

Draught Copy



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Free Magazine

By Maidstone & Mid-Kent
CAMRA

incorporating Gravesend &
Darent Valley, Bexley,
Medway & West Kent
Branches

Summer 2023 No. 205

Website: www.mmk.camra.org.uk

Twitter: www.twitter.com/mmkcamra

The Armoury, Linton Maidstone & Mid Kent Pub of the Year

The Armoury has won Maidstone & Mid Kent Branch Pub of the Year award

See inside for more details.



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, Medway and West Kent branches of CAMRA. It is published quarterly, in March, June, September and December and has a circulation of 4,500 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 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: £100 / £60 / £35 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 July 2023.

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.



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Darent Valley**



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and Mid-Kent**



West Kent

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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

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Campaign
for
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Campaign
for
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**SAVE
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**Saturday
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Maidstone and Mid Kent CAMRA
East Malling Beer Festival

BEER FESTIVAL COMPETITION

Here's a chance to win one of two prizes, each of two complimentary entrance tickets, to the East Malling Beer & Cider Festival on Saturday 2nd September at East Malling Research. Please note that this competition is not available to people under 18 years of age.

All you have to do is solve the 28 cryptic clues below. The first letter and length of each answer is given. The second letters of each answer make up the names three lighter-coloured beers (6,4 letters), (6,3), (5,4) from brewers who advertise in this magazine, either in the ad or their website.

Scan or photograph this completed page and email it (don't forget the beer names!) along with your postal address, to jeff.tucker047@gmail.com. The closing date for entries is **9th August 2023**.

In the event of a tie in the number of clues answered correctly, the winners will be picked at random by the landlord of one of the pubs where we meet on 10th August 2023. Good luck! Answers in the next issue.

Is sociable – “I’m sex-mad!”	M								
Catch a girl with nothing on	L								
Drawing a box with nothing in it	C								
Len cares about ancillary workers	C								
Be the cause of a special event	O								
Spoons stirred Russian leader to lend support	S								
Dad’s attempt at baking?	P								
Ranks 150 donkeys	C								
Steer clear of a hole	A								
Mix pity or mix closeness	P								
Insects used to be an afterthought	W								
Get a heavenly body, or date is ruined	A								
Sought compensation for medical disaster	C								
Fast-moving, urinated in the outskirts of Surrey	S								
Ida must arrange a venue	S								
Poems about a racecourse	E								
Maidstone’s rubbish is the most important thing	D								
Discourage man from getting Persil?	D								
A big grey thing caused the plane to crash	E								
Coolest wild animals	O								
How a poet might be paid? That’s absurd!	P								
Skilled worker from Hobart is a nurse	A								
Challenge a saint to throw up	S								
A famous fish from Bournemouth	N								
It adorns the neck, neck and neck	T								
Two presenters pour wine from the bottle	D								
Help actor to be punctual	P								
Calm down – silly sausage!	A								

The three hidden beers are: _____

THE FIRST MAIDSTONE BEER FESTIVALS

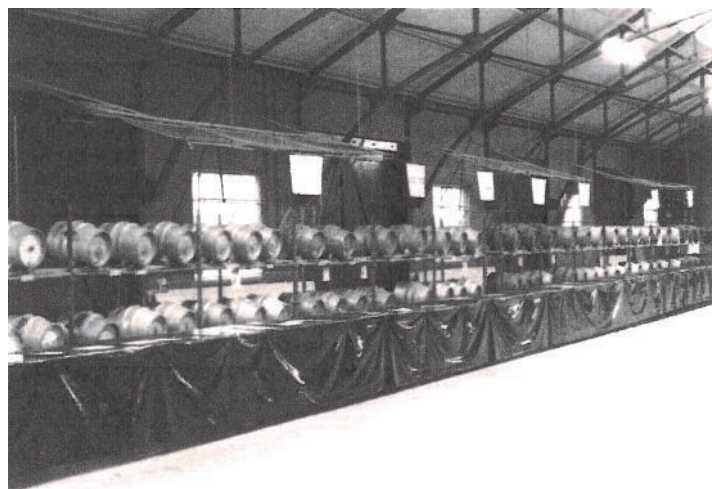
May 13th 1979 and May 25-26 1980,
Agricultural Hall, Lockmeadow Market

MMK's first Beer Festival in 1979 boasted a range of 43 different beers. 4,000 people packed into the hall and hundreds had to be turned away. The beer – over 10,500 pints – sold out in 7 hours.

The 1980 event was held over two days, and for safety admission was limited to 3,000 each day. Ninety-plus 18 gallon casks were racked up on two-tier stillages (pictured).

Looking back I am amazed at the self-belief with which we undertook this Festival, not only was it our first, but one of the biggest in the South-East.

Dave Rayner





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To find out more and for a list of participating pubs, visit snea.me/cask-club

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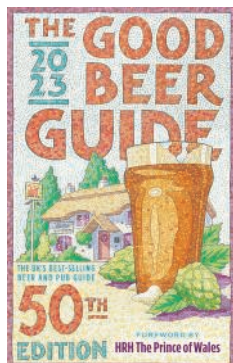
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Cask Club

WHAT PUB, BEER SCORING AND THE GOOD BEER GUIDE

BY DANNY CLARK



You are more than likely aware of the “Good Beer Guide”, CAMRA’s flagship publication, that lists the best pubs in the UK, but what you may not know is how those pubs are selected. Mainly, it is as a result of beer scores being submitted by CAMRA members from across the country, the unfortunate reality is that those scores are mainly derived from the very few branch activists that visit the pubs within their branch.

As a CAMRA member you can send in beer scores to the local branch via the What Pub website and if you have ever wondered why your favourite pub that sells really good beer, isn’t in the

Good Beer Guide then this may well be because its hasn’t had enough visits rating the quality of the beer. Entering the scores doesn’t automatically get your pub into the Good Beer Guide as scoring beers is the first stage of a multi-stage process, but beer scoring on a consistent basis contributes to the process of selection of pubs that go into the Good Beer Guide.

