

Opening Times



STOCKPORT AND SOUTH MANCHESTER CAMRA No. 34 FEBRUARY 1987

TAKE THE FIZZ OUT OF LAGER

In a bid to halt the ever rising tide of lager, Bradford CAMRA have produced leaflets for distribution in pubs. Aimed at the younger drinker they ask why are you drinking lager? Is it:

#Because it's refreshing?

#Because it's cool?

#Because it's Continental, imported & something special?

#Because it's sparkling?

#Because it's strong?

#Because your friends drink it?

#Because you're swayed by mass advertising?

"It is unlikely that you will admit to the latter, but think about it. If lager was really so fantastic would so many millions of pounds need to be spent?"

The leaflet concludes: "Think again! Seriously consider why you and your friends continue to pay far too much for an inferior product."

On keg beers the leaflet poses the question: "are you drinking it for the bubbles, the name, the lack of choice...or for a bet?"

Keg beer is not a patch on the real thing, like lager it has all the goodness taken out of it."

"Sure, it's clear. There's nothing in it to obscure the view. The taste is usually bland and tart and the wind is guaranteed. Do try the traditional versions of the beer and, if not available, ask why?"

The leaflet leads on to real ale 'the product of centuries of the brewers art, to be preserved and promoted, saved and savoured, enjoyed and wnth-used about. Try it, stick with it - shun all imitations.' The Branch Chairman, Dave Boothroyd, commented: 'It's going into several local pubs where, we judge, it will be noticed by the younger probably lager, drinker. We don't know the reaction of the licensees yet - it should be interesting."

FESTIVAL BULLETIN

Following our report last month, it's now all systems go for Stockports' very first Beer Festival next April 23rd. to 25th., at the College of Technology, Wellington Road South - get those diaries out!!

We'll be printing an update each month between now and the Festival to keep you up with the news of the most exciting event in years for Stockports' Beer drinkers

The hall's been booked and we're now well into orderereng the beer. The good news is that the Borge House Brewery on the Isle of Lewis will supply the Festival if we supply the barrels (and the weather allows the ferries to reach Stornaway, the Hebrides can be tricky at that time of year!!)

Hopefully there will be a first timer at any Festival available - with Phillips Heritage Ale from Norton, Shropshire. The Brewery moved from Buckingham last year and plans to be brewing by March.

We are planning souvenir glasses and T shirts and there will also be a variety of stalls with CAMRA products, beer guides, beer-mats etc.

There should also be a variety of special offers and a competition for new members joining at the festival.

We will also be supporting the Stockport Express Advertiser Heartstart Appeal during the event.

More news next month!

The Boars Head, Market Place, Stockport.

Open 6 Days: Closed Sundays: Good Food Daily: Live Music 6 Nights.

Sam Smiths Real Ale: Tel. 480 3978



PLACES TO VISIT AROUND AND ABOUT.....

By Jock Stroller.

It might seem odd to be suggesting a visit to Buxton at this time of the year, but contrary to popular opinion, the Town is virtually never cut off during the winter. Although the Cat & Fiddle road from Macclesfield is occasionally impassable, the other main roads are seldom unusable and the railway line from Manchester Piccadilly via Stockport is almost always unaffected. The last return train leaves Buxton at the civilised time of 23-03.

Buxton is an unusual town of varied topography, narrow cobbled streets near the old market place, pleasant gardens adjacent to the grandeur of the Crescent, and architectural delights ranging from quaint almshouses to the imposing hospital and spa buildings. Obviously these

delights are much more pleasant to peruse when the ambient temperature is nearer 20° C than 20°F, but all the more reason for heading for the nearest cosy hostelry to sample the various beers on offer in Buxton.

Probably the most exotic ales in the area come from Nottingham brewers Hardy & Hanson, which are not available in Greater Manchester area. Their Kimberley mild and bitter are on sale in four pubs in the town, and although the beers are flavoursome and characterful, the brewery's insensitive renovation policy has destroyed much of the character in the Railway Hotel and the Cheshire Cheese. However, the Devonshire Arms on North Road, just off the A6 opposite the golf course, still retains a welcoming lounge and pleasant vault.

Of the three Bass pubs, the Bakers Arms on West Road, just off the A6, sells a good pint of Draught Bass in a warm cottage style interior. The Kings Head, on the Market Place, and the Old Sun, further up the High Street, are probably the pick of the many Marstons outlets in the town. The former is a large, rambling pub that used to be a manse, and retains an unusual spiral staircase. The latter, formerly a brewery, is more compact with a strong emphasis on pub games.

