



# OPENING TIMES



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## CHANGE AT LAST!

### Welcome Licensing Lifeline For Local Pubs And No 24-hour Drinking Binge

**S**weeping licensing reforms proposed in the Government's White Paper, published last month, could be a shot in the arm for Britain's community pubs, writes Ted Bruning.

And the proposed reforms will enable police and licensing authorities to crack down on the excesses encouraged by city-centre theme bars. As expected, Home Secretary Jack Straw is not proposing a 24-hour free-for-all. Licensees will have to submit their proposed hours for approval in advance, and the councillors who will take over the licensing function from magistrates will have the power to reject unsuitable hours such as 3am closing in quiet suburbs.

But licensees will also have to submit operating plans detailing proposals for dances, live entertainment, TV sport, and dining for approval in advance, giving neighbours a say in how their locals are run.

Another proposal is to make pubs more family-friendly by abolishing the failed Children's Certificate in favour of a presumption that properly supervised children should be allowed into almost all pubs. The Government sees this measure, along with a change to allow over-16s to drink wine with pub and restaurant meals as well as beer and cider, as a civilising influence on pub culture. It will also help country pubs cash in on the tourist market.

The bad news for circuit pub operators is that in future, understanding their social responsibilities is going to be a necessary qualification for licensees. On top of that, it will be harder to get away with serving under-age drinkers, and the police will have the power to close down rowdy or badly-run venues on the spot.

CAMRA, The Campaign for Real Ale, has welcomed plans for a more flexible approach to pub opening hours to meet the needs of today's consumers.

Mike Benner, Head of Campaigns and Communications said, "The Government plans to reform all aspects of licensing law in order to modernise current laws which are archaic, over-bureaucratic, and have no place in today's society, but the main area of interest to consumers is that of opening hours."

"A more permissive approach to liquor licensing will benefit all consumers, whether they are regular pub goers or not. Residents and communities will have a say in the permitted hours set for each pub and it is therefore highly unlikely that all pubs will be allowed to open 24 hours a day. CAMRA urges the Government to stand its ground on reform, but to ensure that residents have proper protection from problem pubs." Despite gloomy predictions that longer hours will lead to increased alcohol abuse and related crime, previous liberalisation measures in 1988 and 1995 led to more choice for consumers, a more relaxed approach to enjoying alcohol and did not lead to significant increases in consumption or alcohol related crime.

Britain's prohibitive licensing laws have increased problems with alcohol related disorder and we look forward to a time when younger pub goers adopt a more relaxed and responsible approach to enjoying alcohol. Treating adults like adults is a step in the right direction which will help us Britons shake off the 'lager louts of Europe' label."

## Festival News

We are now well and truly in the run-up to this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival, once again kindly sponsored by the Stockport Express. The entertainment is booked, the glasses and T-shirts ordered, the license obtained (many thanks to Paul Stanyer of the Swan With Two Necks for being our licensee) and, most importantly, the beer and cider order has been worked out.

As usual Opening Times is taking this opportunity to bring you just a small taster of the many beers on offer. There really will be something for every taste, whether you like mild, bitter, stout or strong ales. There will be up to eight milds available from the classic Black Country Highgate Mild, the superb Phoenix Monkey Town Mild and the powerful Swale Death By Chocolate Mild at a powerful 6 per cent ABV. Lovers of bitter will be well catered for with no less than 56 standard and premium bitters available during the course of the Festival. Roosters Brewery will again be brewing a Festival Special for us and this will have to compete with heavy-weight contenders such as Passageway, Marble, Kelham Island, Phoenix and Swale, whose stunning India Summer Pale Ale is

this year joined by Forty Winks (3.7%) and Kentish Gold Ale (4.5%). Among many highlights for lovers of the hop will be Durham White Velvet and the glorious White Squall from Grantham's Newby Wyke Brewery. Old favourites returning this year include Yates's Bitter and Taylor's Landlord which will be joined by newcomers Pictish Brewing Company who are sending their full range including the wonderful Pictish Porter. This will be one of 10 stouts and porters which include Beartown Polar Eclipse, Salopian Ironbridge Stout, a former Beer of the Festival, the wonderfully named Black Stump from the Barge & Barrel brewpub in Yorkshire and a welcome return for Lamp Oil porter from the relaunched Aspinall's Craft Brewery.

There will also be 10 special beers including the perennial favourite Oakham White Dwarf which is joined by two ginger beers, Ginger Marble and Salopian Gingersnap (both 4.5%) and Fraoch Heather Ale. Bringing up the rear we also have 8 strong ales and this year there are some real treats here. Robinson's Old Tom is a firm favourite of course but others to try include Bridgewater Ten Cents, a 10% imperial stout which has been maturing for six months, and Marble Wee Star (9%) a powerful winter ale which has been maturing since last November. Also maturing from November is Oakham's Cold Turkey (6.3%), a beer which had 35 bottles of port added to the fermenting vessel!

So, something for everyone. Do remember, though, that not all beers will be on at the same time and one or two may not even arrive (although we usually have an acceptable alternative if that happens). Festival Website at: [www.stockportfestival.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.stockportfestival.fsnet.co.uk)



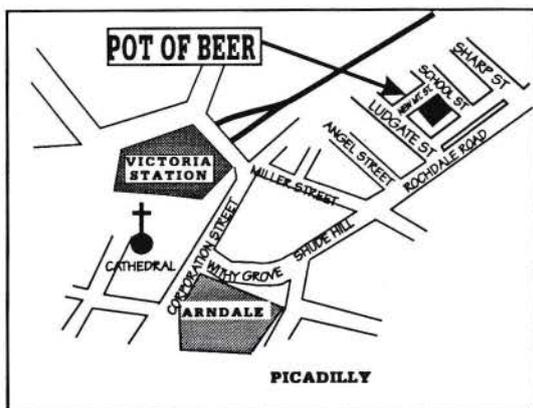
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## IN THE EDITOR'S VIEW..

The Government White Paper on licensing reform is very welcome. In some areas it has gone even further than observers expected and could very well herald the biggest shake-up in the licensing law for 200 years.

The proposals are a long way from becoming law, though. While they could come into force next summer if all goes smoothly, those of us who want to see these reforms still face a fight to stop them being watered down.

While most interested parties, including Alcohol Concern, broadly agree with the main proposals of the White Paper, the danger comes more from grass-roots organisations such as residents' associations voicing fear about public nuisance which are based on a combination of misinformation and over-simplistic media reports. Local people can be assured that there isn't going to be a 24-hour free-for-all, that there isn't going to be chaos on the streets, that their local pubs aren't going to be open all hours, and that they will have more say, not less, in what goes on.

The experience of relaxation of licensing controls in Scotland, and of the 1988 and 1995 licensing reforms, demonstrates that fears of public drunkenness and increased alcohol consumption simply don't materialise.

These measured proposals will benefit everyone – licensees, pub-goers and local residents alike. Let's not throw all that away just because of a few sensationalist headlines and the activities of a handful of neo-prohibitionist scaremongers.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Just as we went to press the story broke that beer drinking really can be good for you. When a similar story broke about red wine the hoity-toity, London-based media fell over themselves to report the fact. It will be interesting to see if they given similar prominence to good old beer. I think we can all guess the answer to that one. Meanwhile, those of us in the real world will continue to enjoy our favourite tippie safe in the knowledge that a little of what you fancy does you good. Cheers!

*John Clarke*

## OPENING TIMES ISSUE 193

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**Fight for Consumer Choice in Pubs - Join CAMRA now - see page 23!**

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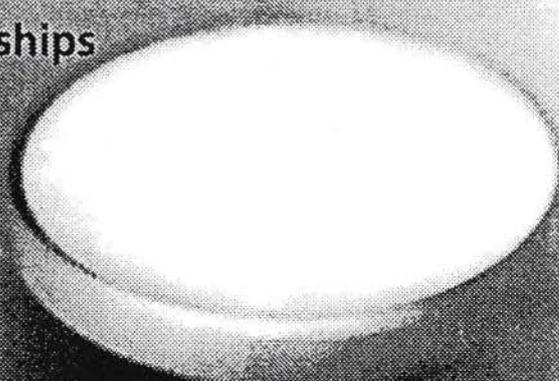
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**Congratulations to Jane Patchett of Hydes' The Crown, on Cheadle High Street, who ran in the London Marathon, and achieved a time of 4 hours 55 minutes - not bad for a first-timer! Jane was raising money for the British Heart Foundation: her target was £1000, but she's expecting to total over £1600, including a chunky donation from Hydes Brewery. Jane said that it was a "fantastic day" - and thanks everyone who supported her. Well done!**

It was just 12 months ago that we reported on something of a cask ale revival at Stockport's Nelson Tavern where bar-cellarman Dean Farrah had spearheaded the introduction of changing guest beers. He was also instrumental in the running of several successful in-house beer festivals and told OT that there was a significant demand for cask beer in the pub. Not any more it seems. A change of management has seen the departure of Dean (to the Blarney Stone was the last thing we heard) and the cask beer as well - when OT called recently only one handpump had a pump clip on it, and that was turned round. Presumably this is down to a management decision and a particularly barmy one it has to be said. Let's hope that common sense soon prevails - don't hold your breath.

The Midway, Newbridge Lane, Stockport, has had a makeover and very impressive it is too. The pub has been opened out a little but still has that country feel, albeit in a more modern style with warm, orange-washed walls. The menu looks impressive and, commendably, food is served for most of the day. Three cask beers are sold - Boddingtons Bitter, the much-improved Courage Directors and Tetley Bitter (although the clip for this was reversed when OT called).

Something a little more enterprising on the beer front would be welcome but nevertheless the Midway is still well worth a visit.

Elsewhere in the Portwood area, the picture is less happy. The Coach & Horses is now a levelled sight while the Rifle Volunteer remains closed, although it does appear to be occupied upstairs. A brighter note is struck by the return of the Old King to the real ale fold, which now has Worthington Bitter on handpump.

