

WHAT'S DOING

JULY
1991

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

CLASSIC PUB TO CLOSE

Ye Olde Nelson on Chapel Street in Salford is scheduled for demolition as part of the A6 improvement scheme. The pub retains its Victorian layout and sense of community in an area where decent pubs are thin on the ground. It was probably easier to widen the road by sacrificing Ye Olde Nelson than to try and knock down the cathedral across the road. Why should we have to lose a pub of character in order to shift a traffic jam 100 yards down the road? Watch this space.



BOLTON BEER FESTIVAL (ANOTHER ONE)

The Bolton branch of CAMRA will be holding a mini beer festival on Sunday 29th September at the Sports Centre, Silverwell Street, Bolton. Opening hours are 11am-6pm. It will be part of the Bolton Licensees' Alliance "Fun Day", which includes darts, dominoes, tug-of-war, etc. Admission is by ticket (£1) and these are available from most Bolton town centre pubs. All profits from the Fun Day will go to local charities and profits from the beer festival will go to the Bolton Hospice Appeal. For further details ring Ron Lambton (landlord of Maxims, Bradshawgate) on 0204 23486.

CHINESE LEAVE (2)

Cheung and Company have applied for planning permission and listed building consent to alter and extend the St Vincent at New Cross. It looks like they'll operate it as a pub. Draught Tsingtao?

VAUX POPS UP

The Lancaster, a former Wilsons pub on Stockport Road, Ardwick, and the Swan in Weaste, a former Chesters house, are among the latest Vaux appearances in Greater Manchester. Both serve Samson and Darleys mild on draught.

BIGGER PROFITS?

Holts recently broke their code of silence to tell the local press about the cost of brewing materials. Sounds like they're getting ready to push the price of a pint up 10p or so, doesn't it? However, we were assured at the brewery's AGM on 20th June that they had no such plans.

CRESCENT MOVES

Plans for alterations to the Crescent in Salford have been passed by the City Planning Committee. It is not yet known whether the work will go ahead and whether a pub would be incorporated in the eventual development.

UP IN T'VALLEY

The egotistical, entrepreneurial racehorse and pub owner Roland Topham is on the move again. His fourth pub - Tophams Tavern in Edenfield - is boarded up and for sale. His previous three pubs, each modestly named after himself, have reverted to brewery control - two to BodPubCo and one to Robinsons. What fate awaits the current Tophams?

Meanwhile, just down the road, the Bridge at Ewood Bridge - closed for some months - resembles a builder's yard, with much renovation work in progress. The pub, a Tetley "tied free house", never achieved its full potential. Watch this space.

HOLTS CORNER

Stewart Revell

I am often asked if Holts are buying, say, the Flying Wombat from Whitbread, or maybe the Camel and Cucumber from Grand Met, depending on the rumour going round at the time.

The simple answer to questions such as these is, "I don't know, but I'll try to find out." Many CAMRA members believe that there is some form of "hot line" between the brewery and myself, and as soon as Holts acquire another pub, someone from the brewery gets on the phone to me with the full information. It just isn't like that!

I have to contact Holts each time there is a rumour of a new acquisition for confirmation or denial. Pity really, but there it is. The reason why there are so many rumours concerning Holts is quite simple. The big brewers are putting many of their houses on the market and several potential outlets in the Manchester area are regularly checked out by Holts. Most fail to be purchased for one reason or another. For a pub to stand a chance of becoming a Holts house it must meet some of the following criteria:

- 1 Be quite large - capable of turning over between 15 and 25 barrels a week.
- 2 No other Holts pub close by.
- 3 On a normal delivery route.
- 4 Not too expensive. (This is Holts!)

GREENALLS SALES

Ascot Taverns Ltd, a subsidiary of the Blackpool-based Springfield Group, have acquired three premises formerly owned by Greenall Whitley. The Fountain in Miles Platting and the Poets Corner in Lower Broughton are operating as normally as pubs in those locations do. The Broughton Tavern is still closed and needs some renovation work before it is reopened. Real ale is promised. The Unicorn on Broughton Road is still up for sale.

