

OPENING TIMES

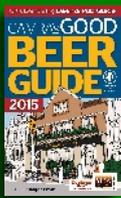
AUGUST 2015 / FREE



INSIDE: NEW VENUE FOR MANCHESTER
BEER & CIDER FESTIVAL / CHORLTON
FESTIVAL REVIEW / MEET THE BREWER
WITH BEER NOUVEAU



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OPENING TIMES

Opening Times is published by the Stockport & South Manchester Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, with assistance from the Trafford & Hulme and High Peak & North East Cheshire Branches. Additional material is supplied by the North Manchester and Macclesfield & E Cheshire Branches. 7,500 copies a month are printed by Phil Powell Printing of Failsworth and distributed throughout Stockport, Trafford, Manchester and Tameside. There are also many outlets in Macclesfield & East Cheshire, High Peak and Glossop.

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* Transport for Greater Manchester: www.tfgm.com 0161 228 7811

* East Cheshire: 0300 123 5500
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/public_transport.aspx

* Derbyshire: www.derbybus.info

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Front cover - The Marble Arch by Wesley Harding. Visit his website at www.whardingphotography.co.uk/ to view and purchase his excellent photographs..

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What's On

Local CAMRA Branch Events, Information and News

Your Local CAMRA Contacts & Websites

Stockport & South Manchester (SSM)

www.ssmcamra.co.uk

Contact: Paul Felton; Secretary@ssmcamra.co.uk

North Manchester (NM)

www.northmanchestercamra.org.uk

Contact: Phil Booton; phbooton@hotmail.com

High Peak & NE Cheshire (HPNC)

www.hpneccamra.org.uk

Contact: Stewart Taylor 07907 714826; taylorshouse@supanet.com

Macclesfield & East Cheshire (MEC)

www.eastcheshirecamra.org.uk

Contact: Tony Icke 01625 861833; bicke@madasafish.com

Trafford & Hulme (T&H)

www.thcamra.org.uk

Contact: John O'Donnell 07879 880972 or enquiries@thcamra.org.uk

Local CAMRA Events

All welcome at these events

Friday 7th – Mild Magic presentation: Spinning Top, Wellington Road South, Stockport SK4 1AA. From 8.00pm. (SSM)

Saturday 8th – Second Peak District bus trip leaving Whaley Bridge at 12.45pm. More details from branch contact. (HPNC)

Monday 10th – Branch Meeting: White Lion, Buxton Road, Disley SK12 2HA. (HPNC)

Wednesday 12th – Moston Survey: Broadway, Nuthurst Road M40 3PL 7.00pm; Gardeners Arms, Moston Lane M40 5RZ 7.45pm; plus two others. (NM)

Thursday 13th – Branch Meeting and Summer Quiz: Arden Arms, Millgate, Stockport SK1 2LX. Starts 8.15pm. (SSM)

Wednesday 19th – Branch Meeting: venue to be confirmed. Check branch website. (NM)

Thursday 20th – Beech Road Social: 8.00pm Beech M21 9EG, 9.00pm Famous Trevor, 9.30pm Parlour, 10.15pm Moose. (T&H)

Friday 21st – Stagger: Heaton Moor & Heaton Norris West: Elizabethan, Heaton Moor Road SK4 4PB 7.30pm; Plough, Heaton Moor Road SK4 4NZ 8.30. (SSM)

Saturday 22nd – Club of the Year presentation to Stalybridge Labour Club and Cider Pub of the Year presentation to Stalybridge Station Buffet Bar. Times from branch contact. (HPNC)

Saturday 22nd – New Faces Social: New Oxford, Bexley Square, Salford M3 6DB 4.00pm and then visit to First Chop Brewery (tbc). (NM)

Wednesday 26th – Patricroft Survey: Grapes Hotel, Liverpool Road M30 7HD 7.30pm; Dutton Arms, Barton Lane M30 7AE 8.15pm plus three or four others (NM)

Wednesday 26th – Local drop-ins. Venues to be confirmed – see website or contact. (MEC)

Thursday 27th – Pub of the Month presentation to the Beer Shop, Kingsleigh Road, Heaton Mersey SK4 3QF. From 8.00pm. (SSM)

Thursday 27th – Spinningfields Social: 8.00pm Oast House M3 3AY, 9.00pm Dockyard M3 3AN. We will then explore the area. (T&H)

Wednesday 2nd September – Salford Uni to Salford Uni: Union Tavern, Liverpool Road M5 4LG 7.30pm; Crescent, Salford Crescent M5 4PF 8.15pm; Salford University Students' Union M5 4WT 9.00pm. (NM)

Thursday 3rd September – Branch Meeting: Volunteer Hotel, Cross Street, Sale M33 7HJ. Starts 8.00pm. (T&H)

Social Media

Many of the local CAMRA branches have Facebook and Twitter accounts which you can follow:



Stockport & South Manchester:
www.facebook.com/SSMCAMRA

Trafford & Hulme: www.facebook.com/thcamra

Macclesfield & East Cheshire:
www.facebook.com/pages/Macclesfield-East-Cheshire-CAMRA/106975496056067

Stockport & South Manchester: @SSMCAMRA

Trafford & Hulme: @THCAMRA

North Manchester: @NorthMancsCAMRA

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The Beer Shop, Heaton Mersey



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for August is the Beer Shop on Kingsleigh Road, Heaton Mersey. John Clarke paid a visit.

Dean Hilton has been running the Beer Shop on Kingsleigh Road since November 2011. His background is in IT but as he moved into retirement he sought something that would not only occupy his time but could be combined with his long-time interest in good beer. He's been a member of CAMRA since the early 1970s, although his interest in beer doesn't stop with the UK.

However the Beer Shop has turned into more than a full-time hobby. While it's situated in a row of shops in a tucked away position the business is thriving with a 30 per cent year on year increase in sales.

A one room affair, with a bar at the back, shelves of bottles to the left and fridges to the right, the Beer Shop is a convivial place to have a drink. The red walls add a warm touch and there's plenty of seating (plus a big screen TV for major events). Cask beer is a major feature with between four and six available (and the useful website at www.ukbeershop.com will keep you up to date with what is on tap). These can either be drunk on site or taken away in three, five, ten and twenty litre bag-in-box containers.

While the cask beers are mainly local-ish, the bottled range features not only local offerings but also those from further afield in the UK as well as choice offerings from overseas. There is a notably good range from the two great European brewing nations of Belgium and Germany (including sour lambics from the former and smoked ales from the latter), while craft beers from the USA also feature.

