

# Draught Copy



CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE

## Free Magazine

By Maidstone & Mid-Kent  
CAMRA  
incorporating Gravesend &  
Darent Valley, Bexley &  
West Kent Branches

Winter 2021/2022 No. 199

Website: [www.mmk.camra.org.uk](http://www.mmk.camra.org.uk)

Twitter: [www.twitter.com/mmkcamra](https://www.twitter.com/mmkcamra)

## Good Beer Guide 2022 Released

The Good Beer Guide (GBG) is the UK's best-selling guide to pubs, bars and clubs, where you can enjoy a great pint of traditional British beer. It highlights places to savour excellent beers, as well as cask-conditioned lagers, world beers and real ciders too.

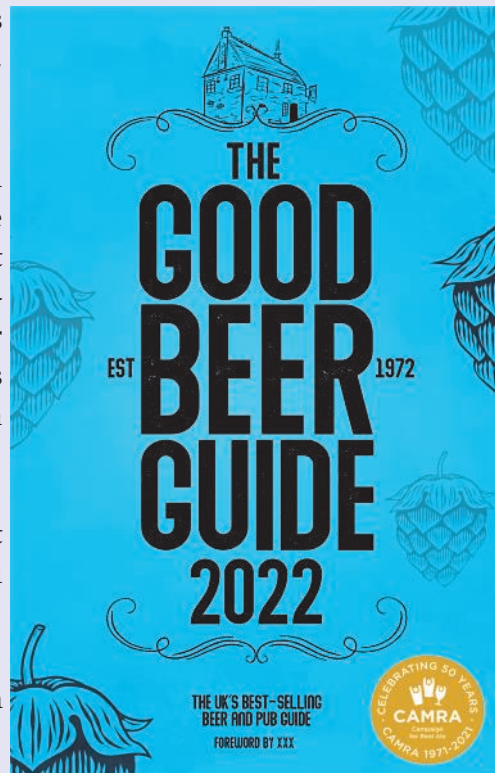
In the guide, you'll find over 4,500 listings across the UK's best pubs, bars and breweries, chosen by local CAMRA volunteers as having the best cask beers available – or you can check out the special brewery section to discover new breweries setting the scene alight with interesting, exciting new brews.

In today's world of homogenised and bland, where one beer tastes just like another, it can be hard to find a great pub that serves interesting and well-kept real ale, however the Good Beer Guide contains over 4,500 reviews making finding a great pub to enjoy a excellent pint, easy.

The Good Beer Guide is your passport to discovering where and what you should be drinking right now.

To buy your GBG from CAMRA:

Visit [camra.org.uk](http://camra.org.uk) and click on "CAMRA Shop".



# 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, Gravesend & Darent Valley and West Kent branches of CAMRA. It is published quarterly, in March, June, September and December and has a circulation of 3,500 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 a 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.

**Advertising rates::** £85 / £50 / £30 for a full / half / quarter page respectively

**Editor and Correspondence:** *DraughtCopy.Editor@mmk.camra.org.uk*

**Advertising:** *DraughtCopy.Advertising@mmk.camra.org.uk*

The copy date for the next issue is 21st January 2022.

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*

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Our social diary changes faster than we can print it, so to keep up-to-date we suggest you use the below QR codes to access the branch meetings on our websites.



**Bexley**



**Gravesend and  
Darent Valley**



**Maidstone  
and Mid-Kent**



**West Kent**

Love  
beer?

Love  
pubs?



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

From  
as little as  
**£28.50\***  
a year. That's less  
than a pint a  
month!

Includes  
**£30\*\***  
Real Ale  
Cider & Perry  
Vouchers

## CAMRA Membership Is for you!

We're leading the fight to keep pubs alive and thriving in every community, serving quality ales and ciders.

Find out more [camra.org.uk/joinup](http://camra.org.uk/joinup)

**Or enter your details and complete the Direct Debit form below and you will receive 15 months membership for the price of 12 and save £2 on your membership subscription**

Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit [www.camra.org.uk/joinup](http://www.camra.org.uk/joinup), or call **01727 798440\***. All forms should be addressed to Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

### Your details:

Title ..... Surname .....

Forename(s) .....

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) .....

Address .....

.....

..... Postcode .....

Email address .....

Daytime Tel .....

### Partner's Details (If Joint Membership)

Title ..... Surname .....

Forename(s) .....

Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) .....

**Direct Debit Non DD**

**Single Membership (UK)** £28.50 ☐ £30.50 ☐

Under 26 Membership £20.00 ☐ £22.00 ☐

**Joint Membership** £36.50 ☐ £38.50 ☐

(At the same address)

Joint Under 26 Membership £22.00 ☐ £30.00 ☐

Please indicate whether  
you wish to receive **BEER**  
by email OR post: ☐ Email ☐ Post

I wish to Opt-in to ☐ General Communications  
☐ Branch Communications

Concessionary rates are available only for Under 26 Memberships.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association which can be found on our website.

Signed .....

Date .....

Applications will be processed within 21 days.

### Direct Debit Instruction

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:  
**Campaign for Real Ale Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts AL1 4LW**  
Email: [membership@camra.org.uk](mailto:membership@camra.org.uk) Telephone: 01727 867201

**Name(s) of Account Holder**

**Billing Address**

**Bank or Building Society Account Number**

**Branch Sort Code**

**Postcode** .....

Payments will show as CAMRA Membership on your bank statement.

☐ I understand that CAMRA has partnered with Stripe, who collects Direct Debits on behalf of CAMRA and confirm that I am the account holder and the only person required to authorize debits from this account.

