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**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

**Issue 56
Summer
2013**

The magazine of the Deal Dover Sandwich & District
Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale

CHANNEL DRAUGHT



INSIDE

LOCALISM TAKES OFF

Communities
fight to protect
their pubs

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THE NEW BEERAGE

A look at the
current boom in
brewing real ale

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ANCHOR'S SUCCESS

WINGHAM PUB GETS TOP ACCOLADE

See Local News



Channel Draught

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CHANNEL DRAUGHT

ISSUE 56
Summer 2013

At last a summer to warm the hearts of brewers and publicans, not to mention sun worshippers and other outdoor types. Beer sales are up, as it seems also are visits to the pub, but whether enough to stem the apparently endless round of pub closures is another matter – although in Dover, we are anticipating the re-opening of the Falstaff and establishment of a new micro pub. However, as well, there are plenty of festivals, and plenty of good long summer days remaining, so no excuse not to get out and enjoy some of the many excellent Kentish beers now being produced.

Despite the general malaise hanging over much of the brewing and pubs industry, real ale continues in good health – particularly at the micro end where both micro breweries and micro pubs continue to thrive. Additionally, we are also able to welcome a completely new dimension to supporting the pub, in the form of the Government's Localism legislation, which allows pubs to be listed as Assets of Community Value. This gives local communities the power to register the importance of their pub, even before any threat may have appeared. CAMRA has taken a lead, launching a campaign to encourage the nomination of local pubs, with the target of 300 listed by the end of the year, and offering advice online at www.camra.org.uk/listyourlocal.

In this edition, we report on the use being made of Localism, as communities across the country strive to save their local, often banding together to raise money so that they can buy it themselves. Also, we take a look at a couple of the county's newer breweries, describe aspects of life in a Dover pub a century ago, and ask if you can put a name to a number of now closed country pubs – plus of course all the usual items.

Martin Atkins



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EVENTS DIARY

Sat 17 Aug	Beer Festival – Astor Theatre , Deal*
Mon 19 Aug	Branch Meeting – King's Head , Kingsdown.
Thur 22 - Sun 25 Aug	Summer Cider Festival - Chambers, Folkestone*
Sat 24 Aug	Beer Festival – Deal & Betteshanger Rugby Club*
Wed 21 - Mon 26 Aug	CAMRA Cricket Tent – St Lawrence , Canterbury
Fri 23 - Mon 26 Aug	Beer Festival – Phoenix , Canterbury*
	Beer Festival – New Inn , Canterbury*
Sat 24 - Sun 25 Aug	Bank Holiday Festival – Red Lion , Stodmarsh*
Mon 26 Aug	Music Fest. – Louis Armstrong (for Pilgrims Hospice)*
Sat 31 Aug	Faversham Hop Festival*
Sun 1 Sept	
Sat 14 Sept	
Mon 16 Sept	North-West Frontier Stagecoach bus trip - see website for details
Thur 19 Sept	Branch Meeting – Coastguard , St Margaret's Bay.
Thur 19 - Sun 22 Sept	Daddlums Match - Carpenter's Arms, Coldred (8pm)
Fri 27 Sept	Music Festival – Anchor , Wingham *
- Fri 11 Oct	Kent Green Hop Beer Fortnight*
Fri 11 – Sun 13 Oct	Oktoberfest – Berry , Walmer *
Fri 18 - Sun 20	Beer Festival - Spa Valley Railway , Tunbridge Wells
Mon 21 Oct	Branch Meeting – Berry , Walmer.
Fri 15 Nov	Daddlums Match – Crabble Corn Mill (7.30 pm)
Mon 18 Nov	Branch Meeting – Pier Three , Dover.

Branch Website www.camra-dds.org.uk

Branch meetings are held every third Monday of each month and start at 7.30pm.
For full details about rural rambles & pub strolls, please email john@ramblingrumbler.plus.com or
call 01304 214153.

Events marked * are not organised by CAMRA



COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID

Government figures in June showed that the Community Right to Bid has already been used to list at least 360 Assets of Community Value, of which 67 were public houses. Planning minister Nick Boles said that increased protection for community facilities had been provided by the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that local planning policies and decisions should guard against the unnecessary loss of community assets such as public houses. However, in addition, communities now also had available the community rights created through the Localism Act.

Further assistance has come in the shape of a new community assets fund of £250m recently unveiled by Prime Minister David Cameron, who added that there will also be long-term loans to help save community facilities, and the creation of a "social stock exchange" that will link communities trying to raise funds for local projects, and potential investors. Everyone knows how vital are local institutions, and that despite the best efforts they can face closure, he said. "I want our social investment funds to give people the opportunity to take them over and run them." CAMRA spokesman Neil Walker said it could not have come at a better time. He said the money could be important for communities trying to buy a pub which had been listed as an asset of community value. "We hope this £250m will be made easily available.....and will have a positive impact on the number of community pubs being lost across the UK." (See Localism Take Off)

Some councils, however, concerned about pub loss have already drawn up their own agenda. A leading example is Cambridge, where permission for a pub seeking change of use will only be given if it is put on sale for a year, free-of-tie and has no restrictive covenant. The policy though, which as well as giving pubs greater protection, also allows locals a voice in the future of those up for sale, did not find favour with the British Beer and Pub Association's (BBPA), who called for it to be subject of a judicial review. However the BBPA's request, described as "appalling, extraordinary, disgraceful and regrettable" by campaigners, was rejected. Cambridge MP Julian Huppert, who is backing the council and himself campaigning for a change to planning law so pubs and communities are safeguarded from unwanted developments, said he was delighted.

CAMRA's campaign to list 300 pubs as Assets of Community Value (ACV) has received the backing of Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Eric Pickles. Speaking at CAMRA's parliamentary reception, hosted by MP Greg Mulholland, he described the pub as part of British culture and integral to British life, and hoped it would go from strength to strength. He said: "CAMRA's decision to go for the registration of 300 pubs this year is ambitious, but achievable, and then next year, and the year after – once they're registered it changes the game." He urged communities and councils to grasp this opportunity, and not wait for changes in planning law, for which CAMRA and other campaigners are arguing. And in a hint that perhaps such changes might not be forthcoming he pointed out that local authorities already have the power to control change of use through an Article 4 Direction.



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The Local News

Contributors - Martin Atkins, The Mclroys,

John Pitcher, Tony Wells, Jim Green and Mike Sutcliffe etc.

Please note that any views expressed herein are those of the contributors and are not necessarily those of this branch or CAMRA Ltd

If you have any news about a pub in your area – new beers or different beer range, alterations to the pub, beer festivals or anything that may be of interest to our readers, please email:

channel.draught@camra-dds.org.uk

We are, of course, equally pleased to hear from landlords with news about their pub.

DOVER

New Micro Pub If all goes according to plan the **Rack of Ale** micro pub will be opening at 7 Park Place (opposite the Police Station) in October. Owners and licensees will be Trish Gulliford, who helped in setting up Ripple Steam Brewery and former Royal Marine Bandsman Steve Jenkins, and they will be offering an ever changing selection of real ales directly from the cask, supplied by microbreweries from Kent and across the country. Also available will be locally sourced cider / wine and soft drinks as well as the odd hot drink and a few nibbles. They hope that clubs will be able to make use of the pub for meetings, and to engage the occasional guest speaker to talk about real ale related matters.

Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club, Wednesday evening July 24th, and the club played host to the presentation of a charity donation to Macmillan Nurses by members of the Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District CAMRA Branch. The donation of £500 came from the proceeds of this year's White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales. Four Kentish real ales (Goacher's Mild and Fine Light, and Hopdaemon Incubus and Skrimshander) were on the handpumps, supported by a tasty buffet provided by the club.



Crackdown on Street Drinking In an attempt to cut down the amount of street drinking, a Reduce the Strength project was launched in the town in May. Following the success of the first such trial in Ipswich, off-licences are being asked not to sell alcohol above 6.5% ABV to street drinkers. Initially set for six months the scheme commenced with six shops signed up. The problem, together with other aspects of anti-social activity such as drug dealing and aggressive begging were highlighted by **Pier Three** owner Rob Wright on Facebook in mid June, and drew many responses in support. Pier Three itself continues making an interesting choice of ale, a very good pint of Pig's Ear from Tir Dha Ghlas was enjoyed earlier in the summer. (See Last Knockings)

Blakes, Castle St: Adnams remains a main supplier – Lighthouse and Fat Sprat being available at different times over the summer. Kent beers include Millis and Gadds, whose Old School Mild received high praise. From further away Harveys makes regular appearances, Armada Ale being on tap during midsummer, and several barrels have been taken from Arkwright's. Other breweries include Bath, Bank Top and Welton. At the **White Horse** Harveys Sussex Bitter remains standard with a varying selection of guests plus cider.

Golden Lion, Priory Place: Having been closed for the best part of two years, it reopened just before last Christmas, and remains much as it was in Rab and Teresa's time, notwithstanding the prominent external repainting. Inside the decoration remains more traditional, woodwork now stained dark brown, and photos of old Dover on the walls. At the end of May a visit found Black Sheep bitter and excellent London Pride on the handpumps.

Eagle, London Rd: One real ale normally available, usually an ordinary strength bitter. Recent visits have found Moles Bitter and Old Dairy Red Top. In Charlton Green the **Red Lion** has London Pride as standard plus a second real ale, often Bombardier or Harveys Sussex Bitter. As a change Hook Norton Lion appeared in early August. Jan and Keith have also reintroduced meals at the pub over recent months.

Star beer at the **Louis Armstrong** in the spring was Goacher's IPA at 5.6% ABV. That's India *Pearl* Ale by the way, a limited edition brew to celebrate the brewery's thirty years of operation. As a regular customer the Louis was offered a polybin of the ale, and it duly kept real ale drinkers very happy over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend. Despite

the use of "pearl" instead of pale the beer did have about it the taste of true IPA, and while impressive when first opened got markedly better as the container emptied. Best endeavours should be made to persuade Goacher's to repeat the brew, or even better make it part of their regular line up.

Falstaff, Ladywell: At the start of July, after several months of work and considerable renovation, the pub was a just a few weeks from reopening as The Fleurs. The new owner is former farmer and stonemason Jeffrey Flowers for whom running a pub will be a new experience. At the time of writing we have no information about his policy on real ale. Also new to the town's licensed trade, are Maggie and Tony Tarason who together with their twenty something two sons and daughter, have taken over the **Crown and Sceptre** in Elms Vale, after having run a guest house in France.

First & Last, East Cliff: Boarded up again at last visit, the pub is being advertised as a leasehold by Journeys Dover (part of the Journeys Hostels brand), which describes it as a small public house on the ground floor plus four dormitory style rooms on the 1st floor. We are also informed that it was the former drinking place of Sir Winston Churchill and is steeped in history. (see Last Knockings)

Fox, Temple Ewell: Good reports of this year's annual May Bank Holiday weekend beer festival in aid of Dover Rotary Club's charity raising. 17 barrels of Kent and Sussex real ales were available over Saturday and Sunday, and a Rotary Club spokesman said that around £3,500 was raised. Later on May 23rd the pub again hosted trophy presentation night for the Dover Beer and Brains Quiz League, when a good

night was had by all, aided by a most entertaining quiz courtesy of landlady Alyson. Regular beer remains the excellent Pride of Sheffield from Kelham Island.

Archer, Whitfield: For a pub that not so long ago was devoted to all things keg, it is a definite result to find it now regularly providing two real ales. Not only that, but the pub now has the benefit of cheery Sam Brading behind the bar, who many will remember from her time at the Park Inn in Ladywell, where she is much missed - a case of Dover's loss being Whitfield's gain. In mid April the pub was selling Brakspear Bitter and Ilkley Gold, and in late May Moorhouse's Black Cat Mild. Biddenden's Bushells cider has also been available.

