Amphill, Amphill, Beds
Milton, Cambridge, Cambs.	Cambridge Moonshine, Cambs.	Tring, Tring, Herts
Potbelly, Kettering, Northants.	Copper Kettle, Rushden, Nhants	

Pubs in the scheme

Vicars Inn, Arlesey	Golden Pheasant & New inn, Biggleswade	March Hare, Dunton
Chequers, Wrestlingworth	Thornton Arms, Everton	Engineers Arms, Henlow
Sir William Peel, Sandy	Coach & Horses, Stotfold	Coach House & Rising Sun, Potton

Please visit these pubs and enjoy locally produced ales.

Real Cider & Perry in Bedfordshire

Pubs in East Beds branch permanently selling at least one 'Real Cider or Perry'.

Locally produced cider can be ordered from the following outlets:-

Golden Pheasant, Biggleswade
New Inn, Biggleswade
Cock, Broom
March Hare, Dunton
Thornton Arms, Everton
Engineers Arms, Henlow
Old Transporter, Henlow
Sir William Peel, Sandy
Coach & Horses, Stotfold



Apple Cottage, Baldock, Herts
Millwhites, Boxmoor, Herts
Cassels Cider, Cambridge
Franklins Cider, Dunton, Beds
Hereward Cider, Ely, Cambs
Harrold Calvados Society, Harrold, Beds
Eversheds Cider, near Odell, Beds
Pickled Pig, Stretham, near Ely, Cambs
Potton Press, Potton, Beds
Virtual Orchard, Wolverton Mill, Bucks

ASK YOUR LOCAL PUB TO STOCK A REAL CIDER OR PERRY

Yorky Bars - part two

In the last issue I was regaling the tale of a recent visit to York with my wife Carol and fellow CAMRA member Ian from Eaton Ford. We met an old comrade Mick and started our tour of York pubs and we continue from the point where we had just left the **Ackhorne** on St. Martin's Lane. We backtracked to Micklegate and we turned down the hill and across the road to turn left into George Hudson Street then right to the **Corner Pin** in Tanners Row which I'd suggested we visit purely for nostalgic reasons.

Some years ago there was a three-and-a-half week nationwide management lock-out of BT Engineers and associated union members [I used to work for BT]. Many colleagues found that landlords of pubs near the offices or exchanges were willing to open early to afford shelter from the winter cold. The Corner Pin, similar to the Stanley Arms in Bedford (now Bar Citrus) used to provide free whisky to the people on the picket lines when they popped in for a pint and get warm. Probably many landlords benefitted from POETS day as mentioned before and it was a repayment in kind to their regular clients!



The Corner Pin was a bit disappointing with just one Real Ale on, but it was perfectly palatable and the barmaid was quite chatty. After a few minutes waxing lyrically about our past experiences visiting the pub, she revealed that it was now a Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender bar. She seemed a little taken aback when we told her that we didn't care what it was or who used it as long as they enjoyed themselves.

I was reluctant to go to the **Maltings** (back along George Hudson Street and turn right just before Lendal Bridge), as I didn't rate the landlord too highly from a previous visit. But since he only worked lunchtimes we went in and found it was quite busy. It is not a very big pub and as it was too cold to use the terrace overlooking the river, it was standing room only inside. It had a superb range of 8 beers and the bar staff and clientèle were friendly.



After a couple of pints we moved on to our final destination. We crossed Lendal Bridge on the left hand side of the road and walked past the entrance to the Museum Gardens, turn left along St Leonards Place and then right into High Petergate through Bootham Bar. On the right is **Three Legged Mare** is owned by York Brewery and macabrely named after a structure for hanging several people at the same time – a popular pastime in olden days, judging by another nearby pub the “Last Drop Inn”.

Inside is an array of nine handpumps containing most, if not all, of the beers produced by the York Brewery and four guests usually from other Yorkshire or Northern independents. The Wonky Donkey, as the pub is known locally, has a shop-front entrance with two large glass windows and a recessed doorway between them. It's so close to York Minster that it can be seen from one of the settees inside. It was a haven of warmth on a cold night and the service and atmosphere were both first-class. After another pint or two Ian and I said our farewells to Mick and we went back to our hotel.



