

OPENING TIMES

MARCH / APRIL 2023

FREE



INSIDE: MILD MAGIC 2023 /
STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER
FESTIVAL RETURNS AND MORE



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Contents & Information

Contents – March & April 2023

Pubs of the Month	5	Scribbles on a Beermat	13
Pubs of the Year	7	What's Brewing	15
Heard at the Bar	8	Pub Walks	17
Stagger	9	What's Brewing	19
Mild Magic 2023	11	News Extra	21
Club of the Year	12	CAMRA Diaries & Awards ..	23

About Opening Times & Contacts

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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 contact the Consumer Service at the following address:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/if-you-need-more-help-about-a-consumer-issue

Their telephone number 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

Subscriptions

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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/public-transport.aspx
- * Derbyshire: www.derbybus.info

Pub Opening Hours

We hope you will visit all of the pubs mentioned in *Opening Times*. There isn't the space to print all of their opening hours – however these can be checked on CAMRA's online pub guide: whatpub.com

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 on the left) 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.

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www.centralmanchester.camra.org.uk

Contact: Cath Potter; chair@centralmanchester.camra.org.uk

Social Media

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

Stockport & South Manchester:

Facebook – www.facebook.com/SSMCAMRA

Twitter – @SSMCAMRA

High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire:

Facebook – www.facebook.com/HPTNECCAMRA

Central Manchester:

Facebook – www.facebook.com/groups/CentralManchesterCamra

Twitter – @MCRCentralCamra

Macclesfield & East Cheshire:

Facebook – www.facebook.com/groups/897449270304045

Twitter – @MECCAMRA

CAMRA Discounts

A list of local pubs generously offering a discount to CAMRA members can be found online at www.camra.org.uk/join/membership-benefits/real-ale-discount-scheme/

Front Cover

Mild Magic launches in 31 March. See Page 11. Our picture shows Gary Baker of the Petersgate Tap in Stockport serving a pint of Magical Mild! Photo by Lawrence Devaney.

Contributors

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Copy date for the May/June issue is Monday 10 April.

The Petersgate Tap



Double Winners!
Stockport CAMRA Pub of the Year and
Cider Pub of the Year (5th year in a row)

Winner, Stockport Pub of the Year, 2023

Winner Stockport Cider Pub of the Year
 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022, 2023

Winner Gtr Manchester Region
 Cider Pub of the Year
 2018, 2019

Good Beer Guide
 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022, 2023

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Pubs of the Month

Stockport & South Manchester Winners for March and April



The Stockport & South Manchester Pub of the Month for March is the Wellington Free House, Wellington Road South, Stockport.

Fronting the busy A6 road, and opposite the former Grand Central complex, this comfortable and welcoming pub has been created out of two shop units.



The exterior has full-height windows either side of the entrance; these can be opened in warmer weather to create a café-like feel to the place. Inside, you will find exposed structural steelwork married to bare brick walls, and sanded wooden flooring; these are coupled to displays of clocks (none showing

the right time, incidentally), bookshelves, old radios, and plenty of mirrors.

Two wood-burning stoves add warmth in cooler periods. The front room has a mix of dining room furniture and sofas, then down three steps you get to the 'Snubbery' which is a more intimate and relaxing space and has sofas and coffee tables. This also gives access to the toilets, and to the outside drinking yard, dubbed the 'Courtyard'. Weekends see entertainment in the form of a DJ, soul and Motown evening on Friday, and live artists performing on Saturdays.

The owners are Lee Woodhall and his partner Donna. Lee ensures the cask beers – Marston's Wainwright and two guests, often from Weetwood and Seven Brothers – are kept in consistently good condition.

So, please join us on the evening of Thursday, March 23, when we present this very well-deserved award. The Wellington is a short walk from Stockport Station and is well served by the many buses that use the A6.



The Pub of the Month for April is the Cross Keys in Cheadle Hulme. John Sutcliffe tells you all about it.

The Cross Keys is a traditional, friendly and hospitable public house, owned by Hydes and managed by Mike Bradshaw, who took over in October 2018.

Unlike establishments in the centre of Cheadle Hulme, the location of the Cross Keys is more difficult, and it is a tribute to Mike's skill and ability that we award Pub of the Month for April for continuing excellence. This will be the second time Mike has received our Pub of the Month award, and that itself is a tribute to his hard work.

Regular beers are well-kept Hydes Original, an excellent session bitter, and Lowry. Hydes Dark Ruby mild is also available from time to time, and will feature during the six weeks of Mild Magic.

On Friday nights there is karaoke, and on Saturdays the beer price is only £2 a pint from 6pm until 8pm. Opening times are 12 noon until 11pm, and midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.

The pub was refurbished ten years ago. There is a large, comfortable lounge entered from the central main door, or from a small, but adequate, car park at the side. At the rear of the bar there is a long games room with a pool table and dartboard. Upstairs is a sizeable function room that is available for meetings and special occasions.

At the back is a pleasant outdoor seating area. There used to be a bowling green, but that is now built on for housing, screened by a high fence. In the summer, this area is very pleasant for families, and customers can call in for refreshment when taking their dogs for a walk.

We will be presenting Mike with his award on the evening of Thursday 27 April, from around 8pm. Do join us for what should be a very enjoyable night.

As Cheadle Hulme railway station is at least a twenty-minute walk, the best transport is the 313 bus from Stockport to the Airport, or the 368 from Stockport to Heald Green and Wythenshawe. There is also the 328 circular from Stockport.

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 150 years. Check out their advert on the previous page.

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Stockport & South Manchester Awards

Pub, Cider Pub and Club of the Year 2023

Petersgate Tap Does the Double



For the first time in the history of its awards, the Stockport & South Manchester Branch has made the same pub both its **Cider Pub of the Year** and overall **Pub of the Year**.

The Petersgate Tap, on St Petersgate, Stockport, celebrated its sixth birthday in September last year, and in those few years it has become one of the leading local outlets for quality real ales, cider and perry.



It's a stylish conversion of a former bookmaker's shop, operating over two floors – and so is rather more than a traditional 'micropub'. In addition, there has been a constant programme of investment in the pub – smart new windows, an outside area with an awning for the warmer weather, cosy

cubicle seating and a bottled and canned beer shop upstairs. The shop functions on two levels – not only can you buy beers to take away, you can also choose something that takes your eye for fridge-cooling and drinking in.



On the bar you'll find six cask and six keg beers. These are sourced far and wide, although particular attention is paid to the top rank of local craft brewers here in the north-west. Dark beers are a speciality and if they are your thing you'll always find at least a couple available. The Tap also has arrangements

with several brewers to get special casks of beers that are otherwise destined for keg, bottle or can. Indeed, owners Alan and Chris Gent have bought several casks themselves for this purpose. Quality is top-notch across the board and the pub is a regular in the national *Good Beer Guide*.

