

30p

# What's Doing

JUNE 2000



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

## JOHN WILLIE'S WINNERS

The **Lancashire Fold** at Alkrington, Middleton, has had a makeover and been redecorated throughout. The lounge has been enlarged and given traditional-style fittings and the vault updated.

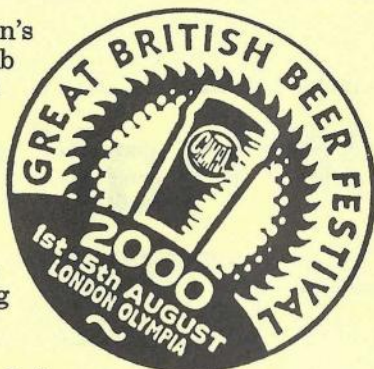


The **Rose of Lancaster** in Chadderton is the J W Lees managed Pub of the Year for 2000. The tenanted Pub of the Year is the **Railway Hotel** at Royton.



## Great British Beer Festival

Between 1st and 15th August London's Olympia will become a rather big pub for the Great British Beer Festival 2000. This year, for the first time, the GBBF will be open all day Thursday as well as Friday. Over 700 different real ales, ciders, perries and imported beers will be on offer. A special bar, fitted out courtesy of Youngs Brewery, will be dedicated to beers celebrating the Queen Mother's birthday.



The organisers promise pub games, tombolas, a quiz and a wide variety of music. This includes a T-Rex tribute band, classical, jazz, folk, swing and 'a showcase of up-and-coming talent from the Parlophone/EMI record label'.

The range of food will include different international styles and there will be a family room with live entertainment for children. For miserable buggers who can't stand kids or the racket created by up-and-coming talent, Marc Bolan lookalikes and the finger-in-the-ear brigade, there will be a lounge 'exclusively for CAMRA members to drink their beer in peace and a friendly atmosphere that is guaranteed to have you making new friends'.

Details of the Great British Beer Festival, including how to book in advance, can be found on the official website at [www.gbbf.org](http://www.gbbf.org).

## Independents Day Pub Hunt

This year's pub hunt is due to take place on Saturday 1st July at the Beer House. OK, it's Canada Day, not Independence Day, but it'll have to do.

Would last year's winners, the Raving Mad Bastards (*pictured*) please make contact to confirm that they are setting a suitable head-scratcher. Or, if you recognise them, give them a nudge.



## Calling bottleologists

Tony Sherning has around a dozen bottles from the Carlisle Brewery which he's about to chuck in a skip. Give him a ring on 0161 432 8307 and you could be the lucky recipient of these state artefacts.

## Four Miles and Fifteen Milds

*May 6th was CAMRA's National Mild Day. Members of the North Manchester Branch held their traditional marathon, drinking as many milds as they possibly could in one day. Peter Cash was there and he remembers it all...*

We got off to a good start in the **Beer House**, with both *Titanic* and *Boat Resurrection*. Across the Irk at the **Queens Arms** we enjoyed *Taylor's Dark* and *Rudgate Ruby*. Back down the hill and up to the **Pot of Beer** for the regular but not very common *Robinsons Dark*,



whilst over at the **Smithfield** the *Highgate Dark* had been replaced by *Greene King XX*. On *Oldham Street*, **Gullivers** provided *Lees GB* and the **Castle**, *Robinsons Hatters*, though *Dark* is also sold here.

A bit of a walk took us to the **Jolly Angler** for the *Hydes Dark*. The disappointments of the day were provided by members of two big 'chains'. Both had promised earlier in the week to have a mild available on the day. **Wetherspoons** have been running national adverts for *Batmans Dark* at 99p, but none was to be had by us at **Wetherspoons** in *Piccadilly*. Similarly, at the **Hogshead** (*High Street*) the promised *Elgoods* failed to appear.





The reliable **Crown & Anchor** (Cateaton Street) provided the *Holts mild*, then it was into Salford, where the **Kings Arms** made up for the let-down at the Hogshead by serving *Elgood Black Dog*. Opposite the Cathedral, **Ye Olde Nelson** now sells *Tetley Dark* following the demise of *Chesters Dark*. At the **Crescent**, as well as laying on some sandwiches, licensee Idy was selling three milds: *Hydes Light*, *Phoenix Monkeytown* and *Skinners Black Betty*.

