

OPENING TIMES

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2017 / FREE

**INSIDE: WIN PRIZES ON THE WINTER WARMER
WANDER / PUBS OF THE MONTH /
MORE ON MANCHESTER BEER & CIDER
FESTIVAL / BOOK REVIEWS**



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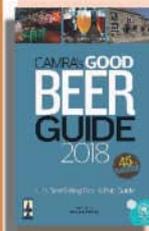
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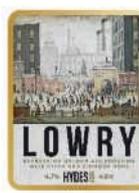
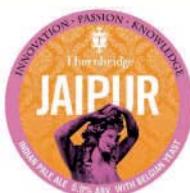
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~ OPENING TIMES ~

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News, articles and letters are welcome to the editorial address – John Clarke, 45 Bulkeley Street, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9HD. E-mail – stocam@btinternet.com. Phone 0161 477 1973. Advertising rates on request or online at: <http://www.ssmcamra.co.uk/magazine.htm>. Local advertising John Clarke (as above) or contact Neil Richards MBE at n.richards@btinternet.com.

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.citizenadviceguide.org.uk/consumer_e/reporting_a_problem_to_trading_standards

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Available at £12.00 for 12 issues (make cheques payable to Opening Times). Apply to David Sharpe, 1 Chiltern Drive, Woodsmoor, Stockport, SK2 7BE. Tel 0161 483 3708

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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.derbysbus.info

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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 January/February issue is Friday 25 November

Contributors to this issue: John Clarke, Alan Gent, Dave Hanson, Peter Butler, Neil Worthington, Paul Felton, Dave Burston, Sue Lightfoot, Peter Edwardson, Tom Lord, Lawrence Devaney, Margaret O'Brien, Mark McConachie, John Westwood, Stuart Ballantyne

Distribution Manager – Janet Flynn

Front cover – A roaring fire and a dark ale – perfect for the winter months

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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)

highpeaktamesidenortheastcheshire.camra.org.uk

Contact: see website

Macclesfield & East Cheshire (MEC)

www.eastcheshirecamra.org.uk

Contact: Rob Nicholson 07983 524102;

social@eastcheshirecamra.org.uk

CAMRA Members only

Local CAMRA Events — November

Thursday 9th

Branch Meeting: Blossoms, 2 Buxton Road, Heaviley, SK2 6NU. Starts 8.15pm. (SSM)

Monday 13th

Branch Meeting: Poynton Royal British Legion, George's Road West, Poynton, SK12 1JY. Starts 8.00pm. Will include presentation of Branch Club of the Year Award. (HPNC)

Friday 17th

Burnage & Heaton Mersey Stagger: 7.30pm Farmers Arms, 254 Burnage Lane, M19 1EN; 8.30pm Sun in September, 588 Burnage Lane, M19 1NA. (SSM)

Saturday 18th

Winter Warmer Wander (see page 11 for full details) Launch Stagger in central Stockport: 7.30pm Railway, Avenue Street, Portwood, SK1 2BZ; 8.30pm Remedy Bar & Brewhouse, 11 Market Place, SK1 1EW. (SSM)

Thursday 23rd

Pub of the Month presentation to Reasons To Be Cheerful, 228 Fog Lane, M20 6EL. Very close to Burnage Station. From 8.00pm with presentation around 9.00pm. (SSM)

Saturday 25th

Train trip to Carnforth and Lancaster: catch the 11.15am Glasgow train at Manchester Piccadilly station. Change at Lancaster and arrive Carnforth 12.13pm. (HPNC)

Local CAMRA Events — December

Saturday 9th

Branch Christmas Party: Lowes Arms, 301 Hyde Road, Denton, M34 3FF. From 4.00pm. (HPNC)

Monday 11th

Branch Meeting: Harewood Arms, 2 Market Street, Broadbottom, SK14 6AX. Starts 8.00pm. (HPNC)

Thursday 14th

Branch Meeting with Winter Quiz: Arden Arms, 23 Millgate, Stockport, SK1 2LX. Starts 8.15pm. (SSM)

Friday 22nd

Annual Hillgate Stagger: 7.30pm Queens Head, 12 Little Underbank, SK1 1JT; 8.30pm Red Bull, 14 Middle Hillgate, SK1 3AY. (SSM)

Thursday 28th

City Centre Social. Details from contact. (HPNC)

Thursday 28th

Pub of the Month presentation to the Ladybrook, Fir Road, Bramhall, SK7 2NP. From 8.00pm with presentation around 9.00pm. (SSM)

Social Media

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



Stockport & South Manchester:
www.facebook.com/SSMCAMRA

High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire:
www.facebook.com/HPTNECCAMRA

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



Stockport & South Manchester: @SSMCAMRA

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CAMRA Discounts

The full list of those pubs offering CAMRA Discounts will appear in the next issue. The latest list can be accessed online at:

<http://www.ssmcamra.co.uk/OTfiles/304sep17.pdf>

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Heard at the Bar

Pub News from Stockport, Manchester, Tameside and beyond

Arden Arms



According to the new tenants about 200 people must have asked them what their plans were for the Arden Arms before *Opening Times* posed the same question. That, if anything, shows the regard in which this famous Stockport pub, institution might be a better word, is held by

its large band of regulars. There's always a sense of nervousness when a much-loved local changes hands but having chatted to new tenants Geoff and Maria Troughton (pictured above) we are confident that all is well.

Joe Quinn and Steve King were always going to be a hard act to follow and we know that Robinsons knew they'd have to choose their successors with care – and this they have clearly done. Geoff and Maria took over on 18 August and came with 25 years' experience in the trade. The last two of those years had been spent running a "Hungry Horse" in Reading, which they decided was very much not for them, and before that they had gained substantial experience in pub management here in the North West for companies such as Boddingtons, Burtonwood and Thwaites. There was also a seven-year stint in the Isle of Man working for Heron & Brearley, one of the island's major pub operators and brewers.

So, what brought them to Robinsons and the Arden Arms? Geoff told us that he and Maria were looking for a tenancy and really there were only two or three companies they wanted to work for. Former colleagues in the North West now worked for Robinsons and alerted them to the Arden and suggested they go and have a look – and that sealed the deal. As Geoff puts it: "Who couldn't fall in love with this?"



So, what are their plans for the pub? Not a lot is the reassuring answer. "We're not here to change anything" says Geoff, "we just want to continue a great pub". Indeed nothing has changed. Geoff and

Maria have acquired all the fixtures and fittings to maintain the pub's atmosphere and the staff has stayed on too. So you will see familiar faces behind the bar and the menu remains its usual eclectic and excellent self.

One thing we have picked up on is comments about how good the beer has been recently. The range comprises Wizard, Unicorn, Dizzy Blonde, Double Hop, Trooper and the current Robinsons seasonal (we are also looking forward to the return of Old Tom this winter) and Geoff told us that he's been a trainer for Thwaites and is passionate about beer. It shows.

It's reassuring to know this wonderful old pub (it's listed Grade II and is on CAMRA's National Inventory of Heritage Pubs) is in safe hands. Those 200 people can rest easy.

CAMRA Regional Pub of the Year

A Wigan pub which opened less than three years ago has been crowned Greater Manchester's Pub of the Year. **Wigan Central**, the brainchild of the town's Prospect Brewery, has been impressing visitors since opening in the railway arch on Queen Street adjacent to Wigan North Western station in December 2014.