DEAL

Cambridge Arms, Dover Rd., Walmer: Closed over recent months the pub re-

opened in May with another name change – reverting to its former name (of twenty years or so from the early 1970s) the **Drum Major**: before that, of course, it had been the Cambridge Arms. New licensees are Karen Siggins and Stephen Lohan, who we understand are serving real ale and are considering adding real cider as well.

Berry, Canada Rd: Following its sixth



Martin Atkins, Branch Chairman, presents Chris Barnes of The Berry with the Pub of the Year certificate



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win in a row as Branch Pub of the Year, the Berry has now been chosen as East Kent Pub of the Year – that is, winner out of the five East Kent branches, which as well as ourselves, includes Thanet, Canterbury, Swale and Ashford, Folkestone and Romney



Chris Barnes receives the Kent Cider Pub of the Year award from Linda Thompson

Marsh. West Kent winner, against which it will compete for the over all Kent title, was the George & Dragon, Swanscombe, currently very much in the news as the home to the recently established Caveman Brewery. And progress is being made on the cider front – having been chosen as Branch Cider pub the Berry was subsequently judged winner as Kent Cider Pub of the Year.

In late May the Berry was much involved with the organisation of the **Deal Car and Motor Show**, held on Walmer Green on Spring Bank Holiday Saturday. Eight barrels of East Kent real ale from local breweries were ordered through the pub, and pub staff helped set up the bar. The event, substantially larger than last year's, proved a great success and we understand that £1,700 was raised in aid of Walmer Lifeboat. Ripple Steam, Goody, Wantsum, Gadds, Foundry and Tir Dha Ghlas, all provided beer, much of it sponsored, and all had been drunk by

3pm.

Opposite, on the Strand, things now appear distinctly more positive than they seemed until quite recently. Of the four pubs that used to look over the Green, by last year only the **Stag** remained. The **Lifeboat**, converted to a dwelling some yeas ago, must be irrevocably lost, but the **Lord Nelson**, apparently destined for use as two flats, is due to be re-opened as the **Lighthouse Arts and Music Venue**, including a bar with real ale available, while the former **Lord Clyde**, now offering French cuisine as **La Bouche**, also includes on its drinks list bottled conditioned ale from Gadds and Wantsum.

Additionally, for CAMRA members, the **Royal Marine Club** normally has two real ales on tap. One Saturday afternoon in late July, with the fair in full swing opposite, these were Henry IPA and a most excellent dark beer from Theakston – Shot in the Dark. In Station Rd. we hear that new licensees at the **Railway** are to be Mark and Sylvia who had been running the **Plough and Harrow** at Tilmanstone.

Magnet Inn, London Rd: Always a reliable outlet for Shepherd Neame beers, three real ales are usually to be found, with the occasional guest from elsewhere – in May Long Blond from the new Long Man Brewery in Sussex was on the handpumps. Darts and pool are available, and also that reappearing old standard of the public house, bar billiards. The pub hosts regular meetings of the Deal and District Motorcycle club, and live music is featured regularly.

In the High St. another new outlet for real ale is to be found opposite the Town Hall, where the basement venue **Steak House and Dive Bar** has nor-

mally a couple of hand pumped beers available – at the time of writing, recently Adnams and Ripple Steam. In mid August the now annual **Astor Beer Festival** is set for Saturday 17th.

Alma, West St: A growing force for real ale in Deal, a visit in mid April found excellent pints of Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter and Thwaites Wainwright – "Always a good pint here" was the accompanying comment. Later at the start of June there were good reports on Landlord and Wainwright. And local ales do not get ignored either, Ripple Best being on the handpumps in late May.

Just Reproach, King St: The usual eclectic collection over recent months. Locals have included Dragon and Red Rye from respectively Canterbury Ales and Canterbury Brewers, Kent Brewery's Brewers Reserve, Old Dairy Sun Top, and from Goachers Beyond Reproach and India Pearl Ale. The quality of the latter is attested to above, while the former we might logically assume is Goacher's very excellent "house" bitter which appears under various guises across the county's pubs. Those from more distant parts have included ales from Okells, Mauldons and Stonehenge, and, not much seen since the later years of the Mogul, Oakham JHB.

Prince Albert, Alfred Sq: Fine selection of Kentish ales over recent months including Hopdaemon Golden Braid and Incubus, Kent Black Gold, Session Pale and Mauri (made with New Zealand hops and apparently extremely tasty), Nelson's Helmsman and Ripple Steam Brewery Best Bitter. Along the road in Middle St. at the **Ship**, many plaudits for the Dark Star Hophead. One of the best pints of Hophead around, one of members commented.

Sportsman, Sholden: A visit in late

July found Ripple Steam Best Bitter and Harveys IPA on the handpumps.

SANDWICH AND RURAL

Sandwich Folk & Ale Festival Now in its third year, the festival is becoming an established East Kent event. To highlight the great selection of real ale pubs in Sandwich, and the variety of real ales available from Kent breweries, Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District CAMRA Branch ran a campaigns stall and Real Ale Trail, with help from



Wantsum Brewery, who kindly offered us part of their stall for the purpose. The display of campaigning leaflets and a selection of CAMRA's publications drew considerable attention, and a steady stream of people, throughout the afternoon.

The Real Ale Trail took the participants to eight real ale pubs in the centre of Sandwich plus three off licences – Strand Wine Co, Hercules Wine Warehouse and Roses Fine Foods – each location providing a question about the real ale it was serving. Prizes were a selection of real ales kindly donated by the Wantsum and Ramsgate breweries.

Anchor, Wingham: Landlord Kevin tells us that cask ales continue to outsell Fosters (no surprises there then) and

spring and summer have seen regular appearances from Hopdaemon (Incubus & Skrimshander), Landlord, Fullers ESB, Youngs Special, Summer Lightning and Ringwood Fortyniner. Old Dairy beers have also been represented amongst whom he has come across "his new favourite!" – Gold Top. A fourth handpull is planned for the autumn. "We were delighted to host the CAMRA branch meeting in July," says Kevin, "When I got the chance to meet "Beery Boater Jim" in person. Being a canal enthusiast myself it was great to swap stories about the silvery roads in the UK."

The pool table has been replaced by bar billiards and the pub also hosts darts and quizzes. From Sept 2nd there will be an acoustic jamming session in the bar on the first Tuesday of the month. Outside there is Bat and Trap and in late July the Petanque pitch was

nearing completion.

Music events feature importantly. In May the Woodnestock Festival, hosting over 30 bands from across the UK (including Wingham's very own Ukele Band), proved a great success, and another Music Festival, 'Woodnestock Harvestock' is planned for September, featuring, among others, Kent Duchaine, American Delta Blues Guitarist of whose performance the Sunday Times wrote "One of the five best concerts nationwide (in any music genre)."

As we go to print we hear that the Anchor has been judged Regional Winners (London & South East) as best newcomers in the Morning Advertiser Great British Pub awards 2013.

All change at the Plough "I've always had something of a soft spot for the Plough Inn, Ripple," says our Pubs Offi-

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cer Tony Wells. "It epitomises the look and feel of a country pub and has always been a great stop off when walking around the area." With its six hand pumps it has always been a staunch supporter of real ale, but this has not always benefited from the regular changes of manager. However, with Martin Bushell now installed behind the bar this will no doubt all be in the past. A keen proponent of real ale Martin is actively looking to grow the reputation of the Plough, particularly with respect to real ale.

He has recently reintroduced Fuller's ESB, the only regular outlet in the branch for this renowned ale, its excellent condition on a visit earlier in the year, a testament to Martin's dedication and commitment. He is also working closely with David Cliff, the head brewer at Ripple Steam. The Plough can be considered to be the Brewery Tap and always has a good range of the brewery's beers on. So if you happen to be passing through Ripple why not pop in; and if you're a CAMRA member why not send Tony your beer score – remember that beer scores are used to select the branch's entries for the Good Beer Guide. Find us on Facebook or Branch Website www.camradds.org.uk.

Hope, Lydden: Having apparently been sold earlier in the year, an application to demolish part of the pub was submitted to the council in July. Already agreed under the permission for new houses at the rear some years ago, that application included the retention of what remained as a pub, with extensions. We watch with interest. Up the hill and across the A2 and the **Carpenters Arms** maintains a wide ranging selection of ales - Salopian Darwins Origin, Mauldons George's Best, Kelham Island Pride of Sheffield Hop

Back Crop Circle, Gadds No. 5, and Somer and English Ale from the Salisbury Brewery, are just a selection of the brews that have appeared over the last few months. At the **Bricklayers Arms** in Shepherdswell, a visitor in June described the pub's pint of Master Brew as the best he had drunk apart from that in the Bear in Faversham, which it definitely equalled.

Black Pig, Barnsole, Staple: The pub was found to be closed earlier in the year and as far as we are aware remains so. Any news gratefully received.

Royal Oak, Nonington: Having undergone a complete facelift, including the removal of the pool table, the pub is very much family orientated, with substantial eating area both inside and in the garden. There are four real ales on tap – recently Landlord, London Pride, Flying Scotsman and Wantsum Red Raddle – and redecoration has been designed to give a bright welcoming feel, to appeal to locals, ramblers, cyclists and general travellers. An adventure playground and BBQ area have also been installed.

Blue Pigeons, Worth: The pub played host to our June branch meeting when we enjoyed very good local beers from Wantsum and Canterbury Ales, respectively 1381 and Wife of Bath, along with London Pride. The pub will host a beer festival on the 17th & 18th August.

Royal Oak, Capel-le-Ferne: Reports of a beer called Tolly Cobold Old English Ale, being described as very tasty. Is this the same as Greene King's 2.8% offering Tolly English Ale? Visits to the reopened **Lighthouse** in June found London Pride and Doom Bar on the handpumps and following the recent refurbishment "less gloomy than before with more daylight."

King's Arms, Elham: The front bar,

with an open fire in winter and views across the square to Elham Church, is one of the cosiest bars around. If you have never visited it is worth a look. Hopdaemon Skrimshander and Golden Braid, and Harveys Sussex Bitter are regulars. Over the first weekend in July the pub hosted a beer festival – eight different beers with an emphasis on local breweries.

CANTERBURY

Phoenix, Old Dover Rd: A Single and Colonial Hop Festival is planned for the Late Summer Bank Holiday weekend, 23rd to 26th August. A total of 22 beers will be available over the four days, plus if possible, a beer from their own microbrewery, currently still under development.

New Inn, Havelock St: Also hosting a festival over the Bank Holiday weekend, there will be 12 to 15 beers including, hopefully, some of the strong IPA's from the new Tiny Rebel brewery of

Newport. No Jaipur this year, but in its place will be Doppo IPA (9% ABV) from Marble of Manchester, a dead ringer apparently, except it is unfiltered – one of its brewer's line of organic and vegan ales. The pub is looking forward to taking beers from the Kent Green Hop Festival in the Autumn.

In Bekesbourne the **Unicorn** is now closed, and with signage gone, now appears to be a private dwelling under the name the Old Unicorn. There used to be two pubs here, the **Prince of Wales** as well, by the station, but that went some decades ago. Now, with no pub at the adjoining village, Patricbourne, the whole valley between Bridge and Littlebourne is completely "dry". Fortunately nearby Bridge still has three pubs, the **Plough and Harrow** in particular still maintaining the feel of cosy village local – as also does the **Mermaid** in Bishopsbourne, a mile or so away, where a visit in mid June found Master Brew and Spitfire on the



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handpumps. Yet further back up the Nail Bourne the **Black Robin** at Kingston was selling two brews from the Foundry in Canterbury.

In Bramling we hear that the Spring Bank Holiday beer festival at the **Haywain** was a great success. Regular ales are London Pride and Bombardier, supported by two Kentish guests (Hopdaemon, Gadds, Old Dairy, Westerham, etc) and the occasional from further afield – Skinners Betty Stogs always goes down well, and Bramling Cross, whose name requires it to be an obligatory choice every so often.

