

# The Firkin



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

**Newsletter of CAMRA North Bedfordshire Branch  
Summer 2006 Vol 31 No 2 FREE!**

**Wells and Young's join forces – page 3**



**Visit the world's largest pub – page 5**

**Next  
Bedford  
festival  
coming  
soon:  
page 9**



## **Pub of the Year**

**Landladies Vicky and Joyce Stevens at the Stone Jug, Clophill, celebrate their North Beds POTY 2005 award**

## **Also inside:**

- 4 Pub News
- 6 Pub of the Year
- 8 Summer festivals
- 10 Forest of pubs in Marston Vale
- 13 Champion ciders
- 14 New CAMRA guides
- 15 Branch diary
- 15 Eating out in pubs
- 16 Help us win CAMRA challenge
- 16 Get Firkin by post
- 17 Join CAMRA today!
- 18. Branch contacts
- 18 Advertise in the Firkin

# THE SLATERS ARMS BAR AND RESTAURANT

*A warm, friendly welcome awaits you at this newly refurbished public house in the heart of Kempston rural*



- A selection of 3 Real Ales
- An extensive range of draught and bottled lagers
- An impressive selection of wines, both new and old world

- Fully non-smoking restaurant

- BBQs every Friday and Saturday evening

- Wednesday and Thursday 12-3  
Senior citizens £4.95 for 2 courses

- New pizza menu available to eat in or take away



*97 Box End Road, Kempston Rural, Bedfordshire. MK43 8RS  
(01234) 854433*

# Wells and Young's join forces

**THE formation of a new joint brewing company by Charles Wells and Young's has been front page local news. Although CAMRA members are disappointed to see the Young's Ram Brewery in Wandsworth close, the news is not all bad.**

## Separate pub estates

Young's and Charles Wells have set up a joint company to brew beers for both companies at the Eagle Brewery in Bedford. The new operation should be brewing by October 2006 and the Ram Brewery in Wandsworth will close and be redeveloped.

Both Wells and Young's have stated that the new venture is only to brew beers, leaving their pub estates and marketing fully independent. Both have given assurances that their current range of draught and bottled beers will remain available through existing outlets.

Admirers of Wells' and Young's beers would prefer two regional brewers with strong family ownership to co-operate rather than fall into the hands of a major brewing combine. However, the recent take-over of Hampshire brewer Gales by London regional Fuller's and the ensuing rationalisation of operations has made people suspicious.

CAMRA remains concerned about the implications of the new developments in Bedford. Despite the assurances, will the new joint venture turn out to be the first step in a future full merger of the two companies?

## Secure future

CAMRA's Chief Executive Mike Benner said: "We have known for some time that Young's could not continue at its present site, but we hoped that efforts to find a suitable local alternative would bear fruit and not spell the death of more than four centuries of brewing tradition in Wandsworth.

"CAMRA wants assurances that the beers produced by both companies have a secure future, and that the identity of Young's 208-strong pub estate and Charles Wells' 248 pubs

will be safeguarded.

"We urge Young's to be upfront about where its beers are brewed and not try to pass itself off as a London brewery. It is a tremendous loss for London drinkers and a great shame that there is only one substantial real ale brewer left in the nation's capital in the form of Fuller's."

## Disappointed

CAMRA's London Regional Director Steve Williams said: "I am disappointed that London and Wandsworth will lose their flagship brewery. Another great brewery that has produced fine beers for hundreds of years is lost in the name of progress.

"However, I look forward to Young's beers out of Bedford proving as tasty and first rate as those that have quenched the thirst of London's beer drinkers for many years."



CHARLES WELLS

## Proud history

Young's and Charles Wells both have proud histories. Beer has been

brewed at the Ram Brewery in Wandsworth since 1581, making it the oldest site of continuous beer production in Britain. It supplies more than 500 free-trade outlets and has a tied estate of 205 pubs. Young's future has been under discussion since 2003 after the site was included in an urban redevelopment plan.

Charles Wells is the largest independent family-owned brewery in the country. It was founded in 1876 and has been brewing at its present site in Queen's Park since 1976. It owns 248 pubs and supplies a large number of other outlets.

## Royal Oak, Carlton

Welcome to Ian Whiley and Andrea Lynch, who moved from Wollaston to take over this village pub in late March. The pub offers real Wells Eagle IPA and Bombardier, a variety of pub games and monthly live music. A beer festival in aid of cancer research is being planned for 1st to 3rd September, with 10-12 beers and several live bands.



The Royal Oak, Carlton

## Five Bells, Riseley

Welcome to new landlords Alan and Rose. Serving Greene King IPA and guest beer (Greene King Triumph and Titanic White Star when we called in April). Bar food will be available from the summer. Open Mon-Thu 5-11, Fri/Sat all day from 12 noon.

## Crown, Little Staughton

Landlord Kevin Foskett plans to install and open his own micro-brewery in outbuildings behind the pub, but has not yet revealed plans for his own beers. Wells Eagle IPA, Fullers London Pride, Greene King IPA, Shepherd Neame Spitfire and Westons Old Rosie cider were available on our last visit.

