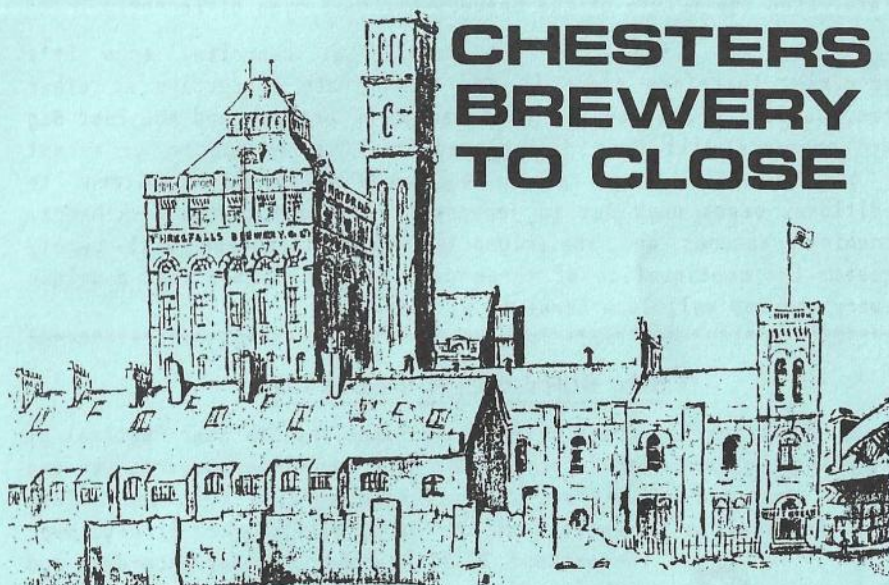


# WHAT'S DOING

OCT  
1987

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE



Whitbread have announced the closure of Salford's Cook Street Brewery. Brewing will cease by May 1988 with the loss of 68 jobs. Another 64 jobs will be lost in distribution. Whitbread make the usual assurances about the future of the cask beers brewed in Salford - Chesters mild, bitter and Trophy - yet there are strong reasons to doubt that these beers will be the same when brewed elsewhere.

Cook Street has been under threat for some time. The reasons for closure given by Whitbread are: "The trend in the market is towards lagers and packaged beers. Salford brewery is not equipped to produce these products and we have other more modern breweries in the north of England with available capacity."



This is pure PR nonsense. There is a trend towards lager but there is also a requirement in the area for traditional beer. All the local independents serve real ale in all their pubs. Whitbread were one of the first brewers to stop brewing traditional beer in the North West and one of the last to start brewing it again. The popularity of real ale in the North West is undoubted, yet Whitbread were particularly slow to reintroduce it to their pubs. Less than 50% of Whitbread's tied houses serve cask-conditioned beer and in Salford, home of the brewery, only 5 pubs out of 28 are cask outlets. Little wonder, with such an abysmal performance, that the brewery should close. If Chesters cask beers had been made available in, say, half the tied estate, then the future of the brewery may have been different.

As it is, the brewery is not running at capacity, ergo it's uneconomic, therefore close it and concentrate production at other sites. Salford will lose its only remaining brewery and the last Big Seven presence will have disappeared from Greater Manchester except for the Moss Side lager plant. Whitbread's lack of commitment to traditional beers must put in jeopardy the future of the cask beers. Economic pressures and the exigencies of distribution will surely threaten the continuation of three cask beers. We have lost a unique brewery and may well lose three local beers.

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### 8th BURY BEER FESTIVAL

If you think that it doesn't seem long since the 7th Beer Festival at Bury - then you are right! Because the hall was closed towards the end of last year, the 1986 festival was held earlier this year. This year's festival is to be held at the Derby Hall, Market Street, over



the weekend 20-21 November (Friday-Saturday) and will be open on both days 11.30-3.00 and 5.00-11.00. Admission will be free to card carrying CAMRA members, otherwise 50p at lunchtimes and early evenings and £1 thereafter.

There will be thirty-odd real ales and ciders from a wide selection of brewers (full details next month). Good quality food will be available throughout, as will live entertainment.

Prospective coach parties should endeavour to arrive before 8.00pm each evening as experience shows that it tends to get a "bit" busy later. For the first time a special commemorative glass is being produced for those wishing to purchase one.

# IN SEARCH OF THE TRADITIONAL PUB

## ALTRINCHAM & STOCKPORT

As part of the vetting procedure for the "100 Traditional Pubs" publication, North Manchester CAMRA members have in recent weeks forsaken the homely hosteleries of Ordsall and Miles Platting to visit pubs in the sticks which might meet their stringent criteria. Now, Altrincham and Stockport can't match Eccles, but they'd be bound to have the odd decent pub, wouldn't they?

