

30p

What's Doing

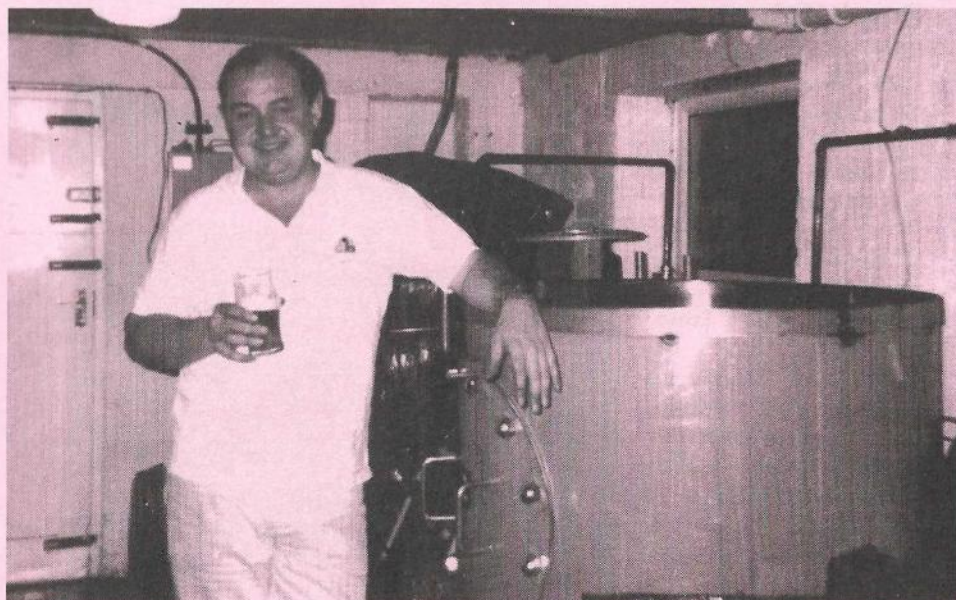
DECEMBER 1999



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

BREWING AT THE 'RAG'

The Lord Raglan at Nangreaves near Bury is now the home of the Leyden micro brewery (*WD last month*). Brothers Brendan and Terry Leyden got under way on 1st October with 'Brendan's Birthday Beer' and a further brew, 'Nanny Flyer' (3.8%) will probably become the regular house beer. This is named after the old Corporation bus which made its way up to Mount Pleasant. The beer, which made an appearance at the recent Bury Beer Festival, has a rather nutty flavour to it, is sharp and very quaffable. Other brews are planned.



Brewing at the 'Rag' *continued*

The brewery is a three-barrel plant with two fermenting vessels converted from cellar tanks. They are housed in an old garage at the rear of the pub. The design and inspiration is attributed to John Feeney of Bank Top Brewery fame and the main engineer was Brian Farnworth. The brewery uses ready-crushed pale and crystal malts, together with others for experimentation, and whole hops (Goldings and Styrian Goldings). Spent hops are acquired by Cedric the local farmer for cattle fodder.

Steve Smith

Northern Quarter Beer

Manchester city centre's Northern Quarter now has its very own beer - a 3.8% bitter brewed by the Marble Brewery called N/4 Bitter. It has official approval from the Northern Quarter committee and so is allowed to use the Northern Quarter N/4 logo on the pump clip.

The beer is only available in Northern Quarter pubs, so as well as the Marble Arch, where it has replaced Marble Dades, it is on sale at the Fringe, the Band on the Wall and the Beer House. It may well appear on the bars at Centro, Smithfield and Pot of Beer in the near future. (Marble Dades can still be had in the Chorlton pubs, where it is called Marble Chorlton.)

Bar Centro on Tib Street has a new owner, Mike Guest, but little is expected to change and the cask Theakstons will remain.

Delph doings

The bus stop plate has been removed from the side wall of the Swan and relocated to a post by the pavement.

The pub, which has been selling Lees bitter for some time, has also lost its William Stones insignia and become a J W Lees tenanted house. Only the bitter is available at present, but a refurbishment is planned.



Fisherman's Fest

Steve Smith

The end of September heralded the Autumn (where did that summer go to?) Beer Festival at the Fishermans Retreat, Bye Road, Shuttleworth. It was held in a marquee attached to the downstairs bar and the beers were mainly session and strong bitters.



Ales under 4.5% were priced at £1.70, those over at £1.80. Good value, I thought, especially for some of the higher gravity ales. Among those I favoured were Cottages Norman Conquest (7%), Abbeydale's Absolution (5.3%) and Orkney's Raven Ale (3.8%). Some previous champions were also featured: Coniston Bluebird (3.6%) and Mordue's Radgie Gadgie (4.8%). Entertainment was provided on three days out of four, with the last day dedicated to 'imbibing copious quantities of superb cask ales'.

The pub is a pleasant retreat, nestling in the Twine Valley Fisheries Country Park. The upper level caters mostly for diners, with the smaller downstairs bar more of a waiting area. It is certainly worth visiting even when there is no beer festival, as there is usually a choice of one or two Taylors beers, Courage Directors bitter and a couple of guests. The next festival will probably be in the spring and there are regular whisky tasting evenings throughout the year.