NO RETURN?

An application to revoke the licence of the Rovers Return in Ordsall has been adjourned.

END OF THE LINE?

Despite reports to the contrary in the local bugle, suggesting that the Stalybridge Station Buffet has been saved, the matter is far from resolved. Licensee Ken Redfern still has a number of matters to settle with British Rail before a new lease can be signed.

LETTERS



GOOD BEER GUIDE

Sir - With reference to the pub selection made by the Trafford & Hulme branch of CAMRA for the 1992 Good Beer Guide (June WD). I must take them to task for a glaring omission. Whilst fully appreciating the restrictions placed upon branches, and notwithstanding the thoroughly democratic and altogether good-natured manner in which branch selection meetings are invariably held, I must ask - why the f***** hell was the Roebuck, Flixton, not included?

This Holts house, together with the nearby Lord Nelson, sells the best and cheapest beer in the area. The licensee of over twelve months standing came from a GBG-listed pub in Monton, the beer improved 1000% when he took over and what do we get? The Manor Hey! What a shambles.

High Speed Gas

HIGGIES

Sir - I'm normally more than happy to let some of Roger Hall's more outrageous diatribes pass into the oblivion they deserve, having always chosen to remain aloof from internal CAMRA bickerings, and to concentrate on campaigning in the pubs and directly with brewers and public. Some assertions, however, are too serious to ignore.

In his "More Brewery Closures" article in June WD, Roger suggests that the Higsons campaign was an "after-the-horse-has-bolted" response. As one who has been involved over the years in giving positive support to Higsons, I just cannot let this irresponsible slur stand uncorrected.

The Merseyside branches, and "Mersey Drinker", consistently supported our former local brewery over fifteen years. The support was intensified over the last five of those years when the portents for the brewery were not good, and long before Boddingtons/Whitbreads came on the scene. To give just a few examples:-

- 1 Mersey Drinker "Beer of the Year Award".
- 2 Numerous "Pub of the Month/Season/Year" awards.
- 3 Sponsorship by Higsons of Merseyside Beer Festival, including free beer and badged glasses.
- 4 Sponsorship of local guide to Real Ale pubs
- 5 Ale Trail
- 6 Bringing the horse dray on a tour of town centre pubs and, perhaps most important, a regular dialogue on the subject of beer quality over many years.

This was all done long before any closure or takeover was ever

seriously considered, and was not done out of any blind allegiance to a product simply because it was local. Quality was what mattered - it had to be local and good.

Some of the Mancunian voices currently being raised in praise of Whitbread's Boddingtons products, including, no doubt, that of Mr Hall, could do well to pay more attention to the quality of what they're supporting.

Thankfully, we now have Cains beers being brewed at Stanhope Street. The Merseyside activists are convinced Cains is a quality beer and are therefore giving it maximum support and publicity. Not even Roger Hall could claim that Cains was threatened just yet!

Tony Molyneux

HOLTS WAGES

Sir - I refer to your cover feature in the June issue, particularly the item on the enormous profits made by my employers, Holts.

I would like it to be brought to your readers' attention that these profits do not have any bearing on the wages of Holts managers. I enclose a copy of our recent pay rise. (It is laughable to call it a pay rise, as our standard of living will in no way rise.)

This year I will receive the princely sum of £8,591.08 - a rise of 8% on my previous £7,954.70. We managers are being subjected to new and stringent accounting procedures; we are on the premises and on call for all manner of problems - and at risk from physical abuse - yet Holts do not see fit to give us a living wage.

An exploited Holts manager

ALTRINCHAM ALES

Sir - Thanks for the tip about the Navigation Hotel in Broadheath introducing handpumped draught Bass (WD June). I live only 100 yards from the pub, but always passed it by because it sold only the usual gassy Bass/Stones range of beers. The draught Bass is certainly a smooth, creamy pint - and so it should be at £1.30!

Meanwhile, just across the Bridgewater canal bridge in Broadheath's cosy old Railway, the price of a pint of Boddies bitter has sneaked up to £1.10 (although entertainment from the regular wits is still thrown in!). It's interesting to note that, just a short 41 bus ride away, at the Legh Arms in Sale Moor, Holts can provide a pint of superior bitter for 84p.

