

WHAT'S DOING

Sept
1991



THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE



BEER IN BOLTON

A "mini beer festival" began at the Clifton Arms, Newport Street, Bolton, at the end of last month. Joining the regulars (Tetley, Walker, Jennings and Moorhouses bitters) are Taylors Landlord, Everards Tiger, Moorhouses Pendle Witch and Jennings Sneck Lifter.

PRICE LISTS AND OPENING HOURS

A CAMRA survey of 769 pubs found that 1 in 7 were breaking the law by not displaying a price list. And 63% weren't displaying their opening times. 14% had no price list at all and 19% had price lists which couldn't be seen from the bar.

7% displayed their opening times inside the pub - pretty useless when you are outside, waiting for it to open! 27% displayed them outside only - so you have to drag yourself outside to find out when the place shuts.

KING'S ALE

Leo King

So now Ye Olde Nelson on Chapel Street, Salford, is to be demolished for road widening (WD July). Whitbread want to demolish the Tallow Tub and the Crescent may be turned into offices. Another block of offices is to be built next to the Kings Arms - are they going to knock this pub down as well? It's about time that Salford made its main street - Chapel Street - into an attractive city centre. Leave the pubs alone, bring back the reputable shops and stores and breathe new life into the old centre as other towns and cities have done. Years ago Chapel Street was a thriving centre and Salford was one of the most-pubbed places in the country. Look at it now.

More Salford notes....

The Spinners (ex-Marstons) on Oldfield Road is still closed and boarded up. The Railway, corner of Oldfield Road and Liverpool Street, is now a John Smiths outlet. It was formerly a Greenalls pub and before that a Wilsons house. I asked for a pint of bitter but was served Magnet bitter. Both the Magnet and John Smith's usual bitter are dispensed from illuminated electric pumps, but the Magnet didn't have a fizzy taste and was pleasant. Maybe John Smiths also dispense their traditional beers from these pumps now - either that or my taste buds are deteriorating!

Hobson's Choice (Whitbread/Chesters), Oldfield Road, is still open despite a sign high above the entrance which reads: "Licensed premises for sale - Freehold - No tie". This pub was formerly the Brown Cow (the name is still on the windows) and it was given its present name to commemorate the play (and 1954 film) "Hobsons Choice", which was based in Salford. Some of the scenes for the film were shot in Salford.

SEYMOUR/GROVE

The old Seymour Hotel (latterly "Seymours") on Upper Chorlton Road, Whalley Range, has been revamped considerably. It is now called the Grove (being immediately opposite Seymour Grove) and real ale is on sale for the first time in many, many years. It was a Wilsons pub for some time and it is now a BodPubCo outlet selling, on my last visit, Boddingtons bitter on handpump. Only one real ale, but that's better than none at all!

This large hotel was gutted in the Watney era; before the brewery architects moved in there used to be magnificent fireplaces at each end of the large lounge. The new Grove is not quite as grand as the

original hotel, but the new layout is far better than any of the previous ghastly efforts. New lighting, seating, glass and woodwork give the Grove a bright and cheery atmosphere. The beer is good, too.

ECCLES NEWS

Mike Robinson

New Landlord (1)

Wayne Stokes is the new landlord at the Duke of York, Church Street. Wayne has taken up the permanent post after being a relief manager. The latest beer range at the Duke is: Taylors Landlord and Ram Tam; Thwaites bitter; Chesters mild and bitter; Bentleys Yorkshire Bitter; Castle Eden. Guest beer: Fullers Chiswick Bitter.

New Landlord (2)

Don Wilkinson is the new landlord of the Bridgewater (Holts), Liverpool Road, Patricroft. His predecessor, Mike Baxter, has moved to the Park, Swinton.

Guest Beer

The Ship Canal, Barton Lane, now has Boddingtons bitter as a guest beer alongside the regular Wilsons mild and bitter.

Black Boy Transformed!

It's not often that a brewery builds a brand new public bar for a pub, but that's exactly what Banks's have done at the Black Boy, Liverpool Road, Patricroft.

