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



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

**Issue 65  
Autumn  
2015**

# CHANNEL DRAUGHT



## **INSIDE**

### **MAKING YOUR PUB AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE**

How to protect  
your local pub

See Page 26

### **MARIS OTTER**

The 50th  
anniversary of the  
creation of the  
brewers barley

See Page 41

## **DOVER TO GET BRITAIN'S FIRST MICRO CIDER HOUSE**

THE THIRSTY SCARECROW TO OPEN SOON

See Page 8



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# CHANNEL DRAUGHT

**ISSUE 65**  
**Autumn 2015**

**A**s we report on our front cover and in Local News, Dover is about to get its first dedicated cider bar, the first micro cider bar anywhere, we believe. No doubt there will be long established West Country cider houses who would argue that they are equally small, and were around long before the micro concept was evolved, however in the spirit of the current movement, and to the best of our knowledge, the Thirsty Scarecrow is the first.

We also anticipate the imminent opening in Walmer of the Freed Man, a micropub on Dover Road, and an indication that the number of micropubs continues to grow, with East Kent accounting for a substantial part of the total. A list of Kent micros, published in our autumn 2014 edition, showed twenty five in East Kent: a year later, including the two above, it stands at thirty nine (see Page 38 for the complete Kent list).

Kent microbreweries too, appear in similar good health. The 2016 edition of the Good Beer Guide lists thirty two in Kent, with four completely new since last year, including the small, home based Turnstone from Whitstable offering what its owner classifies as nano-brewing. However, we know that there have been some more recent additions, and that in East Kent alone there are at least a further half a dozen under development, or where brewing is currently suspended.

In the following pages, as well as the usual items, we take a trip around all seventeen of our 2015 Good Beer Guide selection, offer advice on getting pubs designated as Assets of Community Value and give a brief history of real ale brewers' favourite malting barley. We also compliment Stuart Robert's regular reports on real ale and pubs from across the Channel, by printing a view from America, which features a couple of pubs readers may be acquainted with.

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*Martin Atkins*



# CONTENTS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 3 Events Diary   | 38 Kent Micropubs - an updated list   |
| 4 Put your money where your mouth is.  | 41 Maris Otter—the brewers malt   |
| 6 Local News   | 43 Crossword  |
| 19 Kent Small Brewery News   | 45 A view from America  |
| 22 National News   | 49 Curry On (In) the Cut - a look back at the Beery Boaters Autumn 1991 Trip. |
| 26 Making your pub an asset of community value                                     | 58 Last Knockings   |
| 29 Ramblings & Rumblings   | 60 CAMRA Membership Form  |
| 32 Channel View  | 61 Local Information, CAMRA Info  |
| 34 The Good Beer Guide Trail - visiting all the Branch's 2015 Good Beer Guide Pubs | 62 Advertisers Index  |
|  | 62 And Finally.....   |

# EVENTS DIARY

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Mon 16 Nov</b>          | Branch Meeting, <b>Railway Bell</b> , Kearsney, Dover                 |
| <b>Fri 20 - Sun 22 Nov</b> | Beer Festival, <b>Anchor</b> , Wingham*                               |
| <b>Sat 21 Nov</b>          | <b>Margate Pub Tour</b> . See Branch website.                         |
| <b>Fri 27 - Sun 29 Nov</b> | Beer weekend, <b>New Inn</b> , Canterbury*                            |
| <b>Fri 11 - Sat 12 Dec</b> | Beer Festival, <b>Rack of Ale</b> , Ladywell*                         |
| <b>Sat 12 Dec</b>          | <b>Royal Oak</b> , Nonington. Branch Meeting & Christmas Meal - 12.30 |
| <b>Mon 18 Jan</b>          | Branch Meeting, <b>Crispin</b> , Sandwich.                            |
| <b>Fri 5 - Sat 6 Feb</b>   | <b>WHITE CLIFFS FESTIVAL OF WINTER ALES</b> , Dover Town Hall         |
| <b>Mon 15 Feb</b>          | Branch Meeting, <b>Red Lion</b> , Charlton Green, Dover.              |

**Branch Website    [www.camra-dds.org.uk](http://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 and 2015 GBG Trail, please email  
[john@ramblingrumbler.plus.com](mailto:john@ramblingrumbler.plus.com) or call 01304 214153.  
 Events marked \* are not organised by CAMRA



## PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR MOUTH IS

Once again the Government has come up with a new initiative aimed at supporting the British pub, but what exactly is its commitment?

The "This Pub Matters" badge is directly aimed at the problem of pub closures, and at slowing the rate, and was launched by community pubs minister Marcus Jones, at the Great British Beer Festival in August. It will be available to all of the 800 pubs currently listed as Assets of Community Value, and CAMRA's ambition is that by the end of 2016 more than 3,000 pubs will have ACV designation.

Its first recipient was Tina Massie of the Red Lion, Knotty Green, Buckinghamshire, which was listed by Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe branch with Chiltern council in June. "I am absolutely thrilled the community and CAMRA have recognised the Red Lion as an Asset of Community Value," said Tina. "It is a fantastic honour and a pat on the back for my team, who work so hard to keep the pub at the very heart of our village."

Marcus Jones said: "The great British pub is a national treasure which is why we bought in new powers so people can help protect their local by listing it as an Asset of Community Value. Hundreds of communities have seized this opportunity and I am delighted this is being recognised at the Great British Festival."

He continued: "There is increasing confidence in the sector with community ownership of public houses starting to take off and the boom in great British brewing. However, we must be realistic that planning rules alone cannot keep pubs open which are not making money, therefore this government's broader strategy of lower taxes, less regulation and a growing economy is the best way to support a thriving and diverse sector."

All very well as far as it goes. We welcome any interest and support from government to assist our campaigns, and applaud the existence of the office of community pubs minister, a position unimaginable forty or fifty years ago.

However, despite such advances, it all seems very much tinkering around the edges. To pick up two of the minister's points: legislation might not save uneconomic pubs but it could stop successful pubs being converted to supermarkets without planning consent, and if lower taxes are on the agenda let us see UK beer duty nearer the European average rather than amongst the highest.

One cannot help but see the spirit of *Yes Minister* at work: "Humphrey, the PM wants us to do something about pubs – stop so many closing. Find something that doesn't cost any money and doesn't involve awkward legislation."

Pubs are a traditional and vital part of British culture, very different from the cafes and bars found elsewhere in the world. From across the country comes news of small communities banding together to protect their local, either by designating it an ACV or buying it outright themselves. A movement, which like microbreweries and micropubs, has very much sprung from the grass roots. They deserve all the muscle, in respect of pub protection and lower duty, that Government legislation can give them.



# LOUIS ARMSTRONG

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# The Local News

Contributors - Martin Atkins, The Mcilroys,  
John Pitcher, Tony Wells, Jim Green 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](mailto:channel.draught@camra-dds.org.uk)

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

## PUB OF THE SEASON – THE FOX, TEMPLE EWELL

Not many pubs lie in a downland valley with a garden that has a stream running through it, a skittle alley, and an old apple tree shading one corner. The Fox, however, is just that – an idyllic setting for a summer evening's drink, reminiscent of old England and George



The Fox, Temple Ewell

Orwell's famous and fictitious perfect pub *The Moon Under Water*, and a well-deserved winner of our Branch's award as this year's Pub of the Season for Summer.

The pub has been run for the last fifteen years by Steve and Alyson Grayson, and in 2005 was awarded Branch Pub of the Year. Three or four real ales are normally available, with Kelham Island Pride of Sheffield, from Steve's home town, and Butcombe Bitter appearing regularly. Quizzes and skittles

are played, and as well as a normal range of pub food there are special pie and curry nights. In spring an annual beer festival is held in support of the Rotary organisation.

## DOVER

**Arlington**, Snargate Street: The pub has been closed since late summer, and there is uncertainty about its future – any further news gratefully received. Also welcome would be news of events at the **Nelson**. In our summer edition we reported on new arrangements by which Shep's have leased the pub out completely free of tie for a number of years. We understand that live music has been introduced but have no information as to whether or not real ale is being sold. At **Blakes** we hear good comments about Blakes house bitter from Millis and about "friendly and helpful service." Also on tap from Millis has been Pedlers Best, and we note the pub has also been selling Goachers Blakes Bitter.

At the **Mash Tun** lots of beers and lots of comment. The Hopdaemon house beer appears to be going down well and good to see an old favourite from Mogul days, Oakham JHB available back in the summer. Mad Cat beers from Brogdale have been very prominent of late – including Disobedience, Crispin, Golden, and Auburn Copper. Other beers have included Bank Top

# **RACK OF ALE**

**Dover's First Micropub**

**7 Park Place, Ladywell, Dover, CT16 1DF  
(Opposite Dover Police Station)**

## **BEER FESTIVAL**

**To celebrate the opening of the Back Rack**

**UP TO 15 ALES (5 INTERNATIONALS) ON  
TOP OF THOSE ALREADY PROVIDED**

***Friday 11th to Sunday 13th December  
(look out for hours on Facebook)***

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**Raising funds for HARBOUR SCHOOL minibus**

Dark Mild, "Really first class pint"; and St Austell Proper Job, "To die for!! Hoppy, golden, just the right amount of fizz and perfect temperature." As a special offer to CAMRA, all members, on production of a valid membership card, are currently entitled to beer and cider, at respectively £2.50 and £3.00 a pint each week from noon Wednesday to 5pm Friday.

**White Horse**, St. James' Street: Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter remains a fixture, and very good too, probably the only regular outlet now in the town. Other beers seen of late have included Upham Punter Adnams Lighthouse, Sharp's Atlantic IPA, Wickwar Bob and the ever popular Lodden Hullabaloo.

At East Cliff we understand that the **First and Last** is now for sale. Last proposed incarnation we believe was to be as hostel and bar in connection with hotel/hostel opposite, but to the best of our knowledge only operated briefly, if at all, in that capacity – seems to have been closed for ages. We would appreciate any further information. Meanwhile at the other end of the harbour there is currently no real ale at the **Cinque Port Arms**, Clarence Place.

In the Market Square at the **Port of Call**, planning is currently underway to enlarge the ground floor, make changes to the function room above, and create an extension of six B&B rooms. Beer selection remains heavily Kentish – Hopdaemon, Westerham and Nelson all appearing recently. Ripple Steam is a regular supplier with both Classic IPA and Best featuring.

Ripple beers have also been seen at the **Duchess** in Bench Street, which usually has at least one real ale on the handpumps. More Kent ales available in Cannon Street at the **Eight Bells**, where it is good to see a national chain sourcing locally. Among the pub's wide and varying selection Hopdaemon,

Whitstable and Rocking Robin have all supplied of late. From further away beers have included the usual mix of new and little known brews along with well some established icons such as Marston's Old Empire and Harvie-stoun's Schiehallion.

However, if it is Kent ales you want, one of the best selections around is to be found at the **Lanes**. There are currently around forty breweries now in Kent, and a glance at the pub's offerings over recent months suggests that regular users of the pub will have every chance of trying them all. Goody from Herne appears very regularly, while among those not so commonly seen at this end of the county are Pig and Porter of Tunbridge Wells, Kent of Birling and Musket of Linton. In October the pub kindly stepped in to host our monthly Branch Meeting, scheduled originally to be held at the Arlington, which by then was closed.

Opposite Priory Station the **Priory Hotel** now regularly offers one or two real ales. Mainly national, recent beers have included Hardy & Hanson's Bitter and Young's Bitter. As reported in our summer edition the **Crown and Sceptre**, Elms Vale Road has been selling Sheps Whitstable Bay beers of late, and it certainly appears to be shifting. A visit one Sunday afternoon found it had just all been sold out. Around the corner in Eaton Road a choice of up to three real ales is normal at the **Boar's Head** – Young's Bitter, Greene King IPA and Sharp's Doom Bar all having been seen over recent months

Still no sign of real ale returning to the **Eagle**, but, nearby the former, and currently closed, Corner Café on the other side of the Tower Hamlets junction, is due shortly to open as the **Thirsty Scarecrow**, a cider bar. Co-owners are Kathryn Tatham and Kieran Redman. Kieran, who you may know from the Rack of Ale, commented:



"This will be a Micro Cider House, working on the same principals as the other popular micropubs in town." Plans include one or two ales available in addition to cider.

In Ladywell, the **Fleur** has now been reopened for several months but although handpumps have been installed we await reports of whether they are being used, and if so for what. At the **Park Inn** further changes of operation, as we understand that it is now being run by the proprietors of the Railway Bell at Kearsney.