To get there by public transport, limited services operate along Whalley Road (alight at the Pack Horse for a ten minutes' walk). The Bury and Ramsbottom circulars, routes 472 and 474, stop at the junction of Whalley Road and Shipperbottom Lane. From here it is a twenty minute stroll.

It makes you think

The *Wäldches-Bräu* homebrew pub in Ginnheim near Frankfurt is promoting its seasonal brew, *Eichebier*, by highlighting the medical benefits of moderate drinking. The moral is that you see plenty of old boozers, but only a few old doctors!

BEER



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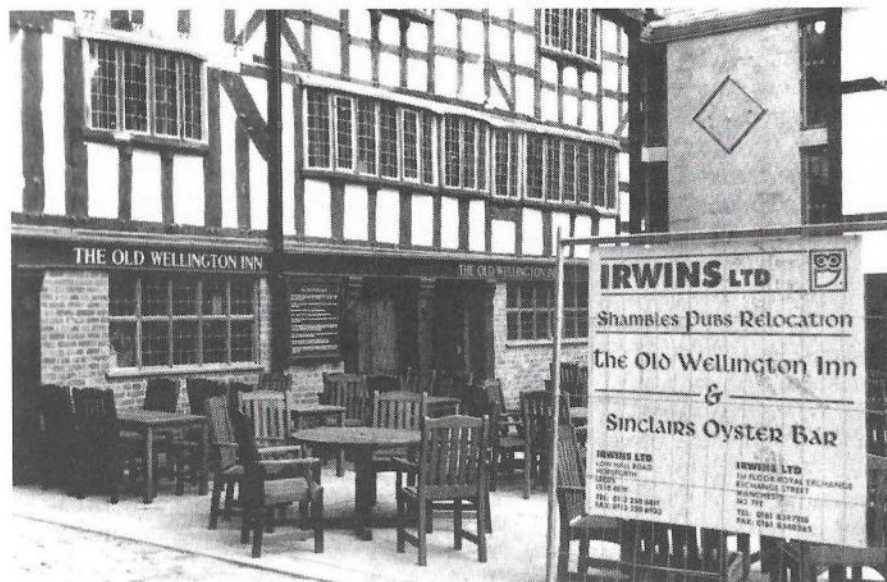
**20-22 JANUARY 2000
THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE**



FESTIVAL

Shambles open

Yes, really! After all the delays and false starts, both pubs are now trading. First to open was the Old Wellington on 9th November. True to Bass form, though, there was no cask ale; Worthington and Bass appeared a day or so later. Watch out for the prices - the Bass is £2.10. Sinclairs opened on November 15th, selling Sam Smiths OBB at a very reasonable £1.24.



In their new setting on Cathedral Gates, the two pubs do look a lot better and a very good job has been done all round, really. The developers have stuck to the original designs wherever possible, with new walls and windows where the Shambles pubs abutted other buildings. Unfortunately the Wellington's first and second floors are now given over to diners, resulting in a crush of drinkers in the bar.

Yard of Ale?

Some bright spark in the marketing department at Asda has come up with a novel variation of a yard of ale - six different 440ml cans of bitter end to end in a plastic tube, presumably a yard long. There is also an alternative version containing six cans of our favourite lagers, although yard (or should that be 0.9144m?) of lager doesn't quite have the same ring to it. These somewhat less than handy take-home packs were on offer at £6.99 in the Asda Superstore near the Trafford Centre.

Half Nelson

Last month's WD noted the reopening of the Lord Nelson on Newton Street, Manchester. Well, it's keg.

Wigan and district

Dave White

The centre of Wigan is, for the most part, a no-go area for the over-thirties at weekends, most of the pubs being geared to lager louts, as scantily dressed as they are hard of hearing. For as many years as I care to remember, the **Clarence Hotel** (right, a.k.a **Harry's Café Bar**) on Wallgate has been part of that circuit. Things might be looking up, however, as Jennings have bought the pub, which should be open in time for Christmas. Then again...



On the other side of town, in the midst of the sprawling Robin Park complex, stands the **Red Robin**. I called in recently on my way to the cinema and counted ten (yes, ten) handpumps, all for Tetley bitter, none of which actually sold the stuff. The film wasn't much cop, either.

Nearer to home, the **Pagefield Hotel**, Park Road, Springfield, has risen from the ashes as the **Famous Pagefield**. I'm not sure what the pub is famous for (the revolving door, perhaps?) but its newly-found celebrity status has not changed the Pagefield in any way. The pub serves the same boring pint of Greenalls bitter as it did before.

At least the Pagefield still sells traditional beer. Of the 210 pubs listed in the 1994 Wigan Real Ale Guide, no fewer than 81 (39%) have either converted to keg or closed. The latest victims to fall to smoothflow include the **Dog & Partridge**, Chapel Street, Pemberton (Greenalls) and the **Miners Arms**, City Road, Kitt Green (Whitbread). The former is arguably the best pub in Pemberton and a particularly sad loss.

News in Brief: The **Stocks Hotel**, Alder Lane, Parbold, is closed once again, this time for refurbishment. This Tetley house seems to have lost its way in recent years... the **Old Springs**, Spring Road, Kitt Green, is offering a guest ale alongside Burtonwood bitter and of late this has been Batemans XXXB. What a pity I only discovered the handpump on my way out...

