

2019
Greater
Manchester
Magazine
of the Year

OPENING TIMES

JULY & AUGUST 2019 / FREE



**INSIDE: STOCKPORT BEER & CIDER
FESTIVAL REVIEW / LOCAL AWARDS /
PUB WALKS / PUB AND BREWERY
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Contents & Information

Contents – July/August 2019

Pubs of the Month5	Pub Walks17
Curmudgeon6	News, Letter, Obituary19
Heard at the Bar7	Join CAMRA20
Cider News9	CAMRA Diary20
Family Brewer News11	CAMRA Awards21
Stagger13	Chorlton Beer Festival21
Beer Festival Review15	High Peak Pub of the Season22

About Opening Times & Contacts

Opening Times is produced by the Stockport & South Manchester Branch of CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Additional material is supplied by the High Peak, Tameside & North East Cheshire Branch, and the Macclesfield & East Cheshire Branch. It is printed by Matelot Marketing and distributed throughout Stockport, Tameside, South Manchester and East Manchester. There are also numerous outlets in Macclesfield & East Cheshire, Manchester City Centre, High Peak and Glossop.

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- * Derbyshire: www.derbybus.info

Copy date form the September/October issue is Monday 5 August.

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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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CAMRA Discounts

A list of local pubs generously offering a discount to CAMRA members can be found online at www.ssmcamra.co.uk/discount.htm

Front Cover

Good times at Stockport Beer & Cider Festival. See review on page 15. Photo by Lawrence Devaney.

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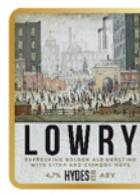
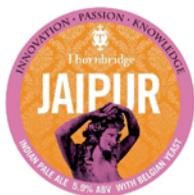
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Pubs of the Month

Stockport & South Manchester Winners for July and August



The Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA Pub of the Month for July is the Cross Keys on Adswood Road in Cheadle Hulme. Mike Wilson explains why it won the award.

It is always good to recognise a pub that has won a new lease of life – and this certainly applies to the Cross Keys. Mike Bradshaw, who has plenty of experience in the pub business, arrived at the Cross Keys last October and has wasted no time making his presence felt.

The pub dates from the inter-war period and the impressive, free-standing building has been opened up over the years. But the pub is large enough to have a separate vault for games including pool, so that this does not dominate other areas. This pub serves its community well, and Mike and his team have succeeded in attracting a regular band of locals who consider the Cross Keys to be home from home. The pub caters for various activities such as Morris Dancing and Karaoke (fortunately, not simultaneously!) and there are TVs for sport - but arranged in a way that is not intrusive to those who simply want a pint and a chat.

For some years there had been a disused function room upstairs. This has now been brought back into service and is available for use. The Cross Keys is a key supporter of local charities, including the nearby Chelwood Food Bank as well as the Manchester Children's Hospital.

And now to the beer. Traditionally, the only cask ale has been Hydes Original Bitter – not that there is anything wrong with that, especially at £2.20 per pint! Beer quality of late has been very good. However, some of the locals are partial to a mild, and so the range has been extended to include Hydes Old Indie. Not only that, but plans are afoot to extend the range further, possibly in time for our presentation night. So please do join us on Thursday 25 July from 8pm to congratulate Mike and his team for their hard work in making the Cross Keys such a successful local.

The Cross Keys is situated on Adswood Road, Cheadle Hulme, close to the junction with Ladybridge Road, Bird Hall Lane and Councillor Lane. Buses 313 and 368 will drop you close by.



The Stockport & South Manchester Pub of the Month for August is the Station Hop in Levenshulme. John Clarke went along.

When the Station Hop opened in February last year, it brought something new to Levenshulme's pub scene, as it has more of a craft beer vibe than the other local outlets. The stripped-back shop conversion, with its array of keg fonts

alongside bottles and cans from new and innovative breweries, was a first for this up-and-coming suburb. The presence of two handpumps dispensing equally modern cask beers was also a welcome sight in an area where cask beer tends to have a precarious existence.



It's surprisingly big, as beyond the front bar, which was quite spartan at first but has since gained a more homely feel, are two further rooms, and outside is a beer garden that plays host to a variety of street food traders.

Since opening, this excellent bar, a project by beer enthusiasts Chris Buxton and Amanda Finch, has put down real roots in the community and has become a home from home for many locals. This is evidenced by the various

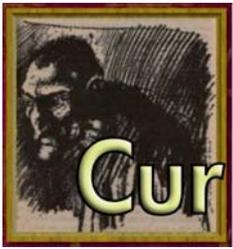
activities that take place – from an increasingly popular homebrew club to a regular quiz night. The notice board, complete with details of local events and postcards from holidaying regulars, adds to and emphasises the community feel.

Of course the beer is important and here there's usually something for everyone. The bottles and cans cover all beer styles from the most modern IPAs to Belgian classics. The keg taps dispense an equally eclectic range of modern beers, while cask fans are well catered for by the two handpumped beers, one of which is very often a stout or porter.

Join us on Thursday 22 August when we present this very well-deserved award to Chris and Amanda. The Station Hop is just a short walk from Levenshulme station while the ever-reliable 192 bus will drop you very close by.

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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 150 years. Check out their advert on the previous page.



Curmudgeon

When is a Pub not a Pub?

When it's a bar, of course. While there's no specific legal distinction, the two carry very different connotations. This is not to say one is better than the other, but they're certainly not interchangeable. However, it's notoriously difficult to come up with a hard-and-fast definition separating one from the other. Beer writer Martyn Cornell has recently had another stab at it on his Zythophile blog, where he suggests that a key distinction is that pubs tend to have a bar at right angles to your path when coming in through the entrance door, whereas bars have their counter running along a side wall. Often, this is indeed the case, but it rather breaks down when you have a multi-roomed interior with different entrances. But perhaps bars don't tend to have multi-roomed interiors anyway.

In general, while you can point to various characteristics that pubs usually have, and bars don't, it's always possible to come up with exceptions to the rule. Overall, it's often a case of "you know one when you see one". Pub names usually start with "The", but bar names seldom do. Pubs are often specific buildings designed for the purpose, while bars tend to be part of a larger building. Pubs make use of the upper floors of the building, while a bar may be underneath something entirely different. The licensees of a pub are likely to live on the premises, but with a bar they hardly ever do. Bars are often aimed at a specific, identifiable "crowd", while pubs seek a wider and more general clientele. And, at least outside urban centres, pubs often have car parks, but I can't think of a single bar that does. A pub retains its identity through various changes of ownership, while that of a bar is very much tied up with its current trading format.

