

# Cider & Rom •Cider & Perry Win on our Cider Circuit – page 15



The Knott is Regional Pub of the Year – see page 8

GMPTE



Good Beer Guide 2011 out now – see page 17







October's Pub of the Month is the well-known Red Lion on Wilmslow Road in Withington. Stuart Ballantyne has been to visit this South Manchester institution.



he Red Lion is a pub that is a historic country inn and must be one of the oldest pubs in the area. Dating back to the 1670's it looks old and feels old as you enter the front door because the ceiling is very low, so much so that anyone over six foot tall may struggle to stand fully upright. You might say that the pub is a bit like the Tardis as it seems to be much bigger inside than it looks from without. Around the interior walls you can look back more than 100 years at photographs of the much smaller pub in the early 1900's.

Over recent years the pub has been extended many times. Fortunately the ever popular and immaculately kept bowling green at the back of the pub has survived and it is particularly popular in the summer when you can have a game of bowls or just sit and watch the action whilst enjoying a beer or two.

The Red Lion has been run for more than twenty years by the same licensee, Kevin Connor. That's quite an achievement so Kevin, and Carl Ross the assistant manager, together with the rest of the large team at the pub must be doing something right.

Firstly of course must be the beer. The Red Lion is a Marston's house selling Marston's Bitter, Pedigree, Jennings Cumberland Ale and Wychwood Hobgoblin. It must be one of the busiest pubs in Marston's entire estate as Kevin orders his Pedigree in hogsheads (54 gallon casks). He told me that he would also order his other cask beers in hogsheads if he could but Marston's cannot supply the other beers in such large barrels. Who said nobody drinks real ale these days? Add to this an excellent seven days a week food menu and the generosity of the locals in supporting charitable causes then you have an award winning pub that is very difficult to beat.

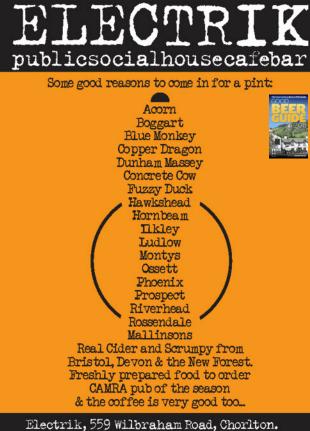
All in all, a very worthy winner. Note that the pub of the month award this month is on **Tuesday 26th October** to avoid a clash with Manchester's SIBA beer festival and the Didsbury beer festival.



The Pub of the Month award is sponsored by Stephensons, 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.







www.electrikbar.co.uk



ne of the prizes for the annual Mild Magic challenge is a trip to one of our local family brewers – all of whom still make at least one cask mild.

Hydes make three – possibly the largest range of mild ales made by any family brewer in the UK and this year they hosted a gathering of lucky Mild Magic winners when a grand time was had by all. Our thanks to Hydes and also to the CAMRA liaison officer Paul King who stood in and conducted us around the prewery. The happy crowd are pictured below.





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# COMMENT, NOTES & CONTENTS

## **Opening Times – Comment**

Welcome to Cider & Perry Month. This is the time of year when the nation's craft cider makers are busily pressing their apple and pear juice. This will spend the next few months maturing and fermenting to produce the increasingly wide range of traditional ciders and perries that add interest to the bars of more and more pubs. Oh, and by the way – it's **always** perry and **never** pear cider.

With record sales at beer festivals, and more pubs selling the real thing, it seems that real cider and perry's day has come. Why not take part in our cider circuit – you'll visit a wide range of great pubs and bars, and get a chance to sample some fantastic drinks.

This month we also celebrate the launch of the 2011 Good Beer Guide. Look out for the Good Beer Guide logo on many of our adverts this month - these signify pubs that are in the new Guide and are all worth a visit.

# **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. 7,200 copies a month are printed by Phil Powell Printing of Failsworth. All articles copyright CAMRA unless otherwise stated.

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#### Copy Date for the November issue is Friday 15 October

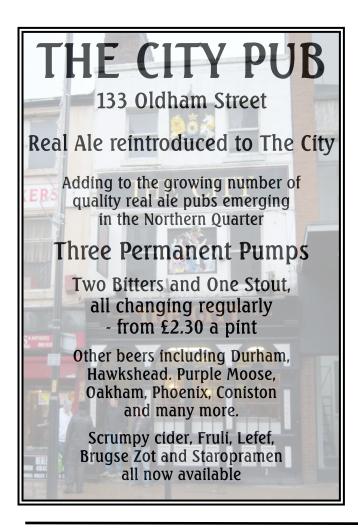
**Contributors to this issue:** John Clarke, John Tune, Dave Hanson, Peter Butler, Robin Wignall, Peter Edwardson, Frank Wood, Andy Jenkinson, Dave Hallows, Stuart Ballantyne, John Sutcliffe, Beverley Gobbett, Mark McConachie, Steve Smith, Heather Airlie, John O'Donnell.

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OOM and gloom around the branch area this month with lots of reports of pubs up for sale, leases up for grabs, pubs closing, turned into flats, you name it. Pugh & Co. are advertising the Lane Ends at Lane Ends, Marple up for auction. This was very recently a Good Beer Guide pub and was always worth a visit. Pugh & Co. are also advertising the Swan at Cockbrook, Ashton; the Yew Tree, Osbourne Street, Bredbury and the Buxton Inn at Droylsden (the one with the Wilsons signs still up outside and in good condition).

## Free Houses & Festivals

I VISITED the **Printers Arms** at Thornsett on the August Bank Holiday weekend and was impressed with the decor and the friendliness. The licensee is Vicky Turner, who along with her husband Stuart, run the pub, whilst also running the Printers



Arms at Cheadle. told me that the three handpumped ever changing beers were so popular, that the two silver racks of fonts dispensing the delights of Carling, Becks etc. were in freefall, so much so that they are planning to take out the smaller rack of three and replace with two more handpumps in due course when trade jumps up a little further.

On my visit, Salopian Vortex (4.0%), Nottingham Extra Pale (4.2%) and Storm Tornado (4.5%) were the beers on offer, all at keen prices of £2.20 pint. They are putting food on for televised football matches this season and so far this is taking off well.

At the **Navigation** in Buxworth, Robinsons Unicorn and Taylor's Landlord are the regular beers with a further three guests. On my visit the same day, Brampton Aspire (3.7%), Derby Peregrine Porter (4.4%) and Abbot Ale were the guests on sale, following a pattern in lots of High Peak free houses recently, of having unlikely beers on for the area they are in.

