

WHAT'S DOING

SEPT
1992

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

POTATO BLIGHT



There is some concern about the future of the Oxnoble on Liverpool Road, Manchester. (The only pub in Manchester named after a potato since the Maris Piper shut in 1887.) Apparently Whitbread wanted to pull the building down and build a new pub, but planning permission was refused. They say the building is unsafe, which is their fault as they knocked the place about in the 1970s to the extent that the bar fell into the cellar! The building may now be sold.



MANCHESTER CIDER FESTIVAL

Six free houses are getting together for a Manchester Cider Festival from 17th September to 3rd October. Over fifty British and foreign ciders will be on offer, with about six different brews on sale at each pub at any one time.

The pubs taking part are the Marble Arch, the Beer House; the Kings Arms and the Crescent in Salford; the Queens, Red Bank; the Kings Arms in Chorlton on Medlock.

PAYING GUEST

On a recent visit to a Bolton Whitbread house a correspondent spotted OB on handpump alongside the Boddies. He asked for OB and got a shock when he was told it was £1.42 a pint, as against £1.22 for the Boddingtons. The reason? It was a guest beer!

STOWELL SPIRE

The new Banks's pub in Weaste is called the Stowell Spire (after the nearby landmark). This name was put forward by Tony Adams, a Salford CAMRA member. His prize? 24 cans of Banks's beer!

SOUR GRAPES

Boddingtons have applied for listed building consent to alter and refurbish the Old Grapes in Sunlight House, off Quay Street. Even Boddingtons might actually improve the somewhat bizarre interior.

MORE HOLTS IN TOWN

While other pubs in Central Manchester close, Holts are hoping to extend their only tied house in the City Centre (well, Muckman's isn't very central). They are hoping to expand the Crown & Anchor into the shop next door. Keen Holts watchers will be making sure they don't make a pig's ear of it.

KING'S ALE

Leo King

GULLIVERS on what must be Manchester City Centre's wildest street, Oldham Street, has been done up very nicely by J W Lees. There's now a much brighter bar layout and serving area, new furniture, a plush carpet and much better and brighter lighting. One corner has been reserved for a stage and the pool table remains in the back room, which has also been re-carpeted. Music is provided more or less from the pub opening to closing time by a very large cassette system. Some cassettes sound like they have come from the Ark, but music from way back is great, even though you get the feeling it would not be out of place if the system had a handle to wind it up! The beer is always in fine form, with bitter at £1.12 a pint.

Gullivers is full of all sorts of characters, so it's not for the faint-hearted! Although the pub contains a mixed set of drinkers, the atmosphere is colourful and, at times, unusual. If you have not been to Gullivers for a long time, try it.

It is a pity about the brewers' vandalism in the bad old days of Watneys ownership, when the pub was called the Grenadier and, before that, the Albert. Beautiful blue-and-white tiles and other fine fittings were ripped from the walls when the place was modernised. You only have to remember what Watneys did to the Marble Arch. Fortunately, the fine craftsmanship at the Marble Arch was only covered up. The old Albert was not so lucky.

Oldham Street contains two fine pubs of character - Gullivers and the Castle (Robinsons), almost opposite. The Castle has remained unaltered throughout the years and I hope that these two pubs reign for many years to come. The Castle sells the reasonably priced ordinary bitter.

A large new Banks's (yes, them again) pub should be open by the time you read this. The Stowell Spire is situated on Eccles New Road, just on the Weaste side of Regent Road roundabout. GM buses 33 and 63 and Ribble bus 25 from central Manchester stop almost at the pub.

The Millstone (Banks's and Wilsons beers) on Thomas Street in central Manchester appears to be closed again. This pub saw a tasteful refurbishment not too long ago. The Lower Turks Head on Shudehill is still closed, despite a notice in the window stating "Opening Soon", which has been there for the best part of this year! Other pubs in this area (which seems to have more closed pubs than any other part of Manchester City Centre) are Polars (formerly the Old White Bear), where a "For Sale" sign has been erected, Smithfields, the Crown & Kettle and, once again, seemingly, the City on Oldham Street. I have

also heard the Merchants Bar is closed for yet more alterations. Inject Holts tied outlets into this area, then the pubs would thrive! I would also like to see the Castle & Falcon open again. This pub on Bradshaw Street, once restored, must surely be better than the Castle & Falcon Club, where you have to be a member. Come on, Burtonwood, let's have the pub back again! Surely it's time the Castle & Falcon was reopened - why the long delay?

