

October 2009



# Opening

TIMES

THE FREE CAMRA REGIONAL MAGAZINE

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

## Cider & Perry Special

Inside:

All About Perry – page 14

CAMRA's Cider & Perry Month

WIN Cider & Perry on our Cider Circuit



Plus:

Bumper Good Beer Guide

issue – 37<sup>th</sup> edition of

CAMRA's flagship book.

Review and how to buy:

see pages 12 & 13.

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## wetherspoon





The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for October is the Thatched House on Churchgate, Stockport. Arguably the town's leading rock pub. Neil Furlong explains why it won.



OVER the years the Thatched House has had numerous owners, mainly Wilson's and the ill-fated Vaux Breweries, and various incarnations, but in recent years has settled down in its role as Stockport's premier rock pub. Not perhaps the clichéd 'CAMRA pub' to the casual observer but not only does the pub excel on the music front it has in recent years become increasingly impressive with its range of beer and cider.

Over the past five years the pub has been run by Alex Hammond and during that time there have been steady additions to the beer range, including an enhanced range of bottled beers (some bottle conditioned and all interesting)

The regular beers are usually Wychwood Hobgoblin and Black Sheep Bitter, and these are accompanied by an ever-changing range of guest beers sourced from the surprisingly extensive Punch Taverns' list. Quality is such that the pub has become a regular in the national Good Beer Guide. Not only that but real cider (and sometimes perry) is also on handpump. These are usually from the Westons stable, but sometimes from other makers, too. It would be easy to concentrate on the music side of things here and just offer a couple of bog standard national beers, cask or otherwise. To offer such a wide range of interesting drinks as well as maintaining a vibrant music policy shows real commitment (as well as being hard work!).

It was for this commitment that the Thatched House has already gained two Pub of the Month Awards over the years and this hat trick is testimony to the hard work that goes in to maintain standards and generally keep the show on the road in these difficult times for the pub trade.



The presentation night is Thursday 22 October from 8.00pm – come along for what should be a great night out.



The Pub of the Month award is sponsored by Stephenson's, a local family firm that has been supplying the local pub and catering trade for over 140 years. Check out their advert on this page.

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### Don't Castrate our Cat

**R**OBINSONS Old Tom is a beer of which Stockport can be justly proud, a complex, high-quality strong ale suited to considered sipping rather than reckless bingeing. It has been voted CAMRA's Champion Winter Beer of Britain on several occasions and recently won an award of World's Best Ale. Yet its future would be threatened by Conservative plans to triple the rate of duty on "strong" beers and ciders above about 5.5% ABV.

While it is true this category includes some cheap, high-strength products that are favourites with problem drinkers, it would also affect many beers from independent breweries in the same vein as Old Tom, Belgian imports such as Chimay and Duvel and the products of pretty much all of Britain's independent cidermakers. These products are consumed responsibly by discerning drinkers and are often already relatively expensive in terms of price per alcohol unit. In any case, it is not usually beers and ciders in this strength band that fuel alcohol-related disorder, or feature in supermarket discounting.

This is an ill-considered and indiscriminate plan that would not achieve its stated objectives and would penalise many respected products that in general are not consumed irresponsibly. It also unfairly singles out beer and cider when wines and spirits cannot be absolved of all blame for our alleged drink-related problems.

The present government, especially over the past few years, has been very bad news for the pub trade and for responsible drinkers, but at a time when there seems to be a general tide of anti-alcohol sentiment in society it may be naive to assume that an alternative would necessarily be much better.

### Don't Knock It Till You Try It

**T**HE difficulties involved in blanket targeting of "strong" beers are highlighted by the reaction to Tokyo\*, a limited-edition brew produced by iconoclastic Scottish brewers BrewDog. This is an imperial stout weighing in at a mammoth 18.2% ABV, but at the same time priced at an eye-watering £9.99 for a 330ml bottle.

BrewDog have established a reputation for ruffling the feathers of the drinks trade establishment and the anti-alcohol lobby, and, rather predictably, Jack Law of "Alcohol Focus Scotland" frothed: "It is utterly irresponsible to bring out a beer which is so strong at a time when Scotland is facing unprecedented levels of alcohol-related health and social harm. Just one bottle of this beer contains six units of alcohol - twice the recommended daily limit."

This seems more than a little hypocritical when for £9.99 you could easily buy a bottle of cheap whisky or vodka containing 28 units of alcohol, and a price of £1.67 a unit is surely enough to satisfy even the most ardent anti-drink zealot. This no more contributes to problem drinking than does a bottle of cask-strength Islay malt retailing at £40.

Beer writer Pete Brown sampled a bottle and, while finding it deep, rich, complex and satisfying, said "The idea of anyone binge drinking a bottle of this beer, of knocking it back quickly, is utterly absurd. I defy anyone to drink a bottle in under an hour. You actually don't want a full bottle of it." It's frankly impossible to visualise Tokyo\* taking the place of Tennent's Super in the hands of Rab C. Nesbitt lookalikes stumbling around the streets of the Gorbals. They're unlikely to have even heard of it in the first place. A beer such as this is to be savoured, not poured down your neck.

And you have to wonder whether Jack Law actually tried it before rushing to condemn it. Almost certainly not - he's probably a teetotaler anyway.

Curmudgeon Online:

[www.curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com](http://www.curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com)



## COMMENT, NOTES & CONTENTS

### Opening Times – Comment

Having spent many years observing the pub and brewery scene there is one constant truism – pub and brewery projects never come in on time. So it has proved with the two new free houses that we have featured in recent issues. With luck the Black Lion in Salford will be open by the time you read this. The Magnet in Stockport is planned to be open by the end of this month.

This month we celebrate both the launch of the new Good Beer Guide and also traditional cider and perry. The Good Beer Guide is the best selling pub guide in the country and this month many local pubs appearing in its pages have taken an advert in OT to celebrate the fact. Do try and pay them a visit for a Good Beer Guide guaranteed quality pint.

Cider and perry is increasingly popular – witness the record sales at Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. An increasing number of local pubs and bars sell the real thing and many are taking part in our Cider Circuit. Please do take part and support the real cider revival.

### 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.

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

Postal subscriptions are available at £7 for 12 issues (make cheques payable to *Opening Times*). Apply to John Tune, 4 Sandown Road, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, SK3 0JF.

**Trading Standards** – for complaints about short measure pints etc contact Consumer Direct (North West). Consumer Direct works with all the Trading Standards services in the North West and is supported by the Office of Fair Trading. You can email Consumer Direct using a secure email system on their website ([www.consumerdirect.gov.uk](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk)) which also provides advice, fact sheets and model letters on a range of consumer rights. Their telephone no. is 0845 404 05 06

**Copy Date for the October issue is Friday 9 October**

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**Lots of news for you this month but little room to record it all – I'll run a major catch up next time. Meanwhile...**

**F**irst and foremost the **Black Lion** in Salford should be open by the time you read this. I plan to get in as soon as I can and should have a full report next time. I'm expecting great cask ales, real cider and a huge range of Belgian bottles. More next time.

The return of a Manchester institution is a real ale gain for the Northern Quarter. Closed for the last three years, the refurbished **Band On The Wall** (Swan Street) was due to reopen in late September, serving beers from Hydes' list. The venue has expanded into the next-door Picturehouse, a separate-but-linked café bar. I will be in for a full report next time.

Over the summer, Manchester's **Town Hall Tavern** has been rather splendidly refurbished. It had suffered badly from floods of rainwater that got in through damage caused by an earlier fire in the upper part of the building. The opportunity has been taken to renovate the whole pub and expose a magnificent wooden parquet floor. The work took a couple of months and the pub finally re-opened at the end of August.



The Tavern is located on Tib Lane, which is **not** to be confused with Tib Street in the Northern Quarter – this is off Cross Street, between Albert Square and King Street and about as central as you can get in Manchester.

The immediate impression on entering is of a very light, airy and spacious building. The highly polished (but not slippery) parquet floor includes a couple of tile insets with geometric designs. The ceiling retains some interesting plaster covings. The bar counter and back along the left hand side are also in varnished wood and sport three handpumps. The two regular beers are Taylor's Landlord and Deuchars IPA, while the third tends to be another national brand such as Bass or Bombardier. Beer choice is unfortunately limited by the pub's ownership (Enterprise Inns), but at least the price (£2.60 a pint) hasn't yet reached the inflated levels charged by some of its neighbours.

