

● June 2013

# Opening

Times

The free local CAMRA magazine

Covering the cities of Manchester & Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, N.E. Cheshire & Macclesfield

**Cider & Perry Festival – pages 14 & 15**  
**Heritage Pubs – pages 20 & 21**



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# Pub of the Month

## The Blue Bell, Levenshulme



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for June is the Blue Bell on Barlow Road in Levenshulme. Margaret O'Brien has been along.

The Blue Bell is an imposing pub tucked away a short walk from the A6, in Levenshulme. Over the years Levenshulme has become something of a real ale desert and the Blue Bell is one of just two remaining cask ale pubs, selling well kept Sam Smiths Old Brewery Bitter.

The pub is managed by Mark Dunn, who has worked for Sam Smiths for over 20 years. Not all Sam Smiths pubs sell cask beer and that was the case with the Blue Bell until Mark pushed the company to allow him to sell it five years ago.

The pub itself is very smart, having undergone one of Sam Smiths classy refurbishments a few years ago. On the right is a spacious vault and to the left three additional rooms – a large lounge with parquet flooring wraps itself around the bar counter and off this is a smaller carpeted lounge and a small snug.

It's really at the heart of the community with a variety of groups using the pub. Events are held to raise funds for community projects to improve local sites and walkways and there are other regular events including a quiz night and pub trips. There's always a warm welcome from Mark and his wife and their staff.

This well-deserved award will be presented on the night of Thursday 27 June. We hope to see a good crowd along to celebrate the success of a pub in an area where so many others seem to be failing. It's easy to get to on the 192 – just walk down Cromwell Grove to its junction with Barlow Road and the pub is there on your right.



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

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## Join CAMRA Today

Complete the Direct Debit form opposite and you will receive 15 months membership for the price of 12 and a fantastic discount on your membership subscription.

Alternatively you can send a cheque payable to CAMRA Ltd with your completed form, visit [www.camra.org.uk/joinus](http://www.camra.org.uk/joinus) or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

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# Comment & What's On

## Notes and Local CAMRA Branch Events

### Heritage Pubs, Traditional Cider

CAMRA. That's the Campaign for Real Ale isn't it? Well, yes and no. As you may know CAMRA started life as the Campaign for the Revitalisation of Ale. It was formed as a reaction to the industrialised keg beers that were threatening to at best marginalise, and at worst eliminate, traditional cask beer from the country's pubs. It quickly changed its name to the Campaign for Real Ale but the aims remained the same. There are some out there who think that's as far as it goes. No so.

This year CAMRA marks 25 years since its members voted to put campaigning for traditional cider and perry on an equal footing with campaigning for real ale. Thus CAMRA in reality became the Campaign for Real Ale, Cider and Perry. There was another change 10 or so years ago when the membership voted to make another change. This time campaigning for pubs was given equal standing. Consequently CAMRA is now in fact the Campaign for Real Ale, Cider, Perry and Pubs. Luckily we have kept the acronym CAMRA rather than adopt something arguably both more accurate and tongue tying.

Why are we telling you this? Well for one you will find in these pages features on both our forthcoming Cider & Perry Festival and the new book on Heritage Pubs. Secondly there are still those out there (both in CAMRA and outside) who mistakenly think that CAMRA is solely about, and should stick to, beer alone. We disagree.

### 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. 7,350 copies a month are printed by Phil Powell Printing of Failsworth. All articles copyright CAMRA unless otherwise stated.

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**Subscriptions** – available at £11.00 for 12 issues (make cheques payable to Opening Times). Apply to David Sharpe, 1 Chiltern Drive, Woodsmoor, Stockport, SK2 7BE. Tel 0161 483 3708

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**Distribution Manager – Janet Flynn**

**Front cover – the Briton's Protection, one of Manchester's Heritage Pubs. Photo courtesy of Dimpled Mug ([dimpledmug.co.uk](http://dimpledmug.co.uk))**

### Your Local CAMRA Branches

**Stockport & South Manchester (SSM)** [www.ssmcamra.org.uk](http://www.ssmcamra.org.uk)  
Contact: Mark McConachie 0161 429 9356; [mark.mcconachie@o2.co.uk](mailto:mark.mcconachie@o2.co.uk)

**North Manchester (NM)** [www.northmanchestercamra.org.uk](http://www.northmanchestercamra.org.uk)  
Contact: Phil Booton 0161 957 7148 (daytimes); [phbooton@hotmail.com](mailto:phbooton@hotmail.com)

**High Peak & NE Cheshire (HPNC)** [www.hpneccamra.org.uk](http://www.hpneccamra.org.uk)  
Contact: Geoff Williamson 01663 765634; [disleygeoff@gmail.com](mailto:disleygeoff@gmail.com)

**Macclesfield & East Cheshire (MEC)**  
[www.eastcheshirecamra.org.uk](http://www.eastcheshirecamra.org.uk)  
Contact: Tony Icke 01625861833; [bicke@madasafish.com](mailto:bicke@madasafish.com)

**Trafford & Hulme (T&H)** [www.thcamra.org.uk](http://www.thcamra.org.uk)  
Contact: John Ison 0161 962 7976 or [enquiries@thcamra.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@thcamra.org.uk)

### Your Local CAMRA Events Events in blue, open to all

**Wednesday 5th** – Social: Wangies, Liverpool Rd, Patricroft. From 8pm. (NM)

**Thursday 6th** – Branch Meeting: Waterhouse, Princess St, Manchester. Starts 8pm. (T&H)

**Saturday 8th** – Northern Moor & Brooklands Social: 12pm Carters Arms, Northenden Rd; 1pm Park Hotel; 1.45 Gardeners Arms; 3pm Jolly Butcher; 4pm Wendover; 5pm Belmore Hotel. (T&H)

**Tuesday 11th** – Evening Walk in Macclesfield. Details from contact. (MEC)

**Wednesday 12th** – N/4 Crawl: Soup Kitchen, Spear St 3.30pm; Crown & Anchor 8.15pm; Port Street Beer House 9pm. (NM)

**Thursday 13th** – Branch Meeting: Robinsons Brewery Visitor Centre. **NB** this will include talk from Robinsons management and brewery tour plus buffet meal. Meet 7.15 for 7.30 start. (SSM)

**Thursday 13th** – Timperley Social: 8pm Stonemasons, Stockport Rd; 8.45 Quarrybank Inn; 9.45 Hare & Hounds; 10.30 Old Hall. (T&H)

**Saturday 15th** – Branch AGM: Royal Hotel, Hayfield. Meet 2pm for 1.30pm start. (HPNC)

**Wednesday 19th** – Branch Meeting: Salford Arms, Chapel St, Salford. Starts 7.30pm. (NM)

**Friday 21st** – Withington Stagger: 7.30pm Old House at Home, Burton Road; 8.30 Victoria. Wilmslow Rd. (SSM)

**Wednesday 26th** – Social: Star, Back Hope St, Higher Broughton. From 8pm (NM)

**Thursday 27th** Pub of the Month presentation to the Blue Bell, Levenshulme. (SSM) 08:00pm.

**Saturday 29th** – Trip to Kirkstall Brewery, Leeds. £3 each. Free drink. Contact [social@thcamra.org.uk](mailto:social@thcamra.org.uk) (T&H)

**Sunday 30th** – Chorlton Festival set-up. Contact [chorltonstaffing@thcamrs.org.uk](mailto:chorltonstaffing@thcamrs.org.uk) (T&H)

**Wednesday 3rd July** – Gardens Crawl: Rain Bard, Gt Bridgewater St 7.30pm; Briton's Protection 8.15pm; Cask, Liverpool Rd 9pm; finish Knott Bar.

