

25p

What's Doing

MARCH 1997



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

MIDDLETON MOVES



J W Lees are planning to extend the Assheton Arms in the centre of Middleton and to give the pub a more upmarket image. Perhaps the brewery is taking steps to counteract the threat of a Wetherspoons opening up in the town centre. The proposed site of the hotly contested Wetherspoons application (see inside in this issue) is just across the roundabout from the Assheton. The nearby Corkies Club has also announced its intention to go upmarket and aim for a more mature clientele.

Joeys in the City

The City on Oldham Street (right), which at times has been a somewhat lacklustre pub, is now selling Holts. Will this herald a change of fortunes? Watch this space.

Parson's Nose

One of the most exciting pub developments in Salford since the war is planned in Worsley. The outfit who built the Kings Ransom in Sale and refurbished the Bulls Head in Hale have planning permission and a provisional licence to extend Church Lodge on Worsley Brow and turn it into a pub. The premises are on the service road to the Novotel.

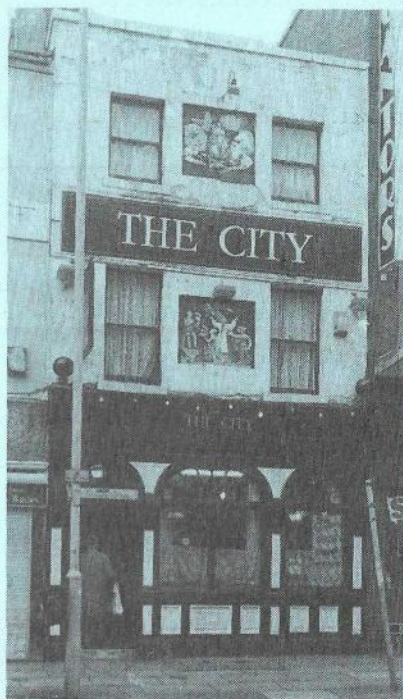
The conversion will have pitched roofs, gables and several distinct rooms and drinking areas. Up to six traditional ales will be on sale. This is excellent news for Worsley, where all the other pubs have been spoiled by pointless alterations, chasing the holy grail of the young customer. The only reservation is the pub's name - The Parson's Nose. Work will begin around May and the pub is expected to open in early 1998.

Queens Award

The Queens Arms in Patricroft is to be entered for a CAMRA/English Heritage pub design award. The refurbishment at the Queens is sensitive to the pub's history and layout and has improved trade, whilst retaining the traditional atmosphere.

Crass Bass

Bass Taverns have removed one set of screens from the side rooms of the Unicorn on Church Street in Manchester. This has the effect of diminishing the sense of cosiness and is perhaps the thin end of a wedge which may open up the entire pub. A sad mistake in a pub which has been well conserved.



Kings Arms

At the end of last year Mike Edwards took over at the Kings Arms on Bloom Street in Salford (see WD Jan) and since then the pub has seen some tidying up, with new seat covers and stools. On the beer front, recent brews have included Charles Wells Bombardier and Fargo, Moorhouses Pendle Witch, Caledonian 80/-, Batemans Draymans Tipple and Sarah Hughes Ruby Mild. Mike has also reintroduced cask cider in the shape of Westons Vintage.



At present the pub is running a loyalty discount scheme - buy seven pints of cask ale and receive your eighth free. If you haven't been to the Kings for a while, it's worth giving it a try.

Mosley Street Moves

A new pub, The Beer Exchange, is to open next to the Bank on Mosley Street. The Bank is being Firkinised and will be renamed the Overdraft and Firkin. It will be supplied from the Flea and Firkin at All Saints, where one Brendan Dobbin has been spotted installing a brewery and carting bags of malt inside.

Campaigning for Pubs

CAMRA's booklet, *Campaigning for Pubs - The way forward*, has been published. It provides ideas and guidance for those who are concerned to ensure the survival of traditional pubs and who might be involved in campaigns to save individual pubs.

Five Nations Line-up

Between March 1st and March 15th the Hogshead on High Street, Manchester, will be selling five brews to celebrate the final stages of the Five Nations Rugby Championship:

Flower of Scotland (*Caledonian Brewery, Edinburgh*)

Bread of Heaven (*Brains, Cardiff*)

Sweet Chariot (*Youngs, London*)

Molly Malone (*Hilden Brewery, Co. Antrim*)

Marseillaise (*Brasserie des Deux Rivières, Brittany*)

COME TO THE ALL YEAR ROUND BEER FESTIVAL

THE BEER HOUSE

Angel Street, Manchester. 0161 839 7019

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



LIVE CEILIDH BAND

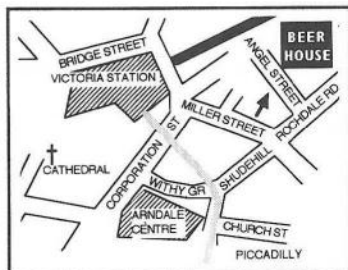
Saturday March 8th, 1pm-3.30pm

- *Happy Birthday Sal !!!*

and Saturday March 15th

Lunchtime food 7 days a week • Try our Sunday Breakfast 12 -
2.30 • Evening Meals 5 - 7 Fri • Thurs 5 - 8 Choice of three
curries (veg and carnivore) + rice £2.70
Half price menus Monday lunch