Trafford's never been famous for its pubs; they've not had their own brewery since Joe Holt was in short trousers, but Altrincham has the best selection and biggest concentration in the district. The revamped Malt Shovels has recaptured much of its former glory and with live jazz and Sam Smiths OBB is popular once more. The Railway (Marstons) has retained its vault but the decor is somewhat fussy, the mild is keg and the bitter and Pedigree are not up to Good Beer Guide standards.



The Old Roebuck (Wilsons) is without doubt the most traditional pub in the town centre, with a vault, lounge and snug. Sadly the pub is not as crowded as it might be and the beers, whilst well looked after are, nevertheless, not on top form all the time. Wilsons' Orange Tree has been transformed into a trendy bistro but the handpumped beers are surprisingly good.



Boddies have several pubs in and around Trafford, some of which have been gentrified to appeal to the Cheshire Set and others which remain as basic spit-and-sawdust boozers. The Grapes on Regent Road falls into the former character. The interior has been opened up and the pub is clean, bright and popular. The Tatton, tucked away on



Tipping Street, has had a few walls knocked down but is still a nonsense local which serves only bitter on draught.

Hydes' Bakers Arms is a modern, featureless building dating from an era of impoverished pub design. Wilsons' Faulkners Arms on Stamford New Road is a single-roomed pub with a gloomy atmosphere. It is not the busiest pub in Altrincham. It's no good looking around for a Holts pub for a last pint - there aren't any.

Stockport had a well-deserved reputation as a centre of excellence. A concentration of Robinsons pubs round the brewery and clusters of Boddies and Wilsons pubs serving real ale formed a hard core of decent pubs which was complemented by a sprinkling of pubs owned by other brewers. Hillgate from the Blossoms to the brewery was a street of out-

standing merit. Sadly, much has changed. As in many towns, pubs have been knocked down for road schemes and slum clearance and others have been refurbished. Fortunately, Robinsons in their infinite wisdom have not destroyed two of the best pubs on what was once a monumental crawl.



The Blossoms on the A6 is still a perfect example of a traditional pub - three rooms and handpumped beer of quality. The Red Bull is still one of the finest classic pubs in the County. Flagged floors, oak beams, old-fashioned tables and seats, good beer and good food have ensured that it remains as popular as ever. Any attempts to alter this unique hostelry would destroy its essential character.



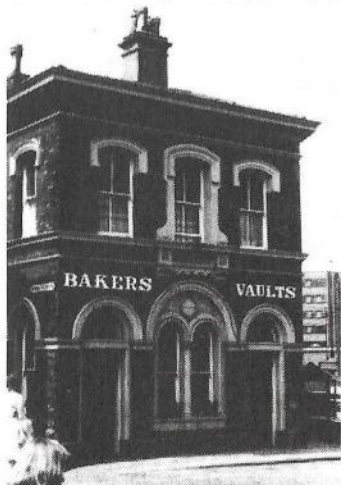
There are one or two other pubs on Hillgate which have remained unchanged but, like flies in amber, they now appear

somewhat anachronistic in a quickly changing world. The Crown (Wilsons) still has a corner door and the beer is good but the tables look like NAAFI rejects, the place seems not to have been decorated this century and some of the customers look as though they've been forcibly embalmed. Boddies' Black Lion has still got a Clarkes Brewery doormat. This bitter-only pub has a large front vault and a rear pool room - one of the few pubs without a lounge.

Most of the remaining pubs on Hillgate have either been ruined or were not very good in the first place. One exception is the Pack Horse, a former Whitbread house of horrors which has been turned back into a proper pub and now serves the full range of Chesters beers. Wilsons' Wheatsheaf is nothing to shout about, the Bowling Green is keg and Robinsons have done their best to ruin the Royal Mortar, the Star & Garter, the Spread Eagle and the Royal Oak. The Golden Lion (Burtonwood) has had most of its walls knocked down and doesn't always serve the advertised handpumped mild. The two Tetley pubs are both on keg beer. The Gladstone, which is a fairly dismal establishment, displays handpumps but tends to serve bitter through keg mild dispensers. Worth a miss.

Without doubt the worst bit of desecration is Watney's treatment of what is now called JR's. Known to the locals as J Arthur's, for reasons which remain unclear, this emporium employs tuxedoed bouncers and serves an array of lagers from enormous fonts. It is the epitome of un-pubness.

