

30p

What's Doing

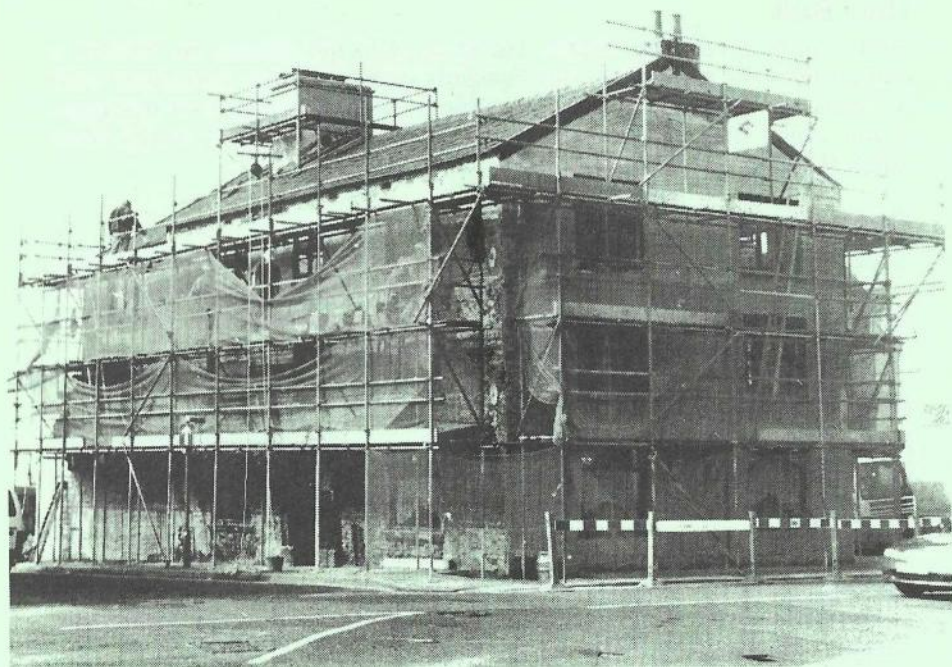
SEPTEMBER 2000



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

REBUILDING IN STALYBRIDGE

As makeovers go, this one looks serious. The White House, one of the oldest buildings in Stalybridge, was bought by Hydes Brewery a few months ago and the brewery is spending some money on the place. Hydes also acquired the nearby Q bar.



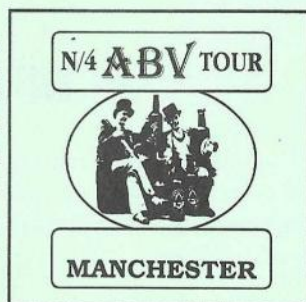
Bury Beer Festival

This year's Bury Beer Festival will take place in the usual venue, the Met, Market Street, Bury. The dates are Friday 24th November and Saturday 25th November, a few weeks later than previous years but all the better for keeping the beer at an ideal temperature. One night will be 'quiet' for the dedicated drinkers and one night will have entertainment, but the organisers haven't decided which night will be which yet.

What they have decided is to go back to basics. No festival theme, festival glasses or T-shirts, simply a great atmosphere and a good choice of well-presented ales.

N/4 ABV World Tour

A second Northern Quarter pub festival is planned for October 19th-22nd, following the thoroughly enjoyable and very successful first ABV tour in May. This time the original eight pubs are joined by the **Smithfield** on Swan Street. 100 cask beers are promised, together with food, entertainment and more beers from around the globe.



New Bull

Holts have given the **Bulls Head** on Church Street in Eccles a comprehensive makeover and the pub seems to have benefited with an increase in business. Most notable is the attractive new frontage, much nicer than the austere brick-and-tilework which dated from when the pub was rebuilt in 1958.

Centro for cask

Cask beers have quickly become a popular fixture at the once keg-only bar on Tib Street, Manchester - and with the people who said they would not sell! Hydes Jekylls Gold and seasonal are the beers. Centro opens late till 1.00am on Friday/Saturday.

Pub fests

August Bank Holiday weekend saw 30+ new beers at the **Crescent** in Salford, and there was the opportunity to try out the new, compact beer yard, too. A similar sized event was held at the **Stalybridge Buffet Bar**.

On September 21st-24th the **Beer House** is holding a Highlands and Islands Fest, with 40+ beers from the wilds of Scotland. Haggis (and neeps?) are promised. Kilts are an option.

Breakfast, Bus & Beer

Alan Ainsworth

On Sunday 23rd July the two Porters pubs in the Rochdale, Oldham & Bury CAMRA branch area (the Ashton in Oldham and the Arthur in Bury) ran a bus trip to the Albion Beer Festival (at the Porters pub in Clayton-le-Moors). The luckier contingent was the one that boarded at the Arthur Inn, where Martin the landlord provided an excellent, bargain price, full breakfast from 10.00am onwards. After a few pints of Porter's excellent beers we boarded the coach and made our way to the Albion.

We arrived high in alcohol content and anticipation. Sunday was the last day of the festival; David Porter had promised to ensure that a good selection of beers would still be available, and we were not disappointed. I seem to recollect (rather hazily) around twenty beers were still available. They included the ever popular Oakham JHB, which was excellent, and one called 'the secret hop', which wasn't.

It was an enjoyable Sunday session, the only down side being the inability to fire up the barbecue. This was owing to the fact that the barbecue was left in the hands of a group of juveniles who appeared to be somewhat inebriated.

Many thanks to those involved in organising the trip and to Martin for cooking breakfast, which was an enormous help in getting us through the session.

Lord Nelson

The Lord Nelson at Ringley, the traditional pub where the North Manchester branch of CAMRA was formed back in the early 1970s, was closed and boarded up last month. Thwaites are rebuilding the premises with a dining room extension.

