

The Deal Dover Sandwich & District Branch Magazine

CHANNEL DRAUGHT

Issue 75

Free

Spring 2018



Inside:

◆ DEAL HOP FARM 2018

After last year's success, bigger and better this year?

◆ BATHAM'S NEW PUB

The start of a move back to more traditional style pubs?



CHANNEL DRAUGHT

Issue 75 Spring 2018

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

**Please drink
sensibly!**

Cover Photo
The Crown Inn
Finglesham
Good Beer Guide Pub 2018

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BRANCH DIARY

Events shown in blue are not organised by CAMRA

<i>Fri 1 - Sun 3 Jun</i>	BeerFest & Family Fun Day, Duke of Cumberland, Barham
<i>Sat 2 Jun</i>	Medway CAMRA Beer Festival , Star Meadow Sports Club, Gillingham 12 Noon
<i>Thur 7 Jun</i>	GBG Trail – long walk. Fox , Temple Ewell. 12noon
<i>Fri 15 - Sat 16 Jun</i>	Ashford, Folkestone, Romney Marsh and KESR Beer Festival . Kent & East Sussex Railway Tenterden
<i>Fri 12 - Sun 17 Jun</i>	Real Ale & Cheese Festival, Lydden Bell, Lydden
<i>Mon 18 Jun</i>	Branch Annual General Meeting. Mash Tun , Dover 7.30pm
<i>Thur 5 Jul</i>	GBG Trail. Start Just Reproach , Deal
<i>Fri 6 - Sat 7 Jul</i>	Berry Summer Beer Festival, The Berry , Walmer
<i>Sat 7 - Sun 8</i>	Sandwich Folk & Ale Festival , Sandwich
<i>Mon 16 Jul</i>	Branch Meeting, Jackdaw , Denton 7.30pm
<i>Thur 19 - Sat 21 Jul</i>	Kent Beer Festival . Canterbury Rugby Club, Merton Lane North, Nackington Road
<i>Thur 2 Aug</i>	GBG Trail. Start Crispin , Sandwich
<i>Tue 7 - Sat 11 Aug</i>	Great British Beer Festival . Olympia, London
<i>Mon 20 Aug</i>	Branch Meeting, Royal Oak , River (tbc) 7.30pm

At last a decision has been reached. After two years of discussion and argument about the future direction of CAMRA, the Special Resolutions designed to equip the Campaign for the very changed environment of the 21st century, were in the main carried at the Coventry AGM in April. Significantly, however, the resolution to extend CAMRA's remit to include all pub goers and beer, cider and perry drinkers failed.

An understandable reaction perhaps, from members of an organisation established specifically to protect and promote traditional cask conditioned ale, against the inroads of heavily promoted, and generally considered inferior, keg. And while much has changed since, including perhaps the quality of keg beer, to mark a division between cask and keg, was, and is, an easy and simple distinction, and one based on material fact. It would seem likely, that however poor some real ales might be, and however good might be some keg beers, many members were deterred by not only a radical change in the what they had signed up to, but also by judgements which in future would be defined by the subjective and arguable criteria of quality.

Of course CAMRA's priorities have altered. As we have pointed out before, while we might have saved real ale, we have not necessarily secured places to drink it – today all pubs, to a greater or lesser extent, are under threat, and much of CAMRA's work now involves pub protection and retention. It is therefore especially heartening to see communities taking the initiative and acquiring their local as has happened recently in our Branch area with the Chequer at Ash (See page 5).

Certainly things are very different from the Campaign's early days, when nearly all pubs were the tied houses of breweries: an arrangement which while it might not have been perfect, offered us plenty of pubs and gave landlords a reasonable living. Today as we report in Channel View (Page 25), for those tied houses that remain, whether pubco or brewery, matters often appear far from happy.

Meanwhile, the number of independently owned pubs continues to grow – whether newly established micros, purchases from pub chains or community owned. Perhaps this then is the future, a new model for the 21st century, replacing the great tied estates, the declining and outmoded model of the 20th century. Whatever, CAMRA's revitalised campaign is now well placed to face the challenges of the forthcoming decades.

Martin Atkins



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CAMRA AWARDS

DEAL, DOVER & SANDWICH BRANCH AWARDS

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

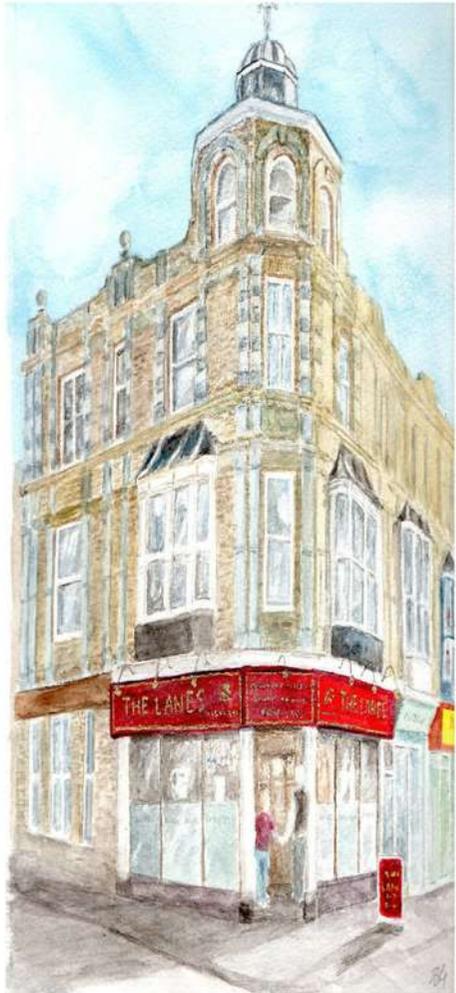
REGIONAL AWARDS

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

*DEBBIE & KEITH
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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

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

Pub of the Year For the second year running **The Lanes** in Worthington Street, Dover, has been chosen as Branch Pub of the Year by Deal, Dover, Sandwich & District CAMRA – just the most recent in a variety of awards that the pub has won since opening in December 2014. Offering a continuing succession of microbrews from both Kent and across the country the pub provides regular drinkers with one of the widest choices of ale in the Branch area. Last year the pub was also named East Kent Pub of the Year and was Runner Up as Kent Pub of the Year. We took the opportunity to make the presentation early afternoon on Thursday 5th April, as we started on the first day of this year's GBG Trail. Beer choice comprised Gadds Dr Sunshine's, Hop Fuzz English and Kent Brewery's Black Gold together with Bramber and

year anticipated completion of the pub's purchase by the end of March with opening planned for the Autumn. At the start of the year the money raised by the share offer and support from the Plunkett Foundation still left a substantial shortfall, however by reopening the share offer and inviting short term loans (a method also used by the Harrow at Stockbury – see National News), sufficient funds were acquired. By the middle of April we were informed that the purchase had gone through.



Branch Chairman Martin Atkins (left) presents the 2018 Branch Pub of the Year Certificate to Debbie & Keith Lane



The Chequers Inn, Ash

DOVER

The new St James Development offers opportunities for pubs in the vicinity. Both the **Lord Nelson** and the **Castle**, where refurbishment work has recently been undertaken, and which earlier in the year was being offered leasehold at £100,000, face onto it, while other local pubs must expect to benefit.

Why So Cirrus from Downland's Brewery of Sussex. However, going back a month or two, we feel special mention needs to be made of Angels & Demons Black Taxi Porter, available in late February – perhaps the best porter ever.

Overlooking the area, the **White Horse** offers Landlord as a regular, plus usually a cider and a couple of other ales, recently including Harveys and Gale's Seafarer's. In Castle Street, **Blakes**, whose garden backs onto the development and might have hoped to have direct access, but does not, retains Blakes Bitter from Millis as standard plus a varying selection of both local and more distant brews. A visit in mid-April found the pub

Success for Ash After several years of struggle it appears that a successful conclusion has been reached, and that the **Chequer Inn** at Ash is now in the ownership of the local community. News from the Chequer Inn Ash Society earlier in the

offering two from Breakwater – Samphire Gold and Cow Juice.

Another likely beneficiary is the **Mash Tun** in Bench Street. Local breweries feature strongly, including Gadds, Westerham and Hopdaemon, and from our own Branch area Breakwater and Angels and Demons. From elsewhere Old Cocker and Old Station Porter from 3 Piers received particularly good reports while it was pleasing to see an old favourite from Mogul days, Oakham JHB, available earlier in the year. An extensive choice of ciders is also sold, including the particularly good product from the local Green Oak Cider Works at Waldershare.

In the Market Square the former Port of Call, renamed last year **Burger Brothers**, and subsequently closed in the autumn, remains non-operating, as is currently the **Roman Quay** in Church Street. It opened briefly towards the end of last year as a “gin and ale house”, but at the time of writing has been closed for several months.

Nothing closed of course about the **Eight Bells** in Cannon Street where its twelve handpumps offers the widest choice of real ale in the town. Good variety too, with a selection of nationals, regional micros and locals – the latter represented on a visit in early May by Old Dairy Red Top, G2 Plough and Wantsum 1381. By contrast the **Golden Lion**, Priory Place appears to have abandoned real ale for the present, although salvation is at hand just around the corner in **The Lanes** (see above). At the **Prince Albert** Bombardier is a regular choice.

Priory Hotel: Normally at least one real ale available. Varying selection but tends towards national brews, including recently Sharp's Doom Bar – “Not a great lover of this beer but a really good pint served just right” – and Courage Best. In Elms Vale real ale seems standard again at the **Crown & Sceptre** where Spitfire Gold and Whitstable Bay Pale Ale were available on a recent visit. And at the **Boar's Head**, Eton Road Young's Bitter and Doom Bar feature regularly.

Thirsty Scarecrow, High Street: While cider is the major sale, real ale is always available, usually via the KeyCask system. Among recent choices have been Ramsgate Black Pearl Oyster Stout and, from the new Faversham brewery, Arden Pale. In Ladywell, however, another of the newer generation of Dover pubs, the **Rack of Ale**, remains closed and to let following Trish's departure in early December.

In Maison Dieu Road the **Louis Armstrong** continues to offer three or four real ales plus a selec-

tion of bottle conditioned ale from local breweries. Regular suppliers (Hopdaemon, Gadds, Old Dairy, etc.) have recently been extended to include the newly established Romney Marsh Brewery and Dover's very own Breakwater Brewery. Along the road, two real ales remains standard at the **Red Lion**, Charlton Green, usually G2 Plough along with either Landlord or West Berkshire Good Old Boy. Meanwhile, although not of late a real ale pub, we note with sadness the current closure of the **Admiral Harvey** and of the death of its last landlord Pat Edwards (see Last Knockings). Currently it remains boarded up and for sale with seemingly the likely prospect of conversion to residential use.

