

30p

What's Doing

SEPTEMBER 2001



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine



GO FOR BURTON

The beer range at the Burton Arms on Swan Street in Manchester will be extended in September, as new licensees Claire and Howard get the cellar the way they want it. At present, Adnams Broadside is the sole real ale; eventually the range will be extended to six.

The Burton Arms has the feel of a busy city centre pub and as such will be a contrast to the other Northern Quarter pubs. It's well worth including on a N/4 crawl. Food is available 12-2 Mon-Sat and the Burton is open 12-11 Mon-Sat, 12-10.30 Sun. The pub has eleven letting rooms (B&B from £25. Tel. 0161 834 3455) and there are plans to build another eleven in 2002.



**THE ROSE AND CROWN
MANCHESTER OLD ROAD
BURY LANCS
BL9 OTR
TEL 0161 764 6461**

FOR REAL ALE AT ITS BEST!!

8 HAND PUMPS - EVER CHANGING INCLUDING
BLACK SHEEP PHOENIX RIDLEYS
CHARLES WELLS & MANY MORE

**FINE WINES, SOLD BY THE GLASS
(HOUSE WINES ONLY)
AND BY THE BOTTLE, INCLUDING**
J.P. CHENET - RED & WHITE
TURNSTONE - WHITE YARANDA- WHITE
LINDISFARNE FRUIT WINES
SOLD BY GLASS OR BOTTLE

**ALSO A FINE SELECTION OF AT LEAST 13
MALT WHISKYS, GINS ETC.**
INCLUDING
PLYMOUTH GORDONS BOMBAY SAPPHIRE

**MONDAY - FRIDAY COOKED FOOD IS SERVED
FROM 12 NOON - 3 PM
FREE CHIP BUTTIES FRIDAY TEATIME
SUNDAY LUNCH 12 NOON - 4 PM
MUFFINS ALWAYS AVAILABLE**

BRITISH INSTITUTE of INNKEEPING



M E M B E R

SETTING *professional* STANDARDS

Yo Ho Ho and a Bottle of Beer

Alan Gall

According to one Standish resident, the bleachworks on Chorley Road had a plaque in the entrance lobby proclaiming, 'On or near this spot the Mayflower was constructed'. It's rather hard to imagine that the ship which carried the Pilgrim Fathers to America in 1620 was nailed together by Wigan folk and floated down the River Douglas. What is certain, however, is that the old bleachworks is now home to the Mayflower Brewery, the first in Standish since J B Almond closed in 1968.

The new venture is run by Stewart Thompson and his wife Chris. Stewart is no stranger to the brewing world, having started his career as a quality assistant at Tetley Walker in Warrington over thirty years ago. Since then he has served as chief chemist at Higsons (Liverpool), quality manager at Boddingtons and second brewer/brewing manager at Hydes. He has also worked on short contracts for Jennings in Cumbria and Moorhouses in Burnley. The photo shows Stewart (right) accepting the Bronze Award for Hydes Bitter at the 1997 Great British Beer Festival.

Mayflower Brewery will be capable of producing up to five barrels a week. Two beers are currently under trial, Wigan Bier at 4.2% and Mayflower Best Bitter at 3.8%. A third brew at about 5%, the name as yet undecided, will probably follow shortly. The equipment comes from St Helens College, which runs courses in Brewing Processes and



Techniques, and supplies the student bar. The plant became available when the college decided to increase its brewing capacity - no doubt because of all those thirsty students.

Five varieties of hops are used: Styrian Goldings (a Fuggles variety grown in Slovenia), First Gold (a dwarf variety - bred to grow on a low trellis system) and the more traditional English hops - Fuggles, Goldings and Challenger. As well as crystal malt, the brewery uses Maris Otter malt which has become popular with some regional and micro-brewers since its higher cost is offset by the consistent and superior results obtained.



The new beers can be sampled at the Dog & Partridge, School Lane, Standish, and the Gathurst Station Inn, Gathurst Lane, Shevington, which is running a Beer Festival during 24th-26th August. Further outlets, as they become known, can be found on the company's website: www.mayflowerbrewery.co.uk

City News

The **Ape & Apple** of John Dalton Street has had loads of money spent on it. The obvious transformation is downstairs, where the once open drinking area has been divided up into alcoves, all with new furniture. There is even a no-smoking area. Upstairs has been recarpeted and upholstered, but otherwise is as it was. Food is much higher profile now - served 11.30-7 Monday to Saturday and 12-4 on a Sunday, when a three-course lunch costs £6.99.

Pub hours abolished

Permanent, unrestricted 24-hour drinking is now permitted - on the Isle of Man. While our government was stalling on the subject of licensing reform, the Manx authorities introduced their very surprising legislation. Under the ruling, any pub can change or extend its hours merely by posting details of the opening times outside the premises. The island has been described as 'a microcosm of middle class England' and as such will be studied closely by industry insiders to see if the mainland can learn anything.

Wolverhampton & Dudley scrapes through

Roger Hall

Pubmasters' bid for W&D failed, but only just. A successful bid would have meant the break up of the company and the breweries being put up for sale. As a buyer would have been difficult to find, it would almost inevitably have meant the closure of four real ale breweries.

