

25p

What's Doing

JULY 1996



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

Rochdale Free House

The Cemetery Hotel on Bury Road, Rochdale, has new owners. The long established free house has been bought by Kevin Robinson and his partner and after carrying out some cellar improvements they will be reopening the pub on Friday 5th July.

Kevin, formerly of the Flying Horse in the town centre and now licensee of the Albion Hotel on Whitworth Road, tells us that to begin with the beers will be from Lees, Taylors, Marstons and Moorhouses.



The Bomb Blast

Up to a dozen city centre pubs were closed for days after the explosion which damaged buildings up to a quarter of a mile away from Corporation Street. Seftons (aka Paddy's Rat & Carrot) was directly opposite the seat of the blast and will be demolished along with much of the Arndale Centre, Marks & Spencer and Longridge House. As WD went to press there were reports of serious structural damage in Shambles Square to both the Wellington and Sinclairs which might require their demolition. Inspection of other pubs like the Mitre, Crown & Anchor, Swan, Bouchelles and the John Willie Lees had not been finalised, but pubs in and around St Ann's Square were reopening.

Buildings like the Royal Exchange and the Corn Exchange have been seriously damaged, as have both the Cathedral and St Ann's Church. Local conservation societies are determined that they should be restored. Let us hope that the Wellington and Sinclairs can also be restored. It was at vast expense that they were moved to ensure their survival when the Arndale Centre was built. It would be a pity if they were allowed to vanish now.

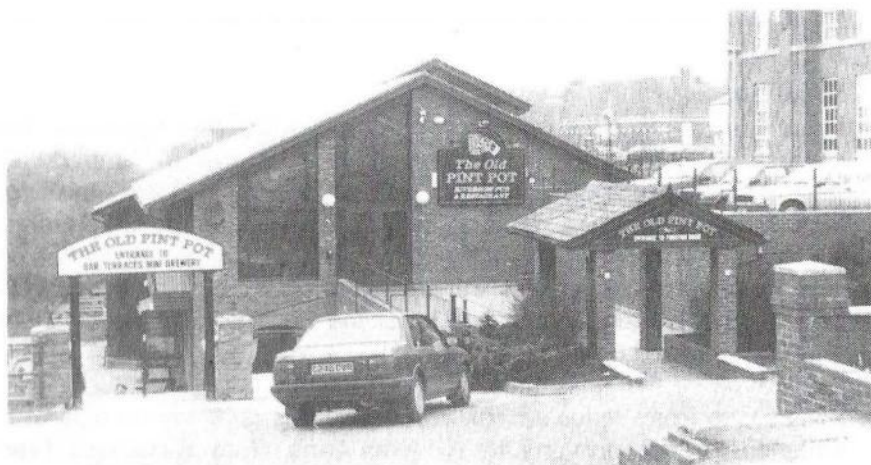


The Old Pint Pot Brewery

Pete Cash

All being well, by the time you read this Salford's latest home-brew pub should be selling its own beers. First mash is planned for 19th June, with the beer coming on sale about a week later.

Visitors to the Old Pint Pot (formerly the Adelphi Riverside) will have noticed a new conservatory containing much stainless steel, tanks and pipework, along with a wooden-clad mash tun and copper. The pub is owned by Honeycomb Leisure, their manager is Ben Gleaves and prior to the home-brew coming on stream, 'Ben's Best' at £1 a pint offered very good value.



The student population is very much the target of this venture. Between 5pm and 7pm you are invited to share a 4-pint jug of Carlsberg for £3.99 and there's a 'Grantstretcher Menu' between 5.30pm and 7pm, with chilli, veg curry or Italian chicken at £1.75.

The brewery has a 10-barrel capacity and in charge is Robert Wardman, with Dave Smith (BA Chem) acting as technical consultant. All brews are full mash (no malt extract), though malt will come ready crushed. Local water has been analysed and appropriate adjustments made to achieve a satisfactory brewing liquor. Hops (whole, not pelleted) will include familiar varieties such as Goldings and Challenger.

I am not allowed to say much about the yeast, except that it comes from another (larger) brewery, and that it is hoped that the finished beer will have some of the character of that company's product. After fermentation, conditioning takes place in tanks under top pressure, after

which the beer is racked into conventional casks and dispensed via handpump in the CAMRA-approved manner.

Initially, two beers will be brewed, at ABV 4.0% and 3.6%. A portion of each will be blended to yield a 3.8% hybrid. No names have been ascribed; it is likely that customers will be asked to name the beers, with appropriate prizes for the winners. Sales will be confined to the pub itself, at least to begin with.

There have been teething troubles in setting up the brewery, but at last all looks set to add three more ales to the 'must try' lists of all you beer tickers out there.

Bolton briefly

After standing derelict for some months, the Duke of Clarence, Bath Street, has been pulled down and the site is now a car park. The Shamrock (ex-Railway) at Daubhill has closed for good and the building is now being used as a doctors' surgery. The imposing Magees (ex-Crofters) on the corner of Chorley Street and St Georges Road has new owners and the licence was transferred to other (keg) premises in the town centre. On the other side of town, the General Havelock on Sidney Street is boarded up.

