

25p

What's Doing

AUGUST 1994



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

Oxnoble Nobbled?



After months of certain speculation, Whitbread have finally applied for permission to alter, extend and demolish in part the Oxnoble Hotel on Liverpool Road. Sensitive demolition has always been part of Whitbread's developmental repertoire and it seems unlikely that the Oxnoble proposals will be any more appropriate than their previous limp thrusts. Further details of planning application 045786/DF/CMDC/94 may be obtained from Principal Planning Officer Peter Babb on 234 4552.

Manchester Micro

Mark McConachie

Well, Failsworth to be exact. A couple of years ago the man behind the Strawberry Duck in Clayton bought a club on Ashton Road West, Failsworth, turned it into a pub and renamed it the Failsworth Arms. Three beers - Holts mild and bitter and Boddies - were on sale in this cavernous place and to be frank it was far too open and very "un-publike".

All that has changed and the whole pub has undergone a vast transformation. It's now the Millgate, has two well-appointed rooms and a restaurant (the Old Wharf) at the rear which offers reasonably priced meals. The beer range remains the same, but add to this the pub's own in-house beer - "Willy Booth's Bumper of Stingo!" brewed right there on the premises. The odd name for the beer (although anything outrageous goes these days) originates from a poem of 1854 by local Newton Heath writer Elijah Ridings. The brewery can be seen behind the bar in the lounge, where wooden-clad vessels for hot liquor, mashtun and copper can be viewed.

Enough of the pub, I hear you ask, what about the beer? Unfortunately, on my visit the beer was not ready and I do not think that they had even started brewing! I was told it should come on stream in early August, however. No details of the style of beer, strength or price could be gleaned either. More when we have it.

Holts in Chorlton

Joseph Holt plc has applied for planning permission to alter and extend the Tara Hotel at 526 Wilbraham Road (on the corner of Oswald Road). The building is a former doctor's house which has been operating as an hotel for some time. Holts' proposals include the building of a ground floor public bar and two function rooms. Hotel rooms on the first and second floors would be retained. So if all goes to plan, aficionados of Cheetham's favourite brew will be able to come to South Manchester and stay in a pub owned by the cheeky amber nectar purveyors, just as they can in the North at the Woodthorpe.

Licensing News

Greater Manchester Police have applied for the revocation of three Salford licences - Buskers, the Langworthy and the Grosvenor - all of which are in a state of disrepair. The Bluebell in Monton and the Clifton Park Hotel (why did they change it from the Gay Willows?) have applied for permission to make structural alterations. A transfer application has been made for the Golden Gate on Cross Lane.

Swinton & Pendlebury

BodPubCo are introducing a new beer into some of their outlets which is similar to the Old Shilling of two or three years ago. The brew comes from Jennings of Cockermouth and is a light bitter, og 1032. At 99p a pint (presumably to compete with Holts) it is sold in each pub under an individual "house name". The first pub in the area to sell it was the Albert on Bolton Road, under the title Nadgers Brew, and 18 gallons sold out within 24 hours.

The Shepherds Arms on Hall Street is now officially called the Showboat, the nickname it has had for years, but beware, the Burtonwood mild is keg. Halligans on Swinton Hall Road has replaced Banks's bitter with Boddies, but a welcome arrival just over the Wardley border at the Brook Tavern is Cains bitter at £1.10.

Kings Ale

Leo King

Southern discomfort

The Southern Hotel in Chorlton-cum-Hardy has been modernised once more. It's a miracle that pubs like this one stay up after having the guts ripped out of them time and time again. Raised seating areas always seem make rooms look smaller - put too many in a place and there's a claustrophobic effect. The Southern now seems too cluttered, there are far too many lights and I certainly don't like the lounge part of the pub. Why didn't BodPubCo leave it as it was? It was a very pleasant room with a very comfortable drinking area.

The vault remains virtually untouched and it has been almost the same since the days when the Southern was a Swales house, although it now has a giant screen. There are ten handpumps in the lounge (this was a long-term electric dispense pub, even back in the sixties when Swales owned it). However, I was disappointed to discover that the Southern is not a BodPubCo outlet along the lines of the Kings Arms in Salford. One bank of three handpumps had Boddies pump clips, as did two more further along. Others dispensed the same tired old Whitbread range - you know, Castle Eden and Marstons Pedigree. (What, no Timmy Taylors?) Also, Tetleys bitter was on sale. Ironically, Boddies nearly fell to Allied Breweries (Tetleys) back in 1971 - remember? Boddies bitter is £1.27 and Castle Eden £1.32. Not exactly cheap. The Southern now has an inbuilt chip shop. Why? There has been a chip shop about fifteen yards away for very many years.