Signature .....



This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.

### The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit, Stripe will notify you 2 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request Stripe to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by Stripe or your bank or building society you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
- If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when Stripe asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us. Setup of Direct Debit Instruction with Stripe on behalf of CAMRA.



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

\*Price of single membership when paying by Direct Debit. \*Calls from landlines charged at standard national rates, cost may vary from mobile phones. New Direct Debit members will receive a 12 month supply of vouchers in their first 15 months of membership. The data you provide will be processed in accordance with our privacy policy in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations.





## KENT BREWERY

Our Farmhouse Crafted beers offer a more unusual and satisfying experience than you might normally expect.

We can be found in the best pubs and bottle shops in Kent and further afield.

Please enjoy the difference!

[www.kentbrewery.com](http://www.kentbrewery.com)



# CAMRA NATIONAL AGM

## A warm welcome awaits you on the East Sussex coast!



*CAMRA's Members' Weekend, AGM & Conference will be hosted by our Sussex branches at the Winter Garden in Eastbourne 8-10 April 2022.*

CAMRA holds its Members' Weekend, AGM & Conference annually in April. While the primary purpose is to debate motions to steer the Campaign and to elect the Campaign's new board of directors; Members' Weekend is also a chance for CAMRA members to socialise with

like-minded individuals and to explore the beer scene of different cities around the UK – the location changes every year.

After two years without a physical event, hundreds of members have already registered to attend – to see what Sussex has to offer by way of great beer, cider and perry. The weekend is a chance to meet friends, make new ones, go on organised brewery trips and take part in activities. It's free to attend and open to all CAMRA members. The weekend is staffed by volunteers – with a range of opportunities to help on offer.

All the information is on the event page, where you can register to attend / sign up to help.

go to: [www.camra.org.uk/members-weekend-agm-conference](http://www.camra.org.uk/members-weekend-agm-conference)

Or email: [membersweekend@camra.org.uk](mailto:membersweekend@camra.org.uk)



**TERRY  
OSBORNE**  
INSURANCE  
SERVICES LTD

The experts in bespoke insurance solutions for the hospitality & leisure industries



Call us for advice, a competitive quote or instant cover:  
01622 745 297 Email: [info@terryosborneinsurance.co.uk](mailto:info@terryosborneinsurance.co.uk)  
[www.terryosborneinsurance.co.uk](http://www.terryosborneinsurance.co.uk)



## MUSKET BREWERY'S EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY

WAS "BANG ON!" *by Tony Williams*

If you are looking for a small, family-run company that against all the odds has survived the last recession and the COVID 19 pandemic in Kent, look no further than the Musket Brewery at Linton!

Located at Loddington Farm in the village of Linton just outside Maidstone, Musket Brewery proudly brews traditional real ales, supplying pubs, clubs, retail outlets and the general public throughout Kent. Celebrating its eighth anniversary, Musket was founded in the depths of the last recession, but despite numerous significant challenges that threatened closure, the herculean efforts of family and friends have ensured stability and growth of the family-owned brewing company. Founder Tony Williams explains:

"From very humble beginnings of brewing in a redundant mushroom shed, thanks to massive support from CAMRA and other numerous sources, Musket now operates a large brewery, tap room bar called The Armoury and beer garden; as well as supplying many pubs together with our bottled and mini kegged beers to Farm Shops, Garden Centres and other retail outlets. Our real ale takeaway service from the Brewery Shop and on-line, proved to be our lifeline throughout the pandemic and we are grateful for the significant support from our loyal customer friends". He said.

Musket's celebratory day got off to a BANG, thanks to the wonderful 79<sup>th</sup> Cameron Highlanders re-enactment troop thrilling the crowd with volleys of musket fire, Loddington Landlord, James Smith, ran a super BBQ which raised money for Medical Detection Dogs, Kashmir Kitchen cooked up some great curry, while singer/guitarist, Ian Ingles, superbly entertained the evening crowd. All this and great Musket beers were hugely enjoyed by many Maidstone and Mid-Kent Branch CAMRA members, families and friends, that came along to join in the celebrations.



Musket brews eight great real ales throughout the year, using Kentish hops wherever possible in support of local businesses. For more information on Musket Brewery call 079671 27 27 8 or visit [www.musketbrewery.co.uk](http://www.musketbrewery.co.uk)





# KENT BEERS!!

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



**POWDER BURN**  
5.0% Kentish Porter



**FIFE & DRUM**  
3.8% Golden Ale



**TRIGGER**  
3.6% Pale Ale



**FLINTLOCK**  
4.2% Best Bitter  
(Award winning beer!)



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



**FLASH IN THE PAN**  
4.0% Green Hop Ale  
(Limited Availability!)



**BALL PULLER**  
4.0% Premier Bitter  
(Award winning beer!)

Brewing since 2013, Musket Brewery has earned a well-deserved reputation for providing **GREAT** beers of consistently high quality, supported by exemplary customer service! You "Musket" these beers now available in bottle, 5 litre mini-kegs throughout Kent in Farm Shops, Garden Centres and Shop On-line. Ask for Musket beers in your local!