Unfortunately, both Robinsons pubs in the town centre have been ruined by Robinsons mindless de-characterisation pub renovation policies. To make matters worse, the extremely rare Robinsons Dark Mild has recently disappeared from the New Inn. Cask Tetley Bitter is available at the Swan, a comfortable three roomed pub with an attractive exterior on High Street.

All in all, a good selection of well kept ales can be had in the 20 or so varied and interesting pubs in Buxton, for those brave souls hardy enough to brave the winter chills.

On reflection, perhaps a visit might be delayed until the spring.....?

NEXT MONTH OUR NEW 'OUT OF TOWN' SERIES HAS A LOOK AT ECCLES.

PUB OF THE MONTH

The Stockport and South Manchester Pub of the month for February goes to the Hare & Hounds on Abbey Hey Lane, Abbey Hey.

A small, totally traditional Boddingtons pub, the Hare & Hounds is the type of pub that once existed anywhere but is now becoming all too rare. The layout is traditional with vault, snug and lounge together with a corridor, all of which are frequently packed with locals enjoying the excellent Boddingtons Bitter dispensed from attractive Victorian ceramic handpumps. No mild is sold reflecting the historic drinking preferences of this part of the City.

The presentation will be made to Iris and Rollo on Thursday, February 26th., and all are invited to come along to what promise to be an excellent night out.

RONNIE & HARRY WELCOME YOU TO

The PACK HORSE -

MIDDLE HILLGATE

Stockport's only Cask Trophy ~

Chesters Mild and Bitter ~ ALL

HANDPUMPED ~ Bar Snacks when you want 'em.

Live Music Thursday & Sunday.



Come and join us!

We're next to the 'Sally Ann'!



KEVIN & SUE WELCOME YOU

TO The Swan with Two Necks

OPP. WOOLWORTHS, PRINCES ST., STOCKPORT

ROBINSONS BEST BEERS.

HOT & COLD LUNCHTIME FOOD.

CHILDRENS' ROOM.

A HAVEN IN THE SHOPPING PRECINCT!



CHANGES AT MONROES

Monroes, formerly the Nip & Tiddle, formerly the White Hart, on London Rd., Central Manchester is once again being gutted by Whitbread. One of the few remaining survivors of the failed 'House of Horrors' style of conversions favoured by Whitbread in the early eighties.

Monroes was certainly different but we doubt anyone will shed any tears at the departure of all the junk and bric-a-brac. These days Whitbread-Chesters tend to favour 'instant-Victorian' as a theme and this is probably the fate in store for Monroes. Let's just hope that they get rid of the daft name.

BUTTERFLY STROKES?

Following complaints that the butterflies at his butterfly safarie in Friarbourne were so intoxicated on fermented nectar that they were flying into visitors, Mr. John Ellerton said: "If your life was only three weeks long, you would probably be a heavy drinker too."

The Castlewood

(HOLE IN WALL)

Opposite TSB, Bridge St., Stockport

Children Welcome 11-3 & 5.30-7pm

Pub Meals .. Lunch Mon-Sat. 11.30-2pm

Hand pumped ~~~ Real Ales



SAMUEL WEBSTER



WILSONS

PRICE LIST

Lounge, Smoke Room and Best Room

DRAUGHT ALES

Mild	per pint	1/3
Best Mild	" "	1/4
Best Bitter	" "	1/8
Old Tom	" "	3/7

BOTTLED ALES AND STOUTS

Light Ale	per half bottle	1/0
Light Bitter Ale	" " "	1/1
Brown Ale	" " "	1/3
Unicorn Stout	" " "	1/3
Barley Wine	per baby bottle	1/9
Bass, Worthington & Guinness	per half bottle	1/5 1/2
Carlsberg Lager	" " "	1/7 1/2

WINES AND SPIRITS

Whisky		2/5
Gin	with Cordials	2/3
Rum	2d. extra	2/2
Brandy		2/9

Pictured above is a copy of a 1961 Robinsons price list, currently displayed in the Manchester Arms, Stockport.

