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



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Issue 34
Winter
2007/08

CHANNEL DRAUGHT



INSIDE

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How a once great
British institution is
being slowly
undermined

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pubs once found in
this Dover street

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**NEW GUIDE TO
EAST KENT PUBS
BY BUS IS
LAUNCHED**
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**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

**The Diamond Pub Guide
2007 - 2008**

Real Ale



in association with
 **Stagecoach** in East Kent

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CHANNEL DRAUGHT

ISSUE 34
Winter 2007/08

Happy new year and welcome to our winter 2007/8 edition of Channel Draught.

Should you find the contents somewhat gloomy we make no apologies, as public houses are going through one of the toughest periods most landlords can remember. Beer consumption is at its lowest since the depression of the 1930s and almost half of that is now drunk away from the pub. With the financial lure of alternative use, the smoking ban, higher malt and hop prices and now the attack from health campaigners, it is some wonder that anyone wants to enter, or stay in the business at all, and we are indebted to those hardy individuals who keep it going. However we see no advantage in sticking our heads in the sand and we devote a fair bit of this issue to detailing the various threats and problems currently facing pubs and real ale.

On the brighter side, there is plenty of good ale around, and despite our qualms about the future of the public house we are able to report on three new establishments in this issue. There are at least five real ale festivals arranged over the next few months (see Branch Diary), the first being our own 15th White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales on Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd of February – doors open Friday at 1pm. For those wanting to get out and about we have just published the Diamond Pub Guide, in conjunction with local bus operator Stagecoach (see Tony's Tappings).

We also continue our recent series of articles on the history of local public houses. In this edition Paul Skelton provides a very interesting piece about Biggin Street and its pubs over the years, including photographs of some that those of us old enough recall from our youth.

Martin Atkins (Editor)

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EVENTS DIARY

Fri 1st & Sat 2nd February	White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales, Dover Town Hall
Sat 16 th February	Diamond Route Bus Crawl, further details from the branch website
Mon 18 th February	Branch Meeting, Dublin Man o' War, River, Dover.
Wed 20 th February	Daddlums (Kentish Table Skittles) Evening - Louis Armstrong, Dover 8pm
Fri 22nd & Sat 23rd February	Berry Beer Festival*, Walmer with Branch Social Sat pm
	Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club Beer Festival* – see local news for details
Sat 15 th March	Deal Sea Front Walk starting at Dunkerleys, midday
Mon 17 th March	Branch Meeting, Three Horse Shoes, Mongeham
Thurs 20 th to Mon 24 th March	Beer Festival*, The Chambers, Cheriton Place, Folkestone
Good Fri & Easter	
Sat 21 st & 22 nd March	'Planet Thanet Festival' The Winter Gardens, Margate.
Mon 21 st April	Deal, Dover, Sandwich & Dist. AGM followed by Branch Meeting at the Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club, Dover

Branch meetings are normally held every third Monday of each month and start at 7.30pm.
For full details about pub strolls, please email john.pitcher@ic24.net or call 01304 214153.

Events marked * are not organised by CAMRA

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

The Threat To Your Pint

In the summer of 2006 a report was received by the European Commission on the health and social impact of alcohol, which was intended to form the basis of its alcohol strategy. Although never implemented it proposed warning labels, restricted advertising and a 10% duty rise, suggestions that are now being replicated by the newly formed Alcohol Health Alliance (see National News) and which recur consistently. Last year Patricia Hewitt, while Labour Health Secretary, called for 10p on a pint, and Ian Duncan Smith's Conservative Party working group proposed 7p. Only the naïve would imagine that all this is unconnected, or that the Alcohol Health Alliance just happened together over the last few months.

As part of the powerful health lobby, already deeply entrenched amongst our legislators, the Alliance will have ready influence with Government. Witness the ease with which anti-smoking legislation is being rolled out across Europe, or the EC's entrusting of the above report to a body closely linked to a temperance group whose mission is "to spread the principles of total abstinence from alcoholic drinks". Apparently, half the Alcohol Health Alliance's 24 members are similar hard line teetotal bodies. Particularly disturbing is talk of a "war on alcohol" and of introducing into the campaign "passive drinking" – the knock-on social effects of booze.

It's difficult to believe that the Alliance's relatively modest initial proposals represent the full extent of its objectives. A 10% duty rise and warning labels would seem unlikely to deter even one binge drinker, and it's a reasonable assumption that these are seen as just first

steps towards making alcohol *very* expensive, and giving it the same pariah status as tobacco. Already campaigners have trailed possible very large increases – £2 or so on a bottle of wine, and the price of a pint at anything from £3.50 to £7. Whether such would be a solution is doubtful. Those already prepared to pay £5 or £6 a pint for alcopops in a pub would be able to absorb substantial increases in supermarket prices, while the alternatives offered by bootleggers and drug dealers would become increasingly competitive.

For the traditional local, however, with beer prices as high as ever, it would be curtains. This would result in the fine irony of leaving those around which bingeing revolves, the supermarkets, off-licences and anonymous city centre boozers, relatively unscathed, while destroying the very institution with the best chance of imposing control. It would also, of course, as seriously degrade the lifestyle of the responsible 95%. Rather than reaching for the blunt instrument and laying out all around, innocent and guilty alike, a more just and civilised approach would see a return to the wisdom of earlier generations and the re-establishment of the public house at the heart of the licensed trade.

CAMRA must put its full weight behind opposing this threat to our culture and individual freedom. It must clearly establish that despite its dangers, alcohol, on balance, does far more good than harm and that the most predictable outcome of campaigns such as this will be very few pubs and probably no real ale.

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The Local News

Contributors - Martin Atkins, Anne McIlroy, Roger Marples, John Pitcher, Tony Wells, Andrew Bushby, Malcolm Birt and Di Jones etc.

Please note that any views expressed herein are those of the contributors and are not necessarily those of this branch or CAMRA Ltd

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

channeldraught.pubnews@virgin.net

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

DOVER

The decimation of the town's pubs continues apace. The housing development on the site of the **Primrose** is well under way, as is the conversion of the **Westbury** into flats, while at Aycliffe we understand the **King Lear** is now closed and awaiting its turn, permission having been granted for the erection of flats and houses. In Folkestone Road the **Orange Tree**, also earmarked for housing redevelopment, has been boarded up now for what seems like years (probably is), and the **Engineer** at the other end remains closed, although the FOR SALE sign has long gone and the external lights mysteriously turned on, a few weeks before Christmas. Also long gone are the days of Barney and Chrissie at the **Falstaff** when the pub carried five real ales and there was often standing room only. Reopened last spring with much razzmatazz and a change of name (the **Finest Hour** – yet to materialise), it is now closed again and joined, at the time of writing, by the **Prince of Orange**, New Street, where apparently the last tenant had

had enough, locked up, and went.

However all is not gloom. At the **Golden Lion**, Priory Place, Rab and Teresa still pulling a wide selection of real ales through the handpumps: the last few months of 2007 including among others Jennings Cumberland Ale, Greene King Abbot and IPA, Fuller's London Pride, Everard's Original, Palmer's Copper Ale, Cameron's Strongarm, Caledonian 80/-, Bath Barnstormer, Hydes Atomic, Old Peculier and Brakspear's Bitter.

Park Inn, Ladywell: Ex Boar's Head landlord Dave Hicklin seems now well settled in. Regular music events, bands, karaoke, discos, etc. are a feature, while real ale on the pub's two remaining handpumps is normally Spitfire and 6X.

Louis Armstrong, Maison Dieu Rd: Hopdaemon Skrimshander is now well established as house bitter, and well outsells the Bass that it replaced. Standard line up now includes at least one guest as well, normally Kentish, but Jackie still supports her old regulars from further afield such as Burton Bridge and Grand Union.

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Of the Kent breweries, Gadds Seaside and No. 5, both prove most popular, while an "experiment" in November in the shape of a firkin of reworked Gadds Dark (4% mild) was equally successful. In recent months beers from Westerham, now delivering locally, have been added to the list and sold well – so far British Bulldog and the Christmas ale, God's Wallop (both 4.3%). It might be of interest in some quarters that the pump clip for the latter carries the words: "The Fairtrade Mark guarantees that the sugar in this beer meets international Fairtrade standards." As a contrast to Dover's original live music venue the **Red Lion** a couple of hundred yards along the road is more traditional with two cosy bars and normally Bombardier and Greene King IPA on handpump.

Gadds Dark was also a success at **Blakes**, which along with the White Horse offers plenty of choice in the Castle St area. Blakes once again had a barrel of Goacher's challenging 1066 Old Ale in the cellar just before Christmas. At 6.7% it starts to fall into the cider strength category, not recommended for drivers in more than a half at a time, with a couple of pints in danger of placing you within the Government's definition of binge drinking. Goacher's, of course, also supplies Blakes with its house beer, Blakes Bitter, as good a pint of ordinary bitter as you will find anywhere, as well as the highly distinctive Crown Imperial Stout. Other regular suppliers include Northumberland with their Spooner-like brews (e.g. Bucking Fastard and Wucking Mords Fuddled) and, again, Westerham. Around the corner from

Blakes the **Castle**, Russell St., for a long time only offering keg, has for the last few months reinstated a handpump. A variety of real ales has been tried with some success and the dedicated support of a neighbouring trombonist.

Meanwhile the **White Horse** maintains its normal eclectic selection. Regular suppliers include York, Moorhouse, RCH, Titanic (Captain Smith didn't last long) and Stonehenge whose Heel Stone and Old Smokey seemed particularly well liked. Standard bitter remains Timothy Taylor Landlord. Christmas, as usual, found a variety of seasonally named winter beers – Robinson's Mr Scrooge, Moorhouse Santa's Piste, York Winter Wobbler, etc. – one particularly notable beer being Pandamonium



Bob Adams

from Beartown, strangely sweetish and dark. A big event before Christmas was the celebration by Bob Adams, White Horse stalwart and printer of this newsletter, of attaining pensioner status -

Sunday evening December 9th found a well crowded pub, copious quantities of food and drink consumed and vintage rock 'n' roll from Buddy G.

Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club:

The club has a beer festival arranged for Saturday 23rd February (12.00 – 23.00ish), featuring Kentish Micros, but there is a strong possibility that the festival will start the day before at

18.00. They are hoping to have a small folk group on Saturday evening. Card carrying CAMRA members will be admitted (free of charge), although the club retains the right to refuse admission. They will be signed into the club, to satisfy legal requirements. Good quality rolls of home cured ham, salt beef and farmhouse cheese will be on sale. For further enquiries – please ring the club on 206262.