Sometimes it's less a question of physical aspects than how businesses choose to define themselves. On Stockport Market Place there are two recently opened establishments right next door to each other – the Angel and Project 53. Both have a somewhat "crafty" ethos, but the Angel definitely comes across as a pub, whereas Project 53 is unquestionably a bar. With a new name and different décor, the Angel could be considered a bar, though.

The different connotations of the two categories will often influence how an establishment wants to be seen. One well-known London craft beer place took exception to being considered for a "Pub of the Year" award because they identified themselves as a bar. To them, a bar was modern and progressive, while "pub" suggested something stuffy and old-fashioned and very possibly belonging to Greene King or Punch Taverns.

Some Wetherspoons, particularly those in their more modern design idiom that are conversions of former retail units, do very much say "bar" rather than "pub", whereas others that are in existing pub premises, such as the Gateway in East Didsbury, are definitely pubs. However, their general atmosphere and wide customer mix are very much those of pubs regardless of their design. And, while their name says otherwise, I'd say that the vast majority of micropubs, going by the criteria set out above, are in reality small bars little different from the keg-only "box bars" often found in similar premises.

At the other end of the scale, there's also the vexed question of when a pub actually turns into a restaurant. Most restaurants obviously aren't pubs, but quite a few have the outward appearance of pubs and indeed might once have been one. Strictly speaking, if anyone can come in and have a drink without needing to buy a meal, it doesn't qualify as just being a restaurant. However, I'd say there also needs to be a test of whether any meaningful numbers of people actually do, and whether non-diners are made to feel welcome.

Curmudgeon Online: curmudgeoncolumns.blogspot.com

In Brief

Pub & Brewery News

As this issue of *Opening Times* was being put together, several pubs and bars were on the brink of opening and will all be covered in more detail next time.

In Davenport, the **Jolly Sailor** on Bramhall Lane was due to open at the end of June. This is the latest venture from the Almond family and we expect the Jolly Sailor to replicate the successful business model they have applied to their other pubs – so look forward to a carvery and a range of well-kept cask ales.

Two new micropubs/bars were also on the verge of opening as we went to press. In Hazel Grove the hugely anticipated **Beer More Social Bar** was expected to open in either late June or early July. This will be on London Road, occupying one of the units in the development



on the site of the very much unlamented **Grove**, pub. An artist's impression of the interior is shown here. Expect at least half a dozen keg beers and two cask beers, plus a variety of cans and bottles. The

second newcomer is to be in Gee Cross. **Jake's of Gee Cross** at 285 Stockport Road is an offshoot of the popular **Jake's Ale House** in Romiley, and will be offering four cask beers and traditional cider plus non-mainstream keg beers, quality gins and wine.

Two new bars also appear to be in the pipeline for central Stockport. Planning applications are in for new licensed premises at 28 Little Underbank and 8 St Petersgate, the latter being next door to the **Egerton Arms**. There's also an application for **Beer Traders** in Marple to extend into the next door premises and so pretty much double in size.



On the downside, we hear the rebirth of the **Gorton Mount** (Mount Road, Gorton) as a pub has been short-lived and it's now being converted to other use. Two Wythenshawe pubs

have also bitten the dust with both the **Happy Man** (pictured above) and the **Portway** closing their doors for good in recent weeks.

In Dukinfield, Robinsons' **Victoria** (Victoria Road) has been without cask beer for some time. The good news is that a new tenant was due to take over in early June and cask beer will be returning to this community local. In Hyde, there are two new cask ale outlets, too. The **Albion** (19 Market Place) now has two handpumps, but just the one cask beer – Robinsons Dizzy Blonde when OT called. The **Jolly Carter** (Clarendon Place) is also reported as having two handpumps in use, with Dizzy Blonde being joined by Wychwood Hobgoblin.



Stockport has also gained a new brewery, as we welcome Matt Haley's **To The Moon Brewery**. Formerly a keen homebrewer, Matt launched his Bramhall-based brewery at the end of May, his first beer being a keg DDH (that's double dry-hopped) IPA at 6.8%. It had appeared in the **Mounting Stone**, the **Magnet** and the **Petersgate Tap** as we went to press and was a very

impressive start. More next time.

Heard at the Bar

Pub News from Stockport, Manchester, Tameside and beyond

New Look Pubs

We reported last time that the **Royal Oak** (Stockport Road, Cheadle) was being refurbished by Robinsons. The pub has now reopened after a £200,000 spend.



For some years this was rather a twilight pub but it's now been transformed. The interior has been opened up significantly and while a case could clearly be made for a degree of opening out you do get the feeling that in this case it has been at the expense of some of the pub's character. Having said that, something needed to be done to secure the future of the Royal Oak and hopefully this is it – and of course everything is shiny and new at the moment, so it may get a pubbie feel once everything has bedded in.



It's all very easy on the eye and you can certainly see where the money has gone, with high quality fixtures and furnishings and a variety of seating options that should suit everyone. There's a food operation but it doesn't seem to dominate (and the availability of Pieminister pies is a definite plus), while cask beer has returned, too. When *Opening Times* called, Wizard, Unicorn and Trooper were all on handpump and hopefully trade will be such that turnover (and hence quality) can be maintained – bearing in mind that the Royal Oak hadn't sold cask for some time. All in all, it's a thumbs up – go and have a look to see what you think.



Robinsons have also unveiled the new-look **Rising Moon** at Matley, near Hyde, which reopened in May following a seven-week, and £250,000, makeover. There's a brand-new bar, walls have been removed, and a new lobby and main entrance have been created at the side of the pub. Food looks to be a very prominent part of the operation.

Holts has submitted plans for a large extension to the **Griffin** in Heaton Mersey. As far as we can see, the historic core of the pub will remain unchanged (presumably it'll get a lick of paint) while a large extension will occupy part of the car park with the apparent intention that this will be given over to dining.

In Higher Poynton, the **Boars Head** reopened on 24 May following a refurbishment by Punch Taverns. Our man on the spot reports that the new-look pub now has a bistro-type set-up, with the lounge and bar areas switching places. The pub is now open from 12 noon until 11pm every day, with food available until 8pm. Cask beer remains, with three handpumps on the bar – at the time of our visit these were Sharp's Doom Bar, Black Sheep Best Bitter and Marston's Wainwright but we understand these may change.

Nelson, Didsbury



The **Nelson** on Barlow Moor Road in Didsbury is a fine example of a down-to-earth community local but it hasn't been best known for the quality of its ales. That's now all changed thanks to the arrival of Adam Prestage as licensee last December.