## Smiths Arms, Kempston

Welcome to local man Sean White, who took over here in March. Wells Eagle IPA is available on handpump, but Sean hopes to add real Bombardier soon.

## Banker's Draft, High Street, Bedford

This popular Wetherspoon's pub has become a regular outlet for Potton Brewery in Bedford town centre. Landlord David Cooper expects to offer five Potton Beers on rotation in the coming months. Potton will also brew a special beer for the pub and customers are invited to take part in a competition to give it a name.

## Green Man, Lidlington

Welcome to new landlord John Brown at this handsome, partly thatched village pub. Greene King IPA and a guest beer are available on handpump. Good home cooked meals are served lunchtime and evenings.

## Carpenters Arms, Cranfield

Welcome to new licensees Andy and Cathy Itzinger, who took over this Good Beer Guide listed pub in April. Serving Wells Eagle IPA and a guest beer. Open all day Tuesday to Sunday, serving good home-cooked lunches and evening meals, with traditional roasts on Sunday. Evening specials and a Sunday evening quiz. More on page 10.

## Swan, Radwell

Welcome to new landlords Kevin and Julie Tyrrell, who took over this beautiful thatched pub in March. A wide à la carte menu is available lunchtime and evenings from Tuesday to Sunday, with a two-course Sunday carvery for £8.95. Wells Eagle IPA and a changing guest beer are normally available.

## Greyhound, Haynes

A warm welcome to new licensees Peter and



The Swan, Radwell



# Pub news

*Diane Norman, who are new to the pub trade. So far there have been few significant changes, with the emphasis remaining on good food, a friendly welcome and being the village local. Greene King IPA and Abbot are available on handpump. Opening hours are 11am to 12.30am Monday to Thursday, closing 1am on Friday and Saturday, and 11.30pm on Sunday.*



*The Greyhound, Haynes*

*of the nearby Whitbread estate, the White Horse is now part of a small pub group including the Raven at Hexton, the Crown at Shillington and the Chequers at Houghton Conquest. The guest beer on a recent visit was Batemans Rosey Nosey.*

## Woolpack, Wilstead

*Landlord Nick Ward is planning a beer festival to run over the August bank holiday. Plans are not yet complete, but full details will appear in coming weeks on the pub's new website at [www.woolpackwilstead.org.uk](http://www.woolpackwilstead.org.uk)*

## Green Man, Clophill

*Welcome to Giuseppe, Peter and Amelia Morelli, who took over this old, oak-beamed pub in the centre of the village late last year. Serving Greene King IPA and Abbot on handpump.*

## White Horse, Southill

*Welcome to new manager Frank Ross at this handsome inn just north of Shefford. Once part*



**Oakham ales**  
*Award Winning Ales*

**Tel. (01733) 358300**  
**Fax. (01733) 892658**

80 Westgate, Peterborough  
Cambridgeshire PE1 2AA

Email. [oakhamales@aol.com](mailto:oakhamales@aol.com)

**Jeffrey Hudson Bitter**  
3.8% A.B.V.



A golden beer whose aroma is dominated by hops that give characteristic citrus notes. Hops and fruit on the palate are balanced by malt and a bitter base. Dry hoppy finish with soft fruit flavours.



**White Dwarf**  
4.3% A.B.V.



Piercing bitterness in this 'brite' English style wheat beer, mellows to reveal fruit overtones amidst a dry as bone finish. A real thirst quencher.



**Bishops Farewell**  
4.6% A.B.V.



A strong premium beer of structured quality dominated by elaborate fruity hop notes, with a grainy background and dry finish.

**SEASONAL ALES**

SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY



# Visit the world's largest pub

*THE Great British Beer Festival 2006 moves for the first time to London's Earls Court Arena, after 14 successful years at Olympia. The GBBF is Britain's biggest beer festival and has a lot to offer, with more than 700 real ales, ciders, perries and foreign beers from around the world. Attractions include live entertainment, traditional pub games and a fine selection of food. GBBF is open from Tuesday 1st to Saturday 5th August.*

## Bigger venue

More than 47,000 people attended last year's "Showcase of British Beer". The festival has now outgrown London Olympia and will move to Earls Court, allowing more choice, variety and beer than ever before!

CAMRA's Marketing Manager, Tony Jerome, said: "We look forward to moving the Great British Beer Festival to Earls Court. We have had some very successful festivals at Olympia over the recent years. Following last year's record attendance we felt this was the ideal time to move to a bigger venue."

## Tasty tipples

Over 700 hand-picked tasty tipples will be on sale, from the tiniest microbreweries to large regional brewers and national combines. The menu includes wheat beers, golden ales, stouts, porters, bitters, milds, bottle-conditioned beers, as well as ciders, perries and real lagers from all over the world. The



*festival is not only about the ale!*

## Other highlights

You can also enjoy good food, live music and other entertainment, games, tombola and quizzes in the comfort of a family-friendly atmosphere. Catch up with friends, unwind after work, or just soak up the festival!

