

## PUB TROUBLES.

Every decent pub goer will be sorry to learn of the problems that the Landlord of the Jolly Carter in Northenden is experiencing with thugs both inside and outside the pub. Bottle smashing, ~~chairs and tables~~ wrecked are just part of the sorry story - and it's not long since the licensee from the Clarence, Wilmslow Road, was attacked whilst he was doing relief at the nearby Birch Villa.

This is a side of Pub life that, thankfully, probably few CAMRA members see. Perhaps we should consider ourselves lucky that we are able to enjoy ourselves on an evening out, and then find our way safely home without encountering any real problems. We should all be concerned at this increasing use of violence and we are amazed at the following comment attributed to a gentleman (?) described as Boddingtons advisor on Pub welfare when asked about the continued troubles at Boddingtons Jolly Carter: "We do get a strong element of tough men in our houses, because we are a tough mans beer."!!!!

Leaving aside the point as to whether tough men enjoy drinking a bland low gravity bitter beer the spokesman's comments imply that this sort of trouble is not uncommon in Boddingtons Pubs.

If this is indeed the case then members of the public wishing to enjoy a quiet drink would appear to be better off avoiding Boddingtons houses, especially as the comment made implies that Boddingtons are not particularly sympathetic towards the Landlords plight.

## PUB OF THE MONTH.

February's South Manchester Pub of the Month presentation night takes place on the very last day of the month - Thursday 28th.

The venue is one of the finest traditional style pubs in the whole of the area covered by the Branch - the Seven Stars on Ashton Old Road.

The beer is a very good advertisement for Holts, and so is the decor - no instant fun themes here, just a good solid Victorian pub well looked after. For those who don't know the Seven Stars (shame on you!) it's towards the Ardwick end of the Old Road between Gorton Road and Midland Street, and only about 15 minutes walk from the City Centre.

Splendid old pub, good beer, good atmosphere, and even a Manchester dartboard in the vault for the experts (or the foolhardy) - you can't afford to miss February 28th.!

Rhys P.Jones.

## WELCOME TO WEBSTERS.

Following our night out with Pennine Hosts (details inside) snippets of information keep coming up from our be-fuddled brains!! One of these concerns Websters, which is likely to be found in about 20

Hosts pubs on this side of the Pennines - this will be a welcome addition to beer choice. The Good Beer Guide quotes Websters (Halifax) as brewing Dark Mild (1032) Yorkshire Light (1033.8) & Yorkshire Bitter (1037.5)

As this is believed to be a reciprocal arrangement you will be able to get your friendly neighbourhood Wilsons if you're ever stranded on the other side of the Pennines.

Phil Levison.

## CON PLEASE - YOU'RE IN GREENALL WHITLEY LAND.

Nasty rumours abound concerning the dubious and dishonest tactic of the installation of fake handpumps in two Greenall Pubs - the Elizabethan in Heaton Moor and the Kenilworth in Cheadle.

One pull on the pump and out from a nozzle a little distance away comes bright and fizzy gassed Greenalls.

You have been warned!!

Opening Times is written & published by South Manchester Camra. Send your news, views or comments to: S.H.Higgins, 48, Moorcroft Drive, Burnage, Manchester M19 1WH. Tel: 432 0059.

The views expressed in 'Opening Times' are not necessarily those of the Campaign for Real Ale Ltd.



GUESTS OF HOSTS.

An invitation arrived out of the blue - to go on a pub-crawl with Pennine Hosts.

So on the 16th., January South Manchester members turned up at the Nelson Tavern on Wellington Road South. As numbers were expected to be limited to one mini-bus, it had to be first come, first served - a pity members couldnt turn up early for Branch Meetings!

But, to the pubs - Nelsons Ale House was converted to a Tavern in Hosts terms, and its stillarecognisable pub with hand-pumped mild and bitter, and many features of the original building, mosaic floor, tiled walls etc. - a perfectly good back fitting was stripped out, but we have been told that this will appear in another location.

Next call was Sports, or so it said on a brightly illuminated sign topped by the words 'Open House'. Locals would recognise the building as the Windsor Castle on Castle Street, Edgeley - but that was a Wilsons Pub and Sports certainly isn't that any more. It's brightly lit, with lots of light paint-work and chromium fittings, a central bar where only the bitter is 'real', and there are snooker and pool-tables and dart boards - a licensed Youth Club someone suggested. Apparently its also open outside licensing hours for coffee, teas etc.

