



OPENING TIMES



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6,700 CIRCULATED EVERY MONTH

FREE

RAILWAY IS LOCAL PUB OF THE YEAR

Following the success of the Nursery as CAMRA's national Pub of the Year for 2001, Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA have chosen the Railway, Portwood, to carry the torch in the 2002 competition.

It's a case of second time lucky for the Railway, as the pub very narrowly missed out on the award four years ago. This time however, the pub was a clear winner, a tribute to the hard work and commitment of licensee Alex Lord. Back in 1996, the Railway was re-opened by the Porter Brewing Co as their third tied house. Under the stewardship of Paul and Bev Stanyer, the Railway became an instant success and something of a flagship for the Porters brewery. At around the same time Alex Lord started working for the company as a barman, and then also as an odd-job man.

Paul and Bev left the Railway after notching up two Pub of the Month awards there, and subsequent events have been well documented in these pages. Suffice it to say that the pub appeared to enter a period of decline culminating in a sudden management change in September 2000. This resulted in Alex taking charge and facing the task of restoring the Railway's fortunes.

Luckily, in Alex Lord the Railway has found itself in the hands of one of the most hard-working and committed licensees you are likely to encounter. And the hard work has paid off with the Railway now restored to its place as one of the top cask beer pubs in Stockport. The full range of Porter's hand-pulled beers, including the house beer, Railway Sleeper, traditional cider and foreign beers are all back to the top quality demanded by the pub's customers. A comprehensive menu of home-made food has also been restored. A new innovation, introduced by Alex, is a wide range of Belgian and German bottled beers. The range, which would look well at home in Manchester's *Northern Quarter*, has really taken off with the pub's customers.

On hearing of the award Alex told *Opening Times* "Everyone is very, very happy and all of the customers are over the moon. It would have been a shame to see the pub go without getting the top award".

This richly deserved award will be presented to Alex on Saturday 2 March from 8.00pm onwards. Every night at the Railway is a good 'un, but this one promises to be a classic. Alex is promising something special - a 'Night of 101 Beers'! It will certainly be a case of get there early if you want a seat.

AND THE DAVENPORT ARMS IS RUNNER-UP

While there can be only one winner, the Davenport Arms at Woodford made a strong showing to become runner-up. Known to many as the "Thief's Neck", this classic country pub was a previous winner of the award in 1995.

Uniquely in the area, the licence has been held in the Hallworth family for over seventy years, with John, the third generation, having handed over to his daughter Yvonne in 1991 after twenty-five years' service. Despite bouts of ill health he continued to be a familiar face in the pub and gave the benefit of his long years of experience of cellarmanship, until his sad death in May of last year. A mark of the respect in which John Hallworth was held was the fact that over four hundred people attended his funeral.

However, Yvonne, her sister Alison and their hard-working staff continue to maintain the same high standards in this atmospheric, traditional, multi-roomed pub with its real fires, magnificent garden and warm welcome to a wide cross-section of the community. Most importantly, the beer - Robinson's Hatters Mild, Best Bitter, Old Tom and seasonal beers - remains in consistently good nick, resulting in the "Thief's" having been in the Good Beer Guide for fifteen straight years since 1988 - a record second only in the area to the Nursery, which has just become the National Pub of the Year.



INTERBREW PLOT LINK WITH CARLSBERG

After a bruising rebuff from the competition authorities that saw Interbrew forced to sell off Bass Breweries to US-based Coors (with the lucrative Carling brand), Interbrew now appear to be plotting a sales-led link with Carlsberg-Tetley.

Interbrew were allowed to keep some of the smaller parts of Bass, (including the right to sell Bass Ale - though it will be brewed in the part sold off) but in order to keep the beer (i.e. lager) market competitive, was forced to sell the Carling brand which accounts for, we kid you not, a massive 19% of UK beer consumption.

In an attempt to put together a 'sector-killer' package, Interbrew are in talks with C-T to combine their sales and distribution (which would then be sold off and managed by BOC) to combine low-strength British-brewed Carlsberg (NOT the best lager in the world, even when brewed in Denmark), with high-strength British-brewed Stella. A combination of ersatz-beers designed to knock a hole in equally ersatz British-brewed Carling's market share.

Given that the taste of Carling was described by one beer writer as "a combination of gnat's pee and soap-suds with an unpleasant rusty-metallic after-taste", and that Carling's domination owes much to saturation and lack of choice in the midlands, it may be a winning formula. Together with the news that C-T chief exec Colin Povey has been carrying out a "core-brand review" to be announced within the next couple of weeks, it looks like more predatory discount-led selling into the pubco estates, and you can bet that quality, tasty, real ales - and the discerning customer, will lose out yet again. **PBH**

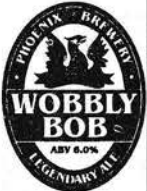
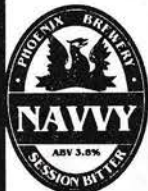
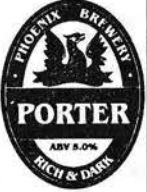
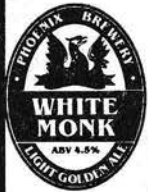
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IN THE EDITOR'S VIEW..

The argument about the size of the cask ale market seems set to rumble on and on. Certainly, the entertaining row between the various market research firms shows no sign of abating. On balance I think the British Beer & Pub Association has the better methodology in assessing the cask ale output of its members. It seems equally clear that they have seriously underestimated the size of the micro-brewers share of the market. If they are to defend their own figures on the basis that they come from surveys of their members, then they must surely accept SIBA's figures which are based on similar surveys. Of more importance than arguing over the odd percentage point, though, is how the figures are presented. The headline figures cover the whole beer market including off-sales. Cask ale is essentially an on-trade product and so the headline figure don't compare like with like as keg beers and lagers have their volume boosted by canned and bottled products. Even senior figures from local family brewers have spoken in gloomy terms of cask ales 9 per cent market share when what they should be talking up is the much more healthy 16-17 per cent of the pub and club market commanded by cask ale. Perhaps this is something the Independent Family Brewers of Britain should take on board when planning this year's Cask Ale Week.

Most of the family brewers are also members of the British Beer & Pub Association. Given that this organisation seems dedicated to talking down cask ale, the very product on which the family brewers depend, it remains a mystery to me why they remain members of it. Answers on a postcard, please.

John Clarke

News of a distribution tie-up being planned by Interbrew & Scottish & Newcastle is yet more bad news. The combined force of Stella and Carlsberg will be too much for most pubco's to refuse, and this will lead to bland national ale brands being discounted as part of the deal, with tasty micro brews squeezed out of yet more outlets by predatory discounts. Fat chance of this Government intervening, however.

Paul Hutchings

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OPENING TIMES is published by Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA - The Campaign for Real Ale. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the campaign either locally or nationally. Editors: John Clarke, 45 Bulkeley Street, Edgeley, Stockport SK3 9HD. ☎ (0161) 477 1973; Paul Hutchings, 8 The Green, Heaton Norris, Stockport Cheshire, SK4 2NP. ☎ & Fax (0161) 432 8384. News, articles and letters welcome. All editorial items may be submitted in most popular WP formats or preferably ASCII on IBM-PC format 3.5" disks (which will eventually be returned) or CD-R, or via e-mail to johnclarke@stocam.u-net.com. Adverts or photos should be "hard copy" or in CorelDraw 3.5 or 7 (*.cdr) format or TIFF or EPS files (submit printed proofs for checking and ensure that any "include all fonts" options are on). All editorial items © CAMRA: may be reproduced if source acknowledged. All Advertising images are copyright the respective design sources (Largely CPPR, but all other copyrights and trademarks acknowledged).

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Fight for Consumer Choice in Pubs - Join CAMRA now - see page 19!

PUB OF THE MONTH FEBRUARY 2002

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		



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for February is Kro Bar, Oxford Road, Chorlton-on-Medlock.

Uncompromisingly modern in its interior design and catering mainly (but not exclusively) for the student market, Kro Bar is perhaps not the typical 'CAMRA pub', at least not in the eyes of those who believe the clichés. In point of fact, Kro Bar proves the point that good pubs come in all shapes and sizes, and make no mistake, Kro Bar is a very good pub.



Converted from the former premises of the Manchester Temperance Society, the stylish interior and rear conservatory extension were designed by Manchester architects Stephenson Bell who have successfully incorporated a very modern bar into a listed Georgian building. Upstairs other public rooms have a more traditional feel and are decorated with old Temperance memorabilia found during the restoration of the building.

The owner of Kro Bar, Mark Ruby, is Danish and a Kro is a Danish country pub. As it says on the Kro website (www.kro.co.uk) the aim is for the bar to have the qualities of a Kro - good food, good beer and a warm welcome. Mark, ably assisted by bar manager Martin Judge, has certainly achieved these aims. The bar is lively and friendly, as you would expect from its location, and the quality of the food is legendary with a wide variety of freshly prepared dishes, often with a Scandinavian accent, available.

However, it is on the beer front that Kro really makes an impact. Given the type of bar this is, you could be forgiven for having very low expectations on the beer front. You would however be very wrong. A wide range of foreign bottled beers (both Belgian and German) are complemented by both interesting foreign beers on draught and, pride of place in the centre of the bar, five cask beers on handpump. Taylors Landlord is a regular as is Boddingtons Bitter. The other three beers are constantly changing guests, usually from micro-brewers. There's a real commitment to quality too, a policy which has resulted in very healthy cask ale sales in an environment where the bigger operators would have you believe it would be a non-starter.

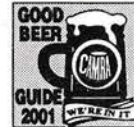
Great beer, great food and a great welcome. What more do you need? Still not convinced, then come and join those of us already in the know when we present this well-deserved award on Thursday 28 February.

Public transport to Kro Bar couldn't be easier as it's on one of the busiest bus routes in the country. It's at 325 Oxford Road, opposite the University Students Union.

