

OPENING TIMES

CAMRA FREE

MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE

(DRINKERS GLOOM IN MMC REPORT)

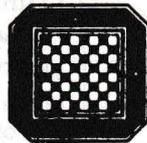
THE Monopolies Commission has ruled that the proposed merger of pubs and brewing interests by Grand Met and Courage is not in the public interest although the scheme could well still go ahead.

The two companies, who trade locally as Wilsons/Websters and John Smiths have something over 90 pubs in the Stockport and South Manchester area which means local drinkers could be in for some big changes.

The original plan, widely condemned as a blatant attempt to get round last year's MMC ruling on the licensed trade, involved the brewing side of the two companies being transferred to the control of Courage while the pubs would be run by Grand Met through a new company, Innpreneur Estates. The pubs would be tied to the Courage controlled breweries for 10 years. The new company would control something like 8500 pubs and have about 10% of the national beer market.

The MMC said this wasn't on and ruled that before the deal could go ahead stringent conditions would have to be met:

● The brewing side would have to sell breweries and brands so that it would have less than 15% of the market.



- Over 1000 extra pubs to be freed from the tie.
- The supply agreement to last for five years instead of ten.
- The new pub company to have no more than 25% of the pubs in any licensing district.

As with the original MMC enquiry, the government has watered down these proposals and, providing all other points are agreed by the middle of this month, then the requirement to sell breweries and brands will be waived. This being so, then Grand Met and Courage should have no problems in coming up with an acceptable package. What will this mean for local drinkers?

We might see a few more supposedly 'free' houses, but how free they will be remains to be seen. The 25% limit for licensing districts will have no effect, locally the combined estate is already below that level. What is almost certain is that we will see less choice. The beer range will be controlled by Courage who could well be keener to promote their current beers than the ones they are taking on. No one would bother if Websters was axed in favour of John Smiths but the move could also spell the long predicted demise of Wilsons, a sad end for a once proud name.

The Royal Oak

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No Children • No Dogs

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Wide Selection of Wines £2 - £20

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Note: We operate under the Wholesale Licencing Act,
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wine/spirits, which can all be different.

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Traditional
Cask
Beers

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good taste

NOVEMBER

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

PUB OF THE MONTH

MANCHESTER City Centre has very few remaining traditional locals. In all too many cases brewers have been unable to resist the temptation to convert their pubs into cafe bars or glorified eateries for hungry office workers, all with fancy prices to match the fancy decor.

One of the all-too-rare exceptions to this rule is our Pub of the Month for NOVEMBER - the **Grey Horse** on Portland Street. Aply run for many years now by tenants Tom and Jean Golding, the Grey Horse is a remarkable survivor in many ways, not least its size. Not much bigger than your front room, the pub would have been closed as unviable by many brewers but luckily the Grey Horse is owned by local company Hydes who evidently have more sense.

Tom and Jean did in fact win this award once before, in June 1981; not many pubs win twice but for the Grey Horse their was no hesitation. No food, no gimmicks but a good atmosphere, good beer and good prices (still less than £1 a pint despite Hydes' recent increase) - an achievement anywhere these days and for the City centre, truly exceptional. Join us for the presentation on Thursday 22nd, but get there early if you want a seat!

The Robin Hood

HIGH LANE, BUXTON ROAD, STOCKPORT
Telephone: 061-483 2602



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- DINNERS
- FUNCTIONS
- Residential · LIVE MUSIC
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Your hosts: Janet & Peter Blissett M.B.I.I.

NEW BREW



LOCAL brewers Burtonwood launched a new cask beer last month. James Forshaws Bitter, named after the brewery's founder, is a 4% ABV beer and the company are obviously hoping that will be rather more successful than their previous attempts to launch a second bitter.

