

# WHAT'S DOING

OCT  
1979

THE MANCHESTER BEER DRINKER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

## MANCHESTER ARMS TO BE PULLED DOWN

Following what is seen as a 'political' decision, the Manchester Arms is to be pulled down. Although the Department of the Environment Inspector was in favour of retaining the building, his decision was overruled by the powers-that-be and yet another valuable piece of Manchester's heritage will disappear forever. The building was bought by the GMT some years ago when the 'Pic-Vic' underground line was being planned. When the plan fell through GMT allowed the building to become derelict, although there was some hope in early 1978 that it might be restored, when the City Planning Committee told the GMT that they were not to demolish it.



The Manchester Arms stands on Long Millgate opposite Victoria Station, and dates from the early eighteenth century. It was once the home of the Howarths whose name is commemorated by Howarth Gates, which was a narrow passage running along the side of the pub to Corporation Street. Just after 1786 when Joseph Howarth died, the building was converted into a pub. Long Millgate was one of the first thoroughfares of Manchester, leading to Scotland Bridge across the Irk and the road to the north, and in the latter half of the eighteenth century a coach service ran from the pub to Bury on three days a week.



## SALFORD POLLY

The Whitegates in Hyde was the first pub to serve David Pollard's John Barleycorn Bitter back in 1975. As the pub has now been sold to Sam Smiths for a sum of around £102,000 Pollards have been looking for other outlets. The Gloucester Arms on Regent Road in Salford was a Wilsons house before being sold into the free trade about three years ago. Pollards have now acquired the Gloucester, making it their first tied house.

The licensee is Eric Walsh, formerly of the Bulls Head on Market Place, Stockport. The Gloucester is selling both mild and bitter at 30p and 32p respectively. David Pollard intends to increase the lunchtime trade by putting on good food and, to attract the evening clientele, that old Salford institution, the 'singalong' is being reintroduced. It is hoped that the Gloucester will eventually sell another traditional draught beer alongside Pollards bitter and mild.

The introduction of another beer to Salford is particularly welcome at a time when the city has just lost half a dozen pubs. Although the Gloucester only has a short life-expectancy because of possible road schemes, its short-term future is relatively secure, and is an encouragement to those of us who saw the demise of the traditional Salford pub as an imminent threat.

Roger Hall

## BROADWAY REVIEW



Rumours are rife about the impending demise of the Broadway in Salford's dockland. Planning permission for the demolition of this typical Holts pub and the building of a new pub on the same site was granted in December 1978. There does, however, seem to be some doubt in Salford Corporation about whether Holts will take up their option to rebuild. It was originally planned to compulsorily purchase the pub and allow a new pub to be built opposite, but partly because of pressure from the local CAMRA branch, the Corporation shelved their plans leaving Holts possibly to carry out the work for them.

## BEER FESTIVAL A SUCCESS

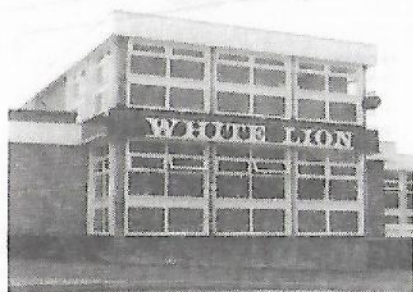
Over 2,500 people visited the Manchester Beer Festival last month. Almost 10,000 pints of beer were drunk, the most popular being Timothy Taylors, Saxon Cross, Theakstons and Wem ales. Owing to the success of the venture the local branches of CAMRA have decided to make the festival an annual event.

## BRIGHT IDEAS AT OB?

The latest casualty in Oldham Breweries' swing to bright beer is the Devonshire at Lees. This pub, recently nominated for inclusion in next year's Good Beer Guide, has now lost its handpumps, the beer being served from kegs with a CO2 "blanket" pressure. Neither the manager nor the customers are particularly overjoyed.

This month will see the start of a concentrated campaigning effort against the brewery's present policies. This will take the form of a leaflet campaign backed up with local press coverage, the intention being to bring to people's attention the insidious advance of "bright" OB beer.

Steve Lawton



## REAL ALE FOR IRLAM SIGNAL BOX

The White Lion, Irlam has now changed over to traditional handpumped mild and bitter. Any pub which reverts to real ale is of course a welcome development, but the White Lion is not just any pub as I shall try to explain.

Along with the Nags Head (Whitbread-no real ale) the pub lies at the centre of Higher Irlam on Liverpool Road, and this one move by Wilsons has doubled the choice of real ales available in this particular area. We'll now have Wilsons at the White Lion and Boddies at the Boathouse. Although traditional beer has appeared in a couple of clubs recently, this is the first switch back to real ale in an Irlam pub - a significant development.

The White Lion has been renovated and redecorated inside and out and all vestiges of the Watney image have been removed. The pub has an imaginatively designed, spacious lounge and is extremely comfortable to say the least. There's a completely separate vault and games room which has been extended. The pool table which hitherto dominated the vault has been consigned to a small room adjacent to the main drinking area. A problem for some is the presence of juke box music which can be obtrusive in both the lounge and the vault. However, the box has always been popular and will no doubt remain so. An array of handpumps dominates the bars and they deliver a good pint of traditional beer. Sales have more than doubled since the changeover and so I'm sure the brewery will be pleased with this investment in the Irlam area. Let us hope that certain other breweries follow Wilsons example in the not too distant future.

Bill Collier

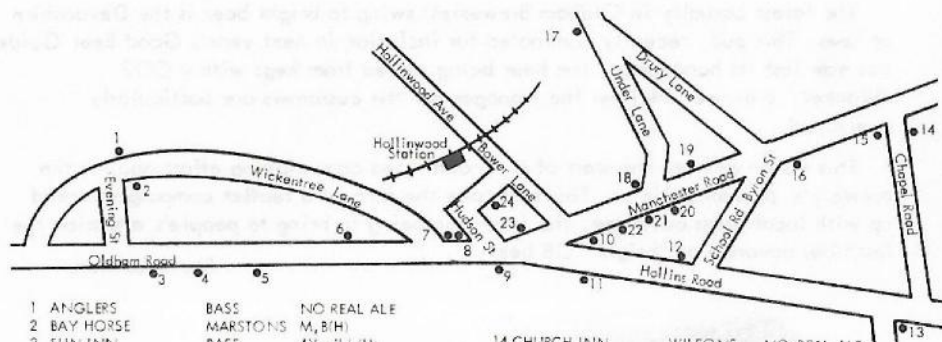
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The Cloggers Arms (Greenalls) on Oldham Road, Failsworth is to have hand-pumps installed after renovations have been carried out.

