

OPENING TIMES

SUMMER 2017 / FREE



**INSIDE: BEER FESTIVALS IN CHORLTON
AND THE CITY CENTRE / PUBS OF THE
MONTH / MANCHESTER BEER WEEK**



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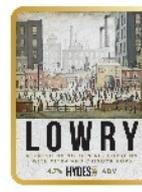
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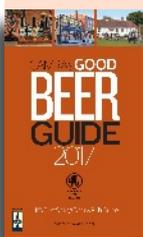


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OPENING TIMES

Opening Times is produced by the Stockport & South Manchester Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Additional material was supplied by the High Peak, Tameside & North East Cheshire Branch; Macclesfield & East Cheshire Branch; Salford Branch; Trafford & Hulme Branch and the Central Manchester Branch. It is printed by Oxuniprint Ltd, a division of Oxford University Press and distributed throughout Stockport, Trafford, Manchester and Tameside. There are also many outlets in Macclesfield & East Cheshire, High Peak and Glossop.

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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 03454 04 05 06.

To report a matter to Trading Standards go to:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/report-to-trading-standards/

To find a local office: www.gov.uk/find-local-trading-standards-office

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 244 1000

* East Cheshire: 0300 123 5500
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/public_transport.aspx

* Derbyshire: 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.

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Contributors to this issue: John Clarke, Alan Gent, Dave Hanson, Peter Butler, Neil Worthington, Paul Felton, Dave Burston, Robin Wignall, Peter Edwardson, Tom Lord, Ian Thompson, John O'Donnell, Graham Donning, Simon Miller, Dave Carter, Dave Hasler, George Symes, Dave Sheldon and Graham Privett.

Distribution Manager – Janet Flynn

Front cover – Home brewer Jonah Stancombe brewing his More or Less at RedWillow Brewery for Stockport Beer Festival's Bar Nouveau. Photo by Nadia Jackson.

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What's On

Local CAMRA Branch Events, Information and News

Your Local CAMRA Contacts & Websites

Stockport & South Manchester (SSM)

www.ssmcamra.co.uk

Contact: Paul Felton; Secretary@ssmcamra.co.uk

High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire (HPNC)

www.hpneccamra.org.uk

Contact: see website

Macclesfield & East Cheshire (MEC)

www.eastcheshirecamra.org.uk

Contact: Rob Nicholson 07983 524102;

social@eastcheshirecamra.org.uk

Trafford & Hulme (T&H)

www.thcamra.org.uk

Contact: John O'Donnell 07879 880972; enquiries@thcamra.org.uk

Central Manchester (CMCR)

www.centralmanchestercamra.org.uk

Contact: enquiries@centralmanchestercamra.org.uk

Local CAMRA Events

CAMRA Members only

Thursday 8th June – Committee Meeting and Club of the Year presentation: Ladybarn Social Club, 13 Green Street, Ladybarn, M14 6TL. Starts 8:15pm. (SSM)

Saturday 10th June – Branch Meeting and AGM: Glossop Labour Club, Chapel Street, Glossop. SK13 8AT. Starts 1:00pm. (HPNC)

Saturday 10th June – The above Branch meeting will be followed by presentation of Branch Pub of the Year for Derbyshire to the Queens Arms, 1 Shepley Street, Glossop, SK13 7RZ. (HPNC)

Thursday 15th June – Branch Meeting: Blossoms, 2 Buxton Road, Heavily, SK2 6NU. Guest speaker – David Bremner, Robinsons Director of Marketing. Starts 8:15pm. (SSM)

Friday 23rd June – Stagger & Exploration of Northenden: 7:30pm Farmers Arms, 26 Longley Lane, M22 4JR; 8:30pm Lounge About, 424 Palatine Road, M22 4JT. (SSM)

Friday 16th June – Mobblerley Walkabout: Get return ticket for train to Knutsford 5:35pm from Altrincham then catch 88 bus, 6:05pm, (there is a later connection, 6:14pm then bus at 6:35pm which cuts it very fine) to the Bird in Hand. Tour country pubs of Cheshire on foot then catch train back to Altrincham from Mobblerley Station, first pub the Bird in Hand, the stop is just before Newton Hall Lane. (T&H)

Monday 19th June – Survey Evening: 6:30pm Wonder Inn, 29 Shudehill, Manchester M4 2AF; 8:00pm Pilcrow, Sadler's Yard, Manchester, M4 4AH. Other pubs will also be visited. (CMCR)

Thursday 29th June – Pub of the Month Presentation: Crown, 98-100 Heaton Moor Road, Stockport, SK4 4NZ. From 8:00pm. (SSM)

Saturday 24th June – Social: Mouselow Farm Brewery, Dinting, Glossop, SK13 7QQ. From 12 noon. (CMCR)

Saturday 1st July – Buxton Social: meet Old Club House, Water Street, Buxton, SK17 6BD at 1:00pm. (HPNC)

Saturday 8th July – **advance notice:** Treasure Hunt. Starts 12 noon at New Oxford, Bexley Square, Salford, M3 6DB. See page 23 for more information. All welcome.

Social Media

Many of the local CAMRA branches have Facebook and Twitter accounts which you can follow:



Stockport & South Manchester:

www.facebook.com/SSMCAMRA

Trafford & Hulme: www.facebook.com/thcamra

Macclesfield & East Cheshire: <http://fbl.me/meccamra>

Central Manchester:

www.facebook.com/groups/CentralManchesterCamra

High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire:

www.facebook.com/HPTNECCAMRA



Stockport & South Manchester: @SSMCAMRA

Trafford & Hulme: @THCAMRA

Macclesfield & East Cheshire: @MECCAMRA

Central Manchester: @MCRCentralCamra

The Future of Opening Times

After this issue there will be some significant changes to *Opening Times*. Due to circumstances beyond our control, we will no longer be producing OT "in house" but instead we are going into partnership with Matelot Marketing who already produce many other local CAMRA magazines.

The look and content of *Opening Times* will remain "in house" so you should see very few, if any, changes. To make this work we will be moving to bi-monthly publication, which brings us into line with other major CAMRA magazines. In addition, and to ease the transition, we will be taking a summer break and we will be returning with a September/October edition which will feature both Stockport Beer Week and the Cider Circuit.

Unfortunately we will no longer be able to cover the Trafford & Hulme Branch at all and our distribution in Central Manchester may also be restricted so some of you may not see us again. Thank you for your support to date. Our coverage of Stockport, South and East Manchester, Tameside, Glossop, High Peak and selected pubs in Poynton, Macclesfield and Bollington will continue unchanged.

The Waters Green

Local CAMRA
Pub of
the Season
Winter '13



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Cheshire SK11 6LH
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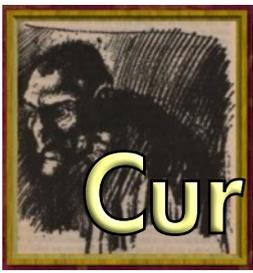
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Curmudgeon

Back on the Escalator

In his 2011 Budget, George Osborne mentioned in passing that “there would be no changes to previously announced alcohol duties”, which many media outlets wrongly reported as meaning that they would be frozen, whereas in fact the dreaded duty escalator remained in operation.

In March this year, Philip Hammond pulled the same stunt, which led to widespread confusion as to what the duty implications actually were. One well-known brewer, who will remain nameless, even said on Twitter that they didn't think there had been any changes. The situation was so bad that the British Beer and Pub Association felt compelled to issue a statement clarifying the position.