The Nelson was one of the few pubs left with a variety of rooms to suit different tastes. While there were both juke box and televisions, it was still possible to find a quiet spot in which to chat, and it was second home to many local characters. Altogether a splendid place to drink and it will be missed, as will the long-serving licensees, Terry and Mavis Wolstencroft.



Letters

In defence of Whitbread

Sir - Re 'Pendle Riches', about the prices charged in Manchester's Hogshead (WD August). I agree that the prices quoted are on the high side, especially for the mild. But I have paid £2.15 for a pint of Wadworth 6X in an ex-Greenalls pub, the Black Horse, Farnworth, Widnes. Now by any standards one would expect a plush pub in the centre of Manchester to be, in general, a dearer place to drink than even the 'best' pub in Widnes.

Whitbread have their faults, but to my mind their Hogsheads are easily the best of the 'alehouse' chains. Tetley Festival Ale Houses can be good and also hold festivals, but in some the beer range has been reduced. The Lord Rodney in Warrington, said to have the longest bar in the Tetley estate, is an example. The much smaller City Arms in Manchester seems to have a wide range - bigger turnover, perhaps.

The Firkins seem to have lost their way since they became part of Allied Domecq. Wetherspoons are OK for a quick drink - the one at Victoria Station, London, is good. But I wouldn't spend a whole session in a Wetherspoons pub, something I would happily do in a Hogshead.

Whitbread-owned Beefeater and Brewer's Fayre may not be to everyone's liking, but in some places like Widnes these are better than the local pubs. They tend to be clean, sell at least a couple of real ales and have well-trained staff.

Whitbread also have some good beers. I have enjoyed many pints of their Abroad Cooper, and some years ago a lemon-flavoured beer, the name of which escapes me. I have certainly not heard any allegations of deterioration of quality like those levelled at Draught Bass and Allied's Burton Ale.

Kim Rampley

Dark beer

Sir - The Bar Centro on Tib Street (WD August) is a welcome addition to Manchester's N/4 scene. Very pleasant inside, a good range of foreign draught beers, a first class pint of Hydes Jekylls Gold and a good mix of clientele, but there is just one slight problem. It's too dark, especially over the bar. A few extra lights positioned over the bar to help me see the beers on offer and, most importantly, my money, would be appreciated. Apart from that, the Bar Centro will be a regular place to visit whilst drinking in Manchester - well done, Tony and Linda.

Talking of beers on tap, a large chrome water tap with a GB Lager sign on it appeared on the bar in my local Wetherspoons recently. I don't know what it tastes like or costs, but whoever brews it is honest. You can't accuse them of misleading dispense.

A Whitehead

Still there...

Sir - 'It is a sad fact that there is no operating pub on Oldham Road between the Wheatsheaf in Ancoats and the Bulls Head in Failsworth,' according to the article in WD July. Not quite. The Copenhagen in Newton Heath is still going.

Rob Magee

...and another thing

Sir - The Orwell, Wigan Pier, is not a Tetley house, as described in your June issue. It is in fact leased by a company called Wigan Pier Ltd from Wigan MBC. The freehold is owned by British Waterways.



The snug know-all

Maggie welcomes you to the

DUCIE BRIDGE

Corporation Street, Manchester
Near Victoria Station - opposite the CIS

**Boddingtons,
John Smiths, Tetleys**

Traditional food served 12-2pm & 5-7pm

Opening hours:

Monday-Friday 11.30-11.00pm

Saturday 12-4pm & 7-11pm

Sunday 12-4pm & 7-10.30pm

Free Function Room available

Telephone 0161 835 1006

Ripponden Reflections

Countryman

This Yorkshire village in the Ryburn valley is at the junction of the A58 Rochdale and A672 Oldham to Halifax roads and is surrounded by moorland. The number of pubs has declined somewhat in recent years. The **White Hart** on Rochdale Road has been converted into cottages, the **White Swan** on Oldham Road is now a restaurant and the **Junction** on the same road, despite the Boddingtons insignia, has been shut for some months.

What remains is an average nest of hostelrys, the showpiece being the **Old Bridge Inn** on Priest Lane, attractively located by the pack horse bridge and the church. This old inn has an interesting timber-framed interior on different levels, incorporating three quaint drinking areas. The regular beers from the ornate, unmarked handpumps are Taylors Landlord, Best Bitter and Golden Best. There are also guests from the likes of Moorhouses and Old Mill.

The **Golden Lion**, in the centre of the village on Halifax Road, has been opened out considerably and consists of a lounge and television area, with a patio outside. Mansfield bitter and guest beers are on offer, along with good value meals and snacks.

Almost next door, the **Queen Hotel** has John Smiths cask as its only real ale. The interior is modern, opened out, with much polished light wood in evidence, and dominated by a large screen television.

Heading out of the village there are two more pubs. The first, on Oldham Road, is the **Besom**. It has a compact bar and front lounge with an extended rear area for those wishing to dine. Cask ales are Tetley bitter and Taylors Landlord.

On the outskirts of the village on Rochdale Road is the area's other

formidable ale house. The **Butchers Arms** sells beers from Marstons and Taylors, plus guest beers. One of the guests, Orkney Red Macgregor, was enjoyed so much by the locals that it now has a place on the bar. This is probably the furthest south the beer is regularly available. The pub itself is built from local stone, with mullioned windows, several rooms and split-level areas.





There are hourly bus services to Ripponden from Rochdale (528) and Oldham (562). Once inside the West Yorkshire boundary, a Calderline Day Rider ticket for travel after 9.30am costs £2 and is valid within Calderdale on any First Group bus service.

