The Quarterly Magazine of the Thanet Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale
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THE CONQUEROR

Thanet’s original micropub!
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and 5.30pm-9.30 pm

Sunday.............................................................Midday-3pm

Monday.............................................................Closed

Five minutes walk from Ramsgate Football Club
View from the Chair

Hello Again, with the Festive Season upon us many of us are looking forward to the Year to come! We have the Branch AGM scheduled for Saturday 3 February 2018, 11.30 at The Red Lion in Ramsgate, I look forward to seeing as many Branch Members there as possible, and perhaps a few of you may be interested in roles within the Branch, maybe you fancy yourself as the next Chair or one of the other tasks such as judging for the Branch Pub of the Year, having to visit local establishments and drink their ale (and cider) amongst other arduous tasks.

The Branch Beer Festival Committee are working hard in making our Easter Beer Festival the success it has been in the past, we will soon be emailing out for volunteers to help with set up and on the days, either serving pints or many of the ‘back stage’ roles we have to fill to ensure that we all get to enjoy the Festival. The 2018 logo will soon be ready for release, so watch our Social Media pages, this year we will be celebrating a 100th Birthday with one of our National Armed Forces. We are still considering charities to support through our Charity Bucket – if you know of a local charity that could do with our support, do let me know and we can add it to those being considered.

Having been in the chair for a year, I still don’t know how I got here – or as Terry Pratchett wrote in The Last Continent “I don’t think I've drunk enough beer to understand that.” Or how I got here, which by my age I really should have stopped doing!

Enjoy the festive season & see you all in 2018!; and for those of you tweeting don't forget #ThanetCAMRA or Facebook us @thanetcamra

Cheers all
Jo Walbank
Branch Chairman
chair@thanet-camra.org.uk
https://www.facebook.com/thanetcamra/
https://www.facebook.com/PlanetThanetEasterBeerFest/
BRANCH EVENTS

Visit our website at www.thanet-camra.org.uk or contact Graham on 01843 835793 for further details.

BRANCH DETAILS

Chairperson: Jo Walbank - chairman@thanet-camra.org.uk;
Secretary: Dennis Brandrick - secretary@thanet-camra.org.uk;
Treasurer: Debbie Aris - debbie@thanet-camra.org.uk;
Membership Secretary: Jez Laming membership@thanet-camra.org.uk;
Pubs Officer and Aot Editor: Steve Saunders - steve@thanet-camra.org.uk
Branch Contact: Graham Rickett - branch@thanet-camra.org.uk

All correspondence should be addressed to: Thanet CAMRA c/o 11 Sea View Road, Broadstairs, CT10 1BX
Tel: 01843 835793 or emailed to: branch@thanet-camra.org.uk.

BIRCHINGTON-ON-SEA

SEA VIEW, Station Road
Shepherd Neame have put the pub up for auction. A holding is in place at present but what the future holds for the place is unsure as the company have recently sold the Sportsman in Cliffsend and the Orb in Margate to developers.

WESTWOOD

FALCON INN Ramsgate Road
Sadly local businessman Louis Mayhew who took the lease of this pub in the Summer has decided that the pub wasn’t turning a profit so has decided to close the place. When he took on the lease he renamed it to its present title - it previously being the Grog Wench and before that the Star Inn. We await future developments to the place.

That’s it for now.
Steve Saunders

Send any pub news send to steve@thanet-camra.org.uk with Bar None in the header.
The 2018 Easter Beer Festival is taking place on Friday 30 and Saturday 31 March 2018 and we are already in planning mode – however, it won’t happen without the many people who volunteer to help out setting up the Winter Gardens between Monday 26 and Thursday 29 March and also to put the venue back to normality on Monday 2 April.

As for the main event itself, we are looking for people to help out even for just an hour or two. We have several areas that need staffing, including the MAIN BAR – serving nearly 200 different Real Ales, the CIDER BAR with over 30 Real Ciders and Perrys, the INTERNATIONAL BOTTLE BAR, MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT STAND & the souvenir Festival Glass/beer tokens Stand. There is something for everyone to get involved in, and a chance to learn new skills!

No experience is needed as full training/instruction can be given. You don’t even need to be a CAMRA Member (although this comes with lots of benefits too).

In return for your efforts, you will receive a free Festival T-shirt, a free Festival Glass, a pint or 2 to put in that glass and later in the year, a free trip to another beer festival (usually in Kent TBC) paid for by the branch.

We are keen to know at the earliest opportunity those who can help on any day, even if only for a few hours to help set up and share a bit of banter with friends old and new.

