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Channel Draught

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The Newsletter of the Deal Dover Sandwich & District
branch of the Campaign for Real Ale

Issue 14 Winter 2002



10th Winter Ales Festival

14 & 15 February 2003

At Dover's 800 year old Town Hall

Supported by **DOVER**
DISTRICT COUNCIL



Events Diary

18 November	Branch Meeting	<i>Louis Armstrong</i> , Dover
16 December	Branch Meeting & Christmas Social	<i>Mogul</i> , Dover
11 January	Minibus Trip	Contact John Pitcher on 01304 214153 for info.
20 January 2003	Branch Meeting	<i>Fleur de Lis</i> , Sandwich
14 February 2003	White Cliffs	<i>Dover Town Hall</i> ,
15 February 2003	Winter Ales Festival	
17 February 2003	Branch Meeting	<i>Firkin & Flotilla</i> , Dover
17 March 2003	Branch Meeting	<i>Blakes</i> , Dover
21 April 2003	Branch Meeting	to be advised

Meetings start at 8pm unless otherwise shown

The branch *normally* meets on the third Monday of each month.

If you are interested in joining CAMRA come along to one of our meetings!

Please consult 'What's Brewing' to confirm venues, especially if travelling to meetings/events.

Events marked with * are not organised by CAMRA but by the venue indicated



Channel Draught is Published and © 2002 by the Deal Dover
Sandwich & District Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale.
The Branch supports the campaign to retain Real Ale in pubs in White
Cliffs Country. Please drink sensibly!

In this Issue



Welcome to the Winter 2002 issue of Channel Draught.

This issue officially marks the run-up to the Winter Ale Festival in February 2003, but planning has been going on for the last six months. The Festival also marks the 800th anniversary of the Town Hall and that should make this Festival rather special.

At 56 pages, the Winter issue is the largest Channel Draught to date. It wasn't planned that way but I had too much material and too little paper originally. Of course, having got *this* issue to the printers (on a shiny beer mat no less), I have another issue to prepare - for the festival.

I welcome any original articles on White Cliffs Country, it's pubs, former (and future?) breweries, and people. See page 53 for how to contact me.

Topsy
Editor

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The Local News

Headlines this issue:

- Lloyds No. 1 in court
- Sheps buy Royal Hotel (Deal)
- Market (Sandwich) re-opens

Dover

As I write these notes JD Wether-
spoon PLC is about to appear before
Folkestone Licensing bench with the
stated intention of obtaining a late-
night licence for its Lloyd's No.1 out-
let in the former Snoops disco club.
Basically they want the same hours as
per the club but of course without the
same entrance restriction, so would be
able to stay open until 2am most
nights. The application is of course
under the present licensing laws,
rather than the proposed Licensing
Act, of which more later in this issue.
Best information so far is it would
open up in the spring even if late
hours are refused. The Lloyd's format
is modernistic and music-led (canned,
not live) and with a short list of ales.
Meantime the Eight Bells stays with
the existing format. Expect up to five
guest ales from the winter list – their
Christmas/New Year bash has already
been advertised in our own "What's
Brewing" but as yet no indication of a
super-heavyweight winter ale of the
sort which would grace our Town
Hall.

Nothing more on the Litten Tree.
Owners SFI Group have been preoc-
cupied with a financial performance
which has left shareholders gasping
for a "dead cat bounce". They failed
to get a Slug & Lettuce in Canterbury
but were still pursuing their ambitions
in Dover with plans in at DDC. Also
preoccupied are Spirit Group (Punch
Taverns) which might explain why
the *Flotilla & Firkin* continues un-
changed – keep smiling Dan, only
you and Rab sell Pedigree these days.

Not just Pedigree in the *Golden Lion*
but usually Adnams and quite often
Young's AAA. The latter is meant to
be chilled and forced through a tight
dispenser but needless to say Rab
serves it properly! Mention of Punch
Taverns takes me to the *Carrier's*
Arms – bought by them from Kevin
Iverson and now run by Gus from the
Roman Quay. Handpumps there but
not in use. Sadly the *King Edward*
VII no longer sells Real Ale. Geoff
and Jan tried hard to encourage sales
but they simply cannot rely on too
few visiting CAMRA members to
maintain the turnover.



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VICTORY MILD. WORTHINGTON: WHITE SHIELD.

Call Peter & Kathryn on (01304) 831619 for
more details or e-mail the above address.

Business as usual at the *Flagship* with Tetley Imperial served without the Yorkshire sparkler.

Adnams at *Cullin's Yard*, but no Real Ale at the Western Docks – two disused handpumps in the *Cinque Port Arms* and a redundant Wadworth 6X poster. Dom and Claire where are you? Yes, I know, sunny Spain and well deserved for all the happy memories both at “C-shed”. Latterly they had the *Boar's Head* which does maintain the tradition with either or both handpumps usefully occupied. Young's and Ansells are favourites here.

Real Mild is hard to get but Charlie & Frank often have one available at the *Mogul*. Equally hard to get locally is beer from Goacher's of Maidstone so here we find guess what? Goacher's Mild. This of course rotates with all of those other hard-to-get ales which we all have to look up in the GBG or just try anyway. Beers from Oakham and Hop Back are as popular as ever, but for a change there has been Nethergate Umbel Ale. Umbel is an old word for coriander and the brewer is not afraid of using it!

Last time I mentioned John Otway who finally returned to fame with his “Bunsen Burner” track. The beer which he presumably sponsors (and drinks?) is made by Crouch Vale and made its local debut in the *White Horse*. Since then the *Eagle* has had

it too, followed by the dark, strong Full Pitch from Old Kent Brewery. However Hopdaemon is the regular supplier here with Golden Braid and usually Skrimshander on tap but also the bottled-conditioned lager-style Green Daemon which is also available in a very English restaurant not so far away.

The *Louis Armstrong* usually has a guest ale (or two), often from Cottage Brewery or Burton Bridge both of which do monthly specials rather than regular brands. At the time of writing there was Piddle in the Hole which you may remember from last year.

The *Red Lion* across the street has now settled on London Pride and Flowers OB. Likewise the *Old Endeavour* has settled on Master Brew – the Bishop's Finger is off handpump but still available in bottles.

Always a guest ale in the *Park Inn* – see the blackboard display. Batemans or Everards recently. However a bit of a change at the *Prince Albert*. Out goes the real cider (poor sales) but in comes Ringwood Best Bitter from the New Forest.

No real ales now in the *Engineer*, *Sir John Falstaff*, *Britannia*, *Sportsman*, *Primrose*, and *Priory* – I mention these because they all have/had disused handpumps - but do try those other pubs which do a fine pint day in, day out.

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Deal & Walmer

The *Cambridge Arms* has been something of a revelation. Smartly refurbished with a new frontage and with a much improved beer range. On my last visit there was Kimberley Classic with a promise of local beers due in.

Shepherd Neame has bought the *Royal Hotel* so the beer range will not change! Spitfire in the beach bar. Admiral Penn continues with Bass, Bombardier and London Pride – six o'clock is prime time here. Summer Lightning appeared in the *Ship* recently and made an interesting contrast to Old Hooky. *Prince Albert* has changed hands (reports please) whilst

The *Strand* has had Stones Bitter which was previously on at the *New Inn* (both have other ales too). Young's and Greene King in the Eagle and a varying range in the Alma.

Sandwich

Top news is the reopening on the *Market Inn* by Shepherd Neame where the brewery has invested a lot of £££ here by extending it into the property next door. As with all such projects it is hard to gauge its success or otherwise but the initial impression is that it is a tad Spartan consid-



ering the target market (and the Spitfire was pricey too). While the Market Inn was closed the *Fleur-de-Lis* did fine business, and still does so hopefully the two will co-exist as they did before. The *Fleur-de-Lis* does guest ales, recently Caledonian Golden Promise which is certified organic but also Edgars Golden, Cornish Coaster and something called Welly Weather (in September?).

