

30p

# What's Doing

AUGUST 1999



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

## Holts all over the Globe

Well, Leigh at least. A new Joey's house opened in the town in early July, a former Matthew Brown pub. The Globe is on Bradshawgate (the pedestrianised area at the rear of the shopping centre/bus station) at the corner of Vernon Street. There is now a central bar flanked by a vault area and a lounge, nicely fitted out and with a restrained decor. The photos of old Leigh and district pubs give a local feel. To get there, catch the 26 or 35 bus from Manchester or Salford. Alternatively, train to Atherton, then 582 bus to Leigh.

### Rumworth

16th July saw the second Holts opening within a month - the Rumworth on Wigan Road, Bolton (buses 127, 540-2, 547-8 from Bolton). This is a good-looking, solid, red-brick, double-fronted building with a very comfortable lounge, a central bar and a well appointed vault, with pool and darts area to the rear of that. If the locals get a liking for Joey's beers it should do well.





## CAMRA Prices Survey 1999

The average price of a pint of real ale now stands at £1.76 (up 2.84% on last year) and the average price of a pint of lager now stands at £1.93 (up 3.10%). The inflation rate for the period is 3.52%

### Real Ale prices by region...

	1999	1998	% Change	Cheapest	Priciest
<b>U.K</b>	<b>176p</b>	<b>171p</b>	<b>+2.84%</b>	<b>75p</b>	<b>400p</b>
Wales	169p	158p	+6.50%	120p	216p
Scotland	194p	180p	+7.21%	172p	215p
South West	184p	177p	+3.80%	110p	250p
North	171p	164p	+4.09%	140p	230p
North West	153p	147p	+3.92%	99p	286p
East Mids	175p	162p	+7.42%	99p	230p
West Mids	168p	155p	+7.73%	90p	233p
East Anglia	186p	178p	+4.30%	115p	400p
London	195p	192p	+1.53%	120p	245p
Yorks	162p	157p	+3.08%	75p	400p
South East	190p	185p	+2.63%	75p	300p

### Lager prices by region...

	1999	1998	% Change	Cheapest	Priciest
<b>U.K</b>	<b>193p</b>	<b>187p</b>	<b>+3.10%</b>	<b>100p</b>	<b>260p</b>
Wales	183p	182p	+0.54%	149p	210p
Scotland	189p	177p	+6.34%	170p	210p
South West	197p	190p	+3.55%	148p	240p
North	186p	180p	+3.22%	162p	220p
North West	180p	172p	+4.44%	100p	220p
East Mids	189p	176p	+6.87%	120p	230p
West Mids	186p	177p	+4.83%	110p	243p
East Anglia	202p	193p	+4.45%	149p	240p
London	212p	212p	0%	100p	260p
Yorks	183p	175p	+4.37%	122p	218p
South East	206p	200p	+2.91%	100p	260p

	1999	1998	% Change
Price of cider	181p	164p	+9.39%
Price of nitrokegs	184p	180p	+2.17%
Price of stout	208p	202p	+2.88%

### Nationals v Independents

	1999	1998	% Change
Real ale prices for national brewers' beers	174p	170p	+2.29%
Real ale prices for independent brewers' beers	172p	171p	+0.58%
Real ale prices in national pubs	176p	173p	+1.70%
Real ale prices in independent brewers' pubs	168p	168p	0%
Real ale prices in pub chains	172p	172p	0%
Price of guest beers	180p	179p	+0.55%

### Pubs serving full pints

% of pubs not serving full pints 91%

% of pubs selling full pints 9%

### Pubs offering no smoking areas

% of pubs with no smoking areas 24.2%

% of pubs without no smoking areas 73.3%

### Of those offering no smoking areas:

In whole pub 0.4%

A separate area of the pub 9.3%

A separate room 45.5%

For diners only 44.8%



So the average price of a pint of real ale is below the rate of inflation. Lager continues to be dearer than real ale, but not significantly more expensive to produce. The extra 17p a pint pays for all that advertising.

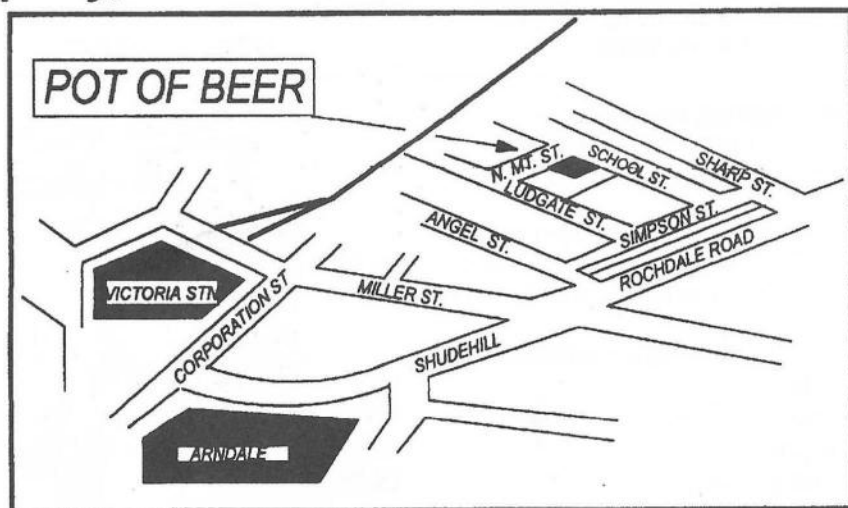
The North West remains the cheapest region; London is the dearest. No surprises there. Real ale in pubs owned by independent brewers is the best value (£1.68 compared to £1.76 in nationals' pubs and £1.72 in pub chains). This average has not increased over the last year. Nitrokeg is 8p a pint dearer than real ale - even real ale guest beers are cheaper than nitrokeg.

