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



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Issue 24
Summer
2005

CHANNEL DRAUGHT



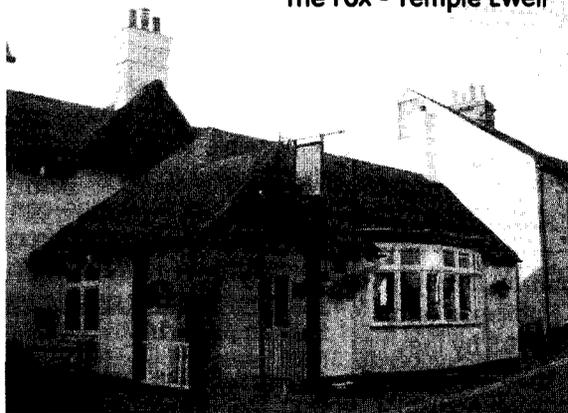
INSIDE

**PUB
PROFILE**

Way Out
Inn
makes a
comeback

Crabble
Corn Mill
Beer
Festival
Report

The Fox - Temple Ewell



THE FOX - TEMPLE EWELL
DEAL, DOVER &
SANDWICH
PUB OF THE YEAR
2005

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

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Please drink
sensibly!

CHANNEL DRAUGHT



ISSUE 24 SUMMER 2005

It's well into summer and therefore well into beer festival time. Dover's second festival this year, at Crabble Corn Mill over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend, proved a great success and the organisers hope to make it an annual event (see article page 34). Then at the end of July there is the Kent Beer Festival at Merton Farm, Canterbury and, at the start of August, the Great British Beer Festival at Olympia (see advert page 30).

One of the problems always facing a newsletter such as ours is obtaining a fair representation of news from all parts of the area it serves. Obviously we are well acquainted with those pubs that we use regularly ourselves, but we don't always know what's going on elsewhere, and from time to time we receive complaints from landlords that their pubs are rarely mentioned. With our limited resources of staff and time it's impossible for us to keep a check on all parts of the district, and to try to help we've created an email address to which anyone can send information. We cannot guarantee to print everything sent but we will try to use as much as we can. The email address is channeldraught.pubnews@virgin.net – further details on page 14.

Along with the new licensing laws, the pub trade is also facing the prospect of legislation on smoking in public places and currently the Government is undertaking a period of consultation on the issue. CAMRA is backing the provision of separate rooms for smoking within licensed premises and members are urged to demonstrate their support. See National News article, on page 19, for consultation e-mail address.

Martin Atkins (Editor)

CONTENTS

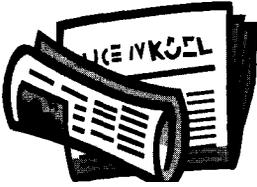
3	Events diary	32	A Visit to the Whitstable Brewery
4	Local News	34	Crabble Corn Mill Beer Festival report
14	Pub News E-Mail Address	36	Pub Profile - The Way Out Inn makes a comeback
15	New Boss at the Golden Lion!	38	The Beery Boaters - 25 Years On.
18	National News	46	Have Chopsticks, Will Travel
22	Cider Matters	48	Last Knockings
24	Visit to Triple FFF	51	Local Information
25	Kent Small Brewery News	53	CAMRA Info
27	The Fox, Temple Ewell, 2005 Pub of the Year	54	Advertisers Index
28	Channel View	54	And Finally
30	Great British Beer Festival 2005		

EVENTS DIARY

Monday 1 st August	King's Head, Kingsdown – Social
Tuesday 2 nd to Saturday 6 th August	The Great British Beer Festival – Olympia, London
Saturday 13 th August	Goodnestone/Chillenden/Nonington – Walk (Take 11.22 train from Dover to Aylesham. Circular walk returning from Aylesham)
Monday 15 th August	Hare & Hounds, Northbourne – Branch Meeting
Saturday 27 th August	Ham/Sandwich/Worth/Eastry – Walk (Meet Sandwich Station 11.45, 11.15 Dover, 11.32 Deal; 113 bus Dover Pencester Rd 10.20, South St 11.05, Burgess Green 11.19)
Monday 19 th September	Louis Armstrong, Dover – Branch Meeting
Saturday 10 th September	Dover & Out – Walk (Meet at Swingate at 12.00, 113 bus Dover Pencester Rd at 11.20; 11.00 Sandwich Guild hall, 11.13 from Burgess Green, 11.30 from South St)
Saturday 24 th September	Preston & Wingham – Walk (via Canterbury: bus 622 leaves bus station at 12.05, arrives Preston at 12.40 – return from Wingham)
Monday 17 th October	Green Berry, Walmer – Branch Meeting

Branch Meetings start at 7.30pm

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!



The Local News

Contributors - Martin Atkins, Anne McIlroy, Roger Marples, John Pitcher, Tony Wells, etc.

DOVER

Blakes, Castle Street: Chris and Roger, who took over the business from John and Teresa Toomey at the start of last year, have decided to move on. Chris says she loved the work and had thoroughly enjoyed her time at Blakes, but with Roger doing a full time job as well they felt over extended. However it's not all change. The staff have remained, and the new owners, Peter and Kathryn Garstin, are well known to local real ale drinkers as former incumbents at the Yew Tree at Barfrestone. Changeover took place in early June, and as we would expect beer quality has been well maintained. Peter is staying with the policy of beers from all over the country, but local brew, Hopdaemon Incubus, will feature prominently.

The White Horse, St. James Street: Gill and Jack are maintaining a selection of four real ales at this old Dover pub. Timothy Taylor Landlord is standard, with the rest selected from a handful of regularly appearing brews, plus guests. Among the former are London Pride, Youngs, Greene King Abbot, Wychwood Hobgoblin and Ringwood Fortyniner; and over the Spring Bank Holiday the excellent Brakspear Special made a wel-

come return. They have also joined the growing number of pubs selling real cider, currently offering Thatchers.

The Eagle, London Road: Mick has given up his attempts to keep real ale – he says he just can't sell it and was having to throw a lot away. A great shame, for as well as giving us one less real ale pub, the Eagle had a great tradition for real ale, going right back to its Courage days.

The Park Inn, Ladywell: Maintaining an interesting, and often expanded guest ale policy, as many as four guests have been spied on occasion. Recently a couple of excellent pints of Roaring Meg (5.5% ABV) from Springhead of Newark, finished off a very good Saturday evening.

The Golden Lion, Priory Place: Normally two or three real ales, and often ones you won't find elsewhere – the all too rarely seen draught version of Bishop's Finger having appeared more than once. The pub's also been doing grand work for the winkle club and playing host to illustrious guests. (See page 15)

The Louis Armstrong, Maison Dieu Road: Draught Bass and a small brewery guest are normal at this music-orientated pub. Regular guests include beers from Burton Bridge,

The Crown Inn

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Grand Union, Cottage, and locals Nelson and Hopdaemon. Recently we enjoyed the excellent bitter Jack O Legs from Tring – landlady Jackie Bowles couldn't resist the name (Robin Basford will elaborate).

Elsewhere **The Primrose**, Coombe Valley Rd is closed again with doors and windows covered with metal shutters, and **The Westbury Hotel**, Westbury Road is still looking very forlorn, with rumours of demolition; although it has been written off as a public house several times in the past already. Meanwhile a few streets away on Folkestone Road, the brightly painted **Orange Tree** is thriving, as a good traditional local. The recently changed hands **Cullens Yard**, Cambridge Road, is sticking with Adnams we are told, while nearby the only remaining pub in Snargate St, **The Flagship**, as reported in our Spring issue, has reintroduced real ale, although often only available at weekends. **The First and Last**, East Cliff has new tenants after a period of temporary management. MasterBrew is the regular real ale. At **The Red Lion**, Charlton Green the ever popular duo of London Pride and Bombardier are regulars in this cosy pub.

DEAL

The Admiral Penn, Beach St: Not much left now to show that this was a pub. Original consent was for ground floor shop unit and two flats. At least one flat has been advertised for occupation, and work on the ground floor is progressing.

The Star & Garter, Beach St: The Penn's near neighbour, is also closed, with permission for conversion to four houses. Internal works started some time ago but seems intermittent. Superficially from outside property looks much the same, minus signs of course.

The Five Ringers, Middle Deal Road: Currently a house is under construction on the car park at the side of the pub – application having been made during the winter to demolish the pub and construct three houses.

The Eagle Tavern, Queen Street: One of the first pubs to apply for a revised license and extended opening hours under the new licensing regulations is facing opposition from the police and local residents, who fear increased nuisance and disorder. The application includes requests for midnight closing Monday to Thursday and 1.30 am at weekends, live music and darts exhibition matches.

The Lifeboat, The Strand, Walmer: Still closed and apparently unoccupied, and no indication of any plans for the future. Any information gratefully received.

Three Horseshoes, Mongeham Road, Great Mongeham: Recent visits have always seen Gadd's as a guest beer alongside the regular GK IPA. Good welcome and very pleasant garden at the back.

In Middle St **The Ship** has been sell-

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ing Gadd's 5 and 7 plus Master Brew, Ship Ale and Summer Lightening, while the **Prince Albert** maintains an ever changing regime, a visit during the hot spell in June finding Robinson's Old Stockport, Grouch Vale Brewers Gold and Gadd's Dr Sunshine. On the opposite side of Alfred Square **The Saracen** regularly sells SN Master Brew and Best and the seasonal brew, and at the **Hoy** it's Maser Brew, Spitfire and sea-

sonal. In Beach Street **The Bohemian** now seems to have Weston's Organic Cider as standard along with three ales – regularly including East Anglians Adnams and Woodforde's. **The Three Compasses** is maintaining a single real ale – lately Tolly Original. Recently the **Alma** was selling Master Brew, Directors and GK IPA, while the High St duo of **Strands** and **The New Inn** feature Bass, with respectively Worthington 1744 and Spitfire.

