

  
**TIMES**

OCTOBER 2008

# Opening

THE FREE CAMRA REGIONAL MAGAZINE

COVERING THE CITIES OF MANCHESTER & SALFORD, STOCKPORT, TAMESIDE, TRAFFORD, N.E. CHESHIRE & MACCLESFIELD

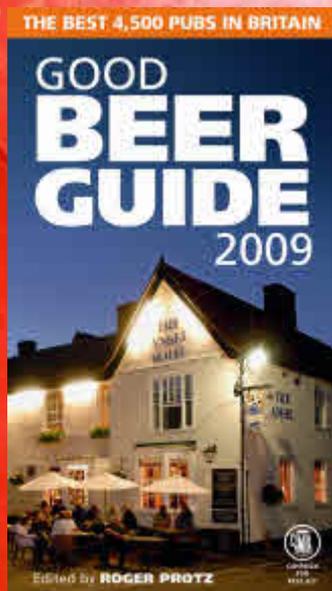
## Cider & Perry Special

**Inside:**

**All About Perry – page 10**

**CAMRA's Cider & Perry Month**

**WIN Cider & Perry on our Cider Circuit**



**Plus:**

**Good Beer Guide 2009 – 36<sup>th</sup> edition of CAMRA's flagship book. Review and how to buy: see page 7**



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# Pub OF THE Month AWARD



**The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for October is the Pack Horse on the Market Place.**

The Pack Horse is a good old-fashioned market pub with a traditional atmosphere and layout. There has been some modernisation and opening up over the years but there are still no less than three separate rooms – to the left a large tiled area with a public bar feel, and to the right two well appointed lounges. The whole pub has been redecorated in recent years to give the whole place an uplift but with no loss of character. There is also a beer garden for smokers and those who enjoy al fresco drinking.



Of course the Pack Horse really comes into its own when the market is on – with a lively lunchtime crowd enjoying the good value meals. It can sometimes be quieter at night but is in no way less appealing with Sky TV and also free pool on Tuesdays.

But of course for many people, the big attraction is the beer. There are currently three cask beers available – Tetley Bitter, Deuchars IPA and Copper Dragon Bitter, the latter proving very popular. It is possible that this range will also be joined by Copper Dragon 1816.

The team behind this excellent local is Frank Mooney, Debbie and Colin who have done an excellent job in the two years they have been there, particularly on the beer front, not only steering the pub into the new 2009 Good Beer Guide but also gaining Cask Marque accreditation.

All of this excellent beer can be sampled on the presentation night, Thursday 23 October. **M O'B.**  
 The Pack Horse is in the centre of Stockport at 2 Market Place.



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**CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2009 We're in it!**



**Opening Times – Comment**

THIS month is CAMRA's Cider & Perry Month when we briefly turn our attention away from malt and hops and instead look at apples and pears. Cider and Perry (none of your "pear cider" here, thank you very much) are some of the most traditional and historic drinks available in the UK today. The West Country, from Cornwall to Herefordshire is the historic heartland of these exceptional drinks but they are also available locally – in increasing amounts. Why not take part in our Cider Circuit or at least drop into some of the participating pubs and try the true Taste of Tradition?

LAST month saw the launch of the 36th Good Beer Guide, CAMRA's flagship publication. Featuring 4,500 of the UK's top pubs, this is an indispensable book for those who appreciate fine ales. This month some of the local entries are also advertising in OT – look for the "We're in the Good Beer Guide" in their ads and pay them a visit for the Good Beer Guide guarantee of a good pint.

**Opening Times - Information**

*Opening Times* is produced by the Stockport & South Manchester Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Additional material is supplied by the High Peak & NE Cheshire, Trafford & Hulme, North Manchester and Macclesfield & E Cheshire Branches. The views expressed are not necessarily those of CAMRA either locally or nationally. 7,000 copies a month are printed by Phil Powell Printing of Failsworth. All articles copyright CAMRA unless otherwise stated.

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Postal subscriptions are available at £6 for 12 issues (make cheques payable to *Opening Times*). Apply to John Tune, 4 Sandown Rd, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, SK3 0JF.

**Trading Standards** – problems in pubs should normally be resolved by a quiet word with the licensee. However sometimes it may be necessary to take it further. These are the local contacts:

<b>Stockport</b>	0845 644 4301	<b>Trafford</b>	0161 9122274
<b>Manchester</b>	0161 234 1555	<b>Derbyshire</b>	08456 058058
<b>Salford</b>	0161 925 1346	<b>Cheshire</b>	0845 1132500
<b>Tameside</b>	0161 342 8355		

**Copy Date for the November issue is Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October.**

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Wobbly Bob



# Stagger

## Shaw Heath & Higher Hillgate with Peter Edwardson

**A** WET night in July took us on a stagger around the southern environs of Stockport town centre, heading up Shaw Heath to the A6 and then doubling back down Higher Hillgate. Fortunately the heavy showers of the early part of the evening cleared up later on.

We began at the **Armoury**, prominently situated on the roundabout at the junction of Shaw Heath and Greek Street. This is a four-square Robinson's pub retaining a traditional three-



roomed interior. We sat in the comfortable lounge where the mock half-timbering on the walls gave a reassuringly old-fashioned feel. The pub has a surprisingly large beer garden to the rear, but as it was

raining heavily this did not find too many customers. Although early in the evening it was already fairly busy. Beers available were Unicorn and Hatters Mild, both of which were good, with the Unicorn slightly shading it.

A short stroll up Shaw Heath brought us to the **Florist**, an imposing Victorian pub in the Italianate style that can be surprisingly hard to spot from the pavement. The interior has been slightly opened out over the years but still has five separate areas ranged around the central bar, and plenty of comfortable seating. Robinson's beers again, following a similar pattern to the Armoury with the Unicorn just that little bit better than the Hatters.

We continued along Shaw Heath, passing the keg-only Plough on our left, and then turned right down Adswold Lane West to reach the **Adswold Hotel** in its rather secluded location. This is a large, three-bay pub set back from the road behind a cobbled forecourt. The spacious interior features a variety of separate areas, but it was a sign of the times that the social focus of the pub seemed to be around the commodious smoking shelter to the rear. There is also a large beer garden to be enjoyed in better weather. There were a number of pictures of old Stockport on the walls and a display of beer trays featuring dray horses. No change from the diet of Robinson's, but the beer kept up the good form of the first two pubs.



