

OPENING TIMES

DECEMBER 2016 / FREE



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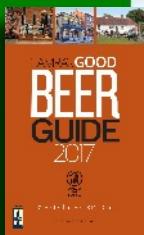
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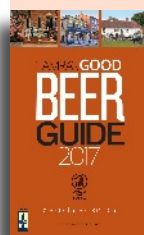
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OPENING TIMES

Opening Times is produced by the Stockport & South Manchester Branch, the Trafford & Hulme Branch, the Central Manchester Branch and the High Peak, Tameside & North East Cheshire Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Additional material is supplied by the Salford Branch and the Macclesfield & E Cheshire Branch. 7,600 copies a month are printed by Oxuniprint Ltd, a division of Oxford University Press and distributed throughout Stockport, Trafford, Manchester and Tameside. There are also many outlets in Macclesfield & East Cheshire, High Peak and Glossop.

News, articles and letters are welcome to the editorial address – John Clarke, 45 Bulkeley Street, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9HD. E-mail – stocam@btinternet.com. Phone 0161 477 1973. Advertising rates on request or online at: <http://www.ssmcamra.co.uk/magazine.htm>

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Their telephone no. is 03454 04 05 06.

To report a matter to Trading Standards go to:

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To find a local office: www.gov.uk/find-local-trading-standards-office

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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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- * Transport for Greater Manchester: www.tfgm.com 0161 244 1000
- * East Cheshire: 0300 123 5500
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/public_transport.aspx
- * Derbyshire: www.derbybus.info

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We aim to ensure that the information in *Opening Times* is correct at the time of going to press. If we get something wrong then please get in touch (editorial contact details above) and we'll print a correction. Please also note the opinions expressed in *Opening Times* are not necessarily those of CAMRA either locally or nationally.

Copy Date for the January issue is Saturday 3rd December.

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Distribution Manager – Janet Flynn

Front cover – Happy Christmas everyone!

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What's On

Local CAMRA Branch Events, Information and News

Your Local CAMRA Contacts & Websites

Stockport & South Manchester (SSM)

www.ssmcamra.co.uk

Contact: Paul Felton; Secretary@ssmcamra.co.uk

Salford (SAL)

www.salford.camra.org.uk

Contact: Dave Hampshire; talldave@gmail.com

High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire (HPNC)

www.hpneccamra.org.uk

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www.eastcheshirecamra.org.uk

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social@eastcheshirecamra.org.uk

Trafford & Hulme (T&H)

www.thcamra.org.uk

Contact: John O'Donnell 07879 880972; enquiries@thcamra.org.uk

Central Manchester (CMCR)

www.centralmanchestercamra.org.uk

Contact: enquiries@centralmanchestercamra.org.uk

Local CAMRA Events

CAMRA Members only

Friday 2nd – Presentation of certificate to mark 30 consecutive years in Good Beer Guide. Davenport Arms, 550 Chester Road, Woodford, SK7 1PS. Subsidised minibus will run from Stockport departing Crown, Heaton Lane at 8.00pm. Book with John Clarke (0775 383 6898). (SSM)

Monday 5th – Branch Meeting and Christmas Social: Brink, 65 Bridge Street, M3 3BQ. Starts 6.00pm. (CMCR)

Thursday 8th – Branch Meeting including Christmas Quiz: Arden Arms, 23 Millgate, Stockport, SK1 2LX. Starts 8.15pm. (SSM)

Saturday 10th – Winter Pub of the Season presentation: White Lion, 134 Buxton Road, Disley, SK12 2HA. Starts 1.30pm. (HPNEC)

Saturday 10th – Day out in Huddersfield: catch 10.11am train from Piccadilly. (CMCR)

Saturday 10th – Meet North Cheshire Branch members on their annual Chorlton Social. Details from contact. (T&H)

Wednesday 14th – Little Hulton Social: 7.30pm Duke's Gate, 287 Clegg's Lane, M38 9NJ; 8.30pm Little Hulton Conservative Club, 1 Armitage Avenue, M38 0EH. (SAL)

Friday 16th – Annual Hillgate Stagger: 7.30pm Queen's Head, 12 Little Underbank, SK1 1JT and meet 8.30pm at Red Bull, 14 Middle Hillgate, SK1 3AY. Finish at Blossoms, 2 Buxton Road, Heaviley, SK2 6NU. (SSM)

Wednesday 21st – Branch Meeting and Social: Swinton Catholic Club, 11 Worsley Road, M27 5WN. Starts 7.30pm. (SAL)

Wednesday 28th – Christmas Crawl of Stockport: meet 12 noon Fairway, 137 Higher Hillgate, SK1 3HR; 1.15pm Red Bull, 14 Middle Hillgate, SK1 3AY; 2.00pm Petersgate Tap, 19 St Petersgate, SK1 1EB;

3.00pm Remedy Bar, 11 Market Place, SK1 1EW; 4.00pm Cocked Hat, 2 Market Place, SK1 1EW; 5.15pm Railway, 1 Avenue Street, SK1 2BZ; 6.30pm Magnet, 51 Wellington Road North, SK4 1HJ; 8.00pm Crown, 154 Heaton Lane SK4 1AR and finishing 9.30pm at Ye Olde Vic, 1 Chatham Street, SK3 9ED. (T&H)

Wednesday 28th – Northern Quarter Crawl: 6.30pm Soup Kitchen, 31-33 Spear Street, M1 1DF; 7.30pm Castle Hotel, 66 Oldham Street, M4 1LE; 8.30pm Gullivers, 109 Oldham Street, M4 1LW; 9.30pm Crown & Kettle, 2 Oldham Road, M4 5FE. (SAL)

Wednesday 28th – Post Christmas Social: Waters Green, 96 Waters Green, Macclesfield, SK11 6LH. Starts 7.00pm. (MEC)

Thursday 29th – Manchester City Centre Christmas Social: meet New Oxford, 11 Bexley Square, M3 6DB between midday and 1.00pm. Then back towards the City Centre. (HPNEC)

Thursday 29th – Pub of the Month presentation to the Crown, 416 Buxton Road, Great Moor, SK2 7JQ. From 8.00pm. (SSM)

Wednesday 4th January – Branch Meeting: Britons Protection, 50 Great Bridgewater Street, M1 5LE. Starts 6.00pm. (CMCR)

Wednesday 4th January – Presentation of Neil Richardson Award. Venue to be decided – check website. Starts 7.30pm. (SAL)

Thursday 5th January – Branch Meeting: JP Joule, 2A Northenden Road, Sale, M33 3BR. Starts 8.00pm. (T&H)

Thursday 5th January – Good Beer Guide selection meeting: Lord Elson, 1 Minshull Street, Knutsford, WA16 6HG. Starts 8.00pm. To be confirmed – check with contact. (MEC)

Social Media

Many of the local CAMRA branches have Facebook and Twitter accounts which you can follow:



Stockport & South Manchester:
www.facebook.com/SSMCAMRA

Trafford & Hulme: www.facebook.com/thcamra

Macclesfield & East Cheshire: <http://fbl.me/meccamra>

Central Manchester:
www.facebook.com/groups/CentralManchesterCamra

High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire:
www.facebook.com/HPTNECCAMRA



Stockport & South Manchester: @SSMCAMRA

Trafford & Hulme: @THCAMRA

Salford: @NorthMancsCAMRA

Macclesfield & East Cheshire: @MECCAMRA

Central Manchester: @MCRCentralCamra

Pub of the Month

The Crown, Great Moor



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for December 2016 is the Crown in Great Moor. Jim Beeson is a regular there.

