



OPENING TIMES



Distributed throughout Stockport; Central, East & South Manchester; Tameside; N.E. Cheshire & Macclesfield

Volume 18 Issue 5

MAY 2002 No:217

6,700 CIRCULATED EVERY MONTH

FREE

FESTIVAL FEVER



Countdown Underway to Stockport's Main Event

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

As usual Opening Times is taking this opportunity to bring you just a small taster of the many beers on offer. There really will be something for every taste, whether you like mild, bitter, stout or strong ales.

There will be up to **nine** milds available from the classic Bank Top Dark Mild, the superb Phoenix Monkey Town Mild, Wentworth's Moore's Magic and the rare Hydes Welsh Dark.

Lovers of bitter will be well catered for with no less than **58** standard and premium bitters available during the course of the Festival. Pictish Brewery will be brewing a Festival Special for us and this will have to compete with heavyweight contenders such as Roosters, Marble, Abbeydale, Phoenix and Oakham, whose stunning White Dwarf makes a welcome return. Among many highlights for lovers of the hop will be Durham White Gold, the excellent Wentworth WPA, Pictish Brewers Gold and the ever-reliable Whim Arbor Light and Hartington Bitter.

Last year's well received Festival newcomer, Alcazar from Nottingham, will again be sending four beers including the quaintly named Nottingham Nog. This will be one of **9** stouts and porters which include Beartown Polar Eclipse, Moor Peat Porter, and, a stunning beer this, Wentworth Oatmeal Stout.

There will also be **11** special beers including the classic Ginger Marble, three excellent beers from Salopian, Black Booty, Golden Thread and Puzzle and three beers from Heather Ales - Kelpie, an organic bitter with seaweed (it tastes great - honest!), Alba, a beer with spruce tips, and Meadow Wheat which, we believe, is the first commercial beer brewed with Scottish-grown hops

Bringing up the rear we also have **8** strong ales and this year there are some real treats here. Robinson's Old Tom is a firm favourite of course but others to try include Boggart Hole Clough Streaming Boggart at 9 per cent, Moor Old Freddy Walker at a powerful 7.3 per cent and this year's brain cell killer, the 11 per cent Thomas Sykes Ale from Burton Bridge. Look out also for the stunning Blue Moon, a strong (6%) IPA from Pictish.

So, something for everyone. Do remember, though, that not all beers will be on at the same time and one or two may not even arrive (although we usually have an acceptable alternative if that happens). *More Festival News on Page 5!* You can also visit the Festival Website at:

www.stockportfestival.fsnet.co.uk

IN MAY'S OPENING TIMES

Editors View	2	Manchester Matters	11
Pub of the Month	4	Stockie on the Oche	12
Prices Down	5	Pub News	13
Brewery News	6	Camra Calling	14
Shaws Brews Again	7	5 Years Ago	15
Gold, Silver & Bronze	7	Curmudgeon	15
Stagger	8	High Peak Events	16
Mildly Challenging ...	9	Desert Island Beers .	19

DUTY CUT SPLITS BREWERS

While many micro-brewers celebrated their Budget beer tax cut, family brewers complained they had been left out in the cold, and all criticised the way in which the announcement was made by Chancellor Gordon Brown.

In a move for which the micro-brewers have been fighting for over 20 years, the Chancellor slashed duty by half for those brewers producing less than 3,000 barrels a year, a saving of about £40 a barrel. Brewers producing up to 18,000 barrels a year will get a graded discount on duty, which could save them up to £120,000 a year.

The campaign for the duty cut had been spearheaded by the Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA), whose spokesman Nick Stafford (of Yorkshire's Hambleton Ales) said: "This is excellent news. It's great - you can't say otherwise."

"We actually argued for the limit to be set higher, but the Treasury wasn't having any of it. Still, we are finally going to reap the rewards of years of campaigning, and it will make a significant difference to the chances of growth for hundreds of small breweries".

These sentiments have been echoed by local micro-brewers. Bank Top Brewery's John Feeney told Opening Times, "I think it's wonderful", a view echoed by Pictish brewer Richard Sutton who added "It's terrific news, isn't it?"

Out In The Cold?

These positive views are by no means universal, however, even among the micro-brewers. Tony Allen at Phoenix Brewery, which is too big to benefit from the full duty cut, was less than impressed. "I've never been in favour of it," he told us, saying it would simply be a boost to his competition.

The most scathing criticism, though, came from the Independent Family Brewers of Britain (IFBB), most of whose members will not benefit from the cut. Calling the move "the worst possible scenario", the IFBB said the cut merely deflected interest from the greater problem of Britain's overall high duty rates. "We estimate that the duty cut will affect only one pint in every 100 consumed in the nation's pubs", said IFBB vice-chairman Stuart Neame.

...continued on page 5



PHOENIX BREWERY

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



MORE CHOICE BETTER BEER



2002 International Brewing Awards
Gold Medals for Navy and Wobbly Bob



Tel/Fax: 01706 522227 Mobile: 07970 177 306

may special



Black Diamond ABV 3.5%

A full-bodied rich dark mild. Roast barley flavours dominate the palate and lead to a subtle well-balanced finish.

UNIT 9, CANALSIDE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,
WOODBINE St. EAST. ROCHDALE. LANCs. OL16 5LB

IN THE EDITOR'S VIEW..

There was good news and bad news in the budget. Beer duty was frozen (although a couple of pence off would have been useful) and at long last a sliding scale of duty was introduced, giving a welcome boost, and in some cases a lifeline, to the micro brewing sector.

The bad news is the spin which accompanied the announcement and the relatively low level at which the cut-off point has been set.

Don't expect 14p off a pint in village pubs in time for the World Cup. In fact, don't expect 14p off a pint at all. While some small brew pubs with little or no outside trade may well reduce their prices, most of the brewers benefiting from the tax reduction will be using the money for investment and expansion rather than slashing prices. And quite right, too. And of course most pubs selling cask beer, village or otherwise, are owned by family and regional brewers who won't get a tax reduction at all. Not surprisingly, many family brewers are pretty cheesed off by all this, particularly as research indicates that to set the cut-off point at the European level of 120,000 barrels a year annual production would only cost another £3 million. A drop in the ocean compared the annual beer duty take by the Treasury. Vigorous lobbying is taking place to try and bring this about and certainly has the full support of Opening Times.

The brewers must be careful not to overstate their case, though. The family brewers do have tied estates to fall back on (unlike most micros); and the powers that be are unlikely to be impressed by fanciful stories of the likes of Adnams being squeezed out of business!

Don't forget to enter our monthly competitions, by the way. These are brought to you by Robinson's and every month there's a great prize to be won. All it will cost is the price of a stamp - as they say, you'd be daft not to.

John Clarke

Two breweries threatened, but one sale at least might prove to be good news for once. Wychwood, a small brewery (but too large to be really called a micro) with a growing pub estate has seen its major investor 3i pull out, and the pubs and brewery split up. The pubs (the Hobgoblins) have found a new owner in the form of one of the specialist smaller pubcos and whilst they will continue to take the Wychwood cask ales, their already large number of guests beers will improve still further, and the brewery, bought by the owners of the Ushers brands is actually going to see further investment and expansion. Brakspear on the other hand, who keep sweeping the board at the Organic beer championships have said their tied estate cannot keep on subsidising the brewery (much of whose production is sold on at massive discounts to the big pub-owning chains) so after a review it will almost certainly close (the cut off point for duty relief in the Budget being set too low for them to benefit), bringing an end to a very ancient brewing heritage in Henley-on-Thames. At the same time Enterprise Inns are being allowed to buy thousands more pubs. The trouble is, very soon there will be very little decent for them to sell, even if they had a change of heart, and wanted to!

P.B. Hutchings

OPENING TIMES ISSUE 217

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).

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

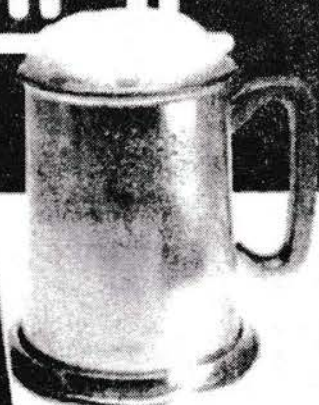


The Sixteenth STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

Stockport Town Hall
30th May to 1st June 2002

Supporting
**ST ANN'S
HOSPICE**

5 Minutes from Bus & Train Stations



**THURSDAY
30th
MAY
2002**

EVENING
5.30PM-11.00PM
ADMISSION **£2**
LIVE MUSIC
**A Few
Good Men**

**100 BEERS,
CIDERS &
PERRIES-BEERS**
FROM
£1
PER PINT
BEFORE 8PM

**FRIDAY
31st
MAY
2002**

LUNCH
11.30AM-3.30PM
ADMISSION **£0.50**
LIVE MUSIC
**The Mighty
Wurlitzer**

EVENING
5.30PM-11.00PM
ADMISSION **£3**
LIVE MUSIC
**The Purple
Gang**

**SATURDAY
1st
JUNE
2002**

LUNCH
11.30AM-4.00PM
ADMISSION **£1**
QUIET DRINKING
SESSION

EVENING
6.30PM-11.00PM
ADMISSION **£2**
LIVE MUSIC

HOT & COLD FOOD
AT ALL SESSIONS

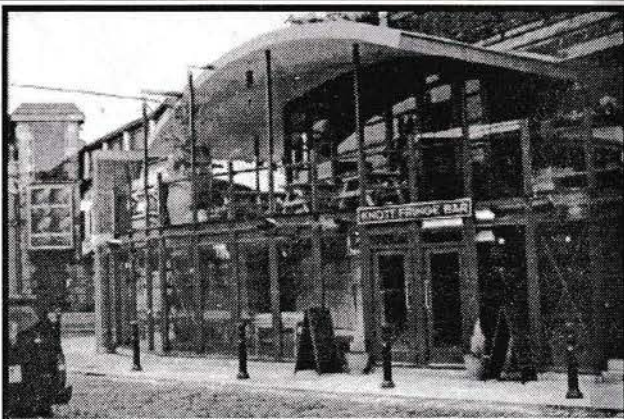
**The
Winchesters**

**ORGANISED BY THE
CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE**
FREE ENTRY
TO CAMRA MEMBERS

FAMILY ROOM
until 8.30pm
QUIET ROOM
from 8.30pm

Visit our Web Site: www.stockportfestival.fsnet.co.uk

Sponsored by The **STOCKPORT EXPRESS**



**K
N
O
T
T

F
R
I
N
G
E

B
A
R**

**IT'S NOT
BAR FRINGE -
IT'S
KNOTT
FRINGE BAR**

**The Uniquely
Civilized Bar
on Deansgate**

(underneath the Railway Arches)

**5 Handpumps:
Beers From
Phoenix,
Boggart Hole,
Marble Brewery &
Regional Guests**

PLUS
St Louis Kriek, Draught
Hoegaarden & small range of
Belgian Bottles
Imported Draught
Krombacher
GUEST FOREIGN BEERS and
ever expanding range of
bottled German Beers
including Augustiner, Fruh
Kolsch & Schneider Aventinus

Food Served 12 - 8



**K
N
O
T
T

F
R
I
N
G
E

B
A
R**

**PUB OF THE MONTH
MAY 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	29	30	31	



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for May 2002 is the Royal Mortar, Hillgate, Stockport.

