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**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

**Issue 41
Autumn
2009**

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

CHANNEL DRAUGHT



INSIDE

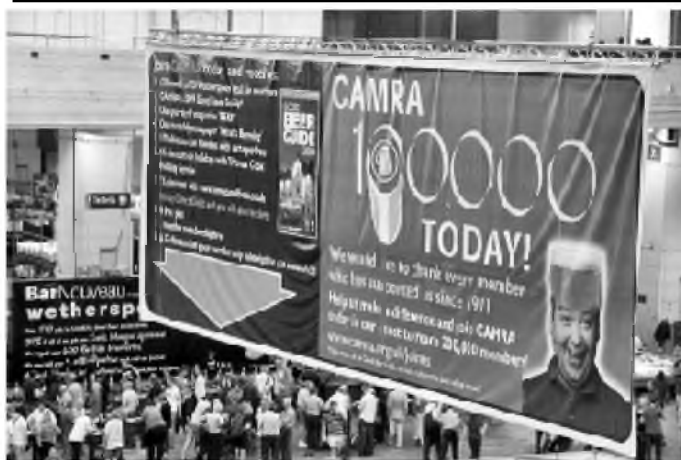
**Getting to
Know
KELHAM ISLAND
TAVERN
and the pubs of
Sheffield
See Page 42**

**Pubs That
Never Were**
The second part
of Paul Skelton's
look at what we
missed

See Page 34



**CAMRA
REACHES
100,000
MEMBERS**



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CHANNEL DRAUGHT

ISSUE 41
Autumn 2009

A tale of two halves, as the football commentator might have said, is the picture painted of pubs and real ale by the 2010 edition of the Good Beer Guide; or as the publication itself puts it in Dickensian terms: "the best of times....the worst of times." As pubs disappear at an unprecedented rate and the overall sales of beer decline, real ale and brewers of real ale (particularly the smaller producers) are booming. In our own county two new microbrewers have just been established and Shepherd Neame is expanding the use of its own micro-brewing facility (see Tony's Tappings and The Wantsum Brewery). The summer just gone has seen more beer festivals than ever and an increasing number of pubs are appreciating the value of expanding and varying their beer range.

However for the industrial scale production of the large brewers things are less rosy. With big brands declining and the supermarkets vying with each other to offer the heftiest discounts on packaged beer, the BMA's call to increase duty and ban advertising might prove to be wholly unnecessary. Left to its own devices there seems every likelihood that the vicious spiral will end up down the plughole – or perhaps, more appropriately up its own

Meanwhile, turning to matters nearer home, it is, as the Dover Express kindly reminded us in mid October, just ten years since Channel Draught was launched. Originally envisaged as a folded A3 information sheet it rapidly took on a very different persona, and under the editorship of first Paul Turvey and subsequently myself, it developed into an A5 booklet of 64 pages. Published four times a year, we hope it provides an accurate and informative picture of what's going on in the world of real ale and pubs, both locally and nationally. In this edition, as well as news and comment, we print our annual roundup of Kent Cider producers and local cider outlets, Roger Marples introduces us to real ale in Sheffield, Paul Skelton continues his review of Dover pubs that never were, and our history of the early years of Beery Boating has reached the Spring of 1986.

Martin Atkins

CONTENTS

3	Events diary		Island Tavern and the Pubs of
4	100,000 and rising		Sheffield
6	Local News	47	Shepherd Neame - New
15	Tony's Tappings		Seasonal Beers
18	Wantsum Brewery	49	Boozeword
20	Ramblings & Rumlblings	50	The one that should have
23	The English Pub		been the Avon Ring - a look
25	National News		back at the Beery Boaters
30	Kent Small Brewery News		Spring 1986 Trip
32	Channel View	58	Last Knockings
34	Disappearing Pubs - Part	60	Local Information
	Two	61	CAMRA Info & Crossword
38	Kent Cider Producers &		Answers
	Outlets 2009 update	62	Advertisers Index
42	Getting to Know the Kelham	62	And Finally.....

EVENTS DIARY

Sat 31 Oct & Sun 1 Nov – Crabble Corn Mill Cider Festival*

Mon 16 Nov – Branch Meeting, Eight Bells, Dover.

Sat 21 Nov – Wantsum Brewery Visit – travel by Stagecoach. Contact Tony Wells
social.secretary@camra-dds.org.uk or (01304) 611090

Fri 11 Dec, Sat 12 Dec & Sun 13 Dec – Winter Beer Festival, Phoenix, Old Dover Rd., Canterbury*

Mon 14 Dec – Branch Meeting/Christmas Social – Louis Armstrong, Dover. See Branch website

Mon 18 Jan – Branch Meeting, The Berry, Walmer.

Fri 5 Feb & Sat 6 Feb – White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales. Dover Town Hall

Branch Website www.camra-dds.org.uk

Branch meetings are normally held every third Monday of each month and start at 7.30pm.

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

Events marked * are not organised by CAMRA



100,000 and rising

Founded in 1971 in a pub in Ireland by four Englishmen on holiday, as a means to resist the increasing domination of a handful of huge national brewers and their keg beers, CAMRA has now reached a total of 100,000 members. From the very first it attracted support. By July 1973 there were ten branches and 5,000 members, and a year later almost 10,000, when the first Good Beer Guide was published, and the first headquarters were being set up. By 1976 the large brewers, having at first tried to ignore the campaign, were being forced into resurrecting real ale, and by the end of the decade all had reversed their policies and were putting real ale back into their pubs.

However, while paying lip service to real ale, the large brewers remained intent on pushing keg. Red Barrel (Watneys Red in its later incarnation) and the rest of the big name keg brands may have been quietly done away with in the 1970s, but they were replaced by that curious manufactured creation, British lager. Every bit as dead, and often poorer tasting, than keg bitter, it became the nationals' principal weapon in their keg armoury, and was soon being promoted with even greater vigour. Opposition to keg, however, showed no sign of abating and CAMRA's membership continued to rise: 20,000 by 1985 and 40,000 ten years later.

But the world was changing. The Beer Orders of the early 1990s saw the national brewers' tied estates dramatically reduced; and by direct consequence the pub companies created. There followed ten or so years of take-overs, mergers and foreign involvement that ended up with most of the country's large scale brewing in the hands of multinationals, with little or no interest in real ale, and many of its pubs owned by just two pub companies. And in case we thought that the evolution of keg had run its course, lager suddenly acquired a new companion at the heavy promotion, fizz and froth end of the market, in the shape of nitro-keg. Meanwhile, following takeovers and closures, the much shrunken family owned local and regional brewers, once the beating heart of traditional brewing, were either being transmogrified into replacements for the old nationals, or tending to find themselves sidelined by that new phenomenon, the microbrewers, whose enormous range and variety of real ale has so transformed what we can expect from a pint of beer.

Throughout all the turmoil CAMRA continued to expand: 50,000 by 1997, 60,000 five years later, and now 100,000. However a bulging membership does not necessarily indicate a battle won. We may have saved real ale but we should not anticipate returning it to its one time pre-eminence; just a few years ago we would have had to report a continuing decline. That decline has now been stemmed. Having bottomed out at just below 10% of the beer market, recent figures show a currant share of 11%. However, we are very much a minority – at the volume end of the market beer means keg. But we have laid down a marker and opened up a debate. The big brewer's aspiration of leading us all gentle into a good night of industrialised sterility has failed. We now know how good beer can be and we will continue to demand that that is what we get.

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The Local News

Contributors - Martin Atkins, The McIlroys, Roger Marples, John Pitcher, Tony Wells, Jim Green and Mike Sutcliffe 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:

channel.draught@camra-dds.org.uk

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

Breweries are to the forefront of Local News in this edition, as two new Kent breweries are launched and Shepherd Neame undertakes various alterations to its beer range, pricing and tenancy arrangements.

In East Kent the Wantsum Brewery based at Hersden, north-east of Canterbury started brewing towards the end of the summer, while from the other side of Kent Moodley's Brewery has been established at Rusthall near Tunbridge Wells. (See Tony's Tappings and page 18). For further news of Kent micro brewers see Kent Small Brewery News

At Faversham, Shepherd Neame has announced an expanded range of seasonal ales – the current set up of four quarterly ales being increased to ten of varying styles and strengths, brewed in succession throughout the year. However, and maybe as an associated consequence, the strength of Spitfire has been dropped from 4.5% ABV to 4.2% ABV. Tastings so far of the revised brew have not been over enthusiastic. It has also been suggested that the reduction in strength will help facilitate Sheps' new support package for its pub tenants, part of which we understand is to be a freeze of all ale and lager prices until January 2011.

DOVER

White Horse, St. James St: Good to see Jill and Jack back behind the bar at the start of October following their few weeks abroad. Probably a first for an English pub, and almost certainly a first for the White Horse, the beer for their return was ordered by mobile phone from Japan's former imperial capital, Kyoto. Included in that order, as well as regular Timothy Taylor Landlord, were barrels of White Horse Oxfordshire Bitter, Wickwar Bob, and Foundation Stone from the Limestone Brewery, an apparently new brewery not recorded in the latest GBG, and about which little is known. Its beers have appeared several times locally over recent months, and in this case proved a great success, disappearing within an evening. At **Blakes** Harveys Sussex remains the regular bitter, accompanied usually by two or three other real ales and a variety of ciders and Perries: East Stour proving a worthy successor to Broomfield after the latter had run out of stock. Northumberland brews have been much in evidence, Wor Bobby in memory of the late Bobbie Robson, a 4% bitter being particularly good, while for those who enjoyed the brewery's Brown Ale, Blakes now has a supply in bottles. In early October Fortitude from the new Wantsum Brewery was on tap, and as elsewhere proved extremely

popular.

Renaissance, Folkestone Rd: Closed and boarded up since last Autumn, the pub was apparently sold earlier this year, and in mid July had scaffolding erected and external work undertaken, including re-roofing and work to the upper floors. Various remarks from people on site suggested that the new owners were not planning to reopen as a pub, and in August a planning application was submitted to convert part of the ground floor to a hot food take away, the first and second floors to staff accommodation, and the third floor to a self contained flat, plus various other alterations and extensions.

Better news however from the nearby **Priory Hotel**, opposite the station. Most of us have lost count of how many years ago its handpumps last saw use, however this summer real ale suddenly re-appeared – beers so far have included various brews from Nelson of Chatham, with Loose Cannon appearing in mid-September. In Priory Place the **Golden Lion** continues with its varying ale range. In early September we found nice pints of Cottage Silly Mid Whippet and St Edmunds. Particularly impressive was a barrel of Greene King IPA later on in the month, which for that brew, was unusually full bodied and well balanced.

Castle, Russell St: Still closed and up for sale; now for almost two years, with no sign of interest, of any sort. Meanwhile buddleia sprouts from all available crevices. And neither will the thirsty real ale drinker find satisfaction at the nearby **Britannia**, also closed and, we understand, awaiting the area's redevelopment, nor probably at the gay orientated **Nelson**, recent visits having found only keg.

However, at the **Funky Monkey**, Bench

St., real ale has appeared for the first time since the venue was originally set up as Jays during the 1990s. The pub has traditionally targeted a young clientèle and never bothered with cask beer, but landlord Nathan Sutton is hoping to expand his range of customers, and as a start introduced Greene King IPA at the end of July (see Tony's Tappings). "I think the demand is there," says Nathan. "A lot of people just stick to what they know, but hopefully this will encourage people to try it for the first time." As a promotion for its introduction, for the first two months, every time a pint of real ale was purchased, the customer received a raffle ticket which went into a weekly draw for a gallon. At the other end of Bench St. however, the **Flotilla** has been a long time supplier of real ale. Normally two real ales, with Bombardier as standard, accompanied by a range of ever changing guests reflecting customer preferences. Recent guests have included Summer Lightning, Broadside and Everards Tiger.

In Tower Hamlets John Townsend and his son Peter are keeping real ale alive and well at, respectively, the **King Edward VII** and the **Carriers Arms**. By the way, a correction to our summer edition in which we stated that John held the tenancy of both pubs. In fact, although he initially re-opened the Carriers last spring after several months of closure, his interest now is limited solely to the Edward VII while Peter holds the Carriers in his own name. The Edward is currently offering 'Happy' Mon afternoons from 3 - 8 pm with ale at £2-30 a pint. Visits during the summer found Wychwood Hobgoblin, Marston's Ashes Ale and Courage Director's, plus a long list of available ales.

Louis Armstrong, Maison Dieu Rd:

Sixteen real ales and three Kentish ciders were available at the pub's second late summer beer festival which took place over the bank holiday weekend. The selection, including beers from Lodden, Dark Star, Oak Leaf, Acorn and Tring, attracted wide interest and considerable quantities had disappeared by Monday evening. The ciders – Hardcore, Rough Old Wife Raspberry, East Stour Cider – proved particularly popular and were all gone in a couple of days. Of the beers, Abbeydale Absolution (5.3% ABV), Lodden Shrimpers and Dark Star Extra Stout also sold well, while Oak Leaf Pompey Royal (4.5% ABV) deserves a special mention as an excellent well balanced dark bitter; very different from the old Whitbread brew of the same name. In mid September the pub saw one of its busiest nights ever for Mark Crump's (aka Charlie Chuckles) fiftieth. Four real ales were reduced to one by the end of the evening as drinkers listened and danced to local ska band *Hey Rudi*. A few weeks later the return of *Tea for the Wicked* (original line-up with Steve on keyboards and lead vocals) proved another success.