Rumours that Holts intend to purchase the Crown & Kettle and the Imperial have been revived. I first heard all this over six months ago. Does anyone remember the strong rumour that Holts had purchased the King on Oldham Street? It remained Tetleys. Perhaps CAMRA's contact with Holts could throw some light on the brewery's intentions?

HOLIDAY ALE: I went to Cornwall for my holidays this year and in far west Penzance (and other Cornish places), Boddingtons, Websters and John Smiths were available. So was Tetleys, but wait. It was the original bitter from Leeds! Why is it they can send the superior Leeds Tetley to Cornwall but can't manage to get it across the Pennines to Manchester?

ALTRINCHAM ALE

The Grapes, Regent Road, Altrincham (BodPubCo) has undergone its third major refurbishment in ten years. This was completed on 24th July and the two-bar pub now provides guest beers alongside Whitbread Boddingtons bitter and mild. Two recent guests were Taylors Landlord and Thwaites Craftsman (both £1.40 a pint), which manager Judith Litton intends to rotate with other guests.

Good value food is served six days a week (Mon-Sat lunchtimes) and Judith provides a home-made Madras curry which varies according to main constituent. On Sundays the Roast is excellent value at £2.50. It is good to see that BodPubCo have got away from the stereotypical wall hangings that some companies buy in bulk from the local market. The Grapes has a selection of monochrome prints of old Altrincham.

REAL EXPENSIVE CIDER

The Rams Head in Denshaw is selling Westons Vintage and Old Rosie ciders at £2 a pint, which is somewhat excessive. Instead of driving to the pub, why not drive down to Much Marcle in Herefordshire instead? If you buy a gallon of cider there, you'll save £13.60, which should cover the petrol costs for the trip!

ORIGINAL LION'S BREWS IN MANCHESTER

Peter Barnes

Despite the many brewery closures of the last few years it is not all doom and gloom on the North West brewing scene. When a large brewery closes and the ex-brewery manager uses his redundancy money to start a new brewery it can lead to the re-emergence of traditional brewing skills and good, distinctive beers. This is exactly what has happened - first with the **Coach House Brewery** in Warrington (ex-Greenalls employees) and, in September last year, the **Original Lion's Brews** at the Griffin Brewery in Burnley by ex-Matthew Brown employees.

The Manchester launch, at the Chestnut Lodge in Eccles on 19th August, was to introduce its product to the local trade. At the moment there



is a bitter, a dry, refreshing and distinctive brew which seems deceptively light for its 1042 og strength. A 1032 dark mild is to be introduced in September; a second, higher strength bitter is being test-brewed and there are plans for a 1058 winter ale (Old Edgar). The aim is to produce quality traditional beers at keen prices. The bitter is sold to the trade at 8p per pint less than Boddingtons bitter, despite its higher strength. It retails at prices ranging from 84p per pint in clubs to £1.38 in a pub/restaurant.

The brewery is housed in an industrial unit. They began with a 5-barrel plant producing 25 barrels per week and have since bought a copper, mash tun and other bits and pieces from a scrapyard and expanded to a 80-100 barrel per week operation. The bitter won the "Beer of the Festival" award at the Blackburn Beer Festival and up to now has been generally available in clubs, free houses and as a guest beer in the Burnley/Blackburn area. It is currently available at the Chestnut Lodge, Trafford Road, Eccles, and makes an occasional appearance at the Beer House, Manchester. Further outlets will be reported in next month's WD.

THE ROT SPREADS

Whitbread have announced they are going start putting Marstons Pedigree into cans.