Cains bitter from the old Higsons brewery is now on sale at the Stamford Arms, Bowdon.

Geoff Atkins

TIPPERARY

Rob Magee's article on the New Market Inn, Stalybridge, in last

month's WD prompted a letter from Peter Lerner. The article included the story of how Jack Judge, who was staying at the pub in 1912, wrote the song, "It's a Long Way to Tipperary". Peter found the article interesting, making a change from "whining on about Boddingtons and Whitbread" (cheeky sod), but points out that Judge had a co-writer. This was Harry Williams, who lived at the Plough Inn, Temple Balsall, Warwickshire. The first few notes of "Tipperary" are engraved on his tombstone.

The original sheet music cover for the song, "the Marching Anthem on the Battlefields of Europe...sung by the Soldiers of the King" credits Harry Williams with co-authorship, and the "Music Hall Songbook" (1975) contains a photo of music publisher Bert Feldman with Jack Judge and Harry Williams. So now you know.

GOOD NICK

Graham Shepherd, enterprising landlord of the Abercrombie in the city centre, now also has the tenancy of the Swan With Two Nicks at the back of Dunham Park. Food is available early evenings and lunchtimes and his aim is to make the pub more family-orientated outside, although at present children are still not permitted inside the pub.

GREENALLS GAIN

The George & Dragon, Manchester Road, Broadheath, Altrincham, is another real ale gain for the area. This was a keg Greenalls pub for many years, but now it is under the Hudsons banner and serves hand-pulled bitter. The pump clip states this is Greenalls, although, as with many other Greenalls outlets, it doesn't taste much like the Greenalls you drank when they brewed it themselves.

WHAT'S DOING contributions should be sent to the editor c/o 88 Ringley Road, Stoneclough, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 9ET. News, articles, letters, etc, must arrive by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Send cheque/PO for £2.40, together with your name and address, to Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester M9 2PW, for 6 issues. Cheques made out to "What's Doing".

BACK NUMBERS: 15p per copy. Send stamped addressed envelope to Roger Hall, address above.

To join CAMRA send £10 to Membership, CAMRA, 34 Alma Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 3BW.

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WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

May's contribution to What's Doing was scarcely in the post when a welter of changes made it old hat. Therefore an update is in order.

The Raven Hotel, Wallgate, has dropped its Ind Coope Burton Ale owing to poor sales. The handpump had been stuck away in a corner of the bar and it was easier to spot Alfred Hitchcock in one of his films than it was to find the Burton Ale wicket on a Saturday night. The price - £1.30 a pint - didn't do much for sales, either. Having said that, the Raven, in my humble opinion, sells the best pint of mild in Wigan town centre and this fine Walkers house will be restored to its rightful place in the 1992 Good Beer Guide.

Burton Ale has also bitten the dust in the SILVERWELL, another Walkers pub on Darlington Street East. However, the landlord is hoping that trade will pick up once the place has been refurbished and he may reintroduce ICBA thereafter.

The WHITESMITHS ARMS, Standishgate, has lost its traditional mild. Perhaps the fact that the beer had to compete with its keg alternative helped it on its way. Boddies and Theakstons bitter remain and the latter has replaced the former in the BIRD I'TH'HAND on Gidlow Lane as the guest beer. The other ales in this GBG Allied pub are Tetley mild, dark mild and bitter and (at least for now) Ind Coope Burton Ale.

As expected, the MARKET TAVERN, Mesnes Street, has closed for a facelift, but the SIR ROBERT PEEL, Wigan Road, Hindley, has re-emerged as THE WIGANER, selling the usual range of Boddies, Bentleys Yorkshire Bitter, etc, expected of Whitbread.

New news, now, to counteract the gloom. John Smiths have given up NORMA JEAN'S BAR, Warrington Road, Lower Ince and the pub is now in the hands of Bass. Not only have Britain's biggest brewers changed the pub's name back to the ROCK FERRY, but they have even reintroduced real ale in the form of handpumped Stones bitter. The "Little Rock" was one of the few SEN pubs in the area until quite recently.