Unusually in this twenty-first century, the pub still has a multi-room feel. Immediately left of the entrance is a large window bay. To the right and facing the bar there is another seating area, separated from the main room by glazed screens. To the rear there are more steep steps down into a good sized back room. And upstairs there is a function room that can be hired for free by clubs and societies, not to mention the pub's own Comedy Club! Yes, there are free comedy performances on many (not all) Friday nights from the *Show Me You're Funny* crew. Go to [www.smyf.co.uk](http://www.smyf.co.uk) full details.

During the week the pub offers daytime food from 12 until 2, or later if the chef is feeling kindly. The pub stays open until 11 for drinks (closing slightly earlier on Sunday evenings).

More Northern Quarter news now. Firstly Marble Brewery is finally moving to **57 Thomas Street**. It's now all systems go to get the place open by the end of November at the latest. Expect Marble cask, Belgian beer and great food. Finally – the **Angel** closed and opened again very quickly last month. As far as I know it is definitely open now. As ever, more next time...

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# High Peak PUB NEWS

WITH FRANK WOOD

**T**HE Hare & Hounds in Simmondley had its beer Festival, after a five year absence, at the August Bank Holiday. Well attended and I suspect successful, the weather however not helping matters, though a larger marquee than in the previous events proved a good decision. The pricing of £1.40 per half was a little dear, but this was all round and for those like myself who decided to concentrate on 5% and above, it was fine as the day wore on, Phoenix Wobbly Bob at 6% helping me negotiate the pathways back down into Glossop!

In Hyde, the **Wellington** on Manchester Road, once a tied house of the long defunct micro Fallsforth Brewery (it closed in 1985), was demolished in August. Also on Manchester Road the **Red Lion** (ex-Robinson's) has been converted to other use. Robinson's have also closed down the **Crown** on Market Street and this is due for auction.

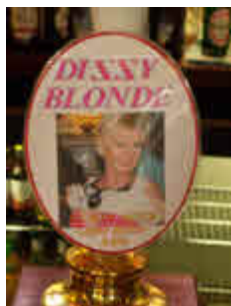


One good news story from Hyde, though, is the **Cheshire Ring** on Manchester Road, where Wayne tells me that business is on the up. This has been helped by the relaunch of the function room as "The Verge" music venue. This is proving

very popular Wayne tells me – if you are wondering about the name, just check out the astro-turfed stage! A recent visit found Beartown's Kodiak Gold on form alongside the same brewery's Peach Melba, and some enterprising guest ales.

It has been a busy time recently with beer festivals all over the branch area in August and festival to look forward to, is at the **Sportsman** at Hyde, where 20-plus beers will supplement the usual range on the bar of some 11 beers, many from Pennine Brewery, who own the pub. This will be held on 1st to 3rd October, with a large marquee in the rear car park, with Cuban music and Cuban food available at all times.

The **Oddfellows** in Ashton is thriving under Alan and Louise Heal's stewardship with the Robinson's ales always on song. Popular among the beers is Dizzy Blonde – and this now has its own customised pump clip showing the pub's very own dizzy blonde, barmaid Pam Mattocks. As you can see this is a rather more attractive clip than the rather plain offering from Robbies.



*Roy Parkes adds* – news from Ashton. **Halfway House**, Whiteacre Road - boarded up. Ralph Warrington's *'Nine Towns Bitter'* (1995) says 'Boddingtons on hand pump ... architecturally superb frontage .... comfortable open plan ... popular' and that's how I remember it, with live music, and a big crowd for football on TV. **Hillgate**, Pot Hill - closed. Planning application in for conversion to residential use. **Seven Stars**, Hillgate Street - boarded up, planning application in for demolition and replacement with two terraced houses and two flats. **Albion**, Penny Meadow - closed, awaiting demolition for a road scheme. Robinsons. *Nine Towns Bitter* is fulsome about this small, busy, friendly street-corner local and quite rightly - it's an unnecessary tragedy that it's going. The proposed new road affects the pub only in order to create 'sight-lines' and easy sweeping turns for large vehicles. Nuff said.

Nicole and Staff Welcome One and All to the

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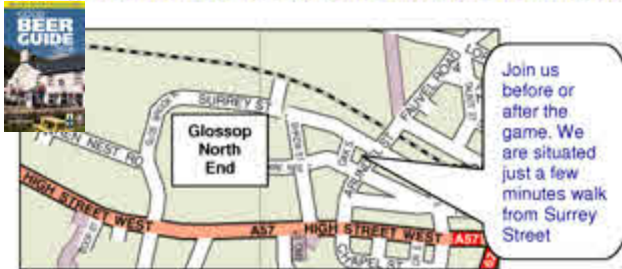
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Guest beers, Robinsons pubs and beer festivals have kept Robin Wignall busy over the past few weeks.

LOCAL free houses are good at getting hold of beers from microbreweries, and particularly, though not exclusively, beers from local-ish micros. An August visit to the **Old Hall** at Whitehough found Bollington Best, Hornbeam Summer IPA and Whim Hartington IPA. The **Navigation** at Buxworth was selling Howard Town Milltown and Hornbeam Cheers for Big Ears. Also available was Robinson's Hartleys Cumbria Way. This is all good for customer choice.

There are then examples of pubs accessing a range of beers which their tying brewery makes available. Both the **Shepherds** in Whaley Bridge and the **Shady Oak** at Fernilee are Marston's pubs where licensees dip into the beers from across the Marston's owned breweries. So it is usual to find beers from Jennings, Ringwood and Wychwood/Brakspear alongside Marston's Bitter, Pedigree and seasonal beers.

I called in the **Grouse** at the summit of the Glossop-Hayfield road. As well as a more than ample reasonably priced meal I enjoyed a decent pint of that archetypal English bitter, Thwaites Original. Thwaites Wainwright's and Lancaster Bomber were also available. The 61 bus Glossop- Hayfield- New Mills-Whaley Bridge- Buxton, passes the door, roughly hourly up to teatime all week. Well worth a visit.

Both the **Cock** in Whaley Bridge and the **Crossings** in Furness Vale give customers a range of Robinson's beers wider than Hatters and Unicorn. At the Cock, Double Hop has been a recent regular, whilst at the Crossings Tit for Tat has been the seasonal choice to accompany Unicorn and Dark Hatters.

An August visit found the recently re-opened **Soldier Dick** in Furness Vale with beer range up to two beers, Black Sheep Bitter and St. Austell Tribute. The former was worth drinking. Nicola and Laura Taylor are now serving food on Sundays, and are keen to make a success of food and beer sales.

August Bank Holiday week end kept the 199 bus route busy with drinkers travelling between the beer festivals at the **White Lion**, Disley and the **Dog & Partridge**, Bridgemont. At the White Lion up to a score of beers were available in the Tent, as well as the usual range in the bar. Beers in the Tent were named after animals and birds, and included a festival special Zebra Bitter from Bazen's, Salford, to go with the pub's Zebra sign. There was a good range of beer styles, with beers from around the country. Weetwood Cheshire Cat and Cairngorm Sheepshagger Gold were probably my choices of the several sampled.

Sixteen beers were available over the week end in the marquee at the Dog & Partridge, as well as the usual range in the bar. There were several beers from local-ish microbreweries, as well as delights from further afield. Beers were selling out on Sunday and I had missed the highly recommended Limestone Stone the Crows. Anglo Dutch Sweet Jane and Black Hole Super Nova were my choices from another good range of beer in good form.

Both these pubs are Enterprise Inns, but then both licensees are keen to access the range of beers available under the SIBA agreement with Enterprise, to bring their customers a good range of good beer. Both managements deserve congratulations.

A local history exhibition in Whaley Bridge gave the answer to one of my posers in August Peak Practice. The Royal Oak became the Chimes at Taxal, before eventual closure. Other photographs showed the Jodrell as a Wilson's house, and the White Horse in Whaley as a Clarke's house. Those were the days. Incidentally restoration and development work at the **Jodrell** is happening, but slowly, and re-opening will be some time away.

