BOLTON BEER BREAKS

FREEPlease Take One



THE MAGAZINE OF THE BOLTON BRANCH OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

Spring 2017

Issue 16



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

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Bolton's Older Brewing Tradition & Membership Form

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Welcome to Spring 2017 - Issue 16

Welcome to the slightly delayed latest edition of Beer Breaks.

The branch is continuing to celebrate our 40th Anniversary, with various events throughout the year. There are several social outings planned and for more information please take a look at our website which is regularly updated.

You will also note on page 9 information regarding our branch beer festival. This is quickly becoming a "must go" event for ale aficionados everywhere. It is always a good event and staff volunteers are welcome. To volunteer, please see the staffing form available at the website - www.boltonbeerfestival.org.uk

We have more pub news including a newly opened outlet in Westhoughton, and some news of bygone brewing in Bolton. There is an award for the Bank Top Ale House as winter pub of the season and much more. In the picture Graham Walsh presents the certificate to the Ale House



Last date for submission of articles or adverts for the next issue is ?

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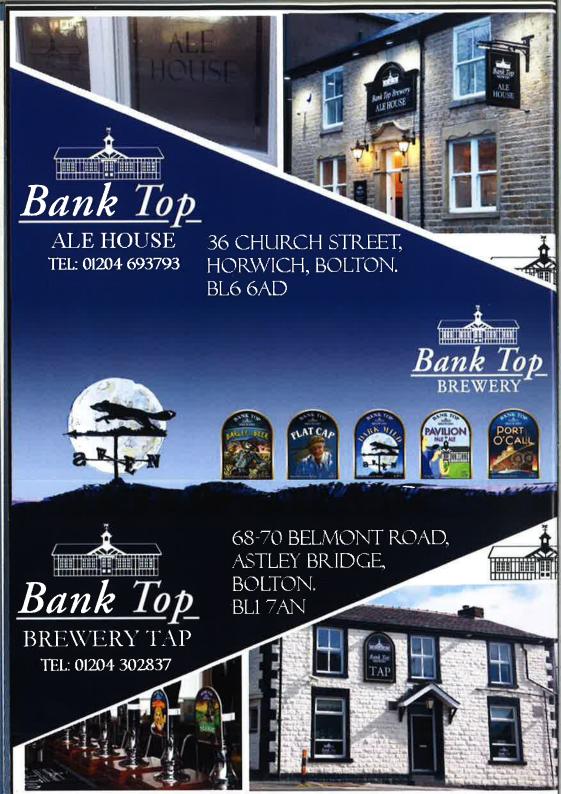
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Pub & Cider News

Pub News

The Hen & Chickens reopened at the end of October with the landlord from the Albion, Paul Kirkman, taking charge. Five cask beers are back on the bar from a wide range of breweries, food is now available again after a long break and a pool table has been installed in the small room at the rear.

Elsewhere the Lever Bridge in Darcy Lever has reopened, but here the handpumps have disappeared, so cask beer is no longer available. The Withins has reopened as well after a rather austere refurbishment and gained two handpumps on the bar, cask beer was initially available but more recently has not been.

In Westhoughton the new Micro Pub on Market St opened its doors at the end of October, and has 4 handpumps on the bar with selection of small breweries beers on offer, plus there is a large rack of bottled beers to drink in or takeaway and a real cider too. Across the road the keg Lounge Seven reopened in November after being closed for several months, however it closed again before Christmas amid rumours of licensing issues.

Down in the country lanes beyond Blackrod, Suzanna's bar and restaurant closed its doors at the end of September but is now believed to have been sold (subject to contract), so could be reopening soon.

In Horwich, dubTAP closed around Christmas it is understood that Epicurus brewing who took over the Hornbeam brewery in Denton last year have bought the business, they are also believed to be interested in running the Star And Garter on Bow Street in Bolton.

Near the Macron stadium, Stonegate Pub Co have closed Scotts bar for refurbishment and conversion into an identikit Missoula bar, a marketing man's dreamworld of Cocktails, Wines, Spirits and Suds. For those of you not familiar with the term 'Suds' their website helpfully advises these are world lagers, beers and ciders from the fridge, and are such wonderful drinks in their own right that you can pay an extra £2.50 to 'Boilermaker' them, this

adds a shot of bourbon/whisky into your chosen 'drink'. Lovely!

There have been changes on Nelson Square in the town centre whereby the cask beers regularly available in the past have all but disappeared under the new management of the Dragonfly, however across the square at Oscar's Bar, now renamed from Square Lounge, there are two handpumps on the rear bar to the right serving Marston's Pedigree and another guest from the Marston's range, this is linked to the closure of Downtown on Bradshawgate.