THE CRESCENT

SALFORD

0161 736 5600

OPEN ALL DAY, EVERY DAY

10 cask ales always available

JOHN SMITHS BITTER - ROOSTERS SPECIAL

PHOENIX THIRSTY MOON + 7 guests including a mild

Erdinger on draught, Liefmans Kriek + Quality Doubles Bar

Food served every lunchtime from 11.30am

TWO MEALS FOR £3 every Saturday 11.30-2.30.

2 Specials from the blackboard for £3

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

GBG 2000 *The Millennium Trail*

Part Seven

Steve Smith and Mark McConachie catch the No.17 from Manchester to Rochdale and alight at Drake Street to visit more Good Beer Guide pubs...

Opposite the bus stop is the **Cask & Feather** on Oldham Road, home of the McGuinness Brewery, which can be viewed through full height glass doors inside the pub. Available on our visit were Best Bitter, Junction, Feather Plucker Mild and Tommy Todds Porter. We departed as a karaoke was being set up, threatening to engulf a third of the pub's space.

We caught another bus and headed for Castleton. The **Blue Pits Inn** on Manchester Road is a comfortable J W Lees hostelry close to the railway station, selling GB Mild and Bitter. The pub has a games room, a substantial bar room drinking area and a pleasing rear lounge. Note the tiled brewery advertisement outside.

On the same road a few doors away is a notable free house, the **Midland Beer Company**, dispensing Thwaites bitter and a guest (Taylors Best Bitter on our visit). This is a former bank building converted to one room, saloon bar style, full of interesting old brewery ads and other ephemera. Keen prices seem to ensure a lively crowd at most times.

Another bus ride (on the handy half-hourly No.17 service) brought us to the **Crown Inn**, just outside Middleton town centre on Rochdale Road. This is another comfortable J W Lees local (GB Mild and Bitter), with a neat lounge and an extended back room. A race night was in progress so the pub was bustling.

Next it was into Middleton proper, a change of bus and out again on the 59 route. On Manchester Old Road near Rhodes is the 'try also' **Carters Arms**, a spacious and welcoming Lees pub again with GB Mild and Bitter.

Off to Stalybridge now, a good place for a pub crawl. We concentrated on the year's entries in the GBG and found few changes. The town's claim to fame is that it has two pubs in the



Guinness Book of Records. One has the longest name (The Old Thirteenth Cheshire Volunteer Rifleman Corps Inn) and the other the shortest (Q).

However, a good place to begin a crawl is at the **Station Buffet Bar**, which is on the platform where the trains from Manchester stop. This world famous, long-standing free house is renowned for its regular beer festivals, jazz and folk nights and an ever changing range of guest beers, mostly from micro breweries. There are four areas for drinkers: a conservatory-style snug, a bar room and two rear rooms. Regular beers are Boddingtons bitter, Flowers IPA and Wadworth 6X. Food is basic and simple - try the nourishing black peas.

Going out of the station and on to Market Street one comes to the aforementioned **Q** bar. Stone floors and brick pillars dominate the downstairs bar, which can get busy, especially at weekends; upstairs there is a cocktail lounge. Of late the place has been acquired by Hydes Brewery, so their beers now feature (bitter and the seasonal Hair Raid), along with Taylors Landlord.



Next door, the **Rose & Crown** is still styled a Vaux house and the beer range has been reduced to Tetley bitter and a guest, Camerons Strongarm (of average quality). This pub has three distinct drinking areas - a lounge, snug at the front and a games room.

At the corner of Market Street and Water Street, opposite the newly renovated bus station, is the **White House**. This pub, a bit run down perhaps and surrounded in scaffolding, has also been acquired by

Hydes. There is a bar room, two side rooms and a back room where hangs a portrait of the 'Laughing Cavalier', a relic from the days when that was the pub's name. The beer range is the same as the Q.

Our next trip took us to Peel Green for a stroll back to the centre of Eccles and some excellent Holts mild and bitter. To begin, the ornate facade of the **Grapes Hotel** on Liverpool Road beckoned. The Edwardian building has an equally ornate interior with several rooms and an abundance of wood panelling and etched glasswork.

Walking into Patricroft, going under the railway bridge on Green Lane and up the slope we came to the **Queens Arms** next to the station, a community local with a characterful vault, lounge and comfy snug. This was the only non-Holts pub of the night (Boddingtons bitter).

Back on Liverpool Road is the **Stanley Arms**. Through the entrance on Eliza Ann Street is a green tiled corridor, a traditional vault and a lounge area, recently revamped. On ordering mild we were politely asked if we wanted the ordinary or the traditional, a practice which seems to be sweeping through the Holts estate.

Just before Eccles town centre, on Church Street, is the **Crown & Volunteer**, of 1930s origin. There have been subtle changes here in recent years, but the underlying character remains unchanged and the pub is still popular with the town's drinkers. A disturbing feature is the 'for sale' notice outside.

On the other side of town, opposite the new Bus/Metrolink Interchange, is the **Lamb**. This is another Edwardian drinking house with several rooms, floral tiling, dark wood panelling and etched glass. (Unfortunately, some windows have been smashed of late and replaced with plain, chicken-wire type panes.)

In these modern times, the Lamb has some competition from the nearby Wetherspoons conversion, the **Eccles Cross**. The pub is nice enough in itself, but we decided not to visit on this occasion.

Finally for this instalment, a return visit to the Oldham area and two 'try also' Lees establishments. The **Junction Inn** on Rochdale Road at Denshaw is one of the brewery's flagships, well patronised and offering a variety of food and drink. Only the bitter and the seasonal (Scorcher) were the real ales though; GB Mild and Moonraker have been dropped. The pub has a pleasant lounge with added space for diners and a back room vault.

After travelling back into Oldham on the hourly 562 bus we made for the **Bank Top Tavern**, an old pub amidst the new developments around Bank Street and King Square. The pub is on two levels, one for diners. The beers are Lees GB Mild and Bitter, plus the occasional seasonal.