Musket Brewery Tap Room—"The Armoury" at Loddington Farm, open Wed-Sun

**Contact Musket Brewery to find out more!!**

**079671 27 27 8 or 01622 749931**

THE SOCIETY OF  
**SIBA**  
INDEPENDENT  
BREWERS  
DDS Scheme

**info@musketbrewery.co.uk**

*"There's more in the barrel" at*

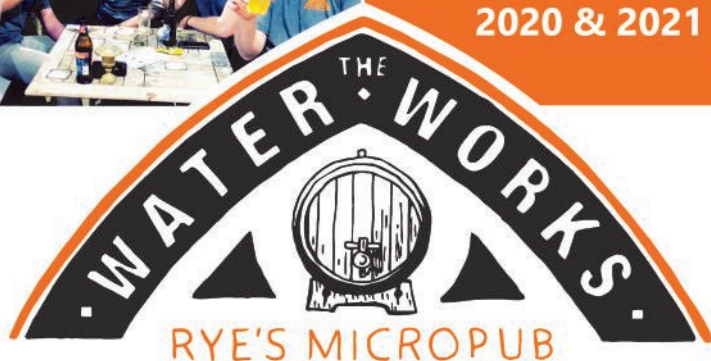
**www.musketbrewery.co.uk**



We are the winners of  
**South East Sussex CAMRA  
Pub of the Year  
2020 & 2021**



and we're in the  
**Good Beer Guide  
2020 & 2021**



## 10 local ales 14 local ciders

Along with ales and ciders, we serve a selection of wines,  
gins and soft drinks Also pork pies and scotch eggs.

If you like any of our furniture you can buy it!

**OPENING TIMES: Mon - Fri from 2pm | Sat & Sun from 12pm**



Tower Street, Rye TN31 7AT | Tel: 01797 224110



Email: [info@ryewaterworks.co.uk](mailto:info@ryewaterworks.co.uk)





Contact: Adrian Moss (01474 363102) / Peter Cook (01322 270589 / 07913 500414)  
email: [gdvcamra@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gdvcamra@yahoo.co.uk) [www.gdv.camra.org.uk](http://www.gdv.camra.org.uk)

---

At the time of writing this in mid-October there are still noticeable quiet periods in pubs, particularly later in the evening, and several have reduced their opening hours and/or their range of real ales to allow for the situation. The return of darts leagues has livened things up rather, and quiz nights seem to be very well-attended at the number of pubs which have restarted them.

Possibly people have other things to think about at present, but reports from up country have been very sparse this time. The branch will always welcome any news, however trivial it may appear to be, as even small items can form part of a bigger picture.

Fortunately, from August onwards the previous cycle of pub beer festivals resumed. In Gravesend things kicked off at the beginning of the month at the **Three Daws**, where there were around two dozen beers plus ciders. Then, over the bank holiday weekend the **Jolly Drayman** had sixteen beers and four ciders. A new event to us was the festival at the beginning of the month at the **Bridges** at South Darent.

Things were still lively in September with a festival at the **Iron Pier Brewery Tap** at the beginning of the month and the seventh anniversary event at the **Compass** back in Gravesend later on, with ten favourite beers from previous anniversaries.

Some pubs used the various enforced closures to do some painting and decorating. In Gravesend the **Rum Puncheon** had a two-stage makeover and is now fitted out in a dark green colour scheme, while the **Three Daws** may catch out some customers who discover that the floor in the room known as the library is now actually level. The **Earl Grey** at Northfleet changed hands last April and opening was then delayed until August to allow a thorough sorting out. Euchre nights on Wednesdays are an attraction here.

The early phase of the 2021 relaxation saw many pubs adopt a cautious approach to beer ranges but there were exceptions. In



Gravesend **TJ's** tended to offer three real ales from polypins from an eclectic range, up to and including *Thornbridge Jaipur IPA*. This has occasionally continued since and one memorable week saw virtually the entire range of *Goody Ales* appear.

Some pubs whose future looked doubtful did eventually reopen. The **Grapes** in Gravesend stayed closed in 2020 but eventually came to life in the summer of 2021 under new management, though now sporting three unused handpumps. The **Prince Albert** in Gravesend was a late revival and the **Rose** by Northfleet station, which had closed on the retirement of the previous owner, has also come back to life. The same may not be true for the **Bat and Ball** in Gravesend though, where the landlord unfortunately died and at the time of writing the pub is still closed.

In Dartford, the **Malt Shovel** is now owned by Punch Taverns following the sale to them of a number of Young's pubs. The **Hufflers Arms** also seems to have been sold and a planning application submitted for an extension at the back.

John O'Sullivan, the landlord of the **Bell** at Kemsing, retired during lockdown and the pub is now run by his son Dennis who had already been working there for some time. Not too far away the **Rising Sun** at Cotmans Ash surprisingly reopened in August this year, having closed, apparently for good, at the end of January last year. Opening hours are limited so intending visitors are advised to



contact the pub first.

At the **Old House** at Ightham Common the wooden casks are back in use and were recently dispensing *Goacher's Special House Ale* and *Larkins Best Bitter*, with *Larkins Traditional* and *Porter* to follow. The log fire in the bar is also back in use. The **Moat** at Wrotham Heath had been closed for about 18 months but has reopened after sale. Trade there is mainly food-led but three Kentish real ales were reported to be available. On the other hand the **Crown Point Inn** at Seal Chart is now closed and for sale, seemingly in a rather derelict condition, but perhaps less so than the **Green Man** at Hodsoll Street, which burnt down after a lightning strike in the summer. It is apparently hoped to rebuild this.

The **Amazon & Tiger** at Harvel is closed. A group of locals want to buy it as a pub but the owner intends to continue to live there and just run the accommodation part of the business. This would seem to require a planning application for change of use as the main use was as a public house with the accommodation ancillary to it. However the pub is now an Asset of Community Value so such permission ought to be unobtainable. At the time of writing there seemed to be no movement here.