SANDWICH & RURAL

The Yew Tree, Barfestone: New licensees at our 2004 Pub of the Year. Since Peter and Katherine Garstin left at the start of the year, the pub has been run by owners Duncan and Jayne Smyth and former tenants of theirs, Bernie and Maureen from Faversham. However, from June 14th Charlie and Heather, who live locally and had been helping out at the Yew Tree over the past few months, have taken on the lease. This is their first pub as licensees and we wish them every success. Real ale they plan to keep much as before – four or five beers, including mild, with a strong local emphasis, Hopdaemon and Gadds to the fore, and the draught cider will stay as well. They will be offering a revised menu, and food will be available all day. Live music of the Irish folk, acoustic or country variety is also on the agenda. (See advert).

The Two Sawyers, Woolage: All change here as well. The pub, which had been operating on a couple of

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days a week basis for some months, was sold by auction in April. New landlords are Tony and Jane, and Tony's sister Brenda, and the pub has been open on a full time basis from the Mayday Bank Holiday weekend. Regular ale is Adnams Bitter, but Hopdaemon brews have proved successful again, particularly Incubus and Golden Braid, the latter especially so with younger drinkers. And the pub will be featuring on TV – BBC1's Homes Under the Hammer will be devoting a whole hour-long programme to its auction and purchase.

The Royal Oak, Capel: Master Brew and Bass as standard. A recent visit by one of our Branch members found the Bass in excellent form – “the best pint of Bass I've had for a long time”. Nelson brews are regular guests, and Admiral has been on sale of late at the very good price of £2 a pint.

The Five Bells, Eastry: Rapidly establishing itself as one of the leading real ale pubs in our area, the Five Bells offers up to five real ales, including Greene King IPA, Hobgoblin and a rotating selection from Gadd's, Hopdaemon, Nelson and Archers. By the time you read this Mitchells and Butlers mild should have joined the selection as a regular brew, having proved very successful a few weeks ago as a guest. The function room behind the pub has been refurbished and is now available for use, complete with bar and classic “singles” juke-box. There is also capacity for two barrels of real ale on stillage,

cooling jackets courtesy of Eddie Gadd.

The Crown, Finglesham: Another pub taking a selection of beers from the ever popular local duo, Gadds and Hopdaemon, including mild during the Mild Month of May. Recent inauguration of The Crown Inn Beer Club (first Sunday of every month from around 3pm) saw bottled Skrimshander and a bottled Gadd's – with the bottled Skrimshander now regularly available at the pub. There has been a steady move towards the smaller Kentish brewers, while the 8% Biddenden cider also appears to be selling well. Hop Back Summer Lightning also a recent guest. A mini beer festival is planned for the August bank holiday weekend, with additional beers, together with a pig roast and other events. (See advert)

The Coastguard, St Margarets Bay: Gadd's and Hopdaemon are regular, plus a range of beers from all over the country. A recent visit found Marlow Rebellion, Grand Union and Red Squirrel IPA. Nigel's particularly impressed with Red Squirrel, a new brewery from Hertford, with respect to both ale quality and organisation, and has taken several beers from the brewery. Also due on shortly is a beer from The White Horse Brewery, another new name to me.

The Butchers Arms, Ashley: As we go to print a planning application has just been published for conversion to a private dwelling – Doug and Audrey, feeling that local support was lacking, had closed the pub in April.

However we understand that the possible loss of the pub is generating substantial local opposition.

At Westmarsh a refurbished **Way Out Inn**, closed since the start of the year, re-opened at the start of July (see page 36). Less good news though from the **Endeavour** at Wootton, which looks ever less like a pub. No application for change of use but we are told that internal work has been carried on, including removal of the bar. In Sandwich the **Bell Hotel** (inc **Magnums Wine Bar**) was undergoing refurbishment at the time of writing. Real ale of late has been from Courage, though there are hints that choice may be expanded in future. The **Fleur de Lis** is showing a strong commitment to local brews, particularly Gadds and Whitstable. Nearer Dover the **Chance** regularly offers one real ale – rotating the likes of Bass, Harveys Best and Black Sheep. At the **Royal Oak**, Whitfield, Bombardier has recently been available while at the **Lighthouse**, Capel it's still mainly Greene King ales – a recent visit found IPA, Ruddles County, Ale Fresco and Abbot (the last two particularly impressive). Its good to see Harvey's Best increasingly available. Among other outlets the beer has been a regular at the **Hare & Hounds**, Northbourne for some years, and we recently enjoyed it, together with excellent all round hospitality, at our July Branch Meeting at the **St. Crispin**, Worth.

FOLKESTONE

The Lifeboat: Another change of landlord, but one probably known to many of you from his stints at the Mogul. Kevin Pierce, Charlie Franklyn's first husband took over the pub in mid-May, and has been offering strong competition to Richard at the East Cliff Tavern, just up the road. Beers so far have included Greene King IPA, Harvey Best, Lees Bitter and Brain's SA.

The Guildhall, the Bayle: Now with Cask Marque accreditation Stuart and Gilly have now joined Punch's Finest Cask scheme, which offers real ales from all over the country. Beers featured so far have included

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The British Lion, the Bayle: Also using the Finest Cask scheme, the pub's landlord expects to get through all eighteen or so beers at least a couple of times in the three monthly cycle. A visit at the start of July found Brains Rev James and Everards Beacon along with the two regulars, Greene King Abbot and IPA.

The Chambers: Now offering five real ales and two ciders - recently Hopdaemon Skrimshander, Adnams, Gadd's No 5, Ringwood Old Thumper and Wychwood Prince Albert. The ciders were Biddenden Bushels and Thatcher Cheddar Valley, both

6%, though a bit pricey we thought at respectively £2.80 and £2.90 a pint.

The East Cliff Tavern: Richard is still offering one of the most interesting ranges of ale in Folkestone, with normally one or two beers available. Locals Gadd's and Hopdaemon feature regularly (Gadd's Mild proving particularly popular in June) but he's heard nothing more from Whitstable after its initial approach in the Spring, and will have to get back to them. A recent visit found the pleasingly dark Red Squirrel Special with Red Squirrel IPA to follow. At the time of writing Richard is convalescing in hospital following a minor operation. We wish him a speedy recovery and return behind the bar.

Elsewhere in Folkestone **Harveys** was recently selling Robinson's Coopers Bell, alongside its more regular selection - Bass, Tiger and something from Archers (this time Archer's Golden), while across the road the **Happy Frenchman** is staying with two for the time being, currently Bass and Broadside. Near the station the **Park Inn** was selling Greene King IPA on last visit. Around the Harbour there was Pedigree and London Pride at the **Mariners**, Old Speckled Hen and London pride at the **Ship**, and just MasterBrew at the **Princess Royal**.

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New Pub News E-Mail Address

Although we have a number of enthusiastic branch members, there is a limit to the number of pubs they can visit. So we've set up an email address to allow you to let us know what's going on in the local area: -

Has there been a change in landlord? Which guest beers is your local serving? Did you have a particularly memorable pint somewhere – if so, what was it and which pub was it in? Do you know of a pub that has just closed/reopened? Which beers was it serving? What was the quality like? Is your local holding a beer festival or other event?

the address is channel draught.pubnews@virgin.net.

So put it in your address book and send us an email.

And of course we would be equally pleased to hear from landlords – new beers or different beer range, alterations to the pub, beer festivals or anything that may be of interest to our readers.

Tony Wells, Pubs Officer

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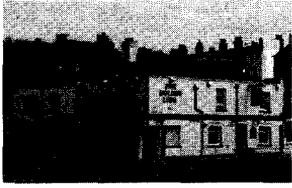
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Titanic Golden Age
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Dark Star Hophead
Hop Back Odyssey
Dark Star Original
Osset Silver King
Titanic Sundeck
Brakspear Bitter
Ringwood 40er
York Cascade
Exmoor Ale



A NEW BOSS AT THE GOLDEN LION!

The Winkler can exclusively report that a new boss has been seen in the Golden Roarer! On Sunday June 12th at around five o'clock one Michael Boyce was to be found in the bar proudly showing off the all black polo shirt with the legend THE BOSS emblazoned across the front and Golden Lion Winkle Club across the back; and as if this was not good enough Michael also showed off the solid silver winkle, on a chain, with which he had been presented. What does this mean for the Golden Roarer I hear you ask? Rab, however, assured your faithful reporter that nothing would change, but don't be surprised to find Michael doing the odd shift, and his wife Fleur doing the washing up.

Michael enjoyed a swift half of bitter shandy, and the company of the bar, for half an hour or so until leaving to be driven home to his nearby castle in a vintage Humber. Nearby castle? – yes Walmer Castle (the big one with the flag and the cannons, not the pub). Walmer Castle is the occasional home of Michael and Fleur, who were enjoying it over the weekend while they attended the Dover Pageant, before the undoubted highlight of their weekend, a swift half in the Roarer! Michael, recently retired from the Royal Navy, is better known as The Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Admiral the Lord Boyce GCB, OBE, DL, and President of the Golden Lion Winkle Club!



The new Boss with Rab & Theresa

Lord Boyce had accepted the role as club President some months earlier and this was the first chance that he had to visit the pub and meet Rab, Theresa and the gang. Like his predecessor as Lord Warden, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, he is also patron of Winkle Clubs all around the country. He spent some time with Rab and other club members discussing recent tasks



Lord Boyce receives his
Silver Winkle

undertaken by the club, these include the £700 purchase of a custom built tricycle for a special needs unit, and the setting aside of £1,000 for playground equipment for a local school. Captain Fuji, the pub's pet photographer was on hand to record the historical visit, and to give the club and pub proof of a very enjoyable occasion, which will be remembered for years to come.

His Lordship expressed a strong desire to return to the pub for a longer stay, and offered his personal help to the club in any way he could; an offer most warmly accepted by a somewhat overwhelmed Rab. Oh, and by the way, the DL stands for Deputy Lieutenant (of London) and not Driving Licence as someone suggested!

