

## Brewers Under Threat

**Fair Pint campaigners head for Europe and threaten to undermine craft brewers' pubs**

Forgive them, Lord, for they know not what they do, *writes Roger Protz*. Publicans leading the Fair Pint campaign have joined forces with the Federation of Small Businesses and the GMB trade union to take their campaign against the tied-house system to the European parliament. They are in danger of opening a Pandora's Box that could spell ruin for Britain's regional and smaller craft breweries for whom the tie is their lifeline.

The justifiable complaints against the behaviour of the giant pubcos, which force heavily discounted lagers and keg beers on their tenants and lessees, restricting choice for consumers, is in danger of getting lost in a general review of the tie by the European Commission. If the tie were to be banned in Britain, scores of independent brewers -- who mainly produce cask beer -- would consider the game was not worth the candle and get out of brewing.

Fair Pint, FSB and GMB will focus on the EU's Directorate General for Competition, which will decide whether to renew a series of opt-outs -- known as block exemptions -- from European competition law. The British tied-house system has been reviewed a number of times by the directorate and given an exemption but there is always the danger the exemption could be lifted. The current exemption expires in 2010.

### Heading For Brussels

The campaigners are heading for Brussels with the wind in the sales following a damning report on the behaviour of the pubcos by parliament's Business & Enterprise Committee. But a press statement by Fair Pint shows it does not distinguish between the behaviour of the pubcos and independent brewers. Fair Pint says: "It's an opportunity for licensees in the UK to make a strong case to the European Commission as to why the tie in the UK should not be allowed to continue. The European Commission has received complaints in the past about the situation in the UK and we expect this review will not simply be rubber-stamped, as perhaps some pubco and brewery executives hope or expect."

Note that the statement says "pubco and brewery executives". Clearly Fair Pint does not distinguish between the likes of Punch and Enterprise Inns and independent breweries. With the exception of Heineken's Scottish & Newcastle subsidiary, the global brewers operating in Britain do not operate tied estates. It's the likes of Robinsons, Holts, Hydes and JW Lees, along with many smaller craft brewers who have begun building small tied estates, who would be hit hardest by a ban on the tie. Without the tie, their pubs would be swamped by heavily-discounted lagers and keg beers. Cask beer would be driven from the bar tops at the very time it's enjoying a revival.

Speaking at his annual meeting, Fuller's chairman Michael Turner hit out at the Fair Pint tactics. He said it could lead to disaster. It had taken the pub trade many years to recover from the ill-thought-out government Beer Orders of the early 1990s, he added, which wanted to turn thousands of pubs into free houses, and action by the EU could have a similar result.

A key question: why is the GMB union getting into bed with free marketers such as Fair Pint and the FSB? The role of the GMB is surely to defend its members' jobs -- and they could be threatened if the tie were to go.



### Also in this issue...



**Another record breaking Stockport Beer Festival – review and pictures pages 10 and 11**





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## COMMENT, NOTES & CONTENTS

### Opening Times – Comment

As you will read on the centre pages, this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival once again broke all records. While attendance and beer sales were well up, the real hit was traditional cider and perry where sales were almost 30% up on last year's figure, itself a record. Many thanks to everyone who came along and made the Festival such a success.

Now for a little controversy. Last month I was chatting to a local licensee and, not for the first time, was told that there was a lack of support from CAMRA whose members apparently hardly ever called. Given that CAMRA members cover all ages and sexes, and come in all shapes and sizes (and as far as I know none have 'CAMRA member' tattooed on their forehead), my response, was "how do you know"? And of course, they didn't. So folks, can we please lay this hoary old chestnut to rest?

Finally, many thanks to Roger Protz for allowing us to use an item from his blog on the front page. Check it out at: <http://www.beer-pages.com/blog.html>.

### 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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### Opening Times 299 - Contents

Pub of the Month	3	Pub Grub	13
Macc Pub of the Year	4	Book Review	15
T&H Pub of the Season	5	Brewery News	16
Beer Festival News	5	Manchester Matters	16
Stagger	7	Cask Tavern	16
High Peak Pub News	8	Curmudgeon	17
Peak Practice	9	CAMRA Calling	18
Festival Review	11	OT Birthday Beer	19
Stockport Supping	12		



# Pub OF THE Month AWARD



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for July is the Circus Tavern on Portland Street in Manchester City Centre. Dave Platt tells you all about it.

The Circus Tavern is one of the great survivors. Just one bay wide and set in a row of probably late 18th Century buildings, it has defied the passage of time to become one of the city's great heritage pubs.



While its near neighbour, the Grey Horse, has been opened out over the years, the Circus has managed to keep its 19th century interior completely intact. Inside you will find a corridor with two simple rooms off to the right, separated from the corridor by grained matchboard partitions.

The bar, tucked under the stairs, is just wide enough for one person to serve beer. There is a history of the building on the left hand wall as you go in, and it was nominated as a "Tetley Heritage Pub" in 1994.

This however is no sterile museum piece. For many years now this has been the haunt of many famous names from the worlds of sport and show business, with the likes of Ricky Hatton calling in from time to time.

For many years it was run by Terry Corless but in recent times "Greek George" has been mine host. George has been a personality on the city's pub scene for many years and he has made the Circus very much his own. Many of the internal walls and partitions are covered by pictures, photos and other memorabilia that mark a lifetime in the licensed trade.

The theoretical capacity of the pub is just 40 people and table service is often the norm at busy times to relieve congestion around the tiny bar.

There is only one cask beer sold, and that is Tetley Bitter. While this is often dismissed as a "national brand", it is invariably a superb tasty pint at the Circus. Many will undoubtedly be downed on the night of the presentation – Thursday 23 July. If you want a seat it might be best to get there at lunchtime!

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## Macclesfield & East Cheshire CAMRA Pub of the Year

MACCLESFIELD and East Cheshire branch of CAMRA launched Local Pubs Week by presenting their Pub of the Year award to the **Harrington Arms**, Gawsworth. On CAMRA's National Inventory of unspoilt pubs, attached to a dairy farm, the pub had been with one family for several generations, so when it was announced that the landlady was retiring, the branch had many concerns.

Caroline and Andy Wightman took over in October 2006 and have gradually and carefully redecorated and rejuvenated the pub, without losing any of its historic character and features - in fact, they have enhanced them. Oak flooring has been added in the bar area and real fires reinstated throughout. There is one bar, with four rooms, one with long wooden settles, and a back room - complete with original farmhouse kitchen range - has been opened up. The quarry tiled floors in the corridor and the old wooden tables and settles in the tap room still give a timeless feel to the pub.