# HARVEY'S BREWERY

*On the BRIGHT side...*

We were delighted to receive a  
**CAMRA GOLDEN AWARD**

celebrating businesses that  
'have gone above and beyond in  
delivering excellence or innovation'  
during the last 50 years of campaigning.



*On the DARK side...*

We were delighted to be named:

UK's Best Imperial Stout

**IMPERIAL EXTRA DOUBLE STOUT**

UK's Best Porter

**1859 PORTER**

UK's Best Strong Porter

**PRINCE OF DENMARK**

**WORLD BEER AWARDS  
2021**



we want to be

[www.harveys.org.uk](http://www.harveys.org.uk)





# Marden Village Club



CAMRA Maidstone & Mid-Kent Club of the Year 2020-21  
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   @mardenvillageclub

Albion Road, Marden, Kent TN12 9DT  
Tel: 01622 831427  
Email: [office@mardenvillageclub.co.uk](mailto:office@mardenvillageclub.co.uk)  
[www.mardenvillageclub.co.uk](http://www.mardenvillageclub.co.uk)

Contact: John Mills 01732 840603 or email [pubs.officer@mmk.camra.org.uk](mailto:pubs.officer@mmk.camra.org.uk)

For more information on these pubs, see CAMRA's online pub database [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com)

Pubs have had a hard time over the last year with the need for PPE with reduced footfall. Now it is difficult finding bar staff and deliveries are erratic. Many have managed to hang on to their trade by means of marquees and awnings in gardens and car parks. Others started a takeaway and delivery services for both food and beer. Some shifted their hours, opening and closing earlier. Shutting for a day or more during the week (though that is not good for the beer). Whatever suited licensees hopefully enabled them to keep going. The opportunity to refurbish has also been used. We can help by continuing to use our pubs, no matter your tittle, rather than buying blocks of supermarket cans.

Now for some good news.



**Vine, Goudhurst** – Re-opening of this pub at the village crossroads is expected before Christmas as an Opening Soon sign has been seen outside.

**George & Dragon, Headcorn** – This has changed hands but not yet been visited.



**Tap 17, Headcorn** – A new micropub venture with beer from taps but not yet visited.



**Monks Head, Larkfield** – Russell Marfleet has taken this on and has greatly improved both interior and exterior during a couple of months closure. Manager Julia is running the daily business. There are two pumps which initially have *Greene King IPA* and *Sharps Doom Bar*.

**Made Inn, Maidstone** – This is new opening in addition to their Ashford venue with 30 beer taps and one cask ale pump.



**Stile Bridge, Marden** – There are signs of activity seen on site here as it is under new ownership and opening again is eagerly awaited in November.



**Kings Arms, Offham** – Saffi Streames is now the licensee in this village pub which now has a covered area in the garden to enlarge the facilities. There are usually three beers on the pumps with *Harveys Sussex Best Bitter* as a permanent.

**Swan, Sandhurst** – Following a complete refit the new owners are providing good quality food and continue with serving *Harveys*.



**Teston Club, Teston** – Complete refurb here with new furnishings and an upgraded cellar which often provides a local beer now to welcome members back again.

**Plough, Trottiscliffe** – Several members were able to attend a showcase of Kent brewery beers served straight from the cask. Paul Herbert from the brewery also attended. The food that we bought there was very good and was welcomed with the beers. *Kent Pale* and *Adnams Southwold Bitter* are kept on the bar inside.



**Swan on the Green, West Peckham** – This recently featured in the remake of *The Larkins* series so was closed for a while during filming but busier now since the series start. Beers on the bar were *Swan Trumpeter Best* and *Cygnet*.

Pubs for sale: **Brickmakers Arms, Maidstone**

**Pilot, Maidstone**

**Oak & Ivy, Hawkhurst**

Closed Pubs: **Victoria, East Farleigh**

Closed with all pub signage removed but planning permission to turn it into a house has been refused.

**Rising Sun, East Malling**

Converted into housing.

**White House, Hunton**

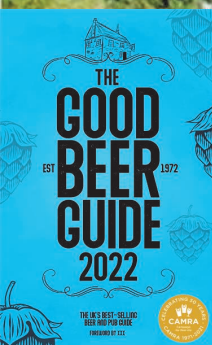
This has closed since Jan Morris the long serving licensee died in March.



## Quiz Night on Monday

Open 12 – 2.30 and 5 – 11 Monday – Thursday  
12 – 11 Friday and Saturday  
12 – 10.30 Sunday

**The Bull  
High Street  
West Malling**



## The Chequers Inn

**Laddingford, nr Yalding  
Kent ME18 6BP  
Tel: 01622 871266**

[www.chequersladdingford.co.uk](http://www.chequersladdingford.co.uk)

**Award winning traditional village inn  
situated in the hopping countryside**

### **Charles and Tracey welcome you to their 15th Century Inn**

- Cask conditioned real ales
- Traditional value-for-money menus, daily specials, Sunday roasts and children's menu
- Very large garden with children's play area & animal corner

**We are proud of our**

- Real Ales, Real Food, Real Staff & No Gimmicks



@THENELSONARMSTONBRIDGE



@THENELSONARMS



@THE\_NELSON\_ARMS

01732 358 284 | 19 CROMER STREET, TN9 1UP | [WWW.THENELSONARMS.COM](http://WWW.THENELSONARMS.COM)

# THE NELSON ARMS



mon	3 - 9pm
tues	3 - 11pm
wed	3 - 11pm
thurs	3 - 11pm
fri	3 - 11.30pm
sat	12 - 11.30pm

**LIVE MUSIC**

sun 12 - 9pm

**ROASTS**

## CAMRA

### AWARD-WINNING PUBLICANS

MATT & EMMA, FORMER LANDLORDS OF  
THE STILE BRIDGE & THE WINDMILL,  
CONTINUE WITH THEIR 3RD PUB  
TRANSFORMATION - THE NELSON ARMS.