**In Edgeley, the Pineapple on Castle Street has ended its brief flirtation with cask beer and has now reverted to the keg-only pub that it has been for years.**

Staying in Edgeley, and by way of a complete contrast, the guest beer range at Ye Olde Vic has really taken off recently, and the quality is second-to-none as well.. When he took over last year landlord Steve Brannan declared it was his aim to restore the pub to its glory days under Kay Ord and he seems to be well on the way to succeeding with a vengeance and the Vic must now rate as one of the best pubs in town.

**As readers will know, the Crown, Heaton Lane, Stockport, changed hands last month. Lorraine James has been suc-**



Top picture: Lorraine James Leaves The Crown on a high note. Lower Picture - new licensees Graham & Jeanette

ceeded by Graham Mascord and Jeanette Walsmsley who took over on 5th April. CAMRA members both, this is Graham and Jeanette's first pub and despite a slightly shaky start (Graham still winces at the memory of the day they had no cask beer), it looks as though the pub is in very safe hands. The question on everyone's lips of course was, what happens to the guest beers? There are some restrictions and for the time being some of the guests have to come from a pretty uninspiring list (although it contains one or two gems) but in addition three independently sourced guest beers are available at any one time.

Real cider (Inch's West Country) has also made a welcome reappearance along with a growing range of single malts. Also of note is a welcome range of special promotions. If three or more share a car then the driver gets free soft drinks for the night; on Wednesdays there is the 'jug club' with a four-pint jug available for the price of three pints and on Sundays between 7 and 10pm there is a 10% discount for OAPs, students and CAMRA members.

Some work is also promised on the pub, mainly on the living quarters but also including a much-needed external makeover during the first week of June. Graham also hopes to realise the potential of the back garden and live bands may make a reappearance.

So far trade has fluctuated, as has always been the case with the Crown but bearing in mind Graham's philosophy of "I don't serve beer to people that I wouldn't drink myself", it is clearly a pub that remains an essential destination on the Stockport drinking map.





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## PUB OF THE MONTH MAY 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	30	31			



**T**he Stockport & South Manchester Pub of the Month for May is The Kings Hall, Cheadle Hulme.

This J D Wetherspoon pub opened in September 1998 and immediately became popular with drinkers of all ages. The premises were previously a Chinese restaurant and, as is usual with Wetherspoons, the conversion is very attractive. There is a variety of seated and standing drinking areas which break up the 'one big room' feel. At the back is a good sized conservatory which is the no-smoking area. There is a toilet for disabled people downstairs whilst the main toilets are on the first floor – and this is when most people discover that the pub also has another drinking area with a rather unusual balcony setting. On hot nights, the outdoor drinking areas, both front and back, are extremely popular. The pub is open all permitted hours and food is available for most of that time. It is on the beer front that The Kings Hall excels. In addition to the regular Boddingtons Bitter, Theakstons Bitter and Courage Directors, there are usually four changing guest beers. Credit for this range, and the quality, goes to managers Carl and Lindsay Waldron who have been at the pub since it opened. This isn't the first Wetherspoons pub that Carl and Lindsay have run though, as they were previously in charge at The Moon On The Hill in Harrow. They also have a fine team of staff who contribute to making The Kings Hall a popular and successful pub.

With a friendly atmosphere, it is not surprising that half the clientele are female. The pub also attracts diners of all ages; young people – particularly Thursday to Saturday evenings – and discerning drinkers who like good beer at a reasonable price.

Why not join us on Thursday 25th May when we present Carl and Lindsay with our Pub of the Month award. The Kings Hall is well served by public transport. Buses 157, 313 and 369 all stop very close by in the evenings while the railway station is only a couple of minutes walk away.

DS.

*The local branch of CAMRA decide on a Pub of the Month by a democratic vote at the monthly branch meeting.*

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**STAGGER**

with guest beer writer Mark McConachie

**T**hough we refer to these outings as a stagger (honest Gov I'm perfectly sober), this month would be better described as a desperate crawl through a beer desert from one rare oasis to another.

The evening kicked off in the Sir Edwin Chadwick, a recently opened outlet on Stockport Road, but a few yards from Dickenson Road. Business at 7.30pm was brisk, and the pub was, as is normal, busy. The Sir Edwin Chadwick is that rare commodity, a Wetherspoon's pub filled with locals. There is an agreeable mix of young and old at all times, the proportions varying as the day progresses. Wetherspoon's three regular ales (Boddingtons, Theakstons and Courage Directors) were on offer, along with tonight's two guests, Ash Vine Heavy Load and Ringwood's 49er. Prices are always keen, both guests costing a mere £1.29. Inside, the former supermarket has been well turned out, with comfy easy chairs to either side of the entrance door, stools around the bar and two raised areas with tables and chairs towards the rear. As summer is (supposedly!) just around the corner, take note that there are not one, but two outdoor drinking areas, a patio to the front and an extensive garden to the rear. Reluctantly we had to leave and embark on what proved an interesting evening.

A few yards along Stockport Road found us at O'Connors, a Tetley's house of many years standing. We entered up a few steps into what was originally a two or maybe three roomed house. All rooms are now knocked together, but the entrance corridor divides the pub into two drinking areas, with the bar being in front as you enter. The Green, White and Gold was much in evidence, but that was to be expected in a proper Irish pub on St Patrick's night. A jukebox was playing, but was easily drowned out by the locals singing traditional Irish songs. Two beers appeared to be on offer, Tetley's bitter, and quite surprisingly Coach House's Dick Turpin. Beer selection was however a little problematic. Instead of turning round the pump clip, it was only the Wallace (and Grommit) figure, perched atop the hand-pump, which was reversed. This subtlety even fooled the barman. Unfortunately the Tetley's on offer was not up to much, hardly a surprise as everyone else was drinking Guinness. Local knowledge saved a walk to the Bay Horse, which, notwithstanding the sign outside declaring real ales, is all keg. A quick look into Reilys Tavern/Ceili Inn at the end of Slade Lane revealed this was also keg. Cutting under the railway along Stanley Grove led us past The Huntingdon, yet another keg only pub.

At last, as we walked along Pink Bank Lane, an oasis came into view in the form of The Garratt. Holts built this pub in the 1960's(?) as a community local. The large lounge is at the front and equipped with a stage, while the public bar is to the rear. Both the mild and bitter were in excellent condition, or was our judgement clouded by the deprivations imposed upon us by the wealth of keg pubs encountered? A man was setting up a sound system in preparation for a live concert. Posters on the notice board revealed that entertainment is a common feature. Unfortunately we could not stay to listen, as we had to get along to our 8.30pm meeting point.

We need not have bothered! Back on Stockport Road, The Little Vic was, yet again, a keg pub. This disappointment was quickly followed by discovering that Biddy Mulligans and The Farmers Kipper were also keg, despite the former sporting a large sign suggesting otherwise. Proceeding south along Stockport Road, we passed the closed and boarded Church Inn (oh well, at least it's not serving keg!). Hennigans Bar was also passed as, yes you guessed, it's keg.

At last, our second oasis! Just off Stockport Road the Horseshoe is both still decorated in Wilsons house style, and still servers real ale! As you enter the door you have to make a choice, left takes you into the lounge, while to the right is the public bar. Business was very brisk, helped by the live music (karaoke?) session taking place in the lounge. Only one real ale, John Smiths Bitter, was on sale, but as this was infinitely more real ale than we had encountered since entering Levenshulme, way back at the Little Vic, we drank it with relish (I thought mine was horrible - ed).

Around the corner, back on Stockport Road we eagerly entered the Union. This is a recent Pub of The Month, and has previously been in the Good Beer Guide. Imagine our surprise when being told that real ale was now only available at the weekends! Back out on Stockport

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# 14th STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL - JUNE 1 to JUNE 3, 2000

Road we quickly passed the **Railway** and **Fiddlers Green**, as both are keg. This brought us to the **Levenshulme** where a hand-pump was spied through the window. Alas, on entering we found that the pump-clip was reversed, no real ale here either! A longish walk finally brought us to the **Wheatsheaf**, which stand at the junction of Stockport Road and Broom Lane. Oh woe! Yet another hand-pump with the clip reversed greeted us!

Mutiny was beginning to break out in the ranks by this point. Those members who had joined us at the halfway stage had only seen real ale in one pub! 'Salvation is just around the corner' we assured them, and duly retired to **The Sidings** on Broom Lane. At last! Joy of joys! What an oasis! Excellent pints of Holts mild and bitter! The beer was so good (and we were so early) that a few pints were consumed. The Sidings was built new by Holts in the late 80's on the site of some old railway sidings (a coal yard in later days I hazily recollect). A large lounge is tastefully subdivided by glass and wood screens, while the public bar has a popular pool table and darts board. The pub was very busy, with a group performing in the lounge, but not in support of St Patrick, rather to raise money for a local family who had suffered a sad bereavement.

Reluctantly we had to move on. The majority of our host decided to abandon Levenshulme and return to their local haunts, but three carried on to the last pub. Walking north down Broom Lane we turned right onto Barlow Road to arrive at **The Polygon**. Unfortunately this pub is often overlooked, as it is not on the A6. On entering, the public bar is on the left and the much larger lounge is to the right. Two beers were on offer, Boddingtons and House bitter. Being adventurous, and throwing caution to the wind, we chose House and were rewarded with a very agreeable pint.

How can I summarise this stagger? Adjectives such as dire, depressing and ghastly come to mind, but then I remember the (few) highlights. How can Wetherspoons and Holts supply keenly priced, excellent ales, all year round, while next door there is only over-priced, super cooled fizzy keg on offer? Maybe St Patrick's night diverted the attention of some landlords? The only way for you to check/dismiss this theory is try the stagger yourself.

**WHO** will succeed Weston's as holders of CAMRA's Cider and Perry of the Year awards? There's only one place to find out -



Stockport Beer & Cider Festival next month. Following the successful move of this prestigious competition from the Great British Beer Festival to a time in the year which best suits the product, we are hosting the event for the third time at the Town hall during our Beer Festival.

A he list of ciders and perries commonly available is being drawn up by APPLE, CAMRA's special cider and perry committee. This will now be whittled down and will form the bulk of our cider order. The total order will again be in the region of 250 gallons and will cover all spectrums of taste from the sweet to the very dry.