Owners Patsy and John Slevin saw the opportunity to provide drinkers with a rail-themed watering hole. Its success has seen a doubling in size, as well

as increasing its offer to include seven real ales, four craft ciders and an astonishing selection of beers from the UK, Europe and beyond.

Wigan Central was pitted against eight other exceptional pubs nominated by the Greater Manchester CAMRA branches. An expert team of volunteer judges visited all nine unannounced and evaluated the qualities of each. They scored the pubs on a variety of features including quality of welcome, value for money, community focus and – most importantly – the quality of beers and ciders.



CAMRA's Regional Director Graham Donning (pictured above with Patsy Slevin, centre, and Wigan Central manager Jo Whalley left) said: "Wigan Central is a wonderful take on a modern bar nestling in a 19th century railway arch. Our judges gave points for the friendly service, condition of real ales and ciders, and the unique use of railway arrival and departure screens to give clear information about the beers on tap and in the cellar. As our regional award winner, the pub will now line up against the rest of the country for the national title. I'm confident it will be a contender."

Prospect brewer Patsy Slevin was thrilled with the award. She said: "Back in 2014, our aim was to have a dedicated real ale bar in a historic part of the town. We invoked memories of the long since closed Wigan Central station with our decor and furnishings that reflect the age of steam. But we aren't stuck in the past - regulars and occasional visitors love our real time monitors showing departures at both Wigan stations. Winning the Pub of the Year is just the ticket!"

Just missing out on the top spot was Cheadle Hulme's **Chiverton Tap** on Mellor Road, just across from the station. This excellent micropub is the Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Year and serves an excellent and changing range of cask and keg beers – quality is top notch and has gained the pub a place in CAMRA's national *Good Beer Guide*.

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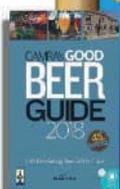
Greater Manchester Pub of the Year 2015

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Pubs of the Month

Stockport & South Manchester Winners for November and December



The Stockport & South Manchester Pub of the Month for November is Reasons To Be Cheerful, a new micropub on Fog Lane in Burnage. Margaret O'Brien interviewed Elena Rowe, one of the owners, and her reply really sums up why it won.

"We have been blown away by winning awards before we've been open a year, winning CAMRA Pub of the Month especially, because we love cask ale and we're obsessed with making sure it's kept well. We hope that winning those awards reflects how hard we've been working to make Reasons To Be Cheerful a great place to drink really great quality beer!

"We're completely independent, and that was one of the most important things to us when we were setting up. We're family owned and run, now with one other member of staff. Also, importantly, our lines are not tied to any suppliers or breweries so our selection is constantly changing and we are always on the lookout for new things. The diversity and quality of the beer is really important to us because that is what we like to see when we go to other pubs and bars. We were inspired by places like the Magnet, Café Beermoth and Heaton Hops. We looked at cafes and cosy coffee shops and living rooms to get something that didn't look or feel like a typical bar or micropub.

"I also want to mention how important the community aspect of it is to us. When we set up we knew we wanted to create a community hub, somewhere where everyone would feel welcome, and it's a pleasure to see that happen.

"We feel like we don't just run a bar. We make an effort to get to know our customers and provide a friendly, personal service. We want to make sure there is lots of buzz and energy about the bar and always something different going on here to attract new people and keep those we know coming back.

"We absolutely love running Reasons To Be Cheerful; every day is different but always a pleasure. We have made new friends and have been blown away by how supportive and friendly the people of Burnage and Didsbury are."

This is a very welcome addition to the South Manchester pub scene, in an area where pubs are thin on the ground. The award will be presented with the award on Thursday 23 November from 8.00pm. Reasons to be Cheerful is close to Burnage Station and the 50 bus route.



The Pub of the Month winner for December is by way of complete contrast – the very large Ladybrook on Fir Road in Bramhall. Lawrence Devaney is a fan and explains why it's a deserving winner.

The Ladybrook is a traditional pub built to meet demand from a growing suburbia in the 1930s. Since current landlady Tracy Robinson took it over in November 2015, she has transformed the beer selection and connected with her customers on several levels, delivering the concept of a community pub.

Both Tracy and owners Greene King should be applauded for the 11 cask beer options available at this Cask Marque Pub of which three are usually from Greene King's own stable. Tracy looks for guidance from SIBA to inform her choice of cask ales, and, if not unique, the Ladybrook is special in frequently having two dark beers available even in the summer. The choice of beers is attracting a growing number of regulars whose own preferences Tracy is happy to reflect in the beers on offer. Expect to see Titanic, Rudgate and several more micro – breweries represented. There's a 10% CAMRA discount on cask beers so a pint comes in under £3. There is a selection of good keg beers and lagers available, as are speciality gins and rums.

There's a well laid out open bar area with a central space and two side wings. Both décor and layout were updated 2½ years ago whilst still retaining a traditional feel. Mixed table and seating options in the three loosely distinct sections provide comfort for drinkers and diners. The menu offers a good selection of quality meals with special deal options available. The Ladybrook is a popular football pub (not to everyone's delight) but one of the wings provides for a quieter area on match days. A completely separate 'vault' at the back has a pool table and its own bar.

Very importantly, the pub has welcomed various social gatherings and interest groups including an orchestra and a chess club, and is currently leading a campaign raising funds for a local street-based defibrillator. Join the local CAMRA branch to celebrate the award to Tracy and staff on Thursday night, 28 December. The pub is on the 378 bus route and is a three-minute walk from the Bramhall Green roundabout stop.



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 previous page.



craft beers from cask, keg and bottle

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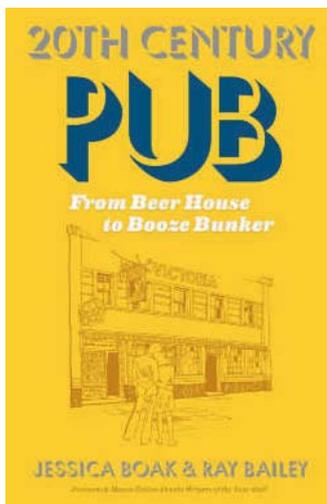
Stalybridge Railway Station - Platform 4 Rassbottom Street, Stalybridge SK15 1RF

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Book Reviews

Peter Edwardson with some Christmas Reading

20th Century Pub, by Jessica Boak and Ray Bailey



There have been plenty of books written on the history of the British pub, and for the most part they cover the same ground. They run through the great days of the coaching inns, the Edwardian gin palaces and Lloyd George's temperance campaign, but, after that, they tend to peter out and go strangely quiet.

This gap has now been remedied with *20th Century Pub* by Jessica Boak and Ray Bailey, well-known beer bloggers and authors of the widely acclaimed *Brew Britannia*, a study of the rise of British beer enthusiasm. This is a comprehensive survey of the development of pubs since 1900, beginning with the

temperance pressures faced by brewers in the early years of the century, and moving on through the genteel improved pub, theme pubs, Irish pubs, gastropubs and Wetherspoon's to end up in the modern-day but oddly old-fashioned environment of the micropub.

