



NORTH CHESHIRE

Covers Warrington and Vale Royal, including Frodsham, Lymm and Northwich. Halton has its own active Branch, covering Runcorn and Widnes Meetings are usually held in the Warrington/Northwich area, with regular surveys of outlying areas. Beer Festivals are held every year, at Northwich

New members and formerly inactive members are especially welcome.

Branch contacts: Nick Bosley 01925 837538 or chairman@camranorthcheshire.org.uk
Gary Chester 07976 268353 or secretary@camranorthcheshire.org.uk
Out Inn Cheshire articles or adverts: Jeff Bouch, 01925 654905 or jeff_bouch@hotmail.com
If anything of remotest interest is happening in your local, let these guys know!
Visit our North Cheshire CAMRA web-site www.camranorthcheshire.org.uk



CAMRA DIARY

*Feel free to call us for more information.
Events start at 8 pm unless specified otherwise.*

- Tue 8 September; Pubs Survey; Great Sankey (Meet Chapel House)
- Fri-Sat 18-19 September ; **Northwich Beer Festival**
- Tue 22 Sept ; Beer Festival Wash Up Meeting, Penny Black, Northwich
- Fri-Sun 25-27 September; **Nantwich Beer Festival**
- Thu-Sat 1-3 October; **St Helens Beer Festival**
- Fri 9 October; Branch Meeting - Red Bull, Kingsley
- Sat 10 October; Cider Minibus Crawl of Branch Area (all day event)
- Thu-Sat 22-24 October; **Wirral Beer Festival**
- Thu-Sat 29-31 October; **Warrington Oktoberfest (Non CAMRA*)**
- Thu-Sat 29-31 October; **Appleton Thorn Village Hall Beer Festival (Non-CAMRA)**
- Sat 17 November; Regional Meeting – Liverpool
- Thu 12 November; Brewery Visit - George Wright, Rainhill
- Fri-Sun 20-22 November; **Barnton Cricket Club Mini Beer Festival (Non-CAMRA*)**
- Tue 25 November; Pubs Survey - Glazebury (Meet Comfortable Gill)



* = supported by but not run by CAMRA

Lymm Rugby Club 1st Beer Festival

Coming after one of the hottest weeks of the year so far, keeping the beer cool in the well insulated, windowless function room of Lymm Rugby Club was always going to be a major challenge. Luckily Mike Elliott was on hand with banks of coolers for the beer, and the beer was maintained at a drinkable temperature with the coolers working their socks off 24/7.

This first beer festival was certainly ambitious in its scale with 28 real ales and 8 traditional ciders on offer. Sensibly, they had secured sponsors for all of the beer as well as glasses, wristbands and glasses. I was particularly pleased for the wrist bands, as it meant I could go outside from time to time to cool down!

Money raised went to the mini and junior sections of Lymm Rugby Club as well as supporting the charity When You Wish Upon a Star, all very worthwhile.

I particularly liked the layout of the programme, with sponsors listed next to the specific beers they had sponsored.

I also liked the column next to each beer outlining the distance from brewery to festival, ranging as it did from 6 miles to a very precise 34.8 miles. In fact all but two of Cheshire's breweries were represented as well as Cheshire Cider.



Entertainment on the Saturday night was provided by the unique Bernard Cromarty, whose rendition of Streets of London had everyone singing along, and Wild Rover bringing a raucous end to the night quite befitting a beer festival at a rugby club. Well done all, particularly in the face of extraordinary temperature!

Gary Chester

CAMRA CHESHIRE PUB OF THE YEAR

CAMRA North Cheshire branch entries for Cheshire Pub of the Year are:

1. Plough, Houghton Green - branch pub of the year 2009, LocAle accredited, featuring Weetwood best cask, Cheshire Cat, Wells Bombardier plus three rotating guest beers.
2. Albion, Battersby Lane, Warrington – LocAle accredited with generally up to six different rotating beers plus ciders and perries. New brewery due to be up and running in autumn 2009.

GLAZEBURY UPDATE

It's really pleasing to announce this years North Cheshire Real Ale In a Bottle winner is Bents Garden Centre in Glazebury. Many people will know it has won multiple awards as a garden centre and for its Christmas displays and how over the last few years, it has expanded dramatically.

Following one of these expansions, food and drink appeared with a gradual increase in locally produced bottle conditioned beer. The current range includes the full range of Woodlands, Frodsham brewery (formerly known as Station House), organic beers from Marble in Manchester and 3Bs as well. Recently added to the range are beers from nearby Dunham Massey (including mild, milk stout and porter) and as with all the other beers, there are tasting notes to go with them

It's great to see so many local beers in one location so congratulation to all at Bents (if you want to visit opening times are Mon-Fri 8.30- 20.00 changes seasonally; 8.30 – 17.30 Sat; 9.00 – 17.00 Sun). Also a website <http://www.bents.co.uk/>

Whilst visiting Bents I caught up on the local pubs; the **Foresters** still has one hand pump offering the Landlords Special Ale (best ask what it is). The Comfortable Gill shows you don't need a continuing change in beer if you offer regularly two good consistent beers, here in the form of Taylor's Landlord and Copper Dragon Black Gold. The **Grey Horse** rotates the guest beer (Landlord on visit) and the **Chat Moss** goes from strength to strength offering three beers from the Marston stable with usually at least one from Jennings.

If you want to visit Glazebury then there are regular bus services to and from Warrington (WBT services 19, 28 and 28A).

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NORTH CHESHIRE PUB OF THE YEAR 2009; THE PLOUGH

2009 saw a close contest with the **Plough** at Houghton Green coming out ahead of the Ring o' Bells at Stretton.

What makes the Plough a winner, aside from the high quality of the Locale Weetwood best cask and excellent Cheshire Cat (plus the rest of the range at regular intervals), Wells Bombardier and 3 rotating guest beers? Really it has to be said it is the fact that it is regularly busy with males and females of all ages creating a lively atmosphere especially on quiz nights. When the two main courses for a fiver offer are on the place is even busier (however it can be busy still when no offer is on!!). There is clearly no sign yet of the credit crunch hitting the Plough. In fact, one of our committee members, flexing his grey pound, praised the excellence of the food during one of the voucher weeks. When I asked which day he went, with a look of disdain he replied, "Which day? I went three times!!"



Early June saw the presentation of the certificate for Pub of the Year 2009 from CAMRA North Cheshire along with plentiful supplies of sandwiches and pork pies courtesy of landlord Keith Anders.