Even the official government announcement was distinctly disingenuous, saying “This measure increases the duty rates on alcohol manufactured in, or imported into, the UK by reference to the retail prices index (RPI).” Anyone reading this would assume that duties had been increased in line with RPI, but in fact the term “by reference to” meant that the dreaded duty escalator had returned, with rates going up by RPI plus 2%. The main rate of beer duty rose by 3.86%, meaning that a pint of 4% beer now incurs duty plus VAT on duty of 52p, a rise of 2p over the previous level.

It's easy to dismiss such rises as trivial and say people will take them in their stride. But every price increase is a step too far for someone who is already at the limits of their budget. And, over time, successive above-inflation increases in duty will make alcoholic drinks significantly more expensive in real terms and reduce the demand. Although obviously not the sole factor, it is noticeable how the rate of decline in the pub trade in the three years since the escalator was shelved in 2014 has been considerably less than in the preceding years.

It would have been understandable, if regrettable, if the government had returned to raising duties each year in line with inflation. But it has been made clear that the duty escalator was never scrapped, merely suspended, and is now back with a vengeance.

Sadly, all the hard work that CAMRA and drinks trade bodies devoted to campaigning against it and pointing out its negative effect on one of Britain's biggest business sectors has been thrown back in their faces. The process is going to have to be restarted, and this time it must be made clear that the objective is to drive a stake through the escalator's heart, not just to put it into suspended animation.

Brewer Before Taxman?

Earlier this year, I wrote about how many small brewers were finding it a struggle to make a decent living. One answer to this has been to suggest that we're not really paying enough over the bar for our beer. However, given that in many pubs the typical pint is now well north of £3, most people would hardly think beer was cheap, and over the years pub prices have increased by more than the general rate of inflation. If there's a problem, it's how the cake is distributed, not that it's too small overall.

Given the amount of effort that has been expended in campaigning against the duty escalator, it is surely shooting yourself in the foot to want to negate all the benefits by putting the price back up again. It's basic common sense that cheaper beer makes for healthier pubs and, regardless of where the extra money goes, higher prices are going to deter some customers, especially those who are already financially stretched.

Curmudgeon Online: curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com
(comments on these articles can be left on the website)



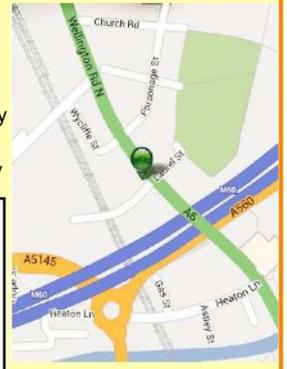
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Pubs of the Month

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The Pub of the Month for June is the Crown on Heaton Moor Road. Dave Carter is a regular and here extols its virtues.

Since the turn of this century Heaton Moor has become quite an area for drinking and eating with new café-bars and a micropub opening at regular intervals during this time. However three pubs have remained constant. Two have gone down the food/drinks route but one, the Crown, has remained what it always has been, a local.



Entering the Crown the first thing you see in front of you see is a window. This gives you a chance to see any friends who may, or may not, be in the main bar. It also gives wives a chance to see recalcitrant husbands - or so the story goes. This window also takes the eyes off the door to the right which hides the pub's hidden gem: a snug room to which the word "bijou" fits perfectly. Completing the pub's layout are two further rooms, one a games/tap room and the other a smaller room off the main bar. Outside is a newly refurbished beer garden providing an excellent area for a summer's drink with B-B-Qs a regular occurrence.



Presiding over the Crown is mine host, Tony Robinson. Tony has been in the pub trade for over twelve years, the last two as leaseholder of the Crown. He is determined to keep the pub as a typical local. Decoration is kept to a tasteful minimum and the TVs in the pub are only on speaker when there are major sporting events taking place. The Crown has six handpumps dispensing generics such as Copper Dragon Golden Pippin and Greene King Speckled Hen, two permanent beers, Acorn's Barnsley Bitter and Salopian's Oracle, and two pumps rotating local brews. Tony has been awarded Cask Marque accreditation for the last three years, testimony to his well kept beer and lines.

So come along to this well run local on Thursday 29 June at 8.00pm for the presentation where Tony and his staff promise you a warm welcome. The pub is a short five minute walk from the A6 along Heaton Moor Road and slightly less from Heaton Chapel railway station. The 42A bus stops nearby.

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h rs for June, July and August



John Sutcliffe writes that the Pub of the Month award for July 2017 will be given to the Church Inn, 90 Ravenoak Road in Cheadle Hulme.

This charming old pub has been in the Bromley family for about 40 years and is currently run by general manager Ed Bromley – the third generation to be involved. The Church is noted for good food, with tried and tested favourites throughout the menu, but with an ever changing range of specials, served until 9.00pm. But of course it's not just about food.



The quality of the Robinsons beers is equally high with Unicorn, Dizzy Blonde, Wizard and one other changing beer from the range available. In the winter months a small cask of Old Tom can also be seen on the bar. The comfortable, oak panelled lounge bar and rear restaurant room have real fires in winter. There is also a well-used vault where the darts, dominoes and crib are often played. The building is unspoiled though small but good changes have been made like refurbishing the toilets and improvements to the garden.



There is plenty of room inside, a covered area with large screen TV at the rear and an extensive beer garden for if the weather is fine. There is a large car park on the opposite side of the roundabout at the junction with Ack Lane West and Church Road.

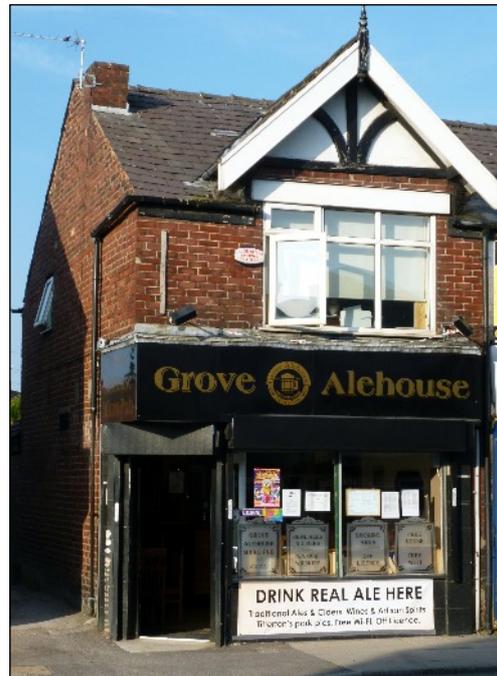
Our congratulations go to the Ed, his family and staff who maintain a very high standard of quality. We hope that you will join us on 27 July from 8.00pm; the presentation should take place around 9.00pm.

Bus 313 runs hourly and returns to Stockport after 23.40. The 42B runs from Manchester via Parrs Wood, Didsbury (until 19.30 only). The pub is also a 15 minute walk from Cheadle Hulme Railway Station.

The Pub of the Month for August is the Grove Alehouse on London Road in Hazel Grove. John Clarke has been to visit.

Hazel Grove's first, and so far only, micropub opened its doors in December 2015 since when it has made steady progress in bringing additional variety to the local beer range. This has been a project by Kevin and Tina Clarke (*no relation!*) who had previously run the nearby Bird in Hand.

Together with their son they carried out the work themselves using a good deal of recycled timber for many of the fittings (although the quality of the finish is such that you'd never know).