Final judging will be on Saturday 3rd June with the winners announced sometime during the afternoon session. Also to be announced at the same time is this year's winner of the Pomona Award, presented annually to that person or organisation that has done most to promote traditional cider and perry during the previous 12 months.

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Hart (Mottram)*

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# O P E N I N G T I M E S

From David Bottomley, Dukinfield:

I have just read the letter from David Porter in the Opening Times April edition, regarding the omission of the Railway from the 2001 edition of the Good Beer Guide.

David Porter's letter asks many understandable questions about our organisation. If CAMRA is really committed to ensuring the survival of real ale, how can it justify delisting the Railway because of some petty rules and regulations, rather than promoting public awareness of an establishment providing an excellent range of beers at a fantastic price. I am amazed that such a decision has been made.

In your own words, Opening Times January 2000 front page, "The high beer quality for which the Railway is known, has continued under the new regime". Also, "the Railway is also in good hands, with the arrival of new manager Fleming Robb-Brown, a licensee of many years experience", yet still you remove the pub from the Guide!

Is this how our branch intends to fight the rise of nitrokeg, first delist the Buffet Bar and now the Railway, seems more like surrender to me.

As a CAMRA member, I am concerned that such a decision will result in visitors to the Stockport area missing out on a pub that provides excellent service and beer quality. Indeed, what would visiting members from outside the area think of a branch that removes such an excellent and worthy pub from the Guide, a pub that is worthy to be included in the Mild Trail, yet not the Good Beer Guide.

This pub has been a start or finish to many a Stagger round Stockport centre ever since David Porter first opened for business, and will continue to be so, a sentiment that I know is shared by my friends and I am sure will be echoed by many other CAMRA members.

I feel that we must now review the way in which the organisation reaches such decisions, and makes changes as appropriate, perhaps a web page to display local entries and invite comments before any final decision is made.

This situation facing David Porter is frankly ludicrous. This CAMRA branch is alienating the very people, like David Porter, who have shown a strong commitment to the cause.

(A similar letter was received from M Knowles of Denton. I can't comment on the Buffet Bar as this is a matter for the High Peak branch (of which both Messrs Bottomley and Knowles are members) rather than Stockport & South Manchester. As to selection procedures and the like, the answer is to take part in local branch activities and have an input. Carping from the sidelines after the deed is done will achieve nothing - Ed(1).)

From: A Children's Nurse (name and address supplied):

I feel compelled to write in response to Dave Porter's letter in April's Opening Times.

While I can understand Mr Porter's sadness at the exclusion of The Railway from the 2001 Good Beer Guide, and I also respect his right to voice an opinion, I feel he takes the matter too far.

To my knowledge the rules on selection of Good Beer Guide pubs have been in place since before I joined the branch 10 years ago. I have no problem with it, the fact that the rules have not been changed in this time would suggest that the majority of branch members feel the same way. Surely if they felt the "extensive dismay" Mr Porter suggests they do, the rule would have been changed by now?

CAMRA is a consumer organisation; those members of the branch who bother to turn up to branch meetings and voice their opinions make the internal rules of the branch. The rules are not made to fit in with the way Mr Porter "runs his operations"! Further to Mr Porter's suggestion that an Emergency General Meeting be called to change the rules, I find this ludicrous! An Emergency General Meeting is called for just that, Emergency! These meetings are not called at the whim of a brewer who is behaving like a spoilt child and stamping his feet when he doesn't get his own way.

From 'A concerned Branch Member' by e-mail (name and address supplied).

Re the delisting of the Railway - although I no longer participate in CAMRA activities at a branch level with any great frequency, I did try to attend the Good Beer Guide Selection meeting, because I knew some idiocy would probably happen. (In the event a broken down car, the slightly less than one-hour response plus repair time plus having to nurse the car home - but well done - as usual - to the AA - prevented my attendance). Could I have prevented what happened? No.

I have to say that where there are rules albeit informal and consensual, and the branch has had this one as long as I can remember, I agree they should be adhered to. I think I would probably, however, have argued for bending them to breaking point in this instance, especially in view of what else happened. The editor's (ed (1)) rather prissy and pompous reply to David Porter's letter reflects that he is also Branch Chairman, a job which by and large he does very well, but he defends the committee and meeting with a vigour that to me has more than a hint of smug conceit.

David Porter brews brilliant beer. David Porter runs a small group of excellent pubs all with outstanding real ales, all of which I have now visited. They are clean, friendly, promote real ale and CAMRA, allow no filtering back of any sort, and are centres for the local community. Everything, in fact that we are about. If you remember the hideous kinky incarnations of Porters Railway in Stockport before David bought it, the man should be thanked for ever.....but. David also has a Zeppelin sized ego problem, and at one time or another has rubbed almost everyone up the wrong way. I would not therefore have given too much credence to his moans about conspiracies, had I not learned that the rules were stretched to breaking point (or beyond in my view) to admit another pub to the guide at the very same meeting, a pub that while excellent NOW, had a poor track record for beer quality and no regular place in the GBG for years, simply because a well known licensee from another GBG pub had moved in. Hmm.

Now clearly in the real world, where the Guide is not actually published until October and serves for the following year, (but the decisions have to be made in February - I mean talk about an organisation not being able to organise a piss up in a brewery) - BOTH these fine establishments should be included. In the case of Porters, its absence from a guide for people unfamiliar with the area is a disgrace when you consider the marginal merits of a number of other entries. It is in part the reason why Alistair Airds Good Pub Guide far outsells CAMRA's Good Beer Guide. In the dream world occupied by the more anorakky and reality-challenged CAMRA hacks, NEITHER should be in. In no way should ONE be in and not the OTHER. So I am afraid I am forced to think that some revenge is being taken for David's frequent and voluble carping - especially about beer selection policy for Stockport Beer Festival (a matter where I am in total agreement with him).

The Good Beer Guide pub selection criteria about length of tenure and methods of ascertaining beer quality are a matter for branches, according to CAMRA HQ. In the local branch it is a matter of long tradition that gets bent a bit almost every year. And sadly, I have to say, Stockport & South Manchester, despite everything, has among the most professional criteria used by any branch nationally. Common sense must be applied not petty indulgences of revenge, or cliques. The rule of law should be applied equally, and could have been done easily, by provisionally putting both in, and withdrawing one or either, before the final deadline of late May/June, if necessary. Even our erstwhile colleagues in North Manchester tend to show a bit more sense over such matters.

(Ed (1) and I are not of one mind on this issue. Whereas the letter perhaps goes too far towards conspiracy theory, I tend to side with David and his supporters on this one. Still we are not yet 'New' CAMRA despite some people's efforts, so some dissent can be tolerated - though Ed(1) will no doubt demur - Ed(2). Well, I must admit I had forgotten that it had to be a transfer from GBG pub to GBG pub, and I don't think I was being smug, just a tad minimalist in my answer. Whatever, the Branch's decision, is, as they say, final. We resume next year and NOT before! Ed(1))

From David Porter, Porter Brewing Co:

My letter was meant 'to stir things up'.

If the Campaign listened to common sense I think it would be a better organisation for it. Unfortunately now the damage is done.

I have nothing against you personally but unfortunately you are the 'front man' and therefore will come in for some stick! Those people who live in ivory towers make easy targets.

Please cancel the PBC Ltd advert in Opening Times. Do not organise any group CAMRA activity or promotion that involves the Railway, I have ordered Fleming not to make you welcome.

(Those CAMRA members who have sprung to the defence of the pub will be doubtless be pleased to learn that Mr Porter has now ordered the licensee not to make them welcome, or so it would seem from this letter. In the course of a, fairly ill-tempered, conversation with Dave he made it clear to me that he did not want the pub to appear in the 2002 Good Beer Guide and nor should we attempt to give the Railway a Pub of the Month award. Given the superb beer quality at the pub both of these eventualities would have been almost foregone conclusions and to deny the pub and Fleming's efforts that recognition really is an injustice. Sadly it seems our hands are tied and I trust that those who wish to take issue with what now will appear to be the pub's continued lack of recognition will direct their protests to Mr Porter rather than CAMRA in general or this publication in particular. This correspondence is now closed. No more letters till 2001, please. - Ed(1). Oh dear, David can really be an idiot when he has a mind to. I suggest you ignore Dave's childish drivel above and just enjoy the beer - oh, and don't wear a branch T-shirt in his pubs! - Ed(2).)

From: Peter Edwardson, Heaton Norris:

On a recent visit to Wetherspoon's Moon Under Water on Deansgate in Manchester, I spotted a handpump with a chalk-written pumpclip saying "John Smiths, £1.15". I ordered a pint of the guest beer, but this had come to the end of the barrel so the barman suggested I choose something else. As you see cask John Smith's so rarely nowadays, I pointed at the handpump and asked for a pint. Before I had chance to stop him, the barman had gone away and poured a pint of John Smith's Smooth instead.

I objected to this and said I wanted the handpumped beer, only to be told that the pub did not stock it, and indeed he doubted whether it even existed. He suggested that I should try the Smooth, but I assured him that I had in the past and did not wish to repeat the experience. It was then grudgingly exchanged for a pint of Boddingtons that proved to be very lacklustre. At no point was I offered a refund of the difference between the price of the guest beer and the price of the beer I ended up with. I hope this was an isolated incident and not an indication that Wetherspoons are going to start using misleading handpumps on a large scale.

From Tony Williams (via e-mail):

"Stagger" in April's edition of Opening Times has finally prompted me to write about something which has always puzzled me; why, in what appears to be at least 90 percent of Robinson's pubs, is it only possible to buy Best or Hatters?

On the rare occasions when I have found them, Stockport Bitter has proved to be a pleasant thirstquencher, Frederic's is an impressive strong ale, Old Tom needs no praise from me and Dark Mild was much appreciated by my wife.

In contrast, I have always been unimpressed by Best - it is within a point of the strength of my favourite Timmy Taylor Landlord bitter but has only half the flavour - and my wife, a mild fan, is equally underwhelmed with Hatters. Is it due to brewery policy, or unimaginative landlords, or undemanding drinkers? I would love to know!