Grognard in Oldham

A couple of months ago the Rochdale, Oldham & Bury branch of CAMRA paid a visit to David Porter's pub/brewery, the Griffin in Haslingden, where the master-brewer informed us that he was seeking further outlets for his produce and that his aim was to have a pub in each of the major urban areas encircling Manchester. So far I've heard nothing definite about Bury, but the **Ashton Arms** (*below*) on Clegg Street, Oldham, is rapidly gaining a reputation both for its pricing policy and the consistent quality of its ales.

Prices begin at £1.10 for 3.3% dark mild and go up to £1.60 for the 5.3% Sunshine, which was voted in at number one at this year's Oldham Beer Festival. A scrumpy cider is also on handpump for those who prefer to fly home. For the rest of us the bus station is twenty yards up the road. The bottled beers and lager are provided by Sam Smiths, as well as the bar towels and beer mats. There is no musak or music box, entertainment being of the 'bring your own' variety, plus a local radio station.



If you look at it optimistically, this gives Oldham centre a triangular real ale crawl: Ashton Arms to Wetherspoons, then down to the Buck and Union on Union Street. The **Up Steps** had its Autumn Beer festival as usual, with the ales at £1.29. My personal favourite was the Black Magic Stout from Hanby Brewery. On the Sunday afternoon the prices dropped to £1, the reason being (I was seriously informed) that the John Smiths smooth was not on. The connection escaped me, but such opportunities must be taken advantage of, being few and far between.

On 9th December Wetherspoons will be celebrating their twentieth anniversary and are promising 79p on 'selected drinks'. It would be just revenge if these turned out to be Smiths smooth.

Down at the **Buck and Union**, the old clutter has been cleared out and minimalist is the word for

decor. The pub usually has at least four real ales, but does not cater for low-income groups. On my last visit the Taylors landlord was £1.89.

So better, maybe, to stay at the Ashton. Some may criticise Mr Porter for his use of hop pellets or think his ales too dry for their taste, but the point about real ale must be the variety it offers and in a town centre full of wine bars and fizz palaces, the addition of five extra beers must be welcome and worthy of our support.

Swan Down

The long closed and derelict Swan on Oldham Road, Newton Heath, was demolished in mid-October. It ended its days as part of the Mayfair Taverns estate.



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.

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To join CAMRA send £14 to Membership, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW.

Around Bolton

Those in the know, know that Trotter can usually be found propping up the bars of Bolton town centre pubs on a Saturday night. For a change, he decided to visit a few pubs on the fringe...

On Pool Street, the **Howcroft Inn** serves an interesting range of guest ales and I sampled Weetwood Old Dog, Moorhouses Volcano (4.2%) and an ale from Barleyhead called Autumn Gold (4.8%), though I thought it was a bit pricey at £1.85 a pint. Tetleys and Taylors Landlord are also available.

From the Howcroft, I went to check out the **Rock House** (right) in nearby Duke Street. This is one of only two Banks's pubs in Bolton and a typical local serving Camerons Ruby Red Bitter and Banks's Original Mild on handpump. For some reason the bitter isn't hand drawn.

Moving closer to town, on Chorley Street is the **Farmers Arms**, where Greenalls bitter is served alongside two guests - Spitfire and Theakstons bitter when I got there. A beer from the nearby Bolton Brewery can often be found at the Farmers. However, if you like a quiet drink, avoid Saturday nights as this is band night.

On the other side of town, about ten minutes' walk from the station, is the **Lodge Bank Tavern** on Bridgeman Street. This is an open-plan Lees pub, serving handpumped mild and bitter and the seasonal beers. The pub across the road, the **Park**, is keg only.

Out in Farnworth, the ever-popular **Britannia**, opposite the bus station, is serving Brains Dark Red at £1.42 a pint. This follows the beer's success at the last beer festival held at the pub. Also available at the time of writing is Wadworth 6X at £1.55 a pint.

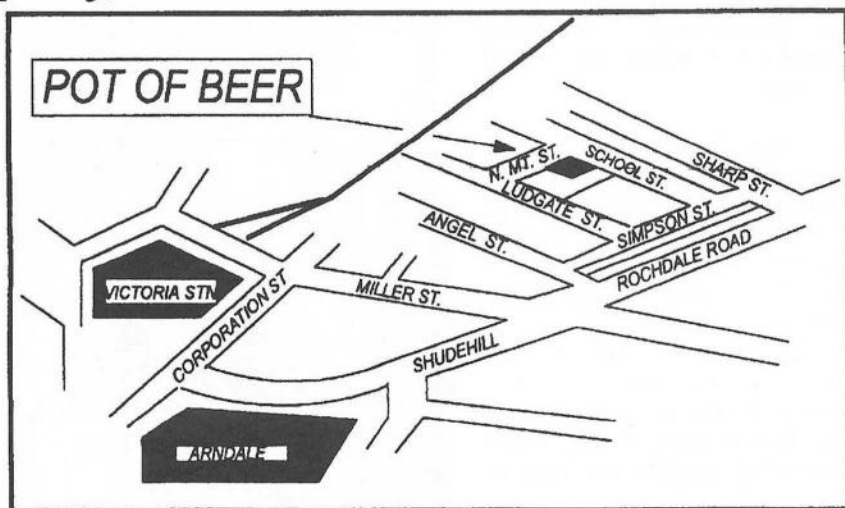


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Westhoughton

'Ceaw-yed land' doesn't appear in the pages of What's Doing too often, so Dave White made the trip in late October...