At Whitfield no further news of Marston's proposed new pub on the Old Park site. However the **Archer** is continuing to sell real ale. Handpumps were reinstated during the summer and were in use by early August. In September the pub proved a fine venue for our monthly Branch Meeting, providing us with well kept Harveys Sussex and Brakspear Bitter. At the other end of the village the **Royal Oak** is still unoccupied and up for sale, and of late, has depressingly acquired boards over the windows and doors. We also understand, that the property is now being offered in two lots – the pub, and the accompanying land.

DEAL

Strand, High Street: The latest chapter in the recent sad history of the once excellent **Black Horse** took place at the end of July when, despite strong local opposition Dover District Council granted consent for the conversion of the ground floor to a café and amusement arcade. Among the objections was one fearing the town would soon "look like Margate or Dymchurch". However, Mark Woolls, a director of the company proposing the new venture said: "We will be opening a coffee shop and adult gaming centre. After various shop closures and the closure of the Regent Bingo Hall we feel it will be an asset to the people of Deal."

In Walmer, real ale has returned to the **Cambridge Arms**, where Bombardier was on the handpumps in late July, but, with the notable exception of the Branch's pub of the year, the **Berry**, the area's pubs will not be attracting real ale drinkers in their hordes. A succession of lager places, said one of our members, and while real ale is usually available mostly it's of the big brand, national variety. At the Berry itself, summer ales included Countrylife Pot Wallop, Hydes Your Bard, Raspberry Ale, Kelburn Red Smiddy, Wadworth's Vince Minty's Strong in the Arm, Fyne Ales Highlander, Otley O-Garden and, of course, Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter; and later, in the autumn, was one of the first pubs to receive a barrel of Fortitude from the newly operating Wantsum Brewery. CAMRA members can also find a good pint at the **Royal Marines Club** whose real ale compliment normally comprises Wadworth Henry IPA plus guest.

St Austell Tribute continues to be the regular at **Dunkerleys**, while at the **Hole in the Roof** Young's Bitter and

Courage Director's can be found. In West St. the renewed interest in real ale continues at the **Alma** with Doom-bar appearing alongside Master Brew in early July. Meanwhile, in response to an enquiry from the Branch, Wetherspoons state they are currently not looking at any Deal properties. The company's Property Board had previously reviewed the Regent, but had decided not to proceed due to the high development costs. Perhaps their judgement was somewhat coloured by their experience with the former Snoops premises in Dover.

In mid-September, Deal Maritime Folk Festival saw outbreaks of music appearing all over the town. At the **Ship**, Middle St. Saturday evening found an enthusiastic crowd spilling out onto the street to listen to singers and musicians; although what *Singing the Blues* or *Those were the days* have to do with either the sea or folk music is difficult to discern. Real ales were Gadds No.7 and Seaside, Dark Star Hop Head and Hop Head Extra, and Deuchars IPA.

Three Horseshoes, Mongeham: Real ale is an ever changing selection – Adnam's Regatta, Holt's Humdinger, Old Hooky, Brakspear's Honey Bee and Everard's Sunchaser, among others being spotted over the summer. And the pub played host to TV chef and presenter Ainsley Harriott of Ready Steady Cook in late July, when he was visiting the village for a family wedding and called into the pub for lunch. In August the pub held a charity fun day and dog show on Saturday 8th and a beer festival and fun day on Bank Holiday Sunday. Along the road, the refurbished and redesigned **Leather Bottle** is another regular outlet for Wadworth's Henry's IPA. Normally accompanied by a second real ale, recent visits have found Fullers Summer Ale, Mauldons

Midsummer Ale and Meantime LPA. In Sholden, in mid September, the **Sportsman** was selling Gravesend Shrimpers alongside Greene King IPA, instead of the regular London Pride, but we understand it was only the odd barrel.

SANDWICH & RURAL

Red Cow, Mote Sole: The pub is currently proving a great hit with real ale drinkers – an almost Pauline conversion considering that at one time it was criticised for high prices and a range not moving far outside a small selection of national brands. Various visits over the last few months have found Gadds Dr Sunshine and She Sells Sea Shells, St Austell Tribute, Loddon Gravesend Shrimpers and Elgood's Mad Dog in addition to the more standard Greene King IPA and London Pride, and all at the very reasonable price of £2.50. The Dr Sunshine and Shrimpers attracted particular praise, the latter being served in its own branded glass.

Fleur de Lis, Delf St: Regular beers are King & Barnes Sussex Bitter and Greene King IPA supplemented by a guest, of late often something from Cottage – e.g. SS Great Britain and Summer Conquest. At the **Place Brasserie** Gadd's Seaside has become the regular ale, however expensive at £3.20 a pint. Good reports from the **George & Dragon**, Fisher St. The pub, which has achieved Cask Marque accreditation, takes Shepherd Neame brews on a regular basis, but also embraces other suppliers – Butcombe (Gold and Bitter), Gadds and Skinner's Betty Stogs all having been seen recently, the latter winning particular praise.

Carpenters Arms, Coldred: Wednesday 16th September saw the latest outing for the Branch's Daddlums table, with the gauntlet thrown down to the

pub's regulars to take us on for an evening at this traditional Kentish table skittles. Not to be confused with devil among the tailors, Daddlums resembles a cut down version of Northamptonshire skittles, and is played on a five to six foot board, with nine wooden skittles arranged at the far end in a similar fashion to nine-pin skittles. Players stand two or three yards away from the table and throw wooden 'cheeses' at the skittles. It is a very noisy game.



The start of the evening was not auspicious. Due to holidays and other commitments we could summon up only six Branch members, while the taxi booked for 7 pm to take us to the Carpenters from Dover did not turn up. However, with emergency help from another taxi firm we eventually made it to the pub and an excellent evening ensued; our numbers being swelled by the arrival of a group of Irish Channel Swimmers who were staying in the village (actually one Channel Swimmer and his support team of three), and who divided themselves between the teams. With a pint per player resting on the outcome, the match was hard fought and didn't finish until 11.20, when with the sides level and our taxis ten minutes away a draw was declared. The pub laid on a fine buffet and we enjoyed Golden Braid, Incubus and Seasider from Hopdae-

mon and Gadds.

And the previous Sunday, Gadds had again been much in evidence as supplier of beer for Coldred's South East in Bloom annual dinner, for which the vegetables that won the village silver, together with local beef and Kentish cheese provided the ingredients. The brewery provided five beers, one for each course, and in order were Rye Pale, Seasider, No.5, Weiss Beer and last but not least, bottled Dogbolter to accompany the cheese.

Plough & Harrow, Tilmanstone: A visit in mid August found Shepherd Neame's new lower strength Spitfire on tap. The brew, which has been reduced from 4.5% to 4.2%, was considered not bad tasting but seemed to lack body. Along the road at the **High & Dry** regular real ale is currently Young's Bitter with London's Gravesend Shrimper featuring regularly. Present landlords Jo Best and partner Jim Porter, who have run the pub for three years, are apparently free of a beer tie and have freedom in their choice of ale. They understand that Enterprise is selling the freehold but have so far been unsuccessful. At the time of writing all real ale is £2.20 a pint.

At Ringwould the **Five Bells** remains closed, but permission was granted in August for single storey side and rear extensions and replacement of windows to UPVC. **Plough** at Ripple was varying its normal range with Coopers WPA and IKB from Wickwar and Stone Cutter, another brew from the otherwise unknown Limestone Brewery. The **Frog & Orange**, Shatterling, once seemingly wedded to national brews is still maintaining a local interest. In late July a very good pint of Gadds No 3 was on tap alongside Charles Wells Bombardier.

FOLKESTONE & HYTHE

Clarendon, Brewers Hill, Sandgate: The former branch pub of the year and occupant of what many would consider one of the best locations in the area, has been put up for sale by its owners Shepherd Neame for £225,000. The story going around is that Sheps need to make a number of disposals to raise the £15m it paid Punch for the thirteen pubs it bought from them earlier in the year. For those who feel the Clarendon to have a certain iconic status, and one of the pubs that the brewery would never get rid of, recent years have seen several changes of landlord; and the feeling persists that it has never generated the income expected of it. No doubt the absence of a car park, is alone a severe minus these days in Shepherd Neame's eyes.

No change of use has been sought, and at the time of writing (mid-September) we understand that an offer has been received from a former local landlord who plans to continue operating the property as a public house. The success of the Three Mariners in Hythe, purchased from Sheps last year, by its former tenant at the Clarendon, demonstrates what can be achieved with a pub that the brewer had given up on. The Clarendon is a natural for real ale, and would have excellent prospects as a free house with a range not limited to Master Brew, Spitfire, etc.

Three Mariners, Hythe: Meanwhile the pub hasn't been resting on its laurels. Henry's late summer bank holiday festival totalled 52 firkins, and featured a beer from every English county, 39 in all. With six ales on handpump and a couple on stillage we understand that the whole lot were consumed by Monday afternoon.

And in Folkestone we hear that Sheps is also trying to offload the **Princess Royal** at the bottom of Bayle Steps. With the closure of the **Earl Grey**, **Railway Bell** and **White Lion** (currently all boarded up and unused) the brewery's representation in the town is becoming rather thin. Also in the Harbour area the **Three Mackerel** remains closed while the **Ship** and **Mariners** are now under the same management – real ales seen during the summer were London Pride and Director's at the former and Bombardier, Adnams and Directors at the latter. However at the **Harbour** a recent visit found no real ale, and in Tontine St. the **Brewery Tap** is still boarded up. However in Church St. we understand the **Pullman** has re-opened with up to four real ales available. In Dover Rd. the **Martello** remains closed but opposite, the **Raglan** is still thriving – rumours that it is to be converted into flats dismissed by the landlady who says she hopefully intends carrying on as a freehouse. Ales are Greene King IPA plus a changing guest, Bateman's Summer Swallow towards the end of August.

Lifeboat, North St: With regulars including Doombar, Bombardier, Harveys Sussex and Black Sheep, the pub was another hosting a bank holiday weekend beer festival. The pub's normal compliment of five or six real ales was expanded to nineteen, with, in addition to the bar handpumps, a dozen or so barrels had been set up in the seating area to the left of the door. Beers included six from Sharps and three from Gadds, plus a selection of others from around the country. Cider was also available from East Stour, both medium and dry (That and Other as they have come to be known), as well as live music and a barbecue. By all accounts the event was a great success and a good

time had by all.

CANTERBURY

A brief visit to the city centre in early September could not help but bring to mind a comparison with 30 or 40 years ago. Butchery lane still has its two pubs – the **City Arms** and **Casey's**, although the latter was then the Shakespeare and run by City Councillor 'Iggy' Dempsey. A Shepherd Neame house, the name change occurred after Mr Dempsey's time during the 1990s and coincided with the brewery's introduction of its own Irish style stout of the same name. It was seemingly only ever available in a keg version and disappeared after a few years. The City Arms long ago lost its separate back bar with snob screen, a desecration which left the pub feeling far smaller and certainly less interesting. Around the corner in the Buttermarket, opposite the Cathedral entrance (free in those days) the Olive Branch is now, for no apparent reason, the **Old Buttermarket**, unless it is to get the word 'old' into the name. Inside it retains the same Dickensian semi-gloom, but at some time acquired a set of curiously tall legged tables. To its right the passageway that once ran through to the main street has long since been closed, as have the tea shops and bakeries which once typified this part of Canterbury. The feel now is of international franchising, as evidenced by Starbucks occupancy of the former tearooms adjoining the Cathedral gates.

At the **Seven Stars**, Orange St. frosted brewers windows and high backed settles have long since been replaced by plain glass and ordinary tables and chairs, while a few yards further down, the ultra modern **Bar Kandi**, a new creation contrasting hard glass and steel with soft low sofas, and sharp

lighting with pastel shades, has nothing to interest the real ale drinker. Over the Stour's hump backed bridge, **Canterbury Tales** (at one time The Mitre) faces the cleared site of the Marlow where work was under way on the stage for the new theatre. In Best Lane however, the **Thomas Becket** has lost its theatrical connections, while the pub no longer seems like a hang over from the sixties. Assorted tables and chairs, hop vines across the ceiling and subdued wall lights produce the feel of a centuries old tavern. With the exception of the Bar Kandi all sold real ale, but predominantly the nationally distributed brews – micros showed only limited representation. However a definite improvement on the early 1970s when cask was a rarity.

At the other end of Burgate, the **Thomas Ingoldsby** offered a choice of seven or eight different real ales, but again mainly from the national selection. In Broad St the **Brewers Delight** is now a house or flats or something else non-pub as is the even longer closed **Havelock Arms** a few doors further down. And in Church St., the former **Dukes Head**, one of the few ex-Fremlins pubs to continue selling hand pumped bitter until it closed in the mid 1970s, and now for many years a restaurant, advertised 'Authentic Arabian and Mediterranean Cuisine' with belly dancing on Thursdays.

Meanwhile also in the city centre the **Three Tuns** (at one time the Queen's Head) remains steel shuttered, and encased, chrysalis-like in plastic sheeting and scaffolding. Apparently the ancient building is in need of substantial renovation, but no-one is exactly certain of what is planned.



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TONY'S TAPPINGS

The perambulations and musings
of our Pubs Officer, Tony Wells

"The finest glass is a glass filled with beer". Margaret Croft, CAMRA Barnsley

500 REASONS TO CELEBRATE

Recently Chris Barnes, landlord of The Berry, Canada Road in Walmer, celebrated serving his 500th different real ale at The Berry. In honour of this event, Chris arranged with Nelsons Brewery, Chatham, for a special beer called Rasp-Berry to be brewed.

