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



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Issue 70
Winter
2016/17

CHANNEL DRAUGHT

A white seagull is perched on the right side of the word 'CHANNEL' in the title. The seagull is facing left, with its wings slightly tucked. The word 'DRAUGHT' is written in a large, bold, white font with a black outline, positioned below 'CHANNEL'.

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GARDNERS OF ASH

The history of a
former local
brewery

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ALCOHOL CONCERNS

How relevant are
the latest alcohol
guidelines?

See Page 20

THE FARRIER, DEAL IS WINTER PUB OF THE SEASON

See Local News



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CHANNEL DRAUGHT

ISSUE 70
Winter 2016/17

Welcome to the Winter 2016/2017 edition of Channel Draught, our 70th, and for the start of a year which promises upheaval and contention, and that is not only over the actions and policies of newly elected US President Donald Trump, and our own Government's invoking of Article 50, to start the process of withdrawing from the European Union. For real ale drinkers concern also extends to the future of CAMRA as we analyse and debate the results of last year's Revitalisation Project.

Nevertheless the everyday world of pubs and beer must continue, and we are pleased to be able to announce the coming into operation of two new breweries in our Branch area – the Breakwater Brewery in Lorne Road, whose setting up we announced in our last issue, and the Angels and Demons Brewery at Capel. Beers from both have been available locally for some weeks and will be appearing at this year's White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales.

Elsewhere, while some new bars and pubs have been opening, probably most recently the Mermaids Locker in Sandwich and the Breakwater's own brewery tap, old pubs continue to disappear and there are several campaigning groups engaged in trying to save their much loved local.

In this edition, as well as all the usual items, we introduce readers to the Breakwater Brewery, while taking a look at an old brewer, Gardners of Ash, whose companion brewer Tomson Wotton we wrote about in our autumn issue. We also report on ACVs in operation and further concerns over alcohol consumption, provide additional updates on Daddlums and include the latest from Stuart Roberts in France and Belgium.

Martin Atkins



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EVENTS DIARY

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <i>Wed 1 Feb</i> | Dover Festival Week Beer & Cider Crawl. Eight Bells (Wetherspoon's) at 7pm (6.30pm if you want to eat first) |
| <i>Fri 3 - Sat 4 Feb</i> | WHITE CLIFFS FESTIVAL OF WINTER ALES
Dover Town Hall
Beer Festival Take-down, Dover Town Hall (9am)
Winter Ale Festival, Berry , Walmer* |
| <i>Sun 5 Feb</i> | Branch Meeting, White Horse , Dover. |
| <i>Fri 17 - Sat 18 Feb</i> | Deal Walk, Sir Norman Wisdom (Wetherspoon's)
1.30pm |
| <i>Mon 20 Feb</i> | Roger Marples Beer & Wine Festival*
Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club (see advert) |
| <i>Sat 4 Mar</i> | Beer Festival, Anchor , Wingham* (see advert)
Branch Meeting, Red Cow , Sandwich |
| <i>Fri 10 - Sat 11 Mar</i> | Branch Meeting, Der Bar , Deal |
| <i>Mon 20 Mar</i> | The Chambers 15th Easter Ale & Cider Festival
Cheriton Place, Folkestone* (see advert) |
| <i>Mon 10 Apr</i> | Planet Thanet Beer Festival , Winter Gardens, Margate |
| <i>Thur 13 - Sun 16 Apr</i> | Beer Festival, Five Bells , Eastry* (see advert)
Branch Meeting, King's Head , Kingsdown. |
| <i>Fri 14 - Sat 15 Apr</i> | |
| <i>Fri 14 - Mon 17 Apr</i> | |
| <i>Mon 15 May</i> | |

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



REVITALISATION REPORT

Following consultations with members during 1916, the Revitalisation Project Steering Committee has drawn up a series of proposals for the future of CAMRA's purpose and activities, and passed it on to the Campaign's National Executive for its consideration. A summary of its recommendations is as follows:

- Campaigning for real ale, cider and perry and protecting community pubs and clubs will remain core CAMRA activities.
- CAMRA widens its mission and purpose to reflect changing consumer needs and developments that have taken place across the sector since CAMRA's foundation in 1971. The Committee found that there is much CAMRA does well, so their proposals principally relate to opportunities for the organisation to remain relevant and effective in the future.
- CAMRA broadens its focus to play a "leading role in informing and representing all those with an interest in good beer of any type".
- CAMRA champions the "virtues of well-produced, well-kept cask conditioned beers as the pinnacle of the brewer's craft" while also promoting greater understanding of beer, cider and perry of all types to help discerning drinkers judge for themselves what "quality" constitutes.
- Celebrating and protecting well-run community pubs and clubs should remain core to CAMRA's purpose, but the Campaign should do more to improve the range and quality of beer, cider and perry in "communal drinking" venues across the on-trade.
- In response to the attacks on responsible drinkers by health campaigners, the organisation plays a leading role in speaking on behalf of all UK beer, cider and perry drinkers and pub and club-goers.

Joint CAMRA founder and chairman of the Revitalisation Project Michael Hardman said: "Our proposals were agreed after eight months hard work and include strengthening some of CAMRA's best campaigns and practices as well as confirming our commitment to real ale and support for pubs and clubs."

"We have recommended we should explore some kinds of beer that have previously been outside our scope, but this is hardly a controversial proposal since our latest survey of members showed there was a clear majority in favour of doing so. We now look forward to the National Executive accepting our proposals, depending on the results of an impact study they will be carrying out, and then to our 185,000 members voting on them."

CAMRA national chairman Colin Valentine thanked Michael and his committee for their work, surveying and meeting with, thousands of CAMRA members to find out their views. He said: "My fellow national directors and I will now take time to fully understand the Revitalisation Project report and the proposals made to us. It's now our job to decide what we will recommend to our members".

Colin assured members that they will be at the heart of the forthcoming deliberations, and will have a full opportunity to discuss the proposals at the April conference. A final vote on any changes will be taken at the Members' Weekend in 2018. (see Channel View)

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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.

DOVER

Blakes: The Castle street pub provided the venue for our Branch Christmas Social a week before Christmas on Saturday 17 December – a dozen of us meeting at 12 noon for a very enjoyable two or three hours. Beers were Blakes House Bitter from Millis, Cornwall Porthbud Bitter and the most excellent Adnams Old. Around the corner, however in Russell Street, to the best of our knowledge no real ale remains the state of play at the **Castle**. At the **White Horse** Harveys Sussex remains a regular accompanied usually by a couple of other ales and a cider.

In the Market Square the **Port of Call**, was closed before Christmas and remains so at the time of writing. No information on exact whys and wherefores. At the **Duchess**, Bench Street real ale remains notable by its absence, but that is more than made up of by the **Mash Tun** next door, which maintains its policy of a high percentage of top quality ale you have never heard of, or at least not had an opportunity to drink.

The pub sources brews from all over the country but with a good proportion from our own locality. Canterbury Ales American Gold and Romney Marsh Romney Cinque Porter both received high praise in November, and there were very good reports of McCann

beers from the new Angels and Demons Brewery in Capel. With views from the pub window across to East Cliff and the Castle, the progress of the new Russel Street development can be watched with interest.

Angels and Demons beers have also featured at **The Lanes**, Worthington Street, alongside the pub's traditional local selection from the likes of Rockin Robin, Pig and Porter, Gadds and Hop Fuzz. In early December a barrel of Bombay Social was described as "Excellent condition with amazing aroma for this 3.8% IPA. Fresh tasting, superb foamy head and rather drinkable (would be ideal for a lazy summer's day ...)" Canterbury Ales Merchant's Ale, also received plaudits: "on really good form for this mild stout style ale with superb taste and cracking good head."

In Ladywell the **Park** remains closed and up for sale, but the **Rack of Ale** a few doors along continues to thrive. Titanic Plum Porter remains as popular as ever and appears very regularly, alongside a selection from all over the country. Around Christmas, with a heavy weighting of festive brews, these have included Purple Moose Snowdonia, Naylor's Cratchit's Cracker, 360 Degree Brewing Pale #39, Peerless Chill Factor, Rudgate Jorvik Blonde, Mordue Howay in a Manger and Frog Island Festive Frog. Earlier, choice had fea-

tured a lot of familiar old brewers with beers such as Hop Back Crop Circle, Loddon Peeler, Saxon Glory, Salopian Propaganda, Elland Halifax Bomber, RCH Hewish Mild, and Big Hand Savanna.

Louis Armstrong, Maison Dieu Road: Four local Kent brews are the norm with occasional representation from elsewhere. Hopdaemon Skrimshander remains the regular house bitter, but is joined by a selection including other Hopdaemon beers such as Golden Braid and Session, as well as ales from Gadds, Old Dairy, Westerham and Goachers, and more recently expanding to include, Canterbury Ales, Rockin Robin, G2 and Romney. Charity fund raising remains important and events around Christmas and New Year added just over another £1,000 in support of Kelly Turner. And in late January, the annual Burns Night Dinner was its usual success with all places spoken for within a few days of details being announced a couple of weeks earlier.

Red Lion, Charlton Green: Usually two real ales available from a selection including Landlord, West Berkshire Good Old Boy, Black Sheep and G2 Plough. A friendly, cosy pub with skittle alley and attractive garden behind.

Priory Hotel: One or two real ales normally plus cider. Recent months have seen G2 Vela Blonde, Doom Bar and Otter Bitter among other beers, and Rhubarb Cider. In Tower Hamlets neither the **Carriers Arms** nor **Dewdrop** were selling real on visits after Christmas although reports of late indicate that both had been. And at the **Boar's Head** two or three real ales normally, including Young's Bitter, several pints of which were much enjoyed on a recent quiz night.

Thirsty Scarecrow, High Street: Although primarily a cider house the pub always sells at least one real ale – of

late Oakham Citra and JHB, Gadds' Seaside and Triple FFF Moondance, and over the New Year Docker's Porter from Dover's new Breakwater Brewery. However, still no real ale at the **Eagle** on the other side of the Tower Hamlets junction.

Breakwater Brewery Taproom, Lorne Rd: The latest addition to the town's real ale outlets opened just before Christmas (see Page 24). At the time of writing, as well as a selection from elsewhere, two of its own brews cur-



rently being served – Breakwater Test Pale and Breakwater Dockers Porter – both attracting favourable comments, especially the porter

Sportsman, London Road: Real ale recently appeared again, Doom Bar being available in December. The **Old Endeavour**, though remains with no real ale, although a visit late last year found a friendly atmosphere and a pleasing view over the river at the back. One or two ales normally at the **Bull**, including over recent months Otter Poppy, Butcombe Christmas Moose, Tetley Bitter and Caledonian Elf Yourself. Meanwhile at the **Three Cups** visits late last year found Ripple Farmhouse Pale Ale and Bombardier.

In Whitfield, Marston's **Kittiwake** has been offering a selection from the

brewery's beer list – Hobgoblin (attracting particular favourable comments), Pedigree, Banks' Bitter, Wychwood Bah Humbug, and Jennings' Redbreast. In November the **Archer** was selling Brakspear Bitter. At Kearsney, usually two or three real ales to be had at the **Railway Bell** – Sharp's Atlantic IPA and Master Brew on a visit in December – but in nearby river only the **Royal Oak** now provides sustenance for the thirsty, the closed **Dublin Man O' War** now encased in steel and up for sale with future unknown.

Fox, Temple Ewell: Kelham Island Pride of Sheffield remains a fixture and is often joined by Butcombe Bitter. Gale's HSB has appeared several times of late, drawing very appreciative comments from one customer: "Perfect taste, colour, and temperature". Around Christmas the pub was offering a good selection of festive brews, including Hardy & Hanson's Rocking Rudolph, Black Sheep Blitzten, Shepherd Neame Christmas Ale and Cottage Figgy Pudding. Looking forward, the May Day Bank Holiday weekend will not this year be hosting the annual Rotary Charity Beer Festival, which instead has been moved to June.

DEAL

Winter Pub of the Season After a vote across the Branch the **Farrier**, Manor Road was declared Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District Winter Pub of the Season. Congratulations to Dayle and Donna who have had the pub for less than a year. Offering a choice of local and national beers, a visit at the end of October found Deuchars, Oakham Citra and Ripple Farmhouse Pale Ale – on good form, fully flavoured: "Good value for money to". In early December Brains Open Casket was available alongside Farmhouse Pale Ale, and a month later Caledonian Cold Comfort could be found – a 4.5% ABV amber bitter described as having a su-

perb fresh head and good taste.

Meanwhile at the **Freed Man**, Dover Road, Saturday November 19 saw the presentation to landlord Ian Goodban of the award for the pub being chosen as the Branch's Summer Pub of the Season for last year. Beers were Reedley Hallows New Laund Dark, Cottage Air Supremacy and North Yorkshire Honey Bunny. Up to four beers are usually available, and other recently



seen brews include Musket Muzzle-loader, Old Dairy Green Hop Ale, North Blyth Coquet Island Gold and VOG South Island. In January the pub made a pleasant venue for that month's Branch Meeting.

Around the corner in Station Road the **Railway** is no more. Demolished at the end of last year, its site is now occupied by initial work on a block of flats.