Over at the *Admiral Owen* a real surprise is the reinstallation of gravity stillage which is in addition to the handpumps. So a bigger range from Greene King results – will Suffolk Strong Ale be on for the winter? *Crispin* has Tiger and Bass as usual whilst *George & Dragon* had on occasion Harvey's Best or Old Hooky. Red Cow continues with a largely Interbrew range.

Villages

The *Chequers* at Hougham is still open. Dennis Ironmonger was due to close down at the end of October but he has agreed with the property owner to carry on into the new year. Problem here is the same as at other villages where the pub has closed. Awkward to get to by car (and bus) for sure but the real issue is the depressingly obvious one of near-total absence of interest from those who merely inhabit the village whilst refusing to contribute to its life. A loyal following of around twenty locals plus some out-of-town trade is simply

The BUTCHERS ARMS

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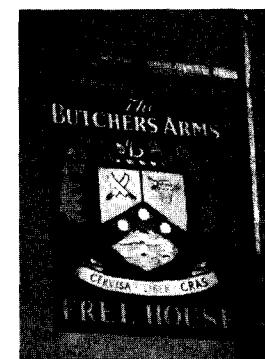
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not enough to support a business.

Q: What do the other 400 inhabitants contribute to their chose place of abode?

A: Ask the Parish Council how many of those care about their community.

We wish Dennis well and hope that he can carry on and succeed. Do drop in and try Burton Ale, Tetley or Old Speckled Hen.



Not far away at Capel-le-Ferne, the *Royal Oak* (above) has Master Brew plus one or two guest ales. November's horrendous gales may deter a few from venturing here – shame on you! Young's Waggledance was superb – no wonder the bees take ages before they decide to go home.

Lighthouse Inn usually has a third option to Greene King IPA or Abbot – Morlands Original @ 4% is of course a GK brew but a fine "session" bitter.

Hare & Hounds at Northbourne had its own Beer Festival recently. A tent on the patio provided a suitably rustic feel, especially with straw bales supporting the stillage! Ten beers available throughout the weekend, Riddleys and Hop Back being amongst them. Meanwhile the bar offers four or five including Harvey's Best. Fuller's ESB made a rare (dis-)appearance here but is normally available just up the road at the *Plough* (Ripple) as are Spitfire and London Pride.



The *Yew Tree* at Barfrestone (right) is well known for its support of local brewers, including Gadd's of Ramsgate, and for Mild.

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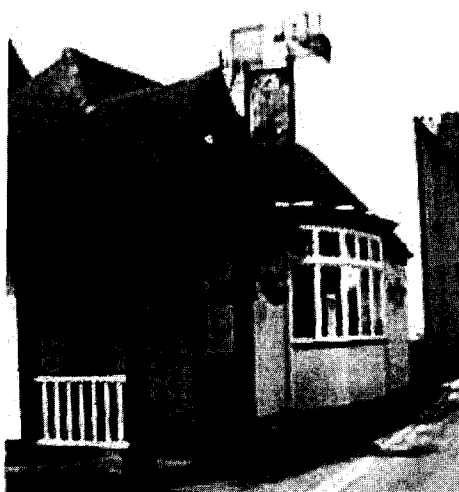
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The formula varies though, so recently some Norfolk brews, notably Humpty Dumpty Claud Hamilton which is a stout. Now we are promised the cask version of Hopdaemon Green Daemon "Pilsner", this after Skrimshander and Dominator. Also the award-winning Indian Summer Ale from John Davidson who now offers DBA which he assures us stands for Don't Bother Asking.



First Tuesday quiz night of the winter saw two contrasting 4.0% bitters on offer at *The Fox* (Temple Ewell). Highgate Special or Ringwood Best – plus Abbot of course. Peering across the bar, we see that the "Rosey Nosey" pumpclip (issue 10) is still flashing! Maybe a recharge soon? More Abbot plus Flowers and London Pride just up the road at the *Railway Bell* (Kearsney).



The building work at the *Butchers Arms* (above) at Ashley has been completed on schedule and Doug now boasts an enlarged drinking space. The beer range varies with recent guest ales from Timothy Taylor's Ram Tam and Adnams Tally Ho! amongst others.

Travelling eastwards, The *Coastguard* at St Margarets Bay continues to support Kentish micro-breweries with ales from Swale & North Weald, Old Kent and Hopdaemon. See page 47 also.

Folkestone

The *Happy Frenchman* duly had its own mini-festival over August Bank Holiday. With stillage made locally (and some taps from CAMRA) around a dozen ales went down very quickly. Bombardier, Spitfire and Bass are the regulars but the guest ales continue to change weekly. If you want advance warning of next week's selection then all you have to do is drop in, try what's on and ask!

Chambers normally has Old Peculier, but for a change (and in the same strength band) how about Old Thumper from Ringwood. Cottage Brewery beers in *Harvey's* recently, plus Tiger and Bass with the latter always on at the *Clifton Hotel* nearby.

The Bayle duo of the *British Lion* and *Guildhall* are both Pubmaster but do credit to themselves by stocking not just 3 or 4 ales good ales but differing selections. However Greene King IPA and/or Abbot Ale are common to both.

Almost in sight in Rendezvous Street is *Wetherspoons*. The beer selection has settled down of late with 2 or 3 guests at any one time and the Wes-

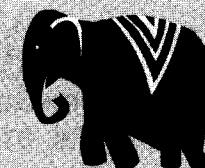
ton's Old Rosie Cider seems to have made a comeback. The Irish bar opposite (formerly The Zoo) is now *Mustang Sally's* and appears to be part of a chain based in Bedford, but is not part of Charles Wells. Tetley Cask Bitter has been restored here and is almost always on.

Beer available at our two newest Real Ale outlets is liable to change regularly (see last issue). *Two Bells* had London Pride on my visit, followed by Greene King Abbot Ale in the *East Cliffe Tavern*. Plenty of Master Brew about, but apologies to the *Princess Royal* for not mentioning them last time!

Earl Grey advertises Spitfire but

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never seems to have any (or Master Brew), *Harbour Inn* usually has two which may be London Pride and Greene King IPA. No Tetley in the *Black Bull* though, so six handpumps are now disused.

So onto the *Lifeboat*. Up until the early summer, the ever-changing duet of guest ales were as good as ever but I have been receiving some unfavourable reports for the last several weeks. Certainly the beer range has been reduced and on personal visits the quality has been well down on previous expectations. Locals tell me that there have been management difficulties here and that these have yet to be resolved so we cannot comment further on that particular issue. However in the meantime the issue of beer quality

has been brought to attention and we trust that action will be taken to restore the fine reputation of this house.

Sandgate

Meanwhile down at the *Ship*, building work has been started and should be finished by the time you read this. The intention is for a seafront terrace alongside the main corridor without disturbing the present bar layout. Almost any of the main pub chains would have wrecked the place to achieve the same result but not here!

Well done Stewart and Wendy. Beer range usually includes "something" from Harvey's, e.g. Armada or XXXX Old Ale, plus the "take no prisoners" 8.4% ABV dry cider from Biddenden.

The *Clarendon* is the local CAMRA branch Pub of the Year and proves that even brewery tied houses (this one being Sheps) can offer a good range in unspoilt surroundings.

On my last visit the Summer Goldings had just given way to Autumn Late Red which was alongside Master Brew, Spitfire and Bishop's Finger. A real surprise was an extra handpump for Biddenden cider which is not the same as in the Ship but their slightly rounder and sweeter 6.5% ABV "Bushels"

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Hythe

No reports have been received from Hythe and your editorial team cannot be everywhere at once! Those of you who take *Channel Draught* home might want to have a look in issue 12 (available on the web!) for a stroll through town and I would suggest that not a great deal has changed. Please tell us if that last statement is wrong – note that bus times have changed so check with Stagecoach (see p51 & p53).