Retracing our steps, we crossed back over Shaw Heath and reached the **Blossoms** at the junction of the Bramhall Lane and the A6, our fourth Robinson's pub of the evening. This is an impressive corner building with a surprisingly small interior comprising a central bar with pool room, vault and snug off. It was fairly busy, but we were able to find seats in the vault, which unusually features a pin table. The beer quality kept up the high standard of the evening so far - there really was very little to choose between these four pubs.

Crossing the A6 on to Higher Hillgate, we passed the Wheatsheaf on the right, which has served real ale in the past, but had none tonight, with a pumpclip turned round on a solitary handpump. We fared better at the **Bowling Green**, set back a little from the main road on Charles Street. This is a former Wilsons pub whose previous ownership is still reflected in the tiling in the gents'. It has been refurbished fairly recently but retains a two-roomed layout with distinct vault and lounge sides. It was probably the busiest pub of the evening so far, with a lively atmosphere. Appropriately for the rainy weather, the karaoke was featuring "Riders on the Storm". One real ale was available - Theakston's Best Bitter - which was generally felt to be in good nick.



We continued down Higher Hillgate, passing the former Royal Mortar on our left, which has been closed for a few years now but still has not found an alternative use. Almost opposite is the **Flying Dutchman**, a compact modern pub rebuilt from an older one some years back. The interior has a contemporary feel but still has a number of separate areas. It was fairly busy, with a noticeably younger clientele than most of the pubs so far. On entering, you are confronted with a row of prominent keg taps, but real ale in the shape of Robinson's Unicorn is available round the corner on an electric metered pump, a very rare sight nowadays, but one that at least guarantees you a full measure in an oversize glass. The beer was quite reasonable although not on a par with the Robbies' pubs visited earlier.

The rain had by now largely stopped as we carried to the **Star & Garter**, an impressive four-square pub commanding a view down the middle part of Hillgate. The interior retains some of its former multi-roomed layout, with one of the former front rooms being dominated by a pool table. In the other a karaoke had been set up but was not currently in action. It was rather quieter than some of the other pubs but nonetheless the Robinson's Unicorn was in good condition although the Hatters shaded more towards average.



The final lap of the stagger took us past the keg-only Crown or "Corner Cupboard" - once a good pub in the days when it sold real ale - and the closed Golden Lion before arriving at the **Sun & Castle**, our final port of call. This is a 1930s building that has been refurbished by Holts in a fairly lavish Victorian style. The only cask beer was Holts Bitter, which was comfortably above average. A Mild pumpclip was on display although the beer was not available. For some reason, the vault side was darkened and deserted, but there was plenty of activity in the lounge where a karaoke was in full swing and even encouraging some of the customers to get up and dance, producing a good, lively atmosphere to round off the evening.

A noticeable feature of this stagger was the consistently good quality of the beer. Although it varied a little between pubs, there wasn't really anywhere that you would be unhappy to be stuck in for the evening. It's disappointing, though, how the other pub operators do not make the same effort as Robinson's to stock real ale in their pubs - three of the five non-Robinson's pubs we passed were keg only. And, while the Hatters and Unicorn were generally in fine form, it would be good to see a little more effort to stock some other beers from their range in what in many cases are flagship pubs, not backstreet boozers. As ever, these are only the impressions of a particular group of people on one specific night. Why not try the pubs for yourself and see what you think?

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# Brewery NEWS...

**S**TOCKPORT & South Manchester CAMRA members made a trip to **Dunham Massey Brewery** last month to present Jon Costello with an award to mark his excellent Chocolate Cherry Mild gaining third place in the Beer of the Festival contest at this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. Our picture shows Branch Chairman John Clarke (yes, him again) presenting the award.



Dunham Massey have been making some excellent beer recently including Dunham Stout (4.2%), Cheshire IPA (4.7%) and Mild Stout (4%). All of these are available from the brewery shop – check the website

([www.dunhammasseybrewing.co.uk](http://www.dunhammasseybrewing.co.uk)) for details.

First place in the Beer of the Festival contest went to **Marble Brewery** for their Festival Special. As we reported a few issues ago, this beer was brewed by the newest member of the brewing team Warren McCoubrey. Warren has now left the brewery to run a pub in Preston, the New Continental (see the advert on page three) but came back to pick up the award on the presentation night. He is pictured along with the three current brewers Colin Stronge, James Campbell and Dominic Driscoll.

This month look out for the return of Festival (4%) a pale and hoppy beer brewed to mark the Manchester Food & Drink Festival. Marble are also in the process of commissioning a new 10-barrel brewery in premises close to the Marble Arch pub. This is to keep pace with the increasing demand for their beers. The brewery at the pub will remain for short run beers and specials.



**Phoenix Brewery** is another serial award winner. Last time we reported that Spotland Gold had picked up Beer of the Festival at Worcester Beer Festival. Owner Tony Allen now advises us that the legendary Wobbly Bob (6%) picked up the awards for Best Strong Ale and Beer of the Festival at this year's Macclesfield Beer Festival.



Denton's **Hornbeam Brewery** has also been picking up the silverware, as it were. Malt Mountain Mild was Beer of the Festival at Rugby Beer Festival. Rugby CAMRA was due to visit the brewery on 20

September to present the award and *Opening Times* was there, camera ready. Unfortunately they didn't show up but we did get this picture of Hornbeam's Chris Coates, Kevin Rothwell and a Malt Mountain handpump. Hornbeam are planning a 4.5%-ish Rye Beer this month and later on there will be the return of the excellent Thumpin' Pumpkin IPA (5.4%). Hornbeam is also keen to promote their new website, which they want to develop into a major resource – check it out at [www.hornbeambrewery.com](http://www.hornbeambrewery.com).

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



Welcome to Hornbeam Brewery's website. "The" place to find all the real ale events in your area. Licensees can advertise their events for free and offer promotions. **Newsletter** each month promoting all the great real ale events in your area for a great night out.