Although not on our route, the **Lass o'Gowrie** deserves praise for the mild choice, which has included *Monkeytown*, *Hook Norton* and *Moorhouses Black Cat* recently.

CAMRA nationally has reported a small increase in mild production recently. The picture in Manchester and Salford seems to be that providing you stick to the free houses and local regional brewers, there is still a good choice. The growth of 'nitrokegged' cask mild in the Holts estate is of some concern as it appears that some houses are ignoring brewery policy and disconnecting the handpulls.

Readers are invited to write in with examples of this. Please give the name of the pub, the date and approximate time of day. The brewery is keen to know where its instructions are not being followed.

## Bury and district

Alex Koval

The imbibers of Radcliffe have been celebrating the opening of the **Lock Keeper**. It may be a nationally owned eatery, serving Tetley at £1.80 a pint, but at least it's cask. That's more than can be said for the recently reopened **Met** café bar in Bury, which now resembles an Ikea showroom. Also disappointing is **Ole**, a Spanish theme bar that finds even keg beer too much of a nuisance. Despairing customers are now offered American bottled fizz. Not too far away, on Silver Street, the Royal has changed its name to **S77** and remains proudly keg. Apparently, people were actually mistaking the Royal for a public house, hence the name change!

It's all change once again at the **Rose & Crown** on Cockey Moor Road, but new licensees Denis and Amanda hope to stay a little longer than some recent incumbents. Their first move was to reduce the price of the regular London Pride (strangely popular, that) and make their two guest beers more adventurous. Just across the road on Ainsworth Road, the **Black Bull** is still serving both Thwaites mild and bitter. On Tottington Road, cask Thwaites has returned to the **Wagonmakers**, along with some excellent Italian dishes. The nearby **Elton Liberal Club** also does cask Thwaites, but seems ashamed of it, as the beer is dispensed from an unbadged handpump. More satisfying is the **Elton Fold Working Men's Club**. This now offers both Lees mild and bitter using lined glasses to guarantee a full measure. And very good it is too.

Congratulations to the **Arthur Inn**, whose recent charity raffle raised over £400 for the children at a local hospital. Of the various prizes, the most sought after was a gallon of Porter beer and the lucky winner was none other than local CAMRA celebrity, Rick Brindley. And yes, the draw was fair and above board.

Finally, what is happening to Hydes pubs in the area? First, the **Golden Fleece** on Bell Lane. This supposedly sells Hydes Light, but the beer never seems to be on. In Radcliffe, the **Wellington** admits to being cask free, despite there being a demand for real ale. As there are now keg Hydes outlets in other areas, does this signal a new and worrying trend for the Manchester brewer?

\*\*\*\*\*

## Closed

There has been another pub loss on Bolton Road, Pendlebury, with the closure of the Albert Inn (aka Nadgers) and - shock, horror - in Patricroft the Stanley Arms (Holts) was closed at 8.30pm on a Tuesday recently.

# **THE CRESCENT**

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**OPEN ALL DAY, EVERY DAY**

**10 cask ales always available**

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**PHOENIX THIRSTY MOON**

**plus 7 guests including a mild**

**Erdinger on draught, Liefmans Kriek  
+ Quality Doubles Bar**

**Food served every lunchtime from 11.30am**

**Free Chip Barms every Monday 5-6pm**

**Weds 5-8pm Choice of Six Curries (veg and meat) + Rice £3**

**Function / Party Room**

**available for free hire**

**Buffets or hot meals provided on request**

**T.V. and Games Room open for  
darts, bar billiards and table football**

**Beer Garden now open**

## Holts corner

Stewart Revell

Not a great deal of news this month. I am still waiting for information regarding the sale of Holts pubs in the Eccles area, where the Crown & Volunteer is up for sale.

I am receiving encouraging reports on the good quality of beer coming out of the Derby Brewery these days; the bad spell towards the end of last year is now but a distant memory.

However, I am still hearing about Holts pubs dispensing 'smooth' mild without handpumped mild being available as well. David Schofield is again most upset and says the following have been selling only 'smooth': Golden Lion (Blackley), Navigation (Rochdale) and Crown & Cushion (Manchester). I have asked the brewery for an explanation and will pass this on when I get it!