A REFURBISHED, TRADITIONAL,  
COMMUNITY PUB IN TONBRIDGE JUST  
500M FROM THE STATION!



## OUTSTANDING SELECTION OF LOCAL & IMPORTED BEVERAGES

**7** CASK ALES

**12** REAL CIDERS

GREAT SELECTION OF CRAFT BEERS  
IMPORTED GERMAN PILSNER  
BELGIAN BEERS





**QUIZ NIGHT**

**ON SUNDAYS**

**LIVE SPORTS**

**4 HD TVS & SURROUND SOUND**

**BT Sport sky sports**



## **THE NELSON APARTMENTS**

2 PROFESSIONALLY REFURBISHED 2 BED APARTMENTS  
EQUIPPED WITH APPLIANCES & SMART TVS IN EACH ROOM

LOCATED ABOVE THE NELSON ARMS PUB

AVAILABLE FOR HOLIDAY & SHORT-TERM LETTING





### Cranbrook's Micropub

Larkins' Alehouse offers a warm, friendly environment without interruptions of music, tv and mobile phones.

Check out the daily updated Facebook or Twitter pages to see which ales are currently available.

Homemade Ham or Cheese rolls, Individual Pies and sausage rolls available –  
Thursday – Saturday

Pizza Cucina –outside on a Thursday evening, feel free to buy a pizza and eat in the pub with a pint!

Group bookings for cold and hot food on request, just give us 3-4 days notice.  
Delivered to your home or eat in!

Beer Garden open all year round!

Mon – Wed 14.00 – 21.00

Thurs-Fri 12.00 – 22.00

Sat 12.00 – 22.30

Sun 12.00 – 18.00

Closed Sunday night

---

### **LARKINS' ALEHOUSE**

7 High Street, Cranbrook, Kent. TN17 3EB

Mobile: Wendy 07785 707476 or Julie 07917 252585

E: [info@larkins-alehouse.co.uk](mailto:info@larkins-alehouse.co.uk)

FB: Larkins' Alehouse

T: @larkinsalehouse

W: [larkins-alehouse.co.uk](http://larkins-alehouse.co.uk)

On Wednesday 21st July 2021, 2 people (both called Richard) caught the train to London (my first train trip in over 20 months due to Covid) for a day out combining a few pub visits with a tunnel walk at the Post Office Museum. Richard caught the 1059 train from Maidstone East and Richard joined him at 1110 at West Malling. As we were going to be mainly in the City area, we changed at Bromley South onto a Thameslink train to Blackfriars.

From here we walked to Chancery Lane for a late breakfast / early lunch at “The Knights Templar” (a Wetherspoons pub). Here, we easily found a table as although it was quite busy, it was not crowded, and using the Wetherspoons App, an All Day Brunch went down very well accompanied by a pint of Summerskills “Westward Ho!”

From here, we moved on to “The Exmouth Arms” at Exmouth Market in Clerkenwell. We chose this pub as it is not only in the current GBG, but also only a 7-minute walk from our next port of call. A choice of four beers was on offer, of which one expired as I asked for it. However, a pint of Three Sods “Mon Cheri IPA” was an excellent 2nd choice.



Our next visit was to be at “The Postal Museum”, for a 90 minute, interesting and informative, guided walk through some of the old tunnels of the “Post Office Railway”, later known as “Mail Rail”. This was a 2ft gauge, driverless, underground railway which from 1927, carried only letters and

parcels (i.e. not passengers) between Paddington and Whitechapel via Mount Pleasant and Liverpool Street. Unfortunately, it became too costly to run and closed down in 2003, but the tunnels and many of the trains are still there. The Postal Museum have taken over a short stretch of the line at Mount Pleasant, and now run trains for the public as part of their museum experience, which means that a small part of the system is now accessible to the public, which it rarely was before it closed.

Some hour and a half later, on a very hot day in London, we both felt the call of the next pub, and just a 6-minute walk took us to “The Craft Beer Co.” in Leather Lane, Hatton Garden. A pint of Siren Broken Dream Breakfast Stout proved to be one of the best pints I have ever had (I scored it a 5 out of 5 and I’ve never done that before). Due to the word “craft” in the pub name, we had expected the beer to be pricey here, but even so, £11 for 2 pints did come as a bit of a shock, especially when compared with £3.69 / pint in the Wetherspoons earlier!



“The Jerusalem Tavern” in Britton St, Farringdon was to be our final call



before heading home. Just another 6-minutes away, this is owned by St Peters Brewery, and only sells their own beers. However, this is never a problem for me, and on this occasion, I opted for the “Honey Porter” and wasn’t disappointed. I love this pub and have visited many times over the years. My only ‘complaint’, is that

the opening hours are a bit restricted. It does not open until 4pm on weekdays, and not at all on Saturdays or Sundays, but it is well worth a visit if you can get there.

We left the Jerusalem Tavern just after 6pm for the short walk to Farringdon Station. This allowed us to catch the last train through to Bromley South without having to change at Blackfriars. A change at Bromley South got us back to West Malling at 1946 and Maidstone at 1959. Apart from the weather being far too hot (but I suppose we shouldn’t really complain), it was a very enjoyable day. All the trains ran to time within a couple of minutes and although they were busier than we had expected post-Covid, they were not crowded and we both felt safe.



