

Named after the year the inn was founded
The Farriers Arms · Mersham · Kent

Farriers 1606

Kentish Country Ale
Brewed on the premises by
The Old Forge Brewery
founded in 2010 just a year
after the pub was 'rescued'
by 121 villagers then
sympathetically re-built
and expanded to include
the Anvil Restaurant and
The Village Forge facility.

With some discontinuity,
brewing has been recorded on
this site as early as the 1700s so
that our new micro-brewery is merely
re-activating an old village tradition.



*There's always a warm welcome
along with a choice of our real ales*

Much-praised 1606 ale is already
CAMRA approved and very
popular with our customers.

The riverside garden is a
great Summer venue for
both children and adults.

The adjacent meadow
provides a community
junior football pitch and
a pétanque piste for those
seeking a gentle challenge.

Cosy woodburning fires and
locally sourced food combine
with regular music evenings,
vintage vehicles and other events
to make this - truly a **Pub for all Seasons!**

THE BREWING PROCESS

The raw materials for beer are barley and water, with some bitterness derived from hops and with the fermentation reaction - to make alcohol from sugars - facilitated by yeast.

Barley is first 'malting', meaning that it is steeped for 2 days in water, spread on a dry floor for 3 - 4 days to allow it to germinate and to generate enzymes, then dried in kilns. The type of barley, as well as the duration and temperature of kilning, determines the eventual properties (including colour) of the beer. Before using the malted barley for brewing, it is milled to break open the grains, so that extraction of starch (the basis for sugar production) will be quicker and more efficient.

The malted barley is 'mashed' in water - just as would be tea-leaves - for about 1 hour at 65° C, during which time the starches are extracted and then converted to sugars by the enzymes from the malt. The sugar solution, now known as 'wort' is drained from the mash and transferred to a kettle (sometimes known as a 'copper'), followed by the more dilute washings that emanate from sparging (sprinkling with water) of the residual "grain" particles. The specific gravity, that is the measure of sugar concentration, is carefully controlled.

Hops are added to the wort in the kettle and the whole boiled vigorously for about 1 hour, during which time impurities are removed or rendered harmless, proteins are precipitated and hop characteristics (bitterness and aroma) are imparted. The wort is now separated from the hop waste (trub) and pumped to the fermentation vessel via a heat exchanger that cools it to about 20° C, ready for yeast addition and fermentation. Fermentation takes about 5 days to generate enough alcohol (again as measured by specific gravity).

There follows a rapid chilling to 6° C, in order to stop reactions and clarify the, by now, beer.

Beer is racked into casks, with some clarifying agent being added, and left for at least 3 days, for some secondary fermentation, before final settling and drinking, at about 12° C.

THE OLD FORGE BREWERY

The Farriers Arms brewing team purchased the redundant Black Dog Brewery's equipment from near Whitby in Yorkshire, thereby obtaining stainless steel vessels at a reasonable cost. These required considerable refurbishment.

Construction work for the brewery in a section of the restored Old Forge commenced on 1st June 2010 and the brewery was commissioned on 23rd October of the same year. Beer was served on 3rd November 2010.

All work, other than professional welding, skilled pipework and specialist fittings was done by volunteer shareholders.

The total set up cost was kept down to around £24 000. This was substantially offset by a grant from South East England Development Association (SEEDA) via its Kent Downs and Marshes LEADER Group.

Name-plate capacity of the plant is 5-barrel (1440 pints per brew) and it consists of hot-liquor tank, mash tun, kettle and 2 fermentation vessels. Ignoring the very substantial cleaning and sterilisation routines, the elapsed processing time - from water and malt, to transferring wort into the fermentation vessel - is about 8 hours. A further 11 days or so elapses before drinking.

The process starts - as in probably all micro-breweries - with already-malted and milled barleys: the types are Pale Malt and Crystal Malt. Kentish bittering hops are added at the beginning of the boil and then aroma hops at the end to produce a distinctive flavour. Fermentation is carefully monitored to produce a quaffable 3.7% ABV ale.