For the moment at least, Banks's, Camerons, Mansfield and Marstons are safe. However, the bid signals the vulnerability of the group and some rationalisation will undoubtedly take place in an effort to safeguard W&D's independence. During the bid process, there was criticism of W&D's failure to integrate Marstons and Mansfield into its operations and of its reliance on real ale and the tied house system. Some reduction in the variety of ales produced seems on the cards, followed by the closure of at least two of the breweries.

It seems that real ale, and the tied house system, only works on a local basis. As soon as brewers try to become regional players by acquiring other brewers, they themselves become victims of national or international predators. This happened to Boddingtons, which bought Oldham and Higgs' breweries before breaking up and selling its pubs to Greenalls and its brewery to Whitbread. Greenalls was rapacious, acquiring brewers like Davenports, Simpkins, Wem and Shipstones, before moving out of brewing entirely and selling its tenanted estate to Nomura. W&D nearly went the same way, and might yet.

In brewing, small and local is still OK. Being medium-sized is fatal. Being big on the national stage is no longer any protection, as we've seen with Bass. So it's global or local, take your choice.



Letter

Fort Baxter

Sir - There has been a most woeful lapse in the standard of accuracy of your magazine. In his letter about Holts pubs being named after characters in Sergeant Bilko (*WD August*), Col Hall said that Ritzic was a member of Sergeant Bilko's platoon, Not so. Rupert Ritzic was the mess sergeant.

You don't get mistakes like that in *Opening Tripe*.

Nat Hiken

The Millennium Pub Trail

Part Seventeen: Riot-torn Oldham and over to Rochdale.

The Dray Twins investigate new GBG entries in the two towns...

Street violence in Oldham has resulted in damage to buildings, and public houses have suffered most. The new GBG entry here, the **Hawthorn Inn**, is off the B6194 on Roundthorn Road, a little way from the centre of town and behind the road which runs through Glodwick and Abbey Hills. It is a community local with OB signage and windows; some damage has been sustained to the front ones. The pub sells a decent pint of Cains and Tetleys Bitter, plus guest beers, and it has an opened out main lounge and separate games room.

A short walk via New Earth Street leads to the A669 and a bus ride took us to Greenfield. There are two entries in this pleasant setting, surrounded by moorland. First, on Chew Valley Road and at the junction with Ladhill Lane, can be found the **King William IV**, stone-built and instantly recognisable, with its red telephone box outside. This is a very popular pub with a good local trade and a formidable beer range, including draught Bass, Highgate Dark, Tetley Bitter, Worthington Best Bitter and guest beers.

Opposite the railway station on Shaw Hall Bank Road is the aptly named **Railway**. This pub has gained popularity with its good range of cask ales. There is John Smiths Bitter, Taylors Landlord and Theakstons Old Peculier, often supplemented by the likes of Morland



Old Speckled Hen. The pub has live music sessions on certain days of the week. It is an opened-out affair with three distinct areas: the main bar oversees spaces set aside for pool, table footy and functions, and a smaller side room contains servery, fireplace and television. The walls are covered with local history photos and memorabilia.

To end our ramblings, we crossed to the neighbouring borough of Rochdale, where the only new entrant is the **Reed Hotel**, which has recently had a change of licensee.

The pub is on Reed Hill, just off the main pedestrianised area of Yorkshire Street and close to the Toad Lane conservation area, where the Rochdale Pioneers founded the Co-op. The former CAMRA Vintage Pub and Bass house has been radically altered and extended, but the Phoenix Brewery windows remain. The lounge has a split-level non-smoking area and there is a pool room, a conservatory and a patio for outside drinking. Banks's Bitter is on handpump.



Open again

The **Flemish Weaver** in Salford, boarded up in June, reopened at the beginning of August. Over on Littleton Road, scaffolding surrounds the **Racecourse Hotel** and it may be reopening soon.

Still playing

During August there were rumours that the **Pied Piper**, a 1960s Robinsons pub at Little Hulton, was about to close. Not so. The brewery's area manager has confirmed that the pub has a temporary manager until a new tenant can be installed.

West Swinton Crawl

Pete Cash

Arguably the most westerly pub in Swinton is the **Morning Star** on the A6, though under the old town boundaries it was in Wardley. Anyway, both the Holts mild and bitter were in excellent form, and the mild was served from the handpump without a glance towards the smoothflow.

The next pub, the **Brook Tavern**, is right on the boundary (the brook) although on my 1960s Swinton & Pendlebury Town Plan it is shown as just in Wardley. It has had an on-off flirtation with real ale since those days; at present it purports to sell Tetley bitter and there have been recent reports of Coach House beers. However the pump clips were turned away from the customers, so we turned away and headed down Red Cat Lane, or Moorside Road as it is now known. The former name is from the nickname of the **Red Lion** on the corner; sadly this pub, once selling draught Bass, has been keg-only for years.

Halfway down Moorside Road we were made welcome in the **Moorside Social Club**, where more Holts (bitter only) was to be had. Just before the East Lancs Road is the **Moorside Farm**, a fairly recent Banks's pub built on the site of a listed farmhouse they demolished. Some of our party had arrived early and managed to get the last pint of Pedigree from two different pumps/lines. As our order of four pints of Banks's bitter was pulled (the mild clip was already face-about) the same thing happened. About one-and-a-half pints of slightly cloudy bitter was managed. The manager was informed, and to his credit he put on a new barrel of Pedigree and charged us only bitter prices. A latecomer (by one minute) was less lucky; he had to pay the full amount!

