



THE TIPPLER



Newsletter of the Gloucestershire Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale

Give Small Brewers a Break

CAMRA has launched a powerful appeal for a progressive duty system to be included in this year's budget to help the small independents and microbrewers compete with the big brewer discounters in the vital pub chain market.

SIBA, the Small Independent Brewers Association, has long been calling for a sliding scale of beer duty - rapidly becoming standard in other EU countries - to help its members compete on price as effectively as they already do on quality.

CAMRA strongly supports this proposal. A hard hitting submission has gone to the Treasury and CAMRA Head of Campaigns Mike Benner said "The Government should act now to protect jobs, consumer choice and local economies."

The small independent sector is nearing crisis. Many local beers will vanish unless small brewers get a (tax) break.

Shepherd Neame loses Beer Duty Case

Kent brewers Shepherd Neame have been fighting a battle in the courts to gain a ruling that the Government's beer duty policy breaches the Treaty of Rome requirement for duty harmonisation.

The Court of Appeal has now rejected the case and moreover refused leave to appeal either to the European Court or to the Lords but the brewery is planning to make yet another application.

The enormous legal costs, described as "well into 6 figures", are being supported by donations from other brewers affected by our punitive rates of duty.

New Inn to Stay a Pub

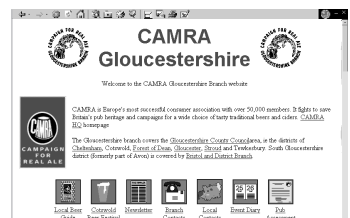
The application to turn the New Inn at Waterley Bottom into a private house has been turned down by Stroud council after a huge protest. Let's hope that Ruby can find a willing buyer soon, now this has been settled.

We're Online!

Thanks to the efforts of stalwart member John Barrett, CAMRA Gloucestershire now has a page on the World Wide Web. It gives details of contacts, branch events and publications. We will post details of the Cotswold Beer Festival as they are finalised and we hope soon to have the Tippler itself online. Check it out if you can.

See page 2 for more about beer on the Web.

Link: www.john-barrett.demon.co.uk/camra



Beer on the Web

There are a growing number of sites on the World Wide Web that contain a mine of information about beer: news, databases of beers and breweries, local CAMRA web pages and of course CAMRA's own website. Here is a brief guide to a few.

CAMRA

All the news of CAMRA events and campaigning activity plus links to local branch websites. Ours should be reachable from there very soon.

Link to: www.camra.org.uk



BeerScene

Covers beer world-wide but the highlight is an excellent database of UK brewers & beers. There's even a map to help you find each brewery.

Link to: www.demon.co.uk/beerscene



BreWorld

Large site with up-to-date news and details of brewing world-wide but biased to the UK. Has a link to a large brewery database.

Link to: www.breworld.com



Real Ale Guide

A new site with a mine of information including links to the Brewery History Society and the British Brewery Playing card Society!

Link to: www.real-ale-guide.co.uk



Lammastide Inn

Brookend

Near Berkeley, Glos

Tel: 01453 811337



Lammas

*The medieval festival of harvest traditionally
celebrated on 1st August*

4 cask ales - no keg beers

Weekly guest ale

Bar snacks

Quality food restaurant

Sunday lunch

Open every lunchtime & evening



Last September we published what purported to be the Cheltenham entry from an imaginary 1903 Good Beer Guide. This was taken from the work of local member Geoff Sandles based largely on records made in 1891 and 1903. This month we return to the theme and offer extracts from Geoff's guide to Stroud around the turn of the century.

British Oak, London Rd., Bowbridge
Stroud Brewery Co.

Stroud Brewery 'Double A' (G)

Despite the fact that the British Oak was very near to the now defunct Eagle Brewery at Bowbridge the draught beers have always been supplied by the Stroud Brewery. Also try the Canal Tavern, (Stroud Brewery)

Caroline Guilford, Uplands Brewery,
Middle Street
Home Brewed Ales

Caroline Guilford Uplands Brewery Mild,
Bitter, Stout (G)

Small domestic brewery in off beer-house. Beers available in stone jars and stopper bottles for home consumption. Closes 11pm. Do not confuse with the other off licence in Middle Street - a Godsell's outlet.

Crown Inn, High Street
Nailsworth Brewery

Nailsworth Brewery Bitter, Stout (G)

A basic pub at the top of Stroud High Street near the fountain. The beer was once supplied by Holmes & Co.'s Bowbridge brewery before the acquisition by the Nailsworth Brewery. The Stout is usually excellent.