Photographs were taken, and usually we print a picture our chairman or secretary with the licensee. However, in this case Keith and Dee's daughter, Kara, had her hair done especially, so a family portrait is shown instead (in contrast, the CAMRA officials in attendance didn't have enough hair to get done!!).

The Plough

Mill Lane, Houghton Green
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Weetwood Best Cask,
Cheshire Cat,
Wells Bombardier
+ 3 rotating Guest Beers

Excellent Food
7 days a week

CAMRA North Cheshire Pub of the Year 2009

Dining Out *Inn* CHESHIRE - Duke of Portland, Lach Dennis

“Real food, cask ales and no bullshit...” reads the headline of the regular advert of the **Duke of Portland** in Out *Inn* CHESHIRE. Looking at their website and seeing the plethora of awards at the Duke, I felt it was long overdue for a visit and food review and I wasn't disappointed.

Differently to its sister outlet (the Belle Epoque in Knutsford), the Duke of Portland is very much a pub that encompasses a fine dining experience, rather than a restaurant that just happens to feature a bar. Noting its *raison d'être*, cask ales feature very prominently on the bar taking pride of focus as you enter the building. All the beers are from the Marston's stable, but this is quite a wide offering these days with beers from Jennings, Wychwood and Banks; all from breweries owned and operated by Marston's. On the day I opted for a Jennings Cockerhoop and a Marston's Bitter – both excellent. Clearly they take as much care of the beers here as they do of their food.



Staff service was excellent, and the training here is obviously first rate – it is rare that you will see teamwork amongst the staff to the level it is exhibited here. The staff were predominantly young, very helpful and not at all intrusive (a difficult balance), and the understated dress style here really suits the almost casual atmosphere they are trying to create. The icing on the cake for the staff would be for them to smile more, a minor thing but important nonetheless and this needs a little work.

The Duke of Portland are clearly proud of the way that they source local produce wherever possible, and even go as far as crediting their suppliers on each dish on their menu – something I've not seen anywhere else, but really affords a good sense of confidence in both the provenance and quality of their food.

For starter, I opted for the Black Pudding, served with an equally sized mash and a delightful cream. £6.95 for the starter, but forget all my previous ravings about black pudding elsewhere. I have never seen one plated like this before and the taste was exquisite. All the flavours worked superbly in balance together and this now takes pride of place as my top starter. Ever.

For main course, what else was there to go for except the grilled sirloin of Cheshire farm Beef, hung for 21 days for tenderness served with proper chips (cooked in beef dripping no less) with organic watercress and a grilled tomato. £18.95. I also opted for a side dish of steamed green vegetables at £2.95. The chips were, as expected, excellent. Watercress was good, and I never, ever eat the grilled tomato – but I did here! Green vegetables were nice and crisp although if I had a criticism here it would have been nice to see some variation in the vegetables with perhaps some cauliflower or carrots. The main event was of course the steak. This was very nice. Delightfully tender and certainly of a good size – just not quite as flavoursome as I was expecting.



I rarely mention other people's dishes in my review, but in this instance I'm going to make an exception. My dining partner had the loin of Glynn Arthur lamb. Totally free range and grass-fed, this is only available to the Duke of Portland. I had a taste of the lamb, and it melted in your mouth. I just know that if I had opted for the lamb, I would now be proclaiming this pub as the best dining experience in Cheshire! So far.....

Gary Chester

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Matthew Mooney

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Dining Out *Inn* CHESHIRE; Netherton Hall, Frodsham

One of a number of pubs in the area that have been acquired by family brewers J W Lees of Middleton near Manchester, the Netherton Hall was treated to a full refurbishment before opening as a Lees house last year. Much the better for the refurb, I thought it was time to give the food a whirl after giving them time to settle down.

The beers on offer are all from the J W Lees stable, and three were on offer at the time of my visit, Bitter (which I was drinking, and very nice too), Coronation Street and the seasonal Gold Digger. We had pre-booked a table and after buying our drinks at the bar were shown to our very comfortable and clean table where we perused the menu.

8 starters on the menu priced from a very reasonable £3.95 to £5.45 (plus a few sharers), and an extensive range of main courses (£8.95 to £13.95) with salads and sandwiches also available make for an intelligent offering.

For starter I opted for the Prawn Cocktail at £4.75. This was a staple starter of yesteryear, but is still served nearly everywhere. A simple dish (or large wine glass in this case) with lettuce, North Atlantic prawns and Marie Rose sauce, served with brown bread and butter. Easy to overlook these days in search of perhaps more exciting dishes, but it is a ubiquitous starter for a reason. Delicious.

Main course; I chose the Butterfly Cajun Chicken described as a succulent chicken breast coated in Cajun spices and grilled, served with a timbale of rice with sour cream and tomato salsa, priced at £9.95. The dish arrived and at first I struggled to locate the chicken, covered as it was in an enormous dollop of sour cream, with a similar amount of salsa by its side. The taste was very good, but there was so much sour cream; this was slightly overpowering and unbalanced the meal somewhat. I would have preferred the sour cream and salsa to be served separately to allow you to add as little or as much as you want.

Service was excellent, with really bubbly staff in a pub with an excellent atmosphere.

And for the historians, here is an old photograph of the pub taken about 1997



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Northwich Victoria Football Club 1st Beer Festival

It's always good to welcome a new beer festival onto the circuit, even when they are not official CAMRA events. Never really any doubts about this one though, organised by local member Andy and assisted by another member Mike Elliott (who has his own company setting up and running beer festivals), there was never any doubt that the beer would be in fine form.

This first festival ran for just one session – Saturday evening, so the beer order had to be just right. As it was, the beer lasted right through the evening but little was left over at the end so it would seem they did get it just right.

Getting there could have been difficult. In a marvellous bout of seemingly Martian thinking, the local authorities, the bus companies (or maybe all of them) have decided that two football clubs at Wincham do not require a bus service from Northwich! In an even better example of proper lateral thinking, the organisers realised that this may be a bit of a problem and therefore laid on their own free bus service from Northwich to and from the festival. Well done for that bit of forward thinking.

Entry was by ticket in advance, and the event was sold out. On entry you got your commemorative glass (and for some strange reason a commemorative set of beer mats), and exchanged some cash for beer tokens which in turn were exchanged for beer.