You don’t have to be an “expert” to begin scoring and the process is pretty simple. Please remember though that it is not about your personal favourite beer receiving the highest score, or that the reason that you are doing it is just to get your favourite pub into the Good Beer Guide. You will more than likely try a beer that isn’t to your normal taste but what you need to consider is the quality of the beer. Ask yourself whether the publican has kept it in good condition and how have they served it, and score it in accordance with the scoring system in What Pub, which is quite simple to use.

In order to submit your scores you need to login to What Pub which is CAMRA’s online pub guide. The address is www.whatpub.com and you can access the website by using your smart phone whilst you are still drinking your pint. The website contains over 35,000 pubs from all over the UK.

In order to start submitting scores via What Pub you will need to;

Login. To do this you will need your CAMRA membership number and your CAMRA password.

Start searching for your pub by name. The easiest way to do this is either by the name of the town/village or, if in a large city like London, the post code.

Locate the “Submit Beer Score” on the tab bar underneath the pub photo if you are using a smart phone or on the right hand side of the screen if you are using a computer.

Enter the date, score, brewery name and the name of the beer as the fields automatically pop up. If the beer that you are drinking is new or a one-off by the brewery then you may need to type in the full name.

Click the “submit” button and your score will be winging its way to the local branch’s Pub Officer.

Another added bonus is the fact that the website will automatically keep a record of all your scores and when you made them so you can look back to see what beers you have had in a particular pub and how you rated them.

The branch Pub Officer then collates the scores and makes them available to each branch business meeting in order that a discussion can be had on how the pubs are doing. Members are then encouraged to visit any pub where scores would suggest that a particular pub that isn’t in the Good Beer Guide may be doing well enough to warrant their inclusion. This second phase is where scores submitted for a pub are “tested” by other members to ensure that the pub is a valid candidate for the Good Beer Guide. As an example, Maidstone and Mid Kent Branch has over 150 pubs that require a visit each year and there are only a small number of active members that score the pubs. If only one member is scoring, say a 4 every time they visit the pub, then such a good score has to be “validated” by other active members. This “testing” period is normally between November and January. This will advantage pubs where scores are consistent and also those pubs where a reasonable number of scores have been submitted.

The third phase is the choosing of the pubs to be entered into the latest edition of the Good Beer Guide. The Pubs Officer will produce the statistics and there will be a discussion by those members that attend a special meeting at the start of the year. This isn’t about beer quality as the beer scores will speak for themselves, but more about whether any of the pubs should be taken off of the list. Good reasons will include change of ownership, new cellar manager, the pub has stopped selling real ale or has been put up for sale. The list of tabled pubs is considerably longer than the number of pubs allocated to the branch for the Good Beer Guide.

<Editor>:

The next meeting to discuss pubs to be entered will be held in January 2024 so keep an eye on our social diary on the website or in the monthly emails if, as a member, you have signed up to these.

REAL ALE & CIDER FESTIVAL

Tenterden
Town Station

FRIDAY 16 JUNE

6.30pm to 10.30pm - no music

SATURDAY 17 JUNE

10.30am to 10.30pm

Live music throughout the day

- Food, Barbecue
- Live Bands
- Cask ale & cider
- Trains all day Saturday



SATURDAY LIVE MUSIC LINE UP

Times may vary slightly!

12.30
WASHED UP JUG BAND

15.00
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
MERCIA (PROM)

17.30
SKA SONIC

20.00
FIT 2 FUNK



KENT & EAST
SUSSEX RAILWAY



Having a Beer Festival when your new monarch is due to be crowned meant we had the opportunity to order several (twenty, with eighteen turning up) beers related to the event. Again we had a good Thursday night, very good Friday, only spoilt by the downpour all day Saturday, meaning the cricket match was cancelled.

Although attendance was down on previous years everyone seemed to drink more.



Total attendance was 1362, with 529 CAMRA members, 808 non-members and 25 under the age of 26, down by 110 on the previous year.

Beer of the festival, by customer vote, was an outstanding victory for our own local *Bexley Brewery* with their *Cherry Bakewell Stout*. Second place was a three way tie between *Bexley Brewery Vanilla Porter*, *Broken Drum Home Brew Quirm Brown Ale* (a brand new beer) and *Ralph's Ruin A Walk On The Mild Side*. Cider/Perry was a win for *Turners Apple Pie Cider*. Thank you to all who voted .



First to run out was *Kent's King Charles III* followed by *Bexley Vanilla* then the *Bakewell*; First cider was the *Turners* (we had 2).



Thank you to Dartfordians for all the help and assistance especially Megan and Brian, and get well soon Rocky.

Our Festival Charity Box saw over £1000 raised for Cancer Research, in memory of volunteer Paul Thomas. Thank you everyone.

Grateful thanks to all the Breweries who sponsored the t-shirts, *Beerblefish*, *Broken Drum*, *Canterbury Ales*, *Gadd's*, *Goacher's*, *Kent*, *Koomor*, *Southwark*, *Tankley's* and *Wantsum*; our glass sponsors *Bexley* and *Westerham* and *Shepherd Neame* who kindly donated two casks. All the hard work from our main suppliers: *Avalon*, *Beer Haul*, *Brentwood* and *Pigs Beer And Fetch the Drinks for the Cider/Perry*.

The location also saw Beer Festival Organiser, Andy Wheeler, hand over the Club of the Year award to Steward Megan Lewis.

Without all the CAMRA volunteers, far and wide, the Festival would not take place, thank you everyone. Special mention to Alan

Bartlett for all his work sorting out the staffing before the Festival, Joe Mist for the cooling and Andy Wheeler the organiser who worked tirelessly to ensure that it was a success.





