

Draught Copy



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Free Newsletter
for the
Maidstone & Mid-Kent,
Gravesend & Darent Valley
and Bexley areas of Kent

Autumn 2010

No. 160

NEW BILL TO SAVE PUBS

CAMRA is strongly supporting moves by Nigel Adams MP to bring forward a Parliamentary Bill to help protect valued community pubs and other local services. This is an issue that CAMRA has been campaigning on since early 2009, and was a central proposal in its Beer Drinkers and Pub Goers Charter, which has the support of over 150 MPs in Parliament.

The Protection of Local Services (Planning) Bill will give local councils in England the power to close loopholes in planning law which allow local services such as pubs, post offices, local shops and community centres to be demolished without the need to seek planning permission.

Nigel Adams, the new Conservative MP for Selby and Ainsty was recently selected by a ballot in Parliament to bring forward legislation on a subject of his choice. Mr Adams used this opportunity to give local services such as pubs greater protection from demolition or change of use, a move which CAMRA has praised. Mike Benner, CAMRA Chief Executive, said:

'This Bill will empower local communities and offer a much-needed lifeline to community pubs and other local services. Pubs are in crisis, with 39 closing every single week. A third of these pubs are then demolished without giving local communities a chance to save them. Both councils and communities are powerless to act as valued and viable pubs are destroyed.'

East Malling Beer and Cider Festival

4th September 2010



See Page 4 for details

DRAUGHT COPY

Draught Copy is the newsletter of the Maidstone and Mid-Kent, Bexley, and Gravesend & Darent Valley branches of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. It is issued quarterly, in February, May, August and November and has a circulation of 2700 copies. Opinions expressed are those of the author of the article, and need not represent those of CAMRA or its officials. All articles are by the editor unless otherwise attributed.

Our advertising rates:

£55 / £30 / £20 for a full / half / quarter page respectively.

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Advertising:	Colin Mann
Email:	colinmann@cix.co.uk

If you find a pub selling short measure, missing price lists, allowing smoking in the premises, or other illegal things in pubs, please have a quiet word with the landlord in the first instance. If you do not receive satisfaction, however, please ring the Council's Trading Standards on 08457 585497 for the K.C.C. area, or 0208 303 7777 for Bexley Borough. We should demand the very highest standards of service in our pubs.

The copy date for the next issue is 30 September 2010 for publication in November 2010.

Visit our website at:- <http://maidstoneandmidkentcamra.co.uk>

Fancy going to a Beer Festival? Try one of these:

CAMRA

www.camra.org.uk/page.aspx?o=events

GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL

August 3 – 7

Earls Court, London

See gbbf.camra.org.uk for details

EAST MALLING BEER & CIDER BEER FESTIVAL

September 4

East Malling Research

New Road, East Malling

Buses every hour from Aylesford

(10:26 onwards) and West Malling

(11:05 onwards) Railway Stations

Or 15-minute walk from East

Malling Station

See maidstoneandmidkentcamra.co.uk/beerfestivals.aspx

**CAMRA volunteers, please email
MMKFestivalStaffing@gmail.com**

BOOZE ON THE OUSE

ST IVES BEER FESTIVAL

September 16 – 18

[www.hunts.camra.org.uk/festivals/](http://www.hunts.camra.org.uk/festivals/branchbeerfestivals.asp)

[branchbeerfestivals.asp](http://www.hunts.camra.org.uk/festivals/branchbeerfestivals.asp)

ASCOT 4TH ANNUAL BEER FESTIVAL

September 24 – 26

Over 200 ales and ciders

See [www.camra.org.uk/page.aspx?](http://www.camra.org.uk/page.aspx?o=277256)

[o=277256](http://www.camra.org.uk/page.aspx?o=277256) and

www.ascot.co.uk/fixtic/

[fix_info/240910.html](http://www.ascot.co.uk/fixtic/fix_info/240910.html)

ST ALBANS BEER FESTIVAL

September 29 – October 2

More than 350 real ales = cider/perry

See www.stalbansbeerfestival.com/

Non-CAMRA – Pubs and Clubs

September 11 – 12

Oak and Ivy

Rye Road, Hawkhurst

BEER AND MUSIC FESTIVAL

10 beers plus live music

See ad on p20

September 16 – 19

Wheatsheaf

Loose Road, Maidstone

MINI BEER FESTIVAL

Hog roast on Sunday, 12 – 4

See ad on p5

October 8 – 10

Crown at Otford

LEAPING HORSE BEER FESTIVAL

18 Kentish beers—See ad on p13

October 29 – 31

Bull, West Malling

TREVOR'S BEER FEST

10+ ales in celebration!

November 4 – 6

MEDWAY BEER FESTIVAL

The Stanley Ballroom

Gundulph Rd, Chatham, ME4 6BB

See www.medwaybeerfestival.com

Maidstone and Mid Kent CAMRA presents



CAMRA's
East Malling
Beer and Cider Festival

Over 70 Real Ales and Ciders!

4th September 2010

11am - 8pm

East Malling Research Centre (ME19 6BJ)

Put it in your diary!

Live music (Hi Jets + Wasted Aces)

Admission:

£1 for card-carrying CAMRA members, £4.00 non-members

Special Festival Bus Service

Hourly from West Malling Rail Station

& Aylesford Rail Station

Both £1.00 return



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

More information on our website: www.maidstoneandmidkentcamra.co.uk



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

KENT BREWERIES

Goacher's	01622 682112	www.goachers.com
HopDaemon	01795 892078	www.hopdaemon.com
Larkins	01892 870328	
Moodleys Brewery	01892 889877	www.moodleys.co.uk
Millis Brewing Co.	01322 866233	
Nelson Brewing Co.	01634 832828	www.nelsonbrewingcompany.co.uk
Old Dairy Brewing Co.	01580) 243185	www.olddairybrewery.com
Ramsgate Brewery	01843 868453	www.ramsgatebrewery.co.uk
Shepherd Neame	01795 532206	www.shepherd-neame.co.uk
Swan, West Peckham	01622 812271	www.swan-on-the-green.co.uk
Wantsum Brewery	0845 0405980	
Westerham Brewery	01959 565837	www.westerhambrewery.co.uk
Whitstable Brewery	01622 851007	www.whitstablebrewery.info