The pub attracts many from the local community as well as regulars and visitors from further afield. Owned by Robinsons, there is always their seasonal as well as the regular Unicorn and Hatters Mild, and good pub food is now available.

This is a traditional pub in every sense of the word, blending the heritage of a historic building with excellent beers and good food. Since Andy and Caroline arrived the pub has gone from strength to strength and Macclesfield and East Cheshire branch had no hesitation in voting the Harrington Arms, Gawsworth their Pub of the Year.

Naturally the couple were delighted. Caroline told *Opening Times* "Along with our staff and customers we were over the moon when we heard that we had been singled out as the best. We have been named as Pub of the Season before, but to go on and win the overall title is a huge honour. This achievement is a real credit to all our staff who take an enormous pride, not just in the quality of our beer, but in everything that we do."

*Below - Caroline and Andy proudly display their award. This historic pub is in the background.*





**C**OME over to Urmston on Thursday 23 July, when Trafford & Hulme Branch will be presenting their Pub of the Season Award for Summer 2009 to **The Steamhouse** at Urmston railway station (8 pm onwards), *writes Neil Worthington*.

What a transformation! For fifteen years Urmston's original station building lay derelict after a modern ticket office was built on the opposite side of the line. It was succumbing to the ravages of flood, fire and tempest, not to mention vandalism. To locals it seemed it would soon have to be demolished.

Fortunately it was rescued by the vision of a local entrepreneur, Rob Foster, who talked Network Rail and the Railway Heritage Trust into helping him fund its conversion into Urmston's newest pub, **The Steamhouse**. Ironically, there used to be a pub on more or less the same spot in the 19th century, the Duke of York, demolished to make way for the station in 1872.

The Steamhouse only opened on 30 June 2008 and it has already become a firm favourite with locals and visitors who appreciate cask ale. It's increased Urmston's cask ale outlets from three to four and boosted the availability of independently brewed beers. There are four handpumps, with usually two beers from Hyde's (bitter and a seasonal or dark mild) and two from local micro breweries such as Dunham Massey, Hornbeam or Bazens'. Belgian breweries feature strongly among the bottled beers.

Externally the building looks much as it must have done in 1873, except that the platform canopy has not been restored. There are even traditional enamel advertisements fixed to the walls, but now they advertise the likes of Duvel and Vedett beers, not Spratt's dog biscuits. But inside there's no hint of the building's former use – don't expect anything like Stalybridge Buffet Bar, this looks more like a Scottish hunting lodge. The floors and walls were too badly damaged to be renovated, and in any case there were very few internal doorways. What we have now is a much more open building, and just as well on a Friday night when there are crowds round the bar.

The ceilings have been opened up to give a very airy feel to the main bar, but separate side rooms have been created out of what used to be store rooms and the stationmaster's house. There's no real cellar: one has had to be created, at the side of the pub, on the site of what once were the station toilets. It's quite a long pull to the bar! But there are a couple of open fireplaces that feature the traditional roaring log fires in winter.

The pub is managed by Lisa Sykes with assistance from Chris Sheehan, who's also the head chef and responsible for the very popular Sunday carvery. Food is served every day from noon till 6 p.m. or so, and the pub stays open for drinks until 11 p.m. (midnight on Saturdays and Sundays). The regular team behind the bar consists of Sam, James and Sarah who between them create a very lively atmosphere.

Events include the Nuts Poker League on Tuesdays (no cash stakes of course), an Open Mike night on Thursdays and live music (acoustic) on Sunday nights. And don't be surprised to find other entertainment from time to time, including a wandering magician.

If you don't live near a railway station the pub is also served by numerous bus routes including the 15, 22, 23, 245 and 255.



## BEER FESTIVAL NEWS

**Trafford and Hulme Branch gear up for this month's Chorlton Beer Festival while Graham Donning updates on the National Winter Ales Festival**

**T**he Fifth Chorlton Beer festival takes place on Friday 10th and Saturday 11th July, *writes Beverley Gobbett*. This year we have festival commemorative pint glasses for you to enjoy sampling our 50, Yes 50 different beers.

We open at 5pm on the Friday and close at 10.30pm so there is still time to enjoy the delights of the cask beer pubs of Chorlton. We open again at 2pm on the Saturday until 10.30pm (beer permitting of course). Please remember that this festival is a full family affair so children on Saturday afternoon and dogs are welcome but the children must be off site by 7pm, the dogs can stay !!

You can access the festival site by going on our website and using the link in our Dates for your Diary. We shall have a Membership stand and any CAMRA member who wishes to volunteer to serve are more than welcome but you must register your name with myself prior to the event.

I am afraid that we are unable to accept volunteers on the day. For anyone who has attended this festival before you will understand why we usually run out of beer. The atmosphere is amazing with everyone in the grounds of the church whilst a band plays, candles twinkle and the smell of good food being cooked wafts all around you. So, as we do each year, we have ordered a third more beer. Now I challenge you to drink us dry again.

### National Winter Ales On The Move

**A**s some of you will know, the CIS Management announced that the New Century Hall was to be "closed" to any external event from December 2009. The reasons, I am told, are that the hall requires refurbishment and would cost circa £1m. The CIS plan to build a larger, newer building on the site on Miller Street (14 acres) but, as far as I am aware, they will not be including any form of facility similar to the NCH.

With this in mind and the fact that I had been looking for an alternative anyway (the obvious ones being far too expensive) the Working Party visited the Sheridan Suite, also known as "The Venue" - <http://www.sheridan1838.co.uk/> - and has decided (subject to the National Executive of CAMRA's approval) that we would move the NWF to the Venue for 2010. This, though not in central Manchester, is just 1.1 miles from the City Centre edge and within easy reach of The Northern Quarter where many of the free houses are located and Victoria Station and the adjacent interchange for Piccadilly. It is easily accessible by 12 service buses and with a huge (free) car park is ideal for Branches organising coach trips to the event.

The National Winter Ales Festival will take place between Wednesday 20 – Saturday 23 January 2010. The actual Champion Winter Beer of Britain tasting panel and competition will convene from Wednesday morning followed by the Trade Session from 2.30pm and general public from 5.00pm.

The winners of the competition will be announced during the Trade Session. This will mean that all of the beers will be available (if ready for serving!) at every session. Also all of the beers will be on one level! We also propose to open from noon on Thursday with free entry to card carrying CAMRA members up to 4pm and then discounted entry at every other session (including the Wednesday evening).

With a larger capacity, all beers on one level and all available from the first public opening session, easier access for the public with escalator access and disabled lift to the hall on the 1st floor (and for the volunteers setting up and taking down - an easily accessible delivery bay, and goods lift) this promises to be an excellent venue for CAMRA's Winter Ales showcase.



