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NEW GUIDE TO  
REAL ALE IN  
THE AREA**



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

**Issue 19 Spring 2004**



# Channel Draught Issue 19 Spring 2004



Welcome to the 2004 Spring edition of Channel Draught.

If you are thinking that you don't remember seeing the Winter edition (Issue 18) you would be right, because for a variety of reasons that one had to be abandoned. However all problems are now resolved and we anticipate resuming the normal quarterly production.

There have however been a number of changes to editorial staff. Paul Turvey (Topsy) who had edited and formatted the magazine since its start in autumn 1999 has reluctantly stepped down from the post, after finding that increasing work pressure and family commitments was not allowing him the time to devote to the newsletter that it needed. His role will now be split between myself, who will be undertaking the editorial responsibilities, and Steve Bell who will be looking after format and design. Dave Routh will remain News Editor and we are gaining additional help from Anne Mellory of Finglesham, who is joining the editorial team.

Can I take this opportunity to thank Paul for all the hard work and effort that he has put into Channel Draught over the last four years. I think without his commitment, energy and skill it would not have proved the success that it has.

In this issue, among other items, Roger Maples makes some blunt comments about the current state of real ale in Britain, we start a new regular feature on cider, and we continue the adventures of the Beery Boaters. Plus of course Local and National News, Old Wart, Local Brewery News, etc.

**Martin Atkins (Editor)**



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Sandwich & District Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale.  
*Please note that views expressed herein are not necessarily those of  
this branch or CAMRA Ltd.*  
Please drink sensibly!

# Events Diary

**19th April 2004** AGM & Branch Meeting  
Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club, Dover

**10th May 2004** Presentation to Tony Prins (Hopdaemon Brewery) for  
'Ale of The Festival 2004, Yew Tree, Barfrestone.

**15th May 2004** Kent Regional Meeting, Mogul Dover 11.30am

**17th May 2004** Branch Meeting, Prince Albert, Deal

**21st June 2004** Branch Meeting, Louis Armstrong, Dover

**19th July 2004** Branch Meeting, Crown, Finglesham

Updates to the diary are available on the branch website  
[www.topsy.demon.co.uk/dds\\_camra](http://www.topsy.demon.co.uk/dds_camra)

**Meetings & events start at 8pm unless otherwise shown**

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

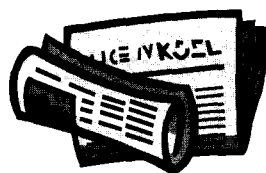
If you are interested in joining CAMRA come along to one of our meetings!

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

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## The Local News

- ♦ More pubs changing hands
- ♦ Local brews making steady progress.

The rapid turnover in recent years of pub ownership and pub landlords shows no sign of abating. As Punch Taverns swallows Pubmaster, and Enterprise completes its acquisition of Laurel, much of the local ex-Whitbread estate finds itself in the hands of one or other of these two giant combines, while, on a smaller scale, many of our branch pubs have individually changed hands, or are looking for new owners or licensees. On the beer front, brews from the three small local brewers who regularly deliver direct to our area, Nelson, Hopdaemon and Ramsgate (Gadds), are all appearing more widely and regularly.

### DEAL and WALMER

#### CLOSURE OF SEAFRONT PUB

From Beach Street comes the disheartening news of the closure of the **Star & Garter Hotel** and the proposed change of use to a shop and two flats of the ever-popular Dutch styled **Admiral Penn**. We have little

information as yet regarding the latter, but in the case of the former, no doubt Shepherd Neame felt it was surplus to requirements following their acquisition and refurbishment of the Royal Hotel opposite - which is a pity because the Star & Garter always seemed more friendly and accessible than the rather austere Royal. Closed from mid-March it is said to be destined for conversion to houses; and decisions on both are probably much influenced the premium available for residential properties on Deal sea-front. If the plans go ahead they will be sorely missed.

However better news from the Cannon St./Golf Road area, where we hear that the Jolly Gardener, closed some years ago and proposed for use as a 'Community centre' (my inverted commas), has been sold and is planning to re-open as a pub. Good news for a rather dry part of the town, and will hopefully demonstrate that a local *is* a community centre.

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Next to a pub not previously mentioned. The **Walmer Castle** adjoining the South Street bus terminal has normally sold real ale, but availability and quality were pretty variable. Now its distinctive central serving area sports three pairs of handpumps contrasting with the weird and wonderful mix of "ready-to-drink" cocktails. Fuller's London Pride is the regular offering, plus guests. In November there was a seasonal ale Ushers Autumn Frenzy brewed by Wychwood. Things are also looking up at the **Yew Tree**, Mill Hill. New tenants here have e-mailed us with the news that at least one handpump was due to be installed, with a decision as to which beer to be ordered to follow.

#### SCOTTISH ALE MAKES A HIT

The award-winning Deuchars IPA has made quite an impact in town, with at least three regular outlets before Christmas – no doubt these "share" customers! The **Prince Albert** took it, where it appeared alongside further brews from Nelson of Chatham, and it also featured in a revised line-up at the **Bohemian**, where regular-strength brews now rule the roost. Woodforde's Wherry remains but the Adnams is now Southwold rather than Broadside. Guest ales may be stronger and usually appear at weekends – our branch meeting in November found another East Anglian, Wolf Brewery from Norfolk. Deuchars was also to be

seen at the **Ship**, Middle Street, whose line-up now includes Woodford's, Hook Norton and Summer Lightning. More recently, Fullers ESB has reappeared, and may be staying. It was, of course, for many years a regular here, and at a time when its flavour was distinctly unique. Fuller's may say otherwise, but to some of us, it tastes nothing like it used to.

Pedigree is a regular, along with normally three other real ales, at the **Alma**, while round the corner in Duke Street the Shepherd Neame owned **Deal Hoy** featured Late Red during the autumn and Porter during the winter. Continuing with Shep's, the **Saracen's Head** in Alfred Square, was recently selling the rarely seen Shepherd Neame Best, alongside Masterbrew and Spitfire, while in Beach Street, the **Royal Hotel**, with major work now completed, has added Master Brew to Spitfire, and the Star and Garter has closed (see above). Choice at the **New Inn** put Draught Bass and Worthington 1744 into head-to-head competition. Meanwhile the **King's Head**, **Port Arms** and **Admiral Penn** each continue with their regular ranges – all in good order on recent visits. No particular real news from the suburbs or Walmer, except that the **Cambridge Arms** is now selling Weston's cider, and Master Brew at the revived **Railway** has been well received by other visiting CAMRA members. The **Oak**

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& Ivy, Blenheim Road is still shut – future uncertain, although a glance through the window at the work done so far, suggests conversion to a house, or houses, will be the likely outcome.

## DOVER

In the last issue, I reported the demise of JD Wetherspoon's plan for a Lloyd's No1 bar at the old **Images** disco bar in Castle Street. Certainly, the site was vacated and put back on the market by the developers. But now we find that last year's planning application has been revived in revised form with JDW as applicant. The plan specifically mentions an outdoor paved area at the back, facing out to the multi-storey car park (not much of a view, but DDC still harbours grand ideas for that whole area). Meanwhile, their existing establishment, the **Eight Bells** was refurbished at the end of January and now features a "sprung" carpet. Ale selection remains much the same, with typically three or four guest ales off their main list, but no more Abbot (their MD's favourite!). After the Halloween bash, De Koninck from Antwerp appeared as promised, plus a beer not seen much locally since Richard and Opal ran the Castle in Whitbread's dying days – Fuggles Imperial, now badged as IPA by Camerons of Hartlepool.

In Folkestone Road the **Engineer** is still up for sale, while the long closed

**Captain Webb** will no doubt be demolished when the Webb's Hotel site is redeveloped. Back towards the town centre, the **Priory Hotel's** hand-pumps remain idle, but real ale can be found in the **Renaissance**, where Peter regularly takes brews from the Nelson Brewery – the end of last year saw Moby Dick and Spanker in November, followed by the stronger Shipwrecked during December. At the **Golden Lion**, Bank's Original has reappeared – properly a mild, it is much lighter than most survivors of its type and appeals as a session beer. Also on pump has been Otter Bright, a modern style straw-coloured pale ale with a real hoppy bite to it, and more recently brews from the Hampshire Brewery.

Around the Market Square, **Bar Ellie** has changed hands (although no real ale for months), and so also has **Harleys**, Church Street; though with its track record, don't expect anything here either. Otherwise no known changes, with real ale at the **Flotilla** and **Nelson**, and intermittently at the **Britannia**, where recently the tenants have been pushing Spitfire and Wadworth 6X. Meanwhile pubco Innspired (aka "Alehouse") is trying to sell the **Castle**, Russell Street, and on the seafront **Millers** has passed to the Spirit Group.

At **Blakes**, Castle Street's bar and restaurant, founders and owners since the mid 1980s, John and Teresa

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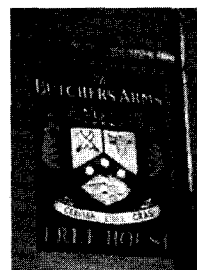
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Toomey have finally decided to hang up their bar towels (see elsewhere in this newsletter). New proprietors, Chris and Roger, plan to keep things much the same, with very possibly an increased emphasis on real ale. Regular beer is London Pride, with normally one or two guests. A couple of minutes away at the **White Horse**, London Pride and Greene King Abbot are standard, but Hobgoblin from Wychwood is often available.

During the winter, Young's excellent Winter Warmer has regularly appeared.

Elsewhere in the town centre, the **Prince Albert** is currently offering Interbrew's reincarnated Boddingtons cask bitter (see National News). Brewed at Strangeways, Manchester, only pale malt and hops are used, to produce a well-balanced, very drinkable northern style bitter. Around the corner in Ladywell the lone hand-pump has disappeared again from the **Sir John Falstaff** (as too has another landlord – first week in February), contrasting strongly with the adjacent **Park Inn**, with six in daily use. Amongst the brand names here are Pedigree and the legendary Old Peculiar, plus regular guests.

The **Louis Armstrong**, a long time outlet for Bass, now usually carries a second real ale as well; normally from a small brewer, Burton Bridge and Grand Union are regulars, together with locals Nelson and Hopdaemon. These two also supply the **Eagle**, supplemented at times by the likes of Hogsback or the Wolf Brewery. Restoration work on the outside is now finished but the four-sided clock plan has been dropped after a lot of adverse comment. I'm told Mick's had enough of the idea and called "time" on it!

In other parts of the town, the availability of real ale is patchier. It is not

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now available at either the **Prince of Orange** or the **Flagship** – now under common management, and still no sign of the redundant handpumps being brought back into use at the **Cinque Ports Arms**. At the other end of the harbour, however, you will find it at the **First and Last**, including Late Red last autumn, and Porter during the winter.