Eagle, London Rd: Still mainly sticking with Nelson for real ale the pub takes the odd beer from elsewhere, a recent notable example being a fine dark stout (4.8% ABV) from Hart Brewery – most delicious. Christmas, however, it was back to Nelson on all pumps, including a particularly fine dry porter, Pursers Pussy at 5.1%. Elsewhere in London Rd. the **Sportsman** normally carries Ruddles Best and the **Kingfisher** opposite, Greene King IPA. However at present there is no real ale at either the **Old Endeavour** or **Bull**.

DEAL

Two new pubs headline the news from Deal in this issue.

Courtyard, Sondes Rd: Advertising itself as Oyster House and Restaurant, this is the most recent enterprise of Mike and Johann, who are probably best known in Dover for Cullins Yard. It has been open for several months, and we understand proving quite a success. We haven't much information on real ale, although we hear Adnams is available.

Smith & Jones Ride Into Town. Barracuda Group who operate 200

pubs and restaurants across the country are planning to open a Smith & Jones outlet at the former Job Centre, 18-20 Queen St. The style is modern with lots of wood in evidence, and food as a major element – the group having won “awards for quality of food and extensiveness of menu” and being renowned for its “notable wine list”. We have no information on real ale policy, but Barracuda appear keen to imply that this is a fairly restrained operation, the application stating that, “We do not use DJs and the loudest noise in a Smith & Jones is the sound of people talking,” which should appeal to some of our branch members, then.

Bohemian, Beach St: Excellent news from Deal Seafront, where we are informed that the Bohemian now has seven real ale pumps on at the same time. There are also perry and cider pumps. Some lagers have gone to make way, although Leffe Blonde & Brune remain along with Budvar dark. There is also Sierra Nevada on draft – “not a real ale but nearest to it”, our correspondent informs us, and he voted top marks to Adnams Old Ale “gorgeous, and a new addition at Adnams apparently, it is to be re-ordered!” Sounds just the stuff to ward off Deal's notoriously biting winter east winds. Bo-Ho is the new in-house 3.8 session ale, specially brewed for the Bohemian by the Nelson Brewery. Landlord John accepts that he may have to throw some away in the early weeks but he is convinced he can build up sales to justify the almost doubling of pumps. He says he now has customers travelling to the Bohemian from other

towns for the different real ales and imported lager and beers he offers - not just for the food.

Hole In The Roof, Queen St: Perhaps tending to be rather ignored by the real ale fraternity, this pub is a very consistent performer. A long time outlet for Courage Directors it has more recently been selling Summer Lightning as well, both normally to be found in very good condition. At the **Strand**, High St. it appears that problems with the conversion of the upper floors to 12 flats now seem to have been resolved, and permission was finally granted in November. However the application for conversion to two dwellings and erection of four houses, at the **New Plough**, Middle Deal Rd., reported in the last issue, has subsequently been with-

drawn, but as far as we know the pub remains closed .

Ship Inn, Middle St: Three of the pub's five handpumps now appear continuously devoted to Gadds ales, Nos 3 and 7 and Seaside being the preferred selection of late. Master Brew is now nowhere to be seen; the other two beers are regularly Deuchar's IPA and Old Speckled Hen. The **Prince Albert**, by contrast, offers a wider range - Cottage, Westerham and Nelson featuring regularly, with a pint of the latter's Pieces of Eight in early December being rated by one of our members as among the best beers they've ever tasted. Other recent ales have included Dark Star Porter, Hydes Rocking Robin, and from the West Country Bath Festivity, Smiles Best and Wadworth's Henry IPA.



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Three Horseshoes, Great Mongeham: Alison and Graham have amended their real ale policy, having found their customers enjoy variety. Instead of steady regulars such as Gadds No. 5 and Greene King IPA they are now offering an ever changing selection. Late November saw Gadds No. 7 and Flowers IPA.

RURAL

Chequers, West Hougham: The pub having been enclosed by wire mesh fences, some months ago, with notices implying that building work was underway, the inevitable has now happened and an application for the its demolition and the erection of five houses has now been submitted to Dover District Council. The applicants claim that the pub is a "non-viable business which could no longer be sustained within the village", and which had been marketed without success as a "going concern" for over six months. Many might think that as the Chequers has been closed since October 2006, there wasn't a lot of "going" going on, unless it was the departure of the last licensees, while those who had visited the pub during their tenure might also have felt that it didn't offer an awful lot to drag people out of Dover or off the main road, or even the local inhabitants out of their houses. A very different prospect than Stephanie Philips' occupancy during the 1990s. A cynic might well speculate that its biggest disadvantage as a functioning pub lay in its development potential. Meanwhile the nearby **Marquis of Granby** in Alkham shows how it can be done. Having seen a change of landlord

last spring the pub is now in line for a major refurbishment, (see Tony's Tappings).

Way Out Inn, Westmarsh: Another of our closed rural pubs, and no signs at present of re-opening. In fact we hear that in early December a new sign appeared in the window stating "The name of this building has been changed to Rose Garden". Any further news gratefully received. No further news from the **Butcher's Arms**, Ashley which remains closed and presumably up for sale, but we understand that owners of the **Endeavour** at Wootton intend to return it to pub use, in due course – whenever that might be.

Charity, Woodnesborough: Once again we wish Jenny and Peter Clayton farewell. Due to leave last Spring following differences with their owners, they actually stayed until New Year. Renowned for good value food, a friendly atmosphere and well-kept ale, including cask conditioned mild (Ansells), they will be greatly missed, and we wish them well. Peter, however, plans to maintain his links with the trade, servicing handpumps (contact 07855 593436). At the time of writing we don't know if mild will remain at the pub. Ironically, of our other regular mild outlets, the **Yew Tree**, Barfreestone, is currently closed seeking a new landlord, Chris Cruse having to relinquish the lease at the end of the year through ill health, while at Eastry the **Five Bells** ceased taking it as standard last year, although they have been selling some interesting ales of late. As well as the more regular Bass and Greene King IPA recent months have seen Hob-

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goblin, Theakston's Best and a particularly excellent barrel of Bateman's XXXB.

Black Pig, Barnsole, Staple: Having seemingly sold nothing but Shepherd Neame ales for years its apparently now all change at the Black Pig. A visit in early November found Summer Lightning, Landlord and Woodforde's Wherry on the handpumps, and not a sign of Master Brew, Spitfire or anything else from Faversham. Subsequent information informs us that the pub has been bought by Punch. Staple's other pub, the **Three Tuns**, is largely devoted to Greene King ales, IPA as standard plus one other – in October/November this was Ruddles Hedgerow. However it is also a regular, and very welcome outlet for Gadds No 5.

Hare & Hounds, Northbourne: Usually four or five ales available with Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter and Hancock's HB featuring regularly along with the likes of Adnams Broadside and Bitter, Theakston's and Titanic.

Rose, Wickhambreaux: The pub had three real ales in late November, including one from the Arundel Brewery, while the nearby **Duke William** at Ickham, closed for a period last winter, now seems back on track, even though it appears to have lost the cosiness of former years. Four real ales – at last visit London Pride, Adnams, Master Brew and Harveys Sussex. At Preston the **Half Moon and Seven Stars** maintains Master Brew and Greene King as standard fare plus a guest – recently these

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included Cameron's Strongarm and Jennings' World's Biggest Liar, the latter presumably brewed for the annual Cumbrian story telling contest. The **Rising Sun** a few miles down the road in East Stourmouth was offering Master Brew and Lees Ruddy Glow in late November.

SANDWICH

Admiral Owen, Sandwich: As reported in our Autumn issue, and Tony's Tappings this issue, the pub has changed hands. As well as providing a traditional outlet for real ale, it also benefits from parties of golfers and wedding guests, staying at the Bell, who cross the road for the real ale and the real pub experience! The venue for our November Branch Meeting, the beer range has remained one of the best in Sandwich - choice in late October/November including London Pride, Hobgoblin, Butcombe Gold and Palmer's Copper Ale.

Market Inn, Sandwich: There is a persistent rumour that the Sheps House is to change hands shortly. The smoking ban has hit them hard, with both doors opening directly onto busy roads.

Greyhound, Sandwich: Still boarded up and now being offered for sale. Local opinion believes it's destined for conversion to flats, and with a freehold price of £450,000 being sought, it would seem a not unreasonable assumption. If it does go it would be another disappointing end to what was once a good town centre pub. With wooden panelling and traditional bench seating, it was once the town's

only Courage outlet – how long ago all that now seems.

The other hostelries remain much the same. Live Music at the **New Inn** and the **Fleur** is always popular, with the latter still maintaining its real ale regime of Greene King IPA and Wadworth's 6X plus guest – including last Autumn Arundel ASB, Cropton Endeavour, Freeminer Tormentor and Dark Star Original. The **Red Cow**, **George and Dragon** and **Kings Arms** are very food-orientated, with the **Crispin** seemingly a hybrid establishment, neither pub nor restaurant, and advertising itself as a 'Tex Mex'. Still devoted to Adnams but never looking over-patronised it might be regretting its wholesale transfiguration a few years ago. Across the road the bar at the **Bell** attracts customers on fine days as they have a large outdoor seating/smoking area, but otherwise custom appears to be mainly Hotel residents.

CANTERBURY

New Inn, Havelock St: We hear that pub has agreed a change of hands, or is about to, as a going concern. If true, this is excellent news, and somewhat encouraging, after the disappearance in recent years of its three neighbouring pubs - the **Royal Dragoon** and **Brewers Delight** to housing, and the **Leopard's Head** to a pizzeria (or whatever they're called).

Malkins, Bridge: Those of us who had noticed that the former Skippers restaurant was closed and undergoing refurbishment need wonder no more about what was planned. The

property has now reopened as a wine bar and bistro called Malkins – presumably the saucy looking serving wench type depicted on the sign. Obviously still heavily foody, the operation does appear to have a proper bar and welcomes those who want just a drink. Real ale so far appears limited to Master Brew. Opposite the **Plough & Harrow** was selling porter from mid/late November: a pleasingly traditional village local, one hopes Sheps leaves it just as it is.

FOLKESTONE

Ship, Sandgate: The longest pub in East Kent usually keeps half a dozen real ales and a couple of ciders. One November Friday evening, Gadds Storm Warning and Old Peculier hav-

ing been on and gone, this reporter tried Abbot Reserve, seemingly a new winter brew from Greene King at 6%+ ABV. Not bad but not as good as their Strong Suffolk, which we wrote about last issue.

Clarendon, Sandgate: With a real fire, several bars and an old fashioned wooden bar servery complete with clock and an impressive range of spirits and liqueurs this must be close to many people's image of the perfect traditional pub. Owned by Shepherd Neame it usually offers three or four real ales – Master Brew, Spitfire, plus Sheps seasonal brew and likely a choice from Kent Best, Bishops Finger or one of their new micro ales. Meanwhile licensee Henry has other ambitions, and having bought the

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Three Mariners in Hythe from his current landlord, is busy converting it to a first class real ale outlet.

