

OCTOBER 2007



Opening

THE FREE CAMRA REGIONAL MAGAZINE

NUMBER 278

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

It's Cider Time!



October is the month when CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, celebrates cider and perry, those most traditional of drinks. The choosing, pressing and blending of the fruit to make cider is just as much of a craft as making beer and produces a vast range of tastes, styles and aromas, similar to those produced in fine wine. Like wine, each year's fruit produces a unique vintage, so much so that cider and perry have been sometimes called 'The Wine of the West'. October is a very active time for producers, especially for those who make only a small amount of cider. Harvest time for cider fruit is roughly from September to November and by October production is in full flow. The huge cider bar at Stockport Beer & Cider Festival is well known and many local pubs also sell real ciders and perries. Most of them are taking part in our 'Cider Circuit (see page 19) giving you the chance to both sample a wide range of ciders and perries and also win some great prizes. Wassail!

THE BEST PUBS IN BRITAIN

GOOD BEER GUIDE

2008

EDITED BY ROGER PROTZ

The definitive handbook of the best places in the UK to get a pint of real ale. From every county from to...
 CAMRA 2008

On September 12th the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) published the 35th edition of the famous Good Beer Guide – the definitive rundown of breweries and real ale pubs in the UK. The Good Beer Guide features 4,500 entries to guide the reader to Britain's best beer and pubs, complete with beer listings, opening hours, pub food information, facilities for families, accommodation, history and locations. *More on page 12.*



The CAMRA Greater Manchester Pub of the Year has been announced and the winning pub is the New Oxford, Bexley Square, Salford. This is a tremendous achievement for a pub that has been run in its present form for only a year. The presentation will be made on 3 October. *More on page 7.*



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**MORE CHOICE
BETTER BEER**

International Brewing Awards



1998
Wobbly Bob



2002
Navy



2002
Wobbly Bob



2004
Wobbly Bob



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for October is the Midland on Wellington Road North, Stockport.

For many years the pub traded as a fake Irish bar known as Dillon's Whistlin' Jig and sold no real ale at all. This ultimately failed and the pub closed down. During this period of closure the pub was badly trashed and that might have been the end of the story.

However the pub was rescued by Janet Howarth who, along with her fantastic staff, has turned it into a true local, restoring the pub's original name. Despite the many alterations over the years, there is still a multi-roomed aspect to the pub which is decorated and furnished in traditional style. Outside there is a beer garden and smoking area.

Once again real ale has returned with Greene King IPA and Theakston's Bitter on handpump. In point of fact despite being just a couple of hundred yards from Mersey Square this is the last cask ale pub on the A6 until you reach the New Victoria in Longsight!

Under Janet's care, the pub has been thoroughly cleaned up and is now a well run tight ship – no messing about or you are out. A new and loyal band of regulars has been built up and the pub is once more a credit to the Stockport pub scene.

The pub also has its own band in The Midlanders and other live bands and singers also perform at the pub, which also boasts three darts teams.

This much deserved award will be presented on Thursday 25 October from 8.00pm – all welcome. **MO'B/DP**

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Cask
Beers

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good taste

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OT – COMMENT...

First and foremost congratulations to the New Oxford for achieving Regional Pub of the Year from a virtual standing start 12 months ago.

Hard work, dedication and a passion for quality real ales have certainly paid off for Tim and Paulette. They aren't sitting on their laurels either as they plan to take the pub even further forward. Talk now is of extending the bottled beer range up to 150! While many visitors to the pub will naturally concentrate on the draught beers, the bottled beer range already merits attention and has recently been augmented by some very interesting Belgian products.

The presentation night was scheduled to be 3 October and we'll have a full report next time.

The other big event this month is the Manchester Food & Drink Festival which this year is having a more beery element than it has done in the past. One of the highlights will be the Best Beer Brewed in Greater Manchester event in Albert Square on Friday 12th. Most of the local breweries have entered one of their regularly brewed cask beers and the public will also get a chance to have a tasting while the judging goes on. Again we'll have a full report next time.

Finally, it will not have escaped your notice that this month we are celebrating cider and perry (and definitely **not** 'pear cider'). If you've not yet tried these superb traditional drinks then this is the time to take the plunge – all of the pubs on our Cider Circuit (and more besides) will have at least one available.

OT – INFORMATION

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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

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Recent Awards & Events Gallery

Mild Challenge Visit to Hydes Brewery

A party of more than 20 enjoyed an evening courtesy of Hydes in Moss Side in late July. The event was to give the prize-draw winners of this year's successful Mild Challenge a chance to see how Hydes brew their Mild, Owd Oak, and 1863 beers. Afterwards, a lengthy sampling session took place in the convivial surrounds of the Hydes Visitor Lounge.

The ten lucky winners of the Prize Draw were: Sue Lightfoot, Stephen Ridge, Pauline Marshall, Michael Corlett, Kelvin Cunnington, John Eyres, Jenny Fairbanks, Ian McDonough, David Hird, and Anthony Meynell. The winner of the "Be a Brewer for a Day at the Marble Brewery" was Alan J Beeley of Heald Green. Alan will hopefully provide us with a summary of his day in a future issue.

Mild Challenge Organiser, Mark McConachie would like to thank all of the people who took part in this year's event, all of the 82 pubs, and the people at Hydes who made the visit possible - Beverley Rae, Paul Mouat, plus Jon Gobbett, and Paul King.



Our picture shows Mark with the winners and their guests in the Hydes Brewery Control Room (photo Anthony Meynell)

Double Award at Crown, Heaton Lane



The Crown, Heaton Lane, Stockport was the venue for a double presentation in July when both a Pub of the Month Award and Mild Champion award were presented to the pub. Our picture shows the Crown's Lee Watts, Lesley Watts, Sam Quinn and Sarah Bergin with their awards.

Cask Champion Award at 3 Rivers



The occasionally presented Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA "Cask Champion" Award went to 3 Rivers Brewery this year. A night of celebration was held at the 3 Rivers Club when the many local members there were treated to an excellent buffet and also a brand new beer, "Lights, CAMRA, Action", a tasty and potent 6 per cent ABV version of the Manchester IPA. Our picture shows the 3 Rivers team (with MD and Head Brewer Mike Hichen, centre) with their certificate.

Pub of the Month and POTY Runner-Up



The July Pub of the Month Award was won by the Crown in Cheadle and our photo (above) shows CAMRA's Mark McConachie presenting the award to Karen and Alan Williams. Mark was on duty again to present the 2007 Pub of the Year runner-up award to Shelia Barlow of the Armoury, Shaw Heath, Stockport.





Essence de Pub

In Ireland and Scotland, following the smoking ban, pubgoers were taken aback by an unaccustomed and distinctly unsavoury aroma in their favourite hostelryes. Tobacco smoke had been concealing a multitude of sins, and an offputting mixture of sweat, urine, flatulence, stale beer and stale food now held sway.

Up to a point this shows the need for pubs to pay more attention to general cleanliness. But, on the other hand, it has to be said that some pub customers, especially the kind who tend to prop up the bar for hours on end, leave something to be desired in terms of personal hygiene.

