

25p

# What's Doing

FEBRUARY 1997



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

## SALFORD PUBS FOR SALE

Greenalls are advertising several of their Salford outlets which are now surplus to requirements. These are the Beehive on Holland Street, Pendleton; Church Inn and Dover Inn, Higher Broughton; Jubilee, Ordsall; Kings Arms, Bloom Street; Paddock, Cross Lane (below), and even the rebuilt Wellington on Regent Road.

On the other side of the Irwell in Cornbrook, £95,000 will buy you Turvilles, a Bass outlet. Most of the Greenalls pubs are in the 'offers invited' category.





## Buffet Bar reopens

Although it had been trading for some weeks, the Buffet Bar on Stalybridge Station was officially reopened on January 16th. It is run by the successful team of John and Sylvia, the people who own the popular Station free house in nearby Ashton.

The Buffet Bar was formerly made up of a main bar, with a conservatory-like structure attached and it was all a trifle cluttered and untidy. Now we have the same two rooms, plus two more to the right of the bar and toilets as well. The two new rooms were formerly living accommodation and a First Class Ladies' Waiting Room. All are now decorated in simple but striking style, with the odd item of rail memorabilia here and there.

A choice of six beers and a real cider is promised at all times.

## Magic moves

Mike Fildes, previously at the Magic Pub Company's Jolly Carter at Winton, has taken over another Magic pub, the Rising Sun in Manchester City Centre. This pub, between Queen Street and Lloyd Street, had a daft Irish name for a while (Paddy's Wig, right), but now it's the Rising Sun again. It is expected that the food trade will be built up under Mike's management.

Meanwhile, Martin Washington has taken over at the Jolly Carter and Greene King IPA has joined the Websters Green Label on handpump.

A recent visit to Paddy's Goose on Bloom Street, Manchester's second Magic Pub Co house (the Rat & Carrot being out of commission, you will recall), revealed the presence Greene King, the company's new owners. Greene King IPA and Abbot were on sale alongside Websters Green Label and Boddies.



## Salford roundup

*Daddy Bell*

Two recent pub closures are the **Druids Arms** (latterly Lees) on Liverpool Street, and the **Railway**, on the other side of the street at its junction with Oldfield Road. The Druids is now a 'sandwich bar cafe' and the Railway has been sandblasted and part-fitted with security shutters. Not even the introduction of line dancing classes was able to save this pub and the model of Stephenson's Rocket, which survived all vicissitudes, has been removed from the Oldfield Road frontage. The building now looks like a displaced 1960s parsonage. Its future is apparently as offices: I am told that, like the still open but nitrokeg Prince of Wales across the road, the Railway has been bought by the owner of a prominent metal processing works in the vicinity.

Northwards along Oldfield Road, the **Jollies** seems to be open again. Turning right along Chapel Street, nothing much seems to be doing at the **Bell Tower**, but the **Old Nelson** (right) is advertising Lees bitter at £1.08 per pint. Along the Crescent, the **Black Horse** (Greenalls) seems to be somewhat open again, following several weeks of closure before Christmas.

Heading for Eccles (a more pleasing prospect), the **Royal** on Eccles New Road has reopened, now officially bearing its familiar nickname, the **Widows Rest** (no apostrophe in sight). The pub has been refurbished internally, but it's still all keg.



\*\*\*\*\*

## New bar for Oldham Street

Further signs that the 'Northern Quarter' is on the up: there are plans to build a new café bar and restaurant on Oldham Street, next door but one to Dry Bar.



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## Inner City Challenge

*Devising a crawl of some six or eight pubs in an inner city area isn't as easy as it was in the good old days, according to Roger Hall in his January contribution to the enduring Hall-Jones colloquy (see also this issue). Rhys P Jones has risen to the challenge:*

Are Ardwick and Chorlton-on-Medlock inner city enough for Roger Hall? If so (or even if not), here's the crawl...

- 1 **Seven Stars**, Ashton Old Road (Holts)
- 2 **Kings Head**, Chancellor Lane (Inntrepneur)
- 3 **Union**, Higher Ardwick (Burtonwood)
- 4 **Park**, Park Street (Burtonwood)
- 5 **Church**, Ardwick Green North (Enterprise Inns)
- 6 **George & Dragon**, Ardwick Green South (Inntrepneur - guest beer Holts)
- 7 **Mawson**, Kincardine Road (Tetley)



Naturally, any individual will like some of these pubs more than others. However, all are at least competently run, most are a good deal better than that. They've consistently sold cask beer of a quality ranging from perfectly acceptable to very good, and none of them should cause the reasonably streetwise pubgoer a smidgeon of unease. (And before anybody asks, I haven't had to cheat by omitting any hell-holes en route!)