For many years the premises were well known as an outlet for Tittertons butchers although it was latterly a computer shop. Being a former shop, the size of the place is as modest as a good-sized living room. The layout is L-shaped with a bar in the right-hand quarter. A fixed-bench seat is along one side of the pub, while six tables and accompanying chairs make up the total furniture in there (albeit there are some barstools too). Beyond the bar, a corridor gives access to the toilet, and also a door to the smoking area out at the rear.

Five handpumps adorn the front of the bar, and boldly face the window enabling the customer to see the cask offering before anything else. They try and have a stout, a hoppy beer, and something less hoppy from a single brewer as much as choice will allow. As with many places these days, flights of third measures of three different ales can be bought. Three real ciders are also available.

During its relatively short life the Grove Alehouse has built up a loyal following of regulars and established its place in the local community. Join us on Thursday 24 August when we present this well-deserved award to Kevin and Tina. The pub is on the main road and is well-served by the 192 bus.

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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 the page opposite.

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Chorlton Beer Festival

John O'Donnell with all the information about this year's event



From 6 to 8 July, St Clement's Church in Chorlton will be the destination for beer and cider lovers heading to the 13th Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival – an event regularly praised as one of the friendliest beer festivals in one of the

finest settings going. Proceeds from the festival are used to maintain and develop the community facilities of St Clement's, including the three community halls which for one week of the year are filled with the finest cask ales.



With three cask ale bars, a keg beer bar, the international bottle bar and one of the largest cider bars in the north, this year's festival will feature a choice of well over 200 beers and ciders with drinks to suit all tastes. There will be beers from some of Manchester's best

established and most loved breweries and beers from some of its newest. For those who like to explore beers from further afield, the Celts will be invading the church hall.

Keeping it Local

Amongst the newer brewers featured will be Altrincham's **Stubborn Mule** which will have its full core range at the festival across the cask and key-keg bar including Cream Ale, Single Hop IPA and the highly acclaimed Absolute Banker pale ale. Meanwhile one of the longer established brewers has now become one of the closest to the festival – after 10 years in a mill in Bury, **Outstanding Beers'** move to Ordsall in Salford earlier this year means its beers will travel just two miles to the festival.

The only brewery closer is Joseph Holt's **Bootleg Brewing**, based a short walk from the festival at the Horse & Jockey pub. As *Opening Times* reported last month, the winner of the recent home brew competition will be brewing the winning Anglo American ale with head brewer Stef Occhi. Another new beer for the festival will be **Brewsmith's** Cascade.

Established favourites from further afield returning to the festival include **Hawkshead**, which will give a Manchester debut to the latest in its Cask Session Series alongside the award winning Cumbrian Five Hop. **RedWillow** returns with the latest in the Faithless series of experimental beers.

The Celts are coming

While much of the UK's beer revolution has been driven from the cities of England, in recent years our Celtic cousins from Ireland, Wales and Scotland have shown that they have caught up fast and Chorlton Festival is setting out to showcase some of the best.

In 2015, Newport's **Tiny Rebel** took the Champion Beer of Britain title for Wales narrowly pipping Scotland's **Kelburn Brewery** which took

Silver for its Jaguar golden ale. Both will feature on Chorlton's Celtic Invasion bar which will feature the best of Scottish and Welsh cask conditioned beers while Ireland will be represented on the PiPa Key-Keg bar.

Over the past two years, Scotland has seen a similar explosion in microbreweries to that seen in England. The grand-daddy of them all is Alva's **Harviestoun** which incredibly first brewed in a converted cowshed 30 years ago. The brewery steadily grew in popularity and quality, going on to win Champion Beer of Britain in 2003. The festival will feature their cask conditioned lager Schiehallion which has three times been named Champion Speciality Beer Of Britain.

One of the pioneers of modern brewing in Wales was Tom Newman whose Celt Experience helped educate drinkers in Wales that beer didn't have to be brown and malty. While Celt ceased brewing a couple of years back, Tom is back making beery waves with his new **Lines Brewery**. Chorlton Festival is pleased to have secured a couple of rare casks from his brewery. Another brewery you can sample at the festival before it becomes a national name is **Tenby Brewery** which in just two years has outgrown its original plant and has recently moved into new premises where it will brew on Tiny Rebel's former plant.

Those in search of exotic flavoured beers are never disappointed at Chorlton and this year will be no different with a choice of liquid desserts on offer. The choices will include Strawberry & Pink Peppercorn and Lemon Sherbert lagers from **Wildside Beers**, a special limited edition white chocolate and raspberry version of **Waan Brewery's** award winning Snowball Stout and **Rammy Craft's** Coconut Mist, a hoppy premium pale using solely Calypso hops and real coconut flakes.

Apples, Pears & Rhubarb

Last year, visitors voted **Snails Bank's** Rhubarb as their Cider of the Festival which made it the first of the 50-plus ciders and perries to be ordered for this year's festival. The same producer is also responsible for one of the most intriguing drinks on the whole list – an elderflower, gin and tonic cider!

Local cider makers will be well represented too with Manchester's very own **Dunham Press** breaking out a very special 18-month aged Sawpit sweet cider for the festival. Another local producer putting northern cider on the map is Macclesfield's **SiDa Cider** which earlier this year won the Northern round of the CAMRA Champion Cider of Britain competition with the 5.6% Maxonian Mist. The medium-sweet cider went forward to the national finals where, despite being pitted against producers from the traditional cider making centres of Hereford, Gloucester, Kent and Somerset, went on to be voted fifth best cider in the whole of Great Britain at the CAMRA national final in May 2017.

Man does not live of beer alone

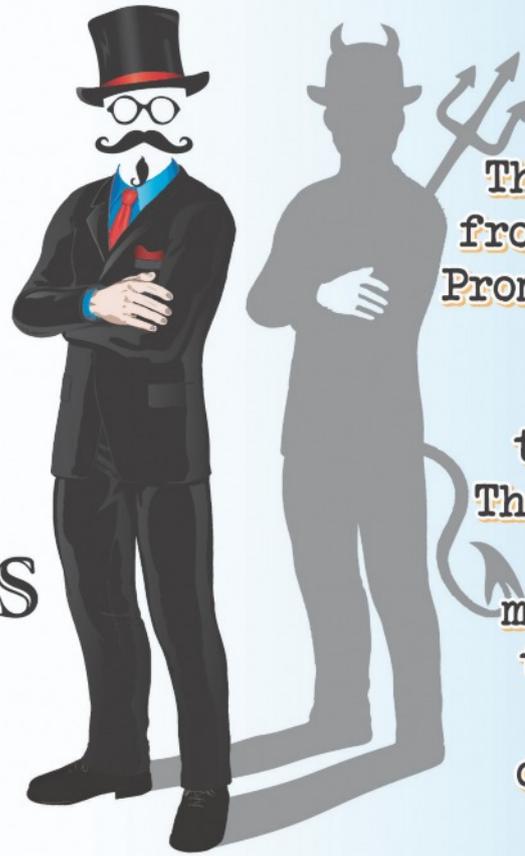
If over 200 beers and ciders isn't enough to tempt you, the festival will also offer some great food to accompany your drinks. Leading the line-up will be the pan-Asian cuisine of Tappopo, established 20 years ago by St Clement's parishioner David Fox and still going strong with three restaurants in Manchester and a fourth in London.

Another local favourite coming to the festival is Beech Road's Epicerie Ludo who will be offering a choice of European cheese and charcuterie platters and baguettes alongside the award-winning pies of local specialist All About Pies.