The Winkler



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The National News

By Martin Atkins

Wolves Gobbles Up Jennings As our last issue went to print Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries was initiating takeover talks with Jennings of Cockermouth, whose prospects for remaining independent were not enhanced by major shareholder, Robinson's of Stockport, pledging its 24% holding to Wolves should the bid go ahead. It did, and by the end of May W&D had control of the brewery and its 131 pubs. W&D says that the future of the Cockermouth brewery is safe and has promised investment of £250,000. It also says that Jennings brands such as Cumberland Ale, Cockerhoop and Snecklifter will be distributed throughout its existing estate. However, deeply sceptical from past experiences, CAMRA is currently seeking more specific assurances. Chief Executive, Mike Benner, said: "We want assurances on Jennings' future as a vertically integrated business and learn more about plans to invest in the beer brands and the company's pubs." And speculation is rife that W&D will be looking to make more acquisitions thanks to a huge refinancing deal currently being negotiated with the Royal Bank of Scotland - Belhaven and Brains being tipped as possible targets. (See Channel View.)

Greene King Swallows Ridleys Early July saw another casualty to the independent sector, with Greene King's takeover of Ridleys of

Chelmsford. Apparently the brewery is to close and brewing transferred to Bury St Edmunds in September, and, no doubt, Ridleys 76 pubs incorporated into the Greene King estate.

Boost for Pub is the Hub Pub is the Hub, the organisation founded by the Prince of Wales to encourage village pubs to contribute more to their communities by filling in for vanished shops and post offices, will be expanding its operations as additional funding is made available, and a new national board and regional help groups are created this summer. It is well on its way towards the target of £300,000 per annum, with current requests for assistance running at 60 a week, considerably in excess of capacity. A recent recruit to the scheme is Punch Taverns, the national pub group, who has told licensees who take advantage of Pub in the Hub that they will boost their businesses.

More Pubs Close As a national illustration of the concerns expressed in our Spring issue, CAMRA's Pub Watch survey has recorded almost 390 pubs closing for good last year, with the majority either demolished or converted to housing. In the last five years they estimate that 2,500 pubs have closed with only 1,600 opening.

Fullers Gold Fuller's has joined the fashionable trend for easy drinking

golden ales, with its latest new beer, Discovery, launched in May. At 3.9% it comprises pale malt, carapils (a slightly darker malt normally used for lagers) and malted wheat, which lightens the body and helps develop a frothy head. Hops are Czech Saaz and American Liberty. Apparently sales are going well. However, might I make a plea, that while jumping aboard the current bandwagon, Fuller's does not ignore some of its older recipes that now never seem to see the light of day. I think particularly about its spring brew, the 4.5% dark bitter Mr Harry, and the superb 4.8% IPA which was widely available across its west London heartland and adjoining areas about ten years ago.

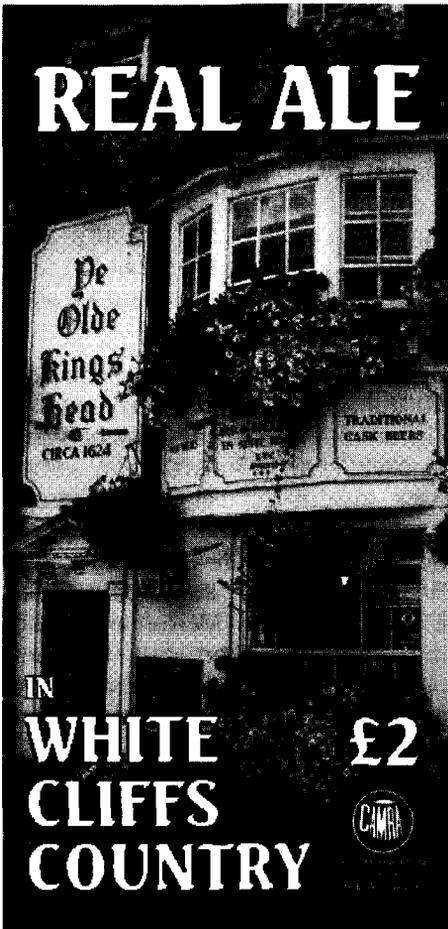
Hop Back Hop Back, however, one of the pioneers of golden ales (its Summer Lightning probably regarded by many as the definitive example of the style), has radically changed direction with its latest brew. Odyssey is a well-balanced, distinctly bitter 4% brew, somewhat darker in colour than the standard bitter, and after eighteen months in development has been available since the end of May. Feedback from the trade had suggested to Hop Back that, despite the current popularity of pale beers, there was demand for darker brews, and although it has produced some before, this is the first aimed specifically beyond its local trade.

More Pubs Change Hands Pub chains and property companies continue to buy and sell pubs as if they were involved in a game of

Monopoly. Latest power in the industry is property tycoon Robert Tchenguiz who, having acquired the Laurel pubco and Yates, now owns 320 pubs and is aiming for an estate of 1000. Rumours suggest he may well be spending some £250m on pubs from Spirit, who is looking for a market flotation. Elsewhere, Admiral Taverns has doubled its size after buying 253 pubs from Avebury, and there is City speculation that the rest of Avebury might in due course also be on the market.

Smoking Ban CAMRA's decision at the Glasgow AGM to oppose Government proposals for banning smoking in pubs that sell food, and to back instead smoking in separate rooms, has received strong support from leading figures in the trade. British Institute of Innkeeping Chief Executive, John McNamara, said that the Government's current proposals could be fatal for as many as 10,000 pubs. In Europe, the approach is mixed with France, Germany and Spain opting for smoke-free rooms, and he hoped that a similar policy would be adopted here. And his views were echoed by British Beer & Pubs Association spokesman Mark Hastings speaking on Radio 4's Today Programme. Meanwhile the Government has denied stories that Health Secretary, Patricia Hewitt, now favours a complete ban, and stressed it was committed to choice. CAMRA is urging members to support its AGM decision and to e-mail their views to smokefreelegislation@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

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Real Ale in White Cliffs Country

Amendments as at June 2005

Butcher's Arms, Ashley - Now closed, future uncertain.

Yew Tree, Barfrestone - The family symbol  should be added. The cider available is Biddenden 8% Dry. Pub is closed on Mondays.

Admiral Penn, Deal - Closed.

Star & Garter, Deal - Now closed.

Eagle, Dover - No longer serves real ale.

Millers, Dover - Now renamed

Marine Court and run as a 'Brewers Fayre' and Premier Travel Inn.

White Horse, Dover - Opening Times changed to Mon-Sat 12.00-11.00pm Sun 12.00-10.30pm.

Mogul, Dover - Now Closed. Will be converted into offices.

Crown, Finglesham - telephone number should be 01304 612555.

Hare & Hounds, Northbourne - fully no smoking 

Lifeboat, Walmer - Now closed, future uncertain.

Chequers, West Hougham - Has re-opened as pub and restaurant.

Way Out Inn, Westmarsh - Was closed but has now re-opened.

Endeavour, Wootton - Closed, future uncertain.

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

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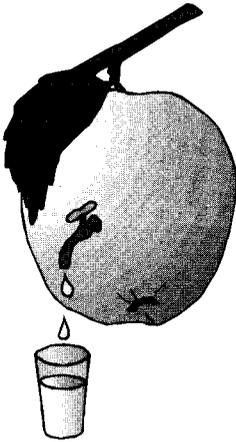


**DEAL, DOVER & SANDWICH CAMRA BRANCH
PUB OF THE YEAR 2005**

Listed in the 2005 CAMRA Good Beer Guide

Small parties catered for.

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CIDER MATTERS

So, what has been happening in the world of cider since the last issue? Well, we're now into summer, an ideal time to drink proper cider! Hopefully the weather will be fine this summer and conditions will be ideal for producing an excellent crop of cider apples.

The UKCider "wiki" is coming along nicely. People have started adding entries for producers, outlets and events, although there have been one or two inaccuracies. Most notable for us was in the pub section, where there are only a handful of pubs listed. Under "Swale" was an entry for the Way Out Inn at Westmarsh, which was listed as selling Theobolds cider and Swale beers. Hmm. It was my sad duty to put that one straight, so it would be nice to add a few to the list. As I don't get out and about anywhere near as much as I used to, please let me know of any outlets in your part of the county and I'll add the info. You could always do it yourself, of course – just go to www.ukcider.co.uk, click on the link for the ukcider wiki and follow the instructions from the "Help" link on the left of that page.

After the copy deadline for the last issue, but before the issue came out, the London Drinker Festival took place in London (where else?!). I remember this festival from years ago when I spent a very pleasant evening drinking cider with a few branch members who happened along on the same evening. I didn't go this time, but I've heard that the decent stuff sold out really quickly (no demand for it, of course!), leaving some very questionable stuff for the busier sessions. It may well have been no fault of the organisers, but such things can really put off the casual drinker or the merely curious, especially if they get the old chestnut, "It's supposed to taste like that." I can only repeat my recommendation to try the cider bar at this year's Kent Festival, where the cider and perry have always been excellent, in my opinion, and the staff knowledgeable and enthusiastic. The same goes for the cider & perry bar at the GBBF if you go, and you'll have an even bigger selection to choose from, so don't be afraid to rely on the knowledge and experience of the staff there, either. If you happen to be in Birmingham, don't be confused by the name of Perry Barr, as there may not be any available....

Another feature of this time of year is the start of the festival season for cider and perry. After the CAMRA Festival at Reading, where the national cider and perry champions for the year are announced, there are various other festivals on offer. The Bath & West Show is the biggest mainstream show, and the cider and perry competitions are keenly contested. Among this year's winners there

were some of the bigger names in smaller-scale production, such as Gwatkin, Hecks, Thatcher, Olivers & Julian Temperley. Don't worry – I'm still getting used to some of those names myself. A popular cider and perry festival is held in Wales at the Clytha Arms, which is near Abergavenny, and has links to the Welsh Cider Society. Ironically, in the days when I could have gone to events like these, I didn't know about them. Now that I know about them, I can't go to them.... If you'd like to hear more about them, for whatever reason, you could do worse than join the UKCider group, which you can find on the internet at <http://groups-beta.google.com/group/ukcider>. You don't need to be high profile – I'm certainly not – and you might be surprised by how much you can learn from others.

