

STOCKPORT  
AND SOUTH  
MANCHESTER  
CAMRA

No:  
157

# OPENING TIMES

FREE

MAY 1997

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## Top Award for Viaducts & Vaults 2

**V**iaducts & Vaults 2, the guide to Stockport's pubs published by Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA, has been voted guide of the year by CAMRA nationally.

The award was announced at the Campaign's AGM & National Conference held in Llandudno in April and left editor Rhys Jones speechless! However Christine Cryne, chair of CAMRA's publications committee praised the guide and said that the judges had been unanimous that it was a winner.

Rhys was convinced that after having won the award with the first Stockport guide it was unlikely that the follow up would be similarly honoured. He was delighted to be proved wrong: "I just didn't think lightning would strike twice in the same place, but I'm delighted nonetheless", he told Opening Times, "This really is a tribute to the hard work put in by all the volunteer workers who put the guide together."

Thanks also went to Paul Hutchings, production and design supremo, who was responsible for the guide's professional appearance. He told OT "it is particularly gratifying to me that the hard work and professionalism of Rhys and the team are recognised elsewhere, and in a year that saw a number of very good other local guides to provide competition".

Copies of the guide, complete with an update, will be available at Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. The price is just £3.95, but if you are a member of CAMRA you can get it for just £2.95. Yet another reason to join the Campaign (see below and inside back page).



Guide Editor Rhys Jones with Production Designer Paul Hutchings Celebrate their success with the award



## CAMRA Hits 50,000 Landmark

The Campaign for Real Ale's UK membership grew by 8% last year and now exceeds 50,000 individual drinkers. Membership has trebled in the last ten years and further growth is expected.

Head of Campaigns, Stephen Cox said, "Our recent victory over the European threat to the guest beer shows how effective our campaigning is in protecting the rights of drinkers." "CAMRA's campaigning is as important as ever. High beer taxes threaten pubs with closure, archaic licensing laws are unfair and threaten choice, and industry mergers offer no benefits to consumers. We need to recruit new members to make sure that the views of British drinkers are heard on these issues."

Members benefit from the unique social and campaigning activities of CAMRA's 190 branches at local level as well as national campaigns.

Steve Cox added, "Real ale attracts people from all walks of life - our 145 annual beer festivals attract an increasingly varied clientele. Many of our members are women and it's good news that so many young people are joining and enjoying the social as well as the serious side of campaigning."

In Greater Manchester, membership growth exceeded the national pattern, increasing by a massive 12% over the year - one of the biggest growth rates in the country. Why don't you join now - and get free entry to Stockport Beer & Cider Festival! See inside back page for details.



as of course has the beer and cider. We preview this inside - all that now remains is for people (and that means you!) to come along and drink it. It's going to be a cracker this year - so don't miss it!

### In MAY'S OPENING TIMES

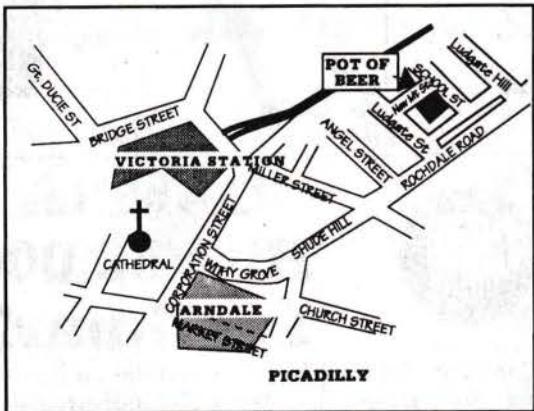
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## IN THE EDITOR'S VIEW..

This OT may be a day or two late (OK, so what's new there) as I waited for the General Election result before penning this.

The question that we must ask is will the new Parliament mean a better deal for beer drinkers? CAMRA will be writing to the new ministers setting out key areas for action, as outlined in our manifesto.

In particular we will be looking to see the proposed merger of Bass and Carlsberg-Tetley blocked, so as to maintain consumer choice. We will also be looking to the new Parliament to thoroughly review licensing laws, rather than make minor modifications here and there - even the police believe it is time for reform.

Planning laws must be changed to eliminate the dangerous loophole by which many changes of use for pubs do not require planning permission.

But most of all we will now be looking for Labour to fulfil its pledge to eliminate short measure by the mandatory use of lined oversized glasses. They promised to do this and with a majority of 179 they should not be held to ransom by vested interests. There is no excuse for a failure to act this time.

*John Clarke*

**OPENING TIMES** is published by Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA - The Campaign for Real Ale. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the campaign either locally or nationally. Editor: John Clarke, 45 Bulkeley Street, Edgeley, Stockport SK3 9HD. ☎ (0161) 477 1973 (home) and (0161) 831 7222 x 3411 (wk). News, articles and letters welcome. All items may be submitted in most popular WP formats or ASCII on IBM-PC format 3.5" disks (which will eventually be returned!). Articles for publication can be submitted by e-mail to [jclarke@opentime.u-net.com](mailto:jclarke@opentime.u-net.com). Compuserve users can mail the deputy editor at 100662,12. Letters to the editor on [otletter@opentime.u-net.com](mailto:otletter@opentime.u-net.com).

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## OPENING TIMES SPECIFICATIONS

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# BREWERY NEWS



**BREWERY NEWS**



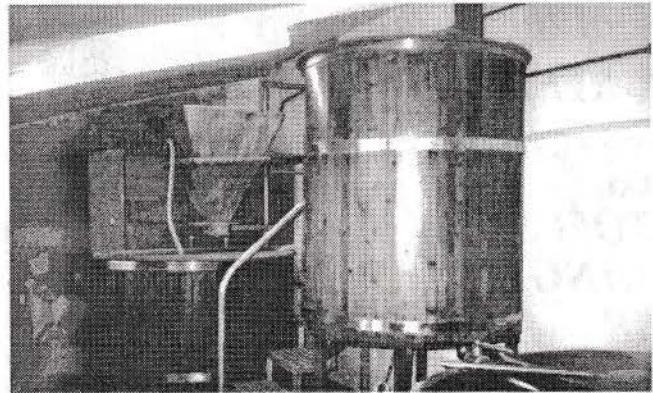
The Staffordshire/Derbyshire borders area is becoming something of a centre of micro brewing. Already Whim are well-established at Hartington and down at Fenny Bentley both Leatherbritches and Black Bull are prospering. Take the A52 Leek road from Fenny Bentley and after eight or so miles you will come to the village of Waterhouses, now home to one of the country's newest brewing ventures, the Stonyrock Brewery at, appropriately, Stonyrock Farm.

This is a venture by the Ivins family and OT spoke to Robert Ivins. Like many new brewers, Robert looked to diversify from his current trade and called on his previous experience as a home brewer which he thought would also satisfy his creative needs.. He also comes from beer connected agricultural background - his father was involved in breeding varieties of malting barley and his sister and brother-in-law were farm managers at Wye College where they were involved in hop production.



Quite a sizeable outbuilding at the farm has been converted into a 5-barrel brewery using a combination of home-made and purpose built equipment. Some came from other brewers, the copper for instance originating at the Titanic brewery in Burslem. There were some test brews but luckily the one beer currently produced, Cavern Bitter at 4.2%, virtually came out right the first time.

The malt is classic Maris Otter from the Beeston Maltings. This is currently supplied pre-crushed although there are plans to install a roller mill at the brewery. A small amount of wheat is also added to the grist for head retention purposes. The yeast is an Allied Breweries yeast, AB1, which Robert says "doesn't like it in the hills" and he may develop his own strain. Hops are whole hops with a number of varieties in use including Challenger, Bramling Cross and Goldings. The Cavern Bitter is a superbly balanced mid-brown beer, with a refreshing easy-drinking quality and a satisfying dry aftertaste. The next beer planned is to be Old Fossil (all of the Stonyrock beers



will reflect the 'stone' theme in their names) which should be a pale IPA-type beer at a strength of "six point something". Quite a few local pubs are taking the beer including the Sea Lion and Linden Tree in Ipstones; the Green Man, Windy harbour; Dog & Partridge, Swinscoe and the Nags Head, Hulland Ward. The Crown in Waterhouses will also be an outlet once a new beer line has been installed. Robert says the brewery's aim is to get the beer in pubs that will sell it on a permanent basis rather than as an infrequent guest beer. Not only will this help establish a scarcity value but will also avoid the heavy discounting that could come with a push into the wider free trade. However Opening Times readers won't have to book the next bus to Waterhouses if they want to try the beer - four nine-gallon casks have been ordered for Stockport Beer Festival! JC.

