

25p

What's Doing

AUGUST 1996



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

Castle & Falcon gone

by Peter Wadsworth, special Castle & Falcon correspondent (retired)

A month after the City Centre bomb blast, the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive contacted the Metrolink people and asked them to slow trams down to five miles per hour and proceed with caution past the Castle & Falcon on Bradshaw Street. The building was (they said) in a dangerous condition as a result of the blast.

Smelling a rat, I went to the Town Hall and spoke to the person who had condemned the property and ironically, he is a CAMRA member! He had been monitoring the empty pub every six months to make sure that it was of no danger to the public, but when the bomb went off the blast wave pushed it sideways, the floor

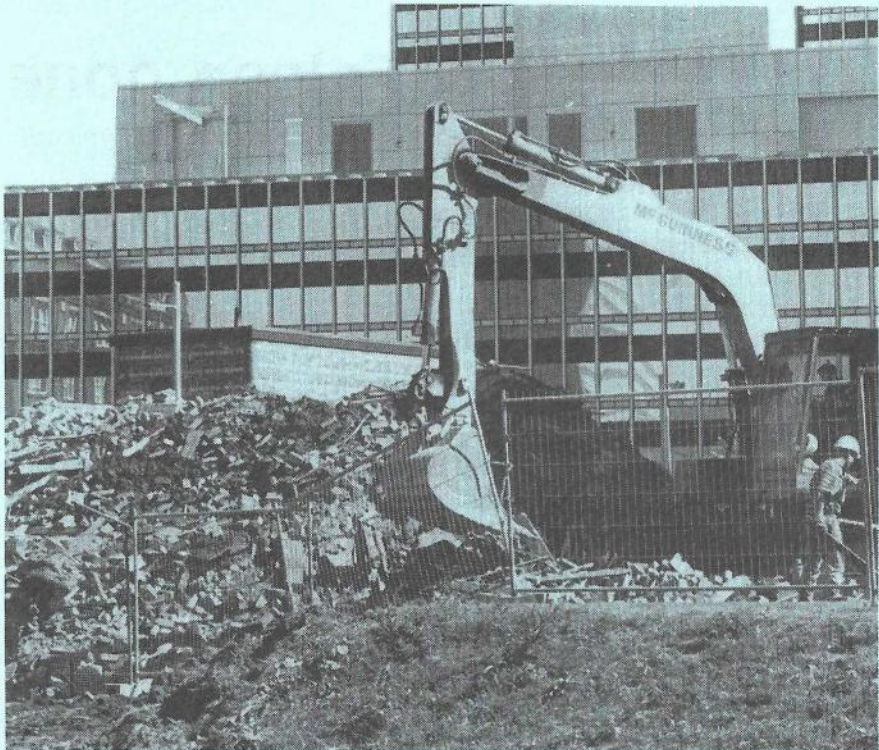


250th Edition (Yes, really!)

joists were detached from the walls and the place was in imminent danger of collapse.

As a result, the GMPTC applied for several overnight possessions of the tram system so that they could get on with demolition. So it was not quite another Tommy Ducks, but nevertheless a sad end for one of Manchester's historic pubs.

The Castle & Falcon had been saved from demolition in 1989 as a result of a campaign launched by CAMRA and last September, when the GMPTC applied for Conservation Area Consent to knock it down, there was more opposition and so they sheepishly withdrew their application. This time there was no reprieve.



The photo of the Castle & Falcon on the cover was taken in July 1986. The above photo of the site being cleared was taken in July 1996.

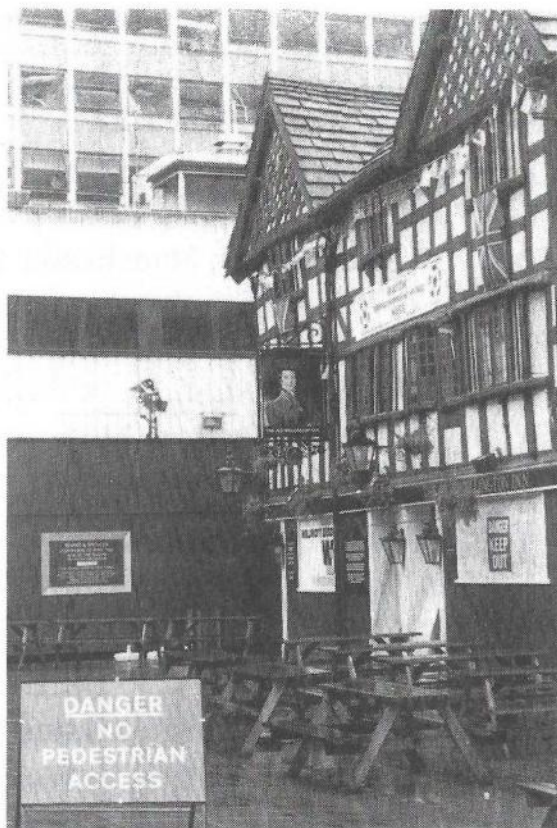
When WD went to press most of the City Centre pubs had reopened with the exception of :-

Paddy's Rat & Carrot
Old Wellington
Swan with Two Necks

*destroyed
serious structural damage
light structural damage*

John Willie Lees
in the Arndale
 Bouchelles
in the Corn Exchange
 Conservatory
in the Royal Exchange
 Exchange Cafe Bar
in the Royal Exchange

The pub next door to the Old Wellington, Sinclairs, escaped with only light damage, considering it was so close to the seat of the blast. At Manchester's most-bombed pub, the Crown & Anchor on Cateaton Street (the windows were put in when the last-but-one bomb went off), there was structural damage to the 'new' part.



