

Continued from page 11 bar you are there to keep people there and buying beer. You are part of a partnership. Since I shifted base back to the Island I have started to get a foot in various doors. I made the move in June, and my wife will be here from the middle of September. We have got to pull our fingers out and see what we are going to do. I don't want to get a 'proper;' job. If I can. I am looking to play three or four times a week. I am playing at The Castle in Newport which is one of my favourites. I am also going to do a summer season at the Ocean Deck in Sandown next year - they are really nice people there. It's interesting that you go in a pub and they say 'Have you got a CD and publicity pack ?' I know from experience that pub owners don't listen to CD's. So far, touch wood, everything is going quite well. Next year I'll be on my feet. One of the things that I missed in Germany was the feeling of being part of a community that you get on the Island. It's been really nice coming back. At the moment, I'm on the outside looking in, but I'm a bit like a prodigal son and I want to be part of the established music scene here. Ultimately, I'd like to find a partner for a duo, so I'm looking for a guitarist/keybord player/singer for a project next year".

Welcome back, Bill. We wish you well.
Vic King

Bill Burns can be contacted on 07972 478673

Disclaimer
 The views expressed in Wightwash are not necessarily those of the editor or The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) either locally or nationally.

To contact *Wightwash*
 phone 721557 or email
 editor@wightwash.org.uk

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 I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and I agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Signed.....Date.....

Wightwash

Volume 2. Number 32

Newsletter of the Isle of Wight branch of CAMRA

Autumn Issue 2007

The Campaign for Real Ale exists to preserve and promote good beer and pubs.

Wessex Region Runner-Up!

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 Just the Juice
Yachts and Ale
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Kerry's Page
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 News and Gossip
 and much, much more....

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BEER IN THE EVENING

Ever fancied a beer in the evening? If so, and the GBG was not to hand, you may have looked on the internet for ideas and found the site called Beer in the Evening. (www.beerinevening.com)

Started as a means of keeping a personal record following a New Year's resolution to get out more, the scheme is now administered by ten individuals and contributed to by many more registered users all over the country, and has ranked No.1 in two categories by the website scorer Hitwise. So, it is, obviously, a very popular point of call, and, indeed, is a very friendly and interesting site.

This being the case, should IW CAMRA members not be promoting our local good Real Ale pubs? There seems to be no criteria for inclusion, other than being proposed and scored by personal opinion. Much like our own Local Guide, having no Real Ale is not a reason for exclusion from being listed.

Searching for listings of our current GBG and BeerPoint pubs, shows that there are many of the Islands best Real Ale spots left out. If they have no active surveyors on the Island, then this might explain why.

So, do your local Real Ale pub a favour, register on Beer in the Evening and get the best IW pubs up there!

John Nicholson

(John is chairman of the Isle of Wight branch of CAMRA)

Drivers Wanted!

Many readers of *Wightwash* will know of Peter Winkles and his tireless work for **Leukaemia Research**. For the last 12 years he has devoted his spare time to raising money by driving the Leukaemia Bus. Well, now he needs a little help with this task.

If you are over 25, have a full driving licence and would be willing to donate a little spare time to driving a mini bus to raise money for this wonderful charity, please give Peter a call on 01983 562294



Win a **£20 Meal Voucher** for the **Chequers Inn** or a **Case of Beer** from the **Ventnor Brewery**

Just answer these easy questions. The first two correct answers out of the hat on 1st November win the prizes.

Send answers to - The Editor, Wightwash, Oakdene, Rookley, Ventnor, PO38 3NH
or email - editor@wightwash.org.uk

- 1/ SamTyler and Gene Hunt are characters in which recent BBC police drama?
- 2/ Who was the second wife of Henry VIII?
- 3/Where did Nellie the Elephant meet the head of the herd?
- 4/ Prior to 1664, what was New York called?
- 5/ How is 555 displayed in Roman Numerals?
- 6/ Which brewery has just taken over Ringwood Brewery?
- 7/ Who is the Chancellor of the Exchequer?
- 8/ Which group released albums called "A Ghost in the Machine", "Synchronicity" and "Outlandos d'Amour"?
- 9/ and 10/
Identify these car manufacturers from the logos shown here?