The cheapest pint

I cannot understand all the excitement about Holts being knocked off its perch because a micro brewery millions of miles away, somewhere in Avon, sells a cheaper bitter. I refer to the Wickwar Brewing Company, whose Coopers WPA is (or maybe was) priced at 88p a pint. Nonsense! Holts is still the country's best value-for-money beer. There's a large tied estate and a vast free trade. Wickwar does not have this and how long will the 88p pint last anyway? Also, Holts bitter is og 1039 (ABV 4%), Wickwar Coopers WPA is og 1036 (ABV 3.5%). I enjoy Wickwar beers, but I'm glad to say that Holts still reigns supreme.

Black Lion

Well, at long last the Black Lion at the corner of Blackfriars Street and Chapel Street in Salford has a real ale. This former Bass pub is now controlled by the Centric company of Nottingham and sells Worthington bitter. Centric's former Bass pubs can sell only Bass products on draught and S&N bottled beers and former Bass tenants have lost their guest beer rights. Talk about a dictatorship! However, I don't think the Black Lion has sold real ale since its Hardy's Brewery days. There was the Charrington rubbish and Brew Ten, and what crap that lot was!



If the Worthington bitter is a success and stays, the Church on Ford Lane, off Chapel Street (Greenalls), will be the only Salford City Centre pub not selling real ale.

Lion & Lamb

Unlike former owners Grand Metropolitan, S&N seem to be willing to spend money on certain of their recently acquired Chef & Brewer estate. This is good news for Blackley folk as the Lion & Lamb on Victoria Avenue has been given a thorough revamp. The pub of late had looked tired and unwelcoming and there was no cask beer either!

After a brief closure it reopened on July 8th and is obviously, and very sensibly, designed to get in the more mature customers the pub once enjoyed. They will surely be attracted by the reintroduction of cask ale, albeit in the form of Wilsons bitter at £1.09 (same price as the nearby Berkshire), but it was proving very popular on the night. A very healthy sign was that the Websters Pennine (keg) bitter was £1.11: incentive - cask is cheapest, cask is best!

Salford round up

The cartulary of empty pubs must be extended to include, once more, the Britannia on Bank Lane. In addition to those pubs which are burnt out or boarded up, there are a number of others which close and reopen mysteriously. In recent months they have included the Bricklayers, the Druids, the Keystone, the Kettledrum, the Maypole, the Corporation and the Brewery Tavern.

Other pubs seem to operate in a restricted way. The Paddock on Cross Lane effectively uses only one room and the Flat Iron near the precinct has severely curtailed opening times. Are our brewers and pub-owning groups becoming so mercenary and rapacious that they can no longer find licensees of the calibre required to run their pubs? It is a sad indictment of our society if pubs like the Langworthy are closed for ever because of crime and intimidation.

Snipe - no cause for concern

Our front page story last month about the fate of the Snipe Inn was, it seems, a trifle exaggerated. The recently published GMPTE Tameside proposals show that Metrolink will pass behind the pub and that only a small corner of the car park will be needed for the work.

What's Doing Competition

The picture shows Lady Bog (easily recognisable with her mouth open) dressed as a Marsh Hare (geddit?) at the Mad Hatter's tea party (aka Wigan Amber Nectar Show).

What is she saying? Answers to the editor by 20th August. Prize - a free night out with Lord and Lady Bog.



Letters

Monkey Business

Sir - Stewart Revell's comments in July WD about the beer delivery system at the Old Monkey warrant a response. He says that the beer is not served under gas pressure but that "the pumps are electrically assisted" to raise the beer the seven metres or so from the cellar to the first floor. Has he actually been in the cellar? I have been shown around the cellar and have seen the rack of gas bottles with connecting pipes to some of the casks (as well as to the lager and stout containers). I have had to wait for a pint upstairs when "the gas is off" so that a new bottle could be connected.

I believe Stewart, as Brewery Liaison Officer for CAMRA, should go and see for himself, rather than simply report what the brewery has told him. Also, I would be interested to know the response of the CAMRA technical committees to this practice. I recently tried a pint of mild downstairs and then a pint upstairs and, although each pint was different, they were both good and the difference was no more than you would normally expect from varying levels of conditioning.

