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Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

Issue 71  
Spring  
2017

# CHANNEL DRAUGHT



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**Channel Draught**  
is published and  
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Deal Dover  
Sandwich & District  
Branch of the  
Campaign for Real Ale  
[www.camra-dds.org.uk](http://www.camra-dds.org.uk)

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Full page - £40  
Back page + £50  
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Publisher/PDF or any com-  
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Spring Edition by  
28th February 2017

# CHANNEL DRAUGHT

**ISSUE 71**  
**Spring 2017**

For those who might feel overwhelmed (or indeed underwhelmed) by elections, Brexit and politics in general, may we offer you a respite in the shape of the 2017 Spring edition of *Channel Draught*, and a few pages devoted to talk of beer and pubs.

New micropubs and microbreweries continue to appear across Kent, and in this edition we include the latest news on the county's small breweries, which now number around fifty. Particularly significant have been the appearance of in-house breweries in pubs, such as Sandgate's Amazing Brewery at the Ship Inn, or alternatively, of breweries with their own on-site tap, such as our own Breakwater Brewery.

On the debit side, however, we continue to lose traditional pubs, particularly away from the town centres, and campaigners are actively engaged in trying to save a number of village pubs – most prominently the Chequer at Ash where a share scheme has been raising money towards the purchase of the pub by the community. Nothing, though, contributes more to a pub's success, and by inference, its more likely retention, than regularly custom – and we realise that we're largely preaching to the converted, but, use it or lose it.

As well as just giving us more brewers, one of the major benefits arising from the microbrewing explosion, has been a phenomenal increase in the style and range of ale for us to enjoy. Particularly pleasing has been the resurrection of porter, and in this edition we reprint an abridged piece on the subject by renowned beer enthusiast, the late Michael Jackson. Also, in addition to all the usual items, we take a look at the Black Country and its beers, relate a day out in Deal, report on a new hop growing venture, and relate a narrowboat trip in South Wales.

*Martin Atkins*



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# EVENTS DIARY

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|----------------------|--|
| Mon 15 May           | Branch Meeting, <b>King's Head</b> , Kingsdown                   |
| Sat 20 May           | Kent Regional Meeting – <b>Louis Armstrong</b> 12 noon           |
| Thur 25 - Mon 29 May | Bank Holiday Beer Festival - <b>New Inn</b> , Canterbury*        |
| Fri 26 - Sun 28 May  | Beer & Cider Festival, <b>Crabble Corn Mill</b> *                |
| Fri 26 - Mon 29 May  | Beer Festival, <b>Haywain</b> , Bramling*                        |
| Tue 6 Jun            | 2017 GBG Trail – meet 18.30 <b>Louis Armstrong</b>               |
| Tue 13 June          | Skittles Match 7.30pm - <b>Fox, Temple Ewell</b>                 |
| Fri 16 - Sat 17 Jun  | <b>CAMRA K&amp;ESR Real Ale &amp; Cider Festival</b> , Tenterden |
| Mon 19 Jun           | Branch AGM & Branch Meeting, <b>Five Bells</b> , Eastry          |
| Fri 23 - Sat 24 Jun  | Rotary Charity Beer Festival, <b>Fox</b> , Temple Ewell*         |
| Mon 3 Jul            | 2017 GBG Trail – meet 12 noon <b>Five Bells</b> , Eastry         |
| Mon 17 Jul           | Branch Meeting, <b>St. Crispin</b> , Worth                       |
| Thur 20 - Sat 22 Jul | <b>KENT BEER FESTIVAL</b> , Merton Farm, Canterbury              |
| Sat 5 Aug            | 2017 GBG Trail – meet 12 noon <b>Fox</b> , Temple Ewell          |
| Tue 8-12 Sat Aug     | <b>GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL 2017</b> , Olympia,               |
| Mon 21 Aug           | Branch Meeting, <b>Plough</b> , Ripple                           |

Branch Website [www.camra-dds.org.uk](http://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](mailto:john@ramblingrumbler.plus.com) or call 01304 214153.

Events marked \* are not organised by CAMRA



## A CURATE'S EGG

Good in parts, was the best that could be said of this year's budget. Following George Osborne's reduction of beer duty in three out of four of his last budgets, it might have been hoped that this trend would continue. Not so, totally ignoring the fact that British drinkers pay almost the highest level of beer duty almost anywhere in Europe, accounting for nearly 40% of all beer duty in the EU, while consuming just 12% of its beer, Chancellor, Philip Hammond saw fit to raise beer duty by "2p" a pint – inverted commas because almost any increase, seems inevitably to lead to at least an extra 10p per pint in the pub.

Additionally, those who listened to the budget, might feel doubly aggrieved, as the only reference to beer duty in the Chancellor's speech spoke of no duty alterations except those already announced. Far from meaning no increase, this allowed the resurrection of Alistair Darling's hated Beer Duty Escalator, leading to accusations of sleight of hand, if not of being underhand.

It has been calculated that during its previous implementation the Beer Duty Escalator had contributed to 75,000 job losses 3,700 pub closures and a 24% fall in beer sales in pubs. CAMRA national chairman Colin Valentine said: "UK beer drinkers, pubs and brewers have been let down by the chancellor's decision to increase beer duty for the first time in five years. The rise will ultimately hit consumers in their pockets and lead to pub closures across the country. The Government's U-turn on beer duty is a real missed opportunity to support consumers."

However, CAMRA welcomed the Chancellor's announcement of a temporary discount of £1,000 on business rates for all pubs with a rateable value of less than £100,000 – 90% of all pubs in England and Wales – and called for it to be made permanent and subsequently increased. Colin said: "The announcement of a new rate relief for pubs in England is a ground breaking step which recognises both the importance of pubs and the unfair impact of the business rate system on pubs. This new relief offers huge assistance to pubs and is a step towards CAMRA's ambition of securing a £5,000 rate relief reduction for all pubs."

A view from the other side of the bar came from Stuart Miller, landlord of CAMRA's National Pub of the Year, the George and Dragon, Hudswell, North Yorkshire, who said that the help with business rates was obviously very welcome: "We're in an unusual position with our pub because we're in the middle of nowhere. Last year we qualified for rural rate relief which is 50% off your business rates – but that meant we didn't qualify for business rate relief which would have been 100%. We weren't expecting to pay business rates this year anyway' but the announcement will effect pubs in busier towns."

However, he said: "It would have been really good for beer duty to have been reduced. We haven't put up our prices but all our suppliers have. The Government have frozen beer duty for a couple of years but just to go down 2% would make a difference – it would be going in the right direction."

# The Fox



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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](mailto:channel.draught@camra-dds.org.uk)

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

## SAVE THE CHEQUER

The campaign by local villagers to purchase the **Chequer** in Ash as a community pub is now well under way. A few weeks after the share scheme's launch in March, a significant amount had already been raised – in one of the weeks leading up to Easter £15,000 was raised in just over a few days. However, that still left a considerable way to go to reach their target of £400,000 to buy the freehold of the pub.

The fight to keep the pub started in earnest the winter before last when determined opposition by local residents to a planning application for change to residential use, sufficiently impressed District Councillor's that they overruled council staff's recommendation for approval, and refused consent. There followed a high profile campaign involving TV actor Neil Stuke and appearance on BBC TV's *The One Show*, and subsequently, public meetings, establishment of a campaign committee, the registration as a Community Benefit Society, and the start of fundraising events.



In early April this year one of the original campaign organisers, Mathew Titterton, spoke to the *East Kent Mercury*: "The whole community has come together with lots of shares bought. It's amazing when you look back and think that four weeks ago we had an empty account! The current total is £84,000 which is fantastic, but still not enough."

Fellow campaigner Hazel Howard added: "We are truly in awe at the level of support and enthusiasm shown locally for the Chequer Inn to be bought and run as a community pub." She said the committee had been around the local area, raising support, answering questions and accepting applications and cheques. Share applications were being received at a great rate but they needed more, she said, and to those who had not yet got round to it or were thinking about it – please do not delay any longer

As we go to press we understand that the share offer is now closed. For further information please email [chequermates@gmail.com](mailto:chequermates@gmail.com) or call 01304 813010.

## AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

**PUB OF THE YEAR** If **The Lanes** in Worthington Street, Dover, seemed unusually crowded at lunchtime on Saturday April 8, it had a very good cause, or more accurately two very good causes. It was to see the presentation to Debbie and Keith Lane of awards by Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District CAMRA for being chosen as Branch Pub of the Season for Autumn 2016 and Branch Pub of the Year for 2017.



Keith & Debbie Lane with the Pub of the Year 2017 and Pub of the Autumn Season 2016 certificates

Opening shortly before Christmas 2014, just two and a half years ago, from the start, The Lanes proved a great success, and within six months, had been selected as Branch Pub of the Season for Spring 2015. Its popularity continued, and with five real ales available, and a large variety of ciders, perries and wine it rapidly became an established part of the town's pub environment.

Ales are drawn predominantly from Kentish microbreweries, and allowing for a few "interlopers" from elsewhere, offers as good a choice of local ales as any pub in our Branch area. As well as Kentish ale, drinkers can also choose from Kentish cider, Kentish wine and even Kentish gin.

**CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR** This year's Cider Pub of the Year has been won by the **Thirsty Scarecrow** in Dover's High Street, a dedicated cider house set up by Kieran and Kate towards the end of 2015. Although not unusual in the West Country, specialist cider outlets tend to be rare elsewhere, and Kieran believes that their undertaking is unique in Kent. Up to twenty ciders are offered, of a variety of strengths and flavours, and there is always at least one real ale. Since its establishment the Scarecrow has built up a loyal following with its regular quiz nights a noted success.



Kieran and Kate receive the Cider Pub of the Year 2017 certificate from Branch Chairman Martin Atkins

Now that CAMRA acceptable cider is found widely across our Branch area, the Thirsty Scarecrow beat off some strong opposition to win. Presentation of the award took place on the afternoon of Saturday May 6<sup>th</sup> in front of a crowded pub – not a seat to be had and quite a few having to stand. Of course plenty of cider was available, but for those wanting ale there was a barrel of Marsh Mellow from the Romney Marsh Brewery.

**PUB OF THE SEASON** As reported elsewhere in this issue, our early March trek across Deal provided us with the opportunity to award the **Farrier** in Manor Road with the certificate for being chosen as Branch Winter Pub of the Year. Formerly the Admiral Keppel, the pub has a very special place in our own history as it was where our branch was formed in the 1970s.

A year or so ago, it was acquired freehold by former Deal Town Football Club Chairman Dayle Melody and his wife Donna, who returned the pub to an earlier name to mark the start of their occupancy. Although there have been small changes, the Farrier essentially remains the same, with real ale featuring both local micros and national brands. Now that so many pubs are disappearing Dayle suspected they might well have saved it from development, and they certainly appear successful in attracting local support – finding it well patronised whenever we have visited it.



Dayle Melody (left) receives the Pub of the Winter Season certificate from Tony Wells, Branch Pubs Officer

**BEER OF THE FESTIVAL** Lunchtime Saturday May 6<sup>th</sup> saw the presentation of awards to Phil Lowry for achieving both Beer of the Festival and Kent Beer of the Festival, at this year's White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales. The event took place in the taproom of Phil's Breakwater Brewery in Lorne Road, and the beer concerned, the first barrel finished after the festival opened, was his newly created Paper Aeroplane Flight – a particularly resounding success from a brewery which had only started test brewing just a few months earlier.



Phil Lowry (right) of the Breakwater Brewery receives the Beer of the Festival and Kent Beer of the Festival certificates from Jim Green, Festival Organiser (left)

Although the winning ale was not available at the award we had a choice of half a dozen of the brewery's beers including the standard Dover Pale Ale, a mild and the particularly successful Cow Juice stout. Phil says he has been pleasantly surprised at the popularity of his dark ales. As a matter of interest the winning beer's name derives from the habit at former festivals, of some drinkers turning the festival programmes into paper aeroplanes and launching them around the hall.

*Channel* Draught and the Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District Branch of CAMRA congratulate all the award winners on their achievement and wish them every success for the future, and at keeping up the good work.

## DOVER

**Blakes**, Castle Street: Regular pub ale continues as Blakes Bitter from Millis, however the recent winter saw seen some very drinkable dark ales appear, including RCH Old Slug Porter, Adnams Old Ale and Adnams Stout, a particularly excellent pint of which was enjoyed one evening at the end of March. Around the corner in Russell Street, the **Castle** remains, to the best of our knowledge without real ale, although we can always hope that this might change with the completion of the new adjacent development.

In nearby St. James Street three ales and a cider are the usual selection at the **White Horse**, with Harveys Sussex Bitter remaining standard. Among a variety of guests over the winter months, a very first-rate barrel of Gale's Seafarer's Ale was available to accompany our February Branch Meeting. At East Cliff, the **First and Last** which re-opened for a short period last summer, before closing again, re-opened again during the winter, and as far as we are aware still remains so – no information on whether real ale is being sold.