(The restricted availability of Dark Mild is down to the brewery who make no secret of the fact that they would like to kill it off, (so all credit to them for keeping it going for the handful of outlets which sell it). All of the other beers - including Hartleys XB - are available to any pub that wants to take them. In fairness many pubs did try Frederic's when it came out but found that a combination of high strength and relatively high price made for disappointing sales - Ed(1).)





**T**his month sees the appearance of new seasonal beers from two of our established family brewers. Both are 4.2 per cent ABV but are quite different beers. Hydes' latest in their T'ale of the Century range is Hair Raid, commemorating Sir Winston Churchill, and which promised to be a rounded, robust premium beer. JW Lees are producing White Bear, a crisp, refreshing wheat beer - their first foray into the wheat beer field. Many Hydes' pubs should be taking Hair Raid while the City Centre's Rain Bar will be a guaranteed outlet for White Bear.

**Robbies Latest**

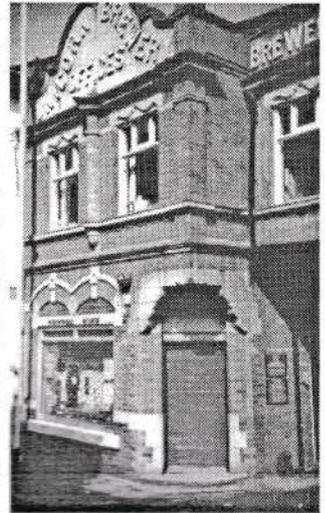
No new beers from Robinson's, although surely with over 400 pubs a range of seasonal beers would be viable, but news of increasing penetration of their beers into the competitive take-home market. Fourteen north west branches of Sainsbury's are taking canned Best Bitter although OT readers may be more interested to know that bottled Fredericks and Old Tom are also widely available in the major supermarket chains - and of course the success of the bottled versions makes it more economical to produce the cask versions of these two low-volume beers. This month also sees the end of an era with the closure of the Unicorn Wines shop at the brewery. We understand this has been brought about by a combination of internal and external pressures, most notably the growth of the supermarket packaged beer trade. However, apart from beer, wines and spirits, the shop was also an outlet for other Robinson's products - T-shirts, bar



towels, and all sorts of memorabilia. Let's hope some sort of on-site outlet is retained for these items.

**Holts Corner**

There has been a 90% take-up on the £23 per share offer for a family/management buyout (OT last month), writes *Stewart Revell*. This was better than Holt's were expecting and early in April all institutions and individuals who accepted the offer were sent their cheques. The shareholders (mainly small, with fewer than about 50 shares each) who opted for the one new for one old share, have been sent new Joseph Holt Group PLC certificates.



Early in April Holt's increased the price of their beers by a penny a pint as per the duty increase in the budget. Bitter is now £1.15 a pint with mild a few pence lower. There has also been a great deal of controversy recently regarding 'smooth' mild in Holt's pubs. Many customers have ordered 'a pint of mild', expecting the traditional beer and have been given the smooth variety instead. I have been assured by senior management that this practice should not be taking place. When customers ask for 'mild' they should be offered the choice before the beer is dispensed. So now you know!

**Micro News**

The new Pictish Brewery held a preview and tasting of its initial three beers last month and the high expectations that we had of



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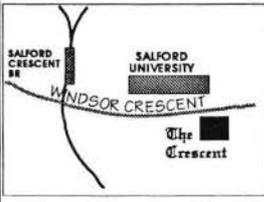
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brewer Richard Sutton have certainly been realised. Brewers Gold (3.8%) proved to be an intensely hoppy beer but with a pleasing roundness, very much in the Roosters mould but, dare we say it, with a touch more body. Celtic Warrior (4.2%) may be due for further tweaking but the sample we tried was a very moreish beer with a hint of chocolate malt coming through in the aftertaste. The highlight, though, must be Pictish Porter (4.4%), with an incredibly complex, rich taste and an instant classic of the style. The first of the brewery's seasonals should also appear at the end of this month.

Business is booming at Bridgewater Ales where production is reaching record levels. Last month's Jesters IPA (4.6%) was an incredibly drinkable and hoppy beer, as was the Easter special, Hot Cross Bunny (4.3%). This month Inglewood Ale (4.1%) makes a welcome return, mid-month sees Bridgewater Packet, 4.25, pale-ish and hoppy, and there will be a further new beer at the end of the month (specification undecided as we went to press). Of course, early in June an 'old' Bridgewater beer will be putting in an appearance when the six-month old Ten Cent (10%!) imperial stout goes on sale at Stockport Beer Festival. A treat indeed - brewer Richard Bazen is particularly looking forward to trying it.



Tony Allen has taken on a new head brewer at his Phoenix Brewery in Heywood. Following in ex-Footage & Firkin brewer Richard Sutton's shoes comes another ex-Firkin brewer. This is Bob Green, formerly at the Philatelist & Firkin in Bromley, Kent, who has moved north with his partner Gerry Denning (who worked at the Fox & Firkin, Lewisham).



Two seasonal beers have been produced by Marble Brewery and can be found on the bar of the marble Arch pub on Rochdale Road, Manchester (plus, no doubt, the company's other outlets, The Bar and Marble Beer House in Chorlton). Marble Ginger (4.5%, £1.65) is brewer Mark Dade's third try at perfecting a ginger beer - raspingly ginger backed by sweetness. The other beer is Summer Marble (4.7%, £1.80), making a welcome reappearance.

Beartown Brewery in Congleton, whose superb Kodiak Gold is a regular at Stockport's Ye Old Vic, have been producing some excellent beers of late. Recently spotted have been Wheat Bear (5%), a refreshing wheat beer and Blarney Bear (4.8%), a classic dry stout. Beartown are also producing a Rye beer for this month's Macclesfield Beer Festival and this, too, may be in the local free trade as you read this.

## BEER'S GOOD FOR YOU!

Move over wine - beer's good for you after all.

The press are fond of linking beer drinking with sore heads and bellies like spare tyres but Dutch scientists suggest an occasional glass of ale can in fact help protect your heart - and do it more effectively than red wine, which is almost gaining the status of a health drink thanks to numerous studies pointing to its beneficial effects.

This is because beer contains vitamin B6, which prevents the build-up in the body of homocysteine, an amino acid that has been linked to a greater risk of heart disease.

The scientists, from the TNO Nutrition and Food Research Institute in the Netherlands, studied 11 healthy men aged 44-59 who consumed four glasses of beer, red wine, spirits or mineral water with their evening meal. Each of the beverages was drunk at dinnertime for a three-week period, and the nutritional input of the food was the same throughout.

Levels of homocysteine didn't increase after beer consumption, but rose by eight and nine per cent respectively after drinking wine and spirits., the team report in the latest issue of *The Lancet*. Such an increase coincides with a 10-20 per cent increase in heart disease, they note. Beer drinkers had a 30 per cent increase in vitamin B6 in their blood, compared with 17 per cent in the wine group and 15 per cent in the spirits group.

The researchers stress that the apparent benefit was recorded after "moderate alcohol consumption", rather than drinking to excess. AFP

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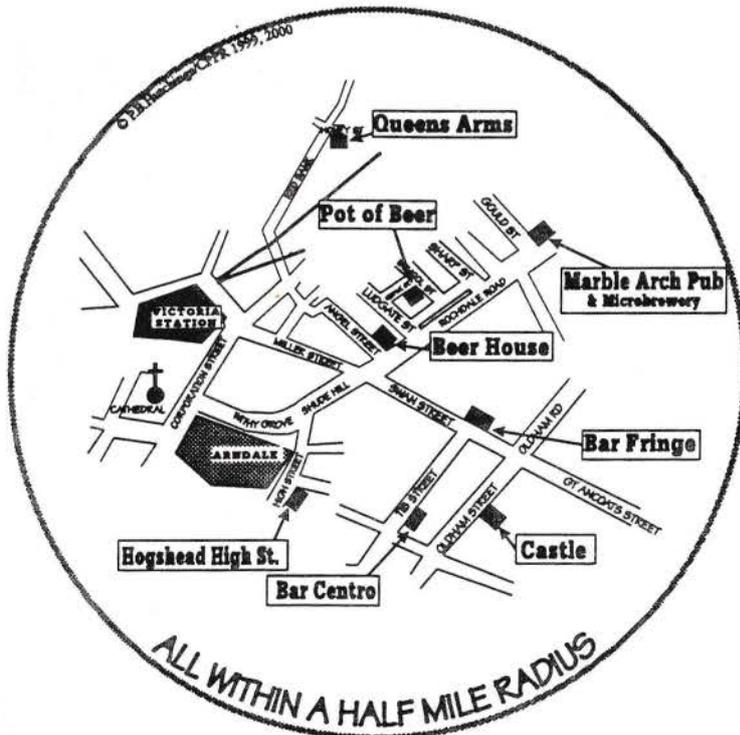
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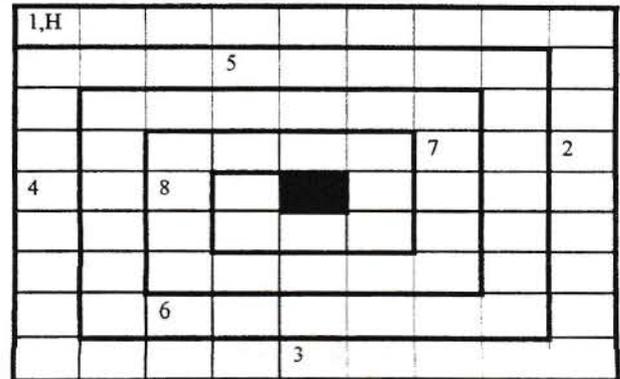
FOR THOSE WHO ARE EASILY LOST - A FREE MINI-BUS SERVICE IS  
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## OT COMPETITION

Due to an as yet unexplained production error we printed the wrong grid last month. For those who managed to cope, well done, but here it is again with the right grid. A prize will be given to one of last month's heroes, and the first correct entry this month picked out of the hat.

Get your Good Beer Guides out - we are going to Scotland! Complete the grid in a clockwise spiral. The last letter of an answer is the start letter of the next and we have given you the first letter. This month the prizes are Swan With Two Necks T-shirts. (One this month, and one last)  
If any pub or brewery would like to sponsor the prize for the OT competition then please let us know. You don't have to set it - just sponsor it (please).