Vinnie Burke and Irene McEwen 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, the Thursday Singles Night has really taken off. The pub is always a feature in OT as it hosts one of the leading teams in the Stockport Super League Darts. The players are such a draw, apparently, that the pub is packed for the Tuesday matches. On Sundays, some of Stockport's elder dartsmen take part in a charity knockabout dubbed 'Silver Arrows'. Vinnie and Irene's efforts have not gone unnoticed at Robinson's, as plans have been 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.

This well deserved award, made to both celebrate the pub's continuing success and Vinnie and Irene's efforts at restoring its fortunes, will be presented on Thursday 23 May from 8.00pm on, and a great night is in prospect. **MM.**

How to get there: the pub is only a short-ish walk from Stockport Town Centre. Buses 192 and 199 will drop you on the A6 near Longshut Lane; Marple buses 358 or 383 will drop you on Longshut Lane. The pub is round the corner to the right.

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

OPENING TIMES SPECIFICATIONS

Column Widths, single 84mm, double 172mm. Image height 26cm. NB Advertisers who supply camera ready artwork designed for another publication that cannot be resized to our standard sizes will be charged the equivalent column/centimetre rate plus a surcharge of at least 30%. Adverts that require unusually large amounts of design work will have the extra work carried out by a studio at full commercial rate.



Duty Cut Splits Brewers (cont)...

The valid point made was that it would only have cost the Treasury a few million pounds more to make the upper cut-off limit the same as the European average, a move which would have benefited all but the largest of the independent brewers.

In addition some of the smaller family brewers (and largest micros) whose production falls around the upper cut-off point are on the horns of a dilemma. Do they continue to expand and so risk losing the duty cut 'bonus', or even should they cut back production to benefit from it.

In Time for the World Cup?

Whatever the brewers' views on the merits of the duty cut, all were unanimous in the criticism of the way it was announced.

"14p off a pint in village pubs and all in time for the World Cup", said the Chancellor. Well, no.

This is misleading, and downright wrong, in fact, for a variety of reasons. Firstly there's the little matter of getting the system up and running. Given the time scales involved, it's unlikely to say the least that any brewer will have had their duty cut by the time the World Cup finishes, let alone starts.

The main criticism, though, is that the Chancellor's comments ignore the reasons why the small brewers wanted the cut in the first place. While some may reduce the price of a pint, particularly the very small pub brewers, most will use the extra cash for investment, consolidation, expansion and, in some cases, even to give their owners a decent living.

For example the Fisherrow Brewery in Edinburgh has announced that it will use the money to buy an additional dray and employ telesales staff. And in Yorkshire, the owner of the Captain Cook pub-brewery was about to sell up to Jennings. He cancelled the deal as the tax relief will allow him to employ a pub manager and allow him to concentrate on brewing. The announcement was also made in such sweeping terms that the casual listener might think that all beer would be reduced in price whereas in fact almost none of it will be. Don't expect a cut in your local Robinson's, Lees, Hydes and Holt's pubs as they haven't had their tax cut. As a notice in one local Robinson's pub explained, they are simply back where they started.



FESTIVAL SPONSORS KEEP PRICES DOWN

Sponsorship at this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival has allowed the organisers to hold down prices by over 10p a pint. They are also able to continue the well-received practice of holding the price of some beers at £1 per pint prior to 8.00pm each night.

Jim Flynn, the Festival Organiser, told Opening Times "Without our sponsors we would have to operate a higher mark-up on the beer and cider. Their involvement clearly shows how the Festival has become an important date on the Stockport social calendar. My grateful thanks go to all of them."

The sponsors declared at the time of Opening Times going to press are:

- ⊕ The Stockport Express - sponsors of the Festival itself and the Family and Quiet rooms.
- ⊕ Frederic Robinson Ltd - sponsors of the Festival glasses and t-shirts
- ⊕ Hydes Brewery Ltd - sponsors of the Festival tombola
- ⊕ Ye Olde Vic, Chayham St, Edgeley - sponsor of the Festival Special beer brewed by Pictish Brewery of Rochdale.
- ⊕ www.Beerbarons.co.uk - sponsors of the festival programme.

Even more beer and cider has been ordered this year for your enjoyment at our traditionally keen prices.



THE CROWN INN



TECHNOLOGY AND TRADITION

IN PERFECT HARMONY...

TEN CASK ALES:

WITH JENNINGS, BANK TOP, PHOENIX, PICTISH,
WHIM AND GUEST MILD ALWAYS AVAILABLE.

CASK CIDER, BAR FOOD AND THE VERY BEST OF LIVE MUSIC

visiting hours:

Monday	} 12 ⁰⁰ -3 ⁰⁰ pm	Friday	} 12 ³⁰ -11 ⁰⁰ pm
Tuesday		Saturday	
Wednesday	} 6 ⁰⁰ -11 ⁰⁰ pm	Sunday	7 ³⁰ -10 ³⁰ pm
Thursday			

Graham & Jeanette Mascord

The Crown Inn, 154 Heaton Lane Stockport SK4 1AR
Telephone: 0161 429 0549 e-mail: crown.inn@virgin.net

VISIT OUR WEB SITE ON www.crown.inn@virgin.net OR
DROP IN TO ENJOY THE UNIQUE EXPERIENCE WHICH IS

THE CROWN INN

HYDES Pick of the Hops



Red Admiral

Using the versatile Admiral hop, this rich ruby quality ale has great depth of character and fullness of flavour, both qualities combine to create a very moreish and appealing beer.

ABV - 4.4%

Available throughout May & June

For more details of Hydes Craft Ale range for 2002

Tel: 0161 226 1317

Also available nationally from The Beer Seller and other leading Wholesalers

Stockport Beer & Cider Festival - Stockport Town Hall, May 30 - June 1, 2002



Family Brewers Focus

The end of this month should see the first of what is planned to be a series of new beers from Holt's. The first beer to come off the new 30-barrel plant will be Baton and will be on sale at the end of May/early June. Unusually the beer will be available in two forms: a 3.6% brew for the Holt's tied estate and a 4.3% version, known as Gold, for the free trade. Different pump clips showing the ABV have been ordered. Presumably the Gold will be rather more expensive than the 3.6% version, but it will also be available to Holt's tied houses if they think they can sell it.



Lees have a new seasonal out this month. Scorchier at 4.2% has proved popular in recent years and makes an early return for 2002. A light, golden beer with a refreshing hop finish, it is ideal for the early summer months.

Lees have also agreed a sponsorship deal with Cheshire County Cricket Club for the forthcoming season. MD William Lees-Jones said, "The move to sponsor Cheshire County follows many years of support for Lancashire County League and the Central Lancashire League with the Lees Bitter Wood Cup." OT readers will have seen the amusing poster adverts for Lees Bitter. Among the more humorous was that with the tag line 'Ribbed for Extra Pleasure'. Sadly the busybodies at Alcohol Concern complained to the Advertising Standards Agency, saying that the poster implied that a pint of Lees enhanced sexual performance! The surprise is that the ASA upheld the complaint! If Alcohol Concern didn't like that, they'll be beside themselves with the new Greene King advertising for Abbot Ale. Devised by McCann-Erickson, it shows a woman lying on a bed writhing, with the strap line "Some things get better given longer"...a reference to the 7-day brewing period for this premium bitter (what else?).



Hydes and Robinson's also have new beers out this month. Hydes have 'Red Admiral', the latest of the 2002 craft ales featuring just one hop variety. This should be a refreshing, tasty beer at 4.4%. Robinson's come to the end of their current run of bi-monthly seasonals with the welcome return of Young Tom. Essentially a blend of Hatters and Old Tom, this was one of the best selling of their seasonals last time around. Hopefully we will be able to let you have news of the next run of beers in the coming months.



Micro Magic

As usual, there are a whole clutch of beers coming out from our local micros. This month pressure of time and space had prevented a full round-up but these are some of the highlights...

Pictish of Rochdale is producing Black Diamond again. Although not labelled as such, this is a 3.8% tasty mild. Pictish has also produced one of its occasional 'extras' recently. This was a return of the Honey Ale brewed with Mexican Honey and fermented out that little bit longer to remove the sweet, cloying aftertaste that characterises many honey beers.



In Heywood, the Phoenix Brewery is currently at capacity but, as ever, has a range of new beers coming on stream. Currently available are Mayfly (4.4%) and a mild, Black Shadow (4%). Out later this month are Tennis Elbow (4.5%), Midsummer madness (4.5%) and Sticky Wicket (4.7%). The range and quality of the beers produced by Phoenix is consistently first rate, little wonder they picked up two gold medals recently (see article on next page).

Bank Top has produced two beers to mark sporting events in Bolton, both commissioned by the local council. Boneshaker (cycling) and Spitting Feathers (Badminton) are both pale, 4.2% session bitters. American real ale lovers will also have the chance to sample two of Bank Top Brewery's ales at a festival in Boston this month. Brewer John Feeney is exporting some barrels of Smokestack Lightning and The Haka, and the casks will be returning to the UK filled with American real ale for a summer beer festival. John also tells us that the long-anticipated brewery move may finally come about in the next 6-8 weeks.



At the LAB in Denton, sales of the mild "Jet Amber", brewed exclusively for the 2002 Mild Challenge, have exceeded expectations and supply. A second batch of the mild has been brewed and it may become a permanent feature as a result of its popularity.

The LAB has brewed two new beers for the beginning of May. The first is "Heywoods Delight" (4.0% ABV) which is a lovely hoppy beer with a sweet malt taste and a nice brown colour. The second is "Houghton Wheat Beer" (5.2%) a robust yet hazy strong pale wheat beer with a lot of bitterness. Both are already proving popular with the locals.

The brewery has also been commissioned to brew a special for the "Stalybridge Beer Festival". The beer will be called "Canal Knowledge" (4.2% ABV) - using amber malt to create a pleasant biscuity tasting malt flavour with plenty of bitterness and a pleasant floral hop finish.



Dave and Sue Welcome You To

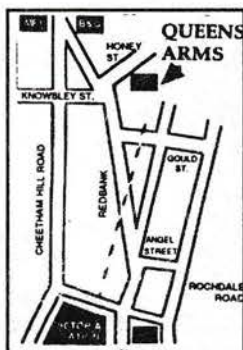
THE QUEENS ARMS

HONEY STREET, CHEETHAM

Try the fine range of beers supporting independent brewers in their excellent free house!

Bantam Bitter £1.25 a pint,

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



Beer Garden

Families Welcome

Hot & Cold Food

We're in the Good Beer Guide 2002!



☎ 0161 834 4239

THE CASTLE

OLDHAM STREET, MANCHESTER
NOW SERVING THE COMPLETE RANGE OF ROBINSONS CASK BEERS!

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

Cumbrian Way re-introducing... **YOUNG TOM** (4% abv)



A WARM WELCOME IN A TRADITIONAL PUB

SHAW'S BEERS BREWED AGAIN IN DUKINFIELD

Tim Jones visits the region's newest brewery...

