

# Draught Copy



CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE

Free Newsletter  
for the

Maidstone & Mid-Kent,  
Gravesend & Darent Valley  
and Bexley areas of Kent

Autumn 2013

No. 172

## MENCAP BENEFIT FROM CAMRA'S REAL ALE SALES



Maidstone CAMRA Chairman, Jeff Tucker, is seen here presenting a cheque for £1150 to Margaret Leeds from Maidstone MENCAP. This sum was the proceeds from a highly successful bar that CAMRA ran at MENCAP's recent Summer Fayre in Mote Park. A report on the event can be found inside on page 49.

## **EAST MALLING BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL**

Our next big event is the **East Malling Beer & Cider Festival** on Saturday, September 7th at East Malling Research. Our poster on page 6 has all the details. We look forward to seeing you there.

Festival volunteers: please email [mmkfestivalstaffing@gmail.com](mailto:mmkfestivalstaffing@gmail.com)

# 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 published 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:**

£69 / £40 / £24 for a full / half / quarter page respectively.

<b>Editor and</b>	Tim Mathews
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<b>Advertising:</b>	Colin Mann
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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 2013 for publication in November 2013.

Visit our website at [www.mmkamra.co.uk](http://www.mmkamra.co.uk)



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

**CAMRA** [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk)

**GREAT BRITISH BEER FESTIVAL**

**AUGUST 13–17**

London Olympia

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

**EAST MALLING BEER & CIDER FEST.**

**SEPTEMBER 7**

East Malling Research, ME19 6BJ

75+ real ales + wide selection of ciders

[www.mmcamra.co.uk/#!/\\_\\_beer-festivals](http://www.mmcamra.co.uk/#!/__beer-festivals)

**ASCOT RACECOURSE BEER FESTIVAL**

**OCTOBER 4–5**

Ascot Racecourse, Ascot, Berks

220 real ales, ciders & perries

[ascotbeerfest.seberkscamra.org.uk](http://ascotbeerfest.seberkscamra.org.uk)

**SPA VALLEY RAILWAY BEER FEST.**

**OCTOBER 18–20**

Tunbridge Wells West Station

Over 50 regional beers & ciders

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

**Non-CAMRA – Pubs and Clubs**

**August 9–11**

**Six Bells** Bethersden Road,

Woodchurch TN26 3QQ

**August 16–18**

**Rising Sun** (Garden Beer Festival)

Twitton, near Otford

16 beers plus cider, perry and food

**August 17**

**Amazon & Tiger** (First festival)

Harvel, near Meopham

10 beers plus cider.

*See ad on page 37*

**August 20–26**

**Wilmington Cricket Club**

20 beers plus cider.

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

**August 23–26**

**Good Intent**

West Farleigh ME15 0NN

*See ad on page 25*

**August 23–26**

**Fox & Hounds**

Romney Street, near Shoreham

25 beers + cider, live music & BBQ

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

**August 26**

**Orpington Liberal Club**

7 Station Rd, Orpington, BR6 0RZ

Beer, Cider, Folk & Blues Festival

*See ad on page 10*

**August 29–31**

**Flower Pot**

Sandling Road, Maidstone

*See ad on page 18*

**August 29–31**

**Teston Club**

Wealden Court, Church Street,

Teston ME18 5AG

**August 30–September 1**

**George & Dragon**

Swanscombe

Second Annual Beer Festival

*See ad on page 33*

**September 13–15**

**Three Hats**

High St., Milton Regis ME19 2AR

Warwickshire Beer Festival

*see ad on page 43*



# HARVEYS

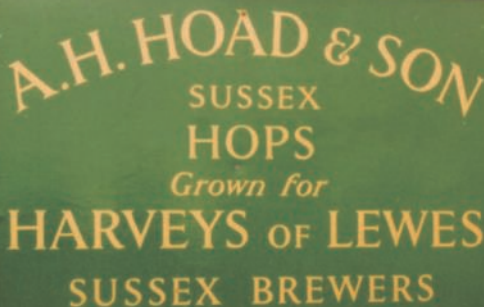
The Sussex Brewers

Harveys, the Sussex Brewers, are quintessentially local. Distribution is restricted to within sixty miles of Lewes and their beers have evolved over the past two centuries to accommodate the preference of beer drinkers within its native and adjoining counties.

Fundamental to this is the procurement of local hops to produce a well balanced beer with a bitterness derived from traditional aroma varieties. It is the brewery's proud boast that it brews from 40% Sussex, 40% Kent and 20% Surrey hops, a balance which approximates the volume of their beers sold within these counties. Supply is guaranteed by means of long term contracts, affording security for brewer and grower alike.

When you are drinking Harvey's beer you are seldom far from a hop garden that has helped craft this time honoured brew. Moreover, it is Harvey's belief that the wide range of new domestic hop varieties present every opportunity for enhancement and innovation. Central to this wealth of heritage, the brewery continues to perpetuate the age old interaction between local rural and urban economies to the benefit of all.

*Local Beer brewed with  
Local Hops*



A.H. HOAD & SON  
SUSSEX  
HOPS  
*Grown for*  
HARVEYS OF LEWES  
SUSSEX BREWERS

Hops growing at Parsonage Farm,  
Salehurst, Sussex.

*"The parish of Salehurst is supposed to have the best plantation of hops in the county, the land being kindly for them, especially about the church, where it is rich."*

- Arthur Young's 'Agriculture of Sussex' (1813)

**'TIME HONOURED BEER - LOCALLY REVERED'**

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

# KENT BREWERIES

<b>Black Cat Brewery</b>	07948 387718	<i>www.blackcat-brewery.com</i>
<b>Canterbury Ales</b>	01227 732541	<i>www.canterbury-ales.co.uk</i>
<b>Canterbury Brewers</b>	01227 455899	<i>www.thefoundrycanterbury.co.uk/canterbury-brewers</i>
<b>Caveman Brewery</b>	07769 710665	<i>www.cavemanbrewery.co.uk</i>
<b>Goacher's</b>	01622 682112	<i>www.goachers.com</i>
<b>Goody Ales</b>	07790 443810	<i>www.goodyales.co.uk</i>
<b>HopDaemon</b>	01795 892078	<i>www.hopdaemon.com</i>
<b>Hop Fuzz</b>	07850 441267	<i>www.hopfuzz.co.uk</i>
<b>Kent Brewery</b>	01634 780037	<i>www.kentbrewery.com</i>
<b>Larkins</b>	01892 870328	
<b>Mad Cat Brewery</b>	07960 263615	<i>www.madcatbrewery.co.uk</i>
<b>Millis Brewing Co.</b>	01322 866233	<i>www.millisbrewing.com</i>
<b>Nelson Brewing Co.</b>	01634 832828	<i>www.nelsonbrewery.co.uk</i>
<b>Old Dairy Brewing Co.</b>	01580 243185	<i>www.olddairybrewery.com</i>
<b>Old Forge Brewery</b>	01233 720444	<i>www.thefarriersarms.com</i>
<b>Ramsgate Brewery</b>	01843 868453	<i>www.ramsgatebrewery.co.uk</i>
<b>Ripple Steam Brewery</b>	07917 037611	<i>www.ripplesteambrewery.co.uk</i>
<b>Rockin' Robin Brewery</b>	07787 416110	
<b>Shepherd Neame</b>	01795 532206	<i>www.shepherd-neame.co.uk</i>
<b>Spencer's Brewery</b>	01233 610215	<i>www.spencersbrewery.co.uk</i>
<b>Swan, West Peckham</b>	01622 812271	<i>www.swan-on-the-green.co.uk</i>
<b>Tír Dhá Ghlas</b>	01304 211666	<i>www.cullinsyard.co.uk</i>
<b>Tonbridge Brewery</b>	01732 366770	<i>www.tonbridgebrewery.co.uk</i>
<b>Wantsum Brewery</b>	0845 0405980	<i>www.wantsumbrewery.co.uk</i>
<b>Westerham Brewery</b>	01959 565837	<i>www.westerhambrewery.co.uk</i>
<b>Whitstable Brewery</b>	01622 851007	<i>www.whitstablebrewery.info</i>



CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE

MAIDSTONE AND MID  
KENT CAMRA PRESENTS

# CAMRA'S EAST MALLING BEER AND CIDER FESTIVAL

East Malling Research ME19 6BJ

Saturday September 7th 2013  
11 AM to 8 PM



75+ Real Ales And Ciders

**ALL DAY  
FALLING**

Live Music

*Atlantic  
Currants*

Admission £2.00 for card-carrying CAMRA  
members; £4.00 for non-members

FREE Festival Shuttle bus service running  
every 30 minutes from  
10.26 (Aylesford Station) and  
10.35 (West Malling Station)



Follow us on @EMbeerfestival



Maidstone and Mid Kent CAMRA  
East Malling Beer Festival 2013



# THE BLACK HORSE INN

## FREEHOUSE

Pilgrims Way  
Thurnham  
Maidstone  
Kent  
ME14 3LD

Tel 01622 737185  
info@wellieboot.net  
www.wellieboot.net



A family-run business with pub, restaurant and lovely bed and breakfast rooms at the foot of the North Downs in the Kent countryside

Dog friendly in the bar

Cask Conditioned Ales – Westerham Grasshopper and 4 Guest Ales, which could include Old Dairy Spring Top, Timothy Taylor Landlord, Sharps Doom Bar, Black Sheep Best, Skinners Betty Stogs, Adnams Ghost Ship - the list is endless but all well kept!

