

STOCKPORT  
AND SOUTH  
MANCHESTER  
CAMRA

No:169

Volume 14  
Issue 5

# OPENING TIMES



FREE

6,600 CIRCULATED  
FREE EVERY MONTH

MAY 1998

## BLACK FRIDAY

**F**riday April 3 saw the announcement of three brewery closures, dealing a body blow to an industry already reeling from the burden of intolerable levels of duty and the flood of cheap imports from mainland Europe.

Whitbread embarked on yet another phase of its 'Tour of Destruction' of the country's brewing scene with the proposed closure of the Castle Eden brewery, situated in the Sedgefield constituency of Prime Minister Tony Blair and the Flowers Brewery in Cheltenham. At the same time Morlands, brewers of the widely available Old Speckled hen, showed its claws by announcing the closure of the famous Ruddles Brewery, purchased last September.

Mike Benner, Head of Campaigns at CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, slammed Morland's decision. "They have betrayed Britain's beer drinkers" is how he responded to the news, adding "Ruddles has been bounced around like a rubber ball since the mid-eighties and beer quality suffered as a result, but in recent times the beer has improved enormously and the bitter was a winner in CAMRA's Champion Beer of Britain Awards last year."

Morland itself was threatened with a take-over by Greene King in 1992. CAMRA campaigned hard to protect the brewery and beers and this is how Morland repay us. Brewing Ruddles outside its Rutland homeland will ruin the beer. A different team of brewers and different water will see to that.

Also facing ultimate oblivion are the Castle Eden and Flowers beers which are to be brewed at Strangeways brewery which now has surplus capacity as sales of Boddingtons Bitter slip. While the Flowers beers have not always been the most highly regarded, they have shown noticeable improvements in recent years and have a loyal following. Castle Eden Ale however, has always been a quality brew and it, too, won an award in the Champion Beer of Britain competition. The move to Strangeways and the consequent changes in the water, brewing vessels and strain of yeast used will make these beers pale shadows of their former selves. Ben Wardle, CAMRA's Press and Public Affairs Manager told Opening Times "Whitbread seems to be finishing off the tour of brewery destruction it started in the 1970s. Drinkers up and down the country have seen well-loved brands axed or changed beyond recognition. We will fight these closures tooth and nail."

## Fair Pints Fight Goes On

**B**ritain's beer drinkers have been cheated by the objection of a single Member of Parliament. When Dennis Turner's "Honest Pint" Bill came up for its third reading on 24 April, maverick Tory Eric Forth stopped it in its tracks by the simple expedient of shouting "object". Although the Bill will come before the Commons again on 3 July it is now effectively a dead duck.

The Bill would have resulted in consumers getting what they pay for - a full pint every time. Despite having the clear support of the Government, the bill met active opposition from trade dinosaurs in the brewing and pubs industry. Expect much crowing from that quarter but consumers are likely to have the last laugh as the Consumer Affairs Minister has committed himself to introduce legislation outlawing short measure in the near future.

In addition there are various ways in which the law could be changed through secondary legislation, which would not be threatened by lengthy parliamentary procedures or disruption by vested interests. A change in the law is certainly necessary as research by CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, shows that eight out of ten pints served in Britain's pubs are less than 100% liquid and only one in three pub companies offer their customers a fair deal on pints. Even the industry is split with several companies introducing oversized glasses, guaranteeing full pints (and not putting up prices as a result) while most others continue to rip off their customers. CAMRA will therefore continue to push for a fair deal for Britain's drinkers and will support the government in future initiatives to achieve this.

## Crown Sold?

Just as we went to press, news emerged that the Crown, Heaton Lane, the premier freehouse operation in Stockport, was in the process of being sold.

Greenalls have long wanted to offload the pub and we understand that a little-known outfit, the Old King Cole Pub Co, is negotiating to buy the Crown along with a package of other Greenalls pubs. Let's hope that the new operators have the sense to keep the running of the pub unchanged - failure to do so would undoubtedly see its trade fall off a cliff. Hardly the way to maintain the value of your investment. After all, it was precisely because the Crown didn't work as an ordinary pub that it became an 'Ale House' in the first place. We await developments with interest.



### In MAY's OPENING TIMES

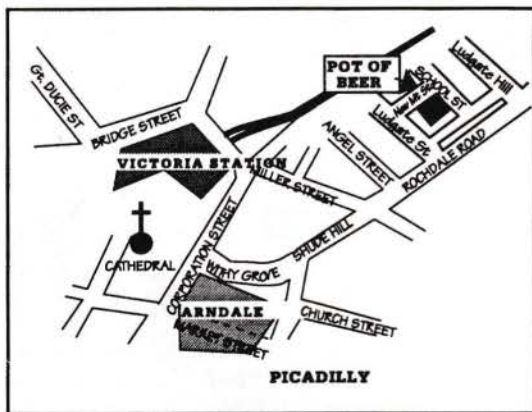
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# POT OF BEER

36 NEW MOUNT ST  
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- ✓ 4 GUEST ALES EVERY WEEK
- ✓ ROBINSONS DARK MILD
- ✓ HOEGAARDEN WHEAT BEER
- ✓ TRADITIONAL CIDER
- ✓ SELECTION OF WINES & MALT WHISKIES



**FOOD NOW AVAILABLE**  
**12 - 2 pm,**  
**MONDAY - FRIDAY!**

## IN THE EDITOR'S VIEW..

April was bad news for beer drinkers. The closure of three breweries by Morland and Whitbread was not entirely unexpected but is a savage blow nonetheless. All three produce beers that are widely available in the Opening Times area and it will be interesting to see how long they survive. Morland's shareholders in particular need to ask some questions of their company. It paid a fancy price for Ruddles but what will they have to show for it? With the brewery closed all that will be left are the beers and without the Rutland cachet, which was one of their main selling points, it remains to be seen just what appeal they have. If, as seems likely, the Ruddles beers eventually go the same way as the brewery just what will Morland have to show for their investment? And the Whitbread closures? Well, nothing new there and while the loss of Castle Eden is a grievous blow, there are likely to be few who mourn the loss of the Flowers beers. This is unjust as great efforts had been made to improve these in recent times but all this clearly counts for nothing in the eyes of the brand-driven marketing men who run the company.

We are also, temporarily at least, to be deprived of much-needed legislation to ensure we get full measure. For that you can thank maverick Tory, Eric Forth who seems to be making something of a career from blocking private members' legislation. This setback is likely to be temporary as the government seems committed to getting fair pint legislation onto the statute book. While we may therefore have to endure some triumphalist crowing from the trade at this temporary setback, it is we drinkers who will have the last laugh.

Finally, hearty congratulations to the Stockport Express Advertiser which has been campaigning for the introduction of toughened glasses into pubs. Major pub operators seem happy to go along with this and anything which makes pub going a safer experience (not that it is particularly dangerous at the moment) is to be applauded. How odd, though, that while the major operators have no qualms about re-equipping their pubs with toughened glasses, to do the same with oversize lined ones is strangely prohibitively expensive.

*John Clarke*

## OPENING TIMES SPECIFICATIONS

OPENING TIMES is published by Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA - The Campaign for Real Ale. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the campaign either locally or nationally. Editor: John Clarke, 45 Bulkeley Street, Edgeley, Stockport SK3 9HD. ☎ (0161) 477 1973 (home) and (0161) 831 7222 x 3411 (wk). News, articles and letters welcome. All editorial items may be submitted in most popular WP formats or ASCII on IBM-PC format 3.5" disks (which will eventually be returned!). Adverts should be in CorelDraw 3 or 5 (\*.cdr) format or TIFF or EPS files (submit printed proofs for checking and ensure that any "include all fonts" options are on). Articles for publication can be submitted by e-mail to jclarke@opentime.u-net.com. Letters to the editor on otletter@opentime.u-net.com. All editorial items © CAMRA: may be reproduced if source acknowledged. Mumble...Grumble...

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# STOCKPORT



# BEER & CIDER

## FESTIVAL

STOCKPORT TOWN HALL MAY 28-30 1998

- Stockport's Biggest Pub
- Beer from £1 a pint every session
- Britain's Champion Cider judged Saturday
- Over 100 different beers, ciders and perries

### THURSDAY

#### Evening:

5.30pm-11.00pm

**Admission:** £1.50

**Entertainment:**

Kings of Swing

### FRIDAY

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11.30am-3.30pm

**Admission:** Free

**Entertainment:**

The Humdingers

#### Evening:

5.30pm-11.00pm

**Admission:** £3.00

**Entertainment:**

Biggles Wartime  
Band

### SATURDAY

#### Lunch:

11.30am-4.00pm

**Admission:** £1.00

Quiet Session

#### Evening:

6.30pm-11.00pm

**Admission:** £1.50

**Entertainment:**

Rocky Mountain  
Ploughboys

**FREE  
ENTRY**  
to CAMRA  
MEMBERS

**FAMILY  
ROOM**  
UNTIL  
9.00PM

**HOT  
FOOD**  
ALL  
SESSIONS

Sponsored by *Stockport Express Advertiser*

# THE MAD MAY EXPERIENCE

or "They SHOOT Scratchers, Don't they?"

