

WHAT'S DOING



DEC
1988

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

BODDIES GET IT RIGHT



The Black Friar, Blackfriars Road, Salford, was officially re-opened by Chairman Ewart Boddington and Mayor Joe Holt (him again) on November 22nd after extensive refurbishment. Boddingtons, and particularly their designer Nick McGilvray, are to be congratulated for producing a high quality scheme which is in sympathy with the style of the pub. The Black Friar still does not pretend to be anything other than a Salford boozier but it has been brought into the 1980s.

The three separate rooms are retained; there is a new lavatory block extension at the rear, direct access to the lavatories from the vault and the back darts room has been enlarged.

This is not a common-or-garden packaged refurbishment: the work has been tailored to the pub's individual style. All the best features have been retained and indeed enhanced by the use of quality materials for new floor finishes, lighting and upholstery, but particularly in the appropriate joinery detailing on the bar and internal doors. Externally, a gable wall and a chimney stack have been rebuilt, the pub re-signed and the 1886 datestone re-exposed.

The next pub on Boddingtons' refurbishment list is the Farmers Arms in Swinton. We hope they will be equally as imaginative and sensitive to this pub's special qualities.

Peter Barnes

ROVER RETURNS TO CHAPEL STREET

From the Globe on Bury Street, Salford (a recently re-opened Lees pub - see WD next month), the new Rovers Return can be admired, framed by the arches of the railway viaduct. Until recently known as the Lord Nelson, the new owners Graham Fletcher and Raymond Fisher decided on the new name because of the pub's proximity to Barlow's Croft. Get it? Complete refurbishment has taken place. Good value food is available and the real ales are Websters Yorkshire bitter (88p) and Websters Choice (96p).

VINE

On 1st November Peter and Clare White left the Vine, Kennedy Street, Manchester, to return to Peter's native Oxford. Since taking over the Vine less than two years ago, Peter and Clare built up a healthy trade, helped by their consistently good John Smiths bitter.

The new landlord is Alan Newnes, who with his wife Margaret has been running the Nags Head in Lower Bollington, near Altrincham. Alan is a member of the Honourable Order of Bass Drinkers and practised what he preached by serving draught Bass at the Nags Head. No time has been wasted at the Vine and handpumped Courage Directors has joined the John Smiths bitter and cask Magnet is promised.

GONE FOR A BURTON

Now Allied are promising Burton Ale in more of their tied outlets, demand seems to be greater than supply and the free trade is losing out. Despite several complaints to Allied, the Smithfield on Shudehill is still unable to secure a regular supply of the amber nectar. Similar reports are coming in from free houses in other parts of the country.

NEWS FROM SOUTH EAST LANCs

Alterations at the General Elliott, Heath Lane, Croft, are believed to involve plans for a bistro at the pub. Also in Croft, the Horseshoe is having a restaurant extension built.

The New Inn at Culcheth and the Ross's Arms, Higher Green, near Astley, are being refurbished.

The Turf & Feather, Locking Stumps, is now selling cask Tetley as well as Ind Coope Burton.

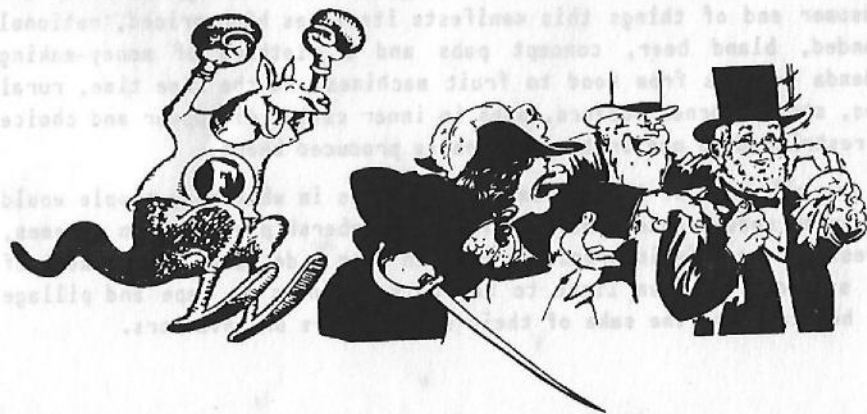
BREWING FOR THE BOTTOM LINE

CAMRA has always been a non-political organisation, accommodating people with many different views. However, the current troubles in the brewing industry may force the Campaign to change its tack. Large scale capitalism has been responsible for many of the recent brewery mergers and closures and threatens choice in the future.

