

WHAT'S DOING

MARCH
1986



THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

ANCOATS ALE



The Ancoats, Great Ancoats Street, reopened on 14th February as a free house. The owner is Charles Dunn, who also has the Alexandra on Mill Street, Bradford (see WD Dec). Licensee at the Ancoats is Roy Southern and his range of handpumped beer is Tetley mild and bitter, Jennings, Youngers Scotch and Websters - all at 68p a pint. The interior has been cleaned up, carpeted and redecorated, retaining the old layout - three rooms and a spacious lobby. The photo shows owner Charles Dunn, Ray Thomas (Tetley), Mike Porter (Vaux - nothing to do with the pub but he likes being in pictures) and licensee Roy Southern.

FREE HOUSE FOR GORTON

Gorton will soon have a real ale free house. The Imperial on Birch Street (ex-Wilsons) is being repaired by its new owner and will eventually reopen selling Holts, Boddingtons, Tetleys and (possibly) guest beers. Watch this space.

TIME WARP

Applications to change permitted hours in Greater Manchester have resulted in no change. In Bury last year an 11.00pm closing time also put back evening opening time from 5.00pm to 5.30pm. This year's application concerned the evening opening time. The LVA applied for a return to the 5.00pm opening but this was turned down in favour of harmonisation with surrounding districts.

In Manchester, Salford, Eccles and Trafford the applications were for 11.00pm closing from Monday to Thursday. In Manchester and Trafford the hearings were deferred and in Eccles and Salford they were refused. Unfortunately, reasons for the refusal were not given so it's difficult to know how a better case could be presented next year. Perhaps it was the objection by NALHM (the pub managers' union) which



swung the vote, although their arguments were less than convincing.

So, Salford and Eccles pubs must still shout last orders before 10.30 and little progress has been made towards sweeping away our archaic licensing laws, the

restrictive provisions of which date back to the Defence of the Realm Act of 70 years ago. What chance can there be of obtaining more flexible hours when decisions are reached in secret and no reasons are given? Do we have to put up with the most limited opening hours in Europe for ever? Is there perhaps hope that Manchester and Trafford will boldly go where Eccles and Salford have not gone before?

BURTONWOOD

Burtonwood are test marketing their new cask beer (o.g. 1039) at their recently refurbished Prince William at Dalton near Wigan. The beer is masquerading as the ordinary Almonds bitter but has a pleasant, more distinctive taste than Burtonwood bitter and is 2p more expensive.

The GBG-listed Prince William has been considerably altered, with a new bar and the little-used right-hand room has been knocked through to the main lounge. The former restaurant now houses a snooker table and the new management (the pub is now leased) offers bar meals at lunchtimes and from 5.30 in the evening.

Next door, the Beacon Inn is serving keg beer through handpumps with clips proclaiming "cask conditioned". It is hoped that this deplorable arrangement is temporary.



NEW LICENSEES AT THE EAGLE

Janet Callaghan, who was born in Collier Street, is now the licensee of the street's only pub - the Eagle. Janet and Gerry moved in on 15th January after Dave and Josie retired. This is their first pub but Janet has worked at the Blackfriar for 12 years. Holts are pouring the vast sum of £15,000 into what has been described as an archetypal back street beer-house. The outside toilets will be no more and the back room is to become a pool room. Eventually it is hoped to extend into the building next door, which is owned by the brewery, but, for the present, the internal toilets will allow the Eagle to obtain a spirits licence. An illuminated sign, together with the demolition of nearby buildings will help to attract people - but was it not the beer licence, the lack of signs, the outside toilets and the sheer difficulty of finding the place which made people beat a path to its door?

FREE HOUSES

A survey of prices in North Manchester's free houses showed considerable variation. Best value was the Drop Inn in Monton with Boddies bitter at 60p. The same beer was also sold in the Mark Addy but at over 15p a pint more. Most of the other free houses gave good value for money and the beer was of good quality in all the outlets visited.

HOLTS NEWS

The Spread Eagle on Regent Road, Salford, closes at the end of September. Now the good news. Building has started on Holts' new pub on Cleggs Lane, Little Hulton, which is expected to open later this year. The opening of the Atherton Arms (see WD Dec, etc) has been put back whilst extensive repairs are carried out. Over in Chorlton-on-Medlock, their new Grafton is taking shape and should be open in a month or so.

BY GEORGE



The Royal George, Lever Street, Manchester, has had its signboards removed and is being redecorated by Wilsons. The interior has always been a bit grim, so it will be interesting to see what the brewery do with the place.