Completing the line-up will be the superior hot dogs of Fat Annes and last but by no means least, What's Your Beef whose gourmet burgers will be making their Chorlton Festival debut.

@foolhardyales

Fool Hardy ales



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A Fool Hardy Tap House



MARPLE BRIDGE BEER EMPORIUM & EATERY

The Spring Gardens Beer Emporium & Eatery

Fool Hardy Ales at The Hope Inn

Stagger

Stockport Market Place with Dave Pennington

On a very wet March evening a large, hardy group gathered for the Stagger around the pubs of Stockport's old Market Place. As it turned out, we considered ourselves lucky that the distances between pubs covered by this stagger were contained within such a small area as heavy rain persisted throughout the evening.



We started at **Calverts Court** on St Petersgate: as you would expect, the popular Wetherspoons pub was comfortably full for a Friday evening, although we did manage to get seats near the door. This is a deceptively spacious bar, appearing much larger inside than it does from the outside. The beers available were Moorhouse's Blond Witch, Lancaster Black, Ruddles Best and Two Brewers Irish Red (brewed at Adnams for Wetherspoons). Also available but not tried by our group were Jennings Sneek Lifter and Greene King Abbot Ale. There were at least a further four handpumps advertising some interesting beers, but each was annotated with "available soon" - an enticement to return! All the beers tried were well received save for the Ruddles which was deemed average.

The next venue (although we actually had to walk away from the Market Place) was the **Petersgate Tap**, the newest of Stockport's cask ale bars, which opened last October. The bar dispenses Hawkshead Windermere Pale as a regular and five further cask ales, always with one handpump reserved for a dark beer. The bar was comfortably busy and with an excellent choice of background music (at least to my taste!). Beers tried were the aforementioned Hawkshead Windermere Pale, Blackjack You Bet, Spitting Feathers Brainstorm, Lancaster Citra and Torrside Baltic Porter. Untried was Lancaster Black. All the beers were well received, with the Hawkshead being one of the best of the evening.

Our next task was to head back to the Market Place (whilst passing the **Egerton Arms** to check and confirm that no real ale was on offer).

After a short walk through the pouring rain, we reached the **Boars Head**, with its single cask

offering of Samuel Smith's Old Brewery Bitter. Offering the cheapest beer of the evening by far, the pub comprises multiple rooms and was its usual bustling self. Unfortunately, most of the group felt that the beer was being served too cold.



A quick stride across the corner of the Market Place saw us reach the **Bakers Vaults**, which underwent an extensive refurbishment a few years ago, and is one of only a few Robinsons houses to offer a wide range of guest beers. The pub was very busy but service was quick and efficient. Five Robinsons beers were being served on the right hand side of the bar: Trooper, Old Tom and In B'Rouge were tried. Also available but not tried were Unicorn and Dizzy Blonde. Four other beers and a cider were being dispensed from the left hand side of the bar. Tonight's guest offerings were Titanic Plum Porter, Amber Ales Revolution, Dark Star Original and Castle Rock Elsie Mo. All the beers tried were well received except for the new In B'Rouge beer which was only average (*brewed using Belgian yeast which may perhaps not have been to everyone's taste - Ed.*).



It was still raining as we dashed along the side of the Market Hall, passing Robinsons' closed **Bulls Head** with its signboard swinging in the wind, and arrived at **Remedy Bar & Brewhouse**, another of Stockport's newer cask bars. The brewery (pictured above) sits behind glass panelling on one side of the bar and it was good to see that they had two of their own beers available: Remedy Pallida (a pale, hoppy ale) and Stout, both with handwritten pump clips!

The former was well received whilst the latter had mixed reviews. Alongside the Remedy beers were Torrside Comet, Williams Brothers Birds & Bees and Ossett Silver King; these other beers were again all well received. The Intrepid Extra Pale was not tried.

Moving on towards the parish church, we arrived at the busy **Cocked Hat**. The bar area is to the left of the entrance, with a two-part knocked-through lounge to the right where karaoke was in progress and the England v Ireland women's international rugby match was being shown (without sound) on the three TV screens. Six intriguing north western cask ales were on offer: Liverpool's Big Bog Hinky Punk, Morecambe's Cross Bay Nightfall and Wigan's Wily Fox Black Pearl were all well received with the Northwich area based Blakemere Old & Filthy and Wigan's Martland Mill Knocker Upper deemed just above average. Big Bog Morast was also available but not tried.

After that, a splinter group dashed through the rain and up the hill to the **Old Rectory** to sample the Greene King IPA and Abbot Ale, both of which proved to be disappointing.

The rest of the group walked down Millgate to our final destination of the evening, the **Arden Arms**, where a full selection of Robinsons beers was available. This classic pub features in CAMRA's National Inventory of historic pub interiors, with its distinctive snug (pictured above) only accessible by walking through the glass-fronted bar. The Unicorn, Dizzy Blonde, Double Hop, Magnum IPA and Wizard were sampled and were rated from acceptable to *Good Beer Guide* standard; no one tried the Trooper.



Overall, an impressive stagger in which our group tried 34 different beers from no less than 26 breweries in the eight pubs visited: all available within a short walk of each other in Stockport town centre. The area has seen a number of new bars and free houses open in the past few years which, along with the popular monthly "Foodie Fridays" throughout the summer, should be ample encouragement for people to venture into the town centre for their entertainment, and to make use of the hospitality of the various pubs and bars.

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High Peak Pub Scene

Robin Wignall & Tom Lord with News and Views

Peak Practice

With Robin Wignall



The previous edition of *Opening Times* carried an advertisement for the beer festival at the **Drum & Monkey** at the Horwich End end of Whaley Bridge. This occurs after the compilation of this article, but one can safely predict that this will have been a good event. Sometimes there seems to be a beer festival at the Drum & Monkey every day with a good choice of beer from local breweries, from across the Pennines and from further afield. An enhanced range will have been available during, and after, the festival weekend. A beer range that included beers from Wincle, Bollington, Happy Valley, Abbeydale and Whaley Bridge promised well. As the Festival advertisement notes, the Drum & Monkey can be reached using the 199 bus service, Stockport to Buxton, which stops at the door. The pub is also conveniently reached by train on the Manchester to Buxton service via Stockport and is but a 10 minute stroll away. Northern Railways timetable 20 has all the rail travel detail.

Whaley Bridge Brewery

Mention of **Whaley Bridge Brewery** leads into recent developments at the brewery and wider. Recent brews have been Dolly Pit Derbyshire Pale Ale, a refreshing light hopped 4% bitter, and Roots Wharf, a heavily hopped US style beer. The next big step forward for the brewery will be the opening of its own pub. After a snag with the local town council, permission for change of use and conversion to a micropub was given by High Peak Borough Council in May. The ambitious development of the former shop can now begin. We look forward to the announcement of the opening date.

A pre-booked group of us recently called at the **Rose & Crown** at Allgreave, for a drink and food after a couple of hours or so exercising on the surrounding hills. The Rose & Crown stands high on a valley side with a long view into the Dane valley, and stands next to a sharp bend on the A54 Buxton to Congleton road. Walking there can be an advantage, unless there is a designated driver, as the A54 is an interesting road to drive. The pub is open all day 11 to 11

Tuesday to Sunday, so don't expect a drink on Mondays. There are two dining sessions from Tuesday to Friday and all day at weekends from noon into the evening.



