

30p

What's Doing

JUNE 2003



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

ANOTHER ECCLES PUB GONE



Campaigners trying to save the **Church Inn** on Church Street, Eccles, by having it listed by English Heritage have failed. The pub, which was the birthplace of John Moores, founder of the Littlewoods football pools and shopping catalogue empire, was demolished in the middle of May.

Andy and Lynn welcome you to

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In the City

The Trafford & Hulme branch of CAMRA recently had a kind of 'beating the bounds' event in Manchester, checking out some of the city centre pubs along the branch's borders with the North Manchester and South Manchester branches. There were a few surprises along the way, as Neil Worthington explains...

The first surprise for many of us was **Sam's Chop House**, which is in a cellar on Back Pool Fold (up Chapel Walks, between Cross Street and Brown Street). It's under the same management as **Mr Thomas's Chop House** and not dissimilar in style, atmosphere and, indeed, price. Sam's, though, has its own house beer (Sam's Special Best Bitter, brewed by Coach House Brewery in Warrington), and other beers include Black Sheep Bitter and Taylors Landlord. Expect to pay £2.30 or more for a pint.

Close by on King Street, **All Bar One** is still on real ale, just about. The bar offers only Worthington Bitter now. **Corbieres** on Half Moon Street (between Cross Street and St Anns Square) now offers Bazens' Pacific.

Rothwells, the enormous former bank in Spring Gardens at the top of King Street, went on to real ale some time ago, but we didn't have long to appreciate the high ceilings and splendid decor. It has since closed to make way for a clothing store; fond memories remain of handpumped Banks's bitter and Marstons Pedigree.



The **Hogshead** on Deansgate is very much more of a bar these days, all chrome and light wood. It's still a real ale outlet, but the range has reduced to just two beers, usually from the national and bigger regionals. Beware! The Pedigree is smooth...

Another surprise was the **Crown** on Fountain Street, which went over to real ale recently. It sports three handpumps (not all in regular use) and Draught Bass was on offer at the time of our visit. Its namesake on Deansgate reopened as **Galvin's Irish Bar**, offering a decent pint of Lees bitter at a very reasonable price for this end of town, just £1.25.

There are, of course, absolutely no changes at the famously traditional **Britons Protection**. The pub hosts a number of events in the back rooms. Every Wednesday night there's the Comedy Balloon Club, which is free, and every first Tuesday of the month the Manchester Music Hall Association meets at 8.00pm, with non members welcome for £3. There's also a monthly Open Mike Poetry Night.

Notes from Pendlebury

Ian Kenny

Holts' GBG2003-listed **Lord Nelson** on Bolton Road, Pendlebury, has been redecorated. New toilets have been installed, but there have been no structural alterations. The vault now looks much less spartan. Nearby at the 'true' Coronation Street, Granada TV is filming a documentary to be shown in August and there are plans to record several scenes at the pub.

Just up the road at the **Windmill** (keg Sam Smiths), major internal alterations are planned to recreate a multi-roomed layout. It is to be hoped that cask Old Brewery bitter will return after an absence of fifteen years and so



improve the choice of real ale along the 'Top Road', which has suffered considerably. To compound matters, the **Albert** (aka Nadgers) was found to be closed on a recent Saturday night and the **Royal Oak** is said to have been experiencing odd opening hours. Both pubs are keg Bass outlets.

Halligans (ex-New Cross Inn) on Swinton Hall Road has been demolished and foundations for a new residential development are being dug.

Shut

The Waggon & Horses (ex-Tetley) on Manchester Road, Bolton, is closed and for sale as a 'redevelopment opportunity'. The other pub near the former Burnden Park football ground, the King William IV, shut a few years ago.

Holts Corner

Stewart Revell

Last month the **Railway** in Didsbury won the Joe Goodwin Award for the best restored local at the National Pub Design Awards, the annual competition sponsored by CAMRA, English Heritage and the Victorian Society.

The award is named after a former CAMRA chairman who was a champion of the traditional pub, and in particular the street corner local. Dr Steve Parissien of the judging panel said of the Railway: 'The new, enlarged plan features a variety of small but individually-defined spaces - a welcome contrast to the drinking barns beloved of pub owners who think more of reduced overheads than enhanced atmosphere.'

The current seasonal beer, **Edward's**, has proved very popular. It is a sweet-tasting brew (made with honey) and is the same price as bitter, 129p a pint. The next seasonal hasn't got a name yet. Any suggestions? Any sensible ones may be printed; any offensive ones will be forwarded to the Greater Grotley Guide.

The new landlady of the Ape & Apple has come from the Globe in Leigh and the new landlord at the Globe is from Allied Domecq. His last pub was the Spinning Jenny in Leigh.