CITY DESK

by Peter O'Grady

SAM'S CHOP HOUSE, the living and still very popular anachronism in Back Pool Fold currently has a notice outside proclaiming "A Great Range of Traditional Ales". On my latest visit (18th Feb) the range comprised Websters Yorkshire Bitter and Mann's Traditional Bitter, both at a modest 90p a pint. Despite the prices, Sam's is still worth the occasional lunchtime visit to view the 1930's in action in glorious black and white.

The former "gentlemen only" sandwich bar which was situated further down Back Pool Fold is closed and can now be found within the main building. Collect your "real ale" at the main bar, as the sandwich bar only serves keg Websters.

* * * * *

I still feel guilty on my very occasional visits to John Smith's VINE INN on Kennedy Street - maybe it's because after all these years I have to pinch myself to believe that the bitter is really real ale.

* * * * *

The SEVEN OAKS on Nicholas Street seems to have come to terms with itself on the edge of Manchester's Chinatown. Although draught Bass is sadly no longer available, the handpumped Chesters bitter and mild always seem to be on good form. A pleasant place to while away half an hour after a cultural visit to the City Art Gallery on Mosley Street.

* * * * *

Following Leo King's letter (Feb WD) and subsequent discussions with landlord Peter Gibbs, I can report that apart from a noticeable window sticker, an internal poster and approximately 90 well-positioned beer mats, there is also a pump clip advertising the availability of Jennings bitter at the WHEATSHEAF on Oak Street.

Naturally enough in this Tetley tied house, the (Tetley) area manager would probably consider this to be advertising above and beyond the call, etc, for what is, in effect, a guest beer. After all this effort, surely it is enough to expect the customer to request Jennings rather than expect the staff to enquire after his preferences - especially at busy periods.

* * * * *

LATE NEWS: The Glue Pot (Prince of Wales) on Edge Street, a former Wilsons house, is now closed (well, it has been for about 15 years). If any readers have reminiscences about this or any other pub in the old Market area would they please write to Peter O'Grady, 36 Hawthorn Grove, Stockport SK4 4HZ

* * * * *

ROSE & CROWN

FREE HOUSE

MANCHESTER OLD ROAD, BURY

*** THE FACTS ***

A certain other publication, under the CAMRA banner, seems to have its "lines" crossed. I am not "threatening" to pull down all the dividing walls, as this would make the roof fall down. I am simply opening up a hitherto unused room and opening up a very narrow corridor. Nothing ominous there. I cannot afford a "plastic palace" with mirrors and crushed velvet. I can afford a traditional pub: no juke box, 4 different beers, a "guest" beer on Monday nights (suggestions welcome), darts, dominoes, exposed beams, exposed brickwork and exposed overdraft. If this certain publication is short of factual "info", I suggest they introduce rub-off Bingo or put tits on page three, but please don't make it up as you go along, Paula. Proof, not prattles.

I find it hard to believe that John Worthington, a fellow licensee and free trader, would supply the actual words printed, and it is also hard to believe that my Hydes free trade rep would supply such "info". Constructive criticism is a tool that can further your cause. Tittle-tattle can only harm it.

P.S.

"What's Doing" does not escape. My name is King, not Knight (once a King, etc - yes, I've heard it) and the pub was bought by Craven County Holdings of Colne, a company specialising in buying small pubs and creating more free houses. I am the tenant of the Rose and Crown, but thanks for the coverage anyway.

Geoff King

Public Relations Executive & Cleaner

Boddingtons - Thwaites - Hydes
Current guest beer: Ruddles County

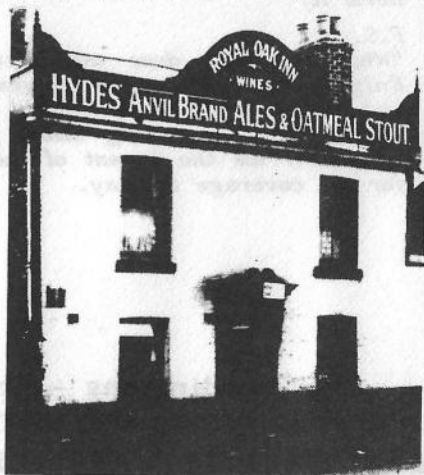


PUBS IN PRESTWICH

Prestwich has perhaps the best selection of pubs and beer of any small town in Manchester. There has been no wholesale demolition, so unlike its neighbours Manchester and Salford, Prestwich has lost only 4 pubs. The 24 remaining offer between them 17 traditional beers from 10 breweries - quite a choice.

