

The Deal Dover Sandwich & District Branch Magazine

# CHANNEL DRAUGHT

Issue 74

Free

Winter 2017/18



Inside:

## • BY BUSTO THE PUB

*It's getting harder to enjoy a pint by bus*

## • HOME BREWING IN NORWAY

*More a serious necessity than a hobby*



CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE

# CHANNEL DRAUGHT

**Issue 74**

**Winter 2017/18**

## 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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**Please note that views  
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**Please drink  
sensibly!**

## Cover Photo

**The White Horse**

**Dover**

**Good Beer Guide Pub 2018  
Kent Tourism Pub of Year 2017**

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## BRANCH DIARY

Events shown in blue are not organised by CAMRA

*Fri 2 - Sat 3 Feb*

**White Cliff Festival of Winter Ales,  
Dover Town Hall**

*Sun 4 Feb*

9 am Beer Festival Take-down, help  
appreciated – **Dover Town Hall**

*Wed 7 Feb*

Dover Festival Beer & Cider Crawl, meet  
5.30 pm **Louis Armstrong**

*Mon 19 Feb*

Branch Meeting & Festival Wash Up, **Louis  
Armstrong**, Dover 7.30pm

*Fri 23 - Sat 24 Feb*

**Berry**, Walmer, 11<sup>th</sup> Winter Beer Festival  
Roger Marples Beer & Wine Festival, **Royal  
Cinque Ports Yacht Club** (see Page 12)

*Thu 29 Mar - 2 Apr*

**The Chambers**, Folkestone, 16<sup>th</sup> Easter Mon  
Ale & Cider Festival (see Page 13)

*Fri 30 - Sat 31 Mar*

Planet Thanet Easter Beer Festival, **Winter  
Gardens**, Margate (See Page 19)

*Fri 30 Mar -*

*Mon 2 Apr*

Easter Weekend Beer Festival, **Five Bells**,  
Eastry

*Mon 12 Mar*

Branch Meeting, **Rock Rose** (formerly the  
Kittiwake), Whitfield 7.30pm

*Mon 16 Apr*

Branch Meeting, **Crispin**, Sandwich. 7.30pm

*Mon 21 May*

Branch Meeting, **Hare & Hounds**,  
Northbourne. 7.30pm

A new year, and a new magazine – well not quite, the big change, as most of you will know, came with full colour gloss last Autumn, an edition, we are pleased to announce, which was almost universally well received. We hope we can carry on as we started.

As we go to press CAMRA starts on the final stage of its Revitalisation Project, which has consumed a large part of the Campaign's time and energy over the last couple of years. The motivation behind the reassessment of CAMRA's aims and roles stems from the major changes that have occurred in the brewing and pub industry since the organisation's foundation in the early 1970s.

At that time brewing in Britain was dominated by half a dozen major brewing conglomerates who also owned the vast majority of pubs. Their perspective of the industry was very different, CAMRA felt, than that held by many beer drinkers and pub users, and in particular involved the replacement of long established traditional and local cask ales with mass marketed national brands of keg bitter and keg lager, products we considered much inferior to those they were replacing.

The success of our Campaign is undoubted. Real ale of great variety and style is available everywhere (although perhaps not in every single pub), and Britain has the largest number of brewers since before World War II. However, much has changed. Craft ale and KeyKeg were unheard of and unknown when CAMRA started, while that traditional outlet for real ale, the British local, greatly reduced in numbers, is now a seriously threatened institution. We might have saved real ale, but we have not necessarily guaranteed the survival of places to drink it.

The Revitalisation Project was initiated to address the issues now facing beer and pubs in a very different world. Following the period of consultation across the membership over the last couple of years a series of recommendations for the future of CAMRA, its purpose and activities will be put to members for their approval in April at this year's AGM in Coventry. With these resolved, we look forward to a reinvigorated Campaign continuing the success of the last forty or fifty years.

*Martin Atkins*



## LOUIS ARMSTRONG

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## CAMRA AWARDS

### DEAL, DOVER & SANDWICH BRANCH AWARDS

- SPRING PUB OF THE SEASON 2015
- AUTUMN PUB OF THE SEASON 2016
- PUB OF THE YEAR 2017

### REGIONAL AWARDS

- EAST KENT PUB OF THE YEAR 2017
- RUNNER-UP KENT PUB OF THE YEAR 2017

*DEBBIE & KEITH  
LOOK FORWARD  
TO WELCOMING YOU TO*

**THE LANES**

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# LOCAL NEWS

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.

## BRANCH PUB OF THE SEASON WINTER 2017/18

From a short list of half a dozen the **Breakwater Brewery Tap** was chosen as our Branch Winter Pub of the Season for 2017/18. Since its establishment at the end of 2016 both the brewery and its pub have become an integral part of cask ale production and provision in Dover and East Kent, with the brewery tap making the particular valuable contribution of offering real ale in a part of the town where its availability is otherwise sparse. A worthy winner, the Breakwater Brewery Tap has our wholehearted congratulations.



## DOVER

Best Pub in Kent Congratulations also to the **White Horse**, St. James' Street, which following its success of being selected as one of three finalists in the Kent Tourism Awards, has now gone on to win top prize of Kent Tourism Pub of the Year 2017.

In Castle Street Millis continues to provide the house bitter in **Blakes**, while there also remains a strong representation from Adnams including

recently some of the brewery's more rarely seen beers such as Nut Brown and Sloe Storm. From elsewhere the pub selection often includes ales from breweries otherwise little seen locally – in late November Plain Ales Inspiration and Naylor Brewery Dark.

**Mash Tun**, Bench Street: Plenty of winter spirit over the festive period with ales such as Range Ales Winter Fire, Westerham God's Wallop Christmas Ale and Family Stout, Angels & Demons Hockley Soul and Old Cocker and Old Station Porter from 3 Piers. However, the less seasonal Hophead, and American Pale Ale, drew a particularly appreciate response – the latter described as, "Top form, fresh on with superb head and really good taste throughout."

Closed for several months, the **Roman Quay** reopened towards the end of the year. Describing itself as a gin and ale house, a panel on the side wall offers premium beers, local ales, artisan gins, rums and cocktails – we await reports. Elsewhere around the town centre we understand that there is currently no real ale at the **Lord Nelson**, and as far as we know it remains similarly absent from the **Castle** in Russel Street. Also currently without real ale is the **Golden Lion**, although reports suggest that a return is being considered.

Plenty of real ale, of course, at the **Eight Bells**. Shortly after Christmas local choice appeared heavily dependent on Wantsum, including Imperium, Ravening Wolf and the superb Golgotha Stout. On the seafront in late November the **Premier Inn** was selling Jennings Cumberland, while around the same time at, **Cullins Yard**, Christmas Porter was available from the in-house Tír Dhá Ghlas Brewery. We understand, however, that real ale is no longer to be found at the **Dover Marina Hotel**.

**The Lanes**, Worthington Street: Maintaining largely a Kentish selection with good representation from local suppliers. One drinker matched

Angels and Demons Bombay Social with Kent Green Giant as the best beer drunk that year: "Nothing more to say than this was a superb beer in absolutely perfect condition. Pity I had to stop quaffing to catch last train home!!" However, more distant brewers, such as Rockin Robin, Musket and Gadds are not forgotten, and the choice is on occasion enlivened by the appearance of the odd wild card such as Adnams Jack Brand Mosaic Pale Ale in late November.

In Ladywell we say a sad farewell to the **Rack of Ale** which, opening in the Autumn of 2013, has so established itself, that it is hard to envisage the town without it. Citing rent hikes and restrictions on sale of certain drinks Trish closed the pub at the start of December. We wish her well for the future. In the High Street, Dover's dedicated cider outlet, the **Thirsty Scarecrow**, continues to offer an extensive and varying range of cider. And ale is always available – Kent Citra and Westerham Bohemian Rhapsody on two recent visits.

**Red Lion**, Charlton Green: Recent months have seen the fine tasting West Berkshire Good Old Boy regularly on the handpumps alongside the golden ale style Plough from the G2 Brewery in Ashford. Meanwhile along the road at the **Louis Armstrong**, the winter selection has included Dark Conspiracy and Little Cracker from Gadds, Silver Top Stout from Old Dairy and Cow Juice Milk Stout from Breakwater. Old Dairy's bottle conditioned Snow Top has also proved a hit, as has the less seasonal Romney American Pale Ale which often seems to last no more than a couple of days.

On Crabble Hill the **Three Cups** has been selling local brews of late – Breakwater Chequers and Angels & Demons Harry Hop on visits in November and December. Meanwhile at the **Breakwater Brewery** itself (Branch Pub of the Season – see above) Cow Juice, Chequers and Single Hop were proving popular in the taproom, with very good reports towards the end of last year, plus also a new mild, Black Ensign (3.2% ABV). At Buckland one or two real ales are the usual choice at the **Bull** – Theakston Christmas Ale proving most popular on a January quiz night.

In River, the **Cricketers** was selling Adnams Light-house and Santa's Little Helper over New Year, but no festive joy at the **Dublin Man O' War**. Closed for the best part of two years and boarded up, it awaits its fate – change of use with erection of houses on adjacent land looking likely. However, along the road, following its sale by Shepherd Neame in October the **Royal Oak**, has reopened – bought privately, we understand, with plans to



continue as a pub. We also note that the council have designated it an Asset of Community Value.

In Temple Ewell, no shortage of Christmas cheer at the **Fox** during the Festive Season where a good selection of winter and Christmas ales were on offer. Among the choice were Shepherd Neame Rudolph's Reward, Archers Xmas Ale, Exmoor Xmas, Greene King Rockin Rudolf and Fullers Xmas Ale.

At Whitfield the **Rock Rose** (former Kittiwake) was selling Hobgoblin, Pedigree, Bombardier and Wainwright in mid-December, while Ringwood Razorback was available at the **Archer**. At the **Railway Bell**, Kearsney Greene King IPA and Abbot, and Doom Bar were the choice.

## DEAL

**Sir Norman Wisdom**, Queen Street: Strong showing for local ales recently, where late last year beers included Hopdaemon Green Daemon, Canterbury Ales Pacific Gold and, from Whitstable, Kent Coast, Brewer's Gold and Oyster Stout, the latter attracting near ecstatic comments: "Bang on form with correct temperature..., excellent head and smooth rich taste. So glad I stayed." From further away Arundel Stronghold (4.7% ABV bitter) also attracted compliments – "good robust taste with nice balance of flavour."

And more Kentish representation just along the road where the **Queen Street Tap** is still sticking with a heavy local input. A visit in mid-December found a choice of Whitstable Pearl of Kent, and Wantsum Figgy Pudding and 1381 – the latter now the pub's house beer, and we hear, at the very competitive price of £2.45 a pint. More Wantsum on earlier visits with Montgomery, plus also Tonbridge Ebony Moon.

