

MACCLESFIELD

Issue 01 | September 2024 | Macclesfield • Tytherington • Bollington

NOW

The Bollington Brewing Co.
open a new HQ and Tap
Room in Macclesfield.

19 year old *Joseph Loake*:
from Macclesfield Kart
Club to Formula 3!

The *Beech Hall*
pupils that swam
across the Channel.

**FANCY A
PINT OF
BEST?**

CONTENTS

FOOD & DRINK 4-6

4 - New HQ for Bollington Brewery...
We investigate why the brewery has moved to Macclesfield.

PEOPLE 8-10

8 - Married to Mr Manchester.
Lindsay Reade's latest book about her life with Tony Wilson.

HEALTH & LIFESTYLE 12-14

12 - Sport for all.
Matt Rigby opens up about his fitness journey.

HOME & GARDEN 16-18

16 - Prints charming...
Fashion fit for royalty from Adamley Textiles Macclesfield.

FAMILY 20-27

20 - Schoolkids swim the Channel!
The Beech Hall School pupils that rose to the challenge!

24 - Property central.
Buying or selling? Why now is the right time.

MOTORS 28-30

28 - From Macclesfield Kart Club to Formula 3!
Local 19 year old Joseph Loake turned his hobby into his career.

TRAVEL 32-35

32 - Into the wild...
A great introduction to high altitude trekking in Nepal.

EVENTS 38-43

38 - What's on?
Fill your diary with these events in and around Macclesfield.

40 - What's on at The Button Warehouse?
We talk to the people behind the Tuesday night Live Lounge.

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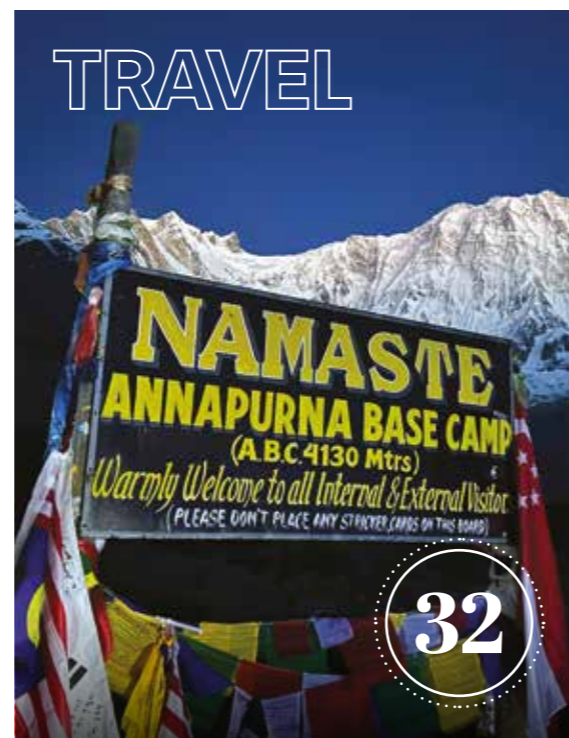
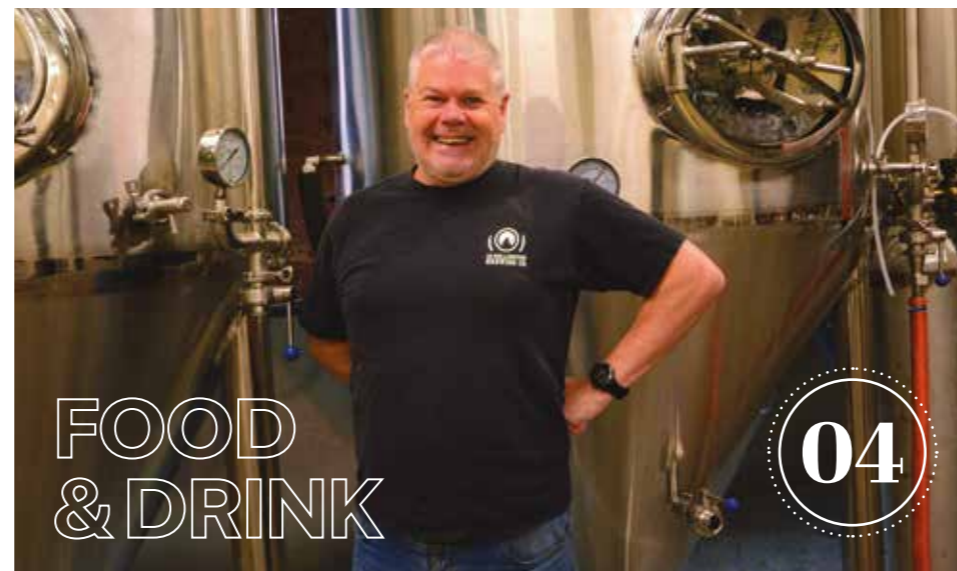
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EDITORS COMMENT

Hello there! Welcome to Macclesfield Now.

What you're holding is the first issue of a quarterly magazine for the residents of Macclesfield, Bollington and Tytherington.

Our ambition is that the magazine will chronicle and celebrate developments in this increasingly vibrant area with a fresh, contemporary attitude and a design to match.

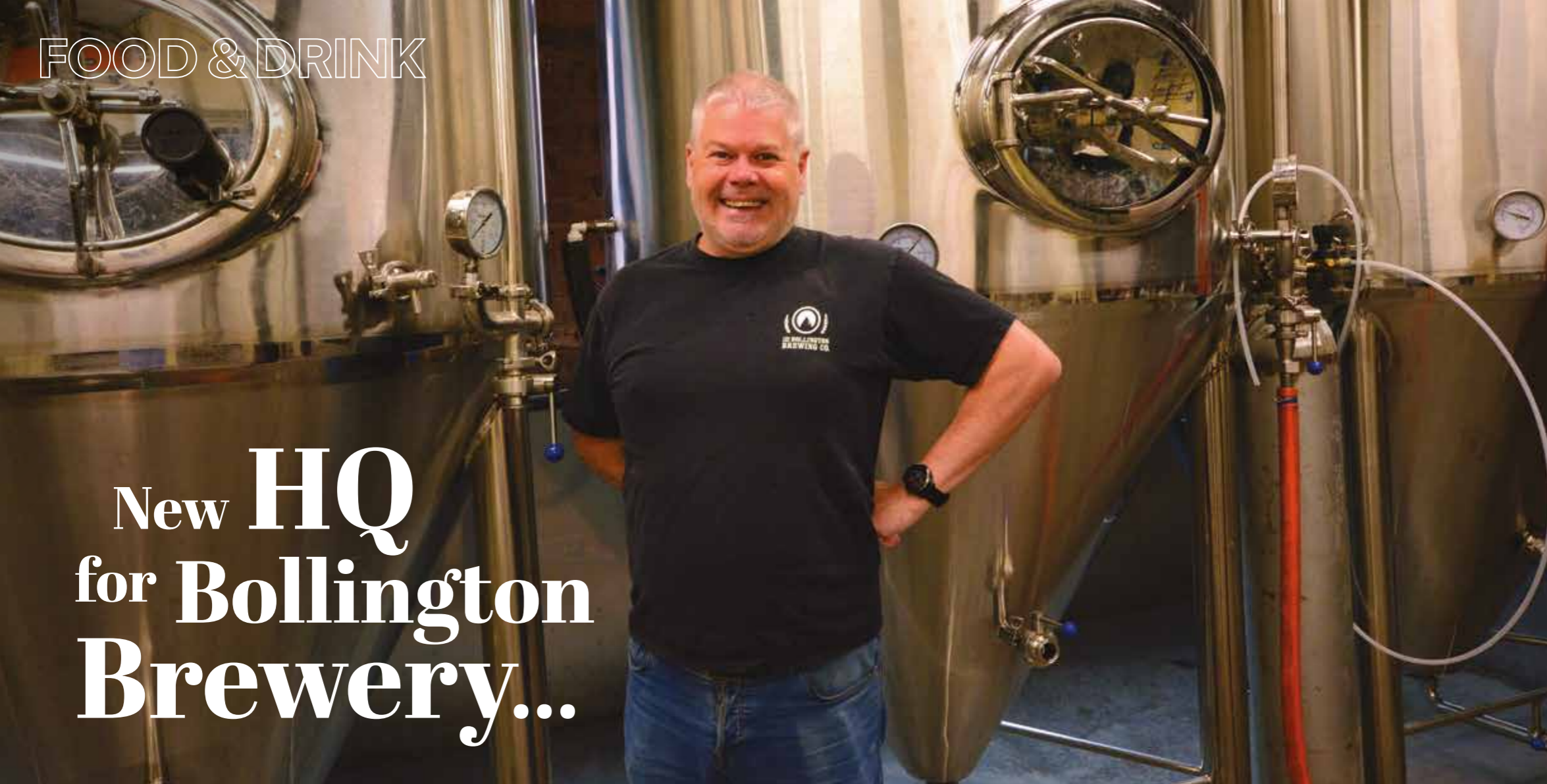
We will talk to the people who are making things happen, we will look at the places that are happening and we will shed light on some of the overlooked elements that are part of the fabric of the area.

I think it's important that, from the start, we strike up a relationship with our readers, so I can't emphasise enough how much we'd like your feedback; your reaction to the features in this issue and your suggestions for things you might like to see us cover in the future. Find us on Facebook: [Macclesfield Now Magazine](#)

Thanks for reading these words and I hope you enjoy the rest of the magazine.

Paul Day

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New HQ for Bollington Brewery...

his feelings on first tasting it: "I think we'd done a good job. It was clear, it was tasty. Yeah, I think we were pretty pleased with it, that we'd done that."

The first beers were soon being enjoyed by customers of pubs beyond The Vale as Bollington's output was quickly taken up by other pubs, despite Lee being initially reluctant to make too much of a fuss about it. "It's one of those things that you don't really talk about because you want to make sure the beer is drinkable," he explains. "We got the first cask down to the pub, put it on and then we announced it on email forums and people came down. Within days, as soon as word got out, people were phoning up to buy the beer. And in those days, once a new brewery opened, the phone didn't really stop ringing. So for about 18 months, it was non-stop."



Brewery bar and shop at The Bollington Brewing Co.