WE'RE
IN THE
GOOD
BEER
GUIDE
'97



OPEN ALL DAY MONDAY - SUNDAY
Darts

TWO TRADITIONAL CIDERS
ALWAYS AVAILABLE

GOOD FOOD - Vegetarians welcome
FREE PARTY ROOM AVAILABLE

Wetherspoons in Middleton

J D Wetherspoon are determined to continue their fight to open an outlet in Middleton. After losing their appeal to Rochdale council, they took the matter to a public enquiry. There they emphasised the job creation potential of their proposed development and pointed out that by siting a pub in a particular area they can help regenerate the area.

The council still maintained that they wanted the site for potential development by a major retail chain. As previously mentioned in WD, there is no realistic chance of that happening as town centre shopping is concentrated in the Arndale Centre and the site (the old Kwik Save building) is in a shabby part of the town.

Over in Bury, the latest JDW venture was due to open in the former transport offices on March 13th, but the date may have been put back to late summer.

Old pub

The closed Appleford, formerly The 53, on Queens Road, Cheetham, is to become a community centre. Pity, some pubs are that already.

The **BEER HOUSE**

Angel Street, Manchester. 0161 839 7019

WEST COUNTRY FESTIVAL

Thursday May 1st

to Bank Holiday Monday, May 5th

**50+ BEERS including many new
Spring and Summer Specials
plus ciders and perry**

Open All Day Every Day

Stalybridge Buffet Bar is back *Ralph Warrington*

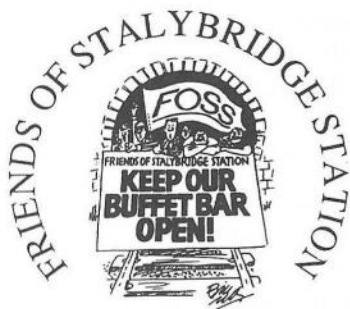
After five years of dedicated campaigning, one of Greater Manchester's best known pubs reopened in late January. The Refreshment Rooms on Platform One of Stalybridge BR Station, known universally as the Buffet Bar, have featured regularly in these pages, ever since British Rail advertised the station buildings, including the bar, for redevelopment. Feeling less than enthusiastic about a wine bar/bistro conversion, the High Peak and North East Cheshire branch of CAMRA initiated the campaign to save the Buffet Bar, starting with a petition, and very soon attracted help from other CAMRA branches in the region as well as concerned drinkers, the local community and politicians.

There was a reprieve when BR was broken up and the campaign was wound down to a watching brief, then there was a fresh flurry of activity in 1994. This was a more broad-based campaign, involving some influential 'movers and shakers' in the background. Some original campaigning, including the running of a special train from the station to Llandudno and a specially commissioned brass band recording, all helped keep the local media full of stories, and when BR relocated (i.e. made off with) Joyce, the station clock, the local MP stepped in to win it back. This publicity exercise has now paid off, with a replica (functioning and accurate) clock being installed early in February.



Now available from the Friends of Stalybridge Station

Commemorative T-Shirt



Limited edition of 1000, with original design by Bill Tidy, and each supplied with a numbered certificate of authenticity

Please send a Cheque or PO (payable to FOSS) for £9 for each T-Shirt, inc.

p&p to:-

T. Walker, 3 Home Farm Avenue,
Mottram, SK14 6JS.

Enquiries: 01457 764482 evenings,
0161 477 6868 days.

So now the bar is back, and much improved, with internal toilets and much needed extra drinking space, plus a posh new room (wallpapered!) for club meetings, parties and the long-established Saturday Folk night. An unfortunate casualty was licensee Ken Redfern, who lost not only his business, but also the family home. Though his cellarmanship and knack of bringing obscure beers to the bar will be missed, Sylvia and John from the GBG-listed Station in Ashton are more than capable hosts, and bring a wealth of experience to the Buffet Bar. They narrowly pipped Dave Connor from the White House and Q, and also Mike Field from the Dewsbury Buffet Bar, to the winning post when the tenancy was up for grabs.

The original Buffet Bar has been thoroughly restored and redecorated, with all the remaining original features intact, including the conservatory and the marble bar. There is a muted paint scheme and the temptation to fill the place with mock Victoriana has been studiously avoided. The original iron fireplace, which puts out far more heat than would be considered possible for such a size of fire, is in place and was burning legs as usual on opening night. The only noticeable change, other than the disappearance of the perennial Christmas decorations, is the appearance of a door next to the fire which leads to the new rooms.

