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Issue 1

# OPENING TIMES



The FREE CAMRA Regional Magazine covering Central, East & South Manchester; Stockport; Tameside; Trafford; N.E. Cheshire & Macclesfield



## BACK TO CASK

### SWITCH BACK TO REAL ALE WITH NEW BODDIES

**T**HE LAUNCH of the new Boddingtons Bitter has already seen some former keg outlets switching back to real ale – and the new beers appears to be selling well to boot.

Opening Times has been made aware of three Stockport pubs – previously keg only – which are now back in the real ale fold with Boddingtons Bitter on handpump.

In Edgeley, the Gardeners Arms on Northgate Road has reintroduced cask beer after a brief keg-only spell. When we called in nearly January, there was a clear attempt to promote the beer, which was on very good form. The Gardeners is itself a very well-run pub these days and it is good to report that the lapse into keg-only status had proved only temporary.

Another pub which had a long track record of selling cask beer until recently, the Jolly Crofter on Castle Street, Edgeley, is also



back on track with handpumped Boddingtons Bitter. Again it is reported to be selling well and proving particularly popular with the rugby crowd.

The third new outlet is the Bowling Green on Charles Street, off Hillgate. This pub has only spasmodically sold real ale for years and since its refurbishment and reopening a couple of years ago, hasn't sold a drop of the real stuff. Until now that is – when visited during the annual pre-Christmas crawl of Hillgate, the Boddingtons Bitter was both very real and very enjoyable.

There are still plenty of keg-only former Boddingtons outlets to go but this is clearly a very good start for the revamped beer which has clearly been very well-received – we have had many positive reports from drinkers across the Opening Times area. Those keg-only pubs which give it a miss are clearly missing a trade-building opportunity hear so let's hope they get the message, and soon.



## TIME TO PUT 'REAL' BODDINGTONS INTO YOUR PUB

### AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL LOCAL LICENSEES

Dear Licensee,  
Boddingtons Bitter has long been associated with the Manchester area, but as a local licensee you will know that its sales have been in decline for some time. Only recently you will have read 'Boddingtons Brewery to Close' headlines in the local press, and Strangeways brewery was saved, for the time being at least, only thanks to a last-minute reprieve.

We in the Campaign for Real Ale therefore welcome the launch of the new 4.1% ABV Boddingtons Cask Bitter. This is no longer the cask form of the declining keg or smoothflow you currently carry, but is a more distinctive pint - drier, more bitter and detectably stronger. We certainly believe that, kept properly, it is a class above its predecessor. What's more, we believe that, if it enjoys the success it deserves, it will assure the continued production of Boddingtons in Manchester for the foreseeable future.

We therefore urge you to stock the new Boddingtons cask - either instead of your existing keg or smoothflow, or to offer as an alternative. But don't just take our word for it - here are just a few reasons why you should offer Boddingtons Cask:

As a licensee you want to give your customers choice. The new Boddingtons Cask is now a tasty session beer brewed to be different to the keg and smooth versions, but still offering the 'Boddies' branding your customers know and trust.

You want to offer your customers a high-quality product, and there's nothing to beat a well-kept pint of cask beer. More and more people are discovering cask ale - a fact borne out by the rapidly growing CAMRA membership.

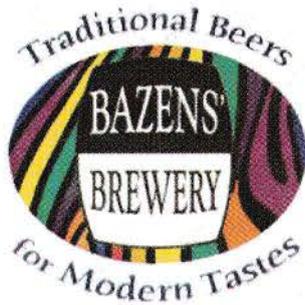
You want to keep Boddingtons brewed in Manchester, and help save the many local jobs which depend on it. We believe that the success of Boddingtons Cask is vital to the long-term future of Strangeways Brewery, and that if licensees like you do not take this beer to your hearts, there is a very real prospect of this part of our local heritage being lost forever.

**The success of Boddingtons Cask is the interest of all of us: licensees, beer drinkers and brewery workers. It's time for action - it's time to give your customers real cask-conditioned Boddingtons!**

### In January's OPENING TIMES ...

A Happy New Year to our readers and advertisers from OT

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Goatee Beer 4.9% (December/January)  
 eXSB 5.5% (new) Blue Bullet 4.5%  
 FlatbaC 4.2% (Beer of the Festival, Stockport, 2003)  
 Knoll St Porter 5.2% Black Pig Mild 3.6%  
 (Bronze Award for Mild, Champion Beer of Britain, 2003)  
 Pacific Bitter 3.8% Best Bitter (new recipe) 4.3%

Regular outlets include  
 The King's Arms, The Albert Vaults & The Crescent, Salford,  
 The Trackside, Bury, Waters Green & The Sun Inn, Macclesfield,  
 Corbieres, The Marble Arch, The Knott Bar, Bar Centro &  
 The Smithfield, Manchester, Salybridge Station Buffet Bar,  
 The Marble Beer House, Chorlton-cum-Hardy.

For more info, please see [www.bazensbrewery.co.uk](http://www.bazensbrewery.co.uk), phone  
 0161 708 0247  
 or email [info@bazensbrewery.co.uk](mailto:info@bazensbrewery.co.uk)

## PUB OF THE MONTH JANUARY 2004

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 Victoria on Hall Street in Offerton is the Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the month for January 2004.

This mid terraced building on a busy main road was until a few years ago one that you would not go out of your way to visit. Then forward stepped Grant and Denise Saunders. It is their first pub but they were not strangers to the trade. With the help of Pubmaster they have turned a rather mediocre pub around into a local centre of excellence with an amazing five real ales on at any one time, four in the lounge and two in the vault (one of which is a duplicate of a lounge beer).

There is always a Mild available as this is Denise's preferred tittle, and usually Greenalls and Tetley bitters. The other two are guests from the Pubmaster beer list. Not often can you find this range of beers in an out of town pub, and all in good condition too. Although altered considerably through the years and consisting of two rooms, vault & lounge, separated by a central bar, it is of simple design and maintains a homely ambience. The vault is the home of the various team trophies that have been won by the regulars' teams over the years.

The pub enjoyed a major redecoration inside and out about six months ago, smartening it up considerably, yet without giving it any false airs and graces that would not be fitting to its very local customers. Keep an eye open for the unique stone pub name plaques at the front and in the rear garden.

This well-deserved award will be presented on Thursday 29 January from about 8.00pm. Get their early for what should be a great night out.

The pub is 500 metres up Hall Street (the A626 road to Marple from Stockport) on the left and is served by the 314 bus from Stockport bus station. For the athletic, it is only 1600 metres (uphill) walk. CW.

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

### CONTRIBUTORS TO OPENING TIMES 237:

John Clarke, Paul Hutchings, Peter Butler, Phil Levison, Mark McConachie, Brian Wray, Peter Edwardson, Tom Lord, Frank Wood, Brian Taylor, Jerry Wicken, Chris Wainwright, Ben Zwierink, Ken Birch, Robin Wignall, Paul Moss, David Sharpe.



**B  
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R**



**B  
A  
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**FRINGE**



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 LOTS OF ATTITUDE** **8 SWAN ST.  
 MANCHESTER**

## IN THE EDITORS' VIEW..

Some readers may wonder why Opening Times is getting behind the 'new' Boddingtons Bitter in such a big way. After all, it's not a beer we have raved about over the years. Well, that was then and this is now. For a start, the revamped Boddingtons is potentially a great beer, provided the pubs look after it properly and, most importantly, allow it sufficient time in the cellar for the flavour to develop. So far, it looks like that is happening as I have had many favourable reports from those who have tried it. So, no apologies for promoting a quality real ale.

More importantly though, we believe that this relaunch simply has to succeed. Interbrew are putting a lot of time, effort and money behind it. If it flops, it could colour the opinion of what is one of the UK's major brewers against real ale. That would be a disaster for cask beer in general and Boddingtons in particular. Not only that, we also believe that the failure of this new beer could put renewed question marks over the future of the Strangeways Brewery. That would be a disaster for Manchester's brewing tradition and those whose jobs depend on it.

By supporting the new Boddingtons we are supporting cask beer, local jobs and a historic part of Manchester's brewing heritage and we make no apologies for it. You should do the same - seek out the new beer, if your local only sells the keg/smooth stuff ask them to try cask, get behind the new Boddies and make it work!

\*\*\*\*\*

With the relaunch of Boddies and many other positive signs of a real ale revival, it looks as though this could be a great year for cask ale drinkers. Let me take this opportunity to wish all our readers, contributors, distributors, advertisers and all those licensees who take OT in their pubs, a very happy and prosperous new year.

*John Clarke*

## OPENING TIMES ISSUE 237

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. Editors: John Clarke, 45 Bulkeley Street, Edgeley, Stockport SK3 9HD. ☎ (0161) 477 1973; Paul Hutchings, 8 The Green, Heaton Norris, Stockport Cheshire, SK4 2NP. ☎ & Fax (0161) 432 8384. News, articles and letters welcome. All editorial items may be submitted in most popular WP formats or preferably ASCII on IBM-PC format 3.5" disks (which will eventually be returned!) or CD-R, or via e-mail to [johnclarke@stocam.u-net.com](mailto:johnclarke@stocam.u-net.com). Adverts or photos should be "hard copy" or in CorelDraw 3.5 or 7 (\*.cdr) format or TIFF or EPS files (submit printed proofs for checking and ensure that any "include all fonts" options are on). All editorial items © CAMRA: may be reproduced if source acknowledged. All Advertising images are copyright the respective design sources (Largely CPPR, but all copyrights and trademarks acknowledged).

### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT OPENING TIMES ADVERTISING

Due to three major factors, our increasing circulation (again), the fact that we have upgraded the paper to a smoother high quality stock (to near universal approval) and the extra costs associated with higher quality photographs and the use of process colour, we have had to put some of our advertising costs up (for the first time this millennium). Existing advertisers on runs will be generally unaffected until 2005. NEW ADVERTISING RATES FROM JANUARY 2004: 1/8 page (60mm x 85mm): £30 (£60 colour); 1/4 page (120mm x 85mm): £55 (£90 colour); 1/2 page (horiz: 174mm x 120mm; vert: 250mm x 85mm): £90 (£150 colour); Full page (175mm x 240mm) £150 (£250 colour). Surcharges may apply for back page. Generous discounts available on adverts of 1/4 page or above for runs of insertions. Advert design & origination usually free of charge unless large costs involved. Ring 0161 477 1973 for details. Artwork should be submitted as hard copy (positive bromide) or PC COMPATIBLE (NOT MAC) \*.jpg, \*.eps, \*.tiff or \*.cdr (Corel Draw versions 3, 5 or 7 - please state which AND you MUST include hard copy back-up). For colour adverts please ring for details first.