I'm not arguing for nationalisation of brewing - that would be as disastrous as the present course promises to be. Once, a local brewer lived and worked in the community which he served. He was part of that community, with roots in the past. His responsibilities were wider than merely maximising the bottom line. They would include respect for employees, licensees and customers and some consideration of how his activities may affect the community at large.

It's true that there were small capitalists of a Gradgrind mentality (and, no doubt, there still are) but the exploitation of labour has been limited by legislation. Not so the wider social effects which large scale capitalism necessarily implies. The small, independent brewer has to be profitable to survive, but that profitability is constrained by social considerations. The small brewer will seek to obtain satisfactory profits, not to maximise them. There would seem little point in closing down the only pub in a village to increase return on capital by 0.2% if this were to result in widespread disapprobation by the public at large.

If a brewer has only one brewery then it is in his interests to run that brewery at maximum capacity - there's no possibility of closing it down and switching production elsewhere. A national brewer with multiple sites can, if demand falls, close down one brewery and move production elsewhere. In fact, there is pressure to do this. By closing down pubs which do not produce the return on capital investors can enjoy elsewhere, the brewer inevitably reduces the throughput of



his brewery and is under pressure to rationalise. This can happen where a brewery is highly profitable, if that profitability falls one or two percentage points below what investors require. Wem Brewery, for example, which provided employment in the town, serviced a large number of rural pubs and was an asset to the county of Shropshire, closed for that very reason. There is no doubt that, as an independent, it would still be trading profitably today.

The system of large scale capitalism has, as an inevitable consequence, this bottom liner mentality. Investors in large scale enterprises include insurance companies, pension funds and investment companies which are interested in the highest possible return on

capital consistent with security. Little wonder that the directors and managers of large brewery groups run their operations to maximise profitability without consideration of wider issues, to which they pay little more than lip service.



Maximising profit leads inexorably to an examination of the return on all operations. All activities or outlets which do not achieve a particular minimum are ruthlessly excised. Marginal pubs are closed, larger pubs are built, products are rationalised, small brews

discontinued, tastes changed and amalgamated, ingredients cheapened, prices increased, some markets targeted, others ignored. At the consumer end of things this manifests itself as high priced, national branded, bland beer, concept pubs and a plethora of money-making addenda to pubs from food to fruit machines. At the same time, rural pubs, street corner boozers, pubs in inner cities disappear and choice is restricted to one or two nationally produced beers.

We are all part of the system which results in what many people would see as an undesirable state of affairs. Membership of pension schemes, investment in life insurance carry with them a de facto endorsement of the system - a green light to the bottom liners to rape and pillage our heritage for the sake of their shareholders or investors.

What, then, can be done? Certainly, appealing to the better nature of the brewers is fruitless; they don't have one, or at least can't use it at work. Legislation has been slow to catch up with the rapid changes in commerce and industry. The Monopolies and Mergers Commission has shown itself to have few teeth and those it has are in a glass of Steradent. CAMRA must become more political, it must press for further legislation and must use what legislation there is more readily. The planning and licensing systems are two examples of processes which can be used to good effect to conserve our public houses. It is difficult, however, to see how further mergers and take-overs can be prevented or further loss of beers be stopped without strenuous action at a national level to enact protective legislation with teeth.

Roger Hall

HIGSONS AND OB IN PRESTWICH

The Parkside Hotel, Bury Old Road, Heaton Park, Prestwich, has been transformed, and Boddingtons have done a beautiful job - the vault has not only been retained, it has been enlarged! A snug has been added (formerly the empty shop next door) and there are two other drinking areas which form the main bar lounge. Polished wood and brass rails complement the well thought out, simple decoration. Handpumps return to the Parkside after a long absence and Higsons bitter is available (83p) alongside Boddingtons bitter (83p), mild (80p) and OB mild (80p). 2p cheaper in the vault. Let's hope that the Higsons stays as this beer adds to the choice of real ales in Prestwich: Holts, Hydes, Tetley, Thwaites, Lees, Boddies and, occasionally, Stones.


