

30p

# What's Doing

FEBRUARY 2005



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

## MORE FROM MARBLE

Just after the introduction of the long-awaited Marble Bitter, the Marble Brewery came up with another new brew, Port Stout (4.7%). This full-bodied, warming stout has a distinct port and cherry aroma and an attractive oaty head. It's very moreish and deserves a place in the Marble Brewery seasonal portfolio.



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

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provided on request - T.V. and Games Room open for darts



## Oldham's Owl

*Staggerin' Man*

After reading Grognaards article (*WD Dec*) about the Owl Brewing Company, Oldham's first brewery since the 1980s, I headed for this new brewpub. The Hope Inn on Greenacres Road is surprisingly near to the town centre (15 minutes walk) and not far from Oldham Mumps Rail Station.

Not only has brewer Gordon Potts given back to Oldham folk their own beer, but he has saved a pub from demolition and revived the town's former emblem, the wise old owl. What is astounding is that he has fitted a near 30-foot tower brewery into the pub, and this can be viewed through windows in the vault. The brewery is on three levels and stretches from the cellar to the highest point of the roof - an amazing sight and a feat of engineering!

There are four regular beers. Greenacres Gold (4.2%) is a pale, honey-coloured bitter, with a good body and a rich, slightly fruity palate. Russet Owl (4.2%) is a medium-coloured session bitter, brewed in a traditional 'Yorkshire Bitter' style. Night Owl (4.2%) is a dark, heavy porter, with chocolate and black malt. 'Deep, rich, for espresso lovers,' according to Gordon's description. The fourth regular beer is the new Owl OB Bitter (4%). This is partly based on the Oldham Brewery recipe and is an homage to the much missed brewery.

Seasonals are currently Horny Owl (3.8%), a deep reddish bitter with a complex fruity palate, and Yon Owl (3.8%), which is hopped with Fuggles and Hersbrucker to give a light but bitter palate. Over Christmas Yon Owl was increased to 4.5% and the beer is aimed at attracting lager drinkers to real ale. Last but not least is the Great Horny (4.7%), a dark beer with added cinnamon for that winter glow. The prices are keen - the most I paid on the night was £1.40 a pint.

Opening times are: Mon 8-11pm; Tues 4.30-6.30, 8-11; Weds to Fri 12-2, 4.30-6.30, 8-11; Sat 12-4, 8-11 and Sun 12-3 and 8-10.30. The company website is: [www.owlbrew.co.uk](http://www.owlbrew.co.uk).

The Hope Inn is Greater Manchester's seventh brewpub. The others are the Church Inn (Saddleworth Brewery) at Uppermill; the Marble Brewery in Manchester; Mayflower in Wigan; McGuinness in Rochdale; Leyden in Bury and the Lowes Arms, Manchester.



## Salford

*Ian Kenny*

The **Paddock** on Cross Lane has had a facelift. The exterior has been cleaned and the main lounge has reopened after years when only the side vault was open. The good news is that real ale has arrived. Holts bitter at £1 a pint is advertised, although I've not been able to sample any yet. On my first visit I was informed that it hadn't settled and on a second attempt I found the pub closed at 10.30pm on a weekday evening, although it had been open earlier.



Further down Cross Lane, the **Ship**, which was damaged by fire last year, has reopened. The pub remains resolutely keg-only.

At Irlams o'th'Height, it took Holts almost two months to redecorate the **Wellington**, but they have done a good job to justify its inclusion in the 2005 Good Beer Guide.

The **Albert Park** on Great Clowes Street, Higher Broughton, has been demolished.

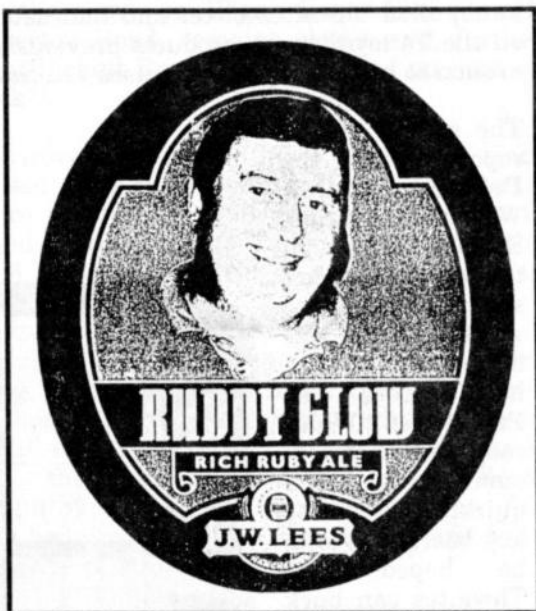


## Breweriana Day

A record £570 was raised at the breweriana charity auction in December. Many of the items came from the collection of the late Tony Molyneux and included the rare version of the first Good Beer Guide, with its uncomplimentary remark about Watneys.

