

25p

What's Doing

NOVEMBER 1996



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

DOWN ON THE FARM



After a period of closure, the Farmyard (ex-Whitbread) on Rochdale Road, Blackley, has reopened. Now the New Farmyard, it has been decorated outside and in. No major changes have taken place, apart from on the beer front. The Holts has gone and in its place are Boddies, Stones and Wilsons bitter, all at a pound a pint. The surroundings are pleasant and the place now appears reasonably busy. These are good signs, as what the Farmyard really needs is a period of stability to re-establish itself.

By the way, does anyone know of another pub with a baby grand piano?

1975

BIRTHDAY
21st
SPECIAL

1996

Marble Arch Micro

Work on the installation of a micro-brewery at the Marble Arch, Rochdale Road, is expected to begin in the New Year. It is expected that the brewery will also supply the Bar/Bar 2 and Marble Arch World Beers, both in Chorlton.

The brewing plant will occupy half of the back room, which will be divided by a viewing panel. The remaining drinking area will be enlarged by taking out the back bar and replacing it by a hatch.



Since taking over seven months ago, licensee and former chef Mark Dade has raised the profile of the Marble Arch enormously. Beer quality is tip-top, the pub is busier and the regular curry and Chinese food evenings are proving increasingly popular. The addition of a micro-brewery can only enhance the pub's growing reputation.

Wetherspoons turned down again

Bolton council has refused planning permission for J D Wetherspoon's proposed outlet in Nelson Square on the grounds that the area is over-pubbed. Some local authorities have yet to cotton on to the fact that Wetherspoon pubs - no music, no pool tables, no kids - are a much safer bet than some of the places they license.

The company's application to open in Middleton has been turned down again. Seemingly the council there is saving the premises in case a large store such as Marks & Spencer's shows an interest. The fact is that two superstores moved out of Middleton's Arndale Centre several years ago and the chances of any chain store moving into a dilapidated building away from the main shopping centre are as likely as Rochdale celebrating a League and Cup double! Wetherspoons had planned to restore the building to its former glory, but it is rumoured that a local brewery was not too keen on a big new J D W pub in the town centre.

Planning News

Café bars are still flavour of the month in Manchester. Planet have applied to open one at 15 Whitworth Street West; Bruntwood Estates want to open another in Central Buildings, Peter Street, and J Rose Ltd have similar designs on 16 Chorlton Street.

Yates's want to refurbish the Merchants on Oldham Street and Greenalls want to knock the Churchill (right) on Chorlton Street about a bit. The latter is of some concern as it's a large building and Greenalls aren't famous for their sympathetic treatment of such.



Back on Whitworth Street, there's an application to turn the basement and ground floor of Number 11 into a pub. Makes a change from café bars.

Over in Crumpsall, things ain't so good. The Belmont Tavern looks set to become a school.

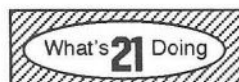
Bury Beer Festival

It's the last call for interested parties who want to assist/influence the organisation of the Bury Beer Festival! The final meeting will be on Saturday 9th November, a week before the Festival, from midday at the Tap & Spile, Bury. Offers of help to Sue/Alan on 01204 574790, who will also provide further details.

Wacky for Worsley

Tetley (or is it Allied Domecq?) are to convert the Red Lion, Newearth Road, Ellenbrook, into one of their themed Wacky Warehouses, complete with a 'playbarn' inside.

The Red Lion was at one time a traditional local in a country setting, but over the years Tetley have steadily ripped it apart. This latest scheme may prove a grotesque finale.



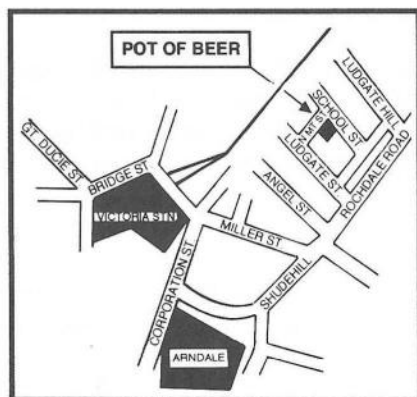
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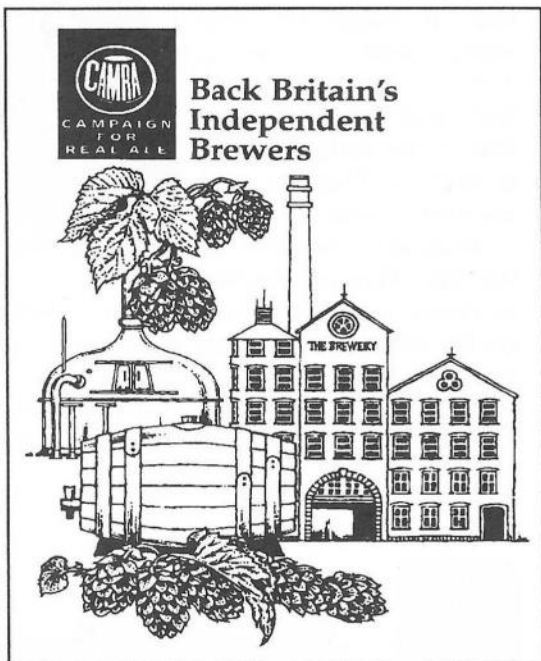
The Independents

A new CAMRA publication lists all Britain's independent brewers - now over four hundred of them, brewing over 2,000 real ales. Independent brewers are strong supporters of cask beer and usually over three quarters of their production is real ale.

The new, small brewers revived porters and stouts, invented summer beers and tried out brewing with weird and wonderful ingredients. Larger companies may copy the ideas, but it is the diversity at the other end of the market which really drives the cask beer world.

Not only do independent brewers promote choice, but they also provide excellent value for money. The latest CAMRA Prices Survey shows that prices in independent tied houses are significantly lower than in their national counterparts.

The independent brewers in the Greater Manchester section of the list are:



Bank Top Brewery, Unit 1, Back Lane, off Vernon Street, Bolton

Richard Cobden's Brewery, Wellington Street, Stockport

Joseph Holt plc, Derby Brewery, Empire Street, Cheetham

Hydes Anvil Brewery Ltd, 46 Moss Lane West, Manchester

J W Lees & Co. Ltd, Greengate Brewery, Middleton Junction

Thomas McGuinness Brewing Company, Cask & Feather, 1 Oldham Road, Rochdale

Millgate Brewery, The Millgate, Ashton Road West, Failsworth

Phoenix Brewery Ltd, Green Lane, Heywood

Frederic Robinson Ltd, Unicorn Brewery, Lower Hillgate, Stockport

If you know of any more, let us know.



Slightly Foxed

Roger Hall

Twenty-one years is a long time to have been pub crawling around Manchester and Salford. There's an inevitable temptation to look back with nostalgia at what there was in 1975, compare it with today and find that today's pubs don't come up to scratch - a sort of Ovaltine and slippers view through rose-coloured bifocals at the past. Recognising this



Clowes, Salford

tendency, I still want to say that we've lost something, that our pubs are, on the whole, less inviting, less exciting, more threatening and less fun than they were. I may be older and more dog-eared, but so are the pubs - and how. It's this that's driving young people into café bars and clubs. The pub, unless it gets its act together, may well have had its day.

Back in 1975 the whole of Manchester and Salford was densely packed with pubs of all shapes and sizes - back street boozers, gin palaces,



Half Moon, Miles Platting

friendly locals, city slicker joints. Of course there were some dodgy places. You could get a high walking past the Apollo or the Robin Hood and you weren't guaranteed a smiling welcome in the Grants Arms or the White Hart (aka The Alsatian & Pickaxe Handle). Some pubs were certainly menacing and some were pretty filthy. The Half Moon in Miles Platting had accumulated grime under the settles and pre-war bluebottles trapped on



Red Cow, Salford

spiralling flypaper hanging from the ceiling. In general, however, pubs were friendly and reasonably comfortable. Pub crawls were interesting as they provided variety not only of beers but also of pub styles and atmospheres.

There are now entire tracts of our two cities where this is no longer the case. I'm not talking here about Eccles or Didsbury, but about vast areas of the inner city and to some extent outlying council estates like Little Hulton and Wythenshawe. Most of our inner city areas have lost population over the years and the population remaining is different. Economic pressures have resulted in pub closures and so has crime - robbery, arson, vandalism, protection rackets. There are two pubs left in Ordsall and only a handful in previously densely pubbed areas like

Pendleton, Miles Platting, Broughton and Cheetham Hill.



Wellington, Regent Road

The pubs remaining seem to have the kiss of death upon them and it is difficult to be confident about their continued survival. Investment is minimal and they are almost without

exception run down and depressing. In parts of the inner city there are no oases among a declining number of declining pubs. Pub crawls are a duty rather than a pleasure in many of these no-hope areas. A pleasant pub like the Welcome or the Queens Arms is indeed a rarity. Most of the others are shunned by strangers and locals alike.



Papermakers Arms, Salford

In the leafier suburbs pubs are thriving and even increasing in numbers. In City Centre Manchester, café bars open by the week. Yet the inner city pub seems doomed. There can be little pleasure in visiting badly run, poorly maintained establishments frequented only by social derelicts and petty criminals, so most people don't. It is sad that these pubs, whose origins largely lie in the beerhouses of the industrial revolution, should disappear, but disappear they surely will. Should What's Doing survive to its 42nd birthday and should I be around to celebrate it, I doubt whether there will be sufficient pubs left in that circle from Chorlton-on-Medlock through Ancoats, Cheetham Hill and Ordsall to Hulme for a pub crawl to take place. Unless, of course, we've built a working class heritage park. Now that's real nostalgia.