Red Lion, Stodmarsh: A festival is set for Saturday and Sunday, Late Summer Bank Holiday, with five or six Kent beers added to the normal line up and four Kent ciders. Attractions includes live music from local buskers, traction engine rides, a farmers market and a plant stall.

FOLKESTONE

The success, after just a few months, of the **Firkin Alehouse** in Cheriton Place, now open all day and seemingly always busy has not gone unnoticed. At the time of writing we understand that the currently closed **Jazz Bar** at the top of the High St. has applied for, and been granted, permission for use as a micro pub. Nearby, in the Bayle, mid June found the **British Lion** selling Abbot, Old Golden Hen and Oakham Bishop's Farewell in mid June – superb with a refreshing citrusness. Bishop's Farewell also at the **Guildhall** alongside Greene King IPA, Harveys Sussex with Doom Bar and Daleside Monkey Wrench waiting in the wings. At the **Pullman** national brews London Pride and Landlord rubbed shoulders with local Kent beers Wife of Bath from Canterbury Ales and Brambling Cross

from Westerham.

At the bottom of Bayle Steps the **Princess Royal** remains boarded up and forlorn – lost count of how many years that is. In these days of micro pubs it is probably not as unviable as Sheps once thought it was, so how about our largest local brewer making its mind up, and, if it cannot make it pay, selling it to someone who can. In the Stade four real ales at the **Ship** on a visit in June – Abbot, London Pride, Exmoor Gold and Flowers IPA – and at the **Mariner** guests were Pedigree and Doom Bar. The **Lifeboat** was selling Theakston Best and Thwaites Wainwright, and in East Cliff the **East Cliff Tavern** was offering Titanic Lifeboat and Skrimshander, with a barrel of Green Daemon waiting in the cellar. On the other side of Tram Rd. and the redundant harbour railway the **Richmond** was selling Master Brew along with two of Sheps seasonal output Canterbury Jack and IPA.

The **Happy Frenchman** remains with just one real ale, Doom Bar at last visit, but **Harveys** was selling three – Courage Best, Bombardier and Young's London Gold. **Chambers** also had three real ales available – Wantsum 381, Adhams Lighthouse and Cottage Firefly.

THANET

Maintaining its position as world micro pub capital, we hear of three more in Thanet. Units 7 & 8 Margate Stone Pier, Margate Harbour is now the **Harbour Arms**, toilet facilities provided by public toilets next door. **Ale's of The Unexpected** was due to open in July opposite the former Royal Seabathing Hospital at Westbrook, Margate, and in Broadstairs, Sinatra's Café Bar in the High Street, is planning to open in the evening as **Sinatra's Alehouse**.

5 Time CAMRA Branch Pub of the Year! 2008-2012

The Berry!



**8 Real Ales
&
4 Real Ciders**

***Harveys Best Bitter**

***Dark Star American Pale Ale**

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LOCALISM TAKES OFF

Communities fight to protect their pubs

Across the country campaigners are pushing ahead to list pubs as being Assets of Community Value, and CAMRA has set Branches the initial target of getting 300 pubs recognised by local authorities as of sufficient community importance to warrant inclusion. As we report on Page 4, by June this year, over a fifth of the buildings listed are pubs, 67 in total, which means, should they be put up for sale, the local community gets six months to bid to buy them before they can be offered on the open market. With the prospect of additional government funding, loans, and assisted communications, prospects for the community owned pub have hardly looked better.

2013 is of particular significance, as it is this year that Britain's first community pub, the Red Lion in Preston, Hertfordshire celebrates its 30th anniversary, when it was bought by locals after Whitbread put it up for sale as a restaurant. Since the village bought the pub it has appeared in the *Good Beer Guide* many times and was named North Hertfordshire branch Pub of the Year for the fourth time in 2012.



Among the current crop of campaigns, one of the most high profile concerns the Golden Harp in Maidenhead where the Furze Platt Action Group are battling to stop it being turned into a Tesco Express. Now, the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead has listed the pub, which means the FPAG could bid for the pub, but as Tesco owns the freehold, it would have to be willing to sell.

Attracting equal attention is the Porcupine in Mottingham, Bromley. Plans by Lidl to demolish the pub to make way for a supermarket have attracted the attention of Bromley and Chislehurst MP Bob Neill, community pubs minister Brandon Lewis, and CAMRA chief executive Mike Benner who joined 200 protesters to express their anger and dismay at the proposal. Currently Lidl has put everything on hold while local residents' views are considered. Unfortunately, listing the pub as a community asset is not possible as it has already been sold to the developer. However, ten miles or so to the west, on the St Helier housing estate in Morden, locals have applied for the Morden Tavern pub, the last of three on the estate, to be made an ACV. The council has already refused permission for its replacement by flats although that decision was overturned by a planning inspector.

Similar stories are emerging from across the country. In Shefford, Bedfordshire the local council is backing plans to get listing for the Woolpack, which has been shut since last October, after its owner died; and in Bentley near Ipswich the community is seeking an ACV to back up their campaign to raise £240,000 to purchase the

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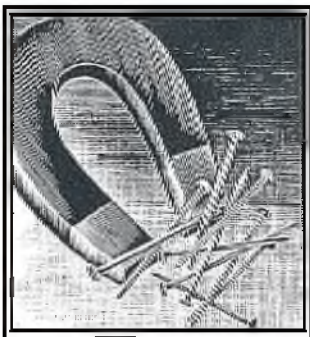


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Case is Altered from Punch Taverns. In the Peak District the Bamford Community Society, is hoping to purchase the last pub in the village – the Anglers Rest; and in Sidbury, East Devon local MP and former Foreign and Commonwealth Office minister Hugo Swire has become patron of a campaign to save the Red Lion, first step being to get it listed as an ACV.

In the west country, Herefordshire is proving very much a leader in the protection of community pubs. The Farmers Arms at Wellington

Heath, near Ledbury, which closed in July 2012 is the county's first pub to get ACV (Asset of Community value) listing. Enterprise Inns are currently considering a bid which if successful would probably see funding via the parish council from the government's public works loan board, with a tenant appointed to run the business. A similar business model has already seen Dilwyn parish council buy the Crown Inn, and the Lamb Inn in Stoke Prior could soon be a second ACV pub as locals have applied for its registration. In Bath regulars at the Richmond Arms want to have it listed as an ACV and stop it becoming a housing development.

In the north-west campaigners in Liverpool are planning to get the Caledonia, a currently closed popular music venue, listed as an ACV, and in St Annes on the Fylde coast a group led by a local councillor are also endeavouring to get listing for one of its community locals. In Cumbria Eden Council has agreed to make the Crown Inn, Blencowe, near Penrith an ACV despite permission for conversion to a dwelling having been granted, and its owner putting it on the market with a £275,000 guide price. Councillors were told that more than £100,000 had been pledged by the community towards the purchase of the pub, and advice is being taken from the Co-operative Enterprise Hub, which was also acting as agent with regard to any possible acquisition.



The Caledonia, Liverpool

On the other side of the Pennines Leeds branch have declared that it is about time Leeds City Council had a pub planning policy and acted according to the National Planning Policy Framework, after another community pub, the Fellmonger in Seacroft was sold to a developer. It plans to get at least 12 pubs listed as Assets of Community Value. And, last but not least, in Hebden Bridge, Calderdale Council has agreed to list the Fox and Goose, (well known to Beery Boaters), as a community asset, following the illness of it's landlady. A share offer has been launched to raise money to buy the pub and turn it into West Yorkshire's first community owned co-operative pub.

Martin Atkins

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KENT SMALL BREWERY NEWS

Canterbury Ales, Chartham 01227 732541 canterbrew@gmail.com

The first in the series of single hop beers, a Nelson Sauvin, was very popular, selling out in two weeks; the second will use Rakau, a new hop from New Zealand, which will be available in August. Pardoner's Ale will be at the Great British Beer Festival and Martin is brewing two green hop beers for the Green Hop Festival.

Canterbury Brewers, Canterbury 01227 455899 thefoundry@live.co.uk

A new, non-green hopped beer, Seriously Saison (ABV 4.8%) has been brewed, which is available by the cask. Additionally three different dry-hopped versions using either East Kent Goldings, Cascade or Simcoe, will be available in bottles in August. Another new beer, Little Red Rye (ABV 4.5%), is the smaller brother of Red Rye. It uses the same coloured malts and hops, but added differently to give it a softer bitterness and more hop aromas.

A beer was brewed specially for the Berry, Walmer to launch their late July festival. A big West Coast IPA (ABV 7.5%), called Pappa Swazz and it was designed to make you suck your cheeks in! The bottling operation has moved from Beercart Lane to a larger site in Bridge.

Goacher's, Maidstone 01622 682112 info@goachers.com

Their 30th anniversary beer, India Pearl Ale (ABV 5.6%), proved very popular; indeed it was one of my top three beers at the KESR beer festival in June. For those who missed out, two firkins were sent to the Kent Beer Festival. Silver Star (ABV 4.2%) is being brewed for the summer months.

Goody Ales, Herne 01227 361555 karen@goodvales.co.uk

Planning permission has been granted to host brewery tours (first one held 27 July); they also have an on and off license to sell beer from the brewery – ales will be sold straight from the cask and ready bottled. Upcoming seasonal are Good Innings, Goodness Gracious and Goodness Gracious Me.

Hopdaemon Brewery, Newnham 01795 892078 info@hopdaemon.com

The brewery is flat out at the moment, with all beers in their range selling well.

Hop Fuzz, West Hythe 01303 230304 darvl@hopfuzz.co.uk

A third upgrade to the brew plant has been completed, along with some more fermenters. Lots of new beers are being produced: Stannos (ABV 5%), a cask Bavarian lager; Yellow Zinger (ABV 3.7%), a summer session ale; Old American Pale Ale (ABV 4.2%), an American pale ale; and Pacific Jade (ABV 4.2%), an American brown ale. They are now selling beer to the Imperial Hotel, Hythe.

Kent Brewery, Birling 01634 780037 info@kentbrewery.com

Kent Brewery now has 10 permanent beers, plus a pale, hoppy 4.5% ale that changes regularly. This new series began with Mauri, a blend of five New Zealand hops which was followed by Bramling Cross, one of Kent's most interesting hop varieties. The next beer in the series is Elderflower Saison, a highly hopped

Saison style beer with elderflowers picked from the land around the brewery. The brewery had its most successful month in May and is now running at close to full capacity.

Nelson Brewery, Chatham 01634 832828 sales@nelsonbrewingcompany.co.uk

A new beer is Golden Galleon (ABV 4.3%). Although previously brewed some 5 years ago, this is a totally different beer being a light golden colour, using lager malt and yeast, with a mix of Brambling Cross, Sovereign, Challenger and Cascade hops, producing a distinctive bitter beer.

Ramsgate Brewery, Broadstairs 01843 868453 info@ramsgatebrewery.co.uk

This year's Green Hop Fortnight, involving many Kent breweries, will be launched in Canterbury at the Food Festival on the last weekend of September. On the first Sunday of October (the 6th), the brewery will be holding a brewery open day with tour, food, beer to purchase (including the bottled Green Hop), Morris Men, music and competitions. The day will be from 10am - 18pm. Also, holding open days at the same time will be Goody's, Wantsum, Canterbury Ales and the Foundry: the idea being for people to tour the different sites. Summer seasonals are She Sells Sea Shells (ABV 4.7%), Festiv'ale (ABV 3.8%) and Summer's Day (ABV 4.3%). The brewery supplied beer to Kent Beer Festival and the Great British Beer Festival.

Ripple Steam Brewery, Sutton 07917 037611 info@ripplesteambrewery.co.uk

A black IPA (ABV 5.8%) has just been brewed; it's made with a grist of traditional floor malts of Maris Otter, Munich, Bamberg Smoked, Chocolate and Malted Wheat and balanced with First Gold and Cascade whole hops. This will be available in late July. Ripple Steam Brewery will be taking part in the Green Hop Festival in late September.