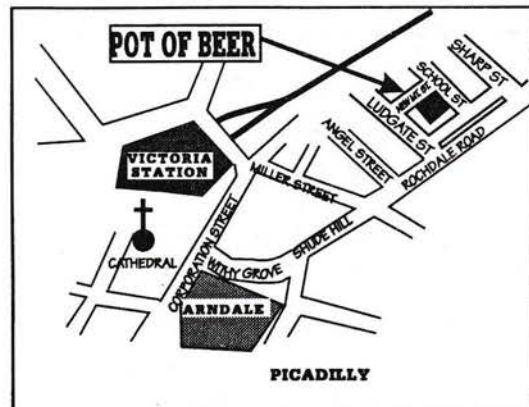
The local branch of CAMRA decide on a Pub of the Month by a democratic vote at the monthly branch meeting.

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**COPY DATE FOR THE MARCH 2002 ISSUE
OF OPENING TIMES IS FEBRUARY 23**

LETTERS OPENING TIMES

From Dave Nunn, Hazel Grove:

It is noted that January's OT resulted in the Horse & Jockey painting out "Cask Conditioned". They missed out the "Ale" bit. This isn't a victory for the Campaign - a victory would have been the restoration of cask beer to the pub.

As you might expect the contents of my fish tank have more imagination than the Pubco that leases/runs the "Jockey". Ideal for the Campaign would be the restoration of 100% availability of real ale in Hazel Grove. It's not hard to sell here, in the days of the "tarmac carpet" the Jockey was well used by a broad clientele consuming Holts and other unmentionables (in a CAMRA audience).

Notwithstanding the poor effort of the Bulls Head with solitary John Smith's cask and the "Jockey" the 100% record could be restored if only Brown's could get on board.

As Brown's insist on serving factory produced beers, it can only be assumed that the wines follow suit. How about some class beers to restore status?

From Jeremy Hinks, Newtown, Disley:

I've had mixed experiences of Wetherspoon's pubs, but in the past have enjoyed the Thursday 'Curry Club' at some of their better local outlets. For the uninitiated, this offers a choice of curries and a pint for under £4.00. Guest beers aren't included, but cask Theakstons is - or at least was. Late last year the offer was changed and while lager, cider and a smooth are all allowed real ale is not.

I've written to Wetherspoon's but had no explanation as to why the chain, which usually and admirably promotes real ale, have taken this backwards step.

Obviously you can still buy a decent ale and dispose of the free one as you see fit, but this change certainly makes the offer a lot less tempting to me and I'm sure to many others who want a proper pint to wash down their chicken balti.

(Just to add that I've recently written making the same point. I found that in December one of the Wetherspoons in London did agree to 'swop' the beer for me, but this was a one off. Slapped wrists to Tim Martin (the big 'W'), I think. Ed(2))

Letters to Opening Times are welcome: The Editor, Opening Times, 45 Bulkeley St, Edgeley, Stockport. SK3 9HD or johnclark@stocam.u-net.com

STOCKPORT & MANCHESTER

Mild CHALLENGE

2002

CALLING ALL LICENSEES!

The 2002 Stockport & Manchester Mild Challenge is coming. This increasingly popular annual event will run from early April to mid-May next year but the organising starts now!

Last time over 100 people completed the Challenge with two dozen visiting every pub. Each year more and more people take part and once again we are pleased to have sponsorship from the Stockport Express which will be ensuring the Challenge gets maximum coverage.

The entry fee is just £10 per pub so if you sell traditional cask conditioned mild and would like to make a provisional booking to get your pub on the 2002 Mild Challenge then call Mild Challenge Organiser - Mark McConachie on 0161 429 9356

HELP HOLD BACK THE NITROKEG TIDE!

**JOIN CAMRA (SEE PAGE 19)
AND DRINK REAL ALE**



16TH STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL 2002



Make a date in your diary now! Stockport's 16th annual Beer & Cider Festival will be held in the Town Hall from 30 May to June 1. While we won't be hosting the National Cider & Perry Championship this year, we will still have a terrific range of ciders and perries. Beer lovers won't be forgotten either as the usual huge range of milds, bitters, strong ales, stouts and porters will be available.

Work on the beer order was starting as we went to press and promises to be the popular mix of old favourites and new beers. We have already commissioned the festival special which this year will be brewed by the Pictish Brewery in Rochdale, so expect something very hoppy and bitter!

Many thanks to the Stockport Express for once again sponsoring the event and to Steve Brannan of the Olde Vic for agreeing to be this year's licensee.

...Pub News...
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FOR REAL ALE
 STOCKPORT AND
 SOUTH MANCHESTER
BRANCH
 ...Pub News...
 ...Pub News...
 ...Pub News...
 ...Pub News...

At the Royal Mortar, Hillgate, Vinnie and Irene have now been in residence some 20 months. Both experienced hands in the club and pub trade they have turned around the fortunes of this popular Robinson's house from a one-barrel-a-week loser (yes, one barrel!!) to an eight per week, thriving local. Steadily applying improvements during their tenure, they have redecorated the place entirely, and remodelled the rear bar and other arrangements in the pool room, all from their own pockets. Liquid entertainment is in the form of well-kept Hatters and Best, live entertainment supplements this on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings when single or duo artistes play to an appreciative crowd. For those seeking a partner, Singles nights have been introduced Mondays and Thursdays. The pub is always a feature in OT as it is the current leader in the Stockport Super League Darts. The players are such a draw, apparently, that the pub is packed for the Tuesday matches. Vinnie and Irene's efforts have not gone unnoticed at Robinson's, as plans won approved to extend the pub into an adjoining property the brewery owns. This will house a new toilet block and games room, whilst the existing outside toilets will be razed to provide a beer garden and some car parking.

Staying on Hillgate, the Lamp Hotel has been closed and up for sale. However it was open again as we went to press but we have no news at to the owners.

Stephen Butler, the new tenant of the Unity, Wellington Road South, Stockport, has fulfilled a long-standing ambition by taking over the running of the Robinson's pub. Having grown up in a number of pubs run by his parents, Stephen is delighted to be continuing the family tradition. "I've always wanted to run a pub of my own but thought it better to wait until I was older and had more experience of life," he said. "My parents ran houses around Greater Manchester so I've seen at first hand what being in the licensed trade is all about."

Customers at the Star & Garter, Higher Hillgate, Stockport, are in safe hands following the arrival of Dave Burtles as the new tenant. Dave is well versed in pub life having run another Robinson's pub, the Prince of Orange in Ashton-under-Lyne, for 10 years. Dave, who is originally from Didsbury, left the Prince of Orange in 1992 but has now returned to the licensed trade after working for two cake firms. Helping him at the pub will be his wife, Lynda. "I took a break from being a landlord because I fancied being able to spend more time on the other side of the bar!" joked Dave. "But



Dave Burtles (right) receiving his licensee course certificate from David Robinson

it is very nice to be back - it's good to be your own boss and to have the chance to meet so many people. We are extremely pleased to have taken over the Star & Garter. It's a traditional local with a very nice interior and a lovely beer garden that will be popular in the summer. Most importantly, the pub has a very friendly atmosphere, and that was just the sort of place we were looking for."

The new tenant of the Armoury in Shaw Heath will be a familiar face to many of his regulars. For Peter Kaut has connections with the pub that date back more than 30 years. "I've been working here on and off since 1969 when my in-laws were in charge," Peter said. "I've had lots of experience both in the bar and the cellar over the years." Although he has done a variety of other jobs, including working as a motor mechanic and a horticultural engineer, the licensed trade has always been Peter's first love. "I really enjoy the atmosphere of pubs and the chance to meet so many people and feel part of the community," he said. "I've worked at a number of houses but have always had a soft spot for the Armoury as the customers who come in here are so nice. As soon as I knew the tenancy was available I decided that I wanted to be the landlord."

Peter has moved into the pub with his Boxer Cross dog Charlie and describes the Armoury as a friendly local that is particularly popular with older drinkers. He's already taken the jukebox out because most of the customers don't like a lot of noise.

Boddington's Bitter has finally been withdrawn from the Crown, Heaton Lane, Stockport. An incongous national brand amongst the ever-changing guest beers, sales had dwindled to a trickle. So eager were the pub's customers to see the back of the stuff, two of them bought the last few pints...and had them poured down the sink! The replacement permanent house beer is Jennings Bitter.

Last month we reported that the Royal Oak in Cheadle had a new licensee. This turns out to be a case of seriously crossed wires. There have been no changes at the pub which continues to be one of the best in Cheadle. Apologies to all concerned.

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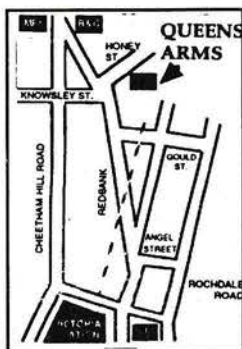
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ESSEN XMAS BEER FEST

Phil Booton goes festive in Belgium

In the middle of December a small group travelled to Belgium to visit the Kerstbier Festival at Essen, organised by OBER (Objectieve Bierproevers Essense Regio). Essen is 25 kilometres north of Antwerp. The festival is held in the Parochiecentrum (Church Hall) opposite the parish church in Kerkstraat. This is less than 10 minutes walk from the station. Trains run approximately every hour, but a change at Berchem is required at weekends. Our train was delayed by 20 minutes on the Saturday, which made us feel quite homesick! Incidentally, don't look for the Krupp armaments factory as this is in the (slightly larger!) German city of the same name.

The festival opens at 1400 hours on Saturday and 1200 hours on Sunday. It closes when the last customer leaves! We arrived soon after opening time on the first day to find a good-sized hall with plenty of seating, and very few customers. This was the calm before the storm however as it did get very busy for a period in late afternoon/early evening. More than 80 Christmas beers were available, including 8 on draught. The beers are numbered in the programme, which made ordering easier for those lacking confidence in their Flemish pronunciation.

Before tasting the beers one needs to hire a glass for 100 Belgian Francs and buy some tokens (40BF each). The informative programme cost 20BF. Beers are theoretically served in measures of about 0.2 litres but this seemed to vary depending on who actually served you. All the beers cost 1 token, with the exception of a few very strong ones, which cost 2. Service was very friendly. Many customers were from Holland and the UK. The border with Holland is only a few kilometres north of the town.