There is also great attention to detail when it comes to real cider and perry. While local producers also feature here, the accent is perhaps more on sourcing top-quality ciders and perries from leading producers such as Ross on Wye, Gregg's Pit and Hecks. All the ciders are either fridge- or cellar-cooled too.

No fewer than eight traditional ciders and perries are now regularly available. A new innovation for 2023 will be the quarterly 'Cider Circle', a round-table-type discussion and tasting, sometimes featuring guest appearances by local cider makers.

This commitment has seen the Petersgate Tap win the Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year award for the last four years, and the 2023 award makes it five in a row.

But there's more to the Petersgate Tap than beer, cider and perry. It's something of a community hub too, with regular live music nights, poetry readings, and also charity quiz nights supporting Stockport MIND – notably the annual quiz which sees the whole pub filled with teams of regulars, and local brewers who also kindly provide prizes. The last one, in late 2022, raised almost £2,000.

On hearing of the awards, Petersgate Tap co-owner Alan Gent told *Opening Times*: "These awards represent the culmination of six years' consistently hard work, so to achieve a rare 'double' is especially pleasing. Chris has done a superb job over the years in maintaining beer quality, and we are constantly seeking to improve our cider offering – we'll be paying our annual visit to Gregg's Pit soon to collect a large quantity of cider and perry.

"We'd like to thank the staff members who have worked with us during this time, especially Gary who has been with us five years now. We'd also like to thank all our customers who have stayed loyal through these last few tough years. Most of all, we'd like to thank CAMRA members for voting for us; we really do value these awards." The awards will be presented to Alan and Chris on Sunday 12 March, from 2pm. It promises to be a great afternoon.

Vale Cottage is Runner-up



This year's Pub of the Year runner-up is the **Vale Cottage**, on Kirk Street in Gorton. This popular free house, set back from Hyde Road and well hidden in the Gore Brook conservation area, has the feel of a country pub. The low-beamed ceilings, the open fire in winter and the warm, traditional décor all add to the rural feel.

It's also a real community local, with plenty going on. On Tuesday there is a quiz night, on Saturday it's karaoke and on Sundays the pub hosts a folk night. Lunchtime food is available every day except Saturday – and it has a good reputation, too.

Originally a Wilsons pub, the Vale Cottage ended up in the hands of Enterprise Inns. However, for some years now it's been an independently owned free house, expertly run by Geoff McCabe. Three cask beers are usually available and these generally come from Timothy Taylor's (with Landlord making regular appearances) and Moorhouse's. Geoff ensures the beer quality is invariably high, and the Vale Cottage is a regular in CAMRA's national *Good Beer Guide*. We haven't arranged the presentation date yet – look out for this in a future *Opening Times*.

The Stockport & South Manchester Club of the Year for 2023 is the Ladybarn Social Club. See page12

Heard at the Bar

Pub News from Stockport, Manchester, Tameside and beyond

Northenden Notes



A trip to Northenden in late January found quite a few changes, writes *Mark McConachie*. On the positive side of things, the **Farmers Arms** on Longley Lane is selling cask Greene King IPA alongside Taylor's Landlord.

Over on Palatine Road, **Lounge About** continues to be a lively place in which it sells Wainwright Gold, usually paired with a beer from Pomona Island. On the keg-only bar front, all of **Anton's**, **Escape 2**, **Grapes Lounge Bar** and **Northenden Untapped** continue on that path. The latter bar did hint however that cask ale may return if trade warrants it; I hope so, because the surroundings it offers are a pleasant escape from the sometimes noisy, TV sports-orientated atmosphere of the other bars in the village.



On the negative side, **Grants Bar** on Palatine Road was demolished around November last year. The site is scheduled for housing and the footings for this were already in place. Overlooking the river

in a most wonderful setting is the **Tatton Arms** (which closed early 2008!). I found the site now surrounded by high fencing, the building in a poor condition and now looking ready for demolition. Planning permission has been granted to build housing.

Rectory, Cheadle



The newest bar in Cheadle is the Rectory on **Rectory Gardens**, next to Cheadle Post Office, writes *Alan Gent*.

It's the culmination of a project developed by Andy and Glenda, who are also part owners of La Cueva, a tapas restaurant next

door. Andy, who is an engineer, decided to take it on and renovate it himself, to complement La Cueva's food offering. The result is a light and airy bar with an unusual ceiling, panelled with doors. On the wall, there are four huge panels with music lyrics printed on them, making an interesting talking point.

The beer offer is keg-only and although Andy has been asked about putting cask on, he's sticking with his all-keg offer for now. Having said that, it's an interesting line-up. When I was in last, there were beers on from Lervig, White Hag, Cloudwater and Brouwerij Huyghe. There's also a regular real cider from Sheppy's and a Paulaner lager. The lack of cask isn't stopping locals visiting; when we called in, the place was full. It's also child- and dog-friendly. Worth a look.

Arden Arms, Bredbury



The **Arden Arms**, Ashton Road, Bredbury, has introduced 25% discount on real ale for CAMRA members. Three ales are now available, with Timothy Taylor's Landlord the house beer, complemented by two guest ales, one from Stockport Brewing and

one from Vocation. Please check whatpub.com for opening hours (currently shown as 3pm-10pm Monday-Thursday; 12 noon-11pm Friday and Saturday; 12 noon-10pm Sunday). The pub is on the 322/327 bus route, with a stop literally on the doorstep.

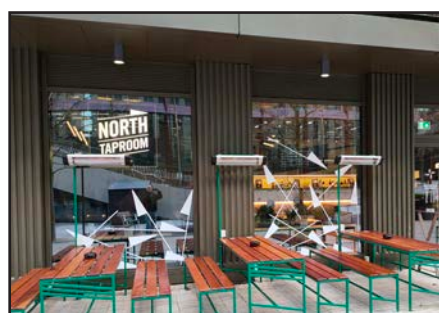
City Centre News



The **City Arms** on Kennedy Street was closed for a short period in January and has had a general spruce-up. The two rooms are structurally unaltered apart from the removal of the door to the corridor that leads to the ladies' toilet and to the backyard. The woodwork appears to have been revarnished and the whole appearance is smarter. The gents' toilets, which had become somewhat grotty in recent times, have had a full refurbishment and look much smarter and cleaner. There are still eight cask ales on handpump, and these were up to their

usual high standard when tasted.

Rain Bar, the JW Lees pub on Bridgewater Street, was closed for a refurbishment as we went to press. It is planned to reopen in March. JW Lees are also hinting that major changes are coming to **Duttons** on Albert Square.



In January, North Brewery from Leeds opened its first bar in the north west, the **North Taproom: Circle Square**. Circle Square is a new office development built on the site of the old BBC building on Oxford Road. The taproom is on the ground floor on

one side of the complex, with offices above. It faces out onto Circle Square, and, with outside tables, should be a popular location when the weather gets warmer.

