

# WHAT'S DOING



MAR  
1993

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

## PATRICROFT ALEHOUSE



The Dutton in Patricroft is the latest pub to be designated a Boddingtons 'Ale House'. The pub company is gradually extending the range of beers available in its pubs, both through the Guest Beer Club and the new Boddington Ale Houses. There are two types of Ale House: *freehouse style*, where a wide range of beers chosen by the licensee is on offer, and *enhanced choice style*, where three or four extra handpumps are provided to dispense beers from the Guest Beer Club options.



The former is exemplified by the Kings Arms in Salford, the Crown in Birkenhead and the newly-opened Crown in Stockport. Two more are in the pipeline, including one in the South Manchester area. There are three of the other type so far: the Black Bull in Preston, the White Hart in Cheadle and, opened on 12th February, the Dutton. (The Grapes, Altrincham, is virtually in this category as well.)

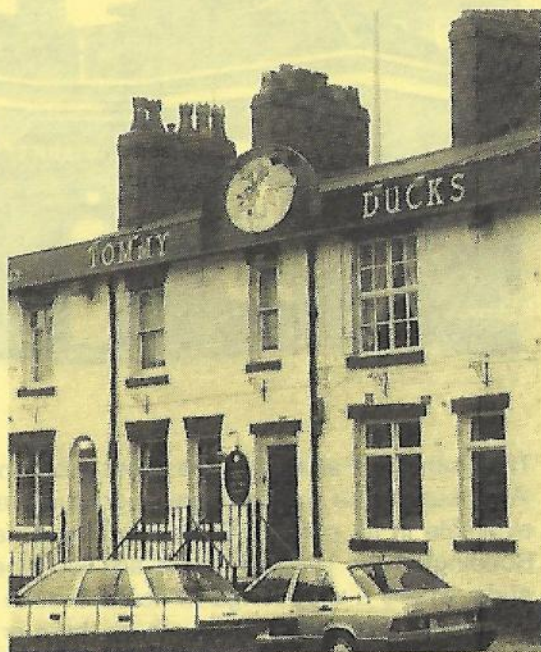
The guest beers, supplied in nine gallon containers to ensure quality, started as a range of 12 beers (listed in October WD) but this is gradually being extended. The Dutton currently stocks Wells Eagle IPA and Bombardier; Eldridge Pope Royal Oak and Potters Pride (low gravity, made especially for the Guest Beer Club); Brains SA and Jennings Snecklifter. At any one time three of these are available in addition to the house beers: Boddies mild and bitter and Old Shilling.

New sites for both types of ale house are being sought. The aim is to respect the individuality of each pub by having a discriminating approach rather than imposing a corporate 'Ale House' style beloved of the national brewers.

Peter Barnes

## TOMMY DUCKS

Lovers of multi-storey office developments in the middle of Manchester will be delighted to hear there will soon be another one, courtesy of Greenalls PubCo. In a move designed to outflank the protesters, Tommy Ducks was pulled down in the early hours of Sunday 21st February.



# EAST GOES WEST

Manchester's bid for the Olympic Games in the year 2000 has already had some effects on the City and its pubs. What is now apparently euphemistically called Eastlands - Bradford and Beswick - has been largely cleared and building has started on the Velodrome. Many pubs on and around the Inner City Ring Road from Bradford Road to Ashbury's have been demolished and other pubs are under threat. The Shakespeare, the Park, the Grey Mare, the Bobbin, the Alexandra, the Star and the Railway have gone and the Queen Victoria and the Duke of Edinburgh are closed.

It would be easy to imagine that these pubs were all closed as a result of new road schemes and the proposed Olympic development, and indeed some of them were, and some existing pubs like the Little Bradford are threatened by the plans. Yet that is not the whole story. Both the Alexandra and the Shakespeare near Philips Park closed for economic reasons, although it's fair to say that the Alex would have been knocked down anyway. The Bobbin and the Queen Vic were both burnt out despite their proximity to the police station. The Bobbin is now Beswick Library.