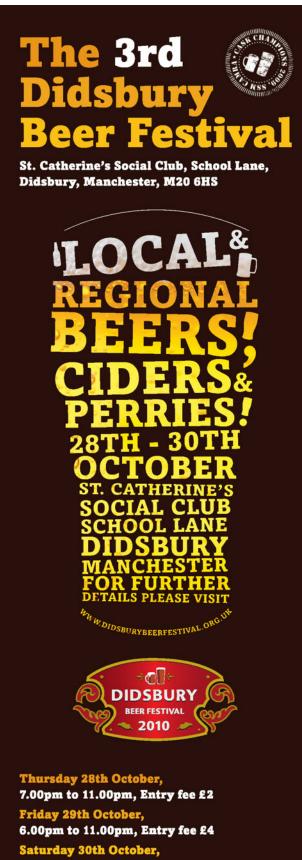
This little trip out involved Sunday lunch, with us guiding our visitor Ian Drinkwater from Southampton Branch round that day and the **Old Hall** at Whitehough did not disappoint, with Marble Manchester Bitter being a pleasant accompaniment to a Sunday Roast. At the **Swan** in Kettleshulme, Marston's Bitter and Millstone Tiger Rut were the attractions for me in the choice of three. The other did not register, I was happy with the first two which were in fine form.

The Beer Festival at the **White Lion** in Disley that weekend was very popular as was the one down the road at the **Dog & Partridge** at Bridgemont, according to our Buxton members. I found it most pleasant sitting in the small tent outside the White Lion, and spent a happy time chatting to locals on a breezy evening. The standard of the beer inside was very high, too.

The weekend after, the **Swan** at Kettleshulme had their festival and I called in after a walk in the Wildboarclough and Pyms Chair areas with the Powser Mountaineering Club who were out in force that day. Beers from Thornbridge were in evidence and the Red, at 5.9% was extremely hoppy and satisfying after a 9 1/2 mile walk! Again, some rare beers for the area, mainly dispensed from the convenient small shed at the side of the pub.

In Hayfield that day, there were three beers on from Northumberland Brewery, the one that I tried was the Fog on the Tyne. I couldn't resist, as we divvied the beers out, to say that this is yours but this one is "all mine, all mine" which the bar staff groaned at but I thought was very witty!!

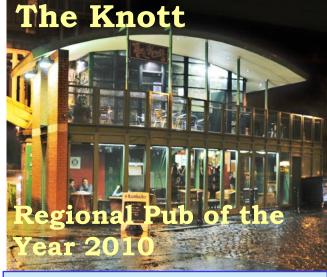




12.00 noon to 11.00pm, Entry fee £2 up to 5.00pm then £3

Charities benefitting -Cornerstone Day Centre & Christie Hospital

For further details please visit www.didsburybeerfestival.org.uk



HE Knott goes one better! Trafford & Hulme Branch has named the Knott as its Pub of the Year for the last two years. This meant that the popular Deansgate bar was entered into the Greater Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Year contest where it went head to head with the entries from the other seven CAMRA branches in the region.

Last year it lost out to the Crown in Worthington (which went on to make the final four in the national competition.). This year the Knott emerged victorious and has been crowned regional champ.

The results were announced by CAMRA's Regional Director Ralph Warrington at the formal launch of the 2011 Good Beer

Guide at the Marble Arch on 16 September. Knott manager Scott Davies and assistant manager Alex Swift (pictured right with their award) thought they were just there for the launch so the look of stunned amazement on their faces when the result was announced was. well, amazing.



Amazement swiftly turned to delight as they were presented with their certificate by Ralph, who praised the Knott's commitment to choice and quality. When news filtered back to the Knott, head chef Oz dropped two plates in surprise!

If you've not been to the Knott do get there as soon as you can. It's just across the road from Deansgate station and Deansgate-Castlefield (formerly G-Mex) Metrolink stop and will certainly repay your journey there. While it's not owned by



Marble Brewery there are often a couple of their beers on the bar along with a range of changing guests, usually from micro breweries near (Pictish, Phoenix and Thornbridge are popular) and far

(Durham and Brew Dog for example). There is real cider and a well thought out range of foreign beers (and not the "usual suspects" either – the excellent Belgian / Dutch Urthel Hop-It was featured as this was typed). The food is excellent and the monthly "epicurean nights" sell out well in advance.

There will be a formal presentation of the award at the Knott on the evening of 11 November from 8pm. Scott and his team will be waiting to serve you all with a fantastic range of beers and ciders, while Oz and his team will be on hand to delight you with their culinary skills.



Robin Wignall's monthly round-up of the High Peak pub scene. This month there's a welcome re-opening, an unwelcome closure plus a host of free house festivals.

THE Board Inn at the Horwich End end of Whaley Bridge re-opened in the middle of August after some redesign, refurbishment and personal investment by new tenants Jason and Malin Coates. The opening beers available were Robinson's Unicorn and Dizzy Blond, with obviously scope for changes and additions. Food was expected to come on stream in September, and live music will feature from Wednesday to Sunday. The Board will open all day on Saturday and Sunday with a later 5.00pm opening in the week until food is established.

As I have previously noted, the Board is a good little local which deserves to be successful, so best wishes to Jason and Malin in their new venture.

Unfortunately the **Swan** at New Mills Newtown closed as August's OT hit the pubs. This news, and the closure of the **North Western** two or three years ago, leaves a bit of a gap in pub availability in the area. Good news of course for the **Beehive** just down the hill, and for the **White Lion**, the first pub into Disley from Newtown.

## Local Festivals & Awards

B Y the time you read this the beer festival at the Swan at Kettleshulme will have come and gone. Sadly I missed it, but an August visit found very good pints of Phoenix Hopsack and Abbeydale Absolution.

Early in August the **Old Hall** at Whitehough, Chinley, was presented with the CAMRA High Peak branch Pub of the Season Award and the Derbyshire Branches Pub of the Year Award. These followed at the end of the month with the Stockport & South Manchester Branch award for the most



popular mild pub on Mild Magic, outside SMBC. Needless to say both occasions were celebrated with a good selection of beers, mainly from local-ish microbreweries. Pale hoppy things tend to rule the roost, but very good Howard Town Mill Town, a dark mild, was available for the Mild Magic event. Two hand pumped ciders were on the bar on both occasions.

The August Bank Holiday weekend saw beer festivals at the **Dog & Partridge** at Bridgemont and the **White Lion** at Disley, with customers transferring from one to the other by the 199 bus along the A6.

The **Dog & Partridge** festival is long established and this year featured 16 festival beers in the marquee behind the pub. Beers were mainly from not too far away, Clitheroe in the north to Burton in the south, with the odd one from further afield. All the beers that I tried were in good form, with Wincle Sir Philip from near Macclesfield perhaps the best of them.