You'd have to be well over 70 to have enjoyed beers from Shaw's Brewery on Park Road in Dukinfield. The old brewery dating from 1856, and still visible on Park Road, was closed by John Smiths of Tadcaster in 1941. John Smiths has acquired the brewery for its tied house estate (which extended to 60 pubs, including the Gun Inn in Hollingworth and the Pack Horse in Hayfield) - a familiar tale in brewery history. But now real ale enthusiasts and local CAMRA members Neil Hay and Phil Windsor have revived the old name by opening a new brewery in part of the old brewery stables block, next door to the original. Phil Windsor has built the micro-micro at the back of his plastics business - Windsor Fabrications - and his influence is obvious in the small brew plant. The set-up comprises two fermenters - of polypropylene - and stainless steel hot liquor, mash tun and 'copper' vessels - these from old cellar tanks (remember the 80's!). The six metre by four metre, five-barrel plant (with garden shed for malt store) is neat and tidy, and well-engineered. They have bought around 20 stainless steel 9-gallon firkins and are in the process of setting up a bar coded tagging system to keep track of this significant investment. The pair consulted widely before embarking on this venture, with advice from such established micros as McGuinness, Riverhead, Saddleworth, Coniston, Tiger Tops and the other recent local pub-brewery at the Lowes Arms, Denton. Neil picked up tips on the brewing side while Phil sneaked an engineer's eye over the plant and set-up.



The one beer at present is Shaws Bitter (although it appears as Best Bitter on the pump clip). At about 4.2% ABV, it is intended to be a traditional session bitter. The first brew was well received but brewer Neil thought it was short on bitterness to balance the malt flavours, so he doubled the hops (they don't use extract) and improved the boil, with more input from Phil on the engineering side. The resulting beer is more bitter and slightly stronger at 4.3%. Ingredients include Maris Otter malt from Fawcett's of Castleford and Challenger and Goldings hops; Neil and Phil are also intending to tinker with the recipe to get the beer they want. They think they are pretty close.

Neil, who distributes the beer himself in the small company van, managed to get the first brew into a wide range of outlets. The second brew has also travelled far and wide including Stalybridge Station Buffet, the Royal and Kinder Lodge at Hayfield; Pack Horse, New Mills; Sportsman, Strines; Old Original, Scouthead (Oldham); and in Ashton, the Dog & Partridge (Waterloo), Station and Ladysmith.

It's early days for a micro but if the enthusiasm and attention to detail Neil and Phil have shown, and the interest from the local free trade and real ale lovers for the first brew follows on to the second (and subsequent) brews, the future looks rosy. It's all down to how many pints are sold...so it's up to the real ale drinkers to back the brew. Keep your eye out and give it a try. It would be nice to think that the new Shaws is set to be around as long as the old one.

CONTRIBUTORS TO OPENING TIMES 217:

John Clarke, Paul Hutchings, Peter Edwardson, Chris Walkden, Dave Sheldon, Phil Levison, Steve Smith, John Taylor, Mark McConachie, Jim Flynn, Dave Preston, Tim Jones, Richard Hough, Tom Lord, Chris Walkden, Anthony Firmin.

GOLD, SILVER & BRONZE FOR LOCAL BREWERS!

Three of our local brewers have triumphed in winning highly coveted prizes at this year's Brewing Industry International Awards.

The awards, which are held every two years, are considered to Oscars of the brewing industry and this year attracted nearly 700 beers from the UK and overseas. The first round of judging took the form of a series of blind tastings held in Burton-on-Trent in February following which the finalists in each category were announced.

Last month, in a ceremony at London's Guildhall, the final selections were made, followed by the presentation of the various awards, and some of our local brewers came up trumps.

Joseph Holt's took the silver in their class, 'International Dark Mild, Stout & Porter', for Holt's Mild, the highest ranking mild in the competition and a result of which Holt's are justifiably proud.

In the 'International Strong Beer' class, Robinson's picked up a bronze for Old Tom in 'Class 3', for dark beers with an ABV of 7% or more. While Robinson's have a large range of excellent beers, it does seem to be Old Tom which wins the awards for them, as well it might, being perhaps the classic barley wine (although it's no longer badged as such).

In the 'International Cask Conditioned Ale' category, attracting 147 entries, there was further local success.

In 'Class 1', for draught ale up to 3.8% ABV, the gold medal was won by Phoenix Brewery for Navy, In Class 3, for draught ale between 4.6% and 6.9%, they won a second gold for Wobbly Bob. Phoenix's Tony Allen is cock-a-hoop. "It took me a week to stop smiling", he told Opening Times when we contacted him.

It's also a triumph for Phoenix brewer Richard Bazem, for while Wobbly Bob has been brewed by Phoenix since its days as the Ellesmere Port-based Oak Brewery (and now has something approaching cult status), Navy is in fact a recreation of his much-loved Navigator, produced by the short-lived Bridgewater Brewery. Congratulations all round.

The Old Glove Works

CASK ALE BAR & EVENT SUITE

Top 6 1999 Cask Ale Pub of The Year

UP TO 6 EVER CHANGING CASK ALES

Open every day - from midday

(Please note our closing times:

Closed from 8pm Mon & Tue; 11pm Wed & Thurs;

Midnight Closing on Fri & Sat, 10.30pm Sun

No Admission after 10.45pm)

Food Available:

12 - 2pm Mon - Fri

5.30pm Friday - Hot

Roast Muffins

Live Entertainment:

Thursdays 9pm

Sundays 3 - 6pm



Resident DJ 8pm

Friday & Saturday (60s, 70s, 80s)

**PRESENT THIS 'AD'
BETWEEN 12 - 3PM ON SUNDAYS
FOR ONE PINT OF ANY CASK ALE
FOR £1**

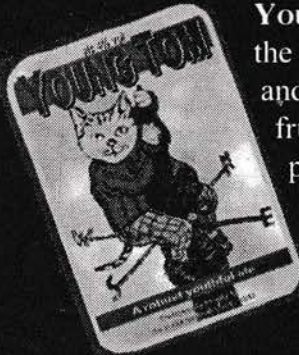
Event Suite for Your Special Occasions

2 Outdoor Riverside Drinking Areas

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



Robinson's COMPETITION



YOUNG TOM (4.0%ABV) the seasonal ale for May and June is dark with a fruity aroma and a palate with a good balance of ripe malt and peppery hops.

In this month's competition, we're offering you the chance to win a Robinson's fleece. The navy jackets come complete with the Company's logo and are available in three sizes. There will be another competition next month, when we'll also be announcing the winner of the April contest.



To enter this month's competition, all you have to do is answer the following two questions.

1. Name the famous 8.5%ABV brand produced at the Unicorn Brewery?
2. Which Robinson's beer is named after the founder of the Company?

Send your answers by the end of the month to: Robinson's Competition, BHA, 94 Churchgate, Stockport, Cheshire, SK1 1XJ

Or by fax to 0161 477-0809 or e-mail info@barryhook.com

Normal competition rules apply

STAGGER

with John Clarke

Bramhall & District

We begin on a Friday at ten to eight at the Jolly Sailor on Bramhall Lane, Davenport, badged a "Steak & Ale House" and owned, I think, by Scottish & Newcastle. Completely revamped since I was last in this pub, plenty of room with a raised section, plenty of seating area, well decorated, a large L shaped bar & quite a few people in. The cask ale on hand was Courage Directors (OK), Bombardier (pretty good), Theakston Cool Cask (average) and Boddingtons which no-one tried. On the whole a nice atmosphere and a huge improvement from last time I visited.

Quarter past eight we call on the Shady Oak on Radford Drive once owned by Tetley's, but now in the hands of some pub company. It's well set back, not an easy pub to find in the dark if you don't know the area. A very spacious pub with lots of wooden beams and panels on the ceiling which complemented the pub considering it's not all that old. The back of the pub had a raised section, separate games area not too close to the bar together with other sectioned off areas for groups of people who wanted a private drink. Due to the sudden rush of punters (namely us), it took a while for me to get served. Only two cask ales on, Tetley's (pretty good) and Old Speckled Hen of which opinions varied from quite poor to very good. Half past eight we end up in the Three Bears on Jackson's Lane, Hazel Grove. Owned by Robinson's, this pub was recently built in the 90's. A smaller pub from the last two visited but still had plenty of atmosphere, which is always a good sign. Very well decorated with wooden panels with insets of coloured glass at the top creating reasonable sized bays for sitting in. On the pumps were Hartley's XB (fair), Robinson's Best Bitter (fair), and Hatters (better).

At ten to nine we bless our presence on the Ladybrook on For Road and owned by...Scottish & Newcastle? Laurel Pub Co? A very spacious pub catering for food, with separate pool room, and with an upstairs function room with a separate bar. Turn left as if heading for Bramhall itself on the roundabout, take the immediate left turn as you head uphill, which brings you to the pub. A very odd place to position a pub of this size you might think. The reason is that it is part of the original main road before the roundabout was introduced. The pub was due for a revamp in March this so let's hope we don't see return of the logos on the beams with saying such as "If you want to be original be yourself." Which seems a fitting statement for the beer. Twelve hand pumps of which ten were serving just Boddingtons (opinions varied from very below average to good). The other two had nothing. For the size of the bar the pub and its location, surely two of Boddingtons siblings could reside in the spare two.

Twenty past nine it's the Three Shires and nitro-keg alert (hand pump usually with Flowers IPA so they said). So twenty five past nine swiftly moving over to the Victoria owned by Boddingtons. An open spacious pub with a few separate rooms to sit in, we found it rather quiet for a Friday night. Lo and behold more lovely logos on the beams. Again, the best one for the pub "The nice things about standards, is that there

VINNIE, IRENE AND THE STAFF, WELCOME YOU TO

Royal Mortar

Higher Hillgate, Stockport ☎ (0161) 480 5073

THURSDAY SINGLES NIGHT PLUS DISCO

LIVE ACTS MOST FRIDAYS,
SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS

SERVING ROBINSONS ALES

DARTS - TUESDAY NIGHTS - POOL

Stockport Beer & Cider Festival - Stockport Town Hall, May 30 - June 1, 2002

are so many to choose from." And wow! What a choice, Boddingtons (below average) and Theakston Cool Cask (yech!).

Twenty to ten we end up in Bramalls, an open roomed pub with the bar area in the corner with steps going up to a separate poolroom. Plenty of people in showing a well used pub serving the only cask Marston's Pedigree (and about the best beer so far). Quarter to ten we see the Belugas pub "wine bar" this means bouncers + us wearing jeans = we do not get in.

So heading off into the night we end up at the Smithy on Grove Lane, Cheadle Hulme at just about ten o'clock. Not the greatest of pubs, comprising of a vault with the darts and pool area. The other larger room is the lounge including a toy and bubbly machine in a certain part at the back. Webster's was the only thing on cask and got a universal thumbs down. We were heading for the Church but time was against us.

So our journey ends about twenty past ten at the Davenport Arms (Thief's Neck) in Woodford and owned by Robinson's. Which, of course, on the front page of Opening Times February 2002 came runner up in local pub of the year. Well what can I say about the place that wasn't said in February's issue (it's got an outside lav) but it must have been close between the two pubs because the Robinson's Best Bitter, Hatters and Old Tom were all very good indeed and easily the best beers of the night (by a long way). We make our way for last orders within easy reach of our homes (you would of thought some people would have gone straight home after drinking all that. Not me!!!!



The Davenport Arms (Thief's Neck)

On the whole it was a refreshing, enlightening stagger that took in a very wide range of pubs all within easy reach. Don't forget this a personal write up and can't be taken as a once and for all judgement of the pub sor their beers. Others on the Stagger might and most probably would give a different view. The two pubs that get my thumbs up were the Davenport & Bramall's for keeping a good pint and a good comfortable atmosphere to drink in. And remember **ASK IF IT'S CASK!** Don't let the side down.

