

MAY 2008



Opening

THE FREE CAMRA REGIONAL MAGAZINE

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

We hereby give notice that Alastair Darling, Chancellor of the Exchequer, is barred from this pub until further notice.



OUTRAGE

Pictured aside is a poster that is going up in pubs across the country as licensees and pub goers alike hit back at the unprecedented peace time hike in beer duty imposed in March's budget.

The Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) has hit out at the Chancellor's decision to increase beer duty by 4 pence a pint in the March Budget, together with annual increases of 2% above inflation for the next four years. The consumer group claims that the increase will lead to at least 20 pence on a pint over the bar, fuelling pub closures and increasing unregulated drinking as more choose to drink at home or on the streets. This is the first time ever that beer tax has increased by 4 pence - a rise of 13%!

CAMRA recently announced that 57 pubs are lost permanently every month as the price differential between pubs and supermarkets widens. Pubs provide a regulated environment for people to enjoy alcohol socially and responsibly.

Mike Benner, Chief Executive of CAMRA said, "The Chancellor has failed to recognise that well-run community pubs are the solution to Britain's binge drinking problems. This budget will do nothing to stop binge drinking, but it will lead to pub closures on a huge scale, widen the gap between supermarket and pub prices and encourage smuggling and cross-border shopping. It's a great big nail whacked ruthlessly into the coffin of the British pub."

The 90,000 strong consumer group has condemned the announcement that beer tax will increase above inflation for the next four years, despite what happens to UK pubs and the beer market.

Mike Benner added, "Pubs are defined as local services, yet this tax rise alongside other market pressures will accelerate closures to unprecedented levels. The budget shows a disregard for our national drink and for the 15 million people who enjoy it responsibly. CAMRA called for a cut in beer duty in the Budget to help pubs compete with supermarket prices. CAMRA believes that supermarket prices of beer are unlikely to be affected significantly by the tax increase, but pubs as small businesses, will have no choice but to increase prices at the bar."

BARRED



We are now on the home straight for this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. Don't forget those important dates - 29-31 May and the venue - Edgeley Park, the home of Sale Sharks and Stockport County.

Admission is free at all times to CAMRA members so why not join now - there's a membership form on page 18. On page 10 you will find a preview of this year's beer selection; we'll have something for everyone.



There's still time to enter this year's Wild for Mild trail. It runs until 23 May and you only have to visit 12 of the participating pubs, and have a half pint of traditional cask conditioned mild in each one, to win a prize and go into our big prize draw. A list of the pubs is on page 5.

Lots of breweries are making special milds for May - details of some are in Brewery News on page 12.

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COMMENT, NOTES & CONTENTS

Opening Times – Comment

WE didn't comment on the Budget last month – I think everyone was still shell shocked by the implications for the beer and pub trade. The price of beer was already due to rise as a result of hefty increases in energy and ingredient prices. Robinson's beer went up about 10p a pint to take account of this in February and the budget has walloped another 10p plus on top of this. Factor in a possible recession and it spells trouble, for both pubs and brewers alike. Good pubs and good brewers will survive, but make no mistake the next 12 months will see the rate of pub closures accelerating and there are likely to be casualties among the micro brewers too. Meanwhile supermarket fuelled "binge drinking" will continue unabated.

However it's not all doom and gloom. Stockport Beer & Cider Festival will soon be upon us. This is the town's number one showcase for the best of British beers, ciders and perries. I hope to see you all there.

Opening Times - 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. All articles copyright CAMRA unless otherwise stated.

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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	Trafford	0161 9122274
Manchester	0161 234 1555	Derbyshire	08456 058058
Salford	0161 925 1346	Cheshire	0845 1132500
Tameside	0161 342 8355		

Copy Date for the June issue is Saturday 10th May.

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The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for May 2008 is the Boars Head on Stockport's Market Place.

The Boars Head is one of the few pubs in the area owned by the idiosyncratic Samuel Smith's Brewery of Tadcaster. Over the years Sam Smiths have ploughed their very distinctive furrow on both the local and national pub scenes. They stand out from the crowd in many ways, all of which are reflected in the Boars Head.

There are for example, no gaming machines, no televisions and no music, either live or recorded – local drinkers may recall that before Sam's change of policy this pub was something of a major venue on the local music scene. Sensitive alterations a few years ago saw the brewery put back some of the internal walls that had been removed years previously – this, too, is a characteristic of the company's operations.

Nor will you not see the brewery's name on any of their pubs but inside the ownership is clear once you glance at the bar – every product, be it beer, lager, spirits and soft drinks is Sam Smiths own brand. It is perhaps this very tight tie that enables the brewery to sell its products at such remarkably low prices. Even after the recent "Darling's Disaster" of a budget, the sole cask beer, Old Brewery Bitter, sells at just £1.32 a pint.

The Boars Head is run by Kevin and Christine Cummins whose first pub this is. They took over in late June last year following a four month spell on relief management for Sam's. Their steady and sure hands have ensured the Boars Head remains a lively and bustling market pub, with a particularly busy lunchtime trade. This is no doubt helped, not only by the well kept beer, but also the traditional lunchtime food. You will rarely see rag pudding on a menu these days but it's here along with such staples as home-made cheese and onion pie and home-made steak, mushroom and ale pie. A snip at £5.25, with kids' portions at £3.00. This is available from 12-2.30 from Tuesday to Saturday. There is also a traditional Sunday lunch from 12-3.

It's always something of a leap into the dark taking on a pub for the first time but Kevin and Christine have shown a sure touch in their running of the Boars Head. Their hard work will be recognised when the Pub of the Month award is presented on Thursday 22 May. A fine night is promised. **JC**

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Heaton Chapel & Heaton Moor with Mike Flynn

With the average price for a pint on the night at £2.40 the Heaton Moor/Heaton Chapel stagger had that Didsbury feel to it. Despite this there was a decent sized group of us out that night.

We all met up at the **George and Dragon** in Heaton Chapel, a large redbrick pub prominently sited on a road junction. It has an attractive brick and stone exterior of the type common to a number of buildings in the area. The interior has been knocked through but still has a number of distinct areas and distinct "vault" and "lounge" sides. The pub is certainly lively with a buzzing atmosphere and from my experience almost always busy. It has a typical pub chain look with food and drink deals dotted all over. The beers on the night were Boddington's Bitter and Wells Bombardier. Both beers were in reasonable form and it is commendable that the pub company are persevering with cask beer, which, when compared with what was to follow, was relatively inexpensive. Our next stop should have been **Conor's Bar** but we missed it out to due to lack of real ale.