**COPY DATE FOR FEBRUARY ISSUE OF  
OPENING TIMES IS JANUARY 28**



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2002  
Navy  
Gold Medal

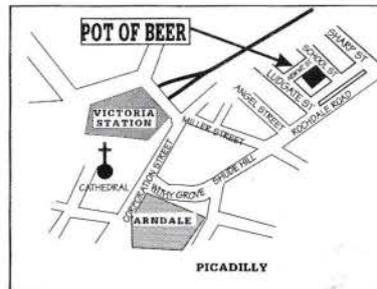
3



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## How would you feel...

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You may not have heard of CAMRA. Or you may have heard the stories of beards, woolly jumpers and sandals. The reality is that we are the biggest single-issue campaigning group in Britain today. All our members are drinkers and pub-goers just like you. We've had many campaigning successes over the last thirty years which benefit you every time you visit the pub or order a pint.

[www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk) Tel: 01727 867201  
or use the membership form on page 18

# NATIONAL PUBS WEEK SET TO BREAK RECORDS

**LICENSEES URGE TO TAKE PART IN CELEBRATION**  
CAMRA's second National Pubs Week is set to be Britain's biggest ever generic pub promotion. National Pubs Week 2004 runs from 21-28 February and thousands of pubs have already signed up to support it.

Building on the success of the first National Pubs Week in February 2003, which saw 15,000 pubs organising special events and displaying promotional posters, beer mats and other material, CAMRA is urging pubs to get stuck in now. CAMRA is producing a wide range of promotional material for



pubs to use for National Pubs Week including three poster designs, beer mats, press release templates, and advice and briefing sheets. Head of Campaigns, Mike Benner said: "The key to the success of National Pubs Week is getting pubs involved in the campaign by ordering free promotional material from CAMRA and arranging events to celebrate British pubs and encourage people through the door.

"The promotional material has now been produced and we have already started distributing it to pubs. I would urge all publicans, whether they serve real ale or not, to get their orders in so that CAMRA can get the packs out in time for them to build up local interest in National Pubs Week.

"In today's competitive leisure industry, it is important that pubs become more focused on marketing to attract and keep custom. They do not have to organise really imaginative events - pub quizzes, food promotions, themed nights, and crawls with other pubs can all work if that is what their locals want." CAMRA is working with some of the pub industry's major players to help promote the event. Several regional brewers, Enterprise Inns, The Publican newspaper and the British Institute of Innkeeping have all pledged their support by agreeing to distribute promotional material, writing trade press features and encouraging pubs to organise events throughout the week. Pubs taking part in National Pubs Week can also promote their events on the CAMRA website. For details go to [www.camra.org.uk/pubsweek](http://www.camra.org.uk/pubsweek) or call Samantha Jones on 01727 867201.

## LLOYDS No. 1

**FALLOWFIELD saw the opening of its first JD Wetherspoon (JDW) outlet (albeit, styled as a Lloyds No.1), the Great Central, on Sunday, 7 December.**

Set beneath a block of modern flats, this new-build pub is directly opposite the landmark J Sainsbury on Wilmslow Road. The pub's name presumably derives from the Great Central Railway line which once ran beneath Wilmslow Road at this point; the former Fallowfield Station (now Bar XS) lies opposite too.

Full height windows open onto a space decorated in muted greys and crimson with some unusual lateral wood panelling splitting up the areas. A no-smoking area is at the front, dining to the left, and the bar area to the right side; alongside which is a 'screen' of high tables and stools to further divide the space. As one has come to expect of JDW, a very stylish opening indeed. The cask beers on offer consisted of the threesome Spitfire, Directors and Abbot Ale, all at £1.49. An additional beer, Taylor Landlord, was programmed into the till at £1.39, but did not seem to be available on OT's visit.

A quick chat to Manager, Kelly Beardmore, revealed that she "...was really pleased with the first day's trading." And rightly so, the place was doing very good business for a quiet Sunday afternoon. Incidentally, Kelly arrives at the Great Central fresh from a fair stint at the Chorlton JDW house, the Sedge Lynn, so the pub should be in capable hands. With this opening, cask ale availability in Fallowfield has increased by 50 percent.



**In Stockport, the former Bridge Street Wine Bar has now been sold, but apart from the 'sold' sign, there appears to have been little activity. We have no news as to whether it will remain in use as a pub.**

Vinnie and Irene have finally departed from the Royal Mortar on Hillgate having turned the pub round from abject failure to thriving local. Their replacement is Stephen Brown. He will be keeping the handpump dispense and when he manages to get unpacked he would like to get Robinson's approval to sell a guest beer. We wish him all the best for a successful tenancy.

**Another Robinson's pub changing hands is the Alexandra in Edgeley. Mel Hancock has retired after 25 years at the pub and his replacement is John Downe, who has taken over with his partner Janet Woodward. Janet has considerable experience of the trade, having been a barmaid at the Grapes, Edgeley, for many years. It is however John's first venture into the trade, although he has been a regular at the Alex for 40 years. Few changes are planned at this unspoilt Grade 2-listed pub, although cask mild will be coming back in response to customer requests. John and Janet have our best wishes for the future.**

Our attention was caught by an advertisement for the Bow Garrett on Brinksway, advertising guest cask beers. There is indeed a handpump on the bar but on our visit, Boddies Smooth was the order of the day - what about trying the new cask version? No such problems further down the road, though, where the Woolpack continues to sell three five cask beers, including three ever-changing guests, always on top form. Not that you would expect anything less from this very well-run pub.

**In Edgeley, the Royal Oak on Castle Street now has the new Boddingtons Bitter on handpump alongside the Holts.**

The Robinson's web-site was advertising several tenancies available in the OT area, as at December 12. These include the Foresters Arms, Openshaw; Nicholson's Arms, Lancashire Hill (which was sporting a number of broken windows in late December); and the Church Inn, Edgeley.

**We probably ought to mention the inception of the Thai Tapas Restaurant at the Shady Oak, Bramhall.. The conservatory at the back of the pub has now been laid out as a restaurant, though you can also eat in the pub. The restaurant opens at 6pm daily except Monday, and there is a Sunday buffet from 1pm. Take away is also available. The blurb says "Thai Tapas chefs have been trained by a Royal Thai cook who often prepared Palace banquets and dinners for the Thai Royal Family and visiting dignitaries. We endeavour to bring you the authentic tastes of Thai dishes using the finest herbs, spices and ingredients which are flown into Manchester twice weekly".**

The Golden Days Garden Centre, Cheadle (see separate article) now stocks not only all Eastwood & Sanders bottled beer range, but also Anglo Dutch. 14 new bottled beers, several bottle conditioned, and as far as I know these bottles are only available by mail order or at Golden Days. From experience Eastwood & Sanders are superb beers, especially the porter (and exclusively to Golden Days, brewer Dave Sanders has autographed each bottle of Fireball!). The list includes (all in 500ml bottles) - Eastwood & Sanders: 1872 Porter, Bargee, Beyond the Pale, Fireball, Ghoul & Ghost, Nettle Thrasher; Anglo Dutch: Kletswater, No Doubt it's Stout, Spike, Tabatha The Knackered, When You're In A Hole Stop Digging, Mc Stout, Bonny Blonde and Haggis Hunter.

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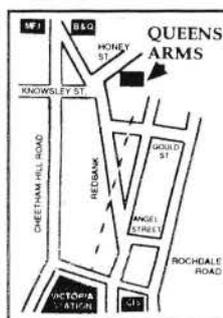
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LOCAL CAMRA PUB of the Month APRIL 2002

**Fine Cask Ales including the NEW Boddingtons and Ever Changing Guest Beers**



# TETLEY'S SUPPLIES THREATENED BY STRIKES

**S**upplies of beer from the Tetley brewery in Leeds could be thrown into chaos after both brewery and distribution staff voted in favour of strike action and an overtime ban in a pay dispute. As we went to press, the strike was due to start on 19 January with no decision made as to how long it would last. Talks were due to be held as this issue of OT came out, so the possibility of Tetley-supplied pubs drying up may yet be averted.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The Independent Family Brewers of Britain dropped a huge clanger last month. The 33-strong organisation representing the country's remaining family brewing firms had received membership applications from Cains of Liverpool and long-established micro, Woodfordes of Norfolk. Both fulfilled the established membership criteria but what happens? New members welcomed with open arms? Well, no – instead the IFBB changes its rules to add a further stipulation that prospective members must have been independently family owned for 10 years or more. Just what are they up to? Since both breweries have changed hands in that period they weren't eligible. This is nonsense – Woodfordes are a well-established company that has been brewing since 1981 and as for Cains, brewing has been taking place there for over 100 years. Both companies are family run with strong commitments to their independence and quality cask ales – more so perhaps than some existing members of the IFBB. We hope that none of our four local IFBB members were party to this ridiculous decision

## FAMILY FAVOURITES



We have now received details of the Lees seasonal beer programme for 2004 – and very promising it looks, too. For January/February there's a new beer, January - Vulcan (ABV4.1%). This is described as "a sparklingly clear wheat beer with a light, clean taste and a hint of spice". A contribution from every barrel sold will be donated to the 'Vulcan to the Sky appeal' which strives to preserve the last air-worthy Vulcan Bomber (built just down the road from JW Lees Brewery). Future beers are: March/April - Brooklyn Best (ABV5.0%) - a welcome return of this popular beer first brewed in conjunction with Garrett Oliver of the Brooklyn Brewery, New York. May/June - Maypole Madness (ABV 4.5%) - "a thirst quenching ale... brewed with amber malt to give a biscuity crispness, complimented by the sharpness of the Northdown and Fuggle hops". July/August - Scorcher (ABV4.2%) – another popular favourite making a return. "A light golden beer with a tantalising, fruity aroma and a wonderfully refreshing hop finish" September/October - Ruddy Glow (ABV 4.5%) – "a rich ruby coloured beer, brewed with a high percentage of crystal malt to give a sweet taste with a tantalising hint of liquorice". November/December - Crackerjack (ABV4.7%) – "a special seasonal ale to finish the year off with a bang and put you in good spirits for Christmas. Brewed with a combination of malts to produce a nutty flavour and some Bramling Cross hops for

fruitiness and just a hint of blackcurrant". Regular outlets for these beers will include Manchester's Rain Bar and the Lloyds in Chorlton.