I don't believe this is an isolated instance. For example, how many Miles Platting pubs have closed or become 'desperate' since the perfectly pleasant crawl I enjoyed there with North Manchester CAMRA a year or two back? And how was the Irlams o'th'Height crawl, undertaken only last month?

*The Trafford & Hulme branch of CAMRA is having a 'Roger Hall Inner City Challenge Crawl' on 27th February (see Branch Diary). However, there are only four pubs named on the crawl (and one of them is in the city centre), instead of the required minimum of six, so it can't really count. Any other suggestions?*



## Wigan & District

*Dave White*

Flushed with the success of the Swan and Railway campaign last year, Wigan CAMRA branch has now locked horns with the mighty national brewers, Scottish Courage. The branch would like to see the removal of facias on former Matthew Brown pubs which give the impression that the beer still comes from the Lion Brewery, Blackburn. (For the uninitiated, Scottish closed the plant six years ago and Matthew Brown ales have been brewed by Home, then Mansfield Brewery in Nottinghamshire.) Better late than never, and Wigan CAMRA can take heart from the fact that a similar campaign by the Merseyside branches - when Whitbread ceased brewing Higsons ales in Liverpool a few years ago - was successful. So best of luck, chaps.

Two former Brown pubs were ahead of the campaign, in any case. All traces of the Lion Brewery have been removed from the exterior of the RED LION, Ladies Lane, Hindley, though the same dreary (nitro)keg ales remain - and the QUEENS on Bickershaw Lane, Bickershaw, is now a Banks's house. This represents a real ale gain, though my informant tells me that the beer was colder than charity on a recent visit.

Four Burtonwood outlets in the area have dropped cask conditioned beer. The ALISON ARMS, Preston Road, Coppull Moor, is one of them, and as the OAK TREE (Burtonwood again), just over the border with West Lancs has gone the same way, this stretch of the A49 is particularly barren, with only the NEW SEVEN STARS (Burtonwood yet again) offering a decent pint on the way to Standish.



The other Burtonwood pubs in question are the PRINCE OF WALES, Springfield; the SPINNERS ARMS, a rather dingy boozer on Atherton Road, Hindley Green, and the SQUIRREL, Ince Green Lane, Ince Bar. Ince-in-Makerfield is becoming increasingly desperate for the real ale drinker, with eleven pubs out of eighteen now on the fizz.

Having had its fingers burned in Warrington, the dead hand of the Firkin Brewery Company has moved on to Leigh. The BOARS HEAD, a Peter Walker pub on Market Street (see photo), awaits transmogrification, but the magnificent red-brick exterior is safe... isn't it? Meanwhile, the enticingly-named Leigh Electric Club, Henrietta Street, is now a free house called the GROVE. Keg.

*News in brief:* the RED ROBIN, Scot Lane, Newtown (see WD Dec 1996) has replaced Ind Coope Burton Ale with Ansells mild. Traditional ale returns to the BANNER, Chapel Green Road, Hindley, in the form of Stones bitter.

*Late news:* Head Brewer at Burtonwood, James Dick, tells us that nitrokeg 'smooth' has now replaced keg beer in the company's pubs. New cowls advertising 'Burtonwood Smooth' have been available since October. There is no brewery policy to replace real ale with nitrokeg and where there have been changes, these have been at the landlords' request.

## **Wigan Beer Festival**

The Grand Tenth Wigan Beer Festival will take place at the Mill at the Pier on 6th-8th March. There will be forty beers, plus ciders and bottled beers, including products from the long-standing All Nations homebrew pub. German sausages will be on sale to soak it all up.

*The Festival dates are:*

Thursday 6th March:

6.00pm - 11.00pm

Friday 7th March:

12.00 noon - 3.00pm and

6.00pm - 11.00pm

Saturday 8th March:

12.00 noon - 4.00pm and

7.00pm - 11.00pm



## Magpie goes Irish

Miles Platting's Magpie, the Whitbread pub that suffered a major fire some time ago, has reopened as Mick Magee's. The Irish flavour is genuine here, though, as the licensee hails from across the water. Sadly, the beer is keg Bass products.

A reported £100,000 has been spent on the place, but it doesn't differ from the old Magpie too much and thankfully we are spared the over-indulgences of the stereotypical Irish bar design schemes.

## Canal Banks's

A five-storey building incorporating licensed premises on the ground and first floors is planned by Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries at Deansgate Quay in Castlefield.

## Bolton Beer Festival

The 1997 Great North Western Beer & Cider Festival will be held at the Bolton Excel Centre, behind Bolton College, Lower Bridgeman Street, Bolton, from 19th to 22nd March. (The old 'Great North Western...' title has been revived in order to avoid confusion with the non-CAMRA beer festival held at the Howcroft.)

The festival opening times will be as follows:

Wednesday 19th March: 6pm-11pm

Thursday 20th - Saturday 22nd March:

11.30am-3pm, 6pm-11pm

The venue is completely 'No Smoking'.