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In the High Street, the **Spire's Bar** is also heavily local orientated, Reeves Ale from Canterbury Ales being available in early December. Meanwhile at the **New Inn** choice was London Pride and Harveys. The **Rose Inn**, closed for some time, has been undergoing refurbishment, and reopening is apparently now fairly imminent – we gather that local ales are on the agenda.

**Just Reproach**, King Street: An ever changing selection from near and far with, of late, Hythe's Hop Fuzz drawing some particularly favourable comments – “Yellow Zinger: very drinkable session beer, perfect lunchtime drink” and Blacksmiths Stout: “one of the nicest stouts I have had.” However, other beers have also drawn plaudits, such as, in early December Oz Bomb from Arbor of Bristol, even though as someone remarked, “more of a beer for summer!”

**Taphouse Beer Cafe**, South Street: A visit during the Autumn came upon Kirkstall Framboise which one drinker described as full depth of flavour, good head and sour raspberry taste – adding, “Can't be keg since no fizz whatsoever!”

Mid-December saw Master Brew, Whitstable Bay and Bishop's Finger at the **Saracen's Head**, and at the **Deal Hoy** Spitfire Gold, Master Brew and Late Red. And on a further visit last year more Whitstable Bay at the Forester on the seafront. At the **Alma** in West Street the selection was Wainwright, Landlord, London Pride and Harveys. Earlier, in November, Eagle Poppy was also on the handpumps.

**Ship Inn**, Middle Street: The pub still maintaining a very competitively priced pint. “Dark Star Hop-head at £2.60 a pint must be the best value in Deal”, remarked one drinker, and the beer subsequently drew compliments on its quality – “top form, fresh hoppy taste, good mouthfeel.”

A visit to the **Magnet Inn** in London Road in early December, found the “Best pint of Master Brew for a long while....would have loved to have stayed on and had a few more.” Meanwhile in nearby Manor Road the **Farrier** continues with its policy of a combination of local beers with more distant brews. Among these, in late November Bootleg Urban Fox was available, and in early December one drinker found Ripple Steam Brewery Farmhouse Pale an excellent pint to start a Saturday session.

**Leather Bottle**, Great Mongeham: Beers are now dispensed from handpumps rather than by gravity from barrels on the bar, with Romney Marsh and Goody Ales remaining prominent. Cider

is also available, mid November seeing Kentish Pip and Rosie's Pig. In Sholden, we understand that the **Sportsman** has been sold. However at the time of writing it remains closed with future unknown.

**Berry**, Canada Rd: Offering one of the widest choice of ale in the Branch area, winter has seen a pleasing variety of darker ales. Among the selection has been 3 Piers Old Station Porter, Bristol Beer Factory Milk Stout, Ramsgate Little Cracker, Harveys Old Ale and Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild, drawing comments with which many would concur – “One of the finest milds I have ever tasted. At 6% it should be treated with respect.”

**Freed Man**, Walmer: Reports of some interesting Kent beers towards the end of last year: Kent Green Giant (6% green hopped IPA), “deceptively drinkable given its strength”, and Boutilliers Smoked Oatmeal Stout at 4.8% ABV – pub “heaving inside, otherwise would have stayed for a second pint!”

At Kingsdown the **King's Head** was the venue for last December's Branch Meeting/Christmas Social. Beers were Gadds No 5, Goacher's House Bitter and a winter offering from Sadler's, Thin Ice, and we enjoyed a most excellent lunchtime. Afterwards we spent a half hour or so at the **Rising Sun** drinking Bombardier and Young's Gold, before catching the mid-afternoon Stagecoach service back into Deal, although the more intrepid jumped bus in Upper Walmer to continue events at the Freed Man.

## SANDWICH & RURAL

Good choice of local ale in Sandwich over Christmas and New Year. Among the selection Angels & Demons McCanns Harry Hop, Pig & Porter Lost Colony and Gadds No 5 could be had at the **Admiral Owen**, and Mad Cat Crispin Ale at the **Crispin Inn**. More Gadds at the **Red Cow**, along with Old Dairy Blue Top, while at the **Bell Hotel** and **Market Inn** Shepherd Neame ales were available

In Nonington the **Royal Oak** remains closed, and we assume that a new tenant is still being sought. Meanwhile around New Year the **Two Sawyers** at Woolage Green was selling Doom Bar and Hop Head, and the **Fitzwalter Arms**, Goodnestone a choice of Master Brew, Whitstable Bay and Shep's Christmas Ale. No Christmas Ale, or cheer, however at the former **Red Lion** in Wingham, where work progresses on its conversion to dwellings, with scaffolding erected back and front.

Fortunately there are two other pubs in the village,





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Building work to convert the former Red Lion at Wingham into dwellings



the **Dog** recently designated one of the three best in Kent by Kent Tourism, and the **Anchor**, offering its wide choice of events and music. There is also a welcoming open fire in the bar, and just after New Year a choice of Abbot, Harveys, Doom Bar and Adnams Ghost Ship.

**Crown Inn**, Finglesham: Plenty of local representation – Beers from Canterbury Ales, Wantsum, Angels and Demons and Old Dairy all appearing over recent weeks. From further afield Dark Star ales have been prominent and other beers have included Lancaster Bomber and Hobgoblin. In Northbourne the **Hare & Hounds**, now under new management for several months has been offering a variety of ales including Harveys Sussex, London Pride and Gale's Seafarer's.

**Black Pig**, Staple: Recent visits suggest that the pub is maintaining its broad selection of ale. Among those seen have been Jenning's Cumberland Ale, Exmoor Ale, Wantsum Fortitude and Purity Mad Goose. Meanwhile, the fight to save the **Chequer** continues in Ash. With substantial funds now raised a shareholders meeting had been arranged as this magazine went to press.

**Five Bells**, Eastry: As always a wide and varying selection of real ales, recent months having seen among others Brains Bitter, Courage Best Bitter, Ringwood Razorback, Hopdaemon Incubus, Wantsum Black Prince, Fuller's London Pride, Shepherd Neame Spitfire and Marston's Pedigree. And more Black Prince regularly at the **Wrong Turn**, Barfrestone along with a varying selection from both local sources and more distant suppliers.

In Tilmanstone the **Plough & Harrow**, is now the subject of a planning application as follows:- "Change of use to a mixed use drinking establishment with ancillary dining and retail and to one self-contained dwelling, the use of land for the siting of 6 no. holiday let camping pods together, the erection of a single storey extension and hard and soft landscaping (existing conservatory to be demol-

ished)." Proposed plans show the existing bar being very much retained as it was, but incorporating a "retail shop" at the right hand end of the servery.

At Coldred the choice at the **Carpenters Arms** remains a selection from near and far. Over recent months locals have included Canterbury Ales Reeve's Ale and Romney Marsh Romney Best Bitter, while mote distant brews have included Dark Star Hophead and Green Hopped IPA, and Rudgate Parcel O' Rogues, all reportedly in the best of condition. In the **Bell**, Lydden a recent visitor was especially impressed with the Sharp's Cornish Coaster. Also the pub had just cleared a barrel of Harry Hop from Angels & Demons in record time over a weekend. Just before Christmas the choice was Hancocks and Rocking Rudolph.

**Jackdaw**, Denton: At New Year the pub was selling Ringwood Razorback, Land Lord, Tribute, and Rocking Rudolph, while at Etchinghill the choice at the **Gatekeeper** was Hop Fuzz Advent, Wantsum Dynamo and Land Lord.

In Ripple, Fullers ESB and Ripple Steam beers remain standard at the **Plough**, added to by a broad selection of ales from other suppliers. Recently these have included Morland Original Bitter, Abbot, Young's London Gold, Hardy & Hanson's Olde Trip, Rocking Rudolph, Greene King Fireside and Gruber Blond.

At Capel, around New Year, the **Valiant Sailor** was selling Doom Bar and Whitstable Bay and the **Royal Oak** Master Brew and Old Speckled Hen. At the **Lighthouse** Doom Bar was available plus bottles from the Romney Marsh brewery, with possible future addition of draught beers from Angels and Demons.

## CANTERBURY

**New Inn**, Havelock Street: As Christmas approached we understand that noses were beginning to glow red with "feverish anticipation" (at least that was their story). Apparently the Brewing Elves have been busy around the land, and the New Inn Reindeer have also been chomping at the bit. So to all those with excellent taste (and sometimes excusable manners – as the pub puts it), the following selection of old favourites were delivered down the chimney for Christmas week: Tiny Rebel Cwtch, Jaipur, Dark Star APA, Oakham Inferno and JHB, Skinners Betty Stogs and Lushingtons, Gadds No. 5 and No.7, Kent Cobnut and Prohibition, and Triple fff Moondance. In Wincheap at the **King's Head**, the New Year saw a choice of Greene King IPA and Abbot, Hardy and Hansons and Ruddles.

**Haywain**, Bramling: A lunchtime visit shortly after New Year found a busy pub and a choice of London Pride, Bombardier, Whitstable Native and Musket. At Ickham the **Duke William** was offering Red Top, Angels and Demons Harry Hop and Goody's Good Shepherd, and at Wickhambreaux the choice at the **Rose** was Greene King IPA, Brains Rev. James and St Austell Proper Job. At Littlebourne the **Anchor** remains closed and boarded up, the optimistic note on the side wall blackboard declaring it was to reopen shortly now disappeared.

At the **Rose and Crown**, Stelling Minnis a recent visit found Goacher's Dark, London Pride and Young's Bitter on the handpumps, while Tribute, Harveys and otter Bitter was the choice at the **Hop Pocket**, Bossingham. However, the **Duck** at Pett Bottom, closed in mid-September for "sprucing up" was still closed at the start of 2018, and looking very empty. In Bridge, Master Brew was to be found at the **Plough and Harrow**.

**Black Robin**, Kingston: Around New Year there was a choice of Red Top, Mad Goose and Black Sheep, while at the **Duke of Cumberland** in Barham beers were Harveys, Greene King IPA and Marston's Christmas Everyday.

## FOLKESTONE

In Christchurch Road the **Happy Frenchman** remains closed and up for sale. However, real ale drinkers might well feel that the newly established **Bouverie Tap**, around the corner in Bouverie Road West, is a fair swap – its two hand pumps seemingly devoted to local Kentish ales. No sign of local beers though at **Harveys** where the choice is still Bombardier and Courage Best.

