

# Opening Times



STOCKPORT AND SOUTH MANCHESTER CAMRA No.56 DECEMBER 1988

## CLUBS CLOBBERED

The viability of many of the area's social, political and workingmen's clubs is under threat from the new, extended pub hours, the National Union of Club Stewards has warned.

In the past, most of these clubs didn't have to try too hard to attract and keep custom as many drinkers would have to use them if they wanted a drink outside normal opening hours, particularly in the afternoons, often it was easier to go there straight away rather than have a drink in the local and have to uproot yourself at 3.00pm. In short, the main pull of many of the clubs was not the atmosphere or the quality of the beer but the legal restrictions on their competitors.

The recent change in the law has put an end to all this and clubs are beginning to be concerned with predictions being made of the 'end of an era' unless they can reverse the trend of declining custom. For too long club stewards have been used to serving semi-drinkable keg beers from the national brewers who had given their clubs nice fat interest free loans. A number of clubs however are realising that it is no longer enough just to cater for the particular interest which they aim to serve but they need to give their existing and potential members a decent pint. And of course there are a good number of clubs which have been serving decent beer for years. As we find out about clubs serving decent beer we try and bring them to a wider audience - you may have seen mention of them in previous issues.

As for the others, surely it's time that their committees and stewards realised that, particularly in an area with as much cask ale as this, the only way to compete is to serve their customers as good, if not better, a pint as they get in their locals.

OPENING TIMES wishes all its readers and advertisers a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year. A special thank you to all our advertisers whose continued support over the year has helped to make Opening Times such a great success.

**PLEASE PASS OPENING TIMES  
TO A FRIEND OR RETURN IT TO  
THE HOLDER.**

## NEW BREWS

John Smith's the Tadcaster brewers who only have a thin scattering of pubs locally have announced the introduction of a second cask beer to sell alongside their standard bitter.

This is their well known Magnet Bitter, last seen in 'real' form in 1975. With an original gravity of 1040° it is somewhat stronger than the 1036og bitter which itself is only available locally in the Midway, Newbridge Lane, Stockport and is promised in the Railway, West Didsbury when alterations are complete, The George and Dragon in Ardwick and Tom Thumb's in Stockport currently remain keg-only, for reasons best known to themselves.

We have heard a little more about the new beer from Greenalls, exclusively reported here a couple of months ago. It will, we are now told, be called Thomas Greenalls and will have an original gravity in the 1045-49 band. Launch date is still April/May next year.

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PLUS CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM YOUR LOCAL

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Tetley Mild & Bitter  
Burton Ale





By Alex Panesh

The Sun in September, as a public house, has only been open some four years but in that time it has gained a loyal set of regulars who flock nightly to a place that is not only warm and friendly but which also sells an excellent pint of Sam Smiths Old Brewery Bitter. Les and Ann who run the pub tell me that it is due for redecoration (not renovation) soon.

If the same amount of care taken in preparing the food is applied to the redecorating then it will be a fine job indeed. This leads me neatly onto the food which consists of a regularly changing selection with additional specials from time to time.

On our visit there was only one choice of a vegetarian meal which was a little restricting. However we decided to have the Smoked Salmon stuffed with prawns and a cheese omelette, both at £2.50. Each came with either chips or a baked potato plus a side salad which even included passion fruit. We followed this with Hot Chocolate Fudge Cake, good value at 80p. We both agreed that the food was excellent, and the best that I personally have tried this year.

Should you wish to drink wine rather than the excellent beer then I recommend the St Emillion which is excellent. Beaujolais Nouveau is also now available and to my mind is the best for many years - my personal favourite is Chateau de Bluizard, fruity and full of gingery aftertaste.

The Sun in September is on Burnage Lane not far from Kingsway and is easily reached by either car or public transport.

## DRAGON ROARS

The George & Dragon in Hazel Grove has re-opened after yet another expensive refit and it must be said that it now looks more like a pub than it has done for years. Gone is the mirrored ceiling and 'Open House' style decor and in its place is a comfortable, plush pub consisting of three large lounge areas served by a central bar. The three 'rooms', although large are spit up by alcoves and raised levels and this together with the low ceiling in part of the pub does make for an intimate atmosphere.

Another improvement is in the beer - three handpumped cask beers are available: Trophy, Marstons Pedigree and, new for the area, Flowers Original. This latter is brewed in Cheltenham and is a full bodied beer with a gravity of 1044°. Although 98p a pint, we are told that it is also currently the best seller.

## WOODMAN CHOPPED

Still in Hazel Grove, we hear that now Robbies have knocked the Woodman through into the cottage on one side of the pub, they're now going to knock through into the shop on the other. This will apparently become the pool room, with the current pool room becoming a food servery area. Formerly characterful and intimate, the Woodman seems destined to become like many other pubs in Hazel Grove: bigger, brighter...and boring.

## ROYAL SALUTE

Another refurbishment unveiled by Robinsons recently is the Royal Mortar on Higher Hillgate, Stockport. The pub had previously been knocked about and although one remaining part of a wall has been removed, the end result is a definite improvement with much needed new seating, lighting (but too bright, as usual) and decor.

