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**CAMPAIGN
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REAL ALE**

**Issue 31
Spring
2007**

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

CHANNEL DRAUGHT



INSIDE

**SMOKE
FREE PUBS
"CAN'T COME
SOON ENOUGH"**

A view on the
impending
smoking ban
See Page 30

COBB'S REVIVAL

Bringing part of
Kentish brewing
history back to
life

See Page 43

FOCUS ON SANDWICH

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Ale

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Summer 2007 Edition by
15th May 2007

CHANNEL DRAUGHT

ISSUE 31
Spring 2007

Welcome to Issue 31 of *Channel Draught*, your local newsletter about all that's good (or bad) in real ale in our patch of East Kent.

Spring is sprung, the grass is grown, and if the weather at the time of writing is any indication, another globally warmed summer heads our way. Still there is plenty of good ale to slake our thirst and plenty of festivals at which to knock it back. Most particularly and immediately, Dover's other regular real ale festival at Crabble Mill is set for the Spring Bank Holiday weekend, and now in its third year. Forty-five real ales are planned with nine out of the ten Kent breweries represented.

Thanet branch has just undertaken its second Planet Thanet festival over the Easter weekend, a great success we hear, while our neighbour to the south Ashford, Folkestone and Romney Marsh Branch will be holding its annual event at the Rare Breeds Centre at Woodchurch in early June. Later on, in July, there is the Kent festival in Nackington, and of course an increasing number of pubs are now regularly hosting their own annual festivals. See individual adverts, Events Diary, and Anne McIlroy's festivals article for details.

It's also good to see the increasing presence of Kent beers in our pubs, although if a report by the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) is anything to go by it's not as prominent as many drinkers would like. Apparently while six out of ten pub users favour a local beer in their local, 'corporate inertia' by pub companies is preventing it from happening. SIBA operates a Direct Delivery Scheme whereby a microbrewer can deliver straight to a pubco owned pub in their locality, but as yet, of the major pub groups, only Enterprise and Admiral have taken it up.

Martin Atkins (Editor)

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EVENTS DIARY

Sat 21 Apr:	Pub stroll , Shatterling/Staple/Wingham – meet 12:00 at Frog & Orange, Shatterling
Mon 21 May:	Branch meeting – 19:30, Charity Inn, Woodnesborough
Wed 23 – Mon 28 May:	Beer festival – New Inn, Havelock Street, Canterbury (01227 464584) *
Fri 25 – Sat 26 May:	Beer festival – Crabble Corn Mill, Lower Road, River (08701 453857) *
Late May (phone for details)	Beer festival - Royal Oak, Capel le Ferne. (01303 244787) *
Fri 1 – Sat 2 Jun:	Beer festival – Ashford Hythe & Romney Marsh CAMRA, South of England Rare Breeds Centre, Woodchurch, Ashford
Sat 9 Jun:	Pub stroll – Capel le Ferne to Dover – meet 11:30 at the Lighthouse Inn, Capel le Ferne
Mon 11 Jun:	Branch Social and Pub of the Year award presentation – 19:30, Crown Inn, Finglesham
Mon 18 Jun:	Branch meeting – 19:30, Yew Tree Inn, Barfrestone
Sat 30 Jun:	Pub stroll , Aylesham to Shepherdsweil – meet 11:45 at Aylesham Station
Sat 30 Jun – Sun 1 Jul:	Beer festival – Half Moon & Seven Stars, Preston (01227 722296) *
Sat 7th July:	Kent Regional Meeting - 11.30, Blakes, Castle St, Dover
Mon 16 Jul:	Branch meeting – 19:30, Plough Inn, Ripple

Branch meetings are normally held every third Monday of each month.

For full details about pub strolls, please email john.pitcher@ic24.net or call 01304 214153.

Events marked * are not organised by CAMRA; later festivals listed on page 28.

Interested in joining CAMRA? Come along to one of our meetings!

The Death of the Local

That's the stark warning from a new survey recently undertaken by CAMRA. Reports from 197 CAMRA branches found that 56 pubs a month are currently being closed for good and that at any one time 1,300 are shut with their future in doubt. This is more than double the rate found by the last survey in 2005.

CAMRA Chief Executive, Mike Benner, said that the damning figures demonstrated why CAMRA's Community Pubs Week in February was so important. 80% of the pubs permanently lost are in urban areas, depriving communities of a vital hub forever. "This is due in part to the high demand for housing," he said, "that often means city and town residents have to watch their community pub ripped from them to make space for another soulless development. Many pubs are also being converted to restaurants, shops and offices. CAMRA believes pubs are a unique sector and therefore should be placed in a separate Use Class to other retail businesses." And Pub is the Hub campaigner John Longden commented "You only have to walk around parts of East London to see the threat to many community pubs. Once where there was a pub, there is now just a building boarded up." And he feared that many of the pubs being sold en bloc were ripe for development.

The survey follows close on the heels of another by CAMRA which illustrated the often enormous gap between pub and supermarket beer prices (see National News). As well as being another factor weighing against pubs' survival, the Campaign also believes it fuels

binge drinking and antisocial behaviour. CAMRA is throwing its weight behind Nick Hurd's Private Member's Sustainable Communities Bill, which aims to support and promote local businesses and communities, and is also backing MP John Grogan's early day motion which condemns supermarket's irresponsible sale of alcohol, and calls for a narrowing of the gap with pub prices. CAMRA asks members to lobby their MPs to support both – go to www.camra.org.uk and click on the relevant link. It is also calling for the demolition of a pub to require planning permission, and for pubs to be included in new large housing developments.

CAMRA's Budget dismay

Despite CAMRA's plea to Gordon Brown to freeze excise duty on beer, he has followed his traditional path and put 1p on a pint; there is also 1p a litre on cider. With the forthcoming smoking ban likely to lose pubs trade it was hoped that brewing could have been spared this year. In fact so consistent has been the "1p per pint" increase over recent years that it's hard not to speculate that it is not an automatic adjustment. Ironically there is no duty increase on alcopops or, once again, spirits. And while the "1p a pint" is dutifully and uncritically reported by the media, it does of course only apply to the weakest brews (stronger beers will pay more, perhaps considerably so). With pub prices being what they are a rise of only 1p is an impracticality; either the landlord absorbs the rise or, if he or she has to recoup it owing to other price rises, the pint almost inevitably goes up 10p.

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The Local News

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

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

channeldraught.pubnews@virgin.net

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

DEAL

Berry, Canada Road: Good reports and a good selection of real ales at the Walmer pub. In late January and February, the regular Harvey's Best was joined by Harvey's Old Ale, Archer's IPA, Smiles Heritage and Whitstable Wheat Beer. All beers tried were found to be in excellent condition.

Bohemian, Beach Street: East Anglian duo Adnam's Broadside and Woodforde's Wherry, along with Weston's Cider are regulars at this seafront pub. Other beers in January and February included Oakham JHB, Cottage Plunge Bitter, Sharps Doom Bar and Whitstable Bohemian.

Deal Hoy, Duke Street: The pub offers one of the widest local selections of Shepherd Neame beers: in late January/early February Master Brew, Spitfire, Porter and Bishop's Finger. The pub garden has seen a big increase in customers since installing decking, new furniture and plants, and last year won Shepherd Neame's Small Garden of the Year award, impressing judges during the summer heatwave.

New Inn, High Street: In March the charity raising singers and musicians group,

the Deal Hoodeners, presented a cheque for £1,400 to Guide Dogs for the Blind. Real ales at the pub of late have been Bass and Spitfire. A few doors along at the **Strand** Worthington 1744 is still sold, alongside Bass, the only local pub to still sell the brew. And nearby in Queen Street the **Hole In The Roof** (Swan Hotel to some of us) real ales now include Greene King Abbot as well as Courage Directors.

Ship, Middle Street: Interesting revised ale choice in the heart of the old town. For some time the regular line up comprised Gadds 3 and 7, Summer Lightning, Master Brew and Deuchar's IPA. However, visits in February and March found just the Deuchar's and No. 7 remaining, with the rest replaced by Old Speckled Hen, and Gadds Dogbolter and Seaside, the last two both being tried and found to be excellent – one of our correspondents considering a pint of the former to be among the best beers he's ever tasted.

Prince Albert, corner of Alfred Square and Middle Street: At the Ship's near neighbour a changing ale range has always been the rule, with certain breweries such as Nelson and Cottage featuring prominently. In early Febru-

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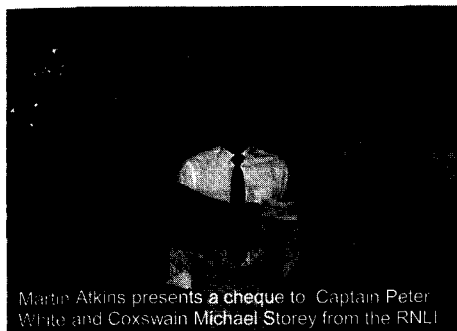
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ary the beer there was Shipwrecked from the former and Whippet something from the latter, which proved most palatable. Also on handpump around the same time were Caledonian Great Scot, Burton Bridge Golden Delicious, Wildcat and Elgood's Cambridge.

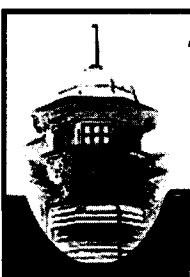
DOVER

Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club, The club provided the venue on Tuesday 6th March for the branch's presentations to the RNLI and Hopdaemon Brewery, as respectively the 2007 White Cliffs Winter Ales Festival nominated charity and brewer of Beer of the Festival. Branch Chairman Martin Atkins presented £500 to coxswain Michael Storey, and Captain Peter White, Operations Manager and member of the crew, while Festival Organiser



Martin Atkins presents a cheque to Captain Peter White and Coxswain Michael Storey from the RNLI

David Green, on behalf of the Festival Committee, presented Tonie Prins of Hopdaemon with a framed certificate. Hopdaemon Brewery won the award for its 5% Greendaemon, and it will go forward for judging for the CAMRA national awards which will be announced at the August CAMRA national beer festival at Earl's Court. Beers were Goacher's Fine Light and



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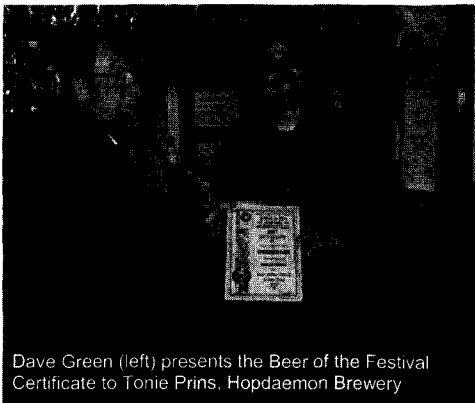
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Dave Green (left) presents the Beer of the Festival Certificate to Tonie Prins, Hopdaemon Brewery

Imperial Stout, and Hopdaemon Incubus.

Renaissance, Folkestone Rd: The pub has joined the ever growing band of real cider outlets, offering Thatcher's Traditional alongside its real ale. Normally confined to a single brew Nelson beers appear regularly – in the middle of February this was Friggin' In The Rigg'in'. The nearby **Prince Albert** has also been selling Nelson beers of late and a cider, Chedder Valley. Its regular real ale is Ruddles Best. At the **Golden Lion** in Priory Place two or three real ales are usually available including London Pride, Pedigree, Ruddles and Black Sheep. An afternoon in the winter was spent enjoying very drinkable Tetley's with a certain Mr Green.

Dublin Man O'War, Lower Road, River: Goacher's Gold Star, adopted by the pub as a replacement for Old Speckled Hen following its drop in strength last summer, and a regular throughout last autumn and winter, has now been replaced by Charles Wells Bombardier. Second real ale remains Greene King IPA.

Crabble Mill, Lower Rd. River: The mill will be hosting its now regular annual beer festival over the Spring Bank Holiday (see advert) with some 45 beers,

including nine from Kent. However you don't have to wait for the bank holiday to taste good real ale, a barrel is normally available at the mill cafe.