  
**1 DOWN  
4 TO GO!**

## **FIVE BEER FESTIVALS AND 200 NEW BEERS IN THE MONTH OF MAY**



### **2. THE BEER & CIDER EXPERIENCE**

FRIDAY 8 - SUNDAY MAY 10

**AT LEAST FIVE EXTRA CIDERS & PERRIES JOIN  
30 NEW BEERS FOR YOUR DELECTATION**

### **3. - GET CASKED & BOTTLED AT THE**

**BELGIAN EXPERIENCE** FRIDAY 15 - SUNDAY 17 MAY

**30 NEW CASK ALES ARE COMPLEMENTED BY AN  
EXTENSIVE RANGE OF BOTTLED BELGIANS!**

### **4. SPRING BANK HOLIDAY MEGA FESTIVAL**

THURSDAY 21 - MONDAY (BANK HOLIDAY) 25 MAY

**40 MORE NEW BEERS PRESENTED ON TWO FLOORS**

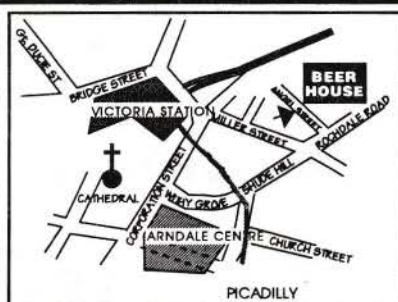
### **5. THE "AND FINALLY..." FESTIVAL**

FRIDAY 29 - SUNDAY 31 MAY

**30 MORE NEW CASK BEERS UPSTAIRS AND DOWNSTAIRS  
ALL FESTIVAL BEERS £1 A PINT  
ON SUNDAY 31 MAY!**

**OTHER NEW BEERS WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE BAR EVERY WEEKDAY.  
SPECIAL FESTIVAL BEER 'WHITE FANG' (AVAILABLE ALL MONTH) HAS  
BEEN BREWED BY SAL AND IDY AT SHUGBOROUGH - A 4.4% ABV  
HOPPY, PREMIUM BITTER. FREE RAFFLE TICKET WITH EVERY PINT -  
PRIZES OF T-SHIRTS, FOOD, BEER, BREWERY STUFF etc.**

**FOOD AVAILABLE ALL DAY DURING THE FESTIVALS**



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# The **BEER HOUSE**

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# Pub Of The Month

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

## MAY

## 1998

**CAMRA**  
**CAMPAIGN**  
**FOR REAL ALE**  
STOCKPORT AND SOUTH MANCHESTER  
**B R A N C H**



**T**he Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for May is the Union on Stockport Rd, Levenshulme. The Union is a Greenalls (ex-Boddingtons) house selling traditional Boddingtons Bitter, the house bitter 'Union', and also a changing guest beer, occasionally a mild. Its recent refurbishment, at considerable cost, has already been reported in Opening Times and has greatly improved the pub which had taken a lot of internal structural abuse over the years. Luckily licensee Joe Brown worked closely with Greenalls and their architects to retain, where possible, and enhance the original decorative features of this former Clarke's of Reddish house, including the unusual coloured tilework lining the corridor and stairs. Also in something of a departure from many recent pub refurbishments, separate rooms, including the vault with its own entrance, have all been retained. The former outside gents has been brought in from the cold and its site is to be turned into a beer garden. The pub is also now fully accessible to wheelchair users. Joe remembers being a barman at the Union in the mid-eighties when it had a large turnover of ale and his recent return was just in the nick of time to rescue this classic local. Previously he had turned round the fortunes of a nearby managed house, the Polygon on Barlow Road. Joe and Terri Brown are great advocates of real ale and the atmosphere that goes with it. You'll find no 'smooth' here, the decor is suitably restrained, a good juke box but no background music, no games machines but a TV room and a comfortable front room containing framed photographs of old Levenshulme. So come along on May 21<sup>st</sup> to celebrate the first anniversary of a re-vitalised Union helping to promote real ale on this part of the A6 corridor. *The local branch of CAMRA decide on a Pub of the Month by a democratic vote at the monthly branch meeting.*

Contributors to Opening Times Issue 169: John Clarke, Paul Hutchings, Phil Levison, Rhys Jones, Wayfarer, Peter Edwardson, Dave Meynell, The Beer Monster™, Steve Smith, Jim Bowden, Mark McConachie, Jack Lyons, Tom Lord, Brian Kemp, John Tune

Irene and Staff welcome you to  
**The Greyhound**



Bowden Street, Edgeley  
**Boddingtons Mild & Bitter**

and ever changing Guest Beers  
 May 9th - Maclays Kanes Amber Ale  
 May 16th - Weetwood Oasthouse Gold  
 May 23rd - Tisbury Ale Fresco

BINGO: MON & THURS afternoons SKY TV

★ **OPEN ALL DAY** ★

CAMRA Pub of the Month  
 March 1997



5

**IN STOCKPORT?**

**WANT SOMETHING TO EAT?**

*FED UP WITH THE SAME "PLASTIC" FOOD?*

THEN TRY...

**BEV'S BUFFET**

SAMPLE.....

**BEV'S LASAGNE,  
 "SOUP 'N' SARNIE"  
 PRAWN & CHEESE SPECIAL  
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 GAMMON STEAK, AND**

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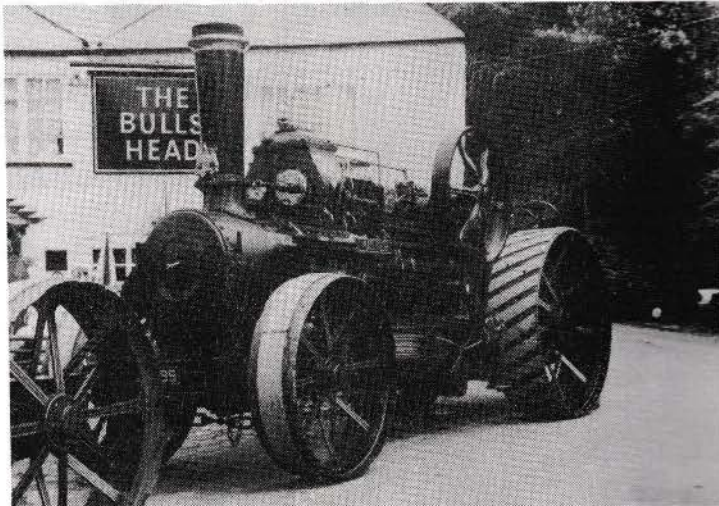
Look out for details of our new web pages - full details and internet address next month

**COPY DATE FOR JUNE ISSUE OF OPENING TIMES IS MAY 22**

# Steam Party

and a Celebration of Tradition

**Spring  
Bank  
Holiday  
23 to 25  
May '98**



6

**Friday May 22nd  
Beer Festival with Special Guest Bruce Jones  
(Les Battersby) 8.00pm**



**Friday May 22nd  
Cheshire Folk Annual Reunion from 8.30 till close**



**Sunday May 23rd  
Folk sing-a-long with Five Barred Gate & Friends**

## **The Bulls Head**

**Town Lane, Mobberley**

Just off the main road between Knutsford & Wilmslow

**01565 873134**

# OPENING TIMES LETTERS

From Tom Lord:

I was recently having a pint in a pub which has a high level of food sales, because of this there is often a high level of young children accompanying parents in the pub. Before anyone says 'Oh no, not the children in the pub issue again', this is not a letter about the merits of children in pubs or otherwise; this has been done many times before. However two small children were running around the tables with less than effective supervision from their parents and I began to wonder about where the liability would lie for any injury or damage caused by children if they were the source of an accident. It does not take much imagination to see the types of accidents there could be: tripping, colliding etc., especially in crowded pubs with restricted spaces with hot food being carried about and, of course, drink glasses.

So, where would the legal liability lie for injury to others and damage to property caused by poorly supervised children: with the parents, the landlord, the pub owners? Also there is the question of legal liability towards children (for whom there is a higher duty of care than adults) where the landlord or brewery may be liable for injury to children on the premises through defects or negligence of staff. It is doubtful if a landlord could waive any potential liability for injury in such circumstances merely by putting up a disclaimer notice, having invited them on to the premises as lawful visitors in the first place.

Many pubs now have children's play areas (inside and out) and it is easy to realise the financial consequences of injury through defective equipment or its negligent maintenance. This must be a source of concern to many licensees and their public liability insurers. Perhaps *Opening Times* has a friendly solicitor who could be persuaded to write a few lines on these issues. There must be some interesting case law on the subject.

## Park Blossoms



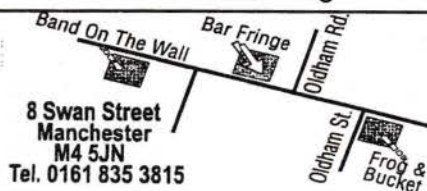
As reported last month, the Park on Newbridge Lane, Stockport has been fully refurbished, and very nice it looks, too. In the typical, stylish Marie Pub Co approach, there is much emphasis on comfort and quality in the furnishings and décor. The old fixed seating has been removed from the right front of the lounge in favour of loose tables and chairs, and a dartboard has been set up here. The rest of the seating has been re-covered and the fixed seats now feature wood panelled backs with inset cushioned back-rests. The colour scheme emphasises traditional autumn shades and is set off by display blackboards and bric-a-brac. A small collection of photographs of old Stockport is a nice touch.

There has been a slight change in the beer range, too. Holt's Bitter remains but is now complemented by Theakstons Best Bitter rather than Websters - an improvement in itself. Quality remains tip-top as indeed it should for pub owner Nigel Eastwood has recently won a brewery Master Cellarman award for the second consecutive year. Well worth a visit for those who aren't yet familiar with this excellent pub.

