Draught Copy



Free Magazine

By Maidstone & Mid-Kent CAMRA

incorporating Gravesend & Darent Valley and Bexley Branches

Winter 2019/2020 No. 197

It's the most wonderful time for a beer...



DRAUGHT COPY

Draught Copy is the magazine of the Maidstone and Mid-Kent branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, also incorporating news from Bexley, and Gravesend & Darent Valley branches of CAMRA. It is published quarterly, in March, June, September and December and has a circulation of 3,200 copies. Opinions expressed are those of the author of the article, and need not represent those of CAMRA or its officials.

If you find a pub selling short measure, allowing smoking in the premises, or other illegal things in pubs, please have a quiet word with the landlord in the first instance. However, if you need to complain about a licensed premises in your area, report the problem to Trading Standards by contacting Citizens Advice, who will pass the details to your local Trading Standards service: Call the Citizens Advice consumer service helpline on 03454 04 05 06 (Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm). We should demand the very highest standards of service in our pubs.

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The copy date for the next issue is 21 January 2020 for publication in February 2020.

Website: www.mmk.camra.org.uk

Twitter: www.twitter.com/mmkcamra

For further information about all pubs mentioned in this publication (or indeed anywhere in the UK), please refer to CAMRA's national pub database: www.whatpub.com





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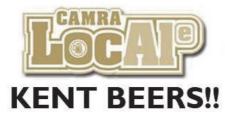
CAMRA BRANCH DIARIES

If you would like more information, please ring the local branch contact—see **Local News** sections. **Meetings start at 20:30 unless otherwise stated.**

