

The firkin



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

FREE

Newsletter of CAMRA North Bedfordshire Branch

Vol 33 No 4

TETLEY BREWERY TO CLOSE



Another Great Festival!

*A Merry
Christmas*

*and a happy New Year
to all our readers -
licensees, pub staff,
customers and advertisers*

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ROXTON AND GREAT BARFORD

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The Campaign for Real Ale is a consumer organisation founded in 1971



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A GENUINE FREEHOUSE

CHRISTMAS SPIRIT??.....WHAT ABOUT CHRISTMAS BEER

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ROBINSONS Humbug Bitter, MIGHTY OAK Ding Dong,
OLDERSHAW'S Holly Days, OAKHAM Raucous Reindeer, TITANIC
Deck the Halls, SARAH HUGHES Snow Flake, STORM Looks like
Reindeer, BRENTWOOD Chestnut Stout, PHOENIX Snow Bound,
HARVIESTOUN Mr Sno'Balls, 1648 Winter Warrant, WINDSOR
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Tetley Brewery to Close

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, has attacked the decision by Carlsberg UK to close its iconic Tetley Brewery in Leeds by 2011.

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, has attacked the decision by Carlsberg UK to close its iconic Tetley Brewery in Leeds by 2011. CAMRA has criticised Carlsberg UK for failing to promote the famous Tetley beers at a time when consumer interest in real ales is growing.



Short-sighted

Bob Stukins, CAMRA Vice Chairman and Director of Brewery Campaigning said: "It is unclear where Carlsberg UK intends to brew the famous Tetley beers which remain

household names in the UK. Brewed outside their Leeds heartland I fear they would lack the provenance which today's discerning consumers expect.

While we recognise the enormous challenges facing the brewing industry at present, I think this is a short-sighted decision. Recent statistics clearly show that real ale is performing better than other beer styles in a declining market. There is an opportunity to respond to this, invest in the Tetley brands and bring them back to glory."

The Tetley Brewery is now the largest real ale brewing plant in the world. The Intelligent Choice report published in September by CAMRA, Cask Marque, SIBA, the IFBB and Why Handpull shows that real ale sales are moving towards growth while the overall beer market has declined by 8% in the year to May 2008.

Give breweries a chance

CAMRA is calling on the Government to overturn its decision to increase beer duty over the next four years to give struggling breweries a chance to compete. High beer tax is driving beer drinkers out of pubs and into their armchairs as the price gap between the on and off-trade widens.

Bob Stukins said: "The Government has a responsibility to act to save British jobs in brewing

and pubs and an urgent review of beer tax is required."

CAMRA is seeking a meeting with Carlsberg UK bosses to discuss a way forward for the brewery, which still has its unique open square fermenters and brews a range of real ales including Tetley's Dark Mild, Tetley's Mild, Ansells Best Bitter, Burton Ale and the famous Tetley's Cask Bitter.

Mr Stukins added: "We have a two-year window of opportunity before the brewery gates are set to close for the last time. We will be supporting anyone who has a plan to keep the mash tuns running in this historic brewery and we will be looking at every possible option to save the brewery. Jobs and this iconic Yorkshire Brewery should not close due to the development potential of this city site."

Lord John Russell

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Six Real Ales including Batemans Mild, XB and Salem Porter, plus 3 guest beers

Food served Tuesday to Sunday

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What a GREAT festival!

CAMRA's 31st Bedford Beer & Cider Festival in October was another great success. Held once again in the Corn Exchange, the town's premier entertainment venue, the festival attracted over 5,000 visitors and sold nearly 18,000 pints of real ale, cider, perry and foreign beers between Wednesday and Saturday.



Yorkshire accent

The festival was about the same size as last year, with 110 different real ales, 30 different brands of real cider and perry, and a wide selection of draught and bottled beers from Belgium, Germany and other countries. As well as the usual real ales from local brewers B&T, Potton, Wells & Young's and White Park, many beers this year came from breweries in Yorkshire.