The Beer Shop isn't in a location where good beer is thick on the ground – it's something of an oasis in the desert – so come and join us on Thursday 27th August when we present this well deserved award. Buses 22 and 197 will drop you nearby from both the Stockport and Manchester directions.



The Pub of the Month award is sponsored by Stephensons, a local family firm that has been supplying the local pub and catering trade for over 140 years. Check out their advert on this page.

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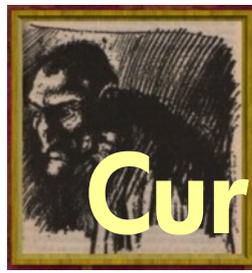
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Curmudgeon

Smell the Coffee

It was a sign of the times that the long-running US sitcom "Friends" saw the main characters socialising in a coffee shop rather than a bar. It began showing in 1994 and, since then, while I'm not suggesting it's a direct result, coffee shops have enjoyed exponential growth and become a standard feature of most British High Streets.

Personally, I have never really seen the point, but their success is undeniable. I would say they have created their own market rather than taking existing trade from pubs – they come across as welcoming, unthreatening and, dare I say it, female-friendly. A coffee shop is basically a window on the world, whereas a pub is a refuge from it. Even the best-run pub still has a slight whiff of edginess and misrule.

Recently, the market-leading operator Starbucks have announced that they are going to roll out the sale of alcohol in some of their UK outlets, following successful trials in the US. It's part of an "evening concept" that also includes serving more substantial meals. I can't imagine that Wetherspoons will be quaking in their boots, but it's easy to see the appeal to tourists wanting a pre-theatre snack, or office workers enjoying a glass of Chardonnay after work before getting the train home.

It's another example of how the on-licence scene is fragmenting and diversifying. If you're having a drink outside the house, it's becoming less and less likely that you'll be doing it in somewhere that is recognisably a pub. However, I would say that trying to ape coffee shops is about the worst thing pubs could do. As with many other marketing gimmicks, the risk is that you alienate your existing customers without winning over many new ones. And it's worth noting that Wetherspoons are the biggest on-trade coffee sellers in the country.

At the Sign of the Crossed Legs

There's one part of the pub that every customer will need to visit at some time, namely the toilets. It's an inevitable result of drinking beer. In the past, many pub toilets were disgusting, but in recent years there has been a marked improvement. In general I would say the minimum acceptable standard for pub toilets is to have one urinal and one trap in the gents, and two traps in the ladies, although I recognise that some smaller pubs only have one in the ladies. But the recent rash of micropubs and mixed bottle shops and bars don't seem to be able to achieve even this level.

If you're primarily an off-licence, but allow customers to sit down and sample the occasional beer, then it may be OK to have a single unisex WC. But if your establishment at some times of the week becomes a busy bar, then people will be queuing up. If someone decides they need ten or fifteen minutes in there – as sometimes happens – those in the queue will be left in a very awkward situation. In the past, I've been in basic, remote country pubs where there was just a single WC out in the yard, and that seemed distinctly primitive. So why should new-wave bars be judged any differently?

Frankly, if your establishment has become a popular bar, rather than a bottle shop with the occasional sampling customer, it's just not good enough. Personally, I would not be comfortable spending much time in a bar with only a single unisex WC. Plenty of established small pubs, such as the Queens Head in Stockport town centre and the Olde Vic in Edgeley, still manage to provide proper separate gents' and ladies' toilets. If you're enjoying success with a new-style bar, you would do well to heed this lesson, even if the toilets have to be placed up or down stairs.

Curmudgeon Online:
curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com



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 1998
Wobbly Bob

 2002
Navvy

 2002
Wobbly Bob

 2004
Wobbly Bob

Chorlton Beer Festival

2015 festival breaks all records

Sweltering temperatures helped make the 11th Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival the most successful ever. Over 4,000 thirsty drinkers flocked to St Clement's Church over the three day event and drank over 10,000 pints of real ale and over 3,000 pints of cider and perry.

The festival kicked off with a quieter session on Thursday evening where visitors had the opportunity to meet brewers from 15 different local breweries, ranging from long established Pictish Brewing to one of the region's newest with Drink Up Brewing's Alex Parkinson being in attendance. Hawkshead Brewery set up in the Out of Town beer hall to run a food and beer matching session while other brewers went for mingling with customers at the bar.

Friday's public session was preceded by judging of the North West Golden Ales round of the Champion Beer of Britain Competition. Eight beers from across the north-west went head to head in a blind tasting session with a panel of invited judges including publicans, brewers and beer experts. After much deliberation the panel voted Marble Beers' Lagonda IPA as the clear winner. Runner up was Hawkshead's Cumbrian Five Hop with Jennings' Cocker Hoop taking third place. Not surprisingly, the Lagonda flew off the bar as soon as the result was announced with two casks being drunk dry by 9pm on Friday night.

An exceptionally busy Saturday saw over 200 people queuing before the gates opened at 1pm with over 500 coming through the doors in the first half hour alone. The volunteers behind the bars were put under extreme pressure by a relentless tide of thirsty drinkers - hour on hour all four bars were packed. Even at the start of the day it was clear cider stocks were low and a call to the festival's cider stockist found him in Somerset collecting fresh cider. Not a problem though - he would drive back direct to the festival with more stocks. In the end, the drinkers beat him to it and the cider bar ran dry at 6.15 with the next delivery still an hour away. Any fears that the cider drinkers would have shuffled off to find their cider fix in the pubs of Chorlton were dispelled as when the delivery did arrive the bar was immediately besieged and a restock equating to 20% of the original order was drunk dry again in just 90 minutes. Chorlton folk like their cider!

After a relentless eight hours of serving the final beer ran out at 9.20pm, just 10 minutes before scheduled closing. It was the first time since 2012 that the festival had run out of beer with drinkers sinking almost 2,000 pints more than they did back at the 9th festival. The beauty of Chorlton is that once the festival is dry, there are 25 more pubs and bars within five minutes walk where customers can sample up to 100 more real ales. Drift to the pubs they did, while the weary team of volunteers set about their final task - breaking down the festival overnight to allow St Clement's to return to its other use and welcome the Sunday morning congregation to worship.

Once the dust had settled, the votes for the customers' beer and cider of the festival were counted and verified. The public chose Dark Drake from Derby's Dancing Duck brewery as their favourite. The choice of a smooth 4.5% dark oatmeal stout just shows that dark beers do work all year round. Cider/Perry of the festival went to Hurst View's Puckered Pear Perry. The first ever vote for World Beer of the Festival went to a classic in Lindemans Cassis which pipped rarer beers from the World Beer selection - possibly because the rare ones flew off the shelves early in the festival.