Breakwater Brewery Tap: The brewery and pub continue to play an increasing role in East Kent, its beers appearing regularly around the area, and up to half a dozen cask ales available on site. Reports from the tap over recent months have included Castle on the Hill, AAA, Hellfire Corner, Cherry Bomb, Docker's Porter, Samphire Gold, Cow Juice and Black Ensign. As far as we know it is still open just Thursday to Sunday, although there seems always talk about extending to Wednesday.

At Buckland the **Bull** normally offers one or two real ales from a varying selection – Hogshead Bitter and Christmas Ale from Theakston's and London Pride being examples over recent months. And on Crabble Hill, of late the **Three Cups** has been selling Breakwater Dover's Pale Ale. At the **Cricketers**, Crabble Avenue, among other choices, seasonal considerations were reflected by Belhaven Robert Burns and Caledonian over the bar.

Royal Oak, River: Now free of the Shepherd Neame tie and privately owned, the pub appears to be operating quite successfully – real ale on visits earlier in the year was Adnams Ghostship and Broadside, along with Master Brew. Along the road, the **Dublin Man of War**, closed and boarded up, awaits its fate, which, whatever it might be, is generally not considered to be that of a pub. At Kearsney the **Railway Bell** offers a choice of largely national brews, a recent visit finding Abbot, Doom Bar and HSB.

Fox, Temple Ewell: Regular beers over recent months have included Wadworth Horizon, Kelham Island Pride of Sheffield and the somewhat eponymously named Exmoor Fox. Local ales have included Spitfire Gold and Early Bird from Shepherd Neame, and Breakwater Best, while around Easter, all the way from north-west Wales came Purple Moose Snowdonia Ale. Following last year, the pub's annual Rotary Charity Beer Festival will again be in June – Friday 22nd and Saturday 23rd June with

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DEAL

The last weekend in February saw the annual late winter beer festival at the **Berry**. Taking place this year over Friday 23rd and Saturday 24th it embraced the usual eclectic selection from the best of British brewing – a valuable preparation for our anticipated entanglement with the “Beast from the East” the following week. The pub has also again been chosen as Branch Cider Pub of the Year, and in addition has won East Kent Cider POTY, and was runner up as Kent Cider POTY.



On the Strand the **Lighthouse**, has been selling a variety of local ales. In early February this included the ever popular Hop Fuzz Bullion Bomb and a month later there were good reports about The New Black from Kent: “very interesting flavours.” Meanwhile visits to the **Stag** found Oakham Citra and Sharp’s Atlantic.

Local ales also much in evidence at the **Freed Man**, Dover Road, including over recent months Old Dairy Dark Snow, Four Candles Oatmeal Stout and Angels & Demons Goldilocks is Dead and 49 Horses. At 2.8% ABV, the latter, being one of the new breed of low strength beers, and described as a flavoursome golden ale, generated a particularly appreciative response. In Station Road work is now well underway at the former site of the **Railway**, for the construction of dwellings, flats or whatever else it is that is planned.

Just Reproach, King Street: Usual wide selection from across the country over recent months, with particularly pleasing comments for Wild Card American Pale Ale – “top form....with clean crisp superb taste” – and Dover’s very own Breakwater Cowjuice Milk Stout: “On superlative form with cracking good head and exceptional fresh taste.”

Ship Inn, Middle Street: Gadd’s ales remain prominent, the seasonal Oatmeal Stout being singled out

for special praise. “Good creamy head & lace, superb rich taste with smoothness, rather drinkable”, commented one customer. Dark Star beers also feature regularly, visits earlier in the year finding Hop Head and American Pale Available. At the **Prince Albert**, Burns Night saw Belhaven Robert Burns on the handpumps, while other beers appearing of late include Native and East India Pale Ale from Whitstable and Caledonian Deuchars IPA. On the opposite corner of Alfred Square in mid-February, Master Brew, Whitstable Bay and the all too rarely seen Bishop’s Finger, were available at the **Saracen’s Head**.

In Duke Street the **Deal Hoy**, was selling Late Red, Master Brew and Spitfire Gold in February while in nearby West Street at the **Alma** the choice was Timothy Taylor Landlord, Harveys Sussex Best Bitter and Thwaites Wainwright together with Woodforde’s Nice Try for the Six Nations rugby.

On the High Street, work progresses on the refurbishment of the **Rose** – at the time of writing yet to reopen. Meanwhile visits to the **Spires** earlier in the year found Canterbury Ales Knight’s Ale and American Pale Ale, and at **Der Bar**, now renamed **The Bar**, the New Black from Kent, described as a 4.8% black APA.

Sir Norman Wisdom, Queen Street: Wide range of ales, as to be expected at a Wetherspoons, with recent reports singling out Truman’s Runner and Whitstable Oyster Stout for special praise – the latter being described as having superb creamy head, good temperature and excellent taste to the end. At the **Queen Street Tap**, the handpumps remain heavily devoted to local beers, with Wantsum providing the house ale, but in addition the pubs hosts are large number of ciders and KeyKeg brews. It also offers a loyalty card and we understand that real ale is still very competitively priced.

In Beach Street recent visits found Tribute at **Dunkerley’s** and up to five varying ales at the **Bohemian**, including Bombardier, London Pride, Doom Bar, Landlord, Youngs, Truman’s Swift, Adnams Ghost Ship and St Austell Proper Job. At the **Taphouse Beer Cafe**, South Street recent ales have included Titanic Plum Porter, Oakham Citra, Breakwater Cow Juice and Adnams Broad-side.

Farrier, Manor Road: Strong links still with local brewery Ripple Steam, whose Farmhouse Pale Ale provides the pub’s house bitter. However, its four handpumps also offer a wide selection from around the country. St Austell Proper Job appears regular-

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ly and other recently featured breweries have included Maldon, Bath and Jennings. Black Sheep and Wadworth provided the colourfully named Monty Python's Holy Grail and St George and the Dragon, while other local representation has come from Dover's Breakwater Brewery with Samphire Gold.

SANDWICH & RURAL

In Sandwich the **Crispin Inn** provided the venue for an enjoyable Branch Meeting in April. The pub has strong links with The Mad Cat Brewery at Brogdale, who provide the pub's Crispin Ale. Elsewhere the town offers a wide selection of real ale. Visits over recent months have seen Bexley beers, including Crook Log Winter Ale, at the **Mermaid's Locker**, Courage Best at the **New Inn**, and Ramsgate West coast IPA and Dark Star Hop-head at the **Red Cow**. Sheps beers can be found at the **Bell Hotel** and **Market Inn** and in mid-February from the **Fleur de Lis** there was report of excellent Harveys Sussex Best Bitter together with an excellent Sunday roast.

Outside the town, however, things are something of a curate's egg. While applauding the endeavours of the Ash villagers to save the **Chequer** (see above), at Woodnesborough, the **Charity**, closed now for several years has been subject of an application for conversion to residential, plus the erection of houses at the rear. Although, now withdrawn, and with no further developments to our knowledge at time of writing, a threat obviously exists. The pub is now the only remaining pub in the village, and has been designated an Asset of Community Value

At Nonington the **Royal Oak** has been closed since late last summer. We hear that a sale is imminent but with exact future unknown, and in Tilmanstone there is still speculation on what will be the eventual outcome at the **Plough & Harrow**. Plans earlier in the year indicate the retention of the pub and dining facilities, but with the addition of retail use together with six holiday let camping pods. And further sad news, though not of a closure, from Waldershare where the **Green Oak Cider Works** was severely damaged by fire earlier in the spring. It is currently closed and is likely not to reopen for several months.

In Wingham work is well underway on the conversion of the **Red Lion** to residential. However, the **Anchor** and the **Dog** continue to thrive, the latter with its recent recognition by Kent Tourism under its belt. At the Anchor, a visit in mid-March found a choice of Doom Bar, Thwaites Wainwright and Exmoor Gold.

And a further loss appears likely in Shepherdswell where development proposals threaten the closed and boarded up **Bricklayers** – a five bedroom house, cottage and a pair of semi-detached houses in the car park. Local opinion believes planning permission will probably be granted. However, the village still retains the **Bell**, at the top of Church Hill by the Green, where recent visits having found Doom Bar and Directors as the regular beers, and has just gained a micropub, the **Tipsy Gardener** in Coxhill. Operated by father and son Carl and Sam Edwards, and after several months of work, it officially opened in a crowded event, on Saturday 28th April. One local source commented: "Lots of lovely cask ales and decent platters of food are on offer. Have been along twice and can highly recommend it."

In Worth we hear that handpumps have disappeared from the **Blue Pigeons**, and understand that real ale is no longer sold. At the **St Crispin**, visits over recent months have found Gadds' No. 5, Timothy Taylor Landlord and Fuller's London Pride. At Finglesham in the **Crown** three real ales is the usual choice with Hop Head as standard plus one national brew and one local – Angels and Demons Panama Jazz available in mid-April. The pub is due for a July visit as part of this year's Branch GBG Trail.

Five Bells, Eastry: Wide selection of ale of late including Wadworth 6X, Wantsum Black Prince, Young's Bitter, Adnams Ghost Ship, Greene King IPA, Fuller's London Pride and Courage Director's. At the annual Easter weekend beer festival, bank holiday Monday afternoon found a choice of microbrews – Kent Cobnut, Franklin's Mama Knows Best, Musket Muzzleloader, and Goody Good Lord.

Plough Inn, Ripple: Strong showing by Ripple Steam, with the brewery's Best Bitter appearing regularly, and being joined earlier in the year by a newer addition to its range – American Pale Ale. Fuller's ESB remains a regular, and other beers seen recently include John Smith's Bitter and Belhaven Bridge to Nowhere. Classic car Sundays still feature and there is a happy hour Monday to Thursday 6.30 - 7.30.

Meanwhile in St Margarets the former **Hope** has lost any resemblance to a pub, while the **Red Lion** remains boarded up with permission for conversion to a dwelling. Better news, however, at the **Smugglers** and **White Cliffs**, where respectively, locals Ripple Steam and Romney Marsh have been seen

Wrong Turn, Barfrestone: Strong support for

local ales. Wantsum Black Prince, Angels & Demons A.D.H.Me and Bombay Social, Goody Ales Genesis and Hop Fuzz Martello all being found on various recent visits. And at the **Carpenters Arms**, Coldred a broad, mixed selection including Rudgate Ruby Mild, Dark Star Hophead, Grainstore Rutland Osprey, Romney Marsh American Pale, Pennine Hair of the Dog, Burton Bridge Bitter and Gadds Seaside. Down the hill in Lydden recent ales sat the **Bell** have included Bays Topsisail, Sharp's Sea Fury and Worthington Cask.