REAL ALE GUIDE TO THE TRAMWAYS REVISITED

by Peter Wadsworth

In a major undertaking such as this guide, carried out as quickly as it was, it was inevitable that errors would creep in. So, apologies to all and here are the corrections...

<u>STATION</u>	<u>PUB</u>	<u>BEER</u>	<u>TIME (mins)</u>
RADCLIFFE	PAPERMAKERS	Holts mild and bitter	4

Mon-Sat 12-11, Sun 12-3, 7-10.30

Straight out of station and down the ramp to Church Street. Cross the road and turn left. Under the bridge to Rectory Lane. Right to Church Street East, left to the pub, 50 metres on the left.

BOWKER VALE	CHEERS BAR	John Smiths bitter, Courage Directors + guest	5
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Mon-Fri 11-3, 7-11. Sat 12-5, 7-11. Sun 12-3, 7-10.30

Down to Middleton Road and turn left. Go through traffic lights to 40 MPH zone. Pub is just beyond the BP petrol station.

WOODLANDS ROAD	SMEDLEY HOTEL	Whitbread Chesters mild and bitter, Boddingtons bitter	8
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Mon-Wed 3-11, Thu-Sat 12-11, Sun 12-3, 7-10.30

Down the long ramp to Woodlands Road and turn right. Long walk to Hazelbottom Road. Sharp left and immediately bear right down Smedley Lane. The pub is 100 metres ahead.

HIGH STREET	YATES'S WINE LODGE	John Smith, Stones bitters	1 1/2
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Mon-Weds 11-10.30, Thur-Sat 11-11, Sun 12-2, 7-10.30

Left out of tram. The pub is just ahead on your right.

PICCADILLY	MONROES	Whitbread Chesters mild, Boddingtons 1 1/2 Bitter, Flowers IPA + guest	1 1/2
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Mon-Fri 11.30-11, Sat 7-11, Sun closed.

Left out of the tram and take the ground level exit to London Road. Pub is over the road. (NB. Use other archway across the tracks on your return.)

And finally, updates.

VICTORIA	STATION BAR	Draught Bass
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G-MEX	CROWN	Vaux Samson, Wards Sheffield Bitter
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Well, that really is it! Watch out for a free leaflet which will be available soon in all 26 pubs near to the "Met" It will be called the "Real Ale Guide to Metrolink" because Greater Manchester Metro Ltd have paid the printing costs and wanted a change of title!

A more comprehensive and selective guide to all good pubs within a ten minute walk, or so, from each station will be available next year.



DOWN THE JUNCTION

I D Roberts

I must confess that I had not been to the Junction on Queens Road for some considerable time before some of the North Manchester branch of CAMRA called on 22nd July. In the past the Junction has been a tied house to Boddingtons and Tetley and I am not sure in what order. However, it is now a free house and probably one of Manchester's lesser known free houses at that.

The Junction's interior is largely unaltered. (I suspect that two rooms to the rear may have been amalgamated.) It retains a snug, a vault, a rear lounge and a tidy lobby.

Boddingtons, Lees and Holts bitters are available at £1.10, 90p and 96p per pint respectively. (Yes, Holts have been undercut!) All were in good nick when we visited. Even those who dislike Boddingtons for ideological reasons had to admit it was all right.

Peter Whelan has owned and run the Junction for about two years. It is busy and serves its local community well. Hop on to a bus and go and see it. (The Rochdale Road services pass within 100 yards.)

Incidentally, the Junction is reputed to have the deepest cellar of any pub in the city, and having descended I can well believe it.

LETTERS



PRAISE FOR WHITBREAD

Sir - As those readers of What's Doing who are acquainted with me will know, I have for a long time been critical of Whitbread, their takeovers, brewery closures, high prices and just about everything that they stand for.

However, I believe in praise where it is due, and I should like it to go on record that the recently-produced Porter from Castle Eden was, in my opinion, a top quality brew - one of the finest and tastiest pints it has ever been my pleasure to sup.

