

APRIL 2007



Opening

TIMES

THE FREE CAMRA REGIONAL MAGAZINE

NUMBER 272

COVERING THE CITIES OF MANCHESTER & SALFORD, STOCKPORT, TAMESIDE, TRAFFORD, N.E. CHESHIRE & MACCLESFIELD

Use 'Em or Lose 'Em



Stockport's Windsor Castle is one of many local pub closures in recent years. CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, has revealed shocking new figures showing 56 pubs a month closing – and 80% of these are in urban areas. While some fall prey to property developers, many pubs close because a combination of high rents (particularly prevalent with the pub companies) and changing drinking patterns make them unviable. If we are to preserve our public house tradition then the message is simple – more people need to use more pubs more often.

INSIDE APRIL'S OPENING TIMES

Stockport Beer & Cider Festival - a full preview of all the entertainment (page 15)

Mild Challenge 2007 - all the pubs and all the beers (page 7, 11)

Regular Features

Recent Awards	2	Stockport Supping	11
OT Comment	3	Macclesfield Pub News	12
Stagger	4	5 Years Ago	13
What's Doing	5	T&H Pub of the Season	13
High Peak Pub News	8	Manchester Matters	14
Peak Practice	9	Book Review	16
Pub of the Month	9	Brewery News	17
Curmudgeon	10	CAMRA Calling	18



The Vale Cottage Inn

REGIONAL PUB OF THE YEAR 2006

A traditional English pub where we value friendly service and offer our customers quiet and comfortable surroundings

Extensive Lunch Time Menu Available 12 to 2:30 Daily
Traditional Sunday Lunches Served 12 to 2:30

Quiz nights: Tuesday - General Knowledge
Thursday - The Best Music Quiz Around

Fine Cask Ales
(Timothy Taylor's Landlord, Theakstons, Bombardier, Guests)



Telephone: 0161 223 2477
Kirk Street, Corton, Manchester M18 8UE

CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2007 We're in it!

Recent CAMRA Awards



Above - Stockport & South Manchester Branch Chairman Mark McConachie (centre) presents the 2007 Pub of the Year Award to Martin Wood and his team.

Below - Mark (centre) presents the February Pub of the Month award to Rick and Jo Brooks at the Dog & Partridge, Didsbury



**Found the pub.
 Drank the beer.
 Now get the 'T'.**

Send the completed form below, stating your size: M, L, XL or XXL together with a cheque/P.O for £5.95 each, payable to Wadworth & Co. Ltd. Send to: Wadworth, Northgate Brewery, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 1JW.

Only £5.95

See our new T-shirt at it's best - visit www.wadworth.co.uk/tshirt

Offer closes 31st December 2007. Subject to availability. Please allow 28 days for delivery.

Order Form (please complete) ©IM

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 Postcode: _____

Size: _____ Quantity: _____
 No. of shirts: _____ Total £: _____

Traditional Beers for Modern Tastes

Sparked Out & A River Runs Through It 4.3%
(March and April beers of the Salford Series 2007)

Pacific Bitter 3.8% **Blue Bullet** 4.3%

Flatbac 4.2% (Beer of the Festival, Stockport 2005 & BIA Bronze 2004)

Black Pig Mild 3.6% (Bronze for Mild, Champion Beer of Britain - CBoB - 2001)

Knoll St Porter 5.2% (Gold - Porters & Stouts, CBoB 2006, Silver - Porters & Stouts, SIBA North Beer Competition 2006)*

Our beers are available permanently at:

The Crescent, The King's Arms
 and **The New Oxford, Salford**
Corbieres, Manchester **The Printer's Arms, Doushaw**
The Royal Hotel, Great Harwood

For other outlets and more info, please see
www.bazensbrewery.co.uk,
 phone 0161 708 0247 or email bazensbrewery@mac.com

* All beers subject to availability

OT – COMMENT...

I will be the first to admit that the Windsor Castle in Edgeley, featured on our front cover, was not high on many peoples' lists of must-visit pubs.

However the closure of this and other prominent pubs highlights the shake up that continues in the local and national pub scenes. While *Opening Times* has long documented the declining pub stock in East Manchester, it is only in recent years that relatively prosperous areas like Stockport have been hit by this phenomenon. In recent years we have seen the closure of the Blue Bell in Edgeley, the Black Lion, Golden Lion and Royal Mortar on Hillgate, the Nicholson's Arms on Lancashire Hill and the Railway in North Reddish. Add to those the Portwood area losses of the Rifle Volunteer, Stanley Arms, Coach & Horses and Brinnington Inn and the scale of the losses becomes apparent.

Admittedly some of these were badly run pubs selling terrible beer. Some just ran out of customers as drinking patterns change. The key to survival must be quality – clean, well run pubs selling quality products that people want to drink (and that includes cask beer) will always survive and thrive. My guess is that it is the rowdy, sometimes poorly supervised and run, keg-only drinking shops that are living on borrowed time. The advent of the smoking ban will only accelerate their demise.

While we in CAMRA are not in the business of advocating wholesale pub closures it may well be that weeding out the poor performers will ensure the long-term health of the well-run pubs that remain.

OT – INFORMATION

Opening Times is produced by the Stockport & South Manchester Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Additional material is supplied by the High Peak & NE Cheshire, Trafford & Hulme, North Manchester and Macclesfield & E Cheshire Branches. The views expressed are not necessarily those of CAMRA either locally or nationally. 7,000 copies a month are printed by Phil Powell Printing of Failsworth.

News, articles and letters are welcome to the editorial address – 45, Bulkeley St, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9HD. E-mail – stocam@btinternet.com. Phone 0161 477 1973. Advertising rates on request.

Postal subscriptions are available at £6 for 12 issues (make cheques payable to *Opening Times*). Apply to John Tune, 4 Sandown Rd, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, SK3 0JF.

Trading Standards – problems in pubs should normally be resolved by a quiet word with the licensee. However sometimes it may be necessary to take it further. These are the local contacts:

Stockport:	0845 644 4301
Manchester:	0161 234 1555
Salford:	0161 925 1346
Tameside:	0161 342 8355
Trafford:	0161 912 2274
Derbyshire:	08456 058 058
Cheshire:	0845 11 32 500

Copy Date for the May issue is Saturday 7 April.

Contributors to this issue: John Clarke, John Tune, Pete Farrand, Dave Hanson, Peter Butler, Tom Lord, Frank Wood, Peter Edwardson, Dave Hallows, Steve Smith, Phil Levison, Andy Jenkinson, Robin Wignall, Dave Sheldon, Jim Flynn

Wayne & Staff Welcome You To
THE CHESHIRE RING
 Manchester Road, Hyde



Enjoy seven handpumped cask ales plus one handpumped cask beer in our friendly atmosphere

Special home brewed beer - XXX Ginger Bear
 Just taste that ginger

Beartown Beers and Ever-Changing Guest Beers
 Draught European lagers including Budvar Dark
 Home-made sandwiches at all times
 (while stocks last)

Function Room available for most occasions

Tel. 0161 366 1840

CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2007 We're in it!



Cask Sampler

Sample a selection of our fine traditional cask ales at a very special price

4 pints / 8 halves
 of 4 different cask ales
£7.50

6 pints / 12 halves
 of 6 different cask ales
£10.95

Simply buy a coupon at the bar
 and get it stamped for each drink you have

The Crown & Kettle promotes responsible drinking -
 The Cask Sampler is designed for sharing

Crown & Kettle

2 Oldham Road, Northam Quarter, Manchester M4 5FE
 Tel: 0161 238 2822, Fax: 0161 238 3614
 Email: crownandkettle@btopenworld.com
 www.crownandkettle.com



PHOENIX BREWERY

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

Best Bitter, Old Oak, Navy, Double Dagger, Monkeytown Mild, Arizona, White Monk, Pale Moonlight, Midsummer Madness, Bantam, White Monk, Black Shadow, March Hare, May Fly, Sticky Wicket, Double Gold, Flash Flood, Black Bee, White Tornado, Last Leaf, Massacre, Porter, Snowbound, Wobbly Bob, White Hurricane, Uncle Fester, Christmas Kiss, Humbug, Tyke, Thirsty Moon

**MORE CHOICE
BETTER BEER**

International Brewing Awards



1998
Wobbly Bob



2002
Navy



2002
Wobbly Bob



2004
Wobbly Bob

**A little beyond the town centre.
Far beyond comparison for
Beartown Beers & Cask Ciders.**



Angella & Chantal welcome you to

The Navigation

Lancashire Hill • Stockport

0161 480 6626

Open ALL DAY Every Day

•6 Hand Pulled Beers

•Krombacher Pils

•Beartown Brewery

•Real Cider from the Barrel

•Erdinger Wheat Beer

•Belgian & Czech Bottled Beers



CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2007 We're in it!