Far and Near

with Daddy Bell

Now that my summer season of rambling and cycling is almost over, there is a chance to reflect upon the best and the worst of my drinking experiences. I wonder why it is that our esteemed editor, usually so judicious, envisages me in the picturesque garb of plus-fours and trilby, with pipe in mouth and a frisky little hound for companion. My true holiday attire, weather permitting, is somewhat more exiguous and lightweight; and both pipe and dog are fanciful additions to the portrait. However, if I ever retire to the country, I will bear these editorial suggestions in mind in developing an appropriate rural lifestyle.

Meanwhile, there are the beers and pubs of AD 2000 to remember and celebrate. The prize for the most improved pub in Eskdale must go to the **Woolpack**, not for its conversion of half the old public bar into a bunkhouse for American archaeologists, but for breaking free from the predictable Theakston range (still the norm at the **King George IV** at Eskdale Green) and introducing beers from Taylors (increasingly available and popular in the district) and elsewhere. I enjoyed both Coniston Bluebird and Hanby Joybringer there.

In Gosforth, the **Wheatsheaf** was closed and boarded (though apparently due to reopen) and the **Gosforth Hall Hotel** was seemingly abandoned. At Nether Wasdale, the **Screes Hotel** did resume opening at all weekday lunchtimes except Monday, to the delight and relief of lovers of Yates bitter and vegetarian chilli. Beyond the end of Wastwater, the **Wasdale Head Inn** has secured all necessary permissions for its brewery, but we cannot expect to taste its products until May 2001. If they do, as projected, use water from Mosedale Beck as the brewing liquor, we can look forward to something rather special.

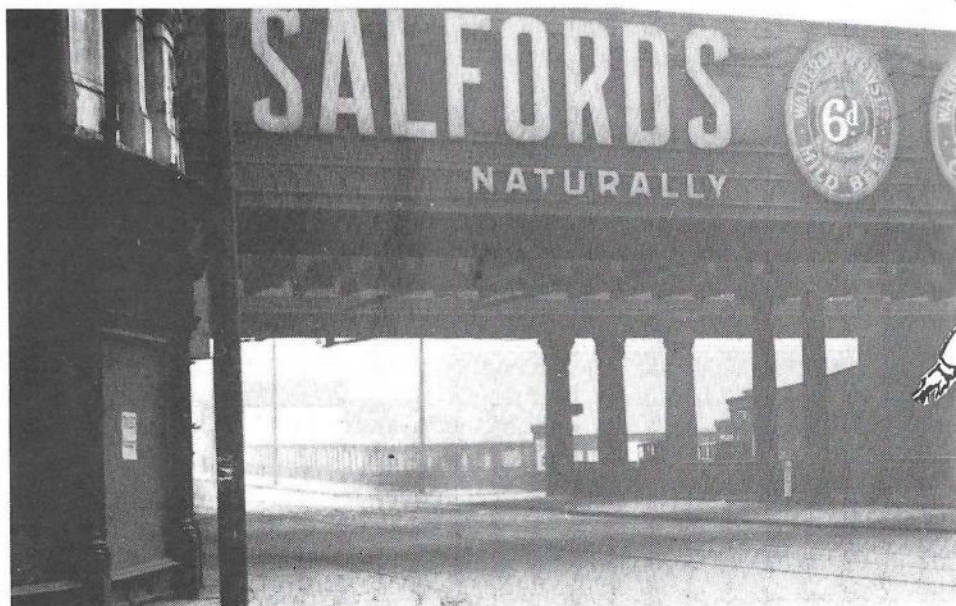
The towns of West Cumberland are not, in the main, remarkable for beer quality or variety. In Whitehaven, the only Jennings pub selling other than the ordinary bitter regularly is **Sal Madge's**; many local drinkers seem to prefer Old Smoothy or cans of Tennents lager. In Maryport, hardly a pub seems to be open, at least in the daytime. I doubt whether any real ale is to be found in the town at all. Cockermouth, the home of Jennings, is an entirely different experience, especially in the **Bush Hotel**. If you venture to the **Bitter End** in Kirkgate, hoping to enjoy some of its own brews and its fine food, make sure you arrive in good time. Except at weekends,



closing time is at 2.30pm, and you have no chance of a drink at 2.15pm. Having made this mistake one day, I did not repeat it the next, and got there in time to sample two of the eight beers on handpump, including their own Cocker Snoot, a 3.8% darkish brown bitter (£1.60 a pint).

Another pub, a favourite resort of mine, is the **Ship** at Allonby, run by Peter and Carol Yates, and selling the products of the eponymous brewery which is now in the hands of Graeme and Caroline Baxter. Nowadays, one is unlikely to find the Ship open at lunchtimes till late in the week, even in summer, but a welcome substitute is now to be found at the **West Winds**, a former parsonage with two handpumps, one of them devoted to Carlisle State Bitter, brewed by Derwent at Silloth using, it is claimed, the original recipe. My best experience of this beer, however, was in the **Woodrow Wilson** in Carlisle itself, handy for the railway station and a more than adequate replacement for the Caledonian House on the other side of Botchergate, which is now **Cal** - 'the anytime experience', full of large shiny fonts dispensing the sort of anodyne liquids for which I have not time at all.

