

Opening Times



STOCKPORT AND SOUTH MANCHESTER CAMRA

No. 52 AUGUST 1988

LOW ALCOHOL - THE LOWDOWN

With growing concern about health and drink-driving, low alcohol beers such as Barbican and Kaliber are being more and more heavily promoted by the brewers. But are they more interested in drinkers' well-being or their own profit margins? A recent CAMRA report shows that in general low alcohol beers offer a very poor deal.

☐ **PRICE:** Although much less duty is paid on low alcohol beers, they are even more expensive than normal strength brews. The average pub price of low alcohol lagers was found to be £1.22 per pint, as against 98p for their normal strength counterparts.

☐ **HEALTH:** If you are a heavy drinker, your health may benefit from switching to low alcohol brews. But most of these beers contain a lot of sugar which hasn't turned to alcohol, and aren't particularly low in calories. They also contain a disturbing variety of E-number additives, which may be potentially dangerous, and hardly suggest a wholesome, natural product.

☐ **TASTE:** Most of these beers look OK in the glass but are a let-down on the tongue. CAMRA's tasting panel found Kaliber to have an aroma akin to dirty laundry while Barbican was reminiscent of ammonia. The best of the bunch was Clausthaler (also sold under Sainsbury's own label), which is brewed in Germany under that country's strict purity laws and contains no additives.

IN THIS MONTH'S OPENING TIMES.....

Page 2: Carnival News; The Price of Your Pint
Page 3: Letters; Pub of the Month
Page 4: Belgium: Land of Beer, Part 2
Page 5: Beer Books
Page 6: Stagger - this month Offerton
Page 8: Holiday Ale
Page 10: The New Breweries, Part 6
Page 11: Manchester Matters; CAMRA Calling
Page 12: Pub News

This month we welcome several hundred new readers to Opening Times - we hope you like it.

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

☐ **CHOICE:** 17 out of 22 brands on the market are lagers. The only widely available low alcohol ale is Whitbread's White Label, which also did reasonably well in the taste test. This can also be found in the pubs of other brewers including Boddingtons and Hydes.

Watch out for these beers appearing in 'draught' form - Bass plan to introduce a draught version of Barbican, and Whitbread have already started selling draught White Label in the South. All of these 'draught' beers are in fact keg, as it is not technically possible to brew and keep a cask-conditioned 'real' low alcohol ale.

However, Whitbread have soured a potentially worthwhile initiative by serving White Label on handpump, conning the public into thinking it is a real ale.

The conclusion on low alcohol beers must be that they are just the latest aspect of the Great Lager Con - high on image, high on price, low on quality, character and value. They'll do little for your health and nothing for your tastebuds or your wallet. They can only be recommended if you want to avoid anything intoxicating, for instance if driving, but still feel you must drink something at least vaguely like beer.

- Peter Edwardson

□ Don & Aline □

NOW AT THE

Thatched House

CHURCHGATE

Handpumps * Real Ale

WEBSTERS • RUDDLES • WILSONS



Bar Snacks





By Alexander Panesh

Editor's note - unfortunately our gourmet correspondent missed the press date for this OT however he tells us that reviews in the pipeline include the Midway in Stockport and the Sidings in Levenshulme. Watch this space.

CARNIVAL TIME

Over August Bank Holiday Weekend (27th - 29th August, CAMRA will be having a stall at the annual Castlefield Carnival. As well as the usual Carnival attractions in Britain's first Urban Heritage Park, this year the event is combined with the National Narrowboat Rally, the premier event in the Inland Waterways calendar.

Come along and enjoy all the fun of the Carnival, with the narrowboats, street stalls, bands and steam engines. Also pop along and meet us on our stall in the Liverpool Road area - we'll be selling a variety of books and other CAMRA products, now's your chance to get that 1988 Stockport Beer Festival Glass and T-shirt you've been promising yourself! We'll be happy to have a chat, perhaps you might even want to join up...