Our first intended port of call was the **Commercial** next to the railway station, but this was closed and in darkness, so we walked down to the **Red Lion** on Wigan Road. Only keg Greenalls here, alas, so it was on to Market Street and the **Wheatsheaf**. This Greenalls pub has had the 'Your Local' treatment and the snug contained some interesting photographs of old Westhoughton. Cask Boddies bitter was on offer.

We turned on to Bolton Road for the **Cross Guns**. Tetley bitter was on sale here, as were Robinsons Best and something called 'Batesmans mild'. This product proved as dubious as the spelling, and must have lain in the pipes for ages. Nice pub, though. No such problems at the **White Lion**, back on Market Street, with Holts mild and bitter in fine fettle. Surroundings earthy but endearing.

Just before boarding the 540 bus to Daisy Hill, there was time to nip in the **Victoria**, a Greenalls pub opposite the White Lion. The beer engines were still in place, but with nothing on offer, and the pub was nearly empty. Judging by the volume of the music, we could only conclude that a Central American dictator was holed up in a nearby building and that someone at the Vic was trying to flush him out.

There were great expectations when Hydes bought the **Daisy Hill Tavern** from Greenalls. However, the pub is noisy and the vault looks as though it has been made out of old kipper boxes. Only one handpump had a clip for Hydes bitter and it was a cold pint-and-a-half at that. We stayed on Leigh Road for the **Rose Hill Tavern** (commonly known as the **Bug**) for the best beer of the night. The Holts mild and bitter were singularly yummy and the pub is handy for the last train back to Wigan from Daisy Hill Station.

P.S. The **Alexandra**, Swan Lane, can be found on the 540 bus route, just on the boundary between



Daisy Hill and Hindley Green. This free house has Tetley mild and bitter and Boddingtons bitter as permanent fixtures with, until recently, a handpump free for Draught Bass, Pedigree or something equally boring. Now, however, the Alex is more adventurous and the spare pump is used to dispense beers from Brakspears, Youngs and Smiles, to name but three. The intellectual powerhouses of Wigan CAMRA can usually be found in the Alexandra on Sundays for the quiz night, winning more free beer than they can drink.

Holts corner

Stewart Revell

In the last ten years the Holts tied estate has been enlarged by some 17%, with new outlets being built and purchased from other breweries. The rate of acquisition has, of course, slowed a little in recent years as the management have become more selective about just what and where to buy. During those years, Holts have spent considerable sums of money on reorganising the brewery, fitting new equipment and replacing old. The brewery yard was given a new surface as the original had deteriorated under the weight of modern drays coming and going. A new laboratory is under construction.

Under brewer Dick Venes left after 14 years with Holts (and about 20 years as a brewer) and a few months ago Mike Hitchen joined the staff. Mike showed many groups of visitors round the brewery during the celebrations of Holts' 150 years in the business. Now he is about to leave for pastures new and taking his place is John Cheetham from Marstons.

In the last few weeks, Holts have secured a deal with Booths Supermarkets to supply the bottled 1849 to their stores. I'm told Booths are based in Preston and to my knowledge they have no outlets in this area, although I understand there is one in Knutsford.

Stewart@revell62.freemove.co.uk

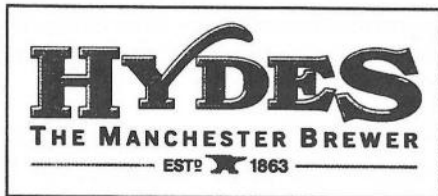
Oriental Ale

What's Doing's correspondent in China, Trevor Crookell, reports that probably the world's most expensive Tetleys can be found at Hong Kong airport. A pint of Tetleys smoothflow bitter will set you back fifty Hong Kong dollars (\$HK). With the current exchange rate of \$HK12.7 to £1, this works out at £3.94 a pint!

Also, the Hong Kong franchise of the Gaylord Indian restaurant chain sells two types of canned Boddies draught bitter, the 3.8% beer available here and a 4.8% version labelled 'Boddingtons Pub Ale'. Both were on offer at \$HK30 (£2.36) per 440ml can.

Anvil angle

This is the new Hydes logo, which has been specially designed to combine an impression of tradition and solidity. The 'anvil' part of the name seems to be on the way out - not the right sort of solidity, apparently. The word Hydes is in chunky gold-and-black letters, with an adventurous streak signified by the flourish on the letter Y, it says here. The updated logo appears on pump-clips for bitter, light, mild and the new premium ale, Jekyll's Gold.



Hare and Hounds

This popular local on Shudehill is now home to the breakaway group of the Manchester City Supporters' Club. The first meeting on 26th October was deemed a success - these soccer fanatics are real ale fans too!

Lamb alive

It's nice to see that Boddies' (Greenalls) Lamb Inn on Oldham Road, Failsworth, is trading again. The pub had been closed for months. No news on the ale front, however.

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Wakefield, Walton, Salford and Swan Street

Extracts from Daddy Bell's drinking diary...

