



FREE


SUSSEX DRINKER

ISSUE 14

SUMMER 1998

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE – SUSSEX BRANCHES

GREENE KING GETS BEARDS

 Suffolk brewer Greene King has taken over Beards of Sussex in a £12 million deal — but has pledged to retain beer choice.

The Beards pubs will lose their Beards identity, being absorbed into the Greene King Pub Company in the case of managed houses, while Greene King Pub Partners will look after the tenanted houses.

Greene King already has a substantial estate in the South East, including a large number of pubs sold by Allied after they were forced to reduce their estate when the Beer Orders were introduced.

A Greene King spokeswoman said that the new arrangement would mean an extension of the range available to Beards pubs, adding that they had “no immediate changes planned, other than adding Greene King to the list of suppliers.” While changes may occur in the longer

term, the brewery has stated that they would “have to be ones that customers approve of”. One change that we could suggest is trying cask-conditioned Greene King Mild in each pub, to see if the customers like it...

As we went to press, nobody I spoke to was sure if Beards Best would be dropped, or would continue to be brewed at Arundel Brewery. We believe the existing contract has only a couple of months to run, so we should know one way or another by the next issue.

CAMRA has been deeply concerned about the loss of free houses to regional brewers and non-brewing chains, particularly in this part of the country, as beer choice is often reduced by such a move. While Beards was, of course, also a non-brewing chain, having ceased brewing in 1959, it's good to see that Greene King don't plan to wreck the pubs!

USEFUL INFORMATION

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<http://welcome.to/sussex-camra>
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OH NO, NOT AGAIN...

The brewery carnage continues, with news that Morrells of Oxford and Inch's Cider are both under threat.

Morrells is up for sale after new chief executive Ken Hodgson announced that both the brewery and tied estate were for sale. Worse news is that the tied estate is to be sold separately from the brewery. The worst and, sadly, the likeliest outcome is that the tied estate will go to a pub chain while the city-centre brewery will be demolished for yet more supermarkets or offices.

However, there is strong campaigning, both locally and nationally, for Oxford City Council to refuse change of use permission for the brewery site, while attempts are being made to get the brewery listed, along with as many as possible of the 130 pubs. Nearly half of the landlords have no protection under the Landlord and Tenant Act, meaning that any company buying the tied estate would be able to get rid of them almost immediately.

Meanwhile, H P Bulmer have announced that Inch's is to close. Bulmer's only bought Inch's just over two years ago, and in that time would seem to have made no particular effort to give their ciders wider distribution. Coincidentally, Inch's ciders are traditional ciders, made from cider apples, while

Bulmer's cider is based on apple concentrate and additives. Could it be that Bulmer's had no intention of doing anything with Inch's apart from knocking them out of the market, and have merely waited two years in order to seem less obvious about it?

Slightly better news on the Whitbread front — a consortium of businessmen is hoping to rescue Castle Eden brewery. They have made a bid for the site, which is due to close on October 1; however, they plan to continue brewing there. Negotiations are still continuing over the value of the brands; hopefully, Castle Eden Ale will continue to be brewed at Castle Eden — and, hopefully, Whitbread will continue to stock it in its pubs!

No such luck for Whitbread's Flowers Brewery in Cheltenham, though; the staff there have been given their statutory redundancy notices.

CONTACTS

Neil Hoggarth (Save Morrells Campaign): (01865) 794438

*H P Bulmer Ltd, The Cider Mills,
Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE*

*Morland plc, PO Box 5, Ock Street,
Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 5DD*

PUB & BREWERY NEWS

BASS

Bass recalled millions of cans and bottles of beer in early July after a coolant leak in the bottling plant at their Cape Hill, Birmingham site. The beer brands affected were Carling Premier, Caffrey's, Worthington "Draught", Carling Black Label and Tennent's Gold; the problem came to light when some customers noticed an unpleasant sweet taste in their beer.