The White Lion festival was in its second year, and had a more expansive beer list from around the country. With over 30 beers listed there was plenty of choice, and a good selection of milds, porters and stouts, alongside pale hoppy brews. Again all the beers tried were in good form, with Jarrow Bitter from Tyne & Wear my beer of the festival.

Both these pubs are part of Enterprise Inns, and it is good to see licensees accessing beers from the Enterprise/SIBA list to create imaginative beer festivals. I look forward to August Bank Holiday 2011.

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# ALES FROM THE HAPPY VALLEY







# Gatley and Cheadle Village Stagger with John Sutcliffe

t was cloudy but dry as a group of eight of us met at Gatley Green on 16 July. We were not surprised to find the first pub, the **Red Lion**, closed down as it has not served real ale for several years and had hardly any customers.

So our first drink was at the **Prince of Wales** a delightful, friendly house, converted originally from a row of early nineteenth century cottages and extended to form a multi-roomed interior, with central bar and a large outdoor seating area, fully enclosed by a fence and entered by a second door beyond the bar, Although there were no children there at 7.30 in the evening, it obviously provides a safe environment for families. The beers on offer were Hydes Original Bitter, Mild, said to be light mild on the pump clip but thought by some to be Hydes Owd Oak dark mild; the



#### other beer being Cape Crusader.

Next door to the Price of Wales is the **Gothic**, a converted chapel with high ceiling and gallery, exposed roof trusses and bar front decorated with Edwardian tiles. The only beer was Cains Bitter from the Liverpool brewery. On the Friday night of our visit there were no customers inside, as anyone valuing their hearing would be unwise to subject themselves to the deafening music, but we joined a handful of customers outside. There is Karaoke on Fridays and a disco on Saturday nights. (*The Gothic is currently closed - ed2*).



A short walk past the memorial park and the clock tower brought us to the **Horse and Farrier**, a popular Hydes Heritage pub with

lots of linked spaces, nooks and crannies and real fireplaces but no real fires. 19thC photographs show the horse drawn tram outside at the front. Beers were well kept Hydes 1863, Jekyll's Gold and a guest beer, Tightrope as well as Original Bitter and Boggart Red Crystal, which were not sampled. A sign outside advertised a quiz night on Thursday, in aid of St. Ann's Hospice.



A short bus ride brought us to the White Hart in Cheadle; possibly an old coaching inn, next to St Mary's Parish Church, with a large rear car park. At one time this was a very popular Boddington's house but declined somewhat and is now owned by Punch. Wadworth 6X was the best kept beer with the guest beer Bateman's England Expects only slightly better than the English Association Football team. However it has a new manager, Paul Heart who intends adding a third beer on handpump. A few days later the pub was closed for a couple of days for the filming of a new television series.



We crossed High Street to the Crown, converted from a shop. Here in a crowded, lively atmosphere we enjoyed Hydes Original, Hydes Mild and Greene King's Westgate Sundance and a high scoring Loose Cannon. This excellent local was awarded Pub of the Month for August. There is a singer on Fridays, Motown every Saturday, a Quiz night on Sunday and Karaoke on Thursdays.

Then to another Hyde's house, the **Star** that still has its former name Old Star in the glass of the windows. It used to have a vault but is now opened out at the front with a pleasant timber floor instead of the previous carpet. The Original was a little better than average but most of us had Rising Star. The pump clip said 6.8% but we were told by the bar staff that it was actually 7.5% ABV.



The George and Dragon, a keg pub is closed and as the Royal Oak had no real ale we went under the railway bridge into Manchester Road to the Ashlea that some may remember as the Railway many years ago. Possibly a former railway building it is a comfortable old brick pub on split levels with parking to the rear. The new manager, Peter Heyes, informed us that the Ashlea was closed on Monday 20th for a refurbishment and would reopen on 5th August. He intends to introduce third pint glasses with an offer of three thirds for the price of a pint. The beers were North Yorkshire Rocket Fuel, and North Yorkshire Mayhem but there will be more on when they reopen (the Ashlea has now reopened and very impressive it looks, too - Ed).



It was interesting to see the changes since two years ago when we last did this stagger. In that time one pub in Gatley has closed and two or three in Cheadle including Weavers and the George and Dragon. Noticeably all of these served keg beer not real cask ale. When will they learn? So it may be worth looking at the White Hart and the Ashlea to see whether an increased number of beers will increase their trade.





<u>Our ales can all be sampled at The Griffin, Haslingden;</u> The Railway, Portwood Stockport or The Sportsman, Hyde.



Trafford & Hulme CAMRA have announced that the winner of their autumn Pub of the Season is the Rising Sun on Queen Street in Manchester City Centre. Beverley Gobbett sings its praises.

N the last four years this pub has gone from having one handpump to five. They have recently put real Cider on one pump so a sixth pump is soon to be installed to take the beer on offer back up to its previous level.

Barrie Sneyd who is at the helm both in the cellar and behind the bar, has proven that he has real ale in is heart. He joins in with Cask Ale Week every year, holds Meet the Brewer evenings and is actively supporting the LocAle Campaign and the new Local Pubs Week recently held in the City Centre.



This pub is in a building steeped with history. It is very long and narrow and has one door on Queen Street and another on Lloyd Street making it one of the City's few through pubs. Meals are available every lunch time during the week. Be aware that they are not always open on Monday and Tuesday evenings after around 7pm.

Barrie and his team have worked really hard to achieve this award. Trafford & Hulme now have so many excellent pubs that getting any award from us is very difficult and always a close match. Indeed they pipped the Waterhouse and the Bar to close joint second for this award but they lost out on a couple of occasions to other pubs by one point so it was on the cards that it would be their turn soon.

Please come and support Barrie and his team to receive this award on Thursday 21st October from 8pm onwards.

# **Massacre in the Market**

HE second Altrincham ABC festival took place in the historic market hall over the August Bank holiday weekend and the customers just kept coming.

We had an unprecedented 300% increase in footfall which meant that we ran out of real ale at 7pm on the Sunday evening. There was still real cider and perry and plenty of Belgian beers to go around whilst the revellers enjoyed the entertainment from the Bottle Tops.

At the official opening of the festival on the Sunday the Lord Mayor announced his pleasure at seeing so many people in the historic market hall and the Court Leet official Ale Taster announced the beer to be fit and proper for consumption by the residents and visitors of Altrincham. Trafford & Hulme CAMRA received a Certificate from the Court Leet for the quality of the real ales on offer.

Thanks must go to Dunham Massey brewery for getting up early on a Bank Holiday Monday to deliver an emergency supply for the Monday afternoon. This was much quieter with a local folk band, Redwing, giving the entertainment, this session was also free for anyone to attend the event.