Adam came to the Nelson after a six-year stint at the **Witton Chimes** in Northwich but he's a local man with connections to the Nelson, as he captained the pub's football team 20 years ago. He's also a big cask ale fan and on his arrival set about tackling the beer quality. In this he has certainly succeeded as not only have the sales increased from one to five nine-gallon casks a week, but Adam has also recently gained Cask Marque status for the quality of his beers. He told *Opening Times* that many of his regulars are now returning to cask beer – Robinsons Dizzy Blonde as a regular, plus a changing guest. Well worth a visit.

Archive Bar & Bottle

Stockport's newest pub (at the time of writing!) opened at 12 noon on Friday 14 June. **Archive Bar & Bottle** occupies former restaurant premises on Mellor Road in Cheadle Hulme – more or less opposite the station entrance and just a couple of doors down from the **Chiverton Tap**.



A project by Will Yeamans and Kristina Garner, a couple with considerable experience in the beer industry, a lot of thought has clearly gone into Archive with good use made of both floors in the building. Downstairs there's a large entrance lobby with a room to the right, where you will find the well-stocked fridges (with beers ranging from old school to very modern and including Belgian and German classics on the way), and to the left is the main bar area. A spiral staircase takes you to another room divided into a lounge area and a snug, with leather sofas and low tables.

Throughout, much use is made of natural wood and vintage furniture while the décor is in warm shades of green. Natural copper is also a feature and adds to the homely feel, while the large windows make it all very light and airy.

On draught there are 12 keg beers and two keg ciders, while pride of place goes to four handpumps. Squawk Brewing's Pavo is the permanent cask beer and this is joined by three guests – on opening these included beers from Buxton, Track and Tiny Rebel. Artisanal gins and well-chosen wines are another feature. Small plates and sharing platters keep you well fed.

Archive opens at 12 noon every day, closing at 11pm Monday to Wednesday, midnight Thursday to Saturday and 10.30pm on Sundays. Very highly recommended.

CIDER & CHEESE TASTING

"Join us for an evening of cider and cheese. You'll be taken through our favourite cheeses, paired with some of the finest ciders, each pairing delivered by the people that know the provenance of every serving. Ever wondered at the history and science behind why cider and cheese go hand in hand? These are the people to ask! We'll even throw in a little pairing of our own at the end!"

FRIDAY, JULY 26th

WHERE: 57 Thomas Street

TIME: 7pm - 9pm

PRICE: £18

HOSTS: Premier Cheese, John Clarke & Dick Withecombe

WHAT: Cider and cheese tasting event tutored by Premier Cheese and John Clarke, cider curated by Dick Withecombe. 5 ciders and cheeses plus 1 beer and cheese pairing.



*For dietary requirements please contact us directly at beerhousesnq@marblebeers.com

TUESDAY 1st OCTOBER

WHERE: The Marble Arch

TIME: 7pm - 9.30pm

PRICE: £50

HOSTS: Marble Beers, Little Pomona Cider, Ross Cider

WHAT: Three Course Tasting Menu with Cider Pairings. Marble Executive Chef Kerry Rickett provides a tasting menu of her design with Little Pomona Cider & Ross Cider supplying a range of ciders to match.



*For dietary requirements please contact us directly at marblearch@marblebeers.com

CIDER DINNER

"We're proud to present our first tasting menu delivered by our executive chef Kerry Rickett, fully showing her passion for the culinary arts and encompassing all that we love about food here at the Marble Arch. We've done plenty of beer pairings over the years, so this time we thought we'd team up with our friends over at Little Pomona Cider and Ross Cider to deliver an alternative and showcase just how wonderfully diverse cider can be. Each course will feature matching ciders that will be introduced by both the chefs and cider makers for you to enjoy!"

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Cider & Perry

Awards, News and Events



Awards for Petersgate Tap

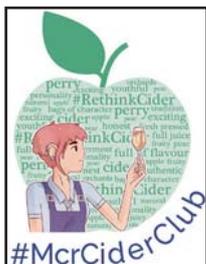


the award with Petersgate Tap owners Alan and Chris Gent.

The branch award led to the popular micropub going forward to CAMRA's Greater Manchester Cider Pub of the Year competition and, for the second year running, the Petersgate Tap emerged victorious. Co-owner Alan Gent was delighted and told *Opening Times*: "Obviously we were very pleased to win the branch award again this year, but this is really special. We know we've been up against some tough competition this year and it's good that everyone is upping their game and promoting cider and perry. We've upped ours too, though, and we're absolutely delighted that the Manchester branches have once again liked what we do enough to vote us regional champions once more."

The regional award is due to be presented on the afternoon of Saturday 17 August at around 3pm. Much jollity is promised.

Manchester Cider Club



Manchester is snapping at Bristol's heels to steal the UK City of Cider crown. Who says? That's the claim in the latest issue of *Imbibe Magazine*, one of the UK's leading publications for on-trade drinks professionals, writes *Dick Withecombe*.

Indeed as Gabe Cook, the 'Ciderologist' from *The Sunday Brunch* TV show, said recently: "Whisper it quietly, but this cider thing is all about to kick off".

The newly formed Manchester Cider Club is now helping lead the way in the new cider revolution in Manchester. A packed and sold-out cider tasting with 24 year old cider maker Albert Johnson from Ross-on-Wye Cider and Perry led to a discussion about holding a monthly cider club at the **Crown and Kettle** (2 Oldham Road, Manchester).

This was kick-started with a master class in May by Joe Weeks of Moss Cider. He presented a superb range of archived ciders summing up ten years of making Manchester Cider. There is now a full year's line-up of some of the most significant cider makers in the country.

The Cider Club meets at the Crown & Kettle on the second Thursday of each month from 7pm. Forthcoming events and speakers include:

July 11 – *Full Juice* magazine launch with Susanna Forbes and Gabe Cook and their selection of exciting, innovative ciders.

August 8 – Martin Berkeley of Pilton Cider.

September 12 – Tom Oliver, world-renowned cider and perry maker.

October 10 – Chris Hewitt of Dunham Press Cider.

Cider and Perry Champs

It was a clean sweep for Herefordshire in this year's CAMRA National Cider and Perry Championship, with **Mayfayre's Cider** (Priors Frome) and **Cleeve Orchard's Perry** (Ross-on-Wye) taking the crowns.

The winners were chosen at the Reading Beer and Cider Festival in May, which featured over 550 beers and 150 ciders and perries, plus a selection of foreign beers, wines and mead.



Of course both were on sale at this year's Stockport Beer & Cider Festival, where our customers had rather different ideas as to what was the best cider and perry. Cider of the Festival was a twice-previous winner – **Janet's Jungle Juice** from **West Croft Cider**, near Highbridge in Somerset. The winning perry was from Stockport favourites **Gregg's Pit** of Much Marcle, Herefordshire, with their

Brandy, Hendre Huffcap & Winnals Longdon blend. Plans are already in hand to visit both makers in the autumn to present their awards.