Then we moved onto the **Elizabethan**, an open plan pub with all the 'comforts of home' as it has sofas, open gas fires, and contemporary decor. The music and lighting complement the modern interior

and ensure that ambience is appropriate to the season and time of day. On a winter's evening you can expect to see the tables to be candle lit and in the summer patio heaters warm the pleasant outdoor seating area. The service was poor on the night due to lack of staff but the beer had improved since the last time that I was in there, which is a step in the right direction. The beers that were available were Greene King IPA, Boddington's Bitter, Titanic's Iceberg, and Hop Back Crop Circle. We only tried the Iceberg, which was well received, and the Crop Circle which garnered mixed reviews.

We missed the next two bars, **Orangery** and the **Town Bar** due to lack of real ale (you will see a trend here soon) and went to the **Plough** which has just been refurbished giving it a fresh contemporary feel, bringing together old and new. The layout has a narrow, somewhat cluttered interior with a variety of areas going a long way back from the road. The beers were Slater's Top Totty, Kelham Island's Easy Rider, Fullers London Pride, and its very own Howard Town Plough Ale. Unfortunately the pub had a (temporary) failure with the cellar cooling equipment which detracted from the beer quality for some of us. Having said that we found Easy Rider and Plough Ale reasonable enough in the circumstances. A return visit here is clearly called for.



We moved on to the **Crown** which is a traditional multi room pub with a lounge, a vault and separate side room which can be used for meetings, which is where we sat. The pub feels more of a traditional local community pub than the others on Heaton Moor Road and I have to say this is a real pub goer's pub. The beers that are available are Black Sheep Bitter, Wells Bombardier, Caledonian Deuchars IPA, Tetley Dark Mild, and Boddingtons. We tried Black Sheep and the Dark Mild (the cheapest beer on the Moor) which attracted mixed reviews but were generally well received.



We then took the short walk down to the **Kro** (ex the Bakery) which was so crowded that some of the group decided it was too busy and moved on. The pub (I use the word in its loosest sense) was an old baker's shop which has

had a large conservatory built on the side of the single room. This gives the impression you are outside when you are inside. It is very largely an eatery and is clearly targeting the "wine bar crowd" which is so prevalent in the area these days. It has all the usual Kro positives and negatives, including cask ale but at a (high) price. I thought with being the first one in the suburbs that they might have gone down a different route. The single beer that was available was 3 Rivers Manchester IPA. Those of us who managed to fight our way to the bar and had the resilience to survive the wait found the beer tasted no better than 'alright'. We missed out on the bars on Shaw Road, the **Blue Cat** and **Cassidy's** (see what I mean about wine bars) due to the lack of real ale.

We then went to the **Moor Top** pub which is a traditional large 1970's built one roomed community local. At the time of visit



there was a quiz and other activities going on and the place had a buzz to it. The beers that were available at the time were Thwaites Bomber and Bath Barnstormer. The majority of the group went for the Barnstormer and most were enthusiastic and those who chose the Bomber were almost as keen. While not everybody's cup of tea as a pub the Moor Top was the surprise of the night with two very well kept and unusual, for the area, beers. One to keep an eye on, I think.

Ignoring the **Room Three Eleven** (yet another bar with no decent beer) we then walked the long trek down to Heaton Norris's **Nursery Inn**. With the pub being the National Pub of the Year a few years ago this is a trek well worth making.

The Nursery is a fine, traditional, multi-roomed, family-run pub run by the Lindsay family. It certainly is a gem with its unspoilt wood panelled 1930's interior and its own bowling green at the rear, bringing a whole new meaning to "pub games"! The beers available on the night were Hydes Original Bitter, Jekyll's Gold, Mild, Owd Oak and the guest was Allgates Shining Light, all of which were sold at keen prices. Faced with such a wide selection of ales the majority of us went for the guest ale and the Owd Oak, the latter turning out to be the best beer of the night. All the beers were well received, however, this turned out to be a fine end to an interesting night out.

As ever this can only be a snapshot of what we encountered on one particular night and cannot be taken as a once and for all judgement on the pubs or their beers. As ever, why not try some yourselves and see how you find them.

WILD FOR MILD

There is still time to take part in this year's "Wild for Mild" Mild Challenge. It runs until 23 May and to win a prize you only need to drink a half of real cask conditioned mild ale in 12 of the participating pubs.

These are the pubs taking part in this year's challenge – you should be able to pick up a card from any of them or apply to the Mild Challenge address: 39 Fox Street, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9EL:



Adswold: Adswold Hotel;
Altrincham: Old Market Tavern;
Bredbury: Greyhound;
Bridgemont: Dog & Partridge;
Burnage: Albion; **Cheadle:** Crown; Star; Queens Arms;
Cheadle Hulme: Cheadle Hulme; Church Inn; **Clayton:** Grove Inn; **Compstall:** Andrew Arms; Northumberland Arms;
Denton: Red Lion; Chapel House; Masons Arms;
Didsbury: Fletcher Moss; Didsbury; **Disley:** Dandy Cock; White Horse; White Lion;
Droylsden: Halfway House;

Fallowfield: Friendship; **Furness Vale:** Crossings; **Gatley:** Gothic; Horse & Farrier; Prince of Wales; High Grove;
Glossop: Friendship; **Gorton:** Plough; Waggon & Horses;
Great Moor: Crown; Dog & Partridge; **Hadfield:** Chieftain;
Hazel Grove: Grove; Royal Oak; Grapes; Three Tunnes;
Heald Green: Griffin; **Heaton Norris:** Silver Jubilee; Four Heaton; Nursery; **Heaviley:** Blossoms; **High Lane:** Royal Oak; **Hyde:** Queens; Cheshire Ring; Sportsman;
Longsight: New Victoria; **Manchester City Centre:** Marble Arch; Ape & Apple; Old Monkey; Grey Horse; Crown & Anchor; **Marple:** Hatters; Navigation; **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:** Three Rivers Club; Thatched Tavern; **Rusholme:** Osborne House; **Salford:** Crescent; New Oxford; **Shaw Heath:** Armoury; **Stalybridge:** Station Buffet Bar; **Stockport Centre:** Arden Arms; Tiviot; Bakers Vaults; Sun & Castle; Crown; Pineapple; Royal Oak; **Whaley Bridge:** Board Inn; Railway; Shepherds Arms; Cock Inn; **Withington:** Victoria;
Woodford: Davenport Arms; **Wythenshawe:** Airport Hotel.