In Tower Hamlets there is currently no real ale, although Chris Page at the **Dewdrop** hopes to resume soon. Meanwhile Avebury Taverns are looking for new lessees for the **Edward VII**. Further up the town, however, good news from the **Sportsman**, where real ale has been reintroduced after requests from customers. Regular supplier is Nelson from Chatham, although other brews have been seen as well. Opposite, the **Cherry Tree** is still looking for lessees.

Further afield, the **Gate**, Crabble Hill, has been sold by auction and boarded up (new owner unknown, and future uncertain). At the nearby **Cricketers**, which of course adjoins Crabble football and athletic ground, your reporter turned up one Saturday afternoon at kick-off time totally oblivious to the facts that: (a) Margate still plays there, (b) Burton Albion was the visiting team, and (c) Burton's colours were the same as his own choice of the day. The landlord cheerily poured a pint of Burton-brewed Pedigree as "your local brew, then". If only! Along with Adnams, it can be served with or without

a sparkler, although it made surprisingly little difference to either the head or the taste.

#### THE MOGUL – SECOND BEST PUB IN BRITAIN?



Not technically true, but the **Mogul** was second best in Kent to the recently announced National Pub of the Year, the Crown and Thistle in Gravesend. The last few months have seen the usual wide selection from small brewers with regular appearances by Oakham, HopBack (notably Summer and Winter Lightning) and Dark Star, whose Hophead is always a favourite. The wheat-infused Thunderstorm made an impression before Christmas, as did Robinson's Old Tom (8.5% ABV), and the delightfully named Betty Stoggs (a charlady we think) has appeared on several occasions. Phil Goacher now often delivers – usually the Dark Mild but of late the very drinkable Light (Bitter) has been seen. Many other beers, of course – recently several excellent brews (as always) from



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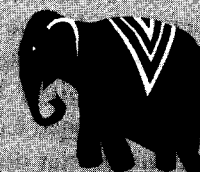
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## SANDWICH

Eddie Gadd of Ramsgate has a regular outlet at the **Red Cow**, where a dedicated handpump dispenses one or other of his numbered brews (varying weekly). There *may* be Dogbolter to follow on special occasions. Opening hours here are firmly traditional with afternoon closure. Gadd's No7 and No3 can feature at the Fleur De Lis, where they alternate with other guest ales of varying strengths, including Caledonian, Wolf Brewery or Woodforde's. See the blackboard behind the bar (or just ask) for "what's next".

Shepherd Neame's **Market Inn**, recently named Pub of the Year by the White Cliffs Country Tourism Association, had Late Red in the autumn and Porter during the winter. It has also, of late, re-emerged as a rare



outlet for draught Bishops Finger. Greene King 1799 on pump, rather than stillage featured at the **Admiral Owen** before Christmas with a promise of Suffolk Strong to follow. Opposite, Punch Taverns has finally found a new tenant for the repainted **Crispin**. Real ales are currently Bass and Greene King IPA but the new landlord said he might consider extending the range to include perhaps Everards Tiger which had formerly been a regular. Beer range at the **George and Dragon**, Fisher Street, has declined (just one on my visit) but the **Kings Arms** now does Young's Bitter on a regular basis.

## VILLAGES

We have had very few reports from readers or locals, so we assume that all of you are happy! (Please don't tell us that you have stopped going to the pub.) So, of those we know about, or have been to ourselves....

### FUTURE OF LION HOTEL IN DOUBT

Currently closed, the **Lion Hotel**, Ash has a notice from December on the door thanking customers for their patronage and announcing forthcoming refurbishment. Certainly the interior looks very bare. However, local rumour suggests that its future might be as an Indian restaurant. This would mean that a village, which not

so long ago supported five pubs, would be reduced to just two (see Editorial). On a brighter note, however, the **Volunteer** appears now to be another welcome outlet for the Ramsgate Brewery.

At the western end of our branch area the **Jackdaw**, Denton, always has five ales on. Apart from Spitfire, which is effectively a "house ale", there has been Pedigree, Brains and Gale's, whilst Ringwood Best also seems to have taken up residence. Open all day, it is now served by extra buses from Folkestone. Nearby, and much more difficult to find, the **Endeavour** at Wootton sells London Pride and Greene King IPA. With conversion to residential use (actively opposed by our branch and many of the locals) recently refused, this cosy little pub needs all the support it can get. Turn off the A2 at the Lydden Circuit junction, or, first left after the Jackdaw.

At the **Yew Tree**, Barfreestone, dark mild is a permanent feature with supplies from Harveys and Moorhouses (Black Cat), among others. Eddie Gadd's Ramsgate Brewery stopped brewing mild after the summer, but the "numbered" brews have continued, while the winter has seen the appearance of his dark and deceptively strong Dogbolter. This ex-Firkin brew, which proved popular at the Flotilla in Dover, when part of that chain, seems even better than it

did then: rich and dark, but dry and hoppy. Tonie Prins supplies from his Hopdaemon range, including from December, his answer to Gadd's finest: the strong, fruity, winter brew, Leviathan. For those not into high strength brews, however, there has also been the light, hoppy Deuchars IPA.

The **Royal Oak**, Capel-le-Ferne, regularly stocks Nelson brews alongside Bass and Master Brew; their finest hour (beer-wise) had to be an alarmingly concentrated extra stout, which bears comparison with the black stuff that Guinness brews for its Afro-Caribbean markets. The **Lighthouse** nearby has taken Greene King's autumnal 1799 plus Tanner's Jack, whilst Everards Tiger is now a regular, if not permanent, guest. The **Plough/Beefeater**, one of the few remaining Whitbread houses, still stocks real ale – normally London Pride and Flowers Original, while in the Alkham Valley the **Marquis of Granby**, has a repositioned sign, and boards outside announcing new ownership

### CHEQUERS STILL CLOSED

At West Hougham the **Chequers** remains closed and a "mystery", as far as its future is concerned. No attempt to obtain change of use, and no advert for sale or lease on the premises, although we understand that one has been seen on the Web. Recently,



however, there were reports of activity and "things" being taken away. As usual, any other news gratefully received. One thought: the village has currently neither pub nor shop and a building the Chequers size could well accommodate both.

At the **Fox**, Temple Ewell, Steve has varied the London Pride "routine" by stocking Fuller's Chiswick instead – we cannot think of anyone else locally who does. He is another to have introduced Deuchars IPA, and also brews from Robinson's amongst others. London Pride remains a regular at the **Railway Bell**, Kearsney, alongside GK IPA and Abbot. At the related Lydden Bell, along the road, Young's Special or Bombardier feature.

After several years of regularly changing hands, the **Butcher's Arms**, Ashley, has now settled down under the ownership of Doug and Audrey Vickers (formerly Alma, Deal). A repositioning of the rear bar and a sizable extension has given this formerly rather cramped pub a new dimension. Evening opening is currently 7.00, with Master Brew and a guest ale always on. From nearby Ripple, we have had good reports via e-mail about the **Plough** which continues to be a rare regular outlet for Fuller's ESB. This sits along-



side the more commonly found Spitfire and Master Brew, while behind the bar you might well find the beaming face of Richard Crocker (last seen locally at the Castle, Russell Street), who's been helping out of late.

Real mild at the **Charity**, Woodnes-

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borough, is always available in the shape of Tetley-brewed Ansells (dark) Mild. GK IPA is also a regular. The **Bull**, Eastry, has more GK IPA together with Bass, and is open all day, while the **Five Bells**, just along the street, usually closes for the afternoon at 3.30, and sells the same two, but regularly offers a guest ale as well – Eddie Gadd's No7 making frequent appearances. In future it's hoped to maintain a rotation of guest ales from the three local small breweries, Hopdaemon, Nelson and Ramsgate. And Ramsgate brews, now feature regularly at the **Hare and Hounds**, Northbourne, which remains a rare local outlet for Harveys.

At the **Clyffe Inn**, St.Margaret's),

the bar has been repositioned at right angles, allowing the back and front bars to be linked as one. The open fire at the back pleasingly remains and was burning well on a recent visit. Spitfire was on handpump. Down in the Bay, Nigel at the **Coast-guard** keeps the local flavour going with both Gadds' and Hopdaemon – generally, but not always, the regular strength brews – plus Adnams Southwold as the other "house" ale. He also stocks a couple of Belgian bottled ales – enjoy, but beware! (See branch social report)

Straying outside the branch area, the **Black Robin** at Kingston normally stocks Master Brew and Black Robin Bitter but does carry guests from time to time; while further along the

Nailbourne the **Mermaid** at Bishopsbourne remains satisfyingly unchanged, its twenty years consecutive GBG entry well displayed on the outside wall. Hopdaemon brews have been seen alongside Shepherd Neame at the **Duck**, Pett Bottom and **HopPocket**, Bossingham respectively Incubus and Golden Braid on recent visits), but the **Three Horseshoes** at Lower Hardres remains dispiritingly closed, although apparently occupied. With sign gone and looking decidedly forlorn, there is little, other than a couple of barrels by the front door, to remind one that just a few

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years ago it was one of the best country pubs around. We understand that at least one application for conversion to residential use has been refused, but that was a while ago, so we'd appreciate any news of the current situation. Away to the south the **Rose and Crown**, Stelling Minnis remains ever popular but nearby Rhodes Minnis is decidedly dry – the **Prince of Wales** having been converted to a house and the **Gate**, to a gift shop, tea room and pet centre. (See Editorial)

## FOLKESTONE

*\*This is a summary for the benefit of our regular readers. For full coverage of pub news and CAMRA events around Folkestone please see the new issue of "Marsh Mash" which is available in selected pubs throughout Shepway, and also in the Ashford Borough area.*

There is nothing new in bank-to-bar conversions (Fuller's, Wetherspoon, etc), but the former Nat West, on the corner of Bouverie Road West and Castle Hill Avenue, is now the **Kalala** Chinese buffet, with a full on licence. At one end of the dining area there is a separate bar with minimalist décor and Shep's beer, included handpumped Master Brew.

There are of course two existing "proper" pubs close by, plus hotels, etc. **Harvey's**, well known for its

Everards Tiger, was recently serving this brew straight from the cask when the handpump failed. Bass is still a staple here, but there is often genuine guest ale at busy times. Bass, of course, can also be found at the nearby **Clifton Hotel**, where there is the option of a pint dimple jug or new-style branded straight glass.

More Bass at the **Happy Frenchman**, together with Young's Bitter and Special (at the expense of Broadside). The weekly guest ale is usually drunk dry - Andy will not serve the next one until it fully conditioned. The deceptively powerful Oakhill Yeoman proved popular, as did Peat Porter from the splendidly named Moor Beer Company of Bridgewater. There is also demand for a real cider here, and Andy is trying to arrange something acceptable to the owning PubCo, which is tricky since so few distributors actually stock one! Real cider (Biddenden Bushels) is always on at **The Chambers** where Chris has reverted from Ringwood Old Thumper to Theakston Old Peculiar - just the right foils to the chillies for which the house is proud!