As the festival had to close on Saturday, with no opportunity to sell what was left the following week, the organisers had to balance choice for customers against minimising waste beer. However, careful planning ensured that a reasonable choice of beer was maintained throughout Saturday, with very little left over at the end.

Cider and Perry

As October is CAMRA's Cider and Perry Month, the organisers were delighted that the range of traditional cider and perry sold well yet again, with cider lovers finishing the last of 300 gallons shortly before the festival closed.

Although real cider and its stable mate perry, made from pears, are still available in only a handful of Bedfordshire pubs, these traditional, fermented fruit drinks have become highly popular at Bedford festivals continues to grow. As with draught beers, there is an enormous difference between real cider or perry and the processed keg ciders more commonly available. We would like to see more local pubs offer real cider and perry, as the festival demonstrates a clear local demand.

In the Howard Room

In addition to British real ales, cider and perry in the main hall, the ever popular foreign beer bar in the Howard Room upstairs offered speciality draught and bottled beers from other European countries.

With so many people now taking holidays abroad, local drinkers have become better informed about the great beer traditions of our neighbours. A growing number of local pubs now offer quality draught and bottled beers from Belgium and elsewhere, not just the usual imported lagers.

The Corn Exchange in-house caterers were a hit for the fourth year running, serving hot and cold meals to several thousand visitors during the week. Thanks to catering manager Sunil Kalyan and his team once again – feedback about the food quality was again entirely favourable.

Entertainment

Local singer and satirist Dr Busker, who has become a regular at these festivals, was in form

on Wednesday evening with a mix of old and new ditties to keep everyone amused. For the first time on Saturday evening, the festival welcomed folk quintet Tam Lin, who gave us a selection of mainly Celtic music to bring the event to a rousing close.

The Bedford Morris Men, this year without visiting teams, performed in the hall on Saturday lunchtime and early afternoon. In our experience, Morris dancers are always thirsty and have a sharp nose for decent beer!

Thanks to the helpers...

CAMRA could not promote and run a festival like this without a small army of unpaid volunteers, to work behind the bars, the glasses counter, on the door and behind the scenes. Chief Organiser John Martin paid tribute to everyone involved in planning, managing and staffing it.

"Organising this festival takes months of planning and enough CAMRA volunteers and friends willing to give their time behind the bars, glasses and other functions. Without so many keen volunteers, we just could not run it at all."

Helpers included hard working volunteers from outside the area, as well as local members and friends. East Bedfordshire CAMRA members operated the shop and tombola, while other helpers came from as far away as London and Lincoln.



Logo by Suni UK Ltd
www.suniscreen.co.uk



..and to the sponsors

The organisers were grateful to Wells & Young's Brewing Company for sponsoring the souvenir glasses once again, to train operator First Capital Connect for promoting the festival on the Bedford-Brighton line and to local companies for sponsoring beer casks on the stillage.

Thanks were also due to the Corn Exchange management and staff for their help and co-operation, and to the many local pubs and clubs that kindly displayed posters advertising the festival. The basement cloakroom was run once again by Bedford Lions in aid of local good causes. We are delighted to report that almost £900 was again raised through the cloakroom and collection boxes. Many thanks to everyone for your generosity.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

32nd Bedford Beer & Cider Festival
Wed 7 to Sat 10 October 2009
If you are a CAMRA member or friend interested in helping organise the event, please call us.

01234 822698

firkin@northbedscamra.org.uk

Pub News

Black Horse, Maulden

News of Steve Miasek, who retired from the Sun at Felmersham some months ago, but is now running this lively village community pub. Greene King IPA and a guest ale from the Greene King list are available, while the large garden includes a children's play area. Having once been a hairdresser, Steve tells us he may offer a haircut and two pints for a tenner!



Ship, St Cuthberts Street, Bedford

Welcome to Pasquale and Janet Mancini, who took over this popular three-bar pub east of the town centre a few months ago. Hidden corners in the side and back bars are great for small groups, while the front "cabin" bar can be hired for private functions. Lunches are available every day, with Greene King IPA, Abbot and guest ales on the pumps. There is a large car park, a patio garden at the rear and decked outside seating at the front. Pasq and Janet also run the Cross Keys in Bedford High Street with help from an on-site manager. Call 01234 267126.