Above Lower Hillgate is Market Place with three pubs, two of them in the Good Beer Guide. It's easy to see why the Old Bulls Head doesn't feature; the beer doesn't seem to travel too well from Robinsons brewery. It is, however, difficult to see why the other two should be extolled so much. Both the Boars Head (Sam Smiths) and the Bakers Vaults (Robinsons) have been extensively altered and are unbelievably noisy, but then it's a Good Beer Guide, isn't it and anyway they both advertise in Opening Times, don't they?



For those of us in areas with only one or two Robinsons pubs it's never been easy for us to see what people in Robinsons' heartland are griping about. Robinsons pubs in North Manchester, for example, are neither exciting nor appalling. A visit to Stock-

port, however, explains the fears expressed by the regulars. Most breweries like to have a flagship near the brewery; Robinsons have a couple of submarines. Surely a local brewer can be more imaginative in the modernisation of its tied estate. Surely the quality of beer can be monitored in a town as compact as Stockport. Robinsons should set the example. At the moment they don't and their competitors don't need to try.

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### DARK HORSE

Handpumped Greenalls has been on sale at the Black Horse on the Crescent, Salford, for some weeks.

### PLANNING NEWS

Robinsons plan to make alterations to the Dog & Partridge in Denton. Let's hope their proposals are more tasteful than some of their other recent efforts. In Moston the GBG Dean Brook Inn is to have a single storey rear extension. It is unlikely that this will detract from the character of this excellent Marstons house.

### MAKING A TOWN HALLS OF IT

It's hardly surprising that Whitbread should be closing their brewery, when they can't even keep their pubs open. The Town Hall on Cleminson Street in Trinity, Salford, is boarded up again. OK, so it's not the best of areas, but Holts have pubs in Cheetham, Ordsall, Charlestown and other similar areas which they manage to keep open. Could it be the prices?

### NEW CHORLTON PUB?

An application has been made to convert the shop at 613 Wilbraham Road into a pub.

### NO BEER GUIDE

The Fourth Greater Manchester Beer Guide has been bonked on the head. Despite the fervent enthusiasm of the massed branches at a Regional Meeting, five CAMRA branches failed to turn up at the next Beer Guide Meeting so the publication had to be dropped. Seems a pity that an area with the strongest and most concentrated CAMRA branch structure can't co-operate on a County Guide. On the positive side, North Manchester are pressing ahead with their guide to traditional pubs in the county.



## ADDITIVES AND ADJUNCTS

Since September WD went to press, two further brewers have replied to our request for information on what exactly they put in their beer. Oak Brewery replied fully (see below), but Bass said it was secret and sent a Brewers' Society booklet on how beer is brewed. To be fair, the booklet is informative and well produced, with sections on both adjuncts and additives. It emphasises the stringency of Britain's food regulations. However, they do not address the important question of labelling. If brewers comply with all the regulations and don't use vast quantities of adjuncts and additives, why are they reluctant to label their beers with the ingredients as all other food manufacturers do? And why do they fight the introduction of legislation which would force them to do this?

The "Commercially Sensitive" argument is a load of balls. If Heinz, Kelloggs, Crosse & Blackwell and the rest have to do it, why on earth shouldn't Whitbread, Wilsons, Greenalls, Bass, Scottish & Newcastle, Courage and Allied Breweries do the same? They can't have anything to hide, can they?

### *Materials used by British brewers.*

*Total in tonnes 1984-85*

Barley malt	665,000
Unmalted corn, flaked barley, roasted barley	22,200
Rice, rice grits, flaked rice, and other starch adjuncts	50,500
Sugars and syrups (liquid weight)	121,200
Sugars and syrups (dry weight)	1,360
Whole hops	2,300
Hop powder	4,400
Hop extracts	215

*Source: Brewers' Society.*

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All beers brewed by Oak Brewery, including West Riding Tyke which is brewed under licence, are produced from malted barley, hops, Burtonised water, and yeast.

Crystal malt is used for colouring the bitters, and roasted barley is added for the Porter. In the Copper we use an extract of Irish Moss (a type of seaweed) to improve flocculation of unwanted protein, and in Fermenter we add zinc sulphate which acts as a yeast nutrient but has the added advantage of improving yeast flocculation.

I don't know what level of these additives persists through to finished beer, but there is nothing to suggest that the quantities of zinc sulphate added should be harmful. In fact it is thought that zinc deficiency may be contributory to anorexia nervosa.

We used to add sodium metabisulphate during fermentation as a precautionary bacteriostat for a short period, but on hearing that some people with allergies or asthma are often "triggered" by some beers, we decided to keep our additives to a minimum.

