

25p

What's Doing

MAY 1996



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

New Pub for Eccles



Salford City Planning Committee has given permission for Monks Hall on Wellington Road, Eccles, to become a pub. Two years ago Banks's Brewery wanted to buy the former museum from the Council and so they put in a planning application to turn it into licensed premises. But the sale was then cancelled when the Council realised they could get a better deal if they obtained the planning permission themselves and then sold the building.

So which brewery, pub chain or whatever is going to come up with the asking price? We'll have to wait and see.

Mild in May in Trafford & Hulme

Roger Wood has compiled the following list of pubs selling mild in the Trafford & Hulme CAMRA branch area. Out of a total of around 165 real ale pubs in the area, 39 sell mild...

Banks's mild

Rothwells Spring Gardens, City
Mancunian City Road, Hulme
Carters Arms Northenden Rd, Sale Moor
Bank at Sale School Road, Sale
Hare & Hounds Wood Lane, Timperley
King William IV Manchester Rd, Partington

Boddingtons mild

Grapes Regent Road, Altrincham
Railway Manchester Road, Broadheath

Holts mild

Spread Eagle Wilbraham Road, Chorlton
Melville Barton Road, Stretford
Lord Nelson Stretford Road, Urmston
Roebuck Church Road, Flixton
Volunteer Cross Street, Sale
Buccaneer Firsway, Sale
Legh Arms Marsland Road, Sale Moor

Lees GB mild

Park Sledmoor Rd, Northern Moor
Butchers Petersfield Dr, Northern Moor

Robinsons Hatters Mild

Railway Chapel Road, Sale
Gardeners Wythenshawe Rd,
Northern Moor
Bulls Head Wicker Lane, Hale Barns
Railway Ashley Road, Hale

Theakstons mild

Axe & Cleaver School Lane, Dunham
Massey

Bass Toby Light

Victoria Stamford St, Altrincham

Cains mild

Huntsman Firsway, Sale

Chesters mild

Robin Hood Urmston La, Stretford
Bent Brook Broadway, Davyhulme

Greenalls mild

Park Lloyd St, Altrincham
Church Church Road, Flixton

Highgate mild

H R Fletchers St Marys St, City

Hydes Anvil Light

Hope Inn Chester Rd, Combrook
Grand Junction Rolls Cres, Hulme

Hydes Anvil mild

Denmark Moss La E, Moss Side
Ye Olde Plough Green La, Ashton
on Mersey
Quarry Bank Bloomsbury La,
Timperley

Cock Robin Manor Ave, Sale
Bakers Pownall Rd, Altrincham
Unicorn Hale Road, Hale Barns

Tetley mild

Stonemasons Stockport Rd,
Timperley

Vaux mild

Crown Deansgate, City

Lights out

Manchester City Council has approved plans for a change of use at the Lightbowne, Lightbowne Road, Moston. This very large ex-Whitbread pub, which has been closed for some time, is set to become a takeaway, a workshop for car valeting and cleaning, and four shops.

New pub for city centre?

It is rumoured that the owners of the Home nightclub intend to open a pub on High Street called the Millennium. It will be in the former Tic Tac shop (near the Blob Shop).

Castle & Falcon reopens!

Well, temporarily. But there was time to pop in, lean against the bar and remember old times in this famous Manchester pub. The builders are in, working for the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive and they have erected an internal scaffold to the full height of the three-storey building and clamped this firmly to the major timber elements to ensure that the pub doesn't fall down. Further work is expected to make the exterior more attractive and perhaps soon there will be a complete restoration by some entrepreneur so that on my next visit I will be able to order a pint!

Peter Wadsworth



Lees Corner

Bernie Jackson

Lees are continuing their programme of refurbishing pubs in the new 'corporate image'. Most recently, the Tommyfield in Oldham, the Lancashire Fold in Middleton and the Horton Arms in Chadderton have been completed. The next on the list, where work has already started and an extension is being built, is the Woodhouse Gardens, Woodhouses, Failsforth.

For collectors, the range of Lees beermats has reached No.12 and the launch of a new guide to all the brewery's pubs is imminent.

In a bid to increase their free trade sales further, and to promote the 'Make May a Mild Month', Lees have decided to try distribution through a wholesaler, 'The Beer Seller'. The company has been asked to push Lees mild, as mild is virtually unknown in the free trade.