Food was also available in the form of cheese or ham rolls (1 token), Soup (2 tokens), Croque Monsieur (2 tokens) and Stoojeejs (3 tokens). This last is a Belgian meat stew and was enjoyed by those who tried it. Those of us who returned on the Sunday found almost all the beers still available. In fact Sunday was busier than Saturday, but service was always quite fast. This was in large part due to the amount of seating, which meant that few people congregated at the bar, unlike many UK beer festivals!

But what of the beers I hear you ask. Well they ranged in strength from weak quaffable session beers at 5.5/6.0 up to the more full-bodied 13.0 of Bush Millennium. More than 30 were new to me (and I am an experienced drinker of Belgian beers). Brewers represented spanned the spectrum from large international companies to the smallest microbrewers (e.g. Gaverhopke, De Cock, Brootcorens). Also a very good selection of rarer Wallonian beers (from the French-speaking half of Belgium). Quality was generally good. Occasionally one was unlucky enough to get the last of a bottle, including a bit of sediment. Among the beers I particularly enjoyed were Liefmans Gluhkriek (served hot), Caulier Blonde de Noel, Enghein de Noel, Verhaege Christmas and the aforementioned Bush Millennium. My beer of the festival though was Fantome Noel, which was wonderfully spicy and warming - just the beer for the cold winter weather.

I would certainly recommend this festival. Although it is smaller than some, it is less crowded. It is easily accessible from Brussels, Antwerp or the Netherlands and has an excellent range of beers. See you there next year (14-15 December 2002). For more information see the festival website at: www.ober.be

6



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NATIONAL PUB OF THE YEAR

The Nursery, Heaton Norris, found itself the at centre of a veritable media circus last month.

Once the news broke of the pub's victory as CAMRA's National Pub of the Year, licensees George and Sue Lindsay found themselves almost under siege with requests for press, radio and television interviews. "The phone hasn't stopped ringing for two days" Sue told us on the day of the formal presentation. The story appeared the national press and local papers the length and breadth of the country. Both the BBC and Granada TV broadcast from the pub as did numerous radio stations. At one stage Sue went international with an interview for British Forces Overseas radio.



The award was presented by CAMRA's national chairman Dave Goodwin who is pictured here presenting George and Sue with a brass plaque to mark their achievement. Our other picture shows local CAMRA members celebrating with George and Sue. As the presentation was made on a Tuesday lunchtime when many members and pub regulars couldn't be present, Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA also arranged a second presentation for Saturday 2 February.



CASK ALE ON THE UP?

New report questions 'official' real ale market share figures

There are lies, damn lies and statistics, or so the saying goes. And never more so than when it comes to surveys of the beer market. For years the licensed trade has been bombarded with surveys and reports firmly predicting all manner of things that never actually happen. More recently there has been an entertaining row about something that will interest readers of *Opening Times* - the size of the cask ale market.

The figure usually trotted out is that cask ale has a 9 per cent market share, the source of this being an annual survey conducted by the British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA). Wrong, claims a survey by Martin Information, it is in fact 16 per cent.

Why the big difference? Well, Martin Communications, who based their findings on a survey of some 66,000 licensed outlets, reckon that amongst other things the 'official' figures greatly underestimate the micro-brewing segment which is more like 800,000 barrels a year rather than the 346,500 estimated by the BBPA. Cue the redoubtable Peter Haydon, General Secretary of SIBA, the body which represents many, but by no means all, of the micro-brewers, who agrees that the 800,00 figure is in line with his own organisation's surveys.

This was too much for BBPA statistician Graham Page who mounted a lengthy defence of his figures in the letters column of the *Morning Advertiser*. This included some interesting revelations. His results are based on questionnaires completed by BBPA members but added to that are guestimates of the output of Sam Smiths along with another sizeable brewery in Cornwall plus another estimate of the micro-brewers output.

Even without the micro sector, the BBPA figures show that cask ale has some 13.5% of the draught market. Page then suggests that the micros perhaps count for another 1.5% (based on 'historical judgements' and ignoring the obvious micro brewing boom in recent years). SIBA say it is at least double that (and they should know how much they produce). This gives cask ale something like 16-17% of the draught beer market. A figure not unlike that produced by Martin Communications - which is where we came in.

So, where does this headline 9% figure come from? Well, it depends on how you present the figures. The BBPA presents its figures as shares of the entire beer market and that includes bottled and canned. Cask ale, by definition, can only be a draught product and so only has one market, the on-trade (that's pubs and clubs). And as the BBPA's own figures show, cask ale's share of *that* market is indeed a healthy 16-plus per cent.

We are therefore left with a situation whereby the BBPA's headline figures for the cask ale market (and the ones that will be picked up by journalists) are put forward in a way which disguises what is in fact quite a healthy state of affairs. The BBPA is of course dominated by the national brewers whose antipathy to cask beer is plain for all to see. Only those prone to conspiracy theories would consider this to be more than just an unfortunate coincidence.



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Robinson's

KEEPING UP APPEARANCES

A crucial reason for Robinson's success has been the great importance it attaches to customer service. This commitment is manifested in, for example, its determination to ensure its cask conditioned ales are of the highest standard and that its tenants and managers are fully trained in all aspects of the licensed trade.

Another very important factor in ensuring that customers enjoy their beer, however, is the physical environment in which they drink it. This is something of which Robinson's has long been aware. Back in the 1930s, under the chairmanship of Sir John, it was one of the first breweries to recognise the need to make pubs more comfortable in order to compete with new leisure attractions such as the cinema and radio. At this time the estate was expanding through the acquisition and building of new houses and there was a move away from traditional 'boozers' to create a more female friendly environment.

The task of keeping all of Robinson's houses in good order has grown over the years as the estate has expanded to its current size of around 400, including Hartleys in Cumbria. It is a challenge that the Company is determined to meet and it is the Architects' Department, based at the brewery, which plays a key role in achieving this aim.

Under the direction of Chief Architect Tom O'Shea Brown and Maintenance Supervisor Peter Wilson, the department spends much time ensuring that all Robinson's houses, which include a variety of architectural styles and characters, are looking their best. The department is a strong believer that alterations and developments should be sympathetic to their surroundings and that when a job is done, it is done to last, using original materials where practical.

The first impression that drinkers get of pub is its external appearance - and this is something to which the department devotes considerable resources. One key member in this area is William, a member of the sixth generation of the Robinson's family to be involved in running the Company. Mr William, a Chartered Architect, has introduced a rolling programme to ensure that the outside of all the houses remain in good order.

REFURBISHMENT

Last year alone, more than 50 pubs were repainted and Mr William is aiming to ensure that the pubs and exteriors are repainted every six years. Work around the Stockport area is usually handled by the brewery's in-house painters while, further afield, jobs are sub-contracted.

The heart of any pub, of course, is the bar area and the Architects' Department works closely with all its managers to maintain a conducive environment for customers. While Robinson's tenants are responsible for the maintenance of their pub interiors, the department provides expert advice and supervision, and also deals with all structural alterations.

Among the houses currently benefiting from the department's work is the Airport Hotel in Wythenshawe, where the bar and lounge areas are being refurbished with new timber flooring, carpets and soft furnishing. Closer to the brewery, improvements are also taking place at the Friendship Inn at Romiley, and both the Horsfield Arms and Arden Arms in Bredbury.

Recent decades have seen the licensed trade become fiercely competitive with many independent brewers disappearing from the landscape. But with Robinson's belief in quality in all aspects of its activities, there is every reason to think it will enjoy a prosperous 21st century.

Cheers!

This space is sponsored by Frederic Robinson Ltd.



Two local breweries are celebrating success in last month's CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival.

Robinson's scored twice with Old Tom being runner-up in the barley wine category and winning bronze in the supreme championship. These are the latest in a long line of awards for this classic strong ale.



Also celebrating is Congleton's Beartown Brewery which won a bronze for Black Bear in the Strong Mild/Old Ale class. Beartown's John Gregory told Opening Times "we are delighted to have had national recognition for one of our beers" The previous national award picked up by Beartown was at the 2000 Great British Beer Festival for Kodiak Gold.

Meanwhile at Joseph Holts, the brewers are working themselves up to fever pitch to produce a really wonderful first brew for the promised series of specials. Twelve different types of malted barley have been ordered so they can select a suitable combination for the trials.



The strength and name of the new brew is not yet known. It may appear next month, or then again it could be later. Details of how the beer will be marketed or advertised are also not known. As usual, it will probably be word of mouth and perhaps a poster in the pub.

MANCHESTER MATTERS *by Citylink*

The short time between January and February Opening Times plus the demands of the National Winter Ales Festival have clipped my wings a little this month, I'm afraid. So it's just a few snippets...

In the City Centre the hoardings are up around the new Wetherspoons on Princess Street. The Waterhouse, as it will be known, is due to open in April. The hoardings are also up next to Churchills on Chorlton Street. I'm not sure whether it's Churchills that is being expanded or whether Scottish & Newcastle are creating a new pub in the buildings next door. No doubt all will become clear in the fullness of time.

Not a million miles away from Churchills, there has been a change of licensee at the famous Circus Tavern on Portland Street. George Archondogeorge took over on Monday January 28 from Steve Campbell. George will be opening the pub at weekends. I hope to have a chat with him in time for next month's column.

During one of my lengthy stays at the Winter Ales thrash, I spoke to Graham Patient of the excellent Unicorn Wholefoods in Chorlton. Graham tells me that Unicorn is now a member of SIBA, the independent brewers organisation, which has now opened its membership to pubs and other purveyors of fine ales. Unicorn also hope to be selling some bottle-conditioned beers from the excellent Black Isle brewery in Scotland and they already sell all of the winners from the recent SIBA/Safeway organic beer competition held at the Marble Arch a couple of months back.

There are also rumours circulating that Lees are buying a pub in Chorlton, although brewery representatives were staying tight-lipped when I raised the matter with them. A case of watch this space perhaps?

