

No.27

**STOCKPORT & SOUTH MANCHESTER CAMRA** 

JULY 1986

# **SLEIGHT OF HAND**

By Jim Flynn.

At a recent Pub of the Month Award, at the Crown in Didsbury, members of the Campaign tackled the Greenall Whitley Area Manager, Mr. Partington, about the Breweries despicable use of fake handpumps to serve gassy keg beers in a number of pubs in the area, including the Elizabethan, Heaton Moor.

He made no apologies for their use and felt that they added to the pubs ambience and did not accept that Greenall Whitley were not keeping to the spirit of current Consumer legislation (albeit falling within the letter). He then stated that the Brewery regarded all their beers as 'real', whether cask conditioned or keg. He was forcefully informed that not only did the average drinker understand the difference but that CAMRAs' definition of 'Real Ale' had been accepted by the Oxford English Dictionary.

Greenall Whitleys' corporate decision not to distinguish between their real and keg Beers is obvious, both from their use of fake handpumps and the fact that it is very difficult for the drinker to determine between their counter taps for their keg/tank and cask beers.

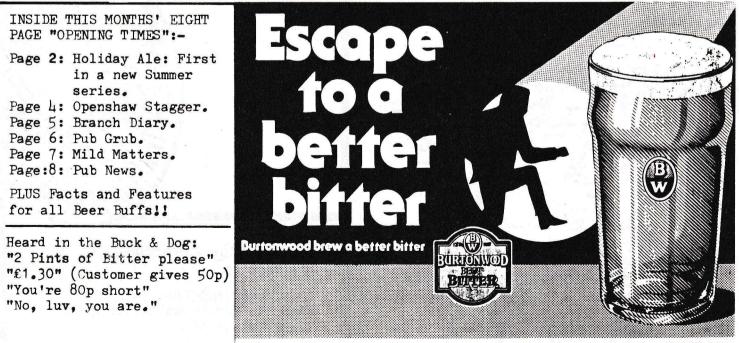
In their desire to become the seventh National Brewery and to maximise profits, Greenall Whitleys' are seemingly willing to try to conceal the nature of their beers from its customers.

The lesson for the drinker is that when in their pubs always ask whether real ale is sold before making your order.

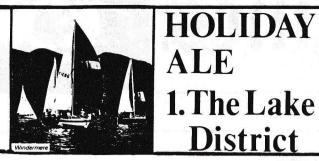
Meanwhile, CAMRA, Stockport & South Manchester, are anxious to draw up a list of those pubs who are using fake handpumps - if there is one lurking near you please write to the Editor, address on the back page.

Remember the slogan:

Con please - you're in Greenall Whitley Land!



Burtonwood Brewery, Burtonwood, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 4PJ Tel: Newton-le-Willows (09252) 5131

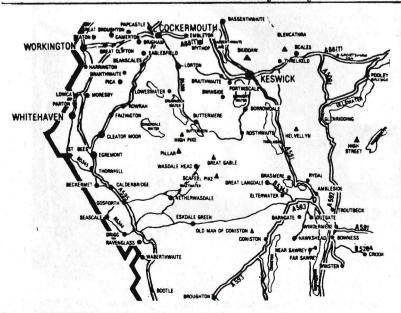


#### PUB BAGGING IN THE ENGLISH LAKES.

BOWNESS ON WINDERMERE. (Turn left off A591 as you approach Windermere from Kendal) Boasts half a dozen real ale pubs, a selection of which are: ALBERT HOTEL: Queens Square: Hartleys Mild, Bitter. XB & Robinsons Old Tom. Expensive accomodation, good food, boring decor. Across the road from here follow the narrow street (to the left of the John Peel Inn - worth a visit) and come to the HOLE IN'T WALL (New Hall Inn). Robinson Place (sic): Hartleys XB. A stunning Inn, built in the early 1600s - suberb carved wooden ceiling, lots of wood panelling, nooks & crannys, slab floors, a stuffed owl, dogs asleep in front of a blazing log fire etc., even a sign which tells you to expect a head on your pint unless you specifically ask for one without. Also sells souvenier sweat shirts. (Parking is impossible, but a large Pay & Display car park is nearby.)