It's organised thematically, with each chapter closed by a visit to a pub that exemplifies its topic. Most of these, in their different ways, are still thriving, a sombre exception being Marples in Sheffield, where 70 people died in a Luftwaffe raid in 1940 while sheltering in the cellars. It was rebuilt after the war, but the replacement itself is no more. Especially interesting is the chapter on the origins and development of the much-maligned estate pub of the post-war era. Will we come to cherish the few survivors in the same way as we now do the inter-war pubs?

The book has clearly involved a lot of intensive research in archives and press clippings, especially in the earlier chapters which have more of a historical feel. It is also brought to life by many anecdotes from people with direct experience of the various themes covered, so a number of familiar names crop up, and there's even one quotation from myself.

A recurring theme is the constant tension between the desire to reform and clean up pubs, and the opposing tendency to see them as places for people to let their hair down where the normal rules can be relaxed. Allied to this is the enduring attempt by brewers and operators to impose particular formulas on pubs, which all too often end up making them somewhat sterile, and are eroded by the conflict with warts-and-all reality.

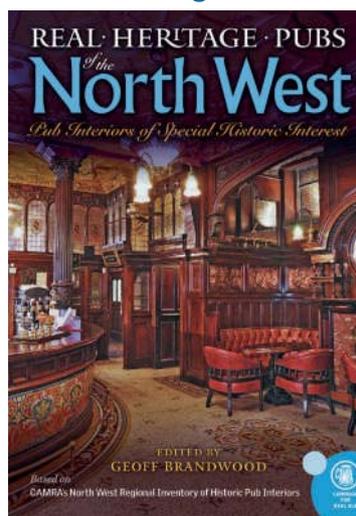
The book is intended to be a historical and sociological survey, not a polemic in the style of Christopher Hutt's *Death of the English Pub*, and the authors, while not fighting shy of expressing opinions, do not treat it as a soapbox. They offer a very balanced account of the debate surrounding the very obvious decline of the pub trade in recent years, and the various factors that are claimed to have been responsible. However, in the end they reach the upbeat conclusion that "we feel unfashionably optimistic for the pub".

It's a thoroughly-researched and intelligently written book that nevertheless maintains a lightness of tone that prevents it becoming turgid even when the subject-matter is serious. It's a must-read for

anyone with an interest in pubs beyond just drinking in them, and is one of those books that you will return to and re-read sections again and again.

20th Century Pub is published by Homewood Press at £16.99

Real Heritage Pubs of the North West



CAMRA have recently published the latest in their series of books on Heritage Pubs covering the North-West of England. Illustrated throughout with high-quality colour photos, it includes 177 pubs across the region ranging from magnificent Victorian gin palaces to simple rural "time-warp" alehouses. The North-West boasts one of the most lavishly decorated pubs in the whole country in the Arts and Crafts Philharmonic Dining Rooms in Liverpool. It also has two of the handful of pubs remaining with a seating area accessed through the

bar servery, the familiar Arden Arms in Stockport and Ye Horns at Goosnargh in Lancashire.

In our local area it features both well-known classics such as the Nursery in Heaton Norris (pictured right) and the Britons Protection in Manchester City Centre, and pubs whose architectural significance may not be so widely appreciated, such as the Turnpike in



Withington (pictured below), which has a very rare example of an untouched early 1960s design scheme. There are also articles on how the pub developed, what is distinctive about pubs in the North-West, how people a century ago could expect to be served drinks at their



table, and how they used the pub for take-out sales in the pre-supermarket era.

Many of the pubs included offer excellent beer and hospitality, but it must be remembered that it is a guide to interior design, and some do not serve any real ale, most regrettably the magnificent Vines in Liverpool. Nevertheless it is an essential purchase for anyone fascinated by pubs and their architecture, and will surely provide the inspiration for many journeys of exploration around the region.

Real Heritage Pubs of the North West, edited by Geoff Brandwood, is published by CAMRA Books at £7.99

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Drinkers' Voice

Speaking up for drinkers

Recent years have seen a growing wave of alarmist messages about the dangers of alcohol, writes Peter Edwardson. If you are to believe the official advice, you're putting your health at risk if you drink more than a mere six pints of ordinary-strength beer a week. Many people have taken this at face value, with an inevitable effect on the pub trade.

DRINKERS' VOICE

In reality, much of this information is, at best, exaggerated and alarmist. In particular, it's rarely mentioned that there's an overwhelming body of evidence that moderate drinking results in better

health outcomes than total abstinence. However, it's rare to hear any sceptical voices raised apart from those of the drinks industry who, regardless of the content of their message, are inevitably going to be seen as influenced by financial interest.

To fill this gap, a new pressure group has now been created called Drinkers' Voice UK, with the aim of putting across a more balanced view and a sense of proportion on alcohol-related health issues and other aspects of alcohol policy. It sets out to represent consumers of alcoholic drinks, not producers, and specifically does not accept any funding from the industry.

CAMRA has had some involvement in providing start-up help and seedcorn funding, but it is an entirely independent body that speaks for all responsible consumers, not just pub-goers and beer drinkers. The public health lobby draws no distinctions between different types of drinks or drinkers, and all have a common interest in standing up against their excesses.

Despite only having been formed a couple of months ago, Drinkers' Voice has already gained extensive coverage on TV, radio, newspapers and social media. It's a much-needed initiative that deserves your support. Why not take a look at their website at www.drinkersvoice.org.uk and, if you can, give them a donation?

Pub News in Brief



North East brewer and pub operator Camerons has announced that it is to open the twelfth outlet in its **Head of Steam** chain in Didsbury early in the New Year. Work is due to

begin in December on the long-closed **Sanctuary** with a projected February opening. The drinks offer will include eight cask lines (which will include traditional cider) and 19 keg lines with a rotating choice of craft beers.

Camerons' Chief Executive Chris Soley is quoted as saying: "We have been looking at a number of venues across the North West and we identified the Manchester area as one of the key places we wanted to open a new site in. Didsbury is a very popular town and we feel our Head of Steam venue will be another excellent addition to the fantastic range of bars and restaurants in the area."

News reaches us that **Tweed Brewery** is planning to open a micropub on Hamnett Street in Hyde. *Opening Times* has been planning a visit to Tweed for a catch-up for some time now so if we finally get our act together there will be more in the next issue.

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Winter Warmer Wander

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OLD TOM

This month we are once again running the Winter Warmer Wander, our annual celebration of festive beers to bring you a little winter cheer across the Christmas season. Like the Mild Challenge and the Cider Circuit, this is the chance for you to visit some new pubs and try some new beers. Further information at www.ssmcamra.co.uk/winter.htm

This year we have lots of great prizes and lots of ways to win them. What you need to do is...

- * Buy at least half a pint of cask conditioned stout, porter, old ale or barley wine (or if none available, any other premium beer 4.5% ABV or over).
- * Get the pub to put a sticker on its entry below (if they can't find a sticker, just get a signature).
- * Get 12 stickers and you will win two bottles of premium beer plus a ticket for Manchester Beer & Cider Festival.
- * 24 stickers wins you two tickets for Manchester Beer & Cider Festival, a WWW t-shirt plus entry into a prize draw for a hamper of assorted beers.
- * Visit all 46 pubs to win two bottles of beer, three tickets for Manchester Beer & Cider Festival, a WWW t-shirt plus entry into a prize draw for a deluxe hamper (12 bottles) of assorted beers.