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## Out and about

*with Groggnard*

There's been some changes at Hollinwood. John, the landlord of the Grey Horse on Manchester Road (Lees) has moved on to the **Britannia Hotel** at Washbrook, Chadderton. This was originally a Wilsons house (*below*) which entered upon hard times with a selection of pressurised beers and a clientele of 'kids and idiots'. Now it offers Lees bitter and mild at £1.30 and £1.28 per pint, but it is not owned by the brewery. John has put his shirt on this piece of private



enterprise, paying for the repairs and redecorations out of his own pocket. Lees' contribution has been to paint the outside in its colours of green and white and the brewery is going to supply the new logo glass for the windows and the two Wilsons lanterns on the frontage.

John is committed to sell Lees for the next three years, after which he may well try some guest beers. Whether he succeeds or not depends upon his taking enough of his

regulars with him from the Grey Horse. I dropped in on his unofficial opening on Saturday 17th and there were about twenty of them in the lounge. One more change to mention - the name of the house is now the **Washbrook Tavern**; original and locationally precise.

Meanwhile, back at the **Grey Horse**, the administration has been taken, or should I say retaken over, by Abdul. He had the Grey Horse for a couple of years, moved to the **Dutch Birds** down Manchester Road and has now returned. His speciality is home-made Indian cuisine and for those who like that sort of thing, the opportunity to enjoy it with real ale is not too common in Oldham. He is also intending to offer a lively social scene with entertainments four nights a week. I hope he succeeds; we all need an alternative to the goggle-box culture.

On the subject of entertainments of the in-pub variety, I paid a visit to Greenfield on the 18th, where the **Station Hotel** was doing a hosting for part of the weekend Saddleworth Folk Festival. The music on offer that afternoon was hardly of the local variety; instead there was the Bayou Gumbo, a cheerfully efficient Cajun band. For those who don't know the Louisiana style of music, it's worth listening to. Incidentally the Taylors Landlord is £1.59 here, about 25p less than in many places in Greater Manchester.

## Wigan and district

*Dave White*

The pundits in St Albans assert that the tide of nitrokeg has turned, and that sales of real ale are climbing once more. That may be true nationally, but here in Wigan, the advance of smoothflow is unyielding. Billinge, for example, was once a good place in which to have a night out; now a cloud of nitrogen hangs over it like a pall. Main Street has been particularly badly hit, with three out of four pubs serving no real ale at all. Cask Burtonwood bitter lingers on (literally) at the **Foresters Arms**, but has to vie with the nitrokeg version; The **Eagle & Child**, which reopened not so long ago as a Wilderspool hotel, has dropped its traditional beers, though the handpumps remain. The thirsty traveller's best bet in Billinge is the **Holts Arms**, Crank Road, which offers an unusual guest beer alongside Burtonwood bitter and a bowling green.

Ashton-in-Makerfield, which was not a particularly good place for a pub crawl, is now even worse. The **Britannia**, a grim Greenalls boozer by Bryn railway station, was closed on a recent Saturday night. Up the A49 at Landgate the long-closed **Red Lion** (Burtonwood) has had its signs removed. Betwixt the two pubs, the **Golden Ball** on Wigan Road was, as ever, shut. Not far away in North Ashton, the **Blue Bell**, Rectory Road (S&N) has succumbed to

the dreaded fizz, though here too, the beer engines remain, just to rub it in.



There have been a few changes in Upholland. The **Stanley**, a musty-smelling Greenalls pub on Ormskirk Road, has gone keg. Since the departure of Brendan at the **White Lion**, Church Street, Thwaites have seen fit to drop the pub's guest beers in favour of their own rather samey brews to complement Thwaites bitter. A more imaginative guest beer policy is operated at the **Old Dog** on Alma Hill. On recent visits, ales such as Weetwood Oasthouse Cold and



Titanic Sundeck have been on fine form, as well as the regulars, Draught Bass and Boddies bitter.

News in brief: Tetley's **Lord Nelson** on Bridge Street, Hindley (pictured), appears to be closed... the **Inn Between**, Appley Lane South, Appley Bridge is closed and boarded up after a gradual decline... A pub is rumoured to have reopened (yes, really). This is, however, the **Norley Hall** on the estate of the same name. The pub, not for the fainthearted, sold Vaux ales before it closed... a trusted informant assures me that Jennings have bought the **Beacon Inn** free house on Beacon Lane, Dalton. If only Holts, Hydes, Lees and Robinsons would show an interest this side of Manchester....

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### Holts Corner

*Stewart Revell*

Under brewer Dick Venes has left Holts after some eighteen years in the brewing trade and on Friday 2nd July he hosted a special commemorative pub crawl for colleagues, friends, other brewers and representatives from allied trades. The photo was taken outside the Coach & Horses, Prestwich. Dick is in the centre, with Chris Dempsey (former head brewer at Cook Street) on his left and Giles Dennis (head brewer, J W Lees) behind them.



### Dade bids adieu

Mark Dade, the popular licensee and brewer at the Marble Arch, is leaving the pub. There's no need to worry, though, as he is only moving out so that a full-time manager (late of the Dog & Partridge, Didsbury) can run the Marble and he can concentrate his efforts on producing more Marble beers.

### Rain forecast

John Willie Lees open their first cafe bar - the Rain Bar in Great Bridgewater Street, Manchester - in August.

## One Night in Darwen

*By way of a change from his usual Saturday night pub circuit, A Trotter took the train to Darwen...*

Our first call was at the **Millstone** (right) in the centre of town, a short walk from the station. This is a large Thwaites pub, mostly open-plan, which was refurbished in late 1998 and now sells only Thwaites bitter. From the Millstone we



moved on to the **Greenfield**, next to the Sough Tunnel, the last pub in Darwen to sell beers from its own brewhouse. These days there are eight handpumps on the bar serving a wide range of beers. The guests on the night we called were Everards Tiger, Coach House Dick Turpin and Greene King Abbot. The Greenfield is also one of the few pubs where Thwaites mild is still on handpump.

