



April 2014

TIMES

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Page 7



MILD MAGIC 2014

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Pub of the Month

The Bulls Head, Manchester



This month Karen Wainwright tells you about the Bulls Head in Piccadilly, which receives April's Pub of the Month award from the Stockport & South Manchester branch of CAMRA.

A striking Victorian street corner pub opposite the main taxi rank at Piccadilly Station, the Bull's Head has long been a popular watering hole for locals, students and train passengers alike. It has survived the Blitz, 1970s developers and even the best efforts of a bus to demolish it. The interior is simple with one large, tapering, open plan room with a raised seating area at the front and a semi-circular bar on the back wall. Polished floorboards and an eclectic collection of tables, chairs and sofas break up the lines of the walls. The welcome is second to none. This is one of those sorts of pubs where you can strike up conversation with patrons and staff instantly. You feel part of a community, even if you only visit once.

Paula Wilkinson had worked behind the bar for many years and always yearned to be the licensee. When Keith Willam retired, he recommended Paula to Marstons as his successor, so in September 2012 she took the helm. The Bulls Head was already a success story, so Paula built on that success. She added an extra handpump making six cask ales available. These all come from the Marstons beer list with Jennings Cumberland Ale, Marstons Sunbeam, Ringwood Boondoggle and alternating Banks's Mild and Jennings Sneck Lifter as regular beers. The other two pumps are any other beer that the Marstons tie permits. All beers are always served in the best of condition and tested by Paula herself who states "I never used to like beer – now real ale is all I drink". Paula has added yet another handpump. This one is for serving real cider, for which there is no tie so Paula has a free hand in choosing it.

The award will be made on Thursday, 24th April 2014 from 8.00 pm. Come along and find out for yourself what makes a really good local in the heart of a city. Piccadilly Rail Station is opposite and bus routes 192, 201, 203/4/5/6/7 and 219 regularly serve the area.

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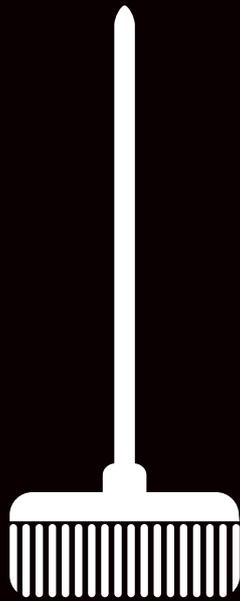
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Curmudgeon

Never Mind the Quality, Feel the Width

There's nothing to beat a cool, fresh pint of cask beer, bursting with life and flavour. However, unfortunately it's still a lot more common than it should be to be served with one that doesn't come anywhere near that description. Over the past few months I've had more than one really tired, lukewarm, flat, stale pint in pubs where I might have expected better, and in one high-profile pub on a recent Stagger we were served up with total vinegar in the middle of Friday evening.

So it might be interesting to do some maths on beer turnover in pubs. According to the British Beer and Pub Association, in 2013 there were 13.8 million barrels sold in the on-trade in the UK. The annual Cask Report reckons about a sixth of this is cask beer, or 2.3 million barrels. CAMRA's What Pub website counts 35,800 pubs across the country selling cask beer. So, given that a barrel contains 288 pints, that makes 64 barrels per pub per year, 354 pints a week or 51 a day.

It's generally reckoned that you'll struggle to keep cask beer in good condition beyond three days, four at most, so even if you get your beer in 9-gallon firkins, that means you can only have two beers on before quality begins to suffer. Beer is available in 4½-gallon pins, but they're far from usual. It's also the case that pubs typically do half their weekly business on Friday and Saturday nights, leaving only 177 pints for the rest of the week, or 35 a day. So it's hardly surprising you often get a tired pint early doors on Tuesday evening.

Simple observation suggests that the typical pub selling cask beer has more than two beers on, and in recent years the number has tended to increase even as overall volumes have fallen. Many ordinary pubs now have five, six or seven different beers. Obviously there are some pubs that do have the turnover to keep a lot more beers in good nick, but the law of averages means that others won't even have the turnover for two. Keeping beers on well above three days must be extremely commonplace.

So perhaps there needs to be more emphasis on quality rather than choice for its own sake, and the automatic praising of a pub for "putting on another handpump" should be replaced by positive references to pubs that limit themselves to one or two well-chosen beers. Both quality and choice are desirable, but choice should never be placed ahead of quality, and it shouldn't be a matter of pot luck whether or not you get a decent pint. As is often said, the worst enemy of real ale is the bad pint of real ale.

Paradoxically, this doesn't seem to be a problem that tends to affect the specialist multi-beer pubs with ten or twelve handpumps, probably because they attract an overwhelmingly beer-drinking clientele who ensure the beer turns over quickly enough and because they are run by people who place a high priority on maintaining beer quality. The prime offenders seem to be the more mainstream pubs where a lower proportion of customers are beer drinkers.

One way of addressing this problem would be for pubs to display on every pumpclip the date when the beer was put on sale. Obviously in the real world it's never going to happen, as it would expose just how long many beers were kept on, but it would certainly give pubs a rocket up the backside to ensure they matched their range to the actual demand, as they would know that beers that had been on too long simply wouldn't sell.

Curmudgeon Online:
curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com

(comments on these articles can be left on the website)

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Mild Magic in Whaley Bridge



MILD MAGIC
2014

Four pubs in the Whaley Bridge area have registered for Mild Magic, the Mild Challenge, in 2014. They will provide participants with a good trip out. These southernmost pubs on the trail are well worth a visit in their own right, with a range of good beers and welcoming hospitality. To avoid wasted journeys some information about opening and closing hours may be helpful.

Shepherds, Whaley Bridge: 15.00 till late Monday-Friday, 12.00 Saturday and 14.00 Sunday till late.

Drum & Monkey, Horwich End, Whaley Bridge: 16.00 till late Monday - Friday, 12.00 till late Saturday and Sunday.

Soldier Dick, Furness Vale: 12.00 till late daily.

Old Hall, Whitehough, Chinley: 12.00 till late daily.

These times could of course vary.

The Drum and Monkey is new to Mild Magic, though in its days as the Board Inn it had been a regular. The others have become regulars. Some of the pubs will be new pubs for some people. All the pubs will look forward to seeing new faces, and returning ones.

Getting there

By Bus: 199 from Stockport stops at Furness Vale, Whaley Bridge Station and Horwich End, Whaley Bridge. Half hourly service during the day, hourly in the evening and on Sunday. TransPeak stops at Furness Vale, every two or three hours until soon after tea. The 61 links Whaley Bridge with Glossop, Hayfield, New Mills and Buxton, hourly during the daytime, every day. The 190 links Whaley with Chinley, roughly every two hours until teatime, Monday to Saturday.

By Train: Manchester - Buxton service, Northern Timetable leaflet 20. Hourly through the day all week, to Furness Vale and Whaley Bridge, half hourly in the evening rush hour. Trains to Chinley, Northern Timetable leaflet 23. Hourly on Saturday. Less frequent in the week and Sunday, but more trains in the rush hour. The odd Sheffield express from Manchester and Stockport stops at Chinley during the evening rush hour.

The Old Hall is ten minutes from Chinley Station or a 30-40 minute walk along the Peak Forest Tramway and Peak Forest Canal from Whaley Bridge or Furness Vale, via Buxworth.

Pub of Year Award to Hope

There was a full house at the Hope Inn on Wellington Road North, Stockport, to see Martin Wood and Samantha Halfyard receive their Stockport & South Manchester Pub of the Year Award for 2014. Martin told the crowd that he hadn't expected to win something like this for three years so to get the award in the first year of the pub opening was a very welcome surprise. The pub offers the full range of Fool Hardy beers from the in-house brewery alongside a range of guest beers, traditional cider and a wide range of international bottled beers. It will now go forward to the Greater Manchester Pub of the Year competition.