In a bid to counter this problem, pub company Mitchells & Butlers have been experimenting in Scotland with pumping various forms of artificial smells into their pubs, including those of ocean breezes, leather and freshly mown grass. Irony of ironies, one pub in Birmingham has even reintroduced the smell (if not the actual content) of tobacco smoke, to bring back that distinctive pub atmosphere that had been lost.

The Ghost Army

Supporters of the smoking ban often claimed that it would result in large numbers of people flocking to pubs who had previously avoided them as they were too smoky. However, in reality this influx has been conspicuous by its absence. Obviously the effect is not even across the board, but in my experience many pubs have been noticeably quieter than they were before, with the remaining customers looking a little bemused and wondering what has happened. One licensee commented to me that while food sales had scarcely been affected, the "vault trade" had fallen off a cliff, an experience that will be reflected in thousands of other pubs.

And local pubs themselves are still the same homely, haphazard places populated by people who have a lot of time on their hands. If they didn't hold much appeal before, simply removing smoke and smokers isn't really going to give non-pubgoers a good reason for visiting them. As I predicted, the idea the smoking ban would bring in large numbers of new customers has been shown to be a complete myth.

Out of Sight, out of Mind

Throughout much of the last century, supervision in pubs was an obsession of licensing magistrates, and the supposed need for all parts of a pub to be visible from the bar was often used as an excuse for the removal of internal walls. Yet one obvious result of the smoking ban is the transfer of a substantial proportion of the customers from inside the pub to an outside drinking area which, by definition, is much harder to supervise from the servery.

Licensees have reported instances of people buying drinks for underage companions, drinking from cans they have bought at the off-licence, and even smoking cannabis, which is much harder to detect in the open air. Forcing a large section of the clientèle outside is also likely to lead to pubs creating a more obvious nuisance in their neighbourhood and increase pressure for their hours to be curbed or even for them to be closed down entirely.

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CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2008 We're in it!



The CAMRA Greater Manchester Region Pub of the Year for 2007 has been announced as the New Oxford on Bexley Square, Salford. This is first time that the award has gone to a pub in Manchester's twin city and is an astonishing achievement for a pub that has only been running in its current format for little more than a year. In that short time the New Oxford has really made its mark on the local real ale map and this is essentially down to the hard work, commitment and passion of licensees Tim Flynn and Paulette Scanlon.

From a standing start, Tim and Paulette have taken the pub from essentially nowhere to a must visit pub for all local beer drinkers who have an interest in the rare, the unusual but above all well-kept beers.



The past 12 months have seen constant improvements both to the fabric of the pub and the range of beers on offer. The pub itself is bright and modern but has very much a pubby feel. On the beer front the New Oxford has just got better and better. The number of handpumps is now up to eight (and more during the increasingly regular beer festivals). Add in an impressive range of foreign beers (bottled and draught), British bottled real ales and real cider, all underpinned by total commitment to quality and the winning formula is obvious.

This award is in fact the second to be won by the pub – the New Oxford was also one of the two winning pubs voted for by participants in this year's Mild Challenge – our photo shows Tim and Paulette receiving their award from Stockport & South Manchester Branch Chairman John Clarke. The pub now regularly sells a guest mild. Tim and Paulette are naturally thrilled – "I am very, very thrilled" Tim told us. "I would like to thank CAMRA for their continued support. I'm very excited for the future of the pub".

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GREAT BEER
IN A TRADITIONAL PUB**

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Hazel Grove & Heaviley with Mark McConachie

Our Hazel Grove and northward Stagger began at a Robinsons house, the **Grove**. For a while we were subjected to very loud music, but the volume was lowered a short time later. The Grove boasts three rooms mostly decked out in yellow and blue decor. An interesting feature is the three "Spanish" arches that separate the corridor and bar from the main room. There is a games/ darts room to the front and a neat snug to the side; other than that, a pretty standard affair. Beers were slightly above average Hatters and Unicorn served by friendly staff.

Across the road, the **Anchor** sells the same two Robinsons beers, whilst the **Woodman** sells the Unicorn only. R Bar was looked at, this is one of the new breed of "box bars" (what I call these spartan, modern bar premises fashioned from former shops), but predictably it had no cask beer. For a time the next pub, the **Phoenix** was Stockport's only non-smoking pub. Well, not any longer of course. But sadly, there is no cask ale either in this Greene King house.



So, on it was to Great Moor, and the **Crown**. A multi-gabled, half-timbered house set back from the road with a cobbled way to the front. There is a good, well-patronised bowling green to the rear too. This was to be the largest pub on the crawl. Another Robbies house, but here offering four beers - Hatters, Unicorn, Double Hop, and seasonal (Dizzy Blonde), which is good to see a pub giving the beers a try, and customers a choice. There was a good sized crowd in using the many available rooms when we called. The friendly welcome was enhanced by the quality of the ales, although the Unicorn went untried, the others scored well with the Dizzy Blonde being a marginal winner.

A little way down Buxton Road brings you to the **Travellers Call**. This sits at the corner of Cherry Tree Lane alongside an aged milestone. Another reasonably busy Robbies house, offering their Hatters and Unicorn, but here they also sell the powerful Old Tom from a small cask upon the bar counter. The mild came out top here, with an especially mellow example of Old Tom a very near second place; very good scores here. There are four rooms here, plus garden area with traffic lights and old-style telephone box. The interior is a visual feast that showcases a wealth of nautical wares - ships' bells, portholes, and other pieces of ironmongery; a fish tank has even been set into the chimney breast of a fireplace.

Another short stroll got us to the **Dog & Partridge**. More Robbies this time in a pub that is larger than you first think.

The many rooms stretch out leftwards from the bar; their layouts are plush and the walls have openings in them so that order may be maintained. Well appointed with part-panelling and regency stripe wallpaper featuring strongly, it gives off a most pleasant atmosphere. A large garden is amongst the rear features. We received a gracious welcome from the bar staff with the three beers scoring highly - Hatters, Unicorn and Dizzy. Again, the mild took the honours here.



As it was more than ten minutes walk to the next pub, I hopped aboard one of the frequent bus services to cut down the time to the **Duke of York** (Robbies), Heaviley. Compared to the D&P, the Duke is "a horse of a different colour". A tall, impressive building set at a slight angle to the carriageway, it is a pub I have often overlooked. Not so other folk though, the place was bustling, mostly in the large, deep-running games-cum-vault area at the back. The quieter two front snugs were of more appeal to our party. A mix of modern and trad, the decor was in good order with some interesting old photos of the locale, varied prints and such to amuse us. The staff was keen and attentive, but if you go to the main bar counter, you may struggle to see the only cask beer, Unicorn, as the handpump is located on the side facing the front snug. We enjoyed the beer, but it would not be in contention for the beer of the night. Sharp-eyed, someone noticed the pub Opening Hours state that it does not open prior to 1400hrs any day.