Steve Bath



# THE PUBS OF HOLLINWOOD



- |                    |          |                |
|--------------------|----------|----------------|
| 1 ANGLERS          | BASS     | NO REAL ALE    |
| 2 BAY HORSE        | MARSTONS | M, B(H)        |
| 3 SUN INN          | BASS     | 4X mild (H)    |
| 4 DUTCHBIRDS       | MARSTONS | M, B(F) Ped(H) |
| 5 HAUGHTON ARMS    | WILSONS  | M, B(H)        |
| 6 WHEATSHAEAF      | MARSTONS | M, B(H)        |
| 7 GREY HORSE       | LEES     | M, B(H)        |
| 8 WOODMAN          | LEES     | M, B(E)        |
| 9 WAGGON & HORSES  | WILSONS  | M, B(E)        |
| 10 OLD POST OFFICE | OLDHAM   | M, B(H)        |
| 11 CROWN & MITRE   | OLDHAM   | M, B(E)        |
| 12 GARDENERS ARMS  | OLDHAM   | NO REAL ALE    |
| 13 LIMELIGHT       | WILSONS  | M, B(H)        |

- |                   |            |             |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|
| 14 CHURCH INN     | WILSONS    | NO REAL ALE |
| 15 BRIDGEWATER    | HOLTS      | M, B(H)     |
| 16 NAVIGATION     | WILSONS    | M, B(H)     |
| 17 ALBION         | LEES       | M, B(E)     |
| 18 BOWLING GREEN  | LEES       | M, B(E)     |
| 19 FILHO          | WILSONS    | M, B(E)     |
| 20 SPINNERS       | SAM SMITHS | NO REAL ALE |
| 21 KINGS ARMS     | HOLTS      | M, B(H)     |
| 22 HAT & FEATHERS | MARSTONS   | M, B(E)     |
| 23 WHITE SWAN     | OLDHAM     | NO REAL ALE |
| 24 RAILWAY        | WHITBREAD  | NO REAL ALE |

The first pub is the Anglers(1), a Bass bright beer pub which provides pub grub at lunch time and every Sunday night a free disco exists which attracts the younger end. Across the road is the Bay Horse(2) nicknamed the 'Shotower'. An excellent pint of Marstons is available in one large lounge (the taproom is separate). Back on Oldham Road is the Sun Inn (3), which has a successful pool team. The main attraction at this pub is the rare Bass 4X mild on handpumps (which are situated on the right hand side of the bar); all other beer is bright. Along the road we arrive at the Dutchbirds(4), which consists of a taproom and a small but pleasant lounge in which Marstons Pedigree is now available on handpump. A short distance away is the Haughton Arms(5), which has a pool room on the right as you enter and a large central bar with a lounge in two halves recently converted to Wilsons real ale. Free entertainment on Wednesday nights. Across Oldham road is the Wheatshaeaf(6), from which a pint of the consistent Marstons is available in plain surroundings. During the week the colour TV is the attraction but at weekends piano music is played for volunteer artistes, including the landlord. At the Grey Horse(7) an excellent pint of John Willie Lees is sold on the old original handpumps, a must for any real ale drinker. Next door is another Lees house, namely the Woodman(8), which is usually very quiet.

The Waggon and Horses( 9) is very popular, especially on Thursdays and Sundays when a disc jockey is present, together with flashing lights and other paraphernalia. Fighting has been known to break out when things go too far. The juke box is popular in quieter moments. Facing the Roxy Cinema is the Old Post Office, from which you can purchase a pint of the excellent Oldham Brewery mild and bitter on handpumps at a reasonable price.

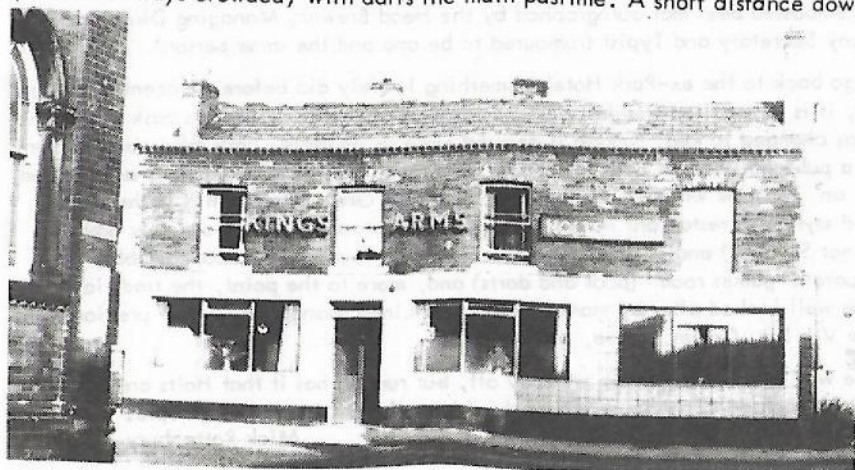
On Hollins Road is the Crown and Mitre(11), which again is OB real ale

but this time on electric pumps. A typical, old fashioned pub with separate rooms. The final comparison of OB ales can be made at the next pub up the road which is the Gardeners Rest(12) and sells only bright beer. Even so it does quite well as regards custom.

The Limelight (13) is the next pub on the list and is another Wilsons pub converted to handpumps recently. Once it was called the Sett and Cemetery and had a reputedly rough clientele, hence the change in name to alter the image. At weekends live groups perform in the lounge. (no charge for admission). On Chapel Road is the Church Inn(14), which is a Wilsons house that was modified a few years ago but unfortunately does not sell traditional ales. The split level lounge is quite unusual, yet attractive. Where the road meets up with Manchester Road, on the corner is sited the Bridgewater(15), which is a small Holts house. The bar is particularly small and has only two handpumps working. The other two have been inoperative for years. Besides the typical taproom and poolroom is another room of truly unique design as regards seating. Custom is being built up by the new publican, Keith Malkin.

The Navigation(16) has recently reverted to handpumps and is quiet in midweek unless the successful darts team is at home. Down Drury Lane is situated the Albion(17), which is very popular and sells Lees beers on free flow electric pumps. Back on the main road is yet another Lees pub which a few years ago had a small, successful restaurant; unfortunately this room is now a pool room. The pub is called the Bowling Green Inn(18) but the bowling green disappeared years ago and the pub is quite characterless now. The next pub, namely the Filho (19), is an extremely popular house and the publican Eric Taylor certainly has the formula for success. The atmosphere is very friendly and the large collection of brasses and ornaments is quite outstanding.

Across the road is the only Sam Smiths pub in the area, called the Spinners (20). Although the brewery has recently changed the type of beer (Taddy) it is still unfortunately not of the traditional kind. Quite a pleasant lounge and the taproom is always crowded, with darts the main pastime. A short distance down





the road, at the corner of Baxter Street, is a building which was once a pub called Help the Poor Struggler. The Kings Arms(21) is another Holts pub and is simply a tap room on one side of the bar and a room with a pool table on the other. Often closed through beer shortage.

