

# WHAT'S DOING

APRIL  
1985



THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

## SCOTTISH & NEWCASTLE GO FOR LION'S SHARE



Towards the end of last month Scottish & Newcastle Breweries launched an £87,000,000 takeover bid for Blackburn brewers Matthew Brown. Matthew Brown's Chairman, Patrick Townsend, is reported to have announced that the offer was "unacceptable, unwelcome and we are going to fight it".

A successful takeover would mean an increase in S&N's relatively modest estate from 1,446 outlets to 1,996. Last year they dropped a proposed takeover of Camerons after being smacked by the Monopolies Commission, but a Matthew Brown takeover would give the brewery only 11% of the beer market in the North West, making it only the fourth largest in the region.

S&N say, as can be expected, that if successful they will support local beer production within Matthew Brown and provide the resources to develop Theakstons (taken over by Matthew Brown last year) as a brewer of quality cask conditioned beer. This doesn't look very



promising at all. Just when Matthew Brown are behaving quite well and bringing back traditional beer, it looks as if their pubs could be flooded with the range of boring, keg S&N piss so beloved of the North East, with only a token appearance of (doubtless overpriced) real ale. This takeover should be resisted!

## WHAT'S DOING



### AMBER NECTAR SHOW

Next month sees the staging of the 7th Saddleworth Real Ale Festival, organised by the Rochdale, Oldham & Bury branch of CAMRA, in aid of the Saddleworth Museum Building Fund.

The Festival covers the weekend Friday - Sunday 10th-12th May and is to be held in the Civic Hall, Uppermill.

Licensed sessions are: Friday 5.30 - 11.00pm, Saturday 11.30-3.00 and 5.00-11.00 and Sunday 12.00-2.00pm. Admission (free to current card-carrying CAMRA members) will be 30p lunchtimes, 50p evenings (before 7.00pm) and 70p thereafter.

Brass bands will provide the entertainment on both evenings, with Trad Jazz on Saturday lunchtime. Food will be available throughout and a downstairs room will be provided for those not old enough to imbibe.

For the connoisseurs of the hop, a startling array of amber nectars has been assembled, featuring no less than 32 different beers from 21 breweries, including Archers, Brakspears, Big Lamp, Belhaven, Gibbs, Old Mill, Simpkins, Holdens, etc.

The "one-man" breweries will be ably represented by Sair Inn and Franklyns. Local favourites such as Failsworth, Taylors and Holts will add to the drinking pleasure. Ciders and perries from Dunkertons will paralyse a few brain cells and knee muscles in those tempted to over indulge in the juice of the apple (and pear!) A selection of red and white wines will also be on sale.

For further information contact ROB Branch Contact (see Branch Diary).

## **SOUTH MANCHESTER'S GOOD BEER GUIDE PUBS, 1986**

(\* indicates new entry)

### **City Centre**

Circus\* (Tetley), Grey Horse (Hydes)

### **Ardwick**

Kings Head\* (Greenalls), Seven Stars\* (Holts)

### **Didsbury/Withington**

Gateway (Hydes), Station (Marstons), Victoria\* (Hydes)

### **Fallowfield**

White Swan (Robinsons)

### **Gorton**

Rock\* (Tetley)

### **Moss Nook**

Tatton Arms (Robinsons)

### **Northenden**

Crown\* (Boddingtons)

### **Stockport Centre**

Arden Arms (Robinsons), Castlewood\* (Wilsons), George (Higsons), Manchester Arms\* (Robinsons), New Inn\* (Wilsons), Red Bull\* (Robinsons), Royal Oak (Robinsons)

### **Edgeley/Shaw Heath**

Grapes\* (Robinsons), Ye Olde Vic\* (Free)

### **Heaton Mersey/Norris**

Griffin (Holts), Nursery (Hydes)

### **Heaviley**

Blossoms (Robinsons)

### **Reddish**

Union (Robinsons)

### **Cheadle**

Printers (Robinsons)

### **Gatley**

Horse & Farrier (Hydes)

There have been more changes than in recent years. Out of the 1985 allocation of 25 pubs, almost half have been thrown out, with some well known names on the list:-

Coack & Horses and Bulls Head (Manchester); Waggon & Horses (Long-sight); Whitworth (Rusholme); Armoury, Boars Head, Bulls Head, Swan with Two Necks, Travellers Call (Stockport area) and the Star (Cheadle). The Grafton (University) is also missing, but this is due to closure and pending demolition.

