

# Opening Times



STOCKPORT AND SOUTH MANCHESTER CAMRA

No. 57 JANUARY 1989

## FESTIVAL FUN

It might seem a long way away here in the depths of winter, but the top date in the local drinkers calendar - Stockport Beer Festival - is only just around the corner. It will run from Thursday 30th March to Saturday 1st April - but don't be fooled, you WILL be able to get in! Following last year's unfortunate misunderstanding, an occasional licence is being applied for so there'll be no doubt about our being legal.

The venue, as last year, is the refectory of Stockport College, where a vast range of traditional beer, cider and perry will await your pleasure. We'll be keeping many of the established favourites (how could we drop Taylor's Landlord?), while giving a Stockport premiere to many other fine beers from the pick of Britain's independent breweries. There'll also be the usual wide range of farmhouse ciders and perries (never tried 'em? Get the taste here), and we're working on a few last minute "surprises" (but not an unpleasant one like last year!)

It's all rounded off by no-nonsense food for drinkers, your favourite local pub entertainers, the chance to win a host of pub collectibles and lots more. So, mark up your new 1989 diaries now for the three spring days when Stockport College turns into the best pub with the biggest range in the North-West.

THOSE DATES AGAIN...THURSDAY 30th MARCH TO SATURDAY 1st APRIL.

## GREENALLS GROSS-OUT

We have reported in these pages how Websters and Wilsons have been falling over themselves to turn many of their Open House bars back into real pubs (the latest being Tops in Heaton Moor which is once again the Moor Top), largely because the Open House concept has proved to be a disastrous failure in many places. The message doesn't seem to have reached Greenalls though who, despite turning the likes of the Gamebird back into a pub have for some reason spent a fortune installing a grotesque Open House style theme at the Kenilworth, Cheadle Hulme. Along with the usual bright lights, shining chrome and loud music that you expect in this type of place, Greenalls have crowned the lot off with a whole wall of TV sets playing the latest pop videos. A true mecca for the lager louts (witness the bouncers on the door). The beer is as plastic as the pub to make this one lovers of real pubs and real beer will go a long way to avoid.

Back in Heaton Moor at the Elizabethan, the fake handpumps remain despite Greenalls assurance that these would be removed from their pubs by the end of the year. We shall be chasing the brewery to remind them of their assurance - maybe the impossible will happen and real handpumps serving real ale will appear in the Elisabethan. Until then, however, beer lovers will give this one a wide berth as well.

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

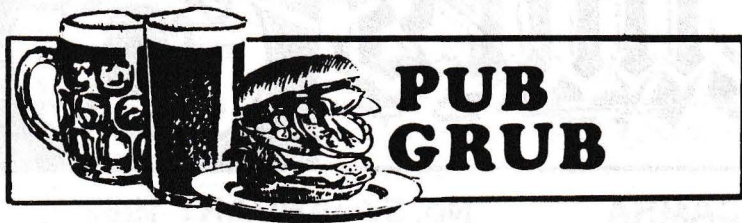


## The Red Lion WITHINGTON

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~~~~~  
Handpulled Marstons  
Pedigree and Bitter

Owd Rodger on draught  
Burton Bitter



By Alex Panesh

I doubt that many of you will want to rush out and try the gastronomic treat reviewed here having overindulged during the festive season, but I do assure you it's worth the effort.

Onward then to the Stockport Arms, Churchgate, Stockport. This pub often tends to be overlooked being as it is slightly off the beaten track now that the shopping centre of Stockport has shifted to the Merseyway/Warren St area. It has to be said that for many years the pub was nothing special, with a poor internal layout. A much needed refurbishment has revitalised the pub and the food has even won a brewery award.

The only cask beer is Greenalls Bitter which was on good form on my visit. We arrived in fact towards the end of lunch and so, although the menu is substantial, a few dishes were unavailable. We tried the Quiche at £1.75 and the Cottage Pie at only £1.00. Both were excellent, the quiche melting in the mouth and the cottage pie bursting with meat, vegetables and flavour. This is an ideal pub to visit for a good value meal if you're in Stockport for the January sales - give it a try.

