

# OPENING TIMES

JULY / AUGUST 2023

FREE



**INSIDE: STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER  
FESTIVAL REVIEW / PUB & BREWERY  
NEWS / PUB WALK / CAMRA AWARDS /  
AND MUCH MORE....**



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

# AFFORDABLE ALES, ALL YEAR LONG

## WATERHOUSE

67-71 Princess Street  
M2 4EG  
0161 200 5380

## MOON UNDER WATER

68-74 Deansgate  
M3 2FN  
0161 834 5882

## THE SEVEN STARS

6-8 Dantzic Street  
M4 2BS  
0161 817 2980

## THE PARAMOUNT

33-35 Oxford Street  
M1 4BH  
0161 223 1820

## PICCADILLY

49 Piccadilly  
M1 2AP  
0161 236 9206

# WETHERSPOON MANCHESTER

## THE GATEWAY

882 Wilmslow Road  
East Didsbury  
0161 438 1700

## FORD MADDOX

Wilmslow Rd  
M13 9NG  
0161 256 6660

## GREAT CENTRAL

306 Wilmslow Road  
Fallowfield  
0161 248 1740



- USE ALE FINDER ON THE JDW APP TO SEARCH THE AREA FOR YOUR FAVOURITE ALE,  
OR SEARCH FOR NEW ONES - 



Check out our brand new webshop!



*A Passion Shared*

[www.redwillowbrewery.com](http://www.redwillowbrewery.com)

Brewery Tours | Online Shop | Festivals | Beer | Bars

Visit Our Bars - RedWillow Macclesfield & RedWillow Buxton

# Contents & Information

## In this issue...

|                                   |    |                                     |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|----|
| <b>Pubs of the Month</b> .....    | 5  | <b>Obituary – Geoff Lees</b> .....  | 13 |
| <b>Heard at the Bar</b> .....     | 7  | <b>Scribbles on a Beermat</b> ..... | 13 |
| <b>CAMRA Campaigns</b> .....      | 8  | <b>Stagger</b> .....                | 15 |
| <b>News Extra</b> .....           | 9  | <b>Pub Walks</b> .....              | 17 |
| <b>More News Extra</b> .....      | 10 | <b>Diaries and Awards</b> .....     | 19 |
| <b>Beer Festival Review</b> ..... | 11 |                                     |    |

## About Opening Times & Contacts

*Opening Times* is produced by the Stockport & South Manchester Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Additional material is supplied by the High Peak, Tameside & North East Cheshire Branch, Central Manchester Branch and the Macclesfield & East Cheshire Branch. It is printed by Paper Red Media and distributed throughout Stockport, Tameside, South Manchester and East Manchester. There are also numerous outlets in Macclesfield & East Cheshire, Manchester City Centre, High Peak and Glossop.

News, articles and letters are welcome to the editorial address – John Clarke, 45 Bulkeley Street, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9HD. Email – stocam@btinternet.com. Phone 0161 477 1973. Advertising rates on request or online at: [www.ssmcamra.co.uk/magazine.htm](http://www.ssmcamra.co.uk/magazine.htm). Local advertising John Clarke (as above) or contact Neil Richards MBE at [n.richards@btinternet.com](mailto:n.richards@btinternet.com)

## 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](http://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](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/report-to-trading-standards)

## Subscriptions

Available at £10 for one year (make cheques payable to Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA). Apply to Lawrence Devaney, 2 Kingsway, Bramhall, Stockport, SK7 3BG.

## 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](http://www.tfgm.com). 0161 244 1000
- \* East Cheshire: 0300 123 5500  
[www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/public\\_transport/public-transport.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/public_transport/public-transport.aspx)
- \* Derbyshire: [www.derbybus.info](http://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](http://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.

## Your Local CAMRA Contacts & Websites

### Stockport & South Manchester

[www.ssmcamra.co.uk](http://www.ssmcamra.co.uk)

Contact: Lawrence Devaney; [secretary@ssm.camra.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ssm.camra.org.uk)

### High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire

[www.highpeak.camra.org.uk](http://www.highpeak.camra.org.uk)

Contact: Peter Mitchell; [peter.mitchell31@gmail.com](mailto:peter.mitchell31@gmail.com)

### Macclesfield & East Cheshire

[www.eastcheshire.camra.org.uk](http://www.eastcheshire.camra.org.uk)

Contact: John Barber; [secretary@eastcheshire.camra.org.uk](mailto:secretary@eastcheshire.camra.org.uk)

### Central Manchester

[www.centralmanchester.camra.org.uk](http://www.centralmanchester.camra.org.uk)

Contact: Cath Potter; [chair@centralmanchester.camra.org.uk](mailto: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](http://www.facebook.com/SSMCAMRA)

Twitter – @SSMCAMRA

### High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire:

Facebook – [www.facebook.com/HPTNECCAMRA](http://www.facebook.com/HPTNECCAMRA)

### Central Manchester:

Facebook – [www.facebook.com/groups/CentralManchesterCamra](http://www.facebook.com/groups/CentralManchesterCamra)

Twitter – @MCRCentralCamra

### Macclesfield & East Cheshire:

Facebook – [www.facebook.com/groups/897449270304045](http://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/](http://www.camra.org.uk/join/membership-benefits/real-ale-discount-scheme/)

## Front Cover

Good times at Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. Photo by Lawrence Devaney.

## Contributors

John Clarke, Alan Gent, Dave Hanson, Peter Butler, Paul Felton, Dave Burston, Steve Davis, Chris Morris, Lawrence Devaney, Peter Mitchell, Neil Worthington, Sue Lightfoot, Carl Burkitt, Jerry Wicken, Jim Flynn, Graham Privett, Dave Pennington, Ben Zwierink, Rod Oliver, Chris Wainwright, Matthew Thompson, Sean O'Mahoney, Mark McConachie, Heather Airlie, Stephen Ingham.

