

OPENING TIMES

JANUARY 2017 / FREE



**INSIDE: MANCHESTER BEER & CIDER
FESTIVAL RETURNS TO MANCHESTER
CENTRAL FROM 19th TO 21st JANUARY /
PUB AND BREWERY NEWS**



Tracy Mullen, loved and greatly missed
Will never be forgotten



The Crown Inn, Heaton Lane

16 Handpumps

Real Cider Guest Lagers Foreign Beers
Lunches Served

12 - 3pm Monday - Friday
Special Occasions Catered For

Folk & Accoustic night

Every Tuesday from 8.30 pm

Come along and have a sing or strum

Open every day from Noon

<http://thecrowninn.uk.com>



The Railway

Avenue Street, Portwood, Stockport



15 handpumps serving beers from
Pennine, Outstanding and
Moorhouses plus Pictish Brewer's
Gold at all times

Changing guest mild and three
additional guest beers at weekend

Changing guest cider

Large range of foreign bottled beers

Open 12-11 Monday to Saturday;
12-10.30 Sundays

QUALITY ALES AT WETHERSPOON

Featuring great ales such as



THE BISHOP BLAIZE

708 Chester Road
Stretford
Tel: 0161 873 8845

THE TIM BOBBIN

41 Flixton Road
Urmston
Tel: 0161 749 8239

THE SEDGE LYNN

21a Manchester Road
Chorlton-cum-Hardy
Tel: 0161 860 0141

THE GREAT CENTRAL

Wilmslow Road
Fallowfield
Tel: 0161 248 1740

THE FORD MADOX BROWN

Wilmslow Park, Oxford Road
Tel: 0161 256 6660

THE J. P. JOULE

2a Northenden Road
Sale
Tel: 0161 962 9889

THE MILSON RHODES

Unit 1D, School Lane
Didsbury
Tel: 0161 446 4100

THE GATEWAY

882 Wilmslow Road
East Didsbury
Tel: 0161 438 1700

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>

Trading Standards

For complaints about short measure pints etc contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Service. This works with all the Trading Standards services in the North West and is supported by the Office of Fair Trading. You can email the Consumer Service at the following address:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/getadvice/consumer_service.htm
Their telephone no. is 03454 04 05 06.

To report a matter to Trading Standards go to:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/report-to-trading-standards/

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

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

Copyright

Unless otherwise stated all material in *Opening Times* is the copyright of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Please contact the editorial address if you wish to reproduce anything in *Opening Times*.

Public Transport

Opening Times does not recommend you drink and drive. Local public transport information can be obtained online as follows:

- * 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

Disclaimer

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 February issue is Saturday 7th January.

Contributors to this issue: John Clarke, Alan Gent, Dave Hanson, Peter Butler, Pete Farrand, Neil Worthington, Paul Felton, Dave Burston, Robin Wignall, Peter Edwardson, Tom Lord, Jon Gobbett, John O'Donnell, Phil Booton, Margaret O'Brien, Brendon Hall, Sue Richardson, Stewart Revell, Jim Flynn, George Elmslie, Lawrence Bamber, Graham Privett, Stuart Ball.

Distribution Manager – Janet Flynn

Front cover – Manchester Central (copyright division design / 123Rf Stock Photo – http://www.123rf.com/profile_division_design)

CLICK & COLLECT

YOU CAN NOW BUY BOXES OF OUR
LOCALLY-BREWED
BEERS ONLINE
AND PICK THEM UP
AT A TIME
THAT SUITS YOU.



BOLLINGTONBREWING.CO.UK

OR ENJOY OUR BEERS IN OUR
THREE CHESHIRE PUBS

THE **PARK
TAVERN**
MACCLESFIELD



THE **VALE
INN**
BOLLINGTON



THE **CASK
TAVERN**
POYNTON



THE **BOLLINGTON
BREWING CO.**

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

Contact: Stewart Taylor 07907 714826; taylorshouse@supanet.com

Macclesfield & East Cheshire (MEC)

www.eastcheshirecamra.org.uk

Contact: Rob Nicholson 07983 524102;

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

Monday 9th – Branch meeting: Harewood Arms, Market Street, Broadbottom, SK14 6AX. To include 2018 Good Beer Guide nominations for the Greater Manchester part of the Branch. Starts 8.00pm. (HPNC)

Wednesday 11th – Branch Meeting: Kings Arms, 11 Bloom Street, Salford, M3 6AN. Starts 7.30pm. (SAL)

Thursday 12th – Branch Meeting: Blossoms, 2 Buxton Road, Heaviley, Stockport, SK2 6NU. Will include voting for branch Pub of the Year, Club of the Year and Cider Pub of the Year. Starts 8.15pm. (SSM)

Friday 13th – Ladies' Day Out to Southport. (CMCR)

Saturday 14th – Regional Meeting: Wharf Tavern, Caroline Street, Stalybridge, SK15 1PD. Starts 1.00pm. (All branches)

Saturday 14th – Stalybridge Social: a visit to various local pubs after the Regional Meeting. (HPNC)

Saturday 14th – Branch Anniversary Celebration: Robinsons Brewery Visitor Centre, Apsley Street, Stockport, SK1 1JJ. Will include buffet meal, quiz and raffle. Guest speaker is Tim Page, CAMRA's Chief Executive. Arrive from 7.00pm for 7.30 start. £11.50 per head (including free pint). Book with John Clarke at stocam@btinternet.com. (SSM)

Saturday 14th – Winter Pub of the Season presentation: Cotton Tree, 3-5 Ingersley Road, Bollington, SK10 5RE. From 4.00pm. (MEC)

Wednesday 18th – Branch Meeting: Whipping Stocks, Stocks Lane, Over Peover, WA16 9EX. Starts 8.00pm. (MEC)

Thursday 19th to Saturday 21st – Manchester Beer & Cider Festival: Manchester Central (GMEX), Windmill Street, Manchester, M2 3GX. Open 12 noon to 10.30pm (7pm Saturday). Further details – see page 7 or <http://mancheerfest.uk/>

Wednesday 25th – Monton Crawl: 7.30pm Malt Dog, 169 Monton Road, Salford, M30 9GS; 9.00pm Park Hotel, 142 Monton Road, Salford, M30 9QD. (SAL)

Thursday 26th – Pub of the Season presentation: Old Packet House, 1 Navigation Rd, Altrincham, WA14 1LW. Starts 8.00pm. (T&H)

Friday 27th – Chorlton-on-Medlock and University Stagger: 7.30pm Ford Madox Brown, Unit 1, Wilmslow Park, Wilmslow Road, Rusholme, Manchester, M14 5FT; 8.30pm Grafton Arms, 27 Grafton Street, Manchester, M13 9WU. (SSM)

Saturday 28th – Brewery Trip – details to be confirmed. (T&H)

Tuesday 31st – Pub of the Month presentation: Remedy Bar and Brewhouse, 10-11 Market Place, Stockport, SK1 1EW. From 8.00pm. (SSM)

Wednesday 1st February – 2018 Good Beer Guide shortlisting: Salford Arms, 146 Chapel Street, Salford, M3 6AF. Starts 7.30pm. (SAL)

Tuesday 7th February – Branch Meeting: Flixton Conservative Club, 193 Flixton Rd, Urmston, Manchester, M41 5DF. Starts 8.00pm. (T&H)

Tuesday 7th February – Branch meeting and AGM: Terrace, 43 Thomas Street, Manchester, M4 1NA. Starts 6.00pm. (CMCR)

Wednesday 8th February – Boothstown Crawl: 7.30pm Greyhound, 44 Leigh Road, M28 1LR; 8.15pm Royal British Legion, Victoria Street, M28 1HQ; 9.00pm Royal Oak, 20 Leigh Road, M28 1LZ. (SAL)

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

Macclesfield & East Cheshire: @MECCAMRA

Central Manchester: @MCRCentralCamra

One for the ladies

Ladies, are you interested in monthly weekday socials? They feature real ale, good pubs, charity shops (optional) and flexible timings. All travel is by public transport. Contact Ann and Margaret at mrcamrasocials@hotmail.com

Possibilities include Macclesfield, Glossop, Bolton and Warrington. The world is our oyster.