A few doors along the **Rack of Ale**, as always offers a wide and varied choice including beer from the new Gemstone Brewery, set up in Chatham and initially using Nelson's facilities. Plum Porter from the ever reliable Titanic Brewery has proved very popular and there were pleasing comments about Nottingham Rock Mild – "a cracking pint." A beer festival is planned for mid-December to celebrate the Back Rack, Trish's opening up of the area behind the stillage. There will be up to fifteen additional ales joining the pubs normal selection (see advert page 7)

**Louis Armstrong**, Maison Dieu Road: Normally three or four Kent ales available with occasional guest from further afield courtesy of swaps with regular suppliers. The pub's good value Wednesday meals (see advert page 5) continue to grow in popularity. At the nearby **Red Lion**, Charlton Green two ales is the norm – at the time of writing West Berkshire Good Old Boy and Timothy Taylor Golden Best, although earlier in the Autumn the former was replaced by Landlord for a while.

## DEAL

In Beach Street the ex-Sheps **Clarendon Hotel** has now reopened, seemingly as two businesses – one, the left hand end in the direction of the Bohemian, a Burger Bros operation

(sandwich board outside offering food and craft beers), and the other, larger part comprising the step down bar and adjoining area to the right calling itself Clarendon Hotel and Bar. Ripple Steam was on the handpump at the end of October. At the rear, we understand, part of the premises is to become an Indian restaurant. Ripple Steam is also available regularly available as one of a choice of four or five ales at the **Bohemian** which sources its supplies from both local Kent brewers and more distant producers, one such being Cottage Pit Stop, on the handpumps in August. In early October a pint of Skrimshander Hopdaemon received the plaudit: in excellent condition with a good head and packed with taste, a pleasure to drink.

Further extensive choice at the **Just Reproach**, King Street where recent visits have seen ales from Triple fff, Broughton, Rooster's, Grainstore, Long Man and Brighton Bier whose Dealer's Choice drew the comments: "Excellent condition for this fresh and tasty IPA. It may be "foreign" beer from Sussex, but I'm not fussy!" Local suppliers have included Hopdaemon, Rockin' Robin and Goacher's. Opposite, we understand real ale has on occasion been available at **Smugglers Records**. The premises has a licence which can be brought in to use when holding music events, etc.

In Queen Street it is good to see real ale continuing at the **Eagle Tavern**, where Sharp's Atlantic IPA was available in August. However, in the High Street, **D's Steakhouse & Dive Bar**, opposite Deal Town Hall where regularly a couple of real ales could be found, has now been converted into a hot dog restaurant (if that's not an oxymoron) called the Dog House. We suspect that real ale will not be on the agenda.

Also currently closed, and with prospects uncertain is the **Saracen's Head**

in Alfred Square. Ostensively up for refurbishment and change of landlord, local comment says a new tenant is not being sought. Anyway, it's farewell for the present to Richard and Opel – we wish them well and hope they find themselves another pub soon. Nothing closed though, about the Prince **Albert** on the opposite side of Alfred Square. Recent reports have seen beers from Nelson and Wentworth alongside Adnams Lighthouse, and a visit at the end of October found two ales from Kent Brewery – Black Gold and Enigma. At the **Ship**, Middle Street, Hophead and American Pale Ale from Dark Star remain regulars alongside a couple from Gadds, No.5 and No.7 featuring much of late. Late August saw Sharp's Atlantic appear on the handpumps.

**Magnet Inn**, London Road: As well as Sheps regular range the pub has been selling some of the brewery's more rarely seen beers. In July the dark brew Red Sails was available and in August the American style Samuel Adams Blonde Ambition. Meanwhile around the corner in Manor Road the **Admiral Keppel** has been selling Fuller's London Pride.

In Walmer, at the time of writing, plans are well advanced for the opening of the **Freed Man**, a micropub conversion of one of the Dover Road shops along from the junction with Station Road. Nearby at the **Thompson Bell** London Pride was available on several recent visits.

On the Strand, of late, real ale at the **Lighthouse** has shown plenty of variety – predominantly local but with some from more distant parts such as Buxton and Harbour. Kent suppliers have included Wantsum, Mad Cat, Gadds, Canterbury Brewers and Ripple Steam. And at the **Stag** Broadside, Spitfire and Bombardier have been available.

Elsewhere in Walmer, Ripple Best Bitter has appeared at the **Drum Major**, while at the **Berry** beers too numerous to record, but what do you expect from a pub with ten handpumps – ales from everywhere, with the Sussex duo Dark Star and Harvey's particularly prominent.

## SANDWICH & RURAL

In Sandwich, plans for a micropub at 6 King Street have eventually been dropped following considerable local opposition. However, there are plenty of other good real ale outlets in the town. At the now reopened **Fleur de Lis** Harvey's Sussex and London Pride were available in August, and there have been good reports of Whitstable Bay Pale Ale from the **Market Inn**. Sharp's Atlantic has been regularly seen at the **New Inn** together with Courage Best and beers from Charles Wells and Greene King.

The **Red Cow**, usually has a choice of four or five ales, recent beers having included Broadside, Doom Bar, Otter, Black Sheep, Robinson's Dizzy Blonde and Bath Ales Conversion, alongside local suppliers such as Gadds, Canterbury Brewers, Ripple Steam and Nelson. And at the **Kings Arms**, Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter and Greene King IPA have been available.

At the **Crispin** Mad Cat Brewery is a main supplier, providing among other beers the pub's very own Crispin Ale. Many other Kent breweries get representation – Gadds, Hopdaemon, Canterbury Ales and Ripple Steam all making appearances over recent months. From more distant parts Broadside is a regular, with other Adnams' brews featuring as well, along with the likes of Dark Star and Sharp's. More Kentish ales across the road at the **Admiral Owen**, where beers from Pig and Porter, Canterbury Ales, Tonbridge and

# THE LANES

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Whitstable have all been seen of late.

And more real ale can be found at the **Bell Hotel** and the **Hop and Huffkin**, and at the **George and Dragon**, Fisher Street where recent visits have found Thwaites Wainwright, Harviestoun's Bitter & Twisted, and Butcombe Bitter among others.

In Ash the future prospects of the **Chequer Inn** as a pub are not good. Its Asset of Community Value status was rescinded earlier in the year, following an appeal by the pub's owner, who has now applied to convert the property to a dwelling. We understand that local opposition to the proposal is not great. Also providing cause for concern is the **Charity** at Woodnesborough which as far as we know is still closed but retains ACV status – any information gratefully received.

And at Wingham the ACV granted on the also closed **Red Lion** is no longer in place either, having been removed following a review by the Council. It concluded that the prospect of it furthering the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community in the next five years was unrealistic. Better news though, from the **Dog Inn**, where there are plans to double the number of handpumps from four to eight. When complete it is hoped that all will be used for Kent brews, including two beers from the pub's own micro-brewery and one for a local cider.

**Anchor Inn**, Wingham: Wide ranging selection including the now rarely seen Farmer's Glory from Wadworth, once, before the rise of the micro brewers, a much sought after pint. Other beers have included St Austell Proper Job, Robinson's Dizzy's Twisted Sister, Marston's King of Swing, Cameron's Long Leg and Adnams Topaz. A beer festival is set for 20-22 November, in the upstairs function room – there will be music and food.

At East Stourmouth the **Rising Sun** has been regularly selling Wadworth 6X. Other beers have included Wadworth Swordfish, Marston's Pedigree, and Midnight Sun, Thunderbolt and Thunderbird from Cottage. And a visit to the **Half Moon & Seven Stars** at Preston in mid-August found Gadds' No. 7 and Master Brew.

In Staple the **Tuns at Staple House** (formerly Three Tuns) remains closed, while a visit to the Black Pig found Landlord and Harvey's Sussex Best. At the **Fitzwalter Arms** in Goodnestone normal choice of late has been Sheps Master Brew and Whitstable Bay, and in Nonington the **Royal Oak** normally selects from a mixture of Kent beers and national brews. Locally Wantsum is a regular, while more distant sourced beers have included Sharp's Atlantic IPA and Doom Bar, Ruddles Best Bitter and Hobgoblin.

Local and not so local, also at the **Wrong Turn**, Barfreestone, which provided an excellent venue for our monthly Branch meeting back in July. As well as featuring many a Kent micro, beers from all across the country are liable to turn up. One visitor found a selection of Viper Ales Jake the Snake, plus two from Mighty Oak, Down the Hole and Three Cool Cats – "Three beers I've never seen before," but all in superb condition.

**Bell Inn**, Shepherdswell: We understand that Cask Marque accreditation has now been acquired. Recent visits have found a choice of ale including Courage Director's, Greene King Old Golden Hen and Sharp's Doom Bar.

**Old Lantern**, Martin: First visit for a while said one of our members, and "didn't disappoint" with Master Brew in very good condition. At Guston, the **Chance** remains one of the few pubs locally where Draught Bass might be found, being one of the pub's regular

real ale selection, and was much appreciated during August and September.

## FOLKESTONE

**Richmond:** Following the report in our summer issue we now hear that the pub has most certainly gone, Shep's having disposed of it for conversion into two flats. May it rest in peace. However its near neighbours, the **East Cliff Tavern** and **Lifeboat**, continue to thrive, the former, we are informed, having shifted thirty plus different ales between June and August. Meanwhile the Lifeboat is concentrating on local brews – a visit earlier in the autumn finding Mad Cat Copper Ale, Hop Fuzz Goldsmith and Gadds Al Murray.

More Mad Cat down the hill at the **Mariner** in the Stade which was selling the brewery's Golden IPA and also Ripple Steam alongside Harvey's Sussex and Doom Bar. A few doors along London Pride, Bombardier, Doom Bar and Abbot were available at the **Ship**.

In the Bayle new licensees Nikki and Peter appeared to have settled in well at the **Guildhall**, and save for some decoration, not much having changed since Stuart and Gilly's time. Early September found Young's Special and St Austel Proper Job on the handpumps alongside Harvey's Sussex and Greene King IPA. Up towards the church the **British Lion** was selling the Marston's selection of Ringwood Fortyniner, Pedigree and Banks's. At **Kipps** the choice was Black Sheep, Portobello Market Porter and Grainstore Triple BBB, and in Church Street, Doom Bar, London Glory and Gadds No 7 were available at the **Pullman**.

**Chambers**, Cheriton Place: Normally four or five ales on the handpumps – Adnams Lighthouse, Wantsum One Hop First Gold, Cottage EPA, Gravesend Shrimpers and Goody on one Thursday evening in September, plus

three ciders. At the **Firkin Alehouse** Tonbridge Blonde Ambition vied with XT Brewing IPA and Blackjack River brown ale. Among those waiting in the wings was the ever popular Dark Star American Pale Ale. We hear that the pub is happy for sandwiches bought from the Sandwich Shop a few doors away to be brought in and consumed on the premises. At **Harvey's** the real ales were Bombardier and Courage Best and at the **Happy Frenchman** Doom Bar.

In Sandgate, autumn saw 98 High Street (formerly the Dressing Up Box) open as a micropub. Called **Inn Doors** it aims to create a small, friendly comfortable area where customers can meet to enjoy a drink and good conversation. The style is 1930s, decorated as a period living room with contemporary furniture. There is cask ale from a purpose built stillage, along with cider and wine and a variety of pies, sausage rolls and cheese, biscuits and pickles. No music, TV or gaming machines, and mobiles are on silent. Hours are Tues, Weds & Thurs – 5pm to 10pm; Fri & Sat – 12 noon to 11pm; and Sun – 12.30 to closing (approx. 6pm, but will stay open later if there are people wanting to carry on drinking!). Closed Monday.

Elsewhere the **Providence** has undergone refurbishment. It now offers three changing real ales, real cider and some "interesting bottled beers." At the **Ship**, in late September, beer choice was Hophead and American Pale Ale from Dark Star, Greene King IPA and Abbot, Hopdaemon Incubus and Hopback Summer Lightning.

Also in September, a visit to Hythe found the **Potting Shed** selling Long Man Best Bitter, Brakspear Bitter and Dogbolter, while round the corner at the **Carousel**, Doom Bar and Youngs Bitter were available. The **White Hart** had Greene King IPA and Shepherd Neame Late Red on the handpumps,



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## Opening Hours

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**TUE: 14:00-23:00**

**WED: 11:00-23:00**

**THUR: 12:00-23:00**

**FRI: 11:00-23:30**

**SAT: 11:00-23:00**

**SUN: 11:30-23:00**



and at the **Red Lion** the choice was Lion from Hook Norton and Wife of Bath from Canterbury Ales. In Windmill Street the **Three Mariners** was offering a selection of five ales – Whitstable Winkle Picker, Tonbridge Rustic, Youngs Bitter, Westerham 1965 and Maidstone Dark.

Outside Folkestone we hear that the **Drum** at Stanford has come to an arrangement with Greene King to sell a local Kentish ale, and that the **Tiger** at Stowting (one of the first pubs to be owned by a group of locals) has eventually been sold – no information on purchaser or future prospects. At Warehorne it is good to hear that the **Woolpack** has reopened, especially as we understand that the **World's Wonder** is now closed.