St Clement's Church and Trafford & Hulme CAMRA would like to thank all the customers who supported the festival. They also thank supporters Outstanding Beers, Blackjack Beers, Brightside Brewery and Blackedge Brewery for their assistance. The proceeds from the festival will be ploughed back into St Clement's mission to provide facilities and support for the whole Chorlton community. Amongst the targets for this year is much needed repair work on the Youth Centre building.



T&H CAMRA – 1001 strong



precipice of the milestone in our membership. Branch Chair Paul King rushed from working on the cider bar to welcome Kelly and Aleks as the 1000th & 1001st members. They were presented with a special certificate, a copy of the Good Beer Guide and a voucher for beer to be spent at the festival.

Trafford & Hulme Branch signed up its 1000th and 1001st members on the Saturday of Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival. Kelly and Aleks signed up to the campaign as joint members completely unaware that the branch sat on the

Spring Pub of the Season



Trafford & Hulme CAMRA's Pub of the Season for Spring 2015 was the Sedge Lynn on Manchester Road in Chorlton. This popular Wetherspoon's outlet is a Good Beer Guide regular and Branch Chair Paul King is seen here presenting the award to manager Kirstin Downham (right) and a member of the staff.

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Stagger

Burnage & Heaton Mersey with Paul Felton

While the BBC Weather website threatened rain, it was a pleasant evening when we met up at the **Victoria** on Burnage Lane. Or to be more accurate, we met up outside the Victoria. While there was a sign outside proclaiming the availability of real ale, and a handpump with a pumpclip attached inside, we were informed that there was none available, and it looked like that had been the case for some time.



So it was south down Burnage Lane to the **Farmers Arms**. It's probably fair to say that the Farmer's has had a chequered history. Before its current incarnation it belonged to Hydes; but now it's part of the expanding empire of pubs & bars belonging to Lawrence Hennigan, centred on Levenshulme but now obviously expanded into Burnage. There's a vault on the right and a comfortable lounge on the left; there are lots of TVs, much Irish memorabilia in evidence (including an enormous Guinness branded rugby ball), and on that evening quite a lot of customers. The only cask beer available was Sharp's Doom Bar, which was okay.



Next we crossed the roundabout onto Mauldeth Road, past the long-closed Green End, and turned right onto Kingsleigh Road for the **Beer Shop**. Founded in late 2011, it's a combination of off-licence and bar – there's a decent range of domestic & foreign bottled beers (some in fridges), plus a few bottles of cider, and a stillage on the back wall for up to half a dozen beers, some served by handpump and some by gravity. You can either take away or drink on the premises – it's not a large place, but there's a fair amount of seating available. We tried three beers: two from Track, Sonoma and Toba (a stout), and Buxton Moor Top. The Buxton was okay, the Toba better, and the Sonoma better still. (It should be noted that

there's a small premium on the buying of halves, but it's only 10p.)

We then returned to Burnage Lane for the **Albion**. We hoped that this would be selling Hydes bitter, but unfortunately this was the second pub of the night that didn't have any cask beer on – there were a couple of handpumps, one of which sported a Hydes bitter pumpclip, but it wasn't on. Whether this was a temporary or permanent thing, I don't know. There was a DJ or karaoke setting up; and there weren't many customers.



Further west along Burnage Lane was Samuel Smith's **Sun In September**. It's an interesting building – set back in its own attractive grounds, it looks rather like a Swiss chalet: the front terrace would be a very pleasant place to while away a couple of hours on a warm evening. There's a smart lounge at the front and a smaller vault to the rear. While there were a fair number of customers, it was noticeably quiet – being a Sam Smith's pub, there's never any piped music or TV, so the quietness might come as a surprise to the unwary. There was a single cask beer available, Old Brewery bitter: maltier than many bitters you find these days, it's not to my personal taste, but it was fairly good.

A long walk all the way down Burnage Lane took us to Didsbury Road and the four remaining places on the stagger. The first was the **Dog & Partridge**. It was rather quiet (apart from a bunch of 20-something blokes stood just inside the doorway ignorantly blocking access to the rest of the pub), and while there were a couple of handpumps stuck on one end of the bar, there was nothing being sold from them, and they hadn't been in use for some time.

So over the road to Holt's **Griffin**. This is a classic multi-roomed pub with etched windows and a superb mahogany bar with glazed sashes. There's much Man City memorabilia, and lots of photos of Heaton Mersey in bygone days. While there was a barrel of mild in the cellar, it wasn't quite ready to be put on, but there were three other beers available – Holt Bitter and IPA, and Camerons Gold Bullion. The bitter was okay, the Gold Bullion rather better: no one tried the IPA. While it certainly wasn't quiet, the pub wasn't as busy as we might have

expected it to be after 9 o'clock on a Friday evening.



Then it was along to Greene King's **Frog & Railway**. From the outside, it doesn't appear to be particularly large, but appearances can be deceptive: while the frontage is narrow, it does go back a fair way from the road. It has a low ceiling, much seating and (as per the Griffin) lots of atmospheric photos of the area in past years. While it may not have been the busiest pub so far, it did seem to be the fullest; there was a karaoke in full swing, but for once the participants appeared to be able to sing! Four Greene King beers were available: IPA, Abbot Ale and Churchill IPA, plus Ruddles bitter. Of the two we tried, the Abbot was fairly ordinary, but the Churchill IPA was something of a revelation, with lots of hops and lots of flavour – not necessarily what you might expect from a GK beer. It was pretty good: had it been a little cooler, it would have been very good indeed.



Our final port of call was the **Crown**, a very attractive Robinsons pub set back a little from the main road. One of the oldest pubs in the local branch area, it has a whitewashed front with hanging baskets, and there's a small raised garden on the other side of Vale Close. You enter the pub at the rear, up some steps and across a small patio. The smaller right hand room was busier and is perhaps more of a 'vault', while the larger left hand room is the lounge / dining area. Again, it wasn't as busy as we'd have expected. There were four beers on sale: Wizard (which no one tried), Trooper, Dizzy Blonde and Unicorn: they were all in good nick.

Thus ended a slightly unsatisfactory evening's drinking. Thanks to everyone who was stocking cask beer: but for three out of eight pubs no longer to be selling any was a disappointment. But to end on a positive note: the threatened rain never appeared, and hooray for that...