Ye Three Fyshes, Turvey

New manager Cliff Elbourne has moved just a few hundred yards from the Three Cranes to this ancient pub next to the Great Ouse. New owner the Clear Pub Company allows Cliff freedom to choose real ales to suit his customers. Adnams Broadside, Greene King Abbot and Hoggleys Northamptonshire Bitter were available recently, ales from Frog Island and other local micros likely to appear soon. Lunches and evening meals are

served daily. A converted barn provides a home for pub games, but the car park is 50 yards along the street. Call 01234 881463.



Knife & Cleaver, Houghton Conquest

This popular pub-restaurant near Ampthill is now run by Susan Cunningham. Although most visitors come for the restaurant, the bar area has been refurbished for those calling in for a drink. Real ales vary but London Pride and Potton Village Bike were available recently. The pub is widely known for its high quality food, which includes speciality seafood dishes. The 18th century building was originally the Butchers Arms and is reputedly haunted. Check the menu at www.knifeandcleaver.co.uk and call 01234 740387 to book a table.

White Horse, Southill

Welcome to Paul Cluett, new licensee at this well-known village pub just north of Shefford. The White Horse is no longer associated with the Raven at Hexton. There is a new food menu and four handpumps, with real Greene King IPA and Old Speckled Hen, Shepherd Neame Spitfire and Wells Bombardier available on our last visit. Call 01462 813364 or visit www.whitehorsesouthill.co.uk

Sun Inn, Felmersham

Bill and Sue, who took over the Sun early this year, recently launched a new Provencal style restaurant at this attractive, thatched village inn. The new menu includes daily specials from chef

Phillippa and her team. Meals are available Wednesday to Saturday from 12 to 2 and 6 to 9.30pm, and Sunday lunches from 12 to 3pm. Wells Eagle IPA and a guest beer are available on the bar. Call 01234 781355.

Bridge, Shefford

Welcome to Stuart Andrews, new licensee at this modernised, two-bar corner pub in High Street, next to where the old railway bridge used to stand. The larger bar offers pool and TV, while the smaller bar is quieter. Wells Eagle IPA and usually a guest ale are available. The pub opens from 1pm on Monday to Thursday and from noon at weekends, closing late on Friday and Saturday. There is live music most weekends. Call 01462 629444.



Falcon, Bletsoe

Brendan Brokinsha, landlord of the Cock in nearby Pavenham, is now running the Falcon as well, although day-to-day business is managed by his colleague Leanne. Lunches and evening meals are served daily, with Wells Eagle IPA, Bombardier and guest beers on the bar. Call 01234 781222.

Cock Inn, Wootton

Welcome to Tony Knox, who took over this friendly community pub a few months ago. Wells Eagle IPA is available, with lunches and evening meals from Wednesday to Saturday. There is an attractive garden for fine weather and occasional live music. Call 01234 767497.

The Firkin

Published every three months by the North Bedfordshire Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. The Firkin is produced and distributed by volunteers to most pubs and clubs in Bedfordshire north of a line joining the M1, Clophill, Shefford and Tempsford. We welcome correspondence and any relevant features for publication. Views expressed here may not be those of the Editor, the Campaign for Real Ale, or its North Bedfordshire Branch.

Items for publication in the next issue should reach the Editor by the date at the foot of this page.

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Trading Standards

If you complain to a licensee about short measure, no visible price list or misleading product promotion and do not get a satisfactory response, contact the Bedfordshire Trading Standards Service at County Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP. Tel. 01234 228897.
www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/bedfordshire

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Falcon artwork to follow

The Gordon Arms



Local community pub
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Café-style home-cooked lunches
Coffee morning and afternoon teas
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Families welcome

