

25p

What's Doing

JANUARY 1994



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

Ale Gain in Ancoats Lane



The Cotton Tree, for years a keg-only Chesters house on Great Ancoats Street, now has handpulls and sells cask ale in the form of Chesters mild and Trophy.

Central Manchester Survey

On 24th November there were 90 different real ales available in Central Manchester. The following tables list the outlets, the beers and the prices.

110 outlets were surveyed, 100 of them sold real ale and 30 of them real mild. 74 pubs had visible price lists. 90 different real ales were available, the lowest price was 90p for Holts mild and the highest was £2 for lager in Henry's.

Some encouraging points:

- * More pubs are serving mild (up from 23)
- * More pubs are serving real ale (up from 90)
- * More café bars are serving real ale
- * Some café bars are becoming pubs (eg H R Fletchers)
- * Much more choice, not only in free houses but also in big brewers' pubs
- * More price lists on display

Table 1: Pubs and Prices

Key: PL=visible price list; M=mild; B=bitter; BB=best or premium bitter; L=lager; K=keg beer

		<u>Brewer</u>	<u>PL</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>BB</u>	<u>L</u>
1 Abercrombie	Bootle Street	Whitbread	PL	120K	127	148	167
2 Athenaeum	York Street	Tetley	PL		130	150	190
3 Bank	Mosley Street	Tetley	PL		140	144	185
4 Beerhouse	Angel Street	Free	PL	115	115	150	185
5 Boardroom	Portland Street	Wilsons	PL	140	149	164	182
6 Brahms & Liszt	Brown Street	Free			145		185
7 Branagans	Royal Exchange	Free	PL		140	175	190
8 Bridge Street Tavern	Bridge Street	S&N	PL		145	156	161
9 Britons Protection	Gt Bridgewater St	Tetley	PL		120	165	170
10 Brunswick	Piccadilly	S&N		136K	145	148	168
11 Bulls Head	London Road	Burtonwood	PL	120	122		165
12 Burton Arms	Swan Street	S&N	PL		132	144	171
13 Carreys (Yates's)	Great Ancoats St	Free	PL		125K		175
14 Castle	Oldham Street	Robinsons	PL	104	110	118	160
15 Central Park	Sackville Street	Courage			135K		170
16 Cheshire Cheese	Oldham Road	Courage		116K	120		150
17 Churchill	Chorlton Street	Greenalls			120		140
18 Circus	Portland Street	Tetley	PL		125		
19 City	Oldham Street	Whitbread	PL		120		150
20 City Arms	Kennedy Street	Tetley	PL		133	147	165
21 City Road Inn	Albion Street	Whitbread		120	120		160
22 Commercial	Liverpool Road	Wilsons	PL		125		160
23 Conservatory	Old Bank Street	Free	PL		105		185
24 Corbieres	Half Moon Street	Free	PL		128	145	170
25 Corner House	Oxford Street	Free	PL		140K		195
26 Cotton Tree	Great Ancoats St	Whitbread	PL	105K	120K		136
27 Courtney & Co	Parsonage	Free	PL		135	145	175
28 Crown	Booth Street	Bass	PL		132	148	193
29 Crown	Deansgate	Vaux	PL	115	99		160
30 Crown & Anchor	Cateaton Street	Holts	PL	90	96		110
31 Crown & Anchor	Hilton Street	Whitbread	PL	116	123	145	162
32 Crown & Cushion	Corporation Street	Holts	PL	90	96		102