BRANCH PUB OF THE YEAR 2009 PRESENTATION

On Monday, 6th July, locals, regulars and CAMRA members gathered to attend the presentation of the Branch Pub of the Year (POTY) 2009 award. Martin Atkins, CAMRA Branch Chairman, presented the award to Chris Barnes, the landlord at The Berry, Walmer in Deal. This is the second time that Chris has won the award – the Berry was Branch POTY last year as well. Chris has done much to raise the presence of real ale in the Walmer area. As well as increasing the number of real ale hand-pumps in the pub, he has introduced real cider, and held real ale and real cider festivals. The question now is whether Chris will be able to make it three in a row in 2010?



A LICK OF PAINT AND A NEW SIGN

....is all it takes to declare that the Black Pig at Barnsole is under new management. Sold to Enterprise in May 2008 the pub changed hands around the middle of August to Mark Fright and Vicky Pegram. The pub was closed for a week while some refurbishment was undertaken but has now reopened. Vicky has always wanted to own a pub, having previously worked at the Fleur de Lis, Sandwich and Charity Inn, Woodnesborough. However, Mark, a plumber by trade, wasn't too keen on this idea. That all changed when the Black Pig came on the market. Mark was born and raised a few doors away and it was the first pub he ever drank in (we won't mention what age he was at the time!). So running a pub in his home village had a distinct appeal; in fact they found a picture of Mark's grandfather hanging on the wall of the pub when they moved in.

People who know the pub will spot two major changes. The public bar, where the previous landlord kept his dogs, has undergone serious renovation – new paint, a new carpet, new furniture and new modern pictures on the wall give it a relaxed feel. The other change is the real ale that is served. The range of Shep's beers that were typically available at the pub has been replaced by Sharp's Doombar and Greene King IPA. Immediate plans are to reopen the kitchen, which is being refurbished, and serve simple and uncomplicated food. Longer term Mark and Vicki

hope to rebuild the bar area, making it smaller, and allowing access between the public bar and lounge bar/restaurant without having to go outside.

SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE!

The third in a series of minibus trips to pubs which are difficult to get to by public transport saw us heading into the middle of our branch. Surprisingly, we departed early since the White Horse in Dover, our pick-up point, was closed for refurbishment.

Our first stop was the Fitzwalter Arms, Goodnestone. This Sheps' pub is very much food-led, and has won awards and featured in various good food guides. However, it still retains its large public bar, split into two separate areas, one containing a dartboard. The scrummy meal of sausages, mash, chard and onion gravy was washed down with hand-pulled pints of Master Brew and bottles of Spitfire and Bishop's Finger. It was then a short trip to the Griffin's Head at Chillenden, also Sheps', Master Brew, and Whitstable Bay were on offer at the bar.



A cross-country drive saw us arrive at the Bell Inn, Shepherdswell. This pub ap-

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The mimibus trip visit to the Yew Tree, Barfrestone



appears to be thriving under new management. On arrival we found we were sharing the pub with a bunch of energetic individuals from the local Hash House Harriers who had just completed their evening run. Real ales were Old Speckled Hen, Greene King IPA and Adnam's Bitter. Our final stop was the Yew Tree, Barfrestone. We arrived to find the staff at this pub/restaurant a little overrun as a typically quiet Monday evening had turned into one that was

somewhat hectic. On the bar were Incubus and Golden Braid from Hopdaemon and Skinner's Cornish Knocker.

Look in Channel Draught and on our website for details of all our social events, including country walks, social evenings, and bus trips.

REAL ALE ON THE RISE

You may have seen in the press recently articles about our thriving real ale industry. There are now more brewers than at any time since World War II, with 71 new breweries starting production in the past 12 months, taking the number of breweries to a total of 711. In its latest annual report, SIBA, the Society of Independent Brewers, revealed that their members had experienced a 7% year on year volume growth throughout 2007 and 2008. In addition, new breweries opening during 2008 added a further 3% to year on year volumes, marking a total volume growth of 10%. As for community pubs, the industry-led Intelligent Choice Report revealed how research from one national pub company showed well-kept beer to be a true indicator of success. Pubs that had obtained an award from Cask Marque, a quality accreditation body for real ale and sponsor of the Good Beer Guide 2010, experienced sales growth of 14%, while those without the award saw a decline of 2.5%.

Closer to home two new breweries have started production in our county. Moodley's, based in Rusthall near Tunbridge Wells, is currently specialising in real ale in a bottle brewed at home, but new premises are being sought with the prospect of expanding into cask production – www.moodleys.co.uk. And nearer still, the Wantsum Brewery based at Hersden, north-east of Canterbury started brewing towards the end of the summer, and hopefully its first beers will have rolled out the door by the time you read this article. (See page 18)

We have also seen a dramatic increase in the number of pubs selling real ale over the past few months. In Dover, in Tower Hamlets, the Carrier's Arms and King Edward VII are now both serving real ale, as is also, perhaps surprisingly, the Funky Monkey in Bench St., which I consider to be more of a trendy bar than a real ale haunt. It now sells Greene King IPA from one of the brewery's new chrome fonts. As well as the font delivering the beer above the bar, so the customer can see the glass being filled, it also has a switch that allows the ale to be poured in a northern style, with a sparkler, or southern style, without a sparkler. In Coldred the Carpenters Arms, has been selling real ale for a year or so now, and has increased the number and range of the beers; and in Whitfield, the Archer now serves real ale having had a successful trial. And a sixth pub in our branch to recently make real ale available is the Cambridge Arms in Walmer.



WANTSUM BREWERY

East Kent's newest brewery

East Kent's newest brewery at Hersden is the creation of former Pfizer worker James Sandy, who has drunk real ale for many years and brewed it on a small scale for the last eight. After being made redundant from the pharmaceuticals giant he decided to go into business on his own by turning his hobby into a commercial operation. A particular incentive, he says, is disappointment with many of the beers he samples in pubs, and a desire to do something about it rather than just moan. Before taking the plunge James worked with a brewer in Bury and discussed his plans with the head brewer of a Devon Brewery.



Monday 14th September saw the brewery's first brew, 24 firkins of the brewery's flagship ale Fortitude Best Bitter (4.2 % ABV), which should be on sale by the beginning of October. By Christmas James hopes to have in addition 1381 – a light coloured IPA (3.8% ABV), Turbulent Priest – a darker bitter (4.4% ABV) and Black Pig – adapted from an Imperial Russian Porter recipe (4.6% ABV). They will be available in firkins and bottles.

The brewery has a 1000 litre (6BBL / 24 firkin) per run capacity, with two fermenters and space for a third, which should allow suitable growth potential. Initially James is planning to ramp up to two runs per week, with his first major objectives establishing the production quality and reproducibility of Fortitude; and acquiring a bedrock of pubs that will consistently take it, plus a larger number who will host it fairly regularly. Next into production should be 1381 (the name reflecting the date of the Kent Peasants' Revolt), followed by Turbulent Priest and Black Pig in mid November. Bottling should commence in October, and Hercules Wine Warehouse in Sandwich will be the first place these will be available. Other outlets of course, are beer and cider festivals, and he will be providing Fortitude to the Crabble Mill Cider Festival at the end of October and has hopes of supplying a forthcoming small festival at Canterbury University.

For the mid-term James plans to get all four beers to a high quality and reproducibility, expand the customer base, and get to a wide number of beer festivals and hopefully win something. The range he hopes will increase to six to eight beers, with production in the longer term expanding to 72 firkins per week, and in due course perhaps achieving a major prize.



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RAMBLINGS & RUMBLINGS

Fri 3 July – Blakes, Dover: Goachers Silver Star, Harveys Best – seemed quite busy, though doesn't take many to fill it up; good to see bed & breakfasters drinking along with locals. **Sat 4 July – Dog & Duck, Plucks Gutter:** Gravesend Shrimper, Henry's IPA, London Pride – quite full of eaters and drinkers early lunchtime. Food a bit pricey, though beer not. Hopefully a good season will last them through winter. **Rising Sun, East Stourmouth;** Waggle Dance, Doom Bar – pub seemed quiet around 2pm, though maybe people outside. Impressed by cheerful civility of landlord greeting late lunch-comers on hot sultry day! **Sun 5 July – Louis Armstrong, Dover:** Pot Belly Brewery 'Well & truly', Skrimshander, Gadds Seashells – not many in for jazz Sunday evening, if that's what it was, though 'quiet' hardly appropriate with the cacophony coming from the stage (*"Philistine"* – Ed.)

Fri 10 July – Five Bells, Eastry: Mordue Workie Ticket, Greene King IPA – several people in bar in afternoon. Landlady had introduced all-day opening on take-over since 'nothing more annoying about not knowing when a pub's open or not.' Food available all day, and good value. **Sat 11 July – King's Head, Kingsdown:** Banks & Taylor Golden Fox, Goachers Silver Star, Greene King IPA – landlord now doing two guest ales. Done away with London Pride mostly on price grounds, which caused much gnashing of teeth from one or two regulars, who'd never drunk anything else. He expected a similar reaction if he did away with GKIPA! **Sun 12 July – Archer, Whitfield:** Brakspear Oxford Gold – blackboard outside: "Real ale on sale here". My first visit and quite a performance pulling my pint from a new barrel, but finally perfectly acceptable. Felt a bit guilty only having the one pint, but tied by Sunday bus times. Looking round pub, couldn't imagine who else would ask for real ale when I'd gone!

Tues 14 July – Boar's Head, Dover: GBG sub-com. Young's bitter – 'Just a moment', said young lady, on hearing my unusual request, 'I'll just go down and tap the barrel' (*However, Young's Bitter has been a regular for a couple of years, and always in good nick* – Ed.). **Marquis, Alkham:** Gadds Dr Sunshine, Whitstable Kentish Reserve – beer a bit cloudy but tasted good. First visit since re-vamp. Relaxing and modern; perfectly appropriate for a new suburban bar, but why mess around with a solid 18th century building in the country? It wasn't broke, but had to be fixed even so! Bar area larger than I imagined. Pricey, unsurprisingly, but staff pleasant. **Carriers Arms, Dover:** Had just sold out of real ale but helpfully referred us on to **Edward VII:** Hobgoblin, Marston's Ashes – new landlord keen on real ale, and showed us a long beer list which looked promising. **Sat 18 July – Hare & Hounds, Northbourne:** Festival – Tring Rector, Gadds Seaside, Seashells and No 3. Maybe the smallest pub fest, only 6 casks I think, but nothing wrong with that, after slow start at 2pm began to fill up, and good to see no entry charge this year!

Sat 8 Aug – Sandwich Stroll. Red Cow: Gravesend Shrimper, St Austell Tribute, Elgoods Mad Dog, Gadds Seashells, London Pride – excellent beer selection, result of ‘bland’ delivery mix-up. One punter had already stormed out, because no Greene King IPA! Perhaps some of us under-estimate landlords’ difficulties dealing with “real male” loyalty to heavily advertised bland! Food good, and beer at reasonable prices! Garden adequate, if not pretty pretty. Ah well, only another eight pubs to go. Lucky Sandwich! This one pub alone far superior to what’s on offer in some towns ten times the size! **New Inn:** Courage Best, Master Brew (£2 per pint, I believe) – somewhat overshadowed by previous pub, but friendly atmosphere. **Kings Arms:** Spitfire (£3-20), GKIPA – a few bar stools but all the tables laid out for food, some ‘reserved’. Fortunately the good weather meant we could sit out in garden. Very pleasant, good floral displays. **Crispin:** Broadside, London Pride – much larger than it looks from outside. Large back room with tiny patio off, overlooking quay. **Admiral Owen:** Shut for refurb apparently. **Bell Hotel Brasserie:** Gadds Seaside – again £3-20, but plush and luxurious: you pay your money and takes your choice! **George & Dragon:** Gadds 7, Butcombe bitter, Master Brew – very quiet mid-afternoon. Nice patio/terrace at rear. **Fleur:** Cottage Summer Conquest, K&B Sussex, GKIPA.

Sat 15 Aug – ‘Yellow Bus’ Tour. Royal Oak, Nonington: Bombardier, Cornish Knocker, GKIPA – no food, chef indisposed. So hastily on to **Crown, Eythorne:** Purity Gold, Adnams, GKIPA – *unexpectedly adventurous beer range!* Purity Gold excellent. **Plough, Ripple:** Fullers ESB, SN Whitstable Bay, Landlord, Old Speckled Hen. **Railway, Walmer:** Master Brew – noisy. **Sat 22 Aug – Deal & Bette-shanger Rugby Club Fest:** Chose the cider option for a change, Blushing Old Wife, (because of red raspberry colour!) plus half of Goachers Gold Star. Good value: no admission charge and 2½ pints for £5!