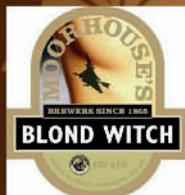
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Mild Magic 2014

Visit Pubs, Drink Beer, Win Prizes

According to the media, mild is a dying beer style. We beg to differ. After excellent enthusiasm from the pubs (and club) across the Opening Times area we have stayed with an amazing 100 pubs on this year's trail. In fact, to (mis)quote Coleridge, here in the North West it is "Mild, mild everywhere and plenty of it to drink"!

What are we asking you to do?

First enter a participating pub (see below) and pick up a card. Second, buy a cask mild (pint or half) and ask the bar staff to put a sticker on your card. Third, drink the mild and enjoy its taste. Fourth, enter a different participating pub; check below as this may influence your choice of pub. Repeat from step two (no need for a new card) until you have filled the card. NB Please check the times of pub opening hours, especially if you are making a special journey.

Which pubs should I go in? If you fill a card with stickers from 12 different pubs you will have completed **Mild Magic** which entitles you to free entry to, or (for CAMRA members) a pint of mild, at the Stockport Beer & Cider Festival 2014. Being slightly more adventurous and visiting pubs in 12 areas is **Mild Magic Extra** and gains you a Mild Magic t-shirt as well as the entry ticket/pint of mild.

Mild Magic Super is a little more challenging - get stickers from 24 pubs, each in a different area and you receive an eye-catching 'Mild Magic' polo shirt plus an extra Festival entry ticket/pint. Now the stakes are rising.

New for 2014, **Mild Magic Ultra** has been revised to give you free rein over how many pubs you visit! You must still visit 36 different areas, and collect points as you go. Each establishment has an associated value and what you have to do is accumulate a grand total of 100 points. Values range from 3 for pubs which might have dipped below your radar, are a little off the beaten track or in remote locations, through to 1 point for the ever popular multi-ale houses in the heart of the communications network. So in theory you could visit as few as 36 pubs or as many as 100. In reality there are only around 20 in each of the extreme categories, so most people will visit around 48 pubs as per last year. For this you will receive a special-edition Mild Magician sweatshirt, four Festival entry tickets/pints and be included in a draw to be "Brewer for the Day" at the Hornbeam Brewery in Denton.

How long do I have to complete all this? Mild Magic runs from Friday 11th April to Sunday 18th May inclusive. To get you off to a flying start why not join us on Friday 11th April for a University and City Centre stagger, starting in the Ford Madox Brown, Whitworth Park, at 7:30pm or catch up at the Sandbar, Grosvenor Street at 8:30pm. We will then be calling in as many (or few) pubs in the city centre as we desire.

What do I do when I have finished Mild Magic? Simply send your card(s) to the organiser (details on card) no later than 23rd May and your tickets (entry or beer) will be sent out by return post. In mid June you will be invited along to a presentation day where your beautifully embroidered shirts will be distributed.

To add even more interest, everyone participating is invited to vote for two pubs in which they were served the best mild, one in the Stockport MBC area and other outside Stockport. The two winning pubs will then be presented with a 'Mild Champion' award and participants are invited to attend these award evenings.



We are also especially grateful to Robinsons for enabling us to offer an extra-special prize: every completed entry will go into a draw and the first 12 pulled out will win a visit to their new state of the art brewery located in Stockport.

Such is the success (and fame?) of Mild Magic that Moorhouse's of Burnley have agreed to be our sponsor. Our grateful thanks to them! Moorhouses brew some excellent beer, especially the multi-award winning Black Cat, and distribute it throughout the North West and, via distributors, to much of Britain. Find out more about them at www.moorhouses.co.uk.



If you haven't taken part before, you must have a go this time; it's great fun and it's so easy - you only need to visit 12 pubs over a five week period. It's an excellent chance to visit some new pubs, try new beers and win some great rewards while voting with your feet in favour of Britain's proud brewing heritage. Please give our campaign to preserve cask conditioned Mild in this area your support!

The Mild Magic Pubs

ADSWOOD Cross Keys; **ALL SAINTS** Sandbar; **ALTRINCHAM** Costello's Bar; **BROADHEATH** Old Packet House; **CASTLEFIELD** The Knott, The Wharf; **CHEADLE** Crown; **CHEADLE HULME** Cheadle Hulme, Church Inn, Kings Hall; **CHORLTON** Oddest, Sedge Lynn; **CHORLTON GREEN** Horse & Jockey, Beech; **CLAYTON** Grove; **COMPSTALL** Northumberland Arms; **DIDSBURY** Gateway, Milson Rhodes, Railway; **DISLEY** White Lion; **EDGELEY** Armoury; **FALLOWFIELD** Friendship Inn, Great Central; **FURNESS VALE** Soldier Dick; **GATLEY** Horse & Farrier; **GORTON** Royal Oak; **HALE** The Moose; **HAUGHTON GREEN** Chapel House; **HAZEL GROVE** Fiveways, Grapes, Wilfred Wood; **HEALD GREEN** Griffin; **HEATON CHAPEL** Hinds Head; **HEATON MERSEY** Crown, Griffin; **HEATON MOOR** Crown; **HEATON NORRIS** Hope, Magnet, Nursery Inn, Railway; **HEAVILEY** Blossoms, Fairway; **HIGH LANE** Royal Oak; **HYDE** Queens, Sportsman, Cheshire Ring, Cotton Bale; **LEVENSHULME** Sidings; **MANCHESTER CITY CENTRE** Ape and Apple, Bulls Head, Castle Hotel, City Arms, Crown & Anchor, Grey Horse, Lass O'Gowrie, Marble Arch, Micro Bar, Molly House, Moon Under Water, Old Monkey, Paramount, Rising Sun, Waterhouse; **MARPLE** Hare & Hounds, Railway, Ring O' Bells; **MARPLE BRIDGE** Hare & Hounds, Royal Scot, Windsor Castle; **NEW MILLS** Masons Arms; **NEW MILLS NEWTOWN** Chalkers Snooker Club; **OFFERTON** Finger Post; **OLD TRAFFORD** Bishop Blaize; **PORTWOOD** Midway, Railway; **POYNTON** Kingfisher; **RUSHOLME** Ford Madox Brown; **SALE** JP Joule, Old Plough, Volunteer; **SALFORD** New Oxford, Salford Arms; **STALYBRIDGE** Society Rooms, Station Buffet Bar, White House; **STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE** Arden Arms, Calverts Court, Crown, George, Pineapple, Red Bull, Robinson's Visitors Centre, Swan with Two Necks, Waterloo; **STRINES** Royal Oak; **TIMPERLEY** Quarry Bank; **WHALEY BRIDGE** Drum and Monkey, Shepherds Arms; **WHITEHOUGH** Old Hall; **WITHINGTON** Victoria.

Note - many of these areas will be subdivided on the card to make it easier for you to complete Mild Magic Extra, Super and Ultra.

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the first Sunday of the month



Trafford & Hulme Pub of the Season

The Vine, Kennedy Street, City Centre

Situated on Kennedy Street, just off Princess Street near to the Town Hall, the Vine is one of the city's oldest pubs, sporting an impressive tiled frontage and stained glass windows. This is an excellent example of how a pub can have a real sense of community built around its regulars despite being right in the heart of the Manchester, yet offer a warm welcome to the many visitors to our city who cross its threshold. Much of this is built around longtime landlady Rachele Stringer whose enthusiasm for life and people is infectious to both staff and customers.