Around Christmas visits to **Chambers** found Canterbury Ales Simcoe Red, Pig & Porter Stout, Adnams Lighthouse and Ghost Ship and from Ripple Steam the Deal Hop Project brew Hopping Mad. One of our members, following a celebratory blowout in the cellar bar, shortly before New Year, subsequently repaired to the **Firkin** where an excellent pint of Alchemy IPA was enjoyed – whether any of the other available ales were sampled is not recorded.

In the Bayle just before Christmas the **British Lion** was selling Ringwood Fortyniner, Banks's Bitter and Canterbury Ales Christmas Ale, while at the **Guildhall** the choice was Greene king IPA, Old Speckled Hen, London Glory and Belhaven. At **Kipps** Twisted WTF, Ripple Steam Best and Hop Fuzz Advent were available.

After some years as "cask dry", Tontine Street now offers real ale drinkers sanctuary at the **Troubadour**: "After a walk round a perishing Folkestone, what a warm welcoming place to wait for the bus home," remarked one Dover drinker on a cold day in November. Visits of late have found mainly local ales – Gadds No 5 and Little Cracker, and Breakwater Cow Juice having been seen around Christmas – however, the range includes more distant suppliers, such as Dark Star Hophead, available over New Year.

Elsewhere, New Year's Day found Doom Bar, Young's Special, Bombardier and Bombardier Gold at the **Ship**, and Doom Bar, Landlord, Harveys Sussex and Mad Cat Golden Santa Paws at the **Mariner**. In the Lifeboat, Dark Star Equinox and Hop Back GFB were on the handpumps, while at the **East Cliff Tavern** the choice was Burton Bridge Screwbed and Dark Star American Pale Ale.

In Sandgate, in early January the **Ship** was offering Hop Back Summer Lightning, Hopdaemon Red, Long Man Long Blonde, Dark Star Hop Head, and Greene King IPA and Abbot. It is hoped that beers from its own Amazing Brewery will shortly by selling into the outside trade. At the **Providence** Doom Bar and Young's Bitter were available, while, across the road at **Inn Doors** a visit late last year found some very palatable Hop Fuzz English, among a variety of other brews.

At the **Carousel** in Hythe, Old Speckled Hen and Nelson Trafalgar, were on the handpumps shortly after New Year and the **Potting Shed** was selling Hop Fuzz English, Adnams Lighthouse and the superb Long Man Old Man. The **White Hart** was continuing its current emphasis on Kentish ale with Firebrick and Coppernob from Tonbridge alongside Greene King IPA, while the choice at the **Red Lion** was Young's Bitter and Directors. At the **Three Mariners** the choice was Skrimshander, Ripple, Tonbridge Traditional and Youngs Bitter, and at the **Butt of Sherry** Courage Best or Directors were available.

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



# Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club

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# RAMBLINGS & RUMBLINGS

*By Stroller*

**Sat 4 Nov – Royal Victoria, Ramsgate** (Cairngorm Tradewinds + others). Typical of ‘Spoons’, most lower strength beers are national bland, interesting looking ones much stronger than session beers. Good time to visit late afternoon when crowds thinning out before evening rush. A massive investment – hope it works out for them. **Great Tree** (Gadds No 5) Deserted at 9 pm on a Saturday, last visited many years back but seems to have become a victim of the micros, let alone Wetherspoons. Now only bright beer and mainly a B&B business. But handy for the station when the evening Loop times don’t connect with trains.

**Thurs 09 Nov – Anchor Tap, Tower Bridge** (Sam Smiths Old Brewery Bitter @ £3-20!)

Amazing find by one of my ex-colleagues – not too crowded either. Too cheap maybe for London types. A good trick question in the Lanes the next day: guess how much I paid for a pint near Tower Bridge last night!?

**A week walking in the Yorkshire Dales: Mon 13 Nov – Newfield Hall, Malhamdale** (Dark Horse Craven Bitter, Hetton Ale) Good to see beer from the micro in the next village on sale at hotel bar – at a price!

**Tues 14 Nov – Lister Arms, Malham** (Settle Mainline Bitter) Welcoming village pub for lunch out of the drizzle

**Sat 18 Nov – Skipton Beer Engine** (Fernandes Half Nelson, Blighty Northern Whisper, Neepsend) Micropub. The subject of looming Christmas cropped up among locals: “Oh no! The amateur drinkers’ll be out in force, cluttering up bars, not knowing how to order, or even what they want.....” So, not really different from Kent.

**Sun 19 Nov – Old Hill Inn, Chapel-le-Dale** (Dent Aviator, Golden Fleece) Ideal for snack Sunday lunch in the middle of nowhere.

**Sat 25 Nov – Conqueror, Ramsgate** (Gadds 7, Thornbridge Jalpur) Surprised to see people knocking back Jalpur early lunch time. Wonder how they spend the rest of the day. **Mind the Gap** (Seasider)

**Sat 16 Dec – King’s Head, Kingsdown** (Sadler’s Thin Ice, Gadds 5) Branch Christmas Meal, most enjoyable. **Rising Sun** (Youngs Gold, Bombardier)

**Sun 17 Dec – St Crispin** Even just after 12 noon place was heaving – full car park and coach from Thanet parked outside. So retreated to **Blue Pigeons** (Caledonian Coast to Coast @ £4-40 – some kind of keg) Just getting busy but I was greeted cordially. **Five Bells Eastry** (Wantsum Black Prince, Greene King IPA) Good crowd in Sun lunchtime, just got seat.

**Fri 22 Dec – Bouncing Barrel, Herne Bay** (Redemption Rock the Kazbek, Skrimshander, Bullmastiff Santa Paws) Only second visit to this superb micro, - good vibes and warm welcome. Through train back cancelled due to ‘trespassers on line’, so unscheduled stop at **Mind the Gap** (Gadds Dark Conspiracy)

**Sun 24 Dec – Troubadour** (Gadds 5, Breakwater Cow Juice) Last orders called at 8, just in time to take last bus back to Dover. Next one will be on Wednesday morning!

**Thurs 28 Dec – Crown, Eythorne** (Rev James, Canterbury Pardoners, Rockin Rudolf Doom Bar)

Only time for a half and a quick soup. Couldn’t stay longer as wanted to complete my walk in daylight, but worth calling back again I think. **Red Cow** (Blue Top, Little Cracker, Marston’s 61 Deep) The trains think it’s Saturday today, meaning an hour’s wait, but where better to wait than here!? Good beer by a roaring fire.

**Sun 31 Dec – Mind the Gap** (Oakham Citra, Gadds 3) **39 Steps** (Inveralmond EPA, Gadds 5)

Packed out, with awful loud music too. This place is too big. I preferred the original place, a few doors along the road.



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# The National News

By Martin Atkins

**National Pub of the Year** CAMRA's 2017 competition is drawing to a close with the contest now down to the final four:-

The **Cricketers Arms**, St Helens – 13 handpumps, beer from newer regional brewers and local microbreweries, real ciders and beer festivals several times a year.

The **Stanford Arms**, Lowestoft – free house a short walk from the town's train and bus stations, possessed of a large array of handpumps serving mainly local ales.

The **Weavers Real Ale House**, Kidderminster – a deceptively spacious micropub, with bench seating along the sides and plenty of tables, it offers eight beers, four ciders and a perry. *(Not to be confused with Park Lane Weavers, which the Beery Boaters moored opposite and visited in Autumn 2016 and was pictured in The Lock Keepers Rest, Channel Draught Autumn 2017)*

**Wigan Central**, Wigan – a two-roomed pub with a railway-themed interior. Although owned by the nearby Prospect Brewery it sources ales from across the country.

All pubs are selected by CAMRA volunteers and are judged on atmosphere, decor, service, value for money and quality of beer. The winner will be announced in February.

**Late Night Levy** In contrast to councils in central and eastern London, where Tower Hamlets, City of London, Islington, Camden and Hackney councils all say they will introduce Late Night Levies, Kingston council in the south west of the capital has declined to adopt a proposal to impose a fee of £299 to £4,440 per year on premises that sold alcohol between midnight and 6am. CAMRA condemns the use of LNLs saying they will hit pubs with yet another bill, at a time when business rate revaluation has seen many pubs facing unprecedented rises. They unfairly penalise pubs – most of which are hubs of responsible drinking, and councils often fail to consider the effect on valued community pubs.

**Trappist Beers in Leicestershire** Mount St Bernard Abbey, near Whitwick in north Leicestershire is set to become the UK's only Trappist brewery and one of twelve in the world

to produce authentic Trappist beer. Father Erik Varden said: "For some time, we have been planning the establishment of a new industry to assist the upkeep of the abbey and provide common work for the monks." Permission has now been granted to convert a redundant part of the 19th century Cistercian monastery building, and preparatory work is now underway.

**Pubco Saves Pubs** For those who think that pubcos are just monolithic corporations happy to sell off and close pubs willy-nilly, or lease them out on cut throat terms should take a look at Brewhouse & Kitchen in Dorset. The company has been credited with bringing brewing back to Brewery Square, Dorchester and subsequently rescuing the Rising Sun in Poole, Malt and Hops in Southbourne and Branksome Arms in Bournemouth. And now a grateful East Dorset branch has given Brewhouse & Kitchen an award in recognition of its good work.

**Alcohol Guidelines** The alcohol industry has decided to abandon displaying the government's alcohol guidelines on drinks' labels – a decision that saw the pro-alcohol campaign group, Drinker's Voice brand the guidelines "dead in the water". Chair, Byron Davies, added, "People just don't want to listen to the government when it comes to alcohol advice anymore."

**Brand Leaders** The 2017 *Cask Report* identifies the ten top selling cask brands in the UK. No surprise, judging from their bar top prominence, that way in the lead is Sharp's Doom Bar, with volumes sales approaching 240 thousand hectolitres (42,234,095 pints), followed by Greene King IPA at just over 160 thousand hectolitres (28,156,063 pints). The remaining eight places in declining order were Fullers London Pride, Greene King Abbot, Caledonian Deuchars IPA (Heineken), Marston's Pedigree, Thwaites Wainwright (Marston's), Timothy Taylor Landlord, St Austel Tribute and lastly, Morland Old Speckled Hen (Greene King) with sales of around 35 thousand hectolitres (6,159,139 pints). Are these though the ales sought after by discerning beer drinkers?



# NATIONAL BEER SCORING SYSTEM

So it's the beginning of the New Year and we've started the process of selecting the entries for next year's Good Beer Guide (GBG) and the candidates for CAMRA's Pub of the Year (POTY) competition. During the year CAMRA members will make hundreds of visits to local pubs and submit thousands of beer scores using CAMRA's National Beer Scoring System (NBSS). We then analyse these beer scores to identify which pubs in our branch serve quality real ale and in turn which pubs will feature in the GBG and be entered into the POTY competition.