October 22nd: to Wakefield, and an invigorating swim at Lightwaves, to build up an appreciative thirst for the products of **Fernandes Brewery** at their **Brewery Tap** in Avison Yard. Six Ringers is a good, clear 6% short-run ale, while Malt Shovel Mild at 3.8% proves very smooth and tasty. One of the best of our not-too-distant northern micros: any chance of their getting a look in at the Winter Ales Festival?

October 27th: to Liverpool for a sale of ecclesiastical bric-a-brac. No bargains there; but Wetherspoon's **Raven** in the busy shopping area of Walton Vale turns out to be fully deserving of its GBG 2000 listing. JD's 'Wicked Beer Fest' has started a day early here, with four festival ales on at 99p per pint. Smiles' Silver Bullet and Oakhill Black Magic Stout both prove excellent. The afternoon continues in the city centre with the discovery of the architectural and liquid delights of the **Vernon Arms**, the **Ship & Mitre**, and **Doctor Duncan's**, the last particularly amazing for its brown and light aquamarine tiled splendour surviving from Pearl Assurance days.

October 28th-31st: the Dark Side of the Moon Festival at the **Crescent** in Salford. Plenty of good dark ales (and a few lighter ones) to enjoy on gravity and handpump, the Oyster Stout from Roosters being particularly (if predictably) to my taste - but Goachers Imperial Stout was also wonderfully good. A fellow Oxonian and I find the capacious armchairs in the Festival Vault so comfortable that we resolve to have our college shields emblazoned on them, to ensure that we can remain ensconced therein without disturbance at future events.

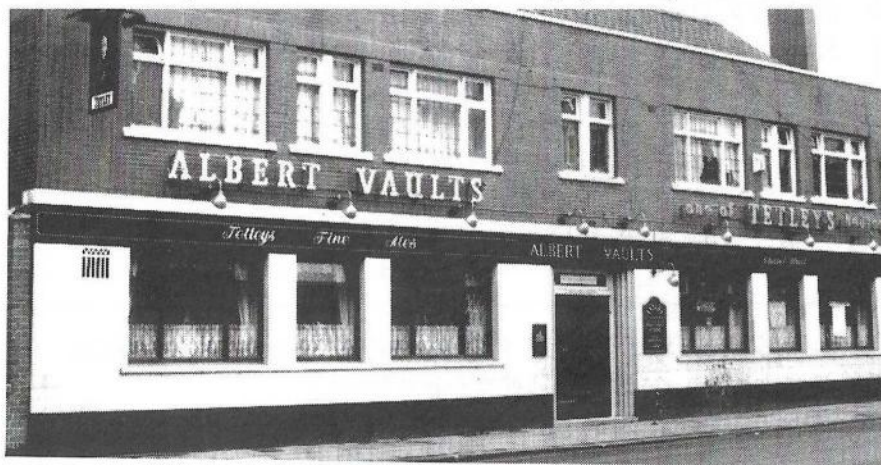
Decide not to go in fancy dress to the Hallowe'en party on the 29th, having earlier in the day been mistaken for a monsignor in masquerade, when I was only wearing my usual working clothes.

October 30th: to Wetherspoon's **Eccles Cross** just before noon, to find at least three of the festival beers (including Ushers' Bishop's Tipple) advertised as available (99p a pint), but to be told by bar staff that 'none of the guest ales are on - we're waiting for the barrels [sic] to settle.' Decide that John Smiths Smooth (the only preferred alternative) is no substitute, and hasten by rail to Ashton-under-Lyne, where Wetherspoon's **Ash Tree** is awash with customers and with festival beers. True, the beers cost £1.29 a pint, the service is rather slow (and the staff look rather young and consumptive), and there are some misleading cask ale labels stuck on keg gantries, but there are nine festival ales on handpump, and the several I sample are all in fine fettle. [By the way, *a propos* Paul Roberts' remark in

November's WD about JDW's pricing policy - 'the rougher the area, the higher the price': do we take it that Ashton is rougher during festivals than Eccles or Walton, and that Eccles is less rough during pub festivals than it allegedly is the rest of the year?]

November 8th and 15th: at the **Cellar Bar** in Blackburn again receive personal attention from Danny Hook, the licensee. Complimentary pints or halves of Pendle Witch and Highgate Fox's Nob straight from the cellar confirm my preference for gravity dispense, and my admiration for Danny's promotion of real ale against the odds, in a pub where students prefer lager or coffee.

November 10th: a quick call on Richard Bazen at the Chapel Street home of **Bridgewater Ales**. The just-brewed millennium ale, Ten Cent, is going well in the fermenter, and a second brew of it is projected in order to satisfy demand. Bridgewater's Blondie (4.7%) continues to sell well in the **Albert Vaults** at £1.10, but Delph Porter has not had equal success there, despite its popularity elsewhere.



November 13th: to the **Beer House**, having been reproached for neglecting it recently. Catch some excellent beers from the tail end of Ian Casson's Over the Moon festival, confirming the pub's reputation for an adventurous range of well-kept ales. Most of the customers unfamiliar to me, and the atmosphere lacks its usual flamboyance... but the beer is as good as ever.

November 20th: call in the **Smithfield** on Swan Street, having managed only a perfunctory visit during its festival earlier this month. The pub deserves more recognition in the 2000 GBG than a 'try also', not least for its sourcing of beer from the most obscure (and sometimes short-lived) micro-breweries. My choice today of a half of Glossop Swamp Rat from Boat introduces me to a fine 6% beer which commands respect.