Foresters Arms, Russell Street
Smith & Co., Brimscombe Brewery

Smith's Bitter (G)

Brimscombe brewery house in the centre of Stroud near the G.W.R. station. The landlady, Mrs Julia Mutton, is justifiably proud of her well kept bitter.

Golden Fleece, Nelson Street
Godsell & Sons, Salmon Springs

Godsell's A1 Strong Ale, AB Pale Ale,
XXX Stout (G)

The Golden Fleece once brewed its own beer. Mr. Poole was brewer at the Golden Fleece in 1856. A suspected yeast infection caused the cessation of

brewing and subsequent acquisition by the renowned Stroud brewers Godsell & Son.

Green Dragon Inn, King Street
Godsell & Sons, Salmon Springs

Godsell's A1 Strong Ale, India Pale Ale,
XXX Stout (H)

Godsell's showpiece pub, recently refurbished by the company. Ornate facade with stained glass and etched brewery windows. Beer on handpull. Magnificent interior. A real gem, not to be missed.

Royal George Inn, King Street
Ind Coope Co. Ltd., Burton on Trent

Ind Coope India Pale Ale (H)

Prestigious hotel in the centre of Stroud. Massive coat of arms above the front door. Good accommodation. A recent acquisition by the Burton brewers, Ind Coope. The beers are collected from the Midland Railway Goods Yard at Wallbridge. Burton Ales also available in bottles.

Sundial Inn, London Road
Smith & Sons, Brimscombe Brewery

Brimscombe Brewery Bitter, Stout (G)

Unusual sundial inn sign. Joseph Benjamin Flight, mine host, was once landlord of the British Oak. His preference for the Brimscombe brewed beers is reflected in the excellence of his cellarman ship.

Swan Inn, Union Street
Stroud Brewery Co.

Stroud Brewery Mild, 'Double A', Entire (H)

Unusual gallow's sign. Was owned until recently by the Cheltenham Brewery. Now a prestigious Stroud Brewery pub catering for the gentry, in marked contrast to some of their lesser properties.

Victoria Tap, Dudbridge
Stroud Brewery Co.

Stroud Brewery Entire (G)

Extremely basic brick-built beerhouse on the Stroudwater navigation above the lock at Dudbridge. Tiny rooms. Frequented by canal

Now It Can Be Told

We have just received the transcript, obtained at great cost, of some discreet surveillance tapes of conversations that took place in the middle of 1998 in the offices of one of the larger breweries that shall remain nameless.....

"Do you actually mean to tell me that we paid good money for that drivel?!"

The Managing Director of Soulless Megabreweries PLC quivered slightly. His face appeared flushed and his hands on the desk were tightly bunched into fists. He had just finished watching the new advertising campaign video, one that was due very soon to be occupying numerous primetime television slots. He was not pleased.



"I'm afraid so. There was a clause in the advertising company's contract that gave them complete artistic control. It was hidden away in the small print. We missed it. The responsible party is being soundly whipped as we speak. I believe it may have been a reaction to the last piece of work that this company did for us which we declined to pay for. In fact this whole new campaign looks somewhat like a wind-up." The Marketing Director perched nervously on the edge of his seat, waiting for the onslaught from the other side of a desk easily large enough for a game of table tennis.

The MD, however appeared ominously calm. "Let me re-cap for you as I see this glorious example of the advertiser's art. We have an interior view of a pub, could be any pub, completely anonymous. Standing in the pub with glasses of beer in their hands are young men with the appearance of train-spotters. Their attire successfully avoids any reference to anything fashionable within the last fifteen years. Their haircuts would make any self-respecting person consider litigation. The text of the ad is that these half-wits are compelled to keep making inane remarks at each other's expense in order that they don't have to use hand cream and therefore run the risk of dropping their pints. These are supposed to be role models. The great unwashed out there in television land is supposed to look at these sorry specimens and think 'I want to be like them, so I'll drink that beer.' This ad is enough to make them all teetotal!"



As he described the horror of the advertisement, his voice became louder and louder until the cut glass decanter and glasses on the sideboard rattled together. The Marketing Director gulped. "It was actually a bit worse than that. They came up with the slogan 'It's a man thing' thereby instantly removing 50% of the potential market. We wiped it off the tape."



"I don't believe it! No one does this to me!" The MD was up and pacing backwards and forwards; he found it helpful when thinking up some truly spiteful retribution. "How many lashes is that idiot in our legal department receiving?"