1. In pursuit of the beaver's home will give you this Strathclyde pub (2 words)
2. Under par bird of prey needs somewhere to stay in the Borders (2 words)
3. Sounds like someone is chuckling at the ties in Fife
4. Horse changed into a pub near the sea when the tide is not out near Grampian (2 words)
5. The Lothians will lead you to this lesser religious tavern. (3 words)
6. Yeast and guns in this Lothians room? (2 words)
7. Is the train allowed here in Strathclyde (2 words)



8. Does the Queen stay here when she visits Grampian?  
Entries to: OT Competition, 45 Bulkeley St, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9HD by 20 May please.

## PUT SMALL BREWERS BEFORE BOOTLEGGERS

CAMRA and the licensed trade reacted with anger and dismay to the news that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, had decided to increase beer duty by a further 1p per pint in the budget on March 21, which came just too late for detailed analysis in last month's "Opening Times". Although this may not seem much, this rate of duty only applies to beers of 3% ABV or less, the weakest milds and cheap supermarket tinnies. Once uprated to the level for stronger beers, and VAT, pub mark-ups and the effect of higher fuel duty are added, it effectively becomes an increase of 4 or 5 pence per pint at the bar.

While this is unlikely greatly to affect the trade of trendy city-centre bars, it will further damage local pubs, particularly in less well off areas, where the attractions of cheap booze from the Continent, whether smuggled or legally imported, become ever greater. 5% ABV lager can easily be obtained in the Calais hypermarkets at the equivalent of 30p a pint, which is extremely appealing when compared to pubs charging five, six or seven times more. The weakness of the Euro, which since its launch has fallen 20% against the pound, makes imported beer even more attractive.

Greater Manchester is the smugglers' biggest target area after London and the South-East, with over 5,000 vanloads of beer arriving every year, and the bootleggers are reported to be increasingly targeting underage children. The attraction is obvious when you can get a can of strong lager for less than a can of Coke.

There are disturbing links with the even more dangerous and lucrative business of tobacco smuggling, which is increasingly dominated by organised criminal gangs including, according to recent press reports, the Mafia. This is not something of direct concern to "Opening Times", but the connections are so close it cannot be ignored. It is estimated that 25% of all cigarettes smoked in the UK are now illegally imported, rising to 50% in some of the more deprived areas, and over 80% of hand-rolling tobacco. Government revenue from tobacco taxation has slumped from £8.2bn in 1998 to £5.7bn in 1999, despite higher rates of duty. The widespread availability of cheap bootlegged cigarettes has led to the first increase in smoking levels for many years, particularly amongst the young.

There is one way in which the Chancellor could help small brewers and independent pubs without making a big hole in the revenue from alcohol taxes, and that is to introduce a progressive system of beer duty with a lower rate for the smallest brewers, a move which has been strongly advocated by CAMRA. This applies in many countries of Continental Europe, particularly Germany, and is a major factor in maintaining a healthy independent sector, strong competition and a diversity of consumer choice. Britain's 400 small breweries have less than 2% of the overall beer market, so the impact on government revenue would be minimal, and once the effect of creating jobs in local breweries and pubs was taken into account the move would almost certainly be self-financing.

Unfortunately, once again, Gordon Brown has failed to heed the advice of people who know the industry. On the whole issue of excise duties he seems to be sticking his head in the sand in a way that is increasingly counter-productive in terms of government revenues, crime levels and public health. **PE.**

## CLOSURE

### Roger Hall on the future of the local

**F**or almost twenty-five years, CAMRA has been chronicling the demise of public houses in Manchester, Salford and their environs.

Most of the closures have been in what Engels described as "unmixed working people's quarters, stretching like a girdle, averaging a mile and a half in width around the commercial district." In other words, the inner city, comprising districts like Chorlton-on-Medlock, Bradford, Ancoats, Miles Platting, Collyhurst, Broughton and Ordsall. That has certainly been the pattern until fairly recently. We've seen hundreds of pubs close in the inner city as a result of slum clearance, road schemes, economic failure and the influence of crime. Depopulation, demographic shifts and changing patterns of life, where the pub is less central to the day to day activities have accentuated the decline of pubs in such areas.

With the dawn of a new millennium, we are beginning to experience a new phenomenon - the closure of pubs in the suburbs of Manchester. Even Eccles, the beer drinkers' mecca, is not immune. Sure, we've seen the opening of Wetherspoon's Eccles Cross, but one pub has closed and four Holt's pubs are up for sale. Many other pubs in the area are struggling to survive.

What we are experiencing may be merely adjustments to population movements, or it may be the beginning of a serious decline in the focal role of the pub in the British way of life. Fewer manual jobs, the espousal of middle class values, eating out, wine drinking, an emphasis on entertainment and the growth of a more cosmopolitan, multi-cultural society have all brought demand side pressures on the traditional pub. From the supply side, structural changes in the industry, the separation of production from retailing and an increased focus on asset valuation and return on capital have brought different but, nonetheless, significant pressures.

Faced with changing demands from customers and heightened expectations from owners, fewer traditional pubs are able to survive, let alone thrive. In the south, burgeoning property values place impossible return on capital requirements from pubs, which are worth more as homes. In the suburbs of Manchester extortionate rents and high prices for beer make it difficult for pubs to compete with alternatives like buying from supermarkets and drinking at home or joining a club.

Traditional pubs and traditional beer go hand in hand. Fewer restaurants, clubs, wine bars and cafés serve real ale than do pubs. Unless customers frequent traditional pubs in the suburbs, closures will continue. The next few years will show whether recent events are a blip or whether we have begun to see the demise of the British pub. I, for one, want to see the pub survive as living, vibrant part of our way of life, not as an artefact in a tourist village.

This article first appeared in *What's Doing*, the North Manchester CAMRA magazine.

14

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



**Millennium Fruit Salad**

Guaranteed to make either winter parties or summer barbecues go with a swing!

**Ingredients**

- 1 pint old or strong dark ale
- 2 tablespoons of demerara sugar
- Use one of the Millennium commemorative beers if you have some left. Old Tom is an excellent alternative.
- A glass of port
- 10 cloves
- ½ lb (250gm) each of plums, apricots, bananas, cherries and raspberries

**Method**

Prepare the fruits, thus: plunge the apricots in boiling water for 1 minute – cool, peel and de-stone, then slice thickly. Repeat for the plums but remove from the water after 20 seconds. Peel and slice the bananas and sprinkle with the sugar. De-stalk the cherries, hull the raspberries, and wash thoroughly. Sprinkle the cloves into the port and place in a small saucepan with the old ale. Gently simmer until reduced by one-third. Place all the fruit in a large bowl and cover with the liquid; make sure each piece of fruit is coated with some liquid, and leave for one hour in a refrigerator. Test for sweetness and add sugar to taste. The dish is ready to serve, although you might like to take up some of these suggestions: Simple – just garnish with lashings of ginger beer – no, no, I mean sweetened double cream. Fancy – place meringues on top – dried shapes are available – in individual bowls and pipe cream shapes around them. Various colours can be used by using food colourings to look really elaborate, or tacky, depending on your taste. Hot Pie! – using short crust pastry, bake the pastry case blind at 325 degrees, fill with fruit mixture, add crust and bake for a further 15 minutes. Again serve with whipped cream.

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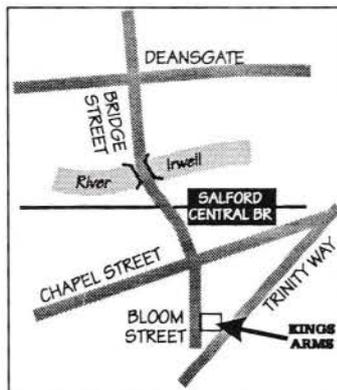
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every Wednesday night  
**FOLK**  
every Monday night  
**TRIO**  
every alternate Saturday  
afternoon  
**GROUP**  
every alternate Saturday  
evening





Sadly, no beer of the month. I've given it a lot of thought, and undertaken a great deal of research, but whilst I've drunk any number of good beers, none have been quite outstanding enough to win the accolade. As to Foreign beers, the beer house has Artoon on draught as I write, to be followed by draught Kwak. Both are well worth a half. Sandbar Beertrading has stuffed the channel with the excellent Hofbrau Maibock in bottles. Strong and full its the state brewery's best beer (though the pale Wheatbeer is also very pleasant).

### N/4 ABV Tour - 18-21 May

Big news this month is the forthcoming event in Manchester's Northern Quarter. Not apparently to be confused with a beer festival, its a....beer festival, in all but name, anyway. The 'non-festival' concept is to allow excellent little places like the Castle Hotel on Oldham Street - the only pub in the Robinsons estate to supply EVERY cask beer they produce - to participate, when the tenancy terms prohibit them from selling avalanches of micro-brewery 'scratcher' beers. Very Fair!

Anyway, participating are Bar Fringe (nine guest cask ales) along with their humungous Belgian range, The Castle as mentioned, The Marble Arch which is adding guests to Mark Dade's excellent Marble Brewery beer range (current new Ginger flavoured beer is very interesting), The Pot of Beer, home of Polish Food in Manchester, with a promised 20+, The Queens Arms on Honey Street (off Red Bank) an excellent pub with an interesting range of cask and foreign beers, and a marvellous view from the beer garden, promising no less than 30 festival cask ales, the Beer House (of course) whose fest-meister Ian Casson, fresh from the success of his 'May it Begin' bank holiday fest is promising 'up to 50' beers - and this

before the pubs next individual festival on June 1-4!

Amazingly the Hogshead on High Street, for a long time one of the better examples of a branded ale house is joining in, and they will be offering 30 cask beers over the period. The eighth participant is Bar Centro on Tib Street. Contrary to the detail published in another place (What's Doing - Ed(2)) the incredible tiny cupboard that passes for a cellar cannot be rigged to mount a stillage, so here its a choice of Czech, Belgian & German brews with a few bottled German Beers coming in specially. (Hopefully they will contrive a cellar expansion one day, because under its new and positive management, all this place lacks is decent real ale - in other respects its a very nice place to eat and drink).

