



Opening Times

No. 26 STOCKPORT & SOUTH MANCHESTER CAMRAS PUB NEWSHEET JUNE 1986 FREE

WILSONS TO STOP BREWING IN MANCHESTER

The shock news that Brewing is to cease at Wilsons Newton Heath brewery was made last month. Announcing the decision, which will result in the loss of 273 jobs, Samuel Websters & Wilsons Managing Director, Peter Humphrey, said that by August production will be concentrated at their Halifax Brewery where a significant amount of Wilsons Beers had already been brewed and supplied to the trade. The company have promised that the choice of brands and its public houses will not be affected and they will be investing over £14 million on their pubs over the next three years. They add that there will be no change in the current Websters and Wilsons beers but CAMRA are not convinced.

The Campaign's liaison Officer with the Manchester Brewery, Roger Hall, urged beer drinkers to boycott Websters ales. He called for the ban following the news of the closure. Said Roger: "It's a disaster for drinkers in this area. It can only be a matter of time before Wilsons fine beers are replaced by Websters products."

Currently Websters Brewery at Halifax brews the nationally marketed Websters Yorkshire Bitter (to the tune of 1/2 a million barrels a year for 10,000 outlets), Green Label Mild, Websters Dark Mild, the new Choice and also Fosters, Budweiser & Carlsberg.

In addition to Wilsons beers Manns and S & P Beers are brewed in Manchester.

Humphrey Higgins.

EIGHT INTO ONE WON'T GO!

Ten years ago there were three independent Breweries called Boddingtons, Higsons and Oldham Breweries. The first named produced two flavoursome milds, a highly distinctive bitter & an excellent strong ale. The other two each produced cask mild & bitter with good reputations & rather more copious amounts of the blandier non-real versions of the same beers. So, in 1976, we had eight cask beers of well deserved reputation.

Unfortunately in 1986, all of these breweries have become part of the expanding Boddingtons demi-empire & the choice of cask beers is now somewhat reduced. Many Boddingtons watchers believe that it won't be long before all pubs belonging to the group will be selling Higsons lager, Boddingtons Bitter & tank or keg Oldham Mild (under the guise of Boddington OB Mild). Since only the most ardent coloured water drinker would disagree that Boddies Bitter is a very pale shadow of its former self, it will be a tragedy that in the space of a decade 8 cask beers will have disappeared down the corporate toilet of Boddies to be replaced by something apparently taken straight out of the River Irwell with only minor reprocessing.
Jock Stroller.

IN THIS MONTHS EIGHT PAGE 'OPENING TIMES'

- Page 2: Book Review (New feature)
- Page 3: The Three Tunnes, Hazel Grove.
- Page 4: The Offerton Stagger.
- Page 6: Pub Grub.
- Page 8: Pub News.

PLUS facts & features for all beer buffs!!

Contributors this Month: Rhys Jones, John Clarke, Andy Cooper, Humphrey Higgins, Jock Stroller, Paul Thompson, Jim Flynn, Peter Edwardson, Tommy Jackson

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Swan With Two

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STOCKPORT.

Becks.

ROBINSONS BEST BEERS.

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CHILDRENS' ROOM.

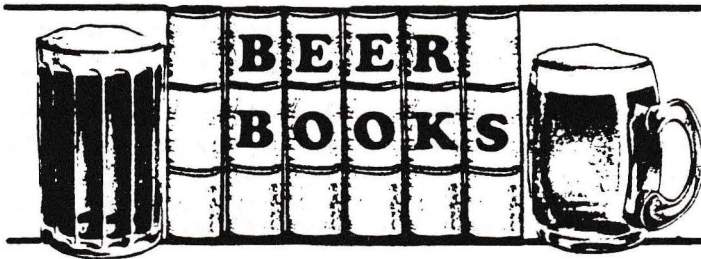
A HAVEN IN THE SHOPPING PRECINCT!

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"BEER; BED & BREAKFAST", edited by Roger Protz. Robson Books/
CAMRA, 210pp. £4.95.

CAMRA has published this book not to replace the well-known Good Beer Guide but to supplement it by giving a nationwide selection of pubs with good beer and good B & B. We all know that few town pubs let rooms these days, so the selection is evidently geared mainly to countryside weekend breaks; however, each of the 4 Countries covered - England, Scotland, Wales and the Isle of Man - gets at least one entry in its capital city, and there are also entries on other large cities such as Nottingham and Hull. If you're contemplating a fair number of trips away this year, and would rather stay in a real pub rather than grotty digs or expense-account rabbit-hutches, you're likely to find this guide a useful companion. Just one criticism: following a bad old CAMRA tradition, the maps are pretty perfunctory.

