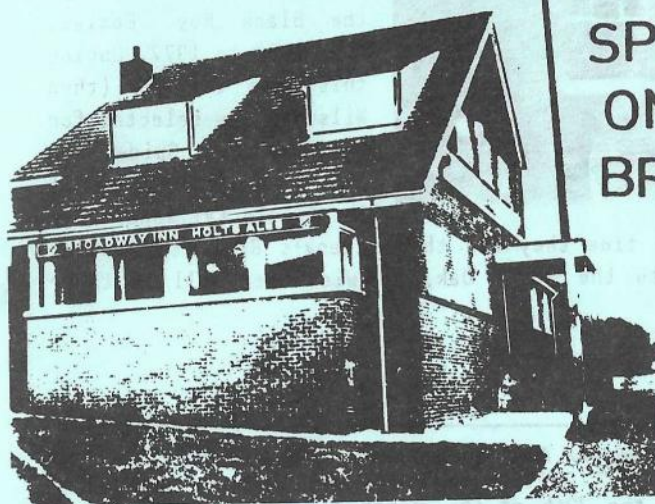


WHAT'S DOING

FEB
1989



THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE



SPOTLIGHT ON BROADWAY

Changes in the Trafford Road/Eccles New Road/Regent Road area of Salford have meant the loss of many pubs - Salisbury, Trafford, Clowes, Grove, Osborne, Star, not to mention all those on Cross Lane. Only one was rebuilt - Holts' Broadway. Salford Docks are now the posh Salford Quays and there have been numerous industrial developments along Eccles New Road.

With an eye to the new potential, Holts are improving the Broadway and extending its catering facilities. An unused bottle store will be converted into a new kitchen and licensee Chris Smalley will be head chef (he is a former chef of De La Salle College, Middleton). We are assured that the Broadway will not be turned into a restaurant!

ROYAL OAK

For many years the Royal Oak, Boothstown, run by Don and Marian Fraser, has featured in the Good Beer Guide. It is sad to record that in the first week of January the pub was the scene of a violent attack and close on £400 was taken. This latest incident proved too much for Don and Marian, who have given notice to Wilsons/Websters. They hope to leave in two or three months time.



Their first pub, in 1954, was the Wellington in Eccles (Holts). They kept the Black Boy, Eccles, from 1962 to 1977. During this time the pub (then Wilsons) was selected for the Good Beer Guide. For four years they were at the Castle (Wilsons) near

Rochdale, during which time they won the brewery's Best Kept Cellar Award, before moving to the Royal Oak. We wish them well in their retirement.

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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BAY HORSE

After the Red Lion in Prestwich and the Eagle & Child in Whitefield, Holts have done up the Bay Horse, Unsworth. The bar has been rearranged and handpumps have made a welcome return. The redecoration is very nice, and new fixed seating and carpets (even in the vault!) have been installed. Licensees Ken and Lilian have been at the Bay Horse since April last year, having come from the Golden Lion in Blackley; before that they had the Derby Brewery Arms.

It appears that Holts' policy is to give priority to their managed houses, as some of their local tenanted pubs are in varying states of disrepair.

WE COUNTED THEM OUT

Many of the gentrified, open-plan pubs in Salford's leafier suburbs have recently fallen victim to the novel phenomenon of lager lout riots. So far there's been trouble at the Boundary Stone, the Red Lion, the Moorside Farm and the Greyhound. At the Cock, the landlord and his two tuxedoed heavies have so far managed to avoid any brouhahas; perhaps having a bouncer with an earring does the trick. One other thing remarkable at the Cock is the massive font which squirts out lager and, wait for it, Boddies mild. Can it be that this is, perish the thought, brewery conditioned beer from Strangeways? We should be told.

BURTONWOOD

Burtonwood Brewery have purchased 21 pubs from Mansfield Brewery in what is said to be the first phase of a major push to acquire pubs east of the Pennines. The pubs are scattered through Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Notts and the majority (18 or 19) will sell real ale. This will spread even further Burtonwood's already stretched-out estate of some 300 pubs. All the acquisitions will be managed, whereas only 10% of the existing houses are managed.

Cask Top Hat?

There have been rumours for ten years about the launch of a cask version of Top Hat, Burtonwood's premium keg beer (og 1048). The keg product is held in high esteem by drinkers in the North West and it is a well established brand. A cask version might be expected to sell well in selected outlets if it was given the marketing support recently received by Strait (a keg-only low alcohol bitter).