AMBLESIDE. At the Northern end of the town, up Smithy Brow (opposite the main car park - just past the famous little house built over the river river) lies the famous GOLDEN RULE: Hartleys Mild & XB. A mecca for CAMRA buffs & very popular with tourists and the locals. Two rooms, real fires, wooden beams, fox's heads etc. This pub also sells souvenier Golden Rule sweat shirts, and even Golden Rule belts. Six other pubs in town sell real ale.

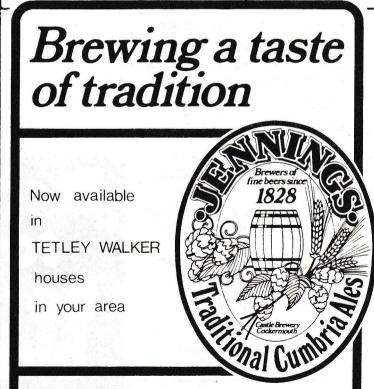
THRELKELD. Nestling under the massive hulk of Blencathra, the village of Threlkeld (4 miles east of Keswick on the A66? has two superb pubs; both multi-roomed 'nook & cranny' style



traditional country inns with wood beams, hunting scenes, real fires etc. SALUTATION: Matthew Brown Mild, Bitter & John Peel Special, hot food available. HORSE & FARRIER: Jennings Mild & Bitter.

MIDDLE OF NOWHERE. Situated just off the A66 between Penrith & Keswick (see map) lies the famous (sic) SPORTSMAN INN: Jennings Mild, Bitter & Marathon. The Sportsman has featured on TV due to the fact that it is actually situated on the old road and has been bypasse by the new A66 and the authorities keep disallowing a decent roadsign to direct thirsty travellers. However, when your chronicler called, the pub was packed and it is justifiably popular with those people who can actually find it (possibly due to the excellent attached restaurant - proper Cumbri food a speciality). Excellent views of clouds swirling over Great Mell Fell to the South. wooden columns, real fire, pew and barrel seats. N.B.: Beware of the legendary Marathon the stuff is lethal and addictive!

WYTHOP. Close to the Northern end of Bassenthwaite Lake. The PHEASANT INN: Draught Bass & Theakstons Bitter. A 400 year old traditional old coaching Inn (now a Hotel in a delightfull forest setting just off the new A66 (from which it is properly signposted!?) Quite smart, judging from the numbe of BMWs, Volvos etc., littering the car park, with a relatively small & cosy bar.



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Page'3

BECKERMET. Nine miles South of Whitehaven, just off the A595 (near Windscale). A charming little village with two pubs, the best of which is: ROYAL OAK: Hartleys XB & Youngers Scotch Bitter. Displays all the traditional virtues - multiroomed, real fire, outside drinking area, good & plentiful food, mechanical serving bells (use at your peril!) & accomodation.

ESKDALE GREEN. South of Wastwater, at the western end of the notorious Hard Knott Pass. BOWER HOUSE INN: Hartleys XB & Youngers Scotch Bitter. A very up-market, seventeenth century inn, food and accomodation available. The nearby KING GEORGE IV (known for some obscure reason as the Tatiegarth) is also well worth a visit (Youngers Ales)

WASDALE. Which claims Englands' highest mountain (Scafell Pike), deepest lake (Wastwater), smallest church and sometimes biggest lier (annual event). At the southern end of Wastwater the tiny willage of Netherwasdale (marked as Strands on some maps) is blessed with two good pubs (both free houses facing each other) which are so similar that few people can remember which is which. Both are split level, multiroomed with real fires etc. STRANDS HOTEL: (Usually Hartelys Bitter available, but when your chronicler called this was not on and was due to be replaced with Robinsons Bitter - the thin end of the wedge, perhaps?) Substantial meals available, amusingly false wood beams. SCREES HOTEL: Hartleys XB, Theakstons Bitter & Old Peculier, Robinsons Old Tom. Stuffed fox's and stoats in glass cases - accomodationand of course the mandatory souvenir sweatshirts etc. Do not miss the famous WASTWATER HOTEL at Wasdale Head, set amidst the most spectacular scenery in the Country and selling a variety of real ales.