No major changes in the town centre. The GBG-listed duet of **British Lion** and **Guildhall** will switch from Pubmaster to Punch, but their beer ranges are likely to stay unchanged; therefore Greene King IPA and Ab-

bot in both, with Bombardier, Bass, Young's Special or Old Speckled Hen at one or the other. Punch already owns **Mustangs**, with its Tetley Bitter (no longer labelled cask but unchanged), and a second big branded ale – e.g. Pedigree or Young's. At **Wetherspoons**, which should by now have a new manager, we have formerly criticised both poor quality and limited beer range here, but the previous management fully supported the Halloween Festival last year. Since then we have seen Belgian De Koninck *ale* (not lager!), and more recently brews from their spring list.

#### SHEPHERD NEAME PUBS REFURBISHED

No changes either around the harbour with its many fizz-only bars, but there is news from two of the traditional Shep's pubs. At the re-decorated **Richmond Tavern**, Jan Pederson is handing over to a new tenant, whilst we are told that the **Princess Royal** is also due to change hands, with refurbishment to follow. Further out, at Cheriton, the **White Lion** now sports two handpumps. On a recent visit Master Brew was on one, with Best turned round on the other, not having sold too well. We have commented in previous issues that Shepherd Neame appeared to be dragging their heels over installing handpumps, despite requests from tenants Rachel and Duncan. How-

ever while there are now handpumps, there is no Rachel and Duncan. Apparently they left before Christmas, and the pub is now run by a manager, for someone who has a pub in Ashford.

Greene King IPA at the **Royal Standard** while next door the **Two Bells** are now taking beers from Nelson. Six idle pumps in the **Black Bull** – the barman didn't know why, either, while after a long period with the clip turned round, the Enterprise owned **Valiant Sailor** now has Bass on all of the time.

Finally, a sad note at the **East Cliff Tavern**, where long time landlord, Horace Brickall, died early in the New Year. However, Richard Parks continues to look after the bar, offering two real ales more often than one. Hopdaemon on occasion, whilst Granny Wouldn't Like It from Wolf Brewery was accompanied by a bundle of CAMRA "Norfolk Nip" newsletters. Beer Seller delivers here, with its slot-in pump cards, and despite its continued S&N ownership (see National News) it still carries a huge variety of beers, from well-known brands to real oddities, like Nethergate Umbel with its coriander infusion.

*Dave Routh*  
Additional reporting  
by Martin Atkins

## The Bull Inn EASTRY



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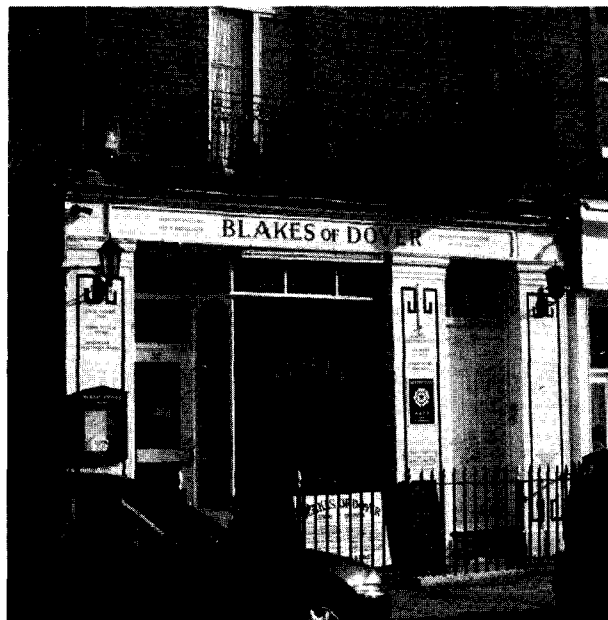
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# BLAKES

## The End of an Era in Dover



In the mid 1980s a new type of establishment appeared in Dover. John and Teresa Toomey converted the basement of the Webley Blake insurance and estate agents premises in Castle Street into "Blakes". Set in a mid-nineteenth century terrace overlooked by Dover Castle, it was, from what I recall, originally presented as a wine bar, and certainly the exterior signage carried the term wine lodge for many years. However its character and appeal was always broader than this might suggest, and it soon found favour with locals, the busi-

ness community, and cross-channel travellers.

Originally a cellar bar only, the ground floor was converted a few years later, to provide additional dining space and a location for private functions. In good weather customers had the benefit of a long, walled garden at the rear, which, in more than one year provided adequate sanctuary for a local mallard to raise a brood of ducklings. Always unique, and a bar and restaurant rather than a public house, Blakes

offered excellent food, good beer and conversation, and one of the most extensive ranges of malt whiskies (both Scottish and Irish) that you would find anywhere. From the start hand pumps were installed, and initially carried just draught Bass, but the range was expanded to include other Bass brews plus independents such as Adnams. Around Christmas, John might well put a barrel of winter ale on the bar. It was also, and remained for many years, one of the ever-decreasing outlets for Worthington White Shield.

John and Teresa proved admirable hosts and Blakes always offered a warm welcome, despite John's habit of asking customers about their "alleged" gout. With the right combination of customers (and bar staff) it was the best bar in town. It regularly appeared in the Good Beer Guide and was a favoured venue for CAMRA branch meetings. Over the years beer range varied considerably but of late London Pride has established itself as the standard brew, supplemented normally by one or two guests.

However, nothing stays the same for ever, and a few years ago John and Teresa decided it was time to relinquish control. For a couple of years, Blakes was run by Teresa's brother Noel, and wife Sue, before John and Teresa took it on again, to finally sell at the end of 2003. As hosts of many

an enjoyable evening we wish them well, and good fortune in any future enterprise. New owners, Chris and Roger aim to keep things much the same, and observation so far, suggests they are managing it most successfully.



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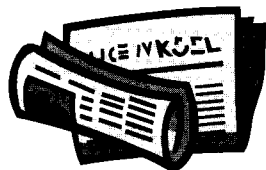
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## The National News

### Shep's Rocked by Resignation

On the eve of Shepherd Neame's AGM, Stuart Neame stunned shareholders by suddenly announcing his resignation from the Board. He had been with the family firm since 1972 and for many years had been vice-chairman. In recent times he has adopted a very public profile with attacks on licensing reforms, excise duties and other perceived hindrances to business. However, fundamental differences over future policy, particularly Shepherd Neame's adherence to vertical integration, appear to have proved too much. Had he remained he might well have expected to become Chairman when his cousin, Booby Neame retires in October 2005.

One thing is clear though. The company sees its future in family-orientated food outlets and the award-winning Manor Farm Barn near Gravesend. It has also reinvested in previous new ventures, as at the Master Brewer in Folkestone. Old-fashioned back-street boozers which once formed the backbone of its estate are low priority and many can expect to be sold or closed. On a more positive note, last autumn's Late Red was

well received and distribution has expanded (including free trade). Winter once again saw the Porter which was revived last year, while Bishop's Finger and Best have also been more in evidence lately.

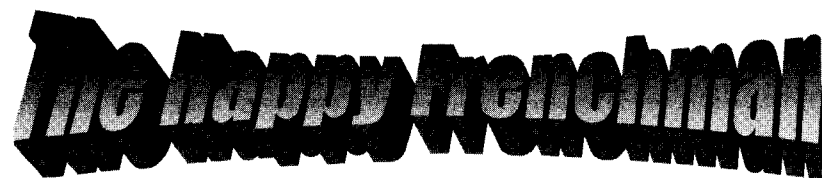
### Brakspear Heading "Home"

Since the disappointing closure of its Henley-on-Thames brewery, Brakspear's brewing has been contracted out with its two main bitters being produced at Burtonwood in Cheshire. However, in the early summer they are due to move back into Oxfordshire with the expansion of the Wychwood Brewery at Witney onto an adjoining site recently vacated by the Co-op. Wychwood's parent company Refresh UK has always insisted that Brakspear's brews would return "home", and had bought much of the plant from Henley. With the former Thomas Hardy brewery in Dorchester also closing, all of the main Refresh brewing operation can now be combined at Witney. The challenge for Refresh now is to recreate the familiar Brakspear taste and aroma which had been lost during its enforced exile north.

Most of the seasonal specials from Brakspear (and also Ushers) are still

Andy & Charlotte

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being made in Oxfordshire, by Wychwood – these include “Hop Demon” which (despite the spelling) is causing some understandable confusion on the Kent coast! Perhaps Tonie Prins over at Canterbury should be calling his lawyer.....

### 1845, 1799, 1698, etc

All famous years in the brewing trade, and all have appeared on beer labels as names in their own right. Four years ago Greene King celebrated its bicentennial with the dark, malty 1799, which has now become its autumnal offering. We also hear that it *might* relaunch its mid-strength Triumph, which looked to have been sacrificed to boost its then revamped, but dumbed down, Ruddles County. Meanwhile, GK IPA is now a trifle hoppier these days!

Fuller's splendid 1845 has been bottled on yeast sediment for some years but during the autumn it also produced a draught version for selected pubs. This followed a brief run for its Porter (after Honey Dew). As to where you can get some, the only Fuller's tied house anywhere near here was at Kennington, Ashford, but we are told that this has been sold to Shepherd Neame! Shep's does a bottled but filtered 1698, and offered a modified, lower strength version in cask for its 1998 celebrations – shame they don't do a full-strength cask brew for the

winter!

### Punch knocks out Pubmaster

Punch Taverns became Britain's biggest pub owner with its purchase of Pubmaster. The deal worth £1.2bn gives Punch a grand total of 7500, approaching the size of Bass in the 1980s. The competition authorities had concerns where Punch would hold more than a quarter of the pubs in some areas, but has ordered no more than 200 disposals.

Pubmaster was under pressure from its bankers to sell, whilst Punch can use future profits as security. Only a couple of years ago, Pubmaster was itself a serious contender for major expansion with its bid to buy out Wolves & Dudley's pub estate and close down the Banks's and Marston's breweries. But recently, it was also looking to dispose of individual pubs in an effort to bring down debt.

Enterprise Inns, however, has once again leap-frogged over Punch Taverns to reclaim its title of Britain's Largest Pub Group. It has now completed its takeover of the Unique Pub Co. which had evolved out of Intrepeneur, itself the creation of a merger between the old Watneys and Courage pub estates. Enterprise will be under regulatory pressure to release pubs in areas where they have a disproportionate presence, e.g parts

of Kent where Courage used to vie with Whitbread.