## BAR FRINGE

Draught Hoegaarden, Bellevue Kreik & Leffe Blond in Traditionally Chilled Brewery Glasses, Draught Krombacher and Handpumped British Ale including changing Guest from Bank Top and Handpumped traditional Gloucester cider or perry

Food available 12 noon till 8pm  
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FOOD AVAILABLE AT  
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FRI & SAT EVES

A GREAT SELECTION OF  
NEW BREWS &  
FARMHOUSE CIDERS

22 & 23 MAY 1998

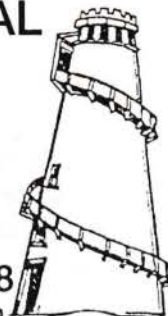
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7

## THE 4th ACCRINGTON BEER FESTIVAL

AT THE TOWN HALL ACCRINGTON



Family Facilities Afternoons And Evenings  
Till 8.00pm

WED 24th June 6pm to 11pm  
THURS 25th June 12 to 3 6pm to 11pm  
FRI 26th June 12 to 4 6pm to 11pm  
SAT 27th June ALL DAY

Free to CAMRA members and EBCU members except  
Friday evening 50p

East Lancs CAMRA in conjunction with

HYNDBURN LEISURE SERVICES

# STAGGER

with Dave Meynell

**A** mild March evening saw the start of a Stockport Centre Stagger which was to cover a wide variety of pubs.

Half a dozen of us met in the Nelson, a Scottish Courage managed house on the main A6 next to Stockport College and which has been tastefully refurbished with the floor now exposed to display some areas of original tiling. A steady early evening trade was occupying the several different drinking areas and the jukebox and pool table were both in use. Handpumped Theakstons Bitter and XB were both sampled, the former being above average, the latter not so good.

Across the road and a short walk down the hill towards the town centre took us past what will shortly be 'Stockport's Biggest Pub' - make a note in your diaries: 28-30<sup>th</sup> May, Stockport Beer & Cider Festival at the Town Hall - not to be missed. The New Inn, Stockport's only gay pub, was next on the route. In contrast to the Nelson there were only a handful of customers but it was still early in the evening. The split-level layout was pleasant enough, with piped music and an unusual monogrammed carpet. Tetley Bitter was the only cask ale on offer - and only average.

Still on the A6, the Unity, a clean, popular and pleasant one-roomed Robinson's house was busy with customers of mixed ages enjoying



Hatters Mild and Best Bitter. Both were well received, the Bitter having the edge. Although not on the planned route, four of our now quite large party popped into the Manchester Arms, another Robinson's pub that has remained unchanged for years, though a major refurbishment has been promised by Robinsons for at least the last two!, serving consistently good beer. Tonight was no exception with both Best Bitter and Hatters Mild on good form. The Blarney Stone, formerly the Imperial, took us away from the

A6 and onto Petersgate. This Irish theme - walls adorned with signs of Irish place names and other trivia - is obviously quite popular and was fairly busy with the back room being set up for live music. Unfortunately the only cask beer was 'Blarney Stone Bitter', of unknown origin but easily the worst beer of the night!

In complete contrast, however, was our mid-evening meeting point the Little Jack Horners, a former Wilsons house that is now owned by Vaux. Refurbished approximately 18 months ago, the split level pub with its archways, barrel vaulted ceiling, exposed brickwork and panelled walls is well decorated, clean and comfortable. It was busy, too, with a crowd of mixed ages enjoying Samson and Wards Bitter which were both on excellent form.

Back onto Petersgate now, and the Stockport Arms, another unspoiled split-level pub that was very busy on the lower level when we called. Unfortunately the Greenalls Mild has been taken off due to lack of demand and replaced with keg Chesters' Mild. Still on Petersgate but towards the Market Place, the Egerton Arms, now back to its original name having endured a spell as "Porky Pig's Pie Shop", was very busy and extremely loud with a mainly younger clientele. Gray's Bitter was the only cask ale tried (Websters was also available) and was reasonable.

Into the Market Place proper now and Sam's Bar, Stockport's newest drinking establishment and adjoining the Boar's Head. This modern bar is very tastefully decorated, occupying two floors and very much appealing to the younger end of the market. Indeed it seems perfect for its target audience. Banks's Mild and Bitter plus Marston's Pedigree were all in good form, the Pedigree having the edge.

The White Lion on Underbank was next on the agenda and the third consecutive "venue" for the younger set (my age must be telling). Packed to the doors and so loud that conversation was virtually impossible, this large pub used to have a large variety of real ales, but on our visit the only cask beer was Boddingtons Bitter which was distinctly average.

Although not on the agenda, a couple of us nipped into the Queens Head and sampled a quick half of Old Brewery Bitter which as usual was on excellent form (for those not familiar with this pub, also known as Turner's Vaults, it is one of Stockport's classics and is a must to visit). A short walk onto Princes Street and another Stockport Classic, the Swan With Two Necks, a traditional unspoiled Robinson's pub with a separate vault, and a lounge and dining room joined by a long corridor. Compared to previous houses, this was very quiet for a Friday night, but more importantly served both Hatters Mild and Best Bitter in good condition. Some decided to stay and finish the night here, but a few of us travelled on to the Tiviot, another typical old Robinson's house where you can enjoy a quiet pint while the action carries on in the market



place. The vault and lounge are served by a central bar offering Best Bitter and Hatters Mild in very good form. The draught Old Tom was in excellent condition.

And so ended a very varied and enjoyable night's drinking, so if you like your pubs large and noisy or small and quiet and company young or old, you will find them all among this selection and, of course, the many other central Stockport pubs not covered in this Stagger. Why not try them yourself?

8

## The Nursery Inn

GREEN LANE,  
HEATON NORRIS,  
STOCKPORT  
432 - 2044



- ★ Good Home Cooked Food Served Daily
- ★ Lunches every day including Sundays for families in our Dining Room.
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- ★ Bowling Parties & Function Room.
- ★ Egon Ronay Guide, AA Best of British Gd
- ★ CAMRA Good Food Guide 1994

Hydes  
Anvil Ales

Brewers of  
Traditional  
Cask  
Beers

Always in  
good taste



# MANCHESTER MATTERS

**W**e now have our two new Hogsheads – on Deansgate in the City Centre, and on Oxford Road near MRI – and worthwhile additions to the City's drinking scene they are too.

The Deansgate branch, two doors down from the Sawyers Arms, makes good use of timber and brick to create a comfortable pseudo-rustic effect that's welcoming without looking too blatantly themed. Opening night saw two banks of handpumps in use



by Rhys Jones

for Whitbread and other mainstream beers, one for the more unusual guests (four Titanic beers including topical Oscar, plus Dent Kamikaze), two beers on gravity (Dent Owd Tup and Berrow Topsy Turvy), and Bulmers Old Hazy cider on handpump. Quality was excellent, but prices are unsurprisingly on the steep side; £1.64 for Titanic Lifeboat may be within the bounds of reason, but £2.14 for Topsy Turvy is pushing it even for a 6 per cent ABV beer. The Belgian bottled range runs the gamut from dullards to classics, and food is served till 10 – acceptable choice and quality. Top-ups, quite often necessary, were not volunteered but were given with good grace when requested. Overall, a promising start which should provide some salutary competition for the often disappointing Deansgate branch of Wetherspoons (not to mention the Sawyers Arms).

Only days later came the opening of the Oxford Road branch. Unlike Deansgate, this is a new building, externally undistinguished apart from a striking turret which fairly echoes 1930's London Underground architecture. It's laid out on two floors, the upper floor being non-smoking, and a style similar to Deansgate's produces a high-quality drinking environment (though the toilets are surely inadequate for the traffic offering, and the stairs leading to them seem to have strayed in from a 1950s secondary school). Each floor has a bank of 10 handpumps serving both Whitbread beers and a changing range of guests, an Old Hazy handpump, and a range of Belgian bottles: there is also room for up to four beers on gravity downstairs. A preview evening here saw one or two glitches (Castle Eden Ale was served much too green, and a couple of Titanic beers got their lines swapped over); but preview nights are there to sort out glitches, and given the management's track record at the High Street branch, I look forward to this new venture becoming a highlight of the Oxford Road/Wilmslow Road scene, and a standing reproach to many of the other bars chasing the student pound.

Not far off in Rusholme, the trend to "smooth" keg Boddingtons continues as this travesty of the proper Strangeways brew takes pride of place in the **Sherwood** and the **Gardeners Arms**, neither

of which any longer sells any cask beer. And in Victoria Park, the **Blackstock** is now a computer shop (Micros Direct – but computers, not breweries, alas!). In the City Centre two very different pubs no longer tempt the real ale drinker – the run-down, 1970s **Boatman's Home** has been demolished, while the opulent **Athenaeum**, dating from Manchester's commercial heyday, no longer serves real ale.

The **Square Albert** now boasts just one real ale – a changing "guest" from the Carlsberg-Tetley range – plus a deceitful handpump for pressurized Addlestones Cider. At the **Commercial Hotel**, John Smiths Bitter is now keg; but while a handpumped guest beer is available at Vaux's **Crown**, nearby on Deansgate, Vaux's own beers appear there in keg form only.

The **Union** in Levenshulme no longer sells handpumped mild, but this has freed a pump for guest beers. So far the offering has been a touch prosaic, featuring for example Tetley Bitter, and it would be good to see something a little more enterprising to match the excellent refurbishment. I'm not asking for exotic brews from remote and unheard-of breweries – this would not be the right pub for such things – but something like, say, Wadworths 6X would sell well. In Fallowfield, Hydes' have broken new ground, for them, by introducing guest beers at the **Friendship**. Guests have come from such breweries as Ash Vine in Somerset and Moorhouses in Burnley, but I hear some regulars have been less than happy about the more cosmopolitan style now being applied to what has hitherto been the only proper regulars' pub amongst a gaggle of student bars.