JBA Premium didn't receive much promotion and suffered from being too similar to the bitter - it was withdrawn last year. With the much-

loved light mild ceasing production several years ago, Burtonwood's cask beer range consists of just mild and best bitter. The winter ale, Brewers Reserve, did not appear last year. Let's hope that 1989 shows a re-commitment to cask beer with the appearance of Top Hat in cask form. It would sell well in the expanding real ale free house market, and on the well established guest beer circuit.

HIGHER IRLAM NEWS

Two handpumps have appeared at Sports to dispense Wilsons bitter. The unsubstantiated rumour department reckons that this somewhat jaded emporium will revert back to a pub later this year.

Handpumped Trophy bitter has appeared at the Nags Head, complementing Chesters mild and bitter. Unfortunately the pub has had its vault removed, but there are now facilities for darts and dominoes, together with a separate pool area.

Rumours that the Boathouse is on the "Henry's Table" menu have sent shudders through the community. However, no immediate changes are envisaged in this direction and we can breathe again, for the time being.



MOORHOUSE'S

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DRAUGHT BITTER
The Prize-Winning Pint!



FROM BARGEE TO BHAJEE

Winton and Monton were the scene of North Manchester CAMRA's New Year Crawl and Curry afternoon.

At the Egerton we were surprised to learn that the licensee had just left and there were rumours of alterations. Fortunately the handpumped Boddies mild (73p) and bitter (77p) were up to their usual standard.

In the shadow of the M602 is Holts' Ellesmere, which just escaped demolition for the motorway. Mild (68p) and bitter (71p) are served by electric pump.



The old Brown Cow did not escape and a modern replacement now stands on the other side of the motorway. Handpumped Robinsons best mild (73p) and best bitter (78p) complement the powerful Old Tom (£1.20) from a small barrel on the bar. The uncommon ordinary bitter was once also sold here but has now gone.



At the other end of Parrin Lane, the Bridgewater Canal abruptly changes direction; here the builders decided to take it across the Irwell at Barton. Here also is Monton's newest public house, according to the sign. However, much knocking and rattling of the locked door of the Bargee brought

forth a young man who said the licence had been refused the previous day. They are going to try again; meanwhile you must have a meal if you want to sample the Robinsons and Hartleys.

The Bluebell on Monton Green has regained its old name but the inside is still plush, with much emphasis on food. Grand Met's "national brand" policy has restricted the choice of real ale to the incredibly bland Yorkshire bitter which nobody tried, and Ruddles Best. This is a tastier pint, but for a strength of only 1037 the 94p price seems exorbitant.

Best news of the day was the Drop Inn. This former free house was bought by John Smiths, who at the time offered only one real ale - bitter. This is still available at 80p but other handpumps supply Magnet (84p), a smooth, malty premium bitter of strength about 1040, and Courage Directors. This excellent beer, with a gravity of 1046, was the same price (94p) as the much weaker Ruddles up the road.

Our final watering hole was Holts' Good Beer Guide pub, the Park. Mild (67p) and bitter (70p) were enjoyed in the comfortable snug with its Bridgewater Canal theme. Close by is the Passage to India. Formerly a Co-op and lately a furniture store, this smartly-appointed Indian Restaurant offers a wide range of dishes. Some of the more insatiable members were seen drinking lager in here and later re-entering the Park. Whether they made it all the way back to the Egerton isn't known!

Pete Cash

BEER PRICES DOWN!

That's the happy news for regulars at the Legh Arms, the Holts GBG-listed pub in Sale Moor. On January 5th it changed from a tenancy to a managed house as Terry and June Slater took over the licence. Bitter and mild were reduced by 2p a pint to 70p and 67p, while Holtenbräu received a massive cut of 23p! Did anyone really drink it before at £1 a pint?

For a house with the potential of the Legh, it is not surprising that a fairly major refurbishment is in prospect and I am assured that this will be in keeping with the present traditional layout. At the time of writing, handpumps were expected "at the earliest opportunity" and the pub was open for the full number of permitted hours each day.

Mick Rottenbury

To the Editor:

375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27

LETTERS



BEER TO SUIT YOUR PALLET?

Sir - If you have ever wondered where all those much-sought-after used pallets went to, then look no further than the refurbished Bridge in Sale. (See "Trafford & Hulme News", this issue.)

The liberal use of rough-cut, unplanned packing case timbers gives the pub the appearance of a log cabin following a hurricane. The beers, Boddies mild, bitter and Higsons bitter remain on electric pump, but at 87p (lounge) the bitters are definitely not for the backwoodsman.

Steve Lawton

ADAMS & EVE

Sir - I have just read Katherine Adams' article on women and the pub in the 1898 Good Beer Guide. Oh, dear! No doubt she is younger and prettier than I am, but to say that a woman alone in a pub is automatically regarded as "a scarlet woman or a pint-swilling harriidan" says more about her anxieties than about the British male drinker. Frankly, most of them wouldn't even notice - and quite right too.