#### Tom Jackson.

\* A new Guide to 500 real ale pubs in Cumbria has just been published by the local Branch of CAMRA. Copies are available at £1.00 plus s.a.e. from Graham Donning, Hewitt Close, Great Urswick, Ulverston, Cumbria.

#### **CHEAP BEER?**

Those readers who are contemplating joining CAMRA should note that it was agreed at the recent CAMRA National AGM in Southampton to increase subscriptions to  $\pounds 9$  for Ordinary Membership, or ten times this figure for life Membership.

However since the new rate still works out at roughly the cost of a pint per month, this is surely a small price to pay to help keep Traditional Beer in pubs worth drinking it in.

### PUB THE MON74

The Stockport & South Manchester Branch selection for the July Pub of the Month award is the Crown, Heaton Lane, Stockport.

Renowned for being run by Stockports' oldest Landlady. who retired in late 1984 after running the pub for 28 years. This was followed by a decline in the pubs trade and even a period of closure until February 1985 when Jim & Alice Knight took over. No strangers to the trade, having run the Queens on Portwood 14 years ago, the pub has been revitalised, the redecoration inside and out being matched by the friendly atmosphere and warm welcome which now makes the Crown one not to miss. Handpumped Boddingtons Mild & Bitter are on sale and invariably on fine form. The presentation is on July 24th., and members & friends old and new are warmly invited.

#### HAVE A NICE DAY!

Stockports' Transatlantic licensee, Ron Davies of the Bulls Head, Market Place, retires on the 8th., of this Month. Having run the Bulls with his wife Jean for the past  $6\frac{1}{2}$  years, Ron, who hails from Boston, is finally hanging up his pumps!

He reckons that the things he'll miss most are the 'nice folks & nice people' who form his customers and as he is only moving to Warrington he quoted McArthur : 'I shall return! I just want to rest, sling back a few bourbons and Budweisers and perhaps get barred from the Bulls Head!'

The pub won't be quite the same when he's gone - so turn up on Independence day & grab him a scotch!

### Castlewood (HOLE IN WALL) OPP TSB BRIDGE ST. STOCKPORT.

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#### OUT IN OPENSHAW ... By John Clarke.

The Branch has a history of poorly attended crawls in the East Manchester area & this was no exception with only two hardy souls in attendance all night. As ever the comments on the pubs & beers merely reflect what we found on the night and shouldn't be taken as definitive.

We started at the Duke of Edinburgh, Mill St., a monolithic Tetleys Pub which can usually be relied on to serve a good pint. Neither, however, were on their usual form tonight, but were still thought to be above average. The first of several Manchester log-end dart boards was noticed in the vault.

Pausing only to see whether the newly refurbished Bradford Hotel was still all keg (it was!), a short detour took us to the Fox, Clayton Lane. A Whitbread house, the Fox was also refurbished about 8 months ago in a style that can perhaps best be described as a more restrained version of Hosts 'Open House' theme. Cask Chesters Bitter is on sale & was thought to be no more than average but was selling well. The best beer in the pub was probably the bottled English Ale spotted behind the bar.

On to Ashton Old Road now and the Lord Wolsely. A real ale gain here, Chesters Mild & Bitter plus Trophy all available on handpump. Keg Trophy was also on sale and as usual our order was met with a lunge for the fizz pump. In the nick of time we got the real thing which turned out to be sour and almost undrinkable. The barmaid told us that the cask was not as popular as the keg but since on our experience there seems to be no attempt to sell it, that's hardly surprising. The Chesters Mild was also sampled and judged to be 'on the turn'. The best thing about the pub was the locals who were friendly and welcoming.