Moreover, in the only outlet in which I drank the beer - the Land o'Cakes in Great Ancoats Street - it was always on excellent form on the numerous visits that I made to this pub in July, whilst it was available.

In addition - and this is most unusual for any big brewer - porter was sold at a remarkably reasonable price - £1.05 in the Land o'Cakes and, I believe, 99p in some other outlets, representing extremely good value for a beer of its strength.

I do hope that Whitbread will realise the potential of this product, and will take steps to make it available on a regular basis, and not just as a one-off to celebrate their 250th anniversary.

It would be tragic if this brew were to join the list of excellent beers produced by the big boys, but not promoted and later withdrawn - such as Whitbread/Threlfalls Special Cask and S&N's shortlived cask Newcastle Exhibition.

If the big brewers could concentrate on producing excellent quality beers of their own, instead of expending their efforts in acquiring "names" or "brands" made famous by others, then I, for one, would be happier to patronise their pubs.

Jim Bracken

METROLINK

Sir - Why all this fuss about Metrolink (WD May ad nauseam)? I see no reason to celebrate the fact that two of Manchester's best rail services have been taken over by a private company which has banged up the fares. The only new bit is the few hundred yards of track through the city centre, which was already adequately served by public transport. When the geniuses who dreamt up Metrolink (and the fools in

authority who let it happen) provide some new public transport services, then I'll be interested.

And why on earth do you recommend what, for the most part, are unremarkable boozers which just happen to be the nearest to the tram stops? The pubs were there when the trains were running and no one then thought it was a jolly good idea to get off the Manchester-Bury train at Woodlands Road or Bowker Vale! What next? Pubs next to interesting lamp posts which you can see from the tram?

Such an obsession with the novelty of Metrolink just goes to show that the average CAMRA member (or at least, contributor to your magazine) aspires only to drink real ale and collect engine numbers. (And he probably wears an anorak.)

Dan Boyle

RAIL ALE

Sir - I can sympathise with the hapless traveller who wants to get off the bloody tram thing and calm his jangling nerves in the nearest hostelry. But haven't we got our ends and means mixed up? I use transport to get to a pub; I don't go in pubs as an adjunct to tramping. Any why the nearest pub and not the best? Why can't we just have a list of decent pubs like the Crescent and be told how to get there, instead of a fussy daft guide to tram-side pubs?

T Rolley

MORE CRITICISM

Sir - The response to my letter in the July edition of WD has been mixed on a personal basis, but at least the letter provided a few talking points! The opinion of Rupert was that my letter made a refreshing change (WD Aug), but then he went on in his usual pseudonymic gibberish, which seemed to invalidate the significance of his column entirely. I would not be sad to see him go, although a cast list of participants is eagerly awaited both by myself and George Carman QC (his real name!).

I must take issue with the Metrolink survey, which suggested that the nearest best public house to the St Peter's Square station is Tommy Ducks. To ignore the City Arms and the Good Beer Guide listed Vine in favour of a Greenalls pub shows a lack of geographical knowledge and jaded taste buds in keeping with a long night out on the Skoll!

The August What's Doing, in which beer in a can occupies the front page, is worse than ever. The compilation obviously clashed with the entire North Manchester branch's annual coach trip to Yugoslavia. (Wishful thinking!) The front page, with its irrelevant attack on Boddingtons in a can, shows the narrow mindedness of CAMRA, who would rather attack a meaningless advertising campaign than shout

from the rooftops new and positive developments in the area, as in the Vaux invasion. Perhaps the Campaign is too busy sniping at failed breweries to find anything good to say.

The new campaign for pub preservation is admirable in theory but I was amazed that pubs like the Tallow Tub, run by CAMRA's favourite bogeyman, Whitbread, with its prison-like exterior, doss-house decor and dubious ale could be included in such a scheme. I have no problem with the closing of pubs, however traditional, because of their lack of appeal. Dodgy ale and dirty decor should not be defended by CAMRA, which after all is here to defend beer standards, not turn into a collection of frustrated architects and interior designers.

