

WHAT'S DOING

SEPT
1989



THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE



BACK TO CASK

The Peel Park on Chapel Street, Salford, is selling real ale again for the first time in many years. John Smiths bitter (88p) and Magnet (92p) are available on handpumps. The Peel Park is conveniently situated on the dry bit of Chapel Street on the way out towards the Crescent.

MMC REPORT

The recommendations of the Monopolies & Mergers Commission have been watered down further. Last month we reported that the Big Brewers would have to sell guest real ales from the smaller, quality brewers in their pubs. Not so. The DTI now says that the Big Brewers themselves can supply the 'guest' beers to each other. Keg Snotes and Websters Yorkshire Bland, anyone?

CASTLE & FALCON SAVED

Old pub escapes the axe



The Castle and Falcon

On Thursday 10th August the City Planning Committee decided that the Castle & Falcon on Bradshaw Street, Manchester, should be saved from demolition. City Planning Officer Brian Parnell said, 'It is one of the City Centre's oldest public houses, still retaining a domestic scale, and the structural condition of the front part of the building facing Bradshaw Street appears to be good.' Several of the City's councillors also spoke in favour of the pub remaining.

Reassurances were given that the problem of the pub's cellar, which is at present on the line of the Metrolink, will be overcome.

Burtonwood Brewery still own the pub, which is now shut, and Deputy Chairman Richard Gilcrist said, 'We would like to retain the Castle & Falcon'. Manchester awaits the reopening of one of its favourite pubs.

Meanwhile, the fight to save the Coach & Horses is being stepped up a gear or two. The pub is still open, serving Timothy Taylors Landlord, Boddingtons bitter and Tetleys bitter. Licensees Bill and Jean are still there and would love to see you.

WIN SOME - LOSE SOME

Greenalls' ill-fated Mersey Lights on Princess Parkway, which has been boarded up for the last two years since the previous landlord did a runner, looks set to become a Texaco petrol station if planning permission is granted. It has been unkindly suggested that a litre of Texaco Four Star is preferable to a pint of Grünhülle, and the filling station may have a cosier atmosphere than the Mersey Lights!

Meanwhile, Greenalls are going to build a new pub on the station approach at Stockport. According to a brewery spokesman the pub will be open-plan and include a ten-pin bowling alley, a six-screen cinema, a health club, a disco, a theme bar and a swimming pool. Hmm.

ECCLES NEWS

Things are looking up at the Duke of York, Church Street, with the arrival of new licensees Garth and Jenny James-Davies. Garth, a CAMRA member, has plans to restore the pub to its former popularity. The folk and jazz nights will be reintroduced and the upstairs function room and the non-smoking room will be reopened. More importantly, the pub will stock guest beers alongside Hartleys XB, Marstons Pedigree, Thwaites and Castle Eden (seven bitters in all). Foreign bottled beers will be on sale, and a selection of malt whiskies. Many former regulars are returning to the pub, as well as some new faces. As they say, well worth a visit.



Strange goings-on at the Top House (Railway), Church Street. Tetleys have ripped out the vault and relocated the bar, making it a one-room pub. The Top House was in need of some alteration, but this is slightly draconian! Will the loss of the vault mean the loss of vault prices? Will the acid-etched window be replaced? Will the coal fires be replaced? Probably not. It will be interesting to see how the regulars of this once cosy pub will react to the 'improvements'. Watch this space.

BOLTON NEWS

Des Nogalski

Real ale has returned to the Millstone, Crown Street, Bolton. Hand-pulled bitter is now on sale at 96p a pint. The pub appeared in the second Greater Manchester Good Beer Guide some ten years ago, but real ale disappeared shortly after. Extensive refurbishments a few years back transformed the pub into a disco-type outlet, although it has had a reputation for good cheese lunches.

At least in the case of the Millstone the real ale has replaced keg beer. Two Tetley houses at the bottom of Deane Road have been experimenting with cask bitter alongside the keg version. It's the usual story - ask for a pint of bitter and the bar staff lurch towards the keg pump. In the case of the Duke, the real stuff came to an ignominious end when they couldn't even sell it off at 50p a pint. At Carringtons it wasn't noted for being of particularly good quality.