One of the organisers, Alan Gardner, had won a competition set by Lees Brewery to find someone with a ruddy complexion. His prize, a firkin of Ruddy Glow, was delivered to the Crescent and proceeds from the sale of the beer were added to the charity fund.

The 2005 event has already been booked. It will be on 10th December at the usual venue, the Crescent in Salford.



## One for the Tickers

Bells Brewery Rainmaker (4.1%), a light ruby red beer with a hoppy aroma, made a welcome appearance at the Beer House on Angel Street, Manchester, over the New Year festivities. The beer badge is unusual, with its white plastic rim and cling film centre containing impressive artwork.

**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 £18 to Membership, CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road, St Albans, Herts AL1 4LW.

## Wigan and district

*Dave White*

Blackburn brewer Thwaites has acquired two pubs in the Wigan area, according to the local press. The **Plough & Harrow**, Broad o'th' Lane, Shevington, made the change just before Christmas, and now sells handpulled Thwaites bitter and Lancaster Bomber: an improvement on the Tetley/Flowers products previously on offer. They haven't got around to renovating the premises yet, however.

The second pub is reportedly the **Prince of Wales**, Woodhouse Lane, Springfield, though the bar staff didn't seem to know quite what was happening, when I had a word. The Prince of Wales reopened only last summer and quickly reverted to keg beer, so it is to be hoped that Thwaites can buck the trend, if and when the change is made.

The same newspaper stated that the **Miners Arms**, Manchester Road, Astley would also go over to Thwaites.

I'm pleased to report a real ale gain on the edge of Wigan town centre. New licensees have moved into the **Griffin Hotel** on Standishgate and installed handpumps. The pub, which has a poor track record so far as cask conditioned beer is concerned, now offers Courage Directors and a guest ale (Deuchars IPA when we called by), so give it a try.

This stretch of the A49 heading into Swinley is looking better than it's done for years - surely someone could make a success of the **Whitesmiths Arms**?



It's a pity I can't say the same about the A577 through Higher Ince and Hindley, where pubs are shutting faster than you can say 'knife'. The **Amberswood Tavern** and **Park Hotel** on Manchester Road are closed (the Park only reopened last year), as is the **Minstral** - yes, that's how it's spelled on the sign - on Wigan Road. The **Plough Hotel**, further up on Atherton Road, remains closed and, further down, the **Crispin Arms** at Birkett Bank is still boarded up (just off the A577, but what the heck?).

Speaking of which, I've discovered that two more pubs, long since closed, have been delicensed. The **Bamfurlong Hotel**, Lily Lane, Bamfurlong, had its licence revoked in 1999 and is now a private residence (but has retained vestiges of the Tetley livery), and the **Victoria Hotel**, Liverpool Road, Platt Bridge, was delicensed in 2001. Both classic boozers in their time.

News in brief: the **New Scholes Tavern**, Scholes, reopened before Christmas, but remains keg. **St William's Catholic Club**, Patricroft Road, Higher Ince, has abandoned its fling with traditional beer, though the handpump is still there. The number of real ale outlets in Ince is back down to one... the **Norley Hall Hotel**, Severn Road, Norley Hall, has been bought by the Chorley Pub Company (*see Jan WD*). The pub, which has a bad reputation, is currently undergoing a £250,000 makeover, and may be renamed.



## Brewery for Leigh

The Merlin Brewery has been set up on the Victoria Street Industrial Estate at the back of Asda. Ann and Don purchased their equipment from Beecham's of St Helens, and regular brews are Astley Gold (3.8%), Vision (4.2%), Legacy (5%) and Cannonball (5%). The brewery is named after their grandson (it's his middle name) and Merlin ales were on sale at the Bent & Bongs Beer Bash.

## Boggart Bulletin

Starless Night (4.2%), suitable for those cold and windy winter's nights, is the new monthly special from Moston's Boggart Hole Clough Brewery. It is a rich chocolate stout with a roasted nut aftertaste.

## Millstone Brewery

Mossley's Millstone Brewery has added a premium bitter, the 5% **True Grit**, to its range.