Bollington Brewery have relocated their brewing operations to a new site on Parker Street in Macclesfield. *Paul Day* paid them a visit.

Bollington Brewery began serving us their locally brewed beer in 2008, when owners Lee and Kirsten Wainwright opened The Vale Inn, in Bollington.

Lee had grown up in the town but moved away 12 years earlier, freely admitting that he never expected to return. He worked in IT for Bass and subsequently sold pub till systems before running his own pub in Chester for a year or two. It was his desire to own a freehold pub that brought him back to the area. The major pub chains were hoovering up freehold pubs at the time, making it difficult for an independent operator to find a site.

It was the availability of The Vale that brought him back here. "The big companies didn't want The Vale because it was small," he explains. Going on to add that it had been mostly shut for the previous nine years. However, on the basis that he knew the area, he bought it.

Lee was determined to acquire a freehold because he wanted to sell beer from the small breweries that were starting to crop up at the time. It was through

talking to these breweries that gave him a hankering for brewing his own beer, the major hurdle being he didn't know where to start.

It was a visit to a beer festival in Stowmarket that changed everything. "I was talking to my mate who lives down there," Lee explains, "and I was saying, 'we really want to open a brewery, but we've got no idea how to go about it.' And he said, 'the guy who's just bought our local pub used to have a brewery, let's go and have a chat with him'.

The landlord had sold his previous pub, complete with brewery, to Punch Taverns but the new owners had no interest in making their own beer so Lee bought the equipment, brought it up north and put it into storage.

It was another year before they found somewhere to put it. TNC Granite moved out of their premises on Adlington Road in Bollington, across the road from The Vale, around the same time Lee had booked to go on a brewing course. And so it all fell into place.

"We did the course in March, 2008. And we moved into the brewery in April. My original plan was to spend a day or two a week brewing beer and then go and run The Vale, but it doesn't work like that because for every day that you brew, there's another day of cleaning up and casking. So my brother, who'd helped build it, said 'I'll give you a hand if you want, while you get started and find some staff.' He ended up being our full time head brewer for seven years."

They christened the first brew they produced First Brew (since renamed Bollington Best) and Lee recalls

With the kit they originally acquired they could brew 16 casks at a time and they experimented with around 45 different recipes, trying different methods and techniques. This experimentation was important for them to maintain their popularity with other pubs: "There were about 800 breweries in the country so you were on regular rotation with the pubs, who wanted something different all the time. They'd phone you up and say, 'Have you got anything special this week?' and if you did they'd say 'Right, I'll have one of those, and then three of your core beers, but if you didn't have a special, they'd say 'I'll give you a ring in a few weeks.'"

Lee's three favourite beers from The Bollington Brewing Co.



No. 1

Long Hop

A pale lager style bitter with fruity refreshing hops, former summer special brewed for cricket lovers now a permanent beer.



No. 2

Bollington Best

The beer he invented when they started! A delightfully hoppy bitter. Clean & crisp with a light golden colour & refreshing bitter aftertaste.



No. 3

Endurance

This is one of our keg beers, designed in collaboration with Glyn Fisher who completed a Coast to Coast bike ride for Macmillan.



Brook Mill, Parker Street
Macclesfield, SK11 7BQ



Clearly this was hard work. Not only did the team have to regularly produce a new beer to offer the pubs but, more prosaically, they often had to drive hundreds of miles to deliver it. This was not really the direction in which Lee wanted to steer the business. He would rather sell his beer in his own pubs: "We were focused on having a number of pubs but there weren't really any available then."

However, Robinsons had sold Macclesfield's Park Tavern to someone planning on turning it into houses. The buyer changed his mind and put it up for rent as a pub. "We were the ideal candidates for that," says Lee. "They spent a year refurbishing it, and we moved in. It was perfect for us and we ended up buying it."

Eventually, the Brewery ended up with a core of six main beers and further developed the pub estate into Poynton and Congleton. However 2024 has seen the greatest upheaval for the Brewery, with the acquisition of Brook Mill on Parker Street in Macclesfield - a new HQ for the whole operation. "When we originally started at Adlington Road, we knew we had a limited lifespan. The landlord said we could have three years and we managed 16 years. So we did alright but we always wanted somewhere that was our own. We looked for years but couldn't find anywhere so to find this is amazing."

As with many such buildings, things had to be ripped out before the real beauty was revealed. In this case it is the wonderfully tiled walls that decorate the main tap room, once a bakery operated by the Co-op. At the time of speaking to Lee, 'Tap Room' seemed the most likely name for the venue, but things are in flux. The wooden benches and tables were piled up, waiting to be sanded and refinished. It looked a long way from being operational but a matter of days later we were there again for a weekend event that incorporated a DJ, live music and food from a pop-up operator in the small courtyard adjacent to the building.

"At the moment, everything is about making this a nicer space. Every time we do an open day, we see how things work differently, and we tweak things and change things."

"What we're trying to do here is create a home for ourselves for the future."

Lee Wainwright
Owner of The Bollington Brewing Co.

One of the plans already in place is to keep outsourcing the food offer to caterers who would be willing to take on specific days or even whole weekends but, rather than keep them in the courtyard Lee is planning on building a basic kitchen from which they can operate indoors, so in winter, at least, the public won't be huddled outside under a gazebo.

At the licensing hearing for the new venue, Lee responded to some half-hearted objections by saying: "What we're trying to do here is create a home for ourselves for the future. We've been in rented units in Bollington for 16 years and we want to find somewhere we can create a base.

"We want to do it properly and we want to be part of that community. The proposal is going to create further employment, it's going to create some tourism because people will come and see it because the building is magnificent."

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Married to Mr Manchester.

She has worked at Bollington-based estate agents Holmes-Naden for over 20 years, but the three books Lindsay Reade has written refer to an entirely different life. Her new book - *A Continual Farewell* - is an archive of her marriage to, divorce from and subsequent relationship with broadcaster and 'cultural catalyst' Tony Wilson.

We spoke to Lindsay at The Mulberry Leaf in Bollington.

By Paul Day



Scan the QR code to buy *A Continual Farewell*



“Tony just wanted to be in the music business. They’d cancelled *So It Goes* and he needed a way in. He was driven by punk rock, he was mad on that, having been the first to put the Sex Pistols on TV.”

Lindsay Reade

Author

Lindsay Reade first saw Tony Wilson on television in 1976. He was presenting Granada Reports, ITV’s long-haired teatime alternative to the BBC’s Look North and, by the end of the following year, she had married him.

Lindsay was to be at Tony’s side during a seismic period in Manchester’s cultural history, which saw the formation of Factory Records and the launch of the Hacienda. While a cabal of men are generally seen as the main protagonists of that movement, Lindsay’s involvement was significant, particularly at the beginning. “I was a co-founder, as far as I’m concerned,” she says. “For one thing, it was mainly the two of us that put together the first single, because you had to make it by hand. And I brought OMD (Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark) to the label when Tony didn’t particularly like them. He had cloth ears, really.”

Her 2010 book, *Mr Manchester and the Factory Girl* tells the story of her relationship with Tony, while her new book illustrates it - with significant input from the late Mr Wilson himself. Prompted by a Science and Industry Museum exhibition on Factory Records, Lindsay began looking through her letters. “I was reading Tony’s letters and I thought, these need preserving. He was such a good letter writer. He was such a good writer.”

So it became Lindsay’s lockdown project, scanning the letters and developing a narrative to run alongside them. However, the finished book contains more than Tony’s scribbled musings, there are a lot of images that haven’t been seen before and, fittingly, it is visually impressive. Tony’s last letter to Lindsay was written in 1991 but their relationship continued until his death in 2007,

growing in strength, even as Tony weakened. In Paul Morley’s biography on Tony, Lindsay refers to this period: “I think I fell in love with him again and I remember saying it to him - joking really, ‘will you marry me?’ And he said ‘Well we already did that, and look what happened?’”

So what did happen?

“We were both really headstrong,” Lindsay admits. “The problem was that he was extremely confident and driven and he had his day job, which was also an evening job because he was presenting Granada Reports and *So It Goes*. We had a really happy year. But then he started managing The Durutti Column, shortly followed by *A Certain Ratio* - and I didn’t think much of either of them, to be honest. “Tony just wanted to be in the music business. They’d cancelled *So It Goes* and he needed a way in. He was driven by punk rock, he was mad on that, having been the first to put the Sex Pistols on TV.”

This led to Tony being absent for much of the time and Lindsay took this as a rejection. She recognises that this was possibly down to insecurity on her part, failing to appreciate that while she was not driven by ambition, her husband was.

The effect of Tony’s absence from the family home was thrown into sharp relief when Ian Curtis moved in, shortly after his first suicide attempt. “It was my idea that he stayed, because I didn’t really understand what was going on,” Lindsay explains. “All I knew was that he was married with a young child and in love with another woman, and he had to decide what to do. So I thought it was a good idea to give him space away from both situations.”

Ian moved into their home on the night of the infamous Joy Division gig in Bury, at which Ian was largely unable to perform and a riot ensued. “He came back with us after the Bury gig, and Tony and Rob (Gretton) had told everybody that he was to be left on his own, not to have any visitors. So it was just me and him, 24/7. It was a very bad idea, because we were both driving each other round the bend.”

Books by Lindsay Reade

Torn Apart: The Life of Ian Curtis
(with Mick Middles) (2006)

Mr Manchester and the Factory Girl
(2010)

A Continual Farewell
(2024)

Despite the eventual disintegration of their relationship – or possibly because of it – Tony offered Lindsay a ‘proper’ job at Factory Records, in overseas licensing. “We were separated by this point,” Lindsay says, “but he was trying to get me back. I don’t know whether it was his Catholicism, because we were married, or because he really loved me? Maybe he did in a way, and I loved him, but I couldn’t go back because by then I was in another relationship. I did take the job, because I needed a job.”

She began work in the Summer of 1983, around the time Tony began divorce proceedings. True to the slightly dysfunctional nature of their relationship, Lindsay was now feeling she might want to get back with her new boss. “By then I was actually thinking that maybe I could go back. So, when I got the decree nisi, I wrote a letter to the courts to say I didn’t want to go ahead with the absolute. But I never posted it.”