At Woolage Green the **Two Sawyers** was selling Doom Bar and Hop Head in early March while the choice at the **Fitzwalter Arms**, Goodnestone was Master Brew, Whitstable Bay and Bishop's Finger. In Kingston there was Gadds No 5, Doom Bar and Old Dairy Gold Top at the **Black Robin** and Greene King IPA, Harveys Sussex and Black Sheep at the **Cumberland** in Barham.

Jackdaw, Denton: Earlier in the year Tribute, Landlord, Ringwood Razorback and Gadds No 5 were available. We hear that the pub has recently changed hands – any further information gratefully received. In Elham the choice at the **Kings Arms** saw London Pride replacing Skrimshander – the remaining two ales still being Golden Braid and Harveys Sussex, and in Etchinghill the **Gatekeeper** was selling Old Dairy Blue Top, Landlord and 49 Horses from Angels and Demons.

In Capel, at the **Valiant Sailor**, Doom Bar was on the handpumps, as it was also at the **Lighthouse**, where there is talk of taking local brewed Angels and Demons as well. In the **Royal Oak** Master Brew and Old Speckled Hen were available.

CANTERBURY

Celebrations at the **New Inn**, where the pub has again been chosen as Canterbury, Herne Bay and Whitstable Branch Pub of the Year. Communication mid-March from Katrina: "Tickled pink doesn't come close to describing the joy of being awarded CAMRA District Pub of the Year for the 2nd year running.....more of a tickled deep crimson with brass knobs on! Yippee and Hurrah, and infinite Dad dancing! So, many thanks to all who voted." With the usual broad selection of real ale on the handpumps or waiting in the wings, she was at the time also attending to future expectations, ordering beers for the May Beer Festival, which we will run from Thursday to Sunday (and possibly Monday) over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend. We understand the line-up will include "many of the usual suspects", including Jaipur and a reappearance of Beyond the Pale from Kent.

Also in mid-March the **Phoenix** was selling Dog-

bolter and She Sells Sea Shells from Gadds, Dorking Red India and Angels & Demons American Pale Ale. At the **King's Head**, Wincheap choice was Greene king IPA and Abbot, Hardy and Hansons Bitter and Old Trip.

At the **Chequers**, Stone Street a recent visit found Hop Head, London Pride and Red Top and Gold Top from Old Dairy, and at the **Rose & Crown**, Stelling Minnis more London Pride and Youngs Bitter. In Pett Bottom it was good to see the **Duck** reopened having been closed for a period later last year, and good also to see support for Kent brewing – real ales coming from Breakwater and Westerham.

And more Kent beers at the **Duke William**, Ickham in mid-March, where Tonbridge American Pale Ale and Old Dairy Copper Top were available alongside Landlord. In Wickhambreaux at the **Rose**, Bombardier, Greene King IPA and Fullers Seafarer were available, however, at Littlebourne the **Anchor** depressingly was still closed and boarded up.

At the **Haywain**, there was a selection of Bombardier, London Pride and Weltons Horsham Pale. Plans were already being prepared for the annual Spring Bank Holiday beer festival, which will run from Friday 25th to Monday 28th May with 40 Ales & Ciders – approximately half coming from Kent. There will be live music and barbecue, and entry is free, with opening times 7.30 on Friday and 12 noon for the remaining three days.

FOLKESTONE

Happy Frenchman, Christchurch Road: Closed since mid 2017 the pub has now been sold. We understand that the purchasers are the owners of the Five Bells at Brabourne who plan to reopen the premises in May as the **Earl of Radnor**. In nearby **Harveys**, in mid-March, the long established choice of Courage and Bombardier had been changed to Courage and Doom Bar, and more Doom Bar around the corner at the **Clifton Hotel**, where, with a relocated bar, management has seen fit to discontinue the Draught Bass for which the hotel had for a long time been renowned.

At **Chambers** in Cheriton Place, Angels and Demons Goldlocks is Dead was appropriately available, the pub having sponsored the beer at this year's White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales, where it was subsequently pronounced Beer of the Festival. Also on sale were Pig & Porter Slow Black, plus Adnams Lighthouse and Ghost Ship.

In the Bayle a recent visit found a choice of Thwaites Original, Fortyniner and Hobgoblin at the

British Lion, with more Hobgoblin at the **Guildhall**, alongside London Glory, Green King IPA and St Austel Proper Job. At **Kipps** beers were Firebrick Blydon Brick, Mad Cat IPA and Canterbury Ales Pardoners.

Down by the harbour, the **True Briton**, after being closed for renovation, has reopened under its new name (or is it old name) the **Harbour Inn**. Meanwhile, early March found the **Mariner** selling Ghost Ship, Harveys Sussex, Doom Bar, HSB and Old Dairy Red Top and the **Ship** London Pride, Doom Bar, Bombardier Gold and Old Speckled Hen. At the **Lifeboat** Hophead and Hop Fuzz beers were on the handpumps, and at the **East Cliff** Burton Bridge Golden Sovereign and Dark Star Pale Ale. On Dover Road the last remaining pub in the area, the **Raglan**, appears finally to have given up the ghost – at least it was looking severely closed when walking passed it earlier in the year.

In Sandgate we hear of a new real ale outlet in the High Street, the **Sandgate Vaults**. Situated opposite the Military Road junction its cellar bar offers normally two local beers. At the **Ship** the in-house Amazing Brewery is back in operation, a very pleasing barrel of Cotter VC on the handpumps on a visit over Easter weekend – “very much a tradi-

tional East Kent style bitter”. Plans, are shortly to be selling home brewed beers into the local market, and of possibly creating a black or dark IPA.

In Hythe the **Carousel** was selling Greene King IPAs, while a very local selection of Hop Fuzz Martello and Blacksmith, and Breakwater Best was available at the **Potting Shed**. Gadd's Dr Sunshine, Hophead and Greene King IPA was the choice at the **White Hart** and Directors, Youngs and Old Dairy Copper Top at the **Red Lion**. Just along the road the long closed **Duke's Head** looks ever more neglected and unloved, the blackboard on the wall forlornly advertising six real ciders.

At the **Three Mariners** Youngs, Westerham 1965, Romney Dark IPA and Ripple Best were on the handpumps. We hear that it is planned to dedicate the larger of its bars to the old Mackeson Brewery, but while appropriate memorabilia is keenly sought, any prospective donors are requested to please contact the pub before turning up “with your collection of 2,000 milk stout bottles”.

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



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RAMBLINGS & RUMBLINGS

By Stroller

Sun 11 Feb – Royal Oak, River (Master Brew, Adnams Ghostship & Broadside) Good to see pub open again, will hopefully do well.

Shrove Tues 13 Feb – Nigel North's Herne Bay Crawl: Butcher's Arms, Herne (Old Dairy Copper Top, Burning Star Plateau, ESB) Problems getting here as main road shut, but where there's a will..... **Firkin & Frog** (Brunswick Gold, Goody Good Life + others) First visit here, impressed – cosy, welcoming and enjoyed pancakes, and nearly as many dogs as people! **Saxon Shore** (DBC Jurassic + others). **Rose** (Master Brew) Comfy Sheps house.

Thurs 15 Feb – Carpenters Arms, Coldred (Grainstore Rutland Osprey, Romney American Pale) First visit this season. Walked from Shepherdswell and easily made 5pm opening time in daylight.

Mon 19 Feb – Eight Bells (Weltons GoldenTaff + others) Place heaving after Dick Streeteer's funeral. **Louis Armstrong: Branch Meeting** (Gadds 7, Oatmeal Stout, Skrimshander, Romney American Pale)

Thurs 22 Feb – Drum, Leyton, E10 (Reunion Ales Opening Gambit, Match Fit) **King William Fourth, Leyton** (Rhymney Bitter) Traditional London pub, but seemed a bit run down. Then saw a notice in the gents that it would cease trading in a day or two, without mention of any future plans.

Sun 25 Feb – Mash Tun (Three Piers Porter) **Conqueror** (Romney Murmuration, Hop Head) **Artillery, Ramsgate** (Gadds Seaside & Seashells) How fortunate that my visit to this normally civilised house, coincided with Sun afternoon free jukebox between 2 and 4, and free volume too apparently – as loud as you like! Then of course the maxipub – Ramsgate's new claim to fame. **Royal Victoria Pavilion** (Old Dairy Silver Top + others) Didn't manage a second pint though – 'Sorry, our System's down'. How long it took to be up and running again, I didn't wait around to find out.

Tues 6 Mar – Bell, Shepherdswell (Directors, Doom Bar) First visit for a while, and welcoming ambience. **Carpenters Arms, Coldred** (Burton Bridge Bitter, Gadds Seaside)

Sat 10 Mar – Queen Street Tap (Tiny Rebel Hank, Tonbridge Old Chestnut, Canterbury Pardoners, Wantsum Red Raddle) Huge crowds watching rugby on one screen, football on another, agreeable cacophony!

Fri 16 Mar – Cinque Ports, New Romney (Cotleigh Tawny, Atlantic, London Glory, Betty Stoggs) Large part of bar sealed off, where wall being repaired **Smugglers** (Hop Fuzz Zingiber) **East Cliff Tavern** (Burton Bridge Sovereign Gold, Kent Prohibition APA)

Sun 18 Mar – Breakwater (Traditional Bitter, Dockers Ale) Crowded pub Sun afternoon. Quite a good band playing, though everyone shouting to converse above the music. Same thing happens elsewhere with people 'watching' football.

Tues 20 Mar – Artichoke, Chartham (Master Brew, Spit Fire) Further along the road passed closed Chapter Arms. Nearly all neighbouring houses had signs in windows, 'Save our Chapter Arms', but I wonder how many actually used it! **The Lanes** (Hop Head, Gadds 5)

Wed 21 Mar – Mash Tun (Hop Head, Stag Red Imperial, Gadds Oatmeal Stout) **Louis Armstrong** (Gadds 7, Skrimshander) Always a good bet for excellent good value food on Wednesdays, not always easy to find a seat though. **Fox** (Breakwater Best, Sheps Early Bird, Fox, Horizon)

Thurs 22 Mar Travelling from Ashford on the 11a – my destination the **Star**, St Mary-in-the-Marsh, but there were road closures so village was bypassed. Finding myself a few minutes later in New Romney wended way to: **Smugglers** (Hop Fuzz English, Weltons something or other) Bumped into locals from Ashford, Folkestone and Romney Marsh Branch ensuring good welcome from mine host. **East Cliff** (Kent Prohibition, Burton Bridge Stairway to Heaven)

Sat 24 Mar – Ypres Tavern, Sittingbourne (Courage Best) CAMRA Regeneration conversation. Much hot air and a haven for the vocal! **Papermill** (Wild Beer Bible + others) First visit here – a really micro micro



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The National News

By Martin Atkins

Sign of the Times Results from Greene King and Marston's announced earlier in the year must surely prove heartening for real ale drinkers – an 8% fall for the Bury St Edmunds brewer compared to revenue and profits at the Midland based brewer respectively surpassing £1 billion and £100 million. Both companies have made substantial acquisitions over recent years but whereas Marston's have generally kept existing breweries in production, Greene King, with the odd exception, have closed those they have taken over, and moved all production to Bury.