Opposite Bower Lane is the Hat and Feathers(22), a Marstons pub on electric pumps which is unchanged since the days when the brew was Rothwells of Newton Heath. Permission has now been received to modify the building and work will start soon. Once again pool predominates. Across the road is the White Swan (23), which is known as the 'Dirty Duck' to the locals. This is another Oldham Brewery pub and sells only bright beer in plain surroundings.

Opposite Hollinwood station is the Railway(24). The only Whitbread house in the area, it is quite popular, especially at weekends when volunteer amateur artistes queue to give their impressions of Perry Como etc. At one time when Chesters was real ale the customers had a reputation for fighting but nowadays the atmosphere is quite sedate. Only bright beer is sold on draught but of course bottled Guinness is available.

From a total of 24 pubs described no less than 18 sell real ale; the minority sell only bright beer (non-real ale) but of course these could be converted in the future. The pubs listed are in the form of a pub crawl but obviously CAMRA members will give the bright pubs a miss unless they prefer a Guinness.

D Mason

## FISH 'N' CHIPS 'N' GREENALLS

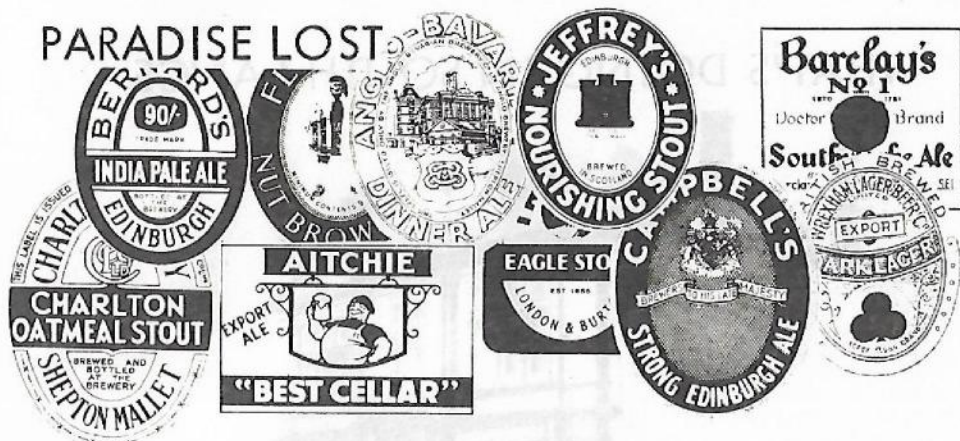
Friday, September 14th, saw the beginning of a new venture in Altrincham. The Park Hotel died when the builders moved into the pub on Lloyd Street a few months back and we waited with interest while a small army of workmenknocked down walls and hammered things together again. Speculation ran wild as we wondered if we were about to see the first licensed multi storey car park, casino or roller skating rink. Being of sounder mind than the rest of the Trafford and Hulme branch committee (which doesn't mean a lot) I did suggest in a previous What's Doing that a restaurant was on the cards. Since I was closest, I claim the first prize of a barrel of Drabs and a gold embossed beer mat autographed by the Head Brewer, Managing Director, Company Secretary and Typist (rumoured to be one and the same person).

To go back to the ex-Park Hotel (something I rarely did before it recently changed hands), it is now called the Jolly Friar, continues to serve Greenalls cask bitter (the mild has changed to keg, though if demand were to increase, cask mild could return) and is a pub and fish and chip restaurant combined. The official opening was carried out by an 18 stone wrestler dressed as a monk and Greenalls claim it is the first pub/old style fish restaurant in the country. The restaurant part is open six days a week (not Sundays) and children are welcome. The lounge bar is comfortable, there is a separate 'games room' (pool and darts) and, more to the point, the traditional bitter is well looked after by managers Jim and Linda Monaghan, whose previous pub was the Vth Inn, Crown Square, Manchester.

Time will tell if the gamble will pay off, but rumour has it that Holts are interested in a licensed curry house - that should put the wind up a few people!

Mick Rottenbury

# PARADISE LOST



The Manchester district is sometimes referred to as a 'beer drinker's paradise' but today's selection pales into utter insignificance when compared with the range available in great-grandfather's day. Although the combined total of breweries in Salford and Manchester reached a peak of nearly 80 during the latter half of the last century, the choice of beers was far better than even this incredible number suggests.

Many breweries from all over the UK and Ireland either maintained their own depots or employed agents in the area. As far back as 1850, Bass & Co had a Manchester agent and Tetley's Pale Ale was available in 1860 through one of Salford's many small brewers - Ruben Sutcliffe of Blackfriars Street. The rising popularity of pale ales was evident in the increasing number of Burton-on-Trent breweries which established outlets in Manchester such as Wilders Burton Brewery, Brunt & Co, Thomas Robinson, Salt & Co, Joseph Nunneley and John Thompson & Son. The last named is still with us today in the guise of Marston, Thompson & Evershed Ltd.

Following the Burton invasion came the Scottish infiltration, in the form of Aitchison & Co, T&J Bernard, Archibald Campbell & Co, to name but a few. Of course, in those days Scottish beer had a reputation for quality and strength, a qualification that, sadly, cannot be applied to most of today's products. Aitchison is now absorbed into Bass Charrington, Bernard into Scottish and Newcastle and Campbell into Whitbread.

London was well represented by Hoare & Co, Trumans Meux & Co, Barclay Perkins & Co and Whitbread, whose selling point was the then popular London Stout. Rivals in the stout market were the leading Irish concerns like Jamieson Pim & Co.

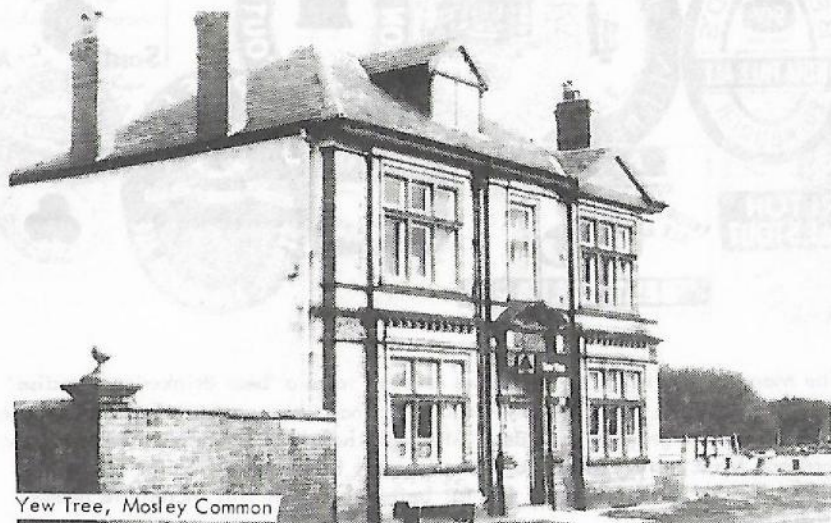
Bottles from the Oakhill Brewery of Bath are still occasionally being dug up on old tips around the area. This company was founded in 1767 and continued brewing up to 1956. Like too many others, it became part of a national group.