The **White Horse** was too far away to include (I think it does Boddies bitter and Theakston Cool) so we went along the East Lancs to the **New Ellesmere**. Unfortunately this had only Boddies bitter, so we left without ordering and crossed over to the **Staff of Life**, where we enjoyed Burtonwood bitter. Some form of pub quiz involving a Michael Miles 'Take Your Pick' style 'open the box' device was starting up, so we ended at Holts' **White Swan**. This is being redecorated, but only gradually, so is remaining open throughout. The wood panelling and fireplace in the large back room have been given a high gloss varnish, which shows the grain well but is a bit hard on the eye; perhaps it will dull with age and nicotine! Anyway, the mild and bitter were of the usual high standard.

Took off

The Airport Hotel at Barton, between Eccles and Irlam, has been demolished.

Letter

Sir - Ray Batty (*Letters, WD Aug*) takes CAMRA to task for its selection of GBG pubs. I'm not sure what he's complaining about. Is it just that the same pubs keep appearing or is it that the pubs in the Guide don't serve decent beer? Pubs are selected on the quality of the beer they serve. It shouldn't be surprising that the same pubs get it right year after year.

Having said that, I'm all for more surveyors, more nominations and more voters. Perhaps we could start with Mr Batty's own 25 best pubs in the area. Send in your own nominations and the debate can start.

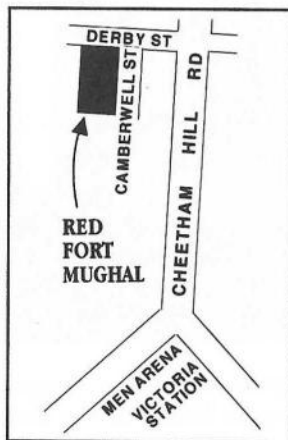
Charles Dray (deceased)

Contributors to this issue: Paul Warbrick, Paul Roberts, Roy Bullock, Stewart Revell, Pete Cash, Mark McConachie, Alan Gall, Roger Hall, Mike Goode

RED FORT MUGHAL Restaurant

Units 1&2 Camberwell St, off Derby St, Cheetham, Manchester
M8 8HW. Telephone: 0161 835 3596

- * *Authentic Mughal Indian cuisine*
- * *Close to City Centre* * *Licensed*
- * *Fully air conditioned*
- * *Fully wheelchair accessible*
- * *Secure car parking to rear*
- * *Parties, weddings, engagements*
can be catered for * *110 seats*
- * *Take away service*



Opening hours:

Mon-Fri: 11-3pm, 7-11pm

Sat: 7-11pm

Sun: 11-4pm, 7-11pm

Out in Bolton

Paul Warbrick

On a hazy July evening, a group of North Manchester CAMRA members headed for Bolton and first stop was the **Howcroft Inn** on Pool Street, near the junction of Topp Way and St Georges Road. The

pub has two wood-and-glass panelled snugs separated by the bar, a large concert-type room and a conservatory overlooking the bowling green.



Regular ales are Taylors Landlord, Tetley mild and bitter, an ale from Bank Top Brewery, plus a guest. We tasted the Gold Digger (Bank Top) and the 4.5% Old Dog from Weetwood.

From the Howcroft we made the short trip over to the **Farmers Arms** on Chorley Street, opposite the site of the Bolton Royal Infirmary - now a David Lloyd Sports Centre and a housing development.

The Farmers was a Magees beerhouse for many years and now serves Greenalls bitter and a Bank Top ale. The pub is split-level, there's a beer garden to the side and rock-type bands usually play there on Saturday evenings.

The final pub of the mini-crawl was the **Hen & Chickens** on Deansgate: the ales sampled were Hits the Spot and Triple Hop, seasonal ales from Hydes and Cains.

Beinlos abroad

Bavarian Bierfest with a difference

Even after many years of touring dozens (or even hundreds) of Bavarian festivals, I can still find one that surprises me. The Annafest in Forchheim takes place the last week in July. Unlike other festivals with one or more huge marquees, this one is to be found in the middle of the woods up the appropriately named Kellerberg, a couple of kilometres out of town.

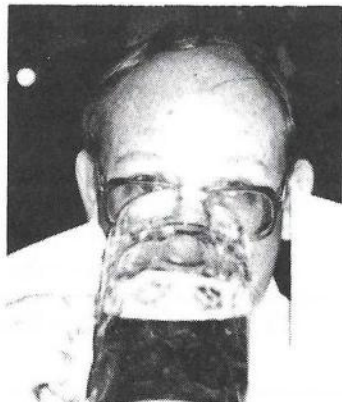
The hillside is alive with the usual festival fairground attractions - even a big wheel. There are well over a dozen 'Kellers' serving beer from half a dozen local breweries in the Fränkische Schweiz, from Forchheim and surrounding towns. The beer is served in stone litre pots and most of the Festbiers on offer tasted more akin to Doppelbock than the usual Festbiers. Unusually, the beer is available on self-service and one can pay a deposit on the *Maßkrug* and wander around the various attractions.

Several stages near the Kellers provide a range of music and there is a fantastic range of food at very reasonable prices. The town centre resembles a ghost town, even at weekend, and the local pubs tend to close as the local population and tens of thousands of others head for the Annafest. But beware, this is an open-air event and I would not like to be up there when it rains!