Some of the brewery's beers are now available in bottles (and bottle conditioned). They are **Three Shires Bitter** (4%), **Windy Miller** (4.1%), **Grain Storm** (4.2%), **Millstone Edge** (4.4%), **Autumn Leaves** (4.3%) and **Christmas Ruby** (4.7%). A few of these, as their names suggest, are seasonal.

One outlet for the bottled beers is Mossley Wholefood, 11 Arundel Street, Mossley OL5 0NY. Tel. 01457 837743.

The brewery is located in Vale Mill, Mossley OL5 9JL. For further information: [www.millstonebrewery.co.uk](http://www.millstonebrewery.co.uk)

## Oaks site

Yet another application has been made for a residential development on the site of the Oaks, Oakwood Road, Walkden. Previous plans were rejected by Salford Council following objections from nearby residents. (*See WD Oct 2004*)

## Letter

### Holts

Sir - With regard to Stewart Revell's question in November's *What's Doing*, the answer is a resounding YES! Let's have a really BITTER bitter from Holts, with a bitterness of 50, nay 100, nay 200 units. One to make us shudder convulsively and make our lips pucker up such that we cannot even look at a trombone, let alone play one. I would even pay a further 5p a pint for such luxury.

Albert Onejug



## Name Your Poison

*Alan Gall*

The use of arsenic in medicinal preparations has a long and interesting history. From cosmetics used by prostitutes, giving them nice rosy cheeks, to the kill-or-cure treatments of the Victorians, it once featured prominently in everyday life. Charles Frederick Hyde, brewer at Chesters in Ardwick, wrote in his diary for 16th January 1890: 'Went to the city and paid a guinea to Dr Little for examination and another 6 shillings for specs... no disease whatsoever in the eyes and advised me to continue the use of arsenic for scurvy.' Little did he know that ten years later the other face of arsenic - its extreme toxicity - would cause much anguish for Manchester brewers, and even more for some unsuspecting drinkers.

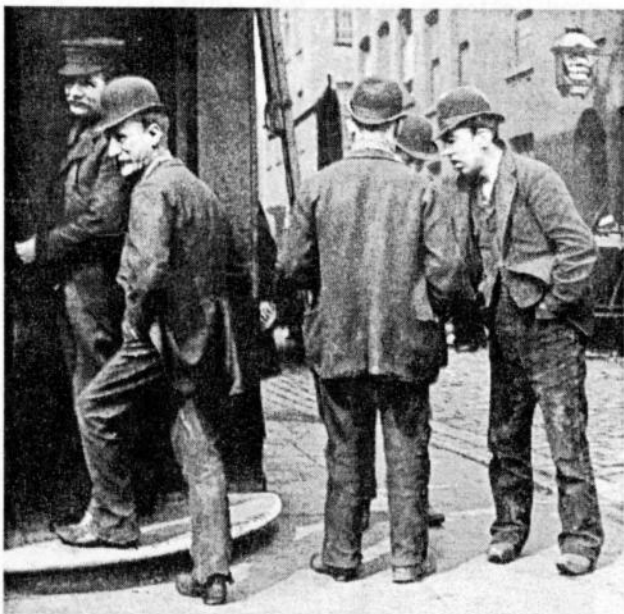
The first hint that something strange was happening seems to have been noticed at the Workhouse Infirmary in Crumpsall. A number of patients were admitted with very similar symptoms in varying degrees; paralysis of the limbs, change of skin colour, loss of memory and cirrhosis of the liver. Alarming, the number of cases began to increase significantly towards the end of 1900. The areas particularly

were Ancoats, Ashton Old and New Roads, Hulme, Lower Broughton and Miles Platting. It didn't take long to find the reason - they were all suffering from arsenic poisoning, and this had come from drinking beer.

Breweries had been promoting the idea that beer, if drunk in moderation, was good for health.

'Drinking beer can kill you' was clearly an undesirable message to be sending out to customers and so the Manchester Brewers Central Association commissioned a report by a team of experts. James Niven, Manchester's Medical Officer of Health, also began compiling a report.

The brewery-sponsored commission reported back on 15th December 1900. Having examined all the basic ingredients used at the



Manchester breweries (apart from, apparently, malt) the finger of blame pointed firmly at a manufacturer in Liverpool called Bostock & Company, who had supplied brewing sugar containing the poison. During one of the processes, they had used an arsenic-laden sulphuric acid bought from John Nicholson & Son, a chemical manufacturer in Leeds. The commission were at a loss to explain why Bostocks would use such a product when it should have been obvious that a reasonably pure acid was necessary. Incompetence seemed the likely answer, as there was no significant commercial gain to be had from buying the slightly cheaper version.