Locals and visitors alike have long been able to sample excellent ales from the two handpumps crammed onto the bar of the small ground floor servery, with Timothy Taylor's Landlord and Wychwood Hobgoblin the only permanent ales. However, December 2013 saw the biggest change at the pub since the original ground floor bar was expanded into the building next door in the 1970s. That expansion created the upstairs area and a cellar bar which in recent years has served as the pub's restaurant and function area but late last year, the cellar bar was transformed into Malt & Cask - a pub within a pub.

As the name suggests, Malt & Cask specialises in whiskies and cask ales, with no fewer than eight handpumps on the bar serving a wide range of styles. Currently limited to a range of guest ales offered by owners Enterprise Inns, Rachele hopes to be able to expand the range to include ales from local microbrewers over the next few months. The whisky selection extends beyond the more common Scottish offerings to include Welsh, Irish and even Japanese varieties. The new bar has an entirely different feel from the rest of the pub while still offering the same friendly service. The transformation has expanded the pub's appeal with some of the existing regulars preferring the ambiance of Malt & Cask while others prefer the more traditional décor upstairs. The pub is also attracting new customers keen to sample the expanded range and enjoy the increased space. Managing to pull off traditional pub and modern bar in the same building is quite an achievement and well deserving of the title Pub Of The Season.

The presentation will take place on Wednesday 16th April from 8pm. If you know the pub, you know you'll be welcome, but if you've not checked it out before or haven't been for a while, this is a great opportunity to come and experience this hidden gem of the city.



Trafford & Hulme Club of the Year 2014

Flixton Conservative Club does the double

Rather than resting on its laurels, being crowned last year's Club of the Year seems to have inspired Flixton Conservative Club to endeavour to reach even higher levels. This drive to continually improve is one of the reasons why the club has again been selected as Club of the Year.

It has been an impressive 12 months for a club which was probably not even on most CAMRA members' radar this time last year. It's apparent that those who have visited the club since have been suitably impressed, reflected by the fact that the club went on to finish a very close Runner-Up in the Greater Manchester Regional Club of the Year contest for 2013.

The choice of real ales in the Club has continued to grow with the number of hand pumps having been increased from four to six (just in time for last year's Easter Beer Festival). Theakston's Best Bitter is generally always available whilst the other five pumps are used to offer a wide range of interesting beers from an equally wide range of breweries. The Club is always keen to support local breweries and, more often than not, you will find something on offer from the likes of Dunham Massey, Prospect, Bank Top, Beartown, Coach House or Cheshire Brewhouse to name just a few. In addition to the choice, the Club also prides itself on the quality of the cask ales, underlined by the fact that it has held the Cask Marque accreditation since early 2012 and recently passed its latest re-assessment with flying colours. To complement the extensive range of cask ales, the Club also sells an interesting selection of bottled beers from yet another local brewery, TicketyBrew.

The husband, wife and daughter team of Nigel, Sharon and Lianda Porter are a major driving force behind the Club's real ale success but they are the first to admit that it has only been made possible thanks to an enthusiastic and increasingly knowledgeable team behind the bar, a very supportive committee and, most importantly, a membership who have really embraced the Club's burgeoning cask ale presence with great enthusiasm. Nigel's reaction on hearing of the Club's latest accolade was to thank CAMRA, on behalf of the Club, for both the award and for their continued support. He and the rest of the team look forward to welcoming more CAMRA members to the Club in the future.

The Club will be holding its annual Easter Beer Festival from Friday 18th to Monday 21st April 2014 when the A-Z theme of the festival will result in 26 beers from 26 different breweries being available over the four day period. In addition to the club's usual offerings from Ticketybrew, the festival will also feature a limited number of excellent bottled Belgian beers as well as traditional ciders. The Branch will be taking the opportunity during the Beer Festival to present the Club with their award on Saturday 19th April, from 5:00pm. So why not come and join in the fun and find out for yourself why Flixton Conservative Club is Trafford & Hulme CAMRA Club of the Year 2014.





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LUNCH 11.30AM-3.30PM

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**WALTHER HOUSE
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FREE ADMISSION



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LUNCH 11.30AM-4.00PM

LIVE MUSIC

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LIVE MUSIC

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Beer Festival Entertainment



Anthony Meynell previews what's on this year

Thursday Night – The Robin Sunflower Band

Robin Sunflower is one of the UK's few full time professional harmonica players. He is unique in his preference and application of the seldom seen 2ft. long chord and house brick size bass models.



The band is a melting pot of musical styles, blending together Jazz, Blues, Country, Ska, Reggae and Latin themes. The band plays songs from such diverse sources as Bob Marley, Johnny Cash and Duke Ellington as well as original material.

Here is a band whose musical interplay and vibrancy create a truly live experience for anyone wishing to dance or just sit back, watch and listen to some truly great musicians. Robin is joined by guitarist Dan Broad (Happy Mondays), bassist Morgan Pugh (ex-Haggis Horns) and drummer Rick Weedon (Kirsty Almeida, Kyla Brox).

Friday Lunch – Walthew House Steel Band

From this year's beer festival charity, the majority of the band are actually visually impaired and so it must be very difficult for the musicians to perform to a discerning audience. The band formed in 2009, as a result of the support of the North West Steel Band Association who generously donated the instruments. Since this time the group have gone on from strength to strength. Group leader Janice Turley told the beer festival 'the musicality of even the simplest pieces delights us and as the complexity of our repertoire grows we have started to include pieces from our favourite musicians. Arranging has become fun yet challenging'.

Friday Night – Featuring Stavros

Featuring Stavros are one of Manchester's leading rock cover bands. Known primarily for their "modern – heavy rock edge", applied to famous 70's, 80's and 90's tunes and for their gritty and powerful versions of music by 60's guitar icon Jimi Hendrix.

Stavros will not disappoint; with sweet vocals, ripping guitar solos, and a dynamic rhythm section, as they storm through tracks from Queen, The Kinks, Led Zeppelin, and many more.

Saturday Lunch – Reckless Elbow

Reckless Elbow is a five-piece folk/acoustic band from the Wirral, who are livening up the music scene with their blend of traditional and new music. Their emphasis is on songs and tunes from the British Isles but particularly Ireland, with American music also incorporated into the mix.



Playing the music of their influences, such as The Pogues, Christy Moore,

The Sawdoctors and Steve Earle to name a few, along with the traditional songs of Ireland and Liverpool interpreted in a way that make you sit up, or more usually stand up (and dance), and take note.

Often fast and furious, Reckless Elbow also have the ability to seduce you with their ballads including their self-penned works. These guys have a sense of humour emulating from their roots and their proximity to Liverpool, usually witty, sometimes self-deprecating and always with warmth which endears them to their audiences.

Saturday Night – The Kyla Brox Band

Born in the 1980s Lancashire, Kyla was exposed to the passion of Afro-American music at first hand from her blues singing father, Victor Brox. Kyla joined the family business in 1992, singing with Victor onstage at Band On The Wall at the age of 12, and performing with his regular touring group shortly afterwards.



Kyla's voice remains a stunning example of the soul singer's art: turning up the heat by degrees, lulling and charming before unleashing emotional catharsis, and blurring the distinction between pleasure and pain like the soul greats of old. Whether fronting the mighty Kyla Brox Band, or harnessing undiluted soul power in a duo with musical and life partner Danny Blomeley, Kyla Brox is without doubt the most authentic UK blues and soul singer of her generation.