Boar's Head, Eaton Road: A change of landlord at the end of January. Dave Hicklin, who has kept the ale flowing since spring 2003, left for pastures new and has been replaced by Phil Hall, who has spent much of his working life as a fairground showman in the north of England – "roll up, roll up ladies and gentlemen for good ale, skittles, darts and all kinds of entertainment at the Boar's Head." And full marks to the new management for turning out a very drinkable Greene King IPA on a recent quiz evening; normally far from being this correspondent's favourite beer.

Eagle, London Rd: Still carrying three real ales, primarily from Nelson of Chatham, but supplemented from time to time by brews from elsewhere. At the start of March Cornwall's Wooden Hand Brewery featured with Cornish Buccaneer and Black Pearl, but they were somewhat eclipsed by a superb barrel of Nelson's 4.5% Dogwatch Stout. Later in the month the pub hosted our monthly branch meeting when we enjoyed Spanker, Rochester and the particularly sturdy Nelson's Blood. In late March the pub was privileged to have a barrel of Nelson's heavy duty 5.5% Task Force. Commemorating the Falklands Campaign it is a thick, dark beer with a malty sweetness, and most of the brew is destined for bottling. Very good as it was, a couple of years' bottle conditioning and it should be superb.

Blakes, Castle St: Kentish beers should always be available in the cellar bar, with Goacher's Imperial Stout a



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fixture. Other Goacher's beers feature regularly along with Gadd's, Hopdemon, Whitstable and more recently Westerham. At one time in late winter the pub was offering the fine selection of Dogbolter, Imperial Stout and Whitstable Native. More recently a new brew from Gadd's, Storm Warning, was on the handpumps; heavy and fairly sweet, and reddish black in colour. Very morish, although in any contest it would have to give way to Eddie's other strong dark brew, Dogbolter. Amongst more distant beers was Cottage Merchant Navy from the locomotive class of the same name, selected for the visit of the naval ships in March.

White Horse, St Jame's St: In contrast, Blakes' near neighbour concentrates on more distant breweries. Particularly impressive has been the pub's

selection of stronger and darker brews – Springhead Leveller 4.8%, Titanic Captain Smith 5.2%, Banks & Taylor Oxford Rebellion and Breconshire Red Dragon (no connection with either Felfinfol Double Dragon or Hannibal Lector). Don't ask this reporter to choose between them; at the time of drinking they each seemed about as good as an ale can be. However lighter beers have not been ignored and, as well as the ever present Landlord, of particular note we enjoyed Barnsley Bitter from Acorn, Kookaburra from Cotleigh and Elgood's Pageant; medium brown, malty and fruity.

Kingfisher, London Road: And change also at the former Cherry Tree, the previous incumbents having left suddenly following the New Year all night party. New landlord Fergy Sharp intends to make it "a local pub for local

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people. I would like to create a traditional atmosphere where local people can just pop in for a few drinks and have some fun." There is karaoke every Thursday and he is looking to start pool and darts teams. The pub will also be hosting speciality evenings. Opposite, it's good to see the **Sportsman** still continuing with real ale – usually Ruddles Best from Greene King. However further along London Rd neither the **Old Endeavour** nor **Bull** currently sells real ale although it has reappeared at the **Three Cups**, Bombardier having been seen.

Primrose, Coombe Valley Rd: Finally succumbing to the axe that's been hanging over it for some years, at the time of writing the pub is no more than a heap of rubble, permission having been granted some months back for demolition and erection of eleven houses and seven flats. It leaves the St Radigunds area without a pub, the nearest for those residents wanting a drink being on London Rd.

King Lear, Aycliff: And a similar fate could be awaiting Aycliff, where earlier this year plans were submitted to replace the King Lear with fourteen flats and six houses. The application claims that the pub has become run due to poor trade, and that development would regenerate the site. However it would leave Aycliff without a pub and the nearest available alternative a mile or more away

In Folkestone Rd. the boarded up **Orange Tree** still awaits the developers' bulldozer, with an application for demolition of the pub and erection of six flats currently undecided at the time of writing. And still apparently no work yet on the increasingly derelict looking **Westbury**, nearby, where permission

exists for conversion to residential use. The **Engineer** at the junction with Malvern Rd remains closed but the 'for sale' board disappeared sometime in the winter, and on occasion lights are observed inside. In early March at the other end of Folkestone Rd the **Hare and Hounds** is another welcome outlet for Shepherd Neame's Kent Best alongside the more standard Master Brew.

In Ladywell the long awaited re-opening of the **Falstaff** has now taken place, but first reports suggest no real ale. In Castle St work at last seems underway on the postponed/cancelled/revived Wetherspoon's development, to convert **Snoops** (Images, ABC, Granada) into a Lloyd's No.1 – signage and fascia material having recently been removed.

Lastly in Dover, we are pleased to note that the **Cabin** restaurant has now reopened. Although not a pub, its former proprietors have strong connections with the branch, and in those days sold an extensive range of excellent bottle conditioned beer as well as real cider. Whether the same will apply in future we don't know.

SANDWICH, CANTERBURY & RURAL

Crown, Finglesham: After a very close run contest the pub was chosen as Branch Pub of the Year for 2007, and a certificate presentation is arranged for 11th June along with, it is hoped, a special celebratory brew from Eddie Gadd. The pub normally carries three real ales, Master Brew plus two guests with a heavy concentration on Kent beers. In February and March these included Hopdaemon Golden Braid, Whitstable Native and Gadds Dog-

bolter, while among those from further afield were Dark Star Old Ale and Robinson's Dark Horse. Later in the summer a beer festival is again planned.

Admiral Owen, Sandwich: New owners for the 15th century pub which has been sold by Greene King to Admiral Taverns. The landlords however remain unchanged and are planning to place an emphasis on real ale, a visit early in the year found Fuller's London pride, Adnams Broadside and Caledonian Deuchar's IPA on sale, while later, on our February Stroll (see separate article in this issue) ales were Hook Norton's Old Hookey, Deuchars IPA, and Marston Pedigree. A more exciting beer range than formerly, but the friendly welcome is just the same.

Royal Oak, Nonington: Sad news, at the start of the year, with the sudden

and unexpected death of landlord James Adams, who took over the pub with his son in September 2005. We remember him particularly for excellent hospitality on our stop at the pub during last November's evening coach trip. The pub continues to be run by the family and played host to our February branch meeting this year – again with a most enjoyable selection of sandwiches and nibbles.

Yew Tree, Barfreton: A recent visit saw Archer's Golden, Hopdaemon Incubus, Greene King IPA, Goacher's Mild and Biddenden cider on the pumps (one of the few pubs in our area to regularly sell both a real mild and cider). The Golden and Mild were tried and rated well; good also to see that the pub was nice and busy in all bar and eating areas. The pub is con-



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Festival blog : <http://crabblebeerfest.blogspot.com/>

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tinuing its live music policy which is proving most popular.

High & Dry, Waldershare: The pub has undergone serious redecoration over the last few months outside and inside, where the décor is modern and bright. A visit in February found a Murder Mystery evening in progress and the pub buzzing. Beers were Master Brew and Greene King IPA. At the **Bell**, Shepherdswell, recent reports suggest that some work is now underway on the rebuilding following last summer's disastrous fire. However any further information would be gratefully received. In Lydden at the **Hope**, following last year's refusal for the construction of five dwellings and four letting apartments at the rear, an application has now been submitted for just five dwellings and a revised car parking area.

Charity, Woodnesborough: A sad farewell to Pete and Jenny Clayton, who have run the pub now for several years, but will shortly be hanging up their bar towels for the last time. Over their time at the pub they normally maintained three of four real ales, including Black Sheep, Gadd's and Ansell's mild – one of only three pubs in our branch area to regularly keep real mild; and established a reputation for straightforward good value cooking. They have our best wishes for the future and in the mild month of May the branch will hold its monthly meeting there.

Royal Oak, Capel: And another on our list of festival pubs, this time with three being planned – end of May, end of July, end of August – and all beer should be £2.00 or under. Regular beers come from Greene King, Nelson, Archers and Shepherd Neame, a pint

of the latter's Master Brew on a visit in March proving most enjoyable. (See advert.)

Hare & Hounds, Northbourne: In addition to its beer festival in late July (see advert) the pub will be holding two Morris Dancing events on the 21st May and 3rd July at 8.00 on each day. Beers are usually Harveys Sussex as well as Adnams and other guests.

Garden House Hotel, St. Margarets: Formerly the Clyffe Hotel and at one time the Cliff Tavern the weatherboarded building appears to be another loss to our branch area's watering holes. Twenty years ago one of the most vibrant hostelries around, it has undergone several bouts of alteration in recent years, ending now with apparently the removal of the bar. Whether or not this means all bar facilities, we understand that effectively it is not open for non-residents' drinking. Elsewhere in St Margarets the **Smugglers** has been selling Bass and Greene King IPA with often a guest, and the **Red Lion** Charles Wells Bombardier and Young's Bitter.

Way Out Inn, Westmarsh: Recent reports say the pub is still closed with no apparent sign of imminent re-opening. With reference to ownership a notice in the window states that 'Term of lease has ceased absolutely and the lease is forfeited'. Also still closed are the **Endeavour** at Wootton, the **Chequers** at West Hougham, closed since mid October 2006 and up for sale leasehold or freehold, the **Butcher's Arms**, Ashley, where conversion to residential use was refused and dismissed on appeal last year, and the **White Horse**, Eythorne, where a large notice announces 'This pub is closed, why don't

you run it.' Further afield the **Three Horseshoes** at Lower Hardres remains closed after several years, and at last visit in February so also was the **Duke William** at Ickham. In Bridge scaffolding still surrounds the **Red Lion** following last year's fire.

New Inn, Havelock St, Canterbury: Set mid-way in a 19th terrace this little pub is always worth a look (see Last Knockings), if you can find it. From the city centre turn down and across Broad St, and Havelock St is one of several roads leading off on the far side, opposite the City Wall. Normally five real ales are available. In late May a week long beer festival is planned (see Events Diary).

FOLKESTONE

Guildhall, The Bayle: Enjoyed a good pint of Wadworth 6X here in early April. Interestingly the beer seems to have improved since the days when it was a regular in Whitbread's stable – from recollection there was some agreement allowing Whitbread distribution rights at least outside Wadworth's own delivery area, and the arrangement may have been more far reaching than that. Certainly to many of us it always bore a striking resemblance to the then Cheltenham brewed Flowers Original. Other guests have included Sharp's Doombar and beers from Titanic and Mordue, as well as the particularly excellent Marstons Old Empire, a beer which also featured at the nearby **British Lion**. Around the corner the **Pullman** in Church Street still normally carries one real ale, in early March Hobgoblin.

Harvey's, Sandgate Rd: beers are normally Courage and Archers, the latter's Best still at £2 a pint on last

visit. Across the way in Christchurch Rd at the **Happy Frenchman** (Folkestone's TV bar?) two or three real ales are usually on handpump – mid March Theakston's Best and Greene King IPA, while at **Chambers** the regular fare is five real ales (Skrimshander, Southwold, Gadd's No 5 and Old Thumper, plus guest) and two ciders. We trust its Easter festival was its usual success.

Down by the Fish Market, London Pride and Greene King ales were to be found at the **Mariners** and the **Ship**, and Harvey's Sussex at the **Three Mackerel**. Yes, you did read that correctly, this is the latest incarnation of what had been the **Oddfellows**, following brief spells as **Nostalgia** and **Euphoria**. While retaining the hard edged metal/plastic look it has at least reinstated real ale.

East Cliff Tavern: Real ales are almost exclusively micro sourced with strong representation from Kent, Gadds and Hopdaemon being regulars – the former's Seaside being very good in mid February, and Incubus and Skrimshander on over Easter. From more distant parts Cottage Wessex appeared in early April together with beers from a brewery new to this reporter, Potbelly of Kettering. For cider lovers the pub offers 8% Bidenden. At the **Lifeboat** Harveys Sussex and Timothy Taylors Landlord appear to be standard. Guests have included Highgate Fat Catz and Hyde's Jekyll Gold.

No apparent change in the boarded up stakes; the **White Lion**, **Two Bells** and **Martello** all still looking forlorn and desolate, with local rumour suggesting that the latter is destined to be flats.



TONY'S TAPPINGS

The perambulations and musings
of our Pubs Officer, Tony Wells

"Could you manage 8000 pints?"