Answers to the Spring Quiz:

- 1/ Lewis Hamilton 2/ Scotland Yard 3/Femur 4/ 1971 5/ Rudyard Kipling 6/ Time and Relative Dimensions in Space 7/Bob Dylan 8/ To Pluck
- 9/ BBC 10/ Special Air Service Janet Leal of Shanklin wins a £20 Meal Voucher for the Chequers Inn and Suzie Shippam of Freshwater wins a case of Ventnor Beer.

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The Ventnor Lion Point Pumping Station

The treatment of waste water has always presented some difficulty in Ventnor. When the original system was installed a very deep tunnel had to be dug to convey sewage from the homes in Lowtherville to link with the lower part of the town.

Latterly, Southern Water incorporated the town in its island wide Seaclean scheme and all waste water needing treatment before discharge is kept in holding tanks prior to its transfer to the Sandown plant. For this transfer the old railway tunnel has come in useful for it now contains a section of the pipeline.

The holding tank for Ventnor required excavation to the depth of eight metres. It is concealed beneath the imposing building which can serve as a fine bandstand. However the rude locals bearing in mind its actual function and with some lack of finesse have christened it "The Poo Palace".



Rob Marshall

From *Paul Mattick*

A new system, which has recently started in Nottingham, looks set to take the country by storm in the very near future. **Smoking in Pubs** is the brainchild of... Now that I have your attention; it's nothing to do with smoking, but a scheme called **LocAle**. The Aim behind it all is to promote local Ale, (hence LocAle!)

Anyway, this is how it all works. Licensees and landlords are asked if they wish to participate and in turn are given window stickers and pump clip crowns for the relevant pumps along with posters and flyers to decorate the walls. The posters alone cover all manner of unsightly cracks etc. so they're off to a good start! There are a couple of rules, one of them being that a local brewery must not be more than 20 miles from the front door of the said pub- 'A bit of a problem if you want **Goddard's** in Freshwater then' you may ask. But no, because there are exceptions to the rule, and as we are an Island we are exempt and outside the international "oops I'm in deepwater" limit, to worry about all that!

The chief element of the scheme is to promote LocAle... sorry - Local Ale, which in turn may encourage some of our nationally run pubs to adopt the scheme thus promoting our island produce.

And it's another feather in the cap for Paul and Sharon at the **Yarbridge Inn**. Narrowly missing **Regional Pub of the Year**, they were worthy runners-up.

This is what the judges wrote "Very close in second place, is the atmospheric **Yarbridge Inn** at Brading on the Isle of Wight. The judges commended the nine super real ales on offer, all from independent brewers, but especially the adjoining board listing the brewer, location, strength and price

of each real ale, plus a short description of each. One judge commented: "An excellent beer line-up, I tried eight of the nine and all were in very good condition- particularly impressive given its rural location on an island."

Personally I'm particularly impressed that this judge tried 8 of Paul's beers and managed to remember anything at all.

The winner was the **Plough Inn** at Little London, just north of Basingstoke.

It's been 40 years since the **White Hart** in Havenstreet has had any alterations (and that was only for a change of loo seat!). I can now reveal that Licensee **Keith Terrell** and his wife **Cherry** are looking forward to opening the doors to the public on the 12th October. Keith told me that after closing in July, builders have put in new kitchens, a new cellar and, wait for it, new toilets. What was wrong with the old toilets I'll never know as it was always nice to look up at the stars whilst doin' the do! Keith also told me that he plans to put on two Real Ales for the time being, and he'll see how it goes before deciding to add oth-



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ers. The real fire stays, as does the restaurant area (larger than before) and a large umbrella fire thingy will be on site for all you smokers who wish to smoke on the new fire retardant Patio!
Good luck Keith and Cherry, see you soon.

The Woodvale, Gurnard are running a very popular guest beer scheme that would definitely get the LocAle thumbs up. At £2.10 a pint the featured beers include **Yates, Youngs, Archers** and **Goddards**.

The **Three Bishops**, Brighthstone is currently closed for an extremely extensive refit. Chris and Helen hope to reopen in November. Please see www.wightwash.org.uk for more on this story.