The truth is that this part of Manchester was vastly overpubbed. The area has suffered a triple jeopardy. Not only has population moved out with slum clearance programmes and the working population declined with the closure of industrial premises, but new pubs were built when old ones were still standing. These three factors, together with the more widespread effects of the recession have led inexorably to closure. It would be a cruel irony if the remaining pubs were demolished at a time when their survival could form a focus for the regeneration of the area. Pubs like the Little Bradford and the Britannia deserve not only to survive but to thrive.

A more insidious threat from the Olympic Games concerns those pubs in the area which would house the Olympic Village, currently known as Ancoats, but no doubt due for recycling by the image-makers. Alcohol is banned in the Olympic Village as it doesn't enhance performance in the way that anabolic steroids do. So, any pubs in the designated area would close, although they could re-emerge later. Most of us probably couldn't give a toss about the Dancing Weasel or whatever it's called, but a lot of buckets could be cried over the Moulders Arms, the White House and yes, wait for it, the Jolly Angler if they were to close.

Already a campaign to save the Jolly Angler has been started by a growing band of aficionados of this idiosyncratic yet popular pub. 2000 is a long time off but the decision - Manchester, Brasilia, Istanbul, Sydney, Berlin, Milan or Beijing - will be made in September. Are we to allow the likes of Juan Antonio Samaranch and the next king's sister to shut the Angler? We've already had the daft trams shut the Coach & Horses and the Castle & Falcon. Let's hope Manchester doesn't win. They can always knock down that silly bridge and the funny opera house in Sydney or bulldoze a few thousand shacks in China instead. The Angler's worth a dozen foreign towns.

## BEER FESTIVAL

The Wigan Beer Festival, 18th-20th March (see advert), will feature the fondly-remembered Burtonwood Light Mild in cask form for the first time in years. Also expected are bitter and mild from Bathams and beers from Sean Franklin's new Harrogate Rooster Brewery. Possible 'winners' for spotters to 'score' include Summerskills Ninja and Ash Vine Black Bess Stout.





# ROCHDALE NEWS

Mark Hardman

The Abbey, Redcross Street, has been acquired by Burtonwood from Tetley (WD last month) and this former keg pub is now serving draught Burtonwood bitter. A longer-standing Burtonwood acquisition is the Princess Royal, Freehold Street, a former Boddingtons/OB house. Burtonwood took over in the autumn of 1992 and cask mild and bitter are available.

The White Lion, Yorkshire Street, is open again after being closed for something like six years. This Thwaites house saw use as a site office during the construction of the adjacent shopping centre, then reopened shortly before Christmas selling Craftsman, bitter and mild. The pub has been extensively renovated and opened out somewhat, although distinct drinking areas have been retained.

The Woolpack, Drake Street, has expanded its beer range and now sells Theakstons XB and Old Peculier and Draught Bass. The Brindles Stool, Acker Street, has cut back to Youngers IPA and Stones and Theakstons bitters.

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## SWINTON & PENDLEBURY

Two of the area's Tetley pubs, Halligans on Swinton Hall Road and the Station on Bolton Road, are selling Boddingtons bitter at £1 a pint. Cains bitter is on sale at the Foresters on Chorley Road; the mild is now keg. Camerons Strongarm is on sale at Banks's Moorside Farm.

## LONG SERVICE

Carl and Josephine Healey, Prestwich's longest serving managers, left the Turf Tavern, Heaton Park, on Monday 1st February after over twenty years there. They have moved to the Prince Albert (another Banks's pub) on Ribble Drive, Whitefield, in a swap which brings the licensees from there to the Turf.



# THE STATION

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in a friendly atmosphere.

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from the smaller or more distant  
INDEPENDENT BREWERIES  
share the bar with  
Boddies, Pedigree & Chester's Mild  
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# REAL ALE GUIDE TO THE RAILWAYS

## INCE AND HINDLEY

by Brian Gleave

After saying our farewells to Wigan, and apologising to Billy Boston for getting his name wrong last month, we re-board the train at Wallgate Station for our journey to Manchester via Atherton. The first stop is Ince. It says a lot for Ince when I tell you that of the four pubs nearest the station, two were closed, one was on keg beer and the other was boarded up until recently.