Open all day every day with food served all day!

Traditional pub favourites along with A La Carte and blackboard daily specials

## THE DRAUGHT COPY CAMRA DISCOUNT LIST

We will be starting a new feature in these pages, a list of pubs and clubs that offer discounted pints to any card-carrying CAMRA member. If you are a licensee who is already extending this welcome privilege, then please let us know – email [dc@braymead.com](mailto:dc@braymead.com). Equally, if you would like to start such a scheme and have your pub or club listed here, please send us an email with details of what you're proposing. It need only be a nominal discount, a minimum of 10p off a pint, to qualify.

We look forward to welcoming you here as you welcome us.



Recent issues of *Draught Copy* online can be found at [www.mmkamra.co.uk/Pages/DraughtCopy.aspx](http://www.mmkamra.co.uk/Pages/DraughtCopy.aspx)

### RIFLE VOLUNTEERS

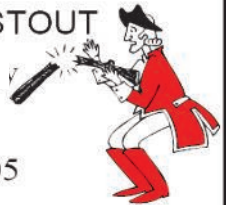
Wyatt Street, Maidstone - Phone 01622 758891

A REAL TRADITIONAL MAIDSTONE PUB

SERVING GOACHER'S FINEST ALES AND STOUT

Good Beer Guide Listed This Century

Maidstone CAMRA Pub Of The Year, 2005



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**WE SPECIALISE IN PUBS!  
COMPETITIVE PUBLICAN PACKAGES AVAILABLE NOW!**

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**THE KING & QUEEN**  
Restaurant, Bar & Accommodation  
TEVITA TAVERNS LIMITED

**Food served all day every day**

Closed Sunday evenings except bank holiday weekends

Operating under the same ownership since December 2000 and with our key team members being with us for many of those years, these really are the reasons we are able to ensure the very best standards in all that we do at the King and Queen, in well kept, relaxed surroundings that are open all day, every day!

Whether you are enjoying a traditional bar meal, dining from our a la carte menu in one of our restaurant areas or indeed dining outside in our beautiful garden or even just relaxing with a bottle of wine or a pint with friends, we'll make sure your experience with us is really enjoyable.

*Bookings strongly recommended to avoid disappointment - 01732 842752*



- Full Restaurant A la Carte Menu
- Traditional Pub Favourites
- Lighter Lunch Snack Menu
- Traditional Sunday Lunch (12pm - 4pm)
- Christmas Party Menu 2013
- Function & Party Menus for all types of family & corporate events
- Champagne & drinks receptions
- Office lunches & walking groups
- B&B Accommodation
- Live music nights
- Quiz nights
- Comedy nights

*For more information find us online at:*  
[www.kingandqueeneastmallings.co.uk](http://www.kingandqueeneastmallings.co.uk)

*Follow us on Twitter:*  
[@kingandqueenm](https://twitter.com/kingandqueenm)



# ORPINGTON LIBERAL CLUB

## August Bank Holiday Beer, Cider, Folk & Blues Festival

**26 August. 11am to 11pm. Stunning real ales and ciders all at £2.70 a pint, live music. Excellent Barbecue.**

**Provisional list of real ales: Kissingate Six Crows, Ilkley Siberia, Elephant School s-lime, Triple fff Jabberwocky, Saltaire Cascade Pale, Whitstable Oyster Stout, Clarence & Frederick's American Pale Ale, Kent Brewery Cobnut, Caveman Citra, Green Jack Summer Dream, Westerham Bohemian Rhapsody, Tonbridge Rustic, Wantsum Black Prince, Pig and Porter Ashburnham Pale.**

**Ciders and Perry. Real three week hung beef burgers from a local farm. Wild Boar and Red Apple Sausages. Very close to railway station and many bus routes.**

**BOOKING ESSENTIAL.** For more information and to book go to [www.orpingtonliberalclub.co.uk](http://www.orpingtonliberalclub.co.uk)



**Bromley CAMRA  
Club of the Year 2013**



**Craft Brewed · Progressive · Quality Beer**

**Brewing Kent Beers for the 21st Century**

**Widely available throughout London and the South East**

**Exclusive House Beer at The Craft Beer Co. pubs in London and Brighton**

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



# THE WHEATSHEAF

LOOSE ROAD MAIDSTONE

01622 752624

REAL ALES REAL FOOD  
REALISTIC PRICES

YOUR FRIENDLY LOCAL PROVIDING A WIDE RANGE OF DRINKS  
TO ACCOMPANY GOOD FOOD, ALL AT REASONABLE PRICES

**A SUNDAY ROAST EVERY SUNDAY**

**COME AND ENJOY A FRESH, HOME COOKED ROAST DINNER  
FROM 12PM TILL 5PM FOR ONLY £7.95. CHILDREN £4.95**

OUTSIDE BAR SERVICE PROVIDED FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Showing all sporting events on ESPN and Sky Sports

## The fabulous GRANDADS

## Classic Rock

from the 70's, 80's and 90's

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

*'The awesome fabulous Grandads have put together a varied set list of great music that everyone likes. The best sound I've ever heard in a pub - Fantastic.'*

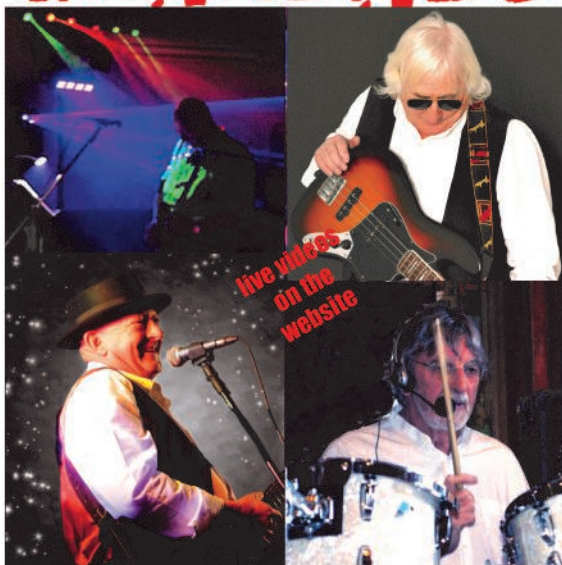
*The Windmill, Willesborough.*

*'We've never seen or heard anything like them. No one else could Top-the-Bill at our festival.'*  
**The Dog and Bone, Gillingham.**

*'An excellent band with quality equipment complimented by a brilliant light show, your choice of music was spot on for the Dukes Head. We are still rocking...'* *Chris Sutton - Landlord.*

*The Dukes Head, Dunton Green*

**Tel: Neil on 07767 891609**



## Kent Cider Makers

Badgers Hill Farm	01227 730573	
Biddenden Cider	01580 291726	<i>www.biddendenvineyards.com</i>
Big Tree Cider	01474 705221	<i>www.bigtreecider.co.uk</i>
Broomfield Orchard	01227 362279	
Castle Cider Co	01732 455977	
Core Fruit Products	01227 730589	
Double Vision Cider	01622 746633	
Dudda's Tun Cider	01795 886266	<i>www.duddastuncider.com</i>
East Stour Cider Co	07880923398	<i>danbaldwin@tiscali.co.uk</i>
Green Oak Farm	01304 821630	<i>info@greenoakfarm.co.uk</i>
Johnson's Farmhouse Cider	01795 665203	
Kent Cider Company	07738 573818	<i>kentcider.co.uk</i>
Kentish Pip Cider	01227 830525	<i>www.kentishpip.co.uk</i>
Kings Wood Cider		<i>danbaldwin@tiscali.co.uk</i>
Magic Bus Cider	07887 747569	
Merry Moon	07707 309041	
North Downs Cider	07747343892	
Pawley Farm Cider	01795 532043	<i>pawleyfarmcider@tiscali.co.uk</i>
Rough Old Wife Cider	01227 700757	<i>www.rougholdwife.com</i>

For a useful map of Kent cider makers,  
mostly clustered around Canterbury and East Kent,  
please take a look at the website of  
CAMRA branch DDS (Deal, Dover, Sandwich & District)  
*www.camra-dds.org.uk/pubscidermakers.htm*



**Rough Old Wife:** This summer, to further the marketing of Kent real ciders they opened up the cidery for a 90 minute talk, tour and tasting through Groupon. So far the feedback has been tremendous, with many people going away to their local pub and starting to ask for real cider on draft. Rough Old Wife will share the results of how successful this has been in the next edition of *Draught Copy*; so watch this space!