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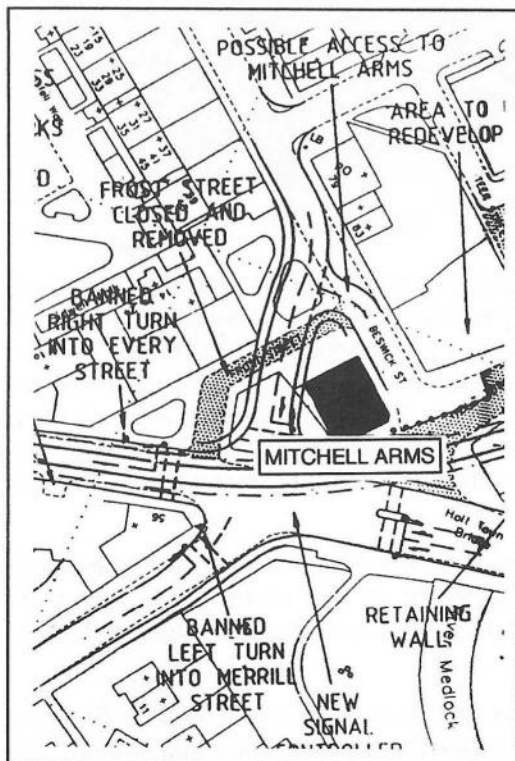
Make May a Mild Month

A tour of Manchester and Salford's premier free houses has been arranged for 29th May. The full timetable is given here in mind-boggling detail and with a bit of luck all the licensees will read it and ensure they've got a mild on sale.

Distances between pubs are given in furlongs. The furlong is a handy unit for pub crawls and the timings assume a leisurely walking pace of two-and-a-half minutes per furlong. Twenty minutes are allowed in each pub, except for the last one.

Dist.	Pub	Arrive	Leave
	Queens Arms	7.00	7.20
[4.3]	Marble Arch	7.31	7.51
[1.2]	Beer House	7.54	8.14
[1.2]	Smithfield Hotel	8.17	8.37
[8.1]	Egerton Arms	8.58	9.18
[0.8]	Kings Arms	9.20	9.40
[3.2]	Dock & Pulpit	9.48	10.08
[2.5]	Crescent	10.15	11.00-ish

Total Distance: 21.3 furlongs.
Total Walking Time: 55 minutes
Total Drinking Time: 185 minutes.
Total Time: 240 minutes



Ashton Metro update

Revised plans for the proposed Manchester to Ashton Metrolink line were published to coincide with a series of public meetings held at venues along the route. The plans for the Every Street, Ancoats, area have been changed and show a new road to the west of the Mitchell Arms connecting to Beswick Street. CAMRA wrote to GMPTE to applaud their proposals and the reply was positive, but they wouldn't give any assurances. So they could still change their minds and their plans and knock the pub down anyway.

Rochdale News

Mark Herdman

A resolving of the financial difficulties at the Flying Horse Hotel, Town Hall Square, Rochdale, has seen the business pass back to the people who were running it several months ago. Following a short closure for redecoration of the bar area, the pub reopened selling Batemans Champion Mild, Lees Bitter, Marstons Bitter and Pedigree, Taylors Best Bitter and Landlord, and Morlands Speckled Hen, all of which have proved to be in excellent form in recent weeks. Lunchtime/early evening food, function room and accommodation are all available at this town centre pub.



One consequence of the changes at the Flying Horse (above) has been the loss of probably the only regular outlet for Federation beers in the area. However, further variety may be introduced to Rochdale in the near future. The Woolpack on Drake Street, a former Bass and Centric pub, was bought by Gibbs Mew in the Centric sell-off in 1994. This pub is now undergoing internal and external work, including the fitting of Gibbs Mew signage, and the reopening - and possible beer changes - are awaited with interest.

There have been beer changes at the Mash Tun further down Drake Street. After the sudden departure of the licensee the range has contracted to a choice of four or five beers of the Boddingtons, Flowers, Theakstons, Tetley ilk.

For a little variety, you could do worse than pay a visit to Springers (formerly Brindles Stool), off Baillie Street, behind the bus station. Vaux

bitter is selling for £1 a pint and Waggle Dance is exceptionally good value at £1.30 for a 5% abv beer.

Reed Hotel

The Reed Hotel, Reed Hill, off Yorkshire Street, has reopened following extensive refurbishment work costing owners Wolverhampton & Dudley a reputed £360,000. A conservatory has been added and a beer garden created on part of the car park (reached via Hunters Lane). Bed and breakfast accommodation continues to be offered.

Inside, the structural work has been handled sympathetically and the multi-roomed layout has been retained. Access to the conservatory is through the rear room and down a few steps and these two areas form the main dining area; food is served at lunchtime and early evening.

It is pleasing to see the old bar has been retained, complete with etched glasswork of the former Phoenix Brewery. The attention to detail has extended to the inclusion of a phoenix in the etched window design in the conservatory.

Beer-wise, it is disappointing to see that only Banks's bitter (on handpump) is available. It is hoped that the improvements to the pub will increase custom and persuade W&D to widen the range.

Red Revolution/Green Revolution

Oxford Street, in the city centre, has a new bar. Called the Revolution, it is right next to the River Medlock and opened in early April with a red exterior. Then within days it had been repainted green. Was the red too revolutionary? The beers are Boddies, John Smiths and Pedigree (£1.80).

The decor is tasteful and simple - bare wood floors, some exposed brickwork and wainscot panelling: 'dining room' tables and chairs complete the picture. If you don't like the beer there are fifty flavours of vodka, from Jelly Tot to Milky Way.

Shifting sands

A new pub has opened on Grosvenor Street, next to Scruffy Murphys. Currently selling a sole cask beer - Mitchells (£1.30) - and styled the Sandbar, it is a modern pub in a former shop. Decor is minimalist, sounds are light jazz.