**Thursday 4th July** – Branch Meeting: Chorlton venue tbc. Meet St Clements Church. Starts 8pm (T&H)

**Saturday 6th** – Independents' Day Treasure Hunt: starts Castle, Oldham St, Manchester. Starts 12-12.30pm (NM)

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**P.S.: BEST SERVED WITH PINT OR A GLASS OF WINE !!!**

Enjoy



## **Whats On**

### **Monday**

Big Screen Movie Night 8pm  
Popcorn Hot Dogs and Ice Cream

### **Tuesday**

Bluegrass Folk Music -9pm

### **Wednesday**

Alternate weeks Jam Night and  
Wine Down Wednesday Club 9pm

### **Thursday**

Classic Vinyl Dj Night 9pm  
Northern Soul, Motown, Indie

### **Friday**

Beer and Spirit Promotions

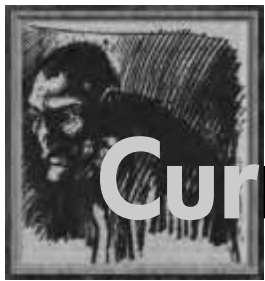
### **Saturdays**

Big Screen Sky Live Sports and Music events  
etc

### **Sunday**

Afternoon -Charity Cheese Board 4pm  
Jo's Bumper Quiz 9pm  
Play your cards wrong

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# Curmudgeon

## Down Escalator

THE NAME of Derick Heathcoat-Amory is not one that is likely to be familiar to the modern-day beer drinker, but his claim to fame is that, in 1959, he became the only post-war Chancellor of the Exchequer to actually cut beer duty. Until now, that is. During the past year, CAMRA led a high-profile campaign to scrap the Beer Duty Escalator, which was introduced by Alastair Darling in 2008 and each year increased the level of beer duty by 2% over and above the rate of inflation.

Many, including myself, were somewhat sceptical of the chances of success, given the dire state of the public finances and the general climate of anti-drink scaremongering. However, in the event, in his budget in March, George Osborne not only scrapped the escalator but went two steps further and actually cut the main rate of beer duty by 2%. This must rank as one of CAMRA's greatest campaigning achievements in the lifetime of the organisation.

An important factor in this was getting the entire brewing and pub trade speaking with one voice, and bringing industry organisations such as the British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA) and Society of Independent Brewers (SIBA) onside. The argument that the negative impact of the escalator on pubs had wider social implications struck a chord well outside the confines of the trade, and the campaign was given strong support by voices such as the Sun newspaper and the Taxpayers' Alliance whom some CAMRA members might not regard as natural bedfellows. In contrast, appeals to government based on claims that one section of the industry was gaining an unfair advantage have inevitably met with failure. United we stand, divided we fall is a crucial lesson to be learned.

At times the campaign against the escalator was (maybe understandably) guilty of overstating the negative impact it had on the pub trade. Of course it didn't help, but it was only one of a number of factors working against pubs. Thus the duty cut should not be seen as a magic bullet. One excuse for lack of success has now been taken away, and it is now up to pubs to respond in an enterprising and imaginative manner and deliver more competitive prices to customers. Those who just use it as a means of fattening their margins do not deserve to prosper.

The escalator was maintained for all other categories of alcoholic drinks, leading to some indignation from the wine and spirits sectors. To some extent this was just redressing the balance, as there were at least two occasions during the last couple of decades when Kenneth Clarke and Gordon Brown froze spirits duty while raising that for beer. However, it has been widely pointed out that Britain's high levels of duty across the board (either second or third in the EU, depending on the type of drink) have severe negative consequences in encouraging smuggling and illegal distilling. Hopefully next year will see the escalator scrapped for all drinks.

Cider is an unusual case, as the general level of duty is much lower than that on beer for products of comparable strength. Traditional cidermakers have defended this on the grounds of the investment needed in orchards and lengthy fermentation periods but, on the other hand, it does give a cost advantage to some industrial products that seem to have little connection with the Herefordshire or Somerset countryside. In 2010, Alastair Darling proposed an across-the-board 10% hike in cider duty, which met with considerable resistance in the West Country and was cancelled by the incoming Coalition government. Maybe a better solution, rather than a general increase that would hit all producers, would be to raise the proportion of pure apple juice required to qualify for the lower rate from the current 35% to something like two-thirds or three-quarters. Products not meeting that requirement would be taxed at the higher rate for "made-wine", which is similar to that for beer.



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MARBLE ARCH INN  
PRESENTS

# EASTER MENU

A SAMPLE OF THE BIRTHDAY FESTIVITIES TO COME, MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED

SATURDAY 25TH MAY AT 8.30PM  
ABATTOIR BLUES

TUES  
**28** PUB QUIZ  
MAY WITH SPECIAL HOST ROB HAMILTON

SUNDAY 6TH JUNE  
**CREDO**  
JAZZ FUSION BAND

JUNE 25  
SPECIAL HOST - OUR RICH!  
**QUIZ**

7TH JULY ★ DON'T MISS IT! ★ 3RD AUGUST  
★ **TOP SECRET** ★

**PUB QUIZ** TUES  
SPECIAL HOST JONATHAN SCHOFIELD 30  
JULY

**11TH JUNE** ★ ANDREW DAVIES GIVES A TALK ABOUT THE AREA  
From when the pub was part of the rich Scuttlers history - expect gangs of Manchester!

**ELLE MARY** SAT  
20  
JULY  
WHEN ELLE MARY PLAYS GOOD THINGS COME QUICKER

SUMMER! CAN YOU BEAT OUR BREWERS TUG OF WAR TEAM?  
**BRAWN AND BRAINS**  
A DAY OF EVENTS FINISHING OFF WITH A BARBECUE

FRIDAY 2ND AUGUST  
**THE BIG  
125  
BEER  
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SETS ALL WEEKEND FROM  
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TUESDAY 17TH AUGUST  
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DJ DR SID**

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"I DON'T KNOW WHO LET US IN  
BUT THEY WOULDN'T LET US OUT"

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# Trafford Bar to Hulme

## George Elmslie Reports

A bitterly cold wind blew down the Stretford Road as the Trafford & Hulme branch embarked on a survey on a Saturday afternoon in the area closest to the name of the branch, if not the heart of it.

First port of call opposite the Trafford Bar tram stop is the **Tollgate**, a relatively modern pub which was empty save for us and one other customer at noon; considering how close the pub is to United's ground I am sure that on a match day there would be



considerably more custom. The cask ale on offer was Marstons Pedigree, not the most exciting beer and a tad cold to be honest. Next on was the EPA but this would only be offered up after the Pedigree had run out. You can sympathize with the manager/landlord; not enough customers to justify two beers, but perhaps maybe more beer would attract more punters. The debate rages on.

We proceeded down the Stretford Road, once a busy thoroughfare now somewhat by-passed, but still well served by various bus companies. On this occasion however we walked the 10-15 minutes to the **Three Legs of Man**, a street corner pub opposite the now closed Platford



Hotel and a bookies among other shops. An unpromising exterior conceals a small intimate old style two roomed bar with wood panelling and casement style windows separating the interior spaces. The ale on offer was Black Sheep Bitter, a reasonable pint where some would not expect it and which has been on sale since the landlord took over some years ago.

Next we wound our way through the new low-rise Hulme of today. This of course was the site of the notorious 'crescents' of which there is no trace now. A remaining feature is the architecturally curious **Junction Hotel**, a definite throwback to the old Hulme of 80,000 people and a pub



on every corner. One arched window has a sign above 'outdoor department' which is presumably what they called off sales then. It is in a 'flat iron' shape and once had three floors, but has only two now; and its close proximity to the old Hippodrome Theatre means there must be some tales to tell from the old days. Only a stone's throw away is the now closed Hydes Queens Brewery and not surprisingly a Hydes beer was the ale on hand-pump but unusually it was the Light offering from them. This is what you would call a light mild style beer and a great drink to have in these classic surroundings.

Across the A5103 now past a new development rising from the open areas either side of Bonsall Street. At this point is a new bridge known as The Arch. In the 1970s this area was one of those windswept urban concrete precincts with a Labour club on one side and a Robbies pub the

Red Admiral, on the other. A pop into the **Church Inn** on Cambridge Street was fruitless, there was no real ale and hadn't been for some time despite a Lees hand-pump and clip on display!