**Distribution Manager – Janet Flynn**

**Copy date for the September/October issue is Friday 4 August.**

# 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

6 rotating cask ales, 8-10 real ciders  
 Bottle Shop with 150+ beers and ciders  
 Events:

Leaf Promotions live music, 1st Fri  
 Double Indemnity (music & poetry) 3rd  
 Wed

Torrside Brewing Monsters Weekends  
 6 tutored tastings a year

19a St Petersgate, Stockport SK1 1EB

Our pub charity is Stockport MIND

**THE SAMUEL OLDKNOW**  
 BEERS  
 WINES & SPIRITS

GOOD BEER GUIDE  
 \*2023\*  
 WE'RE IN IT

OPENING TIMES: MONDAY - THURSDAY 1-11 FRIDAY - SUNDAY 12-11  
**SIX REAL ALES, CRAFT BEER & LAGER**

22 MARKET STREET, MARPLE  
 0161 425 9530 - samueloldknow.co.uk

A FAMILY BUSINESS

# STEPHENSONS

Supporting The Catering Trade Since 1868

PROUD SPONSORS OF  
**PUB OF THE MONTH**

A forgotten British classic:  
**The 10-sided Lantern Tankard**

VISIT THE NORTH'S LARGEST CATERING  
**CASH & CARRY**

tableware • catering equipment • disposables

**stephensons.com**  
 161 Buxton Road, Stockport, Cheshire, SK2 6EQ

# Pubs of the Month

Stockport & South Manchester Winners for July and August



**Dave Pennington tells you about the Mounting Stone in the centre of Bramhall which receives July's Pub of the Month award.**

The Mounting Stone opened in June 2016 and has been operating since then under the leadership of Andrew O'Shea and his team. It's the sister pub to Cheadle Hulme's Chiverton Tap.

It's a cosy, friendly, community micropub in the centre of the village, operating on two floors, with an additional outdoor seating beer garden to the rear. There is a cosy basement drinking area below the ground floor bar. The shop-front entrance and interior were tastefully redecorated last year. The pub is on the site of a blacksmith's or farrier's. The stone referred to in the pub's name was for mounting horses and is still to be found a short distance away, up the road towards Woodford.

The pub has six cask lines, including a permanent dark beer, and a real cider. Its two house beers are Bollington Brewery's Best Bitter and Long Hop. Andrew recently added two further keg lines, making a total of ten keg lines covering all beer styles. Alongside the draught selection there is also a good variety of bottles and cans available. There are monthly quiz nights and charity nights.

In 2019, Andrew started an in-house brewery – Made of Stone – using a one-barrel plant. Here he brews twice monthly, usually one-off casks and kegs. The Mounting Stone is proud to have been in the last six consecutive issues of the *Good Beer Guide*.

Join us for the presentation on the evening of 27 July, when a great night is in prospect. The pub is located in the centre of Bramhall village, a short walk from the railway station, and is served in the evening by the 378A bus from Stockport and Cheadle/Cheadle Hulme.

**The Pub of the Month award is sponsored by Stephensons, a local family firm that has been supplying the local pub and catering trade for over 150 years. Check out their advert on the previous page.**

A FAMILY BUSINESS  
**STEPHENSONS**  
Celebrating 150 Years of Inspiring the Caterer



**The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month award for August 2023 has been won by the Heaton Hops on School Lane in Heaton Chapel, writes Jim Flynn.**

Heaton Hops in Heaton Chapel was opened by Damian O'Shea ('the Aleman') and his partner Charlotte back in April 2015, and since then they have won numerous awards from far and wide.

The bar is based in converted shop premises with just two small rooms (the second is downstairs) and a seemingly ever-expanding outside pavement drinking area which, in the summer especially, gives a continental feel. Damian has certainly created a friendly, hospitable and innovative place to have a drink.

There are now three changing cask beers, traditional cider and keg



beers, along with bottled and canned beers from the UK and around the world (Damian started out selling bottled beers in local markets). The aim is to promote local beers as far as possible, although not to the exclusion of high-quality products from around the country. Indeed, one of the cask beers is now always supplied by Taylor's as the bar is a member of Taylor's Champions Club. The increasing choice of cask beers has enabled Damian to become one of the most enthusiastic supporters of CAMRA initiatives such as Mild Magic.

To say that the place has captured the imagination of local drinkers is an understatement, with the place packed out almost every night (don't go on Mondays, it's shut). So get there early to join the local CAMRA branch to celebrate the award, which will be presented to Damian, Charlotte and their staff on Thursday 24 August, when I'm sure there will be great beer and a convivial welcome.

The pub is on the 7 and 42A bus routes, the 192 stops nearby and Heaton Chapel train station is only five or six minutes away, so there is absolutely no excuse to miss this night!




the old hall inn

beer  
festival

returns

15-17TH SEPTEMBER  
HOLD ON TO YOUR TANKARD!



One of the peak districts most lively and atmospheric beer festivals returns to the old hall inn & paper mill inn, chinley. Ideally located only a short walk from chinley train station. Save the date and look forward to an extensive & varied selection of beers, cider and food, and some live music!

[WWW.OLD-HALL-INN.CO.UK](http://WWW.OLD-HALL-INN.CO.UK)

# Heard at the Bar

Pub News from Stockport, Manchester, Tameside and beyond

## Davenport Arms, Woodford



The end of September will also see the end of an era at this classic country pub. Long-serving licensee Yvonne Hallworth has announced that is when she will be retiring on health grounds. This will bring an end to the Hallworth family's 91-year tenancy of this popular Robinsons house. After

Yvonne retires she will be replaced by an interim manager until the pub is refurbished and extended, possibly in 2025 we think.

We wish Yvonne all the very best for her retirement and would like to thank her, and her family, for their immaculate stewardship of this fine pub.

## Two for Tameside



A smart new micropub called **The Snug** has been opened in Droylsden by the owners of the **Jam Works**, the craft beer bar next door. Across the road from **Silly Country**, High Peak, Tameside & North East Cheshire CAMRA Pub of the Year, there are three handpumps, one for Bridge Beers and two for

guests, in addition to several craft/keg beers.

Furnished to a very high standard, with dark wood and faux stained glass, The Snug is easy to reach, being very close to Droylsden tram stop and the 7, 216, and 230 bus routes, and is a very welcome addition to the Tameside real ale scene.

There's a brand new bar in Ashton, too. Hidden away in a warren of streets near the market place, **To the Moon and Back** occupies a corner site at 6 Market Avenue, and promises to be a real asset to the Ashton beer and bar scene.