Meet the Brewer

Beer Nouveau



This month Brendon Hall interviews Steve Dunkley who proudly proclaims that his "pico brewery" in Prestwich is the smallest commercial brewery in England. Steve is pictured above with his small but perfectly formed brewhouse.

1) Hi Steve, what got you into brewing?

Homebrew. When I was 16 I bought my dad a kit which he didn't use, so I did and it wasn't as bad as you'd think. Ever since then for the last 24 or so years I've been brewing on and off. I've worked in pubs and breweries too which has introduced me to what can be done with beer, but I keep thinking there's still more to do.

2) You have chosen some pretty unusual beer ingredients in the past (thyme springs to mind!). How do you go about choosing flavours for Beer Nouveau?

The beers fit into two categories, traditional and anything but. The house beers are the traditional ones, all based on my memories of some pretty decent beers I've tasted over the years. The other beer flavours are inspired by the people they're named after, for instance (Alan) Turing was a passionate and clever bloke, so I thought I'd give passion fruit and sage a go, and it worked very well.



3) You're Manchester's smallest commercial brewer. What's next for your brand? More cask, bigger premises, a railway arch?

The next move is more cask. I've recently doubled the number of fermenters I've got with the plan to brew half for bottle and half for cask. The first beer for cask heading to pubs is in the fermenters at the moment and will be released into the wild soon. Bigger kit and premises are also being considered.

4) What one piece of advice would you give to anyone thinking of starting out in the world of brewing?

Go to your local homebrew group and chat to the people there. Even if you don't currently brew at all, go along. Home brewers know a lot about beer and brewing and are a great way to start getting your hands dirty learning about the ingredients you'll be using.

5) Finally, when you aren't drinking your own beer please tell us one local, one national and one international beer that has blown your socks off recently.

One local beer is ridiculously difficult considering how many superb beers are coming out of Manchester at the moment. If forced though I'd go with Chorlton Brewing Co's Citra Sour, it's a great beer first and foremost, and it just happens to be a sour. Nationally I seem to keep going back to Adnams Mosaic Pale Ale which really shows off that an established regional brewery can produce good modern style beers. Internationally I'd have to go for Ballast Point's Victory at Sea; massive flavours in a massive beer.

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Heard at the Bar

Pub News covering Stockport, Manchester and beyond

Marble Move

Regulars at the **Marble Beer House** in Chorlton were shocked by the sudden announcement in early June that sisters Vicky and Helen Creer had resigned from the Manchester Road bar. Vicky and Helen had become synonymous with Marble Beers having held numerous positions across the brewery and pub empire over the past 15 years including two separate stints as managers of the Beer House. Vicky also managed the city centre's Marble Arch while Helen spent many years at the organisation as office manager.



But locals need not fear for the future of the Beer House - it is in safe hands with Marble Arch manager Gaz Bee having moved from the city centre pub to Chorlton as the new permanent manager. Gaz told *Opening Times* that customers are not likely to notice any significant changes, invoking the simple edict of "if it ain't broke...". *Opening Times* wishes Helen and Vicky well and looks forward to being able to report on their next venture.

City News



The Dockyard Bars group is developing its very own "craft" beer in association with Bury's Brightside Brewery. By the time you read this, the first test brews may already have passed over the bars of the Spinningfields and Salford outlets. The test brews were scheduled to be in cask form but *Opening Times* understands that the owners intend the final version to only be available in filtered keg form. This seems like a missed opportunity for the bars that usually feature an admirable range of locally sourced real ales, with the exception being the presence

of Wainwright - made famous by Thwaites of Blackburn but these days produced by new owners Marston's. Having locally brewed cask house ales on the bars would be the icing on the cake.

Charity Burgers



The **Cocked Hat** on the Market Place in Stockport is backing a local children's hospice during August with its new burger menu. Manager Dixon Maw, who is also Cluster Manager across Manchester and East Cheshire for AtWill Pubs, responded to a plea by Francis House Children's Hospice to get involved in their annual BIG BBQ appeal.

From August 1st, Dixon who has been at the pub for two years with wife Gemma and their team, will be launching Burgers AtWill, a tasty selection of burgers with a choice of 20 toppings and 10 sauces. Customers can choose whatever combination they like, and throughout August the 30p per topping charge will be donated to Francis House.

Dixon said: "Francis House does incredible work caring for children and young people with life-limiting conditions and supporting their families. Gemma and I spend a lot of time in hospitals with our own daughter Jessica but consider ourselves to be fortunate not to be facing the prospect that her condition is terminal.

We have some generous customers and are hoping they will enjoy the new burgers, try out some interesting topping combinations, and raise funds for this very worthy local cause."

Quarry Bank



The **Quarry Bank** on Bloomsbury Lane in Timperley has reopened after a major refit lasting about four weeks. The front is now much more attractive with new trees and softer looking hard landscaping. Inside, the big

difference is that they have removed some walls and you can walk straight from the lounge to the vault, which opens the pub up quite a bit more. This Hydes pub is often busy and actually has 12 handpumps across its two bars. Normally there are five real ales - Hydes Original, Owd Oak, a Hydes Seasonal (currently 1863), a Beer Studio beer, and often a non-Hydes guest ale. There is plenty of attractive outdoor seating at the rear of the pub including a no-smoking area. Go on "Cask Ale Monday and Thursday" when all cask ales are discounted.

Pub Shorts

The **Church Inn** in Cheadle Hulme is an excellent pub although it's known for the rather high price of its cask beers. Good news then - on Mondays and Tuesdays there will be £1 a pint off cask ales between 5.00pm and 7.30pm.

The **Bulls Head** in Poynton has revamped the bar area and now has four handpumps in pride of place on the bar as you enter. Recent guests have included Storm Bosley Cloud and Cross Bay Omega IPA alongside staples Thwaites Original, Wainwright and Marston's Pedigree.



In Heaton Moor, the **Plough** closed for a month long refurbishment on 19th July. It's now owned by pub company M&B and comes under their "Castle" brand which is supposed to feature more community-oriented pubs. At a meeting of locals before the pub closed, the new management said that the range of cask ales would be expanded, as would the keg and bottled craft beer range, and there will be changing guest beers. The pizza-based menu is to be dropped in favour of more conventional pub grub. A suggestion that the prices be lowered was not taken seriously, our man on the spot tells us!

In Hazel Grove the closed **Royal Oak** on Commercial Road looks doomed. A planning application has been submitted to demolish the pub and erect 13 dwellings on the site. It's a far cry from the days when the annual Robinsons' bowls tournament was launched there and the pub thrived. Presumably it was just that little bit too far from the main drag in Hazel Grove to prosper in today's market.