While I was doing final preparation of this article, I read about CAMRA's Cambridge Beer Festival, which had its best year so far, with record numbers of customers. They managed to sell 100-110 tubs of cider, which isn't bad for a drink that it's claimed nobody wants any more.

So, let me leave you with a reminder – your cider wiki needs you, so if you have any info on local pubs selling real cider and/or perry, please let me know. Also, if you come across a shop selling either, that's useful too, but bear in mind that the main supermarkets have all started stocking a limited selection of bottled cider. You can email me at realcider@yahoo.co.uk. See you next time!

Applejack

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TRIP TO TRIPLE FFF BREWERY ALTON, HAMPSHIRE

Winner of this year's White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ale was Comfortably Numb from the Triple FFF Brewery at Alton, Hampshire, which ran out at 8.20 on Friday night; and in line with our custom in recent years we paid a visit to the brewers to present the certificate in person. Eight branch members, plus Jeff Waller from Swale Branch, made the trip on Saturday June 18th (which turned out to be one of the hottest days of the year so far). We arrived at Alton at about 1pm, half an hour late, the train having been slowed for much of the journey from London by the hot weather (wrong kind of heat presumably).



Dave Green (centre) presents the Beer of the Festival certificate

This was the second time Triple FFF had won the title, but unlike our previous visit a few years ago we were hosted in its own pub, the Railway Arms, conveniently near the station, rather than at the brewery on the outskirts of the town. The pub is set in a terrace opposite the station approach and has a secluded garden at the back, shaded by high trees, and here we very quickly settled in. There were five or six of Triple FFF brews available, including, if I remember correctly, Alton Pride, its clean tasting session bitter, Moondance and Apache Rose Peacock, plus one from Mighty Oak of Maldon, Essex. Festival Organiser, Dave Green, presented the certificate (see photo above), and we enjoyed more than a few excellent pints, together with a fine selection of sandwiches provided by the pub.



After a very pleasing four or five hours we reluctantly left - Dave Green for the Isle of Wight, and the prospect of a few days yachting on the French Coast, and the rest of us back to Kent, arriving in Dover at about 9pm.

Martin Atkins

Kent Small Brewery News



Hopdæmon Brewery 01795 892078 – Newnham

Contact: Tonie Prins

Business is brisk and Tonie is still catching up on the loss of production, resulting from the move. The brewery has been very busy supplying beer festivals of late. Bottle conditioned beer continues to be a major seller and additional holding tanks have helped the brewery meet this demand; Messrs. Tesco and Sainsbury's, plus the usual London Museums, who are still good customers. A special brew was supplied to Southwark Cathedral, in May, to celebrate the installation of a new bell. Incubus is selling extremely well at Blake's, in Dover, and the Two Sawyers, Woolage Village, whose new owners have an enlightened real ale policy, is a new outlet for Hopdæmon beers.

Nelson Brewing Co. 01634 832828 – Chatham

Contact: Andrew Purcell

The brewery has recently arranged a contract with a transport firm to deliver cases of bottle conditioned beers and polypins to trade and private customers, in any part of the country, for next day delivery. The two bottle conditioned beers currently available are England Expects (4.2% ABV) and 1805 (5.5% ABV). A special beer will be brewed for the Kent Beer Festival, to cater for feminine taste, whatever that might be. It will be created and brewed by two female members of staff, one of whom works in the office, and the other, a young Czech lady, who normally helps Andrew in the brewery. Rochester Bitter has been making an appearance in The Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club, where it has been very well received.

The Ramsgate Brewery 07967 660060 – Ramsgate

Contact: Eddie Gadd

The seasonal Dr Sunshine's Special Friendly English Wheat Ale was available at the time of writing, and sales were buoyant. Does anyone know of a less concise name for a beer? A new fermentation room has been commissioned and this will increase the capacity at a time when demand has been outstripping supply. Eddie and Lois (his wife) have produced a son. Is this the start of a brewing dynasty?

Whitstable Brewery 01622 851007-Grsafty Green

Contact: Rafik Abidi

Please see page 32 for a full article on this brewery.

Roger Marples



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		<i>Saturday</i>	11am - 3pm
		<i>Sunday</i>	12 - 10.30pm
<i>Often local</i>	<i>Evening</i>	<i>Mon-Friday</i>	5-11pm
		<i>Saturday</i>	6-11pm
		<i>Sunday</i>	12 - 10.30pm

Available any lunchtime for personal or business functions

THE FOX, TEMPLE EWELL BRANCH PUB OF THE YEAR 2005



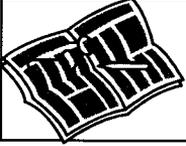
Until the 1970s there were three pubs in Temple Ewell: The George and Dragon on London Road, The Donkey in Mill Street, and the Fox in the High Street. Now there is just the one, The Fox – and this year, the Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District Branch of CAMRA had chosen it as its Branch Pub of the Year. By coincidence, it was the venue for our midsummer Branch meeting on June 20th and so it was an obvious choice for us to present the certificate on the night of the meeting.

First to business and the weather, although overcast, was sufficiently fine to allow us to have our meeting al fresco. We shifted three of the outdoor pub tables together and had a very pleasant meeting in the pub's garden – there can be few CAMRA meetings undertaken beside a brook, in the shadow of an apple tree. Ales available that evening were Greene King Abbot, Wadworth 6X, Tolly Original and Deuchars IPA.

The meeting finished at about 09.30 and we returned inside The Fox for the presentation. Branch Chairman, Martin Atkins, congratulated landlord Steve Grayson on the success he and his wife Alyson had achieved with the pub since they took it on five years ago. It had always been a favourite pub, but for many years offered just the one real ale and no food. Now there were four real ales and a fine range of food, as well as the affable and convivial atmosphere. Set below the downs on the edge of Dover, with its stream bounded garden and skittle alley, it is a worthy winner.



Martin Atkins presents the Certificate to Landlord Steve Grayson



CHANNEL VIEW

Once upon a time, Wolverhampton and Dudley Breweries was an unambitious Black Country brewer of pleasing if unremarkable beers. It owned 600 plus pubs and stood aside from the amalgamation craze of the 1950s and 1960s which saw neighbours Ansells, and Mitchells & Butlers merged into national giants. However, things change. In 1999 it acquired the breweries and tied estates of Marston's and Mansfield (closing the latter's brewery in 2001), and earlier this year bought the 450 strong Burtonwood estate, taking its pub ownership above 2,000, the level at which, under the now discontinued Beer Orders, it would have had to start making disposals. Now it has added Cumbrian brewer, Jennings of Cockermouth, and its 128 pubs to its business (see National News). W&D maintains it has no plans to close the brewery or discontinue the brands, but it's doubtful if many would bet on Jennings beers still being brewed in Cockermouth in ten years' time. Equally worrying are the continuous City rumours of a tie up between W&D and its only regional rival, Greene King of Bury St Edmunds, to create a new national brewer with 4,500 pubs.

The Government appears not to be interested, and indicated its philosophy some years ago when it rescinded the Beer Orders. These may not

have worked as intended, but at least demonstrated appreciation of a problem: at the moment there seems every possibility of a return to the concentration of power that they were introduced to deal with. Whether or not Wolverhampton and Dudley does eventually merge with Greene King, both no doubt expect to expand their estates and business over the next few years. Even as we go to print, news comes that Greene King has acquired Riddleys of Chelmsford and its 76 pubs. Pub groups Punch and Enterprise between them already control some 15,000 to 20,000 pubs, and are looking for further acquisitions. While no doubt welcomed by management, shareholders and the City, it is hard to identify any benefit of such conglomerations to the average drinker. They certainly do not seem justified by profitability. Joseph Holt of Manchester is regularly among the Country's most profitable brewers but owns just 128 pubs, and its ales are amongst the cheapest.

The last twenty or thirty years have seen a wealth of micro-brewers established and, despite depletions, there is still a significant number of small family and local brewers remaining. Such diversity gives real choice, but only if it is accessible. At the moment both Punch and Enterprise offer a range of small brewery ales, and Greene King runs a guest ale policy, but there is no certainty

that such arrangements will always exist. In any case many pubs in these groups, whether by choice or restriction, currently limit themselves to a handful of widely available brews. And the small brewer can no longer rely on the independent free trade as pub chains and larger breweries cherry pick the most desirable public houses. The Government will be irresponsible if it continues to turn a blind eye. Ideally it should act to prevent any further concentration of power; and, at the very least, should reintroduce a guest ale provision for tenants of large brewers and pub chains.

The Government is still ploughing ahead with its proposals to ban smoking in English and Welsh public houses that serve food by 2008. However, as yet nothing is set in stone, and it is now embarking on a period of consultation. The well-organised and vociferous anti-smoking lobby will be arguing very forcibly for a complete ban with no exceptions; it is up to everyone else to make their views equally clear.

While accepting that for some smoking can be unpleasant, and that there is a certain danger in passive smoking, this newsletter has always held that the case for a ban has been exaggerated and over-hyped. We support choice, but for some there may be no choice. In our Spring edition we highlighted the large number of pubs locally that have recently closed, or for whom the future is uncertain. A complete ban on smoking would likely see their number swell

appreciably (evidence from elsewhere indicating a loss of trade of up to about 30%). Unfortunately, much discussion so far has been supposition and conjecture, with little hard evidence. For an issue where livelihoods as well as lives are at stake, this does not seem good enough. We need to establish exactly the risks of passive smoking in a pub or restaurant, and how these compare with other risks of daily life, and in particular the feelings of bar staff, whose working conditions are always touted in support of a ban. From observation there seems to be no great demand for a ban from this quarter, and it would be particularly ironic, especially for the many who smoke themselves, if staff were to find that measures designed to protect their working environment were to leave them with no work at all.