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High Peak Pub Scene

Tom Lord & Robin Wignall with News and Views

Peak Practice

With Robin Wignall

Fortunately, dedicated drinkers have, over the years, kept a historical interest in their local pubs. This is important in preserving the history of pubs as the loss of them, both as institutions and even as buildings continues. I currently have access to Jack Turnbull's excellent 'Last Orders Please' of 1988. This tells in great detail 'the origin and history of the taverns, inns and public houses of Marple, Compstall, Mellor and High Lane.' Jack devoted six A4 pages at the end of his volume to 'Pubs which have closed.' An updated volume would of course add more pages to the list. It is now some years since the Bowling Green and Jolly Sailor in Marple closed their doors for good. These were both Wilson's houses in their latter days, though even before 1988 they would have been part of the Watney Grand Metropolitan group. More recently in this area the Rock Tavern on the road to Glossop from Marple Bridge is now closed, boarded up and fenced round whilst the Spring Gardens at Compstall is no longer a pub but a restaurant. At least it probably still has a drinks license. The Spring Gardens was once famous for its pleasure gardens at the rear of the pub, to which visitors came in large numbers. Those were the days.

Of course many pubs are still there to be visited and a group of runners and walkers met, after activities, for lunch at the **Andrew Arms**. This Robinsons house in Compstall is off the main road through the village, being tucked away above and beyond the entrance to the Etherow Country Park car park. Very good value lunchtime food was available, white fish the size you might normally find in a seaside town, and service was good with a dozen or so folk in the group to serve. There were also regulars in the Andrew Arms so that it was quite busy anyway. Food could be washed down with Robinsons 1892 and Unicorn, both of which were in good form.



The same group called at the **Soldier Dick** in Furness Vale recently, on the same mission as above. Again group members were able to enjoy good food at sensible prices with efficient service. Again a

number of locals were dining which gives its own recommendation. As noted last month there is a changing range of beers at the Soldier Dick. The four hand pumps dispense beers from all over, with recent offerings including the ever popular Thwaites Wainwright and the very local and also popular Wyoming from Whaley Bridge Brewery.



The mention of beers from a geographical range moves us onto the winter beer festival at the **Old Hall** (above) at Whitehough near Chinley. Two bars were operating in the Old Hall and the **Papermill** was of course part of the festival with a further range of beers. Not all the beers were available all of the time, because of the big range on the list. New breweries for me included Backyard Brew House, Cumberland Brewery, and Milton. Lots of seasonal dark beers were to be had including Brunswick Porter from Derby and Dark Drake from Dancing Duck also Derby. For those with a taste for paler brews again there was a good range which included Vale Mill from Millstone Brewery and Kooky Gold from Offbeat Brewery. All the beers that I tried were in fine form and it only remains to offer the reminder that the next Old Hall festival will be in September.



Other local notes include the receipt of its Cask Marque certificate by the **White Hart** in Whaley Bridge. A recent guest beer here to make up the four beers was Adnams Gunhill, a dark malty brew which was well worth trying, even if not a normal pale hoppy brew.

The **Navigation** at Buxworth continues to source beers from a wide area. A recent call found beer from Phoenix, Elland and Frank Wood's Mouselow Farm. There is always a good choice at the Navigation.

The **Shepherds** in Whaley Bridge has sold a Marston's craft brew, Revisionist Dark IPA at 4.8%. Well worth a try, though I still can't get my head round dark and the pale IPA!

The **Drum & Monkey** at the south end of Whaley Bridge is trying Greek food evenings on alternate Saturdays in March. Food can be washed down with up to four beers which can come from Abbeydale and local brewers including Whaley Bridge.

And finally the **Goyt** in Whaley Bridge has up to five well kept beers available. A recent call found very good Black Cat Mild from Moorhouse's, St Austell Tribute and the occasionally brewed Theakstons Lightfoot.

High Peak Pub News

With Tom Lord

News from Mossley is that the **Butchers Arms** on Stockport Road is now selling two changing cask beers, and also on Stockport Road the **Billy Goat** had now begun selling cask beers again with Thwaites Black Gold and Bomber lately.

The **Hare and Hounds** at Luxley is continuing to offer Thwaites Wainwright. In Stalybridge Tom Hathaway has left the White House in the town centre to take over the **Old Thirteenth Cheshire Rifleman** on Astley Street. Currently cask beer is served from two handpumps.

Over in Glossop the **Howard Arms** is on the list of Enterprise Inns available leases as is the **Grey Mare** up in Charlesworth. Also in Glossop the **Moon and Sixpence** (pictured above) is now closed and boarded up and the **Royal Oak** on Sheffield Road is also closed.



Sisters – brewing it for themselves

Jackie Bardsley gets stuck in

Saturday March 8th was International Women's Day. To celebrate this Sophie De Ronde, head brewer at Brentwood Brewery, came up with the good idea of brewing a special beer at the same time with other Brewsters around the globe. She recruited members of Project Venus and Pink Boots Society in America, brewers in Australia, Canada, Ireland and New Zealand, plus 66 in the UK. They all wanted to invite beer-loving women interested in brewing to join them for a sociable brew day. Kathryn and Amanda at Wilson Potter invited women who they work with professionally or who attend events at the brewery on a regular basis.

The beer is called **Unite Pale Ale** at 4% with American Cascade hops; Kathryn and Amanda also included some Fuggles to add some British character. Each brewery could choose its own malt, as long as the finished beer was a mid-brown colour. Everyone also had their own choice of yeast. The beer will be available as cask ale in selected pubs around the country, and is also due to feature at Oldham Beer Festival in early April. Some of the breweries will also bottle their brew and will donate a portion of their beer sales proceeds to charity.

I was very lucky to be invited and arrived early, so as not to miss the mashing in. Luckily coffee and tea were available on arrival, as it was quite a cold day. In between stages we were firstly treated to breakfast and later a lunch with delicious piping hot soup followed by a cold platter. Wonderful hospitality, of course. Later we could partake of three of the delicious Wilson Potter beers, the golden beer Cascale at 3.7%, In the Black, a rich stout at 4.2% and my favourite, the malty Ruby Red at 4.4%. In the meantime we were getting the messages by Twitter with updates from the brewers around the world.

The beer was in the fermenting vessel by about 3pm. It goes without saying that we are looking forward to tasting Unite. It brought it home to us that brewing is a strenuous job when done in a true artisan way, lifting heavy weights and emptying the malt residue. So I would like to thank Kathryn and Amanda for a very interesting day, it was a privilege to be part of a unique occasion.



Trafford & Hulme presentations



Opening Times was shocked by the news that Steve Crook, the landlord of the **City Arms** in Manchester had suffered an accident at the pub leaving him with a fractured spine. We're pleased to report that after two weeks in Manchester Royal Infirmary, Steve is now back home above the pub to begin a six month convalescence. Everybody at Opening Times wishes him a speedy recovery.

One of the things which makes the City Arms such an excellent pub is the dedication and professionalism of the team, most of whom have been at the pub for many years. With Steve incapacitated, the staff have rallied round to keep the pub running, with Max Sheen looking after much of the cellar work while Jeni McHugh has stepped up to the day to day running of the pub, both being ably assisted by the rest of the excellent staff.

Jeni was on hand when Trafford & Hulme branch visited to present the pub with their award as the Best LocAle Pub for 2013 - pictured with branch vice-chair John O'Donnell (above left).

Trafford & Hulme's Most Improved Pub for 2103 was the **Jackalope** in Chorlton which has seen a massive turnaround since taking a new direction leaving its previous incarnation as Escape behind. Pictured are owners Lee Gorton & Rob Loader with branch vice-chair John O'Donnell (above centre).

The Trafford & Hulme Best Newcomer award also went to Chorlton with **Font** on Manchester Road coming out on top. Pictured are cellar manager James Moffat with pub regular and branch member Mark Reeves (pictured above right). Font has also gone on to be named branch Cider Pub Of The Year - more on this next month.

Bus to the Pub 2014

Hop on board for great pubs and beer

For the second year CAMRA Branches in Greater Manchester are running their Bus-to-the-Pub circular bus service. On Saturday May 10th, for one day only, the bus service will run hourly, linking over a dozen pubs in the inner suburbs of Manchester, Salford and Trafford. The idea is to encourage greater use of the bus by pub-goers. Many of the pubs on our route are normally hard to reach by bus. Come with us and we stop right outside.