HARVEYS

The Parliamentary Beer Club presented a lifetime achievement award to Anthony Jenner, chairman of Harveys Brewery. Mr Jenner joined Harveys 60 years ago as second brewer, and was appointed as head brewer in 1946, on his return from the Second World War. During his time at the brewery, production has increased five-fold.

The Family Ale, a 2.2% ABV dinner ale (a now almost-forgotten style) was so popular that it should be brought back next year. It was last on sale in the Forties, at a shilling (5p) a pint; now it sells for slightly more!

RECTORY ALES

Plumpton Post Office is now selling four pint bottles of Rector's Revenge and Downland Ale, a new beer.

*(Hmm — I need some stamps, too...
Ed)*

FULL PINTS

Sadly, the attempt to make full measure a legal requirement has been defeated. MP Eric Froth Forth again shouted "object", causing the Bill to run out of time. The fight continues — in the meantime, don't forget to ask for a top-up if you're given short measure!

NEW GUIDE

CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide to Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg* has been updated, replacing the 1994 edition. Nearly 900 beers are described, with details of over 60 different beer styles. The brewery section has been completely revised, and there is more tourist information and café information — yet the cover price remains the same as the previous edition: £9.99 from all good bookshops (ISBN 1-85249-115-9). CAMRA members can buy it from HQ for £9, including postage and packing.

PUBWATCH

Mid-Sussex is getting tough on pub troublemakers — anyone banned from a pub in Burgess Hill was automatically banned from all the others in the town as well, but now the scheme has been extended to cover Haywards Heath and Lindfield as well.

SUPERPUB UPDATE

The *Walkabout Inn*, planned for Brighton's West Street, has been given the go-ahead by licensing magistrates. The pub will open next spring, with capacity for 770 customers who will be able to watch sporting events on a 20 by 15 foot screen while eating their kangaroo, crocodile or emu! Quite how many more superpubs central Brighton can take is anyone's guess — though many would say we've already got too many in the centre...

INNTREPRENEUR

Inntrepreneur, now owned by Japanese bank Nomura, is to split its pub chain into two separate businesses following last month's High Court ruling that their beer tie was not in contravention of EU competition laws. The new business, containing about 2,600 pubs, will be run by Giles Thorley, one of Inntrepreneur's bankers, while the chain will retain the other 1,400, including those involved in the legal action.

Inntrepreneur now plans to sue the rebel landlords for millions of pounds in unpaid rent, with those landlords who cannot pay being evicted.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The *Sheffield Arms*, a listed Georgian coaching inn near Danehill, has had a change of use application approved, and will now become a shop — but the pub will still operate, albeit in a

smaller space. The building will be restored as part of the conversion.

The *Greys*, one of Brighton's smallest pubs, may be extended by up to 50% if Whitbread's application is approved. The plan would involve moving the toilets. Landlord Mike Lance said the pub "will still be a shoebox, and the character won't change. We're not going to put carpets in and strange wallpaper."

The saga of the *Gun Inn*, Findon, continues with news that the latest application to build houses there have been rejected. The pub remains under threat, though, until it's confirmed that the developers have given up and gone away.

The *White Horse*, Ditchling, is due to have a restaurant added, which has worried some people; in fact, the restaurant will be in the section to the right of the bar, which is an old stable block that's currently disused. The effect will be more room for drinkers, not less...

In Brighton, plans have been submitted to convert two shops in Madeira Drive into a pub. More details when we get them.

REFITS

Owners Greenalls have applied for permission to make internal alterations to the *Robin Hood*, Bognor Regis. They also plan to extend the pub.

AWARDS & EVENTS

The third South Downs Real Ale & Cider Festival, held at Lewes Town Hall on July 3–4, was again very successful. Nearly 1,100 people attended the event and generously donated £100 for the festival charity, the Phoenix Day Centre.

The beer of the festival was Harveys Tom Paine, and cider of the festival was Gibbon Strangler from Rye.

Next year's festival will be held on May 28–29, 1999 (earlier because of an exhibition in the hall in July).