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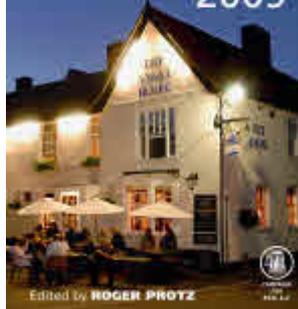
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## GOOD BEER GUIDE 2009

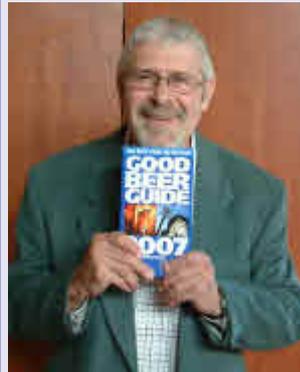


"The definitive rundown of the best places in the UK to get a pint of real ale, from cosy country inns to upmarket style bars." - Time Out Magazine

The 2009 Good Beer Guide was published on 11 September. This, the 36th edition of the country's best beer and pub guide, features 4,500 of the best pubs in the UK, chosen by CAMRA members from across the country.

Despite many pubs struggling in today's current economic climate and research showing that 57 pubs permanently close every month across Britain, this year's Good Beer Guide highlights that the UK real ale pub scene is thriving. No less than 1,227 new pub entries and 73 new breweries are listed in this edition. The Guide features both urban and rural pubs, giving details of food, pub history, architecture, transport links, beer gardens, accommodation, disabled access and facilities for families.

Pubs are surveyed by local CAMRA members and scored on a variety of aspects that make a great pub. These include customer service, the clientele mix (i.e. the pub appeals to 18 and 80 year olds), value for money, décor and of course the quality of the real ale. CAMRA members therefore guarantee to supply the reader with the most up to date publication to help locate the best pint of real ale.



Good Beer Guide editor Roger Protz said: "CAMRA's Good Beer Guide is Britain's original number-one, independent guide to good beer and pubs. It is great to see that there are now more than 660 real ale breweries in Britain brewing over 2,500 different varieties of real ale and so many wonderful pubs to drink them in.

Roger continued, "The CAMRA members work tirelessly to survey the pubs each year to make sure the reader gets the most updated guide to the best pubs in Britain. I would personally like to thank them for all of their hard work and support."

The Good Beer Guide Mobile Edition coincides with the launch of *Good Beer Guide 2009* and makes the ideal companion to the printed Guide. Wherever you are, or wherever you are going, get information on local Good Beer Guide pubs and beers sent direct to your mobile phone. Depending on the tariff, this indispensable service costs from as little as **5.5 pence per day!** (plus your standard network Internet charges).



This unique service is compatible with most mobile phones with Internet access and support for Java applications.

You can keep your copy of the Good Beer Guide up to date by visiting the CAMRA website ([www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk)). Click on "Good Beer Guide" then "Updates to the GBG 2009".

Copies of the Good Beer Guide can be obtained from Jim Flynn at a price of £14.99 (includes p&p). Please send a cheque payable to "CAMRA Stockport & South Manchester" to 66 Downham Road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport, SK4 5EG.

## THE PACK HORSE

**Frank, Debbie and Colin**  
**Would like to welcome you all**  
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### Two Sides to the Same Coin

**I** HAVE seen a few comments recently suggesting that the on and off-trades are locked in a titanic battle for the soul of the British drinker.

However, for the vast majority of people who enjoy drinking alcohol, their experience will include both drinking it on licensed premises and at home. They may well like visiting pubs from time to time, but may also have a bottle of wine with dinner, or a beer while watching the television, or maybe a few bottles with a barbecue. They have a reasonable expectation that they should be able to buy alcohol for consumption at home in conveniently located outlets offering a good range and competitive prices. Surely this is a false opposition, and in reality the on and off-trades are complementary aspects of the same business.

While the primary aim of "Opening Times" has always been to promote pubs and cask beer, it has also often included features on quality bottled beers to drink at home, and any attempt to discourage this shows a failure to understand how people live their lives today. The attitudes that "I do all my drinking in the pub" and "we never have drink in the house" belong to the 1950s, not the 21st century. The message must be that drinking in the pub is more special, not that drinking at home is bad.

It cannot be denied that there are problems in the off-trade such as below-cost selling and underage sales that need to be dealt with. And I'm not convinced it's desirable to give a licence to every two-bit corner shop where supervision is likely to be more lax than in a larger or more specialised outlet. But those problems can be addressed, and do not mean that the off-trade as such is an intrinsically bad business. And most of the adults you see indulging in offensive drunken behaviour in the streets will have been drinking in pubs and clubs, not at home, so it cannot be said that the on-trade does not have its problems too.

The attempt to drive a wedge between on and off trade is really a dishonest tactic by the neo-prohibitionists who are opposed to the drinks trade in its entirety, but cunningly seek to attack its weakest points. It would be short-sighted and hypocritical for anyone concerned about the future of pubs to welcome significant curbs on the ability of people to buy alcohol for home consumption, because those restrictions will inevitably end up hitting pubs as well.

### Old Enough to Fight

**O**F COURSE the most prominent example of this tendency is the proposal by the Scottish government to increase the minimum age for buying alcohol in the off trade from 18 to 21, which may seem superficially tempting to some who think it might give a boost to pubs. However, even if it does lead some people to drink in pubs who otherwise would have done so at home, it's hard to see that filling pubs with young people intent on getting drunk as cheaply as possible is going to improve the image of the trade. It is also very doubtful whether it will solve the problems it is claimed to address: it will simply drive them underground and transfer the trade from legitimate outlets to black marketeers.

But, regardless of the practicalities, the proposal is objectionable in principle. Alcohol is a legal product, and 18 is regarded as the age of majority for pretty much all practical purposes, so it is a direct attack on the liberties of adults. Can it really be right that a soldier who has been putting his life on the line in Afghanistan returns home to Scotland and is not allowed to buy a bottle of beer to unwind in his own living room?

Curmudgeon Online: [www.curmudgeon.org.uk](http://www.curmudgeon.org.uk)



# Trafford & Hulme PUB NEWS

## Save Our Heritage Pub

**D**ID you know that CAMRA keep a record of all pubs that are of National Heritage interest either due to the exterior or the interior of the pub?