THE SMITHFIELD HOTEL

37 Swan Street, Manchester City Centre

presents its

FIRST BEER FESTIVAL

from Friday 16th August

*For two weeks licensee Alison has chosen for your
taste buds an*

ALPHABETICAL BREWERS MEDLEY

of beers from both Regional and Micro Breweries

Tempting your palates will be beers such as

DONNINGTON SBA
EARL SOHAM GANNET MILD
FOXLEY BREWERY BARKING MAD
HARVEYS XXXX/OLD ALE
NENE VALLEY TROJAN

There are 26 letters in the alphabet, so this is just
a small sample to tempt you. Obviously there are
21 others to lap up!

Open all day every day during the Festival

FOOD AVAILABLE

Beers supplied by Freetraders of Runcorn

Kings Ale

Leo King

Real Ale Festivals in the City

The First Smithfield Real Ale Festival will commence on Friday 16th August - for details see the advertisement in this issue. If the festival is a success, licensee Alison may organise additional events.

Another first-time festival, at the Crown & Anchor/Beer Engine on Hilton Street, will begin during the first week of October. Ten beers will be gravity-dispensed from stillages close to the bar counter. Subject to availability, these will be:

Bateman Salem Porter

Belhaven Festival Gold

Bragdy Dr Johnson's Draught

Broughton Merlin's Ale

Commercial Old Toss

Kelham Island Pale Rider

Little Avenham Torchlight

Newale Clatford Clout

Oakhill Black Magic

Tomintoul Nessie's Minster Masi

In addition to the festival ales, the Crown & Anchor will have its usual handpumped beers and guest ales, so there will be up to 21 beers available at any one time.

Carbon dioxide lagers, now nitrogen beers. Why?

I notice that this nitro-creamflow is creeping in everywhere, as if gassy lagers are not enough. Nitro-Stones was on sale in the Old Wellington in the Shambles - there is more taste in an ice cream! For the taste of real Stones, try the Unicorn on Church Street or Yates's Blob Shop nearby. In Didsbury, the ever popular Royal Oak on Wilmslow Road now has Marstons freeflow smooth bitter. Why are Marstons going in for this stuff when they produce excellent beers? Fortunately the pub still sells the traditional bitter. The nearby Station (also Marstons) doesn't sell the freeflow version and a spare handpump dispenses Batemans mild - now that is sensible!

Closed and Boarded

The **Jubilee** in Salford's Ordsall District Centre was closed well before Christmas 1995 and now the building is thoroughly sealed with metal sheeting. Recurrent rumours of reopening came to nothing.

It is rumoured that the **Prince of Wales** on Oldfield Road, Salford (that strange no-person's land between Ordsall and Islington) will soon close as the building has been sold.

Bolton News

Des Nogalski

The concept of the 'Irish' pub has hit Bolton with the opening of two in the town in recent months. First of all the Cotton Bar at the **Pack Horse Hotel** on Bradshawgate was converted into **O'Leary's**, offering live traditional Irish music on most nights. The pub has become popular with Bolton's Irish community and a number of cultural activities now take place there.

A couple of hundred yards up the road, **Durty Nelly's** has been created out of former retail premises. The decor is similar to O'Leary's, with wooden fittings and bare floorboards dominating, although it is hard to see what is Irish about the design of either pub. Unlike the keg-only O'Leary's, Durty Nelly's has a choice of real ales: John Smiths, Tetleys, Theakstons and a house beer. Again, live Irish music is a feature on most nights.

After being closed for two years, the **Saddle** on Lee Lane in Horwich is open again now that it has been sold by Bass. A licence application has been lodged for the former **Crofters Hotel** (*below*) on St Georges Road, which was closed by Greenalls over two years ago and subsequently de-licensed. A refurbishment is under way at the former **Prince William** on Bradshawgate and Allied Domecq are developing a



new wine bar to be known as **The Brasshouse** at the former Kwik Save on Churchgate. The £1.1 million conversion of the **Watergate Toll** on Salford Road (A6) into a 'Brewers Fayre' is now complete. Soon after its re-opening, Boddington's Bitter, Morland Old Speckled Hen, Whitbread Castle Eden Ale and Flowers IPA were on sale.