Cider & Food in Manchester

With its mix of sweetness, sourness, acid and tannin, cider is a natural food partner. With this in mind, Marble Beers have arranged two exciting food-pairing events.

On Friday 26 July there will be an evening Cider & Cheese tasting upstairs at **57 Thomas Street** in the Northern Quarter. This will be hosted by John Clarke and Manchester Cider Club's Dick Withecombe – expect fine cider and perry and superb cheese.

Later, on Tuesday 1 October, there will be a fine dining event at the **Marble Arch** (Rochdale Road, Manchester) with food both prepared and matched with top-rated ciders and perries. This will be hosted by *Opening Times* editor, John Clarke.

Look out for formal announcements of both events via the usual channels.

Full Juice Magazine



Full Juice is a brand-new free magazine that celebrates the world of craft cider. It will be published four times a year and given away free in quality pubs, bars and bottle shops, and also at festivals and events. The first issue was published on 28 May and the second edition should arrive in September.

It is the brainchild of four of the UK's foremost cider enthusiasts. Pete Brown, Gabe Cook, Susanna Forbes and Bill Bradshaw have spent the last decade travelling to the world's greatest cider making regions – learning, talking, and writing about what they found there. Now, they've come together to create this regular, periodical celebration of craft cider.

Highly recommended – look out for it in local pubs and bars.

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99 BROADSTONE ROAD
REDDISH
STOCKPORT
SK5 1AS

THE GRIFFIN HEALD GREEN

124 WILMSLOW ROAD
HEALD GREEN
CHEADLE
SK8 3BE

THE GRIFFIN HEATON MERSEY

552 DIDSBURY ROAD
HEATON MERSEY
STOCKPORT
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What's Brewing

Family Brewery News from around the region

Lees Generation 5000

In late May, JW Lees announced four special editions of its beers to be brewed with Generation 5000 of their ale yeast – a yeast re-pitched 5000 times since 1967.



JW Lees Bitter, Manchester Pale Ale (MPA), Founder's and the latest Boilerhouse beer were brewed on 3 and 4 June with the only crop of Generation 5000. The beers went into trade on 17 June so if you are lucky you may still find one on sale.

This landmark celebrates the historic ale yeast that has been a constant at Lees' Greengate Brewery for 52 years. Through delicately controlled, stress-free brewing, careful harvesting and storage, the brewers have been able to re-pitch the yeast for every brew of JW Lees Bitter since then. JW Lees were hoping this would draw attention to the importance of

yeast as an ingredient that not only adds its own flavour but extracts unique flavours from malts and hops in the brewing process.

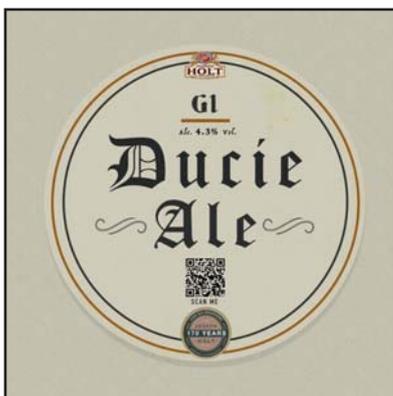
Michael Lees-Jones, Head Brewer at JW Lees, said: "We're incredibly proud to be brewing with Generation 5000 yeast. That we've been able to harvest so many times just shows the care we take in brewing and the commitment to our craft."

Tom Evans, Master Brewer at JW Lees, said: "During fermentation, as a result of alcohol production, yeast secretes compounds known as esters – flavours and aromas that are important to the final character of the beer. The JW Lees strain is subject to a carefully controlled fermentation to encourage and enhance delicate sweet, soft fruit qualities that can be commonly found in our beers."

Holts at 170

Joseph Holt will be celebrating its 170th anniversary with the release of six limited edition commemorative cask ales and a drinkers' virtual history tour of the iconic Manchester brewery.

A group of Greater Manchester pubs have been earmarked as part of a select number of outlets around the North West which will be taking part in the 170 Cask Ale Programme.



Pump clips at the pubs will have a QR or bar code. Customers can scan these codes with their phones to get information about the fascinating Joseph Holt story. Each of the six celebration ales will be codenamed G1 to G6 to mark the six generations of the Joseph Holt family and will be rolled out over the coming year. They will be available in around 40 of the brewery's 127 pubs.

The brews themselves will also have a different names to help plot different stages in the Joseph Holt story.

G1 - Ducie Ale (4.3%), available from June, this golden ale, brewed with heritage malt, marks the first premises occupied by Joseph Holt – at the Ducie Bridge brewery in Manchester.

G2 – The Mayor (4.6%), on sale in August/September, is named in recognition of second-generation Sir Edward Holt, son of founder Joseph Holt, who enjoyed the rare honour of being elected Lord Mayor of Manchester two years in a row.

G3 – Patersons (5%), a high-strength Joseph Holt Bitter, which is also dry-hopped. The name recognises how the second Sir Edward Holt played an active role in the Paterson Institute, the research arm of the Christie Hospital. His wife, Lady Margaret Holt, was also a tireless supporter.

G4 – The Sportsman (4.1%), which will go on sale in December/January, is a brown beer brewed with oranges, cloves and allspice. Its name salutes fourth-generation family member and chairman, the late Peter Kershaw, who was a former rackets and real tennis champion.

G5 – Ruby 40 (3.9%), so named to mark fifth-generation and chief executive Richard Kershaw's 40 year, (ruby) anniversary tenure at the brewery.

G6 – Pegasus (4.2%), a pale ale, all-English malt and hops, which marks the sixth generation of the Joseph Holt family. It takes its name from the winged horse of ancient mythology and recognises that today; two siblings – Jane and Andrew Kershaw – are working together at the brewery for the first time.

Sixth-generation Joseph Holt family member, Jane Kershaw, herself a trained brewer, says: "This is such an exciting time for Joseph Holt. What's more, by offering information about the company's heritage at the pumps, our one-off cask ale programme will make our valued customers part of the ongoing Joseph Holt story too."

Robbies' New Shire Horse



Following Robinsons' announcement on 1 April that they were launching their very own Shire Breeding Programme, the brewery brood mare, Horsemans Princess Giselle, finally gave birth to the brewery's first foal – Hillgate Henrietta-Anne, born on Saturday 27 April. Hillgate Henrietta-Anne was born in a family-owned field in

Nether Alderley. It was a real family affair with three generations of Robinsons present at the birth.