BEX: Bexley, GDV: Gravesend and Darent Valley, MMK: Maidstone & Mid-Kent

```
December GDV 4 19:00, AGM & Christmas meal, Jolly Drayman (Gravesend)
          MMK
                  5 20:30, Woodcock, Iden Green, then Bull, Benenden
                    20:30, Brch Mtg,
          BEX
                    Bexley CC/Burnt Ash Hockey Club, Bexley DA5 3QG
          MMK 12 20:30, George, then Walnut Tree, Yalding
          MMK 14 Bus Trip to Swanley, Crockenhill, and Brew Buddies
          MMK 19 20:30, Drakes, Maidstone, then Stag
                12:00 noon, Twixtmas Social, starting Robin Hood &
                    Little John, 78 Lion Rd, Bexleyheath DA6 8PF for lunch.
          MMK 3 20:30, Goacher's Old evening, Rifle Volunteers, Maidstone
January
          MMK 6 10:50, Bus & Walkabout – Sandwich
                    19:00, Branch Mtg, Tailors Chalk, 47-49 High St,
          BEX
                    Sidcup DA14 6ED, includes post Xmas/New Year meal
          GDV 8 20:00, Biz Mtg, Dartford Working Men's Club
          MMK 9 20:30, Biz Mtg. & GBG selection, Marden Village Club
                    20:30, Angel, Addington, then
          MMK 16
                    Duke of Wellington, Ryarsh
          GDV 23 20:00, Three Pillars, Compass, Three Daws (Gravesend)
          MMK 23 20:30, Larkins Alehouse, Cranbrook
          MMK 30 20:30, Lord Raglan, then Stile Bridge
          GDV 5 20:00, Dartford Jug, Malt Shovel, Foresters (Dartford)
February
          MMK 6 20:30, First & Last, Maidstone, then Cellars
                 20:30, Furze Wren, 6 Market Place,
          BEX
                    Broadway Square, Bexleyheath DA6 7DY
                    20:00, Cotton Mill (Swanley), Chequers (Crockenhill),
          GDV
                    Five Bells (Eynsford)
          MMK 13 20:30, George, Trottiscliffe, then Kings Arms, Offham
          MMK 15 10:20, Bus Trip to Mayfield, Rotherfield and Frant
          MMK 20 20:30, Bell & Jorrocks, Frittenden, then Knoxbridge
          GDV 26 20:00, Biz Mtg. & GBG selection, Glentworth Club (Dartford)
          MMK 27 20:30, Yew Tree, Sandling, then Red Bull, Eccles
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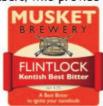


"There's more in the barrel"

Musket Brewery is a family owned, Maidstone-based Micro Brewery located at Loddington Farm, Linton, brewing premium REAL ALE at realistic prices. The Musket brewers are CAMRA members, who provide these carefully brewed ales for your enjoyment.



MUZZLELOADER 4.5% Kentish Ale



FLINTLOCK 4.2% Best Bitter (Award winning beer!)



FIFE & DRUM 3.8% Golden Ale



TRIGGER 3.6% Pale Ale



POWDER BURN 5.0% Kentish Porter (Autumn/Winter brew!)



MATCHLOCK 3.8% Kentish Mild (Spring/Summer brew!)



FLASH in the PAN 4% Green Hop Ale (Only available in September!)



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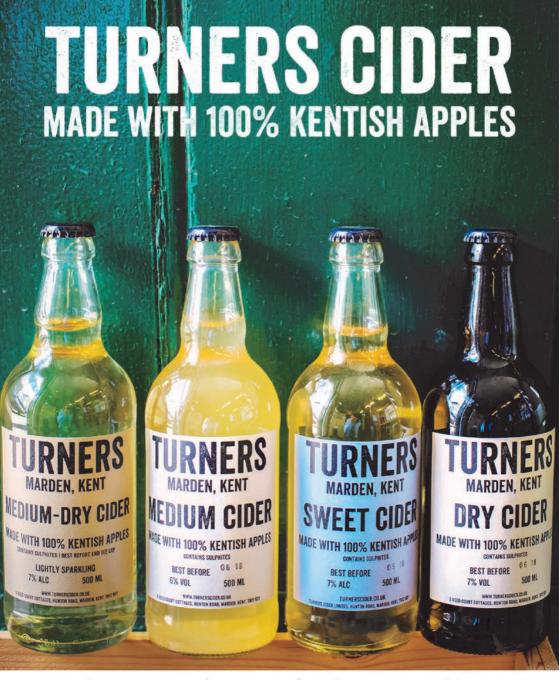
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"There's more in the barrel" at

www.musketbrewery.co.uk

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CALL 07825 394164 OR MAIL PHIL@TURNERSCIDER.CO.UK

LOCAL BEER & CIDER FESTIVALS

CAMRA Festivals:

November 20 - 23 40th SE Essex CAMRA Beer & Cider Fest

Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford SS4 1BU.

150 real ales, cider/perry & international/craft beer

+ free soft drinks for designated drivers.

Hot/cold food all sess. Souvenir glass. Over 18s only,

Open Noon to 10pm Wed - Sat.

FREE entry to card carrying CAMRA membs at all times; non-members £2 entry from 5pm on Thursday & Friday.

November 20 - 23 Harwich & Dovercourt Bay Winter Ale Festival

54 Kingsway, Dovercourt, Harwich, Essex CO12 3JR

Website: www.tendringcamra.org.uk

40+ Real Ales plus Ciders/local Wines and International Beers

+ free soft drinks for designated drivers

Souvenir glass. Open 5:00pm to 11:00pm Wed and 11:00am to 11:00pm Thurs - Sat.

FREE entry to card carrying CAMRA members at all times

Non-members £2.50 entry to all sessions.

November / 28 - 1 Champion Bottled Beer of Britain at the Good Food Show

December North Ave, Marston Green

Our flagship Birmingham winter Show brings together the UK's greatest chefs and experts, plenty of festive shopping and inspiration, exciting live entertainment in our unique Big Kitchen and on numerous stages across the show.

December 3-7 36th Pigs Ear Beer Festival

Glenarm Road/Lower Clapton Road, Hackney E5 0LY

Website www.pigsear.org.uk. Twitter: @pigsearcamra, Facebook: camra.elac

200+ Real Ales, Ciders, Perries, Foreign & Bottled Beers.

Hot/Cold Food all sess. Open: 12noon-1030pm (Tue-Thur), 12noon-11pm (Fri/Sat)
Admission: £3 (CAMRA membs), £5 Non-members [£8 CAMRA membs season ticket].

Reduced admission Sat £1[Members]/£2[Non-members]. No U18's

February 7-8 27th White Cliffs Festival of Winter Ales

Maison Dieu (Town Hall), Biggin Street, Dover, Kent, CT16 1DL

Website: www.camra-dds.org.uk.

Other Events:

February 7 - 8 7th Tonbridge Juddians Rugby Club Beer Festival,

The Slade, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1HR.

Website www.tj-beerfest.com, @TJRFC

Selection of 24 real ales, plus cider. Free admission.

Local Beweries

Bexley Brewery	01322 337368	www.bexleybrewery.co.uk	
Boutilliers	07715 698441	www.boutilliers.com	
Brew Buddies Ltd	07962 369717	brew-buddies.co.uk	
Brumaison	07831 704089	www.brumaison.beer	
Canterbury Ales	01227 732541	www.canterbury-ales.co.uk	
Cellar Head	01580 879523	www.cellarheadbrewing.com	
Dartford Wobbler	01322 866233	www.dartfordwobbler.com	
Goachers	01622 682112	www.goachers.com	
Iron Pier Brewing	01474 569460	www.ironpier.beer	
Kent Brewery	01634 780037	www.kentbrewery.com	
Larkins Brewery	01892 870328	www.larkinsbrewery.co.uk	
Mad Cat Brewery Ltd	07960 263615	www.madcatbrewery.co.uk	
Musket Brewery	07967 127278	www.musketbrewery.co.uk	
Nelson Brewery	01634 832828	www.nelsonbrewery.co.uk	
No Frills Joe	07516 725577	www.nofrillsjoe.co.uk	
Old Dairy Brewery	01580 763867	www.olddairybrewery.com	
Pig & Porter	01892 615071	www.pigandporter.co.uk	
Ramsgate Brewery	01843 868453	www.ramsgatebrewery.co.uk	
Rockin' Robin Brewery	01622 747106	www.rock in robin brewery.co.uk	
Shepherd Neame	01795 532206	www.shepherdneame.co.uk	
Swan on the Green	01622 812271	www.swan-on-the-green.co.uk	
Tonbridge Brewery	07962 016286	www.tonbridgebrewery.co.uk	
Wantsum Brewery	01227 910135	www.wantsumbrewery.co.uk	
Westerham Brewery Co.	01732 864427	www.westerhambrewery.co.uk	
Whitstable Brewery 01622 851007 whitstablebrewery.co.uk			
Man available at vyyyyy konteamya org yk/kant/hyayyarias			

Map available at www.kentcamra.org.uk/kent/breweries

LOCAL CIDER MAKERS

wap available at www.keineanna.org.ak/kein/bieweines			
	www.beardspoon.com		
01580 291726	www.biddendenvineyards.com		
01304 821630	www.greenoakfarm.co.uk		
01622 746633	double vision cider @outlook.com		
01795 886266	www.duddastuncider.com		
07880 923398			
