

Camra Bolton Branch and its Pubs 2015

Bolton Branch Pubs included in the 2015 Good Beer Guide were

Bolton – Alma, Bank Top Brewery Tap, Barristers, Bob's Smithy, Bolton Ukrainian Club, Dog & Partridge, Spinning Mule

Bromley Cross – Dunscar Arms, Flag

Harwood – House Without a Name

Horwich – Bowling Green, Crown, Victoria & Albert

Branch Meetings in 2015 (Incomplete)

Balmoral 28/01/15

Masons Arms 12/03/15 Committee

Sweet Green Tavern 26/03/15

Old Three Crowns 21/04/15 Committee

Hen & Chickens 30/04/15

Bay Mare 19/05/15 Committee

Great Ale at the Market 27/05/15

Blue Boar 25/06/15

Old Man & Scythe 30/07/15

UKI Club 27/08/15

Horwich RMI Club 24/09/15

Ainsworth Arms 21/10/15 Committee

Hen & Chickens 29/10/15

Balmoral 26/11/15

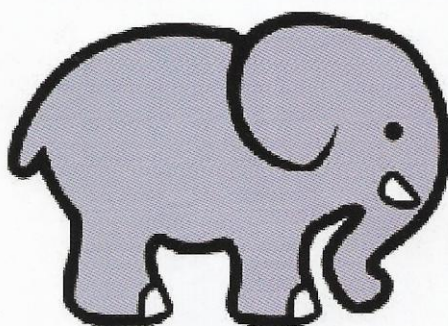
Balmoral 17/12/15 (Social Meeting)

<u>Town Centre MILD CRAWL.</u>		
<u>Wednesday 6th May 2015</u>		
Sweet Green Tavern	1	7.45pm
York	2	8.10pm
Spinning Mule	3	
Downtown Bolton	4	8.45pm
Olde Man & Scythe	5	
Blue Boar	6	9.20pm
Hen & Chickens	7	
Albion	8	
Other Town Centre Pubs.		
Alma		
Balmoral		
Barristers Bar		
Dragonfly		
Elephant & Castle		
Great Ale Year Round		
Hogarths		
Millstone		
Old Three Crowns		
Star & Garter		
Yate's		



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**

Bolton CAMRA



Beer Festival

April 9th – 11th 2015

Thursday - Saturday

**Thursday 9th April
4:00-10:30pm**

**Friday 10th April
12:00-10:30pm**

**Saturday 11th April
12:00-10:30pm**

at
Bolton Ukrainian Club
99 Castle Street
Bolton BL2 1JP

**40+ Real Ales
Real Ciders
&
Ukrainian Craft
Beers (Bottled)**

ADMISSION £2
(except Friday
after 5:30pm £3)
plus £2 (refundable)
glass hire

HOT FOOD,
Soft Drinks & snacks
available at all sessions

*Poster kindly
sponsored by:*



CAMRA members FREE ADMISSION Thursday
And only £1 all other sessions
(on production of valid membership card)

Over 18s ONLY except Saturday before 6:00pm

Supporting



Bolton Hospice
Living with Illness
Registered Charity
No. 518756

www.boltonbeerfestival.org.uk



@BoltonCAMRAbeer

Pub News

The Branch recently voted the Victoria and Albert (V&A) on Lee Lane in Horwich as Pub of the Year for 2015. The award was based on consistent quality and range of real ale and cider



served throughout the year as well as good service and value for money. Many congratulations to Dave and his team. Second place went to last year's winner Bank Top Brewery Tap and third to the Hen & Chickens.

Branch Cider Pub of the Year went once again to Bank Top Brewery Tap in Astley Bridge. 6 real ciders are usually available.

Branch Pub of the Season for Spring 2015 went to Great Ale Year Round in Bolton Markets. The bar is now run by Steve and Anne Simms and who have recently expanded the size of the bar, begun to serve food and extended hours until 7:00pm on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. They have also renamed the bar Great Ale at the Market. It has an ever changing range of beers on two handpumps, mostly from local breweries.