33 Dancing Weasel	Great Ancoats St	Wilsons	105K	110K	140
34 Daniels Café Bar	Chapel Walks	Thwaites	PL	135	180
35 Dry 201	Oldham Street	Whitbread		140	180
36 Ducie Bridge	Corporation Street	Wilsons	132	132	160 170
37 Dutton	Park Street	Hydes	PL	120	165
38 Granby	Princess Street	Free		150	190
39 Grand Central & Subway	Oxford Street	Courage		135	170
40 Green Room	Whitworth St West	S&N		140	180
41 Grey Horse	Portland Street	Hydes	PL 115	120	168
42 Gullivers	Oldham Street	Lees	PL 112	116	135
43 Hare & Hounds	Shudehill	Tetley		133	176
44 Harp & Shamrock	New Mount Street	Marstons		118	135 150
45 Hat & Feathers	Mason Street	Whitbread	PL 107	103	150
46 Henrys	Parsonage	Greenalls	PL	170K	200
47 Hogshead	High Street	Whitbread	PL 126	130	154 173
48 Horts Wine Bar	St Anns Square	Free	PL	160	185
49 H R Fletcher	St Marys Street	Bass	PL 122	137	157 195
50 John Willie Lees	Withy Grove	Lees	104	111	160
51 Jolly Angler	Ducie Street	Hydes	115	120	168
52 Joshua Brookes	Princess Street	Free	PL	140	160 175
53 King	Oldham Street	Tetley	110K	120	145
54 Kings Café Bar	King Street West	Tetley	PL	165	200
55 Lancaster Tavern	Princess Street	Free	PL	130	145 170
56 Land o'Cakes	Great Ancoats St	Whitbread	117	124	142
57 Lass o'Gowrie	Charles Street	Whitbread	PL	133	145 173
58 Lord Nelson	Newton Street	Courage	PL 115K	118	140
59 Manto	Canal Street	Free	PL	150	160 190
60 Marble Arch	Rochdale Road	Free	PL	128	150 185
61 Merchants (Yates's)	Oldham Street	Free	PL	126K	165
62 Millstone	Thomas Street	Wilsons	PL 113	121	160
63 Mitre	Cathedral Gates	Free	PL	122	158
64 Monroes	London Road	Whitbread	PL 115	125	135 160
65 Mother Macs	Back Piccadilly	Whitbread	113	123	165
66 Moulders Arms	Heyrod Street	Burtonwood		116	156
67 Mulligans	Southgate	Free	PL	125	143 172
68 Nags Head	Jacksons Row	Greenalls	PL 130K	130	145 170
69 New Union	Princess Street	Burtonwood	120K	125	165
70 New York, New York	Bloom Street	Wilsons		140K	170
71 Nickleby's	Dale Street	Tetley	120	120	140
72 Old Garratt	Princess Street	Boddington	PL	130	180
73 Old Grapes	Quay Street	Boddington		130	170
74 Oscars	Cooper Street	Free	PL	120	120
75 Oxnoble	Liverpool Road	Whitbread	120K	130	150 165
76 Pack Horse	Deansgate	Greenalls	PL 122K	124	165
77 Paddys Goose	Bloom Street	Wilsons	PL 128	140	170
78 Peveril of the Peak	Gt Bridgewater St	Wilsons	PL	130	155 170
79 Pig & Porcupine	Deansgate	Boddington		132	155 189
80 Portland Arms	Portland Street	Tetley	PL	126	136 174
81 Rembrandt	Sackville Street	Lees	110	115	145
82 Rising Sun	Queen Street	S&N	PL 115K	143	146 172
83 Ronnies Bar	St Anns Square	Free	PL	160	190
84 Rosies Bar	York Street	Wilsons	PL	145	174

85 Royal Central	Windmill Street	Boddington PL	132	150	177
86 Royal George	Lever Street	Vaux	116	99	150
87 Salisbury	Wakefield Street	S&N		142	154 172
88 Sawyers Arms	Deansgate	S&N		140	148 176
89 Seftons	Corporation Street	S&N PL		153	178
90 Seven Oaks	Nicholas Street	Whitbread PL		126	145 170
91 Shakespeare	Fountain Street	S&N PL		148	160 178
92 Sinclairs	Old Shambles	Sam Smiths PL	109K	115	136 167
93 Sportsman	Market Street	Lees		115K	125 160
94 Square Albert	Albert Square	Tetley PL		140	150 185
95 Stage Door	Oxford Street	Free		140K	170
96 Star & Garter	Fairfield Street	Whitbread PL	119	128	170
97 Swan	Withy Grove	Wilsons PL		130	136 160
98 Swinging Sporan	Sackville Street	S&N		140	150 160
99 Thomas's Chop House	Cross Street	Whitbread PL		100	190
100 Town Hall Tavern	Tib Lane	Bass		132	142 173
101 Unicorn	Church Street	Bass PL	124	124	132 160
102 Victoria	Hardman Street	Tetley		99K	99K 99
103 Vine	Kennedy Street	Courage PL	130K	134	154 178
104 Waldorf	Gore Street	Whitbread PL	115	123	138 165
105 Walkers	Swan Street	Free PL	95	100	120 150
106 Wellington	Old Shambles	Bass PL	112K	124	135 180
107 Wheatsheaf	Oak Street	Burtonwood		118	121 165
108 White House	Great Ancoats St	Free PL	110K	100	160
109 White Lion	Liverpool Road	Whitbread PL		130	145 170
110 Yates's	High Street	Free PL		125	165