I can recall beer from Smith's of Macclesfield being sold here in the early sixties, and soon after Smith's was taken over and closed by Marston's. Later in time both the Cheshire guides, *Cheshire Ale* of 1987 and *Out Inn Cheshire* of 1998, list the pub as a Robinsons house. These days the Rose & Crown operates as a free house with a definite local feel about the choice of beers. When our group called Storm Beaufort's Ale and Mobberley Brewhouse Boon Juice were available. Wincle Brewery is close at hand and beers from there are often on sale. Good quality food, much of it sourced locally, is available, though it has to be said not at budget prices. Nonetheless it is worthwhile dining at the Rose & Crown with friendly and welcoming staff.

Not too far away from Allgreave, perhaps a leisurely stroll over the hill and through the fields, are to be found the **Wild Boar** and the **Ship**, both in different parts of Wincle. And of course the **Wincle Brewery** is open for business and a pint during the working day at the brewery down by the Danebridge.

Local History

A recent local history society meeting in New Mills shed light on the history of some of the town's lost locals. A lengthy list was presented to the listeners but I was particularly intrigued by the demise of licensed premises along what is now Dye House Lane. This had previously been High Street and had in history been the main road through the town. Apart from changing social habits and many other considerations, when the street lost its status this would in time have impacted on the pubs along the road. At the end of Dye House Lane nearest to town was the Pineapple, a fairly recent closure of a pub which was part of the Robinsons estate. Next along was the Grapes which was a brewhouse as well as a pub. The Cock and then the Printer's Arms were next along the road. Finally, and the most recent closure, was the White Hart at the end of Dye House Lane at the angled crossroads with roads to Mellor and Thornsett. The buildings are still largely in place but this list represents a loss to

the pub heritage of New Mills. The long list did make for an interesting talk.

Finally another curio found in the Punch estate, saw the **White Hart** in Whaley Bridge selling Upham Last Suspect Chestnut Ale. Actually quite a decent pint.

High Peak Pub News

With Tom Lord

In Droylsden the **Railway** has been sold and its future is uncertain. The **Kings Head** in the centre of the town has had an internal refurbishment carried out. The **Lazy Toad** now has two beers from the Sharp's range and three from Lees while the **Beehive** has had a few beers from the Bradford brewery.

Green Mill Brewery is no longer using isinglass finings so all its beers are now vegan friendly.

Tweed Brewery is an official partner of this year's Tour of Tameside event. They will be providing a pop-up bar at the end of each stage of the event which takes place over the four days from 15 to 18 June. They have also undertaken a rebranding exercise to provide a consistent look across their range of beers. Expect to see new pump clips rolling out across local outlets.



A recent trip to Chapel-en-le-Frith and Whaley Bridge calling at the **Old Cell**, **Roebuck** and **King's Arms** in Chapel and the **Drum & Monkey** and **Shepherd's Arms** (pictured above) in Whaley, produced seventeen different hand pulled real ales, including notably Tetley Mild at the Roebuck.

As indicated previously, the closed **Jubilee** on the Simmondley Estate in Glossop has now been demolished. Work is expected to start soon on the building of flats on what was the pub and car park space. In further pub news, there is a planning application for the demolition of the **Organ** in Hollingworth and the building of 52 dwellings with associated access. This sounds to me like a repeat of the previous application which seemed to be dropped in the face of objections from the Highways Agency.



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CENTRAL MANCHESTER BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL 29/6/2017 - 1/7/2017

Opening Times & Admission

Thursday 29th June : 4pm - 9pm : £2

Friday 30th June : Noon - 9pm : £3 (£5 after 5pm)

Saturday 1st July : Noon - 9pm : £4

(CAMRA Members - £2 discount all sessions)

Location

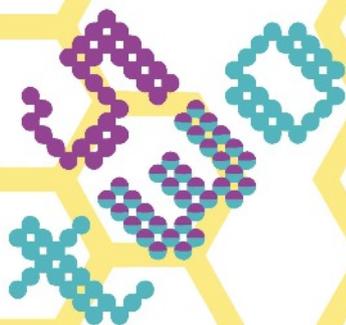
53two Theatre

8 Albion St

Park Avenue Car Park

Manchester

M1 5LN



Central Manchester Beer Fest

The latest information on the city's newest beer festival

Plans for the new Central Manchester Beer Festival are well in hand, writes *Graham Donning*. With beers coming from across Manchester and beyond we are looking forward to providing some spiffing beers and ciders! What an enjoyable few pints you can have whilst celebrating Manchester Beer Week! Plus we will have beer from the newest Manchester Brewery – Beatnikz Republic, reviewed by your editor in last month's *Opening Times*.

We are hoping to have beers from Alphabet, Track, Squawk, Beer Nouveau, Blackjack, Runaway, Gasworks Brew Bar, Beatnikz Republic, Mallinsons, Brass Castle, Mad Hatter, Hophurst, Cloudwater, Marble, Shindigger, Six O'Clock, Brewsmith, Brightside, Hawkshead, Northern Monk, RedWillow, Rammy Craft, Vocation, Serious Brewing, Stringers, Thirst Class, Thornbridge and Stubborn Mule. Plus there may be a few others! One beer to look out for will be the welcome return of Brass Castle's Bad Kitty Vanilla Porter – winner of the People's Choice Award at Manchester Beer & Cider Festival earlier in the year.



There will be food available at all sessions from Just the Cheese, Oddfellows Chocolate and Beehive Food – so you can do your own food matching. Visitors are welcome to bring cold snacks in if they wish. But why would you want to with this offering!

There will be free entry to CAMRA members on Thursday, reduced prices (£2 off) Friday and Saturday. Non-members will pay just £2 on Thursday, £3 before 5pm on Friday, or £5 after 5pm and £4 all day Saturday (but you can always join at the festival and get the CAMRA members' discount back). Bargain! Cask beer prices will also be reasonable, working out at an average of £3.40 per pint, ciders will be around £3.80.

Be warned we aim to close shop at 9pm each night. But that gives plenty of time to get to those other cracking pubs in the vicinity! More details are in the advert on the facing page.

Macclesfield Pub of the Season Trafford & Hulme Awards



Macclesfield & East Cheshire Branch have named the **Prince of Wales** on Lawton Street, Congleton as their Summer Pub of the Season. This award has been made in recognition of the fantastic turnaround that has been witnessed at the pub since Joule's took it over a couple of years ago.

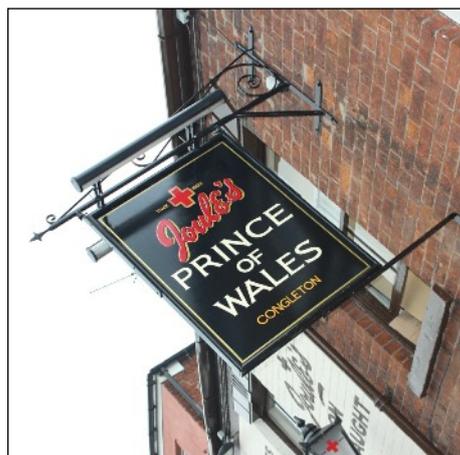
From being an uninviting pub which rarely sold real ale, it is now a thriving pub with regular events taking place and a range of six cask ales – four from Joule's and two guests – always available.

Much of the credit must go to Verity and Gareth Griffiths and the team for making the Prince a "must visit" destination when in Congleton. Join local CAMRA members from 7:30pm on

Trafford & Hulme Branch recently presented awards to their 2017 Pub of the Year and the Runner-up.