The Brewery Bar, owned by and attached to Blackedge Brewery in Hampson St Horwich, is now open. It is a handsome refurbishment of a previously unused building and serves 6 real ales, usually showcasing wonderful Blackedge beers straight from the brewery. Guest beers are occasionally available and there are a number of real ciders. Opening times are limited to Friday 4-10pm and Saturday 2-10pm, although this may need to be extended if the bar's early success continues.

Elsewhere in Horwich former Branch Pub of the Season, the Bowling Green has closed. Whether it will open again as a pub is uncertain. Licensees Jason and Nicola Monks have moved to take over the Jolly Nailor in Atherton. The Branch wish them good luck with their new venture.

The York on Newport St serves one cask ale during the week and two at weekends, mostly from the Marstons range, but there are often guests from other breweries. A recent mini-festival had ales from Okells, Harviestoun and Leeds Breweries.

The new licensee at the Blue Boar is occasionally serving real ale from the two handpumps. The Pineapple at Astley Bridge has been closing and reopening at frequent intervals. It has now been sold by Heineken UK to Admiral Taverns with a suggestion that cask beer may become available in the near future.



In Farnworth, the Kings Arms Hotel is up for sale. It is meanwhile remaining open with the current owners and has up to 6 cask ales on the bar and remains a place well worth visiting. The Bradford Arms has unfortunately removed its single handpump.

In Kearsley, the White Horse is a recent convert to real ale and is serving Black Sheep Bitter as a permanent fixture alongside a rotating guest which was Robinsons Dizzy Blonde on a recent visit. Up the road, the Moss Rose closed in early January, seemingly forever, but has since reopened. Cask beer is not available though. Further along, the Spread Eagle is currently closed.

In Brightmet, Withins has returned to its original name after a spell as Pizza Me, although cask ale remains absent. Tansy Green on Brodick Drive does continue to serve real ale, usually Theakstons Black Bull or Lightfoot. The Crofters Arms in Harwood has three handpumps, most recently serving Thwaites Original, Bank Top Flat Cap and Phoenix Arizona. Prices have been some of the cheapest around.



Branch Pubs Officer, Don Chattwood has been through the planning applications associated with 59 pubs that have closed in the branch area since 2009. Two pubs had no traceable planning application, both since demolished, one of these is now land for sale by Trust Inns, the other is a hole in the ground. Four Pubs are closed and boarded up and have yet to have any Planning Applications. Five pubs have been converted to full or partial reuse as A3 Cafe/ Restaurants, this does not require planning applications in itself but all have had other Planning Applications related to the change of use, one currently has a refused Planning Application. Fifteen have been converted to A1 shop or other retail units, again this does not require planning applications in itself, but all have had other Planning Applications related to the change of use. The remaining 33 pubs have all had Planning Applications related to their change of use to residential, education centres etc. Most tellingly perhaps, of the 59 pubs, only 5 sold Real ale when they closed, 45 did not (On 9 pubs there was a lack of information at the time of closure).

The Red Lion in Blackrod had a Planning Application submitted to demolish the pub and replace with housing, as had already happened on its car park, but this was subsequently withdrawn.

The Branch tries its hardest to keep up with the ever-changing pub scene. If you visit a pub, check it out on CAMRA's comprehensive pub database at whatpub.com and let us know if there are any changes required, by using the submit changes option.



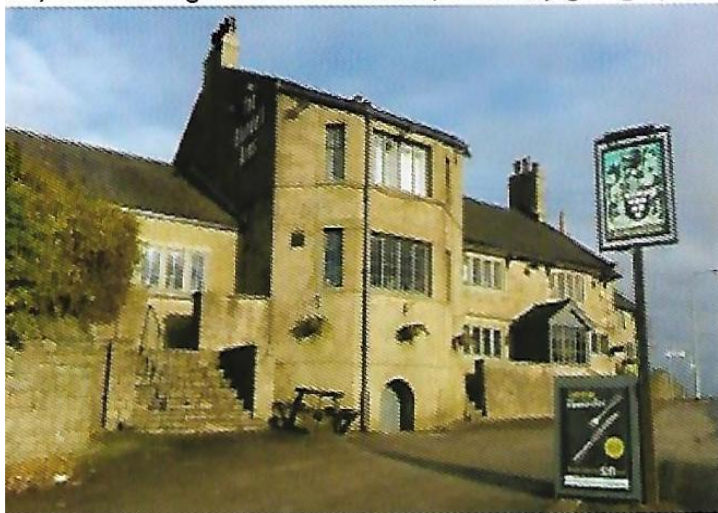
Camra Members can also score the quality of the beer which will help us to decide on Branch pub awards. Alternatively email us at pubs@boltoncamra.org.uk.