In Ardwick, the Park has been done up in fine style. The two room, lounge and vault layout, is no more. It is now one large L-shaped space with new bar and seating to complement. Food seems to feature highly now - the pub always lost out to the nearby Church because of the lack of this in the past - those days seem to have gone. Just one thing remains to be done in my opinion, install cask Burtonwood beers instead of the smooth version they have now. As the trade has noticeably picked-up, I'm sure they could warrant selling cask ale; after all, the Church has been selling cask Boddies for years now.





This month's Desert Island beers are from Richard 'Sooty' Sutton of Pictish Brewery. Richard's brewing experience included stints at both Manchester's Footage & Firkin and Heywood's Phoenix Brewery before he set up the highly regarded Pictish Brewery in 2000. Already armed with both the current Champion and Winter Champion Beer of Britain, currently Oakham JHB and Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout, these are Sooty's other choices... "Whether I'm brewing beer or drinking it I have one basic rule, it's got to have lots of flavour. Life's just too short for crappy, mass produced bland beers! I'm not particularly fussy about style; I enjoy everything from lagers through to stouts as long as it's good (that rules out 99% of British brewed lagers). If I was genuinely taking that trip to a desert island I would probably have to take at least one of my own beers along but I can't decide which is my favourite from one minute to the next. It would be pretty pointless and self-indulgent selecting one of my own beers for this list, I wouldn't brew it if I didn't like it. For this list I have selected the beers that through the years have really made an impression on me and perhaps helped to nudge me into becoming a brewer.

"The beer that started my love affair with real ale was **Cropton Two Pints**. It was the first pint that I had in Rochdale's Tap & Spile (sadly no longer in existence.) It's full malty flavours and delicate hop aromas brought about the sudden realisation that Tetley Bitter wasn't really much good. True to the legend one pint was not enough so I went back for another but they'd sold out so I had to have something else. That was pretty good as well and so my fate was sealed.

"Probably my all-time favourite beer is **Springhead Leveller**. Alan Gill has a real nose for a good recipe and I could equally have chosen Roaring Meg, Cromwell's Hat or Hersbrucker Weizenbier. The large proportion of amber malt in Leveller gives it a rich coffee flavour which you'll either love or hate and really sets this beer aside as one of a kind. I haven't tried it since Alan left as brewer and can only hope that things have not changed too much.

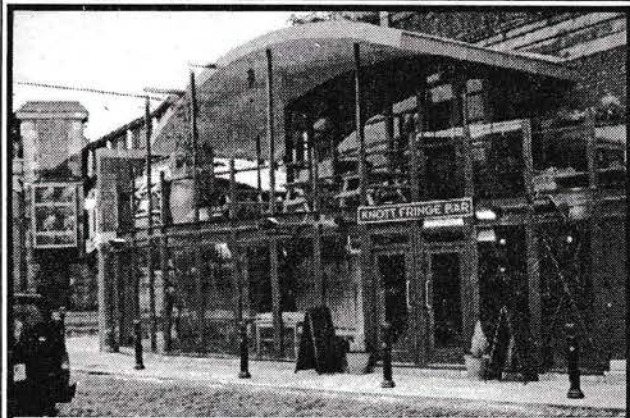
"I first encountered **Butcombe Bitter** on a potholing trip in the Mendips in a cracking country pub (sorry I can't remember which one) served on gravity dispense. For some reason beer is always more satisfying after you've spent several hours down a dark wet hole which is probably the only good reason for going down a cave in the first place. The fact that Butcombe brewery survived for 18 years only brewing the one beer is a testament to just what an outstanding beer this is.

"**Orkney Dark Island** is one of the fullest flavoured beers around and is perfectly balanced. What more can you say about perfection? "My final selection is **Mort Subite Gueze** (the traditional unfiltered version if you can find it). This was my introduction to the world of lambic beers, which I would consider to be the champagnes of the beer world. The idea of a deliberately soured beer is a strange concept for British brewers to grasp. The first mouthful is disgusting, about half way down the glass you're not quite so sure and by the time you reach the bottom you need another bottle.

"In true Good Beer Guide style I would like to include a few try also's and in keeping with the guide most people will probably agree that they're better than the main selections. Beers that didn't quite make it into my top five are, Batemans victory, Hop Back Summer Lightning, Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby Mild and Dent Bitter. If you ever find yourself in Mexico and haven't had a decent pint for days try a bottle of Bohemia, It's not real ale but it's full flavoured and very hoppy."

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NORTHERN QUARTER STAGGER (1)

There has been much written, some of it by me, about the Northern (or Beer) Quarter of Manchester, for many years one of the nation's premier real-ale drinking areas, and whether it is suffering some sort of decline. In order to answer the question, I thought it appropriate to undertake the equivalent of an Opening Times Stagger around the area - looking at the beers on offer when I walked through the doors, and judging the merits of the establishments as havens for drinkers. Despite the core pubs' boast of all being within a half mile radius, problems of locomotion with my hip has meant that two visits were necessary, and pressure of space means that the stagger will have to be spread across two issues, part two to follow with my thoughts on the start of the festival season next time. Each pub was visited (for these purposes) but once, and what I found then is what you get...

It all starts at the **Castle**, in Oldham Street. An ultra-traditional (nay, time-warped) Robinson's three roomed pub. A drinkers area with some table seating and three bar-stools at the front, a lounge just behind the bar and a larger games room at the back. The gents is down a long corridor, and while covered is very much tacked-on in the old Robinsons outside-loo-tradition. It is well known that I like this quaint boozier with a real locals feel a lot. Kath and Ian add their own kind of atmosphere. Widely known as the only Robby's pub to serve all nine real ales: Hatters & Dark Mild, Old Tom and 6 bitters: Old Stockport, Best, Frederics, Hartley's XB and Cumbria Way and the seasonal guest (Robin). Cumbria (outstanding) and Old Stockport (good) were sampled. The drinkers atmosphere is untroubled by food. It is so absurdly English (down to the giant Czech football flag and leaflets advertising their airline and tours of Moravia) that I am somehow reminded of a bar in sixties Montmatre! Across Oldham St and onto Tib St and left to the **Centro** cafe-bar. Modern clean, pale, light. An upstairs bar with tables and a few high stools. Foreign beers and cask ales, and later drinking at weekends. There is a large downstairs area, and the inside loos are at least 15°C hotter than the rest of the pub. Real ale was successfully introduced here a couple of years back, and the range is usually interesting. Hydes Dutch Courage (their then seasonal), Pictish Winter Solstice, Slaters Grand Un, and Salamander Hellbender were on offer. The Slaters was tried first, a light brown beer with a peppery hop nose, almost lentil-like dryness in the body and a slightly fruity finish leading to a light hop bitterness. It was very good, and I preferred it to the maltier taste of the Salamander I had next, though the condition was excellent. Up Tib St, away from the centre until it reaches Swan St, then across the road to Bar Fringe. Established five years ago (plus a month or two) this eclectic long, single-roomed pub based on a Belgian brown bar soon fought its way into drinkers hearts, and eventually the Good Beer Guide. Its walls are festooned with cartoons and oddments, and to say licensee Carmen is a character would be doing Charlie an injustice, for she is a whole host of them, packed into a tiny, tattooed body. All four handpumps were in use with Bank Top Santas Claws, Boggart Dark Side, Spinning Dog Santas Paws and Osset Silver King, complementing the extensive range of Belgian draught and bottled products. Sticking to 'stagger' rules and eschewing any foreign temptations, I tried the Bank Top offering (Bank Top has a residency here, with at least one of their beers rotating on a handpump). It was mid brown, sweet and fruity with a bittersweet finish. Everything indeed that you would expect of a Christmas seasonal beer. It was also in spot-on condition. After

sampling two of the others I crossed Swan St to the **Burton Arms**, which was packed. Like its neighbour the Smithfield (see below), The Burton really is still a hotel, and very popular. The bar runs the depth of the building with a lounge at the front (and more TVs than you can shake a stick at) and a games room at the back. It is also a locals pub and has theme nights etc. Up to six beers are available here, from larger breweries, and the choice today was Old Speckled Hen, Adnams Bitter, Bass and Pedigree, the other two having run out. The lighter Adnams was something of a relief after all the 5% plus beers I had been on. It was as usual, fresh and in good nick, though without the complex flavours of the last three or four.

Next door but a couple is the **Smithfield**. Also a hotel, but in this case specialising in some of the obscurist micro-beers there are. The Smithfield holds a beer festival every few weeks, and the range of handpumped beers are then complemented by more offerings from the cellar. As it chanced, there was one on on this visit - Black Isle Autumn Ale, Woodhampton Old Rooster, Golcar Bitter, Moulin Brew, Bankfield Dark Times, Ale of Athol, Goldthorn Premium. Too many to list. But always a hatful in this excellent pub. All the ones I tried were in good form...and we haven't even reached the Beer House yet, where part two of this venture begins. So far the Northern Quarter seems to be holding up quite well, which is more than could be said for me as the cold December night air hit my face as I emerged from the Smithfield... *...to be continued*

NATIONAL WINTER ALES Festival & Championship Round-up

Organisers of last month's CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival at the Upper Campfield Market, Castlefield, have hailed the event as an outstanding success.

The foreign beer stall was impressive to say the least and featured probably the best selection of draught (that's as in straight from the cask) German beers ever to feature at a CAMRA festival. Indeed it was the foreign beer bar that provided two of Opening Times's favourite beers (well Ed (1)'s anyway, Ed (2) as foreign bar manager is far too modest to blow his own trumpet) in the form of Carlow O'Hara's stout, a marvellously dry and complex 5% brew from the Irish Republic, and from Germany the wonderful Tegernsee Spezial again hit the spot. This 5.5% masterpiece, and now a firm festival favourite really did show what a proper pale German lager should be like, and was in stark contrast to most of the crummy germanic-sounding, but British-brewed muck foisted onto the drinking public.

It was however British cask ales that took pride of place, with a superb selection, not only of stouts, porters, old ales and barley wines, but milds and bitter of all strengths. Many local brewers were represented including the first major festival appearance by the LAB beers, which sold at a phenomenal rate, much to the delight of brewer Anthony Firmin. Other stand-out beers included 1872 Porter from the West Yorkshire Brewery (6.5%, dark, dry and complex) and Goachers Old Ale, tried late on Saturday afternoon and still brimming with condition. This complex, bitter-sweet 6.7% ale was a classic of its style.