The Black Boy used to be an awkwardly-shaped, open-plan pub with little character. However, following extension into adjacent premises and a full refurbishment, it has been transformed into a very smart two-bar local with lounge and public bars. The beer range remains unchanged, with Banks's mild (96p) and bitter (101p) on electric pumps.

Banks's are to be congratulated on a well-executed pub conversion.

REAL ALE GAIN

The Unicorn on Charles Street, Werneth, Oldham, now sells Boddingtons and OB cask beers. This former Oldham Brewery pub had been on keg beer for many years.

LAST POST?

Whitbread's Penny Black in Cheetham is closed and boarded up. The area around Waterloo Road has been particularly difficult, with problems in recent years at many pubs, including the Lonsdale and the Apollo.

WHOSE PUB IS IT ANYWAY?

Not so very long ago, you could tell who owned a pub by the brewery name on the signage. The licensee would be either a tenant or a manager employed by the brewery. The small number of free houses were usually identified as such and the licensee was usually the owner.

This simple state of affairs no longer exists. The decision by some breweries to quit brewing and the shedding of many pubs by the big brewers has led to a situation where the name of a brewery on a pub gives no indication as to who owns the business. Does a Boddington's sign, for example, indicate that the premises are owned by BodPubCo, by Whitbread (who own Boddingtons Brewery and trade name) or by one of the many free house chains?

Few premises indicate anything other than the pub name, the name of the licensee and the beers they sell. Yet the responsibility is clear. Where licensed premises are owned by a company:

"Every company shall paint or affix, and keep painted or affixed, its name on the outside of every office or place in which its business is carried on, in a conspicuous position and in letters easily legible."

Companies Act 1985 Part XI 348

Few premises appear to comply with this requirement. Some pubs, of course, trade under the pub name and, of course, this name would appear on the premises. However, there is a further requirement under Section 2 of the Business Names Act 1985. In any premises where the business is carried on and to which the customers of the business or suppliers of any goods or services to the business have access, there shall be displayed in a prominent position so that it may easily be read by such customers or suppliers a note containing the following names and addresses...

- (i) in the case of a partnership, the name of each partner.
- (ii) in the case of an individual, his name.
- (iii) in the case of a company, its corporate name, and
- (iv) in relation to each person so named, an address in Great Britain at which service of any document relating in any way to the business will be effective.

How many of us can claim to have seen such a notice?

Clearly, then, the law is once again being flagrantly ignored by the licensed trade. As a campaigning organisation, CAMRA requires this information in order to monitor pub ownership and the growth of pub-owning groups. We should press vigorously for compliance with the law, even to the extent of initiating prosecutions for those who refuse to indicate the ownership of licensed premises.

Roger Hall

WIGAN & DISTRICT

Dave White

In my last column, I remarked upon the appearance of real ale in the unlikeliest of Wigan's pubs. The trend continues, with EDISON'S on Market Street in the town centre now serving Tetley bitter and dark mild via handpump. Formerly the CROFTERS ARMS (and with the old Walker maroon-and-white tilework still intact), Edisons has sold Tetley fizz for at least fifteen years. Even more surprising is the arrival of Boddingtons bitter at the BROCKETT ARMS, Wigan Lane. I am reliably informed that this Tetley hostel hasn't sold traditional ale in its entire thirty-odd year history. Indeed, Tetley seem to have gone completely barmy, as evidenced by the fact that the VICTORIA on Wallgate has just had its first coat of paint since VE night. Wonders never cease.

Another trusty informant has reason to believe that the PARK HOTEL, Manchester Road, Higher Ince, will soon be selling Websters Green Label. This is a far better tipple than its bland Yorkshire counterpart, so get in there and drink the stuff before that nice Mr Courage closes the brewery. At the moment, the Park is one of the few pubs in the area - if not the only one - still to sell cask Wilsons mild.

Still on Manchester Road, but going into Hindley, the MINSTREL now has John Smith Magnet alongside the regular bitter; and let's hope that Paramount Inns, owners of the HOCKERY BROOK, soon remove the sign outside the pub proclaiming "traditional ales"...unless they plan to reintroduce the stuff, that is.

