

30p

# What's Doing

AUGUST 2003



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

## SALFORD PLANS

A planning application has been made to demolish the Brewery Tavern on Adelphi Street, near Salford Royal Hospital, as was. It closed in the 1990s after being a Burtonwood pub for a few years. Before that it belonged to

Allied Breweries (Tetley) and long ago it was the Adelphi Street Brewery tap. The adjoining brewery closed at the beginning of the twentieth century.



A planning application has been made for another ex-pub not far away. Park Broom Homes of Spofforth, North Yorkshire, want to convert the former Dock & Pulpit, Encombe Place, into two apartments. This was originally the Borough Arms and a Burtonwood pub until the 1990s, when it was acquired by Jo and Andy Davies and became a real ale free house for a few years.

*Andy and Lynn welcome you to*

# **The Hare & Hounds**

400 Bolton Road West,  
Holcombe Brook, Ramsbottom,  
Bury, Lancs.  
BL0 9RY  
Tel 01706 822107

## **Quite Simply REAL ALE AT ITS BEST**

From brewers all over the country

## **Food**

Our FULL menu is served 7 days a week 12-9.00

## **If that's not enough**

We offer a no smoking area, Two real fires,  
Thurs & Sun Quizzes starting at 9.30pm,  
Beer Garden & Patio Area

## **Opening Times**

Open 12 noon - 11.00pm Monday - Saturday  
12 noon - 10.30pm Sunday



## In the City Part Two

*with Arthur Dent*

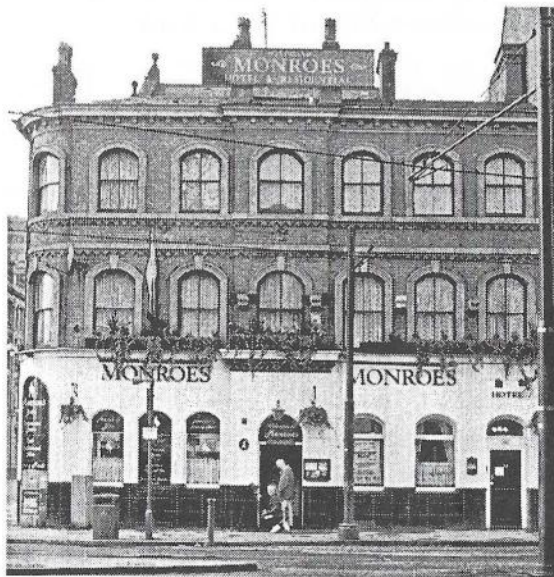
Right in the heart of Chinatown is the **Seven Oaks** on Nicholas Street. This is a corner pub on two floors, but on my visit only the ground floor bar was open. The beers available were Boddies and Caledonian Deuchars IPA. I tried the IPA, but it wasn't championship beer quality. Tetleys is usually also available.

I moved on to the **Grey Horse** on Portland Street, which sells three Hydes ales: bitter, mild and Jekyll's Gold. I tried the Gold, but it had a sour taste. My money was refunded and I went to the nearby **Circus Tavern**, a two-roomed Tetley house with a small bar. Here I sat in the large front room and enjoyed an excellent pint of bitter. The bowls of crisps and nuts on the tables and bar were a nice touch. Who needs theme bars when you've got a little gem like the Circus?

Next, across the road and into **Paddy's Goose** on Bloom Street, beside Chorlton Street coach station. The two real ales were Pedigree and Robinsons bitter, which I tried, and it was almost as good as in the brewery tap. It was fairly quiet for a Thursday evening and despite the location, Paddy's Goose is worth a visit.

Around the corner in 'the village' is the well established **Rembrandt Hotel** on Canal Street. Duncan Fox and Peter Beswick have been running the Rembrandt for sixteen years and the place has an ambience which they strive to keep. One of the regulars is now 96 and the hotel was the first place he came to after he was demobbed! The real ale is from John Willie Lees and there is now a Thai restaurant in the upstairs conservatory bar.

Moving on towards the edge of the city, **Monroes** on London Road is, as the name suggests, a shrine to the blonde bombshell Marilyn Monroe. Two real ales were available - Flowers IPA and Boddies.



Finally, it was down London Road to the **Bulls Head**, a friendly, traditional pub of character opposite the new Piccadilly Station entrance. The manager, Dave, used to be at the Britons Protection. A semi-circular bar serves Burtonwood bitter and Top Hat, plus two guest real ales and I tried the Bombardier.

## North Manchester Reloaded

*Some months ago Dave Hallows wrote a series of articles highlighting pubs in North Manchester. A number of hostelrys did not get a mention, so Dave redresses the balance...*

The **Parkview** (Burtonwood) on Heaton Park Road, Blackley, was built in the 1960s between a council and private estate. Visitors shouldn't be put off by the unsightly galvanised steel fence around the front beer garden. The fence is needed because there is a high wall down to street level and the garden houses a children's play area. Inside, the one long room harks back to the sixties and it is somewhat careworn - definitely in need of some investment. The pub had one real ale on - Burtonwood Bitter. It wasn't great, but I'll be visiting again, unlike...

The **Flying Horse** on Crab Lane, in the heart of Crab Village, had four handpumps but no real ale. Now this pub has had a lot spent on it, and it just does not bother with real ale. It had Greenalls bitter and another beer in the not too distant past, when it was very much a 'village pub'.