Pub of the Month

Remedy Bar & Brewhouse



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for January 2017 is the Remedy Bar and Brewhouse on Stockport's Market Place.

Owned by Simon Wells and managed by Neil Butes, Remedy Bar and Brewhouse is a welcome addition to Stockport's reviving Old Town area. It's a stylish conversion of two modern shop units in the historic Market Place which has bedded in well since it opened almost a year ago.

The bar is at the rear but part of the former dividing wall between the units remains in situ to break up the quite large interior and so prevent everything being that bit too open-plan. The decor is loosely steampunk-inspired with exposed pipes and ducts, mix-and-match furniture, and bare light bulbs. The floor around the bar is an eye-catching mosaic made of one penny coins.

Simon is also co-owner of a brewery installation business so Remedy also acts as a showcase for the smaller pub breweries that his firm will install. The small 200-litre kit can be seen behind a glass wall and while brewing has so far been irregular this is expected to step up with the arrival of a permanent brewer in the near future. At the moment there is a changing range of half a dozen cask beers supplemented by some interesting kegs and bottles. As you might expect there is also an impressive food offer to soak up all that beer.



Join us on **Tuesday** 31st from 8pm onwards when we present this well-deserved award. Please note the change from the usual Thursday as this month the presentation has been moved to avoid clashing with the Manchester Beer & Cider Festival.

A FAMILY BUSINESS
STEPHENSONS
 Supporting The Catering Trade Since 1868

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

A FAMILY BUSINESS
STEPHENSONS

Supporting The Catering Trade Since 1868

Proud Sponsors Of
PUB
 OF THE MONTH!

Visit The Largest Catering
CASH & CARRY

In the North!
 Next to the Alma Lodge
 on the A6, Stockport



Buy Online:
stephensons.com

disposables | cleaning | crockery | glassware | bar & kitchen equipment | cutlery

FAMILY RUN,
 MULTI AWARD WINNING
FREE HOUSE

14 hand pumps and an extensive range of bottled beers and cider.



We now have
 6 Craft Kegs

THE MAGNET

51 Wellington Road North, Stockport, SK4 1HJ
www.themagnetfreehouse.co.uk
 Open: Mon-Thur 4-11pm, Fri-Sun 12-11pm



The Campaign For Real Ale presents



Manchester Beer & Cider Festival

19th - 21st January 2017

Manchester Central

The North's premier beer celebration

700 beers, ciders and perries
from the UK and around the world

TICKETS
ON
SALE
NOW

MANCBEERFEST.UK

 ManchesterBeerFestival  @MancBeerFest

BEER
TASTINGS
& SPECIAL
EVENTS



Organised by
CAMRA
Greater Manchester
Branches



Metrolink

£1 off entry with valid Metrolink Ticket



**STUBBORN
MULE
BREWERY**

Proud to support
**breast
cancer
care**
the breast cancer
support charity

Manchester Beer & Cider Festival

John O'Donnell with news of the brews at this month's event

Living on an Island

One of the most popular features of Manchester Beer & Cider Festival is the breweries who are invited to bring their own bars to the festival. The 2017 festival sees the best line up yet with five top class additions joining established favourites in the middle of the Central Hall.



Leading the way is a brewery that to call it award winning would be a major understatement.

Although only four years old, Newport's **Tiny Rebel** has made award winning a way of life including sealing Gold, Silver and Bronze in the 2014 Champion Beer Of Wales en route to taking the big one — Champion Beer Of Britain in 2015. Cwtch, the winning beer, will be on their bar along with five others including Stay Puft marshmallow porter and a rare cask of Cherry Bomb cherry sour.

Joining Tiny Rebel is a local brewery that many commentators are tipping to be en route to similar success. Sam Dyson's **Track Brewing Co** celebrated its second birthday in December and in that short time has built a portfolio of top quality beers. Pale ale Sonoma has been top of many local drinkers' favourite beers list for the last couple of years and Sam literally hasn't been able to brew enough of it, already prompting two expansions of capacity at the city centre brewery. Sonoma will of course be on the bar along with a yet to be confirmed range of other beers.

Hauling their bar over the Pennines will be Malton's **Brass Castle**, a brewery whose adventurous attitude to brewing has made a big impact across Yorkshire and beyond. As well as brewing a range of cask ales ranging from 3.8% pale ale Cliffhanger to the multiple award winning Bad Kitty Vanilla Porter, the brewery has been vocal promoters of real ale in key-kegs allowing them to produce a range of keg-conditioned beers alongside their cask ales. Their bar at #MBCF17 will feature both cask and key-keg conditioned beers. All Brass Castle beers are vegan and vegetarian friendly.



The festival's "wild card" bar invite has been accepted by Kent's **Pig & Porter** which will be bringing its range of beers all the way from Royal Tunbridge Wells. Robin Wright and Shaun Ayling first visited Manchester two years ago when their brewery was just a sideline to the mobile hog-roast business which gave the company its name. They fell in love with the city's beer scene and have returned several times to brew with local

brewers including Blackjack and Runaway. The quality of their beers has seen both give up their former jobs to become full time brewers and the beers have become staples on some of the leading craft beer bars in the country.

The final new arrival is another local brewery which has made a big impact in a short time. Ramsbottom's **Brewsmith** is a family affair being run since 2014 by couple James and Jennifer Smith and James's father Ted. After less than one year in operation, their Bitter won Overall Silver in the 2015 SIBA North West awards and in 2016 they repeated the feat with Oatmeal Stout taking the same award. Their bar will feature both these beers along with four others, including a brand new beer to be launched at the festival.

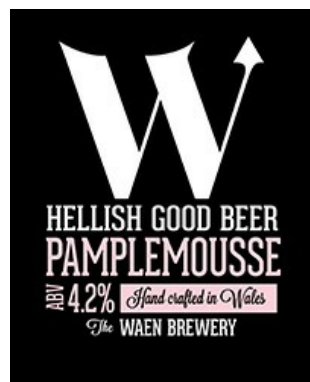
In total twelve breweries will have bars on the festival's central island. **Hawkshead Brewery** will return with its largest ever bar at the event and of course it wouldn't be Manchester festival without our own Marble Beers. To use a cheesy pun, one brewery's debut at #MBCF16 was such a **Runaway** success that they will be back for 2017 with an expanded range of key-keg conditioned beers. **Outstanding Beers** will be presenting the first brews originating from their new home in Salford which finally commenced brewing in December.

The **Blackjack Beers** Brew Tap will again be moving into Manchester Central for one week only, with an ever changing range of Blackjack brews appearing over the festival - including their special festival collaboration with **Cwrw Iâl** brewery and a sampling of special casks from the brewery's barrel ageing programme. Also back for a fourth year will be two of your favourites - Cheshire's **Bollington Brewery** and Bury's **Brightside Brewing**.

The final bar on the island is something very special. Before the festival, the only people who will have tasted **Wildside Beers** will be the brewers themselves - the brand will be launching their full range at the festival so you can be among the very first to try them.

Festival Highlights

With the festival expecting to offer as many as 700 beers, ciders and perries there will be something for everyone and everyone's highlight will be different. However, as ever the festival will offer a few specials which you may wish to seek out.



Brewery tour with a difference:

When breweries are taken over and closed, there is often much discussion about whether the beers can ever be the same at their new home. For #MBCF17 you will be able to take part in a unique experiment to see if you can tell the difference. The festival has arranged for Sue Hayward, head brewer of South Wales' **Waen Brewery** to take her award winning Pamplemousse golden ale on tour, brewing the beer at four different breweries in three different countries. Described as citrusy grapefruit loveliness the beer was the brewery's top seller and sold out quickly at #MBCF16 but is it as good when brewed elsewhere?

Sue started her tour just up the road from home at **Hopcraft** in the Rhondda valley before heading to England to recreate the beer in organic form at **Stroud Brewery**. She then headed to Scotland for a brew at Fiona MacEachern's **Loch Lomond** brewery with the final brew taking place right here in Manchester at **Blackjack Beers**. Casks of all four versions will be available simultaneously on Bar 3 at the festival for you to try them side by side or one at a time. On Thursday 19th Sue will be holding a special "Meet the Brewer" at the festival where she will talk about life as a gypsy brewer and the challenges of recreating a beer on unfamiliar kit.