Manchester Council decided to punish the pubs, saying, 'The Sanitary Committee were, moreover, able to secure a number of convictions against retail dealers, which was the only vindication of the law open to us.'

Without access to the original information on beer samples, it is difficult to say exactly which breweries sold the contaminated beer. The Department of Health examined twenty-five and eight had dangerous amounts of arsenic in the beer. Although five of the eight used Bostock's sugars, this still left three who claimed not to have done so. The Cornbrook Brewery on Chester Road was known to have



suffered, and Groves & Whitnall of Salford and the Manchester Brewery Company of Ardwick featured in subsequent court cases. Other firms were able to boast that they had a clean bill of health. Boardman's Brewery of Ancoats, for example, proclaimed their beer to be arsenic free, yet it was only a matter of luck.

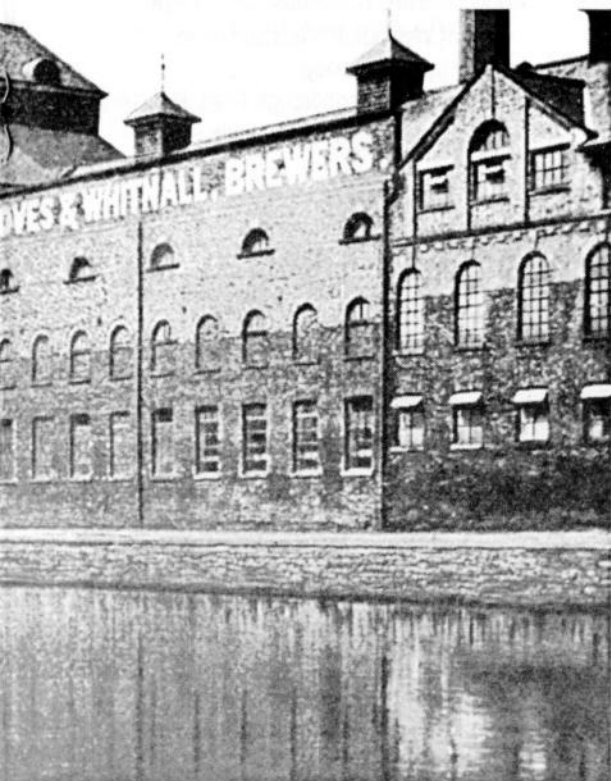
Manchester Guardian 18.12.1900

## ARSENIC IN BEER,

### THE EPIDEMIC STILL PREVALENT.

There are still several patients in the Manchester and Salford hospitals suffering, apparently, from poisoning by arsenic. At the Manchester City Coroner's Court Mr. S. Smelt, the coroner, yesterday held inquests with regard to the deaths of two persons, one a man aged 51 years and the other a woman aged 42. Both had been admitted to the Crumpsall workhouse hospital apparently suffering from the effects of arsenical poisoning. The Coroner pointed out that some previous cases had been adjourned for full inquiry until January 9 next.

Clearly, trade would have been badly damaged for users of the arsenical sugar and in addition there was the considerable quantity of beer that must have ended up down the drain. Legend has it that thousands of gallons of Groves & Whitnall beer were tipped into the Irwell.



The brewers managed to weather the storm. There were approximately 35 breweries in Salford and Manchester at the start of 1900 and two years later the figure was much the same. 1903 saw a few takeovers and closures, but other factors may have been involved.

Manchester's Medical Officer of Health concluded that about 2,000 people suffered from the poisoning to some degree. As to actual deaths in the city, it was his estimate that it could not have been much under a hundred.

*Thanks are due to Sue Hyde Fielding for the quotation from her grandfather's diary and to Salford Local History Library for the photographs.*

## The Holts List

Stewart Revell provides an up-to-date list of the company's pubs.

Abbey, Hard Lane, St Helens  
Angel Inn, King Street, Knutsford  
Ape & Apple, John Dalton St, Manchester  
Ashley Brook, Liverpool Street, Salford  
Atherton Arms, Tyldesley Road, Atherton  
Bay Horse, Parr Lane, Unsworth  
Bird in Hand, Liverpool Road, Patricroft  
Black Dog, Church Street, Belmont  
Blue Bell, Manchester Road, Bury  
Blue Bell, Moston Lane, Moston  
Bolton Castle, Tonge Moor Road, Bolton  
Bradford Inn, Bradford Road, Miles Platting  
Bricklayers, Ordsall Lane, Salford  
Bridgewater, Liverpool Road, Patricroft  
Bridgewater, Manchester Road, Hollinwood  
Brigadier, Firsway, Sale  
Broadway, Broadway, New Moston  
Broadway, Broadway, Salford  
Brooklyn, Green Lane, Bolton