\*\*\*\*\*

*Contributors to this issue:* Mark McConachie, Steve Smith, Dave Crookell, Peter Cash, Roger Hall, Alex Koval, John Cresswell, Stewart Revell, Dave White

# THE CRESCENT

SALFORD 0161 736 5600

## MIDSUMMER ALES and CIDER FESTIVAL

Thursday 22nd June to Sunday 25th June

### 30 SUMMER BREWS

*plus 4 ciders and 2 perries*

**Served from the bar, vault and cellar**

**ALL DAY FESTIVAL FOOD  
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**Open All Day**

# Lord Raglan Hotel

Home of Bury's  
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**LEYDEN BREWERY**

## **BEER FESTIVAL**

**16th June to 2nd July**

**LIVE MUSIC EVERY FRIDAY**

**CLASSIC CAR SHOW**

**HORWICH MORRIS MEN**

**FORTY DIFFERENT BEERS  
FROM INDEPENDENT  
MICRO BREWERIES**

### **Lord Raglan**

**NANGREAVES, BURY, LANCASHIRE**

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**Ring Terry or Brendan for details**



## Letters

### Bad guide

Sir - When visiting a pub I'm not familiar with, I find it useful to have a bit of advance knowledge (Good Beer Guide, local guides, etc) and it can be a disappointment when the information is inaccurate.

I knew many of the Stalybridge pubs, but not the Bridge Inn, so one Tuesday night, straight from work, we planned to eat there. According to WD April 2000, the Bridge 'concentrates more on the food side, providing evening meals.' No it doesn't. The barmaid told us they 'never do food'. The beer range wasn't as extensive as the WD article suggested, but the Landlord was fine.

The Good Beer Guide 2000 states that Lees' Black Horse Hotel, Shaw, sells seasonal beers. I went there on 30th December 1999. Not only do they not sell seasonal beers, the barman had never heard of Moonraker. I pointed out a Moonraker advert behind him, to which he just shrugged. The Lees mild was poor, but it was exchanged for bitter with good grace. Despite the fact that there were about ten people in the whole pub, a fight broke out. Why is this pub in the Good Beer Guide?

Another Lees pub in the Good Beer Guide with a 'seasonal beers' note is the Lodge Bank Tavern in Bolton. When we visited on 5th February we were told they only sell Lees mild and bitter. The latter was fine.

The third Lees pub 'with seasonal beers' was the Tandle Hill Tavern, Middleton (visited 1st April). Again we were told that they only ever sell the mild and bitter. Both were in excellent condition and the pub is well worth the train/tram/two buses/uphill hike.

Does CAMRA check what beers are actually sold in the pubs?

Finally, in response to the enquiry in WD May, I recall Uncle Igor being on at the Beer House a few years ago. It was around 25%, cost about £2.25 for a **quarter** pint and tasted awful.

*David Sheldon*

### Uncle Igor

Sir - Re. Glyn Kendrick's letter in May's What's Doing. If memory serves me right, Ross Brewery of Bristol brewed Uncle Igor. They had a pub/brewery in Newport, Wales, as well. Sadly neither is with us today. Ross also brewed the superb Saxon Ale, made with honey and borage.

*Vince Fitzgerald*

### More about Uncle Igor

Steve Smith has sent in a copy of *The Newport Brewhouse* from *Beer Necessities* CAMRA magazine. The author, Arfur Daley (don't the

Welsh have some funny names?) describes the brewery which was set up in a former Mexican restaurant by Michael and Edwin Ross in 1995. Before that, Messrs Ross operated the Bristol Brewhouse, which was known for organic bottled beers such as Hartcliffe and Saxon.

They brewed the 21% 'Uncle Igor's Famous Falling Down Water' in both Bristol and Newport and the beer was sold from a stoneware jar by the wine glass measure. According to Arfur, the brew took about eight weeks to ferment, by which time it was perfectly clear, and caramel colouring was added in the form of gravy browning. The taste was likened to that of a sweet sherry.

### Greenalls

Sir - Re. 'Wigan and District' (*WD May*). I agree that many (ex?) Greenalls pubs are going all-keg, and not just in Greater Manchester. In little over a year in Halton (that's Runcorn and Widnes to older readers), three Greenalls, two Tetley and one Marstons pub have lost cask ale. In addition, a good Greenalls pub I have used since 1971 now only has Greenalls bitter on handpump. In the past they had some good guests, including Youngs Special. Another Greenalls house has guests, but at £2.05 a time, irrespective of strength.