Festival specials

As usual, the festival will feature a number of beers brewed specially for the event. Since April 2000, Rochdale's **Pictish Brewery** has been brewing the finest pale and hoppy beers which are so much in demand that each brew is sold out before it is made.

Continued on Page 19

The New Oxford

Continental Style Real Ale Bar

Bexley Square, Chapel Street, Salford, M3 6DB

0161 832 7082

Open Daily 12 noon to 12 midnight

Food available 12 noon - 4.00pm

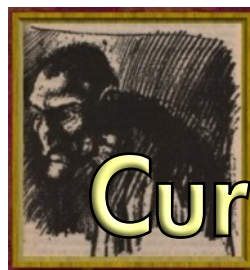
Monday to Friday

Up to 20 cask ales and ciders

Belgian and German draught
and bottled beers

A warm welcome awaits at the
Good Beer Guide 2017 and multiple
CAMRA award-winning pub

Branch and Regional
Cider Pub of the Year 2014



Curmudgeon

Can This Be For Real?

Eyebrows were raised last year at the news that CAMRA had given accreditation as “real ale” to can-conditioned beers from Moor Brewery in Bristol. While this may on the face of it sound surprising, given that CAMRA is happy to recognise bottle-conditioned beers as “real ale”, it is entirely consistent to do the same for beer that still contains live yeast, but just happens to be in a different kind of container.

Having expressed some scepticism about the concept, I was – to their credit – sent a sample of six cans to try by Moor Brewery. Now, they all came across as well-made beers, and one, the rye-infused Smokey Horyzon, particularly tickled my tastebuds. The amount of yeast and carbonation suggested that they could realistically have conditioned in the can. Having allowed them to settle for a couple of weeks, I was able to pour most of them reasonably clear. But I have to say I’m not remotely convinced by the concept.

Over the years, I’ve enjoyed many excellent bottle-conditioned beers. But I’ve always been able to check that the yeast has settled to the bottom, and then pour it carefully to ensure I end up with a clear drink. However, with a can, you simply can’t do that, so you have to trust to time as to whether the yeast has settled, and depend on very precise timing to minimise the amount that ends up in the glass. The whole process is turned into a lottery. For this reason, regardless of the inherent merits of the beer, I’d say cans are not an appropriate medium for container-conditioned packaged beers.

Personally, I prefer the taste of beer, not yeast, and there is far too much anecdotal evidence of murky beer playing havoc with the digestive tract for such concerns to be dismissed out of hand. The whole concept of “real ale in a can” has not been thought through properly, and I find it disappointing that CAMRA has given it its seal of approval.

Delayed Gratification

Scotland seems to be doing its best to be a world leader in neo-Prohibitionism, and the latest idea to rear its ugly head is one from “public health experts” to ban the sale of alcohol in the off-trade until 5pm. This is objectionable on so many levels that I won’t even attempt to list them. It represents a collective punishment meted out on the overwhelming majority of responsible drinkers in an attempt to address the problems of the irresponsible few.

One obvious issue is that it would be likely to lead to a kind of quasi black market of people buying drink on others’ behalf. A simple request to pick up of bottle of whisky while you’re out could easily lead on to someone carrying a small stock to supply people who find it inconvenient to buy it themselves. And I can’t see the Scotch whisky industry – the country’s leading export earner – being remotely happy about being prevented from selling bottles to coach parties on distillery tours.

In Sweden, which operates a similar hard-line attitude to alcohol sales, the state-run Systembolaget stores tend to close their doors just as the Scottish offies would be opening. You could just as well argue that earlier closing, rather than later opening, would achieve the same result, or lack of.

Of course the chances of this happening in the near future, even in Scotland, are zero. But, by laying it on the table, a window has been opened up in which such draconian proposals are brought within the scope of serious debate. And how long will it be before someone suggests banning pubs and bars from selling alcohol before 5pm too?

Curmudgeon Online: curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com

(comments on these articles can be left on the website)



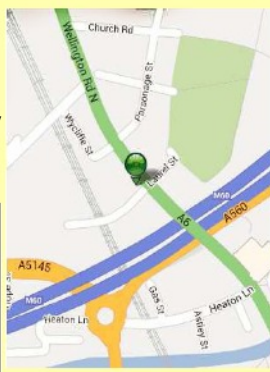
The MIDLAND

19 Wellington Road North, Heaton Norris, Stockport SK4 1HJ
www.themidlandpub.co.uk info@themidlandpub.co.uk

A traditional pub
serving a range
of ever changing
Cask Ales

Open
Noon everyday
Until 11pm
Sunday - Thursday
Midnight
Friday & Saturday

Live music
every other
Friday Night



Trafford & Hulme Awards

Most Improved Pub, Best Newcomer and Winter Pub of the Season

Trafford & Hulme Branch recently presented awards to the Most Improved and Best Newcomer to pubs in central Altrincham, writes John O'Donnell.



The **Cheshire Tap** was voted the Most Improved Pub having transformed the former Classroom on Railway Street into a cool bar which has been a popular addition to the town's beer scene since opening in December 2015. While the site's previous incarnation was popular, it offered little to attract fans of quality beers whereas the Cheshire Tap features four real ales and a range of "craft" keg and bottles. In keeping with its name, the bar regularly features Cheshire based breweries; on presentation evening two beers from Poynton Brewery were on offer - the flagship Vulcan Best Bitter and the newly launched Kiwi, a New Zealand hopped pale ale. The other two pumps featured Black Shire Stout from Tweed and Robinsons Dizzy Blonde. Pictured above are general manager Martin Connolly and bar manager James receiving their award from branch chair John O'Donnell (centre).



The Best Newcomer award went to the nearby **Craftsman** which coincidentally also opened in December 2015 in a vacant unit on Stamford New Road (although the site had hosted a bar many years ago). Here six handpumps have plain pumpclips which just feature a number which refers to the large blackboard above the bar. On the presentation night there were beers from across the country - Brightside's Odin topped the list with the rest of the board featuring UBU from Warwick's Purity Brewing, IPA from XT Brewery in Berkshire, Yeovil Ales' Yeo Ho Ho, Cross Bay's Sunshine and Kits Coty from London's Caveman Brewery. Although the bar took a few months to find its feet, it has built a steady following in the town and was busy when CAMRA came to present their certificate. Pictured is bar manager Ian Peel with branch chair John.

Winter Pub of the Season

Trafford & Hulme branch has voted the **Old Packet House**, Navigation Road, Broadheath as its Pub of the Season for Winter 2016. Built in the 1770s the Old Packet House was the second stopping place on the journey,



by boat or barge, from Manchester to Runcorn along the Bridgewater Canal and provided shelter for passengers and storage facilities for packages for dispatch or collection. It has been run since 2014 by Claire Hardman and her partner and the pub is a cheery and welcoming local serving two cask ales; Little Bollington from Dunham Massey and Golden Best from Timothy Taylor's. It's very much a locals' pub; Claire and her staff work hard to support the local community with charity events, karaoke every Friday, live music on occasional Saturdays and Quiz Nights on Monday.

Food is served daily from noon until 8:30pm and for those wishing to stay over there are four en-suite bedrooms at reasonable rates for B&B. So please come along and honour Claire and her team with your presence when they receive their award on Thursday 26th January 2017 from 8pm.

High Peak Awards

The High Peak, Tameside & North East Cheshire Branch of CAMRA has presented its Cider Pub of the Year Award to the already multi-award-winning **Harewood Arms** in Broadbottom. As well as selling a changing range of guest ciders the pub is also home to the Greenmill Brewery. Pictured here is the High Peak Chairman Phil Moss (left) presenting the award to pub and brewery owner Phil Wild.



The High Peak Branch's Club of the Year went to perennial winner, the **Poynton Legion Club**. Pictured below is local CAMRA member Lawrence Bamber (left) presenting the award to club steward Nick Williams. The CAMRA members present also

met Colin Bavins, of the on-site Poynton Brewery who showed them round the brewery. The club is a regular outlet for Poynton Brewery beers and the CAMRA party was able to sample the new Kiwi, a 4% golden ale with New Zealand hops.