The Way Forward

J Whitehead & S Davies

CAMRA was formed in 1971 with the aim of promoting 'beer brewed in the traditional style, from traditional ingredients, by traditional processes and served in traditional ways.' Whilst we celebrate and support this statement, we also feel that there are problems inherent in any organisation that does not move forward - thus we offer our opinions on a possible source of debate within CAMRA.

In the seventies and early eighties the movement had a strong, youthful, fun-loving membership, but in recent years the membership has been described by some as 'beer anoraks'. Why is this? Perhaps the answer lies in the disinterest of some members whenever change is suggested.

The organisation is considered by many outsiders as having its head up its arse when it comes to the real world. For example, it fights to keep open pubs that were last regularly used during the 1950s, whilst ignoring the opening of café bars, jazz clubs and other late-night drinking venues.

In the North Manchester Branch of CAMRA, we have listened to views such as, 'You can't have a successful new-built pub' and 'I avoid them café bars', and we can only presume that those outside the organisation have a point. It does not seem to us that tradition is an objective fact. We are quite happy to note the removal of the particular tradition that kept women out of pubs, but we accept that some people will always regret its loss.

It would seem that young people enjoy drinking in the contemporary surroundings of 'trendy bars' and that their product choice is often restricted to the over-priced 'premium' bottled beers. There is no reason why CAMRA should not fight to get real ale or traditionally brewed foreign beer on sale in such places. We believe that the public interest is there and that contemporary surroundings, young people and decent beer can exist under one roof. We also believe that CAMRA's long-term youth membership can only benefit from such a campaign.

If CAMRA continues to ignore potential membership from the young, it risks not only becoming an insignificant, powerless group which the big brewers will ignore, but - at worst - extinction. Think about how things have changed over the past 25 years and about what the future holds in store. Ill-positioned, ill-used, run-down traditional pubs on the one hand, trendy bars full of young people drinking alco-pops on the other, or a beneficial mix of both serving real ale to a mixed-age population?



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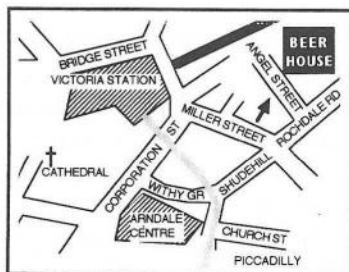
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NOW TAKING CHRISTMAS
BOOKINGS FOR FREE PARTY ROOM**

Wigan and District

Dave White

After years of neglect and more relief managers than you can count, the BOWLING GREEN on Wigan Lane, Swinley, reopened in mid-August. Under the stewardship of Chris and June Docherty (ex-Stanley's, Beer Engine, etc.) and with few internal alterations, the Green offers a range of beers largely from the Scottish Courage range, though, unusually for a national conglomerate, most of the ales aren't available in the nearby town centre. An independent guest beer is often on sale (Bushy's was on, not long ago), and the pub has recaptured its former glory in a very short space of time.

Foxburgh Hotels, the chain that now owns the Bowling Green, have also purchased the COMMERCIAL HOTEL, another Tetley Walker pub on Cale Lane, New Springs. Alas, all the beers are of the keg/nitrokeg variety, and the village has lost its 100% record for cask ale.

Thwaites have been buying pubs from Tetley Walker as well. The Blackburn beers are now to be had at the VICTORIA, Haigh Lane, Haigh; the WATERWHEEL, Warrington Lane, Scholes, and the WHITE LION, Church Street, Upholland. Ironically, the last named inn had made it into the 1997 Good Beer Guide on the strength of its guest beers; one hopes that Thwaites leave things pretty much as they are.

A new Whitbread pub has opened by the A49/M6 roundabout at Goose Green. The WHEATLEA PARK adjoins the Travel Inn motel, and whilst the numbered tables remind you of the emphasis on food, the pub does at least have a No Smoking area (in Wigan, by golly!). A guest ale competes with the Boddingtons and Flowers range, though it tends to be on the lines of Taylors Landlord and Waddies 6X. A pint of Castle Eden will set you back £1.60.

Another new pub is being built in the Robin Park area of Newtown. In fact, they all seem to be beating Wetherspoons to it! Further to the August WD report which predicted an opening date of September 12th, the workmen were still beavering away one calendar month later. Wigan being the fiefdom of a certain Camra NE member, the JDW price list is sure to be the most talked-about in town... if the place ever opens, that is.

The OLD PEAR TREE, Frog Lane, Wigan, is about to change hands as Frank and Jean Fielding retire from the business after nearly thirty years there. The Burtonwood pub, which has appeared in all but four national Good Beer Guides (including the new





one) will be taken over in early November by Ray and Karen Ratcliffe, who also run the ALEXANDRA HOTEL, a free house on Swan Lane, Hindley Green.

News in brief, and mainly concerning Vaux. Samson has been dropped from the BIRD I'TH'HAND, Wigan Road, Hindley, leaving the pub with a boring range of keg Matthew Brown beers... the ROCK FERRY, Warrington Road, Lower Ince, no longer sells real mild, though cask Samson is still available... nearby on Ince Green Lane, the MANLEY HOTEL is up for sale... back in Tetley land, the BROCKET ARMS, Mesnes Road, Swinley, is another pub to lose cask mild, but has reintroduced a guest ale - Marstons Pedigree on a recent visit - to vie with Tetley bitter and something called 'Brocket Bitter'. These marketing men can charm the birds off the trees.

Park, Swinton

Lisa and Graham Hattersley took over at Holts' Park Inn on Worsley Road, Swinton, in September. They have come from the Greenwood Tree in Wythenshawe and before that they had the Bulls Head on Chorley Road in Swinton, both Tetley houses.

The Park had been managed by Derek and Geraldine Makinson, who are now at the Old Cross in Radcliffe.

Eccles Unchanged?

D Busman

Twenty-five years ago a walk from Peel Green to Eccles town centre along the A57 would have been a stroll along a busy suburban street typical of many throughout the North of England. It was a nearly-continuous development of shops, small businesses, houses, cafes, the odd cinema, off-licences and, of course, pubs. Hardly a property looked down-at-heel, most businesses traded well and many were indeed prosperous. Some shops were indicative of the reasonable prosperity in the area, selling quality furniture, specialist cameras and electrical goods.

Today the scene is less comforting. Some shops are boarded-up, some businesses are obviously barely viable and the odd building has been removed altogether, leaving sorry rubble-and-weed strewn gaps in previously unbroken terraces - testimony to what one politician described as 'a leaner, fitter, more exciting Britain'. All the pubs, surprisingly, remain.

Eccles, it seems, has a place in the hearts of CAMRA members. The proliferation of Holts pubs and the town's mixture of old street-corner locals and large, early-Edwardian emporia are perhaps the main attractions. Eccles' stock of pubs may well have escaped the ravages of the sixties because of a scheme, never realised, to make the A57 a dual carriageway. Hence few pubs on this corridor were rebuilt or seriously messed about. Note that the Ellesmere (opened in 1966) is set well back from the road line. Further, Eccles has lost no pubs in the last 25 years. It has gained three. Similar areas in the North have seen their stock of

pubs reduced dramatically. Their pub trade followed the path of their other businesses. Look at what has happened in parts of Salford and Manchester, where boarded-up and burnt-out pubs can often be seen.

Why is Eccles different?
Certainly the area's



income must have dropped with the closure, or significant contraction of, local firms and those in Trafford Park. The shops and other small businesses have felt the chill.

In the mid-1970s Neil Richardson published 'The Pubs Of Eccles', which frequently made

reference to how busy, even crowded the town's pubs were. This may be one clue to the survival of Eccles' pubs. Was the area under-pubbed in the seventies? I feel it might have been. My personal impression at the time was that the town could readily have supported a further half a dozen or more and they all would have made a good living.

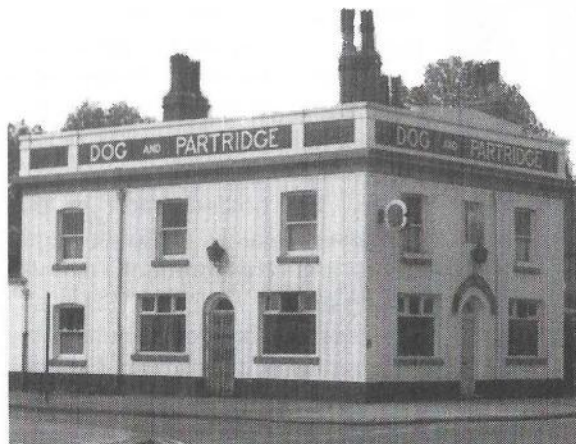
The town definitely had a healthy pub culture. With a few exceptions, the hostelries appealed to a wide range of people of all age groups and both



sexes. Many pubs had a pianist (pianos seemed far less intrusive than organs) and some still do. Several pubs may have been boisterous, but few were threatening or intimidating. The presence of a goodly number of Holts houses helped hold down the price of beer in all establishments, not just their own. Very few pubs had been converted to the desolate workingmen's-club design favoured by pub architects in the sixties and seventies. Surely taken together these factors slowed the move to buying tinned beer and drinking it at home in front of the telly.



In a period which saw, in other areas, a general decline in pub patronage, draught beer in Eccles improved. I recall visiting the pubs on Liverpool Road in 1972. In many of the smaller Holts houses the ale was foul (people still drank it - or bought bottles). The licensees probably took hogsheads and no care. A noticeable improvement took place in the late 1970s when a new couple came to the Stanley Arms. They organised their cellar, organised their deliveries and improved the beer dramatically. Other pubs soon followed this example. Frequently, liquid improvements were accompanied by sensible tidying of premises and simple redecorating to relieve the symphony in brown of many a snug. There may have been the odd excessive venture into 'Brewer's Tudor' and 'Landlady's Torremolinos', but the improvements were well received.