For further information contact Jon Seddon, 01204 412432.

Volunteers to help staff the festival are required - contact Richard Spedding, 01204 653924 (h) or 01204 521771 x2305 (w)



Bolton's Bank Top Brewery will be brewing a beer specially for the event, using the new 'First Gold' dwarf hops.

## Bolton briefly

Yates Brothers plc have purchased the old N&P site on Bradshawgate for £240k - no reports yet as to what is happening.

Gallaghers Oyster Bar (formerly the Crofters/Magees) on St Georges Road opened last month selling Tetley mild and bitter, Pedigree and a guest beer (Wadworths 6X), all on handpump.



## Lees hits Ramsbottom

Lees aficionados can now sup the bitter at the Good Samaritan, Peel Brow. The beer is available as a regular guest, is well kept and is a very reasonable £1.20 a pint. John Smiths bitter and Lion bitter were also available on a recent visit.

Elsewhere in Ramsbottom, the Grant Arms (right) is no longer keg only. Theakstons bitter on handpump has made an appearance.



## Bulldozer hits Bury

It is expected that the Napier on Bolton Street (Thwaites) will be demolished at the end of February. The building is unique, with some fine 'Bury Brewery Company' etched glass bay windows. Sadly it would seem that real ale sales have declined to the extent that it is not available all the time. Nevertheless, the Napier is worth a look this month before it's gone forever.



Derek and Lisa, managers of the Tap & Spile on Manchester Old Road, Bury, are moving up to Scotland

to run the Tap & Spile at Aberdeen airport, having done a fine job of keeping the beers in excellent nick during their stay here.

Building work continues apace on the new Wetherspoons in the centre of Bury, but it looks as if opening time is still some way off.

## Anvil Tales

Keith Egerton

4X Anvil Strong appeared again this winter but, according to some licensees, it has not sold quite as well as had been hoped. If demand is insufficient, it is unlikely to be brewed again for some years - the beer reappeared partly as a result of pressure from CAMRA members. If you don't support it, you have only yourselves to blame if it is lost again!

Rumours abound that Anvil Smooth nitrokeg is about to be launched and served via a tall font similar to Theakstons, so that there will be no confusion with the real stuff. The brewery, however, is maintaining a 'no comment' position at present, so there are no details regarding strength and price, and it is not even known whether this is to be a separate product or a replacement for the existing bitter.

Of not quite so much interest to real ale drinkers, but nevertheless worth noting, is the unsubstantiated rumour that the ABV of Harp is to be increased from 3.4% to 4%.

## Late Parrot

Joining the Norwegian Blue in parrot heaven, the Grey Parrot on Jackson Crescent in Hulme is being knocked down to make way for a housing development. It is unlikely that it will be greatly missed.

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## Pubs of the Inner City

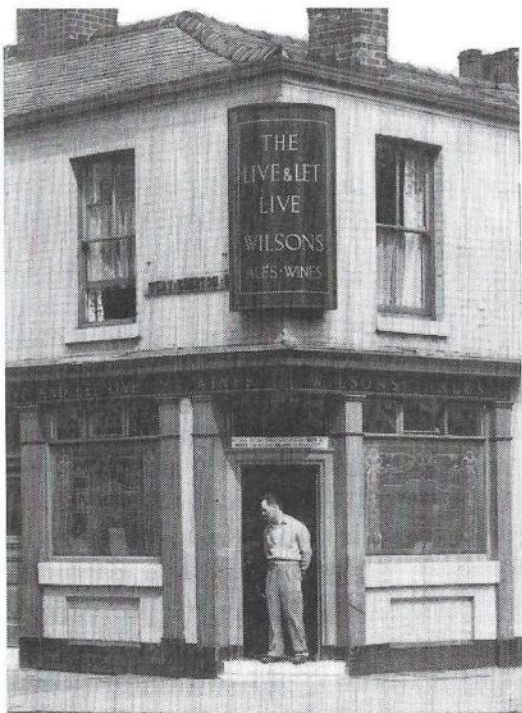
Roger Hall

*Manchester contains, at its heart, a rather extended commercial district, perhaps half a mile long and about as broad, and consisting almost wholly of offices and warehouses. Nearly the whole district is abandoned by dwellers, and is lonely and deserted at night. With the exception of this commercial district, all Manchester proper, all Salford and Hulme, a great part of Pendleton and Chorlton, two thirds of Ardwick and single stretches of Cheetham Hill and Broughton are all unmixed working-people's quarters, stretching like a girdle, averaging a mile and a half in breadth, around the commercial district.*

So wrote a visitor to Manchester a hundred and fifty years ago. Since that time, the commercial centre has expanded and housing on the fringes of what was then the city centre has gone. Yet that area, comprising the largely residential districts between the outer ring road (Alan Turing Way, Queens Road, Great Cheetham Street, Albion Way, Seymour Grove, Moss Lane) and the inner ring road (Mancunian Way, Trinity Way) may still be thought of as the inner city of Manchester. It was these very areas - Adelphi, Ordsall, Hulme, Chorlton, Ardwick, Ancoats, Miles Platting, Collyhurst, Cheetham and Broughton - which spawned the early beerhouses on which much of our conception of the traditional urban pub is based.