The WATERS EDGE, Mill Lane, Appley Bridge (ex-Greenalls) has re-emerged as a "free house". Several Tetley huntsmen smile benevolently at you from the exterior signings, but inside the pub, little has changed, with Tetley and Greenalls fizz vying for barspace. With three other real ale pubs within walking distance, the Waters Edge has little to commend it, but if you've got to have your fix of Greenalls, then try the FOX INN at nearby Roby Mill, which sells the full Greenalls range on handpump, plus Stones best bitter.

On the subject of free houses, the Station Bar at Gathurst used to be quite resistable. When it opened last year the beers on offer were Boddies bitter and Flowers IPA. They're still there, but so are Marstons Pedigree, Tetley mild and a guest beer, which alternates between Taylors Landlord and Fullers London Pride. A pity that the nearby Appley Bridge Station Bar, with its keg Bass range, couldn't follow suit.

Finally, news in brief...the HARE & HOUNDS, Upholland Road, Billinge, has been selling Kelham Island bitter and/or Taylors Landlord as a guest beer and both are proving more popular than the Tetley products normally on sale (I'm saying nothing)...not far away, another Tetley pub, the QUEENS ARMS on Sandbrook Road, Tontine (long keg), is closed and boarded up...Cains bitter is now on sale at the Robin Hood, Wigan Road, Ashton, at the expense of the ersatz Higsons brew. The Robin Hood is the only Higsons pub in Wigan Metro - what a comedown!...the CHERRY GARDENS, Wigan Lane, Wigan (Burtonwood), has gone over to keg mild. Apologies to any Wigan Ale Trailers who were caught out.

NEW HYDES PUBS

Some of the ten pubs Hydes have bought from Bass (WD last month) are now selling Hydes beers. The Golden Fleece (Bury) and the Wellington (Radcliffe) have Hydes mild and bitter, whilst the Lord Clyde (Bolton) also has the rare dark mild. Our roving reporter reckons that the Wellington is the best so far.

NEW BROOK

The Brook Tavern at Wardley has undergone its transformation (WD last month) and now sells real ale - Tetleys.

CASTLE & FALCON

Work has started on restoring the Castle & Falcon in Manchester, now that most of the mess created by the laying of Metrolink track has been tidied up. The basic jobs of underpinning the foundations and putting in new roof timbers are well under way.

GOING FOR A BURTON

Big changes are planned at the Burton Arms on Swan Street, Manchester. The Bass range of beers is to be dropped, with the exception of draught Bass, and a variety of more interesting real ales is to be introduced. Will the management do anything about the arbitrary closing times as well? We'll see.

RUMOUR DEPARTMENT

We hear that the Berwick Arms (Bass) on Carnarvon Street, Cheetham, has been selling Lees bitter as a guest beer recently. This pub hasn't sold real ale for donkey's years.

CELL SOLD

Byrom's (the former Kersal Cell) and the Adelphi Riverside have both been acquired by Tetleys.

CAMRA STRATEGY

Roger Hall

The Brewery Action Group, which likes to think of itself as a regional think tank, has been considering the question of CAMRA's future strategy. BAG recognised the need for CAMRA to concentrate on one common aim and identified two stages in adopting a strategy...

1. Determining one major objective.
2. Determining methods of achieving this.

In concentrating on the first stage, many suggestions were forthcoming but the greatest danger was seen as the growth of national brands of real ale. CAMRA's main objective should focus on opposition to National Branding. Many evils were considered to flow from the growth of branding, including prices, monopoly control, the demise of regional beers, brewery closures, the loss of mild, the marginalisation of pubs and the deterioration in quality.

The suggestion that opposition to national branding should form the major thrust of our future campaigning was brought to the Regional Meeting and overwhelmingly endorsed. A conceptual shift might be required to campaign against real ale, or to support a real ale in one location and reject it in another, but the trend was seen as something which must be arrested and reversed at all costs.

