



# Opening Times

No.22 STOCKPORT & SOUTH MANCHESTER CAMRAS' PUB NEWSHEET FEBRUARY 1986 FREE

## CAMRA JOINS PUSH FOR EXTRA TIME!

Readers will recall that last year Stockport pubs were granted the right to remain open until 11 pm every weekday night of the week - yet Manchester drinkers must still start 'drinking up' at 10-30 on Mondays to Thursdays.

CAMRA doesn't think this makes sense - and this month we will be doing something about it, by making representations to the Licensing Justices in support of 11pm closing through the week.

The area concerned is Manchester, Salford (including Eccles) and Trafford. In Manchester & Salford the Licensed Victuallers Association has made an application which we shall be supporting - in Trafford we are initiating our own application. There will, we understand, be no objections from the Police, but NALHM - the Union which represents Pub Managers, as distinct from Tenants - is expected to oppose the applications.

Superficially, one can sympathise with the Managers' case - they argue they'll be working two extra hours a week for no more money. However, it must be stated clearly that the Managers' pay and conditions are matters to be decided between them and the brewers who employ them, and should not be allowed to adversely affect the facilities available to their customers - on whom, remember, their livelihood ultimately depends. Gratifyingly, many individual Managers are more enlightened than their union's official line, and some of them will be speaking in support of the applications.

There's no need here to dwell at length on the arguments for the extension; simply, we think that you the customer have a right to decide for yourself, within sensible limits, when to drink without needing to carry around an annotated street-map telling you which areas close when.

The hearing for Manchester is on Thursday 6th., February (other areas: Salford 7th., Feb., Eccles 11th., Trafford 12th.), and if approved the extension is likely to come into force around April.

Rhys P. Jones.

*OPENING TIMES is produced by the Stockport & South Manchester branch of CAMRA. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Campaign. Send your news to: S.H. Higgins, 48 Moorcroft Drive, Burnage M19 1WH*

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## PUB OF THE MONTH

The Stockport & South Manchester Pub of the Month for February is the Grapes, Castle St., Edgeley. The Grapes is a popular two room pub with a large vault and a lounge which itself has two distinct areas - near the bar it's more of a noisy smoke-room atmosphere & at the back a quieter lounge type area.

Altogether an excellent pub, ably run by Dave & Sandra George who guarantee a warm welcome for all. The beer is always top-notch (the pub is a new entry in the 1986 National Good Beer Guide), with hand-pulled Robinsons Mild & Bitter being accompanied by Old Tom straight from the barrel in the winter months.

All three will no doubt be sampled at some length on the presentation night, Thursday, 27th., February, to which all members and friends are invited.

John Clarke.

## Egerton Arms

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  - We have a good selection of Hot & Cold meals including:
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FOLK NIGHT EVERY WEDNESDAY

# STAGGER

## THE WITHINGTON WANDER & DIDSBURY DAWDLE.

Friday, 22nd., November saw a small number of CAMRA members gather at the Victoria, Withington, a Good Beer Guide listed Hydes pub, at the start of our monthly pub crawl. The pub is spacious & pleasantly renovated, & even at 7pm was quite crowded, unsurprising in view of the quality of the beer.

We then moved virtually next door to the Albert (Wilsons), very much a local's pub, and whilst we were made to feel quite welcome, it would probably be the sort of pub where students wouldn't be particularly popular. Neither mild or bitter was of a very high quality.

Then to the Withington Ale House - readers will, of course, recall from previous articles in 'O.T.!' Regardless of the merits of the beer, which was not particularly good in any event, the pub itself was quite an experience - it is so authentic that it is obviously a fake! Pennine Hosts have certainly made an effort, and undoubtedly the pub is an improvement on its former guise - the Pavilion.

We rounded the corner into Burton Road & after a brief stop at the Orion (keg only) we tracked down to the Old House at Home, a Chesters' pub; which is approached through a grotesque colonnade. The pub is a typical modernised library, although you can't read the books as they are stuck together! The mild was not very good.

Next, the Waterloo, an above average Wilsons' pub, selling pleasant bitter and good mild. The plush seats seem a little incongruous in the setting.

This was followed by a march back across to Wilmslow Road, and to Marstons' Red Lion, where only the Pedigree was sampled, and this was a fairly good quality. This is a very crowded old pub, with a large bowling green. The pub is popular and deservedly so.

Then to the Manor House, a large Tetley's pub selling a good pint of bitter & Burton Ale, which unusually was not on good form, as well as the mild which was not tried. The pub was very crowded, with a strong smell of perfume, and the open plan layout seemed to appeal to most of the clientele. First impressions were not favourable, but after a while you can grow to like it.