Fred's Cap from Bolton's Bank Top Brewery is regularly on sale at the Britannia in Farnworth and the Weavers Arms (Mop) at Halliwell. Fred's Cap and Bridge bitter have also been seen at the Malt & Hops on Bradshawgate. Further along Bradshawgate, Sam's Bar (ex-Prince William) is being extended into the shop next door.

About Altrincham

Ye Olde Roebuck is selling Lees bitter (£1.20) as a permanent guest beer. However, not all that is on handpump at the Roebuck is traditional - there's also keg Taunton Cidermaster.

The bar at the Cresta Court Hotel (open to the public) is selling real ale in the form of Boddingtons bitter (£1.40) and a guest beer (£1.50). Recent guests have included Holts bitter and Marstons Pedigree.

The Railway at Broadheath is still open, although everything around it (including part of the terrace next door) is being demolished for the redevelopment scheme.

Bulls Head alterations

Burtonwood Brewery is planning to make extensive alterations at the Bulls Head on London Road. The bar will be moved to the far end of the main room and a new kitchen area fitted out. The vault will go, but the snug will be retained, albeit in a more open-plan form. It is hoped that the ceiling cornice work will be kept and the paint stripped from the exterior tilework.

In recent times the Bulls Head has seen repeated changes of licensee and trade has dwindled, so the alterations are designed to attract customers, particularly the student population thereabouts. The present licensee is enthusiastic and has a commitment to real ale: the current range includes Burtonwood bitter, Top Hat and Tom Thumper, the seasonal ale. If all goes well, there may be an eventual return to cask mild, the introduction of Forshaws and perhaps even Almond Stout in winter.

Work is due to start in mid-August and reopening is planned for early September. The Bulls Head is conveniently situated close to Piccadilly rail station and Metrolink and there are frequent buses along London Road until late evening.



What's Doing Coming of Age

The date and venue for WD's 21st celebrations have been decided. The date is Sunday 17th November, starting at 6.30pm. The venue will be divulged to those lucky enough to be allocated tickets. It's not too late to apply. If you've been involved with What's Doing in any way through its childhood and adolescence, write to the editor and let him know. You may be a writer, collator, distributor, seller, advertiser or insultee. Tickets will be issued at the end of August.

**THE
STATION**

THE STATION
ASHTON-U-LYNE

TICKER'S COLLECTION
BANK HOLIDAY
SPECIAL

THURSDAY 29th AUGUST - 4th SEPTEMBER

35+ ALES

35+ ALES

THURS 29th AUG - 4th SEPT

**A WEEK LONG PRESENTATION
OF NEW AND RARE BEERS,
TOGETHER WITH SCRUMPIES & PERRIES etc.**

HOMECOOKED FOOD AVAILABLE

WARRINGTON STREET ASHTON-U-LYNE

King's Ale

Leo King

Smithfield Beer Festival

In August, licensee Alison will be putting on an 'Alphabetical Medley' beer festival at the Smithfield on Swan Street, Manchester. Alphabetical Medley? Well, she has prepared a list of brewers in alphabetical order, although she has been stumped by two letters - X and Z. Any suggestions as to how to complete the range?

The Smithfield regularly sells the excellent Whim ales from Hartington in Derbyshire. I'm told that Whim have acquired the Broughton Brewery in Scotland, so look out for Broughton beers in the near future.

Crown & Anchor

Further to last month's news about the Crown & Anchor (Beer Engine) on Hilton Street, the licensee tells me that the number of handpumps is being increased from eight to twelve (three banks of four). The Crown & Anchor beer festival is set to take place in October - details nearer the time.

Brewery Tap

Paul Mason

Whitbread recently finished a big budget refurbishment of the former Brewers Arms on the Boddingtons Brewery site at Strangeways. The pub was closed for some years and a major flood in the visitor's centre meant that brewery visits were not possible. The Brewery Tap now has a dual role as a reception/hospitality suite for brewery tours and as a public house. Tours recommence in August.

There are three distinct rooms - a traditional bar, a comfortable lounge and a very plush snug. Between the bar and the lounge there is a window into the cellar, where casks on stillage can be viewed. The walls have an interesting display of brewery artefacts, but the merchandise display cases strike a garish note.

On the opening night Boddingtons mild (£1.39) and bitter (£1.46) were on sale alongside draughtflow and Export Gold. Flowers Original has now been added to the range. Unfortunately the oversize pint glasses have not been seen since the opening night.



Mash Tun

The new licensee at the Mash Tun on Drake Street is Carl Griffiths, who can draw upon family experience to revive the fortunes of the pub as his parents are licensees of the GBG-listed Dusty Miller in Bury.

The pub now sells four real ales. Tetley bitter is a regular and the others are guests from the Theakston and Whitbread range, together with independents such as Adnams bitter and Greene King Abbot Ale.

Food remains available at lunchtime and for those who despair at the number of electronic gaming machines in pubs, the Mash Tun now features table football!