The Wanderer – O'er t' moors

On a warm sunny evening, the 125 bus drops me across the road from the Bob's Smithy (Tip: buy a very reasonably priced Horwich return ticket.) This spacious old pub, nowadays has a distinctly modern feel replete with marble bar top, which boasts 6 hand-pull real ales. I opt for a pint of one of the regular beers, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker, and a very fine drink it is too. On such a fine evening I take advantage of the more recently created beer garden, out the back of the pub.



Now a 10-15 minutes stroll toward Horwich brings me to the Blundell Arms, a gastropub, which although more popular with diners, also welcomes drinkers too. There are 3, or 4 levels, on entering from the roadside, but keep going up and bearing left until you reach the bar,



on the top level, and the reward is a choice of up to 4 beers. Having purchased a very tasty Adnams Broadside, I make my way to the grassed beer garden, which offers a fantastic view over West Bolton and beyond down to the Cheshire Gap.

A leisurely amble and I'm in the Jolly Crofters and enjoying a pint of the marvellous Moorhouse's



Black Cat. Again, the pub relies heavily on serving food, but the bar area has a homely feel for the casual drinker. And for my final pub tonight, I meander down the hill toward Horwich to arrive at the Bank Top Alehouse and a wide selection of their beers. However, I try the guest beer, a very good Peerless Triple Blonde. The pub, of course, has that distinct Bank Top House quality interior, both modern and cosy, which is nice as there's now a nip

in the air. And so, with great timing, I cross the road for the 125 bus back to town.

With all that fresh air and sunshine, t'was a crackin' wander o'er t' moors, sampling good real ale, in and outside lovely pubs.

Want more information about Bolton's real ale pubs? Visit: www.whatpub.com

BEER FESTIVAL VOLUNTEER - GO FOR IT!

Having attended Beer Festivals for many years as a punter I decided it was time to become gamekeeper and be a volunteer.

A huge amount of meticulous planning and organisation takes place ahead of the event including the drawing up of a rota by the staffing officer to ensure that all areas and sessions are manned adequately whilst providing an opportunity for volunteers to experience the various duties.

I arrived Thursday evening and was handed my credentials - a name badge and a Volunteer T Shirt. My first task was on the door - Meeting & Greeting customers offering general guidance whilst handing out wristlet bands which allows secondary access should they need to leave the venue temporarily. At this point you also record entry and egress on counting devices to control numbers in the hall at any given time. This is mandatory for Fire Regulation purposes. Doorman duties also includes handing out carrier bags for Festival glasses for customer convenience and to ensure departing patrons do not incur the wrath of the local constabulary.

Next up I worked on the Cider bar. I know next to nothing about cider aside from if you drink too much of it you tend to fall over. I was fortunate enough to be nursed through by local CAMRA branch Cider Officer who happily shared her great expertise as and when required.

On Friday I initially worked on the door before a spell returning the £2 deposit on Festival glasses which are then placed in the glass washer. Not a glamorous task but it provides an opening to chat to like-minded individuals, mostly about beer and wave off visitors who without exception when questioned confirmed they had enjoyed the occasion.

My next assignment provided a chance to rest my legs as I sold the £5 strips of Beer tokens whilst advising customers that unused tokens could be cashed in or preferably donated to the Festival charity Bolton Hospice.



