

November 2014



Opening

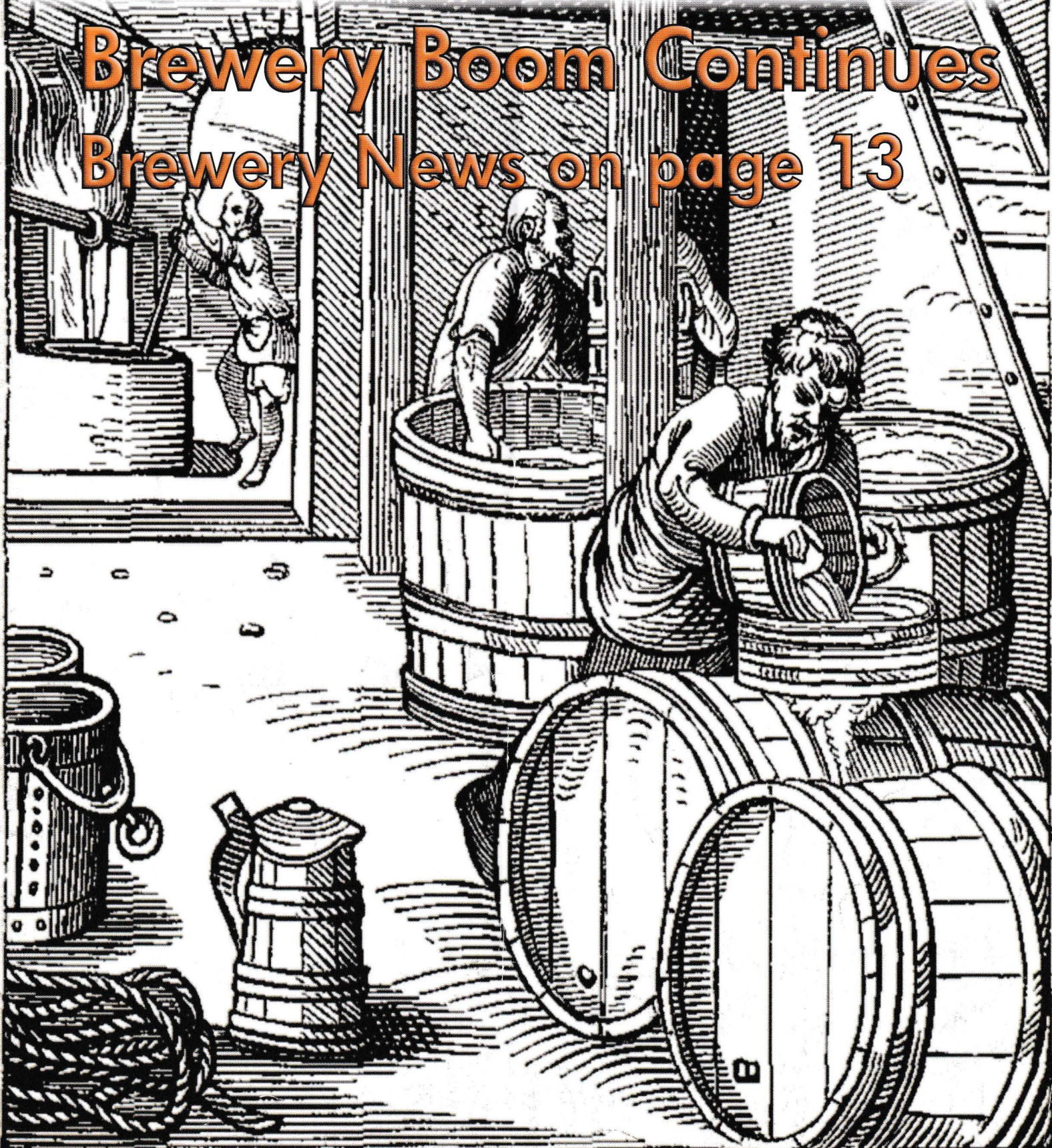
TIMES

THE FREE LOCAL CAMRA MAGAZINE

Covering the Cities of Manchester & Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, N.E. Cheshire & Macclesfield