"Only twelve for the moment. The rest have been deferred. As we were tying him down across his desk and trying a few practice swipes, he made a suggestion that you may find interesting - that we change the name of the beer."

"Change the name of the beer! What to? How on earth will that make any difference?"



The Marketing Director appeared to have relaxed. He sat back in his chair, contemplating his joined fingertips, now confident of the effect that his reply was going to have. "It will make all the difference if we change it to Worthington Best Bitter."

"But we don't sell Worthington Best....." began the MD petulantly, but his voice quickly tailed off as the penny dropped. "Of course, I see! It's wonderful! What better use for a totally crap ad than to use it for a competitor's product! But surely they'll realise what's going on."



"Not necessarily. Bass is so big that they use a number of different advertising agencies. They'll all think it was done by someone else. Just as long as it's not coming out of their budget they won't care less. We may even be able to do something clever with that awful slogan and the word 'Worthington'. This should put back Bass's sales by twenty years."

The MD looked pensive. "I hope not. They were selling much more twenty years ago than they are now, but I know what you mean." He turned to the Marketing Director with a beaming smile across his face. "This is wonderful! I love it! Make the changes and get it out as soon as possible. Give that idiot from the legal department another twelve lashes just to keep him on his toes. I feel terrific. I feel like closing another brewery!"



"You only closed one last month, we haven't enough left for you to have a celebratory brewery closure."

The MD's face fell momentarily. "I thought it was a bit much to hope for, putting one over on Bass and closing a brewery on the same day. Never mind, I will just have to savour the anticipation of my next brewery closure. I could always buy one, and then close it down."

The Marketing Director left him shuffling through papers, totally absorbed in contemplation of which regional family brewer could next be bought up and closed down.



Wolves Buy Out Marston's

As predicted last time, the problems in the industry have reached even mighty Marston's. They have sold out to Wolverhampton & Dudley (Banks). We don't doubt that this is the best outcome of what might have been a damaging battle but let's hope that Wolves stand by their pledge to safeguard all three Marston's breweries and all their brands.

... but Ward's and Vaux may Survive

The threat of closure has been hanging over both Ward's of Sheffield and Vaux of Sunderland but may be averted by a management buy-out. A month ago the board of the newly renamed parent company Swallow gave the buy-out team 4 weeks 'exclusivity'. If the money has been found by 1 March the breweries will

Cotswold Beer Festival 1999

Planning has already started for this year's Cotswold Beer Festival, which is on 23rd to 25th of July at Postlip Hall.

One of the first jobs to get underway is the ticket sales operation, and here we try to answer some questions about the ticket system, to help you when the application forms are sent out after Easter.

Why is the ticket system so complicated?

It has evolved over the years as we have tried to be as fair as we can in the face of a demand for tickets that exceeds the supply by 50%.

How do I get an application form?

'Personalised' application forms are sent to all CAMRA members living in Gloucestershire, and to everyone else who applied for tickets the previous year. Blank forms are available from pubs that regularly receive the Tippler, and also from the Tourist Information Centres in Cheltenham, Tewkesbury and Winchcombe.

Do CAMRA members get priority?

Gloucestershire members of CAMRA are entitled to two 'guaranteed' tickets per subscription (so joint members get two tickets between them, not two each). This is two tickets in total, not two per session, and they have to be paid for at the normal price.

What about coach parties?

About half the tickets are allocated to coach parties and other groups wanting more than 5 tickets for a session. But they must apply by an earlier deadline (around the end of May).

Does anyone else get priority?

We try to allocate tickets to anyone (including coach organisers) who was unlucky the previous year. So far we have always managed to do this, although we can't offer any guarantees. The initial rush of applications makes it impractical to give priority to early applicants.

What else affects my chance of getting tickets?

The fewer tickets you apply for the better your chances (this is to discourage people from applying for more tickets than they need), and applying for only one session will help. Failing to send an SAE or the correct money will count against you.

Some tips on applying for tickets

Read the notes accompanying the application form carefully before filling it in.

Use the personalised application form if you have one.

Send in your application well before the deadline.

Remember to enclose a suitable, self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Make sure you have included the right amount of money.

Do not apply for more tickets than you need.



Tewkesbury Winter Ale Festival



The Fourth (Crikey, is it that long?) Winter Ale Festival was held, as ever, on the first weekend of February in the skittle alley of the White Bear, Bredon Road. Twelve fine winter ales from all corners of the land were collected by our dedicated beer committee, the new banners were put up, the glasses polished and the doors opened for a member's only preview on the Thursday.