Not having time to traipse up and back Nangreave Road, it was with regret that we omitted the **Puss in Boots** (Robbies) this time. When I last called in it was selling a good drop of Unicorn. So it was into the **Bamford Arms** for the priciest beer of the night. This is a pub-restaurant attached to a Travel Inn. A unfortunate greeting was that one of the main entrance doors had been smashed, however once inside we found a generally warm and comfortable welcome environment. The decor is modern with many large impressionist images and earthy wall hues adding a warmth to it all. A change from Robbies beers was to be had here, Boddies (which none of us tried), and Hydes Jekyll's Gold. We found this better than average, but please could it not be served so cold next time?

Time being against us, our final call was the legendary **Blossoms** for more Robinsons beers. Just the two beers, Hatters and Unicorn, but in great form tonight as befits a Good Beer Guide listed pub. Three rooms make up this house - back lounge, pool room, and vault. All are served by the bustling corridor bar, usually the hub of much conversation and humour. The Blossoms continues to be run by the same steady hand of the family that have tended it for many years now. As well as good beer, it is always a pleasure to admire the well kept interior (I particularly enjoy the leaded glass of the windows). Another fine end to this predominantly Robinsons crawl. If you would like to follow in our footsteps, use buses 192, 191, or 199 to get you to the Hazel Grove start point on London Road. Enjoy.



Boddies for the Chop? was the startling front page headline, which followed the news that Interbrew were moving some kegging operations from the Strangeways Brewery, with the loss of 68 jobs.

The prophets of doom had predicted the ultimate demise of the 275 year old brewing operation, but although they were likely to be proved wrong (we over-optimistically said at the time), no-one should be complacent enough to imagine everything in the garden was rosy.

The story was that Boddington's would continue to be made in Manchester until 2004, but after that the keg versions would be trunked to plants in Salmesbury, Lancashire, and Magor, South Wales, for processing and packaging. In 2004 all production of Boddingtons Bitter for kegging would transfer to Magor, leaving Strangeways as a cask ale only brewery producing cask conditioned Boddingtons Bitter, Flower's IPA and Flower's Original. Announcing this plan, Interbrew said it was important to them to retain a cask operation within the UK, and by specialising as a cask brewery, the Boddington's site held a unique position within the business.

So was this plan reassuring? Hardly, as the removal of the keg Boddington's from Strangeways would reduce its brewing volumes to just 20% of capacity, or one day's work a week, and insufficient to keep the brewery viable. History of course tells its own story. The Interbrew assurances proved worthless. The brewery is now closed and largely demolished.

Real Beer Week followed on from the success of Cask Ale Week the previous year, and it aimed to promote the 33 members of the Independent Family Brewers of Britain (*now reduced to 28 as a result of their unfortunate propensity for putting themselves up for sale or taking each other over – Ed*), and also to introduce many new customers to the joys of real beer. In the North West, six of the family brewers – Holts, Hydes, Lees, Robinsons, Thwaites and Jennings combined forces to support Real Beer Week and create a greater awareness of the diversity and choice of real beers in the region. A joint event was held at Manchester's Ape & Apple, attended by head brewers, directors and executives of all six companies, who introduced their new seasonal ales.

The Manchester area had always been well served by micro brewers, not least from the efforts of Richard Bazen. He helped set up the lamented Bridgewater Brewery, and then moved to work as a brewer at Tony Allen's highly regarded Phoenix Brewery in Heywood.

Now, for the second time in his career, he had set up on his own. The original Bazens' Brewery was a short lived affair, operating from Trafford Park in the early 1980s. This time around he was in partnership with wife Jude, and they operated from a unit on the small, pleasant Agecroft Enterprise Park in Swinton. The brewing kit came from Brewing Solutions in Oldham, which produced about 4½ barrels per brew from the nominal five barrel plant.

Hydes were continuing to expand, but only very gradually – the good news was that they had bought the Conway in Cheadle Hulme. For years the pub had struggled to find a role (at one stage it had even been a "sports pub") – perhaps its fortunes would now change, being in the hands of a local brewer. The pub now trades successfully as the Ryecroft Arms.



The Big Lock, Middlewich

We were originally going to do a write-up on another pub, which will remain nameless, but that plan was cancelled when they proved incapable of serving up a drinkable pint of beer. So a quick scan of the *Good Beer Guide* led us to the Big Lock in Middlewich, which none of us had ever visited before.

It is tucked away in a residential area to the north of the town in an attractive location by the "Big Lock" itself – an unusual double-width lock on the Trent & Mersey Canal. It can be reached either by taking Finney's Lane from the A530 or Webb's Lane from the A54 – the latter is the route from the town centre and would be about a ten-minute walk.

Externally it's a rambling red brick building dating from the Victorian era. The surprisingly spacious interior comprises a main bar area in the centre, with a games room and snug leading off it and a long, airy dining area running along the side of the pub nearest the canal, opening out on to a terrace above the towpath. It was pleasant enough but perhaps needed a lick of paint here and there, something the new owners will no doubt attend to. It also suffered from the common problem of a group of regulars clustering around the bar and making access to the counter difficult.



The Big Lock – potential waiting to be unlocked

Many years ago it was a Wilsons pub, but more recently it was owned by the Honeycombe Leisure chain, who have recently been taken over by Cains – hence we found mainly Cains beers on the bars rather than the slightly more varied choice the *Good Beer Guide* had led us to expect. The range was Cains Bitter, IPA and Wheat Beer, and Tetley Bitter. We tried the IPA and the Wheat Beer, which were both pretty good, the pick of the two being the relatively low-gravity, clean-tasting IPA. There was a wide range of fairly conventional food – we had Haddock & Spring Onion Fishcakes, Ham, Egg & Chips, and Pepperoni Pizza, all at £7.95, all of which were decent although not outstanding.

The Big Lock is a pub that we came across by serendipity and I wouldn't make any claims for it as ranking among Cheshire's finest. However, it enjoys a very attractive setting and is a good place to sit outside on a sunny day and watch the activity on the canal. It will be interesting to see what Cains do to develop it in the future and unlock its considerable potential.

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CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2008 *We're in it!*



The Really Nice Beer Company, which has run from the rear of the **Royal Hotel** in Hayfield for some years now, has changed owners due to retirement (see article on page 23). Royal Landlord Dave Ash has taken over the reigns and I noticed that the **Kinder Lodge** just across the village, had beers supplied from them when I called in on Sunday 9th September.

Over in Disley, the **White Lion** at the top of Redhouse Lane, where it meets the A6 road through the village, has recently had up to four guest beers on the bar. In early September, there were two Coach House beers on, a Storm Brewery beer and Abbeydale Moonshine which was rated in fine form.

In Marple Bridge, the **Norfolk Arms**, prominently situated at the centre of the village, near the traffic lights is still shut. Another Norfolk Arms, this time in Glossop, also near the traffic lights, is still under major works by Holts Brewery who have bought it and are re-opening it to much anticipation by the townsfolk.

In Whaley Bridge, the **Jodrell Arms** is shut and has signs up that the lease is available.

