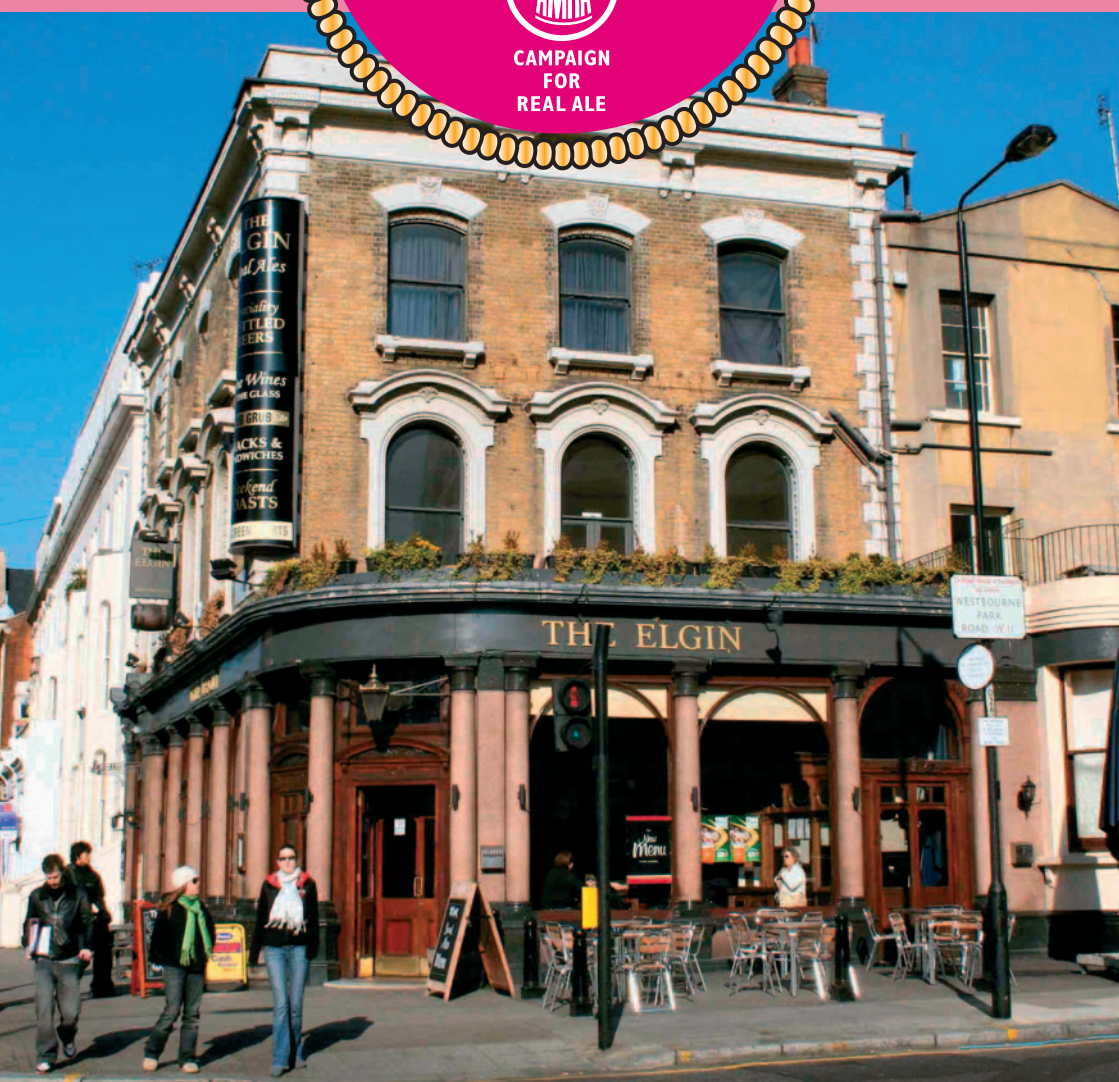


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LONDON DRINKER

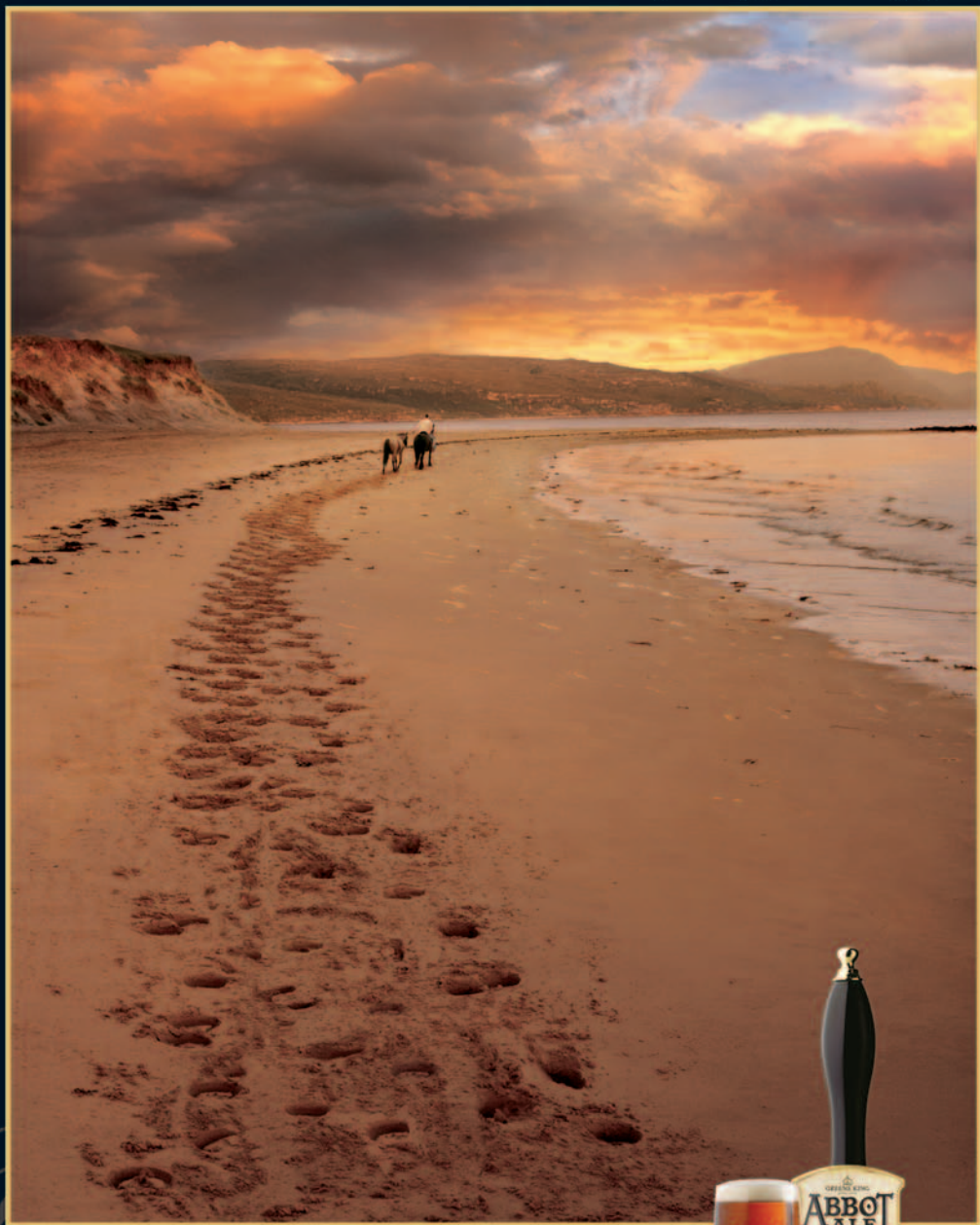
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London Drinker is published by Mike Hammersley on behalf of the London Branches of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale Limited, and edited by Geoff Strawbridge.

Material for publication should preferably be sent by e-mail to geoff@coherent-tech.co.uk.

Press releases and letters by post should be sent to Tony Hedger, Apartment 11, 3 Bewley Road, London SW19 1XE

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Save our pubs

This editorial is dedicated to Dylan the sheepdog, late of my local, the Sultan, SW19. Although he came to the life late, Dylan took to it and became the consummate pub dog. He contributed to what made the pub special. It is sad to think that I won't look around the pub any more and see him stretched out on the carpet like a hearth rug with legs. He made me smile. I will miss him.

This isn't just a parochial self-indulgence. It takes an unpredictable combination of diverse things to make a pub special and many British pubs are special. If not, why would CAMRA sell so many Good Beer Guides year after year? I am not pretending that there are not bad pubs or, more sadly, good pubs that are not welcoming to strangers but, on the whole, we have something special here. Yet there are various interests that want to put the pub out of business. However, I suspect that this is not the intention of most of them; they just cannot see the consequences of their actions.

The change in the licensing laws two years ago was intended to free up pubs and in most cases they now stay open to midnight on Friday and Saturday. Certain elements of the press however choose to report this modest change as '24 hour binge drinking' and despite clear reports to the contrary – only two traditional pubs in the whole country actually operate 24 hour licences – insist that we are

approaching some sort of drunken apocalypse. Why? Just to sell papers? I can't see what else.

The new licensing laws allow the authorities to control pubs and clubs much more effectively than before but little use of the full powers is made and worse. For example, some police forces still try to close pubs on the spot when they find that the 'Designated Premises Supervisor' is not present despite the Government several times having issued guidance that this interpretation is wrong.

The smoking ban didn't help, of course. I will not reopen the debate here but there was inevitability to it and most pubs would probably have coped, especially with the good weather coming. Until, that is, the extraordinary increase in duty in the recent budget. My reading of the trade press suggests that, in consultation, the Treasury appeared to have accepted that the pub trade needed help, and so the increase in duty came as a genuine shock. It does not even make sense as a simple money-raising device. I can only assume that this was the knee-jerk reaction of certain political advisors who took heed of the dismal newspaper headlines mentioned above and thought that this would look as if the Government was doing something about the 'scourge' of binge-drinking. Wrong. Damaging the pub trade is exactly what the Government should not be doing. They should be looking at

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something more imaginative such as duty reductions for locally supplied beer.

According to one of the London free newspapers, a line of cocaine is now cheaper than a pint in Central London and if Government policies lead to the closure of even more pubs then Class A drugs will probably be easier to obtain. That cannot be what was intended but it is what they - or rather, we - are going to get.

Then we have the health lobby. As I have said before, no-one is going to ignore sensible advice and we all know that excessive alcohol intake is damaging. I would have thought that drinking at home was likely to be more damaging than in the social surroundings of the pub. Do organisations like the Alcohol Health Alliance simply want to give us advice, though, or are there some of them who want to do away with the consumption of

alcohol altogether? We must pin down the organisations concerned so that we know the truth of their intentions.

The problem of under-age drinking is often thrown into this argument but this has little to do with proper pubs. The problem exists mainly with the town centre 'circuit' venues but again effective enforcement of the new licensing laws is the answer. Pubs - local or circuit - cannot however be held responsible for the consumption of alcohol sold by supermarkets or corner shops in parks or shopping malls and suggestions that prices should be raised to control this problem are wrong especially when, as with the recent duty increases, supermarkets can simply absorb the higher costs. Hit the right target; enforce the law instead of penalising everybody - or is that part of the hidden agenda?

It has to be said that the pub trade at the top level does not

help itself. Some pub-owning companies are half-hearted about running pubs because they know that there is the property value to fall back on if the pub does not make money. The conditions that they impose on their leasehold tenants in particular are not something that would be tolerated in many other trades. I have every admiration for those who keep their pubs going in the current climate.

Finally, there is one group of people who really can make a difference - drinkers. To quote the slogan from the old CAMRA t-shirt: '*a pub is for life, not just Christmas*'. Just as Peter Sutcliffe said in his editorial last issue, we have got to get out there and use our pubs. This is not news, I know, but for the sake of us drinkers of cask conditioned beer, it cannot be said enough. Use it or lose it.

Tony Hedger



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CAMRA resolves action against pubco constraints

CAMRA's annual Conference, held in Cardiff in April, unanimously resolved to seek legislation to ensure that pub companies with more than 500 pubs allow their managers, lessees and tenants the right to stock one cask-conditioned beer of their own choice at a price negotiated by themselves, free from the pub company's portfolio. Keith Watkins of CAMRA Walsall Branch has kindly agreed to publication here of his speech proposing the motion.

There is one major force working against the future of the British pub and against the interest of the pub industry. That force is the greed of the large pub owning companies. In theory the tenants of these vast estates run their own business; in practice they operate within a financial straitjacket imposed on them by the pubcos.

Beer has to be purchased from the pubco's limited portfolio at an inflated price. Such portfolios often mean that a local micro has no outlet for its beer in its own area. The range of approved beers a tenant can take is minuscule compared to the range now available. Any tenant caught obtaining beer from a source other than the pubco can be subject to a heavy fine or termination of contract.

Should a tenant be successful against the odds and increase his barrelage, then the pubco increases the rent. Surely the only industry where success is penalized. Good tenants are

leaving the trade, not necessarily through lack of business but because they cannot cope with the high rents and the restrictions imposed on them - because they do not have the freedom to run their own business.

Even when a pub closes for good, the pubco is still a winner: it has the, often considerable, property value. The huge purchasing power of the pubcos gives them a significant and unacceptable degree of control of the brewing industry. The SIBA delivery scheme is a welcome but minor concession.

I've spoken to some tenants in our branch area: let me give you a few examples.

One tenant enquiring if could go free of the tie was told yes but his already considerable rent would be doubled, or he could have one free line with a £37.50 surcharge. Finally the offer was withdrawn.

A 9 gallon of Broadside from the pubco costs £98.89; the tenant could obtain one himself for £55.

A tenant runs out of beer and requests permission to get two 9s in himself. Told no he must go through the pubco and pay £80 delivery charge. This same Marston's tenant also tells me he can obtain Banks's Mild £12 cheaper than from the people who brew it.

A tenant two miles from the Beowulf brewery is denied the chance to obtain beer direct from the brewer - instead it has to

come via the pubco with a £40 surcharge.

Some deals are better than others but permeating the whole lot is the lack of freedom to run a business - the sense that the more effort the tenant puts in the more he will be penalised.

For us the pubcos mean yet more Pedigree, Speckled Hen and Greene King IPA instead of Thomas Salts, Coniston Bluebird or Six Bells Bitter. I think much of what I've said is already known but, unlike in the 70s and 80s, CAMRA has been reluctant to tackle it. Cask beer is riding the crest of a wave. It may be that choice and certainly quality are better than they ever have been. This is something we should celebrate, encourage and enjoy. Cask beer is our right and choice is our right. I see this motion as the start of a movement to give the tenant a degree of freedom to run his own business, to increase the market for small brewers and help to stem pub closures.

In almost every industry the tenant rents premises and is then free to run his own business - why not ultimately with the pub owning companies? Cask beer should be a free market for:

- those who want to brew it;
 - those who want to sell it; and
 - those who want to drink it.
- NOT those who want to MANIPULATE it.

Keith Watkins
CAMRA Walsall Branch

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Echoes of the past

Marston's – Wolverhampton & Dudley as was – has acquired Ryland Thompson Limited, the parent company of Refresh UK plc, the operators of the Wychwood Brewery in Witney, Oxfordshire, which brews Hobgoblin and Brakspear as well as Prince Charles's Duchy Originals Organic Ale. Refresh also have contracts with Wadworth, Thatchers (cider), Löwenbräu and Innis & Gunn and are very active in the take-home trade (ie supermarkets).

This continues Marston's strategy of buying up local breweries such as Jennings and Ringwood so as to offer a combination of locally brewed ales and national brands. It comes across as a wonderful concept but to me it has terrible echoes of the old Whitbread 'umbrella'. There must come a time when surplus capacity and economies of scale

(or 'synergies' as I understand they are called now) will come to the fore and breweries will close.

One curious point: Refresh reduced the strength of Wychwood Hobgoblin at the end of February from 5% ABV to 4.5%, the same as Pedigree. The purchase must have been in hand at that time, so it makes you wonder why.

Here we go again

There is a family-owned brewery in which an investment company has a substantial stake and they are unhappy with the company's share structure, demanding sweeping changes. If you are wondering why I am repeating the Young's story, I am not; this time it is Adnams although the investment company is our old friends Guinness Peat Group. GPG, who under the 'A' and 'B' share structure, have a 5% holding

but only 2.5% voting shares, are also unhappy with Adnams' corporate communications. One of the causes of complaint is the expansion of Adnams' Cellar & Kitchen Stores network. We are getting one in Richmond apparently. Adnams predictably deny this and say that there is no support for any change to the share structure. In the year ended 31 December, Adnams' operating profit rose 2.6% to £4.2 million with property sales increasing this to £7.5 million.