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Winter Beer Festivals

8th Derby Twelfth Night Winter Beer Festival

Thu 8 to Sat 10 January in the Darwin Suite, Assembly Rooms, Market Place (bus station 1 min). Open Thu 6-11 (£4), Fri/Sat 11-4 (£2) and 5-11 (£6), CAMRA members Thu and Fri/Sat lunch free, Fri/Sat eves £2. Advance tickets £1 discount. More than 90 real ales, cider, perry and foreign bottled beers. Live entertainers each evening.
www.derbycamra.org.uk

National Winter Ales Festival

Wed 21 to Sat 24 January in the New Century Hall, Manchester. Open Wed 4-10.30 (£2), Thu 4-10.30 (£3), Fri 12-5 (£3) and 5-0.30 (£5), Sat 12-10.30 (£3), CAMRA members £1 off all sessions, NUS members and pensioners £1 off Wed/Thu only. More than 200 beers, cider, perry and bottled real ales. Families welcome Saturday, live entertainers Wed and Sat eves, with quiet areas available. Festival charity is the Rainbow Family Trust.
www.alefestival.org.uk/winterales

13th Cambridge Winter Ale Festival

Thu 22 to Sat 24 January at the University Social Club, Mill Lane (bus station 10 min). Open Thu 5-10.30 (£2.50), Fri 12-3 (free) and 5-10.30 (£2.50), Sat 12-10.30 (£2.50), USC, CURAS and CAMRA members free. About 120 beers including seasonal ales, winter warmers and a choice of session beers. No under-18s admitted to evening sessions. Frequent X5 express bus from Bedford.
www.camra-cambridge.org.uk

26th Luton Beer Festival

Thu 19 to Sat 21 February at Hightown Community & Arts Centre, Concorde street LU2 0JD (rail station 10 min). Open Thu 5-11 (£3), Fri 12-6 (£3) and 6-11 (£4), Sat 11-6 (3) and 6-11 (£2). CAMRA Members free entry except Friday after 6pm £1.50. About 80 real ales from independent brewers, cider, perry and foreign bottled beers. Beer and cider lists available on website in New Year. Easy train journey from Bedford.
www.sbedscamra.org.uk

Hitchin Beer & Cider Festival

Fri 13 to Sat 14 March in Hitchin Town Hall, Brand

Street (bus 5 min, train 20 min walk). Organised with Hitchin Round Table. Open Fri 12-11, Sat 11-11. About 50 real ales plus range of cider, perry and foreign beers. Regular Mars M1/M2 buses from Bedford and Shefford. Check website for admission charges and other details.
www.camranorthherts.org.uk

St Neots Beer Festival

Thu 19 to Sat 21 March at the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots (near town centre). Open Thu 5-10.45, Fri/Sat 12-10.45. Happy Hour Thu 5-6 with free admission and cheaper beers. More than 40 real ales from independent and micro-breweries, cider and foreign bottled beers, free soft drinks for designated drivers. Families welcome until 8pm, no entry or re-admission after 10.30. Frequent X5 express bus from Bedford. Check website for admission charges and other details.
www.huntscamra.org.uk

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Thursday 22nd January 16.00 - 22.30
Friday 23rd January 12.00 - 22.30
Saturday 24th January 12.00 - 22.30

£3 entry for all sessions except £2 for Wednesday.
£5 Friday night (from 17.00) Discounts for CAMRA members
£1 discount for Concessions (NUS & OAPs) on
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Entertainment on Wednesday evening - The Frank White Band
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Pub Awards Chequers wins regional POTY



only at the Chequers, three found their way to the Bedford Beer & Cider Festival in October. If you sampled and liked them then you may be interested in chasing up the rest of the range at the pub. Unfortunately, the Chequers does not normally offer food and is not accessible by public transport direct from our patch, even though it is only a few miles from the Bedfordshire border near Potton. Stagecoach route 18A from St Neots to Cambridge stops outside.

Pubco receives award



CAMRA EAST ANGLIA's Regional Pub of the Year 2008 is the Chequers at Little Gransden, Cambs. CAMRA members from across the region gathered at the pub in October for presentation of the award certificate to owners Bob and Wendy Mitchell (pictured with Regional Director Andrea Briers).