Shamrock & Thistle, George Lane: The former George or Chequer appears destined to be another casualty of modern times, an application having been submitted to convert from public house to mixed use including artist's studios, private gallery, ancillary living accommodation and ground floor retail unit.

In the Bayle, dark ales have shown particular prominence recently. Bate-man's very tasty Salem Porter (4.7% ABV) appeared at least twice at the **British Lion** while in mid January the **Guildhall** was selling the superb Ad-nams Old (4.1% ABV). The nearby **Pullman** has been undergoing renovation while remaining open and at last visit was offering two real ales, Greene King IPA and Hobgoblin, although its handpumps have been reduced to three.

Three Mackerel, The Stade: We admit that when Harveys Sussex appeared in the latest incarnation of the old Oddfellows our thoughts corresponded with those of Oscar Wilde on an ill-advised marriage – a triumph of hope over experience. However the ultra modern harbour side bar stayed with real ale all last year and at last visit had added Old Speckled Hen to the selection; more power to their elbow, or at least their customers'. At the **Mariner** and the **Ship** the choice remains with London Pride and Greene King ales.

In Tontine St. the **Brewery Tap** appears closed but the **Princess Royal** next to Bayle Steps appears to be

continuing its revival reported on in our last issue. In mid January it was selling Sheps Porter alongside Master Brew.

Valiant Sailor: Last time we looked at this pub it was selling just the single real ale. However, in late November there was a choice of London pride, 6X and Master Brew. The **White Lion**, Cheriton is still bricked up, while the **Two Bells**, Canterbury Rd. and the **Martello**, Dover Rd. are both still closed with no sign of any change. Opposite the latter, the **Raglan** had Sheps Kent Best on the handpumps at last visit.

There was a superb range of beers at the **Lifeboat** one Sunday in January - Landlord, Bombardier, Rosy Nosey, Cains Victorian Beer (6% ABV) and Acorn Old Moor Porter, with Harvey's Sussex apparently having run out. The Cains was delicious and deceptive, tasting nothing like its advertised strength. Meanwhile the redecorated **East Cliff** normally offers one or two real ales. A visit in November found Crouch Vale Best, superb, and Cottage Rocket while mid January saw more Cottage with Merry Hound at 4.2% ABV.

LATE NEWS

With regard to local cider outlets please note that the **Montefiore Arms**, Ramsgate sells Biddenden medium dry (8.45 ABV).

Broomfield Orchard at Herne (01227 362279) is a new cider producer in East Kent. Run by Robert Riley and his wife. They have been producing cider for about two years, and offer sweet, medium and dry. More details in our Spring Issue.

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TONY'S TAPPINGS

The perambulations and musings
of our Pubs Officer, Tony Wells

Drinker's thought of the day:- "The church is near but the road is icy. The pub is far away but I will walk carefully". Russian Proverb

GOT ANY NEWS?

We have a new email address for you to send in information about pubs and beer in our branch:- pubs.officer@camra-dds.org.uk. More on using this email address in my tappings below.

BUS GUIDE TO REAL ALE IN OUR BRANCH

On Wednesday, December 12th we launched a guide to the real ale pubs on the Diamond Bus route.

The Diamond Bus route is a great way to visit the real ale pubs in our branch, particularly those in rural areas, without having to worry about drinking and driving, and with a Day Explorer ticket at currently £5.00, it's particularly cost effective.



Developed in partnership with Stagecoach East Kent, the guide lists over 100 real ale pubs within a 500m (5 mins) walk of a bus stop on the Diamond Bus route (services 13, 14, 15, 88 and 89). Our aim is to promote real ale and real ale pubs in the area, while encouraging the use of the local bus services provided by Stagecoach.

With the Thanet Loop and Triangle Route, the Diamond Pub Guide is the third real ale guide to be produced by CAMRA and Stagecoach covering bus routes in East Kent. Copies will be distributed to local real ale pubs, bus offices, tourist offices and libraries and will shortly be available on our website. You can also get a copy of the guide by sending a stamped addressed envelope to Out-span, The Street, Finglesham, Deal, Kent, CT14 0ND.

To celebrate the release of the guide, a real ale and cider



day out by bus has been organised for Saturday, 16th February 2008. More details are available from our website at www.camra-dds.org.uk.

“SO, WHY ISN'T MY PUB FEATURED IN CHANNEL DRAUGHT?”

This is a common complaint I receive from many publicans when I am out and about. In general, the mention of a pub in Channel Draught depends on whether we have anything interesting to report about that pub, and could be anything from a particularly good or interesting beer, a change in beers or landlord, or perhaps they are holding an event, such as a beer festival.

If we haven't heard anything or there is nothing to report about a pub, then that pub won't get a mention. Most of our information comes from a very small group of active branch members who mail in news and other information to the Channel Draught editorial team and myself. However, this group can't really be expected to visit every pub, so we have to rely on other sources of information – yourselves!!

If you have anything to report, such as a change in beers, a particularly good seasonal beer, an event, or a pub refurbishment then let us know. You can send your information by snail mail to Pubs Officer, Outspan, The Street, Finglesham, Deal, Kent, CT14 0ND or email it to pubs.officer@camra-dds.org.uk.

Finally, and to put a stop to these complaints, here's a list of all the 119 real ale pubs in our branch in no particular order:

Bell Inn; Blakes of Dover; Castle Inn; Chance Inn; Cinque Ports Arms; Coastguard; Crown & Sceptre; Cullin's Yard; Eight Bells; Hare & Hounds; Marquis of Granby; Plough; Red Lion; Royal Oak; White Horse; Boar's Head; Bricklayers Arms; Britannia; Cricketers; Crown Inn; Dew Drop Inn; Dublin Man O' War; Eagle Inn; First and Last; Flagship; Fox; Golden Lion; High & Dry; Hope Inn; Hope Inn; Lord Nelson; Louis Armstrong; Lydden Bell; Malvern Inn; Park Inn; Prince Albert; Red Lion; Royal Oak; Smugglers; Sportsman; Three Cups; Ugly Duckling; Volunteer Inn; Chequers; Coach & Horses; New Inn; Plough Inn; Lord Clyde; Port Arms; Railway Hotel; Blue Pigeons; Lord Nelson; King's Head; Three Horse Shoes; Hare & Hounds; St. Crispin Inn; Prince Albert; Deal Hoy; Magnet Inn; Five Bells; King's Head; Telegraph; Ship Inn; Crown Inn; Leather Bottle; Zetland Arms; Rising Sun; Thompson's Bell; Mill Inn; Bowling Green Tavern; Strand; Alma; Saracen's Head; Red Cow; Crispin Inn; Charity Inn; Admiral Owen; George & Dragon; Five Bells; Yew Tree; Half Moon & Seven Stars; Dog & Duck Inn; Fitzwalter Arms; Anchor Inn; Bull Inn; Frog & Orange; Royal Oak; Bohemian; Jackdaw Inn; Old Lantern Inn; Three Tuns Inn; Railway Bell; Plough & Harrow; Swingate Inn; Dog Inn; Red Lion; Stag; Market Inn; New Inn; Fleur de Lis; King's Arms; Blazing Donkey; Rising Sun; Three Compasses; Royal Hotel; Hole in the Roof; Dunkerleys Hotel; Clarendon Hotel; Griffins Head; Lighthouse Inn; Black Pig; Sportsman; Duke of York; Place Brasserie; Marine Court; Berry; King's Arms Hotel;

If we've left anyone out let us know, but for the rest you've now all been mentioned at least once.

And now the news I have received...

Admiral Owen, Sandwich. The Admiral Owen recently changed hands. The new tenants are Barry, originally a hydraulic engineer, and Yvonne (+ 2 kids and dog!) They haven't run a pub before, but with the help of their staff, Cally the Chef and Jen the barmaid they're fast getting the hang of it. They say that they don't intend to change the basics with real ale being the major seller. One immediate improvement is the re-use of the open fire which gives such a lovely feel to the place.

Half Moon and Seven Stars, Preston. A visit at the end of what appeared to be a boisterous lunchtime found Greene King IPA, Master Brew and a very good pint of Cameron's Strong Arm. An unusual menu option was the Suckling Pig meal for 8 at £18.00 a head.

Marquis of Granby, Alkham. As far as we are aware the intended month or two closure for refurbishment is currently under way. It will be substantial, including B&B facilities for five rooms, and extensions to the bar and kitchen. Adnams Bitter and Harvey's Sussex Best selling particularly well, plus guests.

Dog & Duck, Plucks Gutter. New managers, who have been there about 4 months. Over Christmas they traditionally run a money-raising event for charity, this year it was for Riding for the Disabled at Cobbs Meadow. The Morris Minors Club also meets there on the 2nd Monday of each month

Berry, Walmer. Chris has a beer festival planned for the weekend of the 23rd February to which we are organising a branch get-together (see Branch Diary). For anyone with a musical talent, the Walmer, Deal & Sandwich Guitar & Musicians Club holds an open session at The Berry every Thursday evening at 8.30pm. All levels of ability are welcome. For more information contact Nigel Lines, 07747 148443

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The National News

By Martin Atkins

CALL FOR 10% RISE IN DUTY

November saw the launch of the Alcohol Health Alliance, a grouping of 24 health bodies and charities fronted by the Royal College of Physicians, to lobby for tighter regulation of alcohol. Their initial objectives are as follows:-

- Dedicated funding for alcohol treatment
- Increased taxation on alcohol
- No advertising before 9pm on TV and in cinemas with 18-rated films
- Health warnings on promotional material
- The drink-driving limit to be reduced to the EU standard of 0.5g/l, and near-zero for new drivers

Unsurprisingly the most controversial aspect of the above, is the suggested duty increase, which for the moment has been set at 10%. Royal College of Physicians President, Professor Ian Gilmore, commented: "Research from across the world shows a direct link between affordability of alcohol and level of consumption. Raising the tax on alcohol would help reduce our consumption, and reduce the future burden of ill-health from alcohol misuse, while generating more funding for treatment services. This is a win-win for the nation's health." Currently alcohol generates £10 to £12 billion in taxes annually, while the NHS spends about £3 billion on alcohol related problems, with 28,000 hospital admissions and 22,000 premature deaths a year.

The proposals have understandably drawn stiff criticism from the industry.

"None of the remedies...would have any effect whatsoever," said a British Beer and Pub Association spokesman, and would be countering the campaign using "its long standing arguments...based on actual evidence" as the means to tackle alcohol misuse. While its director of communications, Mark Hastings, described the new lobbying as one of the most "concerted and sustained threats to its commercial viability ever... it's absolutely essential that our industry gears up for what is going to be a considerable battle." He also claimed that many anti-smoking lobbyists were now focusing on alcohol – "the same skills set, the same tactics, the same people".