Wantsum Brewery, Hersden 0845 0405980 wantsumbrewery@googlemail.com

Summer ale, Red Raddle (ABV 5%), was the first beer to sell out at the Crabble Corn Mill beer festival – it's available until the end of September. The brewery sent beers to the Kent and Great British Beer Festivals and is also supplying many of the new micropubs in the area including the Firkin Frog, the Tankerton Arms, the Bouncing Barrel, the Harbour Arms, Margate and the Hovelling Boat, as well as the more established ones. They are expecting delivery of an additional conical fermenter in July in order to maximise brewing capacity.

Whitstable Brewery, Grafty Green 01622 851007

whitstablebrewer@bvconnect.com

The single hop ales continue with Chinook (ABV 4.4%), which proved so popular in June it is being brewed into July. July will also see a new single hop beer made with the wonderfully vibrant and aromatic Mosaic hop. Sales continue to rise with growth in both new outlets and beer volume; new staff have been taken on to meet this demand.

No reports were received from **Westerham Brewery**, **Old Dairy Brewery** and **Tir Dha Ghlas Brewery**.



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The National News

By Martin Atkins

Fair Deal Rally A rally in early June, staged by the Fair Deal For Your Local campaign, drew support from publicans, CAMRA members and other campaigners, to back Government plans to clamp down on big pub companies charging above market rents and inflated beer prices. Calling for a new deal to save Britain's struggling locals, which are closing at a rate of 26 a week, campaign spokesman Lib Dem MP Greg Mulholland, said: "It's a scandal that local pubs are being driven out of business by the practices of large pubcos. Doing nothing will result in more closures and further damage to local economies.

Accompanying the rally was evidence from a new survey, presented to MPs by CAMRA, that showed that the majority of publicans tied to the big pub companies earn less than the minimum wage. The survey revealed that 60% of licensees tied to the big pub companies earn less than £10,000 a year, and 24% between £10,000 and £15,000 – a total of 84% earning under £15,000. That compares with 67% in a similar survey just four years ago. By comparison only 25% of free of tie lessees earn less than £10,000 a year. At the other end of the earnings scale differences are equally stark, with just one in a hundred tied pub licensees earning over £45,000, as opposed to one in five who run free of tie pubs.

Greene King Under Fire Criticism has been aimed at the East Anglian brewer for replacing traditional pub signs with versions just bearing the pub's name in

green and gold lettering, at themed outlets such as the family orientated Flame Grill and Meet & Eat. In Oxfordshire CAMRA member Steve Lawrence said, "this seems an odd thing to do for an organisation that wants to encourage visitors to its



premises; it makes them merge into the background"; and in the brewery's home town of Bury St Edmunds, Alan Jary of the Bury Society thought the loss of the signs a tragedy. "The old signs date back to when people couldn't read, but would look out for a picture of a Dog and Duck. They are unique." A Greene King spokesman said that the more contemporary signage was in keeping "with their offer, which is designed to appeal to everyone looking for a great family dining experience." (See Last Knockings). Apparently some 200 pubs are set to lose their traditional signs.

Meanwhile, there is talk of the brewer doubling its existing family foody brand, Hungry Horse.

Madness Gladness Following the recent spate of bands 'n' beer – bands promoting/lending their names to beer brands (Iron Maiden, Elbow, etc.) – recently resurgent 80s outfit Madness, have gone into partnership with Growler Brewery (formerly Nethergate) of Pentlow, Essex to create what has variously been described as “a lager that's an ale” and a “British take on lager.” Brewed as an ale but with lager hops the new beer, Gladness, was the brainchild of the landlord of the Dublin Castle in Camden, the pub that gave Madness its first break. It is 4.2% ABV and is being produced in both cask and bottle and was launched in early June at an event featuring the band, who have been involved in creating the beer: “After many, many years spent in a pub discussing and debating what would be our ideal beer we are very proud of our very first attempt and we've got a great excuse to spend a bit more time in Great British Pubs,” said lead singer Suggs.

Wenlock Latest Following one of the most vociferous campaigns of recent years the Wenlock Arms in Hackney has reopened and is on course to return to its former glory as one of North London's most iconic real ale pubs. New owner Heath Ball intends to restore the pub to its status as a “real ale mecca”, with ten real ales on pump, and a good selection of perry and cider. The pub will be stocking beer from many of London's microbreweries as well as beer from other parts of the country, says Heath. Particularly he wants the pub to remain traditional – not go down the gastro path as so many have done. Refurbishment work is currently underway and should be

completed in six months.

Minimum Pricing Dropped Plans for minimum alcohol pricing in England and Wales have been scrapped, although it would remain “under consideration”, owing to a lack of “concrete evidence” that minimum pricing would reduce the harm caused by alcohol abuse, and could impact on responsible drinkers. CAMRA position was reversed at this year's Norwich AGM. Previously the Campaign had been in favour of a minimum pricing, but policy now looks to support measures preventing below cost selling of alcohol. The dropped plans would have seen a 45p per unit minimum price, although supermarkets and off-licences are likely face curbs on loss leaders and other below cost deals. Scotland is still pressing on with a minimum of 50p a unit of alcohol, but the government is facing a legal challenge from the Scotch Whisky Association and other trade bodies. In Northern Ireland many politicians favour minimum pricing but no policy has yet emerged.

Truman's Moves On Plans to bring Truman's brewery back to its London roots have received the backing of the CAMRA Members' Investment Club with an investment of £100,000, which will help Black Eagle brewery, trading as Truman's, build a new 40-barrel brewery in Hackney Wick, close to the Olympic Park. CMIC founder Neil Kellett described the investment as potentially one of the most exciting by the club for many years. The concentration in the industry over recent decades has reduced massively the number of publicly-quoted companies in which the club can invest. Truman has already built the sales of a good sized microbrewery with brewing put out to contract.

Young's A-Go-Go Young's of Wandsworth, now operating just as a pubco has gone into partnership with Greenwich based Meantime to install tanks in pubs. Trialled at the Plough and the Windmill in Clapham, and the Grove in Balham, it is based on the tank pubs of Prague. Beer will be unfiltered and unpasteurised and put into bags inside the tanks. Secondary fermentation continues but the beer is dispensed using the key/keg method of gas pressure on the outside of the bag. However CO2 is not vented and initial reports speak of beer being somewhat more gassy than traditional cask conditioning, although subtle. First trials are with 4.5% ABV Meantime London Lager. And attention is also being paid to Young's image. Spring this year saw the estate's 125 pubs receive a new look and August was set for revamping its draught beer. Existing pump clips for Bitter, London Gold and Special will be

replaced by newly designed tie on badges shaped like a luggage tag – “quirky, contemporary and vintage with a nod to tradition,” said the brewery. “In an extremely competitive market we needed to modernise and rejuvenate the brand to ensure it is still relevant to the modern drinker, while retaining all the charm and appeal of Young's brewing heritage, which is important to its loyal fan base.” Make of that what you will.

Long Man Brewery A new brewery in East Sussex has received plaudits from one local member, who came across its bronze coloured IPA (ABV 4.4%) Sussex Pride in early June at the Ticked Trout in Wye. Superb! Excellent! Words were hardly enough. Obviously a brewery to watch out for.

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RAMBLINGS & RUMBLINGS

Thurs 2 May – George, Molash (Master Brew, London Pride) Joint ramble with a coach load of French from Dunkirk. Pub fed about 60 people very efficiently. Interesting to see our French friends requesting tap water to drink - I told them I held the French personally responsible for the Great Bottled Water Con!

Tues 14 May – Crawl of Dymchurch and New Romney with AFRM on a rainy evening. **Ocean Inn** (Courage Best, Directors) **City of London** 'Landlord's Special' @ £2-50, tasted like Hop Fuzz English! also Hardy&Hanson bitter) Better than expected inside. **Ship** (Harveys bitter, Broadside) Bus on to New Romney: **Ship** (Master Brew, Spitfire). **New Inn** (Doom Bar). **Cinque Port Arms** (Old Dairy Gold-top, Portobello something or other) Freshly cooked Indian food provided from 'kitchen' in garden. Recommended!

Thurs 16 - Sun 19 May – Beer Walking in the Chilterns. Too many pubs to mention all – however: **Swan, Great Kimble** (Tring Ridgeway Bitter, Mellow Amber, Mansion Mild) Nice friendly pub. **West Herts Sports & Social Club – Allowed in with CAMRA cards to Watford's only GBG listing** (Cottage Waterloo, London Pride, Tring Ridgeway Bitter) 'This is just like pubs in New Zealand', mused Dick Bates, soaking up the atmosphere. **Land of Liberty, Peace and Plenty, Herons-gate** (Tring Liberty, Aylesbury Hop Press, DS Hophead & American Pale, Downton Fresh Dark, XT13) Certainly land of plenty judging by the houses, and traffic in narrow lane. Why is it the narrower the lanes, the bigger the cars? My first visit to this superb pub but pity about hazardous pedestrian access.

White Horse, Bourne End (McMullen's Country, AK) An unusual McMullens outlet in West Herts. **Artichoke, Croxley Green** Good Sunday lunch on terrace outside – first warm day of the year! Can't remember what I drank though. **Sportsman, Croxley Green** (Buntingford Twitchells, Volsung, Slater's Best, Dark Delight) Some unusual beers for the Kentish palate – good that travel broadens the drinker's mind.

Thurs 23 May – Chance, Guston (Bombardier, Bass) Ramblers' Skittles match. Only a few could beat the notorious camber. I didn't, but generous supplies of chip butties from mine host saved the day.

Bank Hol Mon 27 May – Eight Bells (Wantsum One Hop, Oakham JHB, Weltons Land of Hope). **Coach & Horses, Hacklinge** (GKIPA, Weston's First quality) Garden full of families and kids mid-afternoon, the latter suitably distracted by bouncy castle. **Crown Finglesham** (Wife of Bath, Pokies Black Jack, York terrier, Wychwood Battleaxe) Garden ditto, but large enough to avoid the most exuberant. **Five Bells, Eastry** (Mordue workie Ticket, GKIPA, Weston's Old Rosie)

Sat 1 June – Romney Marsh Outing: Bell, Ivychurch (Wadworth Henry IPA, Exmoor Hound-dog, Penhurst PA Porter, St Austell Trelawney, Doom Bar) Easy



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three mile walk in April, but by now challenging struggle through the rape fields, but resulting high viz effect on one's clothes could be useful in dark. **Star, St Mary-in-the-Marsh** (Rother Valley Level Best, Adhams Mayday, Youngs Bitter & Special). Called in at **Three Mariners, Hythe** on return (Whitstable EIPA, Incubus + others)

Mon 3 June – King's Head Kingsdown (Old Trip to Jerusalem, Gadds Seaside, GKIPA) Friendly, informal, quite a contrast to **Zetland** (Kent Best, Masterbrew, Spitfire). Smarter after revamp, but few tables available for mere drinkers. Large dogs seem obligatory, not easy to access gents without treading on tails. Sea views enhanced by large cars parked right up to windows. **Rising Sun** (Courage Best)

Thurs 6 June – Blue Pigeons, Worth (Canterbury Pardoner's Ale, London Pride, Spitfire) Nice locale, with exquisite décor, hopefully not *too* nice for these parts. **Bay Point** (Gadds 5, Jennings High Spy) Accepted invitation to 'launch' but charged £3-80 a pint! As the event took place after last bus back at 6pm, it meant three mile hike back to Sandwich. Thankfully this time the evening sun shone on the righteous.

Mon 10 June – Old Gate Inn, Dover Rd, Canterbury (Purity Mad Goose) Passed on bus hundreds of times but never thought worth getting off for. How wrong! Impressive selection of vegetarian food will ensure my hasty return. **Plough & Harrow, Tilmanstone** (Masterbrew) Mine hosts Mark & Sylvia about to depart for Railway, Walmer. Never came here as often as I'd have liked but was always impressed – with food too. Is this the brewery's way of thanking them for their efforts?

