

STOCKPORT  
AND SOUTH  
MANCHESTER  
CAMRA

No:190

Volume 16  
Issue 2

# OPENING TIMES

FREE

FEBRUARY 2000

6,600 CIRCULATED  
FREE EVERY MONTH

## OLD TOM HITS GOLD

Top Award For Local Favourite

**S**tockport's family brewer, Frederic Robinson Ltd, is purring with success after Old Tom scampered off with the top award at CAMRA's National Winter Ales Festival, held at Manchester's Upper Campfield Market last month.

The legendary 8.5 per cent alcohol-by-volume strong ale, which has been brewed continuously since 1899, was singled out as 'Supreme Champion Winter Beer of Britain' by a panel of tasters including beer writers, brewing industry professionals and officials from CAMRA, the campaign for Real Ale. The competition was split into three categories, stout and porter, old ales and strong mild, and barley wines. The judging panel then had to narrow down the selection to just two beers from each category before selecting the supreme champion.

At the announcement, CAMRA's Greater Manchester regional Director, Steve Prescott said, "At a time when big brewers are flooding the market with mass produced beers it's great to see a traditional family brewer like Robinson's leading the pack on quality." Robinson's described the award as "fantastic" and paid tribute to the entire brewery team, which had contributed to the success at the festival. "This award comes as deserved recognition for Old Tom which has been runner-up at the last two winter ales festivals," Oliver Robinson told Opening Times

Stockport Beer Festival Organiser Jim Flynn was equally delighted. "Although Old Tom is perhaps a winter beer, for the past two years our customers have enjoyed it just as much in June! It just goes to show that quality will always sell. Well done Robinson's!"

Quite a few local Robinson's pubs have been selling Old Tom this winter and with luck this win will be a further boost to the sales of one of the few remaining old style barley wines made today.

The other category winners were: Old Ales & Strong Milds - Theakstons Old Peculier, Stouts and Porters - Wye Valley Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout. Full Details on page 16.



Robinson's Head brewer Chris Hellin (centre left) and Oliver Robinson (centre right) celebrate as Old Tom earns the title 'Supreme Champion Winter Beer of Britain 2000'. They are joined by CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival volunteer Mike Brown, Opening Times co-editor John Clarke (2nd left), and Steve Prescott, CAMRA's Greater Manchester Regional Director.

## Woolpack is Pub of the Year



**F**ollowing what is now the traditional close vote, Ye Olde Woolpack on Brinksway, Stockport, emerged with the honours as Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Year.

Famously in the shadow of Stockport's giant blue pyramid, the Woolpack is a classic example of how a failing pub can be turned into a successful enterprise. Fifteen years ago it was a failing Greenalls house and this was followed by a spell as an equally failing free house, "The Hague". Closure followed but 12 years ago this April, Bob Dickinson came on the scene and since then it hasn't looked back.

It is one of those pubs that tells you it is well-run the moment you walk through the door. It's clean, well maintained and has a welcoming, comfortable atmosphere. Despite having been opened up slightly, there is still very much a traditional multi-roomed

(continued on page 6)

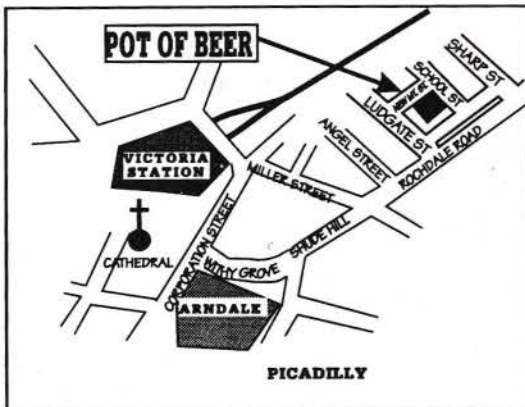
### In FEBRUARY'S OPENING TIMES

Editors View .....	2	Five Years Ago .....	9
Pub of the Month .....	3	Letters .....	10
Stagger .....	5	Beer Monster .....	12
Pub of the Year .....	6	Fistful of Arrows .....	15
Banks Fails to Impress .....	7	Macc Pub of the Season .....	16
Romper Ruined .....	7	Camra Calling .....	18
Book Review .....	8	Brewery News .....	19
Curmudgeon .....	9	Pub News .....	18

# POT OF BEER

36 NEW MOUNT ST  
(0161) 834 8579

- Everchanging Guest Cask Ales
- Robinsons Dark Mild
- Draught Leffe Blond & Hoegaarden
- Black Rat Traditional Cider
- Continental Bottled Beers
- Wide Selection of Wines



**POLISH & ENGLISH MENU  
AVAILABLE 12 TO 9 PM  
MONDAY TO FRIDAY AND  
12 TO 4 PM SATURDAY**

## IN THE EDITOR'S VIEW.

Congratulations are due all round for the superbly run National Winter Ales Festival which took place at Castlefield last month. The beer was superb, the crowd were record breaking and good humoured, and our very own Beer Monster™ ran perhaps the best foreign beer stall seen at any local or regional festival. The icing on the cake, though, was Robinson's Old Tom claiming the top prize and Champion Winter Beer of Britain – an award that simply confirmed what many of us already knew. Let's hope the publicity gives this superb beer a boost. While quite a few pubs sell it on draught, the number is still worryingly low. If you're a Robinson's licensee reading this and you haven't stocked draught Old Tom, why not give it a try?

★ ★ ★

This month our letters page includes a (very long) letter taking both Opening Times and CAMRA locally to task for ignoring 'trendy' bars in and around Manchester. Sitting here in my ivory tower it seems to me that they get fairly covered as and when the need arises. It's easy to be complacent, though and I would be very interested to know what other readers and local CAMRA members think about this.

*John Clarke*

### No End to the Tours of Destruction?

Its an ill wind as they say...Greenalls (now a hotel and leisure group after selling their brewery and later their pubs) look likely to fall to Whitbread who still have one real ale brewery left - Boddingtons in Manchester - (but for how long?). This week sees news that Ushers is looking to offload its brewery (or close it) and Greene King claim that their matching of Old Speckled Hen (formerly brewed at Morlands in Abingdon) in East Anglia is "90% there". (Its amazing how far that 10% can seem to a drinker). Now apparently, Bass, who took over Allied's huge brewery at Burton is thinking of quitting brewing. just who is going to be left?

*P.B. Hutchings*

## OPENING TIMES ISSUE 190

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. Editors: John Clarke, 45 Bulkeley Street, Edgeley, Stockport SK3 9HD. ☎ (0161) 477 1973; Paul Hutchings, 8 The Green, Heaton Norris, Stockport Cheshire, SK4 2NP. ☎ & Fax (0161) 432 8384. News, articles and letters welcome. All editorial items may be submitted in most popular WP formats or preferably ASCII on IBM-PC format 3.5" disks (which will eventually be returned!) or via e-mail to [johnclarke@stocam.u-net.com](mailto:johnclarke@stocam.u-net.com) Adverts or photos should be "hard copy" or in CorelDraw 3,5 or 7 (\*.cdr) format or TIFF or EPS files (submit printed proofs for checking and ensure that any "include all fonts" options are on). Letters to the editor on [otletter@opentime.u-net.com](mailto:otletter@opentime.u-net.com). All editorial items © CAMRA: may be reproduced if source acknowledged. All Advertising images are copyright the respective design sources (Largely CPPR, but all other copyrights and trademarks acknowledged).

### OPENING TIMES SPECIFICATIONS

Column Widths, single 84mm, double 172mm. Image height 24cm. NB Advertisers who supply camera ready artwork designed for another publication that cannot be resized to our standard sizes will be charged the equivalent column/centimetre rate plus a surcharge of at least 30%. Adverts that require unusually large amounts of design work will have the extra work carried out by a studio at full commercial rate.

### OPENING TIMES ADVERTISING

ADVERTISING RATES: 1/8 page (60mm x 85mm): £30; 1/4 page (120mm x 85mm): £50; 1/2 page (horiz: 174mm x 120mm; vert: 240mm x 85mm): £85; Full page (175mm x 240mm) £140. Surcharges apply for back page. Discounts available on adverts of 1/4 page or above for runs of insertions. Advert design & origination usually free of charge unless large costs involved. Ring 0161 477 1973 for details. Artwork should be submitted as hard copy (positive bromide) or pc compatible \*.eps, \*.tiff or \*.cdr (Corel Draw versions 3, 5 or 7 - please state which AND you MUST include hard copy back-up).

# Pub Of The Month

## FEBRUARY 2000

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				



**T**he Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for February is the Victoria, Hall Street, Offerton. For the past 12 years, the Victoria has been run by Ian and Christine Sherry who did in fact gain a similar award ten years ago. This latest award is equally well-deserved and also represents something of a leaving present for Ian and Christine who are departing the pub later this month.

The pub dates back to the 19th Century when it was known as the Military Arms (when a barracks was located across the road), changing its name to the Victoria in 1875 when a residential development replaced the barracks. It was also a beerhouse at that time, obtaining its full license from another old pub, the Waterworks Inn on King Street East.

In more recent times the pub was owned by the old Wilson's brewery of Newton Heath, coming into the ownership of Greenalls following a series of 'pub swaps' in the 1970s. Nowadays it is under the wing of the Inn Partnership subsidiary of Japanese banking giant Nomura. Despite all these changes in ownership, and although the pub lies on a busy main road, its character has hardly changed at all over the years, remaining a well-run, friendly and traditional local with a loyal and characterful clientele.

It's a traditional two-roomer with a comfortable lounge and lively vault (both of which were subject to a very successful refurbishment some years ago), and tradition carries through to the beer front with Greenalls Bitter and Tetley Mild accompanied by an ever-changing guest beer, all of tip-top quality.

We wish Ian and Christine all the very best for the future and they will take with them this very well deserved Pub of the Month award which will be presented on Thursday 17th February, when an excellent night is in prospect. LC.

*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 190

John Clarke, Paul Hutchings, Phil Levison, Rhys Jones, Peter Edwardson, Jim Flynn, Stuart Ballantyne, John Tune, Tim Jones, Tracey McIlwraith, Lorraine Chlebicki, Steve Bray, Richard Lewis, Ken Birch, Brien Carey, Paul Staney.

# The Marble Brewery

"While waiting for the Liberty of the Summer, the Wee Star & Dobber totally vanished. However, deep in the Northern Quarter, the Ginger man lurked behind McKenna's Revenge."