In the whole of Greater Manchester area we only have 21 pubs on the list and only three of those are in the Trafford and Hulme area, writes *Branch Chair Beverley Gobbett*. The two in the city centre are the Britons Protection and the Peveril of the Peak. The only one to be listed outside the city centre is the Railway in Broadheath, Altrincham and this pub is currently under threat of closure due to lack of custom.

The pub was actually built as two cottages alongside the railway line and then the railway company decided to put a station in Broadheath so the cottages were purchased and turned into a small multi-roomed pub. I have found the station and pub clearly marked on a map dated 1882 at [www.oldmap.co.uk](http://www.oldmap.co.uk). Many original features are to be found inside the building. The doors to all of the rooms are etched with Tap room, Vault and Lounge and named after a railway station such as Waterloo. The original kitchen with its stone floor is now the back parlour. The bar is of curved wood with small fixed seating in this very cosy little room. Take a look at the black and white flooring which is outstanding.

In 1996 this pub was set for demolition by its owners, Crown Estates, yes the Queen owns it, to make way for a new retail park. The public and CAMRA got together and a petition was set up which managed to get the pub recognised for its historical interest and now it is Grade II listed as a building and the bar and two old handpumps behind the bar are also listed.

With all the usual current climate problems facing all landlords the pub is now struggling for enough custom to keep its doors open. The lease is now up for sale but due to the Grade II listing restricting any changes to the interior of the building or the removal of the bar, no-one has been able to see a way of making it viable.

This means that the only way to still be able to see the interior of this building and enjoy it for its historical interest is to use it now. Go in and see for yourself and enjoy a pint of Holts Bitter or Dark Mild whilst you are there

For more info re heritage pubs see [www.heritagepubs.co.uk](http://www.heritagepubs.co.uk)

## Apology to Trafford & Hulme Members

**T**RAFFORD and Hulme branch wish to apologise to any of their members who had to incur the inconvenience and extra expense in order to obtain their AGM notice from the Post Office. Obviously, this was an innocent mistake regarding the current pricing rules imposed by the Post Office in relation to the length of the envelope used. We were trying to save expense by using a gifted box of envelopes.

If any member is willing to receive their AGM notice by email in the future, both saving the branch expense and yourself inconvenience, kindly request so by emailing the branch chair at [chair@thcamra.org.uk](mailto:chair@thcamra.org.uk). Once again, we apologise for the inconvenience caused to some of our branch members. - *Beverley Gobbett - Branch Chair*



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Martin Matthews, Le Trappiste, Greenwood Street, Altrincham:

I write to you with some concern as a regular reader of Opening Times and proprietor of Le Trappiste, 40, Greenwood St, Altrincham.

It somewhat surprises me that as the representatives and 'mouthpiece' of CAMRA for large portion of Greater Manchester and the Peak District, that one of, if not the leading venue for Belgian Beers England is on your doorstep and yet, it is deemed not worthy of a mention in your magazine. I have been the owner of Le Trappiste for over three years, I have your magazine in the bar for my customers to read and I am often asked 'why does the bar never get a mention?' Lots and lots of CAMRA members regularly come into the bar, they ask the same question?

There are several other establishments throughout Greater Manchester that sell Belgian Beers, but not one of them is solely dedicated to them and has the range that Le Trappiste has. We carry over 100 quality beers, with some real rarities. You recently featured the beers from Oud Beersel and their availability locally, we stock both the Oude Geuze and the Oude Kriek, Drie Fonteinen Oude Geuze, Hanssens Artisanaal Oude Geuze, Cantillon Bio Lambic, Girardin Black Label, Frank Boone. We sell the ranges from Dolle Brouwers, Het Kappittel, Alvinne, St. Bernardus, Gouden Carolus, Hercule and many more. In Tim Webb's latest book '100 Belgian Beers to try before you die', in the past three years 64 of those beers have been available at Le Trappiste. Of that number 31 are available at this moment. We host regular tasting evenings, which are always sold out, the next one is for our Winter Beers, on 17th November.

In summary, I would like to ask the same question as many of your members and readers. Why do you never feature or indeed refer to Le Trappiste in your magazine? If you wish to truly represent your readers and members I respectfully feel that you should reflect an objective view of the Belgian Beer scene to both your readers and members. If you would like to discuss any of the contents of this letter further, then I would be more than happy to do so? Or if you would like to visit Le Trappiste and see for yourself what a fantastic venue it is, and what's happening, then please contact me and I will try to ensure that I am available. Alternatively if you feel that perhaps you would like to include an article, I would be more than willing to write one. However, that would not be objective, and would not be correct. **(Martin makes a good point. Next year I plan to run a large feature on foreign beers in the Opening Times area and give everyone a fair crack of the whip - Ed)**

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## All About Perry

Gillian Williams tells you all you need to know...

**Y**ou've heard of cider but may have no idea what perry is. Read on and let a whole new world tickle your taste buds and awaken your senses.

Perry is to pears as cider is to apples but while it is possible to make cider from dessert apples you can not make perry from dessert pears. Perry pears tend to be small and generally hard and their names take on a sort of mystic charm like Merrylegs; Mumblehead; Lumberskull; Huffcap and Startlecock.

Right – a traditional press for making cider and perry. Still in use in the West Country today.



To make perry the pears are processed to produce juice by pressing them in the same way as apples. Some perry pears are very soft and spoil easily so must be pressed as soon as they are ripe. Others like Thorn are so hard, that they have to be left for the winter frost to help "blow" the cells thus allowing more juice to be pressed. This is where the skill of the producer comes in to ensure the best care is taken of the fruit to guarantee high quality juice and secure delightfully fragrant perry when fermented.

So what does it taste like this real perry? Perry is quite a light drink with a flavour sometimes compared to melons, roses, or apricot jam with a finish of honey and blossom married together. It is not carbonated or pasteurised and is usually served in draught form.

CAMRA organises the National Cider and Perry Championships annually and for 2008 the National Gold Champion Perry is produced by Gregg's Pit of Herefordshire, which was described by the judges as having "A balance of citrus aroma with a winey aftertaste. Fabulous."



Left – the orchard at Gregg's Pit, makers of the 2008 Champion Perry

From the 16th century perry production has been said to thrive in the sight of May Hill on the borders of Herefordshire, Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. This is still true with Wales, the South West and East Anglia now also being acclaimed for their own perry production.