Here Branch Chair John O'Donnell is seen presenting the Pub of the Year Award to Chris Bardsley the manager of **Pi (Altrincham)**. Chris has now had the honour of receiving this award for two consecutive years.

While here, John is seen presenting the Runner-up award to Emma Stubbs, Duty Manager at the **JP Joule** in Sale. This popular Wetherspoon pub always has a good range of guest beers alongside the house regulars Ruddles Bitter and Greene King Abbot. Traditional cider from Westons is also sold.



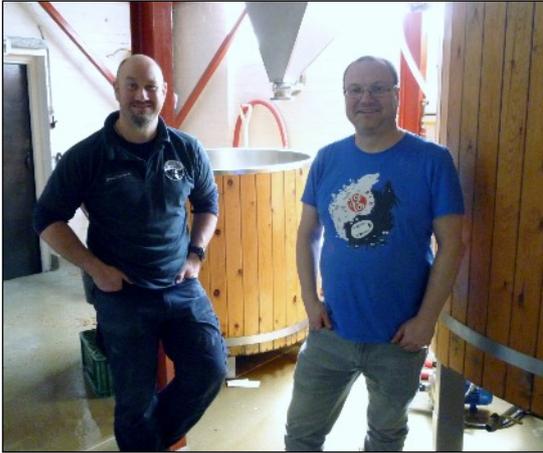
Wednesday 28 June for the presentation of the award.

Marble advert

Home Brewers in action

Winners of our Home Brew Competition brewing their beers

By the time you read this Stockport Beer & Cider Festival will have been and gone – look for a report and details of the Beer of the Festival winners in the next issue of *Opening Times*. One of the popular bars at the festival is Bar Nouveau, featuring 10 brand new beers. For the past two years some of these have come from the winners of our Home Brew Competition who all get a brew day at a local brewery to produce their winning beer on a commercial scale. This year *Opening Times* went along for the brew days to generally make a nuisance of ourselves and take some photos (the only one we missed was Jonah Stancombe at RedWillow and the photos there were kindly taken by Nadia Jackson).



Above and centre – Mark Reeves is seen brewing his Melandra Mild (a dark “salt and pepper” mild) with Howard Town Brewery’s Stuart Swann. Pictured above right is Jonah Stancombe (second from right) with (left to right) Peter Sidwell, Chris Clough and Nick Rothko-Wright at Torrside Brewery. Also pictured are some of the ingredients that went into Jonah’s Kuwa-Niwa Belgian-style wheat beer.



Far left is Tom Barnard with Squawk Brewing’s Oliver Turton who hosted the brewing of Tom’s Marching Stout, a “lactose and coffee stout”. Left is Manchester Brewing’s Paul Mellor with home brewer Adam Land who brewed his Lucky Thirteen golden, dry pale ale at the Ardwick brewery.

Jonah Stancombe was a busy man this year. Not only did he win two categories in the Home Brew Competition but we also arranged for him to re-brew his winning bitter from last year as the original version went slightly awry. Below left and centre, Jonah is pictured with RedWillow Brewery’s Graham Nelson brewing his very hoppy “More or Less” session IPA. Below right Jonah is pictured with Richard Conway from Thirst Class Ale in Reddish where he brewed Ghost Juice, a heavily hopped pale ale.



Hogshead Brewery in Denver

Simon Miller checks out cask beer Stateside



When real ale drinkers in the UK think of American beer they mostly think of kegged craft beers. Well in Denver, Colorado, a place with more breweries per capita than anywhere else in the USA, an old tradition is making a comeback: not just cask beer but beer that has been brewed in wooden barrels. (The barrels are mostly stainless steel with the exception of two French oak firkins and some beer which is aged in whiskey barrels before being refermented in a stainless steel cask.) Hogshead Brewery on 29th Avenue West, situated three and a half miles from downtown Denver, is bucking the trend of kegged craft beer and has decided to concentrate on old school English style beers.

The head brewer is an ex-pat from England called Stephen Kirby and has been in the beer business for more than 30 years. Stephen says "when I started Hogshead it was for purely selfish reasons, I was missing that proper pint as us English like to say. Some of the beers I have been making I have been brewing for over 30 years and some are more modern expressions that use the same English backbone with the late hopping in the kettle and dry hopping in the fermenter with high alpha/aroma Australian and American hops".

The brewery is housed in an old petrol station and had seven beers on sale when we dropped in. With the strongest beers on offer Divine Right imperial stout (10% ABV) and the not so PC Window Licker barley wine (9.8%) which were only served in halves we decided to go for the AK bitter (3.9%) and Barge's Mild (4.2%) first. The AK was a good English session beer and the mild could have held its own against any of its English counterparts.

Next up were Etta's Wedding Reserve (5%) and Chin Wag, a 5.8% extra strong bitter which was the preferred choice out of the two. Two pints of Hogwild IPA were next which were on excellent form and leaving the two strongest for last. The Window Licker and Divine Right were very good but the Stout just pipped it. Denver is a long way to go for a few pints but definitely worth it.



Heard at the Bar

Pub News covering Stockport, Manchester and beyond

Altrincham & Trafford



Altrincham's **Craftsman** bar has been relaunched as a new bar named **Rustic**. The Craftsman opened in December 2015 and was named Best Newcomer of 2016 by Trafford & Hulme CAMRA.

As *Opening Times* went to press, the bar was closed for refit. The main change to the operation is expected to be the introduction of a full bar menu.

The redevelopment of the former **Stamford Arms** in Bowdon has finally been granted planning permission. It is over 12 months since the leasehold of the pub was purchased by Dubai-backed developers who plan to turn it into the "Stamford Kitchen & Tap Co". Trafford Council have twice rejected planning applications with concerns about noise in the Bowdon Conservation Area. Some issues still remain, particularly about a proposed roof terrace but the council has given permission for the rest of the development to proceed while discussions are ongoing.

Two local Greene King pubs are seeking new tenants. The **Saracens Head** at Warburton near Lymm is closed and boarded with the Suffolk-based brewer advertising for new tenants with an annual rent of £36,000. The **Stonemasons Arms** in Timperley is continuing to trade while also being advertised with a rent of £52k and an entry cost of £70k. Greene King say "A large capex is planned for this pub in order to improve the offer and move it towards a more aspirational and premium outlet". Local reports say that some redevelopment work is already going on at the pub.



Urmston has a new "craft beer" shop. **Craft Brewtique** opened on Flixton Road in the town in early March. The shop run by owner Jay King stocks bottles and cans from local and national brewers including Torrside, Alphabet, Marble

Beers, Magic Rock and Tiny Rebel. Meanwhile Sale's **Artisan Ales** has resolved its licensing issues and is now open 10am till 5pm, Wednesday to Saturday, from its home inside Sale's Traders Outlet.

Chorlton

The **Lloyds Hotel** in Chorlton has a new landlord in the form of Darren James who took over just as the last issue of *Opening Times* went to press. Darren comes to the Wilbraham Road pub from another JW Lees pub, the **Kingfisher** at Kirkham near Preston. *Opening Times* welcomes him to the area and wishes him well.

Meanwhile, Greene King has applied for planning permission for major changes at Beech Road's **Famous Trevor Arms**. The plans resurrect changes which were proposed by former owners Punch Taverns just before they sold the pub. The plans which are before Manchester Council will see the traditional two roomed pub knocked through to make one large space. New patio doors to the garden are also proposed.