In the Market Square the **Port of Call** remains closed, while in Bench Street there appears no sign of real ale returning to the **Duchess**. Plenty next door, however, at the **Mash Tun**. The pub was quick to avail itself of Dover's newest brewer – Breakwater Docker's Porter available in January and White Cliffs Festival winner, Paper Aeroplane Fight in February. Other choices display a heavy Kentish influence with beers from Hopdaemon, Westerham, Pig and Porter, Canterbury Ales and Gadds all appearing over recent months – particular praise being awarded to the latter's Black Pearl Oyster Stout: "excellent condition, full bodied and smooth, not too sweet or bitter."

In Worthington Street, **The Lanes**, con-

tinuing its wide selection of ale and cider, in April received the Branch's awards for being chosen as Pub of the Year and Autumn Pub of the Season (see page 7). Earlier in the year the **Golden Lion** was selling Hancock's Golden Lion Ale, while at the **Prince Albert** Bombardier is usually available. During the Six Nations Belhaven Grand Slam could be found at the Priory.

In Elms Vale, the **Crown & Sceptre** was selling Whitstable Bay in April, while at the Boar's Head we are sorry to hear that Dean will be leaving at the end of July after seven years at the pub. We wish him the best of luck for the future, and hope his successor continues offering good real ale, including one of the best pints of Young's Bitter around.

In Ladywell the seemingly "inevitable" has happened, and for the **Park Inn**, the days of being a pub seem finally to have finished – a great pity for what had once been one of the most popular pubs in the town. Closed and boarded up since the middle of last year, at the time of writing, work is in progress to convert it to an Indian restaurant.

No lack of ale, though, along the road at the **Rack of Ale**, where Trish continues to offer a wide ranging selection from right across the country. Often prominent is the ever popular Titanic Plum Porter, a beer which has generated a following all of its own, while Ripple Steam beers retain their regular appearance. Other brewers featured over recent months have included Mordue, Elland, Coverdale, Hopdaemon, Hanlons, Kent and Millis. From Tir Dha Ghlas in February came 50001 – a name which more than hints at a back story, whatever that may be. However, a particular accolade must go to the return of Romney Cinque Porter which was much enjoyed in late March.

In London Road there appears no sign

of real ale currently returning at the **Eagle**, but those seeking a pint in that part of the town need look no further than the **Thirsty Scarecrow** on the other side of the Tower Hamlets junction. As well as a wide selection of cider, ales over recent months have included Old Dairy Gold Top, Triple FFF Moondance, Hop Fuzz Adhoption and Oakham Inferno – see above, Presentations and Awards.

Always a good selection of local ale on the four handpumps at the **Louis Armstrong** in Maison Dieu, where, with the odd exception, the choice is entirely Kentish. Main suppliers are Hopdaemon, Gadds, Old Dairy, Westerham and Goachers. For lovers of dark ale the range will very often include a porter, stout or other dark brew when they are available. At Charlton Green the **Red Lion** continues to offer two real ales – over recent months Landlord and Plough from the G2 Brewery in Ashford. Both pubs have very pleasing rear gardens which might not be apparent to those not familiar with them.

In Lorne Road Dover's newest pub, the **Breakwater Tap** has been offering a selection of its own ales plus beer from other breweries. Phil's original brews, Docker's Porter and Dover Pale Ale, were soon joined by the 6% ABV Paper Aeroplane Flight (See page 8). Subsequent brews have included a stout and mild and amber and golden ales.

In River, the **Dublin Man O' War**, remains closed and boarded up, while along the road, at the time of writing, we hear that the **Royal Oak**, also closed earlier in the year, is currently under temporary management.

**Fox**, Temple Ewell: Normally a choice of four real ales, with Pride of Sheffield and Butcombe Bitter appearing regularly. The annual Rotary Charity Beer Festival will, this year, be taking place in late June – Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday

24<sup>th</sup>, with possibly Sunday, if anything remaining: 20 beers, including locals such as Ripple Steam and Breakwater, and entertainment on Friday evening and Saturday afternoon and evening.

## DEAL

**Berry**, Canada Road: Normal service from this many times winner of Pub of the Year – large selection of ales from almost everywhere, including, during the winter months, the much enjoyed Harveys Old. Very appreciative comments on the annual winter ale festival in February, which saw an appearance by that seemingly near legendry IPA, Thornbridge Jaipur, plus a new beer (at least to this magazine) from Dark Star – Hophead Mosaic, “a real treat.” There were also plaudits for the new Angels & Demons Brewery: “If they can keep up providing such good beers this local brewery can go far,” said one drinker of Hockley Soul.

In Dover Road the **Drum Major**, was selling Caledonian Over the Bar, during the Six Nations Rugby, while at the **Lighthouse**, visits earlier in the year found Hop Fuzz Fallout, and Wantsum 1381.

**Bohemian**, Beach Street: Ripple steam beers appear regularly, while Rams-gate She Sells Sea Shells seems to have generated a following, the beer having been available on several recent visits. In mid-March a barrel of Wantsum Montgomery was: “On cracking good form. Superb taste – well recommended by the bar staff!”

**Just Reproach**, King Street: Lots of different beers and lots of positive comments – Bad Co. Whiter Shade of Pale: “Low strength but packed with flavour and taste. Great session beer”; Downlands Brewery Old: “Top marks...old ale with lots of choc coffee flavour, (perhaps better than Harveys Old ?)”; Ghost Sylvanus: “Fresh excellent head for this 4.9% Anglo-American pale ale.

# THE LANES

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Sharpish taste on palate but nice after-taste....tip-top condition." As an interesting variation or perhaps just a resurrection of the old, early March saw a half of Breakwater HMS Minno Mild being sold with a bottle of Manns Brown Ale.

**Ship**, Middle Street: Timothy Taylor Landlord seems now well established alongside beers from Gadds and American Pale Ale and Hophead from Dark Star. In early April, Hophead: "On top form ....crisp refreshing taste – usual high standard here. And cheap too!" Hophead has also been available in the nearby **Prince Albert** in Alfred Square, where real ales reflect a selection from both local and national sources, including also recently Caledonian PA, Worsthorne Packhorse, Youngs bitter, Westerham Finchcocks Original, Courage Best, Adnams Ghost Ship, and Whitstable Try Time. At the Shep's owned **Saracen's Head**, opposite, recent visits have found Whitstable Bay Pale Ale and Spitfire.

**Deal Hoy**, Duke Street: Regularly takes Shep's brought in guests, when available, most recently including Tribute and Saison. At the time of writing though, the range was all Shep's – Master Brew, Spitfire Gold and Whitstable Bay Red. In the High Street, the basement at **Der Bär** provided an excellent venue for our April Branch Meeting, with beers from Gadds – Seasider and No 5.

Up at Walmer Station Shep's former Railway is now just a cleared site awaiting whatever development can acquire planning consent. Fortunately local residents still have the **Thompson Bell** and newly established **Freed Man** to supply their real ale requirements. The latter with an ever changing selection has included over recent months, McCanns Bombay Social, Kent Cobnut, Northumberland ResAle-lution, Angels/Demons Panama Jazz, Worsthorne Snowstorm and Gadds

Uberhop. Meanwhile, visits to the Thompson Bell have found London Pride available.

**Sportsman**, Sholden: Varying selection of real ale, including of late Gadds' No. 5, Timothy Taylor Landlord, Canterbury Ales Pardoner's Ale.

**King's Head**, Kingsdown: Selection from both major national brands plus a good variety of micros – e.g. Bombardier and Youngs contrasting with Lytham, Milestone and Rooster's. Gadds ales are well established, recent visits finding Dr Sunshine's Special Friendly English, Seasider and No. 5, a barrel of the latter in early April being described as superb. At the **Rising Sun** Adnams Lighthouse and Bombardier were available in April, while back in February the pub was selling a beer from Hophurst of Wigan, to the best of our knowledge a first locally from this brewery.

## SANDWICH AND RURAL

**Red Cow**, Moat Sole: The venue for our March Branch Meeting, we were offered a choice of four real ales – Gadds Dr Sunshine, Timothy Taylor Landlord, Doom Bar and a somewhat speech challenging Ahopalypse Now (brewery not recorded). Doom Bar is a regular, but Landlord often appears and there is usually one beer from Gadds. A visit earlier in the year found another old favourite, Ringwood Fortyniner, on the handpumps.

**Crispin**, High Street: Regular ales are Broadside, Doom Bar and the house beer, Crispin Ale, brewed for the pub by Mad Cat. Also appearing recently from Mad Cat has been Crispin Pale. Comments following recent visits suggest beer quality is among the best. Opposite, at the **Admiral Owen**, a heavy emphasis on Kent beers saw brews from Pig & Porter, Tonbridge and Ripple Steam available earlier in the year.

# THE CROWN INN

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Elsewhere Doom Bar and Harveys Sussex have been found at the **Fleur de Lis**, which was complemented on its friendly service. Nearby in mid-March Belhaven IPA could be had at the **New Inn**, while the **Hop & Huffkin** was selling Hopdaemon Incubus and Tonbridge Blonde Ambition. Earlier in the year the **George & Dragon** had Butcombe Bitter on the handpumps.

Outside Sandwich several of our Branch's rural pubs remain under threat which future uncertain. The current situation at the **Chequer** in Ash is outlined above, but in nearby Staple we have no further information about the **Tuns at Staple House** or about the **Charity** in Woodnesborough, both of which remain closed. No further news either about the **Bricklayers** in Shepherdswell, where the property remains empty and boarded up.

Meanwhile, in St. Margarets for the **Red Lion** and **Hope**, things have gone rather further. Both seem now to have been lost – the former, having acquired permission for use as a house, has now apparently been “gutted” of any pub furnishings, while work is currently underway at the latter to convert to one or more residential units.

Also, still remaining under threat, is the **Aylesham Working Men's Club**, where a refusal to grant consent for conversion to flats is, as far as we are aware, currently still on appeal. And appeal decisions are also awaited at the **Red Lion**, Wingham, in respect of the Council's non determination of change of use and listed building applications.

Fortunately the village has two other pubs, the **Dog** and the **Anchor**, the second of which was planning to offer a fourth real ale for spring – retaining Doom Bar as stock bitter, the remaining three will comprise one local, one premium and one guest. In addition a local

cider is usually available. And Wingham Parish Council has awarded landlady Michelle, this year's Jack Jolly Community Award in recognition of her contribution to community life – in particular her support for local groups and charities, organising the village Christmas tree, and bringing the community together through events at the pub. Meanwhile the recent PRS Music Makeover award recognises the pub's value as a music venue.

At Barnsole, Staple we hear sadly, that due to ill health Ali and Jane plan to leave the **Black Pig** in August– a great pity as every impression suggests they were doing rather well.

In Lydden Sharp's and Wantsum seem the popular choice at the **Bell** – a visit in January finding Cornish Coaster, Doom Bar, plus a Wantsum waiting in the cellar, while in February Doom Bar and Ravening Wolf were on the handpumps. At Shepherdswell's **Bell** the normal choice is Directors and Doom Bar.

And at our two previous Pubs of the Year from 2015 and 2016 the normal wide selection with heavy representation from Kent – various visits to the **Carpenters**, Coldred finding beers from Gadds, Dark Star, Rockin' Robin, Yeovil, Kent, Phipps and Hopdaemon, while at the **Wrong Turn**, Barfreestone choice included Wantsum, Butcombe, Hop Fuzz Martello, Musket, Gadds and Clark's. A mile away in Eythorne the **Crown** was selling Young's Bitter in early March.

**Chance**, Guston: Always one or two real ales available, often including the now rarely seen Draught Bass, which was accompanied on a recent visit by Greene King Yardbird. At the **Plough**, Ripple retains ESB a regular, accompanied by one or more of the Ripple Steam brews, and various guests. Late April saw John Smith's Bitter on the



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handpumps, a rarity for our area.

At St. Margarets Bay, a visit to the **Coastguard** earlier in the year found Master Brew, Spitfire and a beer from Rudgate, continuing Shep's policy of bringing in guests from other breweries. "Good value food, and restaurant full even on a Tuesday", however, as so often the case these days, "Not much room for drinkers though."

**Crown Inn**, Finglesham: Dark Star Hophead and beers from Canterbury Ales remain popular, however recent months have seen some more unusual additions to the selection – Wadworth Dirty Rucker, Caledonian Edinburgh Castle and Wychwood Dryneck. Also, Theakston Atlantic Red, "in great condition and flavoursome." At Hacklinge, Doom Bar and Greene King IPA have been available recently at the **Coach & Horses**.

**Five Bells**, Eastry: With an ever changing choice of guests, beer selection of late has included Slater's Blitzen, Old Speckled Hen and IPA from Greene King, Black Sheep Best Bitter, Wantsum Black Prince, Adnams Ghost Ship, Goody Good Heavens and Good Sheppard, Young's Bitter, Jennings Cumberland, Fuller's London Pride, Portobello Star, Wadworth 6X, Rudgate Ruby Mild, and St Austell Proper Job. Meanwhile the Easter weekend saw the now regular annual beer festival – good selection of ale, several ciders, music and rather busy.