**De Olde Vic** CHATHAM ST.,  
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Stockport's Premier  
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Guest Beers Weekly  
PUB OF THE YEAR '87  
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DECEMBER			
4	11	18	25 ...
5	12	19	26 ...
6	13	20	27 ...
7	14	21	28 ...
1	8	15	22 <b>29</b> ...
2	9	16	23 30 ...
3	10	17	24 31 ...

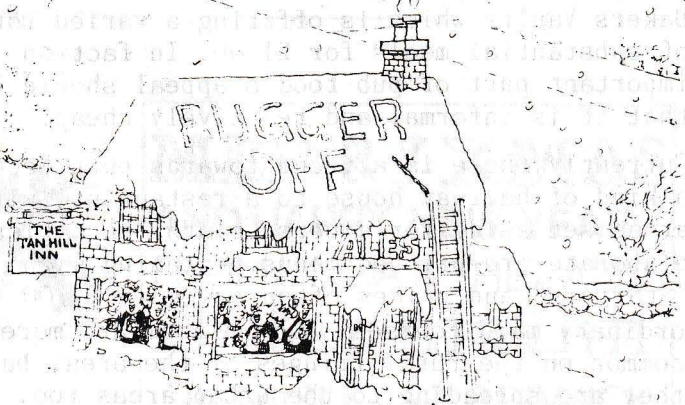
# PUB OF The MONTH

December's Pub of the Month is the King's Head on Chancellor Lane, Ardwick.

It's not the first time that the King's has gained this coveted award, for some years ago when it was still a Greenalls pub, licensees John and Josie Sullivan, last heard of at the Chapel House in Dukinfield, hosted a splendid evening on a cold winter's night. Since their time though, the pub went into a solid decline - put on the market by Greenalls, and neglected by a succession of caretaker licensees.

All that changed, though, in November 1987, when Tony and Audrey Stokes moved in. Though they had some experience in the trade, this was in fact their first pub - though you'd never know it by the assured way in which they stamped their signature on the place. The beer is supplied by threatened national brewer Scottish & Newcastle - Youngers Scotch and IPA from the outset, joined last summer by Theakstons Bitter, all on handpump and good form. As for the change in the pub, one customer summed it up on a recent visit - "Suddenly, the place shone..."

Tony and Audrey's hard work has given the King's Head an enviably high standard of beer, food and hospitality. We present them with the pub of the Month award on Thursday, 22nd December - be there for a night to remember!



Alan and June Preston  
invite you to

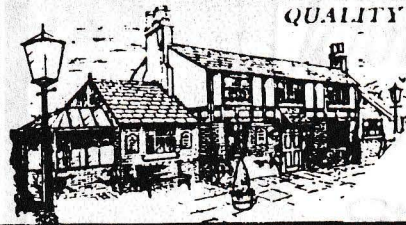
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Hydes  
Anvil Ales

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Brewers  
of  
Traditional  
Cask  
Beers

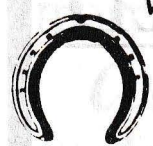
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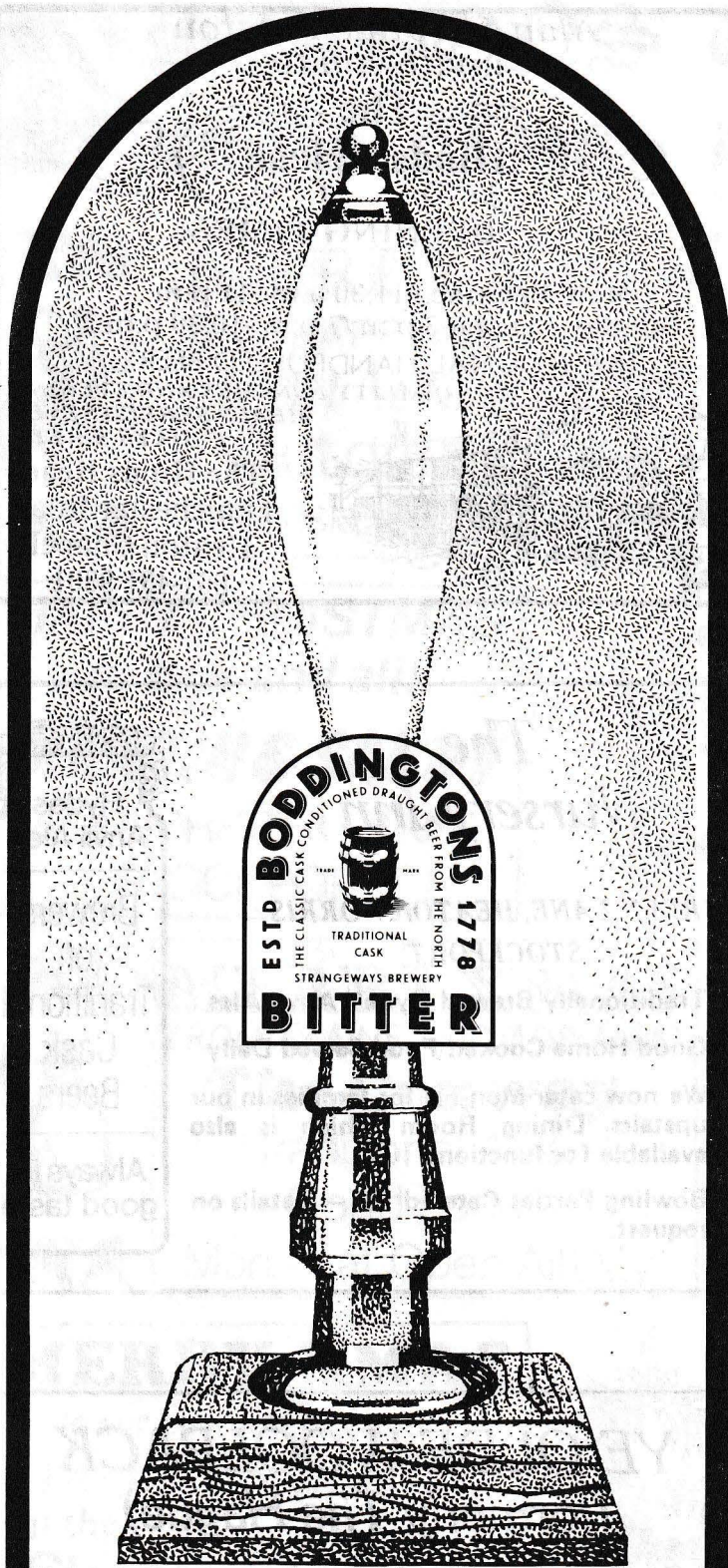
Always in  
good taste