Reports from Mellor, are that the **Oddfellows**, a regular Good Beer Guide entry, has been found to be shut in the evenings, very strange! Any information at what is going on here would be very useful, with surveys shortly to be completed in the Branch area!

The **Lantern Pike** continues to sell locally based Howard Town Wrens Nest...a good seller in the pub.

In Birch Vale, the **Sycamore** re-opened early in August and what a change, almost breathtaking in fact. JW Lees Best Bitter and Wells & Youngs Bombardier were the two beers on dispense on 9th September on my visit. There are comfy settees, polished light wooden floors and a superb beer garden. Anyone not having visited for a while will be a little gobsmacked at the difference to say the least. Oh, and the food is "amazing" so says a branch member who has recently eaten there.

The **Little Mill** at Rowarth, on the same day, had no less than three beers on from Coach House, with the usual standard fayre of Marston's Pedigree and Banks's (Mild) completing the five handpumps.

Two Cheshires

Just out of the Branch area, but used now and then by Branch members, the **Cheshire Cheese** in Hope, on Edale Road, has changed hands as the landlord has announced his retirement. He has sold the free house on to a pub company; I believe to be Enterprise Inns. It will be interesting to see the change in the beers available, as they normally source from local micro breweries. The pub was the Sheffield Branch's pub of the season recently and is a regular Good Beer Guide entry.

The **Cheshire Ring** in Hyde is now opening earlier than before. The new starting times are 1pm Monday to Friday and 12 noon on Saturdays and Sundays. There is also a regular programme of events each Thursday. The first Thursday of the month sees an acoustic night with "Waifs & Strays". The second Thursday is Sci Fi Night with old films and TV programmes being shown, while on the third Thursday it's Curry Night with Wayne's fiendish home-made curries. The last Thursday is the increasingly popular Laurel & Hardy night. If there's a spare Thursday in the month then this will be filled by a fun quiz.



Robin Wignall's monthly round-up of events on the Peak District pub scene

Dove Holes Community Centre, venue for the annual Jazz and Beer Festival, recently held an exhibition of historic photographs and memorabilia.

A 1934 General Plan of Dove Holes marked the **Railway Inn**, **Crown Inn** and **Queen's Hotel**, whilst the **Wheatsheaf** was not marked. The Railway and Crown are now lost locals. The Crown stood on the Chapel road out of Dove Holes. The Queen's and Wheatsheaf still survive. The present building, which was the Railway stands on the Buxton road out of the village and now houses a joinery business. At the time of its closure the Railway was probably the most northerly pub in the then Hardy & Hanson estate. However one old photograph showed a previous Railway building belonging to Nottingham Brewery Co. This brewery was bought out by Tennant Brothers of Sheffield, which in turn became part of the Whitbread tour of destruction. Somewhere in the course of its history, the Railway must have changed its tie.

Another old photograph showed the Wheatsheaf in an earlier building, and in the days when it sold Bell & co. Fine Ales.

An interesting piece from the recent past was the programme for the 2nd Jazz and Beer Festival, in 1993. There were 20 beers available that year, just a few more than in recent years. Some of the beers and brewers are no longer around, Mitchell's (Lancaster) Old Priory Porter, King & Barnes Mild and Broadwood and Eldridge Pope Thomas Hardy Ale and Blackdown Porter are lost beers from lost breweries. A version of K & B Mild is brewed for Badger by Gribble. The Thomas Hardy name lingers on at Burtonwood. Marston's and Hop Back no longer brew Merrie Monk and Flintnapper respectively. There were two good milds on the list in 1993, Adnam's and Black Cat.

Over the August Bank Holiday weekend the **Dog and Partridge** at Bridgemont held its annual Beer Festival, which was its usual successful sell out. There was a general emphasis on pale and hoppy beers, which seems to ensure success, with local-ish microbreweries in good number. Copper Dragon, Bowland, Greenfield, Kelham Island, Acorn, Abbeydale and 3Bs were represented, whilst there was also beer from Wylam. Copper Dragon Golden Pippin and Greenfield Monkey Business were probably the best of a good bunch to choose from.

The following weekend saw the second **Swan Beer Festival** at Kettlethulme. This is an ambitious 30 beer plus cider and perry festival. Festival glasses were sold, and beer bought with tokens. One of the out buildings served for stillage and bar, and more beers were available in the pub. Up to 8 beers at a time were available at the bar and in the pub. By Saturday afternoon some of the firkins were beginning to empty. Microbreweries were well represented with beers from locals Storm, Thornbridge Hall, Spire (Chesterfield), and Whim. Also from not too far away were beers from Bowland, Copper Dragon, Abbeydale, Phoenix and Titanic, and more distantly Hawkshead and Loddon (Reading). Copper Dragon Scott's 1816 and Phoenix Arizona were my choices from another good list. Hanby Cherry Bomb pleased some drinkers, as did Salopian Lemon Dream, but neither made my favourite list!

A recent visit to Chapel en le Frith found Tom Wood's Bomber County in good form at the **Chapel Bistro** with Okell's Summer Storm at the **Memorial**. Summer Storm is a hazy wheat beer with a good distinctive taste. With beer sensibly priced at £2 a pint, choice and quality are not the only attractions at the Memorial.

The **Shepherds** in Whaley Bridge has been selling a good pint of Red Brick Shire Oak Amber Ale. The assumption is that Red Brick is a brewery title for one off brews from Marston's and/or Banks.

Church Inn



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**Local CAMRA Pub of the Year 2005
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CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2008 We're in it!

GBG – 2008

35th Edition of UK's Leading Pub Guide

"Put together by CAMRA, it's the definitive rundown of the best places in the UK to get a pint of real ale, from cosy country inns to upmarket style bars." - Time Out

The 2008 Good Beer Guide was published on 12 September with a 1970's themed party featuring a '70's-style buffet, fancy dress, and an appearance by a classic 1970's Ford Capri. The launch was held at Fuller's Star Tavern in Belgravia, one of just 10 pubs to appear in all 35 editions (the only one in the North West is the Roscoe Head on Roscoe Street, Liverpool).

Edited by Glenfiddich Award-winning drinks writer Roger Protz



(pictured left at the launch party), the Good Beer Guide is more than just a pub guide. Britain's longest-running and best-selling guide contains Britain's best pubs for real ale. But for beer lovers it also gives up-to-date information on the country's beers and

breweries. It's compiled by 82,000 dedicated volunteers in the Campaign for Real Ale. There are no fees for listings, and every pub is checked many times a year.

The Good Beer Guide offers:

The best pubs in England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man that serve cask-conditioned real ale in tip-top condition.



Full details of beer, food, entertainment, family facilities, history and architecture for the pub entries.



The unique Breweries section that lists all the breweries -- micro, regional and national -- that produce cask beer, with tasting notes compiled by CAMRA-trained tasting teams.