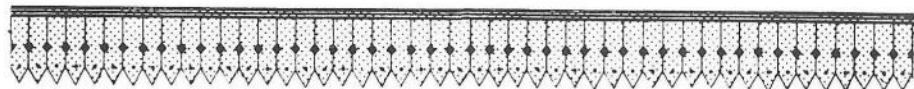
If we end up with the "choice" which consumers can exercise in America or Australia, it won't really matter who owns the pubs, whether they display price lists or opening hours or sell keg cider through hand-pumps. In CAMRA's early days, the campaign against Red Barrel mobilised and united members in a way which brought about rapid changes. Lager has, perhaps, run its course. Let us make sure that the brewers' latest wunderkind, real ale, remains locally brewed for local tastes.

We need to consider ways in which this objective might be achieved. Greater Manchester branches will be proposing the adoption of Opposition to National Branding as the major campaign objective at CAMRA's 1992 AGM.

TRAFFORD ALES

Urmston's sixth pub, the Britannia on Flixton Road, is a cafe bar selling Websters Yorkshire Bitter and Ruddles bitter on handpump. Don't all rush at once!

The Orange Tree, Altrincham, has replaced Wilsons mild with Websters Green Label - unique in South Manchester.



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LETTERS



LICENSING FREE FOR ALL

Sir - I am unsure how Peter Barnes' advocacy of a licensing free for all (WD Aug) advances CAMRA's search for a clear strategy, but it certainly raises questions of control which need to be addressed. Licensing serves many purposes other than merely to control the number of licensed premises. The suitability of premises and the character of the licensee are surely critical to control of licensed premises, and the location of a pub is important for purposes of road safety and public nuisance. There is little evidence to suggest that the magistrates' consideration of need acts in restraint of trade. Applications are rarely turned down on grounds of need unless there are objections. "Trade" objections carry little weight with most committees. Frequently, applications are granted against the weight of "trade" objections because an applicant has demonstrated a need for real ale, a variety of beers, a pub of traditional character or something else which has been hitherto ignored by the big brewers. Licences are not being unreasonably withheld. Indeed, many licensed premises, closed for economic reasons, could have been acquired by the "more entrepreneurial type of licensee" but haven't. Where are the premises which could have become thriving pubs but for the restrictions of licensing magistrates?

The unfettered proliferation of pubs may seem a utopian aim but it is likely to bring about more problems than answers. It would certainly not curtail the monopolistic powers of the big brewers. In 1830 the Beerhouse Act freed a large number of licensed premises from control by licensing committees. The ensuing problems were legion. Moreover, the growth of uncontrolled premises was one factor in accelerating the demise of small brewers and the concentration of ownership which we face today. The licensing system is not perfect, but it would be foolhardy to lose what control we have. I feel that we should look elsewhere for ways to curb the excesses of the big brewers. Unsuitable premises run by convicted felons is too high a price to pay for freedom from control, for which there is little demand and which would do little to further CAMRA's aims.

Roger Hall

URMSTON PUBS

Sir - Thanks to "High Speed Gas" (WD July) for raising the profile of Urmston and Flixton pubs. He is welcome to come to the survey night

(approx 9pm at the Roebuck, 26th September). While I personally don't like the technical quality of the beer in the Roebuck, I acknowledge that it is highly rated among regulars I have spoken to.

At the Manor Hey, the S&N beers are kept well, but like many national brewery brands have inferior, bland tastes. (In some cases, beers are brewed miles away from their original homes.) On my last visit, the Theakston and Matthew Brown beers tasted so similar that they reminded me of the former Krol lager cartoon. Nevertheless, this is not the fault of the Manor Hey's licensee, who deserves congratulations on supplying and keeping his real ales in good condition - this, of course, is why the pub is in the Good Beer Guide. How about a guest beer, though?

The Lord Nelson also keeps excellent Holts beers, but sadly won't be in next year's GBG as there is a six-month qualification rule on new licensees. Let's hope the Trafford & Hulme branch puts the Lord Nelson in the 1993 GBG.

Roger Wood

DORTMUND DRINKING

Sir - I was interested to read Paul Roberts' piece on Dortmund and the Ruhr area of Germany in June's WD. Coincidentally, I had been in Essen the weekend before Paul.