The improvement of various Holts pubs has come under some scrutiny in recent times, with the Roebuck in Urmston being condemned for the changes made there. The pub has been transformed from a slightly dingy boozier to a solid, clean and pleasant traditional Holts pub. I always thought that was the idea.

The only problem with Holts' developments lies in the brewery's refusal to close even for a day when major building work is going on. The Lamb was a major case in point, with the vault being closed at regular intervals and the overspill being housed in the snug, a place widely famed for its peace and quiet, thus ruining the entire atmosphere of the pub. The addition of both plastic chrome bar pillars in the vault and wallpaper designed for a combined funeral parlour and curry house in the snug have not added much to the place, but the fine ale and a general brightening in atmosphere, along with the almost unique snooker table in the back room, still represent a fine establishment.

Finally, I would like to suggest that a local Good Beer Guide be produced by some responsible body (not CAMRA!) as the anomalies have become ludicrous and insufferable. That famous pubs are excluded and inferior establishments promoted to fame in the Guide has completely discredited CAMRA in this area. The examples are too numerous to mention here. I am sure that such a guide would fill an aching gap in the boozier's bookshelf.

S J Hayward

JERSEY ALE

Sir - What a coincidence to catch Steve Smith's tour of Jersey pubs (WD Aug) - we found ourselves on that island a few days later.

As most of the pubs he mentions are in the Good Beer Guide (which I have with me) I was very interested in the others. To my greatest



delight I found the Star & Topsy Toad, run by Steve Skinner. He and his pub had big coverage on local radio last week and it didn't come as a surprise to hear him say that he got his idea from Bruce's "Firkin" chain in London. The pub was gutted completely and reopened on 2 April 1992. I must say I like the work done and there are areas to suit all tastes - it is packed every night.

Steve Skinner's guest beers (always at £1 per pint, similar to his own) nearly always come from the Ringwood Brewery and they sell quickly.

I must agree with Steve Smith - if you don't like Bass you haven't much choice here. True, Guernsey put some real ale on the island (and it isn't a bad bitter or mild) but Mary Anne's first attempt at real ale isn't wonderful. Maybe they will shake off the keg image with much practice! Randall's ("Jersey's Original Brewery") don't produce any real ale and I won't be too upset when they stop brewing soon. Landlords aren't sure what they will get in its place.

Food here is generally more expensive than in the North West of England. Petrol is £1.20 per gallon but you wouldn't do an enormous annual mileage with the island being only 9½ by 5 miles!

Sean Kilgarriff

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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SEPTEMBER

Guest Beers

Chiltern Ale
Chiltern Beechwood
Old Nix That
Jolly Roger Ale
Jolly Roger Shipwrecked
Hook Norton Mild
Hook Norton Bitter
Thwaites Craftsman

Events (8pm except trips)

Sun 6th Room at the Back - Jam Singers welcome.
Tues 8th Slurred Word Spectaculum - Songs, Poems, Fun & Frivolity
Thur 10th Moose Molloy +
Sat 12th Coach to Shrewsbury Beer Festival
Tues 15th Slurred Word
Thur 17th Altered Natives +
Sat 19th Dent Brewery via Settle/Carlisle +
Tues 22nd Slurred Word
Thur 24th Wild Turkeys +

+ Subject to confirmation

plus 17th Sep - 3rd Oct MANCHESTER CIDER FESTIVAL

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Ben Birch,

Licensee.

Real Ale Off-Licence

57 Manchester Road,

061 881 9206.

Vance De Becheval,

Proprietor.

THE NEW SHALIMAR

by Al O'Matey



After climbing the steps in Back Turner Street, the first thing to greet you as you enter is a bed of hot coals. Although

seating is limited to about 10 or 11 places, the friendly and efficient service together with the excellent value-for-money food ensures that you keep returning.

Vegetarians are reasonably well catered for; veg samosas at 25p each (a standard portion is two) come accompanied by a small salad and three dressings - the ubiquitous mint raita together with what appeared to be an Imli (tamarind) sauce and a tangy pale green puree (onion and green coriander?). Main dishes are Veg Curry, Dhal and Spinach, all at £1.25. The proprietor was slightly surprised when I asked for three chapatis (standard number in Bradford) and when they arrived I saw why. They are very generously sized, piping hot and only 20p each. Nan is 35p and rice 50p.