All of the town centre pubs have something to offer the Real Ale drinker but special mention must go to the *Gate Inn* where guest ales are now the norm, courtesy of Enterprise Inns' policy and a licensee who knows his beers.

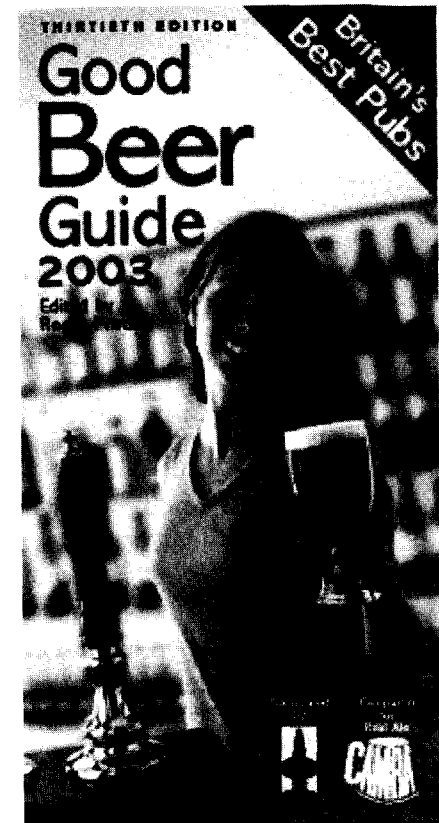
Endpiece

That's all the news we have at the moment but as I mentioned above, we cannot be everywhere at once.

If you know of any news concerning pubs, especially those in the rural areas or smaller towns, please let us know. You can phone/text me on 07932 525345 or e-mail me at dave.routh@zoom.co.uk.

Dave Routh

Contributions by
Alan Beecham, Scots John,
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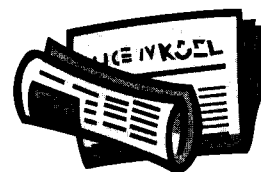
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The National News

Open All Hours!

The 24-hour pub is here. Well, by next summer anyway. That's what the tabloids have told us so we know it's true. They of course know its true because HM said so in her speech which that nice Mr Tony so wholeheartedly approved of.

So that's it then, we're all off to the pub when we feel like it. Well, if only life were so simple.....

To their credit (and leaving out any party politics) our wonderful leaders are finally about to deliver on one of many promises they made way back in the run-up to the 1997 General Election. At the time they gave the public impression that our time-honoured licensing laws were yet another outdated old-fashioned fuddy-duddy British anachronism which stood in the way of the brave new flag-waving millennium, and on the basis of probabilities they reckoned that there was more support for consumer freedom than for continued repression. So they told us that the pubs could

open when the licensee felt like it, unless of course there were objections from local residents ("The Wife and I are Trying to Get Some Sleep Act") or indeed from any of those busybodies who delight in making all of our lives a misery, or at least downright dull.

As we all know, life ain't that simple and the idea that pubs should be freed from arbitrary opening restrictions was linked to a fundamental change in the way in which licences are granted and then policed. In short they want control to pass from the present system to one which is controlled by local authorities. So in the forthcoming White Paper (after seemingly endless consultation) we will see detailed legislation which will require individual licensees to present to the likes of DDC an operational business plan which will encompass any number of matters including, say, health and safety, smoking, entrance policy, families with children, staff hours, etc. All of this will be accompanied by a cheque for £xx which said authority will spend on recruiting and/or training the staff

needed to process the application and deliver the right result.

Do I sound cynical? I should do. I have yet to meet a licensee who is favour of the change of authority, and indeed there are high profile players like Tim Martin (JD Wetherspoon) or Stuart Neame who have rubbished the idea. Still for all that we should be grateful that at least there is the prospect of being able to have a sociable drink, and all that goes with it, without having to continually look at the clock and think "one more before the last bell".

More on this when the White Paper is published. CAMRA supports the whole idea in principle but has concerns about the practice, especially the extra burdens which are likely to fall on already-harassed licensees.

Major Breweries

The fall-out from the Interbrew Bass/Whitbread take-over has started. Brands are all and there will be changes in range of beers coming into their former pubs. Of all the brands there are now concerns for three ales, viz. Draught Bass, Flowers and Boddingtons.

Bass is in the crazy situation whereby the brand is owned by one company (Interbrew) but made a rival (Coors) and distributed to pubs which may have allegiances to either or both. Not surprisingly Coors has come up with a competing brew in Worthington 1744, which is reputed to be based on an old Worthington 'E' recipe and is the same strength as Bass. Coors owns the Worthington brand name.....

Flowers and Boddingtons are made at Strangeways in Manchester, owned by Interbrew. We now learn that, apart from actual beer production, the Strangeways operation is being scaled down with packaging/kegging being moved out. With the cask version of Boddies getting harder to find and with unpromoted Flowers up against ever-increasing competition it is hard to avoid the conclusion that Interbrew is "up to something". Are they about to shut Strangeways and axe Flowers? Would they really move Bass out of Burton-on-Trent into Strangeways?

Dave Routh



King's Head

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FreeHouse



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Sunday 12 - 10.30pm

Evening Mon-Friday 5-11pm
Saturday 6-11pm
Sunday 12 - 10.30pm



The Beery Boaters - Almost Bogless In The Fens

Firstly, a potted history of narrowboat sanitary arrangements! In the beginning (i.e., working narrowboats), these were very simple. The nearest bush or buckit and chuckit! With the advent of pleasure boats, more convenient conveniences started to appear. At first, the porta-potty, which still had to be emptied every day; a smelly task reserved for the captain to allot to anyone who had incurred his wrath! Nowadays there are usually holding tanks, which can normally last at least a week before a pump-out is necessary. The pan itself has a lever which operates a flap and the flushing water. All very simple and effective.

Imagine our surprise, then, when we took over the 62ft Fenland Fox in the Cambridgeshire town of March at the end of September, to discover a refinement to the system. A compressed air contraption, operated via an electric compressor coupled up to an inverter, which gave us 230 volts to operate this and goodies including a micro-wave oven. The fitter who showed us over the boat darkly hinted that the next boat that they built would go back to a more conventional design, so we gathered that there had been problems. But, for the moment, all seemed well. Click, slurp, clack, whoosh, it went, followed by chug, chug, chug from the compressor!

The part of the fens which we were on, the Middle Level, has a maze of drainage channels. The name Vermuyden features largely in their construction. Several are navigable, and March lies on the old course of the River Nene, which is the major part of the link between the River Nene at Peterborough and the River Ouse at Denver. As the fens shrank when they dried out, instead of locking down from canals to rivers, in this case one has to lock up! Some of the fens are actually below sea level.

We had planned to go to Peterborough for Sunday evening, which is in a westerly direction, but as the boatyard is on the west of March, and as we wanted to spend the Saturday evening in March, we would first have to go east, find a place to turn and retrace our track for a bit. We were warned that we might have to carry on east for about an hour to the junction of the Twenty Foot River before we would be able to turn.

So we went into March, tied up at the excellent moorings in the town centre (opposite the town hall clock with a very loud chime) and had a pint or two of Greene King Old Speckled Hen at the convenient and convivial Ship Inn before



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Jason

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going off to the Rose and Crown, a well—deserved regular GBG entry, to sample their range of beers. March seems an excellent little town, with a more-than-the—average selection of take—aways of all types. Upon returning to the boat, we noted with relief that the chimes of the town hall clock are turned off during the night. However there must have been a slight air leak from the compressor, as it erupted into chug, chug, chug, every half hour, and as I was sleeping nearest to it I vowed to find a means of turning it off. Otherwise I would just have to drink more beer!