**Robinson's** kick off their seasonal programme with a new beer this month – Enigma is a 4.7% premium



beer with a distinctive citrus hop character and a strong crisp bitterness. Look out, too, for Double Hop, which has now replaced Frederics as the 5% premium beer.

**Hydes** also have a premium seasonal out this month.



Hunky Dory weighs in at 4.8% and is described as a "moreish premium ale with a pleasant warming after palate." The future of Hyde's premium winter brew XXXX is in doubt, though. At 6.8% ABV it is a potent drink and as such appeals only to a limited number of outlets. Sales of XXXX have now dwindled to such an extent that the brewery is struggling to sell even the minimum brew length. If sales of this classic beer do not pick up it may be axed next year. XXXX is still available to the free trade at £85 a nine gallon cask; the brewery recently announced that in order to clear this year's stock they would be prepared to offer a special deal 'two nine gallon casks for the price of one' to the free trade. Suitable outlets should contact the brewery while stocks last!

## Mighty Micros

As usual, the local micro brewers are going great guns. We start this month's review by catching up with the area's newest brewer, **Three Rivers**.



So far, expectations have been exceeded with a number of regular accounts now on the books. The winter strong ale, Old Disreputable (ABV 5.2%), a dark amber beer with a chocolate aftertaste, has been very well-received and will be available until mid-February. February will also see a new beer – details haven't been firmed up yet but it is likely to be a mild or a stout. Three Rivers are also planning a formal launch night – this will take place at the Crown, Heaton Lane, Stockport, on Friday 23 January from about 7.30pm. All the Three Rivers beers should be available and it will give drinkers a chance to meet the team behind the brewery.

**Millstone Brewery** – in Mossley, are another newcomer pleased with progress, with lots of repeat orders and about 40 regular-ish accounts. There's a new beer out, too. This is A Miller's Ale (ABV 3.8%), a pale copper, very hoppy

beer using Fuggles and Golding hops. Later this month will see the introduction of Grainstorm (ABV 4.2%). This will be quite a pale beer with a full body, although specific details hadn't been finalised as we went to press.



**Leyden** – the New Year special was Hopy New Year (ABV 3.8%) which lived up to its name and was dry-hopped with the new 'Pam' variety. There will be another new beer this month although brewer Brendan Leyden hadn't finalised details when we contacted him.

**Shaws** – continuing the brewery policy of a new beer every two weeks, Tame Valley Ale a 4.2% golden bitter was on sale in early January and this was to be followed by Golden Globe (ABV 4.3%). This is a light and extremely hoppy beer brewed with First Gold hops, and has been brewed to mark the brewery's support from the Globe in Glossop.

**Bazens'** - The new beer for December/January is Goatee Beer (ABV4.9%) - another singular hopped variety, this time for the Capricorn sign and using Target hops. The Aquarius beer will be Riverside at 4.5%. The new strong bitter is now available and slightly stronger than previously reported. It is now called eXSB and is 5.5%. Black Pig Mild has won another award, this time for Mild of the festival at Woking Beer Festival. The Surrey and Hampshire Borders branch of CAMRA are coming up to present the award/certificate at the beginning of May. Bazens' have also sent some mild to the Helsinki Beer Festival - the furthest it's travelled so far!



**Facer's** – the other half of the Salford Brewing Syndicate is also going great guns. A special beer was produced for New Year. Resolution was a 5.5% version of Landslide and only 15 casks were produced. The next in the 'Greats of English Literature' series will be out when you read this and will be available until the end of February. This is Prancing Pony, marking the works of Tolkein. At 3.9%, this is a very pale, yellow beer made with 100% Halcyon malt and hopped with Galena, an American variety with a high bittering rate.

The Syndicate itself is expanding with the installation of a new copper and hot liquor tank, a move that will virtually double capacity.

**Bank Top** – no new beers at the moment (the dark Mild was particularly wonderful when tried recently). The bottled Smoke Stack Lightning (ABV 5%) sold well and will be repeated, though. **Greenfield** – as we reported last month, several new beers came out over the Christ



mas period. The brewery is now reintroducing some of its early beers, starting with Brassed Off (ABV 4.2%) and this will be followed by Delph Donkey and Dobcross in the next few weeks.



**Phoenix** – it's a quiet time of year for the region's largest micro – the lull after what proved to be a very busy Christmas period. Look out, though, for the return of two favourites – Jovian (ABV 4.2%) and Massacre (ABV 4.7%) will be out late this month through to the end of February.

**Pictish** – the new beer mentioned last month was Troglodyte, a 4.5% pale, hoppy beer which seemed to come and go in a flash, such was its popularity. More please! This month sees the welcome return of Northern Dawn (ABV 4.3%). This is deep amber coloured and full-bodied with a long malty but very bitter finish. Well worth seeking out.



**Ramsbottom** – Paul Robinson continues to produce an interesting range of beers. New beers, include Ramsons (ABV 3.8%), an amber session ale with loads of hop aroma and, you'll be surprised to hear, a dry bitter finish. Paul tells us the name may come from either old English or Anglo Saxon. The name of Ramsbottom has nothing to do with the back end of a sheep, it was originally known as Ramsons-Bowtham, which literally means Valley of Flowering Garlic. So now you know! Also look out for Windfarmer (ABV 6%), a strong, jet black winter beer with a bit of cinnamon in the copper to give it a twist.

## REAL ALE IN A BOTTLE

### WELCOME NEWS FOR ARMCHAIR DRINKERS

**Much as we all enjoy drinking beer in pubs, you will be pleased to know that there's no reason why you can't enjoy the unbeatable taste of real ale from the comfort of your own armchair.**

The most authentic bottled beer you can buy is real ale in a bottle. This is because, like real ale in a pub, the beer contains yeast and continues to mature for a fuller, fresher taste. Many brewers describe this beer as bottle-conditioned, so look out for this description on labels. Real ale contains a huge range of tastes and flavours and you will find that the same is true with real ale in a bottle, so whether you prefer something dry and hoppy or rich and biscuity, there will be a bottled beer to suit your tastes and that will also go perfectly with food.

Real ale in a bottle should be kept cool and then lightly chilled before serving. It should be stored standing up so that the yeast sediment settles to the bottom of the bottle. The yeast keeps the beer alive so that it can continue to mature and improve. Treat it with respect, as it has been brewed with care rather than being mass-produced, and remember not to shake the bottle but to pour it slowly into your glass so that if there is any sediment, it remains in the bottle. Many of the brewers which

produce real ale in a bottle are independent local brewers, so why not check if your local supermarket or off-license stocks locally brewed beer and support your local producers as well as enjoying a taste of your local area?

CAMRA, in conjunction with the Guardian newspaper, makes an award every year for the best real ale in a bottle. The 2003 winner was O'Hanlon's Port Stout, and previous winners include Fuller's 1845, Hop Back's Summer Lightning and Young's Special London Ale. Many of these award-winning beers are available in specialist off-licenses, my mail order or internet as well as in some supermarkets and off-licenses.

The new edition of the Good Bottled Beer Guide contains tasting notes and useful information including details of where you can buy real ale in a bottle across the UK. This pocket book costs £8.99 (£5.99 for CAMRA members buying direct from CAMRA) and is available from all good bookshops as well as online at [www.camra.org.uk/books](http://www.camra.org.uk/books).

**Coming Next Month...** Reviews of The National Winter Ales Festival in Burton, Atherton and a look at the Festival in the Smithfield, Manchester (from January 15)

**Coming in March...** The BeerMonster returns from Germany and talks Franconian Beer and brew-pubs

**Coming in April...** Our Eight Page Mild Challenge Pull-out



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# STAGGER

with Jerry Wicken

## BURNAGE & HEATON MERSEY

A cool, dry November Friday evening saw just three of us arrive at the **Rising Sun** (formerly the Milestone). This large, barn like structure has experienced more personality changes than David Bowie but has now one L-shaped room with part of it raised for dining. At 7:30 pm, it was not clear exactly what the pub is trying to achieve. There were no diners but several drinkers who still treated the pub, and why not, as their local but were probably indifferent as to whether or not there was food or whether the staff wore pub livery. Beer on offer was Marston's Bitter and Pedigree: only the bitter was tried and was considered fairly good. Just down the road is the **Victoria** and, as the name suggests, is a large Victorian pub with an impressive high ceiling interior. Less impressive was the only cask beer on offer, Boddington's Bitter, the week before the new brew came on the market. The first pint drawn, in the opinion of all three of us, had a sour taste and unpleasant smell. The barmaid claimed people had been drinking it all day without complaint and having spoken to the manager another pint was drawn from a different barrel. This was exactly the same in taste and smell and with no other cask on offer, we made our leave with the pump clips still offering the beer. (A few minutes later, two more of our team arriving late tasted the same offering and found it drinkable albeit below par. Also, the pub was quite busy, so our opinion is only one of many as it is in all the pubs we visit.)

Next on the list was the **Farmer's Arms**. This is not the most inviting of pubs from the outside. Inside the recorded music was deafening and playing to a very sparse crowd. Why do pubs do this when it is apparent from the empty seats that nobody wants it? The beer was Hydes Bitter served from electric dispense and was rated satisfactory.

Still on Burnage Lane was our second meeting point, the **Albion**. This was more welcoming and three Hydes beers, Dark, Light and Bitter were all on show. Sadly, the dark mild had to be taken off and was replaced by the Light. Both this and the bitter were considered good.

Things were looking up as we bypassed the keg-only **Green End**. So were our numbers, swelled to eight, as we approached the **Sun in September**. This pub was formerly a large private house but in the early nineties was turned into a Sam Smith's pub with a smallish public bar and a large but cosy lounge that retains many of the original house features such as a real fire. It also has a separate no smoking area. Despite its size, the pub keeps the ambience of a bustling 'local' and was busy but not uncomfortable when we arrived at about 9pm. This is now one of the cheapest pints in South Manchester at £1.23 per pint for the only cask beer on offer, Old Brewery Bitter. The beer received good to very good marks from everybody and it was with some reluctance that we filtered out.

Passing en route the flats that replaced the little lamented **Old Bull**, our next stop across the Heaton Mersey border, was the **Dog And Partridge** on Didsbury Road. Previously, this 1960's two storey hostelry was keg only but now sold Boddington's Bitter. Once again the disco music was frighteningly loud which may or may not have accounted for the lack of customers. At least the beer generated a lively debate to compete with the music, with scores ranging from below average to good.