Stones bitter is also now available at the HARE & HOUNDS, Bolton Road, Aspull, alongside Greenalls bitter and Original. This pub is worth a visit, if only to admire the St Helens Brewery windows. The recently re-opened RUNNING HORSES, off Fingerpost, remains the only pub in the Aspull and Haigh area on keg beer.

The real ale revival has swept away two of the most intransigent keg bastions in the area. I refer to the RAILWAY HOTEL on Dangerous

Corner, Leigh (Tetleys) and the ROYAL HOTEL, Castle Hill Road, Hindley, which now serves Theakstons best bitter. Those untouched keg gems are dropping like flies...

The ORWELL, Wigan Pier, has sprouted yet more wickets on the bar. Robinsons best bitter and Hydes take turns alongside Jennings, Tetleys and Walkers best bitter, and mine host Deano has reintroduced cask Tetley mild. The Orwell also remains the only Wigan outlet for Brendan Dobbin's West Coast beers, so get in there.

The biggest scoop comes last. If all goes to plan, Burtonwood's WHITE HORSE on Standishgate could be open by 1992. This town centre boozer has been boarded up for over two years and is said to be positively dilapidated. Remember, you read it here first...

IRLAM AND CADISHEAD

The Holts invasion of the area continues. Holts bitter is now available at the George, a Whitbread pub in Cadishead. There's a strong possibility that Holts mild will soon be complementing the bitter at the Tiger Moth in Higher Irlam.

Rumours abound that BodPubCo are planning to convert the buildings available at Irlam Station into a Henry's Table.

Unfortunately the Sports (ex White Lion) is a keg-only pub again. Handpumped Wilsons bitter has been removed and no real ale replacement has been introduced.

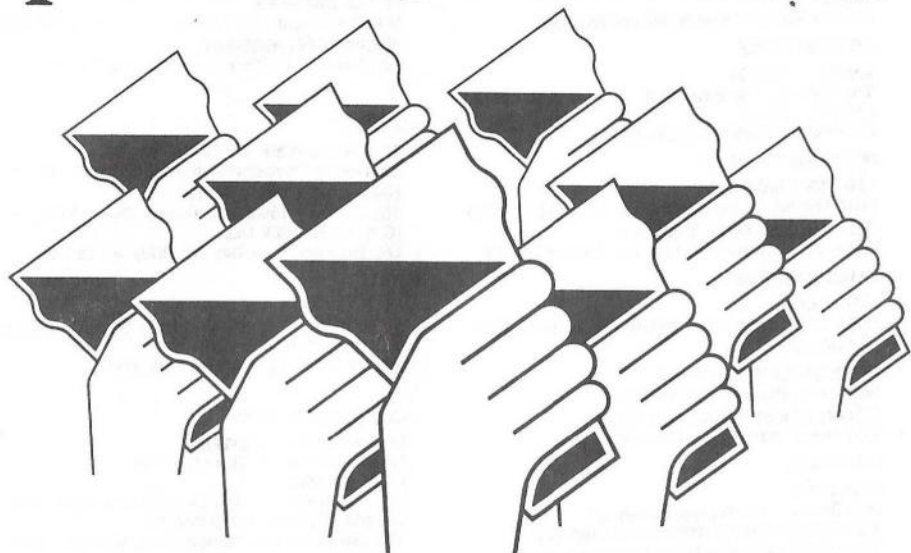
Hundreds attended the Boathouse Raft Race on the old river course on the late May Bank Holiday. They cheered on a hilarious, motley array of craft, varying from catamarans to floating pallets. The regatta final was won by the Boathouse Nomads, who are of no settled abode since the demise of the White Lion and Nags Head vaults. In hot pursuit were the Tiger Moth team, fed now, of course, by Holts.

TALLOW TUB UPDATE

Whitbread's application to Salford Planning Committee to change the Cook Street Brewery and demolish the Tallow Tub pub has ground to a halt as one concerned heritage group after another has submitted reports. This has resulted in the Planning Department having to prepare a full report for the Committee. The earliest date for a hearing is thought to be in August.