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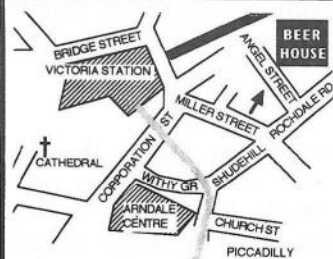
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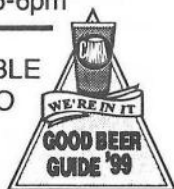
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OVER THE MOON AND INTO THE MILLENNIUM!

Now and Then

No.114

Park Hotel

Rob Magee

159 Park Road, Oldham

The last time I visited the Park Hotel there were so many machines around that I thought I had entered an amusement arcade. The former showpiece hotel next to Alexandra Park had been transformed. It had suffered the indignity of being reduced from three storeys to two and eventually, in 1997, the pub was closed and boarded up. It had lasted some 120 years, most of them as an Oldham Brewery house, but this story is about its very first owner, a Mr George Smithies, and how the hotel very nearly didn't open at all...

On 2nd December 1863 the Mayor of Oldham cut the first sod to mark the start of work on the town's latest amenity, Alexandra Park. Six months later, whilst the park was being laid out, a beerhouse opened on Sheepwashes Lane (now Park Road) called the Sheepwashes & Park Hotel. The tenant was Robert Lees and he intended to convert the beerhouse into a fully licensed pub for the benefit of visitors to the park. The building was big enough - five drinking rooms, four bedrooms and stabling for three horses - but full licences were not easy to get and when Alexandra Park opened in 1865 his customers had to make do with beer and soft drinks.



The Sheepwashes & Park Hotel got its full licence in 1868, but its days were numbered. The Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway Company needed the land so that they could build a warehouse. George Smithies was the licensee after the Lees family had left and he had a proposition for Oldham Corporation. If they would sell him some land next to the park, he would build a new, prestigious Park Hotel and transfer the old licence to the new building. The Corporation said yes, provided the hotel was built within a year and it had stabling, a coach house and other facilities, and yielded an annual value of over £80.

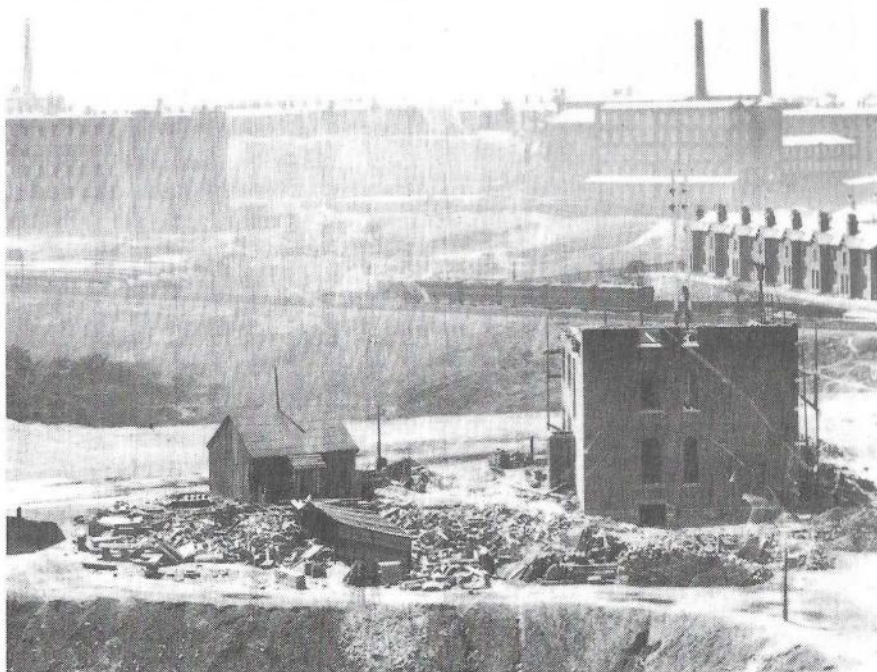
Unfortunately George didn't get a move on and in 1875 there was trouble. He thought the old pub belonged to the Corporation and

naturally they would give him time to finish the new one before he had to move. In fact, it was now owned by the railway company and they wanted him out.

The company gave George £50 to leave and not give them any trouble and they also allowed him the use of a single room in the old building to carry on running his business until it was time to pull the place down. The new hotel was nowhere near ready and George had to consider the possibility of losing the old licence and then having to apply for a new one. To add to his troubles, in August 1875 the owner of the Alexandra Hotel, a nearby beerhouse, applied for a full licence. The likelihood of the authorities handing out two new licences in the area was remote. Fortunately the application was refused and the Alexandra remained a beerhouse for several more years.