*The Stonyrock Brewery may be contacted on 01538 308352.*

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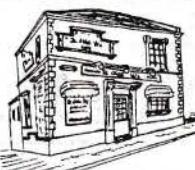
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## Pub Of The Month **MAY**

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**T**he Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for May is the Railway, Great Portwood Street, Stockport.

Many readers of Opening Times will already be familiar with the Railway which, since its reopening last September, has become one of the stars of the local drinking scene. Previously the pub had experienced mixed fortunes having traded variously as 'Cheekies' and 'Byrons', ultimately leading to closure early in 1996. That seemed to be the end of the railway as a public house until it was rescued by Dave Porter of the Porter Brewing Co. who restored the pub as his third tied house (after previously failing to buy the Stanley Arms!).

The quality of the Porter ales was already well-known (having picked up two Overall Champion Beer of the Festival awards from Stockport Beer Festival, as well as a host of category wins) but as ever it takes more than good beer to make a good pub.

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What every pub needs is the right people behind the bar and in Paul and Bev Stanyer the Railway has come up trumps. Already experienced in the pub trade, having previously run another Porters pub in Clayton-le-Moors, their sure touch has established the Railway as a firm favourite with local drinkers. Quality ales, low prices, real cider, interesting foreign beer, good value home-cooked food, no returns to the cask, no juke box, no gaming machines - apart from over-sized lined glasses there's little more that even the fussiest drinker could want from a pub.

This is a truly well-deserved award and will be presented to Paul and Bev on Thursday, 22nd May on what promises to be a memorable night. JC.

*The local branch of CAMRA decide on a Pub of the Month by a democratic vote at the monthly branch meeting.*



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During Stockport Beer Festival

Paul & Bev at the Railway pride themselves in selling excellent quality real ales and cider in a warm and friendly atmosphere. The pub does not have a jukebox, fruit machine or TV. They also sell a small range of foreign bottled beers.

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Porter's Sunshine .....	5.3%	£1.45
Real "Scrumpy" Cider .....		£1.80

# LETTERS OPENING TIMES

## From Kim Rampley:

I was interested to read "Supermarket Sweep" - OT April. I have never cared much for the enforced jollity of pubs over Christmas, so I usually get bottled beers - usually UK brewed bottle conditioned ales (BCAs) to consume at home. A couple of points:

1. Tesco. I generally agree that their beer range is the best, especially their own label ones.
2. Morrisons. Our local one usually has a deal whereby if you "perm 2 any 4 from a specific few - Jennings Cumberland, Pedigree and 6X have been the choice recently - you get £1 off.
3. Kwik Save. Though not in the same league as the stores you mention, I have seen some very good offers - for example with an in-store coupon I got £1.50 off 3 bottles of Vaux Waggledance, i.e. 3 were cheaper than 2!
4. Oddbins. Perhaps the best choice for BCAs, they have occasional "12 for the price of 8" offers and staff who know their wares. There is a handy branch in Cooper St, Manchester City Centre (near the City Arms and Vine pubs).

Finally, as regards Greenalls Corner - their behaviour does not surprise me especially vis-à-vis the Crown. I have been lucky enough (!?) to live in "Greenall Whitley land" all my life apart from my four years at university, and have seen their antics over the years - closure of breweries, demolition of Tommy Ducks, etc., etc...need I say more?

## Out of our Circulation Area?

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## From Bob Bromley:

I was rather surprised at the prejudice in the March Curmudgeon. Maybe the writer has spent a lot of time sitting in traffic queues at Newbury but that is no excuse for having a go at that particular anti-road protest. Presumably the writer is also unaware that the anti-Newbury bypass protest has been vindicated by recent revelations from those responsible for pushing through the route that has been adopted.

It also smacks of hypocrisy to suggest that one new road scheme is fine but another should be resisted when Opening Times consistently berates other scheme which it opposes - e.g., insensitive pub conversions, poor quality beer, short measures etc. There is also a hint of NIMBYism: it's fine to ruin countryside near Newbury so that someone from Manchester can have a smoother journey to Hampshire but it's not all right to mess up parts of West Manchester.

Please, in future, stick to matters which are directly related to beer and cider; that's what CAMRA is good at.

## Greenalls Update

Last month we reported on the proposed shake-up in the Greenalls estate. Sadly there is little more to report this month.

The good news is that Peter Belfield is staying on at the Comfortable Gill as a franchised tenant.

The bad news is that there is still no news on the Crown, Heaton Lane where Steve and Lorraine James are still in limbo. Meanwhile it's business as usual and the excellent stream of guest beers continues unabated. Get down here and enjoy them while you still can.

CAMRA HQ WORLD WIDE WEB PAGES ON:  
<http://www.camra.org.uk>

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## PHOENIX BREWERY

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BANTAM BITTER  
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BEST BITTER  
Tawny coloured, with a hint of sweetness in the full bitter palate. A fresh but dry hop finish.



OLD OAK  
Well balanced brown beer. Malt and hops balance well, bitterness in the aroma and taste. The finish is malty, fruity and dry.



THIRSTY MOON  
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Pale brown bitter. Full flavoured hops, bitterness. More pleasantly dry and light than its gravity would suggest.



WOBBLY BOB  
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The High Peak & North East Cheshire Branch Contact is Ralph Warrington  
(0161 368 3624 (h) 0161 439 7502 (fax))



# STAGGER

with Jack Lyons

Whilst our destination was the pubs of Fallowfield, our rendezvous this Saturday evening was to be one of Joseph Holt's latest acquisitions, the **Kingsway** at the northern end of the A34.

A former dilapidated Greenalls Berni Inn-type establishment, this was tastefully refurbished as only Holts know how and is now running as a three room pub, with one of the rooms mainly serving a thriving restaurant area, all served by an island bar. The Holts Bitter was certainly of good quality but the mild was disappointing (possibly due to low sales in this particular pub).

Leaving Levenshulme behind, we continued across the border into Fallowfield, passing some joggers from the University athletics ground on Moseley Road, for a swift half at the Greenalls-run **Old House At Home**, a small local tucked away amongst a couple of streets of back to back terraces. It was an average pint of Greenalls Bitter served from a split level bar, adorned with trophies, dividing the vault and lounge. There were some fine etched glass doors. Back on to Moseley Road, lapping the earlier joggers, a Paul Calf attitude sets in as we head for Wilmslow Road and **Rabinskis** on Wilbraham Road, which unfortunately has gone font mad - not a proper handpump in sight. A proper posers paradise. Crossing the road, we popped into the **Queen of Hearts**, a vast old church building conversion which is always popular with students, this was my first visit. Quite dimly lit inside with a forest of handpumps on a long bar. Sadly the Arctic Ale only existed on the pumpclips; however, the Tetley Bitter was quite good as was the Burton Ale. Strangely, the bouncers were put to work as we left.

Heading south down Wilmslow Road we approached **Buchanans**, formerly the Sherwood and now apparently running as a Scottish theme bar. Makes a change, I suppose. There was plaid covered seating aplenty, Balmoral-style candelabra and a Murphy's promotion (*oh, very Scottish-ed.*). We all tried the Aviator Firkin Ale which was creamy but a little watery.

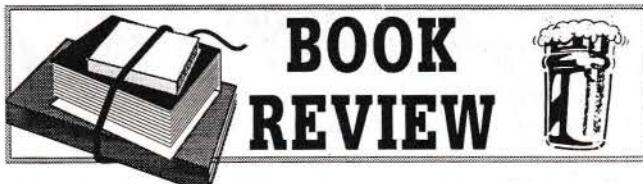
Crossing the road we entered **Durty Nellies**, occupying part of the old Fallowfield station and soon to succumb to supermarket blight. However, in the meantime, it's a busy bar festooned with promotional blackboards, and when they ran out of walls, they've used the windows. A tiny price list was spotted behind the bar - Boddies at a pound a pint. Three halves were ordered at 71p each! Served from one of 12 clipless handpumps.