## CANTERBURY

**Thomas Tallis**, Northgate: Major delays have seen the opening of Mark Robson's proposed alehouse put back – at the time of writing it is likely now to be sometime in the new year. Considerably larger than a micro pub, it is planned to comprise three rooms and serve a choice of traditional cask and the more recent innovation key cask.

**New Inn**, Havelock Street: A beer weekend is planned for late November – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>. It will be themed around birds with planned ales to include brews from Rockin Robin and Kent's new "nano" brewery Turnstone at Whitstable. From further away they will be Purity Mad Goose and Oakham's Scarlet McCaw. Music will be courtesy of a selection of recordings using traditional vinyl technology.

**Phoenix**, Old Dover Rd: The pub offers a 10% discount to CAMRA members. Beer choice is normally four plus real ales, many of Kentish origin although with a good selection from across the country. And always an interesting selection at the **King's Head**,

Wincheap – a visit at end of September finding Wantsum Moor's Head and Nethergate Growler Bitter alongside Harvey's Sussex and Master Brew.

Outside the city, the **Hop Pocket** at Bossingham was found closed in September while at the **Rose and Crown**, Stelling Minnis a choice of ales offered Young's Bitter, Hop Fuzz and Whitstable.

## ELSEWHERE

**Red Lion**, Snargate: Saturday July 25<sup>th</sup> saw a substantial crowd gather at the Red Lion, Snargate on Romney Marsh to see the presentation of two awards – as Ashford, Folkestone and Romney Marsh Branch Pub of the Year 2015, and for thirty continuous years in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide, the latter received from the guide's editor Roger Protz.

Known to all and sundry as Doris's, after its long serving landlady, Doris Jemison it has, like our own Carpenters Arms, remained in the same family for over 100 years, with Doris herself having run it for more than 50. The pub, dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, is one of CAMRA's heritage pubs, and still retains wartime posters and pictures of Winston Churchill – "Nothing significant appears to have changed, except the beers, since I drank there in the late 1950s," commented one long standing Branch member.

It also remains split into a number of small rooms, which made it fortunate that the day of the presentation stayed fine, allowing the event to take place outside rather than the somewhat constricted confines inside. Brewers Goachers and Romney Marsh provided good Kentish ale to keep everyone happy, while, as the pub does not normally offer food, Turner's Fine Food of Goudhurst provided a selection of English cheeses to satisfy those parts that the beer might not have reached.

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# KENT SMALL BREWERY NEWS

**Canterbury Brewers**, Canterbury 01227 455899 [thefoundry@live.co.uk](mailto:thefoundry@live.co.uk)

An eclectic range of beers are on offer for autumn and winter: Ocktoberfest (ABV 4.8%), a German style amber cask lager with Noble hops; Scrumptin (ABV 4.6%), a pumpkin pie beer, brewed with slow roasted pumpkin, cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves; Wpadka (ABV 3.8%), a Black IPA dry hopped with either Australian Ella or New Zealand Nelson Sauvin; Christmas Pudding (ABV 4.6%), a golden Christmas ale brewed with sultanas, raisins, currants and plenty of Christmas spices; and Halfling IPA (3.6%) Session IPA dry hopped with Cascade and Simcoe (sound like small beer to me!).

**Caveman**, Swanscombe 07900 234644 [cavemanbrewery@gmail.com](mailto:cavemanbrewery@gmail.com) The first beer for keg and bottle is currently being brewed: a Rye pale ale (ABV 5.3%). Although the kegs will be force carbonated in the conditioning tanks (not approved by CAMRA), the bottles will be bottle conditioned and unfiltered. Christmas seasonal, Christmas Club (ABV 6.4%), an old ale spiced with Garam Massala, is also being brewed at the moment – some will be set aside for oak-ageing. A beer to watch out for in the early part of 2016 is Mogao Ginger Stout. Cold storage space is being increased so James can keep up with demand.

**Old Dairy**, Tenterden 01580 763867 [fineale@olddairybrewery.com](mailto:fineale@olddairybrewery.com)

Winter seasonal ale, Snow Top (ABV 6%) will be available from November: brewed with rich dark English Maris Otter, Crystal and Black malts and the spicy notes from English Challenger, East Kent Golding and Bramling Cross hops. Snow Top is badged as the 'perfect winter warmer for those long cold nights'. The Old Dairy Brewery on-line shop is now up and running and brewery tour vouchers and gift vouchers are available – ideal gifts for Christmas.

**Pig and Porter**, Tunbridge Wells 01424 893519 [ask@pigandporter.co.uk](mailto:ask@pigandporter.co.uk)

Penhurst Pale (ABV 4.5%) is being renamed as Fatal Flaw as the original name caused confusion with drinkers: some thinking it a misspelling of Penshurst (the nearby village); others thinking it not especially pale. Fatal Flaw will be reclassified as an American Amber ale. Green hop beer Strangely Brown (4.4%) has proved so popular it is being added to the occasional range under the name Thief of Time, using the same grain but with dried Fuggles hops. Slow, Black (5.1%) is joining the core range. A new cold room and two new fermenters are being added to the brewery, allowing Sean to double production.

**Ramsgate**, Broadstairs 01843 868453 [info@ramsgatebrewery.co.uk](mailto:info@ramsgatebrewery.co.uk)

The monstrous Green Hop Export (ABV 6.5%), a kegged version of the Green Hop Ale, will be available through the autumn. Beers coming up are: winter special, Dark Conspiracy (ABV 4.9%); and Christmas special, Little Cracker (ABV 5%). The brewery's Christmas opening day is Saturday 1 December from 12 noon – 4pm: expect beer, mince pies, carol singing etc...

**Rockin Robin Brewery**, Maidstone 01622 747106

[sales@rockinrobinbrewery.co.uk](mailto:sales@rockinrobinbrewery.co.uk) 15 Barrel Brewery. Ales include: Reliant Robin (ABV 3.7%), RPA (ABV 3.9%), Robin Redbest (ABV 4%), Rock A Hula (ABV 4%) which appeared at the GBBF in August, Reckless Robin (ABV 4.5%), Really Rockin (ABV 5%), Blizzard of Oz (ABV 4.5%) and Portly Robin (ABV 5%).

**Wantsum**, Hersden 0845 0405980 [wantsumbrewery@googlemail.com](mailto:wantsumbrewery@googlemail.com) The brewery is expanding, taking on another warehouse and office unit at Lakesview Business Park, into which will be put a large cold room and an office. This allows production to be increased by 50% and provides room for three more fermenters.

**Westerham Brewery**, Edenbridge 01732 864427

[sales@westerhambrewery.co.uk](mailto:sales@westerhambrewery.co.uk) Five Westerham beers have won medals at the International Beer Challenge. Hosted in London, a panel of beer experts, including retailers, importers, publicans, brewers, writers and flavour analysts, judged more than 630 beers from 30 countries. Audit Ale (ABV 6.2%), Double Stout (ABV 5.5%), Marks and Spencer's 9 Hop Kent Pale (ABV 4%), Viceroy IPA (ABV 5%) and British Bulldog (ABV 4.3%) all picked up awards.

**Whitstable Brewery**, Grafty Green 01622 851007  
[whitstablebrewer@byconnect.com](mailto:whitstablebrewer@byconnect.com) Cockle Warmer (ABV 4.7%) will be available shortly to help you, well, warm your cockles this winter. Kent Coast (ABV 3.9%), a pale ale with 'some of the world's most flavourful hops' proved so popular it will be making an appearance again next year. Work continues on the brewery's very own micro pub (no further news at this point).

### Hopdaemon Presentation

Last year Hopdaemon won beer of the festival at the White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales with the World War I commemorative beer Over the Top. This year, while not taking the top accolade, the brewery's Green Daemon was the first Kent beer finished and thereby adjudged Kent Beer of the Festival.

Presentation was made on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September by a small group from Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District Branch. As last year, Hopdaemon owner and brewer Tonie Prins met us at Faversham



station around midday to drive us the few miles to the brewery in the downland village of Newnham. Occupying farm buildings on a side lane off the main road, nothing, save the odd barrel standing outside, suggests that here is a brewery supplying beer to pubs over a large part of Kent.

We were shortly joined by CAMRA East Kent Area Organiser Jeffery Waller, and several pleasant hours soon passed. Tonie received the award from Festival Organiser Dave Green, and we drank Hopdaemon beer and talked about beer, pubs and brewing – Tonie had green hopped a small quantity of Green Daemon to produce a beer of a subtle but distinctly different flavour.

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# The National News

By Martin Atkins

**Real Ale Growth** This year's *Cask Report*, the annual publication on the state of the real ale market, finds that our traditional ale is significantly outperforming the market, and forecasts that by 2020 it will account for one in five of every pint sold in a pub. Iron Maiden frontman Bruce Dickinson who provided the report's introduction said, "British ale is a drink with global appeal. Maybe we forgot that a decade or so ago when ale seemed a bit dog-eared and old-fashioned. But now, cask ale is regaining its rightful place on the bar, claiming back its birthright as the very DNA of a uniquely British tradition." Leading the way is the independent sector, whose members in the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) have seen their market share rise from under 2% ten years ago to around 7% today. SIBA's managing director Mike Benner commented, "Discerning consumers are increasingly choosing beers from independent brewers over those from big producers." And real ale is now critical to many pubs' incomes, real ale drinkers currently spending just under £1,000 a year in pubs, almost twice the average personal spend. The report recognises though, that pubs face a challenge, with people using them less often owing to alternative leisure opportunities. Here, however, real ale has a distinct advantage – it is generally speaking something you cannot get at home or anywhere else.

**Two Largest Brewers to Merge** Mid October saw the world's two largest brewers finally agree in principle on terms of a merger, by which Brussels based AB InBev, brewers of Stella Artois and Budweiser will take over SABMiller whose brands include Peroni

and Grolsch. As they stand at the moment the two brewers combined account for a third of total world output of beer, and it is likely that disposals will be required. Apparently an impetus behind the proposed merger is competition from the growing craft sector. Readers of *Channel Draught* will no doubt find the above of limited interest and it is included for information purposes only. The 2016 Good Beer Guide states that AB InBev produces no real ale at all, and does not even mention SABMiller.

**Dark Star Expansion** Those of you who despair at the loss of ever more good local pubs and the conversion of those that remain into food orientated "family" outlets might take heart at news from Dark Star. The Sussex based brewery, which started in the basement of a Brighton pub, has plans to build up a small chain of about twenty pubs – currently it already owns the Evening Star in Brighton and the Partridge at Partridge Green, and is negotiating for a third outlet in Haywards Heath. However, this is no target led development. The brewery intends to take its time, and find the right premises in the right location, ideally small wet led outlets, fulfilling a vision of classic pubs and good beer. Managing director Paul Reed says they are not interested in car parks, letting rooms or big kitchens: "Great beer is what we understand and hopefully the new venues will be full of people standing shoulder to shoulder drinking great beer and talking rubbish, rather than places for family meals." Of particular interest are traditional high streets away from shopping centres with plenty of empty shops. "Small wet-led bars could be an exciting alternative

to charity shops," he says – and offering something that cannot be bought online or provided by out of town retail parks.

**Otley 19** Demonstrating probably the most comprehensive use yet of ACVs, Otley in Yorkshire, last April, had all 19 of the town's pubs granted ACV status. However, the designations, which followed nominations by the Otley Pub Club, were not greeted with universal enthusiasm. Lee Pullan, freeholder at the Old Cock, branded the blanket nomination as a 'publicity stunt', and demanded a review into his own pub's listing. He argued that if the Old Cock was to close there would still be plenty of other pubs in the town for the community to meet and socialise in, plus additionally, that much of his trade was not local. The consultancy Change-of-Us, representing Mr Pullan, said that most of the town's pubs were tenanted and at higher risk of disposal than the few privately owned pubs, and it is not unreasonable to assume that several pubs might come on the market together. Would the local community be expected to bid on them all? "The blanket listing will create permanent closures rather than preventing them. Pubs will stand boarded up waiting for the ACV and planning processes to take their course." Otley council, however, rejected these arguments and decided that the Old Cock would remain listed as an ACV.

**Living Wage Fears** *Channel Draught's* concerns about the impact for pubs of the Chancellor's planned Living Wage, which we expressed in our summer edition, have been echoed across the economy by many businesses whose wage rates by necessity have to be low. With the cutting of benefits, support for the low paid is being shifted towards employers, who in the case of small pubs can often be earning an hourly

rate considerably less than the staff they employ. However, larger operators are concerned as well. At a time when we continue to lose pubs, either demolished or converted to other uses, Wetherspoons boss Tim Martin pointed out that by pushing up wages the government is "inevitably putting financial pressure on pubs." His comments accompanied preliminary yearly results which showed like for like growth of only 1.4% for the 26 weeks to 26 July.