Laurel Pub Co., the successor to Whitbread's managed estate, has finally put its pubs on the market. Of the 600+, a few are for individual disposal but the rest have been split into two tranches. Over 400 unbranded outlets are expected to find a ready buyer, but up to 200 'high street' bars including the Hogsheads are reckoned by the City analysts to be more problematical given the move away from branded chains and the saturation point of the 'circuit' bars in all too many town centres. The usual suspects are expected to bid.

### New Boddies or Old?

Ever since it took over the last remnants of the Whitbread Brewing Company, Interbrew has persisted with its remaining ales and has now turned special attention to Boddingtons.

Having almost closed the Strangeways plant (see last issue), it has now come up with a revised cask version of the so-called “cream of Manchester”. Its strength has risen from 3.8% to 4.1% and its flavour has changed much to the approval of those who can get it. Under Whitbread, production of cask Boddies declined steadily as it was pushed out by the heavily backed processed variety towards the “danger point” of around 10% of the total.

Older CAMRA members say that the new brew is much more like the old pre-Whitbread beer. (See Local News). If you see it on a handpump, give it a try and see if you agree. Incidentally, Bass seems to have improved as well. Less sweet and cloying, they say.

### Beer Duty Review

Two years ago, Chancellor Brown reduced excise duty on beer for small brewers, with all of those producing fewer than 18,300 (36-gallon) barrels a year gaining some benefit, with a maximum saving of £130k pa. In theory, this was the equivalent of up to 14p a pint, but almost every one has used the saving to re-invest in their business or hold down wholesale prices to attract further custom.

This year's budget. Has seen the Chancellor further extend allowances. All breweries producing between 30,000 and 60,000 hectolitres per year would be able to double production and still claim tax relief.

### New Legislation

The changes to excise duty just announced are small beer compared with the new licensing law which has received Royal Assent but will now take a further year or so to take effect. Reports so far suggest that

local authorities, LVAs and even the Government are finding the implementation of the new proposals far more complex and problematic than anyone envisaged. Some are speculating as to whether they will ever come into force in their present form.



Meanwhile, elsewhere in Whitehall, and despite a substantial campaign, the latest changes to the 'Use Changes Orders' failed to make planning consent a requirement for conversion of a public house to a restaurant. (see editorial).

**Dave Routh**


*Additional reporting  
by Martin Atkins*

### **Real Ale in White Cliffs Country - amendments.**

**Crown, Finglesham** - telephone number should be **01304 612555**

**Yew Tree, Barfrestone** - No Smoking area symbol  and the family symbol  should be added. The cider available is Biddenden 8% Dry.

**Star & Garter, Deal** - Now closed.

Please note that the  in the Guide means that the landlord has indicated that they will admit children.



## **LOUIS ARMSTRONG**

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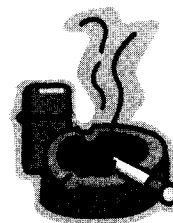
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## **SMOKING BAN IN PUBS**



The possible banning of smoking in public places is much in the news and, if implemented, would of course affect public houses. From our own observations, however, there does not appear to be much, if any, support from pub users, either staff or customers, and this opinion is backed up by recent CAMRA research, which showed that only 18% of regular pub users support a total ban in pubs and bars, and that of all adults 50% *disagree* with it.

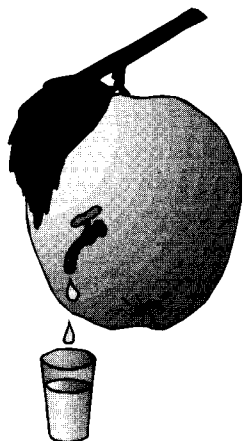
However the issue extends well beyond the preferences of customers and staff. The very livelihoods of pubs themselves are at risk, especially the smaller ones. Already having a rough time through rent increases, beer price rises and the ever-growing trend of drinking at home, the last thing they need is to deter smokers, many of whom regard having a cigarette as an integral part of enjoying a drink. For many a smoking ban may well be the final straw.

It seems though, that there is a puritanical spirit abroad, obsessed with protecting ourselves from ourselves, and trying to prohibit everything that is not 100% healthy. It would of course be wrong to deny that excessive smoke can be unpleasant, or the existence of health risks, but of the 1000 deaths a year in Britain from passive smoking the majority involve those who have lived with heavy smokers. There appears to be no figures for disease contracted via pubs and bars, and probably there is more risk from vehicle emissions and other atmospheric pollutants.

However the need to provide a sufficient choice of environment to satisfy smokers and non-smokers alike does exist, and to this end CAMRA backs the Charter for Smoking in Public Places. This co-operative effort between the hospitality industry and the Department of Health is based on the use of market forces and consumer choice, and gives discretion to individual pubs to develop their own smoking policy. "Charter-compliant" pubs will inform customers outside the pub of the policy within, thus allowing customers to choose whether to use that pub or not. In due course the normal processes of supply and demand should provide sufficient variety to cater for all tastes.

CAMRA hopes that all pubs will sign up to the Charter, and that the resulting improvement in pub atmosphere and choice will make a ban unnecessary. However, pubs and customers alike should be aware that there are considerable pressures to impose a ban. In New York, where one now exists, there has been a 30% drop in business by pubs and restaurants. Failure to provide a more comfortable environment for all pub users could well see the same result here.





## CIDER MATTERS

When you mention cider most people think either of Somerset farmhands drinking themselves incoherent on scrumpy, or big name commercial ciders like Strongbow or Dry Blackthorne. Actually it needn't be like that at all. There are plenty of small producer ciders out there which taste better than the big brands, are more wholesome, with less additives (preservatives, etc.), and which don't have to be drunk in silly quantities.

I'm not here to slag off the big name ciders, but I am here to promote what you might call "the real stuff". Just as there is keg beer and real ale (craft beers) so there is mass produced "industrial" cider and smaller-scale "craft" cider, which can vary in scale from bigger producers like Weston's, down to individual farmers, using excess apples and selling cider at the farm gate. Just as with real ale some are great, some are good, and some decidedly dubious. A lot of the fun is finding out which is which.

I'll admit I used to drink "industrial" cider, because I didn't know any different, but once I found the alternative there was no looking back. I vaguely remember, on a CAMRA tour around Romney Marsh, trying a pint of Biddenden Dry, in the third pub we visited. It was light and clear, with a delicate flavour, and I just didn't realise it was about 8% ABV..... By the time we reached the fourth pub I was definitely struggling. I don't remember much about that evening, but I do remember what a revelation the cider was, and now, if I see a real cider in a pub, I generally give it a try, especially if it's new to me. You might not so often find it on draught in this neck of the woods (try the Mogul, the Yew Tree at Barfreestone or the Cambridge Arms), but it is regularly available in supermarkets and off-licences. This in itself is a bit of a minefield though, as there are still plenty of bottled ciders masquerading as the decent stuff, when they are just bottled versions of "industrial" output. I'm not going to name names, but I can recommend the CAMRA Cider Guide – I believe a new edition will be published this autumn.

Another source of good cider is, of course, just about any CAMRA beer festival. There might only be one or two on offer, but the Kent Beer Festival at

Canterbury, usually has quite a good range. At the Great British Beer Festival at Olympia, there is quite a large separate bar dedicated to cider and perry.

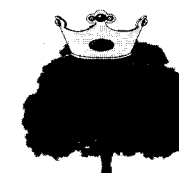
Did I mention perry? When I was younger I thought Perry meant Babycham (yuk!), but that is just a heavily branded commercial version. Perry is most easily described as cider made with pears, and is even more difficult to find locally. Again, many CAMRA beer festivals offer at least one perry as well as cider. I used to enjoy the Brogdale Cider and Perry Festival at Faversham, when it was run by CAMRA. One year I tried a perry that was totally clear, and had just a slight aroma of pears. Like the Biddenden cider it was dangerously drinkable, but weighed in at 9.6% ABV...! Fortunately the strength was clearly advertised and I treated it with respect. Generally perry looks much like cider, and is definitely worth a try.

So, have I captured your imagination? Are you determined to try proper cider or perry at the first chance you get? Maybe you're just ready to try a new drinking experience? Let's face it, what we drink is a matter of personal choice, but if you never try real cider or perry, you'll never know what you might have been missing.

*Applejack*

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# EDITORIAL

As reported in LOCAL NEWS the Three Horse Shoes, Lower Hardres and the Chequers, West Hougham are currently closed, while the Endeavour at Wootton unsuccessfully applied for conversion to residential use within the last couple of years. These cases are symptomatic of the general malaise hanging over downland pubs at present. Locally, the last ten years has seen the demise of the Newcastle at Ewell Minnis and the Three Bells at Swingfield (both within recent times well patronised), the Prince of Wales and Gate at Rhodes Minnis and to the west of Stone Street, the Nelson at Waltham and Duke at Petham. Often remote and away from the main routes, the struggle against drink-drive laws, high houses prices and the stay-at-home mentality can be very unequal.

Perhaps a solution might lie in a relaxation of our stringent planning legislation. Designed to protect our traditional countryside it has, intentionally, curtailed development, particularly where the scenery is most outstanding. The downside, of course, is that local services become increasingly hard to sustain. A controlled increase in the size of villages in such areas might well serve to support these – including, of course public houses. As conventional wisdom has it; plenty of chimney pots, plenty of trade.

Planning legislation, or lack of it, is also implicated in rumours surrounding the future use of the Lion Hotel, Ash, which suggest that conversion to an Indian Restaurant is planned (see LOCAL NEWS). While conversion of a public house to residential use requires planning consent, and often involves proof of unviability, change of use to restaurant or shop does not; and despite a substantial campaign, and its acceptance of a pub as a community amenity, the Government saw no need to include such a requirement in the recent changes to the Use Classes Orders – although it did make planning consent necessary for conversion to a fast food takeaway. Therefore, the only pub in a village cannot be converted to a house without detailed and lengthy scrutiny, and may well be refused; but it can be changed into a restaurant without any consideration at all. This would seem to have no logic, or is it an indication that the Government and its advisors view public houses and restaurants as synonymous – just as places where people eat and drink? If it is, then it suggests a lack of understanding of the true nature of public houses, their tradition and their role in the community. Whatever the reason, and whether or not the residents of Ash want the Lion Hotel converted to an Indian restaurant, they can do absolutely nothing about it.

## New Guide to Real Ale in White Cliffs Country

The brand new guide to 'Real Ale in White Cliffs Country' has just been published. It contains information on almost 200 real ale pubs in the towns of Deal, Dover and Sandwich as well as the in rural areas nearby. The guide provides an introduction to pubs in the area for visitors as well as being a useful reference item for local people. There are full details and descriptions for each pub selling real ale and a brief reference for those that do not. It also provides information on Kentish brewers and Cider makers and a guide to the correct methods of dispense for real ale. The information for the guide was gathered during the course of the last 12 months. All licensed premises in the White Cliffs area that are open to the general public were surveyed by CAMRA branch members.