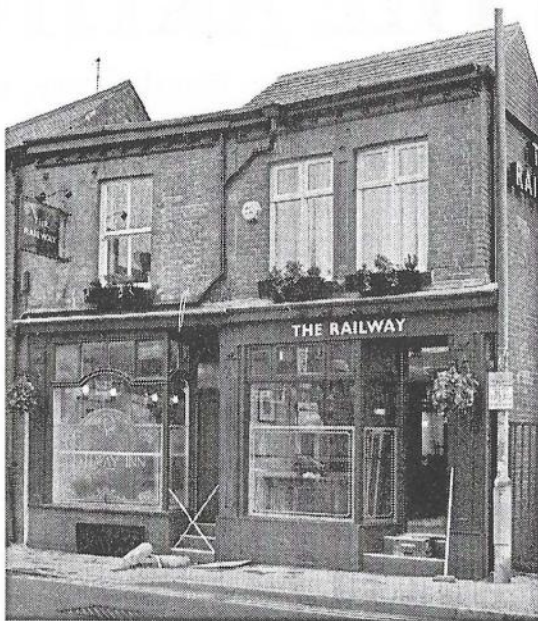
stewart@revell62.freemove.co.uk

Swinton

The rare Robinsons Dark Mild has replaced the customary Hatters version at the GBG2003-listed **White Lion** on Worsley Road, Swinton. Best Bitter and Snowdon remain the other staples.

Another Eccles loss?

The **Waggon & Horses** on Liverpool Road, Peel Green, is under threat of demolition. Apparently the company that runs the Netto chain of supermarkets has obtained planning permission to develop the site.



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Coach & Horses

Work is under way at the long closed Coach & Horses on London Road in the city centre. The roof has been repaired, metal shutters attached to the windows, what appears to be a ramp for the disabled built and the exterior painted. Unfortunately the alterations inside do not have the look of a pub.

Salford

There has been a planning application to convert the site of the King William IV on Springfield Lane, Salford, to residential use. This follows the closure of the nearby Black Friar and Braziers Arms (WD last month). So let's be grateful that the Eagle on Collier Street continues to thrive.

It appears that the Old Nelson on Chapel Street is going the way of other pubs on this stretch of road. Metal shutters cover all the downstairs windows and doors, while windows on the upper floors are smashed. Earlier reports of a short period of closure for refurbishment appear to have been rather optimistic. Demolition may now be at hand.



WHAT'S DOING contributions should be sent to the editor c/o 88 Ringley Road, Stoneclough, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 1ET, to arrive no later than first post on the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue.

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To join CAMRA send £16 to Membership, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW.

Tyldesley (leg two), Hindsford and Atherton

Dave White

The 33 bus took us to Tyldesley and we began where we left off a year ago. Ever the optimists, we checked out a number of places which we knew would surely be real ale free, and were: **TK's Club**, Lime Street (a redundant handpump remains), and **M.Ba.Go** and the **Wine Bar**, both Elliott Street. There was disappointment at the **Railway** on Wareing Street, however. We found a handpump for Tetley bitter, but were told that the pub had just stopped selling it.

We had more luck at the **Union**, Castle Street. The pub is bigger than it looks from the outside. The emphasis is on games, with a back room for table football and dominoes, and a pool room set back from the lounge. A small side room connects lounge and vault, and there is a beer garden. The Union was built on a hill, and the disabled may have trouble negotiating the steps. The Thwaites bitter was well-conditioned and enjoyable and, what with the table football, I could cheerfully have stayed here all night. We had to press on, however.

The **New Butchers** and the **Bongs Tavern**, both on the same street, were keg only (the Bongs advertises real ale, but doesn't sell it), as was the **RAOB Club** down the road, so we moved on to Hindsford and **Paddy's Bar**, set back on Tyldesley Road. This is a barn of a building, consisting of a lounge and games area (the latter had a snooker table). Saturday night is karaoke night, and a request for Thwaites bitter can be met with a sprint towards the smoothflow, so beware. The beer was on the cold side. Barm cakes are on sale, and children are not allowed into the pub after 6pm.

The **Glass Barrel**, Tyldesley Road, sold only keg beer, so we repaired to the **Botanical Gardens** club, down the way. Sadly, the handpumped Thwaites bitter was not available on this occasion, so we marched on to Atherton.

The **Bay Horse** (*right*) stands on the corner of Bolton Old Road and High Street, a bustling boozer with a small vault, large lounge and small side bar. Someone was throwing a party, so we sat in the vault. Points of interest include some 1970s prints and a rather lewd clock. Boddingtons bitter and Taylors Landlord were available. The latter was a little warm, but otherwise okay.