Just a couple of blocks away, and we were at the Hollywood, in Bloom St. - this was to be the only unchanged pub we would see on the trip. Its a huge building with a large stained glass window, different drinking areas (including a vault) and hand-pumped mild & bitter. Bitter sales outstrip the Mild but there is still a steady demand for mild (3 kils a week) which is a pointer to the traditional type of pub. a taste of tradition, to pinch one of Banks's slogans! Our visit included a look at the cellar, where some of the old gas fittings were still in place (and that was when even the gas was real from Portwood Gas Works just down the road.),

Now back into Stockport Centre to the Far Pavilions - the where? Formerly Mr. Chips and before that the Mersey T Tavern. This is Hosts 'ethnic colonial' concept. Here they offer 'all the spice of old India in the days of the Raj.' - in Mersey Square?! - a lot has already been said about this place, none of it very complimentary, so lets' just

mention the 8ft. pith helmet over the bar, the jungle noises and the bitter only.

So out of the jungle, on to the A6 and South to Hazel Grove and the Bulls Head Tavern. This is a pub which didnt have a lot to offer in its original form and the new style was thought to be an improvement. Although, basically, open plan, there are separate drinking areas and even the ubiquitous gas fire with its brick 'chimney' conceals a quiet little corner with a dart board. Barcalycard? - presumably aimed at the food side, but would they accept it for a couple of pints? (Bitter only) Now I suppose it's just a matter of time before an American Express pub.

Next port of call was Drakes on Marple Road, Offerton, formerly the Golden Hind., with its bright Open House type sign and no indications of whose brewery it was. This pub is something of a split personality - one side is the new image with artificial greenery and up market furniture fittings (and customers to match) but walk to the other side (via the Gents if you like) and you're back in a traditional pub with pool, darts, cards (and real people?)

Our final visit was to the Pack Horse in Ashworth Lane, just up the road from Mottram cross roads. Thought to have been an Inn for at least 350 years, this is one which could have been really ruined by insensitive modernisation. But it has retained something of the character of a wayside Inn, and serves hand-pumped mild and bitter, as well as a good range of food 7 days a week, lunchtimes and evenings. Once again a small traditional vault with cards and darts (log-end board) and as we were

EXOTIC FOREIGN BEERS

ONLY 99p A BOTTLE (OVER 20p OFF)

WHEN YOU PRESENT A COPY OF 'OPENING TIMES'

AT

The  
NELSON  
TAVERN

THE HOME OF HOME MADE FOOD!!

Meals served Monday-Saturday 12-2-00  
and Monday-Thursday Evenings



Guests of Hosts - cont.

made very welcome by the 'innkeeper' and his wife, it rounded off a very interesting and enjoyable evening.

Thanks again to Mr. Alan Thompson, M.D. of Pennine Hosts, Mr. Ken Sutton, District Manager, Mr. Tony Tighe (P.R.) and not least the driver who transported us safely throughout the evening.

Phil Levison.

REAL GREENALLS HANDPUMPS.

The Greenalls Bitter at the Angel, Wellington St., Gorton, is now served by handpump - a veritable thicket of handpumps indeed. However, owing to poor sales, the pub sells no mild of any description. The Angel will appear in the forthcoming Greater Manchester Good Beer Guide and is well worth a detour from the more usual Gorton/Hyde Road pub crawling routes.

WATCH THIS SPACE.

At long last a 'Sold' sign has gone up outside the Cheshire Hunt on Hyde Road. We await with interest developments in this former Wilsons house which has been on the market for some two years.

VIDEO NASTY

The Salisbury (nr. Oxford Road Station) closed for renovation in November and re-opened its doors just before Christmas as the Salisbury Ale House. The handpumped Wilsons Mild and Bitter are still available, but the Bulmers cider has been replaced by Keg Strongbow.

This kind of conversion, to quote Pennine Hosts, covers "everything associated with the traditional English pub." Whilst we cannot fault the extensive use of real bricks and timber in the refurbishment (and very reasonable food - £1.25 for typical chicken, curry, lasagne etc) there is one feature which is not traditional English pub - the video juke box. 3 strategically placed screens make it difficult to avoid - if you think you've found a quiet corner, you'll still get the sound, and a space invader type of machine that bleeps and grumbles and talks to itself.