And finally, a word about the article last month that accused many pubs of serving "bland, unimaginative food". This column seeks out only the best so, if you go into a reviewed pub you can be sure that it's worth a visit. See you all next month.



## CHEEKY LASS

In early December, Whitbread's home brew pub, the Lass O' Gowrie in central Manchester advertised its Graduation Brew - Centurion or Log 52 - at an original gravity of 1052°, claiming this as "the strongest brewed in the North-West". This was a particularly silly claim to make in the winter season, when devotees of strong ales have Robinsons Old Tom, Lees Moonraker and Hydes Anvil Strong Ale to choose from - but even among perennial beers Centurion, (which is itself only brewed about three times a year), is comfortably outgunned by Wobbly Bob (og 1060°) of Oak Brewery in Ellesmere Port.

## RIVAL FOR O.T.

Drinkers in a Manchester pub will soon have their very own newspaper to read. With the backing of licensees Rick and Mel, organisers of the social club at Banks's Longsight, Belle Vue, will be bringing out "Longsight News" as soon as enough material has been gathered together - hopefully early this year. The aim is to tell people what's going on in the pub, chronicle the fortunes of pool and darts and generally create a bit of community spirit - we wish all the best to this commendable venture, which really sums up what a good local should be about.

### HEARD AT THE BAR'S CHRISTMAS STORY.....

The Scene: The Grey Mare, Ashton Old Road having its annual childrens Christmas Party.

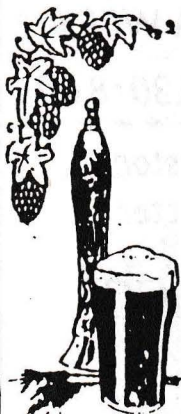
Licensee: Hello Father Christmas (ho ho ho!), would you like a pint?

"Father Christmas": Yes please, Stan.

Small Child: Hey Mam, Father Christmas is an alcoholic

\*\*\*\*\*

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## JANUARY

|   |    |    |    |     |     |
|---|----|----|----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 8  | 15 | 22 | 29  | ... |
| 2 | 9  | 16 | 23 | 30  | ... |
| 3 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 31  | ... |
| 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 | ... | ... |
| 5 | 12 | 19 | 26 | ... | ... |
| 6 | 13 | 20 | 27 | ... | ... |
| 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 | ... | ... |

## PUB OF The MONTH

The Stockport & South Manchester Pub of the Month award for January 1989 goes to Ye Olde Woolpack on Brinksway, Stockport.

Like many other freehouses, the Woolpack has had a chequered history - originally it was a Greenalls tied house that became more progressively run down until the brewery decided to sell it off. It was bought by Chris Hague, formerly of Ye Olde Vic who not only renamed the pub after himself but unsuccessfully tried to make the pub all things to all men, one room being decked out in fun pub decor, the other traditional. Eventually Whitbread sent the bailiffs in and we thought it had closed for good. We had not reckoned on the determination of Bob and Gill Dickinson who took on the pub and turned it back into a real local - traditional decor and good home cooked food are complemented by excellent beers, some of which are unique to Stockport - the current range includes Vaux Bitter and Samson.

Trade is still building up so support Bob and Gill in this venture and join us on the presentation night, Thursday 26th.

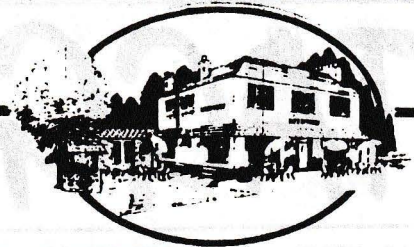
## UP THE JUNCTION

It is not often that you'll find criticism of Holts in these pages but the increasingly marked deterioration of the Junction in Cheadle Hulme is unfair on both the pub's staff and dwindling band of faithful regulars. Indeed Holts seem to be content to let the place rot while they decide what to do with it - the much vaunted refurbishment has we hear now been put off until the summer.