# NEW OXFORD

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Not much for you at all this month. I've not been out and about much and to be honest not a lot is going on at the moment. I'm still planning a trip up to Great Moor but that will have to wait until next time.

The **Railway**, Wellington Road North, is now free from tie, having been purchased from Punch by former leaseholder and now owner, Ray Ford. When I called Holts Bitter and Bank Top 'Flat Cap' were on hand pump. The Bank Top was pretty good too and reasonably priced at £1.10 for a half. Black Sheep Bitter was advertised as forthcoming, but Ray intimated that he might be getting rid of this, in order to promote micro brewery beers. I must say, he's very keen so I hope the Railway will get plenty of support from my readers.

Across the road, the **Magnet** is also on track to reopen as a free house but a little later than predicted in last month's issue. The purchase was completed on 18 September and Lee Watts tells me that it's now all hands to the pump with the aim of having the pub open by the end of this month.

## When Curmudgeon Met Keith Floyd

It was sad, but not altogether surprising, to hear of the death of TV chef and noted *bon viveur* Keith Floyd. A couple of years ago, I had a chance meeting with Keith in the surprising surroundings of the Olde Vic pub in Edgeley. This was the finishing point of an Edgeley Stagger, I had certainly enjoyed a few drinks over the course of the evening and so, by the looks of it, had Keith.

His presence there was explained by the fact that the owner of the pub (who is not the same person as the licensee) was acting as his driver and general minder during a tour of his one-man show *Floyd Uncorked: the life of a Bon Viveur*, following Keith's latest and, it would turn out, last drink-driving conviction. They had called in to the Olde Vic on the way between a show in Keswick and the minder's home in Stoke.

Keith was 63 at the time, and it has to be said he didn't look a well-preserved 63, with his trademark floppy forelock reduced to a few strands, but no doubt he could still scrub up well for a public appearance. Predictably, he expressed his concerns about the future of the pub trade following the smoking ban (which turned out to be entirely justified), and, perhaps more surprisingly, said that he felt the gastro-pub trend had gone too far and was now ruining the character of many pubs. I can well understand why he thought that, as he was always a strong believer in authenticity and a critic of pretension.

Sadly, on the Keith Allen TV programme which aired on Monday (14/9/09), the night of his death, he seemed a frail shadow of his former self, and aged well beyond his 65 years, although his mind was clearly still as sharp as ever. It can't be said that in his last days he was a great advertisement for a bibulous lifestyle, but he lived life to the full – he was married and divorced four times – and given the chance to live his life again I doubt whether he would have it any other way. Apparently, although he had recently been diagnosed with bowel cancer, his most recent medical gave his liver a clean bill of health.

By another strange coincidence, the same Stagger took place in the week of Keith's death. Maybe it should be named the "Keith Floyd Memorial Crawl". We certainly raised a glass to him in the Olde Vic.





**The pubs around the University are a mixed bag at the best of times – how would they fare outside term time? John Clarke and a group of hardy stalwarts went to find out.**

**L**ATE August on Oxford Road is when the hum of the traffic is louder than the hum of conversation in many of the pubs, until the summer lull gives way to the frenzy of Freshers' Week and the madness starts again.

Many of the pubs are quiet, too damn quiet, but at least you get served quickly. Most sell cask beer, too, so there was anticipation in the air as we set out. That didn't last long as we were brought down to earth at our first stop, the **Varsity** on the main drag where Oxford Road blends seamlessly into Wilmslow Road. It's a large, open-plan, Wetherspoons-like beer hall. It was busy at 7.30 with lots of sports screens and loud music. It's not the place you would expect to sell cask ale to be honest but to its credit the bar has two hand pumps (albeit hidden behind a menu on this occasion). Only one was in operation and that dispensed decidedly average Wells Bombardier. Our enjoyment of this was not helped by a decision to sit outside where the grimy tables and unwashed windows hardly enhanced the drinking experience. I must mention the excellent service though – the bar staff are a real credit to this place even if, on this visit, the beer wasn't.

Heading into town it was the **Oxford** next. This has had numerous incarnations over the years but is now a warm, comfortable and, to use an old fashioned word, convivial place to enjoy a beer. And we did enjoy the beer – Wells Bombardier went untried but the Youngs Bitter was fine. A large display of pump clips was on display showing past guest beers and I would happily spend some time here. Notably friendly and efficient service was again worth a mention.



Continuing to head north it was round the corner and into Grafton Street where the **Grafton** awaited us. The new build Holt's house was a complete contrast to the other pubs having a traditional vault and a large rambling lounge. Quieter than the two previous pubs, the traditional décor seemed a little careworn but the beer was OK, the Holt's Bitter being reasonably well received. The mild was keg. We moved on.



Carrying on down Grafton Street brings you to the **Bowling Green**. The former Greenalls house is now owned by Punch Taverns and run by the amiable Kev Bayles, very much a cask beer man. It's essentially one L-shaped room, traditionally decked out in dark wood and comfortable seating. There's a good beer garden at the back, too. This is one of the pubs where the trade largely evaporates when term time ends so only one of the three hand pumps was in use when we called (two are now in service by the way) dispensing St Austell Tribute, a regular beer here and a rare find for the area. It was on good form, too.

Round the corner onto Upper Brook Street and the next left onto Dover Street and you reach **Jabez Clegg**. Perhaps the

ultimate student beer hall, *Opening Times* has been visiting this place since it opened over 20 years ago now. I recall the place when just the small end bar was open and the rest of it was shell. It was always going to be a huge money spinner and its success laid the foundations for the locally successful Hale Leisure chain of bars and pubs.

The small back bar is now all keg but the main beer hall (which has a small snug off) usually sells cask beers and two were available tonight (a third, Moorhouses Pride of Pendle, was off) these being Hydes Jekyll's Gold and Thwaites Lancaster Bomber. We all tried the Hydes which was again in pretty good form.



The huge pub, complete with table football large screen sports (athletics tonight) was largely empty so we rattled around a bit. Come Freshers' Week and you won't be able to move.

However it was time for us to move – down the street back to Oxford Road and **Kro Bar**. This is another example of local initiative and a fortunate purchase laying the foundations for a successful chain. Mark Ruby's purchase of the old Manchester Temperance Society building, right in the heart of the "University Quarter" and bang across the road from the Students' Union was always going to be a smash hit. Throw in a cutting edge design from local architects Stephenson Bell, great food and a commitment to cask and you have a real asset to the area.

Reflecting perhaps the lack of trade at this time of year only two of the four hand pumps were in use, these dispensing Theakstons XB and Deuchars IPA. Again both of these were enjoyed by those who tried them. Two of us took the chance to sample a couple of bottles from the recently imported range of Danish micro-brewery beers. Very good they were too – the Kro Bars still have most of these in stock by the way, so do give them a go.



It was a short bus ride to the final two bars. First up was **Sand Bar** on Grosvenor Street. This Good Beer Guide regular was the busiest bar so far. There really is an interest in the beers here. Four hand pumps dispense three guest beers and the house brew, Phoenix

Brewery's All Saints Bitter. The other guests were Burton Bridge Golden Delicious, Moorhouses Black Cat and Taylor's Landlord. New Forest Cider was also on hand pump. All four beers were on good form and Sand Bar probably offered up the best beer of the night across the board.

This quirky conversion of two Georgian town houses works on many levels – the food is as individualistic as the pub, there are regular art and photographic exhibitions, the music is great and as if the cask range wasn't enough there is a great range of foreign beers, notably from Belgium and Germany.

Finally we made our way to **Kro2** on Oxford Road, close to the BBC. This very modern and stylish bar is essentially a glass box at the bottom of the old National Computing Centre. It replicates the tried and trusted Kro formula and is the venue for the excellent Kro Beer Festivals which are held in the large outside drinking area. An excellent DJ was on tonight with some great sounds, including a few Latin rhythms to accompany Theakstons XB, Thwaites Lancaster Bomber and Wainwright. No-one had the Theakstons but the other two beers were fine with the Wainwright having the edge. I had another bottle of Danish beer.