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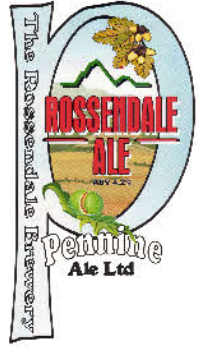
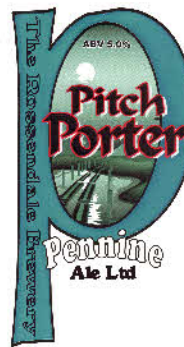
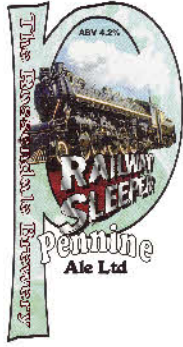
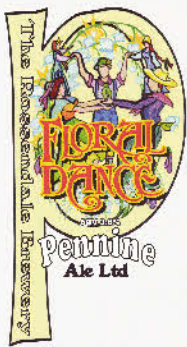
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**Didsbury Village – where Jerry Wicken finds televisions and real ales jostling for space in the local pubs**

**A**N assault on the senses. I counted 18 in the first five pubs we visited. It's probably just me but this is my opportunity for a quick rant. Why do we need 18 flipping TVs in five pubs? Some were on, some were off, some had conflicting channels playing simultaneously, some were competing against piped music, all were competing against chatter and few, if any, were being watched! The case for the prosecution rests m'lud.

Putting my Orwellian nightmare aside I also counted 18 real ales and ciders in the first five pubs (and 26 in total). Now that's more like it.

The **Station** is an old fashioned local at the Northern reaches of the Village which has had a bit of a makeover in the last few years. It has a small front bar running lengthwise and a back room which holds a dart board and card table as well as the ubiquitous TVs. There are benches outside the front and a small beer garden to the rear. They sell Marston's Bitter and Jennings' Cumberland which both scored very well. Lively conversation could be found in the front bar and if you think of Didsbury on a Friday night as full of lager and shot fuelled teenagers running amok be thankful that they have yet to penetrate the Station Hotel.



If you thought the Station was a local's local, the **Nelson** seems at first sight to be even more so. However, once inside and supping the very well received Bass or Jennings' Cumberland you appreciate that this is rather a community local. In one big room it has a dart board, advertises poker nights, is home to Didsbury branch of Man City supporters, has live music, karaoke on a Saturday and if that isn't enough it has five TVs! This Friday saw a good mix of clientele which I always reckon is one of the signs of a good boozier.

Our 8:30 rendezvous was the **Dog and Partridge**. This ever popular pub offered six different real ales, of which the Timothy Taylor's Landlord emerged, marginally, as the best beer of the evening. The Alton's Pride and Greene King Abbot were also marked highly but we did not have sufficient capacity



for the Adnam's Broadside, Theakston's Bitter or the (Greene King) Ruddles County. Always attracts a young crowd in the evenings but at lunchtime and afternoons there is a good mix. The pub always seems to have friendly staff which is a big plus along with the free monkey nuts from a barrel in the corner. Four TVs vie for your attention but perhaps I shall have to accept that this is what people want. Anyway, I still like the pub and the atmosphere.

The (Famous) **Crown** is only a hop across the main road and was busy without being mobbed when we visited. The pub has

several nooks and crannies which gives the impression of separate bars: there are also a few benches out front for an alfresco pint. We didn't try the Pedigree and the Bombardier was a bit lacklustre. However, we were pleased to see a draught cider in the guise of Old Rosie which one of our team scored very highly and the Wychwood Hobgoblin (which most of us sampled) was very good indeed. I must mention that the beer quality overall had improved a good deal since our last stagger in August 2008. Because of the pub's layout it is relatively easy for those so inclined to ignore the three TVs.

Opposite is the **Royal Oak**, renowned for its cheese and pate lunches and usually very busy on a Friday evening. Yet on this particular Friday in the middle of May seating was available for all our nine strong team. The beers were Ringwood 78 bitter, Marston's Bitter (both of which were very good and topped up without asking) Jennings' Bitter which was fair and Pedigree which went untried.



There are separate drinking areas each with their own atmosphere (and two TVs) as well as a few benches outside. The pub is open until 1:30 a.m. on Saturday nights.

Our last pub in Didsbury Village (the remainder serving no real ale) was the **Fletcher Moss**. Even by its own standards the pub was heaving and our group, by now 11 strong, fragmented into various rooms and the outdoor seating area at the back of this Hydes hostelry. Despite the crowds there was, as ever, enough



staff to fill our pots. Most of us drank the guest ale, Cottleigh Kookaburra which was well liked and a couple had the Hydes Mild which had mixed reviews. One of us tried the Jekyll's Gold

and liked it a lot and one other, the seasonal Sacre Bleu, and rated it very highly. This was the busiest pub of the evening and as usual has a mixture of young and old. I would not dream of making the connection between the number of customers and the absence of a working TV.

I should also mention that the pub enjoys a quiz night and a live acoustic evening on alternate Mondays. Ask in the pub for a confirmation of times and dates.

Our last port of call was to have been the **Parrs Wood Hotel**, at the corner of School Lane and Parrs Wood Road as recent intelligence had discovered real ale back on sale after a few years absence. Sadly, on this occasion there was none. Lucky for us that we were invited by one of our team into **St Catherine's Social Club**, a private club attached to the Catholic Church, but open to all for a small annual fee. This cannot form a part of our official stagger but for the record, Hydes Bitter and Sam Smith's Old Brewery Bitter are regulars and there is a guest ale – on this occasion, Thwaites Wainwright. Both the OBB and the Wainwright were very good.

So another stagger ended and I can report that the variety and quality of ale in Didsbury is very good. The pubs, too, have individual personalities and attract young and old alike. There is a pub for everyone. The atmosphere in Didsbury when we were there was lively but in no way intimidating. Give it a go yourselves and see what you think. It certainly beats watching TV!!!





# High Peak

## PUB NEWS

WITH FRANK WOOD

**Nats Kitchen** on Market Street in Buxton, had the Buxton SPA (Special Pale Ale) on sale on the first weekend in June and some Branch members got the chance to sample it both here and at the **Beltane** on Hall Bank, near to the Town Hall. At 4.1% it is a fairly pale and reasonably hoppy beer that went down well but as with all new beers from new breweries, it may well be "tweaked" a little for future brews.