Peter Barnes

Who owns what?

Sir - I have noticed that of late a number of large Whitbread houses in the area no longer display that name anywhere on the pub. Examples I have seen are the Farnyard in Blackley; the Broadway, New Moston, and the Bulls Head, Walkden. Are Whitbread getting shy? Are they trying to hide something? I think we should be told.

Mark McConachie

Low Greed

Sir - Surely it was Lord Thomson, not Lew Grade, who said that commercial television was a licence to print money? (WD July)

John Greenway

(I heard it was Lew Grade, and he would have known. He founded Associated Television (ATV), which at one time controlled a quarter of all television programming. Then the company made a fortune by syndicating re-runs of "The Saint", "The Avengers", etc, all over the world. Lord Thomson made his loot in newspaper publishing - Ed)

Jubilee - no cause for celebration

Following a rather nasty fracas in the Jubilee in Ordsall involving the licensee (RL player Phil Ford) and violent customers, he has understandably quit. The pub was closed for a short period but has reopened with a temporary licensee. The future does not look promising for what was a rather good BodPubCo house.

Holts Corner

Stewart Revell

The free trade within the Greater Manchester area continues to expand. The Canary Tavern, 96 High Street, Little Lever, is one of the latest outlets.

Improvements at the brewery are ongoing, with a new surface being laid in the yard. Perhaps this is the first change there since the cobbles were laid in the 1850s? No-one is saying what was found under the cobbles!

Holts' shares recently rose to an all-time high of £34.75 (each) and there is every reason to expect them to rise further over the coming months.

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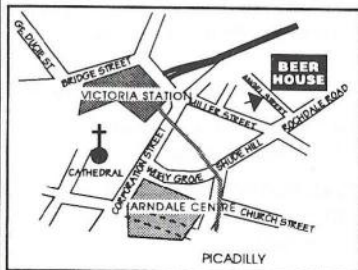
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Sale Ale

Tetleys have completely rebuilt the old Queens Hotel in Sale and the pub is now called the Station at Sale. It's spacious, light and tastefully fitted-out and there's a large patio area. Handpumped bitters (no mild) on offer are Tetleys, Marstons Pedigree and Ind Coope Burton Ale. At 137p a pint, the Tetleys (3.6 ABV) is not exactly cheap.

There is a "steak house" eating area and the Station at Sale also offers two services which will make any true pub-lover shudder - morning coffee and afternoon tea. And the female bar staff wear black bow ties with matching braces. So another Leisure Experience is born...

Beer Festival

CAMRA and local Rotary Clubs will be presenting the first ever Northwich Beer Festival on 16th and 17th September at the Memorial Hall, Northwich. Proceeds will be donated to local charities. There will be around forty real ales from independent breweries (including locals Coach House and Weetwood), food at all sessions and noise from a jazz band and some Morris Men. (Why is it that nobody ever puts on a beer festival where we can all just sit down and sup? There always has to be jazz or brass bands and grown men poncing about in clogs.)

Opening hours will be 7-11pm on Friday 16th; 12-4pm and 7-11pm on Saturday 17th. Entrance (including commemorative glass) is £3 on the Friday, £1 on the Saturday lunch and £2 Saturday evening. CAMRA members get a free half pint on presentation of their membership cards.

Entrance to the Festival is by programme only and these are obtainable from Mark Enderby, 3 Brackley Street, Stockton Heath, Warrington WA4 6DY. Send an A5 stamped addressed envelope and cheques should be made out to "Northwich Beer Festival Account". For further details phone 0925 602809.

Bank Holiday Fun

The Minstrel on Wigan Road, Hindley, will be putting on about six extra beers over the August Bank Holiday weekend and on Sunday 28th August there will be a CAMRA barbecue, to which all are welcome. A dwyle flonking contest may be held between the Pie-Eaters and the Laurel & Hardy branch. We can't wait...

New pub for Worsley

A provisional licence has been granted to Tetley for a new pub on Stable Fold, off Barton Road in Worsley village. The premises are designed to fit in with the half-timbered look of the area and will emphasise food. Ten-pint-a-night, beer-bellied darts players probably won't be very welcome.

Royal Oak Returns

The Royal Oak in Didsbury, home of probably the best cheese butties in the country, has reopened after extensive refurbishment following an arson attack earlier this year. The pub has been restored and a good job has been made of retaining its character. The beers are Batemans mild, Marstons bitter, Pedigree and Head Brewer's Choice.