The closed pubs are the Bird i'th'Hand (keg Burtonwood) and the Manley (Vaux real ale). Local rumours have it that the latter is being converted into a restaurant but it's hard to imagine a restaurant doing great business in Ince.

The Conquering Hero (Matthew Brown/Paramount) on my visit suffered from the worst possible Double Whammy - keg and karaoke! Your best bet, therefore, is to turn left at the top of the station steps and less than half a mile away on the left is the Anderton Arms. This is a quiet pub these days, selling highly drinkable Thwaites best mild and bitter from the wickets.

The next station as we head towards Manchester is Hindley and right next to the station is the Edington Arms. If you only visit one pub in this guide to one of the world's Great Railway Journeys, make it this one. The Edington (now unrecognisable as the Legh Arms of a former life) has fast become the most popular pub in Hindley and deservedly so. It is a free house stocking Holts mild and bitter, Boddingtons bitter, Tetley bitter, a mystery beer called Savages Head and up to three guest beers. It is all of excellent quality and keenly priced and the Edington Arms is a Wigan CAMRA Pub of the Year and a Good Beer Guide certainty.

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## HOLTS CORNER

Stewart Revell

There has been no discernible activity at the Old Monkey on the corner of Portland Street and Princess Street, but Holts tell me that it is their intention to complete the pub this year and it will be open by Christmas. Because of limited space, there will be two drinking levels, a ground floor and an upper floor. To make room for an adequate cellar, the ground floor will be raised a couple of feet from road level.

Holts are hoping to expand the Crown & Anchor on Cateaton Street as soon as possible. In the meantime, please be patient!

# WHOSE PUB IS IT ANYWAY?

The last three years has seen a transformation in pub ownership as a result of the Monopolies & Mergers Commission report. As national brewers have shed pubs to comply with the Beer Orders, a number of pubs have closed and others have been acquired by regional brewers and pub-owning groups. Of the regionals, Vaux and Burtonwood have probably had the greatest impact in Manchester in acquiring pubs formerly owned by the big brewers. Both Boddingtons and Greenalls moved out of brewing and are now the largest pub owning groups in the area, with close on 2,000 pubs between them.

Pubs owned by the national brewers, regional brewers and Boddingtons and Greenalls are clearly identifiable. However, a growing number of pubs are now owned and run by less well known groups which often have ties with larger brewers. Café Inns, Honeycomb Leisure and Paramount are examples of new pub-owning groups with premises in the North West. National groups like Control Securities and Pubmaster also have outlets

## FREE HOUSE

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SAMEOLDSTUFF

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*No dominoes*

*Children Welcome*





in the North West. Alongside these and long standing independent groups like Yates's Wine Lodges there are numerous small operators with as few as two pubs. These licensed premises may be leased or owned outright; they may be managed or tenanted; they may be tied, partially tied or free. It may be clear what beer they sell but it's usually difficult to tell who owns them and who operates them. The licensed trade is significantly more complex than it was four years ago.

These trends give considerable cause for concern, particularly during a deep recession which puts pressure on the licensed trade. The big brewers may be guilty of many things but they did have a lot of financial clout and didn't go bust very often. Some of the new operators may lack the deep pockets of the big brewers and at a time of falling markets and declining property values may find it difficult to finance borrowings. Several bankruptcies will not help the stability of the trade and may herald a further loss of pubs. Paradoxically, the fragmentation of ownership may help to concentrate control in the hands of the big brewers as operators seek the security of brewery loans in exchange for long-term trading agreements.

