

25p

# What's Doing

JUNE 1998



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

## Bolton Wetherspoons

The Spinning Mule opened on Nelson Square in mid-May. It's a new building, fitted out to the usual Wetherspoon standard, with an open bar area for 'vertical drinking', some seats to the sides and a dining/no smoking room at the back.

On the bank holiday weekend the pub was busy and it has already been assimilated into the Bradshawgate 'monkey run'. There were six real ales on, including guests Oakhill Mendip Gold, Marstons Sundance and Jennings Cocker Hoop.

The chaps at Wetherspoons have obviously put a lot of time and money into the Spinning Mule, so why pick such a boring name? Nearby, there is already a Crompton's Mule (ex-Prince William) and a Cottons (ex-Hogshead). Is that all there is to Bolton's rich heritage - t'cotton mill?





## Beer, Brass and Buses

The Greater Manchester Transport Museum is holding a beer, brass and buses evening from 7.00pm on Saturday 4th July, at the Transport Museum in Boyle Street (next to First Manchester's Queens Road depot).

Two brass bands and beers from the local breweries are promised. Events put on by the Museum are usually very well organized and this is their first venture on a beer theme. Details can be obtained from Steve Lord at the Museum on 0161 205 2122.

Admission is by pre-purchased ticket - send SAE and cheque for £6 (we don't know how many pints are included in the price!) payable to 'GMTS', to GMTS, Museum of Transport, Boyle Street, Cheetham, Manchester M8 8UL.

## Another Castlefield pub

Banks's opened the Quay Bar, by the side of the Bridgewater Canal on Old Deansgate, in mid April. It's a two-storey building of brick, steel and glass and both floors have full length bars where food is served until 7.00pm. The beers are Banks's bitter at £1.80 and Camerons Strongarm, dispensed from unusual anodised steel handpulls. As it is a canalside pub, there's a large deck-boarded outside drinking area.

The building's appearance has echoes of yacht design, with full height, aluminium-clad sails-cum-aircraft-wing sections forming walls. Much use is made of steel - panels, bar fittings and internal drainpipes. The pre-corroded copper is unusual, too.

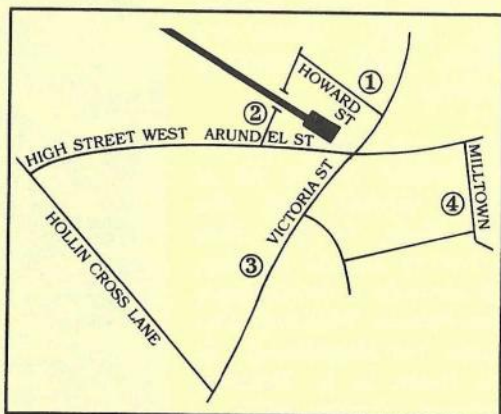
If you go back to Deansgate you may spot Nowhere Bar on the corner of Castle Street. Very stylish, but no cask ale. If Atlas, Quay and Dukes 92 can stock the stuff, why can't they?

## Glossop Crawl

*see branch diary*

On 3rd June the North Manchester Branch will be visiting Glossop and these are some of the pubs we shall be trying:

- 1 Star Inn (various guests)
- 2 Friendship (Robinsons)
- 3 Crown Inn (Sam Smiths)
- 4 Prince of Wales  
(Marstons, Banks's)



## **Independents' Day Treasure Hunt**

*Pauline Wadsworth*

**4th July**

**12.00 noon to 8.00pm**

**Starting and finishing at  
The Beer House, Angel  
Street, Manchester**

As usual, the object of the exercise is to weave your way around Manchester, solving clues as you go, and sample beer from the many independent brewers who sell their libations in our great city.

To those who took part last year, what can I say? Yes, the Treasure Hunt was incredibly difficult, but this time Hattie & Co are striking back and can guarantee a fun, beer-swilling day out. There's a prize for the winning team (from two to four people) and the team name will be engraved upon the hallowed shield.



There is a nominal entry fee of £2 per team and everyone gets a free supper. For further details contact me:  
Phone 01204 573749. Fax/Voice Mail: 01204 436604.  
e-mail: pauline.wadsworth@zen.co.uk

## **Planning News**

Hot on the heels of the brewery success on Gould Street, Marble Arch World Beers Ltd plan to convert their Chorlton off-licence into a specialist beer bar.

Saved from the threat of cosmetic demolition, the Mitre near Manchester Cathedral seeks listed building consent to brick up some doors and make new ones.

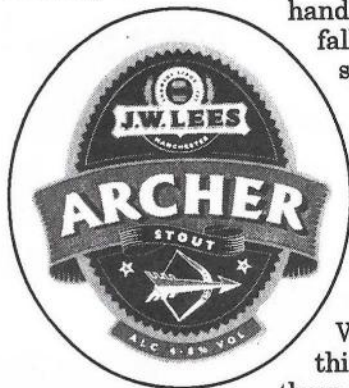
Plans have been submitted for internal and external alterations to the Conservatory on Old Bank Street.