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REALISTIC PRICES

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TO ACCOMPANY GOOD FOOD, ALL AT REASONABLE PRICES
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WITH HOG ROAST ON SUNDAY, 12 - 4**

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MONDAY TO SATURDAY**

SUNDAY LUNCH ~ MIDDAY TO 4PM

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- **LIVE BANDS** •

Bar open Monday - Friday 10am to 11pm, Saturday 11am to 11pm
Sunday 11am to 9pm (Summer, music nights & Bank Holidays to 10.30pm)

Large Beer Garden

TEL: 01732 842752

1 New Road, East Malling, Kent

Email: kingandqueen@tevitaverns.co.uk

King & Queen "What's On" 2010

No reservations for live music (these are free events) - arrive early!!

The King & Queen, 1 New Rd, East Malling, Kent ME19 6DD Tel: 01732 842752

Thursday 8th July Monthly Quiz Night Quiz starts 8.30pm

Sunday 11th July Award Winning Jazz Vocalist & Keyboard Player Liane Carroll starts 7.00pm

Sunday 25th July LIVE MUSIC Classic Soul Covers Kit Curtis & the Scene starts 8.00pm

Thursday 5th August Seafood Night Set Menu of Fish & Seafood Bookings Essential

Thursday 12th August Monthly Quiz Night Quiz Starts 7.30pm

Sunday 22nd August Mega 80's Quiz Music & Trivia Quiz starts 8.30pm

Sunday 29th August Bank Holiday BBQ 6.30pm PLUS LIVE MUSIC Bookings Essential Chris Rose "Kings of Swing"

Thursday 9th September Monthly Quiz Night Quiz starts 8.30pm

Sunday 12th September OPEN MIC NIGHT Plug in & Play from 7.30pm

Sunday 26th September "Stand Up" Comedy Night Bookings Essential

We may change any of the above, or even add extra dates - please ring before to check timings etc.

YEW



TREE



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OPEN ALL DAY EVERY DAY, UNTIL MIDNIGHT ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHTS

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FREE WiFi THROUGHOUT THE BAR.

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EMAIL: YEWTREESANDLING@HOTMAIL.CO.UK. WWW.YEWTREESANDLING.CO.UK

IT'S FESTIVAL TIME

by 'Man of Kent'

After a break of three years, the Maidstone and Mid-Kent Branch of CAMRA is once again organising a full-blown, Real Ale and Cider Festival in the local area. CAMRA's East Malling Beer and Cider Festival will take place on Saturday 4 September at our new venue: East Malling Research, the world-famous horticultural research station.

We know you've missed us, with many a Real Ale enthusiast asking us when our Festival would return. Since we last were involved in a similar event, we've been looking for a new venue that would give us the scope to run a Festival on our own terms. After nearly two years of searching the area for a suitable site, we are sure we've made the right choice in East Malling Research. We believe its spacious grounds make it the perfect location for our Festival as we move forward.

We are working hard to make the event a memorable one, not just in terms of the beers and ciders available – over 70 real ales and more ciders than ever before – but also those elements that help make it a day out for all to enjoy: live music, CAMRA shop, tombola, wholesome food, *etc.*

Local radio presenter Roger Day will open the Festival by downing a ceremonial pint at 11:00. We look forward to many of you joining him in celebrating Real Ale and Cider. [See poster on p4 – Ed]



We're in it!

The Bull
High Street
West Malling

At least 5 Real Ales available with
frequent guest brews

Beer Garden

Phone 01732 842753

THE FLOWER POT

CAMRA Maidstone and Mid Kent Pub of the Year 2009, 2010

Situated a short walk from Maidstone East train station on the edge of the town centre, The Flower Pot has a traditional back street Pub feel with its recently restored public and saloon bars.

Currently serving Goacher's Gold Star and Young's Bitter plus four ever changing guest ales from around the country, also at least one real cider always available. See our website to find what's on sale right now.

Still the only Pub in Maidstone town centre with Budweiser Budvar on draft.

We offer a Real Ale takeaway service and a discount for Card carrying CAMRA members.

Electro acoustic jam night every Tuesday from 8.30pm
Singers, song writers, musicians, poets and comedians welcome

Great value traditional pub food served daily 12 to 6pm

In the public bar our Original Wurlitzer Jukebox plays hits from the 50's and 60's, as well as some more modern inoffensive music.

Bar games, Shove Ha'penny, pool

Live Bands - See website for details

Opening hours; Monday to Friday 12pm - 11pm

Saturday 11am - 11pm

Sunday 12pm - 10.30pm

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Web: WWW.FLOWERPOTPUB.COM

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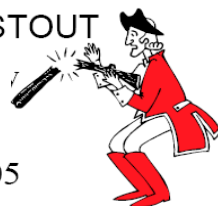
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Maidstone CAMRA Pub Of The Year, 2005



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Leaping Horse Beer Festival

(All Beers & Ciders From Kent)

@ The Crown, Otford



Friday 8th - Sunday 10th October

18 Beers from Kent

EVENTS

Midday Friday 8th – Beer Festival Opens

*Friday: Crookshank, Sprocket, Knock & Tank (R & B Rock Band) 8:30pm
& Sausage Sizzle*

Saturday: Folk Sing along & Morris Dancers from 1pm

Pete Morton, Comedy Folk Singer 5:30pm

Hog Roast @ 7:30pm

The Road Dogs (8:30 R & B Rock Band)

Sunday: Lunches served 12:30-5pm

Pumpkin competition 3pm & Open Mic Sunday Session – 5pm

2minutes walk from Otford Train Station

10 High Street, Otford, Sevenoaks TN14 5PQ

Phone: 01959 522847

Email: fengiescatering@aol.com

Website: crownpubandrestaurant.co.uk



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01732 885332

www.blackhorseandhoodens.com

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MONTHLY COMEDY NIGHTS , REGULAR MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENTS
VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR DATES AND DETAILS

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 12th 8.30pm

'GOOSEBUMPS'

Swing jive band

FRIDAY 27th to MONDAY 30th AUGUST

The Black Horse

2nd Annual Beer Festival

Real Ales, music, feasting and general mayhem as usual!