Forchheim lies south east of Bamberg (fifteen minutes by local train) and is half an hour away from Nürnberg. This region boasts dozens of breweries, has gorgeous scenery and beer at extremely reasonable prices. Two of the many other Bierfeste that overlap with the Annafest are the Bierprobewoche in Kulmbach and the Lohr Spessartfestwoche.

The former takes place in a marquee which covers 90% of the main town square. The other 10% is given over to outside drinking stalls. Beers from all of the three Kulmbach breweries are available in and outside the Bierhalle. Again, a deposit system allows one to wander around - although after a few hours of holding a *Maßkrug*, one wonders how the waitresses manage to carry a dozen or more!

I wrote about the Lohr Spessartfestwoche last year, and it was as enjoyable as ever this year, with the 5.6% Festbier costing DM8.60 a litre



(£1.50 a pint) and still tasting good, despite being brewed in Lohr and then shipped across Unterfranken for fermentation at Würzburger Hofbräu. Forget the Oktoberfest - these smaller festivals offer better beer at much lower prices - this year at the Oktoberfest a *Maß* will cost DM12.80.

Belgian Badge Brewery Buys Becks

Following on from last month's news, it has emerged that Interbrew of Belgium have paid DM3.5 billion for Becks. Interbrew already 'badge' brew Stella Artois and Hoegaarden around the world and no doubt they will eventually ruin Becks with the same process.

Only two weeks earlier, Interbrew bought a majority share of the famous Altbier brewery, Diebels.

At the moment the majority of Becks production is exported, as most Germans think Becks is bland and boring compared to the more tasty (and cheaper) smaller brands. It seems unlikely that will change under the new regime.

Scottish Courage had been tipped as a favourite to bid for Becks, but the end result will be the same for the discerning drinker.

THE CRESCENT

SALFORD

0161 736 5600

OPEN ALL DAY, EVERY DAY

10 cask ales always available

HYDES BITTER & JEKYLL'S GOLD

ROOSTERS SPECIAL - 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 and table football

Beer Garden

Real Ale and Bowling Greens

Pete Cash

We recently enjoyed an afternoon's crown green bowling at the Rose & Crown, a splendid Thwaites pub built on the side of a steep hill on Carr Street, not far from Ramsbottom Station on the East Lancs Railway. Because bowling greens need to be more or less level, building this green (in about 1848) must have involved moving a prodigious amount of earth. On the sides remote from the pub and the hill it is surrounded by a low wall, but if you peer over this you are greeted by an astonishing sheer drop. Another unusual feature is that the sides are not all square to each other; the one away from the hill is at an angle which results in an acute corner. An aerial photograph in the front lounge shows the trapezium shape quite clearly.

Regulars in the pub weren't sure exactly how old it is; they were certain that it was older than the green. A row of houses looks down on the green at the back, bearing the legend 'CARR TERRACE - MDCCCLXIII'. The front windows of the Rose & Crown have a deeply etched, stylized monogram, 'MBB', which we were told stood for 'Massey's Burnley Brewery'.

As if to confirm this, the Massey silver cup (for bowls, naturally) resides in a glass-fronted cupboard just behind the front entrance. Awarded since 1937, it shares the cupboard with numerous other



cups and trophies, and underneath is an antique cash register. On the walls around this area are group photos of Club members, going back to at least 1947. An old advert for St Bruno tobacco, with a bowling cartoon, complements the other memorabilia. A large notice board on the wall leading to the back door gives evidence of an active and thriving club (membership, currently £20 p.a.) with numerous fixtures. Non-club players pay a green fee of £1.50 per person. There is even an advert for a bowling supplier, the appropriately named JACK Slater of Crawshawbooth.

At least one other pub in Ramsbottom has a green - the Grants Arms, not very far away - and the Ramsbottom League has teams from about twenty venues in the surrounding area. All this got me thinking about how many pubs have lost their greens, and how very few remain in playing condition today. There is the famous Howcroft in Bolton, of course, but in my home town of Swinton and Pendlebury they have all disappeared. Robinsons' White Lion in Swinton used to have one (now a large car park at the back), as did Boddingtons' White Horse on Worsley Road. This was at the left hand side of the pub (now occupied by houses and called White Horse Gardens). Even in the early 1960s, when I was a regular here, it was in a sorry state; overgrown and weed-ridden. One of my drinking companions volunteered the manpower of the vault to restore it, but the old landlord, Fred Padgett, felt that the maintenance was beyond him, and in any case he reckoned not to make much profit out of bowlers - 'They spend most of the time playing bowls and not drinking more than half a dark mild.' (Boddies did two milds in those days.)

Roger Hall, in his book, 'The Pubs of Swinton and Pendlebury', gives more information. The green belonging to Pendlebury's Bowling Green was actually across the road at the Royal Oak. The Football on Swinton Hall Road was the only beerhouse to have one, and an 1874 report refers to one at the fully licensed Lord Nelson. Another casualty was the Red Lion on the A6, whilst the Robin Hood on the A666 was the home of Clifton Bowling Club. When I worked for Chloride Batteries, the Recreation Club, just the other side of the motorway from the Robin Hood, had two greens. The club itself was built on the site of the former Seven Stars, derelict by the end of WWII and demolished in 1955. Whether the greens belonged to the pub, Roger does not say.