These districts have been transformed in the last thirty years. Closure and relocation of industry, rehousing, social mobility, family patterns and unemployment have all affected these districts. Not surprisingly, increasing age profiles, falling incomes and a decline in a sense of community have affected the pubs in all these areas. Marginalisation and closure have been a pattern oft repeated over the last three decades.

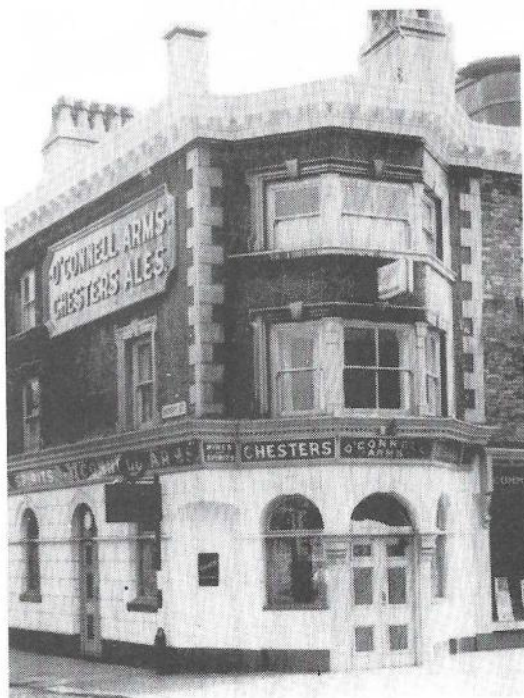
In 1963 there were seventeen pubs on



Oldham Road between New Cross and Queens Road. There are now just two. On that short stretch of road we have lost such excellent pubs as the Crown & Kettle, the St Vincent, the Old Pack Horse, the Lancaster and the Victoria. Of the nineteen pubs on Regent Road in 1963, only one remains, the rebuilt Wellington. Such gems as the Fox, the Grove, the Albert Inn, the Live and Let Live and the Peeping Tom are now but memories. This sad tale of decline and closure has its parallels in virtually every part of the inner city.

Until the late 1980s it was possible, within the space of a mile in any sector of the aforementioned girdle, to call into half a dozen of the twenty pubs you might pass and sample a range of beers in a variety of settings. That is certainly not generally true today. Of course there are pockets where the existence of universities or commercial activities has ensured the viability of a cluster of pubs. There are also individual pubs across the city which are excellent by any account. To my mind, however, variety, diversity and choice are as important as the excellence of an individual pub.

The Welcome in Ordsall is a great pub. It's well run, part of the community and serves a pint of impeccable quality. But... there's only one other pub in Ordsall - the Bricklayers. Across the road, the Wellington's gone 'smooth' and the Prince of Wales on Oldfield Road is keg. You'd have to walk to the Union Tavern on Liverpool Street or to the A6 to get another decent pint.



The Queens Arms on Honey Street, Red Bank, is another cracking inner city pub. It's near enough to the city centre to be incorporated in a tour which could include the Beerhouse, the Marble Arch, the Pot of Beer and the Crown & Cushion. But go in the other direction, and what have you got?



Er, the Mile House and then nothing until you get to the lacklustre premises in Cheetham Hill.

We could single out other individual pubs of quality like the Mitchell Arms (Ancoats), the Hope Inn (Cornbrook), the Travellers Call (Gorton), the Junction (Hendham Vale), the Crescent (Salford) or the Dock & Pulpit (Salford), all of which appear in the 1997 Good Beer Guide. The point remains that these are fewer and further between. Pubs like the Britannia in Beswick or the Mawson and Salutation in Chorlton on Medlock don't even appear in the Good Beer Guide.

Inner city pubs are essentially locals, although it is clear that enterprising licensees can attract a much wider clientele. If pubs like the Queens and the Dock & Pulpit can survive, then surely others can as well. In order to halt the spiral of decline we must celebrate these inner city pubs which meet our ideals and encourage people to visit them. What's Doing encourages articles on individual pubs or areas of the inner city which highlight an important part of our drinking heritage.