Concern is mounting for the fate of the pub, should we win the battle to prevent its demolition. Trade is very slack and a period of closure would probably see the pub vandalised or burnt out in double quick time.

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JENNINGS BROS Plc
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Derby Brewery, Empire Street, Cheetham
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Phoenix Brewery, Green Lane, Heywood
FREDERIC ROBINSON Ltd
Unicom Brewery, Stockport, Cheshire SK1 1JJ
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Kings Arms, Helmshore Walk, Manchester M13 9TH

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1 Collers Way, Reepham, Norfolk NR10 4SW
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MARSTON MOOR BREWERY

Crown Inn, Kirk Hammerton, York YO5 8DD

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SAMUEL SMITH

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WALES

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DYFED

CROWN-BUCKLEY

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FELINFOEL BREWERY CO

Farmers Row, Felinfoel, Llanelli, Dyfed SA14 8LB

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S A BRAIN & CO Ltd

Old Brewery, St Mary Street, Cardiff CF1 1SP

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POWYS

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SCOTLAND

BORDERS

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MACLAY & CO Ltd

Thistle Brewery, Alloa, Central FK10 1ED

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ORKNEY BREWERY

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LOTHIAN

BELHAVEN BREWERY CO Ltd

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CALEDONIAN BREWERY

Slateford Road, Edinburgh EH11 1PH

STRATHCLYDE

BROUGHTON BREWERY

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WEST HIGHLAND BREWERS

Old Station Brewery, Taynult, Argyllshire, Strathclyde

ISLE OF MAN

ISLE OF MAN BREWERIES Ltd

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CHANNEL ISLANDS

THE GUERNSEY BREWERY CO (1920) Ltd

South Esplanade, St Peter Port, Guernsey

R W RANDALL Ltd

Vauxdaens Brewery, St Julian's Avenue, St Peter Port

Guernsey

NORTHERN IRELAND

HILDEN BREWERY

Hidden House, Grant Street, Hilden, Lisburn

Co Antrim

FORTY YEARS ON

Roger Hall

It is twenty years since CAMRA was founded. Where will it be in another twenty years?

CAMRA has failed. Failure may seem an inappropriate word to use for an organisation which is thriving in terms of membership and which has transformed consumer pressure so that real ale is available in a majority of outlets and small breweries have proliferated by the score.

Yet, if we step back and take a more objective view of the industry, we might ask what has actually been achieved. The big brewers have a greater rather than lesser stranglehold than they had twenty years ago. Mergers, takeovers and brewery closures have continued apace and most of our "real ale" is badge-brewed by large combines in central locations. Quality, distinctiveness, character, individuality, regional differences seem to have gone out of the window and that beloved institution, the English pub, is in greater peril than it was in 1973, when Chris Hutt's "The Death of the English Pub" was published. The last twenty years has seen lager overhaul ale in volume terms, the virtual demise of real mild in many areas, the emergence of wine bars, an increased in licensed restaurants and a vast growth in off sales, all of which are counter to CAMRA's ostensible success.

CAMRA has become reactive rather than proactive. It now responds to situations rather than trying to set the agenda. Our strategy, such as it is, does not attempt to forecast future trends, to separate out the inevitable from the avoidable, to identify our own resources and our strengths and weaknesses as a campaign. In short, we fail to prioritise and end up chasing ambulances and chimeras. We need to think about what changes are likely in the industry as a result of social, economic and political changes in the UK and Europe. What's going to be the demand for beer? What's going to happen to the supply of beer in the UK? What about further mergers, badge brewing, separation of brewing from pub-owning, pub-owning groups, micro-breweries, the health lobby, anti-alcohol campaigning and many other issues?