Winter Warmer Wander runs from **Friday 17th November to Sunday 31st December**. Completed forms need to be with Dave Platt, 138 Broom Lane, Levenshulme, M19 3LJ by 5th January. Include your name, address and a contact phone number and/or email address.

Name **Address** **Contact**

RESTRICTED OPENING: Establishments whose **name is red** do not open at least 12noon to 10:00pm every day of the week. Use WhatPub.com to check.

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Arden Arms 23 Millgate, Stockport SK1 2LX | Bakers Vaults Market Place, Stockport SK1 1ES | Beer Shed 47b Market Street, New Mills SK22 4AA | Brink 65 Bridge Street, Manchester M3 2BQ | Calvert's Court 13 St Petersgate, Stockport SK1 1EB |
| Castle Hotel 66 Oldham Street, Manchester M4 1LE | Cheshire Ring 72-74 Manchester Road, Hyde SK14 2BJ | Crown & Kettle 2 Oldham Road, Manchester M4 5FE | Crown Inn 154 Heaton Lane, Stockport SK4 1AR | Crown Inn 19 Ford Lane, Northenden M22 4WE |
| Crown Point Tavern 16 Market Street, Denton M34 2XW | Fletcher Moss 1 William Street, Didsbury M20 6RQ | Ford Madox Brown Unit 1, Wilmslow Park, Rusholme M14 5FT | Fred's Ale House 843 Stockport Road, Levenshulme M19 3PW | Friendship 353 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, M14 6XS |
| Gateway 882 Wilmslow Road, East Didsbury M20 5PG | Great Central 306 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield M14 6NL | Grove Alehouse 145 London Road, Hazel Grove SK7 4HH | Harewood Arms 2 Market Street, Broadbottom SK14 6AX | Heaton Hops 7 School Lane, Heaton Chapel SK4 5DE |
| Hope Inn 118 Wellington Rd North, Heaton Norris SK4 2L | OLD TOM | Horse & Farrier 144 Gatley Road, Gatley SK8 4AB | OLD TOM | Ladybrook Fir Road Bramhall SK7 2NP |
| Magnet 51 Wellington Rd North, Heaton Norris SK4 1HJ | Marble Arch 73 Rochdale Road, Manchester M4 4HY | Micro Bar Unit FC16, Arndale Market, High Street, Manchester M4 3AH | New Oxford 11 Bexley Square, Salford M3 6DB | Paramount 33-35 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 4BH |
| Petersgate Tap 19a St Petersgate, Stockport SK1 1EB | OLD TOM | Piccadilly Tap Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester M1 2GH | OLD TOM | Pie and Ale Units 1-2 Northern Quarter Arcade, The Hive, Lever Street, Manchester M1 1FN |
| Railway 1 Avenue Street, Portwood, Stockport SK1 2BZ | Reasons To Be Cheerful 228 Fog Lane, Burnage M20 6EL | Red Lion 532 Wilmslow Road, Withington M20 4BT | Remedy Bar & Brewhouse 10-11 Market Place, Stockport SK1 1EW | Samuel Oldknow 22 Market Street, Marple SK6 7AD |
| Smithfield Market Tavern 37 Swan Street, Manchester M4 5JZ | Society Rooms 49-51 Grosvenor Street, Stalybridge SK15 2JN | Sportsman Inn 57 Mottram Road, Hyde SK14 2NN | Spring Gardens 89 Compstall Road, Marple Bridge SK6 5HE | Station Buffet Bar Platform 4, Rassbottom St, Stalybridge SK15 1RF |
| Victoria 438 Wilmslow Road, Withington M20 3BW | Waterhouse 67-71 Princess Street, Manchester M2 4EG | Wilfred Wood 204 London Road, Hazel Grove SK7 4DF | Wine & Wallop 97 Lapwing Lane, West Didsbury M20 6UR | Ye Olde Vic 1 Chatham Street, Edgeley, Stockport SK3 9ED |

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Manchester Beer & Cider Festival

If it's January it must be....



Whether Christmas excites or fills you with dread, there's always the compensation of January's Manchester Beer and Cider Festival to launch the New Year, writes David Rigby. Now in its fifth year, the festival sprung from the National Winter Ales Festival which ran in the city for almost a decade before CAMRA's decision to move it around the country. Most of the locally-based organising team shrugged off the disappointment and got on their bikes to establish Manchester's own beer and cider festival.

After a successful two years at the National Cycling Centre, the festival took the big decision to set up in the vast space of Manchester Central (which will never shake off its former moniker of G-Mex). The central location in the heart of the city proved to be a popular move for visitors and, to the relief of the organisers, a good commercial choice, too.

Of course you can expect an incredible choice of beers and ciders. But what else is planned? A comprehensive review of operations after each festival gives organisers clear improvement points,

many collected from visitor comments. The weather can't be controlled, but most other elements can. Managing the queues at opening was significantly changed in 2017 and succeeded in getting people in quickly. The single pay point was generally well-received but foyer operations are being reviewed to smooth passage to the bars.

There will be a new bar combining beers from Ireland with some of the most popular family brewers from 2017. The brewery bars see the return of Tiny Rebel and Brass Castle, hugely busy last time, alongside planned newcomers TicketyBrew, Bridgehouse and Mallinsons. The Key Keg bar introduced in 2016 (to some suspicion) will be an important part of the choice offered, and some significant surprises are promised. Manchester's beer audit earlier this year pronounced it the UK's cask beer capital, but in line with the theme of choice, beer orderers are planning to breach at least one frontier...

Enough of the teasing. To the sometime glee of female visitors, there were peak time queues for the gentlemen. Even in a venue this size, there are not enough toilets in situ - so to provide relief, additional urinals are being hired in. Less time queuing equals more time enjoying the ales! There's a new charity partner too - North West Air Ambulance - chosen almost unanimously by the organising team. The festival is proud of the generosity of visitors and hopes the partnership soars to new heights.



Putting on an event of this size demands an all-year-round effort from the organising team which is actively seeking new blood to join the group. Most of the core is drawn from the nine local branches, with valued contributions from key members across the UK. As there are so many skills required, from finance to web development, it's hoped some of the 9,000+ CAMRA members in Greater Manchester can volunteer for more than just the eight days of set-up, serving and take-down.

So pop the dates in those fancy smartphones of yours - Thursday 25 January to Saturday 27 January 2018. And CAMRA members are welcome admission-free (yes, free!) to the preview evening from 5pm on Wednesday 24 January. Yet another reason to join Britain's biggest consumer campaigning group. Check out the festival website at www.mancbeerfest.co.uk.

Are you arty? Do you like beer/cider?

If the answer is yes to both (or even just to the first one!), get your (electronic?) crayons out and get drawing, because this year we're running a competition to design the logo for the 2018 Stockport Beer and Cider Festival! The winner will win a case of 12 beers and a festival glass to remember the achievement by! There are only a few conditions; the logo must contain the Stockport Viaduct arches (not necessarily all of them though!), a tradition going back to the first festival. It also needs to contain (or have space to contain) the name of the festival "32nd Stockport Beer & Cider Festival" plus the year "2018". Remember that the logo will appear on the side of a glass as well as on the website and posters, so please try not to put in too much intricate detail as festival goers will struggle to see it! Please email your entry to logo@stockportfestival.org.uk and the deadline for entries is **20th November 2017**, so let your artistic side shine and give yourself a chance to design a piece of Stockport Beer Festival History! NB The decision of the Organising Committee will be final and no correspondence can be entered into.