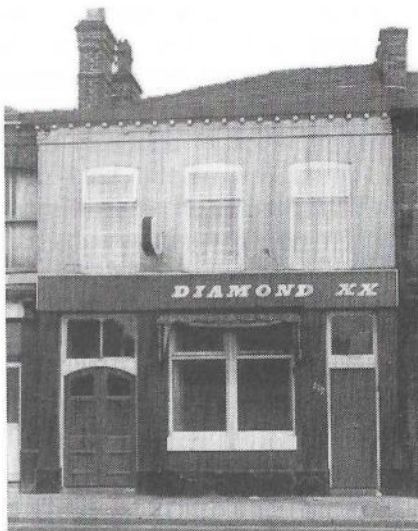
Tied off-licences were a feature of the Eccles area, offering the brewer's full range of bottled beers (more of this anon) and in some cases draught. Hydes,



who had no pubs in the borough, had an off-licence in Peel Green that sold draught beer. Few tied off-licences now remain.

So if Eccles' pubs have remained, what has changed? Amongst the breweries, Wilsons are probably the most obvious casualty. Their familiar chequerboard sign could be seen on many houses in the area. Two, the Diamond XX and the Black Boy, were quite close together on Liverpool Road. They and Boddingtons' Ellesmere provided a little variety for those foolhardy enough to try every pub on the A57. Wolverhampton & Dudley, in the

form of Banks's, now own the Black Boy which, before they enlarged it, was probably the smallest pub in the borough.



Eccles in the early seventies had no free houses. Now there are several. One, the Drop Inn on Monton Road, arrived, as it were, by stealth. The

property was a cafe, gained a table licence and progressed to a full on-licence. It is now very much a pub with no hint of its past. The arrival of the free house extended the range of beers in the town considerably. Only Holts, who have the largest tied estate in the borough, have held out against 'guest-beer' legislation, whereas Whitbread in their Duke of York seem to have taken to it in a big way.



Today, the bottled trade in pubs comprises mainly designer lagers, ciders and other products aimed at 'young adults'. Until the 1980s all of Manchester's breweries bottled their own products (and often Guinness as well), for they had a ready market in their pubs and off-

licences. Many of their bottling plants became life-expired at about this time and almost overnight extensive ranges of bottled beers vanished. Those breweries that have retained their own bottled beer offer fewer beers and I suspect many are bottled by contractors. Bottled beer was popular in the area. In some lounges and lobbies more bottled beer was consumed than draught. Even pint drinkers would split their possibly indifferent draught mild or bitter with a bottle.

Eccles has changed as much as, if not more than, similar towns in urban areas, but its pubs have seen less change than those in other towns. Whether this is due to the nature and ownership of the pubs, a stronger sense of community, or some other factor yet to be identified, I do not know. To make predictions is to give hostages to fortune. The town's pubs have survived better than most. As a sweeping generalisation, they have changed slowly, subtly and generally sensibly. I do not know what the next year, never mind the next twenty-five years, may bring. (Though one rumour has it that J D Wetherspoons are looking to open a mega-pub in the town. This might be a good sign or it could be a disaster.)

Go to Eccles, gain your own impressions and form your own opinions. Do it soon. Its pubs might evolve in the next quarter of a century, or may be changed beyond recognition.

Bulls Head

The refurbishment of the Bulls Head on London Road (WD July) has been completed and the pub now has a 'mock-Victorian' theme. There are bare boards, stained wood, and dado rails worked around the original windows and ceiling cornices. Twee sayings adorn the washed walls, part of which have been given a mock 'Lincrusta' wallpaper effect, albeit painted green.

The single room has a number of raised areas with some button-backed seating and fixed tables. The beers are the full Burtonwood range, excluding the mild (unfortunately), at average prices for the city.

GBG

The 1997 Good Beer Guide was officially launched on 17th October, although copies were seen on sale in September. If it can be produced four weeks early, we see no reason why we shouldn't delay our surveys and selection so the entries are more up to date.



Sorry . . .

Due to the uncertainty of the opening date of our new venture, Stalybridge Buffet Bar, (sometime in November is our hope, Railtrack permitting!), we're postponing the Porter's Festival until late January.

However this will now be . . .

The **2**
STATION
Festival

STARTING THURSDAY, JAN 30TH
UNTIL SUNDAY EVENING

There will be a selection of 50 plus beers, split between the two venues. The usual selection of food and festival glasses and T-shirts will be available.

Hope to see you there and there!

**THE STATION • WARRINGTON STREET
ASHTON-U-LYNE**

Prices Then and Now

Mark McConachie

CAMRA's annual prices survey has consistently shown that year after year the North West is one of the cheapest places to drink in the UK. Central Manchester and Salford have been cheaper still, no doubt benefitting from a number of local independent brewers with their, then, low overheads and no-nonsense tied estates.

The average price for a standard pint of bitter is now £1.30. What were the prices (and the beers) like twenty-

one years ago? Delving into the WD archives, I found a reference to an early BeerEx being held at Farmer Norton's canteen on Adelphi Street, Salford, in 1976. Eleven beers were promised, for 20p a pint.

The first breakdown of prices is in an article in the September '77 issue. 'The Price of a Pint' lists Holts and Boddingtons as the cheapest, at 24p or 25p, with Tetley and Wilsons running around 28p a pint. Robinsons, too, was 28p, but considering its greater strength it did offer better value. Eighteen months later we find that Wilsons Great Northern Mild and Bitter were 34p. In mid-1980 a survey of forty pubs in the Trafford area had Boddies at 37p, Lees 38p, Holts, Hydes and Wilsons 40p. Most others were 2p to 3p above that. (The 40p figure for Holts was for tenancies; the managed house price was 34p.)

Yates will soon be opening a new pub on Portland Street, Manchester. In early '83 their Merchants on Oldham Street (yes, it did sell real ale once) was doing Sam Smiths for 54p, Boddies 60p and Matties, Burtonwood and Thwaites at 62p. In less than six years there was a general price rise of more than 100%.

Draught Bass prices varied widely in mid-'84 - at the George in Stockport it was a whopping 80p!



ROOM PRICES

DRAUGHT BEERS

	Per Half-Pint 10½d.
Mild	11d.
Chester's Best Mild	1/0
Bitter	1/1
Keg Bitter	1/0½
Shandy—Mild	1/1½
" Bitter	1/1½
Bass	1/1½
Guinness	1/3½

BOTTLED BEERS

'Blue Label' Pale Ale	1/4
Brown Ale	1/1½
Dicky Sam Stout	1/5
XXXX Strong Ale	1/6
Guinness	1/8
Mackeson	1/8½
Bass (Blue) & Worthington (Green)	1/7½
Heineken Lager	1/11½
Harp Lager	1/11
Cider	1/1
Chesters E.B.M.	1/4½

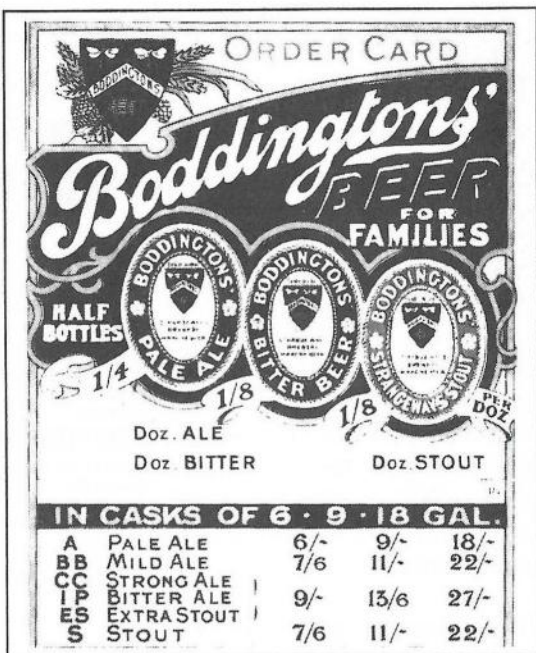
Threlfalls (Salford) price list from about 1970



What's **21** Doing

Meanwhile, in Central Manchester, the Unicorn was charging only (?) 67p. Holts was 55p at the time.

Ten years ago saw the launch of a new premium beer from Websters - Choice. Today that beer has gone and soon, too, will go the brewery in Halifax. The full Websters range was on sale in the Ducie Bridge at the time: Choice at 78p, bitter 70p and Green Label a modest 69p. The last named beer still offers good value today, as it can be found for 99p or less in many Magic PubCo pubs.



ORDER CARD

Boddingtons BEER FOR FAMILIES

HALF BOTTLES

1/4 1/8 1/8

Doz. ALE
Doz. BITTER
Doz. STOUT

IN CASKS OF 6 · 9 · 18 GAL.

A	PALE ALE	6/-	9/-	18/-
BB	MILD ALE	7/6	11/-	22/-
CC	STRONG ALE			
IP	BITTER ALE	9/-	13/6	27/-
ES	EXTRA STOUT			
S	STOUT	7/6	11/-	22/-

100 years ago - when you could get Boddies for a shilling a gallon!