We have commented before that the anti-smoking lobby, although well intentioned, is liable to misrepresent the facts. It would be unjust if their arguments were not adequately answered, as it would also, if the views of those who never, or only occasionally, visit a pub were given as much weight as regular pub users. Surveys suggest that the latter are fairly relaxed over the issue and see no need for a total ban. The Government owes it to an industry, which is a major revenue earner and has seen much interference of late, to ensure that not only is consultation comprehensive and inclusive, but that the final decision accurately reflects the wishes of those most involved – licensees, their staff and their customers.

GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL 2005

A beer drinker's paradise - something for everyone!

Tuesday 2nd August sees the start of Great British Beer Festival at Olympia in London. The festival, which runs until Saturday 6th August 2005 is the unique annual celebration featuring over 450 real ales, plus cider, perry and international beer.

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- **Over 450 real ales** from over 200 different British brewers! Wheat beers, ginger ales, lots of tasty bitters, milds and stouts – something for everyone!
- **200 international beers** – Beers from around the world including, Russian, German, Belgian, Dutch, American, Australian and Austrian!
- **Cider and perry too!** The Festival features a wide variety of traditional ciders and perries, all dispensed directly from the cask by gravity.
- **Champion Beer of Britain** – Final judging of the most prestigious beer competition in the UK takes place on Tuesday 2nd August 2005. **Tu-tored tastings** – From 2nd to 5th August 2005 you can take part in tu-tored tastings hosted by experts.
- **No 'Rip-Off' zone** – full pints guaranteed. We use oversized lines glasses so you get what you pay for – a full liquid pint every time.

Live music/entertainment

Tuesday 2nd August evening, Chaminade String Quartet

Wednesday 3rd August afternoon, Band of Two

Wednesday 3rd August evening, Chas 'n' Dave

Thursday 4th August afternoon, Gordon Giltrap

Thursday 4th August evening, Los Pacaminos

Friday 5th August afternoon, Grapevine Blues

Friday 5th August evening, Rollin' Stoned

Saturday 6th August afternoon, National Youth Jazz Orchestra

Opening Times and Ticket Prices

Tuesday – 5pm to 10.30pm (£7, £5 for CAMRA members)

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday – 12 Noon to 10.30pm (£7, £5 for CAMRA members)

Saturday – 11am to 7pm (£6, £4 for CAMRA members)

Season Tickets also available for all sessions (£17.50, £15 for CAMRA members).

The Great British Beer Festival, are you drinking what we're drinking?

Stewart, Debbie & Paul

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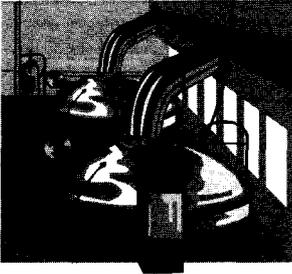
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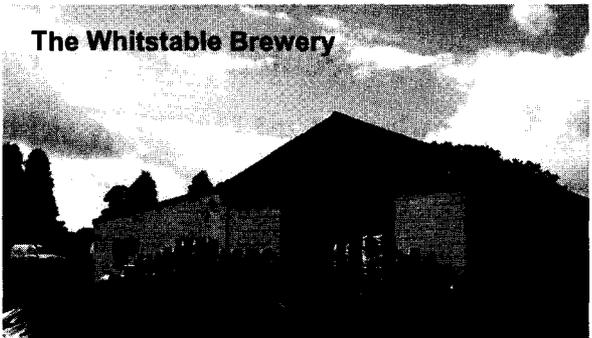
A VISIT TO THE WHITSTABLE BREWERY

In March 2003, Swale Brewery sold its brewery to the Green family, of Whitstable, and the Whitstable Brewery came into being. Initially, the supply of beers was restricted, with a few exceptions, to this company's own outlets.

The Whitstable Brewery's sister businesses are The Continental Hotel, its main beer outlet, together with the East Quay Restaurant and The Whitstable Oyster Company Restaurant. These three businesses are located in Whitstable, a once sleepy, unspoilt North Kent Coast seaside town. In the last few years, Whitstable has been colonized by Londoners with money to spend. The town is now a 'trendy place' to be and the house prices have greatly increased, as has the price of a pint of beer. It was to serve this rapidly changing community that the Whitstable Brewery, was created.

Confusingly, Whitstable Brewery is located a short distance from the small village of Grafty Green, which is a few miles south of Lenham. I, together with Jeffrey Waller, of the Swale Branch, set out to visit the brewery on one fine Monday in June. After travelling from Maidstone on the No. 59 Arriva bus we alighted at the terminus in Grafty Green. We then took a short stroll down Woodcock Lane. Little Telpits Farm was our destination. This is a mixed live-stock farm and there is little, if any, indication that it is anything other than that. Fortunately, I had visited the farm previously, when John Davidson and the Swale Brewery were in residence, and knew of the whereabouts of the brewery, which is not at all evident.

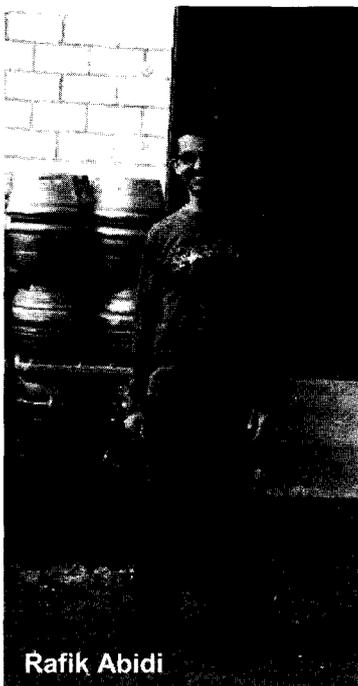
The brewery is located in a large, long agricultural type shed together with a number of adjoining offices, of which two or three are occupied by businesses other than Whitstable Brewery. We searched for and found Rafik Abidi, the brewer, whom we had arranged to meet. After greeting us, he offered us a sample of East India Pale Ale from a nearby cask. This



offer was greatly accepted. The beer was pale, well balanced, and had a pronounced aromatic hoppiness. Jeffrey and I agreed that it was an excellent drink.

Rafik arrived from France in 1993 in order to study chemistry at The North London University. After taking his degree he went to work in the laboratory of the large commercial brewer Fuller, Smith and Turner, of London. After deciding to switch to brewing, having worked for Fuller's, he decided to take a Master's Degree at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh.

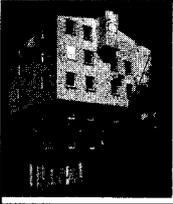
On qualifying as a brewer, Rafik went to Wychwood Brewery, part of Refresh UK Ltd. He then took employment with local brewer, Shepherd Neame (not one of the writer's favourite breweries). After a tempting offer to return to France to brew English style beers for the French (who says that they are *all* Philistines?), he had the opportunity of working at Whitstable Brewery and developing his own range of beers, using good quality ingredients. When John Davidson sold the brewery, the recipes were not included. So, Rafik decided to leave behind him the strictly cost controlled world of conical fermenters, centrifuges, brewing sugars, etc. and embark on producing beers in which he could take a genuine pride.



The range of cask beers Whitstable Brewery produces includes: East India Pale Ale 4.1% ABV (Cascade and Crystal hops), Whitstable Bitter 3.7% ABV (Fuggles and Goldings), and Whitstable Oyster Stout (Challenger hops, with Chocolate Malt and roasted barley). The sales of cask ales are 50% EIPA, 25% Whitstable Bitter, 25% Oyster Stout. On occasions a wheat beer and a raspberry wheat beer, using a 100% pure top quality raspberry syrup, are produced to special order at 5.2%. In addition to these 'real ales', a number of brewery conditioned beers are produced, many of them in bottle form. The brewery is at present brewing between ten and twenty barrels a week, but at full capacity could brew forty to fifty barrels a week, which is quite a respectable amount for a 'micro'.

I am sure that although Whitstable Brewery has only been supplying the free trade for a few months, its distinctive beers will become more widely available, given Rafik's flair and dedication in producing real ales.

Roger Marples

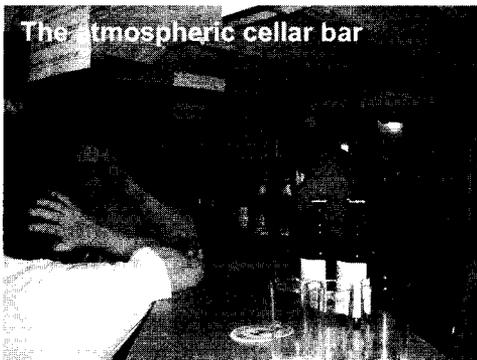


CRABBLE CORN MILL BEER FESTIVAL

Many of you will have seen Graham Butterworth's article in the Spring issue of *Channel Draught*, in which he paved the way for the inaugural beer festival at this remarkable working watermill. I won't reiterate the extensive background of the mill here, but will instead give a round-up of the event from a festival goer's perspective.

The event was held from 27-28 May in glorious bank holiday weekend sunshine. It was the brainchild of Graham (a trustee of Crabble Corn Mill Trust) and came together with the support of his colleagues at the mill and various sponsors. Following a lot of hard work to organise things, the weekend was staffed by volunteers from the mill, local CAMRA branch members, and other interested parties.

We attended the Saturday session and arrived on the specially commissioned festival bus service that ran from Dover Priory station and other stops along the way. For a first-time event, we were impressed by how well organised everything was – a difficult achievement for even the most established of festivals. To make such an event possible, sponsors came together in the form of Kentish beer and cider producers, the Friends of Crabble Corn Mill, local CAMRA, pubs and hotels in the surrounding area, and other East Kent businesses.



The atmospheric cellar bar

As a venue, the mill proved to be an ideal setting: the cellar bar provided a cool and even temperature for the beers being served on stillage, there was ample room indoors and outside in the pretty river-side garden for people to while away the hours, the mill yard catered for hungry festival-goers (with tantalising aromas coming from a BBQ, curries, chilli con carne and vegetarian offerings), and non-drinkers were well catered for with a special

stall selling non-alcoholic Bundaberg beverages from Australia. Despite being let down at the last minute on the music front, the organisers secured a local pop duo and guitarist to ensure that music was still provided on both evenings.