## DUKE BOX?

Do Greenalls hold the record for the newest pub to receive the boarding up procedure? Most pubs which close are old, run-down street corner beerhouses in slum clearance areas but the Duke on Waterloo Road, Cheetham, is no more than a dozen years old and surrounded by new housing. Although the Waterloo (Boddies) was closed for 12 months, all the other pubs have survived. Perhaps Holts should make an offer - it's less than a mile from the brewery.

## CASK CONVERSION

John Smiths have converted the Duke of Buccleugh in the centre of Waterfoot, Rossendale, to real ale. The pub, a fairly basic hostelry, has several large posters and handpump stickers in the windows, not to mention the landlord's pullover. All this is a far cry from the dismal attempts of Whitbread, who do next to nothing to promote real ale when they install it. It is also noteworthy that John Smiths remove the fizz pumps, whereas the likes of Whitbread install cask beer alongside the fizz, and in the case of Trophy, both beers have the same name. It is not difficult to see who will succeed in promoting cask beer.





## LAST CALL

The Travellers Call, a well known house on the corner of Stockport Road and Ashton Road, Bredbury, is going to be demolished to make way for road improvements. This John Willie Lees pub was featured in the Good Beer Guide until a few years ago.

## WILSONS CHOICE

It is unusual for a Wilsons pub to sell a bright and a cask version of the same bitter side by side, but this can be said of the Sherwood, off Grosvenor Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock. And it's nice to see that the landlord usually asks which bitter you want or goes straight to the handpump.

## WORDS FROM WIGAN

Another Ring Road pub has bit the dust. The Grapes Hotel (aka Gunge-smearers Arms) on Wallgate was pulled down in March. Burtonwood closed the pub two years ago, shortly after doing it up.



### THE BRINSOP ARMS

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0942 812007

A BAR FULL OF  
HANDPUMPS  
SERVING:

BASS CASK BITTER (HAMMONDS), DRAUGHT BASS,  
HARTLEYS XB, BASS 4X MILD, MATTHEW BROWN JOHN  
PEEL BITTER, BODDINGTONS BITTER, JENNINGS  
BITTER, THEAKSTONS BEST BITTER & XB, ROBINSONS  
BEST BITTER and REGULAR GUEST BEERS

WEDDINGS, PARTIES, BUSINESS MEETINGS CATERED  
FOR IN OUR HILTON SUITE  
LUNCHES AVAILABLE EVERY DAY

THE FREEHOUSE FULL OF FINE TRADITIONAL ALES  
AND STOCKED HIGH WITH WHOLESOME FOOD



FILLED BAKED POTATOES OUR SPECIALITY

Still in the town centre, the Turnkey Cellars, King Street, now sells Youngers No 3 (74p) alongside McEwans 80/-.

Following the farce reported in February's WD, our correspondent assures Greenalls lovers that the Plough & Harrow in Newton still sells cask conditioned ale.

The Shepherds Arms, Warrington Road, Lower Ince, has sadly switched from handpumped Tetley ales to push-button fizz. This isn't too surprising: the new landlord used to run the New Star Inn (keg Tetley) on the Ring Road route. The Stag Inn, Orrell Post, now sells hand-pumped Tetley mild and bitter. Nearby, the Mount may be getting cask beer before long, although the bar staff don't seem to know when, or what.

Two cask outlets in Orrell have switched to handpumps:

Running Horses, Gantley Road, Burtonwood B,M

Colliers Arms, Greenslates Road, Tetley B,M (just inside Billinge)

South Lancs CAMRA Pub of the Year award goes to the Plough, Heath Lane, Croft. The pub, situated near Culcheth, pipped the Railway Hotel, Leigh, by one vote for the honour. The Plough dispels the myth that Greenall Whitley can't brew good beer and is worth a visit. If you're not driving, a 587 bus from Leigh will take you to the bottom of Heath Lane, so give it a try.

The Wigan pub crawl described in March WD will soon be even better. The Guardians Inn, Frog Lane, is being completely renovated inside. The pub should be ready for April and when it is, Whitbread Castle Eden Ale will be on sale. The handpump and (rather misleadingly) the pump clip are already on display. So in future, only the Pagefield Hotel (GW) and the Colliers Arms (Tetley) will sell keg beer in the Springfield Park area.