The Friendship (Hydes) in Fallowfield is undergoing alterations. The Wilmslow Road entrance is closed as the bar is being extended.

COMPREHENSIVE CHANGES.

The up-to-date Stockport comprehensive list appeared in What's Doing in July last. Since then there have been a number of alterations, which are summarised below. The list does include High Peak pubs though, and we have no details of any of their alterations.

Bramhall: Ladybrook - add Oldham B (E)

Cheadle/Gatley/Cheadle Hulme:

Red Lion, Gatley - add Trophy.

Red Lion, Cheadle - ordinary Bitter replaces Best Bitter.

Edgeley/ShawHeath/Cheadle Heath:

Hollywood - dispense now (H)

Ploagh Inn - delete.

Windsor Castle - now Sports. B (H)

Hazel Grove/High Lane:

Anchor - add Old Tom (H)

Bulls Head - now Bulls Head Tavern

Horse & Jockey - add Mild.

Heatons & Reddish

Add Grey Horse, Old Road, Heaton Norris

Greenalls M & B (E)

Houldsworth - delete Trophy.

Offerton/Offerton Fold.

Drakes - delete Mild.

Stockport Centre

Delete: Bowling Green, Imperial, Railway (Wellington Road N), White Lion and Crown, Heaton Lane.

Castlefield should be Castlewood.

Gladstone - add Mild.

Midland - delete mild.

Midway - add Old Peculier (E)

Mr. Chaps is now Far Pavilions.

Nelson Ale House is now Nelson Tavern.

Add: Pack Horse, Market Place, Tetley M & B (E).

Unconfirmed: Bamford Arms: Wilsons Bitter (H).

From our Irish Correspondent:

We are reliably informed that last summer in Galway an event described as a Beer & Periwinkle Festival was held. Does this mean that "Sot's Ruin"'s much travelled hack, not content with Hacker-Pschorring his way around Bavaria, will now be inflicting himself on the wilds of Connemara, there to Beamish all over his Murphys? I think we should be told.

SOMEBODDY LOVES YOU.1.....

Will someone please tell me why, if Boddingtons have changed their bitter for a blander brew, I can drink a pint of Bitter in the Victoria, Burnage, which tastes as though nothing has changed? Perhaps we blame the Brewery too much, they don't keep and serve the beer. - 'Theakston Cat'



ROUND BRITAINDRINKER.....FAREWELL TO YATES AND JACKSONS

from Alan Seal

The idea was originally conceived, as the best ideas tend to be, after a few pints on a pub crawl of Stockport before Christmas. On discussion of the forthcoming momentous occasion when the entire population of Greater Manchester was due to descend on Y & J's pubs a few worthy dissidents decided to beat them to it in the hope that there would still be something left to drink.

And so it was that on a cold January morning a small, select band, still only partly recovered from the excesses of the festive season, gathered upon the platform of Victoria Station. First destination was not, in fact, the Brewery's home town of Lancaster, but one of its celebrated country pubs, The Ship at Overton, otherwise known as Ma Macluskies. This was reached via trains to Morecambe and the local bus service which not only took us on a tour of every back street in Morecambe but past the nuclear power station and an ICI plant which was belching noxious yellow fumes into the atmosphere. In between the latter two we spotted a caravan park and a signpost to Pontins. Anyone looking for a place to spend their Summer holiday?

Having braved the hazardous journey we arrived at the Ship shortly after noon.

In some ways the pub defies description without lapsing into clichés but the much overused term 'gem' can certainly be justly applied in this case. It is a totally unspoilt Victorian establishment with a vault and two other small rooms opening off the main bar area. Of these we were lucky enough to get established in the snug which boasted a roaring open fire, an amazing collection of birds eggs and a settee which was more comfortable than most beds. As well as the Handpumped Yates & Jackson mild and bitter, draught Merrydown Cider, superb value sandwiches and Uncle Joes mint balls were also on sale. Needless to say we did not explore any further. Our only complaint was that the snow which began to fall did not come down heavily enough to strand us there. Let us hope that Thwaites, in their wisdom, see fit to leave this hostelry just as it is.

It would be a tragedy if it were altered in any way as it exudes the sort of atmosphere which can never be transplanted into a new or renovated building.