Two years later, in 1988, 'City Desk' reporter Peter O'Grady told us that two Tetley pubs had widely differing prices for their bitter. The Bank on Mosley Street was selling keg Tetley for 90p, whilst the nearby City Arms sold the real stuff at a more palatable 78p. Not much changes, then, for now the City is a well-run and well-thought-of pub selling a wide range of beers, whilst the Bank toyed with cask beer for a while but has reverted to keg, albeit Calders nitrokeg.

Whitbread were in the news in July 1990 - they had taken over Boddies brewery and then rammed up the prices. Bitter was typically £1 a pint, whereas two years earlier it had been 75p or 80p - quite an increase when compared to the 9p rise for Holts over the same period (67p to 76p).

A pub often in the news (perhaps unfairly) for its high prices was the Britons Protection. This was the case in mid '92 when the guest ale was £1.40 and Burton Ale £1.55. What irked the author even more was that they were 75p and 85p a half respectively.

November '93 saw the accolade for 'cheapest beer in Manchester' go to the Museum in Moston. Wilsons was 90p and J W Lees 93p. The

Museum is still cheap today, and together with the nearby Golden Tavern (Wilsons), sells those same two beers for around £1 a pint.

In November '95 the price of a pint of Holts bitter finally reached £1 in their managed estate. Another local brewer offering beer at keen prices was Dave Porter. He had just opened his second pub, the Albion, and was selling his own Porter beers from 95p.

Bringing us up-to-date, a recent survey found the average prices in the City were £1.22 for mild, £1.30 for bitter and £1.52 for premium bitter. A more than five-fold increase in twenty-one years. Prices will continue to rise (look out for the November increase in Holts), but it's not all bad news. With the likes of Magic, Wetherspoons and some enterprising free houses you can still get beer at £1 or less. The range of beer and styles of beer have increased enormously over the same period, so despite the loss of many memorable pubs and local beers, the future looks good. Let us hope that in another twenty-one years' time the drinkers then will have the same choice and variety of ales that we enjoy today, no matter what the price!

Happy drinking.

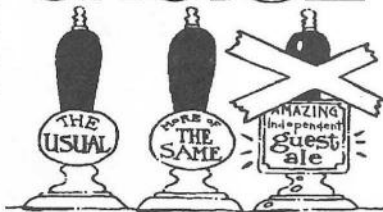
Europe and the Guest Beer

A few months ago the European Commission ruled that Britain's guest beer law was wrong because it discriminates in favour of British beers. The Consumer Affairs Minister rejected the ruling and there has since been a meeting between the Government, the European Commission and the European brewers' trade association (the CBMC).

The EC now seem to accept that an anything-goes policy on guest beers will not work, having realised that pubs would be swamped by national brands of keg beer. The CBMC agree - their European beers wouldn't stand much of a chance against mass-marketed Brit-keg.

In spite of the findings, the EC won't leave things alone and further research is being done. More on this subject when we have it!

BRUSSELS THREATENS REAL ALE CHOICE



Closed and Boarded Corner

A number of developments are expected at some of the long-closed Salford pubs. The Keystone at Pendleton Precinct is to be demolished (finally) to make way for more shop units. Over on Liverpool Street, the Druids (ex-Lees) should re-emerge as an office if plans are given the go-ahead.

Now that the tram link to Salford Quays and Eccles has been approved, the Swan (Vaux) on Eccles New Road, Weaste, is empty and awaits demolition. There have already been two fires in the building and the ground floor windows have been bricked up.

Nearby, Greenalls' Grey Mare is boarded up, following the brutal slaying of a pub regular.

In Harpurhey, the New Derby was boarded up in late September. The reason behind this is unknown - the pub, a free house, seemed to be trading well.

A number of developments have taken place in the Ancoats and Miles Platting area of late. The closed Falcon (ex-Bass) on Merrill Street has been demolished and the land acquired by the city council. The fire-damaged Magpie on Bradford Road is to reopen as a themed Irish pub. After a series of fires at the empty Cob o'Coal (Whitbread, below) on Cardroom Road, complete demolition is the most likely option for the building.

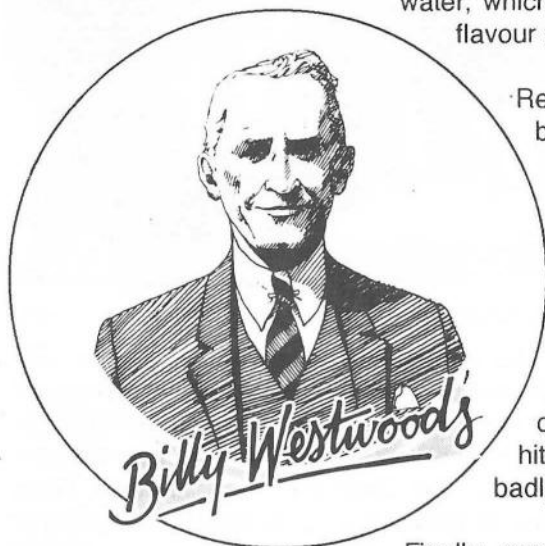


Anvil Tales

Keith Egerton

Hydes have been tinkering with their recipe for their mild. They are now using chocolate malt instead of caramel for colour and flavouring and this has resulted in the beer becoming darker and slightly less sweet. Customers seem to like the idea, as sales are said to have increased by nearly 50%.

The brewery have also now switched from mains water to their own well water, which again will slightly alter the flavour of all their beers.



Remember Billy Westwood's bitter, the session beer which was very well received by customers? This is due to reappear in November (the expected price is £1.15) and it may be a permanent addition to the Hydes range. It is hoped that the availability of Billy Westwood's will not hit the sales of mild quite as badly as it did last time.

Finally, consideration is being given to 4X Anvil Strong, which was relaunched last winter. A final decision has not yet been made, but the beer may again be available this winter, possibly in the New Year.

Guest beers

Two pubs on the Trafford/Cheshire border have withdrawn their guest beers: the Rope & Anchor in Dunham (Boddingtons) and the Green Dragon, Heatley (Draught Bass and Worthington BB). The Tatton in Altrincham has also ended its flirtation with a guest beer.

Two Greenalls pubs, the Greyhound at Ashley and the Farmers Arms at Rushgreen, Lymm, sell a guest beer at a minimum price of £1.68!

Bonapartes on Piccadilly Station is selling a guest beer alongside the Draught Bass and John Smiths bitter. Wadworth 6X and Castle Eden have been seen on the bar recently.



What's **21** Doing

Hulme Pubs

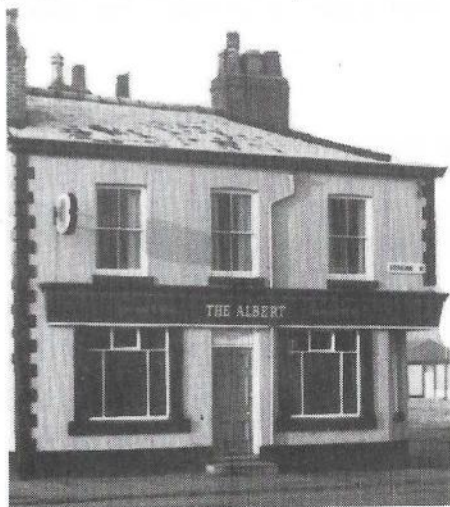
Bob Potts



The Lord Clyde, Chester Road, and St George's Church in 1983

Thirty years ago most of Hulme was swept away and rebuilt with concrete, an event which was much praised by the media at the time, but not by yours truly. During the last two years the concrete buildings have been pulled down and another new Hulme is currently being constructed with bricks. That super-highway, the Stretford Road, is also being reinstated. As a consequence of these drastic upheavals, the pubs in Hulme have, by and large, fared pretty badly. Since my books on the old pubs of Hulme were published in 1983, the following have been

demolished: Albert Inn (left, demolished 1985), Lord Napier (1986), Lord Clyde (1990), Crown, Jackson Crescent (1991); Eagle (1994), White Horse (1995), Cornbrook Inn (1996).



On 31st August this year I biked around Hulme to check on the licensed houses and I saw that a number were boarded up. Some will tough it out until better days, but I fear that others are in terminal decline. Boarded up were the Spinners, Red Admiral,

The old pubs of Hulme in 1983

Albert Inn, Erskine Street
Bulls Head, Chester Road
Cornbrook Inn, Chester Road
Crown, Great Jackson Street
Crown, Renshaw Street
Grants Arms, Great Jackson Street
Hope Inn, Chester Road
Junction, Warde Street
Lord Clyde, Chester Road
Lord Napier, Great Jackson Street
Platform Hotel, Stretford Road
Pomona Palace, Cornbrook Road
Railway Hotel, Cornbrook Road
Talbot, Stretford Road
Three Legs of Man, Stretford Road
Turville, Chester Road

The new pubs of Hulme in 1983

Boatmans Home, City Road (opened 1973)
Eagle, William Kent Crescent (1972)
Falstaff, Jenner Close (1970)
Gamecock, Boundary Lane (1974)
Grey Parrot, Jackson Crescent (1969)
Iron Duke, Hulme Walk (1974)
Mancunian, City Road (1969)
Manchester Regiment, Hulme Hall Rd (1969)
Red Admiral, Hulme Walk (1973)
Sir Henry Royce, Chichester Rd (1973)
Star, Bentinck Street (1975)
Spinners, Rolls Crescent (1975)
Unicorn, Shaw Heath Close (1968)
White Horse, Hulme Walk (1970)

Grey Parrot, Talbot and the Falstaff, which was shuttered with metal screens. There was more bad news: the Bulls Head on Chester Road closed down three years ago.