A short walk down the road brought us to the **Friendship** and a sight we were all anticipating and dreading. The new nitro-keg Hydes font standing tall beside the electric pumps for their excellent real ales. Why Hydes have jumped on the 'smooth flow' bandwagon is anybody's guess, and while we were standing at the bar on a busy Saturday night we never saw the thing being used. Perhaps the novelty value period has ended. However, the Billy Westwoods was excellent at £1.15 a pint, as was the difficult to find Anvil Light.

Leaving Wilmslow Road behind, we approached Ladybarn Lane via the lost rivers of Manchester and came across the **Derby**, a splendid recessed backstreet local with a small opened-out bar area and serving Wilsons Bitter plus Holts Bitter as a permanent guest. This latter was very good. Heading towards Ladybarn village we approached the **Brewers Arms**, a Firkin-type conversion with stripped wooden floors, tables and chairs and the many ubiquitous blackboards. A good range of real ales but not too many, though. Everybody went for the Fullers London Pride, which was good. Castle Eden Ale and Boddingtons Bitter were also available. Across the road is the **Talbot**, a large Victorian building opened out with as many different wallpapers as walls and a promotion for just

about everything. We all had Boddies Bitter which was more or less average. Nobody tried the Trophy.

Our last port of call was to be the **White Swan** on Green Street. A return trip for me after this pub won a Pub of the Month award last summer. The Robinsons Best Bitter was excellent then and so it remained tonight, served from a dominant crescent bar with four separate rooms complimenting this splendid Edwardian local. So, a night of great contrasts. Of course this article can only represent a snapshot of what we found on one particular night and can't therefore be taken as a definitive verdict on either the pubs or their beers. As ever, why not try some yourselves to see how much you agree - or not.



## The History of Robinsons Brewery by Dr Lynn Pearson. 138pp. £17.99

It was in 1988 that I learned that Robinsons had commissioned a brewery history which it was intended to publish in conjunction with their 150th anniversary celebrations that year. Nine years later it's finally out and it must be said that it has certainly been worth the wait.

Brewery histories whether produced 'in-house' or independently can very often be dull, worthy affairs, with the visual impact and appeal of a telephone directory, charting the births, marriages and deaths of the controlling family members interspersed with dreary lists of pubs purchased and breweries taken over.

This book, however, is a triumphant break from the norm. Lynn Pearson is a writer and photographer with a special interest in the history of pubs and breweries and she has certainly brought all her skills to bear here. The book is in a glossy, coffee-table, style and charts the brewing history of the Robinson family in a highly readable, unstuffy narrative lavishly interspersed with old photographs, of the family, their pubs, beer labels and other historic documents. It is in fact as much an exercise in social history as brewery history and is all the better for it. Most of the book is in full colour as well which helps bring many of the older illustrations of beer labels and the like to life.

There are lists of pubs purchased but these are relegated to the back where they belong and so do not interrupt the flow of the narrative. Indeed this is a book which will appeal not to just beer lovers but all those with any interest in local history. At £17.99 it's not cheap but it's worth every penny. Available by post from the brewery (phone 480 6571 for details) or from the brewery shop. Highly recommended. JC.

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## The Nursery Inn



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# OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

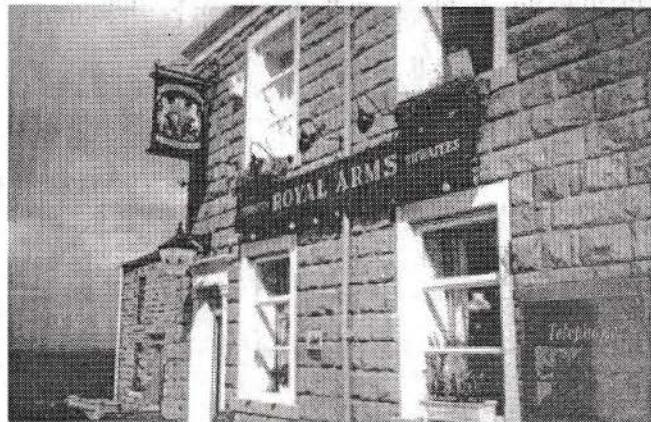


by Andrew Sumner

This month, "Opening Times" starts a new series showcasing some recommended pubs of quality in the Lancashire and Cumbria area. As with "Cheshire Inns", "Pub in the Peak", and "North Wales Pubs", our aim is to lead you to pubs with excellent beer and a firm foothold in their local community. More often than not, they will be set in surroundings of character and historical interest; and often - though by no means always - they will also offer excellent food. So join us this month on our first trip "off the beaten track", as Andrew Sumner takes us on a trip to the Lancashire moors.

Our series starts with a visit to the Royal Arms at Tockholes, Lancashire. Set on the Lancashire moors, the pub has been serving ale for some 140 years, although the building itself dates back to around 1790, when it was built as the supervisor's house for a nearby mill.

Once inside the Royal Arms, the first thing you notice is that the pub is full of character - and not the kind that can be bought off the shelf. The pub has a traditional layout with four separate rooms, each of which boasts a splendid large stone fireplace with a real fire providing a roaring blaze during the winter months. One of the rooms is a no smoking room - always an attractive feature when bringing a baby or young children into the pub, or if like me you are a non-smoker yourself.



The Royal Arms, Tockholes

The Royal Arms is the first pub for licensee Phil Bennison and his wife Katharine. Although Phil is a local lad, he spent some of his time down south as a trained chef at Claridges in London before returning to Tockholes to take up the tenancy of the pub. As you can imagine, not only is the real ale first class (hence the pub's entry in the 1997 Good Beer Guide) but so is the food, all of which is prepared and cooked on the premises by Phil. Unlike some "food" pubs where ale becomes a secondary product, the Royal Arms manages to combine both good ale and good food extremely well; the varied menu is available weekdays and weekends, and all tastes and styles can be catered for on prior request.

As the pub is a Thwaites tied house there are no guest ales; however Phil serves Thwaites Best Mild, Bitter, Craftsman and the current seasonal brew, and is also keen to try the new beers recently introduced by the local Blackburn brewer - one or more of these may be available by the time you read this. As you can tell by sampling any of the cask beers, Phil is a real ale fan himself, his theory being that each pint leaves the brewery in perfect condition and how you find it at the pub reflects how it has been kept since. The pub has a busy trade, especially at weekends, when it is popular with locals and visitors alike; as it is situated on the East Lancashire moorland it is ideal for walkers or ramblers (for whom tea and coffee is available for those not wishing to "partake"). On weekdays the pub is popular with the local business community for a lunch-time pint and a bite to eat, while the evening trade is mostly local. There are no jukeboxes or games machines and quite frankly there is no need for either, as there is plenty of character and local conversation to engage the mind.

Although out in the wilds of Lancashire, the Royal Arms is surprisingly easy to get to either by car or public transport. By car follow the A666 from Bolton through Belmont until you see the sign for Tockholes; then turn right and follow the road for about a mile and you will see the Royal Arms on your right with a large car park just before the pub. The OS reference is 665215. The weekday bus service is sparse but usable: a couple of times a day the 23 bus from Blackburn to Belmont, passing the Royal Arms a mile or so south of Tockholes village. At Belmont there are hourly connections to Bolton on service 528 (so you could let the first bus go and have a couple of pints of Holts in the Black Dog). On Sundays the service is in fact rather better, as the bus (which is service 535 on Sundays) runs right through between Blackburn and Bolton every two hours until early evening. For detailed times, phone Lancashire Public Transport on 01257 241693).

If you want to visit a traditional pub with superb ale and food, and with an atmosphere and local views second to none, the Royal Arms is well worth a visit either on a weekday or at the weekend. But beware - the pub does have a resident ghost called Bob, a friendly old bloke with a pipe. From Monday to Thursday the pub is open from 12 to 3 at lunchtime and 7 to 11 in the evening. However, from Friday to Sunday, and all week during the summer, it's open all day, from noon to closing time.

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## Irene and Staff welcome you to The Greyhound

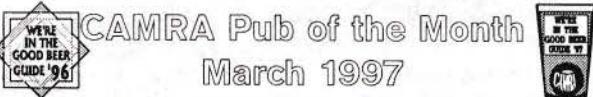


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CAMRA Pub of the Month  
March 1997



# 11th Stockport Beer & Cider Festival Preview

The big event for local beer drinkers this month is the 11th Stockport Beer & Cider Festival, taking place at the Town Hall from 29th-31st. To whet your appetites we present here a small preview of the beers and ciders on offer...