Meanwhile, over on Canal Street, the bar with a rather industrial sub-basement feel about it, Praha V (Prague Five), is now open and selling Boddies at £1.50.

Trafford changes

The Victoria in Altrincham is selling a real ale again - Bass Toby Light - but since there are electric dispensers as well as the handpump, can real ale be guaranteed?

The Redbrooke on Oak Road, Partington, still has its Greenalls sign, but inside there are handpumps for John Smiths bitter and Websters Green Label. Unfortunately appearances are deceptive inside the pub as well: keg Green Label was served from an electric dispenser on the far side of the bar!

The Pelican on Washway Road, West Timperley, was once a keg pub but now it has five real ales: Greenalls bitter and Original, Theakstons Best Bitter, Tetley bitter and a guest beer.

The Huntsman on Firsway, Sale, has been designated a Richard Clarke free house by BodPubCo and sells Clarke bitter at £1 a pint, Cains mild and Boddingtons bitter.

The Robin Hood, Stretford's last multi-roomed pub, has had a refurbishment. Some walls have been partly knocked down to open it out a bit.

Holts Corner

Stewart Revell

I am often asked about the sales of Holts mild compared with the bitter. The top people at Holts won't give barrelage figures, claiming the information is 'trade sensitive', but it can be taken that for every ten pints of Holts sold, two will be of mild.

Mild sales are declining in the brewing industry in general and I understand Holts are addressing the problem by ordering up to 200 firkin (nine-gallon) casks, to be used in those outlets which can't manage to shift a few hogsheads (54 gallons) a week. The smaller casks should ensure the quality of the mild as the beer will spend less time in the pub cellar before being consumed.

It would be nice to think that some of these new firkins will be used for cask conditioned Sixex (the 6% abv strong ale) in the winter, when mild sales are lower than at other times of the year. Mild and strong ales are seasonal, unlike Joey's bitter, which tends to be consumed at every opportunity all the year round.

SIPS UP (anag.)

The Independents' Day Pub Hunt is on the 6th July, starting off at 12 o'clock at the Beerhouse. Let's hope the bloke who won it last year, and whose name nobody can remember, turns up to run it.

Middleton News

Peter Alexander

Well, nothing happens for ages and then it all happens at once! Two new real ale outlets have opened and there's one exciting possibility. J W Lees' first Irish theme pub opened in late March in time for the St Paddy's Day festivities. **Delaney's** is in the old Middleton Police Station in Market Place and it is a vast improvement on the building's last occupant, Jacques restaurant and wine bar.

Lees have brought out the best features of the exterior of the nineteenth century building and they have created a decent two-room pub around a circular bar. Bare boards on the floor and bric-a-brac on the walls, with a few alcoves to break up the space, make for a pleasant place to drink. Lees mild, bitter and Moonraker compete with Caffreys nitrokeg and Guinness and Murphy stouts. Live Irish music at weekends and pseudo Irish food complete the picture. Bitter is expensive for Lees at £1.30, but has been on top form during my visits so far. It certainly seems to be outselling the nitrokeg trio, which all retail at £1.95.

Meanwhile, the Schoolhouse Restaurant on Long Street has been transformed into **Major Wild's Real Ale and Food Emporium**. This is another expensive and tasteful alteration to a lovely old building but on a different theme. The idea is café-bar style eating, drinking and music in an attractive open plan layout, featuring much wood and a long bar. Food, from snacks to meals, will be available at all times. (The food prices seemed very reasonable.)

Major Wild's will be open all permitted hours and the aim, I'm told, is to 'propel Middleton drinking and dining into the twenty-first century'. Well, we'll see. What of the beer in this real ale emporium? Not very exciting, with Flowers IPA, Boddingtons, Worthington Best Bitter and Stones bitter being available from a thicket of handpumps on the preview night. One bright spot is a house beer, Major Wilds Premium, brewed by Tony Allen of Phoenix Brewery, Heywood, at 5% abv.



If the real ale emporium concept takes off we may see a better range of beers, but it is hard to visualise the customer base that will justify six cask ales in a venue that's likely to attract the 'Bottle of Labatts Ice' set. Nonetheless, the venture is to be encouraged as it is certainly something different for Middleton and with all those handpumps perhaps there is scope for a guest beer or two.

And the really exciting news? J D Wetherspoon have applied for planning permission to turn the large, former Kwik Save building in Middleton

Gardens into a pub. This would certainly enliven the drinking scene in the town, providing choice, quality and competition all in one fell swoop. Too good to be true? Maybe. But it certainly seems as though the real ale drinker has one or two things to raise a glass to at the moment.

So much for the new, what about the old? Well, excellent pints of Lees can be enjoyed at the **Britannia** in Middleton Gardens, now decked out in the brewery's new livery, but the **Dusty Miller** is still the best bet for choice. Fullers London Pride and Marstons Pedigree are in good form and the Whitbread seasonal range is usually interesting. I particularly enjoyed the recent Murphy's Oyster Stout. Not bitter? It was so, and hoppy too! Better by far than the sweet and insipid nitrokeg stout. More please! Spring Hops, the latest offering, I enjoyed less - it seemed to be a bit like the rest of the Cheltenham-brewed beers, slightly phenolic.