Visit The Brewery Tap

The Marble Arch Inn,  
73 Rochdale Road  
Manchester 4

Brewery tours available  
Contact Mark on  
0161 832 5914 or  
0161 819 2964

3

**COPY DATE FOR THE MARCH 2000 ISSUE OF OT IS FEBRUARY 26**

# THE ALL YEAR BEER FESTIVAL

THWAITES BITTER, MOORHOUSES PENDLE  
WITCH, TIMOTHY TAYLOR LANDLORD



+ 9 EVER CHANGING GUESTS

from Independents & Micros including a MILD

PLUS A RANGE OF TRADITIONAL CIDERS,  
DRAUGHT KRIEK, LEFFE BLONDE, HOEGAARDEN &  
**EXTENSIVE BELGIAN & GERMAN BOTTLE RANGE**  
& NEW BELGIAN DRAUGHT GUEST BEERS (IN ROTATION)

## EARLY MARCH BEER FESTIVAL

THURSDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> - SUNDAY 5<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2000

**4** **40+ NEW & Rare Beers from all over England -  
Festival Food Lunchtimes with  
A MEXICAN FLAVOUR**

Beers from micros and independents - all served from handpump  
(upstairs and down) and chilled to cellar temperature

Hot Lunchtime Food 7 Days A Week

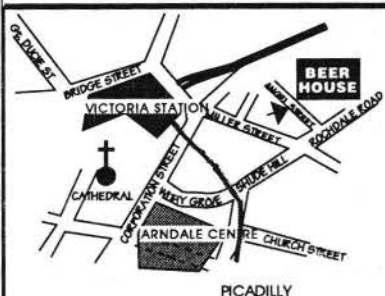
LUNCHES DAILY & EVENING MEALS 5 - 7 (FRI ONLY)

THURS SPECIAL (5-8pm) CHOICE OF 6 CURRIES (VEG & NON-VEG) + RICE £3

SUNDAY 12 - 2.30pm - Giant Yorkshires with choice of meat,  
Roast Potatoes and Veg for just £3

★ HALF PRICE MENUS & CHEAP SPECIALS MON LUNCH ★  
- FREE CHIP MUFFINS WED 5-6

NEWLY REFURBISHED FUNCTION ROOM UPSTAIRS WITH BAR BILLIARDS TABLE & SKY SPORTS



**ONLY AT**

# The BEER HOUSE

Angel Street, Manchester (0161) 839 7019



# STAGGER

with Jim Flynn

## Northenden, Airport and Heald Green

### - All In One Night!

**I**t was 8pm on a cold autumn night when eleven of us trooped out of a minibus and into an almost empty Jolly Carter in Northenden. Inside, pointing to the Boddingtons Bitter handpump, we asked for a half each (it was going to be a long night). The barmaid went straight to the Boddies smooth font and couldn't understand why two-thirds of her customers, the eleven of us, turned round and walked out again, her cries of "it's all the same" echoing round the rapidly emptying pub. And by the way - no it's not!

Still looking for our first drink of the evening, we stopped by the church in the original centre of Northenden village and went into the **Spread Eagle**. This Sixties estate pub was, until the latest refurbishment a few years ago, the only pub in the area without real ale. Now it is one of the few with cask beer. There were more people here than in the Jolly Carter and we went into the lounge where karaoke was being set up. The Greenalls Bitter handpump here was also one of false promise but we were not to be denied as the Boddingtons Bitter was still on. Hallelujah! It was a reasonable drink, too. We made our escape before the karaoke started.

Ignoring the imposing but increasingly shabby **Church** with its sea of keg fonts we went instead to the **Crown**, a gem of a street corner local. The Crown is one of those pubs that vary from busy to excessively full. Tonight it was just busy but we still had to split



into two, with half our party in the lounge and half in the vault, its walls adorned with football pictures. All of us found the Boddingtons Bitter at least reasonable those in the lounge enjoying it more than those in the vault.

Before leaving this lively pub, one of us nipped round the corner to check that the **Tatton** was still keg. It was. We therefore continued to the **Farmers** which was just as busy as the Crown. The Farmers has been refurbished in recent years, with an emphasis on lunch-time and early evening food, and is now probably the plushest pub in Northenden. The best time to visit is probably during the

summer when you can sit outside watching the bowling. The two cask beers were Greenalls Bitter and Tetley Bitter and both were on more than decent form. Indeed the only real criticism of the pub was the heating which for some unaccountable reason, appeared to have been set at sauna level.

Leaving Northenden our next stop was the **Airport Hotel**, selling Robinson's beers - in stark contrast to the Northenden pubs which only stock cask beers from the national brewers. I'm not sure that I would want to stay overnight here as the planes taxiing for take-off are so close that you can almost shake hands with the pilots. There is a family room at the back and a beer garden, which protrudes right out into the airfield itself. We sat in the front lounge surrounded by some of the worst pub wallpaper I've seen for quite some time. Fortunately the beer was rather better. The Best Bitter was reasonable enough while the Hatters Mild (from an unmarked handpump) was in good nick, albeit with an unfortunate taste of caramel about it. There was also a pump for Hartleys XB although this was not on tonight.

Further around the airport perimeter in Moss Nook is the **Tatton**. Another Robinson's pub, this has all the hallmarks of being a multi-roomed old coaching inn with wood panelling and exposed beams. It was certainly popular on the night of our visit. We decided to avoid the pub singer and stood in the corridor with our Hatters Mild and Best Bitter - both beers were good, the best of the night so far in the opinion of some. This pub is well worth a visit.

Round the corner, well two corners actually, is the **Heald Green Hotel**. Comparing this pub-cum-Beefeater Restaurant with the Tatton is like comparing chalk and cheese. It's a 1930s roadhouse, albeit much-altered, and was possibly my least favourite pub of the night. It's pretty much an identikit pub but was obviously popular locally, perhaps due to a lack of competition. The three cask beers, Boddingtons Bitter, Tetley Bitter and Marston's Pedigree, were all considered average with the Tetley's being the best of the crop.

At the other end of Heald Green village is the **Griffin**, a large estate pub. Being a Holt's pub this was the cheapest beer of the night and the place was jam-packed. The Griffin is not an architectural gem but certainly makes up for it in atmosphere. The mild was some of the best Holt's mild I have tasted for months and while the bitter gained mixed reviews the general consensus was that it was good. A really excellent local.

An excellent end too, to what was a good night. A night that again proved that as soon as the big brewers and pub companies have no competition from local brewers, real ale availability deteriorates.

5



at **Pudsey Civic Hall**

3 minutes walk from New Pudsey BR station

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> - Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March**

Around 100 Real Ales • Some at £1 a pint  
Ciders & Perries • Global Beer • Live Music

Thu 11-3 (FREE) 5-11 (£2 after 6pm)  
Fri 11-3 (FREE) 5-11 (£3 after 6pm)  
Sat 11-11 (£2 all day) • CAMRA free at all times

## 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.
- ★ Beer Garden with Eating Area
- ★ 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

# THE BOUNDARY

Specialists in Catering, **OPEN ALL DAY**  
Mobile Bars and functions **EVERY DAY**

## Food Available:

Mon - Thu 12.00 - 2.30pm  
5.00 - 10.00pm  
Fri - Sun noon - 10.00pm

Function Room Available  
Quiz Night Every Sunday

Watch Out For Our Special  
**THEMED EVENINGS**  
Each Month

**A Quality Range of  
Guest Ales  
Always Available**

The Boundary, 2 Audenshaw Road, Audenshaw,  
Manchester M34 5HD

Phone 0161 330 1679 Fax: 0161 285 3456

Environmental Services Tameside  
Clean Food Award 1999

Corporate Member of the  
Guild Of Master Caterers

6

## Woolpack is Pub of the Year

(continued from front page)

character to the pub with two lounges, a lobby area around the bar and a popular vault-cum-games room.

While many reasons may be cited for the pub's popularity – the atmosphere, the comfortable surroundings, the good home-cooked food, it is on the beer front that the Woolpack really excels. The core beer range has varied over the years and currently comprises Theakstons Bitter and Marston's Pedigree. In addition there is a changing guest mild and two guest bitters, often from new and/or obscure microbreweries. Needless to say with the attention to detail that characterises the whole operation here, beer quality is second to none with the beer properly conditioned to ensure the flavours fully develop. Unsurprisingly this has gained the Woolpack an almost permanent place in the Good Beer Guide.

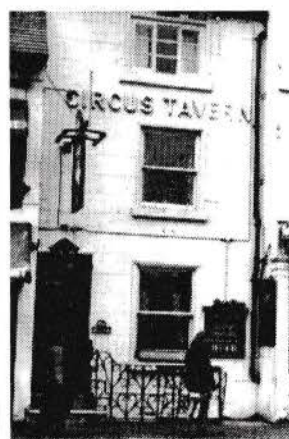
Bob just missed out on a Pub of the Year award a few years ago and so this award, recognising continued hard work and dedication to the highest standards in both the pub and its beer, is particularly well-deserved. The presentation will be made to Bob and Anita on the evening of Saturday, March 11, which promises to be a memorable evening.

## ...And The Circus Is Runner-Up (again!)

**W**hile there can only be one winner, a special mention must be made of the runner-up, the famous Circus Tavern on Portland Street, Manchester City Centre.

One of the city's truly famous pubs, the Circus's fame has spread not only because of its size but also because of the long-serving licensee, Terry Corless.

Once a Tetley pub and now owned by Punch Taverns, the Circus must be the smallest pub in their sprawling empire, and arguably the smallest city centre pub in the country. This delightful, Grade 2 listed, gem consists of just two tiny rooms plus a small lobby. So tiny is the 40 capacity pub that the one-person bar is under the stairs and has room for only two handpumps dispensing Tetley Bitter, consistently at the peak of its form.



It's not just bricks and mortar that make a good pub, though. This is down to the licensee and in Terry Corless, who with wife Kath has now been at the pub for 29 years, the Circus has a landlord as characterful as the pub itself. Their years of experience shine through although Terry has recently been heard to utter the word 'retirement' so perhaps it's best to get there while you can. So reward the Circus for its runner-up achievement by dropping in when you're in Manchester and sampling the atmosphere of what a real pub and real tradition is all about. It's even worth making a special journey.

## PHOENIX BREWERY

GREEN LANE, HEYWOOD, OL10 2EP.  
TEL: 01706 627009



**HOPWOOD**  
Pale coloured bitter, clean tasting session beer with a bitter hop finish.



**BANTAM**  
Pale brown bitter. Slightly nutty, full flavoured beer.



**BEST BITTER**  
Tawny coloured, with a hint of sweetness in the full bitter palate. A fresh but dry hop finish.



**OLD OAK**  
Well balanced brown beer. Malt and hops balance the strong fruitiness in the aroma and taste. The finish is malty, fruity and dry.



**THIRSTY MOON**  
Light brown bitter. Strong hop aroma. The slight maltness is dominated by a full crisp bitterness giving a dry and satisfying finish.



**BONNEVILLE**  
Light brown bitter. Malty character with a soft rounded to p balance.



**DOUBLE DAGGER**  
Pale brown bitter. Full flavoured hoppy bitterness. More pleasantly dry and light than its gravity would suggest.



**WOBBLY BOB**  
Anyer beer. Malty fruity aroma. Strongly malty and fruity flavour. A slight sweetness yields to a dry finish.