Other dishes are Chicken or Lamb for £2 and Keema or Kofta Egg at £1.65.

The Shalimar was here as far back as 1982 but a few years ago it changed its name. Now it has returned as the New Shalimar. Highly recommended!

Manchester's original Shalimar (I think it means Perfumed Garden) was on Sugar Lane, off Withy Grove and next to Wilson's Sugar Loaf pub on the corner with New Brown Street. They were just about (above?) where the Arndale Bus Station Information Office now stands; next time you pick up a bus guide, reflect on the thousands of poppadoms and gallons of Wilson's beer which have passed over that spot.

THE MOONLIGHT

by Peshawari Nan

On Great Ancoats Street next to the Land o'Cakes pub, the Moonlight is primarily a take-away but with some eating-in facilities. Starters are bhaji @ 25p, shish or shami kebab @ 35p and samosas @ 40p. Curries are veg or dhal @ £1.40, spinach @ £1.50, chicken, lamb or keema @ £1.80 and Lamb Keema or Chicken with Spinach @ £2.30. Opening times: Mon-Sat 10-5 & 8-11 (12 Fri, Sat); Sunday 11-3. It is unusual to find such late opening for an outlet of this type in this area. Recommended.

NOW & THEN

by Rob Magee

No.68

ODDFELLOWS CALL

496,498 Lees Road
Oldham

When it closed in 1981, the Oddfellows Call was one of only two beer-houses left in Oldham. It was a perfect example of its type - two cottages knocked into one and licensed in the middle of the last century.

To qualify for a beerhouse licence, a property had to have a certain minimum rateable value, hence the combining of two cottages. However, in 1869 a rating survey found that the Oddfellows Call beerhouse (then No.314 Lees Road) occupied only one cottage and the other (No.312) was rented off as a butcher's shop. No.316 was let for 2/6d a week, plus 3d for the gas! A few years later the butcher was out and James Mills was running the beerhouse at the combined address.

In 1894 the building was owned by Samuel Mills of Springhead. A survey of that year noted there were three drinking rooms and four bedrooms. There was a small backyard and a badly-constructed urinal outside the back door!



A plan drawn in 1931 shows the Oddfellows Hall still had two front doors. The left hand door led to a parlour, with the stairs, kitchen and a scullery at the back. The second door opened on to a lobby which ran to the back door and off the lobby were the bar, bar parlour and tap room.

The Oddfellows Hall was the victim of a Compulsory Purchase Order and John Martin closed the doors for good on 26th April 1981. Before the building was demolished, the signboard over the door was rescued and fitted in the tap room of the Friendship across the road, a Wilsons house! Sadly, a few years ago the licensee of the Friendship was told by his area manager to paint out the words "OB Famous Ales and Stouts". Daft!

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BURY BEER FESTIVAL

This will take place on Friday 6th and Saturday 7th November at the Metropolitan (formerly Derby Hall), Market Street, Bury. The festival will be open lunchtimes and evenings, with 45 real ales, foreign beers and food available at all sessions. Entertainment on both evenings. Admission free to CAMRA members. More staff are needed, so if you can help, please ring B Lee on 061 763 1078 (day), or 0706 824407/826145 (evenings).

TALLOW TUB AND CHESTERS BREWERY

The Chesters Brewery site has been sold by Whitbread Developments to the Greater Manchester Property Venture Fund, a pension fund for former Greater Manchester Local Government workers.

A revised planning application has been submitted for the Brewery which does not include the demolishing of the Tallow Tub. A "For Sale" sign is now on the pub, but with a recent fire and half the roof missing it does not appear to be an attractive buy!

Contributors to this issue: Rob Magee, Roger Hall, Ken Birch, Jim Bracken, B Lee, Paul Mason, Bill Collier, Roger Bullock, Duncan Busman, Tony Adams, Leo King, Roger Wilson, Peter Wadsworth, Pete Cash, Sean Kilgariff.