The pub of course should be an absolute goldmine being situated in an affluent area and surrounded by upmarket office developments. This makes the delay of about 12 months so far even more difficult to fathom. Lets hope that the potential development value of the site isn't causing Holts to have second thoughts about the future of the pub.

## BASS BACKTRACK

Bass' serstwhile promise to increase the availability of Real Ale in their tied estate is looking increasingly threadbare - one of the few converts to cask beer in recent years, the Clarence in Rusholme has now reverted to all keg. Will the promised real ale in the revamped Fobs in Didsbury ever appear, we wonder.



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## NEW DOG - OLD TRICKS

Greenalls refurbished Dog & Partridge in Didsbury reopened last month. Stuart Ballantine has been to give it the once over...

"The Dog & Partridge reopened its doors to high expectations of its return to being a 'real pub' Previously suffering from an early 1970's conversion that had worn badly and only selling keg beer, we had been promised that real ale would be installed and the pub smartened up.

I was not disappointed as this is exactly what has happened, with both Greenalls and Davenport's cask bitters on sale. Sadly, the mild is still keg and there was no sign of Greenalls Original.

This renovation is another in inter-wars style and similar in some ways to the Crown up the road. The embossed wallpaper, dark ceiling and colour scheme, thick carpeting and period music speakers are all part of the illusion.

The bar staff were friendly, although inexperienced and I had to ask for my beer to be topped up twice as it settled a good inch below the pint mark. Both beers were in good condition though.

Greenalls have been gaining a good reputation for their pub renovations and conversions to real ale. Having said that though, I wonder if their insistence on renovating so many pubs in an inter-wars style is now losing some of its appeal. A lot of money has been spent here and it is a major improvement on the pub's old guise, but at the end of the day it's just another 1930's style pub. How about a little more imagination next time Greenalls?"

# STAGGER

HYDE ROAD HIKE - BY RHYS JONES

Hyde Road is one of the most interesting roads in town for the beer drinker, providing a fine selection of the various brews available locally. We decided to split it up and cover the outer section from about Belle Vue eastwards - as well as cutting down the legwork, this enabled us to fit in one or two interesting diversions.

We started at the Longsight on Kirkmanshulme Lane. On its completion in 1985, this Banks's house was bizarrely described by one commentator as "gloomy" - this description never made any sense unless you like floodlit airport lounges, and today the pub is wearing well. The vault and lounge are well contrasted and there's also a family room. The real ales are mild and bitter on electric pumps (Hansons is keg). The bitter was rated good, the mild not quite so good but still well above average.

Next was the Victoria on Hyde Road. This Chesters pub has mild and bitter on handpump. It's good

to see that the keg mild which at one time shared the bar with the handpumps has been removed. It's a one room pub, but the layout of the former separate rooms can still be made out - no airport lounge this. Bitter was above average, mild was good.

A little further out on Hyde Road is Robinson's Coach & Horses, serving best mild and best bitter. This is a plain but pleasant two-roomer where the beer seems to be on the upgrade - both mild and bitter were judged good with the mild marginally preferred, and though I was less enthusiastic about the bitter than most other people, it was still the best pint I've ever had in that pub!

We passed the Cheshire Hunt, which was in the middle of what seems to be an extremely lengthy closure for renovation, and proceeded to the Pineapple, a modern Hydes pub set back from Hyde Road. The beers here are dark mild and bitter on electric pump. The mild was no more than average but the bitter was considerably better. The pub consists of one room with lounge and vault areas defined by use than any physical division. The "lounge" has an attractive wooden ceiling and interesting photographs of the area decorate the whole pub.

Not far away is the Suburban, with Lees mild and bitter on handpump. The Suburban has always seen itself as the local social centre - witness its hosting of the September Gorton Rushcart celebrations - and nowadays the beer and the atmosphere fully live up to these aspirations. The bitter was very good and the mild was above average. However we did think that the external piped music was a bit unnecessary!