Finally, on Oldham Road the **Hare & Hounds** has toyed with Thwaites' own guest range but this does not seem to have been too successful. The Thwaites bitter has been quite acceptable recently, although the quality of the product released from the brewery may affect this. But you could always nip across the road to the **Oddfellows** and pay a mere £1.06 for a consoling pint of Joseph Holts bitter.

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The Pub Tradition

Peter Barnes

As public house ownership switches from the brewing industry to the entertainment industry, the old distinctions between hotels, taverns, 'gin palaces' and beerhouses are being replaced by a wider repertoire which may soon include continental bars, gourmet pubs, vaudeville pubs and family pubs with play barns as well as the traditional pub. The scale and the rate of alteration is alarming, threatening the survival of the traditional English pub.

A sense of history

Most pubs have been remodelled more than once, but Victorian or inter-war alterations were usually carried out with some degree of sympathy. Floor plans remained largely unaltered and where pub interiors have escaped comprehensive refurbishment in more recent years, the historic development can usually be seen. The combination of elements from different ages gives a sense of continuity and people respond to this, expecting old pubs to contain at least some genuine history.

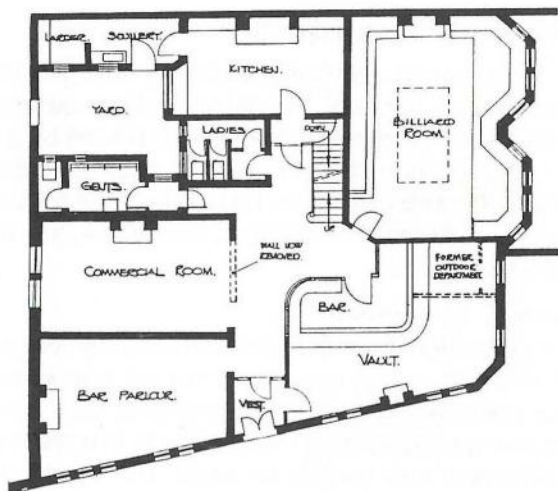
Individuality

Many architects and designers seem to find it difficult to respect a pub's individuality. They dislike awkward angles, narrow doors and corridors and any finish or fitting which is not in pristine condition. They don't seem to



understand that many people enjoy traditional pubs for their shoulder-rubbing qualities and the evidence of use by previous generations.

There is too much readiness to follow building and other regulations to the letter, without any attempt to negotiate with the authorities. In many instances public officials have a degree of discretion, especially when the fabric of a building is protected. But whether a pub is 'listed' or not, wholesale changes affecting its individuality should not be undertaken lightly.



Another enemy of individuality is the use of 'catalogue' fittings and furnishings. The Victorians used catalogues, but they did have a much wider choice. There is a high level of standardisation in today's design industry and the use of production-line fittings and furnishings in nationally or regionally significant pub interiors is not conservation.

Seclusion

A pub's atmosphere owes more to layout and division of space than to decorative details, but the multi-room pub is now a rarity. When internal divisions are taken down it is usually to create a 'circuit pub', where customers can see and be seen; you can also pack more people in at peak times. In other cases walls have been removed so bar staff can keep an eye on customers - often at the suggestion of the magistrates and police. Having a choice of drinking area is important to many people and the practice of taking walls down probably contributes more than anything else to driving away traditional pub-goers.

Separate spaces promote intimacy. The ideal arrangement - found in many Victorian pubs - is a range of areas from the relatively open public bar to parlours and snugs where you can shut out the rest of the pub. Although you can break up a large space in many ways, it is still preferable to have separate rooms for the often conflicting activities - meetings, music, eating, conversation.

Increased supervision can help stop antisocial activities, but the most effective element in keeping order is the personality of the licensee. You

can get disorderly behaviour in the most 'supervisable' pub if it is not properly controlled by the landlord. Conversely, you will not find drug dealing or other problems in a multi-room pub which is run by the right person. Also, the traditional multi-room pub, with a good social mix and age range, has a calming effect on the rowdiest of groups.

(Based on 'Protecting the Pub Tradition: A Guide for Pub Designers', the leading article in the 1996 Building Conservation Directory)

King's Ransom

Roger Wilson

Sale's newest pub opened on 27th March, on the site of an old coal yard on the banks of the Bridgewater Canal. Although new, the gables, chimney stacks and irregular shape make the King's Ransom appear long established. It is situated directly opposite Sale Metrolink station, most bus routes through Sale pass the front door, the car park is reached via Britannia Road and there are mooring facilities for those arriving by canal boat.

The King's Ransom is owned by Bolton-based Watling Street Inns and is essentially a free house. On opening night there were four draught beers: Boddingtons Bitter (£1.55), Directors Bitter (£1.65), Robinsons Hatters Mild (£1.35) and as a guest, Flowers Original (£1.70). Licensee Graham Woodhouse says that he can obtain any guest beer, so let's hope we see some independent brews in the future. The guest beers will run for 4 to 6 weeks at a time and be priced at £1.70.