**Out of our Circulation Area ?  
Having Difficulty Getting Your Copy?  
Postal subscriptions to Opening Times  
are available.**

**Cheque payable to Opening Times for:  
£2.75 for 6 issues or £5.50 for 12.**

**Write to: John Tune,  
4 Sandown Road, Cheadle Heath,  
Stockport SK3 0JF Tel: 0161 477 8363**

## Banks's Flops in Marston's Pubs

### Drinkers Shun Substitute Brew

**T**he attempt by Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries to foist the unwelcome Banks's Bitter on to pubgoers in place of the popular Marston's Bitter appears to be failing badly. Reports continue to come in of consumer resistance to the change and here *Steve Bray* reports on the reaction in Macclesfield.



At the Millstone in Macclesfield when the Marstons Bitter was replaced by Banks's the locals disliked the taste so much that they switched to Pedigree. The result of this was that the pub ran out of Pedigree long before the dray was due. Since then the manager is ordering more Pedigree than before and less Banks's than Marstons Bitter. When I visited the Millstone I asked for Banks's and the barmaid said 'are you sure' so I opted for the Pedigree instead. One of the regulars in the pub also told me that he would not drink the Banks's because he reckoned it had a 'funny flavour'.

I have also visited the Bate Hall in Macclesfield and heard similar comments about the Banks's. Indeed at the Bate I started on Banks's (because it is sold cheaper on Mondays through Thursdays) and after a couple had to switch to Pedigree which was a great improvement. Consequently, from my experiences in Macc., the punters don't like the replacement of their bitter with a weaker beer sold at the same price, they would rather pay more for a better, stronger beer. The message is coming over loud and clear - we don't want Banks's Bitter in our Marston's pubs. Let's hope Wolves aren't deaf to this, after all they do claim to have an 'intense interest' in their customers views. Until the message gets home drinkers should continue to avoid Banks's Bitter where it is offered as a substitute for Marstons.

## Romper Wrecked

The Romper at Ringway has reopened after a major refurbishment. In the last refurbishment under the control of Jessie and Harry Curran the changes looked minor, the major change being the opening up of a back room making the pub into a four roomed pub, three of which had real fires. Not so this time.

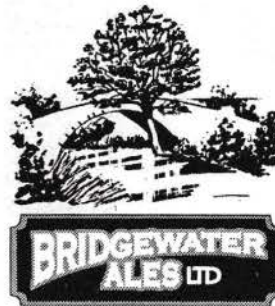
The advertising blurb claims that the Romper is a pub '440 years old beautifully restored to its former glory' and 'offers the atmosphere of a truly traditional country pub'. This is, frankly, a load of old cobbles. The dividing walls have been removed leaving a single L shaped room. The back room has been extended into what was the garden, and two of the fires have gone, one being replaced with a fruit machine. In short it has been gutted and what 'traditional country' character it had has been ripped out and destroyed. The pub is now a Chef and Brewer eatery with a bar attached, menus were evident everywhere when OT called but no drinks promotions were to be seen. It really feels like a restaurant with a bar with the usual production line design clichés everywhere - blackboard menus everywhere, mismatched furniture, candles on the tables. In short not one ounce of originality. This extends to the cask beer range, too with Boddingtons at £1.73 and Theakstons bitter at £1.70 being the two real ales on offer. OT tried the Theakstons and found it to be well kept in its usual bland way. Those who like being really ripped off have the alternative of John Smiths smooth £2.05.

To add a final insult to injury, even the name has been bastardised. The pub was originally the Red Lion, but it became known as the Romper as locals thought the animal on the sign looked like a 'romping kitten'. With a glorious disregard for this story (what was that about restoring the pub to its former glory?), it has now been rechristened the Romping Lion of Altrincham. Those who remember the old Romper won't want to set foot in the place. Those who don't will be able to find something pretty much the same closer to home. It's all quite pointless, really. Give it a miss. **JT/SB.**

Navigator  
3.8% abv

Ash Blond  
4.2% abv

Barton  
Ale  
4.3%  
abv



Blondie  
4.7%  
abv

Delph Porter *1999 Stockport CAMRA  
Beer of The Festival*  
5.2% abv

### Plus Regular Special Brews

February: TLC 4.0% abv & Inglewood Ale 4.2% abv  
March: Mad Hare 3.8% abv

*Regular Outlets - Kings Arms, Albert Vaults,  
Old Pint Pot (Salford); White Lion -  
Liverpool Rd; White House;  
Waters Green, Macclesfield*

**Tel/Fax: 0161 831 9090**

7



## THE HINDS HEAD

Your hosts Alan and June Preston welcome you to enjoy  
our range of excellent

### TRADITIONAL HAND PULLED BEERS

Castle Eden, Marstons Pedigree, Thwaites Bitter

Taylor's Landlord, London Pride & Guest Beer

**AT THE INN WITH THE REPUTATION FOR EXCELLENT  
FOOD AT AFFORDABLE PRICES**

Extensive new menu including lighter meals and  
snacks, younger childrens menu also available

**TRADITIONAL SUNDAY LUNCH £4.75**

**Bar open every Sunday from  
noon till 10.30pm**

**Sunday lunch 12 till 4.30pm**

**Full Menu, Specials and Traditional**

**Roasts in our conservatory Restaurant**



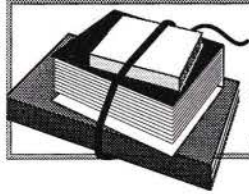
*Stockport CAMRA Pub of the Month April 1997*

**MANCHESTER ROAD, HEATON CHAPEL**

**STOCKPORT, TEL 0161 431 9301**

*Recommended in CAMRA's New Pub Food Guide*





## BOOK REVIEW



**De Pint Biercafegeids 2000, PINT,**  
164pp, £5.50

CAMRA has spawned numerous drinkers' consumer movements in other countries – first, perhaps, looked on a trifle disdainfully as imitators, but now warmly welcomed as colleagues. One of the oldest and most active of these in PINT, of the Netherlands, and they have now produced their first nationwide guide – in effect, their first Good Beer Guide. The guide comprises 12 sections, one for each province of the Netherlands, under which are listed recommended beer shops, all the breweries, and recommended bars. The brewery details are sparse in information yet wasteful of space, listing – apart from the basic name and address details – merely the name (not even strength) of each beer produced, yet allotting each beer a separate line. This, together with lots of white space elsewhere in the layout, lends many pages a curiously unfinished look. The bar entries, however, are much “busier” and more interesting, with all the essential information laid out note-style under a consistent set of headings (Note that the 24-hour clock is used consistently for opening hours, so that a bar shown to open 12.00-4.00 is closed for 8 hours in the day, not 20!)

I should point out here that the guide is written entirely in Dutch. Owing to the note-style format and consistent headings employed, however, this poses little problem to those whose Dutch is limited or non-existent, and the back flap accommodates a brief glossary (which helpfully points out that *popmuziek* means pop

music). Admittedly the phrase *toilet via trap* brought me up with something of a start, but on reflection I reckon *trap* almost certainly means stairs. (No doubt some erudite OT reader can confirm or refute this).

Despite an attractive colour-photograph cover featuring a montage of empty glasses (much more effective than it sounds), this is not the best-looking of pub guides in its physical appearance – there's all that white space, and no illustrations apart from a couple of adverts and some pretty basic maps. Nevertheless, it is the vehicle for a large amount of well-marshalled information on bars in almost all areas of the country. For a first edition (think how CAMRA's Good Beer Guide has changed since 1974), it's a creditable effort, but I think future editions need some serious thought as to what the target market really is and how best to serve it. Too often this edition comes across as an uneasy compromise between reference book in the style of Peter Crombecq's magisterial *Bierjaarboek* and the more discursive pub-guide style of Tim Webb's CAMRA Books volume. Despite my reservations, however, if you're planning a trip to the Netherlands and want the latest insiders' view of the key places to go, this is for you. It's probably unlikely to be available in mainstream bookshops but can be had from Beer Inn Print of Long High Top, Heptonstall, Hebden Bridge, HX7 7PF (add 55p postage and packing if ordering by post – they also run a stall at many beer festivals). RPJ

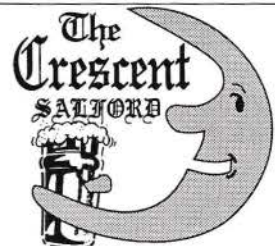
## GOOD BEER GUIDE 2000

Planning this year's holiday or trips out? Do you want to know more about breweries, beer and pubs? Are you looking for a gift for a beer drinker? Whatever you are looking for in a book about beer and pubs, the Good Beer guide 2000 is the answer. Send a cheque for £11.99, made payable to CAMRA Stockport & South Manchester, to 66 Downham Road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 5EG (p&p free).

8

# THE CRESCENT

0161 736 5600



**OPEN ALL DAY EVERY DAY**

**JOHN SMITHS BITTER, ROOSTERS SPECIAL,  
SON OF CRESCENT, PHOENIX Wobbly Bob &  
Thirsty Moon, PLUS 5 GUESTS INCLUDING A  
GUEST MILD - THATCHERS CIDER £1.30/pint**

**ERDINGER WHEAT BEER  
LIEFMANS KRIEK &  
QUALITY DOUBLES BAR**

**FOOD SERVED EVERY LUNCHTIME FROM 11.30am,  
FREE CHIP BARMES - EVERY MONDAY 5-6pm,  
RICE + 3 CURRIES WEDNESDAY 5 - 8pm only £3**

**Full Sunday Breakfast  
(Meat or Veggie)  
from 12 noon**

**DRAUGHT GERMAN BEER FESTIVAL THURS 23 - SUN 26 MARCH**  
FEATURING 7 DRAUGHT BEERS IN THE FESTIVAL VAULT  
including Smoked, Strong (stark), Monastic & Rare Pale BEERS + over 20 Bottled Beers -  
Bratwurst, Bockwurst, Special German Food - Barbecue on Sunday if dry

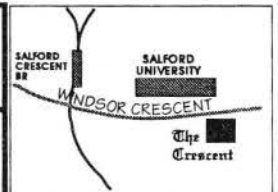
**SPRING BEER FESTIVAL THURS 13 - SUN 16 APRIL**

Coming Soon: New Beer Garden Opening during German Festival Weekend



**10 CASK ALES  
ALWAYS AVAILABLE**

**Roosters Special £1 pint every Saturday  
till end of March (until 6pm)**







## Missing the Revolution

CAMRA recently launched a new Good Pub Food Guide, accompanied by publicity about the revolution in the quality and variety of food available in pubs over the past twenty years, compared with the bad old days of pickled eggs and curling sandwiches. But that picture doesn't match my own experience, and I just can't see it in the vast majority of the pubs I visit. The days when few pubs served food were not in the 70s but back in the 50s and 60s, before the drinking memory of most pubgoers today, and certainly before I was going in pubs. The real revolution in pub food probably happened between 1965 and 1975, spurred on by the introduction of the breathalyser in 1967. I began eating in pubs regularly in the late 70s, and my recollection is that the range and quality of food then was much the same as it is now, although there were more pubs that didn't serve any food whatsoever. In some respects the pub food market has even gone backwards, with the expansion of chain eateries like Brewer's Fayre and Big Steak which offer standardised, frozen and microwaved menus and rarely rise above being just about adequate, and many local boozers serving up very basic pub grub rather than nothing at all. The great majority of pubs today seem to offer a predictable choice of traditional favourites leavened with Anglicised versions of dishes such as chilli and lasagne that have now effectively become British standards. You could almost write the menus in your sleep. Some, it must be said, do it very well, but even so the culinary trends of the past forty years have largely passed them by. Let's face it, most pub food is deadly dull, and scarcely touched by any "pub food revolution". There's far more exotic stuff on the shelves of your local supermarket.