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Weekend

Beer, Cider & Music Festival

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Contact: Adrian Moss (01474 363102)

email: adrian.moss49@btinternet.com
www.gdv.camra.org.uk

In the last edition we reported that the **Royal Oak** in Dartford seemed closed. We have to apologise for the errors in this item as the pub is definitely still open, though it may have closed early on a quiet night. Further, the landlady is definitely not leaving any time soon as our informant suggested might be the case.

CAMRA's Pub of the Year competition is back for 2023 and this year's branch winner is the **Three Daws** in Gravesend. The two runners-up are the **Compass Alehouse** in Gravesend and the **Bull** at Horton Kirby. Award certificates will have been presented by the time this issue appears. The **Three Pillars** in Gravesend will also be receiving an award as the branch Cider Pub of the Year and one will go to **Dartford Working Men's Club** as our Club of the Year.

There was a beer festival at Easter at the **Iron Pier Brewery Taproom** in Northfleet. Twenty-five cask beers were available as well as twelve keg beers. Their own cask products included the new *Woodlands IPA*, *Rosherville Red* which is seldom seen in cask these days and *Export India Porter*, in a cask for the first time.



The **Ship** at Southfleet is also due to hold a beer festival over the Spring bank holiday weekend, in its large garden. Attractions are to include no fewer than twelve live bands and a barbecue. Regular real ales in the pub are *Sharp's Doom Bar* and *Timothy Taylor Landlord*, with one changing beer. *Sharp's Atlantic* and *Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter* have been among those available recently.

In Gravesend the *Young's London Original*, which had become a regular beer at the **Windmill Tavern**, was replaced by *Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter* as the previous edition was being distributed. There is some history here as that beer was regularly available there as a guest beer at the start of the era when major brewers' pubs were allowed to stock one such real ale.

Further down the hill the building work at the **Jolly Drayman** was virtually complete as these notes were being compiled. The bar has more room and there is extra seating in an extension built into the area where the smoking area used to be. This has now moved to the



garden and the entrance has been tidied up with a porch to reduce draughts from the doorway in winter.

Also in Gravesend, the **Ascot Arms**, which closed some time ago, had been almost completely demolished by mid-April to make way for housing. In the town centre, the **King's Head** closed for good too and is to become a food outlet. On a more optimistic note, the **Mole Hole** has had a partial redecoration, with some deep blue and green paint on previously white walls.

The **Anchor and Hope** at Ash was burnt down in April. The pub was likely to be another destined for replacement by housing and, at the time of writing, the fire was suspected to have been started maliciously.



The **Orange Tree** at Wilmington, having been closed for several months, reopened under new management on April 6 but we've no reports as yet. The **Fighting Cocks** at Horton Kirby is apparently also under new management. In

March *Shivering Sands Maunsell Bitter* and *Golden Sands IPA* were on sale. The **Bridges** at South Darenth was due to be sold at auction on May 4, with a guide price of £400,000.

The **Rising Sun** at Cotmans Ash was holding a music event on May 13. Our reporter believes it to be a cider festival as well. This is planned to be one of a series of special music weekends similar to those at the pub last year.

The range of cask ales at the **George and Dragon** at Wrotham has increased to three, with *Wadworth 6X* being a 'regular. Two different beers from *Purity* were on sale recently. Lee & Carla offer typical pub food most lunchtimes. A roast Sunday lunch was tried just after Christmas but did not prove popular. John & Karen at the **Rose and Crown** continue to offer Fish Friday from 6pm (bookings essential) and Pizza Saturday from 4 to 8pm. The **Bull Hotel** intend to offer their wedding guests and other customers the chance to book a rink to play bowls. Thanks to Ken Baines for the updates.

The **Blue Anchor** at St Mary's Platt has had a grand reopening under the new management of 'Michelle and her Dream Team'. It seems that Michelle had been working there and has now taken over as manager. Little has changed except for some slight changes to the food menu. *Greene King IPA* is on sale, normally with one other



beer. The pub is near the churchyard wherein is buried Richard Hearn, perhaps better known as the children's entertainer Mr Pastry, who lived in the village.



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Congratulations goes to the **Coopers Arms**, Rochester which is Medway CAMRA pub of the year 2023. Built in the reign of Richard I (1189- 1199) this grade two listed building became an inn in 1543. Congratulations also go to **Past and Present Ale House**, Gillingham which for the seventh year running is Medway CAMRA cider pub of the year.

Branch members also voted the **10.50 From Victoria**, Strood, last year's POTY winner, in second place, which from April 1st will be opening its doors from midday on Saturdays, and the **Who'd a Thought It** in Rochester, in third place.

The **Prince of Wales** in Strood has been sold. No further information on this pub is available at present. The closed and vacant pub, the **Hen and Chickens** in Luton Road Chatham, is rumoured to become flats and the ongoing saga of the **Angel**, Rainham appears to have come to a close with news that the pub is now boarded up.

A members visit to the **Three Crutches** at Higham found it was now serving *Timothy Taylor Landlord*. The **Bounty** in Strood has now changed hands and the **Woodland Tavern/Canterbury Tales** is looking for a new landlord.

Nelson Brewery in Chatham Dockyard is now delivering *Hopdaemon Brewery* beers.

Medway has a new brewery to add to its list. **Moot Brewery** opened on the 25th March and is located at Court Farm in a converted barn at Upper Halling. They are serving a mixture of draft and cask beers ranging from *Sunday Sipa* at 4% ABV up to *Cinder Imperial Stout* at 8.4% ABV. There is seating inside when the weather is inclement, and payment is by card unless you have the exact amount of cash.



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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

Bull, Barming – On a recent visit here members found *Woodforde's Volt* and also *Nog* from the same brewer. Brews from this Norfolk brewer are rarely seen in this branch, although *Wherry* and *Reedlighter* had also been found earlier in the year.