Less than a hundred yards away is the **Salutation**. This is more like it; a traditional street corner bar but with a much younger ambience. There were four hand-pumps, two with beers from the Green Mill Brewery (one a smoky Pot



Black Porter and the other, Golden Ale, both excellent), a Rossendale Pennine Brew especially for the pub and a **Brightside Beer Junket** had been at the most recent National Winter Ales Festival. The 'Sally' has accommodation upstairs, with five rooms handy for friends and parents visiting students at the nearby educational institutes.

The next planned call was the **RNCM** which has a well stocked bar open most of the time during term but did not open till 5pm on this Saturday. Fortunately we had the **Sand Bar** to fall back on where I had the fearsome but delicious Marble Dubbel (8.5%).



Back then to the **Royal Northern College of Music** which had two beers on (sometimes there are more - it can depend on the concert taking place. A Welsh male voice choir or brass band for instance may require a few more hand-pumps than say a school concert). The beers were Hornbeam Top Hop and Copper Dragon Golden Pippin which were both good. There had been a Hobgoblin pump clip on one of the pumps earlier however this was changed as soon as the bar opened much to the disappointment of some.

This concluded our official survey. Some of us carried on while some went home. All in all this was another interesting foray into our lesser frequented areas and ended with some interesting beers.

*All photos courtesy of Adam Bruderer*

**Independents' Day  
Treasure Hunt**

**Saturday 6th July 2013**

**Starting at the Castle Hotel,  
Oldham Street, Manchester, M4 1LE**

**Registration is 12-12:30**

**Finish around seven**

**Teams of 2-5 people**

**Entry £1 per person**



# THE BEER SHOP

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# Stagger

## Burnage & Heaton Mersey with Dave Burston



On a cold, but thankfully snow-free January night, a handful of us met up in the **Farmers Arms** on Burnage Lane to start an investigation of the pubs of Burnage and Heaton Mersey.

This pub consists of two rooms with separate entrances from just inside the front door. We met in the left-hand room, designated the lounge, but the other room, which used to be the vault, is now called the Oasis Lounge, in honour of the Gallagher brothers whose local this was while they were growing up just around the corner. It contains some pictures and articles about the band. The pub is now part of the Hennigans empire, based in Levenshulme, and as such it is a pleasant surprise that it continues to provide any cask beer, as none of their other outlets do. The offering today was Wells & Young's Bombardier, and while this is not everyone's favourite beer it went down OK, being rated above average.

A brisk walk then took us to the **Green End**, another pub where cask ale had been spotted last year, but a quick look inside confirmed our suspicions that it was no longer available and the pub is now closed and boarded.



At this point we took a diversion from our Burnage Lane route into the Heaton to visit **The Beer Shop** on Kingsleigh Road (interior pictured above). This is a new enterprise which opened just over a year ago, and combines a specialist shop (selling a good selection of British and foreign bottled beers) with a sampling room and bar, capable of serving up to four cask-conditioned beers. A small number of tables and chairs, both inside and out (in anticipation of some warmer weather to come) allow these to be sampled in relative comfort, and some were already occupied when we arrived, though the black-and-white video of Jacques Brel showing on the small TV at one side of the room seemed a little strange. There is also free wi-fi. Three cask beers were available at first, though the Buxton Kinder Downfall went off straightaway, leaving us to sample just the George Wright Drunken Duck (3.9%, £2.60) and Kirkstall Dissolution IPA (5%, £3). Both were rated good to excellent. Returning to Burnage Lane, our next stop was

Hydes' **Albion Inn**. This large corner pub consists of a main lounge with a separate bar/games room (not occupied on this occasion). A DJ was playing 70s music in the lounge when we arrived, and this had turned into a karaoke by the time we left, though the pub was not very full yet. The only cask offering was Hydes Original (i.e. bitter) which was disappointing, being rated average at best, though at least it was only £2.10 a pint.



By now our numbers had swelled a little bit, as we moved on to the nearby **Sun In September**, an unusual name for an unusual pub. It certainly seems out of character with the local area, looking a bit like a country house, which is exactly what it was when it was built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and it still stands in its own impressive well-tended grounds. As a pub it used to have an Indian Raj theme, but this has been toned down somewhat of late, allowing more of the original mansion to be seen. From this description, you might expect the beer to be expensive, but this is far from the case, as the pub is owned by Sam Smith's, which sells the probably cheapest real ale in the UK, their Old Brewery Bitter, here at £1.80 a pint. Although this is the only cask ale available, it was rated above average to good by all of us. The pub (or perhaps the beer) attracts a good number of people: as well as the lounge where we drank being reasonably busy, there is a separate vault behind, which was thriving as well.



A bit of a walk now, down to Didsbury Road and across the Manchester-Stockport border into Heaton Mersey. The first pub we came to, the

**Dog & Partridge** (formerly The Mersey Vale), which normally can be relied on to have one or two real ales, had none on this occasion, so we moved on to the **Griffin Hotel** (pictured bottom col 2). This multi-roomed Holts pub was sensitively extended in the 1990s, retaining and enhancing the original floor-to-ceiling glazed mahogany bar which is the central feature. TVs in the main lounge were showing Sky Sports 1 with the sound down, but some of the other rooms are TV-free. There were four Holts beers on handpump: the Bitter, which was rated good, the Mild (average to good), the Maplemoon (above average) and the IPA (not tried). The low-cost theme of the evening was continued here, with the Mild being only £1.97 a pint.

Up the hill and round the corner, the next pub, the **Frog & Railway** (originally just The Railway) is in the middle of a terrace of shops. There is an emphasis on food, especially in the room at the back, and the bar service was slow. Only one cask ale was available, Greene King IPA, and this was rated poor to only average, which was disappointing, as I remember the last time we surveyed this pub it had just changed hands and seemed to be on the way up.



Our final stop was the **Crown** on Vale Close, set back from Didsbury Road on the right as you go towards Stockport. A whitewashed building in a conservation area, this was the oldest pub on the stagger, in fact one of the oldest in Stockport (around 400 years old). The entrance, up some steps from the cobbled street, leads to a bar area on the right facing the main road, and a lounge/dining area on the left. By now, dining was over and there were just a few folk in the lounge, while the bar area was very busy, as it often is. So we found some seats in the lounge while we sampled the Robinsons beers: Dizzy Blonde, which was only average, and Fredericks 125, which was above average. The Unicorn bitter was also available but no one tried this.

So a stagger of mixed pubs and variable beer. The best beer turned out to be at the Beer Shop, but of the more traditional pubs, the Holts Bitter at the Griffin came out top, followed by the Sam Smith's at the Sun in September.



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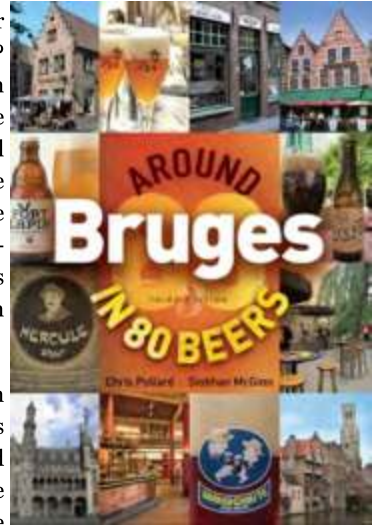


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## Bruges – The Definitive Guide

**Around Bruges in 80 Beers, Chris Pollard & Siobhan McGinn (Cogan & Mater, £9.99). Review by Roger Protz.**

Can there really be 80 outlets for good beer in this tiny town? “Podge” Pollard and Siobhan McGinn have found them in the third edition of their seminal guide. They have pounded the pavements, careened over the cobblestones and left no glass unemptied in their quest for outlets that serve the finest that Belgian brewers can offer.



It’s a guide that wears its heart on its sleeve: “If it is lager and chips you are after, put us down and move on, as we will be of no use you,” the duo state firmly in the introduction. In short, it’s a stellar book but not for Stella drinkers.