Woolpack

Higher up Drake Street, renovation work at the Woolpack is now complete. The bar is liberally covered with bar towels proclaiming Gibbs Mew as a brewer of traditional ales, but it appears they have forgotten that they are also supposed to supply it! The Woolpack is all keg.

THE MIDLAND BEER COMPANY

826 Manchester Road Castleton, Rochdale
near Castleton BR

FOUR REAL ALES

Burtonwood 99p a pint
Theakstons, Taylors and Guest Beers
Thatchers Cider
plus German and Belgian Beers

Lunchtime food Monday - Friday
01706 750873 Open all day

Phoenix Brewery

Peter Alexander

First of all, let's sort out the name! Yes, it is Phoenix Brewery. Tony Allen, owner and brewer, tells me that Oak Brewery has now officially become Phoenix Brewery. After a number of successful years trading at the Phoenix Brewery in Heywood, following a move from Oak's birthplace in Merseyside, Tony feels it is the right time to make the change.

Tony is on the whole satisfied with the way the company is trading at present. He has been concentrating on getting the brewery exactly to his liking and it is now immaculately clean and a very impressive looking sight. The beer range has been expanded and is now as follows:

Regular beers: Hopwood Bitter (3.5 ABV), Bantam (3.5), Best (3.9), Tyke (4.3), Old Oak Ale (4.5), Thirsty Moon (4.6), Bonneville (4.8), Double Dagger (5.0), Porter (5.0) and Wobbly Bob (6.0).



In addition, there are seasonal and occasional brews: March Hare (4.4), Shamrock (4.2), Resurrection (4.7), Midsummer Madness (4.5), Mild (4.0, May only), Spooky Brew (5.0), Firecracker (5.0), Mayfly (4.5), Sticky Wicket (5.4), Humbug (7.0). Most of these appear at the obvious times of the year, but Midsummer Madness and Sticky Wicket, the summer brews, are available for longer, around three months.

The brewery capacity is around 100 barrels per week and Tony is currently operating at between 50 and 75 barrels per week. He has a wide trading area, with regular outlets in Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Yorkshire. Given the competitive nature of beer selling, Tony has asked me not to mention where he currently supplies, as this would lead to competitors beating a path to the outlets to try and oust him! The brewery also does a fair trade through beer agencies and so Phoenix beers can be found far and wide. (I can vouch for this, having seen them in London, Leeds and Edinburgh recently.) There has also been a one-off contract brew for Whitbread, with the very successful Jovian bitter.

Tony has been looking into the possibility of having some of his beer bottled for the 'gift pack' sector and he would also like to have a pub, but the problem is finding the right venue at the right price. In the meantime, he is pushing ahead with plans to include a hospitality centre in the brewery itself.

Finally, Tony brews 'house beers' for a number of pubs in the area. Keep your eye out for them. The Phoenix Brewery name is usually on the pump clip.

COME TO THE ALL YEAR ROUND BEER FESTIVAL

THE BEER HOUSE

Angel Street, Manchester. 0161 839 7019

12 REAL ALES ON OFFER including
BURTONWOOD BITTER, THEAKSTONS XB and
BEST BITTER, MOORHOUSES PENDLE WITCH
PLUS 8 EVER-CHANGING GUEST BEERS
including a GUEST MILD
PLUS A RANGE OF TRADITIONAL CIDERS,
DRAUGHT BELGIAN KRIEK, LEFFE BLONDE,
HOEGAARDEN & MANY BOTTLED BELGIAN
and other FOREIGN BEERS



INDEPENDENTS' DAY TREASURE HUNT

Starts 12 noon, Saturday 6th July

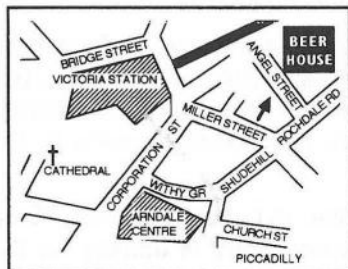
Free chilli supper for all entrants

**20 NEW BEERS FROM INDEPENDENT
BREWRIES OVER THE WEEKEND**

SOMETHING FOR EVEN THE MOST DISCERNING TASTE

Lunchtime food 7 days a week • Try our Sunday Breakfast 12 - 2.30
Evening Meals 5 - 7 Fri • Thurs 5 - 8 Choice of three curries (veg and
carnivore) + rice £2.50 • Half price menus Monday lunch

WE'RE
IN THE
GOOD
BEER
GUIDE
'96



OPEN ALL DAY MONDAY - SUNDAY

Bar Billiards & Darts

THREE TRADITIONAL CIDERS

ALWAYS AVAILABLE

GOOD FOOD - Vegetarians welcome

NOW TAKING CHRISTMAS

BOOKINGS FOR FREE PARTY ROOM

How Profit is killing the Pub

Roger Hall

In the course of discussions about internal alterations to a pub, I recently found myself using arguments which fitted in with the brewers' criteria. I cited pubs which had failed commercially despite similar work having been done. I gave further examples of unaltered pubs which were financially successful. Profit, it seems, is the touchstone by which all projects must be judged, all activities evaluated. What happened to the intangible rewards like interest, sociability and fun?