In a tight competition, the Chequers beat five other county winners to clinch the regional title. The others were our own Wellington Arms, Bedford (Bedfordshire), the Station Arms, Southminster (Essex), the Land of Liberty, Peace & Plenty, Long Lane, Heronsgate (Herts), the Kings Head, Norwich (Norfolk) and the Dove Street Inn, Ipswich (Suffolk). All six are listed in the new Good Beer Guide 2009 and all are fine pubs well worth a visit.

The Chequers is now our regional entry for the national Pub of the Year finals, where it will be head to head against even tougher competition from the finest pubs in the country. The national winner will be announced in February.

The Chequers offers more than a fine bar and a warm welcome, since Bob launched the Son of Sid Brewery behind the building, named after his father who ran the pub for many years. In fact the Chequers has been in the same family hands for the past 58 years!

Although Son of Sid beers are normally available

BACK in our spring issue, we reported a Special Innovation Award made by CAMRA North Beds to the Charles Wells Pub Company for its new Speciality Beer House concept. The first two pubs to be refurbished under the new banner were the Bedford Arms, Bromham Road, Bedford, and the Golden Pheasant in Biggleswade. Both had been rather run-down town centre pubs needing a little beauty treatment and a new image. Both pubs specialise in real ale with few other distractions, and both offer a range of guest real ales as well as regular beers from Wells & Young's. More than a year after launching the concept in Bedfordshire, the Company is considering converting suitable town-centre pubs elsewhere into Speciality Beer Houses.

After a delay when the pub changed hands early in the summer, the award certificate was presented to Charles Wells director Peter Wells (pictured with branch chairman Don Allan) at the Bedford Arms in October.

Debbie and Tony
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Cask ale festival
2nd-31st January 2009
First pint for 10p!
Conditions apply

A Day around Stamford

CAMRA members do not just work hard organising beer festivals and surveying pubs for guides – we also have fun. Last June a coachload took the A1 up to Stamford for a day, managing to visit two micro-breweries and a whole bevy of pubs before falling asleep on the coach home.



Brewing plant at Ufford Ales

Ufford Ales

Our first call was the White Hart at Ufford, a former limestone farmhouse in a small village north-west of Peterborough, an award-winning pub with excellent food and well worth a visit on its own, but it does have an extra attraction. In 2005, the Ufford Ales micro-brewery was set up in converted farm buildings at the side of the pub. We were lucky to be shown round the tiny brewing plant by head brewer Simon Raines, but as it takes only a few minutes to work out which bit of kit is which, most of the time was taken up with Simon's interesting account of his experience with brewing.

Ufford Ales also supplies the Tobie Norris, one of the finest pubs in Stamford, and a number of other regular outlets around Stamford and Peterborough, as well as the White Hart itself.

Regular beers include White Hart, a pale 3.8% abv session bitter, Idle Hour, a darker session bitter at 3.9% and Nirvana, a 5.7% abv, well-hopped traditional IPA. Seasonal beers include Red Clover (4.5% abv) from October to April, from Ufford with Love (4.5%) in mid-summer, Setting Sun

(%.2%) from April to October, and Black Hart (4.8%), a seasonal stout. Readers may remember White Hart, Black Hart and Nirvana on the bar at the recent Bedford Beer & Cider Festival.

Ufford beers are available retail in polypins, as well as in casks for the pub cellar. For details of the full range, visit www.tobienorris.com/uffordales or call 01780 740250.

Hopshackle Brewery

After an afternoon touring the best pubs in Stamford, including the excellent Tobie Norris, we had a final appointment at the Hopshackle Brewery at Market Deeping. Deep inside an industrial estate on the edge of the town, it took some time to find, but CAMRA members' noses are well tuned to any whiff of malt and hops and we duly arrived to be met by Nigel, the owner and head brewer.

Hopshackle opened in 2006 with a 5-barrel brewing plant. Nigel has a strong interest in "historic ales" and brews most of his beers to highly traditional recipes and beer styles. Although only a few beers are available at any one time, a wide range of different brews has appeared in the two years since the brewery opened, many of them brewed to order for particular pubs or festivals. A successful new brew may not appear again for some time, but Nigel keeps the recipe and can prepare another batch when required to meet customer needs.