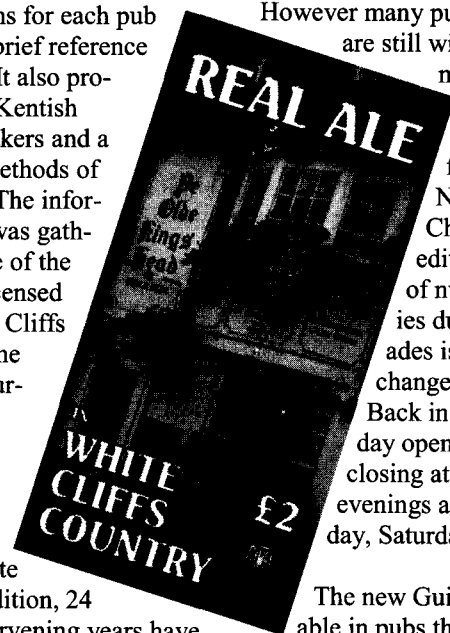
This is the second edition of the Guide, but there has been quite a gap since the first edition, 24 years in fact! The intervening years have been covered by Kent Beer Guides. However, a new Kent Guide is still some way off so the Branch took the plunge and put together this latest Guide. The first guide was published in 1980 and edited by Roger Marples. Roger has also helped with the latest Guide by being a member of the Guide committee and

proof reading much of the text. As one can imagine there have been considerable changes to pubs, beers and the whole brewing industry in the intervening 24 years. A comparison between the two edition shows that pubs such as the Salutation, White Lion and the Grapes in Dover and beers such as Whitbread Fremkins are now distant memories.

However many pubs originally covered are still with us. Interestingly most of the 100 or so pubs mentioned in 1980 served beers from either Shepherd Neame, Whitbread or Charrington. In the latest edition, the establishment of numerous microbreweries during the past two decades is very apparent. Also changed are licensing hours. Back in 1980 there was no all day opening, with local pubs closing at 10.30pm on weekday evenings and 11pm only on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The new Guide is becoming available in pubs throughout the Deal, Dover and Sandwich area, price £2.00. Alternatively, it is available by post by sending a cheque for £2.50 (includes postage) to 'Real Ale in White Cliffs Country', 167, Markland Road, Dover, Kent CT17 9NL

*Steve Bell*



# Kent Small Brewery News



As stated in the last edition of Channel Draught, the number of Kentish Small Breweries which supply their beers direct to our area has now shrunk to three.

The notes for the erstwhile Flagship Brewery, which now trades as the Nelson Brewing Co., have been supplied by Andrew Purcell of that company. This brewer was the main sponsor of our recent Festival of Winter Ales. (See Festival Report).

## **Hopdaemon Brewery 01227 784962 – Tyler Hill, Canterbury**

Contact: Tonie Prins

Firstly, congratulations are due to Tonie as his 'Daemon' was the winner of the 'Beer of the Festival' award at our recent Festival of Winter Ales. There have been rumours that Hopdaemon Brewery is to move to a new site. Tonie cannot understand how this rumour started and categorically denies that this is so.

He is still brewing to capacity and obviously a future move cannot be ruled out completely., but most certainly nothing has been agreed when this article was written.

Golden Dove, a light coloured bitter at 5% ABV has recently been brewed and was well received.

A new cask version of Leviathan at 6% ABV appeared over the winter months. And together with Daemon was supplied to the White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales.

Hopdaemon is again available at the Eagle in Dover, and I understand that the landlord's policy is to have on one Hopdaemon ale and a guest ale from another 'micro brewery'. At our October branch meeting, Golden Braid (3.7% @ £1.90 per pint) was on sale.

Recent deliveries have been made to :

Louis Armstrong, Dover	Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club, Dover
Coastguard, St Margaret's Bay	Yew Tree, Barfrestone
Butchers Arms, Ashley	Two Sawyers, Woolage Green
East Cliff Tavern, Folkestone	Rose & Crown, Elham



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<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Friday</b>	12 - 2.30pm
	<b>Saturday</b>	11am - 3pm
	<b>Sunday</b>	12 - 10.30pm
<b>Evening</b>	<b>Mon-Friday</b>	5-11pm
	<b>Saturday</b>	6-11pm
	<b>Sunday</b>	12 -

**Available any lunchtime for personal or business functions**

**Nelson Brewing Co. (formerly Flagship Brewery) 01634 832828- Chatham**

Contact: Andrew Purcell or Angelica O'Hanlon

The brewery was delighted to be able to sponsor the 2004 Festival of Winter Ales.

Old Sea Dog Stout (5.5%) re-appeared for Christmas by popular demand, and was available for the festival together with the special winter ale brew Nelsons Blood Extra (7.1%) Other ales from the Nelson range that were available for the Festival - Shipwrecked (5.0%), Futtock (5.2%) plus two additional beers White Cliffs Special (5.7% and White Cliffs Strong Ale (6%).

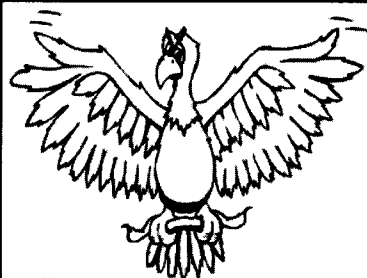
The brewery has been working with the Diocese of Rochester to produce a special ale to celebrate the 1400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rochester Cathedral. A cask version, out now, together with a stronger bottled conditioned version.

The brewery is producing its own bottle conditioned ale, Victory Ale at approx 4.5% abv, and intends to add to the range throughout the year.

The Nelson Brewing Co. has been dealing with the following pubs in the Dover Area:

Royal Oak, Capel Le Ferne  
Fleur de Lys, Sandwich  
Prince Albert, Deal  
Renaissance, Dover

Yew Tree, Barfreston  
Louis Armstrong, Dover  
Sportsman, Dover



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**The Ramsgate Brewery 07967 660060 - Ramsgate**

Contact: **Eddie Gadd**

The seasonal Brown Ale 4.7% ABV finished at the end of October and was replaced by Dogbolter Porter (5.6%). The most recent Brown Ale was brewed to a slightly different recipe. Formerly, a Belgian beer yeast was used which gave a sweeter softer taste; this time a British yeast was used resulting in a much drier finish.

It is interesting to note that sales of beer at 'The Brewery Tap' on Ramsgate's Harbour Parade are approximately 20% for Gadd's N° 7 (3.8% @ £1.90 per pint), 20% for Gadd's N° 5 (4.4% @ £2.20), 40% for Gadd's N° 3 (5% @ £2.20) and 20% for Dogbolter (5.6% @ £2.20). The excellent 4% ABV Mild will be available again in May.

Recent deliveries:

Hare & Hounds, Northbourne  
Butcher's Arm, Ashley

Five Bells, Eastry

The Red Cow in Sandwich is now a regular outlet for the Ramsgate Brewery and has one pump dispensing their various beers. N° 7 was on sale in October at £2.40 per pint and was in first rate condition.

### BRANCH SOCIAL AT THE COASTGUARD

In support of National Pubs Week the most recent branch social was arranged for the Coastguard, St. Margaret's Bay on Monday February 23<sup>rd</sup> and, despite the weather having reverted to winter again, a dozen intrepid members braved the risk of snow to attend. It was well worth the effort with excellent hospitality from owners Nigel and Sam. Real ale were local brews Hopdaemon Skrimshander and Gadd's No 5, together with Harvey's Best, and we enjoyed a generous selection of rolls, cheeses, fish and chips, etc. Several games of daddlums (indoor table skittles) were played, the branch table having been brought over and set up that afternoon, with eventual winners being the Green brothers' team by two to one. Later on in the evening the merit's, or otherwise, of real ale were discussed at some length, with several locals, at least one of whom expressed definite interest in joining CAMRA. All in all a considerable success, and special thanks to Nigel and Sam.



# DECLINE AND FALL

## PURE BEER AND THE CURRENT STATE OF REAL ALE

Should you be reading this in one of your local hostelrys it is to be hoped that your glass contains a quantity of real ale. However can this same real ale be classed as a "pure beer" or has it been brewed to a price rather than to a given quality?

Essentially, real ale is a beer that has undergone secondary fermentation in the cask, and is served from that same cask without coming into contact with extraneous carbon dioxide. CAMRA, though, has a further definition called pure beer which, in addition to the above and greatly simplified, is beer that has been brewed using malt, hops, water and yeast. (The full definition is at the end of this article.)

However recent years have seen major changes to both beer supply and brewing. When, in the mid to late sixties, I started my drinking career in Dover half a dozen or so breweries owned all but a couple of the pubs, and a similar pattern existed right across the country. The licensee's supply of beer was limited to that brewed by the brewery that owned the premises, giving them guaranteed outlets for their products. Providing that the beer was acceptable to their customers, innovation was an unnecessary expense. The head brewer took pride in the brewery's product, and the comparative rarity of free houses removed the need to compete on price in the free trade.

Today the situation has much changed. Now the only owner of tied houses in Dover is Shepherd Neame, with the largest owners of pubs locally being the ubiquitous non-brewing pub groups. These have tremendous buying power, and seek contracts with the national brewers such as Scottish Courage, Carlsberg-Tetley and Interbrew, and the larger independents like Greene King, Wolverhampton and Dudley, Shepherd Neame, and Fullers. Beers from all these breweries can be found today all over the country, far away from where it was brewed.

Like supermarkets, the large pub groups have the power to be able to dictate the price they wish to pay to their suppliers, and the brewers often find themselves restricted to low prices but huge bulk orders via the pub groups, or having to concentrate on their existing traditional, but limited, markets. Pressure to cut costs is substantial, and this is often reflected in the quality of ingredients and methods of brewing. Why brew with top quality malt when a cheaper one can be used? Even better replace some of the malt with glucose or invert sugar, or other cereals such as torried wheat, flaked maize or rice. One well-known East Anglian brewer even once experimented with potato starch. Another money saver is to use "high alpha" hops,

which being very bitter can be used in much smaller quantities, but impart a tinny, aggressive bitterness. These are big savings; never mind the flavour of the beer.

Brewing methods have also changed. Traditional British open trough fermenters, and small flat bottom closed fermenters, have been replaced with conical fermenters by the "cheap beer for pubco brewers". Resembling grain silos, they are much cheaper to operate and can use lager yeasts, which allows greater capacity because of the lack of a yeast head. Many feel that this type of brewing detracts from the taste of the beer; but why worry if it wins huge contracts. Another innovation is the whirlpool which, operating like a spin drier, separates liquid from solids and gives exceptionally clear beer. However it removes "body" and most of the yeast, and does nothing for the taste. After going through a whirlpool, analysis of a former Courage & Co. beer, doubted if enough yeast remained for secondary fermentation.