Title for Kent Pub The 200 year old Harrow at the village of Stockbury, a mile from the A249/M2 junction, has won CAMRA's Pub Saving Award. Faced with its likely closure after Shepherd Neame put the pub up for sale in 2016, local campaigners raised £380,000 to purchase it through support from 140 shareholders and money from the Plunkett foundation. The pub is now a thriving community hub whose activities extend to lunches for vulnerable people, book swaps and an internet café.

Merseyside Success And another pub consigned by its former owners to the scrap heap, has just won CAMRA's top award – the Cricketers Arms in St Helens having been chosen as the Campaign's National Pub of the Year. Andy and Denise Evans took over the pub in 2013 after it had been boarded up for closure, and having reintroduced real ale (abandoned since the 1980s), it has won a succession of CAMRA awards, including regional awards in 2015 and 2016. Now a well established community pub it offers 13 locally sourced cask ales and up to 20 ciders in the summer. A beer garden has been created and there are plans to install a microbrewery.

Fuller's Buys Dark Star Sussex's Dark Star Brewery, now established in the village of Partridge Green north of Brighton, has been sold to Fuller's of Chiswick for an undisclosed sum. Plans at present see the brewery preserving its independence and continuing to brew at its current site, with Dark Star MD James Cuthbertson remaining in charge. It has been suggested that a takeover was one of the options being considered by Dark Star to acquire additional resources for further expansion, while, with on-trade beer sales continuing to decline, Fuller's saw the opportunity

to diversify and broaden its range. The four Dark Star pubs are not part of the deal and will remain as a separate operation.

Prize Old Ale Revived Unconnectedly, Fuller's have joined forces with Manchester's Marble brewery to resurrect Gale's Prize Old Ale. The beer requires wooden fermenters to provide its special characteristics, chiefly from the wild yeast *Brettanomyces*, but lacking space at its Chiswick brewery these could not be installed following the takeover of Gales in 2005. Marble has now brewed the beer and fermented it in an assortment of wooden casks, including Bourbon, Madeira, Barbera and Pinot Noir, each imparting its own variation.

Brewers on the Move In South Wales Brains is planning to move from its current site in Cardiff city centre to a new location 1.5 miles away, with production expected to start in 2019. The current site will be largely redeveloped with the existing brewery building and chimney retained to house a pub, microbrewery and visitor attraction. And in Bedford, Charles Wells, which sold its existing brewery and most of its brands to Marston's in May 2017, has submitted plans for a £13 million new brewery (including a 30,000 hectolitre Brewhouse) and visitor centre, at Fairhill on the town outskirts. Under last year's Marston deal the brewery retained the pub estate, plus ownership of the Charles Wells and John Bull brands.

Relaunch of Bedford Brewery Meanwhile, the former Charles Wells brewery is being relaunched by Marston's as the Eagle Brewery. Due to open in February this year, the development involves new beers, a taproom, shop and visitor centre, plus brewery tours. With last year's deal came a range of Charles Wells brands, including Bombardier, Courage and McEwan's, however at the time of writing, we do not know if any of these, or other of the acquired Charles Wells' brands will find a home here. Marston's said it chose the name Eagle Brewery because "eagles are Bedford's historic champions" – the borough bears an eagle on its coat of arms. "At the Eagle Brewery we are proud to embrace different perspectives. It means while others may move cautiously, we soar fearlessly. Like the eagle that looks over our brewery, we take a different view."



BATHAM'S NEW PUB

New West Midlands pub could start a move back to more traditional style pubs

In the bad old days of the mid 20th century, when the depredations of the big brewers led to the creation of CAMRA, the Black Country suffered considerably less than many other parts of the country. In particular, it was home to three small independent brewers which still thrive today – Holden's at Woodsetton near Tipton, the Olde Swan brewpub at Netherton (aka Ma Pardoe's), and Bathams of Brierley Hill. Both Holden's and Bathams have small tied estates, Holden's about twenty and Bathams recently ten, that is until September 2017, when the brewery opened a new pub.

The King Arthur comprises a pair of semi-detached houses in the village of Hagley, a mile or two south of Stourbridge, which lately had been used as offices. Purchased a year earlier, conversion work cost the best part of a million, with the name chosen to commemorate the grandfather and father (both called Arthur) of Tim and Matt Batham, the two brothers who currently head the firm. At the time of writing, the pub has been open for six months, and even allowing for the traditional "honeymoon" period all indications suggest that it will be a great success.



The new King Arthur at Hagley, near Stourbridge

Readers might well wonder why a CAMRA magazine from East Kent is reporting on a new pub a couple of hundred miles away, but then when the owners are Bathams, all things are different. In many respects Bathams pubs reflect the fashion and style of half a century, or more, ago, its business concentrating on the production of draught mild and bitter. Writing earlier in the year about the King Arthur, the *Morning Advertiser* comments, "the offer contradicts all industry knowledge and trends." There are just two cask ales and no big keg brands – "Guinness, Carling, Foster's or Strongbow." However, the brewery is far from being from stuck in some 1960s time warp: an Italian fizz wine is proving very popular and a speciality gin section offers brands sourced locally.

As for the ale, no popular size nine gallon firkins here. The mild and bitter is delivered in traditional 36 gallon barrels (the brewery also uses 56 gallon hogsheads for its bitter) and the pub clears about twenty a week, 80% of wet sales, and of that a further 80% is accounted for by Bathams award winning bitter. Prices

are £2.45 for the 3.5% ABV mild and £2.75 for the 4.3% ABV bitter. Again, very much bucking the modern trend, food is a secondary consideration. At the King Arthur, it is at the discretion of the manager who sources the supply and keeps the profits, and comprises simple, snack style, choices – cobs, pork pies and scotch eggs, together with crisps, nuts and scratchings.

Other than the bull's head logo Bathams' pubs come with no corporate image or identity, and the King Arthur's original incarnation as a pair of semis remains clearly evident. This very much typifies the brewery's approach, with pubs being allowed to develop their own char-



The Vine Inn (a.k.a Bull & Bladder), Brierley Hill, West Midlands

acter to reflect their location. In Dudley the Lamp is a sprawling pub with its own car park, bed and breakfast and large function room. There is TV in the public bar and good value rolls are available (admittedly not unusual in the Black Country). The New Inn, Wordsley, north of Stourbridge is a good community local, while the Bull and Bladder (aka the Vine) at Brierley Hill is the brewery tap. Set out across several rooms with leather settles and traditional pub atmosphere it offers extraordinarily good value weekday lunches.

Bathams pubs are well known to the Beery Boaters and always seem popular and well patronised. We are not surprised by the King Arthur's success. Very significantly eight of the list opposite feature in the 2018 *Good Beer Guide*.

Bathams may espouse the old fashioned virtues of wet led pubs that are all about beer and conversation – the front of the Vine famously bearing the Shakespearian quotation, “Blessing of Your Heart - You Brew Good Ale” – but their operation suggests pragmatism and business acumen, particularly in taking note of their customers’ tastes and preferences. The tied estate is small enough to allow individual attention to be paid to each premises, while anyone who has tried their beer is likely to want to go back for more. Perhaps other pub operators should take note.

Apart from the King Arthur, Batham’s pub estate is as follows:-

The Britannia Inn, Sedgley, Dudley, West Midlands

The Fox and Grapes, Pensnett, Brierley Hill, West Midlands

The Lamp Tavern, Dudley, West Midlands

The New Inn, Wordsley, Stourbridge

The Plough and Harrow, Kinver, West Midlands

The Plough Inn, Kidderminster, Worcestershire

The Royal Exchange, Stourbridge, West Midlands

The Swan Inn, Kidderminster, Worcestershire

The Unicorn, Stourbridge, West Midlands

The Vine Inn, Brierley Hill, West Midlands

Additionally Bathams supplies around a score of other pubs in the West Midlands area with its beer and resells through Holden’s, Burton Bridge and Wood Brewery of Wistanstow, Shropshire.

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WHITE CLIFFS FESTIVAL OF WINTER ALES 2018

Attendance up and seventy barrels emptied

This year saw the Festival attendance rise against previous years. The numbers visiting was around 1,300 mark and very little ale was left in what remained of the 70 odd barrels we started with. It is hoped that the problems of a couple of years ago when the event was somewhat affected by political demonstrations in the town and the year long Dover/Folkestone railway line closure are now a distant memory.

One thing that was noticed is that the spread of attendance has changed compared to past festivals. Our traditionally busiest period, early evening Friday, seems to have shifted to a few hours earlier to mid/late afternoon, while on both Friday and Saturday there appeared fewer waiting right to the end. This may be due to visitors taking the opportunity to sample the wide selection of real ale now available in the local pubs during their time in the town. It has always been one of the Festival's aims is to promote Dover's real ale pubs.

One visitor who evidently had a good time was James Whiteoak, who sent us the following:-

I attended this festival on Friday afternoon and thoroughly enjoyed myself, spending a convivial couple of hours drinking good beer in good company and in lovely surroundings. The main purpose of this message is, however, to applaud whoever had the idea to incorporate in the design of the commemorative pint glasses a reference to Zeebrugge 1918.

For those who might not appreciate the significance of that reference, 23 April 2018 marks the centenary of the St George's Day Attack. Launched from Dover, this was a daring assault on the German submarine base at the Belgian Port of Zeebrugge by units of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines. Ships were sunk in position blocking the channel submarines used to reach the sea from the port. The ferocious battle that ensued saw many acts of heroism.

Commemorating that event on the beer glasses was a nice touch!

Unlike some recent years, this time we had no particular beer associated with our pint glass commemoration, although once again beer of the festival was a local brew – a 5.3% ABV Oatmeal Pale Ale, Goldilocks is Dead from the newly established Angels and Demons Brewery at Capel. The barrel was sponsored by one of our regular supporters, The Chambers in Folkestone, and being a Kent brew also won Kent Beer of the Festival.

As always we extend our thanks to all our other supporters and sponsors, to all those that helped, and to Your Leisure who manage the Town Hall, without whom the festival could not take place.

Angels & Demons

The brewer of this year's Beer of the Festival began in 2015 through two friends having a passion for quali-



A full house in the Connaught Hall



The reception committee



Clog Dancing in the Stone Hall

ty beer, in all forms, along with the drive to be creative and challenge perceptions.

Located at Great Cauldham Farm in Capel, the beers are hand crafted under the close personal attention of head brewer Joe Andrews. Using the latest brewing equipment and technology, in combination with traditional brewing methods, a consistently high standard is maintained, and the results speak for themselves. Earlier in the year the brewery's 20 barrel system was doubled in size with the arrival of two new 20 barrel fermenters, allowing it to keep up with demand, and maximise full brewing potential, as growth continues.