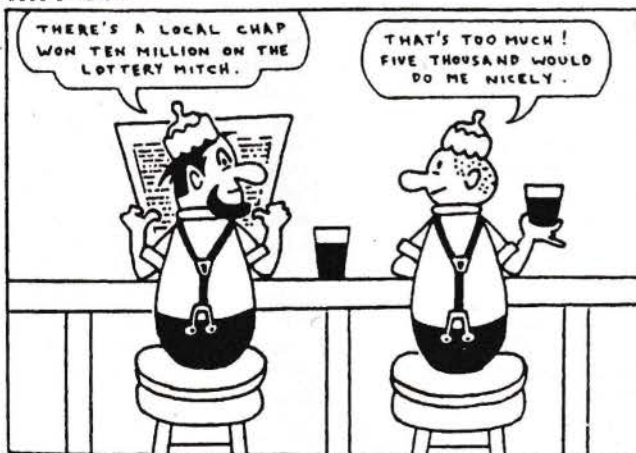
The "other" **Friendship**, in Gorton, now has new licensees, CAMRA members Jonathan and Julie, who've stated their intention of getting the pub back on its feet by, amongst other things, bringing back weekend entertainment. Sadly, poor sales of Bateman's Mild during the recent period of short-term managers may see this fine beer dropped, but there's a possibility that an additional cask beer could be introduced.

Unfortunately, pressure of time has so far prevented my visiting a couple of places which will be open by the time you read this. At the **Metropolitan** in West Didsbury (formerly the Midland), reports suggest attractive surroundings but sky-high prices; while at the **Quay Bar** on Deansgate Quay (almost impossible to find unless you're on a boat), a peer through the glass wall a couple of days before opening revealed what looked like a couple of handpumps for Banks's Bitter. More on both of these next time.

Finally for this month, though, a hearty jeer for Manchester's newest hotel, the **Malmaison** on Piccadilly; for "the hotel that dares to be different" hasn't dared the audacious experiment of selling decent beer in its bar. Malmaison – a "bad house" indeed! Last late news – the **Cock & Bull** on Stockport Road on the Longsight/Ardwick boundary has been renamed **The Spinning Wheel** (and painted bright yellow, perhaps as a warning to traffic). I understand the beer is still keg. Also all-keg is the **Grants Arms** in Hulme which no longer sells real ale.

## MITCH

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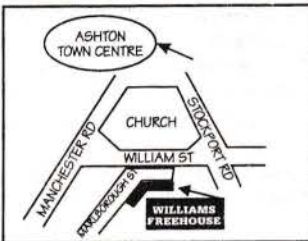


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The long promised article on brew-pubs of Munich and its (reasonably close) environs has once more fallen by the wayside, probably until July. For once this is not the fault of the evil editor directly - but due to all the Bavarian public transport timetables changing over on June 1, and given that one of the day trips is more than a tad ambitious, and another dependent on a twice-a-day bus, I felt it safer to leave things until I have tried them under the new regime! I can't think of anywhere better to get stranded, but some people might complain....So, a look at some recent festivals.

For the last 'n' years I have been in the habit of going over to Doncaster on the Friday of the Stockport Festival, where the emphasis is on rare and new beers rather than better known good ones. I tend to think Doncaster gets the balance just right, but this view is not widely shared amongst the ultra-conservative (note small 'c') hierarchy of Stockport & South Manchester. It also usually gives me a chance to sample Derek Bishop's summer range of Bavarian beers.

Well no more. Due to the health-fascists of Doncaster Council, the previous venue (formerly a liesure centre) is now becoming a giant health spa, and beards and bellies do not fit in with 'new' Doncaster. So back to the racecourse, and also a change of date, to mid-April. The new venue itself was excellent. Decent hot food from the in-house caterers and Melbourne's famous sausages. Despite a dead van, Derek had come through with an enticing range of German beers, and the British range was better than ever. Large cool room, lots of seating, and lists of taxi numbers in every phone booth - specially provided by the CAMRA organisers. If I wanted to be really picky, the product and membership stall was not up to the excellent set-up Jim Flynn manages at Stockport, and the cider range is a bit sad, but it was adequate for most. Absolutely superb. Only an hour from Stockport by direct train (and frequent buses from station). If you like beer and miss this next year, well you're an eejut!

The same weekend saw the new incarnation of the Great NorthWestern Beer and Cider Festival reach its second year at the Excel centre in Bolton College. Going on the Saturday I wasn't hoping for too much, but there was still a good selection of beers, in remarkably good condition. This festival struggles with two problems - an utterly characterless hall, and no smoking on the premises. Now this is all very good for me (a non-smoker), but it does put a lot of customers off, and the heavy handed enforcement last year led to numbers being thin, this. Still, very good beer and a decent number of staff serving, so no real complaints - it seems to be the ONLY possible venue in Bolton.

While the enthusiasts and sychophants attended the Edinburgh CAMRA agm, Walsall held its festival (the AGM moves date nearly every year - and festivals need to keep the same dates or risk serious problems, hence the clash). Held in the old Town Hall, this was again a thoroughly good do. The beer range has the same sort of flavour as Stockport, aimed at the general drinking public rather than the 'beer connoisseurs' Curmudgeon berates on the next page, but gradually they are increasing the number of 'risky' new beers. I thought the venue (slightly smaller than our Town Hall), was magnificent with some of the best twentieth century murals I have seen. There was food but the staff (council) kept vanishing, so I missed out! The beers were once again in good nick, with seven new ones for me to try. As Derek was there the foreign beer was first class.

Locally of course, we now have the Beer House into its month-long five festival spree. The first was unmissable, there is hot food all day, and a raffle tied to their own brew 'White Fang' (named for the pub dog!). May began with Beer House 1, and a joint do at the Salybridge Buffet and the Station at Ashton (with marquee - and no tokens this time - hurrah!). Jazz on the platform at lunchtime and a humungous load of new beers. Closest I've been to paradise since I was last in Bavaria. One to note. Dudley (11-13 June) now in the Castle courtyard (in the midst of Dudley Zoo - with access via a land-train! Huge range of beers, British and Foreign. Unmissable.

# CURMUDGEON



## Old Curmudgeon's Almanack

To celebrate the fifth anniversary of this column, I thought I would take the opportunity to leave off grumbling about the present day and gaze into my crystal ball to see what the future may hold. But that's notoriously difficult to do, and the only thing about the future that's certain is that it's not going to be like you expect it to be. Weren't we all supposed by now to be driving around in jet-powered hovercars? And wasn't new technology supposed to free up unprecedented amounts of leisure time, rather than making us work ever-longer hours analysing mountains of crap produced by computers? On the beer front, who would have imagined that keg beer, which had been completely discredited and in steep decline, would be reinvented as nitro-keg and suddenly become a marketable product again – even though it's basically just the same old rubbish? Or that half the pubs in the country would now be stocking more varieties of real ale than they can turn over properly? On the other hand, many prophets of doom have been saying for a long time that there will be a shakeout in the pub trade leading to the closure of tens of thousands of pubs, but – apart from a few depopulated inner city areas – it just hasn't happened. In view of this, I wouldn't care to say this will happen, or that won't. But I suspect the following will be some of the key questions which the next ten years will answer:

- ★ Will nitro-keg make such inroads into cask beer that it becomes the standard beer in most pubs? Or can real ale continue to hold its own? The jury is still out on this one...
- ★ Will the next recession finally bring about the oft-foretold cull of pubs – as it is obvious that many pubs are even now struggling along on very thin trade?
- ★ Will the inevitable reduction in the drink-drive limit lead to an upheaval in pub-going habits, and a tidal wave of closures, or just give a slight boost to existing trends?
- ★ Will we ever get full measures legislation?
- ★ Can CAMRA continue to be a broad-based consumer movement, or will it metamorphose into what is essentially a club of beer connoisseurs drinking niche products in niche outlets – something of which there are already clear signs today?
- ★ Will the risks to bar staff of passive smoking lead to pubs being forced to become basically non-smoking, with the option of a separate smoking area? And how will this affect single-room pubs?
- ★ Will the gap between British and French beer duty ever be reduced, or will Gordon Brown carry on screwing the British beer drinker regardless of the wider consequences?
- ★ Or will the European Union start taking an interest in alcohol from a health standpoint (as it does with tobacco) leading to upward, not downward, harmonisation of duties?
- ★ Will the health concerns which have affected the tobacco industry now increasingly be redirected at the drinks trade, making 1997 in retrospect the high water mark of a liberal licensing and taxation climate?

If you think you have any answers, then please share them with us.

# 5 Years Ago

by Phil Levison

# MAY '93

'Go Mild In May' was the front page reminder that it was the month when CAMRA traditionally encouraged drinkers to buy a pint of mild. It was described as often over looked, vastly underrated, and probably the closest modern equivalent to the traditional English Ale of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. Also, not so long ago it was the biggest selling type of beer in the country, and perhaps surprisingly, was still the best seller in the West Midlands and South Wales.

