

25p

# What's Doing

NOVEMBER 1998



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

## PICCADILLY GOOSE

The Goose on Piccadilly, Manchester, opened in early October and is one of eighteen Bass pubs across the country based on the Wetherspoon concept. Providing reasonably priced real ale in clean, peaceful surroundings has proved so popular that the big boys are getting in on the act. The Goose has plush surroundings and stand-up tables for vertical drinking *à la* JDW, and





despite the central location, the prices are by far the best value in Manchester. Draught Bass at £1.30, Burton-brewed Goose Bitter at £1.00 and London Pride as a 'permanent guest' at £1.60 per pint certainly highlight the ridiculous prices charged by other City Centre real ale pubs.

There are large smoke-free sections and the bar is a no-smoking area. Excellent value food is served until 8pm and the Wetherspoons theme continues right down to the toilets. The tiling, layout and framed newspapers along the walls, not to mention the emphasis on cleanliness, is again a JDW concept.

All in all, I think this is the best development in Manchester for many a long year as far as the discerning drinker is concerned. Let us hope that the message has finally reached the big boys - there is a huge demand for low-priced pubs with a high degree of cleanliness in atmospheres free from smoke and noise pollution. Perhaps similar drinking havens will soon appear outside the City Centre. Down London, Fullers have converted several of their houses to a similar theme. So how about it Lees, Hydes, etc?

*Paul Roberts*

## **National Winter Ales Festival**

Thursday 21st to Saturday 23rd  
January.

Upper Campfield Market,  
Liverpool Road, Manchester.

### **Opening hours**

Thursday 5.30-10.30pm

Friday & Saturday 12.00-4.00pm  
and 5.30-10.30pm.

### **Admission**

£2 Thursday; Friday & Saturday  
lunchtimes.

£3 Friday evening; £1 Saturday  
evening.

CAMRA members free except Thursday & Friday evenings (£1).



## **Lost Boozers**

The heading 'Stockport' has been omitted from the 1999 Good Beer Guide. All the Stockport entries are under 'Standish'. Quite a boost for that town, but frustrating for those seeking out suitable hostelrys in Stockport. Expect to see wandering would-be imbibers in both locations.

## Cheadle Hulme Wetherspoons

Paul Roberts

On 24th September JDW opened their Cheadle Hulme outlet, the Kings Hall on Railway Road, a couple of minutes' stagger from the station.

The popularity of the place was such that on the first Friday the doors were locked at eight o'clock, leaving around a hundred people queuing outside and waiting for others to leave (reminiscent of the Bury Beer Festival!).

The interior seems small by JDW standards and it is not as luxurious as other outlets. The low ceiling tests Wetherspoons' air filtration system to the full, but a smoke free atmosphere is still achieved and it was nice to see the 'no smoking at the bar' rule being rigorously enforced. Unfortunately Wetherspoons have abandoned their policy of oversize glasses. Seemingly their bar staff were receiving abuse for 'short measures' when using the lined glasses.

I visited during the beer festival and half a dozen guest beers were available, all at £1.39 per pint (most were around the 5% mark). While standing at the bar I overheard an unusual conversation:

Customer: *Two Pints of bitter and a pint of Fosters please.*

Barman: *Which bitter would you like? We've got seven different handpumped bitters all at £1.39 a pint.*

Customer (after a moments thought) - *Oh, er - Three pints of Fosters please!*

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## Unicorn

The Unicorn on Church Street, Manchester, was closed for two weeks in early October. It has emerged from the closure redecorated but relatively unscathed; the panelling and partitions remain. A new coat of paint and new carpets have smartened up the interior and new lighting has improved the atmosphere. The only loss is some of the acid-etched windows, which were frequently being smashed. At around £100 a throw, this was proving expensive and some plain glass has now been used.

## Lord Nelson

Proprietor Frank Boardman continues the improvements at the Lord Nelson on Newton Street. Websters Green Label is held at £1, and considering the lengthy period of closure, the turnaround in trade is commendable. As a result of features such as karaoke, talent contests and charity nights, it has fared better than nearby Tommy's Bar and the Royal George - both closed.



## Out and about

*with Grogard*

### Cemeterial Thought

I've just been inflicted with a mild (no pun intended) attack of nostalgia. In the paleolithic days of the sixties and seventies I used to frequent the Cemetery Hotel on Bury Road, Rochdale, when it was a 'free' house serving Timmy Taylors ales. Then it was sold off to 'Wetbeds' and I crossed it off my Christmas mailing list. It was one of those genuinely relaxing places with good beer, a darts room, two 'posh' rooms and a fine collection of whimsical memorabilia on the walls.

My favourite was a picture of an old man wearing a long white robe, a beard slightly shorter and a worried expression. Rather like Moses wondering if adultery is spelt with one 'd' or two. A caption read, 'You May Be Exiled From Light!', making one suppose the accompanying text to be an article about the Rosicrucians or Pentecostal Church. Yet after wading through a thousand words of prolix waffle it turned out to be an advert for Andrews' Liver Salts, circa 1900.

Also to be admired was an impressive postcard collection with some juicy McGills, some in Lancashire dialect and some touching 'World War Ones' about daddy coming home and the distance to Tipperary.

Pubs are like people, they all change with time, not necessarily for the better. Yet the Cemetery is still much as I remember it, including the name. A recent visit found it still unthemed, un-open-planned and



catering for the beer drinker with intact taste buds. It still has its bar with standing room and three rooms.

Yet there have been changes. The darts room is now possessed by a pool table; another room has a TV for the benefit of sports punters and only the 'plush-posh' room remains as a memorial to the time when the bereaved would cross the road to bid farewell to the departed over ham sandwiches and stand pork pie washed down with a glass or two.