Still with Tetleys, Bolton's latest pub is Oscar's Cafe Bar in the Wellsprings Centre, a new council office block next to the Octagon Theatre. Described as being 'for the discerning customer', Oscar's is apparently quite popular with town centre shoppers during the day. Unfortunately, the 'discerning' real ale drinker is likely to be disappointed, for although the advertising blurb announced cask Ind Coope Burton Ale, the pumpclip is likely to be turned around, although someone claims to have had a pint of the stuff. Still, it's early days.

The late licences story rumbles on and it looks grim for Maxim's, the only cask outlet of the three pubs whose late licences were withdrawn for not serving food. Another of the unfortunate threesome, Maxwell's Plum, re-applied for a licence last month. Eyebrows were raised when the licensee announced that all prospective punters were scrutinised before entering the premises, that most customers were 'over 21s' and that 'We only serve nice people'. However, when the police pointed out that since Maxwell's and Maxim's had been closing earlier there had been less trouble in the town, the application was refused.

THE OAKS

That's the name of a new restaurant at the end of Oakwood Drive in Walkden. It's a new building, replacing the former Courtauld's Social Club, and Banks's cask bitter (95p) and Hansons mild (90p) are on sale. It's not really a pub, but you don't have to have a meal to try the ale.

Editor:
375 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27

LETTERS



THE GREAT DEBATE

Sir - I feel I must comment on the letter from Pete Cash (WD August). While I agree totally with his observation on the excellent quality of many foreign brews, I must disagree with his opinion that a Pilsner-type beer should be part of the Campaign's aims. I always had the impression that CAMRA existed to promote the brewing and drinking of traditional beers; traditional, that is, to Britain. I do not believe it is ignorant or even xenophobic to support these aims. The finest Pilsner in the world, were it brewed here, would not be traditional. Pilsner is a bottom-fermented beer which has no lineage in these islands at all. Is it really bigoted now to prefer a pint of home-brewed bitter to lager? Over the top there, Mr Cash.

Andrew Whitley, Secretary, Society for the Preservation of Beers from
the Wood (West Riding Branch)

PS: Our branch of the SPBW recently presented a plaque to the landlady of the Healey Hotel, Rochdale, for excellent beer in a really well-looked-after pub. Locals will no doubt be favourably comparing the SPBW plaque with the tatty bit of foolscap in a thirty bob frame that seems to be CAMRA's limit!

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Sir - P Cash's letter (August) should have been retitled 'Daft About Lager'. The fact that so-called good lager is available in a few isolated pockets should not have led him to destructive criticism of the article by P Barnes (July), or to an attack on 'ignorant' elements within CAMRA. Lager is the yellow peril and looks like remaining so.

The letter itself seemed to be almost deliberately unfair in parts. P Barnes' article was certainly not an 'outburst', and hardly anybody in CAMRA these days can have 'A blind allegiance to real ale'. The main battle is where it always has been - in the English pub. The main adversaries are English ale versus English lager. This is nothing to do with xenophobia - it's just a fact.

Bill Collier

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Sir - Both Peters (DAFT ABOUT LAGER, WD July, and LAGER, WD August) seem to have got distracted from the main issue. It's perfectly reasonable to say that an organisation founded to protect real ale shouldn't dissipate its efforts by attending to lager (or cider or

pubs?) while real ale is under threat. It's also reasonable to say that that is too narrow a view and that a campaign must pay some attention to wider issues if it is not to stultify and bore the supporters it is trying to attract. That's a difference of opinion which can be discussed endlessly when people have nothing better to do with their time.

What should be of concern to everyone who wants to preserve quality beer of any kind is that a whole generation of drinkers is being encouraged to choose overpriced, poor quality, quasi-beers which are frequently full of unpleasant additives and bad for them anyway. The more you pay, the greater your status, and never mind the quality.

Unlike Pete Cash, I don't think anyone is discerning about beer or anything else, until taught to be so by experience and full, fairly-presented information. Young drinkers today get neither. Instead, they are targeted by massively-funded advertising campaigns for these low-quality lagers at the expense of other drinks, and the brewers provide little or no choice of quality in outlets frequented by the young.

If you've got all the information and you've given the alternative a fair try, and you still choose to pay over the odds for a product of dubious quality, fine - that's your decision. If you do it without reasonable experience of what you're rejecting, you're just foolish. If you do it because someone else tells you to, you're a sucker.

It didn't matter much before we had a youth-centred market. We were all suckers, and grew out of it, and the choices were still there. The penalty that this young generation of drinkers will pay for being smart is that what they choose now they may be stuck with for good.