It's a project by Jason Stephenson (pictured here), who has a long pedigree in pubs and beer. He was the manager of the Crown & Kettle in Manchester for some time, and was also involved in the short-lived Zeitgeist Brew Co. Subsequently, he founded Juggernaut Brew Co which cuckoo-brewed using the kit at the now-defunct Greenfield Brewery.

The Juggernaut beers are contract-brewed at Moberley Brewhouse but there is also a small brewing kit in the

bar and, once all the paperwork has been completed, Jason hopes to bring this into operation in August, when it will be used for more experimental, short-run beers.

The bar itself is warm and welcoming, with lots of natural wood and a bit of a DIY vibe, although that's not to decry what is a very professional operation. There should be two cask beers on sale by the time you



read this, alongside ten keg lines, where the choice of guests includes some beers rarely seen in the area. There is also a selection of cans in the fridge for drinking on or off the premises.

To the Moon and Back opens from 5-11pm on Thursday, 2-11pm on Friday and Saturday, and 2-8pm on Sunday. Well worth a visit.

And, to tie up a loose end, Jason bought the Greenfield Brewery – just as the pandemic hit so his plans to carry on there came to nothing. The brewing kit is in storage but has now been sold to a new start-up...in Botswana!

## City Centre Notes

Several bars in Manchester City Centre have been reported as no longer selling cask ale. These are **Twenty Twenty Two**, located just off Dale Street, **Freemount** on Oldham Street and **Soup Kitchen** on Spear Street, just off Stevenson Square (we think cask may have gone from here as long ago as 2019 in fact). Is this the start of a trend for bars where cask ale is not considered one of their core offerings?

We also have seen reports that cask ale may also be in short supply on both **Common**, on Edge Street, and **Tariff & Dale** on Tariff Street. Further reports welcome.



The campaign for the current management of the Britons Protection (pictured above) on Great Bridgewater Street to have their lease on the pub renewed continues. Central Manchester CAMRA branch members Stephen Ingham and Steve Davis were recently interviewed for a video being made about the challenges facing the pub trade which heavily features the Britons Protection as an example case.

A petition so save the pub has also been launched and you can find that at [www.change.org/p/save-our-pub-the-britons-protection](http://www.change.org/p/save-our-pub-the-britons-protection).

The currently anticipated opening of the **Victoria Tap** (a sister pub to the **Piccadilly Tap**, just outside Piccadilly Station) is likely to be at some point in August. Work is also well under way on **North Westward Ho!**, from Pomona Island Brew Co. Following structural work carried out by the building's landlord, the brewery got the keys in late June, and fitting out is now ongoing. This large pub, in Cavendish House on Chapel Walks, is expected to open in September. See future issues of *Opening Times* for full reports on both when they open.

# CAMRA Campaigns

## Mild Magic Success



MILD MAGIC

The 2023 Mild Magic is being hailed as the most successful to date, with record numbers of participants, pub visits and milds available.

No fewer than 153 completed cards were submitted, an increase of over 40% when compared to 2022, which in itself was a record-breaking year. The number of pub visits was up by a similar amount, with a 41% increase to 3,214 compared to 2,278 last time. We are still totting up the number of different milds available but it will have been at least 70, beating 2022's impressive 67.

Mild Magic organiser Darren Berry told *Opening Times*: "I'd like to thank everyone who helped make this year's Mild Magic such a success – both those who helped with the organisation and those pubs and drinkers who took part. I'm already looking forward to Mild Magic 2024!"

This year participants were asked to vote for their favourite Mild Pub and also their favourite Mild. The pub award was won by Stockport's **Petersgate Tap** while the mild award went to brewers **Joseph Holt** for their **Unmistakably Mild**, brewed specially for Mild Magic. Congratulations to both.

## New Young Members Coordinator

Greater Manchester has welcomed a new Regional Young Members Coordinator, Sean O'Mahoney (shown here on the right). Sean is determined to actively involve current young members while also recruiting new ones, injecting fresh enthusiasm into the organisation.



Sean's appointment has already proved to be a success at the recent Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. With a keen focus on membership, he played a pivotal role in achieving a remarkable milestone. Despite the challenges posed by the post-lockdown period, Sean's efforts resulted in a record-breaking number of new members signing up for the festival. What's more, a number of these new members were young individuals with whom Sean had successfully connected and built strong relationships.

Building on this early achievement, Sean has exciting plans in the pipeline. He is currently working on organising Taproom Tours, providing an opportunity for young members to explore the vibrant craft beer scene in the region.

Recognising the importance of engaging with the younger generation, Sean is also advertising to university students. By reaching out to this demographic, he hopes to encourage their active involvement in CAMRA and ensure their voices are heard. Sean understands that by listening to the feedback and ideas of young members, he can better shape the organisation's future initiatives and policies.

For those interested in getting in touch with Sean, he can be reached via email at [ym@greatermanchester.camra.org.uk](mailto:ym@greatermanchester.camra.org.uk). Don't hesitate to reach out to Sean with any enquiries, suggestions, or to join the exciting activities he has in store.



## Why our yeast needs to be locked up

You might well wonder why we lock away our yeast. Until you learn how important it is to the flavour of our beer. We use our own unique strain called, appropriately, *Taylor's Taste*. The properties of this particular yeast are vital to giving Landlord its deep and complex yet crisp and clean flavour. It's so valuable to us that every year two samples of Taylor's Taste are carefully transported to separate secret locations and stored securely under lock and key, just in case the precious yeast here at the brewery is ever compromised or damaged. It might seem over cautious, but it's *all for that taste of Taylor's*.

All for that taste of Taylor's





# News Extra

More pub and brewery news from across the area

## Special Award for City Arms

On Tuesday 25 April, members of both Central Manchester Branch and others were really pleased to present to Caitlin and other members of the team at the **City Arms** (Kennedy Street, Manchester City Centre) a certificate to celebrate the staff serving consistently excellent beer and providing service to a high standard, *reports Stephen Ingham.*



The occasion was marked by branch chair Cath Potter making the presentation, which was well received

and appreciated, not just by branch members, but by staff and customers as well. Cath is pictured above, right, along with Caitlin and her team

It is hoped that the event suitably acknowledges the efforts of all the staff in what are still difficult times for the service industry, and the licensed trade in particular. I certainly recommend that you call in and sample the well-kept beer, and so support this asset to the local community. Pubs, clubs and bars continually need our support.