Red velvet upholstery with wooden panels and settles still remain. I love the Victorian bedposts with little Ionic twiddles on the top. There are photos of old Rochdale, too. If you look at the one of the River Roach, ask yourself what the function of the striped wooden structure overhanging the waters might possibly be.

So coming down to the *raison d'être* of a pub, what about the beer? Yes, they still serve Taylors; Landlord, Best Bitter and Dark Mild. Sadly the price list is slightly different, Landlord being £1.80 and Best Bitter £1.60. There are five more handpumps and I noticed Vaux Waggle Dance, Everards Tiger and Moorhouses Pennine Pride plus Wards Best Bitter.

Most of the postcards were still there, brightening the place up, but, what a shame, the old man seems to have gone on his journey in search of 'light'.

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## Oktoberfest 1998

At 12 noon on 19th September, the 165th Oktoberfest was opened by Oberbürgermeister Christian Ude with the customary call, 'O'zapft ist!'

Twenty three minutes later a rather drunken young Australian lady decided to bare all and show the 10,000 occupants of the Hofbräu tent what table dancing was all about! One of her fellow countrymen set a record by being carried into the Red Cross tent as a *Bierleiche* (beer corpse) one hour before the actual opening of the 'fest.

On the first weekend it looked as if a new record would be set, with 1.1 million visitors and 800,000 litres consumed. The final Saturday was the busiest day with 650,000 visitors; all the beer halls were completely full and locked well before noon.

The final total of visitors was 6.5 million (100,000 up on 1997), but beer consumption was down by 200,000 litres. In the Ochsenbraterei, 84 whole oxen were consumed (two up on last year). In total DM 450 million (£160 million) was spent over the sixteen days of the festival.

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## 12 REAL ALES ON OFFER

*including*

**USHERS BEST BITTER £1.05**

**DIRECTORS BITTER**

**MOORHOUSES PENDLE WITCH**

***plus 9 EVER-CHANGING GUEST  
BEERS including A GUEST MILD***



**TWO TRADITIONAL CIDERS ALWAYS AVAILABLE**

**DRAUGHT BELGIAN KRIEK, LEFFE BLONDE, HOEGAARDEN &**

**MANY BOTTLED BELGIAN and other FOREIGN BEERS**

***Every Tuesday from 5pm: Buy 2 Belgian bottled beers and get  
one free - from selection of 5***

**GOOD FOOD - *Vegetarians welcome***

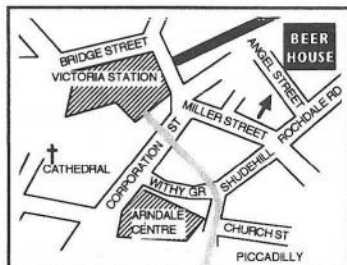
Lunchtime food seven days a week      Evening Meals 5 - 7 Friday

Thurs 5 - 8 Choice of three curries (veg and meat) + rice £3

Half price menus Monday lunch

**HALLOWEEN SPECIAL Sat October 31st  
PENDLE WITCHES BREW**

**£1 pint from 5pm**



**HOEGAARDEN now £1.50  
pint all day, every Sunday  
12-10.30**

**OPEN ALL DAY MONDAY to SUNDAY  
FREE PARTY ROOM AVAILABLE**

## Holts corner

*Stewart Revell*

The brewery now has a name for the new Premium Beer that was test marketed some three months ago. It is to be known as DBA Premium Bitter and has a strength of 5% ABV. It should be appearing in about half of Holts' tied estate from the middle of November. The annual price increase in Holts beers took place at the beginning of October, when 3p was put on bitter and mild (now 109p & 103p a pint). DBA will probably sell for 129p or 130p a pint.

New pump clips and beer mats have been ordered to promote the beer and they take the same shape. (Yes, I know what you're thinking. If a pump clip goes missing, they can replace it with a beer mat and no one will know the difference!)

Joeys have recently been running a promotion with KP nuts, whereby if you drink one and a quarter gallons of Holts and buy around ten packs of KP nuts you can claim a very nice glass tankard with the Joseph Holts logo on it in two colours. That's a lot of beer and nuts, but you're not expected to consume them all in one session. A small card is provided and stamped with each purchase. The glasses look really good, but they don't have the Government stamp. (Not that it matters.)

Some disappointing news now. Holts were hoping to acquire a pub in the Broadway area but this has fallen through. However, they are still on the look-out for one in that part of Manchester to replace the Kings Arms at Hollinwood, demolished for road widening some five years ago.

The good news is that Joeys have acquired the Globe in Leigh and the Sun & Castle in Stockport. The pubs will be refurbished and opened early next year. It is hoped that the rebuilt Kings Head in Droylsden will be open in the first week of December.

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## Patricroft

Roy and Sandra Clapham will be leaving the Ellesmere, Patricroft, on December 9th, having declined the offer of the tenancy following the sale of the pub. Previously Roy and Sandra were at the Dutton, where they ran an enterprising guest beer policy for a while. We wish them well.





## Wigan and district

Dave White

There was a time when the village of Parbold had at least one entry in the Good Beer Guide and more often than not, the **Stocks Hotel**, Alder Lane, was in there. However, as regular readers of this column will know by now, nothing ever stays the same around here. At the time of writing (19.10.98) the Stocks had been shut for some time, after a visit from the local bailiffs. A new licensee for this Tetley pub is promised soon.

Near the Stocks on Mill Lane, the **Windmill** has lost its real Greenalls mild; Greenalls and Theakstons bitters remain in what is now probably the best pub in Parbold.