It may be that marching round with banners when a brewery closes, running beer festivals and producing well-received publications is not an appropriate strategy. What future do we envisage and what do we hope for? Are we content to see the continued erosion of local breweries, the acceleration of badge brewing and the pretence of choice? Are we happy to see our traditional pubs closed, demolished, ravaged, gentrified and marginalised? Are wine bars, tavernas, home barbecues, dinner parties, bottled San Miguel, cans of Bud, tubes of Fosters part

of our future culture? Will we be content to see real ale as a minority niche market, catering to the arcane tastes of a declining number of ageing cognoscenti, or can it remain as a mainstream, bread and butter market? What do the brewers think and what are they going to do? Is there a close link between real pubs and real ale? If real pubs disappear, will real ale go with them? And if they do, who'll care?

At national, at regional and at branch level, CAMRA needs to think about what it wants to achieve over the next twenty years. To do that it must consider the way things are moving and what can and cannot be influenced. Above all, CAMRA needs a strategy. Over the next few months What's Doing hopes to promote a debate about real ale and its future. Views about dangers and potentialities are welcome. Only by looking towards the future can we hope to form a strategy which will focus the Campaign effectively and integrate the myriad initiatives which are proving so ineffectual at the moment.

WIN SOME

Boddington's bid to take over Devenish has failed, despite some last minute, behind-the-scenes manoeuvres. Dennis Cassidy is reported to be hopping mad.

LOSE SOME

Devenish, however, are to get rid of the Redruth brewery, which seems likely to close.

LOSE SOME MORE

Robinsons have announced the closure of Hartleys brewery in Ulverston later this year. Hartley's 4 beers (mild, bitter, Fellrunner and XB) are to be brewed in Stockport. Given that Robinsons brew 4½ real ales of their own, there are serious doubts about how long all the beers will be brewed. Hartleys doesn't always travel well in the Lake District. How it'll survive 90 miles of the M6 is a matter of conjecture.

HYDES GAINS

Hydes have obtained their fiftieth tied house with the purchase of the Cock Robin, Manor Avenue, Sale, from John Smiths (who had previously leased it to Mansfield). As well as being another real ale gain, there will probably also be a price reduction.

The Unicorn in Hale Barns, refurbished a short while ago, now has the elevated status of a one-star hotel, a first for this brewery.

BRIDGE CLOSED

The Bridge on Blackburn Street, Radcliffe, has joined the ever-growing ranks of boarded-up pubs. The former Whitbread house, which has recently been selling Boddingtons, has suffered poor trade in the somewhat hostile environment of downtown Radcliffe.

MALLARD TAKES OFF

Further to last month's story that Holts have acquired the Gardeners Arms at Middleton, news comes of the brewery's success in the guest beer market at the nearby Mallard on Windermere Road, Langley. This Wilsons/Websters house gets through eight barrels of Holts bitter each week. At 88p per pint this has, not surprisingly, decimated the sales of Grand Met products.

SCOUSE ALE IN OLDHAM

The much-heralded Cains bitter (brewed at the old Higsons brewery, shut by Boddingtons/Whitbread) is now available at two pubs in the Hollinwood area. The White Swan, Manchester Road, and the King George IV, Hollins Road, sell Cains on handpump. Sales are reported to be buoyant.

SALE OF THE CENTURY

"For Sale" boards are sprouting everywhere in the wake of the MMC Report and its attempt to loosen the grip of the big boys on the pub scene. Many deals are not all they seem, however, with various lease schemes creating pseudo-free-houses and many headaches for the unwary licensee. One pub that is definitely for sale, lock, stock and keg, is the BodPubCo Devonshire Arms in Lees, Oldham.

A one-time contender for the Good Beer Guide, the pub went on to keg beer a few years ago when Oldham Brewery (remember them?) insisted that buckets of overspill beer could not be taken to the cellar through the gents toilet!

Lees village is a busy part of Oldham, but dominated by Bass. Wouldn't it be nice to have a choice?

WHITBREAD CASK

Those who venture into the heart of Salford Precinct will be interested to know that the Flat Iron sells real ale in the form of Trophy bitter.

BOLTON NEWS

Des Nogalski

Burtonwood have withdrawn their plans to convert the Swan Hotel into offices. The plans, which were passed by Bolton Council last year despite opposition from CAMRA, Bolton Civic Trust and the Victorian Society amongst others, were to have been the subject of a local enquiry at the instigation of the Department of the Environment. However, the Department wrote to interested parties on 28th May to inform them that the plans had been withdrawn.