The Iron Duke in Hulme Walk looked dead because the signs were down and the doors were locked. The Railway Hotel in Cornbrook Road and the Crown in Epping Walk (formerly Renshaw Street) were not open, but strong rumour has it that this is only a temporary state. In 1983 I forecast that the Crown (left) would outlast the sixties box-like buildings next to it, and I have been



proved correct. This Victorian pub was once the brewery tap for Hardy's Crown Brewery, which was demolished in 1965.

The last breweries in Hulme, Cornbrook Brewery on Ellesmere Street and Swales Naval Brewery, closed down in the 1970s. Bass now have a

modern administrative unit in Ellesmere Street. Only recently I discovered that the offices of the long-extinct Cox's Chester Road Brewery are still there on the corner of Cranberry Street.

The surviving Hulme pubs are as follows: the Platford, Three Legs of Man, Unicorn, Sir Henry Royce, Grants Arms, Gamecock, Mancunian, Boatmans Home, Pomona Palace, Turville, Hope Inn, Manchester Regiment, Star and Junction Hotel.

The Junction has been owned by Hydes Brewery since 1916 and it is now the oldest public house in Hulme. On a personal note, for a few weeks in 1994 my niece was a barmaid/manager at the Star on Bentinck Street. She left to become the licensee (for eighteen months) of the Pack Horse on Deansgate in Manchester. She was then nineteen years of age and Greenalls' youngest tenant.

Holts in Dukinfield

The Chapel House on Astley Street, Dukinfield (one of the ten Greenalls pubs purchased by Holts earlier this year), is now a free house selling Holts beers. The pub has been bought by Sheila and Barrie Furbank, the licensees for the past two-and-a-half years. Mild is 99p, bitter £1.05.

From a pub considerably older,



Congratulations!

The Castle Hotel
66 Oldham Street
Manchester

0161 236 2945

*Now selling all of Robinsons cask ales
- including Dark Mild*

ROB went to Wigan

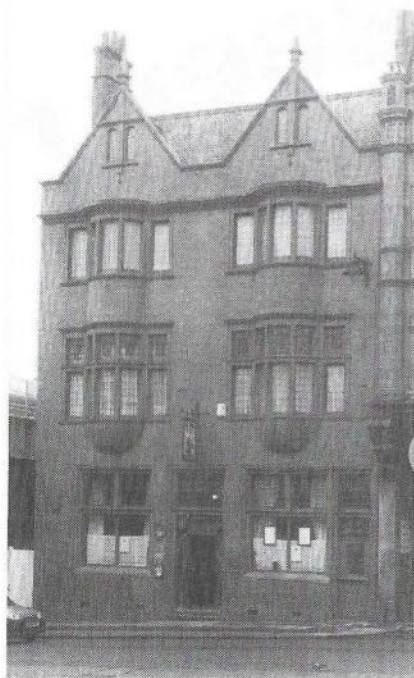
Ian Mitchell

On Sat 27th September the Rochdale Oldham and Bury branch of CAMRA, armed with Day Rovers, had a trip to Wigan. We met on the Rochdale to Wigan train and the signs were not good as the turnout was low - all right, the organiser plus two others ! Things looked worse when we arrived in Wigan and found our three pubs shut.

We walked past the Pier, but still no beer. Then our luck changed: the Seven Stars opened. The on-form pints of Thwaites bitter cheered us up, as did the interior of a large and very well preserved old pub (any pre-war pub is old in my opinion), even if at mid-day the place was virtually empty. On our way back to the station we entered the Swan & Railway (below), where the signs advertised Bass, J Smiths and Stones. The beer was another good pint - of Banks, the alternative being Pedigree. The public bar was well inhabited with drinkers, the pub being a town centre boozer. Time was now catching up with us, so after a quick stop for butties we hit the station for our next train.

On arriving at Gathurst we made our way to the Navigation, a large, white and expensive-looking pub. We expected to pay £1.50+ for a pint and we did, for an excellent pint of Fullers ESB. (It was very good value for a 1056 beer.) The alternatives were Tetley and Pedigree again. We

wandered back to the railway, where the station building is now the Gathurst Station Buffet, with stone floors and an outside drinking area. It's a free house with a range of beers from Moorhouses Premier, through Flowers IPA, Wadworths 6X and Speckled Hen to Tolly Cobbold Old Original (1050). Naturally, ESB had to be followed by Tolly. Whilst in the buffet we were joined by another member of the branch, which was an event in the almost deserted bar.



The next train took us to Hindley and the Edington Arms, a Holts pub. The price difference was noticeable as a round for four cost less than a round for three earlier in the day. The building has been extensively refurbished inside and could have been a modern estate pub.

Another train deposited us at Daisy Hill, where the Rose Hill Tavern was a pleasantly full, traditional Holts house. Most of the pubs we had drunk in so far had been sparsely populated. It was here we increased our numbers to five, being joined by another latecomer. He didn't get to see another pub as the planned tour of Atherton was cancelled in favour of further pints of Holts bitter and mild and an earlier trip home.

The day was completed with us rocking and rolling home care of a BR Pacer which, like all the trains taken by the main party, ran reasonably to time. The trip was a success, with not one poor pint being drunk and the company good, and the only disappointment was the low turnout. Thanks to Clive Taylor for an excellent day out - I'm looking forward to the next. But ROB, where were you?

Contributors to this issue: D Busman, J Whitehead, S Davies, Paul Mason, Roger Hall, Mark McConachie, Stewart Revell, Paul Roberts, Ian Mitchell, Peter Cash, Roger Wood, Dave White, Keith Egerton, Sue Barker, Alan Ainsworth, Stephen Smith, Roger Wood, Leo King

Drink Beer !

THE MARBLE ARCH

73 Rochdale Road, Manchester. 0161 832 5914

THE BARS

531/3 Wilbraham Road, Chorlton. 0161 861 7576

Marble Arch World Beers

57 Manchester Road, Chorlton. 0161 881 9206

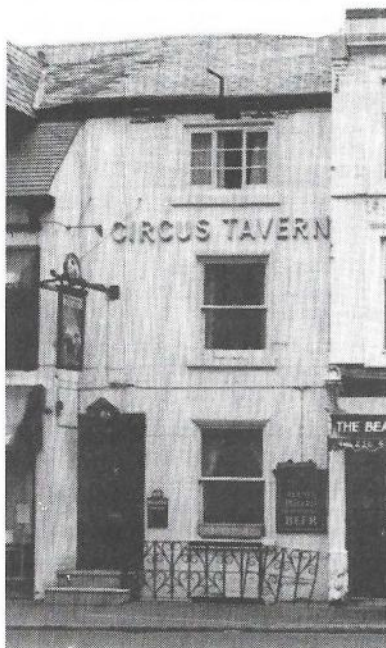
Stay in or go out - Drink with us.

Good Luck - What's Doing!

Heritage Pubs

Last month CAMRA published its National Inventory of 'pubs with unspoiled interiors of outstanding heritage importance'. The following Greater Manchester pubs are on the list:

Railway, Altrincham
Howcroft, Bolton
Grapes, Lamb and Royal Oak, Eccles
Plough, Gorton
Britons Protection, Circus Tavern,
Crown & Kettle and Peveril of the
Peak, Manchester
Hatters Arms, Marple
Old Boars Head, Middleton
Colliers Arms, Mossley
Cemetery Hotel, Rochdale
Station Buffet, Stalybridge
Alexandra, Arden Arms, Queens Head
and Swan with Two Necks, Stockport
Springfield Hotel, Wigan



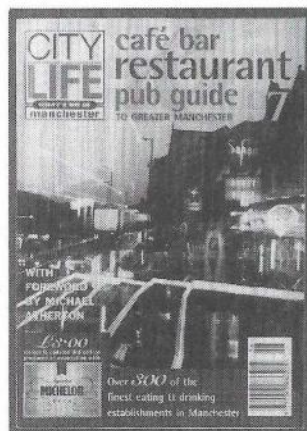
New Pub Guide

Paul Mason

City Life Café Bar, Restaurant & Pub Guide to Greater Manchester
Third Edition. Price £3

The excellent guide to drinking and eating in Greater Manchester continues to improve. In this edition, hotels have been dumped so as to fit in the ever-increasing stock of café bars, but there's plenty in the guide to interest lovers of traditional pubs and cask ales, reflecting editor Mike Hill's knowledge of both subjects. The photography is particularly good - check out the picture of the Castle Hotel on the introductory page to the pubs section.

There are a few niggles for CAMRA purists and I, for one, do not share the guide's enthusiasm for Via Fossa or O'Shea's in the city centre. But this is a good buy for those of us who like to eat as well as drink and want to know what a pub looks like before we visit.



WD covers 1977-1984: Including real ale revivals at Wilsons and Whitbread, Old House at Home campaign, Boddies buy OB, Pollards Brewery shuts and John Worthington buys the Marble Arch from Wilsons.

WHAT'S DOING

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE



WILSONS PUBS GOING BACK TO REAL ALE

Where plans to convert a number number of pubs back to real ale. Coffer inspectors are being sent out to the man and the full list of pubs which will be changed over will not be available until the end of the year. The plans are being distributed throughout the north-west, some of them in writing. The plans are being distributed throughout the north-west, some of them in writing. The plans are being distributed throughout the north-west, some of them in writing.

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WHAT'S DOING

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

REAL ALE FROM WHITBREAD



Whitbread's new real ale. The brewery announced that it will be producing real ale in its new year, and it should be available in the north-west. It is understood that the new beer will be produced at about 20 or 25 a year, and it will be brewed at an original gravity of about 1050 degrees, which should give it a strength between 4.5 and 5.0 per cent. The beer, brewed at Whitbread, will be available in the north-west. The beer, brewed at Whitbread, will be available in the north-west.