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**CASK**  
**CONDITIONED**  
**BITTER**

## NICE BEER, SHAME ABOUT THE FOOD

The licenced trade is constantly changing, new style brewery leases, new hours, new problems. Some say that to survive, many pubs will have to appeal to whole families and above all else this will mean good imaginative food. Are they up to the challenge? Peter Edwardson fears not:

"Each month, Opening Times prints a 'Pub Grub' article which is normally very favourable to the pub covered. But how good really is the pub food in Stockport & South Manchester? In my view apart from a few honourable exceptions, the general standard is very mediocre - and this includes many of the pubs mentioned in 'Pub Grub'. It's a sad comment that our most famous pub food venue is the Royal Oak in Didsbury, and its chief claim to fame (though the food here is good) is that the portions are ludicrously oversized for a normal appetite.

The basic problem is that it's all too predictable. Pubs are not like McDonalds, they should have an individual character, and so should the food. And at least McDonalds do what they set out to do consistently well. Too often in pubs, the menu consists of a long list of various standard dishes, all with chips - and this when few pubs can cook even a halfway decent chip. Little better is the hot servery found in many managed pubs, dishing out catering packs of chili and steak & kidney pie, which you have to queue up for if it's busy, and which become pretty unpalatable, simmering for hours if it's not. Very few pubs seem willing to take any risks with the menu and offer interesting dishes which tempt people to eat there because the food's good, not just because it's there.

There's no reason for pubs to limit themselves to so-called "traditional English food", but if they do serve chili, curries, pizza etc they should restrict themselves to one or two specialities and do them properly, rather than offering a wider choice of prepackaged dishes. That's the way to get a reputation.

Good, imaginative pub food need not be expensive - November's Opening Times reported on the Bakers Vaults which is offering a varied range of substantial meals for £1.50. In fact an important part of pub food's appeal should be that it is informal and relatively cheap.

Currently there is a trend towards pubs becoming a kind of halfway house to a restaurant, with areas set aside for diners, cloths on tables, elaborate pre-printed menus beginning with "Starters" and prices often exceeding £4.00 for ordinary main courses. Such places are more common on the rural fringes of the area, but they are spreading to the urban areas too. They combine the worst features of both pub and

restaurant - publicans should either stick to pub food proper, or go the whole hog and set aside an area as a true restaurant.

Many pubs confine themselves to fuelling workers and shoppers, and in this area, full though it is of speciality restaurants, there is little attempt to go for the leisure market - few pubs serve evening food, many stop on Saturday lunch and hardly any do so on Sunday lunch. Pubs also neglect retired people, who in many cases have comfortable incomes and plenty of time to spend them in the pub. They don't want mountains of chips either, but they do want a little extra personal service.

In this area we may have some of the best beer in the country, but in general our pub food is dull and predictable. In my experience, pub food is far better in the south of England (excluding London, which is awful), and usually little more expensive. If licensees here are to face the challenge of flexible licensing hours and the mushrooming fast food outlets, they must use more imagination and give more thought and care to what they offer."

Editor's note - food for thought indeed, what do you think. Letters to the address on the back page.



## HOST BUSTERS PART 2

In Spring next year Conways in Cheadle Hulme is to be 'de-Open Housed' and converted back into a proper pub. In particular a public bar area is to be restored. It seems almost every week that Grand Met, owners of Websters/Wilsons, try and undo another of the costly mistakes of the Pennine Host design and marketing teams. The whole concept must have proved as expensive and foolhardy as their famous Watneys Red Barrell debacle in the 1970's. When will they ever learn?