Regular beers include the pale Hopshackle Bitter (3.8% abv), Special Bitter (4.3%) and the strong Special No 1 Bitter (5.2%). Seasonal and occasional beers include Shacklers Gold (5.2%), the strong, dark Ruby Mild (5.8%) and the mighty Double Momentum (7%) – the three beers that readers may remember at the recent Bedford Beer & Cider Festival. Different seasonals are brewed every month to provide customers with variety in style and strength.

Hopshackle has no pubs of its own but supplies direct to more than 40 outlets. For further details, call Nigel on 01778 348542 or visit www.hopshacklebrewery.co.uk



Inside Hopshackle Brewery

And finally another pub

After two micro-breweries and four or five pubs already, our hungry and thirsty party finished the day with a booked evening meal at the Goat at Frognall, near Deeping St James. A cosy, comfortable pub offering Hopshackle beers among many others, real draught cider and – for those who can't get enough – more than 50 single malt whiskies. The food was excellent and we left in a happy mood, if somewhat tired. Details of the Goat, the White Hart, the Tobie Norris and the two breweries can also be found in the new Good Beer Guide 2009.



The Tobie Norris in Stamford

Use the Bedfordshire Pub Guide!

The three Bedfordshire CAMRA branches – East, North and South – have worked together to produce a new online guide to pubs in the county.

You can search the guide by pub name, town, village or postcode, and download details to plan individual visits or a local pub crawl. You can even compile and print out your own personal guide to a whole town or village – all free of charge to you and the pubs!

All pubs, hotel bars and sports ground bars open to the public in Bedfordshire and Luton are listed, although full details and a photo are included only where real ale is sold.

You can help us keep the guide up to date. Whether you are the licensee, a pub regular or an



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occasional visitor, please send amendments c/o the Firkin or email pubguide@northbedscamra.org.uk www.bedspubs.org.uk

Three Cups

45 Newnham Street Bedford
NEC10 2JH
01234 352153
Owner: Greene King
Licensee: Tony & Debbie
Kennedy
Status: Tenancy
Licensing area: Bedford Borough
Council
CAMRA Branch: North Beds
threecupbedford@btconnect.com
Greene King XXX Mild [H]
Greene King IPA [F]
Greene King Aboc [I]



Guest Ales: Change regularly [H]
PUB [H] [H] [H] [H] [H] [H]
shelter in garden
Live Music: monthly
Opening Times:
Mon-Sat 11.00-23.00
Sun 12.00-22.30
Meals:
Daily 12.00-14.30

Traditional community pub with two oak-paneled bars, attracting a mixed clientele. Although in a residential area close to the town centre, it manages to feel like a village local.

The Fox Inn

High Street, Carlton



A warm welcome
Choice of real ales
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The Green Man

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Forthcoming Events

19th December
Karaoke Nite with Sean
21st December
Clairvoyance Evening with Chris and Barrie
27th December
Disco Night
31st December
60's + 70's Themed Disco
3rd January
Sing the New Year Blues Karaoke
5th January
Detox and Diet evening
24th January
Country and Western Night
26th January
Burns Night

Thatched village pub and restaurant

Excellent home-cooked menu

Choice of Real Ales

Families welcome

Relaxed atmosphere

Phone to reserve a table

Roxton and Great Barford

THESE two villages, neighbours squeezed between the Great Ouse and the busy A421 east of Bedford, offer three pubs – one in Roxton and two in Great Barford. A third Great Barford pub, the Beehive, used to face the Golden Cross near the central crossroads, but closed a couple of years ago and looks unlikely to re-open.

Both villages can be reached from Bedford by Stagecoach X5 express bus, which stops almost outside the Golden Cross and only about 200 yards from the Royal Oak.