So, after a shaky start the night panned out pretty well. There was a huge contrast in the places we visited and virtually all of them sold us a decent drop of beer. This is an easy Stagger to retrace either in whole or in part and well recommended.

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"The definitive rundown of the best places in the UK to get a pint of real ale, from cosy country inns to upmarket style bars." - Time Out Magazine

The 2010 Good Beer Guide was published on 10 September. This, the 37th edition of the country's best beer and pub guide, features 4,500 of the best pubs in the UK, chosen by CAMRA members from across the country.

Despite many pubs struggling in today's current economic climate and research showing that 57 pubs permanently close every month across Britain, this year's Good Beer Guide highlights that the UK real ale pub scene is thriving. There are 1,297 new pub entries and 71 new breweries listed in this edition. The Guide features both urban and rural pubs, giving details of food, pub history, architecture, transport links, beer gardens, accommodation, disabled access and facilities for families.

Pubs are surveyed by local CAMRA members and scored on a variety of aspects that make a great pub. These include customer service, the clientele mix (i.e. the pub appeals to 18 and 80 year olds), value for money, décor and of course the quality of the real ale. CAMRA members therefore guarantee to supply the reader with the most up to date publication to help locate the best pint of real ale.



Good Beer Guide editor Roger Protz said: "CAMRA's Good Beer Guide is Britain's original number-one, independent guide to good beer and pubs. It is great to see that there are now more than 660 real ale breweries in Britain brewing over 2,500 different varieties of real ale and so many wonderful pubs to drink them in.

Roger continued, "The CAMRA members work tirelessly to survey the pubs each year to make sure the reader gets the most updated guide to the best pubs in Britain. I would personally like to thank them for all of their hard work and support."

The Good Beer Guide Mobile Edition is again available for *Good Beer Guide 2010* and makes the ideal companion to the printed Guide. Wherever you are, or wherever you are going, get information on local Good Beer Guide pubs and beers sent direct to your mobile phone. Depending on the tariff, this indispensable service costs from as little as **5.5 pence per day!** (plus your standard network Internet charges).



This unique service is compatible with most mobile phones with Internet access and support for Java applications. Get more information at [m.camra.org.uk](http://m.camra.org.uk).

You can keep your copy of the Good Beer Guide up to date by visiting the CAMRA website ([www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk)). Click on "Good Beer Guide" then "Updates to the GBG 2010". Copies of the Good Beer Guide can be obtained from Jim Flynn at a price of £15.99 (includes p&p). Please send a cheque payable to "CAMRA Stockport & South Manchester" to 66 Downham Road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport, SK4 5EG.

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## PERRY – WHAT IT IS, WHY IT MATTERS

Rhys Jones on one of the country's most endangered beer style.

WHEN they wish to draw attention to the organisation's successes, people in CAMRA (the Campaign for Real Ale) often think of such things as the huge growth of the micro-brewery movement, or the Campaign's ultimately successful lobbying for flexible licensing hours. Paradoxically, though, one of CAMRA's most illustrious successes has been the preservation of a style of drink that some drinkers would still be hard pressed to identify: real perry.

Consider this: the programme for last year's Great British Beer Festival lists perries from no fewer than 24 producers, selected from many more up and down the country. Yet a generation ago, when CAMRA's involvement with cider and perry was in its infancy, we would have struggled to name as many as 24 producers making any real perry whatsoever. What's more, while many of those producers were from the traditional perry-producing counties of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and Gloucestershire, others came from such places as Mid Wales, Hampshire, and Norfolk in which the drink was until recently no more than a distant memory, if even that.

*Right, perry pears being pressed in the traditional way*



So what is perry exactly? The dictionary definition, accurate but somehow unappealing, reads "fermented pear juice". More usefully, it can be regarded as the equivalent to cider, but made from pears not apples. But not any old pears – unlike cider, which can be made if you wish from dessert or even cooking apples, perry can only successfully be made from specific varieties of "perry pears". Hard, fibrous, and (by the standards of a dessert pear) frequently mis-shapen, these varieties, of which dozens are recorded though many are now very rare, have developed over many years to suit the soil and climate conditions of the "Three Counties" of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, and Gloucestershire which have been their historic heartland.

Real perry is made in essentially the same way as real cider, though many producers who make both contend that perry-making requires the greater skill. The character of the resulting drink shows as much variety as real cider, but as a broad generalisation perry can be said to be subtler and more delicate than cider, often bearing comparison to a high-quality white wine. Colour is typically lighter than cider, often with a greenish tinge by contrast with the gold to orange tones of a typical cider. And the presence in perry pears of an unfermentable sugar known as sorbitol dictates that even perry that is fully fermented out will still have a certain residual sweetness. Perry also lends itself particularly well to bottle fermentation to produce a naturally sparkling drink, and some spectacularly good examples of this style are now available.

By now you will be wondering where you can buy and enjoy some real perry, and it must be admitted that it's still not as easy to find as it should be. One of the best places to start will be your local CAMRA festival – virtually all of these now have a cider and perry bar where a greater or lesser range of perry will be available, and they are



generally staffed by enthusiasts who will be able to tell you where to get it in your area. More and more of the pubs that take beer seriously nowadays sell real perry too – in recent years, those of us in CAMRA who spend some of our time assessing pubs for their cider and perry offering (tough job, but somebody's got to do it) have found impressive ranges of perry in counties as different as Derbyshire and Dorset.

It would be wrong to close without referring to the unfortunate term "pear cider" which has come into use lately. This is of course a logical nonsense – perry is made from pears, cider from apples, and the two drinks are separate and distinct. The term seems to have arisen from the industrial cider-makers' practice of making vaguely cider-style drinks "flavoured" with other fruits (frequently in essence or concentrate form). In their denatured world, a bottle of pear flavouring is just another way to impart some empty novelty to a sweet fizzy drink targeted at the inexperienced or undiscerning. In the interests of clarity, it would be preferable if the term "pear cider" were never used at all: it should certainly never be used (and happily hardly ever is) to describe the true traditional product – **real perry**.

## Not Just About Beer

Mick Lewis on CAMRA's cider campaigning

SO you thought CAMRA was just a beer organisation? Well let me tell you, it certainly isn't. For over 30 years, CAMRA has also supported both real cider and perry. And in 1988, when even I was a lot younger, a committee was set up within CAMRA to deal exclusively with both drinks.

So what do we actually do? Well, there is so much cider information floating about in CAMRA that we aim to pull it all together and, where needed, let people know about it. After all, there's no point in keeping to ourselves. For example, there are no breweries in the UK that we don't know about, but we are continually discovering new cider makers, sometimes families who have been making it for generations and very few people outside of their village know about them. This tracking down of producers is an ongoing situation.

These days, virtually all CAMRA beer festivals sell cider and perry, so we can offer advice to anyone running the cider bar. There are even cider training sessions that take place for CAMRA members every year at the Great British Beer Festival. And in the distant past, we even had four National Cider and Perry Exhibitions in London.

We even publish a cider guide, with information on producers and listing pubs throughout the UK where you can drink it.

And there's still more! May is the month when the winner of our Cider and Perry of the Year winners are announced, after a very comprehensive judging at the Reading Beer and Cider Festival.

Also, for the last few years, CAMRA has dedicated October as Cider and Perry Month. Many local Branches now run cider events during the month. These can range from trips to cider makers through to encouraging local pubs to try real cider, often for the first time. This has encouraged a lot of pubs to continue selling it, once they realise that there is a market for it.

October is also the month when we publicise the winner of our Cider Pub of the Year, where judging has taken place throughout the previous six months.

CAMRA has also arguably saved perry, cider's pear-based sister drink, from extinction as Rhys Jones explains on this page.

These are just some of the things that we do. So you see, I was right all along. CAMRA's not just about beer.



# Join the Opening Times Cider Circuit

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

All you have to do is visit one of our participating pubs and buy a pint or a half of traditional cider or perry, and then get the bar staff to put a sticker on the pub's entry on the form below. Get 10 stickers and you will win a large bottle of traditional cider or perry. Get a sticker from all participating pubs and you will not only get a bottle of cider and perry but you will also be entered into the draw for the 36-pint box. We hope to have some other cider and perry prizes, too.