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Evening meals available, children welcome lunchtime & early evening.

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# STAGGER

SHAW HEATH SHUFFLE BY Robin Wignall

A few months ago I wrote to Opening Times asking for positive reporting by Stagger correspondents. The King St West and Shaw Heath Stagger landed me with the opportunity of putting this into practice.

The Comfortable Gill on King St West was our first visit. This is a busy town centre pub across the road from the bus depot. The mock Tudor decor gives a fairly pleasant interior, though the low ceiling can accentuate the juke box music. The Comfy has a thriving darts and crib team. On our visit we considered the beer to be on good form, though one member had an idiosyncratic dislike of Boddingtons. Both mild and bitter, on electric pumps were considered to be good to very good by the rest of the group.

Leaving the Comfy Gill we had the short walk up King St West to the Olde Vic, passing en route John Smiths' Tom Thumbs. This unfortunately remains all keg, which is a pity as John Smiths

ask conditioned bitter is a palatable pint.

Once a part of the Watney-Wilson empire, Ye Olde Vic is now a free house which has acquired a growing reputation since Kay Ord became landlady and deservedly won the branch Pub of the Year award for 1987. A good array of real ale is maintained in this popular pub. From a personal point of view I think I preferred the bar and darts room of previous days, however the present interior is quite pleasant and the beer of course is a vast improvement. On our visit Taylors Landlord, Wadworths 6X, Marstons Pedigree and Tetley Bitter were available. Our company, now into double figures, felt the Wadworths to be good and the Taylors to be well above average.

A little further up the hill stands Wilsons Blue Bell, an architecturally imposing building dating from 1898. A previously multi-roomed pub, the Blue Bell has been fairly tastefully opened out, and has retained a darts and pool room. Original decorative tiling remains in the entrance hall whilst the lounge seems to have been recently re-upholstered. Wilsons mild and bitter plus Websters bitter are served on electric pumps, which seems odd as on one side of the bar a bank of handpumps stands idle. On our visit the mild was scored at average and the bitter generally above average.

Just round the corner is Boddingtons Greyhound, a 60 year old pub which underwent major alterations in the 1950's. It now boasts 2 rooms and a vault. Decoration is quite acceptable, if perhaps a little 'all beams and brass'. There is a prominent price list on the customer side of the bar and the beer also recommends itself. On our visit both mild and bitter were reconsidered to be well above average and into the good category.

Across the road stands Robinson's Church. With calls so close together there is hardly distance enough to develop a stagger. The Church has been much altered, but retains rooms with separate identities with darts and pool available. This is to my mind a better piece of 'Robinsonisation' and in the opinion of some members The Church has benefitted from alteration - the brick pillar on the way to the gents looked a bit out of place though. Best Mild and Best Bitter are served on electric pumps and Old Tom is on hand pump. The bitter was scored generally above average and good, if cold. The mild also scored above average though the Old Tom could have been better.

Negotiating Edgeley roundabout we reached Robinson's Armoury, a multi-roomed pub which has largely retained the character of a local. On our visit the pub was obviously very popular, perhaps because it has not been knocked around. The group felt the best mild to be generally above average and the best bitter to be better than that,

Next door is Wilson's Swan, another busy two-roomed local, whose popularity has survived alteration. A number of windows sport fine

ESTD  1867  
**BURTONWOOD**  
**BREWERY**



**A FAMILY TRADITION  
 OF FINE BREWING**

etched swans, and add to the pub's character. Darts and pool are available and there is an obvious price list. The Swan is a fairly recent gain to Real Ale, as prior to renovation it had served keg beer only. The Wilsons bitter was scored as average and above, but those who sampled the Websters in the interests of science were rather disappointed.

A stroll along Shaw Heath brought us to the Florist. This Robinsons pub is one of the local favourites, a fine multi-roomed pub with some superb etched windows. The Stagger ended here partly because of the high standard of the beer and partly because it was late anyway. The best bitter was slightly hazy but received very good scores for taste, which goes to show that we should drink with our mouths and not our eyes. The best mild was scored as good.

It has not been difficult to be positive in this article, as on the night we sampled generally decent beer in quite pleasant surroundings. Try the pubs for yourselves and make up your own minds.

EDGELEY

CHESTERGATE

WOOD ST

DAW BANK

STATION ROAD

WELLINGTON ROAD SOUTH (A6)

TOWN HALL

CHATHAM ST

KING STREET WEST

STOCKPORT STATION

GREEK STREET

CASTLE STREET

MERCIAN WAY

HEATH

LONGSHUT LANE

KEY: 1-COMFORTABLE GILL, 2-OLDEVIC, 3-BLUEBELL  
 4-GREYHOUND, 5-CHURCH, 6-ARMOURY, 7-SWAN,  
 8-FLORIST, 9-GRAPES



# THE BEERHOUSE

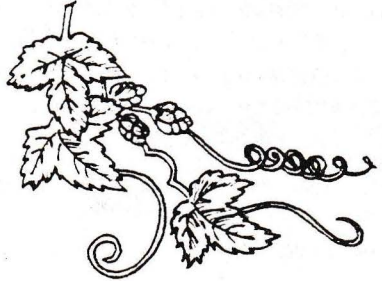
ANGEL ST., off ROCHDALE RD., M/CR

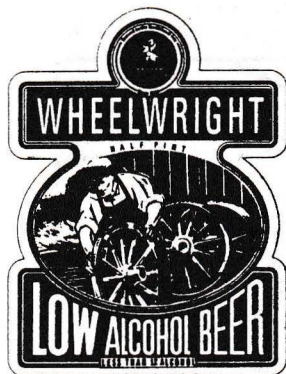
**Theakstons, Holts, Matthew  
Brown & Linfit Beers**