Before getting down to matters of alcohol, I would certainly agree with Paul about the public transport interest in the area, but I would like to correct him on one or two points. I know, of course, that your magazine is not the place in which to go into a long and boring discussion on the relative merits of, say, different types of tramway equipment, but I hope you will bear with me nevertheless. In my experience an interest in public transport and decent beer often go hand in hand.

Solingen is certainly Germany's largest trolleybus system, and the only one using six-wheel rigid single deckers, but it is not the only one. In west Germany there is also a system at Esslingen, near Stuttgart, and in the "neuen Länder" of east Germany there are systems at Potsdam, Weimar, Hoyerswerda and Eberswalde. The system at Essen does have overhead wires, though not in the city centre. Of additional interest at Essen is the fact that some of the routes run on a concrete guided track, part of which is shared with trams. Some of the trolleybuses have doors on the offside as well as the nearside, and the trolley poles automatically rise to meet the wires at changeover points without any action from the driver other than the press of a button in the cab. Those who remember the problems with Manchester's

trolleybuses when they deired in the town centre, and the conductor had to run around with a long bamboo pole with a hook on the end, would be very impressed!

Still on the public transport theme, the Ruhrgebeit also boasts the only tram service in the world with buffet facilities, serving beer and sausages. They run on the interurban routes U76 and U79, from DÜsseldorf to Krefeld and Duisburg respectively. Beware, though, as the trams don't have loos, and the journey takes about an hour each way. How about that, then, Metrolink?

At least in the Ruhr there are plenty of decent boozers (The pubs, not the people who drink in them.) I live just outside Frankfurt, and unfortunately the situation here is a bit different. We have our fair share of "traditional locals", but the problem is that the local speciality is not beer at all, but cider (Apfelwein, locally called Ebbelwoi). If your taste is for a slightly sour, but often home-brewed, drink of 5% alcohol, then you're made: if you prefer beer, then the choice of hostelries is not so good. The dividing line between a pub and a restaurant is very blurred, so that there is often nothing in between a stand-up bar and a full-blown restaurant, often specialising in foreign (ie non-German) food.

We have two local mega-breweries, Binding and Henninger. I find their products to be unexciting, and of course they dominate the Frankfurt pub scene. However, neither produces a wheat-based beer (Weizen or Weissbier, depending on the brewer), so the variety of such beers is greater as they have to be bought-in from other brewers. Wheat beers also have the advantage that they are almost always bottled and come in half-litres: a $\frac{1}{3}$ -litre ($\frac{1}{2}$ -pint) glass of Pils goes down rather too quickly sometimes.

If possible, I always try to seek out one of the breweries from the surrounding towns, such as Licher (from Lich), PfungstÄdter (from Pfungstadt) and GlabbsbraU (from Seligenstadt). These breweries all produce excellent hoppy Pils; the last named also a dark beer and an export. Interestingly, the "export" beer style, derived from the Dortmunder type, is still going strong in this area. Most of the major breweries produce one, though it's often just a less hoppy and more malty version of the Pils.

What about home breweries? Apart from the cider houses (Apfelwein-kneipe), there are two in Frankfurt itself: one in the centre (the 12 Apostles, which is also a Jugoslavian restaurant) and one in the north-west suburb of Ginnheim, called the WÄldches. In the surrounding

area, the Ratskellers at both Wiesbaden and Darmstadt have their own breweries, and both produce a pale and a dark beer, unfiltered, but rather pricey. In Wiesbaden it's DM5.50 (about £1.80) per half litre, which compares with, say, DM2.40 for Rauchbier at a home brew pub in Bamberg in Franconia. Drinking around here is expensive anyway, but these prices are extortion.

It's a lot cheaper to buy beer at the off-licence and drink at home. This might seem like sacrilege, but in fact German bottled beers, not being pasteurised, are often as good as, and sometimes better than, the equivalent draught beers. They are certainly much cheaper. My normal tippie is Jever Pils from north Germany, which I get at my local off-licence for DM1.10 (about 38p) per half litre bottle. We buy it by the crate, of course. It is possible to pick up a crate of Pils from some breweries for as little as DM10 (20 half litre bottles) if you look for the special offers.