**The Cider Bar** - the cider bar this year will offer a mix of old favourites and new faces. Last year's winners - Edgar Harding's Cider and Franklin's Medium Sweet Perry - will defend their titles, and respected names such as Dennis Gwatkyn will once again appear. There will be two varietal perries from Kevin Minchew, who many think has been unlucky not to pick up "Perry of the Festival" in the past year or two; while new names include Broadlands Kingston Black, from a fruit farm near Bath, and something - hopefully a rather special perry - from the Worcestershire College of Agriculture at Hindlip. And it's not all confined to the traditional cider counties - there'll be a Yorkshire cider called Pipkin, made by two CAMRA members in Masham. All in all, there should be something for everyone. RPJ.

**Beers, Ales and Stouts** - as ever this year we have the return of a few old favourites coupled with a selection of new, some brand new, beers for you to try. There will be 13 stouts and porters including award-winning Porter's Porter and Tomlinsons Liquorice Stout. The festival special will be a porter/stout as well - this is a 4.5% brew from the new Abbeydale brewery in Sheffield. Provisionally called *Division One* in celebration of Stockport County's promotion, this is certainly



one to look out for.. There will be 7 old/strong ales including some specially matured Porter's Sleighed and, hopefully, another Abbeydale beer - Last Rites at 11.5%! There will also be 10 milds and no fewer than 69 bitters and premium bitters. These will be from the length and breadth of the country - from the Blue Anchor home brew pub in Cornwall to Tomintoul brewery in the Scottish Highlands. There will be beers from new breweries such as the Traveller's Inn at Caerwys in North Wales and Stonyrock in Staffordshire alongside local favourites from Passageway and Bank Top.

This year we have possibly one of the best ranges of beer and cider we have ever offered, even one or two of the 'tickers' might find something they've not had before! With great entertainment and all the other usual attractions, this will be one not to miss. Remember those dates again - May 29-31 at Stockport Town Hall Ballroom. See you there!



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## COME TO THE ALL YEAR ROUND BEER FESTIVAL



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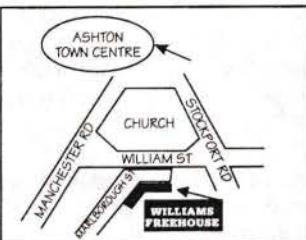


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THE CAMRA

BEER MONSTER

I have postponed my guide to the German version of Manchester (local bias creeping in) for a month, because one or two things of interest have come up.

If you read the Saturday and Sunday press after the recent election you may have noted a curious story about Gordon Brown's July Budget and beer.

Picked up by four papers, the story goes that the Iron Chancellor has been rather impressed by representations about what the ridiculously high level of beer duty is doing to British jobs. Apparently he is convinced (a) of the need over time to bring duty levels in line with European averages (hurrah) and (b) that the loss of excise duty and jobs in breweries, pubs and distribution to the cross channel inflow (and smuggling) must be dealt with. So it is rumoured that there will be a 20% cut in duty, to create 60,000 new jobs, and cut down imports (and reduce beer prices by about 10p). Well, whatever Curmudgeon might think, it IS a splendid idea, but I have a feeling the health fascists will try to stop it. Incidentally, Gordon, why not recoup any losses by putting 50p a bottle extra duty on alcopops at the same time, and do Britain a GIGANTIC favour.

Bank Holiday weekend saw the usual Beer House and Station (Ashton) Festivals with the added bonus of Stalybridge Buffet added. There were, apparently, 160 beers on offer between the sites with about 135 totally new to Manchester. Scratches Paradise. Well...up to a point. Fair do's, the festivals were uniformly excellent, with the Beer House narrowly coming first, followed by Stalybridge with Ashton a close third (despite the Marquee - which I thought was underused again...). BUT, and it is indeed a capital BUT, why the obsession with fruit flavoured beers - three raspberry varieties at the Beer House alone? (Question directed at brewers!). For those that like them, the Belgians do a good job (the draught Peche at the Beer House was very good!), but British examples are (almost) uniformly dire - remember the Batemans Strawberry beer that destroyed every pump line and beer engine it went through or the equally horrid Banana beer of the same year. (The Blackmoor one is a lot better but...)

They ruin the palate, almost necessitate being drunk in halves (slowly) and most of them taste like amateur vipto. If this is the micro-brewers answer to alcopops then my advice is not to give up the day jobs, and stick to malt, hops, yeast and water. As the Reinheitsgebot says - you know it makes sense (well, it should). For those crazy enough to want to know, the Salopian Oat Raspberry was actually quite nice, but the other raspberry and elderberry concoctions were horrid! I have nothing against Europe but lets emphasise what's BEST about BRITISH beer, please.

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## Local Colour, National Bland

Commentators often complain that shopping centres across Britain are becoming more and more alike, with the high street in every town featuring the same range of well-known national chain stores, resulting in a steady encroachment of bland uniformity at the expense of local individuality.

Now much the same seems to be happening to pubs. You could well now find in the centre of any major town, say, a Wetherspoon's, a Yates's, a Scruffy Murphy's, a Firkin, a Hogshead and a Tap & Spile, which, while they maybe perfectly decent establishments in themselves, are scarcely any different from those in some other place two hundred miles away. On the retail park at the edge of any town there may be a spanking new Brewer's Fayre to go with the B&Q shed and the drive-thru McDonalds.

Even in those pubs which are not being subjected to standardised themes, a steady process of homogenisation is taking place. Nowadays, the national brewers tend to offer much the same beer range all over the country. Where once Allied Domecq (or whatever they're called this week) might have given you Ansells, Ind Coope, Halls or Friary Meux, now it's likely to be Tetley's whether you're in Plymouth or Aberdeen. It's just the same with Boddingtons for Whitbread, Worthington for Bass and Theakstons for S&N. Several major independent brewers which once had large tied estates, such as Matthew Brown, Home and Devenish, have sold out to the nationals or to pub chains and have either disappeared off the face of the earth or remain only in the life-after-death of badge brewing. Once it could often be a rewarding experience when visiting a town some distance away to be able to sample distinctive local beers which were not available at home - such as Wem in Shrewsbury or Home and Shipstone in Nottingham. Today, it's getting harder to find anything much different. The citizens of Shrewsbury and Nottingham can no doubt today drink a far wider selection of beers than they could twenty years ago. However, a far greater proportion of the pints drunk will be bland national brews rather than tasty local ones. And how real is the choice anyway when it's hardly any different from that available anywhere else in the country? Even the local ten-beer alehouses will probably, over time, feature much the same beers as those in your home town.

We may tend to take for granted the concentrations of Robinson's pubs in Stockport, Holt's in Eccles and Lees' in Middleton, but, looking at the pub scene across the country, they are something rather special. To have a substantial number of pubs which have their own house style and serve distinctive beers from a local independent brewer greatly adds to a town's individual character, something which, regrettably, is becoming increasingly rare.

## A Tide of Sarsaparilla?

A couple of years ago, I ran into a bit of flak for daring to suggest that, on a range of drink-related issues, Labour might be less sympathetic than the Conservatives to the interests of pubgoers and licensees. Not wanting to get into that kind of hot water again, in the wake of the general election result. I'll say no more than that I have a strong suspicion that my suggestions may turn out to be true - even taking into account Labour's promised introduction of universal full measures, something always strongly supported by the column. I sincerely hope I'm proved wrong, and of course every case will be judged strictly on its merits. However if labour policies do prove to be detrimental to pubs and drinkers, then rest assured I won't hold back on saying "I told you so".



*This month sees the return of one of Opening Times' most popular series, "Pub Grub". All being well, it should appear at least every other month from now on. We kick off the new series with a look at a new venture in an old favourite....*

The Kings Arms on Bloom Street in Salford has long been a favourite with local beer drinkers. It was the first Boddingtons Ale House and although the original managers, Dave and Sue Price, have been ensconced in their own pub, the Queens Arms, for about a year now, the Kings still offers an interesting range of well-kept ales with constantly changing guests.