The **Concert Inn**, Bolton Road, didn't sell real ale, nor did the **Red Lion** on Church Street. The **Kings Head** at Market Place was closed and covered with scaffolding; a reliable source informed me that this pub could soon reopen as the **Last Orders**. We ended the crawl, therefore, in the **Atherton Arms** on Tyldesley Road. (The 33 bus back to Wigan stops just across from the pub.)

It was entertainments night in the lounge, so we quickly moved to the vault. Here we found pool and snooker tables, and a large screen TV which nobody seemed to be watching. There is also a connecting area between the two rooms with more tables and chairs. The pub, a former Labour Club, is tastefully upholstered, and Holts beers are on sale. Edwards would appear to be a slow seller, but the mild and bitter were in fine fettle. Pies were for purchase, though we didn't try them. A pleasant conclusion to the night.

Incidentally, the **George & Dragon**, Elliott Street, is one of seventeen pubs that J D Wetherspoon would like to sell. The pub was visited on the last Tyldesley survey (May 2002).

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Refits for Holts pubs

Neil Worthington

The Derby Brewery's travelling band of painters, decorators, upholsterers and bar fitters recently descended on the **Lord Nelson** in Urmston. From outside, this fine old pub now looks even more like a wedding cake (or a French chateau) - it is certainly one of the better buildings in this part of town. The interior has become several shades lighter and the furniture has been covered in something orange and reminiscent of a 1970s Intercity train.

The brewery has managed to find some new photographs and paintings featuring the eponymous seafaring hero and His Majesty's Ship Victory (but sadly nothing of Lady Hamilton). To pay for all this luxury, the beer has gone up by a penny a pint.

There is even talk of restoring one of the bowling greens that adorned the back of the pub until the 1960s - an unusual step, as most pub companies like to tarmac over the crown greens to accommodate their patrons' motor cars. Oh, and the Lord Nelson is also offering the current seasonal ale, Edward's.



The **Crown & Anchor** on Cateaton Street in Manchester has closed for complete refurbishment by a specialist pub fitting firm. It is not expected to reopen before the end of June, so this is clearly a very serious upgrade indeed. The brewery's website (yes, really!) talks of the Crown & Anchor being 'modernised to fit in with the area's new shopping district', so perhaps they're hoping for passing trade from the new Selfridges and the posh frock shops in the Triangle.

Attractions will include plasma screens, which sound like spare parts off the Starship Enterprise, and a larger 'exterior seating area'. It is likely that there will be a greater emphasis on food. Photographs will be available on the website once the refurbishment is complete.

Wigan and district

Dave White

The **Royal Oak**, Standishgate, Wigan, has featured in this column quite a lot lately, and I'm pleased to report that it has reopened ahead of schedule. Now for the bad news: the pub still sells only keg beer (in spite of what the sign outside would have you believe) and is not being run by Chris and June Doherty, contrary to expectation and, indeed, hope; future plans uncertain, in fact. Meanwhile, trade seems to be picking up at Chris and June's old pub, the **Bowling Green** on Wigan Lane, Swinley, but you can now expect to pay over £2 for a guest ale.

The **Bird i'th'Hand**, Gidlow Lane, Springfield, was described as 'the apotheosis of the two-roomed local' during its 1990s heyday in the Good Beer Guide. Well, not any more, it ain't, as a wall has been partly knocked through. Still, the beers - Tetley mild and bitter - are as good as ever, and you can now listen to two televisions at the same time.

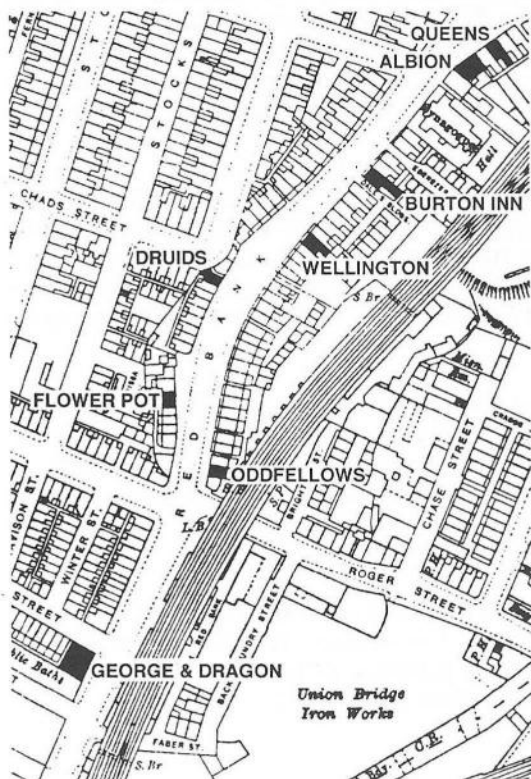
Things are looking up at the **Crawford Arms**, Red Rock Lane, Red Rock. Greenalls bitter has been replaced by two changing guest beers. Recent offerings have included Adnams bitter and Batemans XB, at £2 a pint. The pub is situated alongside an attractive stretch of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, and is now well worth a visit, although the disabled should note there are steps to negotiate.