Contact: John Mills 01732 840603 or email [jandj@larkfield98.freerve.co.uk](mailto:jandj@larkfield98.freerve.co.uk)

**Bull, Barming** – New licensee, Daren Hills, now has opening hours 11.30-11.30 and 12-10.30 Sundays. Food is served 12-3, 6-9 Mon-Thu; 12-10 Fri-Sat; 12-6 Sun. On the bar when the branch visited were *Harveys Best*, *Hook Norton Old Hooky*, *Ringwood Fortyniner*, *Robinsons Uncle Sams* and *Sharps Doom Bar* with prices ranging from £3.25 to £3.55. Guest ales will change regularly. The new website is: [thebullinnbarming.co.uk](http://thebullinnbarming.co.uk)



**Redstart, Barming** – This is only a 5 minute walk up North Street from the Tonbridge Road. There is a substantial car park in front and a large garden to the rear with two petanque pistes. When our branch visited here mid-evening they found it to be quite busy with many patrons having already eaten. Kasia had *Harveys Sussex Best*, *Sharps Doom Bar* and guest ale *Youngs London Gold* available. Website: [www.redstartpub.co.uk](http://www.redstartpub.co.uk)

**King William IV, Benenden** – This was seen to have re-opened in April/May but no reports have been received as yet from anyone in that area.

**Albion, Boughton Monchelsea** – Now reported as closed.

**Crown, Cranbrook** – Building work seems to have halted here.

**Bell & Jorrocks, Frittenden** – Congratulations to Rosie for completing her 478 mile, MRI Scanner Appeal Bike Ride to Londonderry, for which more than £15,500 has been raised.

**Vine, Goudhurst** – This village centre pub has been bought by Toby Excell & Ben Stokes who intend restoring it back into use including serving food and hope to re-open in October.

**Larkfield Priory Hotel, Larkfield** – This has now ceased to sell real ale.

**Wealden Hall, Larkfield** – Now no longer in private ownership, the pub is under the *Greene King* banner and badged as an Old English Inn with only GK beers available – currently *IPA*, *Abbot* and *Old Speckled Hen*.

## Great British Beer Festival

## London Olympia

## 13-17th August

The nation's beers are  
dropping into London



# SHEP'S ALE AT ITS BEST!



WE ARE A SMALL TRADITIONAL PUB  
LOCATED NEXT TO COUNTY HALL AND A COUPLE OF MINUTES  
WALK FROM MAIDSTONE EAST STATION AND BUS STOPS -  
IN COUNTY ROAD - BY THE PRISON GATES.

IN THE GOOD BEER GUIDE FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS AND CASK  
MARQUE ACCREDITED. TO TICKLE YOUR TASTE BUDS WE OFFER  
THE BEST:

- REGULAR CASK ALES
- SEASONAL ALES / NEW CLASSIC COLLECTION RANGE
- SPECIAL ALES FROM THE PILOT BREWERY
- REGIONAL BEER FESTIVALS

TO KEEP OUR PATRONS AMUSED WE HOST REGULAR QUIZ &  
DARTS MATCHES. HOLD CHARITABLE EVENTS. OFFER A VARIETY OF  
ENTERTAINMENT & ARRANGE EXCURSIONS. CLUBS ARE WELCOME  
& SUPPORTED. WE ALSO HAVE A BEER GARDEN & ARE DOG  
FRIENDLY. WE CAN'T COMPETE WITH MAIDSTONE'S FOOD OUTLETS  
BUT CAN MAKE YOU A SWELL SANDWICH TO SOAK UP THE BEER!

NEXT TIME YOU VISIT MAIDSTONE WHY NOT WANDER AWAY FROM  
THE CROWDS AND DISCOVER US . . .

STILL NOT TEMPTED - VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
[www.theswaninmaidstone.co.uk](http://www.theswaninmaidstone.co.uk)



**Chequers, Loose** – New licensee Shaw Cavill took over here on May 1. Breakfasts are now being served. The *St Austell Tribute* will be replaced by a changing selection of guest ales. The regulars will remain as *Fullers London Pride*, *Harveys Sussex Best*, *Shepherd Neame Master Brew* and *Taylor Landlord*. The opening hours have been extended: 12-11 Mon-Thu, 12-11:30 Fri, 9-11:30 Sat, and 12-10:30 Sun. A new website will be available soon.



**Bull, Maidstone** – *Greene King* are yet again causing a stir around the country with their themed eating pubs. Some time ago they removed the sign for the **Bull** on Penenden Heath and left a very plain GK sign. This caused an upset and it was eventually restored. Now the sign again just has the pub name and the theme – the picture being eliminated. Why destroy such well known signs and traditions? If you think this is wrong write to them and complain.

**Fishermans Arms, Maidstone** – Cliff Burke runs this Sheps pub which is far larger than one would expect from the frontage. Though narrow, it has a second room with a dartboard and this leads to a long garden/patio area which soaks up the sun. Cribbage and dominoes are popular. The operating hours are 11-11 (2am Fri/Sat). Sky TV is provided for sports addicts. Free WiFi is present for those that enjoy a drink with their bytes. *Master Brew* and *Canterbury Jack* were available when I called.

**Olde Thirsty Pig, Maidstone** – Found closed in April, this has been re-possessed by the private owner and having been re-furbished has now re-opened. Currently operating from 5pm till 11:30 Mon-Thu, 5pm till 1:30am Fri, 3pm till 2:30am Sat and 3pm till midnight Sun. My bus does not run that late. So it may be suitable for local insomniacs and late shift workers then. The good news is that the four pumps are being looked after by Alison who used to run the **Black Horse** in Borough Green. The beers stocked will be mostly from Kent microbreweries but *Dark Star Hophead* was on when I visited - a welcome intruder from Sussex.



**R Bar, Maidstone** – Boarded up and For Sale by Auction.

# 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 Fawkhams 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 palate & 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.

Fawkhams Green, Longfield, Kent, DA3 8NL  
T: 01474 872291 [www.risingsun-fawkhams.co.uk](http://www.risingsun-fawkhams.co.uk)



## The Bell & Jorrocks

Biddenden Road, Frittenden 01580 852415  
[www.thebellandjorrocks.co.uk](http://www.thebellandjorrocks.co.uk)

Sean & Rosie welcome you to their 18<sup>th</sup> century pub in the heart of Frittenden, famous for its Treacle mines.

The B&J is renowned for its well conditioned cask ales and is in the Good Beer Guide 2012.

We offer Harveys Sussex Best, Adnams Best, Woodforde's Wherry and a guest ale.

Quality assured by Cask Marque.



**Kitchen Open Hours**  
Wed & Sun 12 - 3pm

Mon-Thurs 6:30 - 9pm  
Fri & Sat 7:30 - 9:30pm

**Live Music Monthly** – Check Website for Details



**Rifle Volunteers, Maidstone** – A visit here to cover our Mild in May celebrations also found a polypin of *Goachers India Pearl Ale* 5.7% that had been produced for *Goachers Brewery's* 30<sup>th</sup> birthday and very good it was too. This is one of a few pubs that regularly stock mild ale. *Goachers Real Mild Ale* and *Fine Light* are always on.



**Saxon Chief, Maidstone** – Seemingly allowed to be run down by Enterprise Inns this was closed in March and has now been sold to Chartway Group to be used as offices. Without good tenants and sensible leasing, customers will drift away with yet another loss.

**Wheatsheaf, Maidstone** - Rossa Kenny has introduced a Beer Tasters Card scheme for real ale drinkers. Customers can get a card from the bar which is stamped for purchases of pints of real ale. A free pint is the reward for getting 10 stamps on the card. Several mini beer festivals are held each year. Good quality pints of *Caledonian XPA* and *80/-* have been found at the bar recently. *Courage Best* is the regular ale here.