The prices will probably make you weep but it is interesting to see how various items have gone up over the years. Best Bitter then cost just over 8p a pint and today will set you back about 72p, an increase of an incredible 900%. Old Tom, however, then cost about 18p compared with today's £1.20. an increase of only (!) 666%, meaning that over a period of 26 years it's now better value for money! If you're a whisky drinker you've done even better with an increase of no more than 600% over the same period.

Those drawing the ~~short~~ straw in the value stakes are, strangely, mild drinkers, Best mild having shown an increase of something approaching 1,000% over the period; perhaps this is another reason for the continuing decline of this under-rated but excellent drink.

Whilst Martin and Sandy at the M.A. now can't really be expected to turn the clock back 26 years at least you can get 10p off a pint of Mild or Bitter there between 5-30 and 6-30 from Mondays to Fridays!

PUB OF THE YEAR

Just before we went to press the Stockport and South Manchester Branch of CAMRA announced their 1986 Pub of the Year. This prestigious award has gone to the Crown, Heaton Lane, Stockport. More next month, but the date for your diaries is Tuesday, March 10th., when the presentation will be made.

STAGGER

BOTTLED ON BURNAGE LANE - By Peter Edwardson.

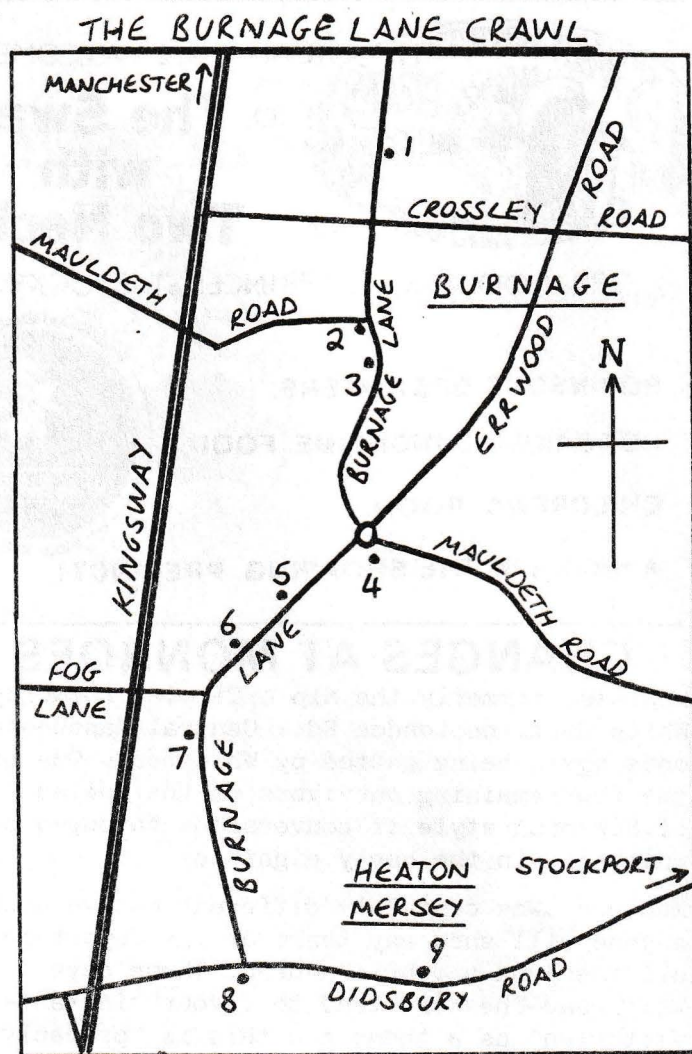
Burnage Lane offers the pub-crawler a wide choice of beer, with eight breweries represented in the nine pubs we visited. Unfortunately, three of them serve no real ale, giving the fascinating spectacle of seeing how hardened CAMRA members react when forced to have a drink in a keg pub. The crawl began at one of the best modern pubs in the Branch area and finished at one of the finest traditional ones - it's a pity that some of those in between didn't quite reach the same standard.

The Milestone (1), our starting point, is a brand new pub built by Banks's and only opened in August last year. It has a two-bar layout, comprising a fair-sized vault and a roomy, comfortable lounge, which is centred on a large fireplace and features some high-quality decoration making good use of tiling, although the seating could be better planned. The electrically-pumped mild and bitter were both in good condition; nobody sampled the Hansons Black Country Bitter which was also available.