That got your attention. As did the beer mat that was on display behind the bar of my local. What was it all about? It was a promotion by the National Blood Service to persuade us to give more blood. The 8000 pints? Nothing to do with beer, unfortunately, but the amount of blood that hospitals need every day. So... to quote their slogan... "Please give blood". Find out more at www.giveblood.co.uk

Our website

Have you visited our new website? www.camra-dds.org.uk. As well as a new design and new features we are committed to keeping the site up-to-date, in particularly the diary page. During 2007 we'll be looking to add new stuff to the website. If you have any comments or ideas then please let us know. By the way, a sincere thanks to Lorna, our webmaster, who made the website possible.

Pub of the Year 2007

The surveys have been completed, the votes are in and counted and we can now reveal that the Deal Dover Sandwich and District Branch's CAMRA Pub of the Year (POTY for short) for 2007 is..... drum roll please... the Crown at Finglesham.

From the short list of five pubs selected by the branch, and after a number of surveys carried out by branch members, the Crown came top of the list. As well as the quality of the beer, the survey included judging the atmosphere, service and welcome, clientele mix, support of CAMRA's aims and value for money. Commiserations to the other pubs, which in alphabetical order were: the Berry, Walmer; the Coastguard, St Margaret's Bay; King's Head, Kingsdown; White Horse, Dover. They all, in their own way, deserved to be POTY but unfortunately there can only be one winner. We congratulate Dave and Jackie on winning this award. We also wish them well for the future as they will now be entered into the Kent Pub of the Year competition, which will be decided towards the end of the year. We are planning a CAMRA social evening at the Crown, on Monday 11th June to present the POTY award. So put a date in your diary and come along. More details about this event will be posted on our website. If you do intend to come along then please let us know, so we can make sure we cater for the right number of people.

National Beer Scoring System

Every year CAMRA produces the *Good Beer Guide*: the "bible" to the nation's best pubs. Selecting the 4500 entries in the *GBG* is based on a vast number of hours spent by thousands of CAMRA members researching pubs, the quality of their beers and voting for their *GBG* entries at their branch meetings. In the past the selection of *GBG* entries and the voting system that was used was up to each individual branch and was typically based on information collected by local branch members. CAMRA introduced the National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) as an easy to use 0-5 point scoring system for judging the quality of beer and to encourage CAMRA members to report on the beer quality in any pub in the UK, no matter

which branch they were from. Originally, scoring was done by filling out NBSS Score Cards available from the branch. At the beginning of the year CAMRA released the NBSS website, at www.beerscoring.org.uk, which allows registered CAMRA members to vote electronically. These scores can then be downloaded by each branch and used in selecting their GBG entries.

So, what do the scores mean?

- 0 Undrinkable.** No cask ale available or so poor you have to take it back or can't finish it.
- 1 Poor.** Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.
- 2 Average.** Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing.
- 3 Good.** Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.
- 4 Very Good.** Excellent beer in excellent condition.
- 5 Perfect.** Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.

Some notes on scoring: Concentrate on the quality of the beer. This can be difficult if you do not like a particular style of beer. If you can't decide between two scores, say a 2 and a 3, then mark the beer at the lower score. If you instinctively feel that this isn't right then the beer probably warrants the higher score. If you do score a beer as 0 we would expect you to take it back to the bar and ask for a replacement, which the landlord should do without any quibble. When you complete your Beer Scoring Form please indicate whether this happened in the Comments field. All pubs and landlords have the occasional undrinkable pint and shouldn't be penalised as long as they took appropriate steps to correct it. Experience has shown me that it can be difficult to decide between a 3 and a 4. If this is the case imagine the following situation. You had intended heading on to a pub which serves a good pint of your favourite beer. Would the beer you have just had tempt you to stay on for one more before you leave? If so, give it a 4, if not mark it as a 3. How to award a 5? Simple. Before you have even finished swallowing your first sip you're already holding the pint out to the rest of the pub as a shining example of the perfect beer. You've also started to wonder whether you can squeeze in another couple of pints of this "nectar of the gods" before you have to go home. So far I have only awarded one 5 this year. So get online at www.beerscoring.org.uk, get yourself registered and submit your beer scores. More information about the NBSS can be found on CAMRA's web site at www.camra.org.uk.

A brief mention... As usual we ran out of room in this edition of *Channel Draught* to publish everything we wanted, but I can't go without briefly mentioning the recent Deal pub stroll, organised by one of our branch members. Starting at the Hole in the Wall, we visited the New Inn, the Strand, Deal Hoy, the Ship, Alma, Saracen's Head, Royal Hotel, Bohemian, and finishing at the Prince Albert. A great day out with some great beers. Beer of the day for me was Dark Star's Original from the Prince Albert, which scored a 4 on the NBSS. If you want to know what events we're organising then visit the Diary page on our website.

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Sandgate

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Shepherd Neame Spitfire and M&B

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Shepherd Neame Bishops Finger and Seasonal Ales

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Wed ~ Thurs

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Fri-Sat

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01303 248684

www.theclarendoninn.co.uk



The National News

By Martin Atkins

S&N to ditch real ale?

The future of real ale production by Scottish and Newcastle must now be seriously in doubt following its sale of the Courage brand to Wells and Young's and the discontinuance of McEwans 80/- the brewer's sole remaining Scottish real ale. By our calculation this will leave just Tadcaster producing any real ale, and that confined to Theakston's Best brewed under contract for the Masham family brewer, and John Smith's. S&N argues that, with the beer market depressed, 80/- sales had dropped to a level where production was no longer economic and there was genuine risk to product quality. However CAMRA's Scotland and Northern Ireland Director Ken Davie commented: "There is no reason why McEwan's couldn't continue producing a small quantity of 80/- cask ale by rethinking their production methods".

In any case the beer was brewed under contract by Caledonian: if that facility proved inappropriate there must be plenty of other small brewers who could have obliged. How exactly S&N sees the future for real ale we don't know, but with the emphasis firmly on international brands (which real ale is not), no one should be at all surprised if the brewery were to abandon it completely, or at least put what production remains out to contract.

Returnable Bottles Ended

In further changes S&N has taken the non-ecofriendly decision to axe returnable Newcastle Brown bottles for

the pub trade, stating that it was economically unviable to be using two types of bottle, and that recent trials found non-returnable bottles popular with their customers. The bottling facility at the Dunston brewery in Gateshead, the current home of Newcastle Brown, will consequently close and all bottle filling will be concentrated at Tadcaster.

The Sustainable Communities Bill

With cross party support the Sustainable Communities Private Members Bill introduced by Nick Hurd, Conservative MP for Ruislip, easily negotiated its second reading. If it becomes law the Government will be required to produce a strategy for supporting and promoting local independent businesses. However while being sympathetic to the Bill's aims the Government has concerns about its operation in practice, suggesting that it would be cumbersome and complicated, which means that in its present form it will be a tough struggle to get it through. This though is quite possible; it has the backing of over 80 pressure groups including CAMRA, Friends of the Earth, Women's Institutes and many organisations representing small businesses, consumer and ecological groups; a great many MPs and members of the public. CAMRA, whose specific interest is of course local community pubs, is urging its members to keep up the pressure, and continue lobbying their MPs to support the bill.

Wells and Young's Take Courage

As we reported in our Winter issue as it went to press, Scottish and Newcastle Breweries has sold the Courage portfolio to Wells and Young's (how easily that now slips of the tongue). The beers involved are Directors, Best, Dark Mild and Light Ale, with brewing transferred from Tadcaster to Bedford over several months. Wells and Young's Master Brewer, Jim Robertson, who spent ten years at Courage's Horsleydown Brewery, will be responsible for flavour matching: "we want Bedford Courage to match the existing brews" said Managing Director Nigel McNally. He added that the company had just invested £2m each on Bombardier and Young's, and intends to do the same with Courage – last year the brand just received £10,000.

Real ale drinkers might feel some disquiet at the prospect of £2m being devoted to the Courage brand, and would probably be interested in a breakdown of how it is allocated. We would all applaud investment in improving the brand quality, but the prospect of big discounts and heavy advertising, to persuade landlords and their customers to buy and drink the beers is unlikely to impress.

Supermarkets Criticised

A recent CAMRA survey of beer in supermarkets found it being sold as cheaply as 54p a pint, of which 38p was tax, while bottled water which carries no tax could be as much as 49p a pint. CAMRA chief executive, Mike Benner said: "The ridiculous practice of the major supermarkets selling below cost alcohol to out-price each other is reckless, irresponsible and

dangerous". CAMRA believes that irresponsible drinks promotions in the off trade are a major cause of binge-drinking, yet it is licensed premises that suffer the fallout while supermarkets continue with impunity. It is undermining a lot of the good work done by the pub trade in recent years to try and curb irresponsible drinking and cheap alcohol promotions. It is a problem that obviously worries the trade press and pub industry chiefs, and now CAMRA is joining them to urge people to lobby their MPs to support MP John Grogan's early day motion which slams supermarkets for the irresponsible sale of alcohol, and calls for a narrowing of the price difference between pub and supermarket.

Marston's Axes Hanson's

An unexpected decision by Marston's has seen the likely end of a Black Country tradition. Hanson's Mild, enjoyed by generations in the West Midlands and brewed at Marston's Wolverhampton brewery, is to be dropped by the end of April, the brewers citing concerns over its quality as demand continues to fall. Pubs that stocked it will be encouraged to sell Marston's alternative Black Country mild, Banks's Original. CAMRA Director of Campaigns Bob Jones said, "While Banks's Original is a great beer in its own right it is completely different in taste to Hanson's Mild." Ironically the decision comes just before CAMRA's annual May promotion of mild, and the Campaign's Members' Weekend in Wolverhampton also in May, at which Marston's chief executive Ralph Findlay is to be the keynote speaker. Not particularly diplomatic, one might think, or perhaps they're not bothered.



NORTHBOURNE

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Coming Soon

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Fri 27th July to Sun 29th July

8 Real Ales and Biddenden Cider planned

Fri 27th - Big Mamou playing

Sat 28th - Morris Dancers + BBQ

Fat River Band playing in evening

Sun 29th - Odd Couple featuring Drew

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Separate non-smoking restaurant area



Snacks served 12-2pm

**The Village Pub next door to
Dover’s Town Centre**

Kent Small Brewery News

By Roger Marples



Ramsgate

At the time of writing Eddie was in the process of creating a 'Festival Special' ale for the second Planet Thanet Ale Fest, using original Cobb & Co's yeast from the family brewery that closed in the 1960s. However rather than try and recreate an old Cobb brew this is one of his own devising, a 4.3% pale ale using Fuggles and Goldings hops, and Marris Otter malted barley. "I am awaiting some secondary fermentation to complete as I write" says Eddie. "So far, it is obviously a highly distinctive yeast producing a sweet and fruity brew. The yeast character is obvious and almost, surprisingly, Belgian in its ever so slight tartness." With a couple of weeks yet for maturation, it was too early to tell how successful he had been, however by the time you read this many of you will have been able to judge for yourselves (for a fuller account of this fascinating enterprise see Eddie's article elsewhere in this issue).

As if resurrecting and brewing from old yeast strains is not enough, there will be a special 5.3% St George's Day beer which he's calling Dragon's Blood and, brewed with Goldings and Fuggles, he describes as thoroughly English! For Easter a 6.7% IPA will be brewed, and will be named Ship of Fools after a well known Brussels beer bar. It will be an all Fuggles brew, and less dry than usual. If the Editor (and Eddie) will pardon me for mentioning, surely an IPA should be very bitter and full of hops. (I'm not sure that Eddie's description necessarily precludes this and, according to the 2007 GBG, IPAs should also be spicy/peppery with juicy malt and citrus fruit flavours – Ed.). Another new beer is Sandboy, brewed with a mixture of local hops, and in May we can look forward to Gadd's Mild. If that is not enough, Celebrated Ginger Ale at 5% will be on sale in late May. Obviously it is all happening in Gadd's. Many of the Gadd's brews were available at the Planet Thanet Beer Fest held at the Winter Gardens in Margate over the Easter holidays.