From the punter's point of view choice needs to be visible to be real. If we want to drink in a pub owned by an independent operator we should be able to identify it. The Business Names Act should be enforced by Trading Standards Officers so that it's clear who's operating the pub. Few people appreciate the difference between Boddingtons Brewery (owned by Whitbread) and Boddingtons PubCo. How many could be expected to understand that the licensee of a pub showing signs from a big brewer is a manager working for a tenant of three pubs leased by a pub-owning group from the big brewer with a tie agreement? Whose pub is it - the manager's, the tenant's, the PubCo's, the brewer's?

## DEARNLEY

The New Inn, New Road, Dearnley, is now part of the Centric Group. The exterior of the pub has recently received some attention and proclaims its ownership more prominently than other pubs in the group, making it more noticeable on the main road between Rochdale and Littleborough. The decoration of the exterior probably reflects the owners' intention to use an adjacent building as a regional office. Inside, the New Inn remains little altered, retaining three small rooms and a further small drinking area around the bar. It is a former Bass house, so the beer range has altered somewhat and currently comprises Matthew Brown mild, Theakstons bitter, XB and Old Peculier, which are all kept in fine form.

## MOORHOUSES

Moorhouses has recently been on sale at the Railway, Twist Lane, and the Victoria, both on the town centre stretch of the Leigh by-pass. Pendle Witch has also been spotted at the Minstrel (formerly Lancashire Union) in Hindley.

## NEW BREW

The White House on Great Ancoats Street lies between the Rochdale and the Ashton Canals, so it was therefore most appropriate that *Bargee's Bitter* was introduced there on 27th January. The beer is a product of the Steam Packet Brewery in Knottingley and has an OG of 1048. The White House sells it for £1.21 a pint. Float along and try it!

## BACK TO CASK

The Nags Head, Irlam (WD Feb), is to become a real ale pub again. It is being given a refit and some restructuring, but the vault will be retained, there will be a lounge area and a separate children's room. Handpumped Chesters bitter is promised at 99p a pint and handpumped Chesters mild will also be on sale. Keg Poachers will disappear.

## QUARRY BANK

The Quarry Bank Inn (Hydes), Bloomsbury Lane, Timperley, has a new licensee. In December, Barry and Sheila Trevor took over from Dave Walker, whose family had run the pub since before the First World War. Barry and Sheila were previously at the Gateway, Parris Wood, and come to a pub which has appeared in the Good Beer Guide since 1987. Lunches are now available seven days a week (12-2.15) and evening meals on Thursday, Friday and Saturday (5.30-8.15) in the restaurant. In addition, there will be one-off gourmet evenings in the early part of the week.

The Quarry Bank now opens all day (11-11) Monday to Saturday and sells Hydes bitter and mild. Barry and Sheila had a free house in North Wales for eighteen years and Barry would like to sell a guest beer alongside the house beers....how about it then, Hydes?

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Contributors to this issue: Roger Hall, Stewart Revell, Ian Kenny, Phil Stout, Rob Magee, Brian Gleave, Roger Wilson, Peter Barnes, Duncan Busman, Bill Collier, Jim Bracken, Paul Roberts, Glenn Worth, Mark Hardman

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# LETTERS

## BOGBRUSH WRITES

Mon cher Eddie - Forgive the resipiscent, if you will, his dark secret.

No longer can I not externalise myself. These past years, my acquaintance with your organ has been all too orthodox, even mundane: you have variously depicted me as DOGSHIT practitioner, televisual divorcee, secret admirer of Mole Whalebody and mountebank of micturition. But the onset of 50 is a time of cynosure, when failed CAMRA bosspersons must write, emergent from the (Liverpool Road Station) closet.

I herewith 'out' myself as a trainspotter of 38 years experience - through clag, red hot cinders and soot in the eye whilst traversing Diggle Tunnel behind 'Royal Scots'. Moreover, what your readers may not know is that fellow former CAMRA bossperson Zimbabwe Talbot-Molyneux has also practised the tendency these last 30 years to my certain knowledge (quite often with me). He was 'copping' A8s between Scarborough and Whitby when Bill Haley was sexing Marilyn Monroe (or was it Elvis fornicating with Rosemarie Clooney? - the trainspotter mind telescopes in these affaires!). Indeed, what the CAMRA bosspersons' minutes don't show is that - for the first two years of the Thatcher ascendancy - seven out of twelve CAMRA juntapersons were of the trainspotting persuasion and meetings were convened and situated primarily to accommodate the habit. Why else would one choose to visit Skegness, Northampton or Wreccsam?