There is a certain disquiet at Westminster, too, where the health lobbyists have considerable connections. Robert Humphreys, secretary of the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group claimed that in Parliament there was "a body of new puritanism, which is quite sinister", a feeling complemented by some of the Alliance's own rhetoric. References to the new "war on alcohol", and the "crusade against tobacco" set the tone. Ian Gilmore expected a far more difficult fight than that which saw smoking banned, and Leeds health chief Tony Goodall, noting the effectiveness of the passive smoking argument, wondered if a case could be developed for "passive drinking", or the knock-on social effects of alcohol.

Apparently, the policy of using price to solve a perceived alcohol problem originates with the World Health

Organisation, although there seems little evidence in fact to justify it. Britain, regarded as having a major problem, has the second highest level of duty in Europe, while Scandinavia, with its famously high alcohol prices, compares unfavourably with the traditionally low priced Mediterranean. We comment elsewhere on the knock on effect of duty increases on illegal drugs and bootlegging and the ordinary pub.

DRINK GUIDELINES "PLUCKED OUT OF THE AIR"

Ironically, the launch of the Alcohol Health Alliance coincides with the revelation that the guidelines on safe alcohol consumption limits, 21 units for men and 14 for women - first introduced in 1987 and which have shaped alcohol health policy in Britain ever since - were "plucked out of the air" as an "intelligent guess". The disclosure came from Richard Smith, a former Editor of the British Medical Journal, and a member of the Royal College of Physicians working party that produced the guidelines. Apparently the committee's epidemiologist had confessed that lack of data made it impossible to say what was safe and what wasn't, however the members of the working party were so concerned about damage caused by heavy, long-term drinking that they felt obliged to produce guidelines.

All very understandable, perhaps, except that subsequent studies suggested that the safety limits should be raised and may be actually harmful at the levels set: one found that men drinking between 21 and 30 units of alcohol a week had the lowest mortality rate in Britain, while another concluded that a man would have to drink 63 units

a week, or a bottle of wine a day, to face the same risk of death as a teetotaler. Further studies have backed up such findings although, admittedly, there have been others that have suggested that anything above a minimal level of alcohol is dangerous. However, health ministers have consistently ignored all such findings and stuck to the 1987 figures.

All of this suggests that no one really knows, except that very heavy drinking doesn't do you any good. However the weight of evidence does seem to support a moderate level of consumption as beneficial. What, of course, is particularly worrying is that Governments and health campaigners, appear automatically to hang the "demon drink" label on alcohol, even to the extent of promulgating advice that might actually be harmful.

NOT US GUV'

A Tesco spokesman described MP John Grogan's comments "as offensive as they are inaccurate", when the chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group labelled the supermarket chain's boss Terry Leahy as the "the godfather of binge-drinking", and added, "It's time he faced up to his responsibilities."

The spokesman continued, "They do nothing to inform the serious social debate on binge-drinking," he said. "Alcohol abuse is a serious concern to us all and we are playing a leading role in the efforts to tackle it. The vast majority of alcohol bought at Tesco forms part of the weekly family shop. We also know people tend to stock up on beers and wines for home use

during promotional periods and consequently buy less at other times."

However one of Tesco's convenience stores in south east London has had its licence withdrawn for several months, including the Christmas period, following evidence of selling to the underage, and many complaints of anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhood. The local authority involved was distinctly unimpressed by the supermarket's response when approached about the problem, which seemed uncooperative and casual.

BREWERS OPPOSE DUTY INCREASE AS BEER SALES FALL

Autumn 2007 has seen a dramatic fall in beer sales. Compared to 2006, September, October and November saw respectively, falls of 8.2%, 7.7% and 9.7%, with the smoking ban seen as the prime culprit, although with the exception of April 2006 no month over the last two years has seen any kind of increase. At the traditional pre-Budget briefing to the All-Party Parliamentary Beer Group, brewing industry leaders warned that any rise in duty would be the final straw for an industry already facing massive price increases in raw materials and energy. For the Society of Independent Brewers Keith Bott, head of Titanic Brewery, predicted that the price of malting barley would increase in January by £135 a tonne and similar rises could be expected for hops, "We genuinely believe we are facing the perfect storm. A higher duty rate will continue us on that path and will create an even greater gap between on- and off-trade."

Jonathan Neame, chief executive of Shepherd Neame will be leading this year's Budget submission to the Treasury and told MPs that the industry

would be calling for a freeze on duty. The rising level in beer duty over the last 10 years had virtually bled the industry dry, to the extent that it was actually generating for the Treasury far less than had been projected." While wine and spirits consumption is up, respectively by 46% and 20% since 1997, beer sales are 11% down over the same period, and at their lowest since the 1930s. Britons now drink about 9½ billion pints a year compared to over 12 billion at the peak in 1979. However beer duty has risen by 26% compared to 16% and 3% for wine and spirits.

CAMPAIGN FOR PENNY OFF DUTY

Meanwhile CAMRA is going one step further, and is actually calling for a cut in duty by one penny. This would not only lessen the effects of impending price rises but would be a fillip to the beleaguered brewers and licensees whose profits are being squeezed by falling sales.

TWO WAY DISPENSE FROM GK

In response to the sparkler argument Greene King has created a new blonde ale to be served through a dispense that offers either a northern style creamy head or southern style "flat" head. Called St. Edmunds, it is 4.2% ABV, and is brewed to be served at 6-7 C. If all that doesn't put you off Greene King's brewing MD Justin Adams commented, "The new beer and serve should help sell the ale as it combines the theatre of Guinness with the cool appeal of lager, it is served at bar level so drinkers can see it being poured with their choice of head. We want the nation to enjoy its spectacle before enjoying its tremendous taste."

DINGBATS

Here are some Dover landmarks described in pictures. For example:



EE



i.e. saint - mare - ees - church (St Mary's Church). Try to get these:

1 D



2 ee



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



e



Answers on Page 61



CIDER MATTERS

Welcome to another delve into the wonderful world of cider and perry. This time, I think I should start with a couple of apologies. Firstly, I had been including Addlestone's in the list of "real" ciders, but I'm told by CAMRA that it is made partly from juice concentrate, so out it goes into the wilderness of industrial cider! Secondly, it seems that my encouragement to go out and look for cider and perry in the wild didn't entirely work. So, if any of you found my attempts to avoid endorsing any particular pub frustrating rather than inspiring, I can only apologise.

On a more positive note, with the publication of the Diamond Bus Route pub guide, we now have the basis for that cider bus trip. As I understand it, we now intend to hold it on Saturday 16th February, with plenty of country pubs to visit by bus. For those of you who would rather stick to beer, every pub on the itinerary will be selling real ale as well, so we'll be inclusive rather than exclusive. Check out the branch website at www.camra-dds.org.uk for more details.

In the cider & perry directory in the last edition, I did refer to my local service station selling a good range of ciders. Not surprisingly, they sold out of Biddenden Monk's Delight quite quickly, so I can only guess how much quicker it would have been if I had actually told you which one it was. They aren't sure if or when they'll be getting more in stock, so feel free to go into the Priory Service Station at the bottom of Folkestone Road in Dover and suggest that they might like to get some more in sooner rather than later. Not surprisingly, they had plenty of the fizzy industrial stuff clogging up the shelves, but they did also have plenty of the ordinary Biddenden cider – medium and dry.

Unlike other branches, we're a bit limited for supermarkets in our area. Dover has Tesco, Sainsbury, M&S and also the Co-op in River, Deal has Sainsbury, M&S and Sainsbury, while Sandwich has a Co-op Pioneer. No Asda, Morrisons or Waitrose for us, then, and it might perk up the available beer and cider ranges if there were, as I can't say I'm over-impressed with our current choice. Beyond that of course there are off-licences, mostly now convenience stores, as the dedicated off-licences were hit hard by the beer runners in the 1990s and by supermarket discounting in recent years. Once again, there is much to be said for supporting your small local shops.

What has been happening in the online world of cider & perry? Not many festivals to go to this time of year, but the cidermakers have been busy preparing next year's product, so the online community has been concentrating more on the supply end of the chain. I missed a chance to help a local cidemaker a couple of months ago, so I'll have to make sure I don't miss the next chance!

Anyway, I hope I get to meet some of you on the bus trip in February, or maybe at the White Cliffs festival at the Town Hall a couple of weeks before. Wassail!

Applejack



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Kent Small Brewery News

By Roger Marples

Westerham Brewery Co. Ltd., Crockham Hill, Edenbridge 01732 864427

sales@westerhambrewery.co.uk

This brewery now delivers monthly to our area, and is seeking new outlets. Deliveries recently include the Berry, Blake's, Coastguard, Louis Armstrong, Prince Albert in Deal, and Yew Tree, Barfreestone. William Wilberforce Freedom Ale (4.3%), is to be launched for Free Trade Fortnight (25th Feb – 9th Mar). It will be amber in colour and contain a minimum of 20% free trade sugar from Malawi. A bottle conditioned version at 4.8% will be available from Waitrose. Another new brew is draught Pale Ale at 3.5%, Finchcock's Original.

Westerham Beers sources 96% of its hops from Kent. Target hops from the Hop Garden, Scotney Castle, Bramling Cross, Goldings, Progress and Whitbread Golding Variety from Finchcock's Hop Garden and Northdown from A C Hughes of Wingham. The malt is Maris Otter traditionally produced 'floor malt', from Warminster maltings.

P & DJ Goacher, Tovil, Maidstone 01622 682112

Goacher's celebrate 25 years in April, and will be producing a rare special ale, the recipe yet to be decided. 2007 was the best ever year for sales. The first brew of 1066 Old Ale has sold out, and a second batch is being considered. Locally it has been available in Blake's and The Bohemian, amongst others.

Ramsgate Brewery Ltd., Broadstairs 01843 580037

info@ramsgatebrewery.co.uk

A new beer, "Great Scot Peated Pale Ale", is being brewed for Burns Night and will be a name that positively rolls off the tongue. There should also be an Oatmeal Stout for February, and for March, East Kent Pale Ale. The excellent Gadd's Stout will be available at our Festival of Winter Ales. A new feature is for those with internet access www.gaddsbeershop.blogspot.com.

Nelson Brewing Co. Ltd., Chatham 01634 832828

sales@nelsonbrewingcompany.co.uk

New beer is Purser's Pussy Porter at 5.1%, brewed in the style of an old London porter, using Fuggles, Goldings and amber malt, while Shiver M' Timbers (4.7%) is being re-introduced. This brew has a 'hint' of brandy, and is described as medium dark and malty. Nelson beers can be found regularly at The Eagle, Dover, which keeps a constant range of 2-3 beers, and the Royal Oak, Capel. Folkestone ASDA sells a range of five bottle conditioned Nelson beers and, illustrating the changing habits of drinkers, sales of bottled beers have increased from 5% of sales to 30%.