Swiftly passing the ghastly Francs (no Eiffel Tower on the roof yet!) we arrived at the Staff of Life. The handpumped Wilsons Mild and Bitter was certainly above average & it was nice to see no Websters products on sale. Nice traditional wooden seating in the vault, too.

Ignoring Bass's George (keg beer, keg pub), the next stop was Boddingtons Locomotive. This is a superb unspoilt multi-roomed pub, even the urinals in the gents were impressive. Lots of good tilework and a good atmosphere to match. Handpumped bitter only was available (many pubs in the area have problems selling mild in any quantity) and was given again above average.

Another detour down Cornwall Street to the Napoleon. An unusual pub, this, technically a free house but with only Wilsons & Websters products on sale, it consists of a small, spartan, vault and a huge lounge complete with dance floor, band and cabaret. Ignoring the mediocre Websters Yorkshire Bitter we both chose the superior Wilsons Bitter and although the most expensive beer of the night (76p) was quite good.

Carrying on down Cornwall St. and over the railway brought us to the Railway. Another Wilsons house & recently refurbished with a feel for the pub that others could do well to copy. Again no Websters at all & the Wilsons Mild and Bitter were voted the best of the night, being very good indeed. It was also nice to have your pint topped up without asking.

Retracing our steps we arrived at the High Bank on Ogden Lane. A fairly average Estate pub the only cask beer was Boddingtons

## Old Ship Inn,

Styal.

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HANDPUMPED MARSTONS PEDIGREE -

WILSONS MILD&BITTER-

WEBSTERS YORKSHIRE BITTER-

THE HOME OF HOME MADE FOOD!

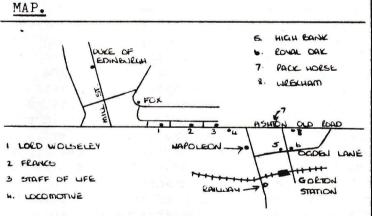
Page 4

Opening Times Page 5

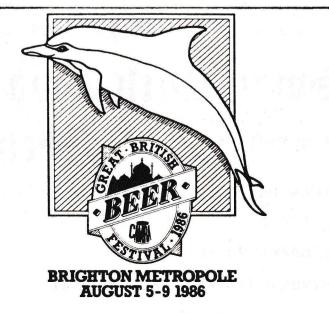
Bitter, the mild being the keg Boddingtons O.B. Mild. Yet again we thought the beer was above average without being anything to write home about. Nearby is Wilsons Royal Oak, another Websters Free Zone serving decent pints of both Wilsons Mild and Bitter. Once again a log-end dartboard was in use.

Returning to Ashton Old Road brought us to another average pub with average beer in the shape of Greenalls Pack Horse. Another Bitter only house we left as the cabaret, "The Fabulous Hearthrobs" was about to start. We headed over the road to Boddingtons Wrexham. Closed for a time, the Wrexham is totally unaltered inside with some of the best interior tilework around. Indeed this pub just shows that very often all that is needed to bring a pub back to life is a lick of paint and a tidy up & not the insensitive gutting indulged in by some breweries in the area. The bitter only was cask (the mild being keg Oldham) and was the best Boddingtons of the night.

An excellent spot to close the evening and also, for the future, to launch a crawl of Higher Openshaw which will be done later in the year.