My visit to the **Berkshire** on Victoria Avenue East, a large 1930s pub, was of short duration but eventful. I asked a colleague if there was any real ale and he told me that it serves Wilsons! I raced to the Berkshire hot footed to rediscover an old Manchester brew. Was it the last Manchester outlet for Wilsons? No, the beer was Websters Green Label and there was a fault in the line. I had just said to the landlady, in an understanding manner, that it was a pity the beer wasn't on, when her Alsatian dog went for me. I froze, she told the dog off and I made my way out. It was sobering experience to feel an incisor brush my leg! Maybe the dog had a go because I didn't buy a drink.





The situation at the **Charlestown** (Lees) on Charlestown Road, Blackley, was a lot better. Both bitter and mild were on magnificent form. The mild was gorgeously malty and fruity, while the bitter had a nice edge to it. The pub used to be the ICI social club, so there is a massive lounge with a large stage. The vault is smaller, hospitable and handsome. The Charlestown is a well-run estate pub and a rare outlet for mild in the area. I could have stayed there all day, but I moved on to Miles Platting.

First, a quick call into the **Spanking Roger**, a rough and tough hostelry just off Oldham Road, as I had heard a rumour of Hydes beers. I spied one handpump advertising Morland's Old Speckled Hen. I boldly asked for this and felt people were looking at me. The bar staff just laughed, replied in the negative and offered me keg.

Moving swiftly on, I went into the **Bradford Inn** (Holts) on Bradford Road. To my mind this is one of the most underestimated pubs Holts have got. The service was spot-on, polite, helpful and pleasant; there was a good atmosphere and the pub was busy. Also, the mild sells and there is no smooth mild! The Bradford is a two-roomed 1980s pub and when it first opened had beer on electric dispense. Now both mild and bitter are on handpump. The mild was semi-chilled and refreshing. The bitter was colder, making it hazy, but it still had a bitter taste.

Finally, I visited a recent Holts acquisition, the **Broadway** on Broadway in New Moston. This former Whitbread house has been changed beyond recognition and for the better. The one long room has been split into a stylish front lounge and restaurant, and a vault. It is modern, even retro in style, with a wooden floor and carpeting around some of the saloon seating. Straw blinds adorn the original windows. On the beer front it was bitter, mild and Edwards (the honey beer). The mild was too cold, spoiling what would have been a liquorice taste. The bitter was better. The pub is half way between a traditional Holts house, appealing to the older clientele, and the up-market with posh food.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Bolton Briefly**

*Frank Booth*

The **Hen & Chickens** on Deansgate has achieved the Cask Marque award for excellence in serving real ale.

The **Goose on Deansgate** has flown away. A recent revamp resulted in a sky blue exterior, plasma screens inside and a change of name to the **Bar BL1**. The handpulled beer has gone and the bar now has a late licence at weekends and 'music', like all the others in the area.

The **Waggon & Horses** on Manchester Road has been pulled down. This leaves the **Churchill**, next to the Orlando Street bridge, as the only public house in the Burnden area.

## Wigan and district

*Dave White*

The **Wigan Beer Festival**, a welcome fixture on the North West social scene for the past fifteen years, has narrowly escaped the axe. Leisure bosses at Trencherfield Mill were unhappy about incidents of antisocial behaviour at the beer festival last March, including drug addicts shooting up in the gents' toilets and punters urinating in the nearby canal - often in broad daylight - after leaving the hall. However, talks between Wigan CAMRA officials and members of the Leisure and Culture Trust to remedy the problems have taken place and, I understand, an agreement has been reached.

Good news now, and the **Royal Oak**, Standishgate, Wigan, reopened on Thursday 17th July. Mine hosts Chris and June Doherty secured a



twenty-one year lease, just as some of us feared it might never happen. The pub may start serving food soon, and it is hoped that Stuart Thompson of Mayflower Brewery will set up shop round the back. This section of the A49 leading into the town centre is a bit of a beer desert, and it will be good to see the Royal Oak returning to its former glory.

The **Bucks Head** at Abram reopened recently. The pub has

been knocked through, which may upset traditionalists, but the emphasis on scrubbed pine gives the place a light, airy feel. There is a patio and beer garden overlooking the bowling green. Real ales on sale are Boddingtons bitter and Black Sheep bitter, but the only handpumps are in the back bar. Further down Warrington Road, cask conditioned beer has returned to the **Dover Lock**, though when I called in, the Worthington bitter wasn't on, and the Old Speckled Hen was very warm. If you're on this stretch of the Leeds & Liverpool, you could do a lot worse than the **Nevison Inn** on Plank Lane, a five minute walk from the traffic lights.

Finally, there is no truth at all in the rumour that the **Beer Engine** at Poolstock has stopped selling real ale. Recent guests have included Fullers London Pride and Skinners Cornish Knocker and the beers tasted fine. 'Beer Engine Bitter' is Wadworth 6X, in case you didn't know.

## Wythenshawe Wander

*In July Mark Herdman was part of a small expeditionary group from Trafford & Hulme CAMRA which visited one of the more obscure parts of the branch area, to the west of the A5103/M56...*

The meeting point was Lees' **Jolly Butcher** (below) on Petersfield Drive, Baguley. The pub lies to the south of the A560 Altrincham Road, between Baguley Tesco and the Brooklands/Baguley roundabout. It has a well appointed lounge, and a large stage and dance floor, suggesting that entertainment is a key element. The bitter was on good form and the mild was exceptionally good, better even than that I had sampled at Lees Brewery a few days earlier on the Rochdale, Oldham & Bury branch's annual Independent Brewers event. Throwing caution to the wind, despite the early hour, second helpings of the mild were called for before we headed off for our second stop.