Whether under the brewery's own name, or its alternative brand McCanns, Angels & Demons beers are widely available around the district, and as well as winning White Cliffs Beer of the Festival this year, it was also a close second in 2017 with ADHME, a 5.2% ABV American Pale Ale. Both were sponsored by The Chambers of Folkestone who have backed the brewery from the start. In 2017 there was also an award for that year's BEST new brewery in Kent.

The awards for Beer of the Festival and Kent Beer of the Festival took place on Wednesday 28th March when a group from the Branch visited the brewery and presented Joe and Nina with certificates for both.



Festival Organiser Jim Green (centre left) presents the Beer of the Festival and Kent Beer of the Festival certificates to Joe and Nina at the Brewery of Angels & Demons

Martin Atkins

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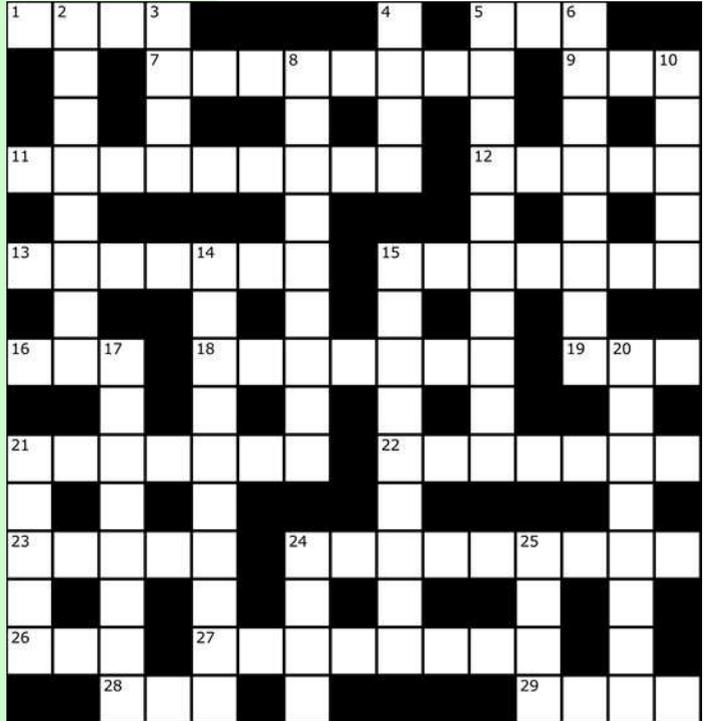
By Trisha Wells

Across

1. In medicine, immediately (4)
5. Bounder (3)
7. Beach resort in S.W. Mexico (8)
9. A cereal plant (3)
11. Animals that eat both plants and meat (9)
12. Alcoholic drink made from pears (5)
13. Really needs a drink (7)
15. Describes firm pasta (2,5)
16. 'Real' beer (3)
18. A fever, a runner or a woman! (7)
19. Nocturnal mammal that might live in the belfry! (3)
21. People who add up when the weather's warm (7)
22. Skimpy clothing that Bach wrote an Air on (1-6)
23. Sounds made by pigs (5)
24. Second largest city in the Netherlands (9)
26. It could be Assam, Jasmine or Orange Pekoe (3)
27. Consume more beer than someone else (8)
28. 'Strictly' judge, ... Goodman (3)
29. A blissful situation (4)

Down

2. Mausoleum near Agra (3,5)
3. Hackney cab (4)
4. As well, also (4)
5. Violent seizures of power (5,1,4)
6. Round handle (8)
8. People who live in the French capital (9)
10. Herb that follows parsley, sage and rosemary (5)



14. Type of bridge (10)
15. Large aquatic reptile (9)
17. A Swiss cheese (8)
20. Every year (8)
21. A strong, dark beer (5)
24. Girl who got an education in Willy Russell's play (4)
25. Turkish spirit (4)

**Crossword Answers
on Page 45**

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TUESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SUNDAY



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CHANNEL VIEW

While generally applauding the development of micropubs, communities purchasing their local, and other examples of independent pub ownership it is easy to forget that a large number of publicans are still tenants of breweries and pub companies. Recent press articles have been critical of pub owners' practices and the application of the Pubs Code by the Pubs Code Adjudicator (PCA).

In the *London Drinker* (Feb/March 2018) campaigning tenant publican Dave Law took issue with the PCA's application of the Pubs Code in relation to the market rent only (MRO) option for pub tenants. Rather than adjudicating, he says, the PCA, in many instances, has effectively merely been rubber stamping whatever has been negotiated between pubco and tenant – raising scepticism in the Pubs Advisory Service (PAS, the independent advice service for pub tenants) and its pub tenant members. And after eighteen months operation it would appear their suspicions were justified. Where arbitration has occurred, a number of awards have found a breach of the Pubs Code's policy that a tenant taking the MRO option should be no worse off than a tied tenant.

It is egregious, says Dave Law, that despite the law needing to be seen to be done, tenants found a PCA referral necessary to fight these agreements, and with no agreed policy to prevent delay, it is anticipated that the pubcos will go to appeal, further deferring resolution. The 'case by case' process and 'arbitration only' solution operated by the PCA, he says, increases delays for tenants who meanwhile are losing out on the 'free of tie' benefits that they seek. An MRO agreement cannot be backdated under the Pubs Code so tenants have to battle on losing money, or simply cave in.

Tenants' delays and costs could be avoided if the PCA was transparent with both sides and adjudicated on common issues. But lack of information and time pressure will likely see tenants turning to chartered surveyors at upwards of £5,000 in fees, rather than paying £200 for a Pubs Code referral.

Additionally, the PCA is required to report to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy unfair practices and contraventions of the Pub Code. As well as examples from cases referred to the PCA, Dave Law says the PAS has heard from lots of tenants who had made no refer-

ral, having already been deterred from opting for an MRO option by the onerous costs added on by the pubcos. However, despite such evidence there has apparently been no action or penalties against the pubcos.

Meanwhile, a recent edition of *Private Eye* took a look at the arrangements for dealing with the wastage invariably involved with cask ale. While breweries take into account the duty allowance on sediment when passing on beer duty costs to pubcos, pubcos do not when they sell on the beer, at usually a substantial mark-up, to their tenants. It is normal for pubcos to work from an assumption that tenants will sell every last drop of the 72 pints in a firkin of ale – a calculation that distorts the pub's earning potential suggested to the tenant when they took on the pub.

Further, calculations for rent are based on forecast "profits", which in theory make an allowance for wastage and sediment. However, observation suggests that this can often be under-estimated. *Private Eye* were told by a Marston's tenant that the pubco had told them to budget for wastage and sediment of 2.5%, but when Marston's published the sediment amounts in its ales, the tenant calculated a figure which should have been nearer 4%, and estimated a consequent total rent overcharge of nearly £20,000.

The magazine also related a rather similar case from a Greene King tenancy, and reported that recently, tenants of Punch Taverns for the second time in 18 months, complained to the PCA that lack of accurate information about saleable beer from their owners could leave the average Punch publican more than £3,000 out of pocket.

A not altogether happy picture. Governments always maintain that the interests of the British pub are close to their hearts, but so often their support and help seems little more than papering over the cracks. Admittedly though, with beer consumption declining and the general public, despite protestations of how much they love the traditional pub, often neglecting their local, to achieve satisfactory regulation is perhaps asking a great deal. A better path then, might be where the Government has direct, simple influence – i.e. fiscal control. What would really benefit would be major reductions in business rates, duty and VAT, the opportunity for which should be greatly enhanced as we leave the European Union.



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Sat 23rd June - **Race Night** - 8.30pm

Sun 1st July - Band & BBQ TBC

Thurs 5th July - **Clairvoyant Evening** - 7pm

Fri 13th July - **Psychic and Pamper Evening** 4pm-9pm
with BBQ 5pm-7pm

Sat 14th July - music TBC

Fri 27th July - **Quiz Night** - 8pm start

Sun 29th July - Band & BBQ TBC

Fri 10th August - **Normans Daughter** - 8.30pm

Fri 24th August - **Quiz Night** - 8pm

Sun 26th August - **Barry Goss** - 2pm-4pm
with BBQ 3pm-5pm



DEAL HOP FARM 2018

The Deal Hop Farm project started in 2017, and proved a remarkable success, attracting sufficient interest in and around Deal, to support the growing of hops on 130 different sites. Initial harvesting from 95 of these took place on 14th September, and produced 75kilos of Prima Donna (1st Gold) hops.

The Hops were passed on to Ripple Steam Brewery who brewed in two runs the green hopped 'Hopping MAD'. In all 57 casks and 139 cases of bottled beer – an impressive 5600 pints in the first year – available in about 35 local pubs & outlets. The beer was well received by the members and the public alike and rated very well at the Berry's Green Hop Season.

In April Deal Hop Farm briefed us on progress so far in 2018.

The second growing season for the Deal Hop Farm – Deal and surrounding areas' community hop growing project – has started with a bang.

We have had very good reports that our 2017 hops are growing very rigorously.

The 'farm' now has around an amazing 210 sites (last year it had 130 people's back gardens and allotments) with around 350 people involved.

It probably will not be until May when we can start to estimate possible yields.

We aim to be producing our Green hopped '**Hopping M.A.D**' again with brewery partners **Ripple Steam**; the brewery is extending its fermentation capacity and we are planning four harvests to hopefully produce four full brews.

Thanks to the support and goodwill from local commercial hop farms, new this year, we have plans and facilities for drying hops which will give options for a new 'dried hop' beer later in the year. It will all depend on what the final harvest in September is like.

One important development for this season has been the offer from **English Heritage** to create a small hop garden in the historic **Captain's Garden at Deal Castle**. This site has been not used for many years.

Our plan is for a small hop garden of about 20 rhizomes. However, we like to extend these ideas - so we have also created 'probably, the smallest barley field in the world' growing next to it (about 10m by 3m).

We are going to see if the barley will be usable for a later brew but there is a lot more processing/knowledge for us to pick up before its harvest in August. So, an experiment in progress. Our next Open Day at the Captains Garden will be on Spring Bank Holiday Monday 28th May 1-3pm.

We are very lucky to have Tony Redsell OBE talking to us about the UK Hop Industry on May 3rd at the Astor Theatre. Tony is one of the largest hop farmers in the county and retired Chairman of the British Hop Association.



Open Garden at the Captain's Garden, Deal Castle



Preparing hop poles at the Captain's Garden, Deal Castle



FROM ACROSS THE WATER

Our 'foreign correspondent' in France came back to visit Kent last Summer

Well, it was pure chance that gave us a break last summer, as my daughter, Aja, was expecting her first, and we had so many pools to finish for August that I didn't dare book a break. However, the summer was good and we got all the pools finished, and my latest granddaughter, Harley, arrived two weeks early so suddenly we had time to spare, and with our favourite little cottage in Stelling Minnis having three clear weeks, bang! we had a break after all.