The former Ben Topp's/McGinlay's/Absolutely Fabulous has had a change of identity yet again and it is now known as **Bar Babylon**. The **General Havelock** on Sidney Street is still closed and boarded up, as is **Fern's Wine Bar** on Market Street in Farnworth. The **Millstone** on Crown Street is also boarded up, which is odd as the pub only closed to allow a refurbishment to take place.

Real ale has disappeared from **Oscar's Cafe Bar** at the Wellsprings, while the **Bowling Green** on Bury Road has replaced Holts bitter with Peter Yates bitter, brewed by Moorhouses for Yates's Wine Lodges. The same beer is also on sale at the **Greyhound** on Deansgate. Another pub to lose its guests is the **Gypsies Tent** on Deansgate - the guest ale handpump has been replaced by a nitrokeg pump. Cask Worthington Bitter is still available.

Finally, the Tom Cobleigh pub chain has revealed that it is looking for an outlet in Bolton as part of a push into the North West. The chain, which specialises in converting existing properties into new pubs, has three sites under consideration.

Design Fault

Allied Domecq Leisure, or whatever they're called this month, have put forward the Barton Arms in Worsley for a pub design award. Leaving aside the question of whether pubs should be 'designed', let's look at what the pub has to offer. OK, it's built so as to blend into the middle class half-timbered Jacobean surroundings of Worsley, but the positive comments stop there. The interior seems to have been created by someone who hasn't got a clue about that elusive 'archetypal pubness'. A barn-like interior with features such as a pretend minstrels' gallery, poor use of natural light, a pervasive aroma of chips, inadequate disabled access and an atmosphere lacking in conviviality is testimony to what happens when pubs are 'designed' by people who have no feeling for them.

Let's hope that CAMRA's Pubs Group is wise enough not to give them an award. If you feel otherwise and think the Barton Arms deserves a gong, let the editor know.

**THE
STATION**

THE STATION
ASHTON-U-LYNE

TICKER'S COLLECTION
BANK HOLIDAY
SPECIAL

THURSDAY 22nd AUGUST - 29th AUGUST

THURS 22nd - 29th AUG

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

HOMECOOKED FOOD AVAILABLE

WARRINGTON STREET ASHTON-U-LYNE

Lees Corner

Bernie Jackson

Lees are due to launch their new pub guide at about the same time as this edition of WD hits the streets. The book is a comprehensive guide to all the tied estate (now believed to number about 170 pubs) and it will be on sale for what I am told will be a 'nominal amount' in most of the pubs.

The brewery's refurbishment programme continues apace. The latest to be completed is the Woodhouse Gardens, Woodhouses, Failsworth, where Dave & Yvonne Farnsworth (formally of the Assheton Arms, Middleton) are the new tenants. Next on the list are three managed houses, the Dicken Green, Rochdale; the Lord Clive, Whitefield, and the Middleton Archer (*right*) in Middleton. Full planning permission, both for building work and a new car park, has now been obtained for the Royal George at Greenfield, but a lot of work needs to be done before it can reopen in the autumn as planned.



In the July edition, Peter Alexander commented on problems with consistency of quality of Lees's beers lately. On my recent visit to the brewery, Head Brewer Giles Dennis admitted that after they had changed their malt supplier there had been a problem with the clarity of some brews owing to protein haze. He denied that this had affected the taste and accused that '!*!?' Alexander of drinking with his eyes!

Still on the Brewery's products, the in-house lager, 'Golden Original', has now been in production for a year and is still said to be selling well, and the British Bottling Institute awarded Lees a Gold Medal for their Archer Stout in April this year (some of you may recall the draught version at a former Bury Beer Festival!). Finally, the brewery is considering an addition to its beer range with a mixed gas dispense keg bitter. Surprised?

Smelling as sweet?

Nicholas Winterton, Tory MP for Macclesfield, has been enraged by the way in which traditional pub names are being changed. He wants to see planning permission required for name changes which have turned our Rose & Crowns into Pig & Radishes. Names are merely the outward manifestation of a more insidious process - the wrecking of our pub interiors in the name of progress.

Name changes are easily reversible; gutting a nineteenth century pub is not. If kicking up a fuss about inappropriate name changes helps to focus attention on more important issues, all very well and good. If, however, it diverts attention away from the way in which brewers and pub-owners are destroying our heritage, then please don't bother. At the moment, licensees are required to inform licensing benches of name changes. How many do that?

Handy Beer Tax Rip-Off Calculator!

You pay EXCISE DUTY based on alcoholic strength and VAT based on sale price.

Alcohol %	Typical beer	Approx duty
3.5	Mild/Weak lager	22p per pint
3.8	Ordinary bitter or lager	23p per pint
4.2	Best bitter	26p per pint
5.0	Strong ale/Premium lager	31p per pint
7.0	Winter warmer	43p per pint

VAT on Beer

Price £	VAT per pint	Price £	VAT per pint
1.00	15 pence	1.50	22 pence
1.10	16 pence	1.60	24 pence
1.20	18 pence	1.70	25 pence
1.30	19 pence	1.80	27 pence
1.40	21 pence	1.90	28 pence
		2.00	30 pence

The Chancellor takes a third of the price of your pint! Join CAMRA in fighting beer tax.