Champion Beers Include Local Favourites

The highlight of the festival was the announcement of the Champion Winter Beer of Britain and, unlike last year two local brews featured in the medals. The results in each category are:

Old Ales & Strong Milds

Gold - Bath Ales, Festivity; Silver - Rudgate, Ruby Mild; Bronze - Beartown, Black Bear

Stouts & Porters

Gold - Wye Valley, Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout; Silver - Ringwood, XXXX Porter; Bronze - B&T, Edwin Taylor's Extra Stout

Barley Wines

Gold - Big Lamp, Blackout; Silver - Robinson's, Old Tom; Bronze - Adnams Tally Ho

Supreme Champion Winter Beer

Gold - Wye Valley, Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout; Silver - Bath Ales, Festivity; Bronze - Robinson's, Old Tom.



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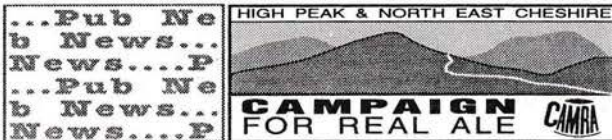
Old Stockport Bitter, Best Bitter,
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Cumbrian Way
re-introducing....
Samuel Oldknob
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A WARM WELCOME IN A TRADITIONAL PUB



Is the White Hart, Mottram the first in the area to have a LINK cash machine? Good idea isn't it... shall I have that last pint... oh no! No money!... no problem sir! Don't tell the temperance society!

Over the hill (not literally) in Hayfield the Kinder Lodge has started taking Tim Taylor's Best Bitter and the Waltzing Weasel also has it alongside Pedigree. This complements the Taylor's Landlord which has been available at the Lantern Pike, Little Hayfield for some time. Has Hayfield been annexed by Keighley?

An unusual turn of events at the Church in Millbrook, Stalybridge and I don't mean the arrival of a new licensee (no names as usual!!) but the fact that the only real beer available is Theakstons cask mild. The bitter just won't sell in competition with the smooth-flow John Smiths and Boddingtons! Eh?!

More news of the Lamp, Brookbottom, Hadfield. This pub has been exercising contributors to this column over the past few months with rumour following rumour. There may be some light shed on the situation with the appearance of a sign advertising the licence. So it was only a refurb.

Changes in the beer range at the Sportsman in Hyde. The Magic Mushroom Mild (not being brewed) is being replaced by Moorhouses Black Cat and Cain's Mild (soon not to be brewed?)

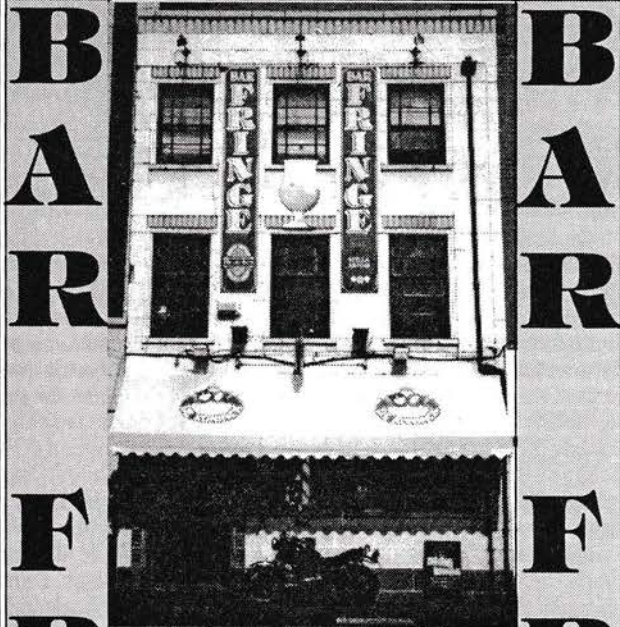
Christina Thompson has taken over as the licensee of the Printers Arms at Thornset to realise her 20-year ambition of running a pub. She will be working with her husband, Andy, who will provide help and support at the Robinson's house. "I've had to wait for our family to grow up before we could seriously look for a tenancy. Now that Nicky is 14 and Jennifer is 10 we have the time and energy that the business demands," said Christina.

Although Andy took a little convincing that giving up his career as a truck driver to become self employed was the right move, he is now sure it was the right decision and Christina says he is a natural behind the bar. The couple's overall plan will be to open the pub's restaurant early this year and ensure that regulars continue to get a warm welcome in familiar surroundings.

One of the hidden gems in the area, the Dane Bank on the Denton/Reddish border, is losing its longstanding licensees. John and Dot Heywood are retiring on 25 February after 20 years at the pub and over thirty years with Robinson's. While the pubs nearby are generally sad apologies, the Dane bank under John and Dot's stewardship has maintained high standards and the pub preserved its traditional atmosphere. Their successors are Dave and Donna Maeve, local people who are new to the trade.

Murray and Marjorie Johns of the Ring O' Bells, Marple, have been named as regional finalists in the search to find the country's top licensees. The couple who keep the Robinson's house have been in the trade for just four years and now progress to the competition's national final. "We are delighted," says Murray. "I feel that it is recognition for everything we do and for the support that comes from the brewery." The British Institute of Innkeeping (BII), which organises the competition, will be presenting the couple with their certificate and trophy when they travel to Le Meridien Grosvenor House in London on February 15th.

The presentation will be made by the BII, competition sponsors Mathew Clark and representatives of The Publican Newspaper. The panel will also be making their selection for the 2002 Licensee of the Year. The result of the national title will be announced at The Publican Awards at the same venue on March 26th where the winners will receive a trophy and £1,000. The competition is designed to recognise the very highest standards of achievement and commitment to the industry. It has addressed every aspect of the couple's operations at the Ring O' Bells where Murray and Marjorie are proud of the traditional pub business they have built and the balance between beer sales and top class pub food that they provide. "Developing the business to this level has taken a lot of time and hard work, but before we started in the trade, we had some extremely valuable training on Robinson's five-day licensee training course which gave us a very good start. Since then we have learnt a lot and Robinson's have supported us throughout," said Murray. "We also have an extremely good team of staff here who share our values and I'm sure they have played a major part in helping to achieve this award." The couple are proud that no special effort was made before they received a visit from the judges as they are strong believers in maintaining year-round high standards.



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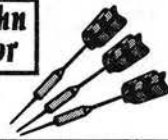
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Stockie on The Che

By John Taylor



The second half of the season is about to commence in the Stockport Licensed Houses Super and Premier Leagues.

Champions for the last two seasons, Royal Mortar, are still riding high at the top of the table, but they are now having it all their own way this year. Having already lost one match, they came very close to losing another, against the Bobby Peel. The Hillgate side eventually won 4-3 but each game went to the wire and four 180s were recorded in the 54 tons or over scored in the match. Best darts of the night went to Kevin Weir (21 & 16) who lost the first leg to Mick Cooney, who had a big outshot of 156, and Tony Daniels (17 & 19) for the champs. Best win of the match went to the Bobby's Steve Lyons who defeated master dartsman Darryl Fitton in legs of 26 and 22. Darryl must have had one eye on his beloved Liverpool who somehow beat Man U on the same night.

Another close finish saw the Ash Hotel come from 3-1 down to clinch the points against the Magnet. Earlier in the match, Derek Higgins (19 & 23), Geoff Millward (21 & 17), and the shock of the night when John Beswick beat Tony O'Shea with two legs of 22, were the heroes for the away side. But the Ash hit back with wins from Dave Adshead (21 & 19), followed by his brother Brian (18 & 16) and a 180, and finally new Cheshire County star Paul Yates with two winning legs of 21.

That wins keeps the Ash in second place alongside Reddish WMC, who demolished Club Leisure from Chorlton 6-1. Best darts for the Reddish side came from Dave Beckett (23 & 24), Pete Day Snr. (23 & 26) and Mick Allen (24 & 18) who had an outshot of 120.

The Moss Rose appear to have team selection problems, that is not having enough players to select from. Only four made the journey

to the Printers Arms and that defeat means they are now only four points way from the relegation zone, which includes the Royal Oak, Nursery Inn, Jack & Jill, Wembley and the Sidings, who have won four of their last six league fixtures and appear to be heading in the right direction. The top teams in the two tables are as follows:

Super League			Premier Division				
	Pld.	W	Pts		Pld.	W	Pts
Royal Mortar	13	12	24	Copperfield	12	12	24
Ash Hotel	13	11	22	Greg St. WMC	12	10	20
Reddish WMC	13	11	22	Florist	12	9	18
Bobby Peel	13	10	20	Dog & Partridge	12	8	16
Magnet	13	9	18	Golden Hind	12	8	16

The week before the above matches took place, the top four teams in the Super League all progressed to the semi-finals of the team knock-out, the results being Royal Oak 1-6 Royal Mortar; Booby Peel 5-2 Copperfields; Reddish WMC 5-2 Printers Arms; Old King (Premier) 1-6 Ash Hotel. Best darts of the evening came from Steve Lyons who won in legs of 13 and 21 for the Bobby Peel, Pete Day Snr (16 & 18) for Reddish WMC and Tony O'Shea (15 & 22) for the Ash.

In the mixed 'A' division, the Pineapple are top of the league followed by Greg Street WMC, who have a game in hand. Copperfields, the Railway, Jack & Jill 'B', Star & Garter and the Rising Sun make up the top half of the table.

Just a quick mention about the crib league on a Tuesday. After 13 matches only 4 points separate the top eight teams, and John McArdle and yours truly won in 71 holes the other week. Yes, 71 holes, now you know why I mentioned it. Sorry, it won't happen again.

Well, it's that time again. Thanks for taking time out to read this article. See you soon.
John Taylor.



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Truth and Trust

In Cheshire and Greater Manchester, figures for drink-driving over the Christmas period showed a welcome and encouraging fall. Unfortunately this experience was not repeated nationwide, where the proportion of positive breath tests from over 15,000 drivers tested after accidents rose from 7% to 8%. This is not in itself statistically significant, and may merely reflect a change in the pattern of testing, but it clearly suggests that the substantial improvements achieved in recent years have ground to a halt.