**Stile Bridge, Marden** – The petanque pistes have now gone and the garden has been paved providing a larger area for customers to enjoy the sun, if we ever get any. We always seem to find something different on the bar here. Sometimes it's a new beer and also new or unfamiliar breweries.



**Unicorn, Marden** – A long overdue branch visit to Marden found us here where Keith had on *Harveys Sussex Best*, *Shepherd Neame Master Brew* and *Sharps Doom Bar* as a guest. There is now a café in the restaurant area.

**West End Tavern, Marden** – Normally I have no bother with low beams but I was caught out here due to the conjunction of step below and beam above. Still there was no damage to my brain but a loss of some beer from my glass. Here we found it fairly busy with *Adnams Lighthouse* and *Harveys Sussex Best* on the bar. The pub now has new licensees.

# The Flower



# Pot

*CAMRA Kent Pub of the Year 2010 & 2011*

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**UP TO 9 ALES AND 4 CIDERS**  
**HOME COOKED FOOD 12-3PM MONDAY**  
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**Kings Arms, Offham** – Alex and Ross held a beer festival from 20-23 June, with 20 beers, mostly from Kent micros. Cool and windy conditions prevailed but I still noted a reasonable attendance by local CAMRA members during the Saturday. The best beers that I found were *Wantsum Black Prince*, *Tonbridge Alsace Gold*, *Kent Berry Mild Porter* and *Dark Star Summer Solstice* – no order implied. Three Kent ciders were also available. You do not have to wait for the next beer festival as there is always something new on the bar, just check out the display of pump clips.

**Bull, Sissinghurst**– At this Enterprise Inns pub after a long period of closure and decay, the builders are in, and a banner announces: "The Milk House, Pub. Dining, Rooms".

**Kings Head, Staplehurst**– Licensees, Robbie and Nicola Tallon, have received the Pub of the Year award from Shepherd Neame for greatly increasing the business since taking over five years ago.

**Railway Tavern, Staplehurst** – Despite the poor light conditions I called in on 29 May as I needed a current photograph for *WhatPub.com*, I was greeted by Ricky Hughes who had taken over on 23 May. Initially putting on whatever beer he had been left, I found *Young's Best Bitter* in good form. Other beers will be featured in due course. The pipes had been given a good clean on take-over and quality should now be greatly improved with proper standards of cleanliness and maintenance.



**Tickled Trout, West Farleigh** – Licensee Lindsey Taylor has made some changes here. The restaurant has been brightened up with cream rather than the dark red paint. There is now a wheelchair ramp to make the large garden accessible as well as a play area for children. Though mainly a restaurant, there are three regular ales *Fullers London Pride*, *St Austell Tribute* and *Taylor Landlord*.

**Farm House, West Malling** – Problems with patrons here, concerning noise levels and unruly behaviour, have caused restrictions to be placed on the evening use of the smoking area and a requirement to employ two SIA door supervisors at weekends. Let us hope the trouble makers do not cause problems elsewhere.



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We are proud of our

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CAMRA Good Beer Guide & Cask Marque award

The **Old Plantation** in Bearsted: We have had an email from Gill Wedlake telling us that Enterprise Inns have put the **Old Plantation** up for sale. The latest news is that it is being sold as a residential property. We now have a fight on our hands to keep it open as a pub. She says she would be really grateful for any help that local members can give. Following advice from our pubs officer, Gill reports: *"The situation at the moment is that we have enough signatures on the Value to the Community form and are still collecting."*

Speaking personally, I find it frustrating that it so often seems to be Enterprise involved in these closures. Such pubcos add little value to the supply chain and are usually so enmired in debt that they have to squeeze their tenants into such tight situations that their businesses become unviable. Where's the enterprise in that? I do wish that large pub estates could be made illegal somehow. They are killing our pubs!

Gill now informs us that the pub has been sold to Swift Brothers, who own Swift Roofing among other businesses, and who will surely not want to run it as a pub. Meanwhile the struggle to get Asset of Community Value status continues.

*Local  
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*Local  
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# The Good Intent at East Farleigh

## August Bank Holiday Beer Festival

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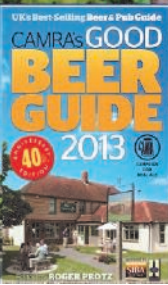


featuring some 12-15 beers from Larkins, Tonbridge, Rockin' Robin & others  
Festival hours: Friday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> from 6 till 11, Saturday 12 till 11  
Sunday & Monday from 12 till 10:30

## Quiz Night on Monday

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

**The Bull**  
**High Street**  
**West Malling**



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*Ian Wright* on 01322 550275 / 07779 319196  
or email [gdvcamra@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gdvcamra@yahoo.co.uk)

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The **George & Dragon** in Swanscombe has done it again! Beating competition from worthy Pub of the Year winners from other CAMRA branches in West Kent, the **George & Dragon** has now been voted, by independent CAMRA members from branches in East Kent, the West Kent Pub of the Year for 2013. The presentation will take place at the pub on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August and all are welcome to attend. This is a significant achievement, and the next stage is the head to head vote against the East Kent Pub of the Year to become the overall CAMRA Kent Pub of the Year.

The East Kent Pub of the Year 2013 is the **Berry** in Walmer, as voted by members, including myself, of West Kent branches. In judging the Pub of the Year, the quality of the real ales, and cider and perry (where available) is of paramount importance but several other factors are taken into account when completing the survey. The initial welcome and quality of service are important and the atmosphere, style and decor of the pub are considered. Overall does the pub offer a focus to the community and offer good value to customers? Both the **Berry** and **George and Dragon** tick all the boxes

The presentation evening in May of the local branch Pub of the Year award to Bob and Bron Veal at the **George & Dragon** was extremely well attended, and we'd

especially like to thank Bron for putting on the food and Nick Byram for showing some of us around the "Cave", the spacious pub cellar where the new *Caveman* Brewery is located. Three of the new "prehistoric" beers were on tap that evening: *Mesolithic* 4.5% ABV, *Prehistoric Amber* 4.5% and



*Nick Byram, Bob & Bron Veal, and Bob Belton*

*Megalithic* 5.9% were enjoyed by all. These and other *Caveman* beers *Palaeolithic* 3.8%, *Neolithic* 4.1% and *Neanderthal* 4.6% have been spotted in several haunts, inevitably at the **Dartford Working Men's Club** (where *Caveman* beers will be available regularly), the **Old Dartfordians Club** in Bexley village and a number of free houses.

Our second well attended presentation evening in May took place at the **Cock** at Luddesdown, the local branch Pub of Year runner-up. The certificate was presented by branch Chairman Bob Belton to licensees Andrew, Denise and Adnam Turner. As mentioned in the previous issue the long serving landlord of this marvellous traditional free house, Andrew Turner is currently suffering poor health (we wish him well) and we are pleased to say that son Adnam is training to run the cellar and the bar so we trust that this wonderful, family-owned pub will continue to prosper and sell traditional *Adnams* real ales, alongside various others for many years to come.

Branch socials have concentrated around rural locations in the spring and summer months and I've started to write these notes on the "longest day", not that you'd credit it in the wind and rain. What happened to summer? Maybe there will be sunshine ahead when you read this? Maybe not? Let's hope the weather stays kind for the increasing number of pub beer festivals around and about. Recent festivals that we are aware of have taken place at the **Rum Puncheon** and **Jolly Drayman**, both Gravesend; the **Rising Sun** at Twitton, the **Queen** in South Darenth, the **Ship** in Southfleet, the **Fox & Hounds** at Romney Street, the **Bull** at Horton Kirby and the **Crown** in Otford. Please let us know about any which have escaped our attention. Four local beer festivals scheduled in August are listed on page 3 of this issue.

As I've been away on holiday I missed most of the above including the **Rising Sun** event in May, where I'm pleased to report that four members from Bexley and Otford met each other there by chance sitting at the same table. I'm planning to visit the **Rising Sun** in August when the real ales and ciders will be complemented by the usual steak night on the Friday, excellent hog roast on Saturday and ploughman's lunch on Sunday. This year the branch will be holding an all day and evening social at the **Wilmington Cricket Club** (see diary page). I'm pleased to report that the **Fox & Hounds** at Romney Street, near Shoreham/Eynsford has recommenced hosting beer festivals in the garden. We missed the Spring Bank Holiday event but intend to visit the August Bank Holiday beer festival.