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Hot and Cold Food**

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SUN. 12.-3., 7.-10.30





## THE LOWDOWN

We reported a couple of months ago how many brewers were jumping on the 'Low Alcohol' bandwagon but at the same time producing inferior, additive filled products for which they were charging extortionate prices. It was with some misgivings therefore that we heard that Robinsons were to

bring out a low alcohol beer of their own.

Wheelwright Low Alcohol Beer rolled out of the brewery late last month and will also be available in bottles from 9th December - so, how will it compare with other similar products? The first thing to stress of course is that like all low alcohol products this is a keg beer and as such is not approved by CAMRA - if you want to cut down on alcohol you could do worse than switching to a decent traditional mild.

That said, this does sound a better product than many around. It's apparently brewed traditionally using Malt, hops and water with no additives such as colouring, flavouring, preservatives or sweeteners

As for price, the brewery are suggesting 10p a pint less than Best Bitter, pointing out that this will produce a similar profit margin - it will be interesting to see how many licensees follow this

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MAKE THEM. FROM TOTAL BEGINNER TO  
EXHIBITION ALE BREWER - TRY BREWING  
SUPPLIES FAMOUS 'BROADSTONE BITTER OR  
'DUBLIN DARK'

**Brew beers like those you buy**

advice and resist the temptation to cash in on the generally high prices that these beers can sell for. We will of course let you know about any instances of blatant profiteering.

What about the taste? The brewery say it 'has the taste of an ordinary beer'. That of course remains to be seen, we hadn't tried it at the press date but being a keg beer it will almost certainly be cold and fizzy. It can it seems be mixed with Best Bitter and it also 'mixes equally well with Einhorn, too'. Now there's a horrible thought!

## XMAS CHEER

The merits of Robinsons Old Tom as a superb example of a winter ale are well known. The brewery have also created a light fruity cake using the beer as a main ingredient. It makes an unusual dessert and can be eaten plain or buttered, or as a sweet with cream or custard

All you need is: 4oz butter; 1 cup dried mixed fruit; 1 bottle Old Tom; 2 cups plain flour. 1 level tsp. bicarbonate of soda and 1 level tsp. mixed spice.

Place the butter, sugar, fruit and ale into a saucepan, melt them together and boil for 3 minutes. Sieve the flour, bicarbonate of soda and spice into a bowl, add the fruit mixture and mix thoroughly. Put into a greased 2lb loaf tin and cook for 40 minutes at gas mark 4.

If you're feeling adventurous you might like to try some traditional mulled ales, home brewers will find them particularly cheap.

**WASSAIL BOWL:** To warm, yeasty mild, add sugar which will start another fermentation. Add ground ginger, nutmeg and fortified wine like sherry (or brandy). Add some more beer, lemon stir and sweeten to taste. Cover and stand in a warm place for up to 3 hours.

**MULLED ALE:** To strong ale add honey, a pinch of cloves, ground nutmeg, ginger and cinnamon. Bring nearly to boiling point, add rum or brandy then sugar to taste. Serve piping hot - but stand well back.

**LAMB'S WOOL:** From the 17th century comes this recipe, found with many variations, but all featuring the white, fleecy pulp of roasted apples.

'Boil 3 pints of mild; beat well 6 whole eggs and add to the ale. Add sugar, nutmeg, cloves and ginger to taste; topping with the pulp of roasted apples and being well brewed, drink it while hot'

It's not really possible to use bitter beers for any of the above, the ales need to be milds, but can be strong or weak according to your taste.



★ SEASONS GREETINGS ★  
 FROM CAMRA AND YOUR LOCAL



**MERRY XMAS**  
 FROM ALL AT THE  
*Nursery*  
 Green Lane  
 Heaton Norris



Merry Christmas  
 TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS FROM  
 Ian and Dot  
**Bakers Vaults**  
 □ STOCKPORT □

**MERRY XMAS**  
 to all our customers from  
**Michael J. Lyons  
 and Betty**  
**The Crown**  
 NORTHENDEN



**Seasons**  
**Greetings**  
 TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS  
 FROM ANN, JOHN & STAFF  
**THE STATION**  
 DIDSBURY  
 Good Beer Guide 1988-89

**MERRY XMAS**  
 AND HAPPY NEW YEAR  
 TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS  
**from Andy & Eunice**  
**The Queens**  
**CHEADLE**  
 GOOD BEER GUIDE 1987 & '88