That letter is reproduced in the new book, but it became moot shortly after it was written. “Without my knowledge, he’d met a girl and she’d got pregnant. Despite that, I carried on working for the whole of 1984, until the baby was born in September. He sacked me in November.”

Ooof.

“I hated him for what he did. I just couldn’t believe it. We didn’t really speak for two years or more. But then we got speaking at the Hacienda and I realised there was still affection between us.”

That afternoon
in Disley in the sun
in the seat of my
little blue racer –
looking through the
mirror
knowing that I had
met my destiny.

Letter 28 - Tony Wilson to Lindsay Reade, 1 September 1989

The reference to the Hacienda reminds me that the entrance to the club was decorated by a framed photo of the blessed Tony. Was this ironic or ego run riot? “Well, he did have a huge ego” recognises Lindsay. “But he told me that I did as well. It was funny because when I used to go to the Hacienda, the bouncers always let me in because they knew me. One day, the bouncers were different, so when I got to the door one of them said, ‘you’ve got to go to the back of the queue’ and I looked at him, and pointed at that picture, and said, ‘I’m sorry. I don’t like to name drop, but I used to be married to that b*****d there, so I’m not paying, and I’m not queuing’. And he said, ‘oh, sorry’, and let me in.”

Lindsay’s departure from Factory did not represent a break with the music business. The ear that had recognised the potential of OMD, also spotted that of The Stone Roses. Lindsay had been managing Factory’s house band 52nd Street when she was asked to co-manage the nascent Roses. She’d previously heard them rehearsing and thought little of them, but a private set at the International changed her mind.

As with much of what she has done, the result ended up being better for a book than for her bank balance. Having thought she’d done a deal for the Roses to sign with Rough Trade, her co-manager pulled a sleight of hand and delivered the band to another label. Deciding that she couldn’t work in such an environment she left with a pay off of just £1,000.

While the band were talking to Rough Trade, guitarist John Squire had presented Geoff Travis, the label’s boss, with a copy of the artwork for the first single. “Geoff said he keeps it on his wall to remind him what not to do when trying to sign a band,” Lindsay reveals. “And there’s a picture of the artwork in the book.”



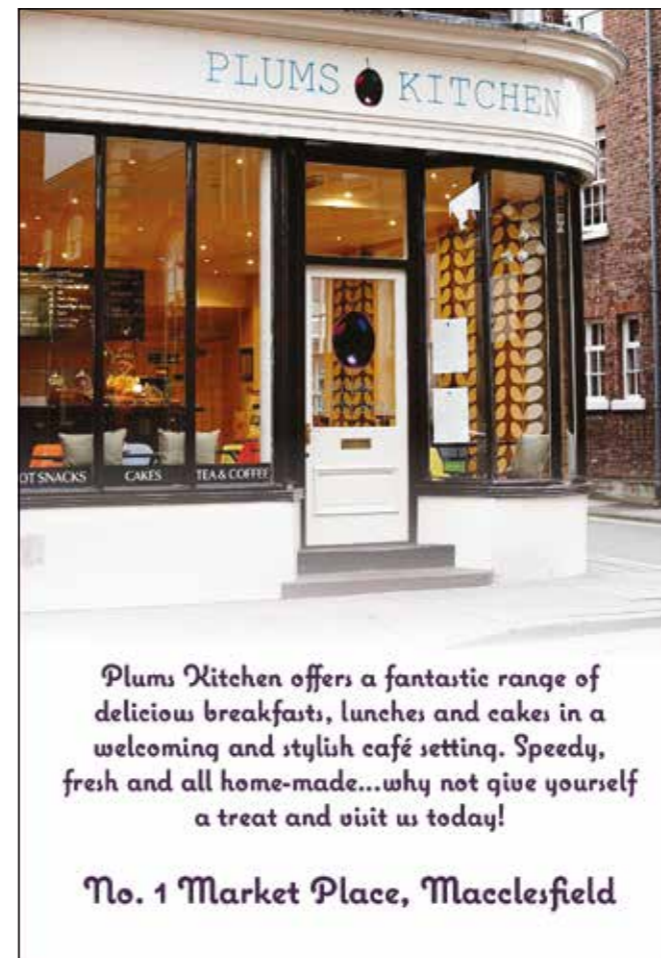
Note from Tony to Lindsay quoting *Gone With the Wind*.

“At Christmas he sent me a note, saying, ‘It seems we have been at cross-purposes’. I only realised 40 years later that that was a quote from *Gone With the Wind*.”

Rhett Butler: I hoped against hope that you’d call for me, but you didn’t.

Scarlett: I wanted you. I wanted you desperately but I didn’t think you wanted me.

Rhett Butler: It seems we’ve been at cross purposes, doesn’t it? But it’s no use now.





Sport for all.

There are no obstacles to fitness says Macclesfield Tough Mudder champion and award winning personal trainer Matt Rigby. *By Janet Reeder*

He's a Tough Mudder veteran, ultra marathon runner and personal trainer... Matt Rigby's list of achievements when it comes to fitness are impressive, but it wasn't always that way. As he confesses over coffee at his favourite Macclesfield café Yas Bean on Buxton Road.

Matt was an overweight father-of-two, was very unhappy and had a sedentary lifestyle. Luckily, he quickly acknowledged that something had to give.

"It all started for me around 2012 when I was chasing the kids around the back garden. I was 26 at the time and I felt out of breath. I thought 'crikey this is not right. I need to sort myself out.'

"I was probably a little bit overweight my lifestyle wasn't

particularly great. I was depressed and lacking in self-esteem and confidence."

Unlike many of us who would have guiltily reached for another bag of crisps and the remote control, he decided that to 'sort himself out' he needed to complete one of the most gruelling races around. Tough Mudder is more than just about winning. It is a community built on teamwork, camaraderie and overcoming obstacles, physically and mentally. It's about stepping outside your comfort zone, which is exactly where Matt found himself.

"A lot of my friends and family said, 'there's no way you're going to be able to do that', but it was like a red rag to a bull," he admits.

"I got help from a personal trainer called Dominique Ambrose and my

fitness journey started from there." After the first 12-mile-long course where he encountered obstacles such as 10 ft walls, cargo nets, monkey bars, rings, and electric wires he was soon hooked and now 39 Tough Mudders later, he's still passionate about the challenges he faces at each event. Taking on Europe's Toughest Mudder for his 40th event in total at the end of July.

"I've done three Europe's Toughest Mudder events involving running multiple laps of the obstacle course for 12 hours through the night and in 2021 I won the 35-39 age group category. It's a brilliant experience because it's very much centred around teamwork and helping others but there is the competitive element with longer endurance events. I've run on my own and I've taken teams of clients there too."

Aside from his own personal fitness goals Matt has been working as a personal trainer for almost eight years. He found that clients were frequently asking for his advice on running and that's why he set up the **#mrptrundamentalist** Run Club, which offers group training runs, an in-house race series and a supportive and encouraging run community. Matt continues to train clients in person at S5 gym on Hurdsfield Road offering 1-2-1 personal training sessions, fitness racing classes and group exercise sessions.

"Back in 2016, I was working for Monarch Aircraft engineering; I had been there nearly 10 years and got made redundant," he reveals.

"It worked out in my favour as I used my redundancy to fund my personal trainer qualifications.

I set up my running club in 2021 with eight people and I now have over 50."

It was speaking to Community Engagement Officer for Macclesfield Town Council, Helena Gowler who had helped to set up the first ever Nerf Gun Championships in Macclesfield that sparked the idea for ParkFit.

The council was looking for someone to be part of their Move More Macclesfield scheme and Matt was recruited for the weekly free fitness sessions which are now scheduled at South Park during term times on Thursday nights at 18:00.

The beauty of these is that anyone at any stage of their fitness journey can just turn up. There's no fee, no registration and Matt will tailor the

sessions to suit the needs of the individuals taking part, offering scaled exercises to suit people's individual ability.

During the Covid pandemic Matt, turning 40 this summer, also recorded 150 live feeds featuring a variety of workouts which anyone can still access by searching for Park Fit Live! on Facebook.

Matt has been supported by second wife Beth for more than ten years and they have daughters Isla, aged seven and Amelie aged three.

Says Matt: "I know what it's like to go from being overweight and depressed and I think that helps my clients because I have that empathy and I am able to work out how to motivate them so that they get results."



Lidl Mudder is for kids aged 5-12.



Matt's Achievements

Represented Team UK at the Obstacle Course Racing World Championships 2019

Organised multiple charity virtual runs over the last 4 years raising over £14,000 for local charities and this year organised the first in-person event; the Chilli Banana Charity 10K

*Qualified as a British Obstacle Sport coach 2020
Europe's Toughest Mudder Age Group Champion 35-39 (9th overall) 2021*

Everybody Leisure Sports Personality of the Year 2021.

Macclesfield Town Council, Mayor's Civic Award for services to Sport and Leisure 2022

Born Survivor Marathon (2nd place) 2024

Volunteered and participated in two formats of the first Deadly Dozen fitness race (solo and team relay, 2024).

Park Fit Macclesfield

Getting active... Where to start?

Set a goal

Matt explains that it helps to have a goal. Do you want to get fit? Do you want to lose weight? Nutrition is all-important as the right kinds of foods will not only help you shed pounds but enable you to work out efficiently.

Increase your steps

For those who are just starting do something really simple like increasing your steps by about 10-15% each day.

"It's hard for someone to do 10,000 steps if they're in a sedentary job and their average is only 3,000," says Matt. "Just take it gradually and build it up. Strive to be 1% better each day and that builds up. Do 18 minutes a day every day for a year you'll see results. It's about little and often."

Plan your week

"Planning is massive," says Matt. "I ask people to send me their basic weekly schedule, because there's no point in planning a 90-minute run at a weekend if you have family and kids and only 45 minutes to spare. It's being realistic about what you can achieve in the time that you have available; about planning your week and keeping it consistent."

Preparing to train: Warm up!

- Raise your heart rate by walking.
- Do walking lunges
- High knees
- Mobility exercises
- Dynamic stretching

Says Matt: "Recent research has shown that static stretching straight away to warm-up isn't that great for the muscles when they are cold to start with."