A short walk up Didsbury Road took us to an old Branch favourite, the **Griffin**. The pub's ordinary facade hides a marvellous and tastefully extended interior. Five rooms, one non-smoking, all interconnect and for warmer days there is a pleasant garden with aviary. Two rooms have TVs for the sports fans but there is no regular recorded music. All three Holt's beers, Mild, Bitter and Patersons were deemed good to very good and by the smallest of fractions were jointly, the best beers of the evening.

Time was against us, so we continued up the hill to the **Frog and Railway** (formerly the Railway having picked up its amphibious prefix in the nineties). The promise of Real Ale is literally etched into its windows but sadly not into the psyche of the licensee. It was therefore left to the **Crown**, a friendly Robinson's pub, to provide our final port of call. The pub has a reputation for good food (in a separate dining area) as well as good beer, the latter evidenced by a photo adorning the wall including our Chairman presenting a bygone Pub of the Month prize. The pub was busy but seats were still available as we settled down to taste the Bitter and Mild both of which scored quite good to very good. The Stagger passed 10 pubs, 8 of which served cask, and we had the welcome variety of 6 different brewers craft and it must be said that the majority of beers were well received.



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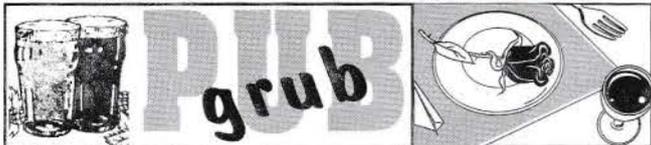
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A HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM

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**THE HORSE & FARRIER  
144 GATLEY ROAD, GATLEY**

**THE HORSE & FARRIER** is a well-known landmark pub situated in the middle of Gatley, opposite the busy junction with Church Road and is one of three Hydes houses in the village.

It was refurbished in late 2002 to a very high standard to become one of Hydes 'Heritage Inns'. This is marked not only by the slightly old-fashioned exterior signage - 'Hydes Ales & Stouts' - but by a very impressive job of work within. On my previous visits the pub had been very busy and so it hadn't been possible to fully appreciate just how good this pub has become.

The interior is skilfully split up into a variety of rooms, all appropriately named - a particular favourite is the 'Little Room', a tiny snug just big enough for one table. However, when a group of us visited between Christmas and the New Year (attracted by the in-house beer festival), we settled in the equally inviting 'Heritage Room' - a veritable shrine to the Hyde family and their brewery over the years. Indeed, there's an attractive smattering of breweriana on the walls throughout the pub.

The beer festival came as something of a surprise and was certainly held at an unusual time, between 26 and 30 December. It was perhaps a combination of the time of year and the relative lack of publicity that meant we had a choice of some 10 beers, stillaged in the upstairs Martingale Room, despite arriving relatively late in the festival's advertised run. These came from a number of regional and micro breweries such as Batemans, Wye Valley, and Harviestoun, with the latter's Good King Legless (ABV 4.5%) being a particularly tasty beer. In addition, the usual Hydes range was available across the bar and the Light and Bitter were on notably good form.

The menu is very wide ranging, to say the least. There is a printed menu featuring a range of bar snacks including soup (£2.25) and sandwiches, jacket spuds and hot barmcakes, all with a variety of fillings and ranging in price from £2.45 to £3.95. In addition there is a speciality sausage and mash menu, featuring not only a range of interesting sausages but unusual variants of mash - for example, chili or roast vegetable. Then there's a carvery, featuring (on this occasion) beef or lamb and finally a specials board with half a dozen mains and also a separate pudding list.

There were four of us so we were able to put the kitchen through its paces. The hot roast beef barmcake comprised a huge brown barm, stuffed with hot beef and accompanied by roast potatoes and a small jug of gravy. "I'll come here again", said it's appreciative recipient.

The three selections off the specials list were equally satisfying. I chose what can be a clichéd dish - mushroom stroganoff. Here though, it was a filling combination of mushrooms and peppers in a well judged sour cream sauce and accompanied by a combination of wild and boiled rice. Good value at £5.95. The beef and vegetable pie (£6.25) was also well-received, a generous portion of 'pie' coming with cauliflower, green beans, golden veg and boiled potatoes. I say 'pie' because this was really one of those bowls of stew with a puff-pastry lid pretending to be a pie. There's nothing intrinsically wrong with this, and there were certainly no complaints today, but to me a pie should be a proper plate pie with top and bottom crusts. Why can't more pubs do these? The

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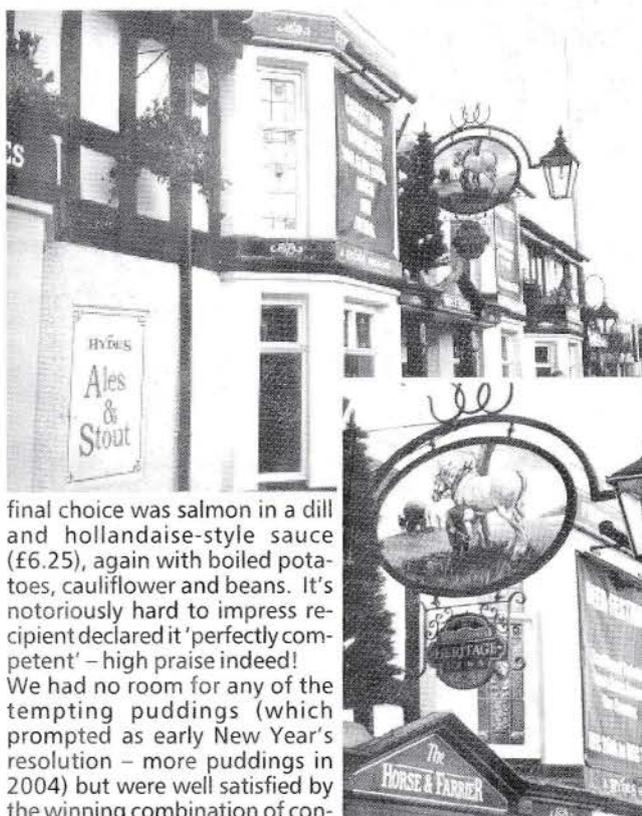
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**VIADUCTS AND VAULTS 3 - OUT NOW!**

A Celebration of Real Ale in Stockport's Pubs

DETAILS ON PAGE 17



final choice was salmon in a dill and hollandaise-style sauce (£6.25), again with boiled potatoes, cauliflower and beans. It's notoriously hard to impress recipient declared it 'perfectly competent' - high praise indeed!

We had no room for any of the tempting puddings (which prompted as early New Year's resolution - more puddings in 2004) but were well satisfied by the winning combination of convivial atmosphere, fine beer and good food. The Horse & Farrier is well worth a visit for both beer and food - it's well served by public transport (trains and buses from Manchester, buses from Stockport). Phone ahead for food availability on 0161 428 2080. JC.



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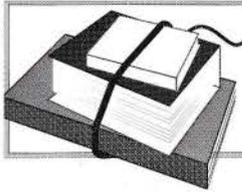
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# BOOK REVIEW



## STOCKPORT'S TAVERNS & TALES BY EDNA KITCHEN AND PHIL ROWBOTHAM; 52PP, £9.99

THIS IS AN ODDITY. Described as 'Memories of a Stockport childhood through poems and collage paintings', it is a collaboration between local artist Edna Kitchen and local archive photographer and historian Phil Rowbotham.

Some 23 pubs are featured, each accompanied by a poem from Edna, recalling her memories of the pub or events and people connected with it. The pubs themselves have been photographed by Phil whose photos then form part of collages put together by Mrs Kitchen. She is now 85 and has some connection with the local pub and brewing scene, having stared work at Robinson's Brewery as a stable girl at the age of 12. Robinson's have in fact co-sponsored the book the cover of which features a striking image of the Red Bull.

Phil Rowbotham, from Heaton Moor, apart from being an archive photographer and historian is also a member of the Victorian Society and over 4,000 of his photographs can be seen on the council's website at [www.stockport.gov.uk/Gallery/default.asp](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/Gallery/default.asp). This book would make an unusual addition to the bookshelf on anyone interested in the local pub scene and is available from Borders Books, town libraries and local pubs. They can also be ordered from Phil Rowbotham a68 Tatton Road South, Stockport, SK4 4LX. The price is £10.99 including post and packing. JC.

### STOCKPORT'S TAVERNS & TALES



Edna Kitchen & Phil Rowbotham

## CITY LIFE FOOD & DRINK GUIDE 2004; 146P, £4.00

THIS IS THE TENTH EDITION of City Life's guide to Greater Manchester's best places to eat and drink. In his introduction, editor Jonathan Schofield tells how they've "kept up to date with all the developments across the regional scene". It is the "most comprehensive guide to regional cuisine available" and is "relentlessly researched". Let's see. As ever the guide is split into sections covering respectively, restaurants, bars, pubs, country pubs, coffee bars/cafes/chippies and food shopping, with each entry (apart from those in the latter two sections) accompanied by a photograph, address and contact details together with a detailed description of what is available. The restaurant section is helpfully split into the various cuisines on offer and includes a useful price guide. There are also thorough run-downs on both the 'curry mile' and chinatown along with useful glossaries to guide you through the menus. The county's position as home to the Vegetarian Society is duly noted and there's even a wine glossary, too. The entries are thorough and cover virtually everywhere worth eating out in the region. The sections devoted to coffee bars etc and food shopping are equally thorough and useful.