To facilitate the completion of our refurbishment, the kitchen will be closed July 26th to August 8th. Our apologies, but it will be well worth the inconvenience. Our re-launch party is on SATURDAY AUGUST 14th, 12 noon onwards, all welcome!

We are open Monday 5 to 11pm (Kitchen closed), Tuesday to Thursday 12 till 3 and 5 till 11pm, Friday & Saturday 12 till 11.30pm and Sunday 12 till 10.30pm...ish!

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www.redlionlenham.co.uk

Contact: *John Mills* 01732 840603 or email *jandj@larkfield98.freeserve.co.uk*

This is a news column: members and publicans can help us out here by informing us of any changes that have been made, including opening times, beer range, re-decoration etc.

For those who have a copy of the *Gateway Guide to Kent Pubs* the following phone numbers should be updated.

Redstart, Barming – 01622 727001

Ten Bells, Leeds – 01622 862949

Robin Hood, Blue Bell Hill – Just outside our branch but several members reported beer in top condition during their 2nd Beer Festival. It may be reached along Common Road by a short flat walk from 150 bus route or for the energetic a short steep climb from the 155 route at Burham. You will deserve a beer if taking the latter route. Good meals may be found here and three beers are normally available - two guests plus *Fullers London Pride*.

Buffalo's Head, Chart Sutton – Now sold but locals do not want to lose it.

Bird in Hand, Coxheath – There is a planning application to rebuild this and the adjacent Londis store. Meanwhile the pub has been redecorated and will re-open shortly to see if it is viable. Use it or lose it!

King and Queen, East Malling – We thank David Drury, the business owner, who kindly sponsored some of the beer which so many people enjoyed at the MENCAP Charity Fayre. The Easter Beer Festival proved popular and several Kent beers previously unseen in this area made an appearance. Enjoy your meal and beer in the well kept garden here. There are usually five beers on the bar including *Sharps Doombur* and *Harveys Sussex Best*.

Roebuck, Harrietsham – Manager Paul Goulden took over here in Jan 2010. The pub sits just off the A20 near the Indian restaurant and is fairly large with a conservatory extension that is used for events, quizzes etc. Beers now available are *Adnams Best* and *Taylor Landlord*.

Kent Cricketer, Hawkhurst – This closed briefly after only two months with previous licensee but re-opened again mid June.

The Rising Sun Inn & Inglenooks Restaurant



A 17th century Traditional Public House with a large Inglenook fireplace, old wooden beams, & a large wholesome menu to choose from.

A very friendly inn situated in the heart of Fawkham Green, The Rising Sun Inn & Inglenooks Restaurant is an excellent choice for food and drink. With a 40 seater restaurant an extensive menu to tempt any palette & a fully stocked bar there are plenty of refreshments to choose from including a variety of six real cask ales, a varied wine list & large choice of fine brandies & single malt whiskeys. Accommodation is also available with two amazing 4 poster rooms & three twin bedded rooms all with ensuite, flat screen TVs & tea & coffee making facilities.

Fawkham Green, Longfield, Kent, DA3 8NL
T: 01474 872291 www.risingsun-fawkham.co.uk

Great House, Hawkhurst – Reported to be keeping *Dark Star Hophead* as a regular guest all during the summer. Always has *Harveys Best*.

Oak & Ivy, Hawkhurst – Seems to be attracting customers with its special offers on meals and Thursday quiz night. Usual beers are *Harveys Best* and *Rother Valley Level Best* with guest ales often from *Dark Star*. This year the Beer & Music Festival is Sat/Sun Sept 11/12.

Hop Bine Inn, Knoxbidge – Recently renamed from **Knoxbridge Inn** and re-opened following a minor facelift. No news on this, as I was on a bus when I passed by and no beer reports have been received yet.

Lenham Working Mens Club, Lenham – There was a good attendance at this club for their first beer festival. Fifteen beers were available from *Hopdaemon*, *Nelson*, *Ramsgate*, *Swan*, *Wantsum* and *Whitstable*. We even managed to check out a few newer brews not previously sampled. Sue and her helpers put on an enjoyable event and the sun even shone so that the beer could be sipped in the garden with the excellent barbeque. *Shepherd Neame Master Brew* and *Spitfire* are normally on the bar.

Breeze Bar, Maidstone – Now open again but more a cafe/night spot.

British Queen, Maidstone – Now run by Wally, who some may remember from the Wheelers Arms, Perry Street which closed in 2000 and is now housing. *Shepherd Neame Master Brew* and *Canterbury Jack* may be found on the bar.

Flower Pot, Maidstone – David is having the outside re-decorated to make it even more inviting. The first tasting of *Royal bitter* from the new *Royal Tunbridge Wells* brewery was found to be good. Also *Blond Ambition* the first from the *Tonbridge* brewery was in the cellar on my recent visit. Always has a good selection of four guest ales plus *Goachers Gold Star* and *Youngs Bitter*.

Players, Maidstone – As the windows are blacked out and there are no opening times it is difficult to know what is going on here. I believe no real ale sold.

Rising Sun, Maidstone – Taken on by Peter Lea, who had started spending money to upgrade the pub, only to suddenly find it had been sold by the owners for housing.

River Bar, Maidstone – Remains closed and to let.

Royal Albion, Maidstone – A third pump has now been installed due to increase in real ale drinkers. Handy for a quick break from the shopping in Fremlin Walk and well known for music events. *Shepherd Neame Master Brew*, *Spitfire* and *Canterbury Jack*.



The Cock Inn

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and Sunday 12 – 10.30

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With Crab	£60	Ideal for two sharing
With Lobster	£70	Ideal for two sharing
With Crab and Lobster	£80	Ideal for four sharing

www.cockinnboughtonmonchelsea.com
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Stile Bridge, Marden – The May Bridgestock Beer & Music Festival went well and another is due for August Bank Holiday. Tasty pizzas and other dishes may be accompanied by *Westerham Bridgestock* (the house beer), the regular *Shepherd Neame Master Brew* or one of the two guest beers. Local ciders are also available.