There has been a pub on this site on the A6 since the old days of coaching, when there were stables for the coach horses at the back. Stockport Council has recognised its iconic status by including an image of the pub on the location signs at the Northern and Southern boundaries of Great Moor.

It has enjoyed a succession of good licensees over the years, the names Pete Flaherty, Diane and Francis McDonald (who obtained the Pub of the Month award in 2005), and Dennis Davies come to mind. The pub is currently in the safe hands of Mark Taylor, who together with his partner Sharon has been running it for the last three years.

Mark has continued and enhanced the reputation of the Crown as a first-rate community pub which can be relied on to provide a good range of beers. Live sport from Sky Sports and BT Sport is available, and high quality karaoke and live music are a regular feature at weekends. Darts and pool are available in a separate sports room, and the pub is regularly booked for family events such as birthdays. The upstairs function room is available for other events, and is a regular venue for CAMRA Branch Meetings.

The most noticeable change since Mark took over is the increased visibility of the cask beer range. The original five handpumps have increased to six, and have been re-arranged so that they now occupy the most prominent place on the bar, leaving one in no doubt as to which cask beers are available. Normally there are never less than four handpumps in action, the current "core" range being Unicorn, Wizard, Cumbria Way, and the Seasonal, while Double Hop has recently also been regularly available. All six pumps can be in action at busy times. Most importantly, the beer quality is also impressive, to the extent that the Crown has qualified as a Robinsons "Perfect Pint Zone", and proudly displays a banner proclaiming this over the front door.

You can sample these excellent beers on the Presentation Night on Thursday 29th December, which promises to be a great night!



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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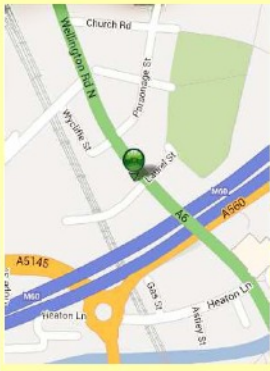
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Midland Saved!

Revised plans reprieve local pub



Last month came the great news that the threat of demolition has been lifted from the **Midland** on Wellington Road North in Stockport.

This thriving free house was threatened by a road scheme that would have seen the pub knocked down for footpath widening. This provoked a major campaign by CAMRA, Stockport Heritage and the pub itself to get the plans changed. Support also came from petitions organised by the pub and on change.org (set up by local CAMRA man Alan Gent).

All of this culminated in a meeting of the council's Planning Committee where the overwhelming majority of the councillors were distinctly unimpressed by the proposals and the apparent lack of effort that had gone into options to save the pub. As a result planning consent was deferred and the local planners have now come back with a revised scheme that retains the Midland and the historic cobbled street which it neighbours.

Landlord Mark Hayter (pictured right) is a very happy man, telling the local *Stockport Express* "My customers are over the moon. It's not very often that the public speak and the council actually listens, so it's a nice victory for everyone involved". Mark now plans to finish off the refurbishment work at the pub which was suspended pending the outcome of the planning application.



Opening Times congratulates everyone on this successful campaign and also thanks the councillors and the planners for taking account of the public's voice here.

Quantum Closes

Local brewery to shut

Celebrations over the reprieve of the Midland were tempered by the news that Stockport's Quantum Brewing was to close down. Owner and brewer Jay Krause (pictured right) posted on social media the reasons why he had decided to close down his five year old brewery.



"The reasons are numerous, but the main reason is that I just want to focus on being a brewer. Not a business owner, not an accountant, not a driver. The situation in brewing at the moment is difficult for operators at my level and size without a direct retail outlet, and I have found my time being taken up less and less by actually brewing beer. This is not why I got into the industry and doesn't motivate me in a way that the brewing process does."

We've not heard the last of Jay though as he is joining the brewing team at Manchester's Cloudwater Brewery. The final beer from Quantum is a 6.9% malty IPA using all the hops left at the brewery – Summit, Goldings, Columbus and Sorachi Ace. Jay leaves Quantum with our very best wishes and memories of some great beers.



Horse & Jockey
 the inn on the green
 9 The Green, Chorlton

Joint Social to the Western Front

Local branches head west – George Elmslie was there

The relatively new Central Manchester branch led the group to the far reaches of Greater Manchester, so far in fact we started at a North Cheshire branch venue, the **Black Swan**, Rixton or Hollins Green, I wasn't sure exactly which it comes under. However I do know it was a 20 minute walk from Glazebrook station and if you don't fancy the walk get off at Irlam and catch a bus to the door.



The walk was worth it though. Six beers on handpump and our group of around a dozen probably sampled them all. The region was well represented with Salford, Central Manchester, Trafford & Hulme and High Peak branches among those represented. The Swan boasts 14 letting rooms and I am sure they do a good trade with these from all the local industry. It's certainly a place I would stay on business trips away rather than the soulless chains I normally get stuck in.



We pressed on (slightly behind schedule as the train was a little late and there was the twenty minute walk), again on foot toward Cadishead and Irlam, and a real treat at our next destination, the **Grocers** micropub. This has only been open 18 months or so and has already won the Pub of the Year Award from Salford Branch. The seating is at the front of house with standing room only in the corridor to a small yard out the back. The beers are listed on a blackboard and the gravity fed offerings are brought to you by the host - I had the Prospect Nutty Slack. Intimate it certainly is and no doubt a conversation would soon be struck up between visitors and regulars alike.

A shorter walk now to the **1923** station bar at Irlam. I remarked on the way out on the train how smart the station was and it was more impressive close up. The bar is in many ways similar to the Steamhouse in Urmston but with a lot more to catch the interest of the visitor. There was one ale



on at the café style bar, Trooper Red 'n' Black from Robinsons. With a private function room at one end of the building, an upstairs lounge and some old style railway carriage booths it's certainly a pleasant place to spend an afternoon, never mind waiting for a train – which we did next in the large fenced off area to the front between the track and the station buildings.

Our next stop was Flixton in the Trafford & Hulme branch area, the **Church Inn** to be precise, just a short walk from the station. This has been a real ale stalwart for some time and is very popular for meals with various deals throughout the week. I partook of the bangers and mash, a good beer sponge I always find. Dining is a main feature of the Church however at one end of the building is a dedicated sports area with high tables and stools and outside is a fairly big space with benches and tables.



Back on the train now for the short hop to Urmston and the **Prairie Schooner Taphouse**. This has been open two years and was celebrating with live entertainment and a substantial buffet but Rob, the owner, had kindly reserved a table for us. The subtitle for the Schooner is taphouse and bottle house and there is indeed a display covering one wall which is full of bottled beers from all over the world. The four cask ales are invariably local and a couple of ciders in boxes are also on the bar. This is the autumn Pub of the Season for Trafford & Hulme branch (see below) and it's also recently been voted the Locale Pub of the Year. This is where our group split up with some splintering off into Manchester and the rest of us staying put. Being a local, I also stayed on and finished in the **Steamhouse** with a Marstons Old Empire as the end to a superb day.