The focus at the festival was very much on Cheshire beers, a sensible move for a first festival as supply lines are that much easier when dealing direct with a brewery. The quality was, of course, excellent, and it was particularly good to see Cheshire Cider making an appearance for the first time in ages at a local festival.



It almost certainly made more money than the whole of the football club has in the recent past. Let's hope this success can be replicated at the club proper. As successful as the festival was, I don't think it will have raised enough money to fund any transfers. What I do hope is that this is the first festival of many.

Gary Chester



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IN AND AROUND GRAPPENHALL

Real ale lovers in the Grappenhall area have never had it so good with three pubs and three clubs within easy walking distance serving cask ale. On the first day of August I took two 'Marvellous Mad Mild Month Mighty May Marathon' CAMRA recruits (and my 'dry white wine' drinking wife) around the area to sample the best beverages on offer, and to introduce them to the beer quality scoring system.

Leaving our car at the Springbrook, we ambled along Stockport Road to the **Thelwall British Legion**. Not quite knowing if we would be allowed in, I enquired behind the bar to see if we could gain entry via our CAMRA membership cards, immediately we were welcomed with open arms, paid our entry fee of 50p each and signed the visitors book, noting that only men need to pay and sign in... Striking up friendly conversations with the drinkers at the bar, we were given a large sample of each of the two ales available. I chose the Wickwar Rite Flanker and my friends chose the Thwaites Wainwright. Alas as the barmaid pulled the first pint of Wainwrights it ran out...!! No matter, up popped the cellerman to change the nine. We sat down in the comfortable and relaxing bar area to chew over our beers, and to admire the skills of a couple of gents on one of the snooker tables. There was a separate area for playing pool and a large function room which holds an annual beer festival.

Bidding farewell we walked back to the **Springbrook**, This is a large 'two for one' restaurant at the junction of Stockport Road and Knutsford Road. It has a distinct separate drinking area in the restaurant, which is becoming more and more uncommon as established pubs become more food orientated leaving little space for the drinker; I do like gastro type pubs where you feel you're in a pub and not just stood in an area next to diners. The two beers on offer were Bank's Bitter and the ubiquitous Jennings Cumberland Ale. Both of which we felt were of average quality. One of our pints (after leaving it to settle a while) had a two inch head; this didn't seem to register with the uninterested barmaid. We quickly downed our pints in the largely empty lounge and set off for our next venue.

Crossing the busy Knutsford and Chester Roads it was only 100 yards to the **Ex-Serviceman's Club**. This is a well established large private club with a function room, a bar area with a large flat screen TV usually showing rugby league and major football games, and three snooker tables in the adjacent snooker room. Outside there is a well used bowling green. As a member of the club I signed in the other three guests for 50p each and wandered over to the large bar. Paul, the licensee is an avid

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supporter of cask ale and has turned this club from a keg only bar to ‘allegedly’ the biggest seller of cask ale in the area. We weren’t disappointed with the choice of cask ales on offer, there were Davenports Summer Storm, Marstons Pedigree, Everhards Sunchaser and Everhards Tiger. I opted for the Summer Storm and a half of Sunchaser, both in good form. After friendly banter with Paul we departed for the walk to Bell House Lane near the village.

The **Grappenhall Community Centre** is a thriving village club with many activities held in the large bar area and in the barn next door. We had recently enjoyed the excellent annual beer festival here. We were warmly greeted by some well known faces and of course Brenda behind the bar who always has a great big smile (well she did when she saw us lot walking in). On offer were an unusual Organic Wheat Beer from Theakstons, Black Hole Brewery Black Hole Bitter and Hydes Golden Find, all served in the ‘Bell House Club’ oversized glasses. In my opinion all cask ale should be served in these types of pint pots. I opted for the Black Hole Bitter which was in superb form and well worthy of the 4 I gave it as a mark. We sat down in the games room and enjoyed the hustle and bustle chattering of village social life. Alas, on we had to go, down Bell House Lane over the humped back bridge, and past the historic church. Gropenhale (as it used to be known) was first mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086; the land was described as having a wood with deer and was valued as being worth five shillings. The image of a grinning cat carved into the tower on St. Wilfred’s Church is believed to be the inspiration for Lewis Carroll’s Cheshire cat in Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland

Arriving at the **Parr Arms** right next to the church I can’t help thinking of the advert on television ‘I Wish I was in Greenhall Whitely Land’ that portrayed the front of this picturesque building. Once inside we had the choice of Robinsons Tit for Tat, Robinsons Unicorn or Hartleys XB. I chose the XB; the pub has three areas for drinking, a large lounge, a somewhat smaller lounge and an old fashioned tap room. Food is available but we didn’t notice anyone eating.

A 50 yard stroll along the cobbled road past the ‘Large Room’ is the **Rams Head Inn**. An imposing large sand stoned building that has had the benefit of a major refurbishment a couple of years back, it is a stylish yet traditional community pub. The existing building was built in 1893, and is listed as being of architectural and historical importance to the village. One of the many unique features is the original village well, situated near the bar. The well actually pre-dates the existing building at about 150 years old, but is now fitted with walkover glass and illuminated from the inside.



There is a large outdoor area behind the pub for eating and drinking in fine weather, and with its unique location and large car park it is especially popular with walkers who can enjoy the nearby Bridgewater Canal. Cask ales on offer here were Marstons Pedigree, Moorhouse Blonde Witch, Deuchars IPA, Shepard’s Neame Spitfire, Ringwood Boondoggle and Jennings Cumberland Ale. I opted for the excellent Boondoggle; unfortunately a Deuchars IPA was served to my friend in a John Smiths Extra Smooth glass..!! Pity the bar staff haven’t the interest to serve ale in their correct glasses. I just hope this was a one off; the Deuchars was as usual for this pub in fine form.

Occasionally the Grappenhall Sports Club serves cask ale, but without prior knowledge of a function (when cask ale can be arranged) we dismissed the idea of the canal side walk along Stockton Lane. We finished the evening well past midnight at the Choy Hing Village restaurant for a Chinese supper.

Overall a very pleasant summers evening drinking real ale, meandering around a traditional English village. We chose the British Legion for friendliness, and the Ex-Serviceman’s & Community Centre for quality and choice of ales. Why don’t you follow our footsteps and have a leisurely walk around Grappenhall Village. One disappointing observation was the lack of quality wine on offer at all but the Rams Head. Maybe my wife should take up a proper drink.....!!!