A pub which has reopened is the **Royal Oak**, Wigan Lower Road, Standish Lower Ground. (WD Sep 98) The pub looks smarter than before, if little changed otherwise. Traditional and smoothflow Burtonwood bitter remain on sale, alongside a guest beer. Recently this was Gales Trafalgar Ale, a welcome change from the Pedigree/6X/Old Speckled Hen range usually on offer.

Scholes was never the most exciting place in the world to go a-drinking but most of the pubs sold a decent pint. Nowadays only the **Black Bull**, Hardybutts remains, since the conversion of 'Thwaites' **Water Wheel** on Warrington Lane. The Tetley mild and bitter at the Bull are eminently drinkable on even a quiet night, making this pub well worth a visit... the only problem being where to go after?

Ashton-in-Makerfield is looking increasingly forlorn, with two more pubs turning to nitrokeg. The **Kings Arms** (Tetley) on the corner of Warrington Road/Liverpool Road may have seen better days, but the **Commercial**, a Burtonwood inn down Heath Road can be found in the 1998 GBG. If Holts think they can make a go of it in Ashton, then good luck to them. Incidentally, the former Conservative & Unionist Club on Princess Road (keg Greenalls) has been converted into flats.

Wigan centre now, and the **Royal Oak**, Standishgate, was due to reopen on 22nd October. Apart from a short-lived stab at it in the early nineties, the Oak hasn't sold cask conditioned beer in donkey's years, so don't hold your breath. Elsewhere in the town centre, the casualties mount, with both **Steppes** (ScotCo) on Mesnes Street and the **Crofters Arms** (Tetley) losing real ale. Good news for nitroids at the Crofters, though - Lees smoothflow is available, a bit of a novelty in these parts. If one removes the Swinley area from the equation, then really good pubs in Wigan centre are thin on the ground. Detractors of Wetherspoons might argue that the **Moon Under Water** has killed trade in other pubs, but some of them were on the slippery slope long before Tim Martin came this way. The same goes for Ashton.



Further to last month, the **Inn Between**, Appley Lane North, Appley Bridge, advertises cask ale, and may even sell the stuff from time to time, but when your scribe called in, the pumpclip for Boddingtons bitter was turned away. Meanwhile at Gathurst, the **Station Bar** looks much the same as before it closed. Recently the bar sold a cask mild (Bass) plus Moorhouses Pendle Witch, as well as a more predictable range of beer. Quite a contrast with the soulless **Buffet Bar** at Appley Bridge station, up the track.

Finally, the **Ellesmere Inn**, Lancaster Road, Hindley, has got rid of real Burtonwood bitter; no bad thing, if my last visit was anything to go by. Expect another Wetherspoons house in town before long.

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## Cheshire Lines

*Steve Smith*

The Crewe & Shrewsbury Passengers' Association, which recently celebrated the 140th anniversary of the Crewe to Shrewsbury railway line, specialises in organising trips to places of interest. One of their most popular feats each summer is to get the Manchester to Cardiff express to make a special stop at Wrenbury for the benefit of visitors to the Bhurtpore Inn beer festival in the nearby village of Aston. This festival has evolved into a very popular event and the Association's members usually meet the train and direct people to the pub.

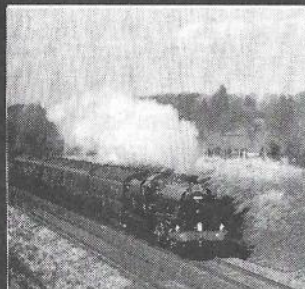
A brochure, jointly-funded by Cheshire and Shropshire county councils, gives a detailed history of the line, information on places of interest and recommended pubs. Copies of this and details of the Association are available from the Chairman, J Cresswell, 39 Coton Hill, Shrewsbury SY1 2DY.

## Hare & Hounds plea

Any information of an historical nature is being sought about the Hare & Hounds, Shudehill. Information about the pub's history and that of Smithfield Market and environs would prove especially useful. Contact Maxine Doyle at the pub or through WD.

# 140 YEARS

Crewe to Shrewsbury Line  
A History & Guide



CREWE & SHREWSBURY

PASSENGERS' ASSOCIATION

Working to promote services with  
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## Not The Roosters Trip

*Ian Mitchell was intending to write a lighthearted account of a trip by the Rochdale, Oldham & Bury Branch of CAMRA to Roosters Brewery, but the destination had to be changed (no-one's fault) and then a number of CAMRA issues were raised...*

The trip itself became tour of various places. It was decided that our main aim would be to visit a Good Beer Guide-listed Boddies pub in North Yorkshire. Read on if you think our organiser has finally flipped...

The first thought-provoking incident was a letter in my paper from an ex-CAMRA member, basically accusing us of being humourless, introverted anoraks. Then someone told the tale of being stopped on the way to the bus with the question 'Do you drink bitter?' The questioner was conducting a survey and had a list containing many 'popular' beers (smooth flow, etc). The only one which the questionee would drink was Guinness! The surveyor suggested our member should go and get his bus.

The aforementioned main aim of the trip was to visit the Old Bear Brewery at Cross Hills, just outside Keighley. The brewery is in the stables of the Old White Bear, a Boddingtons tied house. The bitter received mixed reviews, especially after an excellent trip round the brewery given by Bryan Eastell. The brew is 70% malt, 20% maize and 10% wheat. There is also a small amount of Ingredient X, namely tea.

After lunch we moved on to the Hebble Brook at Mixenden, just out of Halifax. We passed through Keighley without calling at a Taylors pub. This oversight can be explained by the experience of a previous trip to the town, when we tried a few Taylors pubs which weren't too hot. Also, the Hebble Brook was serving Taylors Golden Best, along with two guest beers.