Cart & Horses, Manchester Road, Astley  
Chapel House, Stockport Road, Denton  
Cheadle Hulme, Station Road, Cheadle Hulme  
Church Inn, Bury New Road, Whitefield  
Church Inn, Gaskell Street, Newton Heath  
Cleveland, Crumpsall Lane, Crumpsall  
Coach & Horses, Bury Old Road, Whitefield  
Cock o' Budworth, Warrington Road,  
Great Budworth  
Cricketers, Manchester Road, Swinton  
Cross Yates, Whitworth Road, Rochdale  
Crown, Chorley New Road, Horwich  
Crown & Anchor, Cateaton St, Manchester  
Crown & Cushion, Corporation Street,  
Manchester  
Crumpsall, Bury Old Road, Cheetham Hill  
Derby Brewery Arms, Cheetham Hill Road  
Doffcocker, Chorley Old Road, Bolton  
Douglas Bank, Woodhouse Lane, Wigan  
Duke of Wellington, Weardale Road,  
Higher Blackley  
Duke of York, Marlborough Road, Hightown  
Dukes Gate, Cleggs Lane, Little Hulton





Eagle & Child, Higher Lane, Whitefield  
 Eagle, Collier Street, Salford  
 Edington Arms, Ladies Lane, Hindley  
 Egerton Inn, Hanlon Street, Cheetham Hill  
 Ellesmere, King William Street, Winton  
 Foresters, Bury New Road, Prestwich  
 Fox Inn, Old Market Street, Blackley  
 Friendship, Scholes Lane, Prestwich  
 Frigate, Thatch Leach Lane, Whitefield  
 Gardeners Arms, Hollins Lane, Middleton  
 Garratt, Pink Bank Lane, Longsight  
 Globe, Bradshawgate, Leigh  
 Goats Gate, Radcliffe New Road, Whitefield  
 Golden Lion, Old Market Street, Blackley  
 Grafton Arms, Grafton Street,  
     Chorlton-on-Medlock  
 Grapes, Liverpool Road, Peel Green  
 Griffin Hotel, Wilmslow Road, Heald Green  
 Griffin Hotel, Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey  
 Grove Inn, Ashton New Road, Clayton

Halfway House, Manchester Road, Droylsden  
 Hare & Hounds, Outwood Road, Radcliffe  
 Hipp, Lathbury Road, Harpurhey  
 Hyde Park Corner, Silk Street, Salford  
 Kings Head, Market Street, Droylsden  
 Kingsway, Moseley Road, Levenshulme  
 Lamb Hotel, Regent Road, Eccles  
 Legh Arms, Northenden Road, Sale Moor  
 Lord Nelson, Bolton Road, Pendlebury  
 Lord Nelson, Stretford Road, Urmston  
 Melville, Barton Road, Stretford  
 Millhouse, Ballater Drive, Padgate  
 Morning Star, Manchester Road, Swinton  
 Mort Arms, Elliott Street, Tyldesley  
 Mosley, Red Lane, Breightmet  
 Navigation, Drake Street, Rochdale  
 New Grove Inn, Bury New Road, Whitefield  
 Newmarket Inn, Bolton Road, Pendlebury  
 Northgate, Sholver Green, Oldham  
 Old Blue Bell, Bell Lane, Bury



Old Bulls Head, Church Street, Eccles  
 Old Cross Inn, Eton Hill Road, Radcliffe  
 Old House at Home, Whit Lane, Pendleton  
 Old Monkey, Portland Street, Manchester  
 Orion, Burton Road, Withington  
 Ostrich, Bury Old Road, Prestwich  
 Papermakers, Church Street East, Radcliffe  
 Park Hotel, Monton Road, Monton  
 Park Inn, Worsley Road, Swinton  
 Pepper Alley, Crown Street, Bolton  
 Queens, Clarendon Place, Hyde  
 Queens Hotel, Waters Green, Macclesfield  
 Railway, Dean Lane, Newton Heath  
 Railway, Lapwing Lane, Didsbury  
 Railway, Manshaw Road, Higher Openshaw  
 Railway, Egerton Street, Moses Gate  
 Red Lion, Bolton Road, Irlams o'th'Height  
 Red Lion, Bury New Road, Prestwich  
 Red Lion, Robins Lane, St Helens  
 Roebuck, Church Road, Flixton  
 Rose Hill, Leigh Road, Westhoughton  
 Royal Oak, Barton Lane, Eccles  
 Rumworth, Wigan Road, Deane  
 Seven Stars, Ashton Old Road, Beswick  
 Sidings, Broom Lane, Levenshulme