PAUL FOSTER

Dining Out *Inn* CHESHIRE; Spread Eagle, Lymm

The Spread Eagle is a rather grand looking pub in the centre of the village, with three distinct rooms. Go right on entering and you find a delightful snug. Continue through the snug and you are in the public bar. If you continue straight ahead on entering the pub, is the largest of the three rooms, largely given over to dining. (In fact if you continue through this lounge area, you find yourself in the beer garden overlooked by some daunting sandstone cliffs!).



Dining was the main reason for our visit today, so we found ourselves a table in the dining area and perused the menu whilst enjoying excellent Lees Bitter (with equally good John Willies and Coronation St both available on our visit). The menu is a standard offering from J W Lees, found in a number of their pubs in Cheshire. They do good value Meal Deals between 12 pm and 6 pm Monday to Saturday featuring a starter and main course for £7.95 and an optional sweet for just £3 more.

On the main menu, starters are generally priced between £2.95 (for the soup) and £4.25 for either black pudding or pate, with a range of dishes between these price points. Main courses range from £6.45 (burger) to £9.95 (rump steak). It is really pleasing to see that smaller portions are available for many of the dishes at lower prices of around £4.95. All side orders are a very reasonable £1.00.

I opted for the Chicken New Yorker; "tender chicken breast topped with crispy bacon and barbeque sauce, sprinkled with mature Cheddar. Serve with a choice of potatoes and garden peas." £7.95 was the price. Ordering was at the table, always preferable to placing an order at the bar in my opinion.

The food took a little while to arrive (in fairness we hadn't booked), but when it did the meal was just as described. Tender and juicy chicken breast, tasty bacon, delightfully sweet garden peas, and lashings of barbeque sauce. Nice as the sauce was, it sauce was quite overpowering to the other flavours, with the cheese almost absent in the mouth. I opted for new potatoes and these were quite wonderful. Small and skin on; no butter was needed at all.

In summary, the menu says that they are all about good, honest pub food; a sentiment I cannot argue with. Prices are excellent. The food was good and certainly good enough for the price. Only criticism was somewhat slow service, but this just gave us more time to enjoy the excellent real ales on offer.

Gary Chester

8th Barnton Cricket Club Mini Beer Festival

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5.30pm to 9.30pm

Sunday
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Out Inn Cheshire is proud to support the independent brewers of traditional beers in Cheshire and the pubs that stock them. We encourage drinkers to seek out and drink Local brews and we ask licensees to stock and promote them. Keep local jobs, reduce 'beer miles' and enjoy a fine pint of beer into the bargain.

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Local Accreditation

Following on from the Albion in Warrington and Plough at Houghton Green, North Cheshire accredited another four outlets for the quality of their local beers;

1. **Barnton Cricket Club** – as well as having a beer festival worth visiting in November you can find a consistent pint of Hyde's dark or 1863 from behind the bar.
2. **Millhouse**, Houghton Green for quality of Holts mild, bitter and monthly changing beers. Does this make Houghton Green the first place to achieve 100% accreditation?
3. **Penny Black** – Northwich Wetherspoons pub with beers regularly from Northern/Blakemere and Beartown
4. **Helter Skelter** (pictured) for Weetwood Best Cask from near enough day 1 of the brewery's operation.

Congratulations to all 6 pubs on the quality of their beer.



Getting Quizzical Out *Inn* CHESHIRE; Hare & Hounds, Crowton

Here we go with the first in a new series of six-monthly reviews on some of the best quizzes in Cheshire. Many pubs run these (see the listing), but all are slightly different. The one thing they all have in common is that they are great fun.

The **Hare & Hounds** quiz takes place every Wednesday, and follows a fairly usual pattern of questions being read out on a microphone and teams writing their answers on the pre-printed sheets provided. Slightly unusual here is the images round (dingbats on our visit) are on sheets posted on the walls around the pub. So you have to get out of your seat and find the questions, thrusting you into the community and really giving some "life" to the proceedings.

As is often the case, papers are swapped and you mark each others sheets. Then the prizes! No fine wine here, nor meal deals or free pints. Instead, the prizes are giant chocolate bars, and very popular they are too. And very tasty – yes on our first quiz review, we only went and won it! **Gary Chester** n.b. Because of the relentless pressure on space, we have decided to alternate the quiz and live music listings in successive issues of Out Inn Cheshire. Both lists are shown in full on our web-site www.outinncheshire.co.uk

The Albion Brewpub

Bullersby Lane, Warrington, WA2 7EG - (01925) 231 820

Mark, Gilhan and Kevin offer you a warm welcome & a great pint

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Focusing on
bringing great
bands and great
beer together.





16th Northwich **BEER** FESTIVAL 2009

at Northwich Memorial Hall

Friday and Saturday 18th & 19th September 2009

Organised by The Rotary Club of Northwich and the Rotary Club of Northwich Vale Royal & CAMRA

REAL ALES, REAL CIDERS, REAL MUSIC, REAL GOOD!

FRIDAY EVENING 18th September 7.00pm - 11.00pm **£6.00**

SATURDAY LUNCH TIME 19th September 12.00noon - 4.00pm **£3.00**

SATURDAY EVENING 19th September 7.00pm - 11.00pm **£5.00**

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM:

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- Northwich Tourist Information Office
- Jack Gee Cycles
- Or phone: 07976 268 353

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The Slippery Hill Boys

PLAYING SATURDAY NIGHT
Look Twice Band

The theme for this years festival is **Cornish Ales**

www.northwichbeerfestival.co.uk



**CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE**



Northwich &
Northwich Vale Royal



HALTON

CAMRA DIARY

Tuesday 15 September: Branch meeting 8.30 pm Waterloo

Saturday 26 September: Nantwich Beer Festival trip

Trips; Andy Jameson, 01928 575175

andrewjameson@btinternet.com

Branch info; Dave Gray 01925 727787

david.grey11@btinternet.com

CAMRA CHESHIRE PUB OF THE YEAR

CAMRA Halton entry for Cheshire Pub of the Year contest is the Weaver Hotel in South Parade, Weston Point, Runcorn. A pub that oozes character, it has been restored to its full Edwardian glory and is richly deserved winner of two prestigious national awards; the CAMRA Refurbishment award and the English Heritage Conservation award; well worth seeking out! Excellent cask beers from the Oakwell Brewery are served at very reasonable prices. The Barnsley Bitter and Old Tom Mild can be enjoyed in the library, Snooker room, spacious bar, lounge or large well appointed outside area.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Halton CAMRA celebrated its 10th birthday in April at the **Norton Arms**, Halton Village, Runcorn. Guest speaker, Mike Hall (MP for Weaver Vale) praised CAMRA for promoting the range and diversity of real ales and gave some amusing anecdotes about the House of Commons bar! Stationhouse Brewery from Frodsham brewed a beer especially for the occasion, much appreciated by all present. David Gray, Branch Chair of Halton CAMRA cited Stationhouse as a good example of a local micro-brewery and reflected on the branch formation. Dave highlighted the steady growth in membership of Halton CAMRA and recalled some of the excellent socials. He also warned of the many threats to pubs staying open and of the need to promote local ales and quality local pubs. An excellent evening was had by all, with good beer and a buffet.