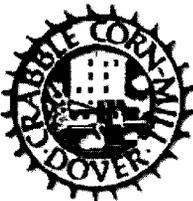
The stillage offered around 25 firkins of beer over the weekend, as well as real Kentish cider. The majority of the beers came from Kentish breweries large

and small, with the remainder from neighbouring counties and the wider southern England area. Chatham's Nelson Brewery was commissioned to produce a special, bottle conditioned beer for the mill, and this was also delicious (only available from Crabble Mill, we made sure we bought a few to take home with us after the festival). It would be difficult to pick out any one beer as a favourite – all were served in fine condition and provided a rich variety of styles and strengths, ranging from Hook Norton Best at 3.6% through to Hop Back Summer Lightning at 5%. Well done to Dave Green and other CAMRA colleagues for lending their support and cellarmanship experience to the bar side of things!



Manning the CAMRA stall in the afternoon, we spent most of our time in the cellar bar where it was nice and cool (that's our excuse, anyway – the proximity of the stillage of course had nothing to do with it!). By the time we eventually packed up our wares, we had managed to recruit a new member to the local branch and sell some local *Real Ale in White Cliffs Country* guides, so were pleased with our afternoon's work.

The mill is a fascinating place made all the more special because the ongoing restoration and preservation 'work in progress' is staffed entirely by volunteers – a real labour of love. The walls of the bar area display all sorts of interesting mill memorabilia as well as work by local artists and craftspeople. Being a non-profit making charity, the Trust relies on entry fees, donations and fundraising events (such as this festival) in order to make costly maintenance possible. Speaking to Graham about the mill, he and others are clearly passionate about its survival – and running a fundraising beer festival seems as good a method as any to help the cause. All being well, the aim is for similar events to be held in the future.



Praise must go to Graham and his many helpers for their collective enthusiasm, hard work and commitment in organising a highly successful beer festival in aid of a local heritage landmark – especially since this was the first event of its type at the mill. May there be many more!

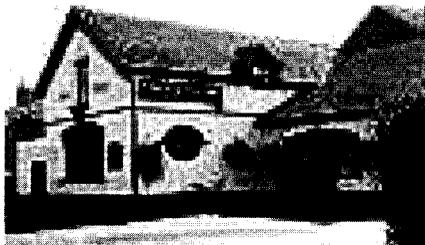
Anne McIlroy
(Crabble Corn Mill Trust website: www.ccmt.org.uk)

PUB PROFILE

THE WAY OUT INN

A Bat & Trap Match of discovery

This particular Wednesday in June the Crown Inn at Finglesham Bat & Trap Team was due to play the Way Out Inn 'A' team at the Way Out Inn, Westmarsh. As the pub had been closed for a significant length of time, we were interested in how they were going to feed and water us (or should that be "feed and beer us"?). However, we needn't have worried as the new managers, Conrad and Mary Mitchell, had things well in hand. A large beer fridge had been set up in the garden from which they were serving the players.



The pub re-opened at the start of July after refurbishment, Conrad and Mary having moved from the Abbots Fireside at Elham. They made the move so that Conrad, who is a Michelin 1-star trained chef, can pursue his culinary skills, and while Conrad is in the kitchen in the role of head chef, Mary will be running the bar. The restaurant will be serving French/English style food. Food will be available throughout the day although the à la carte menu will be restricted to lunch and evening times.

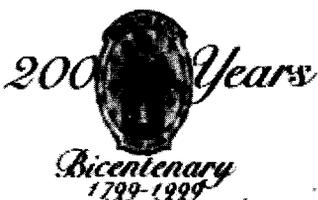
Games at the pub will be pool, darts and, of course, Bat & Trap. They are also hoping to find space in their large garden for a Petangue pitch. In addition to having their own cats, Poshy & Squashy, and allowing dogs into the bar area, they have plans on keeping chickens (I can think of a couple of people in the branch who would get excited about this piece of news). The important topic of real ale will initially be covered by Greene King IPA, so they can judge the demand. We of course brought them up-to-date on some of the excellent local breweries in the area and we certainly hope that they get enough demand to extend their selection.

So, we wish them all the best in this venture and, if you are in the area, pop in and have a pint and persuade them that increasing their choice of real ale will be a good move.

Tony Wells
Pubs Officer

Pub Details: Way Out Inn, Westmarsh, Kent, CT13 2LP, 01304 812899

N.B. With respect to real ale a subsequent visit found Young's Bitter, London Pride and Olde Trip from Hardy and Hansons – worth a trip!



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THE BEERY BOATERS

25 YEARS ON

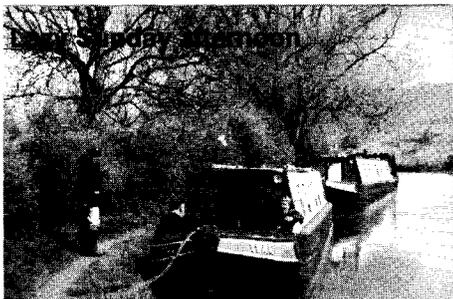


Somerton Deep Lock

It's hard to believe that the Beery Boaters are twenty-five years old. In April 1981, eight of the Dover CAMRA lads set off from Weltonfield, near Weedon, on a 70ft narrow boat by the name of *Olympus*, headed off down the Oxford Canal and ran into a blizzard. That didn't stop us, and to prove it we've been going off on the canals every April since. That first year we didn't reach Oxford; we only got as far as Aynho, just south of Banbury. But in 1988 we took a pair of boats from Willow Wren at Rugby to Oxford, and for our twenty-fifth trip we decided to repeat this run. Thus, on the afternoon of St George's Day 2005, fifteen of us, including three of the 1981 crew, set off on the identical 65ft boats, *Moorhen* and *Teal*, in bright sunshine. This didn't deceive us. We had set off in bright sunshine in 1981 as well!

The evening's stop was going to be at Braunston, some ten miles and three locks from our starting point. It was just after these locks, at Hillmorton, that Paul Turvey phoned Martin to inform us of the death of Dave Routh. This was particularly sad news. Not only was Dave well known to all of us, but he was one of the original eight 1981 Beery Boaters, and had been on many canal trips up to 1995.

We reached Braunston before darkness fell, moored and walked up the hill, past the church with its landmark spire to the Old Plough, which was very busy; and then, a few hundred yards further on, to the Wheatsheaf, which had a live band playing. To our surprise, Chinese meals were being sold in one corner of the pub. If too busy, it is just take-away, but otherwise you can eat in the pub, which we did.



Following tradition, it was a six a.m. start on Sunday morning. For five miles to Napton Junction the route shared with the Grand Union Canal, before it bore off right to Warwick and Birmingham, leaving us to continue on the Oxford Canal towards Banbury, and up the nine locks of the Napton flight to the summit level which runs to the top of Claydon Locks. As the crow flies, this is about 5 miles. As James Brindley designed the canal it is about twelve! There is a prominent radio mast which first appears ahead of you, then to the right, then behind, then ahead, then to the left and finally behind you again. At one point you can walk 200 yards from one bridge across a field to another, which is two miles distant by water! A contour canal par excellence!

The lunchtime stop was the Wharf Inn at Fenny Compton, a couple of miles from the top of Claydon Locks. This used to be the George & Dragon but now, of course, most canal side pubs have to have appropriate names! Still, in those days it only sold Bass; now it serves Adnams, Charles Wells, Hook Norton and guest beers, and is in the current *Good Beer Guide*. In 1981 we had reached Claydon on the first morning, but there were fewer boats moving or moored up in those days. For the benefit of those who miss the point, it is the done thing to slow right down past moored boats! Another good reason for not pressing on to Claydon is that the excellent Sunrising Inn is long gone!



The Red Lion, Cropredy

Through Fenny 'Tunnel' in the afternoon (which was a tunnel before they took the roof off), down the 5 Claydon Locks and a further 4 before arriving at Cropredy, which is famous for the Battle of Cropredy Bridge, where, in the English Civil War, a band of Royalists defeated a larger band of Parliamentarians led by General Waller and captured their artillery (hence the term to 'Waller', ie:- to acquire). We spent most of the evening in the Red Lion, a pretty pub which fea-

tures in both E Temple Thurston's book, *'The Flower of Gloster'* written in about 1910, and L T C Rolt's, *'Narrow Boat'*, published just after the Second World War. It was very busy, but having found the other pub in the village, the Brazenose Arms, very much a youngster's pub, we stayed. As neither pub served food on Sunday night we had Chinese again, this time ordered via the telephone from Banbury, and eaten on return to the boats.

Next morning it was raining. Mind you in 1981 on the second morning it was snowing! Hard! And then we only got to Banbury. This year we got to Upper Heyford, much quieter now that the US Air Force has departed, but en route Ray sprung a surprise. At Aynho, where we turned around on the first trip, he got us to moor up and produced two bottles of Champagne, which were consumed whilst sheltering under Aynho Bridge, and photographs were taken of

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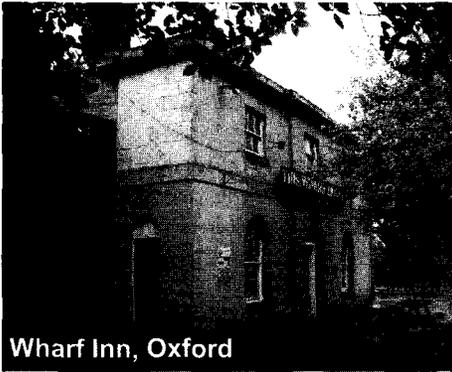
Sunday

***12-3pm
7-10.30pm***

the three gallant veterans from the first Beery Boaters. We made good progress; 17 miles and 11 locks, including Somerton Deep, the deepest lock as originally built on the whole 18th/early 19th century canal system. However, it was nearly 2 pm when we moored below the lock at Upper Heyford and walked up the hill to the Barley Mow, a Fuller's pub. Still, it had stopped raining and the pub staff seemed happy to stay on and cook for our large group, even though food is advertised as finishing at 2 pm. The afternoon remained fine for the 8 or so miles and 3 locks to Enslow, and Rock of Gibraltar. At Warwick another canal side pub is called the Cape of Good Hope, so if anyone ever asks you how you can go southwards from the Cape of Good Hope to the Rock of Gibraltar in 4 days...! The new owners were finding their feet at the Rock, and, after a long walk back past moored boats we found no food on Mondays and only Courage and a guest beer. Some of the party walked to a nearby village, but there was nothing much exciting there, either.