Table Two: Beers and Pubs

<u>Brewer</u>	<u>Beer</u>	<u>Outlets</u>
Banks's	Mild	105
Bass	Draught Bass	28,49,100, 101,106
	Highgate Dark	49
	Highgate B	49
	Light	101
	Stones BB	23,28,61,68,76, 100,101,110
	Worthington BB	28,49,100, 101,106
Batemans	XB	101
	XXXB	100
	Victory	47
Brains	S A Best Bitter	60
Burton Bridge	Festival Ale	4
Burtonwood	Mild	11,107
	Bitter	11,66,69,107
Cains	Bitter	9,43,72,73,108
	Formidable	27
Carlsberg-Tetley		
	Greenalls Bitter	17,68,76
	Greenalls Original	68

Carlsberg-Tetley continued

	Ind Coope Burton	9,55,80
	Tetley Mild	71
	Tetley Bitter	2,3,6,7,9,18,20, 43,53,54,55,71,80,94
	Walker Bitter	20
Courage	Directors	4,5,8,27,36,78, 87,88,91,103
	J Smith Bitter	5,16,27,36,39,58, 62,84,87,91,103,110
	Webster Green Label	36
	Webster Bitter	5,7,8,10,22,62,63, 67,74,77,78,82,84,87,88,89,91,97
	Wilsons Mild (Morlands)	5,62,77
	Wilsons Bitter	77,78,97
Fullers	London Pride	49,105
Holts	Mild	30,32
	Bitter	30,32,45,60,108
Hydes	Light	41,51,96
	Bitter	37,41,51,96
Jennings	Bitter	2,3,9,94
Lees	Mild	50,81
	Bitter	42,50,81,93
McGuinness	Special	4

Maclay Kanes Amber Ale 60,105
Marstons Bitter 24,44,60,105
 Pedigree 1,2,24,31,44,47,52,
 59,60,75,79,85,94,105,109
 Porter 60
 Owd Roger 60
Moorhouses Pendle Witch 4
Morland Old Speckled Hen 28,64,109
Nix Wincott THAT 47
 Two Henrys Bitter 47
Oak Old Oak Ale 20
 Double Dagger 47
 Wobbly Bob 60
Robinsons Mild 14
 Bitter 14
 Best Bitter 2,3,9,14
 Old Tom 14
Rudgate Battleaxe 4
Ruddles Best Bitter 5,10,36,39,
 61,63,67,78,82,88,96,97
Sam Smith Old Brewery Bitter 92
 Museum 92
S&N Matthew Brown Bitter 4
 Theakstons Mild 4
 Theakstons BB 12,20,40,72,98
 Theakstons XB 4,12,98
 Theakstons Old Peculier 4,7,98
 Youngers Scotch 40
Steam Packet Bargee 108
Summerskills
 Whistle Belly Vengeance 60

Stocks Old Horizontal 4
Taylor's Landlord 47,64,104,109
Thwaites Bitter 31,34,90
Titanic Wreckage 4
Vaux Mild 29,86
 Samson 29,86
 Bitter 34
Wadworth 6X 83
Wells Eagle IPA 47
 Bombardier 105
Whitbread
 Bentleys Yorks Bitter 47,72
 Boddingtons Bitter 1,6,7,19,21,31,
 35,36,38,39,45,47,48,52,56,59,63,
 64,65,67,72,73,75,79,83,85,90,96,
 99,103,104,109
 Castle Eden 1,47,57
 Chesters Mild (Everards) 21,31,45,
 47,56,64,65,104
 Chesters Bitter (Burtonwood) 45,56,
 65,99
 Flowers IPA 1,35,38,47,64,96,99
 Flowers Original 52
 Log 35 57
 Log 42 57
 Trophy 21,23,104
 Winter Royal 75,90
 Fremains Bitter 1
Wickwar Brand Oak Bitter 47
Wychwood Dr Thirstys Draught 20
Youngs Bitter 68

Flixton Station

"The Station" in the old Flixton Station buildings has reopened as a pub rather than as a Henry's Table. Guest beers were advertised locally but our correspondent found nothing more exciting than Courage Directors and Marstons Pedigree.