Stagger

Cheadle East – with Jim Flynn

The **Cheshire Line** is perhaps not the best place to start a stagger on a wet February's evening situated as it is part way between Cheadle and Parrs Wood.

A surprising number of hardy souls made it for this first pub and were greeted by an offer from the pub's enthusiastic cellar man to look around his cellar. The word cellar is a little of a misnomer, with this being an old station it doesn't have a cellar under the pub but rather one on the same level as the bar itself. Suitably impressed with what we had seen we returned to sample our beer and look around the pub. While the Cheshire Line has an emphasis on food it also has a good

selection of beers, albeit at a price, and the walls give testimony to its many awards.

There were three beers from the Marston's stable, Old Empire, Banks's Bitter and Jennings's Mountain Man together with Wranghams Stationmaster. As usual being CAMRA members most of us chose the one we hadn't heard of before, the Stationmaster which we found to be in good nick but not to everybody's taste.

We climbed up the steep steps to Manchester Road and headed towards Cheadle and the **Ashlea**. While, like the Cheshire Line, this is a food pub with a central bar there the similarities end. The Ashlea has low beamed ceilings with a number of rooms and areas around the bar making it feel a bit of a rabbit warren.

On the walls were the usual array of blackboards one expects in this type of establishment and on each of the tables was a lit candle, giving the place a warm feeling. The two beers available were Black Sheep Bitter and Courage Directors, which were reasonably well received by our now growing band of drinkers. If anything the prices, while at the top end, were marginally lower than the previous pub.

Our next stop was decidedly different from our first two. The **Royal Oak** is a traditional plain brick built Robinson's pub, with the emphasis on beer. The pub has one central bar area with two smaller rooms leading off, a comfortable snug and a vault type room with pictures of City, United and County on the walls. We stayed in the bar area and sampled the two cask beers available, Hatters and Unicorn, with the former slightly better received.

It was going to be Robinson's most of the way now and our next stop was the **Red Lion**, which was again a contrast to the previous pub with its more ornate white exterior and well lit modern interior with one room broken up into separate areas. The pub was the busiest and most lively we had been in and I enjoyed the atmosphere. There were four Robinson's beers available: XB (which went off as we arrived), Unicorn, Hatters and Dark Horse, the seasonal. Most of us tried the latter which was promoted as a dark bitter and with its roasted taste it was clearly one of those beers which divided opinion with most of us finding it an attractive drink.

Further down Stockport Road was the newly refurbished and reopened **Queens Arms**. Although the modern feel was in some respects similar to the Red Lion we had just left, for those who had not been in since its relaunch the place was a



real eye opener. The only resemblance to the Queens of old is the name of the pub; the contrast could not have been starker. The old Queens was an old fashioned well worn multi-roomed boozier while the new pub is much larger, open plan with pale wood floors and furniture, and with as much emphasis on food as on beer. While the more nostalgic amongst us might prefer the former it is clear that the public of Cheadle are voting with their feet as the place is thriving. The beer likewise; Hatters, Unicorn and Double Hop were considered in fine form by all our party.



The Queens Arms, Cheadle – thriving after a successful refurbishment

Following a amicable chat with the two licensees at the Queens we crossed the road to the **Printers Arms**, which had a refurbishment some while ago, but now seems a little in the shadow of its fellow Robinsons' house.

It has two rooms and a conservatory on the back and we sat in the in the gloom of the conservatory as it was largely empty. I say gloom because the licensee seemed to be doing his bit for global warming by lighting the place with only two small bulbs. The beer in the Printers is dispensed from small electric pumps and the customer has to look very carefully to realise that the place sells cask beer. In old days you could rely on a Robbies house to be selling real ale and therefore this was not an issue but given the recent advent of some all-keg Robinson's pubs, perhaps the Printers should advertise their cask beers more obviously. Unfortunately both the Unicorn and the Hatters were by and large considered as the least commendable Robinsons of the night from what it must be said was a group of pubs generally selling beer of a high standard.

Normally we try to end these staggers on a high note but after walking the half mile to our next port of call, the **Farmers Arms** in Cheadle Heath, we found that was not the case on this occasion. The place is looking a little worn to say the least, which from my experience is not an unusual condition for pubs in Greene King's Hungry Horse chain, even relatively quickly after a refurbishment. Perhaps it's time this theme was sent to the knackers yard. The pub has a quiet room and a noisy one and you can probably guess which one we went into. Although they have handpumps there are no pumpclips on them so the consumer might naturally presume that there was no real ale on sale. Well, making that presumption would be incorrect as both Abbot Ale and Greene King IPA were available. Sadly in keeping with the surroundings the latter was the worst beer of the night, while the Abbot Ale was considered in reasonable form.

Overall a good night with a variety of different pubs and a variety of generally good beer even though over half the pubs were from the same brewery. Indeed the Robinsons was a match for any other beer we had that night



Hidden Salford

A couple of hidden gems still grace the streets of Salford. Back in 1901, Salford had the highest number of pubs per population with two or three hosteleries in every street. Many have bitten the dust, long forgotten, but there are some exceptions still there and doing well.

The **Star Inn** on Back Hope St, an ex-Kay's pub, is hidden away in The Cliff district of Higher Broughton and hails from the 19th Century. Now Robinson's, there's one exceedingly good pint of Robinson's Unicorn from the tiny vault with bar, that can fit about 14 people with some standing. The overflow is in the larger and mostly original saloon with ink-green pig skin bench seating. At the back is the games room which can double-up as a quiet room. Most evenings throughout the pub there's the comfortable hum of many conversations. For donkey's years the pub was run by the renowned 'One-armed' Wally Marshall and many of the locals then are still there. In fact, for the last six years or so, the pub has been run by two former regulars - The Cranks! No one's a stranger here for long as everyone is on first name terms.



About 25 minutes walk away to Lower Kersal is another gem; the **Racecourse Hotel** on Littleton Road. Certainly less hidden than the Star, the pub is enormous and magnificent!

The mock Tudor pub, built in 1930, was saved and renovated by the Barnsley brewer, Oakwell. The pub once served the adjacent Salford Racecourse, hence the size. The main bar in the lounge is 51 feet long! The pub was awarded the CAMRA & English Heritage Best Pub Refurbishment for 2005. Inside, there are various separate rooms with a smaller separate vault and entrance. The hostelry has fantastic oak panelling throughout and mock Tudor arches with original flooring. It doesn't take long before the combination of a pint of Salford Bitter at a very keen price of £1.42 and mementos from the Sport of Kings has its effect - it's a great pub! There's a new beer garden outside by the River Irwell, which should prove popular. What with hopes for a return of the racecourse, possibly near-by, the glory days could be back for this gargantuan house, steeped in history, which resonates with the its bygone horse racing atmosphere. The Star Inn is served well by the 98 bus; The Racecourse can be reached by 93 & 95. Two good tips that are simply a must.

Clear the Air



**From 1st July 2007 smoking is BANNED
from workplaces and public places –
don't break the law!**

Want to find out more or quit smoking?

**Visit www.stockport.gov.uk/smokefree
or call Stockport's 'Clear the Air' Information Line 0845 644 4307**



Mild Challenge 2007

Following the success of last year's competition, we have once again teamed up with the Stockport Express to bring you another Mild Challenge, and again we have stretched our wings to include parts of Manchester and Salford along with a few other pubs further afield.

The previous Challenges have been a great success and if you haven't taken part before, try and have a go this time. It's fun and it's

easy. It's also a chance to visit some new pubs, try new beers and, of course, to win some great prizes.

The Challenge runs from Saturday 31 March to Sunday 6 May and offers everyone taking part the chance to win something. All completed entries will receive either a free entry ticket for the 2007 Stockport Beer & Cider Festival or, if you're a member of CAMRA, a voucher for two free pints of mild at the Festival.

We are also again featuring the **Mild Challenge Extra** – visit a participating pub in 15 different areas, using the headings shown on the card, and you will win a special Mild Challenge polo-shirt.