Eight handpumps now grace the bar: Wadworth 6X and Flowers IPA are always available, plus up to six guests, with beers from the smaller independent breweries to the fore. A real cider will once again be on sale and it is hoped that the famous selection of foreign bottled beers will return. The Stalybridge Buffet Bar is a notable, if drawn out, campaigning victory - persistence pays off, and a fine pub should once again thrive.

The Second Request Stop Beer Hop

John Cresswell

After last year's success, there will be a second Beer Festival at the Bhurtpore Inn, Aston, near Nantwich, on Wednesday 19th to Sunday 23rd March.

Although situated in the heart of the Cheshire countryside, the Bhurtpore Inn is easily reached by train, being twelve minutes' walk from Wrenbury Station. Wrenbury is a request stop for local trains on the Crewe-Shrewsbury line - you have to tell the conductor you want to get off there, and coming back you put your hand out to signal the driver, as you would with a bus.

Travelling from Manchester or Stockport would normally involve a change at Crewe, but the Crewe & Shrewsbury Passengers' Association has arranged with South Wales & West Railway Ltd for a Manchester-Cardiff express train to stop at Wrenbury for visitors to the Festival on Saturday 22nd March. This train departs Manchester at 10.33 and calls at Stockport (10.42) and Wilmslow (10.50). For those returning from the Festival, an express for Wilmslow, Stockport and Manchester is scheduled to stop at Wrenbury at 17.03. (There is engineering work in the Shrewsbury area, so confirm Saturday evening train times by phoning 0345 484950.)

Cheap day returns to Wrenbury are available on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday: from Manchester £8.90, Stockport £8.60 and Wilmslow £7.20. There is a 25% discount for parties of ten or more - phone 0345 125625. For details of other services to and from Wrenbury phone 0345 484950.

Sixty real ales are promised and there will be an extensive range of Continental bottled beers. See advertisement for details of opening times. To all who supported the Bhurtpore Inn Beer Festival and our local rail service last year, thank you. I look forward to seeing you again this year.

Van der Wack

The Flying Dutchman, a floating bar in Salford Quays, has been bought by Hale Leisure and is to be resited in Liverpool.

New pubs

Two planning applications have been made for new pubs in Castlefield, at Deansgate Quay and Slate Wharf. A new pub is planned on Hilton Street near the Crown & Anchor.

Wigan & District

Dave White

The PENDLE WITCH, a GBG-rated pub in Warburton Place, Atherton, is once again back in business after a period of closure. A relief manager is now running the show and the full range of Moorhouses ales is available, plus a guest beer.

Another Good Beer Guide pub in the news is the BATH SPRINGS, Wigan Road, Bryn; or rather, its licensee Ian Halliwell is. Ian has recently taken over the tenancy of the PARK HOTEL, a Burtonwood pub just up the A49 in Landgate, but will be keeping the Bath Springs as well, so the guest beers in this Tetley house should be safe.

Still with the beer drinker's vademecum, and the COLLIERS ARMS, Wigan Road, New Springs, now sells seasonal beers from Burtonwood to complement the matchless bitter and mild. One of these is Buccaneer, as the Bold Lane Brewery has stopped regular production of this pale ale. The Colliers is the safest bet for a good pint in this part of Wigan, since cask conditioned beer at the KIRKLESS ARMS off Cale Lane is fighting a losing battle against Burtonwood Smooth, and the only real ale left at the WHITE LION & RAILWAY in downtown Whelley is Worthington Best.

Finally, by the time you read this, the MILLSTONE, Wigan Lane, Swinley, may have opened its doors again. The Thwaites pub closed before Christmas (see WD Jan 1997), but rumours that it would reopen anytime were rife in mid-February. Here's hoping...

Bigger Farmers

Greenalls plan to extend the Farmers Arms in Northenden by extending the pub to incorporate a new kitchen and dining room. To their credit, they're also building a new bowls pavilion.

The Second **BHURTPORE INN BEER FESTIVAL**

at the Bhurtpore Inn, Aston, near Nantwich
Wednesday 19th - Sunday 23rd March 1997
at least

60 REAL ALES

FREE ADMISSION

Opening times: Weds 6.30-11pm. Thurs & Fri 12noon-2.30,
6.30-11pm. Sat 12noon-11pm. Sun 12noon-3pm, 7-10.30pm

WIGAN ^{EST}1988 BEER FESTIVAL TENTH ANNIVERSARY YEAR !