Letter

Jolly Angler (94)

Sir - So there might be a threat to the Jolly Angler if the Commonwealth Games are held in Manchester in 2002 (WD last month). But what about this "City of Drama" thing in 1994? When the town is swamped by hordes of Melvyn Braggs, won't it be all quiche, campari and bloody Beaujolais? There's no telling what will happen. They could knock a dozen pubs down to build a Luvviedrome and then you would only be able to buy ale if it has bits of fruit floating in it.

Alec Guinness

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*from the
Station Master*



Moorings, Boothstown

Mark McConachie

An aptly-titled and fantastically located new BodPubCo house, the Moorings opened on Booths Hall Way in November. It stands beside the renovated Boothstown Basin on the Bridgewater Canal. On my visit on a chilly evening I was greeted by the sight of swans moving majestically across the still, mist-covered, moonlit waters towards me... (*Get on with it - Ed*)

The pub (more pub/restaurant really) is of modern design; thus no vault or other separate rooms exist, just different areas. These areas are furnished mainly along a fishing theme. So we find a boat emerging from a wall, ships' rigging, fishing rods and baskets, plastic fish, even a whale-topped weather vane and lots of other nonsense. A small area near the entrance is the exception to this and is decorated in an "elemental" fashion - depicting sun, wind, moon, etc.

A nice touch by the bar is a framed summary history of the Duke of Bridgewater and James Brindley's involvement in the creation of the canal. Outside, the Moorings has a terraced beer garden and an enclosed children's play area. The beers are Boddies mild and bitter (126p and 130p) plus a guest. (On my visit this was John Smiths. Hmm...)

Now the moans and groans. Guest beer price is 150p! There are door personnel - two T-shirt and leather jacket clad gentlemen - are they really necessary? But then again, this is Worsley.

Despite all of the aforesaid, the Moorings is not too bad a place.

Welcome addition

The Welcome, a Bass pub on Peel Lane, Little Hulton, is selling Worthington BB on handpull. Not far away on Cleggs Lane, the Raven (Pubmaster) also has Worthington and Stones as well.

Higher Blackley and Crumpsall

Burtonwood's Hilltop on Heaton Park Road has been renamed the Parkview and with the new name came a refurbishment which did away with an unusual feature. The old name was spelled out on the floor of the vault, but this is now carpeted over. The one cask beer on sale is Burtonwood bitter.

BodPubCo's Flying Horse on Crab Lane is now stocking guest beers - currently Castle Eden on handpump. These join Boddies mild and bitter on electric meters.

Cheers Bar on Middleton Road has had a couple of interesting brews recently - Lion Original Bitter and Vaux Samson - both at 99p. The guest brews sell alongside the regular beer, John Smiths (125p).

Timperley

Robinsons Best Bitter (130p) has joined Boddies mild and bitter at BodPubCo's Gardeners Arms, replacing Theakstons bitter. This pub features in the Metrolink Guide and is best approached by turning left at Navigation Road Station and keeping left until you reach the pub (seven minutes' walk). The walk from Timperley Station, as advised in the Guide, involves a poorly-lit journey alongside the Bridgewater Canal, where there are no footpaths.

The Stonemasons Arms (Tetley) now sells both Robinsons Best Bitter and a guest beer. Banks & Taylor Bodysnatcher was on excellent form on a recent visit, but there was no mild.

Kings Ale

Leo King

Unicorn

In the next few weeks the Unicorn (Bass) on Church Street, Central Manchester, will undergo some modifications - but nothing drastic. There will be new leather-covered seating, new light fittings and new carpets. There's good news for the ladies as they will no longer have to trek upstairs to the toilets. New ground-level toilets are being built.

The Unicorn is a popular and traditional pub which has altered little since it was built. The wood-panelled walls are a rarity these days; some indoor tiling remains and the illuminated stained glass in the ceiling near the centre of the pub gives the place additional character. The Unicorn attracts a variety of customers and there is an efficient staff.

Other relatively unspoilt pubs in the city centre are the Castle, Wheatsheaf, Sportsman, Burton Arms, Marble Arch, Crown & Kettle (should it ever reopen!), Old Wellington, Sinclairs, Lass o'Gowrie, Bulls Head, Land o'Cakes and a few more - but not many!

More Micros

The following should be added to the lists in WD Aug, Oct & Nov.