"Hang on," comes the cry. "Breweries aren't charities; licensees can't work for nothing." Well, yes, but it may be that the pursuit of profit alone is self-defeating.

Think about why people began going to pubs in the first place. The old alehouses, and the beerhouses which followed, were not part of a structured leisure experience. They were meeting places, where people could have a drink in surroundings which were often more comfortable than their own homes. The licensees belonged to the communities they served and their fortunes followed those of their customers. Many pubs were run part-time by people who had other jobs during the day, or who combined selling ale with another business - something we can still see in Ireland today.

As pubs have become full-time businesses with the focus on profit, their original purpose seems to have been forgotten. Yet people don't always want to go for a big night out; they may just feel like relaxing with friends over a drink, chatting, or playing darts, dominoes or cards. If they can't do these things in a pub because of its atmosphere or pricing structure, then

they'll invite their friends to drink at home or join social clubs - alternatives which are cheaper and more convivial.



Have we really lost the ability to enjoy doing something for its own sake? Licensees used to come to the trade because they had a flair for it. They

wouldn't necessarily earn a fortune, but they would consider that enjoyment of the job was adequate compensation for living on a moderate income. Sadly, that seems no longer to be the case - as in other fields like music or sport, the opportunity to use one's skills, the satisfaction of doing something well, of pleasing other people appears not to matter any more. As soon as someone shows an inkling of talent in whatever field, he is encouraged to become professional. I'll leave aside arguments as to whether, say, sport has been damaged by that approach. Suffice it to say that earning large sums of money for something you used to do for pleasure makes a difference to how it's done. Suddenly you're no longer your own boss.

In the licensed trade, the brewers have removed all independence. In order to maximise profits, licensees now have to manage restaurants, create large open-plan pubs, install fruit machines, organise karaoke evenings and so on - all part of the Big Night Out. Some licensees may enjoy doing these things, but the point is, they have no choice. There's little room in this brave new world for your small local boozer which caters for basic social needs like conviviality and conversation at a price people can afford.

Brewers have installed managers in their larger pubs and screwed their tenants through high rents. There is an expectation of full-time commitment from licensees. Pubs which don't show a good return on capital are closed or disposed of. A successful licensee is no longer one who runs a cracking little community pub, but one who makes a lot of money for his masters. After all, the brewers don't care whether they sell their beer in pubs, clubs, Tescos or France.

The separation of brewing from retailing doesn't hold out much hope, either. Pub chains, even more than the brewers, look above all for retail profits. So converted cinemas in town centres are a better bet for them and never mind that such places are too big to foster the kind of community spirit which was there in the old street corner locals.

Is it all doom and gloom, then? Well, as long as we allow monetary reward to be our only goal, then yes. Maybe we'll become a post-consumer society where greed gives way to an old-fashioned enjoyment of what we do, rather than of what we own. It may seem naïve to suggest that the four-bedroom detached, the Roller, the villa in Spain and the yacht are somehow less important than a chat with our mates in a traditional pub. But then so often with simple pleasures, we don't value them until they're gone.

Middleton News

Peter Alexander

Well, no Wetherspoons for Middleton, yet. The company's application to turn the former Kwiksave building in Middleton Gardens into one of its large pubs has been turned down, but informed gossip has it that there will be an appeal which is likely to be successful. Watch this space.

So what else is happening? Out in Rhodes the **Waggon & Horses**, a Boddingtons tenancy, has been closed by its new owners, the Greenalls group. Little is known of the circumstances, but it all happened suddenly, to the astonishment of regular customers, when last orders one night really did become last orders. Middleton and Greater Manchester has lost one of its longest serving landlords, Roy Barry, who was there for 32 years. The future of the building, which is in severe need of investment, isn't known, but it will no doubt be influenced by the proximity of the **Gardeners Arms** and the **Wilton**, both now owned by Greenalls.

Continuing with the Boddingtons/Greenalls theme, the **Albion** in Middleton centre has Albion Bitter at £1 a pint for a 4% brew. Not a million miles away, the Red Lion on Hollin Lane, also Boddies, has Clarkes bitter (4%) at the same price. Both were sweetish, North-Eastern style brews and I suspect that they emanate from Whitbread at Castle Eden, but perhaps someone can shed some light on this? The landlords certainly didn't seem to know from whence they came.

By way of an up date on last month, how are our new pubs doing? **Delaneys**, Lees' Irish pub, seems to be going from strength to strength and is amazingly busy at weekends, when there is live music. It still sells Lees bitter and mild in very good condition, although the recent beer quality out of Lees has left a lot to be desired, with taste variations and hazy beer being common. A bonus is that What's Doing is on sale on a trial basis, so get in there and buy a copy!

At **Major Wilds**, the success story is repeated in terms of numbers of customers, but not as far as real ale is concerned. The mainly young clientele prefers lager and bottled products. At the time of writing the beer range is Pedigree, Worthington Best, Boddingtons, Major Wilds Premium (from Phoenix Brewery, Heywood) and Bass (replacing Stones). All have been in average to less-than-average condition over the last few weeks. I hate to say I told you so, but...