Anchor Inn, Great Barford

A riverside inn situated between the parish church and the ancient bridge over the Great Ouse, the Anchor appeals to river travellers as well as those arriving by road. The river bank over the road provides a sort of informal pub garden in fine weather. If you come by bus, be prepared for almost a mile walk from the stop near the Golden Cross. A large lounge offers several distinct areas for eating and drinking, with good, home-cooked lunches and evening meals served here as well as in the restaurant. The bars open daily at noon, closing for two to three hours every afternoon except on Saturday..

Landlord Neal Lloyd offers Young's Bitter and usually at least two changing guest beers on the handpumps, with an extensive selection of wines also available. The pub offers a quiet destination for eating and drinking, undisturbed by games or music. The pub is listed in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide 2009 as well as a number of other pub guides. Call 01234 870364.



Golden Cross, Great Barford
Standing on Bedford Road at the crossroads in the heart of the village, the Golden Cross was a landmark for

travellers until the A421 by-pass opened a couple of years ago. It is now a free house with a bar, lounge and attached Chinese restaurant. The bars open from 12 to 2.30 and from 5.30 to 11 on Monday to Friday, and through the day at weekends. The restaurant offers lunches and evening meals daily from Wednesday to Sunday. Take-away food is also available. Real Everards Tiger and Wells Eagle IPA are normally available in both bars, although drinks are more expensive to buy in the lounge. Darts and dominoes are played in the public bar, with a monthly quiz, karaoke and an occasional live singer. Families are welcome in the lounge and rear garden. Call 01234 870439.



Royal Oak, Roxton
A couple of miles east of the Golden Cross, just off what used to be the main road, this friendly, one-bar pub stands at a quiet crossroads in the heart of Roxton.

The village post office operates from behind the building, creating a small social centre.

The Royal Oak is about to change hands as this issue goes to press. The new licensees, Maxcene and Clive Rowe, are keen to develop the food business with a new "Zoo" theme, although Wells Eagle IPA and occasional guest beers will remain on the bar. The pub will open every day for drinks, lunches and evening meals, although opening hours will be reviewed when Maxcene and Clive find what best suits the business. We will bring you further news in a future Firkin. Meanwhile, call 01234 870361.

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2 Bedford Road, Woolton, Bedford, Beds.



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Set in the village of Woolton, just 6 miles from the M1 Motorway, Junction 13.

Play darts or pool in the main bar or just relax in the lounge bar.

Bookings are now being taken for our Christmas Menu leading up to Christmas, where small parties can be catered for.

For further details, please contact Tony on 01234-767497 or visit our website at www.thecockinnwoolton.com



Join CAMRA today!

THE Campaign for Real Ale was founded in 1971 to keep real ale alive. Thirty-seven years later we have over 95,000 members and more than 600 British breweries brewing over 2,500 different varieties of real ale. So what does CAMRA do?

Fight pub closures

CAMRA research shows that 57 pubs on average close every month across the country. Most of these are local community pubs, often run down by their owners and turned into private houses for a quick profit. Many communities no longer have a pub at all. CAMRA works through initiatives such as the Community Pubs Foundation and Pub is the Hub to stop unnecessary pub closures. The next one under threat might be your local!

Fight short measure

Did you realise that 9 out of 10 "pints" of draught beer contain less than 100% liquid? Consumers lose over a million pounds a day through short measure. CAMRA is pressing the Government to change the law so you get what you pay for – a full 20 fluid ounce pint every time.

Promote guest beers

Six out of ten pubs are unable to offer a guest beer of their choice. Two thirds are tied to a single brewery or to a pub company that restricts what they can buy. CAMRA campaigns for a guest beer law to give licensees the right to serve a guest beer of their choice and to improve the accessibility of real ale in British pubs.

Achievements

CAMRA's many achievements include:

- Helping change the law to allow pubs to open longer where it suits the local community.
- Running a powerful campaign for small brewers' duty relief, helping small breweries to invest and become more viable.
- Working with local communities to save hundreds of community pubs from closure.

- Organising over 150 beer festivals a year, including the Great British Beer Festival at London's Earls Court Arena.

- Encouraging more than 5,000 volunteers to survey pubs, organise and work at beer festivals, and actively campaign for real ale and pubs.