Three pubs serve no real ale: the St Margarets, the Park, a pre-war Threlfalls place which is more a bistro than a pub, and the Church, the oldest pub in the village, which has the misfortune to be owned by John Smiths, a brewery not renowned for its commitment to real ale.

Four breweries have a single outlet in the area. Greenalls are to be congratulated for introducing cask bitter into the revamped Grapes but Marstons are surely open to criticism for allowing the formerly excellent Staff of Life on Rainsough to deteriorate as it has. Five years ago this 60's rebuild sold mild, bitter and Pedigree, featured in the Good Beer Guide and served excellent food. The Staff was deservedly busy. Today the mild and Pedigree have disappeared, the range of food has declined and the place is never as crowded as it was. The Staff doesn't even feature in the Greater Manchester Good Beer Guide, which includes 14 other Prestwich pubs. The 1986 GBG entry is the Royal Oak, a pleasant but unexceptional former beerhouse near Heaton Park Station. Is the reason for its inclusion merely that it sells what is an unusual beer for the area, namely Hydes? Tetley's Commercial on Bury Old Road has been altered internally by converting two rooms into one. The alterations have, if anything, improved the layout. There are still two other rooms and the new lounge is more comfortable and more a part of



the pub than were the two rooms in the old layout. Whitbread's two real ale pubs have both suffered from differing degrees of House of Horrors treatment. The Wilton has re-emerged from its transitory incarnation as the awful Barley Malt. It's now the Wilton again and something like a pub. Chesters mild and bitter are both handpumped but on our visit the mild had evidently seen better days. The Turf Tavern is something of a fun pub with few internal walls. It does manage to cling on to some vestiges of pubness (☉ Bogbrush) and serves Thwaites bitter as well as Chesters mild and bitter.

Simister, which was an isolated village until the M62/M66 interchange was built, has two pubs - both Lees houses. The Same Yet is at the far end of the village. It has been pleasantly renovated to attract the upmarket trade and a bistro has been added at the back. The lounge has the air of a licensed restaurant but the vault has been retained. The Farmers is an excellently preserved village pub with a new vault and a wood panelled front room which is marred only by hideous wallpaper over the fireplace and an imitation stone bar facing. The homely simplicity is reflected in the prices of the handpumped beers, which are 6 or 7p cheaper than those on offer at the Same Yet.

The Plough (Wilsons) on Rainsough is a fairly recent convert to traditional beer but is nevertheless a better bet than the longer established Staff of Life next door. The recent refurbishment has left the place looking a bit plasticky but it is still very much a real pub, as beerhouses which have taken over a terrace of three cottages very often are. Wilsons' other

Prestwich pub - the Railway and Naturalist - has been selling real ale for a lot longer but the single room layout has a cluttered and somewhat tatty appearance which prevents it from achieving its full potential.

Boddingtons have three pubs in Prestwich. The George in Sedgley village with its prestigious bowling green has been altered to create an open-plan lounge with dividers and a gloomy atmosphere as a result of a lowered, dark green ceiling. The Three Arrows is by some strange quirk of geography just in Prestwich. Its position near the motorway has meant that it



caters for the car trade. Although the vault remains, the open plan lounge has destroyed what was a unique pub with its tiny "horsebox" room at the front. The plastic fake beams are so enormous they have to be seen to be believed. The Parkside, next to the Commercial, is a former Swales house. The alterations here have been more gentle. One or two holes have been knocked in walls to give an impression of space without detracting too much from the layout.

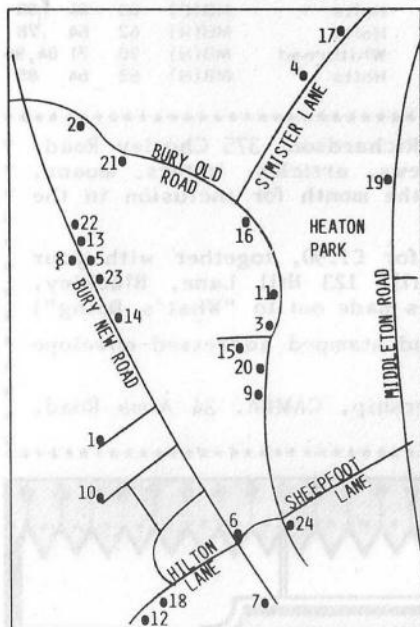
As on pub crawls, we leave the best to last. Holts have 8 houses in Prestwich, which makes it a sort of second Mecca to Eccles. The Red Lion has successfully resisted all attempts at gentrification and remains a basic boozier. Even more basic is the White Horse, which serves an excellent pint through beer engines. The Foresters, rebuilt in 1962, is the most unexciting pub building in Prestwich. The beer is electrically dispensed and 8 hand-pumps lie idle. The Ostrich has a semi-open-plan interior but differing ceiling heights and the retention of the nooks and crannies of the old building make you feel as though you're in a real pub. The Welcome, rebuilt in 1936, is typical of many pubs of that era, with a lot of wood panelling and even a revolving door. The main lounge is spoiled by a superabundance of bric-a-brac cluttering the walls. Reproduction Constables and jingoistic and badly executed portraits of Mountbatten, Montgomery and the Royals jostle for position. The room is dominated by a stage where an organ is surmounted by an enormous pot bulldog called Winston. Fortunately there is a separate vault and the Regency Room which can be used for meetings.