PUB GRUB – EXTRA

The other evening we had the pleasure of attending the third regular Friday Curry Night at the **Cheshire Line Tavern**, Cheadle, which is held every second Friday of the month. We were treated to starters, which are to be different each month as are the curries. Four different curries on one plate and all for £5 or you could have one of the four, for £6, washed down with Banks's Bitter and Jennings Snecklifter! Although it might have seemed strange to have four curries on one plate this was not the case, as each one complimented the other. There was a choice of meat or vegetarian curries on offer, ranging from mild to hot. At the end of the meal we were both pleasantly full, and will definitely be there next time. It has become so popular that to guarantee a table you have to book in advance. So if you fancy a good culinary experience and excellent beer, arrive between 6pm and 8pm. If you don't fancy the curry night, how about testing your knowledge at the weekly pub quiz, which is held every Tuesday. *Barbara Cauchie & Adrian Palmer*



No Escape

A letter in "Opening Times" complains that, even in a multi-roomed pub, it is impossible to escape from big-screen football, and when the customers in one room ask for the set to be turned off, the licensee refuses. In another pub, the casual drinker is left with nowhere to go when presented with a stark choice between a diners-only room and one blacked out for the big match. In yet another, one of the most traditional in the area, a massive flat screen now covers one of the walls in the main lounge. In a pub newly taken over and refurbished by one of our respected local independents, every single room seems to be dominated by a screen. A visit to a pub at a quiet time during the day finds the TV blaring out an Australian soap at top volume to a handful of customers, none of whom seem to be watching.

It seems that the plummeting price of flat-screen TVs and the ease of fitting them in means that it is getting increasingly difficult to escape from the dreaded gogglebox in the pub. And, while televised football matches can be very popular, they often bring into pubs a loud, boorish, overwhelmingly male clientele which can easily deter quieter customers, especially mixed-sex groups.

By all means show live matches in your pub, and it certainly can help boost takings. But if you allow televised sport, and TV in general, to dominate to the exclusion of all else you run the risk of narrowing your customer base and ultimately damaging your trade.

Against the Tide

One place where your ears and eyes won't be assailed by TV is in a Sam Smith's pub. In the interests of saving money, Sam Smith's have decreed that their pubs should have no television and no music of any kind, either piped or live. For many pubgoers that makes them a haven of tranquility where they can enjoy a drink and a chat in peace.

Sam Smith's are often dismissed by real ale aficionados for only offering a single cask beer in their pubs and that, Old Brewery Bitter, is a distinctively malty, bitter-sweet brew very different from the pale, hoppy bitters traditionally popular in the North-West. But when kept well it is a very good beer indeed, and in reality the vast majority of pub customers do not want to spend their evening chopping and changing between different brews. Sam's do offer more variety with an impressive range of high-quality bottled beers. Their incredibly low prices are another major attraction - for a number of years now, they have done nothing but apply the annual duty rises at the bar, with the result that they are now 30 or 40p a pint below Holt's, who were once renowned as the champions of good value beer.

They also have an excellent record of conserving their pubs and carrying out sympathetic refurbishments. Indeed in recent years they even performed the rare feat of restoring internal walls in the Boar's Head in Stockport - a pub that is deservedly receiving May's Pub of the Month award. Sam's houses are, almost without exception, still "real" pubs - something enhanced by the absence of electronic distractions.

Sam Smith's is undoubtedly a firm run in a quirky, idiosyncratic way that flies in the face of much conventional wisdom. But the world would be a much duller place if every business followed the same policy, and long may they continue ploughing their distinctive furrow.

Curmudgeon Online: www.curmudgeon.org.uk

John Palmer

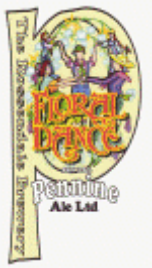
Just as we went to press came news that John Palmer, long associated with the Marble Arch, died on 30th April. We know that Jan and everyone at both Marble Brewery, whose JP Best is named in his honour, and the Marble Arch will want to send sympathies to his friends and family. We at OT would like to add ours, too.



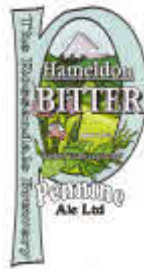
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Hyde,
Cheshire
0161 368 5000



The Griffin Inn
(Site of our Rossendale Brewery),
84-86, Hud Rake,
Haslingden,
Lancashire
01706 21 40 21

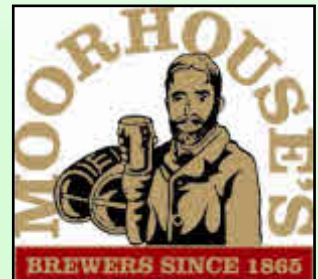
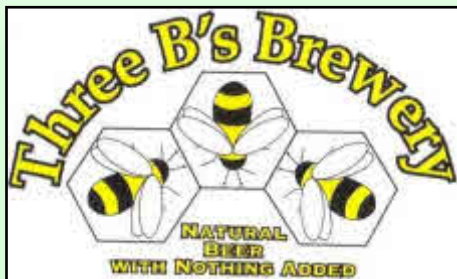


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Foreign NEWS...

Sudden Death in Altrincham

The big news this month has to be the opening of Mort Subite in Altrincham, a bar that promises to become one of the major outlets for Belgian beer not only in the North West but in the whole of the UK.

A joint operation between the Fat Loaf bar/restaurant and the people at Dranke Centrale, already well established locally as major importers of Belgian specialities, Mort Subite is a cellar bar situated beneath Fat Loaf on Greenwood Street, already home to Le Trappiste, an established Belgian beer bar of note. It's just a short walk from the bus/rail/tram interchange.

The bar plays to its strengths as a cellar bar with a dark, ornate *fin de siecle* feel. Elegant and intimate, the atmosphere is enhanced by the low level background mood music and the overall "late night" atmosphere.



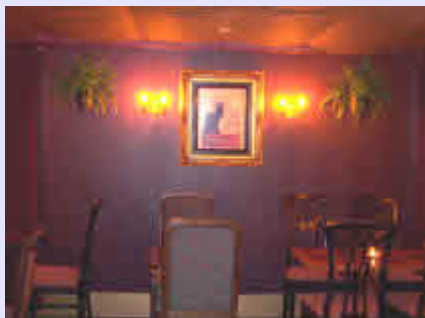
Aside, Bob Louwrier at the Mort Subite

It is essentially supplied and run by Dranke Centrale who supply the entire beer range, and Dranke Centrale's Bob Louwrier runs the bar on a day to day

basis. And it is with the beer range that Mort Subite really stands out.

By the time you read this most of the planned 263 (yes, 263) beers will be in stock and listed in the leather bound "Book of Knowledge", the extensive beer menu. British, German, French, Czech and Austrian beers will feature but the strength in depth will come from the Belgian selection. When *Opening Times* called in late April this totalled 90-plus and was set to double in number

over the coming two weeks or so. There are virtually none of the "usual suspects" either.



Right, elegant and intimate – the interior of Mort Subite

The breweries Dranke Centrale represent in the UK are present in depth – look for Slaapmutske, Achilles, Urthel, Dochter Van de Korenaar and Troubadour – along with many other specialities. Lambics, Trappist and Abbey beers are all there with many other unusual brews. This was the first time we had tried the Gouyasse Blond and Triple from the Geants brewery – very impressive.

The coming months should also see an enhanced range of Dutch beers, courtesy of Bob Louwrier who hails from Utrecht. Food is limited to mixed platters of cheese and meats which really fit the bill and are entirely in keeping with the European theme.