Bank Holiday Weekend festivals. Sat 29 Aug – East Kent Light Railway Festival: Nice atmosphere though not heaving, but early days yet, and lots of competition. Good selection of beers, mainly Gadds. **Sun 30 Aug – Louis Armstrong:** Loddon Shrimper (particularly good), Nethergate Augustinian, plus five others – *good range.* **Mon 31 Aug – Chequer, Ash:** Sheps Canterbury Jack (very good), Young’s Kew Gold. Excellent ambience helped by weather. Good crowd listening to folk groups throughout the day. **Crown Finglesham:** Brentwood Spooky Moon, Nethergate Suffolk County – another excellent summer day’s festival, though very quiet mid-afternoon

Sat 5 Sept – Coastguard: Shropshire Ales Quaff, Gadds Seaside, Whitstable Winklepicker – drinks amid the munching multitudes lured out into the sunshine; queues at the bar. **Sun 6 Sept – Yew Tree:** Golden Braid, Incubus, Skinners Cornish Knocker – restaurant full of Sunday lunchers till well past 3pm, only one or two drinkers in back bar. Happy hour, Mon-Fri 6 to 8 pm. **Wed 23 Sept – Five Bells Eastry:** Winchester bitter, Ginger Pig. **Thurs 24 Sept – Jackdaw:** Harveys Best, Broadside, Spitfire, Directors, Harveys Best. **Wed 30 Sept – Blakes:** Northumberland Golden Fuggles Skrim, Harveys Best. **Fox:** Autumn Leaves, Russell Brown’s Fall Over, Deuchars IPA, Abbot.

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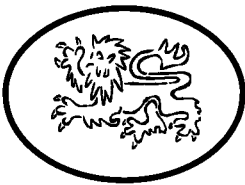
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THE ENGLISH PUB

Nostalgic fantasy or 21st century reality

It seems hardly a week passes without someone in the media bemoaning the present state of the English pub, and comparing it unfavourably with the past. However, while we might be currently enjoying a greater volume of such heartfelt outpourings they are not unique to our times – our image of the pub having always tended towards nostalgia, fantasy, and the belief that things were not as they were. In an article in *The Guardian* last year Ian Jack examined the “traditional” English pub starting with that particularly potent dream, the perfect pub, and the most famous of them all, George Orwell’s fictitious *Moon Under Water*, created for an article in the Evening Standard shortly after World War II.

Victorian in style, (the perfect pub essentially, and inevitably, reflects an earlier era), *The Moon Under Water* had three bars, two of which in winter contained an open fire, and barmaids who were middle-aged, knew their customers by name and called everyone “dear”. It sold cheese, pickles, mussels and liver-sausage sandwiches, while in the upstairs dining-room you could buy a substantial three-shilling lunch of meat and two veg, with a jam roll to follow. There was a garden too, with plane trees, under which in summer you could sit and drink cider while children played on the swing, stopping occasionally to fetch more drinks for their parents from the bar – illegal, but helping to promote the pub’s family suitability. It had neither radio and piano and was always “quiet enough to talk.”

Impossible of course, and to be frank the description contains more than a hint of saccharine: no drunks, bores or indifferent bar staff, and the quality of beer is taken for granted; one almost expects the rosy rays of the evening sun to perpetually bathe the interior. However, Orwell’s description, remains a benchmark against which public houses tend to be measured. In the early 1990s an enterprising Tim Martin used the name and variations upon it for many early Wetherspoon pubs, although to many, the Wetherspoon operation bears scant resemblance to Orwell’s dream, or to the vast majority of traditional pubs.

So, if the *Moon Under Water* is an unattainable fantasy and the Wetherspoons style hardly typical, what exactly is the true nature of the English pub? Ian Jack contrasted a pub near his Islington flat some thirty years ago, where on Sunday night pensioners sang songs from the War, with his wife’s description of pubs today – “big cavernous places with a funny smell, dodgy toilets and bad food.” She could well have added, he suggests “and most of them fully committed to the young, and the young getting drunk.” And if not devoted to the young the Florence, near where Orwell had lived in London, and describing itself as the “the last traditional pub in Upper Street”, is often the alternative. A lunchtime visit found five other customers, a flat screen showing Sky Sports with the sound turned off, popular rock on the pub’s music system, a disused fireplace complete with decorative bellows, adverts for wine and “sweetie shots” and a menu confined to Thai food.

Seemingly anonymous and soulless, and probably with limited local trade, it does-

n't much resemble the *Moon Under Water* or the majority of other post World War II pubs that many of us grew up with – or at least our time-enhanced remembrance of them. Certainly none sold Thai food or “sweety shots”, but then neither were they constantly full of people singing wartime songs. However, although much at odds with our ideal, the Florence has apparently found itself a market in tune with modern life, a fundamental requirement of business in any age. We may baulk at the term traditional, but traditional by whose criteria? What is interpreted as traditional depends largely on who's thinking about it, and can be as much a creation of imagination as reality. CAMRA, founded in 1971, and dedicated to preserving what was then regarded both commercially, and to be frank, by a considerable percentage of drinkers, as an outdated style of beer, very soon also established the 'appropriate' surroundings for its consumption; while two years later Christopher Hutt's book, *The Death of the English Pub*, raised further disquiet about the direction in which the public house was heading. Meanwhile George Orwell's 1940s dreams of “the solid comfortable ugliness” of Victorian interiors, had been preceded throughout the 1920s and 30s by the brewer's vision that looked back to G K Chesterton and ‘taverns and inns’, complete with half timbering, horse brasses and hunting prints.

In reality the great majority of pubs, ale houses, taverns, inns, etc., many of which could quite legitimately have claimed to be traditional, have borne no relation to the Orwellian or Chestertonian ideal, or the concepts of CAMRA members or Christopher Hutt. Many have always had at best a dubious reputation. Perhaps there is no better description of English drinking life than Ernest Selley's 1927 book “The English Public House”. It unsentimentally portrays the pub as it then was, and the bald fact that for many the purpose of going to a pub was to get drunk. A Midlands pub reminded him of Hogarth: “The women were the most degraded I have ever met. They were noisily obscene. One woman illustrated filthy tales about herself with bodily motions.”

It is unlikely that those pining for the lost golden age of the pub had in mind this type of establishment, or the host of back street premises catering for the disadvantaged in our industrial cities. Neither were they necessarily providing good value; before World War II it is calculated that 25% of London landlords watered their beer. Meanwhile the remembrance of the haunts of our youth is often coloured by the passage of time, and quite possibly a certain lack of discernment. A modest amount of alcohol at a tender age can leave all kinds of fanciful impressions. In truth the nature of a public house comprises a variety of elements – staff, customers, physical layout, music (or absence of), quality of beer, etc: does not traditional very often simply mean that combination that we like and that we feel at home with? While we may regret superficial changes in style and decoration, the best pubs are as good as ever. One thing however, has most definitely changed, and changed for the best – the quality of beer. Real ale today offers us a choice and range unimaginable forty years ago, and one fixed in reality and not the result of day dreams or half remembered nostalgia: drink and enjoy.



The National News

By Martin Atkins

Theakston's Best Bitter Back Home

After 35 years of being hawked around north of England breweries, Theakston Best Bitter has eventually returned to Masham; its years in exile seeing it brewed in Carlisle, Workington, Newcastle and Tadcaster. The beer's initial move from Masham followed Theakston's purchase of the then state owned Carlisle brewery in the 1970s, and its expansion of brewing beyond the capacity of the original brewery. Within a few years, though, Theakston's were themselves acquired by Mathew Brown of Blackburn who were in turn subsequently taken over by Scottish and Newcastle. However, unusually, in this age of concentration of business and the closure of small units, the Theakston brewery at Masham continued to brew, until eventually in 2003, Scottish and Newcastle, seeking to rationalise their operations sold it back to the family. Brewing of Theakston beers was thereafter centred on Masham, with the exception of the Best Bitter which continued to be brewed under contract at John Smith's, Tadcaster. Now once again all are together under the same roof. One question, however, does remain – namely the future of real ale at the Tadcaster brewery, now part of Heineken. With the Courage brand now sold to Wells and Young, will the Dutch giant remain interested in real ale production that is limited to just John Smith's?

Brewing Revised in Thorne

Also from Yorkshire comes news of

another revival of real ale, although this time in the form of a completely new operation. The small town of Thorne on the Stainforth and Keadby Canal, known well to Beery Boaters for enormous pub meals, a ferocious dog and an infuriatingly complex combined lock and swing bridge, has regained its first brewery since Darley's was closed by Vaux in 1986. Called the Thorne Brewery brewing is in the hands of former Abbeydale brewer Mike Richards, and the first beers are Best Bitter and Pale Ale. It is a social enterprise and community interest company, which means profits are reinvested back into the local community.

CAMRA Lobbies MPs

CAMRA is calling for planning law changes to stop pubs being demolished or converted to other uses without planning permission. Speaking at a meeting of the Save the Pub Parliamentary Group, CAMRA chief executive Mike Benner said that both rural and urban pubs can be the "cornerstone of community life." It also welcomed the news that both Punch and Enterprise have indicated that they intend to stop the use of restrictive covenants, and will be writing to the two companies to ask for definite confirmation. Save the Pub Group chairman MP Greg Mulholland said: "Two thirds of pubs close where there is no need for planning permission. That is scandalous. Restrictive covenants are an absolute disgrace and any company that uses them has

no concern for the future of the British pub, only self interest and maximising profits."

And the Campaign is also urging MPs to support calls for a major change to European beer duty rules. Headed by John Grogan MP, Chairman of the Parliamentary Beer Group, who has tabled a motion requesting the Government to seek the change, it is aimed at amending the current rules which prevent the UK government introducing a lower rate of duty for draught beer sold in pubs. The European Commission has indicated that it is willing to consider changes and a review is expected later this year. Mike Benner said: "a lower rate of duty on draught beer would represent a golden opportunity for this government to address the disparity between supermarket and pub prices, a problem directly associated with pub closures."

More Women Drinking Real Ale

A survey of 1,000 adults carried out for CAMRA and published just before the Great British Beer Festival in August, showed that while half of all drinkers had tried real ale, a 15% increase on the previous 12 months, the number of women drinkers who had drunk real ale had increased from 16% to 30%. And most of those trying real ale in the past year said it was brewed locally. CAMRA said the increase followed more third-pint measures being offered in pubs, schemes encouraging drinkers to try a beer before buying and record attendances at the organisation's 150 beer festivals across the UK. Chief Executive, Mike Benner, said: "These findings show the increasing consumer demand for wide choice, top quality, and generally for local produce. Real ale can generally only be bought in pubs, therefore with greater popularity

for Britain's national drink, comes further much-needed publicity for community pubs."

'Time' Called for the Traditional Pint Glass?

The Home Office is seeking a replacement for the 'traditional' straight sided beer glass, which it sees as too easily converted into an offensive weapon capable of producing serious injury. Announced at the end of August, the initiative called on a team of designers to produce a range of drinking vessels over the following months that are safer, and will also find favour with the public. Sebastian Conran, who heads the Home Office's Design and Technology Alliance Against Crime, said that reducing the estimated 87,000 injuries caused every year by glassware is the key objective. "We want to find something that will end the situation where shards of glass can inflict quite horrible injuries," he added, "People are quite used to drinking beer out of plastic and paper things but there is a feeling that in public, it is a traditional thing to drink beer out of a glass."

The straight sided glass, usually with a bulge towards the top and sometimes referred to as a lager glass, is of course not really traditional at all but has, over recent decades, steadily replaced the older style dimple glass with a handle. Often called jugs these are heavier and more easily chipped than the straight sided glass, and perhaps critically, are less aesthetically attractive as a container for lager. However in recent years the standard straight sided glass is finding itself competing with a range of styles and designs, often dedicated to a particular brewery, or its beers. The design team have been asked to look at four specific areas – adding a

new feature to the glass material that provides safety when it is broken; developing a composite or alternative material; ensuring that plastic and polycarbonate is at the core of any new vessel; and making sure that the new material makes no difference to the consumer's enjoyment of the drink. Already polycarbonate glasses and bottles, which bounce off floors rather than smash, have been introduced at certain pubs and clubs in an attempt to reduce injuries. Alan Campbell, a junior Home Office minister, said: "Innovative design has played an important role in driving down overall crime. This project will see those same skills applied to the dangerous and costly issue of alcohol-related crime and I am confident it will lead to similar success."

Unsurprisingly the initiative has not been well received. An article in the Guardian very rapidly notched up over 250 comments, almost all hostile, while the British Beer and Pub Association, which represents 98% of brewers in Britain and more than half of the 58,000 pubs, was also critical. It said that people did not like drinking from plastic containers, that they did not last as long as the average three-month lifespan of a pint glass, and were susceptible to scratching. Mark Hastings, director of communications said: "A glass is a better container for the quality of the beer. You can pick up a taint of plastic from a plastic container." Additionally, and perhaps typically of our present Government, the presentation of the initiative contains some strange omissions. There are no figures for assaults with broken glasses (the 87,000 relates to all glass injuries and will no doubt be seen by the sceptical as a deliberate attempt to place that in the public mind, as the size of the problem), no figures

for how many pubs are affected, and most notably of all, no recognition that unbreakable glasses already exist (see Channel View)

Conservatives in Cleft Stick

Eager to do something about alcohol abuse, especially among the young, and the anti-social behaviour it often inspires, the Conservative opposition find themselves with as much a problem as does the present Labour Government. If elected, a Conservative Government would increase the price of super strength lager, strong cider and alcopops, and ban the sale of alcohol at below cost price. Additional powers would be given to local authorities to deny or withdraw licences from problem clubs and pubs and from those who serve under-18s. There is also talk of a special levy on pubs staying open late to help towards the cost of the extra policing that some generate.