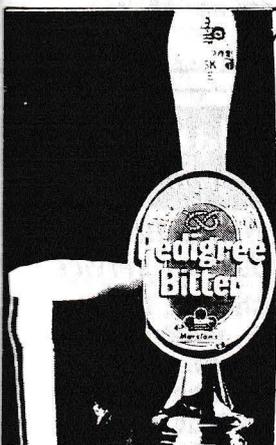
Unlike its predecessors, JFB is a separate brew in its own right and is to be well supported by point of sale promotional material. Where Burtonwood have gone wrong in the past with these new beers (remember Almonds Bitter and JBA?) is with the price which has tended to be a premium price for a not very premium beer. If they can resist the temptation this time, then they ought to be in with a chance. The beer is apparently available to any pub that wants to take it and we will bring you news of any sightings.

The Red Lion

WITHINGTON

Mon.-Fri 11.-11

Handpulled Marstons
Pedigree and Burton
Best Bitter



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★ EVE. MEALS MON.-FRI. 5.30-8.00 ★

RAG WEEK BEER FEST

LAST MONTH we previewed the Beer Festival at Stockport Labour Club. This month there's something on a rather bigger scale.

The UMIST Rag Week Beer Festival will be held at the Barnes Wallis Building in the City Centre and will feature something like 36 different beers. The range to be available hadn't been finalised by the time we went to press but is expected to be along similar lines to last year and should include old favourites like Taylors, Fullers, Theakstons, Batemans, Oak and Marstons together with a few less well-known beers. Naturally we are expecting a good range from Brendan Dobbin's West Coast Brewery to be there as well.

The Festival will be open from Wednesday 28th November to Friday 30th November inclusive between 12 noon and 11.00pm. Admission should be similar to last year, that is £3 for all three days inclusive of a commemorative glass, or £1.80 per day, also inclusive of glass.

There will also be a wide variety of entertainment with at least one group each evening, and possibly up to three, ranging from rock to folk.

There will be one important departure this year - CAMRA are having a membership and products stall. So, if you want to join at our special low November rate (see page 4), which is even lower for students (£5 no less) or you just want to pick up a 1991 Good Beer Guide, or one of the numerous other guides and books which we hope to have available, then please come along to what should be a lively and interesting festival. See you there!

HYDE ROAD RE-THINK

IT WAS over four years ago that Opening Times first highlighted the threat to many of the pubs on Hyde Road and despite the passage of time, and the GMC whose plan it was, the threat remains with many of the pubs on the north side of the road facing the axe.

However, following CAMRA representations, the city planners are looking afresh at the whole scheme. As part of the consultation process, last month saw a meeting between CAMRA and Town Hall officials to discuss the threat to the various pubs.

The plan is for a dual carriageway with cycle lanes and footpaths which will involve a widening of the road, although not by as much as originally envisaged.

Pubs threatened now include the Star (Banks's), the Travellers Call (Hydes), the Nags Head (Boddington PubCo), Victoria (Whitbread), Coach & Horses and Plough (both Robinsons) and the Cheshire Hunt ("Free").

Following our discussions we are fairly confident that some of these pubs will be saved (certainly one and possibly both of the Robinsons houses) and we have pressed the council to offer a new site in compensation for another. Consultations are still underway and the final plans won't be drawn up until January when they will be presented to the council for a final decision. In the meantime we will be looking to see if there is any way of saving some or all of the rest and will keep you informed of progress.

PLANNERS' AXE HANGS OVER 15 PUBS

Manchester Council planners are plotting to demolish at least 8, and perhaps as many as 15 pubs, on Hyde Road. The shock news came in a consultation document 'Planning proposals for Belle Vue' released last month.

Opening Times - March 1986

Phil Welcomes You To The

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Now available in Stockport at the
Stanley Arms, Newbridge Lane

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WHAT IS CAMRA?

TO MANY readers 'CAMRA' probably means just the people who produce Opening Times and run Stockport Beer Festival, but as you might have guessed, there's a lot more to it than that.