Mort Subite is open from 6pm to midnight(-ish) on Tuesdays through to Fridays and from 12 noon to late on Saturdays. It's strictly table service only, so at busy times it may well be best to call ahead on 0751 296 9619.

This promises to be a hugely important addition to the local beer scene and comes highly recommended.



Slaapmutske

One of the first brewers to sell its beer in the UK via Dranke Centrale was Dany de Smet's Slaapmutske Brewery. His beers now feature in several major freehouses locally – so what's the story behind them?

Dany hails from near Ghent and qualified as a brewing engineer in 1992, then starting work at the Huyghe brewery, producers of the famous Delirium Tremens. In 1995 he commenced as a lecturer at the Ghent brewing school, having been a keen home-brewer since 1992.

As with many keen home-brewers, the hobby grew into something rather bigger and the Slaapmutske beers are now brewed by Dany at the Proef brewery, a firm that helps many smaller brewers with their beers. There is a full history of the company on its excellent website at <http://home.scarlet.be/slaapmutske/>. There are now five beers in the range: Bruin (the first beer to be produced) is a spicy (but not over spiced) dark amber beer at 6% ABV. Blonde is 6.4%, highly aromatic and hoppy with a generous use of American hops while the Tripel is 8.1% and a spicy, hoppy deep golden beer. There is a seasonal Christmas beer at 8.4%, which is dark and spicy and the newest entrant is a dry-hopped Plis (5%), only available on draught. All of the other beers appear both in bottle and in draught form. While new beers, the Slaapmutske range are making waves with their inherent quality - Slaapmutske Blond recently won the 'Golden Glass' award for being the best beer in its category at the recent International Beer festival in Zwevegem.

Dochter van de Korenaar

This is a very new Belgian micro-brewer based in the far north of Belgium at Baarle Hertog (it's so far north that it's in a tiny part of Belgium entirely surrounded by the Netherlands). Set up in 2007 the beers had their UK launch at the National Winter Ales Festival in January.

Brewer Ron Mengerik visited the UK last month (he's pictured here with Tim Flynn at the New Oxford – an outlet for the brewery's beers) and we had a chance to chat to him about his beers.

There are currently two beers in the range.

Noblesse (5.5% ABV) is a firm blond beer with a good dry, hoppy finish; Bravoure (6.5%) is darker and spicier classic Belgian ale.

Ron told us that his third beer is likely to be rather stronger at 8.5%. This is planned to be dark and rich, and matured in a cognac cask. Crikey!



Belgian Belly

Many of the beers mentioned here are available from the excellent Belgian Belly on Wilbraham Road in Chorlton. Look out also for the excellent Troubadour Obscura, a wonderfully dark and rich beer, and the brand new lambics from Oud Beersel. More about these next time.



Glossop Music Scene

THE Glossop music scene has built up a good reputation over the past few years, with a variety of live music that is unchallenged in larger neighbouring towns such as Ashton and Hyde.

Take a typical weekend. On Thursday (10th April) the rebel poet and songwriter Attila the Stockbroker came to **Glossop Labour Club**. Never one to shirk his opinion and not stick to it, Attila told tales (and poems) of his life and his 28 year gigging career, his friendship with Joe Strummer from the Clash, and his regular appearances in the cabaret tent at Glastonbury every year since 1982. His love for real ale came strongly into it too....as he and we consumed the regular Labour Club tippie, Moorhouses Premier, always in good form. An excellent night. Two weeks before, at the same venue (and every 4th Thursday in the month) the Glossop Folk Train came to the Labour Club with Geoff Higginbottom, an accomplished folk singer, just as entertaining, playing a very impressive set after playing on the 6.48pm train from Manchester, as is every month, and returning, with the usual entourage who follow the monthly folk train, on the 9.39pm back from Glossop.

On 12 April, Glossop's premier rock band Cold Flame played the **Moon and Sixpence**. Patrick Rowbottom and his band, who played to an ovation at the Rail Ale Festival at Barrow Hill Roundhouse last year at Chesterfield, had not played their home town for a while, so I took it in, whilst drinking the Howard Town Wrens Nest (Deuchars IPA and Deuchars 80 Shilling also on handpump).

At the **Partington Theatre Club**, where Shaws beers remain at a steady £1.60 a pint, Patricia Hartshorne and TV star Michael Elphick played on Friday and Saturday, in Me & Marlene, following the life of Marlene Dietrich. I nipped in here between Cold Flame's two sets and as I met both members of our Sunday Powsers Walking Club and Phil Windsor from Shaws Brewery, I missed the second set in preference to a quiet beer and chat.

Down the road at **Glossop Cricket Club** there was a cabaret artist on but alas, the newly completed clubhouse sells no real ale, so it is of no interest to me at present. Gigs at the **Globe** (microbrewery and guest beers) are usually on Fridays.

More Pub News

THE **Masons Arms** in Hadfield took delivery of a batch of beer from Glossop's Howard Town Brewery in mid April, the first time they have tried it. Landlord Don Hanson has rung the changes at the Station Road pub that has been gradually trying out cask ales of late, with Deuchars IPA on for a while before this. He has also tried hard to alter the pub's former reputation as a "rough house", quite successfully I hear.

Howard Town also appear to have a permanent pump at **Ramsey's Bar** in Buxton with a varying brand of their beers on.

Another real ale gain is the **Cheshire Cheese** in Gee Cross, Hyde. This was reported two editions ago, but it seems it has been successful and is ongoing. Taylor's Landlord and John Smith's Cask have been on sale of late.

At the **Travellers Call** in Bredbury, only Lees Bitter, from their range, has been on sale recently, while two pubs appearing to be closed as we went to press, are the **Buckton Castle** in Millbrook and the **Royal Oak** at High Lane. The **Little Mill** in Rowarth is also still shut we believe, and has been advertised as for sale in the trade press

In Glossop, the **Market Tavern** continues to sell five beers from Cain's range at any time, and the food has had some good reports since the new landlady has taken over the kitchen.

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PEAK Practice

Robin Wignall's monthly round-up of the Peak Pub Scene

Marston's got their act together at the **Shady Oak**, at Fernilee and Mark Parsons took over the license in March. Initially this is on a temporary basis, but Mark likes what he has seen.

The Shady Oak is open from 12 noon except on Monday when there is only evening opening. Food is available lunch and evenings, and most importantly there continues to be a choice of good beer. Four beers are available at weekends and have included Jennings Bitter and Snecklifter, both of which sold out in a weekend. These were alongside Marston's Bitter and Pedigree. As the days get longer and hopefully the weather improves, the Shady Oak is well worth a visit, though of course for a fairly isolated pub on the Long Hill road between Whaley Bridge and Buxton, what it really needs is customers on the dark, cold nights of January and February. There is a daytime only bus link, the 61 Glossop-Hayfield-New Mills-Whaley Bridge-Buxton bus stops at the door. The service is hourly up to teatime throughout the week.