Rockin Robin on the Green, Barming – Has now been handed back to Shepherd Neame, reverting to its previous title *Duke of Edinburgh*, and has reopened with new licensees.



Bell & Jorrocks, Frittenden – Sean & Rosie celebrated 17 years here and this year provided a beer festival with 12 casks and followed that up with a music weekend. However, the initial racking was rapidly consumed and more had to be stacked.

Goudhurst Club, Goudhurst – A small club opposite the village pond that serves the ever popular *Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter*.

Eight Bells, Hawkhurst – Visits here reported finding *Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter* and *Cellar Head Session Pale* both in good order.

Royal Oak, Hawkhurst – Has now been taken on by licensee Harry Cox who was previously at the Leicester Arms in Penshurst. Internal changes and updates have been made to improve the facilities. The permanent ale is *Sharp's Sea Fury* and *Cellar Head* supply seasonal beers. The food menu looks interesting.



Wings Bar & Restaurant, Headcorn – Has re-opened after the winter break.



Hamlet Hotel-Maidstone, Larkfield – This was previously named Hamlet Larkfield Priory Hotel and is still in Larkfield despite the new name. Re-opened on 21st April after a comprehensive refurbishment and now offers a more modern decorative theme. The bar has a comprehensive selection of drinks available.

Monk's Head, Larkfield – No real ale as yet until the clientele base increases. However, I called in recently and a man came in promptly and left after asking if real ale was available and finding that it was not. I wonder how many others have left after finding the same situation. Bottled beers are available and there are several offerings on the tap bar. There is a pleasant garden at the rear for the warm weather.



Cranbrook's Micropub

Winner of the Kent CAMRA Pub of the Year 2022

Winner of the Maidstone and Mid Kent CAMRA branch Pub and Cider pub 2022

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

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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

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Marden Village Club



National CAMRA Club of the Year 2022



© Lester Cunningham

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

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Flower Pot, Maidstone – Holding a beer festival June 21-24

Stag, Maidstone – Stonegate seeking a new incumbent for this town centre pub.



West End Tavern, Marden – Emma & Paul Harrington-Claydon took over as licensees on 17 February and continue to keep *Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter*. *Goacher's Best Dark Ale* has also been reported. A pool table has now been installed.

Duke of Wellington, Ryarsh – Holding its annual beer festival over 11-12 August that is always well attended.

Swan, Sandhurst – Now renamed the New Swan and with a new licensee, Shannon, who has turned it back into a pub with food rather than a restaurant.



Wishful Thinker, Sandway – Elite Pubs latest and largest venue opens to all on June 5 for food and drink. Sleeping accommodation is still being finished and no date available for opening at present. FB: thewishfulthinkerlenham

<https://elitepubs.com/venue/the-wishful-thinker/>

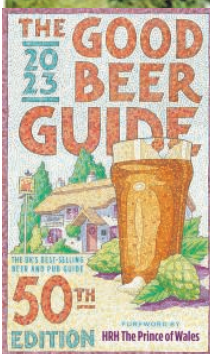
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MUSKET BREWERY



"There's more in the barrel"

TEN YEARS OF BEERS!

The family-owned Musket Brewery of Maidstone, celebrates achieving a decade of brewing downright decent beers this year, as their popular tap room bar and beer garden, The Armoury, is voted the Maidstone & Mid Kent CAMRA Branch "Pub of the Year 2023".

Officially launched on founder Tony Williams' 60th birthday on 21st October 2013, Musket Brewery has survived a recession, lockdown, global pandemic, social distancing, massive price rises and a crippling cost of living crisis. Musket beers are unashamedly traditional and renowned for their full-bodied taste and consistency, making them one of the most sought-after beers in pubs and clubs throughout Kent and key to the brewery's success.

"Right from the very start, I have had fantastic support from my family and hugely valued friends, which continues to this day, I started the brewery with a five-barrel brew plant in a redundant mushroom shed, located on Loddington Farm, Linton and as the demand for Musket beers grew, you could say that the business "mushroomed" from there!" said Tony.



Demands for Musket beers, brewed on the small brew plant, dictated long hours and seven-day weeks for Tony and his son Rhys, who joined his Dad and eventually succeeded him as Head Brewer. It was clear that a larger brew plant and premises was urgently needed, so working closely with Loddington Farm's James Smith, an old shed was replaced with a new building across the farm courtyard. Tony's wife, Linda, liaised with Kent County Council to secure a substantial grant from the North Downs and Marshes LEADER project, which enabled Musket to purchase a brand-new fifteen-barrel brew plant. The new building also

KENTISH BEERS

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FLINTLOCK

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(Award winning beer!)



POWDER BURN

5.0% Kentish Porter



TRIGGER

3.6% Pale Ale



FIFE & DRUM

3.8% Golden Ale
(Award winning beer!)



BALL PULLER

4.0% Premier Bitter
(Award winning beer!)



FLASH IN THE PAN

4.0% Green Hop Ale
(Limited Availability!)



MATCHLOCK

3.8% Kentish Mild
(Spring/Summer brew!)

Musket Brewery Tap Room & Beer Garden – "The Armoury" at Loddington Farm, Linton ME17 4AG
open Wed – Sun.



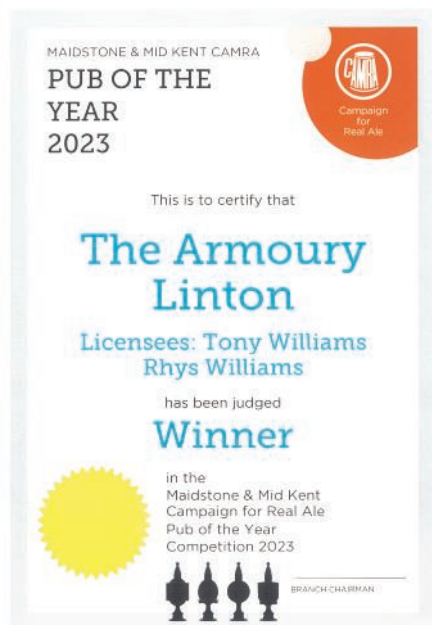


"There's more in the barrel!"

made provision for a Brewery Tap Room, which Linda named The Armoury and was officially opened by James Smith's three-year-old son, Theodore in October 2018.