MOORHOUSE'S

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Owing to an unprecedented burst of sobriety combined with literacy among WD contributors, several articles have been held over for next month's issue.

KING'S ALE

Leo King

Extensions and improvements could soon take place at the Marble Arch, Rochdale Road, Manchester. The existing room is having seated alcoves installed, the bar counter is being moved to the far end and more

tiling will be introduced. No structural alterations will be made to the original building and the improvements should enhance it. A new room will be built with a separate bar counter and both bars could display up to 14 handpumps. The impressive stained-glass fanlight over the entrance will remain and it is hoped to have a large stained-glass ceiling area in the new room. Vance, the landlord, invited me to look around the cellars. These are vast and belie the pub area upstairs. He told me of his

intentions to have live music (eg jazz). How about basement music? Whatever the outcome, I have a feeling that this is going to be quite some pub when it is finished.

MORE REAL ALE FROM WHITBREAD

The former Whalley Hotel (now The Whalley) has been slightly modified and well refurbished throughout. Plush carpeting, cloth seating and mirrored walls have given this fine old traditional pub a relaxing atmosphere all round. No daft gimmicks have been applied - it seems that Whitbread are finally coming to their senses.

After many years this former Threlfalls outlet has returned to real ale. Handpumps adorn the once keg-only bar counter. Trophy, Chesters mild and Chesters bitter are now available and all in tip-top condition. Well worth a visit.

Two other long-term keg beer Whitbread pubs have also gone over to real ale - the City Road Inn, Albion Street/Whitworth Street West, Manchester 1, and Ye Olde Nelson, Chapel Street, Salford 3, with the same three draught beers as the Whalley (and good stuff, too). Carry on with the good work, Whitbread!

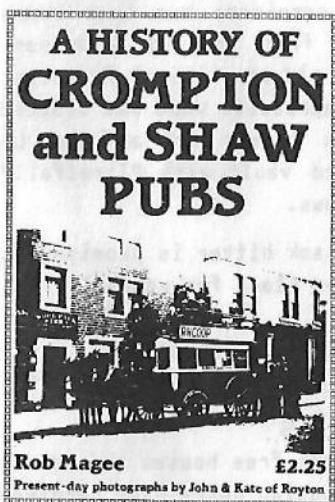


BAD TIMING

Last month I stated that the Swan with Two Necks, Withy Grove, Manchester, was open 12 to 3 on Sundays. This is not so, even though it is printed on the opening times board outside the pub. Apparently some tape is usually stuck over the afternoon part, but people keep removing the tape!

GOOD ALE

A brief ending to my series on city centre pubs worth a visit: Bulls Head, London Road, M/c1; Lass o'Gowrie, Charles Street, M/c1; Peveril of the Peak, Great Bridgewater Street, M/c1; City Road Inn, Albion Street, M/c1; Millstone, Thomas Street, M/c4; Crown, Deansgate, M/c3; Pack Horse, Deansgate, M/c15; Mr Thomas's Chop House, Cross Street, M/c2; Mitre, Cathedral Gates, M/c3; Crown & Cushion, Corporation Street, M/c4, and Sam's Chop House, Back Pool Fold (off Cross Street), M/c2, to name a big handful. All sell real ale.



NEW BOOK

Rob Magee's latest collection of pub histories is out this month. "A History of Crompton and Shaw Pubs" contains over fifty entries, detailing the pubs which have existed in the area. Available from all good bookshops or for £2.70 by post from Neil Richardson, 375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 2AY.

FLYING ALE

Real ale is at last getting to some of Manchester's private aviators. The club house at Barton Aerodrome, near Eccles, has had Lees bitter installed. It began with a one week trial (1 barrel), but now, after seven barrels, the beer seems

certain to be permanent. At 77p per pint it is 2p more than the keg S&N stuff it replaces. Membership of the club (for flying and non-flying) is cheaper than most golf clubs - details from the Tower on 061 789 4785.

HOLTS CORNER

The most recent Holts facelift was at the Red Lion on Bury New Road in Prestwich. The bar serving area has been rearranged and, together with other alterations, this has created a much improved pub. New handpumps have replaced the electric pumps.

The next Holts pub to be done up will probably be the Cart & Horses in Astley. Let's hope it is all done in the best possible taste.