Helen Preece, Head Horseperson at Robinsons Brewery, explained: "Hillgate Henrietta-Anne is our first foal to be born following the launch of our own Shire horse breeding programme. She is a bay filly foal with four white legs and a blaze and she is absolutely perfect! We now have our own registered prefix, 'Hillgate', with the Shire Horse Society, which all future foals will inherit."

Stockport, Greater Manchester

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Stagger

Ladybarn & Fallowfield with Jerry Wicken

*Ladybarn, Ladybarn
Fly away home
The pubs are all closing
And the ale has near gone.*



Over the years most of the area's pubs have closed. Only the **Brewers Arms** (keg only) remains, so we are thankful that following Robinsons' sale of the **White Swan**, the building was taken over by **Ladybarn Social Club**. This year, the club is celebrating

its centenary. It is a lively community facility which, for a modest annual fee, locals can join and enjoy a range of activities. During the week one can find pool, bingo, snooker, darts and quizzes and on Saturdays there is usually a singing act. Whilst the quirky layout of the original pub has gone, there is still a separate room with a telly for the sport. CAMRA members always receive a warm welcome and the ales are invariably in excellent condition. The house beer is Robinsons Unicorn and the regularly changing guest ale was on this occasion Dunham Massey Deer Beer. The former went untried; the latter scored well from our team of tasters. The Club is also twice a winner of the CAMRA Stockport and South Manchester Club of the Year. Well worth checking out.



From here it is a longish (and on this evening, wettish) walk into Fallowfield and the long-established **Friendship Inn**. This Hydes pub has always been a busy boozier and tonight was no exception. It was rammed with a rather younger clientele than in the past. Usually we find a mix of ages but

this evening there were just lots of youngsters, most of whom were watching the England game. The pub is nowadays essentially one enormous room with a fairly large outside drinking area. Tonight, there were no free tables and it was two or three deep at the bar. This is, of course, to be welcomed, even though a ten-minute wait to get served seemed a bit excessive. Nonetheless, the beer range and quality remains impressive.

Nobody tried the Hydes Original, Lowry, Everards Tiger or Village Idiot from the White Horse Brewery in Swindon. But we did indulge in the Friendship Inn Golden Ale and Hydes Full Steam Ahead, which were both quite good, and Idaho from Ossett Brewery which was very decent.



Across Wilmslow Road stands the **Great Central** (pictured below left), a large Wetherspoons house. This was nearly as busy as the Friendship, certainly standing room only. Getting served was no problem however. Nobody tried the ubiquitous and nowadays disappointing Sharp's Doom Bar nor the Abbot Ale. We also sidestepped Mancunian Hoppy Blonde from Brightside and Lytham Brewery IPA and settled on Brains Bread of Heaven which was OK and Acorn Brewery Black Oak which was very good.



Continuing along Wilmslow Road, we arrived at **The Beer Studio** owned by Hydes, not as busy as previous hostelries but very welcoming. Friendly staff offered us tasters of all the beers before we ordered, of which the Bee's Knees from the Three Bees Brewery in

Darwin was good but a bit sweet for my taste, so I opted for one of the two Seven Brothers offerings: Amber Summit scored highly as did its stable mate Session Light. Less successful was Bradford's Farmers Blonde. Nobody tried Hydes Lowry.



Our final stop, a couple of hundred metres up the road, was **The Bar** which only opened in January. The premises were previously occupied by one of the Font bars. Busy with a young crowd but equally welcoming to us crinklies, the only cask ale available was Robinsons Dizzy Blonde. From 7pm - 10pm Wednesday to Sunday a pint can be

yours for £2.50 which is top value. The Bar also serves a range of craft ales, continental beers and a draught cider. The attentive staff made sure we were comfortable and the consensus was that the Dizzy Blonde was a good pint.

In 2006 when I first wrote about this Stagger these last two bars either didn't exist or did not serve cask. Despite the huge and continuing number of pub closures, this is a bit of good news and shows there is room for new outlets particularly in such a locality dominated by students. Back then our Stagger party jumped on a bus at the Great Central and headed for Rusholme. That is now a beer desert so our evening ended at The Bar.

So what we found in 2019 was a select group of clubs, pubs and bars serving real ale. These were mostly very busy with a lively young crowd which I hope bodes well for the future. Sadly, too many ales were available for our small group to sample a full range so if you fancy a friendly night out join us next time.

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Greater Manchester CAMRA - REGIONAL CIDER PUB OF THE YEAR 2017

Festival Review

Stockport Beer & Cider Fest 2019



So, another Stockport Beer & Cider Festival has come and gone. Until around 5pm on the Saturday, attendance and sales were almost 8% up. Then the football happened so people either went home or didn't come at all. Despite that, once the dust had settled the organisers were relieved that everything was only very slightly down on the 2018 event. There were still over 4,000 customers who managed to drink around 13,300 pints of cask beer, 2,300 pints of cider and perry, and almost clear out the bottled beer and cider bar.

Civic Visitors

We were delighted to welcome the Mayor and Mayoress of Stockport to the opening day. Here we see Andrew O'Shea, brewer at Bramhall's Made of Stone Brewery, flanked by Mayor Laura Booth (right) and Mayoress Lynn Glover. Andrew collaborated with Richard Conway at Reddish's Thirst Class Ale to make the special festival beer, You Can Call Me Hal, shown on sale in the background.



Festival Awards



As ever, we ran a competition to find the beer, cider and perry of the festival. The cider and perry winners can be found on page 9. The winning beers, based on the votes of our customers, were all from Bar Nouveau, and were all beers made by entrants into the Festival's homebrew competition which were then scaled up by local brewers.

The Beer of the Festival was won by **Marble Beers** with **Jonah's Stout**. This 6.8% 'vanilla and milk sugar stout' was a runaway winner and was brewed to a recipe by home brewer Jonah Stancombe (seen here on the brew day, right, with Marble head brewer Joe Ince).

The Silver Award went to **Torrside Brewing's Dandelion & BurDUNK**, a dandelion and burdock dunkelweiss, brewed with home brewer Peter Allan. Finally, the Bronze Award was picked up

by Track Brewing with their Helios IPA, a modern beer in the New England IPA style, and again brewed with Jonah Stancombe.