If you are able to help out, volunteer forms can be obtained from the festival volunteer co-ordinator, Peter Jaquiss via email at organiser@easterbeerfestival.org.uk. These will also be available via the Thanet CAMRA website shortly. If you’ve not helped out before and would be interested in finding out more, please contact Peter for further details.
Welcome to my second blog as the Thanet CAMRA Social Secretary. I hope to inform you about the pubs and events the branch has been involved with in the last few months, and inform you as to where we will be visiting next. All social/meetings for the next few months can be found in What’s Brewing, on Twitter, on the Thanet CAMRA website and further on in this issue of Ales of Thanet.

Any member can email me with suggestions of pubs to visit. In particular they should point out for example, when pubs in Thanet have beer festivals or maybe meet the brewer sessions or any event that members would find of interest. All members are welcome to come along to these events though you need to be a member with a current CAMRA membership card to vote at any business meeting or the AGM. I hope to include more visits to areas we don’t visit as often as we should, as well as some of the many fine pubs and micros we have in Thanet.

We held a successful business meeting in September at the Australian Arms in Ramsgate. You can always get a fine pint of Fullers ESB here alongside back issues of Ale of Thanet. The end of August and start of September saw some popular beer festivals. The Bell at St. Nicholas-at-Wade and the Queen’s Head on Ramsgate seafront were well attended. I enjoyed my first visit to The Hussar beer festival in Garlinge. I particularly enjoyed the Timmy Taylors Landlord and Oakham Bishops Farewell. There was a snake show and some wild animals on display in the garden. This is very much a family pub and offers good value meals. The Green Hop beer festival in Canterbury was very well attended by CAMRA members from all over Kent. The Jolly Green Giant from Kent Brewery went down well as did our own Gadds’ Green hop. This festival gets bigger every year and it can difficult to find a seat near the beer tent. October saw the Cliftonville crawl featuring Banks Ale House and The Tap Room. This was followed by The Fez and Two Halves. However several members had to leave early so missed out on the last bars. This taught me that maybe we should start pub crawls earlier at around 7.30pm. Some people have to be up early for work! Not only that but Banks had a happy hour
from 7 til 8pm. Here the Whitstable Green Glory went down well. Nick particularly liked his Dark Star Green Hopped IPA in the Tap Room; at 6.5% it packs a punch.

October also saw a meet the manager night with Chris the manager at The Royal Victoria Pavilion in Ramsgate. CAMRA members got to try festival ales in the cellar before they were available to the public. I have found that the beer here is usually very good. Caledonians Trojan Horse at 5.5% was my favourite; on some occasions I have found 18 different ales on sale here, some sort of record for a ‘Spoons’. Chris told me that when you see a sign saying ‘Available Soon’ in his pub it means the line is being cleaned and that the beer should be available within the hour - not many Wetherspoons can boast that.

Our last social in October saw us hit St. Nicholas-at-Wade. We had nibbles provided by both The Bell and The Sun Inn. A tour at the Wantsum Brewery was excellent with them providing quality beer and food; you can read more about it elsewhere in this magazine.

Our final business meeting of the year was at The Red Lion in Ramsgate. The beer was excellent and saw us start and finish off a cask of Gadds Green Hop in one evening. Our visit was so enjoyable that we are returning here for our AGM in February. Great hospitality from Mel.

The final social in November was the Broadstairs micro meander. Starting at the Yard of Ale we found the Skinner’s Penny Come Quick Stout to be our beer of choice out of the four ales on offer. The Four Candles not for the first time had 3 beers on brewed by the on-site brewery, none that I had seen anywhere before. I enjoyed a 5% pale ale called Strong and Stunning whilst Lynne enjoyed the Citrus Pale at 4.5%. All beers here are still £3 - making this micro excellent value. Our third micro was Mind the Gap where Lynne thought the Titanic Plum Porter was outstanding - so fruity. We lost some members en route to the 39 Steps, but here we found what I thought was beer of the night, Timothy Taylors Poulter’s Porter, a fine porter with a lovely smooth Chocolate taste.

Danny
Beery Steve has been looking at his collection of bus pictures he took in the mid 80s and found some that include a pub in them. He has selected some here with present day views of the same locations with buses where possible.

The Iveco Minibus (top right) passes the Shakespeare in Margate on a service 32 to Dane Valley. While the present day view (top left) features Dart (34410) also on a 32 journey. Sadly the pub closed last year. The next selection were taken around Margate Harbour and show the change to the Royal Albion Hotel bar into Barnacles which was around 1987. The Iveco minibus (above right) and the Bristol VR (below right) are on layover between journeys while the Iveco (left) is on a service 7 to Westgate. This was a route run by East Kent in competition with Chisholm’s Bus Services’ (later Thanet Bus) route between Ramsgate and Westgate. Today’s picture (below left) shows a ADL Dart SLF 4/ Enviro 200 working a service 56.