I continued my learning curve on the Cider bar before eagerly accepting an invitation to serve Real Ale on the Beer bar. By now it was 19:30 and the hall was very busy. This was *hard core*. It was difficult locating all the beers at first but the merry-makers showed great patience and good humour without a hint of criticism. I was admittedly a tad relieved when my shift was complete but I absolutely loved the experience.

I finished off on the door waving off happy departing revellers with their obligatory carrier bags. I wasn't involved on Saturday but returned on Sunday for "Take Down" of the vast amount of kit required to run a beer festival. This is physical work but not too demanding and provided an opportunity for a de-brief and to bid farewell to other recruits.

I would heartily recommend the event to any CAMRA member who fancies helping out. You can commit to as many or few shifts as



you choose and stipulate which jobs appeal or you wish to avoid. Festival volunteers are afforded regular breaks, provided with a glass and encouraged to partake of a little light refreshment gratis as a thank you for their endeavours. All who attend are enthusiastic and allow newcomers to become competent at a suitable pace in a hassle-free environment. Will I back next year? - You bet - it certainly beats my daytime job!

Thanks to everyone who attended our 2015 Festival – it was a great success! We managed to sell out completely, and if you were with us on Saturday evening, and felt disappointed, we can only apologise. There was a considerable range of ales to try along with, what proved to be very popular, a varied selection of ciders & perries. There were Ukrainian and continental bottled beers available, which also went well.

The festival was opened officially by ex Bolton Wanderers star and local licensee, John McGinlay (pictured right with Cliff Burgess). We are very grateful for the patronage of such a Bolton legend and wish him well.

There should be a special thank you to all our sponsors. These ranged from sponsoring a barrel, our staff t-shirts to the bar. Particular mention should go to Great Ale Year (now renamed), Blackedge, Irwell & Bank Top breweries and of course the Ukrainian Club. The unstinting help, endless good cheer and relentless enthusiasm from all at the club makes the business of running a beer festival, so much easier.



None of this could have happened without the staff. All of them were volunteers, who gave of their own time. There is always a small team of dedicated volunteers, who organise the entire festival. They all know who they are, so I will not name check all of them. However it should be acknowledged that all of this would not have happened without them. In fact they are already organising next years festival!

The charity of the festival, Bolton Hospice, has benefitted to the tune of over £300, thanks to your generosity, and the proceeds of the raffle.

BEST BEERS 2015

Dark Beer of the Festival :

Tainted Love – **Angel Ales**

Pale Beer of the Festival:

Bibble – **Wild Beer**

Overall Beer of the Festival :

Tainted Love – **Angel Ales**

Cider / Perry of the Festival:

Blakeney Red Perry – **Butford Organic**



2016 Bolton CAMRA Beer Festival – 14-16 April

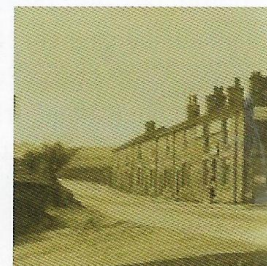
See you there!

Bob's Smithy Inn

Bob's Smithy Inn is on the edge of the moors, and is over 200 years old. The inn is named after the blacksmith who allegedly spent more time in the pub than in his smithy across the road.

Local knowledge (aka Bolton CAMRA Pubs Officer) points to the fact that it was a Tetley pub in February 1983 selling Tetley Mild and Walkers Best Bitter on hand pumps having previously been on electric diaphragm pumps when it was Tetley Bitter too.

In 1990, the year Nelson Mandela was released after 27 years & the world wide web was invented, Stewart and Lorraine Brookes took over at the Bob's Smithy, after 3 years running the Grey Mare on Tottington Road.



The pub is, and has been, in the Good Beer Guide from 2011 to 2016, 2002 to 2009 and 1995 to 2000 plus 1987 - 20 out of the last 22 years – quite an achievement. There is always a good selection of ales which are well kept and served. It is possibly the only place for miles where there is usually a pint of Champion Beer of Britain, Timothy Taylor Boltmaker.