## ECCLES UPDATE

Over the two years in which it has been open, the SWINGING BRIDGE, Redcliffe Road, on the fringe of Trafford Park, has enjoyed much success. Half restaurant, half pub with a partial Chesters tie, initially it offered four or five real ales including Marstons Pedigree and Taylors Landlord. However, it is now owned by Courage, and although at first there was some attempt to maintain choice with a couple of cask beers, this did not last long. The restaurant seems to be going from strength to strength but the Swinging Bridge is no longer much of a pub. Now you are given a choice of John Smiths keg bitter and mild, three lagers and a token John Smiths cask bitter - in perfectly acceptable condition but at 85p a pint worth a miss!

The WHITE LION, Liverpool Road, has recently undergone structural alterations. The licensee, Paul Heatley, and the brewery, Joseph Holt,



are to be congratulated on a job well done. One of the original four rooms has been sacrificed to create a larger bar area and larger vault. The rest of the pub is unaltered apart from redecorations which have exposed the original woodwork on the doors. It remains a pub of character and is deservedly popular.

Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries (Banks's) have applied

for planning permission to build a pub on land between Peel Street and Albert Street. If they are successful it will be a welcome addition to choice in the area, bringing the number of real ales on offer in Eccles to about 29. Banks's build comfortable, traditional-style pubs. They have been moving into the Manchester area over the last few years and currently have 11 pubs here.

The BLACK BOY, Liverpool Road, is gradually being Websterised. The Wilsons bitter has been withdrawn, leaving only Wilsons mild and Websters bitter. Apparently the Websters is more popular with customers - there's no accounting for taste!

The TOWN HALL, Church Street, now has five cask beers: Wilsons bitter and mild, Websters bitter and Choice and Ruddles County. The Mikron Theatre Company will be presenting their "Still Carrying" at the Town Hall on Tuesday 17th November.



# WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

The WALMESLEY ARMS, Spring View, Lower Ince, has had a much-needed coat of paint on the exterior. The drab, rather off-putting outside appearance belied a cosy local with excellent Tetley beers. Now the Walmesley looks so smart that even a CAMRA Regional Organiser couldn't fail to notice it.

Still in Ince, the MANLEY HOTEL, Ince Green Lane, is currently selling keg Vaux products, despite an advertisement for Bass outside. On a recent visit, the walls had been stripped and a change seemed imminent. What chance cask Vaux beers among the "improvements"?

In the August WD I reported that the BULLS HEAD, Southworth Road, Newton le Willows, was selling Ind Coope Burton Ale at 93p a pint. This has been eclipsed by the Burton Ale at the ORWELL, Wigan Pier, which is going for 95p a pint! And the beer wasn't too clever on my last visit, either. However, the Orwell does sell a decent pint of Jennings bitter, when it is available.

Handpumps have appeared in two redecorated pubs in Appley Bridge. They are the RAILWAY (Tetley) on Appley Lane and the WHEATSHEAF (GW) at Randalls Corner. The latter pub in particular is well worth a visit... if, of course, you are still drinking Greenalls beers after the threat to Wem.

Beer engines have also appeared in the BOWLING GREEN, Wigan Lane, Wigan, to dispense the draught Bass and Tetley mild and bitter.

One handpump that the area could have done without is the one in the HALF MOON, Elliot Street, Tyldesley, which is serving keg Higsons mild. However, the rest of the beers on sale in this free house have improved in quality, following a recent rocky patch. Still on the subject of free houses, GEM'S at Upper Dicconson Street, Wigan, is selling a guest beer at weekends. The "guests" have included Hydes bitter, Chesters bitter and Walkers (ordinary) bitter. Holts mild and bitter and Boddingtons bitter are permanently on sale here.

Vaux have sold the BALCONY, near Upholland BR, to the Lancashire Lodge consortium. The emphasis is now on food and accommodation and the beers are Whitbread fizz.

The SIR ROBERT PEEL, Manchester Road, Hindley, is still advertising "Traditional Ales" on the pub exterior, but the draught ales (Whitbread) are keg. Likewise with the WHITE HORSE, a Burtonwood pub on Standishgate, Wigan. I hope that the respective Brewery Liaison Officers are reading this.

Continuing with Burtonwood, outlets for their JBA Premium are dwindling. The latest casualty is the CHERRY GARDENS, Wigan Lane,



Wigan (left), due to poor sales. It is ironic that Almonds has failed to take off in the area where it was once brewed: wonder if charging 80-odd pence for a rather average 1039og bitter has anything to do with it?

Whoever heard of Robin Hood being robbed? It's true, I'm afraid; "Robin Hood" being the popular nickname for the RAILWAY INN, St Helens Road, Leigh. A thief broke into a

safe in the living quarters of this Greenalls pub and made off with £2,500.

Another Greenalls pub in Leigh town centre, the ROYAL OAK, is closed and boarded up. The Oak has been threatened by a pedestrianisation scheme for years.