## CROWN COCK UP

The Old Three Crowns, Deansgate, Bolton, which has reportedly lost trade following its conversion by Pennine Joke into an "English Ale House" by removal of the carpets and comfy seating, has resorted to press advertising in a desperate bid to increase custom.

The good news is that the solitary cask beer, Wilsons bitter, is to be joined by Websters with a regular weekly guest beer, the first of which was due to be Timothy Taylors.

## TITS

Taylor's bitter has joined Everards Tiger and Theakstons bitter as guest beer at the Waggon & Horses, the Pennine Joke pub on Southgate, Central Manchester. All three sell at 90p a pint. Lunchtime drinkers are treated to 2-screen video entertainment and a recent offering was "Dirty Girls", a close study of topless female mud wrestling! Even that can't let you ignore the price of the ale!

## THE CHESHIRE RING STORY

Rumours over the future of the Cheshire Ring Hotel on Manchester Road, Hyde, have been going around for a few months. It was first put up for auction for approximately £108,000, this price was not reached and so the pub was taken off the market. Landlady Frances Gibbons has now left to take over the Best of Brass public house in Mossley (selling Boddingtons beers), whilst landlord Ken Gibbons remains in the Cheshire Ring until it is sold. The pub has now been put on the open market and Ken tells us that there is at least one interested customer. We will have to wait and see.

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### SUBSCRIPTIONS

If you want to be sure of getting **WHAT'S DOING** every month, why not subscribe? It costs £1.90 for six issues, postage paid. Fill in the form below and send it together with a cheque or postal order made out to "**WHAT'S DOING**" to Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester

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### WHAT'S DOING

**WHAT'S DOING** is edited by Neil Richardson, 375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 2AY

**COPY DATE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS THE 20th OF THIS MONTH**

### JOIN CAMRA

To join **CAMRA** send £7 to Membership, **CAMRA**, 34 Alma Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 3BW

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## THE BAD GUYS

Leo King provides the following survey of South, South West and South East Manchester pubs belonging to the three main brewers which still do not sell real ale:

<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>BASS</u>	<u>GREENALL WHITLEY</u>	<u>WHITBREAD</u>
Burnage	Woosters	Farmers	Green End Hotel
Chorlton	Bowling Green Lloyds	Trevor	Feathers
Didsbury		Dog & Partridge	
Hulme	Iron Duke	Grey Parrot Unicorn	Sir Henry Royce
Ladybarn		Old House at Home	Brewers Arms
Levenshulme		Church Wheatsheaf	Railway
Longsight	Church	Mad Hatter New Victoria	Ducie Gold Cup
Moss Side		Hot Pot Western Hotel	Talbot
Northenden		Spread Eagle	
Rusholme	Birch Villa Huntsman		
St George's	Railway	Manchester Regiment	Bulls Head
Whalley Range			Whalley Hotel
Withington		Cotton Tree	Orion

The vast majority of pubs in Wythenshawe show a reluctance to sell real ale from these three breweries and Wilsons as well.

## DRABS

The Wellington Hotel, Church Street, Eccles, has undergone a transformation and the image of a slightly downmarket fifties pub has been replaced with one of a very upmarket fifties cinema foyer. The lounge is now split level, has deep-pile carpet and, in keeping with the current fashion, tasteful, framed pictures and twee botanical interludes. The revolving door has, alas, gone.

## ANGEL ALE

The Angel, King Street, Dukinfield, is now selling John Smiths cask conditioned bitter.



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For a night to remember  
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The Cemetery is unbeatable.

Bring a party and we can provide you  
with a private room - bar sports as  
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Our selection of handpumped beers is  
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**Theakstons Old Peculier & XB • Vaux Samson •**  
**Everards Tiger • Taylors Landlord**  
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**& 3 guest beers & 2 Lagers**  
**PLUS - the worlds strongest Ale EKU**  
+ many foreign & bottled beers

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Cemetery  
Hotel**

**BURY ROAD  
ROCHDALE  
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**UNSPOILT BY PROGRESS**

## GREATER FRIENDSHIP

The Friendship Inn, Lees Road, Oldham, a Good Beer Guide listed Wilsons house, is currently being extended. The work, which involves moving the bar and extending the lounge to the rear, is nearing completion and should be over by Easter. The vault will remain untouched at the insistence of landlord Phil Whiteman. The extra space should help ease the congestion at this very popular pub, at least until the completion of the housing estate opposite, on the site of the old Oddfellows Hall, and the estate to the rear, which will appear when some more of Oldham's industrial heritage is demolished.