By the end of the evening, it was clear that, for the first time, we didn't have enough beer to last until Sunday lunchtime. Amongst others, a bus full of thirsty members from the Dursley sub-branch, obviously celebrating Ric's recent infamy in the 'Observer', set about drinking most of the barrel of our most prized ale, Hebridean Gold from the Isle of Skye brewery. Busy sessions followed on the Friday evening (when the rest of the Gold was quickly polished off, mainly by an uncouth lot from Cheltenham) and Saturday lunchtime but we still went into the Saturday evening session with ten beers still going and a lot of crossed fingers. Alas, by 9.30pm only good old Deep Shaft Stout from Freeminer was still active, mainly because it was in an eleven gallon cask. Within the hour that had gone and we experienced the novelty of everyone leaving before we could call time.

The Beer of the Festival was (surprise!) Hebridean Gold, followed by Old Ale from King & Barnes in second place, and Rob's Ruin from Cannon Royall third.

During the Festival we promoted two of the leading makes of Cask Ventilators, designed to keep cask ale in good condition for the maximum length of time without using the dreaded cask breather

which introduces gas into the barrel. The results are still being evaluated but we were encouraged by the interest and overwhelming support these little gadgets attracted. Many thanks to K&M Engineering for sponsoring the test.

All in all our most successful Festival yet. People came from all over the Midlands and expressed great support for CAMRA. One woman from Walsall brought her husband for the weekend for a surprise birthday treat! (all partners please note). We were encouraged at the number of young people attending and in some cases joining the campaign. We apologise to anyone who came on Sunday morning and for the limited choice during the end of Saturday. We'll do better next year - promise!

THE OLD SPOT INN

Dursley (01453) 542870

Your hosts Ric and Ellie Sainty
Runners up for
**CAMRA's National
Pub of the Year 1997/98**

Why not visit and sample the OLD RIC
OLD SPOT or BASS?
Other Guest Ales available



A selection of quality Ales always on tap



Cirencester Sub-Branch Double Brewery Trip



The question at the forefront of our minds as the five of us huddled outside the Nettlebridge Inn at ten to six on a very dark November morning, and which was further reinforced by the albeit short trip to the brewery in the back of an open pick-up truck, was "What bright spark thought up this idea?"

The culprit for this was undoubtedly Reg Keevil, owner of the Oakhill Brewery. "Instead of looking around breweries when they're not doing anything, why don't you come here one morning and take part in the actual brewing process?" As the Cirencester Sub-Branch of CAMRA are not known for passing up a challenge involving fine ales, this is exactly what we did.

The smoothly oiled organising machine that is Richard Poley swung into action, and before the rest of us knew it, we were down to visit two breweries, not just the one. (Further plans to add yet another on the way home foundered due to lack of stamina.) So our first port of call was behind the ice cream factory in Lovington, deep in the heart of Somerset; the award-winning Cottage Brewery (calling it the Small Industrial Unit Brewery would not have had quite the same appeal!)

We were shown round by Mark Dearman the manager, and Dan Gent the head brewer who has

come from the Freedom Brewery in London, and is enjoying his new-found rural lifestyle. Available for us to sample from their wide range were Norman Conquest, Golden Arrow and the new Rocket. The latter was part of a range of new beers to be produced each month until the millenium.

Although all the beers were excellent, the Golden Arrow was magnificent, a wonderfully fragrant golden bitter, well-balanced and bursting with hops. The Norman Conquest used to be available in bottles, brewed for them by the

Hampshire Brewery. Cottage have now stopped this, intending

to brew the bottled
v e r s i o n
themselves, and
the last bottles
were quickly
snapped up by
Nick.

After reluctantly
tearing ourseves
away from the
Golden Arrow, we
headed north to
Nettlebridge for a few

more pints, a meal, and an early night. At least that was the plan but the last was harder to achieve than the first two, and 5.50 the next morning found us in that pick-up truck with bleary eyes and perkiness at a low ebb. Never before has tea and coffee been consumed at a brewery with such enthusiasm.

The Oakhill Brewery has recently been relocated a few yards further up the
road



Sampling the brew. R- L: Nick Mills,
brewer Gary and Richard Poley

in Oakhill, to the Old Maltings, abandoned for many years. This £500,000 investment by the owner shows a) an overpowering love for traditional British beer and b) a reassuring optimism in the continuing role of micro breweries.