CAMRA Limited, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts. AL1 4LW
Tel: 01727 867201. Fax: 01727 867670. E-Mail: camra@camra.org.uk

North West still cheapest

CAMRA's 1996 Pub Price Survey reveals that the North West is the country's cheapest region for real ale. The average price of a pint in this area is £1.40, compared with a national average of £1.60. It's clearly the influence of our indigenous independents which helps. Nationally, prices in independents' pubs are cheaper than real ale in nationals' pubs or pub chains - perhaps another argument for retaining the tied house system.

Although the cheapest pint in the country was found in London (79p at a Wetherspoon outlet) the capital was generally more expensive. Holts mild at 94p is probably the most consistently low priced beer in the country. It's interesting to see what's happened to the price differential between Holts and the former independent, Boddingtons, since the latter sold out. The average price of Holts bitter, including guest beers and free trade outlets, is £1.08. Boddingtons is £1.56. So much for the power of advertising and economics of scale. Perhaps the extra 48p allows them to create a unique leisure experience.

Wetherspoon Witterings

J D Wetherspoon's Wigan outlet (see WD March) is scheduled to open on September 12th. Meanwhile, the company's two Manchester pubs are selling a variety of amber nectars at bargain prices Monday to Wednesday. Scotch Bitter is 89p per pint, John Willies Bitter 99p and Courage Directors £1.29. Bottled Holsten Pils is 99p and for keg 'badge beer' drinkers, Guinness is £1.29 per pint, along with several lagers.

Alfresco in Farnworth

From Friday to Sunday, 6th to 8th September, the Britannia on King Street will be holding Farnworth's first-ever outdoor beer festival. The beer range is yet to be decided, but there will be a good sprinkling of independents. The pub is easy to get to, being right opposite Farnworth bus station and only a short walk up from the railway station. And if there is anyone out there who can lend landlord Dave Lawson an awning for the event (seriously!), please contact Dave on (01204) 571629.

Joeys on Sauchiehall Street

To celebrate the thirteenth anniversary of their second wedding to one another, the Nightingales went to Glasgow. During their thirteen Good Beer Guide pub crawl of the city they were delighted to find Manchester's favourite tippie, Holts bitter, at the Brewery Tap on the famous Sauchiehall Street. But at £1.75 a pint they decided to have just one and then move on.

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

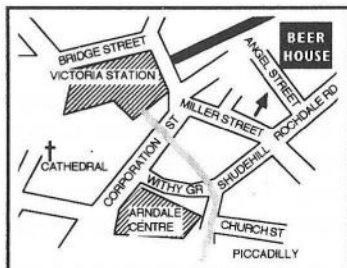
**8 EVER-CHANGING GUEST BEERS
including a GUEST MILD**



**PLUS A RANGE OF TRADITIONAL CIDERS,
DRAUGHT BELGIAN KRIEK, LEFFE BLONDE,
HOEGAARDEN & MANY BOTTLED BELGIAN
and other FOREIGN BEERS**

***SOMETHING FOR EVEN THE MOST DISCERNING
TASTE***

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



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**

Bury News

Barbara Lee

Work has started on the premises which are to house the **Wetherspoon's** outlet in the town centre. The old transport offices on Market Place, facing the parish church, have been all but demolished, with only the fine stone façade remaining, so it will be a while before opening time for Wetherspoon's in Bury.

The **Tap and Spile** on Manchester Old Road is under relief management until the franchise for the business is sold. The beer range is good, and often includes a mild, and the condition of the beers has been most acceptable on recent visits.

In Ramsbottom, the **Good Samaritan** on Peel Brow is under new management and offers good value beer with Wilsons Mild at £1.22, John Smiths Bitter at £1.24 and Ruddles Best at £1.38. There is a guest beer, and if peckish at lunchtime you can get a range of muffins, including a spam muffin for £1.00, or a full breakfast. Elsewhere in Ramsbottom, there is new management at the **Clarence** on Bolton Street. This pub sells Boddingtons and Old Speckled Hen, but the volume of the disco noise on a Thursday precluded staying to try the beers. The **Railway** was offering average Boddingtons at £1.42, while the GBG-listed **Royal Oak** on Bridge Street has well-kept Thwaites Mild at £1.34, Bitter at £1.38 and Craftsman at £1.48.