Building core strength

"A lot of people think core is either planking for ages or doing a load of sit ups. That doesn't necessarily help core strength", Matt explains.

"Core strength comes from compound movements such as squats and deadlifts. For a back squat for example you have to really brace and tighten your core through the movement, so compound exercises will improve your core. Then there are things to supplement that which are crunches, leg raises side planks and normal planks. Once you have the basics, that is what you can build on.

Three ways to monitor your progress:

1. By app

Get a tracking/fitness app on your phone.

2. Manually

Set yourself a distance target and see how long it takes you to do it. Record your time then, then try to beat that time on your next run.

3. Monitor your heart rate

Your resting heart rate is also another way to test your progress. As you get fitter your heart rate will return to normal more quickly after exerting yourself.



For ages 18+ all fitness levels welcome. Come and join in a great and FREE 45 minute Park Fit session with qualified personal trainer Matt Rigby, meet at the Bandstand in South Park (during term times).



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Matt Rigby | #mrptrundamentalist
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The benefits of installing an underfloor heating system are unmatched. From the relative simplicity of its installation to its long-term cost-saving nature, UFH offers impressive rewards to those who choose it over other heating methods. Some of the benefits include:

SPACE SAVING

Radiators and space-heaters are unattractive and bulky, taking up room in your home. Underfloor heating can't be seen and is nestled under your flooring, allowing you to reclaim precious space. This makes it ideal for smaller rooms and open plan spaces where looks matter.

LOW-MAINTENANCE

Once it is up and running, underfloor heating is very low-maintenance and should run smoothly for a lifetime.

EFFICIENCY

If you want to run a more efficient home, an underfloor heating system is the solution. They run 25% more efficiently than traditional radiator systems.

ALLERGY-FRIENDLY

Radiators are notorious for collecting dust and the heat that they output keeps the air in a room dry. Underfloor heating allows the air to maintain moisture and doesn't attract dust-mites, making it perfect for those who have allergies or asthma.

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Prints charming...

“King Charles wears a lot of Adamley. In fact, a lot of the Royals do.”

Tro Manoukian
CEO of Adamley

Liberty of London, Dunhill, Victoria Beckham, Vivienne Westwood and Erdem, Burberry and Harrods and hundreds more look to Langley Mill for their traditional, ancient madder silk. Want inspo for a retro paisley? This is the place to come.

Adamley has a magnificent archive of prints thanks to the acquisition of the David Evans & Co, AO Aldwinkle and Brocklehurst-Whiston print archives. David Evans and a womenswear brand called Biddle Sawyer Silks had already been incorporated into the company in the 1990s. But with the expansion of the archive and the creation of a newly built library they have an incredible resource for any textile designer.

Over mugs of tea taken in a boardroom lined with ancient leather-bound pattern books, Tro explains: “We were part of a PLC when I came in, but in 2007 a small team of us bought the

company out and that for us was a real beginning. We had been restricted in terms of making our own decisions but as soon as we cut those cords the company began to be able to breathe and that then led to us growing quite quickly, taking on lots of new people.

“We still do have individual shareholders - there’s myself, the sales director, the design director and we have a European shareholder as well but the remainder of the company, I think just over 60 per cent, is owned by the staff and they see the benefit from that.”

Adamley is now the only factory in Macclesfield using traditional silk screen-printing methods, having weathered the storms of the economic downturn, Brexit and Covid (in fact most of the workforce went into the factory every day during the pandemic).

The uniqueness of the 24,000 sq foot mill is unquestionably due to its determination to preserve the dying art of silk screen printing. Naturally, Adamley has moved with the times and incorporated digital printing into its production, but it remains a stalwart of the ancient processes required to make silks that are literally fit for our very own King.

“King Charles wears a lot of Adamley” reveals Tro. “In fact, a lot of the Royals do.

In fact Princess Beatrice who has just been crowned queen of Tatler’s best-dressed list, got married in a dress made from Adamley silk.

The mill itself started life as a Victorian laundry conveniently situated on the river Bollin so that lots of nasty effluent could be washed away from the site. That is thankfully not the case now.

The royals wear them, designer fashion houses beat a path to their door... why Adamley Textiles is Macclesfield’s best kept fashion secret. By Janet Reeder



Tro Manoukian: CEO of Adamley, pictured on the left

It’s the global fashion industry’s best-kept secret, yet in its hometown of Macclesfield Adamley Textiles remains distinctly under the radar.

While designers from some of the world’s top fashion houses regularly make the pilgrimage to the charming location of River Mills in Langley to gain inspiration for their creations, few locals will be aware that it is one of the town’s big success stories.

I’m greeted by Adamley CEO Tro Manoukian in the front office, which is decorated with traditional old hand printing blocks.

A quarter of a century has passed since Tro arrived at River Mills on a mission to close down what was perceived as a failing silk screen printing factory; a relic from the 1970s and as unfashionable as loon pants from the same era. Instead, he took the business into the 21st century as a unparalleled high end supplier to some of the biggest fashion labels in the world.



Adamley Textiles have been producing printed fabric in Macclesfield for over 50 years



Screen printing on silk is a slow and meticulous process which involves hand printing colours, layer by layer, screen after screen. It's one that requires great precision to yield the most elegant, vibrant results.

But it was the area's unique situation which made it the perfect location for printing silk in a sustainable way, as Tro explains: "Langley has its own microclimate. It is super wet so it's the perfect environment in terms of how that reacts with silk. We also have our own reservoir here, so we don't use any mains water at all. There's no chlorine no chemicals, nothing to affect the process. That's the reason why we are here, and we have no purpose or interest to move. We want to be here."

Visitors from far afield don't want them to move either. They love the semi-rural location, and the fact the factory's nearest neighbour has a small farm on which she breeds Arabian racehorses.

"We just love that. It gives a sense of wellbeing and calmness," Tro explains.

When Tro first took over the reins of the business the handful of brands, they worked with at the time wanted them to be much more discreet and that was fine because, as the dapper CEO stresses they have never been interested in printing millions of units a year.

"We are a business that prints very low volume at a very high price

and very, very high quality so we are not in a position to want to compromise that," he explains.

However, the original dynamic changed with the realisation that their destiny was in the hands of just a few retailers and if they ever decided they didn't want to work with them anymore then it could seriously affect the business.

"We stopped working with wholesalers and went direct to the retailers. Historically there was always a barrier between us, and the final retailer and that middleman could make the final decision he wanted to. We felt that had to change. So, our demographic shifted, and now we sell to hundreds and hundreds of clients rather than just a few dozen clients which we did 20-25 years ago," says Tro.

"The team as well has changed. We will never lose our roots which is screen printing and that's what we will always do here, but we have embraced cutting edge technology and digital printing because you have to. We are part owned by an Italian company which gives us that ability to really continue to push our product in Europe. Whereas Brexit would have made things a bit more restrictive."

Having an Italian partner means that they have been able to navigate the complexities caused by Brexit and actually gain a raft of British design houses for whom it is no longer viable to have their silks printed in Europe.

In spite of their strong position, Tro laments what has been a lack of interest in Adamley and Macclesfield's silk industry in general. Of course, there are all kinds of businesses which carry silk in their name, from the town's football club to the local radio station but in all the years he's worked at the mill he's seen little interest from the local politicians.

And when he met a group of media who'd arrived from China to write an article about the Silk Road, he found they were surprised to discover that "It was just a bypass". They thought there'd be a monument in the town to mark its achievements.

"We would definitely like to have an involvement with the council and have more people shout about us," says Tro.

"It's a fact that we've have had a lot more support from Italy than we have from our own people here in terms of exposure and that can be really quite frustrating for us."

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Schoolkids swim the Channel!



Each year, pupils aged 12-15 from Beech Hall School in Tytherington swim the English Channel. Yes, really! Headmaster James Allen explains why... By Simon Guerrier.

You might have passed the big sign on Manchester Road proclaiming 'Beech Hall Channel Swim Squad', with a photo of kids in coloured swimming caps venturing into the sea. And yes, they really are swimming to France.

Since September 2020, the private school has dared students in Years 8, 9 and 10 to train to swim the Channel – and plenty take up the challenge. Those who make it to the final relay team each year face a gruelling ordeal. The shortest distance across, between Dover and Cap Gris Nez on the northern coast of France, is about 33km or 20 miles. Even in summer the water isn't much above 17°C.

'Often it's colder,' enthuses headmaster James Allen. 'And where we go from, it's 36km across. But people tend to swim in a bit of an S-shape and depending on the currents it can be more like 50km to France. You're looking at 14 or 15 hours in the water in total, divided up between the squad of four or six. Each person is in the water for an hour at a time.'

An observer from the Channel Swimming Association is on the boat with the swimmers to ensure they are safe – and that the rules are followed. 'When swimmers are in the water, they mustn't touch one another or the boat,' explains James. 'When the next swimmer takes over, they have to jump in the water behind the current swimmer, to ensure no part of the Channel is not swum in. Anti-seasickness meds are compulsory because the boat goes so slowly. And before they can take part in a Channel relay, everyone must have swum for two hours in water at no more than 15°C.'

It all sounds pretty gruelling. Where on earth did the idea come from to get kids to do this? 'We were in lockdown,' explain James. 'Nikki Pope, an award-winning swimmer and parent of one of the students here, was due to be in a relay team of four when one of the others dropped out quite late. She knew I was already a swimmer and asked if I'd step in. We'd been cooped up so long I thought "Why not?" We swam in August 2020 and it was such an extraordinary experience that we got talking about offering it to our children.'



Folkestone Harbour just before the Beech Hall pupils set off

'My first thought was that, "I've swum the Channel" would look really good on a student's CV when they apply for their choice of sixth-form college or job,' he says. 'It really makes you stand out. More people have climbed Everest than have swum the Channel!'

But James is also passionate about the benefits to children of 'finding their sport, whatever that may be. As well as the physical activity, they develop relationships, communication skills and resilience.' Traditional team sports such as football or netball suit some children best. Others need something more individual.

'A boy in Year 10 has been in the squad two years' running. He's said quite openly that he never considered himself an "athlete" or anything like that. But now he's a swimmer. One day, he plans to swim the Channel solo – and I'm sure he will.'