In general, the only pubs showing real innovation or imagination in their menus are those that have gone for an upmarket, restaurant style, with prices to match, and in the process lost most of their pub character. There is a marked lack of pubs which manage to serve interesting, contemporary food at reasonable prices in a pubby setting, particularly in the North of England, and those that do tend to fall into the café bar sector. Some may think that pubs are stoutly defending tradition, but I can't help feeling that they're missing a trick.

### What's on the Menu?

An increasing trend nowadays is to abandon printed menus completely in favour of blackboards. This gives the impression that the pub is offering market-fresh specials, although in reality blackboard menus often remain the same for weeks. A drawback of this is that it can make it difficult to work out exactly what you want, particularly if you're in a large group, and people often like to mull over a menu and consider various combinations of starter and main course before making their choice. In one week I saw two examples of one member of a party having to read the contents of a long blackboard out to elderly or disabled companions who couldn't easily get near enough to see it. This is another of those subtle ways in which pubs unconsciously

# 5 Years Ago

by Phil Levison

## FEBRUARY '95

**T**he front page carried full details of the local CAMRA branch's Pub of the Year award, and this prestigious award had gone to the Queen's Head in Stockport – one of the smallest pubs in town, and one of only two Sam Smiths pubs in the locality. Museum Ale and Old Brewery Bitter were always available, and they were both competitively priced – the OBB had gone up by just 2p in five years, and was the best value pint in Stockport, whilst the Museum Ale had actually come down in price. The pub had undergone a complete renovation five years previously, restoring it to its former glory, and the following year it had been awarded first place in CAMRA's National Pub Design Awards.

There was news of a new brewery coming to Stockport, the first since the demise of Pollards over 10 years before. The unlikely site was the cellars of Peaches night-club, which occupied the imposing red brick premises of the old Reform Club on the corner of Hillgate, opposite the Gladstone. The brewery was the brainchild of Peaches owner John Perkins, and the new beer, Richard Cobden's Bitter, was already being produced by Moorhouses. It was expected to be brewed in Stockport within two or three months.

Prime Minister John Major had announced that "absurd" licensing restrictions were to be scrapped – this would allow pubs to open all day on Sundays. Although not all pubs were likely to choose to stay open, those with a food operation or in tourist areas would undoubtedly benefit. Attention was again drawn to the fact that part of the UK had been enjoying these liberalised licensing hours for a number of years – Scotland, of course, had introduced all day opening long before England and Wales decided to follow suit.

Finally, several items of news on "themes and chains". Two "Scruffy Murphy" Irish theme bars were likely to appear along the Wilmslow Road corridor. The Harrison & Killey building across Grosvenor Street from the Flea & Firkin was likely to be first, followed by the Jaberwocky, part of the Queen of Hearts in Fallowfield, with the pub itself to become a non-brewing Firkin. Wetherspoon's had successfully converted the old Deansgate cinema into the Moon Under Water, and the news was that they had bought another property, this time in the Piccadilly area, and had outbid Yates Wine Lodges for the site. The Boddington Pub Company had sold a batch of 30 pubs to the Paramount chain – including the Bulkeley Arms in Stockport, Smithfield in Openshaw and the Sun Inn, Macclesfield.

discriminate against the disabled. In these days when most pubs probably have a PC in the back somewhere, surely it is not beyond licensees to print off a copy of their daily menu for every table.

Visit Curmudgeon on the World Wide Web at

<http://members.tripod.co.uk/Curmudgeon/>



## The Old Cock Inn,

Didsbury

A wide range of guest beers changing weekly

*Chef's Homemade specials from £3.95*

**Food Served: Mon - Thurs 12 - 2.30pm**

**Fri 12 - 4pm, Sat & Sun 12 - 5.30pm**

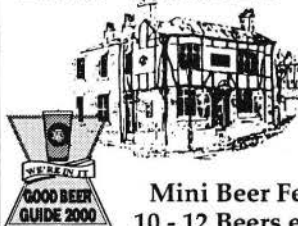
Monday night quiz with 'Bamber Andy'

*Every Tuesday Doubles Bar*

*(Vodka, Brandy, White Rum, Gin - all £1.49)*

**Phone Andy on 445 4405**

## The Waters Green Tavern



96 Waters Green,  
Macclesfield,  
Cheshire SK11 6LH  
Tel: 01625 422653

*opposite the Railway Station*

**Mini Beer Festivals Every Day!**

**10 - 12 Beers each week including:**

Roosters, Whim, Storm, Oakham, Swale, RCH  
and many more...

**Your Hosts Brian and Tracey**

**Bar Meals Served Mon to Sat Lunch**

*This is not a free house*

## ATTENTION ALL FREE HOUSES!

Following the huge success of award winning Plassey Bitter at The Sportsman, Hyde, Geoff is now able to offer all Plassey products at realistic prices with free delivery to selected other Publicans (who would be willing to take it regularly) in the Stockport, Tameside, High Peak and Greater Manchester areas only. Please ring Geoff on:-  
0161 368 5000, fax 0161 366 1365.

**CAMRA REGIONAL  
PUB OF THE YEAR 1998 & 1999**

### THE SPORTSMAN

57 MOTTRAM ROAD, HYDE  
Geoff and Carmel Welcome You To



**A GENUINE  
FREE HOUSE  
WITH EVER CHANGING  
REAL ALES AND  
TRADITIONAL CIDER**

Regular Beers include  
Hartington Bitter, Plassey Bitter,  
Taylors Landlord and  
Magic Mushroom Mild and  
ever-changing guest beers  
Bottled Belgian Fruit Beers  
Special Vegetarian Wholefood  
Menu Now Available

now boasting a full-sized Snooker Table  
Booking in Advance is Recommended



Easy Public  
Transport Connections  
Tel: (0161) 368 5000

25p OFF all  
Draught Beers  
Sunday  
12 - 4pm

## O PENING TIMES LETTERS

From Steve Green, High Peak & NE Cheshire Branch.

*Whilst I agree in principle to the Marstons Campaign, I must sympathise with a local landlord who happens to be a tenant (Shepherds Arms, Whaley Bridge) The tenant in question takes Opening Times and does a lot to help the local branch, ie accommodates branch meetings and lays on food, advertises, runs trips to CAMRA festivals, provided a starting point for a CAMRA sponsored walk etc.. Now he reads that CAMRA is apparently sanctioning what would appear to be a boycott of his pub and therefore putting at risk his very livelihood because he is under obligation to Marstons (W & D) to sell what ever beer they supply to him. Whilst it is probably OK to boycott Marstons managed estate where the staff are paid by the brewery, should we really be hitting CAMRA friendly tenants where it hurts - in the pocket!*

(These complaints would be better directed at Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries who seem intent on removing a popular beer from local "Marston's" pubs and replacing it with an unpopular substitute. If the customers of those pubs then choose to drink elsewhere then that is no fault of CAMRA - ed)

From: Pete Moores, Macclesfield:

*Before I start, the CAMRA I refer to is my area, Stockport & South Manchester and I enjoy reading Opening Times greatly. Manchester is a wonderful place to drink, but, as has been mentioned in these pages, the majority of new bars that are opening, whilst looking good, offer nothing for the real ale drinker. CAMRA, which, presumably, sees Opening Times as it's voicebox, seems to want to get across the view that their members aren't all bearded forty year olds, who's only aim in life is to 'scratch' as much beer as possible. Their attitude towards drinkers under thirty, though and their apparent inability to get their head around the fact that the Beer House's, Hare and Hounds' etc., surroundings do not appeal to everybody, to me, does them no favours. (Just for the record, I love the Beer House, the Crescent, the Queens on Red Bank, et al). Nor does the lack of coverage of two places that are, in my opinion, among the best to drink in, or outside of, Manchester. Neither have the 'spit-and-sawdust' feel of the Beer House, nor do they have the range that places like that have to offer and I wonder if this is why Duke's in Castlefield and Mark Addy, near Salford Central rarely, if ever, get a mention. Whilst not being newly opened, they offer the other side of the coin; real ale alternating in more sumptuous surroundings. Duke's virtually always has 2 ales on: Boddies, and either Landlord, or an ale from Moorhouse's. Granted, not the widest range of beer available in town, but Duke's deserves praise for bucking the Castlefield trend and offering us quality ale AS WELL as a quality place to drink.*

*The Mark Addy is much the same. Again, guest ales are in order and the clientele have their heads screwed on as they do in Duke's. I found out from a recent conversation with the young manager at the Addy that he's a CAMRA member and whilst he's there, there will always be two or three decent ales on the bar. Forgive the mini reviews, but seeing as they hardly seem to get a mention, I thought I'd throw in a few words. This letter is not intended to be cheap promotion for the aforementioned places, but rather using them as an example of CAMRA's apparent attitude towards places like them.*

*If local CAMRA members don't like the places mentioned above because they see them and their clientele as posy or pretentious, then they are no better than the eighteen year olds, up and down the country, who don't like real ale, or it's pubs, because of it's 'dad's drink' image. I find that it's better to drink amongst people who take pride in themselves and the way they act, than a bunch of ill-mannered youngsters. Locally, if not nationally, CAMRA will find itself in a Catch 22 situation with potential younger members if it's not careful, myself being an example. They want the more modern, so-called 'trendier' places to serve real ale and when they do, even if it's just Boddies or Director's, they seem to make no effort*

within these pages to praise or even mention them. I will not join CAMRA while I feel this to be the case. If they DO happen to get a mention, it seems to be along the lines of 'bah humbug, about time' or 'wow, one of them sells real ale, so they should'. Failure to mention places like these, to me, shows a side of CAMRA that is not fully prepared to embrace un-Beer House-like places and is not prepared to give credit where it's due. If local CAMRA has its head stuck in the sand, they can't really blame young people for doing the same. Unless local CAMRA and more specifically, the people involved with producing Opening Times, start to involve people at the younger end of the drinking market, before they start to walk the mass-produced-lager trek, then it's hard to see (they) will change their opinion of real ale, the places where it is served and the people who drink it.