White Horse, Otham – Sold to a builder. A local campaign has been started here in order to keep the pub as there are no others close by.

New Swan, Sandhurst - *Larkins Traditional* is now a regular guest ale in addition to the usual *Harveys Sussex Best*.

King's Head, Staplehurst – Will be holding a small beer festival with 8 Casks plus ciders over August Bank Holiday.

Lobster Pot, West Malling – James has left. Simon & Fiona Godfrey have taken on the tenancy and there is now a full set of six ales in good condition .

Scared Crow, West Malling – A visit in May found *Ushers 1824* as a guest. *Ushers* no longer exists as a brewery but it now comes from *Marston's* in Burton on Trent. The previously regular *Adnams Best* had vanished from the bar in late June and had been replaced by *Youngs Bitter*. *Everards Tiger* was the guest ale on this occasion.

The Oak and Ivy Inn

Rye Road
Hawkhurst
TN18 5DB



Beer and Music Festival

September 11 & 12

- 10 Beers on offer
- Live Music
- Open 11.00am till Late
- Free Camping / Caravanning Available for the Weekend

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E: OakandIvycontact@yahoo.co.uk

W: www.theoakandivy.co.uk

Contact: *Bob Belton* on 01322-224683 (H) / 020-7235-5213 (W) or
Ian Wright on 01322 550275 / 07779 319196
or email gdvcamra@yahoo.co.uk

www.gdvcamra.org.uk

Summer is here again and the seasonal outdoor pub and club beer festivals are happily upon us once again. This time last year I was speculating how many events had taken place at the **Fox & Hounds** at Romney Street, near Shoreham. Looking back through my notes I've discovered that the first festival took place on took place in 2001 and two CAMRA branches ran a bus trip there in June 2002. Now the festival has become a regular August Bank Holiday event and in 2010 the dates are Saturday 28th to Monday 30th August. Jeff and Fran are setting up 20 real ales, plus ciders and perries, in a large tent in the large garden. A hog roast will feature on the Sunday and a barbeque will be available every day. Throughout the weekend ten live bands, ranging from blues, jazz and rock, will appear on the stage in the tent. A magician on Sunday and yard of ale competition are also planned. The bar at the **Fox & Hounds** regularly stocks *Harvey's Best Bitter*, *Hogs Back Traditional English Ale (TEA)*, *Skinners Betty Stogs Bitter* and *Bushells Cider*.

Colin and Sue at the **Rising Sun** at Twitton, near Otford, are hosting their seventh event, from 20th to 22nd August, with 3 beers on handpump in the bar and up to 12 ales, including a mild, plus cider and perry on stillage in the garden. Friday night is steak night throughout the year, so steaks are on the menu on the Friday evening, with a hog roast on Saturday evening and a ploughman's lunch on Sunday. I'm pleased to report that the early May Bank Holiday festival at the **Rising Sun** was successful with *Skinners Cornish Blonde* being the first beer to sell out. There is always a good range of low to medium strength ales of various hues, usually from well-established smaller breweries at this event. Thank you, Colin and Sue, for your continuing hard work.

Sandwiched between the above events is the annual cricket week beer festival at **Wilmington Cricket Club** which runs from Tuesday 24th August to Monday 30th August, once again offering an interesting range of 20 real ales and cider and raffle prizes. The branch will be holding a meeting here as usual on the Friday evening.

Rolling on to autumn there is the *Good Beer Guide* listed **Crown** in Otford village OctOtFest from Friday 8th to Sunday 10th October in marquees in the garden with 20 real ales and ciders, Friday live music, Saturday hog

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roast, Sunday open mic night and a pumpkin competition; for full details see www.crownpubandrestaurant.co.uk.

Make an early note in your diary for the fourth festival at the **Jolly Drayman** in Gravesend which takes place on 12/13/14th November and follow their website www.jollydrayman.com and our new branch website www.gdvcamra.org.uk for forthcoming details. Congratulations once again to Kate and Charlie for the **Jolly Drayman** finishing third in the 2010 Branch Pub of the Year Competition behind the excellent **Bull** at Horton Kirby and ever reliable **Cock** at Luddesdown, which now regularly offers the new *Adnams* beer, *Lighthouse 3.4%* – very quaffable indeed.

The **Jolly Drayman** is now serving *Dark Star* brewery beers on a regular basis, which now has several regular outlets in our area, with the **Dartford Working Men's Club** and the **Bull** at Horton Kirby usually offering a good range of their beers. The **Bull Hotel** at Wrotham sells *Dark Star Best Bitter* and *Hophead* regularly with some guests, and the **Bridges** at South Darenth, the **Fighting Cocks** at Horton Kirby and the **Darnley Arms** in Cobham all serve *Hophead*, one of my own favourite beers.

The **Darnley Arms** has much improved since Kevin took over last year. This former *Greene King* pub is now an enterprising free house. *Greene King IPA* is still favoured by the locals but the excellent, refreshing *Hophead* has gained a sufficient following to become a regular beer. The third and sometimes fourth ale is a guest, being *Milk Street "The Usual"* on our recent visit. The pub hosts a monthly Monday quiz night and weekly Thai meals on Thursdays. Just along the road in Cobham the picturesque *Leather Bottle* has much improved beer quality since changing hands in December. A fourth handpump has been added and the *St.Austell Tribute* was very good.

Another pub which sells a good drop of *Tribute* is one of my favourite haunts, the **Malt Shovel** in Darenth Road, Dartford. This attractive listed building is a country pub in the town and hosts several activities. Monday is Quiz night, Tuesday cribbage in the tap room, Wednesday night is live music with Gamblers guests, Thursday is Sizzle and Steak night and Friday is Fish night, which I thoroughly enjoy. Good food is available every day, except Monday, when the open Quiz has attracted a faithful following and has been lucrative for a certain league quiz team during its free evenings, much to the chagrin of some locals. As Neil the landlord says "It's a fun quiz" and many a fun evening has been enjoyed

supping *Tribute*, *Young's Bitter*, *Special*, *London Gold* and *Hook Norton Hooky Bitter*.

