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



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Issue 67
Spring
2016

CHANNEL DRAUGHT



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CHANNEL DRAUGHT

ISSUE 67
Spring 2016

Welcome to *Channel Draught* Spring 2016. A rather sadder edition than usual, as we report the deaths of long time Branch member and White Cliffs Winter Ale Festival organiser Dave Green, well known Dover publican Charlie Willett, and Doris Jemison, who had run the renowned Red Lion on Romney Marsh for over fifty years. They will all be much missed.

However, turning to less unhappy events, the latest additions to our local micropubs – the Thirsty Scarecrow in Dover, Freed Man in Walmer and Inn Doors in Sandgate – all seem to be doing well. Additionally, also at Sandgate, a new microbrewery has been established at the Ship Inn, and there is the prospect locally, of several others setting up as well.

Meanwhile, although several pubs remain closed, future uncertain or with every prospect of disappearing altogether, residents elsewhere are campaigning to see their pub retained. In Ash, villagers are pushing ahead towards acquiring the Chequer Inn, following Dover District Council's refusal of conversion to a dwelling, and in Shepherdswell another local group are hoping for a similar outcome for the currently closed Bricklayers.

And in Barfrestone, where in 2011, a campaign to keep the Yew Tree open could not prevent its closure, we are particularly pleased to announce the winner of Branch Pub of the Year 2016, is the Wrong Turn – a terrific achievement having been open barely a year and a half.

Also in this current edition, as well as all the regular items, we consider how the micro phenomenon matches George Orwell's "perfect pub", speculate on the future of beer festivals, indulge in a very short London pub crawl and look at some recent happenings in Yorkshire brewing. For the more athletic (or maybe not so athletic) we report on a long established cycling club, while for those of a particularly chauvinistic persuasion we relate some controversial comparisons of beer north and south.

Martin Atkins



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EVENTS DIARY

<i>Mon 16 May</i>	Branch Meeting, Chance Inn , Guston.
<i>Sat 21 May</i>	Eddie Clapson Tribute Fundraiser, Louis Armstrong*
<i>Thur 26 - Mon 30 May</i>	Beer Festival, New Inn , Canterbury*
<i>Fri 27 – Sun 29 May</i>	Crabble Mill Beer Festival , River, Dover*
<i>Fri 27 - Mon 30 May</i>	Bramling Beer Festival, Haywain , Bramling*
<i>Fri 17 - Sat 18 Jun</i>	Kent & East Sussex Railway Real Ale & Cider Festival
<i>Mon 20 Jun</i>	Branch Meeting, White Horse , Dover (tbc).
<i>Fri 24 - Sat 25 Jun</i>	GlastonBerry Beer Festival, Berry , Walmer*
<i>Fri 15 - Sun 17 Jul</i>	Local Ale & Cider Festival, Five Bells , Eastry*
<i>Mon 18 Jul</i>	Branch Meeting, Anchor , Wingham (tbc).
<i>Thur 21 - 23 Sat Jul</i>	Kent Beer Festival (See Page 47)
<i>Sat 30 Jul</i>	CAMRA Revitalisation Meeting , Broadstairs
<i>Tue 9 - Sat 13 Aug</i>	Great British Beer Festival
<i>Mon 15 Aug</i>	Branch Meeting, Black Pig , Staple (tbc).

Branch Website www.camra-dds.org.uk

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

For full details about rural rambles, pub strolls and 2015 GBG Trail, please email

john@ramblingrumbler.plus.com or call 01304 214153.

Events marked * are not organised by CAMRA



HAVE YOUR SAY

Throughout the summer, across the country, the Revitalisation Project will be consulting CAMRA members on the future direction of the Campaign. It is headed by CAMRA founder-member Michael Hardman, and was officially launched at the Member's Weekend in Liverpool at the start of April, and is accompanied by the Revitalisation Project consultation booklet which has been sent to all members. In total around fifty consultation meetings will be taking place, which in our own region, Kent, are arranged for Dartford Working Men's Club on Wednesday May 18 (7.30 start), and Crampton Tower Hall, Broadstairs on Saturday July 30.

CAMRA was founded in 1971 and since then the pub and brewing landscape has changed hugely. The Revitalisation Project will be asking members to speak up about who the organisation should represent and how it should represent its members. However, while the project is aimed at, and response confined to, actual CAMRA members, the issues being discussed will be of interest to anyone concerned about the future of real ale and pubs.

"The founders were solely concerned about beer," says Michael Hardman, "but along the way CAMRA has picked up fellow travellers who share our passion – cider drinkers, foreign beer enthusiasts, pub heritage fans. Has this widening of our purpose strengthened, or diluted our effectiveness? For CAMRA to continue to campaign successfully for the things we are all passionate about we need to ask ourselves some challenging questions"

- Who do we represent now?
- Who should we represent in the future to help secure the best outcome for the brewing and pub industry?
- To help drive the beer market back to growth and create a thriving pub sector, do we continue with a narrow focus, or become more inclusive?

Michael continued: "I've always been immensely proud to be a founder member of CAMRA. I'm just as proud to be able to return to lead the Revitalisation Project to ensure the organisation we launched in 1971 is relevant and effective for the next 45 years. This project is vitally important for me and the Campaign and it should be just as important for you."

"When we founded the Campaign the most important things were choice and addressing poor quality beer. Now you need to tell us what is important to you. We need to hear from as many CAMRA members as possible to tell us what you think the organisation should look like in the future."

The Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District branch is hoping to arrange transport to attend the meeting planned for Broadstairs at the end of July. Please contact Membership Secretary John Pitcher or *Channel Draught* if you are interested. And for non-members, although you are obviously ineligible to take part in the actual consultation, we would welcome your views.



CAMRA REVITALISATION PROJECT

Consultation Event



CRAMPTON TOWER MEETING HALL
The Broadway, Broadstairs, CT10 2AB
Saturday 30th July 2016 12.00pm-2.00pm

The aim of the Revitalisation Project is to review CAMRA's purpose, focus and strategy to ensure that the Campaign remains relevant in a fast changing environment.



From April to September, around 50 consultation events are taking place across the UK. The purpose of these events is to develop interest and involvement in the consultation and give members an opportunity to make their voice heard. CAMRA wants to start a conversation with a wide range of members at all levels.

We'd encourage all our branch members to get involved in the project and make every effort to attend one of the consultation events.

It is your chance to have your say

You can find out more about the project, complete the revitalisation survey and register for one of the consultation events at:

<https://members.camra.org.uk/group/revitalisation-project>



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The Local News

Contributors - Martin Atkins, The Mcilroys,
John Pitcher, Tony Wells, Jim Green 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.

DAVE GREEN



Overshadowing this issue and the Branch, has been the sudden death of Dave Green in late April. A long standing CAMRA member Dave was White Cliffs Festival Organiser and consistently played an active role in Branch affairs. We will all miss him greatly. Our summer edition will carry a full appraisal of the major contribution he made to the Branch over many years.

PUB OF THE YEAR

Saddened by the loss of the Yew Tree in 2011, and having played an instrumental part in the campaign to save it, Ginny Timm set about devising a replacement that would see real ale still available in Barfrestone – her own micropub. Her creation, the **Wrong Turn**, a converted outbuilding and former artist's studio in her garden, opened in

mid-August 2014, and rapidly established itself as one of the Branch's leading real ale outlets.

Recognition soon followed, and last autumn the Wrong Turn was chosen as Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District Branch Pub of the Season. Describing it as a complete surprise Ginny said: "Fantastic certificate and an honour to receive. Thank you very much."

However, the quality of her beer also placed the pub on the short list as a contender for Pub of the Year, and after judging during the winter, the Wrong Turn was duly awarded that accolade as well. A tremendous achievement in just a year and a half, and we offer Ginny our most heartfelt congratulations. As this magazine went to print, presentation of the certificate was being ar-



Ginny Timm (right) with the Pub of the Season Certificate

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ranged for the afternoon of Saturday May 14th.

Runners up this year were the Rack of Ale, Mash Tun and Eight Bells in Dover, the Berry in Walmer and the Ship in Deal.

Ginny has also asked us to let everyone know that the following week, Saturday May 21st, the Wrong Turn is due to be closed all day due to a private function, and she apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause any of her customers.

DOVER

White Horse, St James Street: Great praise for the pub's regular bitter, Harvey's Sussex. One of the best beers around, superb, said one of the local rugby playing and real ale drinking fraternity. Apparently his views are very much reflected the rest of his group, for whom the White Horse is a regular stop

on their weekend circuit of Dover pubs.

Blakes, Castle Street: Normally three or four real ales available, plus cider. House beer is Blakes Bitter brewed by Millis of South Darenth – a 3.7% ABV session pale ale – along with a varying selection from across the country, Adnams featuring prominently.

Mash Tun, Bench Street: Another Dover micro-brewery coming soon? That's the prospect held out by landlord Peter Garstin, speaking to the *Dover Express* a couple of months ago, when he anticipated installing a small brewing kit in the pub's outbuilding.

Now that the old tax office and Burlington House have been demolished the view from the pub extends to the White Cliffs of Dover and the Castle buildings above. Peter and his wife Kathryn had chosen the premises because of the proximity of the Russell Street Develop-

ment. They had also taken a deliberate choice to include soft furnishings rather than the more spartan hard seats and benches of some micropubs, and of course unique to the Mash Tun, a pulpit from which to serve the pub's beer and cider.

The Lanes, Worthington Street: One of Dover's top ten pubs according to postings on TripAdvisor (*Dover Express* January this year), the paper took the opportunity to list all ten and feature, as main picture, mine hosts, Debbie and Keith, standing outside their celebrated establishment. Home to all things Kent, ales are chosen from right across the county – locals such as Gadds, Hop Fuzz and Goodys, vying with Tonbridge, Rockin' Robin and Pig and Porter – although not to the exclusion of beers from elsewhere, a barrel of Triple FFF Moondance receiving particularly high commendations.

Also on the TripAdvisor list, is the **Rack of Ale** in Ladywell, where a series of special events has proved particular successful. With two beer festivals and a '40s swing and jive night under its belt Trish is now planning a '60s night on Saturday 28th May in the Back Rack, the newly installed additional space behind the main bar. A very handy addition, it has proved very useful for meetings, special events and watching the rugby. Three or four cask ales are normally available plus craft beers, wines and ciders. There is also a selection of international beers, and a large number of gins and rums of varying styles and types.

Meanwhile, along the road at the **Park Inn** a prominent 'for sale' sign advertises the property for anyone who might wish to purchase it. It is open and trading, but recent years have seen a succession of landlords. More settled though is the **Fleur**, adjoining the fire station, following its reopening last

year. The former Sir John Falstaff, which uniquely displays a pool table on the ceiling, now normally provides one or two real ales, visits earlier in the year finding Harveys Sussex and Doom Bar.

In the High Street, the **Thirsty Scarecrow**, Kieran and Kate's dedicated Dover cider bar, also offers draught real ale as well as a wide selection of ciders and bottle beers. Among recent choices have been Thornbridge Jaipur IPA, and Hop Fuzz Old American Pale.

Red Lion, Charlton Green: Choice normally of two real ales, the superb West Berkshire Good Old Boy being often available. Other regularly seen beers include Black Sheep Bitter, and from Timothy Taylor Landlord and Golden Best.

Louis Armstrong, Maison Dieu Road: Good selection of heavier and darker beers over recent months including Puddleduck Porter, Family Stout and 1965 from Westerham, and Oatmeal Stout and Common Conspiracy from Gadds. However lighter beers are not ignored and ales such as Golden Braid and Gadds No 7 disappear very rapidly. House bitter remains Hopdaemon Skrimshander. Saturday 21st May sees this year's Eddie Clapson tribute fundraiser

At Buckland two handpumps now at the **Bull Inn**. Selection varies and includes both national and local brews – Wantsum Ravening Wolf being seen in mid-February.

In early March it was good to see the all too rarely found Shepherd Neame Bishops Finger on the handpumps at the **Three Cups**. Alongside it was Courage Best. At the **Cricketers**, Wychwood Hobgoblin was available.

Railway Bell, Kearsney: There was general concern at the end of February when former tenants, Billy and Zara White, abruptly left the pub, and own-

ers, Enterprise Inns, promptly installed steel shutters over doors and windows. However, two weeks later they were removed and the pub re-opened shortly after with new licensees Natham Morgan and Ronald Hall from Rochester.

However, not so good at the **Dublin Man O' War**, where at the time of writing, the current tenants were due to leave, and the pub to close some time after mid-April. Future, thereafter uncertain, but as many have pointed out the pub occupies a quite substantial plot of land.

Fox, Temple Ewell: The May Bank Holiday weekend saw again the now annual Rotary Charity Beer Festival. With some twenty real ales and live music the event was pronounced its usual success. Back in the winter, and somewhat late, for which we apologize,



Steve and Alyson Grayson, were presented with the award as Branch Pub of the Season for summer 2015. Congratulations, and keep up the good work.

DEAL

Late January saw the latest addition to our Branch's pub stock with the opening of Deal's second micropub, the

Freed Man in Walmer. Converted from the former post office in Dover Road, between the Thompson Bell and the Station Road junction, it offers cosy surroundings to talk and drink good real ale. Owner and proprietor is Ian Goodban, one time landlord of the Deal Hoy in Duke Street, a period about which he had mixed feelings. Speaking to the *Dover Express* in March, he said that while he loved the industry, running a tenanted house had its restrictions and frustrations – he was 100% tied to what beer the pub's owner provided and at the pub owner's price. "I wanted to give my customers a better choice and price," he said, and his new micropub's name reflects these aspirations.