The new Buxton Brewery will be at the Staden Lane Industrial Estate, just off the A515 Ashbourne Road but until the brewery is ready, Leek Brewing Company are hosting their early brews. On our visit on 6th June, three handpumps were on in Nats, with **Whim** (Hartington) Flower Power (5.5%) and **Storms Silk** of Amnesia (4.7%) the other available beers, not a bad choice for a Sunday afternoon!

At **Beltane**, the beers on were Hartington IPA, Sarah Hughes Ruby Mild and Everards Sunchaser, all in good form. Across the road, the **Kings Arms** next to the Town Hall sells Marston's Bitter and Pedigree but the guest ale was a new one from Wychwood Brewery that was a "tick" for two of our group. The Kings has had a fairly recent makeover and looks much better for it as well, being rather smart and comfortable compared to the worn out furnishings it had before.

In Mossley, the **Britannia** opposite the station continues to be a superb example of a well-run pub with a selection of six beers in good form. We tried three of them between us, the Millstone True Grit, Howard Town's Glotts Hop and Marston's Bitter being very good, with the Pedigree and a beer from Jennings the others that I could remember. Also in Mossley, the **Yorkshire Ward Conservative Club** had a rather pleasant pint of Shaws Golden Globe, the regular and only beer on sale. Finally at the **Church Inn** on Stockport Road, Thwaites Original was joined by Wainwrights and Highwayman, both considered on good form by the group. The Highwayman was a particular surprise to me, as not having tried it before, I thought it was a superb dark tasty beer. At the **Woodend Tavern**, next to the canal, on Manchester Road, Millstone, Shaws and Greenfield breweries are usually represented and we were not disappointed, with good comments from all the party. Also apparently there is a new chef and the new menus in this cosy pub, with comfortable sofas, were due out from June 11th.

Incidentally, **Mossley Wholefoods** on Arundel Street, Mossley, is once again selling Millstone beers, the brewery now bottling the beers themselves due to public demand. Their phone number for enquiries is 01457 837743.

The **Sportsman** in Hyde is the High Peak Pub of the Year for the Greater Manchester part of their branch area. Picture below is Frank Wood (right) presenting the award to Geoff Oliver and his wife Cangu, who laid on a superb Cuban buffet to celebrate the award.



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*Robin Wignall's monthly Peak pub scene round-up*

At the end of April the **Crossings** at Furness Vale changed hands. Therefore a warm welcome to Peter and Lisa Sheridan. They have arrived from the Tatton Arms at Moss Nook near Manchester Airport, so from one Robinson's house to another. No major changes for now. The pub was spruced up not too long ago. The beer range will be tweaked and Peter hopes to increase this soon. Food will feature before too long. Opening hours have changed slightly- Mon-Thurs. open at 16.00, Fri. at 15.00 and Sat. and Sun. at noon, then till late.

Up at the **Shady Oak** at Fernilee, Tom Fool and Honey Bole, Jennings' seasonal beers, and Cumberland have been alongside Marston's Bitter and Pedigree. Into June, beers from elsewhere in the Marston's brewing empire have featured. These have included Brakspear Hooray Henley, a reference to the site of the original Brakspear brewery, as well as the famous rowing regatta, and Ringwood 78. Craig and Sue have published a leaflet to promote accommodation at the Shady. The main menu leaflet also contains a bit of the history of the pub, dating back to the Cromford and High Peak Railway ca. 1840. The line ran past the back of the Shady Oak. The Credit Crunch lunch (Mon. – Fri., lunch and early evening) is a good deal at 1/2/3 courses for £5.50/£6.50/£7.50. Real ales are always in good form. The 61 bus Glossop-Hayfield-New Mills-Whaley Bridge and Buxton passes the door hourly during the day, every day, until teatime.

The **Shepherds Arms** in Whaley Bridge is of course another pub where beers from the whole of the Marston brewing empire can be found on a regular basis. With eight hand pumps available, each weekend in the Shepherds is a mini beer festival of well kept beer.

The **Board** at the Horwich End end of Whaley Bridge closed briefly in May with the departure of Mark Parsons. It re-opened before the end of the month when Robert Lister came in as relief manager. No change in the beer range of Hatters and Unicorn. Robert has an experienced pub background and drinkers can expect the quality of beer to be maintained during his tenure.

The national malaise of Punch is reflected in this area. At Furness Vale the Soldier Dick is closed and up for sale, a snip at a reported £275K. It's only four or five years since Punch spent £440K on a refurbishment of the pub. In Whaley Bridge the Navigation is closed and up for sale although there is also a 'to let' sign. The White Hart in Whaley and the Albert in Disley are both still trading, but are to let.

In the free trade the **Old Hall** at Whitehough near Chinley, is able to access beers from the microbreweries. Dan Capper is keen on pale hoppy beers, and is able to sell them at sensible prices, especially given that the Old Hall is noted for its quality food. Real ale drinkers are made very welcome. Recent gems have included Storm P.G.A., Hornbeam Ale & Grace, Kelham Island Best Bitter, Marble Pint and Thornbridge Jaywick. There is also a good range of bottled ciders.

It pays to visit the **Navigation** at Buxworth on a regular basis. Miss a few days and you have missed unusual beers, often from local microbreweries, but sometimes from farther afield. A list that includes Howard Town Milltown, Hornbeam Ale & Grace and Itchen Valley Hampshire Rose, is one to whet the appetite.

Finally an early notice of the smashing little beer festival at the **Dog & Partridge** at Bridgemont over the Bank Holiday weekend at the end of August. The Festival starts in the marquee at 5 p.m. on Friday 28 August, and lasts until the beers run out on Monday 31st. 14 Beers last year and of course another six on the bar in the in the pub. Try to get there

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# Phew, What a Scorcher!

## Stockport Beer & Cider Festival Breaks All Records

After the huge increase in numbers and sales at the 2008 Stockport Beer Festival we wondered just what would happen this year. There have been spikes in turnout before only for numbers to fall back next time around. Would the same thing happen in 2009?

As you may guess from the headline, far from falling back, numbers rose again to make this year's Festival the biggest and best yet. Incredibly over 5,750 people came through the doors this year – that's over 250 more than last year and 900 more than the 2007 festival.

### Beers Break Records

Sales here reached 16,000 pints over the three days of the Festival. As usual there was a good turnout from local brewers coming to check out both their own, and possibly their rivals', beers.

Marble Brewery's festival special, Bee, a 4.8% ABV honey beer, was a big hit, as was a revamped Ginger Tom from Robinsons. Reformulated to give much more of a ginger hit, just one 9-gallon cask of this was sold on the charity bar.