The list, while not being endless, is very long. All the labels shown here represent breweries which once delighted, or otherwise affected, the city's drinkers.

Alan Gall



# WHAT'S DOING IN SOUTH LANC'S



Included in this month's "What's Doing" is a comprehensive list of real ale pubs in the St Helens district. This covers the part of our branch area that is not included in "The Road to Wigan Beer". It can be seen that a near monopoly is held by Greenall Whitley, even though the district was a pioneer in the pub-swap game. In 1973 Boddingtons gained 10 pubs in St Helens in return for 8 in the Manchester area. Recommended Greenalls pubs in the town centre are the Cricketers Arms, Peter Street, and the Swan, Corporation Street.

Since the publication of "The Road to Wigan Beer" there have been several changes to the pub scene. The choice of real ale in Standish has increased by 100% following the introduction of cask Walkers in the Dog & Partridge (see September What's Doing). Previously Burtonwood had held the monopoly in the town primarily due to their 1968 acquisition of Almonds Brewery. Anyone stranded in Wigan centre in the early evening can now find refuge in the Turnkey Cellars, King Street (Boddingtons bitter and mild). There is the added attraction of cheap beer between 5.30 and 6.30pm, and you can enjoy it in the unusual surroundings of a Victorian street if you so wish. The Coach House, Lower Ince, no longer has Boddies bitter on offer, although the range of keg beers is quite staggering. We live in hope that the solitary handpump will be used to dispense cask Thwaites in the near future.

The gradual withdrawal of real mild continues, and it has been replaced by the keg variety in the following puns: Lathom House Inn, Kitt Green (Tetley); Robin Hood, Orrell (Greenalls); Wheatsheaf, Standish (Burtonwood). Other amendments to the South Lancs guide are that the Woolpack, Leigh, has switched to drum beer and Bass is no longer on sale at the Jolly Carter, Lowton. Pubs that were wrongly omitted are the Hand and Heart, Market Street, Hindley - Greenalls B, M(E) - printer's error, and the Yew Tree, Bridgewater Road, Mosley Common, Bass Brew X, 4X mild (E) - our error.

Ian Ogden



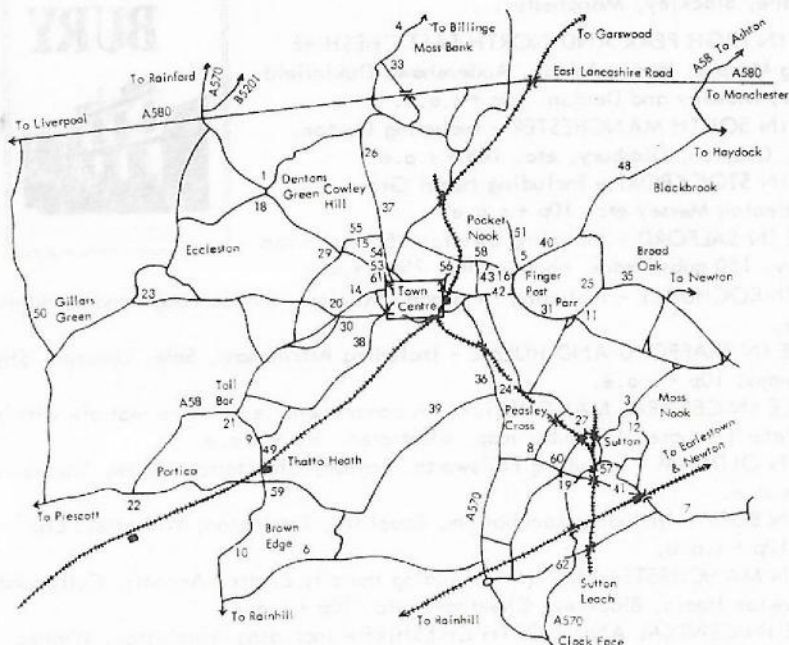
# REAL ALE in ST. HELENS



The pubs listed here are in the area covered by the South Lancashire branch of CAMRA, not included in "The Road to Wigan Beer" which contains details of surrounding areas such as Rainford, Billinge and Newton.

1 Abbey Hotel	Hard Lane, Dentons Green	Greenalls	B,M(E)
2 Angel Hotel	Barrow Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)
3 Bee Hive	Berrys Lane, Moss Nook	Greenalls	B,M(E)
4 Black Horse	Moss Bank Road, Moss Bank	Greenalls	B,M(E)
5 Black Horse	Park Road, Parr	Greenalls	B,M(E)
6 Boars Head	Elton Heath Road, Sutton Heath	Greenalls	B(E)
7 Boundary Vaults	Bold Road, Sutton	Greenalls	B,M(E)
8 Bowling Green	Robins Lane, Peasley Cross	Greenalls	B,M(E)
9 British Lion	Lugsmore Lane, Thatto Heath	Greenalls	B,M(E)
10 Brown Edge	Nutgrove Road, Brown Edge	Burtonwood	DM(E)
11 Bulls Head	Chancery Lane, Parr	Boddingtons	B,M(E)
12 Coppersmiths Arms	Watery Lane, Moss Nook	Boddingtons	B,M(E)
13 Cotham Arms	Cotham Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)
14 Cricketers Arms	Peter Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)
15 Exchange Vaults	Cooper Street, Cowley Hill	Greenalls	B,M(E)
16 Fingerpost Hotel	Park Road, Fingerpost	Greenalls	B,M(E)
17 George Hotel	George Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)
18 Gerard Arms	Kiln Lane, Dentons Green	Greenalls	B,M(E)
19 Glassmakers Arms	Waterdale Place, Sutton	Greenalls	B,M(E)
20 Golden Lion	Lyon Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)
21 Grange Park Hotel	Prescot Road, West Park	Greenalls	B,M(E)
22 Grapes	Prescot Road, Partico	Greenalls	B,M(E)
23 Griffin Inn	Church Road, Eccleston	Greenalls	B,M(E)
24 Griffin Inn	Peasley Cross Lane, Peasley Cross	Greenalls	B,M(E)
25 Hen and Chickens	Chancery Lane, Broad Oak	Greenalls	B,M(E)
26 Hope and Anchor	City Road, Gerrards Bridge	Tetley	B,M(A)
27 Imperial	Sutton Road, Warsley Brow	Greenalls	B,M(E)
28 Lamb Hotel	Corporation Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)
29 Lingholme Hotel	Dentons Green Lane, Cowley Hill	Greenalls	B,M(E)
30 Liverpool Arms	Liverpool Road, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)
31 Lord Nelson	Parr Stocks Road, Parr	Greenalls	B,M(E)
32 Market Hotel	Bridge Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)
33 Moss Bank	Moss Bank Road, Moss Bank	Greenalls	B,M(E)
34 Nelson Hotel	Bridge Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)
35 New Church Inn	broad Oak Road, Broad Oak	Greenalls	B,M(E)
36 New Vaults	Peasley Cross Lane, Peasley Cross	Boddingtons	B,M(E)
37 Park Hotel	North Road, Cowley Hill	Boddingtons	B,M(E)
38 Phoenix	Canal Street, Near Centre	Bodd'tons	B,M,SA(E)
39 Pig and Whistle	Sherdley Road, Peasley Cross	Greenalls	B,M(E)
40 Primrose Vaults	Park Road, Parr	Greenalls	B,M(E)
41 Prince of Wales	Peckers Hill Road, Sutton	Greenalls	B,M(E)
42 Queens Arms	Higher Pair Street, Fingerpost	Boddingtons	B,M(E)
43 Red Lion	Vernon Street, Pocket Nook	Greenalls	B,M(E)
44 Rifle Corps	Duke Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)
45 Royal Alfred Hotel	Shaw Street, Town Centre	Bodd'tons	B,M(E)SA(G)
46 Royal Raven	Church Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)
47 Scarisbrick Arms	Duke Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B,M(E)