Trafford & Hulme Pub of the Season

Trafford and Hulme's pub of the season for autumn 2016 is the **Prairie Schooner Taphouse** in Urmston. The branch presented the award on Thursday 20th October to the owner Rob MacRae and the team. A happy coincidence was the celebration of the bar's two year anniversary of their opening which included a "meet the brewer night" with Colin and Sue from the Poynton Brewery. An additional award still to be presented is the Trafford & Hulme LocAle Pub of the Year which is richly deserved, with the four handpumps frequently featuring beers from Pictish and Phoenix breweries among others from the region. CAMRA discounts are available on production of a current members card and Wetherspoons vouchers are also valid. Pictured here, Trafford & Hulme Branch Chair John O'Donnell (right) presents the award to Rob and his team.





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High Peak Pub Scene

Robin Wignall & Tom Lord with News and Views

Peak Practice

With Robin Wignall



The **Drum & Monkey** at Horwich End in Whaley Bridge held its autumn beer festival in early October. Once again there was an interesting range of beers assembled from brewers new and

not so new. Six handpumps were in use and some beers were additionally available on gravity from the cellar. There was a choice of beers from Sentinel in Sheffield, including SB, Sheffield Bitter. At 3.3% this was perhaps a replica of the small beers of history. It did have lots of flavour. Brewers new to me included Manning Brewers, whose Man Up was worth trying, Slightly Foxed Brewery, Gun, and Swan Craft Breweries. Returning regulars included Oakham, Storm, Manchester Brewing, Whaley Bridge and Abbeydale. The festival provided a busy weekend for staff, with lots of local support and a good turnover of beer. All this made for a good weekend and some really good beers for a few days to follow.

Buxworth



Another feature of early October is the Steam Party at Buxworth. Enthusiasts and others interested have the chance to see steam traction engines, steam rollers and calliopes. Buxworth was busy with visitors and locals. Most of the action was down in the canal basin and the **Navigation** was understandably busy with rapid sales of its usual good range of real ales. Up at **Buxworth War Memorial Club** a traction engine in steam was to be found. On the Saturday three beers were available, selling a good part of the weekend's beer. Only two beers were available on Sunday but Ashover

Light Rale and Dancing Duck Nice Weather were both well worth trying. The Steam Weekend is an annual event and is to be recommended for next October.

Still at Buxworth WMC a curio beer was available in mid-October, from the Green Mill Brewery at the Harewood Arms in Broadbottom. Green Mill Etherow Bitter is an interesting seasonal beer brewed using hops grown in the brewery garden. I understand that this made for a quite special brew. I also gather that Etherow Bitter may be an annual event. So there is something else to look forward to next October. Well done to Buxworth Club for accessing it this year.

Chapel & Fernilee

A recent *Buxton Advertiser* contained an article with the heading "Confusion over pub's new name". The former Fallow Deer in Chapel-en-le-Frith has undergone a good refresh and refurbishment. It will by now have re-opened as the **Fickle Mermaid**. This is apparently a reference to Mermaid's Pool which lies below the cliffs near Kinder Downfall on the edge of the Kinder Plateau. The Chairman of Chapel Parish Council wondered why there had to be a name change at all and felt the link to Mermaid's pool was rather tenuous. As the pub and the pool are five miles apart as the crow flies, the link does indeed seem very tenuous. The previous name was certainly more appropriate to a town which lies in the former royal hunting forest of the High Peak. However let's hope that Marston's makes a success of what promises to be an upgraded version of the previous food and drinks venue.



Up at the **Shady Oak** at Fernilee, on the Long Hill road between Whaley Bridge and Buxton, there are four handpumps on the bar. Two dispense the beers currently available, whilst the other two advertise the next beers on. This works and ensures a good turnover of beer and therefore, ales in good condition. As a Marston's house licensee Dan is restricted to the company beers, though this is quite a range from the

number of breweries in the Marston's empire and Dan is keen to try the less usual beers. Not too long ago Ringwood Red Boar was available. Also to be found at the Shady Oak, are the experimental brews under the Revisionist label. Some of these have been good over a period of time. Some of them seem less appealing. I declined Revisionist Salted Caramel Tawny Ale. Where do Marston's brewers get their ideas?

Just occasionally the *Pint to Pint* article in the Saturday edition of the *Daily Telegraph* features pubs in the *Opening Times* circulation area. A recent article gave an account of a visit to the **Wharf** in Macclesfield, and therefore on the fringe of the Peak District. There is much praise for the beer, the décor, the clientele etc. The author certainly leaves the reader wanting to visit. The Wharf also appears in the fairly recent Macclesfield & East Cheshire CAMRA Branch leaflet, "Macclesfield Town Centre Real Ale Trail".

High Peak Pub News With Tom Lord

It is reported that the **Victoria** in Brosscroft, Hadfield is currently closed. Also currently closed is the **Quarryman** in Dove Holes (pictured below). This pub was formerly the Wheatsheaf.

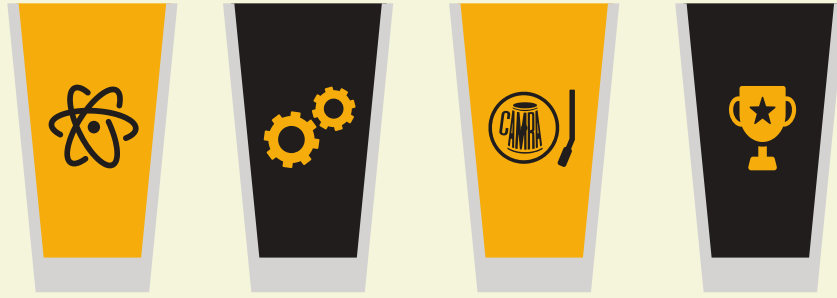


The **Fleece Inn** in top Mossley is offering two regular 'house' ales from various breweries at £1.50 per pint between midday and 6.00pm Monday to Friday.

The Number 13 bar (formerly Nat's Kitchen) in Buxton has now been renamed **South 16**.

It is also reported that the **Stalybridge Labour Club** has now reopened. More on this in the next issue.

Also in the next issue will be news about the **Beer Shed** micropub in New Mills which should be open by the time you read this. We also hear that in the New Year micropubs should be opening in both Disley and Romiley. More news on these in due course.



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Manchester Beer & Cider Festival

David Rigby with more news of next month's event



Bigger and better – that's the aim of the organisers of the Manchester Beer and Cider Festival 2017, which returns to Manchester Central in January. Now believed to be the biggest celebration of the brewer's art in the North, the festival has grown consistently since the National Winter Ales Festival moved from the city in 2014. And with 30 per cent more floorspace – and more seating – than ever before, it has become an essential entry in most beer lovers' calendars.

The festival is organised by the combined expertise of the eight Greater Manchester CAMRA branches. Planning begins almost immediately after the previous year's take down. Comments from visitors and a disciplined review of all parts of the event lead to changes each year. Good ideas from individual branch beer festivals are applied to both backroom and customer experience.