Women feel nervous about going into pubs alone because we've been brought up to think we ought to be - just as we've been told other fictions, for example that we are naturally good at cleaning lavatories and men at cleaning cars. The truth is that most of us can do most things when we need to; it's just that we're scared of the unfamiliar. As anyone - male or female - who's had to manage on their own can tell you, it's amazing what you can accomplish when you try. A simple remedy for embarrassment is to take something to read. That's what men do - or hadn't she noticed?

If you don't like curry, don't eat in Indian restaurants. If you don't like spit & sawdust, don't go into that kind of vault. If you're prepared to accept the status quo and not try to change it, you will usually be accepted. If I go into a traditional vault, I don't expect the men there to moderate their language. If I take my mother-in-law into a lounge, I do. It's a matter of common sense and has more to do with age and class differences than sex. I was once asked politely - after the change in the law - not to go into a vault because the elderly male regulars would be upset. I complied, willingly. It was their pub and they would have felt constrained by my presence. Why

should I spoil their pleasure? Had they been under 45, I might have felt differently and expected them to know better. In any case, the problem of language will soon disappear since many 15-year-olds, boys and girls, use the word "fucking" as frequently as a CAMRA member says "beer". A regrettable decline into inarticulacy, no doubt, but nothing to do with sex, despite the derivation of the word.

The implication that lone women will be molested I reject. It happens occasionally, but then it happens in the street. If a cold stare isn't enough, then a nice, clear request to "Please leave me alone" / "Go away" / "Bugger off", depending on the locality, will usually be enough to turn the rest of the pub against him. There are still plenty of nice men around willing to help a lady in distress.

One remaining difficulty is that bar staff tend not to see a woman waiting to order because they assume she's with the man standing next to her. I confess to a dislike for buying last orders for this reason. Holding a £5 note helps - it makes them think you're buying a reasonable round. (Not £10 in Manchester - then they think you're going to want a lot of change.) The other is ladies' glasses - and here I agree with Ms Adams. They're horrid!

I suspect that the root of Ms Adams' resentment lies in a reluctance to accept that quite a lot of men do enjoy being in a purely male group on occasions, while quite a lot of women prefer mixed company or that of a single friend and dread being trapped in a "ladies' room" or into a "night out with the girls". I don't know the answer to that one - it's just a fact of life!

Sue Richardson

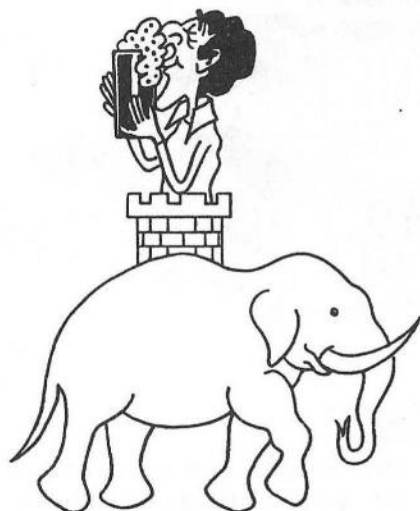
COCK HOTEL

Sir - "Boddies get it Wrong" (Your headline, January WD) could not be truer: sad after December's plaudits regarding the revamp at the Black Friar, Salford.

Yes, the promised "Locals' Bar" has failed to materialise. What there is is an adjunct to the main bar, in no way separate as Boddingtons stated it would be. The youthful clientele crowd in to drink strange concoctions, there is a glaring lack of games facilities - no provision at all for a dart board - despite earlier promises and assurances to magistrates in order to sway locals and thus get necessary permission. As a bijou, art nouveau cocktail lounge I must allow that the conversion is excellent. As an up-to-date replacement for the vault, it gets a definite "thumbs down". Nobody expected, or even wanted, a chauvinistic, spit-and-sawdust male domain, but what

THE THIRD GREAT NORTH WESTERN BEER FESTIVAL

Last year over 5,000 people attended the beer festival at Bolton Sports and exhibition centre. This year it is presented as the GREAT NORTH WESTERN FESTIVAL because the venue has the capacity to accommodate twice or three times that number of visitors over the five day



period. This year, instead of sharing the responsibility with the local council, the Greater Manchester branches of CAMRA are running the festival themselves and aim to make it bigger and better than ever. The festival theme will be "Conservation of the Traditional British Pub" and this will be featured in an exhibition at the Centre.