A route march to Didsbury then ensued, and the Greenall's recently refurbished Crown. Unfortunately the fine Original Bitter was not available, and so all present drank the bitter in preference to the mild. Opinions varied as to the quality, but were generally favourable. Once again the pub was very popular, and again deservedly so. The brewery have done an excellent job renovating the pub - take note Robinsons. This is yet another pub with a library!

Across the road to the Royal Oak, the busiest pub of a busy selection on the night. Also popular, selling an excellent pint of Marstons' Pedigree, and presumably the other beers were of similar quality. Despite the crowds, the service was remarkably efficient, and the backroom even had waiter service!

We then proceeded to the Royal Oak overspill pub, the Albert, a Hydes' pub where at least we were able to get seats. The pub is just off the main road, next to Heald's Dairy, and well worth finding. Both mild & Bitter were good.

We then doubled back to the Nelson on the corner of Barlow Moor Road, an excellent little smoking den, selling only Wilsons bitter on draught, which was of a high quality. Like all the pubs in Didsbury, it was very crowded.

We rounded off the evening at the Station, another Good Beer Guide listed pub selling Marstons' mild and bitter in excellent condition. This extremely basic two roomed pub was an excellent place to round off an interesting crawl around the student, and bed-sit land of South Manchester.

(The comments made in the above article are not intended to be a statement on the quality of the pubs or of the beer on all occasions, but are of our opinion of both on the night of the crawl.)

Andy Cooper.

## Old Ship Inn, Styal.

IN THE HEART OF THE NATIONAL TRUST PARK.

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WILSONS MILD & BITTER -

WEBSTERS YORKSHIRE BITTER -

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This month we visit a pub nearer to the Centre of Manchester; the Church, Ardwick Green. Hidden behind the park it's easy to miss this Pennine Hosts House, but it is certainly worth searching out.

Hosts have done the pub up in one of their more sensible themes and it's now an 'Ale House'. Basically this means that there are a lot of bare boards & often a range of cask beers, although here it's restricted to Wilsons Mild (pricey at 72p), Bitter & Websters Yorkshire Bitter, all on handpump. The refurbishments have been tastefully done with the usual accent on natural wood & brick that Hosts seem to favour in this type of conversion. There's an interesting selection of brass lamps and, could this be unique for a Hosts pub, I spotted a real plant!!

The menu isn't extensive, on my visit there were 3 starters, 5 main dishes & 2 deserts but all looked appetising & well presented if a little expensive (like the price of the beer however, this probably reflects the proximity of the City Centre.) Starters were soup at 60p, Pate at £1.20 & Prawn Cocktail at £1.45. Main courses ranged from standard chilli (£1.95) & cottage pie (£2.00) through Beef Bourignon & Braised steak (£2.50) to Chicken Chasseur at £2.85. I chose the Beef, which basically is beef & mushrooms in a red wine sauce. The portion was reasonably generous, the meat tender & the sauce thick and tasty. Accompaniments were chips (jacket spuds also seemed to be available but I wasn't offered one) & peas.

The peas were a disappointment being the 'minted' variety which I personally found pretty disgusting, although I know a lot of people like them.

Sweets, which I didn't try, were gateaux or lemon merrangue pie, both at 80p. Coffee is also available at 50p.

Conclusions? Well if you're in the area & want a good meal in pleasant surroundings then the Church is for you, but to be honest the quality isn't so outstandingly high or the prices so outstandingly low to consider making a detour to go there.

John Clarke.

## ANOTHER 'OPEN HOUSE'

One of Pennine Hosts most recent conversions is the Conway, Cheadle Hulme - the new sign says "Open House - Conways", with no mention of whose beer it is. Once inside, all is revealed. The Wilsons Mild (74p) & Bitter (76) have now been joined by two Websters beers - Green Label (74p) & Yorkshire Bitter (78) all handpumped.

Anyone looking for a traditional type of pub is going to be disappointed - everything is very bright & airy - yellow lights, brass bar rails, brass framed stools with light upholstery, and there's a music system with flashing lights. The whole place has been 'opened up', with the loss of the separate vault, and whilst food at present is of the "fast" variety, Manager Joe Brannan & his wife Debbie are planning to offer a much wider range when they have settled in. Why not pop along early evening to sample the range of beers, before the music and the flashing lights start to take over!

Phil Levison.

# MANCHESTER ARMS.

WELLINGTON ROAD SOUTH, STOCKPORT.

ROBINSONS BEST ALES!

PUB FOOD & SNACKS MON-SAT.