'It's important to say that our Channel teams are not elite-level swimmers,' James continues. 'Sometimes, they're not particularly good swimmers when they start with us. Whatever the case, it takes a lot of work.'

That work begins with an open try-out day held at the start of each school year. 'That involves a 1km swim – for some, the first time they've ever swum such distance.'



If that doesn't put them off, they then join the team which initially trains three or four times a week. 'It's a serious commitment for a teenager: being in the pool at 7.15 before school, or on Saturday mornings in January when it's 7°C outside. The training is quite tough, to prepare them for what lies ahead when they're in the sea.'

Training is underpinned by science. 'Traditional swim teaching is about speed over short distances. Our squad is training to do an hour at a time in the Channel, in which the aim is to cover 3km. But if you do that with a high profile in the water, the waves will do you serious damage – you can really injure your shoulders. We use a technique called SwimMastery and talk a lot about dynamics in the water, keeping your head and arms low. If you get the stroke right, your head is in the right position and you go at enough speed, you create a bow wave with an air pocket you can breathe. We call it teaching them to breathe underwater.'

Even so, 'Endlessly swimming up and down a 15-metre pool is not particularly interesting when you've been doing it all year. But the swimmers develop a mindset of positivity and understanding that part of achieving a bigger goal is being able to manage discomfort.'

Though training mainly takes place in the school swimming pool, there are sessions in open water. 'We've been to Boundary Water Park near Holmes Chapel, Salford Quays and Sale Waterpark. The squad also needs to get used to being around jellyfish. This year, Liverpool Dock has been teeming with them – without tentacles, so they don't sting – so that's a good place to learn to swim through them. Then we head to Colwyn Bay, where the jellyfish sting. It's not pleasant, like being stung by a bee. But you learn to keep swimming anyway.'

This psychological side to the training is key. 'Swimming at night, for a long time, can be disorienting and gets into your head. You're cold, you're tired, you might feel sick. But it's a relatively short-term discomfort. The students learn resilience to complete the goal. We see the impact of that in their learning in the classroom, too. I really think swimming the Channel has the potential to improve outcomes at GCSE!'

Swimming the Channel also has benefits beyond the individual swimmers on the squad. 'I'm conscious, of course, that our students are enormously privileged to come to a school like Beech Hall and to have the opportunity to swim the Channel. We talked about ways in which we could use that opportunity to give something back to the community, and our brilliant swim coach, Nikki, suggested we raise money for Mencap, the charity that supports people with learning disabilities. Over the past four years the students have raised £85,000 and are hoping to break £100,000 this year. That is something to be proud of.'

Nikki Pope now offers 'anyone who has what it takes' the chance to join the Mencap Marvels and swim the Channel while raising money for the charity. To find out more, visit www.englishchannelrelay.com

Interiors and more at Arighi Bianchi.

This Autumn, enjoy shopping, dining and exciting new events at the North's most prestigious interiors destination.



Autumn/winter 2024 at Arighi Bianchi promises not to disappoint.

In addition to the five floors of inspirational room sets, gorgeous CASA designer accessories lounge and elegant eatery Caffè AB, there's a whole host of new season extras to be enjoyed by visiting the famous retail destination located in the heart of Macclesfield. Shoppers can look forward to a new destination-inspired, limited-edition collection, exciting furniture and homewares drops for the autumn/winter sea-son, mood-boosting interior ideas, Christmas décor and gifting ideas and a calendar of events hosted by the Bianchi family and guest partners.

Postcards from the Alps ... coming this Autumn

The store's new destination-led campaign for the new season is the Alps. The campaign includes a carefully curated collection of homewares and accessories, food and drink and 'how to get the Alpine look' tips - think cosy log cabin vibes, reclaimed wood furniture, ski chalet style accessories and cosy textured soft furnishings. There will also be a new delicious hot chocolate menu at Caffè AB and the chance to win an Alpine Escape!

New Season Furniture and Accessories

Exciting new products will be landing weekly. Pop into store to check out the latest looks in sofas, from compact 'snugglers' to oversized corner sofas, all delivered direct to your door. Arighi Bianchi's five floors are filled to the brim with luxury products for the whole house including carpets, curtains, window blinds, rugs, cushions, and unique home accessories.

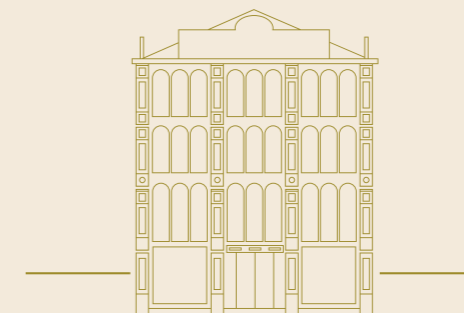
Visit the store if your dining table needs a revamp for Christmas day dinner and festive entertaining, whether that's a new set of chairs or a dining set upgrade ahead of the big day; and there will also be beautiful Christmas tablescaping ideas throughout the showroom for added inspiration.

Christmas Gifting

You'll find everything you need for festive gifting under one roof, with thoughtful and unique options for all the family. The newly refurbished CASA accessories lounge is bursting with accessories, all curated by décor theme, with offerings including everything from candles and diffusers to luxury fragrance and body care, designer kitchen accessories, and aesthetically striking coffee table books. An exclusive Arighi Bianchi line of candles and diffusers will also be available, along with luxurious festive food hampers that are guaranteed to delight.

Exciting Events

Check out the What's On section of the Arighi Bianchi website and keep an eye out on its social media channels for exciting events happening throughout the coming weeks. Not to be missed will be the Luxury Bauble Décor Class with celebrity furniture artist Sarah Parmenter, of Reloved Mcr in November.



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Property central.

Why now is a fantastic time to buy (and sell) in Macclesfield according to the area's housing experts. *By Janet Reeder*



Sheldon Drive, Macclesfield (four bedroom town house). Asking price: £295,000 (Alan Lee)

If you live in property hotspots such as Macclesfield's town centre, Bollington, Prestbury and Tytherington, you'll already be aware of the allure of high performing schools, superb transport links and a wide variety of housing stock to suit every need. If you don't then read on...

Whether you are thinking of buying a home in Macclesfield or you have a property you wish to sell, it's a win-win time for everyone.

This is because the market is finally recovering from the effects of the Covid pandemic says local estate agent Alan Wright of independent estate agents Alan Lee.

Although Alan Lee is a relative newcomer on the high street having been around for only five and a half years,

Alan has been in the property business for more than 15 and says that he'd never seen anything like it when Covid hit.

Initially, as a fledgling company it was touch and go whether they'd survive the recent general election, followed by Brexit and lockdown. Not only that but there were dire warnings in the business that the market would be hit catastrophically.

"And then we had the actual reality," Alan continues.

"The market went completely chaotic. Changes have been almost unprecedented what with the pent-up demand post Covid and then the stamp duty holiday it was like pouring petrol on an already raging fire.

The amount of interest each property had post lockdown was just unbelievable and that sustained for two-and-a-bit years when almost every house was going to best and final bids.

"I have never seen anything like it in my entire career. It was a very bizarre time. What became really apparent quite quickly was people wanted places to work from home in and nice gardens became really sought after. Anybody that had a home office in the back garden people were just going crazy for."

Fast forward to 2024 and things look relatively tame in comparison, but Alan believes that this is simply because the market had been so crazy.

"The market is just normal now," he concedes.

"But I am very well aware SK10 and SK11 are very popular postcodes so I can't speak for anywhere else other than my area."

Homes that are proving popular with buyers at the moment are those up to the £400,000 mark.

"There are some above that level that are also doing very well. But we do find that two bed terraces and three bed semis appear to be the most popular at this moment in time," says Alan.

"Macclesfield is just so sought after because it has countryside nearby, but it also has the commuter links; a good train station to London and Manchester so it is popular in that regard and it is cheaper than places in Wilmslow, and Didsbury.



Kings Park (David Wilson Homes)

"It is a nice place to raise a family, with things going on in the town centre on a weekly basis."

"Ultimately, I think Macclesfield is a good place to live, and I think a lot of people agree with that."

It's those factors which are fuelling a mini property boom in Bollington at the moment according to Andrew Hart who has been at Michael Hart and Company since it opened in 1990.

A few years ago, Bollington came top of the Sunday Times list of desirable places to live, and it has lost none of its charms for families and individuals who want a laid-back lifestyle within commuting distance of major cities.

"It's a popular place - popular with younger families. You get quite a lot of people moving out of the Manchester suburbs and into Bollington, as they've done the city bit and want something more village-like with the attractive amenities we have here," explains Andrew.

"There's the countryside the independent shops etc. but it's still easy enough to get into Manchester and the other towns if you want to."

He agrees that villages like Bollington are becoming something of a property hotspot, especially with the fall in interest rates.

"There's interest there with people wanting to move into the area so it's definitely a good time to sell.

There's no particular type of property that is being sought after, according to Andrew, it's all about the needs of the family or individual.

"Yesterday we had three offers on three different properties. One was a three-bedroom family home, one a four-bedroom family home and the other was a cottage. There were young families who wanted to upsize while the smaller property had attracted the attention of a single lady who wanted a country cottage and who put an offer on it," he reveals.

"At the moment we have just put on the market an affordable one-bedroom flat being sold through East Cheshire's Affordable Housing Scheme where with their discount applied you can get it for £135,000 which is a real bargain. Then it goes all the way up to whatever you want to pay at the top end. Generally speaking, terraced houses, two up two downs are round about £180,00-£250,000 and then semi-detached homes starting at £285,000 up to £500,000 and then the detached ones at £500,000 plus."



Silk Waters (Barratt Homes)

Residents can easily enjoy long walks through fields and woodland, as well as the footpaths along the 26-mile Macclesfield Canal.

Highly-rated schools are situated within a short walk of both developments, and the newly refurbished Grosvenor Centre offers access to many premium brands.

The developers also cite the town's passion for sport, with the football club, hockey club, biking club, angling society, and golf club, to name a few, as a big draw.

"Macclesfield is a dream come true for many of our buyers," said Gavin Powell, Sales Director at David Wilson Homes Northwest.

One of the more interesting sales which Michael Hart and Company is currently dealing with is a farmhouse in the village of Pot Shrigley, which unfortunately had been badly damaged by fire.