Another connection with the old Boddies Ale House operation comes in the form of Ken Birch, the original manager of Stockport's Crown on Heaton Lane when it, too, was given the ale house treatment and who now has the food franchise at the Kings. The name for the new venture is the rather appropriate Beer Gut Kitchen and presents the ideal way for Ken to combine his training as a chef with his love for real ales and continental beers.



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This is reflected in the fact that all of the dishes are prepared using beer. Indeed the food and beer has been so good that Opening Times has been back not once but twice! On the first occasion we tried the Real Ale Pie (£2.80), a classic example of the style with lean steak, kidney and oysters, all marinated in Old Tom and cooked in a stock of onions and Timothy Taylors Landlord. The result is a deeply savoury dish with an intense rich flavour. Topped with the lightest pastry crust it was simply stunning. Pints of Caledonian Deuchars IPA, crisp and hoppy, made for the perfect contrast. On the next visit we went for the Somerset Sausage (£2.20) - prize-winning Clitheroe sausages cooked in cider, apple, onion and garlic. Another Caledonian beer, Campbell, Hope & King Double Amber was a robust, full flavoured accompaniment. Other dishes using beer include Flemish Jambalaya, a mixture of prawns, swordfish, tomato, garlic and Cajun spices enlivened with Belgian Rodenbach (£2.80); Ostend Chowder, a hefty fish and potato soup enlivened by the addition of Belgian lambic beer and Hallamshire Chop, a double lamb chop cooked with Yorkshire Sweet Stout (£2.80). Two vegetarian dishes - Yam-Yam Ram-Tam and Ale Aubergine - also feature beer in the recipe. All these dishes come with two rolls and vegetables. Rice, chips or baked potatoes are 50p extra each.

In addition to all this there is an extensive sausage menu and a choice of vegetarian dhals. The sausage dishes come in a barm (£1.20), with baked potato (£2.00) or a giant Yorkshire Pud (£2.80). The Beer Gut Kitchen represents one of the first serious local attempts to explore the vast possibilities of beer cookery and deserves to succeed. Highly recommended. Get there soon, though, as the Kings Arms was up for auction on 7th May and what happens after that is anyone's guess.JC.

\* The Kings Arms is on Bloom Street which is the direct extension of New Bailey Street as it crosses Chapel Street. Tel 839 4951.

# FIVE YEARS ON AND THE BEST SIMPLY GOT BETTER

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# VIADUCTS & VAULTS 2

THE GUIDE TO STOCKPORT PUBS

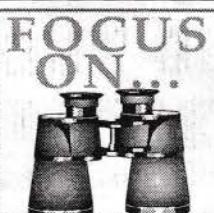
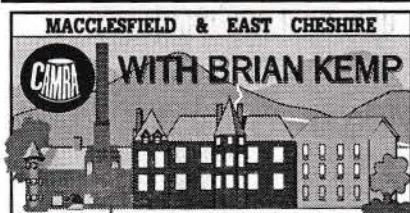


The book cover features a large, bold title 'VIADUCTS & VAULTS 2' at the top. Below the title is a black and white photograph of a stone arch bridge spanning a river. The book is shown slightly open, revealing two pages of text and a map. The left page contains a section titled 'HOW TO USE' with instructions and a sample entry. The right page shows a detailed map of Stockport with various pub locations marked. The overall design is clean and professional.

THE GUIDE TO STOCKPORT PUBS



Viaducts and Vaults 2 can be obtained for £3.95 (p&p free) - cheque made payable to CAMRA Stockport & South Manchester, from:  
Jim Flynn, 66 Downham Road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport, Cheshire, SK4 5EG



### The Railway View, Byrons Lane, Macclesfield

**T**he Railway View is a deceptively large free house standing on Byrons Lane which is the left turn signposted to Langley and Winch at the traffic lights on the main Macclesfield-Leek road.

It is two brick terraced cottages built in about 1700 that have been knocked into a single building and stands on the right just as you cross the railway bridge over the Manchester/Macclesfield to Stoke main line.

It was extensively altered a few years ago changing it from what had previously been a pub which had a number of large barn-like rooms into what is now an attractively furnished pub divided by the new layout into a number of more intimate eating and drinking areas.

The old pub used to be notable for the resident free-range parrot that would fly around the bar and have the un-nerving habit of perching itself on a shelf above the bar. There is a paved outdoor drinking area at the back affording not surprisingly splendid views for railway buffs of the passing trains. This area is known as Platform 1! There is a vast cellar extending to the ground floor area of the pub which has also recently been discovered to have a number of additional rooms off. However the landlady tells me they have yet to summon up the courage to investigate what might be in them! New cellar-cooling equipment is currently being installed.

The Railway View is one of a number of what I call beer festival pubs in Macclesfield. Another is the Waters Green Tavern. Both landlords are also keen promoters of traditional ciders. The core of the Railway View beer range is Batemans XXXB and Dark Mild and the remainder is a constantly changing range of guest beers with Brains SA being an interesting recent feature. A house beer, Railway Steam Bitter is also usually available. At 4.2% it is a generic beer brewed by Coach House Brewery that is badged appropriately to the particular outlet concerned. A recent new addition is genuine Czech Budvar. Opening hours are 12-3 Friday, Saturday and Sunday only and 6-11 in the evening all week. A good selection of bar food is available and Sunday lunch in particular always appears very good value.

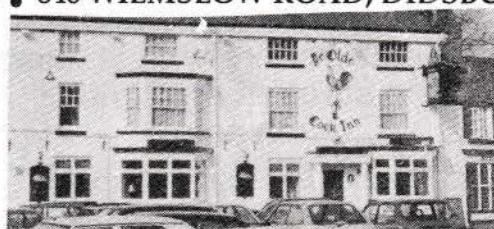
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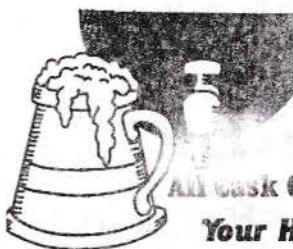
**1st Week in June - Phoenix Brewery Beer Festival**

**SKY SPORTS**

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# 5 Years Ago

## MAY '92

by Phil Levison

**M**ay is the month in which CAMRA traditionally promotes the delights of that much overlooked drink - mild. It was the plight of traditional beer in general that had led to the formation of the Campaign in the early 1970's, and the situation regarding mild had not improved much in subsequent years. New light, or even lite, drinks had been much in favour, and mild had always had a "cloth cap" image, which somehow didn't fit in with the go-ahead 70's, and the yuppie 80's. Boddingtons, Lees and Greenalls all used to brew two milds, but this had been reduced to one each. It was not all doom and gloom though. Local brewers West Coast and the Flea & Firkin had both introduced new milds with great success, and Stanley's and Ollie's (both milds) had been specially commissioned from the Ryburn Brewery by Stockport's enterprising free house, the Stanley Arms. It looked as if the mild image had changed, due in no small part to the wave of new small brewers, many with a mild in their portfolios.

The popular Opening Times series Pub Grub had returned on an occasional basis, with a visit to the Royal Oak in Didsbury - a Marstons pub renowned for its cheese lunches. Several large slabs of different cheeses, pickles etc., with plenty of crusty wholemeal bread (and a doggy bag) all for £2.50 - adjudged to be excellent value.

Congratulations were in order - at the Bristol AGM, the presentation of the "Local Guide of the Year" award was made to Rhys Jones as editor of "Viaducts & Vaults", the Stockport pub guide published the previous year.

"The Flea Goes Real" headed an announcement that tank beers at the Flea & Firkin at All Saints were to use a new dispense system, known as a "nitrogen demand valve", which enabled the beers to be classed as real ale. There was a new beer to be produced in honour of Manchester's Olympic bid - Olympic Gold at 5.1% ABV.

Finally, several odds and ends from the back page - Beers from the ex-Courage empire were beginning to appear - John Smith's at the Smithy in Cheadle Hulme, and the Jolly Sailor in Davenport; Courage Directors was due to appear at the Hesketh in Cheadle Hulme. The question was asked why somebody hadn't tried Magnet - probably the best beer from Tadcaster. Vaux had purchased 126 pubs, including some in the Opening Times area - Vaux Bitter at £1 a pint was selling well, also Samson and Lorimer's Best Scotch were to be found.