The Sports and Exhibition Centre is in Silverwell Street (off Bradshawgate), five minutes from the BR station. 120 real ales and ciders will be on sale. Lunchtime sessions will be 12 noon to 4.00pm; evening sessions 6.00pm to 11.00pm.

Admission prices:

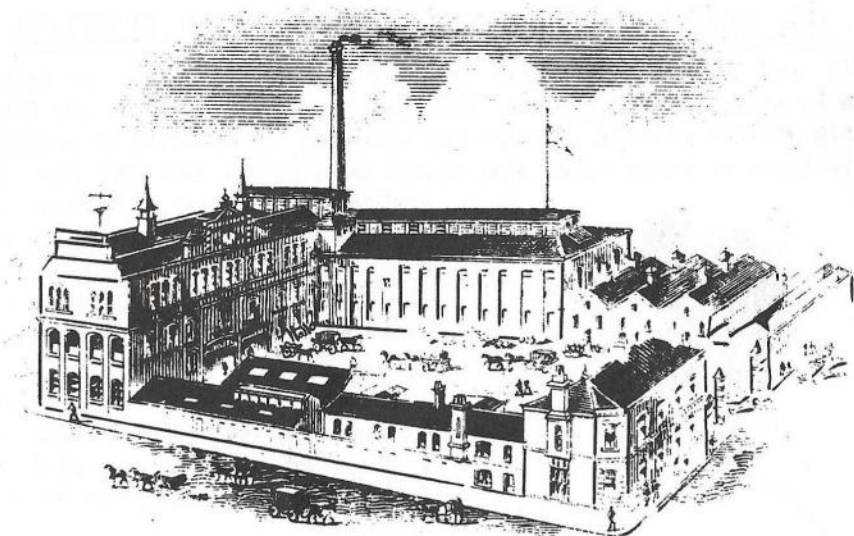
| | <u>Lunchtime</u> | <u>Evening Before 7.00pm</u> | <u>Evening After 7.00pm</u> |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL | - | FREE | FREE |
| THURSDAY 13 APRIL | FREE | 50p | £1.00 |
| FRIDAY 14 APRIL | 50p | £1.00 | £1.50 |
| SATURDAY 15 APRIL | £1.00 | £1.00 | £1.50 |
| SUNDAY 16 APRIL | FREE | - | - |

Free admission to CAMRA members (you can join at the entrance).

Parties of 12 or more which book in advance are eligible for a 50p per person reduction at any paying session. For pre-booking and other enquiries, telephone 061 789 2323.

HOLTS IN ROCHDALE

Holts' continued pressure on their tenants to hold down beer prices has resulted in both of Rochdale's "Joey's" houses losing their licensees. The Cross Yates and the Navigation are due to change hands yet again. Expect the pubs to go managed in line with present brewery policy.



HYDES BREWERY

On 11th January far more people than were invited went on a tour of Hydes Brewery in Moss Side. This was not entirely to the grumbling of Christopher Hyde, our guide and host, who was dressed in a torn white coat like an impecunious ice cream man. Nevertheless, he was kind enough to inform and entertain the party of hard core regulars and hangers-on who'd crawled out of the woodwork.

The brewery dates back to 1861 and was extended in 1952. Although some of the original equipment is still in use, there has been a considerable investment in new stainless steel vessels and automated cleaning equipment, making for a pleasant blend of tradition and efficiency. Mr Hyde emphasised that his brewery was one of the few which brewed only from water, malt, yeast and hops. Sugar was used only for secondary fermentation and caramel for colour. Mr Hyde suggested that CAMRA might do better by re-emphasising the importance of ingredients rather than the tangential activities in which it had recently become involved.

All the malt for all brews is the same with a high nitrogen content. Hops are from Hereford, Worcester and Yugoslavia. Most of the production goes through the modern stainless steel kettles and fermenting vessels but the old wooden vats are brought into use at Christmas for the 4X. Town's water is used for producing beer, although the brewery



has been foisted on the Worsley drinking public (with a 10p per pint increase, don't forget) is nothing short of a con job.

Fortunately, the ex-locals - almost to a man and a woman - are having none of it. The "Locals' Bar" rapidly became known as the "Jokels' Bar" when the serious lunch-time crowd moved their allegiance to the White Horse, despite the distance. The considerable evening crowd have voted with their feet and joined the Ellesmere Bowling, Tennis & Croquet and Worsley Cricket Club next door. This excellent, well-run club has made everybody most welcome. With Ihwaites on draught, at 78p per pint, and an exciting extension

planned (with the probable provision of real ale), what more could one ask?