Leigh again, and the FIR TREE, Firs Lane, has dropped Ind Coope Burton Ale from its range, because the beer wasn't selling. Tetleys and Jennings remain.

Wilf Richardson, until recently landlord of the RAILWAY HOTEL, Twist Lane, Leigh, has died. He was 79. Mr Richardson's connections with the Railway go back nearly sixty years, during which time the pub became the best boozer in Leigh. Wilf's son Peter died in January this year.

The BROOKHOUSE INN, City Road, Orrell, has gone over to keg beer. This pub sold one of the most reliable pints of Tetleys and Walkers in the area and handpumps were installed only last year. A shame.

The BALL & BOOT, a charmless Tetley pub in Orchard Street, Wigan, will probably have lost its real ale by the time you read this. I went to the B&B recently and was sold a pint of keg bitter through the SKOL tap (!!) whilst the handpumps lay idle. Whatever next?

The BELLINGHAM HOTEL, Wigan Lane, Wigan, is an unlikely place to sell cask beer, but it does. Not long ago, the Tetley-Walker range was replaced by Boddingtons bitter and Thwaites best mild and bitter. Keg



Thwaites is also on sale, but for a few pence more than the real stuff. You don't come across that very often!

Lastly, a word of warning about the "Happy Hour" at the RAVEN, Wallgate, Wigan. Before 9.00pm during the week, all drinks cost 60p: that's right - everything. A glass of tonic will cost you as much as a pint of Walkers. So remember to take your quart pots with you when you go!

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## HOLIDAY ALE

Tales of beers from exotic places around the world  
No.1

### **BUTLINS, MINEHEAD**

Bill Collier

If you visit "Somerset World" at Minehead fear not too much. Butlins have put handpumped John Smiths bitter on in the "Molly Malone's" bar. However, the rest of the various cabaret and entertainment bars do not sell traditional beer. All pints are at £1 plus.

But Butlins provide an escape - in the shape of an Exmoor pub crawl on Wednesday nights. You are taken round the area in a Landrover and the scenery is complemented by visits to five or six excellent country pubs. On my outing all the pubs served handpumped traditional beers from the likes of Ushers, Flowers, Ruddles and Exmoor Ale. Prices were around 88p a pint, although one pub charged £1.



*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 next month's issue.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Send cheque/PO for £1.90, together with your name and address, to Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester, for 6 issues. Cheques made out to "What's Doing".

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## B.L.O. JOB

What's Doing has just received a copy of the Higsons/Boddingtons/Oldham Brewery report from the Brewery Liaison Officer, based on a meeting held in May. Very timely. Kevin Buckley (for it is he) seems desperately complacent about Boddies. He did, admittedly, voice a few misgivings about pub conversions which abolished the public bar but seems pleased that Boddies real ale is being introduced into lots of pubs.

Kevin's faith in Boddies seems naive, to say the least. We've seen it all before. There is a national trend towards developing National cask beers; beers brewed in volume and sold all over the country - Websters



Yorkshire Bitter, Ruddles, Stones, Bass, etc. This has always been at the expense of local brews and local breweries. Greenalls have just closed Wem Brewery with the loss of two beers. It is almost inevitable that economic pressure will drive Boddies in the same direction. As Boddingtons bitter becomes the brewery's market leader, other beers will be increasingly under threat. Their sales will be eroded and eventually it will be decided that they are no longer viable.



In the short term it may seem wonderful that draught beer has been introduced to hitherto keg-only Higsons and OB pubs; after all, this, as Kevin so rightly suggests, is the aim of CAMRA. But the emergence of Boddies bitter as a truly regional beer will, in the

long run, help to kill off both Oldham and Higsons in traditional form. To believe the bland assurances of the brewers is shortsighted. Even if they set out with the best of intentions, Boddingtons are bound to bow to economic pressures. These pressures include a vast increase in lager consumption and the benefits to be obtained from reducing the number of breweries and the variety of beers produced.

Kevin says that we shouldn't spend time fighting each other when we can fight Greenalls and Whitbread. Boddies, Higsons and OB are all distinctive local beers. We want to retain them and the feeling in Manchester is that this can best be done, not by expressing approval of the spread of Boddies bitter, but by campaigning actively for the local brews. We don't want Boddies to become another Greenalls.

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## DO IT AT HOME

Peter Wadsworth

The trouble with enjoying real ale is the cost (even in a Holts pub!) However, there is a way round this problem and that is to brew your own at home for around 10p a pint. It is quite within the law to do so (Reginald Maudling sorted that out in 1963) provided you do not sell your product. (You can give it away!)