Below, Robinsons Head Brewer Chris Hellin (left) with Packaging Manager Graeme Hall and PR man Oliver Mason (right)



As usual there was stiff competition for the Beer of the Festival Award. Interestingly for a late spring festival held over a gloriously sunny weekend, all three winners were dark beers. Here they are:

- Gold – Outstanding Brewery Stout.** This is a stunningly good stout, arguably one of the best to appear in recent years. Full, rich and satisfying at 5.5% ABV
- Silver – Robinsons Old Tom.** The classic barley wine will need no introduction to *Opening Times* readers. A firm local favourite now becoming a nationwide cult beer.
- Bronze – Dunham Massey Chocolate Cherry Mild.** Now a serial award winner at CAMRA festivals across the UK after making its cask debut at Stockport last year.

### Good Times Had By All

One of the highlights of this year's festival was the St Trinian's themed night on Saturday. This saw many members of staff and visitors alike get into the spirit of the event which raised money for the festival charity, Stockport Cerebral Palsy Society

The entries were kindly judged by Tommy Docherty, who lives locally and has connections with the Society. He is pictured below getting into the spirit of the occasion.



### Cider Sales Soar

Our local cider-lovers just can't get enough: we had a hundred gallons more at this year's Festival than last (450 gallons in total) – and you still drank us dry! One highlight was the appearance of locally made cider from Stockport's new makers Marysia Bossowski and Gordon Battersby who trade as Mad Hatters Cider. They are pictured below at the Cider Bar enjoying one of their ciders.



We started Thursday evening with 60 ciders and perries on offer, and in spite of a record-breaking Friday night session, there was still lots left for you to try at the start of Saturday evening (130 gallons of 35 different ciders and perries). But everyone was so enthusiastic that by half past nine the choice did get a bit limited. We hope that those of you who then tried "pot luck" of what was left enjoyed the "drier" cider experience. We'll try and make sure there's more variety, right till closing, next year.

The vote for Cider of the Festival went to **Black Dragon**, from the Welsh cider makers **Gwynt y Ddraig**; Perry of the Festival went to **Rathay's Painted Lady**, from Herefordshire. We'll be presenting their certificates to them in October – watch out for the report in *Opening Times* at the end of the year.

### New Members Flock to Join

Stockport Beer and Cider Festival marked another landmark in the history of Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA branch, as midway through the event we signed-up our 900th member. Liam Barratt was the lucky man to reach that figure and bagged himself twelve bottles of Sharp's Brewery Chalky's Bite ale in to the bargain.

Liam is 20 years old and lives in Great Moor, he was signed-up by CAMRA Membership Director, Keith Spencer. Liam is seen below with his prize alongside Keith (left) and Stockport Membership Secretary, Mark McConachie (right).



We hope Liam enjoys both the ale and his membership; and a big thank you to the other 85 people who decided to join CAMRA at the festival.

### Stockport Guide Launched

This year's Festival saw the launch of the long awaited Stockport Pub Guide, the first to appear for five years.



Pictured above are guide editors Mark McConachie and John Sutcliffe (right) presenting a copy of the guide to Alison Farthing, Tourist Manager of SMBC who were one of the sponsors of the guide along with GMPTE and Northern Rail.



A busy month prevented me getting out and about as much as I would have liked but I still have one or two nuggets for you, including news of the two JW Lees acquisitions in the town.

**Lees Move In**

WITH the changes in the pub-owning companies, the **Orange Tree** in Bramhall became a JW Lees house in May. It was selling just their cask bitter when I called in early June, but it was expected to close in July for about three weeks for a thorough £500,000 refurbishment to really take it upmarket. Both the interior and the tired exterior would see a newer, fresher look.

Out will go the pool table, in will come an extended cask ale range when it re-opens; it will also mean the arrival of a new food menu. It may have a change of name too, back to the Victoria, perhaps? All of this is good news for cask fans in the area, and it will allow the pub to compete with its newer neighbours in busy Bramhall. The photo shows the Orange Tree in its current state, by the way – it will be interesting to compare and contrast when the work is finished.



Another pub changing to the ownership of JW Lees was the **Elizabethan** in Heaton Moor. On my visit it too was selling their cask bitter, but this time alongside Coronation Street Premium Ale. The staff was unsure of future plans for re-decoration and such, but they were certain more cask ales would appear, and that they would be placed prominently on the bar. A new food menu is already in place. Again, good news for cask fans in the village, and the bonus of Lees cask beers in an area where few people have ever tried them

**Bits and Pieces**

At the **Ashlea**, Cheadle the plan is to showcase all 23 North Yorks. Brewery beers over the next year. Apparently the younger drinkers are particularly attracted to some of the wacky names used on some beers. In Edgeley, the **Olde Woolpack** is having a break from the popular Thwaites Wainwright to try out two Copper Dragon beers - Black Gold and 1816 when I called. Check out the food offers here, too.

The week after Stockport Beer Festival saw a major in-house festival at the **Crown**, Heaton Lane. 80 beers were available and a special bar was built in the vault to help accommodate them. A good time was had by all and the plan now is to extend the bar counter into the vault to install three extra hand pumps. In the town centre the **White Lion** appears to have closed down – rumours of a Wetherspoons interest have inevitably surfaced. It looked as though the **Pack Horse** on the Market Place would also be closing but it has been taken on temporarily by Matt Willoughby who also has the Hope. I understand he would like to take on the pub permanently (he will still keep the Hope) if all goes well.

Finally – apart from Opening Times, the **Bottle Stop** in Bramhall celebrates 25 Years this year. The bottled range remains large and interesting (the Marble range, the rare Old Luxters beers and the impressive Dark Island Special Reserve are among the highlights). Also of note are the take away cask sales – there’s just one hand pump but it dispenses delights such as Thornbridge Kipling and Jaipur, and most cask Marble beers among others. Well worth a visit – and happy birthday!

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**PUB Grub**



**Pub food is hard to come by in Stockport town centre in the evenings. The Bull's Head is looking to plug that gap. John Clarke and Mark McConachie give the menu a run through.**

The Bull's Head is a pub with a long and venerable history. In recent years it's been a fairly chequered history, too.

A pub was first mentioned here in the 1730s and over the years it appears to have expanded sideways. The first address was 11 Market Place, then 11-13 Market Place and today 13 Market Place – look at the thickness of what remains of the internal walls either side of the door and you will see that one is much thicker than the other. Was this the dividing wall between the two original buildings?

The pub now has a Stockport Heritage blue plaque marking its venerable history.