The Circuit runs from Saturday 10 October to Sunday 15 November. Completed forms should be sent to: "Cider Circuit, 45 Bulkeley St, Edgeley, Stockport, Cheshire, SK3 9HD" to arrive no later than Saturday 21 November. If you are entering the grand draw, make sure you specify whether you would like dry, medium or sweet cider.

All prizes will be presented at a special cider afternoon to be held at the Cheshire Ring, Manchester Rd, Hyde on Sunday 6 December from 2pm onwards.

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<b>Kro Piccadilly</b> Piccadilly Gardens Manchester M1 1RG	<b>Micro Bar</b> Arndale Market High Street Manchester	<b>Crescent</b> The Crescent Salford M5 4PF	<b>Crown &amp; Kettle</b> Great Ancoats Street Manchester M4 5FE		
<b>Star</b> Howard Street Glossop SK13 7DD	<b>Marble Beer House</b> Manchester Road Chorlton M21 0PW	<b>New Oxford</b> Bexley Square Salford M3 6DB	<b>Sand Bar</b> Grosvenor Street Manchester M1 7HL		
<b>Ye Olde Vic</b> Chatham Street Stockport SK3 3ED	<b>Cheshire Ring,</b> Manchester Road Hyde SK14 2BJ	<b>Crown</b> Heaton Lane Stockport SK4 1AR	<b>Duke of York</b> Stockport Road Romiley SK6 3AN		
<b>Marble Arch</b> Rochdale Road Manchester M4 4HY	<b>Railway</b> Avenue Street Stockport SK1 2BZ	<b>Sportsman</b> Mottram Road Hyde SK14 2NN	<b>Station Buffet Bar</b> Rassbottom Street Stalybridge SK15 1RF		
<b>Waters Green Tavern</b> Waters Green Macclesfield SK11 6LH	<b>Thatched House</b> 74 Churchgate Stockport SK1 1YJ	<b>Pi</b> 99 Manchester Road Chorlton M21 9GA	<b>Nook</b> 535 Wilbraham Road Chorlton M21 0UE		
<b>Elektrik</b> 359 Wilbraham Road Chorlton M21 0AE	<b>Steamhouse</b> Station Approach Urmston M41 9SB	<b>Bishop Blaize</b> 708 Chester Road Stretford M32 0SF	<b>Waterhouse</b> 67-71 Princess Street Manchester M2 4EG		
<b>Knott</b> 374 Deansgate Manchester M3 4LY	<b>Old Market Tavern</b> Old Market Place Altrincham WA14 4DN	<b>Bar Fringe</b> Swan Street Manchester M4 5JN	<b>Le Trappiste</b> 40 Greenwood Street Altrincham WA14 1RZ		Name Address

**Notes on opening hours:** most of the pubs taking part are open all day from 12 noon. But please note: **Cheshire Ring** opens 2pm Monday-Wednesday and 1pm Thursday and Friday; **Sand Bar** opens 4pm Saturday and Sunday; **Star** opens 2pm (4pm Monday and Tuesday); **Olde Vic** opens at 5pm (7pm Saturday and Sunday) and is closed Mondays; **Micro Bar** closes 6pm Monday to Saturday and 5pm Sundays; **Thatched House** is closed Monday and Tuesday, opens 8pm Wednesday and Thursday, 7pm Friday and 3pm Saturday; **Waters Green** closes between 3pm and 5.30 Monday to Friday; 3pm to 7pm Saturday and Sunday.



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**TRAFFORD & HULME**

**Pub OF THE Season**

**The Trafford & Hulme CAMRA Pub of the Season for August is Elektrik on Wilbraham Road, Chorlton. This modern bar is far from the clichéd “CAMRA pub” and John O’Donnell explains why it is a worthy winner....**

**A**S AWARD winning pubs go, Trafford & Hulme branch’s Autumn Pub Of The Season is a babe in arms. In fact, when the award is presented to Chorlton’s Elektrik on October 15th, the Wilbraham Road bar will still be four months short of its first birthday.

In Chorlton’s thriving real ale scene, a newcomer would be forgiven for taking time to find their feet but Elektrik hit the ground running, offering three well kept real ales from the opening night. In the eight months since, General Manager Matt Robinson & his team have strived to offer as interesting and varied a range of beer as possible with the permanent Thwaites Wainright joined by two ever changing guests, usually from micro breweries. One pump is commonly (but not exclusively) home to a guest from the excellent Hawkshead Brewery with other recent guests coming from the likes of Boggart, Dark Star and Purple Moose. Most importantly, the beer quality is always top notch.



Hot food is offered all day every day in the form of Bangers & Mash. This may sound basic, but hidden behind this simple heading is a choice of six types of sausage & four flavours of mash plus extras meaning there is no shortage of variety. The hot food offering has recently expanded to include sharing platters for those weekend lunches.



It’s not just CAMRA that have noticed Elektrik – a nomination as Best Bar in the Manchester Food & Drink Festival Awards was forthcoming in just six months. Despite such accolades and a healthy level of custom, Matt and his team consider the bar a work in progress. Recent additions include a Tuesday quiz night and a secluded rear patio area to complement the outdoor seating facing Wilbraham Road. Real Cider has just been introduced, just in time for October’s CAMRA Cider Month.

Elektrik is a distinctly modern bar but by not ignoring the values of a traditional pub, it attracts a varied clientele of all ages – all of whom are made welcome. Please join us in celebrating the work Matt and his team have done when we present the award on Thursday 15 October from 8pm.



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**See form on page 26.**





**Steve Smith is The Wayfarer and he's back with a review of the rural pubs in mid-Cheshire. Buses and trains will get you there and back but there's also some healthy walking to work up a thirst.**

**C**HESHIRE is normally associated with being reasonably flat countryside, although the parts we traversed were quite hilly, being close to the Derbyshire borders. Starting out from Manchester one August Friday, began with fair weather and a train journey to Macclesfield. I was joined by my colleague Mark, who boarded at Stockport, for the short comfortable ride.

Once there, we headed up to the bus station and caught the number 14 bus, taking us to Sutton Lane Ends alighting at the Church House Inn. Sadly, being only about 10:20 hours, it was not open. A road on the right, Ridge Hill, just past the pub climbs up and rises steadily eventually leading onto Meg Lane after about a mile. Once at the end of here, a right turn is needed (or there is a short cut via a footpath) to visit the **Hanging Gate Inn**.

Although it was only 11:05 (the pub opens at 12:00), the door was ajar, and so, rather hesitantly, we entered. No worries as we were given a friendly welcome from Lou, the Danish licensee. This is a Hydes hostelry with a minuscule front, rather quaint stone flagged bar room, a front lounge and a downstairs dining area. We sampled the



Original Bitter and Jekyll's Gold (the seasonal beer had sold out) and their other offering was Morland Old Speckled Hen.

By the time we left the pub, the inevitable English summer rain had set in. Turning right from the pub, a short distance away to the left is a single track road. This leads down to a T-junction where there is a signpost for Wildboarclough to the left; this road leads to the **Crag Inn**. The pub, a free house and a menagerie for stuffed birds and other animals, has an opened out room, an area set for dining and three real ales were in evidence; Bollington Best, Wincle Old Hag (a brownish coloured stout) and the lesser spotted (these days anyway) Worthington Draught Bitter. We indulged in food here, a tad expensive perhaps for the Mixed Bean Tikka Masala with Rice at £8.95, but it was nonetheless very tasty.



Suitably refreshed, the weather having turned a little more favourable, we retraced our steps back to the T-junction, this time turning left where the road eventually reaches the A54 by a crossroads; a further steep climb around a sharp bend brought us to the **Rose & Crown** at Allgreave. This is a



Robinsons house with lounge and so called snug area. Unicorn and the seasonal, Tit For Tat were the beers, and although the latter wasn't quite ready, samples one cloudy, one clear, were provided by the pleasant licensee, (who also telephoned our next port of call to confirm it was open all day).