For over twenty years CAMRA has campaigned for real perry alongside beer and cider. We have worked monitoring the industry, mapping changes, campaigning for quality products and choice to consumers. Today there is a growing choice of real perry available for you to try. Many local pubs that offer real cider will also offer a choice of real perry, too.



Of course the place to go for a really good choice of traditional perry is a CAMRA organised Beer & Cider Festival. Many have a wide range available to suit all tastes, for example this year's Stockport Festival had no less than 18 perries on sale.

## Join our Cider Circuit

**T**HIS MONTH we are offering you the chance to win a 36-pint 'box' of cider, kindly donated by John Reek of Merrylegs Cider as we re-run our Cider Circuit. Not only that but we have made it easier for you to win a prize.



Left - Cider Circuit sponsor John Reek of Merrylegs Cider

All you have to do is visit one of our participating pubs and buy a pint or a half of traditional cider or perry, and then get the bar staff to put a sticker on the pub's entry on the form in the next column. Get 10 stickers and you will win a large bottle of traditional cider or perry. Get a sticker from all participating pubs and you will not only get a bottle of cider and perry but you will also be entered into the draw for the 36-pint box. We hope to have some other cider and perry prizes, too.

The Circuit runs from **Saturday 11 October to Saturday 15 November**. Completed forms should be sent to: "Cider Circuit, 45 Bulkeley St, Edgeley, Stockport, Cheshire, SK3 9HD" to arrive no later than Saturday 22 November. If you are entering the grand draw, make sure you specify whether you would like dry, medium or sweet cider.

All prizes will be presented at a special cider afternoon to be held at the **Cheshire Ring, Manchester Rd, Hyde** on **Sunday 7 December** from 2pm onwards.

## Cider & Perry Month

**U**nlike real ale production, which can happen at any time of the year, real cider & perry can only be made when the fruit is ripe. Great skill goes into producing both products. Great store is placed by the Craft Brewer in the quality of ingredients and variety of flavours created by the malt, hops, yeast and water used to brew the beer.

It is a Producer rather than a Brewer that makes cider & perry. They may use a mixture of bittersweet and bittersharp cider apples or sweet dessert apples, or a mixture of the two to make cider; but perry can only be made from specialized perry pears, which are high in natural tannin.

The choosing, pressing and blending of the fruit to make cider is just as much of a craft as making beer and produces a vast range of tastes, styles and aromas, similar to those produced in fine wine. Like wine, each year's fruit produces a unique vintage, so much so that cider and perry have been sometimes called 'The Wine of the West'.

October is a very active time for producers, especially for those who make only a small amount of cider. Harvest time for cider fruit is roughly from September to November and by October production is in full flow.

CAMRA already have the month of May set aside as Mild Month and following on the success of the Mild campaign, CAMRA has now set October aside as Cider & Perry Month.



**Bar Fringe**  
Swan Street  
Manchester  
M4 5JN

**Cheshire Ring,**  
Manchester Road  
Hyde  
SK14 2BJ

**Crescent**  
The Crescent  
Salford  
M5 4PF

**Crown**  
Heaton Lane  
Stockport  
SK4 1AR

**Crown & Kettle**  
Great Ancoats Street  
Manchester  
M4 5FE

**Duke of York**  
Stockport Road  
Romiley  
SK6 3AN

**Globe**  
High Street West  
Glossop  
SK13 8HJ

**The Angel**  
Angel Street  
Manchester  
M4 4BR

**Legh Arms**  
Ashton Old Road  
Openshaw  
M11 2HD

**Marble Arch**  
Rochdale Road  
Manchester  
M4 4HY

**Marble Beer House**  
Manchester Road  
Chorlton  
M21 0PW

**Navigation**  
Lancashire Hill  
Stockport  
SK4 1TY

**New Oxford**  
Bexley Square  
Salford  
M3 6DB

**Railway**  
Avenue Street  
Stockport  
SK1 2BZ

**Sand Bar**  
Grosvenor Street  
Manchester  
M1 7HL

**Sportsman**  
Mottram Road  
Hyde  
SK14 2NN

**Star**  
Howard Street  
Glossop  
SK13 7DD

**Station Buffet Bar**  
Rassbottom Street  
Stalybridge  
SK15 1RF

**Ye Olde Vic**  
Chatham Street  
Stockport  
SK3 3ED

**Waters Green Tavern**  
Waters Green  
Macclesfield  
SK11 6LH

**Opening Hours:** most of the pubs taking part are open all day from 12 noon. But please note: Cheshire Ring opens 1pm Monday-Friday; Sand Bar opens 4pm Saturdays and is closed Sundays; Star opens at 2pm (4pm Mon & Tue); Globe opens at 5pm (1pm Sun) and is closed Tuesday; Olde Vic opens 5pm (7 Sat & Sun) and is closed on Mondays; Waters Green is closed from 3-5.30 (7pm Sat & Sun).



# High Peak

## PUB NEWS

WITH FRANK WOOD

**A** DISAPPOINTMENT in mid August in Glossop was the closure of the **Market Tavern**, the local Cains flagship pub. It seemed initially that the pub would do extremely well when it opened in mid December, with a full range of Cains beers on sale and with the pub historically a busy house in the days when it was "The Trap". An impressive refurbishment, the recent closure of the Good Beer Guide listed **Gloveworks**, were all in its favour.

Three landlords came and went in the time it was open but no real progress in custom was made. Maybe it was the nearby **Norfolk Arms** opening after a similar makeover in virtually the same week, but the pub never really took off and it was inevitable that something drastic would have to happen to make or break it. Unfortunately, the parent company's problems made the decision for it.

Beer quality in the **Norfolk Arms** has seemed to be a problem too, with cask ale selling slowly, too slow in fact to keep the beer in top condition. However, the **Holts Bitter** is usually the best bet here due to more of that product going through the pumps.

I called in the **Navigation** in Buxworth one Sunday after a club ascent of nearby **Eccles Pike** and surrounding area. Beer quality appeared fine, with the owners being forced to take over after problems with the previous licensees who were running it for them. This free house still takes guest beers as well as some regular beers.