Unfortunately all the music hall posters were lost in the fire and the walls are a little bare at the moment. Long-standing landlord Arthur Gosling is on the lookout for replacements, so if you come across anything suitable, he would be delighted to hear from you.

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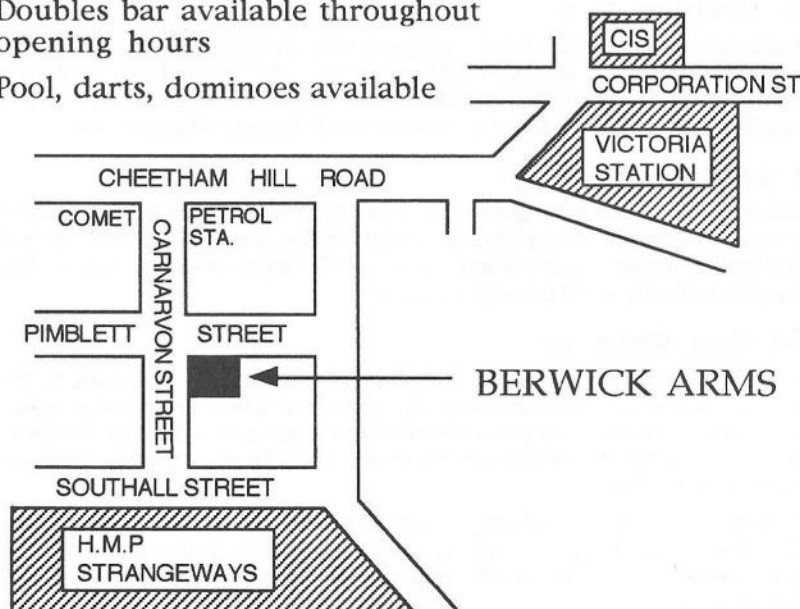
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Robinsons
in North Manchester and Salford



Robinsons

Robinsons is a fairly large independent brewer with over four hundred tied houses from Anglesey to Cumbria. Every pub sells real ale, which is all brewed in Stockport. Despite the relatively high number of pubs, there are precious few in North Manchester and Salford - one in the City Centre, two in Harpurhey, one in Blackley, two in the environs of Eccles, one in Swinton, one in Salford and one in the far flung outpost of Little Hulton.

<u>The Beers</u>	<u>ABV%</u>
Hatters Mild	3.3
Old Stockport Bitter	3.5
Hartleys XB	4.0
Best Bitter	4.2
Frederics	5.0
Old Tom	8.5

Ark Royal

Tavistock Square, Harpurhey

Buses: 17,18,51,61,81,112,122,123,130,161,163,164

Hatters Mild, Best Bitter (E)

This is a modern pub, but nonetheless comfortable and popular. It attracts a good mix of people who make full use of both vault and lounge. The mix is perhaps the reason why the beer here is consistently better than the nearby Milan. The Ark Royal name is echoed in a good collection of large photos of the famous aircraft carrier.

Brown Cow

Worsley Road, Winton. *Near motorway bridge, end of Parrin Lane*

Buses 68,66,33,27

Hatters Mild, Best Bitter (H)

The building dates from 1970, when the original Brown Cow was pulled down to make way for the M602. The old pub had its origins in the seventeenth century and an early licensee gave his name to Parrin Lane. The bowling green has long since gone but there is a children's playground. The modern pub consists of a small vault, a large lounge and a relatively unused concert room at the rear. The village of Winton boasts three pubs near the M602 and Robinsons adds to the choice of Holts, Boddingtons and some guest beers.

Castle

Oldham Street, City

Hatters Mild, Old Stockport Bitter, Best Bitter, Old Tom (H)

Without doubt the best pub on Oldham Street. The building is long and narrow with three rooms. The almost intact tiled exterior stands out against the shabbiness of some of the surrounding properties. The name is set in tiles on the frontage and you are greeted with a splendid floor mosaic upon entry. The decorative bar at the front can become crowded and the large back room can get noisy and there is a pool table. Quiet can be had in the middle room - the parlour. If proof is needed of decent beer, just take a look at how many times this pub has been in the Good Beer Guide. It is one of the very few Robbies pubs to offer the rare "ordinary" bitter: even rarer is the year-round sale of Old Tom.