In early February a visit to the **Royal Oak**, Nonington, found Dark Star Hophead and Greene King IPA, while at the nearby **Griffins Head**, Chillenden Shepherd Neame Master Brew was on the handpumps.

**Jackdaw**, Denton: Timothy Taylor brews have featured here over recent months – both Landlord and Boltmaker making an appearance. Also available have been **Spitfire Gold**, Ringwood

Razorback and Tribute. At the **Duke of Cumberland** in Barham Wadworth 6X, Greene King IPA and Harveys Sussex were on the handpumps in mid-February.

## FOLKESTONE

At **Harveys** Courage Best and Bombardier remain the regulars, and Bombardier also at the **Happy Frenchman** in early March along with Doom Bar. A great variety as always at the **Firkin** where choice over recent months has included Gadds Dr Sunshine and Oatmeal Stout, Kent Pale and Prohibition, Breakwater Cowjuice, Torside Yellow Peak, and XPA and Animal Kiwi from XT.

At **Chambers** a visit in early March found McCanns Harry Hop, Adnams Lighthouse and One in the Chambers from Range, while in Church Street Purity Mad Goose, Doom Bar, Bombardier and Youngs Bitter were on the handpumps at the Pullman. Later in the month Exmore Gold was available.

In the Bayle Harveys Sussex and Greene King IPA remain the regulars at the **Guildhall**, with one or two guests – Hobgoblin being seen on a visit earlier in the year. And more Hobgoblin at the **British Lion** along with Ringwood Fortyniner and Banks's Bitter. At **Kipps** a wide selection of ales over recent months including Romney Marsh Mellow, Pig and Porter Stout, Grady's Red Baron, Banks & Taylor Empire, Leeds Ascension, Portobello Stout, Robinsons Sport of Thrones, Slaters Ultra and Tonbridge Countryman.

At Wetherspoon's **Sam Peto** visits earlier in the year found among others, standards Abbot, Ruddles and Doom Bar, plus Elland Beyond the Pale, Wickwar Tale, White Horse Idiot, Jaipur and Evan Evans St. David's Ale.

In the Stade Harveys Sussex, Broadside, Landlord and Doom Bar have

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# — 2016 —



# HARVEYS

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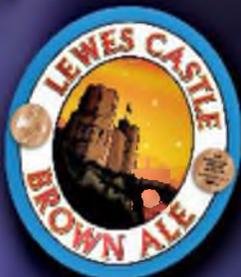


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**BEER OF  
THE FESTIVAL**

*Eastbourne Beer  
Festival 2015*



**BEER OF  
THE  
FESTIVAL**

*South Downs Beer  
& Cider Festival 2015*

**SUSSEX  
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OF THE  
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appeared regularly at the **Mariner**, accompanied on different visits by Crispin Ale, Wantsum Hengist, London Pride and St. Austell Proper Job. Along the road at the **Ship** in early March real ales were Doom Bar, Bombardier and Young's Special, while a visit to the **East Cliff Tavern** found Ripple Steam Farmhouse, Dark Star Hop Head.

An Ashford, Folkestone and Romney Marsh Branch bus trip in mid-April toured a number of village pubs: **King's Arms**, Elham – Golden Braid, Harvey's Best, Skrimshander; **Abbot's Fireside**, Elham – Old Dairy Blue Top, Whitstable Hüll, Wantsum 1381; **Coach & Horses**, Lyminge – Purity UBU, Black Sheep Baba, London Pride; **Gatekeeper**, Etchinghill – McCanns Harry Hop, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker, Wantsum Yellowtail, plus also at the bar, the brewer from *Angels & Demons*.

Meanwhile, at Paddlesworth, the choice of late at the **Cat & Custard Pot** has included Master Brew, Wantsum Grim Reaper, Gadds Seaside and Green King IPA.

In Sandgate the newly established Amazing Brewery at the **Ship** goes from strength to strength. A compact four barrel plant, its ales are now regularly on sale in the pub – in mid-March both Cotter VC and a very good tasting blond were available, alongside the pub's traditional line up of Hophead, Summer Lightning, Greene King IPA and Abbot. Across the road at **Inn Doors**, a visit earlier in the year found Sandgate Special from Four Candles and Hop Fuzz English.

In Hythe, its counterpart, the **Potting Shed**, can be relied upon for a varying selection, recent months choice including Ulveston Flying Elephant, Long Man Bitter, Musket Flintlock, Young's Bitter and McCanns Harry Hop. Around the corner at the **Carousel**, normally two or three real ales are available – a

visitor earlier in the year recording Ruffles Best plus an unnamed golden ale.

At the **White Hart** in mid-March Seaside, Hophead and Green King IPA were on the handpumps, and at the **Red Lion** a choice of Old Dairy Red Top and Youngs Bitter. Youngs Bitter also at the **Three Mariners** alongside Skrimshander and a couple from the new Range Brewery.

## CANTERBURY

**New Inn**, Havelock Street: With up to seven real ales normally available, the range will see a major expansion for the annual Spring Bank Holiday beer festival from Thursday evening until Monday – 27 beers and ciders including Blue Monkey BG Sips and from Thornbridge Jaipur and Peverell, plus entertainment and barbecue.

And a Bank Holiday beer festival also scheduled for the **Haywain**, Bramling (see advert page 36), where a visit earlier in the year found Ripple Steam, London Pride and Bombardier on the handpumps. Ripple Steam also at the **Duke William**, Ickham along with Landlord and Wantsum One Hop. At Wickhambreaux at the **Rose** there was Greene king IPA, Bombardier and Bombardier Gold.

In Wincheap, at last visit, Harveys Sussex, and Greene King IPA and mild were available at the **King's Head**, while the **Chequers** Stone Street was selling Old Dairy Red Top, Hophead and Skinners Ginger Tosser. At Bossingham during the Six Nations the **Hop Pocket** was offering Belhaven Grand Slam and Caledonian Kentish Hop Maker, while at the **Rose and Crown**, Stelling Minnis Youngs Bitter, Canterbury Ales Merchants and Goacher's Dark could be found.

At Bishopsbourne, in the **Mermaid** master Brew was accompanied by one of Shep's guests – Nethergate Growler.



# KENT SMALL BREWERY NEWS

**Amazing**, Ship Inn, Sandgate Modifications to the four barrel plant were completed earlier in the year and cask ale is back in regular production, and in the pub. No plans to brew craft key keg. (See Local News)

**Angels and Demons**, Capel Le Ferne Two ranges in cask, bottles and KeyKeg – McCanns, a more traditional English style ale, currently including Graham's (4.2% English Bitter), Harry Hop (dry hopped 3.7% pale ale) and Hockley Soul (4.2% oatmeal stout); and Angels & Demons, more American craft beer influenced and includes ADH-Me (5.2% American Pale Ale), second cask finished at this year's White Cliffs Festival. Additionally there are one-off brews and seasonal beers.

**Breakwater**, Dover Current beers include Pale Ale (3.5%), Docker's Porter (4.1%), Paper Aeroplane Flight IPA (6.1%) which won Beer of the Festival at this year's White Cliffs Festival, Cow Juice Stout and HMS Minno Mild (2.8%). The Brewery Tap opens 6pm Thursday/Friday and from 12 noon Saturday/Sunday.

**Brew Buddies**, Swanley New beers include Session Buddie (3.8 - 4.0%) for spring, plus a single hop series as 'one offs'. Core cask ales are selling well, along with those in cans and bottles. A beer festival is anticipated for summer. The 'Hoppers Hut' in Sidcup is doing well.

**Brumaison**, Marden Started brewing in November 2016 with a 10 barrel plant. Currently two ales: BB Traditional (3.6%), GB Golden Blonde (4.4%).

**By The Mile**, Broadstairs Producing beer for Cliftonville Farmers Market in Kent. February saw a 5.8% ESB being brewed, and a 4% pale ale called 'Kiss Me Quick', is planned for Planet Thanet Easter Beer Festival.

**Canterbury Ales**, Chartham In February a porter was being brewed.

**Canterbury Brewers**, The Foundry, Canterbury Brewing capacity has increased to six barrels, and a gluten-free bottled beer is planned. The core beer range remains the same. Red Rye (not Little Red Rye) won the Gold Award for CBOB London and SE Area Speciality Beer.

**Caveman**, Swanscombe The brewery is currently ticking over with Caveman Citra and Megalithic ales being brewed in January. Nick has managed to source Citra hops due to his extensive brewing contacts.

**Farriers Arms**, Farriers Arms, Mersham Currently producing Farriers 1606 plus, back in the winter Chestnut Cob (4.4%). Bottle conditioned 1606 also available.

**Folkestone Brewery**, Folkestone A new Brewery. No more news at present.

**Four Candles**, Four Candles, St Peters Continuing to produce one-off batches of each beer, with some going out to other pubs. Trialling a pilsner malt and hops to produce a cask lager.

**Goacher's**, Maidstone Stout, available until around Easter, will be replaced by Silver Star for summer.

**Goody Ales**, Herne "The Cathedral, a special place of worship of the product of the bine and the grain" overlooking the brewery's fields and hop garden, opens 4 - 7pm weekdays and Saturdays, and summer Sundays 10am - 6pm. Each month,



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Firkins at Full Moon have to date included music, film, Morris dancing and Medieval re-enactment. Also new – Beer on the Pier micro pub on Herne Bay pier.

**Hop Fuzz**, West Hythe The brewery tap continues to operate on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays – provision of food planned to start earlier in the year.

**Hopdaemon**, Newnham New recent beers include Christmas Ale (4.4%), a brown ale with hint of ginger, Hopdaemon Red (4.2%) with fresh season Kentish Hops, and, in bottle, Vincent Price Black Cat, although not bottle conditioned.

**Isla Vale Alesmiths**, Margate Donkey Danglers amber ale (4.1%) was brewed again for the local bike chapters' anniversary at The London Tavern. Two Halves (4.0%) pale session beer, is brewed for the Two Halves in Margate, while Ninkasi blonde pale elderflower ale (4.5%) is selling well. Bosun's Best (sweet traditional bitter) is only available at The Wheel Alehouse, Birchington, and a small local beer festival took Portly Pig porter (5.2%) in April. Production of golden ales Golding Delicious and Natural Blonde, started late winter. New premises still being sought.

**Kent**, Birling Twelfth Night Squared took stout category first at the Champion Beer of Britain regional final in December. Beer is being exported and a Belgian style Abbey beer, Abbey 2016 (6.2%), was brewed for the winter. Summit (single hop pale ale) returned for Christmas. Black Mirror sold well in the winter, while Prohibition is now back in full production. Spring will see a new range of beers.

**Larkins**, Chiddingstone Brewing continues, including a green hop ale, and distribution remains unchanged.

**Maidstone Brewing Company**, Maidstone Brewing of Eight, First Light and Alpha 38, continues. These are frequently on sale at the Flower Pot, and are now starting to be seen more widely.

**Margate**, Margate Located in the former Cottage PH in the High St. work on the basement ten barrel brewery and first and second floor bars is nearing completion. A mixture of ales is planned, including a barley wine, with brewing advice being sought from Germany, Belgium and Holland as well as the UK.

**Musket**, Maidstone Two or three brewings a week to keep pace with demand. Good reception for light copper coloured new beer, Ball Puller (device to extract a musket ball lodged in a barrel – 4%). Green hop beer, Flash in the Pan, completely sold out, and very positive comments about Powder Burn porter (5%), replaced in February by Matchlock Mild for spring and into summer.

**NauticAles**, Ramsgate No new brewing during the winter but flagship, Maiden Voyage, resumed in spring, with a cask donated to the Thanet Beer Festival.

**Old Dairy**, Tenterden Snow Top (6%), won silver in CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain 2016, and, in February, bronze, in its category, at the National Winter Beers Festival in Norwich. Brewery tours, including joint tours with the Kent and East Sussex Railway are going well.

**Pig & Porter**, Royal Tunbridge Wells Brewing capacity was due be expanded in March. Core range is Skylarking, Fatal Flaw, Red Spider Rye and Dance First. Ashburnham will alternate with a new lower ABV pale ale and Slow Black oatmeal stout will remain a winter beer. The single hop pale series continues to go well, and a strong pale ale (5.2%) is being developed. An alternative to isinglass is being sought, to create vegan friendly beers, and hopefully improve flavour and shelf life.

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**Ramsgate, Broadstairs** SheSells SeaShells (Light Summer Ale 4.7%) is now available all year. Earlier in the year seasonal ales were Überhop, Oatmeal Stout, Dogbolter and West Coast IPA. March to May saw Dr Sunshine's Special Friendly – ideal for revitalisation after a hard day at the grindstone, says Eddie.