Destroying the past

Coors have announced that they are closing the Coors Visitors Centre - originally the Bass Museum - because the American brewing giant has decided that it can no longer afford its £1 million yearly running costs and numbers through the door are declining despite their having "tried everything" to increase interest.

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Try a fresh perspective

For hundreds of years, the historic town of Burton upon Trent has been recognised as the capital of British brewing and the town's rich brewing history has been kept alive in Britain's only national brewing museum. Coors originally planned to close the museum quickly but after pressure from the local MP Janet Dean and a campaign in the Burton Mail, they have softened their stance by offering a free lease of the building, £100,000 a year and a one-off £200,000 payment to anyone who came up with a viable business plan. Hopefully, something positive will come out of this.

A group led by beer writer Roger Protz and including Fuller's, Young's and CAMRA did open exploratory talks about having the museum move to London but the cost was prohibitive. Unless, as Roger suggests, our new Mayor of London can step in?

The things that they say

Jane Kennedy, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, said on Radio 4 on 5 April that the alcohol duty increases had been "broadly welcomed". She didn't say by whom. Meanwhile, her colleague, the Licensing minister Gerry Sutcliffe, speaking to the Morning Advertiser as, in his own words "a champion of the pub trade", urged Chancellor of the Exchequer Alistair Darling to postpone the duty increase and added: "I think that the industry's right to be upset". He later said that although he has not been misquoted: "My comments do not actually reflect my views. I fully support the tax measures in the budget, and the chancellor's decisions on tax. Alcohol duty increases will go towards helping some of the poorest members of our society". At least, if, as promised, some of the money goes to increased heating allowances for pensioners, then they won't freeze as they sit miserably at home, having been priced out of

their local pub.

I liked Sandy Toksvig's comment on the BBC Radio 4 *News Quiz* that if drinks got any more expensive, she would enquire about renting rather than buying. Not quite sure how that would work though...

Health and welfare

Giles Thorley, chief executive of Punch Taverns, has joined the criticism of the recent increase in alcohol duty. He said: "we all get frustrated by the way that politicians use an excuse to pass on what is effectively a tax hike. The suggestion that the increase was designed to mitigate issues of binge drinking is quite frankly ridiculous. It could have the effect of migrating more people to buying off-trade. The pub is the home of responsible drinking. The number of restrictions that already exist as a result of recent government legislation means that you are much safer drinking in the pub than anywhere else." Some will no doubt comment that he would say that, wouldn't he but that doesn't mean that he is wrong.

Once again, the Government is issuing confusing health advice, this time regarding pregnancy. Back in the autumn, NICE (the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) said that a small glass of wine, half-pint of beer or single measure of spirits per day was permissible after the first 16 weeks of pregnancy. Now their Implementation Systems Director says that "women should ideally be advised not to drink" although she added that there was no evidence of harm to the baby from two glasses of wine a week. The Government's Chief Medical Officer said, "I welcome this updated guidance".

Fortunately, the Government is set to launch a new £10m TV advertising campaign which hopefully will end the confusion about units of alcohol in drinks. The Department of Health is

expected to officially launch the campaign later this month. A comment from the trade was that it was a shame that the Government couldn't launch something similar to explain the constant rise in duty.

A curious anomaly has arisen with the smoking ban in Holland. The smoking of cannabis has long been allowed in certain bars and it has been agreed that this can continue, so long as the cannabis is used neat and has no tobacco mixed with it.

How about this for a touch of 'New Puritanism'? Alcohol Concern have complained about the labels for Wye Valley's Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout because the lady in question is showing a bit too much thigh and could possibly not be wearing any underwear. Even the Portman Group dismissed this one, saying that it "indicated that the complainant's imagination had got the better of them".

Law and order

Here's another piece of legislation to look out for: The Criminal Law (Consolidation) Act 1995. It was by using this measure that the Central Constabulary in Scotland stopped the East Fife football team celebrating their winning of the Scottish League Third Division – their first trophy in 54 years. Their Grand Prix-style champagne-spraying apparently "presented a health & safety issue, particularly with the number of families with children in the vicinity". As fan Eugene Clarke commented: "How this action will help the good people of Falkirk sleep easier in their beds I cannot imagine".

Still, some can take a more enlightened view. I hope that cartoonist Harry Venning will excuse me quoting from his excellent Guardian strip *Clare in the Community*. Clare the social worker is standing outside a pub with a policeman. She remarks:

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'So, 24 hour drinking. What have the social consequences been?' The policeman replies: 'Disastrous. And every police officer I know feels the same way. The boozier behind the station used to do us all a lovely little lock-in but the fun went out of it when everyone else could do it'.

New build restrictions

Whilst we are losing pubs at a frightening rate, replacing them is not now going to be as simple or as cheap. Our good friend Mr Darling has announced plans that will require all new commercial buildings to be 'zero carbon' by 2019. This means that all new pubs, shops and offices will have to be built with green technology such as solar panels and wind turbines to ensure they have no carbon footprint.

Leaving closed pubs empty appears not to be the best of ideas. A closed McMullens pub in

Welwyn Garden City and a closed Greene King pub in Sheffield have both been burned down. With the latter, it was the third arson attack in less than a month. An empty pub in Lincoln has been attacked twice by scrap metal thieves, taking the copper piping and even the lead from the windows.

News from Wetherspoons

Sales for the 13 weeks ended 27 April were static, which is an improvement on the previous 1.6% fall over the previous 39 weeks. Their Real Ale Festival made a big contribution to this.

The company is to hire extra staff to clear and clean tables at peak times. The additional workers are intended to make its pubs more presentable to customers and are said to be costing £4 million.

JDW have also opened two

new outlets at Heathrow Airport's wonderful new Terminal Five. I suppose that there are worse places to sit and wait for your luggage. This brings the number of JDW outlets at the airport to a staggering twenty-five.

For those of you who tried the Tokyo Black beer in JDW's recent festival, you might like to know that it was brewed by a renowned Japanese brewer, Toshi Ishii of the Yo-Ho Brewery. He was invited to England by JDW and brewed the beer at Marstons in Burton on Trent, which he found really exciting.

News from Fuller's

Congratulations to Simon Maughan from Ealing who ran this year's London Marathon dressed as giant bottle of London Pride. As part of their St George's day celebrations, Fuller's made cask 1845 Ale available in



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nine selected pubs. Despite reports on the 'Save Gales' website, Gales Butser Bitter has not been dropped.

News from Young's

Young's programme of pub acquisition continues with five pubs being acquired in the Paddington, Shepherds Bush and Fulham areas. A further three pubs have been acquired from M&B, two of which are 'O'Neills' outlets which will revert to their original names. A newly-built pub will open in Hendon any time now. The building that will replace the now-demolished Plough at Clapham Junction will include a pub, due to open mid-2009.

Youngs have made Caledonian Deuchars IPA available as a guest beer in selected pubs.

News from the trade

I will be honest; after what I reported last issue, I was

expecting now to be writing Mitchells & Butlers' corporate obituary. Although they still have problems, there was no immediate cash flow problem and so the 'merger' with Punch Taverns did not proceed and M&B even put in a bid for Punch's managed pubs operation, Spirit, although this has not progressed either. The negotiations with the private equity investors mentioned previously continue with a 30% stake on offer and M&B has hired the LEK consultancy to review its future options, including whether it should remain independent, which the company believes it can. In the meantime, Robert Tchenguiz has increased his stake in M&B to 23%, at a cost of £40 million.

The takeover by Carlsberg and Heineken of Scottish & Newcastle was agreed by S&N's shareholders and was due to be completed by the end of April.

Carlsberg themselves however reported a first quarter loss of 129 million Kroner (£13.6 million). This was attributed to rising commodity prices. Not everybody was happy. Tim Martin of Wetherspoons took the matter to the Competition Commission because he was worried about Heineken's attitude to price. Apparently Heineken refused to supply JDW with its Amstel lager because JDW wanted to sell it at £1.99 per pint. Go on, Tim, put another real ale on instead; you know it makes sense.

At the same time however, S&N bought out the remaining share of Caledonian Brewing Company for an undisclosed sum. The Harviestoun Brewery, which was wholly-owned by CBC, was however not included in the deal. Two of the founder shareholders in CBC, Sandy Orr and Donald MacDonald, and long term shareholder Stephen T Crawley

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have bought the brewery from Caledonian, thereby preserving its independent status.

Enterprise Inns are to convert formally to a Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT). This is a more tax efficient status for any company whose income is made up of at least 75% in rents and the consent of HM Revenue and customs is required. It does however give the impression that Enterprise is now a property company that happens to own pubs rather than being a pub company.

Punch Taverns have reported a 1% rise in pre-tax profits for their last half-year to £133 million. This was despite a 2% fall in sales in their leased pubs for the 28 weeks ended 1 March. Punch Chief Executive Giles Thorley commented that he thought that the market would recover this summer but long-term saw no end to pub closures.

The owners of Guinness, the Diageo Group, have announced that they will be keeping the St James's Gate site in Dublin. There had been rumours that following a review, it would be closed and a new plant built on a 'brownfield' site. This will still go ahead - to create a 'world-class, state of the art brewery' - but now only half of the existing 250-year old site will be sold off and the other half redeveloped. The sale will raise £400 million but the developments will cost £520 million. Guinness will however be closing other plants in Kilkenny and Dundalk with the total loss of 425 jobs. The Guinness Storehouse, Ireland's top tourist attraction, will remain unchanged. As part of their commitment to tradition, Guinness also recently reintroduced advertising featuring their famous toucan.

Shepherd Neame appear to be bucking the trend. Their turnover

in the six months ended December rose 3.7% although their profit fell 3.3% to £4.7 million. Chief Executive Jonathan Neame acknowledged that the first few months of the winter had been tough but was very positive about the future and commented that their 20-odd managed pubs in London were outperforming their rural counterparts. One of these, the Old Doctor Butler's Head in Moorgate, has won top prize in the company's pub awards.

Dorset Brewing Company Ltd in Weymouth has taken over the running of Dorchester's brew pub Tom Brown's on the 31st March. In a deal with the Pub's owners Oak Taverns, DBC will take on the brewing of the pub's established brands, Tom Brown's Bitter, Flashman's Clout and Old Harry's Midnight Blinder, and the management of Tom Brown's pub.

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Adnams have released a new bottled beer, East Green bitter, which they claim to be Britain's first carbon-neutral beer with less than 1p-worth of emissions per bottle.

The latest initiative from the Portman Group, the drinks industry's collective conscience, concerns the removal of beer brand names from children's sizes of replica football shirts. This will start with Coors and the Carling brand. Speaking on BBC Radio 4, the Portman Group's spokesman said that they were not in favour of a blanket ban on all alcohol sports sponsorship, they were simply promoting brand responsibility.

Around the pubs

Sadly, one of the pubs to fall among the current closures is the Duke of Albany in New Cross which, under the name of the Winchester, was the pub that featured in the cult horror film *Shaun of the Dead*. The film ends with the main characters barricading themselves into the pub to escape the zombies. No such luck in fighting off the developers.

One pub in Oldham, Lancashire has been given a new lease of life as Britain's first Islamic pub. It has become the Halal Inn, described by its new owners as a "gathering place for people who abide by strict Islamic rulings and don't like going to places where they serve alcohol." It retains the dart board and pool table plus karam, an Asian game similar to billiards. It also has a prayer room and a steam room, with traditional Nasheed songs on the jukebox. It may not serve beer but if it fulfills the role of a community local then that has got to be preferable to it being turned into flats. It also has some historical resonance because temperance pubs were quite frequent in the North West at one time.

If pubs are to survive, they

need to diversify. The latest initiative from Gill Gibson and Martin Few at the Land of Liberty, Peace and Plenty at Heronsgate is a book club. Set up following a suggestion from several regulars, the club will meet at 8pm on the first Sunday of each month and will be hosted by local CAMRA member, Marion Birch.

Singer Pete Doherty, in between spells at Her Majesty's Pleasure, appears to have become a pub preservation campaigner. He staged an impromptu gig at the Torriano in Kentish Town to help the campaign to keep the pub open and also voiced support of keeping open the nearby music venue, the Bull and Gate. Mr Doherty said: "*It would be sad to see another pub in the Kentish Town area developed. It cuts up the community. A public house is exactly what it says – a house for the public*". Whatever you think of him, you cannot argue with the sentiment.

If, despite all the gloom, anyone fancies giving the pub trade a go, Hoopers Bar in Denmark Hill/East Dulwich have a vacancy for a pub manager. If anyone is interested, contact 07956 502152/020 7733 4797.

We ask the questions

I have received a press release from the Quiz League of London announcing that their Supporter's Plate award for this year has gone to the One Tun, Saffron Hill, EC1. The plate recognizes any individual, team or venue who has supported the League's efforts.

I know that pub quizzes are very popular and help bring much needed cash into pubs. So if anyone wants to find out more about the League, a not-for-profit organization founded in 1990, their website is www.qll.org.uk.

And finally...

Here is proof that drinking at home does you no good. This

is a quote from a chap in Sevenoaks whose girlfriend had walked out on him. "*When I moved in, I said that I wouldn't spend so much time down the pub. There's no pleasing some women*". All he had done was to install drinks optics and a dartboard in her bathroom.

According to a study carried out for SABMiller, British drinkers spend more time in the pub than our continental neighbours. Apparently, on average, after work we arrive at the pub at 6.14pm and an average visit will last four hours and 27 minutes, which more or less takes you to chucking-out time. I don't know if the surveyors noticed that. The French spend an average of two hours 35 minutes in their bars and the Dutch three hours 30 minutes.

Up to 100 pubs and bars in the US state of Minnesota have found an ingenious way to flout the smoking ban. The law in the state allows actors in plays still to smoke, so some bars have become theatres and made their customers the actors.

The following was forwarded to me by CAMRA's Regional Director for London, Steve Williams. Apparently, HM Revenue & Customs is said to be 'mulling its response' to the potential introduction of a negative ABV drink into the UK market by Dutch company Hixen & Boordt. The drink counteracts the effect of alcohol for which reason its producers say it should be subsidised by the Treasury in the same way that positive ABV drinks are subject to Duty. Animal testing is said to have shown very positive effects in both rabbits and rats. Co-ordination in the animals is markedly improved but skunks, apparently, remain particularly difficult to sober up. I wonder if the release date of 1 April had any significance here?

Tony Hedger

CAMRA Greater London 2008 Pub of the Year competition

This year's competition for the award of CAMRA's Greater London Pub of the Year includes three pubs from last year's competition: the **Robin Hood & Little John**, 78 Lion Road, Bexleyheath; the **Wonder**, 1 Batley Road, Enfield and **Woodies**, Thetford Road, New Malden and three previous entrants: the **Olde Mitre**, 1 Ely Court, Ely Place, Hatton Garden; the **Harp**, 47 Chandos Place, Charing Cross and the **Red Lion**, 13 St Mary's Road, Ealing. The remaining six pubs enter as their local Branch Pub of the Year for the first time. These are the **Green Dragon**, 60 High Street, Croydon; the **Junction Tavern**, 101 Fortress Road, Kentish Town;

the **Roebuck**, 130 Richmond Hill, Richmond; the **Blythe Hill Tavern**, 319 Stanstead Road, Forest Hill; the **Traveller's Friend**, 496 High Road, Woodford Green and the **Trafalgar**, 23 High Path, South Wimbledon.

The current, 2007 Pub of the Year, the **Bricklayer's Arms**, 32 Waterman Street, Putney is ineligible to defend its title as the SW London Branch rules preclude the same pub winning Pub of the Year two years running. Contact your local CAMRA Branch (see pages 36 and 37) if you would like to help us decide the 2008 winner. It's thirsty work!

KINGSTON & LEATHERHEAD CAMRA 2008 AWARDS

Woodies of New Malden has won its third K&L (London) Pub of the Year award in a row.



Originally a cricket pavilion and still full of sporting memorabilia, predominantly London football programmes from the last 20 years, it is off Thetford Road and also known as 'New Malden's best kept secret!'

A delighted landlady Linda Thompson-Jones said *"I've been connected with Woodies for 16 years and absolutely love the place. We are very pleased to have won for the third consecutive time. We've increased our beer range again and feature more different microbreweries' beers now."* The beer range is kept up to date on their website and the Woodies entry on www.beerinevening.com.