However, presumably not wishing to upset a large part of the electorate, the price of spirits and wine are to be left at their present historically record low levels. They may plan to raise the cost of 5% ABV Smirnoff Ice by 50% but the cost of a bottle of 37.5% Smirnoff Vodka will remain unchanged, as will the considerably cheaper own brand, and bottom end of the market spirits, and the fruit juices with which they can be mixed. No prizes then, for guessing where the enterprising youthful binge drinker will be turning – as of course they already are. Meanwhile the envisaged "police levy" maintains the traditional Government fault of treating the pub industry as a homogeneous whole. Any pub user will know that just a handful of pubs and clubs cause 99% of policing problems. Why should the well behaved majority, who are trouble

free irrespective of what time they close, subsidise the few miscreants?

BMA Calls for Further Curbs on Alcohol

No qualms about upsetting voters amongst the medical profession, however. A new report from the BMA proposes tax increases on alcohol linked to strength and set above the level of inflation. It also wants a reduction in licensing hours, minimum prices and a ban on advertising. Dr Vivienne Nathanson claimed the BMA was not "anti-alcohol" but just wanted sensible drinking so that people did not put their health and lives in danger. However many in the industry called the proposals draconian, which would not work. CAMRA head of campaigns and policy Jonathan Mail said they would do little to stop abuse and mainly hurt the responsible majority. "The

BMA should focus on measures which tackle binge drinking," he said. "We've shown that well run community pubs do not promote irresponsible consumption and bring a range of benefits to the community. The proposals..... would increase pub prices and price many out of going to the pub." Also, "the BMA wants to go further in its campaign against responsible drinkers and control pub opening hours, meaning a possible return to a uniform 11pm, or earlier, closing time." (See Channel View)



CHASERS

As predicted in previous editions of Channel Draught Newcastle Brown is leaving Tyneside. Scottish and Newcastle (or Heineken who now own the company) are closing the Gateshead Brewery and transferring beer production elsewhere, with Newcastle Brown ending up at John Smith's, Tadcaster. No doubt Scottish and Newcastle will be telling everyone that the beer will remain just the same, thereby making a mockery of the European Community's Protected Geographical Indication (i.e. production has to be tied to a specific area – in this case Tyneside) which the company proudly acquired for it just a few years ago.

This autumn's prize for lack of common sense must go to that supermarket who banned a woman from buying a bottle of wine because she was accompanied by her seventeen year old daughter, and that was after the checkout girl had asked the mother to produce proof of her own age even though she was over fifty. The argument regarding the seventeen year old was that, somehow, being at the checkout in person made it more likely that the woman was buying the wine for her, even though quite legally they could have gone home and split the bottle between them.

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Kent Small Brewery News

By Roger Marples

P & DJ Goacher. Tovil, Maidstone 01622 682112

Not much new at Goacher's. Crown Imperial Stout will be available from the end of October. They reported their best ever summer and are still busy. The Three Mariners at Hythe has started to take Fine Light on a monthly order, sometimes supplementing with Best Dark.

Hopdaemon Brewery Co. Ltd. Newnham 01795 892078

hopdaemon@supanet.com

Again nothing new. The brewery is very busy. Not much sign of the recession here.

Nelson Brewing Co. - Chatham 01634 832828

sales@nelsonbrewingcompany.co.uk

Two new beers from Nelson are Cutlass at 4% which is of the same style as Rochester Bitter (i.e. light and hoppy), and Jammin' Jack at 4.3%, a golden honey beer.

Ramsgate Brewery Ltd. – Broadstairs 01843 580037

info@ramsgatebrewery.co.uk

This is another brewery that is doing well. So much so that capacity is being trebled by building a new brew house with new fermenters. Dark Conspiracy (4.9%) and Little Cracker will be on sale in November and December, with the possibility of Dark Conspiracy being extended into the Spring. There is a grand plan for next year, but Eddie's lips are sealed. Read about it first in Channel Draught.....although as the brewery has developed a new glossy web site, on second thoughts, you might read about it first on that.

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

sales@westerhambrewery.co.uk

The National Trust bottle conditioned beer about which you no doubt read in the last edition of Channel draught, has now been formally launched. Little Scotney Green Hop Harvest Ale will be on sale until the end of October. General Wolfe at 4.3%, a smooth well balanced beer with plenty of taste, will be on sale in November. A double stout at 5.5%, based on the former Black

Eagle Brewery Recipe, is also planned. Whether the forbidden word "EAGLE" will be used, I do not know. As has been previously mentioned, the use of this bird of prey's name, by Westerham Brewery, upsets those thin-skinned mass producers of brown alcoholic drinks at Bedford. I do refer of course to Wells & Young's. However, more on this subject later.

Whitstable Brewery – Grafty Green 01622 851007

whitstablebrewer@btconnect.com

Well, the Kent Small Breweries must be brewing some good beers, as Rafik reports that Whitstable Brewery has had its best ever summer and sales are still buoyant. Unfortunately he has nothing more to add to fill these pages.

Wantsum Brewery – Hersden 07879486087

wantsumbrewery@googlemail.com

A new brewery for East Kent. I sampled their first brew, Fortitude 4.0% which is a very hoppy bitter, in Blake's, on the first week in October. (See separate article page 18)

The Fox



High Street Temple Ewell, Tel 01304 823598

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12-4 & 7-11 Sunday

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Listed in the 2010 CAMRA Good Beer Guide

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CHANNEL VIEW

DOCTORS' DILEMMA

It is hard to believe that the BMA has thoroughly thought through the detail and consequences of its call for further tax rises on alcohol. The only people upon whom it is likely to have any effect are responsible public house landlords and their responsible customers. The real problem area of very heavy consumption of alcohol purchased in the off trade will hardly be touched.

As we saw following Alistair Darling's 2008 budget, swingeing increases in duty have very little impact on the rock bottom prices at which the supermarkets are able to knock out alcohol. In particular, beer is still being offered at a fraction of the price (perhaps as little as a tenth) that it might sell for over the bar. Unlike a publican, who, unless he or she wants to go broke, must cover the cost of the beer they sell, and more, to make a profit, a supermarket is under no such obligation. Subsidised by the income from their enormous range of food and other products, and, because of their economic clout, very likely by their suppliers as well, they seem perfectly able to completely ignore any duty increases and sell alcohol at whatever price they like.

By comparison the ordinary public house is painfully aware of even the smallest increase in duty. Already having to contend with the recession, declining beer sales, and the smoking ban, it does not need the extra burden of additional taxation – especially, if as in this instance, it is likely to be totally useless at achieving its objective. Across the

country, 40 or 50 pubs are closing every week, and another duty increase will inevitably see a further tranche giving up the struggle; very many of which will be traditional community locals. Dr. Vivienne Nathanson says that the BMA is not “anti-alcohol” and just wants to see people drink sensibly. You could have fooled us. The only result of further duty increases will be less opportunity for drinking in a controlled and restrained environment, and more alcohol bought from the supermarkets, very cheaply, and with no certainty by whom, or where, or in what circumstances it will be consumed.

However, there is another side to all this. The BMA is not the first to call for duty increases to combat alcohol excess. It has long been an article of faith for the World Health Organisation and health campaigners despite there being scant evidence in its favour. In terms of alcohol related problems, highly taxed Britain and Scandinavia compare unfavourably with the traditionally low priced Mediterranean. Unfortunately, of late, health campaigning has acquired a disturbingly puritanical aspect. Talk of a “war on alcohol” and the “crusade against tobacco”, and of developing a “passive drinking” argument (the knock-on social effects of alcohol) set the tone. Dr. Nathanson might well make claims of being “not anti-alcohol”, but in truth many of those campaigning on alcohol are just that, and have considerable sway with bodies such as her own and with Parliament. Among them are hard line teetotal groups who would no doubt happily see alcohol banned,

and who are strongly represented in organisations such as the influential Alcohol Health Alliance, where they comprise half of the 24 health bodies and charities of which it is formed.

Obviously CAMRA has little time for such ideology, and neither, do we believe, have most of the British population. To those of us who support the control of alcohol, increasing duty levels make no sense, damaging as they do one of the most effective ways of combating alcohol abuse, the traditional public house. To those however, who just wish to attack alcohol and everything with which it is associated it makes no difference. CAMRA must make it very clear, and to the widest possible audience, that it will do everything in its power to protect the British pub and real ale, and vehemently oppose those who try to destroy them.

UNBREAKABLE GLASSES

As we report in National News, in an attempt to combat the problem of injuries arising from glasses being used as weapons, the Home Office's Design and Technology Alliance Against Crime has been assigned the task of producing a range of drinking vessels that are safer, and which will also find favour with the public. Very commendable, one might think, except that unbreakable glasses already exist, and the thought of settling down with a pint in a Government designed glass has every unfavourable resonance of wartime austerity or the gloomier prognostications of George Orwell.

Glasses made from material which does not break into dangerous shards have been around for some time, probably a considerable time bearing in mind how long car windscreens have employed a similar quality, and can be exceedingly tough – anecdote speaks

of some needing to be hit with a lump hammer before they will break. Over six years ago our own local council and LVA were being shown examples that were indistinguishable from ordinary glasses, other than being slightly heavier, and which cost the same or only a little more.

Meanwhile the prospect of involvement by a Home Office design team only brings to mind the old adage that a camel is a horse designed by a committee: any 'suitable drinking vessel' emerging from Whitehall will likely have about it a lot more of the dromedary than the thoroughbred. Trying to second guess the public's taste and style is best left to those whose livelihood it is. In any case, as we point out in National News, the so called traditional glass, for which replacement is sought, is by no means any longer the standard. Recent years have seen a variety of new designs appear and many brewers are producing glasses specific to themselves or certain of their beers.

By inference, once developed the new glasses will be rolled out across the country to all pubs, whether they have a problem or not; although for the vast majority attacks with broken glasses are a rarity, if not unknown, and come way down their list of concerns. The Government is once again treating the pub business as a homogeneous whole, the good thrown in with the bad; although in truth few industries are as diversified. As so often, to crack the nut it has reached for the sledgehammer, and treated us to the curious spectacle of a cash-strapped Government proposing to spend considerable time and money developing something that already exists, to a design that no one will want, for pubs that don't need it.



DISAPPEARING PUBS

Part Two of Paul Skelton's look at pubs that never were

In our Summer edition we printed the first part of Paul Skelton's look at Dover pubs that never actually existed. The following is the continuation of Paul's research

LLOYDS NUMBER ONE. Ironically built on the site of Leneys Brewery's barrel storage yard as the Granada picture house and opened in 1930, this Castle St. premises was subsequently bought by ABC in 1935, although not



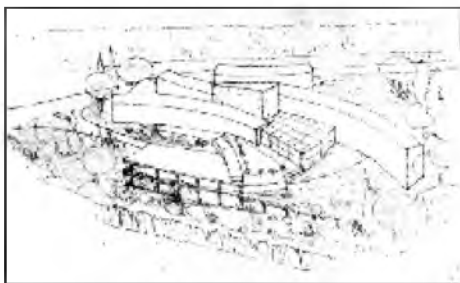
changing its name till 1960. Closed as a cinema in 1982, it became Images nightclub, later renamed Snoops. Way back in 2002 Wetherspoons took inter-

est in the building and was going to convert it into a café and public bar with licence for music and dancing as a "Lloyds Number 1". Now somewhat dilapidated and subject to new proposals from Wetherspoons every few years, it still awaits either renovation and reopening or complete redevelopment. So this is yet another pub that so far has never existed.

MARKET SQUARE HOTEL. In 1953, with one of the biggest reconstruction plans taking place in the Market Square, and new flats and shops being built, the Town Clerk conducted preliminary negotiations with a view to disposing of part of the land on the West side of Market Square between the bank site and Tavenors Lane, for hotel purposes. The committee report stated that provisional agreement had been reached with Messrs. Fremlins Ltd., for the acquisition by the Corporation of the store then occupied by Messrs. W. J. Took and Sons in Tavenors Lane, and the adjoining ruinous premises. The price provisionally agreed was £1100, yet no hotel was ever built on this site.

TEN BELLS. Technically speaking this pub did open, but not with the name first suggested. Now named the "Eight Bells" the Wetherspoons pub opened in 1997 was originally going to be called the "Ten Bells"; that is until someone pointed out that St. Mary's Church directly opposite only had eight bells in its belfry and not ten.

WESTERN HEIGHTS HOTEL. The year 2005 saw a proposal for a 250



bed £45m luxury hotel to be built at the Western Heights on the Old Barracks site between the Drop Redoubt and the Grand Shaft. Ray Haines, chief executive of Dover Chamber of Commerce and working under the name Dover Hotel Development Ltd said he had "found a group with the money." The plan involved the hotel group taking control of the site from its owner, Dover District Council, and as well constructing the hotel, investing substantially in restoring and maintaining parts of the Western Heights, especially the Drop Redoubt, which was falling apart, and still is by the day. As the Western Heights is a scheduled ancient monument and the site is near to ancient Napoleonic fortifications, Mr Haines and his colleagues would need to consult English Heritage. To date, there is still nothing concrete.

NEVER NAMED, THE CHILTERN ESTATE. This one was just on the edge of the Dover boundary, somewhere on the Chiltern Estate, opposite Bushy Ruff. In 1901 Sir William K Crundall, of Crundall's wood yard and one time Mayor of Dover applied for and was granted a licence in September 1901 to serve beer at a proposed public house at Alkham on the Chiltern Estate. Come 1919, Mr. R. Mowll, solicitors appeared on behalf of Sir William Crundall for the renewal of the licence, only to be told by magistrates that the licence would not be renewed as no building had yet

been constructed. I wonder whether he had been selling beer to farm-hands from a barn all this time?