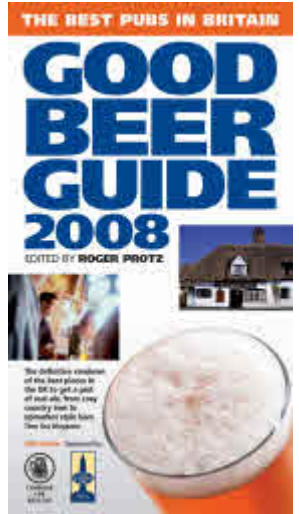


There's also information about beers suitable for vegetarians and vegans, as well as the growing number of organic beers. The Guide lists new breweries, closed breweries, mergers and takeovers, and keeps track of the new, powerful pub groups.



You can keep your copy of the *Guide* up to date by visiting the CAMRA website (www.camra.org.uk). Click on 'Good Beer Guide' then 'Updates to the GBG 2008'.

Copies of the Good Beer Guide can be obtained from Jim Flynn at a price of £14.99 (includes p & p). Please send a cheque payable to "CAMRA Stockport & South Manchester" to 66 Downham Road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport, SK4 5EG



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*Sue & Graham
welcome you*

8 Guest Beers

Real Ale £1.70

**Monday
Nights**

Pub of the
season 2006



Trafford & Hulme Branch are pleased to announce their autumn Pub of the Season is the Famous Trevor Arms, Beech Road, Chorlton.

When Kevin took over as landlord of the Trevor Arms at the end of 2006, his first move was to introduce guest ales. One of the first of the guest ales to be brought in was Bateman's Rosey Nosey and although previously unknown in the Trevor, the new choices, particularly the darker beers, quickly became popular with the locals. Kevin is keen to increase the selection of beers and is investigating new sources to compliment his existing range. The house regular, cask Boddingtons, remains a popular choice, with steady sales maintained.

In April, The Trevor was awarded the coveted "Cask Marque", an accreditation indicating excellence in the service of cask ale. Independent assessors check the cellar and temperature as well as the poured pint, thus ensuring a consistency of quality in the ale served.

The Trevor is one of the older buildings in the popular area of Chorlton Green, on the bohemian Beech Road. A traditional two room style pub, the original mosaic floor was discovered in the public bar during the last restoration. The pub retains a number of other original features and the planned autumn refurbishment is expected to enhance rather detract from them.

Long popular as a United supporters' pub, the Trevor shows most televised games, however, with the new Setanta satellite station available, the variety of sport is expanding and is already proving popular. Special entertainment nights include "Free and Easy" on Fridays, and occasional race nights, the next planned for September.

The presentation will take place on Thursday 11th October starting at around 8pm. All are welcome to come and support Kevin and his team to celebrate the presentation of this award. *Heather Airlie*

**Join CAMRA Now
See Page 22**



Edgeley Around and About

A saunter round Edgeley last month brought a mixed bag of results.

I started at the **Woolpack**, a pub that had fallen off my radar somewhat. I have been hearing good things about the beer here and I noticed that there were now six handpumps although not all were in use when I called. Storm Brewing beers, Moorhouses Black Cat and Fuller's Discovery were all available. The Black Cat was fine but the Discovery was, frankly, poor.

I'd spotted handpumps with Bass clips when passing the **Bow Garrett** but tonight they had gone and the handpumps were disused. Also selling nothing but keg beers is the **Gardeners Arms** on Northgate Road. Given that this is a JW Lees house I find this an incredible state of affairs.

Luckily, Paul and Emma are doing well at the **Alexandra** (Robbies). Although they have dropped the Hatters due to poor sales, they offer Unicorn plus a seasonal beer or one of OB bitter, Double Hop or Cumbria Way. The yard at the rear has been enclosed to be used as an outside drinking area; it also has a decked terrace with heating to add to the comfort of it all.

I was again impressed by the **Royal Oak** on Castle Street – a good, busy pub and some of the best Holt's Bitter I've tried in many a long while. Apart from the Royal Oak, Castle Street is a cask beer wasteland until you get to the **Grapes** at the other end.



The good news is that the Grapes is now run by Noel and Val Jones who have moved there from the soon-to-be-closed **Spread Eagle** on Hillgate. Noel was telling me that some essential cellar work has seen cask beer sales rocket in the short time he and

Val have been there. I know that Noel is a big Old Tom fan and I look forward to that beer joining the well-kept Hatters and Unicorn for the winter season.

With the nearby **Armoury** and **Florist** run by Sheila and Tom Barlow, there are now three excellent Robbies pubs within easy walk of each other.

Elsewhere in Edgeley, the **Church** once again has its tenancy available to let and remains one of the few keg-only Robinsons pubs. Across the road, though, the **Greyhound** has been trying a range of cask beers including Shepherd Neame Spitfire and Black Sheep Bitter. And of course, the ever-reliable **Olde Vic** remains an oasis of good beer and good cheer with its five ever-changing guest ales.

Other News

Laura Duffy (daughter of licensee of city centre Grey Horse) took on the **Prince of Wales** (Hydes) in Gatley about a year ago. Trade is good, and Laura is well respected. The pub appeared to have been newly re-decorated when I called in late August. Hydes mild and bitter are the offerings on the bar plus food from the busy kitchen.

Sad news now of the closure the **Bulls Head** on Gorton Road, Reddish. The licensee of some 11 years has now left the trade but Enterprise Inns are struggling to find someone to take on the lease. Reddish appears to be having problems at the moment, what with the **Railway** long-closed, the **Grey Horse** with an uncertain future, and the **Houldsworth** for sale. A period of stability is much needed.



The Crown Inn, Heaton Lane

16 Handpumps with a Wide Variety of Ever Changing Guest Beers

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Guest Lagers
Foreign Beers*

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'TEN BELGIAN BOTTLES'

BEER FESTIVAL

6.30pm, TUES. 9 OCT:

'ALE TALES'

an audience with Jonathan Schofield

THURS. 11 OCT:

'FESTIVAL DINNER'

four courses of the very best local produce
matched with the best local beer
in association with North West Fine Foods
£30 (by advance ticket)

FRI-SUN. 12-14 OCT:

'TEN BY TEN'

BEER FESTIVAL

the ultimate guest beer 'Top Ten' as chosen
by Marble brewery staff and friends

SUN. 14 OCT:

'END OF THE YEAR'

ALL-DAY PARTY

Pub of the Year celebrates (again) with
live music, Food and Drink Festival quiz,
and hotpot supper

73 ROCHDALE ROAD M4

**MANCHESTER
FOOD & DRINK
FESTIVAL 2007**

CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2008 *We're in it!***The Star Inn, Glossop**

Thirty minutes out of Manchester Piccadilly, along what was many years ago the Sheffield & Wath line, lies the quiet Derbyshire town of Glossop and the Star Inn.

Conveniently situated adjacent to the railway station, the Star is run by long standing CAMRA members Paul and Vivienne Hurditch, both of whom have a strong commitment to real ale but real cider, too – they are taking part in the Cider Circuit again this year.

The Star is in many ways a traditional hostelry with wood panelling, fixed bench seating, a separate snug, and no juke box. However it also has a more avant-garde aspect with its changing selection of beers from a wide number of micro breweries. At least four real ales and one real cider are on tap at all time, along with bottled beers and ciders.