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Sue Richardson

Sir - Yes, yes, all right. Some lager is better than others, and some British lager isn't as revolting as it used to be (WD July, August, etc). One thing conveniently overlooked by CAMRA's lager apologists is that the stuff is invariably gassy.

When I were a lad I joined CAMRA because I didn't like fizzy beer. Drinking a few pints of over-carbonated beer leads to an uncomfortable bellyful of wind, which as well as provoking the usual antisocial bouts, is not at all pleasant. We have campaigned successfully to popularise real ale again, so why on earth does CAMRA keep banging on about lager, which by its very nature is over-carbonated?

And if that isn't enough, even some fizzy beer seems to be getting the CAMRA seal of approval. In the last three issues of WD I read of the

San Francisco Bay breweries. All very interesting until, in the last episode, we were informed that "the beers are more carbonated than British products" and the best thing to do was to buy the stuff by the bucketful and wait until some of the gas bubbles away. Really! What other comestible would we put up with if the manufacturer's instructions included advice on letting the product stand around for a bit to get the nastiness out? Baked beans, perhaps? 'For best results, empty contents into saucepan and place in the airing cupboard for a day or two...'

As well as OGs and ABVs, are we now in need of Fizz Factors? Take a rather good beer (Holts bitter springs to mind) and grade it FF zero. Designate one of those awful fizzy lagers - Harp or similar - FF 100, and grade all other lagers (and beers, for that matter) along the scale.

Alternatively, we could forget about lager until Messrs Furstenburg, et al, come up with one which doesn't depend on fizz.

Willy Wort

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HOLTS BEER

Sir - Although I agree with A Brown (WD August) that the quality of Holts beer varies from pub to pub, the statements made by D Mason (WD July) - 'Beer is not bad when it leaves the brewery' and 'All beer is the same when it is delivered to the public house' - are not strictly true. There have been several instances in the past 20 years when dozens of managers and tenants have had to return beer to the Derby Brewery because it was unsaleable. It happened during the period Holts were expanding their brewing capacity and more recently during the hot weather. Bad batches of beer, although rare, are not figments of the imagination of uncaring licensees. A Brown would be far more 'professional' if he simply avoided the pubs serving badly kept beer and stopped slugging Holts licensees willy nilly.

Glenn Worth

HOLTS NEWS

Holts are to spend some £100,000 on doing up the Seven Stars on Ashton Old Road. The pub will be made bigger and we are promised the nice woodwork and stained glass will stay. Work is also due to start on the Navigation in Rochdale, where it is planned to make the place look more attractive.

Holts are always looking for new outlets and rumour has it that they have looked at the Smithfield on Swan Street, but it is believed that the pub will not be joining the JH empire. (Shame.)

WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

Matthew Brown have taken umbrage at Wigan CAMRA branch over comments made in the Breweries section of the 1989 Wigan Beer Guide. The Blackburn company wrote to co-editor Brian Gleave to complain about the passage (page 5) which reads, '...it has to be said that Matthew Brown have a very poor record when it comes to promoting real ale in their pubs...' The brewery went on to defend their record, but locally (and it is a Wigan ale guide, after all) one pub selling cask beer in an estate of around seventeen isn't much to crow about, methinks. Incidentally, the pub in question, the GLOBE, High Street, Standish, has a lone handpump on the bar selling Theakstons XB which, so far as I know, isn't brewed at Blackburn anyway.

Other news now, and the M6/M61 bypass has sealed the fate of two Tetley pubs in the Worsley Mesnes area. The BULLS HEAD, Warrington Road, Goose Green, has ironically just reopened after much refurbishment. The demolition of the TIPPINGS ARMS, Poolstock Lane, Poolstock, would be particularly sad, as this pub was a potential Good Beer Guide candidate. Indeed, the Bulls Head had returned to traditional bitter after a few years on the gassy stuff. A shame.

Meanwhile, in the centre of Wigan, it seems very unlikely that the WHITE HORSE on Standishgate will reopen, as the building is in a serious state of disrepair. Despite the very favourable position of the pub in the town centre, the White Horse has been on the slide for a couple of years, though why Burtonwood couldn't make it pay is beyond me. However, the good news is that the nearby SHIP on Millgate may well reopen as a - wait for it - Yates' Wine Lodge!! Stand in a corner, those of you who thought we were witnessing the creation of another shoe shop.