Thus far, so good. It is, however, the sections devoted to bars and pubs that will perhaps attract the attention of Opening Times readers and, sad to relate, it is here the cracks begin to show. The section devoted to bars takes the blunderbuss approach of recent years and includes almost anything calling itself a bar (either via a full review or in one of the numerous side columns). Having said that it's striking to note just how many of these places sell cask beer - 11 out of 35 full entries. Add in Le Trappiste in Altrincham and the City Centre's wonderful Temple, and you have well over one third of the entries selling seriously interesting things to drink. The pub sections, though are, frankly, poor. Okay, most of the usual suspects are there as far as the City Centre goes but head north or south and coverage is thin and inconsistent (space prohibits a list of the obvious omissions). And apart from the Lamb in Eccles and Salford's Eagle, Holt's outlets may as well not exist (the Metropolitan in West Didsbury gets the usual glowing review - the award-winning Railway across the road is ignored, for example). The fact that the main section ends with duplicate entries for the Hope Inn, Lass O' Gowrie and Mr Thomas's Chop House (usefully illustrated by photographs of the Crescent, Dukes 92 and the Eagle respectively) doesn't add confidence. Nor does the inclusion of a 'relentlessly researched' list of micro-breweries that manages to include three that must have stopped brewing well before the copy date, and ignores the likes of Bazens', Facers, Ramsbottom, Greenfield and Shaws. Which year's Good Beer Guide was this lifted from, I wonder? If you want a guide to eating out and buying interesting food then this book will be £4 well spent. If you want to learn anything new about the county's pub and beer scene then forget it - sad to say the ill thought out, going-through-the-motions approach that this book has to Greater Manchester's thriving and vibrant pub and brewing scene is a travesty. Much like the coverage it gets in *City Life* itself these days. JC



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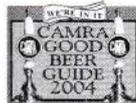
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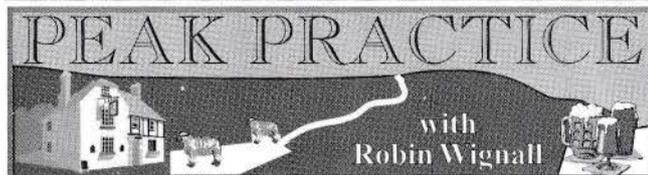
Due to demand, a limit of 86 pubs has been set this time.

The prizes have been changed, too.

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Challenge Super (Sweatshirt) for 36 pubs, in 12 areas

Challenge Ultra (Pewter Tankard) for all of the pubs

Contact Mark McConachie  
0161 429 9356 for details.



A Radio 4 broadcast at the end of December was devoted to the launch day in November, of Christmas beers in Denmark. Not only Carlsberg (don't forget they do a decent brew in Denmark) but also numerous small independent brewers, co-ordinate the launch of the stronger seasonal Yule beers. The programme gave the impression that half the population of Denmark ended up the worse for wear on launch day - and the following day.

In Britain, Christmas brews are becoming an increasing part of the seasonal scene as regional, family and micro brewers bring out seasonal specials. In the Whaley Bridge area a few pubs take advantage of access to guest beers and seasonal brews, and so have added to seasonal drinking enjoyment. The Good Beer Guide-listed Shepherd's Arms always has a guest beer or Marston's seasonal beer, and has supplied Marston's Yuletide Goose over the Christmas period.

Round at Buxworth, where the Navigation always has a guest beer to complement its three regular beers, there has been a rolling programme of seasonal ales. These have included Beartown Santa's Claws and Archers Robin Redbreast. In Bridgemont, the Dog & Partridge has had a pin of Robinson's Old Tom on the bar, as well as Rebellion Roasted Nuts and Cotleigh Reindeer (with its flashing pumpclip), all being in good form.

For those who drink at home, Goyt Wines, one of only three Derbyshire off-licenses listed in CAMRA's Good Bottled Beer Guide, has had a good range of seasonal bottled beers. Here you get the beers that don't appear in the supermarkets. The selection included Skinners Ingleknockers and Wye Valley Dorothy Goodbody's Christmas Ale (both bottle conditioned), Otter Claus and Hook Norton 12 Days.

All the above made for an interesting Christmas time. It's good to know that these days many licensees do, when they can, provide their customers with a range and choice of beers. May they have power in their elbows in the New Year. RW.



**TRIPE WITH CASSIS.**

Late last year it was reported that the consumption of offal was in steep decline. Help stem that decline and try this tasty recipe using a Belgian beer flavoured with blackcurrant. Serves four.

**INGREDIENTS**

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 4 tablespoons olive oil        | 4oz grated parmesan                        |
| 2 finely chopped onions        | 33cl bottle Timmermans Cassis (or similar) |
| 1 teaspoon tomato puree        | 1 vegetable stock cube                     |
| 1 1/4 - 1 1/2 lb beef tomatoes | salt and pepper to taste                   |
| 2lb cooked tripe               |  |
| 2oz butter                     |  |

**METHOD**

Blanch the tomatoes in freshly boiled water for 30 seconds. Turn over and leave in the water, off the heat, until the skin starts to peel off (about 1 minute). Drain and cool under a cold tap then core, de-seed and chop the tomatoes into rough half-inch squares. Try to retain as much juice as possible. Set aside.

Cut the tripe into strips 1 inch wide and 6 long and place in a bowl with the beer.

Heat the oil in a large saucepan, add the onions and sauté until golden brown.

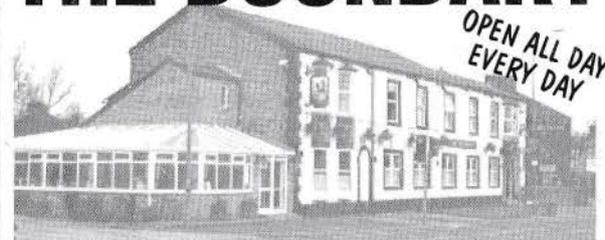
Drain the beer from the tripe and set aside. Add the tomatoes, tomato puree and seasoning to the onions and stir well. Stir in the tripe, butter and crumbled stock cube.

Simmer for 5 minutes, stirring constantly; reduce the heat and gently add the cassis. Simmer gently for 3-4 minutes and serve with grated parmesan on top.

Suggested beer accompaniments - Moretti or a dunkel.

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**CAMRA CALLING!**

**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

Diary

**JANUARY 2004**

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>** - Branch Meeting: Boars Head, Market Place, Stockport. **NB Branch Pub of the Year will be decided at this meeting - a good turnout, please.**

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>** - City Centre West Stagger: 7.30 Kro 2, Oxford Rd; 8.30 Lass O'Gowrie, Charles St.

**Thursday 29<sup>th</sup>** - Pub of the Month - Victoria, Hall Street, Offerton, Stockport. From 8.00pm

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup>** - Minibus trip to National Winter Ales Festival (this is a joint trip with Trafford & Hulme). Depart Crown, Heaton Lane 9.45am. Back by 9.00pm. Book with Paul Formby as above.

*The High Peak & North East Cheshire Branch covers Bredbury, Romiley, Woodley, Marple and all points north. They have advised us of the following events:*

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup>** - Branch Meeting: Ramseys Bar (Buckingham Hotel), Burlington Rd, Buxton. Starts 8.30pm.

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February** - Committee Meeting: Kings Head, Manchester Rd, Droylsden. Starts 8.30pm.

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup>** - Branch Meeting: Kinder Lodge, New Mills Rd, hayfield. Starts 8.30pm.

*Apart from Macclesfield & Bollington, the Macclesfield & East Cheshire Branch covers a wide area from Wilmslow to Knutsford and down to Congleton. They have notified us of the following events:*

**Monday 26<sup>th</sup>** - Branch AGM: Beartown Tap, Willow St, Congleton. Starts 8.00pm. Will

**JANUARY 2004**

**all members please try and attend this important meeting.**

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup>** - Games Evening: British Flag, Coare St, Macclesfield. Starts 8.00pm (details to be confirmed)

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup>** - Bollington Pub Crawl: meet Poachers, Palmerston St 8.00pm.

*The Trafford & Hulme Branch covers the Borough of Trafford, Manchester west of the M56/Princess Parkway and a large part of the City Centre. They have advised us of the following events:*

**Saturday 31<sup>st</sup>** - Minibus trip to National Winter Ales Festival (this is a joint trip with Stockport & South Manchester). Depart Crown, Heaton Lane 9.45am; Altrincham pick-up will be advised. Back by 9.00pm. Book with Paul Formby as above.

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February** - Branch Meeting: The Orange Tree., Altrincham. Starts 8.00pm.

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup>** - Good Beer Guide final selection - meet at The Orange Tree, Altrincham 8.00pm

**REGIONAL EVENT**

**CAMRA U-26 Group: Friday 6<sup>th</sup> February**, 7.30pm onwards: social at the Olde Vic, 1 Chatham St, Edgeley, Stockport (behind the back of Stockport Rail Station) This pub is famous for its atmosphere (friendly and cosy with a larger than life landlord, Steve) as it's noted for its **NO SWEARING & NO BAD ATTITUDE RULE!** As always, meet by the CAMRA sign.

To Do, Address, Notepad, Anniversary, CAMRA, Planner

12



**CAINS**

**BREWERY TOURS**

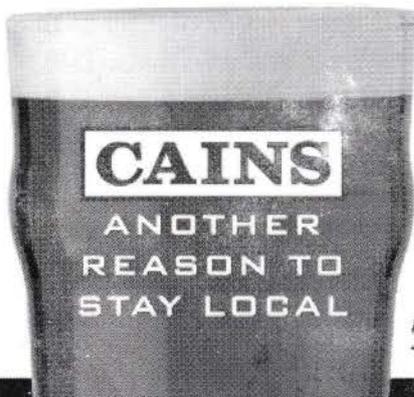
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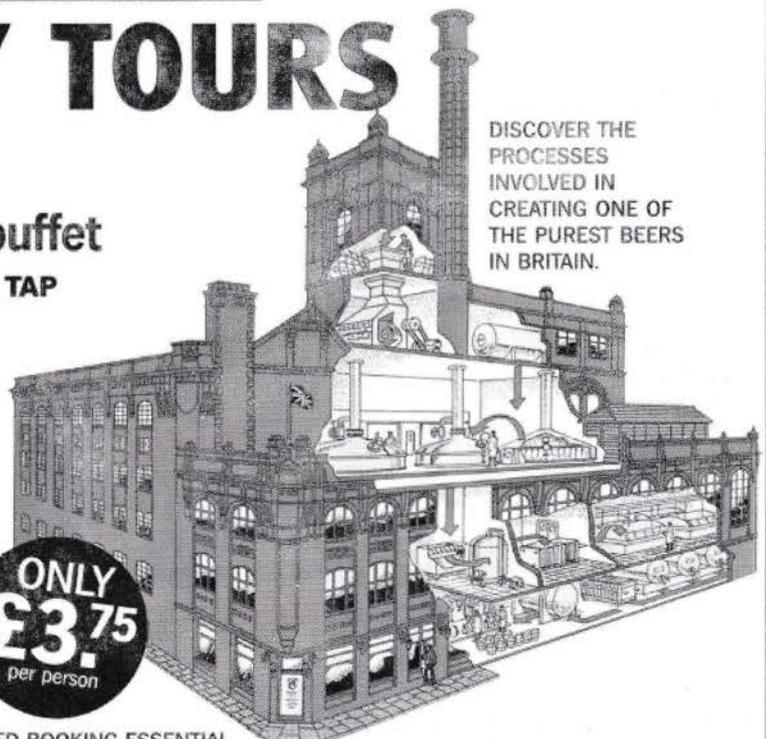
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# 5 Years Ago

by Phil Levison

JANUARY '99

**T**wo items shared the front page – Beer Vandalism Awards and Regional Pub of the Year. The first mentioned was a version of the then established pub vandalism awards, made periodically to highlight the continued despoliation of our pub heritage.