The ninth Yapton Beerex, organised once more by Midhurst, Chichester & Bognor branch, was also successful, with only one customer less than the record number, set in 1993. (*Now I wish I'd been able to go — Ed*) Incidentally, the average beer price was down 2p a pint on last year, at £1.61 — which is equal to the 1994 level! Put *that* in the Chancellor's pipe and smoke it!

The *Cock Inn*, Ringmer, has been awarded a good food certificate by the Parliamentary Beer Club. Lewes MP Norman Baker, a regular at the pub, nominated it for the award and presented the certificate to them.

More on the *Selden Arms* in Worthing, which changed hands recently. Michelle and Bob are now at the helm, and have already completely renovated the cellar. The beers will

keep changing — Summer Lightning, Arundel Gold, and two Dark Star/Skinners beers are those that have been reported so far...

Landlord Ted Murphy, of the *White Harte* in Cuckfield, had his head shaved recently and raised £200 for the Gillian Fabb Memorial Fund.

The Millhaven Trust in Burgess Hill was the beneficiary of a charity yard of ale contest held at the *Watermill* on July 4. Additional funds were raised with a barbecue and raffle, all organised by new tenants Rene Molineaux and Sarah Catchpole.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to A Green of Worthing and P Pembridge of Ifield, who will be enjoying free entry to all sessions of the Great British Beer Festival after winning our competition in the last issue. The correct answer was that well-known winning move, *Mornington Crescent*.

E (N) C M T T P N D A
(R) L I C S (N) O E E I
B L A U I I R T L P
D R G L P D T E I M
Y U I M A R E A C Y
A R A T E E R R I L
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C (M) T E A S T O U T
(G) I C C P (N) H R S (I)
B (S) B O T T L E D (N)

MORE FROM THE AGM...

The weekend of April 25–26 saw the CAMRA Annual General Meeting take place in the Assembly Rooms at Edinburgh. Nine trusty North Sussex branch members made their way up to Edinburgh for this annual event, seven by overnight sleeper on the Thursday night (that was certainly an experience in itself!)

Our adventure started in a very friendly hostelry called the Rose St Brewery, in Rose Street, where we sampled our first Scottish pint and were introduced to the Edinburgh CAMRA Ale Trail (bad move!) We discovered that we could be the proud owners of a commemorative CAMRA AGM T-shirt; all we had to do was drink 10 pints each before we left on the Sunday afternoon train — no problem...

A very enjoyable Friday afternoon was spent at Maclays Brewery in Alloa. The staff were really friendly and seemed eager to ply us with their beers all afternoon. Well, who were we to argue? (Pity it wasn't on

the ale trail!) Several brave souls, on our return from the trip, attended a seminar on beer tasting, having had good practice over the past hours...

Saturday saw the start of the actual AGM: the first we had ever attended, so we were all very interested to see how it went. The majority of the motions on the Saturday related to administrative and financial matters, with several emergency motions about the closures of Ruddles, Flowers in Cheltenham and Castle Eden. Members strongly supported local campaigns to save these breweries, and all motions were carried. Two further emergency motions were also carried: one deploring the failure of Dennis Turner's bill to outlaw short measure, and the other one condemning the Millennium Experience for not including a traditional pub in the Millennium Dome. *(There will now be a pub included, apparently, though it's anybody's guess as to whether it'll serve decent beer — Ed)*

At the end of the session on Saturday there was what was supposed to be a debate on cask breathers. Unfortunately, delegates had to suffer three speakers giving their opinion for cask breathers, with nobody speaking against and no proper debate. Altogether a very disappointing session, and one that left the conference very disgruntled.

The Independent Imbiber

THE real ale magazine. New breweries/beers, puzzles, articles and much more. The ideal companion to the Good Beer Guide.

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**REAL PUB
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REAL PEOPLE**

Barb & Barry Dimmack welcome you to the Brewer's Arms

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Sunday morning saw seven proud (and rather bleary-eyed) branch members all wearing their newly acquired CAMRA AGM commemorative T-shirts. Disappointingly, the Conference did not reach the other miscellaneous motions put forward by other branches, including our own. It is a pity that these could not have been given a higher priority. A lot of time had been wasted the previous day by the Chairman's refusal to follow correct procedure when a call was made for the tellers to count a vote. Had he done so, we could perhaps at least have discussed a few of the additional motions that were not reached.