Sunday morning. Fine, but extremely misty on the water. We set off easterly, and found that we could just turn the boat where the river widened slightly after leaving the town. Back through March and away towards Whittlesey, the only other settlement before Peterborough. By the time that we had reached Ashline Lock, on the edge of Whittlesey, the fog had cleared and it was bright sunshine. Just after negotiating the very sharp bend at Whittlesey Briggate (the tightest of all on our inland waterway system), we tied up and departed to the Bee (formerly the Letter B) and to the Hero of Aliwal for our lunchtime bevvy, but not for long, as we had to be at Stanground Lock, Peterborough, at 1430. At Stanground Lock the Navigation Authority changes from the Middle Level Commissioners to the Environmental Agency and the former insist that you complete a form and be booked in or out of their waters by pre-arrangement. So we were passed through onto E.A. waters, not forgetting to book our return at 0930 the next day.



Just after Stanground Lock we entered the River Nene proper. Much wider waters! Up through the town, under Town Bridge and, spotting the floating pub 'Chaters' moored up on the south bank, turned and tied up alongside the converted Dutch barge. Chaters, a well—deserved long-standing entry in the Good Beer Guide, is on the bottom deck of the barge Leendert-R. An authentic Far Eastern restaurant

occupies the top deck. After several pints there, we re-embarked on Fenland Fox, motored back under Town Bridge and across to the north bank, moored against Peterborough Embankment and set off to walk the ¼ mile or so to pay homage at the Oakham Brewery Tap.

Another worth—while visit. It's a huge pub; the biggest brewery tap in the country, with all of the Oakham beers usually available as well as guest ales. The brewery is on display through glass panels. For east there is a very good Thai menu.

When we got back to the boat we found that overnight road works were in progress nearby. Fortunately, we were not disturbed by any noise from them, but I had neglected to sort out the intermittent chug, chug, chug' from the compressor!

Monday morning dawned fine, but with a slight mist again. We motored down the river for a couple of hundred yards to take on water at a very fast tap. The skipper of a very smart green narrowboat was trying, unsuccessfully, to get the D.I.Y. pump-out facilities to work. He was, we learned, going in stages from the Grand Union Canal to Cambridge, a favourite place to moor up for the winter.

We were booked to go through Stanground Lock at 0900 so, with time in hand, we went down the 'new' course of the River Nene in thickening fog towards Dog-in-a-Doublet Lock before returning to King's Dyke where it was bright sunshine. Our friend in the smart green narrowboat was also waiting for Stanground Lock to open. We were told that over 1000 boats had passed through the lock this year so far, which is a lot for the Middle Levels.

Whittlesey. Despite having a bow-thruster, the green narrowboat had a lot of trouble getting around Briggate Bend without scratching his new paint. We, following, employed more traditional methods and managed more easily!

Having tied up at the town moorings above Ashline Lock, it was found that both toilets had ceased to function, so when we got to the Bricklayers Arms (GBG 2003) I telephoned the boatyard to be assured that, if I turned off the inverter and then turned it on again, all would be well. Secure in this knowledge, we set to more serious matters!

Back at Fenland Fox it proved so. Almost. 'Chug, chug, chug' went the compressor and, 'click, slurp, clack, whoosh, went the after bog, but the midships one still refused to function. But at least we had some facilities, and I now knew how to silence the 'chug, chug, chug' at night.

Our boatyard at March was closed when we got there, so we continued to the town centre, stopping en route to see if a session at the D.I.Y. pump-out station would resolve matters. It didn't, so we tied up in front of the smart green narrowboat and departed to the Rose and Crown.

No 'chug, chug chug' that night after I switched the inverter off, but an annoying motor somewhere in the central heating system took over and rattled away at regular intervals until I silenced it by extracting a fuse!

No mist at all on Tuesday morning. We cruised down the old course of the River Nene to Marmont Priory Lock, sometimes through very thick duck weed. Here the lady lock keeper said that, due to a very low neap tide, we might not get through Salter's Lode Lock to the tidal River Ouse that day, but that we had better get there by 1500 just in case. So we decided to forgo lunchtime ale and only made one stop at Upwell to purchase sausages, etc., at the excellent little butcher's shop which she had recommended to us. We were now on Well Creek, which is very narrow in places.

We moored at Salter's Lode Lock with three other boats while the lock keeper waited for the tide to rise. Eventually he said that it would just make a level with Well Creek, and that we would go out onto the river with all the lock gates open. So up the tidal Ouse for a few hundred yards to Denver Sluice, where we locked up to non-tidal waters again.

Too early to stop at the Jenyn's Arms, just above the lock. Perhaps the Windmill at Hilgay. But this was boarded up, so we pressed on to the Ship, a 2003 Good



Beer Guide pub, at the junction of the Great and Little Ouse at Brandon Creek. Here we were informed that there had just been a change of landlord and that the pub was not reopening until Thursday. So there was nothing left but to continue for another four miles to Littleport, where we tied up outside the Black Horse and spent the evening drinking Bass and playing dominoes.

Back down the Ouse to Denver Sluice in the morning. It was a pleasant and fast trip down and we arrived at 1100; much too early as we were not due to lock through until about 1600. So we carried on to Downham Market by way of the new lock into the Relief Channel Navigation which, at present, almost gets to Kings Lynn. The Relief Channel Navigation is WIDE (and probably deep as well); certainly the widest bit of inland waterway that I've navigated in this country. After tying up at the Downham Market pontoon moorings we went uphill (note - hill!) to the town centre where some excellent Bass was consumed at the Castle Hotel. Then back to the boat and to Denver, where it was found that, contrary to reports received, the Jenyn's Arms closes at 1500 in the afternoon. In due course we locked through Denver Sluice and Salter's Lode (this time being used as a normal lock) and back onto the Middle Levels.

Our object was to reach Outwell before dark; a bit doubtful as it was now 1700 and Well Creek is a bit narrow, but we pressed on and tied up there not that long after dusk. However, despite there being a few pubs in Outwell, we could find no Real Ale there! A mile's walk to Upwell, and the Five Bells had Bass and Greene King, but was a bit boisterous. We carried on to the Globe, a recommended Elgood's pub, to find it closed on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. So back to the Five Bells to find that the food in the restaurant was very good and that, as we were the last diners, we could stay at our table in the relative quiet to drink and play dominoes.

Thursday. Lock down through Marmont Priory Lock, our last of the few locks that week, and then a diversion down Popham's Eau (I wonder why the name of this mile or so of water is always printed in Gothic script in maps) to Three Holes and the Red Hart, an Elgood's pub. As this is on a main road from Wisbech to Ely we had hoped to catch a bus from here to Welney, also on this road, and visit the Three Tuns, a superb timeless little Fens pub. But we could only get a bus to Wisbech, so we spent the afternoon there. After returning to the Red Hart in the evening, we learned that a visit to Welney would be pointless, nay, heartbreaking, as the Three Tuns has been demolished and replaced by a row of modern houses!

Back on the old course of the River Nene on Friday morning. Plenty of time in hand, so we decided to try to navigate the Twenty Foot River, which leaves the Old Course just before March and rejoins it just before Whittlesey. The only problem is a very low bridge which we had been warned that we might not be able to pass under. We did — just! But the only pub on this route, the Horseshoe at Turves, did not open at lunchtime. So it was on to the Old Course, and eastward to March. Oh, and the after bog packed up as well!

At March, I decided to investigate the sanitary system. Increase the setting on the compressor to full value. Chug, chug, chug, chug', it went. Put the setting down a bit and operate the toilet. 'Click, slurp, clack, whoosh', very good, but the 'whoosh isn't stopping! Put the pressure up again before we get flooded! Try again. It works! And so does the centre bog! Success at last, and so off to the Ship and the Rose and Crown. And back to the boatyard in the morning after a very enjoyable and very different from normal Beery Boaters' trip.