Rhys Jones.

This book, and a host of other beer related publications which we hope to review over the coming months, are available from good bookshops or by post from CAMRA Ltd., 34, Alma Road, St. Albans AL1 3EW.

HEARD IN THE 'BUCK AND DOG':

Customer: "Two pints of Bitter and two Grand Marniers, please"
Barman: "Sorry, we've just sold out of Grand Marnier."

BRANCH DIARY...

JUNE

- Mon 2: Social - Grapes, Hazel Grove: 8-30.
Tue 3: Committee: Swan with Two Necks, Stockport
Wed 4: Social with N. Manchester Mitchells Arms, Every St. Ancoats.
Mon 9: Social - Manor House, Withington.
Thu 12: Branch Meeting - Gorton Arms, Gorton Lane, 8pm. Speaker from Banks's - Please arrive early.
Mon 16: Social - Queens, Cheadle.
Fri 20: Abbey Hey Stagger: Waggon & Horses, Hyde Rd. 7pm, Prince of Wales, Abbey Hey Lane 8-30 pm.
Mon 23: Social - Rampant Lion, Anson Road, Brunswick.
Thu 26: PUB OF THE MONTH - Boars Head, Market Place, Stockport.
Mon 30: Social - 8-30 Comfortable Gill; 9-30 Crown Heaton Lane; 10-15 Bridgewater, Stockport.
- JULY: Tue 1: Committee: Longsight, Manchester.
Contact: Andy Cooper: Tel: 0625 872641 (w) 477 2959 (H)

BAKERS VAULTS

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HOW MANY TUNNES MAKE 3?

Robinsons plans for the Three Tunnes, Hazel Grove, were approved by the Licensing Justices on April 7th., and from what we are told the new look Tunnes will bear little resemblance to the existing pub. All three rooms at the front are to be knocked through to form one open-plan room with the bar extended to reach the left hand wall. The current vault is to be turned into a kitchen and the room opposite, the ladies toilet. The garage & store at the back are to be converted into a 'club room'.

This is bad enough but what's worse is the apparent misinformation from Robinsons about the pub. Just consider the following:

1) "No plans have been prepared for altering the Three Tunns (sic)" - Peter Robinson 28/2/85.

FACT: The plans submitted to the Licensing Justices are dated 14th., March 1978.

2) "...plans were approved by the Licensing Justices earlier this month, and they have also received planning permission." - Peter Robinson 20th., February 1986.

FACT: The plans were not approved by the Justices until April 7th. The Town Hall Planning Department has no record of an application for the Tunnes.

Robinsons tell us that they have no idea why the plans are dated 1978 but possibly that could be when it was initially surveyed. A source close to the pub however tells us that the plans prepared in 1978 were indeed those that have now gone before the Bench. These plans were in fact submitted to the Justices Dept. on January 21st. and Robinsons now say that "it was anticipated that they would be approved at the February Meeting." The Brewery has made no comment on the absence of a planning application at the Town Hall.

Further comment seems pointless at this stage, we leave it to our readers to make their own judgement but Three Tunnes regulars might like to know that the planned alterations could be some way off as there are "other approvals to be obtained" (like planning permission, perhaps?) and they are not able to say when the alterations will be taken into their programme.

MANCHESTER ARMS.

WELLINGTON ROAD SOUTH, STOCKPORT.

ROBINSONS BEST ALES!

PUB FOOD & SNACKS MON - SAT.

PUB OF THE MONTH

The Campaign in Stockport & South Manchester have selected the Boars Head, Market Place, Stockport, to receive the Pub of The Month award for June.

Serving an excellent pint of handpulled Sam Smiths Old Brewery Bitter, with live music - ranging from Trad Jazz through to Rock and Roll - and good value for money lunchtime food, the Boars, which has regained a place in the 1987 Good Beer Guide, is under the energetic, and frenetic, tenancy of Peter Blissett.

Having travelled round the World 12 times with Cunard Peter entered the trade at the ripe old age of 23, starting at the Alexandra, Southend (Bass) then on to the Lord Nelson (Chelsea), White Lion (Withington), the Little Bee (Sale), Seftons in Manchester, and the Complete Angler in Sheffield before moving to Stockport 4 years ago. He's travelled a bit, that lad!

Come along on the 26th., June - there's live music, of course, a cracking pint - and a first rate 'do'!!!