Overall there will be well over 100 cask beers, and 150-200 imported foreign brews (bottled and draught). A fine example of co-operation rather than competition. (A free mini bus is running between venues on Saturday). There is a web site (I am told) at [www.n4abv.co.uk](http://www.n4abv.co.uk). Should be interesting. A report will follow next month, together with a review of Oldham and a book review!

### Upcoming Festivals

Stockport (1-3 June), Town Hall. Lots of beers, best range of cider you are likely to see anywhere. Beer House (1-4 June), Boundary (Guide Bridge) excellent fest in the tent 14-18 June (more on this next month). Southport see diagonally below, Frodsham (largely tickets) 26-27 May - see below, Fenny Bentley (dates ditto) - see CAMRA CALLING (page 22). Oh, did I mention Stockport...

### Festival Reviews

#### Crescent, Salford Cask Ale Festival

Good Range and excellent condition. The cooling kit wasn't used in the vault because it stayed cold enough. Food excellent, this pub goes from strength to strength under Idy and Sal, its back on my peregrinating route now as a fixture.

#### Beer House - May it Begin

Once again Ian Casson excelled himself with a good and interesting range - despite being a tad less organised than usual! Nice to see the back of the samey darkish 4.5s. The lighter, hoppier summer beers are 'a cummin in'. Hooray. Once again I never got near the food on either of my visits.

#### Stalybridge Buffet Bar and Station Ashton.

The buffet got through 50 odd beers, a jazz band and the morris men. The pub that time forgot (according to John Hesketh). Amazingly popular, very entertaining, why can't all station buffets be just a bit like this (think of Crewe, Stockport, Victoria and Brum...). Well done. At the Station, meanwhile, David put on his first festival, eschewing the marquee, but bringing a second bar with nine pumps into use. It went very well, a terrific amount of beer was sold at the correct temperature. The pub is clearly in good hands at last and it looks like going back to the halcyon days of yore. Well done.

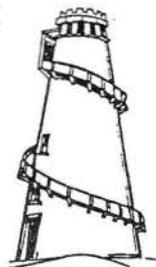
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CAMRA  
FOR  
REAL ALE

## The Waldorf



Gore St, Off Piccadilly, Manchester

**Taylor's Landlord,  
Tetleys, Boddingtons Bitter  
+ 2 Guest Ales**

Great Lunchtime Food

*You can rely on a very warm welcome from  
Wayne and all the staff*

## The Waldorf

**A Pint of Cask Ale for £1**

To Celebrate Wayne taking the pub on as proprietor he is delighted to make the following offer to readers of Opening Times:

Bring this voucher with you to the Waldorf before the 20th May, and on presentation to the staff you may enjoy **one pint** of any Cask Ale available for just £1.

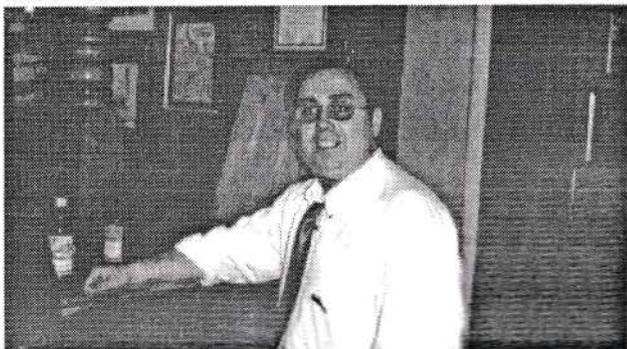
**ONLY ONE VOUCHER PER CUSTOMER**

(The management reserve the right to withdraw this promotion at their discretion without notice)



## WAYNE TAKES CHARGE

**A**nother CAMRA Good Beer Guide listed Pub Changes hands....but this time its actually Good News! Manchester's Waldorf in Gore St, just off Piccadilly has long been one of the unsung gems of the Manchester pub scene. Lively, with a complete mix of customers, good food, and an unswerving commitment to quality caskales. Handy for the bus and train stations, it keeps a thoroughly traditional pub atmosphere and manages to compete with the bottle bars and the discount chain giants Wetherspoons and the Goose, and is a much nicer place to drink.



So what's the good news? Well Wayne Nutall who has run the pub, and built up the cask beer trade for the last several years was thinking of moving on to a pub of his own. Well he has - the owners were so appalled at the thought of him going that they sold him the pub itself! Good beer and good and popular lunchtime food - if you've not been yet, you're missing one of the city centre's best pubs.

### Contributors to Opening Times Issue 193

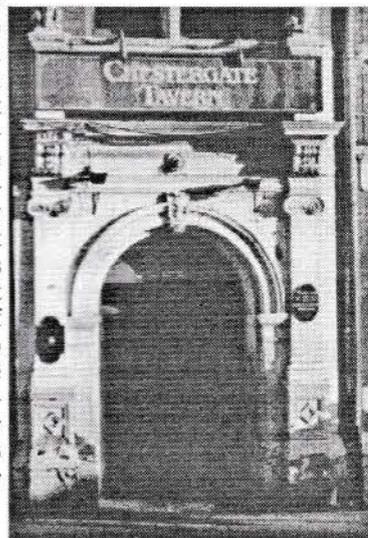
John Clarke, Paul Hutchings, Phil Levison, Peter Edwardson, Dave Hanson, Charlotte Bulmer, John Hutchinson, Tim Jones, Tom Lord, Frank Wood, Ken Birch, Dave Sheldon, Roger Hall, Ted Bruning, Steve Bray



In our second Grot Watch, the monthly features highlighting the appalling state of the Chestergate Tavern on Stockport's Mersey Square, we look at the main entrance.

As we reported last month, the pub has largely been left to rot over recent years and while it's not too bad inside, outside it's just a disgrace. The main entrance - which should surely be an appealing feature enticing potential customers inside - just about sums it up. Just look at that peeling paint exposing the crumbling stonework underneath. Or what about that sign - faded, cracked and, well just terrible really.

The owners of this eyesore are Scottish & Newcastle Retail, the pub-owning arm of brewing giants Scottish Courage. Believe it or not they were one of the six finalists in a 'Pub Company of the Year' contest run by *The Publican* newspaper. According to the blurb, the theme that runs through all S&N Retail's initiatives is "a commitment to ever improving levels of service and quality". No doubt - but as far as the Chestergate Tavern is concerned we'd just be happy with a lick of paint. Still no sign of that planned 'major refurbishment', though.



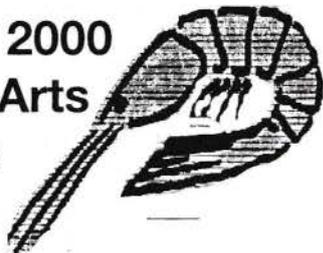
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CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



## The 1st Sandgrunder Beer Festival

11 - 13 May 2000  
Southport Arts Centre



50 PLUS BEERS & CIDERS  
Entertainment Fri & Sat Eves

Thursday 11 May 6.00 - 1.00 (£2)  
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Friday 12 May Evening 6.00 - 11.00 (£3)  
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Saturday 13 May Evening 6.00 - 11.00 (£3)

**CAMRA MEMBERS  
ONLY £1!**

Glass included in Admission Price

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

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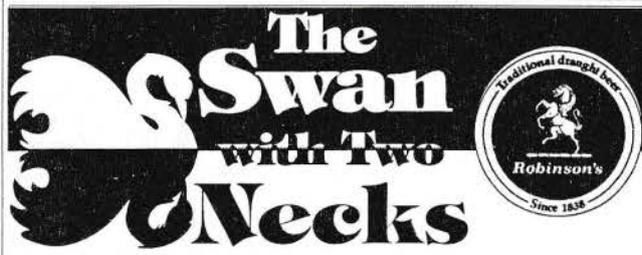
Elgoods Black Dog Mild;  
Brakespear Ted & Ben;  
Castle Eden Nimmos  
XXXX; Hop Back Crop  
Circle; Inveralmond  
Amber Bead;  
Moorhouses  
Thunderstruck; Mordue  
Workie Ticket;  
Wethereds (Ridley);  
Smiles May Fly; Tisbury  
Nadder Jack; Titanic  
(Shugborough) Mi Ladys  
Fancy; Ushers Spring  
Fever; Youngs  
Waggledance;  
Woodfordes Norfolk  
Nog ...and many more



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8 HANDPUMPS  
6 GUEST ALES  
LUNCHTIME FOOD  
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**NELSON INN**  
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OLDHAM STREET, MANCHESTER  
NOW SERVING THE **COMPLETE**  
RANGE OF ROBINSONS CASK BEERS!

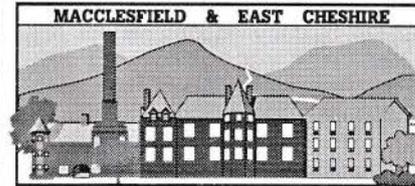
Old Stockport Bitter, Best Bitter,  
Hatters Mild, Dark Mild, Frederics,  
Old Tom and Hartleys



A WARM WELCOME  
AND FINE BEER IN  
A CLASSIC PUB



MACCLESFIELD & EAST CHESHIRE



WITH **STEVE BRAY**



Sad to report that Joan Wood, wife of the landlord of the Franklin in Macclesfield has recently died. Along with husband Geoff she had been at the pub in excess of 15 years and during that time gained quite a reputation among the locals for selling good quality beer.

The Cotton Tree in Bollington is open again - a welcome development and more news when we have it.

While the locals of the Millstone in Macclesfield are ecstatic about getting Marston's Bitter back, they are not too happy with a six pence rise on all beers. Pedigree is now OVER £1-90 - the next rise will hit the dreaded two pound mark.

At the Hanging Gate in Higher Sutton we welcome new licensees Peter and Pat McGrath and son Paul. They tell us they spent ten years running Marston's Crown at Goostrey and another five years selling Hydes at the Jolly Thresher at Agden Brow near Lymm, so they are no strangers to good quality real ale.

The beers available at the Hanging Gate are Hydes' Bitter, Jekyll's Gold and the seasonal craft beer. The Gate is a fascinating 17th Century building, built on a hillside with rooms on a series of descending levels. An open fire and a wood-burning stove add warmth, and this is wonderful walking country.