## Salford Pub of the Year 2023



In the late 1970s, the *Salford Real Ale Guide* listed 85 real ale pubs; I can vouch for this because I visited them all, *writes Ben Zwierink.* How things have changed!

Most have gone, a lot of them due to the massive re-

development of the city. However, thankfully, some of the classic ones have survived. One of them is the **New Oxford** in Bexley Square, situated on a corner site across from the former town hall.

There have been several name changes over the years; it was originally called the Town Hall Tavern, it was then renamed the Court Tavern and a few years later in 1871 it became the Amateurs Arms, with its own music hall.

Wilsons Brewery became the owners and the pub was again renamed, as the Oxford Hotel. When it became a freehouse, it finally became the New Oxford.

For many years now, the pub has been run by Tim and Paulette Flynn, who have turned it into one of the best in Salford – and indeed in the whole of the Greater Manchester area. Not only is there a huge selection of ever-changing cask beers, but the pub has arguably one of the best selections of Belgian bottled beers in Greater Manchester.

Their efforts were recognised by the Salford & District branch of CAMRA, and they were presented with the Pub of the Year award on Saturday 17 June. An enjoyable afternoon was had by all who came along. Pictured below left, Tim (left) receives his award from Salford & District branch chair, Tony Mitchell.

## Cider News

The judging for the Greater Manchester CAMRA Cider Pub of the Year has produced two winners.

Stockport's **Petersgate Tap** has been awarded 'Consistently Excellent Cider Pub - Regional Cider Pub of the Year 2018, 2019 and runner-up 2021, 2022 and 2023'. While this might not exactly trip off the tongue, it does reflect the very hard work put in over the years by owners Alan and Chris Gent.

The overall winner, for the third year, was the **Grocer's Micro Pub** in Cadishead run by Cider Pommelier and Manchester Cider Club member, Martin Shallcross.



Meanwhile, Central Manchester CAMRA has presented its Cider Pub of the Year 2023 award to **Fierce Bar**, on Thomas Street in Manchester. This Northern Quarter bar has been championing real cider, and has been the home of Manchester Cider

Club for the last year. The general manager, Denny Rogers, fell in love with cider in his previous job with Pomona Island, and has developed the range and quality of cider available at Fierce Bar. He is seen here receiving his certificate from Central Manchester chair Cath Potter.

## High Peak Pub of the Season

High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire CAMRA's Pub of the Season for Spring, was the **Angel**, King Street, Dukinfield.

This friendly and family-run community pub is on the main road close to the centre of Dukinfield. There is a pleasant, well-furnished lounge, where entertainment and quizzes take place, and a tap room



with pub games. TV sports are shown throughout the pub. Comedy Club nights take place regularly with the Dukinfunny Club in the upstairs function room. The Angel serves three cask beers, including two changing guests.

Pictured above are High Peak CAMRA's Peter Mitchell (left) and Ian Kerr (right) presenting the award to licensees Dawn Woodhouse and Mark Holt.

# News Extra

More pub and brewery news from across the area

## Thirst Class to Close



Thirst Class Ale in North Reddish has announced that it will cease operations.

In a Facebook post on 6 June, owner Richard Conway explained: "It is with a tear in my eye and a heavy heart that I make the following announcement. I have made the tough decision to close Thirst Class Ale over the coming months. When I decided to open a brewery back in 2015, it was with a sense of enthusiasm

and optimism, and most of the last eight years have been a joyous and rewarding experience.

"However, the trials of the coronavirus pandemic and the current cost of living situation have made trading conditions tough, and I'm finding it increasingly difficult to carve a living in what was already a difficult industry to begin with.

"After much soul searching, I've decided now is the time to wind things down and start a new adventure. Although I'm not sure what that will be as yet!"



The last beer to be brewed at Thirst Class was one of the category winners in the Stockport Beer & Cider Festival homebrew competition. Howard Crook, of Chiverton Tap Brew Club, won the ESB, Strong Pale Ale & IPA category with a Black West Coast IPA. He is pictured here (right) his category winner certificate, and Richard Conway.

In a bittersweet twist, this beer, named An Abundance of Daves, went on to win Gold in the festival's Beer of the Festival competition. While we are very sad to see the end of Thirst Class, and wish Richard all the very best for the future, the brewery is at least going out on a high.

## High Peak Club of the Year

The High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire CAMRA Club of the Year 2023 is the **Poynton Legion Club** on Georges Road West, writes Ben Zwierink.



The club has been on the same site since 1948, so it celebrates its 75th anniversary there this year. The club fell on hard times during Covid but since then it has made steady progress and re-established itself as a prime community venue with a wide range of social

activities taking place. A selection of well-kept cask ales is always available.

The presentation took place on Saturday 10 June. Pictured above receiving the award from branch chairman Ben Zwierink (right) are, from left, Tony Skade (club committee chair), David Home (club

manager), and Darren Oxley (committee vice chair).

## S&SM CAMRA Club of the Year

As we reported in the March/April issue, the Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Club of the Year 2023 is the **Ladybarn Social Club** on Green Street, Ladybarn.

Occupying the former White Swan pub, the club goes from strength to strength, and has recently added a fourth handpump to increase the cask range, which now comprises Robinsons Unicorn and three guests, often from local brewers.

There was a full house on Friday 12 May when the presentation was made to club secretary Phil Cowtan, who has been responsible for driving forward the improvements in the cask offering. Phil is pictured below with his certificate alongside (left to right) Danica Bowcock, Joe Hardy, Kath Price, Angela Turner and Becca Cowtan.



## News in Brief

In Rusholme, the long-closed and iconic **Hardy's Well** (formerly the Birch Villa) has been demolished. There had been numerous plans for the site, some of which had attracted local objections, but a severe fire which rendered the building unsafe sealed its fate. A sad end to what had been an excellent community local.



Mike Swann at the **Spinning Top** (Wellington Road South, Stockport) no longer sources his beers from Distant Hills or Tatton breweries. Instead, he has opted for a more eclectic

range, sourced from a variety of breweries. When Opening Times called in early June, the two guests were Fennec from Brew York and Amarillo Gold from Wadworth, the latter being notably good.