**Range Ales, Lympne** Brewing for over a year, seasonal ales, CQB (summer) and Black Ops (autumn) joined the two regulars and proved popular. One in the Chambers is brewed for Chambers in Folkestone, and winter festivities saw the premium spiced Winter Fire (5.1%).

**Rockin' Robin** Boughton Monchelsea Autumn/winter saw dark ales Blizzard of Oz and Portly Robin plus a popular Christmas Special, Jingle Bell Rock (4.2%) – American style pale ale. Ruckin' Robin golden ale (3.9%), was brewed for the Six Nations rugby, Mildly Rockin' is being brewed for May, and 6.0% Belgian style Kriek beer is planned for late spring. The Beer Barn brewery tap opens 4-9pm Fridays and 12-6pm Saturdays (extensions possible) – beers £3 a pint. Quizzes or live music feature most Friday nights plus the odd special event.

**Romney Marsh, New Romney** December was their best month yet. 2017 will see Marsh Mellow in bottles and new beers are currently being developed. Beers are regularly supplied to a dozen pubs in Kent and East Sussex. For the second year running, the brewery is a finalist in the Kent Beer of the Year category with Romney Amber in "The Taste of Kent Awards 2017".

**Swan, West Peckham** Last winter saw the 6.5% Christmas Ale – bottle of port in every barrel. By March the choice was Trumpeter, Bewick and Fuggles with Cygnet due shortly. May might see a milk stout replace the mild, which did not sell so well in recent years, and Chinook and Ginger Swan could return in summer.

**Tír Dhá Ghlas, Dover** Regular beers are Jimmy's Riddle Bitter (4.7%), Pig's Ear Bitter (3.7%), Jolly Roger Mild (3.7%), one or two of which usually available in Cullins Yard plus bottle-conditioned versions. Occasional other local outlets. A new beer Lifeboat Porter (4.7%) has recently been seen at the Rack of Ale.

**Tonbridge, East Peckham** 2016's three new beers, Golden Rule, Old Chestnut and IPA (their first keg beer), were all successful. They now supply Wetherspoons in Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells with a full range. February saw three new beers – American Pale (5%), Countryman Bitter (4%), and red ale, Firebrick (4.5%). They remain committed to using Kent grown hops.

**Wantsum, St. Nicholas at Wade** Relocation from Hersden to the new larger 20 barrel plant at St. Nicholas Court Farm should have been completed in April. Cask to continue as core product, but, to satisfy growing demand, with some keg production. A brewery shop will be open Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm. The core beers – 1381, Black Prince Mild, Montgomery, Imperium, Dynamo and Red Raddle – were due for review. More's Head is no longer brewed.

**Westerham, Westerham** Tap Room & Shop opened in December, which in due course will offer four cask conditioned and four craft beers. The new brewery will open in the following months. Tours and tasting events were planned from March.

**Whitstable, Grafty Green** Faversham's Corner Tap now open. January saw Cockle Warmer Winter Ale (4.7%) and the Six Nations, Try Time! red ale (4.2%).

## Situations Vacant

Tony Wells, our Branch Pubs Officer, has expressed his intention of standing down at June's AGM. As a result a number of positions and roles will become vacant:

- Pubs Campaigns Officer (see below)
- Pubs Preservation Officer (see below)
- Pubs Database Coordinator
- Good Beer Guide Coordinator
- Pub of the Year Coordinator
- LocAle Coordinator
- Cider Representative

You can find more information about these roles on CAMRA's Member's Dashboard

### **Pubs Campaigns Officer/Pubs Preservation Officer**

Monitor and report on pub activity across the branch; Coordinate campaigns relating to pubs under threat of closure or unwanted changes; Keep abreast of council policies and plans; Assist in maintaining an accurate pub database

### **Important**

The Branch Committee has a number of other vacant positions, including Treasurer and Social Secretary. If these are not filled the branch will struggle to operate. This may cause the branch, including the beer festival, to become defunct and close.

If you'd be interested in volunteering for one or more of these roles or have any questions then please feel free to contact Tony at [pubs.officer@camra-dds.org.uk](mailto:pubs.officer@camra-dds.org.uk).

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# The National News

By Martin Atkins

**185,000 & Growing** CAMRA membership continues to expand, the recent Manchester Beer and Cider Festival signing up over 300 new members from the near 15,000 attendance, including the Campaign's 185,000<sup>th</sup>. CAMRA now has more members than any of the UK's political parties, except the Labour Party, and is among the country's top membership organisations. The average annual increase is now almost 10,000.

**Parliament Keeps Up Pressure** New chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Save the Pub Group is Labour MP for Chesterfield, and former shadow pubs minister, Toby Perkins. He thanked outgoing chairman, and group founder in 2009, Greg Mulholland, for all his hard work campaigning for pubs on issues ranging from pubco reform to protecting pubs from closure. He said the group would maintain a strong level of interest across parliament on key issues facing pubs including the code and adjudicator, planning and supermarket threats, taxation and the wider economic pressures facing the industry.

**New Pub Protection** Meanwhile, after years of campaigning by CAMRA, the Government has now changed the law and removed the loophole that enabled developers to demolish pubs or convert them to another retail use without applying for planning permission. The legislation followed a vote in the House of Lords earlier in the year, where by a substantial majority of 90, they proposed that the Neighbourhood Planning Bill should be amended by removing permitted development rights from pubs. That this amendment was both initiated, and subsequently

adopted, CAMRA sees as in no small way a reflection of the influence of the Campaign, and of its membership who sent over 8,000 emails to politicians in support of the argument over the first few months of the year.

**Heineken Takes Major Stake** As reported in our winter edition Heineken is set to become one of the UK's major pub owners, ranking it alongside brewers Greene King and Marston's, and pubco Enterprise. In a reverse to the general trend over recent decades, which has seen a separation of brewing interests and pub ownership, the Dutch brewer is set to acquire 1,900 pubs from Punch Taverns, giving it, together with those acquired from the takeover of Scottish and Newcastle ten years ago, some 3,000 plus across the country.

In response to obvious concerns that the former Punch pubs will face a reduced choice of beer, Heineken have stated that tenants will not be forced to purchase only Heineken brands, saying they will start with what is right for each pub and will work together with licensees to ensure they can offer the appropriate drinks selection. The company added that Heineken would adhere to the Pubs Code and promised further discussion with CAMRA once the deal was completed.

However, despite such assurances the Competition and Markets Authority has declared it will investigate the proposed deal. CAMRA welcomed the intervention, seeing the merger as possibly reducing competition and lessening choice for beer drinkers, but feels that an in-depth analysis is required and has called for a full market investigation.

**Live Near a Pub** According to a YouGov survey by property website TheHouseShop.com houses near pubs are more desirable (23%) than either those near banks (20%), schools (17%), or places of worship (7%).

**A Vote for Community Power** The current interest in community ownership has received a valuable boost with the award of CAMRA national Pub of the Year to the George and Dragon in Hudswell, North Yorkshire. The pub, which closed in 2008 and left the village with no facilities other than a hall, was bought back by the villagers and reopened in June 2010. As well as being a pub it also supports a library, a shop staffed by volunteers and allotments.

The George and Dragon's success in community ownership, is just one example of a movement which is gaining strength right across the country. As we report elsewhere, the campaign to save the Chequer in Ash has recently undertaken a share scheme, while in Balcombe, West Sussex locals came together just eight months ago to save the Half Moon. After registering it as an ACV, a public meeting in October attracted over 150 people and pledges of support. A community benefit society was set up and £300,000 raised with help from the Plunkett Foundation. In January the pub reopened.

And even if not taken into community ownership, more pubs are receiving the protection of being designated as an Asset of Community Value. In our own county, residents of Brasted, in west Kent, hope that they have secured the future of the community's one remaining pub, the Stanhope Arms, now that their application for ACV status has been granted. Over the last twenty years three other pubs have closed and one has become effectively

a restaurant, with darts and bat and trap teams ousted. The Stanhope has six handpumps and a range of ales including four changing guests, often the choice of the pub's regulars.

**Brewers Relocate** Both Brains of Cardiff and Everards of Narborough, Leicestershire are currently planning to redevelop their brewery sites. In Cardiff the old Brains site alongside the River Taff is destined for a mixture of offices, hotels and apartments, plus a waterside leisure zone, with a new brewery located somewhere in the city. Because of its heritage value the brewery building and chimney will be retained. Everards move will see an expansion of the Fosse Shopping Park and the construction of a smaller brewery at nearby Enderby. The brewer plans to scale back production and cut out contract brewing to concentrate just on their own beers.

**Late Night Levy Latest** The use of late night levies to offset the cost of late night policing continues its sporadic implementation across the country. Tower Hamlets in London's East End, is a recent example, where pub operators will be required to pay between £400 and £4,400 each to finance extra police on the streets. However, criticism has come from trade organisations and consumers, who have warned that businesses will be badly hit. The British Beer and Pub Association said that pubs are unfairly burdened by the levy, which is effectively a tax, even though they might be solving problems through local partnership initiatives. Campaigners argue that a Business improvement District, like that established in Cheltenham, and which draws financial contributions across businesses of all types would be a better solution.

**Deal With It** – Deal's local Green community group has launched a Community Hop Growing project in Deal and the surrounding district. Starting earlier this year it comprises a patchwork farm in Deal made up of peoples' gardens, allotments, and community gardens & spaces. There are similar successful 'Grow Beer' community schemes around the country, and with 130 gardens by the end of April, they say they have been a little overwhelmed by the response



They have also teamed up with **Ripple Steam Brewery** to help produce the beer and mentor the club. They anticipate that it may well take a few years to make their own batch economic with a commercial brewer but the end objective is to produce a locally grown Deal Beer. The idea, they say, is to work together to grow, harvest, learn, have fun with Hops and produce some quality local beer.

The first year timetable is as follows:

- New members order hop plants (last order date 23<sup>rd</sup> February)
- Planting of Hops Feb/March
- Workshop on Hop Management in April
- Harvest on one day in September
- October hopefully some beer

"The plan is to produce a green hop beer with the group looking at hop drying options in later years. We have planted a dwarf hop variety 'Prima Donna'. The crop in the first year will be a little hit or miss as the plants establish themselves. The biggest challenge for the group will be to coordinate the harvest on one day across all the gardens in September."



Future plans include regular meetings on the history of beer and hops, visits to breweries and hop gardens, and a mini-Oktoberfest to celebrate the first brew.

Tel: 01304 372673

Email: [Info@DealHopFarm.org.uk](mailto:Info@DealHopFarm.org.uk)

Facebook Group: DealHopFarm



# RAMBLINGS & RUMBLINGS

*By Stroller*

**Mon 2 Jan – Rack of Ale** (*Mordue Howay in a Manger + others*). **Admiral Owen** (*Pig & Porter Ash Can Rantings*), *Tonbridge Old Chestnut*) Fag end of 'Festive Season' – bored kids running round.

**Sat 7 Jan – Ashford Folkestone & Romney Marsh Pub of the Year trip: Farriers Arms, Mersham** (*Farriers 1606*). **Bowl, Hastingleigh** (*Hopdaemon Session Ale, Hopdaemon Red*). **Timber Batts, Bodsham** (*Madcat Kaos, Hop Fuzz Tomahawk, Hopdaemon Golden Braid, Xmas Ale*) Not a POTY candidate, but seemed rude to pass 2 miles away and not call in. Not long re-opened, and mainly a drinker's pub it seems.

**Sat 14 Jan – Bowl, Hastingleigh** (*Rockin Robin Bitter, RPA, Hopdaemon Red*) **Five Bells, Brabourne** (*Hopdaemon Red, Brabourne Stout, Tonbridge Blonde, Hookers Hooch*) First visit here, interesting beers, but, packed with foodies Sat lunchtime, hardly a 'pub' (*my feeling as well, and, from what I recall, not cheap – Ed*). **Potting Shed, Hythe**, (*Ulverston Flying Elephant*) Another packed venue late afternoon, fortunately with 'drinkies' though. The world and his wife and their dog!

**Tues 17 Jan – Coastguard** (*Master Brew, Spitfire, Whitstable Bay*) Good value food, and restaurant full even on a Tues in Jan. Not much room for drinkers though.

**Sat 21 Jan – Outer Dover Crawl: Railway Bell** (*Sharps Atlantic, Abbot, Doom Bar*). **Fox** (*Pride of Sheffield, Spitfire, Butcombe Bitter, Hop Back Winter Lightning*). Past the defunct Dublin, and finding no sign of life in Royal Oak at 2.15 proceeded to the **Cricketers** (*Hooky Gold*), then **Bull** (*Tetley Cask*) and finally **Breakwater** (*Dockers porter + others*)

**Fri 24 Jan – King's Head, Shadoxhurst** (*Master Brew, Spitfire, Hog Island (Guest) @ £4!!*) Long Trek over the other side of Ashford to nice country pub almost deserted Fri lunchtime. Festive only drinkers, we're missing you awfully!