LA PETITE TOULOUSAINNE
ALC. 4.7% VOL.

SPRING
GOLDEN BEST BITTER
ALC. 4.6% VOL.

HOWGAT & KEMP
NEW ZEALAND PALE ALE
ALC. 6.4% VOL.

MARBLE ARCH
QUASQUICENTENNIAL
125 BARLEY WINE
Brandy barrel aged for 12 months
ALC. 10.7% VOL.
Marble Keg Product

GONDA IPA
ALC. 5% VOL.

DOBBER IPA
ALC. 5.9% VOL.

EARL GREY IPA
ALC. 6.8% VOL.

EMANCIPATION
AIDED AND ABETTED BY JAMES KEMP,
FORMERLY OF BUXTON BREWERY
ALC. 7% VOL.

MARBLE ENGLISH IPA
ALC. 5% VOL.

LITTLE MEIKO
JAPANESE YUZU IPA PRODUCED TO KIMURA-BEE STANDARDS
ALC. 7% VOL.

MARBLE ARCH INN
QUASQUICENTENNIAL
125 IMPERIAL RUSSIAN STOUT
THIRD BOTTLING
Aged for 12 months in Clermont Springs Bourbon barrels
ALC. 10.4% VOL.
Marble Keg Product

BOHÈME
BORN IN PLZEŇ, INFORMED BY PUCCINI,
APPROPRIATED BY MARBLE
ALC. 4.2% VOL.

MARBLE BREWERY
INDIA PALE ALE
BEERMOTH
ALC. 5% VOL.

BEER MATTS
HAWKSHEAD COLLAB
ALC. 5% VOL.

WINTER REGNUM
A BREW FROM KEVIN MURPHY
ALC. 5% VOL.

ANTIPODEAN
NEW ZEALAND PALE ALE

BREW 900
ALC. 9% VOL.

LITTLE BARNEY
WEST COAST IPA
ALC. 5% VOL.

MARB LATZEN

GREEN QUARTER IPA
HOLT'S, MARBLE, BLACK JACK & RUNAWAY COLLABORATION
ALC. 5.5% VOL.
Keg Product

GINGER '5.1'
ALC. 5.1% VOL.

High Peak Pub Scene

Robin Wignall & Tom Lord with News and Views

High Peak Pub News

With Tom Lord

We start with some good news this month. The **Sycamore** in Birch Vale, between New Mills and Hayfield, has now reopened after a period of closure. It has been tastefully refurbished and at the time of the visit was serving Bradfield Farmers Blonde, Black Sheep Bitter and Thornbridge Jaipur IPA. Bar snacks and main meals are served from an extensive menu until 6.00pm from Monday to Saturday.

It is reported that the **REMS Bar** in Chapel-en-le-Frith now has Jaipur and Marston's Burton Bitter on handpump. On a sadder note it looks as though the **Grouse** at Chunal, between Glossop and Hayfield, is closed. The pub signage has been removed or painted over and the car park blocked off.

One to keep an eye on is what used to be the **Hunters Inn** in Chisworth on the Marple Bridge to Glossop road. This stone built end of terrace pub closed some time ago but work has been going on at the premises and it is reported that there is a sign which says opening soon. Hopefully more on this next month.

Refurbishment work, which appears all but complete, is going on at the **Buxton Inn** on Manchester Road in Droylsden. The good news is that a handpump has been installed which at the time of visiting was dispensing Holt's Bitter. Robinsons' **Snipe** in Audenshaw has also recently benefited from an external makeover in the company's new livery.



The **Boundary** at Guide Bridge currently has beers from Hornbeam and Cross Bay breweries, and the **Spread Eagle** at Hatherlow in Romiley regularly has beers from Moberley Brewery.

sensible bitters such as Seamless and Faithless, through the smoked porter of Smokeless, to the challenge of Shameless at 5.9% and Ageless at 7.2%.

The range was completed with a couple of beers from Healey's Brewery, from Loppergarth, near Ulverston in the south west of the Lake District. Golden Bitter had sold out by Sunday afternoon but the BHW Dark Mild was well worth a try. All the beers tried were in good form and helped to make a very pleasant afternoon, especially as there was live music in the marquee on Sunday afternoon provided by Martin Bennett's Jazz Friends. Make a note in the diary for next year's event over the weekend of 1st to 3rd of July

Also in early July the High Peak Branch of CAMRA presented two of its Pub of the Year awards. There will be information on the presentations elsewhere in this issue of OT. The afternoon began at the **Old Hall** at Whitehough near Chinley. The usual interesting range of beers was available, though Marble Manchester Bitter was perhaps my choice of those tried. Look out for the major beer festival at the Old Hall over the weekend of 18 - 20 September.

Peak Practice

With Robin Wignall

The **Railway** in Whaley Bridge is enhancing its reputation as a live music venue, and continues to sell good pints of Robinsons Unicorn, Trooper and other beers. Trooper is probably the current best seller. The Whaley Water Weekend in June brought a curio when one of the live acts was also a brewer: Tom Hingley is a real live musician with brewing skills. He sells his beers in bottles and has the beer brewed at breweries around the country. A bitter is produced at Monty's brewery in Montgomery, whilst a stout is being produced at a brewery in Market Harborough.

Some of the clubs in our area try to support real ale and make a good job of it. At **Whaley Bridge Club** Marston's Bitter is a regular and can be accompanied by a beer from elsewhere in the Marston's brewing empire. **Furness Vale Club** has been good for a beer from Thwaites (or supplied by Thwaites) although the Marston's purchase of Thwaites' brands could change this situation. One real ale is always available at **Buxworth War Memorial Club** and this is often enhanced at weekends or during special events such as the Buxworth Olympics in July, which will have passed by the time you read this. This club sources beers from Storm, Green Mill, Abbeydale and Winkle as well as other breweries. Hand pumped beers are also available at **High Lane Conservative Club**.



Moorhouse's beers sell well in the Punch estate in Whaley Bridge. Both the **White Horse** and the **White Hart** sell Blond Witch, whilst at the latter Pride of Pendle is also popular. A re-launch of food at the White Hart sees Wendo's Café Bar serving substantial snacks and bar food at sensible prices. Freshly made coffee is an alternative to beer.