Brewery Boom Continues

Brewery News on page 13



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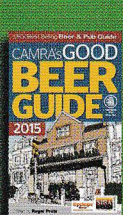
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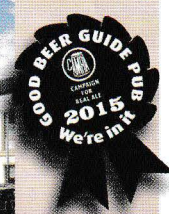
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Bantam, Christmas Kiss, Humbug, Tyke

MORE CHOICE BETTER BEER

International Brewing Awards



1998
Wobbly Bob



2002
Navvy

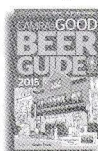


2002
Wobbly Bob



2004
Wobbly Bob

SSM CAMRA
Pub of the Year
2010



Pure Radio
Pub 2010



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Buses 192 & 22 pass by the door

What's On

Information, Notes and Local CAMRA Branch Events



Opening Times - Information

Opening Times is published by the Stockport & South Manchester Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Additional material is supplied by the High Peak & NE Cheshire, Trafford & Hulme, North Manchester and Macclesfield & E Cheshire Branches. 7,350 copies a month are printed by Phil Powell Printing of Failsworth.

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Trading Standards

For complaints about short measure pints etc contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Service. This works with all the Trading Standards services in the North West and is supported by the Office of Fair Trading. You can email the Consumer Service at the following address:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/getadvice/consumer_service.htm

Their telephone no. is 0845 404 05 06. To report a matter to Trading Standards go to:

www.adviceguide.org.uk/consumer_e/reporting_a_problem_to_trading_standards

Subscriptions

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Public Transport

Opening Times does not recommend you drink and drive. Local public transport information can be obtained online as follows:

* Transport for Greater Manchester: www.tfgm.com. 0161 228 7811

* East Cheshire: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport_and_travel.aspx. 0845 140 2666

* Derbyshire: <http://www.derbybus.info/>

Disclaimer

We aim to ensure that the information in Opening Times is correct at the time of going to press. If we get something wrong then please get in touch (editorial contact details above) and we'll print a correction. Please also note the opinions expressed in Opening Times are not necessarily those of CAMRA either locally or nationally.

Copy Date for the December issue is Friday 7 November

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Distribution Manager – Janet Flynn

Front Cover – Brewery woodcut, things have moved on slightly these days.

Your Local CAMRA Contacts & Websites

Stockport & South Manchester (SSM) www.ssmcamra.co.uk
Contact: Mark McConachie 0161 429 9356;
mark.mcconachie@o2.co.uk

North Manchester (NM) www.northmanchestercamra.org.uk
Contact: Phil Booton; phbooton@hotmail.com

High Peak & NE Cheshire (HPNE) www.hpneccamra.org.uk
Contact: Stewart Taylor 07907 714826; taylorshouse@supanet.com

Macclesfield & East Cheshire (MEC)
www.eastcheshirecamra.org.uk
Contact: Tony Icke 01625 861833; bicke@madasafish.com

Trafford & Hulme (T&H) www.thcamra.org.uk
Contact: John O'Donnell 07879 880972 or
enquiries@thcamra.org.uk

Local CAMRA Events - Open events in blue

Wednesday 5th – Social to Regional Pub of the Year – Harewood Arms, Broadbottom. Train from Piccadilly at 18.46. (NM)

Thursday 6th – Branch Meeting: Orange Tree, Altrincham. Starts 8.00pm (T&H)

Saturday 8th – “A bit of a do” at the Spinners Arms, Hadfield, featuring Mouselow Farm beers and some music. From 8.00pm, (HPNC)

Monday 10th – Branch Meeting: White Lion, Disley. Starts 8.00pm. (HPNC)

Tuesday 11th – Campaigning Meeting: Coach & Four, Wilmslow. Starts 8.00pm (MEC)

Wednesday 12th – Newton Heath survey – start at Railway 7.30pm. (NM)

Wednesday 12th - The Big Parlour Pig Out – one pig, several different ciders, call 01618814871, for details and to book. (T&H)

Thursday 13th – Branch Meeting including “Meet the Brewers” – a chance to meet some of the area's newest brewers. New faces very welcome. Stockport Brewing Co Tap, Arch 14, off Heaton Lane, Stockport. Starts 8.00pm, (SSM)

Friday 14th & Saturday 15th – Chorlton Challenge: a visit of all the cask ale outlets in Chorlton. Contact for details. (T&H)

Wednesday 19th – Branch Meeting: Hare & Hounds, Shudehill. Starts 7.30pm, (NM)