## DUCK ALE

Tommy Ducks on East Street, off Oxford Street, Manchester, is now selling Greenalls Original alongside the ordinary bitter. Both beers are on handpump.



### THE STATION

**You'll find us  
at the end of  
Warrington St.  
next to  
the by-pass**

**Our range of hand pumped real ales include  
Marstons Pedigree, Merrie Monk, Mercian Mild,  
Owd Rodger (when it's cold), Boddingtons Bitter.**

**Recent Guest Beers have included  
Ruddles County, Oldham Bitter, Old Peculier**

**We are renowned for our superb luncheons  
(hot & cold buffet plus tasty 'brown-dish' meals)**

**All served in a Victorian setting.**

*if the weather's nice,  
enjoy a pint in the  
beer garden!*

**\* Organise an excursion & we'll provide \*  
a room & food if you wish.**

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## ROEBUCK REMINDER

Following last month's review of the free trade in Saddleworth, it is learned that the Roebuck, Strinesdale, now offers Theakstons Best Bitter and Old Peculier alongside the Matthew Brown beers. Although the landlord is most fastidious about looking after his beer, the character of the inn is really more of a restaurant. Recommended for those who wish to tounge while they quaff.

## FOR HULME THE BELL TOLLS

The Talbot (Wilsons), Stretford Road, Hulme, appears to be closed. The Falstaff (also Wilsons), Jenner Close, Hulme, is also closed and boarded up all round. Both pubs sell (or sold) handpumped real ale. The Talbot is noteworthy for being in two towns - the lounge in Manchester and the vault in Stretford. (Before modernisation the rooms were vice-versa.) The Falstaff is an estate pub which replaced the old one several years ago. There are no "For Sale" signs at either pub; could it be that Pennine Host are creeping into Hulme? Heaven forbid!

## STILL IN THE SHADE

The former Shady Lady (Wilsons) on Oxford Street, Manchester, has opened as "Oxford's" (a Pennine Joke "Open House"). The pub appears to be decorated on a theme somewhere between tropical and 1920's. No real ale.

### BAR FOOD

IN our story on London Hosts, the Grand Met managed house operation, it was stated that the "Pub 80" concept probably appealed more to the younger drinker or those looking for bad food.

This should, of course, have read "Bar food". We apologize for any embarrassment caused.

*Morning Advertiser*

## GLOBE CLOSÉS

The Globe, Old Street. Ashton-under-Lyne, has been closed down. Although the pub has not sold traditional beer for a number of years (Oldham Brewery tank), it seems strange in view of the fact that Boddingtons are looking for more outlets in this area. It would appear common sense to put traditional Boddingtons beers in this outlet, as it always seemed to be a popular music pub. Maybe there's more to this story than we know.



## GOOD NEWS FOR RADCLIFFE

Three Radcliffe pubs have been converted to cask beer in recent months. The Swan and Railway on Spring Lane now sells Chesters bitter and Castle Eden; the Victoria on Ainsworth Road and the Unicorn on Bolton Road now sell Castle Eden only. Whilst all three pubs were badly in need of refurbishment, all can now be categorised as art deco "nice pubs".

**Contributors:** Don Chattwood, Philip Levison, Jim Davies, Leo King, Dave White, Dave Hale, Adrian Cunningham, Duncan Busman, Rob Dunford, Roger Hall.

## THE GREATER MANCHESTER BEER GUIDE

Every CAMRA branch these days seems to aspire to produce a local beer guide giving a comprehensive listing of real ale pubs. This serves as an interesting addition to the national Good Beer Guide for the visitor. It also aids the Campaign for Real Ale by promoting real ale wherever it is served. The local beer guide, therefore, is a desirable product.