Humphrey Higgins.

MILD MATTERS

One reason that CAMRA is against Brewery mergers is that even if the predator Brewery gives an assurance that the taken over Brewery will remain open quite often in the future that Brewery will close, leaving the consumer with less choice. In 1982 Robinsons took over Hartleys and it has come as a shock to learn that a keg Hartleys Mild (Three Shires) is being brewed in Stockport. Could this be the thin end of the wedge, as up to now all Hartleys Beers have been brewed at Ulverston?

In a recently received letter from Mr. Peter Robinson it is stated that:

- 1) Three Shires keg mild was brewed for the Free Trade & only a few pubs took it.
- 2) The pubs that took keg only did so as turnover of cask was too low.
- 3) There are no plans to keg Robbies mild.
- 4) Three Shires is brewed at Stockport because there are no kegging facilities at Ulverston.

Paul Thompson.

Castlewood

(HOLE IN WALL)

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STAGGER

OFFERTON BY OMNIBUS.

The April destination for our regular Monthly Crawl was the Stockport suburb of Offerton. This is one of the less well-known parts of the Branch area, few of us having visited any of the pubs before. However we found an interesting variety of beer & pubs, and discovered that Offerton drinkers are lucky in that there was not one keg pub among the six we visited.

We assembled at the traditional starting point for these trips, the Manchester Arms in Stockport. This is a pub charitably described as unpretentious & lively, but as usual the hand-pumped Robinsons Best Mild & Best Bitter were on excellent form. Old Tom was also available on gravity.

The promised mini-bus was cancelled, so we had to fall back on GMT for Transport, catching the 358 at Stockport Bus Station. The driver assured us that the fare was only 23p, but unfortunately he was corrected by an Inspector who got on later and those of us too impecunious to afford Saver tickets were exceded for the princelt sum of 7p! All this excitement made us forget to look out for the former Bell's Brewery on Hempshaw Lane, which is still standing. This was taken over by Robinson's in 1949, and was used as bottling stores until the new plant at Bredbury was opened in 1975.

On finally arriving in Offerton, one member of the party was so disorientated by the epic 1½ mile journey that he was heard to wonder "Now where has Stockport gone - is it over there?" To be fair, he had come all the way from

Edgeley. The thunder-clouds which had been rolling around earlier on had now disappeared, leaving a clear & mild Spring evening, perfect weather for a crawl involving some longish walks between pubs.

First call in Offerton was the White House, a Wilsons pub that has recently been refurbished to create a pleasant & comfortable interior. Ronnie & Nancy were out but we did find two handpumped beers, the mild being rated good, while the bitter was average. Just up the road is the Fingerpost, a large and imposing Robinsons house with fine etched glass windows. Best Mild and Best Bitter were available on electric pumps, and both were well thought of. This pub has a traditional layout - we counted six separate rooms - but a rather tasteless mock-Tudor treatment had been applied to the snug we sat in. The spartan outside Gents were out of keeping with the grandeur of the architecture.

The next two pubs provided an interesting contrast between the approaches of two particular national and independent brewers. The Strawberry Gardens is owned by Pennine Hosts, who have done some pretty appalling things to pubs, including Drakes further along Marple Road, which we would have visited had the mini-bus been available. Here, though, the refurbishment is most acceptable. The pub has an attractive cottage-style frontage, and a darts room and panelled snug have been retained at the front, with a more modern lounge extension to the rear. Some criticism was made of the pastel upholstery and plastic plants, but most of our attention was taken up by an electronic trivia machine. The handpumped Wilsons Mild and Bitter were both of above average quality.

Boddingtons were once renowned among real ale drinkers, but their Gardeners Arms proved very disappointing. It is a good-looking

Rotation

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Parties ★ Childrens Parties

—o—o—

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house prominently sited on a road junction, but the interior, although keeping two bars, has fallen victim to a particularly bland and uninspired modernisation. The most traditional feature was a '1778' plaque behind the bar. Boddingtons Bitter was the only real ale available, which was considered very poor and lacking any kind of taste. Keg OB Mild & Bitter were also on sale, dispensed from identical bar mountings to the real ale. Spotted in the Gents was a Boddingtons water jug containing a toilet brush, the purpose of which puzzled us, although we thought it might have something to do with the poor beer!