Once again I'd like to mention that the Dartford Independent Quiz League is looking for new teams and players for the new season starting in September. All the current venues stock real ale, with the **Bull** at Horton Kirby having the largest choice of at least six ales and a cider in superlative condition. I mentioned some village pubs in the previous issue and there are two *Shepherd Neame* pubs in the League; the **Stage Door**, Hythe Street, Dartford and the **Orange Tree**, under new management, in Hawley Road, Wilmington. The **Stage Door** currently has three handpumps and we understand that *Shepherd Neame* are planning the install two more pumps and supply ales from other breweries. The third pump was offering *Holden's Bottom Knocker* 4.7% during my visit at the end of June and we look forward to a greater range of beers in the future.

The **Foresters** in Great Queen Street, Dartford runs two league teams and offers three real ales, *Courage Best*, *Spitfire* and a guest beer. On August Bank Holiday Sunday 29th the **Foresters** is organising a charity walk in aid of Cancer Research along the Darent Valley Path from Farningham to Dartford. Referring back to the Quiz League please contact Bob Belton on the header numbers or email bob.belton@hotmail.co.uk if you would like to join a team or enter a new pub or club in the League (minimum five players).

On Friday and Saturday 4/5th June several branch members attended the Dartford Real Ale Festival at the **Fleetdown Community Centre**, Swaledale Road, Dartford. This event first took place here in 1997 and was the forerunner of the excellent popular, large real ale festival in Central Park, initially run by the Dartford firemen and latterly, until 2007, by Geoff and Nick Byram of **Dartford Working Men's Club**. The park festival may yet be resurrected in some form, but meanwhile the smaller 30 firkin event, which supported the Arrow Riding Centre for the Disabled in 2009 and 2010, deserves greater customer support. All eight beers I sampled were in very good condition and I particularly enjoyed the *New Alloa Birds and Beers* (honey flavour) *Three B's Doff Cocker* (more honey) and the *Hogs Back Old Tongham Tasty*, at 6% ABV, sent me pleasantly on my way to the nearby *Fastrack* bus stop.

We've been informed of a number of pub closures recently, which we hope are mostly temporary and we would welcome any up to date news,

especially in the Gravesend and Northfleet districts, which appear to be more seriously affected. These pubs include the **Terrace Tavern**, just along from the **Crown & Thistle**, and the **New Inn**, one of the oldest pubs, in Gravesend town centre.

In the previous issue we reported that the former **Coopers Arms** in Northfleet has become a cafe and I can thoroughly recommend the generous portion of haddock and chips, sadly without any beer. Other pubs are becoming food emporia: a few hundred yards up the hill in Northfleet, the **Queens Head**, an imposing three storey building is set to become a Thai restaurant.

The recently re-opened **Kings Arms**, by the cricket green in Meopham is apparently now a restaurant selling drinks with meals only, similar to the up market **Stables**, formerly the **Horse & Groom**, at Wrotham Hill, which now only serves beer to diners. However the **Long Hop** in Meopham, also by the cricket green, remains a drinking pub serving real ale, although the emphasis is now on the extensive range of food.

About two years ago the **Colyer Arms**, Station Road, Betsham, near Southfleet, became an Indian restaurant, we understand, still maintaining a facility for drinkers only. The Gravesend Messenger of 24th June reported that the **Colyer Arms** is the subject of a planning application to demolish the existing building and replace it with private housing. Our Pubs Officer is planning to object, on behalf of CAMRA, on the grounds of loss of amenity to the local people. The **Colyer Arms** is the only “pub” in the village.

Finally, and potentially the most damaging from CAMRA’s point of view, is the current closure in June of the iconic **Old House**, Redwell Lane, Ightham Common. The **Old House** is a *Good Beer Guide* regular and the only pub in the branch area to be listed in the CAMRA National Inventory, which documents pubs of historic and architectural interest. The **Old House** is a traditional Kentish red brick and tile cottage style building, and the only local hostelry regularly dispensing beers by gravity. A true reminder of bygone times which we earnestly hope will not be consigned to the past.

Did you know that you can find recent issues of *Draught Copy* online at <http://maidstoneandmidkentcamra.co.uk/aboutus.aspx>?

Contact: *Martyn Nicholls* on 01322 527857 (H)
or *Graham Austin* on 07939 145429 (M)
or email contacts@camrabexleybranch.org.uk

Our meeting in April, following the successful Bexley Beer Festival, was held in the **Railway Tavern** in Old Bexley village. The beers were all in very good condition and the choice of *Shepherd Neame Early Bird*, *Black Sheep Golden Bitter*, *Courage Best*, *Brew Dog The Physics*, replaced by *Isle of Purbeck Solar Power* made the meeting more interesting. Well done to Peter Sampson and family for increasing the real ale range from one (*Courage Best*) to four, with a changing selection of guest beers, since they took over a year ago.

The **Old White Hart** pub in Erith, built in 1902, was purchased by Potion Bars in 2008 and the company opened the “bar” after replacing the old frontage with contemporary floor to ceiling metal framed glass windows, without planning permission. They applied retrospectively but were refused in March 2009. Bexley Council served an enforcement notice on the bar to remove the glass and restore the old frontage; the company appealed and lost. At present discussions to find a solution are in progress. Bexley CAMRA fully supports the findings of the government inspector who said that his main concern was the effect of the new frontage on the character of the building in part of the Erith Riverside Conservation Area, and that the change had “resulted in the loss of an intrinsic part of the building’s historic character”.

The Pub of the Year presentation to the **Crayford Arms** took place on the 26th May, awarded by branch Pubs Officer, Ian Wright. The locals and CAMRA members in attendance enjoyed the usual good range of beers from *Shepherd Neame* plus a guest ale, *St.Austell Tinnners*, and were treated to a decent spread of food – much appreciated. Congratulations once again to Sharon, John and Paul.