After we'd donned our wellies and waterproofs/overalls, Gary Lumber the head brewer showed us around and soon set us to work emptying sacks of crystal malt and brewing flour into the hopper, where it was ground to grist. We soon discovered one characteristic of brewers - they need to be strong, those sacks are heavy! The brewing process was explained in minute detail and it also became clear that a thorough grasp of chemistry would also be quite useful.

We were shown how to remove the shives from the bung hole, a few taps with a mallet on a screwdriver and out it came - easy! Then we tried. The least said about our efforts the better, but if you've seen the Generation Game, you will get the idea of the degree of our success.

Oakhill have recently produced an even stronger version of their Black Magic Stout at a deceptively ferocious 8.3% abv. 9am found us carefully sipping this intensely flavoured beer - without the bitterness of the stout, more like a powerful old ale. The beer has yet to be named and we were asked for our suggestions. As the beer is of a blackness that prevents any light from penetrating we suggested that it was just the thing to observe a total eclipse of the sun through, and stumbled on the

perfect name - Total Eclipse. We have high hopes that this will be adopted.

Constant monitoring of liquor temperature as the mash tun filled ensured the correct conditions and soon the sparging of the malt allowed us to sneak back to the Nettlebridge Inn for breakfast.

Unfortunately one of our number was slowly succumbing to the adverse affects of either a chicken curry, or the Norman Conquest, and retreated to his bed. The rest headed back to the brewery where, before the boil could begin, the original gravity of the wort was measured.

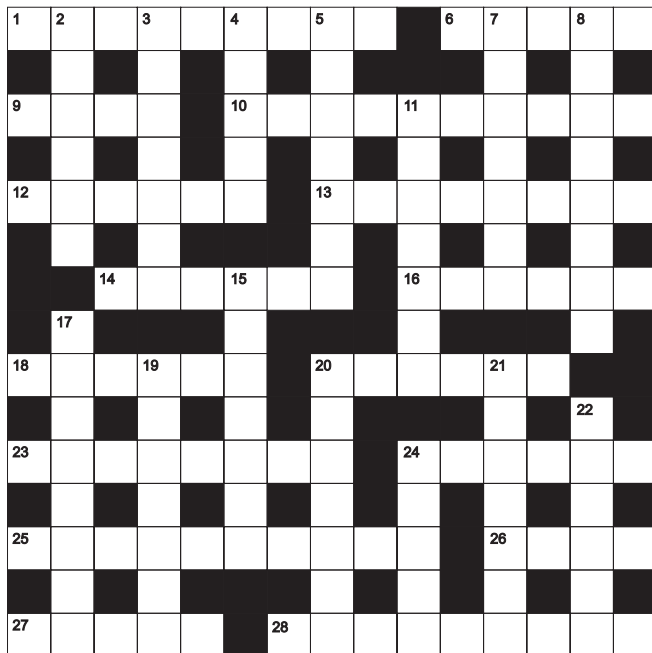


Rob Tough tries his hand

The beer to be brewed that morning was Oakhill Bitter, and, after calculating the necessary quantity of water, the wort had to be further diluted to achieve the 1035 gravity. The hop pellets were added and as the boil began, clouds of steam gathered in the roof of the brewery, and we could then clean out the spent grain from the mash tun. This was not the back-breaking task that we had feared as the spent grain was not wet and heavy, although the steam coming from it gave us the appearance of some tortured souls labouring in Dante's inferno.

We were unable to stay right to the end of the process, and the tasting of the product would be further delayed by three weeks, but in true TV cookery style, Gary was able to provide a cask of one they had prepared earlier for us

Prize Crossword - GBG Pubs



Eight of the answers are the names of pubs in the county which have been included in the 1999 edition of the Good Beer Guide (have you got your copy yet?) Each pub has a single word name without 'Inn', 'Arms' or any other addition.

Clues to these pubs consist only of the cryptic part - for example '*REGAL*' could be clued simply as, "A backward drink!" However it is up to you to determine which the pub clues are.

Entries to the Tippler editor by 27 March and the first correct answer out of the hat will win two complimentary tickets to the 1999 Cotswold Beer Festival to be held at Postlip Hall nr. Winchcombe on 23-25 July.

Name

Address

.....