Your radiophile Scot should know that while he satiated his appetite for Gresley and Peppercorn pacifics on the East Coast Main Line, some of us were abusing our bodies by chasing obscure O4s - falling down manholes in a totally unlit Gorton engine shed (code 39A) at 2.00am, eyeballing the goings-on in the 'muck-hole' at the north end of Crewe Station, and avoiding being sliced in half by a Houdini shunting pannier tank at Chester West. My balls had barely dropped, but I still have a bright memory of an excursion from Liverpool Central to Swansea in the summer of 1957. I 'copped' 521 engines, travelling on a child fare 'Workman's Return' (costing about 4/7d) - leaving at 04.50 and returning at 00.30, having sampled (and rejected) Buckleys Bitter and Rhymney Ales as no match for the then ubiquitous Double Diamond!

In more recent years I've had a keen interest in the trainspotter as social stereotype. My preliminary conclusions are that the hitherto obligatory 'gricer's uniform' - long gaberdine mac, duffle bag, ancient Rolleiflex



camera and soggy tomato butties - correlates with strong maternal deprivation. And whilst there is some evidence for Peter Terson's depiction ('Last Train Through the Harecastle Tunnel') of trainspotting as a foil for incipient homosexuality - my own formative experience of being 'fingered' by an Edge Hill engine driver in a non-corridor coach at Acton Bridge is still very real - we should beware of universalising such connections. An alternative formulation suggests that the massive thrust of exhaust through a steam engine's funnel can act in a catalytic way on trainspotters, heightening sexual arousal. Some heterosexualist respondents to whom I've spoken admit to optimum stimulation experienced on trains hauled by steam locos pulling ex-Kings Cross suburban stock through tunnels (the railbuff equivalent of the mile-high orgasm?...ralltour marketing staff at Victoria Travel, please note.

Surprisingly, you may think, there doesn't seem to be any linkage between trainspotting and adult deviancy. Youthful trainspotters go on to become perfectly respectable schoolmasters, sociology lecturers, Python exponents (John Cleese, Michael Palin) and bus drivers. Do they drink real ale? The only certain thing we find here is that those who do tend to drink too much (insatiable appetites?), just as they tend to lack balance in their trainspotting.

Good wishes, Bogbrush

PS: Is this boring enough to kill this subject forever in your pages?

*(We should think so)*

## GROSS SLUR

Sir - Is it true that Whats Doing has increased in price by 25% so that Eddy Nestfeather can afford a rinky-dinky computer and so produce WD in what Tom Duckfoot considers to be a politically correct typeface? We should be told.

Daisy Hill

*(The editor was unavailable for comment at the time of going to press on account of him being on his yacht.)*

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## YOUNGS

The Pagefield, Park Road, Wigan (YES! - the one with the revolving door) has started selling Youngs bitter alongside Greenalls mild and bitter and Stones bitter as part of a deal with the Wandsworth brewery. The class London beer ought to sell well against the uninspiring range. What, you may ask, are Youngs taking from Greenalls? Certainly not beer, but gaming machines!

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FESTIVAL  
SIXTH BEER  
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Wigan Pier**



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**Admission: *Thurs, Fri Evening £1.50;***

***Sat Lunch & Eve £1.00***

***(Free to CAMRA members)***

***and Free to all on Friday Lunchtime.***

***Times: Thursday 5.30 - 11.30***

***Friday 12.00 - 3.00 & 5.30 - 11.30***

***Saturday 12.00 - 4.00 & 7.00 - 11.00***

***Entertainment: Thursday - Red Eye Blues Band***

***Sat (lunch) Ian Royle Jazz Band***

***Sat (Eve) - Cliff Rescue & the Helicopters***

**Food all sessions including authentic German sausages**

**Family Room on Saturday Afternoon**

**with Children's Entertainer**

# NOW AND THEN

by Rob Magee

No.73

## CROWN

Cheapside, Oldham

In the eighteenth century Priest Hill (later Cheapside) was part of the main thoroughfare through the town, connecting what became Henshaw Street with Middleton Road (now Chadderton Way). When Henshaw Street was opened up, Priest Hill became a backwater, market stalls were set up there and the name was changed to Cheapside.