"It has about eight acres of land and needs total renovation, but it should generate a lot of interest as it is in a lovely spot overlooking the Cheshire plain," says Andrew.

"Location is always important. Bollington has increased in popularity over the years you can see the difference in pricing between Bollington and other places around the area. The villages are more sought after as there is more of a community feel about them."

New homes from Barratt and David Wilson Homes are also attracting a lot of attention.

Silk Waters Green and Kings Park in the heart of the town are proving a big hit with buyers, because of their fantastic location.



The farmhouse at Pot Shrigley (Michael Hart & Company)

"They love it for its commuter links, its connection to the rural wonders of the Peak District and its rich history.

"It's definitely a great time to buy in Macclesfield. There's an opportunity to progress on the property with us and we have a wide range of moving schemes to help home buyers make a comfortable and more affordable move.

"For those with a property to sell, it's beneficial that interest rates have come down recently and there's an appetite in the market. We can also help take care of the sale of an existing property through our Part Exchange and Movemaker schemes."

Local plan for housing in Cheshire East



A 12-week consultation on Cheshire East Council's 'Local Plan issues paper' came to an end in July.

The new Local Plan will eventually set the blueprint for development in the borough into the 2040s. Factors include meeting the borough's future housing needs, tackling climate change, providing new jobs, restoring nature and supporting healthier lifestyles.

Councillor Mick Warren, chair of Cheshire East Council's environment and communities committee, said: "The current Cheshire East Local Plan runs to 2030 and last year, the council decided that a new one should be prepared to replace it.

"We're still waiting for the Government to release full details of the changes they are making to the way future local plans must be prepared, as part of its reforms to the planning system, and we are some way off publishing any draft policies and proposals for the borough.

"But the issues paper is the first important step in preparing our new local plan and provides an initial opportunity for local communities to tell us through the consultation how they feel it could help to tackle local priorities.

The new Local Plan will take several years to prepare and will be shaped by several rounds of public consultation.



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From Macclesfield Kart Club to Formula 3!

At just 19-years-old, Joseph Loake has achieved more than the average teenager. From championship titles to awards, the competitive racing driver sits down with journalist *Emily Whitehouse* so we can learn more about the man beneath the helmet.

The life of a competitive racing driver is hectic to say the least. While it seems exciting on the surface, behind the wheel drivers are faced with serious dangers and an immensely busy calendar. I got in touch with Joseph towards the end of July, trying to schedule an interview for August, when drivers are traditionally given a summer break. However, it's nearly September and we've finally managed to find a window to talk.

'Hello!' says Joseph, in an excited tone, his strong northern accent in full-swing. 'I'm super excited to finally sit down and chat with you.'

Joseph was born in Macclesfield and has lived there his entire life. For the 19-year-old, racing is what he was made to do. He explains that, unlike other competitive drivers, his family, who are still based in Macclesfield, were never that interested in motorsport, but that never stopped them encouraging him to pursue a career in it.

'When I was little, my dad and I used to go racing at the local rental karting place and I don't think he thought I'd now be doing it for a living,' he laughs. 'Growing up my family and friends weren't too

interested in motorsport, they knew it existed, but we never used to watch any races together. The first race I remember watching was the Brazilian Grand Prix in 2016, by which point I was already driving professionally.'

Joseph continues: 'I started racing competitively in 2016 when I was 10 years old which is when I joined Macclesfield Kart Club where I stayed until I was 14. After that, in 2019 I joined the BRSCC Fiesta Juniors championship, which was a huge career highlight for me as I got to race around Silverstone for the first time and it's where I won my first championship title.'

Created in 2012, the BRSCC Fiesta Juniors championship was launched to help young drivers, typically aged between 14 and 17, break into the sport. When Joseph took part in this competition, his talents on the track really began to shine. During his first year, he actually missed the opening round of the competition, but still managed to finish second overall, taking a double win at Anglesey in North Wales.

In 2020 - a year that was traumatising for most of us - Loake won the championship overall and was a staggering 50 points ahead of his rival, William Orton.

'When I was competing in the Fiesta's championship I had the time of my life. It was the first time I felt like a proper racing driver, which was mad because I was only 14 and not allowed a driving license, but I was allowed to race a Ford Fiesta,' he says chuckling. 'I actually kept hold of the car that I drove in 2020 when I was 15, for the championship that I won, because I really didn't want to let it go. I won every race in it and just wanted it as a little track car, but then I needed the money to progress with racing, so I had to sell it unfortunately.'

And progress he has. In December 2023, he was the winner of the Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Award.

Established in 1989, the award was created to recognise talented young racing drivers across the UK. Then at the start of this year, Joseph began driving for the Rodin Motorsport team in Formula Three (F3).

Joseph says: 'To win the award was seriously special. There's been so many impressive people that have won previously, like Lando Norris, Jenson Button and David Coulthard and pretty much every single winner of the award has gone on to be something, be it Formula One (F1) or maybe Le Mans, but even if I just get as far as my name being among the other winners, that'd be enough for me.'



Scan the QR code and follow [joseph_loake_racing](#) on Instagram. Interested in becoming a sponsor? Please email Moira Loake: moiraloake@yahoo.com



Formula 3 cars have a top speed of 300 km/h and can go from 0 – 100 km/h in 3.1 seconds

'One of the prizes you get with the award is being able to test drive an Aston Martin F1 car in the summer and when I designed my helmet for the British Grand Prix earlier in this year, I did so with this test drive in mind. I wanted to make the helmet look like something that nobody else had done. I knew I wanted it to look like the British flag in some way because this year was the first time I was doing my home race, but I didn't want it to just be the flag because that's quite boring. So I thought "let's chuck a few triangles into the mix that are all red, white and blue and see what happens", and it's safe to say it was the right decision as I now absolutely love it.'

From winning the award and conquering previous championships, the world has had its first taste of a man who has the potential to become an F1 champion. However, Joseph explains that he still has a way to go before he can claim the top spot.

'Like any aspiring racer, I want to become an F1 driver and win races and then the championship and

then multiple championships, but I'm aware this is quite a long way off. I've always admired Max Verstappen, who is the current F1 world champion and although the season hasn't finished yet, it looks like he'll remain on top.'

'Verstappen started in F1 when I first began racing in 2016 so to watch his journey has been incredible and his driving style is something I look up to. This year was my first-time racing in Monaco and the first track that I received championship points for this season. Anybody who knows Monaco, knows it's one of the hardest tracks to drive because of all the sharp corners and narrow pathways, but when I was driving it, I thought about how Verstappen drives with a bit of aggression and concentrates on nothing but bringing home the title, and this clearly helped me soldier through, as well as my amazing team behind me.'

Despite his outstanding achievements and drive to become a world champion, Joseph explains that he's not putting too

much pressure on himself to be the best as right now, he believes he's exactly where he needs to be.

'Although I wouldn't trade this job in for anything and I thank my lucky stars every day that I get to race and travel around the world, I think it's important to not forget where you've come from,' Loake says. 'No matter where I am, I always look forward to coming home. When we've had five race weekends in six weeks, it gets difficult, and you need a break.'

'I love coming back to Macclesfield because it's where everyone I love is. Before I became a full-time racing driver, I didn't realise how much I enjoyed the little things like just walking around town or going to the gym or being able to breath in air that's not thick with car fumes,' he explains.

'When I look to the next five years, the future feels uncertain, but I hope I've made it into F1, and I hope I'm as happy as I am now. One thing is for sure though, I don't have any plans to move out of my mum's house anytime soon.'



Joseph Loake, in qualifying at Silverstone with his team Rodin Motorsport



Joseph Loake in the final race of the season, August 2024



Joseph Loake pictured here with his mum, Moira Loake in Monte-Carlo, Monaco

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Into the wild...

A great introduction to high altitude trekking in Nepal. A wonderful walk into the amphitheatre of the Annapurna Sanctuary, surrounded by 11 of Nepal's major peaks. *By David Harrison*

Typically, these trips involve 8 to 14 days (occasionally more) trekking in relatively remote landscapes. High passes up to 4,900m/16,000ft may be crossed (sometimes snow-covered) and there may also be glacier travel and peak ascents. Walking days can be between 5 and 8 hours with considerable ascents and descents. Overnight stops on trek could be in tea houses, mountain huts or camping. These trips suit enthusiastic hill/mountain walkers.

To undertake such treks, you should be physically fit and experienced in hill walking. We travelled with **Mountain Kingdoms Ltd.** who have vast experience of arranging trekking adventures, both as part of a group or as a private party.