- Read more about CAMRA's successful campaigning at www.camra.org.uk

Join CAMRA today!

If you care about these issues and want to make a difference, join CAMRA today! For less than the price of a pint a month, you can join over 95,000 other members throughout Britain and help campaign for quality real ale and good pubs. Single membership costs only £22 a year, reduced to £13 for retired over 60, under age 26, unemployed or disabled. Save £2 a year and get three months free by choosing direct debit.

Use the form opposite, call 01727 867201 or visit www.camra.org.uk/joinus.

The Salutation

SATURDAY 18th OCTOBER
RAISING FUNDS FOR SPINAL RESEARCH
 Registered charity 281325



Book your table for a 3 course meal
Stand-up routine from Russ Williams
 (Comedian of the year 2000).

CHARITY AUCTION
All money raised goes to our charity
Attend auction without dinner – entry £1
Live music with Sam Lewis
Dress code smart / casual please

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It takes all sorts to campaign for real ale

Join CAMRA today...

Complete the Direct Debit form below and you will receive three months membership free and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription. Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.



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Please state which CAMRA newsletter you found this form in?

| | Direct Debit | Non DD |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|
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For Young Member and concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201.

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

I enclose a cheque for

Signed Date

Applications will be processed within 21 days

Mem Form 0108



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

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Branch Diary



BRANCH business meetings are normally held on the third Thursday of alternate months, e.g. January and March. Social and campaigning events are usually held on the second Thursday of each month.

Guests are welcome at social events, but members have priority on brewery visits. For latest information check What's Brewing, or visit the branch website at www.northbedscamra.org.uk

DECEMBER

Thursday 18 – Christmas social

Branch Christmas social, 8pm at the Three Cups, Newnham Street, Bedford. Greene King beers including XX Mild and current guests, plus a hot buffet. To ensure enough food is ordered, phone John Martin on 01234 768294 or email socials@northbedscamra.org.uk if you wish to attend.

JANUARY

Thursday 8 – rural tour

Visiting selected pubs north of Bedford. Minibus leaves Wellington Arms at 7pm – book seat with John Martin, £6 contribution to costs.

Thursday 15 – branch meeting

Branch meeting, 8 for 8.15pm at the Three Cups, Newnham Street, Bedford. Agenda includes shortlisting entries for the next Good Beer Guide. CAMRA members only.

FEBRUARY

Thursday 5 – rural tour

Visiting selected pubs south of Bedford. Minibus leaves Wellington Arms at 7pm – book seat with

John Martin, £6 contribution to costs.

Thursday 12 – GBG selection

Special branch meeting, 8 for 8.15pm at the Three Cups, Newnham Street, Bedford, to select entries for the next Good Beer Guide. CAMRA members only.

MARCH

Monday 9 – festival committee

Meeting to form a committee to organise the next Bedford Beer & Cider Festival, details to be confirmed. Volunteers please contact John Martin on 01234 768294 or email festival@northbedscamra.org.uk

Thursday 12 – social

Social evening from 8pm. Details to be announced.

Thursday 19 – branch meeting

Branch meeting, 8 for 8.15pm at the Three Cups, Newnham Street, Bedford. All CAMRA members welcome.

Advertise in the Firkin

Promote your pub, product or services in our pages

Produced by local beer drinkers for local beer drinkers – a select target audience. Our readers use shops and taxis to get home, buy insurance and drive cars, as well as spending time in the pub. They also include pub and club licensees.

■ Circulation 3,000 copies every quarter, delivered to almost every pub and real ale club in north Bedfordshire. Full layout is also posted online for at least a year at www.northbedscamra.org.uk

■ Simple artwork created at no extra cost, or supply your own

■ Reserve space in the next issue by 1st February

To enquire or place an advert, contact:
Neil Richards on 01536 358670 or 07710 281381 or email: n.richards@btinternet.com

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To allow settling not all beers will be available at any one time.
Also some beers will become 'SOLD OUT' as the Festival progresses.
Entertainment is on evening sessions only.

Entry ticket £2.00 per session (CAMRA card carrying members £1.00)