Cask loss

The Waterloo on Waterloo Road, Hightown, has changed owners from Bass to Vaux. The change has meant the loss of Boddies and Worthington - their replacements are keg.

Mild in May

At the end of May the North Manchester branch of CAMRA tackled the Marathon Mild Crawl of Manchester and Salford's premier free houses. Pete Cash was there...

Starting at the Queens Arms on Honey Street, we sampled Federation Brewery's Buchanan mild at 140p. A fairly recent addition to the regular beer range, this is always consistent at the Queens.

Across the valley at the Marble Arch, there was a dark beer on sale - Marstons Eagle Dark at 145p. This is one of the 'Head Brewer's Choice' occasional beers, and nobody was sure whether it ranks as a mild; the ABV was above the normal range. Unfortunately only one of our party got a decent pint as the barrel ran empty immediately afterwards.

Down Rochdale Road, two milds were available at the Beer House: Taylors Golden Best at 135p and Moorhouses Black Cat in the Guest Mild spot at 120p. Most people opted for the latter, in the belief that all milds should be blackish in colour. Indeed, Taylors themselves used to offer an alternative pump clip for Golden Best, labelled 'Bitter Ale', to match the perceptions of some pub customers.

Across at the Smithfield on Swan Street we found the cheapest mild (apart from Holts) on the crawl: M&B Highgate Dark at only 100p. Mild is still a popular drink in the West Midlands and until recently mild-only pubs could still be found.

Next came the long trek (8.1 furlongs, if you recall the cut out 'n' keep distance table in May WD) to the Egerton Arms (*right*) on Gore Street, near Salford Station, where we enjoyed



Holts mild at 94p. At the Kings Arms up Bloom Street the mild (which changes regularly) was Greene King XX Dark at 115p.

The tiny Dock & Pulpit on Encombe Place was packed out because it was quiz night. Mild is not normally available here as sales would not justify it. However, they knew we were coming and had installed 'Black Shadow' at 135p for the occasion.

Finally to the Crescent, where Banks's mild at 134p was accompanied by nourishing soup, kindly provided by hosts Andy and Jo to round off the evening.

Although not too many completed the crawl from beginning to end, quite a few joined in along the way and it was gratifying to find mild, an endangered species in many places, available in so many of our favourite pubs.

Bury Beer Festival

This year's Bury Beer Festival will take place at the Met Arts Centre on Friday 15th and Saturday 16th December. Organising meetings will take place at the Tap & Spile, Manchester Old Road, Bury, from midday on the following Saturdays: 27th July, 24th August, 21st September, 26th October and 9th November. All interested are invited to attend and chuck in their two-penn'orth.

Independents' Day Treasure Hunt

CAMRA's annual treasure hunt round pubs in Manchester is on Saturday 6th July, starting at the Beer House, Angel Street. It is open to teams of two, three or four and kicks off at 12.00 noon. In the evening there will be a free chilli supper for all entrants. The treasure hunt is open to all and there's no need to book, just turn up at the Beer House.

Manchester Regiment

After a gap of several years, this pub on Hulme Hall Road, Cornbrook, is selling real ale again - Boddingtons, Stones and Greenalls bitters.

Marstons Choice

A new range of Marstons 'Head Brewers Choice' beers was launched in May. Seventeen special beers will be available in the participating outlets between now and the beginning of 1997. First off was Ditchingham Ale (4.8%ABV) - a full-flavoured, premium pale ale with sharp hop bitterness, according to the chaps at the brewery.

Letters

Niche niceties

Sir - It came as a shock to find Rupert (WD June) writing 'in clear' rather than inflicting on his long-suffering readers his usual shop-soiled assortment of opaque banalities and narcoleptic twaddle. On closer examination, however, the piece turned out to make little more sense than usual.

Rupert has failed to realise that CAMRA does not campaign for the abolition of keg, whether the nasty old Watney's Red sort or the 'new improved' nitro version. The aim is a choice of cask and keg, each honestly described so that drinkers know what to expect. There are times when keg can be a sensible choice - if I'm in a pub with dodgy cask beer, I'm grateful for the option of nitrokeg stout.

In any event, in most pubs in Manchester it's real ale that's the bread-and-butter beer, nitrokeg the specialist 'niche' product. Has Rupert got his niches in a twist?

Rhys P Jones

Full of holes

Sir- In the final paragraph of Rupert's tirade last month, he said CAMRA was faffing about 'like a fart in a colander'. Six lines later the Campaign was 'dead in the water'. Did the colander sink, or what?

Billy Bucket

Tommy's Bucket

Local pub entrepreneur Dave Parkin has acquired Carrey's (formerly Top Yates's) on Oldham Street in Manchester and is refitting the place for his new comedy venue, the Frog & Bucket. It will open as a pay-at-the-door operation in early July.

On 6th July his original Frog & Bucket (ex-Britannia) on Newton Street will become a pub once again (no door charge), called Tommy Ducks Whisky Bar. Both venues will sell cask ale from the S&N range.

The original Tommy Ducks was demolished by its owners, Greenalls, and clever Mr Parkin has registered the name. So who knows how many other Tommy Ducks outlets may emerge?