The **Hare & Hounds** at Simmondley, a Punch Taverns house, also changed hands in August with Roy & Annette Crane taking over what had been of late a fairly run down establishment compared to recent years. I called in on Sunday 31st August and found the **Tetley Bitter** accompanied by Taylor's Landlord, the latter being fine. Roy told me that **Shepherd Neame Spiffire** was to become the third cask beer in the coming week but this will be a guest that will change periodically. They have acquired a new chef in **Alison Fletcher** who has lots of experience and initially the food trade was starting to increase and the hours that food is available were also increasing. Well off a bus route but the pub is certainly worth a try if in the area.

The **Royal Hotel** in Hayfield has been stocking Pennine beers recently. Brewer **Geoff Oliver** tells me that they ordered a total of 11 casks during August.

Another pub, the **Roe Cross** in Mottram Cutting has a sign outside stating that they are commencing selling cask ale. I have not had a chance to call in yet but will try and report back next month. This too, has not sold cask for many years, concentrating mainly on food.

**Glossop Labour Club** has been renovated over the past months, the money coming from the sale of their car park for building. The upstairs has been completely gutted, new roof and new floors put in and the unsightly pillar in the middle of the room downstairs has been taken out. The members here, big fans of **Moorhouses** beer, still vote for **Premium Bitter** from the **Burnley** brewery, to be their main cask ale.



Aside – the **Cheshire Ring** in Hyde was one of this year's "Wild for Mild" Champion pubs. Landlord **Wayne Taylor** (*right*) is seen here with partner **Sarah** and barman **Colin Whitley** with their award.

Colin and Vicky Welcome You To

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Robin Wignall's monthly round up of the Peak Pub Scene

**T**HE LATE August Bank Holiday weekend saw the usual super little beer festival at the **Dog and Partridge** at Bridgmont, which again sold out. I called on Saturday afternoon when a good range of beers from Derbyshire and NW England were available.

These included beers from Bowland at Clitheroe, Bryson's at Morecambe, Howard Town, Glossop, 3 Bs, Blackburn and Thornbridge, Derbyshire. Beers from Titanic, Black Sheep, Coach House and Hydes, I left untried and I understand that there were more beers waiting in the wings to replace empty casks. Thornbridge Wild Swan was perhaps my beer of the festival, but all the beers that I tried were in good form and the festival certainly lived up to its reputation. The beer list also shows the good range of beers available from the Enterprise Inns SIBA list, though presumably at a price. I look forward to next year's bash.

The **White Lion** in Disley also benefits from the Enterprise SIBA list. A recent visit found George Wright Drunken Duck and Hornbeam Top Hop in good form, whilst Copper Dragon Challenger IPA and Wentworth Oatmeal Stout were untried delights.

## Whaley Bridge

**B**Y MID AUGUST the **Board** and the **Railway** in Whaley Bridge, both Robinson's houses, had lost their tenants as Chris Byatte and Phil Whittaker, respectively had moved on. The grapevine suggests that temporary managers are in place and certainly both pubs are trading. I will hopefully confirm the situations for next month's column. I also gather that the **Oddfellows** at Whitehough near Chinley has changed hands. This Marston's house needs a visit.

At the **White Hart** in Whaley Bridge Kevin Thomasson and Sharon took over some months ago, a change missed in this column. Tetley Bitter and Wells Bombardier are permanent beers, whilst on my last visit Speckled Hen was the guest beer. The guest beer changes on a regular basis. Kevin plans to re-arrange the the bar to group the handpumps together on the front bar as you go in.

The **Shepherds** in Whaley Bridge continues to select beers from the Marston's list which includes ales from the recently acquired small breweries. Ringwood 78 and Brakspear's Bitter have been available lately. The former has also been at the **George** in Hayfield.

## Hayfield

**G**OOD news has been reported from the **Sportsman** in Hayfield. The pub went through an uncertain patch perhaps a couple of years ago, but is now once again a thriving pub. Good food can be washed down with Thwaites Bitter, Wainwright's and Lancaster Bomber. I have received recommendations from a few different sources so it seems that a re-visit is due.

Still in Hayfield, a recent speaker at Furness Vale Local History Society shed some light on pub history in the village. **The Royal** had in its history been a vicarage and at one time was the Shoulder of Mutton. Lost locals include the Bridge, Toll Bar and Junction Inn.

And to finish on a depressing thought, one can only ponder how many pubs in the OT circulation area will become lost locals in the next year or two.

Whilst a postscript brings the sad news that the **Soldier Dick** in Furness Vale seems again to be closed, and the **North Western** at New Mills Newtown is closed, with sign and Robinson's badging removed, and is up for auction. This latter pub has all the signs of a lost local.

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# CAINS "SAVED"

**L**AST month we reported how Liverpool based Cains Brewery had run into financial problems and gone into administration. The company had come unstuck following the, with hindsight, misguided decision to take over the loss-making Honeycombe Leisure and its estate of run-down pubs.



Subsequently a few more facts came to light. The brewery was in fact owned by a company connected with the Dusanj brothers (essentially the owners of Cains) and so was excluded from the administration. Similarly the 10 pubs owned by Cains before the Honeycombe venture were owned by trusts connected with the Dusanj family. Furthermore the brewing company had been paying rent of £500,000 a year for the use of the brewery. We must stress that there is nothing illegal or improper about any of this – it just goes to show how complicated these things can get.

We also reported that there were various bidders to buy the brewery business from the administrators. Among them it seems were the Dusanj brothers. It was also reported in the press that the company that owned the brewery (a company connected to the Dusanj brothers, remember) had made it clear that any purchaser of the business would have to pay £1 million a year in rent. Unless the purchaser was the Dusanj brothers – in which case the rent would be £600,000 a year.

Unsurprisingly then, just before we went to press it was announced that the brewery business, and the leasehold of nine pubs, had been bought by... the Dusanj brothers (for an undisclosed sum). So that's alright then. Hopefully it will bring some stability to the **Gothic** in Gatley which has been the subject of some press speculation as to its future.

**IT'S NOW all systems go for this year's Manchester Food & Drink Festival. As last time there will be a welcome focus on real ales from the plethora of breweries, big and small, across Greater Manchester.**

The main arena for this will be the new Spinningfields district, just off Deansgate, where a real ale bar will be run as a joint operation by Marble Brewery, the Crescent and the Knott. This will feature cask beers from breweries across the county and run from Friday 3 to Saturday 11 October.