Pub Shorts



The **Vale Cottage** in Gorton goes from strength to strength since becoming a free house. Geoff McCabe is back as licensee and he tells us that Timothy Taylor's Landlord is always available alongside two other beers on rotation. Home cooked food is available Tuesday to Friday, and Sunday lunch.

In Cheadle Hulme, the former **Ryecroft Arms** has now been demolished and the site is to become housing. When OT passed by all that remained was the rather attractive pub sign but we expect that was destined for the skip.

We are happy to report that cask ale has again returned to the **Thatched Tavern** on Stanhope Street in Reddish. This is an excellent community local and well worth a visit.

In the City Centre **Stage & Radio** (43 Port Street) has now installed three handpumps on the left side of the bar. OK, it's not the eight that we were told they were going to have when they first opened but cask ale is getting closer –

it wasn't on sale as we went to press but it may well be by the time you read this. Hopefully the pizza restaurant will also be up and running by now, too.

The Horse & Jockey on London Road in Hazel Grove is now back on the cask ale map. Following a well-judged refurbishment of the pub licensee Vicky Trueman reintroduced cask beer in January. Marston's Wainwright is more or less permanent and this is joined by two changing guest beers from the Punch Taverns list. Sales have gone well and Vicky has introduced a cask loyalty card – buy six pints and get the seventh free.



The **March Hare** on Mill Lane in Cheadle Hulme was refurbished in March and is now a classic country dining pub in appearance – albeit one in the heart of suburbia. Manager Rachel Weaver has also taken steps to ensure that customers just dropping in for a drink are also made welcome. One of the five handpumps is for Weston's Rosie's Pig Cider, one for Sharp's Doom Bar while the other three are for guest beers (of which Black Sheep Best Bitter and Marston's Wainwright are semi-permanent).

Pub Beer Festivals

The next issue of *Opening Times* is due to be published just after the August Bank Holiday. Expect lots of in-house beer festivals across the area's pubs. We have already received notification of two.



The **Lowes Arms** on Hyde Road in Denton will have a beer festival from 25 to 28 August and details will be available on the pub's website at www.lowesarms.co.uk. The **Boundary** on Audenshaw Road in Audenshaw will have a festival over the same dates. Again details will be available on the pub website at www.boundaryinn.co.uk.

Manchester Beer Week

Connor Murphy with a run-down of this year's event



Greater Manchester is gearing up for an unparalleled 10-day celebration of all things beer-related as Manchester Beer Week returns for its second run between June 23 and July 2. The festival boasted more than 90 events in its first outing and is once more promising a huge variety of attractions to excite all manner of beer drinkers.

It all kicks off on June 23 with an all-day opening party in collaboration with Grub at the reopened Mayfield Depot site near Manchester's Piccadilly Station. The opening weekend will also host the city's biggest ever brewery open day, when 12 breweries will open their doors to the public. This list includes Dan's Brewery, which is opening for the first time at its unit on North Western Street, and this is where Marble will also call home for the day.

The other breweries joining the opening weekend's festivities are Red Bank quartet Beatnikz Republic, Blackjack, Joseph Holt and Runaway, as well as seven more from the Piccadilly area – Alphabet, Beer Nouveau, Chorlton Brewing Co, Cloudwater, Manchester Brewing Co, Squawk and Track. Although Saturday

June 24 is the focus of the celebration, a handful of breweries will also be open at other times throughout the opening weekend.

This year's Beer Week also boasts two beer festivals. Central Manchester CAMRA's second annual festival takes place at 53two between Thursday June 29 and Saturday July 1, while the Pilcrow Summer Beer Thing, from the organisers of Indy Man Beer Con, will be hosted in Sadler's Yard from Friday June 30 to Sunday July 2.

And it wouldn't be a celebration without a series of special beers. Manchester Beer Week has once again managed to attract some of the nation's top brewing talent – including Northern Monk, Hawkshead and Brew By Numbers – to brew collaborations with Mancunian brewers, which will be launched during the festival.

On top of this, Manchester Beer Week is also launching its first awards programme this year, which will be open to the public, so keep an eye out and make sure to vote for your favourite pubs, bars and breweries once the categories are announced.

There will also be a series of pub trails, tastings, tours and talks taking place throughout the festival. For the latest event information visit www.mcrbeerweek.co.uk. *Opening Times* can confirm that as part of Manchester Beer Week there will be two tastings and tap takeovers in Stockport. The Petersgate Tap will be hosting Hawkshead Brewery with six cask and four keg beers available on 27 June while the Magnet will be hosting Cloudwater Brewery, again with keg and cask beers available.

Regional Cider Pub

Just before we went to press the winner of the 2017 CAMRA Greater Manchester Regional Cider Pub of the Year award was announced. The winning pub is the Samuel Oldknow on Market Street in Marple.

Since opening at Easter last year the Samuel Oldknow, a micropub run by Billy Booth and Anthony Meynell, has proved to be a huge success. Indeed so busy has the pub been that Billy and Anthony have appeared shell-shocked at times!



When the pub opened the traditional cider was just sold through one of the five handpumps on the bar. Since then that single cider has been joined by no fewer than seven more. Four are sold from large Kilner jars and three more are "bag-in-box" – and all are kept in the fridge to ensure optimum serving temperature. The ciders vary between the very

traditional and some newer varieties with whole fruit added.

Having already won the branch Cider Pub of the Year Award from the High Peak, Tameside and NE Cheshire Branch the Samuel Oldknow went head to head with six other branch winners and to the delight of Billy and Anthony emerged top of the heap. This well deserved award will be presented at 1.00pm on **Sunday 11 June**.

Trafford & Hulme Club Award

Perennial award winner **Flixton Conservative Club** has again been voted Club of the Year by Trafford & Hulme CAMRA – a run of successes that is testament to the hard work of the team there. Pictured below (left to right) are Club Stewards Sharon and Nigel Porter, Trafford & Hulme Branch Chair John O'Donnell and Club President Mike Kiely on the presentation night.



The Club will now go forward into the judging for the Regional Club of the Year Award (indeed judging was underway as this was written) – where it has been a previous regional winner.

Among the other hopefuls this year is Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA's **Ladybarn Social Club**, on Green Street in Ladybarn. The branch award is due to be presented by Stockport & South Manchester Chairman on Thursday 8 June.

Beer on Burton Road

Jim Flynn checks out the flourishing bar scene

While pubs have been shutting all over the country, West Didsbury is certainly an exception to this rule, with bars opening seemingly every other month, to cater for the young upwardly mobile drinkers with high disposable income that the area attracts these days. Since we last ran a Stagger here we have had to split West Didsbury in two halves, such has been the growth in the number of cask outlets, and it's incredible to think that seven years ago not one of the bars you will read about here was open and selling cask beers.



Our first stop on a pleasant but cool spring evening was the **George Charles** (apparently named after the person who owned the shop back in the 1800s), on the corner of Nell Lane at the far end of Burton Road 'high street' walking away from the tram stop. It's very nicely fitted out with large windows on all sides and floral displays, giving the bar a very spacious and open feel. On the walls are old wooden fruit boxes and in contrast with elsewhere the background music was pleasantly muted. Downstairs is a second room with seating but we didn't venture down. There were three cask beers available, Seven Bro7hers Session, Beartown Best Bitter and Battlefield Saxon Gold, none of which corresponded with the beers listed on the blackboard! All were in reasonable nick.