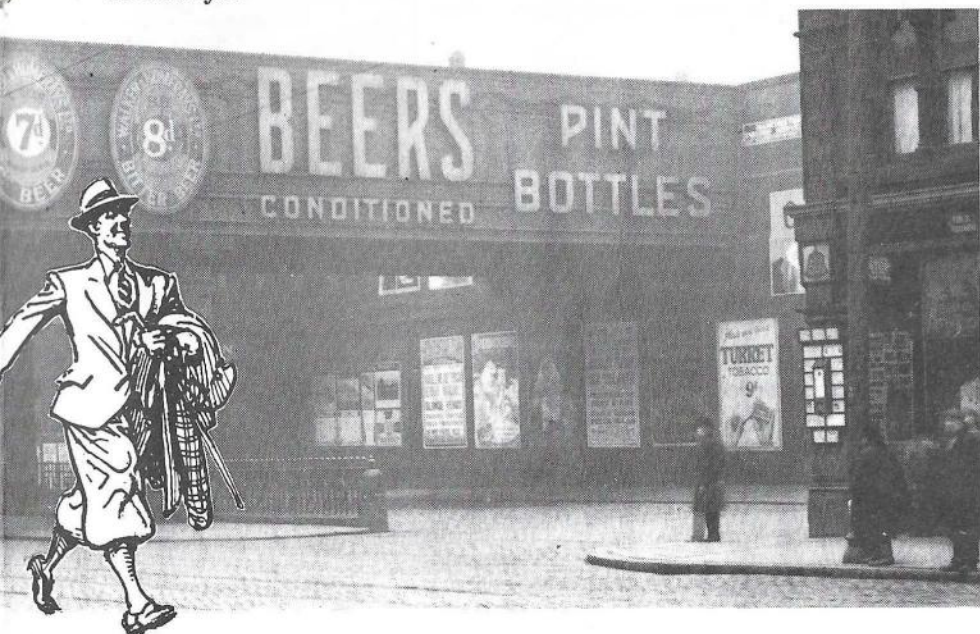
In the Woodrow Wilson, where the 3.7% Carlisle State Bitter sells at £1.30, as against £1.75 in Allonby, I was offered it with or without a sparkler. I opted for the latter - and what a revelation! I haven't a clue how Derwent's re-creation compares with the original, but the difference in flavour with a tiny head and brim measure was remarkable. Not surprisingly, it is gaining in popularity locally. Since



I usually have few good words to spare for Wetherspoons, I am glad to applaud their newish Carlisle pub, and hope it continues to promote this excellent local brew.

Away from Lakeland and back in Manchester and Salford, there is much to note with approval. If my visit to the **Beer House** fairly early in August was at all typical, the place must currently take the palm for sheer variety of both beers and breweries. Ian Casson has proved a dab hand at spotting worthwhile novelties. In Salford, the **Kings Arms** in Bloom Street is concentrating on good microbreweries, Scottish ones being particularly prominent recently. August 18th saw the launch at the Kings of Navvy, the reborn Navigator, brewed by Richard Bazen at Phoenix. It was the next day before I got a chance to test it: already they were on to a second cask. It was most refreshing, more bitter than its Bridgewater precursor but clearly within the same tradition. Selling at the Kings at £1.30 a pint (the same price as the other regular 3.8% bitter, Pictish Brewers Gold), it will also be available at the **Pot of Beer** in New Mount Street, where Ken Birch is now busily established.

With these developments - and the move to organic ales at the Marble Brewery - can we expect similarly enterprising initiatives from our other favourite free houses? Is it possible that a handy person could put together all the bits and amaze us with the long-awaited Crescent Brewery? And if they did, would Thornley Kelsey ales be revived? Or would there be more of a local market for the return of Walker & Homfrays?



Wigan briefly

Dave White

It's been a long time in coming, but the **Minstral** [sic] on Wigan Road, Hindley, finally reopened in August. Like so many other pubs in Hindley, however (over two-thirds, in fact), the Minstral offers only keg beer. I suggest you sink a pint or two of Peter Yates' at the **Wiganer** up the road, then catch the bus home.

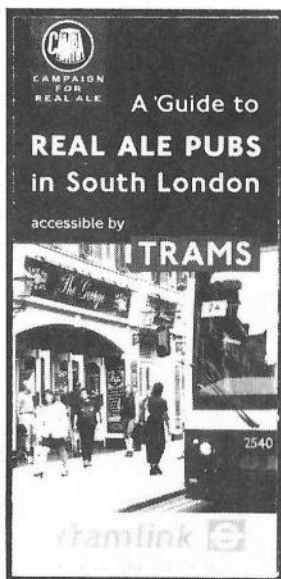
In Garswood, the **Railway Hotel**, Station Road, no longer sells real ale. A lick of paint wouldn't go amiss at this ex-Greenalls pub, as well. As if by recompense, the **Stag Hotel** on the same road offers a guest beer to go with the cask Burtonwood bitter (Camerons Strongarm most recently), but if the standard of the beer when I called is anything to go by, the pub doesn't appear to be selling much of either.

Full circle

Trawls (tram-assisted pub crawls) and accompanying tram guides were conceived by Peter Waddy when Metrolink began running. The idea has been taken up elsewhere and last year the Midlands Tram Guide was published. The latest in the genre is 'A Guide to Real Ale Pubs in South London accessible by Trams' - and the Operation Director of the said Tramlink system is none other than Miss Waddy.

Tramlink on the internet is: www.tramlink.net. The guides can be obtained from the Tramlink Shop, Unit 5, Suffolk House, George Street, Croydon.

The Waddies will soon be moving to the South East and so bid a fond farewell to all CAMRA members in the North with whom they have had the pleasure of drinking over the past twenty-odd years. We are reliably informed that Hattie has sobered up and will not be creating a similar trail of mayhem down South.



Contributors to this issue: Rob Magee, Dave Crookell, Steve Smith, Mark McConachie, Peter Wadsworth, Paul Roberts, Sue Barker, Alan Ainsworth, Stewart Revell, Daddy Bell, Roy Bullock, Roger Hall

Marsden revisited

Grogard

About once a year someone does an article on Marsden and I think it must be my turn for 2000.