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SOUTH CHESHIRE

South Cheshire CAMRA Invite you to...

The following Branch meetings have been confirmed:

Monday October 5th; 8.00pm **Hops**, Crewe.

Friday November 6th; 8.00pm **Borough Arms**, Crewe

Saturday December 5th; 6.00pm **Hops**, Crewe

(Xmas "do" with buffet at local Chinese restaurant)

*All our events are open to any CAMRA member, anyone who likes beer or pubs,
and anyone who is just curious to see what is going on!*



A mostly rural area, but including the towns of Crewe, Middlewich, Nantwich, Sandbach and Winsford.

Branch Contacts:

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Paul Hext 0784 6657833 (m)

h3xtyp@hotmail.com

*** Contact Paul for details



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Festival Opening Times

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Wednesday - Thursday:

to be confirmed; at least 12 noon - 2.30 pm & 6.30 pm - 11.30 pm

Friday & Saturday 12 noon - 11.30 pm

Sunday: 12 noon - 11 pm

FREE ADMISSION:

All enquiries ring 01270 780917

SPECIAL TRAINS FROM MANCHESTER & CARDIFF COURTESY CASPA



GOOD
BEER
GUIDE

CAMRA CHESHIRE PUB OF THE YEAR

CAMRA South Cheshire branch entry for Cheshire Pub of the Year is the Borough Arms in Crewe. Mentioned and pictured in the news section below, the Borough is a real ale lover's heaven, with a splendid range of cask beers, including ales brewed on the premises.

Crewe news:

Lion and Swan: West Street, Crewe. Razed to the ground in early July. A superb, lively, constantly entertaining, Boddington's local throughout the 60's and 70's and early 80's when Jim and Renee Moran were in charge. After Jim's death, Renee continued to run the pub without any problems. Then, when Renee decided it was time to retire, [Boddington's brewery had been sold to Whitbread] the pub went into a swift decline. Fairly frequent changes of tenants/managers did no good at all. The regulars upped sticks and went elsewhere where they were made welcome. The pub finally closed three years ago.

A mysterious fire upstairs only speeded the inevitable demolition. Now, whenever I pass by the site, I can still imagine hearing Jim's voice saying to me "Y'ell 'ave me in the cooler" as I stood at the bar at 10.29 with an empty pint glass and a thirsty look. [For those used to modern liberal licensing hours, 10.30 was towels on the hand pump time]

Borough Arms: External refurbishment now complete, complete with hanging baskets and looking good. Inside, the beer range is as eclectic as ever, not forgetting the Borough Arms Brewery brews. We are promised a genuine Pilsen style beer in the near future.

Brunswick, Nantwich Road. Now re-opened, with real ale. Everards spotted on recent visit. The pub is also a live music venue.

Burton, Victoria Street. Closed suddenly during the last week of July [28th]. Boarded up on Friday 31st. Unsure why, but the usual rumours about possible conversions abound-apartments, fast food etc.



Paul, Val and Emma and all the staff welcome old and new customers to the newly refurbished

TOLLEMACHE ARMS

Relax and dine in our dining room or while away an hour looking through our in house library all recommended and read by the landlord!

Monthly themed dining with the next on the 6th June when we will be sampling a French Evening drawing on Paul and Val's experience of five years living in the French countryside.

Always at least three real ales from the Robinson's stable and live music on the last Friday of every month.

The "Tolly" has had a chequered history but we are committed to providing outstanding standards of hospitality and truly great food. All meals are prepared and cooked on the premises using local suppliers wherever possible.

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Email: enquiries@tollemachearms.co.uk

SANDBACH NEWS

The Real Ale scene in Sandbach seems to be undergoing something of an upsurge of late. The **Limes** is considering adding a second Spitting Feathers beer to complement the Black Sheep bitter on sale, and the **Wheatsheaf** is advertising its guest ales (from the Marston's stable) on a chalkboard outside.

The Robinson's-owned **Crown** has tried Hatters Mild, but it suffered from poor sales. Encouraged by the very knowledgeable locals, seasonal beers will be tried.

The nearby **Swan & Chequer** (right) seems to be going down the same route, and the **Lower Chequer** is continuing with three cask ales from the larger regional brewers. Meanwhile, the new young landlord at the **Iron Grey** (*well, they all look young to me, just like the policemen nowadays*) is attempting to attract a younger crowd with a new pool table and dartboard and louder music.

Most surprising of all is that the **Lion**, very definitely a loud, young-persons pub, has converted to cask and has been selling Charles Wells Bombardier at £1.40 a pint. Maybe this real ale stuff is catching on! By our reckoning, this leaves the *George* as the only pub in Sandbach which is keg-only.

Down the road at Elworth, the **Midland** continues to be one of our favourite friendly Robinson's locals. A request for a cheese bap is likely to confuse the landlady and lead to much banter, so is well worth asking for. The **Fox**, just round the corner, re-opened earlier this year after refurbishment, reports are awaited.

Further afield, the **Blue Bell** at Smallwood held a beer festival in July – good to see the new owners continuing the tradition.

Finally, the **Beer Emporium**, the renowned specialist bottled beer shop formerly in Burslem, has moved to Sandbach, in the former butchers in Welles Street [see advertisement in this issue]. We wish them all the best, and will be in to try their wares and report back in the next edition. DD



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Open... Mon: 5pm – late, Tue-Sat: 11am – late, Sun: 12 – late

LODGE, ALSAGER.