# the **Somerset** arms

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The other beer festival listed in August is a new one at the **Amazon & Tiger** in Harvel on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August with ten real ales, ciders and live music. This pub is an austere building celebrating its centenary this year and is pleasantly located by the cricket green. We made an unscheduled stop here during our social in June and spoke to licensees Mick & Ange, who are proud to serve an ever changing range of three real ales, with beers from *Kent Brewery* being a favourite. *Lancaster Amber* and *Hogs Back Summer Ale* were sampled that evening.

The scheduled stops on this whistlestop tour were the **Black Horse** at Stansted, selling very good quality *Larkins Traditional* and *Whitstable East India Pale Ale*; the **Green Man** at Hodsoll Street, serving *Dark Star Hophead*, *Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter* and *Sharp's Doom Bar*; and finishing at the **Vigo** in Fairseat. This *LocAle* favourite was offering *Ripple Steam Best Bitter* and *IPA*, which are not quite so local, being from the opposite end of the county. All four of these country pubs were quite busy for a Wednesday evening, which is encouraging, as they all need to be supported regularly by the drinking and eating public.

We have recently visited the remaining two pubs in Southfleet, the **Ship** in Red Street, where we sampled *Wychwood Hobgoblin*, *Adnams Broadside* and *Wells Bombardier*, and the **Manor Farm Barn** in New Barn Road, offering *Shepherd Neame Master Brew*, *Spitfire* and *Kent's Best* that evening. Another social took us to the Shorne area where the **Copperfield**, a *Crown Carvery* restaurant pub on the old main Gravesend to Rochester road, had a decent pint of *Sheps Spitfire*. In the two traditional pubs, the **See Ho**, Pear Tree Lane, Shorne Ridgway and the **Rose & Crown** in the village centre, I sampled *Fuller's London Pride* and *Bombardier* respectively. All the beers tasted fine but as CAMRA members, we had hoped to find a more intriguing variety of real ales on offer.

A more interesting range of beers was encountered on trips in the Eynsford, Otford and Kemsing areas. The **Crown** at Otford stocks two house beers from local breweries, *Westerham Otford Crown Bitter* and *Tonbridge Three in a Bed*, alongside cider and rotating guest beers, and always serves excellent home-cooked meals. The **Fox & Hounds** at Romney Street near Shoreham was serving *Goody's Genesis*, *Cottage Duchess* and *Hepworth Sussex Best Bitter* at the times of visiting, and at the **Rising Sun**, Cotmans Ash Lane near Kemsing, we sampled very refreshing *Hop Back Hop Medley*, *Long Man Sussex Pride* and *Cotleigh Owzatt!* I enjoyed an excellent pint of *Okells Manx Pale Ale* at the **Five**

**Bells** in Eynsford, which now serves *Long Man Long Blonde* fairly regularly, and we tried *Theakstons Masham Four and Twenty* at the **Malt Shovel**, which has also stocked *Long Man Long Blonde*. On the way back to Dartford we called in at the **Bull** in Horton Kirby which was agreeably busy on a Thursday evening, and the pub is recovering some of its former glory on the real ale front. *Dark Star Hophead* and *American Pale Ale* are fairly regular now; *Skinners Betty Stogs* and *Goddards Fuggle-de-Dum* were guests.

We're always on the lookout for more pub information from the Gravesend and Northfleet areas. Les Broad has visited several pubs in Northfleet, reporting that the **Rose**, Wood Street, near Northfleet station and handy for Ebbsfleet football ground, is a welcoming back street local selling *Millis Kentish Dark*, a very good mild ale, and *Sharps Doom Bar* when he was there. *Millis* beers, often *Gravesend Guzzler* and *Kentish Dark*, are regularly on offer at the **Rose**.

The **Coach & Horses**, The Hill, Northfleet normally has *Banks's Mild* and *Sharps Doom Bar* on offer. This is a cosy pub where good food is available, with steaks at reasonable prices. The **Six Bells** in Old Perry Street sells *Doom Bar* and *Courage Best* and is also noted for its food, with a good value, weekly curry night. The **Earl Grey**, in Vale Road, a *Good Beer Guide* regular, is a traditional community local, a welcoming *Shepherd Neame* tied house serving *Master Brew*, *Kent's Best* and seasonal *Early Bird* in very good condition as usual.

The greatest variety of beer in Northfleet is to be found at the **Campbell Arms** in Campbell Road, another traditional back street community local. Les tried *Oakham Bishops Farewell* and *Limestone Foundation Stone*, both in good condition, and noted *Weston's Cider* on handpump. Real ales rotate at the **Campbell Arms** and something interesting is usually on offer at the very reasonable price of £2.70 a pint.

Overall the real ale scene in Northfleet has improved recently, especially with real mild often available in two of the pubs. On the down side, two pubs in Northfleet have closed in recent months, the **Prince Albert** in Shepherd Street and the **Rising Sun** in Seymour Road, neither having sold real ale in recent years. We have also been informed that the **Royal Oak**, Stonewood, Bean has closed permanently.

Les has also given me information regarding twelve pubs in Gravesend which, for lack of space now, will be updated for the next issue. One

point worth mentioning briefly is that the **Somerset Arms**, Darnley Road, near Gravesend railway station, is selling selected ales at £2.00 a pint on Tuesdays. The *Kent Brewery Pale*, *Beyond the Pale* and *Hook Norton Old Hooky* were particularly well kept. Also the **Trocadero** in Windmill Street has finally re-opened, selling *Courage Best* and *Wells Bombardier*, initially at £2.10 a pint.

Les also visited the **Black Horse and Hoodens**, Maidstone Road, Borough Green which has new licensees. During his visit the pub was offering *Theakston Double Cross IPA* and *Sharp's Doom Bar*, both served in good condition. Alison, the former landlady, was a real ale enthusiast who gained the pub a place in the *Good Beer Guide*. [She is now at the *Olde Thirsty Pig in Maidstone – Ed.*]. The other pub in the village, the **Henry Simmonds**, opposite Borough Green railway station has three separate rooms, one a large bar with TV screens and pool, a small welcoming centre room and a large quiet room. *Doom Bar* was on offer at £2.90 a pint.

I shall finish this narrative with a few comments from recent visits on my cricketing travels outside the branch area, but not too far away. At the Sussex versus Kent 40 over match at **Horsham Cricket Club** I was encouraged to hear that the beer marquee was selling ten real ales! On inspection I found beers from *Belhaven*, *Hardy & Hansons*, *Morlands* and *Ruddles*....you've guessed it.... all *Greene King* tied beers and at the exorbitant price of £3.80 a pint, pre-poured into a plastic beaker. It seems the *Greene King* have the concession at Horsham Cricket Club as *Abbot*, *IPA* and *Old Speckled Hen* were available in the cricket club bar, also at £3.80 but served in a proper glass.

The following week I visited the Kent versus Northamptonshire 40 over match at **Tunbridge Wells Cricket Club**. The CAMRA tent was selling all real ales at £3.20 a pint, served in Kent Beer Festival lined glasses, from a large array of breweries, including *Larkins*, *Tonbridge* and *Westerham* from Kent and *Dark Star*, *Oakham* and *RCH* from further afield. The pavilion bar was serving *Shepherd Neame Kent's Best Bitter* at £3.00 a pint, but only to members.

We called in at the **Bedford Arms** next to Tunbridge Wells railway station on the way home. This is a *Greene King* house with eight handpumps carrying a minimum of two from the *Greene King* stable and up to six real ales from small breweries. My choices were *Ripple Steam*

IPA and *Franklins Citra*, both very tasty so brownie points for *Greene King* this time. The price bands were a bit steep, starting at good value £3.20 for weaker strength beer, a big hike to mid price £3.60 band for mid-strength ales and another steep jump to £4.00 a pint for stronger brews.

Speaking of £4.00 a pint, a friend of mine visited an open air event (non-CAMRA) in the Midlands in June where the participating pubs were selling all real ale at £4.00 a pint (in plastic glasses) with half pints at a ridiculous mark up to £2.50. [4 divided by 2 equals 2 in my maths book: not 2 and a half]. There is a growing trend for pubs to overcharge substantially for half pints, over and above a 5p rounding. As a driver who often drinks halves this is annoying, and overcharging should be highlighted and condemned. Bexley Branch have named and shamed two pubs guilty of this insidious practice and we should all keep vigilant, complain and take action where appropriate.