## SEND THEM VICTORIOUS!

The end of February sees the retirement of Bob & Doreen Smyth of the Victoria in Withington. Bob has been the licensee for an incredible 23 years, and before that licensee of the Albert in Rusholme for 12 years - he can be justifiably proud that he is probably Hydes' longest serving Manager, with some 35 years service.

The pub is a haven for the real music lover, as the Halle and the BBC Philharmonic Orchestras appear regularly.

About a year ago the Victoria was closed for extensive alterations, the pub was extended into the old off-licence and tastefully refurbished inside. It is a testimony to Bob & Doreen that all the old regulars have returned, and many new ones besides.

They are a generous bunch too, and deserve a pat on the back for their consistent and long standing generosity to many local charities - over the years hundreds of pounds have been raised and donated to charities such as Christies Hospital.

The Victoria sells excellent Hydes Bitter & Mild and has earned a well deserved place in the 1986 Good Beer Guide. We will be very sad to see Bob & Doreen leave, but would like to wish them a long and happy retirement.

Stuart Ballantyne.

## MORE MARSTONS

A welcome addition to the beers available in East Manchester is Marstons Burton Bitter (70p) and the powerful Strong Ale, Owd Rodger (55p a half) at the Travellers Call, Ashton Old Road, Beswick. They are on sale as an experiment and will be retained if demand justifies. Boddingtons & Thwaites bitters remain on sale, but, sadly, low sales mean that the only mild now available is keg.

### ADVERTISE IN "OPENING TIMES" -

'Opening Times' reaches thousands of pub goers every month - contact the Editor for details of advertising rates.

RICHARD & SUSAN GENDERS.....

## The Battle Stop

136, ACRE LANE, BRAMHALL. TEL: 439 4904.

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TAYLORS LANDLORD

and BITBURGER PILS

ON DRAUGHT.

OPEN MON-FRI 4-10; SAT 11-11; SUN 11-10

## CAMRA FIGHTS 'ROMPER' PLANS

Readers of January's 'Opening Times' will have seen our item about the generally dismal pubs in the Wythenshawe area & how one of the few worth visiting is the Red Lion, or Romper, on Pinfold Lane, down by the Airport.

This won't be the case much longer however if Boddingtons get their way for they've applied for planning permission to add on a childrens room, a new glass & aluminium entrance hall, two 40 seat dining rooms, a cocktail bar & a 76 place car park! Our view is that this would totally destroy the character of one of the few genuine 'country'pubs within the City. Although the existing layout of the current building is apparently to remain unchanged, it's hard to imagine how the potential customers of the new development would fit in with the quiet unspoilt local that the Romper is today.

We've lodged an objection to the application & both the City Architects & Planners Depts. have recommended rejection of the scheme as not only do they think it's out of character with the listed building status of the present pub, it also destroys part of the Green Belt and is out of line with permitted developments around the airport. The Wythenshawe Area Committee have recommended refusal and we have high hopes that the Planning Committee will deliver a similar verdict on January 23rd. We'll let you know the final outcome next month.

# The Boars Head, Market Place, Stockport.

Open 6 Days: Closed Sundays: Good Food Daily: Live Music 6 Nights.

Sam Smiths Real Ale: Tel: 480 3978

## TETLEYS TAKE THE OAK

One of the most surprising recent change to the pub scene in Stockport has been Barrie Sullivans sale of the Shady Oak in Bramhall to Tetleys, the original owners of the site. Since opening the pub was packed every night & Tetleys must have been kicking themselves for letting the site go, so much so that they made Barrie an offer he couldn't refuse.

Barrie left on January 20th., but he persuaded the new owners that the pubs reputation had been built on the wide range of Traditional beers available. The message appears to have gone home as the new range is Walkers Best Bitter (76p), Ind Coope Burton Ale (84p) Tetely Mild (72p), Teteley Bitter (75p), Marstons Pedigree (80p), Thwaites Bitter (76) & Jennings Bitter (75p). It's sad to say goodbye to Taylors, Theakstons and Ruddles but all the same this is quite a range for a tied house.

Barries future plans include two similar pubs to the Shady Oak, one in Northwich and the other in Cheadle on the site of the old Seven Arches Garden Centre. The application for the Cheadle pub should have now gone in & no doubt readers will join with us in wishing Barrie the best of luck with both pubs.

## JEWEL IN THE CROWN

You've probably read that CAMRA likes to promote the products of small independent breweries & how cheap their products are, Holts being a notable local example, in which case you'll be surprised to learn that the cheapest beer in Central Stockport can be had in a pub belonging, not to an independent, but one of the 'Big 6' national concerns! This is the excellent Crown on Hillgate where handpumped Wilsons Mild & Bitter are available at 62p & 64p respectively, which makes it as cheap as Holts in the Griffin, Heaton Mersey.