Friday 21st – Chorlton-on-Medlock & University Stagger: 7.30pm Ford Madox Brown, Wilmslow Road; 8.30pm Grafton Arms, Grafton Street. (SSM)

Saturday 22nd – Gtr Manchester Pub of the Year and Pub of the Season presentations to the Harewood Arms, Broadbottom. From 8.00pm. (HPNC)

Wednesday 26th – Ginnels & Back Doors themed survey in Manchester City Centre: starts Town Hall Tavern, Tib Lane 7.30pm (NM)

Thursday 27th – Pub of the Month presentation to the Fletcher Moss, Didsbury. From 8.00pm. (SSM)

Friday 28th – Congleton Fun Crawl. Starts Leisure Centre at 7.30pm. (MEC)

Saturday 29th – Winter Warmer Launch Stagger in central Stockport: Cocked Hat, Market Place 7.30pm; Arden Arms Millgate 8.30pm (SSM)

Wednesday 2nd December – “Most Improved Pub” presentation to Worsley Old Hall followed by early Christmas buffet (price tba). From 7.30pm. (NM)

Pub of the Month

The Fletcher Moss, Didsbury



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month award for November 2014 goes to the Fletcher Moss on William Street in Didsbury. Stuart Ballantyne tells you why.

The Fletcher Moss is now run by Jane and Martin Devlin, who are no strangers to Didsbury - a few years ago they ran the Royal Oak before moving to the Four in Hand in West Didsbury. But it was the draw of running a traditional locals' pub that drove Jane and Martin to apply for the vacancy at the Fletcher Moss.

Prior to the recent opening of the Metrolink tram the pub could easily be missed by visitors to Didsbury as it is tucked away on a side street off the busy Wilmslow Road. It was the arrival of the adjacent tram stop that prompted Hydes Brewery, together with Jane and Martin, to make changes to the pub. Out went the tiny car park and in came a beautiful garden and outdoor drinking area. Internally the pub was remodelled to create distinct, cosy, separate drinking areas. An over 25's policy was introduced. Then Martin got to work in the cellar and on the beer. He is fastidious about his beer, frequently getting up as early as 6am to ensure that the beer that he sells is always of the highest quality.

All these efforts have worked wonders. Hydes cannot believe how well the beers are selling in the Fletcher Moss. So well in fact that, by the time that you read this, two more hand pumps will have been installed. It had been expected that the cost of the refurbishment would take five years to cover itself but only taken ten months such has been the increase in trade. No wonder Hyde's recently presented Jane and Martin with their "Managers of the Year" award.

The Fletcher Moss is not a food-led pub. It's a locals-led pub that by listening to its regulars and offering great beer in a clean and friendly environment has reaped dividends. And if all that is not enough you could always visit the Fletcher Moss to admire Jane's collection of over 100 porcelain tea pots which are displayed around the pub

So why not join us for the Pub of the Month presentation to Jane and Martin on Thursday 27th November when the pub is likely to be very busy.

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The Pub of the Month award is sponsored by Stephenson's, a local family firm that has been supplying the local pub and catering trade for over 140 years. Check out their advert on this page

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THE BEER SHOP

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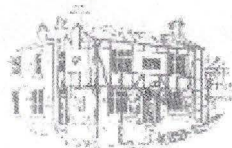


The Beer Shop is now fully open until 22:00 every night for on and off sales. Tutored tastings and more Meet the Brewer events are planned. Check the website for future events. Visit www.ukbeershop.com or call 0161 947 9338 for updated information.

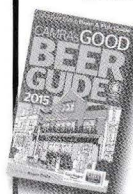
**OPENING HOURS: TUESDAY TO THURSDAY 4-10PM
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MONDAY CLOSED**

The Waters Green

Local CAMRA
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Winter 13



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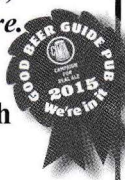