In Esher the **Albert Arms** has won the K&L (Surrey) Pub of the Year and deservedly so as its range has doubled over the last year, introduced by landlord Mike Harrison. A modern open plan pub with a central bar, it has up to eight beers mainly from local breweries such as Surrey Hills, Twickenham, Crouch Vale, Waylands



(Addlestone) and Hop Daemon. Very good for food and wine as well.

The **Surbiton Club** in St James Road, Surbiton was voted K&L Club of the Year for 2008. They are a private members club and have several regular beers and often a guest ale.





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BEXLEY'S PUB OF THE YEAR

A three times winner of CAMRA's Greater London Pub of the Year award, the Robin Hood & Little John, Lion Road, Bexleyheath, has won the local CAMRA Bexley Branch award for a ninth consecutive time. Run by the Johnson family (Ray, Caterina and son Tony) since May 1980, this quiet, charming little backstreet local has eight well kept real ales on offer including Brains Reverend James, Harveys Best Bitter, Brakspear's Bitter, a beer from Adnams, Fuller's London Pride and more often than not two guests from the likes of Westerham, Archers, Brentwood or Sharps.

At lunchtimes (not Sunday), Caterina's home cooked meals with themed specials and regular Italian dishes warrant a mention, as do the tables inside the pub, made from old Singer sewing machines. On Burns Night, a Scottish ale can be drunk with portions of haggis, neeps and tatties.

Likewise for St George's Day there is roast beef and Yorkshire pudding in the evening, normally alongside Westerham's British Bulldog, after some Morris dancing and a Mummers play. In May, the pub supports CAMRA's 'Make May a Mild Month'.

Branch chairman, Martyn Nicholls sums it up: "This pub is the embodiment of much of what we are working towards, a friendly, welcoming pub serving quality real ale with great service. But remember today that no pub is safe from closure; it's still a matter of use it or lose it."

Runner up was the Black Horse in Albert Road, Bexley, another backstreet local serving lunchtime food and offering Wells & Young's Courage Best and two guest ales.

Peter Trout



David Norman at the Trafalgar, South Wimbledon, received his 2007 South West London Branch Pub of the Year award on 25 April, the opening night of his Light and Dark Beer Festival. Cllr Philip Jones, Deputy Mayor of Merton, paid tribute to the success of this small, independent community pub.

Take a learned pub crawl with Judy Black around Rice Village, Houston,
on the Travel Pages at www.londondrinker.org.uk



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Great British Beer Festival

Earl's Court will again host CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival in August. 65,000 people attended last summer and we expect as many to come along this year. Over 500 varieties will be available: draught bitters, milds, stouts, porters, golden ales and wheat beers from the smallest microbreweries and large regional brewers, bottle-conditioned beers, ciders and perries and traditional foreign beers from around the world.

The festival is not only about the ale! Visitors will also be able to enjoy food, live music, entertainment, games, tombolas, and quizzes in the comfort of a family friendly atmosphere. Why not catch up and socialise with friends, unwind after work, or just soak up the festival atmosphere! Other features include

- ◆ **Family Room** – all those under the age of 18 must remain in the Family Room throughout the festival and must be supervised by a family member.
- ◆ **Tutored Beer Tastings** – why not learn to appreciate the different tastes and flavours by attending one of our tutored beer tastings? But be warned, places sell out fast!
- ◆ **Corporate Hospitality** – For work colleagues or clients, we are able to offer a variety of packages to suit most tastes and budgets.
- ◆ **Hat Day** – Thursday 6 August. As usual we will be asking people to wear their silly hats on Thursday. So whether you have got one in the cupboard, or even better make one for the day,

make sure you remember those hats! The best hats will win prizes.

For more information please visit www.gbbf.org

Win a pair of Great British Beer Festival tickets!

CAMRA is offering 25 lucky winners a pair of Great British Beer Festival tickets. All you need to do to enter this competition is email or post your answer to this simple question by Friday 4 July.

How many people attended the Great British Beer Festival last year?

Please email your name, address, email, telephone number and answer to tony.jerome@camra.org.uk or alternatively post to Tony Jerome, Senior Marketing Manager, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Rd, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW. Winners will be notified and sent their tickets before Friday 18 July. If you are not a CAMRA member and would

like to be sent some more information

on our organisation then please let us know on your entry.

Opening times

Tuesday 5 August 5pm-10.30pm; Wednesday 6, Thursday 7 and Friday 8 August 12 noon-10.30pm; Saturday 9 August 11am-7pm

Ticket prices

Buy your tickets in advance by visiting www.gbbf.org and receive a £2 discount.



A chance in a lifetime to brew at the Budweiser Budvar Brewery

Ceske Budejovice (Budweis in German), in the Czech Republic, has a long reputation in brewing dating back to the 13th century when the town received its brewing rights. Since 1895 it has been the home of the world renowned Budweiser Budvar Brewery. And now you have the chance to go there, brew there and, of course, try one or two their beers.

For the first time, the Brewery is offering two friends a trip of a lifetime. With flights to and from Britain to Prague, the lucky duo will be met on arrival at Prague airport and then transferred to Ceske Budejovice to stay two nights at the 'Little Brewery' which has been converted to a hotel. Dinner will be hosted by one of Budvar's senior managers.

Up early next morning to brew maybe one of the

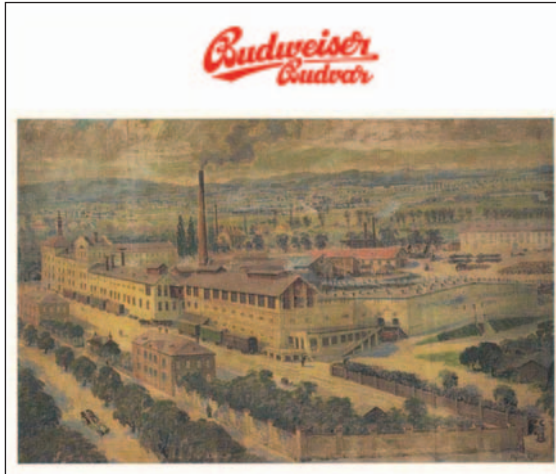
beers not available in Britain, such as Pardal, which is more bitter than the better known Budvar. Breakfast will be with Josef Tolar, the Brewmaster since 1985. Josef was responsible for leading the management buyout from the Czech Government at a time when it could have fallen to foreign hands. Although he is an innovative brewer, Josef has always insisted that any technical advance must enhance and preserve tradition. An example of this is the brewery's 100 day brewing cycle; the same as it was in 1895. During the day there will plenty of opportunity to hear about the history of the brewery.

Lunch will be in the brewery tap, followed by a free afternoon with the opportunity to visit the Brewery's visitors' centre or to look around the city.

Founded in 1265, Ceske Budejovice has plenty to see including the splendid Premysl Otakar II Square with its Baroque burgher houses.

Dinner will be in Cesky Krumlov. Dominated by its castle (which is the second largest castle complex in the Czech Republic), the town is a Unesco World Heritage Site with 300 protected buildings. Next day will be a return to Prague for a full free day and overnight in a Prague Hotel with transfer to the airport and home the following day and a rest!

This unique experience will be auctioned at CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival at Earl's Court on Thursday 7th August at 7.30pm. If you can't get



there, then postal bids are accepted. Simply e mail baustin@supanet.com (or write to 18 Malden Road, Watford WD17 3EW) with the price you are willing to pay. The highest bidder will get the two places.

But even if you aren't successful, Budvar Budweiser is always happy to see people and their visitor's centre gives a great overview of the Brewery and the

beers.

For more information on Budvar Budweiser Brewery, visit their website at www.budvar.cz/en/index.html or www.budweiserbudvar.uk.com and on Cesky Krumlov, www.ckrumlov.info.

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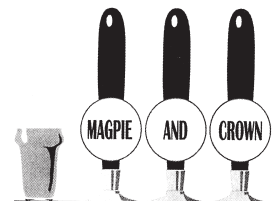


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www.camrasurrey.org.uk/kingston

THIRD BEXLEY BEER FESTIVAL

After a tempestuous Easter, weatherwise, we were a bit concerned with the cold, wintery, rainy forecast. But we needn't have worried; the consistent temperature certainly helped the beer which, with a total of 998 happy customers, sold out at 6.30 on the Saturday evening. Those who came early on Friday stayed longer, so that we had to restrict entry later that evening (sorry if you couldn't get in) but then all beer varieties were available and people were enjoying themselves.

Of the 65 firkins (64 different beers including eight porters, eight milds and five stouts), Grindleton Ribble Rouser was the first to run out, followed by York Decade and Leeds Pale. The favourite, by popular vote, was Cambridge Moonshine's Harvest Moon Mild, with Cairngorm Trade Winds second and Bazens' Black Pig Mild and Archers Easter Bonnet joint third. In all, 54 ales received votes. Cider/perry of the festival was New Forest's Kingston Black..

Thanks to Sidcup Sports Club for letting us run the event, to the Robin Hood & Little John, the Portrait and Fuller's for sponsoring casks, to organiser Paul Simons for suggesting the logo and Smart T's for designing it – it looked good on both the Wetherspoon sponsored T-shirts and the Westerham sponsored glasses – and to all the CAMRA volunteers from various branches for giving up their free time; without them the festival would never have taken place.

Immense thanks must go to Paul Simons who stepped in after Alan Boakes, who organised our first two festivals, suffered a sad personal loss. Not only did Paul put his own personal stamp on the event but he also designed and produced the programme himself – a very brave and successful effort. On behalf of Bexley Branch, thank you Paul for making it such a success. Here's to the next one!

Peter Trout

BEER FESTIVAL BOOST FOR HACKNEY CHARITIES

Collections made at the Pig's Ear Beer and Cider Festival in December 2007 resulted in £300 being raised for Hackney charities. The festival was organised at Hackney Ocean by the East London and City (ELAC) Branch of the Campaign For Real Ale (CAMRA).

The charities – Age Concern Hackney, City and Hackney Mind and St Joseph's Hospice – were the named charities of Hackney's Speaker 2007-

08, Cllr. Faizullah Khan. Pig's Ear Festival Organiser, Derek Jones, says: "CAMRA is always happy to contribute to its local communities and ELAC sees this £300 donation as a way of saying thank-you to the people and Council of Hackney. We are grateful for the strong support we received from Mayor Jules Pipe and Councillor Vincent Stops, among many others."



Presentation of the Pig's Ear cheque to the Speaker of Hackney. Pictured left to right – Derek Jones, Jon Russell Brown, ELAC Chairman, Cllr. Faizullah Khan, Cllr. Vincent Stops.

YES FOLKS, IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN!



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

CAMRA West Middlesex Branch is pleased to announce that this year, like last year, the **19th Ealing Beer Festival** will again be held under canvas, BUT this time it will be located right in the centre of Ealing, on the huge Walpole Park just 200m south of the Town Hall and opposite from the Questors' Grapevine Bar in Mattock Lane. Only a short walk from Ealing Broadway tube station.

2nd – 5th July 2008

with **150 Cask Beers**, Ciders & Perries, draught & bottled foreign beers and Real Ale in Bottles.

Pub games will be available and interesting stalls will stock a wide range of merchandise. Children's Area. Loads of space and plenty of seating.

Open from 12 noon to 11pm throughout.

A wide range of hot and cold foods will be available at all times including vegetarian options. Volunteer help required between 28th June and 7th July, extra benefits for those helping out offsite and or during setup and takedown. Camping facilities may be available by prior booking. Concessionary pricing for CAMRA members, OAPs and student union members at all times. We have a special offer to CAMRA members this year, **FREE** entry before 4pm on production of your current membership card. Coaches catered for by prior appointment.

Further details from Graham Harrison on +44 (0) 7971 547738

Or Brian Pipe on +44 (0) 7736 118448.

www.beeronbroadway.org.uk or www.westmiddx-camra.org.uk

Please see the website for full details on admission prices, glasses, policies, maps, beer & other lists, details of stalls, other facilities and lots of other further details.

Nothing mean about the flavour of Meantime

With the recent announcement of the closure of Grand Union Brewery, the positive developments of London's Meantime Brewery makes particularly pleasing reading. Not only is the Brewery looking to move to a new site to cope with its expanding business but it is also going to be begin brewing at one of London's oldest brewing sites, at the old Naval College in Greenwich. Brewing started here in 1717 when it supplied the daily beer rations for retired and injured seafarers at the Royal Hospital.

This innovative move is part of the redevelopment of the Old Royal Naval College visitor centre, where Meantime will have a brasserie and bar. But innovation is at the heart of Meantime, which only started brewing in 2000. Unlike any other brewery in London, Meantime has a continental system and uses its mash tun as its copper as well. All of its beer is matured for at least 28 days after fermentation. It also uses four yeast varieties in 12 different beers, meaning hygiene is of the utmost importance.

Meantime currently produces 15,000 hectolitres per annum but intends to more than double this with the move to the new brewery. Draught beer is in kegs, not real but sometimes unfiltered, and bottled beers (some real, some not) are all bottled on site. Unusually, they have a champagne corker, which they use on their Indian Pale Ale and London Porter.

CAMRA's London Tasting Panel visited the brewery in April and here are their tasting notes for Meantime's bottled real ales.

Wheat: 6.3% ABV. A Bavarian beer yeast, wheat and pale ale malts and Perle and Northern hops. Bubble gum on the palate and the aroma with a light spicy hop character plus a trace of citrus.

Pale Ale: 4.7% ABV. An Anglo-American style pale ale using American Willamette, Cascade and Cluster balanced by British Goldings hops producing a strongly hoppy beer with some fruit and bitterness. There is a little dryness that lingers pleasantly.

London Stout: 4.5% ABV. This stout is based on the original Stout Porters that date from the early 19th century. It has no roast barley, which is typical of a London Stout of this time. Irish stouts introduced roast barley at a later time. The malts used are brown and black and the hops, Goldings. There is a creamy mouthfeel and aftertaste with coffee notes



throughout. The bitterness is of a burnt character leading to a dryness that is balanced by a toffee sweetness.

London Porter: 6.5% ABV. A mix of seven malts (including one that is smoked) gives a light smokey nose that is present faintly on the palate. The hops are Fuggles. Treacle and liquorice notes are balanced by a fruity character

throughout and some dryness. Meantime has used a 1750 recipe as their inspiration for this Porter and is looking at producing this beer at the old Naval College Brewery, where they are going to investigate the possibility of maturing the beer in wood for 12 months. Should be an interesting drop.

Coffee Porter: 6.0% ABV. The base of this beer is as the London Porter but without the smoked malt. The addition of rich Arabica roasted coffee, not surprisingly, produces a coffee character throughout this beer, which has a hint of a burnt bitter dry character on the aftertaste that could be described as similar to espresso. The hops give some fruitiness on the nose and palate. An excellent desert beer.

Chocolate: 6.5% ABV. The base is as the Coffee Porter but uses bitter dark chocolate instead of coffee. It is a brown beer with amber hues. The nose and flavour is of a malty sweetness with plain chocolate, balanced by some fruit. This produces a warm, rich, creamy beer but with a dry aftertaste.

Raspberry: 6.5%. The recipe is in the style of a Belgian wheat beer, meaning that there is the typical acidic, sour and slightly earthy nose and palate rather than the synthetic sweetness of many so called Belgian fruit beers. It actually uses a Bavarian beer yeast and British raspberries. A dry and refreshing summer drink.

Indian Pale Ale: 7.5%. Using Maris Otter malt and Fuggle and Goldings Hops, this amber coloured beer is of a traditional IPA character. It is a robust beer with lots of hops in the aroma and flavour that is balanced by malty sweetness and a lingering bitterness. As with real IPAs, this beer can be laid down and drunk later. The laying down will change the character, often mellowing the flavours together.

Wetted your palate? Then you can find Meantime beers in Sainsbury's, Waitrose and some Threshers. Or visit Meantime's website to find a number of stockists that will deliver direct. A great way to drink good beer and support one of London's breweries. Enjoy.

Christine Cryne

PWR Events Ltd in association with the Greenwich Foundation presents

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New books

A couple of years ago, Bob Steel wrote *London Pub Walks*. Instantly successful, this pocket sized guide has become a must-carry volume for anyone interested in high quality real ale pubs in London and their superb architectural heritage.

Well Bob did not rest on his laurels milking the praise; instead he has been busy travelling and has now come up trumps again with his new book, *Peak District Pub Walks* to help you see the best of Britain's oldest national park whilst never straying too far from a decent pint.