Finally, two more pubs have closed and are boarded up. The **Bucks Head**, Warrington Road, Abram, has a 'lease to let' sign outside, so there's hope yet. Marsh Green is publess, at least for now, following the closure of the **Clubhouse** on Scot Lane.



The Red Bank Crawl

In *Roads Out* last month, Roger Hall highlighted the loss of pubs on the roads out of Manchester and mentioned the recent closure of the Mile House on North Street, the continuation of Red Bank towards Bury New Road.



The Queens Arms is now the only pub on this route, but in the dim and distant past the hike up the hill from the Crown & Cushion on Corporation Street to Honey Street was a lot more interesting.

The first pub on the left hand side was the **George & Dragon** (Holts), which was demolished in the 1980s after being shut for a long time before that. Part of the wall of the adjacent building, Red



Bank Baths, is still there, opposite the railway arch over Faber Street.

Next was the **Oddfellows**, on what is now waste land next to Roger Street. A block of offices covers the sites of the **Flower Pot** and the **Druids Arms**. The Druids was next to the flight of steps up to St Chads Street, occasionally used by the energetic to get to the Derby Brewery Arms.

The **Wellington** was on the site of the Rose Textiles building and the **Burton Inn** where Creamline Dairies have their premises. The next pub was the **Albion** at No.2 Honey Street and that building is still there. The **Queens Arms** originally occupied No.6 Honey Street and was extended into No.4 in the 1980s. Years ago, No.4 was a chip shop. And that's another amenity disappearing from the roads out of Manchester!

Chorlton cheer

Neil Worthington

Good news from Chorlton. The old Hardy's has reopened as **The Lloyd's Hotel** and sports a fine range of cask ales from new owners Lees. On a recent visit, the beers were Lees Bitter, GB Mild and a seasonal beer, 1828.



The new name is derived from the building's original name, which can still be seen in the stonework outside: Lloyd Platt's Hotel. It features prominently on menus, wine lists and the staff uniforms. As at the Rain Bar in Manchester, food and wine are just as important here as beer and one can order a wide variety of 'contemporary food' - snacks or full meals - at most times of day. Many wines are available by the glass as well as by the bottle. There is a big smoke-free area; in fact, the smoke-free bit seems larger than the smoking section.

Round the back of the bar is a 48-seat restaurant area with a view out over the bowling green, which seems to have been returfed and freshly spiked. Upstairs, 'The Board Room' is available for private parties. The whole building feels big, open, light and airy - a very welcome new showcase for fine ales in a modern setting.

Contributors to this issue: Dave Hallows, Roy Bullock, Mike Davey, John Joshua, Ian Kenny, Pete Cash, Phil Stout, Stewart Revell, Dave White, Neil Worthington, Roger Hall, Alan Gall, Paul Warbrick

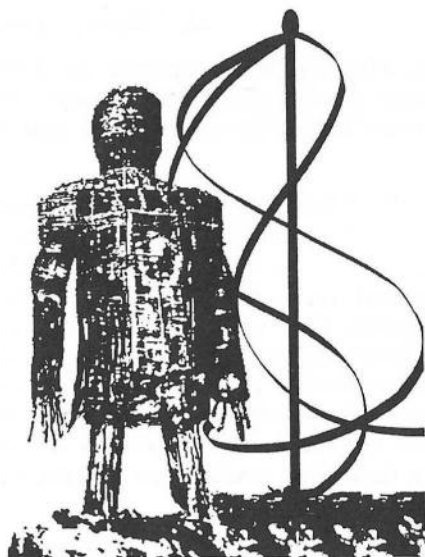
Queen of the May

Dave Hallows

An understanding of the earth and the seasons is important if you're a real ale drinker. After all, a good crop of barley and hops is crucial to beer-making. With this in mind, I attended the Pagan Beltane celebration at the Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham, on a Sunday evening.

Billed as the Wicker Man and Maypoles, this was where there is contact with earth, the seasons, renewal and fertility by sayings, songs and much merriment. The event was aided by real ale and mead, dancing around the maypole and burning the Wicker Man, called Edward. (The 1970s film, *The Wicker Man*, starred Edward Woodward.)