Sun 16 June – London Regents Canal Stroll: Dove, Broadway Market E2 (East London bitter, Crouch valley Gold, Gadds 7 & Seashells + selection of Belgian beers) Quite a find! (Discovered later in GBG) Then to **Cat & Canary, Canary Wharf** (Redemption Pale Ale + Fullers beers) Barman enquired if we liked ESB. I started to say too heavy a drink for warm afternoon etc, but he persisted: "I might be offering you something." Whereupon my friend and I were offered a bottle each on the house, as today was Fathers' Day!! Ahem. **The Ledger Building** (Doom Bar + others) Pleasant Wetherspoons catering for any non-millionaire types frequenting this part of the world.

Thurs 20 June – Tunbridge Wells: Bedford Arms (Tonbridge Blonde + others) Interesting beers on sale but due to excitable decibelles yelling at each other, couldn't hear my taste-buds. **Beau Nash** (Everards Elixir, Harveys best) Nice old hotel bar, I think, accessed by the longest approach imaginable. **Sankey's** (Goachers Bitter) **Crystal Palace** (Harveys Best)

Sun 23 June – Fayrenew Hotel, Kingsgate (Canterbury Jack @ £3-90!! Masterbrew, Spitfire) But food prices reasonable to be fair. Welcome haven, having been caught in a cloudburst on Thanet coastal walk.. **Thirty Nine Steps, Broadstairs** (Wellbeck Red Feather + others) My second visit - still impressed. **Artillery Arms, Ramsgate** (Gadds Seaside, + others)

Stroller



CHANNEL VIEW

BEER FESTIVAL PARADOX In CAMRA's early days the concept of a beer festival to promote real ale and offer drinkers a choice of beers that they would not normally come across, seemed, in modern parlance, a no-brainer – how better to argue our case and have a good time to boot. And so a hundred festivals were born, or more accurately several hundred, plus all the non-CAMRA events, and all the non-CAMRA but very much supported and staffed by CAMRA hybrids – all in all a bandwagon now jumped on seemingly by almost every other pub that takes real ale at all seriously.

Currently the festival scene is looking extremely healthy, possibly even over healthy – a little bloated perhaps, as one who has indulged too much on the fat of the land. Not that the Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District Branch is complaining, our annual White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales contributing handsomely to CAMRA funds. However, our success and the success of a great many others, does not come without a measure of disquiet. Certainly In Dover, on the first weekend in February, while we are shifting 5,000 pints of 5% plus, the local pubs, and real ale pubs in particular, can look forward to a quiet night or two.

In a recent edition of CAMRA's newspaper *What's Brewing*, long time CAMRA member **Sue Hart** asked if beer festivals are doing more harm than good and if campaign resources could be better used elsewhere.

“Are CAMRA beer festivals helping to kill our local pubs? They are certainly helping breweries both big and small to sur-

vive and prosper but what about the long term effect on our locals? From my staffing organiser's perch on the stage at Battersea Beer Festival in early February this year I could not help but think what a feast for the eyes the scene before me is for any publican in the land.

The hall filled with enthusiasts all enjoying, not only the beers, but the social interaction the festival provides. If only their pubs could capture some of this ambience (and the profits!) on a cold wet Wednesday afternoon. Some pubs do of course. Those like the nearby Falcon at Clapham Junction (whose manager does pull pints at Battersea, bless him) are busy every day from opening to closing time. Others are not so lucky being away from the main drag and have to rely on evening regulars and their own occasional efforts at beer festivals to pull in the punters.

To be sure, beer festivals have served the Campaign well, from the very first one (at St Albans with most of the beers donated by the brewers) to the vast national extravaganza that is the GBBF today. But haven't we outgrown them, proven the demand for real ale, given the breweries, mainly the smaller ones and the micros a helping hand on their way?

Now the survival of pubs is seriously threatened by supermarkets et al and the culture of drinking beer in pubs is at an all-time low I think CAMRA needs to change tack. We are tackling the pub closure scene as best we can with planning laws challenged, MPs quizzed, pub-goers being energised to

mount campaigns, often successful. But what else can we do to help ordinary pubs survive?

I note with dismay the increasing number of CAMRA branch meetings held in breweries, my own branch among them. This denies the local pub the chance of selling maybe another 80 pints of beer in a couple of hours and it also means we are out of the public eye. In my own branch we used to try to hold all our meetings in public spaces, not hidden away in upstairs rooms out of reach of casual observers or potential new members.

With reports of CAMRA festivals being short of staff, attracting fewer visitors and not being so profitable perhaps it is time that branches redirected their efforts to helping those pubs who have never held a beer festival to do so. If you have been to a pub for the first time to its beer festival you are more likely to revisit on a quieter night.

When, in 2001, our usual venue was not available for the beer festival we chose instead to support a beer odyssey in four of our pubs. A mini beer festival in each of the pubs serving a different selection of beers, which was well patronised by regulars and CAMRA members alike. Okay, there was no donation to the Campaign from a festival surplus, but we got people into pubs and drinking real ale, much more valuable than cash in the bank.

We have been preaching to the converted at beer festivals for several years now, the campaigning value is at an all time low, staffing is proving problematic, perhaps it is time we diverted our energies to supporting pubs before they mostly disappear."

A NEW START That CAMRA's target of signing up 300 pubs as Assets of

Community Value, had already seen 67 listed by June, suggests that Sue's concerns, outlined above, are shared by many across the country. Along with the micro pub revolution, it quite possibly portends a significant change in the general perception of the British pub. The micro pub took the idea of the public house back to its roots – a place for drinking beer and conversation – the new powers introduced under the Localism Act emphasise the community value of a pub, a consideration often at conflict with the commercial approach of pubcos and breweries.

Although for some of us, the loss of a pub has always been a tragedy, for too long not much was done, despite much espousing of the traditional British local. To our legislators, it appeared that there seemed to be so many pubs around, that closing the odd one or two, or even half a dozen, would hardly matter. While this might have been true fifty years ago, although it always ignored a pub's often unique character, it is certainly not today, where numbers have been cut to the bone.

Although not exactly revolutionary, and not guaranteed to save any pub, the Right to Buy, together with the requirement that local authorities give special consideration to community pubs in their planning policies, is a massive step in the right direction. It is one which local communities should grab with both hands.



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THE NEW BEERAGE

Brewing real ale is booming

When CAMRA was formed in 1971 the idea of setting up a new brewery was hardly a major consideration in anyone's thinking, either amongst real ale campaigners or the national concerns that dominated the industry. Certainly the latter might well erect new plant on greenfield sites, but that would almost inevitably replace one or more of their existing breweries, while, although not a few on the Campaign side probably harboured dreams of brewing themselves, the realities of the 1970s industry, where 90% plus of the market comprised tied estates, no doubt restricted such speculations to the late evening at the local with four or five pints under the belt.

Nonetheless, a few enterprising and enthusiastic individuals did take the plunge and over the next couple of decades small breweries, "micros" as we now know them, were starting to appear across the country; aided in no small part by a huge expansion of free trade as the large brewers started to divest themselves of "underperforming" or otherwise unwanted pubs. The success of micro brewing is now well established with over 1,000 now in operation across the country. However, today that very success often belies the name.

By the start of the present century real ale appeared of declining interest to the major brewers, now largely in foreign ownership, who seemed intent on cutting brands and capacity, and contracting out what real ale they still produced. However things were set to change.

In 2007, Marstons, an old regional brewer, and now one of the country's largest brewers of real ale, bought Ringwood, one of the leading micro brewers, followed a year or two later by the acquisition of Wychwood, best known for its well advertised brew Hobgoblin. This was not a matter of just buying brands and closing their breweries or, as in the old days, acquiring outlets (i.e. pubs), as Ringwood is recorded as just having seven and Wychwood none at all. It was a large brewer realising that the real ale market is about choice and variety, and was the only really healthy part of an otherwise declining market. Both breweries continue to flourish, their beers widely available in the free trade and throughout Marstons estate.

Perhaps, even more radically, in 2011, Canadian/US brewing giant Molson Coors, which in 2002 had established itself as a major presence in the British industry by buying a large part of Bass Brewing, (although not the Bass brand itself which is owned by AB InBev), bought Sharp's of Rock in Cornwall, whose flagship brand Doom Bar, had over the preceding years, become a major real ale presence across southern England. At the same time the company also invested £1m on real ale brewing at William Worthington's Brewery in the National Brewery Centre in Burton.

From being an also-ran, a sop to those of us who still hanker after the beer of their youth, real ale is now at the forefront of brewing – perhaps not in over-all volume,

but certainly in terms of interest and rude health. And “micro” some of them certainly are not, the likes of Woodforde’s in Norfolk, Dark Star in Sussex and Moorhouse’s in Burnley now having grown to regional size. No need here for elaborate advertising campaigns, re-branding or re-positioning in the market, to try and prop up sales.

Two recent events well illustrate this changing world. In early summer the *South Shields Gazette* reported that from July the Jarrow Brewery, based at the Maltings, South Shields since 2008, will start brewing an additional 56,000 pints a week from its new plant in Jarrow, giving a total weekly production from both sites of over 70,000 pints. The economics behind such a major expansion for a brewer that operates just four pubs itself, is an agreement with Danish brewer Carlsberg who inherited the Tetley and Draught Burton Ale brands following the demise of Scottish and Newcastle, to distribute Jarrow Brewery beers across the country.



Further south in Great Yarmouth, May this year saw the resurrection of a famous name in East Anglian brewing with the opening of the new Lacons Brewery. The original brewery which operated an estate of some 300 pubs (including 50 in London) in the mid 20th century, closed in 1968 after falling under the shadow of the Whitbread “umbrella” ten years earlier. The brewery’s falcon emblem, however, can still be seen carved into many a pub, or ex pub, across East Anglia, and its widespread distribution sufficiently intrigued local business men Mike Carver and Trevor Hourican, who run a local drink wholesaler, that they were persuaded to restart brewing under the same name. The new brewery, which includes a tap, visitor centre and small museum devoted to the original brewery can initially produce 100 casks a week but will expand to 400 later this year. The initial three beers are described, perhaps worryingly as “modern ales that will appeal to younger drinkers.” However, the brewery has been able to acquire original Lacon’s yeast strains from the National Collection of Yeast Cultures and plans to expand the range to include some original Lacon recipes.

Martin Atkins

You can now also follow us on Twitter: @DDSCAMRA.

We’ll be using Twitter to publish information about the pubs and real ale events in our branch area as well as other stuff we think you might be interested in. Let us know what you would like us to publish information about.

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THE ARCHCLIFFE FORT

Martin Atkins looks the life and times
of one of Dover's lost pubs

In our winter edition we printed an account of a trip around the pubs of the old Dover Pier District at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The following is a more detailed account of what life might have been like in one of them drawn largely from local press reports

The pub took its name from the nearby fort which at one time dominated the area. It was a defensive measure dating from the time of Henry VIII and was largely demolished in 1927-8, although parts of it still remain. The formation of Bulwark Street in which the Archcliff Fort pub was sited commenced about 1800, but the origin of the pub itself is thought to be 1867. References to it as "Carter's Archcliffe Fort Inn", suggests that James Carter was the first keeper. In 1873 he handed over to Charles Parfitt.

From the Dover Express and East Kent News, Friday, 19 May, 1874.

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE Samuel French, brought up in custody from the Union Hospital, was charged with attempting to commit suicide on the 18th of April last.

Charlotte Parfitt deposed: "I am the wife of Charles Parfitt, who keeps the "Archcliff Fort Inn." On the 12th of April, at about half-past twelve, prisoner came in and called for a pint of porter, and went into the parlour with two soldiers. They stayed there about 1½ hours, when the soldiers came out and asked if I would allow prisoner to lie down somewhere, and I permitted him to lie down in the sitting-room. About seven or eight minutes afterwards I looked into the room and saw he had cut his throat. Dr. Colbeck and a Policeman were called, and prisoner was soon after removed to the hospital.