At the other end of the town, in north Deal, **Bloody Mary's** was selling Hardy & Hanson's Rocking Rudolph in mid December, while a few doors along at **Der Bar** Kent Brewery's beers featured prominently towards the end of the year – Black Gold, KGB and Beyond the Pale all appearing alongside Turner's Sweet Cider. Just before Christmas one drinker was very impressed with Pig & Porter Ashcan Rantings Citra; "Really good form with excellent head, fresh clean taste and

amazing mouthfeel for this 4.2% APA style.”

At the **Ship** in Middle Street the regular Dark Star American Pale Ale received excellent reports in late November: “Packed with flavour and extremely drinkable.” Later in mid December Timothy Taylor Landlord was added to the selection. More compliments at the **Prince Albert** where earlier in the autumn Adnams Lighthouse, was described as on “good form...with good head. Pleasant yet unassuming taste.” Young’s Bitter and Special have also appeared, plus Worsthorne Gold, a new brewery to this publication we think.

Deal Hoy, Duke Street: Christmas saw Shepherd Neame Rudolph’s Reward on the handpumps – No. 18 Yard Brewhouse range. Described as easily drinkable with a good pleasant taste. The pub impressed with its friendly service. At the **Alma** good reports of Timothy Taylor Landlord and Thwaites Wainwright towards the end of the year.

In the High Street **Spire’s Bar** in the landmark centre was selling Romney Marsh Romney Marsh Golden and Canterbury Ales Miller’s Ale during December. However, at the **Rose** real ale seems to have been dropped for the time being, although bottled Gadds ale is available, but for those who do not like it cold, unfortunately mostly chilled. And no real ale either, on a recent visit, at the **Eagle**, Queen Street, despite its two hand pumps.

Magnet Inn, London Road: Master Brew is regular ale at this Sheps pub. Around Christmas it was accompanied by the brewery’s Xmas Ale and but early December also found Bootleg Urban Fox from the Horse and Jockey brewpub at Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester on the handpumps – “Good form for this red ale with pleasant taste

overall. Friendly service.” In Bowling Green Lane at the **Bowling Green Tavern** London Pride is normally on, but on a visit in December it was selling Wychwood 12 Drummers – reported as with really good taste for a 3.5% ABV.

Port Arms, Beach Street: Charles Wells Poppy was available in late November. Meanwhile the **King’s Head** opposite, for several years now a tied Sheps house, was selling late red during the autumn – strong malty taste, seemed almost like a variant of Spitfire, someone commented.

At the **Bohemian**, Beach Street a mixture of local and national brews. Gadds No 5 appears regularly – in late October being described as on fine form with full taste with plenty of character. And later in the month Hop Back GBF was available: “Always a pleasure to see a beer you do not expect” Nearer Christmas Wye Valley Brewery Hereford Pale Ale could be had.

In King Street, as always, a wide an ever changing selection at the **Just Reproach**, Deal from both local Kent sources and breweries across the country. The following are just a few of the pub’s recent selection: Goacher’s Fine Light, Blue Monkey Harper’s Golden Ale, Kent Black Mirror and Prohibition American Pale Ale (described as fantastic flavours – lots of people drinking it), Old Dairy Silver Top (“rich full taste throughout”), Long Man Old Man, Oakham Bishop’s Farewell and Citra, Gadds’ No. 5, Hopdaemon Golden Braid, Westerham Spirit of Kent and Goacher’s Crown Imperial Stout.

On the Strand, a couple of cask ales can usually be found at the **Lighthouse**. “This pub is a gem. Consistently well presented beer from the barrel from local breweries,” someone commented. In mid December Ripple Farmhouse Pale Ale and Whitstable Native were available, while earlier Tonbridge Capel

Pale and Gadds Green Hop Ale were being sold. At the **Stag**, there were good reports of St Austell Proper Job in late November – “really nice refreshing taste.”

Drum Major, Dover Road: Thwaites Good Elf was on the handpumps in early December, in notably good condition, with Courage Best just taken off. Sharps Doom Bar and Adnams Ghost Ship had also been available around the same time

Berry, Canada Road: The normal eclectic selection of ales was further enhanced over the festive period by a variety of dark/winter brews. To the forefront was the ever popular, reliable and during winter at the Berry, regular, Harveys Old – the recipient of many a plaudit from drinkers. Also the object of resounding praise was Time & Tide Double Stout. Although KeyKeg it drew the following comment: “9% ABV stout of pure joy despite being served slightly cold. Treat with respect, drink slowly, enjoy the mouthfeel with coffee taste and amazing aroma. Be filled with Xmas cheer....”

Otherwise too many to mention, except a handful from December. Old Mogul favourites Oakham JHB and Bishop's Farewell – “firm favourite among the drinkers in the pub”; Wylam Rakau: “Excellent example of a New Zealand hop based beer”; and Burning Sky Plateau: “Great beer you can see why the berry has put it on a regular pump.” The Berry's annual winter ale festival is set for Friday 17 and Saturday 18 February.

King's Head, Kingsdown: Excellent reports on a variety of beers during the late autumn and early winter. Norfolk Brewhouse Moon Gazer: “Top form for this dark mild – real tasty with good mouthfeel. Yum!” Also Marston's Burton Bitter, while locally Canterbury Ales supplied Reeve's Ale and American

Gold, and Gadds' No. 5, Dark Conspiracy and Seasider. Over the festive season Springhead Roaring Meg and Greene King Rocking Rudolph were available.

SANDWICH & RURAL

Mermaids Locker, Cattle Market: Our Branch's latest micro pub, and the first in Sandwich, is now established at No 8 Cattle Market, next to the bus stop between Moat Sole and Harnet Street. Occupying a thirteenth century building it offers cask ales, ciders, wine and craft gin. Meals are available and there is full disabled access and dogs are welcome. Up to four real ales are offered – a visit in mid January finding Canterbury Ales Millers, Gadds Little Cracker and Robinson's Double Hop.

Across the road the **New Inn**, was chosen for our November Branch Meeting, and it was pleasing to find such a well patronised pub on a Monday evening. Real ales were Belhaven Bridge to Nowhere, Adnams Ghost Ship and Courage Best. At the **Fleur de Lis** Harveys Sussex Best Bitter is regularly available, and in December Harveys Old Ale was on the hand pumps.

Red Cow, Moat Sole: Continuing with a wide selection from both local and national sources. Recent visits have found Old Dairy Red Top, Ringwood Fortyniner, Adnams Ghost Ship, Wychwood Bah Humbug, Charles Wells Good Stuffing, Gadds' No 3 Kent Pale Ale and Doom Bar.

Good varying choice also at the **George & Dragon**, Fisher Street – Marston' Black IPA, Charles Wells Golden Cauldron, Mad Cat Golden IPA, Otter Ale, and Butcombe Bitter and Haka from Butcombe all being available over recent months.

Crispin Inn, High Street: Maintaining links with Brogdale's Mad Cat Brewery, the brewery's Crispin Ale is normally

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available – a summer version being provided during the warmer months. Also from Mad Cat, Jet Black Stout was seen in the autumn. Alongside, Adnams beers feature regularly, Shingle Shells and Ghost Ship appearing towards the end of the year.

Away from Sandwich, campaigns continue to save several threatened village pubs. At the **Red Lion**, Wingham, to the best of our knowledge, the outcome is still awaited on the developer's appeals against the Council's non determination of the change of use and listed building applications. Meanwhile in Ash work is ongoing to raise funds for the purchase of the **Chequer**. In Shepherdswell the **Bricklayers** remains empty, with its physical condition now causing some concern in the village. Local opinion fears that the owners are awaiting the expiry of AVC listing in January 2019, when they will be able to apply for change of use through the normal planning route.

Other village and rural closed pubs include the **Tuns at Staple House** in Staple, the **Charity** in Woodnesborough and at St. Margarets the **Red Lion** and **Hope** – the former currently with permission for residential conversion applied for, and the latter, we understand, "gutted" and seemingly also destined for residential, and with houses currently under construction in its grounds.

At Barfrestone, Wantsum Black Prince Mild is now established as a regular in the **Wrong Turn**, the Branch's 2016 Pub of the Year, while other Wantsum brews feature prominently. Other Kent beers seen recently include Hop Fuzz Yellow Zinger, Fallout and Martello, Musket Flash in the Pan, G2 Sail and Gadds Seaside. More distant brews have included those from XT and Butcombe, from which in January came Adam Henson's Rare Breed Ale.

Carpenters Arms, Coldred: And at nearby Coldred, Gadds ales are partic-

ularly conspicuous at our 2015 Pub of the Year – No 5, Seaside, Al Murray's Beautiful British Beer, Little Cracker and Uperhop all having appeared during the winter months. However, the pub's choice extends right across the British Isles. Orkney Red MacGregor has appeared again, and also from north of the border Highlander and Maverick from Fyne Ales. Nearer home from Sussex came Long Man Long Blonde and Rother Valley Ignite, and from further afield beers from George's of Essex, Grey Trees of South Wales and Skinner's of Cornwall.

In Shepherdswell, the **Bell** was selling Directors and Doom Bar in late November and at the **Two Sawyers**, Woolage Green, Tribute and Doom Bar were available. In Lydden there is little sign that the village until recently had two pubs, what was the Hope now apparently converted to residential with new housing built on land at the back. At the **Bell Sharps** Atlantic and Doom Bar were on the handpumps during a recent visit. Meanwhile a few miles away at Barham, in late November, the **Cumberland** was selling Harveys Sussex, Greene king IPA and Broadside. And in Denton at the **Jackdaw** the choice was Tribute, Spitfire, Landlord and Ringwood Razorback.

Black Pig, Staple: Reports of a superb beer in late November. "Called at the Black Pig yesterday lunchtime and had the best pint for ages. A Wychwood beer, Wickerman, Try it if you get a chance, I think it is stunning." Other beers of late have included Exmoor Exmas, Thwaites Wainwright, Wychwood Bah Humbug.

Just before Christmas the **Griffins Head**, Chillenden was selling Shepherd Neame Late Red – "On good form with nice fresh head and good robust tangy taste. Friendly and welcoming service. Roaring log fire makes it hard to leave." Meanwhile at the **Fitzwalter**,

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Goodnestone Shepherd Neame Christmas Ale was available – earlier in the month Whitstable Bay and Master Brew. At the **Anchor**, Wingham, on a visit in early December beers were Old Dairy Red Top, Doom Bar and Musket Fife and Drum. A festival is planned for Friday 10th and Saturday 11th March with over fifteen ales and ciders and live music (see pub advert for details).

A festival is also booked at the **Five Bells**, Eastry for the Easter weekend, from Friday 14th until Monday 17th April. Ever changing guest ales are a feature, the selection over December and early January including Black Sheep Brian, Charles Wells Burning Gold, Greene King Rocking Rudolph, Adnams Shingle Shells, Woodforde's Wherry, Box Steam Bauble, Sharp's Doom Bar, Wadworth 6X and Courage Director's.

Crown Inn, Finglesham: Canterbury Ales feature strongly with recent months seeing Wife of Bath, Knight's Ale and Reeves Ale. Hophead appears regularly as do beers from Caledonian, with autumn visits finding both Autumn Red and Deuchars IPA. Also seen lately Courage Best, Hophead, Hobgoblin and Ripple Steam Brewery Black IPA.

Plough, Ripple: Ripple Steam Beers remain the staple along with long time regular Fuller's ESB. In late autumn a barrel of Farmhouse Pale Ale attracted the following: "Top form for this. Fuggles variant with excellent fresh taste. Fully flavoured with nice head and lace. Easily drinkable." Other recent brews have included Ripple Best Bitter and Gold, Kelham Island Riders on the Storm, Greene King Gangly Ghoul and G2 Orion.

In Capel, visits in November found Hancocks, Master Brew and Greene King IPA at the **Royal Oak**, and at the **Lighthouse** Bulldog and Spirit of Kent from Westerham. At the **Valiant Sailor** Doom Bar was available.

FOLKESTONE

New breweries abound in Folkestone and its environs. As well as the recently established Romney Marsh Brewery, set up in 2015 in New Romney, the last year has seen five more added to the total – the Range Brewery operating from Lympe Industrial Estate, the Amazing Brewery at the Ship in Sandgate, the Docker Brewery on Folkestone Harbour Arm, the Samphire Brewery located behind a home brew shop at 118 Sandgate Road and the Folkestone Brewery. On this last we have no information about location but understand that trial beers have been brewed and are hoped to be on sale by the spring.

The Amazing Brewery is now brewing three ales, Cotter VC, Freedom and Amazing Grace, a pint of the latter being enjoyed at the **Ship** on Christmas Eve. And although the only brew pub in Sandgate, brew pub beers were also being offered at the **Provident** and **Inn Doors** – at the former, Farriers 1606 from the Farriers Arms, Mersham, alongside Doom Bar and Range Ales, and Hazelnut Porter from the Four Candles in Broadstairs, at the latter.

In Hythe, just before Christmas, the **Carousel** was selling Mad Cat Santa Paws and Youngs Bitter, while round the corner at the **Potting Shed** the choice was Gadds No 5, Hop Fuzz Brown Ale and, from more distant parts, Oakham Bishop's Farewell. At the **White Hart** Rocking Rudolph and Dark Star American Pale were on the handpumps alongside regular Greene King IPA, and at the **Red Lion** Old Dairy Red Top and Youngs Bitter could be had. In the **Three Mariners** the selection included Tonbridge Copper Nob, Hopdaemon Christmas Ale and Youngs Bitter.