I started on real ale when I was younger, because I actively wanted to drink something that everybody else wasn't and I also loved the tradition, taste, price etc. side to real ale. As anybody who reads this knows, today's eighteen year olds do the exact opposite and drink what everyone else does. CAMRA's slant seems to be that if you drink smooth, creamflow and the like, then you're stupid and gullible. Privately, I'm sure CAMRA members think that, but officially it's not very tactful. Hardly the stance to get new converts. It's hard to see where, locally and nationally, CAMRA's future lies, as young people are notoriously apathetic to real ale because of it's image. I couldn't care less about image, that's why I feel as comfortable drinking in the Pot of Beer as I do in Duke's. It's a pity the people who are involved with the branch and Opening Times don't seem to feel the same.

(This is an edited version of a much longer letter and it makes many good points. It also spectacularly misfires as Opening Times has in fact always made a point of covering this type of pub or bar, and has not stinted on the praise where it is due [ed.1] Given the frequent recommendations given to the Sand Bar and Bar Fringe - hardly old fogey places - by the Beer Monster, there is more credit due than given, though I will make a point of visiting the Mark Addy again, which I used to use and enjoy on a regular basis. [ed.2])

## The Old Glove Works

### CASK ALE BAR & EVENT SUITE

Top 6 1999 Cask Ale Pub of The Year  
UP TO 6 EVER CHANGING CASK ALES  
Open all day - every day - from midday

Food Available:  
12 - 2pm Mon - Fri  
12-3pm Sundays



Live Entertainment:  
Thursdays 9pm  
Sundays 3 - 6pm  
Resident DJ 8pm  
Friday & Saturday

(60s, 70s, 80s)

Prize Quiz Sunday 9pm

Whisky Galore 5 - 7pm Mon - Thurs  
(Any Whisky, Malt, JD, Southern Comfort only £1 a shot)

Event Suite for Your Special Occasions  
2 Outdoor Riverside Drinking Areas

Riverside Mill, George St  
Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 8AY  
01457 858432

11



### JAZZ

every Wednesday night

### FOLK

every Monday night

### TRIO

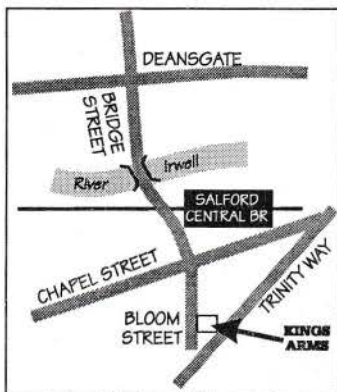
every alternate Saturday

afternoon

### GROUP

every alternate Saturday

evening



## The Kings Arms

11 Bloom Street, Salford M3 6AT  
(0161) 832 0167

Free House  
7 REAL ALES

Belgian & German  
Bottled & Draught Beers,

**Bridgewater**  
Navigator always  
available plus  
6 ever changing  
guest beers

# ARMOURY INN SHAW HEATH



**BEST BITTER, HATTERS MILD,  
OLD TOM**

Snacks Available

**OPEN ALL PERMITTED  
HOURS EVERY DAY**

(including Saturdays & Sundays)

*Robinsons Traditional Ales*

☎ 0161 480 5055

Bed and Breakfast Accommodation From  
£17.50 - (Evening Meals if required)  
Free Meeting Room Available for 20 - 40 people



## He Ain't Heavy - He's My Budvar

Call it a draw. The 'King of Beers' (American or British brewed Budweiser - surely some mistake - ed. [No, its a trademark - BM] and the Czech Republic's 'Beer of Kings' - Budweiser Budvar [yes, its ANOTHER trademark]) have been told by a judge in the latest round of their fight to get exclusive use of the name Budweiser in the UK, to go home and sulk and sack their lawyers, because despite the possibility of confusion between the products (one is weak, made of 30% rice, n% chemicals, claims to be American and has only the vaugest resemblance to beer - but does have the worlds best adverts, the other is a stronger, slightly sweet but whole-malt, pleasant beer worthy of the name) they can both use the trademark, as they have done so since before 1900, and have been in court at intervals since 1911! (Think of the fees....)

## NWAF Off

(Well at least over, for another year). The CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival was held in Castlefield at the end of January, and a success it certainly was. Firstly it did not run out of beer, and this despite nearly twice as many members of the public showing up. Secondly there was no cacophony of discordant yowling (well, except from the cider bar) as there was no entertainment. It didn't need any. Thirdly the food (provided by Idy from the Crescent, Salford) was apparently very good - chance to fight through the queue would have been nice - the British beer quality was consistently high if slightly cold (rare change!). The number of CAMRA members through the door, though, was surprising - nine less than last year. At first I wondered if nine members had died in the last year, but then the solution came to me - Ian was having a scratcher

12

**B  
A  
R  
  
F  
R  
I  
N  
G  
E**

MANCHESTER'S BELGIAN STYLE BROWN BAR, THE BEST ENVIRONMENT TO SAMPLE A RANGE OF OVER 40 BOTTLED AND 6 DRAUGHT BELGIAN BEERS FROM AUTHENTIC BREWERY GLASSES. DRAUGHT PRODUCTS INCLUDE **HOEGAARDEN WIT** (5% ABV) AT £2.20/PINT AND **VLAAMSCH WIT** (4.5% ABV) AT £2.10/PINT.

THE BOTTLED RANGE RUNS FROM THE TRAPPIST TO THE LAMBIC FRUIT BEERS (IN BOTH MODERN AND ORIGINAL STYLES) AND ON TO THE SPECIALS INCLUDING **DELERIUM NOCTURNUM** (9% ABV) AND **KWAK** (8.5% ABV).

**FOOD AVAILABLE 12 NOON UNTIL 6PM**

**10 - 12 MARCH - HUYGHE WEEKEND!**

**Delerium Tremens & St Idesbald Blond** on Draught and **Delerium Nocturnum, Campus, Blanche de Neige** and range of fruit wheat beers in bottles

HAND PUMPED BRITISH ALES FROM **BANK TOP** AND **MARBLE BREWERY**. DRAUGHT **KROMBACHER** £2.00/PINT PLUS A RANGE OF BOTTLED GERMAN GUEST BEERS.

**PART OF  
N/4 DISCOVERY  
TOUR**



8 SWAN STREET  
MANCHESTER  
M4 5JN

Tel: 0161 835 3815



(rare beer) festival at the Beer House, and Jenny had several new ones on at the Smithfield in Swan St, so they had all disappeared up there.... Nice one, chaps, though thanks are certainly due to all the members who volunteered to work (and ALSO turned up!).

Having been very negative about bizarre rationing policies at Bradford (Feb 24 - 6, Victoria Hall Saltaire) - especially at the free and ticketless session on Friday, I am told that they have seen reason and all the beers will be on for at least some of each session this year. Thanks, chaps. Unfortunately I shall be in Paddy's Wigwam - Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral crypt that day for the excellent Liverpool Beer Festival (23-26, no tickets needed Friday lunch). The need for a ticket at other times is less burdensome since the Ship & Mitre on Dale St, Liverpool has a festival the previous weekend, so one can pick up a ticket then.

Elsewhere, Wigan (Mill at the Pier) and Leeds - actually at Pudsey Civic Hall (New Pudsey BR) clash on the 16-18 March, and Doncaster (April 13-16) clashes with CAMRA's AGM in Derby.

Closer to home, the City Arms in Kennedy St has a festival on as you read this, Idy at the Crescent is having a German Festival with 7 beers on draught in March - see advert for details - and is not only opening a beer garden, but also putting some traditional games in the vault for use in the afternoons. Bar Fringe has a special 'Huyghe' (home of the Delerium Tremens family) weekend earlier in the month - details previous page. Ian Casson at the Beer House seems to be heading for 12 Beer Fests a year, with one the first weekend in March - and he is talking about ANOTHER one at the end of the month. There has certainly been no drop in range of new beers since he took over - quite the opposite.

So, finally, a predictable word about the Foreign beer bar at the Winter Ales shindig. It was big, it was good, the beer was great. Well that's about it. 17 draught German Beers (10 on at any one time), 4 draught Belgian Beers on out of 9 in total, and with the bottles, 82 foreign beers in all, many of the German ones never before in the UK (or indeed, outside of Germany). No Irish beer, and a simple reason why not. PorterHouse (whose beer, I have to say, I really, really admire) will only allow it on a mixed gas dispense. I needed it in cask form, but the brewer and the owner consider this form inferior. Now I think they're wrong, but there you go. Tony Brookes of the Head of Steam is having an Irish Cask festival around St Patricks day. I wonder how he will solve this conundrum?.

## Beers of the Month

### *The Beer Monster's British Beer of the Month:* **Kitchen Sexy Satsuma (4.7% abv)**

In December I tried Kitchen's Tubby Tangerine. It was very nice with a citrus sweetness that cut through the malt, and whilst in the taste it could have been almost any fruit, there was a just perceptible hint of tangerine in the nose...so I was puzzled to see if the Sexy Satsuma COULD be any different! Well it is. It is often difficult, but rarely impossible, to pick up the fruit (or veg) flavours in the Kitchen beers, but since I MUCH prefer satsumas to tangerines, clementines and all the other fruits of that ilk, I was more than prepared to give it a go. I know I often rant about the inadequacy of most English Wheat and fruit beers (the former should be left to the Germans and the latter to the Belgians, grumble, rumble...) but Kitchen have got this one dead on. The nose has bags of fruit, and its there, subtle but everpresent, all the way to a long bittersweet, drying finish. Superb balance, excellent beer - well done Rob.

### *The Beer Monster's Foreign Draught Beer of the Month:* **Tegernsee Dunkel Doppelbock (7.0% abv)**

If you didn't get any of this when it was on at the National Winter Ales Festival, more fool you. It is VERY unlikely to surface in draught form in England ever again, and even getting the bottles can be a problem, even in the village surrounding the brewery in the Bavarian Alps. The Beer? Astonishingly complex and bittersweet - in the best sense that the sweetness rose and fell in the mouth as the huge malty dry finish took over, leaving a faint clean hop taste at the very end.. Now I've always thought draught Old Tom was a fine dark Winter Beer (and a worthy winner of the Winter Championship) but I have to say I wouldn't have fancied its chances had this been a British beer.... The best dark beer I have ever drunk. Period.

### *The Beer Monster's Foreign Bottled Beer of the Month:* **Tegernsee Heller Bock (6.8% abv)**

Same brewery - but this time the pale golden winter strength brew. I had been trying to get this for three years and it was well worth the wait. Pale, very dry, sweetening just a shade into a long drawn out hoppy bitter finish. The normal Spezial Helles (pale) beer - available in Sand Bar Grosvenor St - is a good refreshing beer, but this is quite excellent. The odd CAMRA festival may have some until I drink it all - the bottles already in the UK are all there are going to be!