Would you like us to write something about your pub?
Phone 721557 or Email editor@wightwash.org.uk

Wightwash can exclusively calm all rumours that have been currently upsetting the London Equity Markets, the Nikkei and the Dow Jones Index. **Jay Chapman** is not leaving the **Fat Cat Bar**. All that's happened is Mum has sold her shares and Jay has a couple of new partners. That's it... it's business as usual. Not that there's anything usual about the Fat Cat of course!"

Jo and Dave Radcliffe, Sandownian party animals are doing it again. The landlords of the **Castle Inn, Sandown** just can't resist the chance of a knees up, and especially if it means helping local charities. This year instead of one Halloween party they are having seven- They call it A Halloween



Week. This is your chance to search out those scary costumes and get ready for spooktacular fun. The Halloween week kicks off on the 27th October

with a fancy dress party held at the pub. Entry to the party is free and you can be sure of an eerie atmosphere. Jo and Dave will be decorating the pub in all sorts of ghostly things and all the staff and customers will be dressing up. During the fun there will be raffles, quizzes and a children's party. On the bar will be a favourite or two from the **Wychwood**

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Coming Soon - Real Ale Festival (1 - 18 Nov) 50 Real Ales!!

Wightwash was sad to learn that the iconic Paul "Ciderman" Miller has decided to retire, however this is not the end of real cider on the Isle of Wight by any means. We are lucky to have Gill Williams, CAMRA's Director of Cider and Perry Campaigning living here on the Island and she has agreed to write a regular column for us. So without further ado, may I present...



Autumn is the season of mellow fruitfulness as the work for Cider and Perry Producers begins in earnest. Once a year when the fruit is ripe Producers scrat, press and store the liquid gold from their cider and eating apples and perry pears. This ferments over the winter months to be tasted and blended in Spring – producing a glass of liquid sunshine to be savoured through out the whole of 2008. CAMRA has now set October aside as Cider & Perry Month.

Hampshire Producer, Angus Whitehead of Mr Whitehead's Cider Company is no stranger to the skills involved in making real cider and perry having been producing since he was a teenager. In 2006 he was awarded the accolade of CAMRA's National Bronze for Mr Whitehead's Perry. 2007 saw Angus' range stretch to the Island (thanks to Peter and Ysanne Legg) and now there is a range of draught products available at various Island outlets including:-
Bottles:- Fat Cat, The Rose, Buddle, Kingston Arms, Worlds End, Ventnor Brewery
Draught:- Waterside, Traveller's Joy, Stag
www.mr-whiteheads-cider.co.uk



Please also check out www.camra.org.uk and click on "ABOUT CIDER"

Stop Press
The Yarbridge have Heck's the 2006 National Gold Cider on currently as well as Mr Whitehead's bottles.

f **JACK'S JAZZ**
(1 TO 7 PIECE)

For those who like Jazz AND those who don't!

JACK TAIT
(01983) 854403

Dear All

I have been asked to write about Pubwatch.

Well, what is it?

In essence, it's the Licensed trade's equivalent to Neighbourhood watch. Pubwatch, however, tends to be more active.

The basic principle is that licensees agree a number of policies of action against individuals who cause or threaten damage, disorder, violence, or who use or deal in drugs in their premises. Normally the action is to exclude these individuals from the premises.

To work effectively, any Pubwatch must work closely with the Police so that information and photographs may be exchanged.

There is no doubt that an effective Pubwatch can make a tremendous difference on a locality. Most people want to enjoy an evening out without trouble and may stay away from an area where there is. Licensees can affect this by joining, actively participating, or setting up a Pubwatch.

Most of the Isle of Wight is covered by a local scheme, but certain areas have less participation than others. If there is not a Pubwatch in your area that you can join, why not think about forming one? (You can contact me in the first instance if you would like to, or your local Police Officer).

National Pubwatch have a website www.nationalpubwatch.org.uk where you can also get a copy of the National Pubwatch Good Practice Guide.

One of the most important things to maintain, is enthusiasm. A watch is run by licensees for licensees with the assistance of the Police.

The motto "banned from one, banned from all" is one of the strengths of Pubwatch. Unity of action against problem customers is the clearest message that can be sent.

**PS Graeme Mudge
Licensing Sergeant**

Police Licensing Tel 01983 823154



Brewery as well as the regular real ales. and, just for the ladies the pub will also be concocting some Halloween cocktails.