A short walk took us to the Victoria (2), a large 1930s Boddingtons pub which appeared smart and well looked after. The lounge area has been opened out but retains considerable character with much original wood in the decor. The mild was above average, while opinions on the bitter varied from average to good.

The Farmers Arms (3) offers only keg Greenalls beers. The interior has been fairly recently modernised and, while it appeals mainly to younger people, it is quite congenial, and real ale would not be out of place. So what to drink? One of our party peered over the bar, spotted some nips on the shelf, and asked "Can I have a bottle of that please?" which turned out to be Old Glory, an acceptable pale barley wine. Another risked the mild, which was very sweet and sickly, while the rest made do with bottled Guinness.

Next call was Whitbread's Green End (4) an impressive inter-war Brewers' Tudor building, although inside it has been given a standard chrome and pink upholstery renovation, and does not seem as spacious as you would expect. The solitary handpump on the bar was found to dispense keg Gold Label Lager, but a bottle of Gold Label barley wine proved palatable enough.



Thank goodness, it's back.

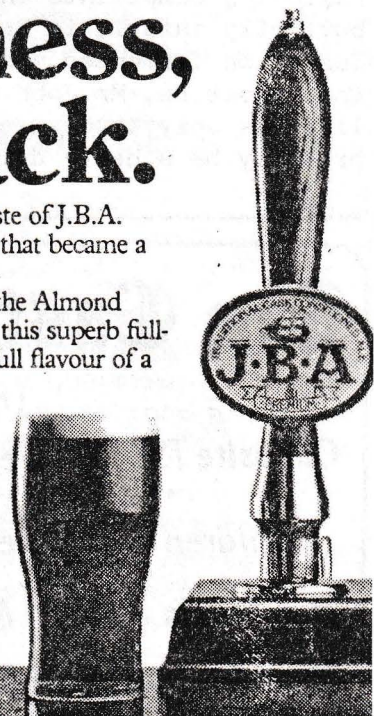
Now you can try a taste of J.B.A. Premium bitter - the beer that became a legend in its own time.

Originally brewed at the Almond family brewery in Wigan, this superb full-bodied beer captures the full flavour of a bygone era.

J.B.A. Premium bitter is now being brewed again in the time-honoured tradition, allowing you to enjoy a taste of the past again.

J.B.A.
THE BREWERY

Welcome home.



Brewed by Burtonwood Breweries

STAGGER - Continued.

Back to real ale at last in Hydes' Albion (5), where the electrically-pumped best Mild and Bitter were both above average. However, behind a promising facade this big pub turned out to be much in need of renovation, and the atmosphere didn't encourage us to linger.

With some relief we pushed through the crowds at the bar of the Sun in September (6) for a pint of Sam Smith's OBB, which was in very good condition. OBB is now the only real ale on sale, the lighter Tadcaster Bitter, which was more like a typical Manchester beer, having been withdrawn a few months ago. This is another fairly new pub, converted from a private motel, with a small vault and a large, comfortable lounge in an Indian Raj theme much more tasteful than the Far Pavilions in Stockport!

Bass's Old Bull (7) has recently changed from a keg name (Woosters) back to a real one, but unfortunately the same can't be said of the beer, although a bottle of the newly introduced Red Triangle Export was some compensation. The next pub, the Dog & Partridge (now the Mersey Vale, see last months' O.T.) (8) was in the midst of refurbishment, but both the Boddingtons mild and bitter were both of average quality.

Finally to the Griffin (9) on Didsbury Road, which we found packed to the doors. For those who don't know it, it's a fairly plain, old-fashioned four roomer, which has escaped the ravages of modernisation and retains many original fittings, particularly the ornate bar. The chief attraction is the high quality and low price of Holts beers, and the bitter, which was very good, did not disappoint, although the mild was no more than "above average." A slight let-down for a place such as this!

As always, the views on pubs and beers expressed in this article are purely those of individual CAMRA members on one particular night - there are certainly some purists who would want to lynch me just for drinking bottled beer, let alone enjoy it!!

REAL ALE IN CENTRAL & SOUTH MANCHESTER - Update no. 11

This month's real ale gain, opened just before Christmas but just too late for our January press date, is the Barleycorn on Barlow Moor Road, West Didsbury, which now sells Ind Coope Burton Ale, Jennings Bitter and Tetley Bitter, all on handpump. Two pubs to delete from the City Centre listings are Cheers, which is closed, and the Victoria, where the handpump is no longer in use.