Crossing to the north side of the A560, we called in at the **Wendover**, on the junction of Ferndown Road and Wendover Road, Brooklands. A pub which, I'm told, has had its share of troubles in the past, now seems like a comfortable and welcoming local, having benefited from internal and external improvements and sympathetic management. It is laid out in an open L-shape, while maintaining recognisable lounge and bar/games areas. Our visit coincided with a quiz night and there was a good sized crowd in attendance. We sampled the Banks's bitter before moving on.

Retracing our steps, we turned on to Wythenshawe Road (B5167). Three of the pubs on our survey dated from the 1950s-1970s, reflecting the modern nature of much of Wythenshawe, but our next stop represented the rural past. The area around the Wythenshawe





Road/Moor Road junction contains the widest collection of older buildings outside Northenden, and the **Gardeners Arms** (*below*) is one of them. The pub's other claim to fame is that it is one of the longer-standing Robinsons houses, having been acquired by the brewery in 1882.

Old it may be, but quaint it ain't! There is a functional, well presented open lounge, but no particular play is made of the age or potential character of the pub. Beerwise, the Best Bitter was acceptable, but opinions were varied on the Hatters Mild.

The final stop was just round the corner on Moorcroft Road. The **Park** is another Lees house and another modernish estate pub. We couldn't sample the mild as the barrel was settling, so we all partook of the palatable bitter while accommodated in a very large, and very empty, lounge.

Contrary to some people's expectations, we scored four out of four in terms of finding real ale. It has been a long time since CAMRA has bothered this part of Wythenshawe and, indeed, vice versa. The Jolly Butcher, Gardeners and Park all featured in the early 1980s Greater Manchester Good Beer Guide (succinctly described as 'brand new estate pub', 'busy, friendly local' and 'modern estate pub' respectively) and have rarely, if ever, featured in CAMRA publications since.

Interestingly, the beer ranges appear not to have varied over the years, and there were no signs of guests or seasonals, hinting at solid local pubs serving a consistent local trade. Here's hoping that the success of this survey will encourage a larger branch group to survey the remaining Wythenshawe pubs in the not too distant future.





## Up North and Down South

Bob Berwick

As a northerner who spent twenty-one years living and drinking 'down south', I have been amused by the comments in *What's Doing* regarding 'Southern Ale'.

I started my real ale drinking in the 1960s, mainly in the Ostrich, a fine Holts pub in Prestwich which was run for years by Tom and Winnie. I also used to pop into the Turf just up the road, which was owned by Duttons, a Blackburn brewery. As well as those two brews, I was no stranger to the likes of Chesters, Greenalls, Hydes, Oldham Brewery, Wilsons, etc.

In 1968 I moved down to Southampton and I must admit I had given no thought to what real ales would be on the menu. In fact, even though I had been drinking it for years, I don't think the term 'real ale' would have meant anything to me. However, the late 1960s was a bad time for pubs in the Southampton area, as the smaller breweries such as Brickwoods of Portsmouth and Strong's of Romsey were being taken over by the likes of Watneys and Whitbread.

The main ales in most pubs were Watneys Red Barrel and Starlight or Whitbread Gauntlet and Tankard. No thanks! So my first few years down south were spent drinking lager. In time I discovered Gales pubs, which led me to Hall & Woodhouse Dorset ale, Wadworths, Fullers, Huntsmans beers, etc. Eventually, when the Watney and Whitbread pubs were being given the elbow by concerned drinkers, the real ale pubs picked up their trade. Indeed, when I



returned to the North in 1989 it was harder to get a bad pint than a good pint in most Southampton pubs.

Alas, on my return to the Manchester area, what did I find? A bloody desert! Now, unlike George Bowling in George Orwell's book 'Coming up for Air', I did not expect to return to a place and find it unchanged after twenty or so years, but I did expect to find some decent beer.

I am now living near Leigh, which is running out of real beer pubs so fast that I have nearly given up on the place. Whenever I can, I make the long bus journey into Manchester and head for the Northern Quarter, where at least you do have a choice of ales. I have always liked the pubs in that area, so I was not surprised when I was told by my cousin, who is tracing the family tree, that my grandad not only lived and worked in the Red Bank area, but he was also a very frequent visitor to the local pubs.

The Greater Manchester area has a declining number of pubs and we have seen the demise of too many decent beers. There is an old saying, you never know what you have until it's gone, and that is very true of the real ale scene in Manchester over the last fifteen years.

I find that a lot of people from the North who knock beers from the South have only visited the South for sports events at places like Wembley or Cardiff and don't therefore have the time to explore the area. They just dive into the nearest big pub with Sky Sports on television to meet their fellow supporters. These tend not to be real ale pubs. Maybe a bit of time going over the Good Beer Guide and finding a good local pub would help change their minds.

Another point about Southern beers is the fact that whilst the average price of a pint is less up North, it can still be cheaper down South. In September 2002 I paid £1.80 for a pint of Wadworth 6X in the Osborne Hotel in Shirley, Southampton. Just a week later I paid £2 for a pint of the same in a pub in Lowton St Luke's, near Leigh.