More good news is that the **Navigation** in Whaley Bridge is due to re-open in early April. More news on this next time hopefully. The re-opening of the **Goyt** may also be not too far into the future.

A bit more padding on the notes about the **Jodrell** in Whaley Bridge. A conservation architect has been employed to help the planning of alterations in this listed building. Accommodation will be aimed at more up market than B&B. The food side will be a 'sort of gastro pub,' but the aim is that all parts of the operation should give 'an affordable, good experience.' The kitchen is being gutted and all plant will be replaced. The long closed door on the station side of the building will be reopened as the entrance to the hotel. Further updates to follow.

The Navigation in Buxworth continues to source unusual beers. In mid March Cottage Pawfather, one from their Whippet Series was available. This was a malty brew and was of course in good condition.

During early April a rolling Beer Festival was in operation at the **Shepherds'** in Whaley Bridge. All eight handpumps were in operation, with the three permanent beers, Marston's Bitter, Pedigree and Jennings' Dark Mild, augmented by changing guest beers on the other five pumps. Shepherd Neame Early Bird, Rooster's YPA and Outlaw Wild Mule were early attractions, whilst beers from North Yorkshire and York breweries have been included. Castle Rock Harvest Pale is a wonderfully pale and hoppy brew.

This seems to have been a successful venture which will hopefully be repeated at intervals. Late news from the Shepherds' is that I understand Jennings Snecklifter has become a fourth permanent beer. It always sells well and quickly, a popularity which was of course reflected at the Shady Oak.

Meals at the **White Horse** in Whaley Bridge (OT April '08) have made a good start since introduction, certainly sufficient to make the venture worthwhile. A recent visit found Greene King IPA and a decent pint of Adnams Bitter on the bar.

Meals were also introduced into the **Railway** in Whaley Bridge during March, initially at lunchtime before expanding to a separate evening menu. Real chips are promised. These are to be washed down with two or three Robinson's beers, in consistent form these days.



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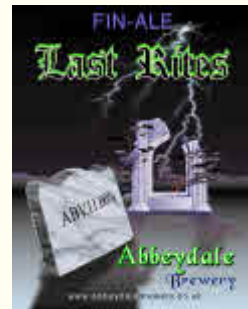
BEER PREVIEW

Once again the Festival beer managers are working hard to bring you an exciting range of beers. There will be some old favourites alongside beers brand new to the Festival.

The Festival special beer is being produced by the highly regarded Marble Brewery on Rochdale Road. Expect something pale and very hoppy – we are ordering enough to make sure that this beer will be available at every session.

There will be up to 12 **Milds** available including a brand new strong mild from Marble, the excellent Titanic Dark Mild and the tasty Black Funnel from the Newby Wyke Brewery in Lincolnshire. Established favourites such as Grainstore Rutland Panther and Arundel Sussex Mild will also be there.

Bitter lovers will be well served with up to 43 standard bitters (up to 4.2% ABV) and 32 premium brews. Old



favourites such as Abbeydale, Durham and Newby Wyke will be back alongside a host of beers new to the Festival.

Among those to look out for are beers from Hornbeam Brewery, the new California Dream Beer has gained rave reviews locally, Crown Brewery in Sheffield and the tweaked beers from Pennine Ales, the former Porters Brewery now run by Geoff Oliver. Beers from the

High House Farm Brewery near Newcastle and, closer to home, Spitting Feathers Brewery near Chester should also be making their festival debut.

If all goes according to plan there will also be beers from Dave Porter's new Outstanding Brewery Co. Which beers will be available we don't know yet but we have provisionally requested a cask Pilsner, Smoked Out, a 5% brown beer brewed using continental smoked malt and Pushing Out, a powerful yet hoppy beer at 7.3% ABV. These are subject to what Dave has brewed at the time – expect three completely different ones!

Among the other **Special Beers** will be a fruit stout, honey beers, wheat beers and ginger beers. The popular Phoenix Ginger Wheat will be making a return visit along with a Chocolate Cherry Mild from the new Dunham Massey Brewery.

There will be up to 10 **Stouts & Porters** and these will feature popular beers like Pennine Pitch Porter, Fullers London Porter, Titanic Stout and some specially matured Hornbeam Dark Domination Porter – this six per cent beer has been maturing at the brewery since January so expect a treat.

Fans of the more powerful beers will also be catered for with 10 **Strong or Old Ales**. Old Tom will be back, as usual, along with Whim Black Christmas (6.5%), Phoenix Earthquake (7.7%) and the very strong Abbeydale Last Rites at a massive 11%. You have been warned.

Finally – **foreign beer** should be making an appearance this year. We are hoping to have a range of draught lambics and cherry lambics from Belgium. Details hadn't been finalised as we went to press but we are aiming to have a selection from Girardin, De Cam, Oud Beersel, and Cantillon. Look out for them next to the cider bar.





National News

EARLY April saw two well known brewers surrender their independence. Both were surprising moves.

First to go was the **Wychwood Brewery** of Witney in Oxfordshire. This company, owned by Refresh UK, produces the Wychwood beers, notably the well-known Hobgoblin, along with the revived Brakspear beers. Surprisingly they also owned the rights to the famous Manns Brown Ale as well as producing Prince Charles' Duchy Originals beers.

The purchaser, in a reported £10 million deal, was Marston, who will now add the brewery to their existing portfolio that already includes Jennings of Cumbria and Ringwood of Hampshire. The Wychwood, and hopefully the Brakspear, beers, will be available to local Marston's pubs. Look out for them.

Hot on the heels of this takeover came news of another buyout. This time it was north of the border with Scottish & Newcastle, in its last act as an independent concern, taking over **Caledonian Brewery** of Edinburgh, a move that will see ownership of one of the more successful Scottish breweries passing to Heineken. In a complex deal a few years ago S&N had already acquired the premises and plant of Caledonian along with a 30% stake in the brewing company that ran the brewery and owned the brands.

It remains to be seen what Heineken do with a dedicated cask ale brewer. The fear must be that they will be tempted to sell off the valuable Edinburgh site and move production to either Tadcaster or the Royal Brewery at Moss Side. This we think would be a sure fire way to kill off the brand but who knows what logic prevails in the global corporate mind?

Family Brewers

As usual, our local family brewers have some seasonal beers out this month.

Robinson's – Top Tipple (3.9% ABV) is still out and has been joined for the next six months by Dizzy Blonde (3.8%), a welcome return for one of last year's more successful seasonals. Look out too, for an interesting variant of Old Tom. As part of Sainsbury's beer competition, Robbies entered two Old Tom variants, one with chocolate and one with ginger. The ginger version made it through the preliminary judging round and will appear on Sainsbury's shelves for a month from August 14.