Whitbread had been busy developing specialist ale houses, and their highest profile project yet had opened in central Manchester – this was a Hogshead Ale House in the former Benson's on High Street, which had been thoroughly refurbished in a bare-boards style thought to be rather reminiscent of the Wilsons "Ale Houses" of the mid-80s. Eight handpumps were backed up by four more on gravity in a chilled store at the back of the bar, but six days later, there were only three beers on offer. Prices were described as "unsurprisingly ferocious", with Coach House Post Horn (5.2 per cent ABV) at £1.80, compared with the Marble Arch price of £1.50. There had been a number of repercussions following Greenalls' demolition of Tommy Ducks the previous February. Manchester MP Alf Morris questioned the Environment Minister in the House of Commons about demolition controls; six local Labour MPs attempted to introduce an Early Day Motion, naming the Greenall Group as vandals. Opening Times had already suggested a boycott of Greenalls pubs, and this suggestion had been taken up by Manchester's listings magazine City Life. Actually, in the past, Greenalls had been better known for destroying small breweries all over the North West and the Midlands: Groves & Whitnall, Magee Marshall, John Sumner, Simpkins, Wem, Davenport, and Shipstones. CAMRA had produced a "Greenall's Tour of Destruction" T-shirt, including all the breweries and Tommy Ducks.

There was an item drawing attention to the fact that Robinson's produced two bitters – the widely available Best Bitter, and the more elusive 'ordinary' Bitter. This was well worth seeking out, as it provided a cheaper and lower strength (3.5 per cent ABV) alternative to the Best, and was ideal for lunchtime drinkers. The New Inn at Chapel-en-le-Frith was included among the stockists, and it was suggested that Chapel was unique as another pub in the town – the Pack Horse – sole the even rarer Robinson's Dark Mild (the only other outlet being the Red Lion at Lower Withington in Cheshire). Happily both beers are now more widely available, 'ordinary' Bitter particularly so, having been relaunched as Old Stockport Bitter. The newly opened Terminal Two at Manchester Airport had real ale. Tetley Bitter and Draught Bass had been available at Busby's Real Ale Bar, and manager John Cunningham said that turnover had been good, with over 70% of sales being cask.

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# BREWERY NEWS

**T**he products of the Marble Brewery, based at the Marble Arch free house on Rochdale Road, Manchester, continue to impress.

There are now no fewer than six house beers permanently on sale, with two new beers making their appearance in the last month. The first newcomer was McKenna's Revenge Porter, named after the 19th Century brewery which had the pub built, and is a rich dark beer of 5 per cent ABV. Those who remember the much lamented West Coast Brewery's Yakima Grande Porter will welcome the return of an old friend, as McKenna's is an authentic recreation of that superb beer. Late last month it was joined by the sixth addition to the range, Dade's Bitter at 3.8 per cent. This beer takes its name from Marble brewer Mark Dade (and why not?) and is a raspingly bitter beer which fair takes your breath away. "It's like Holt's used to be when it was good", one seasoned drinker told OT, which just about tells you all you need to know. Drink and enjoy.

Also making an experimental appearance is a 'smooth' version of Robinson's Best Bitter. This is odd in that the beer is cask conditioned (and indeed can originate from the same barrel that dispenses 'real' Best Bitter at the same time) but on its way to the bar passes through a device known as a 'nitrogenator' which injects mixed gasses into the beer. This means that it will have more taste than many other smooth beers but will be sold at cellar temperature rather than being chilled down, a feature which seems to appeal to 'smooth' drinkers (God knows why). For the privilege of drinking this gassed up beer there will of course be a price to pay - about 10-



15p pence a pint extra to be precise. This is apparently to cover the cost of the equipment and the gas cylinders. Some drinkers have, apparently, been less than impressed to discover that they are paying this addition for what is, in effect, just plain old Best Bitter with little more than fresh air injected into it. The beer is currently on sale in four tenanted pubs, the Crown, Hyde; Dane Bank, Denton; Baker's Vaults, Stockport and the Admiral Rodney, Prestbury. It will also be going into a managed house, the Emigration in Offerton. Reaction has so far been mixed. The Crown is reputedly selling more smooth than cask, and the Dane Bank is also reporting a good reception. The Bakers and the Admiral Rodney report a much more mixed response however, and certainly questions must be asked about the wisdom of putting it into the Admiral Rodney, a pub with a very strong regular, and cask Best Bitter drinking, clientele.

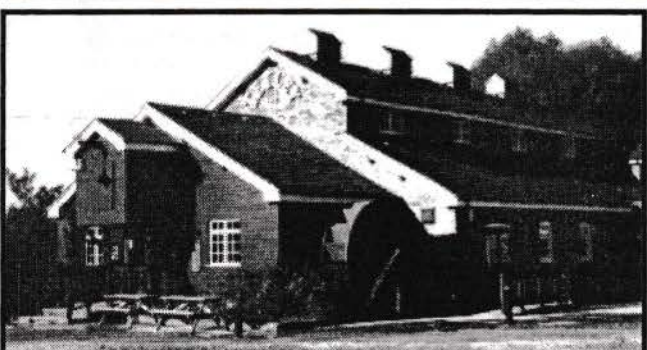
Vaux are also playing around with their 'smooth' beers but in the opposite direction. Their premium beer, Samson, has been reduced in strength to 4 per cent ABV and also launched in 'smooth' form. Confusingly the cask version is also now labelled 'smooth' as well. As if this wasn't enough, a cask version of the existing smooth beer, Lambtons, has also been introduced. Are we all clear about that? The cask Lambtons, by the way has received some rave reviews and has reportedly been on sale at the Crown, Hillgate, Stockport.



## SHAMBLES WATCH!

There are now only 17 weeks until the Shambles is due to re-open - Ha! Ha!  
Given the current state of play - Probability STILL Decreasing! (<5% est.)

12



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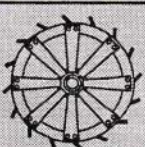
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<p><b>HOPWOOD</b> Pale coloured bitter, clean tasting session beer with a bitter hop finish.</p>	<p><b>BANTAM</b> Pale brown bitter. Slightly nutty, full flavoured beer.</p>	<p><b>BEST BITTER</b> Tawny coloured, with a hint of sweetness in the full bitter palate. A fresh but dry hop finish.</p>
<p><b>OLD OAK</b> Well balanced brown beer. Malt and hops balance the strong fruitiness in the aroma and taste. The finish is malty, fruity and dry.</p>	<p><b>THRISTY MOON</b> Light brown bitter. Strong hop aroma. The slight malteness is dominated by a full crisp bitterness giving a dry and satisfying finish.</p>	<p><b>BONNEVILLE</b> Light brown bitter. Malty character with a soft rounded hop balance.</p>
<p><b>DOUBLE DAGGER</b> Pale brown bitter. Full flavoured hoppy bitterness. More pleasantly dry and light than its gravity would suggest.</p>	<p><b>WOBBLY BOB</b> A rather beer. Malty fruity aroma. Strongly malty and fruity flavour. A slight sweetness yields to a dry finish.</p>	

# Stockport Festival Preview

The big event for local beer drinkers this month is the 12<sup>th</sup> Stockport Beer & Cider Festival, taking place at the Town Hall from 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>. To whet your appetites we present here a small preview of the beers and ciders on offer...

## Beer, Ales and Stouts

As ever this year we have the return of some old favourites coupled with a selection of new, some brand new, beers for you to try. There will be over 50 bitters and premium bitters from the length and breadth of the country including festival favourites from the likes of Whim, Black Bull and Porters but also featuring newer breweries such as the John O'Gaunt brewery in Leicestershire. Fans of the hop will also enjoy beers from Roosters, Kelham Island and Oakham. Our Special Beers section features wheat beers, ginger beers, a mango beer (!), a raisin stout and even a cask conditioned lager. Lovers of darker brews will be well catered for as usual with nine milds and 11 stouts and porters. The milds will include a beer brewed specially for us by the Footage & Firkin in Manchester while included in the stout/porter class will be a brand new beer from Harts. Strong Ales will also be available, although nothing in the brain damage 11% range of Abbeydale's Last rites, which we sold last year. There will be a rare local appearance by Whim's Black Christmas (6.5%) and we will be mounting a promotion of one of the country's last remaining old-style barley wines, Old Tom from our very own Robinson's. Look out also for this year's special festival beer, a 4.5 per cent hoppy IPA from Aspinall's brewery at Knowsley Country Park near Liverpool. With over 90 beers from 60-plus breweries, Stockport Town hall will become Stockport's biggest pub - don't miss it.

## The Cider Bar

Of course, this year's highlight is CAMRA's National Cider & Perry Championship, the winners of which will be announced on Satur-

choice of cider and perry of the festival with the winners of the official national awards. The celebrity panel of judges, by the way, will include Paul Keetch, Lib Dem MP for Hereford and chair of Parliament's Cider Club.

**This year we have possibly one of the best ranges of beer and cider we have ever offered, even one or two of the 'tickers' might find something they've not had before! With great entertainment and all the other usual attractions, this will be one not to miss. Remember those dates again - May 28-30 at Stockport Town Hall Ballroom. See you there!**

## Out Inn Cheshire

The new Campaign for Real Ale pub guide to Cheshire will be published this month with a hoped-for launch at the Macclesfield Beer Festival. *Out Inn CHESHIRE* will provide details of meals, opening hours, disabled access, family-friendliness and of course, the beers available in pubs across the county.

The book will feature all 1200 pubs in the county with 100 selected for special treatment, with such flagships being described in glowing detail and illustrated by specially commissioned photographs, many in colour. Coverage doesn't stop at the county boundary, either, with the most interesting pubs just over the line also included.

*Out Inn CHESHIRE* will be an invaluable addition to the pocket or glove-box of everyone who ever wants to eat, drink, or socialise in Cheshire. With a cover price of £4.95 and 144 pages of illustrated text, and a further 24 pages in colour, it is excellent value.