In mid December visits to the **Firkin Alehouse** and **Chambers** found a choice of Hophead, Siren Craft Under-



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current, Tiny Rebel Fugg Lite and Milk Street Americo, a the Firkin, while Chambers was selling Adnams Light-house, Ripple Steam Black IPA, Canterbury Ales Millers and Range Ales One in the Chambers, with three ciders from Biddenden – Bushels, Dry and Red Love. Over the Easter weekend the pub will be hosting its annual Easter beer festival, its fifteenth, with over thirty ales and ciders (see advert),

Meanwhile at the **Happy Frenchman** Doom Bar and Old Speckled Hen were available, and at the **Pullman** Gadds No 7, Doom Bar, Purity Mad Goose and Mad Cat Santa Paws could be found. In the Bayle the **British Lion** was selling Banks Bitter, Ringwood Fortyniner and Canterbury Ales Christmas Ale, and the **Guildhall** Ghostship, Harvey's Sussex and Greene King IPA. At **Kipps** the choice was Ilkley Crossroads, Tring Comet and Bragby's Red Dragon.

In the Stade four or five ales can normally be found at the **Mariner** – in mid November Mad Cat Golden, Ghostship, Harveys Best and Doom Bar – and three or four at the **Ship** with Doom Bar and Young's Special featuring regularly.

CANTERBURY

New Inn, Havelock Street: Now with seven operating handpumps mid January found a choice including Scarlet Macaw, UBU, Harveys Best, Betty Stogs, London Pride and Hophead, with to follow Adnams Old Ale and Ghost Ship, Gadds West Coast IPA, Ripple IPA and Farmhouse, Dark Star Festival, Oakham New World Order, Woodfordes Wherry, St Austell Trelawny, Canterbury Ales Millers, and Bulldog and God's Wallop from Westerham. Sunday afternoon and evening have been attracting backgammon and scrabble enthusiasts, and on Burns Night the opportunity was taken to officially launch the pub's twenty plus se-

lection of whiskies, alongside traditional haggis complimented with homemade whisky sauce.

At the **Phoenix** four or five real ales are usually available with a heavy emphasis on Kentish brews – in early December Gadds No 7, Whitstable Winkle Picker and Hop Fuzz – plus, from away, Adnams Ghostship. Currently the in-house brewery remains not in use. In Wincheap the **King's Head** offers four real ales and in January hosted that month's regional meeting for Kent CAMRA branches. Beers included Harveys Sussex, Greene King IPA and an extremely popular Goacher's Mild.

In early December a visit to the **Haywain** at Bramling found Whitstable Oyster Stout and EIPA on the handpumps alongside London Pride and Bombardier. The **Duke William** at Ickham was selling Whitstable Bay, Old Dairy Red Top and Ripple Steam, and the **Rose**, Wickhambreaux Greene King IPA and Abbot and Directors.

At the **Chequers**, Stone Street in early December there was a choice of Hophead, Skinners Ginger Tossler, Oakham Citra and Old Dairy Red Top plus a pin of Whitstable Gold. The pub also offers a take-home facility for any real ale. And at Bossingham the **Hop Pocket** was selling beers from Hop Fuzz and Cottage together with an oddly named brew from Caledonian – Kentish Hop Maker. In the **Rose and Crown**, Stelling Minnis beers included Youngs Bitter and from the new Angels and Demons Brewery a dark ale, McCann's Hockley Soul.



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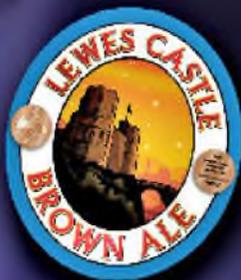


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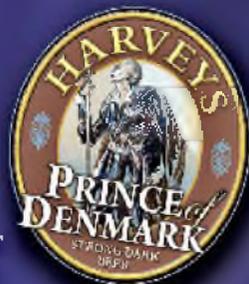
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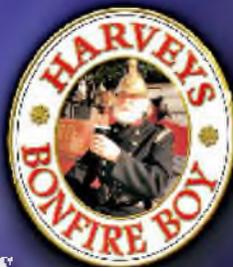


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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Correspondence about our Pub Games article

After the report on pub games in our Autumn edition we received the following letter in December from John Hill of Strood (our apologies if we've misread his name)

I was recently at Deal for a few days and whilst there picked up a copy (from the Saracen's Head) of the *Channel Draught* newsletter. I saw the article on Pub Games and in particular the reference to Daddlums.

Just to let you know that the Vigo Inn at Fairseat is now closed and a private house, so I wonder what happened to the Daddlums table? In fact the inn did close about two to three years ago, but after a while re-opened, but then finally closed earlier this year, I think.

About the same time we also received an e-mail from Paul Kirby, which reiterated that the Vigo is now closed but which disclosed further information about the fate of its Daddlums table.

Last week I had the pleasure of travelling some 50 miles east of Gravesend in order to enjoy a few days cycling in your neck of the woods, primarily to enjoy the micro pub culture in your parts.

Whilst partaking in a particularly pleasant drop of stout at the Just Reproach (apologies to the brewer but I do not recall its name) I was thumbing through your excellent *Channel Draught* magazine and felt compelled to send an update on your pub games feature, specifically Daddlums. I am pleased to report that despite the demise of the Vigo Inn, the daddlums table now resides at The Jolly Drayman in Wellington Street, Gravesend DA12 1JA, and is used weekly every Sunday evening by some ten to twenty enthusiastic "cheese" lobbbers.

If any of your readers would care to find out more or would like to join us for a game, please feel free to contact me at the E:mail address above or contact the landlord Rob McMillan at jollydpubhotel@outlook.com. Should you make the effort to travel up you would be assured of a warm welcome and a great selection of at least four ales, the Jolly is a long time regular in The Good Beer Guide and was local pub of the year 2011 & 2012.

So, the Daddlums table at the Jolly Drayman is the old table from the Vigo. We had been aware for some time that Daddlums was now regularly played at the pub, and it had been suggested that maybe this was the location of the missing table of the two made by the late Dave Green. Based on the dimensions of the Vigo table, one is now currently residing at the Louis Armstrong in Dover, but the other, last seen at the sadly also now defunct Yew Tree in Barrestone, some twenty or so years ago, has now seemingly completely disappeared...at least from our knowledge.

We would welcome any information, or news, of this or any other Daddlums tables or pubs where the game was, or is, played



ALCOHOL CONCERNS

There is an amusing old adage (or perhaps not so amusing) that an alcoholic is someone who drinks more than their doctor. Nevertheless, popular witticisms aside what exactly are the current views on alcohol of those who look after our health?

In our autumn issue we published the results of research that appears in the 2017 *Good Beer Guide* showing that going to the pub is good for you. Other research, which has never been refuted or challenged by anti-alcohol campaigners, suggests that the mortality rate of moderate drinkers is lower than that of teetotallers.

And last summer Bradford CAMRA's magazine *Tyke Taverner* published the following research conducted among the medical profession by *medeConnect*, "a leading provider of community based research using both online quantitative market research with UK and international healthcare professionals".

	There is no safe level of alcohol consumption	Moderate consumption of alcohol can be part of a healthy lifestyle
Strongly agree	76 (8%)	144 (14%)
Somewhat agree	225 (22%)	490 (49%)
Neither agree or disagree	97 (10%)	133 (13%)
Somewhat disagree	365 (36%)	159 (16%)
Strongly disagree	239 (24%)	73 (7%)
Don't know	4 (0%)	7 (1%)

However, none of this has prevented fresh guidelines being drawn up last year by the Chief Medical Officer, who, somewhat arbitrarily it seems, has come down on the side of there being no safe level of drinking, and recommended that personal weekly consumption should be no more than fourteen units – equivalent roughly to seven pints of 3.6% ABV bitter. And contrary to traditional international practice the guidance was the same for men and women, drawing the criticism that it contradicted the accepted scientific fact that men generally have a substantially higher tolerance of alcohol than women.

On top of all this the new guidelines are way out of line with those in other countries. 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.

Such diversity should come as no surprise. Few areas of modern life seem as overburdened with dubious statistics as those connected with alcohol. Among which can be found that drinking four pints or more in a session amounts to binge drinking, that the previous guidance limits of 21 units a week for men and 14 for women were 'plucked out of the air' (admitted by one of the committee that drew them up), and that restricting drinking to the new revised guidelines is an equivalent of risk to watching TV for a few hours each night – if that is a risk what part of our daily existence is not? (See also Page 57).



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The National News

By Martin Atkins

PUNCH CARVED UP Punch Taverns is to be divided between Heineken and private equity group Patron Capital, splitting the pubco respectively into two groups of 1,895 and 1,329 pubs. The pub group, whose market capitalisation before news of the bid stood at £285m, was left with a value of £402.7m following the deal. The arrangement also saw off a rival approach from Punch's original co-founder Alan McIntosh. Punch has struggled since the banking crisis and the subsequent economic downturn of 2008, and last August reported its first annual profit since 2013. The purchase will increase Heineken's UK estate by about two thirds to around 3,000 pubs, the new purchase adding to the residue of pubs acquired when, with Carlsberg, it took over Scottish and Newcastle about ten years ago.

FINAL FOUR The end of last year saw contenders for CAMRA's National Pub of the Year 2017 competition reduced to the final four. This year the choice is between two recent winners – the **Swan With Two Necks** from Pendleton, Lancashire, which won in 2013, and the **Salutation Inn** from Ham, Gloucestershire which won in 2014 – together with the **George and Dragon**, Hudswell, Yorkshire and the **Stanford Arms**, Lowestoft, Suffolk. A decision will be announced in February.

MINIMUM PRICE UPHELD The Scottish government's proposal for a minimum price of 50p a unit for alcohol has been upheld by judges in Edinburgh, who rejected a challenge from Scotland's drinks industry which had argued that such a restriction was in breach of European Law. Currently half the alcohol sold in Scotland does not meet the proposed criteria including

69% of spirit sales. At the time of writing no date had yet been set for its implementation. Following the decision, campaigners in England pressed for a similar or greater (possibly 60p a unit) minimum price to be introduced here, as had been proposed a few years ago. However, the Westminster government said there were no plans as it did not wish to penalise responsible moderate drinkers.

PUB RAMBLES CAMRA has teamed up with the Ramblers to provide a selection of short walks across England which stop or finish at a real ale pub. The walks celebrate the role pubs play for many community groups. Aside from just providing a place to drink, many pubs are the hub of their community acting as meeting places for walking or cycling groups, as well as hosting community events. Pub walks already play a large part in CAMRA activities as evidenced by the many RambALE groups that exist in CAMRA branches. For the more adventurous, CAMRA's *Wild Pub Walks* by Alan Hicks which details a set of mountaineering walks, is due to be published in May.

MORE PUB PROTECTION With more than 2,000 locals having been made assets of community value CAMRA is now calling for more protection by the removal of permitted development rights for pubs. CAMRA national chairman Colin Valentine said that while the ACV process can often be very time consuming it offers only temporary protection and has to be renewed every five years. "All we are asking for is a level playing field where a planning application on a pub has to go through the full planning process."

* * * **Blakes** * * *

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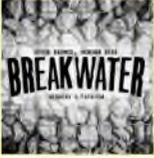
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BREAKWATER BREWERY

Introducing Dover's latest brewery and taproom

In the 19th century Dover was renowned as a brewing town with half a dozen or so independent breweries operating. By the middle of the 20th century, along with many other British towns all that had disappeared, the last remaining brewery probably being Leney's which was taken over by Fremains of Maidstone before World War II; and that remained the case, with no commercial brewing in Dover, until Tir Dha Ghlas opened at Cullins Yard in 2012. Now, from the end of 2016 it has been joined by a second, the Breakwater Brewery in Lorne Road.



The Breakwater Brewery brewing plant

The creation of Phil Lowry it is a five and a bit barrel plant (his own words), acquired from the now defunct Brew Wharf Brewery in Borough Market which he ran for several years. Ironically, or perhaps appropriately, it occupies the site of one of those now long gone 19th century breweries, the Wellington Brewery, on the far side of the river behind the old mill premises at the junction with London Road. A long, low building, it bears at first sight, even in the days of

brewing in units on industrial estates, little resemblance to any popular image of a brewery, and certainly the very opposite of the Victorian tower brewery.

Perhaps calling it just a brewery is not completely accurate. The front door opens on to a substantial tap room with a bar and tables and benches, and a long shelf on one wall displaying an interesting collection of old beer bottles. Two brewing vessels stand at the far end, beside a sign from the above long-gone Leney's, with pipe connections through to the fermenting tanks in an adjoining room.

Trial brewing started in late 2016, with water drawn from the brewery's own borehole sunk down into the aquifer below Dover, and just before Christmas the first beers were available to the public. At the time of writing (mid January) two cask beers, Dover Pale Ale (3.5% ABV) and Dockers Porter (4.1% ABV), have been produced and a third, Paper Aeroplane Flight (6.1% ABV), is being developed for this year's White Cliffs Festival. Keg beers are currently being worked on, with the first likely to have appeared by the time you read this. In due course, Phil plans to offer a range of cask and keg beers, with an emphasis on those with an ABV of 3.5 - 4.2% and over 6%.