Meanwhile, up on Wellington Road North, the **Midland** now has regular fortnightly deliveries from Wincle Brewery. These are rarely seen in the area so this is a welcome move.

We reckon the **Beech Tree** (Outwood Road, Heald Green) is doomed. It's been closed for a while, but wasn't properly secured so became a sort of unofficial youth club that attracted the attention of the police from time to time. Almost inevitably, there has now been a fire and, although the building is still intact, that almost certainly signals the end.

# Stockport Beer & Cider Festival 2023

## Review, News and Winners



Despite the move to a new venue, the Masonic Guildhall on Wellington Road South, this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival has been hailed as another successful event.



Between Thursday and Saturday, our customers were able to enjoy over 200 different draught beers, ciders and perries, and enjoy them they did! If that wasn't enough, the stock of over 1,200 bottles and cans, all fridge-chilled, also sold very well.



In addition to the many visitors from Stockport and the North West, beer and cider enthusiasts arrived from places as far away as London, Birmingham, York and Newcastle, to sup the extensive offering of local beers available.



The crowds took advantage of the hot weather to use the outside seating which was very popular throughout the festival. The Walthew House charity stand was busy selling beer and snacks and, to complement the

drinks, visitors also enjoyed the music and food on offer.

Festival organiser Jim Flynn told *Opening Times*: "I am delighted that so many people came along to sample the great variety of drinks available in the friendly atmosphere at the Guildhall. It was great to see lots of regular visitors and also plenty of festival newcomers, too.

"I would like to thank the 150 CAMRA volunteers who gave their time to organise and staff the festival, as well as our sponsors and the team at the Guildhall; without them, none of this would have been possible. And, finally, thanks to everyone who came along and made it such an enjoyable event."

*Festival photos by Lawrence Devaney*

## Beers, Cider and Perry of the Festival

One of the many highlights of the festival has always been the public vote for Beer, Cider and Perry of the Festival. Despite the festival being held in June, our customers over the years have shown a particular liking for dark beers, which has continued this year.

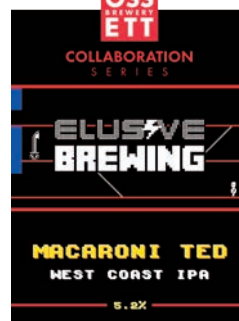


The overall Beer of the Festival was **An Abundance of Daves**, a 6.2% 'West Coast Black IPA', which was a collaboration between **Thirst Class Ale** of North Reddish and homebrew competition winner Howard Crook. As we report on page 10, this is something of a bittersweet award, as Howard's beer was the very last one to be made at Thirst Class before it ceased brewing.

Both Richard Conway from Thirst Class and Howard Crook were delighted with the award, and it certainly means the brewery has gone out on a high. With luck, you should still find this beer in local pubs and bars.



The Silver Award went to a very summery beer, and another collaboration. This was between Manchester's **Blackjack Brewing** and homebrewer David Ogden, with a light and refreshing **Elderflower Bitter** (3.7%). It's two years on the trot for David, as his collaboration with Marble, Ogden's Foreign Export Stout, won silver in the 2022 Beer of the Festival vote. Elderflower Bitter should still be available in cask.



The Bronze award was also won by a collaboration beer, but not one involving a homebrewer. The beers from West Yorkshire's **Ossett Brewery** are a familiar, and welcome, sight on local bars. They have a range of beers under the 'Collaboration Series' banner and **Macaroni Ted** was a beautifully crisp and bitter 5.2% West Coast IPA brewed in collaboration with **Elusive Brewing**, based near Reading. Look out for it.

The cider and perry awards have gone to makers in the West Country and in Wales.



Although the festival has been a long-time supporter of **Ross on Wye Cider & Perry**, from back in the days when it was called Broome Farm, it has, astonishingly, never won an award from us. Well, that's now

been put right, as Cider of the Festival is Ross's **Ellis Bitter**, a single variety cider made from an old Devon cider apple.

For Perry of the Festival we travel down to Monmouthshire and **Troggi Seidr**. This small producer won the award once before and is back this time with its **Tregagle Perry**.

Look out for reports of all the presentations in future issues of *Opening Times*.



Central Manchester CAMRA  
Pub of the Year 2023



**20%  
OFF TAPAS**  
VALID UPON PRESENTING  
THIS IMAGE

**THE MOLLY HOUSE**

26 Richmond St, Manchester M1 3NB | themollyhouse.com



The Beer Line Cleaning Professionals

PUBLICANS AND  
BAR MANAGERS,  
TRY OUR FULLY MANAGED  
REGULAR BEER LINE  
CLEANING SERVICE

SAVE MONEY

REDUCE WASTE

IMPROVE YOUR DISPENSE  
QUALITY

LET PROFESSIONALS EASE  
YOUR WORKLOAD

CONTACT KEVIN ROBBIE TODAY  
FOR YOUR  
**FREE FIRST CLEAN**

MOB: 0772 992 6124 OR 0800 7810 577  
EMAIL: KEVINROBBIE@CLEARBREW.COM  
WEB: WWW.CLEARBREW.CO.UK

ESTABLISHED 2006  
SERVING OVER 3,000  
CLIENTS NATIONWIDE

**FREE INITIAL  
CLEAN**  
NO COMMITMENT  
NO CONTRACT



SEVERAL OF OUR  
CUSTOMERS ARE  
FEATURED IN THE  
2023 CAMRA  
GOOD BEER GUIDE



# SUMMER PALE

AVAILABLE FROM  
JUL TO AUG '23



- Style** Hallertau Bock
- Hops** Magnum, Hallertau
- Malt** Lager Malt, Munich Malt
- Warm Gold
- Floral, Lavender, Fresh
- Soft Caramel, Malted Biscuit



**J.W. LEES**

FRESH CASK

100 BARREL

# Scribbles on a Beermat



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

## The Wig & Pig

It's been a long day. A pub, tucked away on a quiet street in an unnamed town, presents itself.