### **Oldham Road Pubs in 1963**

#### *West side*

St Vincent  
Old Pack Horse  
Vulcan  
Bird in Hand  
Lancaster  
Ram  
White Hart  
Victoria

#### *East side*

Crown & Kettle  
O'Connell Arms  
Cheshire Cheese  
Nelson  
Wheatsheaf  
Bee Hive  
Angel  
Nottingham Castle  
Heywood Arms

### **Regent Road Pubs in 1963**

#### *South side*

Globe Hotel  
Regent Hotel  
Wheatsheaf  
Fox Inn

#### *North side*

Queens Arms  
Bridge  
Queens Arms  
Wellington  
Grove  
Gloucester Arms  
Spread Eagle  
Albert Inn  
Duke of York  
Sir Colin Campbell  
Live & Let Live  
Gas Tavern  
Borough  
Peeping Tom  
Star

## **Altrincham changes**

The Grapes on Regent Street has lost its cask Boddingtons mild and guest beer, which has been replaced by Castle Eden Old Henry.

There's much better news from the Faulkners Arms on Stamford New Road, a pub once renowned for its Wilsons beers and chess games. There is now a guest beer - North Country Alesman was on recently. The usual McEwans 70/- sells well alongside Theakstons Best Bitter.

Ye Olde Roebuck, once under the same management as the Faulkners, has withdrawn its Lees bitter.

Once cellar and bar improvements have been made, the Railway at Broadheath will be selling several guest beers. Kitchen facilities, a conservatory and a beer garden will also be provided, subject to planning permission at this Grade II listed pub.

## **New voting system**

After many years employing a Good Beer Guide selection system which divided North Manchester and Salford into a number of 'mediaeval villages' to which quotas were allocated, the North Manchester branch has welcomed in the winds of change. Don't worry, the acrimony and vitriol will remain. There won't be any scientific scoring systems or anything daft like that. The shortlisting system is retained and the Central Manchester/The Sticks divide will still be with us. Instead of voting for pubs area by area, there will be one vote for seven pubs in the City Centre and one vote for twenty pubs in North Manchester and Salford.

The resulting pecking orders can be adjusted by motions from the floor, but not on grounds of quality. The first out lists will result in the best pubs. However, there may be a poor geographical spread or an unrepresentative selection of brewers. These can be adjusted by a vote at the meeting. Of course, if the membership wants twenty Holts pubs in Eccles and Swinton, then that's OK. At a trial run, a satisfactory conclusion was reached despite the presence of some who had difficulty in grasping the concept.

All CAMRA members are welcome to attend and vote at the two selection meetings. They are as follows:

Wed 12 Feb 8pm, Hare & Hounds, Shudehill (non-City)

Wed 26 Feb 8pm, The Crescent, Crescent, Salford (City centre)

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Contributors to this issue: Rob Magee, Roger Wood, Keith Egerton, Barbara Lee, Roger Hall, Daddy Bell, Pete Cash, Rhys P Jones, Dave White, Brian Gleave, Mark McConachie, Richard Spedding



## Wetherspoons in Oldham

A new Wetherspoons pub, which will have a unique design and be a bold architectural statement, according to Oldham's Director of Environmental Services, is planned for High Street. The site is on the corner of Lord Street and presently occupied by two former shoe shops.

## Pack Horse

The Pack Horse at the Knott Mill end of Deansgate is currently in the hands of relief managers. The pub underwent a substantial investment in refurbishment and alteration last year, but it has nowhere near 'reached its potential'. It is hoped that new managers will be appointed soon and that they will concentrate on increasing the trade to viable levels, with particular emphasis on food at lunchtimes, as the facilities for catering are good.

**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.



## Eddie Cash

Eddie Cash, one of CAMRA's oldest members, died in hospital on 21st January after a short illness. He was 87.

In spite of failing health over the last year, Eddie continued to attend meetings and he regularly took part in other activities such as collating and delivering What's Doing. For many years he was a regular at the White Swan in Swinton.

We offer our sympathy to Peter, to Margaret and Bob and to Susan and her family. He will be missed by all who knew him.

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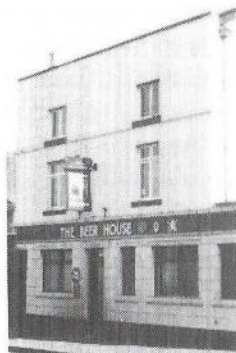
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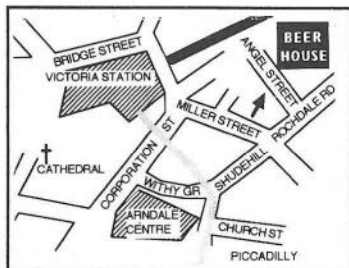
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## Salford des. res.

Six handsome zebrawood chairs, the seats covered with light blue Norwich figured damask; pair of beautiful oak card tables, richly inlaid with rosewood; mahogany sofas, with loose cushion and bolsters; superior Brussels carpets; brass and polished steel fenders and fire irons; pair of elegant bronze figures for lights, with ground glass shades; mahogany four post French bedsteads...