Several changes of beers in our City Centre pubs - Branagans no longer sells Websters Bitter, while the Burton Arms has dropped mild. The City Arms has at last put its Tetley Mild and Bitter on handpump to give a commendably full range of Allied's locally available beers; Langdons Wine Bar has dropped its Chesters beers in favour of handpumped Banks's Bitter. The Lower Turks Head and the Mitre have both added handpumped Websters Bitter to their range, while the New Union has dropped the pricey JBA. As reported last month the Old Garratt has been revamped and now sells Boddingtons Bitter, Higsons Mild and Oldham Bitter on

BAKERS VAULTS

MARKET PLACE, STOCKPORT

SUPERB CUISINE LUNCHTIMES

FULL A LA CARTE EVENINGS -

MONDAY TO FRIDAY FROM SIX PM

SATURDAYS FROM SEVEN PM

FINE ROBINSONS ALES.

TEL:480 3182.

REAL ALE UPDATE - Cont.

HANDPUMP. Also refurbished is the Town Hall Tavern, where Bass Mild and Stones bitter have appeared on handpump alongside the Draught Bass - but have they really spent enough on the pub to justify charging £1 a pint for Draught Bass?

Finally in the Centre Sams Chop House is now selling handpumped Wilsons Bitter, alongside its other beers.

In the suburbs, the Olde Cock Inn, Didsbury, has added Chesters Mild on handpump, while the Old Grey Horse in Didsbury has stopped selling Websters Bitter - however this pub is due for the "Pennine Host" treatment shortly, so watch this space. Over in Gorton, the licensees valiant efforts to sell cask mild at the Angel have come to naught, so this pub once again sells no mild at all.

Rhys P.Jones.

HEARD AT THE BAR: In a large Bass pub in Eccles: "A pint of Draught Bass, please" Barmaid, after several abortive pulls on the pump, "It's empty, but there's some in this tray, will you have that?"



By John Clarke.

Another City Centre outlet this month (Pub Grub was going to visit Didsbury, but the week I chose was the one when everywhere was snowed up!) and the City Arms on Kennedy St., (which is just off Princess Street, opposite the Town Hall)

Popular with drinkers and diners alike, the City Arms is one of the few remaining examples of a City Centre pub that keeps a traditional atmosphere and doesn't rip you off. On a historical note, the pub is housed in what was once a row of Georgian Houses and for many years belonged to the old Empress Brewery on Chester Road, Old Trafford. Empress sold out to Peter Walker of Warrington in 1930 and of course in 1961 Walkers themselves merged with Tetleys of Leeds, and Tetley-Walker still run the pub today. The pub has recently been altered to increase the drinking area in the vault but has suffered no loss of atmosphere or traditional layout. Five cask beers are sold: Tetley Mild & Bitter, Walkers Best Bitter, Jennings Bitter & Ind Coope Burton Ale, and all are usually on fine form.

Virtually everything on the menu comes with chips and peas (the revolting 'minted' type unfortunately) or beans. The food is, however, filling and well cooked, portions are generous and prices rock bottom.

On my visit there were two specials available, roll, vegetable soup, jacket potato with corned beef and beans or Goulash, both at £1.20. I chose the Goulash which came with chips etc. (let's call it CPB for short) and despite looking like an orange mush was actually very tasty and perfect for a winters day.

THE

BRIDGEWATER

CHESTERGATE, STOCKPORT.

FREE HOUSE.

TETLEY BITTER -

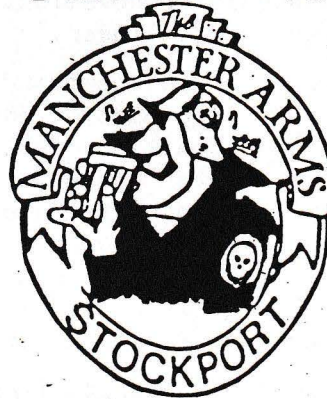
JENNINGS BITTER.

PUB GRUB & BAR SNACKS.

THE MANCHESTER ARMS

STOCKPORT

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CLASSIC JUKE BOX

★

BIKERS WELCOME

★

ROBINSONS FINEST ALES

★

MARTIN & SANDY

Also on the menu are roast beef, ham or Turkey (with CPB) at £1.20; sausage, bacon, meat & potato pie, or steak and kidney pie (all plus CPB) at £1.00, Gala pie & CPB at £1.20 and Egg & CPB at 90p and continue on the rest of the menu with Hot Roast Beef or Ham butties at 95p, chpsteak barm, 55p, sausage, bacon or chip barm, 45p, toasties from 50p -60p and sandwiches at 38p. The dearest things on the menu are the various plated salads at £1.30.