The next port of call was the **Bowling Green Hotel** on Bolton Road (A666). This is a community pub with a small beer garden and barbecues every Sunday in summer in the old stables, whatever the weather. The guest beers here were excellent - we tried the Theakstons mild.

Moving along Bolton Road, we came to the **Britannia**, opposite the India Mill Centre (which has an original old steam engine to look at). The Britannia has been opened up a little, but it is a relatively untouched Thwaites house, with tilework around the entrance and bar and etched windows dating from the days when it belonged to Shaw's Blackburn Brewery. For visitors who like a bit of excitement with their pints, there are exotic dancers on Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons. There is also a large beer garden with a children's activity area for the family day out.

Our last port of call was **The Pub**, formerly known as the Greenway Arms. This is a large, newly refurbished Thwaites house (what else?) which caters for the younger drinkers on a Saturday night. To our surprise, The Pub was selling Ridgeleys Essex Rumpus and Fishermans Whopper (a damn good pint it was, too), along with Bobbins bitter (from Blackburn's 3B's Brewery) and Thwaites bitter.

The number of guest ales available in Darwen surprised me, and I would highly recommend a night in the town as a change from the hustle and bustle of Manchester or Bolton on a Saturday night.



## **CAMRA campaigns... at last**

*Roger Hall*

Eventually CAMRA has woken up to the fact that we're losing the battle. In four years cask beer sales have fallen by 38% from 6.1 million barrels to 3.8 million. This is hardly 'sudden', as What's Brewing claims. CAMRA has been content to pussyfoot about with its criticisms of nitrokeg - none of the 'avoid it like the plague' of Watneys Red Barrel days. It took coverage in the national press, the demise of some long-established regional breweries and the Allied Domecq debacle to shake the Campaign from its complacency.

'CAMRA goes on the offensive,' we are told. We should have been on the offensive a long time ago. CAMRA has set up a fighting fund to campaign for real ale. They're asking for donations. Funny, but I thought that was why we existed all along, although one might be forgiven for thinking that CAMRA was all about recruiting members who don't do anything, writing books and running beer festivals.

But we can get our priorities right, now that it's obvious to everyone that we've made a total bollocks of it. Yes, worry not. CAMRA's Head of Campaigns, no less, sends out a list of Campaigning priorities. The missive reads:

*The priorities are (in no particular order):*

- 1. **The off-trade.** Sensitive promotion of real ale in a bottle and membership bearing in mind our commitment to the pub.*
- 2. **Real ale promotion.** Combating national marketing strategies - promoting real ale to modern drinkers. Educating beer drinkers how to tell the difference between real ale and nitrokeg when they get to the bar. Highlighting the positive attributes of real ale and the negative qualities (sic) of nitrokeg.*
- 3. **Licensing.** Campaigning for a fairer licensing Act which includes liberalised opening hours.*
- 4. **Full measure.** Legislation which will guarantee a full liquid pint.*
- 5. **Beer duty.** Support for absolute cut to stem the flow of personal and smuggled imports and the social costs which result. Campaigning for a progressive system of duty to protect small brewers.*
- 6. **Pubs.** Reaching out to pub-goers, increasing profile as pub-goers champion - the tied house system, pub preservation, etc.*
- 7. **Positive support of regional and family brewers on an issue by issue basis - they are the biggest producers of real ale and we are losing them!***

8. *Guest beer and pub chains.* As pub chains become bigger and more powerful, the guest beer law becomes increasingly irrelevant. Campaigning for guest beers in pub chains.

9. *Quality & distinctiveness of real ale.*

Well, there we go again. My dictionary says: 'Priority: something that ought to be considered, dealt with, in the earliest stage of proceedings.' How the hell can we have nine of them in no particular order?

Too little, too late? Let's hope not. If real ale is not to become an interesting niche in ten years' time, we need to enthuse members now, not waste money on poster sites. CAMRA's original effectiveness was through an informal, word of mouth campaign. Perhaps the Internet offers a similar opportunity today.

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### **Patricroft**

Sue Jackson has moved from the Diamond XX to the pub across the road, where the Boddingtons cask bitter has been replaced by Tetleys smooth.

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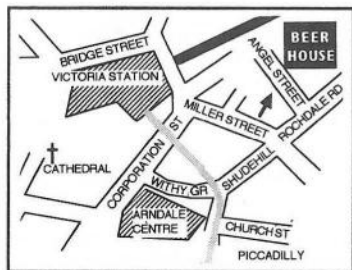
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## Letters

### Bhurlpore Beer Festival Breaks Records

Sir - A total of 323 passengers alighted at Wrenbury Station, a small request stop on the Crewe-Shrewsbury line, during the four days of the Bhurlpore Beer Festival last month. 179 arrived on the Saturday, 53 of whom alighted from the 1133 Manchester-Cardiff express, which made a special stop at Wrenbury. Another 27 arrived a few minutes later on the local Shrewsbury train. 80 passengers on Wrenbury Station is almost unheard of and the signalman who raised the barriers after the trains had passed said, 'I have been here for four years and I have never seen anything like this!'

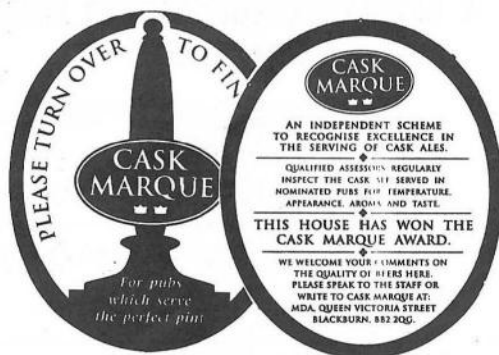
The majority of those who arrived by train seemed to be from the Manchester area. Thanks to all who visited the festival. If you require any information about visiting towns and villages along the Crewe-Shrewsbury line, please contact me.