With all this cost saving one might expect to find a cheaper pint and perhaps a visitor to one of J.D. Wetherspoon's emporia might be fortunate in this. But it would not be reflected in the nearby pubic house, where the landlord might be paying nearly twice as much for his cheaply produced beer in order to support the pubco's profits.

And should we feel sorry for those brewers forced down this cost saving road? The answer is no. I quote from CAMRA's 2004 Good Beer Guide. Greene King Abbot volume sales 20% up and Old Speckled Hen 13% up. Fullers announce continued sales growth and brewing profits up 18% in 2003. Sales of Shepherd Neame Spitfire up 20%, Youngs Bitter up 6.6% and Young's Winter Warmer 21%. Adnams sales rose 11%, with Broadside up 15.5%. And so on. What a sorry story this is. From my own observations each of these brewers uses some, if not all, of the above mentioned cost saving practices.

However every cloud has a silver lining. Wolverhampton and Dudley Breweries has recently launched Old Empire (5.7% ABV). Brewed only with malt and hops and using Marston's unique Burton Union fermenters, it is said to re-create the taste of a true 19th century India Pale Ale, and, if successful,

### CAMRA defines pure beer in the following terms: -

Not less than 100% of the extract to be derived from barley malt

- ◆ Only leaf or palletised hops to be used in the copper
- ◆ Primary fermentation to be effected with a top fermenting yeast
- ◆ No deliberate acceleration of the fermentation period
- ◆ Any use of caramel to be declared
- ◆ No synthetic chemical substitutes for alcinates to be used
- ◆ No bromates to be used in malting
- ◆ No addition of enzymes
- ◆ No substantial removal of yeast unless reseeded is practised – beer must contain at least 0.5 million live cells/m.l. after racking into cask
- ◆ Secondary fermentation period of at least seven days (in cask or tank) to take place before fining
- ◆ Cone or compressed hops to be the only post-fermentation bittering substances

will become a regular member of their portfolio. And a second surprise comes from Interbrew, who has launched a revived cask version of Boddington's Bitter. Brewed in open Yorkshire square fermenting troughs it is 4.1% ABV it is a very drinkable and clean tasting northern style bitter, though substantially different from the excellent light and intensively hopped bitter of thirty years ago. I understand that the existing inferior tasting 3.8% version is still to be manufactured as Boddington's Smooth Bitter.

Such conviction in the merits of pure ale from two large brewers is heartening, and they deserve all our support. However there are hundreds of "micro-breweries" and some long established family brewers whose output would regularly pass the CAMRA pure beer test, and without whom a follower of taste, character and purity would be sorely disappointed.

N.B. For those who want a guarantee of "pure beer" visit the Yew Tree at Bar-frestone, whose landlord will stock no other type of draught real ale.

*Roger Marples*

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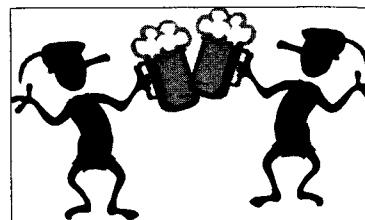
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## 11th WHITE CLIFFS FESTIVAL OF WINTER ALES

The eleventh White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales kicked off at 5.00 pm on Friday 6th February at its regular venue, Dover Town Hall. Opened jointly by the Town Mayor, George Alt, and Nigel Collor from the Dover District Council, the building was packed to capacity within a couple of hours. By 9 pm several barrels had been emptied, and at the end of the evening 16 of the original 72 had been laid to rest while many of the remainder had only a little beer left. As last year, music was provided by local group The DBs, who proved very popular, with many dancing in front of the stage and several encores demanded, at the end of the evening.



Saturday opened at 10.30 am and, as ever, was much quieter with a greater emphasis on visitors from other parts of the country. As usual members and non-members were evenly balanced, unlike Friday, which is predominantly a local's night. Over lunchtime we were entertained with light classical music by a group of local musicians. However barrels continued to be emptied at a fair rate, and by 2.30 the choice of ale was so reduced that we stopped charging admission. The last pint was downed around 6 pm, our earliest ever finish.

Beer of the festival, the first barrel emptied, at about 8.20 pm on Friday was, appropriately, local brew Daemon from Hopdaemon (erroneously called Golden Goose in the Beer List) specially created for our festival by brewer Tonie Prins.

Once again very successful, and more funds raised for the campaign, although for the future if anyone can suggest a practical way of providing a better balance between Friday and Saturday, we'd be glad to hear of it. As it was 70-80% of the beer, often the lighter brews, was drunk on Friday evening, much reducing the choice for those attending on Saturday.

Many thanks to all who helped, sponsored or supported us, in particular Thanet Leisure force, who had only been running the Town Hall for a few months, and the Nelson Brewing Co., this years major sponsors.



## The Beery Boaters - Go to Brum and beyond

A return at the end of September to our old friends at Anglo Welsh at Tardebigge to collect our boats to visit the Black Country again: not the long way round via Worcester like the last time, with it's 34 locks on the first afternoon, but the more direct route with a total of nil locks (but 3 tunnels) to Birmingham. For the first time on an End-of-Year trip we had two boats, the 70ft 'Canterbury' and an old friend, the 68ft 'Balmoral'. The extra boat was because 'Shep', a Mogul regular, was due to get married in a few weeks, and he wished to savour a final period of freedom with a 'Stag Week' on the canals, and brought some drinking companions with him. In fact, it was just like 'The Mogul on Tour!'

I quickly found out that 'Canterbury' steered like a waggon with a wheel adrift, and I compounded this by reversing hard into the bank outside the Crown at Alvechurch, where we moored for the first evening, knocking the rudder out of alignment with the tiller arm! No actual damage was done, so we suffered it for the rest of the week.

The Crown is a very popular pub with a standard range of beers and good food, so we ate there, then walked further afield. Two more adventurous groups went off on the



three miles or so to find the Coach & Horses at Weatheroak, where the Weatheroak Brewery is found. Only one group got there: the others just got lost! Martin and I walked to the next bridge back on the canal where we had seen a 'new' pub, The Weighbridge, and found there, guess what - Weatheroak beer. This was once the weighbridge operator's office and house, and has been converted into an almost 'divisional' pub, with several small rooms. We discovered that there was a curry evening

every Friday, and a quiz as well the coming Friday. As this was to be our last evening, we booked a complete room then and there for the two crews.

Sunday morning was fine and brought out the fishermen, with whom we had much 'merry banter'. Whoever first named a pub 'The Jolly Angler' must have had a fine ironic sense of humour! We had been through one tunnel the first afternoon, which left two more to Brum, the well-over-a-mile Wast Hill, and the very short Edgebas-

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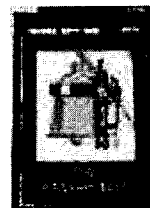
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Jason



ton.

In the centre of Birmingham, we were just in time for Sunday lunchtime opening. Superb canalside walks and mooring nowadays right in the city centre and only a few hundred yards to an old favourite, the Prince of Wales. When we first came across it, over 20 years ago, it was part of a terrace of houses and in the charge of Nancy, a lovely Irish landlady. Now, it stands on its own, surrounded by the Conference Centre. The story goes that when the City Planners found that their favourite pub was going to be pulled down to make way for the aforesaid Centre, they drew some lines around it! So there we ended up (at least I certainly did and found it still an excellent place.



Off to Netherton in the afternoon, initially with 'Balmoral' in the lead down Telford's New Main Line, however 'Balmoral' decided to do part of Brindley's Old Main Line, which meant going up three locks and down another three, "to get some practice in". Hence they missed the fun of seeing 'Canterbury' firmly sat on a rock for about 20 minutes, with the crew frantically trying to get her off. Even so, 'Canterbury' got to Netherton Tunnel first. This tunnel is about two miles long, but seventeen feet wide with a towpath either side. The moorings at Windmill End, on the other side, look almost rural.

Naturally, we had to visit the 'Dry Dock' pub first, just down the embankment from the moorings, but found it a shadow of its former self when it was part of the now defunct Little Pub group. We ate there, then moved off in groups to The Old Swan (Ma Pardoe's), which now brews again and is in CAMRA's National Inventory of

Pub Interiors of Outstanding Historic interest.



Next day, back through the tunnel and to Tipton which meant, for 'Canterbury', the first three locks of the trip, where we tied up by the statue of the 'Tipton Slasher' in the town park. The 'Tipton Slasher' was William Perry, former boatman and bare knuckle prize fighting champion of England in the mid-nineteenth century. His HQ was the Fountain pub, and we had a few

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pints there before seeking out The Pie Factory, another former 'Little Pub' but this one unchanged, even to its Lumphammer beer and Desperate Dan pies (complete with horns) A Group of young ladies who had arrived by coach were apparently unconscious of the humour they were provoking, seated under a sign proclaiming 'The Best Tarts in Tipton'! After eating and drinking several of our lot departed to the nearby Holden's brewery and brewery tap. An

uneventful late afternoon's cruise took us to Wolverhampton, where Pete Smith, who was joining us for the rest of the week, was waiting at the Great Western.

If you do not wish to descend twenty one locks to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, you have to turn round at Wolverhampton and it is, for a long boat, a fairly difficult affair, which entails reversing to the small British Waterways dock, sticking the bow or stern into it, and doing a 103 point turn. A sudden clanking noise arose from under 'Canterbury's' stern and the engine stalled. I explored the weed trap and found that something sharp had attached itself to the propeller. Eventually, with rubber glove on, I extracted the remains of a large paint can which, from the colour adorning my hands and gloves, I suspect was of British Waterways origin. 'Balmoral' was way out of sight when we turned left onto the Wyrley and Essington Canal.

The 'Curly Wyrley' is little used at present, but this state of affairs will almost certainly improve when the Lichfield Canal is reopened. The past hot summer had increased the proliferation of the usual floating duck weed, and it soon seemed as if we were slowly punching our way through a sea of mushy peas. Near Wednesfield we overtook 'Balmoral', who had stopped to have its prop de-toxified. We also had to stop on several occasions, and found that most of the problem arose from long reeds wrapped around the prop, and of course, the inevitable plastic bag or two.

At Birchills Junction we turned right. We had amended our route slightly because 'Balmoral' had another crew member to collect, and we decided that Walsall would be a convenient place. At the top of Walsall locks we waited for 'Canterbury' to arrive in the 'New Navigation' which unfortunately no longer has real ale. The nine Walsall locks gave some problems, mainly with rubbish jammed behind the gates, but at least, unlike on some previous occasions, there were no dry pounds between the locks.

