



CAMRA

Chelmsford & Mid-Essex Branch

Pub News

March 2009

by Nigel Sadler - Pub Liaison Officer

Well we're nearly out of the winter now having survived snow and flooding in recent weeks so let's all start to look forward to daffodils and crocuses etc. No doubt there will be a few more cold days ahead until the glorious British summer starts i.e. warmer rain but until then the best place to be is probably inside your local. Remember use it or lose it!

My 5 month mission to boldly go (yes, I know it's a split infinitive!) where no man has been before i.e. all the pubs in our area is still on course with the wilds of Blackmore, Fryerning and Witham having now been visited. Next major assault will be on Braintree in the coming week or so.

In between all the pub visits I did manage a week in Buenos Aires (37C and sunny!) and thought perhaps you might like to know what the beer scene is like over there just in case you get a chance to visit.

A number of micro breweries have sprung up in recent years which make a refreshing change from the large Quilmes Brewery's lagers which are ubiquitous. Though most tend to supply the finished product in filtered keg form, from what I make out, there are one or two heading down the real ale path. I enjoyed a very good draught stout from Gambrinus, more like a Beamish than a Guinness. A bottle of Patagonian Amber Ale was particularly good and reminiscent Newcastle Brown in some ways. My next trip will take me to India in April so I will let you know what they drink with their curry!

Onto the events for March then. Mother's Day is going to be one the big one of the month so why not take dear old mum down to the local for a half of Oscar and maybe a packet of crisps to show her how appreciated and loved she is?

The White Horse, Townfield St, Chelmsford – *Had a very successful re-opening back at the end of January and Chris the landlord was pleased that many of us turned up that night and have been back since. He's holding a charity "Race Night"*

on 14th March from 9pm and is planning a beer festival for April featuring 30 ales with emphasis on Essex micros. More about this in the next newsletter.

Kings Arms, Broomfield – Recently re-opened and the new management is keen to build this pub back into an alternative to the popular Angel down the road. Also a venue for all those with “green/eco” concerns, “Green Drinks” are held on the 4th Wednesday of each month to discuss various environmental issues with likeminded people of all political persuasions. Only GK IPA on draught at the moment.

The Bell, Woodham Walter – I know this is on the edge of “our patch” but worth a mention. It was closed for a few months but has now opened again and is apparently a very good pub/restaurant now.

The Butcher’s Arms, North End – There’s been a new Italian menu introduced for evening meals with a range of pastas, seafoods etc. The pub is also going more musical than in the past with folk nights every first Friday and second Sunday of the month plus an “Open Mic Night” where all are invited to come along and play an instrument or sing. A full PA and mixing desk are even provided!

The Prince of Wales, Inworth – Was up for sale last year following it’s demise as a restaurant but it’s now open again. Alas only one real ale on (Riggwelter) due to “lack of demand” from the locals according to the manager but let’s hope the trade builds and this lovely old pub survives.

The Two Brewers, Chelmsford – Just changed hands and under new management. Only had GK IPA on but I understand there are plans to introduce a couple more real ales in coming weeks. I will keep you informed.

The Griffin, Danbury - Has its lease back up for sale and we understand that the potential new owners are keen to retain the existing style and format after, perhaps a much overdue, refurbishment.

The Cricketers, Danbury – Gary, the current landlord, has now taken over the Victoria at Woodham Walter but won’t leave the Cricketers until end of May when the current lease expires. Prospective tenants to replace him and his wife in this popular Danbury pub are now being interviewed. I hope to have more news in the April newsletter.

The Oddfellows Arms, Chelmsford – Will be going for a music night on Sat 14th March with The Warehouse Blues Band 8:30pm Till Late. In addition to their traditional pub grub they are now offer a great value Sunday Roast at £6.50 per head. Bookings now being taken for Mother’s Day (Sunday 22nd March).

The Cricketers, Fryerning - Will be serving 'Brentwood Best' Ale throughout March. They are also going for a musical theme and have booked the great singer 'Keith James' singing all the crooning classics in our restaurant on Thursday 12th March (please contact them on 01277 352 400 or at www.thecricketersfryerning.com to

book a table). They'll also be holding 'A Question Of Thought' quiz on Monday 16th March to help raise money for Muscular Dystrophy, you can book a table in the restaurant for this or just come and take part in the bar.

Other news:

As many of you may already know from Brian's Spring Circular, our Pub of the Year 2009 is **The Wheatsheaf at Writtle and** a presentation is planned for 31st March at 8pm.

National Pub of The Year – The winner is in Yorkshire: **The Kelham Island Tavern, Sheffield**. It has been a **CAMRA Sheffield Pub of the Year for the last four years** and was a **past regional winner in both 2004 and 2007**. The pub is also **listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2009** bearing the following description:

"An impressive 10 permanent hand pumps include two that always dispense a mild and a stout/porter, so you are sure to find something to quench your thirst. A visit in the warmer months enables you to sample the pub's multi-award winning sub-tropical beer garden- a true gem."

Julian Hough, CAMRA's Pubs Director and one of the final judges, said:

"The Kelham Island Tavern is a regular in the Good Beer Guide and has been treasured by pub-goers from Yorkshire and beyond since its opening in 2002. It truly is a pub for everyone, and its attention to detail is fantastic. To have won so many awards in such a short space of time, even enduring a disastrous flood in 2007, is a true testament to the dedication and commitment of its staff. The pub is a deserved winner, and a wonderful example of a well-run community pub."

Let's hope the next winner will be in Essex!

Quote of the month (an occasional article): *From the landlord of Judge Tindal's Tavern, Chelmsford, when I popped in the other week:*

"Oh CAMRA eh? That's all J. R. Hartley and fly fishing type people isn't it?"

I can only assume that he must have been referring to none other than our very own country pursuit following chairman; Podge.

Finally has anyone got any info on their locals as requested in my last newsletter? Not heard anything back yet. Come on don't be shy! Just names of owners and beers available would be a help.

Keep your eyes open for the next issue in April!