All this begs the question: "Do Boddingtons really care?" With a rumoured 30-odd other pubs to share the same fate as the Cock, the answer would appear to be an emphatic "No!" Possibly, eventually, the brewery will come to realise that bums-on-seats-in-restaurants is not the be all and end all of business. (Cases in point are the highly successful Holts pubs and the proliferation of the very good Banks's establishments in the North West.)

In closing, we sadder and wiser "Cock Fighters" would urge all Boddingtons drinkers to be ever vigilant regarding any proposals for their local. Once planning permission is given for alterations to take place, any similarity between original plans and the final changes can, as we have witnessed, be purely coincidental.

Alan Stewart, Chairman, Worsley Cock Fighters

BUSY BODDIES

Sir - Are Boddingtons too busy to bother with their customers these days? On a recent short trip from America, my mission was to buy a Boddies tee shirt to take back to a fan in the States. It nearly proved impossible! I rang the brewery and explained the situation, to be told abruptly that none of the pubs would have any, the brewery had no stock and no plans to produce more. In other words, "Buzz off!"

I nearly gave up but at the last minute decided to try the "brewery

tap", the Brewers Arms. They were just closing, but trainee landlord Steve was more than helpful. Not only did he ring the Old Garratt to find out if they still had a stock, but gave me a lift down there in his car. As a result, I was able to take back my tee shirt, a pack of cards and one or two other items as well. Tony, the licensee of the Old Garratt, said he thought there were about ten pubs selling them. Many thanks to both Tony and Steve - I'll certainly revisit their pubs next time I come home. Pity the brewery staff aren't as courteous and well informed as their landlords.

Frank Heaton

TAFFY APPLE (2)

Sir - What a shame that your reference (WD January) to the Apple & Pear Products Liaison Executive (don't blame me for the acronym!) was as sour as a cooking apple, and about as much use to the drinkers as a pint of Dry Blackthorn! As it happens, there's plenty of interest in real cider locally - to my personal knowledge, it is sought out by numerous Greater Manchester CAMRA activists, while the evidence of local beer festivals, where good cider and perry are a sure-fire sell-out, indicates a substantial suppressed demand.

APPLE, which is a formally-constituted specialist committee of the Campaign for Real Ale, aims to serve actual and potential drinkers of traditional cider and perry by broadening the appreciation and availability of these drinks. I very much hope that on more mature reflection you will agree this is an aim which a CAMRA publication should support, not snipe at.

Rhys P Jones

BODDINGTONS GO FOR THE WILTON

The Wilton Hotel, Manchester Old Road, Rhodes, is going to be Boddies' next "Henry's Table". This beautiful Victorian pub is now in the hands of those responsible for the "Cock-up" in Worsley. The Wilton is a huge building, with car park and large gardens - Boddingtons will have a field day with this one. Apparently they were considering the Three Arrows down the road for the butchery job, but instead the axe has fallen on the Wilton.

What is going to happen to the four darts teams, two football teams, the table tennis team and the two bowling teams? The vault contains dozens of trophies testifying to the success of the Wilton. It is a friendly pub, with customers who have been loyal for donkeys' years. The regulars are not happy, and who can blame them? Their boozer, which sells butties and hot pot, is about to become a restaurant selling beer. Another fine old pub is about to have its heart ripped out.

does have its own borehole. Only gypsum is used to treat the water. Most of the production is racked into barrels which are dry hopped with two pellets.

Hydes have 49 pubs, most of which are fairly close to the brewery and in suburban areas. Because of this and because the beers are reasonably priced, Mr Hyde felt that they had not suffered from declining beer sales as other breweries had. Hydes brew their own lager - Amboss - using the same ingredients as the beers, and they also keg Stella Artois, which is sold in their pubs.

A new generation of Hydes is already employed by the brewery and, as over 50% of the shares are in family hands, the future seems relatively secured, barring a Ruddell-type deal, of course. We were given the impression of an efficient, friendly, small brewery more than holding its own in a world dominated by the big boys. Christopher Hyde has our thanks for his generosity and patience and all those who visited will no doubt wish Hydes every success in the future.

Roger Hall

NEW BEER GUIDE

The Bolton branch of CAMRA launches its guide to real amber nectar in the Bolton area on 1st February. Entitled "Beer in Bolton", the book is a comprehensive survey of the 150 or so pubs in Bolton Metro - plus a few borderline cases - which serve real ale. In addition to the main text there are articles on lager, the old breweries of Bolton, dress restrictions in pubs and more besides.

Beer in Bolton costs just £1.50 from local bookshops, or send a cheque or postal order made payable to "CAMRA BOLTON BRANCH" to Dave Tong, 17 Belmont Road, Bolton, Lancs.