Milan Inn

Rochdale Road, Harpurhey

Buses: 17,18,51,61,81,112,122,123,130,161,163,164

Hatters Mild, Best Bitter (E)

This is a compact, interestingly-shaped pub which opened about 1850 as a beerhouse and got its name from a now demolished terrace nearby. The interior is mostly wood panelled, with two U-shaped seating areas on either side of the main door. A juke box invariably provides some good tunes from the 50's and 60's. There's a separate vault but it is not well used, perhaps because you can only reach it through the gents as the outside door is locked. Or maybe it's the austere decoration, or the odd shape (a crooked-L) of the room. The pub is unfortunately let down by inconsistent beer quality: the mild is sometimes dreadful. That is a shame as at one time the Milan was a Good Beer Guide pub.

Pied Piper

Eastham Way, Little Hulton

Buses: 6A, 31; others 12,35-39,68 (6 minute walk from the Shamrock, Manchester Road East)

Hatters Mild, Best Bitter (E)

This is a large, well-run post-war estate pub in the middle of the northern half of Little Hulton's numerous housing developments. Interestingly, the pub was built with an Outdoor Department that separated the lounge and vault: it is no longer used but can still be seen. The lounge appears to have been two rooms at one time, but these are now separated only by a partial wall and a double-sided fireplace. A nice set of Guinness prints provides the decoration. In sum, a decent no-nonsense pub for all tastes.

Pleasant Inn

Chapel Lane, Higher Blackley

Buses: 57,149

Hatters Mild, Best Bitter (H)

Records are unclear as to the exact date the Pleasant started as a pub, but 1870 is a likely year. As with most of the Robinsons houses in North Manchester and Salford, this was one of those acquired when Robinsons bought out Kays Atlas Brewery in 1929. For the last dozen years the Pleasant has been in the capable hands of Joan and Doug Knott, who run an unspoilt, two-roomed pub with beer quality that ranks as the best in Blackley. No surprise, then, that the Pleasant is a Good Beer Guide regular. A true gem of a pub!

Star

Back Hope Street. *Between Great Clowes Street and Lower Broughton Road. Best approached from Knoll Street, off Bury New Road*

Buses 89, 90, 91, 94, 96, 97, 98, 139, 140

Hatters Mild, Best Bitter, Old Tom (winter) (E)

Located in a quiet backwater of Salford - the Cliff in Higher Broughton - the Star is now the only Robinsons pub in the old City of Salford (if we consider the White Horse to be in Eccles and regard the closure of the Three Legs of Man on Greengate as permanent). The Star boasts the smallest bar in the city, in a tiny vault. There are two further rooms, one of which is home to Salford's oldest folk club. An old beerhouse, dating back some 150 years, the Star still retains much of what might be regarded as the essence of a local pub. It is cosy, welcoming, yet idiosyncratic. There's a sheltered garden and good quality beer (GBG 1994). The Star is a haven in the urban jungle of Salford.

White Horse

Gilda Brook Road, Eccles. Near M602 roundabout. Buses 64, 66, 68

Hatters Mild, Best Bitter (E)

The present building is the third White Horse. The first was licensed in the early years of the last century and was originally named the Shovel & Broom. This was replaced in the 1930s by the second White Horse after Robinsons acquired the pub with the tied estate of Kay's Atlas Brewery. Unfortunately, Mr Robinson did not foresee the coming of the M602 and in 1973 a third pub had to be built out of the way of the motorway and just inside the Salford boundary. Typical of its era, the White Horse is a two-roomed pub with a large lounge and a vault. Despite its unprepossessing appearance and serious competition over the M602, it is a popular pub offering a rare beer for the area.

White Lion

242 Manchester Road, Swinton. Junction of Worsley Rd, Chorley Rd.

Buses: 12, 26, 35, 36, 37

Hatters Mild, Best Bitter, Frederics, Old Tom (E)

Dating back to 1790, the White Lion is Swinton's second oldest pub. It was the original home of the town's once-famous rugby football team whose name, "The Lions", derives from the pub. The premises have been altered considerably over the last 200 years and now consist of a vault and two lounges. Despite its age, the White Lion fails somehow to exude "an ambience of archetypal pubness", as Bogbrush might have said. It is, nevertheless, popular and an asset to an area dominated by Tetleys and Holts.