VISIT A VINTAGE PUB

The Tallow Tub on Chapel Street in Salford is an architectural gem, although you would not think so from its external appearance. It is also a very old pub, dating from 1802 and with a rich and varied history, but in recent years it has lost its way and is not as busy as



it deserves to be. It only served keg beer for many years and it has had four changes of licensee since 1984. The new tenant, John Flanagan, is now building up the business again. The features of the pub are a central, curved bar with a tiled base, serving hatches and leaded, stained glass; unusual and ornate tiling in the corridor; two back rooms away from the bar with many very old or original features; an impressive wood and stained glass screen and a large L-shaped vault with "Threlfall" windows.

The cask Chesters mild is in good form and cask bitter is promised in the near future. Why not call in and see the place for yourself? The best way of protecting our heritage of pubs is to make full use of them. (North Manchester branch will be there on 4th January.)

WIGAN FREE HOUSES

A few years ago Wigan did not have any real ale free houses and now it can boast five. The SWAN & RAILWAY, whose opening hours have remained unchanged (including Sunday) since licensing reform, is about to add Courage Directors to the existing range of Stones bitter, Bass 4X mild, draught Bass and cask John Smiths. The Grand Hotel's RILEY'S BAR serves Vaux Samson; the TUDOR HOUSE has Stones bitter and draught Bass and an exotic guest beer is promised for the CAMRA meeting on 7th December. GEM'S offers Holts bitter, Boddies bitter and the Whitbread trio of Flowers IPA, Castle Eden and Chesters mild.

Opposite Gem's, the CHARLES DICKENS sells Tetley mild and bitter, Theakstons best bitter and Youngers IPA. A guest beer is again promised for the Jazz Party on 20th December. It seems a shame the independent and micro-brewers can't break the big brewers' hold on the Wigan "free" scene.

BOLTON NEWS

Des Nogalski

Bolton lost a pub at the end of October when the Sunnyside Hotel on Bloom Street/Adelaide Street closed its doors for the last time. After being sold by Tetleys a few years ago, the Sunnyside functioned as an Irish centre, then CAMRA member David Rowlinson attempted to turn the pub into a real ale free house. When that failed the pub was bought by Harry O'Byrne. Now, after two years, during which it was re-furbished after an arson attempt, Harry has sold the Sunnyside to a Wigan firm after receiving an offer he couldn't refuse. The building will now be turned into a nursing home.

Maxims on Bradshawgate got its first new beer after being transferred from Vaux to Ward. The beer is Kirby Ale, a 1050og premium bitter retailing at £1 a pint.

CAMRA members seen in wine bar shock! Yes, it's true. When Bolton branch members surveyed Brunel's on Manor Street they found the full range of bottled Newquay Steam Beers (at around £1.40 a bottle!), plus bottled Budvar from Czechoslovakia. As for the draught "beer", the keg Stones tasted as though it had been topped up with lager slops. Another outlet for Newquay Steam Beer - bitter only this time - is, believe it or not, Mr Patel's off licence on Bury Road near the Hare & Hounds.

Finally, as Christmas approaches pub designers and decorators are working flat out in readiness for those once-a-year drinkers that seem to hog the bar every festive season. A couple of early reports say that Whitbread's Royal Hotel on Vernon Street and Matthew Brown's Bay Mare on Blackburn Road are both open and selling cask beer for the first time in donkey's years. More on these and others next month.

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.

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The return of....

WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

The items of fan mail outnumbered the writs, so I have come out of retirement. Therefore, for all you curious Mancunians, Pie-eaters and Lobby-gobblers out there, this is what you've been missing, if you don't already know....

Town centre news first, and the **WHITESMITHS ARMS**, Standishgate, has been transformed into **HARRY'S CELLAR BAR**. Assuming you can get past the weekend bouncers, Boddingtons bitter is to be had at 96p a pint! The deafening disco beat follows you all over town. Granted, the old Whitesmiths was a bit grotty, but surely the punters deserve better than this?

The **BRICKLAYERS ARMS**, Hallgate, has been tastefully refurbished. The pub was never really closed, as it was done up piece by piece, and the results are very pleasant. As a friend of mine commented, "It's still 'The Brickies'". An astute observation, indeed. The quaint old air pressure dispensers have been done away with and Walker bitter and Tetley mild are now served by handpulls. Well worth a visit.