The bad news is that the beer tent is being provided by Whitbread (we did offer but couldn't afford the £3000 'donation'), so whether there will be real ale is anyone's guess, the White Lion on Liverpool Road is a safe bet however (this has the distinction of being the only Chesters pub in Greater Manchester in the Good Beer Guide)

See you there!

THE PRICE IS HIGH

As we went to press, the crazy round of price increases that plague the pub goer was off again with the pace being set, as usual, by the Big 7 brewers - Wilsons-Websters, Whitbread (as usual!) and Greenalls all announced increases that will put between 3 and 4 pence on a pint. Not only that but, and this could be an ominous straw in the wind, the Greenalls LVA Chairman suggested his members should in fact put up their prices by 10p a pint to cover amongst other things the new hours, and this despite evidence from Scotland that the increase in hours should not significantly increase costs.

Speaking of prices, the results of CAMRA's National Prices Survey were released last month you may have seen it mentioned in the national press. Conducted in the first 6 weeks of this year, the survey covered 1500 pubs throughout the country and once again Greater Manchester came out tops in the value for money league, with the independents leading the way over the big brewers.

One or two of the findings stand out:

★Robinsons Best Bitter was the 3rd cheapest beer of its type in the country, being pipped by two other small breweries in Wales and the Midlands.

★Holts mild and bitter the cheapest in the country

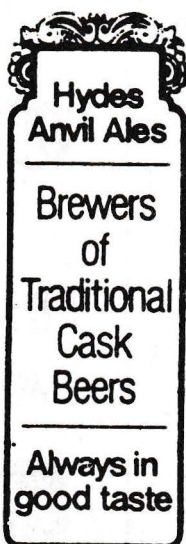
★Big 7 beers seem to go up faster, to take a couple of random samples, Chesters mild and bitter in the Midland, Stockport went up 6 & 7p between the 1987 and 1988 surveys. In the same time, Boddies bitter in the Hare & Hound Gorton went up 4p and Holts beers in the Grafton, Chorlton-on-Medlock 3p.

The message from these results is loud and clear, support your independent brewer, it'll cost you less to do so!

The Nursery Inn

GREEN LANE, HEATON NORRIS
STOCKPORT

- Traditionally Brewed Hyde's Anvil Ales
- Good Home Cooked Food Served Daily
- We now cater Mon-Fri for families in our upstairs Dining Room which is also available for functions.
- Bowling Parties Catered for - Details on request.



YE OLDE WOOLPACK (formerly The Hague)

BRINKSWAY · FREE HOUSE
061-429 6621

Robert & Gillian Dickinson proprietors
TRADITIONAL HAND PULLED BEERS
Websters, Thwaites and Ruddles County



LETTERS...

From Peter Edwardson:

"The Olde Vic in Edgeley has become justly popular for being the only free house in Stockport which offers a selection of guest beers not normally seen in the area, and usually serving them in excellent condition. For these reasons it was chosen as CAMRA's Pub of the Year for 1987. But are CAMRA members so fond of the beer that they are prepared to turn a blind eye to a pricing policy which would be strongly condemned in any pub owned by the big brewers?

On a recent visit, Batemans XXXB was £1.09 a pint more expensive than Ruddles County (which is slightly stronger) in most local Grand Met pubs. Marstons Pedigree and Taylors Landlord (neither a truly exotic beer for the area) were both 99p, when recently CAMRA was highly critical of the Hinds Head in Heaton Chapel selling Castle Eden for 98p.

The Olde Vic is entitled to charge some premium for going to the trouble of importing rare beers, but prices like that cannot be excused when CAMRA is campaigning for a fair deal for pub customers. Another problem was that I for one certainly couldn't see a price list anywhere in the pub."

Hello, Good Evening....and Good Luck to the 6th licensee in 2 years at Stockport's Golden Lion (Burtonwood). The pub has re-opened again but at the time of writing was selling keg beer only. We hope cask beer will be introduced after a promised revamp.