Up to Gorton Cross now, and the Angel on Wellington St. This busy Greenalls pub has a vault and a lounge with two distinct areas - formerly no doubt separate rooms. The bitter was well above average but the mild was keg, previous attempts to sell cask having come to nought.

Next call was the Plough, back on Hyde Road. This is a very fine example of an unrenovated Robinsons pub, with a big vault - clearly the heart of the pub - complemented by three other separate rooms; good tile work and a splendid wooden gantry complete the traditional picture. Best mild and best bitter are served from electric pumps. On our visit, while the bitter was OK, the mild was sadly below average - it's a great pity that Robinsons still seem to be falling down on quality control when the beer at its best is so good and there are classic pubs like the Plough to drink it in.

Further out on Hyde Road now, to the Lord Nelson. We covered this Wilsons managed house in the recent Abbey Hey Stagger, and were, it seems, thought by some to have been unduly harsh - so this was an ideal opportunity to reconsider. Well, we can certainly acknowledge that at least

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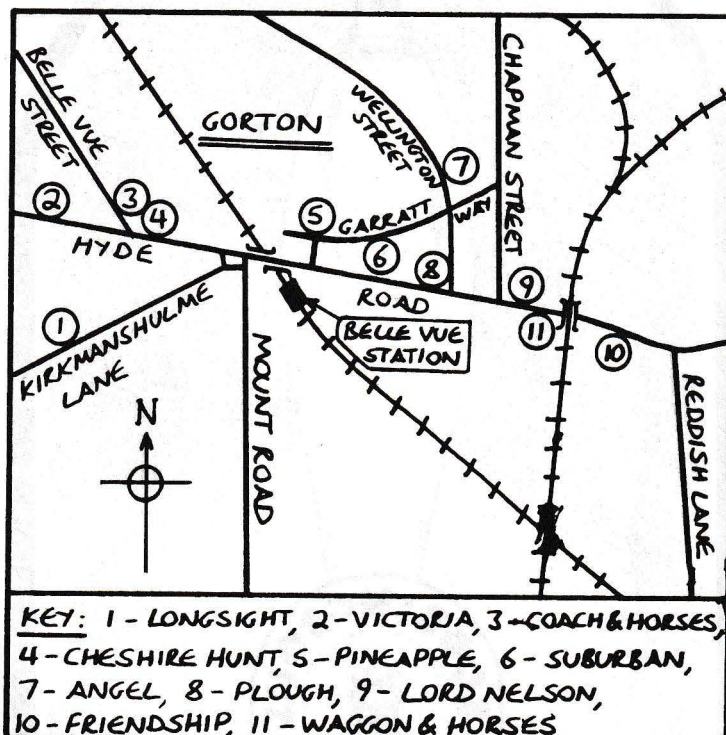
some of the beams looked as if they might be real wood (editor's note - the licensee tells us that some are a couple of hundred years old). Overall however the impression was of over-loud music unsuccessfully attempting to mask the essential characterlessness of the place. The unhelpful absence of pumpclips (we saw, too late, draught mild being served) meant that everybody drank Wilsons bitter which was above average.

Ever onward to the Friendship (Marston's) on the opposite side of Hyde Rd. Retaining separate rooms, the pub was well thought of. The Burton Bitter, on electric pumps, was above average but unfortunately the Mercian Mild tasted of TCP. This wasn't too bad if you could get it changed, which was done without demur, but staffing levels were such that one mild drinker failed to get his beer changed, and another of us never managed to get served at all despite waiting some minutes in a pub that was not over busy.

Readers who know Hyde Rd. will have realised that between the last two pubs, we missed one out. We knew Holt's Waggon & Horses would have the cheap -est beer of the night and we suspected that it might well have the best, so we decided to finish there. And yes, it was the night's best pint. The well modernised pub was its usual bustling self and made for a pleasant end to the evening.