The burning is a means of casting away winter, thus further encouraging fertility. Sadly, there was nobody enacting the Britt Ekland role in the film, but it was spectacular all the same! Garlands of spring flowers, maidens laughing, children chastised and the May Queen announced as the Wicker Man burned.



On the beer front, there was Marlow's Hammerhead, Facer's Landslide, Ossett's Grand slam and the straw-coloured Silver Link, Hanby's Red Setter and Liberty Ale, which was golden and fruity, with a mellow hoppy edge. The regulars of Phoenix Bantam and Taylors Landlord completed the list.

Fertility restored, the garlanded May Queen left the pub laughing, with her beau following behind her. Fantastic!

Boggart Bulletin

The Boggart and his elves have gone strong. In May there was a red ale called **Half Cut** (5%) and around mid-June a pin of **Rocket Fuel** will arrive at the Bar Fringe on Swan Street in Manchester. For safety reasons, this 15% (yes, 15%) special will mainly be in bottle elsewhere!

Out of town, Boggart Hole Clough Brewery will be producing a 4.8% special (no name, as yet) for a beer festival at the White Horse in Hedgerley, Buckinghamshire, also in June.

TREASURE HUNT 2003

The Annual North Manchester CAMRA Independents' Day Treasure Hunt

will take place on

Saturday 5th July 2003

Starting from the Marble Arch, Manchester
(Corner of Rochdale Road and Gould Street)

If you fancy a fun day out with some good friends in
pubs selling excellent beers from INDEPENDENT
breweries, why not join in?

£4 entry fee per team
Up to five people per team

Registration will take place in the Marble Arch
between 12.00noon & 13.00 (pub doors open 11.30)

Teams to return around 20.00 (to be confirmed on the
day) when quiz sheets will be marked and winners
announced

Food (carnivorous and vegetarian) will be provided
and is included in the entry fee

The winners will have the dubious honour
of setting next year's treasure hunt

This year's event is organised by last year's
winners, the Castle Knights

Enquiries to Mark or Elizabeth
on 0161 789 5016



Independents' Day Treasure Hunt - A Survival Guide

Treasure Hunt time is approaching and two-time winners, the Raving Mad Bastards, have prepared the following guide to survival on the day...

Pick a good team name

When teams register, they are asked for a team name. Many don't think this through beforehand and make something up on the spot. That's what we did, and we made the mistake of winning. We are now stuck with our name, so let that be a lesson!

Plan the route

Before teams leave on the trek, they should have a good idea of the route they intend to take. It's annoying, and time-wasting, when you realise you have walked past one of the pubs and didn't go in. Take into account opening times, too. It's possible that some might not be open all afternoon.

It is also worth considering a 'visiting strategy' - going to the nearest pubs first and risking being stuck at the far end of town ten minutes before the deadline, or starting at the farthest point and working back towards home. There is no preferred method, although the first means you get a drink in quicker.

Put in the work first

We've seen teams enter a pub, sit down for a drink, and after a while look at the questions almost as an afterthought. This doesn't work. Get in, blitz the questions, and then there should be time for a quiet sit down before rushing off to the next pub.

Check everything

It's easy to fixate on old framed prints, but if something has writing on it (and sometimes even when it hasn't) an object could provide an answer. Jugs, signs, mirrors, book spines, jukeboxes and fireplaces can all be relevant, particularly if the setters are feeling devious. Check ceilings, dark corners and the small print on everything. Read the clues carefully, too. Sometimes they can be cryptic, but blindingly obvious with some lateral thinking.

Watch the time

Eight o'clock seems a long way off at the start, but it's surprising how fast it comes around. Set a specific time for leaving each pub (even if it's a nice pub). Don't worry if some of the questions haven't been answered; cut



your losses and move on. Allocate more time to the first pub or two, as it may take a while to get a feel for the questions. Which leads to...