A few weeks ago I was on a pub camp site at a place called Linwood in the New Forest. The real ales included two of my all-time favourites, Ringwood Best Bitter and Wadworth 6X (the latter doesn't travel north very well). There was also a microbrewery on site. A week or two before that I was camping behind a pub in Fenny Bentley in Derbyshire and drinking some fine beers from the brewery next to the pub. I was also drinking some good northern guest beers. There was nothing to chose between the two weekends, but the prices in Linwood were about 20p a pint more.

I reckon it's a question of swings and roundabouts. Beer is cheaper in the North, but finding a good real ale pub is getting harder. Down South, finding a real ale pub is easy, but in the main it costs more. So you pays yer money, takes yer choice and enjoys it wherever you might be!



## Treasure Hunt 2003

*The Castle Knights, last year's winners, this year's organisers and next year's competitors, provide an overview...*

The annual Treasure Hunt took place on a nice sunny Saturday at the beginning of July. Sixteen teams turned up at the Marble Arch - sixty people altogether - to collect their question papers and set off for a good mooch round the city centre.

This year's theme involved identifying eight pubs by their 'grid references.' Not your actual Ordnance Survey references, but pictures of the grids outside each pub. This appeared to be a popular idea with a large group of real ale drinkers now entitled to claim their 'I-Spy Grid' certificates.

Unfortunately, not as popular were the clues they had to solve once they got inside the pubs. Six of the twenty-four questions were not answered by any team at all. This resulted in a lot of entrants thinking that the organisers were an evil and sadistic bunch. They could well be right.



At least, everyone was up against the same difficulties. The challenge did not deter anyone, and all the teams made it back in the evening to the Marble Arch for food, real ale and presentations to winners and losers. Despite the tough questions, everyone we spoke to had a good time and all were quite 'relaxed' by the end of the evening. The worthy winners were The Raving Mad Bastards (*left*), but as they have set the quiz twice before, they relinquished the

task of setting next year's Treasure Hunt. Another team, Two Dead Goldfish, volunteered to step into the breach, and their gesture was well received.

We would like to thank all the teams who took part for their endeavours and good spirits (especially those who had travelled some distance). Thank you to all the pubs which allowed a bunch of 'grid spotting anoraks' to blunder around, and particularly the Peveril of the Peak, which opened all afternoon especially for the event. Special thanks to Paul (and his staff) at the Marble Arch, who helped the event to be a success, despite having been in charge of the pub for only a week. Here's to next year's event and its continuing success.

**ARE YOU SICK AND TIRED OF  
SEEING THE SAME OLD  
ADVERTS & OFFERING THE  
SAME CHOICE OF REAL ALES?**

**WHY NOT TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT! WE OFFER  
EVER CHANGING REAL ALES ON 9 HANDPUMPS**

**IT'S LIKE A BEER FESTIVAL EVERY DAY  
OF THE WEEK!**

**FROM 13th DECEMBER WE HAVE OFFERED 377  
DIFFERENT BEERS FROM AROUND THE UK AND  
SWEDEN, PLUS 2 REAL FRENCH CIDERS AND 8  
FROM THE UK**

**ALSO AVAILABLE: AN AVERAGE OF 40 BOTTLES  
FROM AROUND THE WORLD**

**OPENING HOURS**

**MON-SAT 12-11pm, SUN 12-10.30pm**

**FOOD AVAILABLE:**

**MON-THURS 12-3pm, FRIDAYS 12-5pm,  
SAT & SUN 10-5pm**

**ONLY MINUTES FROM THE METROLINK  
WHY NOT GIVE US A TRY**

**THE TRACKSIDE  
BURY'S ANSWER FOR REAL ALE.  
EAST LANCs RAILWAY, BOLTON  
STREET STATION, BOLTON STREET,  
BURY, BL9 0EY**

**TEL: (0161) 764 6461**



## Tyldesley and Atherton

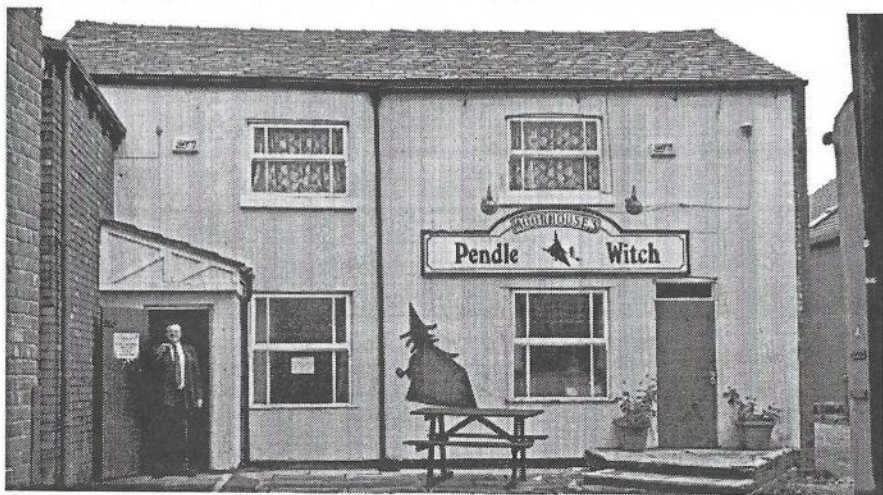
*At the beginning of July members of the North Manchester branch of CAMRA went on one of their regular summer excursions. Ian Kenny was with them...*

Meeting at the **Mort Arms** on Elliot Street, Tyldesley, we sampled the Holts mild and bitter (both excellent), and after a discussion it soon became apparent that the town did not offer a particularly good pub crawl. One member who had arrived early had had a quick look around all the pubs that were open. Wetherspoons only had Boddies bitter, Taylors Landlord, Shepherd Neame Spitfire and Titanic White Star, and he thought it was one of the most depressing Wetherspoons pubs he had ever encountered. The GBG 2003-listed **Half Moon** only had Holts bitter and the rest were either shut or keg only.