Silverwell, Darlington Street East, Wigan  
 Sir Charles Napier, High Street, Golborne  
 Spread Eagle, Wilbraham Road,  
     Chorlton-cum-Hardy  
 Stanley Arms, Liverpool Road, Patricroft  
 Starkey Arms, Manchester Road, Heywood  
 Sun and Castle, Middle Hillgate, Stockport  
 Tamar, Wigan Road, Leigh  
 Three Crowns, Mill Green, Macclesfield  
 Union Tavern, Liverpool Street, Salford  
 Volunteer, Cross Street, Sale  
 Waggon & Horses, Hyde Road, Gorton  
 Waggon & Horses, 367 Bolton Road,  
     Irlams o'th'Height  
 Welcome, Bury Old Road, Whitefield  
 Wellington, Church Street, Eccles  
 Wellington, Bolton Road, Irlams o'th'Height  
 White Horse, Bury New Road, Prestwich  
 White Lion, Liverpool Road, Patricroft  
 White Lion, Market Street, Westhoughton  
 White Swan, Worsley Road, Swinton  
 Wilton Arms, Coronation Road, Radcliffe  
 Winters, Little Underbank, Stockport  
 Woodthorpe, Bury Old Road, Prestwich  
 Wyldes, Market Street, Bury



## Smooth Willie

*Albert Onejug*

Following an arduous session of retail therapy on Oldham Market, I went in search of refreshment at Tommyfields, knowing that brewer J W Lees, of whom we are all proud, would provide me with a pint of fine bitter. Indeed, this proved to be the case.

However, as I approached the bar and asked for the aforesaid pint, the barman said, 'Smooth?' To which I replied, 'No. Cask.' Strange, I thought, that he didn't say 'Cask?' first rather than the other way round. The price of my pint was £1.58, which is normal in these parts.

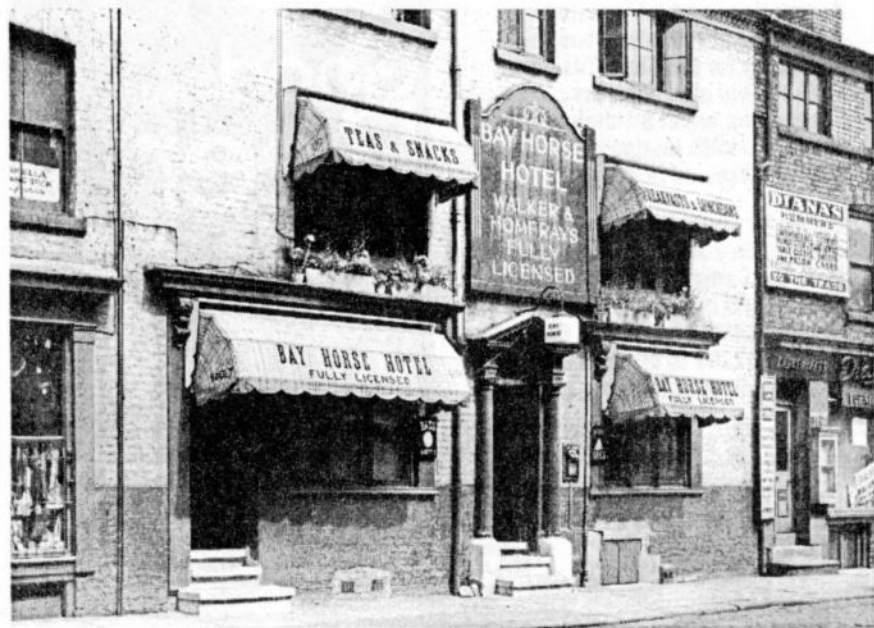
As I wandered round the pub, I saw a blackboard announcing that Smooth was priced at £1.30. Now, if Smooth is being promoted at £1.30, while cask bitter is £1.58, surely market forces will play their part and sales will increase. This would be followed by the tired old argument that 'Cask doesn't seem to sell as well.'

Are John Willie Lees actually attempting to tip the scales in favour of nitrokeg? I think we should be told, as Rupert is wont to say.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Bay watch

The city has a new pub. Or, strictly speaking, an old one has been reincarnated. Older readers may remember the Bay Horse on Thomas Street, which closed over twenty years ago and became a shop. The former Wilsons pub is now a keg-only bar.