O.K., the food here isn't exactly Cordon Bleu and it's not going to win any prizes for imagination but for good quality, filling food at almost giveaway prices the City Arms has to be a must if you're in the City cenytre at lunchtime. A word of warning - get there early, as you can imagine it gets very busy.

MIDLAND MOVES

The Midland, Wellington Road North, Stockport has recently emerged from its umpteenth refurbishment at the hands of Whitbread-Chesters.

This has to be the most successful yet however, the lounge on the right being extended into what was variously living quarters and kitchen. This has created a much bigger room which is still cosy with a nice old fireplace sporting a real flame gas fire.

The other rooms are much as before & the whole place has benefited from a redecoration. Cask beers available are Chesters Mild and Bitter, both on handpump.

The Midland is a far cry from the dismal, keg only pub it was just a few years ago and is now well worth a visit.



Hanson's Black Country Bitter is a 1035° – 1036° lighter bitter offering the full flavour, clarity and clinging head of a distinctly Banks's beer. The revival of the ancient brewing skill of 'late copper-hopping' has created a Bitter of superb, individual character.

Available at the following Banks's & Hanson's pubs:

The Falcon , Chorlton-on-Medlock	The Longsight , Belle Vue
The Gorton Arms , West Gorton	Osborne House , Collyhurst
The Gransmoor , Openshaw	Mitchell Arms , Beswick
The Station at Cheadle , Cheadle	The Milestone , Burnage

CENTURION LASS

The Lass O'Gowrie, Manchesters only home brew pub, produced one of their occasional strong 'centurion beers just before Christmas. Brewed to an original gravity of 1055° it sold at £1.00 a pint. So popular was it that all four barrels sold out in 2½ days. We asked landlord and brewer Joe whether he had considered making the brew a permanent addition to his range, however he believes that its popularity was due to the fact that it does only make an occasional appearance.

ALL CHANGE AT THE RAILWAY

As we went to press Holts were advertising for new tenants for the Railway, Manshaw Road, Fairfield. An external refurbishment is promised – let's hope that the wonderful old lamp outside which is one of the few remaining examples anywhere, will survive.

CAMRA CALLING

Once again there's the usual round of events this month. We kick off on Wednesday the 4th., with a visit to Boddingtons Brewery – all those going remember to be in the Brewers Arms by 7-00 pm at the latest.

This is followed on Monday 9th., with a social at the Seven Stars, Ashton Old Road, Beswick – a recently refurbished Holts pub. Next is the Branch meeting on the 12th., and we hope to have a speaker from Boddingtons and the venue is the Victoria Inn on Burnage Lane, Burnage. The meeting starts at about 8-00 pm. The next day we are running a coach to the Bury Beer Festival. This leaves the Bulls Head, Hazel Grove at 5-30, the Pineapple, Heaton Lane at 5-45 and the Mauldeth at 6-00 pm. The cost is £2.50p for CAMRA members and £3.50 for non-members but this does include admission.

On Monday 16th., our social is in the City Centre at the Old Garrett on Granby Row – traditional beers from Boddingtons, Oldham and Higsons. The following Friday (20th.) sees the annual Cheadle crawl – start 7pm at the White Hart and meet at 8-30 pm at the Railway.

Almost done now – Monday 23rd., sees a social at the Gladstone, Hillgate, Stockport (much improved following the change of licensee, apparently) and on Thursday 26th., it's Pub of the Month at the Hare and Hounds on Abbey Hey Lane, Abbey Hey – transport will be provided.

Finally on the 2nd., of March the social will be at the Imperial, Birch Street, West Gorton. This, like all other Monday night socials starts at about 8-30 to 9-00 pm.