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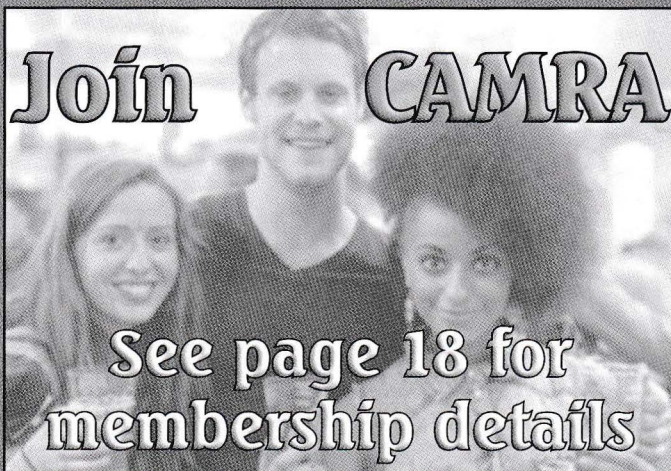
Your Hosts, Brian and Steve

Bar Meals Served Mon to Sat Lunch

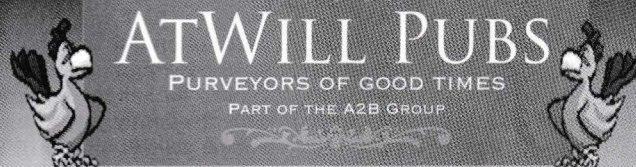
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**See page 18 for
membership details**



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Stagger

Dave Burston in and around Stockport Market

September's Stagger covered the pubs in and around Stockport's historic Market Place, an area that is on the up after a period in the doldrums - More of that later.



We started on St. Petersgate, at the **Calverts Court**, Stockport's Wetherspoons. The only modern building on the stagger, it's a bit like Dr Who's Tardis, in that it is much larger inside than it looks from the outside: long and narrow, with the bar down much of the right-hand side and various kinds of seating on the left. Ten handpumps were serving seven different beers on this occasion, with strengths ranging from 3.6% to 5.5%. All were rated above average to good, with Mobberley's Legacy and Winkle's Sir Philip being particularly appreciated. Most beers were £2.20 a pint, surprisingly this was not to be the cheapest beer of the night.

The next pub on our route was the **Egerton Arms** but as the two handpumps on the bar were not in use we moved on.

While passing the Grade II listed building that was once a bank and is now **Live Stockport**, we peered through the windows and could see scaffolding inside, confirming that renovations were in progress. The name of its previous incarnation, Bambooza, was still visible on the outside. Looking forward to trying the real ales promised in this venue, we had to content ourselves with the here and now. (*Live Stockport is now open – see Pub News – Ed*).

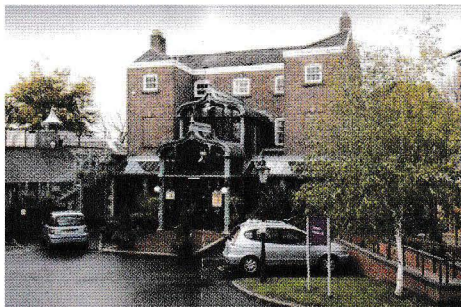


So we went on into the Market Place proper, and to another recently renovated and re-opened pub, also Grade II listed, the **Bakers Vaults**. This Robinson's house and former live music venue closed suddenly last Christmas, but after considerable investment and some internal alterations it is good to see that it's a thriving pub once again. The juke box was a little on the loud side and the pub was very busy,

even at 8.30 on a Friday, so after getting served by the very efficient bar-staff, we gathered outside, where there are a few tables overlooking the square. No fewer than eight beers were on offer: five from the Robinsons stable including Hartley's Cumbria Way, and three guests. All the beers were rated above average to good, and the 6% Ashover Milk Stout was even better. Interestingly, our halves were served in half-pint dimple mugs, the first time I've seen one of these for ages, though handled mugs in general seem to be making a comeback in pubs. All beers were around the £3 mark apart from the stout which was understandably dearer.



After the modernity of the first two pub interiors, the next one was a real contrast. The **Boars Head** is a little-changed Sam Smith's house, with several different rooms leading off a central passage where the bar is. Although the pub is on a sloping site, it is all on a level inside once you have got past the two steps to get in. There is even an outdoor decking area on the same level, raised considerably above Vernon Street at the lower end of the site. Sam Smith's Old Brewery Bitter, at a very cheap £1.80 a pint, was the only real ale available, and received mixed reviews from the 14 of us, varying from below average to good.