STYLE

Trek



GRADE

Vigorous



ACCOMMODATION

Teahouses



DURATION

17 Days Total
11 Days Trekking



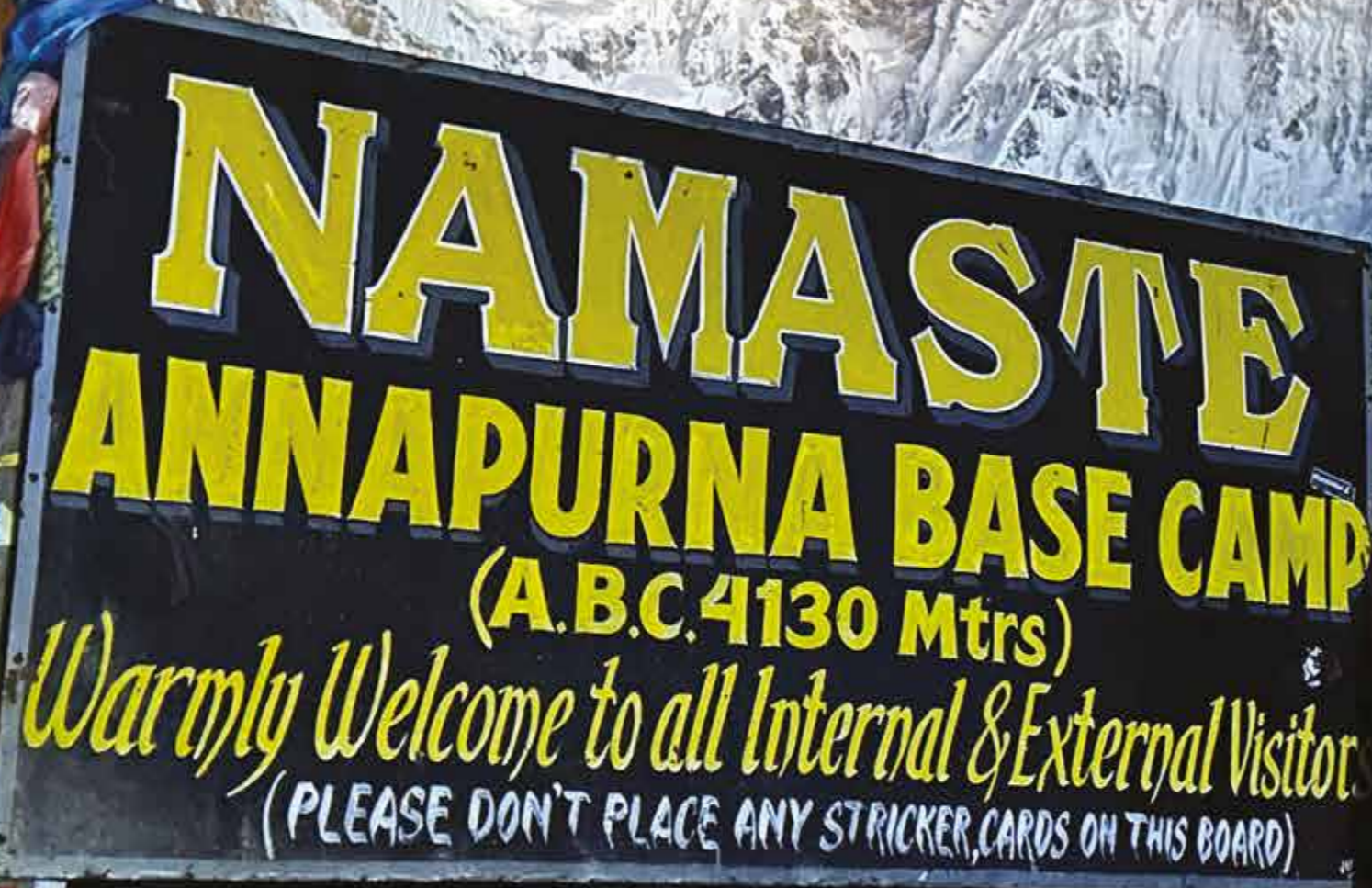
MAX ALTITUDE


4,130m
13,550ft





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The trek at a glance...



As we descended into the sprawling Kathmandu Valley below, the shambolic infrastructure of the capital city reached out before us, tightly squeezed into a narrow corridor between the foothills of the Himalayas.

As we emerged from Tribhuvan International Airport we were met with an assault on our senses. Baggage handlers, taxi drivers, trekking guides and street sellers all vying for attention and yet somehow the chaos seemed to work.

Following a short transfer we soon settled into the lavish gardens of our hotel for the evening, the wonderfully named Yak and Yeti and our team were taken through a trek briefing.

The following day, after a scenic flight to Pokhara, gateway to the Annapurna range, we met our trekking crew made up of our guides Nima and Lama and their team of porters.

A short minibus trip later we arrived at roadhead we were soon walking through tropical forests and open terraced fields. The leaches were trying to hitch a ride, but as long as we remained vigilant, it really wasn't a problem. We made our way towards our first evenings accommodation Sanctuary Lodge near Birethanti. As far as trekking lodges go, this was a Rolls Royce, a lodge which was hand built by local craftsmen.

After an evening meal of the traditional Dal Bhat and a good night's sleep, we set out on the 5-to-6-hour trek to the Hilmaya Lodge. It was a long climb up to Ghandruk (also known as Ghandrung) which took us on a stone staircase up through fabulous countryside of cultivated terraces, small settlements and attractive farmhouses. We shared the path with local people and school children while all around farmers were working in the fields with buffalo drawn ploughs. We soon reach Ghandruk which is a busy,

prosperous village, well known as it is home for many of the Gurkhas who have served (and continue to serve) in the British Army.

We settled into our lodge for the evening - and as we hadn't yet gained too much altitude, we enjoyed a Gurkha beer, but closely monitored by our guides!

Day 3 on trek was certainly vigorous with over 8 hours of trekking - through to Sinuwa.

The weather was clear permitting fantastic mountain views, which included Annapurna South, 23,687ft/7,220m, Hiunchuli, 21,132ft/6,441m, Annapurna III, 24,786ft/7,555m, Machhapuchare, 22,943ft/6,993m, and Gandharba Chuli, 20,498ft/6,248m.

We trekked uphill through farmland and forest to Sinuwa Danda, a small settlement on a ridge with 2-3 teahouses. Set in a rainforest, Sinuwa came alive in the evening - certainly an insect heaven.

"Adventure should be 80% 'I think this is manageable,' but it's good to have that last 20% where you're right outside your comfort zone. Still safe, but outside your comfort zone."

Bear Grylls
Adventurer

The following morning, we headed towards Deurali, walking through the forest to the village of Khuldi-ghar where our guides Nima and Lama handed in our trekking permits and conservation tickets at the checkpoint. We descended to the settlement of Bamboo, having reached an altitude of 7,700 feet. The climb was continuous, but our guides set a steady and controlled pace which certainly facilitated our breathing as we gained altitude. We soon reached Deurali at 10,498 feet. That evening in a busy food hall we met fellow trekkers from all parts of the world and there was a heady mix of languages fighting to be heard.

The following day we started walking up towards the Machapuchare Base Camp at 12,000 feet. The lush green vegetation gave way to snow-capped mountains and deep river valleys. You could certainly feel the altitude, but excitement was high as we arrived at the gateway to the Sanctuary. It was a shorter walking day, only 4 hours, so when we arrived, we sat on the terrace drinking ginger tea and absorbing

the spectacular vista's which surrounded us.

We agreed with the guides that we would start the following day at 3am to walk under the stars to the Annapurna Sanctuary, arriving in time to see the spectacular sunrise over the Himalayan mountain range. It was a cold start as down jackets were adorned - and we walked under the clear night sky with head torches showing the way.

Arriving at the Sanctuary - we climbed further up towards the retreating glacier, and we were rewarded with the most spectacular sight of the sun rising over Annapurna South and her awe-inspiring neighbours. Completely surrounded by soaring, snow-capped giants, including Annapurna 1, Tent Peak, Hiunchuli, Gandharba Chuli, and Machhapuchare - we watched as the peaks were washed in liquid gold sunlight. Certainly, a lifetime memory.

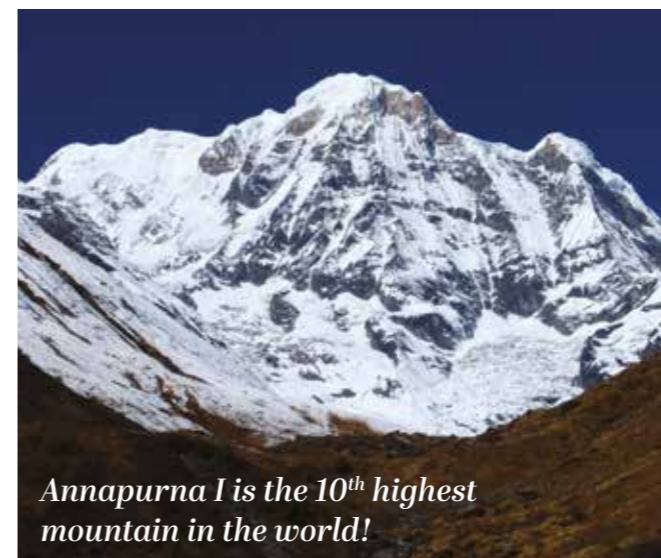
The following days we headed down passing through the villages

of Dovan, Chomrong, Tadapani and Ghorepani which was our base for climbing to the viewpoint of Poon Hill at 10,532 feet to see another spectacular sunrise.

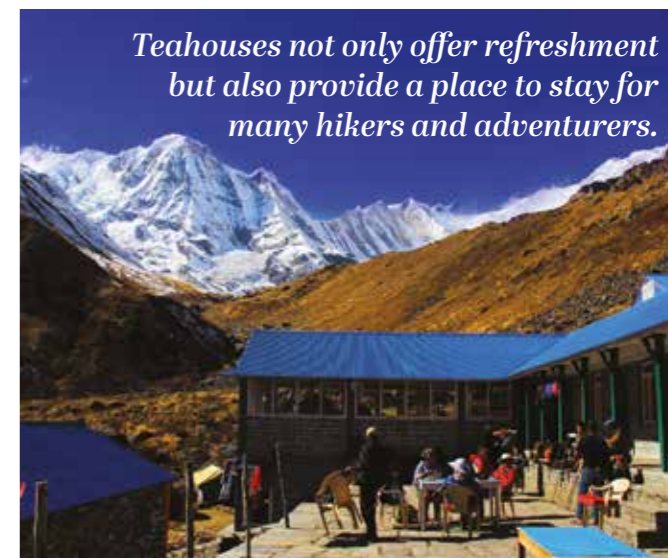
For the final half day we trekked back to the roadhead where our vehicles were waiting to take us to the Bari hotel in Pokhara. As we sat in the lavish gardens by the pool, reminiscing on the adventure of a lifetime, we reflected on an amazing experience in an amazing country. If you are looking for an adventure - this could be for you!

Note: Altitude Sickness

It is caused by gaining altitude too rapidly, which doesn't allow the body enough time to adjust to reduced oxygen levels and changes in air pressure. This can cause hypobaric hypoxia (a lack of oxygen reaching the tissues of the body). In severe cases, fluid builds up within the lungs, brain or both and can be extremely serious. It is important to acclimatise and not increase altitude too quickly.



Annapurna I is the 10th highest mountain in the world!



Teahouses not only offer refreshment but also provide a place to stay for many hikers and adventurers.



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What's on?

THEATRE & CINEMA

23-28 September
MACCLESFIELD MAJESTIC THEATRE GROUP PRESENT: THE ADDAMS FAMILY
 A comical and wacky production at MADS Little Theatre in Macclesfield.