The proposed modification to the **MILLSTONE**, Wigan Lane, has been postponed until early 1989. Thwaites had planned to extend this, the smallest pub in Wigan, into the former betting shop next door last month. Do make the most of the Millstone while you can; the ale is tip-top and the cheapest in Wigan - 79p bitter, 78p best mild. (are you listening, Harry?)

Elsewhere, however, **RAFFLES**, Millgate, and the **WHITE HORSE**, Standishgate, are two well-situated boozers run down. The magnificent wooden bar in Raffles (formerly the **SHIP**) is the best in Wigan - since the demise of the **PARK HOTEL** and the **WHEATSHEAF** - so let's hope it isn't knocked about, if and when the pub reopens. The White Horse, on the other hand, was one of the dreariest pubs anywhere, though the beer was always good. The potential is there, so come on, Burtonwood, pull your finger out!

Other pubs in the area that are closed/still closed include the **DOG & PARTRIDGE** (Tetley), Standish; the **PLOUGH & HARROW** (Thwaites), Coppull Moor, and the **ROCK HOTEL** or **ROCK ROCK CAFE** (M Brown), Lower Ince.

Tetleys, who don't have the most impressive record in converting pubs to real ale, have pulled off a couple of surprises. The **OLD ENGINE** at Gathurst, which hasn't sold real ale since the Gettysburg Address, is now selling cask mild and bitter. Elsewhere, the previously-keg **HARE**

E HOUNDS, Golborne Road, Lowton, 'has reopened following substantial renovation, selling Tetley bitter, Ind Coope Burton Ale and Jennings bitter, all on handpumps, which is a bit of a boost for an area dominated by Greenall Whitley.

Other Tetley pubs in the area now selling Burton Ale are the **AVENUE** (ex-**PIED BULL**), Market Street, Leigh; the **COMMERCIAL**, Cale Lane, New Springs (an unlikely candidate), and the **WHITE LION**, Church Street, Up Holland, which also serves a consistently good pint of Jennings bitter. Meanwhile, the landlord of the **BIRD I'TH' HAND**, Gidlow Lane, Wigan, is eager to give Burton Ale a try, but Allied haven't exactly been falling over themselves to supply it. What's the problem? Incidentally, this pub is currently selling both Tetley milds.

Finally, Greenalls have restored cask conditioned Local Bitter and Original to the **SPINNERS ARMS**, Castle Hill, Hindley, after nearly a decade on fizz. The same goes for the **CHERRY TREE** (formerly the **NEW INN**), City Road, Orrell, following a brief spell on the keg stuff.

HYDES' 49er

On Friday 11th November, Hydes' 49th tied house, the Windmill at Windmill Hill, Runcorn, opened its doors to the drinking public for the first time. It was obviously of interest to the locals as most of the population of Runcorn appeared to be trying to get in during the course of the evening.

The pub has a comfortable lounge bar on two levels with separate drinking areas, a separate games room (carpeted, no less) and a smart family room. Cask mild and bitter is 78p and 82p respectively. Food is available at lunchtimes and in the evening if demand is sufficient.

PRESTWICH POINTS

The Royal Oak (Hydes) on Whittaker Lane, just off Bury Old Road, has had the painters and decorators in, just in time for Christmas. It's the best pint of Hydes for miles around and the train practically takes you to the front door (BR Heaton Park).

The St Margarets on Bury Old Road, a keg shop for donkey's years, recently acquired a handpump which sometimes dispenses Stones cask bitter, of variable quality.

Other contributors to this issue: Brian Gleave, Stewart Revell, Peter Wadsworth, Paul Roberts, Keith Egerton, Glenn Worth, Mick Rottenbury, Mike Robinson, Janet Prescott



ASIAN CORNER

THE SANAM

145-151 Wilmslow Rd, Rusholme

Practically every Manchester curry enthusiast must have

heard of Rusholme. The number of establishments on Wilmslow Road seems to have quadrupled over recent years, to such an extent that the place is fair bustling with activity every night of the week.

Five years ago every other restaurant along Wilmslow Road appeared to be a Small Sanam Sweet Centre. Now, it seems, they have decided to concentrate on this large one, a fairly plush affair that even has a balcony. Don't let the posh interior put you off, however; the Sanam's prices are quite reasonable.