# For the best real ale pubs in the UK

## Good Beer Guide 2005

"Every time I tour the nation,  
It's the first thing I pack"

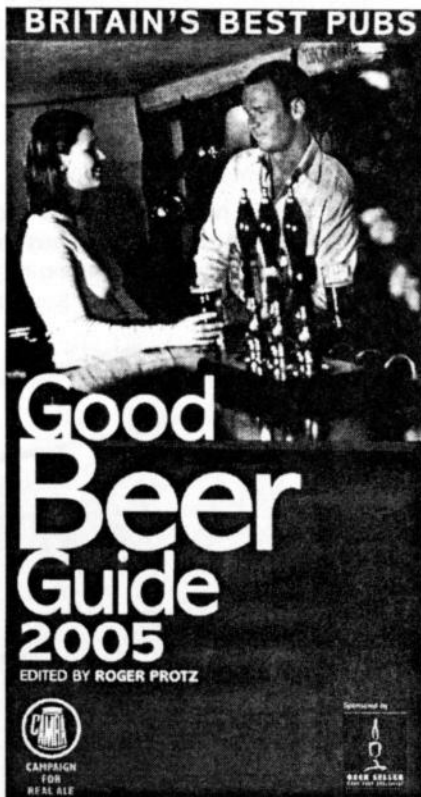
— Oz Clarke

This best-selling guide provides details on 4,500 of the best real ale pubs in Britain today. All pubs listed within the guide serve good-quality real ale and are inspected throughout the year to ensure a consistently high standard.

Every entry contains contact details for each pub as well as descriptions and information on the choice of real ales, food and suitability for families. This beer lovers' bible also contains information on all Britain's breweries with tasting notes for real ales brewed in the UK.

Edited by Roger Protz, the Good Beer Guide 2005 is available direct from the Campaign for Real Ale, RRP £13.99 but only £10 plus £1 p&p for CAMRA members. Call 01727 867201 to order or buy online at [www.camra.org.uk/books](http://www.camra.org.uk/books)

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## CAMRA Membership gives:

- ★ Monthly copies of *What's Brewing*, CAMRA's entertaining and highly-regarded newspaper.
- ★ Discounts on CAMRA products and publications (including the best-selling *Good Beer Guide*).
- ★ Advance warning of beer festivals throughout the U.K. and Europe - and discounts when you get there.
- ★ An invitation to join CAMRA's activities such as brewery trips, meetings and socials.
- ★ **ABOVE ALL**, you will belong to a flourishing and successful consumer movement which is acting as a champion for beer drinkers and pub users.

## APPLICATION TO JOIN CAMRA

I/We wish to become members of the Campaign for Real Ale Limited and agree to abide by the Rules.

Name(s) .....

Address.....

.....

.....Postcode.....

Signature.....Date.....

I/We enclose the remittance for:

Single £18 ☐ Joint £21 ☐ (at same address)

OAP Single £10 ☐ OAP Joint £13 ☐ (at same address)

Unemployed/Disabled £10 ☐

Under 26 £10 ☐ date of birth:.....

For Life and Overseas rates contact CAMRA HQ (01727 867201)

Send your remittance (payable to CAMRA) to:

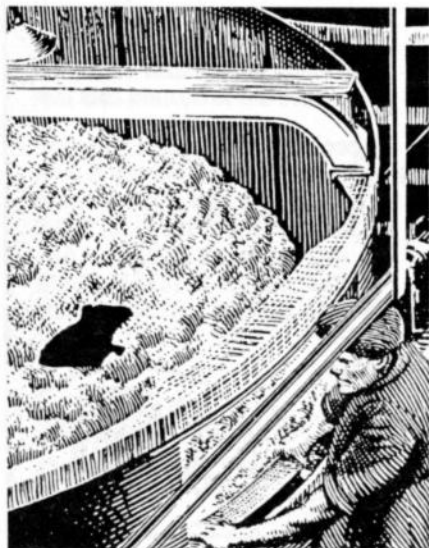
The Membership Secretary,  
CAMRA, 230 Hatfield Road  
St Albans, Herts AL1 4BR



# Rupert

It was one of those rambling arguments that came to no real conclusions. At Bunty's behest we had left the Winter Ales Festival early and retired to the nearest Drabs house. Bunty had become increasingly frustrated at the behaviour of demented tickers and saw no reason why people couldn't quaff old ale, barley wine and porter in pints instead of in 'wimps' glasses'. As we relaxed in Cushe's with a real pint, Fiona began a tirade against Campaign members being charged a fortune to enter the festival when they should get in for nothing. She also criticised the few vegan and organic products available.