That South Manchester institution, the Whalley Hotel, has we hear gone over to real ale in the form of Chesters Mild & Bitter plus Whitbread Trophy, all on handpump.

The Junction, Cheadle Hulme is to be expensively done up to incorporate a restaurant, Holt's first such venture. More news when we have it.

DECEMBER

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

PUB OF The MONTH

August's Pub of the Month is another Holts house, the Grove on Ashton New Road in Clayton (see last month's Stagger), where we salute licensees Anne and John McArt. They've been at the Grove two years, following a 16 year stint with Whitbread, although interspersed with relief management for Holts. On arrival their first task was to smarten the place up a bit, though not to the detriment of what is now a simple but very well-kept two-room local, an example to most of its neighbours.

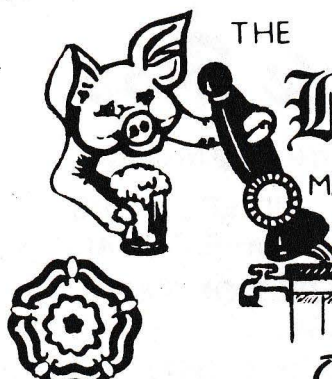
There's always a warm welcome and a fine pint (mild & bitter on handpump) at the Grove, and particularly so when we present the Pub of the Month award on Thursday, August 25th. Be there!

SOME YOU WIN, BUT SOME...

Titanic Brewery of Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, whose closure we reported recently, recommenced brewing in the first week of July; the brewery plant has been bought by the assistant brewer, Keith Bott's brother and the premises, brewing staff and range of beers will remain the same. Though Titanic's popular pub, the Travellers Rest in Burslem is not included in the deal, the beers are expected to remain on sale there. Locally, Stockport & South Manchester CAMRA is in contact with the brewery to suggest possible outlets hereabouts; the revived brew has already been on sale at the Beerhouse and the CAMRA beer tent at the Ashton Canal Festival.

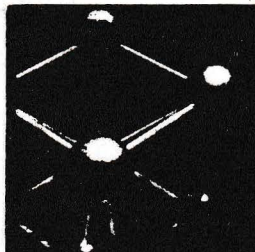
As we went to press however, we found that the Fox & Hounds at Stoddesdon, Kidderminster was to go up for auction in August - the home of Dasher Downings beers, this would be a sad loss.

THE
Boars Head
MARKET PLACE, STOCKPORT
TEL. 480-3978
FOOD
DAILY
OPEN 6 DAYS
LIVE MUSIC 6 NIGHTS
* **SAM SMITHS REAL ALES** *



The Olde Vic CHATHAM ST.,
EDGELEY
Stockport's Premier
Free House
TAYLORS LANDLORD
TETLEY MILD & BITTER
Guest Beers Weekly
PUB OF THE YEAR '87
tel. 480 2410



BELGIUM LAND OF BEER

by Rhys Jones

This month Rhys Jones concludes his Belgian beer survey with a look at the unusual Lambic and Trappist beers.

LAMBIC BEERS

The most widely available hereabouts are from the firm of Timmermans, at Itterbeek. The cherry (kriek), raspberry (framboise/frambozen), black-currant (cassis) and delicious new peach (peche) are at the Beerhouse and the Olde Vic while the Beerhouse also has the non-fruit flavoured gueuze together with a new peach beer from Lindemans, Pecheresse and an extraordinary straw-berry beer (Bezebier) from Van Honsebrouck; from the same brewery there's also the famous Brigand, a strong beer (9% by volume) conditioned in the corked bottle - a cult beer both in Belgium and Britain. Finally the Bottle Stop has Mort Subite kriek, originally brewed as a house beer for the characterful Mort Subite bar in Brussels but now more widely available. Gueuze is typically around 5% alcohol by volume, the fruit flavoured versions rather more, say 6%.