**CROWN INN**  
 Heaton Lane  
 Best Wishes to  
 All Friends from  
**Jim, Jane, Jan  
 and Dianne**



Happy Christmas  
 TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS FROM  
**Margaret David  
 and Staff of the  
 Comfortable Gill**  
 STOCKPORT

**MERRY XMAS**  
 FROM ALL AT THE  
**Boars Head**  
 MARKET PLACE,  
 STOCKPORT



★ SEASONS GREETINGS ★  
 FROM CAMRA AND YOUR LOCAL

seasons greetings

TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS FROM

*Martin and Anne*

GREY HORSE

REDDISH TEL. 432-1295



**Merry Christmas  
& Happy New Year**

TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS FROM

*NICK and PAT*

WAGGON & HORSES

**Hyde Road**

MERRY XMAS

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS FROM

*John, Paula & Staff*

NAVIGATION

HEATON NORRIS

seasons greetings

TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS FROM

*David, Roy, & Mike*  
 THE TIVIOT, Stockport

TEL 480 4109

**The Kings Head**

CHANCELLOR LANE, ARDWICK

*Wish Everbody a  
 Safe Merry Xmas and  
 a Happy New Year*

A Big Thank You To All Our  
 Customers For Your Support

AUDREY, TONY & ALL STAFF



MERRY CHRISTMAS and a  
 HAPPY NEW YEAR from

*Phyllis & Family*

The Printers

CHEADLE



Merry Christmas and  
 A Happy New Year FROM

*RALPH and JEAN*

**THE CROWN**

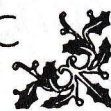
❖ Cheadle ❖

**Merry Xmas**

*From Kay & Staff*

YE OLDE VIC

**Edgeley**



*merry xmas  
 & a happy  
 new year*

TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS

FROM Allan and

Beryl at

**The Florist**

SHAW HEATH

# Don't skid off the road this Christmas

DRINKING and driving is one of those awkward issues many pub goers prefer to steer gingerly around. Until they collide with the problem and get banned for a year.

Christmas is the time of year when the Government tries to drive the message home to the swaying bands of office party revellers. And police with little bags ask for a blow by blow account of your evenings drinking.

So, before you ease the car keys out of your pocket and pop down to the pub through the pouring rain, what are the facts you ought to consider first? According to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA):

- One in three drivers killed have a blood/alcohol content above the legal limit
- Two in three drivers killed at night are above the legal limit
- One in three drivers tested as the result of an accident fails the breath test.

"The drinking driver is a potential killer armed with alcohol and a high calibre ton of metal - but he probably looks like the man next door having a good time" warn ROSPA.

Alcohol affects decision making, self-criticism, balance and co-ordination. Inexperienced drink/drivers are most likely to add to the 5500 people killed in road accidents in the UK every year. And the victims are not often behind the wheel.

Experienced drivers can also easily fall foul of the law. Threequarters of all breath tests follow police stopping cars for offences like a faulty rear light or speeding. In accidents, all drivers are regularly breath-tested.

The chances of being breath-tested are growing - out of 25 million licence holders, 250,000 are tested every year, ie one in every hundred drivers will be asked to blow their chances of keeping their licence during the next 12 months.

The message then is clear. If you want a Merry Christmas, leave the car at home.



## Brewing a taste of tradition



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# WINTER ALES

BY ANDY PRINGLE



As sure as day follows night, the seasons change and once again winter is upon us. Snowdrifts, fireworks and mass slaughter of the innocent turkey all herald the passing of another year. All should not be gloom and humbug however. To help us through these coldest days and longest nights, many brewers produce winter ales, also known as Christmas or Old ales. Most of these are strong beers and are often brewed only for a few winter months. They are a throw-back to the rich, dark beers of a century ago.

Winter ales are often matured in the brewery for much longer than other beers, their higher gravities allowing for a lengthy conditioning period. The taste improves as the beer mellows with time in the cask. I have even heard a tale of a cask of Marstons Owd Roger being "mislaidd" for a whole year and being considered superb 12 months later.

One problem for a brewer producing these strong ales which are allowed to mature for longer than other beers is that he pays duty on them as they ferment and doesn't receive any payment until the beer is sold, months later. This is an argument for a "duty at the gate" policy (taxing beer only as it is despatched) which CAMRA supports. Despite this, there are many old ales brewed and it is well worth looking out for them.

Perhaps the best known from this area is Robinsons Old Tom (og1079). The name dates back to 1899 when one Mr Munton was the head brewer. He was an incessant doodler and every time he recorded an entry of winter ale in his books, he

drew a smiling cat next to the figures and so the name was born. This fine brew has proved so popular that it is now available in some outlet throughout the year.

Another local example of a winter ale being available all year due to popular demand is Moonraker (og1074) from Lees at Middleton Junction. The other local brewery to offer a winter ale is Hydes. Unlike Robinsons and Lees, their 4X Strong Ale is only available in the winter months. With an original gravity of 1080 this fine beer is found in many of their tied houses and some free trade outlets. Odd man out among the local brewers is Boddingtons who axed their Old Ale about 7 years ago and despite occasional murmurings that it might be revived it has yet to reappear.