All the standard Indian curries are available, plus quite a few rare and unusual dishes, including Lamb's Brain and Liver and Kidney Tikka. Indeed, it seems that the only organ not available is the willy. Most of the main courses on the menu tend to be around the £3.40 mark, which includes a choice of either rice, two chapattis or one nan bread.

We started with Onion and Potato Bhajias at 60p a throw. These were nice and spicy and a welcome change from the usual all-onion variety.

I must mention the papadoms at this point, as we were actually given individual plates to eat these from. Most unusual; I always thought you simply smashed them over the head of the person sitting opposite.

For our main courses we decided on the Palak Gosht (lamb with spinach) and the more usual Rogan Josh. The third member of our group opted for one of the specials, the Sanam Mix, this being an impressive combination of Tandoori Chicken, Meat and Chicken Tikka, Sheek and Shami Kebabs plus rice and a choice of curry sauce, all for £4.50.

Both the lamb curries proved to be gastronomic delights, being well spiced and with an adequate covering of orange oil (always a good sign!). The chapattis were excellent, being of the thick and doughy variety and consequently very substantial. The Sanam Mix also received the thumbs-up, though you may be overfaced by it if you have a starter as well.

So, all in all, the Sanam gets a four star rating and has to be the reference by which other restaurants should be judged.

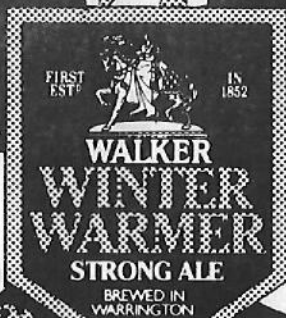
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LETTERS



THE GREAT DEBATE - CAMRA PUB DESIGN AWARDS

GCSE Comprehension Test: Compare and contrast these two letters. What inferences can you draw about the personalities and lifestyles of the contributors? Which one has a wooden leg and who breeds budgies?

A - Roger Hall's customary engagement with theatrical hyperbole won't have been in vain if his piece (WD Nov) succeeds in stimulating the conceptual/ideological debate within and beyond CAMRA on the place of "design" within the equation of "pubability" or "quality of pubness".

More power to Roger's cerebral cavities for this, but he shouldn't assume Pub Preservation Group has been left entirely unaware of the dangers of wholesale espousal of "design", when that concept is articulated as part of the fashionable ideology of lifestyles and segmented marketing, now projected in a great proportion of brewerspeak, to colonise the natives at the level of popular experience and social identity. In pointing-up the one-dimensionalism of admass manipulative packaged culture which many brewery profit-screwers now deploy as standard "plugging-in" ideological tools, Hall is echoing my own (far from original) warnings in a recent memo to Pub Preservation Group.

Others have very recently reiterated the fundamental position that pubs for people cannot be "designed" into existence. This, in my view, is a basic (and non-negotiable) truth - a tool, perhaps, with which to begin an ideological fight-back, which I hope can now take place.

B I have just received an entry form for something called the "Pub Design Awards 1988", with which it appears that CAMRA is associated. The form also refers in smaller print to "CAMRA Pub Awards 1987", and I therefore assume that this document refers to something once indeed known as the CAMRA Pub Awards.

Has someone gone off their rocker? What on earth is CAMRA doing giving Design Awards? Is "design" not the very antithesis of everything that CAMRA thinks makes a good pub? Have we not always said that good pubs happen, they are not created by design? How on earth can the Joe Goodwin Award ever be givento something that has been "designed"?

Words absolutely fail me, and I can only believe that I was right in

resigning from PPG when I did. I wish the group every success in drawing the nation's attention to triumphs of the designer's art, and must rejoice that I am no longer part of this arse-licking roadshow.

MARK ADDY

Sir - On Friday 21st October a colleague and I were invited to meet some workmates for an after-work drink at 5.30pm in the Mark Addy, near Salford Station. On arriving, we managed to get to the bar after about ten minutes' wait. My colleague was then approached by a barmaid and told that he and another young man were "unacceptable" and would not be served. Upon politely requesting the reason for this, no reply was forthcoming. My friend was wearing tweed trousers, brown leather shoes, shirt, tie and Barbour-type waxed cotton jacket. The other refused man was similarly dressed but with no jacket.

We informed our friends of this judgement and left to spend our money elsewhere. We later found out, some more people having arrived after we left, that the same ruling was made on them (all males). The women in the group had then purchased pints on their behalf.