## Lees Corner

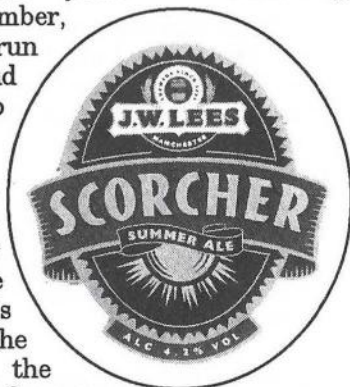
Bernie Jackson

In the brewery, work on covering all of the square fermenting vessels is nearly finished and a new yeast handling system, which will convert to liquid yeast, is now being installed. Both these projects will help in improving consistency of product. At the end of May, all bottling at the brewery is to stop. Only half-pint bottles could be handled and the demand for these in pubs is falling. Bottling will be contracted out and some of the beers will be put into 500ml bottles for the supermarket (Asda) trade.

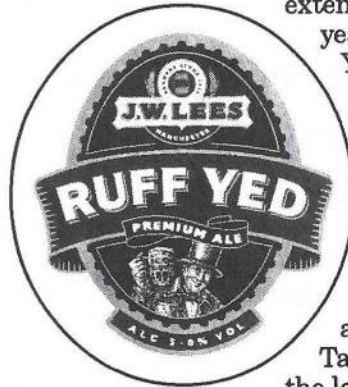


Of the seasonal beers, Archer Stout (previously a sweet bottled stout) is the latest, having been on sale since 5th May. In July, Summer Scorchers is planned - a lighter version (4.2%) of the Scorchers which was brewed for Whitbread last year. Following

this, in September, there will be a re-run of Ruff Yed (5.0%, brewed last year), and finally in November, Storm - no description yet.



In the pubs, Lees have finally got planning permission to extend the Puckersley in Royton, although they have had to reduce the size of the extension. In this year's Pub of the Year awards, the



two winners from a shortlist of ten were the Rose of Lancaster, Chadderton (managed houses) and the Rembrandt in Manchester (tenanted houses).

On Friday 5th June, in association with the Guild of British Beer Writers, Lees are to host what is described as a 'Tutored Tasting'. Roger Protz will be present and all the local brewers will be invited to attend.

## Pen point

The Pen & Wig (Websters) on New Bailey Street, Salford, is closed for a refurbishment, according to a notice outside. Will the pub lose its cask ale?



## Sunny Mossley

If you should find yourself in Mossley, make sure you get to the Rising Sun (free) on Stockport Road. The tenants arrived five months ago from the Great Western at Standedge and they have really set about promoting cask ale.

Six beers are usually on, with regulars being Jennings (118p), Boddies (142p), Tetley (148p), Black Sheep (146p) and Taylors Landlord (154p). The guest beer was Ruddles County at 150p. A well-run pub that is well worth a visit.

## Reopenings

The John Willie Lees in the Arndale Centre is open again and it appears to be business as usual for this pub-cum-cabaret venue. Both JWL mild and bitter are on sale.

On Newton Street, John Smiths' Lord Nelson is open again after a short spell of closure. Our Northern Quarter correspondent has yet to call in, so we don't know if any cask bitter is on sale there. On hearing that the shuttered doors of the Bird in Hand, Miles Platting, were open once more, our correspondent was '...too stunned to make a visit just yet.'

## New Brew Launch

The latest beer from Bolton's Bank Top Brewery will be launched at the Smithfield, Swan Street, Manchester, on Thursday 11th June. The beer is one of the 'Knights' series and is called Sir Bedivere. Demand is likely to be strong, so get there early.

Don't be put off by the story that the pub might have a ghost. Landlady Jenny says that some customers have 'felt a presence' and the pictures on the walls of the back room move off level every so often. Spooky, eh?



## Worsley and Boothstown

*Following on from Mark McConachie's review of the John Gilbert last month, Ian Kenny has made a complete survey of all the pubs in the villages of Worsley and Boothstown, beginning at the Cock on Walkden Road...*

The Cock now has less emphasis on food since the days of its controversial refurbishment in the late 1980s. Boddies mild has dissappeared and the real ales are Boddies bitter, Theakstons Best, Castle Eden and Flowers Strong. On my visit to the John Gilbert, the beers were again Boddies bitter and Courage Directors, but Theakstons Best had been replaced by Robinsons Frederics (£1.90).

Going under the newly re-christened M60 motorway and past the Courthouse, one comes to the latest incarnation of the Bridgewater. The uninspiring solitary real ale is Boddies Bitter. Further down Barton Road can be found the imaginatively named Barton Arms (*below*) with its equally mundane Tetley bitter.

Into Boothstown, and north of the East Lancashire Road are two pubs, the Woodside on Newearth Road and the Red Lion on Bridgewater Road. The range of real ales at the Woodside is now Stones bitter, Worthington bitter and an excellent pint of Draught Bass at £1.58. At the Red Lion, in addition to the Tetley bitter, Marstons Pedigree is now sold. However, this pub should be avoided



at weekends and school holidays when the place is thronged with kids at the 'Wacky Warehouse' to the rear of the premises.

In the centre of the village on Leigh Road can be found the sometime GBG entrant, the Royal Oak. It is badged a Wilsons house, but the only real ale to be found is Holts bitter (£1.19). Just across from the Royal Oak is the Greyhound on Victoria Street. This pub has acquired more of the feeling of a community local of late and the real ale on sale is the increasingly rare-to-find Wilsons bitter.

Just off Leigh Road on Boothshall Way and on the towpath of the Bridgewater Canal can be found the Moorings. Here the real ales are the bitters of Boddies, Tetleys and Flowers.