The results of the beer scoring analysis is also used to:

- Monitor the quality of real ale being served in our pubs.
- Select those pubs that will be invited to join CAMRA's LocAle Accreditation Scheme.
- Identify those pubs to appear on our **Best Of...** web page.

## What is the NBSS?

The National Beer Scoring System (NBSS) allows CAMRA members to submit information, in the form of beer scores, about the condition and quality of the real ale they have been drinking. The scoring system is based on a simple 'points out of 5' scoring system:

| #   | Definition   | Your Likely Reaction   |
|-----|--|--|
| 0   | No real ale available  | "Lets find another pub."   |
| 0.5 | <b>Undrinkable.</b> Cask ale is so poor you have to take it back or can't finish it.   | "Surely the barman should have smelt the state of this beer as he poured it."<br>"Disgusting"; "Appalling"; "Revoltig"; "Off"  |
| 1   | <b>Poor.</b> Beer that is anything from barely drinkable to drinkable with considerable resentment.  | "They'd have to pay me to drink this beer."<br>"Unpleasant"; "Inferior"  |
| 1.5 |  | "Poor"; "Indifferent"; "Second-rate"   |
| 2   | <b>Average.</b> Competently kept, drinkable pint but doesn't inspire in any way, not worth moving to another pub but you drink the beer without really noticing. | "It was OK but nothing to write home about. I'll be glad to finish it so that I can try a different beer or perhaps move on to another pub. I will not be recommending it to my friends."<br>"Mediocre"; "Run of the mill"; "A little tired" |
| 2.5 |  | "Ordinary"; "Acceptable"; "Passable"   |
| 3   | <b>Good.</b> Good beer in good form. You may cancel plans to move to the next pub. You want to stay for another pint and may seek out the beer again.            | "Not bad and I'd be reasonably happy to drink this beer all night. I think my friends should try this beer."<br>"Quite good"; "Enjoyable"; "Nice"; "Decent"  |
| 3.5 |  | "Good"; "Lovely"   |
| 4   | <b>Very Good.</b> Excellent beer in excellent condition.   | "Hmmm, I wonder if I have time for another pint or two and my friends have <u>got</u> to try this beer."<br>"Very good"; "First-class"; "Great"  |
| 4.5 |  | "Excellent"; "Superior"; "Outstanding"   |
| 5   | <b>Perfect.</b> Probably the best you are ever likely to find. A seasoned drinker will award this score very rarely.   | "Nectar of the Gods! It would take wild horses to drag me away from this pub and this beer."<br>"Perfect"; "Superlative"; "Stunning"   |

### Notes:

- Real ale should be scored based on its quality and condition
- Bad quality beer as well as good quality beer should be scored, so we have a good and fair picture of the quality of real ale at a pub.
- Every pub occasionally serves a pint near the end of the barrel. So to be fair to the landlord, a score of "0.5" ("Undrinkable") should only be given if the ale is taken back and it is not replaced or refunded with good grace.
- The majority of scores for a pub well known for its real ale quality will be between 3 & 4. For a GBG-quality pub the majority of scores will be around 3.5.
- Scoring a 4.5 is a rare event. Scoring a 5 is a very, very, very rare event – after all it's not often you get to drink the Nectar of the Gods. So, a score of 5 should only be given a couple of times a year.

## Submitting beer scores

If you are a CAMRA member you can submit a beer score from CAMRA's WhatPub website (<http://whatpub.com/>):

1. Logon to the Whatpub website using your CAMRA membership number and password.
2. Search for and select the pub you visited.
3. Enter the date of your visit, the brewery and beer name along with your beer score.
4. If you can't find the brewery or beer then you can either enter the names into the appropriate fields or, by selecting Advanced Options, enter the details into the Comments field.

## What if I am a publican?

If you are the publican of a real ale pub you may be interested in knowing how the quality and condition of your real ale is being rated. There are a couple of actions you can take to find out more.

You could consider joining CAMRA. In addition to all the benefits of joining the organisation, you will receive regular branch reports that provide updates on the ranking of real ale pubs according to their beer scores.

Alternatively, you can contact us directly and we'd be happy to provide you with the details of the beer scores that have been submitted for your pub. Just email [pubs.officer@camra-dds.org.uk](mailto:pubs.officer@camra-dds.org.uk).

If you are concerned that you are not getting enough beer scores then get to know which of your locals are CAMRA members. Then pester, persuade, coax and cajole them into submitting some beer scores. One or two beer scores a month is sufficient to be eligible for an entry into the GBG.

In the next editions of Channel Draught we'll be looking in detail at the Good Beer Guide and Pub of the Year selection procedures.



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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*In our Autumn edition a letter from **A Concerned Voice** raised the issue of pub opening times. The following came in response, from the owner of the **Freed Man** in Walmer.*

When I slipped my leash from Shepherd Neame and started thinking about opening a micropub my wife and I decided on some market research. Happily, this involved visiting micropubs and noting down what we liked and what we found more irksome.

One issue that did begin to bother me was opening hours. I have had similar experiences where I have been refused service in a crowded pub, or traipsed to the end of a long road only to find the lights out. That is why I decided to open from 12 every day albeit with slightly flexible closing hours. We do shut early quite often on a Monday or Tuesday, but only when it is apparent that any more business is highly unlikely. I am conscious of the fact that as a micropub with a good reputation we do have a larger catchment area than other 'local' pubs; so we don't take the decision to close lightly.

Licensing hours is not an issue, I am licensed until 23:00 seven days a week. This gives me the flexibility I want; my opening times are 12 to 9ish on a Monday - the ish is important, if I have people in I don't ask them to leave on the stroke of nine.

Another reason for opening seven days a week is that it keeps the beer flowing. I may only draw a dozen pints from each pump on a quiet day but it keeps the product fresh and quality is paramount. That is why you will often only find three ales on during the week - it keeps the casks turning over.

Having said all that, micropubs are a reflection of the people that run them, and it is up to each landlord and landlady to run their business how they see fit. For some Monday and Tuesday closing may make sound financial sense, or it may be due to restrictions on their time so I don't think the wide variety of opening hours is going to change anytime soon.

That means that as a customer I have to plan ahead a little. Check online or give the pub a call before committing to a thirty minute train journey into the wilderness. Also, talk to the owner, let them know how you feel. It may be that they don't think there is the demand for the pub on a Monday - if you can convince them otherwise they may decide to open.

Whatever happens please continue supporting all pubs, not just the micros. Sometimes, as a landlord it feels as if everything is set against us but happy and appreciative customers does make it worthwhile.

**Ian Goodban**

*The comments made by "A Concerned Voice", in our Autumn edition would seem to hark back to the era of restricted opening times including afternoon closing, when pub hours were set in tablets of stone – come rain or shine, hell or high water a pub would open at a certain times, and close at a certain time, day in day out, except of course Sundays when religious considerations brought even further constraints. These were the days of local licensing authorities setting hours of opening across the whole area of their jurisdiction, and when it was not unknown where two authorities with different closing times adjoined, to see a late night, last orders dash, from pubs in the earlier closing authority to later closing pubs in the other.*

*With all day opening and subsequently all night opening, or at least licensees having the right to apply for whatever period of opening they felt might be propitious for their premises, the concept of all pubs opening and shutting at set times completely disappeared. Now, as "A Concerned Voice" pointed out, it has become something of a wild west. Ian Goodban's policy sounds exemplary, and he is right when he says that customer's need to plan ahead a little. However, customers also need to be able to plan, so it is very important that opening hours are clearly stated and adhered to.*

## PUB ACCESSIBILITY

I recently submitted a WhatPub update about Cullins Yard, Cambridge Road, Dover, concerning the excellent disabled facilities that were available. I also mentioned, that despite there being many sources of information that highlighted disabled facilities in pubs, I had found it quite difficult to find accurate and up to date

information about wheelchair accessibility in the pubs in our local area.

Having been confined to a wheelchair for several months earlier this year I was looking for pubs that could be described as being 'wheelchair friendly'. Whilst I have a pretty good knowledge of many local pubs I decided to do an internet search to see if there were any wheelchair friendly pubs I had overlooked and I got some very surprising and varied results.

Some supposedly wheelchair friendly pubs were most definitely not what I would call 'wheelchair friendly' despite the guide they were featured in claiming otherwise. Other pubs that I knew to be wheelchair friendly simply did not feature in any guide that I looked at. I would therefore like to suggest that pub landlords and CAMRA members who submit updates to the WhatPub guide about disabled access should consider adding a description about wheelchair accessibility in any updates they submit.

The sort of information that is useful to someone in a wheelchair is probably taken for granted by many of the more able bodied members but at risk of stating the obvious, the things I look out for are as follows:-

**Outside the pub:-** There are disabled parking spaces; No uneven or slippery ground; No steps up or down; No steep slopes; No heavy doors or gates.

**Inside the pub:-** No internal steps; there is room to move between tables; easy access to the bar and restaurant; no narrow corridors or tight turns.

**Accessible toilets:-** Doors have handles to assist opening; Room to manoeuvre past the door; Room inside the toilet to manoeuvre; grab rails; location of toilet roll; location of wash hand basin and hand towels/dryers.

If in doubt about the accessibility of any pub I would advise members to phone ahead of any visit. Just because a pub does not display the 'wheelchair' logo in a guide does not mean it is inaccessible to a wheelchair.