As it is a circular route you can board or alight at any of our stops, but the service does take a short break in Eccles – right outside the Lamb Hotel and Wetherspoon's Eccles Cross. The first bus leaves there at 1150, then hourly from 1300 to 2200. The route first goes to Ordsall for the Welcome (Lees') and Union Tavern (Holt's). Next are the Star Inn (home of Star Brewery) in Higher Broughton and the stunning late-Victorian Duke of York (Holt's). We then come to inner Ancoats, calling alongside the Jolly Angler (Hyde's), before stopping in West Gorton for the Royal Oak (free), Vale Cottage (free) and the Plough (Robinson's).

Next it's via Levenshulme for the Blue Bell (Sam Smith's) and on to the variety offered by Chorlton Green. Then it's on to Urmston for the Steamhouse (free) and back over the Ship Canal for the Queen's Arms (Thwaite's and Lancaster's), before returning to Eccles.

In addition to joining at any of these pub stops, you can board at any of the intersections between our route and the radial bus and tram routes into Manchester city centre. In the centre, the Jolly Angler, Ducie Street is the most convenient point. Fuller details are given on the North Manchester website. The service operates like any other bus route - several buses are used running to the fixed route and timetable. The day ticket costs £5, with discounts for advance purchase – available from all the pubs on the route – and for CAMRA members.

To come along with us on our beer festival on wheels on May 10th look out for our red double deckers. You really can't miss us. See the website: northmanchestercamra.org.uk for fuller details of times, fares and stops.



it's nearly time for the next

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SATURDAY MAY 10th 2014
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route subject to confirmation



CAMRA
CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

Costello's Award Night

On Tuesday 4th March, members of CAMRA all met at Costello's Bar, Goose Green, Altrincham to celebrate it coming Runner-Up in the Greater Manchester Pub of the Year competition for two years in a row (2012 and 2013). The joint manageresses, Rachael and Gabbi were delighted with the accolade and gave thanks to the brewery and all their locals for their continued support of Costello's in Altrincham.



Jamie, the brewer from Dunham Massey, was also given an award gained at the recent Manchester Beer and Cider festival for third place with Dunham Dark in the Mild category of the North West Super regional competition. Only the week before, Dunham Massey Porter had been named Champion Winter Beer of Britain so this was an ideal opportunity for CAMRA members to show their appreciation to all of the brewers and their families.

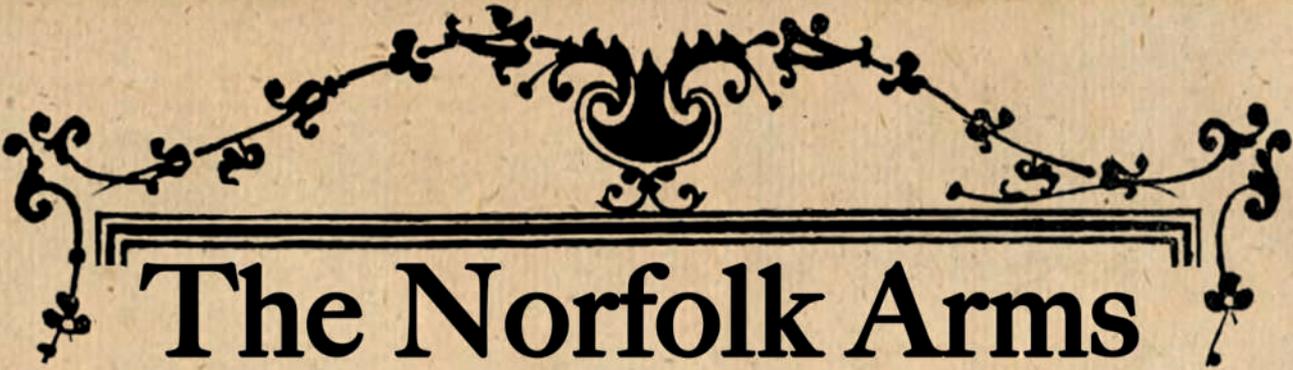
MBCF Charity Cheque

Jim Flynn, Sponsorship Manager for Manchester Beer & Cider Festival, presented a cheque for £2750 to the Festival charity, Henshaws, recently.

Louisa Walmsley, receiving the cheque on behalf of Henshaws, said that it had been a huge learning curve for them, when the sheer weight of Festival customers meant they had to draft in 'just about everybody' to help out.



Henshaws ran the cloakroom, sold the programmes and took straightforward donations. Additionally, MBCF made a donation to the overall figure. Louisa stressed that having learned a great deal, Henshaws were keen to come back again as the Festival charity and try to raise even more money.



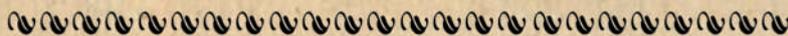
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What's On

Information, Notes and Local CAMRA Branch Events

Opening Times - Information

Opening Times is published 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. 7,350 copies a month are printed by Phil Powell Printing of Failsworth.

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Trading Standards

For complaints about short measure pints etc contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Service. This works with all the Trading Standards services in the North West and is supported by the Office of Fair Trading. You can email the Consumer Service at the following address:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/getadvice/consumer_service.htm

Their telephone no. is 0845 404 05 06. To report a matter to Trading Standards go to:

www.adviceguide.org.uk/consumer_e/reporting_a_problem_to_trading_standards

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- Transport for Greater Manchester: www.tfgm.com 0161 228 7811
- East Cheshire: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport_and_travel.aspx 0845 140 2666
- Derbyshire: www.derbybus.info/

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We aim to ensure that the information in *Opening Times* is correct at the time of going to press. If we get something wrong then please get in touch (editorial contact details above) and we'll print a correction. Please also note the opinions expressed in *Opening Times* are not necessarily those of CAMRA either locally or nationally.

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Distribution Manager – Janet Flynn

Front Cover – Mild Magic 2014 – make sure you take part

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www.thcamra.org.uk

Contact: John O'Donnell 0789 880972 or enquiries@thcamra.org.uk

Local CAMRA Events

All Welcome at these events

Wednesday 9th – Wetherspoons Crawl: Moon Under Water, Deansgate 7.30pm; Seven Stars, Printworks, 8.00pm plus three others. (NM)

Thursday 10th – Branch Meeting & AGM: Blossoms, Buxton Road, Heaviley. Sandwiches will be provided. Starts 8.15pm. (SSM)

Thursday 10th – Studentville Social: Ducie Arms 7.30pm; Salutation 8.30pm; Church 9.15pm; Courtyard 10.00pm; Odder 10.30pm. (T&H)

Monday 14th – Branch Meeting: Royal British Legion, Poynton. Starts 8.30pm. (HPNC)

Wednesday 16th – Branch Meeting: Bridgewater, Barton Road, Worsley. Starts 7.30pm. (NM)

Wednesday 16th – Pub of the Season presentation to the Vine, Kennedy Street. From 8.00pm. (T&H)

Wednesday 16th – Pub of the Year Presentation: The Young Pretender, Congleton. From 8.00pm. (MEC)

Thursday 17th – Whalley Range Social: Nip & Tiddle 8.00pm; Hillary Step 8.30pm; De Nada 9.45pm; Font 10.45pm. (T&H)

Friday 18th – Stagger of Ladybarn, Fallowfield & Rusholme: Brewers Arms, Ladybarn Lane 7.30pm; Friendship, Wilmslow Road, 8.30pm. (SSM)

Saturday 19th – Walk to Wilmslow via Styal. Start Railway, Handforth 12.30pm. (MEC)