SSM CAMRA Pub of the Year 2010

Railway Heaton Norris

Pure Radio Stockport

Stockport's Award Winning Community Pub

Good Beer & Good Cheer

We're in the Good Beer Guide 2017

Hand Pulled Ales
Holts Bitter plus 4 changing guest ales

Live Music
Modern/Mainstream Jazz every Sunday
Open Mic every Friday
Rock & Roll - 1st Saturday of Month

Hazel Moor Sea Anglers Club - 1st Wednesday of Month

Pub Games
6 darts/crib teams and 2 pool teams

74-76 Wellington Rd North, Stockport SK4 1HF
Tel: 0161 477 3680

Buses 192 & 22 pass by the door

Pub and Brewer

What's happening around the Opening

Trafford Update



Sale's **Vine** has a new manager and an improved real ale range. Although the pub has always sold one good quality real ale, new manager Nick has expanded the range and is aiming to keep all three handpumps in regular use. When *Opening Times* called the offering was Copper Dragon Golden Pippin and Brains Skull Attack.

Rather belatedly, *Opening Times* also welcomes new management at **Jackson's Boat** near to Sale Water Park. New landlady Dionne took over in October and has given the pub, which sits on the banks of the Mersey between Chorlton and Sale Moor, a much needed new lease of life. The pub has a much improved food menu and has introduced its own Jackson's Boat Sale IPA brewed for it by George Wright Brewery in St Helens. The real fires are back for the winter months.

After reporting last month on the impending opening of Altrincham's **Con Club**, we can confirm that it did indeed open in late November. *Opening Times* hasn't managed to make it down to visit yet, but reports and reviews so far are positive. There are six handpumps on the bar and early featured breweries have included Harviestoun, Timothy Taylor and TicketyBrew. The management told us that they were hoping to have the on site micro-brewery installed and operational by the end of December (*Opening Times* knows that brewery installations always seem to operate in their own time zone so wishes them well with this).



After reporting last month on the opening of the revamped **Bird I'th Hand** in Flixton, *Opening Times* went to have a further look. As previously reported, the pub has been opened up downstairs but in a tasteful way which prevents the "barn" effect. In an unusual

move by modern standards, the pubco has opened up two very fine rooms on the first floor. One is a games room with pool table, the other is a function room. Both have splendid hammerbeam roofs and are linked by a small bar which is opened for sports matches - not just on TV, there are also active darts, dominoes and pool teams playing in local leagues. Even if the bar isn't staffed, people can take drinks upstairs. The stairs are accessed by a door at the rear of the new pizza kitchen area.

Chorlton Latest

We reported last month on the refurbishment of Chorlton's **The Bar**. Work was completed in late November with the walls painted a dark blue-grey and the internal seating moved around. The armchairs which used to surround the fireplace have been relocated to the far corner of the pub and replaced by high tables and upturned barrels for "vertical drinking". As the last issue went to press, rumours began circulating that after 20 years, The Bar name would be going and this was confirmed in the first week in December when signage went up announcing it as **Chorlton Tap**. We can't help wondering if this isn't a little too obvious an attempt to cash in on the success of the Euston Tap, York Tap, Sheffield Tap brand which has no association with The Bar - we wish them well but time will tell.

BENT & BONGS BEER BASH

2nd - 4th FEBRUARY 2017

Fly me to the moon,
 let me play
 amongst the
 stars...**BEER!**

**@ ATHERTON
 ROLLER RINK
 VICTORIA MILL,
 BOLTON ROAD,
 ATHERTON,
 M46 9JQ**

ENTRANCE FEES

THUR 6-11PM £3
 FRI 4-11PM £5
 SAT 12-9PM £6
 Includes glass & programme

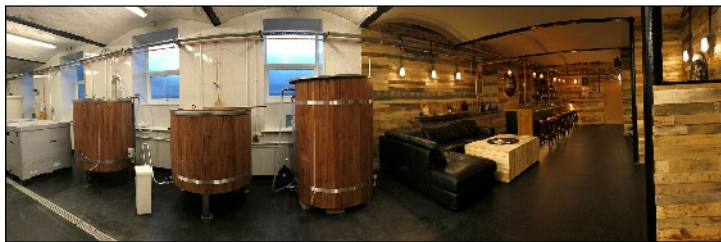
All proceeds to charity!

ALES *Prosecco*
CIDERS *Gin Bar*
LAGERS
FOOD

BANDS

CHECK OUT WWW.BENTNBONGS.COM FOR MORE INFO

Four Kings Brewery



Four Kings Brewery opened its doors in the Hyde suburb of Newton on 3rd December. It's at the furthest reaches of an industrial estate – a small sign then directs you to an anonymous door and it's quite a surprise to be greeted by the professional set-up pictured above.

We'd heard talk of this brewery for some months and it is very apparent that a lot of work and thought has gone into the operation, which is

Tameside's newest brewery. Despite the name it is in fact the project of five friends: Paul Ashworth, Toby Colbourne (both pictured right), Any Booth, Paul Mallon and Dave Clarke. None of them have any form of brewing background apart from a general love of beer. "We're just five mates who wanted something else to do" Paul Ashworth told us. Despite the slick appearance it's very much a part-time operation with all five keeping their day jobs, all of which involve skills they have been able to bring to the brewery.



Getting the kit installed was a bit of a bumpy ride for them, and they were let down badly by one supplier it seems, but at the end of the day Porter Brewery Installations rode to the rescue and the six-barrel kit first fired up in early November. The recipes have been devised by Toby who has made a point of using all-British ingredients. Thus the first two beers are IPA (4%), brewed with pale malt and hopped with Goldings and Challenger varieties, and Gold (also 4%) very slightly darker and brewed using Fuggles and East Kent Goldings. Both are extremely drinkable with a good bitter hit at the end. The next beer will be a porter and bottling is also planned.

While the premises have both an on-licence and an off-licence they won't be running the brewery bar as a pub. What they do want is for people to come along and enjoy the beers in a relaxed environment. Visits are invitation only, but people are invited to get in touch via the website at fourkingsbrewery.com.

And the future? None of the team has plans for Four Kings to conquer the world. "We hope it all just pays for itself" Paul tells us. Given the current very competitive environment in the local brewing scene that sounds very much like a recipe for survival.

Soul Doubt Brew Co

The microbrewery beneath the **Old Abbey Taphouse** in Greenheys has a new lease of life. Formerly called the Craftsman Brewery some new hands are trying their hand at the 100 litre kit.

Chris Buxton and Graham Harkis are both enthusiastic home brewers who have upped their game to start producing initially for the Old Abbey itself and then further afield with a small bottling operation in their

immediate sights. They have named the new operation the **Soul Doubt Brew Co** reflecting the music-heavy reincarnation of the parent pub which, by the way, offers ales from Newcastle's Brinkburn Street Brewery, a rare sight in these parts. When *Opening Times* called a preview of the first brew, a smoked stout, was tried. Although the brew was not quite ready it was very promising indeed.

Beer Shed, New Mills



Regular readers may have spotted references to this forthcoming micropub in several recent issues of *Opening Times*. Good news - it finally opened in late November.

It's a project by Russell Degnan (pictured above) who returned to the UK with a micropub in mind after spending some time in Germany - he'd visited over 20 and thought one would probably work in New Mills. Russell wanted to open the type of place he'd want to drink in himself and hopefully this would appeal to others. So far he's been proved right as Beer Shed appears to have been an immediate success.

The frontage, on Market Street, just a short walk from Central Station and the 358 bus stop, is very narrow but the pub goes back quite a long way, and there is also another room downstairs. It all makes for a welcoming and cosy feel. The beer offer comprises three cask and six keg beers along with a range of bottles and cans from both the UK and overseas. The aim is to source the draught beers from local suppliers (and given the number of breweries in say a 20-mile radius, Russell is somewhat spoilt for choice). There's traditional cider too. Well worth a visit – but note Beer Shed is closed on Monday and Tuesday, opens at 4.00pm on Wednesday and Thursday and 2.00pm all other days.



And the march of the micropub continues. Just opened as this issue of OT was being put together is the **Old Cell Ale Bar** in Chapel-en-le-Frith. Hopefully we'll pay a visit in time for the next issue.