Wigan & District

Dave White

Amidst a fanfare of publicity, Wigan CAMRA launched their local pub guide in March 1994. The cover print stuck to your fingers, but the information contained therein was accurate at the time. However, whilst we await the much-improved eighth edition (a must for your Christmas stocking), here are some of the changes that have been taking place over the last five months...

Pubs that haven't sold a drop of the real stuff this side of a Labour government continue to surprise. The **Lathom House Inn**, Latham Lane, Kitt Green has gone over to cask Tetley bitter and dark mild; in Billinge, the **Unicorn** on Upholland Road is now selling real Greenalls mild and bitter, which means that only the **Eagle & Child**, Main Street (also GW) is on keg in the village.

The number of Matthew Brown pubs selling cask beer in Hindley has increased 100% since the **Bird i'th'Hand** took on Vaux Samson as a guest beer. The Bird is on the corner of Wigan Road and Liverpool Road and the Samson is going for a very reasonable £1.20 a pint. A mile or two down the road in Ince, the **Manley Hotel** on Ince Green Lane has reopened at last, selling Vaux bitter and Samson. Well worth a couple of scoops before catching the train home.

The club trade seems to be getting in on the act. The **Gidlow and Beech Hill Social Club** now hawks cask Tetley dark mild, bitter and Boddies bitter and can be found, not surprisingly, on Gidlow Lane, Beech Hill. Closer to the town centre, **Wigan Bowling Club**, Park Crescent West, is offering Castle Eden Ale and Flowers IPA. Meanwhile, the place that used to be **Aspull Labour Club**, Haigh Road, Aspull, sells a range of ales from Bass, Banks's and John Smith and in the back of beyond, **Beacon Park Golf Club**, Beacon Lane, Dalton, has gone over to cask Theakstons best bitter and XB.

There appear to have been no keg gains since the guide came out, but the public bar of the **Killhey Court**, Chorley Road, Worthington, is closed and being modernised at present. Electric pumps have replaced wickets at the **Court Emporium**, King Street, Wigan. Has anyone tried the Boddies in there lately?

There have been a legion of lesser changes, with several pubs now operating a guest ale policy. These include the **Stocks Inn**, Alder Lane, Parbold (T-W); the **Charnley Arms**, Almond Brook Road, Shevington Moor (GW), and the **Prince of Wales** (aka the **Jawbone**), Victoria Street, Newton (T-W). The last of these also has a house beer on offer, brewed by Tetley-Walker at a 1033 og. (Walkers ordinary?) On the other hand, the experiment with Lees bitter in two town centre Tetley pubs - the **Bowling Green** and the **Fox & Goose**, both on Wigan Lane - has been dropped.

Elsewhere in the centre of Wigan, the **Royal Oak**, Standishgate, has increased its range of beers to include Castle Eden Ale and Flowers IPA alongside draught Bass. The **Cherry Gardens**, Wigan Lane, has lost its cask mild, but the Forshaws was excellent on a recent visit. Another Burtonwood pub, the **Running Horses** on Gantley Road, Orrell, has reverted to cask mild after a short spell on the fizzy stuff, and a hop, skip and a jump away, the **Bispham Lodge** on Upholland Road, Billinge, now sells Vaux bitter alongside Samson. However, if there's such a thing as an ambience transplant, this place needs it!

The **Crown Hotel**, Platt Lane, Worthington, has abandoned its links with S&N in favour of Tetleys and the range of ales reflects this. In Burtonwood-land, the **Old Original Seven Stars**, Preston Road, Standish (always a bit of a mouthful) is now officially known by its former nickname of the **Shamrock**; the recently

revamped **Worthington Hotel**, Market Street, Hindley, now sells Top Hat alongside Burtonwood bitter, and TH has replaced Forshaws at the **Railway**, Station Road, Parbold.

Finally, news in brief. The **Cross Keys**, a Hindley Greenalls pub on the A58 and closed this past decade, suffered damage when some schoolchildren set fire to it. The little rascals... Back in the centre of Wigan, plans to convert the **John Bull Chophouse** up the Wiend to real ale have once again fallen through. Perhaps Thwaites will remove the fake handpumps from the bar while they make their minds up?