Tuesday 22nd – Quiz Social: Beech Inn, Chorlton. Mark CAMRA's Community Pubs Month at our 2013 runner-up. Starts 8.00pm. (T&H)

Wednesday 23rd – St George's Day Social: English Lounge, High St 7.30pm; Lower Turk's Head, Shudehill 8.15pm. (NM)

Thursday 24th – Pub of the Month presentation to the Bulls Head, Piccadilly. From 8.00pm. (SSM)

Thursday 30th – Club of the Year Presentation: Eccles RFC, Gorton Street, Patricroft. From 7.30pm. (NM)

Thursday 1st May – Branch Meeting: Volunteer, Sale. Starts 8.00pm. (T&H)

Saturday 3rd May – Presentation of Pub of the Year Runner-up Award to the Fairway, Hillgate, Stockport. From 8.00pm. (SSM)



Pennine



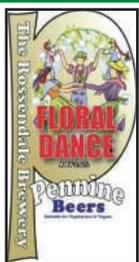
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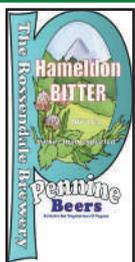
Contacts - Office: 0333 210 4021; Geoff: 07816 912 794; Robin: 07709 874 783

Meet our beers - Beer Tasting Notes



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A pale and fruity session beer, with body that is more than a match for many stronger beers!



Hameldon Bitter
3.8%

An unusually dark traditional bitter, with a dry and assertive character that develops in the finish.



Glen Top Bitter
4.0%

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Rossendale Ale
4.2%

A malty aroma leads to a complex, malt dominated flavour, supported by a dry, increasingly bitter finish.



Halo Pale
4.5%

A citrusy, pale ale brewed with Cascade aroma hops, finishing with a slightly bitter aftertaste.



Pitch Porter 5%

A full bodied rich beer with a slightly sweet, slightly bitter start, counter-balanced with sharp bitterness and obvious roast barley dominance.



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Pub News

Covering Stockport, Manchester and beyond

Thief's Neck New Look



The **Davenport Arms** at Woodford – better known to many as the Thief's Neck – reopened on Thursday 27 February after a £100,000 refurbishment by Robinsons Brewery and licensee Yvonne Hallworth.

Externally, the foliage that previously obscured the view of the pub has been removed, and direct access to the road in front restored. The furniture in the front forecourt has been renewed, and smart new signage added.

Inside, the main change is the construction of a new bar counter, surrounded by an area of flagged flooring. This is more spacious than its cramped predecessor and must make life a lot easier for those working behind the bar. The handpumps now enjoy pride of place right in the centre.



All the loose furniture has been renewed, and the fixed seating re-upholstered. The vault and main bar area have wood floors, with the snug, which has been slightly opened up into the rest of the pub, still carpeted. The seating in the vault now has distinctive wooden perforated backrests that look as though they may have come from a former chapel. It's good to see that the rare vintage Farmer's Weekly posters of types of livestock, horses and working dogs have been kept. The pub is in fact very dog friendly with dogs being welcome in the vault.

There's a more extensive and ambitious food offering, with the full menu being available seven days a week at lunchtimes, plus a range of "bar tapas" in the evenings.

While the refurbishment undoubtedly makes the pub smarter and more appealing to modern customers, first impressions were that, compared with its previous homely charm, it all seemed a little too squeaky-clean for its own good. However, with the passage of time it will surely come to seem more lived-in, and it

remains one of the most characterful pub interiors in the area.

It is now branded as a "Cask Ale House" and on the reopening the beer range was 1892, Unicorn, Dizzy Blonde, Trooper and Thief's Downfall, a 4.1% ABV ale brewed specially for the pub, which was very enjoyable.

City News

One of the most famous and historic pubs in Manchester is now under new ownership. In 2011 the Britons Protection celebrated 200 years and in the same year, Peter Barnett, the then owner, celebrated 30 years at the pub. Now Peter and business partner Markus have passed the pub's lease to another safe pair of hands in Mark & Lee, the rarely seen leaseholders of the multi-award winning City Arms on Kennedy Street. They have already set about making a number of subtle changes.



On the bar they will be trying out a number of new breweries with Congleton's Brightside brewery and Moorhouses both mentioned.

Although constrained to buying most beers through pubco Punch Taverns, the pub has three free of tie lines giving them the freedom to buy beers from any brewery they choose. The new management are keen to make use of this freedom to stock some local products. They have already instated a blackboard above the bar listing the "beer miles" of the beers on sale. When *Opening Times* called Outstanding Blonde was available and Privateer Red Duke had just gone.

There is another new cask outlet not far away from the Britons Protection. After going through an ill fated incarnation as 'Sugar Buddha', the former Beluga bar restaurant on Mount Street, just behind the Central Library, is now **Velvet Central**. Under the same ownership as Velvet bar, restaurant and hotel on Canal Street, there are two pumps on the bar. When *Opening Times* called, only Hornbeam Top Hop was available but we're told that the bar is keen to keep two ales on and is looking to bring in Brightside beers alongside offerings from Hornbeam.

Opening Times was saddened to hear of the sudden passing of a much loved regular at the **Rising Sun** on Queen Street. After seven years at the pub, Alfie the pub spaniel succumbed to a rare bowel disease in early February. Although Alfie will live long in the hearts of

regulars at the pub, for landlord Barrie Sneyd and his family, the house was too quiet without him, so March saw the arrival of Harry - a bit young to be a guard dog, but now serving his time as guard puppy!

West Didsbury & Chorlton



Visitors to **Elektrik**, Chorlton, may be familiar with the Elektrik Cask Ale Club which offers mid-week cask ale drinkers the chance to get a free pint. Well, Cask Ale Club has now been extended to include sister bar **Volta** (pictured above) on Burton Road, West Didsbury. Visitors get a stamp with every pint of cask ale purchased Monday to Thursday - collect five stamps and you can claim a free pint. You can pick up a card in either bar or if you already have a wallet bulging with loyalty cards, virtual stamps can be collected on the Elektrik City App which is available for iPhone and Android smartphones. When *Opening Times* called the beers on the bar were Roosters Londinium Porter, RedWillow Seamless and the permanent Thwaites Wainwright.

Opening Times also popped next door to **Folk Café Bar** where we found that the popular haunt had added a third handpump to the bar. On our visit, the beers available were Brightside Darkside Stout, Tatton Blonde and Marble Lagonda IPA.

Chorlton's **Dulcimer Bar** is teaming up with the team behind last November's Chorlton Love Beer Festival to hold a festival at the pub over the Easter weekend. Running from Thursday 17th to Monday 21st April, the festival will feature over 40 beers, ciders and perries over the weekend. The pub will be launching their new collaboration with Salford's First Chop Brewery, the 4.7% DSP (Dulcimer Spring Pale Ale). Entry will be free and CAMRA members will get 10% off the price of their pint.

The newly refurbished **Lloyds** on Wilbraham Road, Chorlton, has become the latest pub to sign up to the CAMRA Pub Discount Scheme. A variety of special offers will be available to CAMRA members on presentation of their membership card - the pub launched this in early March with a very special 50% off a pint.

More Pub and Brewery News on page 22

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Last Leaf, Massacre, Porter, Snowbound,
Wobbly Bob, White Hurricane, Uncle Fester,
Christmas Kiss, Humbug, Tyke, Thirsty Moon

**MORE CHOICE
BETTER BEER**

International Brewing Awards

 1998
Wobbly Bob

 2002
Navy

 2002
Wobbly Bob

 2004
Wobbly Bob

Stagger



Dave Hanson takes a walk on the mild side

This year's Mild Stagger was started early by two rebels who staged a guerrilla visit. The Midway on New Bridge Lane, though principally a food orientated pub, always extends a welcome to drinkers.