There are 24 taps on the back wall, mostly keg/keykeg beers, but two are for cask and one for cider. The furniture is a mixture of high tables, and low tables with benches in the modern style, and service is either at the bar or at the table. The cask beers are from North, or North collaborations, and a collaboration with Lees featured recently. All in all, this is an excellent addition to this part of the city. It also makes for a decent pub crawl, mixing the traditional and the modern, when combined with **Bundobust Brewery**, the **Salisbury Ale House** and the **Lass O'Gowrie**.

Stagger

Heaton Moor with Jim Flynn

It was a very cold January night when we met up at the **Elizabethan**, acquired by Lees some years ago, and which had an extensive refurbishment relatively recently. This plush, well-lit, imposing, detached Victorian house sports a central bar serving a very large,



comfortable, open-plan lounge. Having walked through the surprisingly well-populated front garden, we were greeted by the first of the evening's door staff. On entering, we found the pub very busy, although we managed to find seats

in one of the more hidden alcoves that it still retains. There were three cask beers: Lees Bitter, MPA and Founders, which were all in good nick.



We went next door to the **Moor Club**, which was happy to accommodate us. This club was created by a merger of the Conservative Club and the Reform Club down the road. The building is another impressive, large and high-ceilinged establishment with a number of rooms. Upstairs, they cater for

weddings, and the front room downstairs is hired out for private functions or used for live music. The main bar area has two large TV screens showing sport. On the other side of a plastic partition there are full-sized snooker tables. The cask beer choice had been reduced to two since my last visit, with the Holt's Bitter being good – Marston's Wainwright wasn't sampled.



Across the road is the **Plough on the Moor**, where we were met by another doorman. The single, and very long, lounge area was heaving, with all the seats taken by a mainly younger clientele. There were four cask beers: Vocation Heart and Soul, Laine Breaker, Titanic Plum Porter and Marston's Wainwright. The Wainwright and Titanic were the pick of the bunch, the Vocation receiving mixed reviews and the Laine Breaker was exchanged, but, worryingly the pumpclip was not turned around. Heaton Moor is not cheap, but the Plough was a real outlier with cask beer over £5 a pint!



We moved a few doors down to the **Crown**, the only pub in the area to retain a multi-roomed interior and a traditional vault. This characterful pub was quieter than the Plough

(although it filled up quite rapidly after we arrived). Ignoring the snug to the right, which unusually, boasts its own gents' loo, we went

into the main lounge. There were three beers on sale, all from Greene King: IPA, Yardbird and Firebird. Only the latter two were tried, with Firebird being well below standard and returned, and the Yardbird being in reasonable nick. Just as we were leaving, the evening's entertainment, a guitarist, struck his first chords (there were we thinking that the customer surge was down to us!).



We walked a quarter of a mile down to the **Moor Top**, where we were greeted by yet another doorman. The pub's beers were all from Stockport Brewing Company: Jester, Yuletide Blonde and the house beer, Moortop. The large bar area is L-shaped and features two electronic

'Shuffl' boards. There is also a semi-partitioned area off to the right. To the front is a roadside beer garden, not as extensive as the Elizabethan's, but nevertheless well populated with tables, heaters, etc. The pub was moderately busy, but quieter than those in Heaton Moor centre. All the beers were more than reasonable.

We then set off for the longest walk of the stagger, down Green Lane towards the **Nursery** in Heaton Norris. Luckily, we'd received an invite to the **Heatons Sports Club**, which broke our journey. Set back from the road, it's hidden from view by the houses built on the land sold by the club to fund this very plush modern facility. The weather by this stage was very cold and the driveway had iced up, causing one of us to slip over. Picking him up, we took a route across the pitches and up to the large, comfortable bar on the first floor. As there had been no training sessions, we were almost entirely by ourselves. By this time, our number had swelled, and we all sat down to sample the Wainwright and the Stockport Cascade, which was one of the beers of the night.



Tucked away at the end of a picturesque cobbled street, the **Nursery** is one of Stockport's must-visit pubs! This 1930s Hydes house was CAMRA's 2001 National Pub of the Year and, while it could now do with a bit of a spruce up, it's still a gem. With a magnificent wood-panelled interior, the

pub is on CAMRA's National Inventory of Historic Interiors and is also Grade II listed. Around the side is the traditional vault and at the rear a bowling green. We sat and enjoyed the 1863, Black Ale (a seasonal from their Ralf+Alf range), Lowry and Hopster, which were all considered good; the Black Ale was voted beer of the night. Nobody tried Original, and disappointingly the excellent Dark Ruby was not on. Overall, a good end to what was, perhaps with an odd exception, not a bad stagger.

The Nursery photo courtesy of Mick Slaughter.

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Mild Magic 2023

Visit Pubs, Drink Beer, Win Prizes

Friday 31 March to Sunday 14 May

According to the media, mild is dying out. Recent statistics show this neglected and misunderstood beer style accounts for just 0.3% of the beer market. To support this, we have organised yet another Mild Magic trail for you to enjoy.



This is the country's largest and longest-running mild trail; the first one was in 1994. Luckily, mild continues to flourish in our region, but it is now non-existent in many places.

This year, we have signed up no fewer than 100 pubs to take part: many will be offering their customers cask mild just for the duration of Mild Magic and for that they have our thanks. Last year, at least 65 different milds were noted during Mild Magic, so here's your chance to seek out and try examples of this tasty beer style. Milds are not necessarily dark nor low ABV; there are light-coloured milds, as well as some rather strong ones!

So what are we asking you to do?

First, enter a participating pub (see end) and pick up an entry card, or you can download one from our website (www.ssmcamra.co.uk). Second, buy a cask mild (pint or half) and ask the bar staff for a sticker to affix to your card. If no stickers are available, please get the card signed. Third, drink the mild and savour its taste. Fourth, enter a participating pub in a different area as shown on the card. Repeat from step two until you have filled your card. NB: check the pub opening hours, especially if you are making a special journey (details available at whatpub.com).

How do I win a prize?

To complete the standard **Mild Magic**, collect stickers from **12 different areas** and you will receive a Mild Magic T-shirt and two ½ pint vouchers to be redeemed for milds of your choice at the 2023 Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. This will be held between 22 and 24 June at the Masonic Hall on Wellington Road South, Stockport SK1 3UA. See below for redemption details.

Collect stickers from **24 different areas** to enter **Mild Magic Extra** and receive a Mild Magic polo shirt and three ½ pint vouchers for mild at the Festival.

Mild Magic Super is a little more challenging. Visit **48 pubs from at least 36 different areas** (72 are available) and you will win a Mild Magic sweatshirt and four ½ pint vouchers for mild at the Festival.