Special editorial and advertising features will include Cheshire's canals, local walking routes and cycling in addition to features on mild and cider.

Demand is likely to be strong, and if you do not want to take a chance on bagging a copy when it is launched at Macclesfield (and of course, it will be sold at Stockport Festival's CAMRA shop), you can order it on 01565 653096. Pubs or other outlets with wholesale enquiries are welcome to call co-ordinating editor George Symes on the above number.

**Sorry but the bottom of this page was missing from the original hard copy. Coupon on page 14?**

# The Pomona Award

## The Cider Drinkers' Oscars

**W**hat do an environmental charity, a Mercedes-Benz van, and a Yorkshire pub have in common? They've all been nominated for the latest award presented by CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Building on CAMRA's long-standing promotion of real cider, the Pomona Award seeks to honour people or organisations that have made a significant contribution to the cause of 'real' cider and perry.

Real cider faces many threats, and perhaps the most basic is the long-term decline in Britain's orchards, thousands of acres of which have been grubbed up to make way for more profitable crops or for urban development. Environmental charity Common Ground celebrates local ecological diversity in all its forms, and has taken particular interest in orchards. Their promotion of an annual Apple Day in October has been a great boost to the image of real cider.

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The orchard planted and the cider made, the next difficulty is getting it to the customer. With most cider made in deep countryside remote from main population centres, a reliable distribution network is essential. Hence the perhaps tongue-in-cheek nomination for Fly, a 14-year old Mercedes van, or perhaps really for Fly's owner, Somerset-based cider wholesaler Rob Wilson. Rob and Fly have been bringing cider from remote Somerset farms to captivate and delight the rest of the country for a good few years now, making them important contributors to the cause of real cider.

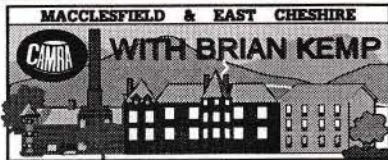
Like beer, cider is best enjoyed in the convivial atmosphere of the pub. But the stranglehold of the big brands of keg cider means that pubs selling the real stuff have become sought-after rarities. Imagine if there was only one real ale pub, or none at all, in your town - that's how things have been for lovers of real cider. And that explains the nomination for the "Sir" Geoffrey Boycott in Dewsbury, a pub that not only sells real cider - and the much rarer perry, made from pears - but has even held its own cider festivals to bring together a wide variety of cider and perry for the enjoyment of devotee and novice alike.

These three nominations, culled from a wide field, demonstrate the range of concerns evoked by real cider and perry. All the nominations have now been collected, scrutinised and argued over by members of APPLE, the specialist cider committee of CAMRA. And the winner? That'll be announced at the Stockport Beer & Cider Festival on Saturday May 30<sup>th</sup>. Whether it's a van, a pub, an environmental charity, or something or someone completely different, we invite you to raise a glass in tribute - a glass of real cider or perry, of course.

## Name That Mild

Thanks to everyone who entered our competition to name the mild being brewed for Stockport Beer Festival by Manchester's Footage & Firkin. Such was the quality of the entries that as we went to press, no decision had been made on the winner. Full details, and photo, next time though.

**Sorry but the bottom of this page was missing from the original hard copy.**



## A Waters Green Ramble

When I regaled you last month with a number of personal views of the moment concerning several Macclesfield pubs, I promised that this month we would look at the pubs in and around Waters Green. So, let me take you on a peripatetic tour of this area of the town which is conveniently situated directly opposite the railway station if you are coming from the Manchester/Stockport direction and offers a microcosm of typical Macclesfield pubs including the good, the bad, and the indifferent. You must visit it yourself to come to your own conclusions on which are which as I have no desire to get involved in local arguments (or, at least, no more than normal!).

Several hundred years ago, Waters Green was a large cattle/horse market for the large surrounding area of country and I presume this accounts for the large number of pubs in the area to provide itinerant traders with food, refreshment and, presumably, lodging on market days. Today it is predominantly a large Borough Council 'Pay and Display' car park surrounded by pubs, estate agents, a large car dealer's showroom, and numerous other small business premises. No matter, let us begin by visiting one of the most prominent pubs as you come out of the station. Robinson's **Nag's Head** is practically opposite across the zebra crossing. I featured it in an individual article a few months ago so will not dwell too long on its description. Suffice to say it is a very large imposing pub of many rooms and vast unexploited potential. It sells Robinson's Best Bitter, Hartley's XB, and Frederics all on handpump and keg Hartley's Three Shires Mild. Last Sunday when Jim and I were in there the cask-conditioned beers were excellent but there was a fiendishly loud jukebox and all the tables and chairs in the large back room were stacked on the bench seating. I said I was tempted to describe it in OT as scruffy but Jim, ever the diplomat, persuaded me that uninviting might be a better choice of word.

Anyway, come out of the Nag's, turn right around the corner and you will come to a large Marston's pub, **The Old Millstone Inn**. This sells the usual Marston's range of beers and is a large mainly open-plan pub with several raised sitting areas and a games room at the back. It has undergone several major, and, I would imagine, expensive refurbishments in recent years and I would be surprised if they have proved to be cost effective (see OT articles passim re my views on local Marston's estate management). Next to the Millstone is what is now called **108's**, a Vaux pub deriving its name from its proximity to the Macclesfield historical landmark 'The 108 Steps' that take you up to St Michael's Parish Church. I still think of it as the Bull & Gate, a pleasant old Wilsons pub with classic chequerboard windows before it was bought by Vaux some years ago. It is now of the minimalist bare-board alehouse variety selling Vaux Samson.

Come right out of 108's and walk uphill up the cobbled Churchwallgate (now renamed Church Street) and just off to the left is **The Castle** (also featured separately in OT some time ago). A charming and peaceful multi-roomed old pub that used to be Tetley's but is now part of one of the new pub companies. In my humble opinion it really ought to be on CAMRA's National Inventory such is its timeless uniqueness (*and indeed it is - ed.*). It sells Theakstons Mild and Bitter plus guest beers, all on handpump, and if you have never been there before is worth a visit. Back down to Waters Green and across to the right between the car showroom and the back exit from the bus station is the **Waters Green Tavern**. Ostensibly a Tetley's pub but to all intents and purposes it might as well be considered a free house such is the extensive range of constantly changing guest beers served on handpump; always of good quality. Mansfield Riding Bitter and Whim Hartington IPA appear to be regulars but be prepared to be surprised by some of the guests on offer as you are usually spoilt for choice. It is a largely open-plan pub with a separate poolroom and serves good value food.

If you are still going strong and game for more, come out, turn right around the corner past the car showroom and on Albert Place you come to Holt's **Queen's Hotel** which they bought from Tetley a few years ago. Now a typical large-roomed Holt's pub more typical of a Manchester environment, it sells handpumped Mild and Bitter of uncompromising quality and at their usual prices. Very handy for the station as you can actually see the trains arriving! Once again good value food is a feature. Finally, down past the bus station on Sunderland Street stands Robinson's **George & Dragon**, a friendly and invariably busy pub selling Hatters Mild and Best Bitter on electric pumps. Jim tells me it has recently undergone an attractive internal redecoration and the beer is always good, both in quality and price. It features a very good value lunch.

If you have got this far, come from the Stockport/Manchester direction, and had a couple of pints in each pub, you are probably now fairly 'tired and emotional' and totally incapable of 'discussing Ugandan Affairs' so I suggest you saunter carefully back across Sunderland Street, up the approach to the station and catch the next train home!

...Pub Ne  
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HIGH PEAK & NORTH EAST CHESHIRE  
**WITH TIM JONES**  
**CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE** CAMRA

The Wheatsheaf in Hyde (referred to as having scaffolding around it in April's OT) has now been demolished. The King's Head in Droylesden (Market St/Greenside Lane) is also reported as demolished - a sad but hopefully temporary loss of this Holt's house as we understand that the brewery are to build a replacement on the site.

Turning now from disappearing pubs to appearing ones - Hyde is soon to have a Wetherspoons outlet, as reported last month. A license has now been granted.

Now to reports on appearing and disappearing beers. The Spring Tavern in Glossop has ditched Theakstons Bitter and replaced it with Jennings Cumberland Bitter. Bredbury Conservative Club also now has Plassey Bitter and to show no political bias, Glossop Labour Club has for some time has **Moorhouses Bitter**.

So much for appearing beers, now for a disappearing one - and a savage loss for Marple drinkers. The Holt's Bitter at the Bowling Green is bowing out shortly, not at the landlord's wish but at the insistence of the pub owning group who want a 'guest beer' offered from their list, on which Holt's does not appear to figure. Lord above - excellent though Robinson's beers are, how the centre of Marple needs some beery diversity! As does the centre of New Mills, incidentally. One wonders whether the tied house system has some drawbacks.

These notes could not finish without mention of the White House and Q Beer Festival, held over Easter in Stalybridge. Again a good event - well organised by landlord Dave Connor, with a good range of beers and cider. Naturally several visits were necessary to fully appreciate it and, despite the cold weather for the outdoor part of the event, everyone enjoyed it. And last, but not least, hearty congratulations to Jim Grindrod, landlord of the Duke of York, Romiley, who has just won a brewery Master Cellarman award, and quite right too, as the pub serves a consistently good pint.

Graham welcomes you to ...