48 Ship	Blackbrook Road, Blackbrook	Greenalls	B, M(E)
49 Springfield	Thatto Heath Road, Thatto Heath	Greenalls	B, M(E)
50 Stanley Arms	Gillars Lane, Gillars Green	Greenalls	B, M(E)
51 Star Inn	Merton Bank Road, Pocket Nook	Greenalls	B, M(E)
52 Swan	Corporation Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B, M(E)
53 Talbot Hotel	Duke Street, Town Centre	Boddingtons	B, M(E) SA(G)
54 Travellers Rest	Crab Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B, M(E)
55 Turks Head	Cooper Street, Cowley Hill	Tetley	B, M(E)
56 Union Hotel	Hall Street, Pocket Nook	Boddingtons	B, M(E)
57 Victoria Hotel	Ellamsbridge Road, Sutton	Greenalls	B, M(E)
58 Victoria	Pocket Nook Street, Pocket Nook	Greenalls	B, M(E)
59 Vine Tavern	Elephant Lane, Thatto Heath	Boddingtons	B, M(E)
60 Vulcan	Robins Lane, Peasley Cross	Tetley	B, M(E)
61 Washington	North John Street, Town Centre	Greenalls	B, M(E)
62 Wheatsheaf	Mill Lane, Sutton Leach	Greenalls	B, M(E)

#### SOUTH LANCASHIRE CAMRA BRANCH CONTACTS:

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SECRETARY: Ian Ogden Ashton in Makerfield 79534

# Real Ale Guides

The following publications are available from Roger Hall,  
123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester.

## REAL ALE IN HIGH PEAK AND NORTH EAST CHESHIRE

- Including Marple, Hyde, Ashton, Audenshaw, Dukinfield, Stalybridge, Mossley and Denton. 10p + s.a.e.

## REAL ALE IN SOUTH MANCHESTER - Including Gorton,

Openshaw, Clayton, Didsbury, etc. 10p + s.a.e.

## REAL ALE IN STOCKPORT - Including Hazel Grove,

Cheadle, Heaton Mersey etc. 10p + s.a.e.

\*REAL ALE IN SALFORD - Including Swinton, Eccles, Irlam and Worsley. 150 pubs, maps, photographs. 25p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN ROCHESTER - Including Heywood, Milnrow, Littleborough and Middleton 10p + s.a.e.

\*\*REAL ALE IN TRAFFORD AND HULME - Including Altrincham, Sale, Urmston, Stretford, etc. With maps. 10p + s.a.e.

\*\*\*REAL ALE IN CENTRAL MANCHESTER - A comprehensive guide to real ale within 1 mile of St Peter's Square. 117 pubs, map illustrated. 30p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN OLDHAM - Including Failsworth, Royton, Chadderton, Shaw, Saddleworth, etc. 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN BURY - Including Ramsbottom, Radcliffe, Tottington, Whitefield and Prestwich. 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN MANCHESTER NORTH - Including the city centre, Ancoats, Collyhurst, Moston, Newton Heath, Blackley, Cheetham, etc. 10p + s.a.e.

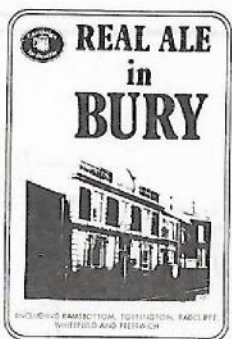
\*\*REAL ALE IN CENTRAL AND NORTH CHESHIRE - Including Warrington, Widnes, Runcorn, Lymm, Frodsham, Northwich, Middlewich and Winsford 10p + s.a.e.

THE ROAD TO WIGAN BEER - Including Leigh, Atherton, Standish, Skelmersdale, Newton, etc. Fully illustrated, maps. 35p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN GREATER GROTLEY - Including Grotley, Slumley, Smarmford and Slutch, Poshton and Pseudley. 10p + s.a.e.

REAL ALE IN ST HELENS - Including Sutton, Peasley Cross, Thatto Heath, Moss Nook, Eccleston, Parr, etc. 10p + s.a.e.

\*updated 1979 \*\* Second Edition 1979 \*\*\* Third Edition 1979



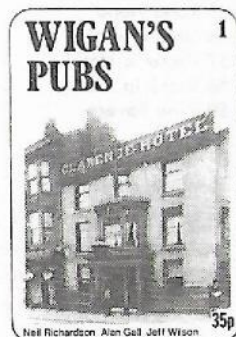
# Pub & Brewery Histories

The following publications are available from Alan Gall,  
61 Romney Street, Salford 6.

SALFORD'S PUBS No 1 - Covering 'Hanky Park', Regent Road, Cross Lane, Charlestown, Walker & Homfrays brewery, etc Fully illustrated. 70p including postage

SALFORD'S PUBS No 2 - Covering Greengate, Chapel Street, Islington, Ordsall, Threlfalls Brewery, brewery takeovers, etc. Fully illustrated. 60p including postage

WIGAN'S PUBS No 1 - Covering the town centre, Aireys, Oldfields, Albion breweries, the Newtown Brewery, etc. Fully illustrated. 45p including postage







"It's all lager isn't it?" is the standard response to statements about Continental beer. Certainly few beers brewed outside Great Britain would satisfy Camra's criteria for "Real Ale". Yet many Continental beers, particularly those of Bavaria and Bohemia, are excellent and frequently superior in every respect to the best of our own traditional cask conditioned beers.