Following a tip from an Alsager CAMRA member, a visit was made to the Lodge one Friday night and it was a very busy pub! At the bar it was obvious why. The beers on offer were Townhouse Audley Gold, Hopback Spring Zing, Marble Dobber, Whim Hartington IPA, Marston's Pedigree and Bitter. The absence of sparklers on all but the Marston's beers made for speedy delivery of a full pint. There are also three real ciders

The Audley Gold was excellent; LocAle as well! The Hartington and Dobber were equally tasty. On a later visit, the beers were Townhouse Barney's Stout, Dark Star American Pale Ale, Thornbridge Jaipur, and Hobsons Golden Glow as well as the Marston's. The ciders were Thatchers Heritage and Cheddar Valley along with GWR Bounds Brand Cider.

Landlord Phil said that he, his wife Helen, and family have been in the pub for 4 months and that he had bought the former Punch pub, because living in Alsager, he had liked it and had been sorry to see it go into decline. He believes that Alsager needs a really good real ale pub. Work continues on upgrading the kitchen. By the time you read this the regular opening hours should have been decided. Very much worth making a detour for, or get there by train or the No. 20 bus from Crewe. [88 Crewe Road, Alsager. Telephone:01270-873669] PH

Women turn to real ale

More women are trying Britain's national drink; 30% of women drinkers have now tried real ale, up from 16% in 2008! Many women had never tried real ale, not knowing where to start, not knowing what real ale is, thinking it would be too bitter or not liking the appeal of beer in general. Recent initiatives such as 'FemALE day' during National Cask Ale Week in April, the growing use of third pint measures in pubs and record attendances at beer festivals have led to a radical change in female drinking trends.

Beer writer Melissa Cole says: *'More women are discovering the delights of real ale.'*



On grounds of taste and flavour there's no reason why more women shouldn't drink real ale; they haven't been doing so due to a combination of macho marketing, poor product information and urban myths.

Fortunately more women now understand about real ale; that it isn't bloating, is lower in calories than wine and most importantly, because of its immense diversity, women know there's a style of real ale out there for them.'



The Black Lion

Traditional Pub ... Real Ale

Liz and Darren, formerly of the Dysart Arms in Bunbury, are pleased to be offering:

- Fresh Food to be served Lunch 12 - 2.30pm & Evenings 6 - 9pm Tuesday to Saturday
- Real Ales featuring local brewery Weetwood & Guest Ales
- Quiz with prizes every Monday 8.30pm

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8th NANTWICH BEER FESTIVAL

This beer festival will be held in Nantwich Civic Hall (next to the bus station) on the weekend of 25th-27th September, as part of the annual **Nantwich Food and Drink Festival**.

Around seventy cask beers will be available over the weekend (whilst stocks last!) and there will also be a range of ciders and perries – *let's be quite clear, there is no such thing as pear cider... it's perry!* The beer range will be from breweries in Cheshire and the surrounding areas and the guest region this year is Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire (loosely referred to as Robin Hood country). There will also be one or two "committee favourites" making up a varied selection of beer styles.

The festival opens at 5 pm on the Friday and will close at 5 pm on the Sunday - earlier if the beer runs out! Entry during the day is free (i.e. 11 am until 5 pm on the Saturday and noon until closing on the Sunday) and a bargain £3 for the evening sessions (i.e. after 5 pm)

CAMRA members will get a free beer token on paying sessions.

There will be live music both evenings [*Strangefruit* on Friday evening and *Cold Flame* on Saturday evening] and the festival staff will be in fancy dress for these sessions. The evening sessions are certainly very much a party atmosphere!

Saturday afternoon is a great family session and the age range is from 8 months to 80 years old. There's plenty of seating and people often call in to the Civic Hall for a beer or two as a break from the hurly burly of the Food Festival.

We look forward to welcoming back our "regulars" and if you've never been to a beer festival or tried real ale before we'll be especially pleased to see you. Out of 70 beers I'm sure we'll find one to your liking, so do call in to Nantwich Civic Hall during the last weekend of September and maybe try something new.

Once again, our nominated charity is St. Luke's Cheshire Hospice in Winsford.

For Beer Festival information please go to: www.nantwichfoodfestival.co.uk/beerfestival.htm

MJ



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www.thebiglock.co.uk

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- Tel.:

01606 833489

e-mail:

thebiglock@btinternet.com



Paul's Big Walk

South Cheshire branch congratulates CAMRA member Paul Tench who has just completed a Lands End to John O'Groats walk in aid of Cancer Research UK. He walked 1,129 miles (1,806 km) from Lands Ends in 74 walking days (for the mathematicians that's an average of just over 15.25 miles per day). During the walk, Paul called at 176 pubs and sampled 114 different cask ales. Whilst he didn't record the exact quantity of ale consumed he estimates he was getting about 21 miles to the gallon!

Every week Paul sent out a brilliant newsletter, with photos, to friends and sponsors. This detailed where he'd walked, what he'd seen and scores for beers supped along the way.

If you'd like to donate to Cancer Research UK then the weblink is

<https://secure.justgiving.com/paulsbigwalk>

Well done Paul! What's your next challenge?

MJ

LocAle - CAMRA's accreditation scheme promotes pubs selling locally-brewed real ale.

- * Pubs - stocking local real ales can increase pub visits
- * Consumers - demand greater beer choice and diversity
- * Local brewers - gain from increased sales
- * The local economy - more money is spent and retained locally
- * The environment - fewer 'beer miles' reduce road congestion and pollution
- * Tourism - increases the sense of local identity and pride.



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CHESTER & SOUTH CLWYD

CAMRA DIARY

For the latest events, please visit the branch web site at www.chestercamra.co.uk

Fri 4 Sept: **Summer Pub of the Season** Queen's Head, Sarn - minibus from Chester

Fri 11 / Sat 12 Sept: **Tattenhall Beer Festival** Barbour Institute (ticket-only)

Sun 13 Sept: **Presentation to Alan Frain** for 25 appearances in the Good Beer Guide
2pm **Bunbury Arms** at Stoak

Thurs 17 Sept: **Branch Meeting: Bridge End, Ruabon 8.15pm.**

Fri 2 / Sat 3 Oct: **Pub Beer Festival:** Carlton Tavern, Handbridge

Fri 9 Oct: **Stonehouse Brewery Visit,** Oswestry

Thurs 15 Oct: **Branch Meeting:** Mill Hotel, Chester 8.15pm.

Fri 16 / Sat 17 Oct: **1st Kelsall Beer Festival** Kelsall Community Centre
approx 22 beers (some new!) 5pm to midnight.

Sat 17 Oct: **Regional Meeting:** Vernon Arms, Liverpool 1.00pm.