01795 665203			
01795 521317	www.kentcider.co.uk		
01227 250151	www.kentishpip.co.uk		
07771 711252	www.littlestourorchard.co.uk		
07707 309041			
01580 763938	www.nightingalecider.com		
01892 824544	www.pippinsfarm.co.uk		
01227 700757	www.rougholdwife.com		
01795 529100	www.tiddlypommeshop.co.uk		
07825 394164	www.turnerscider.co.uk		
01233 850664	wiseowlcider@gmail.com		
	01580 291726 01304 821630 01622 746633 01795 886266 07880 923398 01795 665203 01795 521317 01227 250151 07771 711252 07707 309041 01580 763938 01892 824544 01227 700757 01795 529100 07825 394164		

Map available at www.kentcamra.org.uk/kent/cider



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Seasonal Greetings from Kent Brewery

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CAMRA'S NATIONAL CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR AWARD

The **New Union** pub in Kendal has scooped CAMRA's prestigious National Cider Pub of the Year Award.

Nestled on the fringe of the Lake District, this 'nononsense' pub is a popular community hub hosting a weekly quiz, fortnightly music nights, carol singing,



live music and whisky tastings. It works closely with Kendal businesses to offer local produce and boasts 'great beer, good craic and a friendly atmosphere' and re-opened just two years ago following an untimely closure.

The presentation to the **New Union** was on the 1st of October at 1.30 pm and kicked off CAMRA's 'Cider Month', a month-long promotion of real cider and perry production. CAMRA members organised hundreds of events to celebrate one of their favourite drinks as producers across the country prepared to harvest apples.

Phil Walker from the **New Union** said: "I'm absolutely honoured that The **New Union** has won CAMRA's National Cider Pub of the Year Award. To go from opening the pub just two years ago to being able to compete against the finest cider pubs across the country makes me incredibly proud.

"I want to say a massive thank you to the judging panel for selecting the **New Union** and to our loyal customers here in Kendal who have helped us get where we are today."

Sarah Newson who organises the competition said: "This is a remarkable achievement for a previously closed pub to win national recognition so quickly after re-opening. The **New Union** boasts an excellent range of real ciders and perries in an area that isn't usually known for cider and perry, and we're pleased to see such an offering on the fringe of the Lake District."

Other finalists in the competition include last year's Club of the Year winner the **Appleton Thorn Village Hall** in Appleton Thorn, Cheshire, **Larkins**' **Ale House** in Cranbrook, Kent and the **Woodbine** in Waltham Abbey, Essex.

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I recently visited parts of the western half of the Czech Republic where, along with most of the rest of the world, new bars, brewpubs and microbreweries are springing up all the time. My CAMRA Czech beer guide is now twelve years old, so I consulted *Ratebeer.com* before my visit.

I flew from Heathrow to Prague, then caught bus 100 to Zlicin bus station, where the Prague metro terminates, and coaches run every hour to Plzen, run by Student Agency, whose luxurious yellow coaches bomb down the motorway, with an onboard attendant serving free hot drinks, and dishing out headphones for the entertainment. The coach cost 100Czk, for a 50-mile journey of one hour duration.

In the following, Czech Koruna is shown as Czk, of which there are around 27 to the pound. The default quantity for a beer is half-a-litre, and please excuse the lack of accents on some of the letters, as I don't have them on my keyboard!

After arriving at Plzen bus station, I caught tram no.2 to the railway station, where my hotel was easy to find. The Astory Hotel was pleasant enough, with a good breakfast, but far too expensive for the Czech Republic. I had time for a short train ride (67Czk return) to Rokycany. I noticed that a new, very long, tunnel had been constructed to bypass a previously meandering route.

At Rokycany, a small town, I managed to find U Stocesu in a residential area, not



helped by a lack of street names. This is a brewpub, and had four of their own beers on draught. *Stoceska* (3.8% ABV, 29Czk) was nice, light and not too gassy. *Harcir* (4.5%, 35Czk) was less bitter but good, and *Weizengrimm* (4.5%, 37Czk) was a German-style wheat beer, served in the appropriate glass. *Repis* (4.5%, 35Czk) was also on. I had three pints and a pizza for £8!

Back on the train to Plzen, and a walk to Namesti Republiky, with its interesting modern water features, and found, with some difficulty, **Francis beer café** on the north side of the square. They had four exotic draught beers and some bottled Belgians. I tried *Zhurak*, which was very nice, but 69Czk – expensive!

So, around the corner to the **Beer Factory brewpub**, with a modern interior, where 11 beers were on, nine of them their own. I tried *Nevada Ale* (3.9%, 50Czk) which I didn't like much, then *Weizen Bock* (60Czk), which was much better, in the German style.

On Monday morning, I presented my itinerary for the day to the ticket office at Plzen station, and they sold me a Plzensky Region day ticket at 179Czk, which was about a third of what I had calculated the cost of individual tickets. I caught a fast train to Plana, followed by a one-coach train to Domazlice. Part of this journey was on a replacement bus service, which involved a forest track not much wider than the

bus. At one point, the driver had to squeeze between a lake on one side and big trees on the other – hairy!

At Domazlice, an industrial town, *Ratebeer.com* listed two pubs, both selling the same beer. The nearest was on the main road next to the station. I walked in both directions trying to find it, but eventually concluded that it must be the scruffy kiosk right outside the station. This bar, with no indoor seating, did indeed have two draught beers from *Pivovar Kout na Sumave* nearby. The *10 beer* (23Czk) was nice and the *12* (27Czk) even better. I would have preferred a proper pub, but the other one was too far away.

Back on a one-coach train to Klatovy, which went through Kout na Sumave, where the brewery presumably was. Klatovy had nothing near the station, so I whiled away the 50 minutes between trains in the station café, which had bottled beers. A Branik was just 14Czk. There were no seats, and it closed at 5pm. Back to Plzen,

through some superb countryside.

A 24-hour ticket for trams and trolleybuses (60Czk) was available from the on-board machine, but the only method of payment was a contactless bank card. I caught tram number 1 towards Bolevec and got off at Mozartova stop, which was right next to the **Raven**



brewpub. Eight draught beers were on. *BT Cascade* (50Czk) was very good, but the darker *Jiskra* (55Czk) was less to my taste. The food was mainly burgers.