As word spread of the new hospitality facility at Linton, The Armoury soon became a real community hub, as families, friends and neighbours gathered to enjoy great beers, a small selection of wines, ciders, soft drinks and snacks, both in the bar and large Beer Garden, which boasts a huge stretch tent for shelter during inclement weather.

"We are thrilled with the way in which The Armoury bar and beer garden has evolved. We have warmly welcomed a significant number of minibus and coach visits from pubs, clubs and fellow CAMRA branches, along with classic car and motorcycle meets. Our friends from local Morris Dancing sides and Folk Club groups have made good use of the tent and play a huge part in "keeping tradition alive". We also support local artists by hosting regular music nights, which now have a great following". added Tony.



Another popular addition to The Armoury has been the introduction of weekly mobile kitchens, serving curries and Tex/Mex, with Loddington Farm landlord, James, also providing succulent Venison BBQ's of burgers and steaks, that have been enjoyed by many.

"To have been voted Maidstone & Mid Kent CAMRA Branch "Pub of the Year 2023" is a huge honour and as we only serve Musket Brewery beers, stands as testament to the popularity and consistency of our beers, which has

been the foundation the growth of our business. CAMRA members know their beers and I thank fellow members for their unfailing support since Musket was founded. Even at the grand old age of 69, I am still delivering to pub customers that have taken Musket beers since we started in 2013 and we continue to welcome new customers as they discover just how good Musket beers are!"

Musket has a range of beers to suit all tastes and are available throughout Kent, with the seasonal green hop brew, "Flash in the Pan", needing to be reserved well in advance of its release in late September to avoid disappointment. There are also thoughts of a very special Musket Brewery Anniversary Ale to be brewed in readiness for the 10th anniversary and Tony's 70th Birthday in October – watch the Musket website www.musketbrewery.co.uk



Photo: The Musket Brewery family of Tony, Linda, Louise and Rhys.

Contact: Keith Ennis / Dave Moore

email: campaign@camrawestkent.org.uk



CHARCOTT: The **Greyhound** continues to serve four well kept ales, usually all from Kent. Recently however *Surrey Hills Gilt Complex* made an appearance, it's also worth mentioning that cider has been available in handpump.

CHIDDINGSTONE: The **Castle Inn** is performing well and is well supported by locals. The Chiddingstone Real Football was well attended on Good Friday and a lot of ale was consumed. Two *Larkins* ales are usually available in the bar, recently joined by *Harvey's Sussex Best*. A local cider is also available here.



CHIDDINGSTONE HOATH: The **Rock** is an excellent freehouse, tucked away down narrow lanes, but always worth visiting. *Larkins Traditional* and *Sharps Sea Fury* are the regulars here, plus a guest ale.



COWDEN: The **Fountain Inn** continues to perform well, with three well kept *Harvey's* beers available. The food side is increasing and the Steak Nights on Thursdays are popular and there is now a loyalty scheme in place.

EDENBRIDGE: The **Secret Cask** always has some local beers available, a couple from *Bexley Brewery* were sampled recently and were in good form. Changes are afoot soon as the business will be moving to new premises a short distance down the road.



HEVER: News from here concerns the **Greyhound**, the pub is now purely a restaurant, so drinkers will have to use the **King Henry VIII**, or travel to the other end of the lane, to drink in the **Kentish Horse** in Markbeech.

CAPEL: Simon and Lindsey took over the running of the **Dovecote Inn** at the beginning of April. They are now free of tie and are majoring on local cask ales. In mid April they had two *Larkins* beers and one from *Tonbridge, Long Man* and *Harvey's*. They are still investigating which opening hours work best for them so please check their Facebook page or phone ahead if you are coming from a distance.



LAMBERHURST: The **George and Dragon** are serving *Harvey's Sussex Best* which is also available just down the road at The **Chequers**. The **Chequers** also have a guest ale which was from *Only With Love* on our visit.



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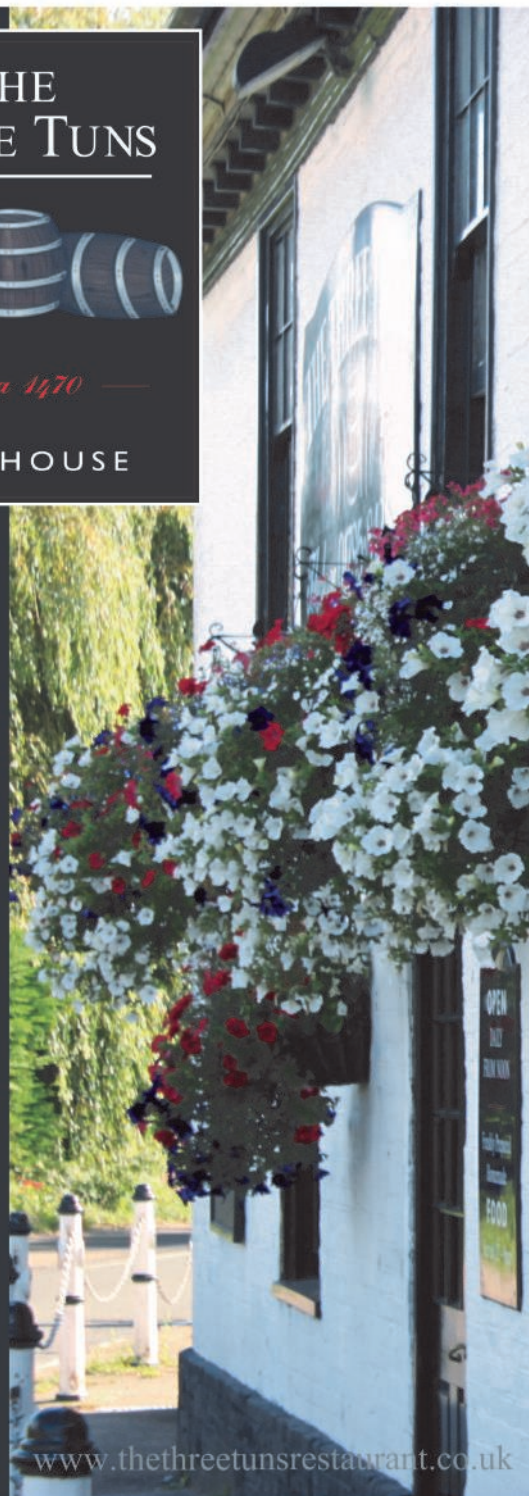
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TUNBRIDGE WELLS (The Pantiles): The **Ragged Trousers** on the Pantiles have *Fonthill Good Morning Captain* and *Long Man Best Bitter* as regular beers. Just off the Pantiles in Sussex Mews, The **Sussex Arms** have a *Fonthill* Brewery beer and *Long Man Best Bitter* as regulars, and also have two guest beers which vary but are usually something less well known from smaller breweries. They are on Real Ale Finder if you want to check what they have.