As well as the brewery's own output the bar also offers a selection of beers from other brewers, plus ciders, notably the local Green Oak, and artisanal wines. Initially, most of Breakwater's output will be sold through its own bar, but some will be

supplied to other local outlets on request. Current opening times are Thursday and Friday evenings and Saturday and Sunday from 12 noon, but for exact details and possible future alterations please see the brewery's website.

Phil grew up with the pub and beer business, his father having the now defunct Railway at Appledore from 1984 to 2003. Subsequently he spent three years managing the Coastguard at St. Margaret's Bay for Nigel and Sam Wydymus, followed by six years in California, and as mentioned above, a stint at the Brew Wharf Brewery in London, where he started up the London Brewers Alliance.

Currently Phil's main employment is selling hops for major international hop supplier Barth Haas & Simply Hops, which takes him all over the world, and obviously restricts the amount of time he can spend on Breakwater. It is all credit to him and partner Vic Evans, then, that they have set the brewery up and got it running in a little over a year despite planning and licensing challenges, and we look forward to it becoming an established part of brewing and beer supplying in Dover and East Kent.



Martin Atkins

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KENT SMALL BREWERY NEWS

As there was no Brewery News in our last edition the following incorporates news covering the last six months or so.

Amazing, The Ship, Sandgate. The brewery is now well established with some modifications being made to the brewing kit over the autumn. Cotter VC and Grace both proved very popular last year, with a tweaked version of the latter due to appear in December.

Angels & Demons, Capel. Located at Cauldham Farm in Cauldham Lane, we understand that while beers have only recently been distributed locally, brewing has in fact been taking place for much of last year. Co-founders were Ross Gandon and Jim Fowle who oversee production along with head brewer Joe Andrews. The main product lines are Pale Ale, IPA, Brown Ale and Session Ales and have been appearing under the brand name McCann's.

Attwell's, St Nicholas at Wade. Sadly closed and equipment sold

Breakwater, Dover. See separate article

Brew Buddies, Swanley. Early October saw the brewing of a dry hopped Stout, Earl Grey Mild and, with Orpington Liberal Club and Leyton Orient Supporters Club, a collaboration brew, 'Ace of Clubs'. Friday October 7 saw the grand opening of the 'Hoppers Hut', Brew Buddies' micro pub in Sidcup, with a policy of rotating beers from different breweries.

Caveman Town, Swanscombe. Largely concentrating on permanent beers: Neanderthal (4.4% best), Palaeolithic (3.8% pale) and Neolithic (4.1% pale) in cask and a keg stout, Cavedweller, is still brewed fairly often. Big problem keeping up with demand for their four permanent beers while continuing to brew others – using volunteers to assist with deliveries.

Isla Vale Alesmiths, Margate. According to most recent information new premises are still being sought. Last year three new beers were brewed for the Kent Beer Festival – Ninkasi (blonde, pale 4.5% ABV), Festival Ale (IPA 4.2% ABV), and Yasigi (dark vanilla stout 5.5% ABV) – followed in August by Donkey Danglers amber ale (4.1% ABV) to celebrate the local bike chapter's anniversary at The London Tavern, Margate. All subsequently going on general release to Thanet alehouses. They have also supplied to the Inn doors in Sandgate.

Kent, Birling Last year saw Pale put forward to the South East regional final for the Champion Beer of Britain, while Prohibition was chosen for the GBBF. Session Pale sold out in record time at the CAMRA Cricket Tents in Tunbridge Wells, requiring more to be delivered. Session Pale was due to make a general return along with Zingiber.

Mad Cat, Faversham. A new beer for autumn was Elder Mad Cat Blonde (4.5% ABV), flavoured with Elderflowers.

Maidstone, Maidstone. October saw a new light beer, Alpha 38, (3.9% ABV) using the same malt base as First Light but with dry hopped Chinook hops, which was due shortly to be on sale in the Flower Pot. The Eight and First Light beers are still being brewed.

Margate, Margate. In late August work was progressing well and on schedule at the currently closed Cottage pub in Margate. The premises will be known as The Old Cottage Pub and Margate Brewery, and test brews were planned before winter. The new roof was due to be finished within a few weeks, with fitting out of new bar and restaurant to follow.

Musket, Maidstone. The brewery was three years old on October 2 and a new van has recently been acquired to help with deliveries. In August, four Kils of Trigger were sent to the Great British Beer Festival, while the hop harvest saw three batches of Flash in the Pan (4% ABV Green Hopped Beer) brewed with every cask being sold/reserved within a week. A new brewing of Powder Burn (5% ABV Porter) was planned for October.

NauticAles, Ramsgate. A cuckoo brewery currently using the Four Candles equipment but looking for larger premises. New ales earlier in the year were Bosun's Whistle and Bitter End. Apart from donations to good causes all ales are only available at their micropub in Northwood, Ramsgate. The first Green Hop sold out in less than two weeks. Autumn ales included Trafalgar Day celebration beer, Nelsons Victory, using the same ingredients as original Maiden Voyage but stronger at 5.2% ABV, Halloween brew Mary Celeste (golden ale 4.3% ABV), and Long John Silver (pale ale 5.4% ABV). For Christmas a stout or porter were planned.

Ramsgate, Broadstairs. Seasonal brews for early autumn included Green Hop Ale (4.8% ABV) from locally grown East Kent Goldings; Rye IPA (4% ABV) crafted from malted Rye & Kentish Bramling Cross hops – crisp, hoppy & spicy; and, in its fifth consecutive year, Duppelhop Oktoberfestbier (6% ABV) – pale amber and on the 'refreshing' side of hoppiness. In the London and South East Strong Ale category, Gadd's No3 (5.0%) was voted Gold with a presentation set for the Montefiore Arms in January. Later seasonal brews included Dark Conspiracy (4.9% ABV), and Little Cracker (5% ABV) a Yule Special using crystallised rye malt and a selection of spicier Kent hops. Current seasonal ales include Oatmeal Stout (4.6% ABV) and Dogbolter (5.6% ABV), available from January to March, and for February, West Coast IPA (5.6% ABV), a US style pale ale, originally brewed in 2008.

Rockin' Robin, Boughton Monchelsea. Autumn/winter dark ales include Blizzard of Oz and subsequently Portly Robin, but Mildly Rockin will not be brewed until spring. Jingle Bell (4.2% ABV American style pale ale) was brewed for Christmas, and a 6.0% ABV Belgian style Kriek beer is planned for spring. Robin's Beer Barn micropub was due to open officially on Saturday 12th November– 4pm-9pm on Fridays and 12pm-6pm on Saturdays.

Romney Marsh, New Romney Romney. Marsh Mellow (3.6% ABV), launched at the Kent County Show, soon became their best seller and could well be added to their core range. Autumn saw the seasonal Cinque Porter being brewed again, and selling well – should continue until April. Cask conditioned 8 pint kegs are now available from the brewery shop, and expansion of deliveries into Sussex continues, including the Horse & Cart Inn, Peasmarsch where they supply the house bitter. Amber Ale was awarded Kent Beer of the Year 2016, and thanks to local MP Damien Collins, three firkins were recently delivered to the House of Commons Strangers' Bar. Plans for the future include the opening of a brewery tap room.

Swan On The Green, West Peckham Green. Hop beers, Bramlings Dark (4.5% ABV), Bramlings Pale (4.0% ABV) and Goldings Pale (3.6% ABV) continued until November Then reverting to normal – Trumpeter (4.0% ABV), Fuggles (3.6% ABV)

and Bewick (5.3% ABV). Christmas Ale (6.5%-7.0% ABV) was due at the end of November – a bottle of Port in every barrel.

Wantsum, Hersden. The brewery is in the process of relocating to a new site at St. Nicholas Court Farm, St. Nicholas at Wade in Thanet branch area. Extensive refurbishment is being undertaken and in January a further three months was anticipated before the new brewery will be operational. In the meantime brewing will continue at Hersden. Set within a working farm complex the new brewery will be much larger than the existing, and will enable brewing capacity to increase to a 20-barrel plant. Cask beer will continue to be the core product but to meet growing demand some beer will be put in key kegs and keg lager is likely to be introduced. A brewery shop will be open Monday to Friday 9:00 to 3:00. The present core beers are 1381, Black Prince Mild, Montgomery, Imperium, Dynamo and Red Raddle – to be reviewed shortly with Fortitude possibly replacing Imperium as a core beer. More's Head is no longer brewed. Cleric's Consolation, a slightly hazy and light wheat beer based on a monk's recipe was a one-off brew in the autumn, and had mixed reaction. Black Pig is the current seasonal beer and Amarillo the current one hop beer. Figgy Pudding and a one off Five Gold Beer were brewed over Christmas. Pump clips and bottled beer labels have been re-designed and the Bat & Ball is a new outlet in Canterbury.

Whitstable, Grafty Green. A new 20 barrel brewing kit has doubled capacity, and the Faversham micropub was hoped to be open by Christmas. Their Green Hop Beers, Good as Goldings and Green Glory sold out in record time, with one of each at the Green Hop festival in Canterbury.

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RAMBLINGS & RUMBLINGS

By Stroller

Thur 3 Nov – Plough, Ripple (*Greene King Gangly Ghoul & Frankenstein, Ripple Farmhouse & Steam Bitter, Fullers ESB*) New management. Couldn't stay long, but even so, got dark before reaching the **Farriers** (*Ripple Farmhouse, Brains Open Casket*) Thence to Curry Evening at the **Norman Wisdom** (*Deuchars IPA + others*) packed out, lucky to find a table!

Sun 6 Nov – Royal (*Spitfire Gold @ £4! Master Brew*) Just Reproach looking rather full, proceeded to the **Bohemian** (*Gadds 5 @ £4!! + others*) No wonder Just Reproach was full – it seems there's a premium for drinking on the seafront!

Thur 10 Nov – Five Bells, Eastry (*Wantsum Black Prince, Brains SA*) They coped well with eight ramblers dropping in for the two course lunch for a fiver. Cheaper than staying at home! **Rack of Ale** (*Loddon Peeler, Saxon Glory + others*). **Eagle** (*No real ale*) Quite busy nonetheless, and traditional ringing of bell and calling 'time' took me back a few years!

Sun 13 Nov – Kings Head, Kingsdown (*Gadds Conspiracy, Springhead Roaring Meg*) At 5% a bit strong for Sunday lunchtime, so I went for the 'session beer' at 4.9%. "Well, it's that time of year", said landlord Alex. **Freed Man** (*Coquet Island Gold + others*) Bar besieged Sun afternoon – not easy making sense of beer selection. **Eight Bells** (*Nottingham Brewery Legend + others*) Convenience facilities unavailable in Dover on Sunday, paid a relieving visit here for a quick half.

Fri 18 Nov – George & Dragon, Sandwich (*Madcat Gold, Butcombe Bitter, Oter*) Nice food and I don't remember beer being outrageously expensive, but coffee @ £4 a cup!! **Yard of Ale** (*Kirkby Lonsdale Single Track, Springhead Outlawed*) Pretty well packed, not surprising early Friday evening. **Mind the Gap, Broadstairs** (*Gadds, Springhead Drop of the Dark Stuff*) Pretty empty.

Mon 21 Nov – New Inn, Sandwich: Branch Meeting (*Belhaven Bridge to Nowhere, Ghostship, Courage Best*) Good to see pub busy on a Monday. Perhaps the karaoke was the attraction.

Tues 22 Nov – Drum, Leyton E10 (*Nethergate Ian & Paul's IPA, Adnams Old King William Fourth*) (*Brodie London Fields, Amarillo*) **Tap East, Stratford International** (*Signature Red Wedge*) @ £4. Where do they think they are? Deal Seafront?

Thurs 24 Nov – Ashford, Folkestone & Romney Marsh Branch Crawl: New Romney, Smugglers (*Rother Level Best3, Tonbridge Ebony Moon*), **Cinque Ports** (*Proper Job*), **Ship** (*Master Brew*). **Dymchurch, Ocean Inn** (*Directors City of London*) (*Old Speckled Hen*). **Hythe, Three Mariners** (*Incubus*)

Fri 25 Nov – Shipwrights, Hollowshore (*Goachers Dark Mild + others*) Welcoming place to warm up walking Faversham marshes. **Blakes** (*House bitter, Broadside, Cottage Up n Under*) Quite a few in for evening meal, very enjoyable too!

Sat 26 Nov – Wrong Turn (*Hop Fuzz Zinger, Wantsum Black Prince & Green Hop Bullion*) So green hops come in black too – well there's a thing.

Mon 28 Nov – Sun 4 Dec a week on the Isle of Wight Great off-season, great walking, good bus services, even on Sunday evening! Food good, and good if you like Doombar or Landlord. But two pubs particularly stood out: **Sat – Castle, Sandown** (Wadsworth IPA, Yates Holy Joe Swordfish, Hobgoblin) At last, a proper pub, no food in sight. **Sun – Newport Alehouse** (Yates Undercliff, Ghostship, Island Ales Malt) A true 'micro' such as what we're accustomed to back home!