On entering we were greeted by Rob, the manager, who served us with an excellent pint of Taylors Golden Best. Other beers were available, but we were on a Mild Magic mission so we resisted. Golden Best is an excellent version of a light coloured mild, and is often mistakenly thought by many to be a bitter. For 7 o'clock the place was very busy, so we remained propping up the bar as there were no seats at any of the numerous tables. Having finished our drink we then had to make a hasty journey across the numerous Peel Centre car parks to the real start of the stagger.

At the **Railway**, Avenue Street we met up with our fellow staggerers for the evening. The future of this pub had been in jeopardy because of re-development of the area, but with the current recession the future is a lot more assured and it has received some welcome investment. Tonight the mild on offer was AllGates' Black, a traditional dark and malty mild which everyone found to be on good form. The array of handpumps on offer beckoned (and two of us did falter and sample a porter) but as this was a mild stagger we were honour bound to leave them untouched and move on.

Back along Great Portwood Street and left under ASDA brought us to the **Arden Arms**. Inside, the Arden is a time capsule of a real old-fashioned local: lots of wood panelling, friendly staff and chatting locals. Being a Robinsons' house, the only mild on offer was their 1892 (or Hatters as it was known or even Best Mild to the diehards!). This was the second light mild of the evening, but with a less pronounced hop flavour than Golden Best. Nevertheless it was rated as pretty good by everyone. Arriving at 8pm meant food was no longer being served so we easily found seating on the wooden benches in the Millgate Room (during the day, this room is reserved for diners). Having downed

our dose of olde worlde nostalgia we departed for the 8:30pm meeting point.

In previous times we would have called in the **Tiviot**, on Tiviot Dale. Alas this is now closed (and rumoured about to fall down), so we had to continue along Prince's Street. Because of the uncertainty of the evening opening hours of the **Swan with Two Necks** on Prince's Street this was not the advertised 8:30pm meeting point but as it was open some of us went in. The Swan does an excellent dinnertime meal trade but because of a lack of passing trade in the evenings it is not always open. The mild on offer this evening was again Robinson's 1892 and was also rated pretty good. The interior also features rich wood panelling meaning it is another of CAMRA's historic pub interiors. This diversion was a much appreciated addition to the intended itinerary.



We all met up again in the ever popular **Crown** on Heaton Lane just under the viaduct (or more correctly viaducts as, if you raise your eyes, it is two viaducts built side by side). The Crown keeps a mild on at all times, along with a stout and even a porter being nearly always available too. Today's offering was Copper Dragon's Black Gold, a deliciously moreish dark mild and a classic of the style which was rated as excellent by all. The news on the grapevine is the Crown is to have its own brewery, so who knows, in future years we may be drinking Crown Dark (assuming they produce a mild). The draw of the thirteen other handpulls was great, but this evening we were on a mild quest, so onwards and upwards.

Crossing Heaton Lane we entered the **Pineapple** anticipating yet another pint of Robinson's 1892. Having been served it was unfortunately realised that it was the end of the barrel and not up to standard. As the barmaid didn't know how to change the barrel we were immediately offered an alternative, which we all accepted. It is unfortunate when your intended pint is not up to scratch, but it was nice to see there was no argument, nor was the often proffered "That's how it's meant to taste. It is real ale you know." being trotted out.

Neither of the next two pubs has mild on sale. The **George** on the corner often has a Taylor's mild available (either Golden Best or Dark Mild) but none tonight. The **Midland** just up Wellington Road North was selling Tetley Dark Mild but has dropped this due to low sales (rather than sell poor beer though).



Continuing up Wellington Road North we entered the **Magnet**. Milds are often available here and we were rewarded with the grandly named 1987 Manchester Mild brewed by local brewer Quantum. I would love to know the reasoning behind the name, a nod to Robinson's 1892 maybe? (*actually it was inspired by Boddingtons mild - minus the caramel - of that era - Ed*) Another golden mild, and only 3.1% ABV, but absolutely bursting with flavour and considered the tastiest and best (of a very good selection and high standard) beer of the night. Who said mild was tasteless? The Magnet is also in the process of opening its own brewery so maybe the next report will be for Magnet Golden Mild. Temptation was to stay and have a second pint of Quantum, but we were on a quest, so on we trekked.

Across the road the **Railway** was checked as their guest is occasionally a mild, but not on this evening. Continuing along Wellington Road North we arrived at the **Hope**, a pub this time with an operating in-house brewery which has produced a mild. Today there was no mild from Fool Hardy Brewery, but a rare appearance from a Midlands brewery: Holden's Mild was on the bar. A fine example of a dark malty mild, again rated as an excellent and very tasty beer to boot. As this was the end of the stagger, some people made their way home, while others fell by the wayside and had a none-mild pint - shame on them!

This perambulation around a selection of pubs revealed a diverse range of tasty milds, from the almost golden ale Quantum, through the mid brown Robinsons to the inky black Holdens. Why not introduce yourself to the range and delights of mild by taking part in Mild Magic?

Pub & Brewery News

Covering Stockport, Manchester and beyond

Lass O'Gowrie Reopens



Following its closure in a blaze of publicity earlier in the year, the **Lass O'Gowrie** (Charles Street) reopened quietly on Wednesday 19 March. Having undergone a (much needed) deep clean and a modest refurbishment, it has to be said the Lass has scrubbed up very well indeed.

Some ornate ceiling features have been uncovered, there are new light fittings and the bar area has been renewed (with further work to come here once listed building consent has been obtained).



As we reported the lease has been taken on by John Rowlinson, licensee of the nearby Salisbury, and the pub is being managed by keen beer man Matt Muszynski. He comes with eight years experience at the Salisbury where he has been running the cellar.

The new-look Lass offers a range of bottled craft beers (some from owners Greene King, others from elsewhere in the UK and overseas). However pride of place on the bar goes to eight handpumps. Four dispense beers from the Greene King stable and the others are free of tie – when OT called two were in use offering Boggart Rum Porter and Privateer Red Duke.

Food is currently limited to bar snacks but more substantial food will be available once the kitchen has been sorted out. The pub opens every day at midday and closes at midnight Sunday to Wednesday, and 1.00am Thursday to Saturday.

It is good to see this Manchester institution in what are clearly safe and capable hands. All it now needs is bums on seats. Drop in soon.

Just as we went to press another landmark pub opened its doors again – welcome back to the **Mark Addy**. More next time.

Chorlton & Trafford

March saw the end of an era when one of Chorlton's smaller but most popular bars changed hands. After seven successful years in charge, owner Annie Davies has sold the **Nook & Cranny** to Guy Hodgkiss. He made the local headlines recently with a failed bid to open a café bar in a former newsagent next door to Chorlton Bookshop. Massive local opposition to his plans there ultimately saw the council reject his application. The two owners were due to exchange as *Opening Times* went to press and we understand the bar would close for a short while, reopening in much the same café bar style as Mr Hodgkiss had planned for the newsagent site.



Altrincham's **Wheatsheaf** (21 Church Street) has expanded its range of real ales to three. When *Opening Times* called these were Thwaites Wainwright and two from Greene King - Ruddles County and IPA. With regular events at the pub including quiz nights and karaoke, and the pub's food getting good reviews all round, the new management of Chris & Audrey Jackson are now working on the pub's beer garden to get it ready for summer.

Meanwhile, the Jacksons' former pub, **Ye Olde No. 3** on the Bridgewater Canal between Little Bollington and Lymm re-opened under new management in early March. The new team is Vickie Mealey & Dave Murphy. The young couple have come to the Wheatsheaf after a short three month stint at the Frog & Firkin in Chester. They are aiming to build up more food trade alongside its established drinks trade. Two guest cask ales are featured currently from the standard Enterprise Inns list so mainly national names. However, the pub is hoping to be allowed to join the SIBA Direct Delivery Scheme, giving them access to local breweries. *Opening Times* wishes them success in their new venture.