Today it's a Robinson's house and has suffered its ups and downs. There has been the odd period of closure and the odd period when no cask beer was sold. It had a substantial makeover a year or so ago and so when Lawrence Cody and business partners Karen and Steve Martin reopened it on 7 May little or nothing needed to be done to the fabric of the pub. Bold colours and designs work well in the big rooms and make what could be a cavernous pub have an intimate feel.



One change was the emphasis on cask beers. Six are now on handpump including the elusive Dark Hatters (also sold in the Swan With Two Necks, by the way), Dizzy Blonde and the current seasonal. Quality is high.



Food was a major priority and is now available both lunchtimes and evenings from 5.30-9.30 (although this may be discontinued Monday and Tuesday due to lack of demand).

A Thursday night saw the pub busy with diners so a gap is obviously being filled here. The printed menu with starters, mains, deserts, light bites and kiddies food is supplemented by blackboard specials.

Mark, being of modest appetite, passed on the starter. I however felt the Black Pudding Cake calling me. This comprises two chunky slices of Bury's finest, coated in breadcrumbs and served with a creamy wholegrain mustard sauce and topped with a poached egg. This large plateful (there's salad on the side, too) was incredibly good value at £3.50 and was both rich and filling.

Mains came from the specials list. Mark went for Fish Creole with rice and salad. I went veggie with the stuffed pepper, again with rice and salad. These were a snip at £4.50 and £4.20 respectively.

Both were excellent. The fish was perfectly cooked and came smothered in a spicy, tomato sauce. The pepper was stuffed with rice, mushrooms, leeks and cheese and made for a filling dish. Sadly the combination of the black pudding and the pepper ensured I was too full for pudding (and the Chocolate Cake with Old Tom ale rich chocolate sauce certainly had my name on it).

Lawrence tells me that trade is building up and this is a venture that really does deserve to succeed. It comes highly recommended – get down there soon and try it yourselves. **JC**



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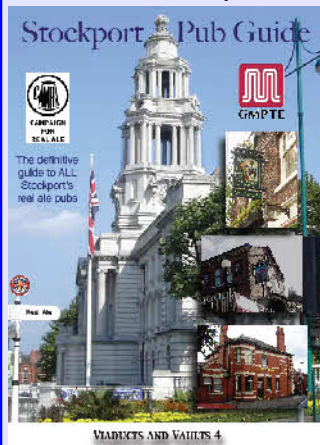


# Book Review



## Stockport Pub Guide: Viaducts and Vaults 4, CAMRA Stockport & South Manchester, 112 pp, £4.95

THIS fourth edition of CAMRA's guide to Stockport's pubs follows the tradition of its predecessors in sporting a striking cover photograph. This time, though, while three pubs appear as small inset photos, the main picture is of Stockport's imposing Town Hall. The editors' pride in the town is confirmed in the range of feature articles; an interesting piece on the town's history and notable buildings, written with a native's personal touch, is backed up by articles on the erstwhile Strawberry recording studios and "famous sons of Stockport". (But where are the daughters? The broadcaster and journalist Joan Bakewell springs immediately to mind).

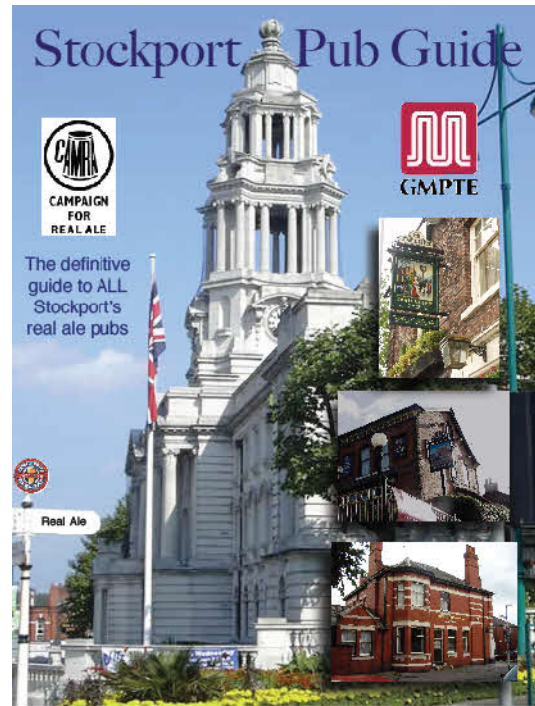


More conventional CAMRA fare includes pieces on mild, porter, cider, brewery history, beer festivals, and heritage pubs. The brewery section is intelligently arranged and avoids the danger of degenerating into a mere list. All in all, most bases are covered, though some will no doubt query the omission of any guidance as to how to reasonably complain if problems are encountered. A particularly pleasing feature, doubtless occasioned by the support for the guide from the Passenger Transport Executive and train company Northern Rail, is the sprinkling of suggested trips by train to places just beyond Stockport's boundary.

A pub guide, though, really stands or falls by the quality and organisation of the pub listings and descriptions, and here this guide impresses. As previously, the best of the pubs are singled out for extended description, but the "also-rans" get a decent write-up too, so that a clear impression is given of all the pubs selling real ale. (Those without real ale are listed with name and address details only). Facilities are denoted by symbols, for the most part identical to those in CAMRA's national Good Beer Guide, though the double arrow symbol to denote proximity to a railway station has been replaced by the Northern Rail logo which unfortunately has not reproduced well at the small scale necessary.

The practical side of things has not been neglected, with a comprehensive index, well-presented public transport information, and clear district maps (though these show only the "featured" pubs). An overall map of the borough would have been helpful, however. The design is pleasing, and for the first time features full colour throughout, though this has been used in a pleasingly restrained fashion in contrast to the gaudy splashes seen in some guides. The use of colour certainly benefits the photographs, and there's a photo for every "featured" pub, though one or two are rather gloomily reproduced.

Regular readers of *Opening Times* might think they know Stockport's pubs well enough not to need a guide to them. That would be a mistake. This enthusiastic, well-informed, and bang up-to-date guide (it even catches the most recent conversions to cask beer on the A6 north of the town centre) has something to inform even the most experienced Stockport pubgoer. With a cover price unchanged from the last edition six years ago, it really is an essential purchase. **RPJ**



VIADUCTS AND VAULTS 4

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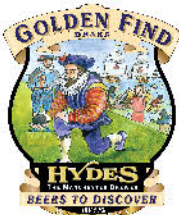
## Brewery News

**H**ydres Brewery has launched the fourth of its 2009 craft ales – Golden Find - as it celebrates a 25% year on year increase in sales of its craft ales..

Golden Find is a refreshing summer beer with an ABV of 4.1%. "Its golden colour and zesty citrus taste make it stand out as a perfect accompaniment to the warm weather" says the brewery . It is made with Tipple and pale Ale malts and Challenger, Fuggle and Styrian Goldings hops.