The overall feeling was that we had a great time, and were all glad we went. Next year, the AGM comes to Hove (actually!) and as some of us are on the organising committee, I hope we will be able to contribute something after having experienced it first-hand at Edinburgh. This was John Cryne's last AGM as retiring Chairman so it will be interesting to see how the Conference differs next year under a new Chairman. The branch wishes John and Christine, who also retired, every success for the future.

I hope that we will see some of you at Hove next year, from April 16-18.
Carol Lambert

JOIN THE ALE TRAIL!

The fifth Ale Trail started on May 30, with forty pubs taking part. This year's theme is Southdown Ale Trail, so a bus took us to the launch night and a tour of outlying pubs.

The launch night was held at the Royal Oak in Lewes on May 29 and those attending were treated to a superb buffet, excellent entertainment in the form of Ellie, the singer and, of course, a great selection of beers priced at £1.20 a pint.

On July 18, an open top ex-Southdown bus picked up 70 travellers at the Evening Star to take them on a tour of eight outlying pubs, namely the Linden Tree, Sloop, White Horse, Trevor Arms, Golden Galleon, Ram, Laughing Fish and Halfway House. Coincidentally, we bumped into Miles Jenner, the chief brewer of Harveys at the Halfway House. Thanks to the Bus Preservation Society, and to Nick the driver.

The highlight of the day was the barbecue, kindly provided by the

branch's Pub of the Year — the White Horse in Ditchling. Thanks Ian and Mary for your efforts.

All in all great value at £5, which included a complimentary pint, the barbecue, a programme and the fine weather (the latter not courtesy CAMRA). Next year we plan to run a number of tours — so keep your diary free!

The trail is once again run in association with Beards of Sussex (who have just been taken over by Greene King). Harveys are sponsoring the passport, Gales the cartoon map and the Sussex Drinker's friendly rivals, the Independent Imbiber are sponsoring the quiz.

Passports are available at participating pubs. If you complete all forty pubs you win a sweatshirt and either an inscribed glass or a T-shirt; thirty pubs will get you a sweatshirt and twenty a T-shirt. All participants win a certificate and a cartoon map.

Andy Rivett



JOHN TAYLOR

It was with much sadness that long-standing members of Brighton & South Downs branch heard of the recent death of John Taylor. John was one of the founder members of the branch in the early 1970s. He died following a heart attack on June 7. Many CAMRA and ex Post Office Telecommunications friends were at the funeral.

John was one of the driving forces behind a small group of people, mainly BT (then Post Office Telecommunications) colleagues, who formed a branch to cover the Brighton area. The town then was a sea of keg pubs, with only a handful of real ale outlets. John was very active in spreading the message and promoting the cause of real ale. He used to regularly organise a rota of lunchtime meetings at suitable venues around the town.

John was born in the Manchester area, and came to Brighton in the mid-sixties. Before joining the Post

Office, he was first an engineer and then joined the RAF in the Second World War as a young pilot. He will be remembered for his loyalty, enthusiasm, passion and a tremendous, almost Tommy Cooper-like style of humour. John's favourite beers were Bass, Brickwoods Best Bitter and Young's Special. His other hobbies included football (he was an avid Manchester City supporter), gardening, tennis and jazz. As well as being a founder member of the local CAMRA branch, John was also instrumental in organising a Post Office walking group, which successfully combined real ale with rambling. John loved walking on the Sussex Downs.

John's many friends will have strong and humorous memories of a great character who will be sadly missed. John leaves a widow, Betty, to whom the local branch sent a letter of condolence, as well as making a donation of £50 to the British Heart Foundation.