The Coach & Horses is perhaps the most old fashioned of the Holts houses, with a lounge, tiny snug and tap room. The clear windows in the lounge bay are a strange feature in a pub. The quality of the handpumped beer makes the Coach & Horses understandably busy.

The Woodthorpe, a former residence of the Holt family, has the appearance of a country hotel. It is indeed residential and, judging from the number of people in the strictly residents only lounge, they must sleep ten to a bed. The elegance of the building, with features like a hand-carved fireplace, is the antithesis of the typical Holts back street boozier. All aficionados of the country's best brew should visit the Woodthorpe.



Without doubt the best pub in Prestwich is the Friendship. We're not just saying that because the landlord sells What's Doing in preference to "that 10p thing"; it's really true. For many years the Friendship was dowdy and unattractive with beer that was OK rather than excellent. A change of licensee has seen considerable investment by the brewery. Internal alterations have unified the separate rooms in the pub without destroying any of its character. The cellar has an



impressive 20 hogsheads on stillage to cater for the vast turnover of beer which is always of the highest quality and the cheapest in Prestwich. Lunchtime food is good value and the Friendship certainly lives up to its name.

The remoteness of some of the pubs make it difficult to sample more than half a dozen different beers in one evening but it is possible to visit all the Holts pubs (but perhaps not too wise). Start off in the Coach and Horses, call in at the Welcome and make your way down Nursery Road to the village on the New Road where you can call at the White Horse, the Foresters and the Red Lion. Rectory Lane, Bent Lane and Ostrich Lane will bring you out at the Ostrich, from

where its only a short walk to the Woodthorpe. A brisk walk down Scholes Lane should get you to the Friendship (where else?) by closing time (11.00pm all week).

Roger Hall

(Photos and historical information from David Rowlinson's "History of Prestwich Pubs" - £1.50 from good bookshops)

THE PUBS

PRICES CORRECT AT 13.2.1986. Lager prices are shown to remind people what a rip-off this weak, gassy liquid continues to be.

				Prices	
				M	B Lager
1	Church Inn	Church La	Jn Smith	TANK	67K 71K 83
2	Coach & Horses	Bury Old Rd	Holts	MB(H)	62 64 77
3	Commercial	Bury Old Rd	Tetley	MB(H)	68 70 80
4	Farmers Arms	Simister Lane	Lees	MB(H)	60 63 70
5	Foresters Arms	Bury New Road	Holts	MB(E)	62 63 78
6	Friendship	Scholes Lane	Holts	MB(H)	59 62 70,92
7	George	Bury New Rd	Boddingtons	MB(H)	63 66 80,93
8	Grapes	Bury New Road	Greenalls	B(H)	70K 73 84,93
9	Ostrich	Bury Old Road	Holts	MB(E)	60 63 75
10	Park Hotel	Lowther Road	Whitbread	KEG	Hardly a pub
11	Parkside	Bury Old Road	Boddingtons	MB(E)	63 67 80
12	Plough	Hilton Lane	Wilson's	MB(H)	65 68 84

13 Railway & Naturalist	Bury New Rd	Wilsons	MB(H)	66	68	82,88
14 Red Lion	Bury New Rd	Holts	MB(E)	62	64	78,98
15 Royal Oak	Whitaker Lane	Hydes	MB(E)	64	69	75
16 St Margarets Hotel	Bury Old Rd	Bass	KEG	72K	74K	84
17 Same Yet	Simister Lane	Lees	MB(E)	67	69	80
18 Staff of Life	Hilton Lane	Marstons	B(H)	69K	71	83,97
19 Three Arrows	Middleton Road	Boddingtons	MB(E)	70	72	86
20 Turf Tavern	Bury Old Rd	Whitbread	MB(H)	67	69	82
		Thwaites	B(H)		70	
21 Welcome	Bury Old Rd	Holts	MB(E)	63	64	88
22 White Horse	Bury New Rd	Holts	MB(H)	62	64	78
23 Wilton	Bury New Rd	Whitbread	MB(H)	70	71	84,96
24 Woodthorpe	Bury Old Rd	Holts	MB(H)	63	64	85

* WHAT'S DOING is edited by Neil Richardson, 375 Chorley Road, *

* Swinton, Manchester M27 2AY. News, articles, letters, moans, *

* etc, must arrive by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the *

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* St Albans, Herts AL1 3BW. *



THE STATION

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

It's all been happening here
at the Station.....