For 2017, a revised entry procedure promises reduced queuing, as glass hire is included in the single daily entry price. The dash to get in before prices went up at 5pm has been abolished! Organisers have also removed the disincentive for CAMRA members to buy advance tickets – the discount will be given in the form of beer tokens. The food offer, although still controlled by the venue, is also expected to be considerably better and more

varied. And after a successful introduction last time, tutored tastings and beer talks from recognised local and national experts are back on the menu.

Charity partner Breast Cancer Care will be in the second year of their two-year tenure and drinkers have always been very generous supporting the good causes. Shortly, organisers will be inviting expressions of interest for the charity partner in 2018 and 2019. So if you're involved in charity organisations, local or national, keep an eye out for this.

But what about the beers? Organisers are tight-lipped as ales, ciders and foreign beers are finalised, but there are some clues. The keykeg bar made its controversial debut in 2016 and is back, alongside a dozen exciting brewery bars including debutants Brass Castle and Tiny Rebel. New for 2017 is an Independent Family Brewers bar, showcasing the best of beers often overlooked by festivals. And across Greater Manchester, plans are in place for some unique collaboration brews.

Regional Director and Festival Organiser Graham Donning said: "Our first year at Manchester Central went better than anticipated with visitor numbers touching 15,000. For 2017, the reopened St Peters Square Metrolink stop will help improve access, especially for the considerable number of drinkers who travel long distances to the festival.

"Our 'bigger and better' aim for MBCF17 always depends on our great band of volunteers. If you're a CAMRA member, why not be part of the team? We're always looking for new people; there are far more jobs to do other than serving beer and cider.

"And advance tickets make great Christmas gifts for those people you've no idea what to buy!"



Manchester Beer and Cider Festival runs from Thursday 19th to Saturday 21st January 2017. A special preview evening will be held on Wednesday 18th January to which CAMRA members can gain entry. Tickets are now available from www.manchbeerfest.uk



**Manchester
Beer & Cider
Festival**

Brew Taps

Brendon Hall on a growing scene

You'll probably be reading this piece sat wrapped up cosily in a pub, cruel winter winds buffeting those poor souls braving the elements. Well... you're missing out! There's no better time to get out and explore the current trend of breweries throwing open their doors to customers wanting to drink on-site.

Spurred on by the pale imitation events being held in London and the rest of 'the South', our very own brew tap scene has exploded over recent years. Many big name brewers have taken the leap into the world of on-licenses and serve beer on the premises. This expansion dovetails nicely with consumers wanting to know more about the provenance of their beer. No one wants a stale pint, so why not skip the middleman and try something from the fermenter?



Brew taps cater to many different types of drinker. Often the brewers are on-site too, so you can gain a first-hand insight into the backbreaking toil and craftsmanship that goes into each pint. Are you the kind of person who wakes up at night thinking about alpha acids and rolling boils? You've got a great opportunity to chat to a professional who does this full time, 24/7. Want a group night out away from the usual haunts? Grab a few mates and head down to the bench seating of your local railway-arch brewery. At several venues you'll be able to grab some street-food too. Jason and Jules Bailey of Manchester based street-food company 'Grub' run weekly events in conjunction with **Alphabet Brewery** at their brewery on North Western Street near Piccadilly Station (pictured above). More details can be found at www.grubmcr.com.

Steve Dunkley opens his **Beer Nouveau** brewery on North Western Street each Friday and Saturday night. Steve, aside from being one of the cheeriest and most knowledgeable brewers in the area, serves a range of cask and keg Beer Nouveau beers alongside guest ales, real ciders and soft drinks. Near neighbours Manchester Brewing also has an occasional tap with the next one due on 3rd December.

Local newcomers making a big splash, **Cloudwater Brewery** offer brewery tours and tutored tastings each Saturday – which can be booked through their website cloudwaterbrew.co – and have recently obtained their landlord's permission to open on Fridays and Sundays too. Once every month from spring to autumn Manchester's **Blackjack Brewery** has a tap bar and there are frequent events at near neighbours **Runaway Brewery**. Further afield, **Cryptic Ales** in Stockport, **Torrside Brewing** in New Mills and **Howard Town** in Glossop (amongst others) all also open their doors – more details on each available from their respective websites.

So, if you're interested in trying your favourite beer the way it was meant to be served, get something warm on and head to your local brew tap, pronto!

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Winter Warmer Wander

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This month we are once again running the Winter Warmer Wander, our annual celebration of festive beers to bring you a little winter cheer across the Christmas and New Year season, and on into the cold nights of January. Like the Mild Challenge and the Cider Circuit, this is the chance for you to visit some new pubs and try some new beers. Further information at www.ssmcamra.co.uk/winter.htm

This year we have lots of great prizes and lots of ways to win them. What you need to do is...

- * Buy at least half a pint of cask conditioned stout, porter, old ale or barley wine (or if none available, any other premium beer 4.5% ABV or over).
- * Get the pub to put a sticker on its entry below (if they can't find a sticker, just get a signature).
- * Get 12 stickers and you will win two bottles of premium beer plus a ticket for Manchester Beer & Cider Festival.
- * 24 stickers wins you two tickets for Manchester Beer & Cider Festival, a WWW t-shirt plus entry into a prize draw for a hamper of assorted beers.
- * Visit all 40 pubs to win two bottles of beer, two tickets for Manchester Beer & Cider Festival, a WWW t-shirt plus entry into a prize draw for one of two separate prizes: a hamper (12 bottles) of assorted beers or a meal for two at a local Wetherspoons.

Winter Warmer Wander runs from **Friday 2nd December** to **Sunday 8th January**. Completed forms need to be with Dave Platt, 138 Broom Lane, Levenshulme, M19 3LJ by 13th January. Include your name, address and a contact phone number and/or email address.

Name **Address** **Contact**

RESTRICTED OPENING: Establishments whose **name is red** do not open at least 12noon to 10:00pm every day of the week. Use WhatPub.com to check.