So, all in all, this was a fantastic event and we can only promise that next year we will be ready and hope to have looked after enough real ale to go around for the whole of the festival.



Above – Trafford & Hulme CAMRA's Beverley Gobbett (left) with the Lord mayor and Court Leet Ale Taster

Residents and visitors of Altrincham should be proud that you have truly put yourselves back on the map where real ale is concerned. Cheers from Trafford & Hulme and Le Trappiste Bar.

STOP PRESS: the new Le Trappiste was due to open in late September and should be up and running by the time you read this. Look for a full report next month.

# **Public Transport**

Buses, trains and trams are a great way to get to get around if planning a trip to a pub. Greater Manchester has an excellent public transport services so there's always a handy way to take you to the pub of your choice.

Most public transport runs until around 11pm Mondays to Saturdays, although times of last services vary. On Sundays and public holidays services run less frequently and last services may run a little earlier. There's a great range of tickets including good value returns and day tickets to save you money.

GMPTE can help you make your public transport journeys by giving you impartial advice about services and which ticket to choose.

## **Getting more information**

Visit a **GMPTE Travelshop** at bus stations in Greater Manchester. They have timetables and travel maps to take away and can help you plan your journey.

<sup>CP</sup> Phone **Traveline 0871 200 22 33** (calls cost 10p a minute from landlines, mobile and landline networks may charge an additional tariff). Lines are open 7am to 8pm Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm Saturday, Sunday and public holidays.

Visit **www.gmpte.com** for full information about local bus, train and tram travel, including a journey planner, maps and timetables.

For local train information visit www.northernrail.org or phone National Rail Enquires 08457 48 49 50.

# Buy the 2011 Good Beer Guide see page 17

# Local Fruit

O you like to support your local economy? Celebrate the wealth of nearby produce too often overlooked in this era of globalisation? Well a recent CAMRA initiative has leant a hand in identifying locally produced ciders and perries.

The initiative was launched at Reading Beer and Cider Festival in May. Following on from the recent success of the Locale scheme, there was а demand for а similar approach to cider and perry



promotion. The result was the production of two new pumpclip crowners.

Paul Scrivens, Reading cider bar manager said "this is a welcome addition to the bar. Many customers are keen to try the local products, but with a range of over 150 on the bar at one time identifying the local ones has sometimes been a problem. The new crowners provide a clear and consistent message, and I've had a good response from the public."

After the success of the launch at Reading, the new crowners will be making an appearance at other CAMRA festival cider bars. It is hoped that publicans will make use of them in promoting local products in their pubs.

The exact definition for what qualifies as local has been left to the discretion of the individual branches, to allow for regional variations in cider availability, and CAMRA branches across the country have been encouraged to promote the scheme in their area.

Below – Marysia Bossowski & Gordon Battersby, Stockport's very own cider makers.



If you know of a pub that serves real cider or perry which is not local to the district, you can recognise their efforts by proposing them for a "Real Cider Sold Here" window sticker? Details can be found at www.camra.org.uk/ciderstickers. This scheme relates to any cider and perry which conforms to CAMRA's definition - they don't have to be locally produced. A list of ciders that CAMRA does not consider to be real can be found at www.camra.org.uk/nonrealcider.

# Award to Dulcimer

HE first ever winner of the Trafford & Hulme Branch's Cider Pub Of The Year is Dulcimer on Wilbraham Road in Chorlton.

The award was presented to owner Lee Janda on 21 July 2010. There was a fantastic choice on the night, with three ciders and two perries, with amazing pates and cheeses during the night. The cask beer range at Dulcimer is also worthy of note with a sixth hand pump recently installed; the three ever changing guest ciders and perries are racked behind the bar.

Not only does Dulcimer have a fantastic ever changing range of cider/perry but they also have their annual Cider & Perry Festival, held in January, where over 15 ciders/perries are available over the weekend



Above – CAMRA's Greater Manchester Regional Cider Coordinator Steven Swain (left) presents the award to Dulcimer's Lee Janda.

# Cider Tour 2010

S is almost traditional for CAMRA's cider and perry month, Steven Swain who is not only the Cider Representative for Trafford & Hulme Branch but also the newly appointed CAMRA Regional Cider Co-ordinator for Greater Manchester (congratulations by the way, Steven), organises a Cider Tour covering a whole range of pubs and bars stretching from the heart of Trafford Borough and ending up in Manchester City Centre.

It is designed so that participants can drop in and out (cast iron constitutions and livers would be needed to do the lot!). This year's Cider Tour takes place on Saturday 16 October and this is the route (a £6 bus/tram ticket is recommended):

- 10.00am J P Joule, Sale
- 11.30 Unicorn, Altrincham
- 12.00 Old Market Tavern
- 12.30 Travel to Chorlton via tram / bus
- 13.30 Oddest, Chorlton
- 14.00 Bar / Nook / Abode
- 15.30 Electrik / Dulcimer
- 16.30 Sedge Lynn
- 17.30 Marble Beer House
- **18.30 Bus to City Centre** 19.00 – Britons Protection
- 19.30 Knott
- 20.30 Moon Under Water
- 21.00 Rising Sun
- 21.30 City Arms
- 22.00 Waterhouse

# **Regional Cider Pub**

HE CAMRA Greater Manchester Cider Pub of the Year is the Cheshire Ring, on Manchester Road in Hyde. This Beartown Brewery pub always has three ciders or perries available, usually Westons Old Rosie on handpump and guests brought up from the cellar.



Pictured above is Wayne Taylor (*right*) receiving his award from Ralph Warrington, the CAMRA Regional Director for Greater Manchester.

# What is Perry?

A s cider is made from apples, perry is made from pears, not just any pear though. These are perry pears, which tend to be smaller & harder then dessert pears.



Perry tends to be produced sweet or medium sweet although CAMRA's 2003 National Bronze Perry was Barkers Dry from Worcestershire. Perry also contains natural levels of non-fermentable sorbitol and so even the drier versions are less dry than the driest ciders.