MILDLY CHALLENGING

Dave Sheldon with a new slant on the Mild Challenge

It was Chris Walkden's idea. 12 pubs in 12 different areas and drinking 12 milds from 12 different breweries. Could it be done?

Chris had planned the route and worked out the bus times and connections so Chris, Paul Watson and I caught the 10.00am 313 from Cheadle Hulme. Changing in Stockport to a 330 we arrived in Hyde town centre for the short walk to our first pub, The Sportsman. We arrived three minutes before opening time at 11.00. Not surprisingly we were the first customers of the day and we were soon enjoying some Moorhouses Black Cat Mild. We had to resist the temptation provided by bitters from the likes of Plassey, Phoenix and Hartington but accepted 'a taster' of a new brew from Shaws Dukinfield Brewery. It was a very strange beer.

With a bit of time to kill we walked back into Hyde town centre and had bacon and sausage barmes before catching a 201 to Denton. The Lowes Arms opens at 12.00 and we were again the first customers of the day. The LAB Jet Amber had run out the night before so we had to wait for our friend, brewer Anthony Firmin, to connect a new barrel. This mild is made with chocolate malt and has lots of flavour. Anthony broke off from brewing some Frog Bog Bitter to join us.

Although the 201 bus runs every ten minutes, we had to wait twenty for one into Manchester City Centre. We were getting behind schedule now, it was two and a half hours since the pubs had opened and we had only visited two.

At 13.30 we entered The Smithfield Hotel. This pub was quite busy, possibly because Chelsea v United was on big screen TV. Paul, Chris and I don't usually drink too much mild so again our resistance was tested by a wide range of bitters form independent breweries. Fortunately the Greene King Mild was good.

We walked across the city centre to reach The Rain Bar by 14.00. We sat out the back in the fine weather enjoying some Lees Mild. Here we succumbed to sampling some of the excellent Brooklyn Best Bitter. On the short walk to Oxford Road we spotted the 86 bus and so dashed across the traffic for an expeditious connection. By 14.35 we were sat outside our fifth pub, The Marble Beer House in Chorlton, drinking Marble Uncut Amber. On this occasion it was OK but I know from visits to The Marble Arch in Manchester that it can be much better.

From Chorlton we caught the 168 to Burnage. Chris had driven over in the week to see where The Rising Sun was as none of us had been there before. The Banks's Original was excellent. We also took advantage of this pub serving food all day and having a no-smoking area in which to enjoy it.

Outside the pub we caught the 197 and we were inside The Moss Rose, in Heaton Norris (West), by 16.25. After some fine Hydes Light we set off on the lengthy walk to The Navigation, in Heaton Norris (East). This was pub number eight and the walk, fresh air and perhaps even the beer were starting to make us feel a little

jaded. There was a change to the advertised beer at The Navigation, Beartown Brown Bear being the mild on offer, again it was good.

Walking down Lancashire Hill we made our way to The Railway on Portwood in Stockport. It was now 18.00 and Anthony, from The Lab Brewery (see Lowes Arms above), was waiting for us. Following some fine Porters Mild, Anthony was to drive us around the remaining pubs.

It is just a short distance to The Swan With Two Necks in Stockport town centre. The Robinson's Dark Mild hadn't arrived. Not to worry though as the Robinson's Hatters Mild was in excellent form.

We arrived at the penultimate pub, The Victoria in Offerton, at 18.55. There was a surprise for us here. Instead of the expected Greenalls Mild there was Cain's Dark Mild. Whilst enjoying this we noticed that two other Cain's beers were also available, well worth the visit.

Finally we arrived back in Cheadle Hulme at 19.30. Our final mild was Holts in the Cheadle Hulme. This beer had won an award this week and I would have liked to have been able to report that an excellent day out had been completed with a worthy beer. Unfortunately this wasn't the case as this beer was barely drinkable.

So nine hours after entering the first pub we had successfully completed our challenge. My favourite three beers on the day were LAB Jet Amber, Banks's Original and Robinson's Hatters. Those brewers who have dropped the word 'mild' because it presents an old fashioned image, but know that they have a quality product if only people would give it a try, seem to have a good point. Beers this good deserve to be promoted and enjoyed.



STILL A POT OF BEER

Despite rumours to the contrary, the Pot of Beer (New Mount Street, off Rochdale Road) is most definitely not closing. There are new faces behind the bar, though.

Sue and Paul Higginson took over as managers on Tuesday 30 April and are already settling in well. Sue will be known to many from her 3½ years behind the bar at the Queens Arms, Red Bank. Sue and Paul also acted as relief managers at the Queens from time to time and it was Dave Price from the Queens who taught Paul the art of pub cellar work.

They have already made their mark on the pub by persuading owners Peter and Wanda Ward to take out the cask Boddington's Bitter. Currently the only permanent beer is the elusive Dark Mild from Robinson's which is accompanied by two changing guest beers, although as trade builds up this range will expand.

The couple hale from Cheshire, Paul from Winsford and Sue from Cuddington, neither renowned beer drinking towns. Indeed it was discovering the Beer House which prompted Paul to move to Manchester! Their aim at the Pot is, as Paul put it "to provide what I'd like to find in a pub".

This means not only quality cask ales but also good, traditional food. Due to Wanda Ward's other commitments, the Polish food has been taken off the menu but will be replaced simple high-quality meals using all fresh ingredients. Paul and Sue have a connection with North West Fine Foods, an organisation representing small and often specialist farmers. Expect to see wild boar sausages on the menu! Initially, the food will be restricted to lunchtimes only but simple snacks may be made available in the evening in due course.

Opening hours have been fixed at 12-11 from Monday to Saturday. The Pub will be closed on Sundays to start with although Sunday lunchtime opening may be introduced. Paul and Sue certainly deserve support in this, their first pub. Why not drop in next time you're in Manchester?

MANCHESTER MATTERS by Cityman

Just where do these stories come from? Last year the rumour mill had it that this popular Northern Quarter pub was to become a champagne and oyster bar, a tale laughed off by Ward Tavern's Wanda Ward. She's not laughing so much now as the latest story has started to hit the pub's trade.

A couple of weeks ago I was 'reliably informed' that the Pot had been sold and was facing demolition to become a car park. Naturally, I was on the phone to Wanda straight away and, as I suspected, this is a load of old rubbish. There was a slight hiatus at the end of last month as Tam and Dave departed (quite amicably for personal reasons) and Paul and Sue took over. Ed(1) has promised a small feature on the new couple which should appear elsewhere in this issue and it's good to report that it's business as usual at what has always been one of my favourite N/4 pubs. Well, almost business as usual - due to other time pressures Wanda won't be able to prepare the Polish food so the entire menu will be in the hands of the licensees.

Elsewhere in the City Centre it's been a very quiet month. Out on Oxford Road the hoardings are now up around the site of **Kro2**, which looks as though it's going to be quite a sizeable operation. They are still up around the new **Wetherspoon's** on Princess Street as well. The opening has been put back - press reports said June but the hoardings say July.

Northenden Notes

On a visit to Northenden I found the pubs to be the usual mixed bag. Starting at the **Jolly Carter**, I found a rather desperate pub with keg beer, few customers and a 'to let' sign. Down the road at the **Spread Eagle** there was better news with a lone handpump selling Boddingtons Bitter.

In the centre of the village, the **Church** has just been refurbished to an excellent standard but no cask ale and, according to the landlady, no prospect of any. Very sad. Meanwhile down the road, next to the police station, is the ever-vibrant **Crown**, with Boddingtons on handpump. Perhaps the Church should take a few lessons from this pub if it wants to sell cask beer.

Round the corner down Mill Lane is the **Tatton**, a pathetic example of under-investment if ever there was one. Outside you think this place should have real prospects with a fine building on a riverside setting. Venture inside and, oh dear, a run-down pub with no real ale. Finally, up at the far end of the village, is the most up-market pub, the **Farmers**. With food to the fore, and now Taylors Landlord and Charles Wells Bombardier to go with the longstanding Greenalls Bitter. This pub is a credit to both area and those who run it. All the village needs now is a pub owned by an independent brewer.

Out and About

Robbies' **Airport Hotel** at Ringway has received a thorough re-decoration with what looks like new fixed-seating to complement other new furniture in both the front lounge and the larger back lounge-cum-aircraft-viewing area, all very smart in autumnal colours. The latter has improved food facilities on tap and will doubtless be a hit with the regulars. The beers on offer are Hatters, Best and XB. Finding myself in Gorton (on the Mild Trail, of course), I popped in to the **Plough** and got talking to licensees Tony and Linda. In the two and a half years they have been there, they reckon to have trebled beer sales from a very low start point. Various darts, dominoes, crib and pool teams seem to agree, as they now base themselves here once again following that fallow period. Being a Robbies house it sells a very decent drop of Hatters and Best. Coming to the pub soon are inside Gents toilets; scheduled for work starting in May, the toilets will occupy the space currently taken by the outside facilities and the Ladies loos will be enlarged at the same time. As access will be by the current staircase corridor, no internal room alterations will occur. The beer garden will probably be spruced-up during that period.

Finally, a couple of late snippets - firstly, I hear that there is no longer cask beer to be had in the **Peninsula** (ex-Talbot) in Ladybarn. A sad loss if that's the case. Not too far away, the **Golden Lion** in Withington appears to undergoing (another) refurbishment. I'll try an call in before next month's column is penned.

10

10 DRAUGHT CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

NEXT OT AVAILABLE AFTER JUNE 12

THE CRESCENT

SALFORD - 0161 736 5600

OPEN ALL DAY, EVERY DAY



10 Cask Ales Always Available including
HYDES BITTER, ROOSTERS SPECIAL,
MOORHOUSE PENDLE WITCH,
PHOENIX THIRSTY MOON

Plus 8 guests including a mild
Erdinger on Draught, Liefmans Kriek
+ *Quality Doubles Bar*

Regularly changing **BELGIAN Guest Beer**

**NEXT CRESCENT BEER FESTIVAL
THURSDAY 4 TO SUNDAY 7 JULY**

**30 NEW BEERS From Independent
Micro-Breweries**

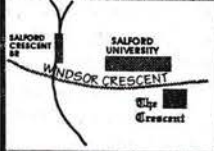
Food Served Every Lunchtime from 11.30am (12 on Sun)

Free Chip Barms Mondays 5 - 6pm

Wed 5 - 8pm Choice of 6 curries (Veg & Meat) + Rice £3.20

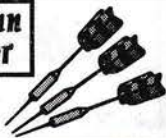
Function/Party Room available for FREE hire
- Buffets or Hot Meals provided on request

TV & GAMES Room
Open for darts and table football



Stockie on The che

By John Taylor



With just one remaining fixture to play in the Stockport Licensed Houses Super League, Reddish WMC are two points clear at the top of the table, followed by present champions Royal Mortar and the Ash Hotel. All three teams have tricky last games.

Reddish are away at Club Leisure, which is not an easy venue to go to when you are looking for a win to secure the championship for the first time ever. The Mortar are at home to the fifth placed team Bobby Peel, and the Ash are away to the Magnet who are presently fourth. A three-way tie is still a possibility - pity the poor person who would have to sort that out.