There is clearly a market for these beers, as shown by the fact that more and more brewers are producing them. Two recent introductions which should be more widely available this year are Walkers Winter Warmer (og1060) from Warrington which we believe will be appearing in Tetley pubs this year and not just the Peter Walker estate and Brewers Reserve (og1070-ish) from Burtonwood, successfully test-marketed last year and hopefully to be more widely distributed this. Others to look for are Daniel Hammer from Thwaites, Ram Tam from Taylors of Keighley and of course Owd Roger from Marstons, one of the long established winter brews, but again available all year.

As you can see, there are many of these interesting beers to sample. I must warn you, they are a lot stronger than normal bitters and must be treated with respect - certainly you should not consider driving if you intend sampling them. Drinking them all night is also not recommended but why not try a "Father in Law" (Old and Mild!) - it's a great combination drink and will help keep mild sales buoyant.

May I wish you all a very merry Christmas and lets all drink to this most traditional of British beers.

## APPLICATION FOR CAMRA MEMBERSHIP

I/We wish to join the Campaign for Real Ale Limited, and agree to abide by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Campaign.

NAME(S) ..... DATE .....

ADDRESS .....

POSTCODE .....

SIGNATURE ..... TELEPHONE NUMBER(S) .....

I/We enclose remittance for individual/joint membership for one year: U.K. £9

Overseas £12

I/We would like to receive further information about CAMRA

Please send your remittance (payable to CAMRA Limited) with this application form  
T. Clarke, Flat 2, 2 Errwood Rd., Levenshulme, Manchester M19 2PA

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**FROM CAMRA AND YOUR LOCAL**

**Whitworth Hotel**

RUSHOLME

*Brenda and John*

*wish all their customers*

**Merry Christmas and  
A Happy New Year**



**Seasons  
Greetings**

from RICHARD and SUSAN at

**The Bottle Stop**

Acre Lane - Bramhall

**Merry Xmas**

TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS FROM

*John, Joan & Staff*

**Egerton Arms**

**Stockport**

**MERRY XMAS**

**AND HAPPY NEW YEAR**

TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS FROM  
Barbara, Richard, Simon

**The Blossoms Hotel**

Stockport

Ten Years Good Beer Guide

**1979-1988**



*Merry Christmas  
& Happy New Year*

To All Our Customers  
FROM STAN

**Grey Mare**

Ashton Old Road



*Merry Xmas*

To Our Friends  
FROM ALL AT THE

**Tatton Arms**

MOSS NOOK



JEAN and ROGER

AT THE

*Church Inn*

EDGELEY

Wish All Our Customers

**A Happy Xmas**

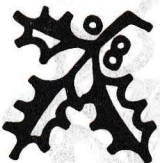
**MERRY XMAS**

**AND HAPPY NEW YEAR**

FROM LINDA & THE LADS

**Britannia Inn**

ROWSLEY ST., BESWICK



**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
& HAPPY NEW YEAR**

from Bill and Jean

*Coach & Horses*

**London Road**



★ SEASONS GREETINGS ★  
 FROM CAMRA AND YOUR LOCAL



**MERRY XMAS**  
 AND HAPPY NEW YEAR  
*from Nora & Keith*  
**Victoria Hotel**  
 Wilmslow Rd., Withington

**MERRY XMAS**

FROM DON and ALINE

**Thatched House**  
 CHURCHGATE

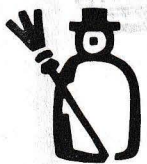


**HAPPY CHRISTMAS**  
*to one and all!*

**MARTIN & SANDY**  
 MANCHESTER ARMS  
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A MERRY CHRISTMAS  
 To All Our Customers from  
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 at THE SHADY OAK



**MERRY XMAS**  
 FROM ELAINE AND ADRIAN AT  
**The Conway**  
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Merry Christmas and  
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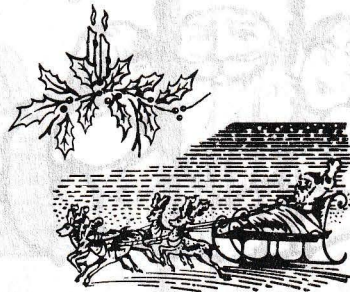
TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS FROM

*Alan, Maureen & Staff*  
**Parrswood Hotel**  
 PARRSWOOD DIDSBURY



**MERRY XMAS**

to our customers from:  
 DOT, KEN & Staff  
 at the  
**Claremont Hotel**  
 Claremont Rd., Moss Side



Merry Christmas  
 & Happy New Year  
 TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS FROM  
**Les and Ann**  
 Sun in September  
 Good Beer & Food Guide

**MERRY XMAS**  
 AND HAPPY NEW YEAR  
*from all at*

**The Ramper**  
 Pinfold Lane

Merry Christmas

from MELVYN and LINDA at

**The Alexandra**  
 Northgate Rd.

EDGELEY





## CAMRA CALLING!

Our first social in December is at the Horse and Farrier, Gatley Rd, Gatley on Monday 5th at 9.00 pm (NB all Monday Socials start at 9 unless otherwise stated. The Horse & Farrier has been in the Good Beer Guide for 10 years and we will be presenting the licensees with a plaque marking the event.