Aston Manor Brewery, Aston, Birmingham 7

Border Brewery, Berwick on Tweed, Northumberland - *not to be confused with the Wrexham brewery taken over and closed by Marstons.*

Brewery on Sea, Lancing, West Sussex - *please disregard 'Spinnaker Ales' (WD Oct) - these are the products of the stated brewery*

Brunswick Brewery, Derby Cannon Royal, Kidderminster, Worcs

Chandlers (*refer to Aston Manor, above*)

Commercial Brewing Co, Keighley - *has associations with Worth Valley Brewery*

Concertina Band Club, Mexborough, S Yorks - *a brew pub, but distributes real ale to the free trade. Beer has been on sale at Bury Beer Festival and Beer House.*

Foxley, Marlborough, Wilts Goose Eye, Keighley, W Yorks

Godsons, London - *was recorded in Dec WD but now appears to have finished.*

Hexhamshire, Hexham, Northumberland

Hobsons - *according to GBG is in Cleobury Mortimer, Kidderminster, Worcs. According to road atlas it is in Shropshire, as I recorded in Dec WD.*

Hogs Back, Tongham, Surrey Kemptown Brewery, Brighton, E Sussex

Lichfield Brewery, Lichfield, Staffs Rebellion Beer Co, Malow, Bucks

Nene Valley Brewery, Higham Ferrers, Northants

Wales

Bracdy Dyffryn, Denbigh, Clwyd, North Wales

Bullmastiff, Cardiff (*formerly of Penarth, South Glamorgan (WD Aug)*)

Sam Powell (*see WD Aug*) - *ales now brewed at Wood's, Craven Arms, Shropshire*

Put together, the lists probably contain the names of all the micro breweries operating at present. I'll provide updates when new information comes to light.

Alkrington Ale

Late November saw the opening of a refurbished Bass house, Old David's on Mount Road, Alkrington. A few internal alterations have been made, including the introduction of cask beers - Worthington BB and Stones.

Holts in Brief

Stewart Revell, Mike Robinson

In November the brewery put a penny on the price of their beers. As there was no further increase in excise duty at the end of that month, prices remain at 96p for bitter and 90p for mild.

The Sabre in Ordsall has not been sold to Wimpey, contrary to popular belief, and I am reliably informed that the licence was re-applied for in the normal way. We await developments.

This month Holts take over the Chapel House at Denton from Whitbread. It will be closed for some two months so that it can be converted back into a proper pub, the way Holts and their customers prefer.

In Eccles, new licensees at the White Lion are Don and Cath Wilkinson, who have moved all of 200 yards from the Bridgewater in Patricroft. Eddie Stafford, an experienced bar and cellar man who has worked for many years in the Eccles/Salford area, has taken over at the Bridgewater.

North v South

Mark McConachie

You may think the only difference between here and the South is one of price. Not so. In late November, sixteen members of Portsmouth CAMRA visited this area and I joined them on crawls of Ancoats and Eccles. Amongst the many topics discussed on both evenings, a few stood out as being worthy of mention...

* Prices in the South seem to follow a crude formula of "gravity plus 10p". For example, a 1040 beer would sell for 150p; 1050 - 160p and so on.

* Dominance of the Big Five. In Portsmouth most pubs are Whitbread. Here we retain a good proportion of independents' pubs.

* Despite Whitbread, the chaps from Pompey thought they still had a wider variety of beers than we have here.

* Pub-owning groups control a large number of pubs in the South and this restricts choice and value.

* Pub interiors. The big brewers/owners like to make their pubs big and barn-like; ie. knock all the walls down and create one large room.

It does not appear to be too good down there, despite the choice argument. When you consider our excellent local brewers and a select number of good free houses together with keen pricing, we ain't too badly off.



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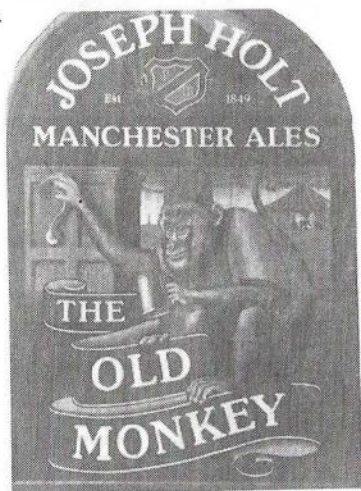
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Monkey Business

Mark McConachie

An expectant crowd of around thirty people crossed the threshold of Holts' latest pub, the Old Monkey, at 4.59pm on Monday December 6th. Some ten minutes later the place was packed to the gunwales.