Norman Griffiths

WATCH THE DICKY BIRD

The Bird in Hand, a recently opened free house on Oldham Road, Miles Platting, was burned out on 24th July. There are now no fewer than six pubs closed between Livesey Street and Queens Road - the Old Pack Horse, the Notts Castle, the Lancaster, the Heywood Arms, the Hope Tavern and the Bird in Hand. Only the White Hart remains open. The cause of the fire has not yet been established. No doubt Plod and the boys from Trumpton will find out.

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HOLTS CORNER

Stewart Revell

Over the last decade Holts have increased their tied estate considerably. This has been achieved by building new pubs and purchasing ready built pubs no longer required by other brewers. In the first category, new Holts pubs include: The Sidings (Longsight), the Millstone (Warrington), the Dukes Gate (Little Hulton) and, more recently, the Ashley Brook (Seedley). The Sabre (Salford) and the Tanners (Cheetham) opened some time ago.

The pubs taken over by Holts include: the Cross Yates (ex-Bass, Rochdale), Kings Arms (ex-Wilsons, Salford), Old Blue Bell (ex-Wilsons, Bury), Kings Head (ex-Wilsons, Droylsden), Bolton Castle (ex-Tetley, Bolton), Crown & Cushion (ex-Whitbread, Manchester), Crown & Anchor (ex-Whitbread, Manchester), Atherton Arms (ex-Labour Club, Atherton) and the Hipp (ex-Whitbread, Harpurhey).

Two pubs have been lost in the 1980s: The Apollo (closed down) and the Spread Eagle, Regent Road, Salford (licence transferred to Dukes Gate).

The Junction was rebuilt, extended and given a new name - the Cheadle Hulme. The Broadway in Salford was also rebuilt. The Hyde Park Corner in Salford (once a Tetley pub) has been demolished and a new pub is being built on the site. The replacement for the Bridgewater in Hollinwood is due to open on 1st October. Planning permission has been obtained for "extensive alteration" at the Roebuck, Flixton.

To cope with the increased tied estate, an additional area manager, Keith Thompson, has been appointed to look after a third of the managed houses. Until recently he was with Thwaites, but is now working closer to home in and around the Greater Manchester area.

NEW BOROUGH

The Borough in Encombe Place, near Salford Royal, has been boarded up for some time. It was feared that the former Burtonwood pub would be sold as offices, but there are hopes that the premises will reopen as a pub.

NO OIL PAINTING

The Lowry, a modern Whitbread estate pub on Langley Road South, Pendleton, is closed and boarded up. The pub, which was rumoured to have been bought by Holts, was a victim of inner city violence and intimidation, according to the Manchester Evening News. Let's hope that somebody does buy it before it catches fire, as so many other Salford pubs have done.

NOW & THEN

by Rob Magee

No.58

GEORGE HOTEL

1 Stamford Street,
Mossley

The original George Inn at Mossley stood next to the site of the present pub and was opened by William Farmer in 1826. Septimus Gill moved from the nearby Royal Oak beerhouse on Arundel Street to take over the George in 1858. For several years, Septimus had tried to get a full licence for the Royal Oak, but now that he was running the fully licensed George his attitude changed. In 1862 he was the only Mossley publican to object to a full licence for the Royal Oak. At the brewster sessions the solicitor for the Royal Oak's licensee accused him of opposing free enterprise and also said (somewhat maliciously!) that when Septimus had purchased the George, Lord Stamford, owner of the land, had inserted a clause in the sale to the effect that the house could be pulled down to widen Stamford Street. The solicitor concluded his attack with, "...and he (Septimus) has the impudence to think that he is a snug as a button!"

The old George Inn was indeed pulled down so that Stamford Street could be widened. However, at the same time (in 1866) Septimus Gill built the present George Hotel next door. It was said he gave an



allowance of 8,448 pints of ale to the men who built the new George, but such extravagant behaviour may have been unwise.

Septimus Gill's fortunes appear to have taken a downturn, as barely three years after the new pub opened he had left. In 1869 he was running the Welcome Return (now the Blazing Rag) in nearby George St. This was a mere beerhouse – poetic justice, as far as the beerhouse-keeper at the Royal Oak was concerned!