Elsewhere in town, the TUDOR HOUSE HOTEL, New Market Street, is selling Bass XXXX mild through an unmarked handpump...two Tetley keg emporia, CLARENCE'S on Wallgate and CROFTERS, Hallgate, are currently closed and are being gutted...by the time you read this, STANLEY'S SNOOKER CLUB, Powell Street, will have reopened, selling a range of ales from, amongst others, Teteleys, Taylors and Marstons, not to mention this august organ.

In Lower Ince, the reopening of the ROCK FERRY on Warrington Road was imminent at the time of writing. As mentioned in July WD, the 'Little Rock' will rejoice in the name NORMA JEAN'S. Rather surprisingly, however, Scottish & Newcastle have sold the pub to John Smiths, who have almost no representation in the area. One lives in hope.

Hindley news now, and the WORTHINGTON HOTEL, Market Street, has lost its cask mild. This Burtonwood pub was a regular fixture in the Good Beer Guide until a few years ago. Meanwhile, in Ladies Lane, the LEIGH ARMS, a Matty Brown pub adjacent to the railway station, is closed and boarded up. Which brings us back to the start of this column...

WHAT'S DOING IN RADCLIFFE

WD is now on sale in three Radcliffe pubs. The Wellington (Bass) on Stand Lane is worth a look in just to see some of the finest Victorian tilework for miles (and have a pint while you're there). The Masons Arms (Thwaites), a somewhat isolated pub down Sion Street, boasts the only 'Hook the Bull' game this side of Suffolk. The Papermakers (Holts) is an old pub tucked away amongst the factories on Church Street East (not far from the train station).

Other new What's Doing outlets are the Beehive on Bury Old Road, Whitefield, a Whitbread pub dispensing an excellent pint of Chesters bitter via handpull at 90p a pint (Marstons Pedigree is apparently on the way) and the Blue Bell (Holts) on Manchester Road, Sunnybank, Bury.

HIGHER IRLAM

A recent visit to Sports (ex White Lion) revealed a high quality pint of Wilsons bitter (handpumped and 82p a pint). Sports is in need of, and apparently due for, a refurbishment by the owners. While they are at it, they can:

1. Sort out the scruffy environs of the pub.
2. Get rid of the 'Sports' theme.
3. Build a vault, games room and separate lounge, and discuss it all with the local people who use the place.
4. Introduce quality traditional beers to complement the Wilsons bitter.

HARE & HOUNDS

Tetleys have done quite a reasonable job on the Hare & Hounds, Stoneclough, Kearsley. Real ale remains (mild and bitter) and handpumps have replaced the electric pumps.

OLDHAM NEWS

Further to last month's report about the demolition of Oldham Brewery, the Royal Naval Association (Oldham Branch) have agreed terms for the purchase of OB's former hospitality suite and the adjoining dwelling house (36/40 Coldhurst Street) for conversion into private licensed premises. A planning application is with Oldham Council. The Association currently meet at the Black Swan at Mumps (a John Willie Lees house). It will be interesting to see whose beer eventually provides refreshment.

Oldham Council has granted planning permission for Holts to rebuild the Bridgewater Hotel on Manchester Road, Oldham. The existing pub, which will be demolished in about 12 months time, is required in connection with the proposed improvements to Manchester Road between Oldham town centre and Drury Lane. It is hoped that building work will commence early next year and that the new pub will be open before the old one has to be demolished. Detailed plans are not yet available, but it is felt that the design could be similar to another new Holts pub, the popular Sidings on Broom Lane, Levenshulme.

Tetley Walker have applied for permission to change the use of No.6 Cutler Hill Road, Woodhouses, from a house to including it within their existing pub, the Crime View. A car park is also planned.

Werneth has a new public bar, the likes of which it has never seen before. The luxurious Avant Hotel opened on 12th August comprising a restaurant, banqueting and conference facilities and three bars, one of which is open to the (suitably dressed!) public. Handpumped Courage Directors and keg John Smiths are on sale. Courage Directors is a first for Oldham on a regular basis, so let's make sure it stays. Prices are unknown at this stage, but let's hope a cheque book is not required for every pint. The remaining part of the complex, comprising 106 hotel beds, should be open in time for Christmas.

Oldham Development Committee have given the go-ahead for a pub and restaurant to be built at the corner of Middleton Road and Melbourne Street. This will be part of a development on the 2.2 acre Melbourne Mill site. A hotel, shops and industrial units are also planned.