A correction to the report in the previous issue; the **Zero Bar** in Bexleyheath Broadway is now a bar restaurant called **Zingara** and has been done up very tastefully and colourfully, joining many other eateries-cum-bars in West Bexleyheath, alas without any real ale.

Unfortunately at our “Make May a Mild Month” at the **Robin Hood and Little John**, the mild was not ready to drink but we still managed a

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meeting with good beer from the other eight on offer. The *Harvey's Mild* was enjoyed by some a few days later.

J.D.Wetherspoons' establishments had five milds available over May, and it was possible to sample all five at our four outlets with both *Elgood's Black Dog* and *Leeds Midnight Bell* really hitting the mild spot. The current CAMRA *Good Beer Guide 2010* lists 193 Wetherspoons, including all nine in Northern Ireland.

It was nice to see plenty of football-related beers during the World Cup. *Banks's Lion's Roar* was on at the **Royal Standard** in Belvedere, JDW was offering *Moore Beer* from Weltons and *Back of the Net* from Greene King. The *Shepherd Neame* special, called 4-4-2, brewed with 10 varieties of hops, was very tasty at the **Crayford Arms**.

June saw our meeting in the **Charcoal Burner** in Main Road, Sidcup (towards New Eltham), an interesting two bar, 1960s pub, where we sat in the conservatory supping *Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter* and *Courage*, the *Fuller London Pride* clip being turned around.

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Well done to the **Lord Kitchener** in Wrotham Road, Welling, for raising £520 in aid of the Greenwich and Bexley Cottage Hospice and also the **Lord Raglan** in Hazel Road, Slade Green, for money raised for the same cause during the World Cup.

The **Furze Wren** by Bexleyheath Clock Tower successfully appealed in April against having to use polycarbonate glasses and can now dispense beer in real glasses after 8pm on Fridays and Saturdays. This Wetherspoons outlet is in the current *Good Beer Guide* selling good real ale in good real glasses.

The **Rose** in Bexleyheath Broadway has now made a point of advertising its guest ales outside the pub, last seen being *Adnams Bitter* and *St. Austell Tinnerns*, alongside more regular beers. The **Rose** is a former *Courage*, then *Ind Coope*, long-standing, reliable real ale pub on the main shopping street.

The **Drayman** in Crook Log, Bexleyheath, which had its licence revoked in August 2009 owing to visible drug-taking on the premises, re-opened on 11th June 2010 as Bexley's first "non-alcoholic" bar. This pub has had umpteen other incarnations over the years, none of them appealing to the real ale drinker, although it may have sold *Charrington IPA*, when known as the **Upton** in the 1970s.

The **Jolly Millers** in Mayplace Road, Bexleyheath, owned by the Brakspear Pub Company is now selling the *Marston's* owned *Brakspear Bitter* and *Oxford Gold* at very reasonable prices. The **Jolly Millers** is another long-standing reliable real ale pub, well-known for its good quality *Charrington IPA* in the 70s and 80s, when owned by Bass Charrington.

On 30th June our branch AGM was held at our well-deserved Pub of the Year, the previously mentioned **Crayford Arms**. It had another good attendance of fifteen local members, along with Ian Fielder, West Kent Area Organiser, representing the CAMRA hierarchy. A full committee was elected, ensuring Bexley branch's continuance into its 35th year. Thank you to all members who have helped the branch recently; and to others, why not come along and get involved or at least notify our Branch Contact of anything interesting happening in the world of pubs and beer in Bexley?

We've noticed an odd report in a local paper where Bexley police used local actors (in return for a donation) to test whether ten of the borough's

publicans were willing to sell drinks to “obviously” drunk people. So on a Saturday night, after having whisky tipped over their clothes and acting drunk, they visited the ten outlets and were served every time without a problem. At a licensing seminar held shortly afterwards the actors gave a repeat performance and when asked whether they would be served, over 100 local licensees said “No”. When the “sting” had been explained to them they were shocked. Chief Inspector Steve Murrant said that licensees needed to train and educate their staff better, otherwise closure could follow. Apparently a recent survey showed that 43% of bar staff are working to a drink sales target so the position is difficult.

Bexley Branch hosted the July CAMRA Kent Regional Meeting at the **Crayford Arms**, where *Kentucky Bluebird* at 5% was the latest, very palatable offering from the *Shepherd Neame* microbrewery plant. We adjourned to the **One Bell**, where *Greene King IPA*, *Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter* and *St,Austell Tribute* were on sale. We then called in at the **Wellington**, also offering *Harvey's Best* and *Tribute* and finished up at the **Charlotte**, near the station, selling regular beers, *Shepherd Neame Spitfire* and *Ringwood Fortyniner* with *Hop Back Summer Lightning* as the guest beer. All in all, Crayford offers quite a pleasant pub crawl.

It is with sadness that we record the recent death of **David Lynch**, who retired in February 2006 from being licensee of the **Swan** on County Road, Maidstone. David was a true character, who kept his ales always in the best of condition, and was renowned for his occasional curry night extravaganzas, which I fondly remember. Rest in peace, David.

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A Worthy Cause

by Chris Webb

Some of the older readers of *Draught Copy* may remember the annual May Fayre held at Mote Park Cheshire Home. Maidstone CAMRA were long time supporters of the Cheshire Home and we raised several thousand pounds for this excellent charity over the years.

Our plan was simple, we would write to brewers, landlords and beer distributors and cajole (that's beg to you and me) their support to donate free beer for the event.

Looking back we were hugely successful and I have fond memories of lifting up to seventeen casks of ale onto a temporary stillage erected on the lawns to the west of Mote House and covering them with a roped down tarpaulin to protect them from prying eyes. This work preceded the May Fayre by some two days, during which time Cheshire Homes arranged for the entire stillage to be covered by a marquee.

I cannot recall the last May Fayre but it is certainly over twelve years ago, it ended when Cheshire Homes finally surrendered to the mounting costs of trying to maintain an ageing building totally unsuited to housing the disabled and relocated to more suitable premises in Staplehurst.

Despite Cheshire Homes' wish for CAMRA to continue to support them at Staplehurst, their facility proved unsuitable for hosting a mini beer festival and regretfully we were forced to end our support.