Independents' Day Treasure Hunt

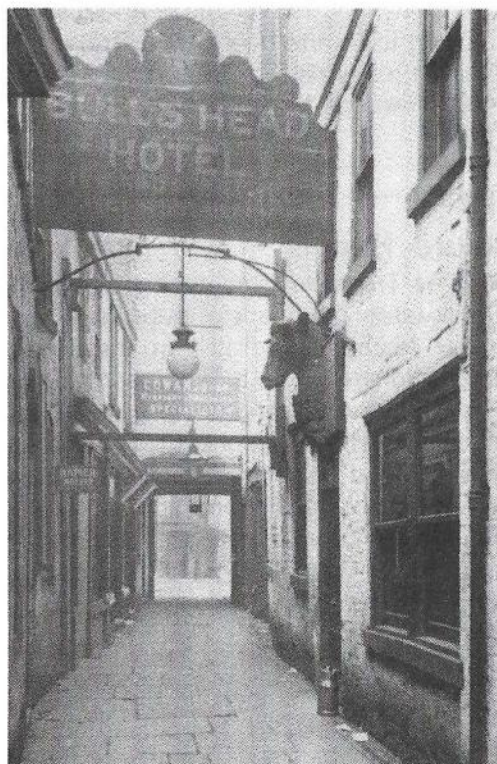
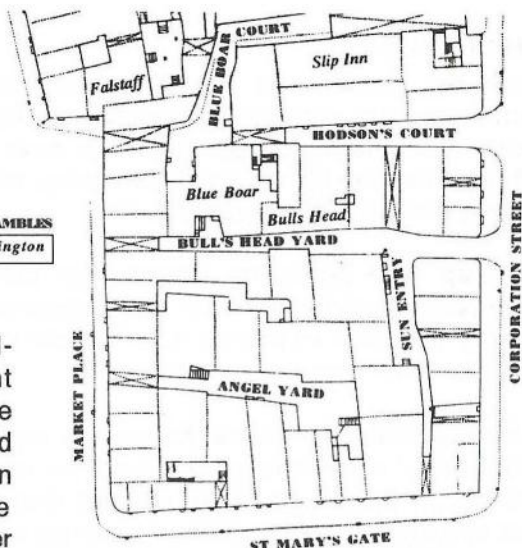
The fourth annual Independents' Day Treasure Hunt took place on Saturday 6th July, around Manchester city centre pubs selling independent brewers' beers. Fourteen teams started off from the Beer House, trying to find clues in pubs deciphered from a 'wordsearch'. A number of teams, notably 'The Tigers of Wrath', gloriously led by Rhys Jones and John Hutchinson, went slightly astray searching for clues in the 'Crown and Anchor' (one of a few red herrings). Twelve teams managed to return to the Beer House for the results and supper. This year's winners of the shield (and a gallon of beer) were Dave and Carol Sheldon (the 'Wobbly Team' from Cheadle Hulme), CAMRA members from the South Manchester branch. Dave and Carol will now have the pleasure of setting next year's event.

Congratulations to all the participants and a big thank you to Idy Phillips and Graham Rawlinson at the Beer House for hospitality and refreshments. 'The Tigers of Wrath' finished in a very creditable twelfth place, and a good time was had by all.

Manchester's old Market Place

As we watch the area around the bomb blast being restored and rebuilt, it is sometimes hard to imagine what the city centre looked like before the glass-and-concrete redevelopment started in the 1960s. Some readers will recall the old Seftons Hotel on Corporation Street and the Fatted Calf round the corner in Cromford Court, which

SHAMBLES
Wellington



were pulled down for the building of the Arndale Centre. But how many remember drinking in the Bulls Head, Blue Boar, Slip Inn and Falstaff? These pubs were on the other side of Corporation Street, part of a collection of old buildings destroyed during an air-raid on the night of 23rd/24th December 1940.

The Marks & Spencers store was built on the cleared site, between the old Market Place and Corporation Street, and the plan at the top of the page shows the original layout of those buildings in one of the oldest parts of the city.

The Bulls Head had a recorded history of over four hundred years. The original

building was an inn with a yard and stables, until the Market Place became too congested and better-appointed hotels opened in Market Street, Deansgate and other parts of the growing town. The Bulls Head property was reduced in size as land was sold off for building and 'Bull's Head Yard' became just a narrow alley from Corporation Street to the Market Place. In the photograph on the previous page, the corner door of the Wellington can just be seen at the end of the alley.

The Blue Boar and the Slip Inn were also long-established town centre pubs, providing food and drink for people visiting the markets, and they were popular meeting places for generations of Mancunians. This drawing of the singing room at the Slip Inn comes from 1906.



'Angel Yard' on the plan is a reminder of a second old inn next to the Market Place, and there was once an alehouse called the Sun in 'Sun Entry'. At the end of the eighteenth century the licence of the Angel was transferred to a building opposite the Shambles and this became the Falstaff, the fourth pub which survived until the Christmas Blitz.

After the air raids, brewers were allowed to hold on to the licences of pubs which had been destroyed and in the 1950s and 1960s, when new housing estates were being built, these licences were transferred to new pubs. So the Bulls Head licence went to the Mallard in Middleton, the Falstaff licence went to the Newall Green Hotel, the Blue Boar licence to the Silver Birch in Wythenshawe and the Slip Inn licence to the Cornishman, also in Wythenshawe.

Tiger Moth

The Tiger Moth in Irlam has been acquired by Sylvia and Colin Noone of the White Lion (see WD April) and was expected to open in early July. The beers are Holts mild and bitter.