The alehouse on Priest Hill was first recorded as the Horse & Groom in the 1770s, by 1806 it was called the Volunteer and in 1820 it was the Cock Inn. Twenty years later the alehouse was being run by a butcher and he changed the name to the Shoulder of Mutton. Next, a hatter took the licence and according to the census of 1851 he put up the sign of the Hatters Inn. However, it was known as the Shoulder of Mutton for another twenty years.





In 1860 licensee Henry Bradshaw got into trouble. A passing policeman noticed a man leaving by the back door at 12.10 one morning and so went inside to see what was going on. Henry was standing behind the bar and when he saw the policeman he said loudly to two men in the room, "Now, I told you. You must not have any drinks here." Just then a servant girl came through the rear bar door with three pots of beer! Henry was fined 20/-. Things got worse. In 1868 and 1869 the police described the Shoulder of Mutton as a haunt of thieves and prostitutes and said that Henry was doing nothing about it. Another tenant was found in 1870 and perhaps in an effort to change the image of the pub he gave it another name, the Crown Inn.

The old alehouse had four drinking rooms and three bedrooms and in 1901 the then owners, Kay's Atlas Brewery, decided to replace it with a palatial three-storey building with thirteen bedrooms. This did not quite materialize, but when the new Crown opened in 1902 it had a dormer-type top storey and no fewer than twenty windows fronting Cheapside. The new pub may not have been the success which Kay's expected, for they sold the Crown to Oldham Brewery in 1927.

In the 1960s Oldham saw the beginning of a mass redevelopment programme and Oldham Brewery decided to sell five of its large town centre pubs on prime sites. The Crown was one of these and the doors were closed for the last time on 18th June 1961. A building which was only 59 years old was demolished and the site is now covered by C&A's store.

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## BEER FESTIVAL

The Seventh Oldham Beer Festival will be held in Werneth Park Music Room, Frederick Street, on March 26th and 27th. Over 35 real ales and ciders, foreign bottled beers and wine. Entertainment on Friday and Saturday evenings. Food at all sessions. Opening times:

Friday 6pm - 11pm

Sat. 11am - 4pm and 6pm - 11pm

Sun. 12 noon - 3pm



Admission: 50p lunchtimes. £1.50 evenings; £2 after 7.30pm

# BEINLOS IN BAVARIA

Paul Roberts

## STARKBIERFEST IN MUNICH

When one thinks of Munich, and in particular, its drinking traditions, one naturally thinks of the Oktoberfest. The first of these took place in 1812, but over two hundred years before that there was another Munich festival - Starkbierzeit. About 1600 Munich, as its name implies, was populated largely by monks. The electoral prince, Maximilian, noticed the monks were living too merry a life and decreed that during Lent they could only partake of herbs, dough, salted fish and not a lot else. However, they did have a daily allowance of 12 litres of beer each. (In those days a litre was 1.12 times a present-day litre, or almost two pints!) In the autumn the Munich climate can be none too kind and as the Paulaner monks came originally from warmer climes, they needed to supplement their meagre diet to survive. To do this they produced a double strength beer to provide them with extra nutrients. April 2nd was their saint's day and the beer became known as Heilig-Vater Bier or Sankt-Vater Bier. In the local dialect, the latter became Salvator.



Salvator still exists today, the Doppelbock of the Paulanerbräu brewery. Over 150 Bavarian breweries produce doppelbocks, all ending in 'ator'. The Munich examples are: Triumphator (Löwenbräu), Maximator (Augustiner), Animator (Hacker-Pschorr), Delicator (Hofbräu) and Optimator (Spaten).