In the Market Place vaults a 'pop up' bar and restaurant has appeared, the Eagle and Child, in theory this is for a temporary period of two months whilst the host pub, the Eagle and Child in Shuttleworth, Ramsbottom is refurbished. After an initial issue with cooling, Marstons EPA and Westons Rosies Pig have been on offer recently.

In Farnworth the Bradford Arms was closed and boarded up for a while, but has now reopened, but as yet no sign of any cask beer.

Following the granting of planning permission a new pub/eatery called the Farmhouse Inn is to be opened by Greene King at the otherwise Industrial site at Cutacre between Little and Over Hulton.

Old favourites before they were closed the Gypsy's Tent on Deansgate and the Clockface in Kearsley have recently been given planning permission for conversion to residential flats and apartments.

Cider and Perry News

The North of England Cider and Perry Competition was held at the Manchester Beer and Cider Festival in January and local producer Red Bank picked up a Silver award for Crackin' Pear perry.

Two recent(ish) additions to the list of outlets for real cider in Bolton are Bunbury's and Yates. Bunbury's has up to six bag-in-box ciders available, usually three from Gwynt-y-Ddraig and three changing varieties. Yates has one changing cider or perry on handpump.

The Beer School

lust over 30 years after we moved to Westhoughton, we have finally got a drinking establishment that we are happy to call our local. A mere 100 yards from our back gate. The Beer School opened at the end of October 2016. On the bar there are 4 cask pumps, 4 keg pumps plus one for draught prosecco. At the time of writing there have been at least 72 different cask ales, some from local breweries such as Blackedge, Hophurst and Northern Monkey and others from further afield, for example Bad Co, Rat and Brass Castle. There is nearly always a mild, porter or stout available (hurray, it can be done!) On the keg pumps, Bootleg Spin Doctor is more or less a permanent feature, whilst the other three have interesting beers from breweries such as Rivington and Bad Co. For non-beer drinkers there is a good choice: there is a bag-in-box of Red Bank Autumn Orchard behind the bar, there's the aforementioned

prosecco, an interesting selection of wine and a range of small-batch gin. On the shelves there are plenty of bottled and canned beers to take away, and glass 'growlers' for take-outs of the cask ales.





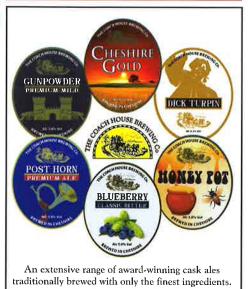
Owner Rachel Birch runs The Beer School with her partner Steve and barman Harry. Before the bar opened, Rachel expected that most of the trade would be daytime off sales of the bottles, cans and growlers. However, it's drinking on the premises that has proved the more popular, which goes to show that we were not the only people in Westhoughton who were waiting for somewhere to drink good beer without having to travel to find it. Over the last month or so, off sales have started to pick up, and the range of bottles and cans available is now over 150.



The atmosphere in The Beer School is friendly and relaxed, there's a wide age range of customers and a good buzz of conversation. Maybe occasionally the background music is a bit intrusive, but we understand from those in the know that it's a really interesting playlist. We've certainly got talking to quite a few people we only knew previously by sight. The place is very dog friendly - a water bowl and dog treats are provided.

The bar was used recently by Northern Monkey to launch their new beer 'Hop Pot'. More bar takeover events are planned, including Tickety Brew in April and Bad Co.





A selection of bottled beers also available.

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Alison Whitaker

The Grey Mare Inn



The Grey Mare Inn on Tottington Road, Harwood is a traditional pub where customers can enjoy great ale in great company. The tenancy of the pub was taken over in June 2016 by Gordon Leach who is supported by the pub's manager, Sarah Lowe. Sarah took over the

management of a pub which had benefited from a substantial capital investment that saw a full resurface of the pub's car park, the laying of a new patio and a return to the traditional exterior colours

of black and white.

Whilst real ale was only a minor consideration when Gordon took over the Grey Mare Inn, the introduction of guest ales, real cider and craft beer has supported a growing reputation for the provision of quality beer in a quality environment. The pub has two staple beers – Wainwright's and Landlord – with guest ales on rotation. In early September '16, just over three months after taking over responsibility for the pub, Gordon successfully achieved Cask Marque recognition for the Grey Mare Inn – an achievement to be proud of!!!



As a member of CAMRA and a strong supporter of its philosophy, Gordon, with the support of Sarah, has established a key objective for the Grey Mare Inn - to be recognised as the go-to venue for real ale, real cider and craft beer. To support this objective, the pub now offers all CAMRA members

(on production of a current membership card) 10% off any real ale or real cider. This offer is available during all opening times.