Goddards Brewery

Goddards are pleased to announce that sales are up from last year. Chris Coleman tells us that production this year has increased by about 20%. To meet the additional demand Goddards are buying in more casks and Chris says that production is busier as more beer is being "exported" to the mainland.

The Brewery also want to tell our readers that **Fuggle dee Dum** has done it again. This popular beer has won an award for the second time this year. It has won a silver medal in the recent South East Beer Competition hosted by the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA). **Fuggle dee Dum** won second place in the competitions Premium Bitter section for beers 4.6-4.9 ABV *Squeaky Clean*

Finally, drinkers will be happy to learn that Goddards have been presented with 5 stars in the Islands food hygiene "Scores on the doors" scheme. The score represents the cleanliness of all premises that produce food stuffs on the Island. 5 stars is the highest. Well done Goddards!

Yates Brewery

Yates has also seen an improvement in beer sales. The Brewery has now had to increase their number of delivery vans on the road to accommodate the uptake. They are really busy at the moment and everyone is working flat out to keep up with demand.

Currently Yates are brewing a new guest beer which they hope will make its debut during next month. A brewery spokesman commented "It has been suggested to the head brewer by the

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general public that the next guest beer should be named 'Handbags at Dawn' – A drink to be respected". Watch this space. Please note that Yates have a new email address. info@yates-brewery.co.uk This is a result of the actions of a very unhelpful national company that bears the same name as a fruit and a colour.

A few of the pubs on the market at the moment

- The Crab & Lobster, Bembridge
 - The Old Stag, Newport
 - The Prince of Wales, East Cowes
 - Ocean Deck Inn, Sandown
 - Ye Olde Village Inn, Bembridge
 - The Fleming Arms, Ryde
- All these and lots more on the Gully Howard website.

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John Rigby has contacted us and would like to know if any readers have information regarding Italian and German POWs held at Havenstreet. John can be contacted via Wightwash (tel.721557) or email jorigbey@aol.com



One event that seemed to go almost unnoticed in the British Press was the passing away of the beer writer **Michael Jackson**. Ironically it received much more coverage in the USA with obituaries in the Washington Post, the Herald Tribune, the

New York Times and many others. One of the few papers over here to mention it was the Guardian. In it Roger Protz wrote "The enduring legacy of Michael Jackson, who has died aged 65, will be that he elevated beer from the belief that it is a simple refresher to its true status as one of the world's great alcoholic drinks". Michael, who acknowledged he would never be as famous as "that Michael Jackson," was "simply the best beer writer we've ever known," said Tim Hampson, chairman of the British Guild of Beer Writ-

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ers. Michael especially loved Belgian brews. His books "The Great Beers of Belgium" and "World Guide to Beer" introduced them to many export markets. His TV documentary series, "The Beer Hunter" - which popularized his nickname - was filmed around the world and shown in 15 countries.

Following feedback from my last poem, here's one written by Benjamin Hapgood Burt in 1933. It was part of Jimmy Tarbuck's act during the 70's. He only did the first verse, it's actually quite a long one so here are the first and last verses.

One evening in October, when I was one-third sober,
 An' taking home a 'load' with manly pride;
 My poor feet began to stutter, so I lay down in the gutter,
 And a pig came up an' lay down by my side;
 Then we sang 'It's all fair weather when good fellows get together,'
 Till a lady passing by was heard to say:
 'You can tell a man who "boozes"

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The Castle Inn, Newport



Proprietors Stuart and Sarah Luke are keen to welcome Isle of Wight Real Ale fans to their historic town centre pub. The Castle Inn is the winner of Best Premium Bar Award, South East 2007. Recently the couple attended a special awards ceremony in London where the TV comedian Rob Bryden presented them with the accolade.

The Castle Inn tempts Real Ale and International Beer fans alike. The pub has a choice of real ales - four on pumps and a stock of Goddards bottled Ales. Stuart has even created a beer menu in which he recommends which beer should go with which pub meal.

For those seeking a unique taste give the exclusive Ventnor Stable Boys Revenge a whirl. This has been brewed especially for the pub by Ventnor brewery and has an ABV of 4.4%. The ale was specially made for the Castle and is named after the pub's ghost (In the pub's distant past, a stable boy, thwarted in love, hanged himself and his ghost reputedly still haunts the back bar).