CAMRA is the Campaign for Real Ale, a nationwide 27,000-strong consumer group for all pub goers, young and old, men and women. The Campaign was started in the early 1970s by a small group of beer lovers who were appalled by the heavily promoted keg beers that threatened to replace traditional draught ales (remember Watneys Red?). These beers were themselves the result of a series of takeovers and mergers in the 1960s that created the 'Big Six' national brewers. Membership grew rapidly and the industry went into rapid reverse. The public interest created by CAMRA made further takeovers unpopular, many small independent brewers were saved from extinction and 'real ale' became a major talking point in pubs.

CAMRA's strength lies in its style of organisation which is based on a democratic structure in which the voluntary efforts of all members can determine policy and action, both locally and on the national level. The Campaign is run by a National Executive, all unpaid volunteers, who are elected at the Annual General Meeting. Locally members are organised in local branches (hence the Stockport & South Manchester Branch), grouped together in Regions - this area falls in the Greater Manchester region. There is also a small full-time staff based in St Albans who look after the day-to-day running of the Campaign. So, behind Opening Times and the Beer Festival there's a whole nationwide campaign - want to join us?

WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN

DESPITE CAMRA's success over the years, our work is far from over. The grip of the brewing giants is still powerful; the late 1980s saw a worrying return to takeovers and mergers (Whitbread/Boddingtons to name just one) and the intensification of lager promotion. Other issues also face the drinker:

- why is beer 30-50p a pint cheaper in Manchester than in London?
- do you know what goes into your pint? Why can't we be told?
- classic traditional pubs continue to be destroyed as highlighted in our September Pub Vandalism Awards.

Despite a healthy and growing membership, the Campaign needs more people to join the fight, although that's not to say that we don't have a good time as well. Locally as well as producing Opening Times, running Stockport Beer Festival and other ongoing campaigning activities, we also have an active social scene. There are regular trips to breweries and to other parts of the country to sample what beers are available there. Each month we have a crawl round part of the area (the results of which you read about in our Stagger articles), there is an informal get together each Monday in a different pub and of course we have our regular Pub of the Month presentation - always a good night.

So you see, you can also have fun protecting your pint. What does it cost? Well, the usual subscription is £10 each year for individuals and £12 for couples but as a **special offer** this month we are offering a £3 discount, just cut out the form below and post it today!

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. £7* Joint membership £9*

I/We would like to receive further information about CAMRA

Knowledge of the average age of our members would be helpful. The information need only be given if you wish.

AGE: 18-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56-65 Over 65

Please send your remittance (payable to CAMRA Limited) with this application form to:

STUART BALLANTYNE, 62 CHELTENHAM ROAD, CHEADLE HEATH, STOCKPORT, SK3 0SL

* Special Offer for November 1990 only

YOU DON'T NEED GUTS TO JOIN CAMRA JUST £7.00*

(AND AN APPRECIATION OF REAL ALE)



**For further details
of the advantages
of being a member
of CAMRA contact
the person below.**

**STUART BALLANTYNE,
62 CHELTENHAM ROAD,
CHEADLE HEATH, STOCKPORT**

* Special Offer November 1999 only

STAGGER

BY: IAN SAUNDERS

THIS month's Stagger was around Ardwick, Brunswick and Chorlton-on-Medlock and we assembled in the **Kings Head** on Chancellor Lane.

The last time we tried this crawl the pub was full of ladies from GUS dancing to loud disco music on the jukebox. This time, the place and the jukebox were quieter, overshadowed by the loudness of one of the landlord's many Hawaiian shirts. On being asked where he obtained such apparel, he simply replied 'What shirts?'. The beer range is all from the Scottish & Newcastle stable and consisted of Theakstons Best Bitter, Youngers Scotch and IPA. Matthew Brown Mild and the potent Kings Ale. All were on good form, particularly the Kings.

On now, to the **Union**, a small locals pub on Higher Ardwick. The beer is Wilsons Mild and Bitter and it was good to see the use of a small jug for topping up. There is a very active ladies darts team here, as evidenced by the

many trophies decorating the lounge. Another interesting feature is the jukebox with a mixture of chart hits, Irish music and a Country & Western number called "The Asshole Song". Intrigued, we put this one on, but as it turned out the title obviously referred to the orifice from which it was sung, we all left before it ended.