David Safiruddin, Marketing Director at Hydres commented: "This is our tenth year of producing an annual craft ale range, and we have seen sales continue to grow by an impressive 25% year on year - fantastic news for the Brewery, especially in such challenging times.

"It is great to see customers up and down the country enjoying trying new beers from all the different breweries giving some real strength to this growth product sector."



**Robinsons** also have a new seasonal beer out for July and August. This is Tit for Tat (3.7% ABV) and is described as a "straw coloured Summer Ale with a distinctive peachy fruit hop aroma. This light, smooth and refreshing beer has a sweet malt palate perfectly balanced by a soft bitterness and crisp dry finish".



On the local micro scene we didn't have time to contact many local brewers this month. However we can report that **Phoenix Brewery** have been commissioned to produce a house beer for 15 Brunning & Price pubs in the north west. The company didn't want a pale zesty beer and so "Brunning & Price Cheshire Best" will be a 3.8% ABV "steady session beer".

Denton's **Hornbeam Brewery** has redesigned its pumpclips so that they are much more bright and direct. There is also news of two new beers. Summer IPA will be available from May to September. This is a 4.5% ABV beer made using Herkules, Perle and Bobek hops, so expect a good bitter yet refreshing beer. In the pipeline later on is Dark & Divine (4% ABV) which will be available from October to April. This month also look out for the new Cheers Big Ears at 4.2%.



**Marble Brewery** will be launching this year's version of Summer Marble this month. When we spoke to the brewery towards the end of June, the hops hadn't been finalised as deliveries were still awaited.

## Manchester Matters

**J**ust room for one or two bits and pieces this month. Notably in Chorlton, July will see the opening of **Oddest** the premises of the former Polar Bar at 414 Wilbraham Road. This is the third in the chain comprising the City Centre's Odd and Odder bars – expect some decent cask ale as this is one of the hallmarks of the other two bars in the chain.

In Didsbury, the **Didsbury** continues to go great guns. I'm always impressed by the way the pub manages to balance out an extensive (and top notch) food operation with a great range of cask beers. Very few places pull this one off but the Didsbury seems to do it effortlessly.

Finally – news reaches us that the **Turnpike** on Wilmslow Road in Withington will be installing cask beer. Great news indeed – more next time.

**Editor's note – readers will have noticed that Brewery News and Manchester Matters have been truncated recently. Normal service will be restored next time!**

## Cask Tavern in Poynton

A new kid on the block is a welcome addition to the Poynton real ale scene. We check out this remarkable conversion to cask.

**T**he real ale scene in Poynton was for many years something of a disappointment. The Legion Club stood out as the place to go and as for the rest.... However things are looking up across the board. The pubs are all worth a visit and now the formerly dire Poynton Wine Bar on Park Lane has transformed itself into the altogether more appealing Cask Tavern.

The man behind this remarkable change is Rob Oldham who took over in mid-April, after a slight tussle with owners Punch Taverns. Yes, them again.

Rob had expressed an interest in the place some while before but with the proviso that he could install cask beer. Punch said no. Another licensee came and went. Punch suddenly said yes.

Rob is new to the trade (he had a short spell at a pub in Newton before taking on the Cask Tavern) but he knew what he wanted.



Clearly the bar had to be refocused to help rid it of its previously poor reputation. Hence the name change, the elimination of the pool table (replaced by darts) and the installation of four cask ales. The bar had also been given a spruce up and is now clean and bright.

Rob has access to the full Punch cask list which is extensive and offers a wide range of beers from all manner of breweries and Rob plans to change the beers around on a monthly basis at first. The good news is that even though trade is still building (the reputation of the old wine bar still lingers in the public mind) the cask ales are turning over. Certainly quality has been high when OT has called, with the likes of Brains Rev James, St Austell Tribute, Fullers London Pride and Jennings Cumberland Ale on the hand pumps. Next up is real cider with two Westons products, including Old Rosie, going on two more hand pumps. Well worth a visit.

We recently had a brief look at the other Poynton pubs and described the **Vernon Arms** as a gastro-pub. It is, in fact, a Sizzler which is one of the Mitchell and Butler brands, essentially a cheaper version of their Vintage Inn brand. They do however serve real ale in addition to the usual fizzy pop. This has included Black Sheep, Landlord and Speckled Hen for around £2 a pint and well-kept.

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**CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2009 We're in it!**





**Is the Price Right?**

"They're selling Carlsberg at 30p a bottle at the supermarket down the road," an aggrieved licensee complained to me. "How can I hope to compete with that?" You can understand her concern, and of course she can't come close to competing on price terms, but in reality she doesn't have to.

Throughout my drinking career, alcohol in the off-trade has been cheaper than that bought in pubs. The gap may have widened a bit over the years, but it has always been there. A licensee has to pay business rates, utility bills and staff wages, none of which you include when thinking how much the can or bottle you've just got out of the fridge has cost. The overheads a pub has to carry mean that it is always going to be dearer than just sitting at home, and surely all pubgoers realise that. A pub is far more than just an alcohol shop, and in reality its main competition for people's leisure spending is restaurants, cinemas, nightclubs, sports grounds and bowling alleys.

Nobody claims that restaurants are suffering because you can buy ready meals at Tesco for a third of the price of dishes on the menu, so the idea that pubs are suffering because cans of Stella are dirt-cheap doesn't really stack up. People don't sit down and make a calculated economic choice between going out to the pub and staying in with a few cans. If they want to go out, they will go out, and going to the pub should be as much about socialising as

simply drinking alcohol. Many pub visits happen when people are out of the house anyway, at work, on holiday or shopping, so the option of drinking at home is not available to them. Obviously, if intoxication is the sole objective, the most cost-effective way of doing it is with cheap cider or spirits from the off-licence, but should pubs be targeting people who just want to get drunk anyway? On the other hand, cask beer, which is generally of moderate strength, is a unique selling point for pubs that cannot be replicated in the home.

Of course price can have an impact on the margins, maybe leading people to go out a little less often, or to tilt the balance a little from on to off-trade consumption. But relative price isn't even the biggest single factor leading people to drink less in pubs. There are many other reasons leading people to drink more at home and less in pubs, such as the decline of heavy industry, the increasing popularity of wine and the tendency of employers to discourage lunchtime drinking by their employees. Lifestyles have changed and society has moved on. And the idea that raising the price of alcohol in the off-trade will do anything to encourage people to visit pubs is totally misplaced.