It's important to realise that I'm not comparing our own real ale with the synthetic trash masquerading under foreign names in this country, but with beers sold in their own locality. I'm sure that Holts and Timothy Taylors would be pretty awful if they were tarted up and sold in trendy bars in Prague and Munich.

At first it is difficult to understand how a beer which is not cask conditioned and which might be pressurised might be palatable, so it's worth while having a look at the differences between our own beers and those of Germany and Czechoslovakia, to see whether we might learn something about the emphasis which we place on each of the factors which contribute to the quality of beer.

#### WATER

The taste of beer is inevitably affected to a considerable degree by the largest ingredient - water - and the trace elements it contains. In England Burton on Trent was considered to have the most suitable water for the production of bitter and consequently many breweries 'Burtonise' their water before commencing brewing. The hardness of water used for brewing varies considerably. Pilsen water, with a hardness of 1.6°n, is probably the softest water used for brewing and may help to account for the characteristic flavour of Pilsen beer.

Although in the past location was a determinant of flavour, this is no longer true as brewers can add chemicals to achieve the type of water they require. The fact that the hardness of water varies as much on the Continent as it does in England would seem to imply that the natural water need no longer be significant

in affecting the final palate of the beer.

### INGREDIENTS

Several countries, including Germany, Norway and Switzerland, have laws prohibiting the use of adjuncts and grains other than malted barley. The German Reinheitsgebot, for example, dating back to 1516, limits the ingredients of German beer to malted barley, hops and water, with an amendment to allow for wheat beers. In Czechoslovakia, however, caramel and other colourings are sometimes added to the beers.

It is certainly true that the use of malt extracts, wheat, maize, rice, unmalted barley, caramel and other adjuncts does nothing to improve the quality of beer, and there is little doubt that the usage has increased in recent years in this country.

The Isle of Man, however, has its own pure beer Act which prohibits adjuncts whilst allowing sugar. Yet the beers of Okells or Castletown do not differ significantly from the mainland beers; in fact they would appear well down the list in many people's choice of quality beers.

### MASHING

There seem to be few differences between Continental and British practices which would affect the quality of the beer.

### HOPS

The hops used by Continental and British brewers do differ considerably. It is the flower of the female hop which provides the oils and acids which add bitterness and aroma and help preserve the beer. The male hop is outlawed in Europe because fertilized seeds can prevent the clearing of bottom-fermented beers, a problem which does not occur with our own top-fermented beers. Although all brewing areas have long established traditions of hop-cultivation, the hops of Bohemia are generally admired by brewers for their quality. The rate of hopping varies considerably both in England and in Europe.

### FERMENTATION

Virtually all British beer is top fermented, and the process is still used in parts of France, Germany and Belgium. The great volume of Continental beer is, however, produced by the bottom fermentation process, which takes place at far lower temperatures (40°-50°F) than top fermentation (60°-70°F). The process may also take longer. There is some evidence that bottom fermentation, which should produce a more stable product, is being introduced by British brewers - Greenall Whitley, Watneys, Trumans and Ind Coope are all thought to be using bottom fermentation but there seems to be no noticeable improvement in the quality and consistency of their beers.

Yeast obviously has a significant effect on the taste of beer and a change in yeast can dramatically alter a beer brewed from the same recipe, but even British lagers brewed with the Continental yeast for bottom fermentation, *Saccharomyces Carlsbergensis*, have none of the taste and character of Budvar or Spatenbräu.

### CONDITIONING

After primary fermentation, traditional English beer is allowed to condition or mature in the cask. The beer is not filtered but clarified by the addition of finings. Secondary fermentation may be encouraged by priming with sugar and



aroma may be created by dry hopping. The period of conditioning is usually about two weeks and frequently less than a week.

In contrast, Continental beers are 'lagered' or stored at temperatures just above freezing point for periods between six weeks and six months. A slow secondary fermentation takes place, maturing the beer which is finally filtered before being put into barrels.

Our own bright beers are often referred to as 'brewery conditioned'. This is a misnomer as they are not conditioned in the brewery. After primary fermentation is complete after 4 or 5 days the yeast is killed off, the beer is chilled and filtered and put into containers ready for delivery to pubs and clubs.

### STRENGTH

Traditional English bitter has an average original gravity of about 1036 (3.5% alcohol by volume). There are stronger beers available but they tend to lack the characteristic taste of ordinary bitters. The beers of Germany and Czechoslovakia tend to be much stronger with average strengths of 4.5% to 5% (1045-1050 o.g.), but the beers are much lighter and less evidently strong tasting than our own beers of similar strength.

### SERVING

Camra has traditionally placed great emphasis on the evils of pressurised dispense systems. Many German and Czech beers are served under controlled pressure without detracting from the taste. The beer is usually sold very quickly giving little time for the gas to be absorbed. Our own obsessions are frequently overplayed. In extreme cases where pasteurised beers are stored in kegs or forced up by CO2 pressure, criticisms may be justified but controlled blanket pressure on a cask which is sold in a couple of days is usually undetectable and unlikely to affect the palate of the beer even for the discerning beer connoisseur.

If there are beers which fail to meet at least two of Camra's criteria for real ale and which are nevertheless excellent, it is surely time for Camra to re-examine its criteria. The excellence of Continental beers seems to lie in the purity of the ingredients, the bottom fermentation system, the greater strength of the beers and the lengthy period of maturation.

I'm not suggesting that we replace our own real ale, but that we don't dismiss out of hand beers which don't meet up to our arbitrary yardsticks. If the brewers, instead of foisting on the public overpriced, cold, weak amber liquids with real Continental names, were to concentrate on producing real Continental beers, we could enjoy the best of two worlds. Real English beer with its vast variety of flavours and colours would be complemented by palatable beers which would supplant the pasteurised lagers which now form over 20% of total beer sales. Quality products should not be condemned because of doctrinaire assertions based on limited knowledge of the beers of communities with brewing traditions as old as or older than our own.

Roger Hall

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The Butty Boat Bar of the Midland Hotel, Manchester, is now selling Tetley bitter on handpumps.

Steve Bath

# THE GROTLEY GUIDE

Dear Sir,

At last the comprehensive guide to Greater Grotley has appeared. However, it disturbs me to find the Lord Cardboard included. Real ale hasn't been seen for years here, never mind the hoppy, delightfully unfiltered Pukes. Your information sent me on a wild goose chase to Poshton, resulting in a slightly embarrassing, yet meaningful, tête-à-tête with mine hosts, Hughie and Ruth. For an easy life (i.e.-no customers), they happily stand by their John Smuggs Tedium.