**Batemans Cut Back** Lincolnshire brewer Batemans of Wainfleet has announced plans to cut beer production by more than half to save money on beer duty. Its annual production will be more than halved to just 7,000 barrels allowing a saving of £18 a barrel. At one time the brewery was producing over 30,000 barrels a year. Batemans blame Small Brewers Relief, the progressive beer duty introduced by Gordon Brown in 2002, to assist the micro industry.

The company's marketing director Jaclyn Batemen said that the current tax regime penalises middle range brewers and allows small brewers to undercut them. She added that many other brewers of similar size to Batemans had already cut back or were considering doing so. Under current rules brewers with production under 3,055 barrels a year pay only half the total duty which equates to around £64 a barrel, or when VAT is taken into account 27p a pint at the bar. The lower duty was intended to attract new brewers and allow them funds for equipment, jobs, training and marketing – it was not intended to allow the undercutting of existing brewers she said, whose costs might be twice those of a small brewer. Should the tax regime become more favourable the company would increase production again. (See Channel View)

**Beer & Cider Duty** Despite its problems for brewers such as

Batemens CAMRA fully backs the retention of Small Breweries Relief, which forms part of its continuing campaign on beer tax. Following the 2014 budget and the Chancellor's second successive duty cut together with the scrapping of the duty escalator, the Campaign commissioned a report from the Centre of Economic and Business Research on their combined effect. Its results, in which economic modelling suggested that beer in the pub was 16p cheaper and that 1,000 fewer pubs had closed, were presented to the Treasury in support of further cuts, which duly appeared in the budget this March. CAMRA continues to use this model in lobbying MPs and in working with the Society of Independent Brewers and the British Beer and Pub Association to achieve a duty system that supports beer and pubs. And, as reported in our summer edition, CAMRA's campaign to protect the small cider producers' tax exemption from tampering by the

European Commission, resulted in the Chancellor giving a firm commitment to uphold the existing arrangements.

**Fears over Pubs Purchase** CAMRA is trying to get clarification on commercial property business New River Retail on its plans for several hundred pubs that it has acquired in two lots over the last couple of years. After the initial purchase of 202 from Marston's New River Retail announced that it planned to develop some into convenience stores, but a statement after the latest purchase of 153 from Punch said that it had no plans for significant disposals, and instead intends to develop car parking spaces and surplus land attached to the pubs for commercial or residential purposes. CAMRA head of communications Tom Stainer felt this indicated a positive approach to running the pubs as going concerns, but said there were still worries over how they would be effected by developing adjoining land.

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# MAKING YOUR PUB AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE

Concern over the loss of local shops, pubs etc. led the government in 2011 to introduce the Localism Act to enable local groups including CAMRA Branches, Parish Councils, and community organisations to nominate such local services as "Assets of Community Value" (ACVs). Councils are required to maintain lists of these nominations, and CAMRA's objective is that 3,000 pubs will have ACV status by the end of 2016

Since April 2015, pubs nominated as ACVs have required planning permission to be demolished or converted to any other use – a very important modification as there is normally no restriction on demolition or conversion to a variety of other uses including shopping.

The Act states that Councils must accept valid nominations if:

- an actual current use of the building or other land that is not an ancillary use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, and
- it is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.

ACV nominations must be submitted to the relevant local council, most of whom have now produced an appropriate form for that purpose – there is no central government form.

For CAMRA members the October edition of *What's Brewing* enclosed a form which is acceptable to councils, and guidelines on completing it. They can also obtain further advice by contacting CAMRA's Campaigns Officer Faye Grima on [acv@camra.org.uk](mailto:acv@camra.org.uk) or visit [www.camra.org.uk/listyourlocal](http://www.camra.org.uk/listyourlocal). Non-members are also welcome to contact Faye Grima on [acv@camra.org.uk](mailto:acv@camra.org.uk) for advice and help.

It is vital that nominations are completed correctly and all the information required supplied. Quite a few nominations have been rejected, or actual designations successfully appealed against, because correct procedures were not followed or on technical points.

The following is a list of the requirements for nominating a pub to become an ACV:

## Details of the pub

- name, address and postcode
- description of the pub and its boundaries (include car park, beer garden, accommodation over pub, etc.)
- Title Plan, and Land Registry documents indicating anyone with a freehold or leasehold interest in the property (CAMRA members please contact [acv@camra.org.uk](mailto:acv@camra.org.uk) )

## Nominators

- an unincorporated group of 21 (or more) local people who appear on the electoral register in the same or neighbouring Council to where the pub is located.

Name, full address and signature of each required, and should be from different households. Also a lead nominator is needed, and a name for the informal unincorporated group.

### Reasons for Nomination

- as much information as possible to show that the pub is valued by the community, and that it furthers (or could further) the social wellbeing and social interests of the community; and that the pub can be viable in the future. A full list of reasons can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/acvchecklist>, but includes such things as meeting places for sports teams; advertises local events; or coordinates the local Neighbourhood Watch.

Once completed the form should be submitted to the local council (the CAMRA form includes a box for council name and address on its front page), which then has 8 weeks to assess the application, during which time the pub is protected from demolition or conversion to other uses. It is advised that a receipt is obtained to confirm submission of the nomination.

Please note, if a pub gains ACV status, its owner is obliged to inform the council if the pub is to be sold, but neither the owner nor the council is obliged to inform those that submitted the ACV. Consequently many nominators request the council to inform them should the prospect of a sale arise. Following notification by the owner to the council, the ACV nominating group must inform the council within six weeks if they propose to try and purchase the pub.

For CAMRA members a series of ACV workshops has been arranged. Details available in the October edition of *What's Brewing*.



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# RAMBLINGS & RUMBLINGS

**Thurs 16th to Mon 21<sup>st</sup> July** Five days in Yorkshire, beers too copious to recall (hope they weren't all citrus pale types that seemed to dominate up there when the Beery Boaters visited in spring - Ed)

**Wed 22 Jul – Plough & Harrow, Tilmanstone** (Master Brew in fine condition) maybe I'd been pining for that Sheps taste!

**Sat 25 Jul – Fitzwalter** (Master Brew, Whitstable Bay) **Black Pig, Barnsole** (Landlord, Harvey's Sussex Best) **Berry** (Dark Star Redhead, Hop Head & Pale Ale, Harvey's, Settle Classic, Tom Paine, Gadds 7, Rockin Robin Hoppin Robin, and several others) Busy early evening with family birthday party.

**Mon 27 Jul – Rack of Ale** (Wantsum More + others) Excellent Wantsum **King's Head, Kingsdown** (Brentwood Galaxy, Ruddles County, Greene King IPA) **Zetland Arms** (Goldings, Whitstable Bay, Master Brew) Mondays very popular here, place "heeeving" – just catch a glimpse of the sea through the parked cars!

**Fri 31 Jul – Star, St Mary in Marsh** (Youngs Bitter & Special, Master Brew, Broadside) **Bell, Ivychurch** (Harvey's Sussex Best, Trelawney, Celtica, Sharp's Atlantic) **Shepherd & Crook, Bummarsh** (Old Dairy Crooked, Welton's Hard Red Balls) Nice to see place busy, just in time for food

**Sun 2 Jul – Royal Oak, Nonington** (Sharps Atlantic, Ruddles Best) No food lunchtime, change of manager, looking for a chef **Dog** (Gadds Seashells, Summer's Day and Gadd 5 – Dogbolter just sold out) Quiet at 3.30 but impressed with beer choice **Crown & Sceptre**, Elms Vale Road (No real ale) "Sorry, been a run on Whitstable Bay, just sold out" Stayed to listen to guitarists, very busy/buzzing late afternoon, great ambience.

**Wed 4 Aug – Rose & Crown, Stelling Minnis** (Youngs Best, Hop Fuzz Martello, Westerham Bulldog) East Kent Ramblers Summer Lunch, efficient service to 40 people, good food too! **Fox** (Butcombe Bitter, Cottage Midnight Sun, Pride of Shefffield)

**Thurs 6 Aug – Arlington** Closed at 6pm. No opening times displayed **Cinque Port Arms, Western Docks** (No real ale) **Mash Tun** (Bank Top De Montfort, Crispin Ale, Canterbury Ales Wife of Bath) **Lanes** (Bespoke Brewing King's Shilling, Goody Goodness Gracious, Rudgate Ruby Mild, Ashburnham Pale, Canterbury Ales Pardoners)

**Fri 7 Aug – Three Horseshoes, Mongeham** (Tribute) Happy Hour 4pm – 6pm Monday to Friday **Hare & Hounds Northbourne** (Dark Star Hop Head & Pale Ale, Devon Steam Piston Broke plus two ciders) Surprised to see John Brown behind the bar, formerly of the Hoy and Bohemian **Eagle, Deal** (Sharps Atlantic)

**Sun 9 Aug – Cat and Custard Pot** (Master Brew, Gadds 5) Landlady Jean celebrating 40th year at pub on 30 October **Gatekeeper, Etchinghill** (White Horse Blowing Stone, Cairngorm Calli, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker, Caveman Palaeolithic) First ever visit since change of ownership and name. Very foodie as previously, beer

range much improved though. **Guildhall** (Harvey's Best, Wadworth 6x, Greene King IPA, Marston's King Swing) **Kipps** ('Home by the Sea' Mermaid plus others)

**Thurs 20 Aug** Start of five days of Derbyshire pub walks **Brewery Tap, Derby** (Dukeries Blonde – not of the best) An inauspicious start **Exeter Arms, Derby** (Dancing Duck Ay Up, Ginger Ninja)

**Fri 21 Aug – Miner's Arms, Milltown** (Castle Rock Elsie Mo) Well-heeled types lunching on fancy food, (miners on their day off possibly – *are there still any* - Ed) but friendly hosts **Nettle Inn, Milltown** What's the difference between 'shut' and 'closed'? This seemed to be both! **Old Poets' Corner, Ashover** (Ashover Light Rail, Poets' Tipple, Oakham Citra) Luckily arrived just in time for lunch - good food, excellent pub **Brunswick, Derby** (Elland Blonde, Brunswick The Usual) **Alexandra, Derby** (Castle Rock Harvest Pale)

**Sat 22 Aug – King William IV, Milford** other than Doom Bar, beers too strong for hot day, so opted for bottle of Crabbies Ginger Beer **Holly Bush, Makeney** (Grainstore Cooking bitter) Great pub, good food **Dead Poets Inn, Holbrook** (Welbeck Abbey Henrietta) **Brunswick, Derby** (Brunswick Triple Hop, Oldershaw Heavenly Blonde)

**Sun 23 Aug – Red Lion, Crich Tramway Village** (Crampton Gold) **King's Head, Bonsall** (Batemans Gold) **Greyhound, Cromford** (Cromford Bitter) A wet teatime, but the Sunday lunch went down well **Boat, Cromford** (Abbeydale Admiral)

**Mon 24 Aug – Monsal Head Hotel** (Stables Bitter) **Red Lion, Litton** (Blue Monkey PG Sips) **Exeter Arms, Derby** (Dancing Duck Ay Up, Pedigree) The Derby Pub of the Year. Quiz night explained the unexpected Monday evening crush Brunswick (Brunswick White Feather, Landlord)

**Tues 25 Aug – Dolphin, Derby** (Ossett Yorkshire Blonde) **Bell & Castle, Derby** (Falstaff Phoenix) Interesting décor, but only us Tuesday lunchtime

**Tues 8 Sept – Zetland Arms** (Whitstable Bay, Spitfire, Spitfire Gold, Master Brew) Good value food, but pub bores not confined to micros it seems! **Bohemian** (Ripple Steam Original, Bath Conversion Ale, Gadds Seashells, Doom Bar) Pleasant welcome but music too loud in afternoon – (*doesn't sound quite your day, John!* - Ed) **Just Reproach** (Ilkley Gold, Hanlon's Firefly, Goachers Best Dark, Upham Stakes) **Lanes** (Yorvik Blonde plus others)

**Thurs 10 Sept – Wrong Turn** (Daytripper, Incubus, Majestic Oscar Wilde) Nice of them to open early for small group of ramblers

**Mon 14 Sept – Rack** (Wantsum Verve, Yellowtail, Titanic Plum Porter) Quiz in progress, very boisterous – (*Every month, often 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday* - Ed)

**Thurs 17 Sept – Shepherd & Crook, Burmarsh** (Old Dairy Crooked Top, Romney Amber) Appropriately local beer for a marshland pub **Firkin Alehouse, Folkestone** (Black Jack New Deal)

**Sat 19 Sept – Lantern, Martin** (Master Brew) First visit for a while - didn't disappoint **Lanes** (Goody Good Try, Goody Dead Good + others)

**Sun 27 Sept – Shepherd & Crook** (Old Dairy Crooked Top, Theakston Light-foot) deserted Sunday lunchtime for some reason

*Stroller*



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# CHANNEL VIEW

**Beer Duty** As we report in National News, Batemans of Wainfleet is to more than halve production to save on beer duty, and other brewers have already undertaken similar moves or are considering them. The problem is one that affects medium sized breweries, very much the old family operations which were the bedrock on which the real ale revival was founded in the early days of CAMRA, and derives from the success of Small Brewer's Relief (SBR) .