Business News

Greene King is buying the Magic Pub Company for £197.5m.

Longer Hours

Roger Hall

Many of us would like to see the entire licensing system revised rather than tinkered with. Having said that, it must be admitted that we've come a long way in the last few years with the piecemeal approach. All day Sunday opening would have seemed inconceivable ten years ago. The latest bit of deregulation concerns proposed changes to permitted hours on Friday and Saturday nights.

The consultation paper was published on 30th May and suggests that normal licensing hours on Friday and Saturday nights should be extended from 11.00pm to midnight. Mindful of the need to protect the public, there are three options for restricting late opening in problem areas.

- 1. A general extension, but licensing justices could reimpose the 11.00pm closing time where necessary.*
- 2. Individual applications which could only be refused on grounds of disturbance, annoyance or disorder.*
- 3. Individual applications, leaving justices with absolute discretion to grant or refuse.*

Option 1 seems to be the most sensible.

The proposal would extend club hours by the same amount - i.e. until 3.00am. This maintains the present differential, but does little to address the question of why you should need to go to a club to drink after midnight. There seems little reason why you shouldn't stay in a pub if you want to. The idea that alcohol is 'ancillary' to entertainment and 'substantial refreshment' in many nightclubs is a charade.

The full consultation paper is available from Mr Dennis Wilmer, Home Office LGDP Unit, Room 1183, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AT. Phone 0171 273 3917. Responses should be submitted to Mr Wilmer by 30th August 1996.

Taylors out

Jennings have taken over from Timothy Taylors at the Red Lion, Bolton Road, Hawkshaw. The beer range is now Jennings mild, bitter, Cumberland and Sneck Lifter, with a guest - Bank Top Fred's Cap on a recent visit. The pub does good quality meals, too, so it is still well worth a visit. (Hourly buses from Bury or Bolton, services 508 and 273.)

Now & Then

Rob Magee

No.95

Brown Cow

34 Stake Hill Lane, Middleton

The photo shows the Brown Cow, a farmhouse and beerhouse at Stake Hill, between Middleton and Heywood. The (much altered!) building is still there today as the Stake Hill Lodge.

The farm was tenanted by the Heap family from the beginning of the nineteenth century and the first beerseller's licence was taken out by James Heap about 1870. Jane Heap took over in 1886 and she ran the Brown Cow until 1930.

The property was bought by brewers Richard Seed & Company of Radcliffe in the early 1900s, but at the 1919 licensing meeting the police wanted to close the house because they believed it was no longer needed. It was situated on a private road - wheeled traffic had to pay a sixpenny toll - and Jane Heap's main business was in providing dinners for local workers. She made a profit of £3 or £4 a week on about thirty dinners a day. She paid the brewery £20 a year rent and her annual



takings were about £936. The 'wet' trade amounted to 156 barrels and 1,195 dozen bottles of beer, together with 278 dozen bottles of minerals.

Fortunately the Brown Cow and Jane Heap were well regarded locally and a petition signed by almost everyone in Stake Hill was presented to the magistrates. It contained the names of 228 customers, with an average custom of 28 years.

The Brown Cow survived and became a Duttons house when the Blackburn brewery took over Seed & Co in 1938. In 1964 Whitbread took over, then about six years later they sold the pub and it was renamed 'Bananas', to suit its new disco and late supper image. Then in October 1982 the 'New Brown Cow' was advertised as a country pub 'with all the luxury facilities of a plush, city centre nightspot' - engraved glass partitions, elaborate chandeliers, luxury seating and deep-pile carpets. What would Jane Heap have thought?

There were more changes of ownership in the 1980s and the pub became 'Baron Courtney's', then in 1991 it became the Stake Hill Lodge, a country pub/restaurant which had certainly come a long way since Jane Heap was making £3 or £4 a week serving up dinners to local workers!

Beinlos Budget Bits

Paul Roberts

Out of total German taxation receipts of DM814.2 billion in 1995, beer taxation was DM1.779 billion. This compares favourably with coffee taxation (DM2.186 billion), brandy taxation (DM4.837 billion), lottery taxation (DM2.594 billion) and tobacco tax (DM 20.595 billion).

So beer taxation in Germany is one fifth of one percent of total taxation and if the same percentage applied here we could look forward to an immediate reduction of up to fifty pence on a decent strength pint.

It has been proved that beer in moderation is beneficial to good health, while coffee has no health benefits, so why shouldn't coffee drinkers be hammered for a change?

Great Danes

In 1995 the Danes drank more alcohol than any other European nation (per head of population). Every Dane over the age of 14 averaged 12.1 litres - half a litre more than in 1990. The reason for the increase in consumption is the reduction in alcohol duties - proving the point that the Exchequer would receive far more in total revenue by reducing the extortionate amount now levied. How about it, then?

Holts in the free trade

Stewart Revell

Some 55 pubs and 16 clubs are currently on the Holts free trade list. These are the pubs...