As someone who finds it difficult to leave Daisy’s Bar, I must make a greater effort on my next trip to follow in Podge’s and Siobhan’s footsteps and take out some of the outlets they have discovered. I use the term “outlets” deliberately, for this is more than just a pub guide. It covers restaurants, De Halve Maan’s brewery and museum, beer shops, hotels, a boat and even a bookshop that sells beer – Waterstones take note.

As well as the listings, the guide is helpfully broken down into the different categories of outlets. This means that when your stomach rumbles you will know where you can eat as well as drink. On my recent visit, I passed Bron in Katelijnestraat and had no idea it was a vegetarian restaurant that sells the sublime beers from Dupont, including the impeccable Saison. I shall not make the mistake again.

Helpfully, the guide lists the main types of dishes you will find in Bruges restaurants – I discover that sea bass is called zeewolf, which is rather alarming, while monkfish is sea devil: I’ll stick to pannekoeken or filled pancakes. For the first-time visitor, Podge and Siobhan also run down the main Belgian beer styles, so you can sort your Dubbel from your Tripel and will never mistake an abbey beer for a true Trappist.

As with all Cogan & Mater guides (proprietor Tim Webb of Good Beer Guide Belgium fame), the book is also shot through with a dry and acerbic wit – or witte, if you prefer. It’s excellent value for money and handsomely designed by Dale Tomlinson, who enjoys a glass or two himself.

Don’t catch Eurostar without it.

**And now it’s 81....**

Travellers to Bruges now have an eighty first watering hole to visit. Martin Matthews (of Altrincham’s Le Trappist fame) opened Le Trappiste Brugge on 9th May. The cellar bar is at 33 Kuipersstraat and it noteworthy for not only offering a good range of Belgian beers but also interesting beers from overseas (which include beers Manchester’s very own Marble Brewery and, inevitably, Danish superstar Mikkeller), a rarity for a speciality beer café in Belgium. It’s slightly off the beaten track which is no bad thing for touristy Bruges. OT plans to call in August.

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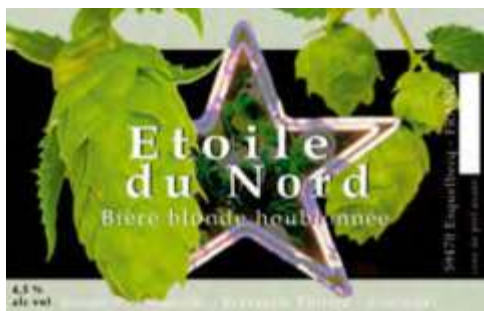
# High Peak Pub Scene

Frank Wood & Robin Wignall with News and Views

## Peak Practice

With Robin Wignall

**Goyt Wines** in Whaley Bridge has for many years been a mainstay of real ale in a bottle, featuring in CAMRA's *Good Bottled Beer Guide*. Local breweries whose beers are available include Buxton, Bollington and Thornbridge.



A range of Belgian beers is also available, including Affligem. The most recent venture has seen beer from Brasserie Thiriez in Esquelbecq, France. Who says the French can't brew beer? However Esquelbecq is in French Flandres, just a stone's throw from the border with Belgian Flanders, which is renowned for its brewing prowess. Five distinctive beers are on sale. Etoile du Nord combines Belgian Saison and English IPA styles to give a fine dry blonde. Blonde d'Esquelbecq is a classic Belgian style blonde. La Maline is a 'bière noire des Flandres,' a fine dark stout. Québécoises uses wheat and barley malt. L'Ambrée is a dark amber beer. All five make good drinking, but for me Etoile du Nord is indeed the Star of the North.



In Marston's recent *Pub of the Year* awards, the runner up in the Cask Ale section for their East Region was Sue Greenwood at the **Shepherds Arms** in Whaley Bridge. It is good to see Marston's recognising some of the good things that happen in their pubs in the Peak District. Congratulations Sue. At the **Goyt** in Whaley Bridge, Tony Gunner has picked up a certificate and award for the keeping of St. Austell Tribute 'to the highest standard,' says the certificate. But then all the

beers at the **Goyt** are well kept and very commendable.

Our local Punch pubs access the Finest Cask list, which more recently has contained beers from smaller breweries. The main beer list also seems to have been enhanced. These are welcome initiatives which enable the **White Horse**, **White Hart** and **Goyt** to provide customers with variety from a changing range of beers. Recently the **White Horse** sold Holden's Black Country Special, a 5.1% brew worth trying. At the **White Hart** Woodforde's Bure Gold from Norfolk was one to enjoy. See above for a bit more on the **Goyt**.

From mid-April, the **Railway** in Whaley Bridge has been serving Sunday lunch, a venture which has had a successful start and offers a promise for the future. Food can be enjoyed with Unicorn and the Robinson's seasonal beer, and sometimes a third beer.



Picking up a bit of history again, the **Navigation** at Buxworth used to be a Wilson's house and bits of evidence from those days can still be found. These days you find a range of beers, often from microbreweries across the Pennines. Abbeydale and Bradfield are examples of the fine ales on sale.

Finally by the time you read this Marston's will have held their early summer beer festival, with licensees able to buy from a list of beers outside the Marston's empire. The **Royal Oak** in High Lane and the **Shepherds Arms** in Whaley Bridge will undoubtedly have beers on from this range.

**STOP PRESS.** The **Drum and Monkey** at the Horwich End end of Whaley Bridge, now has a fourth hand pump. This is to be dedicated to beers from the **Whaley Bridge Brewery**. This is a new venture which after trials and a few tribulations, is now ready to launch commercially. More next time. News also comes in of a new brewery planned for Disley later in the year. While it is early days yet this project looks set to go ahead.

## High Peak Pub News

With Frank Wood

The 2nd Glossop North End beer festival was a huge success in mid May. 28 firkins of beer based on a Derbyshire breweries theme, including beers from Brampton and Dancing Duck. It attracted many visitors from outside the area and as well as raising much needed funds for the club and has become an annual event. The month also saw the opening of the **Smithy Fold**, Glossop's new Wetherspoons which boasts 10 handpumps. It is in a very central location, in the former Woods Mill, very near to the main town centre traffic lights.

Also in Glossop, the **Globe** brew pub recently brewed their 400th batch of beer, and landlord Ron named it "Brew 400". "A hint of Ginger" is the other recent new beer from the Globe.

## Buxton News



Over in Buxton, Everards are believed to have bought the **Cheshire Cheese** on High Street (beyond the market place) and a planning application is in for a micro brewery at the rear of the premises. This will be run by Titanic brewery, with whom they have a tie up. On Hallbank,, the steep street going down from the town hall to the Pavilion Gardens, **Beltane** bar is gaining popularity with locals. It has now added a fourth handpump and is selling beers from many of the local breweries. Also, a chef has been employed and food is now available. Buxton Brewery is still on line with its plans to open a brewery tap in the town by July. It is in the former **Project X** cafe near to the Opera House and will make the town quite an attractive summer beer trip out.

In Chinley, the **Crown & Mitre** has been sold by Robinsons prior to auction but no clues as yet as to whether it will remain a pub. Two pubs boarded up in Tameside, are the **Globe** on Globe lane, Dukinfield and the **Cotton Tree** on Markham Street, Hyde.

# Horse & Jockey

the inn on the green

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## Cider Fest Comes of Age

This month the Greater Manchester branches of CAMRA are staging their third Cider & Perry Festival. Once again the venue is Copper Face Jacks Bar in the Palace Hotel, on the corner of Whitworth Street and Oxford Road in the City Centre.



Since its inception in 2011 the festival has gone from strength to strength and this year marks a real sea change. It has been chosen by CAMRA's national APPLE Committee (that's the part of CAMRA that looks after cider and perry) to host regional judging for the National Cider & Perry Championships. Not only that, but it will be judging ciders from the whole "Celtic Fringe" and the North of England.