Many walkers find Glossop a somewhat civilised staging post in the wilds of the Peak District and Paul and Vivienne have, by prior arrangement, been known to provide hot food for walking parties.

A comfortable, traditional environment with convivial company and good ale makes the Star an ideal haven from the world outside, particularly on winter evenings as the nights draw in. For those who find it hard to leave and face the elements, en-suite rooms are available upstairs

All in all the Star Inn is a strong traditional pub that serves its regulars and wider community well – from Tuesday night quiz competitions to hosting the Glossop Beer Festival; from live music events to charity fund raising; it is the hard work and dedication shown by Paul and Vivienne that have put this pub in the Good Beer Guide and the Good Cider Guide. Well worth a visit. *Richard Chanin*

The Deansgate

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4 cask beers including guest ales

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Brewery NEWS...

New Breweries Come on Stream

The recently launched 2008 Good Beer Guide records no fewer than 50 new breweries opening across the country over the last 12 months. Greater Manchester can now add three to that total. In addition one dormant brewery has been re-named and relaunched.

Prospect Brewery

Patsy and John Slevin's Prospect Brewery is based in John's mother's (very large) garage in Standish, near Wigan. Although her father was a keen home-brewer, Patsy's chosen career was in the childcare industry. After 20 years at this, the last six spent driving 3-4,000 miles a month, a change beckoned. So, she gave up the day job and wondered what to do.

Beer was in her blood and after talking it over with husband John, the decision was made to launch a brewery. Prospect Brewery was formed at the end of January and at the same time she and John undertook a brewing course at Mossbrew.



Following this Patsy started working at Bank Top Brewery in March, gaining encouragement and inspiration from Bank Top's Dave Sweeney. She also got her brewery from him – Bank Top upgraded to a 10-barrel plant so Patsy was able to buy the now-redundant 5-barrel kit.

The first commercial beer, Pioneer (4% ABV, brewed with Pioneer and Goldings hops) was made on 23 August and the second, Goldrush (4.5% ABV, made with Nugget and Cascade hops) followed the next day. Both have been well-received and repeat orders gained. Next up is an as yet unnamed (well, it will have a name by the time you read this) 3.7% very pale beer made with Goldings and Cascade hops, with, possibly, additional dry hopping with Cascade.

Look out for Prospect beers in the local free trade. The brewery can be contacted on 01257 421329.

Green Mill Brewery

The Green Mill Brewery is based in the cellars of the Queensway Snooker Club in Rochdale and is the brainchild of father and son partnership, Phil and Matt Wild.

The initial installation, supplied by Dave Porter is a 2½ barrel plant with two fermenting vessels allowing the production of five barrels a week, but there is room for expansion.

Their idea of starting a brewery came to them almost a year ago when Phil a bit fed up with his job and Matt, even with a chemistry degree unable to find suitable employment in that line, began talking about it over a glass of home brew.

Both of them play snooker and pool, with Phil being captain of the Queensway's pool team and in conversation with the club's owner was offered the cellars at a reasonable rent. And so it started. Two beers have so far been produced. Pearly Gates is a 5% ABV IPA and this was followed by the 3.4% Green Mill Gold. Both have been seen in the local free trade where, it has to be said, opinions have been mixed. Future ideas include a porter (probably called Pot Black) and a wheat beer. The brewery can be contacted on 078 9670 2328



Dunham Massey

The next new brewery to come on stream is John Costello's Dunham Massey Brewery, based in the village of the same name. The kit has been installed and brewing should be underway by the time you read this. The first two beers are expected to be Big Tree Bitter and Deer Beer. More on this one next time.



Launch & Re-Launch

Now that he is happy with his beers, Hornbeam Brewery's Kevin Rothwell was planning a formal launch of the brewery as this issue of *Opening Times* went to press. The chosen venue is the Lowes Arms, Hyde Road, Denton, home to the suspended LAB Brewery. As well as three Hornbeam beers the event will also mark the relaunch of the LAB as the **Dane Town Brewery**, producing a range of beers on a Viking theme. More on this next time.

Hornbeam are also to add a fourth beer to their portfolio this month with Dark Domination, a 6% ABV porter brewed using chocolate malt and roast barley

More Micro News

The big news is that **Porter Brewing Co** is about to be sold, with negotiations at an advanced stage. We understand that the prospective new owner will also be taking on the lease of the Railway in Stockport and in addition will provide a third outlet for the brewery's beers. Apart from a name change it should be business as usual. More next time.

Marble Brewery temporarily ran out of organic malt last month. So what to do? What they did was buy in some stocks of non-organic ingredients (including Maris Otter malt, roasted barley, and Cascade, Liberty, Green Bullet and Mortueka hops) and brewed three one-off non-organic beers. Janine's One is a 3.9% pale and hoppy beer made by Dominic Driscoll and guest brewer Janine Shorrocks (from the Ashover Brewery near Chesterfield); Colin Stronge brewed Tawny '4' at 4.5% while James Campbell produced Stoutier Stout at 4.7%. There was just one brew of each made and the brewery is now back to fully organic production.



Bazens' have two beers out this month. The next in the Salford Series is Royal Ale (4.3%) making the Queen's opening of the Lowry and for Salford Food & Drink Festival a 5% version of the award-winning Knoll Street Porter will be produced.

Millstone Brewery remains very busy but there will be a new beer out this month. This is the next in the pub name series and will be "The Red Lion" at 4.3% ABV. This beer will be brewed using Challenger and Sovereign hops.

Greenfield Brewery also has a new beer out. Black & Tackle is a 4.4% ABV chestnut coloured bitter with a slight malty aftertaste and a dry finish. Greenfield now supplies most of the Saddleworth pubs and clubs and is really becoming the area's true local brewery. Direct sales to the public have also been introduced and are proving extremely successful.

Howard Town Brewery at Glossop have been hit by a shortage of the hops used in Dinting Arches which may not now be available again until Christmas. The temporary replacement is Doctor's Orders (4.5% ABV), slightly darker than Arches and brewed using Northdown, Pioneer and Cascade hops.

Leyden Brewery has produced a beer for the Bury Food & Drink Festival. The 4.2% brew will be very pale and hoppy. At the end of this month there will be a very limited edition beer produced for Radcliffe Cricket Club Beer Festival. This will be called 20:20. No other details known at the moment.

Thanks to More Beer for the Green Mill article – Ed.

DAVENPORT ARMS
(THIEF'S NECK), Woodford



GOOD BEER GUIDE 1988 - 2008
21st GLORIOUS YEAR
IN THE SAME FAMILY FOR 71 YEARS

A Warm Welcome to Customers Old & New
From Yvonne & Staff



Robinsons Traditional Draught Beers
At Their Best

CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2008 We're in it!

MANCHESTER RAG presents Beerfest 2007
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An assortment of ciders and flavored vodkas

Entry is £3 which includes a glass.
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All Profit to local charities
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All About
PERRY

Hand in hand with traditional cider is perry. Some people have started calling this 'pear cider'. This is b*llocks. There ain't no such thing. Cider is made from cider **apples** while perry is made from perry **pears**. The process though is essentially the same for each product.