SALFORD ALE

The cask bitter in the Tallow Tub didn't last very long. The ink was hardly dry on January's What's Doing when it was withdrawn owing to poor sales. The beer didn't have much chance. Over the road the range of beers at the Rovers Return (formerly Lord Nelson) has been reduced to Websters Yorkshire Bitter and Choice. The Globe off Blackfriars Road has recently become a Lees house but the quality of the mild leaves much to be desired. The Black Friar sells Higsons mild and Boddies bitter, whilst the range at the King Billy on Springfield Lane has been reduced to Boddies bitter on handpump and electrically dispensed Banks's mild. The Kings Arms on Bloom Street is still closed but should be reopening shortly.

HARROWING TIME?

Plans for the Farmers Arms in Swinton involve the retention and enlarging of the vault, the incorporation of the living quarters into the back lounge and the moving of the ladies toilet entrance to near the gents. The pub will still have three distinct rooms and a conservatory where the present "beer garden" is. Unfortunately the front door, which is inches from the road, will have to be moved round the side. As nobody's been run over by either horse or car for the last 150 years it does seem a bit unnecessary, but there we go. With a bit of luck the Farmers, which certainly needs upgrading, may end up being improved in much the same way as the Black Friar, rather than destroyed like the Cock.



HOLTS CORNER

Good news for Holts shareholders – the share price has passed the £12 mark for the first time. Recent quotes have been around the £12 1/16 level. Those who were wise (and rich) enough to buy ten years ago at about £3.50 per share have seen their investment grow steadily over the years.

The Junction at Cheadle Hulme was closed down just after Christmas and may not reopen until the extensions are built (see previous WDs). Fisticuffs are thought to be the cause of the shutdown.

One Holts pub still remains a problem for the brewery. This is the Apollo on Heywood Street, Cheetham, Manchester 8. Trying to get someone to run this place is proving to be more than a little difficult, no doubt because of its location.

WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

First impressions are lasting impressions, as they say. Mention the name "Wigan" to anyone and they immediately conjure up images of cloth caps, cobbled streets...and perhaps seedy old boozers. In fact, Wigan probably has fewer traditional alehouses (keg or otherwise) than anywhere else in the country. A year ago I took a couple of friends to the **ROBIN HOOD** in Oldham and they thought they'd died and gone to heaven!



Anyway, Wigan's meagre contribution to last year's "Vintage Pubs" guide has been reduced still further by the closure of the **RAVEN HOTEL**, Wallgate. The pub is to be gutted - that goes for the fine old bar, too - and transformed into a kids' pub, so my sources tell me. Ironically, the Raven was just getting back on its feet again after a legion of relief managers. The beer has improved considerably and the pub was usually so full that it was difficult to notice that all it needed was a decent wallpapering. Whatever are Peter Walker playing at?

At the other side of town, the **MILLSTONE**, Wigan Lane, closed for renovation and extension in early January, as expected. This fine Thwaites pub is not to suffer the same fate as the Raven, I understand, and should be open again before too long.

As for the town centre pubs still closed, Burtonwood have promised a tasteful job on **RAFFLES**, Millgate, in-

cluding a change of name (what, again?!). Parts of this pub have a preservation order on them, so the magnificent bar should be pretty safe. The news is not so good, alas, for the half-dozen or so people who used to frequent the **WHITE HORSE** on Standishgate. It looks extremely unlikely that Burtonwood will retain the licence for what is arguably the oldest pub in Wigan. The cynic in me predicts we'll have another shoe shop in town before long.

Other refurbishments are at the SIR CHARLES NAPIER, High Street, Golborne. In brief, the lounge of this Walkers house is to become the vault, and vice versa. Some minor repairs will have to be made on the OLD DOG, Alma Hill, Up Holland, as a car ran into the front of it. I suspect it was a kamikaze Davenports employee. The feared desecration of the HOLT ARMS, Crank Road, Billinge, isn't going to be as bad as all that. The "Foot" is not going to be turned into a managed house, so Burtonwood can't get up to much, but the roofing has definitely seen better days. Nevertheless, the brewery is promising something sensible.

The ROCK HOTEL (more recently the ROCK ROCK CAFE), Warrington Road, Lower Ince, has reopened as MADISONS. The ale remains Matthew Brown. That's all you need to know.

Tetley continue to surprise with their cask conversions, the latest being the PLATT BRIDGE INN, Walthew Lane, Platt Bridge. The ale is dispensed through those keggish illuminated boxes, but on a recent visit it was "real" enough.

Orrell news now, and Ruddles County is no longer on sale at the ABBEY LAKES, Orrell Road...or anywhere else in the Metro, so far as I know. The other beers are Wilsons mild, bitter and Websters Yorkshire bland. Meanwhile, the CHERRY TREE (Greenalls), City Road, was recently reported selling cask mild and keg bitter. There's a novelty!