In addition there will be a re-run of last year's hugely successful Ale Day, where expert panels of judges select the "Best Beer Brewed

in Greater Manchester". This year the "Ale Day" tent will feature two beers from each participating brewery and be run as a small beer festival over Friday 10 (when the Ale Day judging will take place) and Saturday 11. Members of the public will also be able to vote for their top beer and the resulting "People's Pint" winner will be announced on Saturday afternoon.

Coming up next month is the **Didsbury Beer Festival**. This is to be held on 21 and 22 November at St Catherine's Social Club on School Lane. The beers will be "local and Lakeland Ales". We will have more on this next time but meanwhile you can check out their website at [www.didsburybeerfestival.org.uk](http://www.didsburybeerfestival.org.uk).



**A**T LONG last the **Red Bull** on Hillgate has reopened after a major and expensive refurbishment that has also seen the pub extended into the building next door.

I made a few notes when I called but then I saw an e-mail from local CAMRA member Mike Wilson and he summed it up so well, I can do no better than reproduce his comments here...

"I made my first visit to the Red Bull since its extensive refurb by Robbies. Let me say that this had, for many years, been my favourite pub and I had long admired the fact it hadn't changed at all in the 35 years or so since I first became a customer. Some readers may recall Arthur and Isobel Slater who ran this pub in great style – although not everyone admired Arthur's artwork displayed on the walls!



So I hesitated to set foot in this much-loved pub, dreading what might have been an unsympathetic wrecking of a traditional ale house. Although there were one or two shocks in store (not the least of which was the end of

the famous, if uncomfortable, outside toilets) the overall impression was quite favourable. The old bar has been stripped away in favour of a much more practical, straight bar across the back wall. Although the old bar had character, its u-bend shape made entry and exit from the pub very difficult when the pub was busy.

Some of the old stone flags have been retained, as have many of the old settles and some of the bench seating. The second bar has been removed but is unlikely to be missed. There is a completely new section where they have extended into the property next door (on the left as you enter).

The pub does seem to have been gentrified somewhat, but I guess that's only to be expected. But Robbies have done well to preserve some of what existed before and, once it has bedded down and feels less new, I'm sure it will be well received.

I only had time for a pint of Hatters Mild which was in very good shape. The Red Bull always used to dispense Robbies in excellent condition, so let's hope this tradition survives. My visit was a lunch time and I had a very pleasant beef sandwich. There are no regular meals currently being served in the evenings as the manager clearly wants to see the pub up and running again before getting too ambitious. However, I understand they are to experiment with a range of evening food - so why not pop down and give it a try".

Speaking to Angie at the **Swan with Two Necks**, on Princes Street, she intends leaving early this month. She will still be on the scene as a relief manager for licensees when on holiday. We wish her well, as she has achieved so much with the Swan. Her successors are from city centre Mulligans.

Meanwhile the **White Lion** on Underbank has reopened as some sort of bar-cum-restaurant but still sells no real ale. I have heard the cask beer has also gone from the **St Peter's Tavern** and in any event the pub lease is up for sale, so it looks like another change of licensee is on the cards there. This cask loss leaves just the **Calverts Court** as the only cask outlet on St Petersgate.

In Edgeley it looks as though **Jonjo Greens** (formerly the Pineapple) on Castle Street is closed. It's certainly been shut every time I have passed it recently. It's not sold cask for years, of course. It looks like the **Houldsworth** in Reddish has also reached the end of the road and is now firmly shuttered up. More next time.

David, Tracey and Leah welcome you to the

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# Manchester MATTERS

MY activities were curtailed last month so I don't have that much for you.

I did however get down to the **Lass O'Gowrie** on Charles Street in the City Centre for the grand opening of their smoking balcony – you may recall that I gave this a mention last month.

I think this must have been the highest profile opening of a smoking area ever held in the UK – certainly in Manchester. The reason for the media circus was the presence of Johnny Vegas,



Above – Gareth Kavanagh and Johnny Vegas

now a regular at the Lass, and who kindly did the honours.

After the grand opening smokers flooded onto the balcony, overlooking the River Medlock and licensee Gareth Kavanagh also unveiled a plaque marking the opening of what will henceforth be known as Vegas on Medlock.

I took time out from the festivities to have a chat with Gareth who was very enthusiastic about the pub's future trade. While there had been a bit of a downturn earlier in the year, the smoking area was a much needed facility and trade is now very much on the up. There is a revamped menu (I can testify to the food) and a programme of events including comedy nights, a computer club and an open mic night on Mondays. The upstairs function room is also being brought back into use after donkeys' years.

Of course the beer is always top notch and I was particularly interested to learn that mild is now taking off in a big way. So much so that the Lass is about to become a rare local stockist for Greene King XX Mild – one of the best beers to come out of the Bury St Edmunds brewery.

While in town I also popped into the **Seven Oaks** on Nicholas Street, which is run by Patrick Smith, Gareth Kavanagh's business partner. He took over the pub on an Enterprise Inns lease last November and has put his stamp on the pub. It has become something of a traditional local right bang in the City Centre with traditional pub food (Monday-Friday, 12-3) and even a darts team. Cask beer is a prominent feature with three handpumps in operation dispensing the regular range of Black Sheep Bitter, Jennings Cumberland Ale and Copper Dragon Golden Pippin. Well worth a visit.



The **Ape and Apple** on John Dalton Street is now under new management by Stacey Saunders and her assistant manager Lee Henson. The pub has been voted pub of the week by The Manchester Evening News. The article complimented the pub on its "friendly and efficient service" as well as the homemade specials. The Ape has the longest running comedy night in Manchester every Wednesday night and are starting a live music night, both of which take place in the upstairs bar. The brewery has also just spent £500 improving the upstairs roof garden. I plan to pop in for a chat before the next issue.