Do other readers have a favourite bowling green pub, or reminiscences of lost greens? Finally, can anybody answer this, as our Rules of the Game are not clear: During our match at the Rose & Crown, one bowl with a lot of 'pace' left the green, struck the wooden laths at the back of the gutter and ended up back on the green. Is it a valid wood?

Holts in the free trade

The Berkeley Arms and the Lakeside Inn in Southport recently joined the growing number of free trade outlets supplied direct from the Derby Brewery. Stewart Revell provides the up-to-date list...

Albion, Ashton Old Rd, Higher Openshaw
Berkeley Arms, Queens Rd, Southport
Blue Bell, Shawheath, Stockport
Bowling Green, Manchester Rd, Leigh
Burlington Vaults, Oldham Rd, Ashton-u-Lyne

Chapel House, Astley St, Dukinfield
Clock Face, Old Hall St, Kearsley
Church Inn, Ford Lane, Pendleton
Colliers Arms, Sale La, Tyldesley
Duke of York, Bolton St, Chorley
Egerton Arms, Gore St, Salford
Flat Iron, Church St, Pendleton
Fox & Goose, Wigan La, Wigan
Half Moon, Elliott St, Tyldesley
Hare & Hounds, Shudehill, Manchester
Hargreaves Arms, Manchester Rd, Accrington

Head of Steam, Lime St, Liverpool
House Without a Name, Lea Gate, Harwood, Bolton
Junction Inn, Queens Rd, Hendham Vale, Manchester

Lakeside Inn, Promenade, Southport
Magnet, Wellington Rd North, Heaton Norris, Stockport

Masons Arms, Wigan Rd, Atherton
Millgate, Ashton Rd West, Failsworth
Nelson, Barlow Moor Rd, Didsbury
Oddfellows Arms, Oldham Rd, Middleton
Oddfellows, Tottington Rd, Bury
Old Crow, Bell Lane, Bury
Old Dog, Church St, Preston
Old Man & Scythe, Churchgate, Bolton
Old Original British Queen, Blackburn Rd, Bolton

Park, Newbridge La, Stockport
Pineapple, Rochdale Rd, Shaw
Platford, Stretford Rd, Hulme
Railway, Manchester Rd, Broadheath, Altrincham

Rat & Ratchet, Chapel Hill, Huddersfield
Rose & Crown, Bury Rd, Edgworth
Royal Oak, Castle St, Edgeley, Stockport
Royal Oak, Leigh Road, Boothstown

Seven Stars, Ashton Old Rd, Beswick
Silver Springs, Ashton Rd, Denton
Spotted Cow, Bell La, Bury
Spring Rock, Rochdale Rd, Upper Greetland, Halifax

Strawberry Duck, Crabtree La, Clayton
Sun, Oldham Rd, Failsworth
Tiger Moth, Swallow Drive, Irlam
Towler, Walmersley Rd, Bury
Travellers Rest, Newton Rd, Lowton
Volunteer, Radcliffe Rd, Darcy Lever
Waterloo, Broughton Rd, Chester
White Bear, Market St, Adlington
White House, Great Ancoats St, Manchester
Winston, Churchill Way, Salford

The clubs...

Astley & Tyldesley Miners' Institute, Meanley Rd, Astley
Atherton & Tyldesley Botanical Gardens, Tyldesley Rd, Atherton

Embassy Club, Rochdale Rd, Harpurhey
Higher Broughton Cricket Club, Northumberland St

Manchester Tennis & Racquet Club, Blackfriars Rd, Salford
Moorside Social Club, Moorside Rd, Swinton

Northern Royal British Legion Club, Royle Green Rd, Northenden

Prestwich Church Institute, Bury New Rd, Prestwich

Prestwich Liberal Club, Bury New Rd, Prestwich

Royal Arms Club, Liverpool Rd, Cadishead
Royal Naval Association, Greenbrow Rd, Wythenshawe

Sedgley Park RUFC, Park La, Whitefield
Swinton Catholic Club, Swinton

Village Club, Haigh Rd, Aspull
Wingates Labour Club, Chorley Rd, Westhoughton

Winston Conservative Club, Hall La, Wythenshawe

Lakeland retrospective

Daddy Bell

'There is more to the Lake District than walking,' the Jennings posters have assured us during the foot-and-mouth crisis and its consequent prohibitions of pedestrian movement along footpaths and bridleways. Well, there's Jennings itself, of course. The new 4.3% Crag Rat has proved very popular: though it would be a pity if it supplanted either the weaker Cumberland Ale or the stronger (4.8%) Cocker Hoop. Nor have I been persuaded (despite powerful advocacy from a knowledgeable source) that Crag Rat is a convincing re-realisation of what Boddingtons Bitter used to be like in the distant past. It's good in its own right, as are its stablemates that I've mentioned. Jennings bitter, on the other hand, which in many of their tied houses (especially the urban ones) is the only real ale available, is held by some Jennings fans to bear little resemblance to its former advertised wondrousness as 'the original distinctively darker bitter, malty, nutty and mellow.' Some might say that, temperature apart, there was little or nothing to choose between the cask version and its widely available Old Smoothy nitrokeg rival. All I can say is that I found it acceptable, if not outstanding, on every holiday encounter; but I would always go for one or more of Jennings' other beers, were they available.