Top next page shows a former Greater Manchester Atlantean (7178), a type of bus drafted in by East Kent in 1987 when an enhanced route network was introduced, its seen passing the Bradstow Mill In Broadstairs. This Victorian pub’s interior was devised in the late 70s by Lynnard designer, David Cutmore, to look like the inside of a 15th century windmill. Today’s picture shows an Optare Versa passing the same spot while working a 56 journey to Broadstairs.

Below these is a shot of two Chisholm’s Bus Services’
Dodge minibuses passing the Nineteenth Hole in Kingsgate on the company’s service between Ramsgate and Westgate. The now picture showing Stagecoach Dart 34410 working a 38 service to Birchington via Ramsgate.
Above shows Bristol VR passing the George Hotel in Margate while on a 8A to Canterbury, while the now picture shows a Dart passing the pub, now the Ambrette Restaurant, on a service 33. Below Iveco minibus on a Service 14 from Dane Valley passes the Phoenix, a rarely pictured Margate pub, in King Street; it became the Gaslight Inn a year or so after the picture was taken. The bus is on diversion due to road works as no buses normally uses the road. The pub is no more having been converted into a residential property in the late 90s as can be see in the now picture. Beery Steve
Meet Our Very Own David & Goliath

I caught up with Jon Stringer, who occupies a fairly unusual place as the new Head Brewer of RAMSGATE BREWERY (he was recently promoted with Eddie stepping back to concentrate on other ventures) at one of our largest breweries but he also is responsible for making small batch brews through his nanobrewery BY THE MILE.

So let’s start with your background, what brings you to the world of brewing? Well, I was unemployed and looking for a local (Thanet) job. I called Eddie (Gadd) who I’d done some casual labour for in the past and asked whether he had any jobs vacant. At that moment there wasn’t a position available, but a month or so later one did become available and the rest is history.

Was this what you always wanted to do? If not what was the dream? No, when I was a teenager I wanted to be a chiropodist. My local chiropodist at the time only worked two days a week and spent the rest of the week on the golf course. He was also very well paid. That sounded like the kind of life I wanted. However, my plans floundered due to (1) not getting good enough chemistry grades at school and (2) my dislike of other peoples’ feet.

What was the first pint you had? I think my first pub pint was Ind Coope Burton Ale. I loved this 5% beer and would go out of my way to find it in South Essex. Usually it could be found in the Red Lion pub in Fobbing.

What’s the best beer you’ve ever tasted? That’s a really difficult question. I love most styles of beer but I have a particular soft spot for darker beers. Triple FFF’s Pressed Rat & Warthog, Rudgate’s Ruby Mild, Thornbridge’s Raven, Mikkeler’s Sort Kaffe, Magic Rock’s Bearded Lady to name but a few. Maybe it’s not as dark as the aforementioned but Gadds’ No 5 is also one of my faves.

Where’s the most exotic or strange place you have had an ale? I try not to drink in strange places. I guess the bath doesn’t count as a strange place?! I guess that depends on whose bath it is...

So let’s start with the nanobrewery, are you planning to continue with this venture? Yes, I think so. It took some effort to get it going so I’ll continue making By The Mile beers for the time being.

Where does the brewery name come from? It comes from my love of walking and running.

What’s brewing at the moment? Erm, well, we’ll split this into two. At Gadds’ there is Little Cracker,
Uberhop and East Kent IPA. At BTM we have Freybug Strong Bitter, Rumbold’s Dark Secret and Rumbold’s Revelation - all of these will be on sale at the Thanet Farmer's Market in December.

**Do all your colleagues have to wear the staff uniform?** He-he.

**Now back to Ramsgate Brewery - how excited are you to be named head brewer?** I am very excited and proud. Hopefully the team and I can maintain Gadds' high standards and keep the beers in good nick.

**Will much change now Eddie is stepping back?** Not really. Eddie is still very much involved with the technical and commercial side of the company, and always gets involved when required around the brewery.

**Is there a new Jon Stringer inspired brew in the offing?** Hopefully 2018 should see some new ideas. Watch this space!

**Does the glassware matter?** No and yes. No, because beer is beer and won’t change its flavour just because the receptacle form varies. Yes, because a Gadds' beer doesn't seem right if it’s not in a Gadds' glass. Silly eh!?!
One of our most popular features in Ale of Thanet over the years has been Name or Guess the Pub? Here we have a selection of pictures showing a cropped view of a pub. Can you guess which ones. Answers page 16
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Closed Mon (except Bank Holidays)

THE TWO HALVES
MARGATE

2 MARINE DRIVE
MARGATE
CT9 1DH

07538771904
twohalvesmicropub@outlook.com

Opening Hours
12.00 - 22.30
Several years ago, having read a couple of CAMRA magazines and the tempting money off vouchers that come with subscriptions, I signed on the dotted line and joined CAMRA with little more thought other than it seemed a good thing to do. For a couple of years, I was a silent armchair member, content to read the monthly What’s Brewing and quarterly magazine. Towards the end of 2015 thought it was about time I got my hands dirty in a manner of speaking, and when Jez’s request for volunteers for the 2016 Easter Beer Festival came round saw this as my opportunity! But what will I have to do, how much time will it take up, what skills do I require? I had never before poured a pint in a pub, had very little knowledge of the brewery industry, and the likelihood was I wouldn’t know anyone else there. Due to working full time, was only able to spare a couple of days during the week, plus I volunteered to work on the Saturday.