Enter the **Mild Challenge Super** by getting stamps from 30 different pubs in 30 different areas and as well as the **Extra** prize, you will be entered into a prize draw to be "**Brewer for the Day**" at Manchester's Marble Brewery

To complete **Mild Challenge Ultra**, send in cards containing a stamp from every participating pub, you will also receive a free, special-edition, embroidered Polo shirt. Otherwise, only one entry per person please

This year we are also especially grateful to Hydes' for enabling us to offer an extra-special prize: every completed entry will go into a draw and the first 10 pulled out will win a visit to the brewery to see how Hydes Mild and Owd Oak are brewed.

This year we are again asking all participants to vote for their favourite pint of mild and the pub in which it was served – the winning pub will be presented with a 'Mild Champion' award in recognition of their efforts.



Too good to miss out on? Definitely! So, what do you have to do? It's easy...

- First, get a card. All participating pubs have a stock or you can get one from the Mild Challenge address: 39 Fox Street, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9EL
- When you buy a pint or a half of cask mild in one of the pubs taking part, ask the bar staff to stamp your card. Remember, though, you can only get one stamp from each pub.
- When you've filled the card (you'll need 15 different stamps from 15 different pubs) send it to the Mild Challenge address on the card and, after our closing date, we will send off your prizes.

Simple isn't it? Happy Drinking



Mild Challenge

- The Pubs

These are the pubs taking part in this year's Mild Challenge – they cover a wide area so everyone should be able to take part:

Adswold: Adswold Hotel, Cross Keys. **Bredbury:** Horsfield Arms, Greyhound. **Bridgemont:** Dog & Partridge. **Buxworth:** Navigation. **Burnage:** Albion. **Cheadle:** Crown, Olde Star. **Cheadle Hulme:** Kings Hall, Cheadle Hulme, Church Inn.

Compstall: Andrew Arms, Northumberland Arms. **Denton:** Red Lion, Chapel House, Masons Arms. **Didsbury:** Fletcher Moss. **Disley:** Dandy Cock, White Horse. **Edgeley:** Olde Vic. **Fallowfield:** Friendship. **Gatley:** Horse & Farrier, Gothic, Prince of Wales, High Grove. **Glossop:** Friendship, Star Inn, Old Glove Works. **Great Moor:** Travellers Call, Crown, Dog & Partridge. **Hazel Grove:** Grove, Royal Oak, Grapes, Three Tunnes. **Heald Green:** Griffin. **Heaton Mersey:** Crown. **Heaton Norris:** Navigation, Four Heaton, Nursery. **Heaviley:** Blossoms. **High Lane:** Horseshoe, Royal Oak. **Hyde:** Cheshire Ring, Sportsman. **Lane Ends,** Travellers Call. **Manchester Arndale:** Paradise Brewery Bar. **Manchester City Centre:** Grey Horse, Castle Hotel, Marble Arch. **Marple:** Hatters, Navigation, Ring o' Bells. **Marple Rose Hill:** Railway. **Mellor:** Royal Oak. **Moss Nook:** Tatton Arms. **New Mills:** Masons Arms. **Old Glossop:** Bulls Head. **Openshaw:** Legh Arms. **Portwood:** Railway. **Reddish:** Thatched Tavern, Three Rivers Club. **Rusholme:** Osborne House. **Salford:** Crescent, New Oxford. **Shaw Heath:** Armoury. **Stalybridge:** Station Buffet Bar. **Stockport:** Arden Arms, Tiviot, Bakers Vaults, Calverts Court, Crown (Heaton Lane), Pineapple, Three Shires. **Strines:** Royal Oak. **Whaley Bridge HE:** Board Inn. **Whaley Bridge:** Navigation, Cock Inn. **Withington:** Victoria. **Woodford:** Davenport Arms. **Wythenshawe:** Airport Hotel

Mild – Who Brews What

While the National Brewers seem to have virtually turned their backs on cask mild, our local companies still produce the real thing. Robinson's in fact still produce two milds and Hydes three! Here we give a run-down on the milds you can expect to find on this year's Challenge. In addition a number of pubs will be offering a variety of guest milds during the Challenge.

3 Rivers Delta Dark (4.8% ABV) – tasty dark mild brewed for May. **Beartown Ambeardextrous** (3.5%) – dark, rich and full flavoured. **Beartown Black Bear** (5%) – strong mild with roast and malt flavours and a mellow finish. **Cains Dark Mild** (3.2%) – smooth, dry and roasty. **Coach House Gunpowder Mild** (3.8%) – full bodied and roasty with a malty aroma and full finish. **Highgate Dark** (3.6%) – good balance of malt and hops. **Holt Mild** (3.2%) – very dark with complex taste. **Hydes Light/1863** (3.7%) – refreshing and fruity with a dry finish. **Hydes Mild** (3.5%) – dark and dry. **Hydes Owd Oak** (3.5%) – very dark mild with rich taste. **Marble Uncut Amber** (4.7%) – strong and roasty. **Moorhouse's Black Cat** (3.4%) – dark and fruity with lingering taste. **Robinson's Hatters** (3.2%) – refreshingly dry and malty. **Dark Hatters** (3.2%) – dark and fruity. **Tetley Dark Mild** (3.2%) – good session mild with fruity taste.

THE SPORTSMAN

57 MOTTRAM ROAD, HYDE
Pete and Greg Welcome You To

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



Permanently Resident
Guest Ales include:

Plassey Bitter; Pictish Brewers Gold;
Phoenix Bantam; Taylor's Landlord;
Whim's Hartington Bitter and
Moorhouses Black Cat Mild
PLUS ever changing Guest Beers
& Continental Lagers

Easy Public Transport Connections
Tel: 0161 368 5000

CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2007 We're in it!

CORPORATE ENTERTAINMENT WITH A DIFFERENCE

CUSTOMER AND STAFF ENTERTAINMENT OPPORTUNITIES
AT STOCKPORT BEER AND CIDER FESTIVAL

Sick of prawn sandwiches and boring high brow 'culture'?
Spending a fortune on 'entertainment' that leaves you cold?
Stockport Beer and Cider Festival, held from 31st May to 2nd
June at Edgeley Park, is your chance to really entertain your
customers or reward your staff at a very cost effective price.

We can put together an entertainment, beer, cider and food
package for the evening or afternoon of your choice from as
little as £9 per head (minimum 10 in a party). Alternatively
we can customise a package especially to meet your needs.

Interested?

For more details give Jim Flynn a call any evening on
0161 432 1816 or 07917 596751

www.stockportfestival.isnet.co.uk



Finally called in the **Soldier Dick** on Buxton Road, Furness
Vale early in March, and chatted to the licensee of 6
months, Maz Shaw. She is running her first pub but told
me that her father had the Dog & Partridge at Bridgemont,
just down the road

Since she took over, the previously all keg pub, with
redundant handpumps on the bar, has been transformed into
a thriving real ale outlet, selling a very impressive selection of
bar meals, or you can use the separate restaurant. The beer
range is Draught Bass, Taylor's Landlord and two guest
beers, my choice was Sharps Doom Bar Bitter that many
others were drinking and it was very good. The food is all
locally sourced, and Maz was fortunate to get a top chef who
previously worked at the acclaimed Oddfellows in Mellor.
Theme nights are proving popular. Recently they had a Burns
Night Celebratory evening, with special Scottish dishes on. I
was impressed at how clean the pub was, with a recent full
refurbishment. In my book, it is a plus for the area and well
worth dropping off at if heading up the A6.

In Buxworth, at the side of the High Peak Canal, the
Navigation is also settling down with new licensees. The
good news is that the guest beer policy continues, with
Theakstons Mild being the surprising beer on the up. In fact,
the licensee has joined up for the Mild Challenge this time
round and is convinced that its popularity may mean it will be
a permanent fixture. It was very good when I sampled it on
1st March.

Roaches Lock at bottom Mossley has changed hands.
The joint tenants are sisters at this Scottish & Newcastle pub.
The beer range on our visit in mid February was Young &
Wells Bombadier and Theakstons Bitter.

In Hadfield, the **Masons Arms** has its Enterprise Tenancy
for let, though it is still open and at the **Spinners Arms**, no
real ale is now sold. The **New Lamp** however, goes from
strength to strength, with a regular selection of three real
ales, all kept in good condition at all times I have visited (and
my visits are getting more frequent!).

The **Old General** in Dukinfield continues to sell Shaws
"Blue Moon", and I hear that the folk night on Tuesdays is well
worth calling in for, as well as the beer which is proving very
popular with the locals.