After a gap of a few years and totally out of the blue we received an approach from Maidstone Mencap enquiring if we would like to run a beer tent at their Summer Fayre, which by a quirky coincidence, was also run from a large elderly building (Cobtree Hall) in another corner of Mote Park.

That was eleven years ago, since when CAMRA has raised more than ten thousand pounds for Mencap from the Summer Fayres held in early June each year.

These fayres provide an excellent opportunity for CAMRA to spread the good news about real ale and bolster our campaigning efforts. So for us it is a labour of love, a labour that we freely give as we prepare for and staff the event with our unpaid volunteers, and we ensure that all proceeds from sales of real ale are given to Mencap.

Now I'd like to turn to the real reason I have written this small article. For good or ill I am the 'beggar' whose responsibility it is every year to write to those friendly agents and request a donation of real ale. Invariably I basically end up writing to the same benefactors every year and what is so amazing is that every year, almost without fail, these same companies, some of which are very small business concerns, never let me down. During the Fayre we do all we can to help advertise the largesse of our supporters and of course I always send formal letters of thanks once we have closed our accounts and know how much money has been raised for Mencap.

So, by way of a fillip to our benefactors and to record both CAMRA's and Mencap's gratitude in a more public manner I would like to list (in no particular order of priority) as a 'roll of honour' these magnificent individuals and concerns who have so ably supported us, many of them year on year;

- Goacher's Maidstone Ales (Phil and Debbie Goacher)
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- Youngs and Wells Brewery Company Limited
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- The Flowerpot – Sandling Road, Maidstone (David and Julie Davenport)
- The King & Queen – East .Malling (Dave Drury)
- Waverley TBS
- Bateman's Wainfleet Ales
- Nelson Brewery Company – Chatham Dockyard
- Mr Russell Roberts (RIP) – ex licensee of the Bull Inn E.Farleigh and the White Hart Claygate.

Thanks must also go to supporting public houses such as Cock Inn at Boughton Monchelsea and the Pilot in Maidstone for acting as depots for the donated casks, and if I have overlooked someone then I humbly offer my apologies.

So next time you enjoy a pint or two of the fine ales produced by these good agents, or are in excellent pubs such as the Flowerpot or the King and Queen, please raise your glass and drink a toast to 'a worthy cause'

Cheers (*Fayre do's – Ed*)

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Heading South in CZ

by Jeff Tucker

Say 'Czech Republic' and everyone thinks 'Prague'. It's a nice enough place, but has become a bit of a tourist mecca. As with most countries, the more interesting parts can be found outside the capital. Train and coach travel can be planned (in English) at <http://jizdnirady.idnes.cz/vlakyautobusy/spojeni/>.

One of the southernmost towns in the Czech Republic is Ceske Budejovice, the regional capital of South Bohemia, with a population of 95,000. It is the home of REAL Budweiser, known as *Budvar*. Smaller breweries are found in the area, which can be reached easily by cheap public transport.

On arrival at Prague airport, the easiest way to get to the main station is by express coach AE, which runs every 30 minutes and costs 50KC. KC is Koruna, or Czech Crowns, for which the exchange rate is about 28 to the pound. The coach will deliver you to the upper level of the station, which houses the former ticket hall, with all its slightly faded grandeur, and the **Fantona Kavarna** cafe. My first beer was *Budvar Tmave* (dark), very nice at 35KC for half a litre, which is the default quantity served in the country. The route from there to the station concourse and ticket office is a little tortuous.

The trains to Ceske Budejovice run hourly, and take 2hr 40min to cover the 169Km at a cost of 213KC. Train fares are set according to the distance travelled regardless of the route, and do not vary. The last half hour turned out to be a replacement bus service, to cover long-term reconstruction works on the track.

I was staying at the Penzion U Nadrazi, which was conveniently situated almost opposite the station and even closer to the bus station. The rooms were very clean and modern, if a little basic, but I would recommend it. The price of a single room was just 700KC per night.

Armed with a guide to four local pubs which I found on the Internet, I made the ten-minute walk to the centre of town. The first on the tour was **Restaurace Masne Kramy**, a cavernous place with a large no-smoking area. Another *Budvar Tmave* and a *Svetly* (light) were 35KC and very enjoyable. The latter is the one found more often in the UK, usually in bottles. Dinner was delicious – chicken, bacon, mushrooms and chips, selected from the English menu, costing 157KC.

The second pub turned out to be wrongly placed on the map, but I eventually found it in the opposite direction. **U Tri Sedlaku** (The Three Farmers, I think) is in the traditional style, although the furnishings are obviously quite modern. *Kozel Tmave* at 27KC was not as good as *Budvar*; similarly *Pilsner Urquell* (29KC) was eclipsed by *Budvar Svetly*.

A left turn down Ceska soon brought me to **Potrefena Husa** (Grazing Goose), which had a very modern trendy interior, in contrast to the exterior. *Staropramen Cerny* (black) from Prague at 32KC was not bad, though. Straight on out of this pub led shortly to the **Budvarka Pivnice**, a beer hall with a vaulted ceiling. *Budvar* dark was the choice here. Time for bed!

The next morning involved a train trip to Plzen, home of the country's other famous beer, *Pilsner Urquell*. The place to head for is **Na Parkane** next to the brewery museum. Here can be found *Kvasnicovy Pilsner Urquell*, a yeast beer. This pub is supposedly the only place in the world where it can be found! It was quite bitter and hazy, costing 36KC.

Back on the train from the imposing Plzen station, I got off at Strakonice, home of **Nektar Brewery**, a ten-minute walk from the station if you can follow the map! There was no restaurant on site, but **U Papeze** (the Pope!) across the road sells *Nektar Dudak* (21KC) and the yeast beer *Kvasnicovy* (23KC), neither of which was that inspiring. Back to Ceske Budejovice.

Pubs around the station are few and far between, being mainly gambling establishments full of slot machines, so I headed for the town centre again. I came across the **Polo Pizzeria**, an Italian restaurant which offered *Budvar* at 35KC. Returning to my hotel, I found the **Crash Bar** on Zizkova.