Part of the problem must be that people, particularly youngsters entering the driving population, are given no information as to what the law represents and how to adhere to it. The government continues to tell drivers not to touch a drop, when everybody knows that is not a fair representation of either the law or the facts on accident risk. Something so clearly untrue makes a laughing stock of both education and the law, and will encourage people to doubt everything they are told. To be taken seriously, road safety education and rules must always be realistic and truthful. The absence of honest information can also give rise to dangerous myths - for example, in a survey carried out last autumn, some young drinkers expressed the belief that they could drink five pints of strong lager and still remain within the legal limit.

However, the authorities have not always been so coy with the truth. An official booklet produced by the Transport Research Laboratory in 1986 said:

"Ideally, don't drink anything at all. If you do drink, the following are sensible guidelines:

- ☆ Do not drink on an empty stomach
- ☆ Drink slowly and limit the amount you drink to no more than three units
- ☆ Eat with your drinking
- ☆ Stop drinking alcohol some time before driving"

This is a honest and sensible advice that, if adhered to, is not going to take any adult anywhere near the legal limit, or result in any increase in accident risk. Surely if this message was widely disseminated it would stand a much better chance of reducing drink-related casualties than the patronising and dishonest insistence that even one drink is dangerous.

Campaign for Real Coppers

Probably the biggest deterrent to the potential drink-drive offender is the threat of detection, and knowing other people who have been caught. Unfortunately, in recent years the chances of this happening, outside high-profile Christmas campaigns, have greatly diminished, as many police forces have cut back or effectively disbanded their traffic departments. Outside the motorway network, it is now extremely rare to see a traffic patrol car within the Greater Manchester boundary.

Enforcement has increasingly been entrusted to automatic cameras detecting speeding and red light jumping. But however effective they may be in reducing these specific violations, they are completely incapable of identifying drink-drive offenders, nor of dealing with the growing problem of untaxed and unlicensed drivers. Indeed it has often been remarked that drivers tend to show an exaggerated respect for speed limits if they know they are over the limit. In matters of road safety, cameras can never be an adequate substitute for flesh-and-blood police officers.

Curmudgeon Online: www.curmudgeon.co.uk

CALLING NEW MEMBERS!

As a reader of Opening Times you probably have an interest in good pubs and good beer. You may even be a member of CAMRA, but if you're not then come along to our special membership night of Monday 18 February. It's at the Nelson, Wellington Road South, Stockport and starts from about 8.00pm. Everyone is welcome, particularly if you're under 26. There will be a buffet and we've held the membership rates at their old level for the night. Recruit a friend and we'll even but you a pint!

5 Years Ago
FEBRUARY 1997
 by Phil Levison

The front page was taken up by Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA's most prestigious award, Pub of the Year, won for 1996 by the Griffin Hotel in Heaton Mersey. The pub first hit the headlines in the early 1980's, when a spirited campaign saved the pub from demolition by owners Holt's. There is an impressive interior, typical of many Holt's houses, but the pub was actually built by the Thornley family in the early 19th century, and it only came into Holt's possession in 1922. They recently added a modern extension completely in tune with the bolder part of the pub. There was also a mention for the two runners-up on the competition - the Coach & Horses at Belle Vue and the Unity, opposite the station approach in Stockport. They are both Robinson's houses, and like the Griffin they are both superb community pubs (although the Coach & Horses has had its share of ups and downs in the intervening years).

Still on the subject of awards, the Davenport Arms in Woodford, having won the previous year's local Pub of the Year title, had gone forward into the next stage of judging, winning through as the 1997 Pub of the Year for CAMRA's Greater Manchester region. The pub, also known as the Thief's Neck, was also celebrating its 10th consecutive appearance in the Good Beer Guide.

CAMRA had released its submission to the Monopolies & Mergers Commission on the proposed Bass-Tetley merger. It had argued that the proposed take-over would mean higher prices and less choice for customers, as well as threatening the future of breweries in Alcoa, Burton and Yorkshire. CAMRA wanted the merger blocked, as Bass would have almost 40% of production, whilst the top two companies, Bass and Scottish Courage, would be a duopoly with around 70% of the market.

The long-running saga of the fight to save the Buffet Bar on Stalybridge Station had been regularly reported in this column, but finally the outcome had been a happy one, and three columns of Opening Times had been devoted to the story under the headings "The Buffet Bar is Back" and "The Famous Refreshment Rooms on Stalybridge Station are Re-born after a 5-Year Campaign."

John Turrell had started writing his "Mild & Bitter" weekly beer column in the South Manchester Reporter when the paper was founded 18 years previously. John was also one of the founders of the paper, and his column had appeared almost without a break since November 1978. His efforts had been capped by his winning the Regional Writer of the Year award presented by the British Guild of Beer Writers.

Finally, one item of news from the back page. The Oakley Manor Hotel (opposite Robinson's Church in Cheadle Hulme) had been selling keg Thwaites keg bitter by handpump. Changes were afoot, as the local press had reported that Steve Kalton of Kalton Inns, and also Watling Street Inns, had applied for a full on-licence. Today the former hotel is better known as the Governor's House and is owned by Nottingham brewer Hardy Hansons.



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FOUR GO TO LIVERPOOL

- A Tale of Beer and Adventure

Chris Walkden goes in search of classic pubs and beer

Paul Watson, Dave and Carol Sheldon and myself set off to Liverpool one Saturday to do some pre-Christmas beer shopping. A special day return is available- around £6.50 from Stockport.

If it is adventure you want, a train trip at the moment has all the potential to provide it. You must carry a comprehensive set of timetables with you (plus a football fixture list if you want to avoid travelling fans) in order to make up contingency plans. We needed one straight away- the first train was delayed by a track circuit failure at Handforth and so we missed the connection at Piccadilly. After our two-hour journey, it seemed sensible to make our first port of call The Dispensary on Renshaw St., a five-minute walk from the station. The usual mix of Cain's and guest beers was available. I plumped for Harvestoun Good King Legless (4.5%), a pleasant beer whilst Dave's choice,

Tom Woods Old Timber (also 4.5%) had just gone off so he joined us. Carol is a connoisseur of more heady stuff and had some excellent De Koninck Beer de Noel (6.5%)- although she generously offered us large samples to see what we were missing. Good service from the barman too as he advised us of the £1.60/half price before he started pouring it. Other beers were Castle Eden Winter Royal and La Chouffe Bok. As we were hungry as well as thirsty, Carol's home-made fruit cake, often a feature of these trips, was handed round. This tasted as if it had generous helpings of brandy- that's because it did!

Next stop was the Liverpool Brewery Tap where only one of the local beers was available along with several nationals such as Pedigree, Boddies and Flowers. The local brew was Celebration (4.8%), a straw coloured beer which surprised by having a smooth chocolatey taste. We enquired whether this was meant to be - no-one was sure, but one of the locals suggested that the new brewer had dropped a Mars Bar in the brewing kettle by mistake! The brewery takes up the front of the cavernous single-room pub and can be viewed from the street as well as in the pub itself. Live music is frequently provided and there is a club upstairs - both help to promote real ale to younger drinkers. If this is not your scene, you can always attend the philosophy discussions that take place from 3pm-6.30pm every Monday.

The next pub was a brisk walk uphill - Peter Kavanagh's is hidden away behind the Anglican Cathedral. The Good Beer Guide shows it within a 10 minute walk of Lime Street- I'm not so sure about this, but it is certainly worth seeking out. This Victorian pub has several wood panelled rooms, the front snug featuring a large painted mural whilst there is a collection of 'valve' radios in the rear. More modern transistor radios hang from the roof of the large multi-level lounge, which has loads of pictures of Liverpool life and personalities on the walls. A large book outlining the history of the pub has just been produced and a well-thumbed copy is available at the bar to inspect if you need to read something with your pint. Speaking of which, the Tom Woods had just gone off again so we all plumped

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for the Cains Bitter which was on excellent form. Robinson's Robin, Tetley Bitter and Abbott were also on. Our stay was enlivened by the appearance of the pub dog, a huge beast that had sussed out that Carol's bag contained something interesting. This was of course further supplies of cake. The landlady told us we mustn't give it any and it eventually gave up to go and play a game of tug of war with one of the regulars.

We had already reached our furthest point from the station and we left to find our next target, The Belvedere just as the sun was setting. This is a new entry in the Good Beer Guide and has just won the CAMRA Merseyside Best City Centre Keg to Cask Conversion Award. Despite being close to the Philharmonic Hall, its location in a side street is not immediately obvious. Only two beers on handpump-Hanby Drawwell and Cornish Redruth Bitter and both were on fine form. The pub consists of two rooms, one with the bar and the other with serving hatches. A lot of effort has gone into the pub and it is well worth seeking out, especially if you are going to a performance at the Phil which is two minutes walk around the corner.

Across the road now and down another side street is the Cracke, a multi roomed pub with glass screens and wall paintings. Carol, preferring higher strength beers, had abstained at the last couple of pubs in anticipation of some Wobbly Bob, which is a regular here. But disaster- it had been replaced by another Phoenix beer -Flash Flood that was only 4.1%. Whilst us chaps tried it- and it was very pleasant and hoppy as you would expect, Carol sought comfort from a bottle of water and more of her delicious cake (which had a high alcoholic content anyway!!) Also available was Dent Aviator, Bass and a Hart beer called Captain Morley.