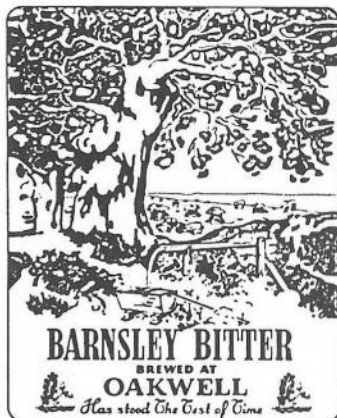
So we hopped on the 33 bus and soon arrived in Atherton. Eschewing the delights of Holts' **Atherton Arms**, which we fully intended making our final port of call, we alighted at the **Wheatsheaf** on Market Street. Some of the party feared that only the bitter would be available in this John Willie Lees pub, but GB mild was on as well and very good it was too. Visitors to the Wheatsheaf are advised to take a very close look at the door hinge to the front room. It is the only one of its kind that I have ever seen.

Crossing the road, we walked down Warburton Place to the **Pendle Witch** to find Moorhouses Black Cat, Premier, Pride of Pendle, Pendle Witch and Jennings Cumberland Ale on the bar. Pride of Pendle was a touch on the warm side but the Black Cat was deemed excellent.

As we headed along Market Street towards the Letters Inn, someone



noticed two handpumps on the bar of the **Punch Bowl**, so in we went. To our surprise we found that this former Greenalls pub was now owned by the Oakwell Brewery from Barnsley and their Barnsley Bitter and Old Tom mild (both 3.8%) were available at £1.40 and £1.36 respectively. The place was in the process of being redecorated: the darts and pool rooms had been completed and work had yet to begin on the main lounge and bar area. The refurbishment is sympathetic and is a good example of what a small brewery can do, in contrast to the attitude of larger pub owning groups towards their 'improvements'.



We finally made it to the **Letters** on the corner of Leigh Road, where the only real ale available was Lees bitter. The diversion to the Punch Bowl meant that the original plan to catch the last bus home from the Atherton Arms was not to be.

# THE CRESCENT

**SALFORD**

**0161 736 5600**

**OPEN ALL DAY, EVERY DAY**

10 cask ales always available

**HYDES BITTER - MOORHOUSE PENDLE WITCH  
ROOSTERS SPECIAL - PHOENIX THIRSTY MOON**

*Plus 8 guests including a Mild*

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

**Regularly Changing BELGIAN Guest Beer**

**FOOTBALL on SKY TV**

Food served every lunchtime from 11.30am (12.00 on Sundays)

Free Chip Barms Mondays 5-6pm

Wed 5-8pm Choice of Six Curries (Veg & Meat) + Rice - £3.20

**[www.beer-festival.com/crescent](http://www.beer-festival.com/crescent)**

Function/Party Room available for free hire

Buffets or hot meals provided on request

**TV and Games Room Open for darts and table football**



## Oldham briefly

The **White Swan** (Robinsons) on Huddersfield Road was boarded up and for sale last month. The **Royal** on Horsedge Street, the **Oldham Hotel**, Yorkshire Street, and the **Welcome** at Ault remain closed. The newish cafe bars haven't been immune to the malaise. **Kelly's** on the corner of Waterloo Street was renamed **Vogue** and then shuttered up.



On the positive side, **Whittle's** (formerly Jackson's and before that the Serjeant at Arms pub) on King Street continues to sell a variety of real ales. Recently the beers were Taylors, Tanglefoot, Black Sheep best bitter, London Pride and Delph Donkey, all at £1.60.

## Bazens' Bullocks

The Bar Centro on Tib Street, Manchester, was recently selling Bazens' Brewery Bullocks (4.3%). The beer, 'richly golden and easy drinking with a lingering citrus taste,' fitted in well at the Centro, which has a liking for fruity and well-balanced real ales.

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

## Doing the Card

Dave Hallows

'Sampling', not to be confused with taste-before-you-buy, nor with the activities of beer tickers, is when the weakest beer is drunk first, then the next and so on until the strongest. Thus, doing the card. One doesn't have to drink in pints - halves will suffice, especially if there are a lot of real ales to get through.