THE WHITE CLIFFS EXPERIENCE.

Not uncommonly referred to as the "White Elephant Experience" it was said to be costing the Dover District Council £340,000 a year to run, and finally closed in 2001. Alternative proposed uses included a theme pub, conference and exhibition centre, offices, entertainment centre, cinema, hotel, shopping, restaurants, night club – or a mixture, to be run by a commercial operator. Originally costing £14 million it was eventually passed over to Kent Libraries for apparently a peppercorn rent.



Another planned pub that never happened, except of course that there had been a pub inside the very same building throughout its existence, as the White Cliffs Experience. This was no other than **The Dover Arms**, the pub photograph with which I started this reminiscence, and which was set up as part of the display of a war-torn Dover Street. There has never been a Dover Arms in Dover, the closest names being the Dover Tavern now named the Flotilla, or the Dover Stage Hotel (see above). I have no idea what happened to the White Cliffs' Dover Arms when it was dismantled, but I do know a good deal of the displays ended up at a similar museum in York.

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KENT CIDER PRODUCERS AND OUTLETS

An Update for Autumn 2009

KENT CIDER PRODUCERS – 2009

(With thanks to Ashford, Folkestone & Romney Marsh Branch of CAMRA)

Badgers Hill Farm, Chilham (01227 730573)

Sales 6 days per week, no wholesale. £60 per 5 gal keg

Biddenden Cider , Biddenden (01580 291726)

E-mail: info@biddendenvineyards.co.uk www.biddendenvineyards.com

Drv. Medium & Sweet

Big Tree Cider, Hartley, Kent (01474 705221)

E-mail: hartleycider@hotmail.co.uk www.cclweb.co.uk/cider

David Claridge - 600 litres in 2008, Big Tree Original & Appley Ever After

Broomfield Orchard, Broomfield Road, Herne Bay

Margaret & Robert Riley 01227 362279

Castle Cider Company, Chiddingstone (01732 455977)

Small producer - all cider sold locally - nothing available for festivals

Chafford Cider, Fordcombe (01892 740437) - Chris Ballanden

600 -700 gals per year. 5 gals £30

Crippledick Cider, Boughton (01227 751537)

Medium & Dry (6.5%) - 26 pint boxes (£1.80/pt)

Double Vision Cider, Boughton Monchelsea (01622 746633)

Medium & Dry Cider, Perry. 1litre bottles, 10/20 litre boxes, 5 gal

Single varieties in 500ml bottles - Cox, Gala, Katy

East Stour Cider Company, Hanover Mill, Mersham (07880 923398)

Est 2008 - traditional cider from Kent apples

Hard Core, Core Fruit Products Ltd, Mystole, Canterbury

Johnson's Farmhouse Cider, Isle of Sheppey (01795 665203)

Paul Johnson - normal blended cider plus small quantities from his own orchard for the first time in 2008. (5 gal kegs)

Kent Cider Company - Mark Henderson (07738 5703818)

E-mail: info@kentcider.co.uk www.kentcider.co.uk

Neal's Place Farm, Canterbury (01227 765632)

Cider available in bottles only

Pawley Farm Cider, Painters Forstal (01795 532043)

Dry/medium/sweet/spiced - only available in bottles

Pippins Cider, Pembury (01892 824544)

No cider currently available

Rough Old Wife Cider, Old Wives Lees

(01227 700757 or 07768 364353) - Simon Reed

E-mail: rougholdwife@btinternet.com www.rougholdwife.com

Old orchard of 250+ mixed variety apple trees. Output below 1500 litres

DDS BRANCH CIDER PUBS – 2009

The Anchor, High St., Wingham

Undergoing refurbishment at time of writing

The Berry, 23 Canada Road, Walmer, Deal, CT14 7EQ (01304) 362411

Blakes, 52 Castle Street, Dover, CT16 1PJ. (01304) 202194

The Bohemian, 47 Beach Street, Deal, CT14 6HY (01304) 374843



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11am to 11pm

Sunday 1st Nov

11am to 7pm

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Corn Mill, Lower Road, River, CT17 0UY.

The Charity, The Street, Woodnesborough

The Coastguard, St. Margaret's Bay, Dover, CT15 6DY (01304) 853176

The Crown Inn, The Street, Finglesham, Deal, CT14 0NA (01304) 612555

The Eight Bells, Cannon St., Dover

The Louis Armstrong, Maison Dieu Rd., Dover (01304) 204759

The Prince Albert, 83, Biggin St, Dover CT16 1BB (01304 204272

The White Horse, St. James Street (01304) 242974

Outside our branch area real cider is also available locally at **Chambers** and the **East Cliff Tavern** in Folkestone, the **Ship** in Sandgate and the **Three Mariners** and **Dukes Head** in Hythe. In the Canterbury area it can be found at the **Phoenix**, Old Dover Rd. and sometimes at the **Red Lion** Stodmarsh. And in Thanet the **Montefiore Arms**, Ramsgate always stocks real cider.

Apologies to any we've missed, and please let us know if we have.



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GETTING TO KNOW THE KELHAM ISLAND TAVERN & THE PUBS OF SHEFFIELD

Roger Marples visits

The CAMRA National Public House of The Year, the Kelham Island Tavern, is situated at 62 Russell Street, on the outskirts of central Sheffield, and in an area that has greatly changed over the years. It used to be populated by "Little Mesters", the local name for small industrialists, together with a few larger works, and while rather grimy had a distinct character, with narrow lanes of stone setts, and interesting industrial architecture. A few yards from the Tavern lie the Kelham Island Brewery and the Industrial Museum and the whole area is known as Kelham Island. The River Don flows on either side of the brewery, and was a factor in the very severe flooding of 2005.



I remember the Kelham Island Tavern as the White Hart, and a very different place. Its customers came from the nearby factories, and most of its trade was done at their mid day break. It was thirsty work in those foundries, and the beer, draught Stones from electric pumps, was what most of them drank. The old Sheffield Stones, from the brewery in nearby Claywheels Lane, was a light hoppy brew, and well worth drinking. With their beer, nearly all of the workers consumed that old Sheffield favourite of hot pork pie topped with mushy peas and mint sauce.

Nowadays it is unrecognisable, with custom drawn from a much wider area. Most of the factories have gone and many of the old buildings have been converted to residential use. A wide new road cuts off this area from the city, however it is only about five minutes or so walk from Shalesmoor tram stop, and even closer to buses on Gibraltar Street. Regular beers are Farmer's Blonde from Sheffield's own Bradfield Brewery, Acorn Barnsley Bitter, Pictish Brewer's Gold and Thwaite's Highwayman Mild. In addition there are usually eight guests, mostly from micro-breweries, and two ciders. They even have guest potato crisps. Food is provided at lunch times, but not on Sundays or Mondays. Music regularly features in the evening, and is normally "folkish", so one is not blasted back through the door in a cacophony of sound, as happens in some houses. The Kelham proudly proclaims its many CAMRA awards – Local Pub Of The Year, Yorkshire Regional POTY, and finally National POTY, no mean feat. The service is efficient and friendly and advice and tastings of beers are freely given. Opening is 11.00-23.00 with an extension to midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.

A Real Ale Tour of Sheffield

In addition to hosting the CAMRA Pub of the Year, Sheffield is an ideal city to visit if you are a fan of the small craft brewer. Put on your drinking boots and incorporate the National Pub of 2009 with this suggested itinerary. When boarding the first tram or bus, start by asking for a South Yorkshire Day Tripper £5.50. This is valid throughout South Yorkshire on all trams and buses all day and after 09.30 on trains.

If we begin from Sheffield Station we can pick up a tram behind the station via the exit at the back of platform 8. Use the tram platform immediately right of the exit and do not cross the line. Take any tram for Malin Bridge or Middlewood (frequency about every 5 minutes), alight at West St., and follow the direction of the tram along West St. At Victoria St. turn left and the **Bath Hotel** is on the right. Open 12.00 - 23.00 and 19.00 - 22.30 Sundays, it is on the CAMRA National Inventory of Unspoilt Pub Interiors, and usually has six beers on sale. All are from microbreweries with the exception of the one regular, Tetley's Bitter (they do own the house).

Retrace your steps to West Street, turn left, and follow the tram lines up Upper Hanover Street. A short walk on the left hand side to Brook Hill, where left again will bring you to **The University Arms** (12.00 - 23.00, but closed Sundays). There are normally five beers from local micros, with Thornbridge White Swan a regular and often also a second or even third beer from Thornbridge. Turn back down the hill and from the University tram stop, take any tram to Malin Bridge or Middlewood (nearest platform) for two stops and alight at Shalesmoor. Follow the platform in

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the direction that the tram departs and **The Wellington** (12.00 - 23.00 and Sundays 12.00 - 15.30 & 19.00 - 22.30) is in front of you on the left. A traditional locals house, this is the home of Little Ale Cart Brewery. There are normally seven beers on draught which include up to 3 Little Ale Cart beers and also a draught cider or perry. Back to where you had alighted from the tram and it is two stops to Langsett/Primrose View, and the **Hillsborough Hotel** (11.00 - 23.00 Mon - Thu, 11.00 - midnight Fri & Sat. and

12.00 - 22.30 Sunday). There are normally seven micros on pump with at least two from the Crown Brewery, which are brewed on the premises.

From the next tram stop Bamforth Street (near enough to walk), go down Bamforth Street hill to Penistone Rd., turn left and the **New Barrack Tavern**, a Castle Rock PH, is just ahead. Opening times are the same as the Hillsborough Hotel, and there are normally up to four Castle Rock beers, five guests (mainly micros), and a draught cider. Although, on my last visit, I had the misfortune to find Fuller's. Outside, turn left, cross the road, continue until the bus stop, and take the No.53 (every 10 - 20 mins), asking for **The Riverside** on Mowbray Street. If, on the way, you are fortunate enough to find the **Gardener's Rest** open get off the bus. It is on your right hand side at 105 Neepsend Lane near to the erstwhile Stones Brewery, and has been closed for two years following flooding, but is due to re-open. It is owned by The Sheffield Brewery. The Riverside is a "café style" bar, and has plans to open its own brewery. Normally there are five or so beers on sale, mostly from the same micro brewery, and is advertised as open all day but times can be erratic. Should you find it not traditional enough, cross over the river bridge, do not cross Corporation Street, and take the first right down Alma Street to **The Fat Cat**. This is home of Kelham Island Brewery and sells three beers from Kelham Island plus ten guests, mainly from micros, but always including Taylor's Landlord, plus two ciders. As you leave you will see **The Kelham Island Tavern** in front of you over the rooftops, if the builders have not obscured the view. If they have, turn right and then first left.

You have a choice of return routes to the station. Either, turn right outside, take first left to Gibraltar Street, and right again to cross the road by the roundabout to Shalesmoor tram stop. Take any tram for Herdings Park or Halfway, but not Meadowhall. Alternatively retrace your steps past The Fat Cat, re-cross the river and cross Corporation Street, to the **Harlequin** on Nursery Street. The beer range is impressive. Regulars are the local Brew Company's Amarillo Blonde, Bradfield Farmer's Blonde and John Smith's Magnet, plus ten guest ales from micros and a cider. All beers are £1.50 - £2.00 on Mondays. After leaving the Harlequin, turn left outside and the 47, 48 or 53 buses will take you to the bus station, and easy access to the railway station.

Roger Marples

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SHEPHERD NEAME'S NEW LIST OF SEASONAL ALES

Shepherd Neame has announced a new expanded range of seasonal ales. The proposed list is as follows:-

January/February: “**Buccaneer**” 4.5% Abv – A golden brown ale with a fruity aroma and zesty citrus, complementing the full malty palate.

March: “**O’ Malley’s Double Stout**” 4.1% Abv – A classic cask stout combining the flavours and characteristics of three coloured malts and additional roasted barley. Generously bittered with choicest East Kent Hops.

April: “**Dragonfire**” 4.5% Abv- A celebration of the best that England has to offer. The cream of the crop of malted barley, oats, rye and wheat with Golding’s hops adding a classic bitterness. Full Bodied and rich with a mellow mahogany hue.

March/April: “**Early Bird**” 4.3% Abv- Pale coloured with a delicious citrus hop aroma and palate, complimented by a smooth maltiness

May/ June: “**Oast House**” 4.0% abv beer., Pale in colour and full bodied , This brew has been hopped using 10 different hop varieties. So expect an amazingly complex palate complimented by glorious aromas , reminiscent of a stroll through the Oast House at hop picking time. A truly special, unique beer

June/ July: “**Whitstable Bay**” 4.1% Abv- Regular summer seasonal, it has become a firm favourite. Light and fruity in palate with the finest pale ale malt giving a round refreshing finish

August/ September: “**Golden Harvest**” 4.2% Abv – A ‘combine’ of Golden goodness. Pale malt, amber malt and golden flaked oats brought together to create a delicious, full bodied ale with a light fruity citrus hop complementing the Jaffa orange flavour from the amber malt.

October: “**Tapping the Admiral**” 4.5% Abv – A full bodied malty beer. A clean, refreshing bitterness derived from three different hop varieties. The addition of Napoleon Brandy essence to the brew makes it quite distinctive. “England Expects”

November: “**Top Hat** “. A 4.8% abv beer . A reincarnation of a beer brewed many years ago at Shepherd Neame. A beer rich in aroma and flavour. A malty, fruity palate leads to a mellow , rounded bitterness. The finish is alcohol warming..