However, just as I did not boycott all things Whitbread after they closed Higsons (I like their Hogsheads), I do not believe in boycotting Greenalls pubs/beers. I use and enjoy their **Nags Head**, Manchester (explicit mural!), the **Sun**, Prescott (good, cosy pub with guests), the **Ring o'Bells**, Daresbury (plush pub in well-to-do area), and the **Albion**, Chester (good, unspoilt drinking place and traditional food with no chips).



Finally, I (just) remember Greenalls St Helens beers, which some said tasted better than the Warrington-brewed product. Can anybody vouch for this?

*Kim Rampley*

### **Lights Out**

Sir - One evening in mid-May the electrical power failed at the Tim Bobbin, the J D Wetherspoon outlet in Urmston. Those inside had to drink up in the dark and no new customers were allowed in. One wonders if the culprit was the ghost of United Utilities, since the premises, before becoming a pub, were the local offices and showrooms of NORWEB!

*Sean Kilgariff*

### **Mooning around**

Sir - Regarding the name for the new Wetherspoons outlet in Swinton. Bearing in mind that the premises were once public toilets, any reference to 'moon' in the name could be deemed inappropriate. So instead of, for instance, The Moon under the Library, I imagine that JDW will maintain their tradition of commemorating local worthies and go for The L S Lowry - not to be confused with that other architectural gem down on Salford Quays.

On Mr Bizwarps recent contributions to WD: Pinball machines can hardly be described as traditional pub games and are best suited to amusement arcades. If licensees feel they should cater for Dillan and his ilk, then the Marble Arch has got it about right, situating the machine in that no-man's-land between the main room and vault.

*Dave Crookell*

### **Disgusting**

Sir - With respect to the naming of the new J D Wetherspoon pub in Swinton, could I suggest 'The Sir John Harrington'. The site was previously a public loo and Sir John was the inventor of the first WC, in the time of Elizabeth I. For some reason it did not catch on and the aristos continued to use their garderobes, whereby they crapped down the outside walls of their castles into the moat. An utterly disgusting habit!

*T E Kendall*

### **Joeys mild again**

Sir - The Halfway House on Ashton New Road has several handpumps, both bitter and mild, all sporting attractive new pump clips, and also a 'smooth mild' tap. When I asked for a pint of mild the barmaid headed straight for the 'smooth' tap, so I said I wanted the handpumped mild. I was told, 'It doesn't come through there. I don't know if it ever has.'

It may be official brewery policy to serve both handpulled and smooth mild, but the policy is not necessarily being followed in the pubs!

*Alan Smith*



## BOLTON PUBS

1800 - 2000

*Including a second edition of  
The Pubs of Bolton Town Centre*

by Gordon Readyhough



## New Book

### Bolton Pubs 1800-2000

by Gordon Readyhough

In 1986 Gordon Readyhough, then the librarian at the Bolton Evening News, compiled his 'Pubs of Bolton Town Centre'. This new volume contains an updated version of the original, together with details of all the other Bolton pubs and beerhouses known to have existed in the last two hundred years.

The book is well illustrated, costs £4.75 and is available from the Artifacts shop in Bolton Library and Sweeten's Bookshop on Deansgate, Bolton.

## Passport Trail 2000

J W Lees have launched a new 'Passport Trail', whereby beer lovers who visit up to 149 of their pubs in and around Greater Manchester and North Wales can win prizes.

Dedicated imbibers who have a pint in all 149 pubs will be invited to a VIP brewery visit and a celebration dinner. (The photo shows the VIP class of 1997 flanked by the Lees-Joneses.)

To take part in the trail, first collect a passport from any J W Lees pub, or send a stamped addressed envelope to Passport Trail 2000, J W Lees & Co, Greengate Brewery, Middleton Junction, Manchester M24 2AX. The passport will be stamped at the participating pubs when you buy a pint (or two halves).



## White Lion, Swinton

Robinson's White Lion on Manchester Road is being extended into an adjoining cottage which for years was hidden behind an advertising hoarding.

A new bottle storage area will be created and there will be a self-contained flat on the first floor. An outbuilding at the rear of the premises which had become unstable has been demolished. The interior of the pub will remain unchanged and the work is expected to be completed by the end of July.

The White Lion was Swinton's fourth pub, built after the White Horse, the Red Lion and the Bulls Head and opened in 1790 when the area around the market place was at the heart of the village. The new public house provided a focal point for the growth and development of the industrial community and became the home of the town's celebrated rugby team.

It is hoped that the facade of the extension will be in harmony with the existing eighteenth century frontage.