*Been watching the Antiques Roadshow, have we?*

Sort of. These items are from a list of the contents of a house in Salford, offered for sale when the tenant was flitting.



*The house wouldn't be the Dock & Pulpit; the erstwhile Borough in Encombe Place, would it?*

Well spotted.

*Sounds a bit posh for a Salford boozier.*

It wasn't a pub then. The sale was in 1842, a few years after the house was built and when it was one of a few select residences behind St Philip's Church. Within twenty years the neighbourhood was built up and the house was turned into a beershop. It was bought by the Altrincham Brewery (later taken over by Chesters), the original front door was replaced by a window, a new entrance was built at the side and the interior was kitted out in approved beershop manner.

*What happened to the zebrawood chairs, oak card tables, etc?*

Long gone, or it's just possible that they are now gracing the interior of some Whitbread Ale Emporium.



# Pub Chains threaten traditional pubs

★ In the 1970s and 1980s the big brewers were responsible for demolition and radical transformation of our traditional public houses. The threat today is from the pub owning companies.

★ Since 1989, over two hundred pub-owning companies have been set up. Non-brewing chains now own 19,000 pubs, a third of the UK total. The top six companies have almost 15,000 pubs between them.

★ Pub chains account for more than one pint in five of all beer sold in bars.

★ A survey of the twenty largest pub chains shows that all of them rely heavily on national brewers for their beer.

## CAMRA's Aims

*Beer choice:* Pub chains have the capability to put interesting beers on sale anywhere in the country. There is a real opportunity for CAMRA to change policies.

*Pub preservation:* Pub chains are at the heart of CAMRA's campaigning for more sensitive pub refurbishments, against awful 'theming' or the closing down of local pubs.

*Beer quality:* Insufficient training and rapid licensee changes have helped contribute to the current crisis. And poor beer quality helps nitrokeg sales.

## What the future holds

Many pub companies will be renegotiating their supply agreements soon. CAMRA has to be in there now, arguing for wider choice.

The 'venture capitalists' who put up the money for pub companies expect their profit after five years, so many companies will soon be floated on the stock exchange, or sold.

The more successful companies want to expand. Pub chains are buying each other, and regional brewers are buying pub chains to extend their tied estate. The big are getting bigger - sound familiar?

## Mergers & Takeovers in 1996

### Pub Chain to Pub Chain

- \* Enterprise Inns buys 500-strong J. Labatt
- \* Nat West Ventures buys Pubmaster from Brent Walker - 1,700 pubs
- \* Rank Organisation buys Tom Cobleigh plc - 81 pubs
- \* Phoenix Inns buys 1,410-strong Spring Inns
- \* Inn Business buys Sycamore Taverns - 216 pubs
- \* Greenalls buys 475 pubs from Boddingtons

### Pub Chain to Brewer

- \* Marstons buys Pitcher & Piano chain - for £2.2m a pub!
- \* Greene King buys Magic Pub Company - 288 pubs
- \* Morland buys Unicorn Inns (Newt & Cucumber)

## **How did this happen?**

Pub chains existed before the 1989 Beer Orders, but most of these companies were set up to buy the pubs sold by national brewers. They tended to sign agreements to buy beer from the nationals: with tight targets to make, the main thing was to buy well-known brands as cheaply as possible. But most companies can buy other beers if they want to.

The City has been very keen on pub chains running large managed houses. Recently these companies have become so expensive, and the price of new sites for pubs has risen so high, that the City is warming to tenanted companies again. However, the conventional wisdom is very much in favour of fewer, bigger pubs.

## **Bigger brewers mean bigger pub chains**

Why are pub chains growing? The more pubs you own, the better price you get from brewers and other suppliers. If big brewers merge, they will try to claw back discounts, so the pub chains will want to get even bigger and more powerful.

The danger is that when three brewers have 85% of the market (following a takeover of Carlsberg Tetley by Bass), the pub chains will stock discounted beer from the national brewers and little else. Needless to say, big discounts between companies won't mean cheaper beer for the customer - it all goes in extra profits to the pub owners (and expensive refurbishments).

## **Types of pub chain**

*Managed chain* - a company which concentrates on one or more themes; big managed pubs with a clear identity. Wetherspoons is the classic example.

*Tenanted chain* - a company trying to run tenancies much like a regional or national brewer. Century Inns and Enterprise, for example.

*Property company* - basically just out to collect the rent.

## **Theme & Us**

Pub chain owners aren't the only people to 'segment' their pubs - one type aimed at young people, another at middle aged couples eating out, etc.

Some of these theme pubs have their possibilities: Tap and Spile and other 'alehouse' chains can offer interesting beer choice, although too often the refurbishments are crass and don't consider existing customers.

CAMRA is used to making these points to brewers, but now they need to be made to pub chains as well!