*John Cresswell, Chairman, Crewe & Shrewsbury Passenger Association. 01743 358179 evenings (not Fri or Sat)*

### What this?

Sir - In a GBG-listed London pub I found a 'Cask Marque' beer mat (reproduced here). The beer mat supported a most pleasant pint of Fullers ESB (£2-28!) Just who are Cask Marque? Does any reader have the answer?

*Sean Kilgariff*



### Gricers etc

Sir - A couple of pints re. the last three issues of What's Doing...

1) Gricers. I recall reading an article about Ian Allan in a railway magazine which stated that the word was first used in the 1920s as a generic term for train spotters. I wasn't aware it was now used for those more interested in travelling routes, curves, etc, little used by regular trains, freight or passenger. However, I fully agree with Bogbrush that rail enthusiasts enrich life's tapestry. The enthusiasts I saw in my teens in the 1960s are nowadays more than likely to have cameras, video cameras, etc, worth hundreds of pounds round their necks and the professional jobs he mentions.

2) The saga of the Samoyed. In May's issue it was suggested that 'The Samoyed no longer suns itself...' (It had been at Nickleby's.) Samoyeds and other breeds like Huskies and Newfoundlands are from cold parts of the planet - Russia, Alaska, Canada, etc, and have coats to



suit the climate. They would hardly be likely to 'sun themselves', methinks. Shome mishtake, shurely? Also, see Rupert, July WD: '...Arctic sled dogs...'

*Kim Rampley*

### **Here we go again...**

Sir - While it was nice to read Rupert's complimentary remarks about me (*WD July*), I feel he may be lavishing undue praise. I was enthusing about the Hare & Hounds on Shudehill (*WD June*) because it is now selling decent beer - John Willie Lees. I still believe North Manchester to be a desert as far as decent beer and decent pubs are concerned. Of the local established breweries (modern micros not included), only beers from Lees and Hydes are worth drinking.

Compare what is available in this region with the excellent beers of Youngs and Fullers on sale across London and the dozens of excellent pubs in Liverpool and it soon becomes apparent that drinkers in the Manchester area are either being ripped off in overpriced free houses or have to suffer indifferent beer in tied houses. Towns such as Rochdale or Oldham offer some relief in a depressing region.

*Paul Roberts*

### **Marshtons**

Sir - I enjoyed Steve Smith's account of wandering round Saddleworth during the Festival weekend (*WD last month*). But what kind of state was he in when he got back to Oldham? He says that on the way home he called at 'Banks's Three Crowns', by the Spindles Centre. Steve, it's a Marstons pub.

*Tommy Field*

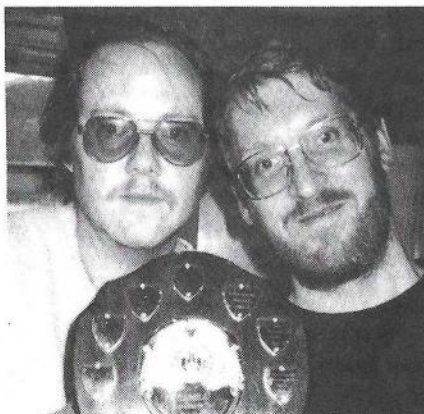
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### **Bridgewater Ales**

Delph Porter received well-deserved acclaim as overall favourite at the Stockport Beer Festival and in the pages of *City Life*. The first brew at the new premises on Chapel Street, Salford, was made on July 1st. A good mash extract and advanced attenuation resulted in a stronger (4.6%) beer than projected, which was sold as Worsley Bitter. A supercharged version of Barton Ale, its taste still shows clear signs of its antecedents in HPD Entire.

### **Pub Hunt winners**

The winners of the 1999 Independents Day Pub Hunt were the 'Raving Mad Bastards' (*right*).

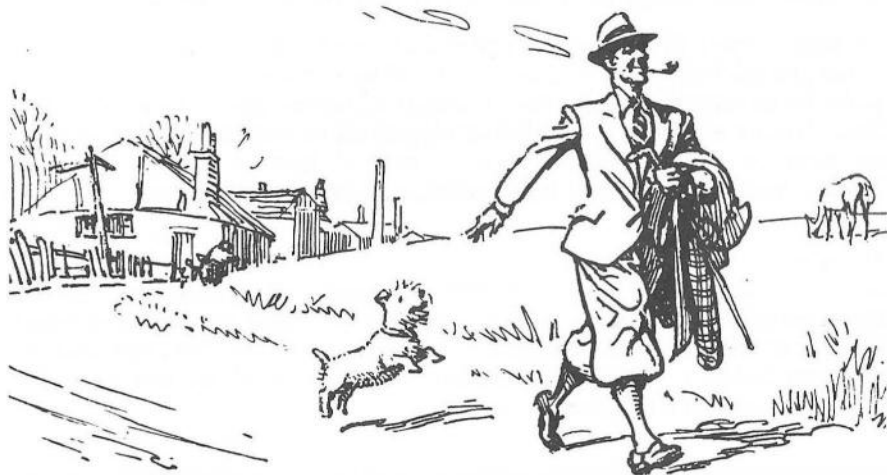


## In West Cumbria

*with Daddy Bell*

I enjoyed Dave Crookell's piece on real ale along the Ravenglass and Eskdale in May's WD. Being now in Eskdale for our customary three weeks holiday, perhaps I could contribute some supplementary and amplificatory remarks...