Getting started is really quite simple. First visit your local home-brew shop. You will soon find the people behind the counter far more helpful than at the supermarkets or department stores. Second, buy your basic equipment. Assuming you have access to general kitchen paraphernalia, you will need:

Fermenting vessel .. ..	typical price £3.30
Large funnel .. .. .	0.50
Plastic hose (1½m or 5ft) .. .. .	.25
Barrel (5 gallons) .. .. .	9.00
Hydrometer .. .. .	1.68
Thermometer .. .. .	1.84
Steriliser + odds & sods .. .. .	3.43

You could reduce costs by using bottles instead of barrelling, but you need to buy them (money!) or save them from other products such as lemonade (time!); also, they need to be strong and not the "no deposit" type of bottle.

Finally, choose a simple beer kit and follow the instructions, remembering to keep everything superclean to eliminate the risks of infecting the beer. The general procedure is to empty the malt extract into the fermenting vessel, add sugar and eight pints of boiling water, stir, top up with cold water and drop the yeast on the top (check temperature 65°-75°F). Cover and store in a warm place for 7 to 10 days.

When "primary" fermentation is complete (check specific gravity 1.005 to 1.010) siphon into barrel or bottles, or, as I do, pour the lot through a large funnel into the barrel. Add a small amount of sugar and wait 3 to 4 weeks for the secondary fermentation to bring your beer to top condition.

There is a lot to learn after your first brew and your local shop will be glad to help - so get brewing!

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### HOLIDAY INN FOR BASS

After just missing out on the Hilton Hotel chain, Bass soon bounced back and has purchased the Worldwide Division of the Holiday Inn chain for \$475m (£290m).

The 178 properties are mainly operated under franchise and, together with the Crest Hotel group which Bass already own, gives Bass 270 hotels worldwide with a total of 51,000 rooms.

Many of the Crest Hotels in Europe sell draught Bass and it is to be hoped that Holiday Inns (including the Midland Crown Plaza in Manchester) will follow the trend.

### BREWERY FOR SALE

Matthew Brown are looking for a buyer for the former state owned Carlisle Brewery. So far no price has been announced.

### NEWQUAY STEAM ARRIVES IN WALKDEN

Tesco stores in Walkden has added the full range of Newquay Steam beers from Redruth to their excellent selection of beers of the world. The Cornish double-fermented natural beers range from a 1040° bitter at 99p per half litre to the extra strong 1083° 9% lager at £1.39 per half litre. Also included are best bitter, stout, extra strong stout and a 1047° lager, all sold in stoppered bottles.

Other beers available at Tesco include Pilsner Urquell (1050°) at £1.19 for 650mls, Fischer (1047°) at £1.29 for 660mls, Italy's premier beer, Peroni's Nastro Azzurro at £1.69 per litre, San Miguel, Herforder Pils, Fischer Gold (1065°), Samuel Smith's natural lager and the remarkably priced East German Brandenburger Pilsner - 49p for a half litre bottle of 1038° true lager. Although not quite as strong as a West German product, it still is a very pleasant drink with a distinctive hoppy flavour.

### NEW TEMPLE

The Temple, Cheetham Hill Road, reopened in early September. Yet another cross between a powder room and a greenhouse, it sells Chesters bitter (86p) and mild on handpump. The only remarkable feature of this establishment, apart from the rip-off prices, is the computerised till with VDU screen in glorious technicolour.

### BUCKLEYS TAKEN OVER

Due to the persistence of Messrs Clowes & Cramer acting like wasps round a jam jar, the board of Buckleys Brewery has recommended acceptance of the entrepreneurs' offer of 192p per share.





## BOLTON NEWS

Des Nogalski

Whitbread's recent good record on refurbishments in the Bolton area (WD September) receives its stiffest test shortly when the town's oldest and most historic pub receives a refit. Rumour has it that the Man & Scythe on Churchgate is going "upmarket", which means that it may be about to join the growing list of so-called "public" houses that deny access to those deemed unsuitably dressed (no jeans and trainers). There are also doubts about the continuation in traditional form of the Bulmers cider - for many, many years the pub's most popular drink. Whitbread claim that cider will still be served - but they aren't saying in which form - and that no-one will be banned. We shall see.

Next door, Burtonwood have applied for planning permission to turn part of the Swan Hotel into two retail units. Presumably this is the little-used Malt & Hops bar rather than the Buttery Bar (real ale: dark mild and JBA) or the dreadful Swannies Bar (horrible beer, horrible decor, horrible music).

More licensed premises for sale, following the recent demise of Ziggi's Fun Pub, are the Dance Factory nightclub on Bradshawgate and the Space City amusement arcade/rock disco.