Stockport Beer and Cider Festival 2019

would like thank all of our sponsors & partners

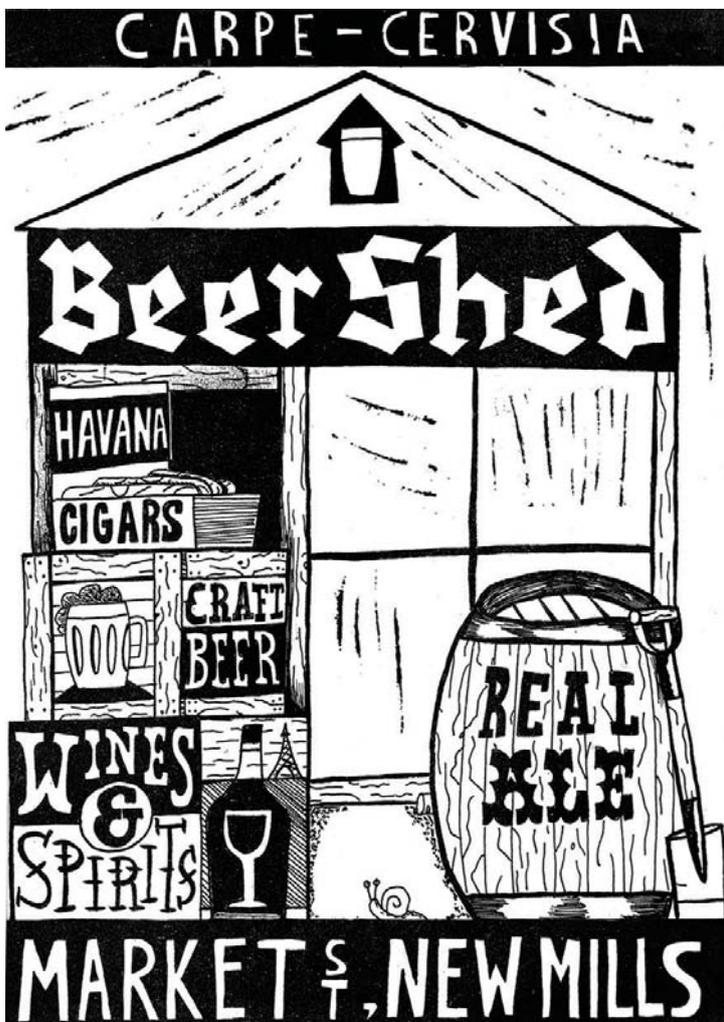


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Pub Walks with Chris Morris

The Bulls Head, Tintwistle



Some of the very best country pubs are away from fast main roads, where the pace of life is calm and peaceful. Tucked away on a quiet old road, this classic 16th century coaching inn is the perfect place to take a mid-walk pit stop. The friendly staff encourage walkers to visit, with muddy boots welcome, great home cooked food to refuel on, a real fire in winter and changing guest beers. As well as looking outstanding from the outside, the pub does not disappoint inside either, with oak timbers, settles and a collection of memorabilia making for a great, characterful pub! When last visited, the cask beers available were Exmoor Gold and Camerons Sanctuary. Opening times are Wednesday and Thursday 5pm to midnight; Friday to Sunday noon to midnight; closed Monday and Tuesday.

Train Information

The walk starts and finishes at Hadfield Station. If travelling from Stockport, this requires changing at Manchester Piccadilly. Purchase a return ticket to Hadfield. Services to Hadfield run twice an hour every day. For full timetable information visit www.northernrailway.co.uk.

The Walk

This is a moderate four-mile circular walk around Bottoms Reservoir. The OS Map is OL1 The Peak District (OS app also available).

Exit Hadfield Station through the car park and turn right onto Platt Street. Continue along this road, past the public toilets, until it turns right to go under a bridge. Instead of walking underneath, carry on straight ahead and go up the ramp to the start of the Longdendale Trail. Carry on this straight path for half a mile until you reach a bench with a memorial plaque for Martin Paul Rydings and a lovely view of Bottoms Reservoir. The path forks slightly just after this point. Leave the main path and take the descending track to the right, close to the stone wall. At the bottom, turn left and walk through the small tunnel. On exiting the kissing gate, follow the sign for TPT West which takes you down across the field towards the reservoir. Go through another kissing gate and take the path to the right signed Valehouse, keeping the reservoir on your left. After walking over the dam, leave the road at a gate on the left signed Bottoms Path. When the path forks next to a large warehouse, turn left and carry on along the reservoir. The path then passes through woodland, turns right and crosses a footbridge. At the top of some steps turn right through a large metal gate and up to a road. Turn left here up the hill to the main busy road. Cross over to the other side and up the steep hill signed Chapel Brow. Turn left at the top with the Bulls Head ahead of you.

After you have finished in the pub, retrace your steps back down the hill, over the main road and through the metal gate you passed through earlier. Instead of going left and down the steps, carry straight on along the wide path. This turns left and goes over another dam. Ignore the path down and carry along the dam wall. At the end of the dam, take the path to the left and carry on walking along the side of the reservoir until you reach a kissing gate. Turn left here and continue until you reach the same kissing gate you were at previously. Retrace your steps back up the hill and under the tunnel. This time, however, continue straight ahead over a stile and along a narrow path

across a field to another stile. Turn right here and carry along the path into Padfield. Turn right at the road and then take the next left to find further refreshment at the Peels Arms.

Padfield

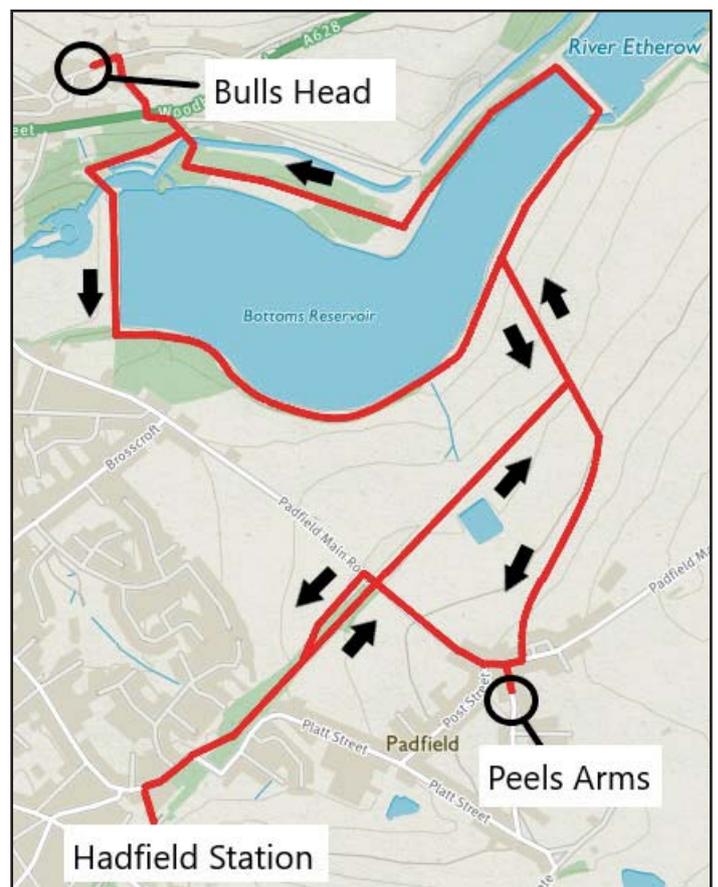


The **Peels Arms** is a great community pub that is also welcoming to visiting walkers. Good traditional food is served here, with cask ales available as well. These were from Theakston and Batemans when last visited. The pub is

famous for the "hole in the wall" wriggle-challenge which, I must admit, I did wriggle out of doing!