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WHAT'S DOING

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE



Plans for expansion at ICI's Blackley complex include a proposal to demolish the Old House at Home and close Salford City. Local feeling is running high and a full-scale campaign to save the old pub is well under way. For the full story, see inside.

WHAT'S DOING

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE



PRIORY SAVED

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TETLEY CLOSE ONE

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WHAT'S DOING

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NO BEER IN THE GAS



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THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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WHAT'S DOING

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

POLLARDS CLOSES

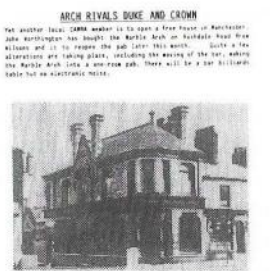


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WHAT'S DOING

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

ARCH RIVALS DUKE AND CROWN



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WHAT'S DOING

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

20p

SEP
1992

CRESCENT TO CLOSE?



The Crescent Free House in Salford is expected to close in the near future. Planning permission is being sought to turn the block which contains the pub and land adjacent to the property subject area in Salford Salford are at a level where it makes financial sense to sell up and move on for the developers. What next?

WD covers 1990-1996: including Holts buy their 100th pub, Whitbread let the Tallow Tub burn down, first anniversary of Greenalls' destruction of Tommy Ducks and the Castle & Falcon is knocked down.



GREENALLS QUIT BREWING

Over a deal struck with Allied Breweries, Greenalls will have ceased brewing in both Manchester and Nottingham by early next year. Since 1989, the company has been brewing under licence for Greenalls, which will be supplied by Toller. Under the licence, Greenalls will be available in Greenalls pubs, but this will be largely restricted to the Toller brand. It is expected that Greenalls will also sell Toller brand beer in some Toller pubs.

Greenalls Breweries will be running the pub, under the name of Toller's, following it will be the largest real ale brewer in the world.

Five new condensed milk will be produced, little consumer resistance is expected in the North West, but the closure of Greenalls will cause some difficulties. The Nottingham production is being shifted to Burton. The remaining beer and bottles will be available to the pub, which will continue in production, again in Burton.



HOLTS HUNDRED



Holts have bought their hundredth pub - the Sanderson Arms at the top of Major Lane (top of Nelson, Bradford). It is a large sixteenth-century 'baker's' pub.

Manchester, who has started on their hundredth pub, the New York Arms (top of Nelson, Bradford). The pub is a large sixteenth-century 'baker's' pub.

Earlier this year Holts announced a major £5.7m and £1.7m, followed by a £1.7m and £1.7m.

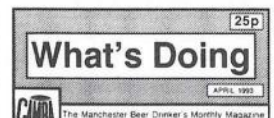


TALLOW TUB GOES UP IN SMOKE



The public to see the 'Tallow Tub', an unassuming Victorian pub on Great Street, Tallow, seems to have been just what a fire caused extensive damage to the pub. The pub is a large sixteenth-century 'baker's' pub.

The story began in March 1991, when Whitbread's acquisition of the pub was announced. The pub was a large sixteenth-century 'baker's' pub.



SAVE THE ANGLER!

If we win the Olympic Games, we will be the only Angler as reported in last month's What's Doing. If we do not win the Games, we might lose the Angler because the Central Manchester Development Corporation have proposed a 'Pleasant Area Regeneration' scheme which envisages the Leyland Street/Duke Street area to be used for business and office use. The same site is proposed for the White House, Great Ancoats Street.

CAMBA has written to the Development Corporation to draw attention to the historical and community importance of both pubs. These pubs, which have cheaper beer and excellent snacks and cake for the more traditional pub customer, are



TOMMY DUCKS 'The Anniversary



At 10.30pm on Monday 2nd February there will be a service to commemorate the first anniversary of the closure of what was Manchester city centre's most famous public house. The pub was built on the brick shell car park on the site of Tommy Ducks. Greenalls chairman, Peter Greenalls, will be presented with a special award for pub demolition. It is a sad day for the pub, which was a landmark in the city.



Holts and Boddingtons pubs become listed buildings

Cooperation between CAMBA and English Heritage has resulted in three pubs in Copple and another in Gorton becoming listed buildings. They are the Royal Oak and the Grapes (all Edwardian-style houses) and the Black Horse, a more modest pub built for Boddingtons in 1886.

Twenty-five pubs in Greater Manchester and Lancashire were submitted for listing altogether and so far the campaigners have been successful with six. The other two, the Harrow in Altrincham and the Plough in Gorton, were listed last year.

We are told that decisions on the remaining 'listings' are expected to come in July and/or early.



Metrolink - Mitchell Arms to go?



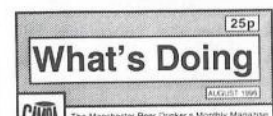
As the consultation period for objections to Metrolink's amended proposals for the East Manchester/Tameside line came to a close, it was noted that another pub at Underhill 'The Time' is a Good Beer Guide pub. Since Mitchell Arms on Every Street in Ancoats. The last only came to light through the vigilance of one person attending the first Manchester public meeting and being able to study the full plans. If you look at CAMBA's website, you will find a link to the full plans. If you look at CAMBA's website, you will find a link to the full plans.



THE TIME HAS COME



In 1996 and the Castle & Falcon and the Coach & Horses will be a revival of interest in the Coach & Horses? This year sees the closure of the Central Manchester Development Corporation and control over planning matters will revert to the City Council. A new view will be put forward and so there could be some positive decisions made about the future of the Coach & Horses.



Castle & Falcon gone

by Peter Widdowson (owner Castle & Falcon correspondent) (email)

A month after the City Centre Bomb Blast, the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive contacted the Manchester people and asked them to show plans down to the bus stop and provided with a plan to show the Castle & Falcon on the bus stop. The building was then seen in a dangerous condition as a result of the bomb.

Seeing a rat, I went to the Town Hall and spoke to the person who had condemned the property and, possibly, he was a CAMBA member. He had been monitoring the empty pub every month to make sure it was of no danger to the public, but when the bomb went off the door was pushed off sideways, the floor



250th Edition (Yes, really!)

Twenty-One Years Ago

Paul Mason

It is November 1975. A small team of CAMRA stalwarts is putting together the first edition of *What's Doing*, whilst a relentless wave of keg beer sweeps across Manchester. But what is happening in the rest of the world? What issues of the day are being debated over fizzy Watneys in Manchester boozers? According to the *Manchester Evening News* of November 1975, this is how things looked...



Entertainment was around a-plenty, with adverts from a multitude of cabaret clubs. Tommy Cooper was appearing at the Broadway in Failsworth, the Miss Sunny Rhyl 1975 Final was fast approaching at Club International on High Street and at the X-rated Glamour House cinema, 'Bared for Action' was twinned with 'Maid in Sweden'. 'Rollerball' was the main feature at the Odeon. Live concerts at the time included Dr Hook and the Medicine Show at Salford University, Caravan at the Free Trade Hall for £1.60 and Julie Felix at the Band on the Wall. The Bay City Rollers had done everyone a favour and left for a tour of Australia. The *Evening News* reported pandemonium at Heathrow as hysterical teenyboppers bade them farewell.

For those who had given up on getting a decent pint and were staying in to watch the box, a typical Friday night on BBC1 offered 'The Invisible Man', 'Sykes' and 'Porridge', whilst Granada had 'Space 1999', 'Rising Damp', 'The Streets of San Francisco' and 'Beryl's Lot'. No Channel Four, of course.

Getting about was a good deal cheaper in 1975, with a new Hillman Imp Caledonian available at £1,424, or a rented car from Budget at £3.95 per day, all in. British Rail were advertising a Saturday special to London from Victoria at

1975

£4.50 return. Tickets bookable at Crumpsall, Bowker Vale and Whitefield railway stations.

Women drivers, however, were getting a hard time from the head of safety at a less than politically correct RAC. Paul Haile stated, 'Women drivers are too busy looking at sale signs in shop windows rather than concentrating on the road ahead.'

There was plenty of interest on the football front, with the 1975-76 season three months old. George Best had reappeared at Old Trafford for Pat Crerand's testimonial. He explained to the *Evening News* how he had lost so much weight as he prepared to play four matches for Stockport County. Rodney Marsh had turned down a move from Maine Road to Aston Villa as City, in eighth place, chased Man United in sixth place. Derby County were two points clear at the top of Division One. United manager Tommy Docherty was quoted in the sports page as saying, 'OK, so we have been beaten by City, Liverpool and Arsenal in recent weeks, but we are still in Championship form.'

On a wider news front, Britain's fishing war with Iceland was hotting up as frigates were dispatched to the disputed fishing grounds, and the IRA had murdered the publisher Ross McWhirter.

Ironically, the *Evening News* letter page was full of criticism of the High Street frontage of the Arndale Centre and the bridge across to Marks & Spencers. Of course, we know what happened to that recently!

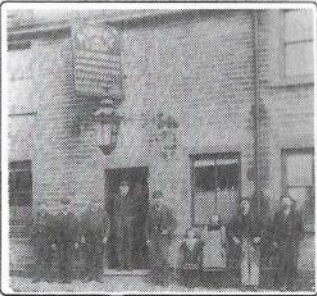
New Book

The latest in Rob Magee's series of pub histories, covering Springhead and Lees, is out this month. The book deals with every known public house and beerhouse that has existed in the area, which includes Alt, Lydgate, Austerlands and other villages. There are old photographs, maps and advertisements and listings of all known licensees for each pub.

The book is on sale in Lees and Springhead pubs, price £3.75.