December: “**Private Reserve**” 5.0% Abv -A full bodied, warming winter ale. Light in colour, using the very best malt and hops to produce a truly special beer.

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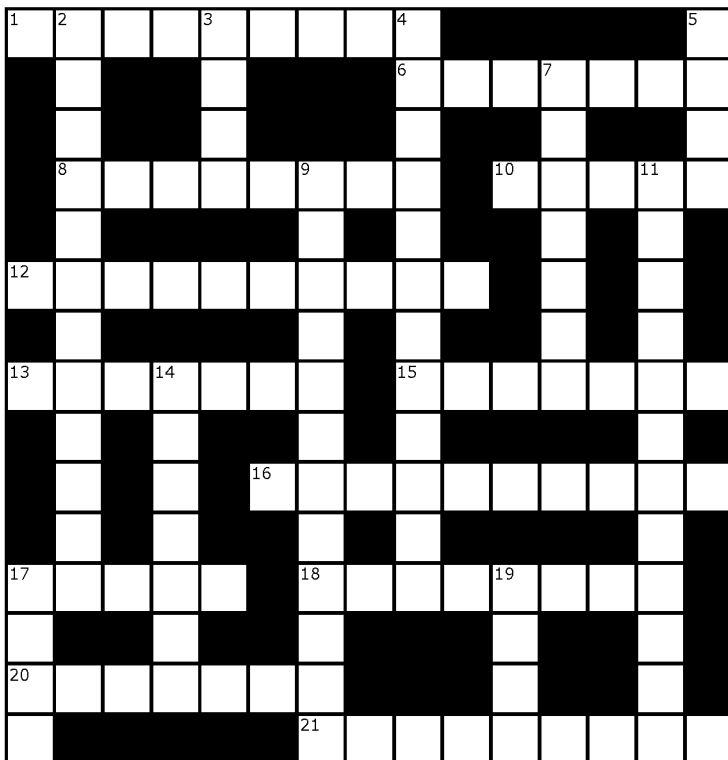
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BOOZEWORD



Across

1. Illegal importers in St. Margaret's inn (9)
6. Fruit made fuss about short voice part (7)
8. A boulder with energy to aim back at educational community (8)
10. Greta went round in front of British Beer Festival (5)
12. Appropriate bar snacks to be served at the Red Cow or George & Dragon? (10)
13. One New Zealander in May – no ver-mouth! (7)
15. Greene county (7)
16. Unfettered dwellings make independent pubs (10)
17. Weasel found in dilapidated model hop building (5)
18. Bundle of value from Devizes brewery (8)
20. Barbara Castle, maybe (7)
21. The measure of a beer! (4,2,3)

Down

2. Australian delicacy for a tunny fish turned up under road surface (9,3)
3. Georgian cleric is head man at Ramsgate (4)
4. Leader of 12th century Arabs in Deal (8,4)
5. Origin of American "beer" (4)
7. King or Queen, if and only if in Wales (7)
9. Recording device rewinds inside heartless job at small beer factory (11)
11. Weakness of aces surrounding hill rat (8,4)
14. Zambian dental arrangement in Kingsdown, perhaps (7)
17. Stitched up news organisation (4)
19. Spirit embraced by bouzouki (4)

Answers on Page 61



THE ONE THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE AVON RING!

A look back at the Beery Boaters'
April 1986 trip

Yes, that was the idea; the Avon Ring starting from Stourport-on-Severn and going anti-clockwise down the Severn to Tewkesbury, up the Avon to Stratford, and then to Brum by way of the Stratford and Worcester & Birmingham Canals and back to base via the BCN (Birmingham Canal Navigations – I shall say zat only vonce!), the Stourbridge and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canals (S&W).

So, I hired two boats from Stroudwater Cruisers of Stourport, and on Saturday 19th April, sixteen of us assembled at the Black Star, Stourport, a canalside GBG Marston's pub, the Dover contingent by way of the Kent & East Sussex Restoration Group's Transit van. By about 1400 everyone had arrived, and with the promise of the boats being ready by 1500, half an hour later we returned to the boatyard and embarked. Dave and Mike Green, Dave and John Underdown, Roger Milbourne (Dodger), Phil Simpson, Jeff Waller, Roger Lane, Chris Excell and Dave Taylor took the 70ft boat 'Intrepid' whilst Ray Crane, Dave McNair, Andrew Bushby (Speed), Mike Lock, Tim Rees and the Commodore occupied the 56ft 'Alderbark'. However the boatyard manager had bad news for us. The River Severn had flooded badly the previous week, and although Worcester cricket pitch was no longer under water, he doubted whether British Waterways would allow us on the river; an opinion confirmed by the lock keeper. We would have to find another route.

The manager suggested, going up to Birmingham via the S&W, down the Worcester & Birmingham to Worcester, and from there either return to Stourport if the river had subsided sufficiently, or, if not, leave the boats at Worcester with Viking Afloat, with whom Stroudwater had a reciprocal arrangement for circumstances like these. However, this seemed a bit short, and from my briefcase, like the proverbial rabbit from the hat, I produced an itinerary for a plan I had been working on for future cruises. This was, up the S&W to Great Hayward, down the Trent & Mersey Canal to Fradley Junction, on to the Coventry Canal, and right at Fazeley Junction for the Birmingham and Fazeley and the centre of Birmingham. From there it would be down the Worcester & Birmingham Canal to Worcester and (hopefully) up the Severn to Stourport. The plan was adopted, with our destination that night the excellent village of Kinver, in which we had stopped on the way home from the 1985 trip. It was 10 miles and 9 locks away, so we had to get a move on. About half way a light rain started, and stayed with us all evening, but the rest of the week turned out fine. At one lock a youth was encountered fishing with a rope and a large hook. He said that he thought that someone had thrown his motorcycle in the lock, but the absence of oil slicks made us doubt it. Dusk was falling when we moored at bridge

29, just below Kinver Lock, and after a couple of pints of M&B at the adjacent Vine, walked the quarter mile or so into Kinver, where the evening was completed with Batham's at the Plough & Harrow (the 'Steps'), and a Chinese take-away to follow.

Botterham Locks



An 0600 start on Sunday morning, and the rain had stopped. I'm not really very keen on the S&W from Stourport to Atherley Junction. The scenery is pleasant enough and there are ample pubs, but the several locks tend to come singly and too far apart to walk between them; in other words a typical Brindley canal. The only pair of locks is the staircase at Botterham, and there are, of course, the three Bratch locks which although not a

staircase, are so close together that you have to open the top gate of one lock and the bottom gate of the next to move a boat between the two. It is said that these locks were built before the idea of a staircase had occurred to James Brindley. After Bratch we stopped for our lunchtime ale at Compton where there was a pair of Banks's pubs, both selling real ale on electric pump, the Oddfellows Arms and the Swan. The latter, older, establishment seemed to be the village local, and proved excellent, with good beer and good company. Neither was it 'foody'; offering just



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tasty and good value rolls, and we have enjoyed several visits since.

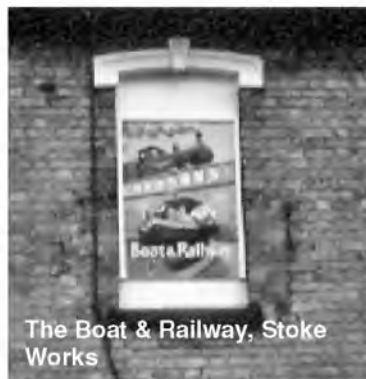
After Compton Lock we had soon passed Aldersley Junction, and the Wolverhampton flight to our right, and a half mile further, on our left, Autherley Junction and the Shropshire Union Canal. From here to the Trent & Mersey we were now covering part of the previous year's Four Counties Route, and of course also part of the Spring 2009 route. This is the summit level of the S&W, and covers over ten miles, with few canalside settlements after



Autherley Junction, although particularly notable is a large (and smelly) tar distillery, which because of the twisty nature of the canal, seems to appear ahead, astern or to either side of you after every turn. The descent starts at Gailey lock with its round toll-keeper's watch house, followed by several miles and half a dozen more locks to Penkridge. We moored for the night by the Boat Inn below Penkridge lock, having covered 26 miles with 27 locks that day. In 1986 the Boat Inn was devoid of real ale, but as we had discovered the previous year there was no lack of it elsewhere and we enjoyed Banks's in the Star, M&B and Bass in the White Hart and Ansell's in the Railway. Fish & chips on the way back to the boats completed the evening.

Great Hayward, was our designated stopping place for Monday lunchtime, ten miles and six locks from Penkridge. The morning passed without incident, and I even managed to steer Alderbank across the aqueduct over the River Sow at Milford without making a pig's (or sow's) ear of it, as I did in 1985. The narrowness of the aqueduct trough is not apparent until just before you get there, and on that occasion, attempting to reverse too late, I made a valiant attempt to demolish one of those Second World War pill boxes which are placed at strategic intervals around our canals, presumably to deter Mr Hitler from invading by narrowboat. On this occasion I used Skipper Dave's method, of throttle wide open and at the right moment swing the tiller hard over. At Tixall Wide (see *Channel Draught Spring 09*) we upset anglers and wildfowl by describing several 360 degree turns. By 1030 we were moored up at Great Hayward Junction and by 1100 were loitering outside the post office, opposite the Clifford Arms. Although it appeared closed, a scouting party was dispatched and found the door open and the landlady scrubbing the floor. She announced that the pub did not open until 1200, but, after spotting the thirsty multitudes, took pity and opened immediately; or maybe, someone cynically remarked, she may have been concerned that the thirsty multitudes might depart for the Fox & Hounds, the village's other pub! The only real ale was Bass, but remarkably good Bass (then brewed by the Burton Union system), and we remained for a 3½ hour session. Still, what matters when one is in good company. I cannot now recall whether we had a meal there, only that Ray managed to obtain some goose eggs from the landlady.

Considering the amount of Bass consumed and as a result most of the Beery Boaters (including both skippers) getting their heads down, it's a wonder that we got anywhere at all in the afternoon, let alone the 13 miles and 5 locks to our scheduled evening venue, the Swan Inn at Fradley Junction. But we did, although I cannot remember much about it, and there followed an evening session on Ind Coope Burton. Towards the end of the evening, as it was the Queen's birthday, Skipper Dave announced that we were going to celebrate with some redundant ship's distress rockets he had brought along. Well, most were so old that they just fizzled, but some did set off in totally unexpected and generally hazardous directions, but whether this was due to the age of the rockets or the state of the operator is a moot point. In the excitement I fell over and damaged my knee, but by then I was so anaesthetised by alcohol that I didn't notice it until the morning.



Tuesday 22nd April. I don't know how we managed the 0600 start, but we did, and I became very aware of my stiff leg when re-lighting the central heating boiler on Alderbank, which had been playing up. It required kneeling down, but now I found I could not kneel, and had to lay flat on the deck. I didn't get much sympathy but, then again, I didn't expect any! It took about 4 hours to reach Fazeley Junction, and turning right shortly came across one of the little eccentricities of the canals, Drayton Manor Swing Bridge, with its much photographed raised footbridge with miniature castellated towers. About 3½ miles and 3 locks further is the Dog and Doublet (the Dog in a Jacket to old boaters) where we stopped for our lunchtime repast of M&B and Bass.

There being now no decent overnight stopping places until you reach Cambrian Basin in the heart of Brum, 11 miles and 35 locks away, we agreed that we must get there that night. Some of our party, decided on a visit to a Marston's pub some distance away, and were warned that whatever occurred, the boats would depart at 1430. Of course, 1430 arrived and they had not returned and, of course, the boats departed. A mile further on, where there are 5 locks close together, a gaggle of stragglers began to catch up with us, the number finally complete when Ray arrived at Curdworth Top Lock. Somewhere on Curdworth Flight, Alderbank gave a lift to a British Waterways worker who proceeded to show us how to work through the locks faster – by charging the boat at the top gates against a head of water. "That's why we put those steel plates there!" he said.



After Minworth, first suburbs, then industry, closed in. We passed under Spaghetti Junction, where three canals meet at Salford Junction, and proceeded up the 13

Aston Locks, followed by the 13 Farmer's Bridge Locks. As we ascended it became dark and foggy, and by about 2100 when we moored outside the Long Boat (Flapper & Firkin) in Cambrian Basin it was really murky. Alright, I *know* that one shouldn't navigate after dark, but no-one in their right mind would tie up overnight near Salford Junction. Ignoring the Long Boat, we hot-footed it a hundred yards to the Prince of

Wales in Cambridge Street. The rest of the buildings in the street having been demolished, it is said that someone in the planning department spent his lunchtimes there, and had had a preservation order slapped on it. It's a pity that a preservation order could not have been put on Nancy, the lovely Irish landlady then in charge and on this occasion in high spirits.



The pub was crowded almost to overflowing, but we managed to squeeze ourselves into the back bar. "What time do you close, Nancy?" asked one of our number as the first round was ordered. "Sure, 'tis half past ten", she replied. At 10.45 beer was still being served we had another round. Whilst ordering still more ale at about 11.00, Mike Lock again enquired about closing time. "I make an exception on



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two nights a year", Nancy said. "One is St. Patrick's Night and the other is my birthday, and sure, it's not St. Patrick's Night!" Well, after that we just carried on drinking. Our ever-observant Mike Lock spied cricketer Bob Willis knocking up a high score in pints in the other bar. Eventually I was persuaded to fish my mouth organ out of my pocket to play a selection of Irish tunes. The party was still in full swing when we left sometime after 0200.