Besides Jennings, there's Yates, for which I remain a passionate enthusiast. The **Screes** at Nether Wasdale (*below*) has the distinction of being the longest serving outlet for Yates Brewery - 15 years - and now displays a certificate to that effect. Drinking the Yates Bitter there on July 15th, I found it in that intermediate state of excellence between butterscotchiness and utter dryness; while six days later I found it simultaneously butterscotchy, malty, smoky and dry. Near



the end of the month, disaster struck: a busy weekend had exhausted supplies of Yates and Black Sheep, and left only Worthington Draught, which is apparently (though 5p dearer than the Yates) the favoured tipple of local farmfolk. I tried it, but I can't unrecommend it too strongly. I'm almost prepared to believe that it's some sort of malt liquor, but it might just as well be a very, very weak solution of Marmite. Reparation was duly made when Yates reappeared two days later: a pint awaited me on arrival, as my cycling approach had been recognised from afar. All the Screes needs to do to fill up my cup of happiness is to eliminate the unworthy Worthy and replace it with one or two more characterful ales, just as many pubs, in Cumbria and elsewhere, have ditched Theakston Cool Cask in favour of something less insipid. In any case, the sight of the 'open' sign on display outside the Screes is one of the most heartwarming moments in western civilisation.

There are, of course, other good beers in the Yates range. On July 25th I called at the **Swan Inn** at Westnewton, just a few hundred yards from the Yates brewery. At one time this pub was rarely, if ever, open at lunchtimes, but since being taken over a year ago by Suzanne and Alan Caldwell it is open every weekday except Monday from noon till 2pm, evening hours being 6 to 11, and is open all permitted hours on Sundays. It provides meals and accommodation, and now sells Yates beers. When I looked in, Summer Fever was available (alongside Jennings bitter), but my one (good) pint exhausted the cask and a new beer speedily followed - Yates No.3, a superb, rich reddish beer. Both were priced at £1.75, which seems to be the going rate in much of the local free trade. The Swan is definitely a pub to revisit, probably before going on to Allonby, where the **Ship Inn** (*below*) has been sold by Peter and Carole Yates to



Steve and Val Ward but still sells Yates beers, which are now brewed by Graeme and Caroline Baxter. The Yates Premium (5.2%) proved irresistibly good at the Ship on July 25th.

Last month I mentioned **Ye Olde Lion and Lamb** as having the best beer range in Gosforth. All its beers sell at £1.65, and the guest ale changes several times a week. During my stay, beers from Brakspears figured several times, but on August 1st a second guest was on - Triple fff Leggless. A plus point is that oversized lined glasses are used. Another pub worth trying is the **Brown Cow** on the A595 at Lane End, Waberthwaite. Food is a major attraction here, and the beer range could be more exciting - Theakston Best, Old Speckled Hen, and Ruddles County. I had a pint of the last: at 4.3% it's weaker than of yore, but I have to say that it was not bad at all.

The **Newfield Inn** at Seathwaite in the Duddon Valley is in new hands and has been well refurbished but retains its slate floor and large round table. No more Scotco beers - Coniston Bluebird and Jennings Crag Rat were on when we called, and the pub is now open all day every day, with food served from 12 till 9.

One pleasing aspect of Lakeland drinking is that beers from Boggart Hole Clough keep appearing. On July 7th, Log End (a 4% porter) was available (with authentic pumpclip) at the **Prince of Wales** at Foxfield, on handpump and in chilled (but still real) form; and on July 22nd the **Brook House Inn** at Boot had Dark Side on (at £2 a pint). But you don't need to leave Greater Manchester to drink Boggart beers: recent memorable offerings have been the 3.6% Punnet (mid-gold with a hint of strawberries) and the 4.7% Sun Dial, both in the **Bar Fringe** in Swan Street, which I am glad to have added to my regular city itinerary. Nor do you need to go up to Cumbria to drink some Cumbrian beers: on August 9th in the **Kings Arms**, Bloom Street, I was sweetly and charmingly served by Christine with two Derwent beers from Silloth, Teacher's Pet (4.3%) and Whitwell, Mark Pale Ale (4.4%). Both were good.

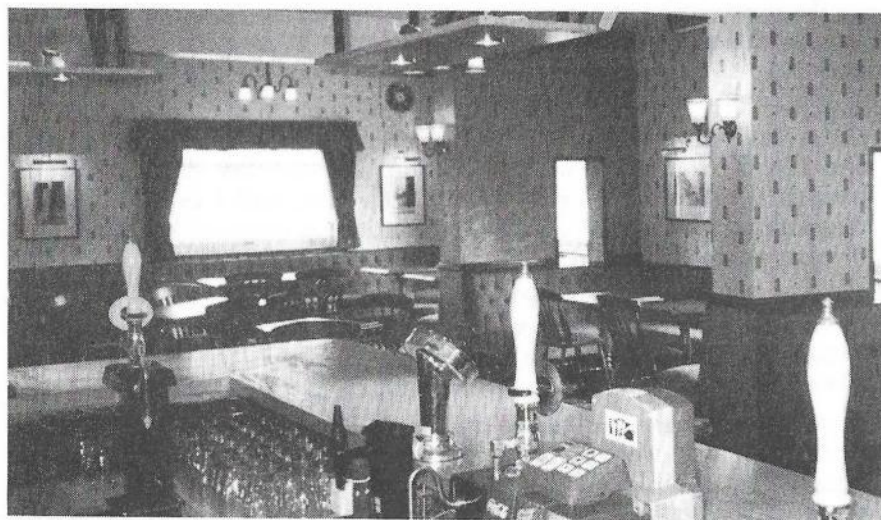
A final West Cumbrian mention - the decent pub in Maryport I alluded to last time is the **Life Boat Inn and Harbour Restaurant** at the bottom of Senhouse Street. I remember this a few years ago as a simple dockside boozer on its last legs, but now it has been transformed and can be strongly



recommended, especially for its seafood. The furniture is of chunky wood, the floor is slate, and there are three handpumps for real ale. Ignoring the Thwaites products, I plumped for Carlisle State Bitter from Derwent, which was an ideal accompaniment to an excellent fisherman's pie.