Introduced by Gordon Brown as Chancellor in 2002, Small Brewers' Relief reduced duty levels for smaller producers, and, aimed at supporting the micro industry and encouraging new entrants to the brewing business, has proved remarkably successful – from a few hundred at the turn of the century Britain now has over 1,400 breweries, the vast majority micros. However, while it has had little consequence for the giants of the business and their considerable economies of scale, many of the middle ranking brewers whose output is too high to qualify for lower duty rates have found it eating into their profits.

Recent editions of *Channel Draught* have highlighted the problem with contributions from Hogs Back Brewery owner Rupert Thomson and Mike Benner managing director of the Society of Independent Brewers and former CAMRA chief executive.

Rupert Thompson outlined the somewhat complex workings of the scheme, which allows small brewers half normal duty rate up to 3,000 barrels a year, after which full duty is paid on all production up to 18,000 barrels a year, when duty relief starts to be withdrawn and subsequently disappears altogether at

36,000 and above. He pointed out that in addition to Batemans recent decision, brewers such as Harveys, Hook Norton, Adnams and Theakstons had raised concerns and that McMullens, Hydes and Thwaites have actually cut production back.

Across Europe there are a number of SBR schemes in operation, and he argued that modification of the British scheme is required, with the objective of encouraging growth, as well as attracting new brewers. A full Treasury review is needed and if SBR were to be reconfigured it could help all brewers below the EU limit of 200,000 hectolitres.

By contrast, while agreeing that there is a problem, Mike Benner argued against a Treasury review. He felt that it risked "various unintended and potentially damaging consequences." All that was needed were a few adjustments to the existing scheme – raising the level at which 50% relief stops and increasing the maximum limit, after which no relief is provided, to the 200,000 hectolitres as allowed under EU law. However, as well as amending the SBR, he suggested we should also be tackling the whole business of beer duty and campaigning to achieve a general reduction.

And beer duty is a problem. Britain "enjoys" one of the highest rates of beer duty in Europe. Within the EU only Scandinavia matches our high level. On top of that there is 20% VAT charged on the cost of beer and duty. Despite George Osborne's welcome scrapping of the beer duty escalator in 2013, and three successive budgets in which beer duty has been reduced, a



£3 pint in the pub will still be sending about £1 straight to the Government.

We should perhaps be questioning why there is duty on beer at all. At one time beer was just a staple part of the diet and, when little was understood about infection, much safer than water or milk. By comparison tea was seen as a luxury and subject to heavy tax – imagine the uproar that would ensue if today a duty on tea was proposed.

At the very least we should be aiming at reducing beer duty to nearer the European average. Then there is the matter of VAT. The government appears to have accepted the importance of pubs and that currently many are struggling. There is a minister for community pubs, and the Localism Act provides assistance for those wanting to buy their local, but nothing would help as much as an injection of cash – effectively what would result if VAT on the on-trade was removed or substantially reduced.

No doubt there would be complaints from the supermarkets, but as heavily service based businesses, pubs, restaurants and cafes have inevitable additional costs that supermarkets can avoid. On the premise that we want to see such small enterprises retained, major adjustments to VAT would be more than justified.

**Joe Henson** As no doubt some of our readers will be aware mid-October saw the death at 82 of Joe Henson, father of BBC TV's *Countryfile* presenter Adam Henson. What possible connection, you are probably thinking, does that have with beer, pubs or anything to be found in *Channel Draught*. In fact it has a great deal. Passionately interested in the countryside and farming, Joe grew increasingly concerned about the changes that were starting to appear in the decades following World War II. In particular he felt the disappearance of traditional livestock breeds

was a loss that we would live to regret, and in 1971 set up Cotswold Farm Park to breed pedigree livestock and build an interest in rare breed conservation.

Does the year 1971 resonate with real ale drinkers? Of course it does, for it was that year that the four founding members of CAMRA, during a holiday in Ireland and amid wall to wall draught Guinness, conceived of an organisation to promote and protect traditional cask conditioned British ale - rapidly disappearing by then. A coincidence you might say, but we would argue the opposite – it was not just about beer and farm animals, but part of a widespread belief that what we eat and drink should be more than white sliced bread and frozen food.

Those who grew up in the 1950s and 1960s might remember the general disdain that was heaped upon all that was old or traditional, Britain was to be a country forged in the white heat of 20th century technology as one prime minister famously said. However the public became increasingly sceptical, typified by the reaction to Dr Beeching's decimation of the railways – not only were we to lose our beloved steam engines, but a third of the system was to be torn up. It became apparent that if left to big government and the whim of the market much of what we held dear would disappear.

In the spring of 1972, a year after the Irish holiday, a meeting at the Rose Inn, Nuneaton saw the approval of a constitution and the election of the first national executive of CAMRA. The following year Joe Henson established the Rare Breeds Survival Trust. Subsequently, no breed of farm animal has become extinct, and at 1400 plus there are now more real ale breweries in the UK than since the 1930s.



# THE GOOD BEER GUIDE TRAIL

Bus trips to visit all of the Branch's  
Good Beer Guide 2015 Pubs

In a variation to his normal summer routine of pub walks, this year John Pitcher arranged a series of bus trips with the objective of visiting every Branch pub that featured in the 2015 edition of the Good Beer Guide. We can only speculate on the reasons for John's switch from walking to public transport, but readers can be assured that it is no reflection on his own capabilities or preferences. We found on our first outing that given half a chance John will be heading off down the nearest footpath - overgrown, flooded or whatever.

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August** The day, and series of visits, started off at the **Five Bells** Eastry, where a small group assembled just before midday to drink London Pride and Greene King IPA. For those who had had no breakfast, or for whom breakfast seemed a long time ago, there was also the opportunity to assuage their hunger. An hour and a half, and pint or two later, and John was taking us across the main street to await the Deal bus opposite the disused and derelict-looking Eastry Hospital.

Our next destination being the **Crown** at Finglesham, we alighted at Circular Road, Betteshanger where we negotiated beaten tracks and brambles to bring us out almost opposite the pub. Hophead from Dark Star, and ESB and London Pride from Fullers were on the handpumps, and we spent a happy hour before yet another ramble, this time through low lying fields, amongst mounds and hollows, and water field ditches. We emerged, in due course, on the Sandwich-Deal road beside the **Coach and**



**Horses** (not included in this trip), where after a short wait opposite, the 13A service took us to Walmer seafront and our final destination, the **Berry** in Canada Road.

As always the Berry's selection was extensive and included Dark Star Hop Head and Pale Ale, Oakleaf Hole Hearted, Heligan Honey, Roosters Wild Mole, Nethergate Old Growler, Portobello Carnival and Skinners Porthleven, plus of course cider. There was also a selection of craft ales. We spent a pleasing hour or so before going our various ways – the first of our group of visits completed.

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August** First stop and initial meeting place at mid-morning was

the **Eight Bells** in Dover, which offered Wetherspoons normal wide ranging selection of real ale, including locally brewed Incubus from Hopdaemon. Breakfast was available for those requiring sustenance. A drink or two and it was time for the short walk to the next on our itinerary of GBG pubs – the **Rack of Ale** in Ladywell.

Open for just two years, the Rack has established itself as one of Dover's prime real ale outlets, devoted to providing the town with micro brews from Kent and across the country, as well as cider and wine. That day, the ale choice was Wantsum Verve, Hop Fuzz Goldsmith, Nottingham Rock Mild and Titanic Plum Porter. A couple of hours soon passed – lively conversation being struck up with, among others, regular beery boaters Colin and Jess – before we departed to the Ladywell bus stop to catch the Deal bus.

All credit to John, it would be difficult to achieve a more perfectly judged journey between two pubs in different towns – from a bus stop a few yards from the Rack of Ale, the stagecoach service deposited us but a few yards from the **Mill Inn**, Mill Hill. As good a community local as any around, we drank Doom Bar in a cosy corner to the right of the main door, before returning to the bus stop for the final leg of the day into Deal town centre and the **Ship Inn**, Middle Street.

A selection of five ales at the Ship – Gadds 5 and 7, Dark Star Hop Head and American Pale Ale and Sharps Atlantic. Prices are very competitive here, the No.7 for example retailing at £2.40 a pint. The front bar being fairly busy we found space in the back bar to enjoy our ale and what remained of the afternoon.

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September** Just two pubs included in the day's itinerary this time, with the first being the **Louis Armstrong** where assembly time was mid-afternoon. The Louis devotes itself to providing mainly Kent ales, being regularly supplied by Hopdaemon (Skrimshander house bitter), Gadds, Old Dairy, Goachers and Westerham. Beers from elsewhere in the country usually appearing courtesy of swaps by the above.

**The Louis Armstrong, Dover**



By chance the Louis had also hosted that day the September Kent Regional Meeting, and as that finished interest turned to the GBG trail. Ale choice ran to Skrimshander and Green Daemon from Hopdaemon, Goachers Maidstone Dark and from Nottinghamshire's Springhead Brewery, Robin Hood. A bare hour could be allowed before moving off to catch the 4pm bus to Coldred and the **Carpenters Arms**.

Tucked away in a small hamlet just off the A2 the Carpenters is of course our current Branch Pub of the Year and that afternoon had available two real ales – Bate-mans Autumn Fall and Longman Copperhop – both in tip top condition. It had been planned to return to Dover via the Dover/Sandwich service, changing buses at Eythorne, as had been done before. However, such a good time was had, that leaving was delayed until long after all bus services had finished, necessitating a journey



**The Crispin, Sandwich**

back by taxi.

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October** saw the fourth part of the trail, which kicked off at lunchtime at the **Crispin** in Sandwich. Beers were Canterbury Brewers Green & Black, Crispin Ale, Crispin One Hop, Broadside and Wantsum Greenhop, of which the landlord obligingly offered samples to those who wanted them. Following an early lunch of the usual high standard, this year's normal bus regime was interrupted by a

mile walk in sunshine to the **Blue Pigeons** at Worth, where we found Bombardier Burning Gold and Nice try from Charles Wells alongside London Pride.

The pub is another that has invested in the wedding business of which one was due that afternoon, although on our arrival at 1.30 the place deserted. With guests due in an hour or so, "You've plenty of time," said the staff, who assured us that people were welcome just to come for a drink at other times.

Back to the bus for the next stage, and the short journey into Deal and a visit to the town's first, and currently only, micropub, the **Just Reproach** in King Street. Another heavy representation from Kent brewers offered us Scotney Greenhop and Goldrush from Westerham, Kent Altered States, Ripple team Farmhouse Pale alongside Grainstore Rutland Panther.

Quite busy, with a "good buzz", there was time for a couple of pints before the 4pm bus to Kingsdown and Shepherd Neame's **Zetland Arms**. Beer choice was Whitstable Bay, Master Brew, Spitfire and Spitfire Gold. Good ambience at 4.30 (between foodie times), and plenty of people just out for a drink.....and remarkably hardly a dog to be seen!

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> October** was set for visits to the final four pubs, and the day began at the **Red Cow** in Sandwich. The weather being fine and warm, we sat out in the garden and drank from a selection of ales that included Ringwood Fortyniner, Doom Bar, Nelson Powder Monkey, Purity UBU and Foundryman's Gold. A pleasing hour soon passed, before we left a busy pub and moved on to the equally well patronised **George and Dragon** in Fisher Street, courtesy of Sandwich's medieval network of side streets and alleyways.

We found a choice of four ales – Otter Amber, Butcombe Bitter, Wantsum One Hop and Hobgoblin Gold – all in tip top condition, and some very interesting snacks including homemade scotch eggs of considerable proportions. We left some time after 3.30 to walk to New Street and await the Deal bus opposite the garage and just along the road from the now defunct Sandwich Arms.

The sun was setting as we alighted in Queen Street and made our way to the **Alma** in West Street, to drink Harvey's Sussex Bitter, Thwaites Wainwright and Sharps Atlantic, with Ripple Steam having recently finished. Another well patronised pub, we stayed until nearly 6pm when walked the short distance in darkened streets to

the last pub of the day and the last of this year's GBG selection, the **Prince Albert** in Alfred Square.

We arrived just as the pub was opening, to find alongside Adnams Lighthouse, Black Gold and Enigma from Kent Brewery, one of the now flourishing Kent beerage, all too rarely seen in our area. The pub has an extensive collection of old beer bottles on shelves around the walls, and an equally impressive array of saucy seaside postcards in the toilets (at least there is in the gents), which caught the eye of some of our group.



And so the tour of all seventeen of our 2015 Good Beer Guide selection came to an end. Towards 7pm we left for the fifteen minute walk to South Street and the bus home, amongst, it being Halloween, many a youthful impersonation of witches, ghouls, goblins and other things from the other side.