Other highlights include:

- Family room: everyone under age 18 must remain in the family room and be supervised by a family member.
- Tutored beer tastings: learn to appreciate the different tastes and flavours by attending one of the tutored sessions.
- Corporate hospitality: several packages are available for entertaining colleagues or clients. Email [georgina.rudman@camra.org.uk](mailto:georgina.rudman@camra.org.uk)

## Book in advance

Admission to the festival costs £7 from Tuesday to Friday and £6 on Saturday. CAMRA members get £2 discount. You can save £1 on admission by booking via the ticket hotline before 21st July. Season tickets valid throughout the festival are available for £17.50 (CAMRA members £15).

Licensees and others working in the licensed trade can apply for two tickets to the trade session on Tuesday 1st August, 12 noon to 5pm. To book all advance tickets, call 01727 867201 or email [cressida.feiler@camra.org.uk](mailto:cressida.feiler@camra.org.uk)

For public opening times, see the display ad opposite. Other information about the festival is available from the dedicated website at [www.gbbf.org](http://www.gbbf.org)

## Win two GBBF tickets!

CAMRA is offering 25 lucky winners a pair of Great British Beer Festival tickets. All you need do to enter this competition is to email or post your answer to this simple question by Friday 7th July.

### Where is the Great British Beer Festival moving to in August 2006?

Post your answer to Tony Jerome, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Rd, St Albans, AL1 4LW, or email [tony.jerome@camra.org.uk](mailto:tony.jerome@camra.org.uk) Winners will be notified and sent their tickets before Friday 14th July.

**Replace with GBBF poster**

# Summer festivals

## 4th Welland Valley Beer Festival

*Fri 23 to Sun 25 June in eight pubs on the Northants, Leicestershire and Rutland borders. More than 100 beers available throughout the festival. Entertainment includes jazz and folk music. Food includes barbecues, pig roasts and homemade pies and sausages. Vintage buses provide a free shuttle service on Saturday, also calling at Market Harborough railway station. Regular Midland Mainline trains run from Bedford and Luton. Organised in co-operation with CAMRA Northants. Call 01536 770404 or e-mail [camrainnorthants@ntlworld.com](mailto:camrainnorthants@ntlworld.com)*

## 29th Derby Beer Festival

*Wed 5 to Sun 9 July at Assembly Rooms, Market Place (10 min rail station). Open Wed 6.30-11 (£3), Thu 11.30-3, 6.30-11 (£4), Fri 11.30-3 (£1), 6.30-11 (£6), Sat 11.30-4 £2), 6.30-11 (£6), Sun 12-3 (free). CAMRA members free at all times, senior citizens free lunchtimes, under age 26 free Wed eve to 8.30pm. Live entertainment at all sessions. Advance booking for*

*groups of four or more gives guaranteed admission and discounts Thu-Sat eves. Credit card payments by 23 June – call 01332 347601 or email [festbookings@derbycamra.org.uk](mailto:festbookings@derbycamra.org.uk) Regular Midland Mainline trains from Bedford. Call 01332 206734 or visit [www.derbycamra.org.uk](http://www.derbycamra.org.uk)*

## Chelmsford Beer Festival

*Tue 11 to Sat 15th July at Moulsham Mill Football Field. Open Tue-Thu 12-3, 6-11, Fri/Sat 12-11. Admission £3 after 7pm, CAMRA members free. More than 300 real ales, 30 ciders and perries, local wines and a wide selection of Belgian beers. Hot and cold food at all sessions. Visit [www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk](http://www.chelmsfordcamra.org.uk)*

## Great British Beer Festival

*Tue 1 to Sat 5 August at Earl's Court Arena, London. Open Tue 5-10.30, Wed-Fri 12-10.30, Sat 11-7. For further information, see pages 6-7 or visit [www.gbbf.org](http://www.gbbf.org)*

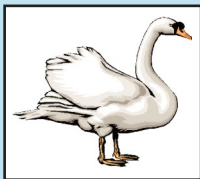
## 11th Clacton on Sea Beer Festival

*Wed 23 to Sat 26 August at St James Hall, Tower Road, Clacton on Sea (follow signs for Westcliff Theatre from town centre). Open Wed 6-11, Thu-Sat 11-11. Admission £1, CAMRA members free. About 50 real ales plus cider, perry and Belgian beers. Food available at all sessions, entertainment Thu eve and Sat afternoon. Clacton Air Show Thu/Fri. Visit [www.clactonbeerfestival.org.uk](http://www.clactonbeerfestival.org.uk)*

## 29th Peterborough Beer Festival

*Tue 22 to Sun 27 August, in three giant marquees on the river bankment east of the city centre. The second largest beer festival in the UK, offering over 350 real ales plus cider, perry and continental bottled beers. Live music in separate marquee, food, pub games etc. For opening times, admission prices, beer list, etc., visit [www.real-ale.org.uk](http://www.real-ale.org.uk)*

## THE SWAN



**Cask ales**

**Award winning bar menu**

**Modern classical French cuisine**

**Wide variety of fish dishes**

**All meat butchered and cut in house**

**Old fashioned desserts**

**High Street, Cranfield**

**01234 750332**





# Bedford festival coming soon!

*CAMRA's next Bedford Beer & Cider Festival is on its way. Plans are already well advanced for the 29th annual festival, which will be held once again at the Corn Exchange in St Paul's Square, from Wednesday 4th to Saturday 7th October 2006.*