Finally, we have the **Mild Magic Ultra** award for **visiting every pub**. This will win you a Mild Magic polo shirt, plus a sweatshirt, along with six ½ pint vouchers for mild at the Festival.

For an optional fun challenge, we also have **Mild Magic Scrabble**. Each participating pub has an associated letter (shown on the card and sticker). Collect enough stickers on a card to spell out MILD MAGIC and win another two ½ pint mild vouchers for redemption at the Beer Festival (with a maximum of four per person).

To add even more interest, everyone participating is invited to vote for the most appealing pub where you enjoyed a mild. In addition, you can vote for the best mild you encountered on the trail; which may not have been in the most appealing pub! The winning pubs will then be presented with a 'Mild Champion' award and everyone will be invited to attend these award ceremonies.

How long do I have to complete all this?

Mild Magic runs from Friday 31 March to Sunday 14 May inclusive.

What do I do when I have finished?

Post all your completed cards to the Mild Magic address given on the card to arrive by 24 May (only one entry per person). Receipt of the cards will be acknowledged electronically, so an email address or mobile number is

required. All entries are eligible for inclusion in a Grand Draw to be one of the people visiting either Hydes Brewery or Marble Brewery; both are near Media City in Salford. The trip to Hydes will be on Friday 7 July starting at 11am and the trip round Marble will be on the afternoon of Saturday 8 July – time to be confirmed. If you are successful, full details will be included with your invitation.

Where do I claim my garment and vouchers?

Garments and mild vouchers will be dispensed at the Stockport Beer and Cider Festival from the CAMRA Shop. If you are not attending the Festival, other provisions will have to be agreed.

Thanks to our Sponsor – Hydes Brewery

This year, we are delighted to welcome back Hydes as the Mild Magic Sponsor. Hydes is one of the few breweries to brew not one, but two milds:

Dark Ruby is a luscious dark mild, while 1863, now badged as a session amber ale, was originally sold as Hydes Best Mild, a classic northern light mild. They don't all have to be dark! Look out for both as you go round the Mild Magic pubs.



We have organised two social events connected to Mild Magic using service buses and anyone can come along. On Saturday 1 April, we will be covering some of the places on the Oxford Road/Wilmslow Road corridor. The second trip is on Saturday 29 April when we will be going to visit some pubs in Tameside. This will include a visit to the Angel in Dukinfield, where High Peak Branch will be presenting their Pub of the Spring award. Full details are available on our website and social media.

If you haven't taken part in Mild Magic before, you must have a go this time: it's great fun and it's so easy – you only need to visit 12 different areas over a six-week period – and there are 72 areas to choose from! It's an excellent chance to visit some new places, try some new beers and win great prizes while voting with your feet in favour of Britain's proud brewing heritage. Please support our campaign to preserve cask-conditioned mild in this area!

The Mild Magic Pubs

Some of the areas below are subdivided on the card.

Altrincham: Costello's Bar, Unicorn; **Ashton u Lyne:** Ash Tree, Halfway House, Tapsters; **Bramhall:** Ladybrook Hotel; **Bredbury:** Arden Arms; **Burnage:** Reasons To Be Cheerful; **Chapel-en-le-Frith:** Old Cell Ale Bar; **Cheadle:** Crown, James Watts, Wobbly Stamp; **Cheadle Hulme:** Cross Keys, John Millington, P5; **Chorlton:** Beech Inn, Horse & Jockey, Sedge Lynn; **Clayton:** Grove; **Davenport:** Milliner; **Didsbury:** Famous Crown, Fletcher Moss, Gateway, Head of Steam, Wine and Wallop; **Droylsden:** Silly Country; **Dukinfield:** Angel, Wheatsheaf; **Eccles:** Eccles Cross, Lamb Hotel; **Fallowfield:** Friendship Inn; **Gatley:** Horse & Farrier; **Glossop:** Bar 2, Smithy Fold; **Gorton:** Vale Cottage; **Hadfield:** The Chieftain; **Hazel Grove:** George & Dragon, Grove Alehouse, Wilfred Wood; **Heatons:** Crown, Griffin, Heaton Hops, Moortop, Navigation, Nursery, The Beer Shop, The Heaton; **Hyde:** Cheshire Ring, Jack's Bar, Queens; **Ladybarn:** Ladybarn Social Club; **Levenshulme:** Fred's Ale House; **Manchester:** Ape & Apple, Britons Protection, City Arms, Crown & Anchor, Grey Horse, Lower Turk's Head, Molly House, Old Monkey, Paramount, Piccadilly Tap, Smithfield, Waterhouse; **Marple:** Norfolk Arms, Northumberland Arms, Samuel Oldknow; **Monton:** Park; **Mossley:** Butchers Arms, Gillery; **New Mills:** Beer Shed, Chalkers Snooker Club; **Patricroft:** Stanley Arms; **Poynton:** Royal British Legion; **Reddish:** Reddish Ale; **Romiley:** Jake's Ale House; **Rusholme:** Ford Madox Brown; **Sale:** JP Joule, Old Plough, Volunteer; **Salford:** New Oxford; **Stalybridge:** Bridge Beers, Q Inn, Society Rooms, Station Buffet Bar, White House; **Stockport:** Angel Inn, Calverts Court, Cocked Hat, Crown Inn, Petersgate Tap, Ye Olde Vic; **Swinton:** Morning Star; **Timperley:** Quarry Bank Inn; **Urmston:** Lord Nelson, Prairie Schooner, Tim Bobbin; **Whaley Bridge:** Goyt Inn; **Whitehough:** Old Hall; **Withington:** Victoria.

Club of the Year 2023

Ladybarn Social Club

For the second year running, the Stockport & South Manchester Club of the Year is the **Ladybarn Social Club**, on Green Street in Ladybarn.



The club occupies a building that was previously the White Swan pub – a Robinsons house, although originally belonging to Kay's Atlas Brewery of Ardwick. When Robinsons closed the pub around eleven years ago, it was acquired by the social club, which had recently sold its nearby premises for housing. It has gone from strength to strength ever since, and it was the Stockport & South Manchester Club of the Year in 2015 and 2017.



The past two and a half years have seen considerable changes. During the first lockdown, some £30,000 was spent improving the building and its facilities. There was a major refurbishment upstairs (where you will find two full-size snooker tables), downstairs the furniture was replaced,

and outside the building was made watertight. The opportunity was also taken to restore the 'Kay's Ales' signage that can be seen on photographs taken in the 1950s.

There have also been significant changes in the cask beer range. There was previously a tie to Carlsberg Marston's, which was finally bought out in 2019. This has enabled secretary Phil Cowtan, who also looks after the cellar, to become rather more adventurous. There are three cask beers on the bar. Permanent is Robinsons Unicorn, which is very popular with many of the regulars. This is joined by two ever-changing guest beers, usually obtained from small, local brewers. Phil makes a point of visiting Manchester pubs to see what's new and what's selling well. He's a big fan of Reddish-based Steelfish Brewing, whose products have been very well received.