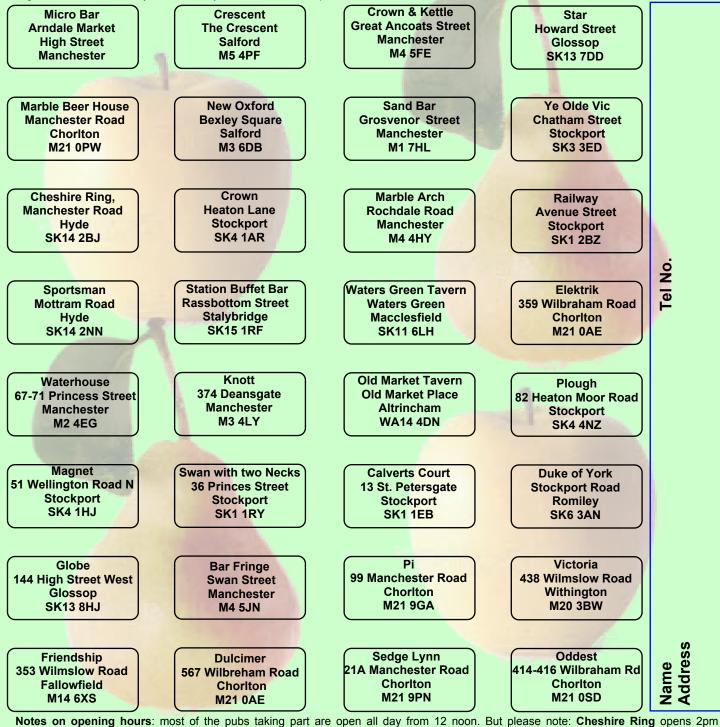
Perry trees while bearing fruit in 3-5 years will continue to produce fruit for 200 or 300 years which is much longer than apple trees, this has led to the phrase "plant perry for your heirs".



This month we are offering you the chance to win a 36 pint "box" of cider. Kindly donated by John Reek of Merrylegs Cider as we re-run our Cider Circuit. Not only that but it is once again very easy indeed 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 12 stickers and you will win a large bottle of traditional cider or perry. Get a sticker from all participating pubs and you will not only get a bottle of cider or perry but you will also be entered into the draw for the 36-pint box. We hope to have some other cider and perry prizes, too.

The Cider Circuit runs from Saturday 9 October to Sunday 14 November. Completed forms should be sent to; Cider Circuit, 45 Bulkeley Street, Edgeley, Stockport, Cheshire, SK3 9HD to arrive no later than Saturday 20 November. If you are entering the grand draw, make sure you specify whether you would prefer dry, medium or sweet cider. All the prizes will be presented at a special cider afternoon to be held at the Cheshire Ring, Manchester Road, Hyde on Sunday 5 December from 2pm onwards.



**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 7pm Monday to Saturday and 6pm Sundays; **Waters Green** closes between 3pm and 5.30 Monday to Friday; 3pm to 7pm Saturday and Sunday: **Magnet** opens 4pm Monday to Wednesday; **Swan With Two Necks** can close mid-evening if quiet

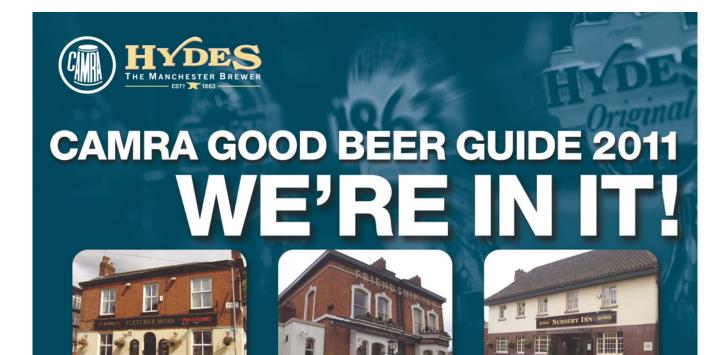


THE RED LION 183 Stockport Road, Cheadle 0161 428 5507



Robinson's Real Ales Sunday Carvery 12 - 6pm Extensive Food Menu 12 - 8:30pm Heated Covered Patio Xmas Menu Xmas Day Bookings Car Park





THE FLETCHER MOSS 1 William Street, Didsbury, Manchester, M20 6RQ. Telephone: 0161 438 0073

THE FRIENDSHIP INN 353 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester, M14 6XS. Telephone: 0161 224 5758 THE NURSERY INN Green Lane, Heaton Norris, Stockport, SK4 2NA. Telephone: 0161 432 2044



"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 **2011 Good Beer Guide** was published on 16 September. This, the 38th 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 hundreds of new pub entries and 78 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 750 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."

Good Beer Guide Mobile makes the ideal companion to the printed Good Beer 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. This indispensible service costs just **£5** (or £4.99 for the iPhone/ iPad/ iPod Touch version). Good Beer Guide Mobile allows users to search by postcode, place name or London tube stations - or it can even locate your current position using GPS.



Search results contain full information and

descriptions for local pubs and include tasting notes for their regular beers. Interactive maps help you navigate to your destination.

This unique service is compatible with most mobile phones with Internet access and support for Java applications, the Apple iPhone *l*iPod Touch **and now Android** ™ devices. For a full list of compatible devices please visit 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). Click on "Good Beer Guide" then "Updates to the GBG 2011".

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.



For more information see www.nwjazzworks.org/manchester

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# **Minimum Madness**

THE ten Greater Manchester local authorities are proposing to implement a 50p minimum unit price for alcohol within the boundaries of the former county. In reality, there's no chance of this happening, as they don't have the power to do it in the first place, and in any case such a price-fixing scheme would be illegal under both UK and EU competition law. Given this, it must be asked why they are wasting so much time and money on a plan that is never going to be implemented.

Such a move would obviously lead to a vast amount of crossborder shopping for alcohol, including proxy purchases for friends and neighbours. And if you were going over the border to get your booze, you might well end up doing the rest of your weekly shop there, too. A better way of damaging the grocery trade within Greater Manchester is hard to imagine. It would also inevitably encourage black-market operators, who aren't going to be anywhere near as scrupulous as legitimate retailers over underage sales.

Supporters claim that moderate drinkers would "hardly be affected", but this could easily make a couple £300 a year worse off without even approaching the official "recommended" drinking levels. In fact, studies have shown that it would impose significant costs on less well-off households, while heavy drinkers would be likely to cut down in other areas to fund their alcohol intake. The claret and malt whisky swigging middle classes would, of course, be unaffected. A more broad-brush, ineffectual and poorly targeted way of addressing problem drinking is hard to imagine.

And if you think that imposing a minimum unit price would do anything whatsoever to bring more customers into pubs, when the reasons for the decline of pubs are far more varied and complex than simply price, you are sorely deluded and indeed playing into the hands of the anti-drink lobby.

# **Swatting Flies**

RECENTLY went into a local pub and found the entire L-shaped counter in the main bar was blocked by people sitting at bar stools and others stood chatting to them. Nobody made the slightest attempt to move to let me or others get through, so the only way to get served was to attract the attention of the staff through a thicket of people and then manhandle your pints over their heads.