*Local CAMRA members have run a festival in Bedford every autumn since 1978. All except one has been held in the Corn Exchange – the event had to migrate to Queen's Park in 1988 while its usual home was closed for extensive renovation.*

## 100 real ales

*This year's festival will be about the same size as last year, with about 100 different real ales, 30 different brands of real cider and perry, and a wide range of draught and bottled beers from Belgium and other European countries. Despite the fact that only a handful of Bedfordshire pubs sell real cider or perry, the growing popularity of these traditional fermented fruit drinks has earned "Cider" its regular place in the festival's title.*

*After two years featuring the SIBA (Society of Independent Brewers) regional championship, this year's festival will feature more real ales from further away. Although it is still too early to announce a list of the beers and ciders to be featured, all Bedfordshire brewers will be invited to supply.*

## Help required

### Sponsor a cask of beer!

Promote your business by sponsoring a cask of real ale at Bedford Beer & Cider Festival. For £60, your advert will appear on the cask end until the cask is empty.

Call 01234 822698 or email [publicity@northbedscamra.org.uk](mailto:publicity@northbedscamra.org.uk)

Details at [www.northbedscamra.org.uk](http://www.northbedscamra.org.uk)

*The festival is run entirely by volunteers. The organisers – all unpaid enthusiasts themselves – need many more volunteers to staff the beer and cider bars, the glasses counter, work behind the scenes, or help set up and dismantle the stillage and other temporary fittings.*

*All local CAMRA members and their friends are welcome – no experience necessary! Although there's no pay, helpers are allowed a generous supply of free beer or cider, a discount on food and have the pleasure of helping run one of the most popular regular events in Bedford.*

*To volunteer, call festival organiser Peter Argyle on 01234 822698 or send an email to [festival@northbedscamra.org.uk](mailto:festival@northbedscamra.org.uk)*

*Further info on [www.northbedscamra.org.uk](http://www.northbedscamra.org.uk)*



## ENGINEERS ARMS

A GENUINE FREEHOUSE  
OVER 25 DIFFERENT BEERS WEEKLY

Leffe Blond + Bitburger on draught  
Selection of Belgian bottled beers

CAMRA East Anglia Pub of the Year 2003  
Bedfordshire Pub of the Year 2002-05

Open all day every day from 12 noon  
Coaches welcome  
Arlesey station 10 minutes walk

HIGH STREET,  
HENLOW, BEDS  
01462 812284

Visit our website at  
[www.engineersarms.co.uk](http://www.engineersarms.co.uk)



# Forest of pubs in Marston Vale

*THE opening of the Forest Centre and the anticipated arrival of the NIRAH project, Marston Vale's bare clay pits and ugly, smoking brickworks are giving way to a greener and more attractive environment with strong potential for tourism and leisure. We hope the area's many pubs have a role in this development and think it is high time to take a look at what they have to offer locals and visitors.*

*So give the pubs of Marston Vale a try – we'll be glad to receive further information for use in future issues of Firkin.*



*The Carpenters Arms, Cranfield*

## Cranfield

*Since the closure of the Leathern Bottel at the northern end of the village, Cranfield has sported three pubs. The **Carpenters Arms** is a busy, popular pub serving well kept Wells Eagle IPA and a guest ale – Wadworth 6X on a recent visit. Good home cooked food is served in the no smoking lounge/restaurant as well as lighter snacks in the bar. New landlords Andy and Cathy plan evenings featuring quizzes and curries, and also hope to run a small beer festival during the summer. More on page 4.*

*Directly Opposite the "Carps", the **Swan Inn** serves a good pint of Greene King IPA, Abbot Ale and a guest ale – most recently Morland Old Speckled Hen. New landlord Steve offers traditional home-made bar food all day and in the no smoking lounge/restaurant. Steve, an experienced chef, specialises in fresh cosmopolitan food. Book to reserve a seat in the busy*

*restaurant. Bed and breakfast is also available.*

*Further up the high street, Pauline at the **Cross Keys** offers a good selection of real ales, including Banks's Bitter, Shepherd Neame Spitfire and Greene King IPA. The pub is popular for its home cooking. Every other Sunday, folk singers and musicians bring a host of talent and a good evenings entertainment.*

## Houghton Conquest

*In the heart of the village, the **Royal Oak** is a busy locals' pub opening weekday evenings and at weekends. Wells Eagle IPA is available on the bar and there's a nice beer garden for use in clement weather.*

*Further along the high street is the **Knife and Cleaver**, a restaurant and free house widely admired for its cuisine. It is a regular entry in many food guides, including CAMRA's new Good Pub Food (see page 14). The extensive menu makes it a popular eating our place for both locals and visitors. The regular real ales are Bateman XB and Potton Village Bike.*

*The **Chequers**, outside the village on the B530 Ampthill road, is now part of a small local pub group including the White Horse in Southill. Greene King IPA and Fuller's London Pride are available on the busy bar, which also offers home-made dishes and bar snacks from an interesting menu. The landlord hopes to enlarge both the pub and its range of real ales.*

## Lidlington

*This small village at the western end of the Vale still has the luxury of two pubs. The **Green Man** is a very attractive thatched building with*



*The Knife & Cleaver, Houghton Conquest*

two bars, serving bar snacks and home-cooked meals. Greene King IPA and Abbot are usually available. An open fire may welcome visitors to the lounge in winter.