John Willie Lees have increased their production beyond the 2,000 barrels per week mark. Sales have increased quickly in recent years, mainly due to the increase in the number of their pubs (now over 150) and the success the brewery has had in the free trade, particularly since Boddingtons chose to stop brewing Oldham beers in Oldham.

Michael Robinson

SOUTH KRAUTLEY AMBER NECTAR SHOW

Paul Roberts

Over the past decade or so I have given an annual report from the world's largest and most famous beer festival - Munich's Oktoberfest. As more and more fellow imbibers from this part of the globe are making the thousand-mile pilgrimage, I thought perhaps it may be appropriate to write a preview to the Oktoberfest and how to escape it.



Oktoberfest München

16.9.11.10.1989

The Oktoberfest is a victim of its own success. With around six million visitors, it is increasingly hard to find a place in the ten main marquees in the evening. If you just want to sample the beer, go midweek in the afternoons. The bands do not start until 1600 and there's normally plenty of room until around 1500. At weekends the bands play all day, so get down before noon to stand any chance of getting a place inside the beer halls - there are normally places available in the outside beer gardens, apart from at extremely busy times.

However, Munich and its environs are there to be explored. The Münchener Verkehrs- und Tarifverbund GMBH (MVV) is the transport authority covering a radius of about thirty miles around Greater Munich. They have the most integrated transport system that can be imagined. Day tickets cover travel on tram, underground, S Bahn (fast electric suburban trains), normal DB trains and buses and coaches of any operator in the MVV area. There are two zones. Innerraum covers about a ten kilometer radius from the city, while the Gesamtgebiet allows travel anywhere in the MVV area. Weekly tickets run from Monday to Monday and require a photograph. In addition, DB (Deutsche Bundesbahn) have excellent value area tickets. Tourenkarten offer ten days unlimited travel in areas which stretch to Austrian border stations such as Kufstein and Salzburg. To qualify for a Tourenkarte you must travel over 200km by rail. However, for those flying or driving down, the same areas are covered in Bezirkwochenkarten, which, although more expensive than Tourenkarten, are still good value.

So that's how you get around. So where do you go? Andechs Klosterbrauerei is almost as famous as the Oktoberfest itself - a small monastic brewery producing inexpensive, palatable and potent beers, along with some less palatable but very potent cheese. To reach it midweek, catch the 1248 S6 from Marienplatz to Starnberg to connect

with the 1330 951 to Andechs. Leave Andechs 1759 on the 951 to Herrsching and return by the S5 at 1815 to Munich (alight at Hackerbrücke for the 'fest). An MVV Gesamtgebiet ticket covers this very enjoyable day in the Bavarian lake district.

Nearer to the centre of Munich is Forschungs Hausbrauerei (closed Mondays) on the S1 route at Perlach. This unusually-designed brewpub serves litres only of very strong Pilsissimus and even stronger St Jacobus Blonder Bock. A new development is a station buffet homebrewpub at Grosshesselohe Isartalerbahnhof on the S7. For film buffs, this is within easy walking distance of the Bavariafilmplatz (the biggest film studios in Europe), just across the river. Erding, at the north-eastern end of the S6, gives its name to a very famous Weizenbier. Freising, at the northern end of the S1, is within walking distance of Weihstephan - the world's oldest brewery and a famous brewing University. Aying is south of Munich on the S1 and the Aying brewery there produces a fine range of beers which have given their name to the imitation Ayingenbrall brewed by Sam Smiths.

Also in the MVV Gesamtgebiet lies Markt Indersdorf, where a much smaller Klosterbrauerei than Andechs produces fine beers. To reach this take the S2 to Dachau and change to the local DB train, destination Altomünster. Outside the MVV region lies the Schlossbrauerei Odelzhausen, which lies just off the A8 Autobahn towards Ulm. This features a range of unfiltered beers and its flagship brew is Operator - brewed to celebrate the opening of the new Munich Opera House in 1963. The brewery will produce a special brew for any occasion, another example being Quickator, to help celebrate the 'Quick' magazine's anniversary. If travelling by car, this brewery, which can be seen from the Autobahn, is also close to the aforementioned Markt Indersdorf. These breweries (apart from Odelzhausen) are all within the MVV region. If you purchase a DB Bezirkswochenkarten, the list of breweries within reach runs literally to hundreds.