A pleasant surprise was in store for us at the **Park** on Parkside Street as it was a recent convert to real ale. It is now the only Chesters pub in the immediate area that isn't closed or keg. Three beers were on offer: Boddingtons Bitter, Chesters Mild and Trophy Bitter (beware, the last two are also available on keg, although neither was offered to us). The mild was on fine form and the bitters were OK, too. It was also good to see that the new regime had attracted more people to the place as there was a wedding reception in full swing as we arrived. Like many of the pubs in the area, the Park consists of a lounge and vault served by a central bar, but here there was also an off-sales counter, presumably disused.

On now to Ardwick Green and the **Church**, a pub much frequented by visitors to the Apollo. From the outside it looks like quite a large pub but inside a central U-shaped bar gives a much more homely feel to the place. Being part of the Chef & Brewer estate, a wide food selection is available Sunday to Friday. The beers are Wilsons Bitter, Websters Choice (both above average) and Websters Bitter which, as usual, no-one tried.

On the other side of Ardwick Green is the **George & Dragon** which has been "real" for some time, although not when we last did this crawl. It briefly flirted with Courage Directors Bitter but now has just John Smiths Bitter which most of us thought was OK. The pub itself is a bit odd in that the first room you walk into is the vault and you have to walk past the bar to get to the lounge. There is then a third room where pool can be played. There are some nice Victorian bits and bobs around the place but the pub has been substantially altered over the years and now looks quite plain.

Ever onwards and into the Chorlton-on-Medlock estate, past the site of David Lloyd George's house and to the **Kings Arms** where, not surprisingly, our numbers almost doubled. This basic two-roomed pub has been transformed into the hub of activity for real ale drinkers by the introduction of home-brewed beers. In fact, all draught beer is brewed on the premises, even the lager. The ales available on our visit were Dobbins Dark Mild, North County Bitter, ESB, Guiltless Stout and Sierra Nevada Pale Ale, all of which rated good to very good with most of the party opting for the Sierra Nevada. Some fine music from Quare

ESTD  1867
BURTONWOOD
BREWERY



**A FAMILY TRADITION
 OF FINE BREWING**

Crack in the vault added to the atmosphere of the place.

In complete contrast now, we moved on to a pub where the main interest lies in the pub itself as opposed to the beer. The **Mawson** is a multi-roomed local with some fine oak panelling and leaded glass. There is a quiet lounge with a library, a livelier vault with a TV r, for more privacy, there's the snug. The beers on offer were Tetley Mild and Bitter plus Ind Coope Burton Ale, of which the Tetley Bitter was the most favoured.

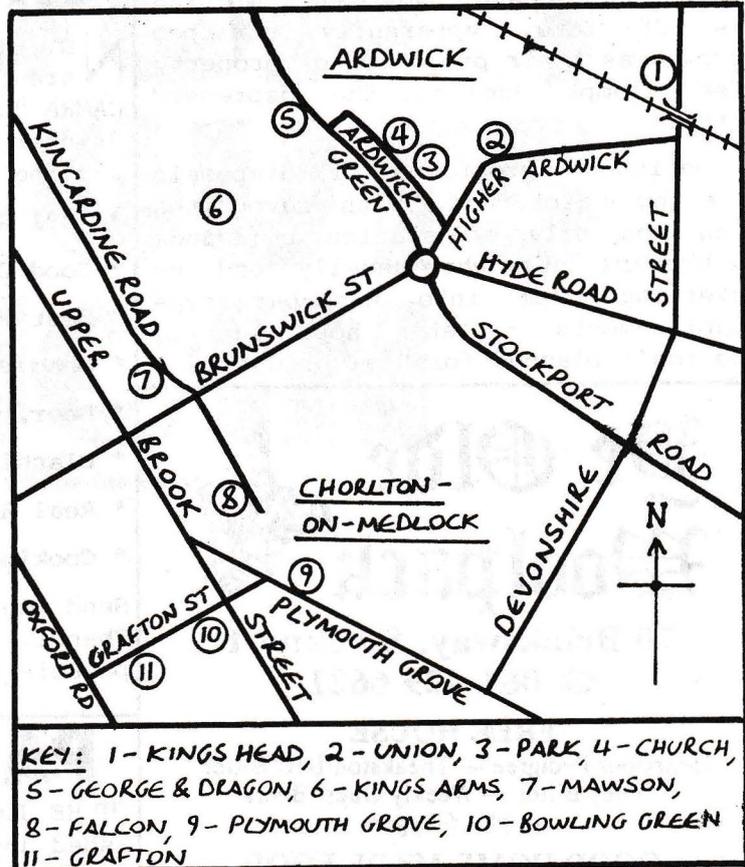
Next was the **Falcon**, a large estate pub on Kincardine Road. A very busy pub, this, owned by Wolverhampton-based Banks's. The Hansons Black Country Bitter was quite palatable but the Banks's Bitter was nothing special and the Mild was awful. So bad, in fact, that it had to be returned - a move not appreciated by at least one member of the bar staff who was less than civil.