We have nothing to report from **Hopdaemon** at Newnham (01795 892078 hopdaemon@supanet.com), except that Tonie is extremely busy, and no information from **Whitstable Brewery**, Grafty Green (01622 851007 whitstablebrewer@btconnect.com), despite attempts to contact by e-mail and phone.



PUBS ON THE ROPES

It might appear somewhat incongruous to bemoan the plight of the public house in the same newsletter as we announce that three more have just opened (see Local News). It might seem equally at odds with the view provided by the media and Government, with their unending concern about “binge drinking”, or the opinion you might form after taking a turn around any town or city centre on a Friday or Saturday night. However, CAMRA's research shows that nationally 56 pubs are closing every month, and while unthinkable twenty years ago, a question mark must now hang over the future of this much-loved part of British life; not perhaps the country inns with large food trade or the big town centre boozers, but the traditional local, once the backbone of the industry. Already having to contend with alternative leisure pursuits and the attractions of other uses (just de-licensing and converting to a house can up the value by a third, half, or even more), public houses are now on the receiving end of ridiculously cheap supermarket beer, a general fall in beer consumption and serious campaigning by the health lobby.

Beer Drinking Declining



While wine and spirit consumption has risen substantially in recent years, beer sales have declined by about 25% since the peak year of 1979. Equally critically for pubs, whereas then 80% was drunk in the pub, now it's just over half. The calculation is simple – beer consumed on licensed premises is, by volume, well under half that consumed just 30 years ago. Ironically, however, duty on beer has gone up by 26% since 1997 compared to 16% and 3% respectfully for wines and spirits, and the British Beer and Pubs association is calling for a complete freeze. Meanwhile, discounted supermarket beer, the infamous 22p can of lager, etc., is seen as not only competing with pubs' own sales at 10+ times the price, but by encouraging “pre-loading” (drinking at home before going out) is also acting as a fuel

for binge drinking, the negative connotations of which reflect on the good and bad pubs alike.

The Competition Commission Washes Its Hands

Any hopes of assistance from the regulatory bodies seem to have been dashed by the Competition Commission's recent provisional report into the grocery market. Contrary to what many might feel their own observations indicated, it felt that below-cost selling by supermarkets, although existing, had no significant impact on other local businesses – e.g. pubs. With specific reference to alcohol Peter Freeman, the

commission's chairman, said, "We are competent to judge competition issues, but not social issues like alcohol. It's not us, sorry." However, the report documented below-cost selling of alcohol during the 2006 World Cup, and revealed that discounted sales by Tesco, Sainsbury, Morrisons, Asda and Somerfield totalled £38.6m.

The Smoking Ban

Almost any landlord you speak to will declare that trade has dropped since the smoking ban, one Dover pub reckoning takings to be down by £1,500 a week, and that is on top of a year or two that have seen business particularly poor. No doubt the full damage will not emerge until the winter months are behind us, but since the cold and wet set in the little groups of pavement smokers have become notable by their absence – and for the most part they don't appear to be not smoking inside the pub either. Nationally, at least one has closed its doors as a direct result, and no doubt others will follow. Figures for the autumn show a substantial fall in beer sales (see National News), backing up data from elsewhere which indicates that a smoking ban almost inevitably leads to a fall in trade. Particularly distressing was the seeming casual acceptance of a certain level of "collateral" damage to the pub trade by those lobbying and legislating for a complete ban, when intelligent alternatives existed, although judging by some of the sentiments now emerging it would appear that to many of the campaigners it was all part of the same exercise.

The Alcohol Health Alliance

Having "dealt" with smoking, the health lobby are now turning their benevolent gaze on alcohol with the creation of the Alcohol Health Alliance, the association of 24 health groups and charities launched in November (see National News). Some of the Alliance's rhetoric is truly disturbing, comparing the fight for action over drinking with the campaign for the smoking ban, and suggesting the introduction of the term "passive drinking" – the knock-on social effects of alcohol. It would also appear evident that they are ultimately seeking a substantially greater rise in duty than the comparatively modest 10% currently proposed. If pursued to a level that might impact on alcohol consumption it would see pubs closing in their thousands, and would almost certainly be the end of anything that might approximate to the local. The Alliance has close connections with elements in the Government with whom it wields considerable influence. Who, five years ago, would have envisaged the imposition of a total smoking ban?

The New Puritanism

Hand in hand with the health lobby comes a revival of old-fashioned Puritanism. The pint or two at lunchtime, a long-standing tradition when many of us started our working lives, is often now either completely prohibited, or at least frowned upon. Locally, pubs that once thrived on trade from port workers have either packed up or endure a precarious existence. Modern bureaucracy views alcohol and working as totally irreconcilable, and never the twain shall meet. The totally reasonable and necessary requirement that train drivers, railway maintenance workers, and similar should have only minimal alcohol in their blood stream while at work was cheerfully extended throughout the industry, encompassing within its grip office workers who might go nowhere near a railway line from one years end to the next.



It seems particularly ironic that what is usually regarded as one of the great treasures of British life should be so abused and so under threat. The pub is integral to our culture. No soap is complete without its pub and Morse, Rumpole, The Sweeney and a host of other dramas unthinkable. However, Dover alone has lost 40 to 50 pubs since the last war, about half its total, and just

the last few years have seen at least ten pubs either close for good or spend substantial periods of time out of use: and if the humble boozer manages to survive redevelopment and all the myriad alternative uses, it has to run the gauntlet of theming, conversion to a gastropub or, that favourite of the PC, the family venue.

Neither does the Government do much to reassure. Talk of creating a continental café style culture, references to “drinking dens” (presumably pubs where the main trade is wet), and guidelines which equate three or four pints in an evening with binge drinking (see Last Knockings), do not suggest much understanding of, or interest in, the traditional local. Meanwhile, just for good measure, the knock-on from substantial increases in the price of both malted barley and hops are working their way through to beer prices, oil is at an all time high – increase in the price of everything else, and the Government is shortly to review the drink-drive limits, with every likelihood of a reduction in the allowance to match continental Europe.

What You Can Do

1. Make sure you use your local pub on a regular basis, not just for bank holidays and special occasions. It's usually better to get out sometime in the evening rather than sitting in front of the TV or computer, and at £5 or so for a couple of pints, it's not a bad way to spend an hour or two.
2. Turn a sceptical ear to statistics and assessments of “safe drinking” levels, etc. We are all aware that alcohol can be dangerous, and have no interest in encouraging unhealthy life styles, but both the Government and health campaigners are prone to distortions and misrepresentations, and, as we report elsewhere, recommendations can sometimes be just “plucked out of the air” (see National News).
3. Strongly oppose the closure of “last pubs”. While the disappearance of any pub is regrettable the loss of the last pub in a village or local community can be tragic, and should be firmly resisted.
4. Don't drink heavily discounted beer, and support the brewers in opposing any current increase in duty (see National News).
5. If you're not already a member, join CAMRA - there's a form at the back of this newsletter. As well as campaigning for real ale, we also support and promote pubs, especially the more traditional. A membership approaching 100,000 has considerable clout and can't be all wrong.

Martin Atkins

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The Golden Hind

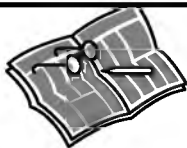
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CHANNEL VIEW

KING OF THE JUNGLE

Rumours are again circulating that Greene King, not content with devouring Hardys and Hansons, Riddleys, Morland, etc, is once again flexing its muscles, with this time Marston's (formerly Wolverhampton and Dudley Breweries) under its baleful gaze. From a commercial point of view it would, as business journalists are fond of saying, make a good fit. The City would congratulate Greene King's boss Rooney Anand on another well-judged acquisition, while the shareholders of Marston's would rub their hands at the prospect of a nice little unearned windfall; and objection is unlikely to come from the Office of Fair Trading or Competition Commission if in fact, they were made aware of the deal.

Everybody's happy then – well not exactly! It is a curiosity of our economy that those for whom a business was primarily created, the customers (viz. no demand, no business), and those who undertake the work, the employees, are well down the list of considerations. A merger would almost certainly see casualties among the half dozen different breweries they currently own, and equally certainly among the range and variety of beers, while cost saving from staff reductions would have been fundamental to its initial conception. The Competition Commission and Office of Fair Trading would no doubt agree that so long as there was adequate competition from other suppliers there should be no problem, but of course that is only half

the story. Beer, and particularly real ale, is not a homogeneous product like soap powder or baked beans, although even here, there are differences between brands. Traditionally each brewery would have developed a range of beers to suit its particular market, often local. One of the main reasons for CAMRA's formation was the loss of a great many distinctive beers as small breweries were absorbed into national combines.

Just as worrying is the habit of switching brews from one brewery to another, changing recipes, or substituting one beer for another, while maintaining that nothing has changed. In the old days when Whitbread still brewed at Faversham, a well known local landlord of the time assured us that Flowers Original was just the same as the Fremlins Tusker that it replaced; and similarly Whitbread would no doubt have vouched that when Faversham was closed and the beer transferred to Cheltenham it remained as near identical, as makes no difference.

For the competition bodies, however, such concerns hold no sway. The recent preliminary report on the grocery trade is a classic example. Not only were there no problems with dominance by four major supermarkets but they felt that on balance we should have more of them. One would have thought that simple common sense would have rung warning bells at one supermarket (Tesco) having a 30% share of the market. They also had no solutions to the discounted alcohol

sales which many see as the basic fuel for binge drinking and a prime source for the underage. "We are competent to judge competition issues, but not social issues like alcohol. It's not us, sorry", said Peter Freeman, the Competition Commission's chairman.

Perhaps, however, they should. Somehow their deliberations seem particularly utilitarian; it's as if we were still living in the 1940s, with all its privations and shortages, and the competition authorities' remit was to ensure the population got the basics at as a cheap a price as possible. Elsewhere attitudes have moved on. We no longer view our historic old towns as expendable if they stand in the way of modern development or the countryside as no more than a food factory; there would be uproar if we did, and there would seem no reason why similar considerations should not apply to competition policy. Anti-social behaviour or the disappearance of a specialist local product, in our case beer, should be of equal concern as restraint of trade or creation of monopoly. It's not as if beer drinkers benefit in other ways, the replacement brews are no cheaper, the quality often poorer, and the choice reduced.

THE ELEPHANT WAITING AT THE BAR

Elsewhere in this issue we have devoted considerable space to the Alcohol Health Alliance and their campaign against drinking. However, it has one very inconvenient aspect which has so far been studiously avoided – namely illegal drugs. In Dover, Deal, Folkestone, Canterbury or any other town in East Kent it is currently possible, so we are led to believe, to buy almost any illegal substance, and the same is

probably true right across the country. The great lumbering elephant standing apparently quite invisibly at the bar, is quite simply the immediate availability of such alternative intoxicants. It's basic economics, if the price of alcohol is increased, illegal drugs become increasingly attractive, and increasingly consumed; a fact which any attempt to reduce binge drinking by raising duty would ably demonstrate. If you want heroin, skunk, crack, etc. outside every school gate and on every street corner push up the price of alcohol until it bites. Organised crime would think that all its Christmases had come at once.