Having filled in the volunteer form and received encouraging emails from Jez, turned up at the Winter Gardens on the Tuesday at 10am as instructed, with strong shoes and a pair of gloves, along with around 20 others, some who clearly were old hand at this, and others were also making their debut. Got signed in, welcomed and given my free volunteers tee shirt and keyring, and spent the day helping set things up. Tuesday I quickly established was beer delivery day! As various lorries arrived during the morning, barrels were unloaded, checked off with meticulous attention by Dennis and wheeled into the main hall, and then loaded onto the stillage which had been set up on the Monday. Those barrels aren’t light, but soon got into the rhythm through watching others and working in tandem with others (and the hoist) and by the end of the day the barrels were all in place, chillers set up and jackets all in place.

Onto Thursday and still work to be done. Banners to put up, posters to display, bottle bar being set up, cider being delivered, glasses to be set out, barrels to be labelled and for the lucky few, beer to be checked. Is this clear or should it be hazy, and most importantly I guess, does it taste right? Somebody has to do it! It would be remiss for me to miss out the task of bagging up the beer tokens – the red and yellow currency of the weekend. This seemed to take most of the week, but as with all the set up tasks, was undertaken with plenty of banter and discussion, and an opportunity to renew existing friendships and make new ones.

Onto the Saturday and Festival time for me (couldn’t make Friday this time). Decided to go off and have a cooked breakfast beforehand at a local hostelry (and saw a couple of others there in volunteer teeshirts with the same idea), and got to the Winter Gardens looking forward to what the day was going to bring. Having cleared up some of the empty cider boxes, it was those blooming tokens again! 5 reds and 2 yellows (or was it the other way round?) into each coin bag, and don’t forget to
close it properly. With half an hour before opening, we had a brief pep talk from
Tony on the do’s and don’ts (top half of the glass is the customers, you hold the
bottom half), and it was into place behind the bar and we were off! Given a
guiding hand by Mark for the first few minutes, and by 1pm felt like an old hand at
pouring beer. Did I need to know much? Well knowing a bit about beer helps, but not
essential as others around to provide advice if required. One of my first customers
wanted a “Citra” type beer – fortunately I knew
that Citra equals grapefruit flavour. Most
frequent question was “I normally drink lager –
what can you recommend?” I recall serving one
mid-twenties lady who asked me this and
found her something she liked – so much so
that she came back for a further 6 pints of it
during the remainder of the day……
By the time last orders was called around
7.15pm, having served non-stop, it was time to
sit down and enjoy a leisurely drink with my
new found friends.
That was 2016, and I came back for more of the same in 2017 having taken so much
satisfaction from my time the year before. Will I be there in 2018? Well yes, as I have
taken on responsibility for volunteer co-ordinator next year. I attended my first AGM in
January, with a very healthy turnout and have gone along to a couple of meetings
since. I am amazed that the Thanet
branch of CAMRA has I believe just in
excess of 500 members at the present
time. In 2017 there were around 90
volunteers helping out, some from other
branches – what are the other 400 of
you doing next Easter!
It may sound like hard (and physical)
work – it can be for those that want it,
but there are plenty of other jobs to be
done for those that prefer to sit down
and do some of the more sedentary
jobs. Its very rewarding in many ways,
and you can volunteer as much (or as little) time as you can spare. It’s a chance to get
to know lots of other people with one common interest, and to learn new skills and how
beer should be handled, stored and dispensed. If you haven’t been involved before,
there are plenty of others to help show you what to do, and it would be great to have
more members coming and helping in 2018. I will be in touch early in the New Year!
Peter Jaquiss
Hammond Unveils a Budget Bonus for Pub Goers

Following the Chancellor’s Budget announcement to freeze beer duty and extend the £1,000 business rate relief for most pubs in England please find below comment from the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA).

On the subject of beer duty, CAMRA’s National Chairman Colin Valentine said:
"Pub goers were fearing the worst from this Budget but will now be raising a glass. Freezing beer duty will help arrest rising beer prices and keep the British pub going tradition affordable. I will be celebrating this decision in my local this evening and I hope millions of beer lovers across the country will be doing the same. Now, to make a real, lasting difference we hope that this move represents the first step towards a long-term freeze. CAMRA is calling on brewers to match the Chancellor’s support by holding beer prices so that local pub goers benefit." On the subject of business rates in England, CAMRA’s National Chairman Colin Valentine said:
"We welcome the Chancellor's decision to extend the £1,000 rate relief for pubs for one more year. This shows that the Government is alive to the threats facing English pubs although more needs to be done. CAMRA is calling for further action to secure a thriving pub sector and would like this relief to be made permanent and increased to £5,000 a year. We would also like to see a wholesale review of the business rates regime, which unfairly penalises pubs and rewards online retailers."