Don't be easily discouraged

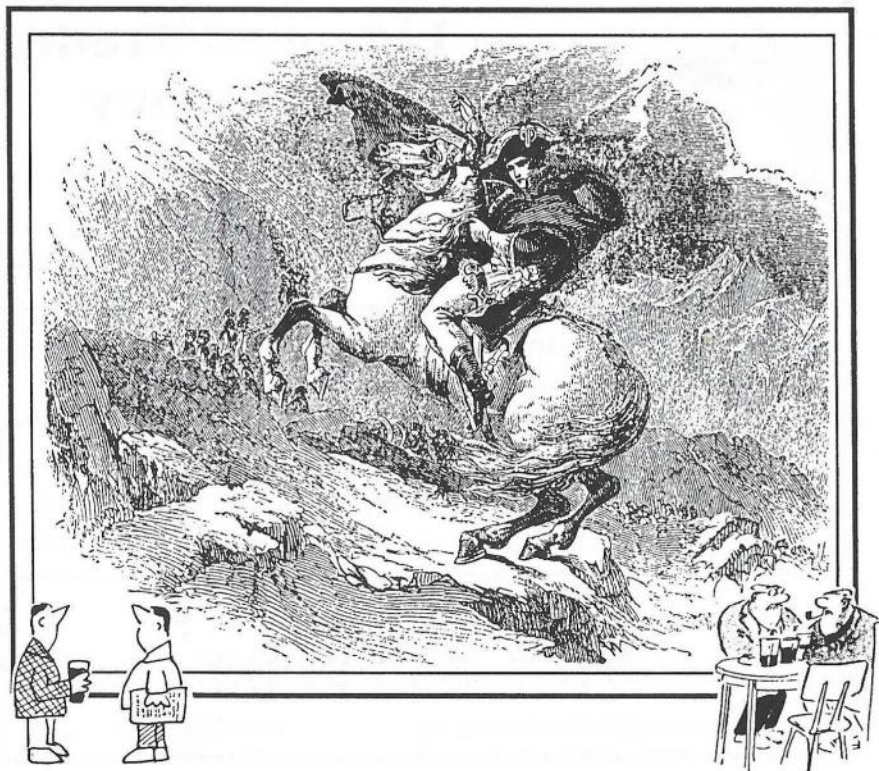
At the beginning there are a lot of questions to plough through and identifying the right questions for the right pub can be tricky. On our first Hunt we were in our third pub before we found a single answer. That did mean that we had to return to the first two pubs later in the day, but we managed to answer all the questions eventually.

Buy in rounds

This is a valuable time saver. When a team goes into a pub, one member should go to the bar. By the time the drinks are ready, it's possible that the others will already have solved a clue or two.

Don't get too drunk

This sounds obvious, but can't be stressed too much. Teams could be going in as many as ten pubs during the day and it's easy to get carried away. If a pub sells a brew you're not overly keen on, have a half, or maybe a soft drink, but buy something, as it's pretty rude going into someone's pub and just staring at the walls. Try to eat at some point during the day, too.



Talk to other people

The day is a social event, and not as competitive as one might think. Teams encounter other teams in the pubs, and an exchange of clues - 'We'll tell you which wall 16 is on, if you point us towards 18' - is always a possibility. The people behind the bars are a valuable source of information - they've been there all day and seen and heard other teams. A friendly word may buy a clue!

And watch out for the organisers. They can usually be seen around, looking smug, and are usually willing to help with pointers for teams that are really struggling.

Don't be embarrassed

Walking round a pub, looking at the minutiae, can feel a little embarrassing at first, but teams get over this pretty quickly. Be prepared to explain yourself as you examine the small print on the picture just above someone's head. Most customers tend to be understanding and even become interested in what's going on.

Don't be late back!

Lateness penalties will kill a team's score. And the food'll all be gone!



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The National Mild Day Crawl

Phil Stout

The annual Mild Day Crawl of Manchester and Salford got off to a good start with Ramsbottom Old Ground Mild at the **Queens Arms** on Red Bank. We then went down the hill, across the Irk and up to the **Marble Arch**. Here there were six milds in the cellar, three of which were available on the handpumps: Cains Dark, Mighty Oaks Oscar Wilde (rhyming slang) and Crouch Vale IPJ. The pump clip for the Crouch Vale said Rudgate Ruby, owing to the line being attached to the wrong cask.

A short walk brought us to the **Pot of Beer** and Robinsons Dark Hatters. We then called in the **Beer House**, having heard rumours of the imminent closure of the pub. We were delighted to find not only that the rumours were unfounded, but also an excellent Croptons Balmy Mild.

The next timing point on the list was the **Smithfield Hotel**, where in addition to the regular Greene King XX there was Phoenix Black Shadow. The only disappointment on the crawl was at the **Bar Fringe** - we had to give it a miss because there was no mild on. So it was to **Gullivers** and Lees GB Mild, then across Oldham Street to the **Castle** for Robinsons Hatters, or Dark Hatters for anyone who missed the Pot of Beer.

The **Grey Horse** (*below*) had Hydes Light Mild. Hydes produce three milds - Light, Traditional (which is slightly darker) and Dark Mild, also known as Welsh Mild. To complete the quartet of local family brewers, we moved on to the **Ape & Apple** to sample Holts Mild.