Wed 14 Dec – Louis Armstrong (Skrimshander, Gadds Little Cracker, Westersham Grasshopper) Christmas dinner time - very hectic. **Fox** (Hardy & Hanson Rockin Rudolf, Black Sheep Xmas, Sheps Xmas) Just managed to squeeze in amid festive boozers.

Sun 18 Dec – Wrong Turn (Wantsum Black Prince, Ashford Copper bitter) **Foundry, Canterbury** (Foundryman's Gold, Petit Belge + others) Nice to be offered a 10% CAMRA discount unprompted - one's beard, belly perhaps giving one away. **Mind the Gap** (Frome Milk Street Honey Bitter, Gadds Little Cracker) **Dickens** (Gadds Seaside)

Tues 20 Dec – Coastguard Temporarily closed due to road closure, but enjoyed climb back up to Civilisation. **Eight Bells** (Banks & Taylor Santa Slayer, Adnams Yuletide + others)

Fri 23 Dec – Breakwater (Breakwater Test Pale Ale, Kona American Citrus) First visit. Rather a large 'micro' (*micro should perhaps be limited to the brewery – I don't think there is size criteria for a micro-brewery tap – Ed*), and good to see devoid of Christmas tat. **Red Lion** (G2 Plough, Land Lord) Called in to shelter from the rain. Good to see an 'ordinary' pub nice and busy today - barman offered beer sample seeing me staring at pump clip enquiringly. **Lanes** (Essex 8-Bit + others)

Sat 24 – Sandgate: Provident (Farriers 1606, Doom Bar, Range Ales just finished). **Ship** (Amazing Grace – house beer, brewed on premises, Dark Star Hop Head, Abbot, etc.) Grateful to get a nice meal on spec at this chaotic time of year. As usual I'd forgotten to plan ahead.

Mon 26 Dec First time in years that we've had buses on Boxing Day, even if only the 15x from Dover to Deal. So along the sun-lit field paths from Ringwould one skipped, reaching the Plough at Ripple at 12.30, to find it firmly locked. So on towards Deal, eventually to the **Farriers** (Everards Sleighbells, St Austell Jolly Holly, Farriers Farmhouse) Today heaving with families, dogs, kids etc. Oh what a magical time of year! **Magnet** (Sheps Xmas Ale, Master Brew) Seasoned drinkers here, festive only boozers conspicuously absent.

Sat 31 Dec – Four Candles (Dark Session, Bradstowe Bitter, Chocolate Porter, Golden Session) The smallest pub on Planet Thanet, but early in the evening just comfortable. **Mind the Gap** (Exmoor Fox + others) Enough in here to see in a good New Year.

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CHANNEL VIEW

CHALLENGES AHEAD After the success of the Battle of El Alamein Winston Churchill famously remarked that this was “not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning,” and while CAMRA’s campaign for real ale can hardly be equated to Britain’s struggle against an evil tyranny, the events of recent years suggest that in some respects there is as much work to do now as there was almost half a century ago when CAMRA started.

That beer and pubs have changed radically since, is an oft repeated truth, and the motivation behind CAMRA’s current Revitalisation Project. However, there are in addition, a variety of social and economic changes of which we need to be very aware. .

Writing in the January edition of CAMRA’s newspaper *What’s Brewing* long time campaigner Roger Protz addressed the issue of brewing’s globalisation, or as he called it Mega Brew. Here in East Kent with our micropubs and strongly established micro-breweries (probably around fifty over the county as a whole now), it is easy to believe that this need not concern us, but, as Roger points out, we would be wrong.

Last year recorded the third biggest takeover in commercial history, when for \$100 billion, the world’s largest brewer AB InBev, bought the second largest SABMiller. It brought together 400 brands, accounting for 30% of the world’s beer and 50% of brewing profits. The merger has been analysed by monopoly scrutineers across the world, and disposals have already taken place, or at least been suggested. However, the combined business will still dominate the

world’s brewing, and if anyone is calling any tunes it will be AB InBev/SABMiller or whatever it eventually decides to name itself.

The newly combined group is the final act in the coming together over the last ten to fifteen years of brewers in Belgium, Africa and North and South America, and while their interest is primarily the industrial scale brewing of international brands the rise and success of small independent brewers has not gone unnoticed. Before the merger SABMiller bought Greenwich’s Meantime Brewery for £120 million, subsequently sold to Asahi of Japan, while AB InBev purchased the Camden Town Brewery for £80 million and is now building a new plant in Enfield, claimed to be the biggest investment in London brewing for thirty years.

Microbrewing might have been the initial concept for such local breweries, but for global corporations they are an opportunity for the exploitation of successful brands. Hence Camden’s Hells Lager is being launched in forty outlets in New York, followed by a roll out across the country and then later this year similar in France. And American Goose Island IPA originally from Chicago is now brewed in Canada, Colorado and at a new facility on the East Coast.

The whole sorry picture is excellently described by Ina Versti and Ernst Faltermeister, two German economists, in *The Beer Monopoly*. As Roger Protz says, they make it clear that for Mega Brew, beer is no longer a drink that gives pleasure and refreshment. It’s a commodity, a vehicle for generating huge profits, and they quote Jorge Paulo Lemman of Ambev, the Brazilian end

of AB InBev: "I was looking at Latin America and who was the richest guy in Venezuela? A brewer. The richest guy in Columbia? A brewer, The Richest guy in Argentina? A brewer."

Among its countless brands, the new monolith now owns Beck's and Stella in Europe, American Budweiser and Corona Extra from Mexico – four brands whose total sales are already far larger than the combined sales of their six largest competitor brands. With economies of scale there is every reason to expect this dominance to increase, and we can look forward to a repetition of Ambev's activities in Brazil between 1989 and 1991 which saw ten plants close and the labour force reduced by half. How very different from the philosophy of the traditional micro brewer whose main interest was the brewing of good beer and the respect and appreciation of fellow adherents of good beer.

Of course we have been here before, if only on a national scale – the amalgamation of local breweries into regional companies and then their absorption into a handful of countrywide combines, that typified much of the first part of the 20th century. Local brews were ruthlessly pruned or standardised while the intended future lay with heavily marketed and national mega keg brands.

CAMRA was formed to save what was left and to drag the major brewers back from their obsession with keg. Today, micro-brewing, which for long has been left alone, if it was indeed at all considered, by the global brewers, is now very much in play. If the quality and variety of beer brought to us by the micro-brewers is to be retained, it would seem that CAMRA must now anticipate resurrecting the same spirit and energy that saw it play a leading part in the saving of real ale during the last decades of the 20th century.

REVITALISATION On page 4 we report on the completion of the first

stage of CAMRA's Revitalisation Project, and it would seem evident from the proposals summary, that the steering committee envisage a future Campaign with a rather wider remit than at present. In particular beer which currently falls outside CAMRA's criteria for real ale is being proposed as worthy of consideration – e.g. "CAMRA champions the virtues of well-produced, well-kept cask conditioned beers as the pinnacle of the brewer's craft" while also promoting greater understanding of beer, cider and perry of all types to help discerning drinkers judge for themselves what "quality" constitutes."

Traditionally real ale included just cask conditioned on draught and bottle conditioned in bottle. Anything else, however good and flavoursome, could not be included. However, many of us have been quite prepared to "bend the rules" when circumstances dictate, especially in respect of bottled beer, where the bottle conditioned product can often be a rarity, if available at all, and in any case does not always confer any appreciable difference.

There is also a strong case for arguing that CAMRA's initial concern was beer quality, rather than the nature of dispense. Had the big national keg brands been rather better, then the adoption of cask or bottle conditioning as defining real ale, might not have been such an obvious choice. And today much of the craft end of brewing is by definition aiming for quality, irrespective of the nature of dispense.

However, having accepted that proviso, CAMRA must beware of allowing the status of cask to slip, or otherwise be compromised by the acceptance of various forms of keg. Cask conditioning confers unique qualities, and as well as viewing it as the "pinnacle of the brewers craft", CAMRA needs to continue promoting cask as the generally accepted standard.



GARDNERS OF ASH

A former local brewery ultimately swallowed up by Whitbread

In our autumn issue, in our piece about Tomson Wotton, we made reference to Gardner's of Ash with which it merged in 1951. This brewery was situated on the Sandwich Road, lying between the fork of the Sandwich and Marshborough roads, and was founded in 1837 by John Bushell as a conversion of the former parish workhouse. It was a substantial building, and has been described, in the time of its operation, as the most prominent feature of the village, even though in its later years, it supplied only 46 tied outlets.

Records suggest that in 1840, just three years after it was set up, it was acquired by William Gardner, who endowed it with the name it was to retain for the rest of its existence, a purchase which apparently also bought with it 49 tied houses. Assuming this information to be correct, it would perhaps suggest that John Bushell had been brewing elsewhere, before establishing the Ash Brewery, as it would seem unlikely that a tied estate of almost fifty premises could be put together in three years, and that such a major development would have been started from scratch, or disposed of so rapidly.



Gardners Brewery (Date unknown)

The name Godden was added to the title in 1855, and Gardner and Godden were registered in 1898 and continued until the amalgamation with Tomson and Wotton Ltd., when the joint operation took the name Combined Breweries (Holdings) Ltd. Brewing of beer stopped in Ash in 1954 but their ginger beer production continued until 1962. A couple of acquisitions are recorded, Tritton's Staple Brewery in 1912, and Edgar Austen's Regent Brewery at Ramsgate in 1927, bringing with their purchase a total of three public houses. In June 1968 the brewery was taken over by Whitbread along with Tomson Wotton and subsequently the old brewhouse was demolished.

The purchase of Tritton's is of particular interest as it was situated at the Black Pig. Although much older, the first record of brewing at the pub was in 1800, at the time that it was owned by Robert Tritton. Tritton's beers were popular and



The Black Pig at Staple about 1912

over his life he was able to buy five pubs, which when he died were distributed among his five children. The pub and brewery remained in the family, ending up in 1895 with Frank Tritton who ran it and kept brewing until 1912, very possibly the last Kent pub to brew its own beers.

In 1912 brewing ceased and the Black Pig, then including a shop, was sold to Gardeners, who installed Mr Harry Newing as tenant, and it remained with the Newing family for the next 59 years. In 1914 the brewery was brought back into service, but solely for the production of Gardener's famous Ginger Beer, which continued until September 1926, when Mr Tritton's old steam engine broke down, when it was transferred to the Ash Brewery.

As we pointed out in our article on Tomson Wotton, Gardner's had considerable interests in Dover, and the brewer is mentioned at some length in the publication *Where to Buy at Dover* printed in around 1900. As well as a number of pubs, it had acquired, in 1881, premises behind the Priory Hotel for the erection of an ale and beer store. A photograph from the early 20th century shows the corner property, more recently *Buffer's Coffee Shop and Snack Bar*, together with the adjoining residential block. How much of this property was occupied by Gardner's is a matter of speculation, however the company logo is still present above the coffee



**Gardners Store,
Dover in 1931**



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shop doorway.

Gardner's ales had a substantial reputation. According to *Where to Buy at Dover*, they possessed a "special quality.....for which the Ash Brewery is so deservedly celebrated". It also reported that the brewery claimed to have been "the originators of pale ale brewing in East Kent more than half a century ago". In fact the authors of the publication appear very impressed by the whole operation: "a model of perfect cleanliness and system.....Messrs. Gardner and Co. were their own engineers, smiths, wagon builders, coopers, carpenters, and painters, for each of which departments there are well-fitted shops." Water of excellent purity was drawn from a 220ft deep artesian well, and situated at the heart of the east Kent hop growing area the brewery had access to best of the local crop.



The Royal Oak,
Monnington in
the 1940s



The brewery's trade at the time, was extensive across east Kent and into Sussex, with stores and offices in Canterbury, Ashford, Sittingbourne, Ramsgate, and Hastings, as well as the above mentioned premises in Dover. To and from these, orders could be sent across the newly installed telephone network, and deliveries made using that most

modern of vehicles, the traction engine. Initial distribution from the brewery seems also to have relied on traction engines, and the publication, at the time that its authors were visiting the Dover stores, speaks of the "arrival of a train of loaded trucks drawn by a powerful traction engine on springs". Apparently two or three such journeys were made weekly from Ash to Dover with an engine easily capable of drawing 20 tons.

Whether or not *Where to Buy at Dover* felt it needed to display local chauvinism, it added: "Other parts of the country may have their own particular brewings, but we very much doubt if, in the long run, they can compare with those obtainable in East Kent. The names of Gardner and Co. and Ash Brewery will, doubtless, come familiarly to our readers, as the ales are very generally to be found in private houses, as well as in most of the hotels and public houses in the locality, where the proprietors are free to make a choice."

Martin Atkins

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ACVs UNDER SCRUTINY

Are Assets of Community Value nominations being used correctly?

After years of pressure from CAMRA and other bodies, concerned about the loss of pubs and local services, the government in 2012 introduced the Localism Act, which among other features introduced the right to buy. By registering local pubs, shops, post offices, etc., as Assets of Community Value (ACV), voluntary and community groups could delay their sale for six months to allow time for a community bid. To date its results are probably best described as 'patchy'.