So, not only will the resurgent and hugely successful Welsh cider industry be present but new artisanal makers from Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man will be there as well. In addition rising stars from Cheshire to Northumberland will be presenting their finest products for both expert judging and enthusiastic consumption. Full details are in the advert on page 15 and also on the festival website.

It promises to be a fun few weeks for cider and perry lovers. At the start of June they will have enjoyed the huge cider bar at Stockport Beer & Cider Festival (the biggest in the North we think), then we have the Greater Manchester Festival and finally on 5 and 6 July there is the excellent cider bar at the Chorlton Beer Festival (to be held as usual at St Clements Church).

## Trafford & Hulme Cider Pub of the Year

Five pubs were entered into the Branch Cider Pub of the Year competition and were judged along the guidelines for the Regional & National competitions. The winner was **The Font** on New Wakefield Street in Manchester City Centre, writes *Steven Swain*.



The presentation took place on Sunday 12th May at 1pm and a good time was had by all who attended, with The Font supplying some excellent cheese boards. There was a choice of five draught ciders on the day with three choices being the norm. Font also has an excellent range of bottled ciders, so if you've not been before give them a visit. Card carrying members of CAMRA get a 25% discount on draught real ciders (and also on real ales, of course). Our picture shows Steven Swain presenting the award to Font's Kate O'Driscoll.

## National Champs

CAMRA's National Cider & Perry Competition was held at Reading Beer Festival last month. In the perry awards the new national champion is Dunkerton's Perry, followed by two Welsh entrants - Gwynt y Ddraig Two Trees and Raglan Cider Mill Snowy Owl. Top cider was Springfield Wobbly Munk from Monmouthshire with CJ's Surprise from Usk in second place. Bronze went to West Milton from Dorset. Across the two categories four of the top six places were taken by Welsh producers showing the real strength in depth of the revivalist cider and perry industry in the Principality. Will the voting at Stockport Festival have shown a similar Celtic bias? More next month.



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The Greater Manchester Cider and Perry Festival is organised and run by volunteers from the Greater Manchester branches of CAMRA



# Celebrating Pub Signs

Arthur Chappell writes

Many open pubs no longer have signs – they have been vanishing as quickly as real ales or Dutch Elm trees. It's a malady that affects keg pubs as much as real ale ones. It's time pubs were actively encouraged to make more of their signs – they get a pub noticed by passers-by from streets away, and often prove to be major works of art in their own right.

The pub sign was a Roman invention. Wine sellers' properties were marked with symbols of grapes and vines. Ale sellers used a beer stake, representing a pole that was used to stir fermenting ale, as most pubs brewed their beer on the premises. Signage was a way in which the best places to get a drink could be quickly identified. In 1393, it became compulsory for public houses to display a sign and the standard rectangular swinging sign held in a fixed bracket was the most commonly found.



Pub closures, financial cutbacks, modern computer graphic logos, and plain indifference means that many pubs have not bothered renewing or replacing their old inn signs. Many classics have vanished to rubbish tips. One former landlord in Chorlton took his inn sign home to use as a tin-plate table cloth.

Some signs that remain are in a very sorry state, weather-worn, or hidden behind satellite aerial dishes and garish night-lights. Quite a few just need cleaning. Pub signs have been under-appreciated and undervalued for far too long. It is time to call for their restoration, as street art and as a major symbol of all that is great about the British pub.

There is an Inn Sign Society, of which I am proud to be among the 300 members, alongside my CAMRA support, but I want to do more. It was working with a photography group on photo shoots with themes as diverse as fairy tales, being fully dressed swimming pools, and Steampunk, that gave me the idea of inviting them to one on the theme of pub signs. After all, CAMRA and Camera are mere letters apart.



My favourite inn sign is that of the Circus Tavern on Portland Street, Manchester city centre. It represents a travelling circus that visited the city in 1795, 1796 and 1797. The reason they only came here for three years is very tragic. They were invited to perform in Dublin, but the ship they sailed on sank, and there were no survivors, including the animals. The sign gives no clue to the sad story behind the big top spectacle depicted.

On July 14th, from 12.30 pm until nightfall, men and women are invited to come to a photo shoot dressed as kings, queens, foxes, knights, soldiers, bricklayers, dogs, ducks, swans, and anything they can think of that is inn-sign related. You can make up your own pub sign or use fictitious ones – one model already hopes to represent the Slaughtered Lamb, the pub from the film *An American Werewolf In London*. All models and photographers are participating free of charge and no one will make any money from the day. Photos can only be

taken by consent between model and photographer and models will work on a Time For Prints (TFP) arrangement – photographers keep the rights to photos taken, but copies of prints will be sent to each model they work with, on disc or via internet exchange, i.e. Facebook or Dropbox. Some models and photographers may exchange basic consent form contracts before taking photos / having photos taken.

You do not have to be glamorous or experienced to model, or take photos at this kind of shoot – all body shapes, sizes and ages are welcome. (Under 16's may only participate with parental approval and presence throughout).



If you wish to participate as a model or photographer, or make up artist, contact me by email [arthur@chappell7300.freemove.co.uk](mailto:arthur@chappell7300.freemove.co.uk). CAMRA members and anyone interested in pubs, breweries, art, etc. are welcome along. There are a few basic safety ground rules to observe, i.e., models are there on a look but don't touch arrangement, there will be no nude photography and despite the theme, please don't bring open bottles or cans of alcohol into the park. The location for this unique event is Peel Park, by the Salford University campus close to Salford Crescent railway station and buses go by frequently from Manchester. There are two real ale bars very close by – the Crescent and the Old Pint Pot (both without decent inn signs). Food and drink are not provided at our on-shoot site so do bring a packed lunch or use the café in the park's excellent free admission museum. There is a MacDonald's about five minutes walk away too. The park was the location for the movie, *Hobson's Choice*, though the pub featured in the film, the *Moonrakers*, has long since vanished. So, do let me know if you would like to attend, and do look closely at the pub signs you see on your travels too. Useful link:

The Inn Sign Society <http://www.innsignsociety.com>


A large advertisement for 'The oddest BEER FESTIVAL'. The background is red. At the top, the words 'The oddest' are written in a white, cursive font. Below this, the words 'BEER FESTIVAL' are written in a large, bold, yellow font with a black outline. Underneath, the words 'more than' are written in a smaller, white, cursive font, followed by the word 'TEN' in a large, bold, yellow font with a black outline. Below this, the words 'real ales &amp; ciders' are written in a white, cursive font. At the bottom, the text 'FROM FRIDAY 28TH JUNE 5PM' is written on the left and 'UNTIL SUNDAY 30TH JUNE 11.30PM' is written on the right, both in a white, bold font. At the very bottom, the address 'Oddest Bar 414-416 Wilbraham Road Chorlton Manchester M21 0SD' and phone number '0161 860 7515' are written in a small white font. There is also a small logo for 'oddest' in the bottom right corner.





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## Stockport Cider Pub of the Year



The Stockport and South Manchester CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year is the Railway on Avenue Street, Portwood. The Railway has been a previous winner of the award and won this time around for continuing excellence in the promotion of traditional cider and perry.

There is always at least one changing guest cider or perry and each year the pub also hosts a cider and perry festival. There was a good turn out for the presentation when two guest ciders and one perry were available for sampling. A generous buffet was made available to help soak up the drinks.

Pictured above from left local CAMRA Chairman John Clarke presents the award to Sue and Vince from the Railway. Looking on are local Mad Hatters cider maker Gordon Battersby (rear) and Stockport CAMRA cider representatives Dave Preston (back) and Mike Gilroy (front).

## Dove Holes Beer Festival

The Dove Holes Beer & Jazz Festival is a fixture on the local beer and music calendar (although the weather sometimes leaves a little to be desired). However there's always a good choice in the beer tent to leave you with a warm glow. There's usually something interesting on offer and this year is no different. The Morton Brewery from Coven (just north of



Wolverhampton) has been a feature in recent years and this time is back in force with four regular beers and two specials. In addition there will be beers from Healey Brewery near Ulverston. This new micro only started brewing last year so this is something of a coup for Dove Holes. As a bonus the brewers from both Morton and Healy will also be present for "Meet the Brewer" sessions. Needless to say there will also be a range of beers from Buxton Brewery including a possible special.