This sold *Svijany* beers all the way from the Liberec region in the far north of the country. When asked why, the owner said they were cheaper to buy than the local beers. *Knezna*, a 5.2% dark beer (33KC) was pretty good, but not on the menu as such. Believe it or not, it was normally mixed with cola to make a drink sold as 'diesel' - sacrilege! *Kvasnicak*, a 6.1% yeast beer (31KC) was not cloudy as expected, but good.

My last full day involved a 45-minute bus ride south to Cesky Krumlov, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and home to **Eggenberg Brewery**, which offers guided tours (in English if required) daily. The no-frills bus terminal in this hilly town overlooks the centre, but the route to get there is not obvious. I eventually found it, and asked for directions to the brewery.

The town centre is truly beautiful, but cars are allowed seemingly throughout, which spoils the effect somewhat. Anyone intending to visit the brewery assembles at the brewery gate at 11.00. On this day, six of us turned up, including an American couple, so the tour was conducted in (pretty good) English by the brewmaster. The price of 130KC included two beers in the adjacent restaurant. The brewery dates from 1560 and is more modern inside than out. Bottles committing suicide in the bottling plant seemed to be a regular occurrence, the floor awash with beer and broken glass!

In the restaurant, *Svetly Lezak*, 5%, was rather nice, as was *Kvasnicove*, another non-cloudy yeast beer. On the way back to the bus station, I came across the **Theatre Club Antre**, with a garden overlooking the river which dominates the town. This sold *Bernard* beers from Humpolec in the adjacent region of Vysocina. *Specialni Cerny Lezak*, 5.1% and 30KC, was my favourite beer of the trip so far, while *Svetly Lezak*, 5% and 29KC, was also pretty good. Back on the bus to Ceske Budejovice and another visit to **U Tri Sedlaku** for a *Kozel Tmavy* and the *Gambrinus*, which was not bad at 25KC, followed by *Budvarka* again for a *Budvar* dark.

The next day I just had time to check out a pub which I had seen from a trolleybus trip, advertising *Platan* beers from nearby Protivin, which I hadn't encountered before. This was **U Cerneho Konicka** (The Black Horse), also on Zizkova, which was amazingly busy at 11.30. The 11-degree beer at 25KC was very nice, as was the *Kvasnicove*, 30KC, served in a weissbier glass.

Sadly, it was time to head back to Prague airport, by bus, train and coach. Whatever you do, don't arrive there thirsty. A half litre of *Pilsner Urquell* will set you back a whopping 145KC, four times the price of the most expensive beer I came across on the trip. There was a lot which I didn't have time to see, so another trip is planned for 2012 on the last weekend in July, which features festivals at two of the local breweries.

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This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- The Guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that take part in the Direct Debit Scheme. The efficiency and security of the Scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society.
- If the amount to be paid on the payment date changes CAMRA will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.
- If an error is made by CAMRA or your Bank or Building Society you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to us.

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account.

CAMRA BRANCH MEETINGS

CAMRA branches arrange socials and trips throughout the year. Non-members are welcome to come along to our meetings. If you would like more information, or would like a lift (if possible), please ring the local branch contact—see **Local News** sections.

BEX = Bexley, **GDV** = Gravesend and Darent Valley, and

MMK = Maidstone & Mid-Kent (*OBM* = Open Business Meeting)

AUGUST

- 5 **MMK** George, then Walnut Tree, Yalding
- 11 **BEX** **Duchess of Kent**, Northumberland Heath (*OBM*)
- 12 **MMK** Kings Arms, Boxley, then Yew Tree, Sandling
- 19 **MMK** Brickmakers Arms, then Swan, Maidstone
- 21 **GDV** 1pm social – **Rising Sun (Twitton)** Beer Festival
- 26 **MMK** Walnut Tree, East Farleigh, then Royal Paper Mill, Tovil
- 27 **GDV** **Wilmington Cricket Club** Beer Festival
- 28 **GDV** 1pm social – **Fox & Hounds** (Romney Street) Beer Festival
- 31 **GDV** 12noon social – Seaside Crawl – Details from Branch Contact
- 31 **BEX** Joint Seaside Crawl – Details from **GDV Branch Contact**

SEPTEMBER

- 2 **MMK** Rising Sun, then King & Queen, East Malling
- 4 **MMK** EAST MALLING BEER FESTIVAL – 11am to 8pm – see page 4
- 8 **BEX** **Albany**, Albany Park (*OBM*)
- 9 **MMK** Lord Raglan, then Stilebridge, Staplehurst
- 9 **GDV** **Rum Puncheon**, Gravesend (*OBM*)
- 16 **MMK** Bell & Jorrocks, Frittenden, (*OBM*)
- 18 **MMK** Bus Trip to Hastings, Westfield and Newenden
- 22 **GDV** **Royal Oak** and **Moat**, Wrotham Heath, then **Blue Anchor**, Platt
- 23 **MMK** **Duke of Edinburgh**, Barming, then **Walnut Tree**, Tonbridge Rd
- 30 **MMK** **Plough**, Trottiscliffe, then **Angel**, Addington

OCTOBER

- 7 **MMK** Drakes, then Olde Thirsty Pig, Maidstone
- 13 **BEX** **Tailor's Chalk**, Sidcup (*OBM*)
- 14 **MMK** White Horse, then Fox & Goose, Bearsted
- 14 **GDV** **Six Bells**, Earl Grey and **Campbell Arms**, Northfleet
- 21 **MMK** Peacock, Iden Green, then **Star and Eagle**, Goudhurst
- 25 **GDV** 5pm Bus Trip – Spa Valley Rail, Ale and Fish & Chips
- 27 **GDV** **Dartford Working Men's Club** (*OBM*)
- 28 **MMK** Walnut Tree, then **Chequers**, Loose

■ OLD 1066 ALE ■ BEST DARK ALE ■

REAL MILD ALE ■ FINE LIGHT ALE ■ GOLD STAR



REAL MILD ALE ■ FINE LIGHT ALE ■ GOLD STAR

GOACHER'S MAIDSTONE ALES

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