Whilst they were drinking these pints, they were approached by the barmaid and told to finish their drinks and leave as they looked "horrible". Please note that these events took place at teatime, nowhere near the traditional "dressing-up-to-go-out" time.

I have also written to the Good Pub Guide, in which this pub is featured, asking that it should be removed from future prints due to the unreasonable attitude of the staff.

Sue Barker

PUB DESIGN AWARDS AGAIN

Sir - I go along with most of Roger Hall's argument about pub design in last month's WD. Layout, architectural style and decorative finish obviously matter, but they are only part of the formula for a successful pub. The trouble with award schemes is that it is so easy to focus on the discernible architectural features of a pub and so difficult to pin down or agree on the essential but subjective qualities such as "atmosphere", "character" and "conviviality".

I think new pub awards are valid because the design qualities are the only ones at the start and the way the pub matures depends, to a large extent, on the integrity of the original design.

If you must have awards for "preservation" or "conservation", how about an award for not doing something to a pub? For keeping a pub's essential style intact over a long period without allowing it to become too tatty or uncomfortable. This is obviously more difficult for some pubs where the style and standards of comfort were suited to

another age and are not easily adapted, but it has been achieved very successfully at the Arden Arms, Stockport; Howcroft, Bolton; Mawson, Brunswick, and Peveril of the Peak, City Centre.

How about another award for traditional pubs which have a problem of space or access or are simply run down and yet manage to overcome the problem without losing their identity in the process? Examples are the White Horse, Eccles (vault enlarged; Old House at Home, Blackley (general upgrading), and Black Friar, Salford (see elsewhere in this issue).

There are a couple of essential guidelines to avoid the trap of being overwhelmed by architectural considerations. Only consider pubs which set out to appeal to all sections of the local community and where beer sales are the most important activity. (This might seem obvious now, but many brewery industry strategists are aiming to reverse the situation.)

From the publicity point of view it would be useful also to have booby prizes such as the pub desecration award (Football, Swinton; Clarence, Ramsbottom).

There must be many more examples of deserving and undeserving pubs. Let's have some suggestions/nominations and perhaps we can feature them in an exhibition at the Great North Western Beer Festival to be held in Bolton next April, where the Festival theme will be "Pub Conservation".

Peter Barnes

OPEN ALL HOURS

Although most pubs in Trafford have taken advantage of the extended licensing hours to some extent, particularly on Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays, few are actually open for all the permitted hours. One is the Toll Gate, opposite Old Trafford Station at the junction of Talbot Road and Seymour Grove. Licensees Ian and Sue Adams took over as managers of this thriving Banks's pub at the end of March this year, coming from the Oddfellows Hall in Wolverhampton. They have continued to build up trade to the current weekly turnover of seven hogsheads of Banks's bitter, two and a half barrels of Hansons Black Country Bitter and three kils of mild (as well as five barrels of Harp and five kegs of Stella).

Full lunches are available every lunchtime and the Christmas menu begins on December 5th - booking required.

Finally, even though United's influence on Division One is minimal, their fans still cause pubs to close for part of Saturday afternoons when they are at home, providing the only exception to the Toll Gate's "open all hours" policy!

RUPERT'S PAGE



As Campaign members slide into senility, their behaviour, so it seems, becomes more and more bizarre. Not since the days of Royal Hall's sartorial ejection by Angstrom Barmley have campaigners actually been removed from licensed premises. Alas no longer true! Rumpleshirtscream, down whose trousers the buxom

Ms von Trapp once poured a pint of foaming ale, is now persona non grata in a certain East Grotley tavern. Returning from an imbibing jaunt to Tykeley, the Snoot Magna and Snobley members called in at the Iron Horsetrough at 10.59 and a bit. At ten past chucking out time, our stentorian hero spied mine host pouring himself a pint and demanded one for his own consumption. Still protesting loudly, he was last seen being carried out of the hostelry...

Even stranger stories were to be heard at the launch of the amber nectar supper's vademecum where the lovesome Ms Ossenpfeffer was savaged by mine hosts for crass editorship. Roddy Kepple, it seems, has recently returned from Brumley where milk float races and Ugandan discussions were the order of the day. This has not prevented him from turning up on tours round Slumley Parva to re-establish his image and losing his monogrammed cravat to the delectable Hattie Nightingale, who used the occasion of the vademecum launch to announce the celebration of her silver bonk.