Police-constable Pilcher deposed: "On the 18th of April, about two in the afternoon, I was called to the Archcliff Fort Inn. I went to the front sitting room upstairs, and saw prisoner, who was being attended by Dr. Colbeck, lying on the floor with a wound in his throat and a large clasp-knife by his side."

Dr. Alfred Grandison deposed: "I am house surgeon at the Dover Hospital. On the 18th of April prisoner was brought in. I examined him and found he had been drinking hard for some time previous, being in a condition bordering on delirium tremens. I have no reason to suppose he is insane."

Samuel French informed the magistrates that he was a stableman from London, and was very sorry. "I was disappointed in getting work, and had more drink than



was good for me, and did not know what I was about." He was committed for trial at the next Quarter Sessions, where, having subsequently found employment in the service of the Rev. Charles Oxenden, of Nonington, and expressing great regret, the Recorder's adjudged that: "you will enter into your own recognizance of £20 to come up for judgment when called upon, which means you will hear nothing further of the matter if you conduct yourself well in the future."



A group outside the pub

1874 seems to have been an interesting year for the Archcliff Fort.

From the Dover Express and East Kent News, Friday, 17 July, 1874

CHARGE OF ASSAULT AGAINST A PUBLICAN William Charles Parfitt, landlord of the "Archcliff Fort Inn," was summoned for assaulting Henry Knott. Defendant pleaded not guilty.

Complainant deposed: "I am a labourer, and live at 37, Oxenden Street. On Saturday afternoon between one and two, I went into the "Archcliff Fort Inn," kept by defendant. I called for a glass of beer, and stood waiting for it, when defendant, who was behind the bar, without saying anything, up with his fist and struck me on the face. I asked him what he did it for, and he then took hold of my collar and ran me into the street. I did not say anything, but went to Mr. Stillwell's office and got a summons for him."

Parfitt said in defence, that complainant came drunk into his house. When refused to be served, he began to use foul language, so he was ejected with gentle force. There being no witnesses the Bench could not say where the truth lay, and dismissed the case.

At this time inquests were often held in pubs and two are recorded at the Archcliff Fort. Firstly, again in 1874, in December, of the drowning of a young crew member of the Trinity House Pilot Cutter, who fell into the Pent while crossing the dock gate at the Wellington Bridge; and



The Archcliffe Fort (right) in 1935

secondly another drowning, this time in August 1980, of a soldier while swimming with his regiment at Shakespeare Beach.

The Parfitts appear to have left in the mid 1870s and tenancy details for the next couple of decades are scant. However from 1895 to 1901 the landlord was Mr. Frederick Buckingham whose death at Deal at the age of 70 was recorded in January

1909. For several years he was landlord of pubs in Dover, including the Archcliffe Fort, the Engineer and the Invicta. A former Metropolitan policeman who retired in 1882, he had at times been selected for duty at the Royal enclosures of various race courses, and spent many years guarding the Beckton gas facility from the activities of Fenians.

That the pub hosted inquests and had for a period a former policeman as landlord suggests that it might have been among the more reputable in a part of Dover not always considered to be particularly law abiding. However, contemporary photographs would suggest a certain decline in status as World War I approached, many of the surrounding buildings appearing to have been demolished presumably to facilitate the expansion of the railways and other commercial developments.

In 1914 the business moved slightly when new premises were built a few yards distant on the site of a former shop. According to the *Dover Express*, a matter of just 10ft and really a technicality. Later it appears to have moved again. The *Dover Express* in February, 1924 reported the granting of an application from Messrs. A. C. Leney and Co for the removal of the licence from one side of the spur at the Viaduct to the other as a result of developments to railway services to the Pier .

This presumably, is the location that it occupied until it was finally demolished to make way for highway developments in the late 20th century. Leney was acquired by Maidstone brewer Fremmlins in about 1930, which was itself taken over by Whitbread in the late 1960s.

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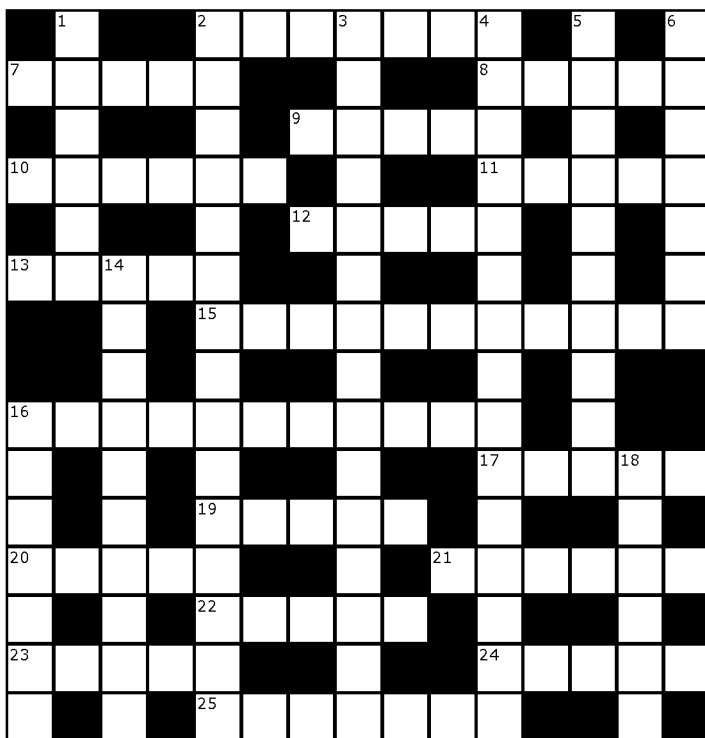
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CROSSWORD

BY TRISHA WELLS



Straightforward clues for a change this time!

Across

2. Spanish drink of red wine, lemonade and fruit (7)
7. Island known as Kérkira in Greek (5)
8. The drink one has most often (5)
9. A state of nervous excitement (5)
10. Risqué (6)
11. Uncouth people (5)
12. Drink provided for a festive occasion (5)
13. Type of clergyman in the Robin Hood stories (5)
15. Winding up of a company (11)
16. Grassy drinking places (4,7)
17. Sample of beer, perhaps (5)
19. Beer made by Summerskills, named after a river in Plymouth (5)
20. Stone worker (5)

21. Butt (3,3)
22. A type of Pale Ale (5)
23. County of 19 (5)
24. Boudicca's tribe and a brewery in Norfolk (5)
25. Horses (3-4)

Down

1. Dark brown beer (6)
2. Beer brewed by Hop Back, named after a seasonal weather phenomenon (6,9)
3. Dog competition (9,6)
4. Southern Lights (6,9)
5. Mid-day sessions (10)
6. Time to go home (7)
14. Unable to make up ones mind (10)
16. British colony in the Western Atlantic, capital Hamilton (7)
18. One who pays rent (6)

Answers on Page 61

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LOST PUBS





Now that we are well into summer, tradition suggests that few pleasures can match a country stroll followed by a pint or two in a wayside pub. Unfortunately such delightful watering holes are becoming few and far between. Above are a few that might have been encountered in previous summers but are sadly no more. How many do you recognise? The most recently open closed just within the last ten years, some of the other have not seen customers for forty years or more. How well did you do? Check your answers on Page 59



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A FESTIVAL DAY OUT

A Branch day out to take in some local pub beer festivals

One of our Branch's more complicated days out involved a Saturday in mid April, with five different buses and three pubs, and started with buses from Deal into Sandwich, and then Sandwich to Tilmanstone. Our initial objective....the Plough & Harrow for breakfast, where a goodly group of eight met up to line our stomachs for the coming day and, for one or two of the more hardy amongst us, to enjoy a rather nice pint or so of Shep's Double Stout.



The cause of such convoluted arrangements was necessitated by both the Centenary Beer Festival at the Carpenter's Arms in Coldred, and the annual Spring Beer Festival at the Five Bells, Eastry, falling over the same weekend.



Replenished and reinvigorated we took the bus to Coldred with some interesting diversions courtesy of a bus driver who seemed unfamiliar with the route, and relied on directions from the passengers on which roads to take. However, in due course we arrived, to find the festival in full swing. The Carpenter's Arms is a true rural community pub, being at the heart of everything that goes on in Coldred. This was Colin's first beer festival, in celebration of his family having run the pub for over 100 years,

and appeared to be well attended by locals, regulars and visitors alike.

A great selection of beers was available (a total of fifteen different brews over the whole weekend) and a cider from Weston's. Of particular note were the two beers from Triple FFF: Gilbert White and Rock Lobster. We heard later that star performer was from Salisbury Brewery – appropriately named, with St George's Day just a few days off – English Ale. Having got our pints we wandered outside into the bright sunny day and settled into a corner to get away from the chill wind. Some of the group took to sitting outside the bus stop, not because they were waiting for the bus, but because the bus shelter turned out to be one of the warmer places on the village green.

The return bus to Eastry arrived somewhat early, but thankfully waited a few minutes to get back on schedule so we were able to climb on board. And the bus driver also knew the route, so our journey to the Five Bells, Eastry, was uneventful. This was the pub's fifth beer festival, and as we have come to expect, there was a great range of real ales as well as four ciders. Unfortunately, owing to the day's "exertions" none of us could subsequently remember exactly what. However, I do

recall that we enjoyed a couple of excellent pints before needing to consider our preferred route home.

While some took the bus, others decided to walk home across the fields through Ham to Finglesham, a decision very much regretted when the wind turned out to be a lot colder than expected, and the gentle walk home turned into a route march in an attempt to get home as soon as possible and into the warmth. Nevertheless, all in all a great day out.



Tony Wells

N.B. Don't forget to keep sending me your Beer Scores for the pubs that you visit. We use these as a basis for selecting our choice for the Good Beer Guide. So, however good the beer at your pub if we don't know about it we can't consider it.

You can contact me on pubs.officer@camra-dds.org.uk.



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TWO NEW CAMPAIGNS

CAMRA is backing new national campaigns to save the pub

FAIR DEAL FOR YOUR LOCAL

The **Fair Deal for Your Local** Campaign is a new national campaign calling on people to back a fair deal for our local pubs! It has been launched by 10 leading organisations to ensure that the Government gives local pubs a fair deal by stopping the overcharging by large pub owning companies, that has damaged and closed thousands of pubs up and down the country.

The Campaign kicked off at 1pm on Thursday 2 May with a photocall and press interviews at the **Jolly Anglers** in Reading, a former pubco tied pub, which having been closed, boarded up and for sale in 2009, is now open as a successful free-house. Its transformation clearly demonstrates the positive future that reform would lead to, compared with the reality of life under the pubco tied model. Having been bought and reopened by the same landlord, who is free to buy beer from local breweries instead of being forced to pay huge pubco prices, the Jolly Anglers is now a successful community business free of tie.

The Campaign is calling for reform of the tied model operated by the large pub owning companies, where beer prices and rents are often hugely inflated and excessive. The Government is committed to introducing a statutory code of practice for the large companies that will enshrine in law the long accepted but largely ignored principle: that the tied licensee should not be worse off than a free of tie licensee.

The Fair Deal for Your Local! Campaign believes that the only way to do this is to include in the new code an option for the tied landlords of large companies to pay fair market rent only to the pub owning company (a 'market rent only option'). With the backing of thousands of pub customers, CAMRA members and licensees it will be calling on the Government to give a Fair Deal to their local. The Fair Deal for Your Local Campaign website is www.fairdeal4yourlocal.com and on Twitter use @fairdeal4yourlocal and #fairdeal4yourlocal.