All in all the Hyde Road Hike can be highly recommended. You might not agree with all our

comments (after all, though written with some background knowledge, they're essentially just a record of a dozen people's reactions on one particular evening), but you're guaranteed to have a good time.



# THE BEERHOUSE

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

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

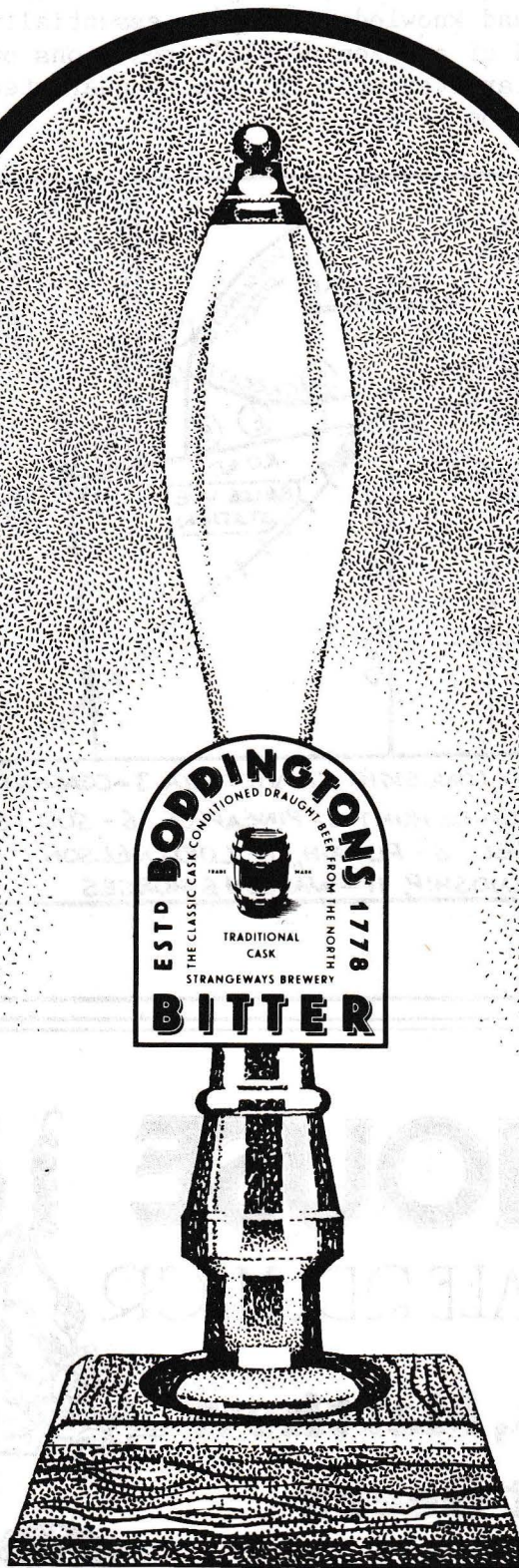
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## LETTERS...

From John Tune...

In reply to Peter Edwardson's article "Nice Beer, Shame About the Food" in December's Opening Times.

Although I agree with Peter that most pub menus are too predictable, this appears to be what the customers demand. I suggest that Peter compares the number of customers ordering a standard pub meal (eg. pie & chips, scampi & chips, etc) with the number ordering an imaginative meal, usually offered as a special and receiving extra advertising. I think the results will surprise him.

This experiment can easily be done in many pubs by just standing at the bar, eg the Romper at Ringway where a standard menu and several specials are always available. The standard menu is used far more often than the special, even though the standard menu is often difficult to find and the special is clearly displayed.

The landlord must cater to his customers demands.

I think that a landlord should first specialise in good beer, the food side is secondary but still important. Sadly this is not always the case, the pubs having an excellent imaginative menu with food of excellent quality often have mediocre beer. This is especially true of the south of England.

NICE FOOD, SHAME ABOUT THE BEER.