Ratebeer.com highest-rated pub in Plzen was in the same road as my hotel, so I set off in search of it, but missed! I mistakenly went to **Hospudka U Jana**, where the only beer was *Svijany Knize* (5.6%, 28Czk and nondescript).

My second attempt was better, as I found the **Klub Malych Pivovaru** a few doors along. They had seven beers on. I chose the most expensive, *Pernon Summer Ale* (49Czk) which was very nice and not at all gassy.

On my final day in Plzen, I found the **U Pasaka brewpub** near the bus station. Three of their beers were on, *Special, Polotmavy* and *Svetle Lezak*, which was 38Czk and enjoyable. The menu was also in English, but I didn't fancy any of the daily lunch specials. Back **to Klub Malych**, where I tried *Zatec Chmelinek* (32Czk), which was a nice light beer, and *Kasperskohorsky Pivovarek* (42Czk), which was a tasty American IPA.

I then caught a train for the long journey to Teplice via Most. The Plzen ticket office would only sell me a ticket from Most to Teplice (52Czk), but I had to buy the ticket from Plzen to Most from a shop on the station, as it was run by a private company. That bit cost 173Czk. Czech train platforms take a bit of getting used to. One platform ('vlak') has two tracks, subdivided into 'kolej' areas. The train went through forested areas, where logging was the main local industry, then hop fields around Zatec.

In Teplice, I stayed in a brewery! **Pivovar Monopol** is quite near the station, has four own-brewed beers on in the large restaurant, with the hotel rooms on the second floor. This was better value, with a very good breakfast in the café at the front of the building. They had an English menu, and a tried the Svetle Lezak (39Czk) and Polotmave, both of which were very good.

I caught a train to the nearby town of Usti and Labem, and trolleybus 51 towards Skalska, getting off at Ryjicka, a few stops before the terminus. **Pivovar Millenium brewpub** was easy to spot opposite the bus stop, and they had four of their beers on. *Destovska* 10 (25Czk) was very nice, but I



wasn't so keen on the Milacek 12 (29Czk). Drsnak 12 and Special were also on.

Back on the trolleybus to Mirovo Namesti, on the way passing the large Zlatopramen brewery, which was taken over by Heineken, and now looks to be derelict. **Na Rychte brewpub** is between the town square and the station, with six own-brewed beers on. I asked for a dark beer and got *Prokop* from *'Chateau brewery Chyse'*; this was 43Czk and excellent. The next most interesting beer was off, so I had *Ustecka Rychtarka*, a wheat beer in the German style (43Czk), which was also excellent. The 'English' translation of wheat beers was 'Frumentaceous'!

I returned to Teplice and to **Monopol**, where I tried the *Special* (46Czk), sold as an IPA but in a wheat beer glass, just to confuse me! It certainly wasn't a wheat beer, but very good nonetheless.

On Thursday, I caught the hourly coach from Benesovo Namesti in Teplice to Prague. Like the town's trolleybuses, this was operated by Arriva! The fare (pay the driver) was 89Kc for a 60-mile one hour journey along the motorway, making it both faster and cheaper than the train. The coach deposited me at Holesovice; a run-down coach station in the north of the city centre, from where I caught a tram to Florenc.

Conveniently situated between the (much nicer) coach station and the metro station is the famous **Pivovarsky Club**. They always have six rare beers on draught, plus over 250 bottles, mainly Czech but from all over the world (at a price!). *Antosuv Troll Summer Ale* (from Slany) was 38Czk for 0.3L and very enjoyable. *Muflon Red Ale* (42Czk for 0.3L) was from Kunratice near Prague, and very tasty.

Dunkel Weizen from Rodinny in Hradec Kralove (38Czk for 0.3L) was a good example of the style. Pragers Passion (42Czk for 0.3L) was an IPA brewed with South African hops from Reporyje in Prague, and certainly interesting. So, in the centre of Prague, I had four exotic beers and a Wiener Schnitzel for less than £10. Happy days!

Sadly, there was no time for a bottle of *Shepherd Neame Spitfire*, so I caught the metro to Zlicin and bus 100 to the airport. All in all, I would recommend a trip to the Czech Republic. Great pubs (many of them brewpubs), cheap and excellent beer, and a good transport system.



BREWING COMPANY













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TAP ROOM OPEN

Thursday 12-630pm Friday & Saturday 12-8pm

THE BARN, PILLORY CORNER, FLIMWELL TN5 7QG

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Marden Village Club



CAMRA Maidstone & Mid-Kent Club of the Year 2019 CAMRA Kent Club of the Year 2019







© Lester Cunningham

- Six real ales supporting Kent breweries
- · Selection of cider, lager, wines, spirits and soft drinks
- · All offered at club prices
- Recently refurbished with a friendly atmosphere
- CAMRA members welcome
- Regular charity fundraising





Find us on f @mardenvillageclub

Albion Road, Marden, Kent TN12 9DT

Tel: 01622 831427

Email: office@mardenvillageclub.co.uk

www.mardenvillageclub.co.uk

LOCAL NEWS

Contact: *John Mills* 01732 840603 or email *pubs.officer@mmk.camra.org.uk* For more information on these pubs, see CAMRA's online pub database *whatpub.com*

Yeoman, Bearsted – Has changed to a bar and Mediterranean restaurant now but usually keeps *Harveys Sussex Best Bitter*.



Royal Oak, Hawkhurst – Has a new operator, Revived Inns Ltd, who also have the Rose Revived in Hadlow. Nigel Tideswell is the new manager. Purity Hop Bunny was found as a guest and Harveys Sussex Best Bitter is permanent. There is a carvery on both Wednesdays and Sundays. https://

www.revivedinns.co.uk/the-royal-oak-hawkhurst

Chequers, Loose - On Boxing Day, the pub will be hosting 2 or 3 groups of Morris Dancers, including the 'Loose Women', who will be performing (weather permitting) in the road outside from around midday. This event is always very popular and is supported by many of the local villagers.



Harveys Sussex Best, Sharps Doom Bar, Rockin' Robin Reliant Robin will be available and one guest ale.

Cellars Alehouse, Maidstone – The Green Hop Ale festival was well supported. There were at least 23 green hopped beers with most of them available at the same time. For a list of the current beers see fb: thecellarsalehouse under the tab Beer List. Also stocks several craft beers, around a dozen ciders and some gins.



Coach House, Maidstone – New licensees Steve Francis and Kate re-opened the pub on 12 October following a brief closure after Claire Darcy left. Food will be provided once a chef has been engaged. New Tel: 01622 430181.

Duke of Marlborough, Maidstone – There is a covered area in the car park at the rear and live music here at the weekends. *Timothy Taylor Landlord* and *Sharps Doom* Bar have been on the pumps recently.