# Rifle Volunteers



**Alex and Polly welcome customers old and new to the Rifle Volunteers.**

Traditional public house serving Goachers Ale and local cider. Fortnightly fun quiz, beer garden.

## OPENING TIMES

**Monday: 6pm - 11pm**

**Tuesday - Thursday: 12pm - 3pm & 6pm - 11pm**

**Friday & Saturday: 12pm - 11pm**

**Sunday: 12pm - 6pm**

**28 Wyatt Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1EU**



# The Flower Pot

**CAMRA Kent Pub of the Year  
2010, 2011 & 2017**

---

**Up to 9 ales, 4 ciders & 5 craft kegs.**

---

**Open mic night every Tuesday from 8:30pm.**

---

**Real ale club 2-4pm Tuesday, 20% off all ale.**

---

**Homemade, thin crust, stone baked pizza  
served Wednesday - Saturday 6 - 10pm.**

---

**See our live drinks menu with  
the Untappd App.**

 [The Flower Pot Maidstone Beer](#)  [The Flower Pot Maidstone Music](#)

96 Sandling Road - Maidstone - Kent - ME14 2RJ

Tel. 01622 757705   Email. [flowerpotpub@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:flowerpotpub@hotmail.co.uk)   Web. [www.flowerpotpub.com](http://www.flowerpotpub.com)

## Don't Drink the Milk!

*by Jeff Tucker*



I was in the Greyhound at Charcott, near Leigh, a while ago, and visited the gents, which took me by surprise, as the urinals were fashioned out of milk churns!

This has become a very nice country pub, with four microbrewery beers from Kent and East Sussex. Infrequent bus 210 from Tonbridge stops a few yards away, or Penshurst station is about half a mile.

There is another pub opposite the station, the Little Brown Jug, also worth a visit. The Tarmac footpath between the two pubs crosses a large ploughed field, which was the site of an airfield in WW2, though nothing of it remains now.

£30.50\*

Have a  
**JOYFUL  
CHRISTMAS**  
With  
**GAMRA**

SPREAD THE JOY,  
GIVE CAMRA GIFT MEMBERSHIP  
THIS CHRISTMAS



### A YEAR'S MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES:

- A welcome pack
- BEER magazine and What's Brewing online news
- £30\* worth of CAMRA real ale vouchers
- Discounts on pints at 3,500 participating pubs
- Free or reduced entry to beer festivals
- Social activities in your area and so much more!

\*£30.50 single, £38.50 joint,  
£22 single under 26, £30 joint under 26.  
\*£30 vouchers for single membership,  
£40 vouchers for joint memberships.

Give CAMRA Gift Membership today  
[www.camra.org.uk/xmas](http://www.camra.org.uk/xmas)





Bus route 297 runs from Tunbridge Wells to Tenterden, taking 90 minutes end to end, though you might want to stop off at several of the wonderful pubs along the way! Some places are served by other routes, as mentioned in the text. The bus is not particularly frequent, with gaps of 90 minutes to two hours between trips, and the last departure from Tenterden being at 17.40 (17.30 Saturdays). There is no Sunday service on the route. With a bit of planning, you can arrange to get off at certain pubs, then catch one going back the other way after a pint or so. It is operated by Hams Travel, who don't offer a day ticket as such, but sell and accept the Discovery ticket, as do virtually all bus operators in Kent and Sussex. Check individual pub opening hours on *WhatPub.com* before you set off.

Starting in Tunbridge Wells, there are many good pubs; too many to list here. The first place of interest, on the bus, is Pembury, which has three pubs, the best of which, for beer choice, is the King William IV on Hastings Road, with up to six beers. The bus doesn't quite pass it, but get off in Henwood Green Road and walk up Canterbury Road.

Back on the bus, the next village is Matfield, with the Star and the Poet quite close to the bus stop. Both usually offer a local beer.

Next is one of the 'don't miss' pubs on the route, the Halfway House just outside Brenchley. Here you will find a pub with a fascinating rustic interior and a wide selection of beers served on gravity by taps through the wall. The food is reasonably priced, too. There is no bus stop planted here, but the driver will stop on request.

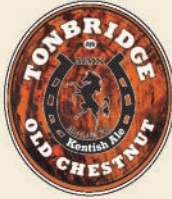
On to the Gun & Spitroast at Horsmonden, where the two buses cross at about the same time on some journeys. Buses 266 and 296 also serve Horsmonden and Brenchley, but only on certain days of the week.

After passing the old station building at Horsmonden, the next place of any size is Goudhurst, a hilly village with two pubs, the Vine on the

# DISTINCTIVE CASK AND KEG ALES

SINCE

2010



**Also available in a range of bottles and cans**

Telephone: 01622 871239 Email: [mail@tonbridgebrewery.co.uk](mailto:mail@tonbridgebrewery.co.uk)

Website: [www.tonbridgebrewery.co.uk](http://www.tonbridgebrewery.co.uk)

Tonbridge Brewery, Unit 19, Branbridges Industrial Estate, East Peckham, Kent TN12 5HF



[facebook.com/tonbridgebrewery](https://facebook.com/tonbridgebrewery)



[twitter.com/tonbridgebrewer](https://twitter.com/tonbridgebrewer)

# Ye Olde Thirsty Pig Kentish Ale & Cider House



Ye Olde Thirsty Pig was built in the 15th Century and is said to be the third oldest building in Maidstone. Originally it was a farmhouse within the estate of the Archbishop's Palace.