Just round the corner, the **Royal Oak** is a busy village pub serving Wells Eagle IPA and occasional guest beers. The large restaurant offers home-cooked food with a choice of two restaurant areas and a covered patio area outside for use in clement weather.

## Marston Moretaine

A large village spread along the old A421, Marston has become much quieter since it was by-passed. There is a pub at each end. To the



The Royal Oak, Lidlington

Peach Inns pub/restaurant offering a cosmopolitan menu. Real ales on our last visit were Greene King IPA and Draught Bass.

Round a couple of lanes, the **Red Lion Country Inn** is a residential hotel as well as a busy pub and restaurant. Well-kept Wells Eagle IPA and Bombardier are available in the cosy bar, which is warmed by an open real fire in winter. Meals are served either in the bar or in the non-smoking restaurant from an extensive menu of home-cooked food. The pub has been Wine Pub of the Year several times as well as many years in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide. The detached rooms are tastefully furnished, some with four poster beds.

(concluded on page 12)



The Bell, Marston Moretaine

west, the **Bell** offers a changing selection of well kept ales – Robinson's Old Stockport, Young's Bitter and Adnams Broadside on our last visit, with Young's St George's Bitter and Wells Bombardier waiting to go on. Home cooking and good bar snacks are available.

At the eastern end, the **Rose and Crown** is sadly the only pub in the area not serving real ale. Unfortunately, the funds have not been available to re-design the interior so that the long distance beer has to travel from the cellar to the bar can be reduced.

## Millbrook

The **Chequers**, a free house on the hill in the village centre, is run mainly as a restaurant, but offers unusual real ales for this area, changed on a regular basis.

## Salford

A small maze of lanes seemingly designed just to confuse visitors, this village not far from M1 Junction 13 has two pubs. Until fairly recently a popular village local, the **Swan** is now a

## Wilstead

Long bypassed by the A6, Wilstead offers two pubs facing each other at the central road junction. The **Red Lion** serves Wells Eagle IPA and Bombardier on handpump in its busy bar and lounge. Pub games are played regularly.



The Red Lion Country Inn, Salford



# Pubs of Marston Vale

(Continued from page 11)

Across the road, the **Woolpack** boasts three real ales, changed regularly – Greene King IPA and Triumph, and Smiles Bitter which was a hit with the regulars when we last visited. Home-cooked food is served at lunchtimes, while in the evening plates and cutlery are supplied for eating food brought in from local takeaways. There is often live music at weekends. Landlord Nick is planning a pub beer festival for August – see page 5.

Don Allan and Peter Argyle

**We'll be looking at another group of pubs in our next issue.**



The Woolpack, Wilstead

## Real ales in a bottle

A new independent wine shop in Cranfield is offering one of the largest selections of bottled beers in the area. It stocks over 100 bottles, some well known but many from smaller breweries. Prices are competitive with supermarkets but there is a much greater range. The shop also stocks a wide range of well priced wines and malt whiskies.



## The Ship Inn

Licenses: RAY & INGRID FOSTER

St. Cuthbert's Street, Bedford

Tel: 01234 267126



- ☆ LICENSEES OF THE YEAR 2003
- ☆ GREAT LUNCHTIME FOOD
- ☆ LIVE MUSIC 3 TIMES A WEEK
- ☆ 3 BARS AND LARGE HEATED PATIO
- ☆ ONE OF THE FEW TRADITIONAL PUBS LEFT IN BEDFORD. OVER 450 YEARS OLD



Pick a 6X object up at the bar.



# Champion ciders

CAMRA's *Champion Cider* award for 2006 has been won by **Hecks Kingston Black** from Street in Somerset. The *Champion Perry* is **Seidr Dai** from Cardiff.

The winners were chosen from 120 real ciders and perries at the Reading Beer & Cider Festival during the May Day bank holiday weekend. The judges described Kingston Black as having a "ripe fruity aroma matured in oak casks providing a complex rich experience. This cider lingers on the tongue and makes it burst into flower."

Andrew Hecks of Hecks Farmhouse Cider was delighted with the award. "It's marvellous, we had no idea we were likely to win. I would like to thank the family and all our customers for their help over the years."

The Hecks family has been producing cider since 1840, operating in Street for 110 years. Their winning cider is made from Kingston Black apples grown in their own orchards.

The winning perry, Seidr Dai, was described as "a mellow, delicately balanced, slightly

sweet perry. Very drinkable, more-ish and should complement many types of food."

Seidr Dai is a new producer contributing to the current cider and perry revival in Wales. The company was founded 6 years ago and specialises in making cider and perry from fruit grown in Wales. The winning perry uses a pear called Hellens Early grown in local orchards.

Dave Mathews of Seidr Dai was overjoyed on being told that his perry had won, and said: "I thought I would spend the rest of my life chasing this award and can't believe it has happened. I would like to thank all the people who help us make our cider and perry."

Gillian Williams, CAMRA's Director of Cider and Perry campaigning said: "High quality real cider is still being made all over the UK. Just squeeze the juice out of the fruit and leave to ferment naturally."