However, areas with a large number of pubs, such as London, Birmingham and Manchester, have a problem. With such a high density of pubs (there are approximately 3,000 pubs in Greater Manchester, 1,800 of which serve real ale), it is very time-consuming for active CAMRA members to survey them all in a given period of time. Often the true identity of the area is lost in a welter of pubs of a similar type, be they street corner pubs, wine bars or whatever.

So when it was decided to produce a new Greater Manchester Beer Guide the format was agreed to be a filler between a comprehensive listing of all pubs and the Good Beer Guide selection. Out of 1,800 real ale pubs we will present the best 600, giving the best possible indication of pubs, beers and atmosphere available throughout Greater Manchester.

It is hoped, therefore, to give the reader a picture of Greater Manchester as one of the country's best real ale regions. The guide will go on sale at a cover price of £1.25 at the CAMRA AGM in Southport and will be readily available in pubs in the region shortly afterwards. It will also be on sale at Saddleworth Beer Festival in May. Buy one!

Rob Carder, Editor

# Real Ale Guides



The following publications are available from Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester. The guides are updated from time to time so if you know of any changes please contact the relevant branch - see Branch Diary.

REAL ALE IN SOUTH MANCHESTER - Gorton, Openshaw, Clayton, Didsbury, etc. 10p+sae

REAL ALE IN STOCKPORT - Hazel Grove, Cheadle, Heaton Mersey, etc. 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN SALFORD - Swinton, Eccles, Irlam, Worsley 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN ROCHDALE - Heywood, Littleborough, Middleton, etc 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN ROSSENDALE - Bacup, Haslingden, Helmshore, Rawtenstall etc 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN TRAFFORD & HULME - Altrincham, Sale, Urmston, 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN OLDHAM - Failsworth, Royton, Chadderton, Shaw, Saddleworth 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN BURY - Ramsbottom, Radcliffe, Tottington, Whitefield, Prestwich, 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN MANCHESTER NORTH - city centre, Ancoats, Collyhurst, Newton Heath, Moston, Blackley, Cheetham, etc 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN CENTRAL AND NORTH CHESHIRE - Warrington, Widnes, Runcorn, Lymm, Frodsham, Northwich, Middlewich & Winsford 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN ST HELENS - Sutton, Peasley Cross, Thatton Heath, Moss Nook, Eccleston, Parr, etc. 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN GREATER GROTLEY - Slumley, Smarmford & Slutch, Poshton & Pseudley. 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN N.W. DERBYSHIRE - Buxton, Glossop, New Mills, Whalley Bridge, Disley, Chapel-en-le-Frith, etc. 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN HIGH PEAK & N.E. CHESHIRE (TAMESIDE) - Marple, Hyde, Denton, Ashton, Dukinfield, Stalybridge, etc. 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN CENTRAL MANCHESTER - All real ale outlets within 1 mile of St Peter's Square. 10p + s.a.e.

1984 - THE ROAD TO WIGAN BEER Comprehensive guide to South Lancs CAMRA pubs - Wigan, Leigh, Ashton, Newton, Atherton, etc. Maps, illustrated. 65p + s.a.e.



Well, I've survived, but according to Fiona and Tish it was a close run thing. My head was well and truly on the chopping block at the How to Make What's Doing Super Wonderful meeting. The silly celt underwent a lycanthropic transmogrification and in his new metamorphosis bayed for my blood and spluttered and stuttered through an almost endless tirade of abuse. His vituperation was not confined only to myself; he spread it about like a drunk urinating from the dress circle of the Royal Opera House.

He accused Mr Nestfeather of rejecting brilliantly researched and exquisitely written erudite articles much as if William Shakespeare had been awarded an E in his English 'O' Level by the Joint Matriculation Board. His paranoia knew no bounds - Snoot Magna, it was revealed, were the only branch who had ever done anything at all in the history of the known universe.

My own salvation came from the intervention of Ben Chestnut. Although I suspect dissimulation, he did say that he was not in the least upset by mention of his own peccadillos and found my column, like the curate's egg, to be in parts excretiating. I was to be allowed to continue by 12 votes to 11 with 6 abstentions but only on several stringent conditions. In future it must not be arcane, esoteric, inscrutable, recondite or abstruse but must be apt, pertinent, apposite and in particular germane. Concentration on the concupiscence of famous local tavern keepers was proscribed in favour of condemnatory exposes of blinkered idiocy by our mentors at St Allballs. I was, however, saved the indignity of having everything rewritten by an editorial committee or of having to supply a glossary of terms for the ignorant and uninitiated, but polysyllabic periphrastic circumlocutions were to be discontinued in favour of Sun-style moron-speak. This is my first attempt:

Why have them nerds at HQ put beer show on in the South? It is daft.