Over 40
Real Ales

Live Music



Traditional Cider
& Foreign Beers

Food available
at all sessions

THURSDAY 6th MARCH

5:30 - 11:00 50p before 7pm £1.50 after

FRIDAY 7th MARCH

12:00 - 3:00 FREE 5:30 - 11.30 £1.00 before 7pm £2.00 after

SATURDAY 8th MARCH

12:00 - 4:00 £1.00 7:00 - 11:00 £1.50

ALL SESSIONS FREE TO CARD CARRYING CAMRA MEMBERS



at The Mill at the Pier
(Trencherfield Mill near Wigan Pier)



FOUR MINUTES FROM WIGAN NORTH WESTERN/WALLGATE STATIONS

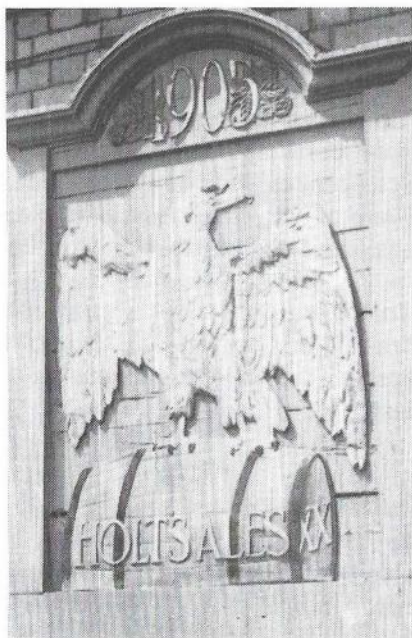
Holts corner

Stewart Revell

I was recently looking at a list of Joseph Holt pubs for the year 1985 and considering all that has happened over the last twelve years, Holts have fared rather better than most other breweries in keeping their estate. My 1985 list contains the names of ninety pubs, many of which were tenanted in those days.

Since then, several new pubs have been built: the Sidings in Levenshulme, the Hyde Park Corner in Salford, the Ashley Brook in Seedley, the Old Monkey in Manchester, the Millhouse near Warrington and the Dukes Gate at Little Hulton. Added to these are the pubs bought from other breweries, such as the Queens and the Three Crowns in Macclesfield and the Starkey Arms in Heywood around five years ago.

Of course, Holts have also lost a few pubs. The Apollo in Cheetham, not far from the brewery, was the victim of vandalism and then set on fire. The original Apollo was one of Joseph Holt's very first tied houses. More recently, the Sabre on Taylorson Street, Ordsall, was destroyed by vandals. The Spread Eagle in Salford (remember the signboard?) and the Kings Arms in Hollinwood were demolished for road widening. A replacement site for the Kings is still being sought. The licence of the Spread Eagle was transferred to the Dukes Gate and the name was given to a large new outlet in Chorlton-cum-Hardy.



Early last year Holts acquired ten pubs from Greenalls. Of these, eight have been retained and converted into managed houses, including the Angel in Knutsford, the Brooklyn in Bolton, the Abbey in St Helens, the Cock o' Budworth at Budworth and the Kingsway at Levenshulme.

So during the last twelve years Holts have done rather well, increasing the number of their tied outlets and spreading beyond Greater Manchester. My current list shows a tied estate of some 120 pubs, with one - on John Dalton Street, Manchester - in the pipeline.

Pub chains and traditional pubs

Roger Hall

One third of all our pubs, about 19,000 of them, are now owned by pub chains. Ten years ago the national brewing companies represented the biggest threat to traditional public houses; today the threat is from pub owning companies. (See WD last month.)

The pub chains are becoming bigger and will continue to grow through mergers and takeovers in order to negotiate discounts with the big, monopolistic brewers. The chains are interested in fewer, bigger pubs, which are usually managed and need to cater for mass markets. Pressure on traditional pubs is two-edged...

** The focus on larger premises marginalises small, street corner locals.*

** Refurbishments of premises are frequently crass and insensitive, irreversibly removing traditional features.*

Pub chains are less visible than their brewer predecessors. They don't have identifiable premises like breweries. Because of their essential facelessness they are more difficult to influence. Customers are not aware of who owns their local. Remote and anonymous companies care less about communities and localities.

What was heralded as a great step forward could represent an insidious threat to our heritage. Large pub chains promise to be more rather than less damaging to the traditional pub than the big brewers were in the past.

Pubs win prizes

Winners of this year's CAMRA English Heritage Pub Design Awards have been announced in the following categories:

Best example of a building converted to pub use:

Commercial Rooms, Bristol (Wetherspoons)

Best pub refurbishment:

Black Horse, Friargate, Preston (Robinsons)

Barton Arms, Aston, Birmingham (Enterprise Inns)

Joe Goodwin Award for refurbishment with minimal change:

Vine, Brierley Hill (Bathams Brewery tap)

Swinton & Pendlebury

The Bulls Head has been refurbished once again. The Royal Oak has a fake handpump serving Cidermaster. Across the road, the Albert (Nadgers) is serving handpumped beer which aficionados of Boddingtons believe is keg. Surely this can't be the case.