Deliberately blocking access to the serving counter always strikes me as a highly selfish and antisocial practice. It can't be much fun either sitting or standing there with other customers constantly jostling you, passing pints over your shoulder and potentially spilling them over your head. If there's a very long bar counter, it might be tolerable for part of its length, but where space is limited surely pubs should encourage people to move away once they have been served to make room for others. It's also very off-putting to walk into a strange pub and find an unbroken screen of people blocking your way to the bar – often when the rest of the pub is deserted.

#### Curmudgeon Online:

www.curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com





The Miners Arms, Adlington, Cheshire

A surprise family outing for lunch one Friday, found me at this hostelry, *writes Steve Smith*. Not having visited for a few years, the place has become much improved from its humble beginnings.

Decidedly up market and geared up for the dining fraternity, as most pubs are these days, it has been opened out with a central bar and intimate divided alcoves and spaces. There is now a conservatory area (where we were located) and on the outside a kiddies' play area. Its nearby canal side location makes it especially popular with locals and travellers alike.

The food menu provided a cornucopia of excellent dishes and one was rather spoilt for choice. Whilst none of our party chose a starter, some opted for the more traditional fish, chips and mushy peas, I and a colleague chose the steak and ale pie, advertised as being accompanied with chips and garden peas, but I decided on a variation of a jacket potato (there were also mashed and new on offer too) and mushy peas. I was not disappointed, for while the pudding bowl with a short crust pastry lid may have looked a little lost on a large plate, once the contents were scooped out, it subsequently filled it up.

There were huge chunks of tender steak marinated in beef

and ale gravy, done to perfection, with the tasty jacket potato served with a sufficient knob of butter. The mushy peas were also of good quality and in fact the whole of our group enjoyed their meals immensely.

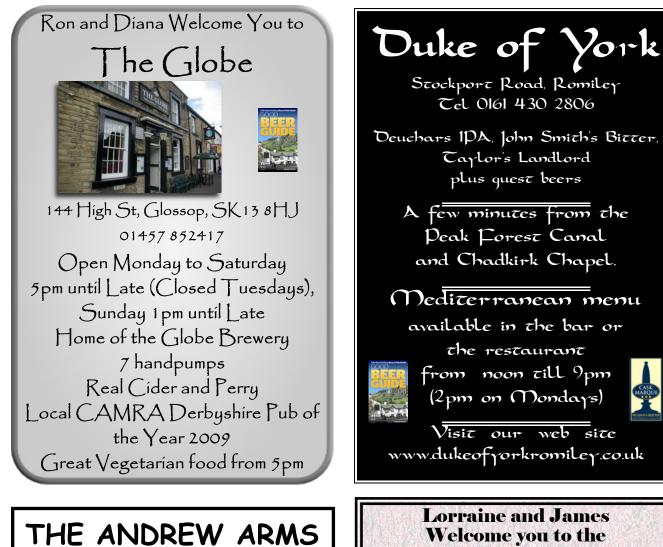
The food was washed down with an equally good selection of quality real ales; Caledonian Deuchars IPA, Greene King's Old Speckled Hen and Theakston Best Bitter. As I was driven there by car, I was able to indulge in these freely.



Following on from this we decided upon pudding, something I would not normally do, but as everyone else indulged I followed suit. Again there was plenty of variety and options, myself deciding upon the pear belle helene. This was a concoction of a large sliced pear accompanied by vanilla and chocolate ice cream, topped with chocolate sauce and whipped cream. For completion there was a brandy snap style biscuit within. Coffee followed for some, but I declined on this.

To summarise, this is a very good venue with a location and food to match; one to return to I think.

The Miners Arms is located on Wood Lane, Adlington, Cheshire and close to the Middlewood Way and Macclesfield Canal. Public transport is rather limited although there is a rail station at Adlington and buses 108 (Sundays and Bank Holidays) and 392 (Mondays to Saturdays) stop there.







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## Lord Nelson, Gorton

Last month's report about the absence of cask beer in the Lord Nelson on Hyde Road in Gorton was a little wide of the mark, we are pleased to say. Theakston's best Bitter and Mild remain available on handpump. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

## **Hazel Grove Cask Losses**



Two losses of real ale in Hazel Grove to report. The first is the **Bulls Head** which has a history of switching from cask to keg beer and back again. At one point it was selling Black Sheep Bitter; Courage Best; and Greene King IPA. The second loss is something of a surprise, Robbies' White Hart. Our reporter stated that no handpulls could be seen in operation although this might not mean that the pub has "gone keg" as in the past the cask beer was sold via electric pumps rather than handpump. More reports please.

#### **Cheadle & Gatley Changes**



We hear that the **Gothic** in Gatley has closed down. If true this will be a sad loss as it was the only Cains Brewery tied house outside Merseyside. While it did seem to have lost its way a little in recent times it nevertheless brought some added variety to the area. Let's hope that any closure is temporary.

Meanwhile the **Greyhound** Cheadle Hulme is closed and fenced off. A sign reads "Enquiries" and gives the name of an estate agent but there is already an architect's sign, and a builder's sign on the temporary steel mesh fence, so it looks as though extensive work is to be carried out, either refurbishment, change of use or demolition and redevelopment of the whole site.

As a pub it was a fine building and is in good condition outside but alteration and neglect inside meant that a once very active community pub, now owned by a pubco rather than a brewery had descended into a scruffy keg pub with lots of gaming machines and a pool table but virtually no customers. There was also extra competition when the **Micker Brook**, now one of the Mitchell and Butler owned chains was built not far away offering the cheapest carvery in the area, so that the Cross Keys and the Greyhound were competing for the remaining customers. Once the **Cross Keys** was refurbished after the fire, it was a one sided contest.

#### **Circus Changes**



Late August saw the retirement of George Archondogeorge, known to everyone

as "Greek George" as licensee of the famous Circus Tavern Portland Street in Manchester City Centre.

This historic Grade II listed gem is in safe hands, however. The new

landlord is Barry Hayes who has taken over the Circus as his first pub. He's no stranger to the Circus, though, as he has been a regular there for the past four or five years.

No changes are planned to the public areas, apart from a little decluttering in the bar area. Barry tells us that George keeps dropping in and is "still dishing the orders out". Tetley Bitter remains the sole cask beer, and was on excellent form when OT called in mid-September. Efficient table service courtesy of Kamila Kaczorowska and Michelle Gunn remains the order of the day, too.

#### **Chorlton's Latest**

Located on the ever popular, funky Beech Road, **The Parlour** is the latest addition to Chorlton's thriving night scene in a different style again.

Set in the former Marmalade, this is a relaxed café-bar complete with leather sofas and freesias. A choice of five handpumps provide a selection of beers from around Britain, plus a cider.