Pub News in brief

While Stockport may have lost a brewery with the closure of Quantum, the town may be about to gain another. A planning application has been submitted to convert outbuildings at the **George & Dragon** in Cheadle into a micro-brewery to supply the pub and other Amber Taverns outlets with beers.

More news on page 16

13TH PENDLE BEER FEST
2-4 FEB 2017
 THE MUNI, COLNE, LANCS

FREE ENTRY SATURDAY FROM 8PM **LIVE MUSIC FRI & SAT**

THURSDAY 4.30-11PM
FRIDAY & SATURDAY 11.30-11PM

£3 ENTRY ALL DAY THURSDAY
 £3 ENTRY FRIDAY AFTERNOON, £5 AFTER 6PM
 £3 ENTRY SATURDAY, FREE AFTER 8PM
 CAMRA MEMBERS FREE ENTRY TO ALL SESSIONS

f WWW.PENDLEBEERFESTIVAL.CO.UK **t**

The Waters Green

Local CAMRA Pub of the Season Winter '13

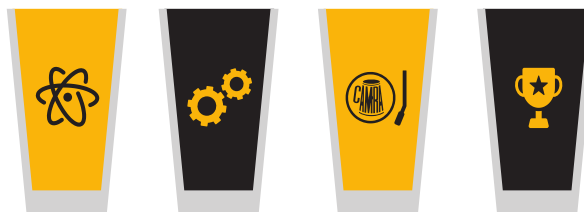
96 Waters Green, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 6LH
 Tel 01625 422653

Ever Changing Guest Beers including: Phoenix, Oakham, Pictish, Mallinsons, Fyne Ales, Newby Wyke and many more.

Your Hosts, Brian and Steve

Bar Meals Served Mon to Sat Lunch

This **is** ~~not~~ a free house



Manchester Beer & Cider Festival

HAREWOOD ARMS

2 Market Street, Broadbottom (400 yards from the station)

Continental Bottled Beers

Enjoy the Winter Cheer of a Real Log Fire

Dog Friendly



CAMRA members

20p a pint discount on real ale Sunday to Thursday

Opening Times Monday-Friday 3pm Saturday-Sunday 2pm

The New Home of the Award Winning Greenmill Brewery
 Greenmill's Hand Crafted Ales plus Guest Beers and Real Cider



High Peak Pub Scene

Robin Wignall & Tom Lord with News and Views

Peak Practice

With Robin Wignall

Local history society meetings can throw up some gems of information about our local pubs, and of course unfortunately our lost locals. An autumn talk about the Andrew family in the Compstall, Romiley and Marple Bridge areas mentioned a couple of lost locals. The speaker talked of the Greyhound at the top of Compstall Brow. The admirable publication *Last Orders*, a definitive history of the pubs of Marple and Romiley etc. confirms a Greyhound opening as a beer house in about 1832, though the address was given as Compstall Bridge. This was empty and derelict by 1879. More recently the George at Compstall Bridge, a former Robinsons house has closed. Usually pubs named George have taken their names from a king. In this case is there a possibility that the pub had been named after a George who was a prominent member of the Andrew family? Of course the **Andrew Arms** at Compstall (pictured below) is still open and well worth a visit for good food and a decent pint of Robinsons.



I heard recently a good story about another lost local written about a few months ago in this column. The story relates to a landlady of the Grapes in Chapel-en-le-Frith, opposite the gates of Ferodo. In the days just before the Second World War this was an Ind Coope house and beer arrived in hogsheads (54 gallons). On relinquishing the tenancy the landlady apparently passed on to her successor the following advice, 'After you have drawn off the first gallon of each cask, top the cask up with a gallon of water. That's where your profit is.' I only repeat the tale as told.

Bits of brewing history can also be picked up in stately homes. Many stately homes had their own breweries to provide for staff and family. The boiling process involved in beer making of course made beer a safer drink than water. At Calke Abbey in the south of Derbyshire, the tourist trip around the house includes passing

through the brew house, with much of the plant still in place. Brewing ceased here in the 19th century when it was more convenient to have supplies delivered from nearby Melbourne, or from Burton. Chatsworth would also have had its brew house and of course the advent of Peak Ales in 2005 returned brewing to Chatsworth even if only to an outbuilding on the estate. This is still in use though most of the brewing now takes place at Ashford in the Water in the neighbourhood.

Your correspondent recently spent a few weeks in Queensland and managed to try just a few fine examples of craft beers from the Australian micro-brewery scene. As in this country craft beers have taken off, but seemingly without the controversy about the authenticity of the product. Let's face it a beer with character and flavour even when chilled would have to be better than bland, over chilled Australo-fizz.

An article on craft beers in the colour supplement of a Saturday edition of *The Australian*, which seems to be the country's only broadsheet newspaper, gave some handy pointers to bottled beers from all over Australia. I visited few premises with on licenses, though some did sell bottles and draught (keg) versions of these beers. Well worth a try was a Kölsch at 4.6% from the 4 Pines Brewery at Manly, Sydney. This is a good replication of the top fermented brews from Cologne. Better than that though, from the same brewery is a 5.1% Pale Ale. The hops are listed on the collar of the bottle, Citra, Amarillo, Cascade and Simcoe. Another brew suited to my palate was Vale IPA from Vale brewing in South Australia. This is bottle conditioned. The hops are listed as Citra, Galaxy and Nelson Sauvin. Australian malt is used and the label describes the beers as 'our interpretation of the American style'. The Australian beer scene has improved in recent years and decent beer can be found. If you found yourself there enjoy your beer drinking.



An early pub visit on returning home found Raw Anubis Porter available at the **Soldier Dick** in Furness Vale. This is a fine 5.2% brew and served as a very good welcome to winter ales.

On a similar note it is good to see that Marston's have brewed Owd Rodger again this year, though only at 7.4%. This was found in the **Shepherds** in Whaley Bridge, and doubtless elsewhere in the Marston's estate.

Finally some good news, by the time you read this the **Railway** in Whaley Bridge should have re-opened. There seems to be only sparse information, so more next time.

High Peak Pub News With Tom Lord

Stalybridge Labour Club has now reopened and offers two real ales thought to be from the Coors list. Also in Stalybridge the **Old Fleece** on Market Street has had a change of management resulting in the reintroduction of real ale with two changing national brands on handpump. The centre of Stalybridge is now once again becoming an increasingly good real ale scene with little shoe leather needed to experience a good range of beers.



The new micropub on Market Street in New Mills is now open. **Beer Shed** opened its doors at the end of November and is well worth a visit. Three changing cask beers on handpump are on offer along with a range of craft beers (see separate feature on page 11 – Ed).

The **Jolly Hatters** in Haughton Green (on Haughton Green Road, not the Town Lane one) introduced real ale last month and quickly had to increase from one handpump to two to keep up with demand. There is a house ale called Jolly Hatters Ale, an amber session beer brewed by Caledonian, and an ever changing guest ale chosen by the regulars. This was Black Sheep Bitter when OT visited and was on good form.

Roger Hall

Sue Richardson remembers a long-time local campaigner

Those of you who haven't heard already will be sad to learn of the sudden death of Roger Hall, a central figure in CAMRA's activities in Manchester for many years.

He was a founding member of the North Manchester branch in the early 1970s and when the branch held its first formal meeting at the Lord Nelson in Ringley on 16th January 1974, the membership fee was a mere 50p a year!

Roger was branch chairman when the first edition of the branch newsletter 'What's Doing' was produced in November 1975 and contributed to it regularly over many years. Some of his articles reflected the character of the man, so here are a few quotations.

In July 1976, his serious campaigning spirit was reflected in an article on the pubs of Salford: "Pubs are a small but essential part of what may be called our 'cultural heritage' and as such should be preserved rather than destroyed."

In August his command of language and dislike of dictatorial attitudes came out in 'The Great Debate' - his response to an angry letter from CAMRA activist Andrew Cunningham berating *What's Doing* for an article criticising the Good Beer Guide: "The author, who, to judge by his style and knowledge of propaganda, must have been apprenticed to Goebbels and Stalin, draws our attention to matters which would normally escape the attention of even the most observant branch. 'The branch press officer must be relatively intelligent, articulate and literate.' We must seriously reconsider our decision to appoint a sub-normal dyslexic who stammers."