Although aimed at all kinds of local services CAMRA'S interest is of course mainly concerned with pubs, and while a substantial number have been registered as ACV's, information so far suggests that comparatively few have been transformed into community owned and run operations. In our own Branch the following pubs are registered as ACV's:-

Saracen's Head, Alfred Square, Deal
Five Bells, Eastry
Bell Inn, Shepherswell
Bricklayers Arms, Shepherswell
Carpenters Arms, Coldred
Red Lion, Wingham
Chequer, Ash
Charity, Woodnesborough
Black Pig, Staple



The closed Bricklayers Arms, Shepherswell

At present four of these are closed – Bricklayers, Red Lion, Chequer and Charity – and while the retention of the first three is being actively being pursued by local campaign groups, at the time of writing none have yet been taken into local ownership. With owners being generally intransigent and the raising of capital a major undertaking, there are substantial hurdles between establishing an ACV and acquiring ownership.



The Saracen's Head, Deal

And there can also be major complications arising from the nature of a landlord's interest in the pub. Whereas, if tenant or lessee, the registration as an ACV may not be of great concern and quite possibly welcomed, as an owner it is often a very different matter. In the July/August edition of Bradford CAMRA's *Tyke Taverner*, the landlord of the Old Cock in Otley expressed his own feelings about having his pub made the subject of an ACV.

Lee and Linda Pullan established the pub themselves over three years from 2007, when they purchased the property, to 2010 when they opened, undergoing during that time two refusals for change of use to a pub by Leeds City Council and an eventually successful planning appeal. In January 2015, Lee says, "without consultation and against our will, led by MP Mr. Greg Mulholland, Otley Pub Club nominated, and then successfully listed 19 out of the 20 pubs in Otley as Assets of Community Value. This was heralded by them and CAMRA as an overwhelming success. Our formal request to withdraw from the nomination was ignored".

The ACV effectively places a "restrictive covenant" on the pub, says Lee. If they wish to sell or grant a lease of 25 years or more there is a six month delay to allow community groups to try and put together a bid. Industry experts have calculated that an ACV can take 30% off the value of a pub, he says, with banks reluctant to lend against a property that cannot be sold for six months, meaning they are handicapped if additional funds are needed. And if a pub has failed as a business, a sixth month delay on sale or change of use could lead to bankruptcy or the property remaining empty and falling into dereliction.

Lee's understanding of the original intention of ACV listings was to save the last pub in a village, the village green or village post office. "To be used selectively and with discretion to retain threatened buildings of great value to the community", and to avoid what has happened sometimes in central London, "where traditional, thriving and historic pubs have been purchased and developed for alternative domestic and business use". A blanket ACV listing is misusing the principle.



"The Old Cock has been trading for five years in a building that is 261 years old. Surely, there should be a good history of trading before a pub can be nominated, decades say." He and Linda created the Old Cock from nothing, it is their passion and a huge investment, and they believe that they are the best people to protect its future, and have earned the right to do so.

Many of the threatened pubs, he says have been failing for years and are no longer economically viable. It is nonsensical to try and save these. If people seriously want to buy their local don't apply for an ACV, but go to a bank and raise the money. And ACV nomination is not without its costs. His fight against the ACV has cost time and money and, he calculates, that with each ACV reportedly costing the council £1,070 the final cost to taxpayers of the Otley ACV nomination, when reviews and tribunals are included, will be between £30,000 and £40,000.

Tyke Taverner state that Lee's comments are a personal view, and they anticipate reaction and responses. We, also, would appreciate any thoughts our readers wish to send us.

Martin Atkins



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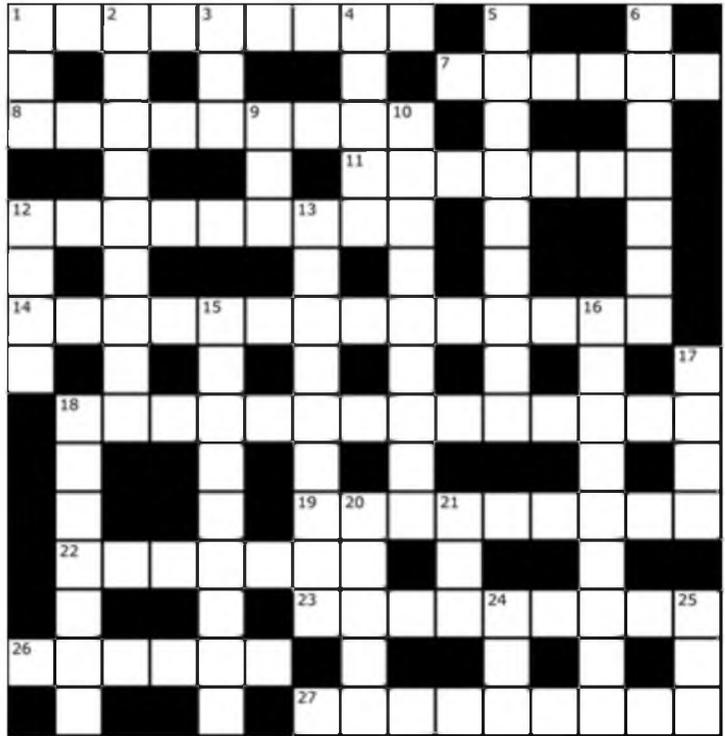
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BEER FESTIVAL



UNCRYPTIC CROSSWORD

BY TRISHA WELLS



Across

1. Internet coffee shop (5,4)
7. Surname of the Minister for Administrative Affairs in "Yes, Minister" (6)
8. A body of agents providing advice and ideas (5,4)
11. 19th century author of 'Hard Times' and 'A Tale of Two Cities' (7)
12. Roman Catholic order of preaching friars (9)
14. Small town in Leicestershire, near where Richard III died (6,8)
18. Border town in northern Northumberland (7,2,5)
19. Abnormal, artificial or strange (9)
22. Type of explosive (7)
23. First name of famous Spanish golfer, born 1957, died 2011 (9)
26. Beethoven's first name (6)
27. Original name of Volgograd, before it was changed to Stalingrad (9)

Down

1. Abbreviation of hundredweight (3)
2. Pan of hot water in which a container is

3. placed for slow cooking (4-5)
3. International vehicle registration for South Korea (1,1,1)
4. Actor who starred with his daughter in "On Golden Pond" (5)
5. Name of fictional detective played by David Jason (4,5)
6. Oratorio by Handel (7)
9. New Zealand honey-eating bird (3)
10. Capital city of St Vincent and the Grenadines (9)
12. Ten cents (4)
13. Boys' club led by an Akela (3,6)
15. English king, father of the Black Prince (6,3)
16. In tennis, games used to decide the set (9)
17. An icon or hero (4)
18. Roman god of wine (7)
20. Vegetables served with haggis and tatties (5)
21. Beer (3)
24. Black mustard seeds (3)
25. Possess or admit to (3)

Answers on Page 61



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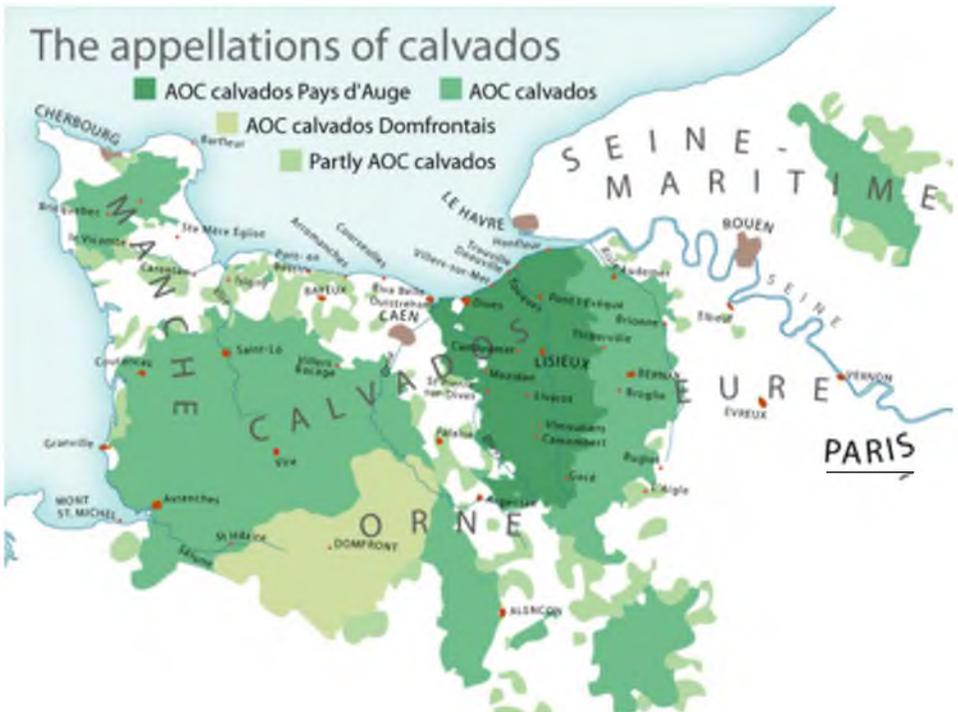
Stuart Roberts in France on his 60th Birthday trip

In our last edition we left Stuart in Normandy at the start of his 60th birthday trip.

Our Normandy stop put us in the middle of cider country but despite earlier research we couldn't find anyone doing tours and no one producing on an artisanal scale. However, we did spot one guy with a flat cap and a prize strawberry nose who, I am sure, would have understood if I had spoken in French with a broad Somerset accent "Bann Jourrrr Meeshurrrrr, Commeee Sarrrr Varrrrr?"..... but then they do have 40% plus Calvados apple brandy that would do more tinting of the nose than a 7% scrumpy.

Cider generally comes in 75 cl bottles that in shape and function resemble Champagne bottles, including wired down corks, with sweet at 2% ABV and dry at 4.5% ABV. The two makers I know about assure me that they are not pasteurised but only filtered and receive a sugar charge to reactivate the remaining yeasts before corking. After refrigeration a 50/50 mix of sweet and dry makes a very palatable accompaniment to a barby in the summer.

Having toured my local Cognac distilleries, I wasn't that bothered on missing out seeing Calvados distilling. However, more interestingly there are the mobile distillers, some of which still pull their stills behind a horse. They exist in our area too but, with the law now forbidding the license to be passed on to the offspring, are



becoming rarer. You can generally smell them as you enter a village, and then you see the smoke and the van, with a part collapsed rear axle and the old distiller sleeping off his interim 'gravity check' under the tarpaulin that links the van to the still, his home for the period of distillation and self-pickling.

The French will turn anything into alcohol and distillation includes almond, hazel, aniseed and any fruit, nut, etc. which is abundant enough to give a yearly consumption for one household after the distillation has reduced the volume. I don't see that the revoking of mobile licenses to the next of kin will change much, as there is always the option of home distilling, or buying 'eau de vie', the first distillation of the wine on its way to brandy – much used to preserve, plums, cherries etc., and makes a lovely desert and digestive drink all in one.



A French mate who died a few years back, used to make a 79% Mirabelle eau de vie, and one sunny Sunday afternoon and I sampled a batch I believe he had just flogged to NASA. "Hell", I cried after the first tiny sip, "you'll do time for this if the Gendarmes knew about it"....."Yes ! But you didn't see it at first until I pointed it out", he replied, while demonstrating how well it was hidden in the middle of a quarter acre field of cannabis.

St Omer, France's beer brewing capital, was another stop and the disappointing absence of real beers or dispense was outweighed somewhat by the enthusiasm of beer loving locals for English beer, who are well clued up on its purity over Belgian beers when it comes to dispense. One guy whose local beer club likes to do beer festivals, spoke highly of the CAMRA Deal, Dover and Sandwich Branch Winter Festival. On this side of the Channel many new generation drinkers are taking a liking to lesser strength "session beers", a night out in a pub after supper taking over from the traditional rush of strong drinks between leaving work and being home for supper at 7 pm, and then staying in all night on Pastis.

One of my drinking companions recalled Beano as a comic sent to him from the UK when he was learning English in the 1960s. When I explained that it was the name given by Londoners for a boozy coach outing to Margate, he suggested, to get a pint of the real beer, organising a coach from the sticks into Paris to take in one of the Frog & Rosbif or Adnams outlets. I think the term 'Beano' or 'Jolly Boys' may be one that is heard in the future by visitors to St Omer.

One brewery worker recalled the buzz around the possible Shepherd Neame take-over of a St Omer brewery back in the 1980/90s. Beer in France is cheap, due to the low tax and I guess Sheps initially felt it was on a winner until it realised that French employers' are responsible for ALL an employee's pension and ALL an employee's medical charges.

On to Brugge, a beautiful town choc a bloc with chocolate blocks and a few breweries, although for my liking producing beers that are all too sweet and all too strong

for most drinkers with an English attitude to beer. I look for the beer that taking the simplest of ingredients, produces all the right balance and notes while keeping below 4%. It stands then, that the same brewer's more complex and stronger beers will be good.

There is a juxta position in Belgium: the young Belgian will drink his beer "sans binge", while the, old, fat, Flamand, bearded gnome look-a-likes, will tell you, after their fourth 6% concoction of liquorice, cardamom and molasses, what you are drinking next, irrespective of who is paying, and how much you are enjoying it after every sip.