We welcome you to our quaint and quirky multi award winning Kentish Ale & Cider House with a Bar Area, downstairs Snug and corridor to the Courtyard Beer Garden, Upstairs to the Main Room leading to the Toilets and the fully refurbished Function Room.

## Opening Hours

Sunday to Thurs 12:00 noon to 01:00am

Friday 12:00 noon to 02:00am

Saturday 12:00 noon to 03:00am



YE OLDE THIRSTY PIG, 4A KNIGHTRIDER STREET, MAIDSTONE, ME15 6LP



## 4 Local Ales from Award Winning Kent Breweries!!!

### Lagers

Curious Brew Kentish lager

Motorhead Roadcrew American style session pale ale

Spitfire an easy-drinking lager

San Miguel Pale Pilsen

Paulaner Munchen German Lager

### Ciders

Biddenden Bushels Kentish strong still cider

Yowler sparkling Kentish cider

Section of boxed Kentish Cider





crossroads opposite the pond, and the Star & Eagle up the hill towards the church. The Vine is closed at the time of writing, but the Star is of historic interest, with fabulous views from the garden.

The bus then passes the Goudhurst Inn, where the beer can be expensive, and the Peacock at Iden Green, a centuries-old Shepherd Neame pub.

We next arrive in Cranbrook, the largest place since Pembury, where the star attraction is Larkin's Ale House, a few yards from the bus stops. In this lovely micropub you will find four regularly changing real ales. Bring your own food or order a takeaway to eat with your pint. Cranbrook also has the White Horse and the George. Bus 5 between Maidstone and Sandhurst also serves Cranbrook.

It is a relatively long journey (about 12 minutes) to the next village, Benenden, where you will find the Bull, between the village hall and the village green. This pub is a Good Beer Guide regular, and has three or four beers from Harveys, Larkins and Dark Star, among others. There is a lovely log fire for winter days.

A few minutes further on is Rolvenden, where the 297 stops outside the Bull. There is also the Star just around the corner, both pubs being worth a visit. Bus 2 between Hastings and Ashford also comes through the village.

Passing the KESR Rolvenden station some distance away from the village, we finally arrive in Tenterden, with its five pubs, all in the main street. The best choice of beers can be found at This Ancient Boro', which opened a few years ago with several beers served on gravity behind the bar, and a selection of tapas dishes available.

The 297 route is quite exceptional in passing so many excellent pubs. One of the two allocated buses is often a double decker on schooldays, offering some great views of the countryside. Study the timetable carefully – it is well worth exploring!

## TABLE TOP SKITTLES

*This follows the article on Aunt Sally in Draught Copy edition 198*

### The History of Table-top Skittles

There is no mystery about the origin of the various games of table-top skittles shown below - they are miniaturised forms of the larger pub game of Alley Skittles or Nine Pins. Alley skittles itself splintered into a number of regional variations and, since a skittles alley takes up a large amount of valuable floor space in a pub, in some areas varieties that did not require alleys at all appeared. Most of these amounted to table-top, miniaturised versions of the alley game and several games of this type are still well-known and popular today.

### Devil Amongst the Tailors

The most famous of table-top skittles games is indisputably the game known as Devil Amongst the Tailors or Bar Skittles or Table Skittles or Indoor Skittles. This distinctive game appeared in the 1700s and was cleverly miniaturised so that no throwing strip was required at all - the nine pins standing on a square table were knocked down by a ball which was swung around a pole, instead.

In 1783, some theatre-goers and tailors rioted at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket over a play that the tailors thought insulting. The Dragoons were called in to stop the riot which they did in such an enthusiastic way that their method was compared to the wooden ball ploughing through Table skittles by the local press. After this incident Bar Skittles was often referred to as 'Devil amongst the Tailors'.

### Hood Skittles

Hood Skittles is a miniaturised version of Old English Skittles, in which cheeses are thrown at pins on a table about 8 feet away. It is extremely popular Northamptonshire and well known in Leicestershire, Bedfordshire and surrounding counties. Confusingly, in the East Midlands, the game is always referred to as Table Skittles while outside this area, it is not well known and Table Skittles tends to mean the smaller game described in the previous section.

The surrounding leather bound and cushioned sides of the table offer the option to bounce the cheese off them before hitting the pins thus obtaining angles not possible in other games while the hood prevents wayward cheeses and pins flying off into other parts of the pub. Most people who've played consider Hood Skittles to be one

# THE CELLARS ALEHOUSE

**6 CASKS / 8 TAPS / 18  
CIDERS / 17 GINS AND MUCH  
MORE - HOP ON DOWN!!**

**CAMRA DISCOUNT**

**MAIDSTONE'S BEST MIRCO!**



**THE OLD BREWERY, BUCKLAND ROAD, MAIDSTONE ME16 0SL**



www.thethreetunsrestaurant.co.uk

# THE THREE TUNS



— Circa 1470 —

FREE HOUSE



## *Traditional Kentish Country Inn*

*Quality food prepared daily  
from the finest local produce  
served in a warm and  
friendly atmosphere .*

*Kentish Beer & Ciders  
always available.*



**The Street, Lower Halstow,  
Sittingbourne, Kent.  
ME9 7DY  
01795 842840**

[info@thethreetunsrestaurant.co.uk](mailto:info@thethreetunsrestaurant.co.uk)



of the most enjoyable English pub games around so it would be well worth popping into a pub featuring the game if you ever have the chance.