How long till
the next pub?



Wharf Inn, Oxford

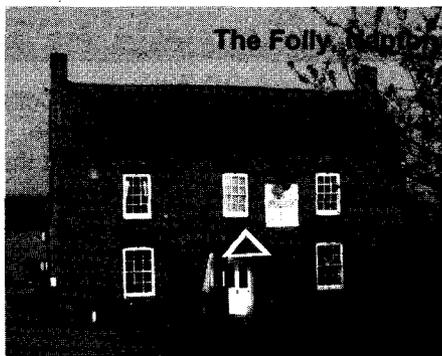
Tuesday, turn-round day, and Ray's ex-P&O shoes had fallen apart in Monday's rain, but now it was still fine. Initially we joined the River Cherwell for half a mile before the canal went off on its own again through a shallow diamond-shaped lock. We continued through the pretty, but boat-congested, village of Shipton on Cherwell before watering at Thrupp; and then alongside the busy A423 trunk road to Kidlington, of Inspector Morse fame, and the outskirts of Oxford, and more rain. We moored in the

city centre opposite Worcester College; *Moorhen* having already arrived, and its crew departed in search of ale. *Teal's* contingent set off in the damp, and after a considerable search found the Wharf Inn at Butterwyke Wharf, an excellent little pub with a good range of real ales. The Moor-chickens arrived later having gone via such places as the Turf Tavern. The Wharf Inn sign shows a canal boat, and the landlord said that the canal once come that way entering the Thames lower down – the pub's value would be doubled if it was still near water. Some wit pointed to the deluge outside his window!

The weather cleared for our walk back to the boats, and Isis Lock. While *Moorhen* headed upstream *Teal* went down-river to purchase Thames passes at Osney Lock; unnecessarily, as it turned out, for these could have been bought at Godstow Lock, the next one up. We had intended to reverse back and turn where the lock cut left the river, but the bow rope jammed (cured by a sharp knife!) and the stern got swept across to the other side by the current, so we went down Osney Lock and turned below it. It was a glorious run up-river. The Thames is wide below Godstow Lock, flowing through the water meadows with lots of rowing boats, from single sculls to eights, and it was bright sunshine. Just after Godstow Lock we passed *Moorhen*, tied up by the bank while the crew imbibed at the nearby Trout Inn obliviously unaware that the lock keeper at King's Lock, which we would have to pass through, went off duty at 5.30 pm and it was now 5 pm. They were apprised of this by mobile telephone, thus proving that they *do* have their uses! Then just before King's Lock, with Hon. Commodore on the tiller, the heavens opened! And how! The lock keeper stayed in his office until *Moorhen* joined us; then let us through to return to the canal via Duke's Cut just above Wolvercote. The evening's mooring was at Thrupp, but with the two canalside pubs only serving Greene King beers nowadays, we walked back to the Wise Alderman at Kidlington, which had a marginally better choice. Some of the group went off to explore the other pubs in Kidlington.

Wednesday, and up to Aynho in the morning and the Great Western Arms. In 1981, it was a fairly basic pub, and in darkness because of the power cut caused by the blizzard. Now, although still a Hook Norton house, it was very much an eating establishment, with rather high prices, but the beer was in very good condition. We reached Banbury at the end of the afternoon. We had hoped to go to Bodicote to visit the Plough, a home-brew pub, but there were no evening bus services, so we retired to the Reindeer (now entitled Ye Olde Reine Deer!) for more Hook Norton, and where, later, we were joined by Gordon Baxter, who had parked his lorry somewhere locally. However, some of *Moorhen's* crew did get to the Plough by taxi, but found that the brewery had acquired an infection, and was selling none of its own beer.

By Thursday morning the rain had mostly cleared for the week but the wind had risen. We returned to the summit and a second visit to the Wharf at Fenny Compton; then around the tortuous level to the top of Napton Locks in almost a full gale. In 1981 and 1988 we moored at the top and walked the mile and a quarter to pubs in Priors Marston. This time we didn't stop and moored past the bottom of the flight, walking back to the Folly. For-





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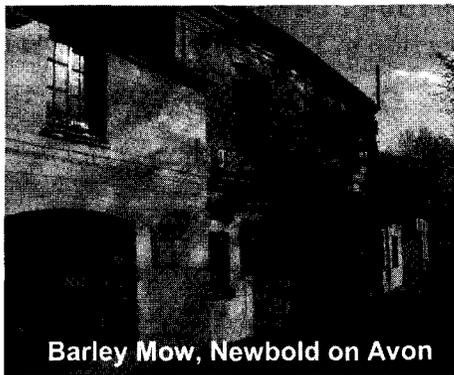


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merly the Bull and Butcher it was mentioned as such in *Narrow Boat* before closing for many years. Now famous for its pies, we ate and had more Hook Norton beer. Some of the group later walked around the back of Napton Hill to visit the Kings Head and the Crown.



Barley Mow, Newbold on Avon

Last full day and sunshine. No stop at Braunston this time, but left through open countryside with its corrugated fields (old strip cultivation) and the masts of Rugby Radio Station coming ever closer. Lunchtime mooring was at Hillmorton, opposite the Old Royal Oak, which was ignored by most on account of the Greene King beers. Instead we walked the ½ mile to the Bell, which served Ansells, Hook Norton and M&B. The afternoon took us down the Hillmorton Locks (after which we could put our

windlasses away), around the outskirts of Rugby, past our hire base to Newbold on Avon, and the Barley Mow (M&B, Worthington) and the Boat (Greene King, Wadworth). These lie down a little lane at right angles to the canal just before Newbold Tunnel, and which was once the route of the canal. One portal of the original Newbold Tunnel can be found in a field behind the nearby churchyard. In about 1828 some fourteen miles were eliminated from Brindley's original thirty six between Braunston and the Coventry Canal, by cuttings and embankments. Bits of the old loops are in water; the Willow Wren boatyard is at the end of one while the other end, the Newbold Loop, still exists as a useful turning point half a mile beyond the tunnel. We split our evening between the two pubs, finishing up with a couple of games of Northamptonshire skittles in the Barley Mow.



The end of the 25th Anniversary Trip

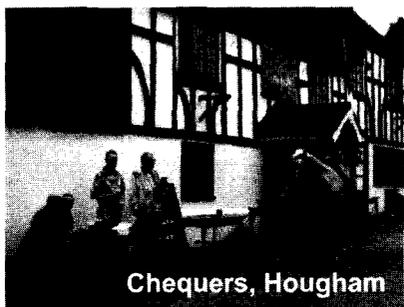
Final morning and raining again! The boats were tidied up and most of the packing done before setting off through the 250yd tunnel, turning in the Newbold Loop and returning to our boatyard. Obligatory group photographs were taken and we went in our various homeward directions.

Jim Green

Have Chopsticks, Will Travel

A hilly walk West of Dover

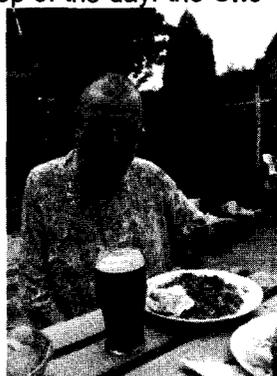
The pub was shut – not a good start to a walk involving beer, but there was nothing we could do about it. Our first pint of the day was to have been at the **Boar's Head**, Eaton Road. Unfortunately, a change in opening times meant a fifteen minute wait if we wanted a drink, and we couldn't wait that long. So from the Boars Head we turned west and climbed uphill onto Whinless Down, the first of many climbs that day, with its fantastic views of the surrounding countryside. "Look – you can see my house from up here" said John Pitcher pointing in the general direction of a group of houses, but given the height we had climbed this wasn't a surprise.



Chequers, Hougham

The path took us westward through pleasant countryside of woods and fields of corn, and provided a distant view of the spire of Church Hougham church. Eventually it joined a bridleway, where we were met by Paul Skelton and a new(?) CAMRA member – his horse. They had decided to accompany us for some of the way. "How's the walk gone so far?" he asked. "It's had its ups and downs!"..... "there've been high points and low points!" were the witty replies.

At last after we had begun to think we would never see the inside of a pub again, we arrived at West Hougham and our first real stop of the day: the **Chequers**. Beers were Fuller's London Pride and Greene King's Old Speckled Hen. Leaving Paul and his horse in the car park we moved into the garden to sup our pints and order lunch. As The Chequers includes a Thai restaurant the menu looked particularly exciting. While ordering Dave Underdown was heard to quote "we'd better get our chopsticks out". I thought he was joking but when the meal arrived out came the chopsticks. Apparently, he is never without them – much to the amusement of some, and annoyance of others, on Beery Boater expeditions. The Thai food was excellent and prepared us for the next stage of our journey.



From West Hougham our intention had been to take a footpath that goes south-east, but it was so overgrown, as to be almost impassable (whoever

owns that field take note!). So we took to the lanes and a short sharp drop followed by a short sharp climb brought us into Church Hougham, and the church whose spire we seem to be intent on circumnavigating ever since we left Dover. Another short sharp drop down Plough Hill left us on Folkestone Road and the **Plough**, our next refreshment stop.