## Results and winners of the pub search quiz in the last issue.

The two pub names we were looking for were **Pied Bull** and **Railway Tavern**, the letters for which are all to be found in the second column of the answers grid. The winners, who each receive two tickets for the East

T	I	N	T	A	G	E	L	Colour a semi-solid substance in Cornwall
P	A	T	I	E	N	T		Case is one in shiny leather
H	A	R	R	O	W			School for arable farmers?
S	N	O	W					White stuff is small at the moment
D	I	S	G	R	A	C	E	Sid returns to the girl - shame!
D	E	A	R	T	H			A shortage of mixed thread
U	R	B	A	N				In your bank, in the town
L	Y	R	E					Old instrument tells porkies, we hear!
B	R	O	A	D				Minor thoroughfare is wide
O	D	O	U	R				Smell in the wood, ourselves
E	L	B	O	W				The Spanish fore-end joint
S	W	I	T	C	H			Exchange small sorceress
E	V	E	N	I	N	G		Flattening before bedtime
O	B	J	E	C	T	S		Takes exception to things
C	U	S	T	O	M	E	R	More cuts confused the punter
E	L	A	T	E	D			Man, late in, is ecstatic
A	L	B	I	N	O			White man gets bin round
S	E	P	I	A				A lot of water (about half a pint), and it's brown
U	T	E	N	S	I	L		Implement would maybe suit Len
A	P	P	E	A	S	E		Satisfy primate that has swallowed green vegetables
P	A	L	E					Not a ruddy soft drink!

Malling Beer & Cider Festival on 7th September, chosen at random, are: John Howarth of Erith and H. Graham of Meopham.

Congratulations to them, and well done to Adrian Whiting, who also got all the correct answers, and Jeremy Bate, Steve Finch and Audrey Joy, who got the two pub names, and all but one or two of the correct answers to the clues.



# *The George and Dragon*

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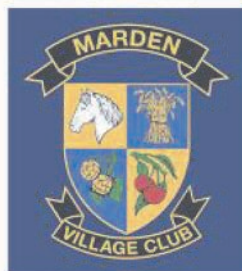
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## **Marden Village Club**

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

## Eighth Bexley Beer Festival

A new venue always brings new problems of logistics; where to put things, will that work or fit in but it all came together - eventually. This year's venue was the **Old Dartfordian's Sports Club** in Bourne Road, Bexley and we would like to thank the club, especially Clive Burke, the Steward, for all their help in enabling this year's event to take place.

Although we had more beer, we also had a record attendance, and unfortunately by 6.15 pm it had all been drunk; our apologies to anyone who turned up and found us dry. You could still have had a drink at the bar of our club of the year. Sorry about the unplanned power cut and indeed the snow on Thursday evening but well done to all the customers for using their mobiles to illuminate the bar!

The Beer of the Festival, as voted for by the customers, was a tie between *Caveman Citra* and *Kent Enigma*. The first cask to run dry was *Pictish Blue Moon* and the most popular cider was *Magic Bus Dreamee Bus* (peach). We would like to thank Jason Batty from the GBG-listed **New Cross Turnpike** for arranging the Wetherspoons-sponsored T-shirts, *Westerham Brewery* for sponsoring the glasses, *Magic Bus* for their lovely cider and Flying Firkin for supplying the majority of the beer after our other wholesaler declined to supply our needs. Finally, a massive thank-you to all our CAMRA volunteers (and press-ganged Sandy) and of course our organiser, Alan Boakes, who almost single-handedly delivered another festival.

In pub news, our micropub, The **Door Hinge**, continues to go from strength to strength. Ray informs me that he has already sold over a hundred different beers in the three and a half months that he has been open and has just signed a 12 year lease. The **Royal Standard** in Lion Road, Bexleyheath has a new landlord, one Stuart Anthony who played Simon White in Eastenders, no less. He aims to turn the pub around, although by the sound of it into a nightspot type place. Hopefully, he will try and sell some real ale as well. We will keep a weather eye on the situation. Sad news is that the **Woodman** in Bexleyheath has closed and there is an application for it to be demolished and replaced with flats. An appeal to Bexley Council has been lodged.

As always we have held monthly business meetings, although not in April because it would have fallen on the night preceding our Beer Festival and it was thought that everyone would be too exhausted after a day setting up the festival to really want to attend a meeting (not to mention slightly tipsy after testing the state of the beers and enjoying the hospitality of the club!). In May, we visited the **Robin Hood & Little John** who kindly laid on two milds (May being CAMRA's mild month) where we once again presented them with their Pub of the Year certificate and were duly rewarded with a nice buffet. In June, our business meeting was held at the **White Cross** on North Cray Road. Also in June we held our AGM at the **Crayford Arms** which was well attended and we also had visits from Kae Mendham (Kent RD), Ian Fielder (West Kent AO) and Geoff Strawbridge (London Regional Secretary). The Committee was re-elected and the buffet was consumed along with the recently brewed *Shepherd Neame Mild*.

Our socials this quarter have seen us travel far and wide across the branch boundary and also hold another Saturday social. In April we held our only branch social, starting at the **Royal Oak** in Northumberland Heath. This is a large pub and was part of a pub group which went into receivership late last year but has been bought out by Barter Pubs and is thriving. It offers an over 60's discount on *Courage Best* during the day, Monday to Friday. On our visit, beside the *Courage* there was *Wychwood Hobgoblin*.

After leaving, we walked past the **Duke**, which appeared to be closed, although according to two of our party was open the previous evening. We arrived at the **Brewers Arms** which also had *Courage Best* as well as *Shepherd Neame Spitfire* available. Finally, it was on to the **Duchess of Kent**, which only had *Sharps Doombar* available, and this ran out at 10:30, so some of us decided to return to Bexleyheath and have a final drink in the **Furze Wren** before wending our way home.

In May we crossed the branch boundary into Greenwich where we met up with one member of the local branch. This crawl was on the evening of the slaying of Drummer Rigby at Woolwich, which prevented some members from getting to the event. We met in the **Plume of Feathers**. Here we had a choice of *Fullers London Pride*, *Harveys Sussex*, *Sharps Doombar* and *Brockley Pale*. Needless to say, most of us had the *Brockley Pale*. Onwards to the **Cutty Sark** where it was quiz night and quite packed, although we did manage to find seats to consume our choices

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from *Youngs Bitter, Special, London Gold* and *Sambrooks Wandle*. Finally, we went to the **Pelton Arms**, which was used as the Nags Head in the programme *Rock & Chips* (the *Only Fools & Horses* prequel). A wide variety confronted us here: *Greene King IPA, Wells Bombardier, Mordue Workie Ticket, Wadworth 6X, Windsor & Eton Conqueror Black, Black Sheep Bitter, Oakham Bishops Farewell, Titanic Stout* plus a cider.

In June we held a Saturday social crossing two branch boundaries. We met at the **Jolly Woodman** in Beckenham, together with members from Bromley, Croydon & Sutton and even Windsor branches and then began a tram crawl (a couple of buses as well). We called at the **Claret** (Addiscombe), **Cricketers** (Shirley) and **George, Green Dragon and Bulls Head** (Croydon). We were invited by Croydon & Sutton to continue with them onwards as they were surveying other pubs towards Wimbledon for a future crawl of their own and some of our team went with them. Also in June we did a pub crawl of Bromley. We started at the **Partridge**, a large *Fullers* pub that had *Chiswick, London Pride, Discovery, ESB* and *Gales HSB* available. Across the road to a *Wetherspoons* pub, the **Greyhound**, with far too many beers to list here and then ending at the **Red Lion**, a former Bromley Branch Pub of the Year. Here we found *Greene King IPA, Abbot and Bohemian, Harveys Sussex* and *Woodfordes Nelson's Revenge*.

As always, the summer months will see us out and about around the branch area and beyond. Check our diary at the back of this issue and come and join us.

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# Ripping Yarns – a licensee’s story

Following *What a Rip-off!*, the article by MMK Branch Chairman Jeff Tucker in *Draught Copy* issue 171, which queried the pricing strategy of Shepherd Neame in its tenanted houses, a concerned local licensee has contacted the DC team to share his thoughts. Here's what he has to say:

*“The article in the last issue of Draught Copy echoes a lot of beer drinkers’ feelings. As an ex-Shepherd Neame tenant, I do know that their rents can be astronomical. ‘Why’ is another question, as they charge high prices to their tenants for their own-brewed products,”* he writes.