Handy for walkers on the west Pennine Moors and visitors to the Macron stadium which is 2 miles away, it has several seats at the front to enjoy the panoramic views over the South Lancashire plain.

Twenty five years later and Stewart & Lorraine, with the help of son Jordan, are as keen and enthusiastic as ever. They have transformed the "Smithy" into probably the best country pub/restaurant in the Bolton area.

Here's to the next 25 years!

Guess the Pub

Two interiors for you this edition. Both are out of town pubs, and both also have a reasonably long history.



Last months answers:
The Finishers and Hogarths

Dates for your diary

October 29th – Branch meeting, 8:15pm at the Hen & Chickens

November 27th – AGM, 8:15pm at the Balmoral. Election of branch officers and nominations are, welcome via website, at October meeting, or on the night.

December 17th – Branch Social, venue TBA

PUB NEWS AUGUST 2015

Awards

The vote for Branch Pub of the Season for Summer 2015 ended up a close race between the Bank Top Brewery Tap in Astley Bridge and the House Without a Name in Harwood. Such was the quality of both establishments that it was decided to give an award to both pubs. Presentations will be made in the coming months. Congratulations to both of them for their continued success.

The Bank Top Brewery Tap continues to be showered with awards. After being voted Branch Cider Pub of the Year during the spring, it went head to head with the winners from other CAMRA Branches in Greater Manchester. Mystery shopper-style cider experts from across the Region visited all the pubs and we are very pleased to say that the Brewery Tap came out as the Regional Cider Pub of the Year 2015. The announcement was made at the recent Cider Festival in Manchester and the certificate was recently presented awarded at the pub. It serves up to 6 changing cellar-cool real ciders and perries from a range of producers.

Town Centre News

The Flying Flute on Bradshawgate now has 2 hand pumps. These were dispensing Thwaites Wainwright and Tetley's Gold in the early weeks. The price of £2.10 a pint is competitive, but £1.55 for a half seems unreasonably expensive by comparison.

The Hen & Chickens have recently been serving Bag-in-Box real ciders.

The Founders Arms on St Georges Rd, for sale since October 2013 is now thought to have been sold subject to contract.

South Bolton News

The Market St Tavern at Stoneclough is the latest pub to be LocAle accredited by the Branch. The venue has 5 handpumps and recent beers have been from Blackedge, Bank Top and Brightside. The licensees are looking to source the best beers from a range of local breweries. LocAle status is awarded to pubs serving beers to a consistently good standard from breweries within 15 miles of Bolton centre



The Freemasons on Market St in Farnworth has the same owners, Amber Taverns, as Hogarths on Churchgate. No surprise then that the pub has been serving some of the excellent beers from Hogarths brewery. On a recent visit Beer Street was on the bar at £2 a pint.

North Bolton

The Bolton News reported that "Plans to create a new orangery at the front of a run-down pub in Astley Bridge have been approved. Developer Nick Howcroft is developing the former Three Pigeons Pub into the Henighans Mediterranean restaurant and bar as well as creating seven apartments in the rear of the building. He has now been granted permission by the council to create an orangery at the front of the Georgian building where drinkers and diners will be able to sit out. Mr Howcroft has previously stated that the Astley Bridge project is now his top priority."

The Flag Inn at Bromley Cross now has a 25p a pint Camra members discount. Usually on the bar are a range of guest beers from breweries such as Phoenix, Hopstar and Moorhouse's.

Deane

The Queen Anne on Junction Rd has recently had Robinsons Beers on the bar. These have included Dizzy Blonde and a rare cask offering, the strong and very wonderful Old Tom.

Horwich and Blackrod

The Bridge in Horwich has now stopped serv-

ing real ale due to lack of demand, which is perhaps surprising given that several nearby pubs have many handpumps on the bar. You lose some, you win some.

The nearby Toll Bar Inn on Chorley New Road has just installed a handpump and has begun serving Lancaster Blonde at £1.95 a pint. This is thought to be a first for owners Bravo Inns, at least in their Bolton pubs. Let's hope it's not their last.