Whitstable

Naval Reserve is a new 5% beer from this brewery, and was designed as a single brew. However it was so popular that Whitstable had to brew another three batches. The Old Brewery Tavern in Canterbury is now selling Oyster Stout and EIPA. Make a note of the Whitstable Beer Festival which will take place over five days, from Wednesday 25th to Sunday 29th July. There will be about 30 different beers from micro breweries.

Goacher's

Unfortunately the Dublin Man of War no longer sells Goacher's Gold Star, but the Bohemian in Deal, the Two Sawyers at Woolage Green and the Yew Tree

at Barfrestone have all started selling beers from Kent's second oldest brewery. The Yew Tree regularly takes the Mild, which has proved popular, and Blake's of Dover has taken Goacher's Special, a brew using a recipe that combines a quarter Goacher's Dark and three quarters Goacher's Fine Light. This is being taken in Kilderkins (18s).

Hopdaemon

Tonie is still struggling to keep up with demand, but would like to brew Dominator, Golden Dove and Greendaemon (White Cliffs Winter Ale Festival Winner), when capacity permits. The Bohemian in Deal is a new outlet for Skrimshander.

Nelson

Powdermonkey will be brought back into the regular portfolio. New brews are Task Force 25 @ 5.5%, to commemorate 25 years since the Falklands conflict, as well as a single variety hop brew, No. 23, using the hop Progress, to be on sale for St. George's Day. It is anticipated that Task Force will be popular in the forces and at British Legion clubs, and will be in both draught and bottle conditioned forms. Recent deliveries have been made to the Bohemian in Deal and Prince Albert in Dover, where the Eagle continues to sell normally three Nelson beers – on my last visit they were all very good. The Rochester Bitter is a firm favourite at the Eagle, but is less popular in the Medway towns, apparently owing to its high hop rate.

Steve & Jackie welcome you to
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CIDER MATTERS

Is it really three months since our last issue? I suppose it should seem longer, as time passes more slowly without a drop of the decent stuff to fortify you. Cider and perry fruit are harvested at... well... harvest time, with production starting soon after, but the finished product can be months away, so this is the time when stocks start to run low, with some being hard, or even impossible, to find.

The excellent perry that was on sale in Blakes seems to have run out – Peter tells me he has been unable to get any more since Christmas. Thankfully, he still has two ciders on sale, and I have also seen Thatcher's Cheddar Valley on sale in the Prince Albert (Dover) recently. The Coach & Horses on the Deal-Sandwich road sells Weston's cider on draught, as does the Chambers in Folkestone, and you can generally get at least one draught cider in your local Wetherspoon's, but check their fridge in case there's a bag-in-box Weston's in there as well or instead. Meanwhile bottled cider is available at some local supermarkets as well.

There are still a few technical questions on the UKCider forum, and some tips about books for sale on the internet. Some are more technical, growing fruit or production, but a few are aimed at the consumer, such as cider guides, although these tend to be less common than beer guides. The last CAMRA guide was published a while ago, so there may be moves afoot to get another under way. Meanwhile, I recommend the UKCider "wiki" pub guide. Visit www.ukcider.co.uk and the wiki link is near the top of the page. Most parts of the country are covered though ours, sadly, is among the less well-represented. Still, I suppose the only way is up.... and the background stuff seems to be catching up at last. The National Association of Cider Makers runs a cider making course, but I suspect it is aimed more at commercial production rather than hobbyists or anyone just interested in cider. CAMRA runs beer tasting sessions at beer festivals, and even tutored sessions, so maybe cider tasting will make an appearance in the near future?

With Spring upon us it will soon be time for the bigger cider events to take place. CAMRA will decide the national cider and perry champions at the Reading Beer & Cider Festival at the start of May, and there are some featuring cider exclusively, like the Welsh Cider & Perry Championship at the end of May. And you can normally rely on a good selection of cider and perry at the Kent Beer Festival in July, along with knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff. Before that our neighbour, Ashford, Folkestone & Romney Marsh Branch has its annual festival at the Rare Breeds Centre in Woodchurch. They have done well for cider and perry recently, and there has been mention of an outing there from our branch this year – get your name on the list! Another possibility could be a trip round the branch's cider-selling pubs, which we think currently number ten. Count me in!

Applejack

The Crown Inn at Finglesham

* Deal Dover Sandwich & District CAMRA Pub of the Year 2007 *



Free House and 16th Century Restaurant

• *Good Beer Guide 2007* recommended • Quality real ales specialising in local micros • Crown Inn Beer Club 8pm first Sunday each month • Bottled Biddenden ciders and occasional draught Biddenden cider • Renowned local chef John Radford • Bat & Trap in summer • Traditional pub games • Real fire • Catering for weddings and functions • Pretty garden with BBQ and safe children's play area • 1Mb wireless broadband • Caravan Club Certified • Curry night first Thursday each month, as well as the following:

Thursday 19 April – Thai night

Monday 7 May – Bank holiday (open all day)

Friday 11 May – Thai night (Siam became Thai Land on 11 May 1949)

Monday 28 May – Spring bank holiday (open all day)

Monday 11 June – Crown Inn branch CAMRA Pub of the Year award presentation night

Sunday 17 June – Father's Day with special menu

Thursday 21 June – Gourmet night with an eight course meal

Thursday 19 July – Greek night with full meze

Thursday 9 August – Spanish night – Tapas

Friday 17 August – Magic night with Rob James and four course meal – pre-booking only

Friday 24 – Monday 27 August – Bank holiday weekend real ale festival (includes pig roast, five-a-side football tournament and children's bouncy castle on the Sunday)

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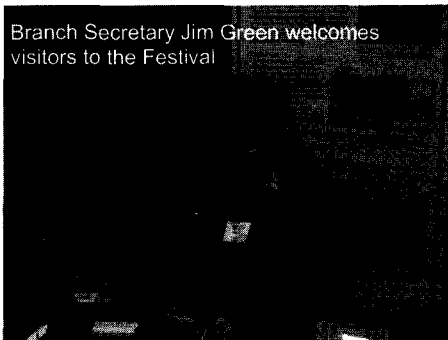
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Festival News

Just the one festival to report on this time, but what a festival! The 14th White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales at Dover Town Hall on Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd February 2007. It is the annual festival of this branch, and the biggest event in our calendar by far.

Branch Secretary Jim Green welcomes visitors to the Festival



For those of you who have not had the pleasure of visiting it, our festival celebrates British beers brewed at 5% ABV and above, with some as high as 9% – so not for the faint-hearted! There were 73 firkins of beer this year as well as four mini casks of 6% Biddenden Bushells cider. Beer of the festival (the first to sell out) was the 5% Greendaemon from Hopdaemon. I would love to appraise Tonie Prins' winning formula, but sadly both my husband Julian and I were driving on the Friday night ("what?!" I hear you holler – "you

drove to a beer festival???"), during which the last drop was sold, but I am reliably informed it is an excellent brew, and the tasting notes describe it as: "a golden beer with luscious tropical fruit aromas and a crisp clean finish." The reason we were driving is that we were due to collect and take home from the station three Aussies (my nephew and two of his mates) who were coming down from London for the festival weekend with hefty backpacks. However don't feel too sorry for us – we were due back the next day as customers.

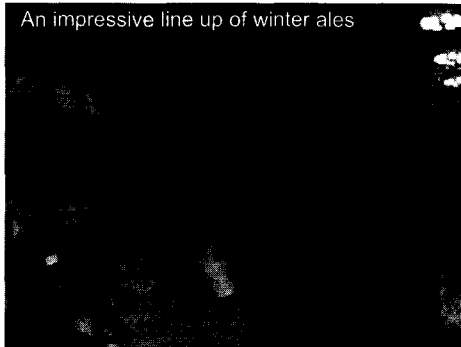
In previous years I've always spent the Friday night behind the bar, which I love, however by the time we arrived this year it was fully staffed, so most of my duties were spent on the door with Lorna, our branch Webmaster. In recent years, owing to the hall's fire limit, we have had to restrict entry for several hours in the evening leading to a lengthy queue developing. This year the limit was reached by early evening and from then until numbers dropped it was 'one out, one in'. If you had to queue, I hope you found it a shorter wait than previous years – certainly the queues weren't as long. This was due partly to our earlier opening (1.00 pm), but more probably because we sold a limited



The sun shines on winter ale drinkers in the atmospheric Stone Hall

number of tickets in advance. We apologise to those advance ticket holders who, owing to circumstances beyond our control, were forced to wait, and did so with such good humour.

The queue disappeared by mid evening and I was no longer needed on the door. Julian had done a few stints behind the bar, and as there seemed to be enough people on hand we finished our duties around 9.00 pm and headed next door to the chippie for sustenance before going to meet the train. By all accounts Friday evening was deemed a success, and no doubt I'll get to try Tonie's winning beer sometime or other.



The next day saw our turn to be customers along with the visiting Aussies, the Wells duo, and two friends, Phil and Rose from Hampshire, who had helped the previous night as volunteer staff. Trish and Rose greatly enjoyed the Biddenden Bushells cider (which Trish and Tony sponsored), while for the Adelaide boys it was all pretty much new territory – but they showed willing and tried plenty of the beers - mind you at £2 per pint it was worth their while! Dave Cooper, landlord of our local the Crown, also popped in for a few hours to sample his pick of the beers before heading back to his own beery duties.

My highlights of the beers included Archer's Force 9 (9%), Dark Star's Critical Mass (7.8%), Ramsgate's Dogbolter Winter Porter (5.6%), Rudgate's Well Blathered (5%), and Wessex's Russian Stoat (9%), of which the beer list tasting notes stated: "Please note: no Russians or stoats were injured in the crafting of this ale". They were all so different it would be hard to pick a front-runner, but one thing to note is that the Force 9 was deliciously deceptive – in no way does it taste anything like as strong as 9%!

In contrast to the previous night, there were fewer volunteers, so six of us did a half hour stint each behind the bar to help out. We enjoyed the classical music in the Connaught Hall – the highlight of which was once again the chap who plays the hosepipe so entertainingly! It also happened to be the day of the opening match in the rugby union Six Nations series – England v Scotland, and dedicated fans were able to watch the proceedings at the end of the Stone Hall on a TV perched high up on a sill beneath a stained glass window, quite a contrast of technology old and new! With one half of the Hampshire Contingent being Scottish, however, one customer was not a particularly happy man later that afternoon – bad luck Phil!

Next morning – the clear-up operation, and once again I had what must be the worst job of the lot – cleaning out all the slops buckets and dirty ash trays. I said to Tony that it always leaves me smelling of a cross between a stale brewery and a dirty ash tray, but we agreed that at least next year I'll only smell of a stale brewery! I cannot think how many buckets and ash trays there were – but hey ho, someone has to do it; and as always our clear-up efforts were rewarded with a big Sunday

pub lunch, this time at another of our locals, the Hare & Hounds in Northbourne – which in my opinion serves the best pint of Harvey's Sussex you'll find anywhere in the area.

Tonie Prins of Hopdaemon was duly presented with his beer of the festival award, and Dover Lifeboat with a charity donation of £500, at a special presentation evening at the Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club (see Local News). So – well done to Tonie, all who contributed to Dover Lifeboat, our customers, the brewers of all those wonderful ales, our numerous sponsors, the Town Hall staff, the festival committee who put in so much hard work to organise and run the event, and of course our volunteering colleagues for helping to make it all happen. See you next year!

Anne McIlroy

Forthcoming Festivals

The next few months' festivals we know of are listed in the Events Diary on Page 3. Below are some of those being held later in the summer – details in next issue.

Hare & Hounds, Northbourne (late July)
Kent Beer Festival, Canterbury (late July)
Red Lion, Stodmarsh (late July)
Royal Oak, Capel (late July)
Whitstable Beer Festival (late July)
Betteshanger and Deal Rugby Club, Deal (August)

Crown Inn, Finglesham (August)
Red Cow, Sandwich (August)
Three Horseshoes, Great Mongeham (August – to be confirmed)
Royal Oak, Capel (August)
Haywain, Bramling, Canterbury (September)

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Sunday Carvery 2 courses £7.00 Please book



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

Listed in the 2007 CAMRA Good Beer Guide

Small parties catered for.