*Martin Atkins & John Pitcher*

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# KENT MICROPUBS

An updated list of Kent's micropubs

*The last few years have seen the phenomenal growth of micropubs in Kent, particularly East Kent. The following, to the best of our knowledge, is the situation at the end of October. In addition to these we are expecting the imminent opening of the **Thirsty Scarecrow** in the High Street, Dover (more predominantly a cider bar) and the **Freed Man**, Dover Road, Walmer. No doubt there are others being planned or proposed and we would welcome details.*

## **EAST KENT**

### **ASHFORD, FOLKESTONE AND ROMNEY MARSH**

**Barbers Arms**, Wye, Ashford (June 2013)

**Dog House**, Evengate Business Park, Station Road, Smeeth,

**Firkin Alehouse**, 18 Cheriton Place, Folkestone (Nov 2012)

**Inn Doors**, 96 High Street, Sandgate

**Kipps' Alehouse**, 11-15 Old High Street, Folkestone (2013)

**Potting Shed**, 160A High street, Hythe Former café, owners Pete and Belinda – ex Botolphs Bridge Inn and Britannia (Sept 2014)

### **DEAL, DOVER, SANDWICH & DISTRICT**

**Arlington**, 161 Snargate Street, Dover ex pub, recently a bistro (Sept 2014) – currently closed

**Just Reproach**, 14 King Street, Deal (Dec 2011)

**Lanes**, 15 Worthington Street, Dover (Dec 2014)

**Mash Tun**, 3 Bench Street, Dover. Formerly Pier Three (Aug 2014)

**Rack of Ale**, 7 Park Place, Ladywell, Dover (Oct 2013)

**Wrong Turn**, Pie Factory Road, Barfreton – converted outbuilding in a property outside the main village centre (Aug 2014)

### **CANTERBURY, HERNE BAY & WHITSTABLE**

**Black Dog**, 66 High Street, Whitstable – ex-delicatessen (Sept 2013)

**Bouncing Barrel**, 20 Bank Street, Herne Bay (May 2013)

**Butchers Arms**, 29A Herne Street, Herne Village – the 'original' micro pub run by Martyn Hillier (Nov 2005)

**Copper Pottle**, 84 Reculver Road, Beltinge (2015)

**Firkin Frog**, 157 Station Road, Herne Bay – bar & small back room (Apr 2013)

**Handsome Sam**, 3 Canterbury Road, Whitstable (2015)

**Tankerton Arms**, 139B Tankerton Rd, Tankerton, Whitstable (Mar 2013)



## **THANET**

**Ales of the Unexpected**, Canterbury Road, Westbrook – former fishmongers, with bar (Aug 2013)

**Bake and Ale House**, 21 St Mildred's Road, Westgate-on-Sea – down an alley-way between the bookmakers and Carlton cinema (Apr 2011)

**Chapel**, 44 - 46 Albion Street, Broadstairs

**Conqueror Alehouse**, 4C Grange Road, Ramsgate (Nov 2010)

**Four Candles Alehouse**, 1 Sowell Street, St Peters, Broadstairs (Aug 2012)

**Hair of the Dog**, 73 High Street, Minster – ex hairdressers with bar (Dec 2013)

**Harbour Arms**, Units 7 & 8, Margate Harbour Arm, Stone Pier, Margate Two small former fishermen's stores knocked into one (May 2013)

**Hovelling Boat**, 12 York Street, Ramsgate (Mar 2013)

**Lifeboat Ale & Cider House**, 1 Market Street, Margate

**Tap Room**, 4 Northdown Parade, Price's Avenue, Cliftonville

**Thirty Nine Steps**, 5 Charlotte Street, Broadstairs (Nov 2012)

**Turneround**, 14 Buenos Ayres, Margate

**Two Halves**, 2 Marine Drive, Margate

**Wheel Alehouse**, 60 Station Road, Birchington (Mar 2013)

**Yard of Ale**, 61 Church Street, St. Peters, Broadstairs (April 2014)

## **SWALE**

**Furlongs**, 6 Preston St. Faversham (2015)

**Heritage**, 17-19 Minster Road, Halfway, Minster on Sea, Sheppey – former old Post Office (Jan 2014)

**Paper Mill**, 2 Charlotte Street, Sittingbourne (Oct 2013).

## **WEST KENT**

**10:50 From Victoria**, Rear of 37 North Street, Strood

**Broken Drum**, 308 Westwood Lane, Blackfen, Sidcup

**Compass Alehouse**, 7 Manor Road, Gravesend

**Crafty Alehouse**, 28 Earl Street, Maidstone

**Door Hinge**, 11 Welling High Street, Welling (Mar 2013) Greater London POTY 2014

**Past and Present** 2a Skinner Street, Gillingham (Aug 2014)

**Penny Farthing**, 3 Waterside, Crayford (Sept 2014)

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# MARIS OTTER

The 50th anniversary of the creation  
of this brewers barley

**A**ny real ale drinker will know the name Maris Otter, but beyond the name how much more do you know about the barley that provides the malt beloved by many a brewer?

Perhaps surprisingly, it is not an old barley but was developed in the 1960s by the Plant Breeding Institute in Cambridge, who cross-bred the varieties Pioneer and Proctor. It rapidly gained the attention of the brewing industry and by the 1970s was dominating the market, but almost as quickly its popularity waned, particularly among the larger brewers, and there were fears that variety might be lost.

However, Maris Otter retained the loyalty of a number of brewers, who liked its performance in the mash tun and the unmatched depth of flavour it gave to beer. Such was the commitment, that the rights to it were bought in 1992 by grain merchants H Banham and Robin Appel, with the intention of saving it. They remain the sole owners, but their stewardship has involved much work, which continues still.

First the purity of Maris Otter was re-established by manually selecting the best stock to start a new breeding cycle. Then, somewhere in Norfolk, a secret mother field was established to grow an annual crop, a small section of which, after checking to remove all sub-standard ears of barley, is harvested separately and used to reseed the mother field the following year. Control samples are kept to compare with each year's crop so that it remains true to type, while Norfolk's sunny climate, sea breezes and light soils are ideal for growing barley. (Most of Britain's Maris Otter is grown and malted in that region.) It is intended that within seven years the majority of Maris Otter grown in Britain will have come from this secret field.

The commitment and faith of its owners has been well justified. Although accounting for less than 6% of the beer brewed in Britain, between 2001 and 2014 nine of the Champion Beers of Britain used Maris Otter malt. It is however a specialist variety, and while used extensively by the micro industry and the new craft brewers, it is no doubt a reflection of our age that it is largely neglected by the larger brewers. Nevertheless, the interest in quality malt continues to grow, and with it, sales of Maris Otter – from an average of 25,000 tonnes a year bought by maltsters in the ten years to 2013, a 40% increase saw this rise to an average of 34,500 tonnes bought in the following ten years.

2015 is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its creation, and marks fifty years of continuous production and use – exceptional as most modern cereal varieties are superseded within five or six years. To celebrate, Mark Banham of H Banham collaborated with David Holliday from Norfolk Brewhouse to create a commemorative beer festival, which was held in Norwich from 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> September. It featured fifty beers, all of which were specially created for the festival, and which represented 44 different British counties, and six countries from across the world.

*Martin Atkins*



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*Sat 12th Dec - Happy Daze*

*Sat 19th Dec - Gold Top*



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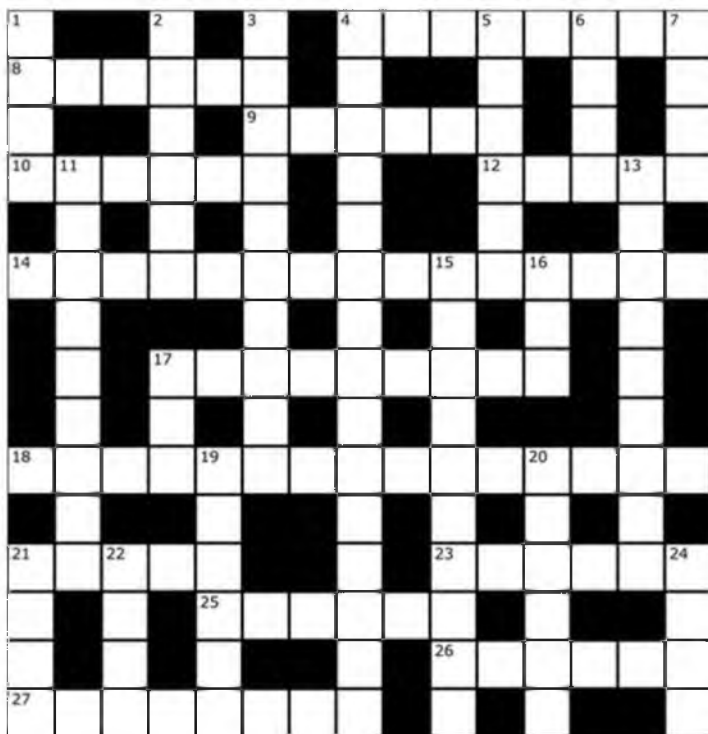
**Sat 26th Dec – Joe Scott (easy listening, 50's & 60's)  
3pm – 5pm**

**Sat 26th Dec – Karaoke with Colin**

**New Years Eve Party with Colin 9pm - Late**

# CROSSWORD

BY TRISHA WELLS



## Across

4. Military accommodation (8)
8. Let someone know (6)
9. Spies (6)
10. Belonging to a people (6)
12. British composer who died the same year as Elgar (5)
14. City in Western USA, formerly known as Fountain Colony (8,7)
17. Tax on selling property (5,4)
18. 1996 movie starring Will Smith and Jeff Goldblum (12,3)
21. Tall coniferous tree yielding fragrant wood (5)
23. 19<sup>th</sup> Century German composer, famous for his operas, including 'The Flying Dutchman'
25. 1980s TV detective played by Tom Selleck (6)
26. City in NW Syria (6)
27. Military conscripts (8)

## Down

1. Official order (4)

2. Yogi Bear's best friend (3-3)
3. Alloy a metal with mercury (10)
4. Dessert made with bread, jam and meringue (5,2,8)
5. Slice of bacon (6)
6. English equivalent of a Count (4)
7. Member of a Gaelic people that migrated from Ireland to Scotland in the late 5<sup>th</sup> Century (4)
11. River forming the border between Texas and Mexico (3,6)
13. Plant used to produce molasses and rum (5,4)
15. US actor, born in 1925, starred in 'The Sting' (4,6)
16. Woody evergreen climbing plant (3)
17. Institute legal proceedings (3)
19. Certification document (6)
20. Eg. ride (anag.)
21. Country in N Central Africa (4)
22. Famous female singer (4)
24. Go on the ramp (4)

**Answers on Page 61**



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# A VIEW FROM AMERICA

British pubs viewed from across the Atlantic

*The following is a shortened version of a piece by **Jason Laughlin** from the **Philadelphia Inquirer Online** in June this year.*

I'd like to say I got the faint scar on my left eyebrow defending a girl or helping a friend in need. That sort of thing appealed to me then. I was 20 and read too much Hemingway. Actually, I was hit in the head by a swiftly opened bathroom door. The minor injury dribbled blood on the grimy, maroon carpet of what became my favourite pub in England, the Huntsman.

For a group of Americans abroad nearly two decades ago, this dim, dirty pub in the shade of Bath's magnificent medieval abbey was a second home. Amid smells of cigarette smoke and fried fish, with ABBA or the Beatles on the jukebox, our crew parked at a small table talking everything from the Clinton administration to rugby. It was our parlour, our Britain, our piece of pub culture.

My violently interrupted trip to the men's room always had an outsize importance to me. The flagstones in the Huntsman's basement once were part of a Roman road. The pub's facade was unchanged since the 1700s. I liked to believe I was a part of that history, if just through bloodstains indistinguishable in the patterns of a threadbare rug.

In May, I returned to Bath for the first time in 17 years. I walked on Pulteney Bridge over the River Avon into memories thick as the low, grey rain clouds. The abbey, the cream-colored stone Georgian shops, the Huntsman itself, all still there. Any sense of familiarity ended inside the double doors. The brewery Fuller, Smith and Turner bought the place in 2012, and turned our shadowy old pub a pleasing pastel. My God, there was a wine list on a chalkboard! As for the blood-stained carpet, they took that, too. So much for my place in history.

At least the Huntsman still exists. English pubs are closing at a rate of 29 a week, according to the Campaign for Real Ale, a consumer-advocacy group. The number of pubs decreased by almost 20,000 from 1982 to 2013, when the British Beer and Pub Association reported about 48,000 of them. Many were transformed into restaurants or gastropubs, as the Huntsman was. Economic pressures and a changing culture are conspiring, advocates say, to dim a national institution.

The change is not all bad. Pubs could be nasty, rundown joints. Gastropubs and wine bars are welcome alternatives, says my friend (and Londoner) Chris Campbell, a graphic artist for the Financial Times.