**Sat 4 Feb – Farriers, Mersham** (*Farriers 1606, Chestnut Cob, Long Man Sussex Pride*). A community-owned pub with brewery, successfully saved from closure, and last year's Ashford, Folkestone and Romney Marsh, branch Pub of the Year. Not easy to get to but well worth the effort – quite busy with drinkers Sat afternoon.

**Thurs 9 Feb – Fox** (*Pride of Sheffield*) Two courses for a fiver Thurs lunchtime, then long walk to **Wrong Turn**, but got there in daylight! (*Hop Fuzz Martello, Butcombe Gold, Wantsum Black Prince*)

**Fri 10 Feb – Mash Tun** (*Northumberland North Sea Blonde, Simcoe Red, Westerham Bohemian Rhapsody, British Bulldog*) Not a good idea coming here after dentist – no taste in the beers! **Lanes** (*Downland Hidden Colour + others*)

**Sat 11 Feb – Firkin Alehouse, Folkestone** (*Dark Star, BAD Love Over Gold, Tiny Rebel Snafu, Marble Mosaic*) Called back to retrieve scarf left on Tues, would have been rude not to stay a while.

**Sat 25 Feb – Canterbury Branch Little Stour Stroll** Cold murky day, but surprisingly mud-free! **Haywain, Bramling** (*Goody Good Health*). **Duke William, Ickham**

(*Angels & Demons Bombay Social*) Foodie and up-market but managed to find a table just for drinkers without too much fuss. **Rose, Wickhambreux** (*Bombardier*). **Evenhill, Littlebourne** (*Sheps Whitstable Bay*)

**Fri 10 Mar – Roger Marples Festival (Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club)** Very quiet late afternoon. Always enjoy my visits here, civilised ambience, and reasonable beer prices. Wadworth's Horizon went down a treat!

**Sat 11 March – Fitzwalter, Goodnestone** (*Master Brew*) A few in watching rugby – or not as case may be. Then sudden influx of 12 or so youngish people, I'd guess from a church visit. One chap carefully sampled Master Brew, which he declared to his liking, just as well as only real ale on. "Oh, Whitstable Bay Lager, that sounds interesting", declared his lady friend. **Anchor, Wingham - Beer Festival** (*Hog's Back TEA*) down in bar. Located Festival eventually, in large room upstairs – good range of music, and beers at £3 (*Harvestoun Bitter n Twisted, Kent Cobnut, Mad Cap Outrageous, 1648 Signature*)

**Sun 12 March – Mariner, Folkestone** (*Crispin Ale, Broadside, Harveys Best*) Somewhere to watch football with drinkable ale – shome mishtake shorely

**Thur 30 Mar – Nick Blundell's Birthday Bash: Haywain, Bramling** (*Whitstable Native, London Pride, Welton's English Pride, Bombardier*) Good place to eat; Beer Festival 28-29 May. **Canterbury – Ingoldsby** (*Acorn Darkness + others*) Some interesting beers on for Beer Festival, but most far too strong for afternoon session. **Two Sawyers** (*Adnams Mosaic, Bombardier Burning Gold*) First visit here - very handy for city centre, pleasant enjoying March sunshine on rear patio. **Buttermarket** (*Fyne Ales Jarl, Timothy Taylor Dark Mild, Great Heck something or other*) Given location opposite cathedral, suggests a tourist trap, but really not. Would've been rude to pass **Trappist Bar**, so enjoyed Belgian bottled beers upstairs on terrace. **Thomas Tallis** (*Old Dairy Gold Top, Brew Buddies Rakau Pale + many Key Kegs*)

**Fri 7 Apr – Star, St Mary's** (*Range Amber, Youngs Ord, Ringwood 49er*) **Bell, Ivychurch** (*Betty Stoggs, Sharps Atlantic, Trelawney, Doom Bar*) A stronghold of Cornish beers for some reason - maybe there's still smuggling in these far away places! Which, talking of – **Smugglers, New Romney** (*Canterbury Merchants, Knights Ale, Tenterden Battle of Hastings, Oakham Bishop's Farewell*) Available beers rather strong for my taste. Raucous crowd early Fri evening.

**Sat 8 Apr – Bowl, Hastingleigh** (*Tonbridge Trad, Hopdaemon Red*). **Two Sawyers, Canterbury** (*Bombardier Burning Gold, Adnams Mosaic*) A nice relaxing haven from the Sat afternoon hustle and bustle.

**Sun 9 Apr – Wrong Turn** (*Goody Genesis, Gadds Dr Sunshine, Wantsum Black Prince*) Sunny Sunday weather bringing out the crowds!

**Tues 11 Apr – St Crispin, Worth** (*Gadds, London Pride, Doom Bar*) Excellent lunches! **Crown, Finglesham** (*Dark Star Hop Head, Moorhouse White Witch, Canterbury Miller's*). **Mermaid's Locker, Sandwich** (*Saltaire Pride, Gadds 3*) Only second visit – they do food too. I wonder if this qualifies as a micro? Answers on Facebook please, which I won't be seeing! Just about warm enough early evening to sit outside on patio at back.

# The Elephant

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# CHANNEL VIEW

**Town Pub** Last winter the Railway Station outside Walmer Station was demolished. No real surprise, as the pub has appeared distinctly neglected over recent years, and is of the type which sadly seems to be becoming increasingly marginalised by modern social trends. It joins the couple of score other pubs in our Branch area that have closed over the last twenty or so years, or are currently under threat, and which generally have one thing in common – they are traditional suburban or village locals.

The disappointing fact is, that pubs and bars are increasingly being concentrated into town centres. It was always a major strength of the British pub that as well as a place to enjoy a drink it also offered a valuable community service and consequently could be found distributed throughout residential areas in our towns and cities, and across the countryside in villages and hamlets. As well as offering ale and sometimes food, pubs provided a variety of games and pastimes, supported football and cricket teams, and were a venue for the meetings of societies and clubs.

And of course for many a traditional pub, those that remain, such a role still exists, but for the variety of newer pubs and bars it is a rarity. By definition micropubs have a problem with space, but within that confine are often obliging. However, for many others it is just a matter of town centre location, and food and drink – a model understandably responding to the market, but nevertheless leaving a gap.

One of the new style was recently analysed by beer writer Pete Brown in the *Morning Advertiser*. In September 2015, at the Great British Pub Awards, Purecraft Bar in Birmingham was named

Best Beer Pub/Bar in the UK, and a traditional local it certainly isn't.

Open for a year and a half at the time of the award, Pete describes it as initially appearing as an unlikely candidate for a great beer pub, “all high ceilings, bare floors and minimal decoration”, you might well write it off as cold and unwelcoming. However, he says, you would be wrong. The pub benefited from the category embracing both pubs and bars, and perhaps also for including for the first time keg beers as well as cask – Purecraft sells a lot of keg.

“But,” says Pete, “to think in this binary way – pub or bar, cask or keg – is becoming less and less useful in a rapidly changing world. It completely misses the point of why Purecraft is set up the way it is.” The bar is designed to appeal to women as much as men, while a central element, is matching beer with food. “Given that more and more drinking occasions involve food,” says Pete, “and given the increasing literature available on how to pair the two (beer writer Stephen Beaumont's new *Beer and Food Companion* should be on every publican's Christmas wish list), it's frankly bewildering that more pubs are not pushing this link.”

With all due respect, this magazine finds it not bewildering at all. Obviously we have no problem with pubs appealing to woman, but food should really be an add-on, however much we appreciate it. Pubs were created for the purposes of drinking beer and talking, everything else is ancillary – darts, skittles, quizzes, support for football and cricket teams, and, yes, even food.

At Purecraft staff discuss the menu

each day, and are invited to sample the recommended beers. The beer range, its storage and presentation, is the responsibility of one member of staff, there are monthly training sessions, and regular beer tastings. Generally Pete was very impressed by staff knowledge and enthusiasm, and while he has reservations about “a retail-based approach to selling beer”, such doubts were outweighed by the sheer quality of beer.

But is this really what the ordinary real ale drinker wants – pristine beer, in pristine surroundings? We submit that it is not. Good beer, yes, but also characterful beer, and beer which does not always taste exactly the same one day from the next, even out of the same barrel. In fact part of the interest and attraction of real ale is the way many brews will change character and qualities as a barrel empties – and we do not mean descending to vinegar if left on too long.

We must beware of making beer and pubs too precious, of moving away from their original community function. Perhaps the photo of the price board that accompanied Pete’s article says rather more than any words. Prices (presumably for a pint) of the half dozen beers shown started at £3.70 and rose to £5.00, with the average £4.20: and in a part of the country where beer is traditionally comparatively cheap. Admittedly, average strength was around 5% ABV, but it still marked a substantial premium over prices in East Kent or across much of the country.

And sadly these are two sides of the same coin – pubs being taken upmarket and distancing themselves from their working class roots; increasing concentration on food, sophisticated surroundings and exotic brews; restaurants without the formality: and all with margins to match. Is this where it’s going, drinking and dining for the well-

heeled, while for the rest its cans from the supermarket?

**Village Pub** By contrast with the fashionable concerns of the big city the villagers of Ash just want a pub. They are not alone. Across the country many are finding that what was once an established part of local life is now up for sale to the highest bidder, despite the impact that this might have on their community – and in Ash, as in many other places, the community is fighting back.

As we report in local news, after a year or so of campaigning, fund raising and establishing an organisation, the Save the Chequer campaign group have recently been raising finance with the intention of purchasing the pub for the village. A daunting prospect it might seem, but there have been many recent successful examples, and the challenge is not as difficult or uneven as it might first appear.

As we report in National News, residents of Balcombe in West Sussex, achieved just that in a matter of months to retain the Half Moon. And locally we have the fine example of the community owned Farriers at Mersham, which seems to be going from strength to strength, and where the operation includes its own brewery.

The particular irony, or perhaps more accurately injustice, is that many of the threatened pubs are perfectly viable, as has been proved by the success of many after a local takeover. Unfortunately they also make attractive residences, or in the case of many towns and cities, locations for supermarkets or blocks of flats.

The Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District CAMRA Branch wholeheartedly supports the Chequer Campaign, and wishes it the greatest success.



# A WALK ACROSS DEAL

Martin Atkins describes the latest pub walk through the town

The first Saturday in March saw another of John Pitcher's Branch pub walks – on this occasion from the centre of Deal to outskirts at Mongeham, with the intention of calling in at all real ale outlets on the way. Accordingly six of us assembled early afternoon at the **Sir Norman Wisdom**, Wetherspoon's Deal operation – convenient as both a breakfast/lunch opportunity for those requiring sustenance and, being just a few yards from the Queen Street bus stop, as a dropping off point for those travelling from Dover.

Operation might be considered somewhat pejorative, but, while carrying a good variety of real ale, it is sometimes difficult to view the establishment as purely a pub; in fact, at least during the day, eating always appears to take precedence over drinking, and, being popular with families, shrill younger voices can sometimes give more than a hint of school dinner time. Anyway those eating enjoyed their food and all of us our beer, which included, Ruddles, Abbot, Skrimshander, Doom Bar, and a rather mysterious looking dark brew which at least one of us, having over indulged on stout the night before, conspicuously avoided. There was also a St. David's Day commemorative beer from Evan Evans, which was of us drank, and went down very well.

Around two o'clock we were off, John leading us the short distance away from the town centre, to the **Hole In The Roof** – a very brief and disappointing stop however, as the pub, for many years a reliable outlet for Directors, seems to have currently abandoned real ale. The **Eagle**, similarly, did not delay us, the absence of real ale there, having already been established. So, it was over the railway bridge for a turn right and through roads and alleyways into Church Path, along the course of the old inland highway from Upper Deal to Sandown, when much of what is now the main town was low lying marsh and shingle banks.

John was now very much in his element, a footpath, and, paved and tarmacked, notably dry and free of mud, although doubling as a cycle route the occasional cyclist had to be accommodated. A brisk ten minute walk and our next destination appeared – and another disappointment, the **Bowling Green Tavern**, closed and sporting a sign offering the pub as a business opportunity. On we went.

Before long we were in London Road, and opposite, the **Magnet**. Again, we feared disappointment, our initial attempts to gain entry confronted by an apparently closed door (which subsequently transpired not to be), but then what real pub does not have a closed, locked or blocked up door. However the car park entrance stood open and we were soon enjoying well-kept pints of Master Brew. The Magnet is a good community local with darts, TV, pool, and, very much a rarity nowadays, a



The walkers enjoy their pint

bar billiard table. We chatted to the landlady and stayed for about an hour before leaving for our next destination, the **Farrier**, in the heart of Upper Deal opposite the church.