Fri 25 Oct: **Autumn Pub of the Season Presentation** (tba)

Fri 30 / Sat 31 Oct: **3rd Chester Autumn Beer Festival** Details will follow.

Thurs 19 Nov: **Branch Meeting:** Gredington Arms, Llyn-y-Pwll, nr. Wrexham 8.15pm.

Thurs 17 Dec: **Branch Meeting / Christmas Social:** Bear & Billet, Chester 8.15pm.



As well as Chester and its environs, this Branch covers an area stretching from Parkgate on the Wirral to Tushingham in the South.

Branch Contacts: (phone numbers, are 01244– unless otherwise noted)

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Socials: *Craig Papworth 313182*

Secretary: Steve Carr

Membership: Chris Pilsbury

Web editor: John Sillioth

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SOUTH CHESHIRE NEWS

Our Summer Pub of the Season award for 2009 went to the **Queen's Head** at Sarn, a hidden gem if ever there was one, tucked away between Threapwood and Tallarn Green off the Bangor-on-Dee to Malpas road. This cosy, three-roomed pub serves Marston's Bitter, Timmy Taylor's Golden Best plus one guest beer conforming to the LocAle scheme such as Salopian Shropshire Gold. The grub also comes well recommended as does a visit to the rear patio garden nestling alongside Wych Brook.

Congratulations to landlady Jenny Brownlee at the **Wheatsheaf** in Nomansheath. Over the summer she celebrated her fourth anniversary in charge by hosting a special (black tie optional) dinner. She's delighted to report, despite all the economic doom and gloom, that paradoxically the last six months have been the best in terms of trading she's so far experienced ... and nor is she complaining. There's good news on the ale front too where sales of cask are brisk. Copper Dragon Golden Pippin appears on a virtual permanent basis while this is supplemented by one guest beer supplied locally and typically from Hanby, Woodland and Weetwood. Hopefully we'll soon be signing up Jenny to CAMRA's LocAle initiative.

Finally the **Red Lion** in Malpas has plans to make their own real ale. Named after the landlord Richard Lever, look out in the future for Levers Ales. Meanwhile, plans are afoot for a repeat of last year's autumn beer festival.



NESTON AREA

After years in the wilderness as a keg only pub, real ale is back and thriving at the **Wheatsheaf** at Ness. The Wheatsheaf is a large village pub that Thwaites bought from Whitbread a decade or two ago and so still has a bit of a chain feel. Nevertheless the Lancaster Bomber and Bitter were in superb nick on a recent visit. It is now an excellent community pub.

Parkgate promenade is blessed with three real ale outlets with the **Red Lion** and **Ship** featuring in recent editions of the Good Beer Guide. The **Boathouse**, at the north end of the promenade, is often forgotten. However this pub and restaurant usually has four or five cask beers on tap, typically Tetley's, Old Speckled Hen, Taylor's, Black Sheep and a guest. There are excellent views over the marshes from the garden.

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Cider Pub of the Year 2007

Runner-up Pub of the Year
2006/2007



LOCALE

The **Ship Inn** in Handbridge is the latest establishment to join CAMRA's LocAle initiative which serves to promote pubs permanently selling locally crafted real ales. The Ship, which re-opened in April, sells beers from the likes of Sandstone and Weetwood. It also showcased in August a new 3.8% beer ("packed full of exotic fruit flavours") from WC Brewery called, ahem, Windward Passage.

Here's a plug for those other worthies signed up to Locale (though, alas, not all of them seem keen to use the hand pump crowners, posters and stickers):-

Grosvenor Arms , Aldford	<i>Weetwoods</i>
Cock , Barton	<i>Spitting Feathers, Stonehouse, Weetwood</i>
Brewery Tap , Chester	<i>Spitting Feathers</i>
Marlborough Arms , Chester	<i>Stonehouse</i>
Mill Hotel , Chester	<i>Weetwood Bitter</i>
Old Harkers Arms , Chester	<i>Weetwood Cheshire Cat</i>
Square Bottle , Chester	<i>Spitting Feathers</i>
Temple Bar , Chester	<i>Spitting Feathers</i>
Farndon Arms , Farndon	<i>Sandstone, Plassey, Weetwood</i>
Pheasant , Higher Burwardsley	<i>Weetwood</i>
Farmers Arms , Kelsall	<i>Weetwood</i>
Morris Dancer , Kelsall	<i>Weetwood</i>
Red Lion , Malpas	<i>various</i>
Queens Head , Sarn	<i>Salopian Shropshire Gold</i>
Bull , Shocklach	<i>Stonehouse</i>
Mitchells Brasserie , Tattenhall	<i>Weetwood</i>
Blue Bell , Tushingham	<i>Salopian Shropshire Gold</i>



CHESTER NEWS

Landlord Carl Scourfield of the **Pied Bull** on Northgate Street has freed himself of the dead hand of the Pub Co.

He's bought the freehold from Punch Taverns for £500,000 less than the company's valuation and is now free to buy beers from whomsoever he may wish.

Although we've yet to see the impact of this, the inn already currently sells six real with Adnams Broadside and Bombardier as permanent. It's also the venue for quiz nights, jazz afternoons, darts teams and staged a beer festival in August. Here's hoping more landlord's can follow Carl's example.

A new bar, the **Canalside Inn**, was scheduled to open in late August.

Part of the Eaton Hotel it lies almost next door to Harkers Arms, separated by the City Road bridge. We've been told of initially four ales being available with this increasing when a proposed 2.5 barrel in-house brewery becomes operational.

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Out Inn CHESHIRE, Autumn 2005

WE ARE IN THE GOOD BEER GUIDE 2009



**GOOD
BEER
GUIDE**

CHESTER WALLS CRAWL

Author Jonathan Swift, when visiting Chester, once wrote

"The Walls of this town are full of renown, and strangers delight to walk round 'em, but as for the dwellers, both buyers and sellers, for me, you may hang 'em or drown 'em."

Hmmm. Wonder what upset him so much? Are we Cestrians really that bad? Maybe the poor fellow had had a bad experience exploring the taverns and ended up in the 17th Century equivalent of today's raucous binge bars selling exclusively bottled Blue Grog and flagons of Fizziale. Anyway, with the Walls more popular now than they were in Swift's era, we'd hate to see today's tourists have a woeful time of things on the beer front. With some cracking pubs to be visited here's a brief guide to would-be mural circumnavigators in need of a tipples during their near two mile yomp.