This time it was Whitbread and Bass that came under attack, as they seemed hell-bent on the marginalisation of cask ale. Bass seemed to have virtually given up on it altogether, whilst Whitbread's policy seemed to concentrate cask into over-priced real ale ghettos (better known as Hogsheads), and at the same time flooding the rest of their estate with nitrokeg Boddingtons.

Today of course, neither Bass nor Whitbread are brewing companies and the successors to their brewing operations are showing a little more commitment to cask ale after many years of neglect. In particular the re-launch of Boddingtons Bitter by Interbrew UK is a very encouraging development.

★ ★ ★ ★

The Regional Pub of the Year title for CAMRA in Greater Manchester, for the third year running, had gone to a pub in the Opening Times area – the Sportsman in Hyde. When owner Geoff Oliver had bought the pub in July 1996 it was a failed, shabby Whitbread house with a low level of trade. A gradual but effective refurbishment had been carried out, together with an excellent range of beer, served in oversize lined glasses, with a full measure guaranteed every time. The Sportsman had been transformed into a thriving, gimmick-free pub, and it was a worthy winner of the Regional title. Today the Sportsman continues to uphold the same high standards and will well reward a visit.

★ ★ ★ ★

It had finally been confirmed, after tortuous negotiations, that the 1999 Stockport Beer & Cider Festival, the 13<sup>th</sup>, would be going ahead at the Town Hall. Also for the second year running, it would include CAMRA's National Cider & Perry Championship. As we go to press, the position for the 2004 festival remains unresolved, with late news that the Town Hall will be available for the festival but Edgeley Park remaining a viable alternative.

★ ★ ★ ★

There was news from three local breweries. Burtonwood announced details of their 'Cask Collection' which was a guest beer programme throughout the tied estate featuring a different beer each month. (The Cask Collection ended its 2004 run with Pendle Witches Brew, judged to be the most popular beer available during the year.)

Hydes were formulating their seasonal programme for the ensuing 12 months, and in addition were to launch a new premium bitter. The low gravity Billy Westwood's Bitter had been axed, and the strength of the Anvil Light had been reduced from 3.7% to 3.5%. Holt's DBA premium bitter was firmly established in the tied estate, and was apparently selling well. There was however a question mark over the future of bottled Sixex strong ale (ABV 6%). It was being bottled by Banks's, but their bottling line could no longer cope with the 170ml bottles. The alternative was to change to 330ml bottles (just over half a pint), but this would increase the price from 77p to around £1.50 – devotees were urged to stock up straightaway!

On the pub news front, the Manchester Arms on Wellington Road, Stockport, had been well and truly gutted, and looked as if it had been knocked through into the buildings at the back. It subsequently reopened as Cobdens. On Middle Hillgate work was underway on the Sun & Castle, where Holts had taken possession.



## THE MASK SLIPS

**ADVOCATES** of a ban on smoking in public places such as pubs have always claimed that their prime concern was to protect people from second-hand smoke. But the truth behind these assurances was laid bare when an editorial appeared recently in the respected medical journal "The Lancet" proposing the complete prohibition of smoking.

In practice, such a policy is never going to be workable, as the experience of alcohol prohibition in the USA demonstrates, and the authors of the piece no doubt realise that. But it is a clear indication of what, at heart, they really wish for. It is a recognised tactic amongst pressure groups of all kinds to campaign for something that falls well short of their ultimate goal, but is likely to gain much wider moderate support.

The phrase "Health Fascism" is often used in a throwaway sense, but it aptly describes this particular mindset, that adults cannot be trusted to take responsibility for their own wellbeing and so the State has to compel them. And nobody should delude themselves that alcohol is immune from the same tendency. Behind such apparently reasonable groups such as Alcohol Concern and the Institute of Alcohol Studies lie hardline prohibitionists, who miss no opportunity to portray pubs and alcohol in a negative light. They will be carefully studying the progress of the anti-smoking campaign for ideas on how best to further their own cause. How long will it be, I wonder, before we see an editorial in "The Lancet" making the case for the complete banning of alcoholic drinks?

## LAW-ABIDING RIFE

Before Christmas, in a survey published by the road safety pressure group BRAKE, half of Britain's motorists admitted to drinking before driving, with one in three saying they had driven after drinking two units of alcohol, and 10% having driven after drinking three. This was presented in shock terms claiming that drink-driving was "rife".

But hang on a minute. The quantities referred to would be highly unlikely to put someone anywhere near the UK drink-drive limit, and in most cases would not even take them above the somewhat lower limit applying in many Continental countries. The spin put on this particular survey could be seen as downright mischievous by implying that lawbreaking was commonplace, when the detail actually showed precisely the opposite. Rather than condemnation, it might be more appropriate to praise the respondents for their moderation and responsibility.

Of course it cannot be said with absolute certainty that any quantity of alcohol is safe, just as driving within the speed limit is not a guarantee of safety. But surely anyone with a genuine interest in road safety should be giving priority to deterring and detecting those who really do endanger others by driving well over the current limit, rather than making responsible people feel guilty about consuming small amounts of alcohol that are irrelevant to accident risk.

Curmudgeon Online: <http://members.lycos.co.uk/curmudgeon>



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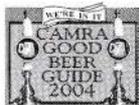
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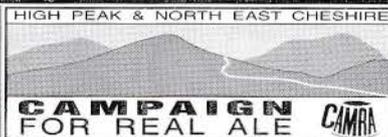
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Several licensee changes in prominent pubs within the Branch this month. The Dandy Cock at Disley has been taken over by two lady joint Tenants (their husbands are not getting involved in the running of it). The Ring O'Bells at Marple, changes again after only a couple of months under new tenants, at the Sportsman at Strines, the landlord has moved to Spain. The Andrew Arms at Compstall has changed and the Star in Glossop finally changed tenants with the process taking since early in August. The common factor being that all of these pubs have had spells in the Good Beer Guide over fairly long periods in recent years. At the Star, Paul & Vivienne Hilditch are, in the early days, trying to do as much of the bar work as they can between them. As December kicked in, Pictish beers were in evidence, with various other micros promised, though they will have to stick primarily to the pubco list, which does include beers from such as Fullers, Youngs etc.

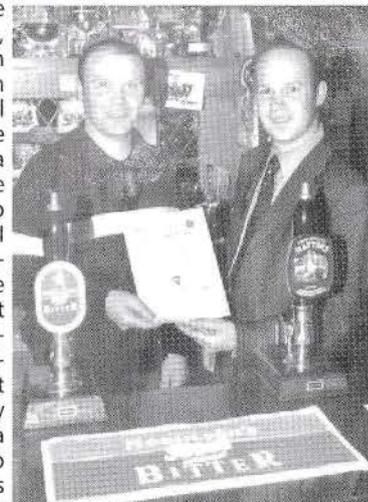
Over in Buxton at the Miltons Head on Spring Gardens, the handpumps have bits of paper taped to the clips stating "no real ale sold here". A pity, as previously it has, though not particularly adventurous, I remember drinking Draught bass here on several occasions in the past. Perhaps they make accept offers for the handpumps?

Shaws of Dukinfield had a Christmas brew on sale. Named Santas 80 shillings, it is a dark bitter, that at 4.2% has a full flavour and is well worth trying.

The Globe in Glossop was to have the legendary John Otway on the bill on January 16th. An all ticket gig, it was sure to be a sell out, tickets on sale at the pub.

The Cheshire Ring at Hyde played host to the High Peak Branch Meeting in December, the branch being the first to use the impressive upstairs function room. The first official function held was the Great British Beer Festival stewards official Christmas party on 13 December.

Several Robinson's pubs in the branch have their tenancies available. These include the Chapman Arms, Hattersley; Horse Shoe, High Lane; Junction, Mottram; Pineapple, Stalybridge; Railway, Woodley and the Robin Hood, Hazel Grove. One Robbies pub with a new licensee is the Grosvenor, Stalybridge, where Carl Kelly has taken over following 14 years in the transport industry. Carl has lived in the area since the age of three and having a brother and aunt who have kept pubs in the area, he is no stranger to the business. "I have provided relief management for them both in the past, so I knew exactly what I was taking on when I applied for the tenancy," explained Carl who has part time support at the friendly local from his partner Laura and daughter Jemma, who both help out at the pub. As a regular customer at the Grosvenor for the past 22 years, and a well-known amateur footballer and manager in the area, Carl already knows many of his regulars and is also attracting new customers. He has also invested in the cellar equipment to ensure that the cask beer is served in good condition.



Carl (left) being presented with his training certificate by director William Robinson

**Finally an a apology. We stated that the Dog in Chapel-en-le-Frith was the Burtonwood pub in Chapel-en-leFrith. It is in fact as we all knew really, the Royal Oak, a few yards down the road!**





I am informed by the soulless wight that passes for Ed(2) that space is at a premium, so I can only deal with one pressing question from the bumper postbag (but keep them coming nevertheless). Hopefully I can deal with more when the BeerMonster takes his German Holiday.

**Q. I am often profoundly irritated by VERY ill-informed people pontificating about beer in pubs (the ' There's no hops in Robinsons' outburst in a Robbies' house in Stockport comes to mind) or raving about the merits of John Smiths Smooth. When is it appropriate to offer (polite) correction to their errors? - Henry Herbert.**

A. I am tempted to say never, because at least sitting in a corner and silently shaking the head while reading a book usually avoids a punch in the mouth, but nay, away with such lily-livered complicity. Is it not our duty to educate the benighted masses? Is CAMRA (if you are indeed a member) an organisation for woolly-jumpered beardies to bore each other to death about the vinous tarmacadam flavour of Old Excalibur, or a vibrant youthful campaigning organisation? (Note: this is a RHETORICAL question, it does not need any answer from you, gentle reader). There's no hard and fast answer, but here's a stab. If you know them, its probably safe to have a go, but try not to (a) overwhelm them with interesting detail (because its probably only interesting to YOU) and (b) do TRY not to be too

patronising. The fact that you're a patronising smug git may account for your lack of a girlfriend. If they're over 60 its a lost cause. Britain undervalues the wisdom enshrined in the older generation simply because they are hide-bound in their utter ignorance and prejudice, though starting off by saying that the government should double the state pension (which it should) might get a more attentive ear. If they (a) have very short hair, (b) are wearing only a Paul Smith shirt in the depths of winter, (c) have a number of friends with narrow-set eyes, inebriated expressions and glasses of lager-like liquids, a punch in the mouth is the best you can hope for. And if the pub is Winters, The Boars Head, the Tiviot or the Swan.... just enjoy your beer and read the book.