Retracing our steps once again back to the cross roads, left again to Wincle this time and a further left turn by the church to descend to the **Ship Inn**, now a J W Lees badged house. A multiroomed former barn and cottages, parts have been added to, but there is still evidence of an original wooden beam or two. Bitter, Coronation Street, John Willie's and the seasonal, Gold Digger were available on the bar.

Back up the steep hill, back to the church and straight ahead up a further incline which brings one back onto the A54. This time we turned right and down into Wincle's second pub, the **Wild Boar**. Here we were met by another of our traveling companions in what was



another Robinsons hostelry, opened out and despite a number of handpumps only the Unicorn was on. However, spot the wild boar skin hanging from the wall!



Further retracing was now necessary, back to the point where we emerged onto the A54. A right turn here results in moderate uphill climbing, to the place where we began, the **Hanging Gate Inn**. Just time enough to have a swift drink and journey on, this time bypassing Meg Lane for the right hand fork, which leads down to a view of Ridgegate Reservoir.

Just in front of the reservoir is a footpath, part of the Gritstone Trail, which skirts the side of it and emerges opposite the **Leathers Smithy** on Clarke Lane, at the outskirts of Langley Village. This is a very food oriented pub, with most tables geared up for those wishing to dine. It is split up into two distinct areas and on the bar were Greene King LBW, Theakston Best Bitter,

Wells Bombardier and York Guzzler (which we all enjoyed). Right out of the pub leads back to Langley itself and the 14 bus to return to Macclesfield.



Unfortunately, we had to walk past the **St Dunstan Inn** for time did not allow. Back in

Macclesfield there was just enough time before the train to Manchester to sample the delights of the **Waters Green Tavern**. Always a plethora of beers here to whet the imbibers' appetite, and the day being a long one, I can't remember what we drank! (I think it may have been Titanic Iceberg - Mark).

All in all a good day - even though we clocked up 13 - 14 miles walking between the pubs.

*This journey was accomplished by using the GMPTE Wayfarer ticket, priced at £9.20 and valid for travel by bus anytime within Greater Manchester, parts of Cheshire, Derbyshire and the Peak District and Lancashire. On trains, it is only available from 0930 Mondays to Fridays, all day Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. Tickets can be purchased from GMPTE travel shops and manned rail stations.*

# THE ROSSENDALE BREWERY



The Griffin Inn, 84-86, Hud Rake,  
Haslingden, Rossendale, Lanc's BB4 5AF  
Contact Geoff or Shane on: 01706 21 40 21



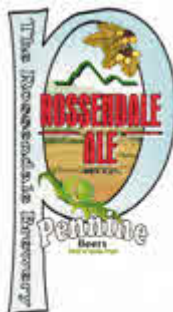
Floral Dance  
3.6%

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3.8%

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4.2%

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Railway Sleeper  
4.2%

An amber, uniquely intense bitter and hoppy beer, still brewed with our Stockport drinkers in mind.



Pitch Porter  
5%

A full bodied, rich beer with a slightly sweet, malty start, counter-balanced with sharp bitterness and an obvious roast



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5.3%

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# Brewery NEWS

**W**E start off with some interesting news from the “wrong side” of the Pennines. Already home to some pretty nifty breweries, Sheffield is about to get another beermaker.

This is the brainchild of Dave Szejkowski (known to everyone as Dave Unpronounceable, for fairly obvious reasons) and Gazza Prescott. The two have been friends for years and have a shared interest in beer and travel, spending much of their free time travelling the globe in search of their “perfect pint”. Both have also had experience in virtually all aspects of the licensed trade from brewing to bar managing.

Both love hops and after extensive “research” have come to the conclusion that most British brewers don’t use enough. However rather than moan about this into their pints they have decided to do something about this. **Steel City Brewing** is the result. Rather than buying their own brewery - with all the associated cost and hassle that entails – Dave and Gazza have

decided, initially at least, to become what’s known in Europe as a “Cuckoo” brewery as they are going to be using the brewplant of Sheffield’s newest Craft Brewer, the [Brew Company](#). This will allow them to benefit from Pete’s experience and knowledge of craft brewing and his brewery and combine this with their desire to make exceptional beer!

The first beer was scheduled to be brewed on 26 September and should be ready by about the time you read this. Hop Manifesto will do exactly

what it says on the pump clip. 5.2% ABV and 78 bitterness units (trust us, that’s a lot) and will use Magnum, Centennial, Cascade and Chinook for hopping with Amarillo as the dry-hop. Look out for it locally – there may be some direct deliveries and Boggart Brewery will also be distributing the beer. Plans are for one brew a month at the moment – so if you like hops you are in for a real treat. For sales enquiries contact Dave on [dave@steelcitybrewing.co.uk](mailto:dave@steelcitybrewing.co.uk)

Closer to home, the **Leyden Brewery** at Nangreaves near Bury is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year. To mark this event Brendan Leyden is brewing a special 10th Anniversary Ale (5.1%) using “green” Goldings hops. He tells us the beer will be “unusual” being copper coloured with a fruity and malty taste with a good hop finish.

Elsewhere, **Millstone Brewery** have produced Autumn Leaves (4.3%) for the first time in three years. Unlike most Millstone beers this is brewed using UK hops and is more like a traditional British-style ale.

**Phoenix Brewery** is having great success with its new series of “Phoenix Fruits” fruit beers. They are not cask ales but both Strawberry and new Passion fruit versions are going down a storm. Phoenix’s Tony Allen tells us that Blackcurrant is next. On the cask ale front, this month sees a whole raft of seasonals including Spooky Brew, Firecracker, Uncles Fester and the wonderful Rip Rap, one of OT’s favourite Phoenix beers.

Interesting things going on at **Marble Brewery**. First though look out for the return of Festival. This year’s version uses a new New Zealand hop, Rukau, which is very aromatic and floral with passion fruit notes. Later this year both Decadence (the 8% imperial stout) and the new barley wine (10.5-ish%) will be out in both 33cl and 75cl bottle – the latter will make excellent presents we think. There are also rumours of some very limited edition Decadence variants....



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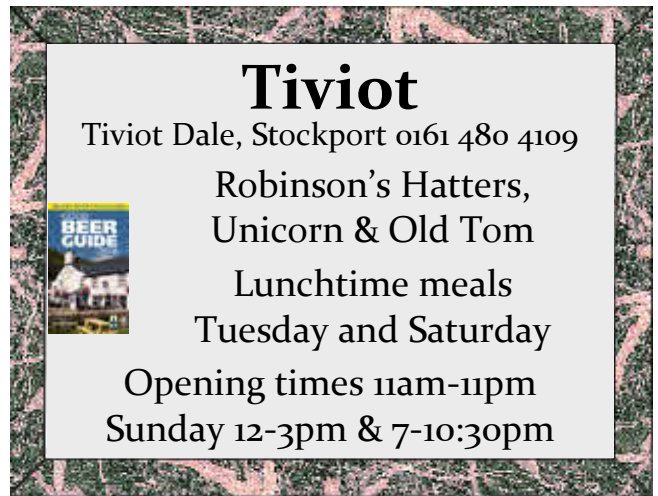
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Opening Times' chef Ken Birch is back with more tasty treats. This month it's....Beery Wraps

I will suggest three fillings which can be used with oatcakes, tortilla wraps or within a pitta. All have a small beer content, and although I use different beers for each, they could easily work as well when using the same beer for all. As part of an Indian Summer al fresco treat, or an autumn Warm Munch, I'm sure the snacks will be equally enjoyable. Each recipe makes six wraps.

**Smoked Salmon and Lancashire Rarebit**

- ¼ - ½ lb crumbly Lancashire cheese
- 1-2 teaspoons English mustard
- 3oz plain flour
- ¼ pint milk
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- ¼ pint pale ale / blond beer
- 4oz smoked salmon
- ¼ - ½ pint water
- salt and pepper to taste, and a little oil

**Method:** Gently heat the oil in a saucepan. Stir in the flour and gradually add the milk and some water to form a smooth sauce. Crumble in the cheese, then add the crushed garlic, mustard and seasoning. Remove from the heat and allow to thicken (2-3 minutes). Then add a little beer and water gradually until a sustainable beeriness is achieved. Spread the sauce in the centre of the wrap and add flaked pieces of smoked salmon (off cuts are fine). Fold over and serve.