In Munich itself, a rare Aying outlet in the city is the Komödianten-



stadl in Bräuhausstrasse (just behind the Hofbräuhaus). It has a true Bavarian atmosphere and as yet has not been discovered by the Aussies or Americans. It opens 1900-0300. Small beers are dear - order by the litre. Fans of the Holts of Munich (Augustinerbräu) flock to the former brewery tap - the Augustiner Gaststätte on pedestrianised Neuhauserstrasse. Another former brewery tap newly reopened is Schneider Weiss at Tal (just off Marienplatz, leading towards the river). As the name implies, Weizenbier is the speciality - particularly the Weizenbock, Aventinus (a dark, strong wheat beer).

If you fancy a last-minute trip to the 'fest, accommodation in the centre of Munich will be a problem. Head down towards the Fünfseenland between the S5 and S6 routes. Apart from being in the beautiful lake district, accommodation will be easier to obtain and for a fraction of the price (from DM20 per person per night). A visit to Munich is a must for any keen beer enthusiast - and the Oktoberfest makes the Great British Beer Festival look like a Jehovah's Witnesses gathering.

THE QUEENS' SECOND BIRTHDAY

Cheap beer, free jukebox music and free barbecue meals - that's how Dave and Jo Glass celebrated two successful years at the Queens Arms, Red Bank, on 27th July. The bucolic evening was enjoyed by a mass of people who filled the pub and spilled over the terraced garden at the back. In fact, demand was so great that the queue at the barbecue was endless and the seven staff had to be augmented by volunteers!

For those who did not find out, the mystery beer was Young's Special, the first time in Manchester.

LOSING THE CROWN

Plans for Manchester's Castlefield involve the development of the bottom end of Deansgate for a hotel complex. The scheme, called the Merlin Project, will mean the demolition of the Crown on Deansgate and the conversion of the lock-keeper's cottage into a public house. Although the Crown has some excellent architectural features, it does not have the historical associations of either the Castle & Falcon or the Coach & Horses. The lock-keeper's cottage, dating from the late eighteenth century, would make an excellent pub, if treated sympathetically. The Crown is to be demolished in about three years time.

NOW & THEN

by Rob Magee

No.41

STAR INN

40 King Street
Oldham



About the year 1820 Benjamin Newton, who kept the Mare & Foal on the new Ashton/Oldham turnpike road, decided to build a shop and public house much nearer the town centre. He was a butcher, so he called his new pub at the junction of King Street, Union Street and King Street South the Jolly Butcher. It opened in 1821 and three years later Benjamin changed his pub sign to that of the Star. (A Star is the crest of the Innkeepers Company and usually has sixteen points (rays), although pubs generally have signs bearing the heraldic star with six rays.)

Benjamin held the licence of the Star until 1831, although during that time he was also running the butcher's shop, and in 1829 a Thomas Clegg was in charge of the pub with Benjamin's wife Ann. In 1830 a new stable was built, combined with a slaughterhouse. In 1831 Thomas Hilton took over the licence, but Benjamin was still the owner and running his butcher's shop.

Samuel Buckley succeeded Mr Hilton in 1835 and things went along nicely for a time until his wife found him quite dead in the cellar with his throat cut! (It is said that Sam periodically re-visits the cellar and has been seen a few times by later tenants.)

In 1886 a report for the Chief Constable noted that there was no back yard, no stabling (?) and a urinal on the footpath in George Street was 'very objectionable to females having to pass here'. An 1894 report resurrects the stables, saying, 'Stables and closet are in yard off George Street away from the house...'

The Star was acquired by the Manchester Brewery Company in 1890, became a Walker & Homfray house in 1912, and that brewery merged with Wilsons in 1949. The current inn sign erroneously infers that the Star



is so named because five roads converge here, but Union Street West did not exist before 1863. However, as Leslie Ayre, the present tenant, says, 'All roads lead to the Star'! Les took over in 1977 and comments, 'When Sam's ghost is in the cellar I can turn off the chillers!' The old photograph was taken in 1898.

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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ASIAN CORNER

TANDOORI KITCHEN

Wilmslow Road,
Rusholme

The rising popularity of Keema Nan curry evenings continues unabated and the entourage was into double figures as we staggered out of the Whitworth and along Wilmslow Road.

With so many eager curry devotees, our choice of eating hole was somewhat limited on a busy Friday evening. The Tandoori Kitchen seemed to be about the right size and they appeared to employ a public relations person hanging around outside the front door in Indian costume. Unfortunately a brief conversation revealed that he didn't speak a word of English! Worse still, he led us into the takeaway-only section. Once the misunderstanding was cleared up we were led upstairs to a spacious eating area - not much of an Indian atmosphere, but then you can't eat atmospheres.