One particular fellow took me away from a nice 4.5% bottle conditioned beer, delightfully hoppy and refreshing with local Poperinge hops, and forced me to drink a fizzing Christmas pudding at 6% followed by fizzing sticky toffee pudding with burnt almonds at 6.5%. Both beers I left after a fair tasting, but, good to say, the barman, seeing my predicament, brought me a free taster of a 6% called De Halve Maan which tasted like an IPA with a nice biscuity finish.

My bolshie gnome acquaintance watched in silence as I drank a full half pint, and then accepted the barman's second suggestion of John Martin Bourgogne Blondes – coffee notes and a bitter liquorish hint just balancing the maltiness. I finished up without one peep from 'Grumpy', my gnomish friend, and bid him good bye, telling him he reminded me of a fellow in England who used to fish all day in my neighbour's pond.

Stuart

Stuart's continuation into Kent will follow in our next issue.)



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OH DANNY BOY, THE PUBS, THE PUBS ARE CALLING

THE BEERY BOATERS' 2016 END OF YEAR TRIP

Saturday 24th September 2016. Nine intrepid Beery Boaters arrived at Tardebigge on the Worcester & Birmingham Canal to collect our 68ft narrowboat Danny Boy for a trip around the Stourport Ring. They were, the brothers Dave and John Underdown, the Martins, Atkins and Prime, John Sheppard (Shep), Paul Skelton (Skelly among other names applied to him), Chris Baxter, Dick Savage and Hon Commodore (Unelected) Jim Green.

With at least the 29 Tardebigge locks to descend and a probable further 6 before nightfall, we needed an early start, and it was useful that, as Danny Boy hadn't been out the week before, it would be ready from 11am. Of course, apart from Martin P who had come up by train, we weren't that early, but by the time the rest of us had arrived he had completed the take-over procedure. Martin A, Dave and I were the last, at 1.15, after a nice pint of Wye Valley and a roll apiece at the Cross Inn at nearby Finstall.

Half an hour later we were off through the 580 yard Tardebigge Tunnel on the short distance to Tardebigge top lock. As usual our negotiation of Tardebigge locks went smoothly, aided by Dick's home brew, and no problem except when a bump in one lock sent Dave sprawling with cuts and bruises to his head and face. We were at the bottom in just 3½ hours, over eight locks an hour, not bad when the pundits estimate four locks to the hour!

The Queen's Head after Tardebigge bottom lock, which was being refurbished when we passed in 2013, seems now some sort of fun pub with hoards of screaming kids! Even our tame redskin wasn't attracted by the large wig-wam in the garden, so we carried on to our preferred stop, the Boat and Railway, where we tied up well before darkness, just before the bridge. It's always been good, selling Marston's range of beers with good-value food, enhanced that evening by Ringwood Old



The Boat & Railway, Stoke Works

Thumper at only £1.80 a pint, although the early Christmas tree in the pub window proved real enough, and not an apparition induced by its copious consumption.

Sunday morning and fine, although it seemed we had had a downpour in the night – of which though, Old Thumper had left us all blissfully unaware. With only six locks and less than three miles before our lunchtime stop, we had no need for an early start, and when we did, about nine, it was only to the water point beyond the

bridge. Why take on water so early? I hear you say! Explanations later. Tanks full, we continued to the Eagle & Sun at Hanbury Wharf, opposite the start of the Droitwich Canals, to moor well before mid-day, and wait until opening time.

This was our first visit, and we found it a popular pub for food, particularly on Sundays, with an extensive carvery – the turkey being sliced up appeared the size of a small ostrich. We mostly sat outside, but when driven in by a short shower found we had to stand at the bar, all seating reserved for diners. Having enjoyed a substantial breakfast, none of us ate, except Chris who couldn't resist cuts from four different joints of meat and as much vegetables as you could pile on your plate.

Off again at three, once more in bright sunshine, and turning right onto the Droitwich Junction Canal. Although only two miles long it packs into that a series of locks including a staircase, and a tunnel beneath the M5, with extremely low headroom – the motorway having been built when the canal was derelict, and the tunnel excavated subsequently with its restoration. If the water level is up, navigation can be impeded, and hence a full water tank helps, but we had no problems. By 4.30 we were moored in Droitwich, just beyond Vines Park, with its several swing bridges, and where the Droitwich Junction Canal becomes the substantially longer Droitwich Barge Canal.

Droitwich is most excellent. Walk into the old town, about five minutes, and there is found what appears to be the old high street, lined with pubs as were country towns of perhaps fifty years ago. We started at one end, at the Hop Pole, with Malvern Hills and Wye Valley beers, and an entry in the 2017 Good Beer Guide, followed by the Old Cock Inn (no, Miss Mary Letts wasn't the landlady) and then lastly, the Talbot, both with ales from the Banks's and Marston's range. Yes, there were other pubs, but we only had one evening. At the Old Cock, Skelly was particularly intrigued by "the strangest beer I have ever had", a Marston's brew called Salty Caramel beer – whether or not it actually contained salt he didn't know, but it did have a caramel taste with a salty twang.

In due course Martin Prime and Skelly, seeking sustenance, went for curries, leaving the rest of us to appreciate the hospitality of the Talbot, where the Californian landlady repeatedly called time followed by further last orders. We are told by the curry eaters, back on board hours before, that our return was in excess of 3am.

Monday. Despite the extremely good session, we were away reasonably early, and on to the Droitwich Barge Canal – eight wide locks, leading down through five-and-a-bit miles to the River Severn. After a few hours, much winding through dense reeds African Queen style, and confrontation with a swan, we cleared the final lock onto the Severn, and turned right heading for Stourport, the sky overcast and the Welsh hills to our left shrouded in heavy mist.

Now we could crack on a bit, even though we were travelling against the current. Through two keeper operated locks, and passed the canalside Hamstall Inn, our original going lunchtime beer break, with Stourport for the evening, before we heard about the new canalside micro-pub in Kidderminster. Still, we had time for a reasonable lunchtime session in Stourport and an easy cruise to Kidderminster for the evening, or so we thought!

At Stourport the canal basins at the end of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal are accessed from the Severn by two sets of locks, one broad one narrow. We came to the broad first, where a large plastic looking cruiser was occupying the

lock moorings with apparently no intention of going through – contrary to regulations. As we slowed Danny Boy drifted towards the cruiser and John Underdown at the front fended us off to avoid contact.

Insufficient, however, for the plastic boat owner, who now appeared, and rapidly became apoplectic! He shouted abuse and danced up and down the moorings taking photographs of us. We, in turn, took photographs of his boat to prove that we hadn't hit it. Shep, on the tiller, took Danny Boy back to the centre of the river to wait for the narrow locks to clear, while plastic boat man continued his remonstrations from the shore. During our wait Martin Prime received a phone call from the boatyard asking if we had problems. Apparently our antagonist had phoned Anglo Welsh, who we learned later took the approach that as experienced boaters they couldn't envisage us involved in anti-social behaviour. From Plastic Boat Man no more was heard.

Some problem on the narrow locks, delayed passage of boats ahead of us and it was an hour or two and well into the afternoon before it was solved and we were able to clear the locks and the basins, and tie up outside the Black Star, for a quick couple of pints and some tasty rolls before continuing to Kidderminster. Chris and Dick, who had jumped ship earlier on for refreshment, arrived back and said that they had been in a pub which advised against mooring in Kidderminster as 'it was full of alcoholics and druggies!'

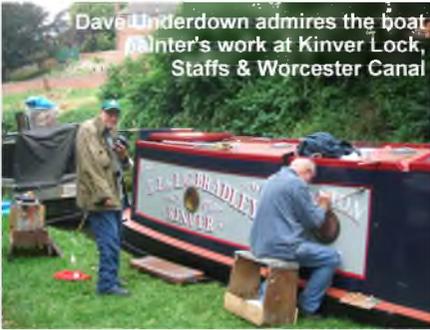


The Black Star, Stourport

Nevertheless, we carried on, and although only four more miles and two locks, some very slow boats in front delayed us and it was dusk when we moored opposite the Park Lane Weavers micro-pub. On the way a Bullied Pacific steam loco crossed the Severn Valley Railway bridge as we approached it, particularly miffing Dave, who missed it and had to endure everyone else telling him what a wonderful sight it was.

The Weavers was nice, but to us from East Kent, the original home of micro pubs, it seems that foreign parts require all pubs to have a bar and hand-pumps. Also with several rooms, it had much greater capacity than being able to accommodate no more than ten with comfort as we had been told, and proved to be bigger than any of the Dover micros. However, it fitted to a tee the general criteria of real ale and cider, no piped music, food to a minimum and mobile phones frowned upon. Some of us stayed in this pub while others went in search of the Weavers Ale House (once, but no longer, associated with the Weavers, Park Lane), and other pubs, and found them all good. Of the alcoholics and druggies there was no sign – must have taken a day off!

Tuesday, and quite a long day ahead, so we set off at about 7am. A pleasant morning cruise took us to Kinver, where we tied up at the moorings below Kinver



Dave Underdown admires the boat
Winter's work at Kinver Lock,
Staffs & Worcester Canal

Lock. Although the town boasts several good pubs they are a short walk from the canal and most of us stayed in the Vine by the lock. Perhaps more of an eating place than a pub, the Vine still served some good local Real Ales from the Enville and Kinver breweries.

A couple of pints and we were off again, pausing above Kinver Lock to take on water. Here a chap decorating the side of a narrowboat, transpired to be the same who had performed his arts on the restoration of former

working boat 'Dover', filmed for TV. Further on, we were delayed by some dredging work, before reaching Stourton Junction and the four locks set among attractive wooded slopes at the start of the short Stourbridge Canal – just four or five miles, with a mile-long branch to Stourbridge town, but in all 20 locks. We encountered a couple of boats coming down them, as we ascended, and above the top lock a clump of white water lilies, testified to the purity of the water.

A twisty mile and a half took us to the bottom of the Stourbridge Sixteen flight as daylight was beginning to fade, with our evening's destination, the Samson and Lion, canalside between the 4th and 5th locks down from the top. It was dark by the time that we got there, passing the Redhouse glassworks cone at Amblecote on the way, and through two locks which are so close together that they operate like Bratch locks on the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, requiring the top gate of one and the bottom gate of the next to be open at the same time.



The evening sun at Stourbridge Locks

Dick, who had gone on ahead, was already enjoying a pint, when we reached the pub and moored outside. Very much a locals' pub, we were made to feel very welcome, with beers from the Marston's range, not much having changed it seemed since our last visit in 1997, apart from the pot-bellied pig now being absent.

Wednesday morning, and the itinerary called for lunchtime at the Vine, Brierley Hill, the Batham's brewery tap, better known at the Bull & Bladder and renowned for food in gargantuan quantities at ridiculously low prices, in addition to the superb beer. At just a couple of miles with five locks, we didn't need an early start, and finally got away shortly after nine o'clock, along a winding canal, with particular care required navigating past work boats undertaking towpath renovation. We moored in the small basin above the bottom lock of the flight still known as the 'Delph Nine', even though it had been realigned to eight locks in 1858 – a small private boat, Calpesian already in occupation, but large enough for two narrow boats side by side.

The short distance up Delph Road takes in four pubs, or five if you include the Bell on the Delph behind us – the Tenth Lock, the Dock & Iron which had recently suffered fire and appeared could be in the process of demolition, the Black Horse and finally Batham's Brewery and its tap the Bull & Bladder. Suffice to say its food and beer fulfilled, nay, even exceeded, our expectations, and it appeared just as popular as ever. We stayed well into the afternoon until, eventually replete, we made our way back to Danny Boy.



Again, only a relatively short distance to our next stop, Windmill End at Netherton, about three and a half miles. Up the remaining seven Delph locks, past Merry Hill shopping centre and up the Blowers Green bottom lock, for a sharp right-hand turn into the Dudley Number Two Canal. We moored early evening beside the Bumblehole park and proceeded, of course, to Ma Pardoe's, most by foot, but those of us ambulatory deficient, by taxi – the excellent local service we had used before, just £4 there and £3.50 back. Ma Pardoe's or more correctly the Olde Swan, was once owned by Mrs Pardoe and forty-odd years ago was one of Britain's remaining handful of home-brew pubs. For a short spell following Mrs Pardoe's death brewing ceased, but the tradition was subsequently revived and has continued for many years, and excellent Olde Swan beers are always available there and at a few other lucky pubs in the area.

Thursday morning, and we had time in hand. We took Danny Boy across the canal to water up on the embankment above the former Little Dry Dock. Latterly one of M.A.D. O'Rourke's chain of 'Little Pubs', with a genuine Runcorn Canal Narrowboat as a bar, it closed in about 2010, and is now flats, even though the name and various pub paraphernalia still exist on the walls. Ahead of us lay Netherton Tunnel, with before it, to the right, the remains of the Dudley No. 2 Canal, running through Gosty Hill Tunnel to its present terminus at Hawne Basin, although at one time it continued through the 3,795 yard Lapal Tunnel to the Worcester & Birmingham Canal at Selly Oak. This tunnel, narrow and low to start with, became even more restricted due to mining subsidence, and was abandoned after Netherton Tunnel was built. More recently it was partially filled with concrete to cope with the weight of the M5 Motorway which now runs above it, and is most unlikely ever to reopen.