The first weekend in July sees the annual Beer and Jazz festival at Dove Holes. The main venue for live music is in the large hall of the Community Centre where there are also three real ales. Some of the weekend activity takes place at the cricket pavilion where Wainwright is available. The beer festival is to be found in a marquee adjoining the club and provides for a good session, or two, of interesting beer. Beers from Happy Valley at Bollington included Milltown Mild, Little Rascal and Rum Porter. The mild was in good form, though I avoided the rum porter with its 'lingering aroma of Barbadian Oak-aged Rum'. An extensive list of RedWillow beers from Macclesfield was available. Customers could work through from



Branch members moved along the Peak Forest Tramway to the **Navigation** at Buxworth. Here too the customary range of interesting beers was available. Elland White Prussian was perhaps my choice of those tried, though I have also recently enjoyed Nettlethresher and Beyond the Pale, also from Elland, at the Navigation.

The Peak Forest Canal towpath took some of the group to the **Crossings** at Furness Vale. Here a decent pint of Unicorn was on sale, although more interesting was the latest White Label offering, American Pale Ale, a very enjoyable, hoppy 5.6% brew - very refreshing after the walk alongside the canal. The Crossings is worth a call for a well kept pint of Robinsons. My afternoon finished across the main road at the **Soldier Dick** where there are usually four beers from which to choose. Mauldons May Bee looked worth a try, and despite the name hinting at a honey beer this was not obviously so in the taste. It was just a good pint of beer, which is the norm at the Soldier Dick.

Ladybarn Social Club

Stockport & South Manchester Club of the Year



For the first time Stockport & South Manchester Branch has made a Club of the Year Award. The winner is the Ladybarn Social Club on Green Street in Ladybarn.

The club now occupies the premises of a former Robinsons pub, the White

Swan, which for many years played a central role in the activities of the old South Manchester CAMRA branch and, indeed, seems to have functioned as an unofficial branch HQ at times.

Sadly the pub fell on hard times and was an early victim of Robinsons closure programme. Luckily that was not the end of the story and the building was acquired by the local Ladybarn Social Club who at the time occupied premises in the next street. The old pub has been refurbished and again plays a central role in the life of the local community. Indeed the community spirit is palpable and really gives the whole enterprise a lift. The presence of two well-kept changing cask beers on the bar is the icing on the cake.



The presentation was made on Friday 3rd July and pictured above (left to right) are Brian Quinn (Club Secretary), Dennis Wright (Head Barman and Cellarman) and Rita Acton. Shortly afterwards the club's Phil Cowtan sent us the following:

When the Club Committee first talked about the possibility of taking over the Swan, I was insistent that we sold cask ale. Some of the Committee were sceptical that it would work as it hadn't gone well in our previous building when I reintroduced it a few years previously but they fully supported the scheme and approved the funds to fit a new cellar chiller system to allow the cask to be kept. This award bears out both the belief and passion in cask ale but also the Committee's continued hard work to make the club a nice place to be, welcoming members and non-members alike and keeping a community asset alive.

Personally I really enjoy seeking out new beers to try and don't mind travelling to various micro breweries to collect new beers and talking to the brewers about their beers to supplement those that we can get hold of through the Carlsberg Tapster range of National and Regional beers. I would love to introduce more handpumps, but that I know that a smaller range with a quicker turnover is far better.

I would also like to mention that any CAMRA Member is free to visit the Club at any time without paying the £1 visitors fee, they just need to sign in.

Piccadilly Beer Mile

Ardwick breweries open their doors direct to customers on Saturdays

The four microbreweries and one beer distributor that occupy the one mile stretch of railway arches between Piccadilly and Ardwick stations in Manchester will be opening directly to the public from 25th July.

Track Brewing Company, Alphabet Brewing Company, Cave Direct, Chorlton Brewing Company and Squawk Brewing Company all plan to sell their beer direct on Saturday afternoons. Some of these will be open sporadically due to other commitments, and some every week.

Manchester is fast developing a reputation for being the home of some of the most exciting artisanal beers currently in the UK. This will be an opportunity to taste beers brewery-fresh and talk to their creators directly about the brewing process. In addition Cave Direct will showcase some of the most highly regarded beers from London and the South of England.

"Since the Manchester Brewery Expo was such a positive experience, we decided to open the brewery on a regular basis" - Sam Dyson, Track Brewing Co.

"Having been involved in the genesis of the Bermondsey Beer Mile in London, I've always seen the potential of a similar thing happening in Manchester. I'm really excited to be part of something that will become increasingly vibrant as other food and drink producers start taking part" - Mike Marcus, Chorlton Brewing Co.

The five stops along the Piccadilly Beer Mile are located at the following addresses:

Track - 5 Sheffield Street, M1 2ND

Alphabet and Shindigger - 99 North Western Street, M12 6JL

Cave Direct - 75 North Western Street, M12 6DY

Chorlton - 69 North Western Street, M12 6DX

Squawk - 4 Tonge Street M12 6LY

A Google map of the locations and a suggested walking route can be found at <http://goo.gl/XwFle7>