<u>Arden Arms</u> 23 Millgate, Stockport SK1 2LX	<u>Bakers Vaults</u> Market Place, Stockport SK1 1ES	<u>Blossoms</u> 2 Buxton Road, Heaviley, Stockport SK2 6NU	<u>Brink</u> 65 Bridge Street, Manchester M3 2BQ	<u>Café Beermoth</u> 40A Spring Gardens, Manchester M2 1EN
<u>Calverts Court</u> 13 St Petersgate, Stockport SK1 1EB	<u>Castle Hotel</u> 66 Oldham Street, Manchester M4 1LE	<u>Chiverton Tap</u> 8 Mellor Road, Cheadle Hulme, Stockport SK8 5AU	<u>Cocked Hat</u> 2 Market Place, Stockport SK1 1EW	<u>Costello's Bar</u> 18 Goose Green, Altrincham WA14 1DW
<u>Crown Inn</u> 154 Heaton Lane, Stockport SK4 1AR	<u>Crown Point Tavern</u> 16 Market Street, Denton M34 2XW	<u>Fred's Ale House</u> 843 Stockport Road, Levenshulme, Manchester M19 3PW	<u>Friendship</u> 353 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 6XS	<u>Gateway</u> 882 Wilmslow Road, East Didsbury, Manchester M20 5PG
<u>Grove Ale House</u> 145 London Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport SK7 4HH	<u>Hope Inn</u> 118 Wellington Road North, Heaton Norris, Stockport SK4 2LL	<u>Magnet</u> 51 Wellington Road North, Heaton Norris, Stockport SK4 1HJ	<u>Marble Arch</u> 73 Rochdale Road, Collyhurst, Manchester M4 4HY	<u>Micro Bar</u> Unit FC16, Arndale Market, High Street, Manchester M4 3AH
<u>Mounting Stone</u> 8 Woodford Road, Bramhall, Stockport SK7 1JJ	<u>New Oxford</u> 11 Bexley Square, Salford M3 6DB	<u>Paramount</u> 33-35 Oxford Street, Manchester M1 4BH	<u>Petersgate Tap</u> 19a St Petersgate, Stockport SK1 1EB	<u>Piccadilly Tap</u> Gateway House, Piccadilly Station Approach, Manchester M1 2GH
<u>Pie and Ale</u> Units 1-2 Northern Quarter Arcade, The Hive, Lever Street, Manchester M1 1FN	<u>Prairie Schooner Taphouse</u> 33 Flixton Road, Urmston M41 5AW	<u>Railway</u> 1 Avenue Street, Portwood, Stockport SK1 2BZ	<u>Remedy Bar & Brewhouse</u> 10-11 Market Place, Stockport SK1 1EW	<u>Samuel Oldknow</u> 22 Market Street, Marple SK6 7AD
<u>Sedge Lynn</u> 21a Manchester Road, Chorlton M21 9PN	<u>Smithfield Market Tavern</u> 37 Swan Street, Manchester M4 5JZ	<u>Spring Gardens</u> 89 Compstall Road, Marple Bridge, Stockport SK6 5HE	<u>Swan With Two Necks</u> 36 Princes Street, Stockport SK1 1RY	<u>Terrace</u> 43 Thomas Street, Manchester M4 1NA
<u>Town Hall Tavern</u> 20 Tib Lane, Manchester M2 4JA	<u>Waterhouse</u> 67-71 Princess Street, Manchester M2 4EG	<u>Wilfred Wood</u> 204 London Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport SK7 4DF	<u>Wine & Wallop</u> 97 Lapwing Lane, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 6UR	<u>Ye Olde Vic</u> 1 Chatham Street, Edgeley, Stockport SK3 9ED

Christmas greetings
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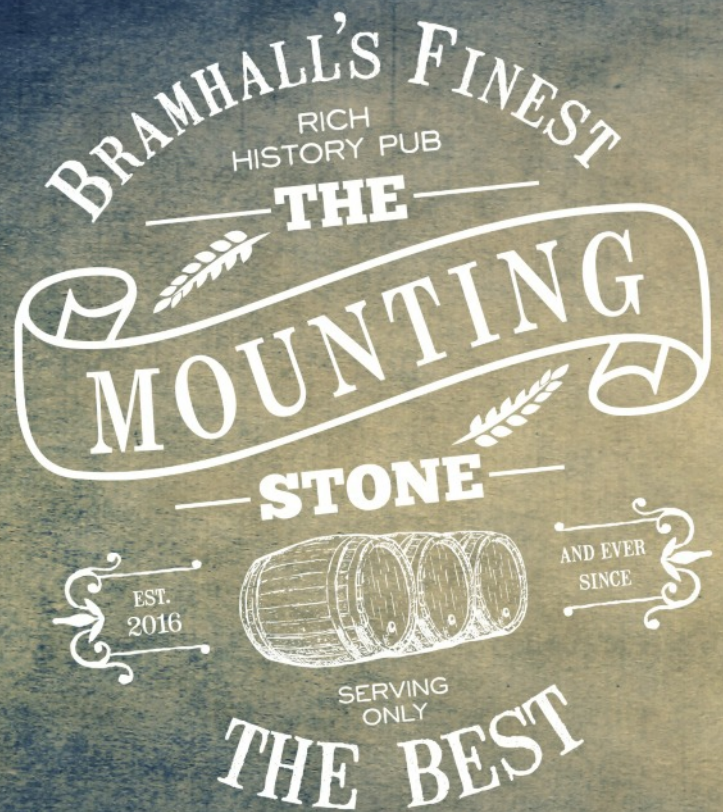


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Stagger

Ladybarn & Fallowfield with Jerry Wicken



A pleasant September evening and the very few met at the **Ladybarn Social Club**, originally a Robinsons house called the White Swan. As befits its origins one of the two ales on draught was Robinsons Unicorn which went untried. The second offering was Mordue Workie Ticket and whilst not to everybody's personal taste it was very highly regarded; in excellent condition and judged unscientifically as the best beer of the evening. The beers though are ever changing and never more than £2.65 a pint.

This club, the 2015 Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Club of the Year, is a real asset to the local community. Staffed by volunteers, it always seems to have something going on. A birthday celebration for a brave fund raiser was being well supported this evening but there are many regular events such as bingo, quizzes, darts, snooker and live acts as well as a TV room for sport. If you're local to the area £20 would buy you annual membership.



Sadly the only pub now left in Ladybarn, the **Brewers Arms**, has no cask beer so we walked into Fallowfield passing the empty **Kah Tao** (bottled beers or keg only) to the busy Wetherspoons outlet, the **Great Central**, named for the defunct Fallowfield railway station which was situated opposite the pub. The pub was full and we had to share a table in order to sit down. Offerings this night were Brightside's The Aleway, Lytham IPA, Stockport Brewery Cascade and Stock Porter from the same brewery. As always Sharp's Doom Bar and Greene King Abbot Ale were the standing

orders. The Stock Porter was good but not great, the Stockport Cascade was returned and changed without complaint by the staff. It was replaced by Lytham IPA which clocked up a similarly good score to the Porter.

If we thought this was busy, the **Friendship** on the opposite side of Wilmslow Road was heaving. With no seats and little standing room inside it was fortunate there were a few tables outside to take our drinks. With a 25% increase



to our group the five of us tried the Hydes Lowry Golden Ale, Wadworth 6X and the Beer Studio Tillicium Concerto. They all scored well above average to good. There were several other beers available but such was the queue for the bar I could only make out Beer Studio Burnt Sienna, Hydes Original, Joule's Slumbering Monk and what appeared to be Alsace Gold from Tonbridge Brewery in Kent. This may have been an illusion but what is certain is how Hydes Brewery has moved with the times. Older readers may remember the Friendship as a multi-roomed, traditional but unexciting local which (like the Fletcher Moss in Didsbury) has been transformed into a modern exciting venue attracting young and old alike.



A little further along Wilmslow Road is another Hydes bar (rather than pub) the **Beer Studio**. Reasonably busy with a friendly clientele and good recorded music it offered Hydes Old Indie and Lowry Golden Ale, Beer Studio Tillicium Concerto and Joule's Pure Blonde. The Old Indie and Pure Blonde were rather average but

the Tillicium Concerto was good and arguably a better example than that at the Friendship. There was a mix of ages, a pool table on the lower level and a small outside drinking area.

Next door is **256 Wilmslow Road** a bar/pub under the same ownership but not (at least when we were there) selling cask ales.