So, in summary, all the pubs sell real ale, some more than others, and a total of fourteen different real ales can be supped, all bitters. However, prices do tend to be on the high side and as housing in the area continues to expand, it can only be a matter of time before other pubs appear.

## Beer gone

The Mile House on North Street, Cheetham, has lost its Boddingtons handpumps and is now selling the Smooth version. Another sad loss of a once proud real ale outlet.

# LAUREL AND HARDY

Classic comedies shown on Super 8 and 16mm upon 36 square foot of silver screen. Each reel lasts around 20-25 minutes after which there is a short break while you replenish your glasses!

**THE MARBLE ARCH on ROCHDALE ROAD**, just ten minutes walk from the City centre, on the **THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH**.

**THE BEER ENGINE, POOLSTOCK, WIGAN** on the **FIRST WEDNESDAY** of every **OTHER** month (4 Feb, 1 Apr, 3 Jun, 5 Aug, 7 Oct, 2 Dec)

The shows all begin around 8.15pm. **ADMISSION IS FREE**

**SATURDAY 5th SEPT 1998**

## THE 6th ANNUAL LAUREL AND HARDY

Noon till night in the Beer Engine Concert Room. Admission £3.

*You don't have to be in The Sons of the Desert (the L & H Appreciation Society) to come along, but if you do want to join, membership is £12 a year (£3 a quarter if you pay by Standing Order). You will have posted to you our own quarterly magazine, plus the quarterly world-wide magazine plus the bi-annual U.K. magazine. For further info ring 01744 817130.*

## Holts Corner

*Stewart Revell*

Over 80% of Holts tied estate is within Greater Manchester, with concentrations around the towns of Eccles and Prestwich. But there are other areas where the brewery has few, if any outlets. Take Tameside for instance. This large area, comprising Ashton-u-Lyne, Stalybridge, Dukinfield, Hyde, Mossley and Droylsden, has few tied Holts pubs - notable exceptions being the Halfway House and Kings Head, Droylsden and the Chapel House, Denton.

However, it is not as bad as it first seems as there are tenanted pubs of other brewery groups and free houses which take Holts as a guest ale. Typical of these in the Tameside area are the Woodman on Oldham Road, Ashton, and the Hillgate at Pot Hill. Further up the road is the New Inn, Mossley Road, A-u-L. In Dukinfield, Holts is on sale at the Angel (*right*), King Street, and the Chapel House, Astley Street.



Mind you, Holts as a guest beer does mean paying a higher price - as much as 20p a pint more than in a tied Holts pub. However, many Holts drinkers find this acceptable, and it can still be a lot less than the price of the pub's own beer!

## Alterations

The Jolly Angler (Hydes) is having a makeover. A new bar and improved bar facilities are promised.

In Blackley village, Holts' Golden Lion is being altered extensively in an effort to attract a new clientele. The old bowling green is to be renovated and brought back into use.



## National Mild Day

*Pete Cash*

Saturday 16th May was CAMRA's National Mild Day and the North Manchester Branch marked the occasion with a crawl of some of our favourite pubs, in which only mild was consumed.

The Beer House was the starting point and there were two milds on offer: Swale Black Marigold (3.6%) at 145p and Batemans Dark Mild (3%) at 140p. (The Beer House operates a commendable Guest Mild policy.) At the Pot of Beer, the regular Robinsons Dark Mild (3.3%) was available at 142p. A quick call at the Marble Arch confirmed that no mild was on sale, so it was on to the Smithfield, where the Highgate Dark Mild (3.2%) at only 110p easily won our 'Value for Money Mild' award.

The Hare & Hounds had its usual Tetley Dark Mild (3.2%) at 142p, but down the road at the John Willie Lees the loudness of the noise coming out of the main lounge, together with the shutness of the downstairs bar, prevented us from sampling the GB Mild (3.5%).

No loud din at the Moon Under Water (J D Wetherspoons) on Deansgate, but we still didn't sample the mild. To its credit, the company had recognised National Mild Day by stating the same on several of its pump clips. Encouraged, we asked the price of the Shefford Mild (Banks & Taylor, 3.8%, but not stated on the pump clip). We were horrified at the 195p asking price and said so. The bar staff said it was all down to the computerised pricing system and beyond their control. Be that as it may, we refused to pay an exorbitant price for a beer which is normally discounted against more expensive bitters. We



wondered how many other potential customers had been similarly put off. Hardly promoting the image of mild as a cheap, low gravity beer!

Further down Deansgate at the new Hogshead, Chesters best Mild (Everards, 3.5%) was better value at 149p, and the same beer at Ye Olde Nelson, Chapel Street, Salford (*pictured*), was an even more reasonable 140p. Finally, the Crescent opened specially for the mild crawlers and there we enjoyed Moorhouses Black Cat (3.4%) at 140p and a vegetable curry courtesy of landlady Ruth.

The quality of all the milds on what was a very hot afternoon was excellent, which must blunt the argument of those who advocate the use of the cask-breather on such beers. The answer is surely a low price coupled to a high turnover in order to ensure that beers do not go off before they are sold out.

## **Medals for local brewers**

Several local breweries picked up medals at the 1998 Brewing Industry International Awards. The tastings (all blind) were done at Burton-on-Trent Town Hall in February. There were 810 beers from 36 countries chasing twenty Class Winner and nine Champions medals. The forty judges included brewers, beer writers and others from within the industry. The presentations took place at the annual luncheon of the Brewery Trading Association at the Guildhall, London, on 28th April.