Dove Holes Beer & Jazz Festival is on Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 July and is open from 12 noon each day. It's a short walk from Dove Holes station on the Buxton line and in addition buses 199 and X67 (from both Stockport and Buxton) stop almost outside. Any beer left at six o'clock in Sunday will be sold off at half price to take away – containers will be available.

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# Heritage Pubs



Above, clockwise from top, the Briton's Protection, Manchester; Plough, Gorton; Queen's Head, Stockport, Harrington Arms, Gawsforth and the Crown, Glossop. (Briton's Protection photo courtesy Mick Slaughter. Other photos courtesy of Dimpled Mug – check out more at [dimpled.mug.co.uk](http://dimpled.mug.co.uk). All rights reserved).

# Real Heritage Pubs

A new publication from CAMRA, The Campaign for Real Ale, highlights the hidden gems of British pub architecture with 270 pub interiors of outstanding historic interest.

Launched in April to coincide with CAMRA's AGM in Norwich and available from 6 May, "Britain's Best Real Heritage Pubs" is a beautifully illustrated celebration of pub interiors, from rural time-warps, Victorian and Edwardian drinking palaces to inter-war boozers, that have altered little in the last 80 years.

"Our pubs have been changed so much during the past half century that ones with genuine historic interiors are now incredible rarities. This book identifies the top 270 of these national

treasures and presents a unique picture of the diversity of interior styles spanning a century or more" said the book's author Geoff Brandwood, of CAMRA's Pub Heritage Group.

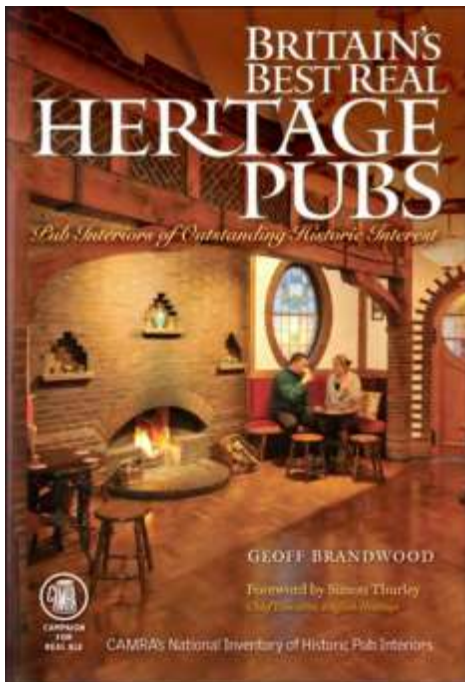
The book represents over two decades worth of work by CAMRA's Pub Heritage Group during which time there was close collaboration with English Heritage. Simon Thurley, Chief Executive of English Heritage, says this in his foreword to the book, "Pubs are an intrinsic part of British life, and nationwide there are around 50,000 opening their doors every day. But historic pub interiors are something rarer. Across the UK, only some 270 have been identified as having the level of national importance necessary for listing in this guide".

English Heritage has been working with CAMRA for 20 years now, and the legacy of that partnership is beautifully revealed within the pages of this book. From wonderful Victorian tiled interiors, through to the simple splendour of Art Deco decoration, the range of pubs recognised through the historic pub interiors project is staggering."

England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are all featured in the book, which is further broken down by counties or local regions and features contact details as well as beautiful, full colour images of the fantastic interiors CAMRA is trying to help celebrate and preserve. There are also informative features about the long history of the pub and many of the intriguing features about this unique British institution.

Locally, the Opening Times area, particularly Stockport and Manchester City Centre, is well blessed with some of these classic pubs and on the facing page we illustrate a few of them. There is also a dedicated website at <http://www.heritagepubs.org.uk/home/home.asp>

Britain's Best Real Heritage Pubs is available from all good book shops and via [www.camra.org.uk/shop](http://www.camra.org.uk/shop). For more information visit [www.camra.org.uk/bestheritage](http://www.camra.org.uk/bestheritage)



# Chorlton Beer Festival Preview

The 9th Chorlton Beer Festival will take place on the Friday 5 & Saturday 6 July. With the beer list expected to top 90 beers for the first time plus 50 ciders and perries, this years festival is set to be the biggest yet.

As ever, the festival will be held in the buildings and grounds of St Clement's Church on Edge Lane, Chorlton. As previous visitors will know, the extensive lawned areas in the shadow of the impressive church makes the festival a great summer experience. After unprecedented demand last year which resulted in the beer hall becoming

extremely busy at times, the organisers are planning the biggest change to the festival layout since the early days of the event. For the first time, the cask ales will be split into two bars in two separate buildings - one in the church itself and the other in the Youth Centre, previously home to the cider & perry bar and the foreign beer bar. The impressive range of cider and perry will be found in a marquee in the church grounds while the foreign beers will be in the church.

With a larger range of cask ales than ever before, there will be something to suit every taste. For the second year, the festival is hosting the North West round of the Champion Speciality Beer Of Britain competition with eight finalists from breweries across the North West, as voted for by CAMRA members across the region. The specialty category includes unusual styles such as wheat beers and cask conditioned lagers along with beers flavoured with fruits and spices, all of which are traditional favourites of the customers at the festival.

As well as the specialty styles there will be a plentiful selection of golden ales, traditional bitters, milds, stouts and porters. Some of the best breweries in the North West will be represented. Chorlton's own Bootleg Brewing Company are once again brewing a special festival ale - the yet to be named follow on from 2011's "Stout Clement" and last year's "Parished" will be a special wheat beer.

On Friday night, music will be provided by Oldham band, Smashing Lads. They are festival veterans and will be playing a mixture of old and new covers, to get everyone dancing come rain or shine. On Saturday, we'll warm up with some afternoon jazz, then we'll have an evening session from Chorlton folk band The Meadow who will keep everyone entertained until the beer runs out!

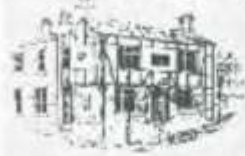
Delicious food will be provided both nights by Swedish / Manchester hybrid **Kro**, Eastern dining specialists **Tampopo** and making their debut at the festival, **All About Pies**, who probably make the best pies in the Northwest.

More info at [thcamra.org.uk/chorlton](http://thcamra.org.uk/chorlton), on Facebook at [facebook.com/chorltonbeerfestival](https://www.facebook.com/chorltonbeerfestival) and on twitter @ChorlBeerFest



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Sunday

12.00 - 11.00pm

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2 - 4 - 1

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join CAMRA and help the campaign  
to keep real ale alive.

See the  
membership form  
on page 4



CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE



# Pub News

Covering Stockport, Manchester and beyond

## Oakwell Closures

Opening Times has been sad to see the demise of Oakwell Brewery's pubs in the area. The **New Victoria** in Longsight was the first to close its doors in late March and this has been followed by the **Red Brook** in Partington which closed on Saturday 4 May. The **Racecourse Hotel** in Salford remains open at the time of going to press, but it too is expected to close imminently as the parent company which owns the Barnsley brewery puts the whole of their pub stock on the market. While Longsight has other pubs, the New Victoria stood out as being a rare cask ale outlet in the area. The **Red Brook** and **Racecourse** will both leave their local communities without a pub - a sad reflection on the way Britain's pub stock is going with more and more traditional estate pubs closing for ever.