Across:

1. Tune lover was crazy about. (9)
6. Strained - like beer when pulled? (5)
9. The French doctor. (4)
10. Aluminium and uranium in place. (10)
12. His egg wasn't all bad. (6)
13. Standard cuts of vegetables. (8)
14. Calm and settled. (6)
16. Currency note in this country. (6)
18. So important he's big-headed? (3-3)
20. Wary to back East, the dog! (6)
23. Delightful broad ale brew. (8)
24. Rustic knave will be friendly. (6)
25. Road worker. (10)
26. Sawn roughly. (4)
27. Incline to be poles apart. (5)
28. Old dog. (9)

Down:

2. Pop a question that has something obscure in it. (6)
3. Take this when you feel angry. (7)
4. This is good when refined. (5)
5. Cover point cuts out point. (7)
7. Round a building. (7)
8. Fibre bundle. (8)
11. Break into your old saving. (7)
15. Mathematics disturbed by a garble. (7)
17. Turn the grinder. (8)
19. Paddle up to the boat and pray. (7)
20. Put this in your coffee? It's best to hesitate. (7)
21. Cast boa off - it's hot! (7)
22. Execute principal estate. (6)
24. Sweet still for tea? (5)

Events Diary

Glos Branch Meetings

Wednesday 7 April - Open Committee Meeting at the Berkeley Arms at Cam, 8.00pm.

Tuesday 4 May - Open Committee Meeting at the Daneway at Sapperton, 8.00pm.

Monday 7 June - Open Committee Meeting at the Black Swan in Southgate Street, Gloucester, 8.00pm.

Sub-branches

Cheltenham sub-branch meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month; call Graham Green, 01242 510867, for details.

Gloucester sub-branch meets at 8pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Windmill, Eastgate St and normally proceeds on from there. Call Matt Jackson (01452 500370) for details.

Forest of Dean sub-branch - Meetings are generally on Mondays at 8.30pm. **22 March** - White Horse, Mitcheldean. For further details contact Dave Watts on 01594 543396.

Cirencester sub-branch have no regular meeting night but are planning a number of brewery trips in the near future. For further details contact Richard Poley (01285 770273).

Dursley sub-branch meet at 8.00pm on the last Tuesday of each month. Contact for the sub-branch is Chris Arrowsmith on 01453 548991.

Tewkesbury sub-branch meets at 8pm on the 3rd Tuesday of each month: **16 March** - The Wheatpieces, Eastern Relief Road; **20 April** - The Gloucester Old Spot, Piffs Elm; **18 May** - The Yew Tree, Conderton; **22 June** - The Greyhound, Eldersfield.

And of course don't forget:-

The Cotswold Beer Festival 1999

To be held from Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th July in the Tithe Barn at Postlip Hall near Winchcombe as it has been for the last 22 years. See p.6 for ticket details.



At time of writing the logo is not decided. The Barn shown here was our logo in 1979.

December Competition Result

The winner of our Prize Christmas Acrostic competition in the last Tippler was John Nicholls of Brains Green near Blakeney. In a few short months now he will receive two complimentary tickets to the 1999 Cotswold Beer Festival to be held this year as usual at Postlip Hall near Winchcombe on the weekend of 23rd to 25th July.

The answer, reading down the first column, was 'THE LORD OF THE RINGS, TOLKIEN'. The quotation was

taken from chapter 9 of Book I as the hobbits approach the Inn at Bree called The Prancing Pony.

'THE DOOR WAS OPEN AND LIGHT STREAMED OUT OF IT. ABOVE THE ARCH THERE WAS A LAMP AND BENEATH IT SWUNG A LARGE SIGNBOARD. A FAT WHITE PONY REARED UP ON ITS HIND LEGS. MANY OF THE LOWER WINDOWS SHOWED LIGHTS BEHIND THICK CURTAINS.'

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Protect your pleasure



JOIN CAMRA NOW

Just fill in the form below and send, with a cheque (payable to CAMRA Ltd), to:
Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts, AL1 4LW

Rates are: Single £14, Joint £17 (same address),
OAP Single £8, OAP Joint £11 (same address),
Student/Unemployed/Disabled £8
For Life and Overseas contact CAMRA HQ (01727 867201)

Name

Address

.....
..... **Postcode**

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

Local contacts

Cheltenham area:
Adrian Eastman - 01242 239977

Cirencester area:
Rob Tough - 01285 860618

Dursley area:
Chris Arrowsmith - 01453 548991

Forest of Dean:
Geoff Petheram - 01594 510648

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Stroud & Stonehouse:
Nick Williams - 01453 757818

Tewkesbury area:
Peter Martin - 01684 292598

Trading Standards Dept.

Glos County Council
Trading Standards Dept.
Hillfield House
Denmark Rd.
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