Regards **Graham Butterworth** (Member 037873)





# UNCRYPTIC CROSSWORD

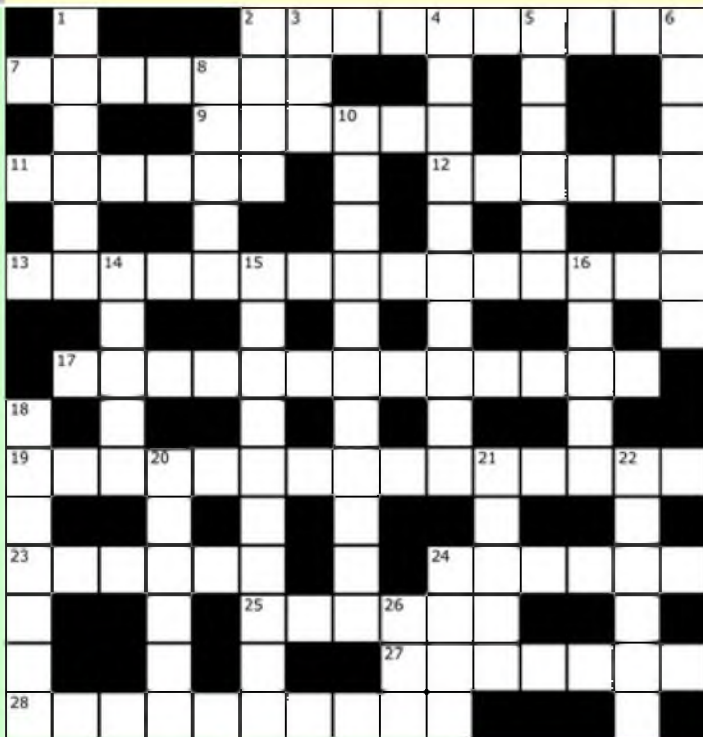
By Trisha Wells

## Across

2. Vehicle which is old and corroded (4,6)
7. More prone to vulgarity (7)
9. Call off (6)
11. Take as hostage (6)
12. Rubbish left in public (6)
13. Decree or statute (3,2,10)
17. Autonomous region in Northern China (5,8)
19. Taxi (7,8)
23. One-time island in Kent (6)
24. A small pointed beard (6)
25. Inhabitants of the state bordered by Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota and Minnesota (6)
27. "And was Jerusalem builded here, among those dark ..... mills" (7)
28. Dutch town where the 1992 'Treaty on European Union' was signed (10)

## Down

1. A belt of the heavens divided into twelve divisions (6)
2. Harvest (4)
3. A large metal container with a tap (3)
4. Campanologist (4-6)
5. Traditional way of behaving (6)
6. In need of water (7)
8. Neck covering (5)
10. Bird which eats decaying flesh (7,4)
14. Mixer to go with gin (5)
15. Cooked or served with potatoes (10)
16. Genus of heath plants (5)
18. Medway town, home of an historic dockyard (7)



20. US state, capital Topeka (6)
21. Birds' resting place (5)
22. Celtic language (6)
24. Mosquito-like insect (4)
26. Tree of the Fraxinus family (3)

**Crossword Answers  
on Page 45**

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# CHANNEL VIEW

*A cold wind is blowing through the pubs and bars of Britain, taking the froth from the tops of our pints, and imparting a chill to real ale where no chill should be. However, this is not just the ever present threat of pub closure, or a Treasury which seems to regard our traditional beverage as a luxury item that should be taxed accordingly. It is a philosophy intent on saving ourselves from ourselves and whose physical embodiment is the anti-alcohol lobby.*

*While few would argue that alcohol is not without its dangers, for the anti-alcohol lobby alcohol has no upside, it is all bad, bad, bad. Here **Byron Davies**, chair of the new alcohol consumer organisation, **Drinkers' Voice**, offers an alternative view, and the vitally important role he anticipates for his group.*

The freedom to enjoy a good drink is a wonderful thing. The first sip of a beer after a long day's hard work is something we look forward to as we switch our minds off from the stresses and strains of everyday office politics, traffic jams, delayed trains home and rotten news headlines. Or perhaps, the freedom to share an important moment over a few drinks with loved ones to celebrate a big birthday, a wedding or even a football result you'll want to remember forever.

Most of us can conjure up those fond memories which stick with us forever. However, not everybody wants you to enjoy those moments over your favourite tipple. Because the increasing presence of the anti-alcohol lobby has dominated some of that rotten news, and is now starting to influence government decisions.

Reading headlines about "Drunk Britain" and the perils of alcohol can leave a nasty taste in your mouth; and trust me, it isn't the beer. But while so called experts from the anti-booze brigade are telling you that all drinking is bad for you, who is taking the time to ask you, the consumer, what you think?

That is where Drinkers' Voice comes into play. We are an alcohol consumer organisation which seeks to give the UK's drinkers the chance to share their views on the role which alcohol plays in their life. Whether you prefer a pint in the pub or a glass of wine over dinner at home, we want you to have your say about why having that freedom to drink is important to your lifestyle.

And it isn't just about freedoms; it's about our health too. Decades of research has shown that drinking moderately is better for us than abstaining altogether. It also shows that alcohol is good for our heart's health, lowering our risk of cardiovascular disease in particular.

While these are facts, it isn't often we read about them when we pick up a newspaper or scroll through news headlines online. We just aren't given the full facts, and instead, we are told there is no safe level of drinking, and that all alcohol is bad for us.

The power of Drinkers' Voice means the way we speak and think about alcohol doesn't have to be dictated to us, but for the first time we now have a vehicle to share our views about the role alcohol plays in our life, for good and for bad.

It is important people know the full truths about alcohol before they choose whether or not to have another drink. The current case, where people increasingly accept the rhetoric that all alcohol is bad for us is not only inaccurate, but it has dangerous implications for our health. If one drink is bad, then why not have three, four, five more?

I'm excited by the potential Drinkers' Voice has in changing the debate on drinking. Without Drinkers' Voice, there is every chance that 10 or 20 years down the line, we will see public health look to a stack of biased consultation responses and pushy correspondence from the anti-alcohol lobby, and consider positions such as plain packaging, increased taxes and restricted access to alcohol purchasing to be those that represent the views of the general public.

However, with the power of our united voice echoing across the country, with a supporters' network built over the years to come, embedded in communities and in the ears of politicians, future governments will be forced to listen to our case: drinking in moderation is good for us, so give us the whole truth.

*The above has been adapted from an article in CAMRA's newspaper What's Brewing. You can find out more about Drinkers' Voice at [www.drinkersvoice.org.uk](http://www.drinkersvoice.org.uk), on Twitter: @DrinkersVoiceUK; and on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/DrinkersVoiceUK](https://www.facebook.com/DrinkersVoiceUK)*



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**Saturday 10th February - Steak Night**



**Wednesday 14th February - Valentines Menu**



**Saturday 17th February - Steve Huckle - 8:00pm**

**Thursday 8th March - Clairvoyant Evening**

**Sunday 11th March - Mothers Day**

**3 Courses £15.50**



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**Joe Scott - 8:00 to 10.30pm**



**BEER FESTIVAL 2018 - EASTER WEEKEND**

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# HOME BREWING IN NORWAY

## More of a serious necessity than a hobby

As everyone knows you don't go out drinking in Norway without a credit card or substantial wad of notes in your wallet. Alcohol in Norway is horrendously expensive. Carrying the second highest tax rate in the world, prices start around £9 a pint, and anything taken home above 4.7% ABV, requires a visit to a state-run bottle shop.

At that level of prices it is a surprise that the country has any pubs and bars at all, and for many of the country's beer lovers it means that if you want to drink beer in anything but the minutest quantities, then brew it at home. Which is exactly what they do. From one end of this long, narrow country, which stretches from the latitude of northern Scotland to well inside the Arctic Circle, homebrewing abounds. Recently in *The i* newspaper Jonny Garrett took a look at the phenomenon.

Homebrewing is a tradition in Norway, stretching back at least to Viking times and carried forward over the centuries as a farmhouse practice – at one time it was law that farms would have to produce ale for the locals. And while in the UK, homebrewing is often a solitary activity, in Norway it tends towards the communal, not least perhaps, because of its universality. According to one commentator virtually every man over 35 will have tried home brewing at least once in their lives.

There are brew clubs all over the country, often acting as local social hubs, and collaboration is common with many seeing brewing your own beer at home as a good way to meet like-minded people. Homebrewing has become a country-wide network and the national homebrewing association Norbrygg, has thousands of members and runs competitions all over the country.

And it is a serious activity, far removed from the dustbin in the airing cupboard, that is often the image conjured up of homebrewing in this country. Many Norwegian homebrewers have built their own kits and the quality and range is excellent. Again no comparison with the results achieved by the homebrew packs that could once be found in many a British high street.

Despite the large volume of beer brewed at home, there are of course commercial breweries, but the crippling tax level, and distribution complications owing to Norway's elongated geography, does not encourage homebrewers to join their ranks. There have been examples but all evidence suggests it is very hard work and growth is often slow.



An outstanding success, however, comes from Stavanger where, following Carlsberg's acquisition and closure of the town's local brewery in 2003, a few residents decided to found their own, Lervig. Initially production was limited to a pilsner, similar to that of the now closed brewery, but with business dragging, Philadelphia-born Mike Murphy (photo left), a leading light of the American craft beer movement, was persuaded to join the operation in 2010.

His first beer Lucky Jack, an American style pale ale, received a mixed reception, but he persevered and Lervig is now ranked among the top 100 in the world by RateBeer. Mike is very impressed with Norwegian homebrewing: "The homebrew here is pretty advanced," he says. "They make impressively clean and easy drinking styles mostly, but every time I make an exciting new beer I get 1,000 recipe requests in the first week."

The success of Lervig has inspired other breweries all across Scandinavia, with some like Lindheim, Duggers and Omnipollo gaining international acclaim. However, in Norway the Government shows no inclination to amend the high tax levels, and of late there have been bankruptcies. With things set to remain as they are, it would seem, that for the foreseeable future, homebrewing will continue to make a substantial contribution to Norwegian beer production.



## WITH SOME LADDIES AND SOME (Beer) GLASSES A Trip to Hackney

"Have you heard of the Howling Hope Tank Bar?" asked a work colleague recently. I hadn't but Google had and amongst current trend for micropubs, microbreweries and craft ale bars this new venture seemed worth a look, and so, with my drinking buddies Pete Smith and Alan Bushby, we set off on the high speed train to Stratford International where a short 15 minute walk took us toward our goal. But as we crossed the River Lea, we noticed below us a drinking establishment, the Crate Brewery. The sun was over the proverbial so we stopped to investigate.

**The Crate Brewery** A Riverside brew pub serving their own ales from six hand pumps and key taps in an almost traditional pub setting with an outdoor drinking area on the river bank. On offer were Crate IPA, The Red, Nitro, a session IPA, Hefeweizen Wheat Beer and Sea Cider. The keg taps offered Belgian style pale and fruit sour beers. Greek style food is served and the Brewery can be seen behind a glass screen. Alan noticed through the back window of the bar, the Howling Hops bar. Time to crack on!



The Crate Brewery

**The Howling Hops Tap Room and Tank Bar**, to give it its full title, is based in an old glass factory – curious slots and marks in the stone floor bear testament to its industrial past and in keeping with this image is the unmistakable sight of a rank of conditioning tanks standing sentry across the bar. The Brewery is behind this and indeed you have to walk past it to get to the loo!



Inside the Howling Hops Tap Room and Tank Bar

On the day of our visit the tanks contained IPA, Like, Molecular Later, Pale Ale, Pale XX, Chocolate Stout and Imperial Stout aka 'Fighting Ale'. Beer is dispensed direct from the tanks through taps into either 1/2 pint jugs or 2/3 pint glasses. I decided to sample the 'Fighting Ale' which was only available in 2/3 pint measures at £2.90.... but then again it is 11.5%! So I had two! Pete and Alan were more sensible. The drinking area is set out



The Peoples Park Tavern



like a beer hall with long trestle tables and benches with a smaller bar serving spirits and soft drinks and a BBQ grill bar.