Greenalls' Tramways Hotel on Blackburn Road may soon find itself serving beer from another brewery not far from Warrington, and another outlet for Whitbread's "Traditional Beer Club" is the Bridge Inn, Wigan Road, Westhoughton. Pompey Royal was recently spotted here.

# RUPERT'S PAGE



Stan's really blown it this time.

According to my informant, Mr Pie Crust, the recent Laurel & Hardy amber nectar convention was not as successful as in previous years. Apparently the punters were heavily outnumbered by the barrels and Stan's entertainment - ventriloquism for the deaf, the Dance of the Seven Silly T-shirts and Waltzing Matilda gargled in mild - did little to rescue the ongoing disaster situation. Every little helps to reduce the Region to penury. At least Stan Craap's efforts smack of honest incompetence shining forth as a bright light among the murky Machiavellian machinations of others.

Snobley and Snoot Magna have tried their very very best to kybosh everything in sight. Happily their efforts to take over this august organ and throw Eddy and myself on the dungheap were strangled at birth. Having failed in this endeavour, Mr Dumpty and Rumpleshirt-scream turned their attention to a new publication - Manky Ale. They were vociferous in their support for this venture but didn't bother selling any, hence hastening its demise. Their latest spiffing wheeze was to indulge in Churchillian perorations invoking the Dunkirk spirit, cajoling reluctant branches to support the production of a new Greater Grotley Toppers' Vademecum. But, guess who didn't turn up at the meeting - that's right - Humphrey Dumpty and Rumpleshirtscream. What a jolly hoot! They've also done their best to put their knives into Billy Shippon's new venture - a guide to the socio-economic group Z hovels of Greater Grotley. Apparently Billy made the grave error of not kowtowing and salaaming and failing to send grovelling missives in triplicate requesting permission from Snobley and Snoot Magna to carry out this work. Consequently, in fear that Billy will line his own pockets, they've withdrawn their usual generous assistance and erected barbed wire barricades to prevent access to Snobley's hovels. Doubtless they've hidden some of the better examples so that Billy will never find them. They won't sell any guides either, as they make very clear in the 14-page admonitory document they've sent to Billy. That'll teach him in future not to incur their wrath.

I've always thought it right that the man who pays the piper calls the tune. How appropriate then that CAMRA should be totally subservient to the Real Peat Marketing Board who cough up buckets of spondulicks

every year to subsidise the Toppers' Vademecum. Cheeky CAMRA suggested that the publication should be launched in the Cycloid Hotel but Real Peat decreed it should be held elsewhere. Quite right too.

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Phone (0204) 72130

## COMMERCIAL TRAVELLING

The Commercial on Liverpool Road, off Deansgate, Manchester city centre, has been considerably improved. It is now a comfortable pub with much wood and brass in evidence, plus the ubiquitous plastic plants. It is also a real ale gain as the Commercial now serves Wilsons bitter and Yorkshire bitter through handpumps.

## LOWTON NEWS

The Rams Head at Lowton (Greenalls) has reopened after extensive alterations. The inside has been tastefully modernised and a restaurant has been added at the expense of some lounge space. The popular public bar has, thankfully, been retained. Also retained is the traditional beer - now handpumped

instead of electric. Greenalls Original makes its debut, but beware the keg Symonds Scrumpy Jack on handpump. Some building work is still going on inside, and when finished the Rams Head should be quite pleasant. Unfortunately the same can't be said about the exterior. A silly striped canopy has been erected around the Tudor-style building and the neon signs would be more at home along the Golden Mile on an October evening. Why can't Greenalls get anything 100% right on these conversions?

## NEW PUB

The old British Legion club on Third Avenue, Trafford Park, is being converted into the "Village Pub". Tetleys are thought to be the brewers behind the conversion.



## BOTTOMS UP

The Weavers on Angel Street off Rochdale Road may shortly be re-opening as a free house. The former Tetleys pub has been boarded up for some time and is now on the market. The introduction of another genuine free house would establish this area of Manchester as the undoubted centre of real ale.

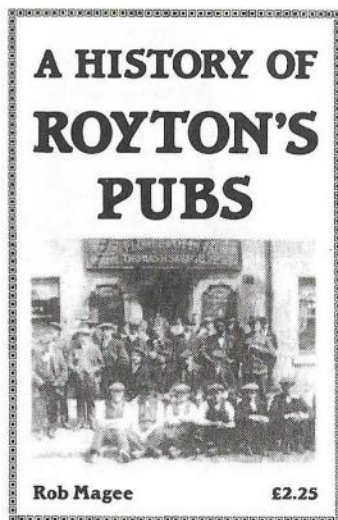
## MORE PRICE INCREASES

In the wake of the many breweries which have imposed price increases, Marstons have put 4p on the price of a pint. Lees have added an incredible 6p per pint on beer and 8p on lager - a jump of just under 10% in the price of their mild. The 3p per pint differential between mild and bitter is being maintained.