# Getting Bigger - some industry facts and figures

## The Beer Side

*Approximate share of beer production in 1996:*

Scottish Courage	30%
Bass	24%
Carlsberg Tetley	16%
Whitbread	14%
Regional/Family brewers	15%
Micro Brewers	1-2%

A merged Bass-Carlsberg Tetley would have around 40% of beer production.

## The Pubs Side

*The national brewers*

Bass Taverns	4,200
Scottish & Newcastle	2,600
Whitbread Inns	<u>3,850</u>
Total	<u>14,650</u>

*Chains with more than 1,000 pubs*

Allied Domecq	4,100
Inntrepreneur (IPCL)	2,900
Greenalls	2,500
Pubmaster	1,650
Phoenix Inns	1,750
Spring Inns	<u>1,400</u>
Total	<u>14,300</u>

The top 6 non-brewing companies own 14,300 pubs - almost a quarter of the total and more than the national brewers! The next 33 pub companies own 4,650 pubs.

## All Pubs and their owners

National brewers	10,650
All pub chains	19,000
Regional family brewers	12,000
Small pub owners	2,000
Others (e.g. freehouses)	<u>17,000</u>
Total	<u>60,650</u>

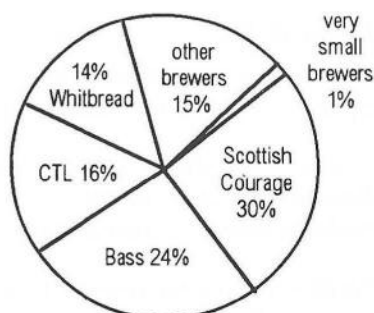
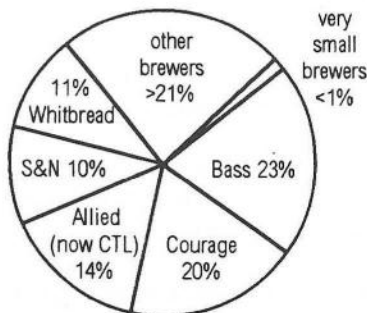
## Other licensed premises

Other full on-licences (hotels, etc.)	24,800
Restricted on-licences (e.g. restaurants)	32,300
Clubs	31,500
Off-licences	52,600

## UK Beer Sales by Type (1995)

Ale 45%, Lager 55%  
 Draught 65%, packaged 35%  
 Real ale is 16% of all beer and 43% of draught mild, bitter and stout.  
 Canned beer is now nearly a quarter of the market.

1989 - Production share of UK brewers - 1996





# Letters

## Too cheap

Sir - Batemans January Ale, a 3.5% bitter, was on sale at my local Hogshead in mid-January for £1.15 a pint. Excellent, I thought. A low gravity beer - just what my liver and mind need, as I am working rather early in the morning. However, it was not available in halves! And if you insisted on a half, you still paid £1.15! Good old Twitters! 'Too cheap to sell by halves', was the official reason - selling beer at 58p a half would bring in the riff-raff!

*Roger Wood*

## Silly Jilly

Sir - Whilst applauding the BBC for featuring English single variety hop beers in its 'Food and Drink' programme on January 14th, I was nonetheless outraged by the repeated references by Jilly Goolden and others to 'Dwarf Hops'.

This is heightism at its most blatant! I would suggest that a more appropriate and politically correct appellation be substituted immediately; my own preference would be for 'Humuli of Restricted Growth'.

*Lupus Minor*

## Sober reflection

Sir - I'm sure all What's Doing readers were heartened to read pop star Brian Harvey's condemnation of drug taking a few hours after unwisely stating that it didn't do any harm.

But I have not seen a word of retraction from that other cultural icon, Paul



*Harvey*



*Mason*

Mason, who told the Manchester Evening News last month: 'I'm going to drink until I fall over.' Such an attitude to alcohol can only have a detrimental effect on impressionable young real ale drinkers. Has he, in fact, recanted? Or did he just fall over?

*Concerned, Castlefield*

## Banks's in Blackley

Blackley now has its first ever Banks's house. They have taken over the Lion & Lamb on Victoria Avenue from S&N. This has resulted in a change of beer from Wilsons to Banks's bitter, but be aware that keg smooth-pour bitter is also on sale, so ask for the handpulled stuff. Very little else has changed at the pub, apart from the new turfed area at the front (WD Jan).

*Fax from Ougadougou*

Ougadougou, Burkina Faso. 20 January 1997. From Adjuko Mbinga

*We are instructed by our client, the late Hon. Rupert Periwinkle, to supply you with information from time to time.*

## Rupert

Reports of my death, like that of Mark Twain, will be greatly exaggerated. For some time, my enemies have been trying to discredit me. The usual blandishments, bribes and threats fell on barren ground and I foresaw a more radical approach to my subornation. I had not ruled out assassination, but suspected that a more subtle approach might be tried. Abduction, brainwashing and behaviour control by means of an implanted smart chip might prove more attractive and more effective. My death could but prevent my heresy. Brainwashing could recruit me to an alien cause.