The longest walk of the night took us next to the **Old Rectory** on Churchgate, a large rambling pub-cum-restaurant with a country-house feel. The large conservatory room was busy with diners, but there are other areas more suited to drinkers and a fairly large beer garden at the front. We sat outside as it still was quite a mild night, consuming our half-pints of Wells Bombardier and Greene King IPA. Both were around average or just above.



Retracing our steps, we returned to the edge of the Market Place for the **Cocked Hat**, another recently renovated pub, re-opened about a year ago. Formerly the Pack Horse, of dubious reputation, the change of name reflected a break from the past and a change to a multi-ale house selling six real ales, which on this occasion were from Beartown, Coach House, Conwy, Brimstage and RedWillow. All were rated good, with the two Beartown beers scoring best. The downside this evening was the loud music being played by a DJ in the main lounge, which seemed to have driven most of the customers into the bar area. There were also three TV screens (two in the lounge and one in the bar) showing a foreign football match no one was watching.



On, then, down the hill to the final pub of the night, the **Arden Arms**. This unspoilt gem has been branch Pub of the Year twice in recent years, and has something for everyone. Food had been served earlier in the evening, but by now all the rooms were full of drinkers partaking of the six Robinson's beers, which were all rated above average to good or, in the case of the Dizzy Blonde, very good, and this was voted the best beer of the night. In the large covered courtyard at the back (almost as big as the rest of the pub) a fairly recent innovation is hosting live bands on Saturday nights, and this area was quite full too.

So, with an average of five beers per pub and 26 different beers overall, this was a stagger for the discerning drinker, with the added interest of the heritage of the area. Four of the pubs on this stagger are in listed buildings, and this will have increased to five (with the addition of Live Stockport) by the time you read this. The beer quality overall was pretty good too. But don't just take my word for it - try them yourself!

WED 5TH NOV

BONFIRE

Celebration

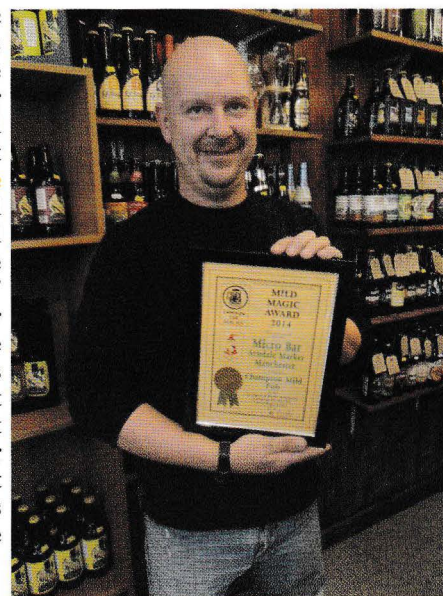
BOOTLEG
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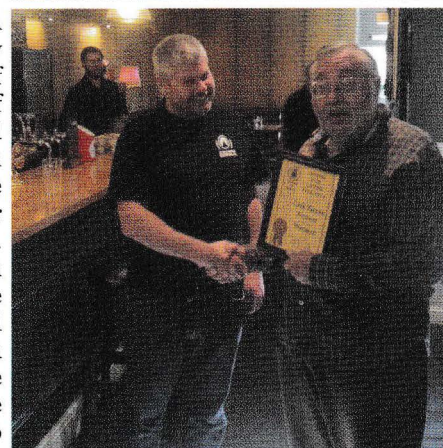
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www.horseandjockeychorlton.com

Recent CAMRA Awards

This year's Mild Magic was a notable success and as usual those taking part voted for their favourite mild pubs. The Stockport winner was the **Hope** on Wellington Road North which received its award in April. The "outside Stockport" winner was the popular **Micro Bar** in the Arndale Market. This is owned by Boggart Brewery and last month Boggart's owner Mark Dave finally got his gong. He is pictured here with the certificate.



High Peak CAMRA have been busy presenting more of their Pub and Club of the Year awards and this time it was the turn of those winners in the Cheshire part of their extensive branch area. Both winners were in Poynton and the awards were presented during the course of a social day out in the village. The Pub of the Year award went to Bollington Brewery's **Cask Tavern** on Park Lane. Our picture shows local High Peak member Lawrence Bamber (above right) presenting the winning certificate to Bollington Brewery's Lee Wainwright. The Club of the Year Award went to the nearby **Legion Club**, also home to Worth Brewery. Lawrence is seen here presenting the award to Club Steward Nick Williams.