The only beer at The Plough was Flowers IPA, which no one seemed a fan of – and it certainly does not rank as one of my favourite beers, being somewhat insipid in its taste and character, but never mind, it gave us the chance to rest our legs. At this point Paul Skelton joined us again, but this time by van. The start of the next stage was... you guessed it... another hill. It seemed that every down is followed by an up, but only steeper and longer. (As Paul was in his van, he would meet us at the next pub.) We passed under the A20 and west along the Saxon Shore Way, with views out over the Straits of Dover, and we could see men working on the Abbots Cliff tunnel. Here we came across a couple of items of interest. Set into the ground at various intervals along the path were plaques that described the local flora; useful if you aren't a botanist! And we also passed a strange concrete structure which, I was reliably informed by Alan Beecham (Chairman of the Ashford Folkestone & Romney Marsh CAMRA branch), was a sound mirror, an early 20th century acoustic system for detecting enemy planes. The parabolic shape of the mirror reflected and focused sound into a sound collector, which was moved around to pick up the maximum sound, and provide a bearing on the plane or planes. This was a small mirror, the larger ones, up to 200 feet in length, were capable of detecting aircraft up to 20 miles away. More information on sound mirrors is available on the web.

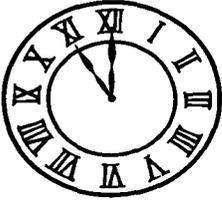
Our next stop was the **Royal Oak** at Capel-le-Ferne. Here the beer range was Shepherd Neame Master Brew, Bass and Nelson's Friggin in the Riggin... the Friggin in the Riggin got the thumbs up from the team and we stayed for an additional pint just to make sure. Paul had got there before us along with my wife, who had volunteered to drive me home at the end of the day.



Lighthouse Inn, Capel

The final leg was to the **Lighthouse Inn**, about half a mile nearer Folkestone. This is a hotel/pub/restaurant and provided us with the choice of Ruddles County, Greene King IPA, Greene King Abbot Ale and a seasonal beer from Greene King called "Ale Fresco". The Ale Fresco was excellent and again received the thumbs up by the group. We swapped our feet for wheels at this point – with Paul and Trisha giving us a lift to **Blakes** in Dover, for a welcome last pint before hitting the road home.

Tony Wells



LAST KNOCKINGS

We comment in Channel View on the Government's reluctance to act on the growing concentration of ownership in the brewing and pub owning industries, while pushing ahead with smoking restrictions. While displaying excessive concern for our health, it seems far less concerned about our freedom of choice. As a non-smoker, what I have a particular problem with are the arguments involving the working conditions of bar staff. While it seems eminently reasonable that workers should not be expected to have to put up with other people's tobacco smoke, it seems equally wrong that those who wish to enjoy a drink and a smoke, a perfectly legal activity, should not be able to do so, and that no one should be allowed to provide that service. Many jobs involve some degree of risk or have undesirable side effects. No one suggests abolishing shift work, despite it being a notorious cause of stress, strain on personal relationships, and generally debilitating to long-term health – our society could not operate without it, and the specific risks pertaining to work in such essential services as the police, fire brigade or armed forces are obvious. What is important is that those involved in such work should be clearly apprised of the risks and disadvantages of that employment. If a public house wishes to include smoking on the premises it should be free to do so, so long as everyone is aware of this. There are of course many bar staff who either smoke themselves or are not worried about working in a smoking environment. An intelligent solution would allow pubs to be smoking or non-smoking, or offer smoking or non-smoking facilities – that way everyone has a choice. CAMRA's policy is for limiting smoking to separate rooms within public houses, which goes more than halfway to meet those calling for a complete ban. It would be pleasing if they could be sufficiently magnanimous to accept such a compromise.

I recently enjoyed an excellent pint of Fuller's ESB at the Plough Inn, Ripple. However as I commented in a previous issue, however good its condition, and despite Fuller's maintaining its strength, it is not the same brew as it was twenty or thirty years ago, when it was totally distinct from any other beer I ever came across, and, to quote the advertising slogan, could add up to "a life changing experience". Perhaps I'm being over romantic, but thinking back, biters such as ESB, Ruddles County, Ind Coope Burton or Courage Director's, at one time always seemed to be benchmarks by which others were judged. They were the epitome of the brewer's craft, and demonstrated the firm's commitment to quality ale, their strength and style pitched where it would best reflect

the brewery's attributes. Today, for the larger brewers, it too often seems a case of brewing by numbers to satisfy market requirements – an ordinary 3.8% bitter, a 4.3 to 4.5% premium bitter (flagship brand), and a strong bitter at 4.8 to 5%, all mid brown in colour and middle of the road in taste – as if to step outside this range would be eccentric and excessively adventurous. When Shepherd Neame introduced Spitfire it was 5%, and was accompanied at the same time, or shortly afterwards, by the draught version of Bishop's Finger at 5.4% – now the two are respectively 4.5% and 5% – and there were other brews too. One year in the mid 1990s, in early Autumn, Shepherd Neame produced a pale, and very palatable harvest ale at 5%, and of course there was the superb 5.2% porter, which continued for several years during the winter. By comparison its current seasonal brews at 4.5 to 4.8% seem undistinguished, with the porter a shadow of the original. Similar comments could be made about many of our other larger brewers. Whether for reasons of cost, or lack of confidence, there appears a reluctance to go with what tastes right, rather than adhering to the correct market niche – perhaps too much listening to accountants and marketing consultants.

However, for contracted out Bass things may be on the up. Once epitomising the classic British bitter it has, over the last few years, often seemed light on flavour and not particularly bitter. However my opinions were completely confounded a few weeks ago at a regular Bass outlet, where I came across some of the best Bass I've tasted for many years. The landlord, though, was not surprised, as the pub's suppliers had suggested that regular drinkers might well notice a difference. If this is the first brew from the contract with Marston's, it bodes well for the future. Marston's, now part of Wolverhampton and Dudley, has just completed a £2m upgrade following this contract and others to supply Wetherspoons and Mitchells and Butlers, and if that means putting some guts into M&B Brew XI at last, it can be no bad thing.

A recent edition of the *Food Programme* on Radio 4 investigated the phenomenon known as British lager, which now accounts for 70% of the beer that the country drinks. The programme played it very straight and sought the views of those in the industry as well as those of beer writer and expert Michael Jackson. Among other facts we were told that while Czech Budvar received several months' maturation, the producers of Carling felt happy with just a few weeks. It was, we were assured, an excellent product; essential for success in today's market – although it still required an advertising budget of tens of millions to persuade people to drink it. To Michael Jackson, however, the average British lager was thin and light on taste. If you removed the chilling and carbonation there wasn't an awful lot left.

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**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

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

Name

Address

Postcode

Signature

Date

I/We enclose the remittance for:

Single £18	OAP Single £10
Joint £21	Unwaged/Under 26* £10

*Date of birth

Send your remittance (payable to CAMRA) to:

The membership secretary,
CAMRA,
230 Hatfield Rd, St Albans,
Herts,
AL1 4LW.
Phone 01727 867201

Channel Draught 24

Andy & Charlotte

Welcome you to...

The Happy Frenchman

Christchurch Road, Folkestone,
Tel; 01303-259815

Every week we offer you a hand picked guest cask ale to complement our regular ales, which include; Bombardier, Bass and Broadside.

It's also worth noting that we are now recognised as Folkestone's premier live music venue, with live band at least two nights a week. On top of which we have darts, two pool tables and a 7ft Big Screen TV showing all Sky Sports, including Sky Sports Plus & Premier

Keep an eye out for our forthcoming refit, when we will have good food available once again!

Branch Contacts

If you have any queries about **CAMRA**, or any dispute concerning ale in White Cliffs Country then please contact **Martin Atkins** (Branch Chairman)

Martin Atkins - 01304 201870
01304 216497

You can e-mail the branch using:
branchsec@ddscamra.org.uk

The branch website is:
<http://www.ddscamra.org.uk>

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Adjacent Branches

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Anne Powell 01233 502519
Annie@brockletts.fsnet.co.uk

Canterbury
Mike Galliers 01732 771775(w)
01227 272494(h)
mike@calebriparc.co.uk

Thanet
Steve Saunders 01843 228159
thanet.camra@virgin.net

**Nationally CAMRA can be
contacted at: CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Rd, St Albans, Herts., AL1 4LW.
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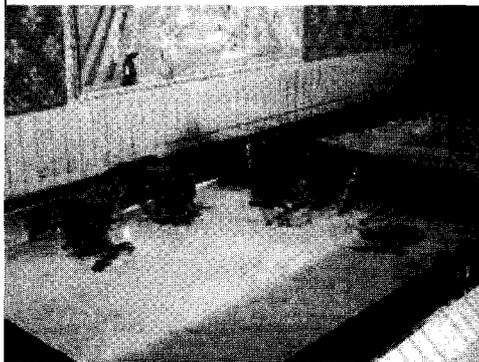


ADVERTISERS INDEX

Page	Name	Page	Name
5	Crown Inn, Finglesham	21	The Fox, Temple Ewell
7	Blakes of Dover	23	Regency Financial Advisors
7	Park Inn, Dover	26	King's Head, Kingsdown
8	Lighthouse Inn, Capel	31	Five Bells, Eastry
9	The Alma, Deal	37	Red Lion , Stodmarsh
10	The Golden Hind	37	Plough Inn, Ripple
10	The Bull Inn, Eastry	40	Charity Inn, Woodnesborough
12	Guildhall, Folkestone	43	The Louis Armstrong, Dover
13	Pips Fish & Chips, Dover	43	Magnet Inn, Deal
14	White Horse, Dover	45	Railway Bell / Lydden Bell
16	Yew Tree, Barfrestone	50	St. Crispin, Worth
17	Hare & Hounds, Northbourne	52	Happy Frenchman,
17	Red Lion, Dover	55	Bob Adams Printers
21	The Royal Oak, Capel	Back Page	The Coastguard.

And Finally.....

Austrian holiday resort offers guests the chance to swim in a pool containing 42,000 pints of beer.



The Starkenburg Beer Myth resort, which is located at the medieval castle of Starkenburger in Austria's famous Tyrol region, has filled seven 13-foot long pools with the beer. Management contends that these beer baths are beneficial towards healing various skin diseases.

Understandably, some guests have admitted to sampling the pool water during their swims. However, resort manager Markus Amann said "I would rather swim than swallow, as we serve enough of a cold, fresh tapped beer at the bars next to the pools," .

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White beer



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