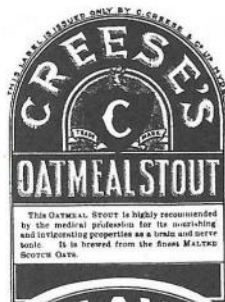
New book

A History of the Breweries of Stalybridge, Dukinfield and Hyde by B Sullivan

A few years ago Mr Sullivan published *Local Brew*, a history of the breweries of Ashton-under-Lyne, and the success of this book has prompted him to put pen to paper again. The result is a well-researched account of Heginbotham's of Stalybridge, Shaw's of Dukinfield and Creese's of Hyde, completing his definitive history of the main breweries of Tameside.

This is the first time the three breweries have been documented, so the book is an ideal work of reference for anyone interested in local brewery history. It is well illustrated with photographs, labels and advertisements.

A History of the Breweries of Stalybridge, Dukinfield and Hyde is available from the author, B Sullivan, 122 Cambridge Street, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 1AU. Price £3, post free. Only 500 copies have been printed, so get your order in now!



A Rock and a Hard Place

As pubs are acquired by pub chains, the pressure to serve nitrokeg seems to increase. But there's no such excuse for brewery-owned premises. So why should Vaux be thinking of switching to Lambtons in their tied estate? Rumours are rife that the Gibraltar in Newton Heath may be next to go from cask beer to the new smooth.

Jacking In

The Bowling Green in Pendlebury is closed and boarded. It looks like the last end. The pub had been trading poorly and opening hours were sporadic of late. Is this the beginning of a shift of the inner city landscape to the leafier suburbs? The Duke of Wellington down the road is now a church and Halligan's a few hundred yards away was closed for several months. Will it soon be as difficult to do a pub crawl of Pendlebury as it is of Ordsall?

Now & Then

Rob Magee

No.99 **Crown & Cushion**

488 Oldham Road, Failsworth

This photograph of the Crown & Cushion at Failsworth Pole was taken in the 1880s. The landlord was John Dunkerley and that could be him sitting by the door, smoking his clay pipe and watching the world go by. The lady at the door is almost certainly Mrs Dunkerley.

The Crown & Cushion had been going for over a hundred years then, which makes it one of Failsworth's oldest pubs. It opened in 1754, only three years after the Pack Horse at Wrigley Head got its licence. One of the Crown & Cushion's long-serving tenants was William Barrow (from 1794 to the 1840s) and he must have seen some changes in the neighbourhood, with the opening of the Rochdale Canal, the making of the new road to Oldham and the dawning of the railway era. Despite the

industrialisation, much of Failsworth remained rural and the licensee in the 1870s, another William Barrow, was a farmer with some forty acres of land.



Yates's Castle Brewery of Ardwick became the owners of the property and were probably responsible for renovating the building in the early 1900s, when it gained a new roof and the stock brick façade we see today. But by the 1930s it looked as if the old pub had had its day. It was in a good state of repair, but the ceilings of the rooms were low and the lavatories in the yard were in a poor state. Trade was three-and-a-half barrels of beer, eighteen dozen bottles and the equivalent of one bottle of wine and spirits a week. The brewery owned some adjoining property

(a former blacksmith's shop) and there was plenty of space in the yard, so it was recommended that a new Crown & Cushion be built.

This didn't happen because the Second World War intervened, and after the war the rebuilding of pubs wasn't high on the list of priorities. The most dramatic occurrence in post-war years was on 10th April 1950, when Failsworth Pole blew down. It was Easter Monday so I was off school and I vividly remember the event being announced on the national news. The present Pole was erected some years later and its 'cock that never crows' is just 52 feet high, quite a come-down from the original 82 feet. Still, this Pole is more technically advanced and you can look out from the Crown & Cushion at the clock tower and know when to get your last pint in.

Yates's Castle Brewery was taken over by John Smiths of Tadcaster, which became part of the Courage Group. When a John Smiths pub guide was published in 1986 I toddled down to the Crown & Cushion for a pint and a copy of the guide. Mary Ibbertson was the landlady then and as she handed me both she said, 'We're not even in it.' It's a shame, really - not many breweries would have missed out a historic pub like the Crown & Cushion!

Hulme pubs

The demise of the Grey Parrot was reported last month and the number of pubs in Hulme continues to fall. After being boarded up for some time, the Iron Duke on Hulme Walk is to become a storage depot for recyclable materials and a site for paper and bottle banks. The Iron Duke was built by Bass in 1974 and the Grey Parrot by Greenalls in 1969.

New Yates's in Oldham

Yates's are planning to convert the former Halifax Building Society on Yorkshire Street into licensed premises. The new bar will target the younger end of the market, leaving the other Yates's (the former Barclays Bank at the top of Bow Street) to cater for the more traditional Yates's clientele.

Thrifty Fringe

The newly-opened Fringe Bar on Swan Street is selling Flowers IPA at £1.10 per pint. However, even better value is the Hoegaarden Witbier at £1.40 per pint. Within the space of a quarter of a mile there are now four outlets for Hoegaarden - the Pot of Beer (£1.90), the Marble Arch (£2) and the Beer House are the others.