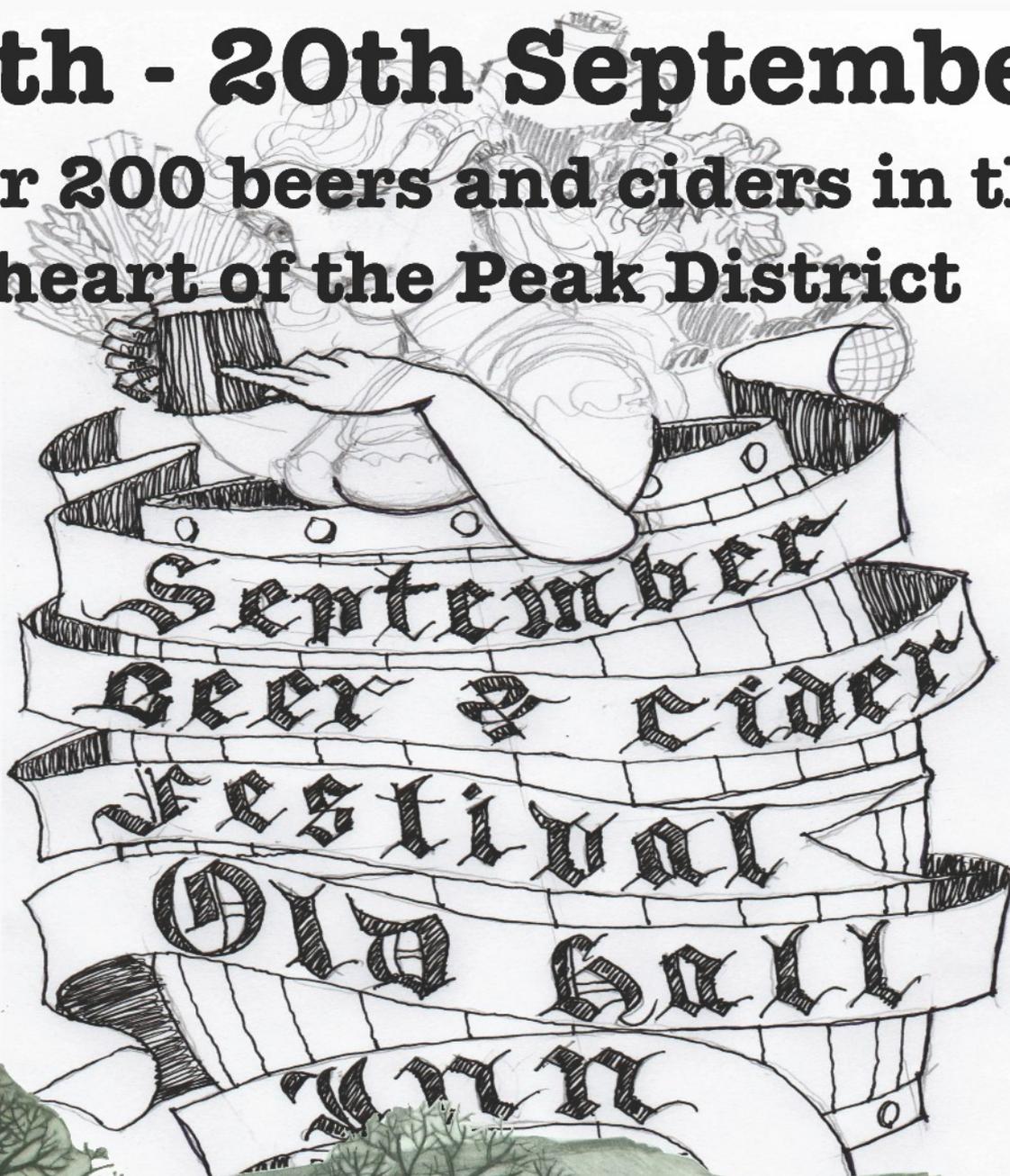
In addition to the above, the nearby Cloudwater Brewery on Piccadilly Trading Estate also has a tap room open every Saturday between 11.00am and 4.00pm. This has to be booked online and details can be found here: <http://cloudwaterbrew.co/events>.

Pictured above (top to bottom) – Chorlton beers on tap, Alphabet Brewery, Sam Dyson at Track Brewing, Oliver Turton at Squawk.



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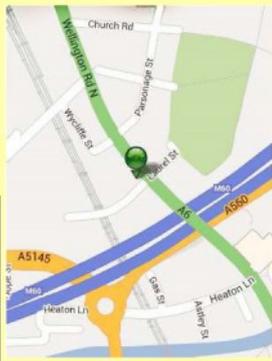


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On the Move

New home for Manchester Festival



The Manchester Beer & Cider Festival - Manchester's premier celebration of the finest beers and ciders - has confirmed its new home for 2016 as the main hall at Manchester Central. The region's largest beer and cider festival will take place from Wednesday 20th to Saturday 23rd January 2016.

Event organisers the Campaign For Real Ale (CAMRA) announced earlier this year that they were seeking a new home after two years at Manchester Velodrome. Six months of meetings and negotiations have seen the organisers secure their first choice venue which will allow them to retain all the features which attracted over 11,000 drinkers to the 2015 festival and are expected to attract even more at its new central home. The festival will feature a massive choice of over 500 beers, ciders and perries across a range of bars. Work is already underway on selecting the beers with established favourites including Marble Beers, Hawkshead Brewery and Brightside Beers already on board alongside relative newcomers to the local beer scene including Cryptic Ales and Seven Bro7hers.

Festival Organiser Graham Donning said, "We are very excited to be bringing the festival right into the heart of the city. With direct access from the newly improved Deansgate-Castlefield Metrolink station and Deansgate rail station, we couldn't have a better location for our customers who flock from across the region, and indeed from all over the country, to attend."

When asked about the process of selecting a new venue he added, "The last few months have been very busy behind the scenes as we sought the perfect venue. My colleagues and I have visited numerous venues across the city and held countless meetings to discuss available dates, logistics, budgets and all the other dull details which the drinkers never see. We are delighted that we have been able to secure an agreement with what was our first choice venue."

Although only three years old, the Manchester Beer & Cider Festival has established itself as one of the top beer festivals in the UK, with one of the largest ranges of beers and cider. Up to 13,000 visitors are expected to travel from all over the country and beyond to attend the festival which complements Manchester's growing international reputation as a centre for craft beer. Hundreds of volunteers will spend four days setting up what will become Manchester's largest pub serving over 50,000 pints over the four day event.

Tickets for the event are scheduled to go on sale on Tuesday 1st September via the festival website at manchesterbeerfestival.org.uk.

Some details already confirmed -

Opening Times: Wednesday 20th January: 4pm – 10.30pm (Trade session from 2pm); Thursday 21st January: Noon – 10.30pm; Friday 22nd January: Noon – 10.30pm; Saturday 23rd January: Noon – 7pm.

In conjunction with our transport partners Metrolink, holders of a valid Metrolink ticket for the day of entry can obtain £1 off Non-Members prices. Only one discount per entry.

Stockport Beer and Cider Festival

A Thank You from Beacon...

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended the festival this year for your very kind support of our work through donating and engaging with the charity at the festival.

Thanks to your kind donations, Beacon raised £4771.49 at the festival this year which will help us to improve the lives of people experiencing mental and emotional distress across Stockport. Beacon works with people who are dealing with depression, bereavement, anxiety, stress and relationship difficulties, to name just a few challenges.

We provide counselling services for adults at eight venues in Stockport and to young people from 14 secondary schools across Stockport, Manchester and Macclesfield. We also run services for disadvantaged young people outside of the school system, and targeted wellbeing programmes to reduce stress and raise confidence and emotional resilience.

As a small local charity, the festival has been an incredible support for our services, and has helped us to extend our reach to help even more local people who struggle with mental health problems on a daily basis.

On behalf of the Beacon team – Thank You! We look forward to seeing you at the festival in 2016.