During September the pub hosted some beer tasting evenings, a chance to try something new. As well as Real Ales, there were a host of international beers to sample including Peeterman Artois which is said to be "breaking the mould in standard lager" plus Leffe, Artois Bock and Moretti Beer.

To find out more and to keep up to date visit www.castleinniw.co.uk

RINGWOOD BREWERY

Thumping GOOD BEER
 (01425) 471177

Ocean Adventures Sailing is the brainchild of James White, from the Wirral, who developed his sea legs on annual family holidays in Orkney, having shared the back of a Ford Cortina with three siblings, a cat and the dog to get there, along with canoes, bikes and boats on the roof.



Andrew Elison, Patrick Land and Andy Kiwi during the Round the Island race.

His successful skippered yacht charter business, which offers day and weekend sails, was born in Liverpool but now mainly operates out of Hythe Marina with one of the most popular destinations being the Isle of Wight. James prides himself on offering the experience of sailing a luxury 42ft Bavaria Lagoon, whilst trying to replicate the atmosphere of a friend's yacht, all at very competitive prices. Feedback suggests he's hit the nail on the head.

Meanwhile, his Master Brewer twin brother has set about the ambitious task of recreating an authentic IPA from a Burton Union system in his microbrewery. With this link to brewing in the family, Ocean Adventures are considering various activities for the future. Anyone interested, for example in sailing from the Isle of Wight to a brewery on the south coast, or for other possible itineraries can contact James on 0151 336 5037 or visit the Ocean Adventures website.

10% from every booking will be donated to Leukaemia Research so please mention Wightwash.

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by the company he chooses'
And the pig got up and slowly walked away.

I began to scratch the gravel, on my all fours I did travel,
I rambled down the road the best I could.

When I awoke next morning, just as the day was dawning,

I was in a pig pen way out in the woods.

Then the pigs began to grumble, I started and I stumbled,
I fell right in their midst and there I lay.

Then one by one they started, till the entire herd departed,

Yes, every pig got up and walked away.

Gotta go, I've got an appointment with a woman called Miss Piggy

Paul

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Dates for your Diary

Quay Arts Centre in partnership with **Vaguely Sunny** present-

One of Irelands most gifted fiddle players - "Riverdance" soloist **Zoë Conway**

14th October Quay Arts Centre 8pm Tickets £12/11 Box Office 822490

17th October

Branch Meeting - Fat Cat Bar, Freshwater - 8.30
(Jay has promised some interesting ciders and beers)

1 - 18 November -

Wetherspoons Real Ale Festival, Fowlers, Ryde

4th November - The Blues Room present:- **Errol Linton's Blues Vibe**

The Venue, Ryde Theatre Tickets £10/12 (Real Ale bar!) Box office (01983) 568099

14th November

Branch Meeting White Lion, Niton - 8.30

14th December -

CAMRA branch Christmas Party - Solent Inn, Ryde
(transport TBA)

25th January Branch AGM - Traveller's Joy, Northwood. 8pm

Andrew Turner
24 The Mall
Newport
Isle of Wight

Dear Andrew,

*I am not writing this on behalf of CAMRA who, to the best of my belief, currently have no official line on this subject.

Re: Proposed lowering of the "Drink Driving" limit.

Can you imagine a newspaper article in a couple of year's time along the lines of "**Government admits mistake and reinstates old drink driving limit**"? Hardly!

A cursory look through this week's County Press shows that those convicted of drink driving offences took little notice of current limits and would be just as likely, if not more so, to ignore a lower limit. "Better to be hung for a sheep than a lamb."
One fact however is undisputed: **lowering the limit would close thousands of rural pubs having a damaging effect on local communities especially in areas such as the Isle of Wight.**

Whilst I realise that "MP condones drinking and driving" is also an unlikely headline, I would urge you to exercise your influence and ask those responsible to consider the effects of any decisions that, even if considered a mistake in hindsight, will never be reversed.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Marshall

[As a result of this letter, Andrew Turner wrote to the Minister of Transport, Douglas Alexander. The reply he received is printed opposite]