NB. On my boating C.V. add to Commodore, Ship's Navigator, Ship's Engineer, Ship's Diver and General Factotum' the following:- 'Ship's Sanitary Engineer'!

Jim Green



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Kent Small Brewery News



Hopdaemon Brewery 01227 784962 – Tyler Hill, Canterbury

Contact: Tony Prinz

Tony is brewing to capacity at the moment and is especially busy with a brew which is bottle conditioned, for the Science Museum in London. It is known as Deep Blue (after the name of their restaurant) and is 5% ABV. Dominator at 5.1% is again being brewed for the winter months.

The Eagle, Dover, always stock draught Hopdaemon beers and one will have a good chance of sampling Tony's beer at:

Coastguard, St. Margarets Bay
Yew Tree, Barfrestone

Rose & Crown, Elham
And perhaps at: The Louis Armstrong, Dover

The Ramsgate Brewery 07967 660060 - Ramsgate

Contact: Eddie Gadd

The beers are now being dry hopped and the clean tasting Gadd's No.4 and No.7 are probably some of the hoppiest that are produced in Kent. By the time that this article is reproduced a draught Brown Ale should be available at the Royal Harbour Brewery & bakery, Ramsgate. It is planned for the second week in November onwards. A 6% ABV 'spicy' beer will be produced for Christmas. An order has already been placed for our festival of winter ales. A trial batch of bottle conditioned Gadd's No.3 has been produced. Eddie was kind enough to give me a bottle and I can vouch for the fact that the clean hoppy taste has been maintained for this pale coloured beer.

Swale & North Weald Brewery 01622 851996 – Grafty Green

Contact: John Davidson

After a wander around Mid-Kent John has decided to settle down for the foreseeable future in the bucolic site he presently occupies and does not envisage any further disruptions. To this end the name of his business will eventually change to North Weald Brewery which properly reflects the geographical location. At present it is known as both Swale and Swale & North Weald Brewery.

A bottle conditioned beer for the Christmas market, Cracker at 6.2% with a dark ruby colour and seasoned with cinnamon has been produced. Two other seasonal beers both bittered with American hops will be on sale, on draught in December. Bizarre (nugget hops) and Mad Tom Courtney (cluster hops).



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now being
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Old Dover
Road,
Capel-le-Ferne 01303 223300

Old Kent Brewery 01732 882111 - Borough Green
Contact Sara-Jane Anderson

Previously all of O.K.B.'s brews were named after cricketing themes but now they seem to have moved to rugby football for 'Drop Kick' at 3.4% ABV and to livestock farming for 'Baa Baas !' at 4.5%. Sara has not, as yet, finalised the recipe but by the time Channel Draught is published they should be on sale. The winter brew is the previously brewed Full Pitch at 5% and has a Chocolate character.

Outlets for OKB beers are:

The Eagle, Dover (which has ordered Full Pitch)

Louis Armstrong, Dover

Coastguard St. Margarets Bay

All of the breweries that are featured in this article will be pleased to supply direct to any eligible licensee in East Kent at wholesale prices.

Roger Marples

Recent deliveries have been made to:
Yew Tree, Barfreestone
Coastguard, St Margarets Bay
Way Out Inn, Westmarsh


Flagship Brewery 01634 832828- Chatham
(by Jeff Tucker)

Contact: Jeff Tucker (see Page 35 also)

Powder Monkey has been discontinued and replaced by Moby Dick (4.4%) for the Autumn. A new beer has been brewed this week, likely to be called Pembroke Festive Porter, also 4.4%. This replaces last year's Pembroke Old Ale.

The first of the season's brews of Nelson's Blood (6.0%) sold out in 3 days! This will be available during the winter months. We are looking to produce a bottled beer within the next few weeks. If this is well received, a bottling plant may be installed in another building within the Dockyard.

The Harbourmasters is doing very well, selling 10-12 firkins of Flagship beers per week. Victory Mild and Admirals Bitter are always available here.



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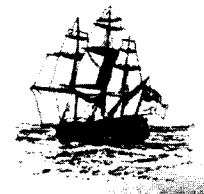
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Christmas
menu 18th
November to 23rd
December

**Good Beer
Guide
2003**



**THE
FLAGSHIP
BREWERY**
THE HISTORIC DOCKYARD, CHATHAM, KENT.



The Flagship Brewery was founded by CAMRA member Andrew Purcell together with his father-in-law, Tony Smith, in February 1995. Andrew, a longtime home-brewing enthusiast, had his appetite for 'micro' breweries whetted at the 1991 Maidstone Beer Festival. On being offered a redundancy settlement by his employer, Dartford Borough Council, he ceased his labours as a local government officer in June 1994. He then decided to put his talents to a far more worthwhile cause and to set up a brewery. After inspecting various locations, including the Kent Museum of Rural Life (home of the Maidstone Beer Festival) he decided upon the Chatham Historic Dockyard.

I had arranged to meet Andrew at the brewery on Monday 28th October which proved to be the day after severe storms. As the visit was scheduled for 15.00 it seemed sensible to meet my companion for the excursion, Christopher Excell from Ashford, Folkestone & Romney Marsh CAMRA Branch, in a Medway towns alehouse. In short, the Roseneath, Arden Street, Gillingham. Christopher contrived by use of private transport and Arriva bus to arrive on time at 12.00. I unfortunately was not so lucky with Connex who delivered me to my destination 1 1/2 hours late. I discovered that the Roseneath no longer sold Flagship beers only Greene King and Fullers. We quickly moved on.

Arriva who proved to be very good at arriving on time took us within easy reach of Chatham Historic Dockyard with time to spare which was just as well as I chose the furthest entrance from the brewery. The stroll through the dockyard was extremely interesting, although there is a charge for entering the buildings where the main exhibits are housed.

We eventually reached the brewery and found there two brewers busy brewing beer. They suggested that we might prefer to wait for Andrew in the nearby Harbourmasters Club. A suggestion which we followed. The Harbourmaster's Club is housed in a pleasant little building that overlooks the River Medway. There is a small bar at groundfloor level with an adjoining kitchen. The bar area contains three tables at which customers may sit whilst enjoying Flagship ales. There is also a first floor seating area with additional room on an outside balcony adjacent to the waterfront.

The building is leased to Flagship Brewery and is open from 11.30 to 23.00 six days a week. Sunday opening is 12.00 to 22.30. Members of the public are welcomed until 19.00 after which time it becomes a member's club. Membership is £5 per annum.

Should you wish to visit these premises the most convenient way is train to Chatham Station then about a fifteen minutes walk or a bus can be taken to the Dockyard gate. Enter the main gate and walk down the gradient. In front will be some 2nd World War aeroplanes. Behind these planes is the Flagship Brewery. To the left of them is the Harbourmaster's Club. As previously mentioned one does not need to pay an entrance fee as entrance to the exhibit halls is restricted to people who have paid for an identifying wrist-band.

Back to the bar: On being welcomed by genial mine host and hostess we were able to choose from an array of four handpumps, three of them dispensing Flagship beers and the other from, if I remember rightly, fellow 'micro' Crouch Vale. The Harbourmasters is leased to Flagship Brewery and serves as the 'Brewery Tap'. The three Flagship Brewery beers on offer were Victory Mild, Admirals Bitter and Powder Monkey. I confined myself to the last two mentioned beers which were both in excellent condition.