Visits so far have found mainly Kentish beers including Whitstable, Canterbury Ales, Kent and Old Dairy. Also seen has been ale from new Ashford outfit G2, the successor to Spencer's, rarely recorded in our Branch area.

However, gain one lose one. Around the corner in Station Road, Sheps appear to have given up with the **Railway** which is now boarded up, sad and forlorn. Various rumours surround its future, including use of the site as a convenience store, a substantial housing development being apparently planned nearby: at one time every reason for retaining a pub. At the time of writing we hear that the pub is lined up to be auctioned.

Berry, Canada Road: Host for our March Branch Meeting, the pub proved a good choice, its basement function room providing sufficient space for what turned out to be a very well attended event. With ten handpumps plus key keg and cider, the Berry offers a selection to suite most tastes, and especially so during its regular festivals – next being the annual GlastonBerry on Friday and Saturday 24/25 June

Taphouse Beer Café, South Street:

The renamed No 5 Kitchen and Bar, which shut down in January, was reopened a couple of months ago by new proprietors, Jonathan Brown, who works for Time and Tide Brewing, and his partner Ruth Shannon, with the intention of operating it as a kind of hybrid – a cafe in the daytime and a bar at night – targeting the over 25s. Beers and ales are a special feature, offering people the opportunity to try different styles and types from all over the world. At the time of writing we do not know if this includes British cask conditioned ale, but as a true representation would be incomplete without it, we trust it will.

In Alfred Square the **Saracen's Head** has reopened and in late March was selling Master Brew and Whitstable Bay. New licensee is Emeline Burton. Shepherd Neame commented: "We remain committed to the Saracens Head.....the pub has great potential," and they plan a complete refurbishment of the pub's kitchen and bar area. Meanwhile its several month closure raised local concerns, and in January, Friends of North Deal applied to have the pub listed as an Asset of Community Value, requiring Shepherd Neame to offer the local community the opportunity to purchase the pub should the brewery decide to sell it.

Opposite, the **Prince Albert** attracted the following compliments from one drinker – "Exceptionally clean and organised bar. Dog and children friendly". Most will applaud dog friendly but we suspect latter might well meet with mixed feelings. Recent ales have included Adnams Lighthouse, Theakston's Best Bitter and Caledonian Strong Ale.

At the **Ship Inn**, Middle Street Gadds and Dark Star are main suppliers – Gadds 5, 7 and Seaside appear regular along with Hophead and American Pale Ale from Dark Star. However, oth-

er brewers can be represented, for example Caledonian Edinburgh Castle 80/-, which was available in February and received particularly good reports. The pub also prices very competitively with at least one beer regularly offered at £2.50.

In Manor Road the **Admiral Keppel** has been acquired freehold by former Deal Town Football Club Chairman Dayle Melody and his wife Donna, which, resurrecting an earlier name, they are now calling the **Farrier** – coincidentally also Dayle's grandfather's trade. With so many pubs disappearing Dayle suspects they might well have saved it from development, and is looking for support from the local community. Small changes have been made, with new tables and chairs and a new sign, but essentially the pub remains the same. Food, either from home or take-away, can be brought in to eat, and real ale, it is planned, will be drawn from a wide selection of sources. A visit in early April found three Ripple Steam ales available.

We also note that the **Bowling Green Tavern** reopened in March after being closed and boarded up for a period – a welcome reinstatement, the area being otherwise devoid of pubs following the closure of the New Plough and Five Ringers over recent years. The end of March found the pub selling Bombardier and London Pride.

Leather Bottle, Mongeham: Good to see Dan maintaining real ale at the pub, whose availability before he took over the reins was intermittent at best. Still drawn straight from the cask, a visit in late March found a barrel of Ripple Steam Farmhouse IPA, installed at the end of the bar.

SANDWICH & RURAL

Chequer, Ash: The fight to keep the pub as a pub continues. Many residents turned out to show their opposi-

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tion when the planning application for change to residential use, which had been deferred in January, was resubmitted for council consideration at the end of February. Council staff had recommended approval but Councillors were impressed by the amount of local support to retain the pub, which, although perhaps appearing somewhat late in the day, deserved recognition. The Chequer was obviously much valued locally and there would be benefits to the community if it were retained.

Accordingly the application was refused, the grounds being that the proposed change of use would represent the unnecessary loss of a valued facility which would reduce the ability of Ash residents to meet their daily needs, and would reduce opportunities for meetings between members of the community. We understand that the campaign group now plan to raise sufficient funds to acquire the Chequer and run it as a community pub.

Meanwhile at Shepherdswell a similar fight is underway to save the **Bricklayers**, closed and put up for sale by Shepherd Neame. A visit in mid-April found the pub boarded up and signs advertising an auction.

Information supplied by the Bricklayers Arms Action Group informs us that the licensee was given notice to quit and left the premises last September, shortly after which the pub was boarded up and placed on the open market by Porters at £360,000. They believe that one offer was made for it, but was withdrawn shortly after the council decision to refuse change of use for the Chequer. We also understand that the Action Group are concerned about the physical condition of the building, and that Shepherd Neame had undertaken to carry out repairs if the pub had not been sold by February, although by late March it was still for sale and nothing appeared to have been done.

The action group have registered as a Community Interest Company (limited by guarantee), and applied for support from the Plunkett Foundation, which was subsequently approved. Links have been developed with the Chequer Inn to share knowledge, and if the pub remains unsold are looking to raise funds to buy the pub for the community.

Other closed pubs, with futures uncertain, include the **Charity** in Woodnesborough and the **Tuns at Staple House** (former Three Tuns). Also still uncertain are prospects for the **Red Lion**, Wingham, where talk of proposed conversion to residential use has currently gone very quiet. No further news either about the micro-brewery at the **Dog**. At the **Anchor**, a chilly day in early March found a welcoming log fire in the front bar, along with Incubus, Doom Bar and Bath Gem on the handpumps. On visits later in mid-April, Exmoor Fox and Gadds No 7 were available.

A warming log fire also at the **Fitzwalter Arms**, Goodnestone where beers were Master Brew and Whitstable Bay. We understand that current licensees Jeannette and Bob Todd, who have run the pub for just over a year, have been busy adding to its attractions. The large barn at the back of the pub has been converted into a function room, while part of the first floor has been used to create three guest bedrooms.

Black Pig, Staple: Now with accredited ACV status, visits in March and April found an eclectic selection of real ales – Jennings Cumberland Ale, Gadds No 5, Wychwood Hobgoblin Gold, Old Dairy Blue Top and Up & Udder, and Goddards Fuggle-Dee-Dum.

In Chillenden major changes at the **Griffin's Head**, with the departure in March of long time landlords Jerry and Karen Copestake, after thirty years serving drinks and food. There intend to continue to live in the village. New

licensee is Helen Paraskevas who previously ran Shepherd Neame's Bucks Head in Sevenoaks. And in Nonington the **Royal Oak** remains a continuing outlet for Ripple Steam Brewery whose Farmhouse Pale Ale was being sold back in March. In April visits also found Hophead and Doom Bar.

Crown Inn, Finglesham: Dark Star Hophead features regularly as do beers from Canterbury Ales of Chartham. Among other locals beers from Goodys often feature. The pub also proved an excellent venue for this year's Branch AGM – plenty of space and a fine buffet to accompany our deliberations.

Five Bells, Eastry: As usual the pub hosted a beer festival over the Easter weekend, offering a wide selection of ales from around the country, including many rarely seen locally. Good Friday also featured an appearance by the Deal Hoodeners. In mid-July a Local Ale and Cider Festival is planned – see Events Diary.

Carpenters Arms, Coldred: Plenty of variety at last year's pub of the year. One of the branch's Local Ales, Kent beers feature prominently – Gadds, Pig and Porter and Rockin Robin, all being found on recent visits, where a pint of Robin Redbreast was "As good as it gets." More distant sources have included brews from Oakleaf, Grainstore, Stancill and XT. Of particular note was a barrel of the recently re-brewed Charrington IPA, now under the Worthington name, from the National Brewery Centre at Burton.

Along the road in Shepherdswell, at the **Bell** in mid-February, Directors and Doom Bar could be found inside, while outside a Harris Hawk on a perch "guarded" the door – a pub first?

Old Lantern, Martin: The pub changed hands during the winter, and

at the time of writing (late Feb) is currently closed, but hoping to reopen towards the end of March. New owners include Johanne Dumelie, who emailed to inform us that they will be focussing on real ales, craft beers, ciders and "handcrafted" spirits, and were researching Kent micro-breweries. They also plan to open their own micro-brewery, hopefully for the beginning of the summer. Johanne himself has spent the last five years running pubs in east London, plus other beer related activities and has worked closely with many of the London breweries.

Plough, Ripple: Fullers ESB remains a standard alongside Ripple Steam – a visit in mid-February finding Classic in excellent condition. Goddards Scrum, Kelham Island Riders on the Storm and Moreland Original also featured around the same time, and also an ale called River Cottage Classic – the TV River Cottage? – if so might we expect it brewed from nettles, blackberries, or some other hedgerow provender.

In St. Margarets the **Coastguard**, now under the ownership of Shepherd Neame, reopened around Easter after being closed for refurbishment: good reports of the Early Bird in early April. In the village a visit to the **Smugglers** one Sunday lunchtime in mid-March, found Greene King IPA, London Glory and Old Speckled Hen. Noted for its food it was also welcoming drinkers of whom there were several at bar. As far as we are aware the **Hope** and **Red Lion** remain closed and for sale. At the **White Cliffs** the revival of real ale continues, and expanding beyond Ripple Steam and Gadds – in March Oakham Citra and Island Records Session IPA being noted on different occasions in March. Over the May Bank Holiday the pub hosted a Beer and Bread Festival

FOLKESTONE

In February, a visit to the **Firkin**, Cherton Place found Hardknott Lux Borealis, Gadds Oatmeal Stout and Oakham JHB. In early March beers were from Milk Street, Rockhampton and Oakhampton, while at **Chambers** there was Adnams Lighthouse, Hop Fuzz Old American, Pig and Porter Rye Red Spider, and Cottage Try Me. The annual festival, featuring a dozen Kentish ales and a good measure of cider, took place over the Easter weekend, apparently with its normal success – “heaving” was one visitor’s description.

Pullman, Church Street: Locals, Gadds No 5 and Old Dairy Blue Top, alongside Purity Mad Goose and a cosy open fire, were welcomingly available on a wintry Monday lunchtime in early March. At the **British Lion** in the Bayle, Ringwood Fortyniner, Hobgoblin and Banks could be found, and at the

Guildhall there was Pennine Winter Warmer and Black Sheep, together with regulars Greene King IPA and Harveys Sussex. Around the same time **Kipps** were selling Burton Bridge Porter, Old Dairy Red Top and Upham Tipster.

In the Stade Blue Top, Doom Bar, Harveys Sussex and Adnams Ghost Ship were available at the **Mariner**, where the number of handpumps has been increased to five, and Youngs Bitter, Doom Bar, and Bombardier at the **Ship**. Around the corner and up the hill, Gadds No 5 and Cambridge Bitter could be found at the **Lifeboat**.

Inn Doors, Sandgate: The newly established micro is offering Sandgate Special, brewed by the Four Candles, Broadstairs. Earlier in the year, also to be found were XT Dark Roast, Gadds No 5, and beers from Wantsum, Old Dairy and Twisted. Happy hours can be enjoyed 5.30 – 6.30 Tuesday, Wednes-

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day and Thursday, and 12.30 – 1.30 Saturday and Sunday, and additionally, on Tuesday and Wednesday, vintage vinyl.

Opposite at the **Ship**, we await reports of the newly installed brewery (see Kent Small Brewery News). Meanwhile, a visit in late February, found Incubus, Hophead and Greene King IPA and Abbot.

Local Kent brews are everywhere in Hythe. A visit in late February found Hop Fuzz Martello and Gadds Oatmeal Stout in the **Potting Shed** along with Hophead while at the **White Hart** Greene IPA was joined by two beers from the new Romney Brewery. Gadds No 7 was available at the **Red Lion**, and at the **Three Mariners**, two beers from Tonbridge were on the hand-pumps along with Gadds and Old Dairy, as well as regular Young's Bitter.

At Elham we understand that Eric and Helen Gaskell who run the **Cumberland** in Barham and **Jackdaw** in Denton, and recently acquired the **Gatekeeper** (former New Inn), Etchinghill, are now also running the **Abbot's Fireside**. A visit earlier in the year found Greene King Abbot and Adnams.

Sad news from Romney Marsh, where we hear that Doris Jemison, who has run the **Red Lion** at Snargate for more than fifty years, died in April. Last year the pub was chosen as Ashford, Folkestone and Romney Marsh Pub of the Year, and Doris was awarded a certificate for thirty continuous years in CAMRA's Good Beer Guide.

CANTERBURY

A visit to the city in March found the much loved Jaipur IPA installed at the **New Inn**, where it is now as regular as the pub can manage to obtain it, and was much enjoyed. Also enjoyed was an excellent pint of Harvey's Sussex,

one of the other ales available. The usual beer festival will take place over the Spring Bank Holiday starting Thursday evening. Over twenty real ales, featuring among others, the new Turnstone Brewery from Whitstable and hopefully a barrel of Downton Chimera – plus music and barbecue.

At the **Phoenix**, Old Dover Road, the choice comprised four Kent ales – Zinger and a very tasty Bullion Bomb from Hop Fuzz, Wantsum 1381, and Pig and Porter Rye Red Spider. CAMRA members are still eligible for a 10% discount here. More Kentish beer at the **Bell and Crown** in Palace Street where was to be found Whitstable East India Pale Ale, Gadds No 5, Old Dairy Copper Top, Wantsum Dynamo and Hopdaemon Incubus.