Unlike the Oktoberfest, which is an 'artificial' gathering in tented accommodation, Starkbierzeit is celebrated in the traditional bierhallen and pubs of Munich. The festival is launched on a political note in the Salvator Keller at Nockerberg by the Paulanerbräu brewery. After a night of political speeches and satire, the main celebrations start on the Friday and last seventeen days. The 5,000-seater beer hall at the Salvator Keller is the centrepiece of the fest and the range of sideshows and stalls outside the hall date back to the origins of the Starkbierzeit, when a variety of contests were held.

That tradition is still maintained by the brewery in the Löwenbräu Keller at Stiglmaierplatz. There is a nightly contest to lift a massive 'stein' weighing

508 lbs! A Bavarian band provides the main entertainment here and in all the other halls. Despite the strength of Doppelbock (ABV is 7.5 - 8.0%), it is only served in litre measures in the bierhallen. It is also sold for the same price as normal Helles and is therefore still affordable with the weak pound! In most of Munich's traditional pubs it is served in the more modest half-litre measures for the faint-hearted.

Starkbierfest this year starts on Friday 12th March and continues until Sunday 28th March. Other dates for the Munich Beer Drinking Diary are:

Sat 17 April - Sun 2 May: Frühlingsfest

Sat 1 May: Maibockfest - around every maypole in every suburb  
and Bavarian village

Thur 12 Aug - Sun 22nd Aug: Sommerfest

Sat 18 Sept - Sun 3 Oct: Oktoberfest

## COMMERCIAL

In December's WD it was reported that the Commercial (Tetley), Heaton Park was going to close after Christmas for a £100,000 refurbishment. Well it didn't! The £1-a-pint for Tetleys over Christmas didn't materialise either. Opening times over the Christmas period were irregular but now the pub has a new tenant and things are back to normal.

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Note: We operate under Wholesale Licensing Regulations, therefore  
minimum purchase is 24 bottles beer or 12 bottles wines/spirits,  
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Open: 8am-5.30pm Monday-Friday; 11am-3pm Saturday  
Closed Sunday and Bank Holiday Weekends  
Telephone orders accepted on a COD basis



# rupert

I'm afraid that Nora's self-effacement will lead to her failure to achieve high office. In normal circumstances, competing against the charisma bypass successes and pre-frontal lobotomy survivors who make up the list of hopefuls for the boss group, her success would have been guaranteed, but this year two candidates of stature have joined the list of lacklustre hasbeens. The first is our own dear Billy Bog, bossperson of the Grotley Region. When elected into this position, such was his popularity in his own home town of Friggin, that two bargeloads of people from a local home, tempted only with a free pie and a goldfish, set sail from the pier in his support. His opponent, Billy Shippon, was overwhelmed and now spends his time editing Fresco and Corbel Monthly. It is usual when people take great office to see their dynamism wane. Such has not been the case with Billy Bog. Cruel detractors say there was none there to start with, but Billy still continues to demonstrate his prowess. Only the other week, with the aid of nothing more than a diary, he was able, unassisted, to work out the dates of the second Wednesdays in each even numbered month from now till December, with only three mistakes. Grotley has carried Billy as it carried Nora and now without doubt Billy will carry Grotley. Nora's achievements are now dim in our faded memories.

If Billy is a threat to Nora, then our second candidate is a danger not only because of his superior intellect but because of his virtuosity in giving the Glasgow kiss to those who upset him. Rab C McLaddie is of such gargantuan physique that Hippo Vistula appears sylph-like in his presence. Few people have looked up his frock and survived. Even Billy Bog may find it difficult against such a competent Caledonian contender.