At Ravenglass, the **Pennington Arms** is still shut and signless and nameless, apart from some armorial bearings set into the frontage. It was, however, still open in 1995 (rather than closed in 1994), in July of which year I enjoyed two pints of meaty Tetley Imperial there (£1.10 each) after fording the Esk. Reopening seems unlikely.



The **Ratty Arms** has become somewhat unadventurous beer-wise under its present licensee. Formerly one could expect guest beers from such Cumbria sources as Derwent or Coniston, but now it restricts itself to Ruddles, Boddies, Jennings and Theakstons bitters, the last being the best seller. One surprising bright spot is the **Holly Bar** at the **Holly House Hotel** (really a small guest house with attached chippy). Boddies or Ruddles may not be very exciting real ales, but they are unusual in cask form in a small seafront bar.

Dave Crookell need not be so pessimistic about the **Bower House Hotel**. True, it is very dependent on executive trade from Sellafield (though much humbler establishments, eg the Victoria Hotel at Drigg are equally dependent for residential trade on contractors at BNFL), but I found the beers at the Bower House - Jennings bitter and Snecklifter, Hartleys XB, Theakstons bitter, Youngers Scotch - to be 'real' enough.

For those who fancy a 45 minute walk over Irton Fell from Irton Road Station, the **Bridge Inn** at Santon Bridge is well worth a visit. The full cask Jennings range is available, with such guests as Everards Tiger and Adnams Broadside.



The **King George IV** at the east end of Eskdale Green is also good for food and drink. Again, local guest beers seem rarer this year, but Jennings Cumberland Ale is generally to be had alongside the Theakstons bitter, XB and Old Peculier. (No Bass, though, for good or ill.)

At Boot, the **Boot House Hotel** has greatly altered its cream tea image with the building of the Poachers Bar. Keg and nitrokeg are extinct there. The regulars (Theakstons bitter and Taylors Landlord) are joined by two guests, usually from Cumbrian sources. I had a pint of 3.6% Eskdale from Mitchells on 3rd July - there won't be much more of that!

At the **Burnmoor Inn** at Boot, the long established proprietors, Tony and Heidi Foster, are now retired (though only to a cottage opposite). The new owners, Harry and Paddington Berger (yes, Paddington), have expanded the menu, introduced all-day opening and extended the beer range beyond Jennings' portfolio. Black Sheep Best and Barnegates Cracker Ale are among the new offerings. Despite its non-inclusion in the 2000AD GBG, this is one pub not to be missed.

The latest news locally is that the bar manager of the **Wasdale Head Inn** will commence brewing there in September.

I am scribbling these remarks in the **Screes Hotel** at Nether Wasdale, a favourite resort, where the staff have just put on, especially for me, a fresh cask of Yates Bitter - cereally, smoky, archetypally itself. The other beers at the Screes today are Black Sheep Special, Jennings Cumberland, Derwent, Adnams Broadside and Theakstons OP. There is also Erdinger Weissbier on handpump. The second pint of Yates Bitter is taking effect...

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## Heaton Park

The Heaton Park Hotel, Middleton Road, Crumpsall, has reopened. Until recently this large Beefeater roadhouse was fitted out in a heavily exaggerated rustic style that had long since had its day. All that has been swept away and the pub now has separate bar and restaurant areas. The bar area remains much as it was in shape, but now there is a light decor and tables and chairs dotted around. Old photos of the locale add to the colour. The beers are now only Boddies (166p) and Pedigree (188p) and they are only available in the bar, not at the restaurant's bar counter.

The former Heaton Park Motors showroom has been demolished so work should soon begin on the pub's adjoining hotel. Also on Middleton Road, **Cheers Bar** no longer sells cask beer (it used to be J Smiths). In Cheetham Hill, the **Griffin** (Websters) appears to be closed - or is it operating odd opening hours?

## The Salford Connection

*Alan Gall*

Having been a dedicated drinker in Liverpool during the 1960s, I well remember the queasy feeling that often followed the consumption of a pint of Bents beer. Prior to this, at teenage parties, I had also experienced the sudden intoxication that came from downing a glass of Bentox, which was a potent, if slightly unpleasant, wine made from beef extract. Over the years I have kept up my interest in Bents Brewery from afar. Several historical accounts have been written but, to my knowledge, no one has ever suggested any connection with Salford.

The story goes that around 1810 Richard Bent, in partnership with others, founded the Liverpool business on Scotland Road and was joined some time later by his nephew John. When Richard Bent died in 1820, John acquired better premises at Johnson Street, where the company then remained. John was joined by his two nephews, James and Rowland, in 1845.

According to Salford directories, up to 1845 the Broughton Road Brewery was occupied by the firm of Thomas and Rowland Bent. The dates tie in, and since the name

Rowland Bent is relatively uncommon, the appearance of a brewer in Salford with the same name hardly seems just a coincidence. (Speaking of coincidences, the Broughton Road Brewery stood not 100 yards from the Greengate Brewery, which was acquired by Liverpool brewer J M Threlfall before he moved to the Cook Street site.)

If this was indeed the same Rowland, who was Thomas? He seems to have started the business on his own about 1822 but apart from that, little is known. Thomas & Rowland Bent had an agent for their beers on Mill Street, Macclesfield. There was also a brewery in Macclesfield called Bent & Caldwell, but that's another story.

The Broughton Road Brewery was put up for auction on 25th March 1845 at the Albion Hotel, Piccadilly, Manchester. The description gave the usual accolades - very commodious... an extensive business... capital spring of water... Steam Engine... and that the property 'is situate in the improving Borough of Salford'. The next recorded occupants, John Hindle Young & Co, are listed for 1848 and 1850, then by 1852 they had moved to the Phoenix Brewery, Sandywell.