On exiting the pub, turn left and left again to carry on along Padfield Main Road which bends slightly to the right. When you pass high brick walls on either side of the road, you are crossing over the Longdendale Trail. Take the path to the left, then left again which takes you back to the trail. Turn right here and retrace your steps back into Hadfield.

If you have time sufficient time before your train home, the **Palatine**, opposite the station, is highly recommended. Recently refurbished by owners Robinsons, this walker-friendly pub gives a warm welcome after the day's exertions with a good range of well-kept Robinsons beers.



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7.30pm Miseley Brothers, 9pm Steeley Don

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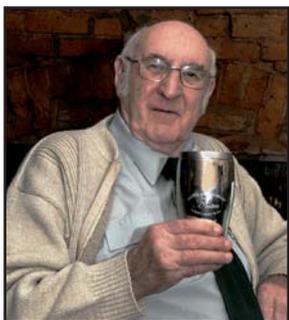
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Brian Taylor

Veteran CAMRA activist



It was with great sadness that Trafford & Hulme branch (formerly South Manchester) learned of the loss of Brian Taylor, aged 89, in April, *writes Beverley Gobbett*. Brian died peacefully following a meal and drinks with his family.

Brian joined CAMRA in 1974, his membership number was 887, so he was one of our founding members. Many members will know him and his

wife, Joan from the Great British Beer Festival where they started out working with John Swingler and Phil Kempton. They later went to work on the Volunteer Arms (the staff bar) and were responsible for us all having a clean glass every time we wanted a drink.

From 1986 until 1997 Brian and Joan's lives took them to Blackpool where they were active members of the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre branch and so worked the Fleetwood Beer Festival every year. I met Brian and Joan when Trafford & Hulme branch was relaunched in 2001 and Brian was our Branch Secretary. I had recently moved back to Manchester and knew nobody. They took me under their wing and invited me to stay with them rather than go home alone.

Through the National Winter Ales Festival in Manchester, and the Stockport and Chorlton Beer Festivals I got to know and trust Brian. He convinced me that I should go to the Great British Beer Festival at Olympia in London and the rest is history.

Although Brian was physically unable to be active with the campaign for the last three years, he was still very active on his computer and still enjoyed joining in where he could. Joan will remain active with CAMRA so look out for her on jollies with the Greater Manchester Ladies on the Lash!

Lost Locals List



A project lasting around six months has seen the Stockport & South Manchester branch produce a 'Lost Locals List' which seeks to document every pub in the branch area which has closed since the branch was founded in January 1974.

As the branch area also covers much of East Manchester, part of the city that has seen a grievous reduction in its pub stock, the list currently has over 290 pubs on it. You can find it online at: www.ssmcamra.co.uk/LostPubsPub.htm. As well as the list, you will see there is a map with links to archive photos and, where appropriate, to the WhatPub website.

It's very much a living document with much tweaking still to do, so any comments or corrections are very welcome (to the editorial address or email please). In particular, the closure dates of the Benchill (latterly the Roundabout) in Wythenshawe and the Dog & Partridge on Ogden Lane in Openshaw (possibly closed around 1980) are being notably elusive.

Pictured above is the closed Nags Head in Gorton with the equally closed Imperial Inn in the background.

Letter to the Editor

From Jim Cullen, organiser of the Salford Independent Beer Festival:

Interesting piece by Curmudgeon in last OT. However, I feel compelled to respond. In particular re the following...

"The Squeezed Middle" - this trope has been peddled by Rupert Thompson of Hogs Back Brewery in his role as SBDRC (Small Brewers Duty Reform Coalition) Co-Chair. In a UK ale context, these brewers are hardly small. Marston's? And is essentially a direct quote.

"Progressive Beer Duty..... It has had unintended consequences..." This is a direct copy and paste from the letter from the SBDRC (Rupert again) to Philip Hammond - Chancellor of the Exchequer dated 6 October 2017.

PBD was NOT introduced to "stimulate the number of small breweries". It was introduced to address economies of scale enjoyed by larger breweries.

Re the point about free trade beer lines. How else are micros to actually GET their beer into pubs? Seeing as the cosy cartel of the British Beer and Pub Association is essentially the SBDRC plus the major Pubcos? Essentially shutting out many micros on price.

As for micros beer being cheap to buy? I pay for almost 100 beers directly. From micros. And that is another false flag waved by the SBDRC. If anything, the reverse is true. As is visible on any Wetherspoon bar top.

I could go on.... But space dictates otherwise....

Different opinions are great. The spice of life. But that opinion piece almost looked like an SBDRC advertorial. With the words reordered.

Woodford CC Beer Festival



The Bank Holiday weekend sees Woodford Cricket Club holding its annual Beer Festival at the Moor Lane, Woodford ground. This will be the seventh year the club

has held the event, which has grown in popularity.

There will be a minimum of sixteen different real ales, including four from Bollington Brewery which has supported the festival since its inception with the provision of a bar, cooling equipment and help to set up.

Non-beer drinkers are catered for too, with a range of draught ciders and a gin bar. Wines will also be available by the glass, and for the hungry, home-cooked hot and cold fare will be available.

Club chairman Dave Williams told Opening Times, "The Woodford Beer Festival has become an important part of the club calendar, not only in boosting much-needed club funds, but also in helping us to play a wider role in the community and welcome people who might not otherwise go to a cricket club. There will be cricket played on both the Saturday and Sunday afternoons of the weekend. So please come and see us, enjoy some excellent beers and have a great time."

Event timings are Friday 23 August 7pm to 11pm; Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 August 1pm to 11pm. Woodford Cricket club is on Moor Lane, Woodford SK7 1PW and can be reached by the 42B bus service which stops outside the ground.