John Hedington

HUNTSMAN NETS SHIELD

This year's winner of the Peter King Memorial Shield is the *Huntsman* at Eridge. The North Sussex branch of CAMRA makes an annual award to what they judge to be the best King & Barnes pub. The award is in memory of Peter King, former Chairman and joint Managing Director of King & Barnes, and a staunch supporter of CAMRA. The shortlist for this year's award included the *Blue Ship* (The Haven), the *Bridge* (Upper Beeding), and the *Sir Roger Tichbourne* (Loxwood). It was a very difficult decision, but I am delighted to say that the Huntsman is a worthy winner.

Bill King presented the award to Nigel and Jane Cameron on June 9. The pub was bustling, and a very enjoyable evening was had by all.

Nigel and Jane took over the pub in 1986, having previously managed a freehouse in Sevenoaks; Nigel comes from a brewery marketing background. The pub serves the full range of King & Barnes beers, including seasonal and bottle-conditioned beers. They also pride themselves on their excellent range of over 30 wines, while Old Rosie cider is also served on handpump.

Nigel keeps his memories of living in New England alive by featuring a special New England menu, which is

prepared by David Quinney, their chef, who also has a special interest in microbrewing. In addition, he offers a wide range of Sussex cooking, using fresh produce. There are themed events, such as the celebration of July 4, an apple festival in October, a Sherlock Holmes evening and, currently, a lobster festival. (Food is not served on Monday or Sunday evenings.)

The Huntsman Motorbike Club meets regularly on Tuesday evenings and on July 26 there was a motorbike show, including a barbecue. Regular visitors also include the Connex/Railtrack Mild Club. (*Can I join? — Ed*) The pub is also a popular venue for passing ramblers and rock climbers.

The pub is situated just off the A26 between Tunbridge Wells and Crowborough, and has a station conveniently within a stone's throw of the pub, which was also the home of Sussex and England cricketer Maurice Tate.

Many congratulations to the Huntsman, and good luck for the future. This pub is well worth a visit.

Carol Lambert
Secretary, North Sussex CAMRA

PUB GUIDE

Another wet and windy Saturday in March. What shall we do that's different, involves drinking real ale but doesn't get us too wet, we asked ourselves. Thus, the idea of a train journey pub crawl was born.

We set off from Hastings on the Charing Cross line, with the first beer stop at Frant after a 40-minute journey. The *Brecknock Arms* at Bells Yew Green is a 5-minute walk from the station. A busy village local, it is a Harveys tied house (don't forget your Hoppers Handbook!). It had Pale and Best on offer, and sometimes sells the seasonal ales. The Brecknock has an interesting and varied menu, with the choice of eating in the bar or the separate dining area.

After fortifying ourselves with a couple of pints of Pale, and macaroni cheese made with Stilton, we set off for our next port of call. Five minutes on the train back towards Hastings is Wadhurst. Opposite the station is an imposing pub called the *Rock Robin*, recently reopened after

being closed for many years. Inside is a long thin room with a superb wooden bar boasting four to six ales. Local, interesting and old favourites are all included in the range and, if things go well, some may be served on gravity in the future. The owners used to run the *Abergavenny* at Frant.

During a particularly heavy down-pour we rushed back to the train and, 15 minutes later, we were in Robertsbridge. Opposite the station is the *Ostrich*, another lively locals' pub, which had four beers on offer with the emphasis on ales from Kent and Sussex; all the beers were very reasonably priced.

As the Brecknock Arms and the Rock Robin are only open at lunch-time, you have to be careful with your timing, but it was a good day out with an interesting range of beers on offer — and we didn't get too wet!

Dawn Lincoln, Colin Smith and Fred the Dog

Write for Sussex Drinker!

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WE'RE "POTY" ABOUT THE CROWN!

... "POTY", of course, standing for Pub of the Year. After a tense voting session at the last Sussex Branches Liaison meeting, the Crown at Midhurst was selected as the winner.

The Crown features beer served straight from the cask, from the cellar room by the bar, as well as additional beers on handpumps. The range changes constantly, and real cider is also available in the summer.

The award presentation is on the afternoon of October 10. Plans are afoot to organise a bus trip to the event, though nothing was confirmed as we went to press; please speak to your branch contact a little nearer the time for details.