Tony Allen's Phoenix Brewery took Silver in the Cask Conditioned (4.7 to 6.9%) category with 'Wobbly Bob' (Youngs Winter Warmer won the Gold award). Burtonwood got a Bronze for their bitter in Cask Conditioned (less than 3.8%). In the category of Cask Conditioned Bitter (3.9 to 4.6%), Taylors took Bronze and Silver (Best Bitter and Landlord, respectively), whilst Robinsons took Gold with their Best Bitter. Taylors also took a Silver for their Dark Mild (dark milds, stouts and porters under 4.1%). Thwaites won a Bronze for their mild in bottle, whilst Gold went to Moorhouses for Black Cat Mild in bottle.

Brendan Dobbin accepted a Gold on behalf of the Porterhouse Brewing Company for Plain Porter and Greenalls won three medals despite not having a brewery!

## **Closures**

The Swan with Two Necks on Withy Grove in Manchester has been closed for some months whilst the Printworks development next door proceeds. Up on Rochdale Road, Captains Bar is for sale and shut, future uncertain.



## Wigan and District

*Dave White*

The last time I toured Skelmersdale, a couple of years ago, the **Roundabout** on Ormskirk Road was due to reopen the following night. Since then, it has closed again, and now reopened again. The 'alehouse' theme is, I am told, an improvement on the old interior, but the ales on offer are almost defiantly unexciting: Greenalls bitter and a concoction known as YLB (Your Local Bitter) of unspecified, but probably low gravity. Nary a cockstride away on Sandy Lane, the **Victoria Hotel** has been experimenting with the Carlsberg-Tetley Tapster's Choice range, though the regular ales are Tetley bitter and Walkers mild.

The **Fishergate Inn**, Orrell Road, Pemberton had reopened: more news on this Burtonwood pub when I get it. Over in Billinge, Greenalls have decided to have another go with the **Pavilion** on Main Street, just when some of us thought that the ill-starred edifice had closed its doors for good.

On the minus side, the **Inn Between**, a run-down John Smiths house on Appley Lane South, Appley Bridge, was closed on early May Bank Holiday Monday. Down the railway line at Gathurst, the **Station Bar** is now rumoured to have lost its licence.

Bad news for sports fans in the area. Real Theakstons ales are no longer available at **Dalton Golf Club**; and the once-mighty **Stanley's True Free House** on Hilton Street, Wigan, has resurfaced as **Riley's American Club**. No cask beer here.

In brief: traditional Greenalls mild has gone from the **Britannia**, Hall Green, Up Holland, though Greenalls and Tetleys bitters remain... real ale returns to the **Honeysuckle**, Swan Meadow Road, Poolstock, in the form of Boddingtons bitter. Another beer engine for OB bitter was not in use when I called in.

Finally, the **Orwell Free House** at Wigan Pier has been voted 1997 Pub of the Year by Wigan CAMRA branch. The 1996 winner, the **Bird i'th'Hand**, Gidlow Lane, Springfield, is Pub of the Season. Presentation dates to be arranged.

## Beer Garden news

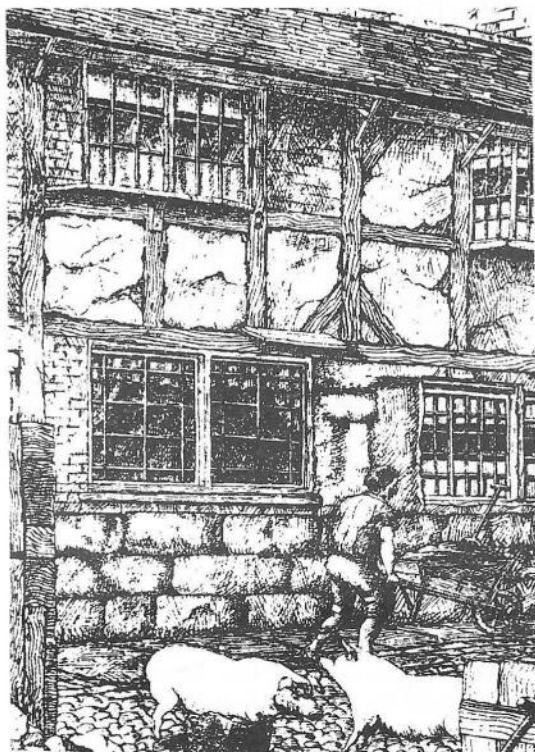
A concrete 'beer yard' has been created at the side of the Pot of Beer on New Mount Street, Manchester. This most welcome sun trap was created out of a couple of parking places. Over in Salford, a beer garden proper is being created at the rear of the Crescent. Work continues apace to make what should be a super drinking area out of a rubble-strewn croft.

## Manchester Pubs - A History

Last year developers were given the go-ahead to build across the Old Shambles site. The two Old Shambles pubs, the Wellington and Sinclairs - reminders of the heart of the old town surrounded by the glass and concrete of 1970s Manchester - were closed.

Replicas of these pubs are being built on a plot of land near the Cathedral and alongside the old thoroughfare of Half Street (now called Cathedral Street). Half Street linked Old Millgate, which led to the Market Place and the Old Shambles, with Long Millgate and the road out of the town to the north. Old Millgate was built over in the 1970s and the line of Long Millgate will change as redevelopment continues, because here we are promised a 'Millennium Quarter' to provide 'cultural and visitor uses'.