The faded cream sign on the front of the building says THE WIG & PIG next to a hand-painted board

dressed like a barrister. Its face loves its job. The doormat welcomes me in and there is wood

everywhere. The floorboards let out a high-pitched squeak as I walk

towards the bar like birds tweeting hello to a new morning. Beer pumps point

like thumbs up, their nails rainbow-coloured spheres with daft names of ales written across them:

*Hoppopotamus, Barley & Me, Janet Neat Porter, Stout & About, All Pale the King, Lager Than Life,*

The chair I land on is the perfect size for my height, as if a carpenter had a chat with my tailor. It feels

like sitting in a memory. I look around the table and everyone is there: the bloke with his past tattooed

between the hairs on his forearm, the lady who could get a conversation out of the brickwork,

the couple playing dominoes without the rules, Graeme and Jim who died before I got the chance

to buy them a drink, the English teacher who looked like he was always a bit of a laugh

when he wasn't charged with telling us to be sensible and anyone in my mind during the length of a pint.

The Wig & Pig doesn't do cooked food, but the wall of crisps is every flavour I've ever tasted.

The sun eventually goes down behind the window because even fantasies must come to an end

sometimes. The landlord says thank you and goodnight to every single one of us by name.

# Obituary

## Let's Raise a Glass

### Geoff Lees



When I look back at the near half-century that our High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire branch of CAMRA has been in existence, we have not been the victim of Father Time particularly grievously, writes Rod Oliver.

Yes we have lost some of our older friends and one chairman – Tim Jones –

but there are a fair few of us still knocking about. I wonder if that's the reason why the fatal illness and death of Geoff has been such a blow. He has been ever present at every beer festival, every annual weekend away and every foreign trip for year after year. And he was proud of that.



He was a larger than life friend in more ways than one. Any arguments about bus or train times were settled by a view inside his voluminous pocket which contained every timetable known to man. A pack would carry his butties and he was set up for the day. He had a prodigious appetite and could – and did – eat all-comers under the table. He was once challenged in the Marble Arch to eat a colossal plate of food and failed on his last potato. When I teased him about this he said: "What they didn't tell you was I had a pudding." At a breakfast meeting of one of his business clients,

he ate six Danish pastries; the same number of plates of hotpot he devoured at Poynton British Legion. He is pictured here on a trip to Belgium tucking into some frites.

I touched on his other side – his extraordinary, detailed immersion in the world of stocks and shares and the like. Banks and building societies which made offers of introductory payments were fair game. Needless to say, he applied this forensic approach to brewing and was aware of which big boys owned which smaller fry.

After drinking with him every Saturday night for thirty years, I completely trusted his palate both here and in Europe. Like the best CAMRA members, he really did know his beers.

His greatest pride was in his branch loyalty. Happy to keep friends from his British Gas days and his pool team, I think his heart was in High Peak CAMRA.

Janet has lost a loving brother, and all of us a steadfast friend. Heaven knows when we'll find another like him.

# CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF BREWING

A progressive and passionate independent brewery located in the heart of Yorkshire. Borne of family values; unity, team work and integrity. Crafted over two decades, we've perfected the science of producing ales of consistently high quality and honed the art of brewing beers that are loved by all.



# Stagger

## Withington with Jerry Wicken

The drizzly weather and a St Patrick's Day Friday did not deter a good crowd of staggerers from assembling at the **Orion**, a good old street corner local in Withington.



The Orion has always been a popular watering hole, and these days has a good size outdoor drinking area to add to the large central bar, with seating all around. The pub was rammed at 7.30; they were three deep at the bar, noise levels

would have concerned Environmental Health and claustrophobics would have been decidedly uncomfortable. But there was a party atmosphere, which can only be enjoyed in these rather gloomy times. The only real ale was Holt's bitter, which was below average for most of our group; however, a latecomer scored it as very good so likely a new barrel had been tapped. Usually the ale is good quality, so the early birds were perhaps unlucky.

As time was pressing, we moved a few doors down to the snappily named **Withington Public Hall and Institute**. Fortunately, the locals have renamed it as 'Whippy', which is much better remembered. The building is a community asset, and has been so in various guises



for more than 160 years. The bar and drinking area are best described as utilitarian, and could have been plucked from a 1960s film set. We received a hugely warm welcome, found a table large

enough to accommodate most of us, and settled down to the only cask ale on offer, which came from the Burton Road brewery. This was well received by one and all. The licensee was keen to explain the range of 'craft' ales for sale, and would have been happy to provide more cask beers. Unfortunately, the number of cask drinkers can't justify it and the pub is only open Thursday to Saturday. All beers are sourced



locally and the Whippy is well worth a visit. The room across from the bar corridor offers food in the form of pizza, which you can eat there or take away. The pizzas smelt rather tasty, but we were on a mission.

We passed the characterful but keg-only **Albert**, and moved on to our halfway meeting point, the **Victoria**, a Hydes pub of long standing and fond memories. We had been warned by drinkers in our previous two pubs that getting in was nigh on impossible. Indeed, as we

approached, a queue of would-be customers snaked around the corner for a hundred metres. Safe to assume it was full, and security on the door certainly suggested a strict entry policy. Fortunately for

us, the landlady had done her homework. From *Opening Times*, she had noted our arrival time and very kindly reserved a couple of tables for us to sit and sup. We were ushered in past the security, like VIPs at the most exclusive nightclub. Above and beyond, we were treated to ale from the wide range available. I'm sure the full gamut of Hyde's beers was there but, from what I could see, the Humdrum Town and Penny Red were waiting patiently while we tried the Dark Ruby, Lowry and Malt Division. All of them were rated good to very good and the Dark Ruby almost reached nectar status.

A big thank you to all at the Victoria for making our evening so enjoyable. The pub has plenty of activities during the week, as well as screens showing sports events. There is also a patio drinking area at the back. This is a real pub and worth supporting.



But things to do, places to be, so no lingering as we trundled past the seemingly permanently closed **Turnpike** to the only Lion in town. The **Red Lion** has outlasted the White and Golden versions, and since 2020 has been a J W Lees house, although the building, the oldest standing in Withington, is over 200 years old. It has changed little as you enter, and low beams may catch the unwary. As the pub has been extended over the years, there is usually plenty of room to sit in any of the bars or the conservatory. For better weather, there are also large outdoor drinking areas. Sadly, the bowling green to the rear no longer exists, but you can still sit there. Like most pubs on the day, it was very busy but we found a table around which most of us could sit. Lees bitter, MPA and the seasonal Spring Dew were all on cask; whilst the bitter was not sampled, the MPA and the Spring Dew were rated good.