TUNBRIDGE WELLS (The High Street): Just off the High Street up Warwick Road you will find the **Grove Tavern** who have been in the GBG for over 20 years. There are usually three or four beers available. Regulars are *Harvey's Sussex Best*, *Timothy Taylor Landlord* and *61 Deep* from

Marston's. On our most recent visit they also had *Dark Star Hophead*. They are also on Real Ale Finder. A little further up and across the road you will find The **Compasses**. This is a *Greene King* pub and its regular beers are *Greene King IPA*, and *Abbot*. They also have a house beer which probably comes from *Greene King* called *Compasses Ale*. On our visit the guest ale was *Long Blonde* from *Long Man* with *Kent Prohibition* "resting" and waiting to come on.



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Report on the West Kent CAMRA Social Visit to Rusthall on 21 July 2022

The trip didn't start well for those of us travelling from Tonbridge. Somehow Arriva Buses decided that they would cancel both the 402 bus and 7 bus in succession meaning there was almost an hours wait for a bus to Tunbridge Wells. Luckily we caught a bus which got us to Royal Victoria Place just in time to catch the planned 281 to Rusthall. There we meet up with two others who were joining us so four of us travelled on the bus.

Having worked out the best stop for the **Red Lion** (Parsonage Road) we alighted there and cut through a path between houses to get to the road where the **Red Lion** is situated. Hugh was lurking outside the pub waiting for us to arrive so that made five. The **Red Lion** is a Grade II listed building and was reputedly first



issued with a licence in 1415. Inside we found two beers and a cider available on hand pump. I tried both beers and they were in good condition but I did find the *IPA* a tad unexciting.



We then moved on to visit the **Toad Rock Retreat**. A couple of us caught the bus whilst the other three decided to walk. Of course, the walkers beat us on the bus and by the time we were walking down the road, they had already got themselves a drink and were settling down on an outside table.



The **Toad Rock Retreat** had parts that were said to date back to the 18th century until it burned down in 1998 and had to be completely rebuilt. It was originally three cottages knocked into one, but these had been so chopped and changed over the years that basically all that remained of them were some internal walls, the main chimney and the front of the Games room. Apparently the pub also burned down in the 1930s. Certainly it was extensively rebuilt then, so much of the outer structure dated from then. The advanced party informed us there were two beers available. *Harvey's Best* again or *Sharpe's Doom Bar*. Not wanting the *Doom Bar* I went for the *Harvey's Best* which was in average condition. It was whilst we were here, Chris joined us having previously messaged us to find how we were progressing. After the one drink here it was back to the bus for those with tickets, whilst Chris drove Hugh back to Tunbridge Wells and



Fuggles Beer Cafe. Fuggles which was chosen as it is right opposite the bus stop for Don and myself to return to Tonbridge on the last bus.

There was the normal excellent selection of cask and keg beers and ciders here. Don and myself had barely half an hour before our bus was due so there was time for a quick one or three in good company.



Report on the West Kent CAMRA Social Visit to The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells on 25 August 2022

There was not a very good start for those of us travelling from Tonbridge. The bus was late so we missed our connecting bus to take us to the Pantiles, so it was a walk from TW station to the **Sussex Arms**. We eventually arrived at 19.50 to find several people already enjoying drinks. There were three cask ales available and two cask ciders. I went for the *Brew61 Greenfields Gold*.



Another member joined us so it made a group of nine of us in total. There was a discussion as to where we should go next. I was in favour of the **Pantiles Tap** as I had not visited there for some time whilst some of the others had already



popped in there earlier. It was decided that those who wanted to, would visit the **Pantiles Tap** and would then catch up with the others who went straight to the **Ragged Trousers**. When we got on to the **Pantiles** we found it very busy as it was the regular Thursday Jazz. I had a half of the *Brew York* and a half of the *Iron Pier* and a quick chat with Geoff who I have not seen for a while.



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The group then came together again in the **Ragged Trousers**. Here we found *Good Morning Captain* from Fonthill Brewery and *Best Bitter* from Long Man on cask.



I opted for *Hefe* from S43 Brewery which was one of their many keg and key keg beers available. Whilst drinking our beers the group discussion turned to the next pub to visit. As it was a short walk down the Pantiles, the **Duke of York** was suggested. Some of the party preferred to go to

the **Grove Tavern**.