Stop three was in Sowerby Bridge. Passing through Halifax, we saw a sign on a pub advertising Tetleys Smooth. Ten years ago Tetleys had TV adverts for hand pulled mild; how times change! At Sowerby Bridge, the Moorings (a converted canal warehouse) had Ruddles in addition to Black Sheep. Where is Ruddles brewed now? The Rams Head sells very good Ryeburn beers, both in quality and in price as they are much cheaper than the beers in other pubs in the town. The Rams Head was almost deserted, which you couldn't say of the last pub, the Navigation. I admit to having been slightly concerned by the 'disco pub' look of the place. Fortunately the Barnsley IPA was spot on, if a little expensive.

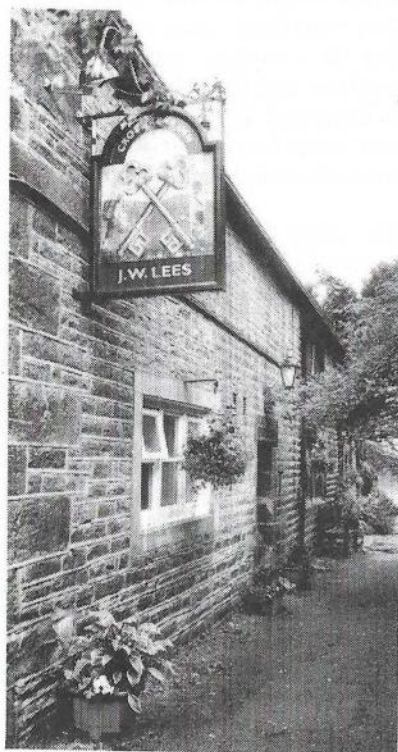
Our last call was up the hill at Uppermill - the Cross Keys, a Lees



GBG house (*right*). The reason for finishing back in the Oldham area was to present a plaque to Pat & Phil, who've just celebrated twenty years in the pub. The fact that the organiser of the trip lives fifty yards away had nothing to do with the call, honestly. Naturally, after twenty years the landlord will soon be moving on. There are already rumours about what will happen to the Cross Keys.

I can't help but wonder if CAMRA is now fighting the wrong war. Real ale appears to be 'safe', but a niche product. The big brewers have the clout to convince the average boozier to drink whatever they pour out of their beer factories. How many brewery protest marches have actually had any effect?

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## Wetherspoons Express

No, they're not doing a Virgin and going into the rail business! Wetherspoons Express is the name for a new chain of smaller JDW outlets where there is more emphasis on drinking and less on dining. Tim Martin says that these will follow the principles (no music, smoke free, etc) which have made his empire so successful and the aim is to be ready for the 24-hour opening of town centre outlets once the licensing laws are changed. The company's property agents are apparently even now scouring the country, looking for suitable locations. With Manchester's stated aim of being a 24-hour city, it shouldn't be long before one (or more) opens here.

## Lancashire Ale

*Leo King*

There will be a second Lancashire Beer Festival at the Beer House on Angel Street, Manchester, in November. Lancashire Day is 27th November and the festival will run for three days - Friday 27th to Sunday 29th. As well as the usual guest ales, there will be real ales from breweries of the Red Rose county of Lancashire. Traditional beers from a traditional county.



OUR COUNTY IS CALLED  
LANCASHIRE  
not  
Greater Manchester  
Cumbria, Merseyside  
or part of Cheshire



## Openings in the Village

Two new bars have opened on Canal Street. First is a style bar called Bar 38 - stylish, but no cask ale. Further along is Abbaye, another keg bar and this time a Belgian beer concept from Whitbread offering commercial Belgian brewers' products in a fancy setting. The same beers can be had at Fringe and Sand Bar. The difference here is that mussels and other such delicacies are available.

The Slug & Lettuce has replaced the Theakstons beers with two Grays beers, and at the Rembrandt the mild has gone, leaving just Lees bitter as the real ale.

## Salford Arms

Alongside the Chesters mild, Greys bitter From Mansfield Brewery is now on sale. This 4.8% beer is good value at £1.09. It needs to be keenly priced to compete with the Egerton across the road, which serves Holts.

## City changes

The Mitre, near the Cathedral, has dropped cask beers in favour of smooth. It's the same story at Tetley's Square Albert. Around the corner, Cox's Bar has chucked out cask Boddies in favour of smooth. It has chucked out everything else, too, to become Baty's - a style bar on two levels.

On Dale Street, Nickleby's is now selling Boddies instead of Tetley bitter. Captains Bar on Rochdale Road has become the Woodville Hotel, selling cask Thwaites for £1.50.

**WHAT'S DOING** contributions should be sent to the editor c/o 88 Ringley Road, Stoneclough, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 1ET, to arrive no later than first post on 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:** £3 for six months, £5.50 for twelve months. Send cheque/PO 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.

## Along the Bridgewater Canal

*It was not ideal walking weather, being a rather murky and drizzly day in the summer, but nevertheless Steve Smith set off with a copy of the 'Out Inn Cheshire' ale guide...*

My starting point was Stockton Heath and the black-and-white painted **London Bridge**. This is a pleasant canalside Greenalls house, one of the guide's 'flagship' entries. Outside, there are picnic tables by the water and inside there is a degree of rusticity plus subdued lighting, pillars and beams, several separate areas, a non-smoking room and a games room. It is a popular eating place, with reasonably priced 'home cooked' food and real ales - handpumped Greenalls mild and bitter and up to three guests. The guest beers are dispensed from imitation casks behind the bar to give the impression they are on gravity. Not so, but the pub is worth a visit.