"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



### Drugged Up On Drink

Regular followers of this column will know that I hold no brief for the Institute of Alcohol Studies, which is basically a neo-prohibitionist body dressed up in reasonable clothes. They know very well that total prohibition is unachievable, but their long-term aims are the closure of large numbers of pubs and the raising of alcohol taxation to punitive levels. However, earlier this year they produced a paper that may well strike a chord with lovers of traditional pubs and beer.

The drinks industry, according to the IAS, has fought a "recreational drug war" in order to win back the youth market. In a consumer culture characterised by the search for instant gratification, one result has been the growth in teenage drunkenness. Drinking to get drunk is now the normal pattern for many young people. The search for "the big hit" is part of psychoactive culture among today's youth. In the past, drinking and pubs were part of a community life, which included restraint and control. Now, young people with a hedonistic approach to life are looking for "time out" when they can put aside inhibition and control. Drinking and drug taking are part of this search.

The alcohol industry has had to deal with two challenges - the decline of the traditional alcohol market, such as the pub, and the explosion in the use of recreational drugs, which at one time threatened the industry with the loss of an entire generation. In response to these challenges, the industry has created a "post-modern alcohol market" of new designer drinks, aimed at young consumers and sold in café bars, theme pubs, and club bars. There has been an increase in the strength of alcoholic drinks in a direct attempt to compete in the "psychoactive market", and these new alcohol products are marketed in sophisticated campaigns which ape the language of drug culture and present them explicitly as psychoactive drugs. Fancy a judder, anyone?

When you see the dreadful tacky new outlets that have opened up, and the rubbishy pre-mixed cocktails that make up a large proportion of their sales, you can't avoid having some sympathy for this argument. In this new world of the designer alcohol drug, it is hard to see much room for the traditional pub and the sub-4% Mild and Bitter that for long were its staple drinks.

Of course, you have to take what the IAS say with a large pinch of salt, as they are looking for any stick with which to beat the drinks trade. They may talk about pubs once being part of a community life which included restraint and control, but in reality they want to see them closed down, whether street-corner boozier, rural inn or trendy bar. But what is certain is that the irresponsible actions of the major drinks companies are playing right into the hands of the neo-prohibitionists.

### Real Measure, Fake Beer

An interesting recent phenomenon is the introduction of one-pint cans for such dubious beverages as Heineken Cold Filtered and Boddingtons Strangeways Bitter (what?). Since there are no restrictions on packaged beer measures, they can get away with this so long as they declare the contents as "568 ml" too. A pity that the contents are nowhere near as traditional as the measure.

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4 Sandown Road, Cheadle Heath,  
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## 5 Years Ago

by Phil Levison

MAY '95

The masthead of Opening Times for May 1995 carried five additional but very important words - CAMRA Newsletter of the Year. This was described as a notable triumph after it had been announced at CAMRA's National Conference held in Wolverhampton. It was the first time the award had been made, and Opening Times came first out of 100-plus newsletters produced nation-wide. There was a photograph of OT Editor John Clarke, and Production Editor Paul Hutchings with the certificate, and just so that there was no mistake, it said "We're Number One!"

There was another headline on the front page - "Arthur to quit?" - this exclusive story was that Arthur Gosling, the almost legendary landlord of the Royal Oak in Didsbury, was set to retire in April 1996, at age 65. Apparently, he was under a lot of pressure from Marston's to go, as they wanted to turn the pub over to management - they seemed desperate to get their hands on more of the take resulting from sales of over 100 barrels a month.

"A touch of the Oirish" reported on the gathering pace of the boom in Irish bars, with no less than five opening during the previous month. Three were described in Manchester Matters as Magic Pub Co bandwagon jobs, and of little merit. But "Scruffy Murphy's" was the name of what would become a nation-wide chain run by Allied Domecq Retail, trading locally as the Tetley Pub Co. The first one had opened in Edinburgh and had been a runaway success - Manchester now had two. One was next to the Queen of Hearts in Fallowfield, the other in Grosvenor Street opposite the Flea & Firkin. An independent OT review squad had visited the Grosvenor Street premises to test the Irishness of the menu - they had reported that overall, the quality, presentation and value were excellent.

Many of the country's micro-brewers were planning special beers to mark the VE day commemorations, and two local family brewers were also joining the fray. Lees contribution was VE Day Bitter, 4.8 per cent ABV at £1.45 a pint, and £10 from each barrel sold was to be donated to servicemen's charities. Hydes' were producing Victory Ale, 4.5 per cent. There was also to be a special promotion where ten pubs would have a handpump installed specially for the new ale - this reflected the increasing trend to handpump dispense in the Hydes' estate.

An oddity to finish - Stalybridge already had an entry in the Guinness Book of Records for the longest pub name in the UK - "The Old Thirteenth Cheshire Astley Volunteer Riflemen Corps Inn". Now it was to be joined by the shortest name. The Editor of the Guinness Book of Records, Peter Matthews, was to attend a reception at "Q" to present the certificate marking the pub's inclusion in the book.



## The Nursery Inn



GREEN LANE,  
HEATON NORRIS,  
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- ★ Good Home Cooked Food Served Daily
- ★ Lunches every day including Sundays for families in our Dining Room.
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- ★ CAMRA Good Pub Food Guide 1999
- ★ CAMRA Pub of the Month April 2000

Hydes  
Ales  
Brewers of  
Traditional  
Cask  
Beers  
Always in  
good taste

STOCKPORT & MANCHESTER  
**Mild**  
 CHALLENGE  
**2000**  
**UPDATES**

Early reports indicate a high level of interest in this year's Mild Challenge, launched last month. It doesn't close until 14th of this month so you may still have chance to pick up a card, complete the Challenge and win one of our great prizes. Meanwhile rather more than the usual one or two gremlins crept into the card. With apologies to all concerned we have spotted the following errors:

- Didsbury, Royal Oak - beer is Banks's Mild, not Bateman's
- Didsbury, Station - ditto
- Didsbury, Fletcher Moss - beer is Hydes' Welsh Dark
- East Didsbury, Gateway - beer is Hydes' Light, not Mild
- Manchester City Centre - Central/South: Castle also has Hatters Mild in addition to Robinsons Dark Mild
- Stockport Town Centre East, Bakers Vaults - address is Market Place, beer Robinson's Hatters Mild
- Stockport Hillgate, Winters - address is Underbank, beer Holt's Mild.

I don't know, you buy the best branded peanuts but the monkeys still can't spell Macberth!



...Pub Ne  
 b News...  
 News...P  
 ...Pub Ne  
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 News...P

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

In Glossop there are on or two changes to report. The Manor Inn, High Street East, and the Surrey Arms, Victoria Street, have been sold by Inn Partnership and are believed to have been bought by Dorbiere Pub Company. Both outlets will therefore now presumably end up selling the Grays range of beers (largely believed to be the Mansfield range rebadged - what will happen to these we wonder if/when Wolves and Dudley shuts the Mansfield Brewery?). C2's, formerly Dollars, across from the Market Place, is under new management. Don't all rush at once though, as the range of drinks available still doesn't include cask ale. Finally, the Nags Head, Charlestown Road, has resumed selling cask beer, presumably to meet demand (and restore lost custom?). The current Hydes' seasonal ales have been on sale since February at £1.60 a pint.

In Buxton the London Road Inn is once again selling guest beers. The big news from the town, though, is the opening of the new Wetherspoon outlet in the former Ashwood Hotel. To be called the Wye Bridge, the pub was due to open on 25 April (hopefully a full review next month? - ed.).

In Disley there are new faces at the Dandy Cock where Duncan and June have taken over. New faces, too, at the Hare & Hounds on Dooley Lane, Marple where Paul and Karen departed on Sunday 16 April. At the time of going to press it was unclear as to whether cask ale would continue to feature at the pub but hopefully there should be more information next month.

At the White Hart in Mottram, Geoff Oliver's new venture is getting underway. Mark and Pam Mitchell opened on 30 March with a good range of beers. Plassey bitter wasn't a surprise but Bridgewater Navigator as a regular is an interesting change from the usual suspects. However in one of Geoff's pubs (OK, I know there are only two), the usuals are pretty good. Alongside the Plassey and the Bridgewater is Taylor's Landlord and Hartington Magic Mushroom Mild. The guest beer on a recent visit was Salopian Brown & Bitter.

At the moment, the only food available is sandwiches but these seem to be doing well and Mark and Pam are hoping to extend the choice of food gradually - early days yet. If the White Hart takes off like the Sportsman, it won't be long before it features on the "must do" real ale list (now how do you get from Cheadle Hulme to Mottram by bus...?)

Finally, it was with deepest regret that we learned of the death of Ian Beecham, licensee of the Pineapple Inn, Market Street, Marple. Ian was killed in a road accident in North Wales and will be sorely missed at the Good Beer Guide pub of several years standing. The branch extends its deepest sympathy to Ian's family, and in particular his widow Claire.

Steve and Johanne welcome you to

**De Olde Vic**

1 Chatham Street, Edgeley, Stockport

**A 'Free House'**

**Guest Beers Changing Weekly**

Beartown

Bridgewater

Abbeydale

and many more...

**House Bitter:**

Greene King IPA 3.6% 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

Graham  
 welcomes  
 you to ...

**THE RAILWAY VIEW**

Byrons Lane,  
 Macclesfield

**GOOD FOOD**

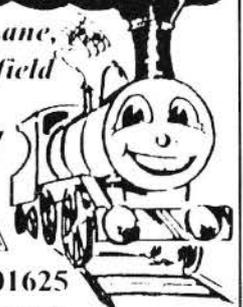
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**PLATFORM ONE**

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☆ QUIZZES ☆

☆ BAR GAMES ☆



☎ 01625

REAL ALE £1.30 MON NIGHT

423657

**Fight for Consumer Choice in Pubs - Join CAMRA now - see page 23!**



**PUB OF THE SEASON**

Macclesfield & East Cheshire branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, has decided to award Ian Wooley and the Congleton Leisure Centre bar, the Pub of the Season Award for Spring 2000.