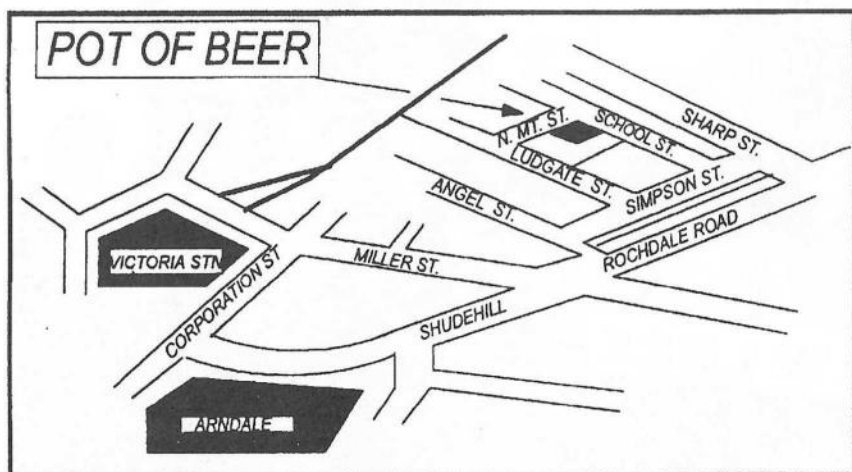


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**POLISH AND ENGLISH MENU  
AVAILABLE 12 TO 9 PM MONDAY TO FRIDAY  
AND 12 TO 4 PM SATURDAY**



## Wigan and district

*Dave White*

Further to my article in the March edition, the **Robin Hood**, Sandy Lane, Orrell, sells cask conditioned beer at last. The Greenalls mild and bitter remain keg, but licensee Celia Buck now offers a traditional guest ale (Taylors Landlord on the night I called in) which is proving popular with the locals. So with any luck the Greenalls products will be shown the door before much longer. It's a cracking little pub as well.

Sadly, there is a real ale loss to report, with the primrose path of nitrokeg extending to the door of the **Old Springs**, Spring Road, Kitt Green. The Burtonwood pub sold traditional bitter and a guest ale, but now proffers neither. The thirsty traveller could do worse than to move on to the **Latham House** on nearby Latham Lane, where Tetley dark mild, bitter and Lees bitter can be found in fine form.

In the biggest conversion since St Paul on the road to Damascus, the hoardings on either side of the **Miners Lamp**, Ormskirk Road, Lamberhead Green, now advertise traditional Thwaites bitter. Not so long ago Reg Holdsworth from Coronation Street beamed from the same billboards when the word was smoothflow. Has someone at the Star Brewery had a change of heart? In any case, the Thwaites bitter at the Miners has improved.

Remember the **Minstrel** in Hindley? The Wigan Road free house has been closed for over three years, although there have been a couple of false dawns along the way. Some windows have been broken and about half of the building has received a coat of rather naff ochre-coloured paint. Nevertheless, the Minstrel is now up for let as a pub-cum-eaterie. Anyone interested?

At the local AGM recently, Wigan CAMRA branch members voted the **Black Diamond** at Lower Ince the best new cask ale outlet for 1999/2000. The Warrington Road pub easily saw off its rivals to scoop the award and the branch is to hold a meeting/presentation there in June. See Branch Diary for details.

## Bolton briefly

The Derby Hotel on Derby Street (ex-Whitbread) changed hands a few months ago and the property is undergoing a serious amount of building work. But will it still be a pub when the dust settles?

Further up Derby Street, the Farmers Arms has been repainted and the Greenalls sign has been replaced by one advertising Bass.

## Gobbled up

Whitbread has sold its 183 Swallow Inns to Enterprise Inns for a sum not unadjacent to £120m. Breweries next?