In White Horse Lane the **Cherry Tree** remained closed following a fire several months ago – work going on inside. We hope it does not alter the pub's unique character which seems to have remained largely unchanged for more than forty years. A contrast to the traditional British pub is to be found at **La Trapiste**, the Belgian bar on the corner of Guildhall Street and Sun Street, with its enormous selection of Belgian beer. The beer isn't cheap, starting at about £3.50 for a 330ml bottle, but then there is not much under 5 to 6% with the strongest reaching a ferocious 12%. Beers to sip and savour, rather than "quaff" like English real ale.

After considerable delay, Just Re-proach owner Mark Robson's project in Northgate, the **Thomas Tallis**, opened in late March. Somewhat larger than his Deal pub, it comprises several rooms and offers a choice of cask and key keg.

Haywain, Bramling: The annual beer festival is set for the Spring Bank Holiday weekend. 35 ales and ciders, with live music and barbecue.



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SAT: 11:00-23:00

SUN: 11:30-23:00





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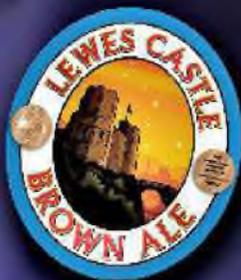


**WORLD'S
BEST
MILD ALE**

*World Beer
Awards 2015*

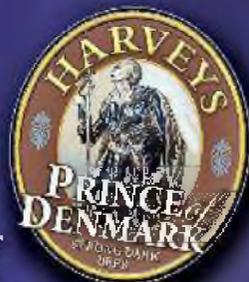
**WORLD'S
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BROWN ALE**

*World Beer
Awards 2015*



**CHAMPION BOTTLE
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HALF MEASURES

Licensees are being urged to charge fairly for half pints after a survey discovered almost 50% are adding up to 20p compared to the proportionate cost of a pint. According to the survey more than 8 out of 10 pubs are charging more than 5p to a price of half a pint, with around 10% charging more than 41p. In some cases, this saw pubs charge £2 for a half pint, where a pint of the same beer would cost £3. One pub added 82.5p to the proportional cost of a half pint, with it costing £2.95 while a pint was £4.25.

CAMRA volunteers also reported pubs which displayed price lists – out of 28 pubs surveyed, 60% did not show one.

Chief Campaigns officer Johnathan

Mail said: “CAMRA recognises there may be a need for pubs to round up to the nearest 5p. However, the wide difference in the premium added suggests some pubs are unfairly penalising customers trying to drink responsibly by choosing half pints and in some cases obscuring this mark up by not clearly displaying prices.”

Half Pint Premium Survey Results

0 - 5p	-	11.3%	of pubs
6 - 10p	-	26.4%	“ “
11 - 20p	-	24.5%	“ “
21 - 30p	-	18.9%	“ “
31 - 40p	-	7.5%	“ “
41 - 50p	-	9.4%	“ “
over 50p	-	2.0%	“ “

ODE TO THE JUST REPROACH

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The Robson Empire's growing
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Canterbury next location
Thomas Tallis is the name.

Cheers Roger Corbett



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KENT SMALL BREWERY NEWS

Amazing Brewery Company

A new undertaking at the Ship Inn in Sandgate, where a four barrel plant has been installed. Trial brews were carried out in mid-January, and it is hoped to start selling beer in the spring. Initial plans are for a session bitter (ABV 3.8 – 4%) and a premium bitter at about 4.8% ABV.

Caveman, Swanscombe 07900 234644 cavemanbrewery@gmail.com

The brewery has had to stop taking on new customers in order to satisfy demand, and there is a long-term plan to find a larger home where they can install a bar. The core range of beers this year, Palaeolithic, Neanderthal and Neolithic, has been expanded to include Shaktora IPA (ABV 5.5%) and a keg stout, Cavedweller (ABV 5.8%). The stout occasionally makes it into cask which it works really well: the added body needed for the beer to work in keg gives 'great mouthfeel in cask'. A Hibiscus Wheat beer (no other details forthcoming) will be launching at the George and Dragon beer festival in Swanscombe on 20 – 23 May. Citra will not be brewed as the hops are currently unobtainable.

Kent Brewery, Birling 01634 780037 info@kentbrewery.com

Twelfth Night, winner of the London and South East Winter Champion Beer of Britain, went forward to the finals last month. Although it didn't win, they produced a 9.4% version to celebrate. This is now available in bottle only. The latest Single Hopped Pale was Simcoe (ABV 4.5%) which, due to its popularity last year, sold out in two days. They also have a new caffè mocha stout called Sacred Grounds (ABV 5.1%) available.

Old Dairy, Tenterden 01580 763867 fineale@olddairybrewery.com

Two major awards have been won by the brewery this year. At the National Winter Ales Festival in Derby, Snow Top was awarded Gold in the Old Ale and Strong Mild Category in the CAMRA Champion Winter Beer of Britain Competition, while Dark Side of the Moo (ABV 7%), a full bodied Imperial porter, won Supreme Gold at the SIBA National Beer Awards in the Small Pack (bottle and can) category. Brewer, Glenn Whatmann was 'shocked' to win with his favourite beer, the porter.

Pig and Porter, Tunbridge Wells 01424 893519 ask@pigandporter.co.uk

The brewery has expanded into an adjacent unit, creating a new cold room and cask washing area. This will quadruple the current cold room capacity and in a single location. Two new fermenters are planned which will effectively double production. Joining the core beer range are Dance First (ABV 4.2%), an American hopped stout, Neither Nor (ABV 5%), a pale ale fermented with lager yeast, and Skylarking (ABV 4%), a session IPA hopped with Ella and Galaxy. Sean and Robin continue to get involved in interesting projects such as supplying a beer for Whispering Bob Harris' festival at Silverstone and brewing a beer for Kent cricketer Darren Stevens' benefit year.

Ramsgate, Broadstairs 01843 868453 info@ramsgatebrewery.co.uk

Gadds are brewing some 'Limited Edition', unbranded beers this year and have started with California Pale Ale at 4.5%. The beer was primarily brewed for keg, which is available in the Montefiore Arms, Ramsgate, but half was diverted into casks to see how it fared, and was available in local micropubs from late January.

Next up is Wild Turkey Barrel Aged Black Pearl (keg) and *Brettanomyces Bruxellensis* Inoculated East Kent IPA (keg and bottle).

Additionally two new beers have been released in 75cl bottles – I Dream of Apricots and Bretthead. These have been aged in the bottle for around 18 months, and have been available for the last few months, featuring at the brewery's Open Day on 12th March, and this year's Thanet Easter Beer Festival. The former is a mid-strength pale ale infused with apricots, and subsequently the addition of *brettanomyces claussenii* (a yeasty type organism that works very, very slowly, giving a tropical fruit aroma) and *lactobacillus brevis* (a healthy bacteria that acidifies beer). Bretthead started with the same base beer, but used cherries instead of apricots and again *lactobacillus brevis*, but also added *brettanomyces lambicus*, which gives a distinctive "horse-blanket aroma". It has been described as "a full and funky beer with a fairly short, sharp finish", the *brettanomyces lambicus* dominating. Those acquainted with horses might have some idea what to expect.

There will be an Open Brew Day at the brewery on 29 May where the public are welcome to come along, sup a beer or two and listen to brewers trying to explain what they're doing, and why. Fellow breweries, Goody's, The Foundry, Wantsum and Canterbury Ales are also taking part.

Ripple Steam, Sutton 07917 037611 info@ripplesteambrewery.co.uk

This spring has seen the launch of Ripple Gold (ABV 3.8%). The beer is based on a traditional Light Ale using Maris Otter and Cystal Malt to give a rich old gold colour, to which Admiral, Aurora and Cascade hops have been added to give a refreshing citrus finish.

Rockin' Robin, Maidstone 07779 986087 robin@rockinrobinbrewery.co.uk

Summer seasonal Rock A Hula (ABV 4%), described as being 'tropical and tantalising', is now available. There will be Brewery Summer Bash on 9 July: it's a ticket only event and tickets are available from the brewery, The Chequers Inn in Loose and the Elephant in Faversham. It is £30 a ticket and this includes the full range of Rockin' Robin ales, cider, wine, burger bar and live music.

Wantsum, Hersden 0845 0405980 wantsumbrewery@googlemail.com

Black Prince (ABV 3.9%) scooped the National Silver Award in the Brown and Mild Ales category at SIBA National Awards. This unofficially makes it the number one mild in the UK, as the winner of the category was a brown ale! Brewery founder James Sandy has taken up a new job in Oxfordshire, which has led to Wantsum beers being found at James' locals in Oxfordshire and other unexpected places en route. Sales are up 40% on last year.

Westerham, Edenbridge 01732 864427 sales@westerhambrewery.co.uk

Work has begun on the new brewery. As well as the brewery, the building will house the brewery shop, a tasting room and a wine store and maturation hall. The single hop series, with its pump clips that reference a lonely hearts column, are proving very popular; the offerings for spring are Amarillo (ABV 4.5%) and Hallertau Tradition (ABV 4%). A new keg range has been launched, which is trialling new hopping methods with apparently great success. Beers include: Floribbean Session IPA (ABV 4.5%), Amarillo Single Hop (ABV 4.5%) and Helles Belles (ABV 4%)

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The National News

By Martin Atkins

Gloucestershire Retains Top Pub

Following the success of the Salutation at Ham in last year's competition this year's title as National Pub of the Year was awarded to the Sandford Park Alehouse in Cheltenham. Opened just three years ago, in March 2013, up to seven guest ales are available – over 1,500 draught real ales having been sold in that time – plus ciders and foreign beers. The judges were particularly impressed by the quality of the beer, where scores were amongst the highest ever recorded. Runners up were the Drovers Rest from Carlisle, the Kelham Island Tavern in Sheffield, and Kent and Thanet's very own, the Yard of Ale, St. Peter's, Broadstairs.

Drink Drive Limit Contrary to various reports the Government dismisses the idea that the drink-drive limit in England and Wales is to be altered. Road safety minister Andrew Jones said: "We have no plans to change the drink limit. There is no review. The Government believes rigorous enforcement and serious penalties for drink drivers are a far more effective deterrent than changing the drink drive limit."

In Scotland, where the limit was dropped from 80mg to 50mg per 100ml of blood in December 2014 reports say that pub and bar sales have been hit, especially in rural areas. Earlier in the year the House of Lords called for the level in England and Wales to match that in Scotland, and in Northern Ireland consultation is currently being carried out on whether the limit should be generally dropped to 50mg, with effectively a zero limit for learner, novice and professional drivers.

Late Night Levy CAMRA has joined

forces with the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) to produce a report exploring the issues arising from the late night levy that local councils are able to impose on pubs that open after midnight. to offset the policing and other costs that can arise from the late night economy.

The law has been in force since 2011, and so far has not been extensively used, but indications are that more councils are looking at introducing it. In Camden where the charge is proposed, Wetherspoons, which operates four pubs in the borough is considering closing early. Levies also operate in Chelmsford, the City of London, Islington, Newcastle, Nottingham and Southampton. However, in Cheltenham late night charges have been dropped, Gloucestershire County Council finding that they failed to raise the expected revenue. Instead a business improvement district is planned to work with pubs and clubs.

The report looks at the partnership working schemes that already exist, and encourages local authorities to adopt one of these rather than a levy. Particularly concerning are community pubs, where problems rarely arise, but where trade after midnight could be critical. (see Last Knockings)

New Drink Guidelines Earlier in the year the Government issued new guidelines on safe drinking. The previous guidelines were set in 1995 and, by the admission of a member of the body that drew them up, were "plucked out of the air", there being insufficient scientific evidence for anything more exact. By this definition men should drink no more than 21 units of alcohol a week and women no more

than 14 – a unit of alcohol being roughly equivalent to a half pint of ordinary strength bitter or single measure of spirits.

The new limits, however, according to England's Chief Medical Officer, are based on "hard science" and recommend that both men and women should drink no more than 14 units a week. This places the British guidelines as amongst the strictest in the world, and well out of line with other comparable countries, particularly for men where the USA is 24.5 units, France 26, Italy 31.5 and Spain 35.

CAMRA chief executive Tim Page, questioning the advice, said: "We are uncertain whether there is sufficient agreement among experts to support these new guidelines." The Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) was concerned that the health benefits of moderate drinking were being ignored. SIBA MD Mike Benner said: "I think many men who regularly consume between 14 and 21 units of alcohol a week will be surprised to suddenly find themselves in an at risk category." (See Channel View and Last Knockings)

Milk Stout Flows Again Milk stout, of which the most famous example was Mackeson (probably the only one likely to be found in a pub when it was still widely drunk) shows every sign of revival. Bristol Beer Factory, BrewDog and Red Squirrel have all produced examples, and have now been joined by Camerons of Hartlepool with a brew called Tontine which has proved a tremendous hit with both male and female drinkers in the North East.

Camerons describe it as a sweet milk stout, although opinions vary, one noting coffee, chocolate and roasted grain with an underlying bitterness. At the moment it is only available in bottle and keg and the brewery are non-committal about producing a cask

version. Despite the name there is no actual milk in milk stout, but it does contain lactose (aka milk sugar) which is un-fermentable, and which provides the beer with a rich, creamy taste unlike the more bitter and roasty flavours to be found in traditional dry stouts.