Over our drinks we consulted Pete's good beer guide (pages torn from the latest edition!) to decide on our next stop....

**The People's Park Tavern** A further 15-20 minute walk away across the nearby A12 trunk road and Victoria Park, the people's park. From the outside a traditional Victorian London boozer, inside, alongside the typical bar, a collection of old arcade machines (in working order!), some quirky decoration on the walls, and home to Laines Brewery – situated, you guessed it, behind a glass screen. Beer, on this occasion served in the traditional manner through hand pumps, included Double Golden Ale, Bestest Bitter, Hello Single Hop, Mangolicious (contains mango!) and Red Empire Red Ale. The large garden backing onto the market is decorated in a similar quirky manner to the bar.

Another check of Pete's good beer guide and consulting one of several conveniently posted maps of the local area we made our way to Mare Street, the 'main drag' through Hackney. Just past the famous Hackney Empire we found 'my pub'.

**Baxter's Court** – the local Wetherspoons. Very popular and with the usual wide choice of local and national ales, we stopped for a sharpener before crossing the road to the

**Old Ship Inn** Accessed by a 'blink and you'll miss its alleyway', the bar was refurbished in a modern minimalist style. Unfortunately this applied to the beer selection with only two out of five hand pumps working, and both proving a little tired or out of condition. Again this description was starting to apply to the three of us, so we headed for our final choice, the well known



**Cock Tavern** An old Truman's Corner pub, now home to the Maregard Brewery – yes, we'd found another brewpub! Twelve hand pumps offered a selection of their own and other local beers, also several ciders, and, as is common these days, Craft Alex's in cans. Ironically the pub used to belong to Howling Hops, so we had unwittingly come full circle. Handily also, just around the corner was Hackney Overground Station, two stops to Stratford International and home.

**Chris Baxter**





# THE 2017 GOOD BEER GUIDE TRAIL - Part Two

## Visiting all the Branch's GBG 2017 pubs

The first half of the 2017 GBG trail finished with a train journey from Temple Ewell to Shepherdswell, and a seven mile muddy walk in changeable weather, including torrential showers and a thunderstorm, and involved the **Fox**, Temple Ewell, the **Wrong Turn**, Barfreestone, and the **Carpenters Arms**, Coldred.

### Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September – Walmer, Finglesham and Sandwich

The second half of our trail found us fully emerged in Stagecoach's revised bus timetables, introduced just within the last week or so, as we made our way around Deal and Sandwich and their environs. Those travelling from Dover had the option of the new 90 bus service which having called at River and Whitfield continues into Deal via Dover Road and the Strand rather than branching off through Mill Hill and along London Road as did all former Dover buses, and as does the current main service. Its particular benefit on this occasion, being a bus stop within five minutes of that day's first pub.

The **Berry** in Walmer has won Branch Pub of the Year seven times, a testament to landlord Chris combining the valued qualities of a community local with an extensive and well-kept range of ales, and where from midday, a small group gathered to pursue the fourth part of that year's itinerary. Although a Monday lunchtime the choice of ale was as wide and varied as ever and included Wild Beer Bibble, Breakwater Bulwark, Harvey's Sussex Best, Rudgate Ruby Mild, Burning Sky Plateau, Dark Star American Pale Ale and Gadds Cloudsurfer. While in anticipation of Oakham Day on Thursday later that week, when nine Oakham beers were to be served, there was also an old favourite from the Mogul days – Bishops Farewell.



We stayed for an hour or so, sitting in the bay window by the bar to enjoy a few pints from the pub's broad selection; outside a day of changeable weather, alternating bright sunlight and cloud. In due course we left to undertake a two bus journey that would eventually deposit us at Burgess Green, on course for the **Crown** at Finglesham – owing to the timetable changes, somewhat later than planned when the GBG Trail was originally drawn up. Along the road, or the more direct route across the fields? The recent bouts of wet weather made the decision for us, and we took the more circuitous road route, rather than following a muddy track through water filled ditches and hollows.

We arrived at some time after 2 o'clock, choosing from a selection of Dark Star Hophead, Caledonian Autumn Red and Beer Goggles, while those suffering from the pangs of hunger took the opportunity for a bite to eat. However, bus rescheduling curtailed our stay, and within the hour we were heading back to Broad Lane to await transport through Eastry and Woodnesborough to Sandwich, the sun shining but ominous banks of clouds threatened the possibility of rain.

Being a school day, and it now being mid-afternoon, our progress was further impeded by the bus terminating at Sandwich Technical School, forcing us to alight on Dover Road and continue on foot to our final destination, the **Red Cow**. Here the choice of real ale was Gadds She Sells Sea Shells, Ringwood Fortyniner, Doom Bar and Timothy Taylor Boltmaker. The clouds now seemingly dispersing, we found a corner with sunlight flooding through the pub windows, to finish off our afternoon and that part of our Trail.

## Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October – Sandwich

The fifth day of our Trail and one confined entirely to Sandwich, starting at midday with a visit to the **King's Arms** in Strand Street. Away from the town centre, on the road that leads out west towards the bypass and Ash, approach to the pub is often from the rear, entering, as on this occasion, through the car park. Beer choice was Harveys Sussex Best and Greene King IPA. Next stop was also in Strand Street, the **Crispin**, at the other end on the corner with the High Street near the ancient barbican and (former toll) bridge across the Stour. Crispin Ale in excellent condition, Madcap Greenhop and Adnams Broadside were on the handpumps.



The Crispin Inn, Sandwich

The afternoon was progressing as the group moved on to the day's final visit, the medieval **George & Dragon** in Fisher Street, and a choice of Butcombe Bitter, Wantsum Greenhop and Otter Amber. Although, like many pubs these days, heavily dependent on food, it nevertheless provides a good local service, and as so often, made a pleasant place for a quiet drink mid-afternoon.

## Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November – Dover

The final day of this year's trail was confined to three of our branch's more recently established pubs. Events kicked off mid-afternoon at **The Lanes**, the Worthington Street micropub that in less than three years has established itself as a major outlet for real ale in Dover. In that time owners Debbie and Keith Lane have won Branch seasonal awards for Spring 2015 and Autumn 2016, and saw the pub chosen as Branch Pub of the Year 2017. Subsequently they were awarded East Kent Pub of Year 2017, and later in the year lost out narrowly to the **Flowerpot** in Maidstone for Kent Pub of Year – and we took the opportunity to present the Runners Up award that afternoon.

As well as winning county awards the pub is a committed supporter of Kent beer, cider and wine, and we drank from an ale selection of Mad Cat Golden IPA, Breakwater Cow Juice, Canterbury Ales Millers Ale, Gadd's No 7 and Romney Marsh Mallow. We stopped for about an hour before moving on to the **Eight Bells** in Cannon Street, the town's Wetherspoons, and open now for about twenty years, the oldest venue on that afternoon's trail.

With a choice of up to a dozen ales and cider, drinkers will almost invariably find on offer a selection of local beers – that day Black Pig and Ravening Wolf from Wantsum, Skrimshander and Old Dairy Blue Top. Again an hour or so soon passed, until at some time after 5pm we left for our final destination that afternoon, and also the last pub of that year's trail.

Dating from late summer 2014, and set up by former **Yew Tree** and **Blakes** licensees Peter and Kathryn Garstin, the **Mash Tun** is also a relative newcomer, and it is hard now to imagine Dover without it. A good choice of ale and cider is always available, with again an emphasis on local producers. This year's green hop brews had just about run their course, but two of the final barrels from East Kent were on tap at the pub – Goody's Genesis and the East Kent Collaborative Brew between Gadd's, Wantsum, Goody's and Canterbury Ales.

There was also one more presentation (shown right), to Steve and Helen Bell who had completed all six parts of this year's trail. Congratulations to them both, and also special thanks to Branch Membership Secretary John Pitcher, who organised and arranged the trail, for all his endeavours.



The presentations in the Mash Tun, Dover

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## TIRED & EMOTIONAL

### Research into drinking and emotions

The old euphemism for being worse for wear for alcohol is apparently very apt according to recent research published in *BMJ Open*, and recently reported by *The i* newspaper. However, both tiredness and emotional feelings varied according to which form of alcohol was being drunk.

Apparently red wine and beer were the most associated with feeling relaxed, respectively 53% and 50% of those surveyed, while of spirit drinkers only 20% reported this connection. Perhaps unsurprisingly, more extreme emotions, both positive and negative were attributed to spirits – while 59% of respondents felt that spirits elicited feelings of energy or confidence, for 30%, spirits induced feelings of aggression, an emotion, which for red wine drinkers, only occurred in just 2.5%.

Different types of emotions – energised, relaxed, sexy, confident and tired, aggressive, ill, restless, and tearful – were attributed to different types of alcohol, and men and women reacted differently to the same drinks. Women were markedly more likely to associate each feeling with all types of alcohol, except for aggression, which also resonated particularly with heavy drinkers – six times more than for light drinkers.

The report also concluded that feeling sexy can also be enhanced by alcohol (no surprises there then), with a quarter of wine drinkers reporting the effect after a couple of glasses. For drinkers of vodka, gin and rum this increased to 40%, although the report made no mention of quantity, or of how whisky and brandy drinkers responded. There used to be a sometimes quoted adage that whisky made you fight and gin made you cry, to which on occasion was added, that brandy made you randy, although there was always the suspicion that had more to do with its rhyming qualities than any empirical observation.

Contrastingly however, for many alcohol had no effect whatsoever on libido – the majority of wine drinkers reported just feeling tired after two glasses, and for beer drinkers only 19% found any enhanced sexual response (the beer goggles fraternity?). It should be noted, though, that the survey was conducted only among 18-34 year-olds (30,000 from 21 countries).

Exactly what results would have been found from among real ale drinkers, most of whom it can reasonably be assumed would fall outside the survey group, can only be guessed at.



## 28% ABV AND £150 A BOTTLE

### Samuel Adams re-releases 'illegal' super strength beer

How's this to make your eyes water. A beer created by Boston based Samuel Adams that is so strong it's illegal in 15 states across America is being re-released for its 10th anniversary. Described by its creator as "the craft beer community's most renowned and sought-after extreme barrel-aged beer, 'Utopias' is not just any beer, it is distinct - and very alcoholic, thanks in part to a strain of yeast called "ninja yeast."

"At 28% ABV (alcohol by volume), this brew is reminiscent of a rich vintage Port, old cognac, or fine Sherry with notes of dark fruit, subtle sweetness, and a deep rich malty smoothness," so basically, not like your typical Sam Adams beer at all. It doesn't cost the same as your typical beer either.

Because Utopias is made with the "world's finest ingredients," according to the press release, including multiple varieties of hops and malts, a bottle retails for \$200 (approx. £150).