Our correspondent, currently a tenant with a major UK pub owning company, says its price list is not too dissimilar from Sheps'. *“Spitfire is listed at £112.74, on which I can get a £10.00 discount. However, if I bought direct from Sheps, the price would be £64.49 (9 gals & ex. VAT). This is quite a difference, 67p per pint. So the poor Sheps tenant has a problem. Sheps tenants do not have the option to buy out as they are wholly tied, usually for all beers, wines, spirits and soft drinks. This lack of purchasing power and high rents do mean that some pubs will have to charge more for their beers than, say, a Free House.”*

*“Sheps say that a tenancy is a cheap way into the market, with maintenance and repair down to them. Try getting them to do anything. My old pub had not been painted for 12 years. The agreement said Sheps would complete it every five years, in the end I did it myself, as it was a mess and a bad advertisement. However they held the tenant to his side of the agreement, and insisted the interior was done every three years. A bit one-sided.”*

*“We lost a lot of money running our Sheps pub and although it was not entirely their fault as a new pub/restaurant opened in direct competition to us, they would not reduce our rent to a viable level. However, when a new operator was found the rent was reduced. This is the problem. There are still many people with redundancy/pension/savings who want to run a pub. The brewers do not need to change their rental or sales policies until this pool of prospective operators dries up. Only when this happens will the industry start to return to some degree of sensibility and profitability.”*, he concludes.

[Would anyone from Shepherd Neame care to discuss the brewery's pricing and rental strategy? Ed.]

# *There's more in the barrel at Musket Brewery*

*By Tony Williams*

**Real ale brewing in the Borough of Maidstone is going great guns as the Musket Brewery Limited begins production at Boughton Monchelsea this autumn, aiming to produce fine craft ales from their brewery at Loddington Farm.**

The Musket Brewery team are Mark Stroud, his wife Beccy, together with Tony Williams and his wife, Linda Pizani Williams. All have many friends and contacts throughout the brewing industry and licensed trade. Tony was formerly Managing Director of a local newspaper group, before becoming Head of Media and Marketing for a local council, followed by a similar role in the charity sector. Mark worked in television, before launching his own successful building company.

Mark and Tony sing together in the Holy Cross church choir in Bearsted, near Maidstone and have been firm friends since Tony joined the choir in 1996. Both Mark and Tony are CAMRA members and have been “home brewing” for many years, much to the delight of fellow choristers, who sing the praises of the brewers and eagerly sample the latest brews!

Musket Brewery is a stone's throw from Coxheath, where raw militia and regular troops used to train for what seemed an inevitable invasion from France in the 1700s. The military camp was the scene of several big reviews of troops by visiting dignitaries, including one by King George III and Queen Charlotte in 1778. The brewery is a short distance from Heath Road, with the very straight course of this road being the direct result of work by the military engineers, a fitting environment for the Musket Brewery!

Operating in a bespoke brewery made to their specifications, Mark and Tony will launch the Musket Brewery in October with two craft ales followed by a winter ale, in readiness for the festive season. For more information contact the Musket Brewery on **07967 127278** or ***tony@musketbrewery.co.uk*** or visit ***www.musketbrewery.co.uk***

***Editor's Note:***

*The Musket Brewery website and contacts will not be “live” until late August/early September.*



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## Another Czech Trip

by Jeff Tucker

Prague has a natural attraction for me, as I'm half-Czech, and my father's family all live out there, mainly in Northern Bohemia, close to the German border.

I travelled out on a Sunday morning, which meant an easy trip on the M25 to Heston, where I park the car to avoid paying silly airport parking charges, then catch the 111 bus in. Arriving in Prague, I bought a day ticket for 110 Crowns (or Kc, which are about 29 to the pound). I made my way by bus and metro to my B&B by Kobylisy station. The Pension Lucie proved to be fabulous inside, despite the shopfront-style exterior, with very friendly English-speaking owners and reasonable room rates.

I had done a bit of research before I left, and used the information on *ratebeer.com* to find interesting pubs, small breweries and brewpubs throughout the Czech republic, which proved very useful in most cases.

Having checked in, I set off for my first pub visit, which was a repeat of one I discovered on my last trip. Called **Zly Casy**, it is a few yards north from Namesti Bratri Synku tram stop, served by routes 11 and 18. There are two bars, one in the basement, each serving different beers from all over the country, starting at 35Kc.

I plumped for *Trebonicky Rukodelny Legionar*, a 5.5% beer from Trebonice, costing 45Kc for half a litre (the default quantity in this article). It was an amber colour, with Premiant, Sladek and New Zealand hops, and very nice it was, too.

The upper bar had 12 beers on tap, all from new breweries since my Czech beer guide was published in 2007! My second choice was *Nuselska Bleda Tvar*, a 6.4% dark beer from **Pivovar Dvur Chyne** in Hostivice, 45Kc. This contained Premiant, Cascade and Citra hops, and was billed as an Indian Pale Ale style. It was hoppy and sweet at the same time.

I could have happily stayed there longer, but other pubs beckoned. Crossing the tram tracks and heading uphill brought me to **Pivovar Basta** on Taborska. As it was fairly warm, I sat in the rear garden, where a mynah bird was giving quite a repertoire!

This brewpub offered four draught beers brewed on the premises. I sampled the *Polotmava* (literally 'half-dark') which was very good, and *Svetla Krouzkava*, which was rather interesting and slightly cloudy. Both



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The pub also sells bottled beers from the whole world, it seems, including every brewery in the Czech Republic. Most are 35Kc, some 45Kc, but imports can be silly prices, such as *Wells Bombardier* and *Wychwood Hobgoblin* at 125Kc!

Using my 2007 beer guide, I chose *Platan Perla* from *Protivin* at 6%, which was rich and syrupy. *Skalak Svetly Premium* (5.3%) from *Pivovar Rohozec* in Maly Rohozec was pretty good with no gas.

I passed on the Strongbow 'cider' (75Kc), various Belgian beers (155Kc) and Rauchbier from Bamberg in Germany (95Kc) and finished my visit with *Herold Black* from Breznice (5.2%), which was delicious, much like a porter.

On Tuesday, I caught a train northwards alongside the river to Usti nad Labem, which has a brewpub and, would you believe, a pub which is twinned with one in Liverpool! Both are called the White Star. I found the road it was in, but it was long and hilly, so I didn't have time to investigate – one for another trip, I feel.

The brewpub was easier to find, being about 150 yards from the station and 50 yards from the main square. It is called **Na Rychte**, and has a modern courtyard out the back, with a tree growing through the roof, and hops growing up the walls. See [www.pivovarnarychte.cz/en/home-page.html](http://www.pivovarnarychte.cz/en/home-page.html)

*Mazel Svetly Lezak* at 33Kc was slightly cloudy and quite bitter, while I wasn't at all keen on the *Vojtech Jantarovy Lezak* - luckily I only had 0.3L (23Kc). The *Ustecka Rychtarka Psenicne Pivo* was the lightest of the three beers, clear and quite tasty. The rest of the day was spent with relatives.

Wednesday involved a train trip out east to Pardubice, home of *Pernstejn* brewery, which is a few yards off the main road from the station to the town centre. There is a brewery tap, where I sampled *Kvasnak* unfiltered at 25Kc. This was cloudy, as expected, and quite tasty.

The *Svetly Lezak* (5.2%) was 15Kc for 0.3L, a clean-tasting clear lager. My last drink here was *Pardubicky Porter*, an 8% beer which was sold in 0.2L glasses for 14Kc – wow!



were 34Kc, and *Special* and *Lahvove* were also on sale.

Back to the tram stop and a number 18 to the terminus at Vozovna Pankrac, from where it was a short walk to **U Klokcownika**. This scruffy, smoky pub is a rare outlet for



*Kacov* beers from the town of the same name. *Hubertus Svetle* was a mere 23Kc but was nothing special. It would have been better to get off at the previous stop, Na Veseli.

Monday started with a metro trip to the end of line B at Zlicin, from where a Student Agency coach whisked me to Plzen along the motorway. The train from Prague takes much longer. Throughout the journey, a young lass plied the passengers with free hot drinks.

Plzen has three brewpubs. If I could have worked out where the bus station was on the town map, I would have found the first one sooner, without almost walking past it to get to the town centre!

The **Minipivovar U Sladka** on Podebradova had quite a modern interior and three beers brewed on the premises. The *Polotmavy* at 33Kc was a bit gassy but not bad. The *Special* was not on, so I had a 0.3L of *Svetly* for 21Kc, which didn't have much flavour.

One of the three pubs was somewhere on a long street, so I didn't have the time to try and find it, so my next port of call was the **Pivovar Groll** on Truhlarska, which is a lovely old building opposite a hideous multi-storey car park, north of the town centre. The two beers were *Svetly* and *Polotmavy*, 35Kc, the latter of which was enjoyed at a table in the courtyard.



Back in Prague, I headed for the **Pivovarsky Klub** near Florence metro station, another previously visited pub. This bar stocks six draught beers, of which I had *Opat 14 Polotmavy Special* at 38Kc, a bit gassy but quite pleasant.