Quickly moving on, we came to Boddington PubCo's **Plymouth Grove Hotel** which is externally very impressive with a clock tower remaining from the days when the building was Ardwick Town Hall. Internally the pub used to be quite bland but thanks to a recent renovation is now a pleasant place for a drink. The few of us who visited this pub found the beer to be on very good form, too, particularly the mild.

We caught up with the others at the **Bowling Green** on Grafton Street. The only real ale available was Greenalls Bitter, uninspiring at the best of times, but the pub is nice enough with a good atmosphere, particularly on this occasion as some excellent entertainment was being provided by blind singer/guitarist Lee Stirling. The good news is that since our visit, cask mild has ben installed, but beware the 'handpumped' Srumpy Jack Cider - it is keg.

Last port of call was the **Grafton Arms** for the only Holts of the night and both beers were up to their usual standard. A fairly basic layout here provides lots of space but not many seats. More entertainment here with a singer accompanied by a Hammond Organ. This prompted most of us to retire to the vault to enjoy our beer.

So ended an interesting evening with a wide cross-section of pubs and no less than 28 different beers, some good, some less so but as ever this article simply reflects what we found on one particular night and certainly shouldn't be taken as a once and for all judgement on either. Why not try the pubs and see for yourself?



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CAMRA - THE PUBGOERS' CHAMPION



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CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE

OFF THE RAILS?

BRITISH Rail have been much in the news of late, apparently strapped for cash as their programme of property sales slumps due to the depressed market.

A continuous programme of disposals is being maintained, with favourites being the sale of station buildings to brewers etc who usually end up converting them into wine-bar type establishments - let's hope such a fate isn't planned for Stalybridge...

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(all served with a selection of fresh vegetables)
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CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

NOT many shopping days left before Christmas - and are you running out of ideas for presents already? CAMRA books make ideal Christmas presents for the beer drinker and pub goer. Available this year, post and packing free, are:

- * 1991 Good Beer Guide.....£6.99
- * Good Cider Guide.....£5.95
- * Best Pubs for Families.....£4.95
- * Good Pub Food Guide.....£5.95
- * Beer, Bed & Breakfast.....£5.95
- * Classic Town Pubs.....£11.95
- * Real Ale Drinkers Almanac.....£5.95
- * Cooking with Beer.....£4.95

Send your order to the Treasurer, 66 Downham road, Heaton Chapel, Stockport, SK4 5EG. Any cheques should be made payable to "CAMRA Stockport & South Manchester".

PARRS WOOD REVIEW

THE Parrs Wood in Didsbury has recently been refurbished by the Boddington PubCo and it must be said that the result is a definite improvement.

On entering, you are immediately struck by two 'marble' pillars which dominate the bare-boarded bar area (they are in fact fake). The bar itself has been turned through 90° to back on to the left hand wall. There is an attractive mirrored area at the back of the bar which itself is dominated by six globe lights on brass columns.