Eagle, Maidstone – Alexandria Weeks took over here in the summer and has re-decorated the interior. *Eagle IPA* is the permanent ale with one other as a guest.

Society Rooms, Maidstone – After 17 years as manager here, Tim Heathfield has now taken over at the Thomas Waghorn in Chatham. The new manager is George Collins, previously at Humphrey Bean in Tonbridge.



Stag, Maidstone – Is now being run by Rockin' Robin Smallbone with Stan Nikolov as manager. Three handpumps have now been installed which have *Rockin' Robin Reliant Robin,* a varying beer from Kent Brewery and one other which also varies.

Swan, Maidstone – Shepherd Neame have sold another community pub. It is not yet known who bought it and what their plans will be.

Wheatsheaf, Maidstone – Closed on 26 October to make way for a roundabout again in an effort to ease the traffic flow at the junction with Loose Road. The previous roundabout was replaced by traffic signals. Rossa Kenny has kept this landmark pub since 1984 so we are



saddened that both licensee and pub are both going. This leaves a bit of a beer desert in that area now, the Swan being the nearest.



Marden Village Club, Marden – Simon put on the club's first beer festival here at the end of October with an additional 12 cask beers in the snooker room. Cider drinkers were also well catered for with eight ciders available. It was a great success, supported by both members and the local population, and the club plan to hold another festival next year. The branch took the opportunity to present Simon with a certificate marking the club's success in winning the title of CAMRA Kent

Club of the Year 2019. The judges were impressed with the beer selection and the friendly atmosphere. Well done to all at the club.

Unicorn, Marden – New hosts are Nikki and Gigi, having moved from the Royal Oak, Hawkhurst. Beers are *Harveys Sussex Best Bitter* and *Shepherd Neame Master Brew. Wychwood Hobgoblin* was also on when I





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visited at the end of October. Open hours are Mon to Sat 11-11 or later, 12-6 Sun. Food is available12-3, 12-9 Tue-Sat, 12-3 Sun.



Ringlestone Inn, Ringlestone – This pub has been re-opened as a pub/restaurant by manager Dalton Hopper and chef Paolo Rigolli. Tastefully re-fitted internally and the garden has also been rejuvenated. High quality meals made use fresh local products where possible. Allied to The Kent

Collection which produce smoked products and artisan cured meats. Vegetarian options are available. Tasting menus may be booked as well as the standard menu which changes frequently with the season. Beer is currently supplied by both *Tonbridge* and *Ramsgate* breweries. https://www.theringlestone.co.uk Tel. (01622) 290300

Rockin' Robin Smokery, Staplehurst – Keith Rookledge has left so there should be a new manager soon. Sunday lunches may now be booked in addition to the daily menu. *Rockin' Robin* beer is on the bar.

E: enquiries@rockinrobinsmokery.co.uk https://www.rockinrobinsmokery.co.uk Tel: (01580) 890444

Queens Head, Sutton Valence – New licensee, Rob Simmonds, opened up the bar at the beginning of October, the food has reportedly improved and the beers remain as before.

Harrow, Ulcombe – Now re-opened as a pub/ restaurant with Errol Defoe as the new manager. Expect to find smoke and cured artisan fish, meat and vegetable products on the menu and Sunday lunches. Beer comes from nearby with Whitstable

Native on the bar. Tel: (01622) 844422 fb: harrowulcombe

Railway, Wateringbury - Previous licensee Donna is now back in charge as licensee and is serving up excellent food again. Fish and chips are popular as a takeaway on Fridays and, to avoid disappointment, Sunday lunches for £9.50 (including veggie and vegan options) need to be booked. Even all the desserts are

homemade. On Tuesdays at 7pm a bingo session is held. Bookings Tel. (01622) 812911 fb: The railway pub Wateringbury.

Email: dons70@hotmail.co.uk.

GRAVESEND & DARENT VALLEY

LOCAL NEWS



Some notable pub closures or threats of closure have occurred in the area recently. The **Chequers**, Farningham is the subject of a planning application to convert the bar to a flat. This is supposed to be temporary, for a period of five years, but it's hard to see the point of this in view of the time and money required for two conversions, and one might be

forgiven for suspecting that the pub would in fact be lost forever. A check on Sevenoaks Council's website showed a raft of messages objecting to this and the

branch has joined the objectors.

The George & Dragon, Swanscombe closed on August 31 after being for sale for some time. Apparently more than one attempt to buy it as a going concern had fallen through, but the new owner has been described as a management company which doesn't sound very promising. The situation will need watching and hopefully any planning application for other use will generate a similar response to that for the Chequers.

Breaking news is that Dartford Council have rejected a planning application for demolition of the **Foresters**, Wilmington which was to be replaced with housing.

The sequence of pub beer festivals in Gravesend continued; At the **Three Daws**, coinciding with a weekend of riverside events at the beginning of August, there was a huge range of beers and ciders to choose from. Like last year, two beers were collaborative brews by the pub and *Iron Pier. Banks Boaring Mild* (4.4% ABV) had a hint of chocolate about it. *Sour Saison* (*Hibiscus Sour*) had run out by the Saturday evening but fortunately reappeared later in the month.

A very hot August bank holiday weekend was the setting for the **Jolly Drayman's** festival. There were 20 beers and four ciders from *Broad Oak*. The beer menu included CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain, *Surrey Hills Shere*

Drop, though surprisingly the first beer to run out wasn't this but *Harbour Cornish Bitter*.

The fifth anniversary festival at the **Compass Alehouse** in September, featured the customary interesting beer selection with a number of unfined brews. Two beers were the result of collaborations between two breweries,

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with one an Anglo-American affair featuring Thornbridge and Sierra Nevada.

Mid-October saw a return to the **Three Daws** for a ticketonly one day Oktoberfest featuring some real ales alongside German beers. On the same weekend **TJ's** held a small festival to celebrate the start of Tom and Iris's fifteenth year at the pub. Six extra real ales were available alongside the regular *Greene King IPA* and two *Kent*



Brewery beers, including offerings from Iron Pier and Twickenham.



The **Mole Hole** in Gravesend opened at the end of July, though the back room is not yet in regular use. There are about four real ales and about four ciders. Children and dogs are welcome. Live music was provided on opening day and has featured occasionally since on Saturdays. This may become a monthly, or even fortnightly, event