Four doors down is **Saison**, which was very crowded, perhaps because the upstairs room was shut off for a private function. It was consequently extremely difficult to get much of a feel for the place, and as there were a couple

of tables under a canopy on the pavement outside, we sat there. The place is related, like many of the bars we visited, to one in nearby Chorlton, in this case Dulcimer. Although I could see there was an extensive bottled range of foreign and UK craft beers alongside a fine array of keg beers, I was a little disappointed to find on our visit only one of the three handpumps sported a pumpclip, Marston's Wainwright. The beer itself was well regarded by us all.



Just across the road now to two neighbouring bars, **Folk Café Bar** and **Volta**, both of which have an emphasis on good beer and good food. **Folk** has a wide frontage but doesn't seem as big inside, as the bar itself is set quite close to the door. I normally like to sit outside amongst the palm trees, but that evening there was insufficient space so we sat near the right-hand snug-type area next to the DJ's equipment, which fortunately was not in operation at the time. From what I could see inside through the sea of people the décor is retro 1950/60s with period bric-a-brac featured on the far wall. The beers available were Brightside Odin (a regular beer here), RedWillow Shameless and Howard Town Super Fortress, which were all in good form.



Next door is **Volta** which is owned by the same people as Elektrik in Chorlton. The outside drinking area is certainly smaller than Folk as it is narrower but inside the bar goes back further. Inside the tables are set up for table service for diners (there is a gastro type menu); nevertheless, drinkers are made welcome and we happily sat and conversed with one of the owners, his partner and their little dog (not that the dog said much). There were two cask beers

available, Track Sonoma and Ilkley Pale which we found to be very drinkable.

On our way down from the tram stop to the George Charles at the start of the evening, we had noticed a new bar called **Proove**, and so we decided to move away from our itinerary, cross the road and check it out. This is a swish fashionable pizzeria with a wood fired oven, but it has a bar at the front selling cask beer. We ascertained that the owners had started in Sheffield running temporary pop-up bars and cafés, and then opened a restaurant; West Didsbury is their second such venture. The lighting is modern with the chrome fitting in the bar sporting multiple bulbs hanging down in a chandelier effect, and the music is quite loud. There was one handpump selling Seven Bro7hers Session, which apparently was the bar's first departure from the Sheffield-based beers they had been selling until this point. The staff told us that the cask beer had been doing well, and if that continued they would consider putting on a second beer. Due to the limited seating, we stood to drink our beer, which we considered very worthy (*the standing or the beer? Ed.*).



Finally, turning back down Burton Road, we moved to another café bar, **Mary & Archie** (apparently named after the owner's parents, and another place with a Chorlton link). This is the smallest and the longest-established of the bars we visited, and I think the most characterful and quirkiest, with a disparate array of furniture crammed into a relatively small space. Having claimed a CAMRA discount on our beer we found seats and sampled Seven Bro7hers Session, Brightside B Side and Cotleigh Old Buzzard, the first dark beer of the evening, all of which were good, and the latter was the beer of the night. A great end to the evening!

Overall this Stagger is not one for those who prefer traditional pubs or for anybody with financial concerns (beer is not cheap in West Didsbury!) but it can be commended for the variety of beer available. It's very accessible from the Burton Road tram stop and requires next to no walking, so why not give it a go?

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**CAMPAIGN
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CAMRA Independents' Day Treasure Hunt – What's It All About?



CAMRA Salford Branch
Presents the 25th Independents' Day
TREASURE HUNT

Find the Hidden Clues in Salford & Manchester Pubs

Open to CAMRA members & to non-Members

Assemble at the
NEW OXFORD BEXLEY SQUARE
SATURDAY 8 JULY @ 11.30am

In 1992, Rhys Jones – then of Stockport & South Manchester Branch – approached Pete Cash of North Manchester Branch with an idea for a joint celebration of CAMRA's National Independents' Day, which had recently been established as the first Saturday in July.

This being the closest Saturday to the American "Independence Day" – 4th July – the idea was for local CAMRA Branches to celebrate the large number of Independent Brewers producing Real Ale in Britain. In 1993 this was 179. In 2017 it is **over 1500**.

Rhys's idea was for a "Treasure Hunt" – an excuse to visit a large number of pubs, each selling at least one real ale from an independent brewer. The two Branches jointly purchased the first Trophy Shield (the smaller, inner one pictured left). The larger, outer shield was purchased later by North Manchester Branch.

It is a day of three stages:

- 1) Meet in the Host Pub (this year it will be the **New Oxford**, Bexley Square, Salford, from 11.00am onwards on Saturday 8 July) where you register your team (£1 per person) then solve a not-too-difficult puzzle. This gives you the names of eight pubs in inner Salford and Manchester – all within walking distance, though there are some free buses.
- 2) Most of the day is spent browsing the pubs, looking for the answers to 24 cryptic clues (three per pub) and sampling the occasional real ale.
- 3) Return to the New Oxford by a pre-set time (usually 6.00pm) where question papers are handed in, checked and scored. The winners will receive a cash prize or sometimes beer tokens. Then there will be some food, this year kindly provided by hosts Tim and Paulette.

It is the duty (and privilege) of the winning team to engrave their name on the next available badge, to be the custodians of the trophy for one year – usually displaying it in a pub of their choice – and to return it at the start of the following year's competition. They also have the dubious honour of **setting next year's competition!**

Although **Independents' Day** is under the aegis of CAMRA, you do not have to be a CAMRA member to take part, though of course we would be delighted if you decide to join us. Good hunting!



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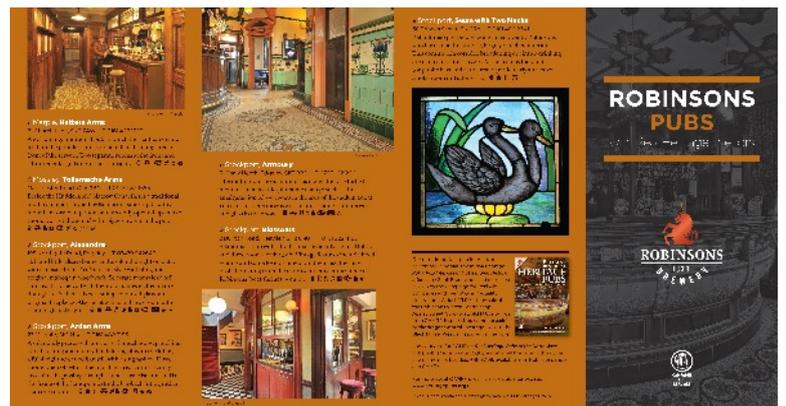
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Robinsons Heritage Leaflet



Robinsons Pubs

Robinsons Heritage Leaflet

Robinsons, in conjunction with CAMRA's Pub Heritage Group, have produced a leaflet celebrating their historic pubs. Despite one or two unfortunate modernisations over the years the brewery still has a good number of pubs with outstanding heritage features.

The pubs listed include such gems as the **Alexandra**, **Arden Arms** and **Swan With Two Necks** in Stockport, the **Plough** in Gorton and the **Harrington Arms** at Gawsworth, near Macclesfield. Other local pubs with heritage features include the **Grapes** in Hazel Grove, the **Hatters Arms** in Marple, the **Castle** on Oldham Street in the City Centre, the **Blossoms** in Heavily and the **Armoury** in Edgeley.

You should be able to pick up a copy from the featured pubs and also from the Brewery Visitors Centre in Stockport.



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