As the old streets disappear, it is becoming harder to imagine the Manchester of even the recent past. In view of this, and in celebration of Manchester's boozy heritage, a series of articles covering aspects of the history of the city's pubs will be appearing in future issues of *What's Doing*. But first, here's a story of the Half Street of long ago...



In the middle years of the seventeenth century a man named William Dunn kept an alehouse on Half Street. During the autumn of 1663 William fell out with one of his neighbours, Ann Saunderson. The lady kept some pigs in a passage between a cellar and the parlour of his alehouse and the animals had chewed and pushed their way through the walls, much to William's annoyance.

Like most of Manchester's buildings at that time, the alehouse had a timber frame, with the spaces between filled with a blend of clay and straw slapped on to a lattice of



twigs or strips of wood, and it was probably this mixture which Mrs Saunderson's pigs found so appetising.

As the years went by, the wooden buildings were replaced by ones of brick and stone and two hundred years after William Dunn, Half Street was lined with a variety of properties, including a couple of pubs and a beerhouse. These were pulled down for the building of the Corn Exchange at the end of the nineteenth century.

Manchester was then a centre for commerce and industry: today it's all about culture and shopping. The Old Shambles was an inconvenient aspect of the city's past, and by way of an apology the Wellington and Sinclairs are being built again in a kind of heritage grotto next to Half Street. For many people who care about the city and the changes affecting it, this is a really daft thing to do. But as the timber-framed new Wellington takes shape, no doubt the ghosts of Ann Saunderson's pigs are looking on with interest.



*The drawing on the left dates from the 1870s and shows pigs in the yard of the White Lion, an old alehouse which stood on Long Millgate near Fennel Street, where the car park is now. The above photo shows Half Street in the 1890s. The new Wellington and Sinclairs are being built on the site of the three-storey building on the right.*



**We're in the 1998 Good Beer Guide**

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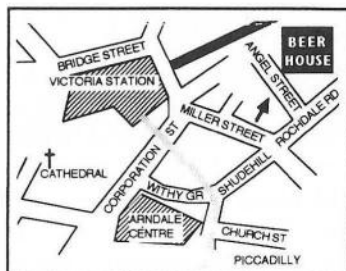
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**FREE PARTY ROOM AVAILABLE**



### **Corrections to GBG '98:**

- ☆ We open at 12 on Sunday
  - ☆ We *do* have a beer garden
  - ☆ We *do not* have a Laurel & Hardy Club (although it looks that way at times!)
- Shurely shome mishtake?



## Over the Hills...

Steve Smith

### Colliers Arms, Pimbo Road, Kings Moss

The Colliers Arms is listed in the Good Beer Guide under Greater Manchester, although Kings Moss, a mid-nineteenth century village between St Helens and Rainford, is now in Merseyside. It contains a mixture of old and new housing and lies in the shadow of a hill known affectionately as 'Billinge Lump'.



The Colliers Arms is a Greenalls pub and a good example of a half-rendered building. There are four rooms, one of which is a lively, traditional vault containing a real fire, dartboard and TV. Exposed brickwork adds to the effect. The Colliers is dedicated to mining and rescue operations around the area, displaying brass replicas of pit winding gear, a horse and cart (complete with coal), commemorative plates and prints, local history guide books and moulded, carved metal plaques.

The furnishings are comfortable, with button-back seating, anaglypta wall coverings and an unusual carved, Oriental-style chair. There is an outdoor area for kids and a beer garden. Food is available lunchtimes and evenings at reasonable prices.

**Opening Hours:** Mon-Sat 12 til 11pm; Sun 12 til 10.30pm.

**Real Ales:** Greenalls mild (£1.43), bitter (£1.48), Original (£1.68), plus guest beers.

**Getting there:** Catch a train from Manchester Victoria to Wigan Wallgate, cross the road to Wigan North Western and take the train to St Helens Central (£5.10 cheap day return). Walk up to the bus station on Bickerstaffe Street. Purchase a Zone A Saveaway ticket (£2.10), which covers most operators' buses in the St Helens area. Around the corner in Victoria Square the 152 bus (operated by Timeline) will take you to Pimbo Road. (Note: There is another 152 service operated by South Lancs which departs at the same time, but does not serve Pimbo Road.) The 12.20pm bus is very handy and the journey takes about fifteen minutes.

You can then return at 1.57pm, stopping off at the Red Cat at Crank, although this appears to be a keg pub. Another bus at 2.42pm will take you back to St Helens. Alight at Hard Lane to visit Holts' splendid **Abbey**, a large and friendly hostelry. By catching the half-hourly No.6 bus round the corner in Greenfield Road, you can go down Robins Lane to the other newly-acquired Holts house, the **Red Lion**. From here you can continue on the same bus to St Helens Junction Station for trains back to Manchester.

# THE MIDLAND BEER COMPANY

826 Manchester Road Castleton, Rochdale  
*near Castleton BR*

## FOUR REAL ALES

Burtonwood 99p a pint  
Theakstons, Taylors and Guest Beers  
Thatchers Cider  
*plus German and Belgian Beers*  
Lunchtime food Monday - Friday  
01706 750873                      Open all day



## McGuinness Brewery

*Pete Cash*

On 13th May members of CAMRA North Manchester visited the Cask & Feather pub (Oldham Road, Rochdale) which houses the Thomas McGuinness Brewing Company.