For those whose ignorance is absolute, Marsden is a small town roughly half-way between Oldham and Huddersfield on the A62 and is on the rail line between Manchester Victoria and Huddersfield/Leeds.

Surrounded by spectacular moorland scenery, much of it owned by the National Trust, Marsden lies close to the Pennine Way and is therefore a popular 'pit stop' for those hardy souls with bulging thighs and brown hairy knees (and that's just the women) who tramp determinedly from Edale to Kirk Yetholm.

But for those of us whose Brasher boots are in a glass case and labelled 'In memory of lost times', easier travel arrangements must be found. Fortunately, my wife (God bless her) makes occasional hunting trips to the markets of 'uddersfield and was happy to deposit me outside the station on Saturday 12th August, with nearly four hours to kill.

If you want to visit the **Tunnel End** from the station, all you need do is follow the canal for about ten or fifteen minutes (it is signposted) and on the left you will see a hole in the hillside. This is the western end of the Standedge Tunnel, which is the longest and highest canal tunnel in Britain. With its barred entrance, it seems more like the gateway to some subterranean dungeon. Anyway, the pub is on the right, looking down towards the tunnel. As the place tends to close early on Saturday afternoon, you can chance a pleasant walk with a dry finish or stick to the centre of the town. I decided on Plan B.

So first stop was the **Railway**. This never seems to change very much. The beer is Burtonwood but the mild and special pale being fizzed, I had to settle for the bitter. A well-kept pint, perfect temperature but a bit pricey at £1.66.

Next stop was the **Swan**. Just go down the road towards the river and it is on the left. Now this place is subject to change. I think it used to be a Bass house, then it sold Barnsley bitter but now does Thwaites. This might be compensation for that famous old pub on the A62, between Saddleworth and Marsden, the **Floating Light**, which was Thwaites for years but is now closed and boarded up. Anyway, the bitter, also very well kept, was (an amazing coincidence) £1.66 with a real mild a few pence cheaper. A pleasant change; there isn't much Thwaites in Oldham.

Then it was across the river and into the **Riverside**. Here one is challenged by seven ales brewed on the premises, a mild, a porter, a stout and four bitters. The gentlemanly thing to do is try a half of



each and then go according to preference. I especially like the porter (og 1040), with its chocolate malty flavour, while the Butterley bitter (1038), sharp and refreshing, is the perfect quencher. Prices go from £1.44 for the Sparth mild up to £1.77 for the Redbrook, which at og 1055 is definitely not a session beer.

The pub doesn't do food any more, but you are recommended to try Pennine Wholefoods across the road, where you can obtain a massive sandwich for £1.40 and eat it back at the bar. I had a beef salad - delicious, it was.

Incidentally, several of the aforementioned ales will be found at the **Saddleworth Museum Beer Festival** over the weekend of 1st September. But tragically I won't be there. I'm off to Scarborough, but there are compensations - we have a flat over a real ale pub, by name the Cellar. I might even write about it next time.

Holts corner

Stewart Revell

In the May edition I asked for information, on behalf of collector Richard Percival, about a Holts Brewery tray manufactured by the firm of Reginald Corfield about 1970. I recently received a letter from Geoffrey Corfield of Ontario, Canada. He didn't have a tray to offer, but he did have fond memories of drinking Holts mild when he lived in Stockport and he is probably related to the Corfields who made brewery trays. Reginald Corfield (1901-1974) was the managing director and according to a book about the Corfields from early times to the present (yes, there is one), other Corfields are listed as manufacturers of things in aluminium. So now you know.

Newfield Inn

Dave Crookell

Situated in the scattered farming community of Seathwaite in the Duddon Valley, the Newfield Inn is a typical, old, remote Cumbrian free house about eight miles north of Broughton-in-Fumess. The area remains relatively unspoilt to the extent that the inn is still the only commercial enterprise in the valley. In the small public bar there is a stove with a real fire and an unusual floor of banded slate hewn from one of the local quarries at Walna Scar. There is a separate dining room catering mainly for the tea and biscuits brigade passing through the valley on coach tours.

Cask ales available on a recent visit were Deuchars IPA and Coniston Bluebird, both at £1.75 a pint; Old Peculier at £2.20 a pint and - lo and behold - Holts bitter, also at £1.75 a pint. Two casks were donated to the inn by a representative of the Derby Brewery, presumably in exchange for accommodation. Joey's finest was being particularly appreciated by an elderly farmer and his son, in preference to the two recent champion beers.



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'.

Now and Then

Rob Magee

No.118 **Hawthorn Inn**

365 Roundthorn Road, Oldham

In 1833 the tenant of a cottage in the hamlet of Roundthorn obtained an excise licence and turned his home into a beerhouse. The tenant was probably James Slater; he was certainly the licensee by 1835 and he continued to run the place until 1861. A listing in a trade directory of 1845 gives the name Colliers Arms, then by 1874 it was the Hawthorn Inn.

In the 1870s the owner was William Beckett Whitehead and he made some improvements to the property, such as installing three privies and an ashpit in the yard. This yard was shared with the occupants of the cottage next door, a fact which was commented on when the police inspected the beerhouse in 1886. Oldham Brewery were recorded as the owners, which is puzzling, since a later survey (1894) has Mr Whitehead leasing the Hawthorn to Twigg's Manor Brewery of Salford.

By this time the beerhouse had its own back yard and the survey found the place very clean and in good repair, with three drinking rooms, four bedrooms, accommodation for travellers, but no stabling.

On Monday 24th January 1910 Samuel Mason took over the Hawthorn Inn with a protection licence (the previous tenant had either died suddenly or left in a hurry). The licence transfer was confirmed on 2nd February and he ran the beerhouse until May 1916. The photo shows Sam and members of his family; the 'Manchester' sign over the door indicates



that the Manchester Brewery Company of Ardwick was supplying the ales.