I like to write a little about what we find in Kent on our return, as many of the places we visit are as recommended by my suffering colleagues at Deal, Dover, Sandwich and District branch who have to selflessly endure all that beer in the name of research. Also, I see myself almost like a French real ale drinker visiting the Mecca of real ale and relaying his own thoughts and findings.

I always try to visit an area some distance from DDS branch that lies between the old A20, the A28 from Ashford to Canterbury, and the B2068 from Stanford to Nackington. It can be spotted on the map in the Kent section of the GBG by the lack of recommended pubs, and I call it "The Beermuda Triangle" because of some curious attitudes of the staff/ licensees and other strange goings on, which I sometimes suspect includes loss of all memory by real ale drinkers, and hence a lack of GBG representation. Some examples are:-

On one occasion when the 9 pm shift came on at the **Tiger** at Stowting, the young girl, who seemed to want an early night, no sooner pulled my pint then she started to wash all the tables down, before stacking the chairs on them and sweeping around us. At Brabourne the **Five Bells** has of late always existed in a futuristic time zone, where beer pricing is somewhat advance of the current time, this year £3.80 a pint.

And one night, in the recently reopened **Timber Batts**, having enjoyed a couple of hours amongst the interesting and eclectic mix of museum pieces, taxidermy and pop art, and with my wife's half pint glass still best part full at 10 pm, I was refused another drink, the landlady saying she was very tied, even though the pub was advertising 11 pm closing. We thought we would try our luck at the **Bowl Inn** just five minutes down the road but although fully lit we pulled in only to push on a locked door.



On another occasion at the **Chequers**, Petham, my wife gave a lift to a lady who wanted to go to nearby Stelling Minnis, only for it to turn out that she was drunk, and for her to cause consternation and misunderstanding by leaving her purse back in the pub.

(A singular area indeed, although maybe, Stuart, you have just been unlucky, as both the Bowl and the Chequers are in the 2018 GBG, and the Bowl, this year and last, has been chosen as Branch Pub of the Year, by Ashford, Folkestone and Romney Marsh CAMRA – Ed.)

However, just outside the Beermuda Triangle, and off the A20 at Evegate near Smeeth, there is a super little micropub called the **Dog House**. Our good friend and holiday host Nicola, introduced us to this friendly little boozier, where we were greeted by a young beer enthusiast called Jim Miller, ably assisted by his manager Rachel and other staff.

As the owner of a fence erecting business, he is also burning the candle at both ends, but remains friendly and attentive, with good conversation and a good sense of humour. His custom and recognition is growing and with reasonably priced, quaffable beers straight out of the barrel, and good unpretentious grub he deserves to succeed.



Inside the Dog House at Smeeth

The pub is on a commercial estate that looks more like a village with its old, and tastefully restored and reconstructed Kent style buildings, including an oast house. There is seating outside in what looks like a village square and inside just enough room to squeeze in a very good band on a Friday night. We enjoyed Black Sheep, but on this occasion it was the name of the band, not the beer. We all mucked in moving tables to make space for the band, and good beer and good sounds were had by all.

On all other nights there is the spirit of a micro pub with good banter. The place is super clean and the staff are friendly,

and with vinyl music in the back ground one is invited to sort through the old records on the shelf and remind oneself how to delicately lower the stylus on the disc. There is also old vinyl for sale, and a selection of books amongst which I found an old guide of Kent pubs which listed pubs, beers with brewers that fell in the late fifties/early sixties. Obviously not for sale but Jim was kind enough to lend it to me during my stay.

Thank you, guys back in Kent – pubs, microbrewers and branch members – who combine to keep strong the backbone of a great British institution. And particular mention of last Summer’s *Channel Draught*. While reading Channel View paragraph eight, and the last paragraph, I could clearly hear *Land of Hope and Glory* playing in my head.



Stuart Roberts

Why Your Beer Scores Count!



**Not enough scores
Not enough scorers
NOT a GBG Candidate**



**Enough scores
Enough scorers
A GBG Candidate**



**Your Pub Needs
Your Beer Scores**

Your beer scores decide which pubs go onto the “Best of...” list, who goes into the Good Beer Guide and ultimately who gets onto the Pub of the Year candidate list.

See <http://www.camra-dds.org.uk/nbss.pdf>



THE POTTERERS CYCLING CLUB (est. 1971)

**** Usque Ad Mortem Bibendum ****

SPRING 2018 UPDATE

Get on your bike!! (or bus, train, feet) and meet The Potterers for a lunchtime pint of Real Ale in some of East Kent's charming, but disappearing, country pubs.

Fear not, this ISN'T an organised bike ride! Arriving by bicycle is not compulsory. I've been known to get to our various "Meets" by train/bus/car/motorbike/feet as well as cycling. But we all have an interest in cycles and cycling, past and present, and many of us appreciate the health benefits of Real Ale (see pictures on website) – in moderation of course.

We have a rota of mainly rural pubs where we meet for lunch and refreshments, and no one is obliged to drink Real Ale. I've seen pots of tea on the table. However, the pubs on our rota do all serve Real Ale.

CAMRA was founded in 1971, in a pub, by four men, from the North West. The Potterers Cycling Club was founded in 1971, in a pub, by four men from the South East. All eight appreciated a pint of good ale. The Potterers' Four Founding Fathers had a better time of it than us. Cycling on quiet country lanes, quieter still on Sundays, with a much, much, larger choice of traditional village pubs. Nowadays, finding suitable venues for our "meets" is a lot more difficult. So many pubs closed and many had to morph into restaurants to survive.

Non-members are welcome to join us for a beer and a chat. We meet on Thursdays and Sundays throughout the summer, and the average age of our membership is over 55 and most of us are retired. Our president recently "celebrated" his 90th birthday and still comes out to the weekday "meets" on his bike.

Since my last article I have cobbled together a website which gives more details of our club and a rota of our Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday "Meets". The website address is: -

www.potterers.co.uk

(If using a web browser search box, enter "potterers.co.uk" minimum.)



The Huntsman & Horn, Herne Bay



The Marquis of Granby, Alkham in the snow



The sadly missed Yew Tree at Barfestone

The Kent Messenger Group kindly publishes The Potterers Cycling Club's forthcoming "Meets" weekly in the "Events Round-up" sections of the Mercury and Gazette local newspapers.

My thanks, also, to Paul Skelton for allowing me to include links on my website to his fascinating Kent Pubs Archive website. Enabling the history of our venues to be easily accessed from my site.

Our motto is "Usque Ad Mortem Bibendum" which the Firkin Brewery stole from us. We, however, are still going. So, get on yer bike, join us and help us reach our 50th anniversary in 2021

Pete Smith

Thanet Section "Meets" – Jun, Jul & Aug 2018

Thursday Meets

Sunday Meets

June

7 th Red Cow, Sandwich	3 rd Half Moon & Seven Stars, Preston
14 th New Inn, Minster	10 th Anchor Inn, Wingham
21 st Rose Inn, Wickhambreux	17 th Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple
28 th Bell, St. Nicolas at Wade	24 th Five Bells, Eastry

July

5 th Red Cow, Sandwich	1 st Anchor Inn, Wingham
12 th Rose Inn, Wickhambreux	8 th New Inn, Minster
19 th Crown, Finglesham	15 th Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple
26 th King Ethelbert, Reculver	22 nd Bell, St. Nicolas At Wade
29 th Five Bells, Eastry	

August

2 nd Rose Inn, Wickhambreux	5 th Anchor Inn, Wingham
9 th St. Crispin Inn, Worth	12 th Half Moon & Seven Stars, Preston
16 th Anchor Inn, Wingham (Committee meeting)	19 th Black Pig, Barnsole/Staple
23 rd Bell, St. Nicolas at Wade	26 th Five Bells, Eastry

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TO THE PUB BY BUS

More on the subject of local bus service reductions making it harder to enjoy a pint by bus

John Pitcher's comments on local bus services in our winter edition drew the following from **Rodney Wolfe Coe**.

I feel that some of what has been written in the two articles in the current edition regarding Bus Services is rather disingenuous.

Firstly, Staple, Northbourne, and Tilmanstone have NOT led to "these villages losing their service". They may well have lost services convenient to CAMRA members but that is NOT the same thing. All retain services, viz Staple (44, 542, 544), Northbourne (81A, 541) and Tilmanstone (88, 88A, 541, 542, 544).

Secondly, the surveys/consultations conducted in the Spring/Summer of 2017 showed that apart from school requirements the 3 most wanted destinations were Canterbury City Centre, Westwood Cross Shopping Centre, and Whitfield Tesco. A quick glance at the timetable shows that such provision has been made.

Thirdly, the writers have overlooked that 20 '80s services in East Kent (the biggest percentage in the DDC area) are operated NOT by Stagecoach, but by Regent. Incidentally the future of 3 of their services – 541/2/4 are due to be reviewed in April – but that may be postponed.

Fourthly – the areas that have lost a number of journeys did so because buses went around empty – the A256 being a prime example. Stagecoach by law as a S.E. quoted company must make money for its shareholders – possibly your pension fund. Buses running empty hour by hour do not do so. County Councils (in Kent's case) are at liberty to use its Council Taxpayers money to subsidize socially needed services. On the A 256, for instance, the empty buses show there is no need. If your members want services then it is their KCC members to whom their ire should be directed, not the operator. Regent are able to operate many areas' basic service because their overheads are much lower – they have picked up business from KCC on a socially needed service contract basis because of this – they make their profits from school contracts and coach hire, neither of which Stagecoach do.

Be prepared for cutbacks in evenings (after 8pm), Saturday (after 4pm) or Sunday services where these are under contract – although DDC should escape more/most cuts. But Stagecoach have taken on some very marginal services on a commercial basis. Perhaps the writers should thank Stagecoach for so doing – but I doubt whether they will!

*I don't think that our comments discounted Stagecoach's commercial nature, and we did point out that the revisions contained benefits as well as detriment. However, we accept Rodney's comment about the Staple, Tilmanstone and Northbourne services, and we should instead have said lost **most of** their services. Our concerns though, relate more to what decisions are made, especially for marginal services, and the issue of local and central government support. Specifically, with regard to the A256 service, from observation this always appeared fairly well patronised.*

We also received information on two Regent Coaches evening services from **Barry O'Brien** who says:

As the article makes reference 'most buses are tucked up in bed by 7 or 8 pm' and as someone who quite likes to occasionally get into Dover from Whitfield for an evening pint this doesn't help, and so I set about asking questions. Fortunately I discovered Sam Regent who runs Regent Coaches, a company charged with taking over some of the Stagecoach routes once the Stagecoach buses are indeed tucked up for the night.