*The One Better-*

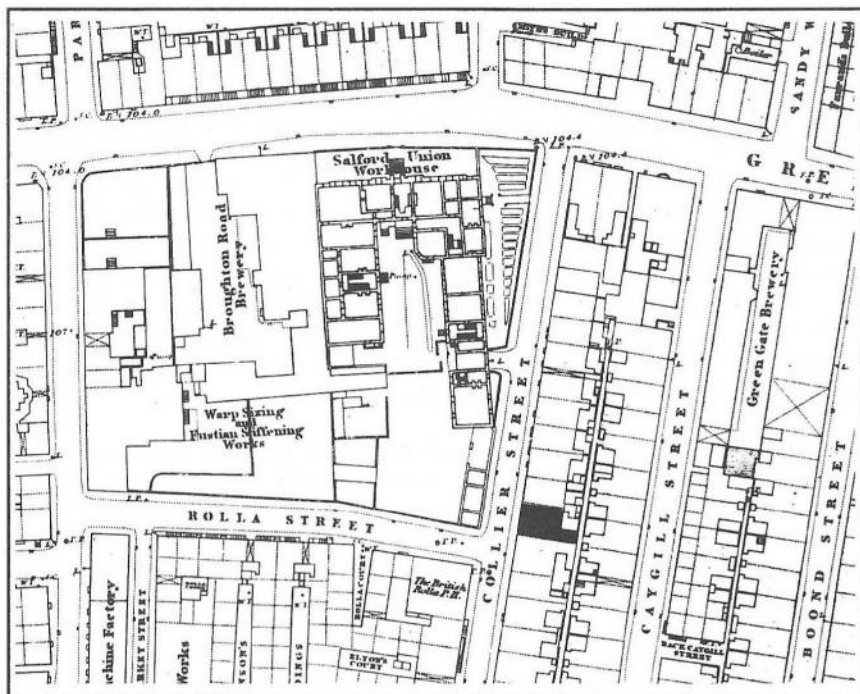


**Bents  
Bitter**

famous for  
over 150 years



Back in Liverpool, after John's death Rowland ran Bent's with James until 1855 and then on his own to about 1866. In 1967, and still in Johnson Street, the brewery was taken over by Bass Charrington, Brewing continued for a time but, as so often happens following takeovers, this ceased (in 1975).



*The plan shows the Broughton Road Brewery in the 1840s. The sites of the brewery and the workhouse next door were redeveloped in Victorian times and this length of Broughton Road was renamed Greengate. One feature on the map remains today - the building marked on Collier Street - Holts' Eagle.*

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## Hydes breeze in

On 11th August Hydes open Breeze, their new pub on Peter Street in the city centre. Housed in what was formerly Hullabaloo's, an Australian BYO restaurant, Breeze will be a cafe bar that sells cask beer (and the only one that will on Peter Street). The beer range promised is bitter, the soon-to-be-launched Premium and their seasonal beer. All will be supplied in firkins and fitted with Race spiles to maintain beer freshness.

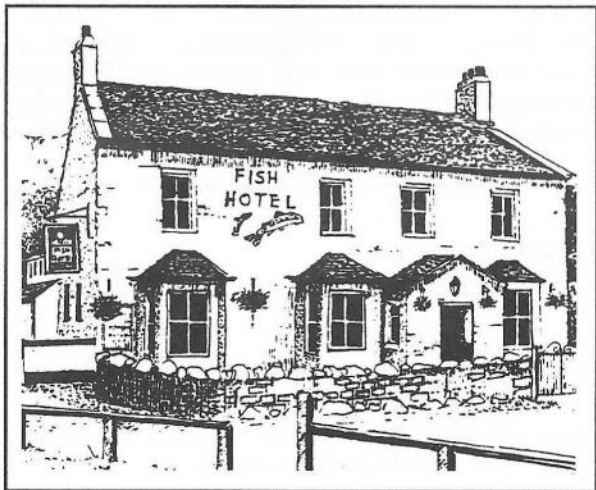
## Buttermere

*Dave Crookell*

The village of Buttermere is a popular walking centre in West Cumbria between the twin lakes of Crummock Water and Buttermere, about eight miles south west of Keswick. There are two pubs, both offering real ale...

The **Bridge Hotel** is situated by the ancient packhorse bridge crossing Mill Beck and the building was originally a corn mill. It has developed into a fairly upmarket hotel with B&B at £49 per night, plus supplements if you want a 'superior' room or a four-poster bed. There are two bars, a hikers bar and a lounge bar, both fairly similar in decor with exposed oak beam ceilings, rather garish pink-washed walls and red carpets. Unfortunately the attempt to attract a well-heeled clientele is reflected in the bar prices, with handpumped Tetley Bitter at £1.90 a pint, Black Sheep Bitter at £2.00, Old Peculier at £2.40 and Addlestons cask cider at £2.10. There is, however, an excellent bar meal menu, with Cumberland hotpot a speciality - this is a huge serving of lamb, black pudding and vegetables topped with red cabbage.

A short distance away is the **Fish Hotel**, a smaller but comfortable establishment offering B&B at a more reasonable £28 per night. The Fish was the home of Mary Robinson, the 'Beauty of Buttermere', who became a reluctant celebrity at the age of thirteen after being mentioned in an early guide to the Lakes. She eventually married the Honourable Augustus Hope, who turned out to be an impostor and was later hanged for forgery. The hotel has a roomy public bar, with an array of handpumped real ales including Theakstons Bitter and XB at £1.65 and £1.80, Old Peculier at £2.00, plus two local brews in the form of Jennings Bitter at £1.60 and Yates Premium Bitter (5.2%) at £1.70 - this was a superb, pale, full-flavoured beer with a strong aroma of malt and hops. There was also a guest ale from faraway Essex in the form of Riddleys Fishermans Whopper (4.3%) at £1.80, described as being fresh, crisp with a malty citrous flavour and an aroma of green apples.