Robbies' Results

Robinsons has announced its results for the year to 31 December 2016. Turnover increased by 7.9% to £68.3 million. Profit before tax was also up by 13.3% to £4.1 million.

Results were boosted by a strong trading performance in all areas of the business and effective management of costs. Specifically there was an increase in external sales where total revenue grew by 9.9%. This was driven by a 13% growth in sales in the off trade and growth in direct free trade. The managed estate (now comprising 10 pubs) also grew sales by 52% to £7.0m – due to the addition of the Mulberry in Conway and, closer to home, the Red Lion in High Lane and the Oakwood in Glossop, as well as an increased focus on food, premium drinks, and accommodation – while, despite having a smaller estate, the contribution from Robinsons' tenanted estate continued to grow and improve.

In line with their strategy, Robinsons continued to invest heavily in the refurbishment of both its managed and tenanted estates, outlaying around £8.6m on maintenance and investments in 2016. Within the 270-strong tenanted estate, Robinsons invested in 17 major development schemes in 2016 and over the past three years have completed 73 refurbishments at a cost of £12 million.

Stockport, Greater Manchester

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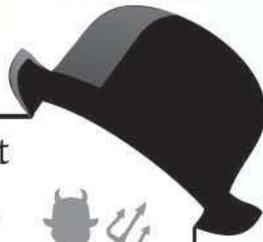
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Curmudgeon

Baby You Can Drive My Car

Recently, there has been a growing amount of interest in the development of driverless cars. The wider subject is really beyond the remit of this column, although I'm sure there are many applications where they will prove very useful. However, as with many other disruptive technologies, both government and independent commentators still seem unsure as to how they will eventually come to be used.

Looking at the subject from a more parochial perspective, one area where they could make a massive difference is in getting you home from the pub. In rural areas, with negligible public transport and distances beyond an economic taxi ride, pub going opportunities are currently very constrained. And, even in towns and cities, while there will be *some* pubs that can be reached easily on foot or by public transport, there are plenty more that can't be. Just imagine programming your automatic chariot for an evening's crawl round some otherwise hard-to-reach pubs!

Some have suggested that there will always need to be a sober, licensed driver on hand in case of emergencies, but that rather defeats the whole purpose, and how quickly could someone be expected to react anyway if they were busy posting on Facebook? Indeed, one of the obvious applications that has been suggested is eliminating human drivers from taxis. And surely one of the major benefits of driverless cars would be to enhance mobility for people such as the very elderly or those with chronic illnesses who are currently unable to drive themselves. However, no doubt the killjoys will be working hard on ways to prevent driverless cars being used in this way, saying "that's not what they were intended for".

Posing A Problem

A local pub has recently received a "craft" makeover, which involved replacing about half the seating with high-level "posing tables". This is a plague that is afflicting more and more pubs nowadays. I suppose the thinking is that they appear modern and trendy, conjuring up visions of bright young things disporting their long, skinny-jean clad legs in a fashionable, cutting-edge bar. But, more often than not, you end up with plump middle-aged folk perched incongruously on high stools.

They spoil the look of the interior of a pub and create an artificial division between drinkers by putting them on two levels. You might say that some people prefer them and should be given the choice, but would anyone walk out of a pub if there were none, and did anyone ever suggest them when asked what they would like to see in a pub refurbishment? It also seems that they appeal to people with an exaggerated sense of their own importance who want to be the centre of attention. The formal name for them is "poseur tables", which rather sums up their attraction.

A couple of decades ago, there was a fad for putting raised seating areas in pubs to break up large areas of flat floor. However, the realisation eventually dawned that these were very unfriendly to the disabled, by effectively closing off a substantial chunk of the pub to them. You certainly don't see them in new schemes, and I can think of a few pubs that have had them removed during refurbishments.

Much the same is true of posing tables, which will place people in wheelchairs at a lower level than their friends, and also present a challenge for older customers with creaky joints. They're an ugly abomination that should have no place in pubs, and the sooner they're all consigned to the skip the better.

Curmudgeon Online: curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com

(comments on these articles can be left on the website)

Calling Home Brewers

New Competition Launched

Stockport & South Manchester Branch is again launching a competition for local home brewers to find up to five beers for Bar Nouveau at next year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival.



Bar Nouveau was introduced in 2015 and features brand new beers launched at the festival. It's proved to be a very successful feature and we will be running it again next year (the festival dates are 31 May to 2 June). There will be 10 beers, all served on a separate bar and stored in a temperature-controlled cellar to ensure optimum condition.

For the past two years we have involved local home brewers and have been delighted by the response. As before, the festival will purchase three firkins of each winning beer and the rest will be sold on to the market by the brewers concerned. If you are a home brewer this is a great chance to join in a brew day at a local brewery and also see one of your beers out there on sale to the public.

The brewers who have kindly agreed to host the winners are:

- **Torrside Brewing**, New Mills
- **Stockport Brewing**, Bredbury, Stockport
- **Blackjack Brewery**, Manchester
- **Thirst Class Ales**, Reddish, Stockport
- **Poynton Brewery**, Poynton

Many thanks to these brewers for supporting the competition. Now – the beers. The five categories are quite broadly drawn so that you can use your imagination. Here's what we are looking for:

Mild - this can be dark or light, strong or weak. This is a chance to take an old beer style and run with it. Maximum ABV 5%

Bitter - session ales, ESBs, pale ales, brown, amber or blonde – the choice is yours. Maximum ABV 5.5%

IPA - while we're not style fanatics you should aim for a minimum ABV of 5%. Apart from that it's up to you – brown, red, black or white IPAs are all welcome. Maximum ABV 6.5%

Stout/Porter - again this is broadly drawn – added flavours and ingredients optional. Maximum ABV 6%

Speciality - this is where you can really go to town. Saisons, bocks, rauch biers – all are welcome. Maximum ABV 7.5%.

A few things to bear in mind: first, although the beers will be judged from bottle they will have to work as cask beers. Also – think about the hops. Some go-to hops (Mosaic, Simcoe, Nelson Sauvin and the like) can be difficult to obtain. While you might be able to get 150gms for a home brew it may well be a different matter when you come to scale up to a commercial length.



How to enter – just email your name, contact details and which categories you want to enter to: stocam@btinternet.com. **The cut-off date for entering is 31 December (but note we won't need details of actual beers until the end of January)**. Judging will take place at the Hope Inn, Wellington Road North, Stockport in mid-March next year.

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High Peak, Tameside & North East Cheshire CAMRA - PUB OF THE SEASON - SUMMER 2017

High Peak, Tameside & North East Cheshire CAMRA - CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR 2017

Greater Manchester CAMRA - REGIONAL CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR 2017

Manchester Food & Drink Festival Awards 2017 - Nominated in Best Pub category



Stagger

Stockport Town Centre – with Peter Edwardson

July's Stagger covered the southern fringes of Stockport town centre. Sadly this is one where a number of pub closures have left rather thin pickings, and so in future the itinerary may need to be revised.