Until the result of the alleged Prime Minister's libel actions against various allegedly disreputable magazines is known, it will not be possible for What's Doing to refer to rumours even by denial. Even such practices as photographing a graffito which asserts a calumny such as 'Jamie Froter is a Baden-Powell-trouserred wassock' and then denouncing this as tasteless and wholly untrue may be construed as uttering a libel. Under such circumstances truth can hardly be a defence. If the Court finds for the New Statesperson, What's Doing looks forward to publishing lots of rumour denials about choirboys, body-piercing and genital mutilation. If it's John Major who wins, then we shall either have to desist or, God forbid, find more subtle ways of referring to what's gone on in a tangential manner so only those who knew anyway know what it's about and those caught with their trousers down have to admit it's them before they deny it. Know what I mean?

# BRANCH DIARY

## Bolton

Thur 4 March 8.30pm, Branch Meeting and Good Beer Guide 1994 Final Selection, Derby Arms, Derby Street.

Thur 18 March. Trip to Wigan Beer Festival. Meet Bolton Station 17.50, train 18.11.

Wed 31 March, 7.45pm. GNWB&CF poster distribution, meet Malt & Hops.

Thur 1 April 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Cattle Market, Orlando Street.

Contact: Judith Spragg 0204 595342 (h), 0204 397350 (w)

## Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tues 2 March pm, Branch Meeting, Cross Keys, Uppermill

Sat 6 March. Joint Social with Wakefield Branch in Rochdale. Phone Branch Contact for details.

Tue 16 March 8pm, Committee Meeting, Napier, Bolton Street, Bury

Wed 24 March 8.30pm, Social, Wishing Well (free house), Heywood.

Fri 26 March 6pm. Oldham Beerex commences - finishes Sunday 28th March.

Tues 6 April 8pm. Branch Meeting, Royal Oak, Bridge Street, Ramsbottom.

Contact: Graham Mason, 061 665 3032.

## Wigan

Wed 3 March 8pm, Branch Meeting, Seven Stars, Wallgate.

Thur-Sat 18th-20th March, Wigan Beer Festival - Help wanted!

Wed 31st March 8pm, AGM, Seven Stars, Wallgate.

Contact: Brian Gleave 0942 840658 (h)

## North Manchester

Wed 3 March 8pm, Membership Social Evening, Royal Oak, Barton Lane, Eccles.

Wed 10 March, Good Beer Guide 1994 Selection Meeting, Unicorn, Church Street, Manchester, 8pm.

Wed 17 March, Branch AGM, Kings Arms, Bloom Street, Salford, 8pm

Wed 24 March, Lees Brewery Trip. Contact Peter Barnes, 789 2323 (h)

Wed 31 March, Collyhurst Crawl: Swan, off Rochdale Road, 7pm; Osborne 8pm; Sparrow, Thornton Street North, 9pm.

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

## Region

1st, 15th & 29th March: CAMRA AGM Committee, Marble Arch, 8pm

16th March, GNW Beer & Cider Festival, Castle, Oldham Street, 8pm

18th-20th March, Wigan Beer Festival

4th April GNWB&CF, Swan, Bolton, Noon

## VAUX

Vaux Samson and Wards bitter are on handpump at the Oxford in Bexley Square, Salford, the former Wilsons pub.



# THE QUEENS ARMS

## FREE HOUSE

4/6 HONEY STREET (off Red Bank)  
MANCHESTER

Tel. 061 834 4239

*Serving a large range of  
traditional ales supporting  
the independent breweries,  
including*



## BATEMANS & TIMOTHY TAYLORS

Mild, XB, XXXB, Taylors Best Bitter  
and Landlord

*and weekly guest beers from around the country*  
WESTON'S TRADITIONAL CIDER ON HANDPUMP

A selection of Continental  
bottled beers also available

### \*\*\* OPENING HOURS \*\*\*

Sun: 12.00-3.00 7.00-10.30  
Mon: 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00  
Tues: 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00  
Weds: 12.00-11.00  
Thur: 12.00-11.00  
Fri: 12.00-11.00  
Sat: 12.00-4.00 7.00-11.00

### FREE

A large and varied selection  
of board games always  
available

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

*Your hosts,*  
**DAVE & JO**