I envisage that my abduction will be contrived in a manner which generates circumstantial evidence of my presumed death. After a time I will reappear with some plausible explanation of my disappearance and continue to campaign for amber nectars and taverns of excellence as before. I suspect that my views might have undergone a subtle transformation, such as to undermine much of what I have fought for all my life. There will no doubt be rational arguments to support my opinions.

I make these comments to warn

readers of this organ what may come. If I am found alive and return to Grotley, please treat with a pinch of salt anything I might say. I will, I am certain, be programmed to influence events in a way which will be detrimental to the Campaign. I may fail to give support to those who need it and fawn at the feet of those who don't deserve it. Please ignore anything I say and treat my writings with contempt. It will not be the real me but a strange power controlling me.

I have not been able to trust anyone in Europe and have sent all my documentary evidence to Africa. Eddy, please do not print any of this as my life may be in danger. Ensure that all readers of What's Doing are informed by word of mouth. In that way my future contributions will be discredited.





# Branch Diary

## **Rochdale, Oldham & Bury**

Sat 1 Feb 12noon, 1998 GBG Selection Meeting + Rochdale Pub Crawl -

Contact has details

Tues 4 Feb 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Wishing Well, Heywood centre

Wed 12 Feb 8.30pm, Oldham Beer Festival Organising Meeting, Hogshead, Union Street, Oldham

Tues 18 Feb 8.30pm, Committee Meeting, Reed Hotel, Rochdale centre

Tues 25 Feb 8.30pm, What's Doing Collation, Flying Horse, Town Hall Square, Rochdale.

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

## **Trafford & Hulme**

Thur 6 Feb, survey/crawl: 8pm Legh Arms, Sale Moor. 10pm and finish, Brook, Brooklands Station

Thur 13 Feb, 8pm Swan with Two Nicks, Little Bollington; 9pm Vine, Dunham Massey; finish Orange Tree

Thurs 20 Feb, 8pm Hare & Hounds, Manchester, then Marble Arch, Pot of Beer and Beerhouse. 10pm Smithfield and pre-selection meeting for GBG

Thur 27 Feb, Roger Hall Inner City Challenge Crawl: 8.30pm Ducie Arms, Devas Street, Hulme; 9.30pm Salutation, then Church. Finish Britons Protection.

Thur 6 Mar, Hale Barns/Hale Crawl. 8pm Unicorn, 8.45 Bulls Head, then Bleeding Wolf. Finish Railway, Hale.

*Contact: Roger Wood 0161 747 3987*

## **North Manchester**

Wed 5 Feb, City Crawl. Peveril of the Peak, Great Bridgewater Street, 7pm; Circus, Portland Street, 8pm; Crown & Anchor, Hilton Street, 9pm; Jolly Angler, Ducie Street, to finish.

Wed 12 Feb 8pm, GBG 1998 (non-City): Final selection meeting, Hare & Hounds, Shudehill, Manchester

Wed Feb 19 8pm, Branch Meeting, Unicorn, Church Street, Manchester

Tues 25 Feb 6pm onward, What's Doing collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham

Wed 26 Feb 8pm, GBG 1998 (City): Final selection meeting, Crescent, Salford. (To include 10 years in GBG presentation)

Wed Mar 5th: Roger Hall's surprise crawl. Meet Old Monkey, Portland Street, between 7.00 and 7.30pm for something very special

*Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937*

## **Bolton**

Thur 6 Feb 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Howcroft, Pool Street, Bolton

Sun 9 Feb 12 noon, Beer Festival Meeting, Clifton, Newport Street, Bolton

*Contact: Richard Spedding 01204 653924 (h) 01204 521771 x2305 (w)*

Dave and Sue 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*

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

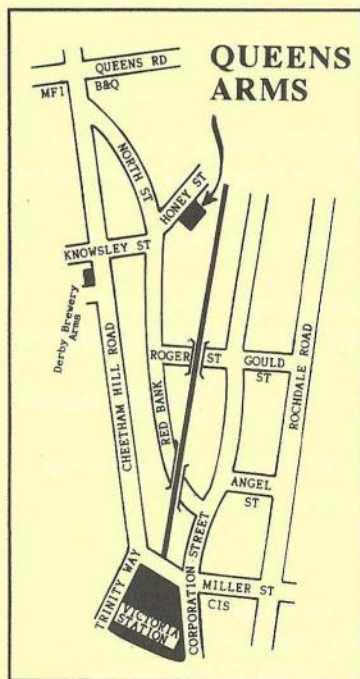


*Westons Traditional Cider on handpump*

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*