The next day we popped back into the city to show Ian some of the sights with a stroll up Cliffords Tower, through the Museum Gardens and Stonegate to the Shambles to one of York's most unspoilt pubs, the **Blue Bell** in Fossgate. The pub still retains its Edwardian interior but the bell pushes for waiter service in the tiny back-bar no longer function. This is not really a problem as the furthest seat from the serving hatch is probably no more than twelve feet away. The front bar is even smaller with a maximum capacity of about twelve. In addition there is a bar in the corridor which links the front and back bars and continues through to the back of the pub where the toilets are located.



When I first visited York in 1981 I didn't have a drink here as there was only keg beer on. John Smiths owned the place and they were one of the last brewers to finally switch to Real Ale after producing only keg beers well into the 1980s. Ian had a two pints of Taylor's Landlord while I had orange juice as I was driving back to Sandy later on.

The following Tuesday I received a surprise package from York in the shape of an old Wilkinson "butterfly" razor as I'd mentioned to Mick that I was returning to traditional double-edged razor shaving rather than multi-blade (and I've had the cuts to prove it!). Mick had included a note wishing me the best with the razor and adding that it was "...from Yorkshire's own electronic on line shopping company 'E-BAY GUM'" which I thought, from a bloke in his seventies who doesn't have a computer, was rather witty. Probably one of the reasons we've been mates for thirty-eight years.

We barely made a dent in the number of good pubs that there are in York so, if you fancy a few days away in a friendly city with a surprisingly large choice of decent boozers, then get yourself up the A1/A64 or on one of the many trains to York which usually stop at Stevenage and Peterborough and enjoy yourself.



TRING

BREWERY Co.

Here at Tring Brewery we select the finest ingredients and craft them into a variety of sumptuous, award winning ales. In fact we produce over 25 different cask ales every year.

Take our Tea Kettle Stout. We've blended a variety of roasted malts to achieve chocolate and coffee notes, great depth of colour and a slight smokiness without introducing any acid bitterness. Our bold, red-amber, American hopped Moongazing is crafted to stimulate all your senses. Enter Ridgeway, a traditional English bitter exhibiting a harmonious balance of premium malt and classic hop varieties. Finally, let's not forget Side Pocket for a Toad. Crisp, golden and hoppy. Our best selling beer for a very good reason.

A beer to suit all palates? We'd like to think so.
Available at pubs and our brewery shop.

WWW.TRINGBREWERY.CO.UK

THE HALF MOON

Beer Festival

BEST OF BRITISH

22ND - 25TH OCTOBER



90 REAL ALES, CIDERS & PERRIES
INCL. 18 FRESH HOPPED BEERS FROM KENT

THURSDAY CURRY NIGHT 6PM - 10PM

SATURDAY LIVE ACOUSTIC MUSIC 3PM - 8PM

SUNDAY FAMILY FOLK DAY 12PM - 5PM

57 QUEEN STREET, HITCHIN, HERTS, SG4 9TZ

[@HalfMoonHitchin](https://twitter.com/HalfMoonHitchin) TheHalfMoonHitchin.co.uk

GREAT FOOD AND BAR SNACKS
AVAILABLE DURING ALL SESSIONS

THE B O T T L E M I X



OPENING 10TH OCTOBER



Find us on
Facebook and Twitter



Tel: 07538 107641
Email: thebottlemix@outlook.com

The Yards,
Market Street, Kettering,
Northamptonshire. NN16 0AH



"The Pub with No Bar"



The Cock at Broom

Close to Jordan's Mill, between Shefford & Biggleswade

A Range of Local and National Real Ales Straight from the Cask.
Traditional Games Room.....perfect for a fun night out with
family, friends or work colleagues. Clubs and Societies welcome

**Book our Front, Middle or Dining Room and
even our Unique Games Room for your event**

"We are proud to support local business"
Seasonal Specials, includes locally farmed meats
Specials for the over 55's incl gluten free options.
Join us for Sunday Lunch! Served 12-4pm from £8.95

23 High Street, Broom, Bedfordshire, SG18 9NA
Phone 01767 314411 www.thecockatbroom.co.uk
2014 CAMRA Award Winner

Tour de Bedfordshire Est Stage 5

The Fifth stage of the “Tour de Bedfordshire Est” took place on 21st June with all participants assembling in the **Cricketers** in Ickleford but with the number of participants the lowest since its inception. This was not due to a drop in sponsorship for any of the teams but a slight malfunction at the planning stage where those of us without offspring didn't realise that the date clashed with Father's Day and all the ballyhoo associated with such an auspicious occasion.