Oldham Brewery purchased the Hawthorn from William Beckett Whitehead's executors in 1925 and in the 1930s the company had plans to build a new Hawthorn on an adjacent site. A removal order was obtained in 1939, but the work was cancelled owing to the outbreak of war. The removal order was withdrawn in February 1954.

The Hawthorn was extended into the adjoining cottage in 1951 and new inside toilets were built. After further improvements in 1955 a wine licence was granted and in 1960 the Hawthorn became fully licensed. The licensee during this period was Harry Kemp and when he left in 1964 after twenty-six years he had seen the pub completely refurbished and re-fronted.

In 1982 Oldham Brewery was taken over by Boddingtons Brewery and there have been several changes since then. Two years ago the Hawthorn became an 'Inn Partnership' pub (a Nomura subsidiary) and today it is a busy local selling a nice pint of Cains.

Piste

Two pubs on Oldfield Road are to be pulled down so that the area can be redeveloped as Salford's answer to Klosters. The **Kings Arms** (Holts, ex-Wilsons, *below*) is expected to close later this year, but the **Prince of Wales** (free) has a few more years yet. The Snow World development, including a ski slope, will take up most of the land down to the Irwell.



Beinlos in Bavaria

Paul Roberts

Viel Spaß im Spessart

From the last weekend in July to the first in August, the town of Lohr am Main celebrated the Spessartfestwoche, one of the largest festivals in Unterfranken in Northern Bavaria.

The festival was centred on a 4,500-seater beer tent serving 5.6% Lohrer Festbier at DM8.30 per Maß (£1.43 per pint). As well as the seats in the hall, there were an additional 2,000 in the beer garden. Newspaper reports estimated there were as many as 10,000 inside the hall on several nights! Each night there was different entertainment, ranging from typically Bavarian to pop groups.

One very unusual and most welcome feature was the provision of the 'Festwochenexpress', a network of 11 bus routes covering 31 towns and villages in the valleys around Lohr. The service ran until 1.00am and a total of 31,928 imbibers used it over the eleven days of the Fest. My own journey was a seven-mile trip costing DM3.00 (92p) on a three-axle double-deck Setra luxury coach with very welcome individual air conditioning controls. On the inbound journey there were standees upstairs, downstairs and on both of the staircases in the vehicle - well over 100 passengers. Duplicates were needed on many late night journeys. The subsidy for the whole operation was less than DM15,000. Compare that with the complete lack of bus services in the northern part of Greater Manchester over the Millennium Eve celebrations.

Stumpf, the family brewery which produces the Lohrer Festbier, brews 11 other beers, including the famous Keiler Weißbier. The annual get-together of the Keiler Fancubers was in the beer tent on the last Saturday of the festival, with over 2,000 fans from as far away as Canada and the USA. Keiler accounts for 25.2% of Lohrer production. Stumpf's is one of a dwindling number of breweries in Bavaria, but the Free State still has 51% of all the breweries in the EC (1999 figures). Average German beer consumption has dropped from 150 litres per head in 1976 to just 130 in 1999 - but the figure in Bavaria is 50% up!



The Festwoche is an enjoyable and friendly affair and a reminder of what the Oktoberfest used to be like. This year saw the most successful event for over a decade, although daily beer consumption figures are no longer given to discourage people from drinking to excess to beat the record. As Lohr is not too far from Bamberg, it is an ideal destination for those wishing to take in the atmosphere of a beer festival while 'researching' the many breweries in Franconia.

Bhurtpore Beerfest

John Cresswell of the Crewe & Shrewsbury Passenger Association writes to say that record numbers of visitors attended this year's beer festival at the Bhurtpore Inn, Aston: 437 passengers travelled by train to Wrenbury Station. The festival coincided with the opening of the new Paradise Brewery, which put on some brewery tours and gave visitors the opportunity to sample Nantwich Ales - Dabbers Gold (5%) and Bitter (4%).

Visitors to the beer festival may have noticed the more-than-usual number of scarecrows in the village. A Scarecrow Trail, organised by the Friends of Wrenbury School, has logged over a hundred, with several between the station and the pub. John also notes that for the third time, the festival coincided with the appearance of a comet (C/99 S4 Linear). Are the two facts related? And after the festival, did anyone ask a scarecrow the way back to the station? Spooky.



A nicely produced leaflet, 'Looking at Shropshire Through a Glass' gives details of eight breweries - Salopian, Hanby Ales, Wood, Corvedale, Munslow, Six Bells, Three Tuns (*pictured*) and Hobsons. John Cresswell has some copies - send s.a.e. to John at 39 Coton Hill, Shrewsbury SY1 2DY.

Beer Street

The Mikron Theatre Company will be performing 'Beer Street' at The Theatre Upstairs, Manchester Road East, Little Hulton, on Wednesday 18th October at 8pm. (Entrance on Cleggs Lane.) The performance is supported by Phoenix Brewery and Phoenix bitter will be available during the interval and after the performance.

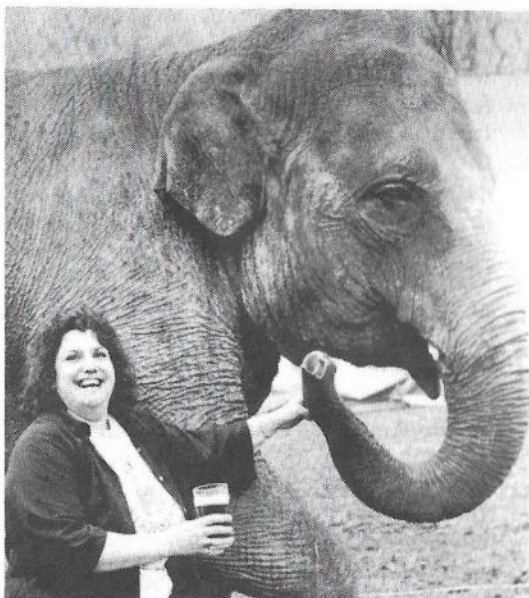
'Beer Street' is described as a tour of the history of the big brewers - a 'lively, rumbustious show' which 'continues to have relevance with the increasing threats to real ale and proper pubs'. Tickets are £4. Details from 0161 790 2727.