As The Parlour is a genuine free house the beer range is likely to be eclectic. At time of survey, the ale offering consisted Tim Taylor's Landlord, Brew Dog IPA, Kelham Island Little Red Corvette, Otter Ale and Beartown Bruins, with cider being Thatcher's Somerset. The menu presents as quality pub grub with a distinction, such as Hunter's Pie and

Lancashire Hotpot. Managed by the team from The Castle on Oldham Road in the city, it promises to open up the Green to contend with the trendy "strip" of Wilbraham Road, in central Chorlton.

#### **Hazel Grove 'Spoons**



Hazel Grove's new pub, a Wetherspoon outlet called the Wilfred Wood, opened its doors on Sept 10th. It is located at 204 London Road by the War Memorial.

As it is occupying former shop premises, it retains a somewhat shop-front facade that is both modern and functional. Internally, a deep space is made more intimate by its being broken up by the use of wooden screens, some booths and a few panelled areas. The bar occupies the right-hand front wall, it accommodates ten handpumps. Eight of these were in use when I called in - Greene King Abbot Ale and Ruddles Best make the permanent line-up, whilst a further three beers from Moorhouses, and two from Phoenix add some interesting depth to the range. Apart from that, the other fare is of the standard Wetherspoon offering.

A smoking area has been created at the rear, whilst for those requiring 'the facilities', they're upstairs in this particular design. My late Sunday afternoon visit found the place bustling. I suspect this will remain the norm, even after the novelty period wanes, as this is the Grove's cheapest outlet by some way. It will be interesting to see what effect this opening has upon the area's more vulnerable outlets.

## **New Look Armoury**

Meanwhile, to the north of the Grove, the **Armoury** on Shaw Heath has been splendidly refurbished by Robinson's. As well as a



thorough redecoration of the three rooms, the outside drinking area and the toilets have been totally re-vamped and brought up to a very good standard. The levels of comfort in the Vault and the Hatters room has probably never been bettered. I'm sure licensee, Sheila Barlow will be delighted with the results. Well done to Robbies too on a great job.





## **Bollington Latest**

We've not mentioned Bollington Brewery in

these pages for a while – a grievous oversight that will now be put right as there's plenty going on.



Bollington Brewing Co.

The big news of course is that Bollington has bought its second tied house. They are taking over the Park Tavern in Macclesfield. Lee Wainwright explained the thinking behind this move: "We feel it's a better way to build our business rather than upgrading our kit and then having to spend lots of time brewing large amounts and then selling and delivering. We prefer to run pubs and sell it direct and be in control"

The pub is an ex Robinsons but interestingly enough it used to belong to the original Bollington brewery Parrott & Horsfield, so things have come full circle.

They plan to completely refurbish it, have eight hand pumps and Moravka Lager and a real cider and no other draught. Food will also be available. Lee summed up "Hopefully we can create a great new pub for Macclesfield and regenerate another closed pub."

It is planned to open this month so look out for a report in a future issue of OT.

On the beer front new beers have included Festivale 2010 (3.8%), which has been crafted with Green Bullet a New Zealand hop with bags flavour of and character, and Summer Nights (3.7%) another beer in the nights series. This one



is a bit different in that it's a pale beer with new hops to create a citrusy fresh flavour and finishes with a bit of a bite!!

#### **Bazens on the Move**

The Bazens' brewery operations have now moved to the nearby Star Inn on Back Hope St on the Cliff. The brewery will now be called Bazens @ Star. It is now downsized to a four barrel plant using a new kit and new yeast. The new brewery occupies an outbuilding at the Star, which may in fact have been a brew house many years ago.

The beer range has also been downsized and will now comprise Starbright (4%), the renamed Bazens' Star Ale and made using Green Bullet and Fuggles Hops, and the popular Pacific. If time allows Flatbac may reappear as a summer brew and Knoll Street Porter for the winter.

Richard will only be brewing once a week so supplies may be more limited than before although Corbieres in the City centre and the Kings Arms on Bloom Street, Salford, will also be regular outlets for the brewery's beers.

There is to be an official opening of the brewery on Saturday 16 October with a day-long mini beer festival (and for which a new 4.5% beer will be produced), stalls at the pub, that is also celebrating the customer purchase of the pub from

Robinsons brewery one year ago. Doors open at 1.30pm on the day. The pub itself plans to put in another beer engine, taking it now up to three real ales on, once again.

#### **New from Robbies**

Robinsons have a new seasonal beer out for

October and November. This is Battering Ram (4%) and is described by the brewery as a "f ull flavoured dark oak coloured bitter with aromas of roasted malt and spicy hop. This rich deeply satisfying beer has a palate reminiscent of



Star Brigh

burnt coffee with a hint of blackcurrant and a robust after bitterness perfectly balanced by priming sweetness".

#### **Stockport Market Ale**

To celebrate Stockport Market's 750th Anniversary, a commemorative 1260 medieval ale has been produced. The 7.5% ABV ale marks the year Stockport Market's Charter was officially signed; making the market one of the oldest street markets in the country still trading on its original site.

Just 4,000 bottles of the limited edition ale have been produced, of those; 1,260 will be decorated with an individual hand-tied neck tag depicting the history in words and photographs of Stockport Market

John Robinson, of Robinson's Brewery added: "This is the first ale that we have produced to celebrate a major historic event in Stockport. Robinson's is set on the edge of the Market Place and we consider it to be our back garden, so what better way to commemorate this landmark anniversary than to launch a celebratory ale.

"Our distinctive ale follows a medieval style recipe using authentic flavours of cinnamon, orange, cloves and nutmeg. It is the colour of cherry brandy with the aromas of deep fruit". The beer which is only available in bottle, has been on sale at Robinsons houses in and around Stockport Market Place, and is well worth sampling.

One for the road (or rail) Public transport information on 0871 200 22 33 or www.gmpte.com

## **Phoenix News**

Heywood's Phoenix Brewery always has an interesting range of beers out. New from the brewery is a (keg only) Lager Bier (4,8%) which, despite it's "non-real" status has been getting rave reviews from even those CAMRA people who have tried it. This and the already established Phoenix Fruits beers is on sale at the Micro Bar in the Arndale Market.

On the cask ale front, Phoenix has a whole raft of beers out this month. Returning in October are Flash Flood (4.1%), Rip Rap (4.1% - and one of OT's favourite Phoenix beers), Firecracker (4.5%), Spooky Brew (4.5%) and Uncle Fester (4.5%). Also out is a brand new beer – Skellington (4.1%) will be a pale and hoppy beer not entirely dissimilar to White Tornado.