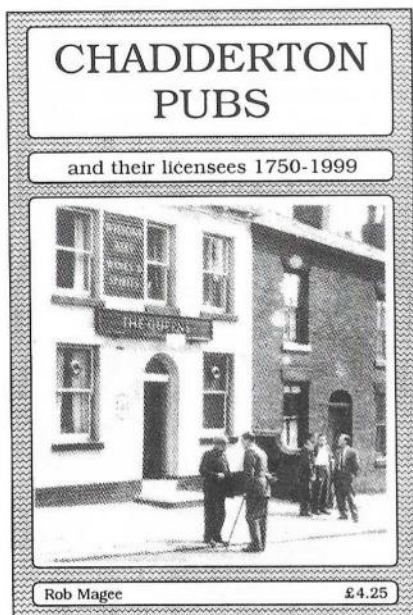
By December 1875 George was desperate. He had to stay in business to be certain of a licence when the new hotel, which was costing him over £3,000, was finished. He tried to have his licence transferred to temporary premises, a wooden hut which had been erected on the building site. The authorities said no. The photograph below was taken around this time and the hut can be seen next to the partly built Park Hotel.

At the end of March 1876 George had to give up the room in what was



left of the old Sheepwashes & Park Hotel; the licence was no longer being used and he was out of a job. Five months later he put in for a new licence, but the Park Hotel still wasn't ready. Local residents who didn't want a new hotel on their doorstep employed a solicitor to oppose the application. This gentleman had been to the site on the morning of the hearing and he told the licensing magistrates that the property couldn't qualify for a licence because some floors were unfinished and ceilings weren't plastered. The application was refused.

A month later, on 20th September, George Smithies made another



application. The new Park Hotel would be ready to open on 10th October. Would the licensing magistrates allow him to transfer his old licence to the new building, even though it had not been used since March? The magistrates thought about it and decided to allow the transfer. So the Park Hotel opened and George probably resolved never to use the same firm of builders again!

New book

Rob Magee's latest book is a second, updated and enlarged edition of the history of Chadderton pubs. Copies are on sale in selected Chadderton pubs and can also be had from good bookshops, price £4.25.

Marstons woe

One of Marstons flagship pubs - the Pack Horse on Wrigley Head, Failsworth - was not selling any cask beer recently. Apparently there won't be any until a cask breather system is installed 'to ensure quality'. Quite.

Also in Failsworth, the Dutchbirds will soon lose its Marstons bitter (cask and smooth) as new owners W&D are withdrawing that beer altogether. Will this mean another loss to keg?

Goosed

Paddy's Goose in the city centre has added Middleton's finest - J W Lees bitter - to the range of Boddies, Landlord and Old Speckled Hen.

Mae'n bwrw bob amser yng Nghymru!

Pete Cash

Well, not quite all the time, but two days after our enjoying a meal and a pint of Bass in Corwen (west of Llangollen) the town suffered a flash flood and the lake at our home for the week, Bala, rose dramatically.

So far as the 2000 Good Beer Guide is concerned, we were in a beer desert; the stretch of the A494 on the N W Wales map between Dolgellau and Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr. In fact, an excellent pint of Castle Eden was available in the **Old Bulls Head** in Bala itself, with passable Tetley bitter at the White Lion. In some outlets, real ale had been 'taken out for the winter season', which was just starting.

The highlight, however, was the **Blue Lion** (*below*) at Cynwyd, south of Corwen but much higher, so immune from floods. Here were three real ales including superb Batemans dark mild, which judging from the large collection of pump clips behind the bar was once one of many guest ales. CAMRA beer mats featured on every table, so it is surprising that the pub gets no mention in the Guide; definitely worth using the recommendation form at the back!



Rat and Parrot

S&N have agreed to take space in the city's Printworks development on Shudehill in the form of a Rat and Parrot pub. Quite what the style is, we shall have to wait and see.

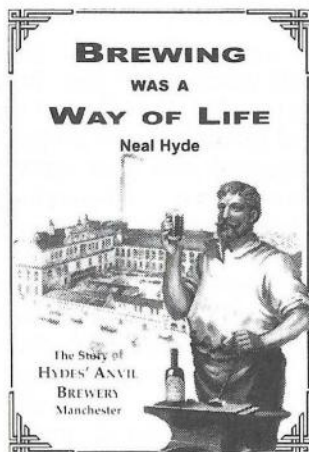
Greenalls sell-off

The sad saga of the demise of Greenalls should be complete by 1st December. S&N will then own the pubs, restaurants and lodges division and will be forced to sell 600 pubs to stay within DTI competition rules.

Brewing was a way of life

Book review by Chris Makepeace

Today the brewing industry is dominated by a few large companies which until relatively recently controlled not only the brewing but the outlets as well. There was a time when every town and city had its own brewery and in many cases, several breweries. Unfortunately, most of these small, often family-run concerns have been swallowed up by the large firms and their unique brews have disappeared. However, in Manchester, there still remain two independent breweries, one of which Hyde's Anvil Brewery in Moss Side, is the subject of this book.



The author is a member of the family which established the brewery in the mid nineteenth century and has been connected with the brewing industry all his life. He traces the history of the company from its earliest days in Audenshaw, to the London Road area of Manchester and finally to Moss Side, where it has been for all of this century. The book gives an insight into the running of the company from the viewpoint of one intimately connected with it and is able to give the background to decisions which others might not be able to give.



As well as the development of the company, the book contains useful information on prices of beers and wages of the employees, whilst the appendices provide details of the pubs that the brewery owns or has owned in the past, together with amount of beer brewed. This well written and well produced publication is full of information not only on the brewery itself, but also on the family. It is an important addition to the

history of brewing in general and also to the history of Manchester.