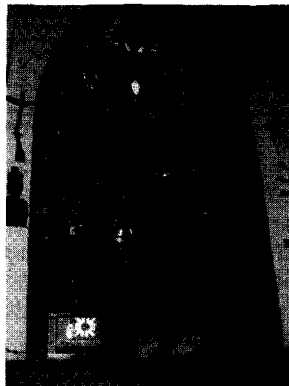
Play area. Children welcome

White Cliffs Festival Snaps



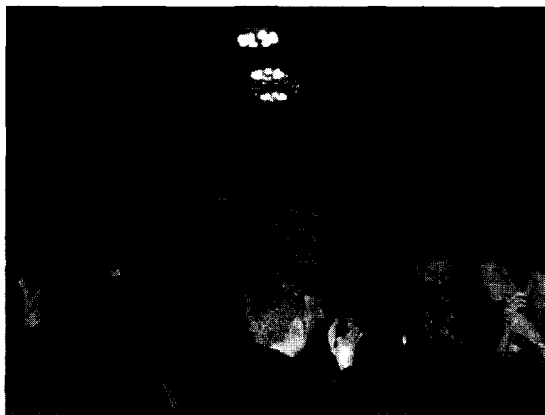
Above: Serious drinking in the
Connaught Hall

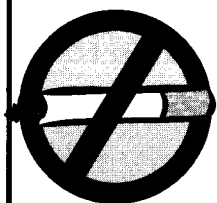
Top Right: England at rugby on the
TV, England at war in the window.



Right: Plenty of choice in the Stone
Hall.

Below: The Three Wise Men





Smoke-free pubs; Can't come soon enough!

What a relief, come next summer we'll be able to breathe fresh air in pubs, free from that all-pervasive odour of nicotine. Many people say they are reluctant to use pubs because of the smoky atmosphere, and waking up next morning with their clothes reeking of smoke from the night before. So let's hope enough of these types will come flocking to pubs in droves, to fill the spaces vacated by those driven away in disgust by denial of their right to smoke.

But to what extent is it a right? Libertarians among us wax lyrical about the 'nanny state' taking away our freedom etc etc. Why shouldn't the chap for whom smoking is frowned upon at home, come down to the pub for an hour or so, to enjoy a smoke with a pint? Well, because there might be people in the pub who find cigarette smoke just as objectionable as 'er indoors' does, that's why!

Personally I have never smoked, so my opposition to this habit is perhaps milder than an ex-smoker's might be. Smoking is a harmful addiction, but then so is alcohol some would say, so I'm wary of throwing too many stones from my glass house. Why, the year after next they might ban dangerous alcoholic drinks from pubs too, and only let us drink in the garden!

My attitude to smoking even mellows as the day goes on. Whilst I have zero tolerance in the morning (I remember once staying at a B&B where people at the next table chain-smoked their way through breakfast), by the evening if I'm in a pub with a few smokers around, it doesn't bother me too much. Most considerate smokers don't deliberately blow smoke over me, and I suppose they don't intentionally leave their fag smouldering in an ashtray while they go and chat to someone on the other side of the room for half an hour. And yes, I'd much rather drink in a pub than at home, though sometimes I wonder why when I've paid nearly £3 for a pint and had to confront a disgusting ashtray which hasn't been emptied for hours. This doesn't happen often in good pubs, but at busy times, the more people smoke, the nastier the ashtrays become.

Local knowledge means I can usually avoid the smokiest pubs, but smokers' behaviour still remains a mystery to me. On rare occasions when I've found myself in very smoky pubs for some reason, I've noticed that the smokier the room, the more everyone in it chain-smokes. I've wondered if I should point out that they could just take a good gulp of smoke-laden air and save money, but it doesn't seem to work like that. I'm told that the stronger the scent of tobacco in the air, the stronger the craving to light up becomes.

So no doubt there will be howls of anguish galore when the smoking ban is intro-

duced. But experience elsewhere shows us that it will not be the end of civilisation as we know it. People will soon adapt. Those pubs who are able will lay on outdoor facilities of some description, and outside the smaller pubs where people will have to huddle in the cold, who knows what new friendships will spring up?

Though the end of lighting up time for smokers, this won't be lights out for pubs.

John Pitcher

As editor of Channel Draught I appreciate that my stance on smoking in pubs is not universally popular, and while not wishing to darken an essentially light hearted piece, there are aspects about the ban that I find rather worrying. I have never supported the unrestricted right to smoke anywhere but I find a total ban incongruous with CAMRA's traditional principle of choice, while there appears a total absence of any comparison between the level of risk from passive smoking and that from other risks in our daily life. It would seem a poor reflection of our culture if we cannot accommodate both smokers and those who want a smoke free environment, and somewhat disturbing that Parliament should vote for a total ban without asking for some kind of statistical assessment. I fear that for some pubs it will be lights out, and while it's fine to jest about banning alcohol as well, I have no doubt that there are elements who would like to see exactly that. Sorry if this all sounds a bit heavy but to me there are serious issues here. Ed.

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CHANNEL VIEW

When Greene King closed Hardys and Hansons it cited economic necessity. "It doesn't make economic sense to continue brewing at Kimberley," it said. "The best way to ensure that Hardys and Hansons brands continue to flourish is to transfer brewing to Bury St Edmunds." Similar arguments were put forward by Scottish and Newcastle for ceasing production of 80/-; demand was so low that it was no longer economic to produce, and presented a genuine risk to product quality. More recently Marstons (formerly W&D) has joined the happy throng and announced the axing of Hansons (no connection) Mild.

Economic necessity can be used to justify all manner of things. No doubt it was much in evidence when the big brewers were trying to ditch real ale in the 1960s, and was probably used in earlier days by those opposing the abolition of slavery and the sending of little boys up chimneys. Had Hardys and Hansons been on its uppers, struggling to survive, the case might have been unanswerable, but it seems that in fact it was quite a profitable firm, perfectly capable of operating independently for many years to come. The simple truth, of course, is that the closure of Hardys and transfer of the brewing will provide the greatest benefit to Greene King's own profits. In due course no one should be surprised to

see Hardys and Hansons relegated to the seasonal category, and quite possibly eventually done away with all together. Meanwhile the reasons for dropping McEwans 80/- would appear to be a reflection of S&N's global ambitions and pursuit of big brands – the micro industry regularly brews beer in small quantities quite profitably and of good quality – and Marston's dropping of Hansons Mild looks just like the old accountants' argument: "why are we brewing two beers when we can get away with one."

Of course we don't know that the customers of Greene King and the others will necessarily dislike the changes, although tradition suggests that for many it's likely to be the case – the good natured British drinker, stoically putting up with all manner of liberties being taken with his or her pint, to satisfy the requirements of big business economics. How many different beers have disappeared or been changed over the years, as merger follows merger, breweries are closed, and production shifted around? Tens of thousands probably, often brews deliberately created to satisfy a specific local taste which can rarely be replicated. Meanwhile the classical model of many eagerly competing firms all trying to attract customers is replaced by a few big operators with big clout telling their customers what they are going to

have. Maybe OK for cars or soap powder, and mass produced lager – the largest possible volume, for the largest possible number, at the lowest possible cost – but of no discernible benefit to those of us who like real ale. Variety and choice rapidly disappear, the beer is no cheaper, and quality very often poorer. And to add irony to injury, while profits may be larger, profitability very often is not.

Such were the reasons behind the formation of CAMRA at the start of the 1970s, after the bulk of the industry had contracted into the hands of half a dozen conglomerates with the apparently avowed intention of getting rid of real ale and forcing us all onto keg. The biggest merger of them all, that of Bass and Charrington, was regarded as a major achievement, a fine demonstration of the spirit of the age to rank alongside the creation of British Leyland, Concorde and, almost, the landing on the moon. The first brewer to have a national coverage of pubs from Scotland to the South Coast blazed the publicity; what business synergies this would produce, what marvels of organisation and large scale production would follow – British brewing was entering the 20th century. And what of the beer? Exactly, all those silly little local breweries could be done away with and replaced by a few big ones with 'good motorway access'.

We all know the fate of British Leyland and Concorde, while after a few visits the moon was left to its own immemorial devices. Bass Charring-

ton, meanwhile, has seen its pubs sold off and its breweries split between global giants Inbev and Coors: and similar rearrangements have overtaken the rest of the 1970s oligarchy. Fortunately not all the industry went down the same path – for example the two Black Country breweries, Batham and Holden with about thirty pubs between them, or on a larger scale Holts, Hydes and Lees from Manchester. All are economically viable, produce respected and well liked beer, and are content to devote most of their energies to supplying their local community.

Greene King was like that once, and not so long ago. It stood apart from all the excitement, and with only several hundred pubs around its Suffolk heartland it would not deliver beyond a certain distance from its brewery. Now its beers are everywhere and it voraciously seeks expansion in any way it can, empire building with the best of them, free now since the current Government's rescinding of the Beer Orders to grow to whatever size it wishes, a merger with its big rival Marston's or one of the major pubcos quite within the bounds of possibility. How very different from the micro brewer with a genuine interest in exploring and developing the full range and styles of British ales, and looking to make just a modest living from the craft that he loves. The large brewers should not be surprised if they find us staying with the micros and the remaining small family brewers, their large variety of beers and ales, and a business ethos that keeps economics and profit firmly in their places.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF SANDWICH PUBS

Sandwich's history dates back well over a thousand years. It was one of the original Cinque Ports, established by William the Conqueror to provide men and ships to guard the English shore, and is possibly unrivalled in this country as a town retaining a virtually unaltered medieval street layout, with many buildings dating from the 15th and 16th centuries. Like almost every other old town, its public houses have played an integral part over the years, and also like most old towns it had far more pubs in the past than it has now. The following is a list for 1882:-

Bowling Street	Forester's Arms	King Street	Green Dragon
The Butchery	Two Brewers		Green Posts
Cattle Market	Market Inn*	Knightrider Street	Salutation
	Mermaid Inn	Moat Sole	Red Cow*
Church St		New Street	Sandwich Arms
St.Mary's	Kings Head		Three Colts
Delf Street	Fleur de Lis*	Strand Street	Alma Inn
	Malt Shovel		Black Horse
Fisher Street	George & Dragon*		Bricklayers Arms
Galliard Street	Sun Inn		King's Arms*
			Red Lion
Harnet Street	Olde New Inn*	The Quay	Three Kings
			Ship
High Street	Admiral Owen*	Upper Strand St	Stour Inn
	Bell & Anchor	Near the Station	Bell Hotel*
	Cinque Port Arms		Lord Warden
	Crispin Inn*		

In all the town had 30 pubs at the time, of which only nine now remain (marked *), although there have been a few additions, including the Greyhound in New Street, which interestingly was not then recorded as a pub. Stricter licensing laws from the turn of the 19th/20th centuries saw the number start to decrease and by 1910 the number had already been reduced by six. Many, however, continued until well after World War II, since when at least another eight or nine have closed; the most recent being the Sandwich Arms at the junction of the Ropewalk and New Street, just four or five years ago. Other post war casualties have included the Two Brewers, the Cinque Port Arms, the Three Colts, the Black Horse, the Three Kings, the King's Head and the Lord Warden.



However, of those that have survived many can trace their origins, at least as buildings, back to Tudor times or earlier. One of the earliest recorded is the George and Dragon in Fisher Street which was an inn at the time of Henry VII, and has been in continuous use as an inn or public house ever since. Currently, while still in use as a pub, most of the floor space is given over to food. Nearby at the corner of Upper Strand Street and the High Street is to be found the imposing Bell Hotel. A more recent building than many of those surrounding it, it is built on the site of the old Bell

The present day 'Bell Hotel'



Tavern and mostly dates from the late 19th century. The earlier building is not without its place in history. In 1660, shortly after the restoration of Charles II, his brother the Duke Of York, Prince Rupert and the Earl of Sandwich visited Sandwich and were met at the Bell Tavern by a civic deputation: it is re-

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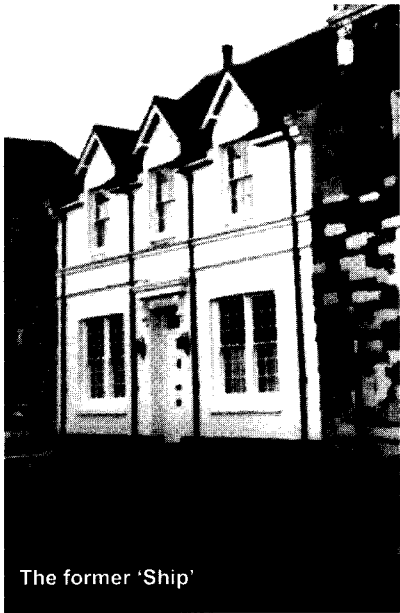
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ported that the Mayor presented the King with a glass of sack which he proceeded to drink on horseback. On its northern side the Bell fronts on to The Quay where two pubs are recorded in 1882 – the Stour Inn and the Ship. The Ship abutted the Fisher Gate and is still shown as a pub on the Ordnance Survey sheets of the 1950s/1960s. The building still remains, now being called Fisher Gate House. The location of the Stour Inn is uncertain but one might surmise that it may have been amongst now demolished buildings in the vicinity of the Barbican.