A brief word on Christmas ales. GEM'S on Upper Dicconson Street, Wigan, was selling Wethereds Winter Royal (what a surprise!) for a brief period, while over the road the CHARLES DICKENS resurrected the Theakstons Old Peculier. Hydes Old Ale was selling at the HALF MOON, Elliot Street, Tyldesley.

This month's column ends with a prediction for 'eighty-nine, as a spy assures me that the cask conversion of the JOHN BULL CHOPHOUSE, the Wiend, Wigan, is almost upon us. Watch this space...

TA TA TAYLORS

The popular Taylors beers will soon disappear from the Duke of York, Eccles. Whitbread have decided that the pub's range of beers should be restricted to their own products.

Other contributors to this issue: Peter Barnes, Stewart Revell, Brian Gleave, Bill Collier, Des Nogalski, Glenn Worth, Keith Egerton

RUPERT'S PAGE



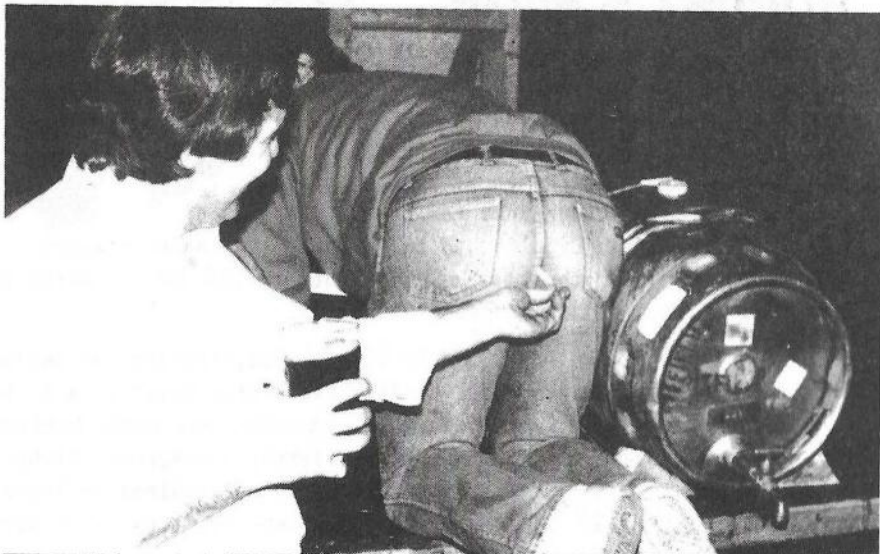
Embarrassment hardly begins to describe my feelings last week. Mumsy had come up from Wealthshire accompanied by her psychiatrist, Cholmondley, and Uncle Biggles. They'd met up with the Reverend Blether of the sadly unsuccessful Underpants for Horses Campaign of the late 70's. Uncle Biggles had telephoned me with the request that I should take them to "one of those sordid hovels which serve that real ale you're always going on about".

Consequently we found ourselves in Simples assimilating the ambience. If Uncle Biggles' remarks about finding the little boys' room to point Percy at the porcelain were somewhat unseemly, his contributions to the conversation on his return were completely outrageous. "Roop," he said, "there's one of those buy-me-and-stop-one machines in there, no doubt to prevent all the randy sods and shirtlifters from getting Aids, but why are they raspberry flavoured?"

Mumsy and the Reverend Blether blushed profoundly and my hesitant explanation about them complementing the Belgian beers went down like a lead balloon. Tish thought she'd rescue the situation. I must explain that her new burgeoning career as a bawdy music hall comedienne had come to an abrupt and premature end when her major venue was destroyed in a conflagration. "How do policewomen part their hair - hello, hello, hello!" she wisecracked. "Did you hear about Donald Duck trying to seduce Minnie Mouse? Well, she insisted on a condom and Donald rang down to reception. 'Duck here - Room 204 - do you have any condoms?' 'Yes sir.' 'Can you bring one to the room?' 'Yes, sir. Do you want me to put it on your bill?' 'What sort of pervert do you think I am?'"

At this point I managed to bundle Tish out of the room before she launched into a half hour monologue of similarly raunchy anecdotes. However, both Mumsy and our man of the cloth were stunned, although Uncle Biggles seemed to be enjoying himself. The Reverend Blether vowed there and then that he would leave no turd unstoned until he closed down for ever all Grotley's slum hostelryes, which were no more than meeting places for mountebanks and vagabonds.