Although much of the current Swan Hotel dates back to the last century, there has been a Swan on the site for over 200 years. Burtonwood, who bought the hotel from Bass in 1980, wanted to rip out the inside of the building, leaving the four walls intact, and convert the interior into offices. No reason has been given by Burtonwood for the plans' withdrawal, but there are two other office developments close to the Swan, both of which still have space to let.

The Railway Hotel on St Helens Road is closed and boarded up. As this seems to have been a thriving pub, it is unlikely to be one which Whitbread would want to sell and we await further developments.

Tetley have put the White Hart on Deane Road up for sale. The pub never recovered from arson attacks it suffered during a recent short spell as "Carrington's", a sort of disco-pub/wine bar. Still for sale, too, is the Victoria (Greenalls) on Bridgeman Street, and there is no word yet on the eight Bass pubs up for grabs in Bolton.

One "pub" which has now reopened is the former Victory Conservative Club. In recent years it was known as Ziggy's Fun Pub until the neighbours complained about the noise. It later returned as Nero's, on a vaguely Roman theme but with handpumped Boddies. Now it is back again, this time as a Tetley house known as Funnies.

COCK EXTENSION

Whitbread plan to extend the kitchen of the Old Cock in Didsbury.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

An application has been made to change the Bulls Head in Hulme to a showroom, office and workshop for the manufacture of illuminated signs.

TOPPLED

The Crown, a Whitbread pub on Old Mill Street in Ancoats, is closed and boarded up, the latest victim of inner city pub closures which seem unending.

MIDDLETON & ROCHDALE NEWS

Peter Alexander

The Cemetery Hotel, Bury Old Road, Rochdale, a "try also" entry in the 1991 Good Beer Guide and a characterful, multi-roomed free house, is under new management. John Telfer is determined to restore the pub's reputation for good beer and to reclaim a full entry in the Good Beer Guide. The beer range includes Timothy Taylors best bitter, Landlord and Robinsons best bitter, with a selection of guest beers from around the country. Seven or eight different beers will normally be available. It is certainly to be hoped that John can restore the Cemetery to its previous pre-eminence. Why not call in and try the beer in the near future?

The JOINERS ARMS in Middleton, a 1991 Good Beer Guide entry, is now tenanted by Gary Hoolikin, the former Oldham footballer, and re-signed in green and red, the corporate colours of the OB part of BodPubCo's estate. The interior has been tarted up, whilst retaining separate bar and lounge areas served from a central bar. The bad news is that, despite the exterior signing proclaiming "Cask Conditioned Ales", the beer served from the handpumps is KEG.

Continuing this theme, the nearby DOG & PARTRIDGE, Spring Vale, Middleton, sells both Boddingtons bitter and OB mild and bitter through wickets clearly marked "Cask Conditioned". Despite this, and no less than four exterior signs advertising "Cask Conditioned Ales", both the Boddingtons and the OB are KEG.

This practice is misleading and deceitful. While both houses will admit the beer is keg when asked, the new exterior signs say otherwise. Will BodPubCo please clean up their act and either restore real beer or remove the misleading signs?

I am glad to correct a statement in June's WD about the BRUNSWICK on Oldham Road/Townley Street, Middleton. The Belhaven 80/- sold on hand-pump is real ale. Licensee Jim Mellor, a CAMRA member, was appalled to read otherwise. Jim has recently introduced a guest beer policy, bringing exotics such as Archers, Sam Powells and Cropton to Middleton for what must be the first time. The beers, all supplied by Alan Pepper's Beer Agency, have been in excellent condition. At the time of writing, Hook Norton bitter was in particularly fine fettle.

The BRUNSWICK, well known for its biking clientele and loud (nay, deafening) rock music, is well worth a visit. The staple range of beers is Ind Coope Burton Ale, Tetley bitter and Dobbins bitter. Belhaven 80/- alternates with McEwans 80/- and there's a guest every ten days or so. Guest beers are competitively priced, with Hook Norton bitter retailing at £1.05, for example.