Following the plans announced by the Chancellor to increase duty on higher strength ciders, CAMRA’s National Chairman Colin Valentine adds:
"This will be disappointing news for a number of traditional cider producers who will be hit by this measure unless an exemption for traditional produce can be secured."

Pub Company Changes – How Do They Affect Your Local?

CAMRA is investigating the impact of changes to our pubs as the big pub owning companies react to the Pubs Code, put into force in 2016 after years of campaigning by licensee groups and CAMRA.

In the last two years, the number of pubs run on traditional long-term tenancies has fallen, as some tenants are replaced by managers. Licensee campaigners are concerned that this may encourage management turnover, all to avoid pubs being covered by the Code. The impact on customers is less clear.

Our Pub Campaigns Committee is looking, confidentiality, for information. It is particularly interested to see if changes in management to pub company pubs result in more or less choice for pub-goers. Has your local pub increased or reduced its range of real ale and cider after a change of tenant? Or do you work in a pubco pub and have seen changes? The Committee would also like to know about any changes in prices and in the quality of the beer being served.

Please send information to the Committee’s Chair, Paul Ainsworth – paul.ainsworth@camra.org.uk

Name the Pub Answers


TRADING STANDARDS

If you feel that you have been treated unfairly in a pub, club or bar you should contact the Citizen Advice consumer helpline on 08454 04 05 06 or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer
What’s the branch up to?

Saturday 3 February 2018
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
11.30am prompt
Red Lion Ramsgate (CT11 8NN)

Future meetings
Minster Campaigning crawl
Starting at the New Inn and ending at Hair of the Dog.
Pub to be confirmed at a later date.
Saturday evening Ramsgate pub crawl ending with a curry at the St Lawrence Tandoori, near both the loop bus and Ramsgate Railway Station

For up to date information on these meetings and socials and other events that the branch will be organising in the coming months visit our website at www.thanetcamra.org.uk, head to our Facebook page or follow us on Twitter.

Danny O Sullivan
CAMRA Social Secretary for Thanet
**Thanet pubs selling locally brewed beers**

Listed below are pubs and bars that are known to regularly sell real ales from breweries within 20 miles of Thanet.

**Birchington:** Wheel Alehouse, Old Bay Alehouse

**Broadstairs:** Bradstow Mill, Chapel, Charles Dickens, Dolphin, George Inn, Little Albion, Mind the Gap, Pavilion, Tartar Frigate, Thirty-Nine Steps

**Cliftonville:**

**Margate:** Ales of the Unexpected, Fez, Harbour Arms, Lifeboat, Mechanical Elephant, Two Halves, Wig and Pen

**Minster:** Hair of the Dog, New Inn

**Pegwell:** Sir Stanley Gray

**Ramsgate:** Artillery Arms, Churchill Tavern, Conqueror Alehouse, Earl St Vincent, Elephant & Castle, Hotel De Ville, Hovelling Boat Montefiore Arms, NauticAles, Oak Hotel, Queen Charlotte, Queens Head, Red Lion

**St. Peters:** Four Candles, Yard of Ale

**Westgate:** Bake & Alehouse

**Reading Street (St. Peters):** White Swan

Thanet CAMRA cannot guarantee the availability of a local ale or the quality of the ale served in any establishments listed and cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions to this list.

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**CAMRA Discounts For Card Carrying Members**

NauticAles (Ramsgate) will provide a CAMRA meeting hub on Saturdays between 12 and 3pm where they will offer 50p off a pint (Ale and Cider)

Harbour Arms (Margate) will offer 10% off a pint anytime

Wheel Alehouse (Birchington) 20p off on Tuesday

The Tap Room (Cliftonville) 20p off lunchtime Monday and Tuesday

Bake and Alehouse (Westgate) 20p off all day Tuesday

London Tavern (Margate) 30p off on Tuesday

The Fez (Margate) 20p off all day Monday

Yard of Ale (St. Peters-in-Thanet) 50p off Ale & Cider

Wednesday

Lifeboat (Margate) 50p off real ale Sunday

Chapel (Broadstairs) 50p off real ale Sunday

The Bottle Shop Off Licence Birchington on Sea - 10% off

The Corkscrew Off Licence Westage on Sea - 10% off

Offers correct at time of going to press (Sept 2017) - they may be withdrawn or altered at anytime please ask when ordering.