SPRINGHEAD
and LEES PUBS
including ALT

with their licensees 1717-1996



Rob Magee

£3.75

Letter

Grey Horse

Sir - I feel I must reply to the article in the October issue about the Grey Horse, Portland Street. Not so much an article as an attack on the previous licensee.

My husband and I have spent many a pleasant hour in there; as you so rightly say it is a place of tranquillity where you can hear yourself talk. Twice a week for the past twelve months we called in the Grey Horse for a couple of drinks before going home.

The interior may not have been to your liking - I personally found nothing wrong with it - but how you can say the beer quality has improved is beyond me. The beer was always on top form.

May I add that the previous licensee only left the Grey Horse due to ill health.

Mrs A Carr

Mitchell Arms

Some good news from Ancoats. The GBG-listed Mitchell Arms on Every Street is safe from the GMPTE Metrolink line to Ashton, according to an article in a free South Manchester newspaper. We contacted the GMPTE for comment and clarification, but have received neither at the time of going to press. However, there's a positive sign in that owners Banks's have begun renovation work on the building. The old rendering is being replaced, the outside repainted and new signage fitted. The interior will be given a thorough redecoration and licensee Mick Hynes is naturally enthusiastic about the project. The new-look Mitchell will surely be the best pub in Ancoats (or is that Beswick, Mick?).

Cask in the Castle

The Castle Hotel on Oldham Street in the city centre, a long time entry in the Good Beer Guide, has added Robinsons Dark Mild to the range of cask beers.

This is the only Robinsons pub selling all seven brews from the Unicorn brewery. For the record, these are: Old Stockport Bitter, Best Bitter, Frederics, Hatters Light Mild, Best Dark Mild, Old Tom and Hartleys XB.

The Dark Mild, once a rare find anywhere in the Robinsons estate, is beginning to appear more frequently, even in the free trade. It is the house mild at the recently opened Pot of Beer.

Mild in the High Street

At the end of October the Hogshead on High Street, Manchester, is including a variety of mild and stouts in the (mainly bitter) guest beer range. The first set will be Brakspears mild, Marstons Intire Butt, Brains Dark and Greene King XX dark mild. The second set (beginning of November) will be Gales XXX dark mild, Boddingtons mild, Batemans dark mild and Youngs Oatmeal Stout. Bottled Marstons Oyster Stout and Freeminer Deep Shaft Stout will also be available.

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.

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

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Oktoberfest Twenty Years On

Beinlos

Confounding medical science, I have just returned from my twentieth consecutive Oktoberfest with my liver still (almost) intact.

Over the past twenty years the Oktoberfest has changed and I regret to say it has not been for the better. Until recently I had always considered the event as a prime example of Bavarian *Gemütlichkeit*. (A word almost impossible to translate into English, but basically 'a heavenly state of friendliness'.) Thousands of Bavarians would sway in unison to the Bavarian, Bohemian, Austrian and German drinking songs being belted out by the bands in the various beer halls, creating an atmosphere unique in the world.



However, over the past few years the emphasis has switched from traditional drinking music to Euro-pop and disco music. This in turn has changed the clientele basis and 1996 saw hundreds of drunken teenyboppers continually asking 'Who the Fxxk is Alice?' and waving their arms around in a demented fashion, as though auditioning for a part in an 'ET' movie. With drunken teenagers there are the problems of beer being thrown around and increased violence.

This lack of ambience after 8.00pm has led to most Bavarians drinking at the Oktoberfest in the afternoons and leaving the bedlam of the night to the gangs of marauding Italians. When I first visited the Oktoberfest in 1977 there were five million visitors - a much more comfortable figure than the close on seven million of recent years.

It is this sad state of affairs that has made me 'call time' after my twentieth 'fest and decide in future to stick to non-Oktoberfest time at Munich - when the city is far less crowded and the beer is better anyway. Before I left Munich Tourist Board presented me with a commemorative litre Maßkrug - a long-service award for my valued custom over the years!

The 1996 Oktoberfest started on a high note - Oberbürgermeister Christian Ude performed the traditional tapping ceremony on Saturday 21st September and achieved a new record by tapping the barrel with only three blows. The Landwirtschaftszentral (the main Bavarian

agricultural show, held every four years), a trade fair for the catering industry, a golf tournament and the October 3rd Reunification Day Bank Holiday all corresponded with the Oktoberfest and gave rise to speculation that a new record for the number of visitors could be set. In the event, 'only' 6.9 million people visited this year, compared to 7.1 million in 1985, the 175th anniversary year.

The problems of overcrowding at weekends have become so great that several new measures have been suggested, such as banning all home games of TSV 1860 and Bayern München during the Oktoberfest. (This comes into effect next year). Fencing off the entire Oktoberfest grounds to restrict entry is being considered and another idea is to move the event to the old airport grounds at Riem on the outskirts of the city. This would eliminate much of the traffic congestion and allow greater room for expansion, but the idea is not popular with traditionalists.

If you have pleasant memories of previous Oktoberfests, you will be disappointed if you return. If you have not previously been, but would like to experience the Oktoberfest atmosphere, go mid-week afternoon. Better still, visit Munich during one of its many other beer seasons - pre-Christmas is special for the atmosphere as well as the *Weihnachtsbock*. Go at the end of March and take in the last week of the strong beer season (*Starkbierzeit*) and the first of the spring festivals. Go at the beginning of May and take in the last of the region's spring festivals and the May Day festivals, together with the launching of *Maibock*. At the Augustiner Bräustüberl adjoining the brewery, Helles direct from the wooden barrel is only DM7,90 per litre (£1.84 per pint) - hardly expensive by UK standards and food is generally cheaper than here as well. Munich is to my mind the finest city there is - so make sure you visit sometime!

Oktoberfest Trivia

The record year for beer consumption was 1985, when 5.45 million litres were consumed. (Is it just a coincidence that Ms. Von Trapp attended that year?) 1966 was the record year for sausages, 903,474 pairs being eaten. 1991 was bad news if you were a chicken - 807,710 half-chickens were consumed.

The Oktoberfest employs 8,000



people full time and another 4,000 part-timers and contributes over one billion Deutsch Mark to the local economy.

Every tune played by the bands at the Oktoberfest incurs a fee payable to the German equivalent of the Performing Rights Society and during the festival the fourteen bands must pay over DM250,000 in fees. Fred Geisser, leader of the Ludwig Thoma Musikanten in the Bräurosl now keeps a running total of all songs played on a laptop computer!

The largest Bierhalle at the 'fest is the Hofbräuhaus with over 10,000 capacity, while the smallest is the Feisingers Käsespezialitäten with a mere 80. On average, the twelve main beer halls seat over six thousand people. Total seated capacity in beer halls/restaurants is 94,000.



The number of postcards posted on site has fallen dramatically as more people E-Mail from their laptops and send Wiesnfxes!

Transport torment for travelling toppers

Drinkers and licensees in Salford and Eccles are not happy following the changes to evening and Sunday bus services in early October. Some services have been cut and others have had their frequency reduced, leading to difficulty in travelling to and from pubs.

People wishing to go drinking on Chapel Street and the Crescent now face a longer wait - formerly there was a bus about every ten minutes. Pubs on Liverpool Street faced a bleak future until the 10 service was restored; Eccles-bound services have been reduced, with the 67 now hourly and the 66 dropped altogether (this served Monton and Winton, including the Brown Cow and Jolly Carter).

Drinkers in Swinton have not been spared either - the Worsley Road pubs have suffered through cuts made to service 12. How the changes will affect the pubs in the long term can only be guessed at. What can we do? Grin and bear it, unfortunately.

Rupert *the Obituary*

An appreciation of the life of Rupert Periwinkle, by his friend Bunty Fortescue

Rupert Periwinkle, who died in tragic circumstances in September, had a long and turbulent relationship with this organ. His investigative journalism resulted in an outspoken and, some would say, vitriolic style which won him few friends but many enemies. Grown men have been known orally to foam at the very mention of his name. Yet his legacy lives on in the timeless bon mots and characters which he brought to life in these pages. It is indeed difficult to write about Rupert without resonances of his writing style invading one's own modest scribblings.

Rupert's death, though tragic, was one of which he would have been proud. Recently he had become convinced that the Campaign had been infiltrated by extra-galactic intelligence whose mission was to stifle dissent. This, he felt, had been evident in the ascendancy of such luminaries as Boris Pratt and Nora Tackler and the replacement of campaigning by celebratory megascoffs at 39 guineas a head. It was his determined investigation into the mysterious manoeuvrings of the Enderby-Hughes Circus which led to his demise. Before his death, Rupert had faxed details of his

astounding discoveries to Adjuke Mbinga, his solicitor in Ougadougou. These will not be revealed until the inquest in December.



Rupert's association with What's Doing began in July 1977 when his defence of the Fatted Pseud appeared on the letters page. Eddy Nestfeather was so impressed that Rupert was made a member of the full-time staff. This was a position which he held with only a few interruptions due to precipitate terminations and gender adjustments until his death by tigers. It was a responsibility which he treated with the seriousness which he brought to all his endeavours, including his campaigning for gay dwarfs and his pioneering work for PORGI (the Persons of Restricted Growth Institute).

Rupert was the eldest son of Lord Periwinkle of Wealthshire and, as such, heir to the Periwinkle millions. He never forgot his humble origins, however. His mother, Bertha, had been a donkey-stone fettler in Nether Slumley until Lord Periwinkle fell in love with her when she won Miss Donkey-Stone 1946 at Gutlets Holiday Camp. Rupert was comfortable in the presence of princes, yet still kept the common touch. He could often be seen dressed in his cravat and plus fours, hobnobbing with tattooed stevedores in the Dockers Wedge or the Rat & Handbag.