After inspecting the progress of the extension at the back of the pub, plus a reasonable pint inside, the “*Grand Départ*” started out for the Half Moon, Hitchin. Nobody let on but I sensed a palpable air of disappointment at the lack of Icklefordians who had bothered to line our processional route toward Hitchin. After all this was our first “Start” outside of Bedfordshire – and I inwardly hoped that the start for the other big, but less well known, cycling “Tour” on 4th July would fair better when they left Utrecht. Television coverage some days later assuaged my fears as there were a few Netherlanders who turned out to wave off the 198 competitors. It was a pleasure to note that the French riders and teams hadn't taken the day off to celebrate the Feast Day of Saint Bertha of Artois (aka Saint Bertha of Blangy) who died on that date in 725AD.

Arriving at the **Half Moon** in the “Lanterne Rouge” position, which I proudly maintained throughout the journey, it was a bit disappointing to reach our first drinks station only to experience great difficulty receiving refreshments immediately due to the swarm of people at the bar. Some of them had obviously come to remember, or at least drink to the memory of, Saint Bertha judging by the colour, condensation and effervescence of the stuff they were consuming as the name of her place of birth has now been hijacked by Anheuser Busch InBev even though the beer is brewed in Leuven, Flemish Brabant. I'm not saying it was the ubiquitous Stella Artois but some customers had made the journey to the pub to drink something other than the excellent real ales and ciders.

After the Half Moon we ambled along to Pirton to visit the **Motte and Bailey** followed by the **Fox** – the gardens of both establishments were ideal spots to soak up the sunshine and the beverages on offer. The Motte and Bailey only had two beers on offer and most of us had Greene King IPA which was perfectly acceptable. The Fox, on the other hand, had five or six real ales and everybody thought that the beer quality was very good.



After leaving Pirton we headed for Shillington, took a sharp left turn at the first road junction to the little rural gem which is the **Musgrave Arms**. I've been visiting this pub for about thirty years and although licensees change, the atmosphere is generally convivial and the beer, although mainly from Greene King and its "approved" suppliers, is always in good nick and this visit was no exception. Again we sat in the garden before leaving for the **Old Transporter Ale House** at Henlow Camp, which was the longest leg of the journey and where the only, quickly forgotten incident of note occurred.

The official tour photographer, back-up, first aider and man who could have put the walking wounded in his car if there had been any was Steve Nakoneczny. He had, unbeknown to us, been sitting awaiting our arrival for one and a half hours. There had obviously been a communication breakdown somewhere in the preceding days, an incorrect ETA compounded by a dodgy map reference. But we were unaware of the problem, and quite frankly at this stage of the proceedings, beyond caring. Anyway we were late; Steve wasn't happy; but we resumed harmonious relationships a day or two later. Sorry Steve!

The beer in the Transporter was excellent and the atmosphere was only marred by one group member who, on his first visit, was much too noisy and used occasional bad language. I apologise to my fellow cyclists and any staff or clientèle who were offended. In parliamentary language I was both "tired" and "emotional" inasmuch that I'd cycled further than I had for several months and near the end of the trip was looking forward to putting my feet up at home.



Finally on to the **Engineers Arms** by which time I'd got used to the sight of my fellow cyclists' back wheels disappearing into the distance. The pub was its usual lively self with football on in the main room and the buzz of conversation elsewhere. The beer was spot on and we sat in the peaceful outdoor area and reflected on an enjoyable and sometimes amusing afternoon, before heading home. I'm sure that my fellow cyclists Alan Britcher, Archie Campbell, cartographer Chris Freeman, Ian Lemin and Steve Mead would join me in thanking the staff and customers at all the hostelrys we visited for their courteous service and friendly banter which were most welcome. May I also add "thanks" to my five fellows for their good company and an enjoyable afternoon?