We started off at the **Nelson Tavern**, a four-square pub in bright turquoise livery, prominently situated opposite Stockport Town Hall. Internally it retains

four distinct areas in the four quarters of the pub, with pool and darts to the rear and a more lounge-type feel towards the front. It also boasts an impressive tiled floor inside the front door. Even though it was only early evening, the pub was fairly busy, with a mainly younger clientele. There were two cask beers available, Theakston's Best Bitter and Wimbledon SW19, both of which were judged above average.



Putting our noses through the door of the **Town Hall Tavern** to confirm that it still didn't serve real ale, we carried on down Wellington Road South to the **Spinning Top**. This fairly new bar seems

to have found a niche specialising in live music, hence the evenings-only opening hours that meant this was my first visit. The interior is basically a single, rather sparsely-furnished room with the bar down the right-hand side. True to expectations, The Sensational Ball & Chain Gang band was tuning up with a raucous cover of "Jean Genie" which proved a little loud for some of the older members of the party. Maybe they found the Green Mill Old Git, which was above average, more to their liking. The other cask beers on sale were Poynton Vulcan, which was a touch disappointing, and Tatton Spinning Hop, brewed for the pub, which wasn't tried.



Crossing Wellington Road South, we headed across to **Winter's** on Little Underbank. This Holt's pub was converted from a jeweller's shop some years ago, and retains the distinctive animated outdoor clock from its former incarnation. The interior is basically a single bar on the ground floor,

with stairs leading up to a first-floor lounge area. There was a lively atmosphere, with karaoke in full swing and a bit of dancing taking place. The sole real ale was Holt's Bitter, which was judged above average.

Close by is Sam Smith's **Queen's Head**, often known as Turner's Vaults. This is a long, narrow pub with a classic, unspoilt interior that earns it a place on CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Pub Interiors. It was fairly quiet, with a distinctly more sedate atmosphere than the previous pub. We were allowed to take a look at the "Compacto", claimed to be the World's Smallest Gents, although no longer in use as it is too narrow for tubby modern men. Sadly, the one

cask beer, Sam Smith's Old Brewery Bitter, was a touch disappointing, and was felt to be possibly nearing the end of the barrel.



This marked the official end of the Stagger, but as it was still only half past nine we decided to climb the steep steps up to the Market Place to try a couple of the pubs there. We were greeted at the door of the **Boars Head** by Felix, the pub's large, fluffy black-and-white cat. This is another Sam Smith's pub, where some internal walls were actually

reinstated a few years ago to create a cosy, multi-roomed interior. While sometimes thought of as being busiest at lunchtimes, it was pretty full tonight. The Old Brewery Bitter was considerably better here and was generally ranked as good.



Our final port of call was **Remedy Bar** on the other side of the Market Hall. This is a modern bar created from a pair of former shop units, but, unlike many of its type, has no shortage of comfortable seating. It was again fairly busy, with a noticeably younger clientele than the Boars

Head. It has its own on-site brewery, visible through a glass panel to the left of the bar, but none of their own beers were on the pumps tonight. There were six beers available in total, all of which were tried by at least one person. Beartown Wojtek was rather indifferent, while Brewsmith Pale, Salopian Oracle and Williams Joker IPA were all good, Poynton Simcoe Red a little better than that, and Beartown Black Bear very good indeed and qualifying as the beer of the evening.

Thus ended an interesting evening with a wide variety of pubs and beer, although the best drinking was in the final two pubs which were not part of the official agenda. Why not try the pubs for yourself and see what you think?

Heald Green & Cheadle Hulme Stagger Online

Also covered this time was Heald Green and parts of Cheadle Hulme. You can find details online at www.ssmcamra.co.uk. Pubs covered included the **Griffin**, now an expensively refurbished dining pub where drinkers are still made welcome, with Holt's Bitter, Two Hoots and Humdinger in acceptable form. Reasonable Jennings Cumberland Ale was found at the **Cheadle Royal** on Royal Crescent and no cask beer at all in the **Village Hotel**.

In Cheadle Hulme, the **Kenilworth** produced the beer of the night with Elysium from Moberley Brewhouse alongside Old Boss and K2 from Moorhouses. The latter is in fact Witchfinder General rebadged for the pub. A long walk to the **March Hare** on Mill Lane saw the party rewarded with Doom Bar, Robinsons Dizzy Blonde, Black Sheep and Old Speckled Hen. All but the Doom Bar were tried and all but the Old Speckled Hen were found to be in reasonable nick.

The night ended at the **Cross Keys** on Adswood Road, a lively wet-led community pub with decent Hydes Original on cask.

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Pub News Extra

News from around the Opening Times area

Puss in Boots



The **Puss in Boots** on Nangreave Road in Offerton has had a makeover courtesy of owners Robinsons and the Almond Pub Co, the family-run group of tenanted and leased pubs. The majority of the work carried out was cosmetic, brightening up and adding

a more contemporary and stylish feel to the décor, although there was additional work at the front of the pub. To quote the press release: "The area has been transformed from an external, covered dining space, to a light and airy yet cosy conservatory, more suited to all seasons".

Inglenook Inns



Earlier this year Robinsons disposed of a small package of pubs to a company called Inglenook Inns & Taverns. The pubs continue to operate as tenancies, and while Robinsons beers still feature you may also find beers from further afield adorning the bars. The pubs involved are the **Bulls Head**, Glossop; the **Crossings**, Furness Vale; **George & Dragon**, Charlesworth; the Greyhound, Bredbury (pictured left); **Railway**, Whaley Bridge; and the **White Lion**, Hyde. We don't know a great deal about Inglenook Inns – the website

(www.inglenookinns.co.uk) appears to be slightly out of date but it looks as though they also run various pubs on behalf of Punch Taverns. The company's Facebook page also indicates they may have an involvement in the **Devonshire Arms** in Mellor although this certainly remains in Robinsons ownership.

End of the Road

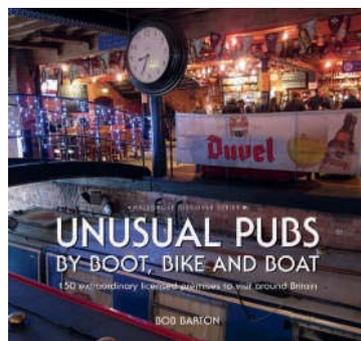


One or two pubs have recently bitten the dust or seem to have rounded the last bend on the road to oblivion. In Adswold the former **Adswold Hotel** has been sold for conversion into a nursing home while conversion to residential use is on the cards for the **Bow Garrett** on Brinksway,

Stockport, and the **Travellers Call** in Marple. In Ardwick the long-closed and very derelict **Kings Head** on Chancellor Lane has been demolished while in Withington the **Old House At Home** on Burton Road has been closed and boarded.

The **Woolpack** on Brinksway, Stockport (pictured above left), is closed and for sale. Yours for £260,000. We aren't optimistic there will be any takers. More likely to successfully change hands is the **Cocked Hat** in Stockport Market Place. The pub is still open and trading (so do call in as it serves a decent pint) but is on the market for £249,000.