## Chorlton Beer



The Edinburgh Fringe comes to Chorlton this month as the **Beech Inns'** free comedy nights hosts two comedians previewing their Edinburgh shows at the pub. Ruth Cockburn and Kevin Dewsbury will be at the **Beech** on Tuesday 11th June with the show starting at 8.30pm. Drinkers wanting to get in the mood for July's **Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival** (see page 21) can begin their ale sampling the previous weekend just up the road when **Oddest Bar** holds its first mini beer festival. Fulfilling the ambition of manager Nicola Clark to showcase even more beers than the six ever changing pumps in the bar, the festival will see a temporary bar installed with an additional six handpumps making 12 beers available at any one time. The festival will be featuring a range of breweries not previously served at the Wilbraham Road bar including Green Jack, Bartrams and ever excellent Dark Star.

## Trafford Updates

There is a new bar in Urmston, with **Stage One Bar** replacing **Boogie Piano Bar** in the former Victoria pub unit in Urmston's old

precinct. At time of going to press there was no real ale on draught but the pub was offering a full range of bottle conditioned ales from Dunham Massey Brewery and "two or three" cask ales should be available by the time you read this. The cellarman is Tim Woodward, formerly of the **Steamhouse**, so can expect well kept beer. Dunham Massey will feature in the draught selection also, possibly alongside beers from Huddersfield's Magic Rock brewery - a particular favourite of Tim. There are ambitious plans to expand the real ale selection and feature "craft keg" - we wish them well and hope readers will go down and support their efforts.

Marston's impressive **Old Hall** on Stockport Road between Timperley and Altrincham reopened on 2 May after an extensive refurbishment which saw the pub closed for almost three weeks. While retaining many of its historical features such as traditional fireplaces, the pub has a fresh new look with brighter decor and an impressive new bar. The pub now does a full carvery on a Sunday priced at just £6.85 which you can enjoy while looking over Altrincham Golf Course to the rear of the pub. Just down the road from the **Old Hall** is another Marston's pub (under their "Taverners" brand), the **Hare & Hounds** which is now opening early for "breakfast carveries" from 9am to 11am when their normal carvery service starts.

Opening Times doesn't regularly get out to Baguley, but news reached us after the last issue went to press that the **Jolly Butcher** on Petersfield Drive had been bought by



pub turnaround specialists Nimbus Leisure who immediately closed the pub for cleaning, maintenance and redecoration of both the main room and vault, plus installation of a new CCTV system. The pub reopened on 19 April under new manager Mark Elliot who has committed to making the pub clean and safe for the whole community, young and old. Popular existing events like the weekly karaoke have been supplemented by a range of additional entertainment including live entertainment with charity nights and ladies nights being planned - keep up with news at [www.facebook.com/jolly.butcher1](http://www.facebook.com/jolly.butcher1). The pub also now offers food and is available for functions (entertainment and catering available). Reports suggest the changes

are working and the pub is welcoming and gaining new customers week to week - congratulations to Mark and his team.

## City News



Just as Opening Times was going to press, we learnt that Manchester Metropolitan University is to close the **Salutation** on Higher Chatham Street (behind the Royal Northern College of Music). Although always under threat since MMU bought the freehold from Punch Taverns, the University leased the pub to the Trof Group last year and the pub has undergone a renaissance under their management. With a weekly programme of entertainment and an excellent range of real ales from local breweries the pub is well used by the local community who we hope will resist the actions of the University (which it is reported plan to use the premises for "offices and storerooms").



We have more cask ale gains to report, which is always good news (provided the beer is well kept and sells that is). The **Mauldeth** on Kingsway (pictured above) has dabbled with cask beer in the past but now seems to be making a concerted effort. When OT called, Wells Bombardier was on the bar and selling well. The beer changes on a weekly basis. Round the corner in Ladybarn the sole remaining pub, the **Brewers Arms** now has two cask beers on sale. On the other side of Kingsway in Burnage the **Victoria**, which for years has had handpumps with pumpclips facing the punters but no cask beer, now has new "cask beers" signs outside. Inside the pumpclips proclaim 'Victoria Ale' brewed by Tetleys.

*Continues on next page...*

# Pub News

Continued from page 23

In the City Centre, **Mulligans** on Southgate just off Deansgate (in fact it now styles itself "Mulligans of Deansgate") is arguably the oldest Irish themed pub in Manchester. It's another bar that has sold cask beer in the distant past but hasn't done so for some time now. The good news is that by the time you read this cask ale will be back on the bar – the aim was to have it on sale by the late Bank Holiday weekend. We'll have an update next time.

Elsewhere in the City Centre, JW Lees are set to open one of their **Duttons** outlets on Albert Square this summer. The site, opposite the Town Hall and Jubilee Fountain, has had numerous, and ultimately unsuccessful, incarnations over the years. Lees have however shown a sure hand with the Chester outlet of **Duttons** so fingers crossed this one will have legs, too. It ought to be a new cask ale outlet as well.

In the Northern Quarter, **Soup Kitchen** just off Stevenson Square, has radically enhanced its cask beer offer. One of the keg fonts has been removed and replaced with a further three handpumps bringing the total to six. OT understands this was due to customer demand.

Finally the **Deansgate** now has a restaurant, 3 Twenty One, on the first floor. Sounds very interesting – more next time.

## East Manchester

There are a few changes to report. Not many of them positive unfortunately. The **Hamlet** (ex Vaux) in Abbey Hey has now been converted to non-pub use. The **Royal Oak** in Gorton is open and trading again after a period of closure; it is for sale though, so may have a limited life yet. The long-closed **Manchester** in Beswick (former Crossroads) has



re-opened. This closed back in August of 2010, so we thought it was a goner. This is good news for people in Beswick and for fans of Manchester City as it increases the open pubs and therefore customer choice on Grey Mare Lane by a huge 50%. All of them are still keg however...

The **Railway** on Manshaw Road in Higher Openshaw remains open and trading well. This Holts house has however dropped cask mild and now offers Bitter and IPA as the two cask beers. Not too far away the previous keg only **Grove** is now closed and boarded.

The **Oddfellows** at the top of Abbey Hey Lane sold a good pint of cask Boddingtons for years. This excellent little local has however sold no cask beer for years now. OT did get a report that Thatchers Cider was being sold on handpump but on a recent visit there was no sign of it. Robinsons **Foresters Arms** on Ashton Old Road remains open but has lost its cask ale (which, if the quality of the cask last



time OT called is anything to go by, is no bad thing). Not so far away the appearance of a new Holt's sign on the **Lord Raglan** briefly revived hopes that the pub was selling cask again but Holt's Smooth is the order of the day here.

## Trafford & Hulme CAMRA Pub of the Year

On Thursday 16 May, Trafford & Hulme branch members, visitors from Cheshire branches, and many local customers of **Costello's Bar** in Goose Green, Altrincham celebrated Costello's being crowned the Trafford & Hulme Pub of the Year for the second year on the run, writes *Beverley Gobbett*.

Costello's opened in December 2011. Within its first year it had been awarded a Pub of the Season certificate which was then followed by the Pub of the Year award. And now again they have been awarded the Pub of the Year. In last year's Regional competition they were the Regional Runner Up being pipped to the post by the Baum in Rochdale which you all know has since been crowned CAMRA National Pub of the Year 2013.

Costello's is the brewery tap for the Dunham Massey Brewing Company and has an ever changing range of seven hand pulls, a range of real ciders and perries and even their own Altrincham Pilsner.

The Manager, Tony Gartland gave tribute to John Costello for brewing such a fantastic product, to all his staff for their hard work and enthusiasm, and to CAMRA for their support. His final tribute and big thanks went to all of his loyal customers who make Costello's the great community pub that it has become.

Anthony Costello then informed the room of the new venture that the family are now entering in to. They are turning the Old Post Office in Lymm into a pub with micro brewery attached. Beers from both breweries will be available from time to time in both establishments. One to keep your eyes open for if visiting the Lymm area.

The evening proved to be a great celebration of their achievement. They even gave away a box of beer to a very pleased local customer whose number was drawn out of the hat as a random gift for loyal customers.

If you have not yet visited this pub then I urge you to give it a try and make up your own mind about its worthiness to be a double winner of the Trafford & Hulme Pub of the Year.