This was the official end to our rather abbreviated stagger and the beer quality we experienced was, in general, very good indeed. These pubs



deserve our support year round, not just on St Patrick's Day.

For some of us, the evening was not over. We bussed, wandered or waddled to the **Fletcher Moss** in Didsbury to present the well-deserved

2022 branch Pub of the Year runner-up plaque. The pub was, of course, busy and, whilst we did not score the Hydes beers as part of the Stagger, suffice to say, they were enjoyed by all.

# Be part of the CAMRA story

Real ale is just the start...

Our story is your story. So join us in supporting everything from pubs, clubs and drinkers' rights, to licensees and breweries, uniting us in the story we all love.

As a thank you for being a hero in our story, you receive great membership benefits, such as **£30 of beer vouchers**, quarterly **BEER magazine**, access to the online news platform **What's Brewing**, partner **benefits and discounts**... just a few perks of joining us.

Join the CAMRA story  
[camra.org.uk/join](https://camra.org.uk/join)



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

Real stories, real people, real ale

# Campaigning for you

Real ale is just the start...

We support everything from **pubs, clubs and drinkers' rights**, to licensees and breweries, the list is endless. United in the story we all love, our great tradition.

So why not join us?

Save on beer when you visit the pub with our voucher and discount schemes. Plus save on entry to 100s of beer festivals too, just a few perks of our CAMRA membership.

Make our story part of yours.  
Join at [camra.org.uk/join](https://camra.org.uk/join)



Campaign  
for  
Real Ale

Real stories, real people, real ale

## THE LIVE BEER EXPERIENCE



BOOK  
TICKETS  
[gbbf.org.uk](https://gbbf.org.uk)

1-5  
AUG  
2023  
OLYMPIA  
LONDON  
GREAT  
BRITISH  
BEER  
FESTIVAL



# Pub Walks with Chris Morris

## Chelford

It's been well documented that walking is good for our well-being, with doctors widely recommending it. Now, make your prescribed walking destination a country pub, serving refreshing cask ales, with a dose of nature on the side, and you have the perfect tonic! The three pubs in this walk all have relaxing beer gardens – perfect for the warm summer months.

### Train Information

Chelford is served by an excellent hourly service from Manchester Piccadilly every day. Services stop at Stockport, Cheadle Hulme and Handforth (also Levenshulme and Heaton Chapel, except on Sundays). The ticket to buy is a return to Chelford. For full timetable information, visit [nationalrail.co.uk](http://nationalrail.co.uk).

### The Walk

This is a leisurely five-mile countryside walk to Over Peover, mainly along quiet country lanes. The route is flat, and the paths are generally good, but some areas will get muddy after heavy rainfall, so walking boots are recommended. The OS Explorer map is 268 – *Wilmslow, Macclesfield & Congleton* (OS app also available). All pubs are dog-friendly.

After exiting Chelford Station to the main road (Knutsford Road), turn right and walk along the pavement for 300 yards, passing over the railway bridge, until you reach a zebra crossing. After crossing over, continue along the pavement in the same direction as before for 150 yards, and then take the signed footpath to the left. Continue along the straight path that narrows at one point, until you reach a kissing gate.

Continuing in the same direction as before, we now enter a field with our first views of open countryside. Hugging the left side of the field, we then exit onto a road. Turn right here and follow the road for half a mile. Along this stretch, we have our first sight of the famous telescope, Jodrell Bank. At the road junction, take the road to the left and continue for a further half mile. After passing a farm, we reach another road junction, where we turn left. After 500 yards, we take the road to the right, signposted to the Dog Inn. Continue along this road for a further 500 yards until we find our first pub of the day.



Located in a delightful setting, the Dog is an upmarket, destination pub with a lot to offer. The interior is inviting and stylishly furnished, with exposed timbers, subtle lighting and real fires for winter. The big asset at this time of year though, is the impressive outdoor area at the rear, that has recently been refurbished. In addition to a locally historic truck as an attraction, a cleverly designed space now presents itself. As well as a mixture of comfortable seating options, and a large shaded area, the highlight is a fully stocked outside bar which

includes a cask beer. The main bar inside has up to three cask beers available, which were from Weetwood and Timothy Taylor on my last visit. The high-quality food is popular here but does come with a premium price. However, relief can be found nearby with our next pub, which is as different as you could imagine.

Turn right on exiting the pub to continue along the road as before for half a mile, ignoring the left turn to Cinder Lane. Continuing straight ahead at the crossroads, our second pub of the day appears shortly afterwards, on the right.



For those wanting a more down-to-earth pub experience, you now have it with reasonably priced food and drink at the **Park Gate Inn**. Instead of the plush furnishings and fine dining, here we have a wonderfully traditional interior of bench seating, wood

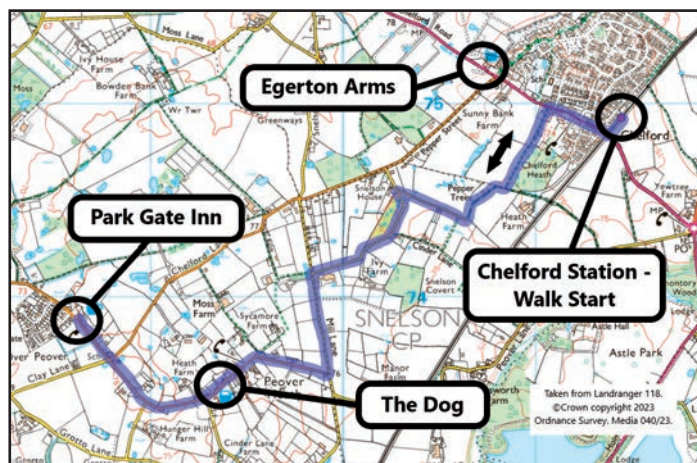
panelling, scrubbed tables, low beams and flagged floors. Owned by Sam Smiths, Old Brewery Bitter is available on cask, plus their usual choice of keg beers. Card payments are now taken, but mobile phones are not allowed. A large and peaceful beer garden is found at the rear.