At the bottom of the locks, the short Town Arm leads to Walsall centre and good moorings. There is a rather uninspiring new pub by the moorings, the Wharf 10, but it



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did sell Highgate real ale, so we had a pint or two there whilst awaiting our new recruit. Then through the town centre to the Victoria (known locally as 'Katz'), a regular GBG entry with a good choice of real ale. Here we increased our repertoire of Black Country phrases when a local addressed a canine creature as "Yawm er Li'l Orrer". We took this to mean "You are a naughty dog"!

Here we decided to amend our route. We had originally intended to return to the Wyrley & Essington Canal and continue round it to the Tame Valley Canal, thence back to the Walsall Canal at the bottom of Ryders Green Locks. But due to the weed growth on the W&E, we decided to go straight down the Walsall Canal; then, as we would have a day in hand, return to Netherton for another night. So on a rather windy but fine Wednesday morning we turned left at the end of the Town Arm and set off for Great Bridge. Most of the Walsall Canal is uninteresting, but it is a lot cleaner than in years past when cruising it was likened to 'sitting in a dustbin and pouring water over yourself'. The improved state of the water is indicated by the number of white water lilies by the banks. At Great Bridge we moored near the town centre above the bottom of the eight Ryders Green Locks.

The crews managed to go in different directions; the Balmorals to the Rising Sun and the Canterbury's to the Port 'n' Ale, both GBG pubs. The latter had, as well as several Real Ales, Thatcher's cider at £1.25 per pint. And a mad rottweiler-type dog!

By the time that the crew of 'Canterbury' had returned to it's boat, 'Balmoral' had gone up the locks, but only as far as the Eight Locks pub at the top. As, however, this pub no longer served real ale, 'Canterbury' pressed on to Netherton.

Come nightfall, 'Balmoral' had not arrived at Windmill End, so, deducing that they had decided to go to Birmingham instead, we locked up and went to Ma Pardoe's. However, we hadn't been there long when they walked in, having done a bit of night cruising!

Birmingham on Thursday night, but where to stop en route? None of us had ever been to Oldbury, and there is a National Inventory pub there, the Waggon and Horses. Oldbury is between the Old and New Main Lines, but nearer the Old, so after passing through Netherton Tunnel for the fourth (and final) time, and turning right towards Birmingham, we turned right again to go up Brades Locks and left at the top. By Whimsey Bridge we found some good moorings and the quiet town centre a few hundred yards away across a busy ring road. A good session was had at the Waggon and

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Horses, and Shep had his Thatcher's cider at £1.25 per pint! Whilst we were in the pub we had the first rain of the week, but only a shower.

To Birmingham for the evening via the Old Main Line, down Smethwick Locks (our last locks for the week), and the New Main Line. 'Canterbury' also took in the Soho Loop (part of Brindley's winding route shortened by Telford) which passes close to Winson Green Prison. Moorings were at a premium in Birmingham, so we tied up alongside each other and set off for the pubs (in my case the Prince of Wales, of course).

The last full day. The crew of 'Canterbury' decided to set off in the morning and find sustenance on the way to Alvechurch; the others opted to have a few lunchtime beers in Brum and rendezvous with us later. So we set off, and after pining through West Hill Tunnel, moored for some rarely seen Marston's bitter at the Hopwood House.

At Alvechurch we tied up near the Weighbridge at about 5pm and, determining that the pub opened at 7, walked back to the Crown. This was also shut, so we walked down to the Weatheroak off-licence in the village (closed as well) and by a circuitous route, back to the boat, just before Balmoral arrived. Returning to the Weighbridge at opening time we found it was certainly a popular evening, and we were glad that we had booked our places well in advance. The curries were ordered and very good they proved. The quiz, however wasn't quite what we expected. It was run by a rather self-opinionated local disc jockey who set up his equipment in 'our' room and played loud pop music at every spare moment. The quiz was one of those where one is expected to know all about television and modern music as well. My pop music stopped at Lonnie Donegan, and I don't watch TV, so I wasn't much good for a start. We all had to put our team names on the top of the answer papers. When they were read out at the end, I first thought that the D.J. was dyslexic, as the Beery Boaters were announced as 'The Hairy Boaters', with not a beard between us and some getting decidedly thin on top as well! But when he announced 'Shep's Stag Party' with an 'H' substituted for a 'T', I began to wonder whether he was more astute than he made out! But, all in all, an entertaining evening, and the Weighbridge IS a nice little pub.

Saturday morning. Raining hard! 'Canterbury' set off and arrived at Tardebigge on time. We waited for 'Balmoral'. And waited! And waited! Martin and I were just about to set off by car for Alvechurch to see if they had been delayed, when they turned up. It appeared that they had been very much delayed in Shortwood Tunnel by a boatload of ladles. One wonders!

The next Beery Boater's Canal Trip is now well booked but there may still be the odd place available. It will be a week on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, starting from Silsden, near Keighley, on Saturday 24th April 2004.

*Jim Green*

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# THE SUNDAY "ALE TRAIL" BUS RETURNS



Following a successful season last year, the Sunday Ale Trail Bus will operate again in 2004. The route is from Nonnington (Mission Hall) to Folkestone Harbour and return. The bus will operate every Sunday from the 25<sup>th</sup> April to the 5<sup>th</sup> September (but NOT on public holidays). A full timetable plus fares are shown opposite. There is a slight change of route this year between the A2 and Hawkinge village: Buses will operate direct via the A260 main road.

It is expected that the service will be operated by either the 1963 AEC Bridge-master double-decker YJG 807, or the 1970 AEC Swift single-decker VJG 187J. Again, as with last year, whichever bus is allocated on the day; a conductor will be on board to issue passengers with genuine Setright ticket register/machine tickets.

Additionally, there will be a number of special vintage omnibus 'running-days' in Kent; where transport enthusiasts; real-ale connoisseurs and members of the general public alike, shall be able to travel absolutely for free on vintage bus services of yester-day-year. The locations and dates are listed below:

- Sunday 20th June' 5th Deal Vintage Omnibus Running Day.
- Wednesday 14th July' Maidstone Tramway Centenary Parade.
- Sunday 18th July' Maidstone Vintage Omnibus Running Day.
- Sunday 8th August. Herne Bay Vintage Omnibus Running Day.
- Sunday 5th September: Ashford Vintage Omnibus Running Day.
- Sunday 19th September: Shepherdsweil EKLR Bus Rally.

Channel Draught readers who are interested in any, or all aspects of the former East Kent Road Car Company, including vintage buses still extant, may like to write to the Secretary of the Friends of the East Kent (FoEK) at: Minnis Lodge, Ewell Minnis, near Dover, Kent. CT15 7DY

EAST KENT HERITAGE BUSES LIMITED

SERVICE

NONINGTON - AYLESHAM - FOLKESTONE MARKET via Hawkinge

104

Sundays 25th April - 5th September 2004 ONLY (Does NOT operate on Public Bank Holidays).

	Service No: 104	104	104
Nonington, Mission Hall.....	1005		
Snowdown Colliery, Railway Halt.....	1010		
Aylesham, Dorman Ave North/Cornwallis Ave.....	1015	1215	1515
Aylesham, Greyhound P.H. ....	1023	1223	1523
Aylesham, Boulevard Courrieres/Vale View Rd...	1025	1225	1525
Barham, Cross Roads.....	1035	1235	1535
Denton, Jackdaw Inn.....	1039	1239	1539
Seisted, Chequers P.H. ....	1042	1242	1542
Densole, Black Horse P.H. ....	1046	1246	1546
Hawkinge, CoE Primary School.....	1050	1250	1550
Folkestone Central, Railway Station.....	1102	1303	1603
Folkestone, Middelburg Square (for Bus Station).....	1107	1307	1607
FOLKESTONE HARBOUR and Sunday Market.....	1115	1315	1615

	Service No: 104	104	104
FOLKESTONE HARBOUR and Sunday Market.....	1130	1430	1630
Folkestone, Middelburg Square (for Bus Station).....	1135	1435	1635
Folkestone Central, Railway Station.....	1138	1438	1638
Hawkinge, CoE Primary School.....	1150	1450	1650
Densole, Black Horse P.H. ....	1155	1455	1655
Seisted, Chequers P.H. ....	1200	1500	1700
Denton, Jackdaw Inn.....	1203	1503	1703
Barham, Cross Roads.....	1209	1509	1709
Aylesham, Dorman Ave North/Cornwallis Ave.....	1215	1515	1715
Aylesham, Greyhound P.H. ....	1223	1523	1723
Aylesham, Boulevard Courrieres/Vale View Rd...	1225	1525	1725
Snowdown Colliery, Railway Halt.....			1729
Nonington, Mission Hall.....			1734

25/04/04 : 87

## FARES (From 25th April 2004)

### SINGLE FARES

Nonington, Mission Hall 5

0.30 Snowdown Colliery 4

0.50 0.30 Aylesham(All 'Stops) 17

0.75 0.50 0.50 Barham Cross Roads 16

0.90 0.75 0.75 0.50 Denton (Jackdaw Inn) 19

1.00 1.00 0.90 0.75 0.50 Seisted (Chequers) 20

1.50 1.50 1.50 1.00 0.75 0.50 Densole (Black Horse) 22

2.00 2.00 2.00 1.50 1.00 0.75 0.50 Hawkinge (All 'Stops) 24

2.00 2.00 2.00 2.00 1.50 1.00 0.75 0.50 Alkam Valley Corner 25

2.00 2.00 2.00 2.00 1.50 1.50 0.90 0.75 0.50 Holywell Avenue 30

2.50 2.50 2.50 2.00 2.00 1.50 1.00 1.00 0.75 0.30 Wood Avenue 26

2.50 2.50 2.50 2.00 2.00 1.50 1.50 1.50 0.50 0.50 Central Station 28

2.50 2.50 2.50 2.00 2.00 1.50 1.50 1.50 0.75 0.75 0.30 Bus Station 29

2.50 2.50 2.50 2.00 2.00 1.50 1.50 1.50 0.75 0.75 0.50 0.30 Tontine Street 30

2.50 2.50 2.50 2.00 2.00 1.50 1.50 1.50 0.75 0.75 0.50 0.30 Harbour 31

Note: Return Tickets issued on either Service 104, or Stagecoach Service 16; for travel WHOLLY between Barham, Cross Roads AND Folkestone, Town Centre/Harbour, are available for return between the same points on either operator's omnibuses.

# Letters to the editor

To contact the Editor  
see Page 61



From Graham and June Hall,  
Wingham:

Sir,

Congratulations on the consistently high standard of quality of Channel Draught.

The range of articles and features are informative and full of interest whether they be local, regional or national. I'm sure there's an analogy with a good pub with real ales but I can't quite think of it!