Roger was now Branch Secretary and a year later would become Press & Publicity Officer himself. He was clearly suited to the job, as he prefaced an article discussing the pleasures of drinking in modern and traditional pubs with this quotation from Dr Johnson: "There's nothing which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced, as by a good tavern or inn." This passion for pubs was reflected in Roger's work on the field of pub preservation. An early campaigning success was saving the Old House at Home in Blackley from demolition and another landmark was the statutory listing of the Queens Arms in Patricroft, the UK's first railway pub. Roger also played a major role in getting statutory protection for large parts of the old Cook Street Brewery in Salford.

But he also had a great sense of humour - the Dr Johnson quote appeared in the same issue as his first 'Rupert Periwinkle' satirical column, in which he not only made fun of the established beer organisations, but sometimes also gently mocked our own officers, as when he declared that the self-effacing Robin Bence (Chairman of North Manchester Branch at the time) had turned down the position of Assistant Regional Organiser "not because he thought this to be an invidious, thankless job, but because he feared that the CAMRA cummerbund which comes with the job would not go round the rotund Robin's middle."

Explaining why the July 2006 edition of *What's Doing* was missing, he wrote "Eddy Nestfeather (his nickname for its editor Neil Richardson) had undergone radical rhinoplasty or elephantoplasty and couldn't print from his hospital bed. He is recovering well and back in harness again, as this bumper edition amply demonstrates." (Neil had been in hospital having a cancer removed from his sinus and shortly afterwards it was found that the cancer had spread and that August edition was the last.)



Pictured here is a meeting of all former chairmen of North Manchester CAMRA. Left to right - Robin Bence, Duncan Roberts, Roger Hall, Phil Stout, Phil Booton and Pete Cash. Picture courtesy of Stewart Revell.

Roger was slightly less active in CAMRA in recent years, but still campaigned vigorously against the reorganisation which saw the end of the old North Manchester branch in April 2016.

And he managed to do all this while running his own business, 'Stylo Signs', in Swinton and later while travelling the world as a lecturer and also serving as a magistrate - a job which he gave up relatively recently when he turned seventy.

My late husband Neil started his printing business in the back room of Roger's shop in Swinton and Roger and his wife Joan were so kind to me after Neil died that I shall always be grateful to them. I have tried to keep to his own words as far as possible in this article, but I shall remember Roger most for his kindness and his sense of humour. We shall all miss him a great deal, but his son told me that when he had his heart attack, he'd just had a good meal and "a couple of pints in his belly", so let's all raise a glass to Roger's memory next time we're in a decent pub.

Join CAMRA
See page 18 for membership details

Stagger

A meander through bits of Didsbury with Jim Flynn

It was a pleasant Autumn evening when we met at the **Parrswood Hotel** on Parrs Wood Road but nevertheless it was too cold to sit in the well-appointed outdoor drinking areas.



These were created by Lees when they undertook a multi-million pound refurbishment in 2015. I hadn't been in the pub for some time and was gratified to find that the brewery's efforts had clearly been rewarded

with a very significant increase in clientele, both eating and drinking. Although the pub has been opened out, this former Boddingtons house now feels much cosier and warmer and I was pleased to note that the old photos of the long demolished Capitol Theatre opposite still adorn the walls. There was football on the TV, a couple of families with children and an office do going on but such is the layout of the pub all this can be avoided if you desire. The beer range has also been improved with Lees Bitter, John Willie's, The Governor, MPA and the seasonal, Jumbo, all being available and on good form.

Amongst our number was one of the organisers of the Didsbury Beer Festival and he offered to take us into the **St Catherine's Club**, just around the corner from the Parrswood, which is the home of the Festival. The club was as quiet as the pub had been busy and the vacant spaces revealed what the festival night crowds obscure: the place needs a bit of TLC. There were two beers available, Thornbridge Jaipur and Moorhouse's First Cut but unfortunately it transpired that there were difficulties with the latter and so we stuck with the Thornbridge which received mixed reviews.



Now it was into Didsbury centre and Wetherspoon's **Milson Rhodes**. This is scheduled to close for refurbishment before opening as a Botanist outlet of the Living

Ventures chain. Wetherspoon's disposal of the Milson Rhodes was allegedly down to profitability but I must say on our visit it was as popular as ever, which adds mystery to the decision. The choice of beer was very narrow, with almost every guest beer being over five percent, which is not what you want on a Stagger and so most people tried the Shepherd Neame Kentish Saison at 4.5%, although a few did drink the Castle Rock Phoenix Red; both were generally considered in good nick.

One of our number suggested that our next stop should be the **Stokers Arms** with the veiled inference that it wouldn't be much cop and while the door staff outside gave credence to this view the pessimism proved misplaced. I was



pleasantly surprised with the whole ambience; there was background music but the hum of conversation from the mixed clientele of all ages was louder. This used to be an O'Neill's but all signs of plastic Irish kitsch were long gone. The lighting is subdued which made it difficult to read the pumpclips but we ascertained that the options were Elgoods Black Dog, Moorhouse's Stray Dog and White Witch along with Westons Old Rosie. We stuck to the beers, which, although pricey, were well received.



A few doors down is the **Slug and Lettuce**. I must admit when I entered I assumed that I would be turning around and walking out due to an absence of cask beer. How wrong I was. Wells Bombardier was available and Young's Bitter was promised next. This is everything I don't look for in a pub, loud music (it was 90s night - not my era!), garish decor and bright lighting which seemed to change colour on a regular basis. Nevertheless they are providing a cask beer option for their customers and at £2.80 a pint in Didsbury; good on them! The beer itself was largely regarded as middling.



Across Wilmslow Road the **Station** is a definite contrast to the previous pubs. Despite receiving a makeover from Marston's a few years ago this is still an old-fashioned local. It has a small front bar running

lengthwise and a back room which houses a dart board and card table as well as TV. On the walls are references to Ireland and Gaelic sports teams but this has nothing of the contrived feel of the previous O'Neill's opposite. Indeed, with an excellent Irish band playing in the corner I could have stayed for the rest of the evening. The Burton Bitter and Hobgoblin however were not quite in the same league as the pub's ambience.

Walking past the library we arrived at **Saints & Scholars**. On the bar was the good news, a handpump with Bootleg's Chorlton Pale Ale. This is still largely a restaurant/café though and the member of staff informed us she was too young to serve us alcohol and so we went to the rear, which is surprisingly extensive, to await the licensee. Within a minute he appeared and brought us our beers, some of which were in oversized glasses served to the brim. The beer itself received mixed reviews.



It was back across the road again to our final stop, the **Dog and Partridge**. This is another of the more traditional pubs in the village, with bare wooden floorboards, which has been described as a 'beer house'. An interesting feature is the machine in the corner dispensing free monkey nuts. There were four cask beers available but we stuck to the Phoenix Thirsty Moon and Elland Blonde which were both on excellent form.

Pub & Brewery News Extra

Even more activity from around the area

Wildside Beers

Wildside is the name for a new range of beers being launched by Radcliffe's **Brightside Brewery**. We asked Brightside's Carley Friedrich to tell us a little bit about them...



"Work on our sister brand Wildside started about 18 months ago when we decided we'd like to introduce an experimental element to our beer range. At Brightside we're well known for consistently good quality modern real ales, but like many brewers we wanted to explore more; find out what would happen if we changed our methods, used fruit or spices, tried our hand at brewing continental styles. After a lot of talking, scribbling and initial design work we realised that the beers we wanted to brew were a complete break from the Brightside style and that they would probably attract quite a different crowd, so we found a designer who lived in a greenhouse to help us get Wildside's message across. We hope you'll like the end result!"

"Our new Wildside beers will be launched at the Manchester Beer and Cider Festival this month; we'd love to see you there and show you Brightside's Wildside. As a sneak preview we'll have the following beers on offer: Imperial Gold 7%, Red Chilli Lager 4.8% (approx), Roggenbier 5% (approx) and Ginger & Orange Ale 4.5% (approx).

"The beers will be available on cask at a dedicated Wildside bar – next to Brightside naturally – but will also be available around the city and beyond in cask, keg and in cans if all runs smoothly. A rum barrel aged version of the Imperial Gold will be available in a couple of months time in limited edition bottles too.