Back to Salford

There's just space and time to mention another transformation, at the **Welcome** on Robert Hall Street, Ordsall Park (as the J W Lees menu states). Though the vault remains suitably plain and simple, the Harold Riley Lounge (*below*) has been thoroughly restyled, in decoration and furnishings. It all seems much more light and spacious - no more bare brickwork, but cream and terracotta walls, with green and ginger carpeting and upholstery. The bar itself is much more open, with suspended blackboards overhead, and a kitchen has been installed to serve hot and cold food from 12 to 3 and 7 to 9.30, Monday to Saturday. Is this the shape of things to come in this part of inner-city Salford?



Those who don't enjoy any sort of lager, however real, need read no further. But for those who are willing to suspend their disbelief, the **Marble Brewery's** Stonham Lager really is worth trying. Chatting with its brewer, James Campbell, on 13th August, I found it very fruity indeed. It was interesting to compare it with another organic lager, Angel, from Broughton, which was available during the **Smithfield's** August festival, which featured beers from tried and trusted micros and small regionals across the country.

That's it - unless Mummy Bell submits, as she half-hinted she might, a piece on Ladies of the Lakes. Perhaps she'll send it to *What Ales?*

Bridlington Boozing

Off to the Yorkshire coast with Trotter on his hols...

There are several pubs around Bridlington harbour, including the **Hook & Parrot** on the Esplanade. The upper bar has panelled drinking booths and the lower (saloon) is used for entertainment. The ales were John Smiths and Courage Directors.

Nearby is the customary Wetherspoons, the **Prior John**. It's one of their purpose-built pubs, with a dome in the entrance and a huge print of Amy Johnson on the balcony. I sampled one of the guest ales, the 4.5% Guinnie Gold.

After a lovely cliff-top walk to nearby Sewerby, I came upon the **Ship Inn** beside Sewerby Hall and Gardens. The Ship is a multi-room pub with a large outdoor play area for children, past photos of the pub's soccer team on the walls and only one real ale, Banks's bitter. But it was welcome after the walk from Brid.

That evening I called into the **Kings Arms**, which stands out among the modern shops of King Street. A compact bar serves a small vault at the front and a corridor leads to the 'Victorian Lounge'. The Kings is a traditional pub selling Tetley bitter at £1.40 plus John Smiths cask.

The next day I took the train to Scarborough to visit the old castle. On arrival, I had a pint of Golden Choice from the Malton Brewery at the **Head of Steam** at the station. It was the only guest ale available, along with Tetleys at £1.25 a pint, and I must say I was disgruntled by the size of this HofS outlet - a compact bar and small drinking area tagged on to the front of the station.

Back in Bridlington, most of the real ale pubs with a bit of history are in the old town area. The **Old Ship** on St John Street was selling Batemans XXXB (£1.85) as a guest ale, alongside Worthingtons and Websters.

Around the corner and beside the Bayle Museum is the **Bull & Sun**. Four real ales were available - Jennings Cumberland Ale, John Smiths (yet again!), Theakston Cool Cask and Theakston Mild. I had the mild - it was the first time I'd seen mild on handpull while over here.

Heading back down Quay Street, I called in at the **New Crown**, a large two-room affair serving Theakstons Cool Cask, John Smiths, guest ale London Pride and, for cider lovers, Old Rosie Scrumpy.

On my last day I took the short trip to Driffield. First stop was the **Tiger Inn**, Market Place, a cosy local serving John Smiths. Further up the road one can enjoy the pleasures of a traditional English inn at the **Bell Hotel**, which was selling Bass and Daleside ales. Finally it was to the **Mariners Arms**, a community local on Eastgate South serving Burtonwood bitter and Thwaites Reward as the guest beer.

The Diggle Hotel

Countryman

This stone-built, three-storey free house is at Station Houses, Diggle, on the edge of Oldham Metropolitan Borough at Saddleworth; a delightful setting near the old station and the southern end of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal tunnel, close to Harrop Edge.

The Diggle is a Good Beer Guide perennial (past and present copies of the Guide are kept on a shelf by the side of the bar) with three comfortable rooms: the main bar, the Huddersfield Narrow Canal Room (a kind of snug with television) and a larger, spacious lounge bedecked with brass artefacts, ornaments, ceramic plates, country prints and photos. Unobtrusive piped music creates a relaxing atmosphere.

This family-run hostelry has a good food operation and meals range from bar snacks (jacket potatoes, hot roast beef sandwiches, steak Canadienne, etc) to more adventurous main courses of steaks, fish dishes and daily specials. All are available at lunchtimes and evenings, seven days a week. Handpulled real ales are Boddingtons Bitter, Taylors Golden Best and Landlord, plus a guest beer.