The monotony of the over-sized lounge has been broken by two raised seating areas one of which is marked no smoking and which also serves as the dining area at lunchtimes. The decor can best be described as completely over the top neo-Victorian with a multitude of pictures and bric-a-brac including an impressive display cabinet containing a variety of pottery. Whilst not to everyone's taste, all this does, strangely, seem to work. Perhaps it is the scale of the pub which has enabled the designer to get away with it.

The vault has been doubled in size and again has new furniture and curtains. Worthy of note is the 5p price differential between here and the lounge areas. The vault also sports the pub's solitary mild pump.

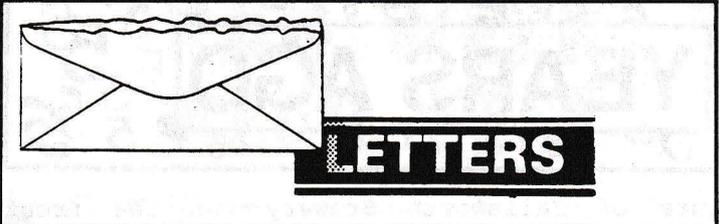
The other beers on sale are Boddingtons Bitter, Tetley Bitter and Theakstons Bitter and whilst the increased range is welcome it also goes to prove that no matter what the refurbishment, the customer always pays - the price of a pint before the alterations was 90p, now it's £1.

CAMRA - THE PUBGOERS' CHAMPION



JOIN NOW!

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



From: Peter Soane -

A recent visit to the G-Mex Pub and Club Show was very revealing. Crowds of eager drinkers thronged around various stands, three or four deep at times. The reason for their enthusiasm was soon apparent. Free Beer!

Samples were being handed over the bars by flustered servers like there was no tomorrow. Guinness, Newcastle Brown, Becks, San Miguel, Federation, they were all there. Such was the crush at some of the stands that they were forced to close for a 'cooling off period'. Next time you shell out large amounts of cash for any of the above, well, "advertising" doesn't come cheap does it?

FLAT FLEA

LAST MONTH we reported the opening of Manchester's latest brewery in the Flea & Firkin on Oxford Road. This month are having to report its, albeit temporary, closure.

The pub itself remains open and continues to thrive but there's been something of a hiccup behind the scenes. It's all down to the water supply - for some reason the brewery only has a domestic supply, with the result that it was taking 14 hours to fill the mash tuns before brewing could start. Not a recipe for success.

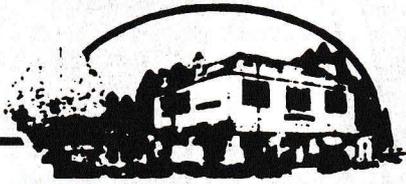
A new water main will cost several thousand pounds and we understand that there is currently some dispute over who foots the bill - European Leisure who sold the pub or Stakis Hotels who bought it. In the meantime, manager John Grover is having the top of the range house beer, Dogbolter, brewed by the small West Midlands brewery Premier Pitfield, who are also supplying some of the guest beers. Unlike the beer brewed on the premises this will be stored and served without the gas pressure normally used and real ale lovers will be able to partake with a clear conscience.

Callers at the pub so far may have noticed the high prices for the guest beers (£1.25 for Hydes Bitter, would you believe?). This is apparently deliberate policy which involves selling the house beers cheaply and pitching the guests high. Fine when there are house beers available, but when they're not...

**THE CLASSIC
CASK
CONDITIONED
BITTER**

MILNROW BEEREX

This month sees the first Milnrow Beer Festival which will be on Saturday 17th at the Community Centre on Royd Street (at the rear of Dale Street). It will open from 11.00am to 10.00pm and will feature a dozen beers from Holts Bitter to Oak Wobbly Bob.