Manchester area

Aces, *Kinsley Close, West Gorton*
Admiral, *Rodney Street, Ancoats*
Derby Arms, *Exbury Street, Fallowfield*
Farmyard, *Rochdale Road, Blackley*
George & Dragon, *Ardwick Green South*
Hat & Feathers, *Mason Street, Manchester*
Jolly Carter, *Manchester Road, Droylsden*
Junction Inn, *Queens Road, Harpurhey*
Lord Raglan, *Ashton Old Rd, Hr Openshaw*
Nelson Inn, *Barlow Moor Road, Didsbury*
Pack Horse, *Stockport Road, Levenshulme*
Queen Victoria, *Grey Mare Lane, Beswick*
Sea Hawk, *Bold Street, Old Trafford*
Strawberry Duck, *Crabtree Lane, Clayton*
Unicorn, *Shawheath Close, Hulme*
White House, *Great Ancoats Street*

Stockport area

Ash Hotel, *Manchester Road, Heaton Norris*
Bowling Green, *Stockport Road, Marple*
Cherry Tree, *Compstall Road, Romiley*
Horse & Jockey, *London Road, Hazel Grove*
Magnet, *Wellington Road North, Heaton Norris*
Park, *Newbridge Lane, Stockport*
Royal Oak, *Castle Street, Edgeley*

Bury area

Bird in Hand, *Manchester Road, Blackford Bridge*
Jolly Waggoner, *Manchester Old Road, Bury*
New Inn, *Bell Lane, Bury*
Peel Hotel, *Rochdale Road, Bury*
Rams Head, *Stand Lane, Radcliffe*
Towler Inn, *Walmersley Road, Bury*
Woolpack, *Stand Lane, Radcliffe*

Tameside

Angel, *King Street, Dukinfield*
Hillgate, *Pot Hill, Ashton*
New Inn, *Mossley Road, Ashton*
Woodman, *Oldham Road, Ashton*

Salford area

Church Inn, *Ford Lane, Pendleton*
Egerton Arms, *Gore Street, Salford*
White Lion, *Liverpool Road, Irlam*

Middleton

Oddfellows, *Oldham Road*

Bolton area

Bowling Green, *Bury Road, Tonge*
Hare & Hounds, *Market Street, Stoneclough*
House without a Name, *Harwood*
Kings Arms, *Chorley Old Road, Bolton*
Man & Scythe, *Churchgate, Bolton*
Old Original British Queen, *Blackburn Road, Bolton*
Park, *Bridgeman Street, Bolton*



Junction, Harpurhey

Altrincham

Cresta Court Hotel, *Church St*

Wigan & Leigh areas

Boundary, *Manchester Road, Leigh*

Colliers Arms, *Sale Lane, Tyldesley*

Gems, *Upper Dicconson Street, Wigan*

Half Moon, *Elliott Street, Tyldesley*

Royal Oak, *Leigh Rd, Boothstown*

Oldham area

Millgate, *Ashton Road West, Failsworth*

Pineapple, *Rochdale Road, Shaw*

Plough, *Huddersfield Road, Waterhead*

Welcome, *Abbeyhills Road*



Welcome, Oldham

Tameside Canals Festival

Summer arrives and so do the narrowboats for this annual event at the Portland Basin in Ashton-under-Lyne. Part of the festival is the beer tent run by High Peak CAMRA.

Over thirty different beers, ciders and perries will be on sale on the weekend of July 12,13 and 14. Opening times are: Friday 7-11, Saturday 12-5 and 7.30-11, Sunday 12-5 (or when the beer runs out!).

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.

WHAT'S DOING ADVERTISING: Full page £50 or £200 for six months, half page £35 or £150 for six months, quarter page £25 or £100 for six months. All adverts must be accompanied with payment. Cheque payable to What's Doing.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Send cheque/PO for £2.70 together with your name and address to Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester M9 6PW, for six issues. Cheques made out to "What's Doing".

BACK NUMBERS: 15p per copy. Send stamped addressed envelope to Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester M9 6PW.

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

Rupert

Well, that's all right then, isn't it? Yet another spectacular amber nectar show goes off with not a hint of sticky fingers in the till. Didn't we do well? Back in middle Grotley all is doom and gloom as an attempt to redesign a pseudo-celtic hostelry goes sadly wrong. Among the wreckage lie the ruins of some of our most ancient taverns, leading Billy Shippon and his pals to cry in their silly beards. But the Campaign is made of sterner stuff. Not for us the boring mainstream thrusts against brewery takeovers, pub wrecking and nitrokeg. No, that's for dweeks and big girls' blouses. Done all that, tick, got the XXXXL T-shirt. So what is the hot topic of debate that grips the Slumley branch meeting? You've got it! Once again it's knockabout farce from the pretend paranoia fringe circus. Bet you didn't know there's a conspiracy to poison us, did you? Well, apparently there is. Traces of goat urine and rabbit dung are contaminating our beers, don't you know. I'm unclear whether this is leeching into Thirlmere from the lakeland wastelands or whether mad brewers are beetling around their mash tuns and fermenting vessels with syringes full of nasty, noxious substances.