The spacious George Hotel soon became established as Mossley's principal hotel and was a busy place for a number of years. In the early 1880s licensee William Radcliffe had established an ale and porter bottling business there and a few years later the owner was William Boardman. There was a Manchester brewer of this name who later formed Boardman's United Breweries and sold out to the Cornbrook Brewery in 1899. As the George is recorded as a Cornbrook house in 1907, he may well have been the same man.

The hotel side of the business appears to have declined in importance by 1890 – a survey of that year found that the George could provide accommodation for just one traveller.

The George became a Bass pub in 1961 and in 1989 part of the Cafe Inns group. The enterprising Kevin Harpy purchased the pub in 1990 and now it operates under the Royal Free House banner. Major alterations are planned for the George and accommodation may once more be provided.

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.

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SALFORD LICENCES

The licences of the Rovers Return in Ordsall and Summervilles at Irlams o'th'Height were revoked by Salford Licensing Bench in August. Appeals have been lodged against the decisions to revoke the licences of the Ordsall and the St James in July.

rupert

During Bunty's incarceration, Effoff, the Friends of Fortescue fought relentlessly for his release from prison. Since Bunty gained his freedom some months ago, their efforts to clear his name have not diminished. Given the problems with Hanratty and Bentley, they were not wholly optimistic and it came as a great surprise to most when Bunty was suddenly exonerated. After all, he wasn't even slightly Irish, had never been near Midley and had never juggled with nitroglycerine.

The removal of Bunty's convictions for GBH, Riot and Affray wiped the slate clean and Bunty was free to pursue his ambition to run a tavern of his very own. He bought a hostelry in downtown Slumley, decorated it and installed a mega-range of amber nectars from the wickets. Bunty's friends and supporters came along but so did some of the local hardpersons who didn't have many taverns left and had been thrown out of the few that did remain. They knew about Bunty's record and thought they could do what they liked because Bunty wouldn't want any trouble in case he was locked up again. They reckoned without Bunty's enormous strength of character. The opening night at the Rat & Terrier was reminiscent of scenes of yore at the Gunge-

smearers and the Dockers Wedge. The drug barons, protection racketeers and their henchmen and hangers-on, together with minor members of the criminal fraternity, were laid out and left in an enormous pile in the middle of Dukeley Boulevard. Far from taking Bunty to task, Transits of cheering constabulary drove past for hours.

The story is, however, not without a tragic element. Within a week, the Rat & Terrier was burnt to the ground in a mysterious fire. The corpses of Bunty's twin sparrowhawks and his three tattooed and muzzled pit bull terriers were found in the remains of the kitchen and Bunty was arrested for arson. Even Mr Fortescue's closest friends wonder whether even his resilient spirit will withstand this assault.

It is not only in Slumley where problems exist. All is not well in the state of Snobley and Snoot Magna. This dynamic cell of the Campaign has enjoyed a stable period since the days of the keg Snotes drinking microcephalic ectomorphic sibling of the barrel-shaped accountant and the attempted coup by Dermatitis. There have, however, been episodes of teddy-clutching and cupboard skulking as people have taken their bats and balls home. What can be going on?

Contributors to this issue: Roger Hall, Rob Magee, Stewart Revell, Dave Glass, Phil Stout, Paul Roberts, Mike Robinson, Roger Wood, Dave White, Leo King, Bill Collier



Branch Diary

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 4 Sept: Cadishead & Irlam crawl. Coach & Horses 7pm, Railway 8pm, then Tiger Moth for Holts.

Wed 11 Sept: Committee & Social, Morning Star (A6), Wardley 8pm. Preceded by visit to Brook Tavern.

Wed 18 Sept: Branch Meeting, White Lion, Swinton, 8pm

Tue 24 Sept, Brewery Action Group, Castle, Oldham St, Manchester, 8.15

Wed 25 Sept, Chapel Street crawl: Peel Park 7pm, Salford Arms 8pm

Wed 2 Oct: Boothstown Crawl, Woodside (E Lancs Road) 7pm, then via Boundary Stone to King William for 8.30.