In Continental countries such as France and Germany, off-trade prices are considerably lower than ours, and the gap between on- and off-trade greater, but they do not have the same problems associated with off-trade consumption as we supposedly do, and in many cases have much more thriving bars. This suggests that the root causes are in social factors rather than simply price levels as such.

Curmudgeon Online: [www.pubcurmudgeon.org.uk](http://www.pubcurmudgeon.org.uk)

Curmudgeon Blog: [pubcurmudgeon.blogspot.com](http://pubcurmudgeon.blogspot.com)

Sue & Vince present.....

# THE RAILWAY'S

PORTWOOD STOCKPORT  
0161 429 6062

## BEER FESTIVAL

august bank holiday weekend

|                 |                            |                    |
|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Friday</b>   | <b>28<sup>th</sup> Aug</b> | <b>12.00-23.00</b> |
| <b>Saturday</b> | <b>29<sup>th</sup> Aug</b> | <b>12.00-23.00</b> |
| <b>Sunday</b>   | <b>30<sup>th</sup> Aug</b> | <b>12.00-22.30</b> |

**16 guest beers**

**6 regular pennine ales**

**food available Friday & Saturday 12-5**



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 01625 425734 pete.farrand@googlemail.com*

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup>** – Branch Meeting: Bulls Head, Stockport Market Place. Starts 8pm.

**Friday 17<sup>th</sup>** – Hazel Grove/Bramhall Stagger: 7.30pm Three Bears, Jacksons Lane; 8.30 Shady Oak, Redford Drive. Bus 374 (705pm Stockport Bus Station; 730pm Hazel Grove Station. Alight Dorchester Rd).

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Pub of the Month presentation to Circus Tavern, Portland St, Manchester. From 8pm.

The **High Peak & North East Cheshire** Branch covers Bredbury, Romiley, Woodley, Marple, Tameside and Derbyshire from Glossop to Buxton. *Branch Contact – Mike Rose 07986 458517. mikewrose@gmail.com*

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup>** – Branch Meeting: Friendship, Glossop. Starts 8.30pm

**Thursday 30<sup>th</sup>** – Social: Ramsays Bar, Buckingham Hotel, Buxton. From 8.30pm

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> August** – Branch Meeting: Cheshire Ring, Hyde. Start 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*

**Fri 10<sup>th</sup>/Sat 11<sup>th</sup>** – Chorlton Beer Festival, St. Clements Church, Edge Lane, Chorlton. <http://chorltonbeerfestival.org.uk/>

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Pub of the Season Award: The Steamhouse, Station Building, Station Approach, Urmston. M41. From 8pm

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> Aug** – Branch meeting: The Volunteer, Cross Street, Sale, M33. Starts 8pm

The **Macclesfield & East Cheshire** Branch covers the northern half of Cheshire East except Disley & Poynton. *Branch Contact – Tony Icke 01625 861833*

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>** – Rail and Ale Day: Altrincham-Chester railway; starting at **Harker's Arms** in Chester and stopping for a drink at pubs near most stations on the way back

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup>** – Summer Pub of the Season Award. Call contact for details.

**Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> August** – Jim Bowden 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lunchtime Social: Waters Green, Macclesfield.

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*


**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>** – Social at Stalybridge Station Buffet. From 8pm.

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup>** – Branch Meeting: Unicorn, Church St, Manchester. Starts 8pm.

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Beer Gardens Crawl: Ape & Apple, John Dalton St, 7.30pm, Briton's Protection, Grt, Bridgewater St, 8.30, Knott, Deansgate, 9pm, Cask, Liverpool St, 10pm


**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup>** – Ellenbrook & Boothstown Crawl: Woodside, Newearth Rd, 7pm

# 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 Membership Secretary, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 3LW. Alternately you can join online at [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk).



**Title Surname Forename(s) Date of Birth**

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**Partner Title Surname Forename(s) Date of Birth**

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**Postcode**

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**Please tick membership category:**

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| Under 26       | £16 <input type="checkbox"/> | £14 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Under 26 Joint | £19 <input type="checkbox"/> | £17 <input type="checkbox"/> |
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| Retired Joint  | £19 <input type="checkbox"/> | £17 <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Signed** .....

**Date** .....

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- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to us.





To mark the 25th Birthday Year of Opening Times we are commissioning a series of commemorative beers from local breweries, one per month (although one or two "extras" are also likely). Each month we will be featuring the brewery producing the beer and also tell you a bit about the beer itself. The seventh in the series comes from Howard Town Brewery. Check out the brewery website at [www.howardtownbrewery.co.uk](http://www.howardtownbrewery.co.uk).

### About the Brewery

THE idea of Glossop's Howard Town Brewery was first mooted, as these things often are, over a beer. Surprisingly, next day neither of the founders, Les Dove and Tony Hulme, had forgotten about it, or dismissed it out of hand in the cold light of day. So just before Christmas 2004, they began to think seriously about starting a brewery. Premises were found in the former Bridge End Fulling Mill, later to become part of the Howard Town Mill complex, one of the largest in 19th century England.

The brewery plant was sourced from Dave Porter, a well known name on the local brewing scene who, apart from making rather good beer also installs micro breweries up and down the country. Nick Boughton and Jon Hunt from Millstone Brewery also chipped in with invaluable help and advice and the first brew rolled out in July 2005.



The quality of the beers was immediately apparent and all was going well until the premises burnt down at the beginning of April 2006. Determined to carry on, beers were commissioned from other micros until brewing recommenced at the current premises, Hawkshead Mill in Old Glossop, in June 2006. Since then Howard Town has gone from strength to strength with golden, hoppy Wrens Nest winning the national SIBA championships in 2007, the same year it was voted Beer of the Festival at Stockport. Other beers to look out for are:

**Dinting Arches (4.4% ABV)** – a pale and hoppy, medium strength beer.

**Glott's Hop (5% ABV)** – this is the strongest Howard Town beer in regular production. As the name suggests it is a very hoppy beer made with Halcyon malt and Pioneer hops.

### About the Beer

This month's *Opening Times* beer is Weiss Peak, a 4.8% ABV wheat beer. It is made using Bobek hops with Challenger hops added for bitterness.

It is light, refreshing and tangy with hints of orange and banana to echo the traditional German wheat beer flavours. A perfect summer refresher in fact. Enjoy!



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## July & August

**TIT FOR TAT** ABV 3.7%

Pale straw coloured Summer Ale with a distinctive peachy fruit hop aroma. This light, smooth and refreshing beer has a sweet malt palate perfectly balanced by a soft bitterness and crisp dry finish.



# Tit for Tat



"I'm not going to Sid's funeral.  
He won't be coming to mine."

alc 3.7 % vol