Over the last 20 years, two sets of players have dominated this league. Cale Green Social Club were top dogs in Stockport for almost a decade, and played under the leadership of Alan Roebuck. That team then won the league from the Mortar and then Tom Thumbs in the next two seasons. It was then the turn of the Nicholsons Arms to be all-powerful. These players, with a bit of guidance from yours truly, won the title for the next five years, and changed venues twice whilst doing so, moving to the Star & Garter and, more recently, to the Ash Hotel. The last two seasons have seen the championship return to the old guard, this time with Pete Gerrard at the reins, so it could be the start of a new era if Reddish are successful, which will be great for local darts.

The champions elect found themselves in that position after a little help from their neighbours the Ash, who recently beat their rivals the Mortar 4-3; wins for Dave Adshead in 18 & 21 darts, Andy Wright (19 & 21), Brian Adshead (30 & 23) and England international Tony O'Shea (17 & 16) won the match for the Heaton Norris side. The champs then replied through Kevin Weir (17 & 15), Tony Daniels (18 & 25), which included an outshot of 154, and Pete Connolly who went out in (24 & 14) darts. But it was too late and the Ash were left wondering how they managed to do the double over the Mortar and still not top the league.

On the same evening, Reddish were confirming their credentials with a 5-2 home win over the Magnet, with one of their young stars Pete Day Jnr winning in 17 & 18 darts, including a 161 kill, which is equal best for the season. The supporting cast were Mick Allen (24 & 26), Brad Clegg (21 & 23), Vic Clegg (16 & 27) and Pete day Snr with two legs of 23 darts. In reply for the Magnet, Derek Higgins went out in 16 & 20, and Geoff Millward (24 & 20).

At the bottom of the table, there is a battle on to avoid the drop, which this season may be only one team. With one match left, the Sidings and the Royal Oak are presently joint bottom on ten points. Their remaining fixtures are the Oak-v-North Reddish WMC and the Wembley-v-the Sidings. The only other team in danger is the Moss Rose who are at home to the Printers Arms, but it would appear that the Moss will not have a team anyway next season, hence the reason why only one team may be relegated.

So the scene is set for an interesting finale as was the recent knock-out final at the Talisman in Wythenshawe, which was won again by master dartsman Darryl Fitton, who beat Chris North to pick up another £1,000. In the semi-final Darryl had beaten Tony O'Shea. Gill Ball won the ladies competition.

Just a quick mention for Tony, who has now played seven times for his country and has won five of them. Recently he played in the home internationals, where he lost to Wa' but beat his Scottish opponent. England were victorious in both matches.

Stockport have just played Sandbach in the Cheshire Super League and won 6-2, including wins for Brian Derbyshire, Paul Yates, Andy Wright, Chris North and John Hollins. Not bad when you consider Darryl and Tony did not play.

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

**HELP HOLD BACK THE NITROKEG TIDE!
JOIN CAMRA (PAGE 19) & DRINK REAL ALE**



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

The Unique Belgian Brown Bar in Manchesters N/4

OVER 50 BELGIAN BEERS
regularly Available
4 GUEST CASK BEERS
GUEST CIDER
GUEST BOTTLES
GUEST CRISPS(?)

COMMONWEALTH BEER FESTIVAL
18 - 25 JULY
Classic Beers From
Across The Empire
PLUS SPECIAL SPORTING CASK ALES

OPEN FROM 12 EVERY DAY

HOT & COLD FOOD FROM 12 TILL

WE STOP EVERY DAY

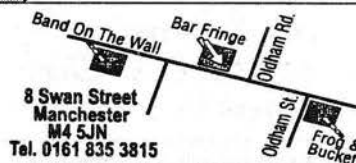
NEW: CHILLED Traditional Cider from the cellar!
Perry coming soon!

WIDE RANGE OF GOOD VALUE HOT & COLD FOOD



OPEN FROM 12 EVERY DAY

HOT & COLD FOOD FROM 12 TILL WE STOP EVERY DAY



Steve, Johanne, Molly &
sometimes Jess welcome you to

Ye Olde Vic

1 Chatham Street, Edgeley, Stockport
(0161) 480 2410



Opening Hours:
Mon - Fri: 5pm - 11pm;
Sat: 7pm - 11pm;
Sun: 7pm - 10.30pm

5 Alternating Cask Beers

*Westons Traditional Cider chilled,
Grimbergen Belgian Bottled Beers*

Selection from 12 single malts
in 35cl measures

Solid Fuel Open Fire

*An Establishment for
the Discerning Drinker!!*

We still maintain our no swearing and
good behaviour policy.

MILD CHALLENGE NEWS



Challenge Co-ordinator Mark McConachie has been trudging the street to see how it's going...

Early signs are that the Challenge is going well, both challengers
and licensees seem content so far.

Apologies to Peter Wood at the Lowes Arms in Denton for getting
the address wrong, it should of course read as Hyde Road. If you
haven't been to the Lowes and tried the Jet Amber then you really
are missing a treat - a great beer.

A mild casualty has occurred in the Gorton area. Visitors to the
Pineapple (Hydes) on Garrett Way will not find any mild on sale.
Fear not though, as staff have been instructed to give people a mild
stamp if they buy a bitter instead. There are also reports that the
Lass O' Gowrie has stopped selling mild but again, cards are being
stamped (try and keep to the spirit of the Challenge and have a
dark beer at the Lass if one is available).

Early congratulations to the first two people to do the lot - Dave
Meynell of Romiley took only two weeks, just pipping Ray Cronie
from Reddish. I'm sure there are more to follow.
Happy Mild Challenging.

NEED TO COMPLAIN?

If you experience problems in a pub, please first try
to sort it out tactfully with the licensee, but if you
need to take it further:-

Local Trading Standards Contacts are:
Stockport - 0161 474 4248, Manchester - 0161 234 5600
Tameside - 0161 342 3477, Derbyshire - 01629 585858
Cheshire - 01244 602500, Trafford - 0161 912 2274

Out of Our Circulation Area ?

Having Difficulty Getting Your Copy?

Postal subscriptions to

Opening Times are available.

Cheque payable to Opening Times for
**£5.50 for 12 issues. Write to: John Tune,
4 Sandown Road, Cheadle Heath,
Stockport SK3 0JF**

<http://mywebpage.netscape.com/openingtimes/>

The Waters Green Tavern



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

opposite the Railway Station

Ever Changing Guest Beers
including: Oakham, Roosters, Ossett,
Kelham Island, Phoenix
and many more...



Your Hosts Brian and Tracey

Bar Meals Served Mon to Sat Lunch
This is not a free house

12

CAMRA
FOR
REAL ALE

Jayne & Bryan welcome you to

THE ASH HOTEL

232 Manchester Road, Heaton Chapel 0161 476 0399

- ☆ *An Extensive Menu of Freshly prepared
Meals 7 days a week*
 - Sunday to Friday 12 noon till 7pm
 - Serving till 9pm Saturday

(20% Discount Every Monday & Tuesday for Senior Citizens)

- ☆ *Fantastic Function Suite for Parties of
30 - 120 for all types of Function, Party or
Conference*
- ☆ *Large Patio, Garden & Children's play Area*
- ☆ *Huge Car Park*
- ☆ *Traditional Vault Area*
- ☆ *Entertainment Every
Thursday & Friday night*
- ☆ *Licensed Thursday, Friday &
Saturday till midnight*

LOCAL CAMRA PUB of the
Month APRIL 2002



Fine Cask Ales including
Boddingtons and Ever Changing
Guest Beers



In the latest move in the continued consolidation of the pub companies, Enterprise Inns has bought the entire tenanted and leased estate of Laurel Pub Co, the outfit that ran the former Whitbread pubs. The move makes Enterprise the country's biggest pub owner with some 5,300 pubs to its name. Not only that it also has an option to buy the 4,200 pubs run by Unique and Voyager pub companies. If it takes up that option, and if the competition authorities don't object, then in two years time Enterprise will be the biggest pub owner in history. Whether such a deal would be passed by the Office of Fair Trading is another matter - they have already made a veiled threat that it does not want pub companies to become too big. And Laurel? It is now reduced to just 606 managed houses and is to develop six concepts among them. The company says that in the main the customer won't notice much different. With one notable exception. The Hogshead pubs are to be transformed from beer-driven venues to a much more 'female friendly' All Bar One-style operation. What this means is difficult to predict but a reduction in both the number and variety of cask ales in these pubs now seems inevitable.

Licensees of the Prince of Wales (Hydes) in Gatley, Graham and Gladys have now been at the pub two and a half years. Prior to that they spent seven years at the Moss Rose in Heaton Norris. The pub sells Hydes Mild and Bitter, and whilst Graham would like to try a seasonal beer, he is restricted by cellar-to-bar pipework which cannot accommodate any more beer lines. Both are enjoying their time at the pub and would like to see it receive a low-key makeover to emphasise its 'Country Pub' feel.

Some Hydes shorts - the Old Star in Cheadle is selling Mild, Light, Bitter and seasonal ale! Along the road at the Crown (also Cheadle), they are doing Mild, Bitter and seasonal, whilst in Gatley, the High Grove also provides that prized threesome. Gatley's Horse and Farrier is to become one of their 'Heritage Inns'.

Cheapest Robbies in the world! Can it be? Well, the Woodman in Hazel Grove is punting out Hatters at only 132p a pint. Can any other Robbies pub beat that?

Two Stockport Robbies houses are getting that Jubilee spirit going, and both have good reason to celebrate. First off is the aptly-titled Silver Jubilee on Belmont Way in Heaton Norris, as June will mark the first 25 years of the pub's existence. To celebrate, licensees Jeff and Angie plan a large party with food and entertainment promised. A justifiably popular local, it sells Hatters, Old Stockport and Best; it also plays host to two of the area's leading pool teams. More information when we have it.

The second pub to celebrate is the Royal Oak, Commercial Road, Hazel Grove, where licensees Bill and Hilda have spent 25 years manning the bar. May 24th sees the promise of artists, food and plenty of fun at this slightly out-of-the-way locals pub. Here again, the pub plays host to a number of sporting teams, this time it is bowls that pass the time along with a few pints of Hatters and Best. This should be their last year at the pub, as Bill and Hilda plan to retire in mid 2003.

At the Thatched Tavern in Reddish, handpumped Bass has now joined Tetley Bitter on handpump. Outlets for Draught Bass are few and far between in the town - another recommended outlet is the Kings Head on Tiviot Dale.

There is a new management couple at the Tatton Arms in Moss Nook in the shape of John and Mary Eastwood who previously ran the Roebuck, a Thwaites pub in Middleton, which they continue to own. Their intention is to increase the entertainment in the back room at the Tatton.

The Smithy in Cheadle Hulme should be shut for a major refurbishment by the time you read this. The pub will re-open in mid to late June.

Also with the builders in is the Boars Head in Stockport Market Place. Owners Sam Smiths have quite an impressive track record when it comes to pub refurbishments and it will be interesting to see what emerges when the hoardings come down.

The Hungry Horse in Heaton Mersey has replaced its cask Greene King IPA with the cold, keg version. Why is it that this pub can't sell cask beer while down the road Holt's and Robinson's do it so well?

That drinking outpost of Stockport Metro, the Beech Tree in Heald Green, is still displaying a sign for cask beer even though inside the pub only keg beer is on sale. This has been the situation for some considerable time.

Another pub couple celebrating this month are Dave and Sandra George at the Grapes, Castle Street Edgeley. On 19 May they will have been at this excellent little local for 25 years. The pub is on something of a roll at the moment - June will see Dave and Sandra gaining their second Pub of the Month award and in September the pub will be making a welcome return to the 2003 Good Beer Guide.