In the 1950s and 1960s Mackeson vied with Guinness for popularity and at one time accounted for half the production of its owner Whitbread. It originated in Hythe in 1907, taking its name from, the family brewer Mackeson who produced it, and who was acquired by Whitbread in the 1930s. Probably for most people over fifty or sixty it is best remembered for Sir Bernard Miles TV commercials of the 1960s. (see Last Knockings)

More on Dark Star Following the report in our autumn issue, the Sussex based brewery is continuing its expansion as a pub owner, which it hopes will develop into a chain of about twenty pubs. Already owning the Evening Star in Brighton and the Partridge at Partridge Green, current home to the brewery, the brewer has now acquired a third pub in Horsham.

The premises, which was a pub called the Anchor Tap back in 1898, has of late been a café. Now, the old name has been revived, with beer not limited just to Dark Star. The brewer is also looking to make a fourth addition to it's estate, in Haywards Heath. Its long term plan envisages pubs that are "full of people standing shoulder to shoulder drinking great beer and talking rubbish, rather than places for family meals."

Community Commitment Both the Co-op and NewRiver Retail have declared their support for community pubs. The Co-op, which over recent years, had been a major convertor of pubs to retail units, has worked with CAMRA to develop guidelines which highlight the importance of retaining successful community pubs but also

recognises some will close because of poor trading.

It says it will listen to the views of local communities, CAMRA branches and elected representatives, and will not stand in the way of those wishing to acquire pubs as community locals. It will also give special consideration to ACV pubs when deciding whether to proceed with a lease or redevelopment, and will ensure that development of sites uses planning procedure rather than relying on permitted development rights. Steve Murrells, Co-op retail chief executive, declared that pub closures were not on his agenda. Where development does take place it is only on sites where trading has been poor, or which have closed already, while many convenience stores have been established on land adjoining pubs to the mutual benefit of both.

Meanwhile, NewRiver Retail director, Jackie Moody-McNamara, whose company has sparked concerns over plans for its pub acquisitions, said that the intention is to continue to grow and invest in its 350 plus pub estate. The vast majority will be retained as pubs, and tenants will be supported to drive performance and increase sales.

Like the Co-op management she recognises the sensitivity around pub developments, and that while a minority of sites are unviable and may go to alternative uses, there is potential for retail and other services on surplus land adjoining pubs. "Many of our pubs are in the heart of their community and the key to their success is quality customer service, high standards, an attractive range of products at affordable prices and relevant community activities or events," she says.



UPDATE

What is LocAle? The LocAle scheme was rolled out in 2007 to help support local brewing traditions and recognise those pubs that serve good quality ale from a local brewery.

What is a "local brewery"? Because of the unique position of our branch, in the far South-Eastern corner of England, we have adopted the definition that a 'local' real ale is one that has been brewed by any brewery based in Kent.

Accredited Pubs

Wrong Turn, Barfrestone*
Carpenter's Arms, Coldred
Deal Hoy, Deal
Just Reproach, Deal
Ship Inn, Deal
Blakes of Dover, Dover*
Eight Bells, Dover
Louis Armstrong, Dover
Mash Tun, Dover*
Rack of Ale, Dover
The Lanes, Dover*
Crown Inn, Finglesham

Fitzwalter Arms, Goodnestone*
Zetland Arms, Kingsdown
Plough Inn, Ripple
Admiral Owen, Sandwich
Crispin Inn, Sandwich
George & Dragon, Sandwich
Red Cow, Sandwich
Fox, Temple Ewell*
Plough & Harrow, Tilmanstone*
Berry, Walmer
Lighthouse, Walmer
Blue Pigeons, Worth

* Recently accredited

LocAle Update Our branch rolled out the LocAle scheme in October 2013. Since then there has been a steady increase in the number of pubs that have been accredited with serving good quality ales from Kent breweries.

Where can I find out more? You can find out more by going to:

<http://www.camra.org.uk/locale>.



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MAMBO JAMBO

Sunday 26 June 4pm

THE GODDAM GALLOWS

Wednesday 29 June 8pm

POCKET BLUES BAND

Friday 1 July 8pm

GYPSKAZZ

Sunday 3 July 4pm

PAUL PURDY

Friday 8 July 8pm

SWINGBACK THING

Sunday 10 July 4pm

JOHN DOGERAL & THE BAD POETS

Sunday 17 July 4pm

TERRY LEACH PURE SAX

Friday 22 July 8pm

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Sunday 24 July 4pm

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BETTER UP NORTH

BEER SURVEY REPORTS BEER KEPT
BETTER IN THE NORTH

According to a recently published survey beer is better and cheaper in the north of England.

Reporting the survey's findings the *Daily Mirror* said that it found that pubs in the north are more likely to keep the beer in good condition and serve it through clean pipes – across the country one in three pints is drawn through pipes which are not cleaned regularly. Apparently many pub operators say the seven-day line cleaning recommended by brewers takes too much time, although it might cost the ordinary pub 50 barrels a year. Other failings identified, were dirty and damaged glasses, and cellars kept at the wrong temperature. And all this is worse in the south the report says, where, to add insult to injury the average price per pint is 82p more.

The actual best were as follows:-

1. **Doncaster**
2. **Southport**
3. **Chesterfield**
4. **Warrington**
5. **Derby**

and the worst:-

1. **Reading**
2. **Hereford**
3. **Plymouth**
4. **Andover**
5. **Swindon.**

Doncaster emerged as the best performer where there was less than a one in five chance of a bad pint, and Reading the worst where allegedly one in two pints were in bad condition.

This magazine has no particular knowledge of any of the above towns so is not in a position to comment, however, general opinion is that beer quality tends to be fairly evenly spread across the country. Some pubs keep it well, some do not, but there is no north/south divide.

We remain intrigued, however, as to whether the picture in the *Mirror* article (opposite) is supposed to be a good example of beer, or bad – it looks distinctly opaque and appears to be topped by something not unlike shaving foam – and if as sold to the customer across the bar up north, might go some way to explaining the 82 pence difference. Never mind a large scotch, a fair part of half a bottle could be sloshed into the gap at the top. If as sold in the south heaven help us.





RAMBLINGS & RUMBLINGS

By Stroller

Fri 15 Jan – Jackdaw (*Spitfire, Ringwood 49er, Broadside*) There was a suggestion box on the bar where I posted a note "A lower strength session beer would be appreciated please" Who do they think they are? Wetherspoons?

Thurs 21 Jan – Rising Sun, East Stourmouth (*Cottage Thunderbolt, Rev James, 6X*) Good welcome for walkers - roaring fire beckoned. **Phoenix** (*Canterbury Pardoners, Romney Amber, Tonbridge Rustic, Wantsum Dynamo*) I tend to frequent this place late afternoon when I'm almost alone. Must try when it's busier some time.

Fri 22 Jan – Norman Wisdom (*Belhaven Robert Burns + others*) Luncheon with the playgroup. **Freed Man** (*Dark Star Hop Head, Reliant Robin, Gadds Seaside & Oatmeal Stout*) Inadvertently gate crashed grand opening. Nicely appointed and impressed by the beer engine, (the handiwork of Alec from the Kings Head Kingsdown). I wish them well.

Thurs 28 Jan – Fitzwalter, Goodnestone (*Master Brew, Whitstable Bay*) Beautiful sunny day, good value food here but shame I had the place to myself.

Fri 29 Jan – Mash Tun (*Hopdaemon House bitter, Red Star Havana Moon, RS Formby IPA, Nethergate Suffolk County*) CAMRA members: beer £2-50 a pint & cider £3 from 12 on Wed to 5pm Fri. Quiet early afternoon, mine hosts enjoying a good skype.

Sun 31 Jan – Wrong Turn (*XT1, Hop Fuzz Martello, Wantsum Dominator*) Rainy day kept motorist faint hearts away, so plenty of room for 20 damp walkers).

Tues 2 Feb – (former) White Horse, Eythorne Noticed whilst travelling through on bus that this is now the White Horse Hotel, 'B&B all year round!' **Five Bells, Eastry** (*Greene King IPA, Directors*) two-course 'pensioner lunches' for a fiver – can't be missed!

Thurs 4 Feb Cat & Custard Pot (*Wantsum Black Prince, Master Brew*) Kitchen coped efficiently with 30 ramblers, all in less than an hour!

Tues 9 Feb – Nigel North's Shrove Tuesday Crawl Missing the **Butchers**, went straight to **Bouncing Barrel, Heme Bay** (*Timothy Taylor, Boltmaker, Old Dairy Copper Top & Gold Top*) First visit here, all essential 'micro elements' in place. **Ship, Heme Bay** (*Doom Bar*) Not sure if pancakes on menu, but enjoyed them anyway. **Saxon Shore, Heme Bay** (*Adnams Old + others*) **Whitstable Labour Club** (*Caledonian Edinburgh Castle*) **Elephant, Faversham** (*XT 15 + others*).

Tues 23 Feb – Duck, Pett Bottom (*Old Dairy Redtop, Timothy Taylor Land Lord*) very foodie, place packed out on a winter lunchtime in Feb! Happy Hour 5.30 – 6. **Mermaid, Bishopsbourne** (*Cameron's Strongarm, Master Brew*) The former resurrected to coincide with PM's EU talks? – Excellent beer anyhow!

Wed 24 Feb – Louis Armstrong (*Westerham GB, Gadds Oatmeal Stout + others*) Good value food served weds and beer cheaper too. Must call again.

Thurs 25 Feb – Bellevue, Pegwell (*Whitstable Bay, Master Brew, Spitfire*)

Gold) Maybe picked up some dreaded lurgy in Pegwell swamps, one was incapacitated for remainder of month, even having to miss a 17th birthday on the 29th!

Fri 4 Mar – Black Pig (Old Dairy Blue Top plus two others) Thence to **Yacht Club Festival** Most enjoyable and a rest from beer scoring too!

Mon 7 Mar – Mermaid, Bishopsbourne (Early Bird, Master Brew) **Red Lion, Bridge** (Adnams bitter, Tribute) Dogs and mistresses welcome, apparently! After long journey on 17 bus, finding lavatories at Folkestone Bus Station closed, nothing for it but make for the **Firkin, Cheriton Place** (Milk Street Same Again, + others) (Surely not the only reason for going to the Firkin – Ed.).

Sun 13 Mar – Smugglers (Greene King IPA, London Glory & Old Speckled Hen) Sun lunchtime but not exclusively foody, several drinkers at bar. **White Cliffs Hotel** (Ripple Steam Best, Oakham Citra) Late Sun afternoon. Didn't look promising at first - no handpump to be seen. But beers served from hidden casks and full range of Time & Tide key keg beers available. Helpful bar staff. Available beers indicated by beer mats displayed on the bar pillar – unfortunately people sitting in front of them on my visit.

Tues 15 Mar – Star, St Mary in Marsh (Youngs Bitter, Tribute, Ringwood 49er, Master Brew) Changed hands but not style. Still busy with drinkers at 4pm, can't be bad. **Three Mariners, Hythe** (Ashburton Bitter, Youngs Bitter + others).

Sun 20 Mar – White Hart, Newenden (Rother Brewers Level Best, LP, Harveys Best) The farthest extremities of AFRM's patch but worth a visit. Good food Sun lunchtime but room for drinkers as well as foodies. **Sam Peto** (Caledonian Vienna Red 4 + others).

Thurs 24 Mar – Charles Dickens, Broadstairs (Seasider). **Artillery** (Whit Brewery Try Time + others). **Conqueror** (Hop Head, Gadds Common Conspiracy). **Four Candles** (Midnight Porter). First visit for a while, not to be missed!

Good Fri 25 Mar – Five Bells Festival, Eastry (Peasantry Best Bitter, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker, Brewster's Hop A Doodle Doo, Green Jack Orange Wheat Beer) Tempted to jump up and down with Deal Hoodeners, if only to keep warm! **Bohemian** (St Austell Proper Job + others). Surprised so many here early Sun evening, but it wasn't, it was Funny Friday

Sun 27 Mar – Just Reproach Arrived at 3.20 to be told by Bronwen: 'Sorry, we closed at 4'. Seems she had advanced her watch and I hadn't! **Norman Wisdom** (Revisionist Irish Peated Ale) Strange flavour, but I liked it. **Five Bells Festival Round Two** (Hawkshead bitter, Kelburn Jaguar, Dancing Duck Dark Drake, Blue Monkey Infinity)

Mon 28 Mar Found **Coastguard** very shut, but enjoyed the climb up again – all in a day's work. **White Cliffs Hotel** (Ripple Steam Original, Gadds 5, Island Records Session IPA @ £4-70!!!) Note, local cask ales sold at 'normal' prices, key kegs, including Time & Tide go for £4-70. Returning to Dover made for **The Lanes**, forgetting that even Easter Monday is a Monday it was shut, so **Eight Bells (Upham Punter's Ale + others)**

Thurs 31 Mar Went looking for new Dover Brewery, without success. On return called in at **Thirsty Scarecrow** (Hop Fuzz Old American)



CHANNEL VIEW

DRINK GUIDELINES *Earlier in the year the new Government guidelines on safe drinking drew the following response in What's Brewing (CAMRA's newspaper) from Good Beer Guide editor Roger Protz.*

I dislike the expression "nanny state". It's used by the kind of people who think wearing a car seat belt infringes their civil liberties. The state has a duty and moral obligation to care for the wellbeing of its citizens. But, when the state and its agencies make recommendations that involve safe drinking, the recommendations should be based on scientific fact.