in future, though the number of performers has never exceeded two.

Live music is in fact not uncommon in the town's smaller pubs. The **Three Pillars** has acts roughly monthly, with thoughts of more frequent events as winter sets in, though anything larger than a trio is thought likely to need too much space. Incidentally this pub was lucky enough to have *Surrey Hills Shere Drop* on sale the day it was announced as Champion Beer of Britain. The **Compass** managed to take live music to a different level for its beer festival with a seven-piece oompah band playing in the main room on the Saturday afternoon.

The revitalisation of the **Echo** has continued with extensive improvements to the garden. This includes a childrens play area and covered bench seating shelters both sides, decorated with posters and old photos of the pub, some from its Watney Combe Reid days. Back in the spring the old public bar area was refurbished with high stools around old wooden barrels as tables.

Up river at Northfleet the **Coach & Horses** has a new licensee and now sells Kentish real ales. At the **Rising Sun** at Swanscombe, Barry and Jane Pailes have just celebrated 30 years at the pub. William Mackie reports that, although they only have a regular three or four real ales, they are always looked after and clear and fresh.

Lauren de Souza has recently taken over as manage at the **Flying Boat** in Dartford, which has had new handpumps installed. An extensive list of local breweries delivering to the pub now includes *Twickenham*, *Old Dairy* and *East London Brewing*.



The **Jolly Millers** in South Darenth now has a refurbished kitchen and offers food including Sunday roasts. They have started having live music and continue with afternoon teas. There are regular guest beers from *Canterbury Ales*. Recently, the **Cotton Mill** at Swanley had *New Bristol Cinder Toffee Stout*,



Canterbury Ales Green & Pale, Old Dairy Copper Top and Tiny Rebel Rainbow Road. A Christmas Market is planned with street food and carol singers on December 1. Unfortunately the discount for CAMRA members is no longer available.

Thanks to Roy Canning for news of the **Rising Sun** at Twitton, which changed hands seamlessly over October 12th and 13th. There are two couples now running the pub between them with a rolling contract to run it for at least five years, so all being well, it is safe for now. The beers on sale at first were *St. Austell Tribute, Dark Star Hophead* and *Wadworth Rising Scrum*. They have no plans for real cider at the moment but hope to offer food once things have settled down.

Things have changed in the pubs in Wrotham, as reported by Ken Baines. The **George and Dragon** is under new management. Pauline and Martyn left in mid-September after nine years and the new landlords are Jade and Marcel. The pub was shut for five days whilst the bars were completely redecorated, including new carpets throughout. Five real ales are still sold with *Harvey's Best Bitter* still



their regular. Thai meals continue on Thursdays and Fridays, with a more extensive pub menu planned for the near future. The **Rose & Crown** continues to have regular guest ales to supplement the *Shepherd Name* staples of *Master Brew, Whitstable Bay Pale Ale* and *Spitfire.* The pub has relaunched its darts team after a few years of inactivity, and they now compete in the

local league on Wednesday evenings.

Up the hill, in Vigo, the **Villager** is closed for refurbishment. They are intending to improve the food offering and the range of real ales. The reopening date was not known at the time of writing. Not far away, the



Anchor and Hope at Ash has a sign saying "sold".



To correct an item from issue 195, the landlord of the **Rose and Crown** in Shorne is Paul Murphy and the manager is Andrew Doorey. The pub now has a house beer at 3.6% ABV from *Sharp's*.

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BEXLEY LOCAL NEWS

Contact: Rob Archer at camr@rcher.org.uk or Roland Amos on 07881 316125 www.bexley.camra.org.uk

BEXLEYHEATH:

The Coach House (40 Watling St), previously reported as closed despite apparently continuing as a pub, formally re-



opened as of early October. With that, a reversion of naming to its earlier style, the **Lord Hill**. The new owners



are Downmores Ltd. Speedy exterior work was noted taking place in the previous week or two and a full

house was present on Sunday the 6th, entertained by a local vocal act. The new landlord, Lee Dolby is also at the nearby **Prince Albert** (Shepherd Neame), which give us pause to think what might happen there, since that last pub is to be found on Shepherd Neame's website leasing page. Currently only bottled *Courage Directors*, so nothing as yet is on hand-pump, but there seems to be a plan to move real ale provision towards *Bexley Brewery* beers. A welcome return.

Nick Hair, the landlord of the **Kentish Belle** (8 Pickford Lane, Bexleyheath,) found his micropub honoured by the London Cider Group



on the 24th October and received the London Cider Pub of the Year 2019 award, having become Bexley Branch's Cider Pub of the year earlier in the Summer. Ian White's group (Ian is at rear of this picture) were present to oversee the festivities as London Regional Director Geoff

Strawbridge made the presentation. Many a face from South East London Branch you'll recognise from festival Cider bars...

WELLING:

The closed **Lord Kitchener** has now been made subject to an application to develop 19 flats. The application reference is 19/01997/FULM and it covers change of use of the ground floor public house from A4 to retail A1, conversion of the



existing first and second floor and alterations including a two storey extension and associated car and cycle parking. It is not clear what fate befell the earlier attempt to achieve Local Listing status. Seen at the Waterworks Micropub in Rye, were their own beermats.

One side has the Rules of the House, which are:

"Find a seat, sit on it and say hello to the people next to you."

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Jeff Tucker



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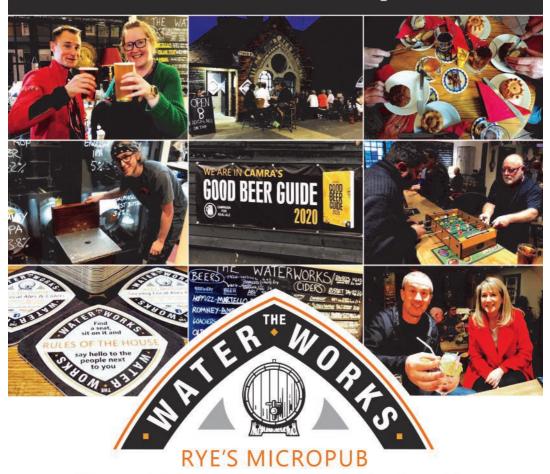


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PIIR GAMES

The History of Skittles

Skittles or Nine Pins, the forerunner of 10 pin bowling, has long been played in the Inns of England. In general, players take turns to throw wooden balls down a lane, at the end of which are several wooden skittles, in an attempt to knock them all over. There are a number of skittle games across England and there have been many more in the past. In Germany, in the 3rd or 4th Century, monks played a game with a kegel which was a club carried for self defence. In the game, the kegel represented a sin or temptation and the monks would throw stones at it until they knocked it over. The modern German term for skittles is Kegelen.