After all this time, and because of the cold weather, a comfort break was required. Where better to stop than the famous Philharmonic pub just round the corner. This is a Tetley Heritage establishment, with a very ornate interior, especially in the Gents, which are a tourist attraction in their own right. A notice outside asks ladies to check with the management before entering to see the sights. For once the Grand Lounge was open, a wonderfully large room with mirrors and paintings. An ideal place to sample the now more varied beer range - Cains Bitter and Bass were supplemented by Hobgoblin and Morrells Advent (4.5%) The latter was sampled and my notes record that we classified it as "not a beer to rave about, but not unpleasant either"- a long winded way of saying average!! A short journey along Hope St and we were at the Everyman Theatre. The large basement cafeteria features a GBG real ale bar and serves food until very late. At this time of the evening it was crowded and the queue for food was 20 minutes- however a bit of planning had someone in the food queue, someone getting drinks and someone guarding the table with one person spare to assist in communication. Carol, by now dying of thirst had a Hoegarden to go with her meal whilst I chose a Dentergems Wheat beer. We swapped to compare- and neither of us could tell the difference. I guess I should have tried the Antoon instead. British real ales were Cains Bitter, Wadworths 6X and Black Sheep Bitter, the latter was rated average.

Around the corner in the middle of the University is the Cambridge, another Good Beer Guide pub that we had not visited before. This Burtonwood pub has Bitter and Top Hat as well as unusually- a guest beer which on this occasion was Woods Wood-

cutter (4.2%), one of their occasional beers which was fruity and very passable. By this time the Saturday night crowd were coming out to fill up the two bare-boarded rooms which meant that we ought to think about getting home.

This just left time for a top up so it was off to Dr. Duncan's near the Station. This excellent Cains pub has won many awards and always features a range of Cains and guest beers. The pub was crowded and some of the local CAMRA members were spotted carrying out a quality control sortie -at least what they told us !! It was nice to see a new Cains beer available -First Choice (4.3%) which was very pleasant- more than that I cannot say as I can't read my tasting notes which usually get a bit garbled by this time on a trip. Batemans Old Nessie was also on whilst Carol sampled the delightful Liefmans Framboise. I was also tempted to try Roosters Stout, - an unusual beer from Sean Franklin's brewery which is usually associated with excellent, light, hoppy beers full of flavour. Alas time did not permit as there was one more stop to make.

The Head of Steam is located adjacent to Lime Street Station in the old North Western Railway Hotel and has only been open for a couple of years. There are five bars and not all have real ale. The best bet is to go to the Grand Hall at the far end- here there were seven real ales including Killeen from Ireland with four other pump-clips turned round. I chose the 3.8% Arran Ale from the Isle of Arran Brewery but the price-£2.16/pint took the shine off it. The cafe-bar style area near the entrance was far more crowded, but those who like to be seen in more trendy areas can still get some good beer by looking carefully- Czech Budwieser Budvar, Antoon and Anchor Steam vied with Highgate Dark and Deuchars IPA plus a load of fizzy pop rubbish. The Railway Bar between the two has lots of railwayana - and real ale when the bar is open- on this occasion it wasn't.

Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA are organising a rail ale trip to Liverpool this month - full details in CAMRA Calling (the OT diary) on page 18. *Ed(2) adds... Do note that the excellent Liverpool Beer Festival (held in the Lutjens designed crypt of the Metropolitan (Catholic) Cathedral) is happening from 20-23rd this month. Entry is free for the Friday Lunchtime session.*

15



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SAD LOSS

It is with great regret that we have to report the untimely death of Paul Marsden, a stalwart member of High Peak and North East Cheshire Branch.

Paul, with his distinctive hairstyle and headgear, was well known among the Greater Manchester Branches and in his favourite pubs in the Stockport and Tameside areas. He was an active Branch member and could always be relied on to support and take part in local Camra activities, particularly where his specialist skills were in demand.

He was a good friend and will be sadly missed by High Peak Branch members and by all those who knew him, and our sympathies go to his wife Jenny

Tom Lord, High Peak Branch Chairman

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The Wharf, Congleton - has introduced a guest ales programme! This is alongside Greenall's Bitter and the far more interesting Greenall's Mild and Timothy Taylor Landlord. The Castle, Congleton - not to be outdone has introduced a second guest ale. Both continue to change regularly. The Queens, Congleton - continues its programme of sourcing its beers from local brewers SUCH AS Slaters and Weetwood.

Real Ale Gain. Good news from the Throstle's Nest in Buglawton. This former keg-only pub owned by Punch Taverns has taken a turn for the better with the arrival of a new licensee. Russ Smith has added real ales in the form of Draught Bass and a rotating guest beer. Hydes Bitter, Everards Beacon and Old Speckled Hen have all been featured, and have sold well. This is a traditional local, with bar snacks available. Russ, you are doing the right thing: good luck!

The Swan in Wilmslow has a much reduced beer range from its former days under Ray and Sheena. Boddington and Tim Taylor's Landlord are thought to be the regulars, with occasional guests but when I called in at the end of May only Boddies was available. They tried Theakston Cool Cask for a while, but sales were poor and they dropped it.

In Knutsford, the Angel (Holts) and the Cross Keys (freehouse) are benefiting from the closure of the Royal George Hotel and its accommodation. This former keg-only outlet is being redeveloped into a shopping centre of some sort.

Rumours that the old Hanbury's supermarket was to become a pub, possibly owned by a national free-house chain, can be scotched. It is due to become a women's clothes shop, we hear. No decent beer in there then.

The Cross Keys continues to be Knutsford's premier destination of choice for the beer-lover. A gleaming bank of five hand pumps greets the visitor. One of the regular ales is the delightful Tim Taylor's Landlord, a beer which has won the Champion Beer of Britain award more times than any other. Three of the pumps feature a regularly changing range of guest ales.

The Angel no longer sells Holts Mild, with only the Bitter appearing on hand pump. On the edge of town, Jim has retired from the Builders Arms. No change to the with Marstons Bitter starring alongside Banks's Bitter & Original.

At the Bull's Head in Moberley, Ted has moved up to a third guest beer. While he is tied to the Punch list, and some locally crafted brews would be a nice touch, the beer range looks reasonably interesting. So three cheers for Ted, and one and a half cheers for Punch, who have half an idea about how to run a pub chain. We had some lovely Bombardier in the Bull's Head on a social evening in November, and followed up with some delightful Abbot in the Roebuck over the road, with a very good meal. A good turn out and an enjoyable evening means that we will continue with our experimental policy of making our socials more sociable! CAMRA members, non-members and the curious are welcome!

The fashionable Roebuck in Moberley has been awarded the Cask Marque for the quality of its cask ales. They currently serve Timothy Taylors Landlord, and for the less discriminating, Tetley's. Great grub too! The Roebuck took the imaginative step of replacing its third beer, the Greene King Abbott with a regularly changing guest beer. They are now achieving sufficient volume to rotate two guest ales each week. Batemans XXXB and London Pride were on recently. I tried the patriotically-badged Wells Bombardier, with its Cross of St George on the pump-clip, and it was very good.

Meanwhile the nearby Bird in Hand is now open after a refit, and the Plough & Flail has changed its range to Boddingtons, Worthington Best Bitter (rare in this neck of the woods), and Draught Bass. This latter was on good form, but I can't help thinking that the range could show a little more imagination.



News from Chelford is that the former Dixon Arms is boarded up, and looks set never to open. The nearby Egerton Arms has probably picked up a lot of additional trade in consequence. This large, fairly food-oriented pub is under new management, and offers two guest beers in addition to the standard offering from the national brewers. Recently tasted was a seasonal offering, Rosey Nosey from Lincolnshire brewer, Bateman's. Delicious.

The Crown at Lower Peover emerged from its big refurbishment last year looking very good. Trade is picking up well after the closure, and the range of real ales is commendably extensive. Star performer on a recent visit was a Cheshire guest real ale, Oasthouse Gold from the Weetwood brewery at Tarporley. Other offerings from the hand pumps were Tim Taylors Landlord, Tetley Dark Mild, Flowers IPA, Morlands Old Speckled Hen and the ubiquitous Boddingtons. We are told that Slaters Bitter from Eccleshall in Staffs was a good seller recently.

The Dog at Peover Heath has a Happy Hour from 5 to 7 on weekdays, with 20p off beers. Real Ales are Hydes Bitter, Moorhouse Black Cat, Weetwood Best Cask Bitter and Old Dog. That takes the Hydes and the Weetwood Best Cask down to £1.20! Happy?

In Macclesfield the Silkman, which is currently closed, is up for sale for £145,000. The Star on London Road has just changed hands. Good luck to the new licensees in yet another former Good Beer Guide pub that has been allowed to run down by Marstons. Also a belated welcome to the new landlord of the Dolphin in Macclesfield who is a CAMRA member and is now taking delivery of Opening Times each month.

Up at Langley, the Leathers Smithy is now owned by Scottish Newcastle. Licensees Pat and Paul McMahon previously ran a pub for Greenalls (the Fiddle i'th' Bag) in Burtonwood five years ago. Paul is a chef by trade. Excellent news is that S & N have allowed them to keep 4 beers on: Directors, Pedigree, Theakstons bitter and a varying guest- at time of visit York Brewery Terrier- and real cider is still on. They have also featured Ale Force from popular local brewer, Storm. The old landlord (not the beer) is still living next door.

The St Dunstan at Langley has been refurbished, and we understand that the range of beers was expected to increase from Marstons Bitter and Banks's Bitter.

The Britannia in Hurdsfield has been gutted and the Burtonwood sign has been taken down. Does anyone know what is happening to the pub?

The Meridian in Bollington has reopened and when we first looked, it had Pedigree on. We now hear that it is not selling any real ale, which makes it the only keg pub for a radius of 5 miles.

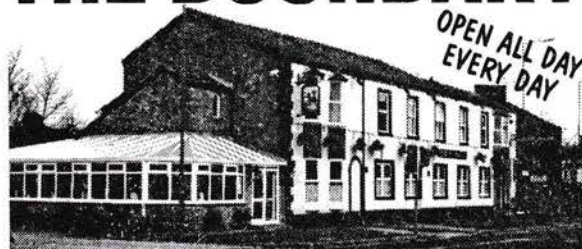
In Bollington, the Church House after changing hands now sells Tim Taylor's Landlord, Greene King IPA and the ubiquitous Tetley. While the emphasis is still very much on food, it must be said that the IPA is 38p cheaper than the Redway Tavern just up the hill.