On down Offerton Lane to the Emigration, a Robinsons pub serving Best Mild & Best Bitter by electric pump. Both were reckoned below average, although the pub was so packed that it was difficult to taste them properly. The interior has been subjected to the kind of heavy handed one-room conversion unfortunately all too common in Robbies' pubs, but this did not seem to deter the mainly young clientele. A point in favour was that a poster showed that over £2,000 had been raised for Guide Dogs for the Blind.

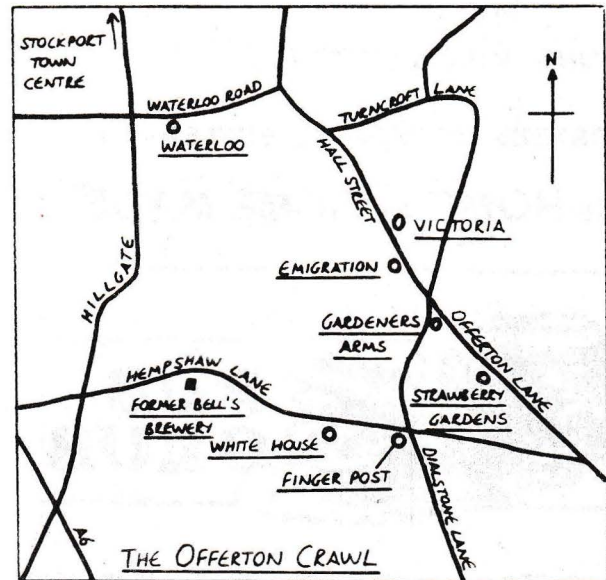
The Victoria almost opposite was a pleasant change, still busy but enough room to sit down. It's a two-bar Greenalls' pub with mild & bitter on electric meter pumps. Greenalls' beers are sometimes dismissed as bland, but the Victoria showed that, when looked after, both beers can be a good pint. Another plus point was that Worthington White Shield was available.

For the final call of the evening, a ten minute walk back towards the centre of Stockport brought us to the Waterloo on Waterloo Road, a Robinsons House selling electrically dispensed Best Mild and Best Bitter, both in good condition. The pub has been somewhat modernised, but has kept its separate bar, snug and lounge, and represents the acceptable face of Robinsons refurbishments. To round off the night, we were treated to a cellar tour by the Landlord. The cellar proved to be a delight to the beer drinker's eye - spotlessly clean, temperature controlled, with rows of mild and bitter casks on the stillage (including some wooden ones), and not a CO2 cylinder in sight. The point can't be made too often that fastidious cellarmanship is the key to serving a consistently good pint of Real Ale.

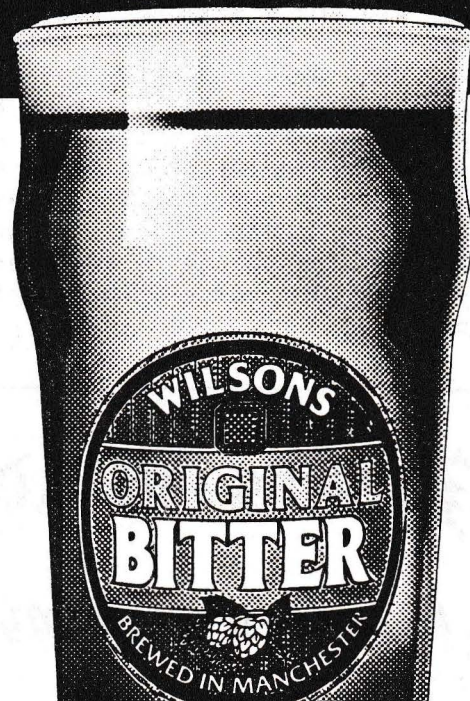
As always, the opinions on pubs and beer expressed in this article are those of individual CAMRA members on the night, and are not intended to represent an official CAMRA view.

Peter Edwardson.

MAP.



I remember you.



Old Ship Inn, Styal.

IN THE HEART OF THE NATIONAL TRUST PARK.

HANDPUMPED MARSTONS PEDIGREE -

WILSONS MILD & BITTER -

WEBSTERS YORKSHIRE BITTER -

THE HOME OF HOME MADE FOOD!



A rare journey to the City Centre this month & The Waldorf, Gore St., off Piccadilly. Slightly off the beaten track and probably passed by most visitors to Manchester without realising it's there, the Waldorf was for many years a Free House only being bought by the old Chesters Brewery in 1950 and at the time was only licensed for six days a week as there was no residential accommodation for the licensee. Subsequent takeovers and policy changes saw the old Chester livery replaced by Whitbreads & in the early '80s the reappearance of the Chesters name. The pub was subsequently put on the market but a failure to find a buyer prompted a virtual rebuilding of the entire pub. Following reopening last year (and now a Whitbread house once again); the Waldorf seems to be more successful than for some years. Three cask beers are on sale - Chesters Mild & Bitter plus Trophy. It's also nice to see no keg beers alongside the cask, so common in many Whitbread Chesters pubs.