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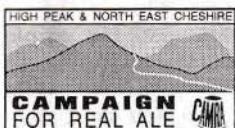
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**May  
Featured Pub:  
Crown & Cushion,  
Victoria St., Newton**

A pub that has really been through the wringer in the recent past, having been a dismal Wilsons house until purchased by Belhaven Inns, the company that shut forever some pubs that could easily have been turned round, such as the Ten Houses (Railway), in Hyde. Belhaven became Ascot Estates, and then Mayfair Taverns, and a succession of disinterested, short-term licensees only served to drive the Crown & Cushion further into the ground. Before being taken over by the present tenants, the pub was threatened with closure by the local council unless substantial improvements were undertaken to restore the integrity of the structure and improve hygiene standards.

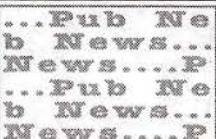
Three years later, and the pub has been vastly improved, with a rebuilt bar, a tasteful redecoration and much use of wooden panelling. The latter, whilst giving a warm and welcoming effect inside the pub has other benefits, as the landlord explained, "once it's up, you only need to dust it regularly, no wallpapering or painting ever again!" As the intention was to keep a traditional community atmosphere, without pandering to transitory fashions in the retail drinks trade, the layout is quite well preserved, with separate bar, lounge and games rooms, spread between what were originally two terraced properties. All are well furnished and comfortable, and attract a good cross section of locals on a regular basis. Some interesting photos of old Hyde can be seen in the bar corridor, with several long gone pubs featuring. As the only pub in the area that doesn't have a jukebox or karaoke, (Japan's revenge for losing the war), and with only background radio, with the volume regulated by the landlord, conversation dominates, and you can join in the debate, or sit and enjoy a pint, perhaps reading a paper or doing the crossword - sublime relaxation. As the pub is still part of Mayfair Taverns, the beer range is controlled by the owners, and is restricted to Carlsberg Tetley products. Excellent Tetley Mild and Bitter is available, with the dark mild being particularly good on my visits, and well supported by the regulars. Quality food is becoming a feature, with lunchtime trade building up from the nearby factories and offices. It is hoped that the occasionally available Burton Ale, easily the best beer that CT produce will become more regular, as trade builds up to make this premium beer viable. An excellent pub, well worth a visit and testament to the fact that all pubs are worth fighting for as even the worst can be turned into fine places with the effort and dedication of enthusiastic tenants. The Crown & Cushion is three minutes walk from Newton Station, or can be reached on the 209 or 346 buses. RW.

## Glossop Beer Festival

A final up-date on this new festival at Glossop FC (Surrey Street) on the late bank holiday weekend this month (that's Saturday 24th and Sunday 25th). The beers have been chosen and confirmed as follows:

**Lees** Bitter; **Hydes** Bitter and Light; **Phoenix**: Bonneville, Tyke, Best Bitter and a Festival Special; **Bank Top**: Bridge Bitter, Cliff Hanger, Samuel Crompton; **Whim**: Black Bear, Magic Mushroom Mild, Hartington Bitter, IPA; **Beartown**: Bruins Ruin, Bearskinfull, Ambeardextrous; **Leatherbritches**: Stout, Bespoke, Belter, Belt & Braces; **Black Bull**: Jacobs Ladder, Raging Bull, Dovedale Bitter.

A fine collection of beers from local (almost) breweries. This should be a great weekend so please come along and give the beers a try and the festival a helping hand. If it's a success it is intended to make it a regular on the festival schedule. TJ.



In Ashton, **Williams** has reduced price beer on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday! £1.10 will buy you a pint of Boddingtons Bitter, Flowers IPA or the guest beer - well worth going out of your way for. Williams also sells Hoegaarden Witbier - at a bit more than £1.10!

Up in Glossop, Greenalls decision to change the **Star** from a managed house to a tenancy and deprive it of its "Ale House" status has caused outrage. All sorts of rumours abound, but it is likely that the Star will become a run-of-the-mill Tetley outlet. Now, I've got nothing against Tetleys per se but to lose the excellent range of beers the Star boasted is going to be a great loss for the beer drinking community.

Over in Broadbottom, recent closures and re-openings seem to have steadied down. Sadly the ultimate loser would appear to be the **Shoulder of Mutton** which is being converted into flats. Further along the road the recently re-opened **Station** (a former Banks's outlet) is selling Thakstons Best Bitter and a guest beer - both on handpump.

On Astley Street, Dukinfield, the **Chapel House** has had new signage erected. This, if you remember, was one of the Holts acquisitions that was subsequently sold off. It is now a free house - selling? You guessed - Holts Mild and Bitter. It would appear that this is a permanent Holts outlet for the area after all. **Ralph Warrington adds**: also in Dukinfield, the **Black Knight**, a down at heel keg only Bass house on Victoria Street, has changed hands and is now called the New Crown. Any positive improvements have yet to manifest themselves. In Hyde, the **Commercial**, which passed into the hands of the accountants a couple of months back, now has new tenants and has reopened. And in Stalybridge a licensing application has been put forward for another wine bar/lager louts paradise on Melbourne Street, further up from the dismal Riverside and Friendship pubs on the same street, which both cater for the same clientele. The place will be called Reds Bar, and will be owned by a company called EMCO Ltd of Leeds.

*Tom Lord has also provided a few beer range updates - the Wagon & Horses in Woodley is now selling Vaux Double Maxim and Samson on handpump; the Hare & Hounds at Chadkirk/Otterspool now has a guest beer; in Offerton the Wrights Arms' range is now Websters Green Label, Greene King Abbot and IPA, all on handpump. Lastly the Rock Tavern, Glossop Road, Chisworth has Banks's Bitter and Camerons Strongarm, again both on handpump.*

## Macclesfield Pub News

The **Prince of Wales**, Roe Street, Macclesfield, has been converted into a Greenalls Porter House with the usual Boddingtons and some guest beers.

The **landlord of the Nag's Head, Waters Green, Macclesfield, a Robinson's house, left on 20 April**. We think that there is an excellent opportunity for a decent Robinsons renovation here as it occupies a prime position opposite the railway station.

The **Durham Ox**, Hurdsfield Road, Macclesfield, a Vaux house, is being completely refurbished, as was the **Bull & Gate**, Waters Green, also a Vaux house. The latter pub reopened on April 18th and has been renamed **108's** after the number of steps on a path from Waters Green to the Market Place.

The **landlord of the White Swan, Rodney Street, Macclesfield, is moving to the Mulberry Bush, Hurdsfield**. Both are Boddingtons (Greenalls) houses.



The back room of the **Mawson**, Kincardine Road, Chorlton-on-Medlock, looks a treat after its recent redecoration. Next to get the treatment will be the "library", first on the left as you go in. When so many pubs have a fortune spent on unwanted sweeping changes, how heartening to see the Mawson building on its strength as a good old-fashioned multi-roomed pub (three separate rooms plus a large "lobby" near the bar) with a great welcome.

Ian Brookes at Stockport's **Bakers Vaults**, in the Market Place, tells us that the famous Mega Band has reformed and Ian himself is "out of retirement" and taking his place in the band's 4-piece brass section. There are 11 band members in total and you can see them at the Bakers on the last Sunday of each month.

One or two Edgeley changes this month - the **Pineapple** on Castle Street which we reported as being for sale last month is still for sale, but it's now closed as well. Also briefly closed was the **Gardeners Arms** on Northgate Road but happily the pub is once again open and trading. Back on Castle Street, the **Royal Oak**, is now offering a weekly guest beer. Greene King's Sorcerer was on sale when OT called and window posters were advertising beer from Bushy's Brewery on the Isle of Man! Lastly, but by no means least, there is a new face behind the bar of the **Prince Albert**, again Castle Street. New licensee is Simon Mounkley, son of veteran, just-retired Blossoms landlady, Barbara Mounkley.

Meanwhile at the **Blossoms** itself, new licensees Neville and Margaret Owen took over on 14 April. While this is their first pub, Neville has some 25 years experience in the trade as a bar-cellarmen, latterly at the Cock in Hazel Grove. His experience certainly showed when OT called - the Robinsons Best Bitter was on superb form. No major changes are planned for the Blossoms - there is to be some redecoration and it is intended to make greater use of the catering kitchen. The function room will also continue in use as before. We wish them both well.