OPENING TIMES LETTERS

From Dave Nunn, Hazel Grove:

Although there is a fair guess that the editor of Opening Times will reach 80 years old before I do, why does he feel that now is the time to let all that campaigning go down the tube? Next time I see my boss or the customers I will say "it's 95% there, that should do". Do you really expect me to be employed much longer? A pint is a pint (568ml) period.

From Steve Robinson, Heaton Norris:

Many thanks to Mark McConachie and his band of helpers for this year's successful Mild Challenge. As last year I managed to visit all pubs (83) on foot, ably assisted by my "trainer" and partner Sue Ridings who collected a t-shirt in the process.

On my 14 trips I sampled 16 different milds from 13 different breweries, covering 132 miles in 3 weeks (due to an impending holiday before the deadline date for the Challenge). Special thanks to the staff/licensees of the following pubs for their encouragement: Friendship, Glossop; Bird In Hand, Hazel Grove; Unity, Stockport; Pineapple, Stalybridge; Victoria, Withington; Marble Beer House, Chorlton; and Travellers Call, Bredbury. (Wow!...Ed(1))

From Anthony Firmin, Glossop:

I am writing in disgust about the Beer Monster™ column in the last issue of Opening Times regarding his comments about Wetherspoons applying for "Children's Certificates".

Does he not realise that children are, potentially, future real ale drinkers? Obviously not! Possibly there is salvation for BM. Perhaps he should... (a) Get a life. (b) Get a girlfriend. (c) Engage in procreation (sacre bleu).

On second thoughts we really don't want another BM do we? So a simple alternative is for BM to stay away from child and family friendly pubs!

Incidentally, the Lowes Arms in Denton is a family and community centred pub where children are welcome when accompanied by an adult who is dining. I guess we will not be seeing you at the Lowes Arms, Mr. BM.

(What Can I say? If Anthony Firmin is as good a parent as he is brewer (and his beers I will heartily recommend) - then his offspring are probably paragons of good behaviour, who cause offence to none. Sadly British parenting (in general) has been in decline for a couple of generations. I have no problems with kids in drinking areas in Bavaria - they generally know what is expected of them. Similarly (largely) in the Irish Republic. Not, though (generally) in the UK. The Lowes Arms is an excellent pub, good beer and I believe excellent food. It will surprise Mr Firmin not at all that I tend to patronise it outside normal dining times - that way everyone is happy. - Beer Monster™)





CAMRA CALLING!

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

Diary

MAY 2002

Thursday 9th – Branch Meeting: Royal Oak, Stockport Road, Cheadle. Starts 8.00pm. Guest speaker – Oliver Robinson, Robinson's brewery.

Saturday 11th – Informal Social at Macclesfield Beer Festival. Meet Waters Green Tavern (opp. Station) 12 noon.

Friday 17th – Hazel Grove (south) Stagger. Meet Rising Sun, London Rd 7.30pm; Grapes 8.30pm.

Thursday 23rd – Pub of the Month presentation to the Royal Mortar, Higher Hillgate, Stockport. From 8.00pm.

Tuesday 28th-Sunday 2nd June – Setting up, running and taking down Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. **All members please try and help at this important branch event.**

Monday 10th June – Social: Crown, Heaton Lane, Stockport. Also celebrate the 40th Birthday of Paul "Freddy" Formby, the branch Social Secretary. Note early start – 8.00pm.

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

Monday 13th – Branch Meeting: Sportsman, Mottram Road, Hyde. Starts 8.30pm.

Saturday 1st/Sunday 2nd June – Beer Tent to mark the opening of the Huddersfield Canal, Stalybridge.

Monday 10th – Committee Meeting – Chapel House (Big Chap), Denton. Starts 8.30pm.

MAY 2002

Monday 17th – Branch Meeting: Stalybridge Labour Club, Acres Lane, Stalybridge. 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:

Friday 10th/Saturday 11th – Macclesfield Beer Festival & Champion Beer of Cheshire Competition, Macclesfield Rugby Club. All members, licensees and beer lovers welcome, especially to our Saturday lunchtime session.

Monday 27th – Wilmslow Mild Session: Coach & Four, Wilmslow. From 8.00pm.

Monday 10th June – Presentation of the Jim Bowden Award, Bull's Head, Kerridge. From 8.00pm.



16th STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL
OPEN THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY
30th May - 1st JUNE
(full details page 3)

ToDo Address Notepad Anniversary CAMRA 93 Planner

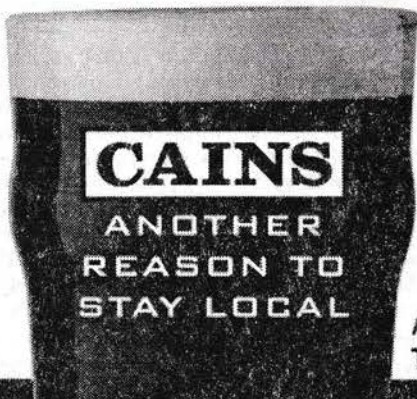


CAINS

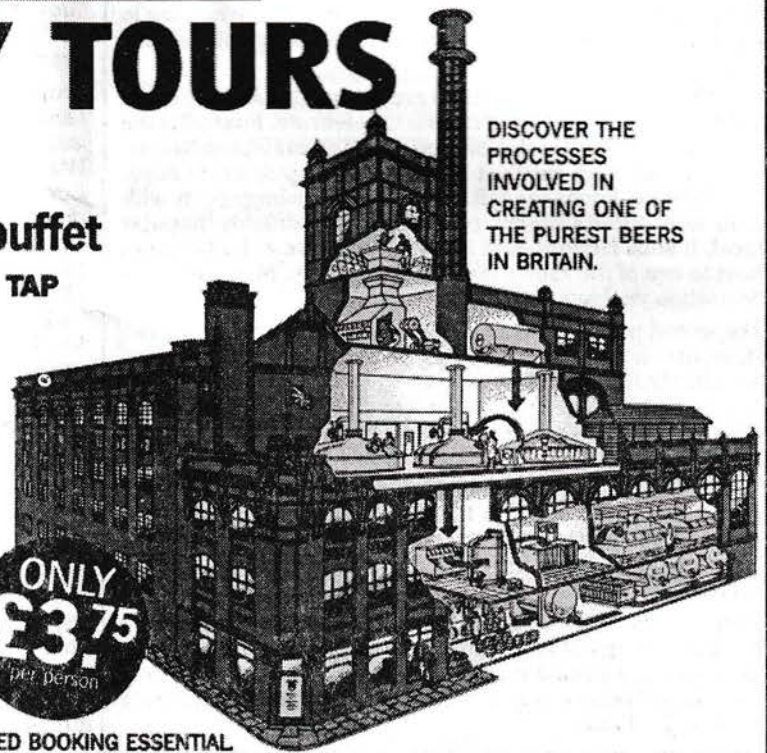
BREWERY TOURS

INCLUDED IN TOUR:
2 FREE PINTS & finger buffet
IN THE AWARD WINNING BREWERY TAP
tours take place monday through to thursday and begin at 6.30 pm

DISCOVER THE PROCESSES INVOLVED IN CREATING ONE OF THE PUREST BEERS IN BRITAIN.



ONLY £3.75
per person



ADVANCED BOOKING ESSENTIAL
Tel: Kathy Jones 0151 709 8734 email: khj@cainsbrew.com

The Robert Cain Brewery, Southop, Street, Liverpool L3 5XJ

5 Years Ago

by Phil Levison

MAY '97

The main front page story concerned 'Viaducts & Vaults 2', the guide to Stockport pubs published by Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA. This had been voted Guide of the Year by CAMRA nationally. The award had been announced at the Campaign's AGM & National Conference held in Llandudno, and had left editor Rhys Jones speechless!

Christine Cryne, chair of CAMRA's publications committee had praised the guide, saying that the judges had been unanimous in naming it as the winner. Rhys had also won an award with the first Stockport guide, and had thought it unlikely that the follow-up would be another winner. He just didn't think lightning would strike twice in the same place. He said it was a tribute to all the hard work put in by the volunteers, and to Paul Hutchings who was responsible for the guide's professional appearance.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Campaign's UK membership had grown by 8% in the previous year, and had exceeded 50,000 - this also represented a trebling in the previous 10 years. In Greater Manchester, membership growth had exceeded the national pattern, increasing by a massive 12% over the year - one of the biggest growth rates in the country. Today national membership exceeds 63,000.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Pub of the Month award had gone to the Railway, Great Portwood Street, Stockport. The pub had only reopened the previous September but had quickly become one of the stars of the local drinking scene. It had previously had something of a chequered career, as "Cheekies", then "Byrons", leading to closure in 1996. But then it was bought by Dave Porter of the Porter Brewing Co as his third tied house, and it had gone from strength to strength.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Staffordshire/Derbyshire borders area was becoming something of a centre for micro-brewing. Whim had been established at Hartington since 1993, and at Fenny Bentley both Leatherbritches and Black Bull had been set up the following year. About eight miles from Fenny Bentley on the A52 Leek road, the village of Waterhouses had become home to one of the country's newest brewing ventures, the Stonyrock Brewery. While Black Bull and Stonyrock have now disappeared, both Leatherbritches and Whim continue to thrive.

★ ★ ★

"Curmudgeon" had drawn attention to the shopping centres across Britain which were becoming more and more alike, and now much the same was happening to pubs. In the centre of any major town you would probably find Wetherspoon's, Yates's, Scruffy Murphys, a Firkin, a Hogshead and a Tap & Spile - and they were scarcely any different from those in a town, say, 200 miles away. We probably take for granted the local concentrations of Robinson's, Holt's, Hydes' and Lees pubs, but they could be considered something special, adding greatly to the area's individual character.



Half a Loaf

It was disappointing, but not entirely surprising, that the government decided to renege on its election promise to legislate for full pints in pubs, and instead chose to declare that 95% would be quite sufficient. Somehow I suspect they wouldn't be happy if I only paid them 95% of my income tax. But half a loaf is better than none at all, and even these watered-down proposals still give much scope for improvement. While nationwide around a quarter of pints of draught beer fall short of 95%, that includes lager, which doesn't tend to have a thick, creamy head. I would say that, in the North-West, well over half the pints of ale and stout, whether real or keg, fail to reach that standard. And it must be remembered that, under these plans, 95% is the minimum which every single pint must reach when presented to the customer, and the right to a top-up is over and above that figure.

95% of a pint, served in a brim-measure glass, should have a head no more than a quarter of an inch deep, whereas it's not uncommon to see pints, particularly of Guinness and "smooth" beers, handed over the bar with heads three times as big. For the first time, Trading Standards will have a clear yardstick to use when enforcing measures, and a lot of pubs around here will have to think very carefully about how they serve their beer.

Common Sense Prevails

Rather more welcome news was the announcement from Road Safety Minister David Jamieson that the UK's 80 mg drink-drive limit was to be retained. This had been signalled in the government's Road Safety Review in 2000, but that document had stated that a final decision had been put on hold pending a European Union review. However, it has now been confirmed that there is no intention to adopt a uniform 50 mg standard, something that will cause many British licensees and pubgoers to breathe a sigh of relief.

he Transport Department clearly do not believe that targeting drivers in the 50 - 80 mg range, many of whom will not be impaired at all, will make any worthwhile difference to safety, and may even detract from pursuing the hard-core offenders with alcohol levels way over 80 mg, who are responsible for the overwhelming majority of drink-related casualties.