Unusual Pubs



Occasionally, we've all walked into a surprising pub, looked around and thought, 'You couldn't make this up!' CAMRA member Bob Barton has done that umpteen times and written a book containing 150 of them, *Unusual Pubs by Boot, Bike and Boat*. He spent three years searching out and sampling such hostelries around the country. "A tough job," he says, "but someone had to do it." He reached many of the watering holes on foot, by bicycle or on board a boat. A few aren't on a road at all, so it's just as well that he has included details of cycle routes, walking trails and canals.

There are pubs in a castle, windmill, abbey, caves, a shed, a beach hut and a chapel, to name a few - not forgetting one in an old Manchester public toilet. Some are peculiar because of their strange collections - such as bookmarks, ties or musical instruments - or they are architectural odd-balls. Some are lit by gas-lamps, others have ride-on railways or double as barbers shops.

The text on each pub is accompanied by a photograph; there is also a map showing locations. Bob mentions ales tried, whether dogs are welcome, and plenty of other details and interesting facts. The concept of 'pubs with a difference' is not new, as described in a chapter on the subject's history. Victorian landlords - even medieval inn-keepers - knew that the exotic or outlandish would pull in the punters.

Local pubs featured include Stockport's **Arden Arms** and, in Manchester City Centre, the **Britons Protection**, **Circus Tavern** and **Peveril of the Peak**.

Halsgrove Publishing, 144pp hardback, fully illustrated, £16.99.

CAMRA Regional Club of the Year



A Conservative club has achieved a remarkable hat trick. **Flixton Conservative Club** at the corner of Chassen Road and Flixton Road is no stranger to awards, having been named top club by Trafford & Hulme

CAMRA for five successive years. But despite a challenge from six of the best clubs across the region, an expert team of judges marked it the Greater Manchester winner for the third year running.

Real ale takes pride of place on the bar, with six handpumps dispensing a choice of beers. There are also two ciders or perries available. Stewards Nigel and Sharon Porter have been encouraged by the club committee to promote beers from popular Greater Manchester breweries alongside beers from further afield. This spirit of adventure culminates on the last Friday of each month with a 'Meet the Brewer' event featuring ales from a specially-selected brewer.

The Good Beer Guide-listed club is a members-only establishment, but applications from new members are welcome. CAMRA cardholders can be signed in on production of their membership cards.

News and Awards

Recent CAMRA Awards and News Extra

High Peak Pubs of the Year

The High Peak, Tameside & North East Cheshire Branch has pubs in three CAMRA regions and is able to present three Pub of the Year awards if it so wishes. This year two have been chosen – one for Derbyshire and one for Greater Manchester.



The Derbyshire winner is the **Queens Arms** on Shepley Street in Old Glossop. This award-winning freehouse is a 15-minute walk from the town centre through Manor Park. Popular with locals, visitors and hikers, it serves breakfast from 10.30am. Standard pub food is available lunchtime and evenings while there is the Queen Spice Indian restaurant upstairs. Four regular beers are supplemented by three changing guests and the pub is a regular in the national *Good Beer Guide*.

Pictured above, retiring High Peak CAMRA Chair Phil Moss (left) presents the award to the Queens Arms team.



The award for Greater Manchester was won by the **Fleece** on Stamford Street in Mossley. Mike and Lyn Tebbs took over the Fleece several years ago when it was in a very run-down condition and have worked wonders with the pub. It is now a much valued and well used local with a changing range of real ales and a good community atmosphere. It is a fine example of the good,

solid local pub which is becoming increasingly rare. Pictured here, Mike (left) receives his award from current High Peak Branch Chair Ben Zwierinck.

High Peak & Tameside Pub News

The beginning of October should have seen the opening of Whaley Bridge Brewery's new micropub in the centre of, err, Whaley Bridge, so hopefully it will be open by the time you read this. If this is the case, we'll have more in the next issue..

Slightly out of our area but interesting news nonetheless: the **Ladybower Arms**, by the reservoir just out of Bamford, appears to have become a Batemans Brewery outlet.

In Droylsden the new micropub called the **Silly Country** is reported to have received its licence and should open shortly. More next time.

There is exciting pub news from Buxton. Not only is Thornbridge Brewery reported to be opening a new outlet in the revamped Crescent but now comes news that Macclesfield's RedWillow Brewery will be opening an outlet in the town. Planning permission has been sought for the old bank building at Cavendish Circus, just down the road from the station. It's early days yet but obviously we will keep you updated.



Congratulations are due to the **Sportsman** on Mottram Road in Hyde. The pub has now won the Hyde Past and Present's locally very prestigious award of 'Hyde's Best Pub' for the second year running. Congratulations to Geoff and Cangui for all their hard work here. The Sportsman also features in the

newly-published *Real Heritage Pubs of the North West* in recognition of the many original Victorian features and fittings.

Didsbury News



The **Dog & Partridge** was closed for a refurbishment in early September. There was a notice on the window advertising for staff reading "bartenders, supervisors, baristas and waiters wanted, applicants must have a passion for wine, whisky and gin".

Despite this suggestion that the pub's trade may be refocused onto a younger clientele, appealing more to those wanting to dine and drink spirits or cocktails, we do understand that the beer offer will remain substantial and prominent. It will almost certainly be open again by now so we'll have a full report next time.

Ye Olde Cock has undergone a minor refurbishment. This, unfortunately, has meant that the 'CAMRA corner' has gone and the *Opening Times* holder with it. Nearby, the **Didsbury** pub-restaurant is selling a beer called Didsbury Dozen Best Bitter. There is no brewery mentioned on the pump clip although when asked, the bar staff told us that it was brewed by Greene King. Robinsons' Wizard and Trooper were also on sale.

Pub News in Brief



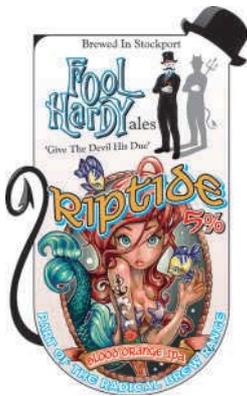
We are hearing good things about the **Grapes** in Hazel Grove since new licensee Sue White took over in June. Good quality Unicorn and Dizzy Blonde were on the bar when OT last called and it seems that many of the old regulars are starting to return.

Cask beer seems well re-established at the **Thatched Tavern** in Reddish where Sharp's Doom Bar is now a fixture on the bar. This lively locals' pub is well worth seeking out.

Finally – out in the sticks, the **Robin Hood** at Rainow has reopened and we have reports of very good beer.

Brewery Updates

News in brief from local brewers



Congratulations are due to **Fool Hardy Ales** for picking up a gold award for Riptide in the North West competition run by SIBA, the Society of Independent Brewers.

This beer, a 5% blood orange IPA, previously won Beer of the Festival at this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival so it's becoming something of a serial winner. Needless to say brewer Martin Wood is delighted, telling *Opening Times* "It's hard to put into words just how happy and proud we are that Riptide has won another gold award, it's just awesome".

