

RETURN TO MALDON PHASE FOUR

On the fourth visit to Maldon (The Jewel of the Blackwater) and home to the magnificent Thames Sailing Barges, including Pudge one of the Little Ships that took part in the evacuation of Dunkirk.

The ancient town of Maldon is situated on the River Blackwater where it joins the River Chelmer and was an early Saxon settlement,. At the time of the Domesday Book in 1086 Maldon and Colchester were the only two Boroughs recorded in Essex

Maldon is fortunate that in the area we have four excellent independent breweries, namely Crouch Vale from Woodham Ferrers, Wibblers recently moved into new premises at Southminster next to the railway station also Maldon has two breweries, Mighty Oak and Farmers Ales now renamed the Maldon Brewing Company.

As mentioned before, Maldon is home to the Thames Sailing Barges and Oyster Smacks that are an impressive sight viewed under sail or even when tied up at the Town Quay and you might fancy breakfast on the sailing barge Hydrogen at Hythe Quay instead of the Rose and Crown recently acquired as part of the Wetherspoon stable.

To reach Maldon from London travel via Liverpool Street to Chelmsford, frequent trains at XX: 02.18.30.38 and 48 past the hour, with a journey time of 35 minutes approximately. Leave Chelmsford at the country end of the platform via the stairs to the bus station, buses to Maldon depart from outside the Betting Shop at XX.05 and XX.35, service number 31B or 31X. Please note these buses DO NOT stop outside the Station entrance, journey times 35. Buses return from Maldon from outside the White Horse at XX.04 or 34 minutes past the hour. You can also travel on same trains to Witham and catch the Blackwater link from outside the station at XX: 12 and 42, returning from opposite the White Horse at XX: 25 and 55, journey time 40 minutes).

The Rose and Crown is situated halfway along the High Street and dispenses the usual Wetherspoon breakfast menu and poor quality beers and suggest we meet there until 11:00 then proceed to the Hythe Quay and the

Queens Head.01621 854112 (usually opens at 10:30). An old Gray and Sons house with a small front bar used mainly by the locals a rear bar along with a large outside area overlooking the River Blackwater with views to Bradwell Power station and the mud flats scene of the World Renown Mud Race, the Promenade and the barges moored at quay. Beers are normally Mighty Oak, Farmer's Ales Puck's Folly, Greene King IPA , Abbot Ale and Ghostship guest beer normally Coors Doomed Bar.

Stay here until 11:30 then walk to

The Jolly Sailor: 01621 853463. Just over the road from the Queens Head. The Jolly has just been refurbished although the beers have not getting very good reviews. The opening times are somewhat hit and miss.

Suggested times 11:30 until 12 Noon, but if open either stay in the Queens Head or visit the first of two new micro pubs, the Farmers Yard.

On departing the Hythe walk up the hill past the church into the High Street, cross over the road and about 200 yards on the left is the Farmers Yard brewery tap of Maldon Brewing Company and sells full range of beers plus Guest ales, stay until 12:30.

Leave for the **Swan Hotel** 200 yards on the righthand side of the High Street, built in 1392 and undergoing a multi-million pound refurbishment but is due to reopen during October, the beers on offer are a mystery at the present but the new Landlord is a very successful and experienced local person. Stay here until 13:00 leave and cross over at the crossing and head for the next port of call

The White Horse 01621 851708 A Shepherd Neame tied house, recently refurbished comprising of one long bar with a partitioned restaurant at the far end was probably the best and cheapest stop for food in the Town but prices have gone up since refurbishment, sells all of your Shepherd Neame favourites, as mentioned before buses to Chelmsford depart from right outside and buses to Witham from opposite the pub.

Cross the road and bear slightly left to find two other pubs, the Blue Boar 01621 855888 a former coaching inn and a hostelry since 1632, has two bars still home to Farmers Brewery but unfortunately the owner is more interested expensive wines than ales and the quality shows, Farmers brews can usually be found in the Harness Bar along with Adnams and other guest brews, all beers are served direct from the cask.

Tucked away behind the Blue Boar is the **Carpenters Arms 01621 853833** a traditional Gray & Son public house serves ever changing guest ales and is worth a visit or you could on leaving the White Horse turn left and just around the corner you will find the Tap Room which is owned by Mighty Oak brewery and sells the full range of their beers

Visit any of these three pubs from 13:05 until you select a bus departure time

The walking time from the town Quay to the Blue Boar is just a 10 minute stroll and the High Street is just a straight walk, each pub is visible from its predecessor (except the Tap Room and Carpenters Arms) so just enjoy the day

I have not suggested any particular place to for lunch as all of the pubs other than the Micros sell food, plus numerous other outlets including Wetherspoon, Subway, a Fish and Chip Shop plus bakers, the fish menu at the Jolly Sailor is said to be very good although the beers are not

Cheers - Barry