#### DON'T FORGET.....



#### **BRANCH DIARY...**

#### JULY.

1			
	Mon.	7:	Social: Waggon & Horses, Hyde Road,
	1.1		Gorton (Holts) 8-30pm.
-	Wed.	9:	Midsummer Pub Hunt: start Castlewood,
			Bridge St. Brow, Stockport 7-30pm.
			Branch Meeting: Castlewood 8pm.
			Social: Three Tunnes, Hazel Grove 8-30.
	Mon.	21:	Social: Tatton Arms, Moss Nook,
			(Robinsons) 8-30pm.
	Thu.	24:	PUB OF THE MONTH: Crown, Heaton Lane,
I			Stockport (Boddingtons) 8 pm.
	Mon.	28:	Social: Midway, Newbridge Lane,
			Stockport (Free) 8-30pm.
	Tue.	29:	Open Committee Meeting: Alexandra,
I			Northgate Road, Edgeley, 8pm.
I	AUGUST.		
	Fri.	1:	'Opening Times' Ten Years On Crawl
I			of Stockport. Times & venues at the
I			Branch Meeting, or 'phone contact.
I	Mon.	4:	Social: Station, Wilmslow Road,
I		·	Didsbury (Marstons) 8-30pm.
l	Cant		: Business: Andy Cooper 0625 872641 (w),
I	Conta	acts	477 2959 (h)
l			Socials: John Clarke 832 2468 ext
			385 (w). 477 1973 (h).
			505 ( <b>w)</b> , 411 ()) ( <b>11</b> ).
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			Without the Restored
			ALL AND A
		ıs traditi	Websters CHOICE Using the finest blend of carefully selected malt, hops
		Head Br	ed at The Fountain every, Halifax, the Good and the traditional websters, the traditional
		since 18.	brewing excellence 88, using a process and natural spring water result in a
		creamy	ults in a smooth wholesome full bodied flavour with all the
		Origina 1042 - 1	Gravity of O48". Characteristics you would expect from a top quality
6			

Available only as a Cask Conditioned, handpulled, traditional ale, Samuel Conditioned, handpit traditional ale, Samue Websters CHOICE is considerably stronger with a higher gravity than normal bitters,

which is why it costs a little more

As you would expect from a brewery with traditions and experience spanning a century and a half, our attention to detail doesn't TRADITIONALLY BREW AND FERMENTED ORIGINAL GRANTY 1042\*. attention to detail doesn't stop there. Samuel Websters CHOICE is available only in selected and approved outlets, whose high standards of Innkeeping match our own. BREWED IN YORKSHIRE



KE IT YOU



ARMS.

WELLINGTON ROAD SOUTH, STOCKPORT.

ROBINSONS BEST ALES!

#### PUB FOOD & SNACKS MON - SAT.



By John Clarke.

This Month it's back to Stockport and the Red Bull on Middle Hillgate.

An old pub, first mentioned in the 1820s, it was for many years owned by Bells, passing into Robinsons hands when they took over their Stockport rivals in 1949. Today the Red Bull still has an old fashioned feel to it what with a flagged floor, open fires and old wooden settles. Indeed it has been said that it's more like a Country pub than one you'd expect to find in Central Stockport.

The handpumped Robinsons Best Mild & Rest Bitter are invariably excellent, so much so that the Red Bull received the Stockport & South Manchester Pub of the Year Award for 1985.

The pub also has a name for excellent value for money food and this was certainly borne out on our visit. The menu is not perhaps as wide ranging as some but this is no bad thing with an emphasis on home made quality. None of us tried the home made cauliflower soup (BOp) for starters and for the main course most of us chose the Pork Somerset Style (£2.45). This consisted of a pork neck chop, topped with stuffing and cheese and then braised in cider. A generous portion, it came with four new potatoes, boiled in their skins with a generous pat of butter, peas and cabbage, properly cooked for once with a 'bite' to it & not the usual soggy mush.

The verdict was excellent, as was that passed on the Savoury Quiche ( $\pounds 2.25$ ) chosen by another in our group. Another generous helping this came with chips - the alternative to new potatoes - a salad, coleslaw, potato salad. The other main course on offer was grilled Sirloin Steak, with all the trimmings plus chips or new potatoes at  $\pounds 3.95$ .