#### **More Brews News**

The **Dunham Massey** Brewery supplied two beers for the recent Macclesfield Beer Festival and both won awards! The Duerr's Blossom Honey Beer won second place overall and first in the Fruit Beer category. The Milk Stout won first place



in the Stouts and Porters category. Congratulations to John and staff once again.

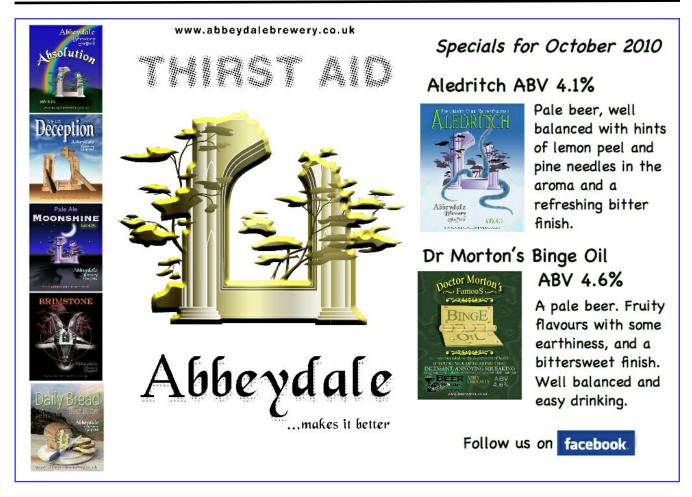
In Rochdale, the **Green Mill Brewery** is on the move. The brewing plant has relocated from the Queensway Snooker Club to the Cask & Feather pub on Drake Street, just a short walk from the railway station. The Cask & Feather was of course the site of the now closed McGuinness micro brewery.

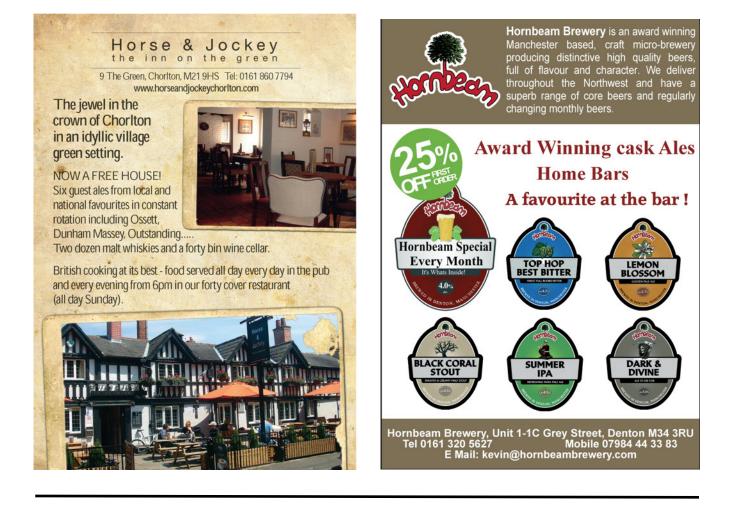
Denton's **Hornbeam Brewery** will be introducing a new beer to its core range this month, various experimental brews have been tried but the final version not yet chosen. However one new beer to look out for is Mary Rose (3.8%) a chestnut red session beer with a good smack of hops coming from the use of Amarillo, Cascade and Bobek hop varieties in the brew.

Hornbeam's Kevin Rothwell has been asked to help judge a beer competition being held at Elgood's Brewery in Wisbech, and in turn he has submitted four of the brewery's beers for judging in the SIBA competition being held at the Palace Hotel in Manchester. He is also keen to scotch some rumours circulating to the effect that Hornbeam is closing down – it isn't!

Up in Haslingden, Geoff Oliver's **Rossendale Brewery** has engaged the services of a new young brewer who is keen to experiment. The first fruit of this is a new Rossendale beer called Pale Halo (4.5%), a dark golden beer with a very moreish hop character. It's an excellent addition to the Rossendale / Pennine portfolio.

aromas of roasted **BATTERING** malt and spicy hop.





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

Stockport & South Manchester Branch Contact: Mark McConachie 0161 429 9356 mark.mcconachie@o2.co.uk Branch website: www.ssmcamra.org.uk	<b>North Manchester</b> Branch Contact: <i>Dave Hallows 07983 944992</i> . <u>davehallows2002@yahoo.co.uk</u>	Macclesfield & East Cheshire Branch Contact: <i>Tony Icke</i> 01625 861833 <u>contact@eastcheshirecamra.org.uk</u> Branch website: <u>www.eastcheshirecamra.org.uk/</u>
Hotel, Buxton Road, Great Moor. Starts 8pm Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> – Stockport North & Portwood	Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> - Cider Night: New Oxford, Bexley Sq, 8pm. Crescent, Salford, 9pm. Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> - Branch meeting & 10 continuous years in Good Beer Guide Award Presentation to King's Arms, Bloom St, Salford. Meeting at 7.30pm. Presentation of Award, 9.30pm (Approx)	Mill Hotel, Chester
	Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> - 2 Pub Social: Red Lion, Chorley Rd, Swinton, 8pm; Morning Star, Manchester Rd, Wardley, 9pm. Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November - Dark Beers Crawl: starts New Oxford, Bexley Sq, Salford, 7.30pm.	crawl: Vale 6pm <b>Tuesday 2 November</b> – Initial Good Beer Guide meeting: Roebuck, Mobberley. Starts 8pm.
Beer Festival and SIBA North Beer Festival. See adverts in this issue. Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> November – Provisional date for trip to Salopian Brewery to present Bronze	Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> - Branch AGM: Timperley Taverners Social Club, Park Road, Timperley. Starts 8pm Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> - Whalley Range survey: 8pm	High Peak & NE Cheshire Branch Contact: <i>Mike Rose 07986 458517.</i> <u>mikewrose@gmail.com</u> Branch website: www.hpneccamra.org.uk/
Award in Beer of the Festival contest. Details from John Clarke on 0161 477 1973 or stocam@btinternet.com	Hillary Step followed by Jam St Cafe. <b>Saturday 16<sup>th</sup></b> - Cider Trail: see website and page 14 for details. <b>Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November</b> - Meet and Greet new faces evening, All Welcome followed by short	Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> – Branch Meeting: Royal British Legion, Poynton. Starts 8.30pm. Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> – Buxton Social: Ramsays Bar, Buckingham Hotel. Start 8.30pm
Trafford & Hulme Branch Contact: <i>John Ison 0161 962 7976.</i> Branch website: <u>www.thcamra.org.uk</u>	branch meeting. Buffet to be supplied. Start 7.30pm at Waterhouse, Princess Street, Manchester.	<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November</b> – Branch Meeting: Crown, Glossop. Starts 8.30pm

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# Battering Ram October and November 2010 ABV 4.0%

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www.frederic-robinson.com