Our route back to Chelford is simply a matter of retracing our steps back to Knutsford Road. A further option for refreshment and food is found by turning left here and walking for a further 400 yards.



The **Egerton Arms** is a large traditional pub with a cosy and characterful interior, featuring low ceilings and wooden beams. A large beer garden can be found at the rear. Up to four cask beers are available, which included Mobblerley and Salopian when I last dropped by.

For full pub details, including opening times, visit [whatpub.com](http://whatpub.com).



YOUR LOCAL  
JOSEPH HOLT PUBS

**THE FIVEWAYS**

MACCLESFIELD ROAD  
HAZEL GROVE  
SK7 6BE

**THE GREY HORSE**

99 BROADSTONE ROAD  
REDDISH  
STOCKPORT  
SK5 1AS

**THE GRIFFIN HEALD GREEN**

124 WILMSLOW ROAD  
HEALD GREEN  
CHEADLE  
SK8 3BE

**THE GRIFFIN HEATON MERSEY**

552 DIDSBURY ROAD  
HEATON MERSEY  
STOCKPORT  
SK4 3AJ

**PLATFORM 5**

47 STATION ROAD  
CHEADLE HULME  
CHEADLE  
SK8 7AA

**THE SUN & CASTLE**

MIDDLE HILLGATE  
STOCKPORT  
SK1 3DG



**170 YEARS OF  
AWARD-WINNING  
ALES AND LAGERS**



# 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 13 July** – Sun & Castle, 54 Middle Hillgate, Stockport, SK1 3EH. Guest speaker – Phil Parkinson, head brewer at Joseph Holt. Starts 8pm. (SSM)

**Saturday 15 July** – CAMRA Greater Manchester Regional Meeting; Lamb Hotel, 33 Regent Street, Eccles, M30 0BP. Starts 1:30pm. (All branches)

**Tuesday 8 August** – Bulls Head, Newcastle Road, Smallwood, Sandbach, CW11 2TY. Starts 8pm. (MEC)

**Thursday 10 August** – Nursery, 258 Green Lane, Heaton Norris, SK4 2BA. Will include a summer quiz with beery prizes. Starts 8pm. (SSM)

**Saturday 12 August** – Norfolk Arms, 2 Town Street, Marple Bridge, SK6 5DS. Starts 1:30pm. Will be followed by a social around local pubs. (HPNC)

## Social Events & Presentations

**Friday 21 July** – East Didsbury & Heaton Mersey Stagger: 7:30pm Gateway, 882 Wilmslow Road, M20 4PG; 8:30pm Dog & Partridge, 687-693 Didsbury Road, SK4 3AG; final pub Crown, 6 Vale Close, SK4 3DS. (SSM)

**Saturday 22 July** – Manchester Brewery Taps Tour. Meet 2pm at the Piccadilly Tap (on the Station Approach); 2:30pm Sureshot Brewery, 5 Sheffield Street, M1 2ND; 3:45pm Temperance Street Taproom, 75 North Western Street, M12 6DX; 5pm Track Brewery, Unit 18, Piccadilly Trading Estate, Manchester M1 2NP; 6pm Cloudwater Brewery, Units 7-8, Piccadilly Trading Estate, Manchester M1 2NP. (HPNC)

**Saturday 20 July** – Summer Pub of the Season presentation: The Ale Stop, 3 Chapel Street, Buxton, SK17 6HX. From 1:30pm. (HPNC)

**Thursday 27 July** – Pub of the Month presentation: Mounting Stone, 8 Woodford Road, Bramhall, SK7 1JJ. From 8pm. (SSM)

**Tuesday 1 August** – Weekday Wander in Eccles. Meet Stockport train station 11:20am (or join at Piccadilly on 11:54 train to Eccles). First pub: Lamb Hotel, 33 Regent Street, M30 0BP. (SSM)

**Friday 18 August** – Edgeley & Shaw Heath Stagger: 7:30pm Alexandra, 195 Northgate Road, SK3 9NJ; 8:30pm Prince Albert, 107 Castle Street, SK3 9AR; final pub Ye Olde Vic 1 Chatham Street, SK3 5ED. (SSM)

**Thursday 24 August** – Pub of the Month presentation: Heaton Hops, 7 School Lane, Heaton Chapel, SK4 5DE. From 8pm. (SSM)

**Thursday 31 August** – Pub of the Year 2023 Runner-up presentation: Vale Cottage, 1 Croft Bank, Gorton, M18 8UE. From 8pm. (SSM)

**Wednesday 6 September** – Weekday Wander in Littleborough. Meet Manchester Victoria station at 11:30am. First pub: White House, Blackstone Edge, Halifax Road, Littleborough, OL15 0LG

**Saturday 9 September** – Trip to Bakewell. Catch 10:35am TP3 bus from Buxton Market Place. (HPNC)

# CAMRA Awards

## Recent Presentations

The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for March was the **Wellington Free House**, on Wellington Road South in the town centre.

This stylish conversion of two former shop units has proved to be a huge success, with the interior decorated and furnished in an eclectic style. 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.

There was a lively karaoke on our presentation night, when, unfortunately, owner Lee Woodhall

couldn't be present. Our picture shows two members of the bar team receiving the award on his behalf.

Central Manchester CAMRA's 2023 Pub of the Year is the **Molly House** on Richmond Street in the City Centre. An inclusive community pub in the heart of Manchester's gay village, the Molly House is host to many community events and clubs each week.

There are four changing cask beers on handpump and four keg pumps, plus two ciders. Dark beers and milds always feature. If you don't drink beer or cider, then a range of spirits and wines is available. Pictured above is Central Manchester CAMRA chair Cath Potter presenting the award to Molly House owner Henry Kennedy-Skipton.



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for April was the **Cross Keys** in Cheadle Hulme.



There is a large, comfortable lounge entered from the central main door, or from a small, but adequate, car park at the side. To 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.

Regular beers are well-kept Hydes Original, an excellent session bitter, and Lowry. Hydes Dark Ruby mild is also available from time to time. This was the second

time manager Mike Bradshaw has received our Pub of the Month award, and that in itself is a tribute to his hard work. He is shown here with his certificate.



# BREWING PERFECTION SINCE 1838