It's also quite difficult to secure a bottle - only 13,000 bottles of Utopias are brewed, every two years. If are willing to shell out the cash for the beer, the good news is it will probably last you a while. Because the alcohol content is so outrageously high, the recommended serving size is just one ounce (about 30 Millilitres) - meaning your £150 bottle of beer should last you most of a session.



## TO THE PUB BY BUS

Are timetable changes and service reductions are making it harder to enjoy a pint by bus?

September. So after years of getting to grips with the buses we were used to, those of us who are regular users had to start all over again.

The downside of the changes has been well publicised. The withdrawal of Services 14 and 87 meant three villages losing their service – Staple, Northbourne and Tilmanstone – the latter losing its pub too! *(We're not sure that the current closure of the **Plough and Harrow** has anything to do with the revised bus timetable – Ed.)* Eythorne/Elvington have come off badly. One Saturday recently I thought I'd do one of my favourite country strolls from the **Crown** at Finglesham to the **Crown** at Eythorne, but thought better of it on realising that the last bus back from Eythorne to Dover would be at 13.18!!

Although Coldred gets a two-hourly service on the 89 in the daytime this doesn't coincide with the **Car-penter's Arms** opening times. There is one bus from Dover which will get you up there by 18.30 but you're on your own coming back.

Eastry now has only an hourly service but still has a direct bus to Dover, though the convoluted route via Deal and St Margarets is not exactly the quickest! But with a little help from trains to Sandwich, I did manage to go to a Quiz Evening at the **Five Bells** the other day arriving around 7 and leaving by 10, so all is not lost.

But every cloud...etc, so fortunately some places have now gained new routes enabling new pub visit opportunities.

One place which has done well is Finglesham, where the bus stops hourly at the bottom of the village street a quarter mile from the **Crown**. They only got a Sunday bus before! It is quite a ride from Dover, about an hour, but at least there is no change of bus. The same bus passes Upper Deal Church near the **Farriers**, about 50 mins from Dover.

An interesting new service is Bus 90, presumably intended to provide a direct link between Deal, Whitfield and Buckland Hospital. It wiggles around all over Dover before going directly to Walmer and Deal. At last an hourly service (apart from a gap in the afternoon) from Dover to Canada Road. But don't be caught out on Saturdays when the service peters out in the afternoon, so after a good session in the **Berry**, you could find yourself deposited on the far reaches of Dover at Menzies Road Bus Depot, and left to your own devices! A case of buses run for the convenience of staff rather than passengers? This bus could also be used by Deal/Walmer people to access Dover pubs difficult to get to – e.g. the **Railway Bell**, from where the **Fox** is only 10 mins walk, and the **Breakwater** in Lorne Road.

Service 91 from Dover to Folkestone via River and Alkham is now hourly, instead of two hourly, apart from a nasty afternoon gap, and again patchy on Saturdays. Is Saturday becoming the new Sunday I wonder?

So in conclusion our bus services are woefully lacking when most of us would want to use them, in the evenings – most buses are tucked up in bed by 7 or 8 pm. But for those who are free to do their pub visits on week-day daytimes, don't miss the opportunities which do present! Do your homework and planning and you might be (pleasantly) surprised. (See Last Knockings)

**John Pitcher**



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# ONE HUNDRED MILES AND ONE LOCK

## THE BEERY BOATERS' 2017 END OF YEAR TRIP TO THE ASHBY CANAL

Well, more like 103 miles and the one lock was done twice (there and back). But it's only a stop lock with a six-inch rise (or fall). So Hon. Commodore (Unelected) was blessed with the theory (Unfulfilled) that he would be able to relax from steering for a change!

In my 39 years of canal boating, one canal that I'd never done was the Ashby. We had intended to do a little bit of it in 2014 when we navigated the Warwick Ring, but we overstayed at various pubs en route and ran out of time. So, on the final trip of 2017 we thought that we'd make the Ashby Canal our main objective and use whatever time we had left to renew our acquaintance with some of the Coventry Canal, including the little-used beginning down to Coventry Basin. Thus, by starting at Rugby Wharf on a Willow Wren boat and not going any further up the Coventry Canal than Atherstone, the only lock would be the stop lock just above the junction of the Oxford and Coventry Canals.

So, on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October a group of the Beery Boaters assembled at Rugby after the usual horrendous trip via the M25 to collect our boat – 67ft with the peculiar name of Rowdyke. Also, it was painted black and grey, instead of the more usual Willow Wren colours of green and red. On querying this, I was told that Willow Wren had been taken over by another hire company some years ago, and this was one of their boats. Although relatively new, it seemed to us that Rowdyke had been completed in a bit of a hurry; some bits appeared to have been very well made, others rather rushed, and perhaps yet to be finally finished off. In my mind I re-christened her Rowbottom, after a down-at-heel training ship in the hilarious book 'We Joined the Navy'.

We were also down a bit on numbers with a crew of six – Martin Atkins, Dave and John Underdown, Alan Hodges and a welcome return of Paul Taroni as well as Hon. Commodore (Unelected) Jim Green. The obligatory tour of the boat with a fitter before setting off was very brief as we were remembered from previous Willow Wren trip. "Yes, they're very experienced boaters!" I heard the lady in the office inform one young lad. Before arriving at Rugby Wharf Martin and I had looked in at the Avon Mill pub, which had been the traditional meeting place for a quick pint at Rugby before setting off, but it was closed and showed no signs of reopening, in the near future at least. "Prime location for housing", Martin remarked.

We only had about a mile to go before we stopped at Newbold-on-Avon for the first night. We were somewhat concerned about the sluggishness of the boat and the amount of water being thrown up at the back. I suspected that something had wrapped itself around the prop, which was quite a large one, but it proved not to have been the case and the canal must just have been a bit shallow there. In fact, Rowdyke proved generally to handle well and had plenty of power.

The pub at Newbold is the Barley Mow. The Boat used to be a pub next door, but in recent years the two hostleries had been fused into one. Interestingly, mooring rings in the lane outside the pub door indicate the original course of the Brindley canal before the northern section above Braunston was straightened in the 1820s, cutting 14 miles off the original 37 mile section of canal. The tunnel, at which we stopped just before, is relatively modern and has a towpath. The bricked-up portal of the original Newbold Tunnel can be found in the churchyard beyond the pub. Anyway, the Barley Mow was pleasant and the food and beer good, Castle Rock Harvest Pale and Purity Mad Goose being the preferred choice.

Tuesday morning. No 0600 starts at that time of the year,





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so away at ten past eight and through the 250 yard tunnel. Half a mile further on we passed the entrance to the other end of the loop cut off by the new tunnel. Between here and the Rugby Wharf Arm is the bit of canal that I've cruised the most as Ray and I participated in a Boatmaster's Course here in 1995, which entailed steering up and down the route several times in several days until we took (and passed) the final examination by the Marine Safety Authority. There was a light breeze, although an early morning sun had vanished, and breakfast was cooking down below.

No doubt because of the straightening of the canal, it doesn't pass through very many villages on its way towards Coventry. Stretton Stop, which we passed at a quarter to ten, has little more than a boatyard, where Rose Narrowboats are based. Once there were a couple of pubs, the Union Jack and the Railway, now long closed. The latter no doubt took its name from the railway main line from Rugby to Coventry,



which accompanies the canal for a lot of the way, as does the M6 motorway, although not too near to intrude on the peacefulness of the surroundings. There's a small swing footbridge there, but some kind person kept it open to allow us through without stopping. The sun had reappeared again. Around eleven o'clock we passed through the only settlement, the village of Ansty, and noted the location of the Rose & Castle, formerly the Crown, for the return journey. At mid-day precisely, after a few sharp bends, we found convenient mooring just above the stop lock at Hawkesbury Junction, otherwise Sutton Stop. We tied up and walked the few yards to the Greyhound for our lunchtime repast, the beers including some very palatable Bass.

Rowbottom restarted at ten past three, down all six inches of the stop lock and 180° around the junction outside the Greyhound onto the Coventry Canal. An hour later and we at Marston Junction, where the Ashby Canal goes off on a hairpin bend to the right. Now most of us were on uncharted waters. Just past the bridge over the junction, by the towpath, we noticed some large fungi, parasol mushrooms of the edible variety, and we collected three young ones, more than enough for the crew's next day's breakfast. Most parasols are edible and to my mind taste far better than field mushrooms, even more so than cultivated mushrooms.

Continuing on our way with the canal meandering through open country for just over 5 miles, we arrived at the A5 Watling Street, pulling up just before the bridge to take on some water, before moving through to tie up at half past six on the Lime Kilns pub moorings. I had last visited this hostelry many years ago in my lorry driving days as there was, and still is, a convenient lay-by just across the road where I often used to park for the night. It was then, and remained until recently, a Marston's tied house, and now, while still selling Marston's beers, also had some decent real ales from small breweries. Our second pub that day it has a well-deserved entry in the 2018 Good Beer Guide, and to my mind was the best of several excellent pubs on this trip. The only drawback perhaps was the traffic noise from the busy road during the night, but after several pints I, at least, was oblivious to it.



Wednesday. Martin went to get some milk from a garage on the A5, in the wrong direction to start with, but we eventually got away at half past eight. A pleasant morning with just a light breeze. Through Hinkley, the only town on the Ashby Canal, and even that didn't intrude on it too much. On the outskirts we passed the Triumph motorcycle works, relocated from Meriden some years back. Further on we passed Bosworth Field, where Richard III lost his crown, although now also subject to relocation, several miles away. At Sutton Cheney we stopped to fill the water tank, having only partly replenished it the previous

evening, before our lunchtime stop at Shackerstone where we found the Rising Sun, our third 2018 Good Beer Guide pub of the trip. Here we encountered for the first time a tasty offering, Masterpiece, from the Heritage Brewery of Burton-on-Trent.

A very pleasing establishment which although scheduled to close at 2.30 showed no hurry to do so and we stayed to nearer three o'clock. It's only about three miles from Shackerstone to the current end of navigation at Snarestone, and we were on our way again at 3.30, after an unexpected and unrepeatable problem with starting the engine. At five o'clock we arrived at Snarestone Tunnel, the only tunnel on the Ashby, went through it and turned at the end of the canal. Well, almost at the end as navigation had been extended for a few yards, and where we turned was the last place that a full-length boat like Rowdyke could wind. Back through the 250 yard tunnel to moorings just beyond, where we tied up at twenty to six and walked up the path to the Globe Inn, almost above the tunnel entrance.



The Globe was a rather large, roadhouse type of pub, with a selection of national brews – Pedigree, Landlord, Bombardier Gold, Bass and Doom Bar – but seemed full of contradictions. An old building, it had presumably been a pub for years, and while many of its customers appeared to be locals enjoying a few drinks, its décor and style suggested that management envisaged it more as a dining venue.