Concerning illegality, of course, Dover, like other south-east ports, has its own particular considerations, as anyone living here during the booze and fag running days of the late 1990s will remember. To walk into certain pubs late in the afternoon was akin to entering the dealing floor of a commodities exchange. We have enough problems without a resurgence of bootlegging, together with its associated gang warfare, intimidation and murder.

Of course it may be that this awkward fact has sunk in, and could explain the current switching of emphasis away from youthful bingers to the 30-50 somethings who are less likely to want to get involved in illegality. In fact the most recent information issuing from the Government almost exonerates the former, who apparently are generally well aware of the advised safe limits. By comparison his or her middle aged counterpart, is allegedly living in blissful but dangerous ignorance (see Last Knockings).

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THE PUBS OF BIGGIN STREET

Paul Skelton's look at the many pubs once found in Dover Town Centre

I was very interested to read about the vanished pubs of Dover and Sandwich in recent editions of *Channel Draught*. Lots are unfortunately still disappearing, but what of those that aren't in living memory, and before the advent of the camera to capture visual images.? Well, luckily there are records of such public houses. I have recently been continuing the work of Barry Smith in putting together a history of the pubs of Dover and District, and believe it or not there are over 500 named in the Dover area alone. That doesn't prove the myth that Dover had 365 pubs at any one time, but it does put into perspective how times change, considering we only have about 38 now still open. For this article I will concentrate on the pubs in Biggin Street, which is a few hundred yards in length, and runs from the Town Hall to almost the entrance of St Mary's Church. Today only one public house can be visited in this street, but over the years there have been many that have come and gone.

The **PRINCE ALBERT** at number 88 Biggin Street is the only pub in that street today. It is reputed to have been there in 1764, (although obviously not under that name) but may well have been rebuilt along with many other buildings along this street as they have been redeveloped. It was certainly there in 1847, and there is rumour that it was renamed to honour a visit by the Prince Consort in November 1842. On 2nd September 1889 the bar was wrecked by an explosion in the cellar,

The Prince Albert in 1987 - Paul Skelton



but the extent of any damage is unknown.

Yet this relatively small street has a very populated history of pubs that can be traced back to 1545. "Why 1545?" you may ask, as actually I can go back to 1540 in my research. The significance of 1545 lies with the monarch of the time, Henry VIII, who decided to enforce the law that all inns, taverns & victualling houses in the Borough must display painted signs on boards 12 inches square, hung over their public houses so that folk could easily recognise them. Of course today most have signs that are even bigger than the stipulated one foot square sign, but this was a big move in those early days.

John Bowles, the mayor of Dover in 1540, was already displaying a sign five years before this ruling, so we luckily have a record of his pub, the **ARMS OF ENGLAND**, although unfortunately its whereabouts is unknown. It must have been a pretty big establishment as it boasted eight beds for the weary traveller and stabling for their horses.

Going back to Biggin Street, the records also show that in the year 1545 there were no less than 13 public houses in that stretch alone. All of them are gone now and unfortunately no photographic evidence of them at all remains. One may have been the **PRINCE ALBERT** before it was renamed, but unfortunately to date I have no record of this, neither do I have numbers for the pubs at that time but then again, Biggin Street would have looked completely different to what it does today. The following is the 1545 list together with name of landlord and accommodation.

ANCHOR Simon Fry (2 beds)

BROAD AXE Margery Wilsher (3 beds)

CROWN VICTUALLING HOUSE widow Johanna Vaughn (6 beds)

GOAT'S HEAD William Dawson (3 beds)

GREYHOUND Richard Wilmington (4 beds) In 1665 a later landlord, Roger Rogers, produced his own beer tokens as well.

HALF MOON run by Roger Bund offering 3 beds.

HELMET run by Thomas Everedge offering 4 beds.

LILLYPOT run by John Miles offering 8 beds.

ST ANDREWS CROSS VICTUALLING HOUSE run by Andrew Davey offering 3 beds.

SUN run by Richard Rogers offering 4 beds. Wonder whether he was related to the Roger Rogers of the **GREYHOUND**?

TAILOR'S SHEARS run by Cuthbert Digeson offering 4 beds.

UNICORN run by James Dowell offering 3 beds.

In 1824 James Poulter (deceased 1872) founded the **POULTER BREWERY** in Biggin Street. This later moved to Russell Street and became part of **LENEY'S BREWERY**.

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Listed in the 2008 CAMRA Good Beer Guide

Moving to later times we have the following:-

EVENING STAR 1838-1842. This was only in operation a few years that I know of, and was eventually closed down when the authorities refused to grant James Tyman or Tyman a license.

PRINCESS ROYAL 1854. Another **PRINCESS ROYAL** was reported close by in Market Place in 1852. No definite address is known.

THREE TUNS 50 Biggin Street 1792-1854. In 1854 the pub was being run by a Mrs Sarah Tyman, the wife of James Tyman who took over the pub in 1843 after the **EVENING STAR** was closed. I think perhaps they were up to their old tricks again and the pub gained a reputation for receiving stolen goods, and so was refused a licence and was closed. A tun, by the way is 252 gallons. At around 1847 the pub re-opened again under the new name of **FOLKESTONE ARMS** and shortly after that changed name again to the **LORD RAGLAN** where it continued to run till 1873. In 1893 the building totally disappeared with the street widening of that year.

BRICKLAYER'S ARMS (number unknown) 1805-1871. At least I think there was one in Biggin Street as another pub with the same name was reported in Snargate Street and also a **BRICKMAKERS** at Buckland Bottom and there is a little confusion over the records available unfortunately.

SARACEN'S HEAD 1613-1880. Again, unfortunately no address number but was said to be on the corner with New Street in 1613. Certainly not the building we see there today. In 1880 it converted into a coffee house and was then referred to as a **TEMPERANCE HOTEL**. Some things never change. 1893 saw its removal with the Biggin Street widening.

But what of the other sadly now disappeared pubs that are in living memory?

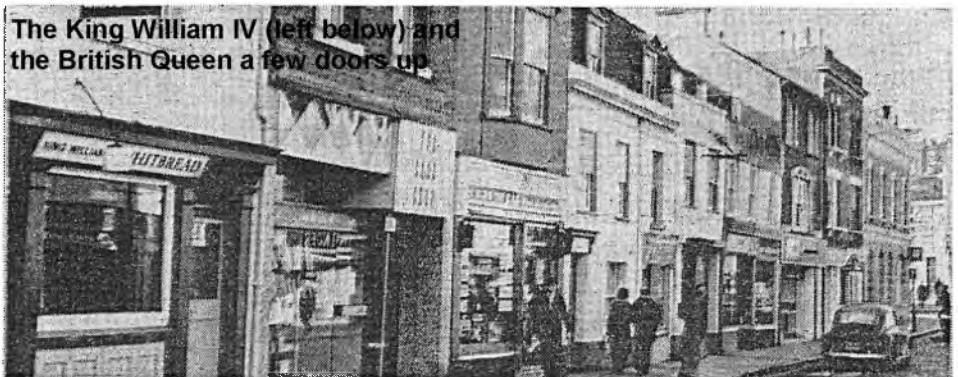
LEFEVRE'S TEMPERANCE HOTEL and Coffee Tavern at the junction with New Street, was once the **SARACEN'S HEAD**, and faced public houses across two streets – the **WELLINGTON HOTEL** and the **ROSE INN** on the opposite corner of New Street (actually Cannon Street) - this picture of Biggin Street was taken in 1894, shortly before the road, only 18ft. wide, was widened. The **WELLINGTON HOTEL** closed in





1971 and later demolished to make way for Tesco. Now serving as Dorothy Perkins. As I have already mentioned the **ROSE INN** is actually in Canon Street and not Biggin Street, however I thought it near enough to include.

QUEENS HEAD was demolished along with the adjoining Baptist church in October 1975 and is now Boots the chemist.



KING WILLIAM IV (above far left) also shows a few doors up the **BRITISH QUEEN** and at the end of the row the only pub now left in Biggin Street, the **PRINCE ALBERT**. Photo taken 10th Feb 1978 (Dover Express), not long before the "King Billy", the British Queen and the buildings in between were demolished.

SALUTATION 5 Biggin Street 1791-63 new 1964-83

The photo (opposite top) shows the original **SALUTATION** taken during a Mayor's procession, date unknown. Sited opposite the William IV and British Queen, it was demolished during the 1960s along with the other nine or ten properties in this stretch of Biggin St., and replaced by the current block of shops containing Rooks



and Paynes. (Photo supplied by Dover Library.)

The replacement **SALUTATION** (shown below) a few years before it was closed and converted into a Pizza Hut before eventually being taken over by Bradford and Bingley.

Photo by Barry Smith, the person who did so much research in the 80s on this subject and who has kindly loaned me his notes and has given me plenty of encouragement and his blessing to continue his work.

For further information on the pubs of Dover and District or if you have any photographs of the pubs listed, please view www.Dover-Kent.Com



Paul Skelton



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TASTE THE HISTORY !

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

I am in the process of reading the Summer 2007 edition of *Channel Draught* and I must correct a comment made on page 4 in the "Battle of Lewes" article.

The Lewes Arms is not the last ex-Beards pub to serve Harveys Sussex Best. The Red Lion in Bromley, south-east London still does, along with Greene King IPA and two guests (which only occasionally come from the Greene King stable). It is the current CAMRA South-East London Pub of the Year (as it was in 1997).

I hope you will make the correction in the next edition of "Channel Draught".

Yours sincerely

Paul Kirsten (South West London CAMRA)

We are indebted to Paul Kirsten for this piece of excellent news and apologise to the landlord and customers of the Red Lion for our error. I took the references to the Lewes Arms from comments in either What's Brewing or the national press which I think may well have originated from a representative of Greene King themselves. We would be interested to hear of any other former Beard's pubs still selling Harveys or in any other way escaping the Greene King stranglehold.

Martin Atkins (editor)

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The Fox - Temple Ewell

How the FOX is adapting to a new habitat!!

“The times they are a changing”, bingo, take-aways and flexibility.

This year's summer was dull, damp, drizzly and pretty miserable, and caused a downturn in the normally very busy garden activity at the Fox in Temple Ewell. Then on 1st July, we encountered “the smoking ban”. All in all, not good for business. So what to do, how to cope with this change in environment?

Introduce new and exciting developments! To combat the downturn in trade, Steve and Alyson Grayson have introduced a series of changes to encourage customers in.