In Ashton, at the **Lord Sheldon Arms** opposite the Snipe
retail park, only Lees bitter is on handpump, the mild is now
on smoothflow.

Cheshire Ring Birthday

An event to look out for is the second Birthday Beer
Festival at the **Cheshire Ring** in Hyde, to be held from
3 to 7 May. Wayne Taylor is promising a range of
30-ish (and knowing Wayne, that means rather more than 30)
guest beers including some brand new brews.

There will be entertainment on the Friday, Saturday and
Sunday and food, in the form of Wayne's famous home-made
curries, will also be available. During the festival, the pub will
open from midday

On the general news front, Sarah, who now acts as the
pub's landlady, has recently gained NVQ qualifications and is
aiming to get her own personal licence. Wayne hopes to go
for Cask Marque accreditation later in the year. Look out, too,
for Thatcher's bottled perry – the latest addition to the wide
range of drinks available.

JOIN CAMRA - PAGE 18



The headline in March **What's Brewing** proclaims the problem of pub closures, lost locals. The article emphasises the urban nature of the current problem and certainly my visits to Stockport reveal a number of fairly recent losses, pubs which one tended to take for granted.

Perhaps that's the problem; we do take our pubs for granted. Out in more rural areas pub losses can go unnoticed unless you pick up local gossip or unless a closure makes headlines in the local press. Whilst some recent concern has centred particularly on the Punch estate, all sectors of the pub market are susceptible. Out in the High Peak even Robinson's estate has seen losses in relatively recent years. The **Midland Hotel** at Peak Dale is now a private residence, and the **Devonshire Arms** at Ashwood Dale, Buxton is no more. Incidentally isn't it time Robinson's gave us a new edition of *Robinson's Inns and Hotels, the Complete Pocket Guide*? The last edition dates to 2000.

Even the national press has picked up the pub closure problems. Immediately CAMRA's news went national, a *Daily Telegraph* article, had a heading 'Save our (decent) pubs: I'll drink to that.' Simon Heffer's article points out the 'breakdown of social drinking in settled communities in public houses.' He criticises many urban pubs as 'nasty drinking factories, with preposterous themes and deafening music.' He bemoans the fact that many rural pubs exist on a 'precarious passing tourist trade.' The article finishes with a heartfelt plea. 'Do something for your country this weekend: go to a decent pub.' Amen to that.

On a local note an apology is due for a factual error in this column in February and I am happy to put the record straight. When the **Navigation** in Buxworth changed hands in December, Lisa Garner took over as licensee. The range of permanent and guest beers has been maintained. Theakston's Mild has been introduced and this has been successful enough to encourage Lisa to sign up for this year's Mild Challenge.

A quick visit to High Lane found the former Burtonwood **Royal Oak** with Jennings' Bitter and Cockerhoop, Marston's Bitter and Thwaites Thorougbred. Marston's Bitter was fine but £2.21 seemed an odd price to pay.

The recently re-opened **Lyme Arms** (formerly Dog & Partridge) in High Lane is a real ale gain. Thwaites Lancaster Bomber and Charles Wells Bombardier were on sale at £2.30 and £2.40 respectively, the former being a decent pint. More about both pubs and others in High Lane another month.

Back in Whaley Bridge Robinson's **Railway** had very good pints of Unicorn and Dark Horse when hosting participants on the Folk Train, supported by the Friends of Whaley Bridge Station.

Over the road in Whaley Bridge the **Navigation** has had Mordue Radgie Gadgie as a guest beer, which went very well, and Sharp's Doom Bar from Cornwall was on the bar for the day of the Folk Train, for visitors who might go walkabout. The **Shepherds** has had Jennings Mountain Man 4.3%, a 50th anniversary brew for the George Fisher walking, climbing and outdoor shop in Keswick. A good brew. Young's Special has been widely available in the Punch estate, including the **White Hart** where Darryl Wainwright has taken over the direct running of the pub. There are lots of decent pubs around, pubs of interest, pubs with decent beer, pubs with a warm welcome. Go out and visit one, at least one!



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for April 2007 is the Pineapple, Heaton Lane, Stockport.

The Pineapple became a public house in the late 1820s, though the actual building is considerably older. Originally a coaching house, it became the headquarters of Stockport Botanical Society before being purchased by the old Bell's Brewery in 1904. Robinson's, the current owners, acquired the pub on their takeover of Bells in 1949.

There have been alterations over the years, and the pub has expanded into a neighbouring property to provide a games room. However it still retains a multi-roomed aspect and is very much a traditional local, despite being just a short walk from busy Mersey Square. Sometimes unfairly overshadowed by its more high profile neighbours, the Pineapple is a gem having the feel and spirit of a neighbourhood community pub.

For the past 19 years the pub has been in the capable hands of Eileen Lloyd who had previously worked there as a barmaid. In those years the pub has established itself as a firm favourite with a loyal band of regulars who appreciate the community feel of the place. She has made the pub very much her own with many personal touches – not least the extensive collection of plates from around the world.

The pub's popularity can be judged by the fact that it sports a quiz team, pool team and no less than three darts teams.

There's good lunchtime food (12-2, Monday-Saturday) and this is complemented by the excellent range of Robinson's beers – Hatters and Unicorn feature of course, but alongside these you will often find a selection from Wards Bitter, OB Bitter, Cumbria Way and the current seasonal. The quality of the beers is such that the pub has featured in the national Good Beer Guide on occasion.

In many ways the Pineapple sums up all that's good about our public house tradition – no gimmicks and themes, just a good solid local serving well-kept real ales to an appreciative crowd of locals. The fact that all of these locals all have to travel some distance to the pub says all you need to know about the Pineapple's appeal.

This well deserved award will be presented to Eileen on the evening of Thursday, 26th April when a great night out is promised. **MO'B**

The Pineapple is well served by public transport – it's just a short walk from Mersey Square and the 192 route. Stockport bus and train stations are also close by.

THATCHED TAVERN

54 Stanhope St. Reddish ☎ 285 0900



DUNCAN & LENNETTE SHENTON

A Warm Welcome

to All our customers

BODDINGTONS BITTER

A Real Traditional Pub

for Real Ale Drinkers -

come and try the cask version

**plus TETLEY BITTER
& DARK MILD IN CASK**

CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2007 We're in it!



Wilbraham Road, Chorlton
(opposite Lloyds Hotel)

Belgian Independent
& Micro Brewery Beers

*including Westvelteren, De Dolle Brouwers,
Roman, Traditional Old Gueuze and Kriek
(Cantillon, Hanssens, De Cam, Drie Fonteinen)*

order online at
www.belgianbelly.com

Monday - Friday 8am - 6pm

Saturday 9am - 6pm

Sunday 10am - 4pm

Trade Enquiries Welcome

Telephone 0161 860 6766

www.belgianbelly.com



Random Target

Under proposals to reduce road casualties, the government has announced that motorists are to face so-called random breath testing. Ministers claim that giving the police the power to stop any driver, regardless of how they are driving, would be a powerful deterrent. At present, the police can stop only those drivers who have committed a moving traffic offence, who have been involved in an accident, or who they suspect of having exceeded the legal limit.

In fact, "random breath testing" is nothing of the kind. That implies that the police will set up roadblocks and stop every seventh vehicle, or whatever. But what is really being proposed is "unfettered discretion", an entirely different concept, that the police can test any driver, whenever and wherever they choose, regardless of any suspicion or evidence.

It is hard to see this making any difference to current conviction rates, as the key constraint on the number of breath tests is police resources, not powers. The police interpret their existing powers very broadly and in practice can already test anyone they want to. What is the point of testing someone when you have no grounds to suspect they may be offending? And the reason the number of breath tests administered has fallen in recent years is because so many traffic police officers have been replaced by speed cameras, which of course are singularly useless in detecting drink-drive offenders.

What this measure will do is further erode the basic principle of a free society that the police should not treat anyone as a suspect without due cause. If the police did not like how a particular pub was being run, they could target its customers to the point that it was closed down. It is no use saying that the innocent have nothing to fear, as if you were routinely harassed when visiting a specific pub, you would naturally choose either to go elsewhere or not bother at all.

The best way of reducing drink-drive offending is surely to provide drivers with realistic, honest information about how to abide by the law. Regrettably, the government, obsessed with the unrealistic concept of "even one drink is dangerous" seem disinclined to see sense. Meanwhile, the casualties continue to mount up.