The last real ale stop in Fallowfield is **The Font**. It serves one changing real ale, in this instance Thornbridge Weightless, and one changing real cider, tonight from Hogans of Alcester. We all tried the Weightless which ranked from average to good. The bar, one of three so named in Manchester, is geared for students (or at least young people) but is certainly not exclusively so. Staff and customers alike were friendly plus a 25% discount is offered to card carrying CAMRA members: this extends to those drinking half pints which I reckon is generous.



We hopped on the bus for our next destination, Rusholme. Once upon a time there were a few decent pubs in the area but so many have closed even the seemingly popular **Hardy's Well**. Run by volunteers for some years it is now boarded up and unlikely to reopen. Progressing along the so-called 'Curry Mile' (it really should be renamed the 'Middle Eastern Mile' as so many curry houses have been replaced) we turned off for our final destination, the **Albert** on Walmer Street. This long established friendly 'Irish' local was at least still standing. The good news ends there. It had but a handful of customers and no longer serves real ale due to lack of demand. One doubts whether Hydes will give it the 'Friendship' treatment. Simply it is now a relic of the past; demand in the area is not there. There are no longer any real ale outlets in Rusholme.

So a rather damp squib end to our Stagger but it is encouraging to report that all the real ale venues we visited were flourishing, in many cases full to bursting and all serving beer of a decent quality. Please give them a try and keep them open.



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Calling Home Brewers

New Competition Launched

Stockport & South Manchester Branch is again launching a competition among local home brewers to find up to five beers for Bar Nouveau at next year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival.



Bar Nouveau was introduced for the 2015 festival and features brand new beers launched at the festival. It's proved to be a very successful feature and we will be running it again next year (the festival dates are 1st – 3rd June). There will be 10 beers, all served on a separate bar and stored in a temperature-controlled cellar to ensure optimum condition.

This year we involved local home brewers and were delighted by the response with 37 individuals or groups entering almost 100 beers. The winners were excellent with one, Ross McFadyen's Pekoe Blue Lady IPA, winning silver in the Beer of the Festival competition. As before the festival will purchase three firkins of each winning beer and the rest will be sold on to the market by the brewers concerned. If you are a home brewer this is a great chance to join in a brew day at a local brewery and also see one of your beers out there on sale to the public.

The brewers who have kindly agreed to host the winners are:

- * Torrside Brewing, New Mills
- * Howard Town Brewery, Glossop
- * Squawk Brewing, Ardwick, Manchester
- * Manchester Brewing Co, Ardwick, Manchester
- * RedWillow Brewery, Macclesfield

Many thanks to these brewers for supporting the competition.

Now – the beers. The five categories are quite broadly drawn so that people can use their imagination. Here's what we are looking for:

Mild – this can be dark or light, strong or weak. This is a chance to take an old beer style and run with it. Maximum ABV 5%

Bitter – session ales, ESBs, pale ales, brown, amber or blonde – the choice is yours. Maximum ABV 5.5%

IPA – while we're not style fanatics you should aim for a minimum ABV of 5%. Apart from that it's up to you – brown, red, black or white IPAs are all welcome. Maximum ABV 6.5%

Stout/Porter – again this is broadly drawn – added flavours and ingredients optional. Maximum ABV 6%

Speciality – this is where you can really go to town. Saisons, bocks, Rauchbiers – all are welcome. Maximum ABV 7.5%.

A few things to bear in mind. Firstly, although the beers will be judged from bottle they will have to work as cask beers. Also – think about the hops. Some go-to hops (Mosaic, Simcoe, Nelson Sauvin and the like) are getting difficult to obtain. While you might be able to get 150gms for a home brew it may well be a different matter when you come to scale up to a commercial length.



How to enter – just email your name, contact details and which categories you want to enter to: beercomp@ssmcamra.co.uk. **The cut-off date for entering is 31st December.** Judging will take place at the Hope Inn, Wellington Road North, Stockport in mid-March next year.



Curmudgeon

A Place Where No-One Knows Your Name

Pubs are typically viewed as places of raucous ribaldry, or at least of cheerful conviviality. However, there is another side to them, as wooden wombs, a third space where people – couples and groups as well as individuals – can seek temporary refuge from the stresses of home, work or just life in general.

A pub is, of course, a “public house”, a hybrid of the two where anyone can walk in off the street and spend some time there provided they put a bit of money across the bar. If you behave yourself, nobody will question your purpose or your right to be there. It's generally accepted that it's up to you whether you engage with other customers or not, and the only people who break that principle are those like Archie the pub bore from “The Fast Show” with his catchphrase “Hardest game in the world”. This applies even in pretty small and cosy pubs.

However, that kind of privacy is difficult to achieve in the new generation of micropubs, where everyone is put together into a small common space and intimacy is inescapable. Many customers will welcome that atmosphere of companionship, but others may feel it's something they prefer to avoid. And there's sometimes the feeling of intruding into a private clique.

Obviously strangers do talk to each other in pubs, and often it's something you welcome. But, if customers don't want to get involved, you leave them alone. There's also an art to making conversation without appearing unduly inquisitive or prying. “What are you doing here today?” or “Where have you come from?” are questions that I see as my own business unless I choose to open up about them. And, of course, Wetherspoons, although often criticised for being impersonal, are amongst the best places for maintaining anonymity.

Closed for You

Over the past year, I've greatly enjoyed reading the adventures of bloggers Martin Taylor and Simon Everitt, who are both, in their different ways, aiming to visit every pub in the Good Beer Guide. One of the problems they frequently encounter is pubs opening very limited and strange hours, which can make it difficult to plan a visit.

It's common now to find pubs that don't open at lunchtime from Monday to Friday, although a fair number do open at 3 or 4 pm, when in the past pubs would have been shutting. But many go further than this, with plenty no longer bothering to open at lunchtimes at all, even at weekends. It's very common in rural areas to find pretty much all the pubs outside town centres closed on Mondays. One well-known Cheshire dining pub is closed on both Mondays and Tuesdays, and doesn't open until 5 pm on any other day. And it gets even weirder, with one Hertfordshire pub only open on Mondays between 3 and 6 in the afternoon, the traditional period of closure.

If you are going to open odd or restricted hours, surely it makes sense to tell potential customers exactly when those hours are, both outside the door and on your own website if you have one. You should also try to make sure that the correct hours are displayed on third-party sites such as CAMRA's WhatPub.com. Even one case of someone turning up when they thought you were open, only to find the door firmly shut, can generate a lot of negative word-of-mouth. And, if you do open strange hours, it rather suggests you're not very interested in attracting casual customers in the first place.

Curmudgeon Online: curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com
(comments on these articles can be left on the website)

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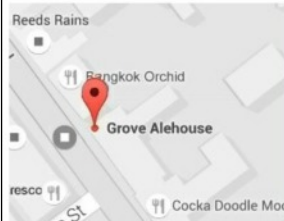
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Heard at the Bar

Pub News covering Stockport, Manchester and beyond

Stretford update

Trafford & Hulme branch members recently took a tour of the pubs and clubs of Stretford and were pleased to see that the local drinking scene is vibrant.