But there is something special about a great English pub. They grew out of the Roman tabernae founded in Britain 2,000 years ago. In small towns, some are attached to old inns or coaching houses. A few pubs I visited still had guest rooms, including one that housed guests in a converted horse stable.

The best pubs, to me, are distinguished by the murmur. There's no music or television. Patrons' voices become the sound track. Not much food is served at a traditional pub, so there's no clink of dishware or waiters taking orders. You hear a witty aside, a surge of laughter, a remark to the bartender - "Another pint, please, in the fullness of time" - but it's unlikely you'll ever have to yell to your mate the question common in American bars: "What?" Turn the noise down, and good things happen. You drink slower. You really listen to your friend, or get to know a stranger. At its best, a pub lives up to its full name: public house.

The Old Green Tree on Green Street in Bath is such a place. In a small, wood-panelled back room with lithographs, foreign currency, and simple benches lining the walls, I sipped a Hewish Mild, one of nine beers on tap and a refreshing change from the hops-heavy brew popular in the U.S.

Owner Tim Bethune, a cheery bloke in a wool sweater, came out from behind the bar to introduce himself. He considers his pub founded in 1710 just as integral to Bath's past as the Roman baths themselves. For the ordinary person, Bethune said, the pub "would have actually meant a lot more to them than the assembly room or the Roman baths." The Old Green Tree's last renovation was in the 1920s, he said. The biggest change since its founding was the enclosure of an outdoor garden where the tree that was the pub's namesake once grew.



I was there to meet James Honey, president of Bath's chapter of the Campaign for Real Ale. The Old Green Tree is a "free house," Honey said, with no contractual obligations to carry beer from a particular brewer. Bethune can negotiate to buy casks of beer for £20 - £30 less. "Tied houses," on the other hand, must sell beer at rates controlled by brewers. That mini-monopoly can boost prices to nearly £5 a pint, or about \$7.50. This is deadly for pubs, Honey said, when people can buy four bottles at a grocery store for the same price.

Pubs also suffer from an explosion of development. London's skyline prickles with cranes erecting glass and steel needles that tower over chimneyed rooftops. Pubs, with their thin profit margins, are worth more remade into houses or razed. Companies buy a pub, raise the price of beer, and establish bizarre closing times. When the pub inevitably closes, the owner uses that as proof the site couldn't support the business, Honey said.

Britain's culture itself is changing. When I lived there in 1998, village pubs were packed by midday with men in shirts and ties. Many smoked. Smoking is banned in pubs now, and the culture of day drinking is almost extinct. The country quaffed almost 7 million fewer barrels of beer in 2014 than in 2000, the British Beer and Pub Association reported.

*Jason bemoans the lack of authenticity found now in many pubs. By contrast he cites a pub in Berkshire, which has been visited on occasion by members of Deal, Dover, Sandwich Branch.*

No question of authenticity at the Bell Inn, in Aldworth, about 50 miles west of London. The two-story pub is built on the frame of a Norman lords manor constructed about 1340 of oak, mud, and wattle.

Landlady Heather Macaulay traces her lineage to the early 1800s, and a Scottish tea merchant named McQuhae. He lost his way near Aldworth and threw his walking staff into the air, determined to head in whatever direction it landed. It pointed him to the Bell, which by then had replaced the mud walls with brick. He met the owners' daughter, they fell in love, married, and he inherited the pub. Heather is the fifth generation of her family to own the Bell. I asked what had changed in more than 200 years.



"It is as it was," she said. "Nothing changed." Macaulay, 86, looked as put together as Easter Sunday in a red cardigan and striped top, though it was nearly 11 p.m. She'd been at work for about 12 hours. "Never put out anything you wouldn't eat or drink yourself," she said.

The exposed timbers are so low in the Bell one has a reminder to duck written on it in chalk, and the five ebony-handled beer taps are old as a Model T. No cash register, just a drawer like something from Dickens, with different-sized slots for pounds and pence.

*Jason makes special mention of West Berkshire's Good Old Boy, known in the Bell as Old Tyler, and often available locally in Dover at the Red Lion, Charlton Green.*

This enjoyable bitter is one of the house beers at the Bell Inn in Aldworth. The owner at the Bell says the beer got its name because the local brewer, who's been making this bitter since 1995, once put down tiles in the roof of the pub's stable.

In her lifetime, Aldworth changed from a poor farming village to a wealthy bedroom community for London commuters. Macaulay turns down all offers to sell the pub. One real estate agent insisted his client had a lot of money. She replied, "He doesn't have quite enough."

James Honey said pubs will survive. He loved the traditional spots but sees room for modern, innovating businesses that try to update the pub for the 21st century. "I think it will be fine," he said. "They may be better quality, some of them, and they'll still be serving ale."

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# CURRY ON (IN) THE CUT

## A LOOK BACK AT THE BEERY BOATERS END OF YEAR TRIP IN 1991

On the End-of-Year Canal Trip (AKA the Commodore's Cruise), the Beery Boaters have often liked to do something different to the April trips. So in 1991, we decided to look at the Erewash Canal. Actually the most northerly part of the Grand Union Canal amalgamation, it goes north from the River Trent almost opposite the River Soar which links south to the Leicester Branch of the Grand Union and the London to Birmingham main line at Norton Junction. The significance of the Erewash Canal, just 11¾ miles in length with 15 locks, is that it joins the Cromford Canal (currently closed) at Great Northern Basin, Langley Mill, and which in turn, led to the Cromford and High Peak Railway by which goods were carried 33 miles over the Peak District, to re-ship into canal boats at Whaley Bridge on the Upper Peak Forest Canal. Hauled by steam locomotives and with a maximum gradient of 1-in-7, it provided a though route to Manchester, and lasted until closure in 1967. The Beery Boaters visited the Peak Forest Canal terminus in 2006.



Our first problem was hiring a suitable boat, the canals and rivers around there not being exactly on the tourist menu like the Llangollen Canal, for example. But as the Erewash Canal is quite short, we could take in other canals as well. So we decided to hire from Swan Line at Fradley Junction on the Trent & Mersey Canal. The craft was the 60ft Fradley Swan, and we started somewhat later in the year than usual on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October.

As I made no log of the trip at the time, once again I will have to rely on fading memories and just a few photographs to recall events although luckily there are a few notable events to recall! To start with, as Swan Line (I don't think that they hire boats any more) was next to the famous Swan pub at Fradley Junction, I've no doubt that we fortified ourselves there before setting off. In those days it was an Ansell's pub and sold Ind Coope Burton Ale.

The itinerary says that we should have got to Alrewas for the evening ale, and as it's only a couple of miles from the start with 5 locks I don't doubt that it's where we got to. I've certainly been there in the past on at least one occasion. The George & Dragon has been in the GBG many times, and is in the 2015

edition, and there are a couple more pubs within a short distance from the canal. There was also the Old Boat, one of M.A.D. O'Rourke's Little Pubs, which is now an Indian restaurant. Today Alrewas is most famous for being the site of the National Arboretum. Peacocks in a canalside garden woke us at dawn.

On the River Trent at Sawley



Likewise the itinerary gives Willington as the Sunday lunchtime venue, and as it was either that or Burton-on-Trent, and we did Burton on the way back, I'm sure that we went to Willington. Three good pubs, the Rising Sun, the Green Dragon and the Green Man. My first photograph after Fradley Junction is entitled '14<sup>th</sup> October, early morning near Shardlow', so I presume that we moored there overnight on Sunday above Shardlow Lock and would have walked the few hundred yards into the village where there are several pubs. In fact I'm sure that we did, as the bow line is tied to a bollard which would have been the start of the lock moorings.

From Shardlow Lock it's about a mile and one more lock to Derwent Mouth, to where the canal ends with the un-navigable River Derwent coming in from the left and the River Trent, nowadays only navigable for a mile, but once to Burton and beyond, from the right. We were now, early on Monday morning, on the wider waters of the River Trent, heading downstream. A few hundred yards further on the river passes under the M1 Motorway with a flood lock just after, usually open, leading to Sawley Cut. This bypasses a weir and leads to the paired and mechanised, and to our eyes large, Sawley Locks. Nowadays they are usually boater operated but then, I recall, a lock keeper looked after the passage of boats. Back on the river for a short distance, then we turned left and tied up below Trent Lock at the entrance to the Erewash Canal.

We would have taken on water below Trent Lock as there were (and probably still are) no more water points above this lock on the Erewash Canal until Great Northern Basin. There are two pubs at the lock, the Steamboat on one side and the Trent Navigation Inn on the other. At that time the Steamboat was reputed to have brewed its own beer ('of dubious quality' someone told me) whilst the Trent Navigation sold Home beers. Anyway, neither pub was open at that hour of the morning, so we couldn't try them. After Trent Lock we proceeded for another three miles and three locks up the Erewash as far as Sandiacre where we stopped for our lunchtime ale at the Plough, canalside, by an impressive mill chimney and selling Stones beers.

That evening we made it to the end of the Erewash Canal, although darkness had completely fallen before we got there. After the last lock before Great Northern Basin (not counting the one up to the basin itself which is actually on the Cromford Canal) the canal became very twisty and overgrown with tall

reeds. We were threading our way along the narrow open bit of water in the middle with only the pretty ineffective tunnel light to show us the way, when we became aware of a sound like an angry wasp somewhere up ahead. Suddenly a small glass-fibre speedboat came hurtling towards us round a sharp bend. At the last moment the chap steering it saw nemesis in the shape of a large steel narrowboat in front and promptly headed through the reeds and up the canal bank. It didn't seem to upset him too much as later, when we were moored in Great Northern Basin, he came up through the lock, tied his boat behind us and asked us if we wouldn't mind keeping an eye on it overnight for him.

Trent Lock



Great Northern Basin is the junction of three canals, the Erewash and the Cromford as already mentioned, and the Nottingham Canal, mostly abandoned apart from the southern bit which is used to bypass the River Trent through Nottingham, and a stretch of about a hundred yards or less from near where we were moored. The canalside pub here, the Great Northern, is actually on the Nottingham Canal. Then it was a Hardy & Hanson pub selling beers from the nearby brewery at Kimberley. Now, of course, Hardy and Hanson has followed Ruddles, Morland and many others into the rapacious jaws of Greene King which takes over and closes breweries, attempting to replicate once famous brands from its own brewery at Bury St. Edmunds. Near the basin is Eastwood which was the childhood home of novelist D. H. Lawrence. As well as drinking in the Great Northern (with an unexpected bonus of 20p per pint off on Mondays), we also walked along the road to the Midland (now the Mill) and the Railway Tavern with a convenient Chinese take-away on hand to provide a meal on our return to Fradley Swan.

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October. Before heading south again we took on water, and Ray presented a couple of large propane bottles which he had rescued from the canal on the way up, to the Erewash Canal Society, which had an office by the basin. We had been told that we could purchase a commemorative plaque for getting as far as we did, and were informed that we could get one from the Treasurer of the Society who lived by Shipley Lock, two locks down on the way back, just over a mile from the basin. So that was our first stop.

Then we carried on back to Sandiacre, this time tying up at the superb Padmore Park moorings. That was as far as we intended to go that day, as we wanted to visit Nottingham, which is only a short distance away and reachable by an excellent bus service. There we found some very good pubs, including

the Partridge. We also learnt that the Nottingham Beer Festival was being held the next weekend at the Victoria Leisure Centre, and decided to pay another visit to Nottingham on the following Saturday after taking the boat back to the boatyard.

On our return to Sandiacre we crossed the small park to the Red Lion just over the road, another Hardy & Hanson pub. The brewery had just introduced a new best bitter, Kimberley Classic. The Landlord had some in his cellar, but he hadn't yet connected it to the handpumps. However, he offered to tap a cask and fetch the beer up in jugs for us. Needless to say the offer was accepted, and very good the beer was indeed. Then we got involved in playing pool against the pub ladies team.

Speed left at about eleven with orders for Indian take-aways to be left on the boat for our return. Midnight came and went with no sign of the Red Lion closing. Eventually some of the crew, including Hon. Commodore (Unelected), returned to Fradley Swan. I ate my Indian meal then saw that Ray's had been left on his bed and was overflowing onto his stripey night-shirt. He was still in the pub. His errant Indian meal went over the side into the cut! In the morning he had forgotten completely about ordering the curry, and wondered about the stains on his night-shirt. In between returning to the boat and going to bed Ray entertained us by doing the washing-up at about three in the morning whilst dropping pots and pans onto the floor and singing! A good day had by all!

Wednesday morning and still feeling somewhat vacant, but we set off as usual.