Wednesday morning was uneventful and took us south out of Brum on the Worcester & Birmingham Canal. Lunchtime ale, was M&B, at the Hopwood House, just south of Wast Hill Tunnel. Shortwood and Tardebigge tunnels followed and there being no banks to erode in tunnels, both boats open their throats while passing through them. As Intrepid came out of Tardebigge Tunnel an elderly gentleman (ex-British Waterways by the look of his overalls) digging a canalside garden dropped his spade and waved his fist at Dave U, who was steering. "Slow down!" he bawled. "You should see the one following us!" Dave grinned, whereupon Alderbank emerged with no one on the tiller. His waving became more animated and I wondered if he would achieve lift-off. "How long have you been going like that?" he hollered. "About six years!" I retorted. The incident seemed to amuse his former work-mates at the BWB yard opposite. "Don't worry about old Harry", one called. "He shouts at everything that moves on the cut!"



The dreaded Tardebigge flight of 30 locks turned out to be child's play, and we cleared the bottom lock in about 1 hour and 40 minutes. However there were 16 of us. A pair of working boats would have done it at least as quickly with just 3! We descended the 6 locks of the following Stoke Flight, and moored up for the night close to the Navigation, a Davenport's pub, still then an independent brewery. The beer was good and there was basic, filling and inexpensive food. We were more than pleased with our progress so far. It was only Wednesday evening and we were just 13 miles from Worcester, with 13 more miles up the Severn to Stourport. Or so we thought!

We made a late start Thursday morning and stopped after 6 miles and 6 locks at the village of Tibberton. Here were pleasant moorings with two Banks's pubs nearby; the Bridge Inn and the Speed the Plough, and we enjoyed a pleasant and relaxed lunchtime session – mostly in the Bridge, although some of us visited the Speed the Plough for food. We got chatting to some locals, who challenged us to a darts match that evening. We didn't see why not as we could cruise down to Worcester the following morning and up the Severn to Stourport in the afternoon, so when the pub closed at 1430 we trooped back to the boats for an unusual idle afternoon.

Well, some tried to relax, including Mike G, who was stretched out on his bunk in

Intrepid in a state of semi-undress opposite the centre hatch. I became engaged in a bout of jousting with some of the others, my weapon being Alderbank's mop, and at one stage whilst on Intrepid's roof, I thrust the mop through the hatch at Mike. Awaking with a start, he grabbed the end and somehow, managed to stumble out of the centre hatch attired only in underpants and cloth cap, and into the canal! Not being best pleased, he pursued me down the village street until he realised his state of attire and retreated rapidly, his place being taken by his father (my brother) who attempted to throw a bucket of water over me while I kept him at bay with clods of earth. So much for a relaxing afternoon! As promised, we had a pleasant darts, dominoes and drinking session in the Bridge Inn that evening, but for the life of me I can't recall which side won.

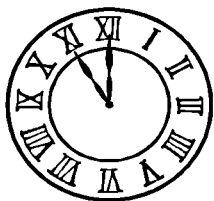
Friday morning and down to Worcester, and to Diglis Basin, where a pair of wide locks lead down to the River Severn. But not for us on this occasion. According to the lock keeper the river was still in a state of flood, and hire craft not allowed to use it, although conditions might improve in a day or so. A party of Americans not being pushed for time said they were prepared to wait; and a couple of us who took a stroll to the locks to look at the river, thought conditions seemed, to us, quite reasonable, and no worse than the River Aire which we had navigated in 1983. However, this being the circumstances for which Stroudwater's arrangement with Viking had been made we informed the boatyard of the situation and returned back up the canal to Viking's base at Lowesmoor Basin to tie up for the last time. At least we would have the opportunity for a good evening on the town. And so it proved. A meal in a good restaurant was followed by visits to various hostelryes including the King's Head and the Bricklayer's Arms with Banks's beers and the Cardinal's Cap with Davenport's. I'm sure that there must have been more.

On Saturday morning a mini-bus took us back to Stourport, from where most of us set off to Farnham 'Beerex' for the evening. On the way we made a detour into the Cotswolds for a look (alas, only from the outside) at the picturesque Donnington Brewery. But we did manage to sample some of their excellent products in the Fox at Broadwell. The Beerex went well but details are



somewhat blurred. I have an idea that we may have visited a couple of pubs in Guildford earlier that evening, also the Hop Blossom (Fullers) in Farnham. Sunday, and home to Dover, no doubt breaking this last leg at the Vigo at Fairseat just to wind down gently at lunchtime.

Jim Green



LAST KNOCKINGS

By all accounts the summer just gone has been a good one for insects, in particular the ladybird, and the butterfly, the painted lady. However the sighting of sometime elusive species was not confined entirely to the natural world. The pub trade had its own share, in the shape of the fair weather drinker, who made a determined appearance during the fine spells, and together with those other sub-groups, the mid winter Xmas Celebratus and Bank Holiday Ataloosendus, constitute that not insubstantial section of the population, 'the pub should be there when we want it!' brigade. The publican, of course, finds their contribution to his or her income most welcome, but not nearly as welcome as it would be if established on a regular basis. This is not a plea for all the year round propping up of the bar, but if all those who went to the pub on just a few occasions a year made it perhaps once a week, or even once or twice a month, the health of the British public house would improve immeasurably.

Over the years the variation from pub to pub of Shepherd Neame beers, particularly Master Brew and Spitfire has always been particularly striking. There are of course those who take a dim view of Shepherd Neame and all its works, and would argue that to comment on such differences is as pointless as arguing over whether Genghis Khan was a bigger scourge of mankind than Attila the Hun; but then my opinion on the brewer has never been that uncharitable. There are, to my taste, better beers around, but with the right care and attention Master Brew, Spitfire and the rest of them are quite worthy of consideration: which brings me to my original point. A few months ago, in a pub that shall be nameless – no names no pack drill, etc. – I drank a pint of Spitfire that did nothing whatsoever to enhance the reputation of real ale. Cold, thin and distinctly lacking in flavour one might well have imagined that it was the landlord's ambition to make real ale taste as much like lager as possible. However, I know of pubs where Spitfire is always a substantial and full bodied brew (irrespective of various opinions on its taste), and nothing like the pint I have just described; the difference seemingly too considerable to be explained away simply by excessive chilling. A conundrum perhaps, but then the thought occurs that were not Shepherd Neame at one time an advocate of blanket pressure, or such like?...and maybe still are. My apologies if this was not, and is not, the case, but it might explain the varying quality of its beers.

It is often said that the English prefer animals to children, and while such sentiments are no doubt much exaggerated, the latest edition of CAMRA's competitor publication, the Good Pub Guide, perhaps provides a measure of understanding. Picking up on the feelings of its readers, it talks of children treating pubs like playgrounds, parents exercising little or no control, and landlords having tried to and given up. There was a time when children would be confined to the car or pub steps, with a bottle of pop and bag of crisps. Today the policy is to treat them as

little adults and, with the obvious exception of alcohol, allow them full range of all pub facilities. But of course children are not little adults and unless engaged in eating, or otherwise being entertained, very rapidly become bored. Excluded as they are by law and tender years from a pub's main *raison d'être* – consumption of alcohol and the conversation of their elders – they are likely, unless kept on a very tight rein, to become a nuisance. By comparison animals (in the case of pubs invariably dogs) are, and don't. Even the most ill tempered low life brute on a length of string, will stay quiet and well behaved within the confines of a pub; as both it and its owner know full well, that if it were not so, they would soon be speedily ejected.

Some months ago it was suggested that redundant pubs might be turned into non-licensed facilities for youngsters: a proposal which in light of the current dearth of such places one would have thought would have attracted all round support; except perhaps from die hard CAMRA members who, while a closed pub remains unused and not demolished, retain the hope that it might sometime reopen as a pub. Not so, the strongest objection came from the anti-alcohol sector, Alcohol Concern I think it was, who saw it is an encouragement to the country's youth to use public houses – presumably as an extension of the logic which states that putting food and drink in cans will only encourage the consumption of canned beer, or milk in bottles, the drinking of wine and spirits. Perhaps, however, the alcohol campaigners have revealed more about themselves than they intended. They are not just against alcoholic excess, but all alcohol, and those aspects of our lives which may be alcohol related or engendered by alcohol, including it would seem the conviviality and informality of the pub.

At one time the paperwork accompanying the organisation of a CAMRA beer festival ran to little more than a budget calculation, a copy of the previous festival's accounts, and a few details on a single sided A4 sheet to cover insurance. What a simple world. Today the budget form and set out of accounts are practically unchanged, but they now have to be accompanied by an extensive health and safety analysis, and, for insurance purposes, comprehensive details of the venue, equipment and stock, personnel information, and set procedures which must be adhered to. This of course is not CAMRA's fault and not unique to beer festivals, but is just another example of the modern world seeking to infiltrate and direct our lives. So very different half a century ago. Whether the term health and safety existed then I don't know, but I don't recall it being used as such. Safety, though, was not ignored. As children we were warned to take care on the roads, not to take sweets from strange men, and not to play in the ruins of bombed and shelled houses left over from the war. However, aged eleven I went with my primary school on a day trip to Boulogne, accompanied by two teachers. On the journey over we were allowed free range of the ferry with its open decks, and once in the town, having been taken to see the cathedral and warned not to buy anything out of suitcases from spivs or bring back flick knives, spent much of the rest of the time wandering around the streets out of sight, or any jurisdiction, of our teachers. We all returned safely that evening, but today, I suspect, the teachers may have been lucky to keep their jobs.

Old Wort

Local Information & Useful Numbers

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

Dover Taxis

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A2B	01304 225588
Central	01304 204040
Dover Heritage	01304 204420
Star	01304 228822
Victory	01304 228888

Deal Taxis

AI Cars	01304 363636
Castle Taxis	01304 374000
Direct Cars	01304 382222
Jacks Cars	01304 362299

Sandwich Taxis

AM Cars	01304 614209
Sandwich Cars	01304 617424

Folkestone Taxis

Channel Cars	01303 252252
Chris's Taxis	01303 226490
Folk. Taxi	01303 252000
Premier Cars	01303 279900

National Express	0870 5808080
Stagecoach	0870 2433711
National Rail Enq.	08457 484950

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Gwyn Prosser MP (Dover)

01304 214484

Dr. Steven Ladyman MP (Thanet South)

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



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Channel Draught 41



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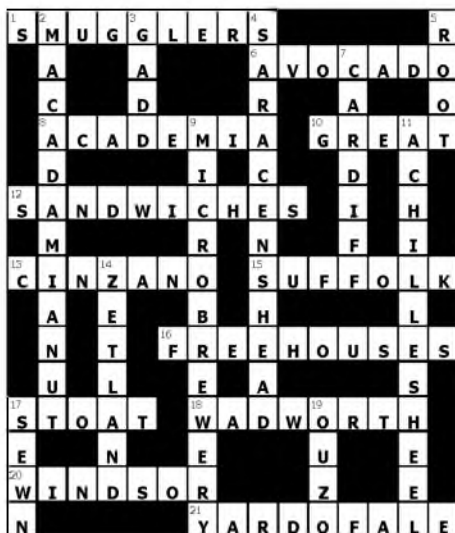
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ADVERTISERS INDEX

Name	Page	Name	Page
Adams Printers	63	Mermaid, Bishopsbourne	19
Berry, Walmer	46	Old Coach & Horses, Harbledown	19
Blakes of Dover	5	Park Inn, Dover	51
Carriers Arms, Dover	55	Phoenix, Canterbury	13
Chambers, Folkestone	46	Plough & Harrow, Bridge	16
Coastguard.	Back Page	Plough, Ripple	48
Crabble Mill Cider Festival	39	Podge's Belgian Beer Tours	48
Crown Inn, Finglesham	45	Railway Bell, Kearsney	61
Five Bells, Eastry	52	Red Lion, Dover	22
Fox, Temple Ewell	31	Red Lion, Stodmarsh	14
Golden Hind	40	Royal Oak, Capel le Ferne	13
Guildhall, Folkestone	37	Sportsman, Sholden	37
Leather Bottle Gt Mongeham	22	St. Crispin Inn, Worth	41
Louis Armstrong, Dover	14	Three Mariners, Hythe	43
Lydden Bell	29	Three Cups, Dover	36

And Finally.....Safe Drinking, Australian style

The medical profession in the UK currently recommends a safe level of alcohol consumption of 21 units per week for men. However Australians seem to have a different view. Australian police have cracked down on motor-racing fans by limiting race-goers to *only* 24 cans of beer a day (around 21 pints). In UK terms, this would equate to a whopping 42 units *per day*. Spectators at the Bathurst 1000 - a three-day race meeting staged in October- were told to stick to just the one "slab" of beer while at the racetrack. Wine-drinkers also had to show restraint, facing a four litres per day limit. Those choosing to drink lower-strength beer were allowed to bring in 36 cans (approx 31 pints), police said.

Police hope the limits will prevent the famous New South Wales race being blighted by alcohol-related violence. Known as "The Great Race", the Bathurst 1000 is a 1,000km (621 mile), three-day race held annually in the town of the same name.

The limits were greeted with dismay by some race-goers when they were introduced. "This is one of the greatest motorsport events in Australia and for some it is a pilgrimage that they make every year," However, Assistant Commissioner Alan Clarke said. "Every year thousands of race fans attend and enjoy the event and police will not allow their safety to be compromised by a drunken few".

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