Keep up the excellent standard.

Yours,  
Graham and June Hall

Folks,  
I attended the White Cliffs festival with 12 others from the United States. This was the third visit to the festival for one of us and the second visit for another. I'd like to compliment you on a wonderfully well run festival. The beers were in excellent condition and the venue was superb.

What makes this such a great festival are the wonderful people who run it and man the taps. We had lots of great conversations and received plenty of advice on what was best. Between all of the glasses we were sharing I was able to sample about 60 of the beers. Great job.

Another high point were visiting the Mogul and the Golden Lion. The Mogul was wonderfully appointed and had excellent beers. The publican and customers at the Golden Lion were very

friendly and the Black Sheep Best there was in excellent shape.

Back here in the US I am back to drinking keg beer. Well, except for the two homebrewed Firkins that will be at a party today and the Foreign Export Stout and Dry Stout that I will be serving by gravity at my St. Patrick's Day party next month.

Cheers, Rick

BURP Fearless Leader  
[www.burp.org](http://www.burp.org)

*Thanks to Graham, June & Rick for their generous comments. Please note that Channel Draught has had some recent changes to the Editorial Team but we hope to maintain the same standard. Hope Rick's group can make it again next year.*

Graham Hall  
Wingham

Sir,  
Old Wart's "Last Knockings" in Channel Draught, Autumn 2003 lamented the changing character of Canterbury City centre from having the "air of an old fashioned provincial city" to "satisfying the requirements of tourists, students and shoppers." These are sentiments with which we agree, as Canterbury has become a place to be avoided. It has become its own deterrent.

Although Old Wart rightly laments the demise of the Brewers Delight in Broad

Street, there is still good news for real ale drinkers around the corner in Have-lock Street at the New Inn. I first used the New Inn in the early 1980s, when, having heard of it by reputation and not knowing Canterbury well, I found it among dimly lit streets of terraced houses, reminiscent of Vienna in Carol Reed's film "The Third Man".

Conversation and drinking are the prime activities of this unpretentious inn, run for over 21 years by Austrian landlord Kurt Temel and his wife Margaret. There is a range of changing ales – on our last visit Woodeforde's Wherry, Black Sheep, Duncans, Harveys and Greene King were on offer. Every year at the end of May the New Inn has a beer festival. The 2003 festival had 25 real ales from all over Britain and included Cheritons, Nethergate, Branscombe Val-

ley among the many.

Locals and regulars, some travelling miles, contribute to the friendly and welcoming ambiance of this unspoilt gem of a pub. Despite the loss of the Royal Dragoon and Brewers Delight, the New Inn keeps flourishing. Next time you go to Canterbury seek it out – it's well worth the effort

Yours

Graham and June Hall

*Old Wart comments: I first became acquainted with the New Inn, thirty years ago when it was owned by Ind Coope. I fully endorse Graham and June's recommendation – it's heartening to find a traditional pub offering good value and an interesting selection of ale.*

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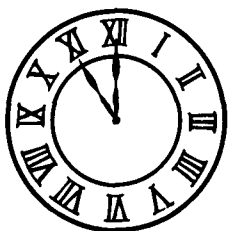
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# LAST KNOCKINGS

After my criticism of Canterbury in the last Channel Draught you might feel I've said enough about modern city centres, however a trip to Birmingham last autumn, by narrow boat, (see Beery Boaters article) generates further comment. Those who remember Gas Street Basin twenty years ago (and I don't) describe dirty canals, derelict wharves and a general air of run down decay. Redevelopment has changed that, and all is now smart and clean, with new and converted buildings housing offices and flats, bars and restaurants.

However, as with so many such developments, there is a soulless feel, with little sense of local community. I could only find one ordinary shop, a small news-agent/store away from the canal, encased in security mesh, and the only occupied unit of what had presumably been built has a block of shops. Meanwhile the water-front hosts the large branded pub chains – All-Bar-One, Piano and Pitcher, Something and Firkin, etc., modern and fashionable, but anonymous and with a certain sterility. Nearby the main thoroughfare of Broad Street was no more inviting. The stretch I walked along included a row of cavernous pub/night spots, dimly lit, with door staff and thumping music, and none looking for customers much over 25 years of age.

Of traditional pubs there appeared to be just two – Darwins (formerly the White Swan) a couple of streets away, and itself now carrying a theme, and the excellent and well known Prince of Wales, just two minutes from the canal. If there are others I didn't come across them. It seems unfortunate that town and city centres so often appear to view the pub as either a night out/party venue or a foodie/wine bar establishment. Obviously that demand exists, but I can't believe there's no one wanting just a couple of pints and a chat, or a read of the paper. On our two visits to Gas Street Basin during the trip, I didn't stray far from the Prince of Wales, where I drank good real ale and enjoyed good conversation in a well-patronised and un-themed ordinary pub.

What good fortune that CAMRA's 70,000<sup>th</sup> member happened to be the very attractive and youthful Elizabeth Moore, and not a bearded, anorak wearing, middle

aged male with beer gut – the usual stereotype of a CAMRA member (although I suppose they all joined years ago). Anyhow, while I appreciate the need to get the best publicity from the event, I do feel a certain concern at the attention given to promoting a youthful image, especially as one of the original elements of the campaign was specifically an emphasis on substance, rather than the image led approach to selling beer adopted by the large brewers and their advertisers. Certainly CAMRA should try and attract younger supporters, they are after all the future, but I feel it should concentrate on the particular qualities of real ale, rather than suggesting that it's just another drink to be found on the bar. Real ale covers a wide range of styles and tastes; the best, satisfyingly complex with subtle flavours, and deserving of the respect and consideration given to good cheese or good wine. This is where our emphasis needs to be, and what we should be promoting. We need to beware of implying that real ale is there just to be knocked back like alcopops or lager top.

The good work of the Conservative Government in the late Eighties, in breaking the stranglehold of the large brewers on the ownership of pubs and supply of beer, is rapidly being undone by the present Government's apparent disregard for this aspect of the industry. While all in favour of extending licensing hours and making pubs more family orientated, it seems unconcerned about what we'll be drinking when we get there.

Recently, Punch Taverns announced the takeover of Pubmaster, making it the country's largest landlord with an estate of some 7,500 pubs, and putting it on a par with the big six before the Beer Orders. Worryingly, Giles Thorley, Punch's chief executive, implied that further acquisitions were not out of the question, referring to the market as "very fragmented". I've nothing against Punch Taverns, but I instinctively become concerned when it seems that power is becoming concentrated in a few hands; a state of affairs which, in many industries, our culture seems to regard as normal, if not desirable, and which the Beer Orders actively opposed.

Real ale drinkers benefited enormously from the subsequent opening up of the market and the resulting proliferation of free houses, small chains and microbreweries. If pub ownership is allowed to contract again to a handful of large organisations, then commercial pressures and operational convenience are likely to see many of these gains lost, and the range and variety of both beer and pubs seriously reduced. The Government should look again at the industry – 7,500 pubs are more than enough for anyone.

*Old Wort*



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## 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 49). You may want to take the matter up yourself and we advise you to contact any (or all) of those on the right:



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

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(Dover) 01304 214484  
Dr. Steven Ladyman MP  
(Thanet South) 01843 852696  
Michael Howard QC MP (Shepway)  
01303 253524

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M & M Cars 01304 382345

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



# CAMRA

Membership of CAMRA is open to everyone who supports the campaign to keep Real Ale.

To join CAMRA, please complete the form below

Application Form to join CAMRA  
I/We wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale and agree to abide by the Rules

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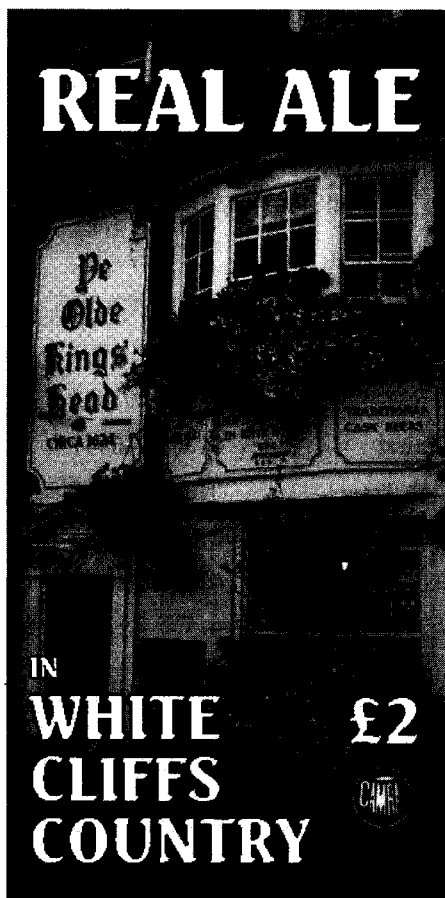
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Send your remittance (payable to CAMRA) to:  
The membership secretary, CAMRA,  
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*Channel Draught 19*

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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  
01304 216497

Dave Routh 07941 968959

You can e-mail the branch using:  
**dds.camra@topsy.demon.co.uk**

The branch website is:  
**www.topsy.demon.co.uk/dds\_camra**

## Adjacent Branches

**Ashford Folkestone & Romney Marsh**  
Anne Powell 01233 502519  
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thanet.camra@virgin.net

**Nationally** CAMRA can be contacted at:  
CAMRA,  
230 Hatfield Rd,  
St Albans, Herts.,  
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## Channel Draught Info & Advertising

**Channel Draught** is the Newsletter of the Deal Dover Sandwich & District Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale..

*Please note that views expressed herein are not necessarily those of this branch or CAMRA Ltd.*

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**And Finally.....***Russian troops have retrieved 10 tons of beer trapped under Siberian ice, the Itar-Tass news agency has reported. The lorry carrying the beer sank when trying to cross the frozen Irtysh river, near the Siberian city of Omsk, around 2,200 km (1,400 miles) from Moscow. The driver and his partner managed to escape, abandoning the beer-laden truck.*

*The rescue team of six divers, 10 workers and a modified T-72 tank from the Emergencies Ministry managed to save the load after a week-long operation. They pulled the lorry to an ice hole, opened the doors, and managed to pull out the kegs and bottles of beer. But just as they were ready to retrieve the lorry itself, the rope snapped, leaving it to sink back to the bottom of the river, deputy head of the Cherlak district administration Vasily Yatkovsky told Tass.*

*The Rosar brewery in Omsk, part of the Interbrew Belgian group, says it is ready to take the beer back. With temperatures around minus 27 degrees Celsius (minus 17 degrees Fahrenheit) in the area, the brewery told Tass the beer was still in good condition.*

*Tass quoted the brewery as saying it will sell the beer as a rarity, but with a discount.*

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