Rent Rise

BodPubCo seem to put a strange interpretation on the expression "rent renegotiation" in their tenants' leases. They seem to think that this means an automatic hike in the amount paid. Furthermore, the figures which they propose are not based on an independent open-market valuation, but on something plucked from the sky. As anyone in the trade knows, the capital value of pubs in Manchester and Salford has plummeted (the Broughton Hotel is up for sale, freehold, lock, stock and barrel for £68,000). This must surely be reflected in open-market rents. One BodPubCo tenant who has been asked to pay over £36,000 p.a. (£700 per week) has had an independent valuation made. This indicated a figure of £23,500 (£450 per week). You can do quite a lot with £250 a week. Rents should reflect demand and it's unfair that tenants should take on the vicissitudes of the property market as well as the vagaries of the pub-going public.

Price Rise

The price of Whitbread's beers, including Boddingtons, has risen by around 8p a pint. This is about six-and-a-half percent, when inflation's half that. Moreover, some 25p is duty and that's not changed, So the increase is more like 8%. And to think CAMRA wanted to jump into bed with Whitbread to stop Arthur Daley and his mates flogging Frog beer off cheap!

Masons Arms

There has been a change of licensee at the Masons Arms (Thwaites) in Radcliffe. Sophie has been a great host to the many regulars for four years and we wish her and her family good luck for the future. The new tenants are Jackie and Brian Hamer, whose brother runs the Pleasant View on Tottington Road, Bury. The cask beers remain the same (Craftsman may be tried in the near future), but the hours have changed slightly: 12-3, 7-11 Mon-Thur; 11-11 Fri-Sat; normal Sunday.

Bottom Price

Further to last month's report on the reopening of the Bottom Derby in Harpurhey, the pub is now offering Banks's bitter at 75p a pint. The cheapest in the world?

Light Relief

The Ancient Lights in the vault of the Cricketers Arms, Swinton (Holts), finally went out in a puff of smoke. The electrician declared the fittings obsolete and a new fluorescent ceiling light has been installed. The regulars are reported to be unhappy about this intrusion of modernity into their favourite watering hole, as the new lights are too bright.



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Closed & Boarded Corner

I'd walk a million miles...

Tetley's Kings Arms (Jolsons Bar) on Langley Road South, Salford, is shut once again. There is no "for sale" sign, but the windows are boarded.

Corporate Livery

An extra dimension has been added to the Belhaven corporate livery of closed, boarded and often burnt out. Following on from last month's report on the White Hart, Oldham Road, all trace of the pub's name and brewery livery have been removed and a new billboard hoarding has been attached to the front of the hapless shell. Now that's corporate initiative for you!

Dead Dogs

Talking about hapless shells, remember the Two Terriers in Ancoats, which shut when grandad was a lad and was the subject of a planning application reported last month? Well, the slates had gone and the place was a wreck a couple of weeks ago.

Off Sales

In order to counter brewers' arguments about beer duty and give weight to CAMRA's belief that brewers are flogging beer off cheap to the retail off-licence trade, What's Doing readers are invited to send in details of supermarket or other off-sales beer prices. Details should include:

1. Place - eg. Tesco
2. Name of beer
3. Strength (ABV)
4. Size in ml. or pints
5. Price

We would also be interested to hear of wholesale prices of beer charged to pubs (say whether this includes VAT). It is our firm belief that in some cases it is possible to buy beer in small quantities at retail prices cheaper than pubs must pay wholesale for barrel lots. We'd like to be able to prove it.

The Station ticket collectors
fed up with The Station Master,
+ the Porters hogging all the
gas light, have decided to
present:



They've travelled the smallest
of branch lines to gather a selection of over
30 new and rare brews to be served during
the week.

Festival T shirts,
Inexpensive home cooked food will be available
Monday evening: Folk in the conservatory.



WARRINGTON STREET ASHTON-U-LYNE

Rupert

Via Beinlos, I receive a magazine entitled "The Beers of Summer", published by Merchant Du Vin in the good old US of A. Inter alia, it contains an article by Whacko Bubbles Pepsi with the heading "Playboy - Entertainment for Men". It's about wheat beers and is illustrated with bunnies and a picture of Playboy magazine - a sort of "Get your tits and Weizenbock out for the lads". It might have been easier to marry Cliff Richard's daughter to establish his sexuality, in the manner his namesake is alleged to have done.

Congratulations to two teams who tied in the intellectual piss up of the year on Independents' Day. In the blue corner the formidable combination of Rumpedshirtscream and Billy Cosh. In the red corner the Nightingales - woman and husband. They could not be separated and will join forces next year to set an even more problematic complexity.