There are two varieties of the game; the more well-known Northants Skittles features stubby bomb shaped skittles, while Leicester Skittles has taller, pointy topped skittles with a kingpin. There are other minor differences in the size of pin, position and cheese, but ostensibly the games are pretty similar.

Daddlums is similar to Hood Skittles in which the cheese is normally thrown so that it lands near the front of the table and then slides forward until it strikes the skittles. The table is smaller than Hood Skittles, from which it is presumably derived and it is only known to have been played in one pub in Kent.

### **Table à Toupie or Toptafel**

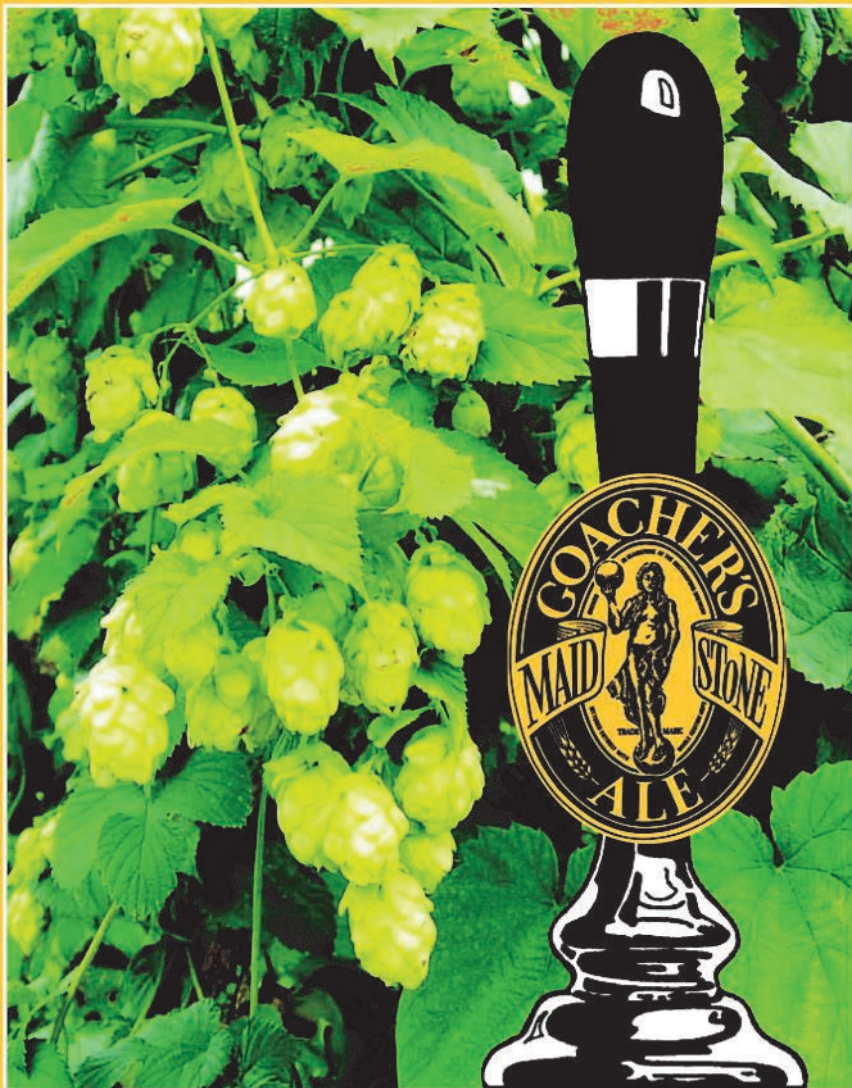
The game consists of a several small rooms laid out on a board - designs vary somewhat. Skittles are positioned amongst the rooms and a top is then sent spinning from one end of the table in an effort to topple as many of the skittles as possible. Each skittle scores (or sometimes deducts) differing numbers of points and success is largely a matter of luck. Apparently it has been handed down the generations in North America for more than a century.

It's apparent that a great deal of uncertainty reigns, not least as to precisely what the game should be called. In the USA, it is somewhat confusingly known simply as 'Skittles' - this is possible because Americans don't play the original game of Skittles or Nine Pins - only Ten Pin Bowling. Other suggested names are 'Racketeer' and 'Devil amongst the Tinkers'. Research suggests that the game is alive and still popular in France, Belgium and Holland. In France it is known as 'Table à Toupie' (literally Table with Top), or 'Jeu de Roi' (Game of Kings) and in The Netherlands it's called 'Toptafel'.

The final piece of evidence discovered so far is from the famous book by Joseph Strutt - "Sports and Pastimes of the English people". From his text, believed to have been first published in 1801, comes a description of a game called 'Devil Amongst the Tailors'. But instead of the game with the ball and pole, Strutt describes in some detail Table à Toupie! So like many games of this era, it seems likely to have originated in England or France but it's not clear which. Interestingly, though, while the French still apparently manufacture and play the game, it's now all but unheard of within the British Isles.

\* REAL MILD ALE \* CROWN IMPERIAL STOUT \*

\* FINE LIGHT ALE \* GOLD STAR \* OLD 1066 ALE \* BEST DARK ALE



\* SILVER STAR \* FINE LIGHT ALE \* GOLD STAR \* OLD 1066 ALE \*

# GOACHER'S MAIDSTONE ALES

P&DJ Goacher, Unit 8, Tovil Green Business Park, Maidstone ME15 6TA. Tel: 01622 682112

[www.goachers.com](http://www.goachers.com)