"The plan with Wildside is to brew a batch of beer, release it into the wilderness then move on to the next so that we're always giving you new things to discover and enjoy. There will inevitably be re-brews eventually, but ideally they'll come around every six months or so to keep things interesting."

Pub & Brewery News in brief

The former **Jack & Jill** in Brinnington was demolished on 19th November and houses will be built on the site. When the pub closed in January last year former owners Robinsons said: "The pub will be offered for sale on the open market and we fully support the property being sold as licensed premises." Sadly there were no takers.



In Didsbury there are new faces at the **Nelson** where Pete Sweeney has been succeeded by Hazel Renshall and Chris Ollier. The Nelson is to close on 11th January to undergo an extensive refurbishment by the "Enterprise Craft Union Pub Company". The plan is to move the bar, to introduce a new smoking area at the back of the

pub, and to ensure that bar prices become more competitive. The intention is to retain Sky Sports, weekend discos and karaoke and, we are pleased to hear, cask beers although these have not yet been specified.

Meanwhile just across the road at the **Dog & Partridge** there was a change of hands last month as the licensees were not able to reach

agreement with the Spirit Group. The pub is to be run (whether permanently or not we don't know) by La Cantina.

Just as the finishing touches were being put to this issue of *Opening Times* there were two significant openings in central Manchester. In Piccadilly, **Bundobust** has taken over the basement space formerly occupied by all-you-can-eat Chinese restaurant Buffet Metro at 61 Piccadilly and offers a combination of Indian street food and craft beers (two cask and a variety on keg). Meanwhile in Ancoats the long-awaited **Seven Bro7hers Beerhouse** is in the Ice Plant Building at 39 Blossom Street. The beer range includes two cask and no fewer than 14 keg beers covering both the Seven Bro7thers range and guests.

Out in Little Bollington **Ye Olde Number 3** reopened on 28th November. The new landlord is Jason Dodds who has another pub in the Preston area. Food is on offer from noon to 9.00pm daily, but when OT called a fixed menu was yet to be put in place. At present, there are two handpumps in use but again, the new team have yet to settle on any regular beers.

A couple of our local brewers are treading traditional paths. Taking a lead from breweries like Manchester's **Beer Nouveau**, the **Rock Mill Brewery** is now using oak casks for their Cotton Spinner bitter – just two a month are available, usually at the **Samuel Oldknow** in Marple. Meanwhile out in Glossop **Howard Town Brewery** is going to start using a dray horse to make deliveries in the local area. He's called Jack and is a 3½ year old Clydesdale.

In Cheadle the **Brezo Lounge** opened just as we went to press after what can only be described as a whirlwind refurbishment. There were to be no cask ales as far as our man on the spot could see although they have a Bath Ales beer listed. However at £3.90 that's unlikely to trouble the Cheadle beer drinkers. Nearby the **Star** is set to close for a refurbishment which will involve expanding the kitchen to offer more food and "appeal to a different clientele" (according to their website). Quite what the locals who have supported the pub all these years make of that, we are not sure.

Davenport Arms

The **Davenport Arms** (also known as the Thief's Neck) in Woodford is a very special pub. It was acquired by Robinsons in the 1920s, and since then the licence has been held by four successive generations of the Hallworth family, a record of continuity which is unique in the Stockport area. The pub has retained a multi-room layout and was subject to a very sensitive refurbishment by Robinsons a couple of years ago which left all the separate rooms intact. It is currently run by Yvonne Hallworth but it really is a family operation – and not only that but Yvonne's son is waiting in the wings to take the family involvement onward to a fifth generation.



It's a former Greater Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Year and with the publication of the 2017 Good Beer Guide also notched up 30 consecutive entries. We don't think anywhere else in the county can match that so to mark the event Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA presented Yvonne with a certificate to commemorate the occasion – she is pictured above with the award.

No Pub Left Behind

Peter Edwardson on Real Ale Deserts

It's become noticeable in recent years that, across large areas, it's become difficult to find many, or indeed any at all, pubs serving real ale. CAMRA's WhatPub online pub guide allows you to change the search terms to include pubs without real ale, so I set myself a challenge to find a place where all of the first ten search results fell into that category. It didn't take long to find some examples fairly close to hand. Leigh recorded 7/10, then Tranmere 8/10 and Widnes 9/10. Finally, a friend struck the Holy Grail, in the North Manchester district of Collyhurst, which recorded a perfect 10 of pubs with No Real Ale. The distinguishing feature of all those pubs is that they unashamedly cater for a local, working-class clientele.

It seems to be taken as read that, nowadays, "estate pubs" are keg pubs, but it wasn't always so. I'm not familiar with those particular pubs in Collyhurst, but I'd bet that thirty or forty years ago, some, if not most, of them sold cask beer. In the early days of CAMRA, it was seen as a reasonable objective that all pubs with sufficient trade and suitable cellar facilities should serve real ale. I remember in the late 80s the local branch mounting a series of campaigns to encourage breweries to put real ale into some of the few remaining keg pubs. In some cases we drew a blank, but more often than not we succeeded. So what has happened since then to cause real ale and the ordinary, down-to-earth boozier to part company?

I'd say the key reason is the shift from saying "the beer in this pub is real" to "this pub sells real beer". There's a subtle, but vital difference. In the early days of CAMRA, pubs just sold Mild and Bitter, or two bitters, and the customers didn't identify it as being real ale or not, although they might notice that the real beer was better. If a pub "went real" it involved changing a keg or top pressure beer over to cask, not adding another pump. Across large swathes of the Midlands and North of England, real ale was more often than not dispensed through electric pumps, so there was no obvious difference at the point of sale.

Not unreasonably, CAMRA took the view that, if real ale was to be promoted, greater differentiation was needed. Most of the well-known beers associated with the initial "real ale revival", such as Ruddles County and Ind Coope Burton Ale, were cask-only, and CAMRA began to press for separate branding for real and keg beers to avoid confusion.

But I'd say the key changes happened in the early 90s. The transfer of pubs from breweries to pub companies took away a lot of the kudos of being able to say "85% of our pubs serve real ale", and the pubcos found that stripping it out made life easier for licensees without much, if any, loss of trade. Plus the rise of nitrokeg created a distinctive keg product for which there was no direct real equivalent, and which, at least initially, was something that many drinkers would make a point of ordering. I remember writing up a pub crawl of Levenshulme in 1997 when it was evident how John Smith's Extra Smooth was increasingly taking the place of cask bitter as the default choice in many of the pubs.

Another factor was the ongoing replacement of electric pumps with handpumps, which may have provided a clear and unambiguous symbol of real ale, but at the same time marked it out as a distinctly different type of beer. If you wanted to avoid something that was inconsistent, potentially cloudy or vinegary, might involve challenging flavours, and tended to be favoured by people with woolly jumpers and beards, you knew not to touch anything that came from a handpump.

In the North-West, we still have substantial numbers of family brewer pubs – Holt's, Hydes, Lees, Robinsons and Sam Smiths – where the cask bitter remains the normal ale choice, and is consumed by large numbers of working-class drinkers. But, across the country as a whole, real ale is increasingly seen as a middle-class drink, and is conspicuously avoided by working-class drinkers, especially the younger ones. Would a working-class bloke under 40 ever even contemplate ordering a pint of cask? Some might say that just displays a lack of appreciation of the finer things in life, but in reality working-class people tend to have a pretty sound nose for pseudery and pretension of all kinds.



Last year, the "Bobby Peel" on Castle Street in Edgeley, Stockport, received an expensive refurbishment from Punch Taverns, which also involved restoring real ale in the form of Doom Bar. But, when John Smith's is available at £2 a pint, all day, every day, who on earth is going to pay £2.95 for a pint of cask? It fell victim to the inevitable vicious circle of lower demand leading to lower quality, and has now, entirely predictably, disappeared from the bar.

It's a challenging question for anyone who wants to champion real ale whether it really matters that pubs like the Bobby Peel and its near neighbour the Jolly Crofter don't sell it, and that "real ale deserts" have

grown up in some of our less prosperous areas. Realistically, real ale is only going to succeed in those pubs if it becomes the default ale option, not an expensive speciality, and I can't really see that happening in the near future.

Salford CAMRA Award

The Salford Branch of CAMRA recently made two special presentations to the historic **Lamb Hotel** in Eccles.