I first met Rupert at Roedean (our parents had a wicked sense of humour) and was reunited with him in 1979 as a result of an Esher/Grotley inter-branch cultural exchange. My not infrequent incarcerations have conspired to prevent as frequent an association with Rupert as I might have wished. Yet, notwithstanding our differences in stature, temperament, sexual orientation and opinions, I have grown to admire Rupert and respect his views.

Rupert was a founding member of Defenders of Grotley Slum Hostels, Inns and Taverns (DOGSHIT). Although he never fully espoused its values, he was a useful sounding board and must take much of the credit for the legacy of excellent traditional alehouses we have remaining in Grotley. Rupert never sought office within the Campaign. He was content to lead from the backbenches. It is because of him

that the worst excesses of the brewers have been thwarted and that charming amber nectar from the wickets is available throughout Grotley.

Above all, however, Rupert will be remembered for his unfailing support of the underdog. It is largely because of his encouragement that individuals have been able to rise above their flaws of character and seek high office in the Campaign. Traits such as megalomania, paranoia, mendacity, fecklessness, lack of charisma, dishonesty and sloth have not proved a barrier to progress for a good many individuals. By means of the written word, Rupert has given a meaning to the concept of 'equal opportunities' and ensured that halitosis and social gaucheness do not deny people the chance to lead others. Many owe their exalted rank to 'this modest hack', as he was wont to call himself. The thrusting dynamism of the Grotley branches is a living testimony to his influence. He will be sadly missed.



Rupert Quiz

Answers on the next page.



1. In what month and year did the image which later became known as Rupert Periwinkle first appear?
2. And what class of CAMRA member was the target of criticism in the associated article?
3. In what year did the first Rupert Periwinkle column appear?
4. What plant was decoratively draped around the column in those early days?
5. With whom did Rupert discuss Richard Boston in the Shrieking Vole?
6. Who was Ophelia Hampton's partner?
7. Who criticised Max Wall for holding a 4,000-strong meeting in a room that held only 26?
8. What is the name of Rupert's younger brother?
9. Who declined to run for the N.E. at the Cardiff AGM?
10. Whose failure properly to organise a Greater Manchester Branches' meeting led to the formation of 'Provisional CAMRA'?
11. What was the name of the Noble's pet, and what was it?
12. Which two characters joined Slumley Branch as a result of an inter-branch cultural exchange?
13. On what political platform did Rupert contend the 1979 General Election?
14. What did Rupert regard as the nadir of irresponsible Grotley Branch policies in 1979?
15. What famous meeting took

place in early 1980?

16. And what happened to the building immediately afterwards?
17. Who successfully opposed the Noble's attempt to have German lager accepted by CAMRA?
18. Who won a gold medal in the World Biriani Gobbling Championships?
19. What is the name of the award which What's Doing hands out for achievements in amber nectar related fields?
20. Who won the 'Roué of the Decade' category of the above?
21. What occasioned the appearance of a coronetted Rupert on the cover of WD?
22. Who regained entry to their Bedesville Hall of Residence at the 1981 AGM by means of a brick?
23. Who emptied himself from both ends simultaneously whilst perched on the back of an old bus?
24. Who was smacked by the N.E. for refusing to attend meetings in Rockall?
25. Of what did Rupert's Yuletide gift of a new filing system for the Noble Robin consist?
26. On the cover of which beer guide did Rupert loom large?
27. Who did Nellie Tweed, Bogbrush and Zimbabwe-Talbot send to plague Grotley?
28. Who did the Noble install in the Cloth Cap & Brick?
29. Who, in WD's 100th, was in an ongoing matrimonial situation?
30. Who stopped Master Bakers Tart & Fairy Cake Company from selling their wares at Elric's 'Mrs Tiggywinkle's Fairy Cake Shop'?
31. Name the goat who lived for

three years in a Snoot Magna pillar box.

32. Who ran the amber nectar emporium known as Leeches?
33. Who produced the first edition of Manky Ale?
34. Who is the legal eagle of the Persons of Restricted Growth Institute?
35. Who hid inside a clam shell just before resigning as Regional Bossperson?
36. Who was reputed to have been found in the jungles of Patagonia?
37. Who was 'Gloody Glazing' at the Slumley branch's attempt to annex Piddlesley?
38. Whose appearance (with a black eye) in Roop's column, cost him a seat on the N.E.?
39. About whom was Rupert forbidden to write anything which could in any way be construed as defamatory, by CAMRA's new Bossperson in person?
40. Name Rupert's dog.
41. Who lives in a disembodied church spire?
42. Who took over from Nora Tackler as Regional Bossperson?
43. Who ran about like a foghorn with piles?
44. Which of Rupert's relatives lost his feet by lying on the wrong railway track?
45. Who won the 'Stuff yourself with free grub and booze at Drabs' annual binge' Award seven times?
46. Whose photo on Roop's page caused him to resign from almost everything?
47. Who was less than polite to a disgruntled customer at the Grotley Nectar Show?
48. Who visited every Crow & Wanker in Grotley?

Branch Diary

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tues 5 Nov 8.30, Branch Meeting, Bridge, Well i'th' Lane, Rochdale

Sat 9 Nov 12 noon, Bury Beer Festival Organising Meeting, Tap & Spile, Bury Centre

Fri 15th to Sat 16th Nov, BURY BEER FESTIVAL, The Met, Bury. Staff still needed from branch.

Tues 19 Nov 8.30, Committee Meeting, Oddfellows, Oldham Road, Middleton

Tues 26 Nov 8.30, What's Doing collation, Flying Horse, Town Hall Square, Rochdale

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

Trafford & Hulme

Thur 7 Nov 9pm, Black Horse, Walcote, for Thai curry!

Sat 9 Nov 11am, Cantillon Brewery Open Day, Brussels, followed by train trip to Antwerp

Fri 29 Nov, noon onwards, Royal Oak, Didsbury, followed by trip to Liverpool and onwards to Isle of Man

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

North Manchester

Wed Oct 30 Student Social & Treasure Hunt. Start and finish Old Pint Pot, Crescent, Salford. 7.30 onwards

Wed Nov 6, Eccles Crawl. White Horse, Gilda Brook Road, 7pm; Lamb 8pm, Crown & Volunteer 9pm

Wed Nov 13 8pm, Regional Meeting, Hare & Hounds, Shudehill, Manchester. North Manchester to chair.

Wed Nov 20 8pm, Branch Meeting, Crescent, including GBG selection dry run

Tues 26 Nov 6pm onwards, What's Doing collation, Queens, Honey Street

Wed 27 Nov, City Centre Prices Survey. Smithfield, Swan Street, 7pm onwards

Wed 4 Dec, Newton Heath crawl: 7pm Copenhagen, Oldham Road; 8.30

Railway, Dean Lane, 9.00 onwards Robin Hood, Droylsden Road

Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

Answers to Rupert Quiz

Score 2 points for each correct answer unless stated otherwise
1 August 1976 (1 point each), 2 Beer bores/snobs, 3 1977, 4 A grape vine (deduct 2 points for Hops), 5 The Contessa, 6 Alistair, 7 Agrippa, 8 Cholmondeley, 9 Arbutnot, 10 Martin Boreman, 11 Boddington, Parrot (1 point each), 12 Bunty Fortescue & Fanny Featherstonhaugh (2 points each), 13 Rights for persons of restricted growth, 14 Publication of the Greater Grotley Guide, 15 Defenders of Grotley, 16 It fell down, 17 Elsie Clockwork-Nun, 18 David Hiccup, 19 Elsie, 20 Michael Rottenbodge, 21 The Royal Betrothal issue, 22 Ben Chestnut & Betty Bass (2 points each), 23 Jamie Frazzle, 24 Dermatitis, 25 A brick, a nail, a starving goat (1 point each), 26 Berks Beerage, or the Ballad of Reading Ale (2 points each), 27 Red Max, 28 Mr & Mrs De Vere, 29 The Litrel Pirrook, 30 Mr Hobgoblin, 31 Germaine, 32 Charlie Bass, 33 Bert & Nora Tackler, 34 Rutley Dikheit, 35 Ben Chestnut, 36 Rumplesdshirtscream, 37 Stan Craap, 38 Gerald Nodding, 39 We are still not allowed to talk about this! Deduct 50 for H Higgins or Humpy Dumpty, 40 Florence, 41 Mycroft Fortescue, 42 Billy Bog, 43 Lady Bog, 44 Great Uncle Culbert, 45 Mr Bolero of Bogden, 46 Trev, 47 Hass Brickle, 48 Rumplesdshirtscream & Starsky.

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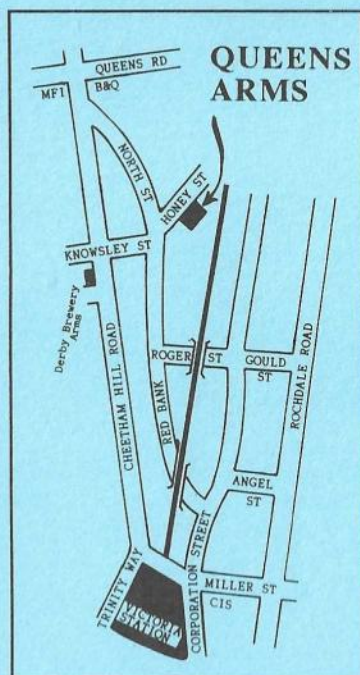


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*We're in the Good Beer Guide and
CAMRA's Good Food Guide*