The pub is open 11.30-11 Mon-Sat and 12noon-10.30 Sun. There are no electronic games, nor is there a jukebox or pool table. There are two no-smoking areas and a small area available for meetings of up to 12 people.

The use of doormen, however, has already caused some consternation and letters have appeared in the local papers from people of all ages who have been refused admission because of how they were dressed. Graham Woodhouse told me that admission is refused to anyone wearing a baseball cap and/or a football shirt. When I asked him about rugby shirts or cricket shirts, with Sale RUFC and Lancashire CCC in mind, the policy was not so clear cut.

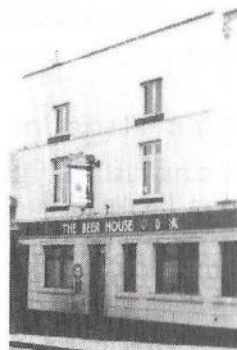
On one visit I found the four doormen particularly oppressive myself, and that was at 7.15 in the evening! The King's Ransom could be a really good pub, but if the discrimination continues it may ultimately be the ruin of an expensive venture. Your comments, please.

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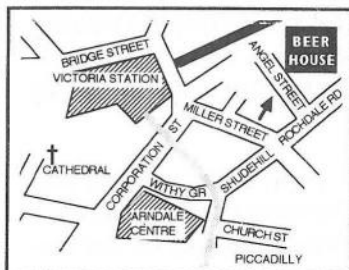
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Letter

Bhurlpore Inn Beer Festival

Sir - On behalf of the Crewe & Shrewsbury Passenger Association I would like to thank all who came to the Bhurlpore Inn Beer Festival by train. It was a very successful first festival, so it is almost certain there will be another next year and in view of the numbers using Wrenbury Station, it is likely that we will be able to make similar arrangements for rail users.

With summer approaching it is easy to make the trip from the Manchester area to Wrenbury and visit the Bhurlpore at Aston. With nine real ales on offer, a visit is always worthwhile and you will be helping maintain our local service.

A limited number of CASPA 'Rails and Ales' guides are available on a strictly first come, first served basis. Send an s.a.e. to...

John Cresswell, 39 Coton Hill, Shrewsbury SY1 2DY

More beer

Burtonwood's Wheatsheaf on Oak Street, Manchester, now sells Burtonwood mild, bitter, Forshaws and Buccaneer.

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...and new beers from other breweries

**Folk Band on Saturday afternoon
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Plus some surprises

I-Spy

When you're waiting for a train on platform 14 of Piccadilly Station you can see these letters atop the Star & Garter on Fairfield Street. Who was 'TC' and what's the pub's connection with the station?

Do tell.

'T C' was Thomas Chesters, the brewer.

And the station?

It was doubled in size in the 1870s and a lot of houses on the south side of the first station, including the original Star & Garter, were pulled down. A new stretch of Fairfield Street was constructed from London Road along the perimeter wall and this passes over the site of the original pub, near the bridge carrying the western end of platforms 13 and 14.

Oh, I see. So Chesters got a new pub for the old one?

It wouldn't have been that simple. In those days the authorities were more concerned with cutting the number of pubs in Manchester, rather than licensing big new ones. There was the Stag & Pheasant as well.



The what?

Chesters held the lease on this pub and gave up two old licences for the new one.

And where, pray, was the Stag & Pheasant?

Nearby, just off Birmingham Street.

Never heard of it.

The name disappeared with the houses in the 1870s, but the line of this street (replaced by the aforementioned Fairfield Street) could still be seen after the station was extended across the cleared site

on massive pillars. When Metrolink arrived the tramline was laid into the Piccadilly undercroft along Birmingham Street. As a matter of interest, Birmingham Street and Sheffield Street, which still exists on the north side of the station, commemorated two of the first railway companies...

Hold it. We seem to be straying into the realms of train spotting. Anything more about the Star & Garter that's there now?



Oh, yes. Thomas Chesters bought the original pub in 1872, a few months before he went to that great sampling room in the sky. His sons and heirs built the new one in 1877, ten years before Chesters Brewery Co Ltd was formed and before local breweries got their rebuilding programmes into gear. For example, the first 'Victorian' Holts rebuild dates from 1889.

I see. So historically speaking, the Star & Garter is almost unique, as the pub preservation chaps are wont to say?

Archetypally quintessential.

Boddingtons Tap

The Brewers Arms on Great Ducie Street, Manchester, is soon to reopen as the brewery visitor centre, replacing the old one in the brewery which is now full of fermenting squares.

Bar doubles

The extended Bar in Chorlton (opposite Safeway on Wilbraham Road) will open on Thursday 9th May. The shop next door has been taken over and this will have a separate entrance and bar.

Progress in Patricroft

A recommendation that the revised plans for the Queens Arms should be given consent was made to Salford's Environmental Protection & Planning Committee on 25th April. The proposal still needs to go before the Council in May.