Unfortunately Stagecoach, for whatever reason, don't appear to be wholly disposed to publicising all of the services Regent Coaches offer, such as those that run late into the evening on routes 61 and 90. Sam turned out to be a responsive kind of guy and has sent through the timetable (shown opposite) of services on the routes mentioned and, what's more, following our conversation has gone to each of the stops on those routes, wherever possible ensuring updated copies of the timetable are posted so that the information is now much more widely available. (For space reasons Barry's comments are somewhat abridged).

90, 61 & 61a evenings Aycliffe - Whitfield - Dover - Aycliffe circular

Mondays to Saturdays	90	61a	61a	61
Aycliffe, St Davids Avenue	~	1928	2128	PR
Dover, Priory Street stop E	~	1936	2136	2311
Tower Hamlets, Astor Avenue	~	1940	2140	↓
Buckland Bridge	~	1945	2145	2317
Roosevelt Road	~	1947	2147	↓
Fulbert Road	~	1952	2152	2323
Tesco, Honeywood Parkway	~	1954	2154	MR

Mondays to Saturdays	90	90
Aycliffe, St Davids Avenue	2028	2228
Dover, Priory Street stop E	2036	2236
Buckland Hospital	2040	2240
St. Radigunds, Barwick Rd	2042	2242
River, Lewisham Road	2048	2248
Kearsney The Railway Bell	2051	2251
Menzies Road	2054	
B&Q store	2056	
Tesco, Honeywood Parkway	2059	2254

	(90)	(90)
Tesco, Honeywood Parkway	1856	2154
Whitfield, Honeywood Road	1858	2156
River, Lewisham Road	1903	2001 2201
St. Radigunds, Barwick Rd	1909	2007 2207
Buckland Hospital	1910	2008 2208
Dover, Pencerster Road arr	1915	2013 2213
Dover, Pencerster Road dep	1920	2020 2220
Aycliffe, St Davids Avenue	1928	2028 2228

Tesco, Honeywood Parkway	(61a)	(61)
Roosevelt Road	2106	2301
Buckland B ridge	2108	2303
Tower Hamlets, Astor Avenue	2113	↓
Dover, Pencerster Road arr	2119	2310
Dover, Pencerster Road dep	2120	~
Aycliffe, St Davids Avenue	2128	~

MR - serves Menzies Road at 2326

PR - Runs from Pencerster Road at 2310

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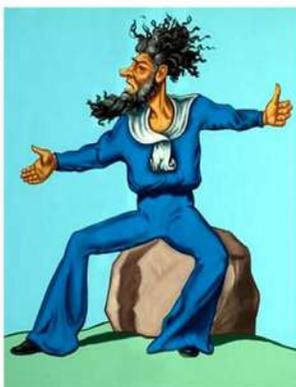


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DODGING DOWNPOURS ON THE BCN

A LOOK BACK AT THE BEERY BOATERS' 1993 TRIP TO THE BIRMINGHAM CANAL NAVIGATIONS

Another go at the Birmingham Canal Navigations! Must be gluttons for punishment! However, although we had gained an Inland Waterways National Cruising Award over the previous two canal trips, the Beery Boaters required more points for the BCN Challenge Award Scheme. And anyway, we like the BCN!

So we set off at 1300 from the Dartline Cruisers at Tardebigge towards Brum on Saturday 2nd October 1993 on the 47ft 'Derwent'. The crew were, Dave Underdown, Andrew Bushby (Speed), Brian Bourne and Hon. Commodore (Unelected), plus Ray Crane who would join us the next evening. A short stop at the Crown at Alvechurch at 1355, where the only Real Ale was Stones, but in good condition. Although the pub stopped serving at 1430, they allowed us another round before time was called and we eventually left at three o'clock

Into the long West Hill Tunnel at 1605, which our typical elderly Lister engine left full of smoke, and to the Stratford Canal junction where we needed rapid action to avoid a small plastic cruiser that shot out across our bows. We tied up at Cambrian Basin some time after six o'clock, squeezing into an empty space among all the private boats which looked like they'd taken up permanent residence. One old dear told us that hire boaters weren't fit to be seen in the presence of 'proper' boaters. We ignored her and departed for the Prince of Wales!

The Prince of Wales,
Birmingham City centre



Sunday 3rd October. I don't know what time we set off as my cassette recorder was temporarily hors de combat, but we went down Farmer's Bridge and Aston Locks stopping near Snow Hill for breakfast, which Hon. Commodore (Unelected) cooked. The crew must have been desperate! At Salford Junction (under Spaghetti Junction) we did a sharp right onto the Grand Union Bordesley Branch and ascending the six locks tied up on the Digbeth Arm at 1345 for some lunchtime refreshment. Our intended destination, the Forge Tavern, was closed, but we found an Ansell's house, Birmingham's Own. We gathered that if you didn't leave on time on Sunday lunchtime you were liable to suffer a lock-in! The beer was good, and it was only the thought of Ray waiting for us that evening that delivered us from temptation, and with many regrets, we set off at 1530.

Up Ashted Locks and back up the 13 Farmer's Bridge Locks continuing to Hockley Basin where we had arranged to meet Ray. On our way we retrieved a redundant BWB engine hatch cover from the bank of

'At Last' and 'Derwent' on the Titford Canal



Oozell's Street Loop to add to Dave's collection of junk, and a folding wheelchair from the canal, on the Soho Loop. There didn't seem to be much wrong with it, and it has served the Beery Boaters faithfully ever since.

Around six o'clock, a few spots of rain, and by the time we moored it was tipping down. No sign of Ray and seemingly no pubs in the proximity, and a chap on a private boat in the secure Hockley Port moorings opposite warned us against leaving the boat unattended where we were. We were also feeling the effects of 48 locks in a few hours! So we got our heads down, only to be woken by

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Ray's arrival at nine o'clock. He planned to take his car to Tardebigge in the morning, then come back by train to meet us at lunchtime. The rest of the night was punctuated by bursts of heavy rain and the quacking of an insomniac duck.

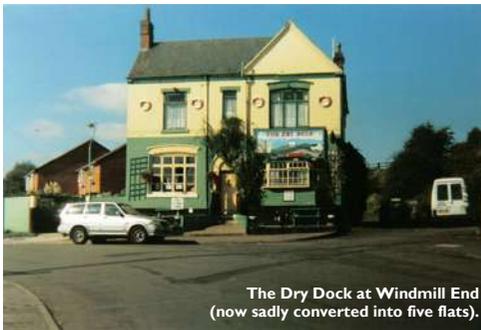
Monday 4th October. The sky had cleared, not a cloud, could be a fine morning. The propeller was remarkably free from rubbish, and a group of Canada geese came past us from out of the basin. Ray set off at 0810 and we continued round the Soho Loop past Winson Green Gaol and turned right at the Main Line. A tunnel from the canal extended under the prison – a sort of Traitor's Gate? I could imagine the inmates escaping by narrow boat! We ascended the three Smethwick Locks to the Old Main Line, and once again we turned up the Engine Arm, reversing up the last part and taking the obligatory photographs. Continuing on the Old Main Line at 1015, the crew persuaded Hon. Commodore to cook breakfast again. Crepes avec champignons et lardons. Sounds good, anyway! We wondered why we were passing so many boats coming the other way.

We soon found out. At Oldbury Junction we turned left onto the Titford Canal where the six locks known as 'The Crow' leads up to what was then (before the Rochdale and the Huddersfield Narrow Canals had been restored) the highest navigable length of canal in the country. Wonder of wonders, there was a boat coming down, the first I had ever met on my four times on the Titford Canal, and the steerer told us that there had been a boat Rally at Titford Pools that weekend. At midday we arrived outside the Brewery Inn (aka New Inn) where we were re-united with Ray, had a couple of pints of Holt, Plant & Deakin and were presented with another certificate by the landlord for getting to this canal.

Off again towards Titford Pools, we reached the New Navigation Inn by Jervis Bridge at 1315. Almost before we moored the landlady was welcoming us over the back fence of the pub garden. Born on a narrow boat she was a real canal enthusiast, and logged all the boats that got to Titford Pools. Also a Holt, Plant & Deakin pub, it had been GBG for several years. Sadly, I understand it no longer sells real ale, but a less sad fate than the Brewery Inn, which is now demolished.

Regretfully, we left the New Navigation at 1540, and went back to the locks. Unbelievably there was another boat in the top lock, the steerer removing debris, including the remains of a jacket, from his propeller. At the bottom we continued to Bradeshall Junction, where we turned right down three locks to the New Main Line. Clouds were now piling up. Left on the New Main Line and left again at Dudley Port Junction towards Netherton Tunnel, stopping for the water point just before the tunnel entrance. Unfortunately, our water hose connection was unserviceable and I needed to hold it onto the tap, and of course the heavens opened.

Through the tunnel to tie up on the embankment at Windmill End above the Dry Dock by 1815 and departed thence for food in the usual large Little Pub portions and Lumphammer beer. It was now dark with the rain still tipping down. However, a lively evening ensued with an Irish Folk Group entertaining, and we eventually got back to Derwent at 1145.



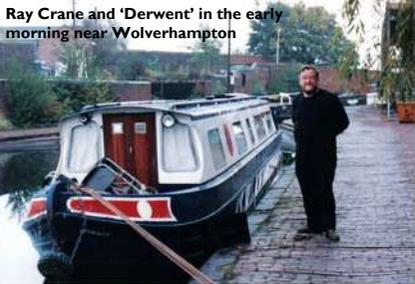
Tuesday 5th October Ray's alarm clock went off at five to seven. It had been windy overnight with the boat bumping the concrete side of the canal, but the rain had stopped, although still cloudy. Ray went off to get his papers and I had an unproductive inspection of the propeller. On the move by 0745 in occasional drizzle, having pulled the boat back the few yards to the junction of Dudley No. 2 Canal to go down towards Gosty Hill Tunnel and Hawne Basin.

Just before Bullfield Bridge a chap on the towpath warned us that there was a car ahead dumped in the canal. Sure enough, but with plenty of room to get past. Half submerged, with a smashed window and papers floating around inside. Tyre-tracks led down the lawn of a factory opposite. It looked like the work of joy-riders. Through Gosty Hill Tunnel to wind at Hawne Basin at 0900 and tie up for half an hour for breakfast, the adjacent Coombeswood Steel Works now mostly derelict.

Back through the tunnel and into pouring rain, and to the car, where the crew of a couple of breakdown trucks were standing about wondering how to get to it. Salvation arrived. We ferried one of the lads out to the car, he smashed another window with our lump hammer and passed a strop through the inside. We watched while the obvious write-off was unceremoniously hauled out of the water and dumped onto the canal bank.