Bill & Sylvia have settled in
and introduced various guest beers:

S&N 80/- Bitter, Hydes Anvil Mild & Bitter,
T. Taylors and Old Mill Bulldog to name but a few.

Spell binding Pendle Witch (0.10.50) is our latest guest.

The "Upstairs" is now open for parties/trips -
your choice of food & favourite tipples provided - if we can.

So why not look in and give us a try!!

2 WARRINGTON ST., ASHTON-U-LYNE. 061-330 6776

WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

John Smiths have renamed the Alison Arms yet again. The pub, near Appley Bridge railway station, was revamped recently as Th'Owd Fettle but it is now called the Inn-Between. A very good pint of cask bitter is to be had at 70p. And just up the road, the Railway (Tetley/Jennings) is also worth a visit.

In line with current brewery policy, Tetley bitter has replaced Walker Best at the Navigation, Gathurst Lane, Gathurst.

Burtonwood have installed handpumps in the Squirrel Inn, Manchester Road, Ince Bar, to dispense the bitter and mild.

Still on Burtonwoods, the last of the guest beers - Youngers No.3 - has vanished from Raffles, Millgate, Wigan. This Almonds "free house" now sells Almond bitter and Burtonwood mild and bitter (79p for seven-eighths of a pint). Apparently, it's the same situation at Almonds' flagship, the Royal in Golborne.

Rumour has it that Wilsons have purchased the Minorca (ex-GW) on Wallgate, Wigan. The pub, which sold keg beer for donkeys' years, is closed and being done up. What chance cask ale? Real Wilsons, or even Websters, would be very welcome in the town centre.

A number of keg conversions and the recent demise of the Saracens Head in the town centre (see Feb WD) means that cask Whitbread ales are now in pretty short supply in and around Wigan. The good colonel's beers can be found in only three outlets.

The Belle Vue, Woodhouse Lane, Wigan, sells Trophy bitter and Castle Eden. This is a handy pub for 'Latics supporters and a potential 1987 Good Beer Guide entry.

The Derby Arms, Castle Hill Road, Hindley, still sells Chesters bitter, but withdrew cask mild some time ago due to poor turnover.

The Hare & Hounds, Billinge Road, Highfield, near Pemberton, reopened recently, converting to real ale. However, the Castle Eden has been withdrawn, leaving Chesters bitter to compete with keg Trophy. No contest, if a recent visit was anything to go by!

All in all, then, Whitbread don't offer much encouragement in Wigan, and so long as their pubs sell keg products alongside cask, we can expect a further decline in the near future.

Wigan Branch are to relaunch their 1984 ROAD TO WIGAN BEER guide. The guide, which covers Leigh, Ince, Ashton, Newton, etc, will sell at the new bargain price of 50p, complete with a list of updates and amendments (there are over 60). The sheet of amendments is available separately. Send 10p and s.a.e. to Brian Gleave, 40 Taunton Avenue, Leigh, Lancs.

IT MAY BE CHEAPER THAN
A CLIPPERCARD,
BUT TRY GETTING HOME
FROM THE PUB



They cut the fares.
They cut the fuss.

 Greater
Manchester
Transport

NOW & THEN

by ROB MAGEE

No.3

HARK TO TOPPER

5 Bow Street, Oldham

Before Yorkshire Street was built (begun about 1795) the main road through Oldham was a tortuous lane which started at Jackson Pit opposite the Roebuck Inn on King Street and wound its way up Water Street, behind the Bulls Head on George Street, across Main Street and down to the right of the Greaves Arms. At the bottom of Church Lane it turned sharp right behind the then Red Lion, at this point becoming Bow Lane, and wound down to what is now Rhodes Bank.