I will also be having a chat with the new people at the **Smithfield** on Swan Street. The pub is having a makeover and I hear very good reports about it.



www.thelass.co.uk

## LASS O' GOWRIE

*Outstanding*

- Probably the best pies in Manchester
- Homemade food served every day
- Up to 9 cask ales at any one time
- Free Comedy on first Saturday of month
- Computer Club last Tuesday of the Month
- Open Mic every Monday

**CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2009 We're in it!**

*Steve, Johanne & Molly  
welcome you to*

# Ye Olde Vic

1 Chatham Street, Edgeley, Stockport  
(0161) 480 2410



### Opening Hours:

Mon – Fri: 5pm – 11pm;  
Sat: 7pm – 11pm;  
Sun: 7pm -10.30pm

## 5 Alternating Cask Beers

*Westons Traditional Cider chilled,*

Selection from 12 single malts in  
35ml measures

### Solid Fuel Open Fire

*An Establishment for the Discerning Drinker!!*

**We still maintain our no  
swearing and good  
behaviour policy.**

STOCKPORT & SOUTH  
MANCHESTER PUB OF THE  
MONTH MARCH 2005

**CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2009 We're in it!**



Here is our monthly round-up of what's happening in the local CAMRA branches. Members of all branches are of course very welcome to attend each others' events.

The **Stockport & South Manchester** branch covers Stockport Borough apart from Bredbury, Romiley, Woodley and Marple, plus that part of Manchester from the River Medlock in the north to the M56/Princess Parkway in the south-west. *Branch Contact* – Pete Farrand 07786 283990

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>** – Branch Meeting: Florist, Shaw Heath, Stockport. Starts 8pm.

**Friday 17<sup>th</sup>** – Offerton Stagger: starts 7.30pm Strawberry Gardens, Offerton Lane; 8.30 Fingerpost, Hempshaw Lane

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>** – Trip to Nottingham. Departs Crown, Heaton Lane 10.am. Book with Margaret O'Brien 07981 756720 (eves).

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Pub of the Month presentation to Pack Horse, Market Place, Stockport. From 8pm.

The **High Peak & North East Cheshire** Branch covers Bredbury, Romiley, Woodley, Marple, Tameside and Derbyshire from Glossop to Buxton. *Branch Contact* – Mike Rose 07986 458517. [mikewrose@btinternet.com](mailto:mikewrose@btinternet.com)

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup>** – Branch Meeting: White Lion, Disley. Starts 8.30pm.

The **Trafford & Hulme** Branch covers the Borough of Trafford, Manchester West of the M56/Princess Parkway and a large part of the City Centre. *Branch Contact* – John Ison 0161 962 7976. *Branch website:* [www.thecamra.org.uk](http://www.thecamra.org.uk)

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup>** – Pub of the Season Award to the City Arms, Kennedy St, Manchester City Centre. From 8pm.

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>** – 10 years in Good Beer Guide presentation to Marble Beer House, Manchester Road, Chorlton. From 8pm.

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup>** – Survey of Urmston/Flixton. Meet 1pm Church Inn, Church Rd, Flixton; 2.30 Roebuck, Church Rd. Later on to Steamhouse and Lord Nelson in Urmston.

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November** – Branch Meeting: Ape & Apple, John Dalton St, Manchester. Starts 8pm.

Apart from Macclesfield & Bollington, the **Macclesfield & East Cheshire** Branch covers a wide area from Knutsford to Congleton. *Branch Contact* – Tony Icke 01625861833

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup>** – Branch Social: Den Engel, Leek. Possible minibus from Bollington, Macclesfield and Congleton.

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November** – Campaigning Meeting: Old Ship Inn, Macclesfield. Starts 8pm.

The **North Manchester** Branch covers The Northern Quarter and North East Manchester plus the City of Salford. *Branch Contact* –

Dave Hallows 07983 944992. [davehallows2002@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:davehallows2002@yahoo.co.uk)

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup>** – Student Social: Marble Arch, Rochdale Rd, Manchester. From 8pm.

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup>** – Branch Meeting: New Oxford, Bexley Square, Salford. Starts 8pm.

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Social in Angel (ex-Beer House), Angel St, Manchester. Starts 8pm.

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup>** – Cider Crawl: Marble Arch 8pm; Angel 8.30; Bar Fringe, Swan St 9pm; Crown & Kettle 10pm.

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November** - Bonfire 'Rocket' Crawl: Rising Sun, Queens St, M'cr, 7.30pm, Ox, Liverpool Rd, 8pm, Cask, 8.30pm, Knott, Deansgate, 9pm, English Lounge, High St, 9.45pm, Town Hall Tavern, Tib Lane, 10.15pm.

# It takes all sorts to campaign for real ale



Join CAMRA Today..

Just fill in the form below and send, with a cheque (payable to CAMRA Ltd) or for Three Months free membership (for those renewing or joining by Direct Debit) complete the Direct Debit Form. All forms should be addressed to: **Mark McConachie, CAMRA Membership, 39 Fox Street, Edgeley, Stockport, SK3 9EL. Tel 0161 429 9356.** Alternatively you can join online at [www.camra.org.uk](http://www.camra.org.uk).



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Address			Postcode	
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Telephone	E-mail			
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Please tick membership category:  
Payment method:

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Joint	£27 <input type="checkbox"/>	£25 <input type="checkbox"/>
Under 26	£13 <input type="checkbox"/>	£11 <input type="checkbox"/>
Under 26 Joint	£16 <input type="checkbox"/>	£14 <input type="checkbox"/>
Retired	£13 <input type="checkbox"/>	£11 <input type="checkbox"/>
Retired Joint	£16 <input type="checkbox"/>	£14 <input type="checkbox"/>

Signed .....

Date .....

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- If an error is made by CAMRA or your Bank or Building Society, you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to us.



## THE ROSSENDALE BREWERY

All of our beers are now available to the Free Trade. Landlords please try them at one of our pubs below: -

The Railway  
Stockport  
0161 429 6062

The Griffin Inn  
(Site of our Rossendale Brewery)  
Haslingden  
01706 21 40 21

The Sportsman  
Hyde  
061 368 5000

Contact Geoff Oliver  
01706 21 40 21



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## October & November

SPELLBOUND ABV 4.1%

Premium light oak coloured autumn ale with distinctive lemon and grapefruit aromas.

This rich, deeply satisfying beer has a dry, hop dominated bitter palate with an interesting balance of liquorice and toffee notes derived from Crystal Rye Malt.