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A raft of local pubs are up for sale or auction. The **Pineapple** in Edgeley has already been mentioned but this is just one of a large number of nationwide disposals by pub chain Ascot Holdings. Other local pubs they are selling include the **Cleveland** in Ardwick; **Gamecock**, Hulme; **Talbot**, Hulme; **Metropole**, Openshaw and in the City Centre the **Lower Turks Head** and **Nicklebys**.

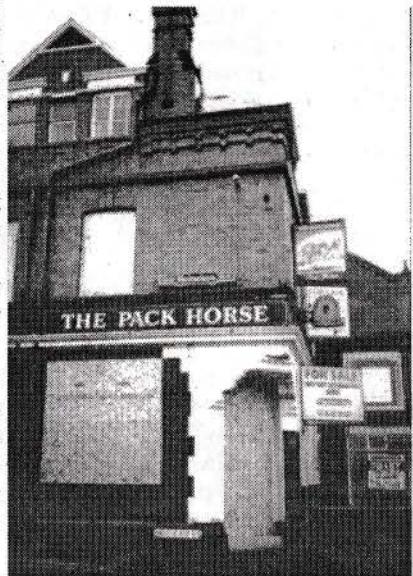
Also getting rid is Greenalls who are auctioning off 64 pubs on 7th May. These include the **Lowes Arms** in Denton; **Concert**, Openshaw; and the **Grants Arms**, Hulme.

Also closed, boarded up and up for sale is the **Pack Horse**, Hillgate, Stockport. The closure came suddenly last month although we understand that the pub had been run by the Receivers for a year or so.

The **Swan With Two Necks**, Stockport has replaced its electric metered pumps with handpulls. An increasing trend with Robinsons houses.

Welcome also to Steve Martin new manager at Robinsons recently refurbished **Dog & Partridge** in Great Moor. Although Robinsons have come in for some stick in the past, it has to be said that they have carried out a creditable job here with a decor in rich traditional shades of red and brown and pleasantly subdued lighting. Externally, there are new etched windows and the whole pub has been spruced up. The beer range has expanded, too with Old Stockport and XB joining Best Bitter and Hatters Mild on handpump. Draught Frederics has gone but is still available in bottle. Food is available from 12-2 and 5-7 Mondays to Fridays and from 12-4 at weekends; the pub is open from 11.30 to 11 and all permitted hours on Sunday. Well worth a visit.

The **Victoria**, Hall Street, Offerton, is now offering a weekly guest beer. This is an excellent little pub and well worth a visit if you are in the area.



## FIRST GLOSSOP BEER FESTIVAL

at

**GLOSSOP NORTH END AFC**  
Surrey Street, Glossop

Sat 24 - Sun 25 May 1997

**25**

Real Ales - Cider & Perry  
Sat 24th 12 - 7pm Admission £1

(50p CAMRA/GFC Members)

8 - 11pm Admission £3

Live Entertainment / Players Presentation

Sun 25 FAMILY FUN DAY

12 - 5pm Admission £1

CHILDREN ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT - FREE ENTRY

## THE CASTLE

OLDHAM STREET, MANCHESTER  
NOW SERVING THE **COMPLETE**  
RANGE OF ROBINSONS CASK BEERS!

Old Stockport Bitter, Best Bitter,  
Hatters Mild, Dark Mild,  
Frederics, Old Tom and Hartleys



A WARM WELCOME  
AND FINE BEER IN  
A CLASSIC PUB



# MANCHESTER MATTERS

To start with, a warm welcome to two re-opened pubs in East Manchester. The **Dolphin** on Clowes Street in West Gorton hadn't in fact been closed for all that long, and seems to have undergone little alteration. It had, however, been comprehensively modernised at an earlier date, and thus, while comfortable enough, has little traditional character. What it does have, though, is

handpumped Grays Premium - a 4.8% ABV beer which I understand is a re-badged version of Mansfield Old Baily. This is a fine beer at any time - at the bargain price of £1.10 when I called recently, it would make a splendid introduction to a Hyde Road pub crawl, or indeed a good reason to spend the evening in the **Dolphin**.

East Manchester's second re-opening, the **Railway** on Chapman Street in Gorton, has had rather more attention lavished on it, the classy refurbishment featuring wooden floors and exposed brickwork. What a shame, then, that the only real ale is handpumped Tetley Bitter, and even that has the "smooth" keg version sitting next to it on the bar! Still, these are two welcome reopenings, and I wish them well.

On the down side, **Barney McGrew's** at All Saints now sells only keg beers, and the **Cleveland** in Ardwick appears to be closed and up for sale (*yours for £30,000 - ed.*). Also in Ardwick, the **King's Head** now has handpumped Theakstons Bitter in place of Websters, and the **George & Dragon** no longer has



by Rhys Jones

John Smiths on handpump, but retains Holts as a guest beer (on less than sparkling from on a recent visit).

In Fallowfield, the **Hungry Horse** has reverted to its old name the **Fallowfield**, though I've not yet had a chance to call and check the beer range. In Longsight, the **Ducie Arms** now has handpumped Trophy in place of Boddingtons, while out at Ringway, the **Airport Hotel** has gained Robinsons Old Stockport and Hartleys XB on handpump.

As predicted in this column in March, the **Town Hall Tavern** in the City Centre has been converted to a cafe-bar. Known as the **Copper Butts**, the new incarnation in fact retains quite a pubby feel, with a variety of seating areas and plenty of mirrors. With a decent range of beers it would be well worth visiting - sadly, though, the only real ale is handpumped Worthington Bitter at £1.60 a pint, which probably makes imported Czech Staropramen a better bet.

Another City Centre venue where the discerning drinker may well look to Europe is **Bar Fringe**, where the handpumped range of Flowers IPA and Marstons Pedigree is flanked by Hoegaarden at a bargain £1.50. The City Centre branch of **Solomon Grundy's** didn't last long - it's now a Spanish restaurant and tapas bar. And PJ Bell's on Oldham Street has become a second branch of Withington's **Kaleida** - still primarily a music venue, still keg. And finally, the sign has gone back in the window of the **City** on Oldham Street advertising Holts at a guinea a pint (or £1.05 for younger readers).

## Heard at the Bar...

.....in a Scottish Courage outlet:

"Three pints of Websters Smooth please."

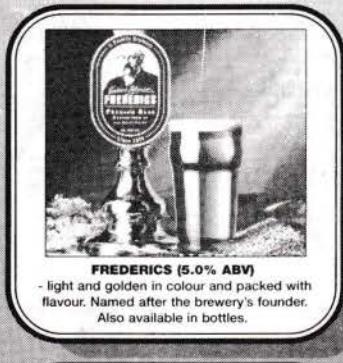
"Er...sorry, we don't sell Websters Smooth, but we have got John Smiths Smooth."

"Oh! Er, well great! I'll have three pints of that then please."

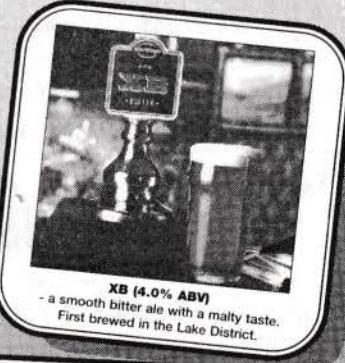
## THE Robinson's COLLECTION



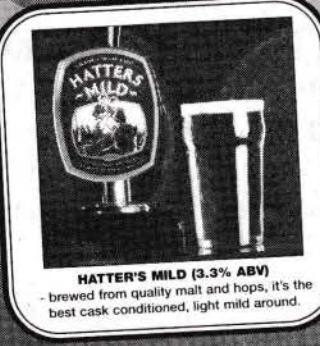
BEST BITTER (4.2% ABV)  
- pale and bright with a full bitterness derived from choice aroma hops.



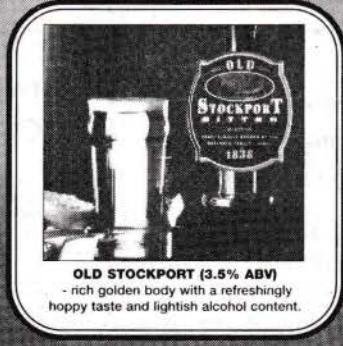
FREDERIC'S (5.0% ABV)  
- light and golden in colour and packed with flavour. Named after the brewery's founder.  
Also available in bottles.