The new "safe drinking" limits for the consumption of alcohol are frankly absurd. They are a refinement of the units – 21 a week for men and 14 for women – drawn up in the 1980s. But the original figures were not based on science. One of the "experts" who drew them up admitted on the Radio 4 *Today* programme a few years ago that they were plucked from the air and were a response to a government demand for restrictions on drinking.

So if those original figures are scientifically groundless, what faith can we have in the new guidelines drawn up by the chief medical officer? She wants us – men and women – to drink no more than 14 units a week, which would make Britain one of the most restrictive countries in the world where alcohol is concerned.

The recommended units in the United States are 24.5, 26 in France, 31.5 in Italy and 35 in Spain. Spain with its Mediterranean diet, has one of the lowest instances of heart disease and cancer in the world, and yet its people are advised to consume – safely – more

than twice as much alcohol as we are.

Britain, I believe, is the only country in the world, where men and women are treated equally when advising on "safe" drinking. This is such scientific nonsense that it defies belief. Women metabolise alcohol in a different way to men. Pound for pound, women's bodies have less water and more fatty tissue than men's. Fat retains alcohol while water dilutes it.

This means alcohol remains at higher concentrations for longer in women's bodies and as a result exposes brains and other organs to greater impact from alcohol. Women's bodies also have lower levels of the enzymes that break down alcohol in the stomach and the liver. This is not misogyny. It's scientific fact and it's clear it's sensible to recommend lower units of drinking to women and not to distort the evidence with a completely unscientific blanket level for both sexes.

I have no doubt the new restrictive units are a response to the relentless hysteria generated by some sections of the media about binge drinking and the myth of 24 hour pub opening. The truth is that the British are moderate drinkers, around number 16 in the world league of alcohol consumption.

And we are drinking less. Figures from HM Revenue and Customs, which collects all the taxes and duties levied on the sale of alcohol, show consumption has fallen by around 19% over the past ten years.

The anti-social behaviour of a tiny minority in some town centres at weekends should not distort the true picture of the moderate way in which most of us handle drink. And the irresponsible

behaviour of that minority could be mitigated if we had a joined-up attitude to drinking in this country.

In France and Italy, for example, young children are allowed to enjoy heavily-watered wine at the dining table with their parents so they can appreciate both the pleasure of the product and the need to consume it sensibly. In Britain there is no guidance or education given in schools while all too often young people are either denied access to licensed premises or shunted off into spartan rooms away from the demon drink. As a result they are unprepared for its impact when they are suddenly allowed access to it at the age of 18.

Alcohol is a good friend and a bad enemy. We need a better understanding of its merits and demerits but that understanding has to be based on good science, not media frenzy.

A NEW BEGINNING? Five years ago the Dover District Council granted consent for the conversion of the much loved Yew Tree at Barrestone to a private dwelling. This February it refused consent for a similar conversion of the Chequer in Ash.

Admittedly no two cases are the same. The Yew Tree was a small pub in a very small village with poor access roads, the Chequer a larger pub in a very much larger village on a superior road network, however both attracted very considerable opposition to their closure, and in both cases the recommendation to the Planning Committee was to grant consent for the change of use. But while Committee Members almost unanimously supported the Yew Tee application they overwhelmingly rejected that for the Chequer.

Arguments similar to the grounds for the refusal at the Chequer (see Local News) could be, and were, employed in favour of the Yew Tree, and might have proved successful had it not been for

that pub's perceived additional disadvantages. However, between the two, there is a sense of a change of mood.

The wording from the National Planning Policy Framework used in the Chequer refusal is more direct and less generalised than the somewhat vaguer and more abstruse talk of harm to the economic and social viability of the community, the alternative local plan description of local value. It reflects the more enterprising and self-confident approach now being found among groups seeking to protect their pub – the advent of Asset of Community Value status offering the very real prospect of owning and running it themselves.

It seems there is a whole new spirit abroad. In Shepherdswell the Bricklayers Arms Action Group is following the example of the Chequer and is pushing ahead with the hope of eventually purchasing the currently closed Shepherd Neame premises, while similar stories appear from right across the country. Writing in the April edition of "*What's Brewing*" (CAMRA's newspaper) Jonathan Owen, chief executive of the National Association of Local Councils advocated the involvement of parish and town councils in protecting and possibly purchasing threatened public houses.

However, it is more than just locals stepping in to keep their pub going. The micropub phenomenon has seen a whole new genre of public house appear – this year providing for the first time our Branch Pub of the Year – while as we report in National News large retail operators such as the Co-op and NewRiver Retail are recognising the need to consult local communities and keep pubs going where possible.

A new dawn? Let us hope so.



THE SHORTEST LONDON PUBCRAWL

Led astray despite good intentions

We had arranged to spend a day in London visiting some of the pubs we had discovered on a previous excursion led by a well-known Dover resident who works in the capital and seems to know every (worthwhile) hostelry in a twenty mile radius of the city. As this particular gent was unavailable, I decided to go it alone and try to find some of the drinking establishments using my trusted A to Z and my less trustworthy memory.

Disembarking from the Southeastern High Speed service at St Pancras I intended to make my way up Pentonville Road towards Old Street to re-acquaint myself with The Wenlock Arms, where we had met before, and hope that my brain would be able to pick up the scent of previous meanderings around London.

In order to save shoe leather, I took a shortcut through King's Cross station. Upon entering I looked up at the wonderful roof structure, which always made me feel like I was inside a deep, lattice topped apple pie. Looking upwards, and not forwards was a fortunate error as I collided with an elongated crocodile of excited Oriental persons queueing for something obviously unmissable. I investigated the cause of all this queueing and excitement only to be met with the aspect of half a luggage trolley sticking out of the wall under a sign indicating, "Platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ".

I tried to extricate myself from the melee and noticed, for the first time, a wide staircase leading upwards towards the **Parcel Yard**. Not very inviting had it not been for the Fullers label adjacent to it. My plans changed and I ascended into a wonderland of Fullers Ales, the full range of ales, including their Vintage Ale on draught. I rather like Fullers beers, including those inherited from Horndean, and decided I needed to try as many as I could in the time available as this was an addition to the planned itinerary.



Finding an area overlooking the railway tracks into the station I set about my task.....

About two hours later, my additional mission accomplished, I rolled out of King's Cross and started up Pentonville Road towards the Wenlock Arms. Whilst waiting to cross Caledonian Road I noticed another drinking facility, previously unknown to me just a few yards along Caledonian Road from the road junction. Closer inspection revealed the **Scottish Stores 1901**.

Working on the established principle that I was still about to start a pub crawl, I thought that a quick pint in this establishment was perfectly acceptable, and so I entered. What a mistake, a row of hand pumps, including two from our local Ripple Brewery and three others, all of which were changed during my visit. Lovely wood

panelled interior, five superb condition real ales, discount for CAMRA members, efficient, and knowledgeable staff, (even the attractive bar maid was able to describe the merits of each ale), all combined with a relaxing atmosphere made me think that perhaps my pub crawl had ground to an early, hazy halt. Other inward needs decreed that I should try some of the bar snacks. The Scotch egg, the house speciality, was a wonderful tasty addition to my first, (of many I hope), visit to The Scottish Stores.



To continue my pub crawl forget it.

I spent the rest of the afternoon in this most excellent establishment before my wobbly legs managed to find St Pancras's magnificent edifice enabling me to catch my homeward train by the skin of my teeth.

Subsequent investigations revealed that The Scottish Stores is a refurbished, and much improved reincarnation of The Flying Scotsman. I recommend a visit: past King's Cross station, along Pentonville Road, and second on the left – preferably without pandering to the urge to try The Parcel Yard on the way.

Alan Hodges



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THE POTTERERS CYCLE CLUB

Peter Smith explains that cycling and real ale can mix

What on earth is an article about a cycling club doing in a magazine devoted to Real Ale?

Well it's because our "meets" always take place at pubs serving real ale. The Potterers' Cycling Club was founded in 1971 with the aim of providing a means by which cyclists could meet up at a public house in the East Kent countryside at lunchtime for a drink, a snack and a chat. The idea has proved successful with the club growing in numbers from the original Four Founding Members to a membership of approximately 80 today. The number of meetings has also increased from the initial occasional gathering, and today comprises two groups. For ours, the group to the East, there is a published list of Thursday and Sunday meetings, all of which take place in, and within, easy cycling distance of Sandwich.

The sister group of The Potterers to the West, frequent a schedule of pubs within easy cycling distance of Faversham, but on Wednesdays. So, especially with the longer days of summer, we have been known to visit each other's choice of pubs.

Our current regular venues to the East, in alphabetical order, are:

Anchor at Wingham
Bell at St. Nicolas-At-Wade
Black Pig at Barnsole
Five Bells at Eastry
Half Moon and Seven Stars at Preston
Haywain at Bramling
Huntsman and Horn at Broomfield
Plough and Harrow at Tilmanstone
Red Cow in Sandwich
Rose at Wickhambreaux.

Aside from the location, the type of pubs preferred are those having gardens and serving decent real ales and lunchtime snacks. Loud music, TV and pubs infested with children are avoided.

Membership age ranges from about 40 to 93 years old and includes all sexes. Winter attendance is in the region of a dozen with more in the summer. Sunday attendance is less as many members have grandchildren or even great grandchildren and are unable to escape family pressures. Also many



pubs will only do roast dinners on Sundays and cycling home on a full stomach, and a pint of beer, is not good for the digestion.

Not so many of us cycle to the meets as Father Time takes his toll. Some arrive by car or motorcycle, some by public transport. There are a few in their seventies and eighties who still cycle regularly to the venues. Most of us aim to arrive at about 12:30 pm. Conversation at the various pubs is normally very lively with virtually every topic, including beer and old pubs being discussed. Quite a bit of nostalgia and moaning is normal too. Most will leave by 2 pm as it's difficult to make a pint of real ale last that long.

The pub schedule can be found on our website:

<http://www.potters-cycle-club.orangehome.co.uk>

Feel free to come and meet us. Please note that we do not have an "organised" ride. Most of us make our way individually to the pub.

The Club Magazine, "Pottering Around" is sent to all members and produced quarterly. Same size as the magazine you're reading. Maybe not as thick but has (fanfare) colour pictures!!!

Our motto, Usque Ad Mortem Bibendum, also happened to be the motto of The Firkin Brewery. However, The Potters' Cycling Club was formed 45 years ago, predating Firkin. I shan't translate it because it's not suitable in these politically correct, health and safety times. Anyway, we can't change history and we all appreciate the health benefits of cycling and real ale. Don't we?

Peter Smith

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NEW AND OLD IN YORKSHIRE INNOVATION AND TRADITION IN THE WHITE ROSE COUNTY

If any few words are to characterise current brewing and real ale they must include change, innovation and diversity, and to review a couple of the latest trends, we take you to Yorkshire, and the excellent publications of the Leeds and Bradford CAMRA branches, *Full Measure* and *Tyke Taverner*, and a fascinating contrast of 21st century state of the art with a revival of the old.

First then to the new: "canned real ale". Yes, you heard right, but then if CAMRA's Technical Advisory Committee are happy to accept real ale dispensed by Key Keg, real ale from a can is no giant leap, either for mankind, or the most diehard adherent to cask. Last summer in its July/August edition *Tyke Taverner* printed an account by David Litten of a visit to Oates Brewery in Halifax to watch the first commercial canning of real ale in the country. The operation, involving the filling of 400 cans of Oates American Pale Ale, and 800 cans of Oates Caragold XB, was courtesy of *WeCan Solutions* and its mobile canning unit, and followed eighteen months of planning and development, including successful trials at Brains and Everards.



David described how the unit was rapidly set up, and that after a few corrections, beer was soon flowing into the top of the machine, filling the cans through a set of nozzles and sealing them with special caps. The method of filling is critical to keep additional oxygen to a minimum, and the earlier tests at Brains and Everards demonstrated excellent filling consistency, sanitisation, carbonation and dissolved oxygen levels. Obviously, once canned the beer needs time to settle and when opened has to be poured with care to leave the sediment behind.

The thinking behind canned real ale, as opposed to traditional bottle conditioned beer, is that it takes the plant to the brewer, rather than taking the beer to the plant, offering micro-brewers an alternative that can be more convenient, as well as being both better environmentally and cheaper in terms of beer miles. Additionally, cans are more efficiently recycled when compared to bottles. Planned outlets include specialist beer shops, farm shops, etc., as well being available via the brewery website: <http://www.oattesbrewing.co.uk/>.

"No doubt," added David, "there will be quite some discussion as to whether these beers are real ale."

Turning now to the old, back in 2014 we reported on renewed interest in, and renewed use of, traditional wooden barrels, particularly in Yorkshire. A flash in the pan one might think, for those who cannot see the wood for the trees, or maybe the trees for the wood. Whatever, as a report in *Full Measure*, the newsletter of Leeds CAMRA shows, the use of wooden barrels is growing apace in the county.

Again, the reporter is David Litton.

At the heart of the movement is master cooper Alistair Simms and his newly established cooperage near Wetherby, and Maureen Shaw and Neil Midgley at the Junction pub Castleford, who since early 2014 have been serving cask ales only from wooden barrels. Here, beers from Yorkshire breweries Ridgeside, Stancill and Elland have proved particularly popular, especially the latter's award winning 1872 porter, which apparently is liable to disappear exceedingly rapidly.



Others pubs featuring the use of wooden barrels have been the Oddfellows in Shipley, the Jacobs in Bradford, the Cap and Collar micropub in Saltaire, and the Duck and Drake in Leeds, which in February 2015 offered four ales in wooden casks for the monthly meeting of the West Riding branch of the Society for the Preservation of Beers from the Wood. The beers were from brewers Saltaire and Ridgeside, and were due to be followed by two from Ossett in casks made for the pub by Jonathan Manby, the cooper at Theakstons.