The summer beer festival at the National Cycling Centre was a notable success this year. As is usual with beer festivals there was a vote for Beer of the Festival which was won by **Brightside Brewery**. A CAMRA group visited the brewery in late September to present the award. Pictured here CAMRA's Graham Donning (centre) is shown presenting the award to three generations of the Friedrich family (grandfather Neil, father Lance and son Hayden).



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The Unstoppable Rise of the Home Brewer

Mark Reeves on getting started

In recent years interest in home brewing has seen a great resurgence - ingredients are easier to get hold of than ever before and, like with food, people are more and more interested in what goes into what they're drinking. It's a hobby that can become an obsession and a career (many home brewers have gone on to set up their own breweries - RedWillow, Black Edge and Weird Beard to name just a few) and you can start out with just a plastic bucket, a few bottles and a kettle. Home brewing has advanced from 'Boots' kits to full-on nanobreweries with a range of ingredients and equipment previously only easily accessible to professional brewers.

Equipment and Ingredients

As previously mentioned you don't need much equipment to brew, a kit can be made up and fermented in a food-safe bucket (ideally with a lid and airlock). You'll need to clean and sanitise your equipment well (brewing can seem to be more about cleaning than anything else!). You can buy empty bottles, or ask a local, friendly, bar (ideally bottles from bottle-conditioned beer) or you can buy beer in bottles and empty them in the usual fashion.

Much of the resurgence of home brewing can be attributed to the relative ease of obtaining ingredients such as grains, hops and yeasts. Traditional homebrew shops inevitably tend to stock fairly basic core ranges that they know will have a high turnover (though they may be able to order in specific items and many now have an online presence too), but on the internet there are shops with vast ranges of ingredients along with chemicals for water treatment and cleaning, and equipment from plastic buckets to fully automated breweries. Many branches of Wilkinsons stock a basic but useful range (mostly kits and equipment) as do some supermarkets.

Learning How to Brew

Home brewing can be enjoyed at many levels, using simple techniques and kits, or using malt extract, hops and speciality grains or right up to all-grain brewing (mashing the malted grains to extract the sugars) and even this can be done relatively cheaply (after the initial outlay on equipment the raw materials are very cheap and beer can be produced for practically pennies).

The Internet is a great source for information on brewing - John Palmer's 'How to brew' website is a complete reference on brewing with details of both novice and advanced techniques. Sites such as 'Jim's Beer kit' and 'Home Brew Talk' host very active communities giving advice to all comers of any level of experience. Others such as BIABrewer.info give advice on specific brewing techniques, Brew In A Bag (BIAB) in this case. Brewers can also seek advice from the online stores, the BrewUK forum being particularly good in this author's opinion.

For those who prefer the printed word, CAMRA has recently published an updated version of Brew Your Own British Real Ale by Graham Wheeler, a recognised home brewing expert. This has details on brewing techniques and includes over 100 recipes to recreate commercial ales including Timothy Taylor's Landlord and Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild.

Meeting Other Brewers

The rise in numbers homebrewing has also seen a rise in homebrewing clubs, Manchester having at last count two - Manchester Homebrew and, a very recent addition, Chorlton Homebrew Association. The former meets at Beermoth every 3rd Sunday of the month, the latter bimonthly on the 2nd Tuesday in Font Chorlton. The clubs are an opportunity to try each other's beers (and get constructive feedback), discuss home brewing and maybe meet professional brewers (and sometimes 'borrow' their breweries to make beer!)

Resources

Homebrew shops

The Brew Shop, 48 Buxton Road, Heaviley, Stockport, www.thebrewshop.com
Trafford Homebrew Ltd, 14 Eastway, Sale, www.traffordhomebrew.co.uk
Salford Homebrew Ltd, 96 Fitzwarren Street, Salford, www.salfordhomebrew.co.uk

Online

Brewuk, brewuk.co.uk
The Malt Miller, www.themaltmiller.co.uk
The Home Brew Shop, www.the-home-brew-shop.co.uk