A practical, pocket-sized, travellers guide to some of the best pubs and best walking in the Peak District, this guide features 25 walks, as well as cycle routes and local attractions. The book also explores some of the region's fascinating industrial heritage and has useful information about local transport and accommodation.

Each route has been selected for its inspiring landscape, historic interest and its beer - with the walks taking you on a tour of the best real-ale pubs

the area has to offer. Full-colour Ordnance Survey maps and detailed route information, alongside pub listings with opening hours and details of draught beers, make CAMRA's *Peak District Pub Walks* the essential guide for anyone wanting a taste of the Peak.

Available from camra.org.uk/shop, cover price £9.99 with the usual discount for CAMRA members.

Also recently published by CAMRA Books is the latest in a collection of international guides: *Good Beer Guide West Coast USA*. While this is one more for the armchair beer tourist than the Peak District book, it is a guide, set out in the now familiar style, to more than 500 West Coast breweries, different beers and great places to try them.

Available from camra.org.uk/shop, cover price £14.99 with the usual discount for CAMRA members.

Letters and articles for publication in *London Drinker* may now be submitted online at www.londondrinker.org.uk



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CAMRA Young Members Group

Over 6% of CAMRA's membership is currently under 30 and this proportion is growing. To promote activation among the 18-30 age group, the Young Members Group was set up. Across the country we host pub crawls and Beer Festival working socials: a short session staffing behind the bar as an introduction to working at beer festivals followed by time socialising. These events are well attended with 30 attending at the working social at the National Winter Ales Festival this year.

The following events are now planned within Greater London.

Sat 14 June - Pub crawl around Marylebone and Paddington. Meet at the Metropolitan above Baker Street station at 2pm.

Sat 19 July - Young Members Working Social, Greenwich Beer and Jazz Festival. Please let us know if you would like to staff so that arrangements can be made. Only CAMRA members may staff.

In August we are planning two bar crawls at the Great British Beer Festival. Details will be in the next issue of *London Drinker*.

CAMRA Young Members also have facebook groups both nationally and within Greater London. For details about events nationally, see the young members section under membership on the CAMRA website.

For further details contact Matthew Black, Greater London Regional Young Persons Membership Co-ordinator

(youngmembers@selcamra.org.uk, 07786 262798).

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6:30 - 9:30pm

Saturday: 1:00 - 9:00pm

Traditional Sunday Lunch: 1:00 - 6:00pm

Branch diaries

Welcome to our regular details of London CAMRA contacts and events. This is where branches can say what is happening in their areas that might be of interest to drinkers across London. Events for June and July are listed below.

Branch meetings and socials are open to all - everyone is welcome to come along.

LONDON REGIONAL EVENT

July - Wed 23 (8pm) London Liaison Committee (Regional co-ordination meeting for London Branches). Royal Oak, Tabard St, SE1. *Secretary: geoff@coherent-tech.co.uk*

LONDON PUBS GROUP

Jane Jephcote 020-7720 6327, jephcotej@hotmail.co.uk

June - Sat 21 Daytime crawl of Woodford Green, Barkingside, Ilford and Barking: (12 noon) Travellers Friend, 496-8 High Rd, Woodford Green; (1pm) Cricketers, 299-301 High Rd, Woodford Green; (2.45) Doctor Johnson, 175 Longwood Gdns, Barkingside; (4pm) Cauliflower, 553 High Rd, Ilford; (5.30) Britannia, 1 Church Rd, Barking. Public transport will be required at times.

July - Wed 16 (7.15 for 7.30) Mtg. Royal Oak, Tabard St, SE1 (upstairs). All branches and members interested in pub research and preservation welcome.

Website: www.londonpubsgroup.co.uk

YOUNG MEMBERS GROUP

London co-ordinator Matthew Black 07786 262798, youngmembers@selcamra.org.uk

June - Sat 14 Pub crawl around Marylebone and Paddington. Meet at the Metropolitan above Baker Street Stn at 2pm.

July - Sat 19 Working Social, Greenwich Beer and Jazz Festival. Please let us know if you would like to work as staff (CAMRA members only).

BEXLEY

Martyn Nicholls 01322 527857 (H), contacts@camrabexleybranch.org.uk

June - Wed 11 (8.30) Mtg. Portrait, Sidcup.

May - Wed 9 (8.30) Mtg. George Staples, Blackfen.

Website: www.camrabexleybranch.org.uk

CROYDON & SUTTON

Dave Lands 07757 233912

June - Tue 3 June (8.30) Croydon Pub of the Year presentation. Green Dragon, High St, Croydon. - **Wed 11** (8.30) Sutton Pub of the Year presentation. Windsor Castle, Carshalton. - **Tue 24** (8.30) Mtg. Dog & Bull, Surrey St, Croydon.

July - Thu 10 South Croydon crawl: (8pm) Swan & Sugar Loaf, Brighton Rd; (9pm) View, Selsdon Rd; (10pm) Crown & Sceptre, Junction Rd. - **Thu 31** (8.30) Mtg. Windsor Castle, Carshalton.

Website: www.croydoncamra.org.uk

EAST LONDON & CITY

John Pardoe 07757 772564, elacbranch@yahoo.co.uk

June - Tue 10 (8pm) Mtg. One Tun, 125-126 Saffron Hill, EC1. - **Fri 20** Peter Snell pub crawl: (7pm) Albion, 94, Goldsmiths Row, E2; (7.45) Dove, Broadway Market, E8; (8.30) Pub on the Park, 19 Martello St, E8; (9.30) Chesham, 5 Mehetabel Rd, Hackney E9; finally Elderfield, 57, Elderfield Rd, E5. - **Tue 24** (8pm) Pigs Ear Festival Mtg. Nightingale, Nightingale La, E11.

July - Tue 8 (8pm) GBBF 2008 publicity crawl: contact branch for publicity material and details. - **Sat 12** Robert's Ramble from Manningtree Stn, visiting several watering holes in Dedham and East Bergholt area. Details and train times will be available from June: contact ELAC or E&B branches or Ron Andrews for more details. - **Thu 17** (8pm) GBBF 2008 publicity crawl:

contact branch for publicity material and details.

Website: www.pigsear.org.uk

ENFIELD & BARNET

Temporary contact Ron Andrews 020-8524 4239(H), Branch mobile 07757 710008 at event.

All are garden socials at 9pm unless stated.

June - Tue 3 Sebright Arms, 9 Alston Rd, Barnet EN5. - **Wed 11** (8.30) AGM: CAMRA members only. Winchmore Hill Cricket Club, The Paulin Ground, Fords Grove, N21. - **Thu 19** (8.30) Cherry Tree, 22 The Green N14; (9.30) Woolpack, 52 High St, Southgate N14. - **Tue 24** Cavalier, 67 Russell Lane N20.

July - Tue 1 Smoking ban anniversary social. Alfred Herring, 316-322 Green Lanes, Palmers Green, N13. - **Wed 9** Cock & Dragon, Chalk Lane, EN4. - **Thu 17** Greyhound, Enfield Lock EN3. - **Wed 23** Queens Head, 41 Station Rd, N21. - **Thu 31** London Drinker pick up. Railway Bell, 13 East Barnet Rd, New Barnet EN4.

Website: www.camra-enfield-and-barnet.org.uk

KINGSTON & LEATHERHEAD

Clive Taylor 020-8949 2099 (H) 020-85401901 (W)

ctaylor2007@free.com

June - Sun 1 Beer festival publicity crawl in Surbiton: (12.30) Coronation Hall, nr rail stn. - **Wed 4** (8.15) Mtg. Griffin, Common Rd, Claygate. - **Thu 19** Moseley two pub social: (8.30) Royal Oak, Walton Rd, then Europa.

July - Tue 8 (8.15) Mtg. Barley Mow, Pikes Hill, Epsom. - **Tue 22** Walton on Thames crawl: (8pm) Ashley, outside rail stn, then to other pubs in Walton and near the river.

Website: www.camrasurrey.org.uk

NORTH LONDON

Social contact: Steve Ducker 07910 151494

steve.ducker@yahoo.co.uk Branch contact: John Cryne 020 8452 6965 john.cryne@uk.pwc.com

June - Tue 3 (7pm) Out of branch social and Purity beer tasting. Bricklayer's Arms, 32 Waterman St, Putney SW15. - **Tue 10** St Pancras/Kings Cross social: (8pm) Betjeman Arms, Unit 53, St Pancras International Stn, Pancras Rd NW1; then Dun a Ri Bar, 19 Caledonian Rd, Kings Cross N1. - **Tue 17** (8pm) London Drinker Beer Festival debrief mtg. Wenlock Arms, 26 Wenlock Rd, N1. - **Tue 24** (7.30) Midsummer social. Spaniards Inn, Spaniards Rd NW3 (other branches welcome). **July - Tue 1** (7.30) Social. JJ Moons, 553 Kingsbury Rd, NW9. - **Tue 8** N1 Social: (8pm) Castle, 54 Pentonville Rd; then Hobgoblin, 73 White Lion St; York, 82 Islington High St. - **Tue 15** (8pm) Annual General Meeting. Calthorpe Arms, 252 Grays Inn Rd WC1. - **Tue 22** NW1 Social: (8pm) NW1 Bar, 32 Parkway; then Spread Eagle, 141 Albert St. - **Sun 27** End of year Sunday N1 social: (12 noon) Hen & Chickens, 109 St Pauls Rd; then Compton Arms, 4 Compton Ave; White Swan, 251-256 Upper St.

Website: www.camranorthlondon.org.uk

RICHMOND & HOUNSLOW

Brian Kirtan 020-8384 7284(H), briankirtan@blueyonder.co.uk

June - Tue 3 Twickenham social evening: (8pm) Eel Pie; (9.30) Fox, both Church St - **Wed 11** (8.30) Twickenham Beer Festival planning mtg. Old Anchor, Richmond Rd, Twickenham: all interested persons welcome. - **Wed 18** (8.30) Mtg. Magpie & Crown, 128 High St, Brentford.

July - Fri 4 (8pm) Ealing Beer Festival social. Walpole Park, W5 - **Sat 12** (pick-up times etc: check website) Trip by vintage coach to Ardingly Vintage Transport Fair (and CAMRA beer tent) for full day visit with pub stop on the way back. £5 coach fare, admission fee etc. not included; booking essential: *Roy.Hurry@westendtravel.co.uk* - **Wed 16** (8pm) Mtg. Red Lion, 2 Castelnau, Barnes SW13 - **Thu 24** Richmond two-pub social:

(8pm) Shaftesbury Arms, 121 Kew Rd; (9.30) White Cross, Riverside (Water Lane).

Website: www.rhcamra.org.uk

SOUTH EAST LONDON

Neil Pettigrew 07751 898310 (M) *evening or weekends only, branch.contact@selcamra.org.uk*

June – Wed 4 (8pm) Cttee mtg and social. Park Tavern, 45 Passey Place, SE9. - **Wed 11** Crystal Palace SE19 social crawl: (7pm) Alma, 95 Church Rd; (7.45) White Hart, 96 Church Rd; (8.30) Postal Order, 33 Westow St; (9.15) Westow House 79 Westow Hill. - **Tue 17** SE1 Social crawl: (7.30) Duke of Sussex, 23 Bayliss Rd; (8.30) Crown & Cushion, 133 Westminster Bridge Rd; (9.30) Hole in the Wall, 5 Mepharm St. - **Mon 23** (8pm) Beer Festival mtg and social. All Inn One, 53 Perry Vale, SE23. - **Sat 28-Sun 29** Beer Festival at Old Mill, 1 Old Mill Rd, SE18.

July – Wed 2 (8pm) Cttee mtg and social. Prince Regent, 69 Dulwich Rd, SE24. - **Mon 7** Farnborough BR6 social crawl: (7.30) Woodman 50 High St; (8.30) Change of Horses, 87 High St. - **Wed 16-Sun 20** Greenwich Beer & Jazz Festival. Royal Naval College, SE10. - **Mon 28** (8pm) Greenwich Festival post mortem. Cutty Sark, 6 Ballast Quay, Greenwich SE10.

Website: www.selcamra.org.uk

SOUTH WEST ESSEX

Alan Barker swessex@essex-camra.org.uk

June – Sun 1 (1pm) All-Essex games afternoon. Hoop, 21 High St, Stock. - **Tue 3** (7.30) Thurrock Beer Festival social. Thurrock Civic Hall, Blackshots La, Grays. - **Tue 10** (8.30) PotY presentation and social. White Hart, Kings Walk/Argent St, Grays. - **Wed 18 Jun** (8.30) Out-of-area beer festival social. White Hart, Swan La, Margaretting Tye, by minibus from Chadwell Heath, Romford, Upminster and Corringham; contact Graham Platt on 020-8220 0215. - **Tue 24** (8.30) Out-of-area social. Viper, Mill Green Rd, Mill Green. - **Sat 28** (12.30) Harwich Town Brewery trip. Station Approach, Harwich, by minibus from Chadwell Heath, Romford, Upminster and Corringham; contact Graham Platt on 020-8220 0215.

July – Thu 3 (8.30) Social. White Horse, 173 Coxtie Green Rd, Coxtie Green. - **Tue 8** (7.30) Chelmsford Summer Beer Festival social. Admiral's Park, Rainsford Rd, Chelmsford. - **Sat 12** (12.30) Summer Beer Festival social. White Horse, 173 Coxtie Green Rd, Coxtie Green. - **Tue 15** (8pm) Out-of-area social. Royal Oak, 44 Tabard St, Borough, London SE1. - **Sat 19** (12.30) Out-of-area social. Woodman, 45 Wildhill Rd, Wildhill, Herts, by minibus from Chadwell Heath, Romford, Upminster and Corringham; contact Graham Platt on 020-8220 0215. - **Mon 21** (8.30) Social. Prince of Wales, 63 Green La, Ilford. - **Thu 31** (8.30) Social. Worlds End, Fort Rd, Tilbury.

Website: essex-camra.org.uk/swessex

SOUTH WEST LONDON

Mark Bravery 020-8540 9183 (H), 020-7147 3826 (W), markbravery@blueyonder.co.uk

Cricket: Tom Brain 07796 265972, thomas.brain@horwath.co.uk. New players and spectators always welcome for friendly Sunday afternoon matches.

June – Tue 3 (7 for 7.30) Purity Brewery beer tasting (jointly with N London branch). Bricklayer's Arms, 32 Waterman St, Putney SW15. - **Wed 11** (7.30) Open cttee mtg. Spread Eagle, 71 Wandsworth High St, SW18. - **Tue 24** Wandsworth Common crawl: (6.30) Beehive, 197 St Johns Hill, Battersea SW11; (7.30) Freemasons, 2 North Side, Wandsworth Common SW18; (8.30) Le Gothique, Royal Victoria Patriotic Bldg, John Archer Way, Wandsworth SW18; (9.30) Hope, 1 Bellevue Rd, Tooting SW17; (10.30) Nightingale, 97 Nightingale Lane, Balham SW12.

July – Tue 1 (7pm) Wandsworth post-budget price survey social. Grapes, 39 Fairfield St. - **Thu 17** (7.30) Open cttee mtg. Castle, 115 Battersea High St, SW11. - **Sat 12-Sun 13** Battersea Beer of the Festival presentation visit to Marble Brewery, Manchester. Contact Phil Blanchard on 07720 432802 or staffing@beerfest.org.uk by 21 June for group travel and accommodation arrangements; if over-subscribed, festival workers will receive preference. - **Sat 19** Wimbledon SW19 GBBF publicity crawl: (12 noon) Alexandra, 33 Wimbledon Hill Rd; late joining point (1.30) Rose & Crown, 55 High St, Wimbledon village.

Website: www.sulcamra.org.uk

WATFORD & DISTRICT

Andrew Vaughan 01923 230104 (H) 07854 988152 (M)

June – Thu 5 (7.30) Annual Darts Tournament. West Herts Sports Club, Park Ave, Watford. All members welcome. - **Fri 13** (8.13) Druids, High St, Rickmansworth; (9.30) Sportsman, Scots Hill, Croxley Green. - **Mon 30** (8pm) Mtg. Estcourt Arms, St. Johns Rd, Watford.

July – Sun 13 (3pm) Petanque match. Land of Liberty, Peace & Plenty, Long La, Heronsgate. - **Fri 18** (7pm) Boxmoor Beer Festival social. Camelot Rugby Club, Chaulden La, Boxmoor. - **Mon 28** (8pm) Mtg. Estcourt Arms, St. John's Rd, Watford.