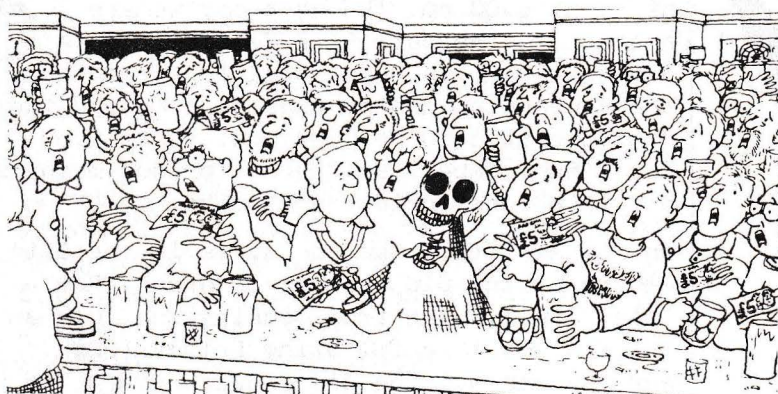
If you want more information about any of our activities please 'phone me, John Clarke, on 831 7222, extension 307 during the day or 477 1973 at night.

GRIFFIN TIFFIN

The standard of lunchtime meals in the Griffin, Heaton Mersey, received bad press in a recent edition of 'Opening Times'. However a recent sampling of lunchtime fayre by myself and three colleagues was appreciated by all involved. Each person had a different choice of the menu; plaice, chips and peas, curry, bacon & black pudding barm with chips and peas and steak barm with chips and peas. Hopefully the earlier visit was just an 'off' day!

FLUSHED OUT

Most bizarre story of 1986 came at the end of the year from Birmingham. Tragedy struck at the Bricklayers Arms in Ladywood when one of the regulars, a certain Les Pallett, dropped dead in the toilets (apparently from some alcohol related cause). An element of grim humour was introduced by the fact that it took a week before he was discovered! As a senior detective put it: "it is incredible that a man could have lain dead at a busy pub for so long without being discovered." He ought to come up here - judging by the standard of service in some pubs we could mention you could be forgiven for thinking that they keep dead bodies behind the bar rather than in the toilets!!



PUB NEWS!

The Three Tuns, Great Egerton St., Stockport, finally closed its doors on 14th., January and is now awaiting demolition. The story behind this has been told at length in the local press and we don't think there's much more to add other than to mourn the passing of another pub and to wish the licensee and his family all the best for the future.

Websters Bitter makes an appearance at two Stockport pubs - the Rifle Volunteer, Carrington Road, and the Park on Newbridge Lane.

Two of Stockports Free Houses have stopped selling Jennings Bitter. The Lakeland brew has gone at the Midway, Newbridge Lane and also at the Bridgewater, Chestergate. At the latter it has been replaced by Ind Coope Bitter - a new brew for Stockport and well worth sampling. Landlord John Nagel tells us that he intends to alternate the beer with Jennings.

Under the temporary management of the licensee of the Boddingtons Arms, Wilmslow, the Romper, Pinfold Lane, Ringway, now sells Boddingtons Mild.

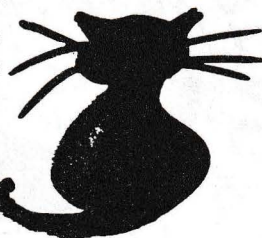
Pussy Cat Pussy Cat
Where have you been
I've been down to London
to visit the Queen...

So goes the Nursery Rhyme

**But did Pussy visit the Chiswick
brewery of Fullers?**

Silly pussy he didn't have to go that far,
but just to

The
**BOTTLE
STOP**



**Acre Lane
Bramhall**

tel. 439 4904

To taste the delights of the London Pride Best
Bitter on draught and in cans. One of many
traditional draught beers & lagers available.
Any Quantity Supplied

Parties catered for.

Egerton Arms

ST. PETERSGATE

(Near the Market Merseyway Car Park)

Your hosts John & Joan Newport invite you to call in and sample their excellent food, whilst enjoying a relaxing drink.

We have an excellent selection of homemade Hot & Cold meals, boasting our famous Hot Roast Beef & Pork Sandwich Carvery at 95p and including chilli, curries, steak & mushroom pie, lasagne & daily specials.

Evening meals available, children welcome lunchtime & early evening.

WHAT'S ON IN OUR CONCERT ROOM

Thursday: FOLK-NIGHT

Friday & Saturday: LIVE GROUPS

Parties catered for — function room available.

TEL: 477 8008

Contributors: John Clarke, Rhys Jones, Humphrey Higgins, Jock Stroller, Stuart Ballantyne.

For details of advertising rates please contact the Editor, Humphrey Higgins, at the address below.

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