There is a substantial lunchtime trade with a wide ranging menu of generally typical pub food. On my visit this included items such as Chili, rice & chips £1.65; Jumbo sausage & chips £1.30; Chicken chasseur £1.70; peppered pork chop £1.90 & steak & mushroom pie at £1.60. There was also an interesting sounding Beef, Apple & Peanut curry at £1.80. My companion and I both stuck to the more usual items - I settled for the chili which was very good indeed. Plenty of meat, not too greasy. The rice was interesting being cooked with peas, and the chips, although frozen, were quite acceptable. My companion chose the steak & mushroom pie which he thought was spoiled by the tough meat but otherwise had no complaints. The portions were generous and well presented.

Indeed, presentation was very much to the fore with the rest of the menu which consists of sandwiches (prepared as you wait) such as ham, 50p, Beef or Turkey, 70p, and salads costing from £1.40 (Ham) to £1.80 (prawn). Tuna or prawn open sandwiches are also available at 90p and £1.10 respectively and pate & toast will cost you £1.25. As I mentioned the arrangement of the cold meats etc., was very well done and all looked most inviting. Tea and coffee can be had for 40p and 50p each.

So, once again, a pub that comes into the 'well worth a visit' category, if you know where to look - off Piccadilly, opposite the Brunswick.

Footnote: Following my comments last month, I am told that the standard of the dessert in the Egerton Arms, Stockport, has vastly improved and hopefully a further report will follow next month!

John Clarke.

PLEA

Colin Heapy of CAMRA's Sheffield Branch is anxious to obtain photographs of the Old Bank Street pub-brewery taken while it was still brewing (it's presently closed for refurbishment); if anyone out there has any, please let us know.

The Boars Head, Market Place, Stockport.

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ROUND THE HOUSE

A Pennine Host conversion not so far reported is the Roundhouse, Belmont Way, Heaton Norris. For once the 'Open House' theme (ie lots of chrome, plastic plants & pastel colours) has actually improved the place. Built in 1977, the Roundhouse was never much of a traditional type pub and for several years was festooned with the 'bric-a-brac' (for which read junk) so popular at the time - all now gone to be replaced with clean lines & bright lights. Certainly not to everyone's taste but equally a step forward for this particular pub. Two cask beers are available - Wilsons Bitter (70p) and Websters Yorkshire (72p) Why, incidentally, since both beers have the same gravity and are brewed by the same Company, should one cost 2p more than the other?

FRANCLY AMAZING!

The Drovers Inn, Ashton Old Road, Openshaw, is about to be transformed into a pub like no other in Manchester by Whitbread, Merseyside. We have no details of the interior decoration planned but it will evidently be on a French theme. This will be subtly hinted at not only by the blue neon signs with the new name 'Francs' (geddit???) (the original proposal by the way was Paris) but also by a 15 foot model of the Eiffel Tower on the roof!!! Believe it or not, this is seriously being considered & indeed planning permission has been applied for. This bizarre scheme (which certainly puts in the shade the 6 foot illuminated pith helmet and taped jungle noises installed in Stockport's Far Pavillions by Pennine Hosts) surely shows the desperate lengths to which some of the big brewers will go to 'pack 'em in' and whether it succeeds only time will tell. At present the Drovers only serves keg beer and this, we think, is unlikely to change.

John Clarke.

REAL ALE IN CENTRAL & SOUTH MANCHESTER.

Update No. 3.

Additions: City Centre: Pack Horse, Deansgate: Greenall Whitley M, B (E).
 Deletions: City Centre: Old Bank Street Brewery (closed for refurbishment): Rosies Bar.
 Didsbury: Didsbury. Wythenshawe: Silver Birch.
 Changes: City Centre: Bulls Head: add JBA. Crown, Deansgate: add Websters Choice. Crown & Anchor: Delete Taylors P add Ram Tam Ducie Bridge: Delete M add GL & Choice. New Union: add JBA.
 Peveril of the Peak, Rising Sun, Salisbury, Sams Chop House: add Websters Choice. Sinclairs: add Museum Ale.
 Northenden: Jolly Crofter is Jolly Carter. Tatton Arms: Now styled Tatton Arms Tavern: delete M, add Websters B, Choice.
 Withington: Withington Ale House: add Websters Choice.
 Wytenshawe: Sports: address is Portway.