There are two 14th century manuscripts which show a game called club Kayles (from the French "quilles" or skittles) and which depict a skittles game in which one skittle is bigger, differently shaped, and in most cases positioned so as to be the most difficult to knock over. The throwers launch a long club-like object at the skittles underarm. The large skittle is presumably a king pin as featured in some of the modern versions of skittles. The fact that the thrower is not using a ball is not at all unusual - the Skittles cousin, Aunt Sally, still uses a baton shaped stick to throw at the doll and many modern skittles games throw a object called a "cheese" instead of a ball. Effectively a cheese is any "lump" which is used to throw at the skittles and shapes can vary from barrel shaped to, well, cheese shaped, really.

All forms of Skittles feature projectiles being propelled from one end of an alley in an effort to knock down nine pins stood in a square at the other end. That is about all that many of the games do have in common, though, over the years, Skittles developed regional variations in skittle size and shape, skittle alley length, use of a kingpin, size and shape of the balls/cheeses and the rules began to vary quite radically across England. One of the most marked divisions is in the method for actually throwing the balls or cheeses. In London, the heavy cheese is flung full toss directly at the skittles, over in the West Country balls are rolled down the full length of the alley while in the Midlands, the Long Alley game usually requires the cheese or ball to bounce a single time before hitting the skittles.

Parallel to these developments, the phenomenon of miniaturisation must have also been occurring, as it did for so many other old English games. This would tend to happen so that pub landlords could retain the enjoyment of the game while no longer requiring the space-consuming skittles alley in order to play.

Some of these table-top versions of skittles are still enormously popular - especially the version known as "Devil Amongst the Tailors" or "Table Skittles". In the case of the peculiar Rolly Polly, a heavily biased ball was developed - possibly as another space saving exercise.

Skittles Games Still played today

West Country Skittles is the most popular and basic version of Alley Skittles, wherein nine skittles are arranged in a square at the end of an alley. The alley is around 24 feet long and each turn starts with all the skittles standing and consists of three throws down the alley. If all the pins are knocked down, then they are all reset. So the maximum score in one turn is 27. There are variations from town to town and even pub to pub as to the further details. For instance in Dorset, back boards are installed at the end of each alley. This allows players to use the "Dorset flop" technique wherein the back board is used to 'launch' a player from squatting position down the alley at which point both hands propel the ball towards the skittles! In the Bridport League, apparently only the middle pin is re-erected once all nine have been toppled giving a maximum score of 11. Balls can be made from a variety of hardwoods although Lignum Vitae is the traditional favourite. Many leagues these days insist upon heavy rubber balls.

Research has discovered four main types of pin as follows: In the East Midlands, people play Long Alley, a skilful game in which the pitch is 33 - 36 feet long, and the projectiles are flung almost the full length of the alley where they must bounce a single time before ploughing into the skittles. Most Long Alley games feature a Kingpin which must be hit first or else no score is counted. Local variations aside, Long Alley itself appears to be split into two main varieties. In Leicestershire, barrel shaped cheeses are thrown and the skittles are tapered and relatively thin. Experts use the eccentric shape to produce clever angles upon the bounce and thus can topple skittles in arrangements that would not be possible with an ordinary ball. In Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, balls, often roughly hewn and traditionally of applewood, are used to topple club shaped skittles.

Old English Skittles or London Skittles is a majestic game in which the alley is around 21 feet, the bomb-shaped pins are $14^{1}/_{2}$ inches high, $6^{1}/_{2}$ inches across the middle (3 inches diameter at either end) and weigh 9 pounds. The discus-shaped cheese, too, is enormous, varying from $8^{1}/_{2}$ to 12 inches in diameter and weighing between nine and twelve pounds but none-the-less, the cheeses are thrown in order that they hit the skittles directly without touching the floor first. The game is now very rare but could still be played at the famous Freemasons Arms in Hampstead.

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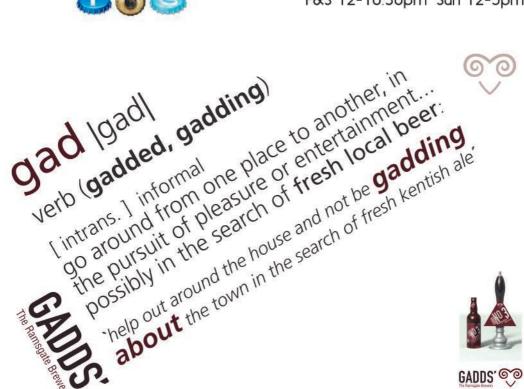
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An unusual game called Rolly Polly or Half-Bowl is, or used to be, played in Hertfordshire in which a bowl with huge bias is used. The 'ball' is rolled at 12 pins in a circle, the catch being that the bowl must go past the circle of pins and another pin a bit further away before returning, due to the bias, in the reverse direction. The game can be thought of as a version of Table Skittles played on the floor with the bias replacing the need for the suspension of the ball on a pole and some have speculated that this is how Rolly Polly originated. It seems more likely, however, that the biased ball is just an alternative solution to try to reduce the amount of space needed for the skittles game. Recent information suggests that the game is in fact of Belgian origin. Both a skittles variant as described above and a Bowls game called Rolle Bolle have been reported. The latter involves sending large disks with a large bias in an effort to get them close to a stake at the other end of the game area.

Ten Pin bowling is the North American version of Skittles and is believed to be based upon the Skittles game from Holland. It was probably the Dutch who took their version of skittles to America in the seventeenth century although another theory believes it is of English origin. Either way, the game fell into disrepute before long as it tended to attract crowds of undesirables and to be played by gamblers. Consequently, a law was introduced to ban the game but since the law only mentioned "nine pin bowling", people simply added another skittle and called the game ten-pin bowling to avoid penalty!

Finally, <u>Aunt Sally</u> is in the skittles family but is a game sufficiently different to merit a section of its own.

Next edition of Draught Copy – Aunt Sally

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Musket Moves On!