The Banks of the Bridgewater

The Bargee at Monton, formerly a free house selling mainly Robinsons beers, has been bought by Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries. The beer range now comprises Banks's mild at 125p, Banks's bitter at 129p and Camerons Strongarm at 140p. Unusually for Banks's, all the beers are on handpump.

The Bargee is conveniently situated for boaters sailing the Bridgewater Canal, being on the bend which marks the change of route when it was decided to carry the canal by aqueduct over the Mersey & Irwell Navigation at Barton.

Eccles alterations

There has been a successful refurbishment of the **Crown & Volunteer** in Eccles, with new bar fittings in the vault and new furniture throughout. The replastering of the lounge ceiling removed the last traces of the site of the former skylight. Otherwise, none of the fine 1930s features have been lost.

Billy up

The former King William IV in Chorlton on Medlock will become a drop-in centre for community counselling and pastoral care if planning permission is forthcoming. The first pub to go this way, the Openshaw Inn on Ashton Old Road, became the Pop Inn. It's now semi-derelict and up for sale. Wonder whether Teen Challenge UK will be any more successful with the King Billy.

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.

Ashton-on-Mersey Update (2)

After the recent work at the Plough and the Buck, more money has been spent in this area with the refurbishment of the Lively Lobster on Manor Avenue. It is now a split-level, comfortable pub, but the major change has been the conversion to cask after serving fizz for more years than anyone can remember. On handpump are Greenalls Mild and Bitter and Tetley Bitter.

Just down the road on Firsway, the Brigadier (Holts) looks as though it is having the inside repainted, but nothing else! The walls are currently completely bare and something is needed to soften the rather stark interior. In the middle of the Racecourse estate, Beechers now has a handpump with a Tetley pumpclip, but the beer doesn't appear to be selling much.

The Huntsman continues to sell Cains Dark Mild at 93p in excellent form, and also H B Clarks (Whitbread) Bitter and Boddingtons Bitter.

Station Celebration

The next beer extravaganza at Ashton's Station free house will be a week-long presentation of new and rare beers, scrumpies and perries from 22nd to 29th August, over the Bank Holiday weekend.

Beerfest '97

There will be a meeting to consider the feasibility of a 1997 Manchester Beer Festival at the Beer House, Angel Street, Manchester, at 7.30pm on 13th August.

Bury Beer Festival

Planning for this year's Bury Beer Festival at the Met Arts Centre is now in full swing and the next meeting for those interested in helping with the organisation will take place at the Tap & Spile, Manchester Old Road, Bury, at midday on Saturday 24th August. Note: The Festival dates given in last month's WD were wrong and should have read 15th and 16th November.

An intense coriander and asparagus nose, with a lingering wet hedgehog aftertaste

Jealous of Boris Pratt and his ilk? Want to learn how to taste beer and describe it in flawless crapspeak? CAMRA is running beer tasting training sessions at a number of venues. The nearest to Manchester is at Chester on 21st September. If you're interested, ring Brewlab on 0191 515 2535.

Holts Corner

Stewart Revell

Holts have sold on one of the pubs they acquired from Greenalls. The Volunteer at Darcy Lever continues to dispense Holts bitter, but the pub is now being run by Greenwood Leisure (who also own the Original British Queen in Bolton and the House Without a Name in Harwood).

The Angel in Knutsford (ex-Greenalls) is closed for extensive refurbishments and is due to reopen in November. Work starts this month on transforming the building on John Dalton Street in Manchester into a Holts outlet.

Virtual Bavaria

For those who are not able to wait the few weeks until the start of the Oktoberfest, the computer software company Navigo is offering a CD-ROM of 'Virtual Reality Oktoberfest'. Apart from getting the usual 3D computerized simulation of the rides and so on, Cyberbuffs will also be treated to a tour through the beer halls and have the privilege of taking the Bavarian Premier's place in tapping the first barrel! One trusts there will be a warning to stop computer bods from getting carried away and trying to clink their own Maßkrugs with the one appearing on the screen, causing irreparable damage to their Pentiums.

THE MIDLAND BEER COMPANY

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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

Now & Then

No.96

Devonshire Arms

Rob Magee

13 Elliott Street, Lees

The Devonshire is one of the oldest pubs in Lees and it has had quite a lively history. It was opened by John Dyson in the 1790s as the Gardeners Arms, complete with garden, stables and cow house. Unfortunately Mr Dyson got himself into money trouble and he ended up doing time in the debtors' prison at Lancaster.

The pub was known as the New Inn in the 1850s, when a tenant by the name of Bethel Pogson arrived. He first hit the headlines when it was alleged that cat-baiting had taken place at the New Inn. Mr Pogson strongly objected to the suggestion, saying that the man to blame was John Knight, who was also accused of putting kittens' heads in his mouth and biting the heads off mice on a regular basis. The police naturally took a dim view of all this, but there were no witnesses to back up a prosecution.