The owners of West Didsbury's **Wine and Wallop** look to be about to finally realise their ambition to open their own brewery. It's going to be called **Brass Tap**, we think, and will be a two and a half barrel kit sharing the former Seven Bro7hers premises with another new starter called **Pomona Island Brew Co**. This is being set up by the owners of the **Gas Lamp** on Bridge Street in Manchester City Centre. The Brass Tap brewery will supply all of the outlets owned by the Wine and Wallop folk – this includes **Folk** on Burton Road, **Flok** in Stevenson Square in Manchester and a new outlet in Knutsford.



Wincle Brewery continues to produce its monthly series of single hop beers, each one celebrating the characteristics of a different British hop. November's beer is Challenger, a 4.5% ruby ale with spice, cedar and green tea notes. This is followed for December by First Gold. This is a marmalade-orange premium bitter at 4.8% with "complex green hop characteristics".

Recent Awards

Plenty of outlets in the *Opening Times* area triumphed in this year's inaugural **Manchester Beer Week Awards**. A public vote decided the winners in each category rather than a judging panel so these really are the people's choice.



The Pub of the Year was the **Magnet** on Wellington Road North in Stockport (with Manchester's Marble Arch the runner-up). The Best Bar award also went to Stockport with **Heaton Hops** on School Lane in Heaton Chapel

beating by just 18 votes Café Beermoth in the City Centre – pictured above is the Heaton Hops team with their certificate.

The Best New Pub/Bar award went to **Reasons to be Cheerful** in Burnage, which beat the fashionable Pilcrow in the City Centre. This is an excellent achievement for a bar that has only been open for a short space of time. The other local winner was the **Epicurean** in West Didsbury snapping up the award for Best Independent Beer Retailer

in a close-run three-way contest with the City Centre's Beermoth shop and Heaton Moor's Bottle.

Other winners were **Cloudwater Brew Co** picking up the award for best new brewery; the award for Best Beer Selection went to **Café Beermoth** while the award for Best Restaurant Beer Selection was picked up by **Bundobust** on Piccadilly in central Manchester. The award for Best Brewery Tap was won by **Blackjack Brewery**.

Mild Magic Awards



This year's Mild Magic trail was again very well supported. As ever we asked the participants to nominate their favourite mild pubs with awards going to the Stockport favourite and the out-of-Stockport choice. Two very new outlets won this time. The Stockport winner was **Remedy Bar & Brewhouse** while the out-of-Stockport award went to **Reasons to be Cheerful** in Burnage. Pictured above is Mark West from Remedy Bar with his certificate while

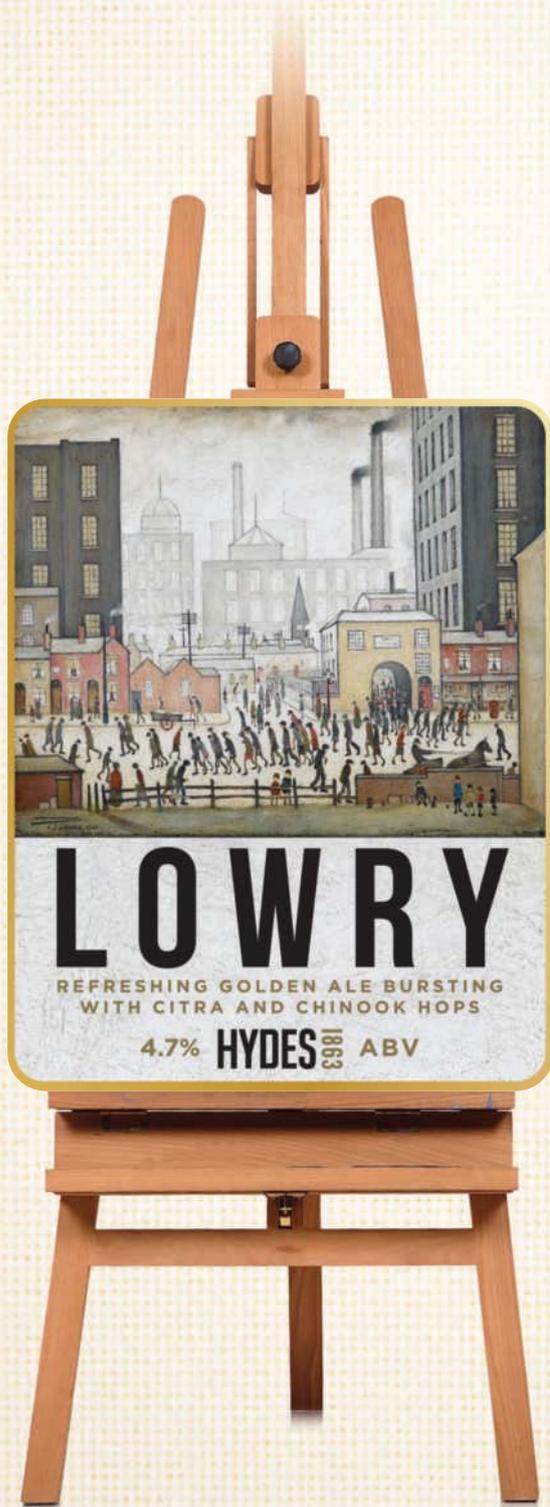
Reasons to be Cheerful's Elena Rowe and Andrew Munro with their award.



In Brief

The **Rising Sun** in Bredbury has closed again. A notice on the front describes the pub as a "great business opportunity". The **Shepherds Call** on Market Street in Hyde finally has a permanent landlord again, following Shane Adam Robins signing on the dotted line with Punch Taverns. There will be two ales on, sourced from the Punch list, and there's 50p off a pint of cask on Mondays.

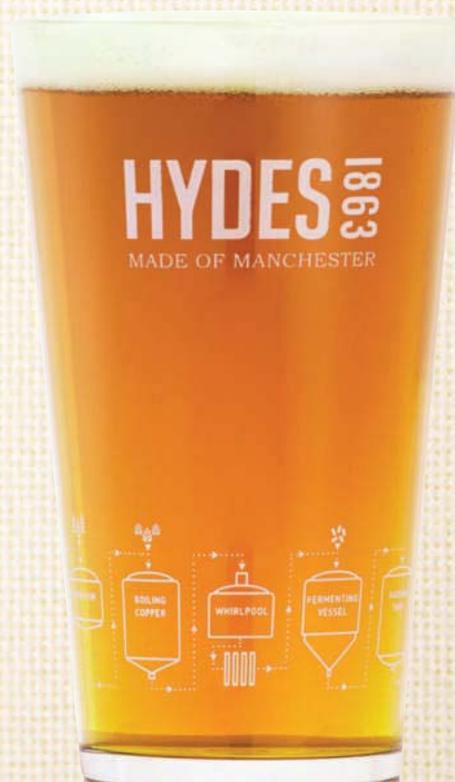
A WORK OF ART ON DISPLAY AT A HYDES PUB NEAR YOU



CRAFTED FROM CITRA AND CHINOOK HOPS TO PRODUCE AN INTENSELY HOPPY, BOLD AND REFRESHING GOLDEN BEER.

THE USE OF AMBER MALT GIVES THE BEER AN ATTRACTIVE RICHNESS WITH OODLES OF STRONG CITRUS AND LOVELY TROPICAL TONES...

A REAL "HOP HEADS" BEER.



OLD TOM



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for the facts

contains malted **barley** and **wheat**