Rhys, Linda and Tony Williams – Owners of Musket Brewery. Picture Supplied by Tony Williams

Six years since the brewing business was founded, the family-owned Musket Brewery has moved into a bigger home!

Originally located in a redundant mushroom shed on Loddington Farm, Linton, near Maidstone, the popularity of Musket beers soon dictated that a larger brewing plant and premises was needed to meet increasing demand for the traditional ales. The owners of Loddington Farm provided a new building and thanks to a grant provided by the North Downs and Marshes LEADER programme, Musket was able to order a brand-new and bigger brew plant.

Whilst continuing to brew beers in the mushroom shed, the new brew plant, offices and larger cold store was constructed, together with a wonderful brewery tap room, named The Armoury. Despite numerous unforeseen setbacks and fabrication issues, the new brew plant was finally finished and the test brew was given a unanimous "thumbs up" by the tasting panel, which consisted of several Maidstone & Mid Kent CAMRA members and real ale enthusiasts. Musket Founder and owner, Tony Williams, is justifiably proud of the achievement.

"I won't pretend that it has not been a monumental struggle for us, with the challenges faced taking their toll on our finances, health and family life. But with help and support from many friends and a herculean effort by my son, Rhys, we have won through and I am so proud of what we have achieved." He said.

The new brewery opens up a new chapter for Musket who have struggled to meet customer demand for their beers, but now with a larger brewing capacity available, they are able to expand their customer base throughout Kent and beyond.

For more information contact Tony on 07967 127278 email info@musketbrewery.co.uk or visit www.musketbrewery.co.uk



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BEER FESTIVAL COMPETITION ANSWERS

In edition 195, we ran a competition to win two pairs of complimentary tickets to the 10th East Malling Beer and Cider Festival in September, we couldn't announce the answers and winners in the last edition of Draught Copy as it was printed before the competition closing date.

The competition was to solve 17 cryptic clues with the first letter and length of each answer given. The <u>second</u> letters of each answer made up the names of three birds (4, 4 and 9 letters) which feature in pub names.

Five people had the correct bird names, and had all of the correct answers. The lucky winners were Helen Graham and John Howarth, and beer festival tickets were sent to them.

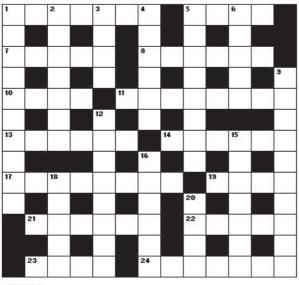
Correct answers were also received from Kevin Jarratt, Geoff Hetherington and Alan White.

The hidden birds were **Duck**, **Dove** and **Blackbird**.

The answers to the clues are below:

T	0	m	е					
P	u	n	g	e	n	t		
D	i	n	0	S	а	u	r	
E	d	w	а	r	d	i	а	n
E	٧	i	d	е	n	t	1	У
W	r	а	i	t	h			-
0	b	t	а	i	n			
Α	b	s	e	n	t			
S	k	i	n	t	67 - 63 ca			
P	1	е	a	t				
C	a	r	р	е	n	t	e	r
T	е	а	1					
Α	d	j	а	С	e	n	t	
S	С	u	r	r	У			
0	k	r	а		261			
Α	d	m	i	t				
S	C	0	r	е				

- 1. A book coming in my direction
- 2. Smelly joke man
- 3. A round is about a Mesozoic reptile
- 4. Two boys at the start of the 20th century
- 5. Ivy led ten around, so it seems
- 6. The Royal Artillery are in with a ghost
- 7. Get boat in a spin
- 8. The first two letters posted are missing
- 9. Hard up, making a terrible stink
- 10. Some people attempt to fold
- 11. He makes a door and fish come in
- 12. Some white albino ducks
- 13. Jade can't arrange it nearby
- 14. Run with a South Indian dish
- 15. A vegetable which some cook rare
- 16. Let in and make a confession
- 17. Twenty points



Solution to Crossword No. 35

T	U	N	Α		В	U	Т	C	Н	E	R	Y
R		1		G	66 - 66 33	L		0		N		1
U	Т	Т	E	R		S	U	R	N	A	M	E
M				0		Т		0		M		L
P	L	C		G	R	E	E	N	W	0	0	D
		A				R		E		U		E
N	0	T	1	С	E		S	Т	0	R	E	D
E		Н		0		Α				E	(6 (1)	
A	P	E	N	N	1	N	E	S		D	0	Н
R		D		V		D		L			66	0
E	Α	R	L	1	E	R		P	L	U	M	В
S		Α		C		E		S		L		В
T	E	L	E	T	E	X	Т		В	U	R	Y

Across

- 1 Angel's ascent in Maidstone (7)
- 5 Wooden trading agreement? (4)
- 7 Blur identity to some extent, but garish (5)
- 8 Bad dream and not the first (6)
- 10 Eye part of flower? Quite the reverse. (4)
- 11 Ovine entrance? (8)
- 13 Drink greedily, having initially gone uptown with Zinedine Zidane and Lee Evans (6)
- 14 Smart salesman home has westerly aspect (6)
- 17 "Shut up you lot!" On the Western Front, perhaps (3,5)
- 19 By jingo! The black-clad rock fan's inside (4)
- 21 End Rob's confusion (6)
- 22 Orangeman has two steaks (the first one filleted?) (5)
- 23 Having swallowed drugs, physician becomes an animal! (4)
- 24 Burnt out car? (7)

The italicised clues share a common definition

Down

- 1 Poorly dressed in cotton cloth (10)
- 2 French composer is fairly solvent, according to the auditor! (7)
- 3 Coope's partner unknown in 500-mile American motor race (4)
- 4 Banksy's first mural arranged, but may need support? (6)
- 5 Old Dairy's left off brewing for actress (5,3)
- 6 Northern area converted to sporting venue (5)
- 9 Father with deep rash it's all gone wrong! (4,6)
- 12 Struggling fish? (8)
- 15 Proof mum mostly embroiled in 60s political affair (7)
- 16 Ah! Erin treated the swelling (6)
- 18 Toilets in the centre of Dungeness (5)
- 20 Long to behead dog (4)

Congratulations to Mr A Wheeler from Blackfen who won last time.

For a chance to win a crisp £10 drinking voucher please send your completed grid to our compiler:

Mick Norman Nursery Cottage Norwood Lane Meopham DA13 0YE

No later than January 14th 2020.

A photocopy/scanned copy can be emailed to:
mlr norman@yahoo.com



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Crayford Arms, Crayford

Drakes, Maidstone

Earl Haig, Bexleyheath Flower Pot, Maidstone

George, Singlewell

George Staples, Blackfen

Golden Lion, Bexleyheath

Hill Top Tap, Sidcup

Jolly Drayman, Gravesend Jolly Fenman, Blackfen

Moody Mare, Mereworth

Olde Thirsty Pig, Maidstone **Old Prince of Orange**, Gravesend

Pippin, Maidstone Rose & Crown, Shorne

Ship, Cobham

Swan, Loose Road, Maidstone

Walnut Tree, Tonbridge Rd, Maidstone 20p per pint

We Anchor in Hope, Welling

Yacht, Bexleyheath

Ye Olde Black Horse, Sidcup

10 percent

20p per pint, 10p per half

10p per pint

20p per pint

10p per pint, 5p per half

10 percent

20p per pint

10p per pint 20p per pint

10p per pint

10p per pint

20p per pint, 10p per half

10 percent (also buy 5, 6th free)

10 percent 10 percent

10p per pint

10 percent

Discounted to £3.00p per pint

20p per pint

20p per pint

10 percent 10% discount

10% discount

20p per pint, 10p per half

10 percent

10 percent

10 percent

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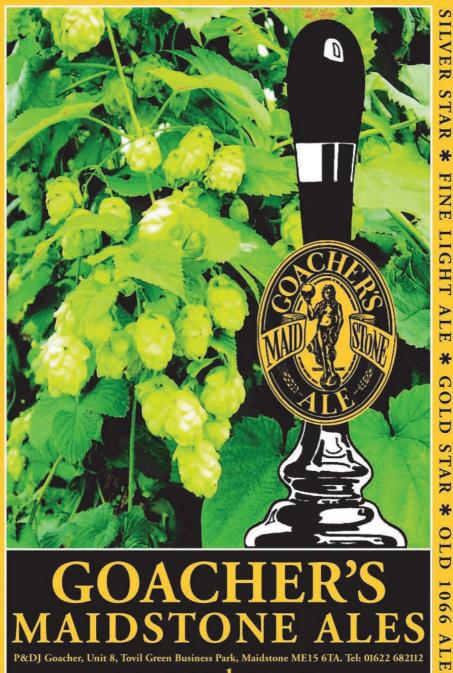
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OLD 1066 ALE

*

GOLD STAR

FINE LIGHT



*

*

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