In response, Bunty said that beer was usually improved by the odd rat that fell in the fermenting vessel and that Drabs' move away from Yorkshire squares which facilitated the serendipitous event



was retrogressive. My suggestion of throwing in organic white rats bred in a laboratory was met with derision from Bunty and the, by now, incandescent Fiona.

As this discussion ground to a halt, another started up. What, Ophelia wanted to know, did we all think about the Government's vacillation over licensing hours? She didn't really get a sensible answer. Bunty was all for going back to the days before the Defence of the Realm Act when you could drink all day. Tish pointed out that this would create a situation which would make Hogarth's Gin Lane look like a tea shop in Mecca.

Alistair was more concerned about the cost of it all. Licences had been controlled fairly well since the reign of Edward VI by magistrates. Local Authorities, who would shortly be in charge, were to efficiency what Prince Harry was to judgement and would charge licensees a small fortune. Add to that the cost of policing the aftermath of binge drinkers vomiting and fighting and it didn't augur well for the aficionado of amber nectar from the wickets who just wanted to go into an ordinary pub for a quiet pint. Bunty asked, 'Who said anything about a quiet pint?'

At this point we were joined by a number of inebriated tickers who'd come for last orders. I am glad that Bunty was in a good mood, otherwise their binge drinking could have led to ale-fuelled mayhem and an appearance in the Daily Mail.

# Branch Diary

## **Regional CAMRA Under 30 Social Group**

Fri 4 Feb from 8pm. Social in Lass o'Gowrie, Charles Street, by BBC, Manchester. 9pm Sand Bar, Grosvenor Street

Contact: davehallows2002@yahoo.co.uk. Mobile: 07931750108

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

Wed 2 Feb, Monton Crawl: Blue Bell 7.30, Drop Inn 8.30, Park Hotel 9.30

Wed 9 Feb, Irlams o'th'Height Crawl: Waggon & Horses 7.30, Wellington 8pm, Red Lion 9.15pm

Wed 16 Feb 8pm, Branch Meeting: Beer House, Angel Street, Manchester

Wed 23 Feb 8pm, Good Beer Guide 2006 Final Selection, City Centre Pubs: White Lion, Swinton

Tues 1 Mar 3pm, What's Doing collation: Queens Arms, Honey Street, Cheetham

Contact Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

## **Wigan**

Weds 9th Feb 8pm: Branch meeting, Holts Arms (Foot o'Causeway), Crank Road, Billinge.

Contact: Valerie Hollows 0161 629 8243 (weekdays); 07889 898955 (mob). email: vhollows@peel.co.uk

## **Rochdale, Oldham & Bury**

Tues 1 Feb 8.30pm: Branch Meeting, Hope Inn, Greenacres Road, Oldham

Sat 19 Feb: Train Social. Details from Branch Contact

Contact: Peter Alexander 0161 655 4002 (h) email: peter@peteralexander.plus.com

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

Thur 3 Feb 8pm: Branch Meeting and GBG 2006 selection, Old Market Tavern, Altrincham

Thur 17 Feb, Oxford Road Crawl. Meet 8pm at The Font, New Wakefield Street. 9pm The Salutation, Ormond Street, Manchester

Thur 3 March 8pm: Branch Meeting, Town Hall Tavern, 20 Tib Lane, Manchester

Contact: John Ison 0161 962 7976

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Contributors to this issue: Alan Gall, Dave Hallows, Alan Gardner, Duncan Roberts, Ian Kenny, Dave White, Roger Hall

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*Dave and Sue welcome you to*

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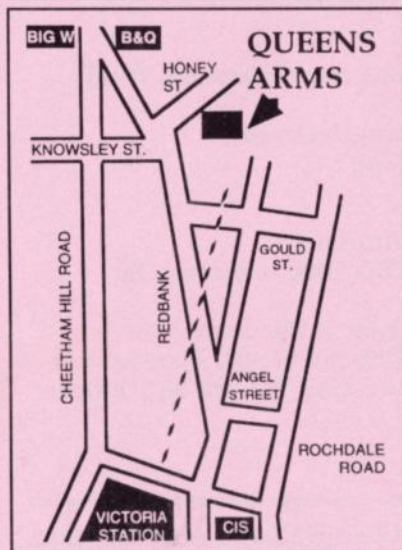
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