Returning to the High Street, the Admiral Owen and the Crispin stand opposite the Bell on either side of the junction with Strand Street, and just along from the Barbican. Dating from the 15th century and re-fronted during the 18th, the Owen was for many years a Truman pub. Subsequently a freehouse for a while it was acquired some years ago by Greene King who owned it until last



The former 'Ship'

SANDWICH PUBSEARCH

Answers on Page 61

N	O	G	A	R	D	D	N	A	E	G	R	O	E	G
G	H	D	J	N	F	J	K	D	C	A	A	X	S	X
R	K	I	N	G	S	A	R	M	S	D	C	Z	I	L
E	W	C	G	T	I	M	S	N	M	N	R	G	L	N
Y	G	E	I	B	G	D	N	I	S	M	I	J	E	Q
H	O	J	K	D	J	I	R	G	J	G	S	F	D	F
O	R	U	I	I	T	A	P	U	I	B	P	G	R	N
U	D	V	D	E	L	N	X	Z	C	H	I	J	U	N
N	T	T	K	O	T	J	E	L	I	Z	N	A	E	A
D	U	R	W	P	G	I	M	W	G	N	I	G	L	S
I	A	E	W	W	E	H	I	P	I	M	N	B	F	N
M	N	E	R	U	L	J	F	A	Z	N	N	O	E	S
R	F	F	G	H	K	N	C	V	N	E	N	A	R	H
P	L	A	C	E	B	R	A	S	S	E	R	I	E	P
F	A	X	C	W	O	W	O	C	D	E	R	L	L	L

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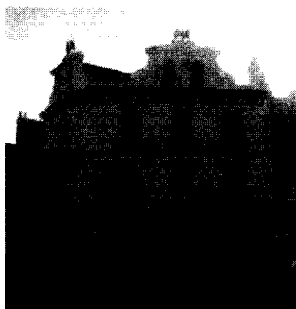
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winter when they sold it to Admiral Taverns. It takes its name from a British admiral at the time of the French Wars who had considerable success capturing French gunboats. In 1837 it hosted a meeting of townspeople to discuss a proposed Sandwich-London



The Admiral Owen and the Crispin

railway line, a plan which never reached fruition, and which even in that railway mad era seems somewhat over optimistic. More recently it came to fame in Spike Milligan's autobiography of his wartime years, where he describes a weekend spent there with a girl from the WAAF. At the time of the big brewery sell-off in the 1990s, the low ceilinged Crispin was a Charrington house. It dates from the 16th century and with its dark wood paneling, long settles and collection of pictures and assorted memorabilia around the walls, for a long time it epitomised the traditional old style town centre pub. During the early



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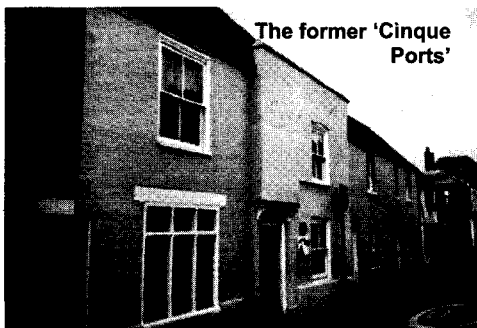
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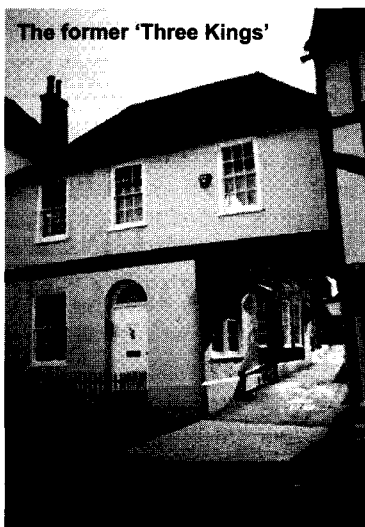
The former 'Cinque Ports'

1950s one of our branch members recalls playing the piano there for beer, while doing National Service at Stonar RAF camp. In recent years it has undergone radical refurbishment into a somewhat severe modern café style which reflects little of this, and which many of us find disappointing.

Of the other two High Street pubs in the 1882 survey, the Cinque Ports at

No 60 survived until the 1970s when it was converted to a house. It was situated towards the other end of the street on the western side and from memory was owned by Fremilins and subsequently Whitbread, and had a rear entrance onto King St. Meanwhile the Bell and Anchor had disappeared many years earlier. Pictures show a timber framed building from the front of which jutted a huge, and substantially supported sign, in the shape of a bell with an anchor painted onto it. The pub stood at a rising part of the street, adjacent to a lane which, with steps up and posts across, looks to be Seven Post Alley, and suggests therefore that its site was that now occupied by the Masonic Hall.

Around the corner into Strand Street, and twenty or thirty yards along on the left was the Three Kings. Set slightly back from the building line, the building is still there, beside an arch leading to the alleyway, Three Kings Yard. A long established Whitbread house (the ownership predated the takeover of various local breweries in the 1960s), there are references to a pub of that name on the site as far back as the Civil War when at times it doubled as a Royalist recruiting centre. Most of the present building dates from the 18th century but the adjoining archway leading to Three Kings Yard carries the carved date 1603. More recently, and more controversially, it is said that before the last war, the room above the bar hosted meetings of local members of Sir Oswald Mosley's Blackshirts, on occasion attended by Mosley himself. Like so many pubs it fell by the wayside in the mass disposals of the late sixties/early seventies.



The former 'Three Kings'

(In our Summer issue we will be looking at historic pubs in the rest of Sandwich.)

Martin Atkins



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COBB'S REVIVAL

Eddie Gadd describes bringing Cobb's back to life
in the run-up to the Planet Thanet Beer Festival

Thanet CAMRA branch had the splendid idea of having a 'festival special' for this year's Planet Thanet Ale Festival and, over a few jars, many possibilities were debated. In the end, as usual, the Yorkshireman got his way and we decided to investigate the possibility of obtaining some original Cobb's yeast. The Cobb family owned the local brewery situated a stone's throw from the Winter Gardens and is credited with being an essential piece of Margate history. The idea seemed sound.

Chris Bond from the National Yeast Collection confirmed that Cobb's had 'banked' yeast in 1965, and set about bringing back a couple of cells from cryogenic storage, and ensuring they multiplied on a slant of agar. This was sent to Sunderland University where Dr Keith Thomas and his team continued the process until, after two weeks, there was sufficient for me to brew with. All very well but I needed to get an idea of what Cobb's beer was like. The local paper helped us to contact a number of people who worked at the brewery, their relatives and some of Cobb's tenants. It then occurred to me that there was more to this than a glass of beer, and with the help of my good friend Dani Flowerdew we undertook the job of recording their memories in an audio format. You just can't beat the sound of someone's voice telling of days long past with great affection and no little pride.

And so the whole thing started coming together – Dave researching and putting together a history display of local brewing, pubs and Cobb's in particular – Dani meeting with local residents and recording all kinds of stories about the Cobb family and the brewery (laughing mostly but occasionally crying a little) – and myself finding out about malt varieties, hop varieties and techniques from the 1960s. The over whelming impression is one of a very decent family who looked after its employees and tenants, and was well liked in return. I even managed to contact Fred Martin, the head brewer, who went on to work for King & Barnes and is now well into his 90s and retired in Horsham – Bill King tells me he never stopped talking about Cobb's! Sadly, Fred could not make it to this year's festival but sends his best wishes to all.

And I was very surprised to hear from Caroline Ernest-Jones of Florida. She was born Caroline Cobb, daughter of David Cobb, the last Chairman of the brewery, and writes: 'I was born at 25 King Street and lived there till I was about 21. I spent masses of time in the brewery as a young tomboy and all the brewery boys were very kind to me (I was "Mr. David's" daughter!). They were all very nice to me too. I had a crush on a few of the younger brewery boys as well! I used to help on the bottling line (well for about half an hour when I was bored in the school holidays!) - taking out the small or green or broken bottles - with the twins the Hughes brothers - one had a limp. Then there was Fred Clarris who was a driver - he lived near Dane Court School - lovely fellow - not sure whether his family are still around (oh

yes they are! Ed). Mr Brackenborough used to run the wine and spirits store - so did Cyril Mirams now I come to think of it. Jack Robinson was the Cooper and it was interesting watching him make and mend the barrels. They all loved Mum and Dad and Mum and Dad loved them too - and they all passed the house every day on the way to work!

The full text was displayed at the exhibition – suffice to say that it was sort of the icing on the cake. Hope you took some time out at the festival to look at the photos, read some of the text and listen to the fabulous audio file Dani created. And many thanks to all who helped – it's been a great experience.

So to the beer itself. It would be futile to try and recreate a beer and instead we have aimed to resurrect the very spirit of the brewery by reawakening the yeast and putting it into an environment it may recognise. I have brewed a pale ale at 4.3% using only Fuggles and Goldings hops – apparently there would have been no other varieties used during the 60s in this area - and Marris Otter malted barley (this barley variety was developed in the 60s). The Cobb's yeast has fermented the beer and I am awaiting some secondary fermentation to complete as I write. So far, it is obviously a highly distinctive yeast producing a sweet and fruity brew. The yeast character is obvious and almost, surprisingly, Belgian in its ever so slight tartness. With a couple of weeks to go for maturation, it's too early to give a detailed critique and I don't like to do that too often anyway! Find the beer as you will, with an open mind and a ready palate but do bear in mind one thing – it's been a very long time since any of us have tasted a beer quite like this one! Cheers!

Eddie Gadd

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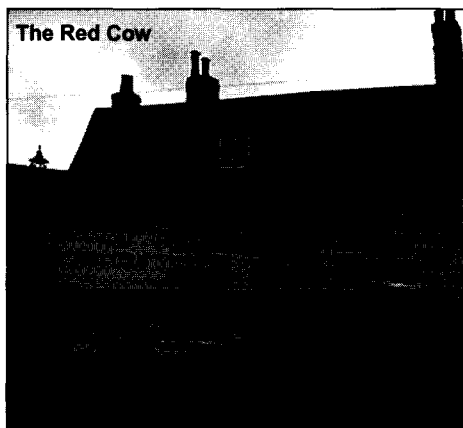


A Sandwich Stroll

The great thing about Sandwich is that nowhere is very far from anywhere else. In particular, none of the ten pubs is very far from the other nine. Therefore, a pub stroll around Sandwich involves lots of beer and very little stroll!

And the great thing about Sandwich pubs is that they all serve real ale. I wonder how many other towns can say that? So, of course, we had to visit them all. It'd be rude not to. So we published our itinerary on the DDS CAMRA web-site, together with my mobile number in case of stragglers, and waited for the big day to come.

Thus, on a not very cold, not very wet, Saturday in February we met at the Red Cow at 11am. In fact, after an excellent breakfast at The Haven in King Street, Tony and I arrived a little before 11, and had to queue up outside, waiting for the pub to open. Next to arrive was Len (from Dover), who had got lost on the way from the railway station – Sandwich is an easy place to get lost in – shortly followed by Ray and Speed (also from Dover) and Robert (from Folkestone).



Red Cow: Gadd's #5, Greene King IPA, Greene King Abbot, Fuller's London Pride and Gadd's Dogbolter in bottles. The first pint went down well, and at 11.45 (5 minutes late already) we set off on the 150 yard walk to the New Inn. Len said if he'd known I was going to be so bossy about leaving on time, he'd have brought a green flag for me to wave. I speculated that since Len works on the railways, he must be an expert at time keeping! And anyway, what was the point of a timetable if we weren't going to stick to it?