The **Swan** in The Square, Dobcross, is a perfect hostelry for this way of drinking. The picturesque eighteenth century pub is one of the few Jennings houses to have all their beers on, plus one guest. So, here is the card:

**Dark Mild** (3.1%): A dark mild with ruby red hues and good body. Superb.

**Bitter** (3.5%): Copper brown in colour. Well-balanced, a fruity citrus taste, quaffable and with a bittery finish.

**1828** (3.8%): Golden, well-balanced citrus session beer. Excellent.

**Cumberland Ale** (4%): Light brown in colour. Refreshingly light and fruity. Both sexes will like this one.



**Crag Rat** (4.3%): Deep golden, sweetish with caramel taste. Good fruity finish. The current seasonal beer.

**Marstons Pedigree** (4.5%): In good nick, as were all the beers. Brown, sweet and malty.

**Cockerhoop** (4.6%): Golden, well-balanced, with a citrus and moreish aftertaste.

**Sneck Lifter** (5.1%): This is a must for devotees of complex beers. Dark/ruby red in colour and it was selling well.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Letter

### Check it out

Sir - In last month's article about the Orange Tree in Altrincham, Neil Worthington referred to the Wilsons Brewery shrine at the pub and the company's 'chequerboard trademark'. Not for the first time have I noticed this error, and not only in *What's Doing*. The trademark was not a chequerboard: it was a draughtboard. Draught as in beer, geddit?

Pedantic Pete



## Festival fun

*The final day of this year's Accrington Beer Festival was attended by a party of North Manchester CAMRA members. Inevitably, they arrived late, owing to a points failure at Bolton. Ian Kenny reports...*

Attendance at the Saturday lunchtime session seemed slightly down this year (the festival workers said that the Friday evening session was busy) but an excellent afternoon was had by all. British cask beers came from as far afield as Shetland (Valhalla) and Cornwall (Ring o'Bells) and there were even draught beers from De Koninck of Antwerp and Donaghue and Dwan, both of Co Tipperary.

The local beers - Bowland (a new brewery in Clitheroe), Coach House, Dent, Facers, Leyden, Moonstone, Moorhouses, Phoenix, Picks, Porter, Red Rose (new from Great Harwood), Three B's and Thwaites - were well represented and supplemented by a healthy number of new breweries from Somerset (Blindman), Skipton (Copper Dragon),

### Saddleworth Museum

*presents its*

## 12th Beer Festival

organised by The Friends of the Museum  
as a fund raising event in aid of the Museum  
with generous assistance from CAMRA

**Friday 5th and Saturday 6th Sept 2003**  
**at the Museum, High Street, Uppermill**

open Friday 7pm to 11pm,  
Saturday 11.30am to 5pm & 7pm to 11pm  
Friday night music - Roger Higgins BluesBand  
Saturday night music - The Harmony Hounds  
(playing 1920s Jazz)  
(small admission charge)

**Twelve beers from nine breweries**  
**local to Saddleworth and surrounding area**

(Greenfield, Shaws, McGuinness, River Head, Phoenix, Pictish)

For travel information, phone 01457 874093

Cornwall (Kaltek), Cheshire (Khean), Staffordshire (Leek) and Northumberland. The festival food was up to the usual high standard.

We later toured Accrington but were not impressed by what this traditional Lancashire mill town had to offer. Even this year's Good Beer Guide entries had few guest beers available.

Three weeks later we caught the 11.33 Manchester Piccadilly to Cardiff express, only to be told that the train would not be stopping at Wrenbury for our visit to the beer festival at the Bhurtpore Arms at Aston. We would have to change at Crewe and catch a later connection. After several complaints, the conductor eventually contacted her control in Cardiff and by the time the train had reached Stockport, Wales and Borders Trains announced that a stop would be made at Wrenbury after all. Apparently the confusion arose because the 10.33 had stopped when it was not supposed to, but why this should prevent our train from stopping as advertised is beyond me.

On arriving at Wrenbury, we first visited the **Paradise Brewery and Bar**, but there were only a few beers to choose from because the previous week's festival had almost completely exhausted the stocks. Twelve minutes' walk brought us to the **Bhurtpore Inn**. It appeared that attendance was down on previous years. The range of beers was helped by the removal of the Festival Bar to a former storage space, creating a larger dining area. There was no marquee in the garden, but the weather was fine enough for a large number to sit outside and service was relatively unencumbered by drinkers standing at the bars.

There were new brews from Blackwater (West Midlands), Blythe (Staffordshire), Copper Dragon, John Eastwood (West Yorkshire), Facers, Greenfield (Uppermill). Kaltek, Khean, Leek and Shaws (Dukinfield). Ticklers were well in evidence and their tastes were catered for by about ten new ticks. The cynic in me suggests that many 'new beers' are just the usual brews tweaked by a process such as dry-hopping and then re-badged.

A decision has yet to be made, but this could well be the last summer festival at the Bhurtpore Arms. The event will probably be replaced by two festivals in spring and autumn. Let's hope that someone at Wales and Borders Trains is aware of the dates.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Boggart Bulletin

This month there is just one special coming from Boggart Hole Brewery in Moston. Sunset (3.7%) is billed as a pale and easy drinking beer. For the more hardened drinker, there is going to be another batch of Rocket Fuel, which last time was brewed at a whopping 14%.



## The Chorlton Road Brewery Part Two

Alan Gall

*The story so far... In the 1850s Messrs Smalley & Evans vacated their brewery overlooking the River Irk at Ducie Bridge, near Victoria Station, and moved to the much larger Chorlton Road Brewery. Twenty years later Titus Smalley's son-in-law, William Dockray, succeeded to the business and after he retired in 1899 Charles Robinson took over...*

Charles Robinson was born in Sandbach about 1852 and became a beerhousekeeper with his wife Annie at the Exhibition Inn on Stretford Road. By 1893 he had also taken up brewing at small premises on the corner of Peter Street and Maple Street, off Lower Moss Lane, Hulme. It was in an area well populated with other members of the trade: within 150 yards stood William Kay's Britannia Brewery, John Wagstaffe's Lion Brewery and Edwin Rothwell's Russell Street Brewery.