Guests are
always welcome
at



ASHTON'S PREMIER
FREE HOUSE

With NINE beers on hand pumps
there are always interesting guest
beers - old favourites and also
rare and exotic brews. (BETWEEN-
8 and 12 different ales EACH WEEK.

MONDAY-
FOLK NIGHT

PLUS

LUNCHEONS TRY OUR HOT MEALS
& SUPER COLD BUFFET

Conservatory & Rooms

For Meetings & Parties

OPEN ALL DAY
- MONDAY TO FRIDAY

WARRINGTON ST
ASHTON-U-LYNE
NEXT TO
BY-PASS



Beer & Pub Facts



B.L.R.A.

PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION (thousand barrels)

| | Total Production | Total Consumption | Consumption (pints per head of population) |
|------|---------------------|----------------------|--|
| 1995 | 34,706 | 36,129 | 177.5 |
| 1994 | 35,643 | 37,013 | 182.5 |
| 1990 | 37,751 | 39,829 | 199.3 |
| 1985 | 36,588 | 37,771 | 192.1 |

Beers below 1.2% alcohol by volume are included in production and consumption.

BEER TYPES (percentage sales)

| | 1995 | 1994 | 1990 | 1985 |
|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| DRAUGHT | | | | |
| Bitter & Stout | 33.0 | 34.3 | 34.5 | 41.8 |
| Mild | 2.8 | 3.1 | 4.1 | 6.4 |
| Lager | 29.6 | 29.7 | 32.6 | 29.0 |
| Low alcohol ale & lager | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.4 | - |
| Total | 65.4 | 67.1 | 71.7 | 77.2 |

PACKAGED

| | | | | |
|------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Light, pale, export: | 7.7 | 7.8 | 7.6 | 7.9 |
| Brown | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.7 |
| Stout | 1.5 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 2.1 |
| Lager | 24.9 | 23.0 | 17.8 | 11.9 |
| No & low alcohol lager | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 0.2 |
| Total | 34.6 | 32.9 | 28.3 | 22.8 |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| TOTAL ALE & STOUT | 45.2 | 47.0 | 48.6 | 59.1 |
| TOTAL LAGER | 54.8 | 53.0 | 51.4 | 40.9 |

NUMBER OF BREWERS

| | 1995 | 1994 | 1990 | 1985 |
|---------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Operating companies | 64 | 64 | 65 | 73 |
| Operating breweries | 93 | 93 | 99 | 121 |

Additionally about 200 small wholesale breweries established since 1971 are currently operating and around 150 pubs brew their own.

EMPLOYMENT

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Brewing/Distribution | 39,000 |
| Pub employees (full + part time) | 326,000 |
| Club employees (full + part time) | 138,000 |
| Self-employed licensees | 100,000 |
| Pub and brewing suppliers | 307,000* |
| TOTAL | 910,000 |

**Full-time equivalents. Includes indirect impact outside the sector.*

CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC DRINKS PER HEAD OF POPULATION (litres per head)

| | 1995 | 1994 | 1990 | 1985 |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Beer (a) | 100.9 | 103.7 | 113.2 | 109.2 |
| Cider (b) | 8.8 | 7.6 | 5.9 | 5.2 |
| Wine | 14.7 | 14.4 | 12.8 | 10.9 |
| Spirits (100% alcohol) | 1.3 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 1.7 |

(a) includes low and no alcohol beers

(b) Includes low alcohol cider

WORLD'S MAJOR BEER PRODUCERS (million barrels)

| | 1995 | 1994 | 1990 | 1985 |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1 USA | 142.8 | 144.9 | 146.0 | 138.6 |
| 2 China | 94.5 | 86.2 | 42.3 | 19.0 |
| 3 Germany (a) | 71.7 | 72.5 | 73.4 | 71.8 |
| 4 Brazil | 51.3 | 38.2 | 35.4 | 18.5 |
| 5 Japan | 41.1 | 44.0 | 40.3 | 29.4 |
| 6 UK | 34.7 | 35.1 | 37.8 | 36.6 |
| 7 Mexico | 27.2 | 27.6 | 24.3 | 17.8 |
| 8 Spain | 15.5 | 15.3 | 16.7 | 14.3 |
| 9 South Africa | 15.0 | 14.5 | 13.8 | 7.9 |
| 10 Netherlands | 14.1 | 13.6 | 12.2 | 10.7 |
| 11 Canada | 13.9 | 14.0 | 13.8 | 13.5 |