Come and join us next year. There is no Yellow Jersey or Overall Ranking. It's simply an afternoon out with a few mates which happily combines bikes and beer .

Barry Price



WHAT?UB

whatpub.com

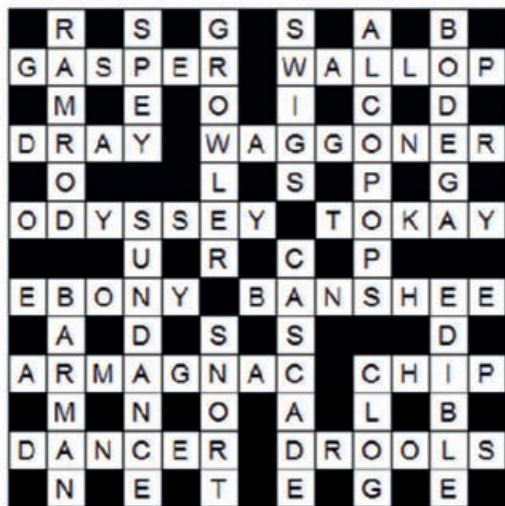
Featuring over 35,000 real ale pubs



Thousands of pubs at your fingertips!



Cryptic Crossword Solution



A Campaign

of Two Halves

Fair deal on beer
pay now!

Save
Britain's
Pubs!



Join CAMRA Today

Complete the Direct Debit form opposite and you will receive 15 months membership for the price of 12 and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription.

Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit www.camra.org.uk/joinus or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to: Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

Your Details

Title _____ Surname _____
Forename(s) _____
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____
Address _____
Postcode _____
Email address _____
Tel No(s) _____

Single Membership £24 ☐ £26 ☐
(UK & EU)
Joint Membership £29.50 ☐ £31.50 ☐
(Partner at the same address)
For Young Member and other concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201.

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

I enclose a cheque for _____
Signed _____ Date _____
Applications will be processed within 21 days

Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title _____ Surname _____
Forename(s) _____
Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____
Email address (if different from main member) _____

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:
Campaign for Real Ale Ltd,
230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW



Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To the Manager _____ Bank or Building Society
Address _____
Postcode _____
Name(s) of Account Holder _____

Bank or Building Society Account Number _____ Branch Sort Code _____

Reference _____

Service User Number **9 2 6 1 2 9**

FOR CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE LTD OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society
Membership Number _____
Name _____ Postcode _____

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Campaign for Real Ale Limited Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Campaign for Real Ale Limited and it will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account. This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payee.

The Direct Debit Guarantee



- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debit.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd or your bank or building society you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
- If you receive a refund you are not entitled to you must pay it back when The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

**Campaigning for Pub Goers
& Beer Drinkers**

**Enjoying Real Ale
& Pubs**

Join CAMRA today – www.camra.org.uk/joinus



CRAFTED
FOR THE

MOMENT

SINCE 1799



GREENE KING
BURY ST EDMUNDS

IPA

HANDCRAFTED INDIA PALE ALE

greenekingipa.co.uk



The Orange Tree

Norton Road, Baldock

We are so proud to have won

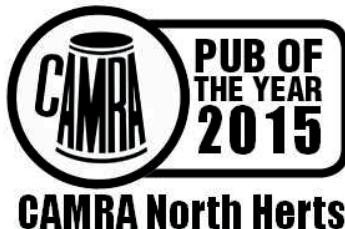
**CAMRA Hertfordshire 2015
Cider Pub of the Year**

with our superb local

Apple Cottage Cider
Baldock's Finest!

Up To 13 Real Ales on Hand Pump
5 Draught Apple Cottage Ciders

**A Cracking Traditional 17th Century Pub with
great home-made food, huge beer garden, pub
games and bottled beer collection.**



Follow us on [twitter](#)

@Orange_Tree_BDK

Follow us on [facebook](#)

Facebook.com/The.Orange.Tree.Baldock