My itinerary had, rather optimistically, opted for Hinkley as a lunchtime stop on Thursday, but 16 miles at that time of the year on a twisty canal it was not really feasible. The sky was clear again but there had been a little overnight rain. We got on the move at a quarter past eight, moored at Bridge 30 and walked up the hill to Dadlington for lunchtime ale. Or rather, the rest of the crew walked while Hon. Commodore (Unelcted), enjoyed his first propulsion in his recently-acquired wheelchair. The Dog & Hedgehog is a very pretty, ivy-clad, pub, or rather, more like a restaurant selling ale which was, nevertheless, in good condition and included more from the Heritage Brewery.

Away again at ten to four. Although, as I said, the itinerary suggested a stop at Hinkley for the evening, as Hinkley town centre is quite a way from the canal we pressed on and stopped again for the night at the Lime Kilns. There had been a brief shower on the way from Dadlington, and the wind had risen somewhat. Once again we enjoyed some good beer and good food at the Lime Kilns.

Not a cloud in the sky when we got under way at eight on Friday morning. We topped up with water again, and then headed back towards the Coventry Canal, quite a bit of wind making for some interesting steering on occasions. The Commodore still has a large chunk of sandstone from Bridge 6 in his possession! We arrived at the junction with the Coventry Canal at ten past ten and turned right to go in the direction of Atherstone, and were soon approaching Nuneaton, the canal passing acres of canalside allotments, as if the town's inhabitants haven't heard about the end of World War II and are still digging for victory.

Through Nuneaton and we tied up for lunch by the Anchor at Hartshill. It's an Everards tied house a little away from where you might expect to find one. No GBG entries since 2010 but we found it a very good pub with pleasant beer, pleasant food and a pleasant landlady. Then on to Atherstone where we unexpectedly found a convenient mooring vacant not far from the top of the locks, so rather than turn the boat and moor, we nipped in quick in case anyone else nabbed it before we could. From there down to the Market Square, much nearer than when had stopped at Bridge 43 down the locks on our last visit to Atherstone.





After an uninspiring pint at the Market Tavern, a Warwickshire Brewery house, we spent the rest of the evening at the Angel Ale House opposite, our fourth current GBG pub. Very crowded, plenty of good beers and we were allowed to play our choice from a large collection of LPs – that is until management felt they would like a change from Irish and English folk. Behind the pub, on an outside stage, various bands struggled with some temperamental electrics. Several of us stopped to buy Chinese take-aways on the way back, Martin particularly pleased with his purchase, of which there was sufficient for his lunch the following day.

overnight rain...and we had run out of gas. We had switched over to the spare on the Tuesday and now this was empty as well so we had to bring the remaining spare aft from the forward locker. We suspected a slight leak from the regulator but with only two full days remaining we reckoned that we'd manage without having to call out a fitter from the boatyard. Just room to turn the boat above Atherstone Locks, and then back towards Coventry, passing the junction with the Ashby Canal at a quarter to twelve. Just before one o'clock we tied up at Hawkesbury Junction, on the Coventry side where there was more room, and walked back to enjoy another pleasant session at the Greyhound.

Back on board Rowdyke at 3.35 and off towards Coventry Basin, only a little over 5 miles, but it was slow going, particularly as we approached the city centre with some very tight bends under the bridges. We arrived as it was starting to get dark. Valley Cruisers now has a hire base at the basin, which no doubt helps to keep the Coventry Arm clear of weeds but limited the once-copious mooring space, so we had to tie up where a sign said that we shouldn't. Then off over the ring road to the city centre, Hon. Commodore in his trusty wheelchair.

Coventry was really heaving. We popped into the Flying Standard, a Wetherspoon pub, to plan the evening's itinerary, then went to the Windmill, which was so crowded that it was impossible to get it, and eventually ended up at the Town Wall Tavern, comfortable and traditional and the fifth 2018 Good Beer Guide pub of the trip. Also, it wasn't that far from the canal basin. Half a dozen or so ales including once again Bass and Old Peculiar.

Sunday, and the last full day started bright and clear. After turning the boat round we took on water at the tap just outside the basin, then set off again. Hawkesbury Junction at five past eleven, then up the stop lock to the Oxford Canal and on to Ansty, where we tied up by Bridge 14 and walked up the road to the Rose & Castle. Again, rather more of a restaurant selling beer than a pub selling food, but the Purity Mad Goose was very acceptable and the Sunday roasts came in a variety of good value portions – very large, but also a small/child's size for about a fiver. I was intrigued by the stream of vintage motorcycles passing down the road outside towards Coventry and then coming back again.

On the move once more, we went through Newbold Tunnel at a quarter to six, and were not surprised to find the only mooring place the very muddy towpath immediately after the tunnel. We walked down to the Barley Mow for our final session at the Barley Mow, and a very different prospect from the previous Monday. Beer selection was much the same, but Sunday night, it would appear, was "party night" with loud music and no food available. We stayed for a couple of pints before deciding to return to the boat and get our heads down for the journey back the following day.

And that was that, almost. With Rugby Wharf about a mile away there was no need for an early start so we potted down and handed Rowdyke over to Willow Wren just before nine o'clock. Photo session complete, it was away back south again (until the next time!).

**Jim Green**

N.B. Martin and I didn't get back until 5 pm, as a clutch problem with his car required a tow from the AA all the way to Dover.





## It may not have gone unnoticed that the brewery has been shrouded in scaffolding since April.

Every six years we undertake redecoration works, painting the wood, iron work and signage to maintain the appearance of our Grade II listed building. It gives us a chance to examine every element of the fabric and, inevitably, attend to the constant wear and tear that occurs with the passage of time.

A programme of works, involving stone masons, joiners, roofing contractors, lead workers and glaziers has ensued under the supervision of our maintenance staff and consultant architects.



The brewery was rebuilt in 1881 by Messrs Card & Son of Lewes from designs of the eminent brewery architect William Bradford of Carlton Chambers, Regent Street, London. During construction work, they unearthed the weather vane that sits on the top of the brewery tower. Dated 1621, it is believed to have originally graced St Thomas a Becket's Church in Cliffe High Street. In 1985, the smaller tower was added to the original in order to increase our production capacity. Built in the exact style of the existing building, it was the recipient of a Civic trust Award and our listed status followed shortly afterwards.

In many ways, Harvey's is a 'heritage site'. Behind its brick façade you will find a production area that has been maintained over the centuries to reflect a time honoured brewing process. Sacks of UK grown malted barley and bales of locally grown hops are held within the original stores and brewing equipment has been maintained or replaced to perpetuate a method of production that has withstood the test of time. It takes a large number of dedicated staff to ensure that standards and procedures are maintained.

In an age where many companies are relocating to alternative sites and constructing breweries that are more automated and cost effective, we feel that the heritage of Harvey's is well worth protecting and maintaining. We are fortunate that many devoted customers share these same ideals and continue to enjoy a range of our award winning local beers.

We are very proud to remain brewing in the heart of Lewes.



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# LAST KNOCKINGS

## *Old Wort*

**Great Pub Robbery** The Pointer in Brill, Buckinghamshire, just two miles from the Great Train Robbers hideout at Leatherslade Farm, and allegedly the pub where their haul was divided, has just been named Pub of the Year by the Michelin guide *Eating Out in Pubs 2018*. The award closely follows the naming by TripAdvisor of the Black Swan at Oldstead, North Yorkshire as the World's Best Restaurant. While we congratulate both on their success this magazine once again questions whether such establishments should truly be called pubs.

**Fallen Angel** What has been called one of London's worst boozers is being put on the market by its owner because he says he cannot be bothered any more with complaints from the flats above. Landlord of the Angel and Crown in Bethnal Green, Stephan Baldwin, said: "The people who move to live above a pub have got to understand that it's not Epping Forest." A not unfamiliar story. To what extent complaints may, or may not, be limited to incomers we obviously do not know, but there is a long history of people moving into the vicinity of a pub and then complaining about it. Unfortunately, and irrespective of how long the pub might have existed, the law is more often on the side of the complainant. This would seem more than somewhat unfair. If you choose to live near a pub you should be prepared to put up with its activities.

**Bus Services** On page 34 John Pitcher summarises the recent alterations to local bus services, and while we appreciate bus operators financial constraints, there do seem to be some strange anomalies. For example it is possible to travel all the way from Dover to Hastings by bus, but completely impossible to get to Thanet in one stage. Formerly it was possible to reach Ramsgate directly from Dover, with stops conveniently close to pubs such as the Conqueror, Artillery (shown opposite) and Hovelling Boat. Travellers could then reach much of the rest of the "Island" via the Loop service. With the revised timetables no bus travels further north than Sandwich where a Canterbury bus provides a link to Ramsgate and Westwood Cross – the latter being, I suspect, not being a prime destination of choice for readers of this magazine – with the rest of Thanet requiring catching a third bus. Would it not be possible for at least some of the Deal/Dover buses to still travel to Ramsgate.



**Revitalisation** As we relate earlier in this issue CAMRA is currently undertaking a degree of soul searching as to the exact nature of its role in a somewhat changed drinking culture. However, we feel that whatever changes to its aims and objectives eventually materialise, the use of the CAMRA logo on the accompanying promotion (shown left) is taking things a bit far. Observed in a pub on the Ashby Canal.

**Singing in Pubs** TV over the Christmas period included Tom Jones talking about growing up in South Wales during the 1950s. Being Wales, he said, everybody sang, and one of the places they sang was in the pub. However, it was not just the Welsh who sang in pubs. In an article in *The Guardian* some years ago Ian Jack recalled a pub in Islington in the 1970s where on Sunday nights pensioners sang old wartime songs. And someone who knew Cornwall in the early 1960s remembers Saturday night singsongs before the arrival of television. When television did come for a while the pubs were empty. In due course the drinkers came back, but the singing was gone for ever.

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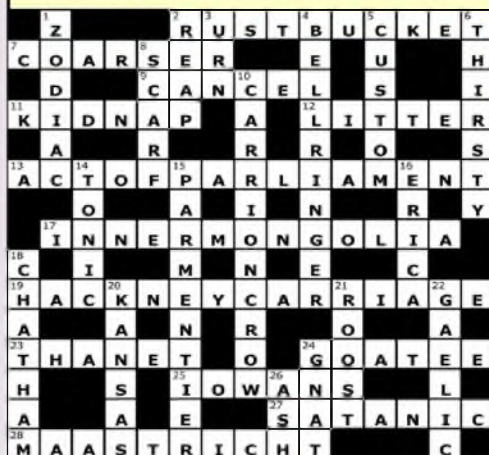
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