Books

Brew Your Own British Real Ale, Graham Wheeler, CAMRA

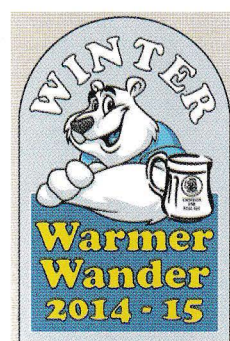
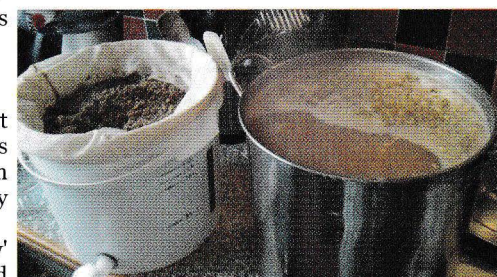
Useful websites

Howtobrew, www.howtobrew.com/intro.html

Clubs

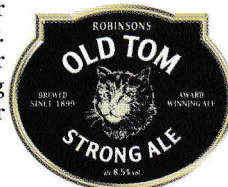
Manchester homebrew, @manchhomebrew, www.manchesterhomebrew.co.uk
Chorlton Homebrew Association, @chorltonbrewers, homebrew@fontbar.com

Jim's beer kit, www.jimsbeerkit.co.uk
Homebrewtalk, www.homebrewtalk.com/
BIABrewer.info, www.biabrewer.info



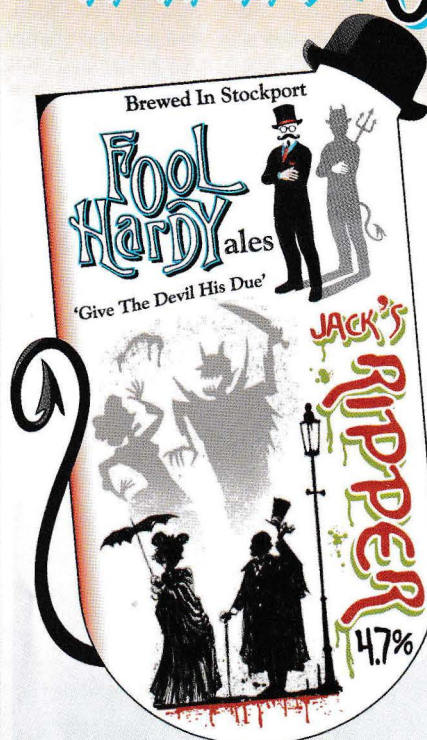
Follow the Bear – Winter Warmer Wander 2014-15

December is not only time for Christmas and the start of winter. It's also time for the Winter Warmer Wander. This year's event runs from Saturday 29th November to Sunday 11th January. There are lots of prizes to be won including t-shirts, bottled beers, pub meals and bottled beer hampers. There are some new pubs taking part this year and once again the event is being sponsored by Stockport family brewer Robinsons and in particular their famous Old Tom. For more information see the December issue of Opening Times.



To launch the Winter Warmer Wander there will be a Stagger around central Stockport on Saturday 29th November. The start will be at the Cocked Hat in the Market Place at 7.30pm with an 8.30 meeting point at the Arden Arms on Millgate.

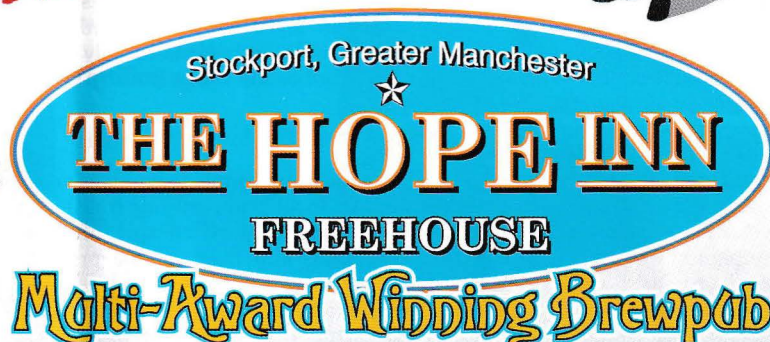
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WORLD CUP CHAMPIONS 2014**

**MANCHESTER CITY WOMEN'S FOOTBALL CLUB
CONTINENTAL CUP CHAMPIONS 2014**

(PS. No corsets or sexist t-shirts required!)

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