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55 YEARS AGO

THE failure of Failsworth Brewery was the front page story in November 1985. It was barely three years since this small operation had been set up just down the road from Wilson's Newton Heath Brewery. But just as other newcomers had come to realise, the major part of the so-called free trade is not free at all, and outlets able to take the beer were few and far between. Failsworth did eventually get their own pub, but it was too late - mounting debts had made closure inevitable.

It was reported that Stockport & South Manchester was the first CAMRA branch to visit Oldham Brewery, who had, of course, been taken over by Boddingtons in 1982. Their future was uncertain, particularly as they were only brewing at about 50% capacity, but nevertheless they had contributed some £2 million to Boddingtons last declared profits of £9M. (Boddingtons had originally promised a further five years of life to Oldham, and they closed them down in 1988.)

The monthly pub crawl covered the Hazel Grove area, starting at the Crown and finishing at the Three Tunnes. 10 pubs, all Robinsons except Wilson's Horse & Jockey, all with cask conditioned Mild and Bitter, both covered in the price range 65 to 70p. (5 years later, a recent crawl started in Hazel Grove again, but this time came in the opposite direction, finishing at the Blossoms in Heaviley. 10 pubs again, all Robinsons except Whitbread's George & Dragon, which was serving Boddingtons Bitter at £1, and Marstons Pedigree at £1.16 - these were the only two pints priced at £1 or over.)

The Cheshire Hunt on Hyde Road near Belle Vue opened for business once more, after a two-year closure. Described externally as a Free House, inside it was all Sam Smith's products, the real ale being Sam Smith's Old Brewery Bitter - at 72p, the dearest pint in the immediate neighbourhood.

Three items from Stockport - Robinsons Royal Oak on High Street closed for major alterations (and we all know what happened to that - ed.)/ Egerton Arms, St Petersgate, re-opened after a long closure for refurbishment - Wilsons Mild and Bitter and Websters Green label Mild available/Ian and Dot Brookes were moving from the Manchester Arms to the Bakers Vaults - they didn't want to miss Christmas at the MA, so they had a full scale Christmas party at their leaving do on November 9th!

CAMRA - THE PUBGOERS' CHAMPION



JOIN NOW!

CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE



MANCHESTER MATTERS

BY RHYS JONES

HANDPUMPED Boddingtons Bitter has appeared in two more previously keg-only pubs - Whitbread's **Junction** at the corner of Hyde Road and Clowes Street in West Gorton and Wilsons' **Falstaff** on Jenner Close in Hulme. However, two of Hulme's pubs - the **Crown** on Jackson Crescent and the **Hussar** - are closed and boarded up, while a third, the **Gamecock**, has suffered the almost equally injurious fate of being bought by Control Securities, and now sells no real ale.

In the City Centre, the **Place Next Door** is closed pending redevelopment of the site; the **City Arms** has withdrawn Walkers Best Bitter; the **White Lion** has dropped Chesters Mild in favour of handpumped Boddingtons Bitter; and the **Marble Arch** has stopped selling traditional cider after a trial of some only two weeks.

Out in the suburbs, there are mixed fortunes for mild drinkers as real mild goes into the **Bowling Green** in Chorlton-on-Medlock (handpumped Greenalls), the **Church** in Hulme (handpumped Lees), and the **Waterloo** in Withington (handpumped Wilsons), but comes out of the **Red Admiral** in Hulme and the **Oddfellows** in Openshaw. Anvil Mild has also vanished from Hydes' **Hope Inn** in Hulme, but has been replaced by Anvil Light on electric pump. Unfortunately Hydes have lost a high profile outlet in South Manchester as their bitter is no longer on sale at the **Manor House** in Withington.

Finally, two of the more spectacular failures on the Manchester pub scene have had the builders in. **Squires** in Didsbury was still under refurbishment as we went to press, no doubt soon to re-emerge under its umpteenth

name, but the more recently established **Dacey Reilly's** in Levenshulme is now open in its new guise of **Fiddlers Green**. It sells Websters, Wilsons and Ruddles Bitters on handpump and is reportedly much improved from its previous identity.

(editor's note - many thanks to Roger Wood for providng the Hulme notes included in this item.)