Aside from the popular Unicorn, Phil aims to have one darker beer and one pale beer on tap. He has also been surprised how well received some of the newer unfiltered and hazy cask beers have been. He also tells us that cask in general has really taken off.

The club currently has around 320 members, and this is steadily increasing. It only costs £20 a year (and just £10 if you are over 65). Non-members can pay three visits before being asked to join.

The presentation date hadn't been arranged when *Opening Times* went to press but it should be in the next couple of months.

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All for that taste of Taylor's



Scribbles on a Beer Mat



Welcome to Scribbles on a Beer Mat: the quiet corner of a Stockport pub where our Poet in Residence, Carl Burkitt, is sipping a pale ale and scribbling some poems.

“If Your Misdemeanours Came to Light, Would You be Ashamed?”

I'm not sure, he replies, his hair as silver as his tongue used to be.

His voice cracks on the journey across their table for two and

his friend refuses to change the conversation. Nosy pub-goers

and a wannabe writer use every muscle in their necks not looking.

If your misdemeanours came to light, would you be ashamed? repeats his friend.

We Chose to See

The skin on the bald head making everyone in this pub laugh is my Uncle Jim.

It is wrapped around a skull tight enough to show its strength. The light dancing off the top is a disco ball

at a rave we all had too many chores or kids or plans to accept the invite to. The freckles are bullets of a dying to do list. The folds above

the eyebrows are six smiles we chose to see, disappearing as the head slowly hangs.

“Is it OK if I Stroke Your Dog?”

Please do, says the owner sipping his stout, surprised at his sexy tone.

Karaoke Every Monday with Our Very Own Dave

Some pubs have people made of the stuff that built the walls. Bricks for bones and floorboards for skin. This place has Geoff who cannot sing. The crowd has hearts for ears and they won't stop beating for him.

Pub News In Brief

Closures and Demolitions

In Withington, the **Libertine** is closed until further notice. This appears to be connected with fuel and utility bills. Also closed as we went to press was the **Hesketh** in Cheadle Hulme. It was being advertised as to let on the Star Pubs & Bars website.



One particularly sad loss is the **Comfortable Gill** on King Street West in Stockport. It's not sold real ale for ages but that's not really the point here. For almost 18 years now, it's been run by experienced licensee Derek Shawcross and his partner Jean, who

rescued it from closure and turned it into a thriving community local specialising in karaoke. Derek has, somewhat reluctantly we feel, agreed to sell up to Stockport Council which plans to level the whole area as part of the Stockport West regeneration scheme. The last night was 24 February.

In Wythenshawe, the **Happy Man** on Portway was knocked down in mid-December. Nearby, in Selstead Road, the **Woodpecker** is fenced off and boarded up. Its fate remains uncertain.

In Hazel Grove, the long-closed **Woodman** has now been demolished. Building work appears to be underway on the closed **Anchor** next door.

Cheadle Snippets

The **Crown** (Hydes) on High Street has a 50p a pint reduction on cask ales before 6pm on weekdays. Nearby, the **James Watts** (also Hydes) has 50p a pint off cask ales on Mondays and Tuesdays.

On Manchester Road, the **Ashlea** has a house beer, Cheadle Best Bitter (3.9%). We understand this is a 'house beer' that owners Greene King make available across their estate, and which is rebadged for each pub. It is otherwise sold as Hardys & Hansons Kimberley Bitter, which, despite carrying the name of an old Nottingham brewery, is actually brewed in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.

Another house beer can be found in the **Wobbly Stamp**. This is Stancill Wobbly Best Bitter (3.8%), otherwise sold as Stancill Best Bitter. Stancill Brewery is based in Sheffield and makes a range of well-regarded beers.



The **Red Lion** in Cheadle has established itself in the last year or so as a pub worthy of a visit, *adds Sue Lightfoot*. Run by the same team as the Bakers in Stockport and the Crown, Heaton Mersey, this Robinsons pub

serves three Robinsons beers, and Titanic Plum Porter, as standard, along with a pin of Old Tom on the bar during the depths of winter. The food available is varied, and of good quality – tables are often booked up, potential customers having to be turned away.

There was a planned kitchen refurbishment which should have been completed by the time this issue of *Opening Times* comes out; the Red Lion was due to resume serving meals at the end of February/beginning of March.

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What's Brewing

Brewery News from around the region

New from Robinsons



It's not very often Robinsons introduce a new permanent beer to their range, but March sees the addition of **Citra Pale Ale**. This 3.4% session ale appeared last year and has been so successful that it's now back – for good.

The beer is described as a “light pale ale packed full of hops that delivers a sweet, citrus flavour profile resulting in a sessionable and accessible ale.”

It was certainly popular last year, a point reflected by Robinsons' drinks and brands manager Sam Kennerley, who told *Opening Times*: “We are delighted for Citra Pale Ale to join our core range of award-winning cask ales.

Just like Dizzy Blonde, Citra Pale Ale started out life as a popular seasonal beer and, ever since last summer, we've heard both licensees and customers demanding Citra come back!”

The introduction of Citra Pale Ale to the range is accompanied by the withdrawal of **Wizard**, a 3.7% session bitter, which does seem to have become much less popular in recent years.

Lees Latest



Middleton-based family brewers JW Lees have also announced their 2023 seasonal beer programme. Available from March to June is **Spring Dew** (4.5%). Described as a Hallertau Bock, the brewery says the beer “flaunts its classic German qualities with Hallertau hops and Munich malt. It has a light fruitiness and freshness inspired by early alpine mornings. This lager-ale hybrid is Bock in style but with the body and character of a fine, premium ale.”

Later in the year, we'll see Summer Pale (3.8%), Autumn Drop (4.3%) and, of course, the famous Plum Pudding (4.8%). More details on those in future issues of *Opening Times*.

Distant Hills Update

You can expect to see new beers from Glossop's **Distant Hills Brewing** in March and April.



First up is **Dark Mild** (3.2%), brewed in preparation for Mild Magic. This is a traditional dark mild hopped with Fuggles and Goldings, with notes of roasted barley. This will be available exclusively in cask and 500ml bottles.

Also out is **Premium Bitter** (4.8%). This is described as “a classic premium bitter, made with the finest ale malts. This will be flavoursome and floral with a clean and structured bitterness.”

Something different will be **Belgian Brut** (5%). This will be a dry, golden, Brut-style Belgian-influenced beer. This will be the first time Distant Hills has produced a beer like this.

There's a new brewer on board, too. Sean Robinson, formerly of Assembly Brew Co., has joined the Distant Hills team. Sean will be working with brewery advisor Don Burgess on their 2023 cask and keg programme.