8 Real Ales

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Tel: (01983) 298024
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CAMRA Favourite

Garden play area and pet animals

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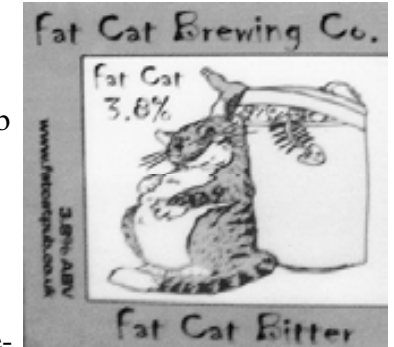
ale but it was very good - **Woodfordes' Nelson's Revenge.** Friendly place too.

Norwich

We read about **The Cider Shed** in the Daily Telegraph so decided to find it and visit. 17 real ales, 10 gravity, 7 on hand pumps, 9 Belgian lagers, 6 ciders some of which were

brewed by the landlord. This pub is laid out like a shed. There are piles of old ropes, bits and pieces hung on the wall and rafters -just like mine at home! ! Attached to the pub is **The Fat Cat Brewery Co.** The Brewer is Mark Winter, whose father David runs **Winter's Brewery**

The beer was very good. It was a friendly pub and just 10 minutes by bus from the city centre. The Cider Shed - 98-100, Lawson Road, Norwich. www.cidershed.co.uk Mark also supplies **The Fat Cat Pub** -- would you believe 30 real ales on all the time. We didn't have time to visit this one but it's on the Dereham Road, Norwich. www.fatcatpub.co.uk



We will have to go back because we missed so much!!! So many good looking pubs. I should also explain that the landlord of **The Cider Shed**

was on holiday. There are two separate companies, the Cider Shed owned by Ryan and Diana Burnard and The Fat Cat Brewing Co. owned by the owner of the Fat Cat Pub.

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Pete Cobb

Have Camper Will Travel!

Fox and Hounds, Heacham Revisited!

Mark has been very busy. There is a new dining room with 40 covers and new toilets. In fact the best pub toilets we have ever visited. Brewery extension and a smoking shelter are in progress and the rest of the pub is soon to be redecorated. The beer was as good as ever with two new additions, Chinook and Old Grizzly (Old Grizzly to an American recipe)

Northrepps (Near Cromer)

The Foundry Arms is in a smashing little village with 14th

Century Church and International Airport. They have three real ales, a log fire and a restaurant which serves excellent meals and are very, very friendly, so fly in and enjoy.

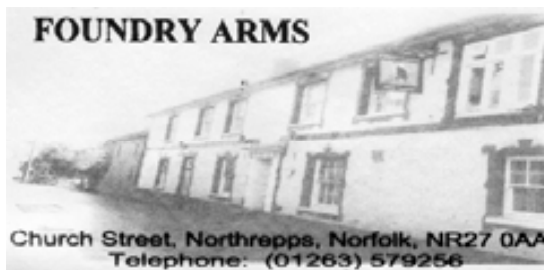
Sea Palling

This is a coastal village and **The Old Hall** keeps its **Adnams** beer in excellent condition. There is a very good restaurant and B & B.

Also, **The Beach Bar** was a very friendly pub, only had **Greene King I.P.A.** but was well kept.

Horsey

Almost a coastal village with a Saxon round tower thatched church, windmill and wonderful pub, The Nelsons Head. It is the sort of pub you would love for your local. Had a huge log fire, good food, only one real



Graham and Helen invite you to

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From the Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State

Andrew Turner Esq MP
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

Andrew,

17 JUL 2007

Department for
Transport

Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DR

Tel: 020 7944 2566
Fax: 020 7944 4309
E-Mail: jm.fitzpatrick@dtf.gsi.gov.uk

Web site: www.dft.gov.uk

Our Ref: DA/SU/015449/07
Your Ref: AJT/LG/Marshall

13 JUL 2007

Thank you for your letter of 21 June addressed to Douglas Alexander enclosing a letter from your constituent, Tim Marshall of 'Oakdene', Main Road, Rookley, Isle of Wight, regarding the legal alcohol limit for drivers. I am replying as I have, Ministerial responsibility for Road Safety policy.