As reported in our winter edition, the Farrier was chosen as Branch Pub of the Season for winter 2016/17, and we took the opportunity to combine two events into one, and we were joined by Pubs Officer Tony Wells to present the certificate to landlord Dayle before we left. Meanwhile, we took the opportunity to enjoying that day's selection of ale – Wadworth 6X, Courage Best and St Austell Proper Job. (See Pub of the Season, page 8)



**The Farrier, Deal**

The afternoon was now drawing to a close and the light starting to fade, as we set off for the last part of our journey, the fifteen minute walk to Mongeham, arriving outside the **Leather Bottle** shortly before five o'clock, and just in time for landlord Dan Warwick to open up and let us in. Dan, who many remember from his stint running the Flotilla and Firkin (now the Duchess), has had the pub for about ten years and always keeps one or two real ales available in cooled barrels on the end of the bar, Marston's 61 deep being the choice that afternoon.

We had planned to move on along the road to the **Three Horseshoes**, but time and public transport wait for no one, and towards six o'clock we departed for the



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bus stop in St. Richards Road, and transport back into Deal, and thence to Dover or wherever, the Three Horseshoes reluctantly set aside for another time. Although only a five minute walk some of us cut it rather fine necessitating a run for the bus, not entirely welcome after several pints and for those not so young.

Despite the odd disappointment, a pleasant afternoon. Our thanks to John for organising it, and we looked forward to visiting more of our local pubs over the coming months.

## PUB FOR SUMMER

Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District CAMRA will shortly be choosing the Branch's Pub of the Season for Summer 2017, and we welcome all nominations. If you feel that your local (or for that matter any other pub in our Branch area) is a good pub for summer, if it has an attractive garden, or offers fine views on a summer's evening over the countryside or across the sea, or is simply a pleasant place to spend a relaxing few hours on a warm afternoon then let us know. Just contact us at [pots@camra-dds.org.uk](mailto:pots@camra-dds.org.uk), and before our Branch Meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> June.

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# BLACK COUNTRY BEER

## A look at the brewing history of this West Midlands region

*Any regular reader of Channel Draught will be aware that the West Midlands is one of the Beery Boaters' most favoured destinations, and at the heart of the West Midlands lies the Black Country. Situated to the west of Birmingham it comprises Wolverhampton, Dudley, Walsall and a dozen or so other towns in close proximity to each other, which as well as possessing the country's heaviest concentration of canals, is renowned for hot pork rolls, pork scratchings and some of the best "unspoil" pubs anywhere.*

*It also offers a great variety of beer at very reasonable prices, and recently BEER magazine, the quarterly sister publication of WHAT'S BREWING took a brief look at the Black Country's recent brewing history.*

The West Midlands was created in the same year that the *Good Beer Guide* was first published. The new county was introduced in 1974, in an administrative shake-up that tied together Birmingham, Coventry, the Black Country and other areas of Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire. The book was only able to recognise this in the second edition, but that was a mere technicality for early CAMRA members. This was a part of the country already well signposted as a heartland for good, traditional ale.

The West Midlands has never suffered quite the same brewing woes as other parts of Britain. Of course, the region has lost breweries and the closure of every one has been sorely felt, but it has never witnessed the total destruction seen in other areas.

When that first *Good Beer Guide* was published, there were still 11 breweries here – a heck of a trawl for the time. Of those 11 breweries, there have been some notable casualties since. Ansells in Birmingham belonged to Allied and closed in 1981, while the Mitchells and Butlers wing of Bass owned three sites – Cape Hill in Birmingham, Springfield in Wolverhampton, and Highgate in Walsall.

True to form, all three were eventually disposed of, Springfield closing in the 1990s, Cape Hill silenced in 2002 by new owners Coors and Highgate sold off. The last, despite several attempts to keep it alive, has also now ceased production, although its famed Dark Mild (3.4% ABV) is still produced under contract by Blue Bear brewery in Smethwick, which was founded in 2006. Blue Bear also brews Davenport's Original Bitter (4% ABV), an echo of Birmingham's Davenport's brewery – remembered for its home-delivery service – which like equally venerable Simpkins in Brierley Hill, became part of Greenall in the 1980s and was soon deemed surplus to requirements.

Of the survivors from those 1970s days, Wolverhampton & Dudley – known as Marston's, since taking over that Burton company – still operates Banks's in Wolverhampton, but closed the Julia Hanson brewery in Dudley in 1991. Holden's at Woodsetton, established in 1915, is now in the fourth generation of family control

that has seen the brewery extended in recent years, and there's another treasure a few miles away at Brierley Hill run by the fifth generation of the Batham family. Bathams is based behind the Vine – commonly known as the Bull & Bladder – an impressive, totally unspoilt pub with the famous inscription from Shakespeare's *Two Gentleman of Verona*, "Blessing of your heart, you brew good ale", emblazoned along the façade.



Also close by is the Olde Swan at Netherton, one of four surviving home brew houses at the outset of CAMRA. It was quaintly noted in the first *Good Beer Guide* under the name of its proprietress, Mrs Doris Pardoe, now, sadly, long deceased. (*The frosted glass in one window still carries the words MRS PARDOES BAR and the pub is widely known as Ma Pardoe's – Ed.*)



The Olde Swan resumed brewing early in the new millennium after a break of 13 years and is now one of a number of brewpubs in the region that include Craddock's at the Duke William in Stourbridge, Fownes at the Jolly Crispin in Upper Gornal and the splendid Beacon Hotel at Sedgley. Another unspoilt gem, the Beacon retains its historic brewhouse at the rear, complete with a sunken copper that looks like a Victorian hot tub. In 1920, a lady named Sarah Hughes purchased the pub after insurance money received

after her husband had died down the mines. She took to brewing the beer herself and her name was restored when production resumed after more than 30 years in 1987. Sarah Hughes is known for its Dark Ruby (6% ABV), a rich, strong mild that reflects the area's devotion to this ale style.

*Good Beer Guide 2017* lists a wonderful 31 breweries for the West Midlands. Among the most prominent arrivals in Sadler's, near Stourbridge, that opened in 2004, reviving a family business that closed in 1927. In 2008, the Backyard Brewhouse opened in Walsall and, in 2011, Byatt's started in Coventry. Both have enjoyed recent expansion. Two Towers in Birmingham was set up in 2010. The name was inspired by two landmarks – a water tower and a folly – which are said may have inspired part of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*.

Predating all of these, however, is Black Country Ales, the brainchild of former M&B and Highgate executive Angus McMeeking, who decided to harness the



local enthusiasm for cask ale by creating a beer-driven pub chain in which food service was deliberately limited. He restored a Victorian brewery at the back of the Old Bull's Head pub in Lower Gornal in 2003, and proceeded to grow the estate to the point where it now includes more than 30, many of which faced an uncertain future before his involvement. It's quite a success story and the brewery has now relocated to Kingswinford.

So, when drinking in the West Midlands, you get the best of both words. There are new



breweries to check out and a good number of companies that have been around for decades. The name may still be relatively new, but its down-to-earth, ale-loving people have never changed. They understand both value and tradition, and the fact the local brewing industry has remained in a relatively healthy state is no doubt a direct consequence of that.



*Jeff Evans* (BEER magazine)

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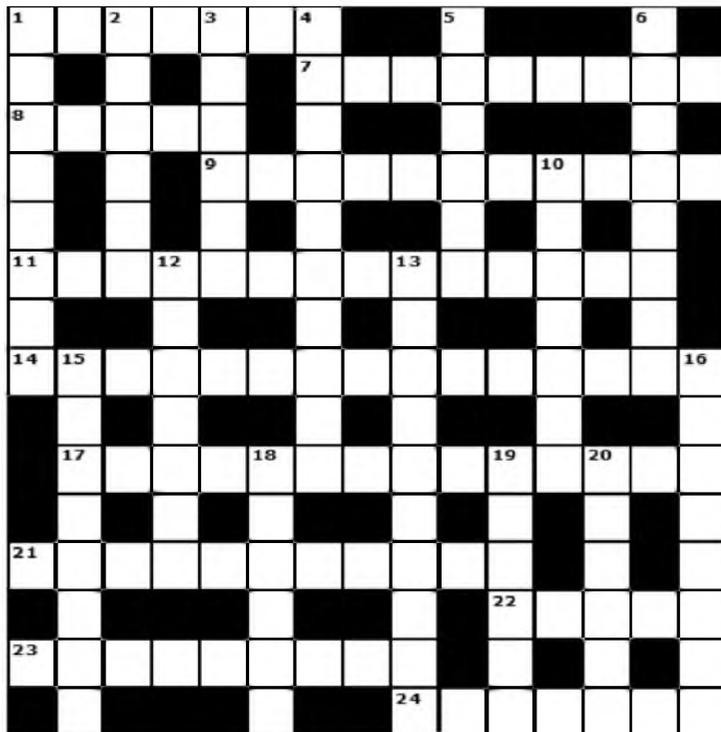


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Local ale and cider festival**



# UNCRYPTIC CROSSWORD

BY TRISHA WELLS



## Across

1. Sharp and forthright (7)
7. Genuine, not a fake (9)
8. Religious ceremonies (5)
9. Technique or ingredient known only to the manufacturer (5,6)
11. Pub in Goodnestone (10,4)
14. A boxer to practise with (8,7)
17. Pub in Hacklinge (between Deal and Sandwich) (5,3,6)
21. Gambling device, once known as a 'one-armed bandit' (4,7)
22. Immature insect (5)
23. Lens for near, intermediate and distance vision (9)
24. Airport in Uganda where Israeli commandos rescued hostages from an aircraft in 1976 (7)

## Down

1. Aircraft transports in an emergency (8)
2. Obtain by force or threats (6)
3. Confer an honour or gift (6)
4. 1942 movie starring Humphrey Bogart (10)
5. A spirit taken after a beer (6)
6. Pub landlord (8)
10. Custodian of a museum (7)
12. Swiss ski resort near the Matterhorn (7)
13. Light canvas shoe with a woven sole (10)
15. Strange – sounds like a beer from Theakston's (8)
16. Reverberate (8)
18. Nose to nose collision (4-2)
19. Big cat native to South America (6)
20. Beetle worshipped by the ancient Egyptians (6)

**Answers on Page 61**

The youthful image on Page 59 belongs to the late lamented CAMRA stalwart, Roger Marples.



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# THE SHADOW OF PORTER

The late beer writer Michael Jackson's appreciation of Porter

To mark the tenth anniversary of the death of Beer Hunter **Michael Jackson**, recent editions of *What's Brewing*, CAMRA's newspaper, have included extracts from his writings. The following dates from 1995, and is abridged..

**E**ven though my parents scarcely drank alcohol, I knew as a small boy there was something called port. Was that what the sign above the pub door meant? Should it have read, "licensed to sell tobacco, ale and port"? It didn't. The sign clearly mentioned porter, as though it were offering to carry my bags.

As I stood waiting for the school bus, I re-read that sign a thousand times. Even when I was old enough to go inside, the sign remained a puzzle: there was nothing called porter anywhere to be seen.

Long before I ever drank beer I knew porter was a mystery. No style of beer has loomed quite so large in the history of Britain and Ireland. Yet no style is so shadowy and elusive. It is recurrent ghost among beers. No style of beer inspires so many questions when I give talks. What was the original porter like? Why was it so called? How did it differ from stout?

Anyone who has ever asked these questions is probably familiar with the received wisdom that the name was first applied to the beer produced by "one Ralph Harwood" at the Bell in Shoreditch, London: in 1730 according to the 1889 book *The Curiosities of Ale and Beer*; ten years earlier if we believe H A Monckton's 1966 work *A History of English Ale and Beer* (or did he confuse the decades?).

Porter brewing 18th - 19th century



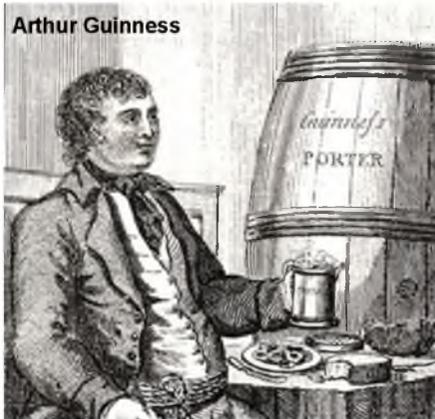
On my bookshelf, the most detailed account is in the 1975 work *A History of Brewing*, by H S Corran, a former curator of the Guinness archives. The earliest mention spotted by Corran was in a letter of 1726. Corran also refers to *The London and Country Brewer*, pointing out, "porter is not mentioned in the 1735 edition, but is said to appear in the 1739."

Most accounts say porter was a ready-made blend of three styles sometimes known as ale, beer and twopenny. Because it was a combination of all three it was also known as entire. This beer is said to have been popular with the workers who carried produce in markets to the east of London – hence porter.

I feel too much is made of these romantic stories. It seems likely the trio of styles was the result of the three waters used in mashing and sparging. Brewers would have made their lives easier by combining three into a single product. Previously, most breweries had been in pubs they served. Now some were free-standing, distributing beer by canal. Did some delivery men announce themselves by shouting "porter!"?