It's reassuring to see that Dillons and Brobdingnags are not cowed by the government's failure to do anything about disparities in tax between here and foreign parts.

Their amber nectars are already five bob a pint more than Drabs' wares, presumably because the Crown Brewery is no more than a front for alien ales, fermented in Frogley and smuggled into Albion disguised as embalming fluid in camouflaged trucks. In any case, Brobdingnags' famous foaming ales are miles better than Drabs' lacklustre liquid. In order to demonstrate the superiority of the leisure experience which they purvey and their refusal to allow price competition to disadvantage them, Grotley's favourite brewery has responded by charging even more for their lovely liquors. That'll

really teach everybody a lesson and serve to persuade the government of their sincerity in lobbying about duty. Cynics, who thought that all they wanted to do was reduce tax so they could leave their prices the same, stuff their customers and make more spondulicks for their impecunious shareholders, are duly confounded. Dillons are lovely people, Brobdingnags is the best beer in the world and I won't hear a word against either of them.

This column is only for men. Despite rumours to the contrary, I'm megamacho. The bunny and the tit prove it.



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Branch Diary

Regional Meeting

Wed 10 Aug, 8pm. Britons Protection, Great Bridgewater Street, Manchester

North Manchester

Wed 3 Aug, Ancoats Crawl: White House 7pm, Land o'Cakes 8pm (both Great Ancoats Street); Walkers, Swan Street, 9pm

Wed 10 Aug, Regional Meeting, Britons Protection, Great Bridgewater Street, Manchester, 8pm

Sat 13 Aug, Trip to Wakefield. Train from Victoria 10.55, arrive Wakefield 12.09. Visit Clarks Brewery Tap, Westgate, then Elephant & Castle, opposite station, and Beer Engine, 77 Westgate End. 15.23 train to Huddersfield to visit Rat & Ratchet, 40 Chapel Hill

Wed 17 Aug, Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford, 8pm

Sun 21 Aug: Sunday opening hours campaign. See Branch Contact for details

Wed 24 Aug, Rochdale Crawl: Flying Horse, Town Hall Square, 7.30pm; Tap & Spile, Drake Street, 8.30pm; Cask & Feather, Drake Street, 9.30pm

Wed 31 Aug: New members social and quiz night: Dean Brook, St Marys Road, Moston 8pm

Wed 7 Sept, Cheetham Hill & Crumpsall Crawl. Griffin, Cheetham Hill Road, 7pm; Crumpsall, Bury Old Road, 8.30pm; Egerton Arms, Hanlon Street, 9.30pm.

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

Bolton

Thur 11 Aug, Branch Meeting & Hot Pot Supper, Lord Clyde, Folds Road. Including nominations and shortlisting for Pub of the Year 1994.

Thur 18 Aug, Barbecue & Social, Sweet Green Tavern. £2 each. Book places with contact by 11 Aug.

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

Wigan

Wed 17 Aug, Branch Meeting, Orwell, Wigan Pier, 8pm

Sun 21 Aug, Sunday Licensing Campaign. 1pm Swan & Railway; 2.30 Old Pear Tree

Sun 28th Aug, Social & Barbecue, Minstrel, Hindley, 2pm

Contact Brian Gleave 0942 840658

Trafford & Hulme

Thur 11 Aug 8pm, Vine, Kennedy Street; City Arms; Abercrombie, Bootle Street; White Lion, Liverpool Road; Crown, Deansgate

Thur 18 Aug 8pm, Branch Meeting, Railway, Hale Village

Thur 25 Aug, Timperley Crawl: Quarry Bank Inn, Bloomsbury Lane; Stonemasons, Moss Trooper, Gardeners Arms, Hare & Hounds

Thur 1 Sept 8pm, Committee Meeting, Unicorn Inn, Hale Road, Hale Barns

Sat 8 Oct, Liverpool and Chester Trip. Phone branch contact for details

Contact: Roger Wilson 061 832 8237 (w), 061 941 5602 (h)

Contributors to this issue: Ian Kenny, Paul Roberts, Roger Hall, Mark McConachie, Dennis Hart, Stewart Revell, Geoff Atkins, Leo King, Dave White, Pete Cash, Brian Gleave, Keith Egerton.

Contributions for September WD should be sent to the Editor, c/o 88 Ringley Road, Stoneclough, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 1ET, before 20th August.

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Fri: 12.00-11.00

Sat: 12.00-4.00, 7.00-11.00

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Dave & Jo*