Not to be left out, that year's Bradford Beer Festival featured four beers in wooden casks, two in 18 gallon kils from again Saltaire – Celebration, a 6.5% ABV golden ale and Imperial stout at a hefty 8.9% ABV – plus Oates Lenten Bock (6.4% ABV) and Norland Moorish Mild (4.0% ABV).

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CHARLIE WILLETT

Long-standing local landlord Charlie Willett passed away on March 18th.

I first came across Charlie at the Dublin Man o'War, River. I think that Charlie was then in the building trade; he knew my father, who was a builder. Ken Halls was landlord of the Dublin then, and Charlie used to stand in for him when he was on holiday, and that was probably when Charlie became interested in having a pub of his own.

His first pub was the Bell at Lydden, before Jubilee Way was built, and we used to watch the HGVs hurtling down Lydden Hill seemingly aiming at the pub window. Our Daddlums table had its origins at the Bell as Charlie gave me a set of Bat & Trap equipment for the CAMRA Branch and among it were odd skittles and cheeses that were subsequently identified as belonging to a Daddlums set. The skittles that we use are still the originals from the Bell.

Charlie subsequently took on the White Horse in St. James Street, Dover, and remained there for very many years. He had a dry sense of humour and the pub attracted an entertaining array of customers. I used it a lot, particularly when I was involved in the transport business, and I made many friends at the White Horse, some, like Robin Basford and Dave Routh, sadly no longer with us, others still around to reminisce about old times.

Gone, but certainly not forgotten, Charlie.

Jim Green



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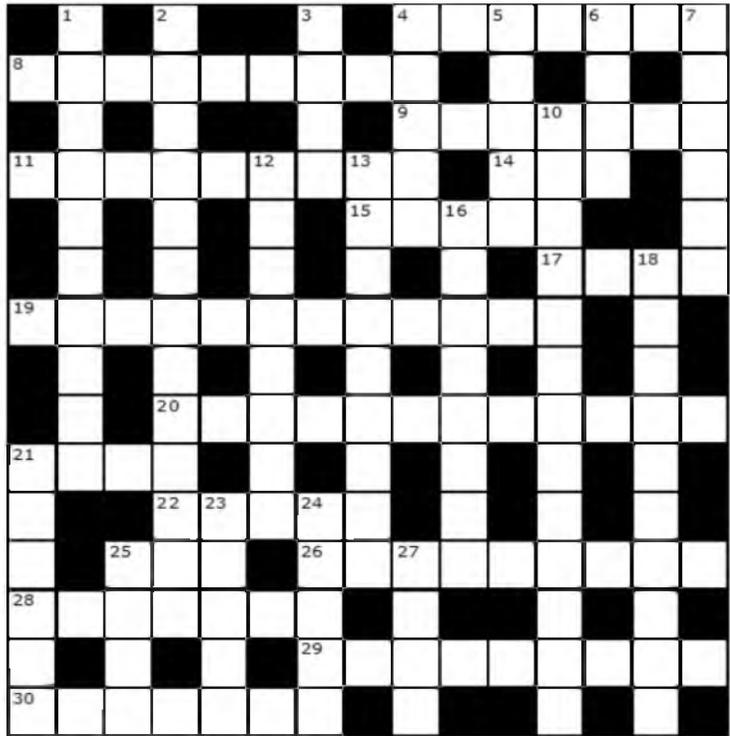
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UNCRYPTIC CROSSWORD

BY TRISHA WELLS



Across

4. Long-winged sea bird, genus Ryn-chops (7)
8. More famous name of Leonardo of Pisa, 13thC mathematician (9)
9. Mythological water nymphs (7)
11. The other way round (4,5)
14. Three-toed sloths (3)
15. Abbreviation of a former county near London (5)
17. Vim and vigour (4)
19. This year's local CAMRA pub of the year (3,5,4)
20. Dickens novel written in 1857 (6,6)
21. N. Ireland political party (1,1,1,1)
22. Proprietor (5)
25. Old Testament priest (3)
26. Lack of uniformity (9)
28. The non-bat side at around 45 de-grees to the wicket (4,3)
29. Not capitalised (5,4)
30. Flying circus act (7)

Answers on Page 61

Down

1. Head covering worn by a fairy story character (6,4)
2. First British Prime Minister (6,7)
3. A maple tree (4)
4. Alternative name for Mount Horeb (5)
5. Epic poem telling the story of the Trojan war (5)
6. 1960s scooter riders (4)
7. Hand in one's notice (6)
10. City in SE France, founded by the Romans (3-2-8)
12. Capital of Alberta (8)
13. Bootleggers or a pub in St Margarets (9)
16. Ancient Celtic religion (8)
18. French Formula 1 driver (5,6)
21. The underside of an arch (6)
23. Irish dramatist, whose middle names were Fingal O'Flahertie Wills (5)
24. Two under par (5)
25. WWII forces entertainment organisation (1,1,1,1)
27. Two-masted sailing boat (4)



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MOON UNDER WATER RISES AGAIN

Are micropubs becoming the embodiment of Orwell's fantasy pub

For lovers of real ale and pubs, February 9th this year marked an important anniversary – 70 years since the publication in the *Evening Standard* of George Orwell's famous tribute to the English pub, the fictitious *Moon Under Water*. To celebrate the event *BBC News* examined the author's views on pubs and beer, and how these might be affecting the current micropub movement.

George Orwell was undoubtedly one of the 20th century's most influential writers. Those of us born anywhere near the period of World War II, or in the decades afterwards, grew up in his shadow. *Animal Farm* and *1984* were often set texts in secondary schools, and terms such as Big Brother and Room 101 have entered the popular vernacular.

Orwell's perfect pub 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. It had neither radio nor piano and was always "quiet enough to talk."

Impossible of course. Orwell's descriptions have more than a hint of rose tinted spectacles and the fading light of a balmy summer's evening, while the pub (amazingly) reflected his own tastes and prejudices. Presumably also, the quality of the beer is a given, drunks and bores would have been identified at the door and denied entry, and indifferent bar staff need not apply. However, the *Moon Under Water* provides a benchmark against which all pubs can be measured. Significantly, Tim Martin used the *Moon Under Water* and variations upon it as names for many of his early Wetherspoons pubs – ironically or even cynically, some might say, judging from the average Wetherspoon's divergence from Orwell's vision.

However, as well as providing inspiration for Tim Martin, Orwell's creation is also cited as a guiding factor for the new phenomenon of micropubs. Admittedly, food is of limited concern and few have gardens or encourage children, if they are allowed in at all, but Martyn Hillier who established the original, the Butcher's Arms in 2005, believes the reasons for their success were similar to the principles laid out by Orwell. "When I started the concept, people asked what the rules are, and it's basically about having a good pub that gets everyone talking to each other," he said. "It's all about



selling good beer and meeting interesting people."

Similar views came from Tim Page, CAMRA chief executive, who sees direct links between micropubs and the cherished ideals of George Orwell. "Much of what he was describing is characteristic of what micropubs seek to represent," he said – a positive development after many troubling years for the industry. And unsurprisingly much the same sentiments are expressed by many of those who have followed Martyn Hillier's lead and set up their own micropubs, now numbering several hundred across the country.

In Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, Graham Newbury of the Bridge Street Ale House commented, "All I want in a pub is a guarantee the beers are good, I don't have to be looking over my shoulder and I don't have to compete with a TV or jukebox. With everything these days people can just stay at home and entertain themselves with films, computer games or whatever – people come to the pub for social interaction." And having previously run bigger pubs for pubcos he also found that running a micropub offered a better chance of achieving a balance between work and private life.

However, it is not just in micropubs where the spirit of the *Moon Under Water* might be found. In Islington, one of Orwell's own pubs, the Hen and Chickens Theatre Bar, still retains much of the character that found favour with the writer. Manager Lizzie Arnold, says that while there might be music at the weekend, the focus is on atmosphere and beer, "It's always busy in here, it can get quite crazy, but we don't do food and we've got a good few regulars. I like it that way. People come here for the atmosphere, they don't come in shouting or whatever, even on match-days," (Arsenal's stadium is nearby).



Of course there has always been a certain affinity between writers and pubs. Over two centuries ago Dr Johnson defined the attraction: "There is nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn." In the *Independent* last December, Ian Rankin, creator of *Inspector Rebus* described one of his own favourites.

"I was at university in Edinburgh when I first made the acquaintance of the Oxford Bar. Tucked away down a lane, yet quite central, it seemed indicative of the city – hidden in plain view. Visitors to Edinburgh are presented with only one side of the city, but secret treasures like "the Ox" can provide deeper insights. It helped that a few police officers drank there, just as I was starting work on my first Inspector Rebus novel. The first time I walked in I was met warily. The second time, there was a nod of recognition. By the third, I was asked if I wanted 'the usual'. In short order I became a regular, eventually even hosting my stag party in the back room.

Pub culture has changed over the years, but the Oxford Bar survives, providing no food, no jukebox or pool table – just a good chat and peaceful nooks. A fair number of its ilk closed in the aftermath of the smoking ban, and many traditional

watering holes have had to evolve, adding grub, quiz nights, or any other novelty that might attract a crowd. But I know what I like and I'm always delighted when I discover a new place that suits my needs. A great pub is society in microcosm, where you'll make lifelong friends, find the solutions to practical problems (someone always knows a reliable plumber or electrician), hear local news, and share those everyday stresses and small complaints of life.

Pubs have also inspired me, gifting me anecdotes and plots for my novels. And with a wider range of beers available than ever before. I doubt I'm going to tire of exploration any time soon."

The Oxford Bar is no micropub, but as described by Ian Rankin it exhibits much of a micropub's characteristics. Whether the format would have found favour with George Orwell we shall never know, but it is a reasonable guess that many would. Certainly, if he were alive today, he would find them generally far preferable to some of the creations that now pose under the name 'public house'. Tim Page views prospects for the micropub as distinctly positive. "The pub is a really great meeting place, because it's one of the few places where people can go that goes across the class divide," he said. "It's more than a place to go and have a drink – that's what Orwell was saying, and it's what micropubs are saying."

Whatever the future holds, either for the micropub, or those in the more traditional pub format, George Orwell's principles are universal. Much has changed since the 1940s, but public houses or their equivalents have always existed – people always need somewhere to talk and have a drink. Despite the problems of much of the industry the micropubs have shown that this can still be achieved.



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BEER FESTIVALS

DO WE STILL NEED'EM NOW I'M 64?!

Yes, mid-February in Dover and a sigh of relief that our annual Festival of Winter Ales is all behind us once again!

I think a good time was had by all though staffing was thinly spread, particularly at early and late stages. As usual we relied too heavily on people from other branches. Perhaps if we reverted to just one session, maybe Friday only, we'd be in a better position to cover all positions more effectively.

Chatting with one of the festival revellers I enquired if his local was still going strong - a pub in the middle of nowhere, favoured by ramblers. He assured me that it was still open and yes, you could get Doom Bar and maybe something similar on a good day. It occurs to me that during the early days of the Festival this was the situation in nearly all pubs. So the Festival was like a beacon – a superb advertisement for CAMRA and showed a wider public that there really were great beers out there, and pubs should be doing better.

But over the years, largely thanks to CAMRA, things have turned round completely. Beer festivals come round with increasing regularity, with mills, yacht clubs, theatres, preserved railways, cliff lifts and even schools jumping on the bandwagon – not to mention pubs' own festivals of course.

And even more importantly beer selection and quality in pubs have improved beyond all expectation. So in reality we are lucky enough to enjoy festival conditions all year round. A walk round the pubs of Dover can offer a selection of beers to satisfy anyone, the same can be said for Deal and Sandwich too. The Berry in Walmer alone, with ten handpumps is a mini festival every day. So apart from trying to cater for train-spotters who have graduated to beer-spotting, is there really a need for 70 beers in one place? Most of us only have one wallet and more to the point one liver too!

But surprisingly beer festivals still pull people in, even if in Dover we were slightly down on last year. They are great social occasions to catch up with friends and undeniably our Maison Dieu Hall is a superb venue. But increasingly it's harder and harder work to put it all on, a great effort for a dwindling band of volunteers, none of whom are getting any younger.

So should we think about doing pub-based festivals in future? Perhaps a joint effort by the micropubs, and maybe others too. Pub A could specialise in winter ales, pub B in light beers etc., etc. Clearly this is only an initial idea on my part and we'd need to mull it all over. But it's time for a re-think about all this. We shouldn't be on a time-switch, putting on a beer festival every year just because we always have done, and because everyone else seems to be doing it too.

John Pitcher



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LATE NIGHTS IN CHESHIRE

A LOOK BACK AT THE BEERY BOATERS' 1992 TRIP ROUND THE CHESHIRE RING

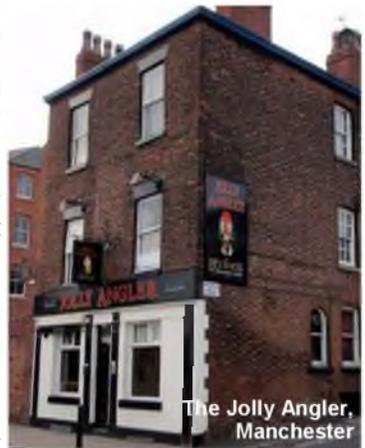
In April 1992 the Beery Boaters returned north to Middlewich Narrowboats for the first time since the disastrous 1987 trip for a repeat circuit of the Cheshire Ring, which we had last done in 1984. Then we had gone anti-clockwise, this time it was clockwise. Two boats again, the 70ft Sycamore, which we had hired on every trip from Middlewich Narrowboats so far, and Larch (promptly re-christened Lurch) of about 60ft.