CAMRA Awards



Trafford & Hulme Branch has been busy presenting awards recently. Their Pub of the Year Award went to serial award winner **The Knott** on Deansgate in Manchester. Above left Branch Chair Paul King (left) is seen presenting the award to Knott manager Simon Carroll. The branch Cider Pub of the Year was another regular winner – **Font** in Chorlton, well known for the very wide range of ciders and perries on sale. Pictured above right, Paul King presents the award to Font's Sacha Blythe.

Drink and Chat Lives On

It's often said that the traditional, no-frills, drink and chat pub is a thing of the past, *writes Peter Edwardson*. However, its demise may have been exaggerated. I recently happened to be in Stockport town centre on a weekday lunchtime for an optician's appointment, and afterwards thought I would call in Sam Smith's Boars Head on the market place for a swift pint. I'm familiar with the pub, but in general I've only visited in the evenings and at weekends.



It doesn't serve food (although it has in the past) but it was noticeable that, just before one o'clock, and not on a market day, it was busy, with a cluster of drinkers at the bar, and pretty much every table having at least one customer. The vast majority were over fifty, and most would fall into

the category of being "down-to-earth". No doubt most were either retired, unemployed or on disability, and so had time on their hands, but that includes a lot of people.

The clientele was mostly male, but it did include couples, individual women and all-female groups. I wouldn't see the pub as being in any way female-unfriendly – it's more a generational thing whereby older women just don't visit pubs on their own. Many widowed or divorced men will find a bit of social life in the pub, if they can get there, but women will be more inclined to sit at home and feel lonely. Maybe in twenty years' time that will have changed.

Being a Sam's pub, it has no piped music or TV sports, which will have encouraged the customers to chat to each other. It's the kind of pub where complete strangers strike up conversation and even offer to buy each other drinks. The low prices will help, too. For these people, the pub is a key part of their social life, not just somewhere to go for a "leisure experience". And, to cap it all, there was a large, fluffy, black-and-white pub cat, fast asleep on a bench and taking up two seats. I was warned not to be too affectionate as it had a tendency to be a bit snappy. You don't get that in Spoons. The Old Brewery Bitter was pretty good, too.

I'm a big fan of Sam Smith's pubs, which offer cheap beer, warm-coloured decor, bench seating, no piped music, no TV sports, and proper pub customers engaging in proper pub chat. I wouldn't say they represent my ideal pub, or that all pubs should be like that. But many other pub operators, in their quest to promote fancy food, music, TV and other attractions, seem to have forgotten what pubs were originally all about. The more distractions there are, the less likely the customers are to talk to each other. And so many pubs have priced themselves out of the reach of ordinary customers who once saw the pub as a valuable social resource. At a time when the isolation of the elderly is a growing problem, shouldn't we be promoting pubs' role as a centre for social interaction?

ACV Action by CAMRA

Trafford & Hulme CAMRA has recently submitted an application to list the Salisbury Ale House in the city centre as an asset of community value. If approved this will officially recognize the valuable community role that is played by the pub and offer some protection should the pub come under threat of redevelopment. The application builds on an on-line petition entitled 'Save the Salisbury Rock Pub' that attracted over 1800 signatures.

The application is currently being considered by Manchester City Council and a decision will be made on 21st August. 'Asset of Community Value' status would mean that the community will have six months to consider buying the pub should it be put on the market, and it also requires that planning permission be obtained for some changes where it was previously not needed.

Both Trafford & Hulme and Stockport & South Manchester branches are currently preparing further applications for 'asset of community value' status and details of these will follow shortly. If you feel there is a pub in the Trafford & Hulme area that either fulfils a valuable role in the community and/or is under possible threat from redevelopment then please contact Tim Field at public_affairs@thcamra.org.uk

John Glover



It was with great sadness that the Trafford & Hulme branch learnt of the untimely passing of John Glover from the Old Market Tavern in Altrincham, *writes Beverley Gobbett*. He passed quietly in his sleep on 21st June. John had always loved this pub in its various guises going from the Unicorn to the Hogs Head and latterly to the Old Market Tavern.

John was abroad with his wife Linda when he heard that the OMT was up for sale in 2005 and he wasted no time in finding out how he could acquire the pub. He and Linda took over in April 2006 where he soon established a bar full of 11 handpumps and an ever-changing list of local bands playing you out every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. He won the Trafford & Hulme Pub of the Year in 2008 and has remained in their top five ever since.

John was from an engineering background so if he couldn't get what he wanted he would just design and make it for himself. I had the privilege of him proudly showing me his self-made stillaging system in the cellars of the OMT. Very impressive. He not only designed his own equipment, but he also helped George Wright's brewery design a few of their beers, the most famous one, and one of my own favourites, is George Wright's Northern Lights.

I and three generations of the Trafford & Hulme Committee attended his funeral service at Dunham Crematorium on Monday 6th July. He would have stood proud to see all the people that turned out in the pouring rain to show their love and respect for John. There were family, friends and customers of the OMT. There were bikers, rockers and musicians of all kinds. Standing room only, we just about made it into the lobby and out of the rain.

The pub is now being admirably run by one of his granddaughters, Amy Glover with cellar assistance from two of John's sons. Next time you go in there, raise your glass and say a big 'Thank You' for the OMT to John Glover.

Pictured above, John Glover (right) receives one of his many awards from CAMRA – this one was the Pub of the Season Award for Summer 2014.

High Peak CAMRA Awards



High Peak & North East Cheshire Branch recently presented its Derbyshire Pub of the Year 2015 Award to the **Old Hall Inn** at Whitehough, Chinley. Assistant Manager Lexi is seen here accepting the certificate on behalf of Dan Capper the licensee while the bar team look on. The Old Hall and its sister pub the **Paper Mill** across the road are deservedly popular and always have a great range of beers with good food and a welcoming atmosphere.



High Peak & North East Cheshire Branch's Cheshire Pub of the Year Award for 2015 was won by the **White Lion** in Disley. High Peak Branch Chairman Phil Moss (left) is seen here presenting the certificate to Ray Calland who is the licensee of the pub. For a good few years now the White Lion, including everyone's friend Eric the resident dog, has been a great home for quality real ales and this award is recognition of the well kept beer and hard work always put in at this pub.

Bootleg Brewery Update

With the return of Erin Guy, the Head Brewer, from maternity leave, it is anticipated that the range of available beers may increase again. A rather disappointing period both for drinkers and the locum brewer, Jack Cameron, has seen owners Holts at a loose end when it comes to the direction of tiny Bootleg. While Chorlton Pale has been in great demand, a new fermenter is waiting to be used for more imaginative brews. Let's hope that Jack can persuade Holts to let him try some innovation now he has the support of the mistress of dark ales!



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