It is miles from here. Beer is dead dear and there will be lots of puffs from South there. What a rip off! And what's up with bloke who writes the beer guide? All he does is give us daft rules. Why can't we have lots of pubs in? The beer up here is cheap and good and the pubs are full of nice folk. Down South beer is flat and bad and the pubs are no good.

No, I'm afraid I can't continue in this vein. It's quite dreadful. I'm quite convinced that Dullville will be an excellent venue for the beer festival. After all, now that we've got shut of all the charismatic loonies who started the Campaign and peopled HQ with two-dimensional blandies, all we need to do is make a fortune and to hell with campaigning. As for the beer guide, we've had Hitleresque little tin gods telling us what to do since time immoral, so total unfairness backed up by pseudo-scientific bilge comes as no surprise.

I'm quite certain that there is room in the Campaign for heterodox behaviour and perhaps we should nurture this in Grotley. After all, we've enough putative barmpots and embryonic loonies to start a funny farm. But for the time being we must all be very serious and not allude to the sexual proclivities of licensees and other peripheral matters. I appeal to all contributors to put pen to paper and bombard Mr Nestfeather with in depth, analytical articles rather than the terse "Jack and Tracy Voletrouser have a new flight of plaster mallards in the snug of the Whores and Strumpet" kind of submission. One word of warning, though. There must be a total separation of truth and fantasy so any mention of Perry Drab, the Rat and Handbag or Charlie Bass will be blue pencilled into oblivion.

#### ADVERTISING STANDARDS

Sir - On a recent visit to the Brinsop Arms, a Good Beer Guide pub which advertises regularly in WD, the range of beers available was a rather mundane Boddingtons, Tetleys (including Walkers) and Bass (including, of course, the notorious "Hammonds"). No sign of Hartleys, Matthew Brown, Jennings, Theakstons, Robinsons or regular guest beers, all of which feature

in the advertisement for the pub. Did these all run out on the same night? Is it purely coincidence that apart from Boddies bitter all the beers on sale were "big six" products? Two possible solutions occur to me:



1 The independent breweries' products sell the most and have to be "rested" to give the big boys a chance.

2 The pub is cutting back on its range and sacrificing the independent breweries' beers in favour of the more "persuasive" big six members.

I recall that when our Regional Social was held there a more attractive range was featured. What is happening? I think we should be told as my visit suggested a rather misleading advert.

Alan Seal

### ADVERTISING STANDARDS (2)

Sir - Advertising standards are falling in "What's Doing". The Station in Ashton no longer sells Merrie Monk, although the licensee still advertises it. After two separate expeditions to taste this fine beer only to be disappointed, I have little respect for the management. A pub has to be run as a business and this excludes promoting items that you don't stock. My advice is to give the place a wide berth until it changes hands again.

A better example of how to run a pub is at the Marble Arch. Mr Worthington tells me that sales of mild have been disappointing and he would stock more if he could increase sales. I wonder how many pubs in central Manchester, Mr I J Maules (WD March), have as much to offer the beer drinker as the "Arch"? I enjoy a pint of mild myself, but only if it can be kept in good condition, which requires sufficient turnover. Unless there are drastic changes, how could you exclude this fine pub from the next Good Beer Guide? Keep up the good work, John!

R J Swinglehurst

### SADDLEWORTH SUMS

Sir - Adrian Cunningham's article on Saddleworth free houses (WD March) uses facts much as a dog uses a lamp post - not for illumination but as an aid to taking the piss out of himself. His list shows that there is now more choice of traditional beers than there was in 1980. Of the 10 pubs listed, 2 keg pubs are now selling real ale and two others sell a vastly increased range of beers. There are now 20 different beers on sale, compared with 14. We've lost Pollards, Oldham, Bass and Tetleys and gained Matthew Brown, Taylors, Marstons and some guest beers. Can't be bad. I rest my case.