Joseph Holt's **Melville** on Melville Road was given a tasteful makeover last year and it seems to have been a success with the locals. At 8pm on a Friday night, the pub was buzzing with almost every table taken as a disco and karaoke set up for later in the evening. Holt's Bitter and Two Hoots were on the bar.

Although it is normally only open to members and guests, the group was welcomed into **Metros Sports and Social Club** on Moss Road. Housed in an impressive building which only dates from 2008, the club has two bars, a concert room and a large function room which is available for hire. With England playing Scotland in a World Cup Qualifier, the Sports Bar was full while the Members' Bar was much more sedate. Tetley's Gold is the house beer here supplemented by a guest beer which changes monthly – on this occasion it was Otter Amber priced at just £2.42. We were met by the club's President who told us how the club's sporting clubs were going strong with the club offering bowling, pool, snooker and darts teams.

Just down Moss Road on the corner with Derbyshire Lane is **Trafford Social Club** – formerly the British Legion Club. The one beer here was Brains The Rev. James which was at a good temperature and in decent if not spectacular condition. The club also offers darts and snooker in its large main room, while the front bar facing Moss Road is a quieter place where members can meet, play card games and chat. Membership here is just £10 a year.

Stretford Sip Club has completed the rework of its bar area which is now L-shaped and filling much of the back room. The main serving area faces forward, while the handpumps have relocated to a new section down the side where bar stools have been installed so visitors can sit and chat to the ever talkative Krista and owner

Heather. The Sip Club's lack of a cellar has meant that maintaining beer quality has been a struggle but Heather has recently invested in new cooling equipment which means that beer quality is much more stable. When we called late on Friday evening, a TicketyBrew beer had just run out so the only cask ale was Blackedge Blonde which was good. The Sip Club continues to rotate its bottled ale range regularly. While we were there, we also learnt exciting news about developments in Stretford but were sworn to secrecy for now – keep an eye on *Opening Times* in the New Year for news.

Chorlton



It's all change at one of Chorlton's original beer bars – **The Bar** on Wilbraham Road has ripped out its bar to create a new seating area at the front of the pub. The bar has been pushed back in the room with the eight handpumps relocated along with 12 fonts which will see an increased range of beers from small breweries replacing Carlsberg and Guinness (amongst others). The bar has been extended back into the little used space near the beer garden entrance where the coffee machine, bar snacks etc will be located. When *Opening Times* called the work was still in progress but it is due to be completed by the time you read this.

Flixton and Urmston



Flixton's **Bird I'th Hand** has reopened after a major refurbishment. The main change from the former layout is that the kitchen has moved

from the back of the pub to the side of the bar, so that it's open to view.

There's been some reduction of internal walls so that it's all one room, but as it wraps round the bar and kitchen it doesn't feel like a big barn. The old kitchen space is now an extension of the old vault. There's a new outdoor drinking area taking up a small part of the car park.

There are two cask ales for now, Deuchars IPA and "Bird I'th Hand Ale" both from the Heineken-owned Caledonian Brewery. We found the latter to be a rather nice amber beer with interesting hop character and a fair bit of aftertaste. Bottled beers include Caledonian Coast to Coast and Three Hop, and Monteith's IPA. The new licensees are Dawn and Mark Embury who are new to the trade.

Work is now underway to convert Urmston's old post office into a restaurant and bar but *Opening Times* understands that the venue is now unlikely to open until the spring. Of course we will report on the opening as soon as it happens.


Castlefield Estates, the group behind Dukes 92 and the Albert's brands have applied for planning permission to demolish the former **Cheshire Lounge** on the A556 in Millington and build a new Albert's pub and restaurant on the site. A two storey building is planned with a bar restaurant on the ground floor and a function room above. The same group is also behind plans to convert Didsbury's former police station into a similar operation although we understand there are still one or two planning difficulties to overcome here.

Altrincham

In Altrincham, planning permission was granted in October for a bar restaurant and microbrewery on the site of the former Altrincham Working Men's Conservative Club on Greenwood Street. To be known as **Con Club Altrincham**, the venture comes from David Vanderhook, who already owns the George Charles pub in Didsbury and Lime bar at Salford Quays. Work got underway as soon as permission was given and the restaurant is expected to be open by the time you read this.

While the area around Altrincham Market is booming, elsewhere in the town *Opening Times* understands **Embrace** on Stamford New Road has closed while **Barringtons** (aka The Old Mill) has a Fleurets' "For Sale" sign outside. The **Stamford Arms** in nearby Bowden also remains closed with structural issues delaying planned refurbishment work.

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Brewery & Pub News Extra

More news from around the region

Piccadilly Mile Latest

Last month saw an event at **Beer Nouveau** on North Western Street where draught beers were £2 a pint and bottles £1 each with all money raised being donated to cancer charities. Amongst the beers on offer was Vinyl Valley Prologue 5.6% (keg, sour). **Vinyl Valley** is the latest brewery in the railway arches between Manchester Piccadilly station and Ardwick (it's actually on Temperance Street) and the brewer is Alex Parkinson previously at the now-defunct Drink Up Brewing. This was a test brew but not produced on the actual Vinyl Valley kit as this has yet to be installed.



Whilst at Beer Nouveau OT clarified one point about **Origami Brewing**. In last month's issue we said that all the beers were brewed on the Beer Nouveau kit but this is not so. Brewer Erin Guy brews the Origami beers on her own small kit on the premises with the exception of 1000 Cranes which is 'cuckoo brewed' on the Beer Nouveau plant as it is produced in larger quantities. Apologies for the confusion.

Finally – we can now expect to see the **Carbon Smith** beers appearing locally. Ollie Smith now has an investor on board and when OT called he was starting to get to grips with his shiny new 10-barrel kit. Our experience of Carbon Smith beers thus far has been very good so do look out for them in key-keg, bottle and can.

Stage & Radio



Occupying the former Cuba Cafe building next door to the Port Street Beer House, **Stage & Radio** opened in late October. There was no cask ale when we called (but not to worry as our Alphabet Flat White at 7.4% was superb). We chatted to a guy at the bar who turned out to be the owner who gave us something of a tour. Downstairs is a function room while upstairs was an as yet unfinished room where a pizza oven was being built. And this should be in operation by the time you read this. Now the interesting bit; when the pizza oven is ready they will introduce cask ales. In fact eight will be available and there will be a deal where if you buy five pints of cask ale you'll get a free pizza.

And there's more; the owner also owns the Goose Fat & Wild Garlic Restaurant which is due to open in March on Blossom Street in Ancoats, close to the soon-to-open **Seven Bro7hers** bar. The Goose Fat will feature an on-site microbrewery (which previous reports have suggested is to be called Fundamentum Brewery).

And speaking of the new Seven Bro7hers bar, we are informed that the aim is to have a "soft opening" by mid-December.

Brewery Shorts

In Denton, the **Hornbeam Brewery** has changed hands and is now badged as the **Epicurus Craft Beer Brewery**. The first Epicurus beer (according to their Twitter feed) was a 4.9% stout called Hades. Another Epicurus beer, IPA "Light Indian Pale Ale" at 4.3% appeared at the recent Didsbury Beer Festival. We understand that some of the old Hornbeam beers will also continue. With luck we will have caught up with the new owner in time for next month's OT.