## THE RAILWAY VIEW

Byrons Lane, Macclesfield

GOOD FOOD

Now Being Served on

PLATFORM ONE

6 GUEST BEERS ☆

☆ QUIZZES ☆

☆ BAR GAMES ☆

REAL ALE £1.20 MON NIGHT



## Ye Olde Admiral Rodney

Prestbury

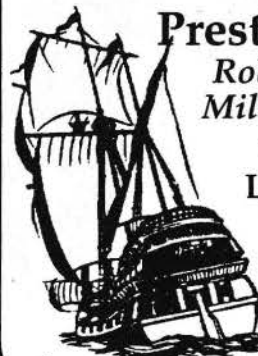
Robinsons Hatters Mild and Best Bitter on handpump

Lunchtime Bar Snacks

12-2.30 Mon-Sat

Peter and Gail welcome you

Tel: 01625 828078





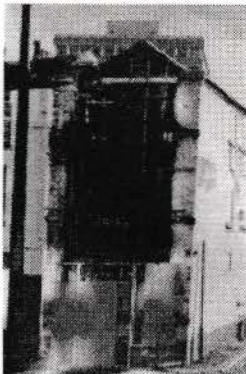
At the Britannia in Beswick, we welcome new licensees Bill and Ann, who took over in Mid-March. They come here with impressive experience of the local pub trade, having run the Grey Mare in Beswick and the General Birch in Ardwick (both now demolished) as well as a spell at the Star & Garter in the City Centre. Although the traumatic redevelopment around the Britannia means trade is likely to be sparse here until the area revives with the new stadium, they've retained a nucleus of loyal regulars, and report a slight but definite improvement in trade since their arrival. We wish them well. At long last, work is apparently about to start on the former Winter's Wine Bar on Underbank, Stockport as brewers Holts convert it into their first pub in the town centre. While the format is to change, the name will remain. "Not only is Winter's a listed building, its name is also listed and we are going to keep it the same when it becomes a pub" brewery director Tom Dempsey told the Stockport Express Advertiser. It is expected that the premises will finally open as a pub at the end of July or early August with bars on two floors.

The long-awaited refurbishment of the Olde Cock in Didsbury was underway as we went to press with parts of the pub cordoned off while work takes place.


At the Prince Albert in Edgeley, a change of guest beer was spotted recently, with Marstons Pedigree replacing Robinson's Best Bitter on handpump. Also in Edgeley, Ye Olde Vic on Chatham Street still does a good line in guest beers at weekends, continuing the long-established guest beer tradition at this comfortable little pub.

In City Centre Manchester, the long-closed Coach & Horses on London Road looks to be in the final stages of decay. The original frontage has now been removed (presumably because it was in a dangerous state) and has been replaced by what looks like temporary boarding. It's a miracle that the old pub is still standing - a state of affairs which looks unlikely to continue for much longer.


It's all change at the Swan, Shaw Heath, Stockport. Licensee Jim Mulvey has departed both the pub and the trade itself, having spent many years on the Stockport pub scene. His replacements are Pete and Lynn Pearson who arrive from the Pomona in Gorton where they were managers for some 18 months. The Swan is their first pub as tenancy and we wish them both well. The pub currently sells Vaux Samson and Mild on handpump. The Samson was particularly fine when OT called. It would be good to see Vaux spending a little money on the pub, too. One of their carefully judged, high quality refurbishments would work wonders here.



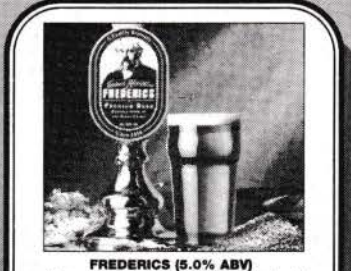
The Swan,  
Shaw Heath




# THE Robinson's COLLECTION



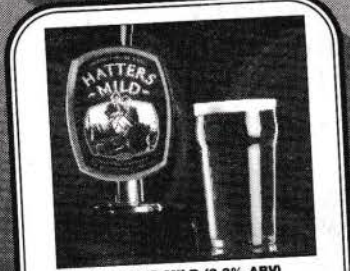
**BEST BITTER (4.2% ABV)**  
- pale and bright with a full bitterness derived from choice aroma hops.




**FREDERICS (5.0% ABV)**  
- light and golden in colour and packed with flavour. Named after the brewery's founder. Also available in bottles.




**XB (4.0% ABV)**  
- a smooth bitter ale with a malty taste. First brewed in the Lake District.



**HATTER'S MILD (3.3% ABV)**  
- brewed from quality malt and hops, it's the best cask conditioned, light mild around.



**OLD STOCKPORT (3.5% ABV)**  
- rich golden body with a refreshingly hoppy taste and lightish alcohol content.



**OLD TOM (8.5% ABV)**  
- smooth, dark and mellow. Brewed from a recipe almost as old as the brewery itself.

C H O I C E B E E R S





This month Wayfarer looks at the pubs of Padfield and Hadfield, Derbyshire. Padfield is a small community to the east of Hadfield, containing one pub, whilst Hadfield itself is a medium sized village, with several pubs of note. Close by is the Longendale Trail, the course of the old Woodhead railway.

### Peels Arms, Temple Street, Padfield

Typical stone built village local, badged as a 'Wm. Youngers Ales' hostelry. The emphasis is on a family establishment, professionally run.

Once inside, this is reflected by the warm and cosy atmosphere. The split-level lounge has comfortable furnishings, the wheel back chairs and button-back seats, with rich carpeting prominent features. Modelled around these are wood and brickwork archways and brick pillars (one with a genuine hole in the wall - if you can squeeze through it, you may be entitled to claim a certificate for doing so!), low beams, brass ornaments and porcelain plates, three real fires and a fish tank.

There is a separate vault to the right, with a games area for pool and darts plus an unusual carved wooden mantle. A room to the left houses on its walls a collection of wooden boards which feature heraldic shields. The bar area is divided between lounge and vault. Food is available lunchtimes and evenings. Accommodation is offered and on fine days there is an outside seating area set around a stone plinth by the car park.

**Real Ale - Theakstons Best Bitter (£1.52). Opening hours - Mon-Fri 12-2.30; 7-11. Sat 12-4.30; 7-11. Sun 12-4; 7-10.30.**

How to get there: from Hadfield by local bus service 396 Mon-Sat only (infrequent but does run between the Peels and the Chieftain) or 10-15 minute walk out of the station - turn right by the Palatine following Railway Street as it runs on to Platt Street, slight incline, turning left onto Post Street which runs up to the rear car park of the pub.

### And now a short description of the pubs in Hadfield: Chieftain, Green Lane

Smart and tidy. A friendly locals' estate styled pub; features piped music. A large lounge area plus a comfortable vault. Real Ales: Hydes' Light and Bitter on electric pumps.

### Spring Tavern, Woolley Bridge, A57

Pleasant, stone-built free house on main road. Lots of brass and ornamentation, jugs, plates etc. Unusual collection of keys; walls completely covered by pictures. Real Ales: Jennings Cumberland Ale and guest beers on handpump.

### Spread Eagle, Woolley Bridge

A pub designed to attract younger drinkers. A Whitbread establishment with leaded windows, pool room and lounge which unfortunately has a huge TV set blaring out. Be careful of the smoothflow beers. Real Ales: Boddingtons Bitter and Flowers IPA on handpump.

### Pear Tree, Hadfield Road

Down to earth local with plain furnishings, tap room and lounge. Old till register on display and coloured glass window panes. Real Ales: Thwaites Mild, Bitter, Chairmans', all on handpump.

### Spinners, Marsden Street

Very brightly lit pub with separate vault and a lounge area which extends to the rear. A split level room off to the left gives a grotto effect. Real Ales: Boddingtons Bitter and guest beer on handpump.

### Anchor, Hadfield Road

Smartly presented, split level local but does feature 'big screen' TV and loud music simultaneously. Real Ales: Vaux Samson and guest beer on handpump.

### Video Vault, Railway Street

From the outside, it's a chapel, through the entrance it's a video shop, further inside, it's a bar. Private members snooker club. Real Ale: Boddingtons Bitter on handpump.

### Palatine, Station Road

Friendly locals' pub opposite the station. Standard Robinson's décor with wood panelling and basic fittings. Quiet room off to the left, opened out area to right includes pool room. Real Ales: Robinson's Best Bitter, Hatters Mild on handpump.

### Masons, Station Road

Still sporting its Wilsons insignia with a lantern outside and chequerboard tiling in the gents. Separate lounge and vault, subdued lighting and mock-rustic effects. Real Ales: Websters Yorkshire Bitter, Green Label on handpump.

### Lamp, Bankbottom

A series of rooms creating a homely atmosphere. Pleasant furnishings with 'Rabble Corner' by the vault and 'Divers' Corner' with salvaged artefacts. Real Ale: Boddingtons Bitter.

### Victoria, Brosscroft

Opened out free house which is pleasantly attractive with brass ornaments and weighing machine. A quiet retreat. Real Ale: John Smiths Bitter on handpump.

How to get there: North West Trains provide a frequent service between Stockport and Piccadilly. From here there is a 20-minute service to Hadfield during the daytime, every 30 minutes evenings and Sundays. The Greater Manchester Rail Ranger (£2.30) is ideal (£1.20 after 6.30 in the evening). Alternatively, catch 330 from Stockport Bus Station, changing on to bus 397 at Hyde (last departure 5.30 Mon-Sat) which is useful as it goes past the Chieftain. The train is more suitable for returning, though.