It was on this lane in 1835 that Isaac Davies decided to convert his shop into a beerhouse - after all, there was only one other beerhouse on the whole lane at that time. Two years later Isaac had left and William Widdell bought the premises. Widdell carried on the shop part of the business and in 1839, presumably after his death, his wife Sally was in charge. She apparently did all right until a police sergeant caught her playing cards for money with her customers in June 1843 - she was fined £2. The last mention of Sally in the records is

in 1844 and by 1850 Hannah Wright was briefly in charge. Ten landlords later (in 1892) Frank Airey took over as the first tenant of the Rochdale & Oldham Brewery, which had bought the beerhouse that year. They also bought 7 Bow Street, as it was now called, and knocked through to add to the original premises. By 1895 a new company had been formed - the Rochdale and



Manor Brewery. The old photograph was taken when Angus Bowie was landlord - the gas lantern depicts a hunting hound - "Topper". Angus was tenant from 1900 to 1902. The Hark to Topper was nicknamed the "Little Piecers" by the locals, a name given to young cotton operatives who would have a quiet drink hidden away in the snug after their shift. Some time before 1914 two adjoining houses were knocked down, a new beerhouse was built and the old one demolished. The site is now a car park. The new pub was renamed the Manor Inn (after the Salford Manor Brewery) on 14th September 1914. The first landlord was William Walsh (1914-16). Ralph Whitehead was tenant from 1922 and into the Roaring 50's. He obtained a spirits licence on 2nd February 1949, and he holds the record as the longest serving landlord. In 1970, and seven tenants later, Eric Downs moved into the Manor Inn and by June 1971 the pub was the Hark to Topper again - after 57 years! By this time it was a Sam Smiths house - they had bought Rochdale & Manor in 1948 and closed it in 1974.

Last October, when Michael Costello moved from the Hark to Topper to the Turf Tavern in Rochdale, Steven Allan took over (the 37th licence holder, or thereabouts). Recently Sam Smiths have tastefully refurbished the pub and Steve sells handpumped Old Brewery Bitter at 72p a pint. His wife Sandra serves delicious lunchtime meals at very reasonable prices.

WILSONS IN HIGHER IRLAM

"Sports" (ex-White Lion) now has a solitary handpump dispensing Websters bitter. The Wilsons original is still keg.

BODDINGTONS BOTHER

Barry Garner, landlord of the Queens Arms in Patricroft, has submitted his notice to leave after falling out with the brewery, Boddingtons. Barry felt he had a verbal agreement that he would be considered for the tenancy of the Railway in Cadishead when the folk there retired. He was not and the pub was taken on by Albert Valentine, who also runs the Boathouse in Irlam.

This, together with his more general objection to Boddingtons permitting some tenants to run more than one pub (to the detriment, he considers, of new couples coming into the trade) has precipitated his action.

Mr M Clayton at the brewery said he was sorry to see Barry leave and that if he decided to return to Boddingtons at some future date then his record would stand him in good stead. (Barry is adamant he will not return!)

The well run and friendly Queens Arms has been in the Good Beer Guide for some years. Methinks that Barry Garner will be missed by Patricroft, Boddingtons and CAMRA

I D Roberts



Offensive comment

I HAVE just received my copy of the 1988 Good Beer Guide and notice, on page 10, the following: "A spotty youth wiping glasses with a secondhand shroud from a recently deceased AIDS victim" (sic). Or should I say sick? I have always thought that CAMRA was founded on good taste. So why gratuitous offence? A disgusted member. — DYLAN PUGH, Melton Mowbray, Leicester.

And I should think so too. As a former sexual amputee, I wholly concur with Mr Pugh's remarks. How utterly offensive and what poor taste. This is totally

symptomatic of the deterioration of moral standards in our glue-sniffing society. Do you really think an Elizabethan hack would have written: "Do not drink at the Blue Boar alehouse for the victualler does serve his ale from lepers' pots"? No, certainly not. Mind you, lepers were chained together and hung with bells like Swiss cows so you could hear them coming. Perhaps it wouldn't be a bad idea to chain Aids victims together with black lesbians, unidexters, transvestites, social workers, transport executives and other discriminated-against minorities, hang them with bells and let them peal their way through Grotley's canalside hostelryes.

It would be useful to classify sections of publications so as not to offend parroting wallies like Mr Pugh. He would have no need to read sections entitled OFFENSIVE JIBES, TWADDLE, CRAP, etc. Nora Tackler has already started off with regard to this one by having a section entitled JOKES so that you're in no doubt that it is one - something we've been trying to encourage Mr Nestfeather to emulate but he's frightened of going blind.