In addition to the Cheshire Ring, we hoped to go to Runcorn and back on the Bridgewater Canal and up the Huddersfield Narrow Canal for the three or so only navigable miles from its junction with the Ashton Canal to the outskirts of Stalybridge. It's quite amazing to realise that then most of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, if not exactly derelict, was inaccessible from both ends, and the 3¼ mile Standedge Tunnel had yet to be fully restored. Yet only 11 years later we were able to cruise the whole of that canal and return to Sowerby Bridge by way of the Rochdale Canal, also mostly unrestored in 1992. We also hoped to go up the Upper Peak Forest Canal from Marple to Whaley Bridge and return.

To my chagrin, I was unable to join the flotilla until the Monday evening as I was currently studying for City & Guilds in domestic and industrial electrics to add to my existing qualifications in aircraft and instrumentation and my final practical examination was on the morning of that day. So I missed the bit of the Bridgewater Canal from Preston Brook to Runcorn and back, and that's still a bit of canal that I have yet to do. At one time the Bridgewater Canal descended a flight of 10 double locks to the River Mersey at Runcorn, but these were closed and eliminated in 1966. Now there is occasional talk of restoring them.

So Hon. Commodore (Unelected) duly arrived at Manchester Piccadilly Railway Station on the early evening of Monday 27th April to wait for the boats to come up the 9 locks through the centre of Manchester to Ducie Street Basin. These 9 locks are part of the Rochdale Canal and the only bit of that canal which never closed. It was also not nationalised and remained in private hands until fully restored throughout. Only then did British Waterways take it on. In 1992 it was still owned by the Rochdale Canal Company, and to take a boat through those 9 locks (in a pretty parlous state!) over a distance of 1 mile cost £26!!

Anyway, I waited in the obvious place, the Jolly Angler, only 50 yards from the moorings. This is a Hydes pub and a long-time favourite of mine. By the time that some of the Beery Boaters wandered in, including Dave U, who had survived being prop-

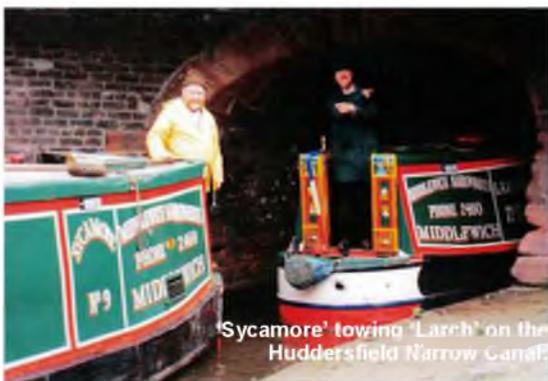


ositioned by assorted ladies on his travels, I had become involved in an impromptu Irish folk session. I had learned from previous occasions in this pub that if you sit in the same bar as the singers, you are expected to add your own contribution to the performance. So I dumped my luggage on Sycamore and returned to the bar. I was told that the boats did go to Runcorn, but that the canal there wasn't really much to write home about. Larch had lurched into a projecting pipe in one of the Rochdale locks and there was a bit of a dent and some scratches on the cabin side.

So, off on my first morning of the trip on Tuesday. The 6 mile Ashton Canal had a bad reputation for vandalism, in fact at one time boaters could ask to be escorted by British Waterways staff. On the several occasions which I've travelled the length of this canal I've never experienced any problems, or come across anybody who has. However, it's probably wise not to moor along it overnight. There are 18 locks in the first 3¼ miles climbing from Ducie Street Basin at Piccadilly to Fairfield Junction where the former Hollinshead Branch of the Rochdale Canal provided a short cut to and from Rochdale without going all the way down to Manchester and back: another canal with restoration prospects. By Lock 13 on the Openshaw (or Ashton) Locks is a Holts pub with the intriguing name of the Strawberry Duck.

After Fairfield Junction the next 2¼ miles is lock-free to Dukinfield Junction where there is a right turn for the Lower Peak Forest Canal and straight on for the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. Although it was only navigable for about three miles through three locks, we went straight on. The main problem with this was that where the canal ended on the outskirts of Stalybridge there was no way to turn a narrowboat round, and the idea of both boats coming backwards all the way to Dukinfield Junction didn't appeal to us. So we hit on the notion of turning one boat round and the other hauling it backwards to Stalybridge and then the one behind pulling the one in front in the other direction.

Larch went through the first lock followed by Sycamore in reverse, then the boats were tied together and Larch pulled Sycamore to the next lock. The scheme worked – sort of, but it took a long time to cover those three miles. Eventually we got to Clarence Bridge at the edge of Stalybridge where a shipwrecked bath tub in the canal thwarted any further progress, so we tied up and walked up the hill to the Pointsman Inn. After a few pints of Boddington's we retraced our watery track to Dukinfield Junction, this time with Sycamore towing Larch. A handy car accessories shop near the pub provided us with some plastic padding and green paint with which to camouflage the scratches and dents on Larch. An interesting interlude, and at least the Huddersfield Canal Society gave us a nice certificate for our efforts.



Sycamore' towing 'Larch' on the Huddersfield Narrow Canal

From Dukinfield Junction we turned left to go up the Lower Peak Forest Canal to Marple, stopping off on the way at the Duke of York at Romily just a few yards from the canal, a regular entry in the Good Beer Guide. This is between the short Wood-

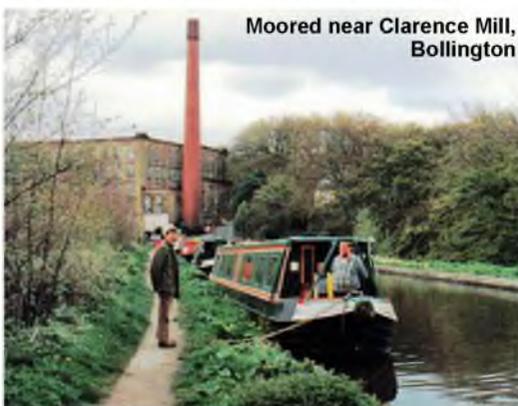
ley and Hyde Bank Tunnels. After the latter tunnel the canal runs close to the spectacular Marple Railway Viaduct, then goes up sixteen closely-spaced locks to Marple Junction where the Upper Peak Forest Canal continues for 6½ lock-free miles to Whaley Bridge and the Macclesfield Canal branches off to the right.

As it was now dark we moored by the junction and spent the evening in Marple, mostly, it seems, on Robinson's beers, although we did visit the Number 12 Wine Bar, owned by a couple of local CAMRA members and selling a range of Real Ales. It was a fine clear night, and John and Ray spent what seemed to be a great part of it on deck trying to see some sort of astronomical happening (the transit of Jupiter or something of that ilk). Hon. Commodore (Unelected) got his head down below decks after a hard day's work!

We had considered going to Whaley Bridge on the Upper Peak Forest Canal, but problems with Sycamore's steering system kept us at Marple until later on the Tuesday morning. It had become very stiff, and I thought that perhaps we had clipped the rudder out of its bottom bearing, which is quite easy to do on a full-length 70ft boat like Sycamore. This is the reason why nowadays most so-called full-length boats are usually about 68ft long, as it tends to happen while going down locks when you catch the rudder on the cill. However, since Manchester (apart from our brief foray back down the Huddersfield Narrow) we had been going uphill.

The usual remedy of pulling the steering arm up and trying to re-locate the rudder in its lower bearing cup (accompanied by much sweating and swearing) had no effect. Anyway, we tied up at the British Waterways depot just round the corner on the Macclesfield Canal and telephoned Middlewich Narrowboats. A fitter arrived and pronounced that the rudder bearings had somehow seized up. This was sorted out and we set off again down the Macclesfield Canal around mid-morning, so our lunch-time session was at Bollington. It took us another 14 years to get to Whaley Bridge.

Macclesfield and Bollington, only 3 miles apart, were known as the Real Ale drinker's wonders of the waterways as it was said that every pub in those two towns sold Real Ale, and this when some towns still had no Real Ale at all. Of the pair I prefer Bollington, purely because I know it better as I often used to park there for the night during my lorry driving days if I was in the area – the municipal car park in the centre of the town had a few free spaces reserved for lorries. Bollington nestles in a valley which the canal crosses on a large embankment. We moored across the canal from the massive Clarence Mill, now converted to house industrial units, where an aqueduct crosses over the road into the town from the west with steep steps going down the side, and walked up Palmerston Street to the town centre. Alternatively one can take a footpath opposite the mill down the side of the embankment which leads directly to the garden of the Vale Inn, now the Bollington Brewery Tap.



**Moored near Clarence Mill,
Bollington**

The first hostelry on our tour was the Holly Bush, a Robinson's house in CAMRA's National Inventory of unspoilt pubs. Then came the Spinners Arms with Bass and Boddington's beers, closely followed by the Meridian, described as 'a pub that time forgot'. Other people forgot it as well, because some time after our visit it closed permanently. Then, turning right down the High Street from Palmerston Street we arrived at the Queen's Arms with more Robinson's and as it stayed open longer than was usual at the time, we stayed there until mid-afternoon before moving on just three more miles to Macclesfield which was where we should have been according to the itinerary.

In Macclesfield we had a memorable session at the Bridgewater Arms. It's no longer on my Real Ale Lists to the Waterways, so perhaps it has closed since our visit but, as the name suggests, it was near the canal. We must have moored near it, as it was one of the first, probably *the* first, pub that we popped into that evening. I recall that it sold Wilson's beer. Then we wandered down into the town and into a few more pubs and on our way back dropped into the Bridgewater Arms again for 'last knockings'.

Unfortunately the pub showed no signs of closing! It turned out to be the landlord's last night there and he wanted to get rid of as much of his beer as he could before he left. We took another group in the other bar to be locals, but they turned out to be another group of boaters braving the lock-in. To encourage us to remain, the landlord produced huge plates of chips and bread to make chip butties with. I can't remember what time we did eventually get back to the boats, but I think that it was after four in the morning. We managed to start off at the usual time, but I can't recall a great deal before we arrived at Bosley Locks, half a dozen miles further on.

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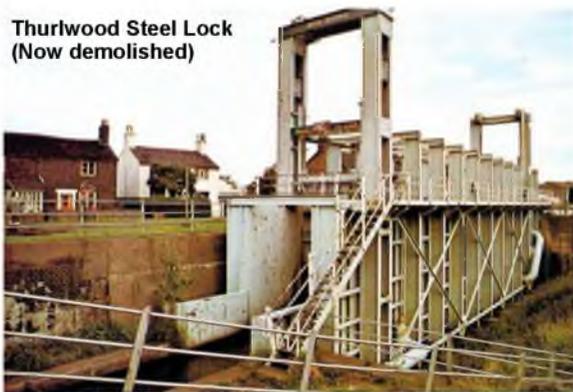
Play area. Children welcome

ones on the Macclesfield Canal, dropping it down from over 500 feet above sea level to the level of the Trent & Mersey Canal at Kidsgrove. They are on the fringe of the Peak District, and there is a fine view of the hill known as 'The Cloud' from the locks. There follows another five miles to Congleton Wharf which, now back on schedule again, is where we tied up at lunch time and walked the short distance downhill into the town. I forget the name of pub that we used, but I'm sure that it was a Robinson's establishment and the landlady made us extremely welcome, even producing a large cake for us to share. Ray was happy as there was horse racing on the television. There was a very good wet fish shop nearby, now no longer there, I've been told, which we made a detour to visit on our way back to Dover to purchase some Manx Kippers and the like.

From Congleton it was just 6 miles in the afternoon to Harding's Wood Junction on the Trent & Mersey Canal with only the one foot drop Hall Green stop lock, which is just before the late lamented Bird in Hand, closed since our visit in 1985. This was most certainly an unspoilt pub, no bar, beer in jugs from the cellar, etc. It's now nothing but a nice canalside cottage. The Macclesfield Canal crosses the Trent & Mersey Canal on an aqueduct, then turns left and runs alongside it until the T&M goes up a couple of locks so that the two canals can meet on the same level. We turned left onto the Trent & Mersey and went down the couple of locks, passing back under the aqueduct, before mooring for the night outside the Red Bull, yet another Robinson's pub. We would certainly have drunk there, and there are a couple more pubs nearby at Kidsgrove to patronise.

Last full day, May Day, Friday 1st. A morning of hard work, 26 locks in 7 miles down the flight known as 'Heartbreak Hill' to Wheelock. Apart from the first few, most of the locks are just far enough apart to make for a long walk between one and the next, but too close to hitch a lift on the boat. Most of them are also paired, i.e., two locks side by side, done to speed up the flow of traffic in the days of commercial operation, but nowadays only one of the pair is

**Thurlwood Steel Lock
(Now demolished)**



generally in use. At Thurlwood there was once the infamous Thurlwood Steel Lock alongside one of the normal type, designed to combat subsidence and generally hated by all, being extremely difficult to operate. On our first Cheshire Ring trip in 1984 it was still there, albeit disused, but now it had been totally demolished, just leaving a single ordinary lock.