Contributing to the growing success of the Grey Mare Inn are two pool teams, live entertainment each month, free pool on Tuesday and Sunday evenings and a 'Happy Hour' from 2 till 8pm Monday to Thursday. In addition, the Grey Mare Inn shows live football and live rugby union as well as other major sporting events. Sarah is keen to have at least one darts team based at the pub so if you're looking for something to do on a Thursday night get in touch with Sarah or any member of the team.

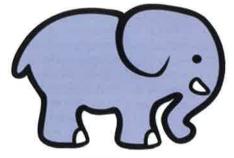
So, what are you waiting for? Get along to the Grey Mare Inn, taste its wares, which includes a large selection of lagers, wines, spirits, soft drinks (as well as tea and coffee), and enjoy a great pint, live music or sport, or just relax in a friendly, warm, environment.





CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALF

Bolton CAMRA





Beer Festival

April 27th - 29th

2017

Thursday 27th April 3:30pm-10:30pm

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Cruel & Unusual Dispense - Part 2

Some time ago I cultivated a strain of Brettomyces yeast from a can of **Chorlton Brewing's Citra Brett Pale** and have used it since in my home brewing. "What?" you might ask — surely canned beer is the ultimate symbol of fizz and tastelessness of beer; a coffin for dead beer.

In bottle conditioned beer the brew is primed for a secondary fermentation and then capped in a bottle. The resulting carbonation is relatively soft and contributes to the development of the contents. As in bottle conditioned beer skill is still needed to get the sugar levels right to prevent under or over carbonation. So it can be in cans with a polymer lined steel can the best – the main drawback is that sediment cannot easily be detected. Ironically many of the real ales we see on draught are anything but in bottle – having been pasteurised and displayed on supermarket shelves with the misleading legend of "Real Ale" – becoming merely brands.

The tide of small brewers turning to cans (containing both bright and living contents) seems exponential, often due to the new bottle shops and bars being able to stack them in fridges where space is an issue. Some of the relatively big players have their own canning plants. Whilst at Bolton's DUB, Head brewer Alex Parkinson (now running Vinyl Valley Beers) held back from "can-conditioned" saying "We actually cask conditioned the beer, then primed it and put it into keykegs to carbonate, then rigged them up to canning line. The beer is bright but purely due to us letting it drop in the cask and keg; we haven't actually filtered it. There will definitely be a small amount of residual yeast. Going forward, the beer will be crashed bright in the Conditioning Tank, transferred to a Bright Tank, force carbonated, then canned. We're only using temperature, so no actual filtration, the beer will still have some residual yeast. We use cans for UV protection, reduced dissolved CO2, they're quicker to cool and great to take to a picnic, party etc. Ours are bright, I don't believe cans should be can-

conditioned; I think you should be able to drink directly from a can if you can't decant into a glass". While technology whizzes at a pace to meet the expectations of the new social drinking spaces, LA's wild brewer Pascal Baudar, as an avowed "primitivist" has taken his TARDIS back 10,000 years to join History's earliest brewing heroes. This Belgian émigré is the pezzonovante of foraged beers, linking the practice with fermented foods generally. Pascal's fermentables include honey from wild beer colonies, and "lerp" — the sugary secretions of an aphid variety. Bittering agents used are a range of wild botanicals; the result is a Lambic-like brew which he stores in self-made clay vessels, reminiscent of ancient amphorae.

There has been a recent revival in the use of amphorae in both winemaking and beer brewing. Doyen of natural winemaking Gabrio Bini cultivates the vine on a volcanic dot near Sicily and matures his wine in amphorae – a tradition going back at least to the kvevil vessels of 8000 BC Georgia. The reaction of wine or beer to porous clay is both enzymatic and polymerising, producing a distinctively flavoured product, characterised by minerality and complexity.

Possibly the craft beer world's most revered brewer - Jean van Roy of Cantillon is using amphorae for some of his wild Lambic beers; after being filled with wort each amphora is covered with a thick cloth to allow interplay with the local yeasts & bacteria, then this is replaced with a cork bung for maturation to begin. Great Notion Brewery of Portland, Oregon are doing the same. Brewer James Durgan read that early amphorae were not fired at a high enough temperature to stay both porous and leak free, so they coated the inside with unrefined beeswax. Great Notion have revived this practice and is said to introduce varied honeyed notes to the brew. These are huge 60 gallon vessels, the beer mostly being transferred eventually to bottles. There would be for me a visceral excitement to tap one directly to a clay cup – connecting with 10000 years of brewing history.