ANY QUESTIONS?

As the new Membership Secretary for the Stockport & South Manchester Branch, I would be pleased to hear from anyone who is thinking of joining the Campaign, but perhaps would like to know more about our activities whether social or formal. Please do not hesitate to contact me, or, better still, come along to one of the events outlined in Branch Diary & see for yourself.

Alastair L. Walker,
 74, Low Leighton Road,
 New Mills,
 Stockport,
 Cheshire SK12 4PJ.

CAMRA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Are you a real ale drinker? Do you feel strongly about your local being turned into a disco fun pub? Does the current spate of brewery takeovers worry you? Then why not join CAMRA and help with the struggle against the profit makers.

Name(s)

Address

Postcode

I/We enclose my/our remittance for Full/Husband & Wife membership for one year £9.00

Signature(s)

Date

Please send this form with your remittance (payable to CAMRA Ltd.) to:
 Sally Bannell, CAMRA Ltd., 34 Alma Road, St. Albans, Herts. AL1 3BW.



PUB NEWS!

FOLLOWING last months' news of the departure of Barry Atkinson from the Longsight, Belle Vue, we are delighted to welcome new Manager, Barry Mycock, who comes to Manchester from the Rookery in Banks's home town of Wolverhampton. Barry has been well received by staff and regulars alike, and on first tasting is certainly maintaining the high standard of Banks's mild & bitter in this fine example of modern pub design.

Taylor Walker have applied for planning permission to turn the ground floor & basement of the Portico Library building on Moseley St., Manchester into licensed premises.

Wilsons are intending to build a two storey extension to the New York, Floom Street, after the demolition of a neighbouring derelict cottage.

Chesters' Lord Wolsey on Ashton Old Road is to have a single storey toilet extension & further along the road Wilsons Staff of Life is to have internal and external changes. The vault is to extended backwards into the kitchen to create a larger games room with pool table.

The consistently excellent Vale Cottage, off Hyde Road is to have a car park on vacant land next door.

The Hollywood, Edgeley, now sells Websters Yorkshire Bitter and Green Label alongside Wilsons Mild & Bitter - all on handpumps.

The boarded up Openshaw, Ashton Old Road, is to open as a tee-total pub to warn young drinkers of the evils of drink. There is a rumour that this former Whitbread house will sell Trophy alongside the soft drinks!!

Contrary to reports in the North Manchester paper, "What's Doing?" the Travellers Call, Ashton Old Road is NOT boarded up and about to be knocked down.

The Ash Hotel, Heaton Norris, has been redecorated & its most distinguishing feature, the hexagonal stand for the handpumps in the middle of the bar has been taken out. Real Ale is in the public and saloon bars, but not in the 'wine' bar.

The Apsley Cottage, Ardwick, is a Real Ale gain with Wilsons Bitter now available - but ask for cask as the keg is still on.

Rumour now has it that Barclays have scrapped their plan to buy the Buck & Dog, Stockport and it seems that the pub will now stay open. More news when to hand.

Egerton Arms

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Or why not try our speciality
"HOT ROAST BEEF SANDWICH CARVERY for only 95p.

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Children are welcome at lunchtime.

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WHAT'S ON IN OUR CONCERT ROOM

WEDNESDAY- FOLK NIGHT- FREE

FRIDAY- LIVE GROUPS

SUNDAY- LIVE ENTERTAINMENT- FREE

477 8008



HOT ON THE HEELS OF Websters Choice comes a new Premium Bitter from Burtonwood. Called JBA the beer is intended as a replacement for Almonds

Bitter which was only introduced two or so years ago. However, whereas Almonds was only a hopper version of the standard Burtonwood Bitter this is an entirely new brew with a higher gravity of 1039-1042 which puts it somewhere between Holts & Robbies Best for potential strength.

Initial distribution is into about 40 outlets selected for their record in keeping beer but after this it will be available to any pub which considers it has a demand & it is available in 18 gallon casks. Like Websters Choice the emphasis is on quality and it is inevitable that comparisons will be made. There is in fact a complete contrast, JBA being sharper with a more distinct character and it certainly deserves to succeed. The brewery recommends that it retails at 4-5p more than the bitter & those wishing to sample it should try either the Bulls Head or the New Union in the City Centre.

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