I'm somewhat disorientated myself after several visits to Dr Freudog. Gentle hints from readers like "Why don't that effin' Periwinkle get his head examined" made me visit a psychiatrist for the first time in my life. One aspect of his treatment has caused havoc - I'm referring to the concept of free word association football league cup of tea shirt tail of two cities. Every thought that enters my head bangers and mash potato crisp packet house that Jack built am Sonatag is subjected to a seemingly endless examination in my mind you two's company three in a bed and the little one said roll over do you want it back or front back or front said the coalman. I must stop now in case I mention things I shouldn't and incur the wrath of innocent victims and at the same time prove Mrs Tackler's fears to be quite

right on to the end of the road island red square tango in Paris. Not that she needed my help to get her first wrist slapping letter from a solicitor for writing alleged defamatory claptrap. The good Mr Pawn from the Daffodil & Coronet is hopping mad with our Nora and we'll no doubt see a grovelling apology in this month's Manky Ale.



SADDLEWORTH SUCCESS

The Cross Keys, a J W Lees pub in Uppermill, recently received its "Ten Years in the Good Beer Guide" presentation. The photo shows CAMRA Rochdale, Oldham & Bury Chairman Graham Chinn, landlord Philip Kay and former landlord Harold Nield.

NO 53

It's not as though there's anything wrong with the number 53. You could imagine some num-

bers that might upset people, but not number 53. So why change the name of the pub? The 53 on Queens Road was a pretty imaginative name for a pub, commemorating the tram route and the buses which still run past. Whitbread have tarted the place up - I'm sure it's too smart for Smedley - and called it the Appleford after the street next door. There's also no sign of real ale - the 53 used to sell Trophy.

GREENALLS BUY DAVENPORTS

Greenalls have put themselves at the top of the takeover league by winning the fight for Davenports against Wolverhampton & Dudley. Davenports have 129 tied houses, mainly in the West Midlands. This acquisition makes Greenalls something more than a regional brewer, with breweries in Warrington, Wem, Nottingham and Birmingham and over 1,500 pubs, slightly more than Scottish & Newcastle. Greenalls have promised no significant redundancies but, given their treatment of Simpkins, we shall have to wait and see. Whether real ale will remain in the majority of Davenports' pubs is also a matter of conjecture, although in this respect Greenalls have a better record with both Wem and Shipstones.

To the Editor:

375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27



LETTERS

PRICES

Sir - These Chef & Brewer/Sports/Host House pubs should give cause for concern. Many of them give us real ale, but at exorbitant prices. At the Monton Green (now shut for yet more modernisation) near Eccles, Wilsons bitter is 74p a pint. Holts is 10p cheaper at the Park Hotel round the corner. In Urmston, the Chef & Brewer Urmston Tavern sells Wilsons bitter for 74p a pint and Websters Yorkshire bitter for 76p. Both beers are traditional and well kept but look at those prices! Half a mile towards Urmston town centre brings you to the Lord Nelson, with bitter at 62p a pint (Holts, obviously). At the other Holts outlet, the Roebuck, it is 64p, but nothing really to gripe about. At the Peter Yates in the town centre the Holts is 72p, but that's another matter. In my opinion, these high priced establishments should not be entered in the Good Beer Guide or even local guides. The Hesketh Tavern in Cheadle Hulme is another Chef and Brewer outlet. The traditional Wilsons bitter is a staggering 78p a pint. But, once again, Holts comes to the rescue at the nearby Junction at 64p a pint.

Leo King

WORLD OF BEER

Sir - Last year we held three "World of Beer" evenings which were very well attended and a most enjoyable time was had by all. We intend to make this an annual event and I am writing to let you know that the dates for this year are Tues-Thurs 11-13 March. We hope to have over 20 different bottle-conditioned beers from Belgium, including such favourites as Chimay, Duvel and Verbotten Vrucht, on sale at reduced prices. Beers from around the world will also be on sale, including Tiger from Singapore, Tusker from Kenya and Suntory from Japan. Of course, we shall also be serving our usual range of traditional hand-pulled beers - Youngers XXPS, IPA and No.3, Clarks from Wakefield and a guest beer - and we also hope to have a strong winter warmer. Our bar menu will be extended to include a number of new dishes from around the world. CAMRA members are most welcome.

Andrew Armstrong, Bar Manager, The Moorings, No.1 Warehouse,
Canal Basin, Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire

MINING MATTERS

Sir - In connection with my research into the history of coal mining in Manchester I am anxious to obtain details of pubs with names connected with coal mining. Such pubs are likely to occur in areas such as Collyhurst, Ancoats, Bradford, Clayton, etc. If anyone can help with photographs, documents and so on I would be most grateful.