Website: www.watfordcamra.org.uk

WEST LONDON

Kimberly Martin 07717 795284, KimberlyMartin@yahoo.com

June – Tue 3 (7.30) PotY presentation. Harp, Chandos Pl, WC2. - **Wed 11** (7.30) Mtg. Carpenters Arms, Seymour Pl, W1. - **Mon 16** Joint social with West Middlesex: Ealing BF publicity crawl. Meet (7pm) Bollo, South Acton. - **Sat 21** St James & Mayfair 'Bob Steel' crawl: (1pm) Red Lion, Crown Passage, SW1; concluding (9.30) Coach & Horses, Bruton Street, W1. - **Mon 23** Joint social with West Middlesex: Ealing BF publicity crawl. Meet (7pm) Mad Bishop & Bear, The Lawn, Paddington St, W2. - **Thu 26** GBBF Publicity Crawl I: (7.30) Crown & Sceptre, Holland Rd, W14

July – Tue 2-Sat 5 Working social. Ealing Beer Festival, Walpole Park, Ealing W5. - **Thu 10** Mtg, Ship Tavern, 12 Gate St, WC2 (7.30). - **Tue 15** GBBF Publicity Crawl II: (7pm) Speaker, 46 Great Peter St, SW1. - **Wed 23** (7.30) Social. Central Bar, Shepherds Bush Green, W12. - **Sat 26** GBBF Publicity Crawl III. (1pm) Hope, Tottenham St, W1. - **Wed 30** (7.30) Social. Plough & Harrow, 120-124 King St, W6.

Website: www.westlondon-camra.org.uk

WEST MIDDLESEX

Social Secretary Roy Tunstall 07960 031399 socials@westmiddx-camra.org.uk Branch contact John Bush 07739 105336 info@westmiddx-camra.org.uk

June – Wed 4 Wetherspoon Festival: (7pm) Moon & Sixpence, 250 Uxbridge Rd, Hatch End; (9pm) Man in the Moon, 1 Buckingham Parade, Stanmore. - **Sat 7** Day trip to Brighton and Portslade. Meet (10am) Harrow and Wealdstone Stn. - **Wed 11** Ealing Beer Festival publicity crawl: Uxbridge. Meet (6pm) Good Yarn, 132 High St, Uxbridge; (8.30). Mtg. Load of Hay, 33 Villier St, Uxbridge. - **Mon 16** EBF publicity crawl with West London: Chiswick. Meet (7pm) Bollo, 13-15 Bollo La. - **Mon 23** EBF publicity crawl with West London: Paddington. Meet (7pm) Mad Bishop & Bear, Paddington St. - **Fri 27** (6pm) EBF publicity social. Kingston Beer Festival (see page 27)

July – Wed 2-Sat 5 Ealing Beer Festival. See page 29 and www.ealingbeerfestival.org.uk for details. - **Wed 9** Mtg: venue tbc. - **Thu 16** GBBF publicity crawl: Ealing. Meet (7pm) Wheatshaf, Haven La. - **Wed 23** GBBF publicity crawl: Uxbridge. Meet (7pm) Queens Head, Windsor St.

Website: www.westmiddx-camra.org.uk

Electronic copy deadline for the August/September edition: 9th July 2008. Please send entries to geoff@coherent-tech.co.uk.

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Welcome to the 200th edition of the current series of Updates. The very first Update appeared in *London Drinker* in February 1982 following publication of the then new all-London 'Real Beer in London'; the first series ran to 12 editions before being absorbed into a 'Supplement' booklet in May 1983. The current series resumed in September 1983, initially cross-referencing to the all-London guide and then to the various editions of the replacement 'sector' guides published during the '80s and '90s.

The disposal of pubs by the major brewers and the growth of pub companies has since changed the London pub and beer scene enormously, making it difficult to continue to research and publish comprehensive sector guides, though these have to a limited extent been replaced or supplemented by local guides covering Borough areas or specific postal districts. The Capital Pubcheck Updates in *London Drinker*, published monthly until December 1999 but since then every two months, meanwhile keep track of what brewers and pub operators are up to in Greater London's 5,700 pubs.

With the 200th edition it is timely again to thank publicly all those many individual and corporate contributors, both within the CAMRA branch structure and outside it, who over the years have provided information for this column. Every contribution, however small, has helped to build up a picture of the changing pub and real ale scene across London. Keep the news coming in and we shall do our best to keep readers up to date with events as they happen.

This time we welcome a new Geronimo Inns pub at NW1 St Pancras Station and a new Young's pub in NW9 Colindale. We report the reopening of a disused Spirit pub in W1 Soho and a former Wetherspoon pub in N13 Palmers Green. Planning applications for the closure and redevelopment of pubs for other uses continue to be submitted across London but there are encouraging signs that some Borough Councils are turning down proposals in the light of the sheer number of pub closures obvious to all.

Cross references to CAMRA's various pub guides covering Greater London are provided to enable easy updating. The numbers in brackets after each entry refer to the page numbers in the following guides: BM - Balham to Morden Pub Guide; BRP - Barnes to Raynes Park Pub Guide; CE - Camden & Euston Real Ale Guide; E - East London & City Beer Guide, 3rd edition; H - Hertfordshire Guide to Real Ale, 2000 edition; HB - Holborn & Bloomsbury Pub Guide; IS - N1 Islington Real Ale Guide; K - Guide to Kent Pubs, 10th edition; 8K - Real Ale Guide to Kent Pubs, 8th edition; KT - Kingston Pub Guide; N - North London Beer Guide, 3rd edition; RHP - Richmond to Ham & Petersham Pub Guide; SE - South East London Pub Guide, 4th edition; SSE - South East London Pub Guide, 3rd edition; SW - South West London Pub Guide, 2nd edition; W - West London Pub Guide, 2nd edition; WB - Wandsworth and Battersea Pub Guide; X - Essex Beer Guide, 9th edition.

If you would like to report changes to pubs or beers, please write to: Capital Pubcheck, 2 Sandtoft Road, London SE7 7LR or email: capitalpubcheck@hotmail.com

NEW & REOPENED PUBS & PUBS CONVERTED TO REAL ALE

CENTRAL

W1(S), LYRIC, 37 Great Windmill St. Fuller: London Pride; Taylor: Landlord. Reopened in late December 2007 as an independent free house after closure by Spirit in early 2006. Same operator as Nellie Dean, also in W1(S). Retains traditional décor and offers good value English food (12-5 Mon-Fri) and £2 for any drink on Mondays. Open 11-11.30 Mon-Thu, 11-12 Fri/Sat and 12-10.30 Sun. Formerly LYRIC TAVERN. (W67, U188)

W1(S), RED LION (SOHO), 20 Great Windmill St. Reopened and renamed **BE AT ONE**. No real ale, now independent, ex-M&B. (W68, U191).

NORTH

N1, MARIE LLOYD, 24 Chart St. No real ale. Reopened after refurbishment. (N51, U184, U198)

N9, COCK, 269 Hertford Rd. Courage: Best Bitter. Formerly **PITCHER & PINT** and originally **COCK TAVERN**. (N99, U178, U192)

N13, WHOLE HOG, 430-434 Green Lanes. Greene King: IPA; Fuller: London Porter; Red Squirrel: Conservation Ale. Beers may vary. Former London & Edinburgh pub (originally Wetherspoon), reopened in February under new ownership after 16 months closure. Food, live music. (N115, U175, U192)

NORTH WEST

NW1, BETJEMAN ARMS, Unit 53, Upper Level, St Pancras International Station, Pancras Rd. Adnams: Bitter;

Sharp: Betjeman Arms (house beer - 3.6%), Doom Bar. New Geronimo Inns 'pub and dining room' on site of the former Shires Bar. Modern style décor with grey painted walls and mixture of stools and sofas, and framed pictures of Betjeman and the St Pancras area. Open plan kitchen with two separate dining rooms to the side. Heated outside drinking/eating area on concourse overlooking platforms and 'smoking terrace' at front with steps down to Pancras Road. Food until 9pm. Open 7.30am-11pm.

NW1, DES VINS, Unit 12A, Ground Floor, St Pancras International Station, Pancras Rd. No real ale. Independent bar and café in newly refurbished station complex.

NW9, BEAUFORT, 2 Heritage Ave (off Graham Park Way). Wells: Bombardier; Young: Bitter; Caledonian: Deuchars IPA (guest). Brand new Young's 'Pub & Dining' on ground floor of new development at Beaufort Park on the site of a former RAF camp near the RAF Museum. Mixture of traditional and contemporary styled areas, patio at front and side. Food 11.30-10 Mon-Thu, 10-10 Fri/Sat, 12-9 Sun. Function room. Open 11-11 Mon-Thu, 10-midnight Fri/Sat, 10-11 Sun.

SOUTH EAST

SE4, JAM CIRCUS, 330/332 Brockley Rd. Taylor: Landlord. Also has a range of continental keg and bottled beers. Independent bar in former club premises opened c2005 but not previously reported.

SOUTH WEST

SW8, PAVILION, 135 Battersea Park Rd. Greene King: IPA; Shepherd Neame: Spitfire. (SW79, U138)

Capital Pubcheck - update 200

PUBS CLOSED OR CEASED SELLING REAL ALE

EAST

E2, ATOMIC, ex-Sycamore Taverns. now converted to a restaurant. Originally **HALFWAY HOUSE**. (E81, U99, U156, U187)

NORTH

N1, BIG CHILL HOUSE, Free, H removed. Formerly **SAHARA NIGHTS**, originally **CROSS BAR**. (N38, U190, U193)

N1, MASQUE, Enterprise, ex-Bass via Unique, closed and empty by January 2008. Formerly **OFFSHORE BAR**, originally **DUKE OF YORK**. (N42, U180)

N1, MITRE TAVERN, 71 Downham Rd. Upper storeys now converted to residential use. (N52, U179)

N1, QUEENS, ex-Taylor Walker, closed and boarded up. Formerly **QUEENS HEAD**. (N56, U185)

N3, CENTRAL, ex-S&N, closed. Formerly **FERRET & TROUSERLEG**, originally **MINSTREL**. (N69, U106, U109, U166)

N3, CHEERS, Free, closed. (N69)

N11, ORANGE TREE, S&N Pub Enterprises ex-S&N, closed. Formerly **BIG HAND MO'S**, originally **GROVE**. (N107, U106, U110, U155)

N13, FALTERING FULLBACK, Free, closed. Formerly **MANHATTANS**. (N115, U163)

N20, BLACK BULL, M&B, ex-Six Continents, closed and

rumoured to be sold to developers. (N147, U151, U165, U187, U197)

BARNET (EN5), ALBION, Punch, ex-Greenalls, closed. (N249, H19)

NORTH WEST

NW1, BABY BETJEMAN, Geronimo Inns, temporary bar now removed and site now occupied by outside drinking/eating area attached to new **BETJEMAN ARMS** (see *NEW PUBS* above). (U198)

NW8, CROCKERS FOLLY, still closed with seemingly some interior fittings intact. The owner is believed to be a Mr Maroush, a Lebanese restaurateur whose van is often parked outside with picture and signage saying 'opening soon'. (N213, U142, U152, U167, U177)

SOUTH EAST

SE1, BRUNSWICK ARMS, ex-Bass, closed and under threat of demolition for a major development scheme. (SE11)

SE6, GREEN MAN, ex-Whitbread. A planning appeal by developers against Lewisham Council's decision to reject the planning application for demolition and replacement by flats has now, encouragingly, been lost. (SE68, U184, U195).

SE13, SPOTTED COW, Enterprise, ex-Whitbread, closed and acquired by a property company for redevelopment. (SE122, U104)

SE15, OGLANDER TAVERN, ex-Courage, closed, with

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planning permission for conversion to residential use granted in March 2007. (SE138)

SE17, ARCHDUKE CHARLES, ex-Ascot, now demolished in January. (SE155, U113, U188)

CROYDON, BAR CIRCUS. Renamed **HALF & HALF** after refurbishment, H removed. Formerly OASIS, GRAIN & GRAPES, DUCK, KEMBERS and originally WEST SIDE. (3SE251, U52, U94, U99, U101, U179)

CROYDON, DUKE OF YORK, Enterprise, planning permission now granted for conversion to residential use. (3SE241, U192)

CROYDON, HARP ROCK BAR, ex-Bass, planning permission for demolition now granted. Formerly HARP. (3SE243, U192)

CROYDON, ROSE & CROWN, ex-Taylor Walker, closed and freehold for sale. It is in a conservation area and in CAMRA's London Regional Inventory. (3SE249, U49, U85)

ORPINGTON, PRIORY TAVERN, Enterprise, closed, future uncertain. Formerly BLACKSMITH (YE OLDE), originally ARTICHOKE. (3SE265, U107, U163, U196, U199)

SOUTH WEST

SW2, ROYAL OAK, ex-Bass, demolished except for cellar, rumoured that it will be replaced by a new bar. (SW53)

WEST

BRENTFORD (TW8), ROYAL HORSEGUARDSMAN, Free, closed and signage removed. (W134)

FELTHAM (HANWORTH) (TW13), SWAN, Marston, ex-W&D, no real ale. (W137, U187)

HOUNSLOW (TW3), BAR BHANGRA, Free, closed. Formerly EARL RUSSELL. (W167, U185)

TWICKENHAM (TW1), AUSTIN'S BAR, still closed and planning permission now submitted to Richmond Council to convert to flats. (W200, U195)

OTHER CHANGES TO PUBS & BEER RANGES

CENTRAL

EC3, UNDERWRITER, -beers listed; +Courage: Best Bitter; +Greene King: IPA, Old Speckled Hen. (E43, U193)

EC4, CASTLE, -beers listed; +House Beer (brewed by Nethergate); +seven guest beers from small breweries. (E47, U76, U193)

EC4, PUNCH TAVERN, -Taylor: Landlord; +Theakston: Best Bitter, now the sole real ale. (E52, U121, U131, U175)

WC2, WALKABOUT, Temple Place. Renamed **MOTION**. (W42)

EAST

E2, MARKSMAN, -beers listed; +Fuller: London Pride; +Taylor: Landlord. (E82)

E2, OWL & PUSSYCAT, -beers listed; +Fuller: London Pride; +Greene King: IPA; +Wadworth: 6X. (E83)

NORTH

N1, GARDEN. Renamed **VINEYARD** after

refurbishment. Formerly **MOON UNDER WATER**, originally 179 UPPER STREET. (N37, U137, U145, U159, U176, U189)

N15, FOUNTAIN. A planning application for demolition has been refused by Haringey Council following a successful campaign led by the Haringey History Forum. (N124, U157)

N16, STAGE B. Renamed **MAGGIES BAR**. (U192)

N21, JIM THOMPSONS. Reverted to **GREEN DRAGON**, -beers listed; +Fuller: London Pride; +Wadworth: 6X. (N151, U163)

SOUTH EAST

SE1, PRINCE OF WALES, 51 St George's Rd. A planning application has been submitted to Southwark Council for conversion of a hotel with retention of a bar for hotel residents and non-residents. (SE29)

SE1, PAPER MOON, This fine pub with a rare tiled mural interior is under threat of demolition for a major development scheme involving the erection of a very tall building. An objection to the planning application has been lodged by CAMRA's London Pubs Group (see also SE1 Brunswick Arms, above). (SE28)

SE16, QUEENS ARMS. A planning application has been submitted to Southwark Council for demolition and replacement by a four storey commercial and residential building. The pub is still open and has a good trade. (SE151)

Volunteer needed, with an interest in breweriana

Do you have an interest in brewery memorabilia - from the late 19th century to the 1980s? The Licensed Trade Charity is looking for a volunteer to help run its memorabilia project. This is where items relating to the drinks industry are donated to the Charity and are sold to raise funds for charitable work.

The project has just been established and now is an exciting time to join, with many people now giving items of value that need collecting, cataloguing, valuing and selling on. This is a very interesting way to help support a charity. All travel and necessary expenses will be paid. We estimate that you would need to have about 8-10 hours a month to help out and be able to come to our office in Ascot, Berkshire fairly regularly.

If you are interested, have a driving license and access to a car to use in this role please get in touch soon. Call Linda Huntley on 01344 884440 or send an email to linda.huntley@licensedtradecharity.org.uk

The Licensed Trade Charity helps those working in or retired from the licensed trade. There are many ways we help, depending on the circumstances, including individual grants and housing for over 55's. Our Welfare team are here to help on 01344 898550.