The award will take place on the evening of Friday 19th May 2000. The award is recognition of the great effort put in by Ian and his staff, to produce a successful and attractive real ale bar, under very unusual circumstances, in that the Leisure Centre is owned and run by Congleton Borough Council. It is also a tribute to the Council, and we all hope the success and good practice shown at the Congleton Leisure Centre will spread to the other Leisure Centres and bars in which the Council has an interest.

You do not have to play badminton or squash for an hour to be able to enjoy the Leisure Centre Bar. Just pop in and try it. Then you can amaze your friends by telling them that you went to a Leisure Centre bar for excellent ale and a good atmosphere.

Ian Wooley is arranging a special night for the presentation, including two cask milds on hand pump, as May is always "Mild Month" for CAMRA. There will be a "price promotion" for the evening, whereby all cask ales will be £1.20 per pint. Four good real ales at £1.20 per pint, and good company to boot - what more can you want!

## THE BUS IS BACK!

The late evening bus from Leek to Macclesfield and Stockport is back thanks to a group of regulars from Good Beer Guide pub, The Waters Green Tavern, Macclesfield.

Cheshire County Council has reinstated the bus following an out cry in recent months. Several locals, including members of CAMRA, sent letters of complaint to councillors and there was also a petition signed by members of a local walking club based at the Waters Green Tavern. Action group Transport 2000 has also joined forces with a number of local groups to campaign for an improved bus service.



Waters Green Tavern landlord Brian McDermott told Opening Times: "In the winter months several of my regulars used to travel across to Leek to visit a number of popular Good Beer Guide entries such as the Blue Mugge, Den Engel and The Wilkes Head. In the summer some of our keener walkers use it for pub walks. It was taken off for no apparent reason at the end of December. It is good to see it back even if it is only on one night per week."

The bus has operated from Wednesday 29 March departing from Leek Bus Station at 21.53 for Macclesfield and Stockport. For an evening out, the outward X1 service departs from Stockport Bus Station at 18.50 and Macclesfield Bus Station at 19.20. Day or evening tickets are available from the driver; they are valid on the last bus from Leek which is operated by Bakers Coaches. There are also additional buses during the day between Manchester and Derby on the X1 service.

## The Waters Green Tavern



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



Mini Beer Festivals Every Day!

10 - 12 Beers each week including:

Roosters, Storm, HopBack, Oakham, Phoenix,  
Triple fff and many more...

Your Hosts Brian and Tracey

Bar Meals Served Mon to Sat Lunch

*This is not a free house*

*opposite the Railway Station*



**The Olde  
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

*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!

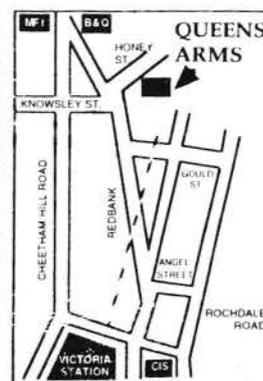
Taylors Landlord - Bantam Bitter £1.15 a pint

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



**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

**MAY 2000**

**Monday 8th** – Social: Hinds Head, Manchester Rd, Heaton Chapel. Starts 9.00pm.

**Thursday 11th** – Monthly Branch Meeting: Royal Oak, Stockport Rd, Cheadle. Starts 8.00pm. **Guest Speaker David Robinson – a good turnout please.**

**Friday 12th** – Trip to Lord Raglan, Nangreaves, home of Leyden Brewery. Minibus leaves Crown, Heaton Lane at 7.30pm. Book with John Hutchinson on 0161 434 7177.

**Monday 15th** – Social: Royal Oak, Wilmslow Rd, Didsbury. Starts 9.00pm.

**Friday 19th** – Gatley & West Cheadle Stagger: 7.30pm Prince of Wales, Gatley Green; 8.30pm Crown, High Street, Cheadle.

**Monday 22nd** – Heaton Lane Social: 9.00pm Pineapple; 10.00pm Crown.

**Thursday 25th** – Pub of the Month presentation to the Kings Hall (Wetherspoons), Station Rd, Cheadle Hulme. 8.00pm onwards.

**Sunday 28th** – Minibus Trip to beer festival at Bentley Brook Hotel, Fenny Bentley (home of Leatherbritches Brewery). Departs Crown, Heaton Lane 10.30am. Book with John Hutchinson on 0161 434 7177.

**Tuesday 30th** – Setting up of Stockport Beer Festival starts at Town Hall 9.00am,

**Thursday 1st-Saturday 3rd June** – 14th Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. If you haven't volunteered to work yet then contact Paul Moss on 0161 439 8309 (eves.) now please.

**MAY 2000**

**Monday 5th** – Social: Ye Olde Woolpack, Brinksway, Stockport. Starts 9.00pm.

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

**Saturday 13th** – Monthly Branch Meeting; Swan Inn, Market Place, Buxton followed by social/crawl. Starts 1.00pm. Note new date/time.

**Friday 26th** – Mossley social including Rising Sun and Church. Details from Frank Wood on 01457 865426.

**Saturday 27th** – Bentley Brook Beer Festival – details from Frank Wood.

**Saturday 3rd June** – Branch walk around Holmfirth & Marsden. Details from Frank Wood.

**Monday 5th** – Committee Meeting: hare & Hounds, Dooley Lane, Otterspool. 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:*

**Monday 15th** – Committee Meeting: White Swan, Rodney St, Macclesfield. Starts 8.00pm.

**Thursday 18th** – Pub Crawl with South Cheshire Branch. Starts Boars Head, Kinderton St, Middlewich 8.00pm.

**Friday 19th** – Presentation of Pub of the Season Award to Leisure Centre, Worrall St, Congleton. Starts 8.00pm.

**Monday 22nd** – Monthly Branch Meeting: Ship, Beech Ln, Macclesfield. Starts 8.00pm.

To Do Address Notepad Anniversary CAMRA 93 Planner



# 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



# MANCHESTER MATTERS by Cityman

Firstly hearty congratulations are due to two city pubs, well a pub and a licensee actually, for scooping top honours in the national awards run by *The Publican* newspaper. JW Lees Rain Bar, an almost ubiquitous prize-winner in any design competition it seems, picked up the award for 'Pub Design of the Year' while Mike Dilger of the superb White Lion on Liverpool Road picked up a gong for Businessman of the Year. Both pubs are favourite watering holes of mine and both awards are very well deserved in my humble opinion.

## New Monkey

Elsewhere it's been some thing of a quiet month in the city, the highlight being the reopening of the Old Monkey on 4 April following a two-week closure for refurbishment. It's had quite a thorough going over, too with both floors completely refurbished with new carpets, furniture, re-upholstered seats and a complete redecoration. The ground floor bar has a new tiled floor although the tile-work that covered the lower part of the bar counter has been replaced by woodwork more in keeping with the rest of the bar. Gothic-style light fittings are now in place and pictures of monkeys dressed in various styles adorn the walls. The upstairs lounge has been refurbished in a similar style.

Attention has also been paid to the outside with hanging baskets and window boxes, and new wall signs on the Princess Street frontage. Overall the pub is much brighter and with a far better ambience than it has had for some time. One thing remains unchanged, though - the mild and bitter remain in superb condition, a reflection of the hard work by licensees Theresa and David, along with their dedicated bar staff, of course!

## Other Changes

As I've said before this year should see a veritable flood of new licensed premises and two more have come to my notice. On Quay Street, just near the Opera House, Regent Inns are to open a 'Walkabout', an Australian theme bar and just when you thought it couldn't get any worse comes news of the latest potential occupant of the Great Northern development. This is 'Teasers' the first UK outlet for a Dutch operation based on Amsterdam's tacky Damrak, and which boasts 'beer and babes' as its speciality. The Visigoths are at the gates.

On a completely different tack earlier last month I found myself in Paddy's Goose, just behind the slum-cum-toilet which calls itself Chorlton Street Bus Station. What a superb pub! OK, the clientele is, how shall I put this, cosmopolitan but the atmosphere, and the beer quality, were second to none. It almost had the feel of a pub from 25 years ago, and with Lees Bitter and Taylor's Landlord on handpump, it is a real oasis. Bass are having yet another go with the Town Hall Tavern on Tib Lane. After the gruesome Copperbutts and the even worse Flares, it is now being converted back into a traditional

pub called...The Town Hall Tavern! It looks as though cask beer will return, too. It really does beggar belief that a company which attributes such importance to 'shareholder value' is prepared to waste so much money on these doomed schemes, and pay the idiots responsible into the bargain! Finally, I am sure my colleague Beer Monster will be waxing lyrical about the forthcoming Northern Quarter Beer Festival but I really must add my own pat on the back to all involved. This promises to be one of the highlights of the year for Manchester beer lovers and I hope all my readers will give it their fullest support.

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

### 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



## APPLICATION FOR CAMRA MEMBERSHIP

(Opening Times 193)

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.



# THE ALL YEAR BEER FESTIVAL



THWAITES BITTER, KELHAM ISLAND PALE RIDER,  
TIMOTHY TAYLOR + 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)**

## Ian's EARLY SUMMER BEER FESTIVAL

THURSDAY 1<sup>st</sup> JUNE - SUNDAY 4<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2000

**35+ NEW & Rare Beers** from microbreweries all  
over England - Special Festival Food Menu  
served at Lunchtimes and Thurs/Fri Eves



## N/4 ABV TOUR - 18 - 21 MAY 2000

The **Alternative Beer Venue** Tour with 100 + Real Ales & 150 + Other Beers  
Something for Everyone AND a Warm Welcome - See Pages 12 & 13

**Hot Lunchtime Food 7 Days A Week**

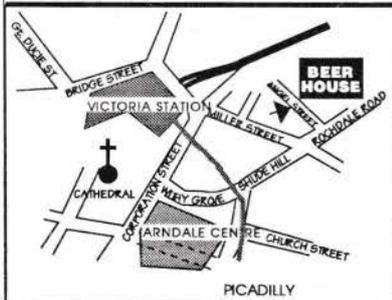
**LUNCHES DAILY & EVENING MEALS 5 - 7 (FRI ONLY)**

**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**



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