News from RedWillow

Macclesfield's **RedWillow Brewery** has had a licence application approved for the unit next door to the brewery. This raises the exciting possibility of an on-site brewery tap. RedWillow has also had to expand its warehousing to keep up with demand.

Hideaway On The Move



Dan Wright (pictured here) established his **Hideaway Brewery** during the pandemic. It was based at his house in Worsley, and trading started in December 2020.

Despite the perhaps unfortunate timing, Hideaway has been very well received and now it's on the move. Indeed, not only is it moving, it's also getting much bigger. Dan has taken on a 3,000 square foot unit on Kansas Avenue in Salford, which makes him a near neighbour of both Hydes and Marble.

The new brewery will have a 12-hectolitre (or about seven-barrel) capacity, and the premises will also incorporate a brewery tap and kitchen. When *Opening Times* called, everything was still very much a work in progress, although the brewery itself had been installed. Dan is carrying out most of the work himself, with specialists called in as and when necessary. The plan is to open over the Easter weekend, and Dan tells us that he wants the tap to be very much a community-focused and family-friendly space.

As for the beers, expect hazy pales and dark beers in the modern style. They will be packaged in keykegs, with some limited runs in cans. Dan isn't ruling out cask down the line, though. *Opening Times* will return for another report when it's all up and running.

Runaway Move Underway



We have previously reported on **Runaway Brewery's** planned move to Stockport and it's now underway. In fact, by the time you read this, it may be largely complete.

The last brew took place at the Manchester premises on 17 February, after which came the big job of moving everything to the new premises on Apsley Street, just opposite the new Weir Mill development. If possible, *Opening Times* will be there to record the first Stockport brew.

More Brewery News on Page 19



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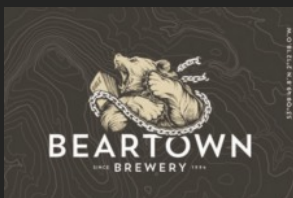
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Pub Walks with Chris Morris

Gee Cross



Located at a height of 800 feet, near the top of Werneth Low, there can't be many pubs in Greater Manchester with a better view than the **Hare & Hounds**. The 180-degree view of East Manchester and the surrounding hills is a big pull for customers, and the food is very popular. On a windy day, you'll be glad of the welcoming and inviting interior with low ceilings, oak beams, exposed timbers and bespoke furniture. On my last visit, the cask beers were Black Sheep Best Bitter and Greene King IPA. A further two cask beers are often available during peak times.

Bus Information

This walk uses the 330 bus route, which runs between Stockport and Ashton. During the day, services run every 12 minutes, with evening services running every 30 mins. The bus also passes through Bredbury, Woodley, Hyde and Dukinfield. For timetable information, visit tfgm.com.

The Walk

This is a two-mile walk with a long, steep climb of 380 feet. It will probably be very muddy at the start after wet weather, so walking boots or Wellington boots are recommended. The OS Explorer map is 277 Manchester & Salford (OS app also available).

We need to exit the 330 bus on Stockport Road, at the stop opposite the Joshua Bradley pub. If you have time, I would recommend a pre-walk visit for a drink or food.



Named after a former mayor of Hyde, the **Joshua Bradley** is a grand pub that is popular with diners, but also caters for those just wanting a drink. The handsome and comfortable interior features high ceilings and impressive wooden fixtures, with a thoughtful arrangement

of mixed seating styles, sure to suit all preferences. Owned by Hydes Brewery, up to four cask beers are available which, on my last visit, were Original and Dark Ruby, plus Black Ale and Flash Banger from their Ralf+Alf range.

On exiting the pub to begin our walk, we need to return to the main road. When looking at the front of the pub from the road, our route is left, along the pavement for a few steps, then right, through the stile

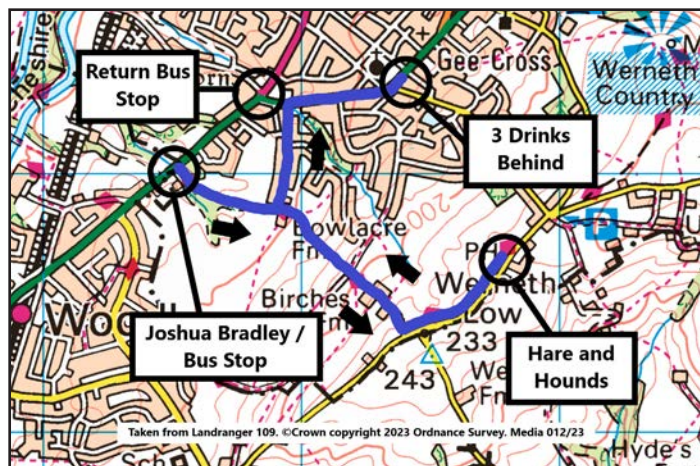
next to the stone wall. Follow the path down to the woodland, which reaches a stream. This is the part that can get muddy.

We cross over the stream and follow the same trail up on the other side. With the Joshua Bradley behind us, walk through the remaining woodland, parallel to the stream for 200 yards, until you reach a gate and stile. Carry on straight ahead and after 100 yards we reach another gate with a farmhouse to the right. Our route is through the stone stile and continuing in the same direction as before, through the narrow path between a dry-stone wall and a hedge.

After exiting the small gate into a field, our route is up the hill to a large tree, again in the same direction as before. Passing through a kissing-gate, we bear right and carry on up the hill, keeping the fence on our right. Carry straight on through the next field and through a kissing-gate to a track. Turn right here and then immediately left to continue up the hill, signposted to Broadbottom. At this point we are being rewarded with a superb view of Tameside and beyond. Passing between two buildings, we continue straight up the hill for 300 yards until we reach Werneth Low Road, running across our path. Take the track to the left now, just before the road, signposted to Broadbottom. Follow this path for 500 yards until you reach the **Hare and Hounds**.

After exiting the pub, we now retrace our steps back down the hill as far as the farmhouse. After exiting the narrow path between the hedge and dry-stone wall at the Bowlacre Farm gate, we now turn right along a residential street, Bowlacre Road. Follow this for 400 yards, whilst admiring the mansions, until you reach Stockport Road. The 330 bus back can be found 100 yards to the left, but for more refreshment we turn right. After a short walk, we pass the Cheshire Cheese, but unfortunately they have recently stopped selling cask beer. However, rich rewards can be found 300 yards further up Stockport Road at the micropub **3 Drinks Behind**.

Located at the former premises of the excellent Jake's of Gee Cross, this new establishment continues with the same warm welcome and high standards as before. An impressively stocked bar awaits, with up to four cask beers available, with German and craft beers plus cider on keg. On last inspection, the cask beers were Bright Lights and Kerala from Distant Hills, with Crème Bearlee and the house beer, 3 Bears Behind, from Beartown Brewery. There is also an extensive wine and gin list.