The fifth member of our party, not so hungry as the rest of us, chose one of the open sandwiches and was taken aback at the plateful she received. A barmcake, huge slabs of cheddar, salad and pickles it was more like a ploughmans lunch and she struggled to finish. The open sandwiches on offer range from Roast Topside (£1.50), Gammon. Turkey (£1.40) to Cheddar, Cheshire or Stilton (£1.30). Pate & Toast is also on offer at £1.40.

To finish, I sampled the Rhubarb Crumble & Cream at 90p which, although looking a little disappointing on arrival, proved delicious. Other alternatives to finish were cheese and biscuits (75p) or coffee and mints (40p)

Our verdicts ranged from good to excellent and our opinions of the size of the portions from 'generous' to 'vast'. Definitely one to visit when in Stockport.

#### HEAD FOR THE AXE?

Following the departure of Landlord Jim Hewston from Greenalls' excellent but undervisited King's Head, Chancellor Lane, Ardwick, word is that the Brewery are "examining options" for the future of the pub. Recently Greenalls have not been averse to selling their lower-turnover pubs either to other Brewers (Pritannia, Beswick sold to Lees) or into the Free Trade (King's Arms, Salford, sold to John 'Marble Arch' Worthingto and this could well be an appropriate solution for the King's Head. Meanwhile, although cask mild was a casualty of the change, the bitter served during the interregnum has been generally most acceptable.

KEVIN AND SUE WELCOME YOU TO THE

Swan With Two

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HOT & COLD LUNCHTIME FOOD,

CHILDRENS' ROOM,

A HAVEN IN THE SHOPPING PRECINCT!

#### MILD MATTERS

News for Mild drinkers - some bad, some, possibly, good. The bad news first: we hear that Boddingtons have apparently indicated that they plan to have just one cask mild for their three Copmanies. Surprisingly this is not to be their own brew which, along with that from the now apparently doomed Oldham Brewery, is to be axed in favour of Liverpool brewed Higsons Mild. Just how Manchester drinkers will take to this foreign invader remains to be seen, but sadly would appear to be of little consequence when increased profits through tationalisation are in prospect.

On a brighter note, Samuel Webster & Wilsons tell us that Wilsons Original Mild has been introduced into their entire estate from Liverpool to Hull and also that Websters Bark Mild has been suspended "in favour of this very excellent beer". They do on to assure us that there are no plans to withdraw the brew and although we have had 'assurances' from Websters Wilsons before ("There are no plans to close either brewery") this development does mean that there is now only one dark mild in their estate and the future of Wilsons Mild could therefore be a little brighter than was previously thought.

#### **IMPERIAL MINTED**

More news about the Imperial, Birch St., West Gorton. Owner Bill Taylor tells us that despite the apparent lack of activity outside, progress is such that the pub should be open by the end of this month. The interior has had to be virtually gutted as the two years of virtual dereliction were compounded by vandals setting a fire in the pub just before Bill bought it. There will however still be a vault and lounge and it is anticipated that the latter will have an 'olde worlde' feel with beams etc.

Beers on sale will be Tetleys, Boddingtons and Banks's with possibly a guest. To capitalise on the neighbouring Belle Vue Stadium the pub may be re-named 'The Speedway'.

A further report will follow the re-opening.

### THE

BRIDGEWATER

CHESTERGATE, STOCKPORT. FREE HOUSE. TETLEY BITTER -JENNINGS BITTER. PUB GRUB & BAR SNACKS.

REAL ALE IN CENTRAL & SOUTH MANCHESTER:

Update No. 4.