Runner-up was the Malt Shovel in Horsham, with the White Horse at Ditchling taking third place.

YOU WANT *HOW MUCH?*

The results of CAMRA's recent prices survey are in — and it makes interesting reading.

First is the news that the average price of a pint of real ale went up by 4.3%, which is just over the rate of inflation. A pint now costs, on average, £1.71. You might be saying "I wish" at this point, but spare a thought for Londoners, whose pint went up 7.3% to an average £1.92! With real ale at £1.47 a pint in the North West, and £1.55 in the West Midlands (unchanged from last year), it's a wonder we don't have "booze cruises" up there — ideal for seasickness sufferers!

Lager drinkers didn't escape the rises, with the London drinker now

paying 8.7% more than last year. That's over *twice* the rate of inflation! With the average price at £2.12 a pint, why bother with the stuff?

The best value has to be real cider, though. Nationally, prices have *fallen* by 2.9%!

Two other things shine through in the survey results: firstly, small independent brewers tended to offer the lowest prices, with beer quality usually better than that of the nationals; secondly, prices have mostly risen by around inflation. CAMRA's Mel Taylor said that "if the Government hadn't increased beer tax, the price of a pint would hardly be up at all."



BRANCH DIARIES



ARUN & ADUR

Contact: Colin Bradshaw (01903) 859778(h)

Mon, Aug 24 Walk To Findon, starting Cricketers, Broadwater.
Ring contact for details.

All start 8pm. Details for September from contact or see *What's Brewing*.

BRIGHTON & SOUTH DOWNS

Contact: Pete Coppard (01273) 683322(h)

Fri, Aug 14	Crawl	Hanover area, start Dover Castle, Brighton
Thu, Aug 20	Cider Social	Cobbler's Thumb, Brighton
Thu, Aug 27	Formal	Stanley Arms, Portslade
Fri, Sep 4	Surveying	Start Golden Cannon, Kemptown
Sat, Sep 12	Cider Social	Stanley Arms, Portslade (at their beer festival)
Fri, Sep 18	Surveying	Start Prince Arthur, Brighton
Fri, Sep 25	Surveying	Start Mitre, Brighton
Thu, Oct 1	Formal	Crabtree, Shoreham

All start 8:15pm.

MIDHURST, CHICHESTER & BOGNOR

Contact: Nick Rines (01243) 780179(h)

Tue, Aug 18	Social	Chequers, Chichester
Tue, Aug 25	Social	Hollist Arms, Lodsworth

All start 9pm; formal at 8:30pm. September from contact or *What's Brewing*.

NORTH SUSSEX

Contact: Carol Lambert (0181) 660 5558(w) (01293) 887419(h)

Sat, Aug 15	Crawl	Start Sussex Oak, Warnham
Tue, Aug 25	Formal	Dun Horse, Mannings Heath
Wed, Sep 9	Social	Onslow Arms, Loxwood
Tue, Sep 22	Formal	Bluebell, Sharpthorne
Mon, Oct 5	Social	White Knight, Pound Hill

All start 8:30pm, except Aug 15 crawl at "lunchtime".

SOUTH EAST SUSSEX

Contact: Mercy Morris (01323) 645663(h) mercy.m@dial.pipex.com

Tue, Aug 25	Crawl	Grenadier, Hailsham
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All start 8pm. Details for September from contact or see *What's Brewing*.

ALL BRANCHES

Fri, Aug 28

Sat, Oct 10 (12pm)

Sat, Oct 24 (12pm)

SUSSEX DRINKER COPY DEADLINE

Pub of the Year presentation (see facing page)

Sussex Liaison, Fletcher Arms, East Preston

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

Name(s)

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Signature Date

I/We enclose the remittance for:

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OAP Single £8 OAP Joint £11 (at same address)

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For Life/Overseas rates please contact CAMRA HQ (0845 60 30 20 8)

Send your remittance (payable to CAMRA) to: The Membership
Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW

(Sussex Drinker)