Although a majority of other European countries have a nominal legal limit of 50 mg or lower, rather than 80 mg, most will only treat an alcohol level of just over 50 mg on a par with a minor speeding offence, and do not impose mandatory driving bans until levels well over 80 mg. Taking the level of penalties into account, the UK in fact has one of Europe's tougher legal regimes on drink-driving, which has also been over the years one of the most effective in reducing casualties.

Curmudgeon Online: www.curmudgeon.co.uk

**COPY DATE FOR THE MAY 2002 ISSUE OF
OPENING TIMES IS APRIL 26**



Buxton Jubilee CAMRA Beerfest

Friday 17th May 1900 - 2400,

Saturday 18th 1200 - 1700, & 1900 - 1am

Pitch Marquee, Buxton Football Club Ground, Silverlands, Buxton

Live band on each night with music until 1130pm

£7 ENTRY FOR EVENING SESSIONS

(includes 2 drinks, engraved glass, band)

£1.50 ENTRY TO SAT AFTERNOON SESSION -

childrens fairground rides, brassband, burgers, football games (world cup fever time), etc..

All proceeds in aid of local charities & BFC youth teams.

OVER 20 DIFFERENT REAL ALES.....

The Nursery Inn

GREEN LANE,
HEATON NORRIS,
STOCKPORT

432 - 2044



- ★ Good Home Cooked Food Served Daily
- ★ Lunches every day including Sundays for families in our Dining Room.
- ★ Beer Garden with Eating Area
- ★ Bowling Parties & Function Room.
- ★ Egon Ronay Guide, AA Best of British Gd
- ★ CAMRA Good Pub Food Guide
- ★ CAMRA Regional Pub of the Year 2001
- ★ CAMRA NATIONAL Pub of the Year



Brewers of
Traditional
Cask
Beers

Always in
good taste

THE WHITE HART

91 Market St. Mottram

**CUBAN Restaurant
NOW OPEN**

Now Serving:

Plassey Bitter, Taylors Landlord,
Dark Mild, Phoenix Bantam,
imported Warsteiner, Faxe and
EVER CHANGING GUESTS
alongside Traditional Pub Games -
Table Football, Pool

Open ALL Permitted Hours

THE SPORTSMAN

57 MOTTRAM ROAD, HYDE

Geoff and Carmel Welcome You To

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



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

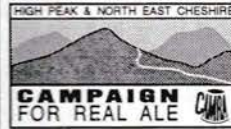
Regular Beers include
Hartington Bitter, Plassey Bitter,
Taylors Landlord and
Dark Mild and
ever-changing guest beers

**Special Vegetarian Wholefood
Menu Now Available**

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



Easy Public Transport Connections
Tel: (0161) 368 5000



HIGH PEAK EVENTS

4th Annual Sponsored Charity Walk

The High Peak Branch's 4th sponsored Charity Walk will take place on Saturday 22 June. The Charity being supported this year is MIND, the mental health charity and is indeed a worthy cause to stretch your legs for.

The route this year is not too strenuous; only a few near vertical slogs over windswept uplands in driving rain. You do not need to be a member of the Special Boat Squadron to do this; if Branch Chairman Tom Lord can do it, so can you!

There is a 10.30am start at the Royal in Hayfield to a finish at Stalybridge Labour Club, and a good range of handpumped cask ales.

The pubs en route are expected to be:

1. Pack Horse, Mellor Road, New Mills
2. Oddfellows, Moored, Mellor
3. Little Mill, Rowarth
4. George & Dragon, Charlesworth
5. Centurion, Gamesley
6. White Hart, Mottram
7. Rising Moon, Matley Lane, Hyde, Newton
8. Stalybridge Labour Club

This gives an excellent range of beers to go at - even if it is chucking it down! Details and official MIND sponsorship forms can be obtained from Tom Lord (0161 427 7099 (h), 0161 837 4474 (w))

Stalybridge Beer Festival

High Peak and NE Cheshire Branch will be running a beer tent in conjunction with the Stalybridge Canal Festival. The dates for your diary are Saturday 1, Sunday 2 and Monday 3 June.

The Canal Festival is being held to celebrate the reopening of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal over the Pennines and will feature food, music and entertainment. Many canal narrow-boats are expected and there will be a range of craft stalls, too. There is no entry to either the beer tent or festival site which are both on Huddersfield Road. A wide range of beers and ciders will be available, including a special beer from the LAB, 'Canal Knowledge'. Opening hours are:

Saturday 1 June: 12 noon-5.30pm and 6.30-11.00pm

Sunday 2 June/Monday 3 June: 12 noon-5.30pm and 6.30-10.30pm

Further details are available from Tom Lord (contact numbers above).



**REMEMBER!
IF IN DOUBT -
ASK IF IT'S CASK**

Graham
welcomes
you to ...

THE RAILWAY VIEW

Byrons Lane,
Macclesfield

GOOD FOOD
Now Being Served on

PLATFORM ONE

8 GUEST BEERS ☆

☆ QUIZZES ☆

☆ BAR GAMES ☆



☎ 01625

REAL ALE £1.30 MON NIGHT

423657





**Down the Line...Pubs in the Towns,
Pubs in the Villages**

Wayfarer's Guide to the Pubs in Handforth

North of Wilmslow and bordering Greater Manchester with Cheshire is this settlement, in recent times expanding somewhat with the development of the housing estates on Cotshaw Farm and Spath Lane. The B5358 road is the main route through the village, replacing the A34 (now the by-pass), where the majority of the pubs can be found.

Blue Bell, Manchester Road - this pub sits on the fringe of the town, a very recognisable construction, reminiscent of the housing estate-type happenings of the sixties/seventies developments. A large lounge is supplemented by a smaller vault room. *Real Ale: Boddingtons Bitter*

Bulls Head, Wilmslow Road - a "Chef & Brewer" roadhouse incorporating a "Premier Lodge" accommodation attachment. There is a certain amount of mock rusticity in the pub interior. Split level areas with the accent on attracting diners, judging by the number of candlelit tables dotted around. Piped music features, dried hops are displayed prominently along with farm implements. The lighting is subdued and there is a beer garden at the rear. *Real Ales: Theakstons Best Bitter, guest beers.*

Freemasons Arms, Wilmslow Road - a low set corner pub on the main road and considerably opened out, with a former fireplace dividing the two areas. Very gentrified, yet still retaining an area for dartboard and television. *Real Ales: Boddingtons Bitter, Theakstons Best Bitter.*

Greyhound, Wilmslow Road - RIP. This former pub (which once sold Joseph Holt Bitter) has been demolished to make way for residential developments.

Mermaid, Delamere Road - built to serve the residents of Spath Lane, this large Bass stereotyped estate pub has a lounge-cum-function room, not always accessible, and a rather noisy, smoky vault. *No real ale.*

Millers, Wilmslow Road - a large roadside "Pub & Restaurant" development, the former Waggon & Horses, by the county boundary facing Stanley Road. Country kitchen-style furnishings are prevalent in the dining area. Otherwise there are tiled floors and pastel wall coverings. Food and drink promotions are on offer from the standardised menu. *Real Ale: Courage Directors Bitter.*

Railway, Station Road - this can be a good starting point as it is handy for the trains, being sited directly opposite the station. A very smart local, typically country style, with a compact bar area, archways through which lie comfortable rooms radiating around, giving a relaxed atmosphere. There is a delimited area for people not wanting to smoke and the pub holds a certificate for the Wilmslow & District best kept area in 1998. There is also a traditional vault and the place is patronised generally by a mature clientele. *Real Ales: Robinson's Hatters, Best Bitter, Old Tom (winter).*

Summerfield, Dean Row Road - the former Wilmslow Flyer (the name commemorated the nearby former Wilmslow RAF site) and now, after a recent makeover, named after the shopping area which it fronts. Wolverhampton & Dudley have done a good job here, though, admittedly, its leanings are more towards providing food (daily, until 9.00pm) but apart from this, they sell up to four real ales. There is a long back counter, a raised corner area, with the rest of the pub being considerably opened up. Unobtrusive piped music, with bright and pleasant interior furnishings add a touch of class. *Real Ales: Banks's Original, seasonal beer, Marston's Bitter, Pedigree.*

Urn, Woodford Road - in the select area of Dean Row, near to Wilmslow. The pub, although modernised, is a country local done up with cream walls and light and dark wood. Old farming prints adorn the walls, low ceilings with beams inscribed with sayings dominate the rooms, some large, some small for intimacy. Outside beer garden available. *Real Ales: Boddingtons Bitter, Theakston's Cool Cask.*

There are also a number of upmarket hotels in the area but it is doubtful whether they offer anything to interest the real ale drinker.

Public Transport Links - Bus services to Handforth: 130 Macclesfield-Manchester; 300 Wilmslow-Wythenshawe Hospital; 312 Handforth Dean-Stockport; 378 Stockport-Wilmslow. Train Services - Manchester-Wilmslow

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



In Glossop, the Globe has been bought by Ron Brooks (of the Glossop Global Lift Music Co). the Music Co used to (and still will) meet at the Globe and the pub will remain a music venue. Ron is committed to keeping real ale but is realistic about the trade the pub has traditionally attracted. As a result the Globe will open from Thursday-Sundays only. There is a rumoured link with Lees beers which will be a welcome addition to the range of cask beer available in Glossop.

Over the hill - not literally - in Hadfield, the Lamp is available "to let". This appears to be a private let rather than a pub company.

The Shepherds Arms, Whaley Bridge, has a new licensee. No fundamental changes are expected.

In Audenshaw, the Queen Anne, Guide Lane, is to let.

REMEMBER - STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL 30 MAY - 1 JUNE

OPENING TIMES ADVERTISING

ADVERTISING RATES: 1/8 page (60mm x 85mm): £30; 1/4 page (120mm x 85mm): £50; 1/2 page (horiz: 174mm x 120mm; vert: 250mm x 85mm): £85; Full page (175mm x 240mm) £140. Surcharges apply for back page. Discounts available on adverts of 1/4 page or above for runs of insertions. Advert design & origination usually free of charge unless large costs involved. Ring 0161 477 1973 for details. Artwork should be submitted as hard copy (positive bromide) or PC COMPATIBLE (NOT MAC) *.eps, *.tiff or *.cdr (Corel Draw versions 3, 5 or 7 - please state which AND you MUST include hard copy back-up).

THE BOUNDARY



*Food Available until
9 pm - every day*

8th BEER FESTIVAL

**80+ BEERS, LAGERS & CIDERS
HOUSED IN A GIANT MARQUEE
LIVE MUSIC FRI & SAT**

12th - 16th JUNE 2002

*Specialists in Catering,
Mobile Bars and functions*



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

Phone 0161 330 1679
*Environmental Services Tameside
Clean Food Award 1999*

Fax: 0161 285 3456
*Corporate Member of the
Guild Of Master Caterers*





This month's Desert Island Beers have been chosen by long-time CAMRA activist, beer-lover and former Opening Times columnist, Richard Hough. Already armed with the Champion Beer of Britain, Oakham JHB, and the Champion Winter Beer, Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout, here are his five other choices:

"It is some years since I last wrote for OT (I used to pen the 'Rhythm & Booze' column, about which people still ask me). Since then I have moved over the hill to Sheffield; I still enjoy the occasional pint though. Here are five of my favourites.