Back to Prague, where I caught a 26 tram two stops to Lipanska, followed by an uphill walk to **Kralovstvi** on Kubelicova. This is a *Cerna Hora* tied pub. The *Pater* (32Kc) was clear and tasty, but the pub was a bit dingy.

Another 26 in the opposite direction delivered me to Letenske Namesti, from where it was but a short walk to **Klasterni Pivnice**, which was an old-style pub and thick with smoke, so I didn't bother.

I walked round the corner to look for **Svijansky Rytir** but came across the **Pivni Klub 300** which looked interesting, and may have been the same place renamed. It has four ever-changing beers, and I sampled *Kocour Studentska* at 31Kc from Varnsdorf, where my father used to work in the late 1930s. The beer had a bitter-sweet flavour. House beers seemed to be from *Uneticke Pivovar*.

From there it was two trams to Vodickova where the **Novometsky Pivovar** is right next to the tram stop. There was a queue of people waiting to get in, so I tried the **Branik Pivovar** a few doors along, which had only Inbev beers. The *Staropramen Cerny* (dark) was pretty good, but 48Kc.

Tram no.3 then took me to Bulovka. The **Richter Brewery** pub was not easy to find, but I eventually found it a short walk west of the tram stop. The *Svetly Lezak* (32Kc, 5%) was pretty good, but the pub was quite smoky. The *Tmavy Special* was 6.1% and 23Kc for 0.3L, and had a slight taste of vanilla. Odd. And so to bed.....

Thursday dawned, and was to be my last day in the country, catching the last plane of the day home. I caught the 22 tram to Brevnovsky Klaster and found **U Klastera** across the road. This pub has six regular beers and a fortnightly guest, most at 33Kc, and the food is good value, too.

*Cerna Hora Granat*, 4.8%, was almost black and very nice, and *Svijansky Knize* (5.6%) was quite bitter but enjoyable. The pub is very traditional, with dark wood panelling.

My last visit turned out to be the highlight of the trip. The **Pivovar Marina Holesovice** is a huge, brand new pub, brewery and restaurant on the river north of Ortenovo Namesti tram stop. It was hard to find, not being helped by the tramway being closed beyond Holesovice, which meant a longer walk and much asking people for directions.

The brewery equipment is in the centre of the pub for all to see, and they sell six beers brewed on the premises. I only had time to try two – *Tamvy Lezak* (35Kc) was dark and delicious, while the *Indian Pale Ale*, 33Kc for 0.3L, was the best beer of the entire trip. I'll be back!



The beer scene in the Czech Republic was always excellent, though, in recent years, multi-nationals have bought up a lot of the bigger breweries. It's good to see that the brewpub concept has hit the country in a big way, not just in the capital.

## The Draught Copy Crossword

Due to the recent indisposition of our compiler, Mick Norman, we regret there is no crossword in this issue. He was rapidly losing his sight in both eyes. After several attempts to impress the urgency of the situation upon the NHS, Moorfields Eye Hospital eventually identified the cause of this rapid decline as a tumour on his pituitary gland, roughly the size of a hen's egg, which had been compressing the optic nerves. There cannot be many people who actually welcome the diagnosis of a brain tumour. Such tumours are almost always non-malignant, but the surgeon thought it had been around for at least 5 years. It was successfully removed at King's College Hospital on 12 June and now Mick reports that his overall vision is better than it was back in January at his last eye exam!

All of us at *Draught Copy* send Mick our best wishes for his speedy recovery.

B	R	E	A	T	H	E	R		D	S
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The solution to crossword 11 is shown here. The winner of the prize for solving it successfully is John Howarth from Erith.

Congratulations, John!

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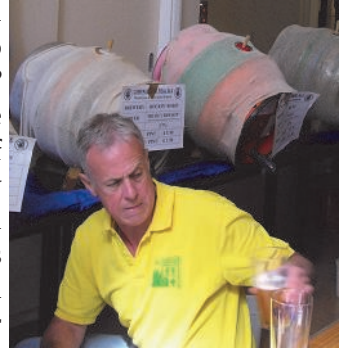
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Drinking beer for charity sounds like a good idea and that is what we asked people to do on the afternoon of June 8<sup>th</sup> at the MENCAP Fayre in Mote Park, Maidstone. The Maidstone and mid-Kent (MMK) branch of CAMRA has supported MENCAP for many years now by organising and running a real ale bar at their annual summer fair. This has involved contacting various breweries and asking them to help by providing beer for this worthy cause. We were very fortunate that several local breweries and one of our local pubs were willing to help us by supporting the event.



*Brian sets out his stall*

After spending some time writing letters, sending e-mails and making telephone calls, I was pleased to be able to present the following Kentish beers:

- *Larkins Traditional*—donated by the brewery
- *Harvey's Sussex Best Bitter*—donated by the brewery
- *Rockin' Robin Mildly Rockin'*—donated by the brewery
- *Kent Pale*—donated by the **Flower Pot**, Maidstone
- *Goacher's Mild*—donated by the brewery
- *Goacher's Light*—sponsored by the brewery

All were priced at £3 a pint to persuade visitors that they could enjoy a glass of real ale and support a charity at the same time! Several of my local branch members helped with the collection of beer, setup of the bar and serving on the day. Dry weather helped us sell all the beer, raising £1150 for MENCAP.



*Local musicians add to the atmosphere*

All in all, a satisfying result, so thank you to everyone who helped and to those who supported us on the day.

*Pictures courtesy of Richard Clennett and Chris Wrigglesworth (front cover)*

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# CAMRA BRANCH DIARIES

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.

Meetings are at 8.30pm unless otherwise noted.

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

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

## AUGUST

- 1 **MMK** **Queen's Head**, Mereworth, then **Swan**, West Peckham
- 3 **MMK** **Chequers**, Laddingford, Transport Festival
- 7 **BEX** **George & Dragon**, Swanscombe
- 7 **GDV** **George & Dragon**, Swanscombe, West Kent PotY
- 8 **MMK** Bat & Trap, Benenden, 7.30, then **Bull & King William IV**
- 14 **BEX** **Prince of Wales**, Upper Belvedere [*OBM*]
- 15 **MMK** **Red Lion**, Biddenden, then **Three Chimneys**
- 17 **GDV** 1pm Beer Festival social **Rising Sun**, Twitton.
- 22 **MMK** **Lord Raglan**, Staplehurst, then **Stile Bridge**
- 22 **BEX** **Wilmington Cricket Club Beer Festival**, Wilmington
- 22 **GDV** 1pm Beer Festival social **Wilmington Cricket Club**
- 24 **BEX** **Old Dartfordians Beer Festival (Bexley)**
- 24 **GDV** 1pm Beer Festival social **Fox & Hounds**, Romney Street.
- 28 **BEX** **Door Hinge**, **Rose & Crown**, **New Cross Turnpike**, Welling
- 29 **MMK** **Teston Club**, then **Wateringbury Hotel**

## SEPTEMBER

- 5 **MMK** **Rising Sun**, East Malling, then **King & Queen**
- 7 **MMK** **EAST MALLING BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL**
- 11 **BEX** **8.30pm Tailors Chalk**, Sidcup [*OBM*]
- 12 **MMK** **Brickmakers**, Maidstone, then **White Rabbit**
- 19 **MMK** EGM, **Bell & Jorrocks**, Frittenden [*OBM*]
- 25 **BEX** **8pm Wellington**, **Bear & Ragged Staff**, **Crayford Arms**
- 26 **MMK** **Lion of Kent**, Bearsted, then **Oak on the Green**
- 28 **MMK** Bus trip to Herne, Faversham and Teynham

## OCTOBER

- 3 **MMK** **Plough**, Langley, then **Cock**, Boughton Monchelsea
- 9 **BEX** **Jolly Millers**, **Bexleyheath**
- 10 **MMK** **Kings Arms**, Offham, then **Nevill Bull**, Birling
- 12 **MMK** Coach trip to Ashford and Romney Marsh area
- 17 **MMK** **Red Lion**, Lenham (Beer Festival wash-up meeting)
- 24 **MMK** **Wheatsheaf**, Maidstone, then **Bull**, Linton
- 23 **BEX** **8pm Royal Oak**, **Robin Hood & Little John**, Bexleyheath
- 26 **MMK** Bus trip to Lewes
- 31 **MMK** **Star & Eagle**, Goudhurst, then **Globe & Rainbow**, Kilndown

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

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



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

# GOACHER'S MAIDSTONE ALES

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