The best perry is made from pear varieties grown specifically for the purpose, many of which have exotic names – Green Horse, Stinking Bishop, Hendre Huffcap and Blakeney Red spring to mind.

As with cider, most perries are made from a blend of pear varieties, but occasionally single pear varieties can be found. Purists will claim that the best perry is made within sight of May Hill on the Gloucestershire / Herefordshire border and it is true that the "Three Counties" (Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire) are the heart of perry country. However some excellent perry is made further away, notably in South Wales and Somerset.



A typical press used to make cider and perry
Unfortunately a lot of perry pear trees have been grubbed up in recent years because many of the smallholdings

where the trees grow are purchased by urbanites who use the orchards to graze their horses. When the horses eat the pears they are prone to colic and the trees are felled.

This is made worse by the fact that these trees grow very slowly (the saying "plant pears for your heirs" has a lot of truth in it), so a planting programme now would do little to increase supply for many years to come. Perry pear trees also live for a very long time – a row planted at Much Marcle to celebrate the coronation of Queen Anne in 1702 are still fruiting.

Now for a visit to some of our leading makers of perry. First to Derek Hartland's farm at Tirley, Gloucestershire. Cider and perry have been made here for generations and Derek has recently been rewarded by winning CAMRA's National Champion Perry award for 2007. His 6% perry is made from a blend of local fruit; it is soft and fruity, medium to medium-sweet and very quaffable.

The winner of the Perry of the Festival at Stockport this year is Hecks at Street in Somerset. As well as a well stocked farm shop selling a wide range of local produce there is a delicious range of single variety ciders and perries. Hendre Huffcap, our winning perry is hazy and pale yellow with a superb pear aroma and smooth lingering finish.

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Join Our Cider Circuit and Win a Cider Box!

THIS MONTH we are offering you the chance to win a 36-pint 'box' of cider, kindly donated by John Reek of Merrylegs Cider as we re-run our Cider Circuit. Not only that but we have made it easier for you to win a prize.

All you have to do is visit one of our participating pubs and buy a pint or a half of traditional cider or perry, and then get the barstaff to put a sticker over the pub's entry on the form in the next column. Get 11 stickers and you will win a large bottle of traditional cider or perry. Get a sticker from all participating pubs and you will not only get a bottle of cider or perry but you will also be entered into the draw for the 36-gallon box. We hope to have some other cider and perry prizes, too.

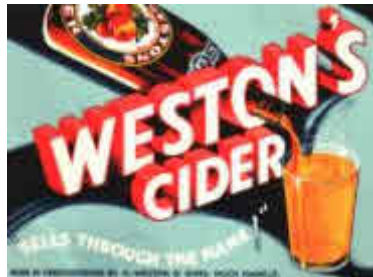


The Circuit runs from **Saturday 6 October to Saturday 10 November**. Completed forms should be sent to: "Cider Circuit, 45 Bulkeley St, Edgeley, Stockport, Cheshire, SK3 9HD" to arrive no later than Saturday 17 November. If you are entering the grand draw, make sure you specify whether you would like dry, medium or sweet cider.

All prizes will be presented at a special cider afternoon to be held at the **Cheshire Ring, Manchester Rd, Hyde** on **Saturday 2 December** from 2pm onwards.

Cider Bits and Bobs

Robinson's have now made real cider available to their tied houses following an agreement with major producer Westons of Much Marcle.



Given that Westons are supplying the handpump dispense as well as the ciders, take up has so far been surprisingly slow. We understand the following Robbies houses sell 'real' Westons cider: Coach & Horses,

Timbersbrook; Dusty Miller, Wrenbury; Puss in Boots, Offerton; Red Cow, Nantwich and the Shrewsbury Arms, Little Budworth.

More New Outlets

Real Cider and Perry continues its slow but sure advance in the local pub scene.

New outlets include the **New Oxford** in Salford that now features a changing guest cider or perry. In addition the **Sportsman** in Hyde is featuring guest ciders and perries for the duration of the Cider Circuit. During September the **Hinds Head** on Manchester Road, Heaton Chapel featured a range of bottled ciders and perries alongside Weston's Old Rosie on handpump.

The **Station** in Ashton and the **Bike & Hound** in Hyde also sell the real thing, as does **Sand Bar** on Grosvenor Street, off Oxford Road, in Manchester.

You will also find a range of draught Weston's 'real' ciders in many local **Wetherspoons** pubs – usually dispensed from a box kept in one of the cool cabinets behind the bar.

Bar Fringe
Swan Street
Manchester
M4 5JN

Cheshire Ring,
Manchester Road
Hyde
SK14 2BJ

Crescent
The Crescent
Salford
M5 4PF

Crown
Heaton Lane
Stockport
SK4 1AR

Crown & Kettle
Great Ancoats Street
Manchester
M4 5FE

Duke of York
Stockport Road
Romiley
SK6 3AN

Globe
High Street West
Glossop
SK13 8HJ

Hinds Head
Manchester Road
Heaton Chapel
SK4 5AD

Legh Arms
Ashton Old Road
Openshaw
M11 2HD

Marble Arch
Rochdale Road
Manchester
M4 4HY

Marble Beer House
Manchester Road
Chorlton
M21 0PW

Navigation
Lancashire Hill
Stockport
SK4 1TY

New Oxford
Bexley Square
Salford
M3 6DB

Railway
Avenue Street
Stockport
SK1 2BZ

Sand Bar
Grosvenor Street
Manchester
M1 7HL

Sportsman
Mottram Road
Hyde
SK14 2NN

Star
Howard Street
Glossop
SK13 7DD

Station Buffet Bar
Rassbottom Street
Stalybridge
SK15 1RF

Thatched House
Churchgate
Stockport
SK1 1YJ

Waters Green Tavern
Waters Green
Macclesfield
SK11 6LH

Ye Olde Vic
Chatham Street
Stockport
SK3 3ED



Wythenshawe Wanderings

A recent wander around some parts of Wythenshawe was useful in verifying some pub losses. Old losses are the **Peel Hall**, and the **Anvil**, but these have now been joined by the demolition of the **Greenwood Tree** (former Burtonwood house - see picture of the rubble strewn site



below).

This leaves a vast swathe of housing to the north of Simonsway with only two viable pubs - the **Tudor Tavern** (keg only) on Peel Hall, and the **Silver Birch** (Holts) on Poundswick near to the Civic Centre. This latter pub sells a decent drop of Holts bitter in pleasant surroundings. Whilst south of Simonsway, the drinker has a choice of just two cask ale pubs - the **Cornishman** sells Banks's Bitter, whilst the **Portway** (recently redecorated by the look of it) was selling Holts bitter at on £1.55. It must be noted that time did not allow surveys of the **Happy Man**, **Mountain Ash**, **Red Beret**, **Talisman**, nor **Woodpecker**. At last inspection these only sold keg beer.