Imperial to go

City Council planners have decided that the Imperial on Piccadilly will be demolished. The historic pub will make way for a hotel lobby for the soon to be developed Joshua Hoyle building.

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

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To join CAMRA send £12 to Membership, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW.

King's Ale

Leo King

I visited the Smithfield. No, not the one on Swan Street - the other one on Shudehill - the New Smithfield. In days of old it was a bank and inside and out it is still a beautiful building, but the place had little success when it was a Tetley pub some years back.

It was closed for a long time and then reopened not long ago selling handpumped Banks's bitter, Camerons Strongarm and Pedigree. However, on one visit the handpumped Banks's was not available and I was offered the variety that 'goes down smooth' - nitrokeg - which is not the sort of stuff a real ale drinker can relish. On my next visit the Strongarm pump had gone.

It is a shame that real ale is a slow seller at the New Smithfield. The handpumped Banks's and Pedigree are kept in top condition by the licensee and owner, Gavan Hesketh, and he tells me that he is going to give Camerons bitter a try. The pub is open seven days a week, there's a small dining area and snacks and lunches are available. There's also a private room for hire.

The New Smithfield is between the Beer House and the Hogshead and, with Banks's (£1.20 a pint) and Camerons, the pub offers some extra choice in the city centre. Why not give it a try?

Down by the riverside...

The former Adelphi Riverside restaurant and bar, overlooking the Irwell near the corner of the Crescent and Adelphi Street, is now called the Old Pint Pot. A mini-brewery is being installed, similar to the one at the Lass o'Gowrie on Charles Street in the city centre and I'm told the beers may be £1 a pint. The brewhouse is at bar level and so can be viewed from both inside and outside.

Growing for a Burton

There aren't many pub gardens in the centre of Manchester. If the application by the Burton Arms to build a garden at the rear of the pub is granted, this will be a welcome addition. Alfresco imbibers will have a clear view of High Street car park. The herds of wildebeest come later.

Knockabout fun

Allied Domecq seem to be busy bashing their buildings about before they flog themselves off to Bass or whoever. Planning applications have been submitted to alter two listed buildings in Manchester - the Flea & Firkin at All Saints and the Bank on Mosley Street. Both of them have been changed a bit already, so what else can the owners have in mind?

New beer guides

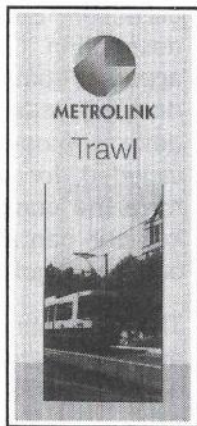
'The Metrolink Trawl'

Peter Wadsworth

Four years ago this month there appeared in these pages the World's First Real Ale Guide to the Tramways. (Anybody out there care to challenge that bold statement?) The guide, researched by members of CAMRA, listed the nearest pub to each of the 26 stations on Manchester's new tram system and thus invented the *rawl* (a tram-assisted pub crawl) from Bury to Altrincham.

The Metrolink company very kindly paid for the printing of 20,000 copies of the guide, which were then circulated throughout the United Kingdom (and, indeed, the world) by willing CAMRA volunteers. The guide was so popular that when the penultimate copy had been distributed, Metrolink held on to the last one and photocopied it thousands of times to send out to inquisitive *trawlers*.

Now the company has seen fit to issue the guide again, this time prepared, printed and distributed by its own employees. Here is a summary of the changes...



Station

New details

Bury

Bury has been left out of the new guide. Now that's what I call a good start! The nearest pub is still the Knowsley

St Peter's Square

They've left this station out, too. Maybe it's to stop me rabbiting on about Tommy Duck's! The nearest pub is the City Arms on Kennedy Street (just off Princess Street, past the rear of the Town Hall, where the licensee was the only person to sing 'Happy Birthday' to me on my 50th birthday *rawl*).

G-Mex

City Road Inn. Now a Whitbread Ale Emporium (where the only free pint was forthcoming on the above-mentioned *rawl*). The pub can be easily seen when you look out from the station over the Rochdale Canal.

Sale

The Station at Sale. A new pub right next door, where you can enjoy the pleasures of Tetleys, Marstons and Ind Coope Burton Ale.

Well, that's it. The pubs nearest the remaining 22 stations are as before (except at Stretford, where the new guide fails to mention that the Bass Drum now sells Worthington *Best Bitter*).

Details of the improved service frequency (now including Sundays), along with updates on beer range and opening times are included in the

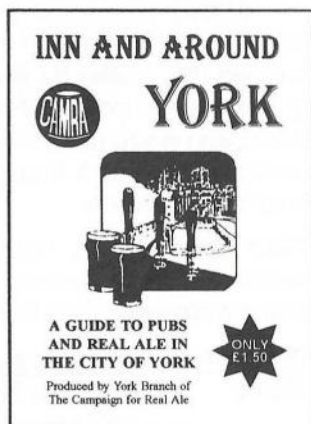
new guide, which can be obtained free (along with treasure trails, quizzes and details of travel discounts) from those very nice Metrolink people by ringing 0161 205 2000.