(a) includes West and East Germany before 1990



INTERNATIONAL CONSUMPTION (BEER) Pints per head

| | 1995 | 1994 | 1990 | 1985 |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1 Czech Republic (a) | 280.0 | 283.5 | 237.7 | 230.2 |
| 2 Germany (b) | 242.3 | 245.5 | 251.3 | 255.9 |
| 3 Denmark | 218.9 | 223.0 | 223.8 | 228.4 |
| 4 Austria | 203.4 | 205.2 | 213.5 | 196.4 |
| 5 Irish Republic | 198.3 | 198.1 | 218.0 | 191.8 |
| 6 Belgium (c) | 183.0 | 188.6 | 212.6 | 212.9 |
| 7 UK | 177.5 | 182.5 | 199.3 | 192.1 |
| 8 New Zealand | 175.1 | 180.7 | 194.5 | 202.0 |
| 9 Australia | 167.2 | 174.2 | 196.4 | 201.5 |
| 10 Slovenia | 165.0 | 166.0 | - | - |

(a) Czechoslovakia before 1992

(b) West Germany before 1990

(c) Includes Luxembourg

BEER DUTY

On a pint of 5% abv bitter selling at £1.60 (in November 1996) the amount of Excise Duty was 30.7p and VAT 23.8p - a third of the price goes directly to the Government. In France, beer duty was just 4p a pint. (It increased to 6p a pint on January 1.)

THE CROSS-CHANNEL BEER TRADE

* At least 1.3 million pints of beer a day are coming across the Channel from France, duty-paid, and the volume continues to increase.

* Customs and Excise estimate more than half this beer will be sold illegally to anyone who wants it.

* One van can hold 1,520 pints of beer - the amount a small community pub would sell in two weeks.

* The 'van trade' alone is equivalent to the annual beer sales of every pub in North Yorkshire, Derbyshire or Staffordshire.

PUBS: BRITAIN'S TOURIST ASSET

In a recent survey, 9 out of 10 foreign tourists said they would visit a pub during their stay. Of those who expressed a preference, 85 per cent said British pubs were better than bars in their own country. In a similar survey in 1992, 68 per cent preferred the British pub.

TOTAL PUBS IN UK

| | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| England | 50,500 |
| Wales | 3,900 |
| Scotland | 4,900 |
| Northern Ireland | 1,700 |
| Total | 61,000 |
| <i>Broken down into:</i> | |
| Managed | 14,100 |
| Tenanted/leased | 24,900 |
| Free houses | 22,000 |

Most of this information is taken from the Brewers & Licensed Retailers Association Statistical Handbook, available from Brewing Publications Ltd, 42 Portman Square, London W1H 0BB.

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.

Letters

Barley Mow

Sir - May I thank all the Manchester CAMRA members who helped us in our bitter fight to prevent the half-timbered Barley Mow in Warrington being turned into a 'Firkin' theme pub. We have secured a temporary victory, but no doubt the Barley Mow and other historic pubs will continue to be threatened.

The key to stopping this sacrilege in the future seems to be to control name changes. If national pub companies cannot rename historic pubs 'Scruffy Murphy' or 'Fart and Firkin', then they will rename and convert less important buildings.

MP Nicholas Winterton failed with his Private Member's Bill, but perhaps a simpler way to control name changes would be to modify the General Development Order and Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (Planning and the historic environment). This approach would require no primary legislation and allow local authorities to make local policies to guide changes. It would still allow name changes where there was no valid objection, but would protect genuinely historic pubs and their names.

The grand old lady who is Chair of our Civic Society said she would 'man the barricades' to save the Barley Mow. If CAMRA can work with a new government which is less tied to big business to change planning guidance, then she will not need to carry out her threat!

Councillor Peter Black

Too cheap two

Sir - In my letter ('Too cheap') last month I criticised the Hogshead in Altrincham for selling Batemans January Ale by the pint only. However, this appears to be the Whitbread policy, as the same 'no halves' rule applied at the Beer Engine (Crown & Anchor) in Manchester. January Ale was a seasonal beer, so let's hope Whitbread don't repeat their attack on the pub tradition.

Roger Wood

Wetherspoons in Middleton

Sir - Wetherspoons offers real ale at cheap prices (from 89p a pint) and food at correspondingly low prices (two full meals for a fiver). The company guarantees that no beer is ever filtered back in their pubs (unlike in many of the pubs CAMRA recommends!) and they offer changing guest beers in comfortable surroundings with no music, no pool tables, no kids and a large no-smoking area.

Why, then, wasn't CAMRA fighting tooth and nail on Wetherspoon's side at the hearing into the proposed Middleton development? Wetherspoon's

aims and those of CAMRA are surely the same. What's the point of CAMRA trying to save a socio-economic group ZZ hovel in an area where nobody would dare to venture after dark, when developments like this are threatened by unenlightened councils? There is not one single pub in the centre of Middleton where one can enjoy a quiet pint in pleasant surroundings. The nearest is the Ring o'Bells and even there, there is a 'quiet' juke box and an out-of-the-way pool table. Surely CAMRA should not rest until there is a Wetherspoon pub in all town centres.

Paul Roberts

Past it?

Sir - Why have you started reprinting pages of dreary CAMRA propaganda every month? This isn't the fun-packed, original and informative What's Doing we know and love. Is it because all your star reporters are now past it?