CAMRA CALLING!

A QUIETER month as we count down to Christmas. The Branch meeting is on Thursday 8th and will be held at the Arden Arms, Millgate, Stockport, starting from 8.00pm.

There is a social on Monday 12th in the Coac & Horses on the corner of Belle Vue Stree and Hyde Road in Gorton. As with all Monday Socials, this starts at 9.00pm

On Friday 16th there is our monthly Stagger, this time in Gatley and Northenden. We meet at 7.00pm in the Red Lion, Church Road, Gatley and will be in the Jolly Carter, Royle Green Road, Northenden at 8.30. The following night we are having an evening in Wigan catching the 6.28 train from Stockport which calls at Piccadily at 6.40.

On Monday 19th the Social is at the Thatched Tavern, Stanhope Street, Reddish and this is followed on Thursday 22nd by our Pub of the Month presentation to the Grey Horse on Portland Street.

On Monday 26th there is a Social at the Sun in September, Burnage Lane, Burnage and the month ends with the UMIST Beer Festival on Wednesday 28th to Friday 30th - see the article on page 3.

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PUB NEWS



The **Railway** in Reddish was under-going extensive refurbishment as we went to press. This is long-overdue as the previous 1970s redplush job had worn very badly.

Contrary to our report last month, the **Gardeners Arms** in Gorton is still selling Chesters Bitter alongside the Best Mild and Boddies Bitter. Also worthy of note is the recent refurbishment here which saw an essentially one-room pub turned back into a three-roomed traditional local.

Welcome to Bruce Davenport, formerly of the **Grafton**, Chorlton-on-Medlock who has moved to the **Griffin** in Heaton Mersey. His replacement at the Grafton is Peter Abel from the Red Lion in Preswich to whom we also bid a warm welcome. Speaking of the Grafton, work has now started on the extension which should see a doubling in size of the lounge bar.

A belated welcome to John and Angela Regan who took over the **Hare & Hounds** on Abbey Hey lane, Gorton at the end of July. Although this is their first pub, John was brought up in the Cotton Tree on Ancoats lane and has been doing cellar work since he was 12. John and Angela have no plans for changing the pub, and are keen to retain its splendid traditional atmosphere. In an area not renowned for pub food, Angela has introduced butties on Saturday lunchtimes, using all fresh ingredients. New lighting has been installed in the beer garden and Angela is keen to encourage the use of this area by families when the weather is kind.

This is one of the best pubs in East Manchester and looks to be in good hands. We wish John and Angela every success.

More Stockport pubs have been lost through road schemes in recent years than for any other reason. It is therefore a pleasant change to bring good news on this front for once. The **Florist** has been under the threat of a CPO for some time like 17 years as part of a Stockport Inner Relief Road scheme - we now learn that the alignment of the road has been moved and will now involve the demolition of the buildings opposite, leaving this excellent pub unscathed.

That smashing little boozier, the **Travellers Call** in West Gorton is now enhanced by a smart new hanging sign. Replacing the illuminated plastic box which blew away in the February gales, this must be the first hanging sign the pub's had in years (or ever?) - only trouble is, its loud squeak keeps the licensee awake!

Contributors to this edition: John Clarke, Stuart Ballantyne, Ian Saunders, Peter Edwardson, Jim Flynn, Keith Lingard, Phil Levison, Rhys Jones, Roger Wood, John Hutchinson, George Symes, Martin Sellars.

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Letters and contributions are always welcome. Send to the address at the foot of the page.

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Shaw Heath**

— *Fine Ales* —

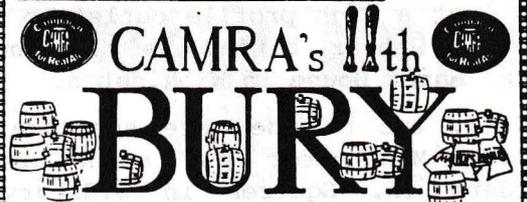
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* **BY GRAHAM THE CHEF** *

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