'Inn and Around York'

Mark McConachie

This new book covers the pubs within the new York city boundary (as of April 1996) and it would be a welcome addition to any pub guide collection. Every pub is listed and each gets at least a sentence of description. The operating company is sometimes given, if it isn't apparent from the beers on sale, and this information can be useful when deciding whether to go to a pub or not. A definite plus-point is that keg pubs are included, for without them we would never have the complete picture. (Remember, a keg pub can always convert to real ale and one that is not listed cannot be found!)

The pub listings are grouped under areas and each area has a short introduction, describing the flavour of the locale. Each entry contains the full name, address and telephone number, beers on sale and CAMRA-approved symbols for facilities on offer just like the Good Beer Guide. There is an additional symbol for CAMRA-recommended pubs.



There is also a map reference number so that each pub can be located on one of three maps (inside city walls; within ring road, and outer areas to city boundary) on the centre pages of the guide. Articles and features are few but interesting and include CAMRA's aims and membership details.

Now for a few criticisms. The descriptions of brewers and their beers is comprehensive and worthwhile, but aren't five full pages overdoing it? Pub opening hours are omitted on the grounds of local dynamism in the industry, but it would still be nice to have some indication of when they open. The transport information is brief and only nearby rail stations are mentioned - there is nothing about buses. Summary listings of buses serving outer suburbs and villages would have been helpful. My last gripe is the size. A5 is not pocket friendly, but the problem can be overcome in this instance by folding the slim tome.

Dave Sampson and his team are to be congratulated on the amount of effort put into this little publication, which at £1.50 for 36 pages represents good value for money.

Going Dutch in the U.S.A.

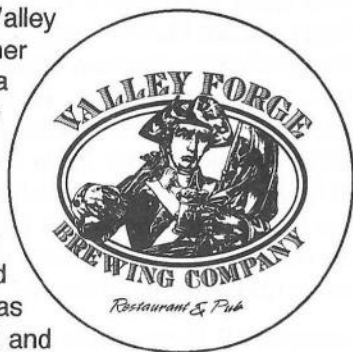
Paul Roberts

A brief visit to 'Dutch Country', Pennsylvania, gave me the opportunity to update my tastebuds with beers from the latest Eastern micro-breweries. Although not as well blessed as California, the Pennsylvania state is now a much better place for beer lovers than it was on my last visit fifteen years ago.

America's oldest brewery is Yuengling, founded in Pennsylvania in 1829 and still a family-owned concern. Apart from a traditional amber coloured lager, they are now producing Black & Tan on draught - a ready mixed version of their porter and lager. Unfortunately I did not find any outlets for the porter in unadulterated form, although the draught Black & Tan was widely available in the south-east of the state.

I had hoped to visit the Dock Street Brewery in Philadelphia, but had to make do with trying their products in a couple of bars. This micro-brewery was often mentioned in the cult T.V. series, 'Thirtysomething' and they produce a vast variety of beers including Rye, Weizen, Amber, Pale Ale, Pils, Stout, IPA and a Mexican type beer.

One very new brewpub I did visit was the Valley Forge Brewing Company, housed in a former cinema close to the King of Prussia Shopping Mall (the second largest in the world) and the Valley Forge National Park. (Valley Forge was where the English suffered a major defeat in the War of Independence.) Regular beers are King's Gold, Regiment Pale Ale, Red Coat Ale and George's Porter. During my visit, there was also a 'Green' Paddy's Night beer, a stout and wheat beer. Beers are brewed in accordance with Germany's Reinheitsgebot and are immensely quaffable!



A brief excursion to a little place called Watertown in Connecticut proved very rewarding. A brand new brewery had started up a couple of weeks earlier - Hammer and Nails. (The owner's name is Mr Hammer and his girlfriend is called Miss Nagel - German for nail.) A 'Newcastle Brown' type ale was the only beer in production and this proved to be a bit sickly after the third pint, but a Viennese type lager is promised soon.

Many people think of Pennsylvania as industrial, but away from the area around Pittsburgh, the south of the state is the exact opposite, with very attractive countryside. The new Continental service from Manchester to Newark is very convenient for touring Pennsylvania and off-season fares can be well under £200 return.

Rupert

How nice to see that at last something is being done to relieve the terminal tedium which many of the Campaign's meetings are wont to induce. The custard pieing of the boss group at the yearly jolly was certainly a move in the right direction. Although Ron Badloss and Rab C McLaddie were somewhat gobsmacked, as the vernacular would describe the mixture of astonishment and battered pride which was evident in their demeanour, it did bring a much needed lighter touch to the proceedings. Let's hope that this levity does not have a detrimental effect on Nora Tackler, whose recent change of name and elevation to the boss group may have been the cause of a certain hubris which people who knew her up in Grotley fail to understand. Never mind, I'm sure that she'll do well and that the only nemesis she'll encounter will be the fun thingy at Alton Towers.

Smarmford & Slutch could well take a leaf from the boss group custard job. When they're picking taverns for the Imbibers' vademecum they use scientific scoring sheets, then all four of them vote and the chairman overrules them and votes his auntie's pub in on a whim. No

wonder nobody goes. They'd be better off smearing one another with tiramisu and lime pickle and licking it off whilst blindfolded.