Additions: CITY CENTRE: Langdons Wine Bar. Great Bridgewater St. Chesters M, B (H). Schnapps, Old Bank St. Websters B, Wilsons B (H) ARDWICK: Cleveland, Wilson St. Wilsons B (H) Apsley Cottage, off Stockport Road (behind Apollo) Wilsons B (H) Specify handpumped. GORTON: Pomona, Reddish Lane, Websters GL, B: Wilsons B (H). OPENSHAW: Lord Wolseley, Ashton Old Road, Chesters M, B, T (H) Beware: Keg Trophy also! Deletions: CITY CENTRE: Ducie Arms (demolished Changes: CITY CENTRE: Brewers Arms: add Higsons B. Dutton Arms: delete BM insert M. Peveril of the Peak: delete Websters B. Royal George, Lever St.: Delete Wilsons beers, add Websters GL, B (H). Smithfield: add Ind Coope Burton Ale, Jennings B. ARDWICK: King's Head: delete M. BESWICK: Travellers Call: Delete Marstons B. add Marstons Ped (H): Owd Rodger not sold during Summer. DIDSBURY: Station: add Marstons Ped. GORTON: Friendship: dispense should read (E) OPENSHAW: High Bank: Delete M: Bitter now served by handpump. Napoleon: Delete Boddingtons B, add Websters B, Wilsons B (H) Prince of Wales: delete TL.

## 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

Page 7

Page 8

# PUB NEWS:

The famous Marstons Pedigree has now made an appearance in East Manchester - it's on sale at 78p at the Travellers Call, Ashton Old Road where it's replaced the Burton Bitter. Owd Rodger, the draught strong ale is being rested for the Summer.

The Royal Oak, Cheadle, has been having minor refurbishment over the past couple of months - re-plastering has been done in the toilets and corridor, the vault has been repainted and the bar re-varnished. Window frames are being replaced and the paintwork touched up.

'Francs', Ashton Old Road has now opened and as predicted is all keg. Lovers of the bizarre will be disappointed as Manchester Planning Dept. have turned down the application to put a model of the Eiffel Tower on the roof.

A few changes have taken place at the Castlewood, Stockport. The food operation has been totally revamped & the new menu offers Pizza (60p), Pate or Cheese ( $\pounds 1.50$ ), Ploughmans at  $\pounds 1.50$  and also Beef & Cheeseburgers at 80p. Jacket spuds are also available. These moves have meant that the old kitchen has been turned into the Games Room and the upstairs bar removed and now used for dining or meetings.

New faces at Holts' Seven Stars, Ashton Old Road. It's Brian & Patricia Porters' first pub, but they already seem to be adapting well to the Holts tradition of a good pint at a cheap price.

The Pomona, Reddish Lane, Gorton, has re-opened, refurbished & sporting 3 real ales: Wilsons Bitter, Websters Yorkshire Bitter & Green Label. The Wilsons mild is keg. A definite improvement from previous. There are two rooms, the main bar (some of which is to be taken up with a pool table, & a concert room.

The back yard at Robinsons Plough, Hyde Road, has been spruced up to be used for outside drinking if we get a decent summer. The inside is unspoilt enough to be an attraction in itself but the option of a pint outside could be a pleasant addition to choice.

As the Robinsonisation of the Union proceeds a mole tells us that next on the agenda to receive the treatment is the Crown on Didsbury Road. HEARD AT THE BAR:

A Robinsons' licensee, having just received a delivery of 'Opening Times', to customer reading a copy: "Go on, read it - but don't let the Robbies rep see it.

The Cleveland, off Stockport Road, Chorlton-on-Medlock, has re-opened. Handpulled Wilsons bitter is available & mild appears to be there too - but has not been 'on' so far. BAKERS VAULTS

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#### WHAT'S ON IN OUR CONCERT ROOM

WEDNESDAY- FOLK NIGHT - FREE

FRIDAY- LIVE GROUPS

#### SUNDAY- LIVE ENTERTAINMENT- FREE 477 8008

Contributors this Month: John Clarke, Rhys Jones, Andy Cooper, Tommy Jackson, Jim Flynn, Humphrey Higgins, Jock Stroller, A.Mole.

For details of Advertising rates please contact the Editor, address below.

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 IWH