B Leather

### BASS

Sir - The Bass Cask list (WD March) needs updates. If I am not mistaken:-

1 Spinners Arms, Fir Lane, Leigh, sells only 4X mild

2 Burton Arms, Swan Street, Manchester, was closed and boarded up when I walked past in late February. Beer from the wood, perhaps?

3 Crown, Booth Street, Manchester, sells draught Bass and Stones bitter.

4 Crown Hotel, Bradley, near Standish, is a free house, but in Bass motifs and sells draught Bass, Cask Bass (known as Hammonds here) and 4X mild, alongside Taylors Landlord, Marstons Pedigree and Boddingtons and Thwaites bitters.

Dave White

### EAGLE EATS

Sir - Following your article on lunchtime snacks at the Jolly Angler (WD March), you may be interested to know that the Eagle Inn, Collier Street, Salford (Holts), has also started providing snacks at what must be the cheapest prices in Salford. For example, baked buttered potato 15p (with cheese filling 25p). There is a full range of very reasonably priced pies and pasties, etc.

Alan Taulbutt

PS If the Eagle regains its much deserved place in the 1986 Good Beer Guide, the comment "Unsigned exterior hides archetypal real pub" will need to be amended. A bright yellow sign now hangs adjacent to the pub which can now easily be seen from Greengate and all surrounding streets.

### BULLOCK BOLLOCKING

Sir - If only Roger Bullock (letters, WD March) would wipe the silly beard off his face and get out and survey some pubs, then we could all benefit from his endeavours. It's fairly easy to stand in the comparative comfort of Manchester's favourite amber nectar shop and bellyache about the half dozen pubs he does know something about, but where was Mr Bullock when we surveyed the Whitbread pubs, the Boddies pubs, the Greenalls pubs and the clubs of the area? Did he come to the branch meetings when Good Beer Guide entries were discussed or even to the meeting to consider What's Doing? No.

The omission of brews and methods of dispense in "Real Ale in North Manchester" was done deliberately to minimise disappointment amongst those who might seek out a particular beer only to find that the pub concerned had stopped selling it six months earlier. The listing of beers in free houses is fraught with peril - Yates's Merchants Bar started off with seven different brews and twelve months later ended up with none, whilst many of the brews at the Marble Arch change from week to week. Events of moment like Greenalls installing handpumped mild or Holts replacing cask bitter with keg are always, well nearly always, reported in What's Doing.

Nevertheless, if the general feeling is that brews and methods of dispense should be included, then so be it. Perhaps Mr Bullock would



give us a lift and check on some of the more inaccessible and least popular pubs of some of the less acclaimed brewers so that we don't make any more silly mistakes next time a list is produced. One thing in Mr Bullock's favour is that at least he had the decency to sign his name, unlike some of your other correspondents in recent months.

Roger Hall (no relation)

### ARCH ALE

Sir - Having read Mr Maule's letter in the March edition of What's Doing, I have endeavoured to stay sober long enough to put pen to paper in defence of "Manchester's favourite amber nectar shop" - the Marble Arch.

When the Marble Arch opened in August last year handpumped Jennings and Holts mild were available alongside six bitters. However, due to almost total lack of demand for either mild, one had to go. Youngers No.3, although not strictly a mild (but who can honestly call Merrie Monk a mild?) is extremely popular and selling much better than the weaker mild.

The inconsistency of mild was widespread throughout the whole Holts estate at the beginning of the year and cannot be blamed on one landlord.

As I was on one of the two double-deck buses which went from the Marble Arch to mourn the passing of Yates & Jackson in Lancaster, I can confirm vast quantities of mild were consumed, but this was more due to the poor quality of Y&J bitter in recent months and not a mass conversion to mild!

The Marble Arch sells a wide and very interesting range of excellent beers from all over Britain, ranging from mild to some of the country's strongest bitters. People vote with their feet and that's how the Marble Arch earned its title of "Manchester's Favourite Free House" - not many pubs in Greater Manchester can pack 'em in as frequently as the Marble Arch does.

Can I suggest that if Mr Maule wants a range of cask milds he and his fellow mild drinkers must prove a demand - and that means drinking a few gallons themselves!