XB (4.0% ABV)  
- a smooth bitter ale with a malty taste.  
First brewed in the Lake District.



HATTER'S MILD (3.3% ABV)  
- brewed from quality malt and hops, it's the best cask conditioned, light mild around.



OLD STOCKPORT (3.5% ABV)  
- rich golden body with a refreshingly hoppy taste and lightish alcohol content.



OLD TOM (8.5% ABV)  
- smooth, dark and mellow. Brewed from a recipe almost as old as the brewery itself.

C H O I C E   B E E R S

# CAMRA CALLING!

Diary

## May 97

- Thursday 8th** - Monthly branch meeting, Greyhound, Bowden Street, Edgeley (vault). Starts 8.00pm.
- Friday 9th** - trip to Beartown Brewery, Congleton. Minibus leaves Royal Oak, Didsbury at 6.30pm; Crown, Heaton Lane, 6.45.
- Monday 12th** - Social, Polygon, Barlow Road, Levenshulme. Starts 9.00pm.
- Friday 16th** - Stagger in Cheadle Hulme and Adswood. Starts 7.00 Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle Hulme; 8.30 Cross Keys, Adswood.
- Monday 19th** - Social, Blossoms, Buxton Road (A6), Heaviley. Starts 9.00pm.
- Thursday 22nd** - Pub of the Month presentation to the Railway, Great Portwood St., Stockport
- Tuesday 27th-Sunday 1st June** - the setting up, running and taking down of Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. All members please try and help. All readers please come and drink!
- Tuesday 2nd June** - Social Grey Horse, Broadstone Road, Reddish.  
High Peak branch covers Bredbury, Romiley, Woodley, Marple and all points north. They have advised us of the following events:

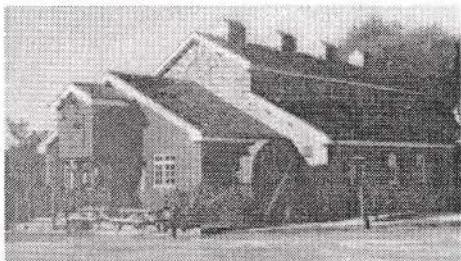
## Campaign For Real Ale Branch Diaries

Here are the monthly branch event diaries, starting with Stockport and South Manchester, followed by High Peak and Macclesfield. Members of all branches are welcome at each other's events!

## May 97

- Sunday 11th** - Woods Walk. Meet 9.45am, carpark Swan PH, New Mills Newtown Station.
- Monday 12th** - Monthly branch meeting, Bowling Green, Marple. Starts 8.30pm.
- Saturday 31st** - Trip to Hart Brewery
- Sunday 1st June** - Snake Path walk. Contact Frank Wood (01457 865426) or Geoff Williamson.
- Monday 9th June** - Branch meeting and AGM, Sportsman, Mottram Road, Hyde. Starts 8.30pm. **All members please try and attend this important meeting.**
- Saturday 21st June** - Train trip to Bridgnorth. Contact Tom Lord.  
Apart from Macclesfield and Bollington, the Macclesfield & East Cheshire branch covers a wide area from Wilmslow to Knutsford and down to Congleton. They have advised us of the following events:
- Monday 19th** - Monthly branch meeting at the Boarhound, Brook Street, Macclesfield. Starts 8.00pm.
- Advance Notice:** The ever popular Severn Valley Railway Trip has been booked for Saturday 21st June. More details next Opening Times.

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Now Under New Management with your hosts  
Jon and Judi Laidlaw

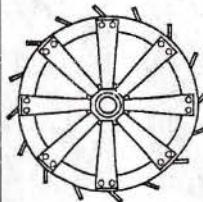
Five guest beers at any time including

**TAPSTER'S**  
Choice  
TRADITIONAL "HANDFULL" BEERS

changed fortnightly

Food available 12 - 9 every day

Quiz Nights Tuesday and Thursday



- t h e -  
**OLD**  
- m i l l -

Mill Lane, Cheadle Hulme  
Tel: 0161 488 4090

Open 12-11,  
Mon - Sat,  
12-10.30 Sunday

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**MANCHESTER'S**  
1st FESTIVAL ALE HOUSE

9 HANDPUMPS - 6 GUEST ALES

FOOD 11.30-2.30 & 5-7 Mon-Fri

and 11.30 - 2.30 Saturday

WATCH OUT FOR OUR SPECIAL 'K'  
BEER FESTIVAL FROM MAY 30th

# JOIN CAMRA NOW AND GET INTO STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL FREE!

As we have been reporting over previous months, preparations for this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival are now well in hand and it's all systems go for the town's real ale extravaganza.

We will be having the usual wide range of beers with old favourites being joined by many beers new to the festival.

With something like 90 ales to choose from, ale lovers will be well catered for (and our bar managers will aim to have at least 40 beers on at any one time - until we start to sell out at the end of the festival that is!). Lovers of traditional cider and perry will also be catered for with our well established cider bar. This year we are ordering 250 gallons and aim to have one of the widest selections of any festival around.

There will be hot food and hot entertainment at all sessions, the usual CAMRA shop, tombola, souvenir glasses and T-shirts. And just a word about the glasses - these will be oversize with a pint line on them. Full measures guaranteed.

This year, the Festival is supporting Sharecare so make sure you pay a visit to the charity stall - they'll have a range of products, and its a very worthy cause.



## DID YOU KNOW

that you can get free entry to the Stockport Beer & Cider Festival by becoming a member of CAMRA, and if that isn't enough, you can also gain free or reduced price entry to every other CAMRA beer festival throughout the UK - currently well over 150 per year!

Details of these festivals and other social events, along with the latest brewery news are supplied in CAMRA's monthly newspaper 'What's Brewing' - delivered free to your door. All members are invited to participate in our packed line-up of socials - at least two events per week: brewery visits (with plenty of sampling time!), curry crawls, minibus trips inside and outside the area; awaydays by train; Staggers and Pubs of the Month are all forthcoming events. So why not become a member of the most successful consumer pressure group in Europe. There has never been a better time to join.

**YOU KNOW IT  
MAKES SENSE**

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## APPLICATION FOR CAMRA MEMBERSHIP

(OT157)

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

NAME(S) . . . . . DATE . . . . .

ADDRESSSS . . . . .

POSTCODE . . . . .

SIGNATURE . . . . . TELEPHONE NUMBER(S) . . . . .

I / We enclose remittance for individual/joint membership for one year: INDIVIDUAL £14  JOINT MEMBERSHIP £17

STUDENT or OAP or REGISTERED DISABLED £8

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP ONLY £8

**Steve McCarley, 32 Howden Close, North Reddish, Stockport SK5 6XW**

those wishing to join CAMRA who live in the Marple, Bredbury, Woodley or Romiley areas, should write instead to:  
Tom Lord, 5 Vernon Drive, Marple, SK6 6JH.



# The Stockport Beer & Cider Festival

STOCKPORT TOWN HALL



29th MAY-31st MAY 1997

**THURSDAY  
29  
MAY**

EVENING-OPEN  
5.30-11.00PM  
ADMISSION  
£1.50  
ENTERTAINMENT  
**THE  
WINCHESTERS**

- HOT FOOD FOR ALL SESSIONS
- FAMILY ROOM UNTIL 9.00PM
- FREE ENTRY TO CAMRA MEMBERS

**FRIDAY  
30  
MAY**

LUNCHTIME-OPEN  
11.30 - 3.30PM  
ADMISSION  
**FREE**  
ENTERTAINMENT  
**JOHNNY  
FRIENDLIES**

EVENING-OPEN  
5.30 - 11.00PM  
ADMISSION  
£3  
ENTERTAINMENT  
**STRANGERS  
IN TOWN**

**SATURDAY  
31  
MAY**

LUNCHTIME-OPEN  
11.30 - 4.00PM  
ADMISSION  
£1  
ENTERTAINMENT  
**ENOCH'S HAMMER**

EVENING-OPEN  
6.30 - 11.00PM  
ADMISSION  
£1.50  
ENTERTAINMENT  
**BIGGLES  
WARTIME BAND**

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