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What's Brewing

Brewery News from around the region

Strange Times

Beers from Salford's Strange Times have become a familiar sight on bars across the *Opening Times* area. They were permanent fixtures on the bar of the sadly demolished Railway in Stockport. It feels like they have been around for a long time, but this is, in fact, quite a new brewery. Like Hideaway (see page 15), it's a brewery born during the pandemic, firing up its coppers at the beginning of 2021.



But, while the brewery might be young, the team behind it (pictured here) is very experienced, with over 25 years in the industry. The owner and director is Alex Lord (pictured centre), who some readers will remember as the very hard-working

licensee of the aforementioned Railway, and subsequently as brewer at the now-defunct Outstanding Brewery. The head brewer is Lauren Guy, another experienced hand, and assistant brewer Aaron Barton-Wells completes the team.

Lauren was unavailable when *Opening Times* called, but Alex took time out to have a chat. He explained that a great deal of thought went into the brewery, its branding and the beers before the launch. Indeed, the website (strangetimesbrewing.com) goes into impressive detail about both the brewery's sustainable ethos and ethically sourced ingredients. All the beers are vegan, too, with the exception of a honey beer – and even then, a percentage of the sales from that go to charities supporting bees.

Like other successful brewers, the team makes beer they like themselves – which in our experience is always a recipe for success. What they like are clean and very drinkable beers, where malt and hops come to the fore. While you'll find some extra ingredients (there's a very popular cherry beer made in the summer), what you won't find are pastry stouts and suchlike.



The brewing kit, based in two units just across the road from Ordsall Hall, is an impressive collection of large stainless steel and wood-clad vessels, with a total capacity of 28 barrels (there's a large 24-barrel kit, and a smaller one with a four-barrel capacity).

Brewing currently takes place twice a week. Beers are available in cask and keg, and, following a successful crowd-funding last year, also in can.

There's a core range of five beers – Neo Kosmo Blond (4.1%), Lorelei Lager (4.2%), Coyote APA (4.5%), Mad King Sweeney Irish Red (4.6%) and Memento Mori (5.5%). These are supplemented by one-off and seasonal brews. The cherry beer will be reappearing soon, and the winter months will see a stout. In late February, there was a special beer made for International Women's Day (see next column).

You'll find Strange Times beers across Greater Manchester, but one guaranteed outlet is just a short walk from the brewery.



This is the **Bee Orchard**, on Clippers Quay. Pretty much on the canal waterfront, it's an attractively located bar personally owned by Alex. Here you'll find two Strange Times beers on handpump and four or five on keg, alongside other good things to drink, including excellent tea and coffee.

When *Opening Times* paid a flying visit, we were told that cheese and charcuterie plates were also being introduced. Bee Orchard is closed on Mondays, and open 4-11pm Tuesday to Thursday; 12 noon to 11pm Friday and Saturday, and 12 noon to 10pm on Sunday. It's a brief walk from Exchange Quay tram stop. Anyone wanting to order Strange Times beers can contact the brewery on 0161 873 8090 or email info@strangetimesbrewing.com.

International Women's Day Beer



On Saturday 18 February, the team at Strange Times opened their doors to create an orange-infused, hazy, pale beer with the Manchester Branch of Crafty Beer Girls, founded and co-ordinated by Francesca Slattery, writes Sarah Hopes. Crafty Beer Girls is a social group for beer-loving and beer-curious women who have monthly meet-ups in independent pubs, venues and taprooms across Greater Manchester. This was their first collaboration brewing project, and was organised with Strange Times' head brewer Lauren Guy and Sarah Hyde of Rambling Beer Co. as part of the International Women's Collaboration Brew Day 2023.

Good fun was had by all, including putting the ingredients for the mash together, and cutting the entire 25kg tub of oranges for the brew. The fruit was donated by Corin Bell of Open Kitchen, Manchester's leading sustainable catering company.

There was also a short brewery tour, with plenty of questions which were all answered by the friendly team on hand.

The beer Boudica's Chariot, is a 4.2% hazy pale ale brewed using Boadicea and Callista hops. It will be available in cask, keg and can, and was launched at Manchester's **Port Street Beer House** on 8 March, which is International Women's Day.

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News Extra

More pub and brewery news from across the area

SupNorth

After a lull late last year, Heaton Chapel's **SupNorth Brew Co.** is back fully up and running, so *Opening Times* asked to call in. It is perhaps the smallest brewery we've visited, occupying as it does the compact garage of a residential property.



The four people involved are all former homebrewers. Tom Roberts (whose garage houses the brewery), Richard James and Paul Middleton all live locally, while the fourth member of the team, Charlie Gardner, lives in Knutsford. Tom and Richard were home brewing together in 2017, and in 2019 were joined by Paul and Charlie. Following feedback from friends and family, they thought their beers had some commercial potential. A commercial licence was obtained in February last year and it's been a

case of steady progress since.

The brewery is just 80-litre capacity and brewing takes place twice a month. The beers, often modern, hazy pale ales of various strengths, along with the occasional stout, are generally canned, although they will sometimes appear in a keykeg. The striking artwork on the cans, based on locally-seen graffiti, is designed by Richard.

Given the limited production, you won't see SupNorth beers everywhere, although they do turn up at the nearby **Heaton Hops**, and also at the **Station Hop** in Levenshulme. There's also an online shop at www.supnorthbrew.com/shop.

Pictured below in the brewhouse, clockwise from back left: Paul, Tom, Charlie and Rich.



Manchester Brewing

We were very sorry to learn that Manchester Brewing, based in one of the railway arches on North Western Street in Ardwick, has ceased brewing. Brewer Paul Mellor produced an excellent range of beers and we hope that the brewing world has not heard the last of him.

Britons Protection Update

Central Manchester branch continues to monitor the situation at the **Britons Protection**, Great Bridgewater Street, Manchester City Centre, and lend assistance to the management in their attempts to keep the licence, which the pub company wishes to take back. Steve

Ingham, the branch's Pub Preservation Officer, has met with Allan Hudd the manager, and reports as follows:



"Allan explained that following a preliminary court hearing in January in the management's attempts to keep the licence, the judge made a number of directions to enable each side to be prepared for a full hearing in August. These directions centre around 'discovery', which means that each party is required to disclose to the other the evidence upon which they intend to rely at the final hearing. Essentially, this is documentation and other evidence. The expectation will be that this process informs the parties so that negotiation and compromise are promoted to avoid a full hearing in court. The process of discovery is required to be completed by June of this year."

Allan and the team at the pub are considering a fundraising event in June to help their campaign.

In respect of the second threat to the Britons Protection, specifically the hemming in by new developments around the pub, the developers have not furthered their proposals. This may not prevent a modified scheme being submitted at a later date. Again, Central Manchester CAMRA will continue to monitor the situation.