A few miles along the canal there is the lovely old village of Grappenhall. By Bridge 17 there is a cobbled street leading to its two public houses. The **Rams Head** is a pleasant, two-roomed, wood-panelled hostelry selling Greenalls mild, bitter and Marstons Pedigree. The **Parr Arms** is almost next door, next to the church, and is another Cheshire Guide 'flagship' entry. It's a popular meeting place and has a large dining room, lots of bric-a-brac and a back room bar with Toby jugs. The beers are Greenalls bitter, Original and up to

two guests.

Back on the towpath and a few miles further along you come to Lymm and the impressive **Spread Eagle**, a Good Beer Guide Lees house. It's a smart place, with split-level lounge and back bar, selling Lees GB Mild and Bitter.

After walking some distance along the canal you reach Burford. Go down the stone steps to the roadway, turn right into Mill Lane and after a short walk you come to the **Railway**. This detached, brick-built pub is next to the TransPennine Trail - a former railway line, hence the pub's name. Pictures in the small rooms hark back



Grappenhall

to the age of steam and there is memorabilia from the time when Boddingtons Brewery was independent. The beers are Taylors Landlord, Boddingtons bitter and a guest.

Further along Mill Lane, near the junction with Birch Brook Road and Warburton Bridge is the **Green Dragon**, a large, open-plan, mock-rustic family pub, heavy on food. Draught Bass and Worthington bitter are the beers.

### **Getting there from Manchester**

By X4 bus from Chorlton Street or 10 from Cannon Street (a longer journey). Trains to Warrington Central leave Piccadilly and Oxford Road at least hourly. Buses 8 and 9 operate via Stockton Heath from Warrington (half hourly, take about 15 minutes and stop outside London Bridge).

After completing the walk, there's a bus stop by the Green Dragon at Heatley Heath. Services are infrequent and prone to revisions. The 38 goes to Altrincham, where you can catch the Metrolink.

A Wayfarer ticket (£6.60 in advance from travel shops and rail stations) allows unlimited travel on the day of issue. A Weekend Wayfarer (£10) covers Saturday and Sunday travel.

## **The BEER HOUSE**

Angel Street, Manchester. 0161 839 7019

## **LANCASHIRE FESTIVAL**

Friday 27th November to Sunday 29th November

**20 + NEW BEERS  
UPSTAIRS AND DOWN**

*Plus*

**TRADITIONAL LANCASHIRE FOOD  
AND CHEESES, SERVED ALL DAY**



## Coniston brews

*Bluebird Bitter from the Coniston Brewing Company is this year's Champion Beer of Britain. Dave Crookell has been to Coniston to look at the brewery and some of the pubs thereabouts...*

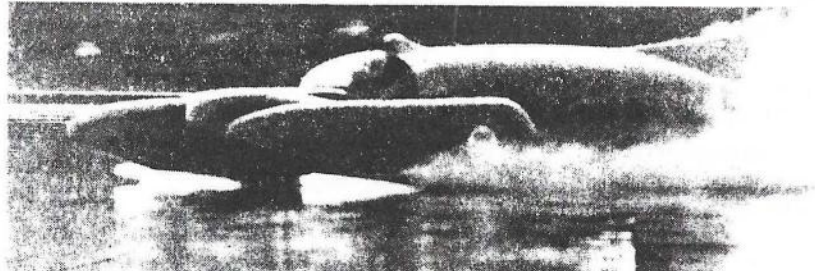
The village is a popular tourist centre, with rugged Lakeland fells to the west and the Grizedale Forest to the east, and is at the head of Coniston Water, the scene of Donald Campbell's ill-fated speed record attempt in his jet boat, Bluebird.

The **Black Bull Inn** - the brewery tap of the Coniston Brewing Company - is a spacious old pub with slate floor and much Campbell memorabilia, including a fragment of Bluebird in a display cabinet on the wall. Here you will find Bluebird Bitter (3.6%) at £1.75 and Old Man Ale (4.4%) at £1.85 together with Old Peculier. There is also the curiously-named Opium, which is really a mix of Bluebird and Old Man Ale. The beers are produced using Challenger hops, roasted pale crystal malts and of course 'the pure water of the Coniston Fells'. They are becoming increasingly available in the South Lakes area as guest beers. I found the Bluebird Bitter to be a light, clean-tasting quaffing ale with a hoppy aroma and dry finish. Old Man Ale is described as a classic dark, rich beer with a subtle yet strong fruity and grainy aroma, balanced by a hint of hops with a malty finish.

Also in the village are the **Crown Hotel** (Hartleys XB and Robinsons Best Bitter), a traditional village centre pub with separate public bar, lounge and dining room, which offers good value accommodation (bed and breakfast £18 per night), and the **Yewdale Hotel** (Boddingtons), a comfortable, well appointed pub.

Approximately one mile south of Coniston on the A593 you will find the **Ship Inn** (Hartleys) in the hamlet of Bowmanstead. This is a typical small Lakeland inn offering Hartleys XB and Robinsons Old Stockport Bitter. There is an unintrusive juke box and the only pool table in the area in a raised games/family room.

Just outside the village, up the hill opposite the garage, is the **Sun Inn and Hotel**, a stone-flagged pub attached to a country house hotel with more Campbell photographs and newspaper cuttings adorning the walls. Beers were Jennings bitter, Tetleys bitter and a guest - Bluebird Bitter again!