If the four friends could hitch a lift on the Beer TARDIS to 2016, whilst monitoring the recent history of brewing and beer drinking on their journey, they would find keykegs coexisting with a revival of wood (they should try **BeerNouveau's Brew Bar**), and a tender growth of amphora aged beers. Would they then reflect that the battle primarily was, and remains about choice and the machinations of corporate brewing?

Recently CAMRA's technical group reported that given some particular conditions the beer from keykegs can qualify as real ale and this was accepted by the 2015 AGM.Brewing and the culture around it is part of a development that has had its dark periods where Big Brewer pushed around the little drinker, but is there not a ray of light illuminating a tradition where every pint of keg-conditioned beer references beer from the amphora.

Keith Sowerby

BOLTON BEER BREAKS

Guess The Pub

Two more pubs for you to identify. Both of these are close to the borders of Bolton, and one of them is right on the border of our closest metropolitan borough neighbour.

The two pubs in the last edition are the Rabbit in Horwich and the Old Three Crowns in the centre.





Bolton's Older Brewing Tradition

In 1891 Alfred Bernard travelled to Bolton and featured the Alexandra Brewery of John Halliwell and the Crown Brewery of Magee & Marshall in his Noted Breweries of Great Britain. M&M only closed in 1970 ending the first phase of Bolton's brewing tradition.





Both breweries were state of the art, with extensive maturing cellars & stabling for the dray horses. Halliwell's had huge oaken fermenting vessels and wasa noted for scrupulous hygiene. In its heyday the Alexandra Brewery had 100 tied houses, including its tap The Alexandra Hotel. The business was taken over by Magee & Marshall in 1910.





David Magee's Crown Brewery was erected in 1866 after 13 years of smaller scale brewing. It was well equipped with refrigeration the hopped wort to minimise infection. Bernard was impressed by bothy the pale ale and a bitter ale he considered equal to true Burton ales "being bright, sparkling and well flavoured with the hop". In its later life M&M produced a beer popularly known as Crawin Up t' Wah, because of its effect on the lower limbs Contrasting to M&M's 60,000 barrels per year a number of more modest brew houses. John Atkinson (situated on Commission Street) could be sampled at The Greyhound, J Harner aroun Bromley Cross, Joseph Sharman and Willian Tong's Diamond Brewery on Deane Road; Walker on Spa Road.

Closed by 1891, both Dawes & Fogg and Newstea & Walker brewed on Bradshaw Gate; brewin nearby were The Derby Brewery and Nightingale

Samuel Smith (no relation to the Tadcaster clan) brewed at both The Dog & Snipe and the still serving Old Original Bay Horse in Horwich.



Since Bernard's book several local breweries have come and gone — James Jackson, Bolton Free, Bolton Clubs, Howcroft's, Leach's, Settle's, Spa Wells, Uncle Tom's Cabin, Wingfield Silverwell (on Nelson Square) and Woods. Over the 20th Century these minnows were swallowed by breweries later to be taken over and closed themselves.

Brewery records are mostly lost or dispersed amongst various archives, and with most of the brewers and drinkers long gone, we may never have a definitive list of, or recipes for, of beers brewed, drunk, liked or hated.

Greenall's bought and closed M&M in 1970, but in 1988 were considering reviving the Magee name, with a light mild and bitter ale (not the same style as a bitter) brewed from traditional recipes, but eventually dropped the project.



Brewing wasn't revived in Bolton until the advent of Bank Top, followed by Dunscar, Hogarth's, Holywell, the short-lived DUB and in 2016 Northern Monkey.

If you have any further information on, and especially recipes from, I would love to hear from you via Beer Breaks.



I Wines by the Glass I Creat Range of Cask Ales I
I Local Bank Top Beers I Families Welcome I Good Homecooked Food I
I Fantastic Menu I Locally Sourced Produce I





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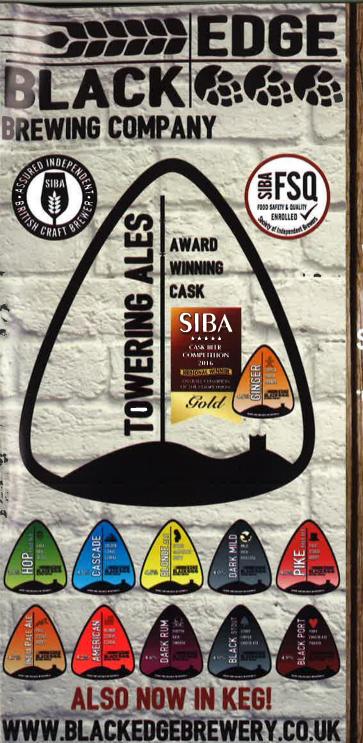
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