BOOK REVIEW

Roger Hall

DRINKING AND PUBLIC DISORDER by Peter Marsh and Kate Fox Kibby (The Portman Group, 2d Wimpole Street, London W1M 7AA) £9.95 275pp

The conventional wisdom that alcohol consumption and violence are inextricably entwined is well enshrined in our culture. Tabloid press headlines about lager louts and a ritual baying for the blood of these offenders are testimony to the moral panic which these latter day folk devils create.

This book does much to dispel the myth and separate fact from fiction. The research on which the book is based took place in five English towns after the "lager lout riots" of the late 1980s. The research was by means of observation, discussions and interviews with a wide cross-section of people in Banbury, Coventry, Oxford, Preston and Wakefield and was supplemented by similar research in Blackpool and Brighton, Scotland and Ireland. A further insight was given by cross-cultural comparisons with Holland, Italy, Spain and France.

Perhaps the most significant findings from the research are that there is no clear relationship between alcohol consumption and violent disorder and that expectations based on culture create the link. In Italy, for example, there is both high alcohol consumption and considerable violence but the two are not linked. Indeed, Italian respondents found it impossible to understand how the two could be connected.

Although the two authors dismiss any simplistic connection between alcohol consumption and violent behaviour, they nevertheless recognise that public disorder is both a perceived and a real problem and make several recommendations to minimise the number and scale of such incidents. Their proposals include radical changes to the licensing laws, particularly as regards hours, consistency in application and close liaison between licensees and the police. Methods of policing need re-examination, especially the policy of high profile policing. Licensees can do a great deal to minimise violence and it is recommended that Licensing Justices pay attention to experience, qualification and training when granting licences for premises where there is a known risk of disorder and violence. It follows that training should be carried out by brewers and employers. The recommendations also deal with the problems of night clubs, late night transport, fast food and restaurants and the role of the media.

"Drinking and Public Disorder" has a firm theoretical foundation, well researched empirical findings and good, practical proposals. It is, furthermore, readable. It is essential reading for members of an

organisation which acts for pub users and supports the conservation of the traditional public house. If violence can be reduced then one more pressure on our public houses will be removed. If the centuries-old prejudices which have resulted in repressive and restrictive laws can be eroded, then we may continue to enjoy our heritage of public houses well into the next century.

GUEST ALES IN BURY METRO

Oak Brewery is supplying guest beers at the Red Lion, Hawkshaw, and the Waterside, Summerseat.

Holts bitter is a regular guest beer at the Jolly Waggoners, Manchester Old Road, Bury, and the Victoria, Walshaw.

IRLAM NEWS

KEGBODS: On August 7th the Nags Head finally went over to keg beer only. The changeover started with Whitbread's "Midsummer Madness" campaign, which introduced keg Poachers beers at prices of 20p or more less than the handpumped ale. Now Whitbread have gone completely overboard and introduced keg Boddingtons.

HIGHER IRLAM SOCIAL CLUB: The "Soshe" is now a real ale club, selling Wilsons mild (92p), Wilsons bitter (94p) and Websters Green Label (94p). The club has always been associated with Wilsons/Websters but there is now only a loose tie and members can, if they wish, press for the introduction of other traditional beers.

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rupert

I'm sick to death of whingeing Jeremiahs going on about the Great Smoke Amber Nectar Show and how no more than a dozen of the assembled wares were in pristine condition, because the show was held in a greenhouse in August. I'd like to make two points. First of all, who in their right mind wants to drink more than a dozen different amber nectars? And just because a rich brewer has coughed up the odd few bob to defray the expenses of the designer water-cooled barrelette blousons, that doesn't guarantee that his beer won't be served warm and brackish. Secondly, where is the sense of adventure? Human progress has only been made by extending the bounds of the possible. Many ventures which were execrated and ridiculed when first suggested are now accepted with warm familiarity as part of the status quo.