What's On

Local CAMRA Branch Diaries

Events for July and August for the following local branches:

- * **Stockport & South Manchester (SSM)**
- * **High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire (HPNC)**
- * **Central Manchester (CMCR)**
- * **Macclesfield & East Cheshire (MEC)**

Formal Branch Meetings - Member only

Tuesday 2 July – Piccadilly Tap, Gateway House, Station Approach, M1 2GH. Starts 6:30pm. (CMCR)

Monday 8 July – Bridge Beers, 55 Melbourne Street, Stalybridge, SK15 2JJ. Starts 8:00pm. (HPNC)

Monday 8 July – Egerton Arms, Astbury, CW12 4RQ. Starts 8:00pm. (MEC)

Thursday 11 July – Petersgate Tap, 19A St Petersgate, Stockport, SK1 1EB. Starts 8:15pm. (SSM)

Thursday 8 August – Hope Inn, 118 Wellington Road North, Stockport, SK4 2LL. Includes Summer Quiz Night. Starts 8:15pm. (SSM)

Saturday 10 August – Commercial, 58 Manchester Road, Mossley, OL5 0AA, Starts 1:30pm and will be followed by a social in local pubs. (HPNC)

Social Events & Presentations

All welcome

Saturday 6 July – Club of the Year: Moor Club, 35 Heaton Moor Road, Heaton Moor, Stockport, SK4 4PB. From 8:00pm. (SSM)

Thursday 11 July – Thirst Back Thursday at Chorlton Beer Festival. Meet Waterhouse, 67-71 Princess Street, M2 4EG, at 6:00-6:30pm and then tram to Chorlton, or meet at festival around 7:00pm. (CMCR)

Saturday 13 July – Social at Mouselow Farm Brewery Open Day, Mouselow Farm, Hadfield, SK13 7QQ. From 1:30pm. (HPNC)

Friday 19 July – Chorlton-on-Medlock & University Stagger: 7:30pm Ford Madox Brown, Wilmslow Park, Wilmslow Road, M13 9NG; 8:30pm Grafton, 27 Grafton Street, M13 9WU; final pub Sandbar, 120 Grosvenor Street, M1 7HL. (SSM)

Saturday 20 July – Day trip to Hawkshead Brewery Summer Beer Festival. If interested contact mrcamrasocials@hotmail.com. Estimated cost £10-15 per person subject to final numbers. (CMCR)

Thursday 25 July – Pub of the Month: Cross Keys, 10 Adswold Road, Cheadle Hulme, Stockport, SK8 5QA. From 8:00pm. (SSM)

Saturday 27 July – Social at Torrside Brewery Tap (Wharf Warehouse, New Mills Marina, New Mills Newtown, SK22 3JJ) and present Silver in Beer of Festival competition. Catch 12:18pm or 12:37pm train from Stockport to New Mills Newtown. (SSM)

Saturday 3 August – Day out in Lancaster. Details on branch website www.ssmcamra.co.uk/diary.htm. (SSM)

Friday 16 August – Bramhall Stagger: 7:30pm Three Bears, Jacksons Lane, SK7 5JH; 8:30pm Shady Oak, Redford Drive, SK7 3PG; final pub Mounting Stone, 8 Woodford Road, SK7 1JJ. (SSM)

Saturday 17 August – Pub of the Year: Buffet Bar, Stalybridge Station, SK15 1RF. To be followed by social in local pubs. Starts 1:30pm. (HPNC)

Saturday 17 August – Regional Cider Pub of the Year: Petersgate Tap, 19A St Petersgate, Stockport, SK1 1EB. From 2:00pm. (All)

Thursday 22 August – Pub of the Month: Station Hop, 815 Stockport Road, Levenshulme, M19 3BC. From 8:00pm. (SSM)

CAMRA Awards

Recent Presentations

The Stockport & South Manchester Pub of the Year Runner-up for 2019 is **Ye Olde Vic** on Chatham Street in Edgeley. Selling up to six changing guest beers, always invariably well kept, alongside traditional cider, this cosy free house, owned by its regulars, is a regular award winner. Licensee Steve Brannan is pictured below (right) with some of the Olde Vic team and the award.



The Stockport & South Manchester Pub of the Month for April was the **Wellington Free House** on Wellington Road South in Stockport. This new pub has proved to be a very welcome addition to the local pub scene and owner Lee Goodhall is seen here with his award.



The May Pub of the Month Award from Stockport & South Manchester Branch went to the **Royal Oak** in Didsbury. This famous pub has had a new lease of life under licensee Gary Tilman and senior barman Thomas Coswill, with turnover increasing by 10% year on year. Pictured above, local CAMRA member Stuart Ballantyne (centre) presents the award to Gary, Thomas and the team.

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11th & 12th July 18:00-22:30, 13th July 13:00-21:30
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Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival 2019

Manchester's friendliest beer and cider event returns to the idyllic setting of St Clement's Church, Chorlton, from 11 to 13 July.

Reflecting St Clement's role at the heart of its local community, the festival will focus on the great local brewers who have sprung up in Manchester and the surrounding area in the 15 years since the festival began.

Since its inception, the festival has raised tens of thousands of pounds to enhance the community facilities at St Clement's, supporting the installation of a disabled-access toilet, new roofs and windows and a new kitchen, as well as general repairs and maintenance.

The festival will feature two cask bars, an expanded keg bar offering 20 lines of keg and KeyKeg beers, and a dedicated bar from Stubborn Mule Brewery. The cider and perry bar will offer over 40 varieties alongside the world beers bottle bar.

New for 2019 is a gin bar featuring a range of local gins with a selection of mixers and garnishes.

A great food lineup from Tampopo, All About Pies, Fat Annie's and Go Get Stuffed will be available over the three days.

Entry on the gate is only £5 including glass and programme. Advance packages including beer/cider tokens are available from:
www.chorltonbeerfestival.org.uk

Chorlton Beer & Cider Festival is at St Clement's Church, Edge Lane, Chorlton M21 9AE and is open from 6:00pm to 10:30pm on Thursday 11 and Friday 12 July, and from 1:00pm to 9:30pm on Saturday 13 July.

High Peak Pub of the Season



High Peak, Tameside & NE Cheshire Branch Spring pub of the season is the **Masons Arms** in New Mills, tucked away down the original high street, not far from the Sett Valley Trail.

If it had not been for a group of dedicated locals, the pub would have served its last pint some time ago. Robinsons decided to sell the pub as it did not stack up with their business model. Step forward the "Friends of the Masons"

who appealed to High Peak Borough Council to have the pub listed as an asset of community value.

They were successful and new owners were found in Stuart and Victoria Turner, already owners of another former Robinsons house, the **Printers Arms** in nearby Thornsett. It has been nothing but good news since then for a pub which has a history dating back over two hundred years.

Julie Addison, the landlady (pictured above receiving her award from High Peak chairman Ben Zwierink), presides over a well-run pub. A range of ever-changing beers, live music and a range of social activities have put the Masons Arms back at the heart of the local community.



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