The **Newall Green** on Greenbrow Road, Newall Green re-opened recently as a Joseph Holt pub. It has been fully refurbished to a good standard. Typical of its era, it has a large vault and a huge lounge. Both mild and bitter are on the bar, and when I called I found both to be of a good standard. This is a welcome cask ale development in west Wythenshawe.

Real Ale and Hotels

An interesting development in recent months has been the appearance of decent beer in some of Manchester's better hotels.

The **Malmaison** led the way with a pioneering "Ale Event" held in June. This took the form of a four-course meal cooked with, accompanied by, and topped and tailed with, beers from Bazens' and Marble breweries.



CAMRA was there to help introduce the event and as each beer was produced the brewers gave them a brief introduction. It was a huge success and as a result the bar at the Malmaison now stocks bottled Bazens' Knoll Street Porter and Marble Lagonda, both of which sell well.

There was due to be a repeat event on 5 October, this time with beers from 3 Rivers and Bank Top breweries.

Another top hotel selling local bottled beers is the **Lowry** in Salford. They have four bottled Marble Brewery beers on the bar and again all are reportedly selling well, notably the Lagonda and the Chocolate with people reportedly taking to the latter as an alternative to Guinness.

Across the road from the Malmaison is the **City Lounge** at the **City Inn**. They actually serve cask beer - there is one hand pump but you'll never find it! I asked if they had cask ale and they told me that it was located low over the other side of the bar, so low in fact that when I leant over I still couldn't see the hand pump. I am told that this is to give the bar a clean appearance.

The beer on offer is Caledonian Deuchars IPA. That will be £3.50 sir. Is this the most expensive real ale in Manchester? Finally on this topic I have heard reports of a possible beer festival in the unlikely surroundings of the **Hilton Hotel**. More on this one next time.

Food & Drink Festival

The Manchester Food & Drink Festival is 10 years old this year and is bigger and better than ever - for the first time they have every borough in the county involved.

Notably, the Festival is finally recognising the county's brewing industry - with about 22 breweries from tiny brew-pubs to the big four family operations, the region is now arguably the national centre of independent brewing.



The highlight will be the Best Beer Brewed In Greater Manchester competition. This will take place on Friday 12 October and so far 16 of the region's brewers are taking part in this ground breaking event. While the judging is going on, members of the public will be able to enter a tasting tent in Albert Square to sample the beers themselves and also talk to some of the people who make these great brews.

The Hinds Head



The Hinds Head, Heaton Chapel has now reopened under the ownership of Dave Woolf and Keith Ellis. The new manager will be Stuart Kirkham. They were negotiating to take over the pub in October after an extensive refurbishment but the financial problems of the previous lessees have brought this forward. The pub will shut for a few weeks in a month or so for that long needed refurbishment.

On a much sadder note Alan Preston who put the pub on the map, took it into the Good Beer Guide, was awarded pub of the month twice, and famously fought Whitbread and won, died in August. A top man, real gent and mine host par excellence. Our condolences to his family.

NEW OXFORD



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CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2008 *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 south-west. *Branch Contact – Pete Farrand 07786 283990*

Thursday 11th – Branch Meeting: Cheadle Hulme (pub), Station Road, Cheadle Hulme. Starts 8.00pm

Friday 19th – Ardwick & City Centre East Stagger: 7.30pm Bulls Head, London Rd (opposite Piccadilly Station entrance); 8.30 Grey Horse, Portland Street.

Saturday 20th – postponed Beer of Festival Presentation to Howard Town Brewery, Hope Street, Old Glossop. Meet at Star (next to station) for departure at 1.30. Meet brewery 2pm. Contact / Book with John Clarke – 0161 477 1973

Thursday 25th – Pub of the Month presentation to the Midland, Wellington Road North, Stockport. From 8.00pm.

Thursday 8th November – Branch Meeting: Blossoms, Buxton Rd, Heaviley. From 8.00pm

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*

Monday 8th - Branch Meeting: Sportsman, Mottram Road, Hyde. Starts 8.30pm

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. Branch website: www.thcamra.org.uk*

Thursday 11th – Autumn Pub of the Season Presentation to Famous Trevor Arms, Beech Rd, Chorlton. From 8pm.

Thursday 18th – Trafford & Hulme Branch 30th Anniversary Celebrations – meet 8pm Malt Shovels, Altrincham, then on to Old Market Tavern

Thursday 1st November – Branch Meeting: Old Market Tavern, Altrincham. Starts 8pm

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

Monday 8th – Campaigning Meeting: Egerton Arms, Chelford. Starts 8pm

Monday 22nd – Autumn Pub of the Season Award: Cock & Pheasant, Bollington. 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. davehallows2002@yahoo.co.uk*

Wednesday 10th – Social: Racecourse Hotel, Littleton Rd, Lower Kersal. From 8pm (Buses 93 and M10).

Wednesday 17th – Astley Crawl: Bull, Astley Straits 7.30pm; Cart & Horses, Manchester Rd 9pm.

Wednesday 31st – 10 Continuous Years in Good Beer Guide Presentation: Bar Fringe, Swan Street, Manchester. From 8pm.

Wednesday 7th November – New Members' Night, Brewery Visit & Social – Marble Arch, Rochdale Rd, Manchester. Starts 8pm.

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.



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Really Nice Beer Co

You may or may not have heard of the Really Nice Beer Company. However if you use the area's free houses you will almost certainly have tried some of the beers they supply.

Based in Hayfield and run by the ever-genial Dave "The Major" Ball the Really Nice Beer Company has supplied many pubs in Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Derbyshire with interesting beers from micro brewers, both near and far, for a good few years now.

However Dave decided the time had come to retire but luckily this doesn't mean that this particular good thing has come to an end.

For many years Dave has used buildings at the **Royal Hotel** in Hayfield as a store, and of course has supplied the Royal with the many and varied guest ales it has sold over that time. So, making what was an obvious move, the business has been purchased by David Ash owner of the Royal, who aims to maintain the best traditions of the company and at the same time move the business on.

Assisted on a part-time basis by his brother Bernard and full time by Andy Willett, David tells us that his aim is simple – to supply top quality cask ales from as many breweries as possible across the UK. Good news indeed for local drinkers. David is open to suggestions as to what breweries to source and plans to expand the company's trading area. He will also be offering a seven day a week service

The Major marked his retirement with a thrash at the Crown, Heaton Lane and of course *Opening Times* was there to join in the fun.

Local publicans and brewers turned up to see Dave off in fine style. The Crown chef, Roy, laid on a fantastic buffet (including some superb home-made pork pies) and this was supplemented by two platters of top rank sea-food (dressed crabs, king prawns and lobster) kindly supplied by David Ash, who also arranged for a commemorative cake. Roy was surprised (and delighted) when celebrity chef Keith Floyd also dropped by. Some pictures of the event are below with The Major surrounded by friends and well-wishers.



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For enquiries or Sales please contact Bernard or Andy on the following number:

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- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Peak Ales | Enville Brewery |
| Moorhouses Brewery | Anglo Dutch Brewery |
| Westons Cider Brewery | Banks & Taylor |
| Buffys Brewery | Mauldons |
| Millstone | Ossett |
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