**Rockinbeerfest** 17th 18th 19th 20th August 2006  
The Kings Bush Centre (Wood Green Animal Shelter)

**Thursday: £3.50 ROCKTECH** (Wood Green Animal Shelter)  
CAMRA Members FREE Thursday  
Kyrb Grinder, Raw Gallagher, Highway 5 Blues Band, Singray, Charn School

**Friday: £20**  
Dropouts  
Wilko Johnson, The Hamsters  
Eddie and the Hotrods  
Danny Bryant's RedEyeBand  
Helium Soul, Who's Next?  
Mediablackout, Dear Old Blighty, After 4

**Saturday: £29**  
Frankie Miller's Full House Reunion  
The Blockheads, Deborah Bonham  
Medicine Hat, Larry Miller, Innes Sibun  
The Soul Kitchen, Badger, Litmus, Morph

**Sunday: £25** Long Weekend  
Mostly Autumn, Bluehorses £69 Adult  
John Otway, David Fisher, Big 10 £24.50 U16  
E-Zee Band, UXL, Ellenby, Chapter XIII £1.00 U10  
The Fondas, Split Whiskers  
Camping - £15 2/3 berth  
£30 4 berth  
£30 Camper  
£30 Caravan

BBC RADIO CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
1013  
caroline RockTech  
0845 299 0845 or rockinbeerfest.co.uk



Bedfordshire's leading stockists of bottled Real Ales  
Over 100 available and many more obtainable to order

We have a wide range of Malt Whiskies and Exclusive Fine Wines

Visit us anytime from Noon  
Open every day

142 High Street  
Cranfield  
Bedfordshire  
MK43 0EL  
01234 751528

[parklandwinecompany@hotmail.com](mailto:parklandwinecompany@hotmail.com)

# New CAMRA guides

## Good Beer Guide Germany

CAMRA's new guide to the biggest beer-drinking country in Europe – published just in time for the World Cup! Edited by enthusiast Steve Thomas, this is the perfect guide book for anyone wanting to understand and experience Germany's great beer culture – both frequent visitors, first-time tourists and those visiting the country for the World Cup.

- 576 full colour pages with photographs and maps
- First and only English-language guide to finding and enjoying good beer in Germany
- Guides to 12 Cities listing the best places to sample a variety of German beers with authentic atmosphere, including Bamberg, Berlin, Munich and Stuttgart.
- How to get there and where to stay.
- Travel info, including railway station, train stop, underground station and bus route for each venue.
- English–German dictionary particularly aimed at the beer tourist.
- Lists all 1,250 breweries and 7,500 beers brewed in Germany

Available from all good book shops or direct from CAMRA at £16.99 (CAMRA members £14.99). Free postage to UK customers during World Cup. Call 01727 867201 or visit [www.camra.org.uk/books](http://www.camra.org.uk/books)



## Good Pub Food

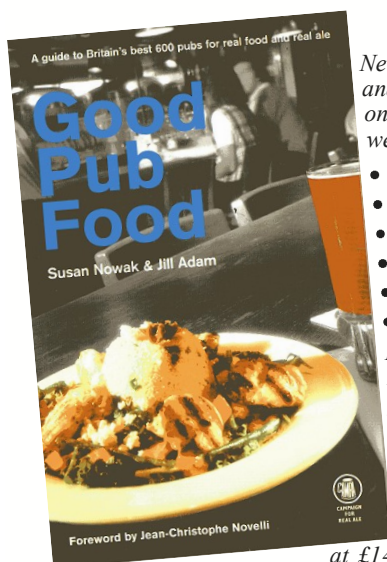
New sixth edition of CAMRA's definitive guide to fine cuisine and excellent beer, edited by Susan Nowak and Jill Adam – the only guide where a pub qualifies for the quality of its ale as well as food.

- 600 entries serving excellent food and real ale
- Emphasis on beer rather than wine
- Features include:
  - The rise of the gastro pub and celebrity chefs
  - Pubs using local produce and cooking with beer
  - Poor food for children in pubs.

Editor Susan Novak said: "The very best news since *Good Pub Food* last appeared seven years ago is the explosion of pubs now sourcing fine local produce – the publicans who go that extra mile to cut food miles. So many beer recipes were donated by publicans for this guide that we can't fit them all in. Try them, you'll find them much more inventive than the standard steak and ale casserole."

Available from all good bookshops or direct from CAMRA at £14.99 (CAMRA members £13.99) + £1.50 P&P. Call 01727

867201 or visit [www.camra.org.uk/books](http://www.camra.org.uk/books)





# Branch diary



*BRANCH business meetings are normally held in the third week of odd months, e.g. July and September. Campaigning events, brewery and beer festival visits may be any day of the week.*

*Guests are welcome at social events, but members have priority on brewery visits. For updated information see the members' monthly newspaper, *What's Brewing*, or visit [www.northbedscamra.org.uk](http://www.northbedscamra.org.uk)*

## Thursday 8 June

*Minibus social visiting village pubs in the Greensand Ridge area south east of Bedford. Bus leaves Wellington Arms, Bedford, at 7.30pm. To book a seat, call Bill Roffe on 01234 342287. For further details, visit our branch website.*