Unfortunately it proved impossible for anything else to live up to the Ship and so the evening proved to be a bit of a comedown. We visited four Y & J houses in Lancaster - The Albert, Farmers Arms, Horse and Farrier and Brown Cow. All were typical ordinary town pubs - decent beer but sadly unexciting after the lunchtime session. Possibly the most interesting pub of the night was the only non Y & J tied house. The Waterwitch used to be the only tied house of the now defunct Westmorland Brewery - it now sells Moorhouses alongside Y & J Mild. Situated on a canal towpath it is a converted stables. In fairness to Lancaster it must be said that there are more interesting pubs in the town but we had dedicated the day to Y & J drinking.

The last train to Manchester brought us home in time for a last pint (or two) at the Marble Arch - a fine end to a fine day. The sad note, obviously, was the demise of a once revered brewery - we can only campaign to ensure that this is not the beginning of an 'open session' on the small independent breweries of the North-West which in most cases offer better quality and value than their bigger, more illustrious neighbours.

PS: Whilst Y & J is no more John Worthington, licensee of the Marble Arch, has had a final pint of Y & J Bitter sealed in a pot for posterity!!

For details of Advertising in 'Opening Times' please contact Ron Sproson on 432 0059.

# Sykes Wine

## bar

Heaton Lane, Stockport, off Mersey Square - Tel: 480 5996.

STOCKPORTS' WINE BAR WITH REAL ALE

DRAUGHT BASS - HIGSONS BITTER -

HIGSONS MILD

AT THE

# GEORGE



WINKLE PICKER

Winkles Brewery in Buxton are intending to move premises into a purpose built industrial unit in Congleton. According to Clive Winkle it's costing as much to heat the current brewery as it does to brew the beer. In the Stockport area Winkles Saxon Cross Bitter is available at the Midway, Newbridge Lane and will also be featured in the new pub on Redford Drive, Newhouse Farm Estate, Bramhall. One beer you won't be able to get at either of these is the new strong ale, Winkles Wee Willie Warmer (!!!) This beer, O.G. 1060 which puts it halfway between Robbies Best Bitter and Old Tom in strength, is currently only available at the Cheshire Ring in Hyde and at Winkles tied house, the Mow Cop Inn, at Mow Cop, Staffs. Its continuing availability will depend on demand although it is at present going very well. Perhaps it will also appear in Winkles second tied house which is currently being purchased - this is the Plough Inn at Eaton on the main Macclesfield - Congleton Road.

John Clarke.

Another Traditional Cider.

For some time now the Lancashire Heroes Shop on Burton Road, Withington, has been selling cider from Sandford, Avon (Between Bristol & Weston-super-Mare). While the sample of Thatchshers' on sale at the Stoke-Beer Festival in October was distinctly controversial (its, shall we say, distinctive odour leading our drinker to dub it 'the cider that sank the Belgians!') several purchasers from Burton Road give a favourable impression of a full bodied, strong tasting scrumpy - and without that smell! At present it seems to have replaced the Symonds cider formerly on sale, though bottles and stoneware jugs are still available.

EXTRA TIME?

Later this month the licensing Justices in Both Manchester and Stockport will hear applications for the permitted opening hours to be extended to 11-00 pm on Mondays to Thursdays.

The move has aroused mixed feelings amongst licensees but it is expected that the applications will be granted.

SHADY NEIGHBOUR.

The Shady Lady (Salisbury Ale House's neighbour) is, we understand, to be another 'Sports'. Work has already started, and at present the only working bar is in the basement, everywhere else is in a state of devastation. It's not so hot in the basement either - bare walls and floors, and very draughty - its planned to keep some part of the pub open during the whole six weeks alterations.

Pure speculation as to a new name - will she become a Sporty Lady? Previous names have been Beef and Barley, and Cork and Screw - it was the Oxford Wine Bar before that. A wine bar was thought to be a modern development, but quoting the old map in Real Ale in Central Manchester, in 1940 the Oxford Wine Bar qualified as a Beerhouse! (and of course there's Clynes Wine Bar in Hulme, which is a Wilsons Pub.)

Phil Levison.

BRAMHALL ALE.