Birmingham, was planned for later on but for lunch-time we decided to go to Tipton, so, once water tanks were full, we set off into Netherton Tunnel with Martin P on the tiller, seemingly trying to break the speed record for its navigation as we thundered through the darkness. At the junction with the New Main Line, we turned right for half a mile, and then right again at Albion Junction on to the Brades Arm, and the three Brades Locks, to take us up to the Old Main Line. The two top locks form a staircase locks and while negotiating these our tame redskin was observed in hot pursuit of a black pussy while looking for a secluded spot to relieve himself, an event generating the predictable double-entendres.

Once more turning right we crossed over the canal along which we had recently emerged from Netherton Tunnel on the Tiverton Aqueduct, before continuing towards Tipton and passing the arm leading to Dudley Tunnel and the Black Country Museum, just before tying up at Coronation Park, Tipton, under the gaze of the statue of the Tipton Slasher, the former boatman and bare-knuckle prize-fighter Bill Perry in fisticuff pose. And it was to the Slasher's HQ, the Fountain Inn, canalside, a couple of hundred yards away, across Owen Street Bridge, that we headed for a pleasant lunchtime session. At one time selling Holt, Plant & Deakin beers, it now has a good range from Banks and smaller breweries such as Wye Valley and Enville, with good food and is an entry in the current (and many previous) Good Beer Guides.



At about 3 o'clock we made our way to the boat and set off for Birmingham, turning right onto the New Main Line at Factory Junction and down the three Factory Locks, the last locks of the trip. An almost uneventful cruise down to Birmingham with most of the crew getting their heads down and Hon. Commodore (Unelected) on the helm for most of the way. Though we did pick up a prop-full of rubbish, the first this week, which Martin P. cleared, and some urchin hurled a full plastic bottle of coke at us from a bridge, which missed me but woke the slumberers when it bounced off the top of the boat.

In Brum moorings are at a premium and we grabbed a space just past Sheepcote Street Bridge having been shooed off by the landlady from a vacant mooring outside the newly-reopened Fiddle and Bone opposite – apparently reserved for a trip boat. Inevitably, our first port of call that evening was the Prince of Wales, and Martin A and I remained there, while the others went off after a pint or two for a tour of the city pubs, including the Post Office Vaults and the Wellington where Paul indulged a half of an 8.5% ABV at £7 a pint – obviously nothing learnt from the Trout and the Landlord. Meanwhile at the Prince of Wales we were told that Nancy, the former long time Irish landlady of the pub, was still going strong in her retirement, and that her grand-daughter had recently worked in the pub for a while.

Friday and Martin P left mid-morning, to catch a train home to commence work. The rest of us set off at around nine, along the Worcester & Birmingham Canal. Just after Selly Oak, where extensive towpath renovation works were under way, a drastic lack of forward movement indicated that something had attached itself to the propeller – a large hessian sack which was quickly removed, although extricating ourselves from the shallows where we had grounded took much longer. Past the Cadbury works at Bourneville, Kings Norton Junction where the Stratford-on-Avon Canal went off to our left, and into the darkness of Wast Hill Tunnel.

Half a mile past the tunnel we stopped by the Hopwood House, the only canalside pub between Birmingham and Alvechurch, our evening destination, and with seemingly more boats tied up than usual, we had to moor some hundred yards further on, using the piling, stakes and Atkins Hitches, the undertaking of the latter almost causing a racial incident involving our representative from the great plains and a

tiller. A pleasant few hours drinking decent-conditioned Marston's products, and we stayed on well into the afternoon – our evening stop at the Weighbridge with a meal booked, less than three miles away and the pub not open until seven.

Even so, we were moored outside Alvechurch Marina, well before the Weighbridge opened. Some of the crew walked to the village, but most of us, remembering that it's quite a hike, happily gave it a miss. Seven o'clock and into the pub, to enjoy good food and local beer, a table having been set aside in the long room with the serving hatch to the bar. One would think the Weighbridge is a relatively unspoilt leftover from a bygone era, but in fact it's only been a pub for around a dozen years. Before that, in the days of canal tolls, it was, as the name suggests, the office for calculating the weight of cargo carried and collecting the monies due.

Away by eight on Saturday morning, most of the crew busy cleaning the boat and packing their kit, and back at Tardebigge before nine. A check on the fuel used, gave us a small refund on the fuel deposit, which I put down to Danny Boy having a traditional heating system rather than employing an Ebesbacher heater as we had on Bunbury. We also received a voucher giving us 25% off our next booking if we used it within fourteen days. So Hon. Commodore (Unelected) was instructed to get cracking on things toute suite! During our unloading, it started to rain heavily, the first really decent spot of rain all week (apart from possibly the first night which didn't bother us in our pits!).

So that was it, the 36th year of the Beer Boaters completed. Roll on the 37th.

Jim Green, Hon. Commodore (Unelected) – additional material Paul Skelton

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GOOD HEALTH

Beer is good for you

As a supplement to our piece on Alcohol Concern (Page 20) the following is adapted from the internet – we have no idea of its origin and cannot vouch for its accuracy....and we make no comment about heading for the fridge.

Swilling down gallons of beer every week is obviously NOT good for your health or your waistline. But in moderation, beer has actually been shown to have medical benefits – from improved sexual performance (yes, really) to helping keep your brain sharp. If that isn't a reason to head to the fridge and open one right now, we don't know what is....

Beer Can Help You Lose Weight Beer is widely seen as incredibly fattening but researchers have found that a compound in beer – a natural flavonoid, xanthohumol, found in hops – actually helps with weight loss. Sadly, the levels in beer are very low – you'd have to drink 3,500 pints a day to have the same effect – but the chemical could be used to fortify your brew.

Hoppy Beers Can Protect Against Degenerative Disorders Xanthohumol is also able to protect the brain against disorders such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

Beer Makes You Better at Sex Some women may beg to disagree, but Dr Kat van Kirk, author of the Married Sex Solution, says that there are several, proven scientific benefits to drinking beer before sex. Drinking beer can delay premature ejaculation – it overloads a man's body with phytoestrogens, proven to delay orgasm. And dark beers such as porter and stout can also improve circulation, increasing the blood flow to a man's penis.

Moderate Beer Drinking Helps You Live Longer Virginia Tech researchers found that regular, moderate beer drinkers were 19% less likely to die during a given time period than people who never touch a drop.

Belgian Beer Helps You Digest Drinking high-power brews such as Leffe could actually make you thin, a study suggested.

Beer Helps Keep Your Brain Sharp A study in the New England Journal of Medicine found that woman who had one alcoholic drink a day were less likely to find their mental faculties deteriorating as they grow older.

Beer Stops You Getting Kidney Stones Drinking a moderate amount of beer reduces the likelihood of kidney stones by 41% says the Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology.

Beer Is Low Calorie Statistics from Guinness show that its heavy, dark brew is lower in calories than either orange juice or skimmed milk.

Beer Is Full of Vitamins and Makes Your Bones Stronger Beer is full of super-nutrients says Dr Stephan Domenig of the Mayr Health Centre in Austria, and is rich in dietary silicon, key to building bone mineral density.



LAST KNOCKINGS

Sign of the Times A good approximation of the currently changing nature of Britain's pub business, can be readily obtained travelling by bus between Dover and Sandown in Deal. Leave from Pencester, and within just a few minutes, in Ladywell, you will find yourself confronted by the closed and steel shuttered **Park Inn**, before, a few doors along, passing Dover's first micropub, the **Rack of Ale**. Continuing out of town, and in St Margaret's, the closed pub count rises to three as you pass the **Red Lion**, now subject to an application for conversion to a private dwelling and the **Hope**, gutted and similarly destined for residential use. A few years ago the **Five Bells** at Ringwould could have been added to the list, but now reopened it appears to be going along very nicely. And if your spirits are raised on seeing the newly established **Freed Man** as you come down Dover Road into Walmer, that could well change to despondency over the next mile or so. In Station Rd. you might just glimpse the former site of the **Railway** where construction of a block of flats is now underway, before passing the former **Yew Tree** on Mill Hill (now a Tesco), and



The Park Inn, Dover

coming to Mill Road where a Coop and Chinese take-away occupy the site of what had once been the **Lord Warden**, and where the former **Bricklayers** has been converted to housing. Arrive in central Deal, however, and matters improve immeasurably. Wetherspoon's **Norman Wisdom** in Queen St., is followed by the **Just Reproach** in King St, while in the High Street new pubs/bars abound – **Spires** at the Landmark Centre, **Der Bär** and **Bloody Marys**. Finally, if you wait for a return bus in South Street the **Taphouse** will be opposite.

The Railway, Walmer
(now demolished)



Some Like It Cold One can only assume that the *What's Brewing's* editorial team were deliberately trying to stir up controversy, when the Star Letter in December's edition of CAMRA's newspaper, espoused the cause of keeping bottles of beer in the fridge. One can almost hear, reverberating across the nation from many thousands of voices, a paraphrase of that famous tennis exclamation: "he cannot

be serious". Beer kept in a fridge tastes of one thing – cold, with maybe hints of a few other flavours just about penetrating the frost. Perhaps no bad thing for your standard British lager and certain keg bitters, but a disaster for real ale...which raises the question, why should anyone who likes real ale wish to drink it chilled? But then, what would be the chance that such bottled ale would comply with CAM-RA criteria – i.e. bottle conditioned? The general suspicion must be that if the pub is happy to keep it chilled, then it won't be.

Some Like It Dark The above was initiated by the general absence of dark ale on draught, the popular current choice favouring pale beers – a complete reversal from my younger days, when two thirds of draught ale sold was dark mild. Now with winter here, those of us who like dark ales have a reasonable chance of coming across a pint or two. However, we've asked it before and we'll ask it again, why is it universally assumed that there is no demand for dark ales in the summer? If it is a response to outside temperature how is that Guinness has for many years sold extraordinarily well in Nigeria?

London Prices The following from Rob Smalley recently appeared in an edition of *Ale of Thanet*, the Branch magazine of Thanet CAMRA. "CAMRA should not overlook the outrageous London pricing of ordinary strength beers, not just heavy-weights/specials, e.g. Bree Louise Coburg Street (Euston) offers 50p CAMRA discounts, but even then it is scarcely below £4 a pint. Mulberry Bush, Southwark Young's ordinary bitter – £4.xx, Falcon Clapham – £4.30, The Ring Southwark £4.50 for Sambrook's ordinary bitter! Even Bishops Finger, Smithfield £4.15 Shep's Master Brew while Fuller's Parcels Yard, King's Cross all exceeding £4. I, as a virtually weekly traveller to/through London have all but eliminated drinking in the Capital's pubs. The bubble will eventually burst."

For several of us, the last occasion we drank in London was with the Beery Boaters in the spring of 2010, just before that year's General Election and shortly after the start of the recession. On that occasion, except for Camden Market, beer prices did not seem exceptionally high, perhaps somewhat above East Kent levels but nothing worthy of remarking upon. Six years later, over much of London the difference is marked, although we have recent reports of a pub in Mile End where beer was "only" £3.70 a pint – perhaps at the top end of our own local pricing, but not out of sight. However, the general disparity does throw an interesting light onto Dave Cameron's remark that we were all in it together.

Sign of the times (continued) If readers take the trouble to tot up the gains and losses above they would find it works out at closed/lost pubs six, new pubs and bars seven, and that it is without any certainty that all of the six had necessarily gone for good. Of course, despite this apparent glimmer of optimism, it is generally the case that the number of pubs is declining – but that is only half the story. What is particularly apparent from this "survey" is that all but one of the new pubs are town centre, and all but one of the closed or disappeared pubs are village or suburban – the traditional local where darts and dominoes might be played and conversation as like as not centred on local gossip. This was a unique feature of the British pub, As well as smart eateries and noisy boozers a large proportion were there for the surrounding community. Of course these still exist, but in greatly reduced numbers, and at a great loss to us all.

Old Wort

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And Finally.....Beer Yoga

It is supposed to have started in Berlin in 2015 but it's now sweeping the world, with Australia, where beer appreciation is practically a religion, the latest country to adopt the trend. According to the Berlin-based BierYoga collective, beer yoga is the "marriage of two great loves, beer and yoga, centuries-old therapies for mind, body and soul". "Beer Yoga is fun but it's no joke. We take the philosophies of yoga and pair it with the pleasure of beer drinking to reach your highest level of consciousness," said BierYoga's founder, known simply as Jhula, who was inspired to set up the group after witnessing a beer yoga session at Burning Man festival in Nevada, USA.

Would-be attendees are assured that no yoga experience is necessary. "The joy of drinking beer and the mindfulness of yoga compliment each other and make for an energising experience," Julha added. Students learn yoga poses involving "beer salutations" and balancing beer bottles on one's head—just watch out for bottle smashes.

It's only a matter of time before the beer yoga trend sweeps the UK when London trendies will start balancing bottles of craft beer on their backs while doing the Downward Dog. Oh course, anyone who's been a rugby club member will be well aware that balancing your beer on your head has been going on for ages and all this is nothing new.

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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

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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

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

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