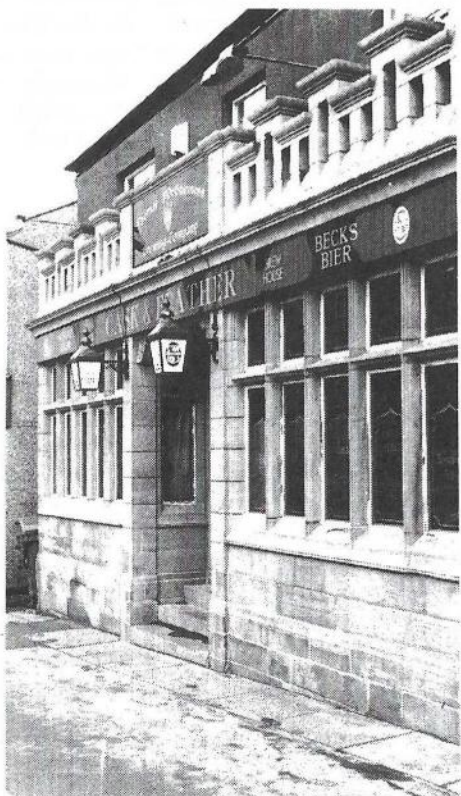
Brewer Alan McKenzie gave us a guided 'tour' of the brewery. More accurately, we packed into the small room at the back of the pub whilst he explained the functions of the various items on view. We were all impressed by the amount of sophisticated equipment, including a futuristic temperature control panel, which is efficiently built into what is quite a small space.

At the start of the process, Alan uses his malt mill to crack all his own grain; this is a step which a number of micro-breweries by-pass nowadays, buying their malts ready crushed. As well as the inevitable pale malt, Alan uses crystal, amber and chocolate malts along with a little roast barley and some torrefied wheat for head retention, which he considers important. Hops comprise Fuggles and Goldings, together with Challenger - a high bitterness hop.

He told us that he is continuously experimenting with different proportions of the various grains, to produce a wide variety of beers. The yeast was originally obtained from Thwaites, but has now evolved into a unique McGuinness strain.

The plant has a five-barrel capacity. On the same level with the mash tun and copper are four fermenting vessels. In the cellar are two further ten-barrel fermenters for the main line beers.

Regulars are Feather Plucker's mild (3.4%), Best Bitter (3.8%), Junction Bitter (4.2%) and Tommy Todd's Porter (5%). This last beer won Alan third prize in its category at CAMRA's



National Winter Ale Festival in 1997. Now that this event is moving to Manchester for three years (starting January 1999), it is to be hoped that Alan will be encouraged to enter again, perhaps inventing an even stronger brew for one of the other categories?

Also available in the pub were Utter Nutter (3.8%) and Summer Tipple (4.5%), an amber coloured seasonal brew. Prices are all very keen, starting at 110p for the mild, 116p for the Best Bitter and 130p for the Junction.

## **Swinton**

There appears to be a trend emerging with the Tetleys houses in the Swinton and Pendlebury area to replace traditional bitter with 'smooth'. In recent months the Brook Tavern at Wardley, the Foresters and the Bulls Head in Swinton centre, and the Station in Pendlebury have all become keg only. One wonders, though, how long it will take the signs advertising 'Traditional Ales' to be removed from the Foresters and Bulls Head.

All is not doom and gloom, however. Two unusual beers for the area have been spotted recently. At the New Ellesmere on the East Lancs Road in Swinton, Everards Tiger was on sale as the guest beer, whilst at the Moorside Farm on Moorside Road, Banks's seasonal beer, Pipkin (4.2%) is available. Meanwhile, at the Albert in Pendlebury (aka 'Nadgers') this Busy Pub Co house now sells Poachers bitter alongside its Boddies bitter.

Finally, at the Folly Lane A.R.L.F.C. Social Club on Station Road, John Willie Lees has arrived to replace Bass. Unfortunately, despite the presence of handpumps, turnover during weekdays is too low for real ale and the beer is being kept under blanket pressure.

## **John Ferrige**

Rochdale is mourning the loss of one of its favourite landlords following the sudden and tragic death on 22nd April of John Ferrige, licensee of the Merrie Monk. John was born in Collyhurst and had lived in Rochdale for the last thirty years. He had owned the pub for the last thirteen years and had run it in a truly traditional style, bringing together people of all ages and all walks of life in friendship. His policies of being particularly supportive of small breweries and usually serving two guest beers had earned John and the Merrie Monk a place in the Good Beer Guide for the past eleven years. A hard act to follow.

Among the hundreds of messages and cards sent in sympathy, was one from the lads at Redbrook Mill which read, 'Thanks John, for bringing real ale to our doorstep'...



## Now and Then

*Rob Magee*

No. 106

**Gold Diggers**

*100 Shaw Road, Oldham*

The Gold Diggers was one of Oldham's many street-corner beerhouses, opened in the middle of the nineteenth century and pulled down for redevelopment some thirty years ago. In the 1870s it was owned by Samuel Brierley, who lived in Derker Street, and Joseph Brierley had the licence. There were three small drinking rooms and a two-stall stable for horses in the backyard. The Brierleys looked after their beerhouse - a survey in 1894 noted the building was very clean and in good condition - and in 1916 Samuel's executors sold the property to brewers J W Lees.