## BODDIES TO BREW IN FRANCE SHOCK

The licensee of a Wilsons pub in Mobberley, the Roebuck, has stopped selling Wilsons Bitter and now sells only Websters Yorkshire Bitter and Choice. His reason is that since Wilsons production was transferred to Halifax it is no longer the original product, but just an imitation. "How would you like a pint of Boddingtons brewed in France?", he asked (he is French). I was tempted to reply that it couldn't be much worse than that brewed in Manchester.

Perhaps someone should tell him that Websters has become a bland national brand and is nothing like the original beer either. Wilsons brewed in Halifax is far better than no Wilsons at all, and is a much superior pint to the pathetic apology for bitter that goes under the name of Websters.

JOIN  NOW

# BEER BOOKSHELF

One or two new beer books and guides have once again hit the bookshops at about the same time and Opening Times will be reviewing these over the next couple of months. We start with Egon Ronay's Guide to Good Food in Pubs & Bars...

"Some pubs are now no more than glorified canteens...hybrid pubs with their characterless open-plan bars and plastic food". So says the new Egon Ronay Guide to pub food in its introduction which goes on to condemn what it calls 'Fast Food Pubs' and 'Trendy Pubs' while lauding the 'Tradition and Quality' of the traditional pub. That having been said, Egon Ronay's idea of such a pub is strictly limited to the boundaries of middle class Britain with the majority of the 750 entries being south of a line from the Severn to the Wash - the only Greater Manchester entries being the Hare & Hounds in Timperley and the Royal Oak in Didsbury.

The Guide's emphasis is on food rather than drink and so the southern bias may in fact reflect the comments made by Peter Edwardson in last month's OT criticising pub food standards in the north. Each entry gives a description not only of the pub itself but also any accommodation and the food served. In keeping with the target readership the guide even lists credit cards accepted. It is pleasing to note that all the beers (including lagers unfortunately) and ciders are listed along with a warning if no Real Ale is available. Unfortunately it is obvious from the absence of such a warning on a number of keg only pubs that either the editor or inspectors have little idea of what is or isn't cask conditioned beer or that Real Cider exists at all. The book also loses a little integrity as a result of accepting adverts from a variety of drinks firms who are all presumably trying to cash in on the Egon Ronay name.

The book also gives a lukewarm reception to many low alcohol beers and wines describing some as smelling 'of a cowshed in winter Alps' and 'industrial taste of rancid bananas', very much reinforcing a recent CAMRA report on the subject. Despite all these limitations, this is not a bad guide given its objectives but is perhaps a little overpriced at £6.95. You can buy the guide from bookshops or AA centres. Alternatively you could wait for the authoritative CAMRA guide to pub food due out in 2 or 3 months.

Next month we look at Michael Jackson's New World Guide to Beer.



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# O.G. or A.B.V.?

These mysterious sounding abbreviations are both in actual fact standard measures of a beer's strength, although neither gives the whole picture.

The reasons for this brief article are twofold, first to explain the terms and also to draw your attention to a change in the law as regards beer labelling due to come into force in May.

'OG' is a term which readers of Opening Times will see scattered about each issue and whilst keen home brewers will be familiar with the term many readers will not. OG is an abbreviation for 'original gravity' and is used by all brewers in this country as a means of indicating the strength of their beers. It is in fact a measure of the amount of fermentable material in the brew, ie what proportion of the ingredients can be turned into alcohol. Water has an original gravity of 1000 so a beer of og1042 has 42 parts of fermentable material to every 1000 of water. It is by using this measure that the Customs officers who visit the breweries calculate what tax must be paid on the beer.

So, all that a higher than normal og is a reliable indicator of is that the brewery has paid a higher level of tax on the brew, so it'll cost you that bit more, and also that it is probably going to be a fuller bodied pint. It's not going to tell you that much about the strength. It's true that a beer of og 1070 will certainly be stronger than one of og 1040 but what about a beer of og 1035 (Boddies bitter), 1039 (Holts) and 1042 (Robbies Best Bitter). Of the three Holts is actually the strongest, next is Boddingtons and Robbies, despite having the highest gravity is marginally the weakest of the three. So, you can see that for many beers the position is far from clear.