13

# The Caledonia Hotel

Robinson's  
'CHEF of the YEAR'  
1999 - 2000

Opposite the General Post Office,  
13 Warrington Street, Ashton Under Lyne.  
Tel: 0161 339 7177 Fax: 0161 292 9313

Come and try our 'Award Winning' dish  
that earned us 'Second Place' and  
'Highly Commended' certificates in the  
Robinsons 'Chef of the Year' competition.



Alan and Louise welcome you to Ashton's most traditionally refurbished pub with luxurious comfortable surroundings. A warm fire for the winter and a patio garden for the summer. Luxury en-suite accommodation is now available.

The first and only pub in Ashton to sell Frederic's premium 5.0% since it was brewed.  
Robinson's Best Bitter and Hatter's Mild all on hand pump.

Excellent home cooked food served:  
Monday - Saturday 11.30 - 2.30 lunchtimes  
Tues, Weds, Thurs 5.00 - 7.00 evenings  
Friday & Saturday 5.00 - 8.00 evenings  
12.00 - 3.00 Sunday. 3 course special plus full menu



Graham  
welcomes  
you to ...

## THE RAILWAY VIEW

Byrons Lane,  
Macclesfield

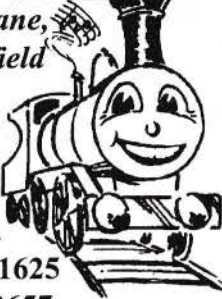
GOOD FOOD  
Now Being Served on

**PLATFORM ONE**

8 GUEST BEERS ☆

☆ QUIZZES ☆

☆ BAR GAMES ☆



☎ 01625

423657

REAL ALE £1.30 MON NIGHT

## 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

Discos Thursday and Sunday

## 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



"I wish to register  
A COMPLAINT!"



**B**ad beer, adulterated beer and short measure still trouble us on occasion. You, the customer, are in the front line and we all know it can be all too easy to do nothing. Remember the point though: if you've paid good money for something which is substandard, then you've been swindled - so complain! So how? Opening Times offers a few words of advice and technical points:

- ★ **Be Polite** - if you create a conflict, you've lost.
- ★ **Be Discreet** - no licensee wants to draw attention to a problem
- ★ **Be Reasonable** - if the beer has reached the end of the barrel, you can tell at once. The landlord may be unaware of this.
- ★ **Be Diplomatic** - "I think this might have gone" is less of an insult to the cellarman's craft than "this tastes foul!"
- ★ **Be Sensible** - a tiny shortfall in volume isn't worth the fuss, but nearly an inch is worth a polite request to "squeeze a drop more in".
- ★ **Be Decisive** - bad beer should be returned promptly. Struggling valiantly through 3/4 of a pint will undermine your case.
- ★ **Don't** - complain to an outside body (see below) without first trying to gain satisfaction in the pub.
- ★ **Don't** - accept the guff that "real ale is supposed to look like that" or that old standby "no-one else has complained". Stand your ground.

The law on "full measure" is currently something of a shambles - the head is legally part of your pint but the Brewers Society say that your pint should be 95% liquid and short measures should be topped up with good grace. Trading Standards officers may be prepared to take action if these guidelines are consistently flouted.

Beer which is "off" is "goods unfit for the purpose" under the Trades Description Act and you have a statutory right to redress. You could ask for your money back, but a replacement from another barrel is usually the best solution. You should be able to read the price list without binoculars or a stepladder. What do you mean "what price list?". If you don't get satisfaction from the licensee, contact:

**The Trading Standards Officer** (for consistent short measure or missing price list) - **The Environmental Health Officer** (for sour beer or unhygienic practices), **The Brewery/Pub Owner** - (for poor beer in a tied house or poor customer service), **The local branch of CAMRA** (who will certainly check up on any horror stories). Luckily none of the above is relevant in most of the pubs in the Opening Times area.

**Local Trading Standards Contacts are:**

Stockport - 0161 474 4248, Manchester - 0161 234 5600

Tameside - 0161 342 3477, Derbyshire - 01629 585858

Cheshire - 01244 602500, Trafford - 0161 912 2274

## Mild Challenge 2000

Attention Licensees! Does your pub sell cask mild? If so, then you could take part in this year's Stockport & Manchester Mild Challenge. Many pubs are already lined up to take part but we still have room for more to come on board. Sponsored by the Stockport Express, this is a chance to promote your pub, and sell a few extra pints of mild and promote this traditional beer style. The closing date for entries is 20 February so if you've not been approached yet contact Jack Lyons on 0161 248 0267 for more details.

BIGGER  
AND BETTER  
THAN EVER



## THE RAILWAY, PORTWOOD

Seven Beers available from the Porter Brewing Co. Ltd.

Including the Railway's exclusive Beer:-

### Railway Sleeper

NOW OPEN  
ALL DAY  
SUNDAYS



FREE QUIZ  
EVERY  
TUESDAY



EXCELLENT FOOD  
AVAILABLE  
6 DAYS A WEEK



THE RAILWAY ALE HOUSE, 1 AVENUE STREET (Off Gt PORTWOOD STREET), STOCKPORT. (0161) 429 6062

# Fistful of Arrows

By Brian Carey



I was pleased to hear from Mike Appleyard recently. Mike is darts secretary of the Cheadle and District Darts league. I remember well when the league was formed eight years ago. At the time I was writing a darts column for the Stockport Messenger and was always pleased to hear from Mike with results, fixtures and general news. It always seemed to me that a league based on such a small area was a perfect idea. Every match would be between local rivals and there would be no transport problems. I have often thought it might be an idea for the bigger, borough-wide leagues to re-think their own structures, but the "we've always done it this way, so it must be right" mentality remains dominant. Anyway, back to Mike.

He told me that the Prince of Wales lost the league for only the second time in those eight years. They were beaten to the title by their "arch rivals" Heald Green's Griffin. The Prince got their revenge in the cup final, however. Mike reports that both teams played great darts. The Gatley lads went into 3-2 lead, with "local legend" Taffy Roberts beating the Griffin's ace marksman Dave Roddis 2-0. With everything down to the last game, it was Prince captain Paul Devine, who hit the winning dart. His opponent down to a double, Paul was left with 84 to kill, and he achieved the kill with a bullseye finish.

"The game was played in great spirit," said Mike. "Both sides deserve a mention, as they champion this league every year without great sponsorship". Mike is worried that the league would be in danger without the help of Eric, the landlord of the Star Inn, who sponsors it all.

It is people like Eric, and, of course, Mike Appleyard himself, who keep this game alive in pubs and clubs all over the land. It is the famous big time players who achieve the accolades, but without the ground work put in by people like this, there would be nowhere for them to learn the game. They are the life blood of darts and must be applauded. Thanks for getting in contact, Mike. It was great to hear your news. Keep it coming. I am always pleased to hear from anyone who has information regarding darts. I can be contacted on 0161-286 7762 or 07374 061881 (mobile).

\*\*\*

During the last few months we have witnessed the annual dart fest on TV. Non dart players can be forgiven if they think that the dart season begins in late December and finishes in early January! Sky gave us the PDC World Championship, with, predictably, Stoke's Phil Taylor winning his eight world title. The presentation was slick, with plenty of razzmatazz, but the sad truth is that Phil Taylor has little opposition on the oche and the end result is something of a foregone conclusion. Only Peter Manley, Rod Harrington and Dennis Priestley are likely to challenge him. There is not enough strength in depth within the organisation. Indeed some of the players in the last 32 would be lucky to scrape into the Stockport Super League side. Eurosport gave us the semis and finals of the World Masters. On the plus side they allowed us to see the Women's, Boys and Girls finals as well as the Men's tournament. But their presentation was awful. The commentator has little knowledge of darts and there seemed to be no effects mike in the auditorium, so there was little atmosphere. The whole tournament was packaged into two hours television and left a lot to be desired. The BBC, on the other hand, have had 23 years covering the Embassy World Championships. Even then, their presentation suffered because most of the games were shown in recorded highlights. Of course, it would not be possible for the Beeb to give the blanket coverage that Sky Sports are able to do, but a compromise would be nice. It was nice, though, to see that John Inverdale, tipped by many to replace Des Lynam, was given the anchor man role, but he needs a better "oppo" than Bobby George. Incidentally, our own Tony O'Shea was seen fleetingly during the tournament. The BBC held a phone-in contest and one of the questions concerned women dart throwers. The viewer had to say who the current Women's World Master was and clips were shown of Trina Gulliver, Francis Hoenselaar and Vanda Adams. The last named was playing a qualifying game against our own Tony. Let's hope it is not too long before Tony makes it to the televised event on his own merit. The final, which was shown live was won by Ted Hankey. Like Taylor, he hails from Stoke - a point which was not picked up by any commentator, I believe. What were the odds of both World champions coming from the same area.

\*\*\*

There seems to be something about postman that make them good dart throwers. Ray Barneveld (twice Embassy champion) had that job in Holland before turning professional, and Robbie Widdows, one of the fancied players in this years contest stills works for the Royal Mail. The Post Office actually hold their own title every year, and for the second year running our own Chris North, who lives in Gorton and regularly plays in Stockport, was National Champion. Twenty-years-old Chris was also a member of the North West side that beat the South West/South Wales side in the four-man event. Other members of the team will be well known to local players: Phil Kerr, Mark Cairney and Ged Kelly.

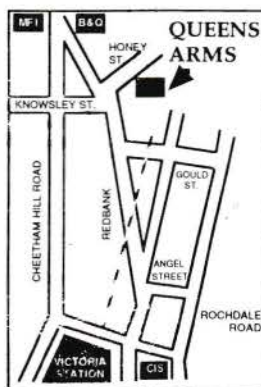
Dave and Sue welcome you to

## THE QUEENS ARMS

HONEY STREET, CHEETHAM

Try the fine range of beers supporting independent brewers in their excellent free house!  
Taylors Landlord - Bantam Bitter £1.15 a pint  
St. Louis Kriek Belgian Fruit Beer on draught  
plus weekly guest beers.

Open: 12 noon - 11.00 p.m. Monday - Saturday  
12 noon - 10.30 p.m. Sunday



Beer Garden

Families Welcome

Hot & Cold Food

We're in the  
Good Beer Guide 2000

Telephone:  
0161 834 4239

15

David J. Bradley Esq.