Hydes – have a new beer out this month. This is Eager Beaver (4.4%) a mid brown beer with a spicy aroma and a bitter, floral taste. Hydes also produced a beer for St George's Day, the 4.3% St George's Bitter, brewed with traditional English ingredients. This was made available to all of the company's managed houses.

Holts – also have a seasonal beer out each month this year. The beer for May is Maple Moon (4.8%), a brown beer brewed with amber malts, Cascade hops and "a teasing glimmer of maple syrup".

Micro Magic

You can't keep a good brewer down and the big news this month is that Dave Porter is back. Those who know Dave will appreciate the name of his new company, the Bury-based

Outstanding Brewery Co. There will be two parallel plants, the main one of 15 barrel capacity and a smaller 2½ barrel plant for short production run and experimental beers.

All the beers will eventually be available in cask and bottle, and the extensive range is expected to include:

OSB 4.4% A mid range copper coloured ale, with a light bitterness and distinctive citrus hop finish in the nose and mouth feel; **SOS** 4.5% Light brown ale strictly for those that like bitter beer, dry and intensely bitter with an incredible blast of late hop dominance; **Blond** 4.5% Only Maris Otter low colour malt gives this beer a very pale appearance that looks like a lager but is definitely an ale. Lightly bittered with a heavy concentration of flavour towards citrus and floral nose and mouth feel; **Ginger** 4.5% Light brown beer with a noticeable hint (not overpowering) of ginger in the nose and flavour; **Smoked Out** 5.0% A mid brown beer brewed with traditional continental smoked lager malt; **Standing Out** 5.5% A pale golden ale, dry and bitter with a good load of aroma hop thrown in to the production for good measure; **Stout** 5.5% A true representation of the beer style, thick, jet black, bitter, with very strong liquorice and roast flavours in the finish; **Pushing Out** 7.3% A pale golden ale with a very strong distinctive dry, bitter flavour, and a powerful unforgettable hop aroma; **Pilsner** 5.0% Crisp, sharp and clean, how a good lager should taste; **Clouded Out** 5.0% A wheat beer with earthy, spicy, lemony flavours; **Amber Bock** 6.0% A strong lager brewed with amber malt and authentic Bock yeast to recreate the classic European beer style.

If all goes according to plan at least three of these beers will be available at Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. Meanwhile elsewhere...

Dunham Massey Brewery – has produced an excellent Light Mild, a superbly refreshing beer that sold out in next to no time. Also out, in bottle form only, is Chocolate Cherry Mild, the Dunham Dark with cherry juice and natural cherry flavours.

Marble Brewery – two excellent beers out. Marble IPA is a 6.6%, amber ale with a true IPA bitterness. Now available after a month's maturation at the brewery. Coming this month is Full Cut Mild, a 6% strong mild brewed with Sarah Hughes Ruby in mind but with a touch more hop character.

Danetown – this brewery based at the Lowes Arms in Denton has ceased to brew and we understand there are no plans to recommence.

Hornbeam – also based in Denton, Hornbeam is by contrast going great guns. Recent beers have been Malt Mountain (3.6%) a superb rich dark mild, and California Dream Beer, a copper coloured very hoppy and floral beer with a citrus finish. This has been brewed to two strengths, 4.4% and 4.8% ABV. The plan now is to produce two new beers each month although we didn't have details of the May beers as we went to press.

Beartown – Polar Eclipse stout keeps winning awards and has done very well in national competitions. There is a new beer out about every six weeks to promote the Animals Asia Foundation. Harley (4.1%) was a golden, blonde beer and this is to be followed by Ursa Major (4.5%), a pale IPA-style beer.

Millstone – still running to stand still, such is demand. At the end of May the next beer in the "pub names" series will be out. This is Gate Hangs Well, a 4.1% pale and hoppy brew.

Bazens' out this month is Cook Street IPA (4.6%), a pale, well-hopped beer to commemorate the old Threlfalls Brewery in Salford. There will be two new milds for this month, too – a light mild at 3.8% and a dark coffee mild at 4.6%.

Phoenix – the regular May specials will be out again this year, including the excellent Black Shadow Mild (4%), Mayfly (4.5%) and White Tornado (4.3%). The new 3.8% Hopsack, a very pale and hoppy beer is selling extremely well – it is now a regular at the Lowes Arms in Denton.

Pennine Ales – New owner/brewer Geoff Oliver has tweaked several of the former Porters beer and is getting very good feedback – Floral Dance has been particularly good of late. There has also been work at the brewery including the purchase of a refrigerated container to use as a beer store.

Pictish – Black Diamond Mild (3.5%) is the special for this month. Look out also for the first appearance in two years of Celtic Warrior, the token Pictish "brown beer".

Stockport Supping

WITH CLIFTON BELL




For Gillian Tyrrell it was a case of now or never to take over as licensee of the **White Hart** in Hazel Grove, as Pat Newbold retired as tenant of the Robinson's pub where she had served her customers for the

past 23 years.

Gillian (pictured above with Brewery Chairman Peter Robinson) explained: "It was just something I felt I had to do or I might spend the rest of my life regretting not making the decision." In fact, Gillian is already well versed in the day to day running of the White Hart, and having worked there on a part time basis for 27 years she already knows many of the customers by name.

I called in to the **Calverts Court** (St Petersgate) and spoke to manager Div Lad. Div was extremely pleased at how the recent Wetherspoon's beer festival had gone in the pub with 70 casks of guest ales sold. This has prompted him to increase the number of guest beers available alongside the three permanent cask beers.

Since Jo Worthington took over the helm at the **Carousel** in Reddish, the upstairs function room is now operational, and every Monday night you can learn to dance the Salsa. It has proved very popular, and you need to phone for



details. There is an opportunity to tax your brain with the quiz night every Wednesday, and half way through the quiz there is a beer break, with sandwiches provided. If these two events don't quench your thirst for enjoyment, there has been a highly successful psychic night, which will be repeated later this year, due to its popularity. All in all good news for this recent real ale gain where, I am told, the cask ales are also selling well.

Elsewhere in Reddish the **Grey Horse** has reopened as a Holt's house after a massive refurbishment. A full report next month. The **Bulls Head** is also open again but still sells no real ale.

In the Town Centre, I am told that the **Egerton Arms** has stopped selling cask beer. I have yet to check this out myself and hope it's not true as this has been a regular real ale outlet for a long time now. Nearby I have noticed on more than one occasion that the handpumps in the **Stockport Arms** are now unmarked and, I guess, disused.

One or two town centre pubs are also on the market at the moment. Café Bar **SK One** has been up for sale for some time. It's never sold real ale or even anything interesting in bottle. A real lost opportunity this, I've always thought. The **Kings Head** on Tiviot Dale is up for auction, while the **Bishop Blaize** on Hillgate can be yours for £195,000, that's £35,000 more than the **Comfortable Gill** on King Street West.