Although entirely new, the building does blend in very well with its surroundings. Inside, there is that quality of "quintessential pubness", oft alluded to in these pages, in that the pub is small enough to be cosy and inviting. It occupies two floors, both very well appointed, with quality materials used for the bar and surroundings. The ground floor is the snug (for want of a better description) and upstairs is the plusher lounge bar. Holts mild and bitter are sold at 90p and 96p in both bars. A theatre theme is carried through most of the pub and the only concession to monkeys is on the stairs to the basement toilets.



New Book

A hundred or so years ago "Dan Crusty" took over the running of a beerhouse and brewery in Cradley in the Black Country. The house was originally a butcher's

shop and at first customers sat in a back room furnished with a few chairs, a settle and a table, with barrels racked on one side. The beerhouse became known as the White Horse and "Dan Crusty" was the nickname of Daniel Batham, the founder of Batham's Brewery. He brewed a strong, dark mild which must have caught on as the business thrived and over the years Batham's Brewery developed into the highly regarded company of today.



The full story is told in "The History of Batham's Black Country Brewers" by John Richards and the book is available from John at 9 Hedgerow Drive, Kingswinford, West Midlands DY6 7SA, price £7.50 including postage. The photo of the Brickmakers Arms, Dudley Road, Lye, was taken in 1927.



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Now & Then

No.82

Unicorn

Rob Magee

5 Charles Street, Oldham

Like many of Oldham's present-day public houses, the Unicorn began life as a cottage beerhouse. In 1862 Frederick Whitehead owned the property and he took out the first licence. He also acquired a music and dancing licence in 1866 to jolly things up. He tried to get a spirits licence, but the police blocked his application because there was already a public house (the Werneth and Railway) on the other side of the backyard. The setback doesn't seem to have affected Mr Whitehead's career, as in 1883 he moved to a fully licensed house (the Dusty Miller on Railway Road) and also became Chairman of Oldham Brewery. Six years later he sold the Unicorn to his company.

A police survey in 1894 noted the Unicorn was very clean and in good condition, with five drinking rooms and two bedrooms. However, the sanitary arrangements needed updating and the gents' urinal in particular was rather rudimentary. This was set on a wooden stage next to the back door, in the manner favoured by many small beerhouses in the days when the art of municipal sewage disposal was still being developed. At the most basic establishments the byproduct of the beer-drinking process was collected under the stage in buckets or tubs, which were regularly emptied down the nearest drain.

By the time I first went in the Unicorn in 1955 the house had the benefit of twentieth century plumbing. In those days the tap room was first left and the parlour first right; beyond the parlour was the bar and a small snug. Second left was a room like a sitting kitchen where one could watch television. Women in particular used this room; indeed, they had to pass through it to get to the toilets!

The Unicorn gained a full licence in March 1961. The layout changed dramatically in 1967 when the ground floor of the cottage next door was turned into a tap room and the original pub became one large lounge, as it is today. The best known landlord of recent years was John Matherson, known to all as Big John. He would put the tip of his index finger on the bar and if you could lift it away you got a free pint - you could use both hands - but I never saw anybody claim his pint!

The next big change for the Unicorn - and for all the other Oldham Brewery pubs - came in 1982, when Boddingtons took over. The brewery which Fred Whitehead helped to establish a century earlier was subsequently closed down and today the Unicorn is owned by BodPubCo.



The Unicorn in 1963

Rupert

I suppose it is not unusual for a genius to be ignored at home. It is, nevertheless, sad that one of Slumley's famous sons has had to seek recognition elsewhere. It started, I imagine, with Billy's elevation to membership of that august and select body - the British Brotherhood of Beer Bores. Envious and vituperative, his colleagues in Slumley poured scorn not only on Billy's penmanship, parodying his lofty prose, but were also bold enough to doubt the excellence of such leading lights of the movement as Boris Pratt and his very best pal in all the world, Bubbles Pepsi. These pedestrian philistines had the temerity to suggest that the portentous pæans of these amber nectar gurus were less than wonderful, describing their various outpourings as tedious drivel and pretentious twaddle.

Billy, who had hoped to do for taverns what his mentors had achieved for ale was unable to fulfil that ambition in Slumley and sought pastures (no not postures, you silly sod, pastures) new. What could be more appropriate than the sleeping behemoth of a branch next door - Smarmford & Slutch? Billy is now installed as puppet master and things are beginning to happen. Look out for a flurry of publications with titles like 'Architraves of Slutch' and 'Smarmford Mullions'. We could be heading for interesting times.