It has been argued increases in the price of malt encouraged brewers to use less, offsetting the impact by kilning it more highly and adding more hops. For whatever reason, this beer hit its stride just as a national transport network came into existence. The darkness of porter would have covered cloudiness and the bitter taste masked flavour defects – both important as beer was shipped further. Although pale ale is first mentioned in the same period, it does not seem to have been perfected until the 1820s, at which time the two styles became rivals for the affection of the British drinker.

Both styles, but especially porter, were the stock-in-trade of British brewers in the greatest days of this country's international influence. That is why the shadow of porter looms so large. While internal transport was



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still embryonic, porter was being shipped across the Channel and the North Sea and through the Baltic to Eastern Europe. Even after World War II, at least one German brewer continued to make a porter. By then, porter had all but vanished in Britain. The lower gravity porter evolved into mild, and the fuller-bodied versions came to be known as stouts.

Guinness launched a porter in the 1770s. There were two gravities, marked with a single and a double X and a stronger version for export to the Caribbean. In 1820, the double was renamed Guinness Extra Stout Porter, and, at some point, the triple X gained the soubriquet Foreign Extra Stout. In 1974, the single, was dropped.

The stout made by Guinness had in the meantime become Ireland's national style. When both porters and stouts diminished in Britain, why did they stand their ground in Ireland? One reason may be the restrictions during World War I made it difficult for British maltsters to roast their grains. These restrictions were not imposed in Ireland, where rebellion and independence were in the wind. If the terrible beauty finally finds a lasting serenity, perhaps the toast should be in a new brew called Peace Porter. (See Last Knockings).



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# EXPLORING THE MON & BREC

## A BEERY BOATERS' RECENT TRIP TO WALES

*The exploits of the Beery Boaters have been a regular feature of Channel Draught almost as long as the magazine has been published. Here, one of our number relates a recent canal trip taken with family members.*

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July last year**, and my partner Ange and I, along with my sister Gerry and her husband Phil, set off for a week on the “Mon and Brec”. Taking the longer, but more scenic A40 to Abergavenny, rather than the cut and thrust of holiday traffic on the M4, we arrived at Castle Narrowboats, Gilwern just after 3pm, our boat “Beaumaris Castle” waiting for us to load our belongings and to receive a very thorough briefing by Nick and Sharon the proprietors. As usual, previous experience of narrowboats and canalling, no matter how long, counted for nothing, as everything from canal etiquette to operating locks, plus the intricacies of the boat were explained over the next hour and a half!

Beaumaris was laid out with 4 berths – a double aft and convertible lounge double forward – a fair sized bathroom and galley between, and tiered shelves for storage lining the walls from end to end. Power, however, unusually came from an electric motor, but appeared to make no difference in handling to a normal diesel vessel except for an initial lazy response when going from forward to reverse, and back, but very good when it came to manoeuvring into a mooring.

Mon & Brec boats are built with a shallow draft owing to the canal’s lack of depth, and it is important to keep away from the edges. For this reason we were advised to take on water at every opportunity, the tank being at the front of the boat and doubling as a ballast tank. If we were to find ourselves going aground we were to distribute ourselves around the boat accordingly!

Heading initially towards Brecon, the very scenic canal is cut into a mountain-side, and occasional glimpses through the trees to starboard reveal incredible views across the valleys. Our first stop for the night is bridge 114 at Llangattock from where a “10 minute walk” will take you the mile down hill to Crickhowell, a small town



offering several pubs and restaurants (unfortunately the pub just down from the canal bridge is closed and boarded up). The Bridge End Inn at the bottom of the hill into town seemed very popular with a large riverside garden and serving five ales (Butty Back, Rev James, Bass, Hancocks HB, and Sadlers Mellow Yellow) and is where we stopped for a pint after going into town for fish and chips.

The beauty of the Mon & Brec is the slow and easy pace of travel. It is also the agony, as the merest attempt to draw into the side to allow an oncoming craft to pass, has you running aground. And trying to increase pace has the prop digging into the shallow bottom, so slow and easy it is.

**Sunday** dawned, and after taking on water (for ballast) we set off along the tree lined cut with occasional glimpses of the valley and apparently Table Mountain! According to the guide book, it is particularly stunning during autumn. Fewer leaves I suppose! We stopped for lunch at Llangynidr, where the Coach and Horses offered Rev James Original and Gold, and 6X, and also an excellent roast chicken dinner in a baguette! Back on board and a short distance later we came upon the first of five locks, raising the canal 50ft. Fairly standard ratchet type paddles and well maintained, the difference being when you leave the lock (going up), you have to empty it again and leave the lower gates open. We were told that otherwise the pressure of water in the locks would cause them to breach and slide down the mountain or some such old Welsh wives tale!

The canal after this twisted and turned for a couple of miles until we reached the 343m Ashford Tunnel. Avoiding a canoe at the entrance we passed through very slowly as the height of the tunnel varied between six foot and a lot less.... and the steerer was 6'3". Halfway through we heard voices behind and turned to see the canoe gaining on us!



Another mile or so beyond the tunnel at Talybont was one of the six charging points for our electric boat scattered along the length of the canal. This would be our stop for the night. After plugging the boat in, we sought refreshment at the CAMRA award winning Star Inn, which is up for sale. It offered, in rather run down surroundings, six beers from eight pumps, including Farmers Pride, XT4 (v.good), Salopian The Bends, Elgoods Golden Shuck, Grey Trees Diggers Gold and Old Speckled Hen. The neighbouring "White Hart Inn" remained unsampled for another day. Both pubs incidentally, can be accessed from the canal towpath.

**Monday** dawned grey and dismal and the sun with his sou'wester on. A lazy late start saw us heading for Brecon via some interesting obstacles, the first being the Talybont drawbridge, an electrically controlled lift bridge on the main road into the village. Teamwork is involved here, one to close the gates to the traffic, one to operate the bridge controls, one to drive the boat through and one to capture the event on camera. Swiftly through, the canal twists and turns through similar drawbridges over farm crossings although these were, in the main, raised open except the windlass operated bridge at Pencelli. A smaller team here, one for the gate, the



tiller man doubling as photographer and two “supervisors”.

After a short while, moored boats slowed progress before a run to the water point at Brynich Aqueduct over the river Usk to take on more “ballast”, before the canal turns sharply left towards the final lock. As we approached, a wide beamed craft, was seen being “poled” around this corner, recalling something the boat owners told us before we left – “the easiest way to turn in a winding hole is to use the boat poles”....well only if the engine fails! In their haste to leave the lock, the crew of this boat, having left the lower gates open, forgot to lower the paddles. It was only after Beaumaris was secure inside and the upper paddles opened, that we noticed the lock wasn't filling, despite the attempt of torrential rain trying to assist.

Eventually through, another hour's cruise took us to Brecon. We found the charging point and left the old girl to rejuvenate while we explored the town. Seemingly compact with quirky narrow streets of colourful

houses reminiscent of an Irish town, we quickly shopped for supplies before the incessant rain drove us to the nearest pub. The Brecon Tap, a modern bar and bottle shop, too big to be classed as a micro pub but of a similar style, offered “pies and pints”. The pints mainly from the Brecon Brewery included Pirate Bay 4%, Lytham Royal 4.5%, T.I.P.A. (tea infused IPA!) 6%, Three Beacons 3% and several craft ales and ciders. The pies didn't appear until we were leaving where one customer's order looked like it could have fed the whole bar! Although the rain was relentless we decided to put a few return miles under the belt as we had time to spare and moored up back at the lift bridge at Pencelli.

**Tuesday** started drizzly, but soon cleared to cloudy and dry, the sun still deciding what hat to wear. We set off with the ladies team at the controls towards Tal-y-Bont stopping there too early for a pint at the White Hart, but just in time for breakfast and a brief top up of juice for the boat. The road drawbridge had to be negotiated first and the previously mentioned wide boat had caught us up. I waited to see if the poles would come out, as it had been noted on an earlier passage through a small bridge, that their crew found them useful. But no, on this occasion the younger crew member stood on the side of the boat with the centre rope in his hand, and stepped off as the boat passed under the drawbridge – dangerous but useful, as the engine had been cut, and senior crew member had abandoned the tiller to shout instructions and apparently assist his wife ashore by giving her a helpful shove!

After breakfast and visit to the local shop, the sun put his hat on and popped over the yard arm – time for a pint but not at the White Hart. A short walk down Station Road took us to the Usk Inn, a big rambling pub/restaurant/B & B serving Evan Evans CWRW, Baa Best and Robinsons Cloudy Cider in a very comfortable lounge full of old leather armchairs.

The afternoon was noticeably busier as we followed another boat through Ashford Tunnel towards the locks. For the first time this holiday we had to queue. The wait

wasn't too long with craft using the locks in both directions, although one forgot the etiquette of emptying the lock and leaving the lower gates open, and in fact doing the complete opposite. At one of the locks a canal and river trust volunteer was making notes of repairs to be done when a spout of water showered one of our crew as the opposite paddle was being opened. He duly scribbled on his pad and took a photo!

One of the delays in the lock was a novice crew being meticulously shown how to operate the gates. As this was the third lock and the novices weren't 100% confident, it made me wonder if they'd been paying attention at the previous two. Then at the next lock a Thai lady and her English gentleman friend seemed equally confused when she asked me how to operate the lock while her companion imperiously steered the boat!

At the last lock we met Mick, another canal trust volunteer, and we swapped tales about some of the day's events. When he told me he had to admonish someone for using the boat pole in a lock, I thought it could only be our friends in the wide boat who were a couple of boats ahead. After about two hours we were clear of the locks and made it as far as Llangatock for the night, although none of us felt inclined to walk into Crickhowell again.

**Wednesday**, and a later start than intended, with one of the crew suffering a touch of Llanelli belly, and the early sun putting his rain hat on again. A short trip to the boatyard for a free pump out (whether we needed it or not) and a thinly disguised admonishment from Nick the boat owner about scratches to the paint work. We set off and moored a couple of hundred yards further on to nip into town for a shop and a quick pint at the Beaufort Arms. The first pub we've been in that didn't serve Welsh ale but instead, Sharps Doom Bar and Youngs Special. When I pointed this out to the landlord he said "Welsh beer? We only serve the best here!"

Back at the boat we made a start towards Pontypool and the other end of the canal, where there is an overgrown section, tended (or not) by the local council which we were encouraged to go down, "Use it or lose it" the boatyard said. There were soon another couple of obstacles worth a mention. Just after the boatyard we negotiated an extremely low pipe bridge, fortunately around the corner so that Nick couldn't witness another shaving of paint off the roof. And half an hour later, Tods Bridge, set across a sharp left hander where advice is to have a crew member haul the boat through on the bow rope. Well, the electric motor is slow enough, and I'm sure Nick has got a pot of black paint back at base! Through the bridge is the juice point, and the first time we've had to use the mooring pins. A good job, once again, that Nick wasn't watching, as we whacked them in without using the safety goggles provided.

Abergavenny was a half hour walk down the mountainside of Blorenge, across the bypass and unfortunately back up again. The only shop still open when we got there was a very welcoming vintage tea room where we stopped for tea and cake. The pubs we'd already passed, the Railway and the Station not so inviting. Passing through a typical modern High Street we dropped down again to the site of this year's Eisteddfod, the first time it has visited Abergavenny since 1913. A celebration of everything Welsh, we gave it a miss and went for a pint at the nearby Bridge Inn where they celebrated their own Eisteddfod with an outdoor bar and live music (a Bryan Adams fan). The interesting beers on offer included the widely available Hancocks HB, Sugarloaf, Horny Goat Ale and Mad Dog Brewery's Lechyd Da, the

beer of the Eisteddfod and very good. Eventually we made our way back to the boat.

**Thursday** A quick re-assessment of the route ahead over dinner the previous night, and an earlyish start suggested we might make it to uncharted waters beyond Pontypool after all. The sun had got his proper hat on, but the wind had also got up. This half of the canal was obviously less used, being more overgrown with a narrower channel to navigate and some challenging turns. The tree line is further down the mountain also, so the scenery was less “claustrophobic”, while moored boats slowed our progress, particularly through Goytre Wharf.

The intention was to stop somewhere near Bridge 68, where there was a recommended (by our guide book) short walk to Pencroes-Hir and a worthwhile pub. Unfortunately we were past a suitable mooring before we realised and so carried on to Mahmilad, the next village... but still no moorings. No choice now but to continue to Pontypool. The approach to the moorings at Pontymoile Bridge became increasingly twisty as the canal wove between the well kept gardens backing onto the cut, with the going, through thick weed, slower and slower. Eventually grinding to a halt, we nursed Beaumaris 50 yards to the mooring point where we extracted enough weed from the hatch to turf a small lawn.

We met the marina warden who directed us into town via the local park and pointed also to a Harvester pub nearby and mentioned another pub 15 minutes away, down the cut. Duly noted for later we headed for town. The park was huge and impressive with gates dating back to the early 1800's, and the rugby club and bowls club have their headquarters there.