## Thursday 13 July

*Branch AGM, 8 for 8.15pm at the Phoenix, St John's Street, Bedford. All CAMRA members welcome.*

## Thursday 27 July

*Branch meeting, 8 for 8.15pm at the Phoenix, St John's Street, Bedford. All CAMRA members welcome.*

## Thursday 10 August

*Possible evening social and supper by the river at the Anchor, Great Barford. Check in *What's Brewing* or branch website for confirmation.*



# Eating out in pubs

*THE 2006 edition of Michelin's guide, "Eating out in Pubs", has already appeared in the bookshops. It features more than 500 "dining pubs" throughout Britain and both parts of Ireland, although Bedfordshire earns only seven entries.*

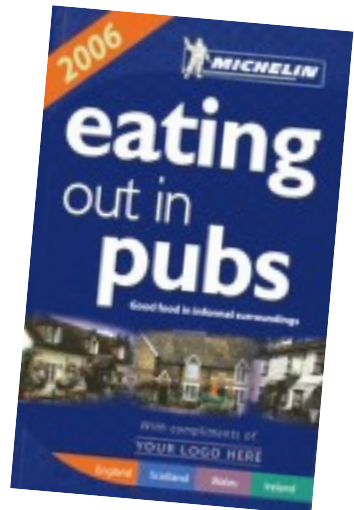
*Pubs have become significant venues for people wanting a meal out. Country inns offering food frequently provide better value for money than city restaurants.*

*The Michelin guide is highly selective and features only pubs achieving the highest culinary standards. However, it is interesting how many pubs featured in this book are also selected for CAMRA's Good Beer Guide. Pub restaurateurs with a reputation for high quality food rarely fail to offer real ales or fail to look after them well. Fine food, fine wines and fine beer go together.*

*The introduction reads: "The pubs vary enormously in style, history and personality and include not just Michelin award-winners but also other local favourites which deserve to be better known. Some chefs and landlords see themselves as at the forefront of the 'gastropub revolution', others are proud that their pub has stayed unchanged for decades, even centuries, yet all of the pubs provide good food in enjoyable surroundings, and all of them make a really*

*enjoyable meal out."*

*Michelin's Eating out in Pubs is available from good bookshops at £14.99. ISBN 2-06-711646-0.*



# Help us win the CAMRA challenge

**YOU probably already enjoy a pint or two of real ale in a decent pub. But are you a member of CAMRA?**

CAMRA is a not-for-profit organisation led by volunteers. It is the biggest single-issue consumer group in Britain today and actively campaigns to protect local pubs and breweries, as well as fighting for pub-goers' rights. You can help the Campaign reach its membership challenge target of 100,000.

CAMRA members come from all walks of life and all adult age groups. Members get a range of benefits, including:

- A lively and informative monthly newspaper, *What's Brewing*
- Free or cheap entry to more than 140 CAMRA festivals throughout the UK
- Discounts on CAMRA products and books, including the best selling annual *Good Beer Guide*.

Many issues we campaign on matter to you. We lobby for fairer and more flexible pub

opening hours. We campaign for new laws on full pints to ensure you don't get ripped off by unscrupulous pub operators. We press for more choice and competition to keep the pubs you like open and the beers you like on the bar.

Full membership costs only £18 a year – well under the price of a pint a month. If you are under 26, are over 60 and retired, or registered unemployed or disabled, you pay only £10. If you've a keen partner living at the same address, you can join together for just £3 more.

To join, clip and complete the form opposite, call 01727 867201, or visit our national website at [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk)

If you pay by direct debit, there's an extra benefit – your first three months' membership comes free. And if you decide to cancel it within this period, you owe the Campaign nothing. Not a bad bargain!

**Bedford's Premier Homebrew Centre**

- comprehensive range of bitters
- wide selection of lagers
- excellent prices
- free advice

and a happy smiling face

**HELPLINE 01234 353856**

15 Union Street, Bedford MK40 2SF

Opening Hours:  
Tuesday to Saturday 9.30am to 5.30pm

## Get Firkin by post

If you can't find the *Firkin* at your local pub or club, subscribe by post. Send a cheque for £1 payable to CAMRA North Beds to Tony Burke, 3 Bracken Place, Bedford MK41 0TG. You will receive the next five issues by post.

CAMRA members in the North Beds branch area are entitled to copies by post free of charge. Call Tony Burke on 01234 273676, by post as above, or email [membership@northbedscamra.org.uk](mailto:membership@northbedscamra.org.uk)

## Trading standards

If you complain to the licensee about short measure, lack of a visible price list or misleading promotion of products, and do not get a satisfactory response, contact *Bedfordshire Trading Standards Service* at County Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP. Tel. 01234 228280.



# It takes all sorts to campaign for real ale



## Join CAMRA Today...

Just fill in the form below and send, with a cheque (payable to CAMRA Ltd) or for Three Months Free membership (for those renewing or joining by Direct Debit) complete the Direct Debit Form. All forms should be addressed to membership secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW. Alternatively you can join online at [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk). Rates for single membership are £18 and joint £21. Concession rates are available on request.

.....