I note that Mr Marshall is particularly concerned about the effect that a lower drink-drive limit would have on the rural pub trade. This is an issue that has been raised in the past and we are aware of the concerns about the possible implications for local communities in such areas.

Unfortunately, drinking and driving is still a very serious problem, and reducing drink-related casualties to the minimum possible remains a top priority in our ten-year Road Safety Strategy. In the report of the second three-yearly review of the Strategy, published in February, we said that we intended to keep the case for a reduction in the legal limit under review. But our first priority is to improve the enforcement of the current limit.

For that purpose, we also announced our intention to start a process of consultation on drinking and driving during 2007, including exploring ways in which enforcement might be made easier for the police. It is too early to say what proposals will be included in the consultation document, but we are aiming to publish it before the end of the year.

Yours Sincerely

JIM FITZPATRICK

The Return of Bill Burns



Singer/guitarist Bill Burns has recently returned to the Isle of Wight!

Bill has moved back here permanently from Germany where he had been working as a musician for over twenty years.

The band that Bill began in on the Island in the late sixties was Dream Machine. Among the people that featured in that band were drummer Dave Betts, vocalist Mick Green, keyboard player Paul Hunter (later in The Choir) and guitarists Tim Saul and Jerry Cahill (later in Shide and Acorn and Dancer and now living in Devon).

Bill started as their drummer and later switched to bass guitar. In that heyday of psychedelia, the band's material was cover versions of songs by groups such as King Crimson, Colosseum and Buffalo Springfield. Bill was at Afton for

the 1970 Isle of Wight Festival where he worked selling apple pies in a catering kiosk and as he remembers "saw just about everybody".

Moving on a few years, another fondly remembered Island band that Bill was the bassist for in the late seventies was Hobo, There was a very popular Blues Night held at the Royal Sandrock Inn in Niton Undercliff (now demolished). " Wednesday night would be party night " smiled Bill. "People would drive there from all over the Island."

Bill originally left the Island to move up to London with a band, but in the mid-eighties he met an Irish five-string banjo player called Jim Birmingham busking in the London Underground and they decided to form a duo, Bill takes up the story. "The original idea was for us to busk our way across the Greek Islands. We got a coach to Frankfurt and while we were there we got into the Irish Pub circuit. It really mushroomed in Germany and the pubs became the places for young people. We worked in Bavaria until we met the women that we wanted to settle down with.

It was difficult for me at first because I was really the accompanist in the duo.

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Jim went back to the UK and left me sitting in a pub in Frankfurt with three songs and two hours to get two sets of material together. However, I managed to get on OK solo and I ended up in a place called Regensburg, which is the birthplace of the present Pope. I married my first wife there who went on to become a lawyer, and a year later I met up with Henrietta who is now my wife".

After a long spell in Germany, Bill decided to return to the Isle of Wight for both family and economic reasons. He explained "As soon as the Euro hit Germany the price of everything almost doubled. Everybody stopped going out drinking in pubs.

Germany went into a mini-recession. People sat outside in the Beergardens while the musicians stayed inside. I was coming over to England to visit and bringing my guitar with me. On the Island I would approach places like The Solent, Simeon, Railway and Steamer and stay for a working holiday". Coming back to see his mother following the death of his father also prompted Bill to move back permanently.

He still retains his fondness for Irish music and explained "My heart is in Irish ballads. You have got to get into the character of the person the song is about, I also like Eric Bogle's songs, and I do Irish drinking songs, that's part of my show. I like to get people singing along, not just mumbling along. That is really exhilarating."

Having been back here for a couple of months, Bill is full of praise for the current Island music scene as he outlined to me. "It's a bit like Liverpool. The Island has more good musicians per square metre of area than anywhere. There are almost too many here at times. I'm slowly getting my feet, playing at places like Holliers, The Castle and The Solent.

My material seems to go down in Europe, even the more cringey stuff. If you sing something like 'Country Roads' in Germany the whole house will join in. I wasn't sure that would go down as well here, but it does. In Germany and Austria I used to play rockier, bigger venues. Here I'm mainly playing pubs. Here they seem to allow musicians to play really loud in pubs, sometimes to the detriment of everybody, I don't like listening to it if it's too loud. When I'm playing I am prepared to turn down if I have to. You have to remember that when you play in a

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