The Brewery Bar at Blackedge Brewery has extended its hours to open 4-10.30pm on Thursday and 2-7pm on Sunday as well as the usual Friday and Saturday hours.

Across the road the Bowling Green, reported in the last edition as being closed, is thought now to be being refurbished for reopening later in the autumn.

The Crown is also undergoing major refurbishment, but will only be closed for a short period.

Bolton Council have decided that prior approval is not required to demolish the Red Lion in Blackrod. Expectations are that it will be gone very soon. An application for new housing was submitted immediately after the decision.

Other News

It was reported in the last edition that the Tansy Green at Brightmet serves Theakstons cask ales. Since then the pub has unfortunately stopped serving real ale.

Closed Pub News

Plans to convert to flats both the Kings Arms on Chorley Old Road and Smudges on St Georges Road junction with Chorley Old and New Road have received planning approval.

The application to convert the Stags Head on St Helens Road to a Wedding Hall/Conference centre has been refused. The pub closed in 2009.

The former Park Inn Egerton Street in Farnworth, has been approved for conversion to flats. The pub closed in November 2013.

Sparkles Nitespot formerly known as the Anchor, 14/16 Union Buildings (off Bradshawgate near the Alma Inn) is up for sale for £125K. It closed as a pub in 2007 and was empty until 2010. Photographs show it still has the bar installed by Bass in 1987.

The Branch tries its hardest to keep up with the ever-changing pub scene. If you visit a pub, check it out on CAMRA's comprehensive pub database at whatpub.com and let us know if there are any changes. Camra Members can also score the quality of the beer which will help us to decide on Branch pub awards. Alternatively email us at pubs@boltoncamra.org.uk.

STOP PRESS

It has recently been announced that the Dog & Partridge is to be demolished. This is a great shame that we are to lose another of Boltons iconic pubs.



The Following Pubs closed in 2015

Founders Arms 18, St Georges St. Admiral Taverns had been trying to sell the pub since 2013 at £200,000 but the price had reduced to £120,000 by the time it was sold in July 2015. It closed on 16/09/2015. Planning Application 96306/16 was for conversion to 7 flats 18/04/16.

Clock Face 63, Old Hall St Kearsley. Final owners were Kensington Maintenance Services, though the final landlord was caught with a cannabis farm on the premises on 03/12/15 and the licence was subsequently revoked. The pub was for sale with Fleurets for £150K to £160K during 2016, being sold in October 2016, followed by a planning application (97772/16) in early November 2016 for conversion to 3 apartments with 6 bedrooms which was approved 13/01/17.

Daisyhill Hotel 3, Lower Leigh Road Daisyhill. Pub closed by Thwaites 03/09/15 after being sold, price was £200,000 in 2014 reduced to £175,000 then £160,000 being converted to residential on Planning Application 95007/15

Dunscar Arms 547 Darwen Road Bromley Cross. Pub was closed by Oxford Inns on 30/09/15 despite it being in the 2015 Good Beer Guide it had been for sale by AC Valuers for £200,000 on 09/09/14, but £150,000 on 11/11/14. Planning Application 94926/15 approved 11/03/16 to extend and convert to 4 flats, a full skip was noted outside on 18/06/16.

The Following Pubs Opened in 2015

Blackedge Brewery Bar Moreton Mill, Hampson St, Horwich. Blackedge Brewery opened the bar on the first floor above the Brewery on 02/03/2015. Initially only open on Friday and Saturday, Thursdays and Sundays were soon added and gave drinkers more opportunity to sample the seven Blackedge Cask beers on offer.

Provenance 46-48, Market St Westhoughton. A handpump was installed on the bar of the upstairs café/restaurant and sold Blackedge Hop initially from 14/06/15.

Bunburys 397, Chorley Old Road. New microbar opened 21/10/15 with three cask beers from independent brewers and a wide range of bottle beers from around the world.

Great Ale at the Vaults. Vaults under Market Place. Opened in Pop Up bar in upstairs temporary area of new development of the Market Place on 20/11/15 before moving to its permanent unit downstairs in the Vaults.