TRAPPIST BEERS

Five monasteries brew - Westmalle in the north, Westvleteren (St. Sixtus) in Flanders and Orval, Chimay and Rochefort in the French speaking south - most brew at a range of strengths giving a total of 15 beers. The best known and biggest is Chimay, the smallest and most retiring is Westvleteren (most of whose St Sixtus beers are in fact produced under licence at a neighbouring commercial brewery, and the most unusual is probably Orval, with just one beer in a skittle shaped bottle. My own favourites would be Westmalle Triple, Westvleteren Abbot (strongest beer

in Belgium - original gravity 1120), Chimay Blue (particularly in its corked version known as Grande Reserve) and Orval. All five Trappist are represented in the Beer House, and the Bottle Stop sells Chimay. Trappist beers are strong - 6% alcohol by volume is a minimum.

As well as the outlets mentioned, it's always worth looking out for Belgian beers if you find yourself in an enterprising free house - the Crescent, on the A6 near Salford University sells Timmermans fruit lambics, St Sixtus and Kwak. The increasingly impressive Station Buffet at Stalybridge also sells a range.



Across in Yorkshire, the Fat Cat in Sheffield and Mooring in Sowerby Bridge are known for their Belgian range as is the Masons Arms at Cartmel Fell in Cumbria. And, if you're eating out in Stockport, don't forget that Coconut Willy's vegetarian restaurant on St

Petersgate also has a range of Belgian beers, generally Duvel and a number of Trappists.

Finally though, a reminder that the threats facing quality independent brewers are international. Last year, two of Belgium's finest breweries - De Kluis of Hoegaarden and Liefmans of Oudenaarde - were taken over by Belgian mega-brewer Stella Artois. Both are expected to remain open, and indeed we must hope that Stella are more merciful than most of the major British brewers would be, for in Hoegaardse Witte and Liefmans Goudenband, these two companies produce two utter classics, not just of beer but of all alcoholic drink. By the way, neither of these are available in the Manchester or Stockport area - how about it freehouses?

BEER from BELGIUM

IMPORTED BOTTLED BEER
DIRECT TO THE TRADE

TIMMERMANS LAMBIC BEERS 1052 OG.
GUEUZE, KRIEK, FRAMBOISE, CASSIS, PECHE.

KWAK 1085 OG. STRONG AND WARMING
ST. SIXTUS BELGIUMS STRONGEST BEER
PLUS MANY MORE SPECIALS

telephone: 061 976 3027

Richard and Sue Genders

The Bottle Stop

136 Acre Lane Bramhall

★ ADNAMS ★ FULLERS BEERS ★
★ TAYLORS LANDLORD ★ BATEMANS ★

WARSTEINER PILS ON TAP

OCCASIONAL BEERS -

Brains SA ★ Brakspears ★ Courage Directors

PINTS POLYPINS FIRKINS BARRELS

OPEN MON-FRI 1.00-10.30, SAT 11.00-11.00,
SUN 10.30-10.30

Tel. 061 439 4904

BEER BOOKS BEER BOOKS BEER BOOKS BEER BOOKS

If you're reading this, the odds are that you're a drinker. You must have noticed over the past few years ever more discussion in the media of the dangers of alcoholic drink, but very likely you have dismissed this as exaggerated propaganda but out by the temperance lobby, and not paid much attention to it.

Now, the wine writer and presenter of "The Wine Programme" on TV, Jancis Robinson, has written a book "On the Demon Drink" described as "for the first time an objective assessment of alcohol from someone who loves it", and which fills a major gap in the market for unbiased information on alcohol. She has examined all the current scientific evidence on alcohol with a critical eye, and tried to sift the genuine facts from those tainted by an anti-drink slant.