Welcomes Customers Old & New

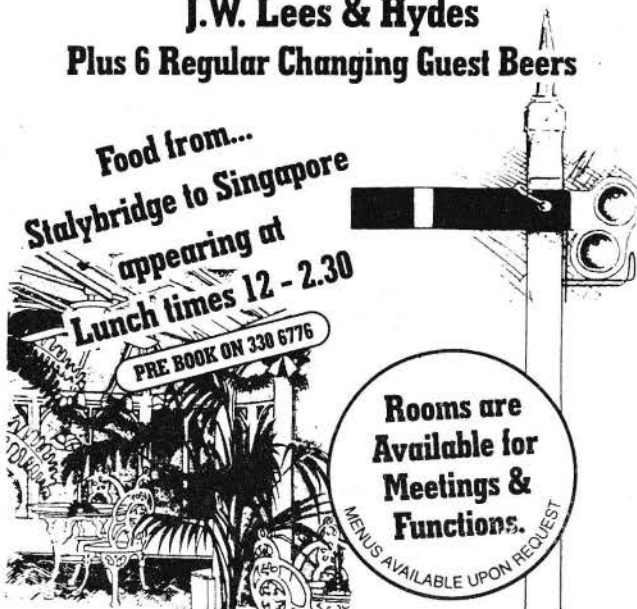


2 Warrington Street • Ashton-under-Lyne • Lancashire • Tel: 330 6776

FEATURING INDEPENDENT BREWERS  
INCLUDING...

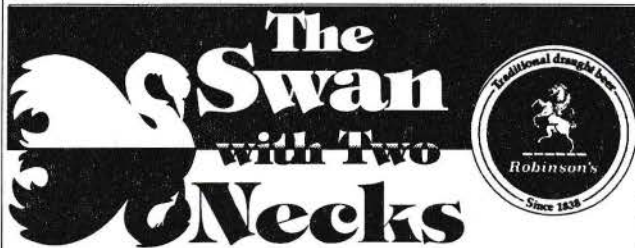
**J.W. Lees & Hydes**  
Plus 6 Regular Changing Guest Beers

Food from...  
Stalybridge to Singapore  
appearing at  
Lunch times 12 - 2.30  
PRE BOOK ON 330 6776



Rooms are  
Available for  
Meetings &  
Functions.

MENUS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST



**PAUL & BEV  
INVITE YOU TO  
THE SWAN WITH TWO NECKS**

**NOW OPEN  
11 - 11pm MON - SAT  
AND 12 - 4pm SUNDAY**

**SPECIAL  
INTRODUCTORY OFFER  
ROBINSON'S FREDERICS  
ONLY £1.55 pint**

**FOOD NOW AVAILABLE  
NEWLY REFURBISHED DINING ROOM**

The Swan With Two Necks  
36 Princes Street, Stockport  
0161 480 2341

16

Jayne & Bryan Welcome You to The

## Ash Hotel

232 Manchester Road, Heaton Chapel  
Tel: 0161 476 0399



Activities include:  
Darts, Pool & Large Screens for  
All Sports Coverage  
**FUNCTION ROOM**  
available for all occasions,  
Business & Private  
NO ROOM CHARGE FOR  
CHARITY FUNDRAISING EVENTS  
Warm, Friendly Atmosphere  
**OPEN ALL DAY EVERY DAY**



**PUB OF  
THE  
SEASON**

The Macclesfield & East Cheshire CAMRA Pub of the Season for winter 2000 is the Railway View, Byrons Lane, Macclesfield.

Situated half a mile South of the town centre just off Leek Road, The Railway View has been in the capable hands of Graham Calvert for the last six years, during which time the real ale range has increased from three standard beers to eight ever changing guest beers from a wide range of breweries. All are well-kept, too, with the result that this justifiably popular pub is a regular entry in the national Good Beer Guide.

Deceptively large, it was originally two cottages built around 1700, and in its most recent guise possesses a number of intimate eating and drinking areas with an open coal fire creating a cosy atmosphere. There is food available at all open sessions and the home-made pies are a particular treat!

In many ways this is a textbook example of a pub just getting better and better, without sacrificing quality along the way. The presentation of this well-deserved award will be on Tuesday, 15th Feb starting at 8:00pm. The Railway View is a ten minute walk from the bus and train stations. Turn left out of the train station (right out of the bus station) along Sunderland Street. Left at the traffic lights, straight on at the next traffic lights and left at the next lights onto Byrons Lane. If you want to travel by bus the 16 will drop you at the door; the 14 or X1 will drop you at Albion Mill, 50 yards from the pub; and the 9 will drop you on Coronation Street, 100 yards from the pub. JT/JC.

## National Winter Ales Festival

### Festival Round-up

Organisers of last month's CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival at the Upper Campfield Market, Castlefield, have hailed the event as an outstanding success with a record attendance over the three days. Festival Organiser Steve Prescott (who is also the Campaign For Real Ale's Regional Director) told Opening Times, "There have been many changes in the brewing industry over the past 12 months with some major brewery closures. But it's not all doom and gloom, and festivals like this show that companies are still developing distinctive and charismatic real ales." Despite the record numbers coming through the doors, a significant increase in the beer order meant that stocks lasted until closing time on Saturday night, unlike last year's premature closure. Plans are already under way for next year's festival, at the same venue in February 2001.

### Champion Beers

The highlight of the festival was the announcement of the Champion Winter Beer of Britain, won, of course, by our very own Old Tom. The results in each category are:

### Old Ales & Strong Milds

Gold - Theakstons Old Peculier  
Silver - Gales Festival Mild

### Stouts and Porters

Gold - Wye valley Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout  
Silver - High Force Cauldron Stout

### Barley Wines

Gold - Robinson's Old Tom  
Silver - Burton Bridge Old Expensive  
All these went forward to the supreme championship where Old Tom beat Old Peculier into second place with Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout gaining the third place.





### Welsh Rarebit

So you've done the rounds, had a few interesting beers and enjoyed good company. You feel at one with the world and well satisfied with life. You walk past the chippy a minute after it has closed, and suddenly an attack of the infamous 'munchies' descends on you. What to do? Toast? Toast and jam? Or delicious Welsh rarebit? Of course the latter would water most mouths and provide a substantial weapon with which to attack the munchies.

My recipe will allow enough for 4-5 servings and which will keep for a fortnight or so - and provide a store to raid on those 'munchie' nights.

#### Ingredients

- ½ a small onion or 1 shallot
- ¼ pint pale ale
- 1lb tasty Lancashire cheese
- 1 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 tablespoon flour
- A little oil
- ¼ pint milk

#### Method

Very finely dice the onion or shallot and sweat this in a little oil until soft. Gently blend in the flour and mustard, and stir until light brown. Slowly add the milk to form a sauce. Crumble in the cheese until ½ pound has been blended in. Then add some beer and stir, then some cheese and stir, and so on until each has gone. Leave to cool and place into a tightly covered plastic container, refrigerate until needed. To serve simply spread generously on toast and grill until slightly charred.

## COMPETITION

As its the first competition of 2000. Paul Stanyer, Licensee of the Swan with Two Necks is Stockport has set a stickler, but the prize is worth the hard work.

Using your knowledge of Beers, or a Good Beer Guide, complete the grid in a clockwise spiral, the last letter of an answer being the start of the next. We have given you the first letter. The prize this month is a Robinsons Sweat Shirt. If any pub or brewery would like to sponsor the prize for the OT Competition, please let us know.

- (1) This Stockport ale was Champion Winter Beer this year - 2 words.
- (2) Is he holding a tea party for B&T?
- (3) Sounds like someone is getting knighted at Icen.
- (4) Did Beowulf use this to hit his anvil?
- (5) Cannon Royal fire this?
- (6) Baby Mallard
- (7) Cotleigh produce this bird of prey
- (8) Murder someone! In Houston?
- (9) Drinking this may give you bad dreams.
- (10) EX-QUOIN may be vernal of Everard (anag.)
- (11) Heartless box returned with head of Sutton will give you this Devon brew.
- (12) Is Al going round the bend to Saddleworth?



1,0				2		
	6					
9						7
	12				10	
						3
	11					
5				8		
	4					

Entries to: OT Competition, 45 Bulkeley St, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9HD by 25 February please.

## 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

# sandbar



beer trading limited

From the popular World beer bar and Alle Biere company

## GERMAN BEER

### CASES FROM £28

20 x 0.5l BOTTLES OF YOUR CHOICE PER CASE  
INCLUDING A RETURNABLE DEPOSIT  
DELIVERY NATIONAL £8



17

## SAMPLE THEM

AT SANDBAR & SEE OUR CELLARS  
**CAMRA PUB OF THE MONTH**  
STOCKPORT & SOUTH MANC. FEB 98  
120 grosvenor st, all saints, manchester, m1.7hl

0161 273 2814

fax 0161 273 5802

WHOLESALE AND OFF LICENCE

CASH AND CARRY OR HOME DELIVERY



# 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

Diary

## FEBRUARY 2000

**Thursday 10th** – Branch Meeting: Nursery, Green Ln, Heaton Norris. **NB GBG 2001 selections will be made at this meeting.**

**Monday 14th** – Social: Kro Bar, 325 Oxford Rd, Chorlton-on-Medlock (opp. Students Union, next to Natwest). Starts 9.00pm.

**Thursday 17th** – Pub of the Month presentation to the Victoria, Hall St, Offerton. 8.00pm onwards. **NB Change of Date**

**Monday 21st** – Social: Arden Arms, Millgate, Stockport. Starts 9.00pm.

**Tuesday 22nd** – Beer Festival committee meeting: Nursery, Green Lane, Heaton Norris. Starts 8.15pm

**Friday 25th** – Hazel Grove Stagger: 7.30pm Rising Sun; 8.30 Grapes. Both on A6, Rising Sun next to 192 terminus.

**Monday 28th** – Social: Hogshead, Wilmslow Rd, Didsbury. Starts 9.00pm

**Friday 3rd March** – Minibus trip round some of the better pubs in East Manchester. Departs Crown, Heaton Ln, 7.30pm. Book with John Hutchinson on 434 7177.

**Monday 6th** – Social: Railway, Avenue St, Portwood, Stockport. Starts 9.00pm.

**Thursday 9th** – Branch Meeting: Boars Head, Market Place, Stockport. **Guest Speaker – David Thompson, MD Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries. A good turnout please.** Starts 8.00pm

## FEBRUARY 2000

**prompt please.**

**Saturday 11th** – Presentation of Pub of the Year award to Ye Olde Woolpack, Brinksway, Stockport. 8.00pm onwards.

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

**Monday 7th** – Branch Meeting: Sportsmans Arms, Mottram Rd, Hyde. 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 notified us of the following events:*

**Tuesday 15th** – Pub of the Season presentation to the Railway View, Byrons Lane Macclesfield. Starts 8.00pm.

**Monday 21st** – Committee Meeting: Davenport Arms, Congleton Road, Marton. Starts 8.00pm.

**Monday 28th** – Monthly Branch Meeting: Farmers Arms, Chapel Lane, Wilmslow. Starts 9.00pm.

**Greater Manchester Branches AGM and Regional Meeting.**

**Saturday 25 March:** The Orwell, Wigan. Starts 12.30pm

To Do Address Notepad Anniversary CAMRA 33 Planner

Claire and Howard welcome you to the city centre's friendly Ale House

# FABULOUS FEBRUARY BEER FESTIVAL

## Among Our BEERS:

Arundel Romeo's Rover; Hopback Flintknapper; Batemans Kiss Me Quick, Valiant; Ridley's ESB, Valentine; Charles Wells Eagle IPA, Josephine Grimley; Harviestoun Storm Force, 70/-; Oakhill Best, Mendip Gold, Yeoman Strong; Tom Wood Lincolnshire Legend, Old Timber; Smiles Best Bitter, Old Toss; Hall & Woodhouse Badger Best, Tanglefoot; Banks Passion Ale; Rebellion Mutiny; Hoskins Bills Revenge; Old Mill Cupids Stunt; Titanic Best, Steerage, White Star; Cains Dragonheart; Wychwood Black Wych Stout...and many more

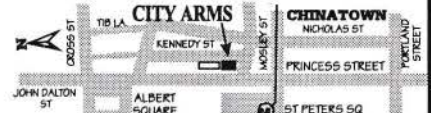


## KENNEDY STREET THE CITY ARMS

8 HANDPUMPS  
6 GUEST ALES  
LUNCHTIME FOOD  
11.30-2.30  
and 11.30 - 2.00  
Saturday



**FESTIVAL STARTS VALENTINES DAY FEBRUARY 14**



EARLY EVENING MEALS NOW SERVED!