11-13 October
ADVENTURE CINEMA - HALLOWEEN AT CAPESTHORNE HALL
 11th - The Lost Boys (15)
 12th - Hocus Pocus Spectacular (PG)
 13th - Scream (18)

12-13 November
A CHRISTMAS CAROL AT THE STOCKPORT PLAZA
 The Charles Dickens Victorian Christmas classic is live on stage for 2 nights.

17 November
AN EVENING WITH ANTON DU BEKE AT BUXTON OPERA HOUSE
 The Strictly Come Dancing star takes to the stage for an evening of song, dance and laughter.

COMEDY

First Friday of Every Month
BUXTON BUZZ COMEDY CLUB AT THE PAVILION ARTS CENTRE
 Quality stand-up to leave you in stitches. Upcoming 2024 dates: 6 Sept | 4 Oct | 1 Nov | 6 Dec

30 September
CAROL VORDERMAN LIVE & OUTSPOKEN!
 Come and see the Countdown arithmetic star live at the Buxton Opera House.

2 October
MILTON JONES - HA! MILTON
 The hilarious, tone deaf, deadpan comedian as seen on TV and Radio 4 takes to the stage at the Buxton Opera House.

5 October
DOM JOLY: THE CONSPIRACY TOUR
 Exploring the strangest and weirdest conspiracy theories. See him at the Stockport Plaza.



6-7 November
JOHN BISHOP: BACK AT IT
 A brand new UK stand-up tour for 2024! The Liverpoolian comedy legend can be live on stage for 2 nights at the Stockport Plaza.

13 November
RHOD GILBERT & THE GIANT GRAPEFRUIT
 See him live at the Buxton Opera House for his hilariously dark and personal new tour!

18 November
DAWN FRENCH IS A HUGE TW*T AT THE BUXTON OPERA HOUSE
 Yes, it's really called that! The much loved TV vicar is sharing her most embarrassing stories live on stage.



EXHIBITIONS

24-25 September
DESIGN CENTRAL INTERIOR DESIGN TRADE SHOW
 The trade only luxury interiors show will run for 2 days at Capesthorpe Hall.

26 September - 3 October
ART FAIR CHESHIRE AT MACCLESFIELD TOWN HALL
 This art fair has been running since 1999! Come and enjoy the work from over 50 local artists.

MUSIC & FESTIVALS

Every Tuesday from 7pm
BUTTON LIVE LOUNGE AT THE BUTTON WAREHOUSE
 Come and discover your next favourite artists! This local event is hosted by Joel Gardner.

7 November
THE STORY OF SOUL AT THE BUXTON OPERA HOUSE
 Powerful performances that showcase the biggest sweet soul music spanning a generation.

9 November
FAIRYTALE OF NEW YORK COMING HOME FOR CHRISTMAS
 A Christmas classic with an array of talented singers, musicians and dancers at the Buxton Opera House.

11 & 15 November
SCOUTING FOR GIRLS
 See them perform their biggest hits at Buxton Opera House on the 11th November and again at Stockport Plaza on the 15th November.

31 December
NEW YEAR'S EVE GALA CONCERT AT THE BUXTON OPERA HOUSE
 Bring in the new year in style with live music from The British Philharmonic Concert Orchestra.

FAMILY FUN

Last Sunday of Every Month
TREACLE MARKET MACCLESFIELD
 Discover 160+ stalls of amazing crafts, food, drink & vintage finds. Upcoming 2024 dates: 29 Sept | 27 Oct | 24 Nov | 22 Dec

5 October
NATURE NEEDS YOU IN WEST PARK, MACCLESFIELD
 So much fun from story telling and crafts to archery and face painting. Come along rain or shine!

19-31 October
PUMPKIN PATCH AT THE FARM AT TATTON PARK
 Meet the farmyard favourites and find your perfect pumpkin in time for Halloween.

26 October
SPOOKY SATURDAY IN MACCLESFIELD TOWN CENTRE
 Spooky happenings with crafts and entertainment, the perfect day out for family and friends!

16-22 November
YULETIDE: A GLITTERING WINTER GARDEN ADVENTURE
 Spectacular family fun as winter myths and stories come to life at Tatton Park Gardens.



What's on at The Button Warehouse?



Martin Guttridge-Hewitt steps out to experience Macclesfield's most talked about music showcase and finest listening room. Who said a rainy Tuesday evening had to be dull?

Directed off Chestergate by a chalkboard sign for "Live Music Tonight" the unassuming passageway guides us into a small courtyard. Here, a ground level doorway leads into a historic stone building, then a wooden staircase befitting what this place once was. Specifically, a button and silk twist warehouse. More generally, early industrial-era storage, past life evident in subtle detailing throughout the deceptively large first floor waiting above.

It's Tuesday evening, the weather has failed to hold up its end of the bargain but that hasn't stopped a sizeable crowd of music fans braving some of late summer's wetter moments to fill The Button Warehouse before we arrive around 8PM. The only table available hides from the small stage behind solid brickwork, but thankfully the sound is crystal clear throughout the room and our position provides an unimpeded and non-disruptive route to the timber-clad bar.

We're not surprised to find the venue this busy given tonight is the Live Lounge, a weekly event that's grown from humble beginnings into a rightly cherished Macclesfield music institution. Regularly reaching seated capacity on the promise of showcasing up and coming talent in a relaxed environment, for free, the deal soon becomes even sweeter with the presentation of crisp pints as the acts begin.

'There's a thriving scene here in Macc. But I think in terms of our lane, folk and singer-songwriter stuff, this is the best place to see live music. Although I would say that,' says musician and vocalist Joel Gardner, the man behind Live Lounge. 'We'll let anyone play, we don't really vet it as such, but it's not strictly an open mic night either. It's a pre-booked open mic. There's lots of really good music and artists about and it's really nice to see the scene kind of improving as well because of the success of what we're doing here.'



Joel Gardner the man behind Live Lounge at Button Warehouse

Putting it into context, there are currently around 600 names on the Live Lounge database who are keen to play. Some will be familiar faces, others debutants, the point is this series has now established itself as a stop-off on the regional circuit for aspiring and emerging musicians. This reputation is validated in the standard of artists as the night unfolds in a hazy brew of soft-lighting, imported lager, and smooth sounds.

A sax-guitar jazz duo who introduce themselves as Bill & Ben arguably steal the early hours with woozy overtures and meandering melodies at day dream tempos. The ear-worm effect is most evident during 'Bilbao', a track inspired by the namesake Spanish city and the gentle flow of its river. An apt reference point to convey the overall feeling throughout. We are un-rushed, the place is warmly inviting, tangibly unpretentious and truly authentic. There's a sense everyone's here to support those playing, and the platform itself.

'We couldn't run as an open mic anymore as demand got too high. And I think as a performer, if you see it's doing well midweek and it has its own audience, you're playing to music lovers in a beautiful location, you know you need to have your set right,' Gardner continues, explaining momentum behind Live Lounge has gathered pace since crowds and culture returned following pandemic lockdowns. 'The open mic scene in Manchester particularly, but around Macclesfield as well, is really strong and we've been rushed off our feet with performers. So it's all pre-bookings now. If anyone wants to play, they get in touch and we slot them in.'

'There are kind of ground rules here, like the focus is on the music. I think there's loads of pubs and bars that put on music but it's kind of in the background. It might be the most brilliant music you can hear but it's not framed in that way,' he replies when we ask for the secret behind Live Lounge's success. 'I just want this to be a place for the music community in Macclesfield, where someone who plays an instrument or someone who has just started to play and wants to go somewhere can meet other people, maybe start a band, and certainly get inspired by listening to some real quality live music.'



“Some of the best nights I’ve had here have been live music and the Live Lounge events are simply magical, the variety of acts just makes it all feel so special.”

Gemma Burleigh
Owner of The Button Warehouse

Of course, this hasn’t happened overnight. Live Lounge is run and, for the time being at least, usually hosted by Gardner. But it wouldn’t exist without Gemma Burleigh, owner-mastermind behind Button Warehouse. The pair met when he was playing another open-mic several years ago, a friendship formed and this then led to the weekly new music showcase. She’s quick to point out, it’s a consistent highlight, albeit not the only aspect of programming at the venue. Sunday Sessions round out each week from 2PM onwards, Thursdays can welcome touring gigs and live happenings take place many Fridays and Saturdays. Socials are the best way to find out what’s going on.

‘I’ve been the owner since 2019, when we started out in the building next door before outgrowing that and moving into this beautiful place,’ she tells us. ‘I’m responsible for the design and feel of the venue, it was important to me to create a space for everyone to feel safe and like it’s their home, I guess... I love the old bricks and wanted to create a laidback abandoned warehouse vibe, with a rustic-industrial feel. Some of the best nights I’ve had here have been live music and the Live Lounge events are simply magical, the variety of acts just makes it all feel so special.

‘One of the best gigs for me was my good friends Joe Doonan and Tim Gambles, they were simply incredible. The live stuff on Sundays is also amazing, with strong favourites like James Biddolph Jnr. and Grace Kelly,’ Burleigh continues. ‘We have a supportive,

encouraging and truly magnificent community here at Button, myself and my staff have always been at the centre of that, making sure everyone coming through our doors feels welcome... It’s more than work... It’s a family... I am so grateful for each and every person who’s supported me on this journey.’

But sustaining hasn’t been easy. Across the board, the arts are in dire financial trouble, and this is rarely more obvious than the music scene. Revenue from sales of singles, EPs and albums has long since been decimated, and as of January 2024 the Music Venue Trust reported that two grass roots venues were closing in the UK every week, many due to running costs, including rocketing energy bills, others landlord disputes, rent rises and redevelopment projects. In the 12 months prior to those figures being published, 125 stages were permanently shuttered across Britain. Button Warehouse has not been immune.

Burleigh recounts how challenges staying afloat during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, which unfolded within 12 months or so of the venue opening, have given way to ongoing financial pressures felt across the sector. There have been moments when it looked like things might fold, and it’s taken grit to get here. A familiar story playing out in towns and cities across the country, and one that emphasises how much risk and passion is involved in running operations like this, making a genuine cultural and community contribution. Not to mention how much we should value them.

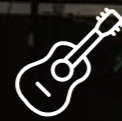
Coming up at The Button Warehouse



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