**Bean and Spinach Spicy Wraps**

- 1 can red kidney beans
- ½ packet of young leaf spinach
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 teaspoons tomato puree
- 1½ fresh green chillies, finely chopped, or 1 teaspoon chilli powder
- 2 pinches dried mint
- ¼ pint dark mild or stout (degassed)
- 1½ tablespoons olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste, and a little water

**Method:** Cook the spinach in boiling salted water for three minutes, drain well and set aside. Gently heat the oil in a medium sized saucepan and fry off the diced onion until golden brown. Stir in the finely chopped chillies and minced garlic. When combined add the spinach, tomato puree, mint and then the drained kidney beans. If the mixture is too stiff loosen with a *little* water. Remove from the heat and add the beer in stages, tasting each time to achieve the preferred balance.

**Three Bean and Cheese**

Ingredients as above except only use a pinch of chilli powder and substitute a tablespoon of mild paprika. Substitute the spinach with half a can of butter beans and half a can of black eyed beans. Also include 6oz feta cheese.

Method as above, adding the beans before the chilli / paprika. Mix and stir in the cheese before adding the beer. A de-gassed high quality premium light lager works well and accompanies these dishes superbly.

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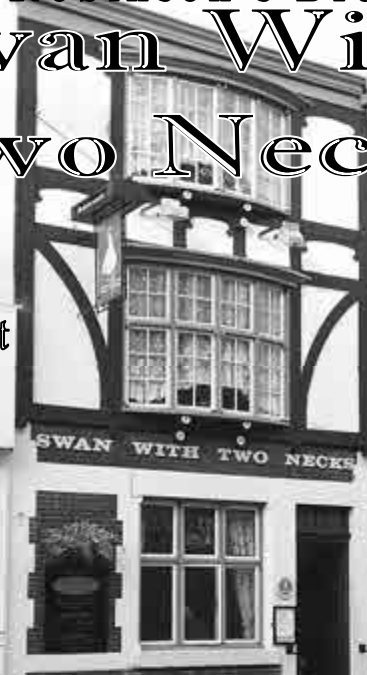
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## TAKE AN ALE TRAIL AROUND STOCKPORT

Following on from our Local Pubs Week event when we highlighted the need to reinvigorate Stockport Town Centre, CAMRA has co-operated with Stockport Council in launching its first ever 'Ale Trail'; self-guided walks around the town centre featuring 20 high quality and unique pubs.

We have often said that Stockport Town Centre has one of the best concentrations of classic pubs as anywhere in the UK. Including historic heritage pubs, traditional town locals. Micro brewery tied houses and multi-beer free houses, Stockport has the lot – and all within easy walking distance.

Each pub on the trail highlights this and has something a bit different to offer. Some are traditional with a historic setting and pride themselves on serving a quality pint, whilst others offer contemporary refurbishment and a relaxed dining experience. There are pubs with beautifully kept beer gardens, family facilities, jukeboxes and pool tables, as well as weekly programmes of live music - rock, acoustic, rhythm & blues, punk or folk.

There are three mini Ale Trails covering different part of the town centre: The Historic Market Place Trail, The Underbanks & Hillgate Trail and The Viaduct & Portwood Trail

Norman Hudson, Service Director for Regeneration and Leisure at Stockport Council, said: "Stockport boasts a wide range of high quality, award-winning food and drink venues and these self-guided walks are a great way to discover some hidden gems.

"The great British pub is an important part of our heritage and Stockport's new Ale Trails celebrate that, whilst at the same time giving people the opportunity to explore the town centre."

This excellent guide was launched at the Crown, Heaton Lane, and our photograph shows Stockport Council's Alison Farthing, CAMRA's John Sutcliffe, who devised the trails included in the leaflet, and the Crown's Tracey Mullen.



Free copies will be available from the Tourist Information Centre, libraries, heritage venues, Stockport railway station and will also be distributed across venues in South and Central Manchester and Cheshire. Copies can also be picked up from the 20 featured pubs which such classics as the Arden Arms, Queens Head, Swan With Two Necks and Crown.

For more information call the Tourist Information Centre on 0161 474 4444 or visit [www.visit-stockport.com](http://www.visit-stockport.com).



## JIM BOWDEN AWARD

Jill Hasler remembers a veteran campaigner and salutes the recipient of the final award made in his memory.

UNBELIEVABLY, this year is the tenth anniversary of the death of founder member and long time treasurer of Macclesfield Branch and one-time *Opening Times* contributor, Jim Bowden.



Jim was known for a love of traditional pubs- the kind where everyone is welcome, where televisions and/or music do not dominate, where conversation is prized and, of course, where good real ale is kept and served properly. He had many pubs which he would visit on a regular basis and for several years after his passing Pauline, his wife, would frequently meet people who said that they used to drink with Jim at yet another pub that she hadn't known about.

In his memory, Macclesfield and East Cheshire inaugurated the Jim Bowden award, which was to go to pubs where Jim had enjoyed the traditional atmosphere. Previous winners have included the British Flag, the Highwayman (in its previous guise) and the Davenport Arms in Woodford. In the last few years it has become increasingly difficult to find such pubs, so, at Pauline's and Nikki (his daughter's) suggestion, it was decided to give a final anniversary award.

There was really only one pub to which this final award could go. The Waters Green Tavern stands as a reminder of what pubs can be. Virtually unchanged since Jim's day, and still with Brian and Tracey in charge, with up to seven real ales and a real cider, and most of all, where everyone is welcome- to stand at the bar and chat or sit in a quiet corner and read.

A group of Jim's drinking friends and several CAMRA members joined Pauline and Nikki to present Brian and Tracey with the award and to, of course, have a drink and a talk in memory of Jim.



Aside: left – right: Jim's wife Pauline, Brian from the Water's Green, Jim's daughter Nikki ,and Tracey from the Waters Green

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- £7 in adv/£9 on the door

Fri 27th Nov - Funky Mustard

- £4 adv/£5 on the door

Sat 5th Dec - Catherine Maclellan

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Fri 11th Dec - Biggles Wartime Band

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# LOCAL BEER FESTIVAL ROUND - UP

August Bank Holiday weekend and the succeeding weeks saw a multitude of beer festivals held at pubs and bars across the Opening Times area. We couldn't get to them all (we tried, mind you). Here are photographs from a selection of them...



The weekend kicked off with the annual beer festival at the **Railway**, Portwood, Stockport (above left), swapped to this weekend from the usual October date (when the annual cider festival takes place). An extra bar was created at the back of the pub to accommodate the festival beers. After that it was out to the Peak District and the **Dog & Partridge** at Bridgemont (above right) where the festival beers were in a small marquee at the back of the pub.



On the way to Disley, the **White Lion** at Disley (above left) held a zoologically themed festival with beers in a marquee in the car park and also with an enhanced range on the bar. The Sunday and Monday of that weekend saw the Altrincham Bottle and Cask Festival run by **Le Trappiste** Belgian bar and ably assisted by Trafford & Hulme CAMRA, whose Jon Gobbett can be seen in our photo, above right. The cask range was supplemented by a wide range of Belgian beers, some new to the UK. Le Trappiste's Martin Matthews tells us this will be an annual event from now on.



The second weekend in September saw the annual Romiley Beer festival held at the **Duke of York** (above right). The wide range of beers easily sold out. The following weekend was the first beer festival at the **Old Hall** in Whitehough near Chinley (above left) where beers from Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire and Derbyshire proved popular.

# JOIN THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



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| Address                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Postcode |             |               |               |         |          |             |               |                                                                                                                         |  |  |  |  |         |          |           |        |
| Telephone                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | E-mail   |             |               |               |         |          |             |               |                                                                                                                         |  |  |  |  |         |          |           |        |

Please tick membership category:  
 Payment method: Cheque    Direct Debit

|                |     |     |
|----------------|-----|-----|
| Single         | £22 | £20 |
| Joint          | £27 | £25 |
| Under 26       | £16 | £14 |
| Under 26 Joint | £19 | £17 |
| Retired        | £16 | £14 |
| Retired Joint  | £19 | £17 |

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your membership will make a difference. For just £20 a year you can help our work to promote real ale, protect consumer rights and support pubs. Benefits include a monthly newspaper, quarterly magazine, free entrance to beer festivals and discounts on books and the Good Beer Guide. 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). CAMRA newsletter *Opening Times*

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

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

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

9 2 6 1 2 9

**FOR CAMRA OFFICIAL USE ONLY**  
 This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Membership Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions to your Bank or Building Society**  
 Please pay CAMRA Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with CAMRA and, if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_

This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.