Jim Mellor is to be congratulated on his enterprise. Readers of WD will receive a particularly warm welcome, as will all CAMRA members. Those preferring a quiet time should avoid Friday and Saturday evenings!

HOLTS IN SALFORD

The Salford Arms, in the shadow of Cook Street Brewery, has chucked Boddies out and replaced it with Holts bitter at 88p a pint. Whitbread, whose pub it is, are reported to be less than delighted.

CAINS

Cains beer from the old Higsons brewery is available in the Old Garratt on Princess Street. It is expected to appear in other Greater Manchester outlets in the near future.

BODDIES UP AGAIN

Boddingtons, our friendly neighbourhood pub owning group, has increased its prices to tenants by £9 per barrel and rents between £1,500 and £15,000 per annum. This has had the effect of raising prices by around 7p a pint. The £1 pint is now a distant memory. Tenants are less than happy about what they see as moves to undermine their position. At a meeting of over 100 of the 200 BodPubCo tenants in Manchester on 20th June there were calls for strike action. The company's policies could lead to a 12p differential between managed and tenanted pubs. Further developments in next month's WD.

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Branch Diary

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 3 July, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Manchester
Wed 10th July, Tyldesley. Colliers Arms, Sale La, 7pm, Half Moon 8.30
Fri-Sun 12-14 July, Ashton Canals Festival
Wed 17 July, Branch Meeting, White Lion, Swinton Market Place, 8pm
Wed 24 July, Winton/Monton crawl. Egerton 7pm, Brown Cow 8pm, Bargee 8.45pm
Wed 31st July, Failsworth. Church Inn 7pm, Bridge Inn 8pm.
Wed 7 August, Regional Meeting, Marble Arch
Wed 14 Aug, Committee meeting, Dun Mare, Little Hulton, 8pm.
Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

Tues 2 July 8pm, Branch Meeting, Old Boars Head, Long St, Middleton
Sat 6 July 11.30am, Independents Day Event. Coach trip around independents' pubs/breweries. Tel. K Birch 0204 887356 for details.
Tues 9 July 8pm, Presentation for 10 years in the GBG at the Bird in Hand, 113 Huddersfield Road, Newhey, Milnrow, Rochdale.
Thurs 11 July 8pm, Evening Social, Brunswick, Moorgate, Bury
Sun 14th July 12 noon. Sunday Stroll, starting at Rams Head, Ripponden Road, Denshaw, Oldham
Tues 16th July 8pm. Committee meeting, Cemetery, 470 Bury Road, Rochdale.
Tues 6th Aug 8pm, Branch Meeting, Eagle & Child, Higher La, Whitefield
Contact: B Lee 061 766 6601 (w), 0706 824407 (h)

TRAFFORD & HULME

Thurs 4 July 8pm, Independents Day, Kings Arms, Salford
Sat 6 July, Hooton Trip. All day trip to Liverpool and Chester by train. Details from branch contact
Thur 11 July 8pm, Branch Social. Meet at Crown & Cushion (nr Victoria Station), then Queens Arms and Marble Arch.
Thur 18 July 8pm, Branch meeting, Builders Arms, Knutsford
Thur 25 July 8pm, Social, Stalybridge Station Buffet Bar
Sat 27 July, Joint Social with Watford & District Branch and South Manchester branch. Stockport crawl, curry, etc, etc... Further details from branch contact.
Thurs 1 Aug 8pm, Committee meeting, Orange Tree, Altrincham
Contact: Allan Glover 061 962 9890 (h) 061 876 0340 (w)

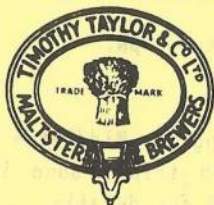
Contributors to this issue: Roger Hall, Rob Magee, Paul Roberts, Roger Wilson, Keith Egerton, Steve Lawton, Dave White, Peter Alexander, Peter Barnes, Des Nogalski, Stewart Revell, Jim Hurst, Mark Stevens.

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