# THE ALL YEAR BEER FESTIVAL

THWAITES BITTER, KELHAM ISLAND  
PALE RIDER, TIMOTHY TAYLORS  
+ 9 EVER CHANGING GUESTS  
from Independents & Micros including a MILD



PLUS A RANGE OF TRADITIONAL CIDERS,  
DRAUGHT KRIEK, LEFFE BLONDE, HOEGAARDEN &  
EXTENSIVE BELGIAN & GERMAN BOTTLE RANGE  
& NEW BELGIAN DRAUGHT GUEST BEERS (IN ROTATION)

## *Flaming June* **BEER FESTIVAL**

Thursday 1st June - Sunday 4th June

**35+ New and Rare Beers**

**Festival Food at lunchtimes with a  
Traditional English Theme**

Beers from micros and independents - all served from handpump  
(4 upstairs and 12 down) and chilled to cellar temperature

**Hot Lunchtime Food Seven Days a Week**

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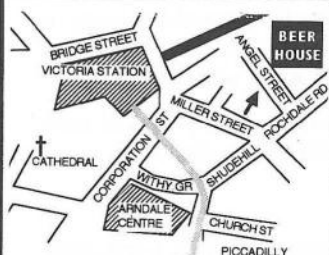
THURS SPECIAL (5-8pm) CHOICE OF 6 CURRIES (VEG & NON-VEG) + RICE £3



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FREE CHIP MUFFINS WED 5-6pm



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Angel Street, Manchester  
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## **GBG 2000 The Millennium Pub Trail**

### **Part Four**

*Steve Smith and Mark McConachie continue their tour of Greater Manchester's Good Beer Guide pubs...*

We met in the **Circus Tavern** on Portland Street, Manchester's smallest pub, between the Old Monkey and the Grey Horse. It is a 'Tetley Heritage Inn', with a single bar and two tiny rooms. The only beer is Tetley bitter, which is excellent.

Chorlton Street Bus Station is across the road and from there we made the forty-minute journey to the **Cross Guns** on Blackburn Road at Egerton. This imposing Whitbread pub has recently had a change of management. There are four pleasant rooms - main bar area, lounge, pool and dining - and some old Duttons Brewery window panes can still be seen in the door. The beers included Boddingtons bitter, Flowers IPA and guests; we tried the Black Sheep Bitter and Bank Top Brydge Bitter.

A bus to Bolton and then one to Farnworth brought us to the **Britannia**, opposite the bus station on King Street. This is another Whitbread house, with a traditional vault. It was unusual to find Whitbread Best Bitter on handpump, with Moorhouses Premier. Alas, both beers could only be deemed average. Other beers were from Greene King (Abbot Ale) and Flowers (IPA).

A five-minute walk from the Britannia, on Higher Market Street, is the **Black Horse**, an open-plan Greenalls establishment





incorporating pool and darts areas. It is a pleasant enough pub, with a mock-Tudor frontage and a long, wood-panelled bar. Greenalls bitter (average) was the sole cask ale.

Another bus ride from Farnworth brought us to within a stone's throw of the **White Swan** on Worsley Road, Swinton. This spacious Holts house has been slightly altered in recent years. We asked for the mild. If you don't specify handpulled or cask, you may get the smooth version, which seems to be the general trend these days.

The advent of the Wigan Beer Festival prompted a return to this popular town, starting at the **Swan & Railway**, which is handy for both North Western and Wallgate Stations. This classic, red brick fronted pub was in danger of extinction in terms of real ale towards the end of its Bass days, but it was rescued by Wolverhampton & Dudley and now sells Banks's bitter, Original and Marstons Pedigree. These are sold at bargain prices on Mondays to Thursdays between 2pm and 7pm.

Continuing along Wallgate and going under the railway bridge out of town, we came to the **Orwell**, which is at the canal side at Wigan Pier, the butt of music hall jokes for years and now tastefully restored. The pub has been converted from an old warehouse and some original features can still be seen, such as the vaulted ceiling and iron columns. It is a Tetley house and as well as Tetley bitter there were guests in the form of Greene King Abbot Ale and Coach House St Patrick's Leprechaun Ale (4.7%).

After a brief stop at the 13th (unlucky for some) Mill at the Pier



Festival in the Trencherfield Mill buildings, we moved on. Going over the canal bridge and via Swan Meadow Road and Pool Street, we came to Poolstock and the **Beer Engine**. Styled a Vaux house, this converted working men's club has built up a considerable following among aficionados of the hop. Alongside the locally brewed (Moorhouses, perhaps?) Beer Engine Bitter are Moorhouses Pendle Witch and guests.

Continuing out of town down Poolstock Lane, we came to the **Bold Hotel**, unchanged by the ravages of time. It is a Burtonwood hostelry, with traditional lounge and vault and a display of rugby memorabilia. As well as the Burtonwood bitter, there was an unusual guest in York Brewery's Yorkshire Terrier Bitter (4.2%). There are frequent buses from here back into the town centre.