At least, having arrived at Wheelock, there were a brace of decent canalside pubs to compensate us for our efforts. The Cheshire Cheese is a Hydes house while past the bridge on the same side was the Commercial Hotel, best described as a '1940s time-warp pub'. The only food was a selection of rolls and a later report gave the beers as Weetwoods, Thwaites, guest beers and Weston's cider, but in 1992 I think that the beer was just Bass. Now, in 2016, I gather that the Commercial Hotel has closed. There was also the Nag's Head a few yards down the road

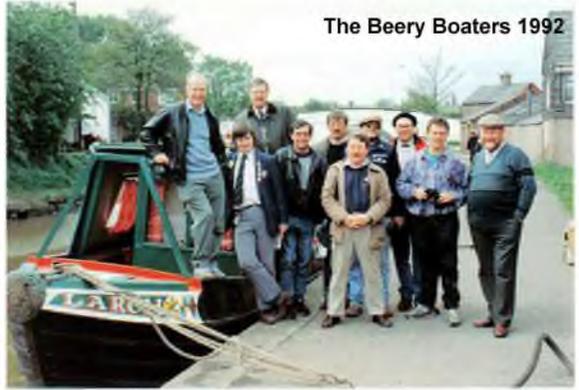
which, according to the 2010 Good Beer Guide sold a 'varying selection of Real Ales', but this pub may now be closed as well.

After Wheelock the canal flattens out somewhat towards Middlewich with just 6 locks in 6 miles, passing the large Saxa Salt Factory on the way. This area, of course, is famous for its salt mines as can be seen by the subsidence in the fields surrounding the canal. At the end

of the afternoon we moored up in Middlewich just before the King's Lock and spent our last evening revisiting the various pubs in the town with just the one lock and a few yards left on Saturday morning to get back to Middlewich Narrowboats.

As well as collecting our kippers from Congleton on the way back home, the Dover contingent stayed in Alfreton at the King Alfred on Saturday night and spent the evening at the Alfreton Beer Festival. Oh, and this time we received a full refund of our accident and damage deposit and thanks for returning the boats in such a pristine condition (the dent in Lurch not noticed!).

Jim Green



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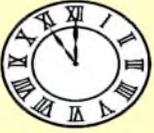
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LAST KNOCKINGS

Catch All Philosophy I suppose we should not be surprised. The Government's response to late night trouble in some town and city centres is to allow councils to charge all pubs, clubs, etc. that are open after midnight a special levy to pay for the cost of additional policing and other expenses that might be incurred. If I remember correctly the original proposal had suggested the levy could be enforced from 11pm not midnight, but whichever, it carries more than a hint of: "any respectable decent premises would not want to be open at that time of night" – a viewpoint with which I suspect many MPs would not wish to concur, but goes down very well with the electorate out in the sticks.

The legislation bears all the hallmarks of knee jerk reaction, taken with as much concern for careful analysis and rational judgement as might be heard from those whose behaviour it seeks to curb, thrashing around and hitting out at all and sundry, guilty and innocent alike. Even the most feisty town centres will include amongst its variety of drinking places quiet community locals, who might well not wish to be restricted by closing after midnight – ironically just the kind of place offering that "southern European" style of drinking which encouraged the lengthening of licencing hours some ten years ago. Very pleasing then to see CAMRA joining forces with the BBPA to offer a rather more pragmatic and fairer approach (see National News).

Chequer Checked Also good to see what can be achieved by a determined campaign and a lot of local support. At one time last year the Chequer Inn, Ash appeared destined to be another casualty of the current fashion for converting pubs into other uses. It was currently closed and its owner had applied to convert the pub into a residential dwelling following a successful appeal to have the Asset of Community Value status rescinded.

However, opposition to its disappearance continued to grow and before last Christmas a large group under the leadership of local resident Mathew Titterton had been formed to save it. There were demonstrations and publicity via local media, a new nomination for Asset of Community Value status submitted, and finally, as we report in Local News, the application for change of use was refused. There is now every prospect of the villagers themselves purchasing the pub and running it themselves.

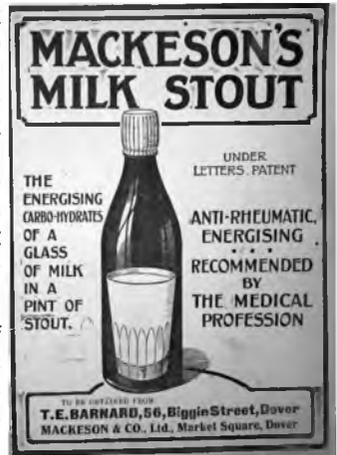
Lies, Damned Lies, and Statistics about Drink In Channel View we print the views of *Good Beer Guide* editor Roger Protz on the revised government safe drinking limits. As Roger points out these recommendations are full of contradictions, assumptions, figures plucked out of the air, or just plain wrong. They bear no more connection with reality than another government guideline which classifies drinking more than four pints in a session as bingeing, and as such, rather than encouraging drinkers to be aware of how much they are consuming, are more likely to discourage any concern at all.

One statistic kept severely under wraps is any comparison of drinkers with teetotalers. From time to time, one comes across various calculations of life expectancy

which suggest that prospects for teetotallers are no better than those for drinkers and can often be worse. One recent survey even showed that teetotallers' expectations matched those drinking 50 to 60 units of alcohol a week, while the best health was shown by those drinking around 30 units a week.

By Golly "Looks good, tastes good and by golly it does you good", the famous advertising slogan to promote Mackeson milk stout, will probably be stirring in many a memory, with the news that the style is apparently making a serious comeback. The TV advert featured Sir Bernard Miles, admiring and sipping from, a glass of the dark ale, while intoning the above dozen words in his native rural Chiltern accent. By his own account, this varied from valley to valley, if not village to village, so that locals could always distinguish the origins of any particular speaker.

However, we should not expect the resurrection of advertising that reflects the Bernard Miles original. As has been pointed out by others, wording that was acceptable fifty years ago, when cigarettes could be described as "cool as a mountain stream" or "the international passport to smoking pleasure", is today hardly likely to pass the medical authorities without comment.



Brewerspeak George Orwell, whose possible views on micropubs we discuss elsewhere, and who famously created the duplicitous news agency Newspeak in his novel *Nineteen Eighty Four*, might well feel quite at home with the language in which major producers of our favoured beverage tend to analyse their business. Not that any actual untruths are necessarily involved, but the talk of like for likes, trading formats, business focusing, and more percentages than you can shake a stick at, are sufficient to turn even the most robust strong ale. They could be talking about soap powder, motor cars or widgets: yes, even that kind of widget which is supposed to insert a bit of life into canned beer. And you can search in vain for any reference to malt and hops or flavour and taste. Ever wondered why Britain now has some 1,500 micro brewers?

The Great Wen Early 19th century writer, social commentator and traveller around Britain, William Cobbett, always referred to London unfavourably as the Great Wen – a wen being a fatty, greasy, and possibly contaminated gathering or cyst under the skin. No doubt his views would find favour with a fellow drinker we came across recently in a Black Country pub. "You don't want to go there, beer's £3.00 a pint," was the comment about our proposal to visit a nearby establishment whose beer and hospitality we had enjoyed on a Beery Boater trip. We were currently drinking Banks' Bitter at £2.50 a pint. How he might view current prices in our capital can only be imagined. Maybe there are places where the price of a pint more resembles the £3 plus which is standard in East Kent. However, by all accounts, in the city centre, unless you can find a Wetherspoons or Sam Smiths, don't expect anything under £4.00, and £4.50 is probably a good average. It was not ever thus – twenty or forty pence more perhaps, but not 50%.

Old Wort

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Channel Draught 67

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CROSSWORD ANSWERS



Local Information & Useful Numbers

Dover Tourist Info 01304 205108
Folk Tourist Info 01303 258594
Dover Police Stn 01303 240055
Folk Police Stn 01303 850055

Dover Taxis

A2B 01304 225588
Central 01304 204040
Star 01304 228822
Heritage 01304 228888

Deal Taxis

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

Sandwich Taxis

Sandwich Cars 01304 617424

Folkestone Taxis

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Premier Cars 01303 279900

National Express 0870 5808080

Stadecoach 0870 2433711

National Rail Enq. 08457 484950

Trading Standards Office (East Kent)

01843 223380

Trading Standards Office (Mid Kent)

01303 850294

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

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And Finally.....What's causing manboobs.

Well, someone had to do the research. Recent information claims that hoppy beers might contain a feminine product that can increase oestrogen levels and cause man boobs, as well as contribute to erectile dysfunction.

The popular India Pale Ale is heavy on hops and craft brewers are using 400% to 500% more hops than the beers produced by a typical big brewer. According to author and herbalist Stephen Buhner, hops are "female flowers of the hop plant" that contain serious amounts of phytoestrogen, a plant oestrogen that women have used as an herbal medicine. So yes, you read that right: Hops can give men man boobs.

However, not everyone is buying this theory: Many are inclined to think that man boobs are more the result of the high number of calories commonly found in hoppy (high alcohol) beers. Also, the actual hop content in a 9 gallon firkin of beer—let alone a single pint—is infinitesimal.

As if man-boob fear isn't enough, it has also now been found that the dreaded "brewer's droop," or male infertility caused by beer can last for up to a year after heavy drinkers stop guzzling.

Generally though, if you drink a lot of beer, suffer from man boobs and have a rotten love life, it might be better if you forget blaming the oestrogen and go for a run.

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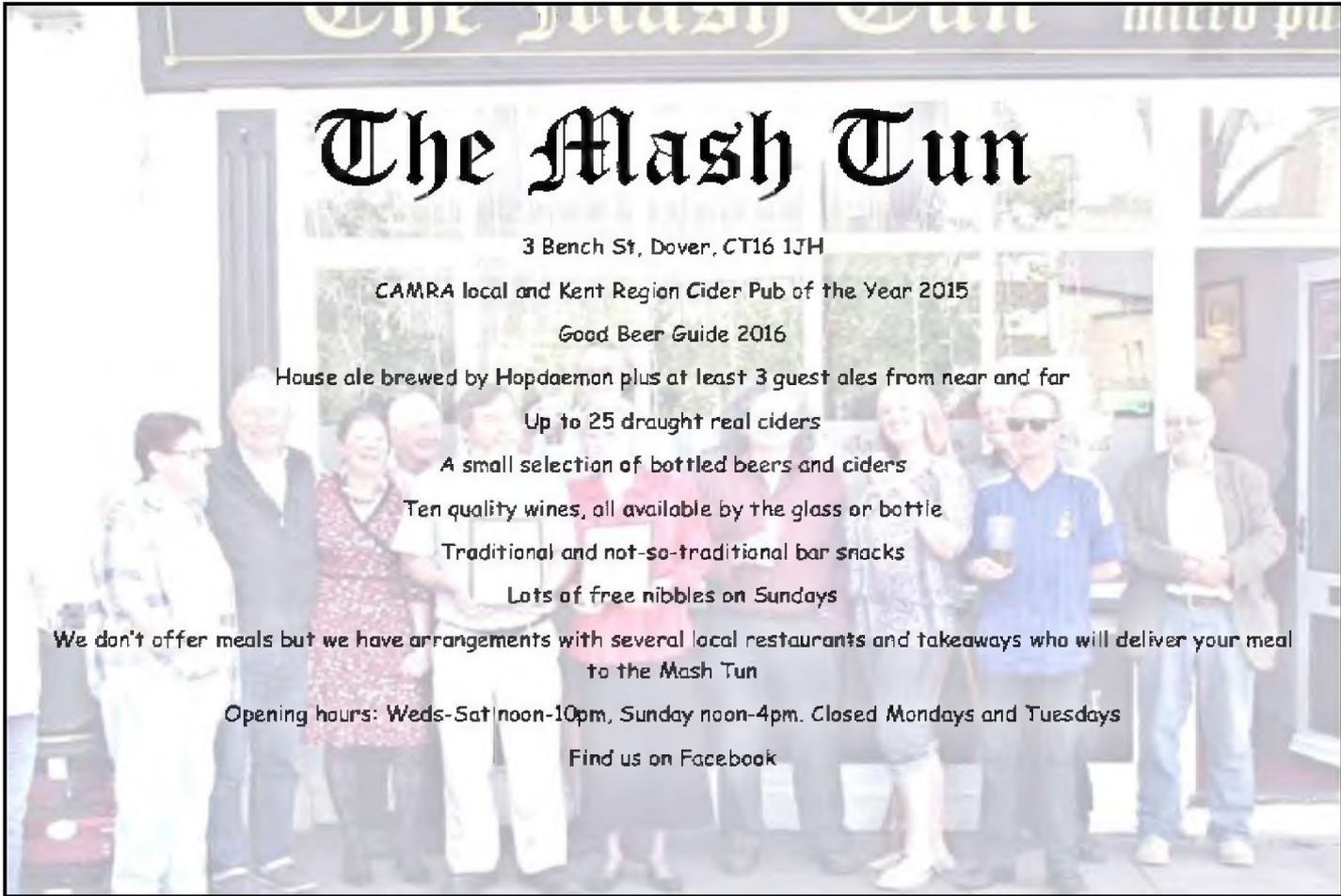
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A group of approximately ten people, including men and women of various ages, are standing in front of the entrance to 'The Mash Tun' pub. The pub's name is visible on a sign above the entrance. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting daytime.

The Mash Tun

3 Bench St, Dover, CT16 1JH

CAMRA local and Kent Region Cider Pub of the Year 2015

Good Beer Guide 2016

House ale brewed by Hopdaemon plus at least 3 guest ales from near and far

Up to 25 draught real ciders

A small selection of bottled beers and ciders

Ten quality wines, all available by the glass or bottle

Traditional and not-so-traditional bar snacks

Lots of free nibbles on Sundays

We don't offer meals but we have arrangements with several local restaurants and takeaways who will deliver your meal to the Mash Tun

Opening hours: Weds-Sat noon-10pm, Sunday noon-4pm. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays

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