Incidentally, if and when the guide is updated, it would be well worth checking out the Onanistic Clogger and Snivelling Brat's Arms in Gilbert Green Close, Splatterly New Town. Last week, Figg's Slimline Heavy (G) was put on for a trial run. Incidentally, the pool table and unpleasant smell have been removed from the gents.

Grahame Tonge

Dear Sir,

I was surprised to see that the Dog & Spit was omitted from the Greater Grotley guide in last month's What's Doing. The Dog & Spit, Higher Snoot Magna, is the only pub in our area using a (D) dispense system, where the beer is delivered to the bar by dog. Mine host, ex-RAF Squadron Leader Biffo Farquar, has been using his trusty labrador, Shep, to fetch the beer from the cellar since 1945. Of course, Shep is getting on a bit now but a sharp kick from Biffo still sends the faithful old hound hobbling down the cellar steps for ale. In recognition of his long service, the brewers, Boringsods, will shortly be bringing out Boringsod's "Woof!", a naturally conditioned bottled beer. Unfortunately there may be some delay in production, as brewery chiefs are still working on a bottle-top design which Shep will be able to open with his gums, his teeth having fallen out after many years of bottle opening.

Biffo and Shep came to Higher Snoot Magna one November night in 1944, when their Lancaster bomber crashed on the town en route for Essen, and Biffo liked it so much that they decided to stay. Higher Snoot Magna has changed little over the years, apart from a sharp drop in population at the time of Biffo and Shep's arrival (fortunately Biffo managed to jettison most of his bomb load over Slumley). Today the pub caters for ex-RAF types and visitors alike, and the ceilings and walls are festooned with RAF memorabilia including some charred remains of Biffo's Lancaster, and a few charred remains of Higher Snoot Magna. The pub is easy to find, situated at the edge of what is now a large car park in the centre of the village.

Douglas Bader-Meinhoff

Dear Sir,

As a great believer in the ideals of CAMRA, and a regular reader of 'What's Doing', I have recently become very disturbed by some of the drivel printed in the magazine, namely the self-centred ramblings of one Rupert Periwinkle. Originally the articles were mildly amusing. However, as time has passed I have (between yawns) begun to wonder what power this person or persons has with the magazine. At the present rate 'What's Doing' will soon be nothing more than a mouthpiece for this moron, who by now must hold the world record for ego tripping.

"Real Ale in Greater Grotley" (September issue) was the final straw. The piece was irrelevant, unamusing and a complete insult to one's intelligence. Surely you are not so short of contributions and ideas that you have to print such garbage?

T A Carrodus



# TRAFFORD & HULME GO EXPLORING

Trafford and Hulme are off on another gay social whirl. This time the destination is Northwich, a town until recently renowned for its superb choice of Wilderspool ales but sadly, after a recent pub swap with Wilsons, now of no note whatsoever.

The date is Saturday 17th November and we shall be meeting Central Cheshire branch at the Volunteer (Wilsons) at 12 o'clock for the usual internecine brawl.

For the purposes of this article we shall assume that the party will alight at Northwich Railway Station before 11 am (diesel from Oxford Road 10.00; Sale 10.08; Altrincham 10.14; Northwich 10.42). As you wander out of the station yard, the Lion and Railway (Greenall Whitley) is the first sight to greet you, but ignore this for the moment and turn right down Manchester Road. A hundred yards on your left you will find the Locomotive, a small superbly basic Northwich pub. By now you will have worked up quite a thirst and as Greenalls closed the 'Loco' some two years ago we'd better get back to the Lion and Railway. (Sigh!) Somehow there's nothing tastes quite so good as a pint of Greenalls you can't get!

However, pushing nostalgia aside, the main part of the crawl consists of a frantic zig-zag from the station down the A 559 (variously known as Station Road, Witton Street and High Street) to the town centre. You can safely be assured of cask Greenall Whitley in all but the following outlets: the Waterman's Arms (Ma Kenyon's) on Witton Street, now dispensing Wilsons on electric pumps, and the Beehive in High Street, where the mild is fizzy.

The Volunteer, in the 1979 Good Beer Guide as selling Greenalls, is now of course Wilsons and is run by a highly delighted and very enthusiastic ex-Greenalls landlord, who serves excellent pints from his new handpumps. To find it, ask your way to Northwich Victoria Football Ground on London Road (just around the corner from the bus station) and the pub is just in front of Vic's ground.

For those without sufficient stamina for the preliminaries any bus passing down into town, past the railway station, will get you there (just ask for the



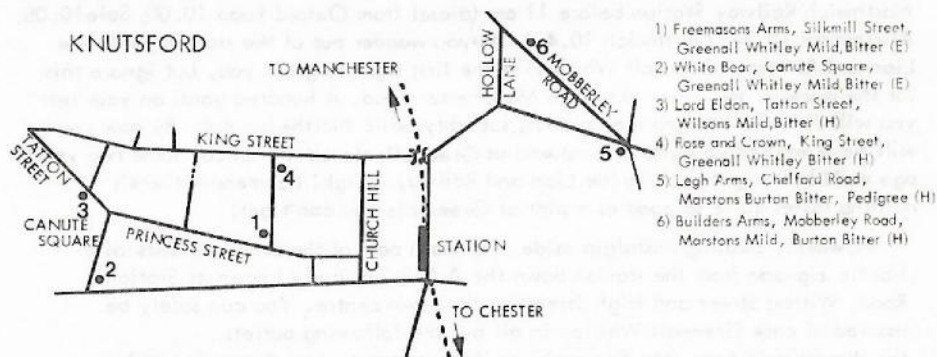
White Bear, Knutsford

terminus).

For people with extra stamina, and a head for heights, another mile and the two other Wilsons pubs are within reach on Castle Hill. The Freemasons is on the left at the top of the hill and the Blue Barrell a few hundred yards further on. However, it is believed the Barrell serves tank Wilsons at the landlord's request - he previously served tank Greenall Whitley.

And so to Knutsford..... Have a nice day'

Dave Ward



The Trafford and Hulme branch will continue their Saturday Cheshire Excursion by spending the evening in Knutsford. A review of some of the pubs in Knutsford appeared in the May 1978 What's Doing. To recap briefly, Marstons, Wilsons and Greenall Whitley ales are available. Three Marstons beers can be sampled; the Burton Bitter, mild and Pedigree. Wilsons and Greenalls mild and bitter are also available. The starting point will be at the Legh Arms at 7.30 pm.

## NEW PUB

A new Wilsons pub selling fined beer opened last month. Called the Metropole, it stands on Ryland Street, Beswick, about 100 yards from the now derelict Clock Face on Ashton Old Road.

Stewart Revell

## Subscriptions

If you want to be sure of getting What's Doing every month, why not subscribe? It costs £1.20 for six issues, postage paid. Fill in the form below and send it together with a cheque or postal order for £1.20 made out to 'What's Doing' to Roger Hall, 123 Hill Lane, Blackley, Manchester.