Concerned, Collyhurst

Y not

The Y Hotel Bar in Castlefield has stopped serving real ale and is now on nitroleg.

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Rupert

I cannot pretend to know what's been going on, nor to understand exactly what Mr Nestfeather has been doing. I did leave clear instructions with someone whom I considered a friend as to where I was and why I had gone. I have not been abducted by aliens, visited Africa or been brainwashed. I do not believe in some far-fetched conspiracy theory, nor have I become some sleeping time bomb for the Campaign. I merely took the opportunity to crew on a round the world yacht race. As simple as that. I felt that it was almost inevitable that at What's Doing's birthday bash, I would be presented with a lifetime achievement award by Rumpleshirtscream, Wayne Dix or some other Campaign notable. This I would have found deeply embarrassing as I am both undeserving and humble. I therefore took an opportunity to absent myself for four months and prevent discomfort all round.

So what do I find upon my return? Nothing much changes. Eddy still believes that campaigning journalism involves interpreting what people say in the light of our own experience rather than taking it at face value. Thus, when Mr Boringsod says that he's going to review all pubs when tenancies end, Nestfeather prints that Boringsods are going to turn all tenancies into managed houses. What a cheek!

Charlie Super is utterly right to point out that we should believe everything the lovely Mr Boringsod says. There is surely only one truth and putting our own social construction on it can only confuse. Heavens above, it might even make Mr Boringsod think a little harder about what he's doing.

Slumley branch selection meetings have become less venal. The choice of taverns for the 1998 vademecum was positively polite. This is largely because lots of pubs have been knocked down and half the remainder are on nitrokeg or are horrid places where you might get your throat cut. In a move to restore the sense of discord, strife and vituperation, the branch plans to wrest some hostelries from Smarmford & Slutch. This clutch of amber nectar purveyors was lent to the one man and his dog branch in 1981 and they've let the area fall apart, allowing mosques and furniture emporia to be turned into avant garde, chic, à la mode pseudo-taverns for jejune parvenu arrivistes who have no regard for the spit and sawdust, salt of the earth places which Smarmford & Slutch inherited and which they've watched close down with never a murmur of discontent.

I'm still finding my land legs, but I hope to report in detail on recent changes in future months.

Branch Diary

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tues 4 Mar 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Gardeners Arms, Millbottom, Oldham

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

Tues 18 Mar 8.30pm, Committee Meeting, Hark to Topper, Bow Street, Oldham centre

Sat 22 Mar, Social Trip to York Brewery. Contact has details

Thur 27 Mar 8.30pm, What's Doing collation, Flying Horse, Town Hall Square, Rochdale

Tues 1 April 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Woodthorpe, Prestwich

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

Trafford & Hulme

Thur 6 Mar, Hale survey. 8pm Unicorn, 8.45 Bulls Head, Hale Barns; 9.30 Bleeding Wolf, Ashley Road. Finish Railway, Ashley Road.

Thur 13 Mar, GBG Final Selection Meeting, Hogshead, Altrincham

Thur 20 Mar, Stalybridge Station Buffet. 2013 train from Piccadilly (platform 13). Regular trains back to both Victoria and Piccadilly.

Thur 27 Mar, Knutsford crawl. 8pm Builders Arms, then Cross Keys.

10pm Angel (Holts). 1920 train from Piccadilly, 1931 from Stockport, 1947 from Altrincham. Return on 2330. Tram connections for Victoria.

Contact: Roger Wood 0161 747 3987

North Manchester

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

Wed 19 Mar 8pm, Branch Meeting & AGM, Queens, Honey Street, Cheetham

Wed 26 Mar, Rhys P Jones Challenge Crawl. Seven Stars, Ashton Old Road, for 7pm start.

Wed 2 April, Patricroft Crawl. Grapes, Liverpool Road, 7pm. Red Lion, George Street, 8pm; White Lion, Liverpool Road, 9.30.

Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

Bolton

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

Contributors to this issue: Roger Hall, Bob Potts, Ralph Warrington, Rob Magee, Tony Sibson, Paul Roberts, Paul Mason, Dave White, Roger Wood, Dave White

Dave and Sue welcome you to the

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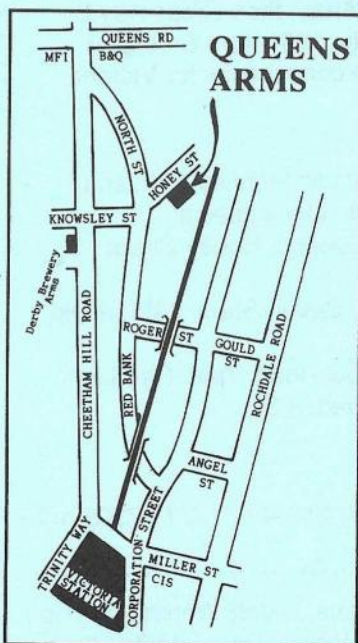


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Tuesday. Beer Prizes

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