The group I was in went to the **Duke of York**. Here we found cask beers from *Fullers, Gales and Dark Star*. They are all owned by the same Japanese Brewery and



probably brewed in the same brewery, although *Dark Star* still brew some beers at the Partridge Green Brewery. I opted for the *Dark Star Sunquake* which was a new beer to me.

Time was now getting on and the two of us from Tonbridge wanted to catch the last bus back which left Tunbridge Wells Station at 22.25. With this in mind we



suggested the **Bedford** be our last call as it is opposite the Station. Tony volunteered to leave earlier and pop in the **Grove** to inform the others where we were going. At the **Bedford** we found two *Gadd's* beers that had come on that day so I plumped for the *No. 5*.

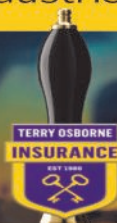


We managed to catch the bus.



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ONE BUS, THREE COUNTIES

by Jeff Tucker

The 291 bus, operated by Metrobus, runs hourly from Tunbridge Wells to Crawley, West Sussex, travelling via East Sussex along the way. It passes many good pubs en route, and we decided to sample three of them on a branch trip recently.

Our first stop was the **Engine Room** in East Grinstead, a quirky cellar bar which opened in the last ten years. They had a selection of about six local ales on, and I had *Time and Tide Sandwich Bay Bitter* and *Brew By Numbers Jester Amarillo*. Both were in fine fettle.

As we came into the town, we noticed that several shops had brown paper over the windows. I didn't think they were expecting a riot, so a quick enquiry established the reason – it was the 'Big Reveal', where shops make a Christmas window display covered from prying eyes, then they are all revealed at 5pm. What a good idea!

We couldn't stay that long so, after making sure that the buses would still be running while the High Street was closed, we got back on the 291 and got off at the **Gallipot** in Upper Hartfield. There wasn't a bus stop



here originally, so the enterprising people at the pub decided to create one (see photo)! The bus company soon adopted it, and it now features on the 'next stop' display on the bus. *Harvey's* was on here, always a useful standby, but I had *360 Degrees Session Ale*, which was very nice, and a new beer to me. The pub interior is very pleasant, with lots of beams, and we got a table by the fire.



An hour later, having tracked the progress of the bus, we jumped on for the short trip to Hartfield village, where the **Anchor** is right in the centre. Again, this is an old, cosy pub. The same *360 Degrees* beer was on, but I chose *Harvey's Old*, the first I have seen of this wonderful beer this year.



It wasn't on top form, but was perfectly drinkable. Must have been near the end of the barrel. Both here and the *Gallipot* were £5.00 a pint. How long before £5 becomes a distant memory?

Back in Tunbridge Wells, there was an option of a pub there or in Tonbridge, but I headed for home. Remember, a Discovery ticket costs £9 from any bus driver, and is valid all day on 99% of buses in Kent and Sussex.



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TAKING THE PEE!

by Jeff Tucker



Having seen some strange things in pub toilets, such as the *Doom Bar* handpump to flush the loo in the **Waterworks** in Rye, and urinals in the style of beer kegs or milk churns, I was somewhat surprised when I had occasion to visit the gents in the **Bell** in Ticehurst, East Sussex recently, which had three real ales on, including *Cellar Head*.

What should greet me but what looked like tubas (see photo). Yes, they were the urinals (or I hope they were, anyway!) The walls were papered with sheet music, to continue the musical theme.

Ticehurst is served by the hourly 254 bus from Tunbridge Wells to Hawkhurst and on to Hastings, and it stops outside the delightful old pub. What am I going to find next? The mind boggles!



Time for a pint?

Happy Father's Day
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The many reasons for visiting the pub - socialising with friends, playing pub games, watching sport, listening to music, participating in quizzes or just plain relaxation - will be familiar to all. However, occasionally an opportunity arises to enjoy a visit to the pub for an evening with a difference.



Once a year, for the last 10 years, events entitled a 'Pint of Science' have been held across the country - indeed nowadays across 25 countries in the world. Various Universities take part by giving a platform for researchers to engage the general public in explaining a summary of their field of interest and expertise along with their current work, and what better place to do so than within a pub! There is no requirement for any

previous knowledge of the subject matter - only a curious mind.

The format for the evening consists of the hosting pub setting up an area usually accommodating 30-40 members of the public with the academics occupying a space in which to address the audience together with any aids such as power point visuals. After all attendees have visited the bar to bring in their drinks the presentation is given, followed by a Q&A session then an interval in which the audience can re-visit the bar to refresh themselves while contemplating what they have just learned before another presentation is given on what is likely to be a totally different topic.

In May, a party of CAMRA members from the West Kent branch headed to the Miners Arms in Dunton Green near Sevenoaks, who had teamed up with the University of Greenwich to host an evening where two varied topics were covered. Firstly Professor Pat Harvey gave us an insight into the future potential for micro algae, CO₂, salt water and sunlight to provide renewable bioenergy. Then Professor Dennis Douroumis explored the advances in 3D printing applications for use in producing tailored medication and creating a range of medical devices.