## Letters

### Picking on Paul

Sir - I read Paul Roberts' latest whinge (*Letters, Oct*) while drinking an excellent pint of Flannerys Harvest Moon (4.5%, £1.70) at the Beer House. Moorhouses Pendle Witch (5.1%) was on offer at the same price. Pretty good value, I would suggest, especially since Paul seems to hold out his pint of Adnams (3.7%, £1.70) in London as being exceptional value.

As always, the Beer House was clean and not offensively smoky; the bar staff were efficient, fast, friendly and knowledgeable, and it was a very pleasant place in which to enjoy a drink. The Beer House is not alone in this - the same can be said of all the well-known real ale houses in and near the centre.

Paul is right to draw attention to the fact that no CAMRA branch is forced to fill its allocation of Good Beer Guide entries - you can always leave some gaps if you think 'your' pubs don't come up to scratch. In my experience, however, it is CAMRA branches in the South East who should be observing this self-denying ordinance, not those in the Manchester area.

*Rhys P Jones*

### ...and again

Sir - If London is so \*\*\*\*ing marvellous, what is it that keeps Paul Roberts in Manchester? (*Letters, Oct*) Is there a Monica lurking outside his office? I think we should be told!

*Ken Starr*

### ...and Rupert

Sir - National Poetry Week has inspired me to write the following poem, which is entitled 'Rupert':

*Rupert is a wise man,  
who talks a lot of sense,  
He suffers fools gladly,  
and never gives offence.  
The End.*

*Ami Drab*



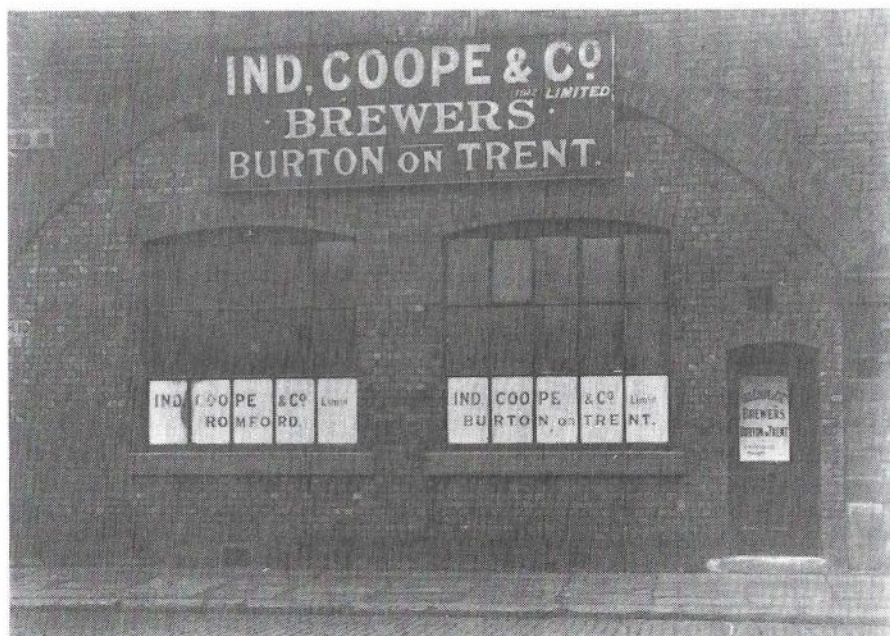


## **Manchester Pubs - a history**

### **Part Four: Breweries and Brewhouses**

Early editions of CAMRA's guides to real ale in Manchester had a predictability about them when it came to the brewers and their beers. The one that came out in December 1978 listed fifty-two real ale outlets between Ardwick Green in the south and Miles Platting to the north of the city. Fifty of them were tied houses selling milds and bitters from the likes of Wilsons, Tetleys, Greenalls and Boddingtons. The two 'free house' bars sold Boddingtons and Tetleys. Whitbread's Salford brewery didn't brew real ale then, but one Whitbread pub was on the list - the Seven Oaks on Nicholas Street. That was because the pub sold draught Bass and it was the last of its kind in the city. Sixty years ago it was common to see Bass and other well known brews of the day on sale alongside the local product.

Over a hundred years ago, before the tied house system took over, the big brewers competed with the locals to get their beers on sale in Manchester's pubs and hotel bars. Agents for Burton brewers (such as Bass and Allsopp), London (Trumans, Watneys) and Edinburgh (McEwans) brewers had offices in the city centre and the big companies also maintained ale and porter stores in railway arches near London Road, Central and Exchange Stations. Scottish brewers were dependent on the free trade the longest and the sign above the



*Ind Coope's beer stores on Great Bridgewater Street in the 1930s. The premises are still there, opposite the end of Watson Street*



entrance to McEwans store under Exchange Station approach could still be seen in the 1980s.

Some Manchester and Salford brewers were also represented in the centre in their early years. Henry Boddington's office was in Victoria Street (next-door-but-one to Sinclairs, as was) and Joseph Holt leased outlets around the town.

There were many other local breweries, now long gone, when Henry Boddington and Joseph Holt were in short trousers. A number of these were across the river in Salford and some had tied houses in Manchester. In the 1820s a Mr Ratcliffe of the Sandywell Brewery was advertising that his pale home-brewed ale and table beer could be ordered at the Crown & Anchor on Cateaton Street for delivery in barrels, half-barrels and quarters. When James Hardman's brewery in Greengate was sold in 1833 he owned four public houses, including the Britons Protection on Great Bridgewater Street. Benjamin Joule was a respected Salford brewer and when his business was sold in the 1850s there were freehold pubs and beerhouses in Manchester, Salford and Stockport. Among these was the Rams Head (Paddy's Goose) on Bloom Street.