The hugely successful Sunday carvery and a regular Tuesday night quiz have been combined on Saturday night, so there is now a carvery and quiz night to appeal to both groups. There is a new menu, keeping many of the old traditional favourites but adding a lot of new items. Alyson serves a home-cooked special every day and in the evening food starts at 6pm to encourage more families into the smoke-free environment – good “pub grub” in a very cosy atmosphere lunchtimes and evenings. She has also devised a new take-away menu, which hopefully will cater to those who want quick and tasty food but are too busy to cook at home, or for those who want to be able to pop to the pub to pick up a pizza or fish and chips, instead of having to drive! They also offer the healthier option of jacket potato instead of chips!

Steve is especially proud of his real ales. The Fox has been in the Good beer Guide for the last six years and was awarded CAMRA Pub of the Year in 2005. There is a choice of four real ales as well as a real cider introduced this year.

Another change to the law recently has been the relaxation of the gambling laws. This now allows the playing of bingo in pubs... so Monday night is now “Bingo Nite” with small prize bingo from 7.15pm. The response so far is looking good, and they have every hope it'll take off.

Christmas is always a great time at the Fox, the decorations and real fire creating a wonderfully traditional atmosphere. Watch out for the flying penguin! The village light “switch on” was on 2nd December and there was a Christmas sing-along in the pub afterwards, always very popular. Throughout December the

pub served a four course Christmas menu, lunchtimes and evenings, plus a couple of disco carveries as well.

Steve and Alyson are always open to new ideas and say that flexibility is the answer to the problems of running a small business, and, having lasted seven years at the Fox, they are looking forward to all the new challenges to come!

Steve and Alyson Grayson



Pumpkins and pigeons – the BLUE PIGEONS pumpkin day

Pumpkins are usually associated with Halloween, late Autumn, early frost and gloomy evenings but this was not the case during the annual pumpkin competition at the Blue Pigeons, Worth. Wall to wall blue sky, sunshine and unseasonable warmth set the scene for up to two hundred revellers enjoying the event.

The pumpkin competition always takes place in October and the acting manageress, Debbie Payne, exercised her considerable organisational skills and did the customers proud. The Whitstable Morris Men danced often and enthusiastically and surely made some converts from line dancing with their colourful costumes, black painted faces and accompanying accordion band (not to mention female impersonators). After an overture performance by the Morris Dancers, Johnny Lewis of Radio Kent introduced two groups: Gold Top, a father and son duo singing 60s rock, and Hullabaloo, a jazz group playing a variety of familiar music. Local charities were very much an afternoon theme with fund raising taking place for Kent Air Ambulance, Cancer Research and Martha Trust.

Entries for the pumpkin competition were slightly less than usual with the largest weighing in at 103lbs. However as the plant had not been purchased from the Blue Pigeons it won the "Outcomers" Prize. The largest "Inhouse" pumpkin scaled 84lbs and won its weight in pints of beer. Other prizes went to children from Worth school who are always keen pumpkin growers – and future customers. Dennis Varral, a long term term pumpkin aficionado, was present and dispensed advice to all potential pumpkineers! With Everards Tiger, Adnams and Spitfire on draught it was an idyllic way to spend Sunday afternoon. Why not attend next year and enjoy the fun or better still, visit the pub in May, buy a pumpkin plant and enter the competition?



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THE GREAT DROUGHT OF EYNSHAM

THE BEERY BOATERS' AUTUMN 2007 TRIP

The End of the Year Trip 2007, saw a return to the Bristol end of the Kennet and Avon Canal, an area we had not visited since 2001. However, while not new territory, it was to be the very first Beery Boaters trip without our guiding light, founding spirit and Hon. Commodore (unelected), Peter A Green, otherwise know as Jim. Complications had followed his long-awaited hip operation in early September, and he had to return to hospital for a few weeks covering the period of our trip. So, straightening our backs and stiffening our sinews, we prepared to enter uncharted waters. Actually, with the exception of a few hiccups, all went well. We kept in touch with Jim, in his hospital bed, but his presence was certainly missed – particularly all the banging and clanking around at set off time in the morning when decent crew members are still trying to get their heads down.

Accordingly, at around 1pm Monday 8th October, seven of us assembled at the boatyard at Monkton Coombe, between Bath and Bradford; our crew comprising, as well as myself, John and Dave Underdown, Terry Easley, Alan Hodges, Dick Savage and, new recruit and old friend of Dick's, Mark Crump, who had gallantly agreed to take Jim's place at the last minute. The pub next to the boatyard, the Viaduct, being closed and awaiting conversion to flats, we walked a brisk ten minutes or so to the Hop Poles at Limpley Stoke, which we found unchanged from our last visit, an apparently traditional village local split into several bars, albeit in an extremely affluent area – but more of that later. An hour or so later, sufficiently refreshed on Butcombe and Palmers, we made our way back to the boatyard and prepared to set off.

With rain forecast on Tuesday and advice from the boatyard not to venture onto the Avon until any subsequent change in levels had returned to normal, we abandoned Jim's original plan of heading first for Bath and Bristol, and set off over the Dundas Aqueduct for Bradford and Devizes; our boat, Eynsham (not, for those old enough to remember, K-E-Y-N-S-H-A-M), rapidly proving to be one of the best handlers we've ever had – extremely responsive at



low speeds and needing no arm wrestling with the tiller. By 6.00pm we were moored below Bradford Lock, just along from the Canal Tavern, a Wadworth House where we found Henry IPA and JCB. Bradford on Avon is a small town and, unsurprisingly on a Monday night, proved very quiet, although Dave was confronted by a naked man in the toilets of the Three Horseshoes – part of a stag night dare, or some such. Dick and Mark went to the Dandy Lion where they got chatting to the barmaid and drank something from a micro called Dandy's Prick, while the rest of us ended up at the Young's (ex Smiles) house, the Bunch of Grapes. Lates evidently not being in order, we were ushered out shortly after 11.00pm and made our way back to the boat where we found the Canal Tavern still in full swing, but being by then well knackered, we turned in.

Tuesday morning and the expected rain had arrived, only a steady drizzle initially, but it had the “set in” look about it. With weather worsening, and waterproof clad, we set off as soon as the light was reasonable, about 7.40, heading for the Three Magpies at Sells Green for lunch and the bus into Devizes afterwards. However, the Beery Boaters' resolve is always open to persuasion by the prospect of good beer, and as we ascended the locks at Seend Cleeve, our attention was taken by a brightly painted sign advertising the Brewery Inn. “Traditional pub and cider house”, it read, and a quick check of Jim's waterways pubs list showed it to be in the current GBG. The rain having apparently decided to desist, *Eynsham* was rapidly moored up and the several hundred yards to the pub eagerly traversed, and a good choice it proved – a real local with sporting trophies on the wall and selling Hob-



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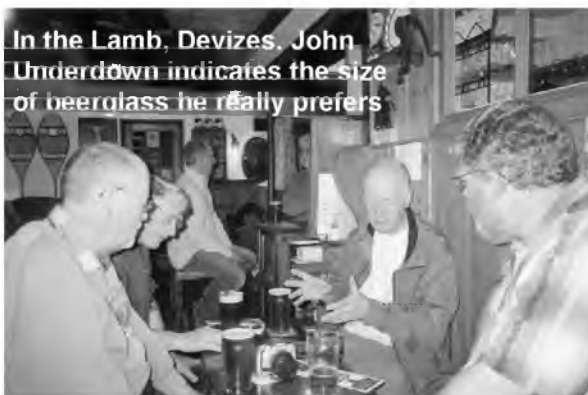
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goblin, Doombar (which seemed to be everywhere) and Thatcher's Cider. When we found that their lunchtime menu included faggots from a butcher just up the road we abandoned all prospect of reaching the Magpies.

With sunshine having replaced cloud and rain, we eventually arrived at Sells Green just too late for the 4.20 bus into Devizes, so while waiting the hour for the next we took the opportunity to water up, a process completed surprisingly quickly. The journey to Devizes Market Place takes about 10 minutes and we were soon enjoying Wadworth's beer in the cosy and old fashioned Lamb,



seemingly unchanged since our 2001 visit, even down to the dog on his blanket by the fireplace. My memory serving me well, we subsequently found our way to the British Lion, also unchanged and selling that night Bath Gem, Bateman's XB and Palmers 200. The last bus back is 10pm and we finished the evening in the Three Magpies – more brass and copper than you could shake a stick at, and beer averaging £3 a pint.

Next morning, we wined at the bottom of the Caen Flight, and made our way back towards Bradford and the Beehive, stopping briefly at the King's Arms, Hilpertion, a large, uninspiring pub with one real ale, rather cold Bombardier. The Beehive we found had changed hands a couple of years ago but was still renowned for its pies and still kept a range of real ales, Butcome plus guests. A pint or two and we pushed on to the top of Bradford lock while, having been too late for food at the Beehive, Mark showed off his culinary skills, by knocking up very tasty cheese and ham omelettes. After a quick look at the Barge, we set off back to the Hop Poles for the evening, mooring just as darkness fell, by the road bridge from the village, with the help of some also just arrived boaters.

No time was wasted getting to the pub, only to find the public bar packed solid, and the little side bar, where we had spent Monday lunchtime, along with the restaurant completely empty but with all tables reserved. I recalled that there was another pub on the main road behind the Hop Poles, and thought it worth a look. Limpley Stoke, however lies on the steep sided Avon valley and behind means upwards, or as some might say "uppards", and "uppards" it proved. The steep lane at the front of the Hop Poles led to an even steeper hill, proudly proclaiming itself a 25% gradient, and so to another hill at the top of which the main road might be glimpsed. Although just five minutes or so from the Hop Poles I was well puffed, and relieved to find the pub, the Rose and Crown, about 100 yards left of the junction. They were serving food until 9.00pm and were selling real ale.

By the time I had returned John, Dave and Terry had found themselves seats in the

public bar and the prospect of food, but the others determined to try the Rose and Crown, and I went with them – puff, puff, puff. We enjoyed Bellringer from Abbey Ales and a good meal. Back at the Hop Poles we learnt that it was owned by the hotel across the road, part of the American Best Western chain, and having no restaurant of its own sent its diners across to use the pub's – perhaps not so much the ordinary village local. We also discovered, with a certain irony, that the diners who had reserved the small side bar, which might comfortably have accommodated us, were the very same boaters who had helped us tie up earlier.

Thursday morning, and we were away by 8.00am., heading for Bath, autumnal mist and moored boats accompanying us most of the way, slowing our progress and delaying our mooring alongside the railings at Kingsmead until midday. We had also missed the water point above Bath Locks (I had neglected to check Jim's lists and still assumed it was half way down the locks), but as we had watered less than two days ago we figured it didn't matter too much. We drank excellent Abbey Ales in the Coeur De Lion and the Old Green Tree, and purchased the obligatory selection of sausages from the sausage shop opposite. Dick and Mark went off to book tickets for the Bath/Harlequins match on Saturday, by chance afterwards discovering the Salamander, which I had come across on our 1996 trip and forgotten about, and now devoted to Bath Ales. The day ended at the Star, which despite doubts from some quarters, we found without problem: more Abbey Ales and, being Thursday evening, also cheese and biscuits – the pub providing gratis generous quantities, which we did our best to generously consume.