Finally, I have heard that Angella Lindsay will be leaving the **Navigation** at the end of this month. During her time there she has won an armful of CAMRA awards and really put the pub on the map. I know she leaves with the best wishes of all at *Opening Times*. Again, more next time.

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**Manchester
MATTERS**



AFTER lauding **Senger** (Chester Street, off Oxford Road) last month it promptly closed down! Owner John Henley tells me that the financial projections just weren't stacking up and he had no option but to cease trading from the site. This is a great shame as this was a bar with a great deal of promise. John's other operation at **Bar Fringe** (Swan Street) continues entirely unchanged.

Oxford Road

A recent foray around the Oxford Road area found some changes. The **Lass o' Gowrie** has gone for a more regimented seating arrangement in the main room, with the replacement of some smaller tables with larger refectory-style ones allied with old pews or benches. It is getting more of the ale house look, if you understand me. Along at **Kro2**, they were selling a very decent pint of Taylor Landlord for a whopping £2.70, alongside that were Jennings Cumberland, and Pedigree.

I popped in to the new bar on Grosvenor Street, **Trof** (sibling of the Trof in Fallowfield). It occupies the former Institute of the Deaf and Dumb, this gothic pile has been very tastefully remodelled inside, with bars upstairs and down; food is a part of the offering too. All good stuff, and a fine space results. I just cannot help but wonder if they have missed a trick here? Where's the cask ale? The place has an air of discernment and class about it, why not allow those customers to try the best of British beers? Cask beers.



The **Ford Madox Brown** (Wetherspoon) opposite Whitworth Park is a fine place to spend time. Interesting decor marries well with Greene King IPA and Abbot, Pedigree, and three other beers on the bar. Trading well since opening in December.

Up in Fallowfield, a packed out **Friendship** had a couple of guests to supplement the Hydes range - Morland bitter, and Cotleigh Tawny. Both seldom seen around here I think. Nearby the **Scream** also known as **Robinski's** has no cask beer but does sell three traditional draught ciders from Westons. At Hydes' **Victoria** in Withington, an ebullient Edgar and Janice told me that the covering on the outside drinking area was being extended, and that a second outside TV was being installed. Inside, the Hydes Mild, Bitter, and Jekyll's, had seasonal beer Trojan Horse standing alongside. Moving south again, trade at the **Didsbury** was brisk when I called. From a choice of four to six beers, I sampled an interesting beer called Flying Herbert from Middlesbrough's North Yorks brewery.

East Manchester

More doom and gloom. The **Royal Oak** on Ogden Lane in Openshaw is closed and, I suspect, awaiting its fate. Also awaiting its fate is the **Albion** on Ashton Old Road which has been compulsorily purchased for a redevelopment of the area. Further down the road the **Queen Anne** briefly lifted my spirits with a sign outside advertising the availability of cask beers. This would be a first for this pub - but inside there were none to be found and my enquiries met with uncomprehending bemusement.

On Abbey Hey Lane, the **Abbey Hey Hotel** is being knocked about and, I guess, being converted to other use. Nearby the **Hamlet** is optimistically displaying a "run this pub" sign. Hmm, perhaps not. Finally, the **Hare & Hounds** is being spruced up - I wonder if this includes the introduction of real ale...



The Deansgate, Deansgate, Manchester

THE Deansgate, dwarfed by the nearby Bethams Tower, has had many incarnations over the years. It started life as the Crown, a good old fashioned Wilsons boozier latterly owned by Vaux Breweries (remember them?). Finally it was bought by Hale Leisure, owners of many prominent Manchester watering holes, including Jabez Clegg in the University area. Initially they turned the pub into Galvin's Irish Bar (although the "Irish" tag didn't last too long) but last year, after a long period of closure and refurbishment, the pub re-emerged as the Deansgate.

With an eye on the Hilton Hotel next door and office developments across the road, the pub has a decidedly upmarket look with an attractive, rambling "gentlemen's club" appearance. Rich shades and dark furnishings add to the overall effect. Accessed via the first floor, the Deansgate has one of the best outdoor drinking areas in the City Centre, too.

It's managed for Hale Leisure by Jon Anderson, who has long connections with the company, having opened Jabez Clegg for it many years ago. He was enticed back to Hale Leisure to run the Deansgate on their behalf and his sure touch has ensured a very classy operation.



Being a keen beer man, Jon has gradually extended the cask offering at the pub and there are now usually four varying cask ales on the bar. On this visit the beers comprised Robinson's Unicorn, Hydes Original and Owd Oak, plus Coach



House St George's Ale. Coach House beers are a regular feature here and while I have heard quite a few people being less than complimentary about this brewery's products, I have found them to be tasty, well-made beers. As an aside look out for their Blueberry Bitter – I was sure I'd hate this but instead found it surprisingly good.

The food offering reflects the traditional style of the pub, with a sound menu offering may pub food staples. Sandwiches are from £4.05 to £6.25; "Light Bites" are £2.92 to £3.95, Jacket Potatoes are £3.95 to £5.25 and the mains run from £4.95 to £7.95.

I went for the chicken, ham and leek pie at £6.95, a personal favourite. This was a fine example with a generous slice of proper pie comprising all the main ingredients in a rich creamy sauce. Crisp chips, peas and a smack jug of gravy made for a very filling plateful. I washed this down with a fine pint of the Unicorn and couldn't resist Jon's offer of a half of the Owd Oak which was at its dark chocolately best.

I had no room for pudding – again a traditional trio of sticky toffee pudding, treacle sponge and Alabama chocolate fudge cake, all at £2.95.

You can eat at the Deansgate every day from 12 noon to 5.00pm. Highly recommended. **JC**

THE BEECH, CHORLTON

HAVING heard various rumours about the Beech, current and future, the reality is far more encouraging, writes Heather Airlie.

Although Jimmy is still around, he has returned to the day job and step-daughter Joanne has taken over running the pub. Her influence is already showing as some less savoury characters have been either banned or controlled by her firm hand.



Ken Loach, director of Kes, has shown an interest in using the snug as a location for his next venture for the BBC, taking a liking to its many original features. The pub has been showing its age and plans are in place to redecorate throughout, starting with the snug. This should start when funding permits, hopefully before summer, but after the proposed filming. As the pubco will not provide funding for redecoration, the money has be found in-house, always difficult, but harder with the latest blow to hit pubs, the tax rise. It should enhance the heritage features that remain and bring a homogenous colour scheme to the three rooms.


The beer garden to the rear has already been revamped to make better use of the space and natural light. This will be the venue for Morris Dancers on Thursday July 17.

No-nonsense Joanne would welcome the return of those that drifted away in previous months and explains "what I really want is to keep all my customers happy and safe and if it means I have to be tough on some people that's what I'll do". To encourage real ale fans she is open to suggestions for future guest ales, although there are no guarantees that they will be available immediately. Her Mum continues to supply her home-made sandwiches for when the munchies bite.