The Wild Boar at Wincle has changed hands. The previous landlord and landlady had an offer they could not refuse to take up a pub back "home" in the wilds of Scotland and a new couple has moved in. They plan to start B&B shortly and have refurbished the dining room. Landlady Diane Trueman, took over early in February, having been an assistant manager at a pub in the Lake District for 12 months, but has been in the pub trade for 25 years on and off. Robinson's are spending a lot of money on it, including new loos and a complete exterior redecoration. Real fires were blazing in both rooms when we visited and the Robinson's Bitter was on top form.

The landlord at the Setter Dog, Walker Barn has got his planning permission so has begun the process of converting the barn across the road to live in. Definitely on is the opening of the upstairs of the pub as a sleeping barn, with 20 beds, at about £11 a night bed and full English breakfast. Bookings are being taken.

Regulars at the Nags Head should be in for a treat following the arrival of new licensees Sandra and Steve Hulse. The couple have just taken over at the Robinson's house, opposite Macclesfield railway station, and have their minds fixed firmly on achieving the highest standards. "It's a super pub with some fantastic customers," says Sandra. "And apart from all the usual clubs which meet here like the darts and pool teams we, also have arms and militia, war games, a jazz club, chess, the second legion and the badger club. I have to admit that I don't even know what they all do." Although some things at the Nags Head, such as Robinson's cask conditioned Best Bitter will remain a firm fixture, customers will see some noticeable alterations over the coming months, and in time the couple hope to introduce food to the pub. "Not much has changed here since the place was built 156-years-ago when it was known as the Station Coach Hotel. We don't want to change the character of the place but there will be some building alterations over the next few months to make the pub more spacious," says Sandra.

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CAMRA CALLING!

Campaign For Real Ale Branch Diaries
Here are the monthly branch event diaries, starting with Stockport and South Manchester, followed by High Peak and Macclesfield

Diary

FEBRUARY 2002

Saturday 9th - Informal trip to Lowes Arms, Denton and Sportsman, Hyde. Meet Crown, Heaton Lane, Stockport 6.30pm. Eat and drink at Lowes Arms then bus to Sportsman.

Monday 11th - First planning meeting for new Stockport pub guide. Swan With Two Necks, Princes St, Stockport. 8.15pm. *Will all interested parties please make every effort to attend this meeting.*

Thursday 14th - Branch Meeting: Adswood Hotel, Adswood Lane West, Stockport. Starts 8.00pm. **NB - final selections for 2003 Good Beer Guide will be made at this meeting**

Monday 18th - Young persons recruitment event: Nelson, Wellington Road South, Stockport. Starts 8.00pm.

Friday 22nd - Fallowfield & Rusholme Stagger - meeting White Swan, Green St, Ladybarn 7.30pm; Friendship, Wilmslow Rd, 8.30.

Saturday 23rd - Day trip to Liverpool including lunchtime session at beer festival and classic pub crawl. Depart 10.26 Stockport, 10.36 Piccadilly.

Thursday 28th - Pub of the Month presentation to Kro Bar, Oxford Road, Manchester. 8.00pm onwards.

Saturday 2nd March - Provisional date for presentation of branch 2002 Pub of the Year award to the Railway, Portwood. 8.00pm onwards.

FEBRUARY 2002

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

Monday 11th - Monthly Branch Meeting: Sportsman, Mottram Road, Hyde. Starts 8.30pm

Saturday 16th - Branch meal: White Hart, Mottram.

Friday 22nd - Trip to London. contact Geoff Lees

Monday 4th March - Committee Meeting: Andrews Arms, Compstall. Starts 8.30pm

Monday 11th - Monthly Branch Meeting: Queens Arms, Old Glossop. 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 11th - Bollington Pub Crawl.

Monday 25th - Selection of entries for 2003 Good Beer Guide. Baths, Macclefield. Starts 8.00pm.

Monday 11th March - Knutsford Pub Crawl: Legh Arms 7.30; Builders 8.00; Cross Keys 8.45, and then by agreement.



To Do Address Notepad Anniversary CAMRA 93 Planner

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CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

Gothic

61-61A CHURCH RD
GATLEY, SK8 4NB

BAR & GRILL

TELEPHONE:
0161 491 1966

FOOD SERVED

12.00-2.30 MONDAY-FRIDAY • 12.00-2.30 SUNDAY

EXCITING NEW MENU
LAUNCHED MONDAY 21st MAY
'Taste the Difference'

SUNDAY LUNCH SPECIAL
3 COURSE MEAL ONLY £3.50

QUIZ NIGHT EVERY WEDNESDAY

ENTRY ONLY £1.00

Price includes hot supper • Everyone welcome

Serving a full range of
Cains Traditional Ales
and Imported Danish
Lagers.

Hopf Weisse, a German
Award Winning Wheat
Beer is also available.

CAINS
AWARD WINNING ALES
SINCE 1850



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT LORRAINE ON 0161 491 1966

100% LIQUID – DEMAND AN HONEST PINT

Getting what you pay for is a basic consumer right. Whether you are buying bread, potatoes, petrol or thousands of other everyday products, a kilogram should be a kilogram, a litre should be a litre, and a pint should be a pint. It's fair to expect that when you order a pint of beer in a pub you should get exactly that – 100% liquid – an honest pint.

Unfortunately, because of loopholes in the law, the reality is quite different.

Research carried out by Trading Standards Officers shows that many pubs serve short measures. The results are startling.

- ★ 8 out of 10 pints served are less than 100% liquid.
- ★ The average liquid served is less than 95% of a pint
- ★ Short measure is costing drinkers over £1 million every day

The Industry View

The huge majority of publicans are honest people who work hard to keep their customers happy.

But some unscrupulous pub companies place unreasonable demands on pub managers to get as much beer from a barrel as possible to increase profits. The only way to achieve this is by serving short measures. The British Beer & Pub Association, which represents the pubs industry, denies that there are customer complaints and think it is acceptable to serve 95% liquid pints and give a top-up only to those who demand it.

CAMRA, the beer consumers' champion believes this is unacceptable and there is a clear need for consumers to be protected in law.

Your Rights Today

If you are served a short measure you should ask the bar person for a top-up, which they should give with good grace.

CAMRA thinks this is an unsatisfactory solution to a growing problem. In a busy pub on a Friday night, it would cause chaos if everybody asked for a top-up.

We believe the law must be changed so that it is the publican's responsibility to serve you a full liquid pint every time. It should not be up to you, the consumer, to ask for a top-up – you've asked for a pint once already!

The Government View

The Government has pledged its support for new laws to protect consumers from short measure. It is a Labour party policy to tighten legislation to ensure you get a full pint.

But despite detailed and realistic proposals, this promise has not turned into action and it is us as consumers who are losing out to the tune of £1 million a day.

How You Can Help

If CAMRA is to be successful in our campaign for an Honest Pint Law we need your support.

- ★ Sign up today to our on-line petition at www.camra.org.uk or call 0845 60 30 20 8 and pledge your support.
- ★ Write to your local MP at the House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA. Call 0207 219 4272 if you don't know the name of your MP.
- ★ Write and complain to your local trading standards office. You'll find the address in the phone book or at: www.tradingstandards.gov.uk.
- ★ If you are not happy with a pint served to you, complain politely to the bar staff and demand a top-up.

Join Us!

Why not join us and help protect and promote choice, quality, and value for money in the world of beer and pubs.

We are a volunteer-led consumer group with over 63,000 members which relies on the support of pub-goers and beer drinkers – just like you.

CONTACT US NOW TO JOIN!

CALLING NEW MEMBERS!

As a reader of Opening Times you probably have an interest in good pubs and good beer. You may even be a member of CAMRA, but if you're not then come along to our special membership night of Monday 18 February.

It's at the Nelson, Wellington Road South, Stockport and starts from about 8.00pm. Everyone is welcome, particularly if you're under 26. There will be a buffet and we've held the membership rates at their old level for the night. Recruit a friend and we'll even buy you a pint!



GOOD BEER GUIDE 2002 - ONLY £12.99 (including p&p)

As You plan this year's trips out & holidays - Why not buy this year's New Look Good Beer Guide! Packed full of the descriptions of the best pubs in Britain, and all real ale breweries - together with articles on subjects as varied as rural pubs, and Britain's contribution to the world of beer. The Good Beer Guide 2002 is the perfect gift for any pub-goer or real-ale drinker.

Send a cheque made payable to: CAMRA, Stockport & South Manchester to:
CAMRA (GBG), 66 Downham Rd., Heaton Chapel, Stockport. Cheshire SK4 5EG



APPLICATION FOR CAMRA MEMBERSHIP (Opening Times 214)

I / We wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale Limited, and agree to abide by its rules.

NAME (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) Date of Birth

PARTNER (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) Date of Birth

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

TELEPHONE SIGNATURE

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO CAMRA

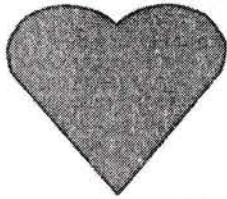
SINGLE £ 16 JOINT £19 UNDER 26 / OAP: SINGLE £ 9 JOINT (both must qualify) £12

Send To: Paul Moss, 60 Adelaide Road, Bramhall, Stockport SK7 1LU

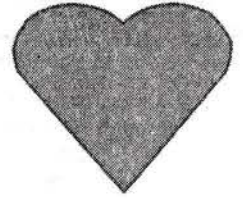
(Marple & High Peak Area to: Tom Lord, 5 Vernon Drive, Marple SK6 6JH)



The Beer House



Telephone 0161 839 7019
6 Angel Street Manchester (off Rochdale Road)
Open 11.30am till 11pm



"If Music be the food of love..."

Well it might be but we think that sometimes a few pints of something a bit more thirst quenching often makes for an amorous evening!!

Look out for our Valentines beers during the second week of February and let Cupid take aim! Not only that but we are looking forward to the



BEERHOUSE MILK STREET, MILTON AND MOOR BEER FESTIVAL

Thurs 28th Feb - Sun 3rd March

Three good reasons to say MMMmmmmmm...

Which we will be offering alongside our usual selection of beers, wines and spirits.

New chef in the Kitchen so look out for some top curries and daily food specials !!!