Not long after this incident, a woman called Hannah Shaw went to the New Inn to collect her husband, but when she arrived she decided to have a drink herself. She was given a half pint of punch and settled down with her pipe and a pennyworth of tobacco. After another half pint she fell off the form she was sitting on. John Knight (the mice biter) was there and



he picked her up and sat her down again. By then her husband, James Shaw, was incapable of doing anything.

After she had fallen off the form a second time and been slightly sick, John Knight volunteered to carry Mrs Shaw piggy-back to her cellar dwelling. When they arrived she fell off his back on to the pavement, banging her head. A neighbour took her into her house and sent for a doctor, but she died later on. Meanwhile, the hopelessly drunk Mr Shaw was also brought home by John Knight, this time in a wheelbarrow. At the inquest, nobody, it seems, knew who had actually given her the drink, least of all the licensee, Bethel Pogson!

The magistrates emphatically refused to renew Mr Pogson's public house licence in 1858, so for a time the New Inn had to manage with a beer-only licence. The next tenant must have run the place in an orderly manner because he managed to persuade the magistrates to restore the full licence in 1860. In the November the pub had a new name - the Devonshire Arms.

Twenty years later the Devonshire was owned by Oldham Brewery and it remained an OB pub until Boddingtons arrived on the scene in 1986. They had some plans drawn up to improve the premises by extending the lounge into a disused kitchen at the rear, but the work was never carried out.

The biggest change came in 1991 when Michael Taylor purchased the Devonshire from BodPubCo and transformed what had been a rather basic, neglected pub. Four years later he sold the Devonshire to John Griffiths, whom I met on an innkeepers' course a few years ago and I realised then that he would aspire to greater things than being barman at the Kings Arms, Grains Bar! He has made more improvements and the Devonshire Arms is now an attractive free house, providing meals and selling real ale.

Roll out the barrel

The World Barrel Rolling Championships will be held on Sunday 22nd September at Burton on Trent, part of the Burton Festival of Beer. Teams of two have to roll empty 36-gallon casks over a three-quarter-mile course and there are prizes for, among others, the fastest pub team, fastest ladies' team and best fancy dress team. So if you didn't make it into the Olympic beach volleyball team, barrel rolling could be the thing for you. Call Kay Fearnley on 01283 563761 for an entry form and full details.

Trams and Beer the Bavarian Way

Beinlos

Much has been written in these pages about the co-operation between Metrolink and CAMRA and the production of 'Trawl' leaflets, so I thought recent events in Munich and Bavaria would be of interest.

Munich's first new tram route for many years, the 17, opened at the end of May. In a little over six months, several kilometres of new track had been laid and roads widened where necessary (Metrolink, please take note). To celebrate the event there was a weekend Tramfest, with parades of vintage trams and a beer festival featuring Munich's favourite beer, Augustiner, at DM5 per litre - half the going rate in the city centre. Munich's most famous band, Helmut Högl, entertained the 25,000 imbibers at the festival.

Several more tram lines are planned in the next few years and all, like the 17, have priority at traffic lights. The tram driver in his cab changes the traffic signals in his favour, thus cutting journey times dramatically. (Another note for Metrolink to heed.) Similar celebrations will mark the opening of these lines, and even the introduction of a new type of bus (articulated, low-floor, etc) on a particular route is used as a good excuse for a beer festival.

The station building at Augsburg celebrated its 150th birthday at the beginning of July and for the whole weekend there was a beer festival together with steam trains and vintage buses and other vehicles in attendance. As Riegel brewery is next to the station, there were no worries about the beer running out!

The introduction of diesel railcars to replace shunter loco-hauled trains on the Dachau-Altomunster line led to a weekend of celebrations with a beerfest at every intermediate station and larger ones at the two end stations. There were steam workings, including through steam trains on the Munich-Dachau main line.

What better way to convert people to public transport! With so much more emphasis being placed on getting car drivers away from their vehicles, there are a few lessons here for the chiefs at the PTE, GM Firstbus, Stagecoach Manchester, Regional Railways, etc, to learn.

Contributors to this issue: Stewart Revell, Pete Cash, Ian Openshaw, Paul Roberts, Peter Wadsworth, Sue Barker, Bernie Jackson, Barbara Lee, Keith Egerton, Leo King, Des Nogalski, Roger Hall, Daddy Bell, Hattie Nightingale.

Rupert

The Independents' Day Mensa Sips Pu (Anag.) was a great success once again. Luckily there were no clues in any of Grotley's Fenian-damaged hostleries. It was particularly pleasing to see previous winners failing miserably. Royal Hall and his in-vitro love child Luke, masquerading as Lord Snooty's pals, were baffled by the whole event, whilst the doubly-wed Nightingales were similarly nonplussed. The family Cosh, led by stalwart Billy, came nowhere and were seen skulking around taverns which did not feature in the scheme of things. Few teams, however, performed as poorly as Snobley & Snoot Magna's megacerebral stentor and monkeyhanger combination of Rumpledshirtscream and Starsky. They swallowed the uncooked scarlet kippers hook, line and sinker and visited every single Crow & Wanker in Grotley in a futile search for the holy grail.