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Trafford & Hulme PUB NEWS



TRAFFORD branch recently enjoyed a social night out giving their Spring Pub of the Season award to The **Volunteer Hotel** on Cross Street, Sale. This impressive public house first opened in 1898, however it stands on the site of an even earlier pub called the White Lion, dating from 1807. Now the property of Holt's Brewery, the Volunteer Hotel got its name from the Ashton-on-Mersey / Sale Loyal Volunteers fighting force, raised to counter a threatened Napoleonic invasion of England in 1803. The Volunteers drilled on the nearby Sale Moor, just east of the present A56.

The present licensees are Jim and Tracy Roberts (*pictured above receiving their award from Branch Chair Bev Rae, left*). They are relative newcomers to the pub trade, but since taking over in July 2007 they have worked tirelessly to ensure that the Holt's cask ales are served to the highest quality. They have done excellent work in expanding the range of ales they sell. Holt's Mild, a one time regular in the pub has been re-introduced and they also stock the seasonal Holts craft ales, along with the standard bitter.

Although the pub is situated on the side of the busy A56, it still retains its feel as a locals' pub. Events during the month include a quiz night on Thursdays, folk and acoustic evenings on two Sundays in the month, a live act on a Saturday every fortnight. The pub also has a thriving and successful League Darts team.

Trafford branch would like to thank Jim and Tracy for their hospitality on the evening, and for the splendid buffet they provided. Thanks also to their staff for keeping the beer flowing.

Other Trafford & Hulme News

Heather Airlie reports from Trafford & Hulme CAMRA's City Centre pubs...

The **Ape and Apple** now has a quiz on Thursdays, but sadly no seasonal ale on as it hadn't settled. The **Bridge**, further down John Dalton Street is looking good. Although the Old Peculier had just run out, the Theakston Best and Thwaites Bomber were both on form.

The now smoke-free **Corbieres** on Half Moon Street has become a gem, as although their only ale is Bazen's Pacific, at £2.20 a pint it's a snip. The **Moon under Water**, the Deansgate Wetherspoons, had a fine selection from their festival list and reported promising sales, with the try three third pints going well. The **Waterhouse**, near St Peter's Square had a similar but different range and were again tasty. It's a shame the festival beers weren't the norm rather than a special.



THE LANTERN PIKE , LITTLE HAYFIELD

The Lantern Pike, Little Hayfield, sits in a hollow alongside the Hayfield to Glossop road; almost within the shadow of Kinder Scout, writes Geoff Williamson. The picturesque stone pub is popular in summer with walkers and other visitors to the High Peak area and the pleasant elevated rear patio area commands superb views along the Sett Valley to the west and also of nearby Lantern Pike hill from which the pub takes its name. Inside, however, the pub is equally enjoyable in winter with the small cosy lounge being warmed by the open fire.

This part of the Peak District has a number of strong connections with early episodes of Coronation Street with actors Arthur Lowe and Pat Phoenix being previous residents of the area, as was producer Bill Podmore. Nowhere, arguably, has stronger links however than the Lantern Pike with a number of the earliest episodes being penned by series originator, and one time local resident, Tony Warren while sitting in the lounge bar close to the fire. Many years later Tony wrote to a previous licensee about his fond memories of the pub and this letter along with photos of the original cast hangs in a frame on the wall close to the spot where Tony once sat.

The pub's notable history did not, however,

start in the 1960's with Coronation Street as it hit the headlines in 1927 when the landlady at the time was brutally murdered upstairs in the pub. The perpetrator was a local man who had fallen on hard times during the depression and his motive was to steal the pub's takings. He was caught and hanged soon afterwards and some say the pub remains haunted by the murdered landlady.

Today the Lantern Pike is a comfortable country inn with separate dining areas in addition to the cosy lounge bar; five en-suite bedrooms also provide accommodation for visitors wishing to stay in the area.

The licensees, Tom & Stella Cunliffe, offer an extensive menu from bar snacks to 'a la carte' and of course the ever popular Sunday lunches. The regular hand-pulled beers on offer are Black Sheep Best Bitter, Taylor's Landlord, plus Wren's Nest from local Glossop brewery Howard Town. The additional trade brought by the summer visitors allows Tom to add a further cask beer to these regulars.

The superb surrounding hills and valleys make this area a giant playground for all those interested in almost any form of outdoor pursuit. Whether you are such a person, or merely wish to take in the views while partaking of the fare on offer you will certainly enjoy your visit to the Lantern Pike. Some limited dedicated parking space is available to the front and side of the pub, which can also be reached on bus service 61 connecting Glossop with New Mills and Buxton. Little Hayfield is also within walking distance of Hayfield itself which features a number of other good pubs and is accessible by other bus services in addition to the Sett Valley Trail for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.



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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 8th May – Branch Meeting: Arden Arms, Millgate, Stockport. **Guest Speaker Oliver Robinson.** Starts 8pm.

Saturday 10th – Informal Social at Macclesfield Beer Festival. From 12 noon.

Friday 16th – Stagger: Stockport North & Portwood – meet 7.30pm Park, Newbridge Lane; 8.30 Railway, Avenue Street.

Thursday 22nd – Pub of the Month presentation to the Boars Head, Market Place, Stockport. From 8.00pm

Tuesday 22nd – Sunday 1st June – setting up, running and taking down Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. Will all members please lend a hand.

Thursday 12th June – Branch Meeting: The Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle Hulme. Starts 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 12th – Branch Meeting: Cheshire Ring, Hyde. Starts

8.30pm.

Saturday 24th – Minibus Social Trip around Buxton area including Quiet Woman, Earl Sterndale and Quiet Woman, Chelmorton.

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 22nd – Timperley survey, 8pm Stonemasons Arms, Stockport Road. 9pm Quarry Bank, Bloomsbury Lane. 10pm Moss Trooper, Moss Lane,

Thursday 5th June – Branch Meeting: Old Market Tavern, Altrincham. 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*

Friday 9th & Saturday 10th – Macclesfield Beer Festival at Macclesfield Rugby Club.

Monday 19th – Post Festival Social and Cask Choice Award: Jolly Sailor, Macclesfield. From 8.00pm

Monday 9th June – Campaigning Meeting: Lord Eldon, Knutsford. 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. davehallows2002@yahoo.co.uk

Wednesday 14th – Peel Green & Patricroft Crawl: 7.30 Grapes Hotel; 8.15 Stanley Arms, both Liverpool Rd.

Wednesday 21st – Branch Meeting: New Oxford, Bexley Sq, Salford. Starts 8.00pm

Wednesday 28th – Continental Beer Crawl: Sand Bar, Grosvenor St 7.30; Kro Piccadilly 9.00; finish at Bar Fringe.

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