Preferably armed with a guide book so you can read up on the sites as you go along, commence from Chester's most famous landmark, the Eastgate Clock, and head southwards. After crossing Newgate, with views of the under-utilised amphitheatre, you can look down on the Roman Gardens before arriving at the **Albion** on the right occupying a corner section of Victorian terrace housing. This pub really is a classic with more than a touch of the eccentric. Outside, blackboards declare itself "family hostile" and boast of the absence of fry-ups, silly foil portions, designer drinks and so on. Inside, reflecting the landlord's passionate interest, all three rooms (decorated with William Morris wallpaper) are festooned in memorabilia of the Great War (as pictured here). Beers usually Taylor Landlord, Jennings Cumberland and Black Sheep Bitter plus the odd unusual guest ale. The grub is superb, good value and traditional. Our recommended food stop.



Back to the Walls, and take care down the Wishing Steps whilst admiring the splendid panorama of the tree-lined Groves, the River Dee, its weir and the sandstone Old Dee Bridge. Just before the approaching Bridgegate, take a slipway to the right as this leads you out opposite the visually stunning, 17th century, timber framed, multi-windowed **Bear & Billet**.



This popular pub was once the townhouse of the Earls of Shrewsbury but sadly, in this celebrity obsessed world, people now get more excited at it being the birthplace of John Lennon's grandmother. Sigh.

As it's owned by Isle of Man brewer Okells expect their ales on the bank of hand pumps (seen here) alongside a couple of guest beers and some genuine cider.

The walk continues on the next page. >>>

Next, head up Lower Bridge Street on the same side as the Billet and just before Castle Street and the Olde Kings Head you'll find steps leading to the **Brewery Tap**. Opened in November 2008, the pub belongs to micro-brewers Spitting Feathers who have done a fabulous conversion job on what was once, and still resembles, an old Jacobean banqueting hall. Another feast for the eyes are seven hand pumps dispensing four ales from the owners plus three rotating guests and a real cider. Marvellous.

Gird your loins for the next stretch of the walk as what follows is the longest without any cask refreshment. Rejoin at the Bridgegate and the Walls take you by the County Hall and castle with views of Grosvenor Bridge. Once over a pedestrian crossing you come to the Roodee's tightly racecourse. On race days you can enjoy free close-up action of the runners and riders as well as hordes of *lagered* blokes with Racing Posts sticking out of their back pockets and cackling women wearing silly hats and ill-fitting gaudy dresses.

Exit at Watergate and no distance up the street on the right is the **Fat Cat** – a cellar-bar which often includes Cheshire-brewed Storm Brewing beers amongst its range. If that doesn't tempt you, carry on only briefly.

After crossing the railway and reaching the Water Towers, **Telford's Warehouse** lies ahead of you accessible by some steep descending steps. This airy, converted warehouse overlooks the Tower Wharf canal basin and is the city's premier live music venue. Inside a cosmopolitan crowd enjoy some unusual micro-brewery beers including a LocAle; Weetwood Cheshire Cat.

The food's good too.

For our next ports of call, retrace your steps and clamber back onto the Walls. Cross over the inner ring road and get off at the Northgate.

Walking into the city, first up on the right is the **Pied Bull**, a former coaching inn with six guest ales including two from a SIBA approved list.

Rejoin the Walls as they now run alongside a vertigo-inducing canal cutting until you reach the Kings Charles Tower. After a further fifty yards or so, take some steps off leading down to the canal towpath.

Turn right and at the first bridge, climb the stairs onto Frodsham Street. Turn left and at the traffic lights, look left again to spot the **Ship Victory** standing almost alone in a sea of cars at Gorse Stacks, the old cattle market. This Good Beer Guide regular is a small, friendly community-focused pub which sells Tetleys alongside one impeccably kept guest beer.

Back one last time for the final short leg of the mission. After passing Chester's underrated sandstone cathedral and its stand alone campanile

you'll be back where you started. If you're still up for more action (surely yes), head along Eastgate passing the swanky five-star Grosvenor Hotel on your left. Immediately after the junction with St Werburgh Street access the Eastgate Row North via some steps. Two options now. Not far ahead is the historic **Boot Inn**, a popular Sam Smiths house which once witnessed the murder of royalist troops in the civil war. Nowadays it's busy with people enjoying the cheapest pint in a generally expensive town. Alternatively head down Godstall Lane - a little boutique alley leading off the Row to the cathedral. Down here you'll find a modern bar called **Duttons** which has rare outside seating and gets wedged with diners during the day. Tied to Manchester brewer Lees it serves their standard bitter plus one seasonal ale.

So, there you have it. The approximate two mile circuit is complete.



CAMRA CHESHIRE PUB OF THE YEAR

Chester CAMRA's entries for the Cheshire Pub of the Year Contest are **Harkers**, Chester and **Bull** at Shocklach.

Old Harkers Arms is the branch's current Pub of the Year. It also won this award in 2007. Since then landlord Paul Jeffery and his staff have continued to serve a whole variety of superbly kept changing micro-brew beers at this canal-side marvel.

As for the **Bull** at Shocklach, this has been a real success. Formerly a pub that was dead on its feet it looked ripe only for conversion to a private house. New owners subsequently transformed the place. Now serving a healthy choice of independent real ales, they have shown total commitment to numerous CAMRA causes including hosting beer festivals, meet the brewer evenings and staging various events for National Cask ale week. It is also a focal point for the community hosting regular Sunday farmers markets on the car park. Without doubt this is one of our more innovative pubs.



PUB BEER FESTIVALS

Over the course of the summer we're pleased to report various pubs, pub chains and breweries have been busy promoting real ales.

As part of the Vintage Inns group, the **Red Lion**, at Dodleston hosted a six-week long Golden Ales festival ("a refreshing and thirst quenching cask conditioned ale alternative to the light lager market"). Meanwhile, there was a bit of cross-border rivalry between Chester and Wrexham's Wetherspoons when they staged a Battle of the Breweries. Wrexham's **Elihu Yale** pub served up Plassey Bitter while Chester's **Square Bottle** sold Spitting Feathers. As yet we're unsure who won in the most pints sold stakes! Elsewhere in-house festivals were staged at the **Bull**, Shocklach, the **Cock**, Barton, the **Peal o'Bells** in Holt, the **Rake & Pikel** at Huntington and the **Pied Bull** in Chester.

Finally, in July, Spitting Feathers staged another immensely popular West Cheshire Beer Festival at the brewery in Waverton with all of the beers miraculously running out simultaneously at last orders.



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