I'm sure that some of the recent additions to the sexual olympics, such as the suits of armour in a hammock event or the demonstration event where straitjacketed contestants were bivouacked on the North Face of the Eiger, will not take off but much the same prognosis of doom was made about Salvador Dali's repainting of the Sistine Chapel ceiling or the Jewish Reform Synagogue at Mecca and both have been a wild success. The world would be a poorer place without such innovations as the Pan Saharan Igloo exhibition, the Bhutan Eisteddfod,

the Bedouin Sea Shanty Festival or the Alice Springs Polar Bear Baiting Convention. Admittedly neither the Little Sisters of Mercy Whorehouse nor the Central Westminster Nuclear Re-processing Plant have achieved their projected profit levels, but both the Buchenwald Heritage Fun Park and Mogadishu gourmet weekends have really taken off.

What I say is persevere, Ms Shame, and show these prophets of doom that with grit and determination anything is possible. Keeping ale in good condition in a greenhouse in August can and will be achieved if not next year then certainly by the turn of the century. Ignore those who mock and your achievements will be all the greater. After all, there were those who laughed at the Grotley tram scheme. They've got egg on their faces now, when you can speed across the City Centre in less than twice the walking time.

PS. It was not Billy Bogg who was chucked out of the Amber Nectar Show for not being a member. He'll show you his card any time.

DOG END PIPETTE NEWS

Do my eyes deceive me or has Mr Riley's roofwork gone awry, causing leaks to the latest would-be real ale emporium? Hope it won't be known as the Limp Dick and Soggy Puppet.

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Branch Diary

ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

Tue 1 Sep 8pm. Branch Meeting, Wheatsheaf, Oldham Rd, Failsworth

Sat 6 Sep. Daytime trip to Huddersfield - phone Branch Contact for details.

Tue 8 Sep 8pm. Social Event - Healey Hotel, Shawclough, Rochdale

Tue 15 Sep 8pm. Committee Meeting, Bridge (free), Blackford Bridge, Bury.

Thu 17 Sep 8pm. Bury Beer Festival organising group at the Napier, Bolton Street, Bury. All welcome.

Thu 1 Oct 8.30pm. Bury Beer Festival Meeting, Napier, Bolton Street, Bury. All welcome.

Tue 6 Oct 8pm. Branch Meeting, Waggon Inn, Milnrow.

Contact: Graham Mason 061 665 3032

TRAFFORD & HULME

Thur 10 Sept 8pm. Metrolink City Centre Survey, starting in the Shakespeare, then Sportsman, Rosie's, Crown and later finishing at the City.

Thurs 17th Sept 8pm. Branch Meeting and Sale Survey: Legh Arms, Temple, Railway and Bridge.

Thurs 24th Sept 8pm. Metrolink Survey of Timperley, starting in the Sylvan, then Gardeners Arms and the Moss Trooper.

Thurs 1st Oct 8pm. Committee meeting at Britons Protection and also surveying Peveril of the Peak, Tommy Ducks and City Road Inn.

Thurs 15th Oct 8pm. AGM, Orange Tree, Altrincham.

Sat 31st Oct - The Famous Tyldesley Crawl.

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

NORTH MANCHESTER

Wed 2 Sept Middleton Crawl: Ring o'Bells 7.30, Old Boars Head 8.30, Assheton Arms 9pm.

Mon 7 Sept 7pm. Tramways Guide meeting, Crown & Cushion, Manchester.

Wed 9 Sept Ancoats Crawl: Crown (Mill St) 7pm, White House 8.30, Jolly Angler 9pm.

Wed 16 Sept, Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford 8pm.

Wed 23 Sept, Little Hulton Crawl: Watergate Toll 7pm, Dun Mare 8pm, White Lion 9pm.

Wed 30 Sept: Swinton Crawl: White Horse 7pm, White Swan 8pm, White Lion 9pm, Cricketers 9.20pm

Wed 7 Oct: Farnworth Crawl: Albert 7.30, White Horse 8.30, Market 9.30, Clock Face to finish.

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

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Sat: 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00

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