At the branch meeting on Thursday 8th (held in the upstairs room of the Blossoms, Buxton Rd (A6) Heaviley) we have a guest speaker from Lees Brewery - Mr Dutson will give a talk on coopering. He will be addressing the meeting before we get down to business, so be early - 8.00pm.

On Saturday 10th we have the branch Xmas meal, to be held at the Nursery, Heaton Norris. Starting at 7.30 a buffet meal will be followed by our guest speaker, Roger Protz, journalist, author and former editor of the Good Beer Guide. Cost is £9.50, which includes a glass of Hydes Anvil Strong Ale.

On Monday 12th there's a social at the Abbey Hey Hotel, Abbey Hey Lane, Gorton - a recent real ale gain. This is followed on Friday 16th by the infamous Hillgate crawl starting at 7.00pm at the Blossoms, we should be in the Crown at about 8.30. With 13 pubs en route this is one not to miss.

Monday 19th and we have a social in another real ale gain, the Greyhound (ex-Gamebird) on Councillor Lane, Cheadle Heath. The Kings Head, Chancellor Lane, Ardwick will be getting a Pub of the month award on Thursday 22nd (see article



## MANCHESTER MATTERS

Over the past few years, a number of hotels have opened in central Manchester, most of them housed in existing buildings whose previous uses range from a listed Victorian warehouse to a multi-storey car park; a regrettable common factor however, has been a lack of interest in real ale. Full marks, then, to the latest of the breed, Parkers Hotel on Corporation Street (at the end of Victoria Station Bridge) for installing handpumps to serve not one but four real ales - Theakstons Best Bitter and XB, Youngers Scotch Bitter and IPA. Let's hope the next hotel to open in the centre goes one further by serving beers from one or more of our local independent brewers.

Just down from Parkers, the real ale available on handpump at Victoria Station Bar is now Draught Bass and at Mr Thomas's Chop House on Cross St the beers available now include Marston Pedigree and Flowers IPA, both on handpump.

Finally, over in West Gorton, the long-closed Dolphin on Clowes Street is now open and, as predicted here last month is an Allied Breweries "free house" - it's a pleasant if unexceptional one-room conversion and the traditional beers available are Tetley Mild and Bitter and Ind Coope Burton Ale, all on handpump.

elsewhere). For those who can't face any more old films there will be a social on 26th at the Suburban in Gorton.

Finally we kick off 1989 with a social on 2nd Jan at the Old King, Great Portwood St, Stockport. Phone Angela on 0663 43769 for more info.

*Richard and Sue Genders*

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★ OLD THUMPER \*\*\*\*\* THEAKSTONS XB ★

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Bar Snacks



**PUB NEWS**



The Midway on Newbridge Lane, Stockport is now selling Courage Directors Bitter on handpump alongside the John Smiths Bitter. The Directors (og 1046) is selling at £1.04 a pint, the John Smiths at 82p.

More alterations in the beer range at the Woolpack, Brinksway, Stockport. Ruddles County has been replaced by Marstons Pedigree and as we went to press landlord Bob Dickinson was about to try Vaux Samson, at og 1041 the more powerful stablemate to the Vaux Bitter, og 1038, usually on sale. Bob has also tried Wards Bitter, which while selling reasonably well did not cause the interest among the locals that he was hoping for - this is a shame as Wards is a fine beer and would be a welcome addition to the Stockport pub scene.

The powerful Ind Coope Burton Ale is starting to appear more widely in the Tetley estate. Two recent converts to this powerful beer (og 1047.5) are the Fir Tree in Reddish and the Mawson, Kincardine Rd., Chorlton-on-Medlock.

We are pleased to report that the misleading handpumps have finally been removed from the now keg-only Carousel in Reddish. This follows our report of the pub to the Trading Standards Dept.

So successful has the Crown in Didsbury become since its refurbishment a couple of years ago that the bar is to be extended into the back room to double the size of the servery. Hopefully the work will be accompanied by a much needed redecoration.

We hear that the refurbished Dog & Partridge in Didsbury should be opening before Christmas and will be selling cask conditioned beer. We hope to let you have a report in the next issue.

Pier One on Copson St in Fallowfield has re-opened as Berties Cafe Bar and, once again real ale is available in the form of Castle Eden Ale plus Chesters Mild and Bitter, all sold via handpump. Will this be the only cafe bar in Manchester selling cask mild, more to the point, will it last?

Ye Olde Vic in Edgeley has increased the range of exotic Belgian Beers on sale. The cherry and rasberry etc beers are joined by one made with bananas, would you believe? Other additions include the powerful Duvel (8% alcohol) and Chimay (7-9%) beers plus two fine beers from the Hoegaarden brewery - Forbidden Fruit, a powerful dark beer and Wit, a lighter, refreshing wheat beer. Each comes with its own distinctive glass, on which you will have to pay a deposit as Landlady Kay Ord has already had some stolen by drinkers.

Contributors to this edition: Geoff Corfield, Jim Flynn, John Hutchinson, Rhys Jones, Alex Panesh, Malcolm Swallow, Peter Edwardson, Andy Pringle, Angela Walker, Robin Wignall, John Clarke

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