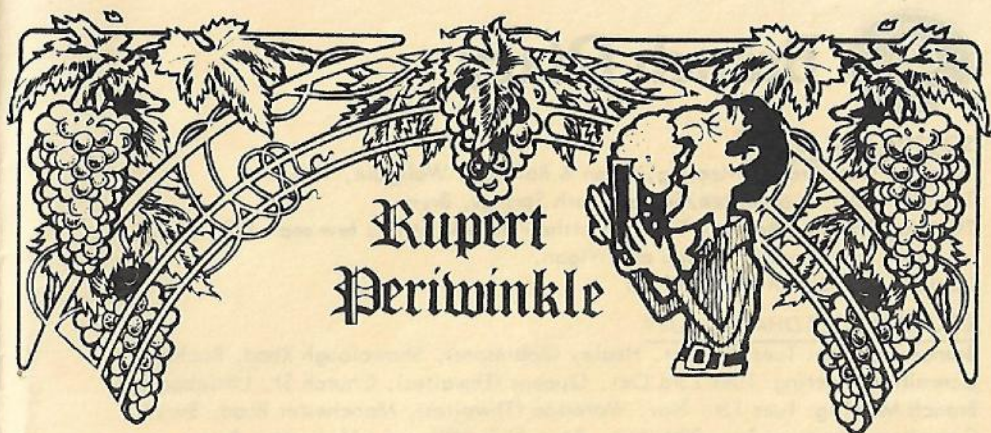
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Please send me the next six issues of What's Doing, starting with the \_\_\_\_\_ issue (state month).

Signed \_\_\_\_\_





First the bounteous tidings - The Noble Robin has made a dramatic and miraculous recovery. Perhaps the Reverend Blether has a hot line to the Almighty for there is little doubt that his prayers were answered. Our noble hero, replete with parrot, is once again scuttling about missing trains and forgetting things and our reverend friend is free to concentrate on his equine underwear crusade.

And now for something of serious import. I've never been in favour of the Grotley Branch method of selecting quaffing houses for inclusion in beer guides. It seems there was a deliberate policy of choosing slovenly quasi-middens in the hope that some "trendy southern poofstah" would pop in to some proletarian hovel and say something like, "Kellner - a half of your ale from the wood, if you please, and may I see the liste du jour? I fancy some canard à l'orange," and probably be kneecapped or lose an ear. Anyway, it always seemed to me that a pub could not be included if the landlord was ever sober or if uncouth hooligans did n't roll JCB tyres round the vault.

To me the publication of the Greater Grotley guide was the nadir of these irresponsible policies. Many people have agreed with me, as evidenced by the sackfuls of plaintive epistles that I've received. A Mr Andrews from the Guild of Radio Jugglers and Ventriloquists wrote to say that he was "gloody glazing at this glack-guardly groadside at his members' aggility." The secretary of the Snobley Short Sighted Society said that he took a dim view of it. The local deaf society hadn't heard of the Guide and it seemed to have gone over the heads of the Gay Dwarf Reform League, whilst other minorities have been vociferous in their protest. Both Boris Prat and Peter Podge wrote to say that they were surviving brain transplant patients. Bunty said that the word "successful" was implied in his description of Sid Tortoise of the Rampant Strumpet and we wondered whether Peter Podge was the same as he of Barnsley and Sheffield Culture fame who recently wrote to our trashy subsidiary, "What's Brewing". The urbane Mr Podge wrote fervently about the wonderful desirability of alcoholism. He's quite right, of course. It's well known that Nelson, Napoleon, James Watt, Queen Victoria, St Paul, William Wilberforce, Florence Nightingale, most of the Popes, half the Anglican Archbishops and a good section of the reigning houses of Europe were all gibbering winos. Mr Podge, however, doesn't go far enough. Alcoholism should not only be encouraged but made compulsory and I hope to guide a Bill through the House of Lords in the near future, making homosexuality and alcohol dependence statutory requirements of all citizens. A bas la différence!





# Branch Diary

## SOUTH LANCASHIRE

Tues 2nd Oct: Branch Meeting, Swan & Railway, Wallgate, Wigan

Tues 16th Oct: Committee/Social, Bath Springs, Bryn

Thursday 1st Nov: Brewery Trip to Matthew Brown. Still a few seats left. Pick up points are Newton, Ashton and Wigan.

Contact: Ian Ogden Wigan 79534

## ROCHDALE, OLDHAM & BURY

Branch Meeting: Tues 9th Oct. Healey (Robinsons), Shawclough Road, Rochdale

Committee Meeting: Tues 23rd Oct. Queens (Thwaites), Church St, Littleborough

Branch Meeting: Tues 13th Nov. Waterloo (Thwaites), Manchester Road, Bury

Committee Meeting: Tues 20th Nov. Brunswick (Wilsons), Moorgate, Bury

Day Trip: Sat 13th Oct to Knaresborough, North Yorks. Lunchtime session only

Contact: Steve Lawton 061 620 9239 (h) 061 236 4411 ext 7236 (w)

## TRAFFORD & HULME

Branch Meeting: (AGM) Thurs Oct 18th 8pm. Malt Shovels, Altrincham

Lees Brewery visit: Weds Oct 24th

Social: Thurs Oct 25th 8pm. Hare & Hounds, Timperley

Committee/Social: Thurs Nov 1st 8pm. Railway, Chapel Rd, Sale

Branch Meeting: Thurs Nov 15th 8pm. Plough, Green Lane, Ashton-on-Mersey  
Speaker from Tetleys (Warrington)

Day Out: Sat Nov 17th. Northwich: Meet 12 noon, the Volunteer, London Road  
and Knutsford: Meet 7.30pm Legh Arms, Chelford Rd (5 mins  
from station) See 'Trafford & Hulme go exploring'

Contact: Mick Rottenbury 969 7013 (home)

## NORTH MANCHESTER

Committee/Social: Weds 10 Oct, Harp & Shamrock, Manchester. 8pm

Branch Meeting: Castle & Falcon, Manchester, Weds 17th Oct, 8pm. Speaker  
from Burtonwood

Contact: Roger Hall 740 7937

## BOLTON

Social: Weds 10th Oct Strawberry Duck, Entwistle. Trains from Bolton

Branch Meeting: Weds 24th Oct, White Lion, Westhoughton

Social: Tues 6th Nov, Tanners Arms, Lever Street, Bolton

# What's Doing

Contributions to the magazine are always needed. If you have any news of pubs opening, shutting, going back to traditional beer or going the other way, please get in touch with the editor, Neil Richardson, 51 Lime Street, Farnworth, Bolton. Farnworth 78138, 061 793 5329. Articles are always welcome.

**COPY DATE** for November edition is Thurs 25th October