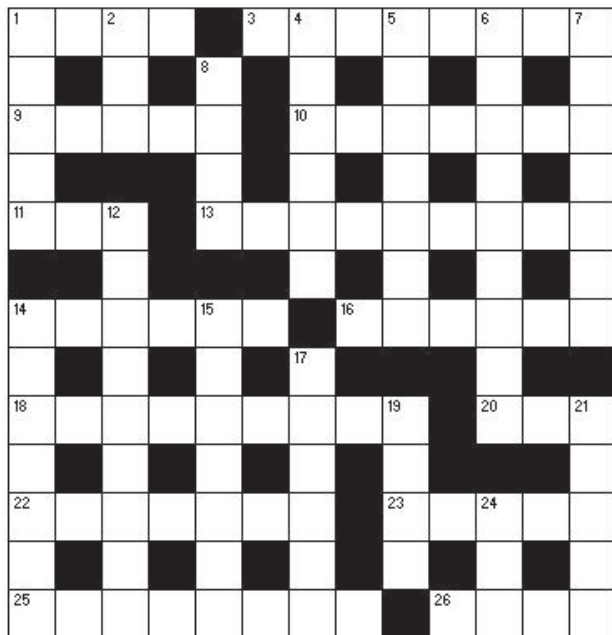
The Miners Arms has undergone much improvement in recent times and in



renovation work uncovered 100-year-old signage of former brewery Kidd & Son's, which has been beautifully restored on the front elevation. A covered patio provided the space in which to appreciate the talks given by the speakers while being within easy reach of the Old Dairy and Marstons beers available on the bar. Well done to the pub for being so innovative. This year's events are 22-24 May 2023. See www.pintofscience.co.uk

CROSSWORD No. 40

compiled by MICK NORMAN



*For a chance to win a crisp
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Across

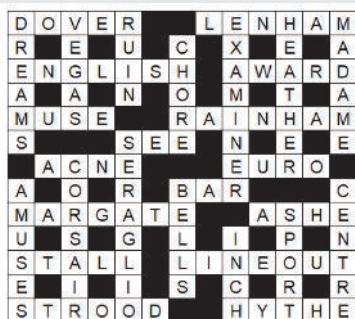
- 1 Restore the band (4)
3 Articles after 10:50 describing operetta (8)
"O for a sawn-off shotgun!"
9,13 - career-ending for one American athlete (5,9)
10 The aim being to lay supper out around 9 (7)
11 Pinch the short dress (3)
13 See 9
14 Is the German Requiem composer in his cups? (6)
16 Ulster rats scattering results in injury (6)
18,26 Rats - Lee Marvin's number one! (9,4)
20 Our favourite drink featured in special edition (3)
22 Listens to the insects (7)
23 Lily is ferocious! (5)
25 Heard '70s pop group hitched a lift with Santa? (8)
26 See 18

Down

- 1 I take on endless repetitive work with church musicians (5)
2 Motoring organisation involved in poor accounting (3)
4 Old Elthamian initially pops over to fight (6)
5 Show left to John Lennon, perhaps (7)
6 Recklessly point a car at George Michael's club! (9)
7 Madmen rose before Lake and Palmer (7)
8 Stranglehold maintained by film worker (4)
12 Bert and Rae in horrible Essex town (9)
14 Cricketer's hats (7)
15 Discussion of direction taken by police in Gateshead (7)
17 Is suet crumbly? It's a series of lies! (6)
19 Opening attendance (4)
21 Queen to shout, ignoring top grade by mistake (5)
24 Soldier with model ass (3)

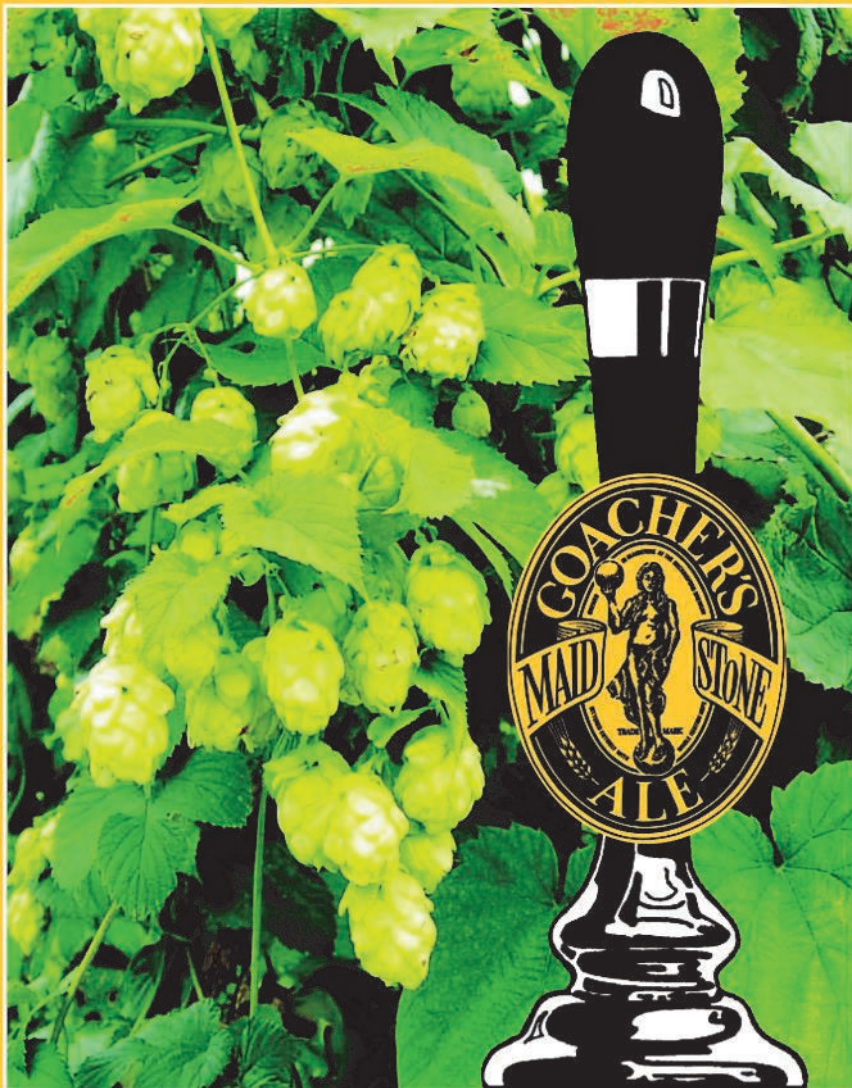
Solution to Crossword No. 39

*Congratulations to
D. Wilcock, Tonbridge
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