Capital Pubcheck - update 200

CROYDON, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER. Planning permission for conversion to seven flats was granted by Croydon Council in February 2007, but the pub is still trading. (3SE241)

CROYDON, PORTER & SORTER. A proposal to demolish the pub and build new tower blocks to include a replacement pub has been opposed by local residents. No planning application has yet been submitted to Croydon Council. (3SE248, U49, U108, U136, U199)

THORNTON HEATH, BRIGSTOCK. Planning permission has been granted by Croydon Council for conversion to flats. Formerly TIR NA NOG for a while, originally BRIGSTOCK ARMS. (3SE282, U177, U185)

SOUTH WEST

SW1(W), DUKE OF YORK. Spirit pub under threat of demolition for a major redevelopment scheme with no provision for replacement pubs; planning status unknown. (SW48, U188)

SW1(W), SHAKESPEARE. Another Spirit pub under threat from the same development scheme. (SW49, U188)

SW1(W), STAG, Spirit, ex-S&N, again under threat from the same development scheme. (SW50, U137, U157)

SW8, VICTORIA, -beers listed except Courage: Best Bitter; +Caledonian: Deuchars IPA; +Fuller: London

Pride. (SW80, U141, U177)

SW12, DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE. Renamed DEVONSHIRE. This Young's pub on CAMRA's London Regional Inventory has sadly undergone an unsympathetic refurbishment, removing several notable features. (SW91)

SW14, CHARLIE BUTLER. Young's and developers Tred Ltd have submitted an application to Richmond Council for demolition and replacement by an eight storey block of flats. (SW97)

SW18, PUZZLE, -beers listed; +Sharp: Doom Bar. Refurbished during temporary closure, restoring more of a pub atmosphere to what had become a rather soulless sports bar. Formerly SAILOR PRINCE. (SW114, WB18)

RICHMOND (TW10), MARLBOROUGH. Acquired by Young's from M&B, ex-Bass and currently undergoing refurbishment (SW155, U151, RHP22)

WEST

W9, WARRINGTON HOTEL, -beers listed except Fuller: London Pride; +Adnams: Broadside; +Greene King: IPA; +guest (Caledonian: Deuchars IPA). (W115, U192)

W12, BUSHRANGER. Renamed STINGING NETTLE by new owners Young's. (W122, U199)

HOUNSLOW (TW3), SOUTH WESTERN. Renamed BLUE GINGER BAR, still no real ale, four handpumps unused. (W170)

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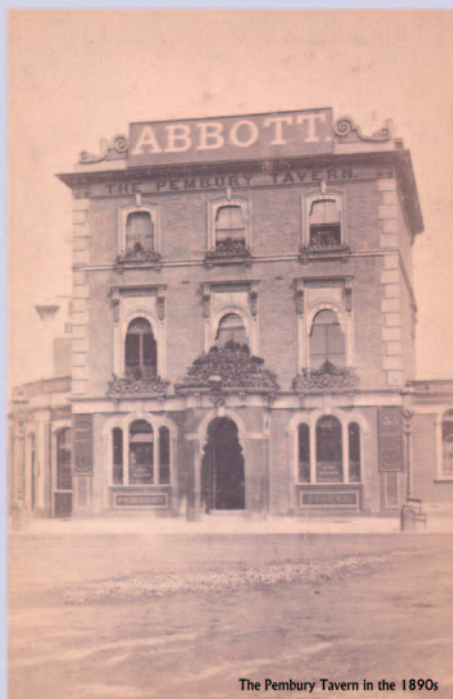
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A PINT OF THE USUAL, OR A
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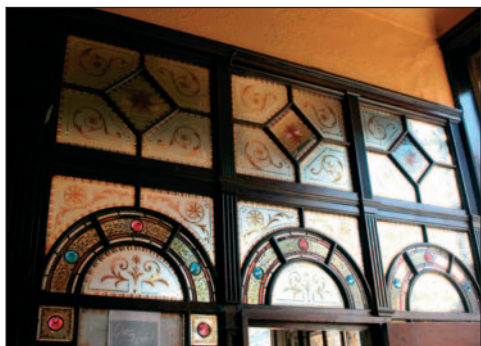
Allow us to introduce you to an old friend. Fuller's ESB, three times Champion Beer of Britain, seen here in its smart new livery. Don't worry, the beer's just the same as ever. But if it's been a while, maybe it's time you reacquainted yourself with its uniquely rich, deliciously fruity flavour and long, satisfying finish. It could well be the happiest reunion of your life.



ESB. THE CHAMPION ALE.

London Pubs Group tour of Notting Hill, Kensington and Bayswater

The first London Pubs Group tour of 2008 took place on Saturday 16 February and concentrated on the Notting Hill, Kensington and Bayswater areas. Participants mustered first at midday in the **Elgin**, 96 Ladbroke Grove, W11. This pub is an 1856



grade II listed building and is on both CAMRA's London Regional Inventory and its National Inventory. Three distinct rooms are still clearly discernible although they are now interlinked. The star performer is the room in the northern part which is separated from the corner bar by a wonderful timber and glass screen of exceptional exuberance. The grey etched parts, gilded patterns and faceted jewel-like details gleam and sparkle. Then there is a bar-back of rare richness, embellished with seventeenth-century detailing, gilded mirrors and a frieze of bas-relief apples. Finally, on the side wall come coloured tile strips and more gilded mirrors displaying foliage, hops, butterflies and birds in flight. The counters are original too and are classic examples of that curious feature found in London pubs but not, apparently, elsewhere – doors to allow the servicing of the beer engines in times gone by. A sadness is the modern replacement in the corner bar of the Victorian bar-

back by a hideous cheap affair with metal uprights. Behind the servery is an office with some fine decorative glass. In the 1990s Allied Breweries transferred operations from the Taylor Walker brand to their Nicholson's Inn chain and were clearly keen to spend some money on the place, but a aura of faded and decaying grandeur seems to have set in since. Real ale available was Greene King IPA and proved quite acceptable in condition. At one time the pub's windows were routinely boarded-up prior to the annual carnival but, given the area's transformation from 'the front line' to home of the 'Notting Hill Set', it seems such precautions are no longer deemed necessary!

Some of the tour party then diverted to an unscheduled stop at the **Earl of Lonsdale** on the



corner of Portobello Road and Westbourne Grove. This Sam Smith's pub was recently refurbished in traditional style with the *piece-de-resistance* being the reinstatement or introduction of wood and glass three-quarter height division screens separating the main island servery into four or five distinct drinking areas. Though by no means as impressive as their breathtaking transformation of the Princess Louise in Holborn, the effect is still mightily impressive and a credit to the brewery. Unfortunately, Sam Smith's policy of removing cask ales from most of its London estate meant that no real ale was on offer. The pub goes back to 1847 and was one of the Henekey Free Houses later acquired by Whitbread. Henekey's were famed for quality pub interiors and notable examples still extant are the Cittie of York, Holborn and Lyceum Tavern, Strand.

Next port of call was the **Cock & Bottle** in Needham Road, W11. Although this pub is not a listed building it is on the London Regional Inventory and has one outstanding feature, an exceptionally ornate bar-back. It also has a series of round columns with florid Corinthian capitals and the various round-headed projections on these have long

Pub heritage

been a mystery. It is believed there was once a gravity-feed system for spirits and wines (housed above the bar) which were fed down the pipes in the hollow columns to cocks on the stubs. There are still traces of pipes for exactly that purpose at the Travellers' Friend, Woodford. Notable also were the pretty stained glass panels of swans which relate to the old name which changed in the late-1980s. Beers available during our visit were Fuller's London Pride, Hog's Back TEA and Sharp's Doom Bar. According to *Real Beer in West London* (1989), the pub dates from 1851 and was formerly under the Watney banner.

A brisk walk under perfectly clear blue skies took us south of Notting Hill Gate into Kensington and the **Windsor Castle** at 114 Campden Hill Road, W8.

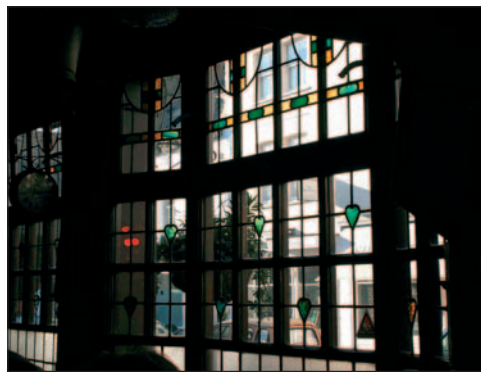


Although this pub is not a listed building it is on both the London Regional Inventory and the National Inventory. This plain, two-storey building of around 1825 sits at the summit of Campden Hill Road and was refitted about 1933. We know this because in the 'Sherry Bar' there is a plaque helpfully explaining that the oak used in that room was felled in the period 1930-32. Also helpful is the fact that the door glass names each of the three traditional rooms. The Sherry Bar is entered off Peel Street, the private bar is on the corner, while the Campden Bar lies along Campden Hill Road. Perhaps it says something for the upmarket nature of the area in the 1930s that the rooms have fancier names than the usual public bar, saloon, etc.

The mahogany bar-back is the sole survivor from the Victorian era. Otherwise the fittings are pretty much intact from the 1930s, even down to some pretty Arts & Crafts door furniture. Pride of place goes to the two screens which create three rooms very much in the manner of a Victorian public house. There are even low service doors to give access for pot boys and cleaning staff. All the rooms have attractive fixed seating which looks as though it could have come from an ancient country pub. The private bar and Campden Bar have counters with raked matchboard panelling whereas the Sherry Bar

has fielded panelling. The latter also has a brick fireplace and, over it, a much yellowed picture of the eponymous castle. Spaces have been added in post-war times on the right-hand side. The pub's name is said to come from the fact that on a clear day Windsor Castle could be seen from it. Fuller's London Pride and a guest beer, on this occasion Caledonian Deuchars IPA, are usually served here.

More leg-work in what had turned out to be a chilly afternoon took members to an extremely busy **Churchill Arms**, 119 Kensington Church Street,



W8. Built in the Victorian era but given a complete internal refit between the wars, this pub is not a listed building but is on the London Regional Inventory. There would have been separate rooms of course at that time but although the partitions have gone, leaving a U-shaped drinking area wrapping round the servery, most of the rest of the c.1930 work survives. The windows are very attractive with their canted bays and charming art-nouveau-inspired stained glass details. Then there is the bar counter which has two distinctly different designs from the counter front in the left-hand parts. Most of it has panels with triple mouldings round them but the smaller, right-hand part is much plainer. This makes it clear that they must have been separated by a partition and, if you look closely, you can see in the window-sill a small piece of patching where the old screen stood. The walls are extensively panelled and there are a couple of pretty tiled fireplaces. There are two sets of snob-screens mounted on the counter but their age is a moot point. When the present licensee came in the mid-1980s they formed a continuous run but it's hard to believe such an intrusive feature would have been installed in the 1930s when people favoured unencumbered counters. For a Fullers pub it was not surprising that London Pride, ESB and Chiswick were available, plus a seasonal 3.8% 'Swing Low' which was no doubt being appreciated by, and pitched at, the many of those watching the rugby on TV. As is common on crawls of this nature, the party had started to become strung out by this point,

with individuals and groups progressing at their own pace using printed tour notes during the afternoon.

The penultimate stop was the **Mitre**, 24 Craven



Terrace, W2. This ex-Whitbread pub is a grade II listed building and is on the London Regional Inventory. It occupies a triangular corner site and has an unusual pair of slightly curved doors at the angle, leading to an attractive little lobby where the pub name appears on the inner door. Before you go in, the windows are worth a look for the very individual ironwork in the uprights and sub-Gothic tracery. Very sadly the glass has been replaced with plain sheets. The most impressive work is on the right-hand side with mosaic flooring at the entrance which stretches back into two more panels. In this area is an excellent display of etched, cut and orange-coloured glass, including a door panel advertising 'Ladies Bar'; which shows how some pubs at the end of the 19th century were starting to

provide a secure environment for respectable women who previously would have regarded the pub as completely out of bounds. Other glass advertises



Pub heritage

an upstairs billiard room and a saloon which has a small coloured skylight. In the main bar three stubs of wood and glass screening have survived from what must have been more extensive screens dividing the pub up into separate drinking areas. The counter is Victorian: in the saloon it forms a quadrant with panelled decoration while in the main bar it has vertical panelling. The bar-back has contemporary wood and mirrors. Fuller's London Pride and the seasonal 'Swing Low', Charles Wells Bombardier, Hog's Back TEA and Sharp's Doom Bar were on during our visit.

The crawl ended in the white stucco-rendered **Victoria** in Strathearn Place, W2. This former



Charrington house, now Fuller's pub is, like the Mitre, a grade II listed building and also on the London Regional Inventory. On a corner site and of c.1840-50, it has some very early and spectacular fittings. Such was the amount of pub renovation at the end of the 19th century, and since, that any fittings before the late-Victorian era are incredibly rare. Those at the Victoria are stylistically mid-Victorian and a precise date, 1864, is suggested by the date on a clock in the bar-back fitting. These, and a side wall, have large mirrors with intricate gilding and coloured decoration, each panel being separated from the others by detached columns with



lozenge and fleur-de-lys decoration. In the angle of the building is a delicate Regency-style fireplace containing a print of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and their numerous progeny. The counter is no doubt a piece from 1864 with panelled bays divided by fluted pilasters. It still retains a fully functioning brass water-dispenser for diluting spirits. Mounted on the long wall in wooden frames are coloured prints of soldiers but these are most probably a relatively modern (though now smoke-stained) addition.

There are several outside doors and these would have led originally to a series of internal drinking areas, separated by screenwork. On the first floor is the Theatre Bar, installed c.1958 with fittings salvaged from Shaw, Runtz and Ford's Gaiety Theatre of 1902-3 which stood in the Aldwych. Balcony fronts supported on Corinthian columns line the walls and a corner is counter set with boards from the shows, one signed Westwood Brothers suggesting that Bryan and Nonnan Westwood (working nearby at the time) may have been the architects for the installation. The bar-back depicts the Gaiety and there are two small box fronts in corners. The separate dining room was adapted after 1955 in neo-Queen Anne style, with panelling, fireplace and corner cupboards decorated with swags. These fittings may well also come from the Gaiety. The Victoria is of interest as a remarkably complete public house interior of the 1890s, to which the identified embellishments from the much lamented Gaiety Theatre add interest, both in their own right and as a rare surviving indication of the interest in Victoriana, particularly as expressed in pub interiors, that was beginning to emerge in the late-1950s. Fuller's Discovery, ESB and London Pride were on handpump, plus the rugby-themed Swing Low which seemed to have replaced Chiswick Bitter here for the duration of the tournament.

Thus concluded another interesting and successful LPG tour, cheers and here's to the next one!

*Jane Jephcote
Kim Rennie*

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Shareholders' visit to Wells and Young's Brewery

Coffee and bacon rolls were on offer at the Alma, Wandsworth before I boarded the coach on Wednesday 12 March with other shareholders bound for Bedford, now home to the Young's range of beers. No shire horses here nor age-old sampling room beloved of the late lamented Young's but instead a profound respect and awareness of the precious heritage the new brewing company had acquired.

More coffee over the introductions to the genial head brewer, Jim Robertson and his team with the brand director Emily Turner of Marketing giving an impressive performance on, amongst other things, their vision for the future of cask ale brands coming out of Havelock Lane. Various graphs showing the general decline of all beer drinking (due to the combined effects of no significant football events and the no smoking ban) were presented but with the emerging upward trend of cask ale sales pulling ahead clearly highlighted. The figures spoke for themselves with Young's Ordinary described as the No. 3 cask ale, in volume terms, in the London area and further afield being No. 5 of the 'draught standard ales', now selling twice as fast as Greene King IPA. With Courage Directors and Best Bitter being added to the fold, this last privately owned brewery of its size was immensely proud of its portfolio. Conversation with Bob, one of the ex Young's brewers who had moved to the brewery and who was a fervent believer in traditional brewing methods, revealed that most of the Charles Wells range and both the Courage beers were dry hopped, albeit with a wet hop essence.

Of great interest to the many CAMRA members present was the announcement by Emily of the launch in April of three bottle conditioned beers, alongside their usual range. Great attention had been paid to the packaging in particular, including real gold on the labels. All to be sold in 500ml designer bottles, Kew Gold (based on the Champion beer of Young's) and the well known Special London Ale were to be joined by a 4.5% Young's bitter. As well as targeting the supermarkets with the new

products, attention would be paid to launching them in pubs, with tastings and other promotions to follow - although with the Young's pub estate not allowing any point of sale material such as drip mats, this would prove more difficult. In addition, all the range of Young's bottled beers would be Red Tractor accredited with heavy emphasis on their provenance. The brewers were proud to point out that the brewing water was itself officially accredited as a natural mineral water and was pure and consistent, a natural advantage.