'*Brewing was a way of life*' is available by post for £11.49 from Chris Makepeace, 5 Hilton Road, Disley, Cheshire SK12 2JU.

Rupert

So that's OK then. Three-and-a-half years after the Boggies blew up Grotley, it's all open again. Karl and Frank's mega-shopperama has reopened as a new state of the art shopping experience to reinvigorate their falling fortunes.

Over by the Cathedral, the new L-shaped 'Old Scrotes' has at long last been completed. What a poke in the eye for all those moaning minnies and prophets of doom who forecast a dismal parody of the 'Old Scrotes' medieval past. What an entirely fitting location for these venerable buildings! How well they blend with their surroundings! How cheap they are! You can get a pint of draught Tredle for a mere two guineas at the Boot, which is the really old wooden-framed one. Clive's Whelk Hut comes in at a very reasonable price of just under twenty-five bob. It's a good job they don't have to pay for the move, otherwise it would take until the next millennium after this one to recoup the million quid it cost.

With its bargain basement prices, there's a grave danger that the Boot will attract all the clientele from Josiah Drab's now very much closer hostelry, the Crow and Wanker, which was also damaged by the Boggies' firework. It's clear that Campaigners will need to get to work straight away to publish a new toppers' vademecum to Grotley which

panegyricizes the reopening of 'Old Scrotes' and waxes lyrical about the splendid vista of Cultural Grotley. What a shame that Smarmy Biggles haven't moved here yet.

I suppose that the one danger of having our city newly scrubbed for Yule and the Millennium is that amateur drunks will not appreciate it and wreck it. Smokeley has a much better idea - build a big disposable tent where all your barmies can flock and if they burn it down, well so what? It wasn't going to be there for ever anyway. It would be very much more regrettable if all the folk who aren't used to getting hopelessly legless several times a week, were to run amuck in Grotley.

Those of us who stagger through the city on a regular basis respect the Arsecake Centre, the Boot,

Clive's Whelk Hut and other buildings of merit and wouldn't dream of damaging them. Sadly, many others, given unexpected courage by unaccustomed over-indulgence, may be less respectful. It would be a sad day indeed if the stalwart efforts of our city fathers were brought to nought by the over-ebullient behaviour of a few amateur drunks. We need to prepare Grotley for its future position as a benchmark modern international city without equal in Europe. Here, without a doubt, the new 'Old Scrotes' leads the way.



Branch Diary

Regional Meeting

Sat 8 Jan 2000 12.30pm, Wheatsheaf, Market Street, Atherton

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tue 7 Dec 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Welcome Inn, Bury Old Road, Whitefield

Tue 14 Dec, Christmas Social, Swan, The Square, Dobcross. Details from Branch Contact.

Wed 29 Dec 8.30pm, WD Collation/Drown the Turkey crawl. Cask & Feather, Drake St, Rochdale

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

Email: P.Alexander@Virgin.net

North Manchester

Tues 7 Dec 8pm, Social. 'Our Best Pubs' No.3. Ye Olde Nelson, Chapel Street, Salford

Sun 12 Dec 12.30pm, Beer Festival Meeting, Beer House

Wed 15 Dec 8pm, Branch Meeting, Grapes, Peel Green

Wed 22 Dec, New city pubs crawl. Breeze, Peter Street, 7pm. Rain Bar, Great Bridgewater Street, 8pm.

Tues 28 Dec noon, WD collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham. Note: Bank Holiday - no public transport in evening.

Wed 29 Dec, Christmas Crawl & Curry. Edinburgh Castle, Blossom Street, 7pm; Pot of Beer, New Mount Street, 8pm; Marble Arch 8.30; Nawaab, Rochdale Road, 9pm.

Wed 5 Jan, Irlams o'th'Height. Wagon & Horses 7pm, Wellington 8pm, Red Lion 9pm.

Wed 12 Jan 8pm, GBG 2001 pre-selection meeting, Crescent, Salford

Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

South East Lancs

Thur 2 Dec 8pm, Red Lion, Lane Head, Lowton

Thur 23 Dec, Christmas Crawl of Atherton. Start at Royal, 7.30pm

Sat 8 Jan 12pm, Branch Meeting, Wheatsheaf, Market Street, Atherton. Meeting prior to Regional Meeting; please be prompt.

Contact: Mike Thomas 01942 817335

Contributors to this issue: Rob Magee, Pete Cash, Mark McConachie, Steve Smith, Dave White, Daddy Bell, Stewart Revell, Paul Warbrick, Dave Crookell, Paul Roberts, Roger Hall

Dave and Sue welcome you to

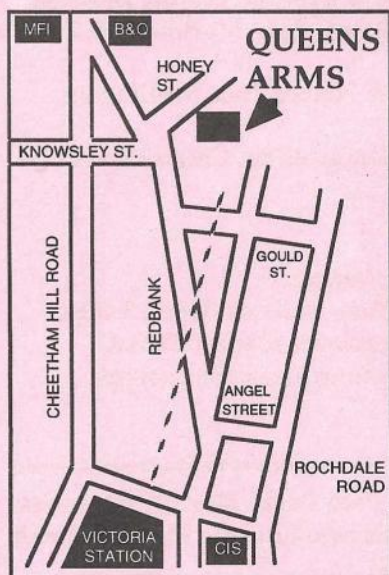
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