After a short while, and a Cornish pasty, we were joined by Andrew. He is a keen supporter of Kentish hops and uses these whole in all the Flagship brews. The three types used are Progress, Fuggles and East Kent Goldings. The malt is Maris Otter from Warminster Maltings. A small amount of torried wheat and brewing sugar are used in Powder Monkey. This incidentally is one of Andrew's favourite Flagship beers. It was stressed that these last two mentioned ingredients were solely used to affect the character of the beer, and not as with some brewers for cheapness. A characteristic of Flagship beers is their maltness. I must admit to being a disciple of the 'hoppy school of beer drinkers' but I had no trouble enjoying these splendidly kept beers.

Beside Andrew there are two other brewers; Malcolm Janes who has been brewing for two years and Clive Harman who has had some experience with our old friends Messrs Whitbread & Co. Clive joined our little party and explained that he started out as a "Bug Man" not a brewer, with Fremlins at Maidstone. I take it he meant micro-biologist. He then transferred to brewing and was employed in the Whitbread empire at Tennants brewery in Sheffield and Nimmo's at Castle Eden. He very much likes to experiment and to create different brews. I suggested that perhaps he could recreate Fremlins Three Star Bitter, of fond memory, to which he gave some thought. It was mentioned, by Andrew, that Goachers of Maidstone did try this once but I was not fortunate enough to sample any. Clive's fascination with different brews goes some way to explain why Flagship normally have approximately ten assorted beers available at any one time.

The next Flagship Brewery member to join us was Jeff Tucker a long time CAMRA stalwart, Area Organiser, Maidstone branch official, editor of 'Draught Copy' local branch magazine amongst other things. Jeff joined Flagship, as a partner, in January 2002 after securing early retirement from the I.T. industry. He looks after the sales side of the business.

After a number of pints of flagship beers it was decided that we had to see where the

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product is made. A short walk took us to the former boiler house where the brewery is accommodated. The equipment, supplied by Total Brewing International of Worcester comprises a seven barrel mash tun with five barrel copper, hot liquor tank and three fermenting vessels. Normally brewing takes place four of five days a week and two brews can be completed in fourteen hours before passing to the fermenting stage. Although the vast majority of beers are supplied in firkins (9 gallons), pins (4.5 gallons) and Kilderkins (18 gallons) are also used. The Barge in Gillingham uses Kilderkins. A special Christmas brew of 6% ABV, Nelsons Blood Extra, will be fortified with Pusser's Rum! There is a possibility of this being made available at the Festival of Winter Ales at Dover Town Hall 14th/15th February.

After a brief tour we re-adjourned to the Harbourmaster's Bar. The happy two hours (17.00-19.00), for member, was just starting as we entered and the bar was beginning to fill which was hardly surprising at £1 per pint. By the time that we left at 19.00, it was crammed solid by people who appeared to be taking their drinking seriously. Not bad for a Monday evening.

The Elephant, 31 The Mall Faversham, is owned by Andrew Purcell and in consequence is an outlet for Flagship beers. It also sells guest ales from fellow micro breweries in addition to Biddenden Draught Cider and bottled natural Honeyhole cider. There will be a celebration at the Elephant on 29th December to commemorate 50



The Mall Faversham

years of the Elephant being known as the Elephant. No doubt a special brew will be created by Flagship Brewery for the occasion.

Should one wish to consume Flagship beers in the local area the most likely venues would be The Yew Tree, Barfreestone, Royal Oak, Capel le Ferne, Louis Armstrong, Dover and possibly the Fleur de Lys, Sandwich.

Roger Marples

The Gate Inn

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Hythe

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Children welcome up to 7pm also dogs welcome provided they are kept on a leash

Winter Ales Festival Preview

Our tenth annual festival of winter ales will be held one week later this winter, owing to difficulties in booking the Town Hall for our usual first weekend in February. The festival will be one week later i.e. Friday 14th February 17.00 to 23.00 and Saturday 15th February 10.30 to 23.00 (or until all beer has been consumed).

Besides our 10th anniversary, Dover District Council are celebrating a milestone in history somewhat greater than ours. This is 800 years since the Maison Dieu, to give the Town Hall its correct name, was built. To be precise the Stone Hall was built in 1203 and the Connaught Hall was added in Victorian times.

We will be producing our first festival commemorative glass of three colours in both pint and half-pint versions, in conjunction with Dover District Council. This, we hope, will become a collectors item. There will be a record number of Kent craft breweries involved. These are the very small breweries that rely on the top quality ingredients used in their brews, rather than large advertising budgets, to stay in business. There are seven of these breweries who will be represented, with the possibility of a newly opened brewery from Gravesend being added to the list. At least five of these will be producing a 'Maison Dieu Ale' specially for the festival.

The format of the festival will be similar to previous years but a number of minor but important details have yet to be finalised by the festival committee, at the time of writing (early November). The Stone Hall will be, for the first time, a No Smoking area. Tobacco addicts may still use the much larger Connaught Hall. There will be a duo performing popular music from 19.30 to 22.30 on the Friday evening. On Saturday, from 12.00 to 14.30, we will have some lighter classical music to soothe those who have consumed too many strong ales on the Friday.

We also hope to launch, at the festival, a comprehensive local guide to all Real Ale outlets providing alcoholic 'on sales' without restrictions, at a very modest price. All beers, minimum 5% A.B.V., will be on sale at £2 per pint with the exception of the 9% A.B.V. Harvey's Extra Double Stout and other ales over 9% ABV.

Lastly should any CAMRA member wish to help at this event he or she will be very welcome and may contact the writer on 01304 208333 (not evenings) or make themselves known to him on the day.

Roger Marples
Festival Licensee



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Viewpoint

Why Kent's missing the bus!

As a local CAMRA branch we really should try to visit all the pubs on our patch at some stage to see what's going on, but what with transport problems and rural isolation, it can be quite a challenge to get around all of them, or even any of them. So what our CAMRA branch has decided to do is to try and arrange visits by service bus to rural pubs which are just about accessible that way, and do minibus trips to the remainder which are completely off the beaten track.

Our first minibus trip for some time was on a sunny Saturday in September. An enjoyable trip around some local country pubs, namely the Chequers at Hougham, the Coastguard at St Margarets Bay, The Lantern at Martin and the Chance at Guston. Very different places but all worth a visit.

But on closer examination it seems that with some persistence even quite out-of-the-way places can be accessed by regular service buses. Keep this to yourselves though. We don't want country buses running around with people on them, do we. West Hougham, for example is accessible by Stagecoach service 68A (3 daytime journeys on Fridays) and apparently by one journey mysteriously numbered 813 every Thursday, operated by a coach company from Ashford. Phone the RSPB Hotline if you spot that one!

To intrepid explorers by bus into the White Cliffs outback we recommend the useful newly published Dover & Deal public transport map. Credit to KCC for that. This clearly outlines routes and gives contact details of the operators. But the intending traveller is then left with the problem of phoning round to find out times. Stagecoach have much improved their provision of timetables at bus stops, so there will be a fair chance of finding a timetable at your point of departure. This is not much use though if you live 5 miles away and are sitting at home on Friday evening trying to work out a plan for Saturday. The bus enquiry phone numbers have also improved but are no substitute for timetable booklets.

Stagecoach produce separate timetable leaflets for every service, useful for people making regular journeys along one route but awkward for finding more extensive information over a wider area. So keeping up to date means having a collection of 20 or so leaflets with varying issue dates and no expiry dates. Getting hold of these timetables can also be a problem. Bus offices are now few and far between and only open office hours, though in some towns they might be

available from tourist offices or libraries too. In addition some local routes are operated by other bus companies so getting hold of timetables for them presents yet further effort.

In effect this tends to mean that bus travel is only available to those with local knowledge, and persistence is required even here. We think this situation deplorable, especially in an area keen to attract tourists, and ask our County Council to pull its finger out and prepare comprehensive timetable booklets, containing bus and rail services for every district. Certain booklets were produced a while back, but the attitude now seems to be that it's not worthwhile because bus times keep changing. But if bus operators knew that local timetables were to be produced every 6 months on a fixed date, maybe this would concentrate minds so that changes, if essential, could at least coincide with these timetables.