But, enough of the Shippon and Slutch branch and on to happier news. Yes, Charlie Bass is back at Mrs Tiggywinkle's after a long absence. Rumours that he intends to serve palatable ale in a pub-like ambience may not be premature. What is certain is that tiggy off the ground, high jinks charades and other divertissements will re-emerge. It is unlikely that dishevelled inebriates staggering in from other hostelries after closing time will be served, as their requests would, henceforth, fall on deaf ears.

Readers may have seen stories linking the name of Rumpleshirtscream amorously with a member of the Royal Family. Although many found it difficult to believe that he could be enamoured of anything other than his own voice, some gave credence to the tale. I am happy to announce that there is no truth whatsoever in these suggestions. He will not have his own batman, valet or equerry and will remain as ever the cuddly old Rumpleshirtscream that we've grown to know and love.

PS. This month is the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Snobley & Snoot Magna Branch. Will they remember?

PPS. Could it have been Smarmford & Slutch stalwart Roger Kepple who was discovered smashing glassware on the opening night of Drabs' Senile Simian?

WHAT'S DOING contributions should be sent to the editor c/o 88 Ringley Road, Stoneclough, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 1ET. News, letters, etc, must arrive by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue.

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

Branch Diary

North Manchester

Wed 5 Jan 8pm, City Centre Good Beer Guide shortlisting meeting. Kings Arms, Bloom Street, Salford

Wed 12 Jan 8pm, Good Beer Guide shortlisting meeting. Castle, Oldham Street, Manchester

Wed 19 Jan 8pm, Branch Meeting, Queens, Honey Street, Cheetham.

Wed 26 Jan, Eccles Survey. Meet Black Boy, Liverpool Road, 7.30 and 10.00pm

Wed 2 Feb, Collyhurst Crawl: Swan, Rochdale Rd 7pm; Sparrow, Thornton St North, 8pm; Milan, Rochdale Road, 9pm. Junction to finish

Wed 9 Feb 8pm, Branch Meeting, Beerhouse, Angel Street

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

Bolton

Thur 6 Jan 8.30pm, Branch Meeting and Pub of the Year Presentation, Sweet Green, Crook Street. Includes GBG 1995 nominations

Thur 20 Jan 8pm, GBG 1995 shortlisting, Pilkington Arms, Derby Street

Thur 3 Feb 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Pilkington Arms, Derby Street

Contact: Judith Spragg 0204 595342 (H), 0204 397350 (W)

Trafford & Hulme

Thur 6 Jan 8pm, Woolpack & Crown, Stockport Survey

Thur 13 Jan 8pm, Deansgate Survey: H R Fletchers, Mulligans, Rising Sun, White Lion and Crown

Weekend 14/15th Jan, Branch trip to Brussels (Deb's 40th)

Thur 20th Jan 8pm, Hale & Alty Survey: Railway (Hale), Cheshire Midland, Tatton & Grapes

Thur 27 Jan 8pm, Broadheath Survey: Railway, Cheshire Cheese, Packet House, Navigation, Orange Tree

Thur 2 Feb 8pm, Committee Meeting, Volunteer, Sale

Contact: Allan Glover 061 872 2373 (W) 061 962 9890 (H)

No Lady

Contrary to the report last month, the Hare & Hounds, Ladies Lane, Hindley, is not selling real ale from Vaux, the new owners. It's keg.

Moulders Arms

Manchester's longest-serving licensee has returned to the city after a brief "retirement". In his forty years in the trade Alan Southgate has managed the Ship Inn, Moss Side, and the following city centre pubs: Coach & Horses, Thatched House, Britannia, Oxford Hotel, Thompsons Arms, Rising Sun, Churchill, Imperial and the Crown & Anchor (Cateaton Street). He has also kept the Rams Head at Disley and other pubs in Lancashire & Cheshire. When he was at the famous Coach & Horses thirty-seven years ago it was residential!

Now Alan is running the Moulders Arms on Heyrod Street in Ancoats, where an excellent pint of Burtonwood (116p) can be had.

Contributors to this issue: Roger Hall, Mark McConachie, Stewart Revell, Roger Wood, Leo King, Mike Robinson, Rob Magee, Peter Wadsworth, D Busman

THE QUEENS ARMS

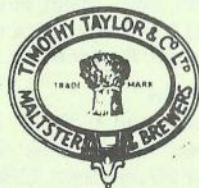
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