Staying in Tameside the **Four Kings Brewery** in Newton was due to have brewed for the first time in late November. Following that there is to be a formal brewery launch (OT hopes to be there) along with the launch of their website.

In Chapel-en-le-Frith the **High Peak Brew Co** closed at the end of August, as the owner Ben Millner has taken over the running of **Intrepid Brewing Company** based in the Hope Valley. He intends to continue his range of unfiltered beers alongside the Intrepid range.

Outside the *Opening Times* area we are sorry to report that the **Wilson Potter Brewery** in Middleton closed last month. We believe this was down to personal differences between the partners. This is a shame as their beers were sound and well-made. Indeed one won Beer of the Festival at Stockport Beer & Cider Festival a couple of years ago. However as one door closes another opens. This month should see the launch of the **Mighty Medicine Brewing Co** in Whitworth, near Rochdale. The entertaining website is at www.mightymedicine.com.



Finally, **Moorhouse's** is promising a spell of seasonal cheer with the Ice Witch (4.3%abv) brew joining the 'Pendle Witches' stable. The seasonal release offers a "lighter golden tippie with easy drinking bitterness to refresh those yuletide taste buds". Brewed with Maris Otter malt and American Citra hops it "displays characteristics of tropical fruits: mango, passion fruit and pineapple". A striking witch themed

seasonal pump clip gives the beer a strong bar presence.

Cider Awards

There was a trip to the West Country last month when the Cider and Perry of the Festival awards from this year's Stockport Beer and Cider Festival were presented.

Gregg's Pit at Much Marcle in Herefordshire was presented with two awards for the same product. The Thorn 2014 Vintage perry won Perry of the Festival at Stockport and also the Manchester Beer & Cider Festival in January. Pictured here is CAMRA's Charlotte Bulmer (centre) presenting the certificates to James Marsden and Helen Woodman of Gregg's Pit.



Cider of the Festival was won by relative newcomers **Williams and Hughes** based at Cradley in Herefordshire for their single varietal Dabinett aged in a Jura cask. This is only their third year of pressing fruit and already they are picking up awards. Steve Williams and Seb Hughes are seen here with their certificate.



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Opening Times

Letters to the Editor

Time to air your views

From Chris Walkden, Stockport Beer Week Co-ordinator:

On behalf of the organising team, I should like to thank everyone involved in Stockport Beer Week 2016 for making it a success.

Most importantly, I would like to thank our sponsors Robinsons Brewery and Metro Taxis, along with Stockport Council. Without them, the Beer Week would never have happened.

Thank you also to the pubs, breweries and other organisations who displayed posters, put on various events, or participated in the Ale Trail, all of which kept us busy during the week. And finally, thank you to all who attended any of the events and who drank some excellent beers in Stockport's pubs and breweries; I hope you all enjoyed yourselves.

We have decided to hold another Stockport Beer Week in late September 2017; watch out for further details in *Opening Times*.

Thanks once again for your support.

(I would like to echo Chris's thanks to everyone who supported Stockport Beer Week which was another success. Well done to Chris and his team for all their work. Ed.)

From Paul Thompson, Didsbury:

I see the last two sentences in the October OT's Stagger were the usual ones. However the answer to the question "Why don't you plan your own visit?" must surely be "Because I don't want to drink below average beer in most of the pubs on this stagger".

CAMRA prides itself on being a consumer organisation similar to *Which*. If *Which* said "We have tried nine fridges and six are below standard, why don't you try them?" it would not have the reputation that it currently does.

I think a different summing up to a stagger such as this is called for.

Another thing that annoyed me in the Stagger write up is the comment about possibly expecting too much from a beer because it was a warm and humid evening. Yes, it is harder to look after cask beer in these conditions. However consider

1) Because of global warming such conditions are likely to become more frequent.

2) In such conditions there is likely to be a greater demand for cool, refreshing, tasty drinks. If real ale cannot meet this demand other drinks will.

I believe that cellarmanship will become more important in the summers to come. Warm humid weather should not be an excuse for poor beer.

(The closing words of the Stagger articles are usually the author's own and usually reflect the fact that the write-ups are really a one night snapshot of the pubs in question so the beer may be different on other occasions. Cellar coolers ought to guarantee beer temperature. Ed.)

From Gavin Poulton:

I visited Heaton Sports Club the other day for its carvery and they were offering Chorlton Pale Ale, Wainwright and Copper Dragon Best. It's not on WhatPub but should it be? I don't know whether there's general access to these beers when they're not doing their Friday and Sunday carvery open to non-members. Have you been?

(Stockport & South Manchester branch is currently waiting for details of 94 local clubs, including this one, to be uploaded to WhatPub. Once in place some surveying may be needed. Ed.)

The AB2C Crawl

A short tour of Manchester

A small group of people from various CAMRA branches joined Central Manchester CAMRA for a recent Monday night crawl, *writes Margaret Corlett*.

We were also joined by Rebecca from Manchester University who, together with a group of three other architecture students in the fifth year of their studies, is hoping to run an event just before Easter with first and second year students. This will investigate the state of Manchester's pubs and their historic importance to the city and also seek to find out how people are and should be interacting with them today. Hopefully this will be the first of many such outings as their project continues.



Starting at the **Allotment** on Dale Street we had a choice of Wychwood Hobgoblin, Potbelly Hop Trotter, Weetwood Cheshire Cat and Prospect Cascade Blonde. Moving on, the **B Lounge** on Piccadilly had just two ales, Hobgoblin again and Marston's Pedigree. Straight across from there the newly reopened **Waldorf** on Gore Street was our next call. This was disappointing as only Taylor's Landlord was on handpump so half the group defected to craft keg Longhorn IPA.

Moving on to Portland Street, the **Grey Horse** (pictured above) was next. On Monday nights there is 50p off pints of cask ale here and we had five from Hydes to choose from: Original, Old Indie, Bovec, Red Lion and Ginger Poperinge. A warm welcome greeted us at the **Circus** where a roaring fire added to the atmosphere. Tetley Bitter and Robinsons Dizzy Blonde were the cask beers on offer. Officially this was the end of the crawl but the range next door in the Grey Horse was considered worth another visit to end the night. For a Monday night on the whole the selection of beers was fine and all were of good quality.

Pub News in brief



The **Grove Alehouse** on London Road in Hazel Grove celebrates its first birthday on December 10th. Amongst the special offers beer and cider will be just £2 a pint all day. There is also free food all day plus a prize draw. The micropub is also supporting Hazel Grove Together's "Winter Wonderland Weekender 2016" with all money from the draw and donations towards the food going to local charities.

In Didsbury we have a cask ale gain with **Saints & Scholars** on Wilmslow Road having Chorlton Pale Ale from Bootleg Brewery on handpump when OT called recently. Our reporter also tells us that there has been some opening out of the interior and some of the "rather appealing clutter" is no longer evident.

In Stockport the **Old Rectory** just off the Market Place is now branded as a Greene King Hungry Horse outlet. Abbot Ale and IPA were on handpump when OT called. Not too far away we hear that there is a planning application to convert the building that formerly housed **Stockport Live** into nine apartments.



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