The Pelican



As readers may know, Manchester's **Beatnikz Republic** Brewing closed down last spring, to be replaced by **Green Arches**. The associated bar, **Beatnikz Republic NQ**, on the corner of Dale Street and Tariff Street in

Manchester City Centre, continued. However, major changes are now imminent.

It has been acquired by Ollie Turton and Rosie Setterfield-Price of **Squawk** Brewing, and will be renamed the **Pelican**. While it is independent of Squawk, the bar will function as a brewery tap, featuring cask and keg Squawk beers plus guests. There will be an enhanced range of other drinks, too.

Some things will remain the same – such as the seating and the food offer, but others will change, notably the internal appearance. The plastic sheeting had already been removed from the walls as we went to press.

The official launch of this very welcome development was scheduled for mid-to-late-March, although *Opening Times* knows from long experience that these things can slip a bit. We will, however, be there when it opens, so look for another report down the line.

In Brief

As we went to press, the **Three Bears** in Hazel Grove was closed for a refurbishment, although it should be open again by the time you read this. It is currently 'to let' on the Robinsons website. In Stockport, the **Petersgate Tap** is hosting a tap takeover and 'meet the brewer' event with **Alphabet** Brewing on 27 April.

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Campaign
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Real Ale

What's On

Local CAMRA Branch Diaries

Forthcoming events for the following local branches:

- * **Stockport & South Manchester (SSM)**
- * **High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire (HPNC)**
- * **Central Manchester (CMCR)**
- * **Macclesfield & East Cheshire (MEC)**

Formal Branch Meetings

CAMRA members only at these meetings.

Thursday 9 March – Gateway, 882 Wilmslow Road, East Didsbury, M20 5PG. Starts 8pm. (SSM)

Monday 13 March – Halfway House, 123 Whiteacre Road, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 9PS. Starts 7:30pm. (HPNC)

Thursday 9 March – Gateway, 882 Wilmslow Road, East Didsbury, M20 5PG. Guest speaker from Brightside Brewery. Starts 8pm. (SSM)

Monday 13 March – Halfway House, 123 Whiteacre Road, Ashton, OL6 9PS. Starts 7:30pm. (HPNC)

Monday 13 March – Beer Emporium Bottle Bank, 24 London Road, Holmes Chapel, CW4 7AL. Will include Branch AGM. Starts 8pm. (MEC)

Thursday 13 April – Blossoms, 2 Buxton Road, Heaviley, SK2 6NU. Will include Branch AGM. Starts 8pm. (SSM)

Saturday 15 April – Cheshire Cheese, 37-39 High Street, Buxton, SK17 6HA. Starts 1pm. Will be followed by a social. (HPNC)

Monday 17 April – Harrington Arms, Gawsworth, SK11 9RJ. Starts 8pm. (MEC)

Social Events & Presentations

Sunday 12 March – Presentation of 2023 Cider Pub of the Year and Pub of the Year to the Petersgate Tap, 19a St Petersgate, Stockport, SK1 1EB. From 2pm. (SSM)

Friday 17 March – Withington Stagger: 7:30pm Orion, 8 Burton Road, M20 3ED; 8:30pm Victoria, 438 Wilmslow Road, M20 3BW; final pub Red Lion, 532 Wilmslow Road, M20 4BT. Following this we plan to travel down to Didsbury and present the 2022 Pub of the Year Runner-up award to the Fletcher Moss (around 9:45pm). (SSM)

Saturday 18 March – Social in Poynton. First pub will be the Kingfisher, London Road South, SK12 1NJ. Starts 1pm. (HPNC)

Thursday 23 March – Pub of the Month presentation to the Wellington Free House, 59-61 Wellington Road North, Stockport, SK1 3RU. From 8pm. (SSM)

Tuesday 4 April – Weekday Wander in Altrincham. Meet 11:15am on platform of Stockport Station for 11:19am train. First pub in Altrincham: Unicorn, 1 Ashley Road, WA14 2DP. (SSM)

Friday 21 April – Stockport South & Underbanks Stagger: 7:30pm Wellington, 59-61 Wellington Road South, SK1 3RU; 8:30pm Queens Head, 12 Little Underbank, SK1 1JT; final pub Petersgate Tap, 19a St Petersgate, SK1 1EB. (SSM)

Thursday 27 April – Pub of the Month presentation to the Cross Keys, 10 Adswold Road, Cheadle Hulme, SK8 5QA. From 8pm. (SSM)

Saturday 29 April – Spring Pub of the Season presentation to the Angel, 197 King Street, Dukinfield, SK16 4TH. Starts 1pm. Will be followed by a social around local pubs. (HPNC)

Wednesday 3 May – Weekday Wander in Stalybridge. Meet 11:10am on platform at Stockport Station for 11:15am train. First pub: Wharf Tavern, 77 Caroline Street, Stalybridge SK15 1PD. (SSM)

Saturday 6 May – Trip to open day at Thornsett Brewery & Hopyard, Thornsett Fields Farm, Briargrove Road, SK22 1AX. Timings TBC. (HPNC)

CAMRA Awards

Recent Presentations

The High Peak, Tameside & North East Cheshire CAMRA Winter Pub of the Season award was won by **Jake's Ale House**, on Compstall Road in Romiley, writes Nick Earle.



This micropub continues to serve quality real ales from its five handpumps. The beers change constantly and usually include a local ale, guests from around the country and a dark beer.

Jake's is welcoming to all. As well as the cask beer, there are five keg lines, a gin bar and a selection of international bottled beers. This all fits into a fairly small bar area.

The original curved shop windows survive and draw you in, as well as providing character. Inside, there is a warm atmosphere created by the extensive use of natural wood, and its mostly booth seating. There is a smaller room at the back with a log-burning stove, which is open at the weekends or when the pub is busy.

The pub is now owned and run by Cheryl Shaw. She has continued to run a great bar while making improvements to the decoration and appearance. Cheryl is pictured above accepting the award from branch secretary, Peter Mitchell.

The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for December was **Fred's Ale House** on Stockport Road in Levenshulme.





The opening of Fred's Ale House by the Hennigan family in 2015 was really the first recognition that the Levenshulme pub scene was changing, and that there was a demand for real ale in the area. This independent bar, named because the building once housed a Betfred bookies, is set over three floors. It is part bar, part coffee shop, and also an art gallery, but the emphasis is very much on the beer.

Fred's has six cask beers, usually including Marston's Wainwright, beers from Blackjack and Brightside, as well as rotating guest beers from a wide range of breweries. Often, a real cider can be found on handpump. Thursday is designated as 'Thirsty Thursday', with selected cask beers at £2.50 per pint from 4pm. Co-owner Kath Hennigan is shown here with the award.



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