Although Cobra beer had been produced onsite for more than ten years, it was not sold by the company, being the property of the Cobra marketing company, but helped maintain the throughput of the brewery, now brewing to capacity.

On the question of Young's Special, Emily was emphatic that this was not going to be axed and indeed a jug of the same was deemed to be superb by some of the regular Special drinkers.

After the obligatory tour of the brewery - well the bottling and canning lines with a peep in the closed fermenting vessels - it was back for a generous buffet lunch and serious tasting session. The bottled Satanic Stout was a revelation to many and the Special London Ale was eagerly sampled. For the statistically minded, the once state-of-the-art semi-automatic control panel I remember seeing on a visit back in 1977 had been replaced in 1993 by a conventional lit panel depicting the various brewing processes. At that time capacity had doubled with two identical brewing streams being set up, each producing 160 barrels (46,080 pints) per brew, 12 to 14 times a day. At my previous visit I did remember asking where the brewery moggie was. There were no mice was the answer, but now it appears there are two moggies, one rather more threadbare than the other. Whether this is measure of progress I'm not sure but certainly the new setup looks to have a promising future with quality ingredients, careful marketing and, above all, brewing personnel who care about their products.

Sue Hart



The Apprentice and the Duke

One of the big questions in the licensed trade is the position of food. Can a traditional Real Ale pub provide quality food, i.e. become a 'Gastro Pub', or is it one or the other?

I was approached by the BBC as I was a non-food pub and asked if I would mind if it was turned into a food venue for 24hrs. I was told that the show was *The Apprentice* and I said that I had no problems, and that they could do as they wished as long as I got the Girls team.

A few weeks later just after noon the Boys team sauntered in, seven young Captains of Industry. I introduced myself and the pub, telling them that 'the Duke' was a traditional British local pub and very much Real Ale orientated. Those of you that saw the show will know that they saw that as code for 'This would make a great Italian restaurant.' Unfortunately that is what they did.

The next two days were pretty much how it was shown on the programme, although a whole episode could have been made about what happened at the Duke.

One story which sums up the Boys team was they decided to decorate the pub, and give it an Italian feel. Apparently the rugby and cricket pictures made it feel too British. They bought a huge amount of green, white and red material to drape across the front. Risking life and limb, they were hanging out of the first floor windows hanging this 'flag'. One of the locals with a pint in hand wandered out to watch the goings on. He looked up, took a swig and loudly enough but not really to anyone pointed out that the red was more of an orange and that the flag that they were draping over the pub was the Irish flag, and so could he swap his Spag Bol for an Irish Stew?

The only other really difficult moment of the evening occurred at about 9pm. Approached by the Royal Free medics asking if they could swing by on a pub crawl, I accepted - never one to turn away custom. The thing they didn't tell me was that there were about 200, they would be arriving at about the same time, they were on a three legged pub crawl and we were the penultimate pub on the list. I had a pub full of bursting inside and out, a film crew filming me and a bunch of lunatics in the kitchen trying to poison my customers. I sent the medics downstairs to the basement bar, put Sambuca on special offer and left them to it.

I finally got rid of everyone at about 2am. The apprentices had all scrubbed the kitchen to a high squeaky clean, and the rest of the crew had enjoyed a couple of drinks. Would I employ any of them? Of course, just so that I could utter those immortal words at the end of their first shift, "You are fired!!"

Was the food experiment a success? Well I had a fantastic time, sold very little real ale but did get through a vast amount of wine. There is a place for food in the pub, but I do believe that it must not be the primary role of the pub, otherwise all it is is a

restaurant. Will we be serving food? Maybe, come and see.

I will be having a Cider festival on the weekend of 14, 15 and 16 June.

Richard Wooderson

The Duke of Hamilton, Hampstead

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The Betjeman Arms, St Pancras Station

Do not be deceived by the outside of this pub tucked away on the upper floor to the right within St Pancras Station (from Euston Road). The successor of the Baby Betjeman (owned by Geronimo Inns), is a labyrinth. Outside the pub on the concourse you can admire the enormous stature of the kissing couple and watch the Eurostar trains come to and fro underneath the amazing glass roof that epitomises St Pancras and (fortunately) has not been touched by the developments. The area in front of the bar, despite being protected by the roof from rain, has huge umbrellas that cover the numerous wooden tables. But one suspects when the sun does eventually shine, it is a welcome relief.

Walk into the bar and you can see two of the original pillars (one partially covered) and the unattractive open kitchen to the right. Balanced on the other side are tables, stools and fixed, but very comfortable, seating. As outside, it can be not too warm in this area with strong breezes rattling the menus and anything else that is lightweight. But the staff delivering the table service (continental style) are warm, friendly and informative.

Unfortunately, look up and you can see a multitude of pipework peaking through slabs of ceiling (one suspects this is meant to be trendy). This coupled with the greenish grey walls creates a

feel of a pub that doesn't know what it wants to be. This is reinforced by the music, which at times is quite loud and doesn't quite fit with the overall ambience. With this being first and last pub for many people entering England, this is not what most people outside or inside the UK would expect.

Regardless, to the back is a pleasant (and warmer) bar area with several mirrors. Walk through to the left and there is another area, more geared up to eating but lacking some atmosphere (almost canteen-like). Walk through again and the eating area here has a nicer feel, almost of a Victorian Eating Room. Keep going and you'll get to the toilets – but be warned they are unisex (it does say this on the door and they really are!)

The food menu could be described as British Gastro but not particularly cheap. The beers on sale are Adnams Bitter (not Broadside, a nice change), Fuller's London Pride and Sharp's Betjeman Bitter. Rumours are that the Betjeman sold more real ale in the first week of opening than wine or lager. There seems to be no doubting that they look after their beer (all three beers on visiting were excellent) and take note, if you wish, to ask for a straight glass as handled dimples rule the day.

Christine Cryne

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Aim

To investigate the potential for the temperature of a beer glass to raise the temperature of its contents.

Equipment

One fridge-freezer thermometer; one two-litre polypropylene jug; tap water; ice cubes; boiling water; one one-pint Ravenhead 'Tulip' beer glass. Note: the only item of apparatus calibrated to national standards is the beer glass; that calibration does not include thermal properties.

Method

I took the jug and added approximately one pint of cold tap water and a few ice cubes to it. I checked the temperature: it was 10C. I pre-heated the glass, using hot tap water, which I drained, and immediately replaced with boiling water. After allowing the glass to heat up, I drained it and placed the hot glass into the cold water and rechecked the thermometer. After a short while (less than 30 seconds) the temperature rose to 11C.

Conclusion

A very hot glass will raise cold water by no more than 1C.

Comments

1. The cellar temperature recommended for the storage of real ales is either 10 - 14C: Cask Marque, or 13 - 14C: Cellarmanship, ISBN 1-85249-126-4; CAMRA Ltd. 1997. Serving temperature at the bar will vary more widely than this, depending on distance from the cask, the bar temperature and how much beer is served in a given time: i.e. allowing for warming up in the pump. Cask Marque recommends a serving temperature of 11 - 13C: telephone conversation today, 8 April 2008.

2. The change in temperature will depend directly on the starting temperatures of the glass and of the beer. A cooler glass will raise temperature less, and a warmer beer will gain less from the glass.

3. I would be surprised if an ordinary person could distinguish beer temperature to an accuracy of 1C.

4. Perhaps someone with better apparatus and too much time on his (her) hands might like to do a more accurate test?

Richard Larkin

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Dear Editor

I would like to place on record my thanks to CAMRA and its members for the support given to me before and during my recent beer festival at the Trafalgar Freehouse in Merton SW19. To my mind it shows exactly what a campaigning organisation should be about. In a small independently run freehouse like the Trafalgar, it can be like swimming against the tide much of the time. South West London CAMRA kindly lent me the glassware for the festival and many members of the branch have been hugely supportive of it. I would like in particular to thank Ellie and Terry of SWL CAMRA for their sterling efforts. They gave up their weekend to volunteer to work behind the bar and did so with distinction for 12 hours each day! I know that many CAMRA members do this kind of thing at the large official festivals, but this really was over and above the call of duty. Thanks to you both.

Running these events is a nerve racking experience, but essential in order to raise the profile of the pub. What CAMRA does best is to provide a support network for pubs like mine, thus ensuring that we stay in existence. I must point out, though, that admiring a pub from afar won't keep it in business. If you have a good local independent pub near where you live I would advise you to use it or lose it.

We had 32 beers and ciders at our festival, and over 600 people through the door, which for a small pub (come and see just how small!) is remarkable. The pub and garden were heaving and everybody (with the exception of the small-minded man who was grumpy because we were busy) behaved impeccably - as you would expect. I did, however, get slightly exasperated at the woman who went into the Yard Bar, looked at the 25 beers and ciders on offer out there and said "is that all there is?"

Oh well! Here's to the next one...

David Norman

Dear Editor

Drinkers need pubs

I had to pinch myself to believe what I was reading in your editorial (LD April-May) despite it being All Fools' Day as I write. I'd certainly agree with the headline that 'Pubs need drinkers' but the rest of the piece seems to be an assemblage of vacuous soundbites cobbled together by an acolyte of Youngs. The Wandsworth pubco must be well pleased that despite reports elsewhere in the same issue of the demolition and sale of several pubs in their South London estate, disgruntlement at the gastrophication of the *Duke of Devonshire* in Balham, and continuing attempts to turn the well regarded *Charlie Butler* at Mortlake into a block of flats, their running dogs are in control at London Drinker!

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Of all the claims in the piece the assertion that CAMRA shouldn't contest 'commercial decisions made by breweries and pub companies' is the most breathtaking. Try telling that to the thousands whose village pubs were shut by Watneys in the '70s and by everyone else since; the shareholders at the Crown, Heskett Newmarket, and other community run locals who saved a tiny handful of the pubs destroyed by greedy brewers; or the loyal drinkers whose locals have been turned into anything from gastropubs to Oirish theme joints or kiddie fun bars, without any concern for the stakeholders in those pubs. Ask any tenant today and he or she will tell you that being screwed by greedy pubcos is at the top of the problems they have to deal with, higher even than the imposition of higher taxes that CAMRA have been so unsuccessful in preventing. It's these pubcos who force tenants to take casks at rip-off trade prices, whilst every initiative by tenants is rewarded by an increase in rent until many give up the unequal struggle. And finally (for now anyway!) was it not a commercial decision of brewers to stop producing real ale that led to the very formation of CAMRA itself? And now a leader in a London CAMRA magazine tells us to lie down and like it. If LD was *Private Eye* I'd be cancelling my subscription, signed 'choked of Carshalton'!

Bob Steel, Carshalton

Dear Editor

Tony Hedger in the news round up mentions that a new beer from Meantime is not an April Fool – I think that he has missed the real April Fool in the form of the editorial defending Young & Co's proposed closing of traditional public houses in favour of the purchase of 'gastro pubs'.

Young's had a long and distinguished history in running an estate of well regarded pubs mainly in the south of London. In earlier times they were proud of the continuity of their estate (*Such continuity is remarkable over two centuries that have otherwise seen enormous changes* – A History of Young's Pubs Helen Osborn pub. 1991)

It would seem that the company (and it is still a public limited company with many small shareholders) is no longer content with its core trading area, and although funds are available from the sale of the land in Wandsworth, it will not invest in the existing pubs. It is no doubt only a coincidence that the two Croydon pubs mentioned in *Capital Pubcheck* as being placed on the market are both large detached premises with car parks which may be suitable for development. They are not being offered to the market as going concerns.

This cannot be outside the remit of consumers and local residents (yes - some of these may also be CAMRA members) to be concerned about. Many of us would also wish our existing brewery (and ex-brewery) estates to be spared the possibility of 'going

under' whether deservedly or not.

If Young's wish to vary their pub portfolio then let it be by exchange with other breweries or sale with a continuing licence. Any other course should be not defended in your magazine which has Drinkers in London at heart.

David Lands, Thornton Heath

Dear Editor

With his call that you can't beat the market but simply have to go with the flow Peter J Sutcliffe sounds like he should be a New Labour Minister rather than writing Editorials in the London Drinker.

Of course CAMRA has to recognise the realities of the market, and try and work to maximise interest in real ale around that. But we also have to challenge the market and aim to do something to constrain and control its destructive urges.

The Editorial suggests that with the market things close and things open as if this was as natural as the tide coming in. It is not.

Of course some things do close because they simply don't find custom or don't make enough money to keep going. There may be a case for providing a subsidy if they are the only pub in a village and the centre of the community, at least while ways of increasing viability are looked at.

But as often pubs and breweries are shut down that are running along perfectly well but just don't happen to fit the grand design of someone who seeks yet more wealth, or a monopolistic position in the market. Here CAMRA can't just go with the flow, it has to challenge it.

Keith Flett, Tottenham

Dear Editor

Your paean to Young & Co's pubs in the last edition of London Drinker has inspired me to relay a rather depressing tale which, although it happened back in January of this year, will linger in the memory for some while longer.

Having found myself in Earlsfield with half an hour to kill and not knowing any of the local pubs, I paid a visit to the Halfway House. By the look of things it had been recently refurbished to give a more contemporary feel, but I didn't want to hold this against it. However, I must have had bad vibes from the start because I didn't want to risk any of the cask offerings and so plumped instead for a bottle of Champion. My worst fears were realised when I had to ask for a glass which, although I was duly given, was passed to me by the barmaid accompanied by the question "Do you want ice in that?"

Young & Co are welcome to spruce up their pubs if they want to attract a younger crowd, but maybe they should also invest in training their bar staff – at least if they want to keep on attracting the custom of this old fart (32 years and counting).

Simon James, Ealing

Dear Editor

I read Mr Tony Bell's letter in the April - May 2008 edition with interest. I was recently present when a similar incident occurred. There were, however, significant differences.

One Sunday last month I was standing at the bar of a favourite pub, when there was an altercation. The first thing I knew of it was when the barmaid refused to serve a customer. This lady is experienced, highly competent and well respected and, I had always thought, totally unflappable, so there was obviously something seriously amiss.

I next heard a customer complaining vociferously about having been served his beer in a warm glass. Another member of staff offered to replace the beer with another pint in a fresh glass. Rather than accept the offer, the customer continued to complain. At this point, the licensee intervened and told the customer that if he didn't like it, he could go elsewhere.

The customer continued his outpouring, at which point the licensee said words to the effect that as he hadn't left when asked politely to do so, he could f*** off. The customer remained. He was told twice more in the same terms to leave. Eventually he did. Now it is regrettable that the licensee felt reduced to using such language, even under provocation, but he certainly did not use it initially.

Richard Larkin

Dear Editor

I was going to reply sooner but Yahoo closed me down for a few weeks! I had to get a whizz-kid on to the case to get me reinstated; literally and even that took some doing. ("*Never underestimate the enemy*" - Mao Tsetung @63 Little Red Book)

London Drinker April/May 2008, page 10:

Health and welfare. My GP assessed my alcoholic unit consumption as 150 units per week following my previous GP's assessment of 43 units per week. I've been breathalized three times and passed all tests much to my amazement, knowing how much I'd drunk each time. My GP couldn't believe it and assumed that it was something to do with my enzymes. Don't ask me what they do. I don't feel smug about possibly driving around over the limit but seldom do I feel intoxicated. Last weekend I went to an old friend's 60th birthday party (I'm 66) but took a cab there and back. Arriving home I collapsed into a chair; the wife went to bed. I awoke when it was light, stood up and fell over splitting my eye brow (boxer injury) on a window frame and fell down. I stood up and did it again: repeat performance - two splits! - then arose a third time and made it to bed, eventually emerging at noon, or after feeling none the worse for wear! So I do suspect that the professionals have not got it right as yet viz units. As far as I can see, according to somebody or other, everything, drink or food or air borne chemicals, is posing a threat to one's health. What are we to do?

Page 25: The cold pint. Tony Bell is presumptuously ignorant! There are people out there who prefer warm beer as opposed to the 'lager louts'. My favourite pubs are those which have radiators around the walls accessible to the punters. In these places I can buy a couple of pints and be drinking one while the other warms up on the top of the radiator. By the time I've drunk the first, the second and subsequent drinks have improved immensely in their flavour. The only time I enjoy a cold beer is when the air temperature is something like 30C. It is much the same with wine, red

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especially. The cooking manual issued with my microwave oven even suggests bringing up to room temperature the red wine by decanting it into a jug and putting it in the oven on number 7 for 30 seconds. To ensure that heat is not lost I put the bottle in for 20 seconds. It really does improve the bouquet of the wine - improving its taste at least. People don't believe me! I do not do it with white wine.