It was then across the Irwell and into Salford and the **Albert Vaults**, where the mild was Bazens' Black Pig, which was also on at our next stop, the **Kings Arms**. Finally, on to the **Crescent**, where we had Pictish Black Diamond and Phoenix Black Shadow. So, with thanks to Idy for putting on the sandwiches, we ended another enjoyable Mild Day Crawl, having visited twelve pubs and sampled seventeen milds and proved once again how complex mild ales can be.



Lees Brewery Visit

Dave Hallows

The Salford University Real Ale Society had its inaugural brewery visit to John Willie Lees in April. A dozen members turned out for the minibus at Castle Irwell Student Village and they were joined by a smattering of the CAMRA U-26 group.



Paul Wood took us around the brewery, now redecorated in white, and there were three beers to sample: bitter, mild and Brooklyn Best. All the beers went down very well and a buffet was also laid on. Afterwards, the Society's Chair, Andi Bickerstaffe, made a speech of thanks. My thanks go to head brewer Giles Dennis and the Society's Treasurer, Tim Jackson, for their help in organising the visit.

Wrenbury Beerfeasts

The Crewe & Shrewsbury Passengers' Association has arranged for the 11.33 Manchester Piccadilly to Cardiff express to stop at Wrenbury on Saturdays 5th and 12th July, coinciding with the Paradise and Bhurtpore beer festivals.

The Paradise Brewery Beers Festival is on 4th and 5th July, 11am to 11pm. There will be 30 or so beers available from other microbreweries, plus ciders. The brewery is a three-minute walk from the station.

The Bhurtpore Beer Festival starts on Tuesday 8th July. Opening times on the Saturday are 12 noon to 11pm. 90 beers will be on offer during the festival.

For the return to Manchester, an express will be stopping at Wrenbury at 17.05 on both Saturdays.

A bevy of beers at Bury FC

Dave Hallows

May 2nd-3rd saw the first real ale festival in Bury's football club and in the main hall of its social club. The event was in aid of the club's fighting fund, as the club is still keeping itself afloat after going into administration just over a year ago. A consortium of supporters have saved the club, or rather are saving the club, and now there may be light at the end of the tunnel.

I found 35 beers on, chosen and prepared by local brewer Brendan Leyden from Leyden's Brewery at the Lord Raglan, Nangreaves. Four beers from Leyden, including the special festival beer, Six Nil (6%), which celebrated Bury's 6-0 win in the FA Cup 100 years ago, headed the beer list. Others in the side were brews from Brysons, Boggart, Bushy (Isle of Man), Pictish, Three B's, Derwent, Hart, Ramsbottom, Barnsley and John Joule & Sons. Nearly every barrel was sponsored by a firm or organisation and the dispense was by gravity, apart from a barrel of Forever Bury from Leyden on handpump. There were two ciders and the festival food was excellent - served on real plates and with real knives and forks, too!

I tried the card from the tiny micro, Brysons from Heysham. Barrows Bitter was golden and bittery, with a fruit finish; Shifting Sands was golden and well balanced, and Shrimpers Stout had an oaty head and a wonderful chocolate roasted flavour that would satisfy any lover of stout. I found Bushy's Ruby 1874 Mild nice and malty, while the Joules Nun's Nectar was amber and fruity. Boggart's Dirk was a quaffable and bittery session beer, and another CAMRA member felt that Derwent's Carlisle State Bitter hit the spot.

The organisers hope that the festival will be held again next year, and on the evidence of the first night this year, I'd say that it was likely, as the place was packed by 8.30pm. The last day of the festival coincided with (almost) the last home game of the season. When *What's Doing* went to press, Bury was in the play-offs to Division 2. Come on Bury!

CAMRA Calendar

Delegates to CAMRA's Annual Conference in Exeter in April voted overwhelmingly in favour of a resolution calling on the National Executive Committee to copy the Women's Institute and produce a calendar featuring each of the NE, month by month, in a suitable artistic pose. There are three female members including new Chairman, Paula Waters, the rest are males of varying build. Seconding the proposal, former Chairman John Cryne said that the only problem would be deciding which candidate would require a handpump to preserve his modesty, and which a hard spile!

Rupert

Bunty looked, somehow, disappointed, not to say crestfallen. I think that he had been secretly hoping that Boris Pratt had got his way and banned people from saying nasty things about Nora and himself. Then Bunty could really have been insulting. It seems to me that if you prohibit something, it usually encourages people to do it all the more.

So I don't think that this relaxation will act as a carte blanche for Eddy to act like 'Gobshite' and allow his contributors to sound off at all and sundry. Eddy is, if nothing else, a gentleman and has, on occasions, encouraged the blue pencilling of my own excesses to prevent embarrassment. For this I thank him, although to be thought of as benign is less than satisfactory. Perhaps Eddy should publish What's Doing's own nude almanac - I don't think that would be benign.