Backing the Fair Deal for Your Local :

- ***The Federation of Small Businesses***
- ***The Guild of Master Victuallers***
- ***CAMRA***
- ***Fair Pint***
- ***Pubs Advisory Service***
- ***Forum for Private Business***
- ***Licensees Supporting Licensees***
- ***Justice for Licensees***
- ***Licensees' Unite the Union***

Summing up, Greg Mulholland, Co-ordinator of Fair Deal for Your Local! and Chair of the Parliamentary Save the Pub Group, said: "It is high time we had a fair deal for our local pubs up and down the country. The Great British pub is a unique institution and important for communities, the economy and for tourism. We have lost too many of them due to the unfair business practices of the large pubcos. It is time Government stopped the overcharging by the pubcos. If they do, our hard working licensees can at last make a fair living which will not only save pubs, but will also

be a huge boost for the economy locally and nationally. Show you love Britain's pubs and sign up to support a Fair Deal for Your Local today at www.fairdealforyourlocal.com!"

IT'S BETTER DOWN THE PUB

In conjunction with **Fair Deal for Your Local!** CAMRA is supporting the '**It's Better Down The Pub**' pub campaign which was launched a month later at four regional venues around Britain.

'It's Better Down The Pub' is all about consumers and licensees sharing their best stories, taking great pictures or producing short films to explain why it is better down the pub. There will be different themes e.g. Family, Celebrations, Sport etc. – these will then be used to hopefully encourage more people to use pubs, or use them more regularly. For the best entries the supporting organisations and companies have donated some excellent prizes. The Regional Launches took place on Monday 10th June at the following venues:

The **River View**, Chester Street, Birkenhead, hosted by Admiral Taverns

The **Swan Hotel**, Greengate Street, Stafford

The **Old Horse**, London Road, Leicester, hosted by Everards

The **Swan**, Bayswater Road, London hosted by Fuller's

CAMRA was hoping that local media and industry reps would turn up to these events, as well as CAMRA members. To find out more about this campaign please visit itsbetterdownthepub.com

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'A SEVERE DOSE OF AVON RING'

The Beery Boaters Spring 2013 Trip

The Beery Boaters last circumnavigated the Avon Ring back in April 1994, travelling anti-clockwise down the Severn and up the Avon from Stourport, and returning back via Birmingham, and the Stourbridge, and Staffs and Worcester canals. This time we took a somewhat modified clockwise route, including a possible diversion to Gloucester, starting from the Anglo-Welsh hire base at Wootton Wawen, just north of Stratford, on Saturday 27th April with narrowboats Moon Dance and Floral Dance.

Martin and Hon. Commodore (Unelected) arrived early afternoon, and gravitating to the adjoining Navigation PH, found crew members Skellie and Bruv John, already installed and causing a stir, having donned tri-corn hats. "Look's like we got a load of pirates on this boat," said one of the boatyard staff, but was firmly put right by Paul declaring that he was in fact the Admiral and John the navigator. In due course the rest drifted in and after the usual boat checkovers we set off just before 3pm, the Moonies leading Flower Power, somewhat later than initially intended, but reckoning that the 7 miles and 17 narrow locks to Stratford was doable in 3½ hours, we thought mooring up at 6.30 to 7.00 would be about fine, but more of that later.

In Skellie speke the two crews were respectively Floral Dance: Commandant Jim Green, Navigator Bruv John Underdown, Bosun Bruv Dave Underdown (the only one to bring a chair), Admiral Paul Skelton, galley boys Steve Grayland and Alan Hodges, ballast boy Martin Atkins, and entertainment officer Paul "Topsy" Turvey. (Why all the nutters in the same boat?). Moon Dance: Captain "Cherub" Peter Broberg, the Simpson's Bart and Homer (AKA Jeremy and Peter), Mike "Wedger" Benton, Paul Roods and Terry Scott, that being Terry and Scott Clark, and not to be mistaken for the schoolboy dressed Curly Wurly advertising comedian mentioned for comedy effect.

All proceedings uneventful until third lock down on the Wilmcote Flight, number 42 by some contrivance, which if did not exactly reveal the meaning of life, made a bold attempt to flash all ours before us. Hon. Commodore (Unelected), in better state than on the 2012 trip but not mobile enough to work locks, was on the helm of Floral Dance and steering with customary élan (some might use a different description). Entering the lock at a decent pace, normal braking procedure (throttle lever shoved into full reverse) produced no response. Admittedly, the emergency brake (lock gate) stopped the boat rapidly enough, to the accompaniment of expletives from all parts of the boat, a broken shackle on the bow fender, and the almost scrambling of the ship's supply of eggs, as they bounced around on the galley table. Thereafter, however, for the rest of the trip, the throttle control worked perfectly.

Bancroft Basin in Stratford was reached at 6.30, and it was immediately apparent that an earlier start might have had its benefits. Most mooring is alongside long pontoons angled out from the shore, and appeared largely occupied by private boats, with only two berths, right in the centre, remaining empty. Approach was awkward, and the keen wind that had been blowing all afternoon showed no sign of discontinuing. Needless to say it all made manoeuvring two, 70 foot narrowboats, rather a job, which wasn't helped by unkind remarks from the adjacent private boat owners, especially a particularly nice man wearing an apron and gesticulating with a kebab skewer. Still it provided them some great entertainment, and the opportunity for gratuitous abuse.

We also found, that the floating office, which supplied the £50 river licences, required for the Avon, had just closed and would not be open until 8am next morning. Bang went the projected 6am start! Still, beer and food came first, and after a pint and a meal in the Pen & Parchment (Greene King), over the road from the basin, we spent most of the evening at the Rose & Crown in nearby Sheep Street with its selection of micro ales and a 10% discount for CAMRA members.

The next morning, licences having been obtained, we were away towards 8.30. Paul S, waking later than the rest, thought he had gone deaf but suddenly remembered he was wearing ear plugs, a necessary requirement he felt, to ward off the assorted extraneous noises of a narrowboat of sleeping Beery Boaters. And, as if to verify, that he was back with the living, the boat's hooter got stuck full on as Hon Commodore manoeuvred out of the berth – a parting gift to our neighbouring boaters, if any were still asleep. The wind was still fresh as we descended the lock onto the Avon. These were now double locks, and Floral Dance got blown into a shallow backwater, having waited for Moon Dance to go ahead as we exited. We probably, also, picked up something on the prop as for the next couple of hours we were distinctly slow. Something made all too evident when, after the next lock, Floral Dance, leaving Moon Dance to pick up the lock crew, sped off round the ensuing corner in a manner that would have impressed Murray Walker, only to be overtaken in short order ten minutes later.

Towards lunchtime, the sun having broken through the high cloud, thoughts turned to our lunchtime ale. The apparent obvious choice of the Fish & Anchor at George Billington Lock, turned out to be situated on the far side of the weir cut and inaccessible from the moorings by the lock; as also we were from Wedger, the last of several crew members to have gone AWOL over the late morning, and who was now waiting for us at the pub. Leaving him to make his own way, we continued a couple of miles to the Bridge at Offenham. Beers here were from St. Austell and Wye Valley and, we were at last rejoined by our lost sheep, who had made good use of his abandoned state and stopped at another couple of pubs on the way.

We were off again mid-afternoon, and passed the work in progress at Evesham Bridge without the assistance of a pilot boat. However, the wind remained a problem, blowing both boats at times into the reeds, most notably Floral Dance at Chadbury Lock where we were stuck on the far bank, until after about ten minutes and some imaginative tiller work by Steve we managed to extricate ourselves. We were now on the Lower Avon Navigation, and quickly discovered that its shorter

locks set us further problems, avoiding the back gate cills.

We moored at Pershore for the night at about 7pm, by the recreation ground, and walked across the grass to the main street, and the Brandy Cask home-brew pub, whose landlord, we felt, seemed somewhat less than pleased to have our custom. However, the beer was good and later some of the crew went across to a Wadworth pub opposite. The evening finished with excellent takeaways from a nearby Chinese.

Monday morning and bright sunshine, and after watering up we were down through Pershore Lock by 8pm heading for Tewkesbury. Lots of mistletoe in the trees, probably poplars, hereabouts. The wind was rising again, quite cold, with more clouds appearing. Under the M5 motorway and just past Bredon at 11.50, and half an hour later we were tied up just above Tewkesbury lock, which leads down onto the Severn. The lock-keeper suggested, that if we wanted to get to Gloucester that evening, we should depart no later than 2.30. The Moonies had already departed for town, but a telephone call

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tracked them down to the Nottingham Arms. As time was rather restricted the the Flower Powers mainly stopped at the aged Olde Black Bear just across the bridge, which boasted a good range of guest beers as well as brews from Adnams and Charles Wells.

Back at the boats well before 2.30pm and into Tewkesbury Lock, that was the theory. Unfortunately the lock is at right angles to the Avon and the wind still strong, and attempts to move out into the river and go straight in failed miserably. The only way, it seemed, was to track along the tow-path and hold the bow at the lock entrance while swinging the stern round. Eventually, we had cleared the lock and headed down the last few hundred yards of the Avon towards the Severn, and our evening destination at Gloucester, or so we thought. Away to our left a narrowboat perched on the river embankment bore testimony to the floods of recent years.



Narrowboat aground on a wall

Ten minutes or so down the Severn at Upper Lode Lock, our plans changed radically. The lock keeper was not sure that Gloucester lock was not still on winter times and closing at 6pm. It was spring tides and if delayed by the tide, having to spend a night tied up on the Severn outside with no access to the shore, was not recommended. He suggested leaving Gloucester until the morning and stop that night at a suitable pub such as the Yew Tree at Chaceley, a couple of miles downstream.



The Lower Lode Inn

Accordingly we had a look at the Yew Tree, but it seemed a bit Marie Celeste, no one about, and inside, empty glasses strewn about and a general impression of an explosion in a mattress factory. Although informed by a neighbour that it would be open at 6pm, it seemed distinctly uninviting, and was served by equally uninviting rickety pontoon moorings. However, half a mile back we had passed the GBG listed Lower Lode Inn and it took only a brief discussion before turning round and heading back to spend the evening there. Its pontoon moorings were excellent, as was the pub, with good food and a fine selection of beer – also cider, which ironically was not west country but local to Wedger and Peter Broberg and their Surrey/Hants Borders Branch.

As the evening progressed games made an appearance – one table playing Maltese Cross while at another Peter Simpson introduced the locals to the card game “Acey Ducey,” including his usual spiel that the most you can lose is 2p a hand. There is however, no upper limit to the contents of the pot or indeed what you can actually bet, and Peter ends up £10 down. That one of the “locals” was a profes-

sional magician may, or may not, be significant – at least Peter didn't bet the boat on it. On our way back to the boats a couple of cars tuned up, their occupants proceeding to engage in some activity at the water's edge. Similar appeared to be under-way on the opposite bank, and we eventually deduced that they were elving. They were still at it at 4am but apparently the season is good and elvers fetch a high price.

Our unscheduled night's stop decided us to abandon going on to Gloucester, a long way for just a couple of hours in the city. It also made the subsequent week's itinerary more relaxed. Our direction, therefore, lay back up the Severn and we allowed ourselves a late start under a cloudless and almost windless sky. We thought that we might stop at Upton-on-Severn for lunch, and making good time and were there by 11am, some clouds having now appeared and the breeze getting up again. On the way, passing a working barge of top soil, or such like, being unloaded by crane with a grab and transferred to a conveyor belt: Dave's initial delight, turned to frustration as his film ran out.

The once plentiful mooring at Upton now seemed reduced to a single pontoon, and appeared full, but good fortune prevailed, and two boats left as we approached. The town has plenty of convenient pubs and most of us chose the Old Anchor with beers from Robson, St. Austell, Sharps and Wadworth. We left mid afternoon for our evening stop at Worcester, where we moored just below the entrance to the Worcester & Birmingham Canal and walked to the Anchor, a Banks's pub in Diglis Basin – as good a basic Banks's pub that you will find, and still dispensing ale by, that now rare appliance, the electric pump.