## New Micro For Greater Manchester

While it's been a thin month for local brewery news, there has been one major development which will see the launch of the county's latest micro brewery.

Readers may recall Richard 'Suttie' Sutton as brewer at Manchester's Footage & Firkin, where he produced some pretty fine beers. After the Firkin breweries were closed by Punch Taverns he moved to become brewer at Phoenix in Heywood. He's now quit that job and bought the old brewing plant and casks from the former Firkin brewery in Dundee. He apparently picked all this up for a song (he won't say how much but his broad grin at the National Winter Ales Festival said it all) and is now looking for suitable premises in Rochdale. The aim is to be brewing by the end of this month - an ambitious timescale but knowing Suttie's enthusiasm one that could well be achieved. The brewery name will be announced in due course but we can reveal that there will be three beers initially - a 3.8 per cent hoppy bitter, a stronger bitter and a porter. More news when we have it but given the quality of the beers he has produced so far, we are all in for a treat.

### Bits and Bobs

Hyde's seasonal, Harry Vederchi proved to be a huge success with the first brew selling out in two weeks. Something of a brewery record, it seems. This eminently drinkable 4.8 per cent beer should still be around this month, to be followed in March by Clever Endeavour, a 4.5 per cent beer celebrating the achievements of Captain Cook.

JW Lees have also launched their latest seasonal, the superb Archer Stout. Dark, rich and quite powerful, this is a beer to look out for. Rain Bar in central Manchester will have some, of course. This month also sees the opening of Dave Porter's latest pub, the Arthur Inn in Bury. Dave himself has been conducting something of a publicity blitz recently, even gaining a large feature in the business pages of the Manchester Evening News.

Bridgewater Brewery are also now producing regular seasonal beers and two come out this month. TLC is a 4 per cent nut brown ale with a high hop profile using Cascade hops, while Inglewood Ale is 4.2 per cent and is a single varietal hop beer using the New Zealand Green Bullet hop (coincidentally, brewery salesman Danny just happens to hail from...New Zealand!). Next month look out for Mad Hare, a 3.8 per cent mild (although it's not being marketed as such).



Make a date in your diary now! Stockport's 14th annual Beer and Cider Festival will be held in the Town Hall from June 1-3. Once again we will be hosting the National Cider & Perry Championships, with a terrific range of traditional ciders and perries. Beer lovers shouldn't worry, though - the usual huge range of milds, bitters, strong ales, stouts and porters will be available.

Work on the beer order was starting as we went to press but we can reveal that one of the beers to be sold has already been ordered...and brewed! Bridgewater Ales' Ten Cent, a 9.8 per cent alcohol-by-volume Imperial Stout will be maturing in cask for six months prior to the Festival and is a beer not to be missed (but also treated with caution!).

Many thanks are again due to the Stockport Express for once again sponsoring the event and to Paul Stanyer of the Swan With Two necks for acting as Festival licensee.

**STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL JUNE 1-3**

## New Stealth Tax Threatens Price Hike

CAMRA has joined forces with organisations representing Britain's independent brewers to fight a back-door tax rise which could cost the industry £15 million a year, and lead to price rises at the bar.

Smaller brewers, who can't avoid expensive metering equipment, have traditionally slightly overfilled their casks to avoid falling foul of Weights & Measures laws. Just before Christmas, Customs & Excise unilaterally declared that the overfill would be taxed from 1 January - imposing a small but significant duty increase on smaller brewers at a time when they are desperate for a cut to help them compete with bigger, more efficient brewers.

The industry has been granted a stay of execution for a few weeks - but Customs is said to be still set on collecting its 'stealth tax'. These actions would also seem to fly in the face of the policies pursued by their ultimate boss, Chancellor Gordon Brown, who has recognised the industry's plight by freezing beer duty in recent budgets.

Representatives from CAMRA and independent brewers' groups have given evidence to the House of Commons Excise Panel and have pointed out that it's the smallest brewers who are already at a competitive disadvantage who will suffer most from the Customs diktat.

Society of Independent Brewers chair Carola Brown said small brewers simply couldn't afford the control systems which would prevent overfill. "Most people would applaud us for trying to make sure our customers get full value", she said. "Now Customs will effectively fine those who do so."

Local brewers Frederic Robinson are also leading the fight. Brewery Chairman Peter Robinson told Opening Times: "The change was originally planned to take effect from New Year's Day - ironic, considering the Chancellor froze beer duty in his last budget so as not to spoil the millennium party. Although Customs & Excise have now agreed to postpone the increase by a few weeks they insist it will still go ahead. But it's unjust and we'll be fighting it all the way."

19

*Steve and Johanne welcome you to*

## De Olde Vic

1 Chatham Street, Edgeley, Stockport

### A 'Free House'

**Guest Beers Changing Weekly e.g.:**

**Kodiak Gold 4.0% abv**

**Ruddles County 4.7% abv**

**Charles Wells Bombadier 4.3% abv**

**Bridgewater Barton Ale 4.3% abv**

### House Bitter:

**Theakstons Best Bitter 3.9% abv**



Tuesday night  
is Quiz Night  
Wednesday Night  
- Meat Night



(currently 24 trays and increasing)

Please note - we have a zero tolerance policy towards bad language and/or bad attitude



The Shady Oak on Redford Drive, Bramhall, is now alternating Taylor's Landlord and Ind Coope Burton Ale, with both beers sometimes being available at busy times. The Taylor's, not surprisingly, has been very well received by the locals. Cask Tetley Bitter is also available. This Punch Taverns-owned pub is currently up for lease so its future remains uncertain at the time of writing.

We welcome Sandy Wall and partner Jayne as new licensees of the Three Bears, Jackson's Lane, Hazel Grove. This is their first pub in the "Opening Times" area but they have extensive experience in the licensed trade in Hartley's country in Cumbria. We wish them every success in this popular Robinson's pub which is one of the few to offer as many as four of their beers - Hatters Mild, Best Bitter, Hartleys XB and Frederics, all on handpump.

We hear that changes may be afoot in Hazel Grove with new licensees reported as being in the pipeline for both the Horse & Jockey and the Cock. More news when available. The Three Tunnes meanwhile, is going from strength to strength under its new licensees with reports of consistently excellent beer reaching us.

Two closed Stockport pubs finally bit the dust last month. Both the Coach & Horses, Portwood, and the Bridge Inn, Chestergate, have been reduced to rubble.

20

Popular licensees Ian and Dot Brookes left the Bakers Vaults (Market Place, Stockport) on 7th of this month. They went out in true style with a veritable festival of music at the pub and the legendary 'Mega Band' appearing on the final Saturday. Ian will be succeeded by Simon McLeod, a local man who comes with experience of the pub scene in London and also an impressive catering background. During a brief chat he told OT that he knows what makes the Bakers tick and no major changes are planned. Good news indeed and we wish him all the best in his new pub, as we do Ian and Dot as they take a well-earned rest.

In Didsbury we bid a fond farewell to Les and Ann from the Station who have moved to take over the reigns at Northenden Social Club, a private club selling cask beer from Tetley and Sam Smiths. No news of their replacements yet.

Another new set of faces to welcome, this time at the Plough (Hyde Road, Gorton) where Tony Lindsey and son Chris have taken over at this popular pub. Tony's a local Gorton man who has run a pub before, albeit a long time ago.

Paul and Bev Stanyer continue to settle into the Swan With Two Necks (Princes Street, Stockport), making improvements all the time. The back room has now been restored and brought into public use - and a very impressive job of work it is too. Home cooked food is now available and the pub opens all day, every day apart from Sundays when it closes at 4.00pm. On the beer front, Frederics continues to sell well and Paul has also managed to persuade the brewery to let him have the elusive Dark Mild from time to time, and hopefully in good time for our annual mild trail in May 2000.

The Arden Arms (Millgate, Stockport) is another high profile pub that changed hands late last year. Rose Senior has departed, to be replaced by Joe Quinn and Steve King who have set about restoring the pub to its former glory. Rose of course took over after the pub had endured quite a bumpy time, and the Arden has struggled to fulfil its potential for some years now. With luck, those days are now over and Joe and Steve have made an immediate impact with a thorough redecoration and spruce up. The pool table has gone, and in the Millgate Room the quarry tiled floor has been exposed and cleaned up. Period fireplaces have been installed and, unusually, have been brought into use with real coal fires. The furniture and bench seating have been polished and cleaned, and the pub once again has the gleam and sparkle that was the hallmark of Jack May's long term tenancy. Suitable prints and bric-a-brac complete the picture. On the downside, the snug behind the bar still hasn't been brought back into use - apparently there are health and safety issues arising from the fact that it can only be accessed by walking through the bar. Let's hope these are resolved in short order, as this room is one of the pub's essential features.

Joe and Steve made their names when they owned That Café in Levenshulme, which became something of a gastronomic oasis during their tenure. Not surprisingly then, a food operation forms an important part of their plans for the Arden, and while it may not be on the same scale as That Café, some very high quality pub food is in prospect. That's not to say the beer will be neglected - both the Hatters Mild and Best Bitter have been on top form when OT has called.

All in all, this is good news indeed for both the Arden in particular and the Stockport pub scene in general.

**OPENING TIMES 189 (January 2000)** Design and Origination by CPPR, a division of Connaught Technologies, Mcr. Office at: 8 The Green, Heaton Norris, Stockport SK4 2NP. Tel/Fax 0161 432 8384 E-mail pbh@opentime.u-net.com Printed by Redvers Press Failsworth.

## APPLICATION FOR CAMRA MEMBERSHIP

(Opening Times190)

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

**Paul Moss, 60 Adelaide Road, Bramhall, Stockport SK7 1LU**

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.