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**WANTED Advertisers**

Rates from £20 to £60

Email with ‘AOT advertising’ in Subject box to steve@thanet-camra.org.uk for more details

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Book your advert for the First Quarter 2018 issue by 23 February 2018
An exciting new bar in Cliftonville offering a wide range of Real Ales, Lagers, Ciders, Wines, Rums, Gins & much more!

FREE WiFi

FREE TONIC TUESDAYS
Free Fever Tree Tonic with any Gin ALL DAY TUESDAYS! (offer ends 31st December)

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Real Ale £2.75 a pint Thursday evening 5pm—8pm (offer ends 31st December)

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TUE to THUR: 14:00—22:45
FRI & SAT: 12:00-22:45
SUN: 12:00—19:00

244 NORTHDOWN ROAD,
CLIFTONVILLE, CT9 2PX
(the old HSBC bank)
A visit to the Alehouses of St Nicholas-at-Wade

It has been quite a while since the branch had had an outing to the pubs in St Nicholas-at-Wade affectionately known as St Nics. We had an ulterior motive as well to visit, so our trip began with a number 8 bus to St Nics and a walk along The Length to get to the Sun. What was amazing was the fact that the weather had been dreadful with downpours right up to the point of us getting off the bus and then getting to the Sun (not really appropriately named on this particular day) as soon as we got to the pub it started again but who cares when you are getting wet on the inside with a choice of four ales – two from Westerham (Kent) - British Bulldog 4.3% bitter and Audit Ale 6.2% strong ale alongside a couple of porters Titanic (Burslem, Staffs) Plum Porter and Caledonian (Edinburgh) Poltergeist Porter 4.0%. All partaken of by the arriving members and non-members of CAMRA. As luck would have it the heavens relented from its downpour to go into sun as we left the Sun and arrive at the new siting of the Wantsum Brewery and their taproom. By the time everyone arrived we were seventeen strong at this point - a great turn out. We were amazingly welcomed here with a buffet and a great selection of the Wantsum beers. I personally opted for the Red Raddle a 5% red American amber/red and one of my favourites the Ravening Wolf a sweetish 5.9% IPA but I did notice a lot of Golgotha sweet oatmeal stout floating around the room. So, suitably fed and watered, our ulterior motive became apparent to the brewery personnel. We were there to present them with a plaque for achieving the gold award for their Black Prince mild at the 25th Winterfest held by the Gosport branch CAMRA and voted for by the participants of the festival. Unfortunately none of their members were able to attend but I think we did them proud. The brewery invited us to a brewery tour where technical operations were gone into and feedback suggested that everyone really enjoyed the tour. Needless to say whilst here in the taproom it poured with rain and as we prepared to leave for the Bell, our third and final destination of the day, the weather yet again relented and allowed us to walk in sunshine. A great welcome from the Bell too who had hot nibbles for us and another selection of ales that suited the fourteen of us, who had left the Wantsum taproom behind. So a BIG THANK YOU to St Nics, a great welcome at all ports of call and an enjoyable afternoon for all. To coin a phrase WE’LL BE BACK.

Graham
CAMRA and Drinkaware announce the first ever London low alcohol beer competition

CAMRA North London will be hosting the first ever competition to find the best low alcohol beer brewed in London at the London Drinker Beer & Cider Festival in March in Camden. The competition is open to any beer of 3% ABV or lower with the aim of showing that a beer doesn't have to be strong to be tasty. Alcohol education charity, Drinkaware, are sponsoring the competition.

Rommel Moseley, Drinkaware Director of Business Development and Partnerships said: “Drinkaware is delighted to be sponsoring this first-ever competition to find the Champion Low Alcohol Beer of London. Drinks that are low in alcohol don’t have to be low on taste and it’s good to see a growing number of brewers producing flavourful beers with lower ABVs, which can help customers to moderate their consumption of alcohol and minimise the harms associated with it.”

The Festival's organiser, Christine Cryne, added: “We welcome entries from any brewery, big or small, in any format, draught, can or bottle, the more the merrier! And we have put together a fantastic list of experienced judges to find us the very best beer. Anyone interested in putting in a beer, or even two, to this inaugural competition, which is free to enter, should contact me.”

The New Inn is a fully independent, friendly and welcoming free house offering an eclectic mix of well kept ales & ciders, whiskies from around the world and a large selection of gins.

7 REAL ALES + 3 KEY KEGS
LOCAL CIDERS
20+ WHISKIES
BEER GARDEN

Come and Join us this Festive Season at Canterbury’s Top Pub

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With London in easy reach of Thanet it is the ideal place for a lunchtime ramble. This issue we explore the area around Kings Cross, Bloomsbury and Euston with our ultimate aim to end up visiting the Bree Louise pub near Euston station, which is due to close in the New Year as part of the redevelopment of the station for HS2.