## Flirting with Real Ale

Another notable West Cumbrian pub offering a selection of real ales from local independent brewers is the **Wasdale Head Inn**. On a recent visit my walking colleague and I surveyed the line-up of seven or eight handpumps and I commented that we appeared to be spoilt for choice. 'Oh, I don't know about that,' said one of the barmaids, 'There's only two of us!' Unfortunately this ended any thoughts I may have had about writing an article on the pub. Maybe next time.

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## In and around Bolton

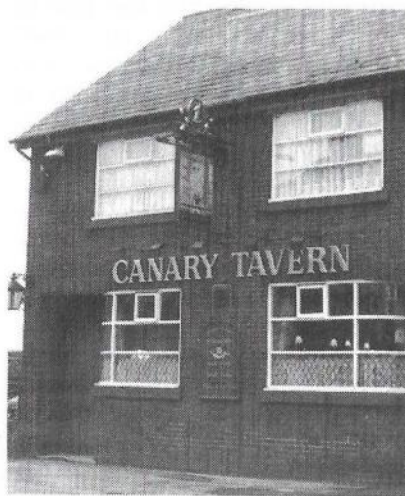
*A Trotter*

The **Varsity** on Churchgate is having a 'Stupid Summer' prices promotion, 11am to 8pm each day, and Banks's bitter is £1.25 a pint. On the other hand, don't be enticed by posters around town proclaiming Flowers IPA at 83p at a certain town centre venue; it isn't cask ale.

Still a popular meeting place adjacent to the bus/rail interchange, the **Sweet Green Tavern** is worth a visit to see the football pennants from Scotland(!) The pub sells Tetley bitter, Sweet Green Special and one or two guest ales.

The **Antelope** on Manchester Road, Kearsley, is selling handpumped Bass (£1.65) as well as Greenalls bitter.

In Little Lever, Gary and Judith, who used to be at the Man & Scythe (cider 'ouse) in Bolton, recently celebrated their first anniversary at the **Canary** (right). The pub sells Holts (£1.20) and Boddies, although the Boddies may soon be replaced, possibly by Hartleys XB. Down the road, the **Stopes Tavern**, has Thwaites bitter and Boddies on handpull.



Over the boundary in Radcliffe, the **Beer Engine** has a large sign stating that it is a Cask Ale Emporium, but only Boddies and Pedigree were on handpump on my visit.

## Farnworth beer festival

The **Britannia** on King Street is hosting a beer festival and barbecue over the late August Bank Holiday, beginning on the Friday evening and continuing until the evening of the Bank Holiday Monday, or until the beers run out. If the last beer festival at the Britannia is anything to go by, expect an excellent choice of ales.

## Now and Then

No.112

**Rose & Crown**

*Rob Magee*  
King Street, Delph

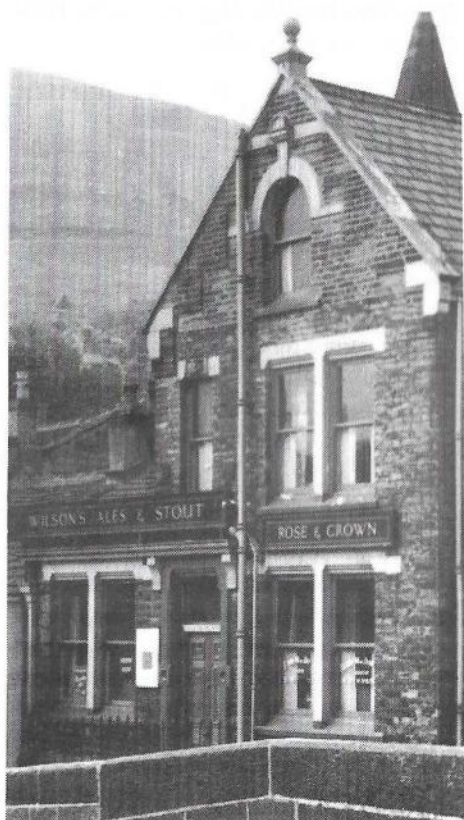
The Rose & Crown was built in the 1890s by Jowett & Waterhouse of the Crown Brewery, Oldham, to replace an older inn (*left*) which was probably built about 1760, at the same time as the still-existing cottages at 23a and 25 King Street. The inn was aligned with the cottages, next to the ford across the River Tame.



Early records show that it may originally have been called the Hare & Hounds and at the beginning of the nineteenth century it was known as the Board Inn before settling down

as the Rose & Crown. The Wrigley family ran the pub at this period and in 1825 licensee Sarah Wrigley was also in business as a carrier of goods to Huddersfield. By July 1850 the Wrigleys had left and the Rose & Crown was advertised to let, along with a brewhouse, stabling and other outbuildings. The rent was fixed 'very low' and the amount of stock required to be taken by the incoming tenant would be 'very moderate'. Business may not have been too good.

In the 1870s and 1880s the Rose & Crown was being run by a local coal merchant and he was followed by a stonecutter called George Carter. In 1891 Mr Carter applied for permission to rebuild the Rose & Crown twelve feet nearer the road. The old building stood between fifteen and sixteen feet back from the road and it





was prone to flooding when the river was in spate during bad weather.

It isn't clear whether this application was made with the backing of brewers Jowett & Waterhouse, but they were certainly the owners of the Rose & Crown a few years later when the pub was rebuilt. Buying old properties and then rebuilding them was a costly business and was one of the reasons the company found itself in financial trouble. The outcome was the sale, in July 1896, of Jowett, Waterhouse & Company and its tied houses to Wilsons Brewery of Newton Heath.