This is because conversions between alcohol content and gravity can only be approximate because they are governed by the level of fermentation. If a beer is very thoroughly fermented, a high proportion of its malt is turned into alcohol, if this is not done then less alcohol will be created. All will be made clear in May, however, thanks to an EEC ruling. All beers, whether bottled, canned or draught will be obliged to declare their ABV or Alcohol By Volume. This is already common on wine and spirit labels and, especially if combined with the original gravity should let the beer drinker know exactly what to expect from his pint. When the system has settled in Opening Times will be covering the issue again with a few facts and figures.

JOIN  NOW



## CAMRA CALLING!

We kick off 1989 with a full programme of events starting on Monday 9th with a social at the Little Bradford, formerly the Why Not, on Ashton New Road. As usual with Monday socials this will start at 9pm. This is followed on 12th with the branch meeting, this time at the Victoria on Burnage Lane - we may have a guest speaker. We will also be picking the 1988 Pub of the Year, so come and have your say.

The next event is one of the most important of the year - on 14th January the Stockport & South Manchester branch will be celebrating its 15th anniversary, as we are the oldest branch locally it will also be the 15th anniversary of the formal organisation of CAMRA in Greater Manchester. We are going back to our birthplace and holding a social in the Printers, Cheadle from 8.00pm onwards. If you are a local member please do make the effort to come along, phone me for any more details you want.

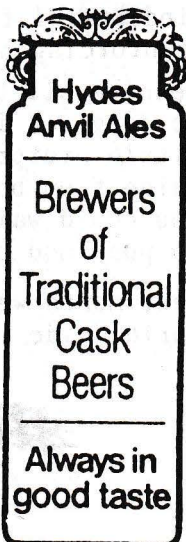
On Monday 16th there's a social in the Castlewood, Stockport and on Friday 20th we have our monthly Stagger, this time covering Brinnington & Portwood. We'll be in the Farmers Arms, Brinnington at 7.00pm and the Park, New Bridge Lane at 8.30.

The next social on Monday 23rd is at Holt's Claremont Hotel, Claremont Rd, Moss Side and this is followed on Thursday 26th with our Pub of the Month award which this month goes to the Woolpack on Brinksway, Stockport. On Monday 30th we have a two-way Didsbury social - the Station at 9.00pm and the Crown at 10pm. For more details of any events phone Angela Walker on 0663 43769 evenings only.

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# MANCHESTER MATTERS

Firstly, an apology - the existence of a Bodding-tons pub has until now inadvertently escaped our records. It's the Grey Mare on Exeter Close, Ardwick, and has bitter on handpump. There's also a pumpclip for mild, but on ordering I was told "we don't do mild" (not even keg) - perhaps the pub is another victim of the Great Bodding-tons Screwdriver Shortage, whereby pumpclips for unavailable products can remain irremovable for months on end. Real Ale has returned after many years to the Steelworks Tavern on Gorton Lane, Gorton, in the shape of handpumped Chesters bitter - again no traditional mild and this in the pub where, quite some years ago, local CAMRA members drank the last of the old cask Chesters "Fighting Mild" (and I bet they wouldn't like to be saddled with a name like that in today's climate of opinion). Whoever said Manchester was still a stronghold of mild?

Not far off, the Cheshire Hunt at Belle Vue reopened in time for Christmas after a lengthy renovation whose effects are barely perceptible to the drinker - it's still a so-called "free house" supplied by John Smiths, but at least its two handpumps offer a choice of beer, for cask Magnet has joined the bitter previously sold. As far as we know this is the first outlet for Magnet in Greater Manchester and we hope this good premium bitter does well. Meanwhile the goal of an all-cask Didsbury moved a step closer as the revamped Dog & Partridge on Wilmslow Road opened its doors selling hand-pumped Greenalls and Davenports bitters.