"Robinson's Old Tom - A previous Champion Winter Beer of Britain, and surely there's never been a more deserving winner. I shall never forget slithering down the cobbles of Stockport's Market Place one icy winter's night to ensconce myself in the Arden Arms. As is customary on such occasions when your ribs ache with cold, a warming tippie was in order. Given that I'm not in the habit of ordering a cup of tea from a pub, Old Tom was the choice. And what a choice! Here is a beer that looks the part, with its deep ruby hue and splendid complex flavours. In addition to the usual 'treacle toffee' richness, this particular nigh there was a magical winy dry note, and an after-taste that just went on and on. I spent the rest of the evening checking that I hadn't got it wrong. And I don't remember the walk home.

"Leatherbritches Honeymoon Ale - The honeymoon in question was, not surprisingly, my own. And my wife's of course. The beer was specially brewed for this auspicious occasion by the splendid people at the Bentley Brook Hotel in Fenny Bentley. By the time we had finished the gargantuan breakfast each morning, and got ready for the day, it was invariably just about 11 o'clock, which meant one thing only. The bar was open. And as my bride was prone to point out, it would be rude not to sample some Honeymoon, since they had brewed it specially... a four per cent pale beer that was finished all too quickly. Like the Honeymoon itself.

"Marble Ginger Marble - I am a big fan of proper ginger beers (ale, rather than fizzy pop), and as far as I am concerned the bigger the better. I'm not interested in subtle hints of flavour, these beers can be rather unpleasant. I want blow-ye-socks-off, no-nonsense GINGER to smack you round the chops. Mark Dade (now at Boggart Hole Clough Brewery) started the trend at Marble a few years ago with what was described at the time as "rrraspingly dry" (sic). And since then the Ginger Marble has just got better and better. Now it is rrrraspingly drry (sic). And it's organic, too, which is a bonus. An utter delight. Oh yes, and ginger is good for your joints as well.

"Hop Back Summer Lightning - A couple of years ago I was working at Stockport Beer Festival. Between sessions most people do something sensible such as eat food, go for a lie down, freshen up and generally sober up. Your illustrious Ed (1) and I popped into the Greyhound, Edgeley for a swift one. Pints of Summer Light-



Once more pressures of space prevent me venting my bloodcurdling wrath upon the unworthy, so a couple of positive points will have to do! Having sounded off at Wetherspoons expense last time it is only decent to say something good. The best pint I have had so far this year was a pint of Hopback Summer Lightning at the Moon under Water on Deansgate, Manchester for the princely sum of £1.35. Indeed the one I had at Wetherspoons's Stockport pub was nearly as good, but cost £1.55. I don't think I will understand the pricing logic if I live to be much older. Still well done to both, keep it up. I tried the current Hopback seasonal at the recent Beer Festival at the Crescent, Salford. It was good, though I think I preferred the Gales Gold seasonal. Very good, as was the fest. Idy & Sal's festivals are indeed usually so consistently good that one runs rather short of new things to say. The next Crescent Fest has been brought forward to July - (4th-7th) due to an expected happy event in Italy in August. I strongly recommend sampling some of the 30 or so new beers that will be there. Thinking of Idy, her name has finally been removed from above the door of the Beer House, so Yvonne Hayward (see pic) is now definitely in charge, managing something Ian Casson never did in his two year tenure. Despite the less than enlightened beer policy of (current) ultimate owners Innspired Inns, the pub is still well worth calling in, as beer quality remains excellent even if the selection is less varied than in former days. Hopefully the situation will continue or even improve, but the speed of change in the Northern Quarter is rapid indeed these days...oh, and welcome Sue & Paul at the Pot.



ning were duly ordered, and we sat in the sunshine to enjoy. So good was it that two hours, and three pints later, we were still there. The food didn't get eaten, the lie didn't get down, and we returned to the Town Hall not freshened up and rather the worse for wear. Suffice to say that the evening session remains a bit of a blur. Summer Lightning is, though, one of only a handful of beers that tastes every bit as good from a bottle as it does from the cask. Try some when you get the chance; just avoid the Beer Festival mid-session interval.

"Abbeydale Black Mass - A medley of dark malts lend this beer its rich black colour, which is a good start. And at 6.66% ABV it is wicked stuff. A complex beer with roast flavours, pronounced bitterness and an excellent lasting finish. The fact that I brew it is only a minor matter of course. (Richard is currently working as assistant brewer at Abbeydale - Ed (1)).

PS - Since I wrote this article my suspicion that Black Mass is a seriously great ale was confirmed when it came first in a field of 95 to win Beer of the Festival at Walsall last month.. Today Walsall, tomorrow the world..."

18



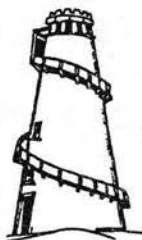
ROWLANDS CARE

IN ASSOCIATION WITH C.A.M.R.A

PRESENT

THE TENTH FRODSHAM BEER FESTIVAL

A great selection of "New Brews" and Old Favourites plus Farmhouse Ciders



Food available at all sessions Entertainment Friday & Saturday Evenings

24th & 25th MAY 2002

Friday Night 6 - 11 pm
Saturday OPEN ALL DAY 12 noon to 11 pm
AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE FLUIN LANE

TICKETS £4.50 FOR ALL SESSIONS (£1 REFUND ON DOOR FOR CAMRA MEMBERS) AVAILABLE ON THE DOOR (subject to the limit) or IN ADVANCE FROM THE HELTER SKELTER BAR (formerly Rowlands) TEL: 01625 733341 THE QUEEN'S HEAD, FRODSHAM TEL: 01625 733288 OR DAVID BROWN, JONES'S COTTAGE, OFF HIGH STREET, FRODSHAM WA5 7AN Please make cheques payable to "Rowlands Care"

The Sixteenth STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL
Stockport Town Hall
30th May to 1st June 2002
5 Minutes from Bus & Train Stations

ST ANN'S HOSPICE

30th MAY 2002
EVENING 8.30PM-11.00PM
ADMISSION £2
LIVE MUSIC
A Few Good Men

31st MAY 2002
LUNCH 11.30AM-3.00PM
ADMISSION £2
LIVE MUSIC
The Mighty Wurlitzer

1st JUNE 2002
LUNCH 11.30AM-4.00PM
ADMISSION £3
QUIET DRINKING SESSION
HOT & COLD FOOD

10th JUNE 2002
EVENING 8.30PM-11.00PM
ADMISSION £2
LIVE MUSIC
The Purple Gang

10th JUNE 2002
EVENING 8.30PM-11.00PM
ADMISSION £2
LIVE MUSIC
The Wincesters

100 BEERS CIDERS & PERRIES BEERS
£1 PER PINT

CHAMPIONED BY THE CAMRA PUB BAR AND RESTAURANT TO CAMRA MEMBERS

Visit our Web Site: www.stockportfestival.fanet.co.uk
Sponsored by The STOCKPORT EXPRESS

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

1ST / 2ND / 3RD
JUNE 2002

HIGH PEAK & NORTH EAST CHESHIRE BRANCH



REAL ALE BEER TENT

AT PENNINE LINK CANAL FESTIVAL SANDHILLS STALYBRIDGE

SAT 1ST JUNE 12:00 - 5:30 & 6:30 - 11:00
SUN 2ND JUNE 12:00 - 5:30 & 6:30 - 10:30
MON 3RD JUNE 12:00 - 5:30 & 6:30 - 10:00

WIDE RANGE OF REAL ALE & CIDERS
BOATS - BANBS - CRAFTS - CLOWNS
REFRESHMENTS

JOIN CAMRA NOW AND GET INTO STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL

DID YOU KNOW?

FREE!

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

Details of these festivals and other social events, along with the latest brewery news are supplied in CAMRA's monthly newspaper 'What's Brewing' - delivered free to your door.

All members are invited to participate in our packed line-up of socials - at least two events per week: brewery visits (with plenty of sampling time!), curry crawls, minibus trips inside and outside the area; awaydays by train; Staggers and Pubs of the Month are all forthcoming events. So why not become a member of the most successful consumer pressure group in Europe. There has never been a better time to join.

YOU KNOW IT MAKES SENSE!

CAMRA & OPENING TIMES AWARDS ROUND UP

It's not about standing around with placards in the biting cold... Campaigning with CAMRA, that is! More often involves sitting in pubs, drinking excellent beer and from time to time presenting deserving licensees with awards for their hard work. Whilst this does entail listening to the odd speech - practice keeps these admirably short, so the main business - eating and drinking - is what it's all about! Recent Pub of the



Month Awards have gone to Mark Ruby and Martin Judge of the the Kro Bar, Wilmslow Road (February, left above) and Alan and Janice of the Travellers Call, Hyde Road (January, above right), Paul Roberts of the Little Jack Horner, Wellington Street, Stockport (February, below left), Alex Lord of the Railway, Portwood with his Pub of the year award, and finally Marble Beers



brewer James Campbell and Marble Arch manager Phil Chapman (bottom right) with the OT/Beer Monster Pub of the Season, Spring 2002 award given earlier this month.



APPLICATION FOR CAMRA MEMBERSHIP (Opening Times 217)

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

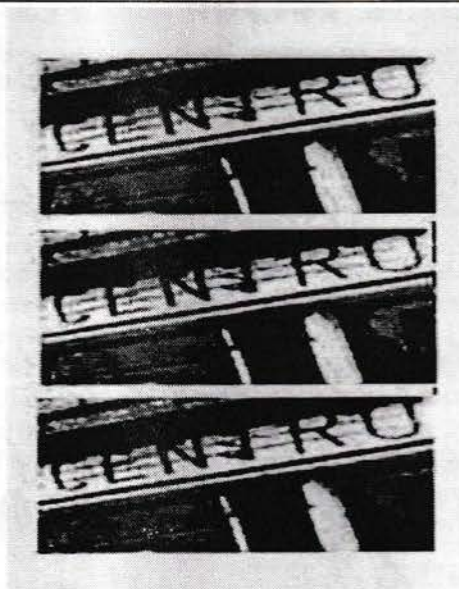
TELEPHONE SIGNATURE

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO CAMRA

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

Send To: Karen & Chris Wainwright, 173 Shearwater Rod, Offerton, Stockport SK2 5XA
(Marple & High Peak Area to: Tom Lord, 5 Vernon Drive, Marple SK6 6JH)





Café Bar Centro

74 Tib Street, Northern Quarter, Manchester

Tel 0161 835 2863.

www.centrobar.co.uk.



Open 7 days a week providing the Northern Quarter with a wealth of beers and lagers from around the world.

Home cooked food (including vegetarian options) available all day - big breakfasts on Sundays!

Hoegaarden, Lindeboom, Leffe, Belle Vue, Budvar and many more on Draft (including guest lagers from around the world!)

Range of Hand Pulled ales from local and not so local micro breweries. This month look out for some brews from the new partnership at Eastwood and Sanders Fine Ales!!

Selection of bottled beers from around the globe.

Happy Hour from 4pm to 7pm daily.

Alternate Sundays – Tony Watt & the Manchester School of Samba provide chilled Brazilian Style beats for you to enjoy from the late afternoon.

Opening Hours 12 till late Monday – Saturday. 1pm till 10.30pm Sunday

“The Northern Quarters’ hidden gem”