

WHAT'S DOING

The Newsletter of the North Manchester Branch of CAMRA

Number 3. January 1976.

Sometimes it's good to get back to Manchester after a holiday. As you speed along the M62 towards the familiar amber glow in the sky, through first the industrial and then the suburban sprawl, you can at least console yourself with the thought that you're rarely more than a hundred yards away from a decent pint.

Not so in all parts of the country. I recently spent a week on the Somerset coast about six miles from Minehead. It's a beautiful spot at the foot of the Quantock hills where Wordsworth and Coleridge used to walk together thinking deep thoughts about golden daffodils and ancient mariners and no doubt steaming off at half past five to the Plough at Holford for a pint of the landlord's best ale. Today, sadly, the only thing that's missing is the ale - at

least the sort that isn't keg or spoilt by gas. Even armed with the Good Beer Guide the beer drinker has a trip of nearly twenty miles to Taunton, Bridgewater or Enmore for a pint of real ale, and if he goes to the last he'll probably need to take out a mortgage for a round of Bass (at 32p a pint!) All of which is a pity since there are a lot of quite nice pubs in the area and there comes a point when you feel physically weak at just the mention of cider.

These observations prompt two important questions. The first is to ask if it can really be true that in an area about the same size as Berkshire or Greater Manchester there isn't a single pub selling real ale. It might be that the area has not been adequately surveyed, in which case one looks forward to the next issue of the Guide. On the other hand, it might be that limitations of space have meant (contd. back page)

BREWERY NEWS.

Bass-Charrington.

The Wellington in the Arndale Centre, Manchester, is behind schedule and may not open until the end of 1976. Although certain technical problems exist, Bass-Charrington hope that cask conditioned beer served by beer engines will be available.

Feedback is still required on the pubs listed in December as selling cask conditioned beer.

Bass-Charrington are to spend £200,000 during the next twelve months on structural repairs to Sinclairs, necessitated by damage done to the building during its removal.

Pollards.

Pollards' output is now forty five barrels a week. They have new outlets at:

The Midway, New Bridge Lane,
Stockport.

The Bees Knees, New Mills.
The Trap, Glossop.

Samuel Smiths.

South Manchester Branch intend to hold a social meeting at the Greatstone Hotel, Chester Road, Stretford, in February, when cask conditioned beer will be available. The meeting will be on a Friday with a buffet and licence extension. It should be an enjoyable eve-

ning, and good support may help to persuade the brewery to reintroduce real ale to Lancashire.

Whitegates.

A new bar has recently been opened. Hartleys bitter will soon be available (at a price which reflects transport costs).

1976 QUIZ.

1. Which Manchester pub used to be a prison?
2. Which Manchester pub now in the premises formerly occupied by a firm of ball bearing factors used to be in a building which previously housed a synagogue? (Ed.-half marks if you understand the question).
3. Where were the following pubs: Four Horseshoes, Welcome Inn, Church Inn, Coomassie Hotel, Queen's Arms, Royal Hotel, Grove Inn?
4. Which two Eccles pubs still have billiard tables?
5. Which North Manchester pub is omitted from Boddington's own guide?
6. What do the Unicorn in Patricroft and the Lion and Lamb in Blackley have in common?

7. Where in Salford are Bass-Charrington beers available through a beer engine?
8. Which Manchester pub had a cider only licence until recently?
9. How many Robinsons pubs are there in Salford?
10. What's missing? Pack Horse, Afterside; Royal Oak, Prestwich; ? ; Grey Horse, Jolly Angler, Manchester.

GREATER MANCHESTER BEER GUIDE.

Owing to lack of survey data only twenty pubs have been submitted for the entire Bolton area.

The best estimate received for printing is £975 for 5,000 and £1,400 for 10,000 inclusive of typesetting and making up. Retail prices of the guide will be as follows:
 Mail order 50p inc. postage
 Shops, pubs 45p (cost price to them 30p)

Other branches 40p. It is hoped that the guide will be launched at the White Gates in Hyde on February 16th.

The North Manchester Branch needs to sell approximately 1400 guides in order to break even. Bearing in mind that we sold only 100 copies of the national guide, a concentrated effort is required to achieve this target. Teams will be

needed to sell to pubs which are included in the guide in the following areas :

1. Central Manchester
2. North Manchester
3. Salford
4. Swinton and Worsley
5. Eccles and Irlam
6. Bolton.

Areas should be decided at the January meeting and copies should be available for distribution at the February meeting. As this is our first real effort at a campaign, it is to be hoped that as many members of the branch as possible will participate.

NATIONAL BEER GUIDE.

Because of problems of classification and identification cider has been dropped from the 1976 guide.

BRANCH MEETING.

The next branch meeting will be held on the 18th. February, 1976, in the Boathouse, Irlam.

'WHAT'S DOING' APPEAL!

PLEASE if anybody has any views to air or comments to make or news to communicate, contact the editor so that they can be published in 'What's Doing'.

the exclusion of the more 'ordinary' pubs in the area. If this is so, it is a pity, especially if a small, real ale pub has been left out because someone chose gratuitously to describe the King William at Glastonbury as 'an honest working man's pub' (as opposed to the dishonest one down the road?) or to lavish six lines of description on the George at Norton St. Philip. My point is that my beer will taste much the same if I know I am drinking it in the 'oldest continually licensed inn in the country' as if I don't, and what I'm really interested in is finding a pint of real ale. Surely the campaign suffers by the introduction of subjective and irrelevant comments, and will ultimately make itself laughable. Worse, it will lose friends and cease to influence people. The landlord who is included one year and not the next (a declining practice, officially frowned on and rightly so,) and the one who is never included will properly be distrustful of CAMRA. These considerations might only concern us for Somerset if we are ever there on holiday, but they will indeed be relevant in Greater Manchester when the local guide is published. I, for one, feel that the closer we move towards a comprehensive and objective guide

QUIZ ANSWERS.

1. Castle and Falcon.
2. The Grapes, Deansgate.
3. Ellor Street, Pendleton.
4. Lamb, Grapes.
5. The Vine, Collyhurst.
6. Both converted to theme pubs - Jules Verne and Wrecker.
7. Albert, Regent Road.
8. Fire Brigade, Pollard St. (Lees)
9. Three Legs of Man, Star, White Horse.
10. Dutton, Cheetham. (All Hydes pubs)

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the better.

The second question is: if it is true, what is CAMRA doing about it? It seems a pity that Somerset as well as Norfolk should be a real beer desert, especially when not far away at Trowbridge in Wiltshire and at Tiverton in Devon, Watneys and Whitbread still produce real ale. If you'll excuse the pun, pressure should be put on these brewing giants to make the real thing available at some of their pubs in the area.

Jem Callaghan
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