Over the years Lees made several improvements and by the 1960s the Gold Diggers had been partly opened out, with an L-shaped lounge to the right of the entrance and a small bar counter and tap room to the left. A full licence was granted in 1961 and the following year plans were drawn up to enlarge the premises by taking over 98 Shaw Road. When the work was completed the drinking area had been increased by half. The original pub became an open-plan lounge, the tap room was in what had been the house next door and there was a central bar.

Unfortunately for Lees and the Gold Diggers' customers, a few years later the pub was included in a clearance area. It eventually closed in 1973 and was pulled down five years later.



## Home Brewing Revisited

*Humulus Lupulus*

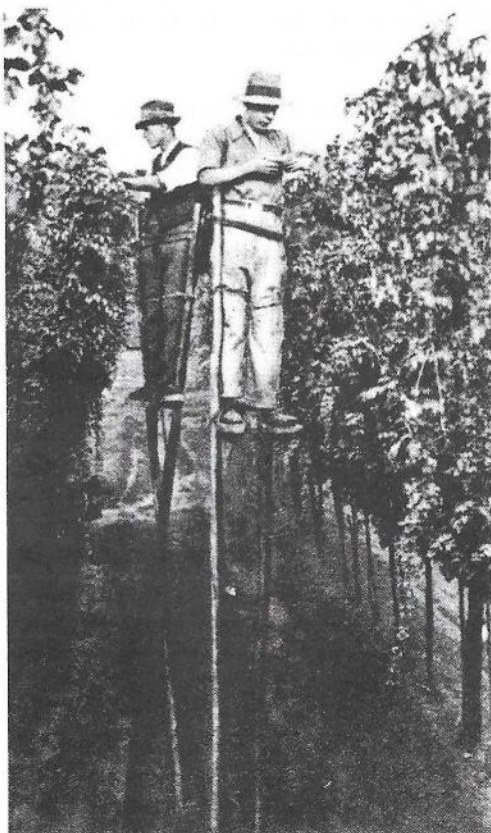
### Part Eleven: Hops (1)

All fermented malt liquors, unless destined for distillation, need a degree of bitterness to offset the inherent sweetness of the malt. For many centuries, this has been almost universally derived from hops.

The hop (*Humulus lupulus*), a member of the hemp family *Cannabaceae*, is grown for the female flowers or hop cones, which contain the essential bittering elements, tannins and oils which give aroma. If there are any male plants in the neighbourhood, they will also contain seeds, a common occurrence in Britain. The seeds can form 25% of the weight, but are of no use in brewing; continental growers have all but eliminated the male hop, resulting in more weight efficient, seedless products.

Over the centuries, and more particularly in recent decades, the number of varieties has become almost bewildering. Many of these are becoming available to the home brewer and next month I will try to cover the main types and their uses. For the beginner, however, it is possible to brew excellent beers using one or both of the best known, traditional hops, namely Fuggles and East Kent Goldings. Both these are low in bitterness by modern standards, but have good flavour and (especially Goldings) aroma. This means they can be used in generous quantities without danger of producing an unbalanced beer or one with undesirable flavours, which can result from overdoing some of the more specialist hops.

It used to be said that Goldings were best for pale ales and premium bitters, whilst Fuggles were more suited to milds, brown ales and stouts, etc. There is some truth in this, but it is not a hard and fast rule: I have often used a proportion of Fuggles in bitter style beers.





For a 5 to 6 gallon brew I would use 4 to 5oz of these low bitterness hops. Some go in at the start of the boil, but a few 'aroma' hops can be held back for the last 5-10 minutes boil (late copper hops) or even for dry-hopping the finished beer at the conditioning stage.

The long boil extracts the bitterness from the hops and also tannins, which help coagulate the unwanted protein 'breaks' (see earlier articles) and contribute to the finished flavour. Any volatile oils are driven off by this boil, hence the late addition of aroma hops.

At this stage it is appropriate to mention two other products which are sold to home brewers - hop extract and hop oil. Hop extract is usually sold as 'isomerised hop extract'. Isomerisation is a chemical process wherein parts of a molecule are rearranged to give a different three-dimensional structure. Isomerisation occurs to some of the hop components during the boil; the theory behind the extract is that the boil can thus be avoided - it is added to cold sweet wort (usually made up itself from malt extract).

In my opinion this is very bad practice. The boil serves to sterilise the wort and remove protein, as well as extract bitterness from the hops. Poor flavours are highly probable if boiling is not undertaken.

There is, I believe, a non-isomerised hop extract, or hop concentrate, available which is intended to be boiled with the wort in the traditional manner. I have never tried this, having never seen the need as whole hops are readily available. It would appear to avoid the objections to the isomerised product discussed above.

Hop oil is quite different. It is a clear, colourless solution of the essential oils in alcohol and has a very powerful aroma of hops. A couple of drops per gallon of finished beer will give the effect of heavy dry hopping; it is easily overdone, however, and I have found that it can have a negative influence on head retention. Only to be used for beer styles suited to a strong hop nose, and even then to be used sparingly.

## **Kings Arms**

The Kings Arms free house on Bloom Street in Salford has a new owner, but the pub will continue as before under licensee Tom Jones. The current range of beers is: Mauldon's White Adder, Cottage Goldfish, Ridleys mild, Jennings Cumberland Ale and Ash Vine Depth Charge.