One Too Many?

A further proposal is that a greater obligation will be placed on pub landlords and restaurant owners not to allow their customers to drink and drive. But it is hard to see how the law can deter licensees from serving too much alcohol to driving customers when they have no means of telling how much they have consumed, let alone how they have travelled there. Should every single pub customer be individually registered on arrival, questioned as to their mode of transport, and have all their individual drinks recorded? And even if they were, what's to stop people visiting two or more pubs?

This also panders to the antiquated view that the drink-driving problem is mostly linked to rural pubs, where a link may easily be established between drivers and their consumption pattern. In practice offenders are far more likely to have been drinking in urban boozers, social clubs, restaurants, leisure centres or even private homes, where car parking may well not be next door and cannot be directly linked to the outlet.



Quite a bit of news for you this month, catching up on one or two new faces as well.

Up at the **Greyhound**, Lower Bents Lane, Bredbury, Colin and Vicky Davenport have been in charge since last September and have transformed the pub.

The collection of jugs has gone (and are being disposed of on e-bay by the former licensee) as have many of the pictures and fake beams. The result is a much lighter, airy pub that remains a comfortable and welcoming local.

The beer pumps and lines have all been renewed and this has had a marked affect on the beer quality which is now second to none. Robinson's Unicorn and Hatters are the mainstay and each week these are joined by one of the other Robbies beers on a guest basis.

Colin has plenty of experience in the pub trade, and indeed is no stranger at the Greyhound, having been manager for the previous two and half years. This is however his and Vicky's first pub as tenants, and a very impressive start they have made here. Well worth a visit.

Heaton Moor News

I popped into the **Crown**, Heaton Moor Road, to have a chat with licensee Liam Cooper about his beer festival planned for 21-22 April. This certainly sounds an impressive event with 20 extra beers available over the weekend, and not just the "usual suspects" either. The list includes the likes of Anglo Dutch Tabatha the Knackered, Dark Tribe Old Gaffer, Downton Chimera Wheat, Nethergate Old Growler and Augustinian Ale amongst others.



Liam tells me that cask ale sells well at the Crown. The regular beers are Boddingtons Bitter (an impressive 12 18-gallon casks a week), Theakstons Mild and guest beers. Quality is high – the pub gained Cask Marque accreditation early last year.

Retaining a very traditional layout and interior, the Crown certainly merits a detour.

Further down the road, is the **Moor Top** where there has been a change from management to tenancy. The new tenant is Malcolm Bird who, with his Ukrainian partner Nina, took over on 28 February.

Mild Challenge in Whaley Bridge

Five pubs in the Whaley Bridge area have registered for the Mild Challenge in 2007, and will provide participants with a good trip out. These southernmost pubs on the Challenge are well worth a visit in their own right, with a range of good beers and welcoming hospitality. To avoid wasted journeys some information about opening/closing hours may be helpful.

Dog & Partridge, Bridgemont, opens at 11.00 but has a 15.00-17.00 close Mon-Thurs., open all day Fri., Sat. and Sun.

Navigation, Buxworth, open all day from about 12.00.

Navigation, Whaley Bridge, on Mon. closed until 16.00, otherwise open all day.

Cock, Whaley Bridge, open all day from about 12.00.

Board Inn, Horwich End, Whaley Bridge, closed until 16.00, Mon-Fri., open all day at week-end.

These times could of course vary.

The Cock and the Board are now regular Mild Challenge pubs, whilst the Dog and Partridge makes a welcome return to the Challenge this year. Both the Navigations are new to the Mild Challenge and will be new pubs for many people. All the pubs will look forward to seeing new faces.

Getting there. Bus 199 from Stockport stops at Bridgemont, Whaley Bridge Station and outside the Cock and then the Board. Half hourly service during the day, hourly service evenings and Sundays.

Train service to Whaley Bridge roughly hourly, augmented during evening peak period, from Stockport and Manchester. This is the Buxton service. Navigation, Buxworth about 20 minutes walk away, Navigation, Whaley Bridge is across the road from the station. The rest are within a ten minute walk

Stockport Supping continued



Malcolm wants the pub to feature good food, wine and, being a cask ale drinker himself, beer. A bar refit is in the pipeline and the plan is to feature four cask ales if demand allows – one national (like Marston's

Pedigree), two regional beers and one local brew. When I called two beers were available – Adnams Bitter and Broadside. The Bitter was on notably good form.

Elsewhere the **Marple Tavern** (formerly the Otters Lodge) on Cross Lane, Marple now has Taylor's Landlord on handpump. Phil McCartney has taken over as landlord at the **Royal Oak** in Mellor .

Finally, in a shock late move, Martin Wood has left the **Railway**, Portwood. More on this next time.

Colin and Vicky Welcome You To
The Greyhound Hotel
 Lower Bents Lane, Bredbury - Tel: 0161 355 0715
Traditional hand pulled Robinson's fine ales
 Rotating guest ales every weekend plus tea and coffee available
 Live entertainment - Every Saturday Lucky Key Draw
 Every Sunday Pot Luck Quiz and "Pray" Your Cards Right
 • **LARGE BEER GARDEN TO THE REAR** •
 ~ Nice Warm Friendly Atmosphere ~

REAL ALES **REAL FIRES**
REAL FRIENDLY
BYRONS LANE
 01625 423657

Sue & Graham welcome you

8 Guest Beers

Real Ale £1.60
Monday
Nights

THE
RAILWAY VIEW Macclesfield

*Steve, Johanne & Molly
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,

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.**

STOCKPORT & SOUTH
MANCHESTER PUB OF THE
MONTH MARCH 2005

CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2007 We're in it!

NEW OXFORD



A warm welcome awaits you

1 House Beer - New Oxford Bitter
+ 5 Guest Ales

Home cooked food served
Mon - Sat 11 - 6pm

3 Belgian beers on draught at all times

New world bottled beer menu

Quiz night Tuesday

Nominated for the Good Beer Guide 2008

11 Bexley Square, Salford (just off Chapel St),
Salford

Tel 0161 832 7082



Oh, Mr. Porter! Is a classic 1937 British film as much in the same way as Porters Ale House (The Prince of Wales) is known as a classic home of beer of 2007, *writes Ken Slater.* The pub is situated on Roe Street Macclesfield, just off Churchill Way and is less than a stone's throw away from the Heritage Centre.

The Prince of Wales is best described as a three-course meal blessed with the touch of Gordon Ramsey; a hint of Worral-Thompson with a smidgen of Delia, such is the diversity of the pub. On entering 'The Prince', you are left with a dilemma: do you turn left to find a pew or right to the ever-popular bar.

Just a step to the left and there is plenty of seating where you can rest your loins and a real fire to warm up your cold bones before purchasing your ale

A little jump to the right, minding your head as you may hit the hops that hang like garlands from the ceiling, a visit to 'The VIP Lounge' is a must. This is an area where you sit and sup your ale whilst chewing the fat with the fabulous, incredible, and toptastic friendly locals.

I have known Cat Higginbotham for a long time and she never ceases to amaze me and other punters with her artistic talents.

Behind the bar is a cavalcade of knickknacks and thingamajigs, beer mats from over the centuries cluster like a nightmare traffic jam on the ceiling where champagne bottle coolers dangle. There are plenty of optics that dispense your spirits from far off nations and a special mention should go to the varieties of Gin, which are subject to a 'Guess the Gin' competition between connoisseurs Bob Suprendo and 'Scotch Boris'.

The far right of the pub is dedicated to the noble sport of Rugby, with the framed shirts and socks of famous players dotted around on the walls.

And now the beer... Three ever-changing ales such as Bombardier (4.3%), Joustler (4%), Ruddle County (4.3%), Abbot Ale (5%) etc, etc. are served throughout the week and are all in the finest of condition. Above the bar is another larger blackboard and upon it is a list of beers that are on (ticked in orange), beers that have gone and beers that have yet to come, if beer were money all of us would be rich beyond the dreams of avarice. The bar also houses resident beers such as Tetley's (3.8%), Theakstons Best Bitter (3.8%) and Duchars IPA (3.8%). If you do need advice there is Scotch Boris (aka Cat's dad, David) who will give you a guiding hand in helping you make your final choice of ale.