Most of Manchester's pubs had their own brewhouses in the early days and some were still in production later in the nineteenth century. The local well water seems to have been suited to the brewer's art, and when the Angel & Trumpet was sold in 1780 the advert mentioned a brewhouse, large yard, pump and plenty of soft water. A new owner extended the property and built over most of the



*The Salisbury Hotel, once equipped with its own brewhouse*

yard, but the remains of the well may still be there, somewhere under what is now the King on Oldham Street.

Not far from the King and near the former Smithfield Market is the Wheatsheaf. An earlier pub on this site was called the Butchers Arms and its brewhouse was capable of turning out twenty barrels of beer a week. An inventory of the brewhouse at the Smithfield Hotel on Swan Street in 1843 included a seven-barrel copper brewpan, two copper pumps, a working square lined with lead and a very large water cistern, also lined with lead. (There was a lot of lead in plumbing in those days.)

The contents of the brewhouse at the Rising Sun on Queen Street were offered for sale in August 1848 and included a six-and-a-half-barrel copper brewpan, copper pump, malt hopper, mash tub, underbeck, cooler, working square and 36 and 18-gallon barrels. Other pubs similarly equipped were the Churchill on Chorlton Street (then called the Mechanics Arms), the Crown & Anchor on Hilton Street, the Ducie Bridge, the (New) Union, the Salisbury and the Waggon & Horses (Mulligan's).

When a pub owner decided to call it a day with brewing, the brewhouse was sometimes rented to an individual who was in the business in a small way. One local man who started off in a pub brewhouse and went on to bigger things was Joseph Holt. The brewhouse was on Oak Street and probably the one at the Butchers Arms (Wheatsheaf). Another of today's local brewers, Hydes, was in its early years based at a brewery behind a Manchester pub - the Bridge Inn on Fairfield Street - which was demolished a few years ago.

The brewhouse behind the Lord Nelson on Newton Street suffered an unexpected halt in production in February 1854. During a hailstorm the chimney was blown down into the backyard and took the brewhouse roof with it. Two men who were shovelling spent grains from the upper floor into a cart in the yard escaped unhurt and when the dust had settled a third employee was found on his knees in the stable, praying for forgiveness for all his past offences, as he thought the world had come to an end!

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## **Sam's Chopped**

Sam's Chop House, a long established traditional eating house in the city's financial district, closed on 23rd October. The lease has come to an end and Scottish Courage don't seem to have pursued its possible renewal with great determination. Should Sam's be allowed to slide into oblivion, or could a group of seriously rich aficionados be persuaded to buy the lease? Sam's is an institution and its premature demise would be sad.



# Home Brewing Revisited

*Humulus Lupulus*

## Part Fifteen - Finings

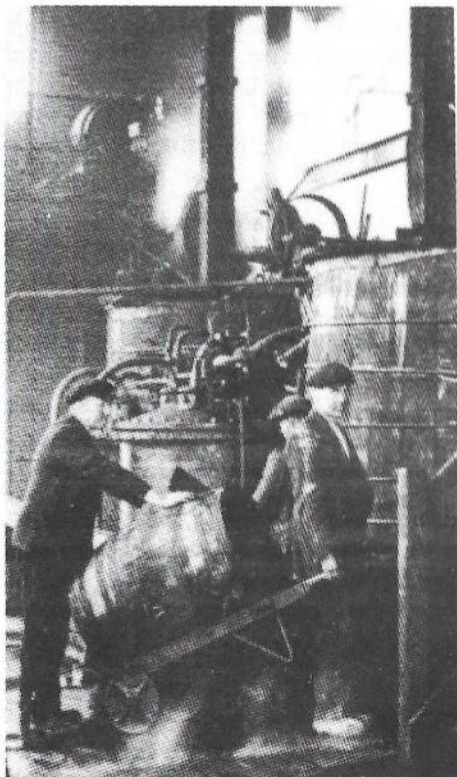
When the yeast has fermented most or all of the sugars in the wort, it will usually sink to the bottom of the fermenting vessel. I will deal with priming and storage in future issues: suffice to say that whatever vessel is used to store and serve the beer, a small amount of yeast will need to be included to produce secondary 'condition', but having fulfilled this function it should stay on the bottom of the container and not cloud the beer when it is served.

As home brewers we have an advantage over commercial breweries. We usually have plenty of time between finishing a brew and drinking it, and normally our containers will not be disturbed once they have been sealed. As a rule, most yeasts will settle down hard on the bottom of the vessel, leaving a clear supernatant liquid, and there is no need to use finings of any sort.

Most authors of home-brewing books are agreed on this. Thus H E Bravery (1) back in 1965 said, 'the beer will clarify itself in no time at all.' As recently as 1993, Graham Wheeler (13) agreed: 'A well-brewed beer, kept for its proper times, should not need fining. A good yeast will clear down unaided.'

This is good news for vegans and vegetarians, since the most common finings recommended to home brewers are gelatine and isinglass. The former is an animal by-product and isinglass is derived from the swim bladder of the sturgeon. In the early days it was only available dry, which required 'cutting' - dissolving in dilute acid over several days to render a glutinous liquid. Nowadays it is available in liquid form, but this has a shorter life and should be stored in the fridge or it quickly loses its potency. In use, it is dispersed in a little of the beer, which is then stirred into the bulk.

I have found the action very rapid and a somewhat cloudy beer will drop clear within an hour or so. However, the



resulting sediment is very 'loose' and easily disturbed compared with the hard, compact layer of yeast resulting when unfinned beer is left to stand for several days or weeks. Especially in the case of bottled beers, it is usually easier to decant most of the contents without yeast carry-over if finings have **not** been used.