During the meanderings of Independents' Day, we visited the Lunar Sea to look for a pin in what amounted to a very large haystack. I was reminded of the truth of the conventional wisdom that the MMC Report has done wonders for the industry. Would biggies like Dillons have thought of turning a

picturedrome into a thriving tavern? Like as if! All they could do at their most entrepreneurial was knock walls down in existing hostleries and hang harrows from the roof. Pretty pathetic really. And what about our stalwart, salt of the earth, stick in the mud, fuddy duddy local alemakers, then? Drabs, Sikhs and Boringsods are about as bold as a fart at a funeral. About the bravest thing they've ever done is nail formica on to a mahogany bar or paint oak panelling green. They've never themed a pub in their lives.

No, the cutting edge of tavern design is with the independent pub chains. They alone have transformed the industry, shaken it from its somnolent complacency into a new-found dynamism that the tied house could never hope to emulate. The very fact that they are valued vastly in excess of their asset base or standard earnings multiples is a sure indication of their success. This is no South Sea Bubble waiting to burst, but a sign of real value added, what used to be called goodwill. Their injection of intellectual capital is commendable. I look forward to Perry Drab following suit so that we'll all be able to sup his much sought after amber nectar in the ambience of a converted synagogue or cattle abattoir for 79p a pint.

Pubs near Zimmer Parks

CAMRA Books has decided not to go ahead with the book about Pubs Near Football Grounds because they don't want their good name to be associated with hooliganism. So they're going to do a cricket book instead. Still a bit risky, though. Why not a book on pubs near Trappist monasteries, embroidery boutiques or croquet lawns?

Branch Diary

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tues 6 Aug 8.30, Branch Meeting, Flying Horse, Town Hall Square, Rochdale

Sat 10 Aug: Coach Trip - Classic Pubs of Lancashire. Limited availability - Branch Contact can advise

Tues 20 Aug 8.30, Committee Meeting, Red Lion, Halifax Road, Littleborough

Sat 24 Aug 12 noon, Bury Beer Festival Organising Meeting, Tap & Spile, Bury Centre

Tues 27 Aug 8.30pm, What's Doing collation, Flying Horse, Town Hall Square, Rochdale

Tues 3 Sept 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Swan, Dobcross

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

Trafford & Hulme

Thurs 1 Aug 8pm, Railway, Flixton, followed by Church, Flixton; Windmill, Carrington, and Railway, Broadheath

Thurs 8 Aug 8pm, Queens Arms, Red Bank, Manchester, followed by Marble Arch, Harp & Shamrock (if open), Beer House and Hare & Hounds, Shudehill.

Thurs 15 Aug 8pm, Bird in Hand, Mobberley, followed by Roebuck, Bulls Head and Church. Possibly Railway and Chapel House if time permits.

Thurs 29 Aug 8pm, Hope, St Georges, followed by White Lion, Liverpool Road, and Crown, Deansgate.

Thurs 5 Sept 8pm, Pack Horse, Deansgate, followed by City Road Inn, Britons Protection, Peveril, Vine and City Arms.

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

North Manchester

Wed Aug 4, City Centre Crawl. Bulls Head, London Road, 7pm; Wetherspools, Piccadilly, 8pm; Crown, Blackfriars Street, 9.30pm. Finish at Crown & Anchor, Cateaton Street

Wed 14 Aug 8pm, Committee/Social: Marble Arch, Rochdale Road, Manchester. Quiz Evening (Pubs)

Wed 21 Aug 8pm, Branch Meeting, Queens Arms, Green Lane, Patricroft

Tues 27 Aug: What's Doing collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham. 6pm onwards

Wed 28 Aug, Brunswick/Charlestown Crawl. Old House at Home, Whit Lane, 7pm; Railway, Broughton Road, 8.30; Priory, Gardner Street 9.30.

Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

Bolton

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

Batemans Mild & XXXB - Mitchells

Bitter - Old Peculier - Taylors Best

Bitter & Landlord - weekly guest beers



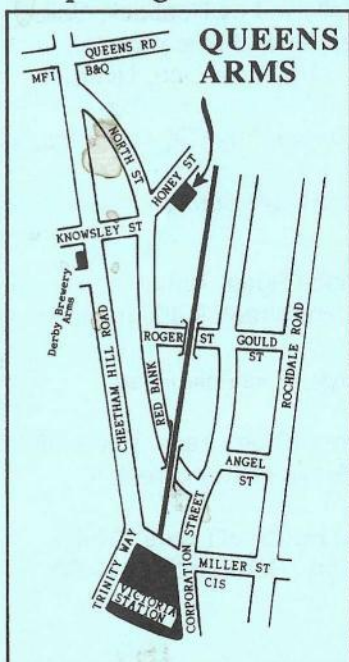
Bitter from 95p a pint

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**