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Back on the boat we noted an ominous spluttering and burping from the galley tap, and things were no different in the morning. The missed water point at Bath Locks suddenly took on a new significance, as did the very quick fill at Sells Green and the leak that Alan had discovered in one of the back lockers. Enough water was coming through for tea, toilet flushing, etc. but we needed a fill up pretty quickly, and there were only two water points before Bristol (the city itself being an unknown quantity), and from previous experience the second, that at Hanham Lock, was spectacularly slow. We pulled in at the first, just above Swineford Lock, a muddy enclosure with a mooring stage, only to find the tap was too far for the hose to reach to the boat and had no on/off lever. However the Beery Boaters are nothing if not resourceful, and in 20 minutes we had put 15 to 20 gallons into the tank using a couple of plastic bottles to carry water from the end of the hose, and operating the tap with an adjustable spanner.

At Keynsham Lock, the refurbished and enlarged Lock Keeper, now a Young's house, failed to impress, the beer not particularly good and a heavy emphasis on food. We completed filling the tank at Hanham, its former problems now resolved, and by 4.30pm were moored in the Floating Harbour, in Bristol. Our first destination was a re-acquaintance with the Apple Tree in Bedminster, and maybe Dave's long lost bottom set of teeth, which had disappeared some time during the evening of our previous visit in 1996. I recalled, last time drinking something yellow and cloudy from Taunton at 5 to 6% ABV. "Taunton Traditional," said the landlord, and filled me a glass from an unmarked pump. It was yellow and cloudy, and tasted appropriately good. "Any false teeth ever been found here" we asked one of the customers. "Yes," she replied, to our astonishment "There were some found when they cleared out after the old landlady had gone – ended up in the skip." She maintained, however, it was a full set, not just a bottom set, but it does sound too much of a coincidence.

We wandered to the modern style Reckless Engineer, opposite Temple Mead Station, and then the King's Head, a gem of wood paneling and mirrors, preserved amongst the steel and concrete blocks of present day Bristol. For the end of the evening it was jazz at the Old Duke, King Street, with Courage, Bath and more Doombar on the handpumps. Interestingly the



pub's clientèle were almost entirely young – local jazz venues please note. Next morning Dick and Mark left early for the rugby at Bath, while the rest of us took Eynsham for a pump out. Forget the quick water top up at Sells Green and the damp locker, the main culprit for our empty water tank was nothing more than a leaking flush in the toilet. As a self service operation the pump out was a new experience, but proved comparatively straightforward.

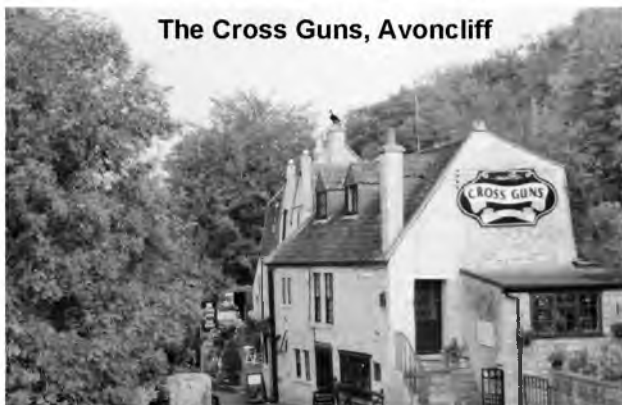
Dundas Aquaduct



About dusk, we moored again at Kingsmead, having stopped at the Jolly Sailor, Saltford for an hour on the way. The evening we spent in the Raven (formerly the Hatchet) with its extensive range of micros, and subsequently the Salamander, where Dick and Mark eventually met up with us, having enjoyed a good Bath/Harlequins game, followed by watching England defeat France on a pub screen. On the way back to the boat we stopped for a Chinese. As we all piled into the take-away the two petite girls behind the counter were quickly

joined by a thick set gentleman who wouldn't have looked out of place in the Triads – I couldn't imagine us being seen as a threat to anyone, but maybe our recent publication of the early exploits of the Beery Boaters had been distributed further than we thought.

Sunday morning and back up Bath locks, past Monkton Coombe and across the Dundas Aqueduct towards Bradford again for our final evening. We took lunch at the Cross Guns, Avoncliff, which was as crowded as if it had been a bank holiday. It seemed largely unchanged from 2001, except the beer was an excellent selection from, new to us, Wiltshire's Box Steam Brewery. Also new to us was the late Sunday afternoon congestion at Bradford lock, which we had to ascend, wind and descend before we could moor up. As we waited our turn at the bottom, half a dozen arrived behind us, including the double width trip boat. "They might try and grab our place," said the owner of the boat we had paired to go up with. They didn't but one of their crew came beetling along and wanted us to lash our



boats together "You'll be all over the place if you get it wrong going into the lock." We ignored him and went in together perfectly.

Eventually winded and moored we went first to the Barge and then to the Three Horseshoes, where we watched South Africa defeat Argentina. Alan, Mike and John having gone in search of a curry the rest of us stayed until closing time, when making our way back to the boat we were waylaid by the Canal Tavern, which unlike the rest of Bradford, was still open, and whose hospitality we felt it



The Beery Boaters
Autumn 2007

only courteous to take advantage of until it too also closed. And that was that. We were off at first light next morning, and back to Monkton Coombe just on 9am. Refund for pump out, end of trip photographs and we were away with thoughts of the Start of the Year Trip in April.

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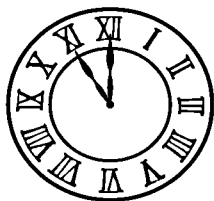
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LAST KNOCKINGS

To most of us, binge drinking no doubt evokes images of young drinkers, and sometimes those not so young, drinking far more than they can reasonably handle in town centre bars, followed by several hours of staggering around the streets, being sick, getting into fights and generally causing a public nuisance. Not, however, according to the Government. Apparently younger drinkers, whatever your own observations might suggest, are, for the most part, aware of the Government guidelines, behave responsibly and are obviously destined to become, if they are not already, model citizens. With those aged 30-50, however, it's a different matter. Often drinking at home, and very likely wine, the majority "admit" they do not adhere to the Government safe limits on drinking. These, the Government now classifies as binge drinkers. And how much of the evil substance qualifies you for the status of a binge drinker? – eight units for a man or six for a woman in an evening, and easily accomplished by one bottle of wine or three or four pints of bitter. What nonsense, CAMRA must firmly rebut such silly pronouncements.

To the majority of journalists or radio and TV reporters, real ale drinkers comprise a single united entity dedicated to resisting the onward march of keg and drinking and promoting real ale from wherever it might come. When a "quote" is required or some comment on present trends, a spokesman from Greene King, Fullers, Wells and Young, etc., is called up and the appropriate response retrieved. Sometimes the lucky reporter will even be invited to a tasting and have explained to him or her the qualities of one of their flagship brews, little knowing that many dedicated real ale enthusiasts would almost as soon drink keg lager. By contrast *Countryfile* or similar will occasionally stumble across a tiny micro and with amazement applaud the plucky operators going it alone against the big boys, equally unaware that there those among us who will drink nothing else. My guess is that the average CAMRA member would almost invariably pass over a national or regional beer for a micro, and it's hard to believe that no reporters or journalists in the national press, TV or radio are aware of this or are not themselves micro enthusiasts. However all is silence.

Before the law we should all be equal but, as George Orwell had it, some it would appear are more equal than others. A case in point is driving penalties. We are constantly being made aware that using a mobile phone is as

dangerous as driving with just over the legal limit of alcohol in the blood (often a lot more dangerous I would guess). A reasonable man, or that much travelled visitor from Mars would logically assume that the penalties are therefore commensurate. How naive, the old puritan mind-set dies hard. To have alcohol in your blood you have obviously been consorting with the Devil – enjoying yourself, in a pub perhaps, among maybe, as the critics of George V's first Christmas Broadcast were wont to point out, men wearing hats. Caught driving with only the smallest quantity above the limit in your blood stream and you will be fined several hundred pounds, banned for a period and face paying a great deal more for your insurance when able to drive again. Apprehended using a mobile phone while driving its a £50 fine and three points on your licence. Admittedly, this is likely to be raised in the near future, but I still hear no reference to a ban.

Every couple of months, Saturday morning is liable to find me bleary-eyed, and heading by train for some distant pub, seemingly always at the other end of the county; for such is necessitated by attendance at the Kent Regional Meeting, the bi-monthly coming together of the region's CAMRA branches to exchange information, update policy and consume a few pints. While sometimes rather a trial, especially if following a somewhat over-indulgent Friday night, there are compensations, not least in the shape of the excellent ales that host pubs are sometimes able to lay their hands on. A fine example was a recent meeting at the Good Intent, Rochester. Among the available selection was a fine dark porter, or maybe stout – I can't remember which – from King of Horsham. Deeply black, smooth and mellow, and without any of the harsh undertones sometimes found with dark ales, it was superb – so good in fact, that returning for a second pint, I found all had gone.

Elsewhere in this issue Paul Skelton provides us with a very interesting article on old Biggin Street pubs. Looking at the pictures from before the war and the late 19th century I was struck by what a far more pleasing aspect the town then possessed than it does today, and I'm not referring to just the far greater number of pubs. The older photographs show a cleaner town, not only the roads and pavements but also the lines of the buildings; and shops signs are sharper, more elegant and totally without the garishness that appeared in the later years of the 20th century. There's more bustle and feel of purposeful activity and of course no clutter of road signs, pedestrian railings or wrappings of take-away food, while instead of the current motley selection of charity, card and pound shops, within a few hundred yards it was probably possible to purchase everything for daily existence.

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And Finally.....

BARMAID HAS A CRUSH ON CANS

While we in Britain agonise over the problems caused by 'binge' drinking, they certainly have a different form of 'unsocial behaviour' in Australia.

A West Australian barmaid at the Premier Hotel in Pinjarra has been fined by police for crushing beer cans with her bare breasts. The Mandurah Magistrates Court fined Luana De Faveri, 31, A\$1000 (£450) after she pleaded guilty to violations of the Liquor Control Act. The barmaid's off-duty colleague, Tracey Amanda Leslie, 43, was also fined A\$500 (£225) because she hung spoons on the barmaid's nipples and the hotel manager Roy Williams was fined A\$1000 because he didn't do anything to stop them.

Police said in a statement that the barmaid "is alleged to have also crushed beer cans between her breasts, which is a breach of the hotel licensing laws". David Parkinson, who is the local police superintendent, said, "It sends a clear message to all licensees in Peel that we will not tolerate this type of behaviour in our licensed premises."

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