Peering into the big wide world beyond Kent shows that most other counties do manage regular issue of handy regional timetables. These are freely available at bus offices in Hampshire and East Sussex, for example, and in Hertfordshire from railway stations too. An enquiry to Derbyshire in advance of a visit resulted in speedy despatch of a set of timetables to Dover at minimum cost.

We hope Kent will reconsider this question. Other counties clearly think it worthwhile spending council taxpayers' pennies publicising local buses, so why should we be the exception? Indeed, KCC remind us that they spend over £5million annually subsidising bus services, so it's in everyone's interest, even the council taxpayer who will never go near a bus, to get as many bums on seats as possible to keep operating costs and subsidies down. If anyone else feels strongly about this please share your views with the Passenger Transport Unit, KCC Commercial Services, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4QG

Yes, we know that running rural bus services can be an uphill struggle, even on Romney Marsh, but we also know that there is goodwill. People would use them, BUT GIVE US THE INFORMATION. Publicise them and don't be so shy! Not everyone has cars and those that do would welcome the chance of being able to get to some of our far-flung pubs by bus. In CAMRA circles particularly we can say that habits and attitudes really have changed for the better. Drinking and driving hardly exists any more but it would be good to see more support for public transport users. A bit more encouragement would be much appreciated.

John Pitcher, Roger Marples

THE OLD LOCOMOTIVE, CANTERBURY. FAREWELL TO AN OLD FRIEND.

So, another old friend has passed away, not bought out and turned into a Wetherspoons beer hall, like the Falstaff tap a few hundred yards away, this time when I say a pub has gone I mean just that, gone! It is no more! and more John Cleese type comments.

I refer to the Old Locomotive, on the way to the West station in Canterbury. What a strange pub the Loco truly was, a true 'one off' in every sense of the word, not perhaps everybody's cup of tea, but I loved it. The beer was Bass or Sheps, or sometimes both (and sometimes neither!) food was cheese and onion and/or salt and vinegar.

The decor (for want of a better description!) was akin to Steptoe's yard crossed with rejects from a poor episode of the antiques road show, I remember arriving one Sunday to find Keith the Landlord trying to get a sixty foot long flag pole into a thirty foot bar, he was on the point of taking out the windows when someone suggested cutting the thing up, this was duly effected and for several years one length served as a footrest to the main bar! The Christmas decorations never came down and, when he failed to pay a certain bill on time the whole pub enjoyed candle light, for months, even after the bill was paid!

Keith's cat, Tiddles, always sat on the bar drinking milk, or was found asleep on the till, rather than move the cat all cash transactions were suspended until Tiddles woke up and moved, and if she failed to do so by closing time then the pub stayed open until she did. Some regulars were often accused of putting sleeping tablets in the milk, but this was never proved! On one memorable occasion when I was sitting on a lopsided stool drinking a very good Bass a stranger walked in and asked the times of the trains to London. Keith then went to great lengths to explain that he had recently signed an agreement with Connex SE whereby he agreed not to run trains from his bar if they agreed not to sell Bass at the station!

The Old Locomotive was not a pub for everyone, it was bizarre, strange, eccentric, weird and wonderful all at the same time, but it was unique, the last of the 'This is my pub and I'll run it my way, thank you very much!' houses.

It may be gone, destroyed completely by an explosion and fire, and I shall miss it, and all the strange and crazy folk who put up with Keith and his cat, it was the last of it's kind and I doubt if I will ever drink in such a house again, so raise a glass to the Old Loco, and think well upon it.

Phil Wyborn - Brown.



Good Beer Guide Selection a brief guide

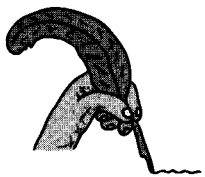
Now that the 2003 edition of the Good Beer Guide is in the shops I think it appropriate to say something on our selection process.

It would be wrong to say that at one time it was easy to for a pub to find its way into the guide but locally it is certainly much more difficult now than in the early days of CAMRA because of the amount of competition and availability of real ale. At that time, some thirty years ago, the number of real ale pubs in our area was, comparatively few. In Kent, as far as I am aware, only Shepherd Neame and Charringtons regularly retained real ale in their pubs, and then not all of those. The free trade was minute and micro brews unheard of. The rest of the trade, brewery owned tied houses almost exclusively used various forms of keg or top pressure to dispense their beer. There were exceptions, such as the Mogul in Dover or the City Arms in Canterbury where cask conditioned ale could be obtained throughout the 70s, but these were few and far between.

The situation now is radically different. In Dover town, in the early to mid 70s, probably no more than 20% of the pubs sold real ale. That figure is currently around 60%, and across our branch area there are well over 100 pubs selling real ale, of which for the current guide we had to pick twenty. Until recently we could choose up to twenty five, but layout changes in the guide, requiring longer, more detailed pub descriptions reduced our allowance, and next year is likely to be further reduced to seventeen. We, therefore, easily have more pubs selling good real ale than that kind of allocation allows us to select, so unfortunately some have to be disappointed; and my commiserations to all those who feel they deserve to be in the guide and are not. Please bear in mind also, that where there has been a change of management we allow six months 'settling in' time for the new landlord before we give consideration for selection. We feel this is both fair on the landlord, and gives us time to form a reasonable opinion.

How then do we make a decision? Perhaps the fairest way would be to toss a coin (or equivalent random selection), but that runs the risk of ending up with all our chosen pubs in the same area selling much the same beer. We therefore make a judgement taking into account both geography and beer range, and try to give as broad a choice to both. It is not easy and usually takes several meetings to come to a final decision, but eventually we hope to have achieved as accurate a reflection as possible of good real ale across our branch area.

Martin Atkins



Letter to the Editor

From Chippy Mick

Working in Dover in the Eighties as a carpenter I was lucky to find the Louis Armstrong as the ideal place for a lunch break. The bitter was perfect but 'oh', the home-cooked food! I enjoyed a plate of superb curry one day but as large postman from Charlton Green Sorting Office scoffed three!

Buddy would be struggling with his crossword - more reference books that Deal library - and yes, Bud, the roller in a typewriter is called a platen.

Builders move in, knock walls down etc, watching an "old boy" doing magic with a seagull feather to create lifelike wood graining.

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Eyeing up a metal stillage being installed behind the bar and then a few days later enjoying a superb pint of dark bitter locally brewed at Martin - straight out of the wooden barrel.

I remember doing a 'Dance to France' with wife and friends, trying to jive to Buddy and his group in a force 9 gale.

Good customers, good booze,
very good pub
Happy days

Chippy Mick

St Margarets & ^{The} Coastguard Pub Restaurant www.thecoastguard.co.uk

St Margaret's Bay has a wealth of local and maritime interest and in the nearby Museum an exhibition of Noel Coward who was once a celebrated resident of St. Margaret's Bay in the early 1950's. The Bay and surrounding area for centuries was the haunt of smugglers, and the coastline was the scene of many wrecks, lying as it does off the Goodwin Sands, maps are displayed upon our walls along with much other interesting historical information. As France is only twenty miles across the English Channel, placing The Coastguard "Britain's nearest pub to France", this part of the coast has seen a good deal of activity. At the time of the Napoleonic Wars, invasion was considered a distinct possibility and troop encampments occupied the Foreland Valley. The nearby Pines Gardens were an early 19th century military campsite.

During WWI and WWII there was obviously much military movement in the area leaving its unique mark upon the landscape, nearby Dover Castle is well worth a visit although in the St Margaret's area there is still much to see and The Coastguard is an ideal location to base whilst visiting these local points of interest and many many others.