As was stated at the beginning of this piece the 'Prince of Wales' is a three-course meal and the one vital ingredient of the feast is Cat. Cat whose vitality and drive has transformed the pub into one of the most popular in the Macclesfield area, even when the chips were down, when The Prince was threatened with extinction, Cat was at the forefront of the campaign to halt such a travesty of justice. The proof lies in the pudding and the many awards that are on the bookshelf in front of the bar such as; Pub of the Season (various years), Best Promotion, Best Fish Tank in a Gents Loo... Is testament to her sterling work. But sadly all great things come to an untimely end (in my opinion anyway). Cat is turning to pastures new for a new life in Canada (Boooo!!!) We all know she and her family will leave a hole the size of Russia in the Macclesfield community and they will be sadly missed but Ottawa to go.



Phil Levison's monthly look back through the archives

For the second month running, the main front page story concerned that controversial item, the full pint. This time the headline was "Full Pint Farce".

Trade Secretary Patricia Hewitt had announced plans to break the Government's repeated promises, and manifesto commitment, to introduce full pint legislation. Instead, she aimed to enshrine in law industry guidelines recommending that every pint need only be 95 per cent liquid.

Publicans caught serving short pints would face fines of up to £1,000, and the loss of their licenses. CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, had reacted with outrage to legislation which would allow publicans – especially big managed house companies which cynically budgeted to get 76 pints or more out of a 72 pint cask – to continue ripping off customers.

There was news that Hydes were to launch a new chain of "prestige" pubs, to be known as Hydes Heritage Inns. This was the brainchild of new board member Stephen Kalton, whose previous company Watling Street Inns, was behind outlets such as the Governor's House in Cheadle Hulme. The first Heritage Inn would be the Coach & Four in Wilmslow, and it would feature quality fixtures and fittings, period furniture and other décor, which featured in Watling Street outlets. Future pubs to receive similar treatment would be the Bulls Head in Lymm and the Horse & Farrier in Gatley.

Last month's column referred to the new 30-barrel micro-brewery which was being installed by Joseph Holt at its Empire Street site. Work was nearing completion, and the first test brew was planned for the end of April.

In the City Centre, the latest Wetherspoons was due to open – this was the Waterhouse on Princess Street. Its rear entrance was extremely close to the City Arms, with its neighbour the Vine – speculation had inevitably turned to how prices would be affected.

In Fallowfield, there were rumours of a new Wetherspoon in the development opposite Revolution – this proved to be correct, in the form of the Great Central.



The Old Market Tavern in Altrincham is the Trafford & Hulme CAMRA Pub of the season for spring.

Just over 12 months ago the pub seemed to be facing a bleak future when the tenant left in March, apparently due to financial problems. Happily the pub re-opened on 24 April. Entrepreneur John Glover re-negotiated the lease with Punch Taverns and it has never looked back.

Eleven cask ales are regularly available – regular beers are Caledonian Deuchars IPA and three beers from Bolton's Bank Top Brewery (Volunteer, Trotters Tipple, Smoke Stack Lightning) and these are accompanied by a range of changing guest beers. There are also plans to reintroduce real cider to supplement the cask ale range.

There is also a range of activities – Wednesday is quiz night with a free buffet, and on Saturday and Sunday nights there is live heavy rock or blues, attracting a predominantly mature clientele.

Meals are available seven days a week between 12 noon and 3.00pm, and the pub is open until midnight from Wednesday to Saturday inclusive..

The Old Market Tavern is a pub with something for everyone and has earned its place as Altrincham's main real ale and music pub. The quality beers and the friendly staff make it a must visit pub and have earned it this well deserved award. The presentation will be made on Thursday 19 April from 8.00pm – get there early for a great night out.

JW

The Legion Club

Greater Manchester CAMRA Club of the Year
The Home of Live Music and Live Sport

All **Prem Plus** matches

As well as all other Sky Sports Channels

Porkies Folk Club

First Friday of Month

Ultimate Quiz

Last Saturday of Month

Live Jazz

With Mart Roger Manchester Jazz

Third Thursday of Month

Magnificent choice of Cask Beer
served in a convivial atmosphere

Poynton Legion

George's Road West

Poynton

For more information

contact Nick Williams

on 01625 873120



We've covered the comings and goings in Rusholme in these pages the last few months. There are a few more changes to note, but first I thought I'd update you on happenings at the western end of Claremont Road, i.e. in Moss Side.

With the **Parkside** closed long ago, that just leaves two pubs for the area, both on Claremont Road. The first is a huge old Holt's house, the **Claremont**, it seemed to be ticking over nicely when I called on a Sunday afternoon. All the decor in the four large rooms is in good order and the two cask beers of Holt Mild and Bitter were fine too.

Down the road at the **Beehive**, I noted that the dividing wall between vault and lounge no longer exists - probably done some time ago as I haven't visited the place for a couple of years. Another surprise at this smallish Hydes house was that it didn't sell cask bitter, just smooth; but it *did* sell cask mild! Who would have thought? Pleasant enough place, although I did find the large-screen TV intrusive.

Continuing toward Rusholme, the **Sherwood** appears to have been sold now, as building work inside and adjacent to it is in evidence. With all of the signage removed it is possible to now make out the Threlfalls lettering in the masonry above the door - see picture below



Nearby, the former **Lord Lyon** has changed from a youth community centre to the Rusholme Pool Corner and Shisha Bar. 'Shisha' is another word for the Hookah water-pipe, a different way of smoking tobacco. Wonder if it'll be exempt from the Smoke Ban?

On Walmer Street, the **Albert** is still selling cask beer, albeit only Hydes bitter; the Jekyll's was dropped some time ago seemingly. Whilst in there, I was told that although the nearby **Huntsman** was still trading, it will close for another restaurant conversion soon. A quick look into the **Welcome**, found it nearly empty of punters, and devoid of cask ale.

I finished this foray with a wander over to Victoria Park to have a look-see at the **Rampant Lion** on Anson Road. Busy and boisterous with a TV football crowd (who all cleared off at Full-Time I noted) it was selling Black Sheep bitter and another beer (pumpclip turned round) at £2.40 a throw.

So, that was the Rusholme area. What was most alarming was the level of decline in the pubs that are trading.

Nearby there have been further developments at the **Whitworth** on Moss Lane East. The pub is once again open and had two Hydes' beers on handpump when I called. Let's hope that it is now entering a period of some much needed stability.

THE CROWN

HEATON MOOR ROAD, STOCKPORT



Presents its 1st Annual Beer Festival

21st-22nd April

20 guest beers including milds and porter

All on handpump with

10 available at any one time

Live Music - Food Available

Opening Times:

Saturday 12- 11.30; Sunday 12-10.30

Mon-Wed 2-11; Thurs 12-11.30; Fri 12-12



Let us Entertain You

Details of this Year's Beer Festival Music Programme

Details of the entertainment on offer at this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival, once again sponsored by the Stockport Express, have now been released and we are able to bring you this preview.

This year we have a superb programme of music to make sure the event goes with a swing. As usual at Edgeley Park, the music will be away from the bar in a separate entertainment suite.



On **Thursday night** we have the **Tame Valley Stompers** (pictured above). The Tame Valley Stompers are based in Ashton-under-Lyne and play across Lancashire, Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Cheshire. They are led by drummer Norman Pennington and each musician is a virtuoso of their own instrument.

The band's interpretation and arrangements bring a different approach and feel to many traditional numbers. If you like songs such as 'China Boy', 'Royal Garden Blues', 'Down by the Riverside', 'Just a Little While' or 'Savoy Blues' you are in for a treat. The Tame Valley Stompers are more than just a standard trad jazz band; their range and depth shine through at all times making their performances truly memorable.

They play with more excitement and vigour than bands half their age and seem to enjoy themselves more than they ought to in the process. Definitely not a concert to be missed if you like traditional jazz or if you have yet to make up your mind



For **Friday night** we bring you **Simon "Honeyboy" Hickling and the DTs**.

To become a quality blues band of international repute is no overnight task. Thus twenty years of travelling on the road, blowing the harp and singing in his own uncompromising but charismatic way has ensured that Simon "Honeyboy" Hickling is now one of the countries greatest exponents of popular blues. Such a pedigree, having over the years played with the likes of Steve

Marriot, (of the Small Faces and Humble Pie fame) and recorded with Bo Diddley, and Paul Rodgers (of Free and Bad Company fame) have ensured that Honeyboy can always guarantee a live virtuoso performance that is second to none. He has also appeared on the blues maestro Paul Jones Blues Show, and other Radio 2 programmes, along with show stopping performances at many of Europe's largest Blues Festivals, which has increased his fan base still further.