On moving to the Chorlton Road Brewery, he renamed it the Carlton. His two sons, Joseph William and Charles Herbert, assisted him at the new brewery. The photo of the car, taken about 1904, shows Charles Herbert in the driving seat and Joseph next to him. The building to the left housed the brewery offices, the bottling stores were on the right and set back between the two were the stables. Several of Charles Robinson's pubs were in Hulme: the Dog & Partridge, 22 Owen Street; the Crown Inn, 185 City Road; the Star Inn, 54 Preston Street and the Caxton Inn, 80 River Street.

All the public houses belonging to the brewery were sold off in 1913



and this enabled Charles to buy Tanyard Farm at Hale Barns a few years before retirement. So when the business passed to eldest son Joseph in the late 1920s, it was without secured outlets. Joseph had trained at the Manchester School of Brewing and became the brewer at Carlton after returning from the Great War. Sales were not helped by the escalating price of a pint. The beer duty levied on a standard barrel (gravity 1055) increased considerably in the war years, going from under £1 before 1914 to £5 a barrel imposed on 20th April 1920.



Charles Robinson, the grandson of the founder, is now well retired after a lifetime as a brewer. He worked at the family business for five years and then moved in succession to Barnsley Brewery Company, Duncan Gilmour of Sheffield, back to Barnsley, J G Swales of Hulme, Duttons of Blackburn and finally to the Northampton Brewery. Charles recalls his time at the Carlton. 'We used to bottle our own bitter and mild beers (naturally conditioned)... but when chilled and filtered non-deposit beers became very popular the amount of beer we bottled did not warrant installing the necessary plant. We brewed Mild, XX and Bitter, XXX, and Stout.'

He also recalled a business arrangement with the undischarged bankrupt John Henry Lees. Lees had run the Moss Side Brewery on



*City Road, Hulme, in the early twentieth century, with Charles Robinson's Crown Inn on the right*



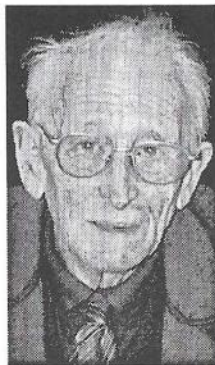
Denmark Road, but the business failed in 1913: 'After he went bankrupt, he had several leases on off-licences which were controlled for him by his nephew and we supplied them with beer from Carlton Brewery and every Wednesday he would travel from Southport to Knott Mill by 1st class train, and then by taxi to the Brewery, the taxi waiting for him, to meet his nephew and pay my father for the week's beer deliveries. He was always dressed in a tall hat, black frock coat, striped trousers, patent leather buttoned boots, silk cravat and no teeth (he could not afford false ones). When he died he left £1 a week to provide milk for the cats at Knott Mill Station.'



The nephew subsequently introduced Tetley's beers into the off-licences, as the bigger brewery was willing and able to spend money on redecorating the premises. Later, when J H Lees' nephew died and his son took over, Tetley's beer completely replaced the local product. The Carlton Brewery had also enjoyed a decent trade with the working men's clubs in the Ashton, Stalybridge, Hyde and Glossop areas, but again was ousted by the national companies with money to splash around.

When lack of trade eventually forced the closure of Carlton Brewery, the premises were used by Rowland Berry, a printer and publisher, before being demolished. Joseph Robinson found work as an assistant brewer at Holts Brewery, where he stayed until his retirement.

The site of the Carlton Brewery is now part of a sports ground and most of the adjoining streets have vanished. Walking down Chorlton Road from Stretford Road and looking to the left, the location was near the corner of the present day Bold Street. This is where Clayton Street once joined the main road. The original Bold Street joined further down.



*I am grateful to Charles Robinson (left), son of Joseph William Robinson, for providing much of the information and illustrations. Thanks also to Keith Osborne for the picture of the beer label, and to Tim Ashworth at Salford Local History Library for his invaluable help.*

# Rupert

Our brains were still hurting from the annual ambulatory amber nectar alehouse quiz. I imagined that, after a tour of Grotley's best, my colleagues would gladly eschew our agreed visits to hostelryes non-Drab. But no, they were as keen as ever and we met in Eunuchramfork's latest establishment - a converted synagogue.

Coincidentally this was just after Tom Swift had announced a ban on foul language. Prepared as ever, Fiona brought with her a two-page list of words that might or might not be banned in order to seek clarification. 'After all,' she said, 'if we don't know what we can't say, we won't know what we can say without being chucked out.' Quite right. She ran the list past a couple of cloth-eared bar persons who giggled but were indecisive.

So the manager had to be sent for. He came and said, 'What's to do?' Fiona said, 'What words can't we use?' He started by crossing out 'crap'. A few more short Anglo Saxon words followed, but he was unable to commit on 90% of Fiona's list. This left a large number of medical expressions, minor expletives and blasphemies,

racial and homophobic bigotry, polysyllabic descriptions of sexual practices and foreign or newly-coined expressions.