Anyway, they're there in fentolitres per Atlantic and likely to drive us daft and impotent, so its got to stop. The first step must be to get a local branch to sponsor a campaign. Slumley are clearly too thick but Smarmford & Slutch are an all-graduate branch so they'll understand science and stuff. Then the annual beanfeast could take it on board and stop the bastards poisoning us. People around us are dying in droves as a result of impure beer when hardly anybody at all is affected by alcoholism, drink-related violence, cigarette smoking or being attacked by rabid giraffes, so it's about time we got our priorities right and stopped it.

We may well be accessories to the crime in running amber nectar shows where we purvey the contaminated wares of unreconstructed ale makers. We must make a stand and only sell beer made from nice water.

Scientific fact: In a recent trial, a Grotley brewer made a 100-barrel, full mash brew from pure rat urine and served it in twelve pubs. Nobody died of Weil's disease, everyone got pissed and 136 customers said, 'By 'eck, it's improved!'

Contributors to this issue: Steve Smith, Paul Roberts, Pete Cash, Mark Herdman, Sue Barker, Alan Ainsworth, Peter Alexander, Roger Hall, Mark McConachie, Leo King, Bert Kerks, Paul Mason, Stewart Revell, Roger Wood.

Branch Diary

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tues 2 July 8.30, Branch Meeting, Waterloo, Manchester Road, Bury

Tues 16 July 8.30pm, Bridge Inn, Blackford Bridge, Bury

Wed 17 July 8.30pm, Pub of the Season, Albion, Whitworth Road, Rochdale

Sat 27 July 12 noon, Bury Beer Festival organising meeting, Tap & Spile, Bury centre

Tues 30 July 8.30pm, What's Doing collation, Flying Horse, Town Hall Square, Rochdale

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

Trafford & Hulme

Thur 4 July 8pm, Saracens Head, Warburton, followed by Rope & Anchor and Vine, Dunham, Hogshead and Orange Tree, Altrincham

Thur 11 July 8pm, Feathers, Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton cum Hardy, followed by The Bar, Wilbraham Road, and the Beech, Chorlton Green

Thur 18 July 8pm, Builders Arms, Knutsford, followed by Legh Arms, Cross Keys, Freemasons, White Lion and White Bear

Thur 25 July 8pm, H R Fletchers, King Street South, Manchester, followed by Courtneys, Grinch, Ganders Go South and Rothwells

Thur 1 Aug 8pm, Railway, Flixton, followed by Church, then Windmill, Carrington, and Railway, Broadheath

Thur 8 Aug 8pm, Queens Arms, Red Bank, followed by Marble Arch, Harp & Shamrock, Beer House and Hare & Hounds

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

North Manchester

Wed 3 July, Macclesfield Crawl. 1830 train from Piccadilly. Return at 2224

Sat 6 July 12 noon, Independents' Day Pub Hunt, Beer House, Manchester

Wed 10 July 8pm, Regional Meeting, Beer House

Wed 17 July, Branch Meeting 8pm, Welcome, Robert Hall Street, Salford

Wed 24 July 8pm, Committee & Social, Junction, Hendham Vale, Harpurhey

Tues 30 July 6pm onward, WD collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham

Wed 31 July, Minibus trip to Linfit Brewery, Huddersfield

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)

Dave and Jo welcome you to the

QUEENS ARMS

FREE HOUSE

Tel. 0161 834 4239

4/6 Honey Street (off Red Bank), Cheetham

Serving a large range of traditional ales supporting the independent brewers

**Batemens Mild & XXXB - Mitchells
Bitter - Old Peculier - Taylors Best
Bitter & Landlord - weekly guest beers**



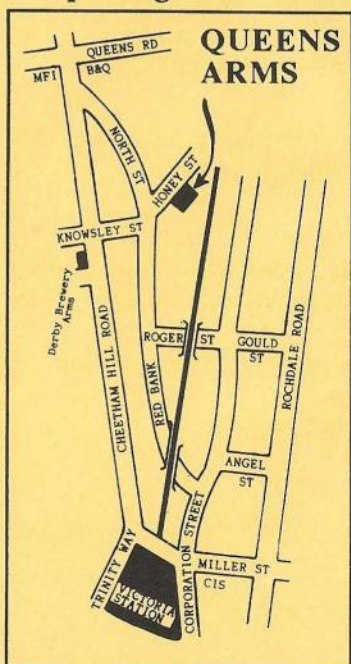
Bitter from 95p a pint

Westons Traditional Cider on handpump

**A large menu plus home-made specials
available seven lunchtimes a week**

Hot and cold food available until late evening

Opening Hours: 12.00-11.00 Mon-Sat; 12-10.30 Sunday



Children's play equipment in the Beer Garden, with swings, slides, climbing net, etc.

We have a Children's Certificate so families are welcome inside or in the Beer Garden.

Bar-B-Que for hire free of charge.

**A permanent range of draught
Belgian beers including Kwak, Le
Trappe & Riva Blanche, not
forgetting the Continental bottles**

Bar Billiards, Backgammon, Chess, etc.

**General Knowledge Quiz Night
Tuesday. Beer Prizes**

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