"The customer care manual" he mentions. What rubbish. We know beer can 'go off' more easily in summer. But why lose the flavour in winter? He must be a slow drinker if he thinks that the temperature of a warm glass is going to be noticed by the time he gets to the bottom. He's living in cloud cuckoo land. Finally, in one pub I frequent the barmaid put my beer in the microwave for 15 seconds and it came out tasting just right.

Page 37: Chesham Arms. I know this pub well as originally it was the only local place in Hackney that sold Newcastle Brown, in the days when it enjoyed a better reputation and there was a hospital clinic in Newcastle for those addicted to it! I don't know why the 'new professionals' describe it as 'hard to find' as it now only has one entrance to it off Homerton High Street down the side turning at Sutton House, 'Hackney's oldest house', would you believe it. With an advert like that they are more likely to put people off going to it. I can't vouch for the quality of the place and its wares these days as I do not frequent it.

Page 57:10 gallon bottle. Red Barrel was the saga and demise of the Watney brewery. A pub I used to frequent, the Dartford Station Hotel (or something like that) near where I lived in Kent in those days started selling Red Barrel but it did cost more than the preferred Watneys Special. So after one sip me and my mates gave it the thumbs down and continued drinking the Special. The Watneys drink which I did like was their barley wine (common from all breweries), Watneys Stingo. That was good just like Russian Imperial Stout, which I came to appreciate later in life.

Well Watneys decided, thinking that they may have been onto a roll with the Red Barrel, charging more and being weaker than Special, to go further down the line and bring out another beer almost akin to the alcohol free stuff of today. They called it Star Light. It was accepted as a joke and didn't sell. It has gone down in history as being the only beer of which a brewer had to increase the alcoholic strength for it to sell at a profit. But by that time it was too late and Watneys literally went down the drain with its Star Light. A shame really because they did make some good drinks in their time.

For me the pits with Watneys was when, after hitch-hiking across France and Spain all the way down to Gibraltar in the late '50s I thought that in this rock town I would be able to get a decent drink

of beer. So I went into Smokey Joe's as it was called for a long refreshing glass of English styled beer only to be confronted by a pump with Watneys Red Barrel on it and nothing else. I couldn't believe it. So it was back to the Spanish brandy, cheaper than anything else that side of the English Channel.

A piece of pure kitsch, to conclude. I am a musician of sorts, playing saxophones. The longtime instrument repairer friend of mine offered me a necksling for supporting the saxes once, which I took him up on in a flash as the Watneys Red Barrel was used as the adjustment piece for the sling. Who in their right mind would incorporate such an item into a saxophone sling? I've never seen it any where else, but I am still using it today!

Roger Hughes, London E5

Dear Editor

I have just read the April/May *London Drinker* and noted the piece about the Ninkasi campaign.

In all fairness to the woman employed by CAMRA to play the part, I should perhaps reveal that when she did a photoshoot at the Great British Beer Festival, it seemed to be a full time job for her CAMRA minder to keep her pint glass topped up with beer!

John Hein

Dear Editor

It be different in the Wychwood

I notice in the Hobgoblin ads 'the lads' continue to flout the indoors smoking ban.. Also the one standing at the back downing his pint *may* be a binge drinker. Who cares? So long as they continue to brew a good drop of ale, I'm happy. (And the lagerboys don't know what they are missing!)

Dave Kennedy, Ruislip

Dear Editor

Way out West

Greetings from soggy, windy and muddy South Devon! It was great to see so many London CAMRA faces at the recent beer festival at the Maltings, Newton Abbot. This is a wonderful festival of 250 different West Country beers at the splendid Victorian, still highly productive maltings near the town railway station.

The Beer Festival is organised by SIBA (the Society of Independent Brewers) Southwest, helped tremendously by local CAMRA branches. Thursday was judging day and, for those who like these things, top beer of the West Country was the superb Skinners Cornish Blonde. With excellent beers, food, a marquee (just in case it rains - the weather was really good), a beer shop, Teignworthy Brewery and even live music in the evenings, this is the biggest beer festival in the region and slap bang next door to the station.

A number of people came down from London just for the day; a train from Paddington at 9.05 gets

into Newton Abbot at about 11.30. Why not come along next year, mid-April? Hope to see a lot of my *London Drinker* friends there again then!

'Tis proper 'andsome.

Cheers!

Robin Forshaw-Wilson

Dear Editor

We have just acquired two 11 week-old kittens named Theakston and Daisycutter. Are there any other pets out there who are named after beers?

Kimberly Martin, West London Branch

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Greater London Pub of the
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See page 20.



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Ye Olde Mitre is top City pub

Ye Olde Mitre, in Ely Place, Hatton Garden, dating from 1546, has been voted 2008 Pub of the Year by members of the CAMRA East London and City (ELAC) Branch. This is the second time in three years the Olde Mitre has received the award - a remarkable achievement as the City of London is well endowed with historic pubs serving consistently good beer.

The choice recognises the continuing commitment of licensees, Scotty and Kathy Scott, to providing a range of first-class traditional real ales. During May, CAMRA's Mild Month, the Olde Mitre offered 25 different mild ales.



ELAC chairman Jon Russell Brown (left) presents the 2008 ELAC Pub of the Year award to Kathy and Scotty Scott on 8 May.

THE ANSWERS

As promised, here are the solutions to the puzzles set in April's Idle Moments column.

NUMBER PUZZLES:

1. 41 Symphonies by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
2. 12 Days from Christmas Day to Epiphany
3. 959 Cells in a Nematode Worm
4. 6 States in New England
5. 147 Square Miles is the Area of the Isle of Wight
6. 38 Stations on the Piccadilly Line
7. 207 Degrees Celsius is the Melting Point of Lead
8. 10 Dimes in a Dollar
9. 76 Years is the Periodicity of Halley's Comet
10. 25 Hours in the Day when the Clocks Go Back

BREWERY ANAGRAMS:

1. PICT'S LONG SWORD - COTSWOLD SPRING
2. THROWN SAIL - NAILSWORTH
3. ADJUST SINE - SAINT JUDES
4. CLOUT MAIN BANK - BLACK MOUNTAIN
5. DOFFS A KEY - OFFA'S DYKE
6. SAWN LADY - WAYLANDS
7. GRIM BEAST - BRIMSTAGE
8. BARN HOME - HORNBEAM
9. STALIN'S SOLDIER HIT AT COAT - TRADITIONAL SCOTTISH ALES
10. SWEPT FLOOR - FLOWERPOTS

5BY4:

April 2008 Famous Couples (Hello time?)

1. Julia Roberts - Lyle Lovett
2. Beverly D'Angelo - Al Pacino
3. Barbara Bach - Ringo Starr
4. Demi Moore - Bruce Willis
5. Brooke Shields - Andre Agassi
6. Ann Bancroft - Mel Brooks
7. Jennifer Aniston - Brad Pitt
8. Nicole Kidman - Tom Cruise
9. Courtney Love - Kurt Cobain
10. Natalie Wood - Robert Wagner

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE:

1. On 5th April 1982 the British fleet set sail for The Falklands.
2. Concorde 002, the British prototype made its first flight from Filton to Fairford on 9th April - in 1969.
3. On 10th April 1988, the first British golfer to win the US Masters tournament was Sandy Lyle.

4. The name of the WPC shot dead by terrorists during a siege at the Libyan Embassy on 17th April 1984 was Yvonne Fletcher.
5. BBC2 was officially opened on 21st April, in 1964.
6. The year in which the May Day bank holiday was first celebrated in Britain was 1978 (the year after the holiday for the Queen's Silver Jubilee).
7. On 6th May 1972 the first all-ladies race under Jockey Club rules, the Goya Stakes, was first run - at Kempton Park.
8. The footballer who retired on 14th May 1977, the occasion of his 1000th appearance (all matches for West Ham, Fulham and England) was none other than Bobby Moore.
9. On 15th May 1928 in Cloncurry, Queensland Dr Vincent Welsh became the first Flying Doctor.
10. The first air raid on London took place on 31st May in 1915.

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Idly leafing through a dictionary of quotations, the sun streaming through the window, and looking for a pithy epithet I chanced upon this from Nancy Reagan in 1981:

"A woman is like a teabag - only in hot water do you realise how strong she is."
Now let's get straight down to the number puzzles. I don't know what came over me but this time no fewer than SIX brand new ones came into my head.

1. 8 is the RN of the UKE
2. 792 I in a C
3. 5,000 F in a RM
4. 16 B on a P T
5. 100 in H is TH and FS
6. 998 C C is the E of a VBS
7. 2 S on a T
8. 1 BA in EB
9. 3 GS for EUWC
10. 180 DC is GMF

I have made a momentous decision -there will be no more brewery anagrams. There are just so many breweries around (and so many new ones every year) that nobody stands a real chance of solving them without having a copy of the Good Beer Guide beside him (or her - but surely ladies don't waste their time on rubbish like this, do they?). As my idea behind this column is to pass the time in the pub, I have suddenly realised that they are no longer relevant; I realised this following an evening with a couple of friends - I was pretending that I couldn't remember any of the answers (or was I?) - and they did not even bother to look at the anagrams. "Waste of time," I thought.

So we shall carry straight on with 5BY4. This time I have gone back to the same list that I used last time and split up some celebrity couples - can you put them back together? I promise I'll try to do something different in the next edition. This time to maintain a balance I have put the chaps in the first list and the ladies second.

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Humphrey Bogart | A. Mary Pickford |
| 2. Douglas Fairbanks | B. Sharon Tate |
| 3. Nicolas Cage | C. Gracie Allen |
| 4. Douglas Fairbanks Jr. | D. Lauren Bacall |
| 5. David Copperfield | E. Patricia Arquette |
| 6. Ben Affleck | F. Joan Crawford |
| 7. George Burns | G. Jennifer Lopez |
| 8. Roy Rogers | H. Christie Brinkley |
| 9. Roman Polanski | I. Claudia Schiffer |
| 10. Billy Joel | J. Dale Evans |

And finally we come to General Trivia. I have decided to continue the pattern set at the start of the year by setting questions about the period of currency of the magazine so this time it's er... oh yes, June and July:

1. On 1st June 1946 the first television licences in Britain were issued - what was the annual fee at that time?

2. Also on 1st June the first Premium Bond prizes were drawn by "Ernie" - but in what year? And what was the first prize?
3. On 3rd June 1963 the Pope, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli died. What was his official papal name?
4. On 6th June 1977 what town was designated a city to mark the Silver Jubilee of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II?
5. On 10th June 1943 the first ball point pen was patented in the USA - by whom, and what was his nationality?
6. Bessie Wallis Warfield was born on 19th June 1896 in Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania. How was she to be better known later in life?
7. Who became President of the USSR on 2nd July 1985?
8. 166 Lives were lost in the explosion on the Piper Alpha oil rig on 6th July, in what year?
9. The seven mile long Mont Blanc road tunnel linking France and Italy was opened on 16th July in what year?
10. Which star of the Goon Show died on 24th July 1980?

So there we are then. If anybody has a good idea for something new to replace the brewery anagrams - and it's too much like hard work (for me), send your idea to the editor and you may get an honourable mention.

Andy Pirson

realale.com

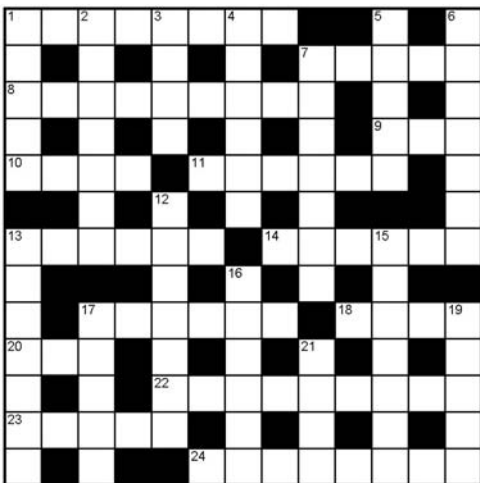
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Crossword

Compiled by DAVE QUINTON



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Address.....

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All correct entries received by first post on 16th July will be entered into a draw for the prize.

Prize winner will be announced in the October London Drinker.

The solution will be given in the August edition.

All entries to be submitted to:

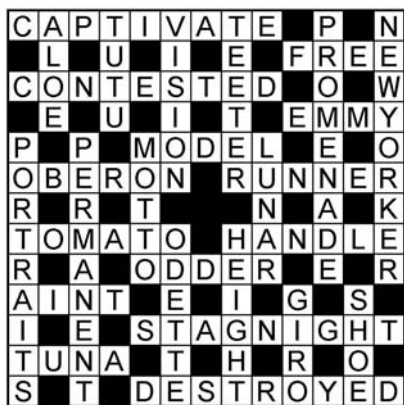
London Drinker Crossword

25 Valens House

Upper Tulse Hill

London SW2 2RX

SOLUTION TO APRIL'S CROSSWORD



£20 PRIZE TO BE WON

ACROSS

1. Look, try but hate. [8]
7. Wicket partly taken from test umpire. [5]
8. Before time, in the morning, exploit people for pleasure. [9]
9. California recycled first automobile. [3]
10. Reflection of city house. [4]
11. Waist is divine when entering race. [6]
13. Get help for a special occasion. [6]
14. Not accustomed to being idle. [6]
17. Pub worker seeing mother in farm building. [6]
18. It's crazy to swallow energy drink. [4]
20. It'll make a hole in a trawler. [3]
22. Striking scaffolder in a boat. [9]
23. Rugby, for example, or Dover. [5]
24. Left a section in a legal document. [8]

DOWN

1. Vermin found in church box. [5]
2. Anything in New York is bad. [7]
3. Egghead to study paradise. [4]
4. Bird in piss up with orchestra? [6]
5. Fool Mussolini about Nigeria's Capital. [5]
6. Caught fire and raced round vessel. [7]
7. Boss over hospital department? He's still learning. [7]
12. Three involved in hit on England supporter perhaps. [7]
13. Top class males upset by sickness. [7]
15. Dexterity of extremely special crew. [7]
16. Neat feline let out. [6]
17. Flower from bog in outskirts of Birmingham. [5]
19. Lawman and revolutionary were bold. [5]
21. Have a drink up in town. [4]

Winner of the prize for the February Crossword:
Paul Rogers, Dorking, Surrey.

Other correct entries were received from:

Tony Alpe, Pat Andrews, Hilary Ayling, Geoff B, Elaine Bamford, Jack Bass, Steve Block, Jeremy Brinkworth, Barry Brownless, Ben Burfutt, Eddie Carr, John Cattemull, Brian Collins, Carole Cook, Chris Fran & a spotted dog, Charles Creasey, Kevin Creighton, Paul Curson, Elaine Cusick, C.A.Daly, J.Davies, John Dodd, Richard & Clever Clogs Douthwaite, Brian Exford, Mike Farrelly, Arthur Fox-Ache, D.J.Freeman, Sally Fullerton, Stephan Gatward, Anthony Gdula & Jess the border collie, B.Gleeson, Marion Goodall, Paul Gray, J.E.Green, Alex Greer, Stuart Guthrie & Chet Fore Raines, Brian Hall, John Heath, Andrew Hide, Patrick Higgins, Graham Hill, Roger Jacobson, Claire Jenkins, Les Jenkins, David Jiggins, Mike Joyce, Lochan Keigh, J.Knust, Pete Large, Terry Lavell, Mike Lloyd, Mr & Mrs. Lopatis, M.E.Maidment, Terry Mellor, M.J.Moran, Al Mountain, Michael Oliver, Nigel Parsons, Mark Pilkington, Geraldine Pote, Keith Potter, Charlie Pottins, Rod Prince, Derek Pryce, John Redwood, Richard Rogers, Bryan Smith, Lesley Smith, Keith Smith, Ivan Stevenage, Alina Syed, Offramp Tavanipupu, Ken Taylor, Bill Thackray, Thamesmead, Mark Thompson, Dave Thomson, Trevor Turner, Leo Walsh, M.Weedon, Elizabeth Whale, Ian Whiteman, John Wilkinson, Sue Wilson, David Woodward, Peter Wright & the Missus. There were also two incorrect entries.

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