Rupert

So, it's the end of an era then. The Nightingales set off to pastures new. They leave their multi-roomed Farnworth megahovel and head off to the warm, soft underbelly of the sarf coast where their Shangri-La or Duntiplin awaits them. It's a far cry from those days of yore when Hattie drank grown men under the table as soon as look at them and poured pints over those foolhardy enough to question her virginity. Expressions like 'as pure as the driven slush' were exiled from one's mind lest one's nether regions were cooled with a pint of Drabs mild. And what of Billy Nightingale - he whose deft shifting by half an inch of pencilled roads on maps saved many a hostelry, he who single-handedly stopped the encroachments of the newfangled iron horse? The Campaign is the lesser for their exile.

But we may console ourselves that they, at least, have not had to change their names and appearances and live incognito in some foreign town. Such was the fate of Mr Kepple, whose top secret work for some Government agency got up the noses of some nasty villains, so he had to go for his own good. Such attrition diminishes the dwindling number of stalwarts and threatens the viability of branches, but what can one do?

I suppose many people will have bought the News of the Screws to



see if they recognise anyone in the name and shame campaign. I was surprised that none of the undoubted weirdos I've met over the years had their mugshots there. My entreaties to Eddy to print What's Doing's own list have, sadly, fallen on deaf ears. It's not as though we wouldn't have enough copy of those who have brought the Campaign into disrepute through their nefarious activities. There are, of course, some whom I cannot mention on pain of death, like Humphrey Dumpty in a money-trousering context, but there's more than enough we could. Perhaps it's time we set up our own version of Big Brother. The antics of those on Channel 4 are as nothing compared to some imbibers of the amber nectar. WD's usual prize is offered for the best collection of eight people you'd least like to be shackled up with for three months.

Branch Diary

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Fri 1 & Sat 2 Sept, Saddleworth Beer Festival, Saddleworth Museum

Tue 5 Sept 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Cemetery, Bury Road, Rochdale

Sat 16 Sept Kelham Island Brewery/Peak District Pubs Coach Trip.

Details from Branch Contact

Tue 26 Sept 8.30pm, Committee/What's Doing Collation/Bury Beer Festival Organisation Meeting, Cask & Feather, Drake St, Rochdale

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

email: *P.Alexander@Virgin.net*

North Manchester

Wed 6 Sept 8pm, Social, White Lion, Worsley Road, Swinton

Wed 13 Sept 8pm, Ellesmere BC&TC, Walkden Road, Worsley

Wed 20 Sept 8pm, Branch Meeting, Beer House, Angel Street, Manchester

Sat 23 Sept 12.30pm. Regional Meeting, Sportsman, Mottram Rd, Hyde

Tues 26 Sept 6pm, What's Doing collation, Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham

Wed 27 Sept 7pm, New Manchester Guide - First Survey. Crown & Anchor, Cateaton Street, Manchester

Contact: *Roger Hall 0161 740 7937*

Wigan

Thurs 7th Sept, Branch Social at Railway Tavern, Hoscarr (by the station on the Manchester-Southport line). Train leaves Wigan

Wallgate 19.09, returns 22.47

Wed 13th Sept 8pm, Branch Meeting, Sir Thomas Gerard, Gerard Street, Ashton-in-Makerfield

Wed 27th Sept 8pm, Best New Cask Beer Outlet Award 1999-2000, Black Diamond, Warrington Road, Lower Ince

Sun 1st Oct, Branch Social at the Railway Hotel, High Street, Golborne. A 660 bus leaves Wigan bus station at 13.01 from Stand C (check first)

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

email *john@misltd.co.uk*

South East Lancs

Thur 7 Sept 8pm, Branch Meeting & Social. Hare & Hounds, Lowton St Lukes

Contact: *Mike Thomas 01942 817335*

Dave and Sue welcome you to

THE QUEENS ARMS

HONEY STREET, CHEETHAM

Try the fine range of beers supporting
independent brewers in their excellent free house!

Bantam Bitter £1.20 a pint

Taylors Landlord Championship Beer

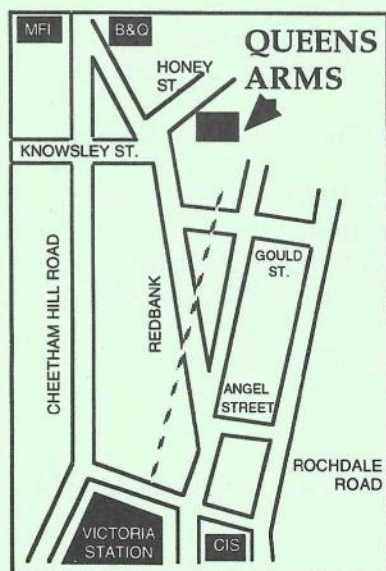
plus

Bottled beers from various countries

Open: 12 noon - 11.00 p.m. Monday - Saturday

12 noon - 10.30 p.m. Sunday

Sept 9th: Pump Clip Sale - 3.30pm
PROCEEDS TO FRANCIS HOUSE



Beer Garden

Families Welcome

Hot & Cold Food

*We're in the
Good Beer Guide
2000!*

Telephone:
0161 834 4239