Fiona handed round suitably bowdlerised copies of her word list and our conversation in bollockspeak (sorry, testicle parlance) began. Using expressions like 'raving dyke,' 'tinted brethren,' 'chlamydian pecker,' 'park the pink bus,' 'banjo-cleaner,' 'clitoritic,' 'gor blimey,' 'horatio,' 'Anne Frank,' 'aardvark's nose,' 'drop anchor in poo bay,' 'drink from both taps,' 'faecal touch,' and 'fannicure,' we were able to tread along the furthestmost boundaries of poor taste and political incorrectness without transgressing Eunuchramfork's arcane rules. All went well, until who else but Bunty went too far.

As we dusted ourselves down later in Wedgies, I asked Bunty, 'Why, when we were doing so well, did you call me a stupid twat?' 'Because that's what you are, Roop,' he responded. 'I can cope with tank and lung warts, but for the life of me I can't see myself resorting to addressing you as a 'lobotomised lady's front bottom' even if it passes muster in Temple's.' So much for Fiona's strategy of urine extraction. Sometimes things backfire! (No innuendo intended.)

## Passport First

The first man to finish this year's John Willie Lees 'Passport Trail' pub crawl was Tony Sibson from Oldham. He got round all the pubs on the trail in a record 28 days, finishing at the Black Lion, Newbridge, Wrexham, on 30th June.



# Branch Diary

## **Regional CAMRA U-26 Event**

Fri 22 Aug, The Heaton's Stagger, with Stockport & South Manchester Branch. Meet 7.30pm in the Plough, Heaton Moor Road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport. Full details from John Clarke on 0161 477 1973.

Email: davehallows2002@yahoo.co.uk

## **Wigan**

Sun 31 Aug 2pm, Branch Meeting/barbecue, Royal Oak, Standishgate, Wigan

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

email: john@misltd.co.uk

## **Rochdale, Oldham & Bury**

Tues 5 Aug 8.30pm, Branch Meeting, Swan, The Square, Dobcross

Sat 9 Aug CAMRAMBLE, Uppermill/Greenfield, including brewery visit

Sun 24 Aug, Saddleworth Rush Cart, Cross Keys/Church, Uppermill

Tues 26 Aug 8.30pm, Committee/WD Collation, Whittles, King Street, Oldham

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

email: p.alexander@virgin.net

## **Trafford & Hulme** [www.camra.org.uk/trafford](http://www.camra.org.uk/trafford)

Thurs 14 Aug 8pm, Branch meeting, Old Market Tavern, Altrincham

Contact: Dave Ward 0161 980 1170

## **North Manchester** [www.camra.org.uk/nmanchester](http://www.camra.org.uk/nmanchester)

Sat 2 Aug, Lancashire Outing: Rawtenstall (Fitzpatrick's Temperance Bar), Burnley for an afternoon pub crawl, then the White Bull at Crawshawbooth for Beartown beers. Bus No.44X from Chorlton Street at 10.40am.

Wed 6 Aug 8pm, Social: Junction, Hendham Vale, off Rochdale Road (Beartown beers)

Wed 13 Aug 8pm, Social: Morning Star, Wardley

Wed 20 Aug 8pm, Branch meeting: Crescent, Salford

Tues 26 Aug 3pm-7pm, What's Doing collation: Queens Arms

Wed 27 Aug, Eccles Crawl: White Horse, Gilda Brook Rd 7.30pm, Albert Edward 9pm (Wellington if shut). Also visiting Lamb, Duke of York and other Eccles centre pubs.

Contact Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

\*\*\*\*\*

Contributors to this issue: Alan Gall, Paul Warbrick, Roger Hall, Dave White, Dave Hallows, Bob Berwick, Phil Stout, Ian Kenny, Mark Charnley, Stewart Revell, Rob Magee, Mark Herdman, Mark McConachie

*Dave and Sue welcome you to*

# THE QUEENS ARMS

HONEY STREET, CHEETHAM

Tel: 0161 834 4239

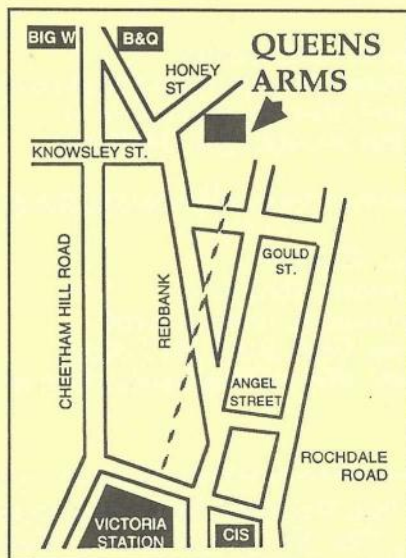
Try the fine range of beers supporting independent  
brewers in their excellent free house

**Bantam Bitter £1.40 a pint**  
**Taylors Landlord Championship Beer**  
*plus 6 Ever Changing Cask Ales*

Wieckse Witte, Affligem Blonde (Trappist Beer)  
& Früli Strawberry Beer on draught  
*Bottled beers from around the globe*  
**Quality Doubles Bar**

*Open: 12 noon-11.00pm Mon-Sat. 12 noon-10.30pm Sun*

City Life Manchester Food & Drink Festival  
**PUB OF THE YEAR 2002-3**



## PUB QUIZ

Tuesday, 9.30pm start

## BEER GARDEN

with children's play area

**FAMILIES  
WELCOME**

**HOT & COLD  
FOOD**  
Sunday Roast

*We're in the*  
**GOOD BEER  
GUIDE 2003**