Catching a high speed train to St. Pancras (International) I and my fellow travellers proceeded out of the station via the exits to the rear of the South Eastern platform’s escalators onto to St Pancras Road. We directly crossed towards Kings Cross station opposite and down St Pancras Road passing around the front of the station into Euston Road. This area of London didn’t become known as King’s Cross until after 1830 when a monument to King George IV was erected; this only lasted until 1845 due to the King’s unpopularity - the base of the memorial housed both a pub and a police station during this time.

The station, built 1851-52, was designed by Lewis Cubitt on the site of a hospital; Lewis along with his brothers William and Thomas are said to have developed more parts of London in the 19th century than any other family. The station has recently had a £550 million redevelopment which saw the ugly 1960s built booking Hall demolished to reveal the grade I listed Victorian façade. Look ahead to your right the triangular shape building housing a Five Guys burger bar has a tower on its rooftop; nicknamed the ‘Lighthouse’ by locals its purpose is unknown though is thought to be an advertisement for Grimsby fish which arrived fresh daily at the station.

Crossing York Way we walked the short distance along Pentonville Road to its junction with Caledonian Road. Just in Caledonian Road can be seen the Scottish Stores pub. This inn originally designed by architects Wyson and Long in 1901 got its name by virtue of the joints of Venison that hung in the bar awaiting their sale by visiting Scottish traders. By the 1980’s pub had been re-named "The Flying Scotsman" and had become well known as one of London’s few remaining ‘strippers’ pubs. The pub reopened in December 2015 under its original name after a sympathetically refurbishment of its grade II listed interiors including the restoration of Jacobean-styled woodwork in the servery, as well as the coloured lithographs of hunting scenes by Cecil Aldin of 1900, set into frames in the panelling. A café-style extension has also been added without affecting the historic fabric of the pub.

CAMRA has described the refurbishment of the pub as: “All in all a splendid example of how to bring a much-loved urban landmark back to life”.

Sadly when we arrived, there was a problem with the real ales, so after admiring the pub’s interior we decided to head to the next pub.

Returning back towards Pentonville Road we continued forward into King’s Cross Bridge and then turned left into Gray’s Inn Road.

Continue forward passing the National Ear, Nose and Throat Hospital until we reached Acton Street.

Housed just a few doors along this road is the Queen’s Head. This narrow late Georgian pub with its single bar, rear smoking patio and pavement benches retains much of its Victorian character such as etched mirrors, a fine back gantry,
floor tiling, blue wall tiles (listed), lamps as well as a splendid bay window, an exquisite fireplace, a lantern and an assortment of ill-matching old tables and chairs. Three real ales along with up to three traditional ciders are sold along with a selection of craft keg; a 10% discount is offered to CAMRA members. I drank East London Pale Ale while the others sampled Redemption Trinity.

Moving on we returned to Gray’s Inn Road and continued down until we reached our next pub the Calthorpe Arms, a traditional Victorian pub with pavement seating on the corner of Wren Street. It is a comfortable single bar pub popular with locals and office workers and was used in 1830 as a temporary magistrates’ court after the first recorded murder of a policeman on duty. Bought by Young’s in 1984 and now owned by the Ram Pub Company, the rotating beers are supplied by Charles Wells and include guest ales; we all had the Thwaites Lancaster Bomber.

Leaving here we headed for the traffic lights ahead and turned right into Guildford Street. Continue along here until you reach the zebra crossing by the entrance to Coram’s Fields, cross and head forward into Guildford Place which soon turns into Lamb’s Conduit Street. A little way up on the left is the Lamb. Although the pub’s sign depicts a lamb it is in fact, as is the street, named after William Lamb, who in 1577 erected a water conduit along the street. The pub was originally built in the 1720s and refurbished in Victorian times with much of the original structure being lost. The pub has a U-shaped bar and above the counter rare ‘snob screens’, one of the few remaining pubs to retain them. These small pivoting panels at head height prevented the well to do drinker having to see the common man and vice versa. Dark wood, smoke-brown walls, sepia photographs and Victorian artefacts give the pub a bygone feel. A Polyphon, a Victorian juke-box, occupies one corner, and at the rear is a small covered patio. A range of Youngs beers along with a couple of guests were on offer - it was pints of Youngs Winter Warmer for us all.

Leaving the Lamb we continued along Lamb’s Conduit Street until we reached its junction with Great Ormond Street, where on the corner sits our next pub to visit, the Perseverance; this independently run free-house was taken over in
2016 by Market Taverns - owners of the Market Porter at London Bridge. The single bar pub mixes original architecture with modern décor, has high tables and chairs along with sofas and low tables; there is an upstairs dining /function room. Real Ales along with craft keg beers come from a variety of sources including a house beer, Bloomsbury IPA, which comes from Cornwall. We all sampled Tiny Rebel’s Cwtch here.