The High Peak & North East Cheshire Branch Contact is  
Tom Lord (0161 837 4474 (h) 0161 427 7099 (h))

## THE CASTLE

OLDHAM STREET, MANCHESTER  
NOW SERVING THE COMPLETE  
RANGE OF ROBINSONS CASK BEERS!  
Old Stockport Bitter, Best Bitter,  
Hatters Mild, Dark Mild,  
Frederics, Old Tom and Hartleys



A WARM WELCOME  
AND FINE BEER IN  
A CLASSIC PUB



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## The Victoria

Hall Street, Offerton  
Tel: (0161) 480 3983



Stones Bitter,  
Greenalls  
Mild & Bitter

All Cask Conditioned - Guest Ales  
Your Hosts Ian & Christine  
BAR SNACKS AVAILABLE

## Jo and Pat and the staff from the NELSON INN Didsbury

welcome all their customers old and new  
Fine Cask Conditioned Ales

### Websters & Holts

Cheapest Beer In Didsbury - Open All Day  
Tuesday night Karaoke  
Disco and Quiz Thursday and Sunday Disco

# CAMRA CALLING!

**Campaign For Real Ale Branch Diaries**  
Here are the monthly branch event diaries, starting with Stockport and South Manchester, followed by High Peak and Macclesfield. Members of all branches are welcome at each other's events!

Diary

## May 98

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup>** - Social at Beer Festival, Old Mill, Mill Lane, Cheadle Hulme. Starts 9pm.

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup>** - Trip to Burtonwood Brewery. Coach departs Royal Oak, Didsbury 6.30; Crown, Heaton Lane 6.45. To book phone John Clarke on 477 1973.

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>** - Monthly Branch Meeting, Blossoms, Buxton Road (A6), Heaviley. Starts 8.00pm.

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup>** - Withington Two Mills Social: The Orion, Burton Road 9.00pm; Victoria, Wilmslow Rd, 10.00pm. Both Withington.

**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup>** - **Greater Manchester Regional Meeting.** Beer House, Rochdale Road, 8.00pm.

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>** - Pub of the Month presentation to the Union, Stockport Rd, Levenshulme.

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Gorton Lane Stagger: 7.00pm Travellers Call, Hyde Rd; 8.30pm Vulcan, Gorton Lane.

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>** - Trip to Bentley Brook Beer Festival. Minibus departs Crown, Heaton Lane 11.00am.

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup>-Sunday 31<sup>st</sup>** - the setting up, running and taking down of Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. All members please try and lend a hand.

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June** - Social: Pack Horse, Ashton Old Road, Openshaw. Starts 9.00pm.

## May 98

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup>** - 3<sup>rd</sup> Time Lucky trip to Harts Brewery. Minibus leaves Royal oak, Didsbury 6.15; Crown, Heaton Lane 6.30. Book on 477 1973.

*High Peak & North East Cheshire Branch covers Bredbury, Marple, Romiley, Woodley and all points north. They have advised us of the following events:*

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup>** - Monthly Branch Meeting, the Royal, Hayfield. Starts 8.30pm.

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup>** - Glossop RUFC August Bank Holiday Beer Tent meeting. Crown, Victoria St, Glossop. Starts 8.00pm.

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Social evening, Cheshire Cheese, Lower Market St, Broadbottom. Starts 8.30pm.

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June** - Committee Meeting, Boundary, Guide Bridge. Starts 8.30pm.

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June** - Lunchtime Social, Little Mill, Rowarth.

**Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June** - Monthly Branch Meeting, Stalybridge Station Buffet Bar. Starts 8.30pm.

*Apart from Macclesfield & Bollington, the Macclesfield & East Cheshire Branch covers a wide area from Wilmslow to Knutsford and down to Congleton. They have advised us of the following event:*

**Monday 18<sup>th</sup>** - Monthly Branch Meeting, Cross Keys, King St, Knutsford. Starts 8pm.

To Do Address Notepad Anniversary CAMPA 93 Planner



**Claire and Howard welcome all their friends and customers**

Among our May Beers:  
Broughton Greenmantle & IPA & Merlin, Everards Beacon & Tiger, Elgoods Cambridge & Pageant, Moles Tap & Best, Nethergate Mild, Batemans Jollys Mayday, Hareviestoun May Fest, Caledonian 10 o'clock Gun and many more...

Shire Horses on May 13th for Wychwood Shires

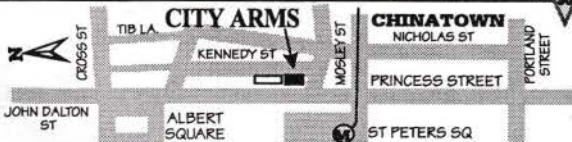
KENNEDY STREET

## THE CITY ARMS

8 HANDPUMPS  
6 GUEST ALES

LUNCHTIME FOOD

11.30-2.30  
and 11.30 - 2.00  
Saturday



## THE QUEENS ARMS

HONEY STREET, CHEETHAM



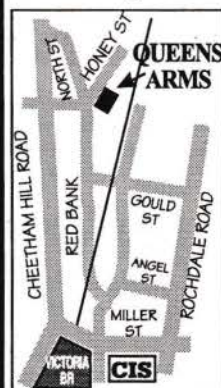
Real Ales  
Traditional  
Cider and  
Czech  
Budvar  
on Draught

Dave and Sue Price invite you to try the fine range of beer, and traditional cider in

**their Excellent Free House**

Taylor's Landlord, Phoenix Bantam and Constantly Changing Range of Beers Beer Garden & Children's Certificate

Quiz Night (Free) on Tuesdays (Cash Prizes) Food Every Day All Day  
**Open All Permitted Hours**



# JOIN CAMRA NOW AND GET INTO STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL FREE

As we have been reporting over previous months, preparations for this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival are now well in hand and it's all systems go for the town's real ale extravaganza. We will be having the usual wide range of beers with old favourites being joined by many beers new to the festival.

With something like 90 ales to choose from, ale lovers will be well catered for (and our bar managers will aim to have at least 40 beers on at any one time - until we start to sell out at the end of the festival, that is!). Lovers of traditional cider and perry will also be well catered for with our biggest range ever as we host CAMRA's National Cider & Perry Championship. Our 250-gallon order will encompass the widest selection of ciders and perries at any beer festival this year.

There will be hot food at all sessions and live entertainment at all bar one, this year Saturday lunchtime is a quiet session for those who want a drink and chat. There'll still be plenty of action on the stage, though, with the announcement of the national cider and perry champions plus the winner of the first ever Pomona award.

We will have the usual CAMRA shop, tombola, souvenir glasses and T-shirts. And just a word about the glasses - these will be oversized with a pint line on them. Full measures guaranteed. One day all glasses will be like these! Eric Forth, eat your heart out!

Finally, our festival charity. This year we are once again supporting Sharecare so make sure you pay a visit to the charity stall - they'll have some beer and a range of products, and it's a very worthy cause.



STOCKPORT TOWN HALL 28th MAY-30th MAY 1998

## DID YOU KNOW

that you can get free entry to the Stockport Beer & Cider Festival by becoming a member of CAMRA, and if that isn't enough, you can also gain free or reduced price entry to every other CAMRA beer festival throughout the UK - currently well over 150 per year!

Details of these festivals and other social events, along with the latest brewery news are supplied in CAMRA's monthly newspaper 'What's Brewing' - delivered free to your door. All members are invited to participate in our packed line-up of socials - at least two events per week: brewery visits (with plenty of sampling time!), curry crawls, minibus trips inside and outside the area; awaydays by train; Staggers and Pubs of the Month are all forthcoming events. So why not become a member of the most successful consumer pressure group in Europe. There has never been a better time to join.

### YOU KNOW IT MAKES SENSE

19

## APPLICATION FOR CAMRA MEMBERSHIP

(Opening Times 169)

I / We wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale Limited, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign.

NAME(S) . . . . . DATE . . . . .

ADDRESS . . . . .

. . . . . POSTCODE . . . . . Date of Birth . . . . .

SIGNATURE . . . . . TELEPHONE NUMBER . . . . .

I / We enclose remittance for individual/joint membership for one year: INDIVIDUAL £14  JOINT MEMBERSHIP £17

UNDER 26 YRS or OAP or REGISTERED DISABLED £8

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP ONLY £8

**Steve McCarley, 32 Howden Close, North Reddish, Stockport SK5 6XW**

those wishing to join CAMRA who live in the Marple, Bredbury, Woodley or Romiley areas, should write instead to:  
Tom Lord, 5 Vernon Drive, Marple, SK6 6JH.



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REFURBISHED**



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Newbridge Lane  
STOCKPORT

*Happy Hour every Friday 8.30pm - 10pm*

**DISCO every Saturday starts 8pm**

**+ Bottle BONANZA**

**HOT & COLD FOOD AVAILABLE  
MON.-FRI. 11.30AM - 2PM**

## OPEN ALL DAY

Tel: 0161 480 2275



**THE ONLY PUB IN STOCKPORT  
WITH FREE POOL & JUKE BOX**

## J W LEES BITTER

### NEW LARGE GAMES ROOM

**POOL, DARTS,  
DOMINOES, CRIB**



### MENU AVAILABLE

135 Buxton Road, Disley

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**Alf & Kay Carter**  
Welcome New & Existing Customers.



## The White Lion

# The Ducie Bridge



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WELCOMES YOU  
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### NOW OPEN!!

*Superb Menu!*

## MANCHESTER

Opposite CIS Building, Close to Nynex Arena



## Open All Day

**NOW FEATURING THE "JUICY" DUCIE COMEDY CLUB  
presented by KEY 103's SMUG ROBERTS**

**EVERY SATURDAY - £5 ON DOOR**

**Seats Reserved Until 8pm - booking line 0161 834 1006**