As well as the real ale gains, there are a few

beer changes to report. The Vine in the City Centre has added handpumped Courage Directors; the Travellers Call in Beswick has permanently dropped Jennings bitter following inconsistent sales; and, contrary to a recent report, the Lord Nelson in Gorton does sell handpumped Wilsons mild (this pub has the opposite problem to the Grey Mare - none of the handpumps has anything to tell you what it dispenses!)

## PIER TWO?

We reported last month that the closed Pier One wine bar on Copson St, Withington had reopened as Berties Cafe Bar. Paul Thompson has now been along to sample its delights...

"On sale are handpulled Chesters mild and bitter and Castle Eden Ale. The Castle Eden was on good form when I tried it (as it ought to be at 99p a pint!). the general layout was how I remember Pier One used to be before ot closed at about the end of last year, ie one room with part of the drinking area slightly raised.

Berties has been redecorated and boasts a series of Geoff Stern's Jazz prints on the walls although the music being played was by Simple Minds, Go West and Tear For Fears.

Berties also has a sign in the window stating over-21's only. As there were less than 10 people in the place at closing time, I can only assume most of the drinking population are aged between 18 and 21 or dislike paying 99p a pint."


## PASTURES NEW

This month saw the departure of popular licensee Peter Blisset from the Boars Head in Stockport Market Place. A long standing Good Beer Guide entry, we hpe that Peter's successor maintains his enviably high standards. For Peter it's a change of brewery as he is taking on Robinson's Robin Hood in High Lane, we wish him well.

□ Don & Aline □  
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TRADITIONAL HAND PULLED BEERS  
Vaux, Theakstons & Ruddles County





Boddingtons have finally submitted plans for the long proposed alterations to the Parrswood, Didsbury. These will be quite major - the vault is to be extended, the Games Room will become new toilets, and the rear lounge area is to be extended into a glazed conservatory which will also incorporate the existing toilets. The bar is to be moved sideways to create a large open-plan through lounge although the separate lounge at the front will be kept. We don't know when work will be starting but will keep you informed.

We've heard a report that the Bridgewater, Chestergate

Stockport has finally been sold. Details were patchy as we went to press but it is thought that three people are involved and that there will be some form of tie-up with Banks's. If the pub does re-open, let's hope that the new owners get rid of the horrible 'packing case' panelling which made the pub so gloomy.

Tetley-Walker have applied for permission to turn the old funeral parlour in the centre of Didsbury into a cafe-cum-wine bar. The plans reveal what can best be described as a multi-room open plan layout - it is intended that people will be drinking in what are currently the Chapel of Rest and Layout Room. This exercise in bad taste is to be called 'Bowlers'. We don't know why the brewery don't go the whole hog and call it something more appropriate say, 'Shrouds' or 'Stiffs' for example!

Just outside the Stockport & South Manchester branch area, we learn that Whitbread have applied for permission to alter and extend the Green Dragon in Ancoats.

The latest sighting of "handpumped" keg Scrumpy Jack cider from Symonds of Stoke Lacey (now owned by Bulmers) is in the bar of the Contact Theatre at Manchester University. You could,

we suppose, argue that the essence of theatre is deception, but this is surely taking things too far!

In mid-December Dave Farnworth, formerly of the Duke of Edinburgh on Mill St in Bradford, took over the Sun & Castle on Stockport's Hillgate - we wish him all the best in a fine pub which we hope to see become one of Stockport's success stories following the introduction of cask beer by departing licensee Howard Ball. We understand that the new licensees at the Duke come from a pub in Macclesfield - they're heartily welcome to the area, and we recommend you call in the Duke as soon as you can.

Holts imposed their annual price increase in early December - the 2p rise brought the managed house price of bitter to 70p. If you're not a Holts drinker, try to remember how long it is since beer in your local was 70p a pint.

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Richard and Sue Genders

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