# Bollington Beer Festival in July

Bollington Beer Festival will again take place in the Bollington Arts Centre in on Friday 26 and Saturday 27 July. There will be a bigger selection of beers this year, around 40 casks, double what was available last year. Expect beers from some of our more innovative brewers as well as old favourites. (see a selection lower down). There will also be around 15 ciders and perrys available.

Festival opening hours will be 6pm to 11pm on Friday 21 July and on Saturday 22 July there will be two sessions from noon to 6pm and then 6pm to 11pm.

The Arts Centre is located adjacent to the viaduct in the centre of Bollington on the main road through the town. It is a short distance from the No. 10 / 10A bus stop, which runs a regular service between Macclesfield and Bollington. The aim of the festival is to raise money for the Bollington Arts Festival in 2014.

Entertainment will be provided by local folk and jazz musicians on Friday evening and Saturday lunchtime and evening. Hot and cold food will be available during both days with the award winning The Great North Pie Company providing food on the Saturday.

Beers will be from local brewers Bollington Brewing, Happy Valley and RedWillow who are all kindly sponsoring two firkins apiece of their beers. Other breweries featured include Buxton, Marble, Magic Rock and Thornbridge and from further afield Highland Brewing in Orkney and Dark Star from Sussex.

Entrance will be £6 for each of the three sessions and will include a souvenir glass to take away. Tickets will be available from late May in the following pubs in Bollington; the Cock & Pheasant, Poachers and Vale. In Macclesfield tickets will be on sale in the Park Tavern, Treacle Tap and The Macc.



## Bollington Beer Festival 2013

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**Bollington Arts Centre**  
**Fri 26 July 6pm**  
**Sat 27 July 12 noon**

### Tickets £6

Available online or in selected outlets



[www.bollingtonfestival.org.uk/beer](http://www.bollingtonfestival.org.uk/beer)

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**Contacts - Office: 0333 210 4021; Geoff: 07816 912 794; Robin: 07709 874 783**

Meet our beers - Beer Tasting Notes

 <p><b>Floral Dance</b> 3.8%</p> <p>A pale and fruity session beer, with body that is more than a match for many stronger beers!</p>	 <p><b>Hameldon Bitter</b> 3.8%</p> <p>An unusually dark traditional bitter, with a dry and assertive character that develops in the finish.</p>	 <p><b>Glen Top Bitter</b> 4.0%</p> <p>A citrusy, full bodied pale beer. Intentionally not over hopped with quite a dry after taste.</p>	 <p><b>Rossendale Ale</b> 4.2%</p> <p>A malty aroma leads to a complex, malt dominated flavour, supported by a dry, increasingly bitter finish.</p>	 <p><b>Halo Pale</b> 4.5%</p> <p>A citrusy, pale ale brewed with Cascade aroma hops, finishing with a slightly bitter aftertaste.</p>	 <p><b>Pitch Porter</b> 5%</p> <p>A full bodied rich beer with a slightly sweet, malty start, counter-balanced with sharp bitterness and obvious roast barley dominance.</p>	 <p><b>Sunshine</b> 5.3%</p> <p>A hoppy and bitter golden beer with a citrus character. The lingering finish is dry and spicy</p>
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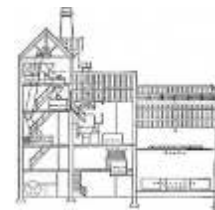
Please do not hesitate to contact us for further info!

All of our beers can be sampled at -  
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[www.rossendalebrewery.co.uk](http://www.rossendalebrewery.co.uk)

All of our beers are suitable for Vegetarians & Vegans.

# Brewery News

## Micro, Regional and Family Brewers



### Robinsons



The new premium beer, Trooper, was launched at the brewery on May 9 with a reception at the new visitor centre. There was an international media presence so as you might expect OT was there as well.

Iron Maiden's Bruce Dickinson was there of course, pulling the first pint and being generally chatty and sociable. Turns out he is a real beer fan and always includes bottles of local beers on the band's rider as they tour the globe. It's still not wholly clear how he and Robinsons got together for this project (but we guess that the success of the Elbow beer must have played a part) but it's certainly been hugely beneficial for Robbies.

International demand has been enormous with trade enquiries from something like 100 countries. Pre-launch orders were in the region of 250,000 pints and for the first time in its 175 year history the brewery is brewing three times a day, six days a week to meet demand. There is even talk of a separate New York launch.

So, what's it like? Well it's 4.8%, reasonably pale and reasonably hoppy. Those expecting an uncompromising hop bomb will be disappointed but then again that misreads the market. It's a beer designed for international sales and which appeals to Iron Maiden fans across the globe. Thus it's a well made, tasty beer that can be drunk in some quantity. It's certainly worth seeking out. It has been launched in a selected number of local pubs and those in the OT area include the Blossoms, Heaviley; Castle, Manchester; Farmers Arms, Poynton; Swan With Two Necks, Stockport; Horse Shoe, High Lane; Red Bull, Stockport; Nag's Head, Macclesfield; Oakwood, Glossop; Windsor Castle, Marple Bridge; and the Royal Oak, New Mills.

### New Breweries

**Six O'Clock Beer Company** is a new microbrewery based in North Manchester, and at just a single barrel capacity it must be the smallest micro in the area. The company was founded by local lads Dan Tang and Ian Johnson after the two met in one of the Marble pubs. The pair chose the Six O'Clock name to reflect their dissatisfaction with the 9-5 working life and to evoke the feeling of sitting down with a tasty, refreshing pint after a hard day's work; it's a great feeling because that's when life really begins.

Dan and Ian designed and built their own brewery in order to get fine control of the brewing process at all the critical points. This fine control combined with the small scale of the brewery gives them the freedom and flexibility to create new and exciting beers, free from the constraints of the more commercial breweries. "With a one barrel brewery, it's clear we're not doing this to make pots of money. We're doing it to create great beer for Manchester." says Dan.



The company's core beers currently consist of 'Overtime', a citrusy and very drinkable 4.2% pale ale and 'Union', a full-bodied, grassy and floral IPA weighing in at 5% and using only UK hops (Challenger, Pilgrim, East Kent Goldings and Sussex). "One thing we are trying to do is to champion UK hops. There is a perception that UK hops are boring and produce dull and unexciting beers. We take the opposite view; there are great UK hops available these days which, on occasion, bear little resemblance to those UK hops grown in the not so distant past." says Ian.

Overtime and Union have so far had a great reception in Manchester's pubs and bars and at the Northern Quarter takeover party where the company collaborated with Privateer Beers to set up a bar on Edge Street.

There's lots more in the pipeline: work is underway on some interesting summer ales

(for when we finally get our summer), some stouts with a difference, and there's already been talk of collaborations with other local microbreweries and even with a well known Northern Quarter coffee/tea shop. Exciting times ahead.

One of Opening Times' High Peak correspondents, Frank Wood, is also launching his own brewery and this should be up and running later this month.

**Mouselow Farm Brewery** is a three barrel plant in a farm outbuilding in the Glossop area and will be run solely by Frank. Beers will be seen locally in the High Peak and Greater Manchester areas, with appearances at local beer festivals. Look out for them in particular at the Glossop Labour Club Summer beer festival on 19th-21st July and the Romiley Beer Festival at the Duke of York the week after. Part of the brewing kit is pictured below.



### JW Lees

Lees have also launched a new beer in both cask and bottle. This is Manchester Pale Ale or MPA for short. There was an all-singing and dancing (literally courtesy of the likes of Manchester legend Bez and others) launch at Rain Bar. OT wasn't there as they don't invite us to their launches (they don't send us press releases either – presumably we've upset someone) but, hey, we can rise above this.

Anyway, to the beer. It's not at all bad. There's been a definite attempt to capture a slice



of the "pale and hoppy" market but, like our other local family brewers, they have tried to do this without brewing anything that might frighten the horses. It's 3.7% on cask (4.1% in bottle) and is pale gold with a moreish, citrusy hop character from the use of American Liberty and Mount Hood hops.

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