Caught between the prudery engendered by my gentle upbringing and the cosmopolitan open-mindedness of many of the crowd, I find myself in something of an identity crisis. I am seriously thinking of joining a Franciscan order and leaving behind this vicious world of vulgarity and greed.



COMPETITION

The picture shows ex-local supremo Ben Chestnut being hard pegged at the World Amber Nectar Show.

- (1) Why?
- (2) Had he been eating beans again?
- (3) Did he shoot the cat?
- (4) What relevance has this to a beer drinkers' magazine?

TRAFFORD & HULME NEWS

The Bridge (Boddingtons), Dane Road, Sale, was refurbished just before Christmas. The vault has been retained and enlarged, although it is not quite so well defined as before. The lounge has been completely transformed along the lines of a narrow boat repair yard - plenty of rough-sawn timber. This room now has separate drinking areas, a fire-place and much more atmosphere. In addition, there is an extension overlooking the canal which is used as a small restaurant.

The Little B, Marsland Road, has been refurbished yet again, and the less said the better. The beer is still fizz. The Vine, Dunham, has become a managed house following the retirement of the previous tenant. The beer remains keg. Over at the Axe & Cleaver, Dunham, the mild is now keg due to poor sales (less than 12 gallons a week). The Swinging Bridge has John Smiths Magnet on handpump and in good form, in addition to the John Smiths bitter and Courage Directors.

NEW LOOK

Three former Wilsons pubs have reopened as "Blezards" houses. These are the Swan and the Lancaster on Oldham Road and the Auld Lang Syne on Pollard Street, Ancoats. The Navigation on Manchester Road, Hollinwood had the Blezard signboards for a time, but now it's a Wilsons/Websters pub again.



Branch Diary

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 15 Feb 8pm. Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford
Wed 22 Feb Unicorn, Manchester, 7pm; Castle, Oldham Street, 8pm
Wed 1 March, St David's Day Crawl. Prince of Wales, Oldfield Rd, 7pm. Oxnoble 8pm.
Wed 8 March, Grove, Bury New Road, 7.30; Tanners Arms, Fairy Lane, 8.30
Wed 15 March Branch AGM & 15th Anniversary
Sat 18 March, Bateman's Brewery trip
Wed 22 March 8pm, Crescent, Salford
Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

Tues 7 Feb 8pm, Branch Meeting, The Dungeon, Turton Road, Tottington, near Bury
Sat 18 Feb. Lunchtime trip to Robinwood Brewery. Ring contact for further details
Tues 21 Feb 8pm, Committee Meeting, Masons, Sion Street, Radcliffe
Tues 7 March 8pm, Branch Meeting, Blue Bell, Market St, Shaw, near Oldham
Contact: B Lee 0706 824407 (h)

TRAFFORD & HULME

Thurs 9 Feb 8pm. Social. Meet Crown & Anchor, Hilton St, Manchester. 9.30pm Beer House, Rochdale Road, Manchester
Thurs 16 Feb 8pm, Branch Meeting/Curry. Meet Albert, off Wilmslow Road. 9pm, Shezan, Wilmslow Road, Rusholme
Thurs 23 Feb 8pm. Urmston Survey. Meet Bent Brook. 9.30pm Yates's, Urmston Centre
Thurs 2 Mar 8pm, Committee Meeting, Railway Inn, Ashley Road, Hale Village
Contact: Pête Forshaw 061 755 2351

WIGAN

Wed 1 Feb, Minibus crawl to promote Beer Festival. Depart from Swan & Railway, Wallgate, Wigan, 7pm
Wed 8th Feb 8pm, AGM, Gem's, Upper Dicconson Street. **WILL ALL MEMBERS PLEASE ATTEND.**
Wed 15 Feb 8.30: Branch meeting, plus discussion on local festival and guide. Seven Stars Hotel, Wallgate, Wigan.
Thur-Sat 2nd-4th March: **SECOND WIGAN BEER FESTIVAL. HELP NEEDED!**
Contact Brian Gleave, Atherton 892965 (w), 876200 (h)

BOLTON

Wed 1 Feb "BEER IN BOLTON" local guide launch, Maxims, Bradshawgate, Bolton
Tues 7 Feb 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, White Lion (Holts), Market Street, Westhoughton
Sat 11 Feb, Yates' Brewery trip
Mon 20 Feb 7.30pm, Beer Festival Meeting, Crescent, Salford
Wed 22 Feb, 8.30pm, Social, Lodge Bank Tavern (Lees), Bridgeman Street
Mon 6 Mar, 7.30pm, Beer Festival Meeting, York, Newport Street, Bolton
Tues 7 Mar 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, York, Newport Street, Bolton
Contact: Barbara Kerks, Bolton 658458 (h)

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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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