New Inn: Courage Best, Master Brew. A swift half at the New Inn brought us back on schedule, and it was time to move on. Still no sign of the other half of the Finglesham Contingent, who had said they would arrive by bicycle, having missed the bus! A short wander through the narrow streets, past a house built in 14 hundred and something, and we arrived at the Kings Arms, where we were scheduled to have lunch. The landlord was most welcoming and re-

arranged some tables for us so we had room for the anticipated McIlroys, who arrived shortly after us. However, despite the varied menu, Ray decided to go back to the New Inn for his lunch, as they had chicken livers on the Specials Board.

Kings Arms: Spitfire, Greene King IPA. Half way through lunch, my phone rang. "Don't tell me about train replacements services!" came Ron's voice. We'd wondered where he'd got to. "I'll explain later", he said, having calmed down a bit, and promised to be with us in half an hour. It so happens that after we had published the date for our Sandwich Stroll, we found out there would be no trains from Dover to Deal that day – but there would be a replacement bus service. Len had come that way so we thought all was well, but apparently not. Ron and Bob had caught the bus at Martin Mill, and as it pulled in to Deal station to connect with the train to Ramsgate, the train pulled out, leaving them with a long wait. They eventually arrived in the Kings Arms as we were finishing our lunch. A few sympathetic murmurings and a swift pint later, we all headed off along the quayside to the Place Brasserie, attached to the Bell Hotel, where we met up again with Ray. Now we were ten! And only 15 minutes late.

Place Brasserie: Directors. One of the advantages of an establishment with only one real ale is that the decision what to drink is easier – ten halves of Director's, please!

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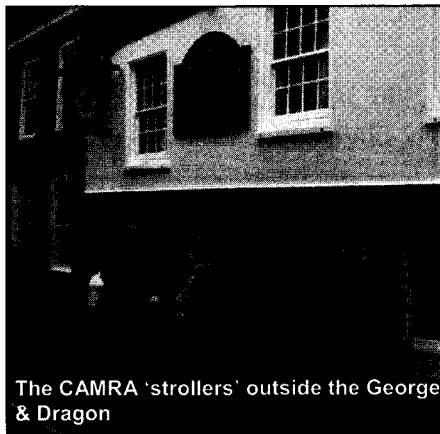
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Next stop – the George and Dragon. (For those of you who are familiar with Sandwich geography, and are wondering why we skipped over the Admiral Owen and Crispin at this point, it's because we had to get to the G&D before it closed after lunch. It's called forward planning!)

George & Dragon: Black Sheep Bitter, Timothy Taylor Landlord, Master Brew
We wended our way through the lanes, and were rewarded with the most exciting beer rage so far, and many decided they had to have a couple to do it justice. But we couldn't linger. Now 20 minutes late we moved on to the Admiral Owen.

Admiral Owen: Hook Norton's Old Hookey, Deuchars IPA, Marston Pedigree. With new owners, but still the same landlord and landlady, the beer range is much more exciting than it was but the friendly welcome is the same.



Crispin: Adnams Bitter, Broadside. Still 20 minutes late, we crossed the road to the Crispin, where we took over the back bar and relaxed on leather sofas and rocking chairs. But no rest for the wicked (or for the would-be righteous, come to that!). Twenty minutes later we were wandering through some of Sandwich's alleyways to the Greyhound.

Greyhound: Master Brew. Another friendly welcome from the landlady, and some of us decided to try our hand at the quiz machine. I think you have to be a bit soberer to beat the machine at its own game, and so it proved. Still, it was pub number eight! And so across the zebra crossing to number nine – the Market Inn.

Market Inn: Spitfire, Master Brew. A swift half here and the clock struck 5. Some of those from further afield decided to call it a day, and headed for their bus. The remaining stalwarts headed out the back door and across the road to the Fleur.

Fleur de Lis: Whitstable East Kent Pale Ale, Wadworth 6X, Greene King IPA. Settling in for a last couple in Sandwich's only current GBG entry, it was soon time to be on our way. So home we headed – some to the train, some to the bus and some to their bikes – but it wasn't the end of the day for us yet. Walking home from the bus stop, we passed the Crown. We had to pop in. It'd be rude not to!

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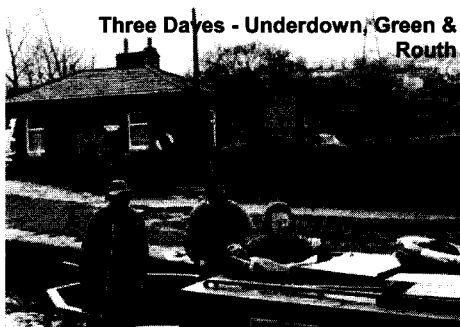
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THE BEERY BOATERS' 3rd ANNUAL CANAL TRIP,
APRIL 1983 (PART 1)

Any blame should go to Dave Green, as it was his idea in the first place. We had decided to make ourselves scarce from the Midlands for a while and he said that he fancied the description of the Calder & Hebble Navigation in the Hoseason's catalogue. So on Saturday April 23rd in 1983 the Beery Boaters met at the William IV in Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire. There were six who had been on both the first two trips; the usual crop of Greens (Dave, Mike and Yours Truly, Jim), Ray Crane, Phil Simpson and Dave Routh, plus Andy Wells, who first came in 1982, and first-timers Pete Simpson (Phil's brother) and Dave Underdown. That made nine, and the biggest boat that we could hire was the 56ft *'Durham'* from Shire Cruisers, which was a bit cramped after the 70 footers we were used to, however as the locks on the upper Calder & Hebble are 57ft long we had no choice – further down our route they get up to 215ft.



Whilst on the subject of locks, this route probably takes in as many varieties of locks and paddle gear as you could find on British waterways: several 'staircase' flights on The Leeds & Liverpool where the gate paddles tend to open sideways and the ground paddles are operated by fixed horizontally turning handles, hydraulically operated locks on the Aire & Calder and, at that time, rope and capstan at Fall Ings Lock, Wakefield. On the Calder & Hebble there are familiar rack and pinion and hydraulic locks worked with your own windlass, some with large fixed handles, and some using the unique Calder & Hebble handspike – a piece of hardwood about 3ft long and 2in x 3in across (no doubt a handy weapon in the commercial carrying days), which opens the paddle by levering around a small slotted vertically mounted drum, connected to the rack and pinion. Closing the paddle is achieved by releasing the ratchet, ensuring a satisfying rattle which would be frowned upon on any other waterway! And there is even a lock with a guillotine bottom gate.

As well as being cramped *Durham* came with a couple of other problems; the

toilets were just of the simple 'flap' type (and one even had a missing flap!), and the 'fresh' water tasted stagnant. Both were to manifest themselves in the future. At the moment the sun was trying to mislead us into thinking that Summer had arrived early, so after another quick pint (Youngers, I think) at the Moorings, a converted warehouse beside the basin, we set off at 2pm. I have no record of where we spent the Saturday night, but we had passed Elland and Brighouse and it was very probably Mirfield. We set off early on Sunday morning and, we being righteous on a righteous day, the sun was still shining on us. The scenery is quite attractive, despite sewage farms and the proximity of large towns such as Halifax and Huddersfield; and there are plenty of industrial relics to keep the industrial archaeologists and corrugated iron enthusiasts happy. For lunch we stopped at Stanley Ferry on the Aire & Calder. For some reason we missed the two pubs there and walked about half a mile to a Tetley's house. Although initially unwelcoming, with notices prohibiting customers from leaning on the bar, the atmosphere thawed as lunchtime wore on and by closing time the landlord offered to run us back to the boat in his car in relays.

By evening we reached Castleford Junction and turned left up the Leeds and Goole Main Line. A couple of miles further on we arrived at Kippax Lock, to find it closed and the lock keeper gone home, leaving us stuck for the night. There were no roads, just a track from the towpath, which a passing local told us



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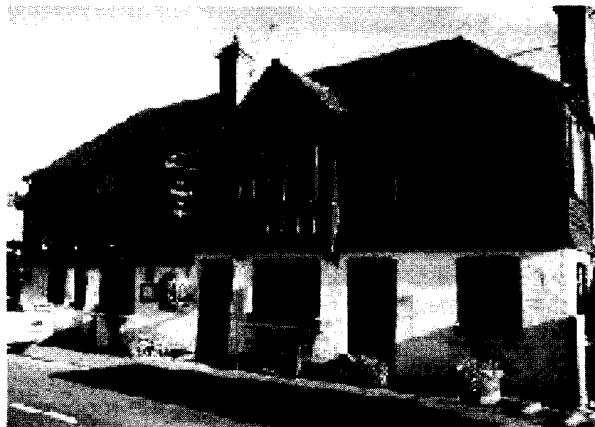
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would take us to a village with a pub or two. Most of the crew set off at once, leaving Mike and I to get changed and follow. However, all we found were various paths mostly ending in boggy morasses, but then, inspiration. There was a pub about a mile back on the other side of the canal. If we 'borrowed' the boat we could easily get to it and back before the others arrived from the village.



The pub proved to be the Boat at Allerton Bywater, then selling Tetley's, although it subsequently had its own microbrewery, but was closed on our trip in September 2006. Made very welcome we spent the rest of the night there, except for a brief sojourn to another hostelry nearby, where the landlord, who had a reputation as a misery we subsequently discovered, quickly found an excuse to ask us to leave. The next thing we knew it was half an hour after closing time. "Quick, back to the boat!"

I had switched the engine off as we approached the mooring place, hoping to glide into the bank so the others wouldn't hear us, when I found Mike had turned in, and went below to try to get him out. Meanwhile, the main party, thrown out of their pub on time, had arrived back at where they thought they'd left the boat. Consternation! Suddenly, as Skipper Dave is looking at the canal and scratching his head, *Durham* comes drifting past him like a ghost ship in deathly silence, 3ft from the bank and no-one at the tiller! A mighty leap and he lands on deck. Mike and I were not exactly popular!!

Kippax Lock opened at 8am and by well before mid day we were into Leeds mooring just above River Lock on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal. Some of us were now suffering from stomach problems and not just from excess of Tetley's. We suspected it had something to do with the funny-tasting water on the boat, and decided to empty the water tank, and top up with fresh water. However while the tank emptied, the pump motor burned out whilst trying to pass air instead of water. Shire Cruisers promised to send a fitter straight away with a new pump. Meanwhile as I was suffering from the worst dose of 'gippy tummy' and didn't fancy any beer, I offered to stay on board and wait for him, while the others went off into Leeds.

However, before they could start the resident lock keeper appeared, resplendent in white peaked nautical cap, which to me, on British Waterways normally suggests officiousness. This character was no exception, demanding that all of us "gather round" so that he could instruct us on how to use "his" canal. We humoured him and he proceeded to tell us, breaking off at one point to shout at some innocent wheeling his bicycle on the other side of the canal that on no account was he to ride the machine on "his" towpath. He concluded by select-

ing Dave, the Skipper, at that time a professional boatman in his own right, and teaching him how to tie "a sailor's knot". I half expected to see the lock keeper in "his" canal, and if Dave had had a few pints inside him I'm sure I would. However it seems that someone may have spoken a few choice words of wisdom to the lock keeper, for when we set off later that lunchtime and on our return later in the week he kept well clear of us!

Despite ominous-looking clouds, we got as far as Shipley for the evening without rain, some twelve miles from Leeds and having completed eighteen locks (of which thirteen were in 2-rise or 3-rise staircases) and twelve swing bridges; the last one in Shipley itself. It carried a lot of traffic and required a lengthy set of procedures involving road barriers and two windlass operated spindles to separately raise the bridge from its abutments, and rotate the platform, and all needing to be unlocked and relocked with the BW key. All was accompanied by the satisfying sound of furious honking from car, lorry and bus hooters, and, as if in unison, "John Smiths Jams Shipley", proclaimed big letters on a tall chimney stack. "Opposite effect to Shepherd Neame Bitter", muttered some wit – although that's a different John Smith's.