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There's a straight bit of canal after Long Eaton Lock just before a sharp left-hand bend. A Viking Afloat hire boat came round the bend as we left the lock, probably the only other boat on the move, that we'd come across on the Erewash apart from Monday evening's speedboat. As we passed each other, the steerer of the other boat exclaimed, "Watch out! There's a man up a ladder in the middle of the canal!" We scratched our heads and came to the conclusion that the Viking Afloat steerer must have imbibed as much beer the previous evening as we had. I ask you, a man up a ladder in the middle of the canal? But as we swung round the sharp bend, what did we find? You're right, a man up a ladder in the middle of the canal! He had the foot of the ladder in the canal and the top propped against a bridge which he was painting. I've never seen a man go up a ladder as fast as he did when he saw us heading straight for it. Well, we *did* miss the ladder, but a few years later when I went up the Erewash Canal again, that bridge was still only half-painted!

There was quite a strong wind blowing by the time that we reached the wide waters of the River Trent. Dave was steering, when at one point we found ourselves being blown towards the bank and had to use a bit of throttle to get us away from the shallows. Unfortunately, there were some anglers there at the time, the sort of anglers who stand in the river clad in waders. I think that the result of Dave opening the throttle was to top up their waders with water as there was much shaking of fists and shouts of "Bounders!" or something like that! However, if Dave hadn't opened the throttle, Fradley Swan may well have run the anglers over!

Back onto the Trent & Mersey Canal and to Shardlow for lunch, this time stopping at our more usual moorings outside the New Inn and the Malt Shovel. The latter pub was once part of Zacharia Smith's brewery maltings, and I can remember some of the old brewery buildings still standing on the other side of the canal. Now, of course, it's all gone in favour of more recent housing development.

In the evening we got as far as Swarkestone and tied up above the lock opposite the junction with the former Derby Canal. A short arm at this end is still in water and used for moorings, before it's blocked off and becomes a dry ditch. However, the line is mostly intact to Derby and it may yet be restored. After crossing the River Derwent in Derby the canal swings easterly and meets the Erewash Canal just above Sandiacre Lock. That junction is also



in water, and if the whole canal was still navigable it would have been an alternative, and probably quicker, route for us to have taken. Incidentally, before

the Derby Canal was built the River Derwent was navigable from its junction with the River Trent to Derby (even the Vikings used it to found their settlement of Deoraby), and originally the Derby Canal crossed the Trent and Mersey Canal at Swarkestone and descended through four locks to meet with the River Trent, then navigable to at least Burton.

The Vikings weren't the only invaders to arrive in this area. In 1745 Bonnie Prince Charlie and his Highlanders got as far as the banks of the Trent, as recorded on a small obelisk in the riverside garden of the Crewe & Harpur Arms, half a mile or so from where we tied up and to where we later trudged. Here they were met by a messenger who they trusted, but who was in fact a Hanoverian spy, and who informed them that a large army was marching up from London to block their path. In fact, the way to London was wide open and the King and his entourage had fled the city.

The Prince and his chieftains discussed things (in the pub?) and by a show of hands they decided to return to Scotland, only to be eventually defeated at Culloden Moor. Actually I reckon that the Scots won the Battle of Culloden as more of their nation fought on the Hanoverian side than with the Jacobites, whose only effective soldiers in the battle appear to have been a regiment of renegade Irishmen. (*Can I assure any of our Jacobite readers that these are only the views of our esteemed Commodore.*— Ed) However, in their memory we feasted on cock-a-leekie soup made from some packets of chicken soup powder and a few leeks foraged from the field by our moorings.

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The Crewe & Harpur Arms is a large pub, then selling Bass, but by the time of our most recent visit had become a very foodie Marstons establishment. From the garden there is a fine view of the 18<sup>th</sup> century five arched stone bridge carrying the road over the Trent and continuing as an elevated embankment across the wide flood plain. As it was dark, on this occasion we didn't appreciate it.

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October. 10 miles and 2 locks to Horninglow Basin in Burton-on-Trent to spend the rest of the day there. This included a visit to the Bass Museum and various pubs including the Burton Bridge Inn (the Burton Bridge Brewery Tap). We finished the evening in a bar by the River Trent (I think that it was called the Riverside Club or Riverside Bar) where there was a Country & Western evening featuring a singer rejoicing in the name of 'Mave the Rave'! Some of our less discerning (or maybe more drunken) crew members were quite enthusiastic about her various talents. The session finished quite late and we phoned for a couple of taxis to convey us back to the boat. Both taxis had Sikh drivers. The first taxi arrived and the first contingent (complete with Chinese take-aways) boarded. Halfway back the driver received a radio call from the second taxi, which had arrived to pick up the rest and wanted to know where his potential passengers were. "Oh, they're all in the damn Chinky!" he was informed.

Last full day and only ten miles back to Fradley Junction so we could take it easy and did half in the morning and half in the afternoon. Lunchtime was

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spent in a Marstons pub called the Barton Turns (formerly the Vine) at Barton-under-Needwood. The village itself, with another couple of drinking establishments, is about a mile away from the canal and the busy A38 road which accompanies it hereabouts, but the Turns is quite a nice unpretentious locals' pub and we stayed where we were.

And that was just about it. Another 5 miles and 8 locks in the afternoon back to Fradley Junction where we spent the Friday evening in the same way that we had spent the previous Saturday afternoon – in the Swan. Return the boat in the morning and back home via the Nottingham Beer Festival.

Question: What's the difference between a Captain and a Chief Engineer?

Answer: Captain has scrambled egg on his hat. A Chief Engineer has spilt curry on his nightshirt!

The Swan, Fradley Junction



*Jim Green*

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# LAST KNOCKINGS

**Children in Pubs** The latest edition of the *Good Pub Guide* (not to be confused with CAMRA's *Good Beer Guide*), which was published a few months ago speaks of concerns over children in pubs – concerns with which many a real ale drinker will concur. Exactly when the little darlings were banned from the public bars, saloon bars and all other parts of licensed premises where alcohol was sold and consumed, I am not exactly certain. Presumably it came about as a result of government legislation, and presumably also, was enacted into law for the benefit of the children themselves, but whatever its implications for the intended beneficiaries, it was probably the general pub user who felt that for once the government was on their side.

However, dispensation for food has allowed children back in force: essential in the eyes of pub operators if they are to harvest the lucrative trade of family dining – one chain actually including beaming children in its TV adverts. While this is no doubt inevitable, given the current nature of the pub business, consideration should be given to those for whom pubs were originally designed, and for whom many of us think they still primarily exist – those who have gone there for a drink. Quiet or noisy a pub should be free of over indulged children treating it like their playground.

**Children Outside Pubs** Those of us who grew up in the fifties and sixties, did so in a world where children and pubs did not mix. Pubs were mysterious institutions, whose interiors might be glimpsed through the occasional open door – otherwise frosted windows obscured what went on inside from prying eyes. There was of course the pub garden or children's room, where such facilities existed, but generally speaking pubs were for adults only, and children were usually left at home. Stories of sitting on the pub steps with a bottle of pop and packet of crisps, are I suspect, somewhat apocryphal, as probably also are tales of hours outside in the family car – if only because most parents would not trust it left for any length of time in the hands of their offspring.

Ironically, while children are encouraged inside to eat, no one under the age of eighteen is allowed even the merest whiff of alcohol, on pain of the most draconian penalties for any pub daring to contravene the regulation. A fine example of unintended consequences. Whereas at one time, intelligent interpretation of law accepted underage drinkers so long as they behaved themselves and could reasonably pass for being eighteen, no such leeway now exists. Instead they drink at home or in parks and churchyards on cheap vodka and super strength lager acquired by friends and older brothers, before the seemingly inevitable progression to substances of dubious provenance and doubtful legality.

**Spitfire Crash** Despite record profits Shepherd Neame's most recent results declare a 15.5% fall in volumes for flagship brew Spitfire. Commenting, *The Times* remarked that it was a sign that drinkers were turning to more modern tasting beers, a somewhat incongruous observation, as in the same sentence it had reported strong growth by the Whitstable Bay range. Leaving aside this further dis-

play of the media's general ignorance about beer, what, we wonder can be the cause of Spitfire's sudden decline. Could it be that the modern Briton is deterred by Shep's once famous and somewhat xenophobic adverts for the brew – "no Fokker comes close", etc. – and has adopted (with rather more success than the actor) the Basil Fawley position: "Don't mention the war." Perhaps more likely it is a response to the brewery dropping the strength of Spitfire a few years ago from 4.5% to 4.2%, just at a time when Kent had a burgeoning micro industry, full of superb brews.

**"Community Living Rooms"** A recent piece in the *Independent* quoted an American photographer's praise of this country on Facebook, in which, among a variety of plaudits was his description of pubs as being not bars but community living rooms, an ideal which CAMRA whole heartedly endorses. However, how many pubs still conform to this model? We of course, all know pubs that still fulfil the function of the tradition local, but would an American visitor? Maybe he spends a great deal of time here, or has friends or take him to the right places. We just hope though, that he is not drawing his observations from the many *alleged* examples to be found up and down the tourist trail.

**One Nation** We hear a lot from the present Government about one nation politics, but how is that claim reflected in terms of pubs and beer? – from observation very patchily. In our summer edition we reported on a Black Country pub where beer was £2.50 a pint and locals warned us off a nearby establishment which charged £3.00. At another, the famous Ma Pardoes, we paid £2.20 a pint and ate £1.20 cheese and onion rolls. What, we wonder, would have been the reaction to the £4.55 charged for a pint of Timothy Taylor Landlord in a Thames-side pub on this Autumn's Beery Boater trip. Except for Wetherspoons, prices were all £3 plus and generally nearer £4 than £3, anything under £3.50 was a distinct result.



Food was no better. Forget £1.20 rolls, there was little to be had under a fiver and while main meals at £10 - £12 are no surprise it would be nice to find basic sandwiches and suchlike at sensible prices. However, in the Thames valley at least, they appear a distinctly endangered species. "Sandwiches? Yes Sir," – but all come with garnish (lettuce, cucumber, bit of tomato, etc.) and likely a handful of chips. Cost? £5 or £6 and, depending on contents, rising.

*Old Wort*

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## National Contacts

**Nationally** CAMRA can be contacted at:  
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For enquiries, phone 01727 867201

Web [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk)



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## CROSSWORD ANSWERS



## Local Information & Useful Numbers

Dover Tourist Info 01304 205108

Folk Tourist Info 01303 258594

Dover Police Stn 01303 240055

Folk Police Stn 01303 850055

### Dover Taxis

A2B 01304 225588

Central 01304 204040

Star 01304 228822

Heritage 01304 228888

### Deal Taxis

Al Cars 01304 363636

Castle Taxis 01304 374000

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### Sandwich Taxis

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### Folkestone Taxis

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Chris's Taxis 01303 226490

Folk. Taxi 01303 252000

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National Express 0870 5808080

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All numbers on this page were believed  
correct at time of going to press.

# ADVERTISERS INDEX

Name	Page	Name	Page
Adams Printers	63	Haywain, Bramling	37
Anchor Inn, Wingham	25	Hopdaemon Brewery	55
Blakes, Dover	17	King's Head, Canterbury	48
Berry, Walmer	14	Lanes, Dover	11
Chambers, Folkestone	52	Leather Bottle Gt Mongeham	56
Chequers, Petham	48	Louis Armstrong, Dover	5
Coastguard.	Back Page	Magnet Inn, Deal	27
Cricketers, Dover	31	Plough, Ripple	31
Crown Inn, Finglesham	28	Podge's Real Ale Tours	5
Elephant, Faversham	57	Rack of Ale, Dover	7
Five Bells, Eastry	42	Royal Oak, Nonnington	44
Fox, Temple Ewell	24	Sportsman, Sholden	40
GB Promotional Products	21	Three Mariners, Hythe	18
Golden Hind	18	Valiant Sailor, Folkestone	40
Harvey's Brewery	16	White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales	54

## And Finally.....Thai'd in knots by regulations.

Draconian rules about alcohol regularly make the news in countries such as Saudi Arabia or Iran. However ever since Thailand's army seized power in a coup last year, flashing a bottle of beer in your selfies could be punishable by a 500,000 Thai Baht (£9,200) fine and a year in prison. The military rulers have promised to 'restore happiness and virtue' and their latest injunction warns that snapping a selfie while downing a bottle of beer displaying the brand's logo and posting it on social media could be interpreted as "encouraging another to consume an alcoholic beverage," which is already forbidden under Thai law. (Apparently ripping the label off the bottle, pre-selfie, seems to allow you to skirt this new law.)

In July, the military junta forbade bars from selling alcohol within 300 metres of a college or vocational school, a move aimed at discouraging teen drinking. If enforced in crowded Bangkok, this would devastate the city's infamous nightlife. Many entertainment zones, from posh nightclubs to red-light districts, are located near schools.

However, as Thais know all too well, official finger-wagging declarations from the Government don't always translate to action on the street. This is the same government that proposed all tourists must wear ID wristbands in case they "get drunk or lost" — another scheme that has yet to materialise.

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