## NEW BOOK

Rob Magee's latest book on the old pubs of Royton will be in the shops later this month. 48 pages of local history, old photographs, maps, etc.

Copies can be had by post from Neil Richardson, 375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 2AY for £2.70



## ROCHDALE ALE

The Baths, a Boddies house on Smith Street near the bus station, is now selling handpumped OB bitter alongside the Boddies mild and bitter.

The Pineapple on Whitehall Street, off Whitworth Road, is now selling handpumped Pompey Royal and Wethereds bitter alongside the Chesters mild and bitter.

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Contributors to this issue: Steve Lawton, Roger Hall, Stewart Revell, Keith Egerton, Peter Barnes, Pie Crust, Paul Roberts

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## JUG & GLASS

It's a better class of pub than we're used to. There was a Bugatti parked outside and a man with a cravat inside. Strangely, Cravat was still there after Bugatti had gone and they don't nick motors in Derbyshire, do they? The Jug & Glass is a free house on the A515 Buxton to Ashbourne road about 10 miles out of Buxton. There are six regular draught beers on handpump - Kimberley best bitter, Ruddles best bitter, Ruddles County, Theakstons XB and Marstons Owd Roger and Pedigree. In addition there is a guest beer - Everard Tiger on our visit. There's an excellent selection of food and the pub has a homely and authentic feel despite some false beams among the real ones and a juke box. The ceiling is festooned with pots and potties and the walls with pictures of vintage cars, but there's also a piano and a dart board. The cellar, which is only just below ground level, is in the centre of the pub and can be seen through a window on the way to the gents, an interesting and unusual feature.



## Branch Diary

### ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

Tues 6 Oct 8pm Branch Meeting, Cotton Tree (Lees), Boarshaw Rd, Middleton  
Sat/Sun 17/18 Oct Weekend away to Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire  
Tues 20 Oct 8pm Committee meeting, Engineers (Sam Smiths), Aspinall St, Heywood  
Tues 3 Nov 8pm Branch Meeting, Eagle & Child (Holts), Higher Lane, Whitefield  
Fri 6 Nov Rochdale Pub Crawl. 8pm Alpine Gasthof (Sam Smiths), Whitworth Rd; calling at Cross Yates (Holts), Whitworth Rd, around 9pm, and Spread Eagle (Wilsons), Cheetham Street, 10.00pm  
Tues 17 Nov 8pm Committee Meeting, Sparking Clog (Banks's), Radcliffe  
Fri/Sat 20/21 Nov BURY BEER FESTIVAL - see elsewhere in this issue  
Contact: John Burns 061 653 8361 (h)

### NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 7 Oct: Winton. 7pm Ellesmere, 8.30 Jolly Carter  
Wed 21 Oct Peveril of the Peak, 8pm. Wilsons speaker on "Pub Refurbishment"  
Wed 28 Oct Dean Brook Inn, Moston, 8pm. Ten Year Award for Good Beer Guide entries  
Wed 4 Nov Crescent "Meet the Students"  
Wed 11 Nov, Gamecock, Old Street, Ashton. 7.30  
Wed 25 Nov, Central Manchester pubs survey. Unicorn, Church Street, 7.30  
Wed 2 December, Ordsall. Wellington, Regent Rd 7pm: Ordsall, 8pm  
Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

### WIGAN

Wed 14 Oct Branch Meeting, 8.30 Seven Stars, Wallgate, Wigan  
Contact: Brian Gleave Atherton 892965 (h), Atherton 876200 (w)

### BOLTON

Tues 13 Oct 8.30 White Lion (Holts), Market Street, Westhoughton  
Fri 16 Oct 16-pub crawl of Bolton town centre in aid of Cancer Research. Start 7.30 Boars Head, Churchgate. Phone contact if you wish to participate.  
Wed 21 Oct 8pm. Students' Social, Bolton Institute of Higher Education  
Sun 25 Oct Radcliffe Survey (1) Meet Royal Oak, Water Street, 12 noon  
Sun 1 Nov Radcliffe Survey (2). Meet Railway, Ainsworth Road, 12 noon  
Tues 10 Nov 8.30pm AGM, York, Newport Street  
Contact Dave Fleming, Farnworth 75111 x207 (w), Bolton 389918 (h)



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*the second*

# **CRESCENT**

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at

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on the Crescent

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REAL BEERS**

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**15 OCTOBER 1987**