Mouselow Farm Brewery

Mouselow Farm beers have spread around into the High Peak, Glossopdale and Tameside areas in recent months, with further appearances at the Old Hall Beer Festival at Whitehough, Chinley, Fleetwood Beer Festival and various Stockport pubs. In mid March, they were on at the Star Beer Festival at Huddersfield, and a Chesterfield run has seen

four different beers at the Chesterfield Micropub, a recent addition to the town's beer drinking walkabout.

Brewer Frank Wood is happy with the quality of the repeated beers, with Golden Gosling, a 3.6% light delicately hopped beer, and Hair of the Horse, a 4.3% multi-hopped beer, being the best sellers. The Glossop Wetherspoons (the **Smithy Fold**) was also keen to have local beers on the bar and Mouselow has been appearing there alongside Howard Town beers. Mouselow also jointly sponsored the Hills and Mills Beer Festival in early April, alongside Howard Town, Green Mill and Buxton breweries, which all supplied three beers to the festival and donated a pin (4½ gallons) of a fourth.

RtwoDtoo Brewery

Things are going so well at Urmston's RtwoDtoo brewery that they've ordered a second two-barrel plant, identical to the first. It should be delivered later this month, and the foundations and pipework are already in place to receive it. The plan is to use the new kit for "research and development", i.e. test brews, and the original kit will continue to turn out the two most popular brews, Steamhopper IPA and Best Red.

Fool Hardy Ales

It's proving to be quite a year for Martin Wood. Not only has the **Hope Inn** won the Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Year award but one of his Fool Hardy beers, Rash Dash, has been on sale at the House of Commons. Martin is pictured below (right) with local MP Andrew Gwynne who recommended the beer to the Strangers' Bar.



Twenty Twenty Two

This venue on Dale Street in Manchester is staging an exhibition of Barcelona design until 23 April. To mark this they have brewed a beer, Una Mica De Sol, at Bury's Outstanding Brewery. The name is Catalan for "a bit of sunshine" and it certainly will be – the pale, golden beer has been brewed using a combination of Amarillo, Nelson Sauvin, Citra, Galaxy and Pacific Gem hops and is 4% ABV.

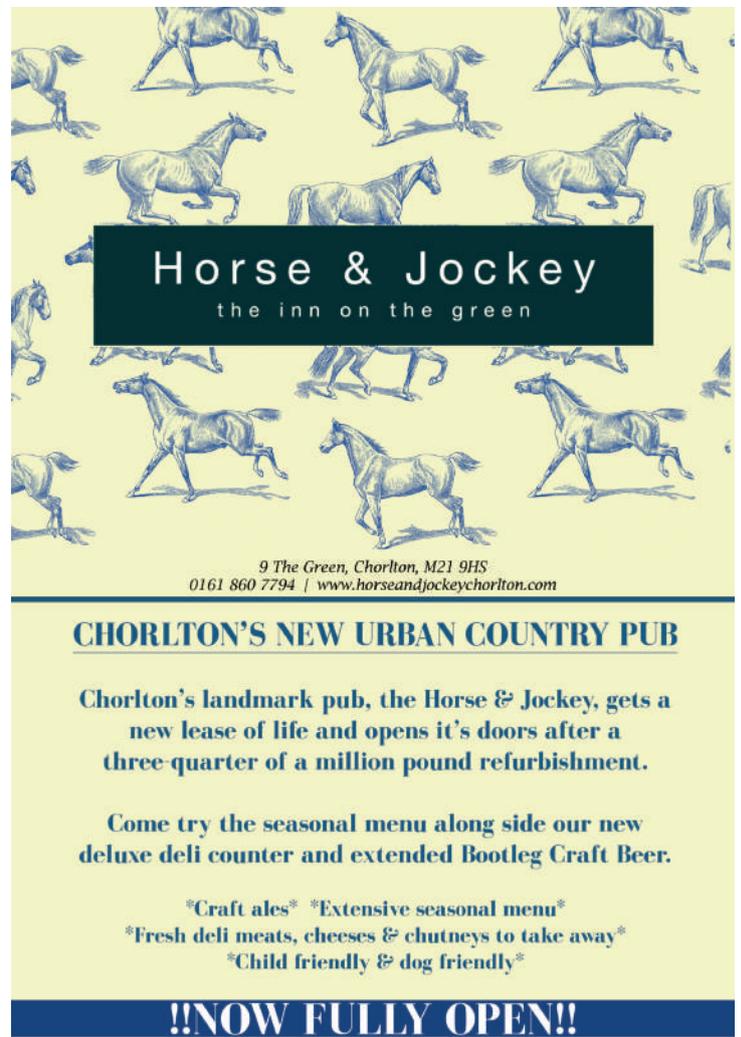
CAMRA Discounts

There are several pubs in the *Opening Times* area that offer a discount to card carrying CAMRA members. This is a very welcome promotion and we are very grateful to those pubs that have taken this initiative. *Opening Times* will be publishing an up to date list of these pubs once every three months. To date we have been given details of the following pubs which offer a discount. If any pub out there has been missed off the list (or the information below is incorrect) then please email *Opening Times* Editor John Clarke with details. The email address is: stocam@btinternet.com.

Here are the pubs which we currently have full details of:

- © **Font, New Wakefield Street, Manchester:** 25% off cask ales
- © **Font, Manchester Road, Chorlton:** 25% off cask ales
- © **Salisbury Hotel, Wakefield Street, Manchester:** 50p off a pint or 20p off a half of cask ale
- © **Albert Square Chop House:** 20% off cask ales
- © **Stalybridge Station Buffet Bar:** 10% off cask ales
- © **Harewood Arms, 2 Market Street, Broadbottom:** 20p per pint off cask ale Sunday to Thursday
- © **Lass O'Gowrie, Charles Street, Manchester:** 50p off a pint and 20p off a half of cask ale
- © **White Hart, High Street, Cheadle:** 10% off cask ale
- © **Victorian, Ack Lane East, Bramhall:** 10% off a pint of cask ale
- © **Mary & Archie, Burton Road, West Didsbury:** 10p off a pint of cask ale

Yet more good reasons to join CAMRA
<http://www.camra.org.uk/joinus>



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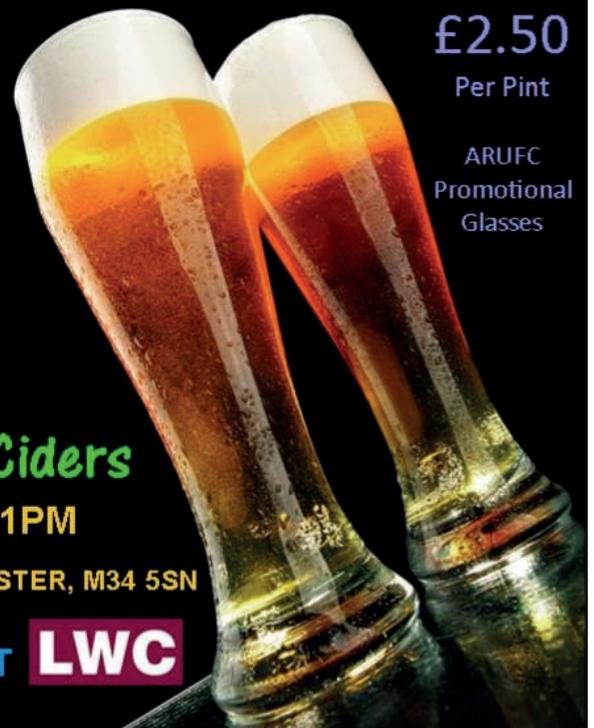
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