Paul Roberts

\*\*\*\*\*  
Keen collector of pump clips seeks them from Hydes, Failsworth, Oldham Brewery, Lass o'Gowrie, Old Bank Street plus any clips from old, now defunct breweries. Will pay generously or swap for a variety of breweriana. Mike Pugh, 195 The Highway, Croesyceiliog, Cwmbran, Gwent.  
\*\*\*\*\*



# Branch Diary

## SOUTH LANCASHIRE

Tues 16th April. Trip to Hydes Brewery

Contact Dave White on Wigan 37389 (h) or Warrington 826515 x303

## TRAFFORD & HULME

Thurs 4 April 8pm. Committee/Social at the Faulkners Arms, Stamford New Road, Altrincham. All Welcome

Thurs 11 April 8.15pm. Hulme Survey - Meet at Northumberland, Chester Road, Hulme.

Thurs 18th April 8pm. Branch Meeting at the Old Plough, Green Lane, Ashton on Mersey

Thurs 25 April. Provisional date for April Pub of the Month

Thurs 2 May 8pm. Committee/Social at the Star, Hulme.

Contact: David Shelton 061 794 2113 (h), 061 224 7341 x54 (w)

## BOLTON

Thurs 4 April. Celebrate the first night of 11pm closing. Meet Dog & Partridge (Thwaites) 8pm. Prince Bill (Boddingtons) 9pm.

Weds 10 April Branch Meeting at the Queen Anne, Little Lever (Thwaites). 8.30pm

Tuesday 23 April. St George's Day Crawl. 8pm Winstons (Stones/Boddingtons), 8.30

White Lion (Wilsons), 9pm Blue Boar (Whitbread).

Sunday 28th April. Sunday Social at "The Bug", Daisy Hill. 12 noon (Holts).

Wednesday 1st May. Branch Meeting at the Alma (Burtonwood), 8.30pm.

Contact: Dave Fleming 389918 (h) or 75111 x207 (w)

## ROCHDALE, OLDHAM AND BURY

Tues 2 April 8pm. Branch Meeting, Blue Bell (Holts), Manchester Road, Bury

Tues 16th April 8pm. Committee Meeting, Hark to Towler (Thwaites), Market Street, Tottington

Tues 7th May 8pm. Branch AGM, Castle (Wilsons), Manchester Road, Rochdale

Fri/Sun 10/12 May, Saddleworth Beer Festival

Tues 21 May 8pm. Committee Meeting, Reed (Bass), Yorkshire Street, Rochdale.

Contact: Steve Lawton 061 620 9239 (h) or 061 775 3351 x248

## NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 10th April, Pennine Host tour. Meet Crown, Blackfriars Street, 7.30pm prompt.

Weds 17 April, White Swan, Swinton. Branch Meeting 8pm

Wed 24 April. Crawl of Tyldesley. Gatehouse 7.30, Black Horse 8.30

Weds 1 May. May Day in Ancoats. Smiths Arms, Sherrat Street, 7pm. Edinburgh Castle, Blossom Street, 8pm.

Weds 8 May, Osborne (Banks's), Rochdale Road, Collyhurst. 8pm

Weds 15 May. Branch Meeting, Union, Liverpool Street, Salford. 8pm

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

## SOUTH MANCHESTER

Thurs 28th Mar. Pub of the Month. Nelson Tavern, Wellington Road, South, Stockport

Fri 29 March. GBG Survey crawl of Manchester City Centre. Details from J Clarke (061 477 1973)

Tues 2 April Open Committee Meeting. 8pm, Swan With Two Necks, Princes Street, Stockport Shopping Precinct.

Weds 3rd April. Social as guests of Banks's at New Longsight, Kirkmanshulme Lane, Longsight.

Thurs 4 April Pub of the Year, Manchester Arms, Wellington Road South, Stockport.

Weds 10 April. Farewell minibus trip to the Park (Wigan) and pub crawl. Details from J Clarke

Thurs 11 April Branch AGM 8pm, Gateway, Kingsway, East Didsbury. NB Current membership cards must be produced for voting.

Weds 24 April. Return visit to Sair Inn and brewery. Details from J Clarke

Thurs 25 April Pub of the Month. Travellers Call, Ashton Old Road, Beswick

Tues 7 May Open Committee Meeting, 8pm, Gateway, East Didsbury.

Thurs 9 May. Branch Meeting, 8pm. Venue to be announced.

Fri 10 May. Coach trip to Saddleworth Beer Festival. Details from J Clarke



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\* \* \* \* \*

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\* \* \* \* \*

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