On the evening of St Patrick's Day we had an early start in the **Lass o' Gowrie** on Charles Street. Always busy and mostly populated by student types, this was Manchester's first home brew pub of modern times and is now part of the Hogshead chain. There is a classic tiled exterior, whilst the interior is along more modern lines and the

brewery can be viewed through glass panels. The regular beers are Log 25 and Log 42 (indicating their original gravities), Boddingtons Bitter and Old Speckled Hen from Morland. The guest ales were Moor Peat Porter and one from Montrose.



We caught one of the frequent buses down Wilmslow Road to Withington and called briefly at the now keg-only (although there was an unmarked handpump) **Albert Inn**. Irish festivities were in progress, with free food and bargain price Guinness (£1.50).

A short ride to Rusholme brought us to the other **Albert**, a (non-GBG) Hydes pub



with two comfortable rooms and bitter and Jekyll's Gold. The pub had a bustling trade with the local Irish contingent.

Cutting through a few back streets, we came to the **Osborne House**, a very pleasing Hydes establishment within striking distance of Rusholme's curry mile. The popular pub was refurbished a few years ago and sells bitter, mild and the premium Jekyll's Gold.

Getting back to the city by bus along Wilmslow Road seemed nigh on impossible as there were diversions owing to some Asian festivities. We eventually settled for the **Sand Bar** on Grosvenor Street, a café bar style student hangout - heavily populated and with a variety of real ales and continental bottled and draught beers. The place has a grotto feel to it: two separate bars, pastel coloured walls with displays of local artists' works, and stone-flagged, cobbled and wood flooring. We left after tasty pints of Phoenix Bantam Bitter and Marston Moor Mad Hatter.

After a bit of a walk and another bus ride, we chose to visit the **Hogshead** in the Chorlton on Medlock area. It is on Oxford Road and from the outside reminds me of a 1930s London Underground Station, with a semi-circular, glass panelled front. Inside, there are drinking areas on two floors, furnished predominantly in light wood. Regular beers were from the likes of Boddingtons and Wadworth 6X; from the range of guest beers we selected Greene King IPA before heading for home.





## The Request Stop Beer Hop

The fifth Beer Festival at the Bhurtpore Inn, Aston, near Nantwich, takes place from Wednesday 12th July to Sunday 16th July. All-day opening is on the Saturday - see advert below. The Bhurtpore is twelve minutes' walk from Wrenbury Station, a request stop on the Crewe - Shrewsbury line.

As there was a substantial increase in passenger numbers during last year's festival, the Crewe & Shrewsbury Passengers' Association has arranged with Wales & West Trains Ltd for two trains - the 1133 and 1433 Manchester Piccadilly to Cardiff - to stop at Wrenbury on Saturday 15th July.

The trains will stop at Wilmslow at 1149 and 1449, but owing to engineering work, they will not be calling at Stockport. Intending passengers from there should check local information. (National Rail Enquiries 08457 484950.)

To ease the return journey, the Association has arranged for two through trains to Wilmslow and Piccadilly to stop at Wrenbury at 1705 and 1936. Other return services, involving a change at Crewe, are at 1835, 2057 and 2203 (long wait at Crewe).

Stewards from the Passengers' Association will meet the trains at Wrenbury.



## The Fifth BHURTPORE INN BEER FESTIVAL

12th - 16th July 2000

Bhurtpore Inn, Aston, Nantwich, Cheshire

Featuring around 90 REAL ALES  
from Britain's small independent brewers  
plus Real Cider & Perry

180 bottled Belgian, German & British beers

Opening times:

Weds: 6.30-11pm. Thursday, Friday: 12noon-2.30, 6.30-11pm

Saturday: 12 noon-11pm. Sunday 12noon-3pm, 7-10.30pm

FREE ADMISSION - All enquiries ring 01270 780917

SPECIAL TRAINS FROM MANCHESTER AND CARDIFF

12 MINUTES WALK FROM WRENBURY RAILWAY STATION

PLEASE NOTE: Only all-day opening is on Saturday 15th July



## Rupert

I suppose by now you'll know them as well as I do. With anyone else you'd laugh uproariously and take the piss, for ever. But Fiona's so in-your-face and Bunty's so, well, fist-in-the-face, that even gentle leg-pulling is out of the question. So, when they told us that they'd been abducted by aliens from the car park of the Dockers Wedge and transported to Grotley in the year 2020, all we could do was to feign belief and ask what, to us, were intelligent questions.