## RECENT LOCAL CAMRA AWARD



Patricia Heathcote of the Grove Inn, Clayton, receiving her Stockport & South Manchester Pub of the Month Award for December 2003 from CAMRA enthusiast Dave Hallows.



## FORTHCOMING BEER FESTIVALS

Most imminent is the rare beers fest at the Smithfield Hotel, Swan Street, Manchester, which starts just before Opening Times appears on 15th January and will run for several days (or until the beer runs out). A preview of the list showed quite a few interesting specimens. At the end of the month, CAMRA and the round table organise Bent & Bongs in Atherton (at the Formby Hall), 29-31, (note no lunchtime session on Friday) with a good selection of winterish beers, and on the same dates the Burton Winter Ales Festival hosts the CAMRA National Winter Ales Festival and championship at the Town Hall. Not to be missed. Next month should see festivals at both Bury's excellent Trackside and Idy & Sal's award-winning Crescent in Salford. More next month.



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# MAASTRICHT

## BEN ZWIERINK TAKES THE CAMRA GUIDE TO BELGIUM & HOLLAND FOR A TEST DRIVE

**OPENING TIMES** published a positive review of **Tim Webb's 4th edition of the Good Beer Guide to Belgium and Holland. A good enough reason to purchase a copy, especially as I had the opportunity to put the guide to a practical test during a recent visit to Maastricht in the Netherlands.**

Maastricht is located in the southern half of Limburg province, wedged between Belgium and Germany, making a three country crawl a real possibility! The city, bisected by the River Meuse, is an eclectic mix of medieval ramparts, Gothic and Romanesque churches, small cobbled streets and impressive facades. If you arrive by train you will find yourself on the right bank of the city, which is where I started my quest for Maastricht's finest bars, armed with Tim Webb's guide.

First port of call was **de Poshoorn** on Stationstraat, a stylish café with a great interior. It may not offer the greatest beer range in town but still manages to have about a dozen beers on draught. I tried the Gulpener Korenwolf, a 5% darkish well-balanced wheat-style beer, and La Chouffe, a 8% coriander flavoured ale. The Chouffe was once a great beer, but it seems to have lost some of its distinctive character.

First-time visitors to Maastricht may well find de Poshoorn without the help of the guide, but it is less likely they would find a real gem tucked away in a side street not far away.

All beer enthusiasts should call in at the **Take One** in the Rechtstraat. The name is uninspiring, the exterior looks unpromising, but once inside you realise you have entered a truly excellent local offering a huge list of unusual beers, including many from small Dutch producers. On my visit I tried the Jopen from the Haarlem Brewery, a fine hoppy ale (at 6.8%

your ale, they supply you with bowls of peanuts in their shells. You are encouraged to drop the shells - this, apparently, helps to oil the wooden floor. Do as you are told, even if the floor around your table looks like the aftermath of a chimps' tea party!

It was hard to drag myself away from this place. However, in the interests of research I moved on. Yes, folks it's a lonely and thankless task doing these reviews! Next on the list was the **Falstaff** reached by crossing the river via the St Servaas bridge (Tim Webb insists on calling this the Wijk Bridge in his guide). The Falstaff is situated on St Amorsplein, a small traffic-free square making it ideal for outdoor drinking on a nice summer's evening. It lacks the comfortable intimacy of Take One but still justifies its inclusion in the guide by virtue of its beer range (70 or 80 are on offer).

There is a great first floor beamed gallery, not used much when the weather is fine and people sit outside in the square; although I suspect that during university terms it could get busy and noisy. The guide mentions a changing beer list of about 70. I decided to try the Chimay Bleue (ABV 9%), primarily because Webb slates the Chimay beers in his guide. The Bleue is described as a 'pretentious pastiche of its former self'. Ironically, Webb then gives the beer a 'well above average' rating in the guide. Make of that what you will! I would agree that the Bleue is not what it once was, and perhaps accountants dictate brewing strategies at Chimay but I do not think the beer is bad as Webb suggests.

Also on offer at the Falstaff was the Columbus (ABV 9%) from the ever-improving 't Ij brewery in Amsterdam. On the whole this café is another deserved entry in the guide, as is the **Pothuiske** near the St Servaas Bridge. This is a small, friendly stone-floored café offering about 70 beers. The kettle and flame logo date back to the time when locals could collect heated water there. The house beer comes from the local Gulpener brewery, which likes to experiment with a range of different beer styles. I tried the Dort (ABV 6.5%), a Dortmund-style beer which was okay, but by no means outstanding.

You will notice that the gravities of most of these beers mean that they are not for the faint-hearted, and neither are the prices. Far be it for me to suggest that the introduction of the Euro has led to an upward 'tweaking' of prices, it just felt that way to my wallet! As far as Tim Webb's guide is concerned, that is certainly good value for money. There are other good local guides available for the Netherlands (for example, Hugh Shipman's excellent guide to Amsterdam bars) but there is nothing comparable on the scale of Webb's guide. Highly recommended!



this one is at the weaker end of the range from a brewery which tends to produce beers of mind-boggling strengths).

Also on offer was a pale ale called Lamme Goedzak from the Schelde brewery, a 6.5% sweet but nicely balanced ale. I finished with Karthuizer Triple (ABV 8%), a deceptively strong coriander flavoured ale. I must also mention the friendly and very knowledgeable landlady who assisted in my choice of beers. To help down



## PUB NEWS

**BY THE TIME** you read this the Alan & Annette Heath will have left the Crown in Bollington. For many years the Crown has struggled but since Alan & Annette took over last year it has returned to being a good local pub. However, the greedy people at Avebury Taverns, not content with increased trade, also want their licensees to sign long term contracts and part with large sums of money. Consequently the Heaths have reluctantly decided to vacate the pub. Thanks to the short-sightedness of Avebury Taverns I now believe the Crown will become Bollington's next permanent pub closure.

Also in Bollington, the Vale has been put up for sale again. Sadly trade hasn't been as brisk as was expected when this pub reopened after a seven-year closure. Another free house up for sale is the George & Dragon, Higher Hurdfield.

**Some news from Congleton: The Lion & Swan and Heath Farm have both ceased to serve real ale. The Bull's Head has added Hyde's Light Mild to its range and is reported as being on top form. The Kheane brewery has started to bottle its beers, starting with the stout.**

In Macclesfield, the Ridgeway has been sold, the Bull & Gate remains closed after its sale and there is still no news regarding the future of the Star Inn, London Rd.

**Robinson's web-site at the end of last month revealed that the tenancy of the Wild Boar, Wincle, was available as at 12 December. Although there is some local trade, the pub was described as relying on a large extent on passing trade and rambblers, with catering forming a major part of the business.**

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**PORTER AND STOUT**

A CLEAR, crisp December evening saw the tasting panel assemble once again for the arduous task of tasting a selection of the bottled beers available in the Opening Times area. As usual the tasting was 'blind', with none of the tasters being aware of the identity of the beer until deliberations were complete. Given that the beers had been stored in an unheated garage, their temperature was lower than traditionally suggested for serving ales, and it was noticeable with all that flavours developed as they warmed up slightly.

This time the theme was Porters and Stouts; two closely related full-bodied styles of beer characterised by the predominant use of highly kilned grains that lead to a dark colour and roasted or burnt flavours. The panel discussed the distinction between the two styles, even resorting to a hefty Oxford English Dictionary tome in an attempt to arrive at a definitive answer. At the risk of provoking a flurry of correspondence, I suggest that a stout should feature significant roasted unmalted barley and strong bitterness hopping, leading to an intensely dry taste, whereas a porter should show a mixture of sweeter fruity malt and bitter hop notes.

**1 - Broughton Oatmeal Stout 4.2% (£1.89, 50cl)**

Black in initial appearance but holding the glass to the light shows the true colour to be a rich deep ruby; this beer had a 'dirty' cream head that faded rapidly. The aroma was thought to be insipid with unidentified chemical notes. Swirling the beer in the glass released some of the characteristic roasted grain notes of the style. The mouthfeel was dominated by excessively strong carbonation that masked any other attributes. The taste was considered to be thin and sweetish with some weak roast flavours. One taster described it as lacking start, body and finish. The depth of flavour did improve as the liquid warmed and the carbonation dissipated slightly, but remained generally thin. This was felt to be a poor example of the style, hindered by the strong artificial carbonation, and showing the apparent trait amongst many Scottish brews of preferring sweet malt flavours over hop.

**2 - Ventnor Oyster Stout 4.5% (£1.85, 50cl)**

Another non-bottle-conditioned beer, its appearance was virtually identical to beer 1, but there the similarity ended. On the nose it had very strong roasted coffee and chocolate aromas that reminded one taster of a chocolate assortment. The mouthfeel was soft and velvety with low carbonation, while the taste was initially a good balance of sweet malt and strong roasted dry notes, with a warming sweetness tending to dominate the mid-taste before petering out to a thin finish. This beer was felt to not quite live up to the promise of the aroma, and there was some surprise when the bottle was revealed, as none of the panel had detected any of the marine notes that might have been expected of a brew that incorporates oysters.

**3 - Wye Valley Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout 4.6% (£2.15, 50cl)**

The bottle features an eye-catching label design featuring the eponymous lady in a Marilyn Monroe-esque pose, but perhaps disappointingly lacks the double-entendres for which much of the brewery's promotional material is noted. The beer itself, which is bottle conditioned, was a fine example of the style with a strong lasting head. The nose was initially dominated by the carbonation and resinous hops giving way to characteristic roasted coffee and bitter chocolate. As might be expected from the aroma the mouthfeel was dominated by the carbonation, but the taste was a complex marriage of roasted dry and bitter hop flavours, leading to a long dry finish and aftertaste. With time and warmth the balance was enhanced as more fruity malt notes emerged. A well crafted beer, which was commended by all.