This superb Edwardian pub, which is on CAMRA's National Inventory of Heritage Pubs, has also been in the Good Beer Guide for 25 years and pictured here Salford Branch chairman

Martin Parkinson is seen presenting landlady Andrea Lythgoe with a certificate to mark the fact. Andrea is holding the Neil Richardson Award presented by Salford CAMRA on an annual basis to a traditional pub. The Lamb won the award in 2015 and has now been presented with a special copy of the award to keep permanently.



A Campaign

of Two Halves

Fair deal on beer tax now!

Save Britain's Pubs!



Join CAMRA Today

Complete the Direct Debit form below 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 or call 01727 867201. All forms should be addressed to the: Membership Department, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, AL1 4LW.

Your Details

Title _____ Surname _____
 Forename(s) _____
 Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____
 Address _____

 _____ Postcode _____
 Email address _____
 Tel No(s) _____

	Direct Debit	Non DD
Single Membership (UK & EU)	£24 <input type="checkbox"/>	£26 <input type="checkbox"/>
Joint Membership (Partner at the same address)	£29.50 <input type="checkbox"/>	£31.50 <input type="checkbox"/>

For Young Member and other concessionary rates please visit www.camra.org.uk or call 01727 867201.

I wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association

I enclose a cheque for _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Applications will be processed within 21 days

Partner's Details (if Joint Membership)

Title _____ Surname _____
 Forename(s) _____
 Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy) _____
 Email address (if different from main member) _____

01/15
Opening Times

Campaigning for Pub Goers & Beer Drinkers

Enjoying Real Ale & Pubs

Join CAMRA today – www.camra.org.uk/joinus



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



Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to: Campaign for Real Ale Ltd, 230 Hatfield Road, St. Albans, Herts AL1 4LW

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society Service User Number

To the Manager _____ Bank or Building Society
 Address _____

 _____ Postcode _____

9 2 6 1 2 9

FOR CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE LTD OFFICIAL USE ONLY

This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Membership Number _____
 Name _____
 Postcode _____

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Campaign For Real Ale Limited Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Campaign For Real Ale Limited and, if so will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s) _____
 Date _____

Name(s) of Account Holder

Bank or Building Society Account Number

Branch Sort Code

Reference

This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay by Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit by The Campaign for Real Ale Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
 - If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when The Campaign For Real Ale Ltd asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.

Manchester Beer & Cider Festival

More news – continued from page 7

Festival Specials continued

Pictish has inspired many brewers and spawned many imitators but only one has managed to perfect the style to a degree that their single hop pale ales are regularly compared to Pictish's own - **Mallinsons** of Huddersfield. What have they brewed? We can't tell you - this one is so special that the brewers haven't even revealed it to the festival team!



One of the city's newest and smallest breweries is **Origami** where former Bootleg Brewery brewer Erin Tickle is joined by her sister Lauren Guy and Simon Tierney-Wigg mainly brewing for bottling on a tiny 100 litre plant on Temperance Street. Their festival special was being brewed as *Opening Times* went to press with the recipe under wraps - all will be revealed on Bar 2 at #MBCF17.

Another festival beer where the recipe wasn't set when OT went to press will come from Rochdale's **Serious Brew Co.** However we'll let brewer Ken off on this occasion as he and wife Jenny had taken a little time off from brewing to celebrate the birth of their son Thomas at the end of November - both *Opening Times* and MBCF congratulate them on their new family. Their festival special will be on Bar 3 alongside their Moonlight stout and Goldrush Belgian golden ale.



One beer that *Opening Times* is certainly looking forward to trying more than others is the result of a collaboration between the festival and **Torrside Brewing**. Likely to be a marmite beer for many drinkers, the concept of an Oatmeal Liqueurice Mild was so intriguing that festival organisers invited its creator, *Opening Times*' very own John Clarke, to head out to New Mills to help brew it.

Regular readers will have seen in December's issue that Stockport's **Quantum Brewing** had decided to shut up shop with owner and head brewer Jay Krause taking up an offer to join the team at Cloudwater. Known for his many wacky recipes, MBCF couldn't let him slope off to his new life without one last brew in his home town so we teamed him up with one of his former protégés, Richard Conway at **Thirst Class Ale**, to brew a special just for us. Given previous recipe ingredients including Uncle Joe's Mint Balls, smoked paprika, purple potatoes and scotch bonnets, we were too scared to ask what is coming...

Other breweries launching new beers at the festival include **Fool Hardy** who will have not just one but two new beers debuting at #MBCF17; **Brewsmith** of Ramsbottom; Derbyshire's **Langwith Brewery** and **Manchester Brewing Company** who will have the only cask of their Brett IPA - the first beer from their barrel ageing programme.

Kegging it large

A big talking point at #MBCF16 was the launch of the "Real Ale in a Key-Keg" bar. Many visitors saw it as a sign of CAMRA modernising while others dismissed it as selling "cold and fizzy muck". Well the bar will be back with an even wider range of key-keg conditioned beers than before including locally brewed beers from Altrincham's **Stubborn Mule** and Macclesfield's **Fiveclouds** along with beers from further afield including **Elusive**, **Moore** and **Weird Beard**.

Indy Fam Brew Con

Another new addition to #MBCF17 will be a brand new bar featuring representatives of the Independent Family Brewers of Britain. Seventeen of the association's members will be represented including all of Manchester's own family brewers **Holt's**, **Hydes**, **Lees** and **Robinsons** with some very special beers making rare appearances on cask.

Bottles of JW Lees' Harvest Ale are sought after collectors' items but it will make an extremely rare appearance in cask form on the IFBB bar at #MBCF17 (in very limited quantities). Meanwhile Robinsons are expected to have a one off new beer available on the bar while **Wadworths** of Devizes in Wiltshire will be launching their new golden ale Filthy Chucker.



McMullen of Hertford have made available a single cask of their Stronghart old ale which has been barrel aged for two years with all the rest destined for bottles. **Harvey's** beers very rarely make it out of the South of England so having them come to #MBCF17 is a real coup. Their world famous Sussex Best Bitter is bound to be a sell out, but serious connoisseurs will be seeking out the Prince of Denmark —

the classic strong bottled beer whose only other appearance in cask form is at the Great British Beer Festival where it has to be rationed to be available in distinct time slots.

Events programme

To accompany our amazing selection of 700 beers, ciders and perries, MBCF is again hosting a range of special tasting events. Entry to tasting sessions and talks will be by ticket only – visit the festival website at mancheerfest.uk/about/events2017/ to book your place. Here's the line-up:

Whatever Happened to IPA? *Opening Times* editor John Clarke takes a look at the rise, fall and re-birth of India Pale Ale; from Empire to your local. Where it started to where it is now. Tickets include tasting of six different IPAs and John's entertaining and expert commentary.

Holy Orders. Monks have been involved in the brewing of beer since time immemorial. John Clarke talks guests through the history of brewing in monasteries by introducing you to six different beers, all brewed by the Trappist Order of monks in Belgium and the Netherlands. Tastings of six exciting beers are included in the ticket price.

Going Dutch – The Dutch Beer Revolution. It isn't all Heineken. The renaissance of artisanal Dutch beer is not as well-known as it ought to be. John Clarke, an expert in the subject will bring you an insight into what is happening in the Netherlands as he discusses six craft brewed Dutch beers of varied and contrasting styles. Tastings of six beers are included in the ticket price.

Cider Tasting. A tutored tasting in traditional cider and perry with local expert Charlotte Bulmer (no relation).

Certificate in Beer Appreciation. This training course is aimed at beer lovers who want to understand how the ingredients that go into beer affect the appearance, aroma and flavour. It is one of three courses run by CAMRA that is externally accredited by People 1st, who are part of the Hospitality Guild.



EAT, DRINK, TOUR & SHOP

Enjoy a taste of Robinsons Brewery Visitors Centre



Delicious food, great gifts & inspiring tours
In the heart of Stockport, Cheshire.

ROBINSONS
BREWERY
VISITORS CENTRE

www.robinsonsvisorscentre.com  

Call 0161 612 4100 or email events@frederic-robinson.co.uk

Robinsons Visitors Centre, Apsley St, Stockport, Manchester, SK1 1JJ