We moored in the town centre basin near the railway station and opposite the Bull public house, where we started our evening's entertainment; all except Andy who had gone walkabout. It sold Bass and a now-defunct beer, M&B




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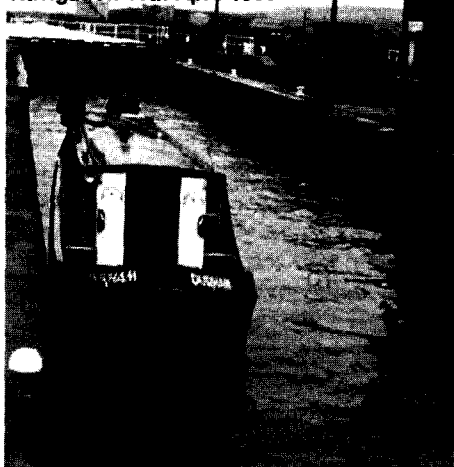
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**'Durham' on the Aire & Calder
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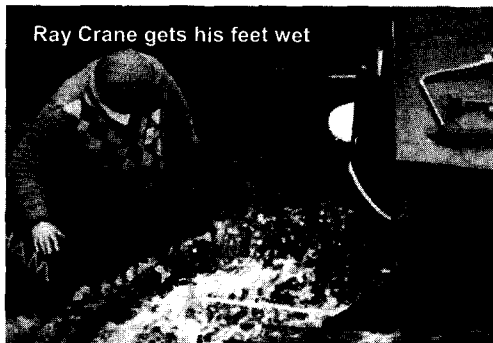
Brew X, rather similar to the generally-unloved Black Country beer Brew XI, but, as was remarked, "one degree under"! While the pub was friendly (just how friendly would be evidenced later) we decided to catch the bus to Bingley, about three miles away, and visit the long standing *GBG* pub, the Brown Cow at Ireland Bridge. A busy and popular Timothy Taylor house, the beer was in expectedly good form, and there was a trad jazz group playing. Some of the seating was in the form of old pews from the church at Haworth, so we could have been sitting and drinking where the Brontes once sat and prayed. Five of the group left after a couple of pints but Dave Underdown, jazz

enthusiast that he is, Mike and myself stayed until closing time.

Back in Shipley we stopped at a Chinese take-away, where we were served by a pretty Chinese lass with a broad Yorkshire accent. "Three chicken Chinese style", we decided. "Do you want chips or mushy peas with it?" she asked. "Eh?" "They all have chips or mushy peas with their chicken Chinese style up here", she explained. Who says that there is no mingling of cultures in this country? Having eaten our meals, and no-one else having returned we went to turn in, when there was a tremendous banging, clattering and cursing from up front and an extremely drunk Dave Routh staggered in through the door, fell against the sink (smashing a couple of glasses), grasped at a window for support (pulling down the curtains and breaking the top, opening, pane of glass) and announced that the Bull was still open. They had looked in on the way back, found Andy and some locals in residence, and were invited inside. Having delivered his message he rampaged off into the darkness again. Mike promptly went off to join the company, but Dave and I reckoned that in this case discretion was the better part of valour and stayed put. I think that it was about four in the morning when the lads eventually decided to call time, the landlord apparently willing to carry on serving beer as long as they were willing to carry on drinking it!

Next morning and life returned to the boat at about 8am instead of

Ray Crane gets his feet wet

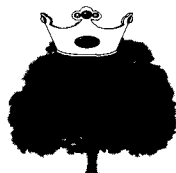


the more usual 6; Dave Underdown and I wore the smug expression of the righteous while those of the others who did manage to stir out of their bunks had a somewhat vacant and jaded look. Dave Routh and Andy stayed put, too ill even to groan. Initially, Andy didn't even respond to the outside of the boat being smitten with the club hammer near to where his head was resting. However, he showed signs of life after the less afflicted had eaten breakfast. Unsurprisingly, there were quite a lot of leftovers, including some sausages. He was lying on his back in the forward cabin with his mouth open. A sausage was dropped in and he began to chew. "Do you want another one?" He nodded, not yet being capable of speech. A second sausage was inserted. "Another?" More assent. A small frog which had been 'rescued' from the canal was dangled over the open mouth. At which point he decided to move! (To be continued)

Jim Green

Being a particularly eventful trip, with much detail, we have split the narrative into two, the second part to appear later in the year - Ed.

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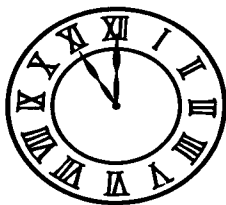
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LAST KNOCKINGS

It's fascinating to note that Wells and Young's, the new owners of Courage, have flavour matched the Bedford brewed beer to reflect the existing beers. I don't know what flavour matching was done when the brand moved from Bristol to Tadcaster, but here is one drinker who wouldn't have recognised it, and although there have been signs of improvement of late, to my taste the Bristol beer was far superior. Might we perhaps hope that Wells and Young's haven't tried too hard to match the Tadcaster brew but have gone back to the original recipe and brewed from that?

I've commented before on the somewhat disappointing nature of many Canterbury city centre pubs, seemingly aimed at satisfying the needs of shoppers, tourists and the weekend circuit. It was good, therefore, to spend half an hour in the New Inn, Havelock Street recently, a pub away from the city centre and apparently unchanged from my last visit two or three years ago. In many respects, frankly, it's not a lot different from how it was in the early 1970s and – except for the rear yard, which was roofed over some years ago – the internal layout, the ground floor of a single terrace house, has remained the same. Beer, however, has not. At that time the pub was an Ind Coope house (remember them?) and everything was keg. Now the pub has six handpumps and offers a wide selection of real ales. I chose a strange brew, Dark Horse from Robinson's, which the pump clip maintained was a bitter but whose colour and taste were more those of a stout or porter – a dark horse indeed!

The New Inn is the sole survivor of four pubs that until recently occupied that corner of Canterbury, a depressing pattern of closure seen too often recently. One such was the Star and Garter on Deal seafront. For the last decade or so of its existence it was owned by Shepherd Neame, although before that, coincidentally, it had also belonged to Ind Coope and was, as far as I know, that brewery's sole outlet in the town. Approached from the south it jutted out opposite the Royal Hotel, on the corner of Oak Street and Beach Street, at the point where the latter shifts some half dozen yards nearer the sea. A hotel rather than a pub, it was a good sized establishment, having about it something of that character usually described as rambling, and had two bars at the Oak Street end. At the front a roughly square room looked out over the sea towards the Goodwin Sands, while behind it a smaller, narrower room, which you stepped down into from the road, contained the bar servery, a dart board and a juke box. It was sparsely furnished with a few bar stools and a number of small tables and chairs, and on the wall was a map showing Shepherd

Neame pubs in Kent and Sussex. For the last few years its single real ale was Master Brew, and while not my favourite beer, at the Star and Garter I always found it was well kept and satisfying. An old style drinking and talking pub (as far as I know no food was sold in the bars) it finally closed its doors just about three years ago, to add four more dwellings to Deal's already substantial supply of seafront residences.

Recently in his column in the *Daily Mail* Keith Waterhouse lamented the great variety of indignities that have been perpetrated on the innocent public house over the last fifty years. These are not common sense alterations deriving from the landlord, aimed at improving matters for the staff and customers, but wholesale revisions of policy from the corporate stratosphere. From knocking all the bars into one, through theming, stupid names (Limping Cockroach) to the current favourite, the PC family pub complete with uncontrolled children rolling on the floor or playing chase around the tables, the list is lengthy. The notable exception is the well known pub chain who gave many of its earlier premises names that alluded to George Orwell's famous fictional ideal pub, the Moon Under Water (although not one of them, to my knowledge, bore much resemblance to the writer's own imaginings). The particular curiosity, however, is that Keith Waterhouse's views find almost universal agreement with any regular pub user you care to ask. For whose benefit then are these 'improvements' designed, and by whom? You can't help the feeling that it's all down to people who rarely go to pubs but are under instruction to devise the kind of pub that might persuade other people who don't use pubs to start using them. Either that or it's bored brewery and pubco office staff finding something to justify their existence. Whether or not such revisions ever prove their worth financially I don't know, but to many of us the simple, and best, recipe for a good pub is good beer, good landlord and leave it alone.

As predicted the guardians of our health, believing they have seen off smoking, are now turning their gaze on other aspects of our disreputable lifestyles. Obviously alcohol is high on the agenda, and there is now a call for price increases to discourage the consumption of 'very cheap' drink. Admittedly spirits are a fraction of the cost they used to be – had their price risen in line with inflation, big brand whisky or gin would be £50 or £60 a bottle – while, as we mention elsewhere, the supermarkets are piling beer high and selling it cheaply. However the Government needs to bear in mind, when in due course it is asked to raise alcohol duties, that whatever's happened elsewhere, the price of the pint in the pub has very much kept pace with inflation, or possibly outstripped it. Any duty increases here for the purpose of curbing drinking would be grossly unjust, and another blow to a very hard pressed industry.

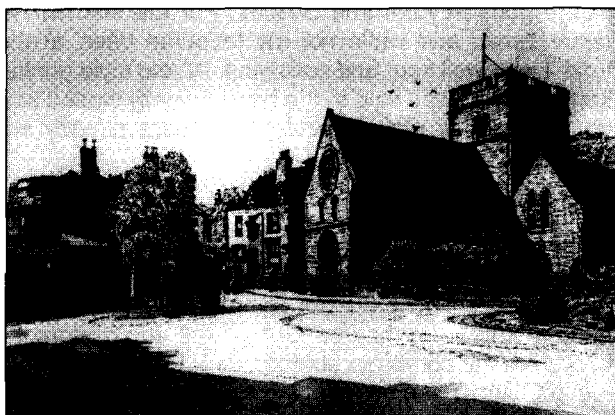
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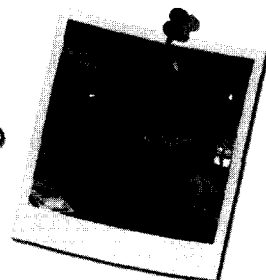
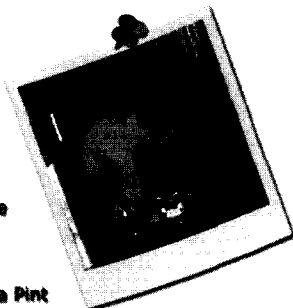
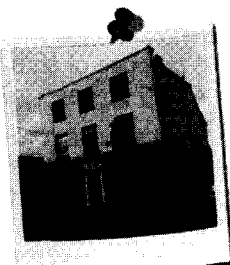
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18	Clarendon, Sandgate	50	Red Lion, Stodmarsh
21	Hare & Hounds, Northbourne	51	The Charity, Woodnesborough
21	Red Lion, Dover	53	Chambers, Folkestone
23	Mermaid, Bishopsbourne	55	Royal Oak, Capel le Ferne
25	Crown Inn, Finglesham	58	White Horse, Dover
28	The Fox, Temple Ewell	58	Berry, Walmer
31	Old Coach & Horses, Harbledown	59	St. Crispin Inn, Worth
35	The Plough, Ripple	61	Blue Pigeons
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THE EVILS OF DRINK (or Après the White Cliffs Festival)

(The story so far...following a day at the White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales Anne, Julian, friends and relations return to Finglesham)....

Lacking Anne's stamina, I was dropped off at home while she and our visitors headed to The Crown for yet more refreshment. "To bed" I decided, though once in the bedroom I reconsidered for a moment, never liking to miss out on pub time. Immediately after that fleeting thought I fell over backwards, and decided that home was the safest place to be. I would hit the sack even though it was only 6:30 in the evening. Some time later I woke up. The clock said 8:30. "Goodness", I thought, "I've been asleep for 14 hours!" My next thought was "Where's Anne? Where are Max and his friends? The dirty stop-outs - they've been out all night!" I looked out of the bedroom window - it was dark. "How could it be dark at 8:30 in the morning? Something awful must have happened... maybe it's some kind of nuclear winter?!" I turned on the radio - surely such a disaster would be featured on the news - it wasn't. I decided to go back to bed, still perplexed and worried. Ten minutes later I cottoned-on - it was 8:30 in the evening and I'd only been in bed two hours. Oh, the evils of drink!

Julian McIlroy

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