Regular readers will recall an earlier report about Barrie Sullivan, a former Lincolnshire licensee, who was building his own pub on Redford Drive on the Newhouse Farm Estate in Bramhall. This is now nearing completion, although a name has not yet been chosen and the opening date of February 11th., has been postponed due to the weather. The pub will feature a wide use of traditional materials (brickwork, real timber beams & open fires)

Equally traditional will be the range of 12 (!) real ales: Boddies Bitter, Marstons Bitter & Pedigree, Ruddles County, Taylors Best Bitter & Landlord, Thwaites mild & Bitter, Winkles Saxon Cross and last but not least a 'house' beer brewed by Winkles. Worth waiting for, I think!

John Clarke.

# BOARS HEAD

MARKET PLACE, STOCKPORT

SAMUEL SMITHS OLD BREWERY

BITTER

PUB FOOD DAILY

LIVE JAZZ AND ROCK 'N ROLL



KING OF THE JUNGLE

The Rampant Lion on Anson Road opened its doors to the public on January 11th although it wasn't supposed to open until a week later.

This is the old Milverton Lodge Club that served Tetley Drum Beer, but that is all changed and you will find well kept Tetley Mild & Bitter at 65 & 68p respectively (there's also Orangeboom & Skol, if you like that sort of thing).

Surroundings are very plush with lots of silk pot plants and greenery, mirrors and brass rails, and 30s style poster pictures. General decor seems very familiar - surely we've seen both Whitbread and Hosts lookalikes - can there be one Big Six designer masterminding Pub '85?

There is a good range of eats available from a glassed in food counter, and as you eat you can contemplate the garden from the recently added and also glassed in conservatory.

The Rampant Lion has probably puzzled a few toppers as a number of Breweries use it - Banks's (& Hansons, of course) Matthew Brown, Camerons, Devenish & Morrells. But apparently lions rampant figured in the coat of arms of the original Milverton Lodge, and the club bookmatches showed a single lion - the owner, Martin Burlin, who had been thinking about a new name, was lighting a cigar, and there was the Rampant Lion staring at him. Now, if you're wondering about the name Burlin - does 'son of pile of pennies' give you a clue?

Heard at the bar.....

- 1) NB: 'Angram' make handpumps and their name appears on the base of the pump. At the Brunswick, Piccadilly, where the Wilsons Bitter has no clip on the pump: "Whose beer is this anyway - Angrams?"
- 2) In a pub that has a reputation for a 'tough' no nonsense landlady: Customer looking at a pint that resembles a thunderstorm: "This beer's cloudy" Landlady: "That's condensation on the inside!"
- 3) "A pint of Skol, without lime, please." Landlord: "Sorry, no lime, will you have it without blackcurrant?"

Contributors: Phil Levison, Paul Thompson, Humphrey Higgins, Rhys Jones, John Clarke, Theakston Cat, Ron Sproson Alan Seal.

OPENING CHIMES

In December we reported that the Church, Ardwick Green, had closed for alterations. It's business as usual again now, so what has changed? An extension has been added (on the right as you go in) which acts largely as an eating area served from a new food counter. The pub otherwise is largely unchanged in layout, but something has been lost in the modernisation.

The Church appears to be quite an old building, and it was always a cosy, comfortable pub to drink & eat in. But this has all changed now. The brand new upholstered seating, light coloured chairs and tables, wooden beams to match, the brick front to the bar - it just doesn't seem right somehow. We are all now accustomed to the pseudo coal fire that we tend to accept them as normal but there is a new trick here. Brass 'oil' lamps adorn the walls and their glass chimneys have been blackened to give a natural(?) effect. I suppose we have to be thankful that handpumped Wilsons Mild and Bitter are still available. (no sign at present of the previously promised increase in the range of real ales available.)

Phil Levison.

CAMRA NEWS.

Wed 13th Feb: Trip to Lees Brewery: details from B.Pryme 225 6606.  
Thu 14th Feb: Meeting, Gateway, 8pm.  
Fri 15th Feb: Cheadle Survey Crawl: 7pm White Hart, 8-30pm Star.

Material in Opening Times may be reproduced freely in other CAMRA publications, but due acknowledgement would be appreciated. Copy date for the next issue: February 23rd.

CASTLEWOOD

(HOLE IN WALL)

BRIDGE STREET BROW, MARKET, STOCKPORT.

TEL: 480 5529

WILSONS REAL ALE - HANDPUMPS

PUB FOOD MONDAY TO SATURDAY & BANK HOLS

11-30 - 2-00

Function room available for Meetings, Parties etc.