**Beer 4 - Wickwar Station Porter 6.1% (£1.99, 50cl)**

This bottle-conditioned beer was the lightest in colour of those on test, a rich ruby against the light with a thin cream head. Sweet fruit and some cinnamon and sweet spice dominated the nose, characteristic roast aromas were somewhat lacking. The mouthfeel was smooth with low carbonation, while the taste was mainly of sweet malt and berry fruit, with some weaker bitter dark chocolate notes that improved with warming giving a better balance. However there was a distinct sourness in the taste, which one taster considered unpleasant. Such sourness may be an intended note in the flavour or it may indicate a problem with this particular brew of the beer.

**5 - Anchor Porter (San Francisco, USA) 5.6% (£1.69, 33.5cl)**

The only distinctive bottle of the night - of a fine amber glass in a shape reminiscent of a Perrier bottle, with the most incredible amount of verbiage crammed onto the neck label. Close inspection of same revealed that the PR men had been allowed free rein: one phrase which caused much mirth being "virtually handmade". Others included "using fresh, whole hops" (implying a minuscule brewing season as hops are usually partially dried before use) and "entirely naturally carbonated" (when the beer showed none of the usual signs of being bottle-conditioned). This was also the darkest beer of the session, with a fruity chocolate aroma. The mouthfeel was smooth and rounded with low carbonation. Complex molasses, warm spice and sweet and sour fruit flavours like Christmas pudding dominated the taste, with roasted chocolate notes arriving later, leading to a long dry bitter finish. The panel agreed that the style was more akin to an old ale than a porter, but nevertheless a fine beer, which the majority chose as best of the night.

**6 - O'Hanlon's Port Stout 4.8% (£1.99, 50cl)**

Another bottle-conditioned beer, this one has a quantity of ruby port added during the brew. Similar in appearance to the other beers sampled, its aroma was thought to be dusty, earthy and dry, with some characteristic roasted chocolate notes. Strong carbonation dominated the mouthfeel, while the taste was somewhat low on complexity with a hint of hop bitterness, a distinct roasted or even charcoal taste on the mid-palate, and a dry fading finish. Again, as with the other beers, complexity increased as the liquid warmed and carbonation dissipated and more of the bitter hop notes emerged. None of the panel detected an obvious influence of the added port.

The beer of the night was the Anchor Porter; although a very close second and perhaps a more characteristic representative of the style was the Dorothy Goodbody's Wholesome Stout. Contrary to the advice of at least one bottle that it was "best served chilled", the panel found that the depth and complexity of all the beers improved as they warmed up... don't believe everything you read. Quoted bottle prices are from Carrington's in Chorlton, but most of these beers should also be available elsewhere in the area if you want to give them a try. BW



**A Guide to the best of the New Year... THE COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO REAL ALE IN STOCKPORT'S PUBS**



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# POTS, PLANTS AND FINE ALES

A VISIT to the local garden centre may be a pleasure, it may be a chore, but one thing it's not is the chance to but some decent beer. Well, usually but not always. Not if the garden centre in question is the Golden Days Garden Centre in Cheadle. For this is perhaps the only licensed garden centre in the country, and certainly the only one to offer a range of high quality British and foreign bottled beers.

Golden Days is off Manchester Road, behind the Cheshire Lines pub and is one of a chain of two, the other being in Standish near Wigan – and the man responsible for the beer is CAMRA member Sam Weller.

Sam tells us it all started about four years ago, when he was approached by Interbrew who asked if he would be interested in conducting an experiment of running an off licence in a garden centre. They paid for the licence and fridge, Sam and his co-manager took the appropriate exams, and a garden centre off licence was born.

Unfortunately for Interbrew the experiment failed and after 12 months they pulled out leaving the Golden days with an off licence to do with as they liked. And being a member of CAMRA what was Sam expected to sell? You guessed.

So, there among the jams, biscuits and pot pourri, you will see a chiller cabinet containing all sorts of beery delights. A pre-Christmas visit found four ales from the respected USA micro Rogue Ales in stock - Dead Guy Ale, Mocha Porter, Shakespeare Stout and American Amber, together with a good range of British and continental beers such as Burton Bridge Porter, Otter Claus, Hook Norton 12 Days, Samiclaus, Erdinger Schneewiese among many others.

Sam uses three main suppliers, Parfitts, Stockport; James Clay (particularly good for American imports), and to a lesser degree the Beer Seller. He has just been promoted to Plant Director,



which includes a lot of travelling, so this year he will be picking up as many different bottle conditioned beers as he can from around the country. Sourcing supplies of bottle conditioned is difficult but the Golden Days will definitely be stocking the new range of Eastwood & Sanders bottled beers (a particular treat for those familiar with the products of this well-respected West Yorkshire micro).

The Golden Days Garden Centre is open 9 -6 Monday to Saturday, and 10 -5 on Sunday.

## JOIN CAMRA - HELP PRESERVE REAL ALE

Use the form on the right to join CAMRA - send it and a cheque made payable to CAMRA to Karen & Chris Wainright, CAMRA Membership, 173 Shearwater Road, Offerton, Stockport, SK2 5XA - or better still, and more conveniently, just fill in the Direct Debit application and send it along with your form - remember to keep your Direct Debit guarantee.

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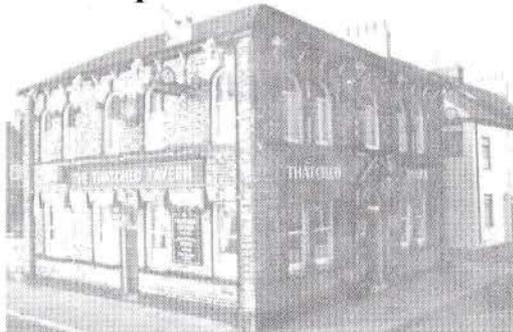
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# MANCHESTER MATTERS *by Cityman*

The run up to Christmas was pretty quiet on the pub news front. In the City Centre, the only major change was the transformation of the Bridge Street Tavern into the Bridge. It's rather more opened up than before and there's no cask beer. No much to write home about at all, in fact - it has quite a striking sign, though, featuring the new Trinity Bridge.

In Fallowfield, Lloyds No1 has opened and I understand there will be a full review elsewhere in this issue. A welcome addition to the real ale scene in that part of town, as a subsequent survey of Fallowfield found it to be indeed, fallow. Out of ten pubs, only three sell the cask stuff - Hydes' Friendship, Beartown's Bruins (beware seemingly erratic opening hours - I've tried four times during its 'official' opening times since late November to find it closed each time! ed(2)) and the new Great Central.

This really is a poor set of affairs. Elsewhere on my travels, I could not help but notice that Hardy's Well (ex Birch Villa) in Rusholme seems to have been closed for a number of weeks; closed too, is the Sir Henry Royce in Hulme.

In Longsight, I noted the decorators were hard at work in the former JDW pub the Sir Edwin Chadwick, so expect a re-opening soon. Also re-opened is the Bank of England in Ancoats (yet to see if cask ale will feature). In the city, the Millstone on Thomas Street in the Northern Quarter, was recently selling cask JW Lees bitter, however I feel poor sales of the beer will probably scupper this brave cask venture.

I will need to get across to Kirkmanshulme Lane in Gorton, as I hear that Banks's Longsight has been re-styled as the Belle Vue. Whether the change involves a shake-up in the beer range, I know not; more, when I have it.

## DIDSBURY DOINGS

I spent an enjoyable few hours in the pubs of the northern part of Didsbury village one Saturday afternoon. My first port of call

was the newish Slug and Lettuce, set atop the former Central rail line; nice place but not a drop of the cask stuff. Crossing the road, took me into the Station (Marstons), which at first, looked shut, but turned out to be showing live football (yawn) so all of the blinds were down. It was busy and selling Marstons Bitter and Pedigree in good order. I do feel the TV screens now dominate proceedings to far too great a degree, others will disagree no doubt...

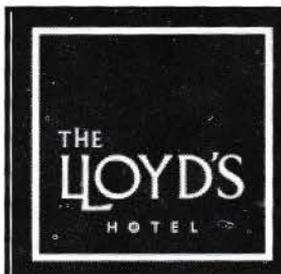
Across the street, the Pear Tree was selling expensive Landlord (220p) and Boddies. That said, I am glad to see that cask is still being sold; in good form too. Next door at the Hog's Head, I was expecting no cask ale at all, but found Deuchars IPA and London Pride at 205p. TV screens now abound showing music videos and there appears to be a focus upon food. All in all not bad, the Deuchars could have been less cool and had a tad more life though. There was no life, well, no live beer anyway, in next door's O'Neill's, so I popped my head into the Dog & Partridge (ex Greenalls). Rugby was on TV and the rustic alehouse decor sits well with the bar offering five handpulled ales - Theakston BB, Landlord, Spitfire, Bombardier and a guest, Wye Valley Santa's Delight on this occasion.

Finally, crossing the road one last time to two pubs on the corner of Barlow Moor Road - the Clock Tower had two beers on when I looked in, Boddies and Directors, whilst at the busy Nelson, the usual Holts bitter was joined by M&B mild, a rarity for the area I'm sure. The southern section of the village will wait for another day.

**COPY DATE FOR FEBRUARY ISSUE - JANUARY 28**  
**- AVAILABLE FROM SATURDAY FEBRUARY 14**

## OPENING TIMES SPECIFICATIONS

Advert Column Widths, single 84mm, double 172mm. Image height 26cm. NB Advertisers who supply camera ready artwork designed for another publication that cannot be resized to our standard sizes will be charged the equivalent column/centimetre rate plus a surcharge of at least 30%. Adverts that require unusually large amounts of design work will have the extra work carried out by a studio at full commercial rate.



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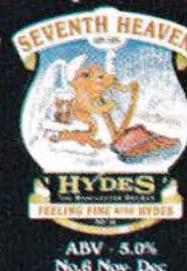
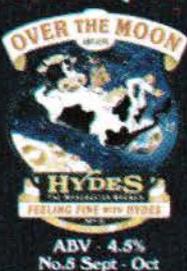
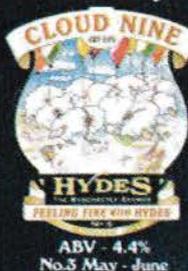
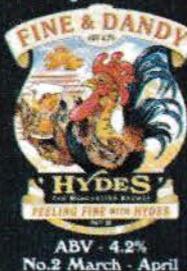
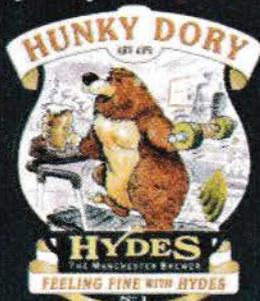
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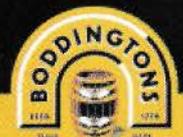
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