Title Surname Forename(s) Date of Birth

.....

P'tner Surname Forename(s) Date of Birth

.....

Address Postcode

.....

Tel. no.(s)

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

BEN Firkin



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



Please fill in the form and send to: Campaign for Real Ale Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts. AL1 4LW  
Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To The Manager Bank or Building Society

Address

Postcode

Originator's Identification Number

9 2 6 1 2 9

FOR CAMRA OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Membership Number

Name

Postcode

Name (s) of Account Holder (s)

Bank or Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Reference Number

**Instruction to your Bank or Building Society**  
Please pay CAMRA Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with CAMRA and, if so, will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society

Signature(s)

Date



This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.

### The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that take part in the Direct Debit Scheme. The efficiency and security of the Scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society.
- If the amounts to be paid or the payment dates change CAMRA will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.
- If an error is made by CAMRA or your Bank or Building Society you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to us.

detached and retained this section

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account

# Campaign for Real Ale

## North Bedfordshire Branch

### Chairman

John Martin – 01234 768294  
[chairman@northbedscamra.org.uk](mailto:chairman@northbedscamra.org.uk)

### Secretary

Bill Roffe – 01234 342287  
[secretary@northbedscamra.org.uk](mailto:secretary@northbedscamra.org.uk)

### Treasurer

Mike Benyon

### Membership / Pubs

Tony Burke – 01234 273676  
[membership@northbedscamra.org.uk](mailto:membership@northbedscamra.org.uk)

### Newsletter / Publicity / Festival

Peter Argyle – 01234 822698  
[firmkin@northbedscamra.org.uk](mailto:firmkin@northbedscamra.org.uk)

### Committee members

Geoff Foll  
Eric Mills  
Paul Weston  
Sue Williams



### Website

[www.northbedscamra.org.uk](http://www.northbedscamra.org.uk)

# The firkin

Published every three months by the North Bedfordshire Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale.

The Firkin is produced by volunteers in their own time and is distributed to most pubs and clubs in Bedfordshire north of a line joining the M1, Clophill, Shefford and Tempsford.

We welcome correspondence and any decent items of interest for publication. Views expressed may not be those of the Editor, the Campaign for Real Ale, or the North Bedfordshire Branch.

Adverts and other items for publication must reach the editor by the date at the foot of this page.

**Edited by Peter Argyle**  
**65 Wingfield Road, Bromham,**  
**Bedford, MK43 8JY.**

**Tel: 01234 822698**

**Email: [firmkin@northbedscamra.org.uk](mailto:firmkin@northbedscamra.org.uk)**

*Printed by Lodge Printers Ltd, Hamerton Road, Upton, Huntingdon, PE28 5YA.*

© Campaign for Real Ale Ltd 2006

# Advertise in the firkin

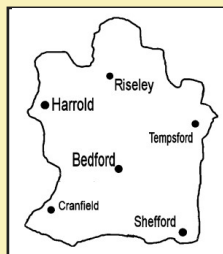
## Promote your pub, product or services in our pages

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. Our readers also include pub and club licensees.

- Circulation 3,000 copies every quarter, delivered to almost every pub or real ale club in north Bedfordshire.
- Space in the next issue must be reserved by the date at the foot of this page.
- Simple artwork created at no extra cost, or supply your own.

### For further details of our rates or to place an advert, call:

Neil Richards on 01536 358670 or 07710 281381  
or email [n.richards@btinternet.com](mailto:n.richards@btinternet.com)



# The Royal George



Wells Eagle + Adnams Broadside  
Guest ales changing weekly  
Lunches daily 12-2  
Sunday lunches  
Restaurant available for parties  
Relaxed atmosphere  
Patio and quiet beer garden

Silver Street, Stevington  
01234 822184

# The Crown



Big Screen Sky Sports



3 real ales, great lager and wines

Food served daily 12-2 & 5-8

Sunday lunch 12-3pm

two courses £6.95



Large beer garden

Families welcome

We are dog friendly



Mobile bar and catering available

Station Road, Willington  
01234 838308

themePARTYplanners.co.uk

Email: [contact@themepartyplanners.co.uk](mailto:contact@themepartyplanners.co.uk)  
Telephone: 01234-319359

Let us Entertain you... Birthday, Wedding, Christening, Retirement, Proms Night, Hen Nights, Works outing or just a get together with friends.. Why not bring your party to our professionally themed events?



**LIST OF SCHEDULED EVENTS FOR 2006 INCLUDE:** Hawaiian Luau, Charlie & the Chocolate Factory, Black & White Masquerade Ball, Mexican Fiesta, Bavarian Oktoberfest, Halloween, Spanish Flamenco Night, Olde Tyme Music Hall, Gypsies Tramps & Thieves, Brazilian Rio Christmas Carnival, Night of the Oscars, Winter Wonderland, Wonderful world of Narnia and New Years Eve Masked Ball.

Full details available on our website: [www.themepartyplanners.co.uk](http://www.themepartyplanners.co.uk) or call 01234-319359 for details.

**ADVANCE BOOKINGS ONLY: NO TICKETS AVAILABLE ON THE NIGHT  
WE ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING CREDIT CARDS**





DRINK OF ENGLAND