In 1957 Watneys brown ale in bottles was being sold in Wilsons pubs - a foretaste of what was to come! Watney Mann took over Wilsons three years later and the well known revolution began. No doubt Watneys Red Barrel was sold at the Rose & Crown - I remember drinking the beer in Oldham and I think it was 2/6d a pint!

Watney Mann became part of Grand Metropolitan in 1972 and the following year John Noon moved to the Rose & Crown from the Bird in Hand in Oldham. John was in charge in the 1980s when the brewery at Newton Heath was closed and production was transferred to Websters Brewery in Halifax. There was another change of ownership in 1992, when the Rose & Crown was acquired by Vaux Breweries of Sunderland.

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## Drummed out

The **Kettledrum** (*below*) next to Salford Precinct has been demolished. Over on Cross Lane, the **Corporation** appears to be shut.



## Rupert

'Well, we're all right in Grotley, aren't we?' Teresa Hampton opined as she arm-wrestled her sister Ophelia to the ground. 'We may have lost old Brobdingnags to Dillons, but Sikhs, Brassos, Boringsods and Drabs will be here for ever. I can't see Perry Drab cashing in his chips and going to live in Mustique, can you?'

'I'm not sure about that,' Fiona began in an unusually conciliatory manner. 'No person is an island. The bell tolls for us all. It may be Ethics, Blooms, Guards and Cowardice today, but it'll be Brassos and Drabs tomorrow. They will not survive the onslaught of crapsmooth.'

Tish and Alistair took up the argument, blaming Ron Badloss and Boris Pratt for behaving like ostriches. Not since the heady days of the late 1970s had there been such murmurings of discontent in the Slumley branch. The arrival of Campaign cufflinks, coffee table books and barmy pub design awards had been accepted with barely a whisper of dissent. The

possibility of establishing Provisional CAMRA in Slumley had not been discussed seriously for over two decades, but that was no longer the case.

Bunty opened the latest copy of the Campaign's national organ and grunted with derision. 'This takes the biscuit. A fighting fund indeed! Have I fought and been imprisoned over the last twenty years for this? Is that the best we can do? I vote that we declare our independence from St Allballs and take direct action against taverns serving crapsmooth. It's the only language they understand. Who's with me?'

In the past, Bunty's forthright approach had been treated with caution by most members, but this was no longer the case. On 4th July 1999, Independence Day, Provisional CAMRA was born in the Dockers Wedge. There was not a single person who was sympathetic to what Mr Flowerpotman proposed from H.Q. Bunty was elected unanimously as Brigade Commander and I was appointed as his adc. As the Inuit say, 'We live in interesting times.' Only time will tell whether this schism will bear fruit.

## Shambles

It seems to be taking longer to build the replica Wellington and Sinclairs than it took to build the late lamented originals. The pubs were supposed to open months ago - now they might just catch the end of the summer.

## Bottom Kings

The pride of Oldham Street, Manchester, the King (Tetley) seems to have dispensed with the cask stuff - only Tetley smooth seems to be available.



# Branch Diary

## **Rochdale, Oldham & Bury**

Tue 3rd Aug 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Black Swan, Bottom o'th Moor, Mumps, Oldham

Sun 22nd Aug 8.30pm, Rushcart Festival. Cross Keys/Church Inn, Uppermill. Further details from Branch Contact.

Tue 31st Aug 8.30pm, WD Collation, Cask & Feather, Drake St, Rochdale

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

Email: P.Alexander@Virgin.net

## **North Manchester**

Sat 31 July 1pm approx, Barbecue, Queens Arms, Honey Street. All branches welcome.

Wed 4 Aug 8pm, Committee & Social, Star Inn, Back Hope Street, Higher Broughton

Wed 11 Aug. Northern Quarter Crawl. Gullivers, Oldham Street, 7pm; Bar Fringe, Swan Street, 8pm; Edinburgh Castle, Blossom Street, 9pm

Wed 18 Aug 8pm. Branch meeting, Kings Arms, Bloom Street, Salford

Tues 24 Aug 6pm. What's Doing collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham.

Wed 25 Aug 8pm, Social, Marble Arch, Rochdale Road.

Wed 1 Sept, Manchester crawl. Crown & Anchor, Cateaton Street, 7pm; Sinclairs/Wellington, 8pm; Hare & Hounds, Shudehill, 9pm.

Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

**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 £52.50 or £210 for six months, half page £36.75 or £157.50 for six months, quarter page £26.25 or £105 for six months. All adverts must be accompanied with payment. Cheque payable to 'What's Doing'.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** £3.30 for six months, £5.80 for twelve months. Send cheque/PO together with your name and address to Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester M9 6PW. 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 £14 to Membership, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW.

*Contributors to this issue:* Paul Warbrick, Rob Magee, Dave Crookell, Dave White, Roger Hall, Pete Cash, Stewart Revell, Ian Kenny, Steve Smith, Daddy Bell, Mark McConachie, Paul Roberts, Peter Wadsworth, Alan Gall.



*Dave and Sue welcome you to*

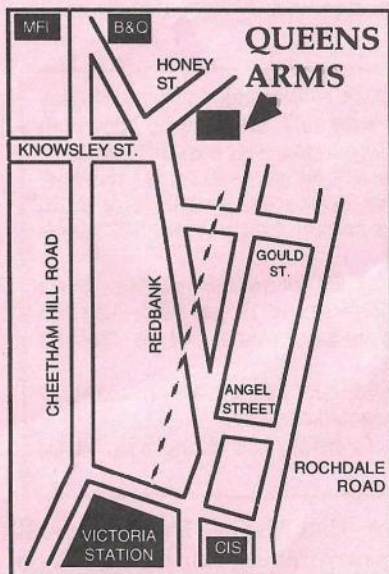
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