At Slumley, branch meetings have already been enlivened by the use of heavy irony, introduced dramatically into flagging debates. The entire meeting fell about in paroxysms of mirth during a discussion on initiating campaigns. One wag, breathing alternately through his nebuliser and a hookah of thick shag, jokingly suggested that we should campaign for purer water in our beer. This metaphor of someone drinking and smoking himself to death, whilst bemoaning the parts per billion of insecticide and recycled sheep urine in our water really put into perspective some of our more esoteric campaigns. Overweight, scruffy nerds with cirrhosis aren't really going to have much sway in the healthy drinking debate. Laugh, I thought I'd never start.

47,000 members and less than 2,000 go to meetings on a regular basis. Grumpy committee men, get your act together and introduce a bit of knockabout farce, ventriloquism, juggling and pie chucking. It'll do wonders for attendances, commitment and campaigning. Change or die.

Batemans Trip

There are still places on the trip to Batemans Brewery in Wainfleet. The party leaves on Saturday 18th August and returns on 19th. Total cost including overnight accommodation is around £25. Further details from Mark McConachie (795 1410).

Branch Diary

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tue 7 May 8.30pm. Branch AGM, Ring o'Bells, St Leonards Square, Middleton

Sat 11 May, Social Coach Trip to Dent Brewery and surrounding area

Tues 21 May 8.30, Committee Meeting, Horton Arms, Streetbridge, Chadderton

Tue 28 May 8.30, What's Doing collation, Flying Horse, Town Hall Square,

Rochdale

Tues 4 June 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Beer Emporium, Union Street, Oldham

Contact: *Peter Alexander 0113 232 4023(w), 0161 655 4002 (h)*

Trafford & Hulme

Thur 2 May. 8pm Pack Horse, Deansgate, followed by Hope (Combrook), Crown, Oxnoble and White Lion

Thur 9 May, 8pm. The Bar, Wilbraham Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy; 9.30 The Beech, Chorlton Green

Thur 16 May, Towpath Crawl. 8pm Ye Old No.3, Little Bollington, followed by Swan with two Nicks, Axe & Cleaver, Bay Malton, Railway (Broadheath)

Thur 23 May, Altrincham Survey. 8pm Malt Shovels, followed by Railway, Cresta Court, Hogshead & Orange Tree

Thur 30 May 8pm, Stockport Beer festival

Thur 6 June 7.30 Bleeding Wolf, Hale, followed by Roebuck, Bulls Head, Railway & Chapel House in Mobberley, and Greyhound, Ashley.

Contact: *Roger Wilson 0161 827 0765 (w) or 0161 941 5602 (h)*

North Manchester

Wed 1 May, Patricroft Crawl. Barton Arms, Cawdor Street, 7pm; Dutton, Barton Road, 8pm; Stanley Arms, Liverpool Road, 9.30.

Wed 8 May, Regional Meeting

Wed 15 May 8pm, Branch Meeting, Unicorn, Church Street, Manchester

Wed 22 May 8pm, Committee & Social, Kings Arms, Bloom Street, Salford

Tues 27 May 6pm, What's Doing Collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham

Wed 29 May, Mild Crawl. Queens Arms 7pm (*see 'Make May a Mild Month' article*)

Wed June 5, Bolton Crawl. Sweet Green Tavern, Crook Street, 7pm; Man & Scythe, Churchgate, 9.30.

Contact: *Roger Hall 0161 740 7937*

Bolton

Contact: *Richard Spedding 01204 61244 (h), 01204 521771 x2305 (w)*

Wigan

Contact: *John Barlow 01257 427595 (h) 01257 426464 (w)*

Contributors to this issue: Paul Roberts, Roger Hall, Roger Wood, Peter Barnes, Mark McConachie, Stewart Revell, Peter Wadsworth, Mark Herdman, Bernie Jackson, Peter Alexander, Leo King, Roger Wilson.

Dave and Jo welcome you to the

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Bitter - Old Peculier - Taylors Best
Bitter & Landlord - weekly guest beers**



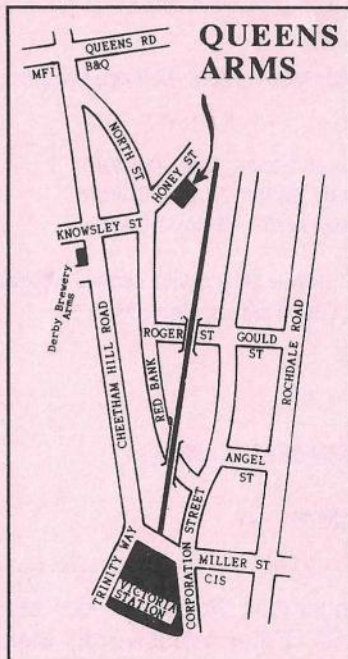
Bitter from 95p a pint

Westons Traditional Cider on handpump

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Hot and cold food available until late evening

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General Knowledge Quiz Night
Tuesday. Beer Prizes

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