We continued, with rain pelting down, back past Windmill End, to turn at Blowers Green Junction by 1205, and head back as far as Stoney Lane Bridge for the half mile walk to Cradley Heath, and the Little Sausage and Porter, another Little Pub. Rain had now stopped. Ray and I, being members of 'The Noble Society of the Little People' were entitled to collect a free gift: mugs from The Little Upton Muggery down on the Severn. More Lumphammer beer and food – Cradley Porker Sausages.

We set off at 1500 and had a look up the Bumblehole Arm which appeared even more neglected than the previous Autumn although there were a couple of residential boats moored there – thinking no-one goes up there to check on their BVB licences? Netherton Tunnel was full of smoke when we entered at 1530 as if a boat in front had a wood-burning stove going full blast. Back up to the Old Main Line, to Tipton to pass the Black Country Museum and the Fountain Inn (HQ of the Tipton Slasher), and suppressing inclinations to stop, pressed on to moor in Wolverhampton Basin at 1905, the intermittent rain having apparently ceased. Then off to the Great Western for some Holden's beer where we were surprised to meet Roger Corbett, an old CAMRA friend from South London. We left the pub at 1130 for take-aways before returning to the boat.



Ray Crane and 'Derwent' in the early morning near Wolverhampton

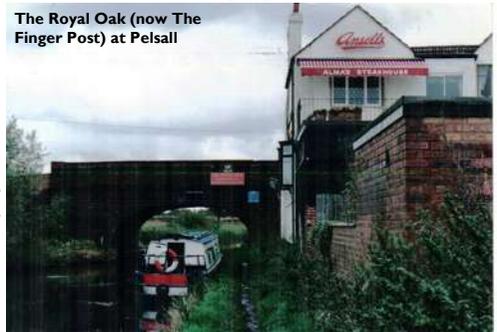
Wednesday 6th October. Up at 0715. Clear sky, no rain in sight, though plenty of weed on the propeller. Ray went to get his papers. Back to Horsley Fields Junction, 10 minutes away, and onto the Wyreley & Essington Canal. The clock on the church tower showed 0845 as we passed over Wednesfield Bridge with children on their way to school waving to us. It was now beginning to cloud over. The water was crystal-clear with quite a few white water lilies and the occasional late dragon-fly, and plenty of fish to be seen; and the several anglers shouting to us to speed up and make the water more cloudy so that the

fish couldn't see them.

Breakfast was being taken on the move, and Brian took over the tiller from me at 1005 as we passed under the M6 – we had heard the traffic before we could see it. "Just in time, it's started to rain!" We sheltered under the bridge at Sneyd Junction with much shouting from Ray. "Are you waterproofing-up, Dave? Only Brian's out there with not a lot on! Come on, Jim, don't be long!" (See how we got bullied by our old Sea Cook! Proper Long John Silver!).

Pelsall Junction at 1220 and we turned left onto the Cannock Extension Canal. Ray took over the tiller, and of course all rain ceased. Funny lot, residential boaters. Ray was steering Derwent as slowly as possible between moored boats. Chap on the first boat called out cheery greetings and thanked us for passing so considerably, the dweller on the second one shouted "Slow down, you're going too fast!" We turned at the end and went back to the junction to tie up outside the Royal Oak (now the Finger Post) at York Bridge at half past one, where I needed to de-weed the prop. again. The pub had Ind Coope Burton beer and also served good meals.

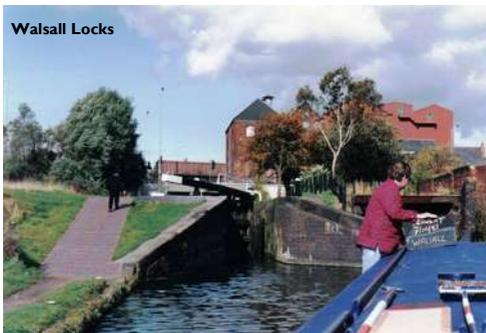
The Royal Oak (now The Finger Post) at Pelsall



1510, on the move once more, and raining, so Ray steered, hoping that it would stop. He received a cup of coffee laced with 4 Bells for his efforts. Of course, the rain did stop. We went to the end of the Anglesey Branch, turned at 1650 and came back. "It was windy up here last year and it's still windy now!" By Ogley Junction, where the Lichfield Canal goes off, Ray spotted some 'lucky

heather' and sent me ashore to get some. At 1735 we continued onto the Daw End Branch, to tie up at seven o'clock, by Daw End Bridge and walk to the Manor Arms, a very good pub with no bar. Ray and I stopped at a working man's club on the way for some M&B and raffle tickets for Ray. Calling in on his way back to Derwent, he found the lucky heather hadn't worked.

Thursday 7th October. Up at 0715. Grey and overcast, it looked like it had rained during the night. Five minutes later it briefly started again. I set off, and Ray emerged with some tea. A couple of early morning herons, one flying and one in a field, before descending Rushall Locks to tie up for breakfast at 0925. Off again to turn right onto the Tame Valley Canal, and right again at 1120 out into the Walsall Canal. Reasonable progress, interrupted by an almighty wallop as a long length of plastic tubing wrapped itself around the prop, followed subsequently by more noise as we picked up several yards of electric cable. Both quickly cleared we reached the bottom of Walsall Locks by 1320.



Ray went ahead to prepare the locks, which were in much better condition than on previous encounters. At the top we stopped to visit the superb little Birchills Canal Museum (sadly now closed) before adjourning to the New Navigation next door for some excellent M&B beers.

Back onto the Wyreley & Essington at Birchills Junction to return to Wolverhampton for the evening, having had to remove ten feet of angler's keep net from the rudder, on the way. Tied up just past Broad Street Bridge at five to six, and caught a train to Tipton to attend a BCN Society Meeting where we enjoyed an interesting slide show and I won the raffle (the lucky heather did some good after all). Afterwards we visited the Pie Factory (another of the Little Pub group), the Fountain and the Noah's Ark. Then fish & chips and a train back to Wolverhampton.

Friday the 8th, the last full day, and noisy traffic woke me at seven. It looked like we'd had more overnight rain and the day was overcast again. Ray went for his papers, I checked the prop and we were off at seven-thirty back towards Brum, passing the Bradley Arm at Deepfields Junction, which, after 1992, we thought best to ignore. A quick look down the Ridgeacre Branch of the Wednesbury Old Canal found murky water and plenty of corrugated iron. Truncated by a new road we had to pole the boat round at Swan Bridge. Back on the New Main Line we tied up at 1325 just past Oozells Street Loop and walked to the Prince of Wales.

Away at 1545 and onto the Worcester & Birmingham Canal. "Looks like we'll get to Alvechurch very late and in the dark, that'll be nothing new!" Still suffering showers. Passing Cadbury's at Bourneville at 1655, Brian, steering, said that he could see flashes of lightning and hear thunder ahead. Ray, down below cooking some tuna steaks, said that he could do with some white wine for the sauce, I suggested that he substituted some of his rum. Nevertheless a pleasant meal of Steaks de Thon à la Mode de Ray.

I took over steering and, of course, the rain descended again, so hard, coming up to Wast Hill Tunnel, that I just let go of the tiller and dived below for shelter. We left the tunnel by 1812, with the sky clearing and dusk approaching, and tied up by the Crown at Alvechurch shortly after seven. Still only Stones real ale. After closing time Ray cooked us a late meal, sausages and sauerkraut, which had been thoughtfully donated by our French Division, Les Bateliers de Biere. Only I don't think that they thought too much! The sausage was OK, but most of the cabbage went to feed the ducks.

Saturday the 9th. Up at seven and away, and moored up at Tardebigge, at 0820. And that was it once more. Ray, Speed and Brian set off in their cars, while Dave and I went off to do some Little Pub Passporting. After the last pub, the Little Kipper House at Willenhall, we got bed & breakfast in Bradley. When we woke up on Sunday morning we found that we were opposite the BWB Yard at Bradley. So we got to the end of the Bradley Arm after all!

Jim Green



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.



www.harveys.org.uk

HARVEY'S
BREWERY



01273 480 209



LAST KNOCKINGS

Old Wort

Alcopops 2018 If there is any doubt that the craft beer industry has not a lot to do with the principles that brought about the creation of CAMRA, then a recent article in the *Morning Advertiser* should clarify matters. It starts off in London-centric fashion: “Unless you’ve been living under a rock for the past few months, you’ll probably have noticed that a beer style called New England IPA (NEIPA) has suddenly become rather popular. Hazier than a glass of orange juice, and packed full of tropical fruit flavours, NEIPA has taken the beer world by storm....” Now a British version called Sleeping Giants (5% ABV) has been brewed by Hackney Brewery – “a tropical juice bomb, ripe with all the flavours of a fruit salad.....low bitterness and soft finish make it instantly sessionable,” says the report. Apparently supplies are very limited, so don’t hold your breath waiting for it to pop up in East Kent, but should you find some (and fuelling the suspicion that craft ale is as much about fashion as beer) “don’t forget to put a photo on Instagram,” you are advised.

Snowed Inn While much of Kent was suffering in the cold weather earlier in the year, and people found themselves snowed, or immobile on unpassable roads, in Canterbury, the New Inn, as the adjoining picture shows, was able to offer a welcome and sustenance for the odd wayfarer.



Locals Succeed As we report in Local News the fight to save the Chequer at Ash has at last ended with success, and reflects a growing trend across the country. There have already been several other local takeovers in Kent, the most notable of late probably being the Harrow at Stockbury which has won a CAMRA award. For those of us who grew up in the mid 20th century the private ownership of a pub was a rarity, and community ownership virtually unknown – with a few exceptions pubs were owned by breweries whose beer they sold and which customers had to drink whether they liked it or not. Today, along with publicans who have bought their own pub, microbrewing and micropubs, the community-owned pub is another element in a very changing world. What is especially heartening is that where a community determinedly pursues the acquisition of its pub it seems nearly always to succeed. We offer the Chequer at Ash, the Harrow at Stockbury and all the others our best wishes for the future.

End of an Era By contrast, Dover’s Admiral Harvey, seems destined to be confined to memory. You won’t have read much about it in *Channel Draught*, in fact it probably hasn’t been mentioned once, to the best of our knowledge real ale having disappeared from the small Bridge Street pub in the late 1960s/early 1970s, as Whitbread converted all but a handful of its pubs to top pressure or keg. And it’s unlikely to be mentioned again. Its last landlord, Pat Edwards, having sadly died in January, after 37 years behind the bar, future prospects apparently point to conversion to a house or flats. Its style, often termed “back street boozier” (or similar), was common fifty years ago, but today is a seriously endangered species – a candidate for red lists everywhere. A home to darts, skittles and pool teams, where, if everyone didn’t quite know everyone else, somebody in the pub would. The Harvey will be sadly missed. Our condolences to Pat’s family and friends, and our commiserations with those having to seek out a new local.





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