### The Direct Debit Guarantee

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

## CAMRA Calling - What's On In The Local CAMRA Branches

### Stockport & South Manchester

Branch Contact: *Pete Farrand 01625 425734*  
[pete.farrand@googlemail.com](mailto:pete.farrand@googlemail.com)  
 Branch website: [www.ssmcamra.org.uk](http://www.ssmcamra.org.uk)

**Thursday 8th** - Branch Meeting: Grapes, London Rd, Hazel Grove. Starts 8pm.

**Friday 9th** - Cider Circuit Starts

**Friday 16th** - Stagger: Stockport Market Place. Meet 7.30pm Calverts Court, St Petersgate; 8.30 Bakers Vaults, Market Place

**Thursday 22nd** - Pub of the Month presentation to the Thatched House, Churchgate. From 8pm

**Thursday 29th** - Presentation of Cask Champion Award at Didsbury Beer Festival. From 8pm. Also CAMRA stall at festival on 29th to 31st inclusive. Contact Mark McConachie for details.

### High Peak & NE Cheshire

Branch Contact: *Mike Rose 07986 458517*  
[mikewrose@gmail.com](mailto:mikewrose@gmail.com)

**Monday 12th** - Branch Meeting: Sportsman, Mottram Rd, Hyde. Starts 8.30pm

**Thursday 22nd** - Buxton Social: Ramsays Bar, Buckingham Hotel, Buxton. Start 8.30pm

### Trafford & Hulme

Branch Contact: *John Ison 0161 962 7976*  
 Branch website: [www.thcamra.org.uk](http://www.thcamra.org.uk)

**Saturday 12th** - Cider Trail: starts 9am Wetherspoons Bishop Blaize, Old Trafford; 11am Old Market Tavern, Altrincham; 12noon Steamhouse, Urmston; 2pm Nook, Chorlton; 3pm Marble Beer House, Chorlton; 5pm Knott, Castlefield; 6pm Wetherspoons Waterhouse, Manchester.

**Thursday 15th** - Pub of the Season presentation to Elektrik, Wilbraham Road, Chorlton. From 8pm

**Thursday 22nd** - Manchester survey: meet 8pm Peveril of the Peak, 8.45pm Rain Bar, 9.20pm Britons Protection, 10pm City Road Inn, finish at the Knott.

**Saturday 31st** - Day trip to Nottingham

**Thursday 5th November** - Branch Meeting: The Old Market Tavern, Altrincham. Start 8pm

### North Manchester

Branch Contact: *Dave Hallows 07983 944992*  
[davehallows2002@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:davehallows2002@yahoo.co.uk)

**Wednesday 7th** - Cider Night: Marble Arch, Rochdale Rd, 7.30pm; New Oxford, Bexley Sq, Salford, 9pm; Crescent, 10pm.

**Thursday 15th** - Social: Marble Arch, Rochdale Rd. Starts 8pm.

**Wednesday 21st** - Branch Meeting: New Oxford, Bexley Sq, Salford. Starts 8pm.

**Saturday 24th** - Trip to White Shield Brewery, Burton-on-Trent. Details from Ken Birch Tel: 0161 705 0202.

**Wednesday 28th** - Newton Heath Survey. Meet Railway, Dean Lane, 8pm.

**Wednesday 4th November** - Atherton Visit. Old Isaacs, Market St, 8pm, Pendle Witch, Warburton Place, 9pm.

### Macclesfield & East Cheshire

Branch Contact: *Tony Icke 01625 861833*  
[contact@eastcheshirecamra.org.uk](mailto:contact@eastcheshirecamra.org.uk)

**Wednesday 7th - Saturday 10th** - Beer Festival at Congleton Leisure Centre

**Monday 19th** - Autumn Pub of the Season presentation: Venue tbc.

**Monday 2nd November** - Campaigning Meeting: Union Club, Alderley Edge



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 tenth in the series comes from Outstanding Brewery in Bury.

### About the Brewery

**A**FTER selling the Porter Brewing Company to Geoff Oliver, who now trades as Rossendale Brewery, Dave Porter still had some beers to get out of his system, as he put it. So it was that Outstanding Brewery was formed as a collaboration between Dave, Paul Sandiford and Glen Woodcock. Another familiar face involved is Alex Lord, formerly licensee of the Railway in Stockport, the Porter Brewing Co flagship.

The brewery, which comprises 15-barrel and 4-barrel plants, runs in tandem with Dave's other business of installing micro-breweries round the UK, and overseas.

It went into production in March 2008 but it was not until later that year the beers started to be seen in the free trade. They can still be elusive at times but have nevertheless gained an increasing reputation for excellence. Distribution is aided by the fact that the beers are available in cask, keg or bottle and cover a wide spectrum of tastes and styles.

The core portfolio comprises 11 beers including SOS (4.5%), a pale brown beer with a huge bitterness; Blond (4.5%), a very pale beer with floral and citrus notes; Smoked Out (5%), a mid-brown beer brewed using a large amount of smoked malt, Pilsner (5%), a crisp, hoppy interpretation of the classic style and Stout (5.5%) a superbly rich, jet black bitter stout with liquorice and roast notes in the complex flavour profile.

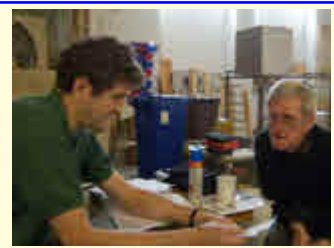
Stout is so good it won the Beer of the Festival award at this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. Below is a picture of the award being presented to (l-r) Glen, Alex, Paul and Dave. A large party from Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA visited the brewery to present the award and this month's Birthday beer has its roots in this visit.



### About the Beer

**W**HEN Stockport CAMRA visited the brewery we enjoyed considerable hospitality from Dave and his team, with several beers to sample, including the superb Stout, and we were also treated to a fine buffet. Dave also held a draw. All of those present put their names into a hat and the one drawn out won the chance to return to Outstanding Brewery to both design and help brew their own beer.

The lucky winner was Chris Howard. Chris has long been a fan of Dave Porter's beers both in the Porter Brewing days and now at Outstanding. One of his favourite beers was an old Porter's beer, Young Tom, initially brewed to mark the birth of Dave's son and returning thereafter as an occasional brew.



Brewing day was Saturday 19 September, and Chris arrived early at the brewery. Opening Times arrived rather later in the morning. Aside are pictures of Chris discussing the recipe with Dave and later "mashing in".



Named, appropriately enough, Howards Way, the brew was the 99th to be put through the brewery and like Young Tom is to be a 4.5% ABV dark brown beer, brewed using Maris Otter pale ale malt, crystal malt and roast barley. Pilgrim hops have been used and for extra richness some port has also been added to the brew!

Outstanding Brewery doesn't make many beers outside its extensive core range so this is a real treat – look out for it in local free houses. Enjoy!



## The White Lion



### Disley



Thanks to all of you who made our August beer festival a ROARING success

We now have the PRIDE to present a

## Halloween mini-festival

27th - 31st October

19+ Beers over the week

Entertainment

Friday - Zebra bier keller band

Saturday - LYF superb band

(original songs and rock covers from the 50s to the present)

135 Buxton Road, Disley, SK12 2HA

Tel. 01663 - 762800

# Voted The World's Best Ale



Robinson's Old Tom is almost as old as the brewery itself. It is a dark and warming superior strong ale, with aromas of dark fruit and a palate booming with ripe malt and hops followed by a deep port wine finish. Over the years it has won some of the industry's most prestigious brewing awards and is now recognised as one of the most famous strong ales brewed in England.

Available from selected stores

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