Eddie Cass, 548 Wilbraham Road, Manchester 21

GUIDE GROAN

Sir - Having just acquired a copy of your "Greater Manchester Good Beer Guide" with a view to planning a forthcoming trip to the North West I feel I must make the following criticism. It seems to me that the guide is next to useless if you don't happen to live in that area! I say this because if I was in Manchester I would have no more idea whether I was in Ancoats, Clayton, Hulme or wherever. There is no overall map to help out. Even if I was standing outside a pub there seems no way I could look it up to see if it were "real" - ie there's no index. Surely some overall plan with all the maps together and all the pubs in alphabetical order, cross-referenced to a map (if any) would be more usable.

Mike Long, Leicester

OLD VET

The Old Veteran, a Greenalls pub off Eccles New Road, Salford, re-opened on Thursday 27th February selling handpumped mild and bitter.

HELL IS A CITY



The plot was pretty awful, but this 1959 film, which was on telly a few weeks ago, was based in Manchester. There were several shots of old Corporation Street before the Big Lavatory was built, and the scene of the crime was in Cromford Court around the corner from the old Seftons Bar, near the Fatted Calf (re-named for the film). The photo shows Stanley Baker investigating in Cromford Court (Seftons on the right).

1987 GOOD BEER GUIDE

Surveys of pubs for possible inclusion in next year's guide are being carried out at the moment. The final selection of pubs for North Manchester and Salford will be made at the North Manchester branch meeting on March 19th. If there are any pubs in the area that you would like to see included for consideration please inform the branch contact without delay so that surveys can be made.

ROBIN DIES

The bulldozers have finally moved in on the Robin Hood, a keg Bass pub on Queens Road, Collyhurst, which has been closed and semi-derelict for the last couple of years.

OPEN AGAIN

The Lord Nelson on Chapel Street, Salford, has opened its doors for business once again.

ROBINSONS LEMON AND BARMY

The South Manchester branch of CAMRA has sent a letter asking What's Doing not to publish any anti-Robbies articles without checking the facts. The cheeky prigs! We always thought it was other would-be beer magazines where the "facts" were as accurate as the spelling (desert for dessert, merrangue, Philarmonic, generosity, independant, Picadilly in a recent issue) who'd upset Mr Robinson and caused him to withdraw his advert from the back page of What's Doing where it had been for the best part of 10 years. Apart from minor criticism of gutting a listed building without permission, this organ has always held Robbins in high esteem. What's Doing would like to take this opportunity of reiterating its stance. We think Robbins is lovely; their beer is smashing; their pub conversions are wonderfully tasteful and Mr Robinson is the nicest brewer in the North West. Can we have our advert back, please?

PLANNING NEWS

Ward	Plot No.	Applicants Name, Address of Site or Property	Description of Proposal
INNER SOUTH AREA - Principal Planner Jim Metcalf 234 4522			
HOLME	F25816	Scottish & Newcastle Breweries Royal Brewery, Denmark Road, Moss Side	Erection of an effluent collection tank



Branch Diary

WIGAN

Wed 12 March 8.30 Branch Meeting, Swan & Railway, Wallgate, Wigan
Fri 21st March Hindley Survey. Start at Derby Arms 8.30; Ellesmere 9pm
Contact Brian Gleave Atherton 892965 (h) Atherton 876200 (w)

SOUTH EAST LANCASHIRE

Sat 15 March, 12 noon. Good Beer Guide '87 Selection. Chatt Moss Hotel, Glazebury
Sunday 30th March 1.00pm. Branch meeting, Railway Hotel, Twist Lane, Leigh
Contact Steve Prescott 0942 719037 (h) 0925 834494 (w)

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 5 Mar Tour of Good Beer Guide pubs in Central Manchester. Marble Arch 7pm, Unicorn 8pm.
Wed 12 Mar Railway, Dean Lane, Newton Heath 8pm
Wed 19 Mar Branch AGM, Bridge, Fairfield Street, Manchester 8pm
Wed 26 Mar Regional Meeting, Unicorn, Church Street, Manchester, 8pm
Wed 2 April, Salford Crawl: Woolpack 7pm, Paddock 8pm
Wed 9 April Old Veteran, off Eccles New Road, Salford
Wed 16 April White Swan, Swinton, 8pm
Wed 23 April Kenyon Arms, Manchester Road, Little Hulton 8pm
Wed 30 April Tyldesley Crawl. 7.30 Carders Arms, 8.30 Half Moon
Contact Roger Hall 740 7937

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in a cosy, unspoilt traditional pub,
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and even the Ale of your choice - within reason!

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Theakstons Old Peculier & XB • Vaux Samson •
Everards Tiger • Taylors Landlord
Porter and Best Dark Mild
& 3 guest beers & 2 Lagers
PLUS - the worlds strongest Ale EKV
+ many foreign & bottled beers

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