Wed 9 Oct Regional Meeting, Kings Arms (Dobbins), Helmsshore Walk

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

TRAFFORD & HULME

Thur 5 Sept 8pm, Committee meeting, Kings Arms, Salford

Thur 12 Sept 8pm, Hulme survey, starting at Junction. Grants at 9pm, finishing at Church

Thur 19 Sept 8pm, Branch Meeting, Vine, Manchester. Also visit to the Abercrombie

Thur 26 Sept 8pm, Flixton survey. Station Bar, Greyhound, Church, Roe-buck, Manor Hey

Thur 3 Oct 8pm, Committee meeting at the Railway, Alty. Also Malt Shovels and Old Mill.

Future events

19 Oct: Day trip to Wakefield by train

29 Nov: Three-day branch trip to Brussels

14 Dec: Xmas dinner at the Market Restaurant

Contact: Allan Glover 061 962 9890 (h), 061 872 2373 (w)

ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

Tue 3 Sept 8pm, Branch Meeting, Wheatsheaf, 699 Oldham Rd, Failsworth

Tue 10 Sept, evening. Hydes Brewery trip. Limited places, but new members especially welcome. Phone for details.

Thur 12 Sept 8pm. Social evening + "Ale Trail" prizegiving, Tap & Spile, Hope Street, Rochdale

Sun 15th Sept, Train trip on ELR. Meet at Napier, Bury, 12 noon.

Tues 17 Sept 8pm, Committee meeting, Dog & Partridge, Roundthorn Road, Roundthorn, Oldham

Tues 24 Sept 8pm, Presentation for 10 years in GBG at Help Me Thro', Crostons Road, Bury

Tues 1 Oct 8pm, Branch Meeting, Blue Pitts, Manchester Rd, Castleton, Rochdale.

Contact: B Lee 061 766 6601 (w), 0706 824407 (h)

WIGAN

Mon 9 Sept, Titanic, Stoke (5.35 Tudor)
Wed 11 Sept, Branch Meeting, Lychgate, Standish, 8.30
Mon 16 Sept, Bass, Tadcaster (5.20 Tudor)
Sat 5 Oct, All day trip (9.00 Tudor)
Wed 9 Oct, Branch Meeting, Tudor 8.30
Thur 24 Oct, Wards, Sheffield (4.00 Tudor)
Thur 7 Nov, Cains (5.00 Tudor)
Contact: Dave Hughes 051 443 3464 (w), 025 75 3864 (h)

HIGHER IRLAM PRICES

Higher Irlam Social Club sells real ale in the form of Wilsons mild (88p), Wilsons bitter (90p), Tetley mild (88p) and Websters Green Label (90p). This has created a small degree of price competition in the immediate area, where the Tiger Moth now has Holts bitter (86p) as a guest beer.

Whitbread have introduced Poachers keg beers at the Nags Head, promoted by a "Midsummer Madness" campaign. The "under a pound" prices are advertised both inside and outside the pub: lager 99p, bitter 89p and mild 87p. Their real ale is much more expensive: Chesters mild 108p, Chesters bitter 112p and Boddingtons bitter 114p. Poachers bitter is 20% cheaper than Boddies - a significant price difference.

Presumably the idea is to attract new custom, although some existing customers might switch to the cheaper keg beer.

The "Sports", over the road from the Nags Head, is under new management. Shortly before the change handpumped Wilsons was removed and the pub has no real ale. Keg Wilsons bitter is 115p and Holsten lager is 150p.

The Boathouse (BodPubCo), by the old river course, sells Boddingtons mild (103p) and bitter (106p) - vault prices.

JUST FANCY THAT!

"Not even Roger Hall could claim that Cains was threatened just yet!"
(Tony Molineux, WD July 1991)

"Robert Cain, the brewery which began producing beer in Liverpool only last year, has been taken over by Danish brewer Faxe Jyske. The Danes bought a controlling interest last month for an undisclosed sum."

(What's Brewing, August 1991)

"And Cain was very wroth." (Genesis 4(5))

What else is safe, Tony?

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Mon: 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00

Tues: 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00

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Thur: 12.00-4.00 6.00-11.00

Fri: 12.00-11.00

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