The menu revealed a bias towards Persian dishes, with lamb kebabs featuring heavily. Also available were the usual Indian main courses, including several vegetarian dishes. The curry dishes ranged in price from £3.20 to £3.70, which included rice or nan. If you give two days' notice you can try 'Raani', a whole leg of lamb marinated in garlic and spices for 48 hours, at £7.50 per person.

We ordered our usual selection of starters and I was particularly impressed by the Onion Bhajias (60p). These were full of seeds, fresh coriander and a fair amount of chilli! The Shami Kebabs (70p) were terribly soggy and falling apart, a pity really as they tasted all right. Fresh coriander was also noted in most of the other starters. I think the proprietor must own a coriander plantation.

For main course I had a Lamb Madras. This was hotter than expected, but I could still taste all the spices and (yes!) the coriander. The Chicken Korma let the side down with a small offal bit, but otherwise was nice and mild (ie safe). The Chicken Dopiaza merited a 'highly satisfactory' from its consumer.

The only Persian dish we tried was a 'Sultani' (sheesh and keema kebabs with rice), which was given the thumbs up. The Mixed Vegetable Curry (£2.80) contained potatoes, tomatoes, aubergines, cauliflower and more fresh coriander. 'Not remarkable', said our guest veggy, 'But OK'.

When the bill arrived, our enormous meal had cost us £5.50 per person - very impressive value for money. The Tandoori Kitchen should definitely be put on anybody's Rusholme short-list.

Keema Nan

PRESTWICH NEWS

The cheapest pint of good quality beer in Britain is on sale in Prestwich! Holts bitter is 66p a pint at the Prestwich Liberal Club, but you've got to be a member, or signed in by one. The Working Men's Club, Heaton Park (not affiliated) has got rid of the keg beer and has been dispensing Boddingtons cask bitter via beer engines for some time. Guests can be signed in.

The Conservative Club sells Marstons Pedigree and here also guests may be signed in. Davenports bitter is in the Grapes (Greenalls) in the village, alongside the Greenalls Original. Unfortunately the John Smiths Magnet has disappeared from the Church Inn (also village), owing to lack of demand.

VINTAGE PUBS GUIDE SELLS OUT

3,000 copies of the Vintage Pub Guide were produced in July 1988 and they have virtually all been sold. CAMRA no longer has any stocks and the last few copies are in the bookshops in Manchester, price £2.50.

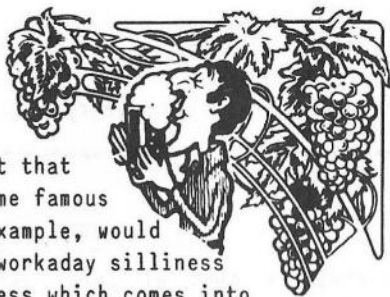
More vintage pubs are being 'discovered' all the time. In addition to those mentioned in an article in WD (January 1989), perhaps we should add:

Queens Head, Stockport (ex Turners Vaults), Sam Smiths
Star, Back Hope Street, Salford, Robinsons
Hare & Hounds, Shudehill, Manchester, Tetley
Grey Mare, Varley Street, Miles Platting, Tetley
Britannia, Rowsley Street, Beswick, Lees
Robin Hood, Lees Road, Oldham, OB

Sadly we must delete the entries for the Bush, Hyde, and the Albion, Ashton. Both have been Robinsonised.

Other contributors to this issue: Stewart Revell, Roger Hall, Peter Barnes, Peter Wadsworth, Bill Collier, Mike Robinson

RUPERT'S PAGE



Well, the silly season is upon us, not that you'd notice from the behaviour of some famous stalwarts of the Campaign. How, for example, would Stan Craap differentiate between his workaday silliness and that very special brand of silliness which comes into its own at this time of the year? Perhaps he could combine his interests in medieval Estonian and pie eating with coruscating repartee and love of computers and appear as an all-singing, all-dancing plate of pie and Russian chips in Friggin town centre. And what about Billy Shippon's architectural tavern toddles round historic Grotley? Pretty eccentric already, you're thinking. But no! Admittedly, Billy has been dissuaded from setting up the Slumley Amber Nectar Imbibers Terpsichorean Yodellers, who would carry out traditional Swiss Morris dancing in basic working class boozers, thereby giving the Campaign total street cred. But what's to stop all the punters dressing up as Nicholas Pevsner on unicycles and juggling with bottles of Python 6X as they wheel past the selected emporia?