#### References

- 1 *Home Brewing Without Failures* by H E Bravery. Max Parrish, London
- 13 *Brew Your Own Real Ale at Home* by Graham Wheeler & Roger Protz, CAMRA

There are also dangers of over-finings. Since the action depends on the neutralisation of electrical charge on the yeast, excessive finings can actually stabilise a haze rather than removing it. It should also be noted that other causes of haze, starch (rare) or protein cannot be cured by finings; the remedy lies earlier in the brewing process.

*(This chapter is dedicated to Rupert, following his request for items in green biro. It is hard to write small enough in crayon.)*

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### Golden opportunity

Avebury Taverns have applied for outline planning permission for a residential development at the Golden Lion in Harpurhey. Whether this involves knocking down the keg-only former Whitbread pub or just building on the bowling green remains to be seen.

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# Rupert

So what's this, then? Campaign meetings crowded after months of apathy, how can that be? It's the arrival of the new toppers' vademecum, that's what. Would-be tickers falling over themselves to get a copy at a snip - £7 except, of course, those wise in the ways of finance, who know where to find a bargain. Why bother to go to a meeting of hard line obsessives when you can pop copies in with your shopping at the local branch of Tossco's. Some campaigners think it's wrong for Tossco's to sell the bibulous bible for only £6.99, but it surely brings the accumulated wisdom of the great and the good to the hoi polloi. This can only make them streetsmart to the evils of lager and smooth and encourage them to shun nasty tinnies from Tossco's and rediscover the charmes of their local hostelry.

The front cover gets a mixed reception. Some think it looks like a 1930s railway poster with a latter-day messiah leading middle class ramblers towards the mecca of a perfect pint. Others think it's like the Teletubbies, which gives more scope for double-entendres. Snobley's completely missing, which Fiona jumped on immediately. 'Since Ben Chestnut left, the whole town's gone downhill. I blame

Rumpledshirtscream and Charlie Super for this.'

It was I who pointed out to her that it was merely a printing error and that both Ben's former pubs were still included and many more to boot. Sadly they all appear under Smegmish, squeezed between Smarmley and Snoot Magna. 'Perhaps Snobley's loss may turn out to be Smegmish's gain,' Tish remarked somewhat elliptically.

Most people were delighted that Grotley city centre now had no fewer than ten entries, compared with a mere eight in 1990. A long debate ensued about whether the taverns and their amber nectars had improved or whether branches with their declining attendances

had lowered their standards. This was unresolved. However, there was a resolution to produce a new vademecum to the throbbing real ale mecca of Central Grotley to coincide with the world amber nectar show in January. This, combined with the preparations

already in hand for Slumley's silver anniversary, promises to reinvigorate the wilting enthusiasm that now seems to characterise the campaign. As Fiona remarked, 'All we do now is recruit affluent scratchers who just want to visit multi-wicketed free houses and beer festivals and get hopelessly pissed.' Quite.



# Branch Diary

**Regional Meeting:** Saturday 7th November 12.30pm  
Swan & Railway, Wigan (guest pies)  
**Good Beer Guide Launch:** Thursday 12th Nov 12.30pm  
Beer House, Angel Street, Manchester  
**Manchester Winter Ales Festival Meetings**  
(All on Sunday at the Beer House at 12.30pm)  
Nov 1st, Nov 22nd, Dec 6th

## **Rochdale, Oldham & Bury**

Tues 3 Nov 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Black Swan, Botton o'th'Moor, Mumps, Oldham

Tues 17 Nov 8.30pm, Brewery Visit/Committee Meeting, Marble Arch, Rochdale Road, Manchester

Tues 24 Nov 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 4 Nov, ROCKET crawl of Patricroft & Eccles:

Red Lion, Chapel Street, 7pm

Oddfellows Arms, Liverpool Road, 7.30pm

Chestnut Lodge, Trafford Road, 8.00pm

Kings Head, Trafford Road, 8.30pm

Ellesmere, Liverpool Road, 9.00pm

Town Hall, Church Street, 9.30pm

Wed 11 Nov 8pm, Social, Brahms & Liszt, Brown Street, Manchester

Wed 18 Nov 8pm, Branch Meeting, Hare & Hounds, Shudehill

Tues 24 Nov 6pm on, What's Doing collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham

Weds 25 Nov 8pm, Committee & Social, Morning Star, Manchester Road, Wardley

Wed 2 Dec Salford Crawl. Crown, Blackfriars Street 7pm; Eagle, Collier Street, 8pm; Kings Arms, Bloom Street, 9.30pm

*Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937*

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*Contributors to this issue:* Paul Roberts, Steve Holt, Rob Magee, Mark McConachie, Pete Cash, Dave White, Michael Lynn, Roger Hall, Dave Crookell

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Dave and Sue welcome you to the

# QUEENS ARMS

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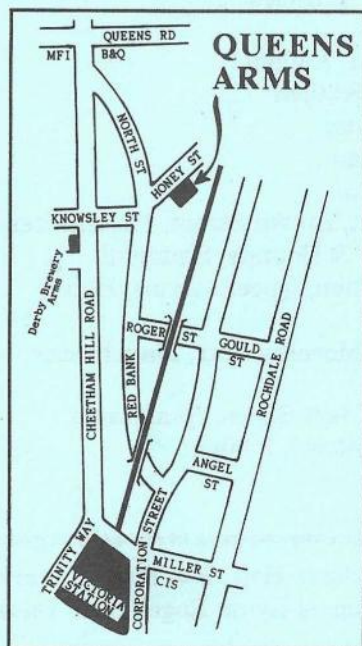


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General Knowledge Quiz Night  
Tuesday. Beer Prizes

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