There is a car park at the front for motor-bound patrons (the pub is close to the A670 Standedge Road) and there are picnic tables in the grassy beer garden, which is illuminated with coloured fairy lights at night. The pub is open 12-3 and 5-11 Mondays to Fridays, 12-11 Saturdays and 12-3 and 5-10.30 Sundays and it makes for an ideal resting place after a walk along the canal.

Local bus services stop outside or nearby: 184 (Manchester via Oldham); 353, 355 (Ashton and Oldham); 356 (Greenfield to Oldham via Saddleworth) and 365 (Oldham to Huddersfield via Marsden).

The Diggle also offers reasonably priced bed and breakfast. For more information about the pub, telephone 01457 872741.



Rupert

I had been planning to catalogue the demise of Slumley's taverns since the definitive guide to the pubs of Grotley was produced. However, that will have to wait. A tale of intercenine (© Dermatrash, 1982) strife has come to my attention. There are those who would wish to kick such stories under the carpet, but sometimes washing dirty linen in public serves a purpose other than titillation. I'm sure I'll think of one soon.

It's never easy being a Brewery Liaison Officer. If you cosy up to the brewers in the hope of gaining information and being able to influence them, you're dismissed by your pals as an apologist. If you castigate the brewers in public, they bypass you and complain to HQ. It's been doubly hard for Mr Bolero.

Drabs are not the most communicative of amber nectar purveyors. Gradually crawling into the twentieth century, they fight shy of publicity and are somewhat detached from mainstream thought in most of their policies and processes. It was inevitable when they opened a new showcase hostelry in deepest Snoot Magna, that they'd get it wrong. Cask, smooth, handpumps, gas, pumpclips - a dog's

breakfast. So, *Opining Tripe* took them to task with Naughty Drabs headlines suggesting calumny rather than ineptitude. Long before this paper crusade hit the skips, Mr Bolero had been beavering away in a diplomatic way to resolve the problem. But no credit from Charlie Super, who likened Mr Bolero to a chocolate teapot, which is not very nice.

Scene Two. Enter el supremo, Ron Badloss at the behest of Mr Bolero. Visits the young Mr Drab at his ale emporium, grovels a bit and searches for the truth. Result - Mr Bolero exonerated, thick ear for Mr Super. Lesson to be learned:- The hard cop/soft cop routine works best when it's planned and undertaken as a co-operative venture. The pool ball in a sock and the soft soap can both work, but we need some co-ordination. What I suggest is that, in future, this organ continues to lick Drabs' bottom, while *Opining Tripe* kicks it and that reciprocally we demonise every action of the Boringsods whilst Charlie Super praises them.

Campaigning, like life, is not a zero sum game and, anyway, we're on the same side. Working together we can both win and get obdurate brewers to toe the line. As it is, we don't know whether the sock or the soap won the day.



Branch Diary

2002 National Winter Ales Festival Meeting

Sun 9th Sept 12.30pm, Crescent, Salford

North Manchester

www.camra.org.uk/nmanchester

Wed 5th Sept 8pm, Northern Quarter social: Beer House, Angel St

Wed 12th Sept Licensing Hours Attitude Survey: Start White Lion, Liverpool Road, 7pm. Old Monk, Lloyd Street, 8pm. Finish refurbished Ape & Apple, John Dalton Street, 9.30pm.

Wed 19th Sept 8pm, Branch Meeting: Crescent, Salford

Tues 25th Sept 6pm, What's Doing collation, Queens Arms, Honey St

Wed 26th Sept, Patricroft to Eccles Crawl. Ellesmere 7pm (White Lion if shut). Wellington 8pm. Lamb 9.30pm.

Wed 3 Oct, Stalybridge Shuffle. Buffet Bar, Q Bar & White House.

Trains 18.56 (Vic), 19.12 (Picc), 19.56 (Vic). Return 22.25 (Vic), 22.34 (Picc), 23.25 (Vic).

Contact: Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tue 4 Sept 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Eagle & Child, Higher Lane, Whitefield

Sat 15 Sept, Coach Social, The Eric Morecambe Memorial Trip.

Details from Branch Contact

Tue 25 Sept 8.30pm, Committee/WD Collation, Rose & Crown, Manchester Old Road, Bury

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

email: P.Alexander@Virgin.net

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.

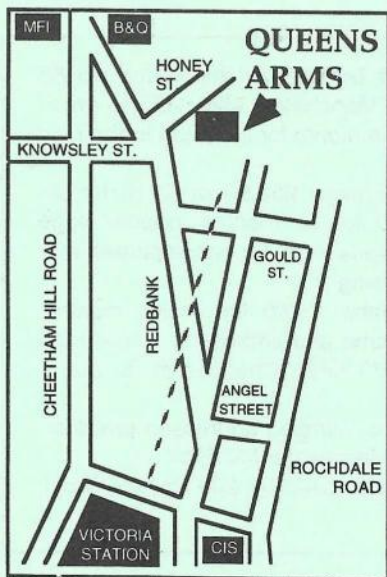
To join CAMRA send £14 to Membership, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW.

Dave and Sue welcome you to
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



Beer Garden

Families Welcome

Hot & Cold Food

*We're in the
Good Beer Guide
2001!*

Telephone:
0161 834 4239