The Crown is an excellent little two roomed pub that's well worth a visit - the etched windows being particularly fine.

## GONE FOR A BURTON?

The Golden Lion (Burtonwood) on Stockports' Hillgate has been closed for some weeks due, we are told, to 'internal problems'. We hope the closure doesn't become permanent as Burtonwood's excellent beers are already thin on the ground in the Stockport area.

## BRANCH DIARY...

FEBRUARY 1986.

Monday 3rd: Social: Midway, Newbridge Lane, Stockport: 8-30pm.

Tuesday 4th.: Open Committee Meeting, The Crown, Heaton Lane, Stockport: 8 pm.

Monday 10th: Social: Bowling Green, Chorlton-on-Medlock: 8-30 pm.

Thursday 13th: Branch Meeting: Gateway, East Didsbury: 8pm.

Monday 17th: Social: Travellers Call, Great Moor, Stockport: 8-30 pm.

Wednesday 20th: Joint Social with North Manchester Branch: Britannia, Beswick.

Friday 21st: Cheadle Crawl: White Hart 7 pm, Railway 8-30 pm.

Monday 24th: Social: Coach & Horses, London Road, Manchester: 8-30 pm.

Wednesday 26th: 3 way Social with Rochdale, Oldham & Bury & Kirklees Branches at the Sair Inn.

Thursday 27th: Pub of the Month: The Grapes, Castle Street, Edgeley, Stockport.

Branch Contacts:

Branch Business: John Clarke: 832 2468 ext. 385 (w), 477 1973 (h).

Socials and Trips: Andy Cooper: 0625 872641 (w)

I remember  
you.



## PUB NEWS

The Waldorf, Gore Street, just off Picadilly in the City Centre, reopened in time to catch the pre Christmas drinking season, adding handpumped Trophy (74p) to the Chesters beers it sold before closing. Sensibly (but unusual for Whitbread) there's no Keg Trophy alongside, so no need to keep an eagle eye on the staff to ensure you get what you want! The pub consists of a single room with U shaped bar - decor is Brewers Parisian!

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Holt's excellent Waggon & Horses on Hyde Road is to have a car park built on the site of the old petrol station next door.

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Ye Olde Vic, on Chatham Street, Stockport, has had another change in its range of beers. The Wilsons Bitter is back & the Everards Tiger has been discontinued. Jennings Bitter & Ind Coope Burton Ale now alternate on a guest basis and they also tell us they are willing to try anything else that comes along. We'll let you know what does.

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The Stockport & South Manchester Branch, after a long debate & nail biting votes, have selected the Red Bull, Hillgate (Robinsons) for the coveted 1985 Pub of The Year award. More next month but the date for your diary is Tuesday, March 11th., for the presentation night.

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The 'renovations' reported for the Royal Oak, High Street, Stockport ('O.T.' January) have, it turns out, involved the demolition of almost the entire pub. We are told that the state of the building was such that once the dangerous gable end was taken down, the remaining structure began to collapse! Robbies original plans have apparently had to be abandoned, so what the new Royal Oak will look like is anyones guess (although we have a nasty suspicion)

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Andy Turner, Manager of the Church on Ardwick Green has moved to the lush pastures of the Blue Cap, Sandiway, near Northwich. We welcome at the Church Gwyn Davies, a name not unknown around our Pennine Hosts pubs! Early indications are that the substitution of a Welshman for a 'Shropshire Lad' has maintained beer quality (Wilson's Mild & Bitter, Websters Yorkshire Bitter) at this pleasant pub.

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As reported last month Boddingtons Buck & Dog, Bridge Street, Stockport, is all set to close its doors for the last time on January 19th.

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## BAKERS VAULTS

MARKET PLACE, STOCKPORT

FINE ROBINSONS ALES

SUPERB CUISINE-

NOW SERVED LUNCH &

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## MOMENTARY MILD

Greenalls' Kings Arms, Chancellor Lane, maintains a good standard of Bitter but has never sold enough mild to justify anything other than keg. A surprise then to spot a 'home made' clip proclaiming 'Draught Mild'. The beer was excellent and much appreciated by the few mild drinkers. The bad news is that it was only on by courtesy of a delivery foul up - & with an 11 gallon keg typically taking up to a fortnight to sell it's unlikely to become a permanent feature. Nice while it lasted, though!

## BRIDGEWATER

CHESTERGATE, STOCKPORT.

'FREE HOUSE

WILSONS BITTER

HOLTS MILD & BITTER

WEBSTERS GREEN LABEL

all handpumped.

HOT & COLD FOOD EVERY DAY.