## **Corporation**

The Corporation on Cross Lane, Salford, is selling Greys Ordinary and John Smiths.

# Rupert

The darling buds of May were neither shaken nor stirred. It was high summer in East Grotley and the social derelicts who had overwintered in prison had begun to repopulate Josiah Drab's hostleries throughout Slumley Parva and beyond. Income flow and profits were running high, but not so high that young Perry was tempted to invest in a new cask-washing plant. The present equipment dated back to the early 1950s. It had been installed following an incident when human error had resulted in cleaning fluid remaining in casks prior to filling with foaming ale.

In those days, brewery employees were given a daily allowance of ale. Ten pints of Drabs bitter did not do a great deal for quality assurance after lunch. Arthur Felch had filled the wooden hogsheads with caustic soda and gone for lunch. Rinsing was not something that took place that afternoon, with results which might have been disastrous had it happened to a more palatable beer.

Immediately Felch was sacked and a new state of the art cask-washing plant ordered with automatic rinse cycle. Designed for hogsheads, the machinery had served Drabs well for over forty years. Inevitably, one supposes, wear and tear took its toll and the

automatic rinse cycle failed. Over 1,000 barrels had been filled with ale before the fault was noticed.

Perry was faced with a dilemma, but, unlike Perrier, did not call back the beer which had been affected. The problem was by no means as serious as the 1951 fiasco. Caustic soda was no longer used as a cleaning agent and wooden casks were not in use. Yet Jeyes Fluid in your pint did not improve the taste, even if it did permit simultaneous inebriation and colonic irrigation. By throwing ale over his head, Tubby Bleachhead was able to wash his thatch and reinvigorate his blonde looks.

This hiccup is likely to affect the launch of Josiah's Roughflow, a response to nitrogenated ales using nitrous oxide and helium. Trials have been encouraging insofar as they have induced much merriment and squeaking in the somewhat dour Drabs estate. Let's hope they don't go down the tubes, as another local independent seems about to do.

It's safe to drink Drabs now. The cask-washing plant has been closed and in a move of supreme irony Arthur Felch's granddaughters Mel and Kylie have been employed to wash the hogsheads out.



# Branch Diary

## **Rochdale, Oldham & Bury**

Tues 2 June 8.30pm, Branch AGM, Royal Oak, Union Street, Mumps, Oldham

Sat 6 June, Steam train trip on East Lancs Railway: Bury-Ramsbottom-Rawtenstall

Tues 16 June 8.30pm, Committee Meeting, Cross Keys, Running Hill Gate, Uppermill

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

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

## **North Manchester**

Wed 3 June, Glossop Crawl. 18.55 train from Piccadilly. Meet Star Inn, Howard Street, 19.30. Train 19.25, meet Friendship, Arundel Street, 20.05. Return 22.46 and 23.16.

Wed 10 June 8pm, Committee & social, Lord Nelson, Ringley Road, Ringley.

Sun 14 June 12 noon at the Beer House:

**National Winter Ales Festival, Manchester 1999.**

First Planning Meeting. All branches please send representatives.

Wed 17 June 8pm, Branch Meeting, Grapes, Peel Green.

Wed 24 June, Broughton: Wallness, Wallness Lane, 7pm; Albert Park, Lower Broughton Road, 8.30; Star, Back Hope Street, 9.30 onwards.

Tues 30 June 6pm, What's Doing collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street. Followed by a visit to the Marble Brewery, 8.15pm. Book with Branch Contact.

Wed 1 July, Monton-Winton-Patricroft Crawl. Barge Inn 7pm, Brown Cow 8.30pm, Queens Arms 9.30pm.

Sat 4 July, Annual Treasure Hunt. Meet Beer House 12 noon.

Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

## **Trafford & Hulme**

*T & H branch are out most Thursday evenings - for details contact Dave Ward, 0161 980 1170 (h)*

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Contributors to this issue: Steve Smith, Bernie Jackson, Tony Allen, Mark McConachie, Pete Cash, Pauline Wadsworth, Ian Kenny, Paul Roberts, Stewart Revell

*Dave and Sue welcome you to the*

# QUEENS ARMS

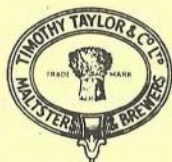
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Bitter - Old Peculier - Taylors Landlord  
& Best Bitter - Bantam Bitter £1 a pint  
plus weekly guest beers**

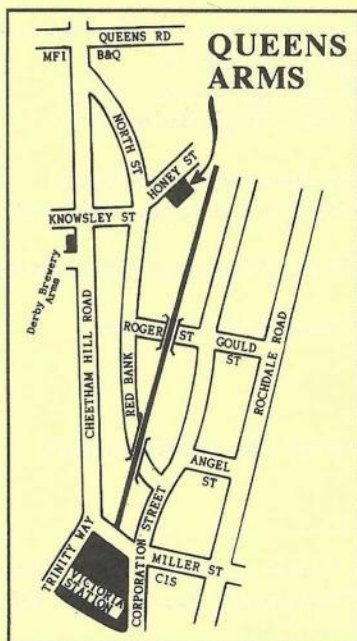


*Westons Traditional Cider on handpump*

A large menu plus home-made specials  
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Hot and cold food available until early evening

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

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Bar-B-Que for hire free of charge.

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Bar Billiards, Backgammon,  
Chess, etc.

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General Knowledge Quiz Night  
Tuesday. Beer Prizes

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