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The evening saw the company split again, most continuing to town, Bruv Dave in the wheelchair and Bruv John pushing, while Hon. Com. (Unelected), knowing how far it was to walk, and Martin stayed put, enjoying a pub that remained refreshingly busy, with skittles being played in the adjoining indoor alley. The wanderers, meanwhile, explored a number of more distant establishments, consuming a variety of beer and meals, and particularly a tasty strong local perry, whose casualties, looking particularly green, did not surface until we had covered a large part of the following morning's milage.

Wednesday, May Day, and also, as Hon. Com. reminded the crews, Padstow 'Obby 'Oss Day. Up at 6.45 with frost on the tops of the boats, but a beautiful clear sky and no wind. A red Virgin hot air balloon rose up and hung over the city as we cruised upstream, heading for the uncharted waters (at least to the Beery Boaters) of the recently restored Droitwich Canal. We were there by 8.30, to enter the broad locks of the first, very rural stretch, the Droitwich Barge Canal. It was now becoming very warm and we started to see plenty of anglers, the first we had come across in any numbers.

While Beery Boating might often appear as no more than an opportunity for drinking, eating and doing combat with the natural environment, there will be, during the week's progress, occasions of sublime enlightenment. Hence, it crossed the mind of our self appointed Admiral, that the canals must constitute one of the most wasteful losses of energy ever invented. All this water rushing by and no use put to it at all. Why don't they attach water wheels or paddles to generate and put some free electricity back into the grid? It wouldn't obstruct the canals, slow down the water or interfere with the water life. Surely the money made could be put back into waterways maintenance and may even save us that £50 per boat.

We came into Droitwich and moored side by side on the moorings at Vine Park about mid day. Once again the crews went their various ways, some to the Gardeners' Arms behind the moorings, with a choice of real ales, others into the town centre. A group of us stopped at the Talbot, a Banks's pub, whose current licensees had just taken it over – and excellent it proved, a true town centre local, if that's not an oxymoron.



The afternoon found us completing the rest of the Droitwich Canal, 7ft locks, and far more of them than we anticipated, to reach Hanbury Junction and the Worcester and Birmingham Canal towards 5pm. Distance and time resolved that the night stop be either the Boat & Railway at Stoke Works, or the Queen's Head a mile further on, and the Boat & Railway it was: good moorings and water point opposite, and the pub most decidedly open. Another good evening in another very busy Banks's pub drinking Banks's and Marstons beers, and enjoying good value food, Topsy proving his worth as designated Entertainments Officer keeping everyone amused with some inspired conversation. There was speculation that perhaps some of his extensive supply of tablets should not be mixed with alcohol.

The good weather continued the next morning, Thursday. Most fortunate as we were facing the 30 lock Tardebigge flight, longest flight in the country plus the six Stoke Locks just before. Off just before 7.30 with breakfast already being cooked and everyone enthusiastic (maybe), Moon Dance ahead, having said farewell to Jeremy who was unable to do the whole week. Just as well we didn't go to the Queen's Head as when we passed it we found it closed for extensive renovations.



As usual, Tardebigge was more forgiving than many a shorter flight, and having reached the bottom lock at 9.10, it was just before noon when Floral Dance left the top lock. On the way up we came across seemingly as many other narrowboats as we had during the rest of the week. Among them were a group of "Australian Vikings", complete with horned helmets whose dress was presumably a response to their hire company – Viking Afloat. Our "Admiral" now having reverted to Red Indian gear, appropriate Viking/Indian photos were taken. Lunchtime was set for an almost obligatory visit to the Weighbridge pub: good beer and pork pies,

having before that called in at Anglo Welsh's Tardebigge hire base to replace Floral Dance's faulty shower head, and have "unspecified repairs" undertaken on Moon Dance.

Off again at 3.30 and aiming for the Drawbridge at Shirley, we were through the 2726 yard water dripping Wast Hill Tunnel, and on to King's Norton Junction in about two hours, turning right onto the Stratford-on-Avon Canal to pass through the stop lock with both guillotine gates raised. Moon Dance having disappeared ahead, it was about 7.30 when Floral Dance pulled up in front of the Drawbridge, to find what had once been a decent boozer now a plastic imitation, all glitter and flashing lights inside, and a children's playground out front. Of Moon Dance there was no sign: no doubt sharing our sentiments they were already making for the only possible alternative, the Blue Bell Cider House, three miles further on.

With just about an hour or so of daylight remaining Hon. Commodore (Unelected) behaved like the Beery Boaters in their youthful prime – taking the tiller and giving it wellie, attempting to get there before darkness fell. We made it – just, and tied up behind Moon Dance shortly after 8.30. We hurried to the pub, where the beers included Holden's and Wye Valley, with a couple of ciders on draught, and the landlord granted us special dispensation for food, if we ordered immediately.

Friday, the last full day: Martin allegedly up half the night turving things out, cursing and oh dearing (*I don't remember – Ed*). We were half a day ahead of schedule and decided to get back to Wootton Wawen that evening, however, there was first, the best part of thirty locks downhill, just to reach our lunchtime stop, the Fleur de Lys at Lawsonford. The weather still fine, we set off at 8am again (no 0600 starts on this trip!) Moon Dance, ahead, stopping by Bridge 20 for Wedger to get some bread from the appropriately-named Wedge's Bakery, before we reached the top of



Kingswood Junction, Stratford Canal

the 22 lock Lapworth flight by 9.25. The sky started to cloud over as we descended, and it was overcast as we completed the following stretch with its six locks, some with characteristic barrel-roofed Stratford Canal cottages alongside, to arrive at Lowsonford and the Fleur de Lys by 1.30. Reputedly the original home of Fleur de Lys pies, we found a somewhat up-market Greene King house, but quite pleasant. Only having four miles and eight locks to go back to

Wootton Wawen, we stayed until four o'clock.

Back at the boatyard we were finally moored by about 7pm and naturally spent the evening in the Navigation, a very enjoyable final session – Hon. Commodore (Unelected) was even persuaded to join in Peter Simpson's dodgy card games. Must have been drunk!

And that was it for another Beery Boaters Cruise. Everyone seemed to have enjoyed the trip; I did anyway. Roll on the next time! Oh, and it rained hard on the Saturday morning while we were unloading our baggage from the boats. Too late, missed us this time!

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LAST KNOCKINGS

Forgotten Truths Responsible drinkers will welcome the Reduce the Strength project (see Local News), although whether it has any impact remains to be seen, and rather depends on compliance by all the various off-trade outlets from where alcohol can be acquired. However, our current legislators and licensing authorities might also like to consider why this is a problem now and was not fifty years ago when many of us were growing up. The simple fact is of course, that the opportunity for purchasing alcohol was severely curtailed: pubs, hotels and a limited number of dedicated off-licences made up just about the sum total. Such restrictions were not something that dated from Time Immemorial, or the puritan era, but had been developed over the last couple of centuries to try and exert some measure of control over alcohol consumption. And basically it worked. From the gin fuelled excesses of 18th century, by the mid 20th century, drinking in Britain largely meant pubs and ale, with pub landlords under severe constraint as to what happened on their premises. They still are. By comparison, the greatly expanded off-trade now operates under very little constraint. So long as a customer is not under age and not visibly drunk there is little to stop them purchasing whatever they want, including various lagers and ciders which seem specifically aimed at those needing an alcoholic fix. Once back out through the door the retailer's responsibility ends. Not only unfair competition for hard pressed publicans, but a source of a very disagreeable social problem.

Churchill's Watering Holes

The number of bars and pubs where our illustrious wartime leader is supposed to have downed a pint or enjoyed a glass of brandy are rapidly becoming as ubiquitous as those historic venues in which Henry VIII held a banquet or Elizabeth I slept. The latest addition to the list is Dover's First and Last at East Cliff, which is described by its owners as "the former drinking place of Sir Winston Churchill and steeped in history."



Although, Churchill did visit Dover during the war and certainly made use of the cabinet rooms in the cliffs under the Castle, it does seem to be stretching credulity a little to envisage him dropping into the First and Last (or Albion as it was then) for a drink, despite its geographic closeness. Fanciful speculation might of course conceive that among the labyrinth of tunnels in the cliffs there was a link to East Cliff, or maybe even to the pub itself, or that use could

have been made of the supply railway track that once ran from sea level to the tunnels' entrances in the cliff face? However, in 60 odd years of living in Dover I've never heard of him spending time in the pubs at East Cliff, or anywhere else in the town, and given the privations of wartime Britain it would seem any such expedition might well have been less than fruitful. Draught beer probably could not have been guaranteed, and the chance of being provided with Churchill's favourite tipples, brandy and champagne, distinctly remote.

Pubs No More "A great family dining experience", was how a Greene King spokesman described one of its recent branding exercises when challenged over the loss of traditional inn signs (see National News). I'm not sure which part of "family dining experience" is more worrying to a discerning real ale drinker. The currently fashionable cliché "experience" to describe almost any event, activity or aspect of modern life; the obvious inference that the re-branded establishments will be more restaurant than pub; or that they are designed to appeal to that doubtful arbiter of good taste and discrimination, the family. Nothing wrong of course with food in pubs, it stretches back as far as beer itself. However, in the public house with which many of us grew up, it was generally confined to the likes of pies, rolls and pickled eggs, and was strictly adults only. A very different prospect from the mewling and puking of infants in arms and the rampages of their bored elder siblings. An exaggeration perhaps – and we appreciate that family trade is often a matter of survival, and that most sell real ale: but is public house still the appropriate term.

Real Ale not Lager There was much publicity in July about the beer promotion which saw a giant image of a pint of beer projected onto the White Cliffs of Dover. As part of the Let There Be Beer movement it formed part of a campaign to persuade people to drink more beer – the country's best loved drink, a movement spokesman pointed out, and particularly associated with Dover and the Kentish hop. All very fine and dandy, except that the beer portrayed was not the ale of our forefathers, but that foreign interloper lager.

UKIP In our spring edition we speculated about the UKIP leader Nigel Farage's taste in beer. Although we are currently unable to provide any update on his own drinking habits, we did note a recent interview with three UKIP councillors/candidates on BBC's *Sunday Politics*. Recorded in a pub garden in leafy Buckinghamshire, it took place around a tray of drinks that included what appeared to be two pints of lager, a pint of bitter and a glass of water. Assuming our identification was correct and that one of the drinks would have been the interviewer's, this meant that at best just one UKIP member was drinking our country's traditional drink. And in case UKIP think that it has been singled out for particular attention, *Channel Draught* will be keeping a watchful eye on what members of all the parties are drinking as we approach the 2015 General Election.

Old Wort

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And Finally.....Roll out (or roll into) the barrel

Barrels, particularly large ones, seem all the rage at the moment. In the heart of Ostbevern, in Germany, beer drinkers can lay their weary heads to rest in a bed carved out of a 19th century historic beer barrel at the Landhotel Beverland. The barrel comes from Pott's, a local brewery and was in brewery use until 1995. There are three beer barrel-themed rooms in the hotel and while each room sleeps four, only one of the beds is the barrel, which can be used as a single or double bed. Arguing over who goes 'in the barrel' is a new slant on 'I'll take the top bunk'.

Each room also has a 32-inch flat screen TV, DVD player, and free internet. For just 20 Euros hotel staff will serve you breakfast in errr.... barrel. And if that wasn't enough barrel for you, the hotel also has a beer barrel sauna that seats 12 people. Guests can use the sauna for 10 Euros, provided they don't mind the smell of hops. In addition to the beer barrel-themed rooms, the Landhotel Beverland has more than 60 other themed rooms, including the Mini Cooper room, the sailing boat room, a Star Wars room, and the treehouse suite.

Now before you start thinking only the Germans could do something as daft as this, a carpenter in Dorset has just created his own version of the barrel sauna and has plans to market them in Britain. The phrase 'got me over a barrel' could get a whole new meaning!

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The Coastguard

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The Coastguard Pub & Restaurant isn't hard to find. Head for the sound of the waves lapping against the white cliffs of Dover, the delicious aroma of local produce cooking in a busy kitchen, the glint of a freshly poured ale. When the English Channel is about to wet your toes, you'll have found us.

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