The Coastguard was rebuilt after the war (it was formerly The Green Man) and stands on almost the exact position that the Green Man had stood for almost 400 years. The name changed in the early seventies. At the rear of the pub can still be seen the remains of the original defences of England (against the French).

The Village of St Margaret's Bay

At the western end of St Margaret's Bay is the Coastguard Station at Langdon Battery which monitors the Straits of Dover and much of the land behind the Bay is owned by the National Trust. The Saxon Way long-distance coastal walk crosses some of that land.

Local tradition claims that the first of the Huguenot refugees to arrive in England

landed here. Could be. It is far more certain that smugglers used the Bay and the village behind it, though we are back to tradition when we recount the old story of a certain parish clerk who is said to have stored in the church tower ropes and tackle for hauling smuggled goods up the cliffs from the beach.

The illicit but very popular trade must have been seriously inconvenienced, though probably nothing more, when Capt Philemon Phillips, RN, persuaded the government of his day to set up a coastguard station, with six men and a boat, there in 1737.

In was in the Bay that the Channel Tunnel Co began the first test boring in 1865. The bore discovered coal and the Channel Tunnel project was pigeon-holed - again!

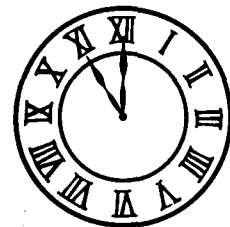
St Margaret's Bay joined the modern world in 1865 when Lord Granville, then the new Warden of the Cinque Ports, decided the little fishing village should blossom into a popular seaside resort. The Granville Hotel still stands as a memorial to his lordship's dream and the resort that developed became home, at different times, to such famous residents and visitors as Lord Arthur Cecil, Lord Byron, Max Beerbohm, Noel Coward, Ian Fleming and Peter Ustinov.

In 1918, the last bomb to be dropped in England in WW1 fell on St Margaret's and when WW2 began the area, like many others along the south coast, was evacuated of all unnecessary civilians and occupied by troops in readiness for the expected invasion.

It was here that the big naval guns, nicknamed Winnie (after the popular abbreviation of Winston Churchill's name) and Pooh (after Winnie, of course) were sighted on France. When they were fired they did more damage to local property than they did to their target area, but there is a story that after Winnie fired her first salvo of the war, her commander telephoned the Prime Minister to report a direct hit. Back came the query: 'Direct hit on what?' 'On France, Sir!' was the reply.

Today the bay is still overlooked by a statue of Sir Winston, glowering across the Straits towards the French coast. It was unveiled in November 1972 by the great man's grandson, also Winston Churchill.

The Dover Patrol Memorial was there before him, of course, unveiled by Edward, Prince of Wales, in 1921



LAST KNOCKINGS

I have to admit to certain reservations over CAMRA's national campaign featuring the real ale goddess Ninkasi. First of all Ted Bruning in October's *What's Brewing* claims that it proves that 'cask ale is just as much for the lasses as it is for the lads'. Unfortunately the image seems more appropriate to the cover of a 'lads' magazine, than one that would appeal to woman, and most of the real ale drinking woman I know are not over impressed. My second point, however, concerns the idea of using an image at all, and particularly one which seems so much of a cliché. The original motivation behind CAMRA was simply to maintain traditional ale in cask condition form, and protect it from the activities of the large conglomerates, who seemed intent on making it fizzy, bland and distinctive less.

The use of imagery such as Ninkasi would have been seen as inappropriate, and was of course just the kind of marketing approach espoused by their opponents. Unfortunately, in the modern world image matters and we neglect it at our peril, but with a campaigning organisation like ours, an image should reflect and reinforce our basic objectives, such as quality, variety, cask conditioning, etc. To me Ninkasi's image specifically represents none of these. She could just as well be holding a packet of washing powder or draping herself over a car bonnet. Who are we targeting and what kind of beer will they expect? If we are trying to woo those who normally drink nitro-keg, lager or alcopops, will they not want something in the same vein. Already there are plenty of real ales around (often large brands) which to my mind do not match the criteria of the original campaign, and which this somewhat glitzy approach is unlikely to improve. The danger ahead is that we end up suspending critical judgement and accept any ale so long as it's real.

In a recent issue of *Channel Draught* I referred to a meeting in spring with Shepherd Neame's Brian Mulhern in which there was discussion about his company's winter ales. I suggested that in recent years these had not been

outstanding and he rather agreed, especially with respect to last year's choice, However my suggestion that they return to the excellent 5.2% porter of a few years ago was apparently a non-starter on the grounds that dark beers do not sell; despite Guinness being an international brand and, more locally, Goachers apparent ability to sell all the Imperial stout they can produce. I was therefore surprised and heartened to hear that Shepherd Neame have had something of a change of view and that their winter ale 2002/2003 is to be the very same porter (albeit 0.2% weaker at 5%) that back in May they felt it was impossible to sell. Initially very pleasing, but I trust Shepherd Neame will understand if I keep my fingers crossed and withhold judgement until I actually taste the brew. It would also be interesting to know if Brian Mulhern's other somewhat depressing comment, that Shepherd Neame must keep expanding or fall prey to some competitor has also been reversed, for although I have nothing against Shepherd Neame, an estate of some 400 pubs plus substantial free trade, should be quite enough for any local brewery. However I suspect, here, nothing has changed.

Those of you who believe that only small and micro breweries can produce decent ale should visit the Flagship in Snargate Street. Unless you are unlucky there is every chance that you will find Tetley Imperial on the bar. Do not be put off by the name Tetley as this brew is nothing like the rather uninspiring standard bitter (though no doubt some will say they love it) which can be found on found on pub bars the length and breadth of the country. Imperial lives up to its name and is a substantial well flavoured brew of some 4.3% in strength. It is not a new beer and has been around for some time but previously rarely seemed to emerge from Tetley's Yorkshire heartland. Those who remember Fuggles Imperial, Truman's Sampson or Courage Directors at its best will not be surprised that it is the product of a major brewery. As this column has remarked before, they can do it if they want to, although unhappily it appears that all too often they do not. Tetley Imperial has been spotted in one or two other outlets and as it falls into that 4-4.5 % 'flagship' bracket (marketing term, not the pub) we may hope to see it appearing more widely. Lets just hope it does not suffer the fate of a number of other beers who have seen their quality and strength deteriorate once they are pitched into the national marketplace.

Old Wort

Local Information & Useful Numbers

If you have a dispute concerning ale bought in Dover, Deal or Sandwich, please bring it to the attention of Martin Atkins (see Page 53). You may want to take the matter up yourself and we advise you to contact any (or all) of those on the right:



Dover Tourist Info 01304 205108
Folk Tourist Info 01303 258594
Dover Police Stn 01304 240055
Folk Police Stn 01303 850055

Dover Taxis

A1 01304 202000
A2B 01304 225588
Arrow 01304 203333
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Heritage 01304 204420
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Trading Standards Office
(Mid Kent) 01303 850294
Gwyn Prosser MP
(Dover) 01304 214484
Dr. Steven Ladyman MP
(Thanet South) 01843 852696
Michael Howard QC MP (Shepway)
01303 253524

National Bus Line 0870 6082608
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Deal Cars 01304 366000
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All numbers on this page were believed correct at time of going to press



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Branch Contacts

If you have any queries about CAMRA in White Cliffs Country then please contact **Martin Atkins** (Branch Chairman) or **Dave Routh** (Area Organiser – East Kent).

Martin Atkins 01304 201870

Dave Routh 07932 525345

You can e-mail the branch using:
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The branch website is:
www.topsy.demon.co.uk/dds_camra

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Annie@brockletts.fsnet.co.uk

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Gerry Keay 01227 463478
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thanet.camra@virgin.net

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230 Hatfield Rd,
St Albans, Herts,
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Please note that views expressed herein are not necessarily those of this branch or CAMRA Ltd.

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