In some ways, Eddy is less censorious than he might be. For years we have been treated to the gentle contributions of the wonderful Daddy Bell. Even when he was in Slumley, his pieces would frequently stray beyond the confines of Greater Grotley. And

What's Doing was the better for it. Now that he is firmly ensconced many miles away, it is quite natural that he should write about his adventures there.

It is invidious that a vitriolic missive should appear criticising Daddy Bell for not writing about Grotley. In the absence of riveting, right on news about our own hostelries, inns and taverns, such contributions are most welcome. As the Campaign stalwarts and illuminati age gracefully, they may tend to stay at home in front of the box or instead of exploring new beers and new venues, go to the same place each week with the same people. At the same time, roving adventurers record their quests in their private journals and tell nobody.



Bunty, Fiona, Alistair, Tish and the rest of the crowd have been guilty of stultifying habituation to the extent that they will only drink Drabs in a handful of hostelries. I have managed to persuade them to visit a new tavern each week, before retiring to Wedgies or Ratties to score the beers using scientific criteria and to report to WD on their experiences. Violence permitting, I hope to bring the first account next month and stave off further criticism of geographic irrelevance.

Branch Diary

CAMRA U-26 Events

Sat 7 Jun. Microbrewery Tap Minibus Crawl. All day. Bus £4. To book and for details ring Rick Yates on 0161 282 7447 or 0776 242 7552.

Fri 4 July, 8pm. SOS - 'Sit Outside Social'. Bar Fringe, Swan Street, Manchester City Centre.

davehallows2002@yahoo.co.uk

Wigan

Wed 25 Jun 8pm, Branch Meeting, Dog & Partridge, School La, Standish

Wed 16 July 8pm, Branch Meeting, Cross Keys, Golborne Road, Stubshaw Cross

Contact: John Barlow (01257) 478816 (w), 427595 (h)

email: john@misltd.co.uk

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tue 3 Jun 8.30pm, Branch AGM, Arthur Inn, Bolton Road, Bury

Sat 14 Jun, Coach Social to North Staffordshire. Details from Contact

Tue 24 Jun 8.30pm, Committee/What's Doing Collation, Old Cross, Eton Hill Road, Radcliffe

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

email: P.Alexander@Virgin.net

Trafford & Hulme www.camra.org.uk/trafford

Thurs 5 Jun 8pm, Branch Meeting, Old Market Tavern, Altrincham

Sat 14 Jun, Doncaster Beer Festival. Neil will be visiting his old branch and would like T&H members to join him for a day out. Trains leave Manchester hourly. Details of the festival are in What's Brewing.

Thur 19 Jun 8pm, Social Evening, Stretford Cricket Club, Lesley Road

Sat 28 Jun 1pm, Canal Walk, visiting some of the pubs in the far reaches of the branch area. Meet at the Railway, Heatley.

Contact: Dave Ward 0161 980 1170

North Manchester www.camra.org.uk/nmanchester

Wed 4 Jun, Swinton Crawl: Farmers Arms, 7.30. Cricketers Arms, White Lion, 8.30. Park Inn, Staff of Life, White Swan, 9.45.

Wed 11 Jun, Social: Ace of Diamonds (Saddleworth Beers), Oldham Road, Miles Platting, 8pm. Castle, Oldham Street, 9.30.

Wed 18 Jun 8pm: Branch Meeting, Crescent, Salford

Wed 25 Jun, Midsummer Crawl & Curry: Smithfield 7pm. Pot of Beer, Marble Arch, 8pm. Queens Arms 9pm. Saffron, Cheetham Hill Road (closes doors at 10pm)

Wed 2 July, Tyldesley and Atherton Crawl: Mort Arms, Tyldesley 7.30 pm. Return from Atherton by train at 10.34 or No.35 bus at 10.39.

Sat 5 July, Independents' Day Treasure Hunt: See advertisement

Contact Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

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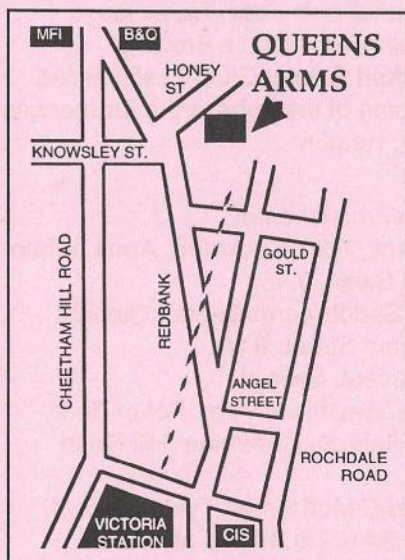
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