Honeyboy and the DT's play an entertaining selection of covers and original songs. Examples of songs often played

include Canned Heat's "Goin' Up The Country", Spencer Davis "Keep On Running" and Booker T and the MG's "Green Onions". Add to this a brilliant sequence of rocking, RnB standards, such as "Let It Rock" and "High Healed Sneakers" and the house will be really 'rockin'.

We keep up the pace on Saturday with two more acts brand new to the Festival.

On **Saturday lunchtime** **Treebeard** will be entertaining the crowd. Originating from Sheffield, Treebeard (pictured below) are regulars on the beer festival circuit, having played Sheffield, Derby, Tamworth, Newark, Barnsley and now Stockport beer festivals. They describe their music style as 'Heavy Wood', and they are currently working on the follow up to their debut CD 'Heavy Wood' released on Gabadon Records



The band plays their own original material together with a selection of rock, pop and folk songs in their own unique way. Above all, Treebeard are a fun band to watch. Their sets are brilliantly executed, with terrific audience interaction all the way through. The great thing about Treebeard is that you never know what is coming next. All the members of the band are skillful musicians and what's more they really know how to entertain a crowd.

Finally the Festival goes out in style on **Saturday night** with a special treat as we take you back in time to the 1940's. and the big band sound of the **New Lights Big Band**, a remarkable collection of talent combining to create the ultimate thrilling big band sound.



Comprising no less than 19 members the New Lights have been playing throughout the last twenty years and this experience is evident in the range and the quality of the music that they play. Don't like 1940's music? – this is no problem as the New Lights repertoire includes everything from the theme to Mission Impossible to Mustang Sally.



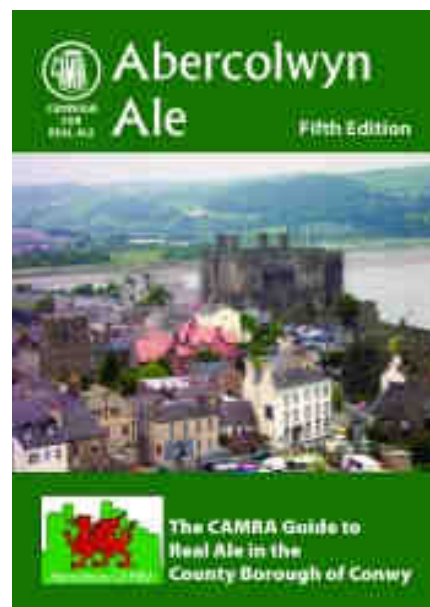
Abercolwyn Ale, Abercolwyn CAMRA, 62 pages, £4.95

At a time when many of the CAMRA local pub guides on my shelves resemble yellowing historical documents rather than current handbooks, Abercolwyn CAMRA are to be congratulated for the regularity of production of this guide to their home patch – the county of Conwy, North Wales, comprising not just the coastal towns of Llandudno and Colwyn Bay but a surprisingly extensive rural hinterland. And with its full-colour cover depicting the historic town and castle of Conwy, plus a double-page spread of colour photographs within, this fifth edition in ten years is their most eye-catching yet, *writes Rhys Jones*

Setting the scene with good pieces on real ale and CAMRA, the guide proceeds to the all-important pub listings, arranged alphabetically by town/village. Every pub in the county is listed, with the keg-only outlets simply named, while the real ale pubs get a description together with facility symbols in the style of the Good Beer Guide. Hotel bars and clubs that sell real ale or cider, together with such unconventional outlets as the bar on Colwyn Bay Pier, are included in the main listings. While some of the less interesting pubs are (rightly) dismissed in a sentence, most get an informative paragraph giving a good impression of the pub's atmosphere and style.

The main listings are followed by a generous selection of recommended pubs in other parts of North Wales, and the book concludes with a varied range of supporting articles. Of these, I particularly enjoyed the in-depth coverage of the local breweries – the two in Conwy county itself have a page

each devoted to them, with half a page for the others in North Wales. But it's not just the breweries – this section tells you about beer styles, how CAMRA assesses beer quality, and even includes a couple of beery recipes. Something for everyone, in fact, and it all adds to the sense that you are getting a decent amount of book for your money.



There are one or two relatively minor criticisms. There's no alphabetical index of pubs – it does make finding them so much easier, especially if you're not well up on the local geography – and the centre-spread map, a survivor from the 1998 edition, could do with some sprucing up to match the greatly improved design of the rest of the book. And it's a pity the pub entries have no indication of opening hours –

I wouldn't necessarily expect comprehensive details for each of the 150 or so entries, but brief details of major departures from the two-sessions-per-day norm that is still the *de facto* standard in the area would have been useful.

But don't let these niggles dissuade you from buying this thoroughly professional and well-presented guide. The county of Conwy offers a wide selection of great pubs and an increasingly vibrant brewing scene. As the days lengthen, this book will help you discover and enjoy them. Mwynhewch!

The Crown

Heaton Lane, Stockport

<http://thecrowninn.uk.com>

Always 14 beers on handpump - including at least one mild and one stout or porter

We are open 12-11 Monday to Saturday and 12-10.30 on Sundays



Beers from Copper Dragon, Bank Top and Pictish always available

Ever changing guest beers - Real Cider

Foreign beers on draught and in bottle

Stockport's Permanent Beer Festival



Brewery NEWS...

Firstly, congratulations are due to Glossop's **Howard Town Brewery** for winning the SIBA National Championship with their Wren's Nest.

SIBA is the Society of Independent Brewers and features many of the country's micro-brewers among its membership so the Glossop brewers were up against some strong competition. Howard Town's Tony Hulme told *Opening Times* that they were over the moon with this national recognition. Howard Town beers have been increasingly seen across the *Opening Times* area and are always worth sampling. Look out for their new mild that should be out for May. Our photo



shows Howard Town's Tony Hulme (left) and Les Dove (right) receiving their award from SIBA President Carola Brown.

To celebrate the award, the Old Gloveworks pub in Glossop will be hosting a Howard Town Night on Thursday 19th April when all five of the regular

Howard Town beers (Bleaklow, Monk's Gold, Wren's Nest, Glotts Hop and Dinting Arches) will be available on handpump.

Three Rivers Gain National Listing

Another local micro hitting the headlines is Stockport's **3 Rivers** who has just achieved a national listing with the J D Wetherspoon chain.

One of the smallest breweries ever to secure a national deal with the 700-strong high street pub chain, 3 Rivers has negotiated an initial order worth around £50,000 to supply a minimum of 150 barrels - around half a million pints - of Manchester IPA - during the three months from April. 3 Rivers MD and Head Brewer Mike Hitchen told us that they were very pleased with this development, which will help put the brewery on the national map.

Look out for a new beer, the first from assistant brewer Andrew Last. This is Bunny Boiler, a 4.5% ABV reddish-brown beer with a high level of bitterness.

Stockport is also set to gain another brewery. We reported last month on the new **Hornbeam Brewery** which, we said would be setting up in Hyde. Not so - a unit has now been obtained in central Stockport not far from the Waterloo pub.

Brewing should be underway in May and the core range is planned to comprise four beers - Cherished Crystal Best Bitter (4.2%), Hop Hornbeam (3.8%), Golden Wraith Pale Ale (5%) and Black Coral Stout (4.5%). In addition seasonal beers are also planned and these will include a porter, a mild and the Winterlong Dark Bitter that has already been seen.

Again, more news as we get it.

Other Brewery News

We hear from **Robinson's** that the feedback for Dark Horse has been hugely positive and indeed it is a very fine beer indeed. It remains available until the end of the month so look out for it if you've not already tried it.

The current **Hydes'** seasonal, Vertigo (4.2%) is also available until the end of this month and again there have been very positive reports about this tasty beer.

Now a brief look at some of the other local micro-brewers in the region. As usual apologies to those we were unable to contact this time around.

Millstone - very busy indeed, so much so that the long-planned stout is very much on the back burner. The bottled beers continue to be very popular and the Love Saves The Day Beer (bottled Tiger Ruts) was recently judged Best Beer in the North West Fine Foods Awards 2007.