Leaving we turned left into Great Ormond Street, passing the famous children’s hospital on our way to Queen’s Square. A statue of Queen Charlotte, wife of King George III, sits in the middle of the square which is home to many medical establishments; our destination was the passageway (Cosmo Place) between the Queen’s Larder pub and St George the Martyr church directly ahead as you leave Great Ormond Street.

A short distance along is to be found the Swan. This long one-roomed Victorian pub with outside seating is a busy and popular destination. Although now a Greene King pub it was formerly a Taylor Walker outlet and it keeps the former owners guest beer policy, so alongside three GK beers may be found up to five real ales from various London breweries including Truman and Wimbledon. A 10% discount to CAMRA members is offered. I drank a pint of G2 Orion while the others sampled Truman’s Runner.

Leaving the pub continue to the end of Cosmo Place and turn right into Southampton Row. Continue forward into Russell Square before turning right into Bernard Street. Passing Russell Square tube station turn left into Marchmont Street, continue forward into Cartwright Gardens and then Mabledon Place before arriving at Mabel’s Tavern. This pub was formerly known as the Kentish Arms and is now named in honour of Mabel Macinelly who came to London from Dublin. She is reputed to haunt the place. The pub has outdoor seating and inside is spread over several different levels with a small snug area at one end of the bar. Two TV screens show various sporting channels. Food is available along with a selection of the owners’ beers (Shepherd Neame). We all sampled their Late Red.

Upon leaving we continued the short distance up Mabledon Place to the junction with Euston Road where we turned left for about a third of a mile before turning right, passing Euston Mainline Station into Euston Square and forward into Melton Street before turning left into Euston Road;
named after the landlord’s daughter who sadly died just 12 weeks old, is set to be eliminated from the local scene when it is demolished as part of the redevelopment of Euston Station for HS2. Even with its coarse and jagged character, the pub, which some people adore and others just dislike, is usually packed with punters sampling some of 20 or so real ales, a dozen+ ciders or the homely food that is offered. It was due to close in November but has been given a reprieve until 31 January. Well worth finding if you get the chance before it closes; just such a shame for a place with such a large following. We sampled Titanic Iceburg, Plum Porter and Moorhouse’s Blond Witch.

That was the end of our trip and we returned back to Euston Road walking back to St. Pancras. If you are still in need of a beer you can visit the Euston Tap, Doric Arch or the George all located by Euston station, just off the Euston Road. Another London lunch is planned in the New Year where I hope to visit the area around Southwark & London Bridge - a write up in next issue.

Cheers
Beery Steve

New Beer from a New Company
Four Candles Micropub & Brewery owner Mike Beaumont has teamed up with Julie Harmer owner of Broadstairs Off-license, The Offy to launch a new company, Planet Thanet Beer Co. The new venture will offer adventurous, experimental stronger beers in smaller (330ml) bottles. The first beer blasted off at the beginning of December was the 6.1% ABV Seagull Attack Juniper Rye.

The Four Candles will still continue to create an ever-changing range of 500ml "Four Candles" bottled beer - all created in the cellar of Britain’s Smallest Brewpub! in Sowell Street. The new Planet Thanet beers will cost £3 per bottle.
CAMRA names the best four pubs in the country

The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) has named the best four pubs in the country as part of its Pub of the Year 2017 competition, one of the most respected and well-known pub awards in the UK.

Among the finalists is the Weavers Real Ale House in Kidderminster, a relatively new one-room micropub. This micropub serves eight real ales and four ciders and perries on handpump and has six craft beers on tap. A short walk from the railway station, it's the perfect place for a pint and a chat on the way into town.

Also in the running for the second year in a row is the Stanford Arms in Lowestoft, East Anglia. A thriving traditional back-street pub, the Stanford Arms serves mainly local beers and ciders, and boasts live music at the weekends.

Finally two rival pubs from the North West have made the list this year - Wigan Central in Wigan and the Cricketers in St Helens, Merseyside. Wigan Central boasts a unique railway-themed interior and sources real ale from all over, with continental bottled beers displayed in a ‘beer library’. The Cricketers in St Helens is a friendly local community pub saved from closure just four years ago that boasts 13 handpumps on the bar and runs beer festivals and jam nights throughout the year.

All of the pubs in the competition are selected by CAMRA volunteers and judged on their atmosphere, decor, welcome, service, value for money, customer mix and most importantly – quality of beer. The four finalists will now have a chance to win the National Pub of the Year title for 2017, which will be announced in February 2018.

National Pub of the Year Co-ordinator Andrea Briers said: "All of these pubs should be very proud of themselves for reaching this stage in the competition. It is a huge honour to be considered one of the top four pubs across the country. While each of these pubs offers something unique to their visitors, they all share the foundation of what makes a great pub - a warm and welcoming atmosphere, excellent service and a fantastic range of beers."

The four finalists will be presented with their super regional award at local events over the coming weeks.
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