Reaching the town, and passed a few boarded up shops, the magnificent Edwardian pub The George, restored at some point to its previous character of Philips & Sons Brewers, looked like it had been allowed to slip into decline again. It certainly didn't look inviting inside with no ale in evidence and ne'er-do-well looking types occupying the bar. We moved on through the depressing familiarity of a dead town with a High Street of pound shops, charity shops and cheap clothing shops. When the only other pub we came across was a boarded up Wetherspoons, what more can be said?

Back at the boat we decided to explore the canal beyond the mooring, although disinclined to take the boat any further after the problems we had mooring up. According to our out of date Nicholsons Canal Guide the Manor Arms, Griffithston, beyond Bridge 50 and 5 minutes or so from the boat served real ale and good food and had mooring and



The Open Hearth Bar at Sebastopol

outside seating. Obviously well disguised, as 25 minutes later we found the similarly described Open Hearth Inn at Sebastopol, a popular local's local, serving Glamorgan Pale Ale, Directors and Doom Bar. After a couple of pints we made our way back to the boat and noted in a current canal guide that the Manor Arms was

“long closed”. If the Open Hearth is the pub 15 minutes away as referred to by the warden, then the Welsh minute is obviously like a country mile, as we had previously experienced in Crickhowell.

Friday, the final day, and we decided not to attempt the “uncharted waters”, but instead rope haul the boat into the winding hole and out of the marina. To no avail however, as 10 minutes later we were back down the weed hatch for the first of several clean outs of the day. Eventually away, we aimed to stop for lunch at one of the pubs we missed on the way down, but were too early for the first at Mahmi-lad, and found the canal too shallow and the bank too overgrown, to moor at bridge 68 for the 600 yard walk to the Horseshoe Inn at Pencroes-Hir.

A few hundred yards on we managed to get into the bank on the outside of a sharp left hand bend, but instead of walking back to the Horseshoe, decided to take a nearby footpath to Penperlleni....only to find next to the path a mooring stage! Half of the crew were dispatched to fetch the boat before proceeding to the village through Goytre House Woods. A quick shop at the local Spar and a couple of pints in the Goytre Arms, a modernised road house offering Speckled Hen, Doom Bar and Rev James. I settled for the latter which was just on the turn by the second pint. A fellow drinker we had passed on the towpath arrived shortly after us, and said he had walked from Bridge 72, suggesting it was the quickest way. He didn't know about the short cut through the woods though!

Back at the boat and another session down the weed hatch, we took account of the time factor and distance remaining to the boat yard and figured we'd make it with minutes to spare, all being well!

Shortly after setting off a Red Line hire boat passed having just left the nearby Goytre Wharf. The tiller man asking if anything was behind us: “Noooo!” I replied “only the brave and foolish go beyond here.” Minutes later another Red Line passed with the warning “It's a bit shallow back there.” He was about to see what shallow really is!

A tricky turn at Goytre Wharf provided some spectator sport for fledgling crews being shown round their boats, and slow going past the various moored craft. The canal twisted and turned for the next half hour before a long straight section to Tods Bridge. Another very tight turn immediately after emerging from the bridge, which has no headroom at all, takes us into another hire base, this one for the very posh Beacon Park Boats. Again providing entertainment for a shore based crowd,



one smartly dressed woman helpfully but uselessly holding onto the end of her bow rope whilst Beaumaris missed her boat by a whisker.

We knew at this point that we had an hour and a half run to the boat yard where we had to be by 8 o'clock, and it was 6.45 with the sun low in the sky

dead ahead making progress slow if not impossible at times. With the quiet countryside giving way to the outskirts of Bleaenavon and Govilon, more and more houses had boats tied up to the well-groomed gardens, all potential targets for a wayward Beaumaris!

We arrived back at base shortly after eight, our arrival delayed by yet another weed hatch inspection half mile from home. Plugging the boat in to charge as instructed, we headed into town for a final couple of pints (Youngs Special)

and some grub at the Beaufort Arms. "Grub? We do proper food here!" said the landlord. Although not the closest pub to the hire base (that would be the Corn Exchange), it is the most popular and the only one doing food.

A discussion with the Nick and Sharon as we handed the boat back on Saturday, suggested that we should have had a go at the uncharted section, and it would seem that previous hirers had walked through to Cymbran and witnessed work in progress on the dilapidated locks, so maybe next time....!



*Chris Baxter*

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## WATNEY'S RED BARREL MOURNED IN BELGIUM

In early April while over in Belgium, I was flicking through one of their national newspapers, and was surprised to find three pictures of a man in a Watney Red Barrel T-shirt. It was quite a nice one. White with black trim around the neck and sleeve ends with a short zip on the front. Watney in large black capitals with, beneath, the symbolic red iconic barrel which we so miss, unfortunately rather distorted by his beer belly. What made it so poignant was that in two of the photographs he was in shorts, bare footed and carrying a large wooden cross, like that chap in the bible.

My heart cried out for him. For his dedication to a lost cause. Even more heart breaking was that he was carrying this cross up a steep narrow cobbled lane. Which was doubly sad because in the picture, beyond him, I can clearly see someone has beat him to it and already planted a cross on the hilltop. What's more there's someone crucified on it. Probably the Watney head brewer.

But then I studied the quite long accompanying article. It turns out that the Red Barrel T-shirt is a Red Herring. The steep cobbled lane Red Barrel Man is ascending is one of the famous cobbled climbs in the brutal 170 mile Flemish one day cycle race, De Ronde Van Vlaanderen.

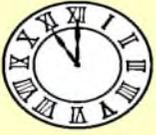
The 2017 race was the 101<sup>st</sup> edition. It was first held in 1913 and due to the First World War the second edition was held in 1919 and has been run annually since then. This cobbled lane is called The Geraardsbergen. Famously known as "De Muur" (The Wall). A vicious, energy sapping climb, and due to its steepness it was always a mecca for fans to see the cyclists at their most tortured as they ride up relatively slowly.

Red Barrel Man was in fact mourning the exclusion of this hill from the 2012 edition of The Ronde, the year the first two pictures were published. However, there is a happy ending, for those of you who haven't yet given up. The hill was brought back into the course this year, and so the third picture shows him walking up it before this year's race, this time wearing long trousers and shoes – BUT exactly the SAME T-shirt! However, this time he's not carrying a cross. But perhaps he's gone to fetch it back down.

Strangely, I could find no mention of why he's been wearing the same T-shirt for five years. No mention at all of Watney's Red Barrel. Some newspaper editors have no sense of history.



*Pete Smith*



# LAST KNOCKINGS

**Wetherspoons Under Water** In our report of a visit to a number of Deal pubs (see page 34) we comment on the Sir Norman Wisdom's somewhat tenuous resemblance to a traditional British pub – a criticism that might well be shared with a number of other Wetherspoons's premises. This perhaps would be of no consequence, except that when Tim Martin started his business thirty or forty years ago, many of his early pubs bore names that made reference to George Orwell's famous fictional and idealised pub, the *Moon Under Water*, the intended inference, presumably, being that Wetherspoons and Orwell's creation shared something in common.

Briefly, the *Moon Under Water* had three bars, open fires in winter, middle aged barmaids who knew their customers by name and called everyone "dear", and sold cheese, pickles, mussels and liver-sausage sandwiches. An upstairs dining-room sold a substantial three-shilling lunch of meat and two veg, with a jam roll to follow, and there was a garden with plane trees, under which in summer you could sit and drink cider. Significantly, with respect to Wetherspoons, it also had neither radio nor piano, and was always "quiet enough to talk."

Leaving aside the absence of music, not a lot of similarity, but to be honest if Wetherspoons is some way distant from the average traditional pub, so is the *Moon Under Water*. But then just as that need not interfere with a good piece of copy, the disparity with the reality of Wetherspoons need not stand in the way of a good business idea.

**Porter** Elsewhere we print a piece about porter by the late Michael Jackson, beer hunter extraordinary. However, despite his eminence in matters of beer and ale we feel it necessary to offer alternatives to some of his observations. As Michael says the original porter is usually considered a ready-made blend of three styles – ale, beer and twopenny – which he suggests were the result of the three waters used in mashing and sparging. While other authorities accept the three ale blend theory, often referred to as three threads, the three elements are often seen as very distinct beers, young brown London ale, pale ale and mature stale – London brown ale matured for months in huge oak vats which gave it a sour, lactic flavour.

The combination, however brought complications. Pale ale required malt kilned with coal, which was taxed and more expensive than wood, and could not be made in London where coal was banned because it caused fogs. Pale beer production consequently ended up with country brewers who also provided facilities for the aging of stale, space confines restricting its production in London, and the transport of both adding further cost. Any alternative, therefore, which could reduce costs, as well removing the need to keep and mix three different brews was welcome. Also, whether or not it was a favourite of London porters, it seems unlikely, with the term porter already in use by the 1730s, that there would be any connection with transport by canal, the nationwide system of the Industrial Revolution only starting two decades later in the north of England with the St. Helens and Bridgewater canals.

**Before CAMRA** One should never be surprised by the revelations of old photographs. The accompanying somewhat fuzzy example, we are told, dates from the 1960s, and featured a very prominent local campaigner for real ale, sadly no longer with us. Any guesses? (Identity revealed on page 43).



**Meantime Launches Canned Range** A leading light of the new brewing movement in London, Meantime Brewing, founded in 2000 in Greenwich, has been through a few changes of late. Acquired in June 2015 for £120m by SAB Miller, and subsequently sold on to Asahi Holdings, it has now launched its first canned range. Three flagship beers – London Lager, London Pale Ale and Yakima Red – are available in 330ml cans nationwide across the on and off-trade. Meantime brewmaster Ciaran Giblin said: “We’ve seen cans grow rapidly in popularity over the past few years and our drinkers and customers have been patiently waiting for us to launch our range in cans too. We’ve always been passionate about making proper beer the go-to choice for British drinkers, and we’re excited to say they’re now able to get their hands on it in can!” An announcement which drew the following from one real ale drinker. “Ok, so it is no surprise that after ditching real ale Meantime should launch a canned range BUT having ditched real ale I am somewhat disturbed by their brewmaster’s claim that, “*We’ve always been passionate about making proper beer.*” I can see the adverts now, ‘Meantime, proper beer in a can’.....I despair!”

**Lunchtime at Lloyds** So, lunchtime drinking at Lloyds is now a proscribed activity. One can only speculate on why the venerable institution found it necessary to issue an instruction about something that modern working practices generally regards as outlawed already. However, the announcement gave the media the opportunity to recall “the good old days” and relate lurid accounts of vast alcohol consumption, often, unsurprisingly, very much centred on Fleet Street and the activities of the City contacts of financial journalists.

However, it wasn’t just the cash swelled toilers in central London who enjoyed in the general midday largess. A couple of pints went unremarked when I started work, and could be upped to three or four on Fridays, and we all remember the buoyant port related lunchtime trade that kept many a Dover pub viable. A general liberality pervaded all. One particular establishment, many miles distant, allegedly, boasted a daily routine which saw the day’s work completed during the morning, whereupon it was round to the pub until mid-afternoon when a brief return to the office was required to clear up before going home.

All now swept away, and bearing in mind the reliance of so much of modern working life on complex IT, perhaps no bad thing – and perhaps we have here the explanation for Lloyds recent pronouncement. One wrong key stroke and millions might be lost.

*Old Wort*

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## **And Finally.....Now you can take the dog down the pub for a pint!**

Dogs are often called man's best friend but a nice pint of ale is going to come a very close second. However the UK launch of 'Snuffle', a Belgian beer brewed exclusively for dogs, is possibly going to change that relationship

"Belgium is famous for its beer," says Snuffle spokesman Stefaan Dielens, "so for us the goal is to also have the very best Belgian beer for dogs."

Rolled out at Pets At Home stores with a view to being stocked at your local pub, Snuffle is a beer that seeks to cure the apparently common issue of dogs (just like their human counterparts) of not drinking enough water on a daily basis. Snuffle's has a specially formulated brew that has none of the alcohol you find in beer, opting instead for chicken or beef flavouring, Vitamin B, oils and minerals. This means it's not just a safe drink for your pet, but a healthy one, too.

Snuffle promotes responsible drinking like any other brewery, claiming the recommended daily intake for small dogs is half a bottle and medium dogs a whole one, whereas big dogs can knock back two bottles. Most importantly though, it means that no longer will man's best friend stare forlornly as you tuck into a classic ale while he's left with a tepid bowl of tap water.

A word of warning though. It is not recommended that you get into a binge drinking contest with your dog down your local. This will almost certainly get you barred and a hasty visit from the RSPCA.

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

# The Mash Tun

3 Bench St, Dover, CT16 1JH

CAMRA local and Kent Region Cider Pub of the Year 2015

Good Beer Guide 2016

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

Up to 25 draught real ciders

A small selection of bottled beers and ciders

Ten quality wines, all available by the glass or bottle

Traditional and not-so-traditional bar snacks

Lots of free nibbles on Sundays

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

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

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