Mind you, from some flippancy starts great enterprises sometimes grow. Both Opening Tripe and Manky Ale were launched as a joke and look at them now! Campaign HQ is now superbly organised with its own valuable premises and lots of specialised committees to look after lots of different aspects of the amber nectar world. Finance looks after finance, Membership after membership, Clubs after clubs and so on, or so you'd think. But no. In a move of supreme cleverness, Seamus Spud and his minions at DOGSHIT, which as we all know looks after our hostelries, inns and taverns, has launched a new spiffing gong scheme for bazzing clubs. In my experience clubs have a much greater wealth of architectural merit than pubs and should be rewarded accordingly. Many of them have been overlooked because they are tucked away over Tesco's or hidden in old Co-op warehouses, converted pre-fabs and army huts. It's a jolly good thing that Spud has recognised the moribundity of the Clubs Working Party and decided to reward this much-ignored sector on his own account. Good on you! Or is it perhaps some spurious wheeze to sucker the gullible, a fitting climax to a silly season relieved only by the odd cabinet reshuffle or transport disaster. Seriousness is the last refuge of the unidimensional, so I'm pleased to see DOGSHIT gaining a sense of humour and instituting awards which only the certifiable would believe to be true.



Branch Diary

ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

Tues 5 Sept Branch Meeting, Rose of Lancaster, Manchester St, Oldham
Sat 16th Sept, Lunchtime euphoric exploration of Eccles, visiting some of Holts' finest! Ring for details.

Tues 19th Sept, Committee Meeting, Kings Arms, Manchester Road, Hollinwood. 8.30pm

Tues 3rd Oct 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Brown's No.1, Market St, Heywood
Contact B Lee 0706 82 4407 (h), 061 766 6601 (w)

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 6 Sept 8pm, Crescent, Salford. Police speaker, Ch Insp Berry

Wed 13 Sept, Rochdale Vintage Pubs. Meet Reed Hotel, Reed Hill, off Yorkshire St 7.45. Trains from Victoria 6.55, 7.10. Return 10.48. Or by bus.

Sun 17 Sept 6pm, Castle, Oldham St. GNW Beer Festival Meeting

Wed 20 Sept, White Swan, Swinton 8pm

26-28 Sept, Daytime, CAMRA stall at G-Mex

Tues 26 Sept, Brewery Action Group, Castle 7pm

Wed 27 Sept, Stalybridge Station. Trains 6.42, 7.42 Vic; 6.45, 7.45 Pic. Return 9.58

Wed 4 Oct, Clarke's Brewery trip £5.00

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

BOLTON

Thurs 31 Aug 7.30 LATE ADDITION: Barbecue, Sweet Green Tavern, Crook Street, opposite Bolton BR station. Phone contact

Tues 12 Sept 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, George, Great Moor Street

Sun 17 Sept 6pm, Beer Festival Meeting, Castle, Oldham Street, Manchester. Note early start time.

Tues 19 Sept, Bridgeman Street Social. 8.30 Lodge Bank Tavern, 9.15 Park, 10pm Victoria

Tues 3 Oct 8.30pm Branch Meeting, Clock Face, Old Hall St, Kearsley

Contact Barbara Kerks 0204 22494 x2220 (w) 0204 658458 (h)

TRAFFORD & HULME

Thur 7 Sept Committee Meeting, 8pm, White Lion, Liverpool Road, Manchester

Thurs 14 Sept, Sale Moor Social. Meet Legh Arms, Sale Moor, 8pm

Thurs 21 Sept, Branch Meeting, 8pm, Old Roebuck, Victoria Street, Altrincham

Thurs 28 Sept, Ancoats Crawl. 8.30pm Jolly Angler, Ducie St, Manchester

Thurs 5 Oct Committee Meeting 8.30pm Chapel House, Pepper St, Mobberley

Sat 14 Oct York Trip

Thurs 19 Oct 8pm, A.G.M Railway Inn, Ashley Road, Hale Village

Contact Pete Forshaw 755 2351

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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

A selection of hot & cold
food at lunchtime and
early evening, including
chilli and curry.

We're in the Good Beer Guide
and CAMRA's Good Food Guide

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