Marble - two beers are being brewed for bottling. Stronge Tawny (5.7%) is already well-known but the other is something new - a 6% version of the popular Ginger Marble. This will only be available in bottle with the exception of one 9-gallon cask which will be available on the charity stall at Stockport Beer Festival. So if you want to try this beer on draught, you know where to get it. Marble Stout was released for St Patrick's night and was dry and delicious. This month look out for Marble Mild, a 4% dark mild with a pronounced hop character.


Phoenix - Earthquake (the 7%-plus) version of West Coast IPA has been brewed and again will be available at Stockport Beer Festival. New out this month are Resurrection (4.7%) and St Georges (4.3%) a very fresh and hoppy beer brewed using English Goldings and Bramling Cross hops.

Pictish - Richard Sutton continues to brew his single hop beers. The 5.5% Amarillo was recently sampled at the Crown, Heaton Lane, and was exceptional. The 4.5% Marynka, brewed using the eponymous Polish hops, was produced in late March and also in the pipeline is Styrian Gold (4%). The seasonal for April is Maelstrom (5%), a strong, pale golden coloured ale. Full malt flavours lead to an intensely bitter finish and powerful hop aroma

Boggart Hole Clough - as usual there is a stream of new beers from the Moston brewery. Mad Hatter was a 3.9% stout and in mid-March a new beer was in the fermenter. This will be low strength, vary pale and hoppy but not too bitter. No name had been decided.

The Waters Green Tavern

Local CAMRA Pub of the Season Spring '03



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

Ever Changing Guest Beers including:
Roosters, Pictish, Newby Wyke, Oakham,
Crouch Vale, Town House and many more
Your Hosts, Brian and Tracey
Bar Meals Served Mon to Sat Lunch

This is not a free house

CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2007 We're in it!

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 Guide
- 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



CASK MARQUE
THE QUALITY ASSURANCE
SCHEME FOR
PUBS

CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2007 We're in it!



Here is our monthly round-up of what's happening in the local CAMRA branches. Members of all branches are of course very welcome to attend each others' events.

The Stockport & South Manchester branch covers Stockport Borough apart from Bredbury, Romiley, Woodley and Marple, plus that part of Manchester from the River Medlock in the north to the M56/Princess Parkway in the west. *Branch Contact – Pete Farrand 07786 283990*

Thursday 12th April – Branch AGM: Florist, Shaw Heath, Stockport. Starts 8pm. All members please try and attend.

Friday 20th – Norris Bank and Edgeley Stagger: 7.30pm Four Heaton, Edgeley Road; 8.30pm Alexandra, Northgate Road.

Thursday 26th – Pub of the Month presentation to the Pineapple, Heaton Ln, Stockport. From 8.00pm

Thursday 3rd May – Trip to Thornbridge Hall Brewery. For booking and final details contact Pete Farrand - number above.

The High Peak & North East Cheshire Branch covers Bredbury, Romiley, Woodley, Marple, Tameside and Derbyshire from Glossop to Buxton. *Branch Contact – Tom Lord 0161 427 7099*

Tuesday 10th – Branch Meeting: Swan Inn, Kettlethulme. Starts 8.15pm

The Trafford & Hulme Branch covers the Borough of Trafford,

Manchester West of the M56/Princess Parkway and a large part of the City Centre. *Branch Contact – John Ison 0161 962 7976*

Thursday 5th – Branch Meeting: Orange Tree, Altrincham. Starts 8.00pm.

Thursday 19th – Pub of the Season presentation to the Old Market Tavern, Altrincham. From 8.00pm

Thursday 26th – Urmston Social: The Urmston 8.00pm; Lord Nelson 9.15pm

Thursday 3rd May – Branch Meeting: Lloyds, Wilbraham Road, Chorlton. Starts 8.00pm

Apart from Macclesfield & Bollington, the **Macclesfield & East Cheshire Branch** covers a wide area from Knutsford to Congleton. *Branch Contact – Tony Icke 01625861833*

Monday 2nd April – Wilmslow Pub Crawl. King William 8pm.

Monday 16th – Campaigning Meeting: British Flag, Coare St, Macclesfield. Starts 8.00pm

The North Manchester Branch covers The Northern Quarter and North East Manchester plus the City of Salford. *Branch Contact – Dave Hallows 07983 944992*

Wednesday 11th – Good Beer Guide Award Presentation: Lamb Hotel, Regent St, Eccles. 8.00pm

Wednesday 18th – Branch Meeting: Hare & Hounds, Shudehill, Manchester City Centre. Starts 8.00pm

Wednesday 25th – Chop-Chop Crawl: Sinclairs Oyster Bar, Cathedral Gates 7.30pm, Mr Thomas's Chop House, Cross St, 8.30pm; Sams Chop House, Back Pool Fold 9.30pm.

Wednesday 2nd May – Blackley Crawl: Fox Inn, 8pm; Golden Lion 9pm. Both Old Market Street.

It takes all sorts to campaign for real ale



Join CAMRA Today..

Just fill in the form below and send, with a cheque (payable to CAMRA Ltd) or for Three Months free membership (for those renewing or joining by Direct Debit) complete the Direct Debit Form. All forms should be addressed to: Karen & Chris Wainwright, CAMRA Membership, 173 Shearwater Road, Offerton, Stockport, SK2 5XA. Alternatively you can join online at www.camra.org.uk.



Title	Surname	Forename(s)	Date of Birth
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Partner	Title	Surname	Forename(s)	Date of Birth
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Address	Postcode
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Telephone	E-mail
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Please tick membership category:
Payment method:
Cheque Direct Debit

Single	£22	<input type="checkbox"/>	£20	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joint	£27	<input type="checkbox"/>	£25	<input type="checkbox"/>
Under 26	£13	<input type="checkbox"/>	£11	<input type="checkbox"/>
Under 26 Joint	£16	<input type="checkbox"/>	£14	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retired	£13	<input type="checkbox"/>	£11	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retired Joint	£16	<input type="checkbox"/>	£14	<input type="checkbox"/>

Signed
Date

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To the Manager	Bank or Building Society
Address	
Postcode	
Name(s) of Account Holder (s)	
Bank or Building Society Account Number	
Branch Sort Code	
Reference Number	

FOR CAMRA OFFICIAL USE ONLY	
<small>This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society</small>	
Membership Number	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>
Postcode	<input type="text"/>
Instructions to your Bank or Building Society	
<small>Please pay CAMRA Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with CAMRA and, if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.</small>	
Signature(s)	<input type="text"/>
Date	<input type="text"/>

This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.



The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that take part in the Direct Debit Scheme. The efficiency and security of the Scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society.
- If the amounts to be paid or the payment dates change CAMRA will notify you 7 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.
- If an error is made by CAMRA or your Bank or Building Society, you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to us.



**OVER 100
BEERS, CIDERS
& PERRIES**

**BEER
& CIDER
FESTIVAL**



**COME AND CELEBRATE
OUR COMING OF AGE!**

**MAY 31ST - 2ND JUNE 2007
EDGELEY PARK • STOCKPORT**



EVENING
5.30PM-11.00PM
ADMISSION £2
LIVE MUSIC
**Tame Valley
Stompers**



**ORGANISED BY THE
CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE**

**EDGELEY PARK
HOME OF STOCKPORT
COUNTY & SALE SHARKS**

**SEATING FOR ALL -
OUTSIDE DRINKING
AVAILABLE**

Supporting

**Independent
Options**

**FAMILIES WELCOME
UNTIL 9.00PM**

Sponsored by

**The
STOCKPORT EXPRESS**



LUNCH
11.30AM-3.30PM
**ADMISSION
FREE**
**QUIET DRINKING
SESSION**

EVENING
5.30PM-11.00PM
ADMISSION £4
LIVE MUSIC

**Simon "Honeyboy"
Hickling & the DT's**

**HOT & COLD FOOD
AT ALL SESSIONS**



LUNCH
11.30AM-4.00PM
ADMISSION £1
LIVE MUSIC
Treebeard

EVENING
5.30PM-11.00PM
ADMISSION £2
LIVE MUSIC
**New Lights
Big Band**

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



GOLD MEDAL WINNER



THE INTERNATIONAL STRONG BEER
COMPETITION, FOR DARK BEERS
FROM 7% TO 11.5% ABV



Available from selected stores

ASDA **BOOTH'S** **Sainsbury's**



BREWING EXCELLENCE

FREDERIC ROBINSON LIMITED, UNICORN BREWERY,
STOCKPORT, CHESHIRE SK1 1JJ TELEPHONE 0161 480 0071

brewery@frederic-robinson.co.uk
www.frederic-robinson.com