Her family has a strange way of celebrating these things - no cakes or party hats for them - what kind of debt, one wonders, is owed to a Nightingale? Black sheep of the family, Squiffy, after securing his plus fours with bicycle clips and filling them with liquid Number Twos, was found in the early hours of the morning on the roof of the Nighingale family residence besmearing the walls with this noxious slurry. He was soon rushed back to the funny farm, but perhaps in the actions of the deranged there lies some eternal truth. Fortunately the Nightingales don't live in Berkeley Square.

If Hattie still puts herself forward as a serious contender to step into the shoes of Seamus Spud's buddy Red Max when he finally hangs up his duvet, then this kind of behaviour must surely be curtailed. One doesn't find serious-minded folk from other parts of the Princedom allowing themselves to be compromised in this manner. After all, you wouldn't find Gerald Nodding doing anything to the detriment of his rocket-like promotion prospects.



WALKERS WINTER WARMER

Peter Walker's extra strong seasonal ale went on sale in 37 outlets on 14th November. The beer sells at 55p per half.

Most of the pubs are in and around Merseyside; nearer to home are:

Ainsworth Arms, Halliwell Road, Bolton. Market, Brackley Street, Farnworth. Sharman Arms, Halliwell Road, Bolton. Raven, Wallgate, Wigan. Springfield, Springfield Road, Wigan



Branch Diary

WIGAN

Weds 7 Dec 8.30, Branch Meeting, Tudor House Hotel, New Market Street, Wigan (There may be a guest beer on.)

Tues 20 Dec 8pm, "There-but-for-the-grace-of-God-goes-John Elliott" night/Xmas Social at the Charles Dickens Hotel, Dicconson Street, Wigan. Beers by Tetley, Theakstons and Youngers (+ guest beer?)

Fri 30 Dec, Manchester Pub Crawl. Commence Beer House, Angel Street, 7.30
Contact Brian Gleave, Atherton 876200 (w), Atherton 892965 (h)

SOUTH EAST LANCs

Wed 7 Dec 8pm, Joint branch meeting with North Manchester at the Boundary Stone, Mosley Common

Sat 10 Dec, Xmas Shopping Social. Start Kendals 11.30am. 12.30 Sinclairs; 12.45 M&S; 1.45 Harp & Shamrock; 2.15 Beer House.

Thur 22 Dec, Xmas Curry/Crawl. Start Mort Arms, Tyldesley, 7.30pm

Mon 9 Jan, New Year Branch Meeting - Party hats must be worn! Church Inn, Louton, 8pm
Contact Steven Prescott 0942 719037 (h), 0925 834693 (w)

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 7 Dec, Social with SE Lancs, Boundary Stone, Mosley Common, 8pm

Wed 14 Dec, Regional Meeting, Beer House, 8pm

Wed 21 Dec, Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford, 8pm

Wed 28 Dec, Swinton A6 crawl: Morning Star 7pm, Foresters Arms 8pm

Wed 4 Jan, Salford. Tallow Tub 7pm, Black Friar 8pm

Contact Roger Hall 740 7937

ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

2/3 Dec BURY BEER FESTIVAL - details as per last month's WD/What's Brewing

Tues 6 Dec, Branch Xmas Social, 8pm, Halfway House, Rochdale Rd, Royton. All welcome

Sat 17 Dec, Xmas train trip to Liverpool for afternoon session. Depart approx 11am.
Ring for further details.

Contact: B Lee 0706 824407 (h)

BOLTON

Tues 13 Dec, Branch Meeting, Howcroft Inn, Pool Street, off Vernon Street

Contact: Dave Fleming, Bolton 389918 (h)

Following the Bolton Branch AGM there is a slightly new look to the committee:

Chairman: Dave Fleming. Secretary: Barbara Kerks. Treasurer: Des Nogalski. Membership Secretary: Dave Tong. Other Committee Members: Don Chattwood, Warwick Green, Bert Kerks, Steve Rishton, Joe Turner.

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Mon: 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00

Tues: 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00

Weds: 12.00-4.00 6.00-11.00

Thur: 12.00-4.00 6.00-11.00

Fri: 12.00-11.00

Sat 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00

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chilli and curry.**

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