We began with the obvious. Was King Charles or George or whatever on the throne? What had happened to Lord Blair? What won the 3.40 at Haydock? We swiftly moved on to matters of ale and hostelries. I started off, somewhat disastrously as it turned out, with a fairly innocent question: 'Did you go to Ratty's and have a pint, then?'

Fiona gave me a look as though I'd questioned the celibacy of the Pope. 'Are you unaware of the Grandmother Paradox?' My blank look told her I was and she continued, 'If I met my granddaughter and she were to kill me, how could she exist?'

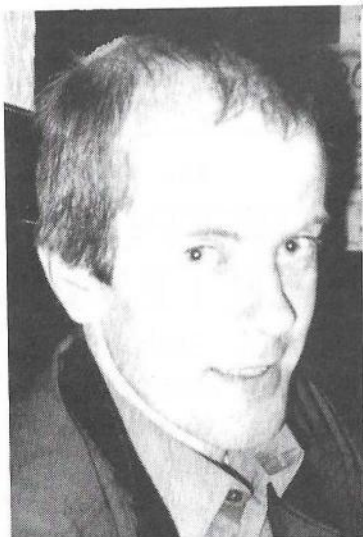
My protestation, 'But you've no children, Fiona,' was met with the

curled lip, sneering at lesser beings look.

'Sometimes, Roop, your stupidity amazes even me. We could not touch or involve ourselves in what we were seeing. We were walking through what was a virtual reality hologram. We could see and hear and even smell what was going on, but the people could not see or hear us, so there was no possibility of our affecting what we saw. Because we have returned and can influence the future by what we do now, I prefer to think of what we saw as one of many possible futures in a range of parallel universes. Whether what we saw will be our future depends on what we do now. We can influence that future and from what Bunty and I saw of our beloved hostelries and delightful amber nectars, we need to get our fingers out and do something pretty smartish if we're to avoid that fate.

'My head hurts,' said Tish returning with six pints of Drabs. 'Just tell us

what it was like without all the philosophy bit. Bunty was just about to tell us when he was forced to visit the vault in response to muffled chants of "Bunty shagged a Martian". Knowing what to expect, we all left and still don't have a clue what they saw in their time travel adventure.





# Branch Diary

## **Rochdale, Oldham & Bury**

Tue 6 Jun 8.30pm, Annual General Meeting, Blue Pits, Manchester Road, Castleton

Sat 10 Jun, Fleetwood Area Trip, Social by Coach

Tue 20 Jun 8.30pm, Committee Meeting, Dusty Miller, Crostons Road, Bury

Tue 27 Jun 8.30pm, What's Doing Collation, Cask and Feather, Drake Street, Rochdale

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

*Email: P.Alexander@Virgin.net*

## **North Manchester**

Wed 7 June 8pm, Social, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham

Wed 14 June, Stalybridge Crawl. Meet Station Buffet 7pm-8pm

Wed 21 June 8pm, Special General Meeting and Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford. To confirm branch officers and ratify £500 donation to CAMRA Fighting Fund.

Wed 28 June, Bridgewater Brewery visit. £3 each. Book with Robert Bracegirdle (0161 872 0800)

Tues 27 June 6pm on, What's Doing collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham

*Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937*

## **Wigan**

Weds 14 June 8pm, Branch Meeting/Best New Cask Ale Outlet presentation, Black Diamond Hotel, Warrington Road, Lower Ince.

*Contact: John Barlow (01257) 426464 (4), 427595 (h)*

*email john@misltd.co.uk*

**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.



*Dave and Sue welcome you to*

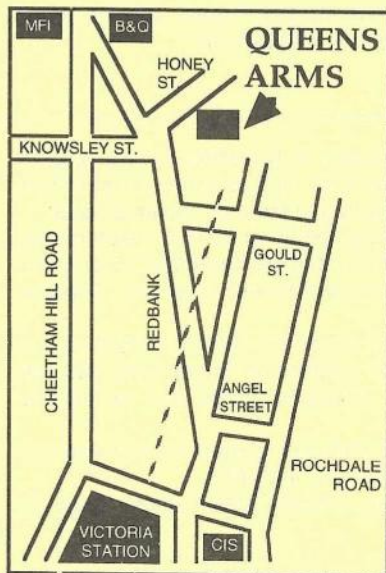
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