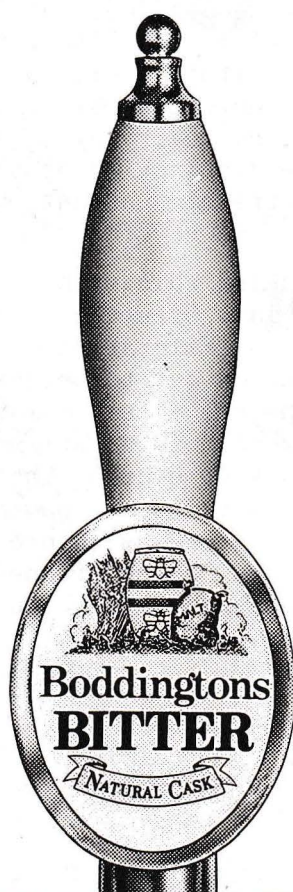
The good news is that drinking moderate amounts of alcohol will do you no harm at all, and in fact may well reduce the risk of heart attacks. But the evidence is overwhelming that in the long term heavy drinking will seriously increase the risk of a wide variety of health problems. This applies to men regularly drinking 25 pints of beer or its equivalent a week, or women drinking 18 pints or more. We probably all half-knew that anyway, but have been reluctant to admit it.

The book discusses the psychological effects of

alcohol - did you know it is basically a depressant? - and looks at the role alcohol plays in various countries around the world - why do the French drink over twice as much as the Finns, but are far less often seen drunk? There is also a detailed table showing just how much alcohol you need to drink to exceed the legal limit for drink-driving - the kind of information the government should (but won't) distribute to every driver in the country to help them avoid breaking the law.

As a wine expert, Ms Robinson makes one or two elementary mistakes about beer, but this does not detract from the overall interest of the book. Inevitably, most of the people who read a book of this kind will already be aware of much of its message, but it is a message that deserves a wider hearing. Too much of the "health education" information put out by official sources has a basically anti-alcohol stance, which not surprisingly leads to it being ignored. The message should be - enjoy your pint of real ale, or glass of wine, but be careful not to overdo it!

"Jancis Robinson on the Demon Drink" is published by Mitchell Beazley at £9.95



Two Bevvies of Beauty

BODDINGTONS AND HIGSONS
TOGETHER.

A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES,
NOT TO MENTION DRY THROATS.

TRULY TWO BEVVIES OF
BEAUTY, YOU COULD SAY!

As Real Ale Lovers, you need no introduction to the deliciously nutty tang of Boddies bitter.

Now, however, you can also try the superb individual flavour of Higsons at many Boddies' pubs in the Stockport area. This noble brew from down the M62 has been winning friends among real ale drinkers for many years - 200 to be exact!

Like Boddies, Higsons is brewed in the traditional way, using only the finest malt and hops. So whether you stick to the local favourite or sample the strength of the guest from 'out west', you're still in for a treat.

Try a bevvy of beauty today. Or better still, try both.



STAGGER

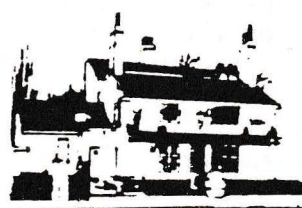
OFF TO OFFERTON by Andy Cooper

A balmy evening in late June saw a group of branch members assemble at Drakes, Marple Road, Offerton at the start of a tour around one of the less frequently visited parts of Stockport. Drakes is a typical "Open House" establishment, where an ugly exterior hides a very predictable interior. Full of mirrors and subtle lighting, the pub holds a fine collection of plastic plants. There were at least some unexpected features, most notably the fact that at least a vault is retained and that the clientele appeared older than normal for these types of establishment. The beers sold were the standard Pennine range, of Wilsons Bitter and Websters Yorkshire Bitter, neither of which inspired anyone to flights of silver tongued rhetoric.

Our next stop was also a Pennine Host establishment, but one which provided a total contrast: the Strawberry Gardens on Offerton Road. This is a good multi-roomed boozery, with a vault full of people eagerly watching the European Championship.

Once again Wilsons Bitter and Websters Yorkshire were available, together with Websters Choice. The Choice turned out to be sour and undrinkable but was changed for Wilsons Bitter without demur. The pub is presumably popular at lunchtimes, since an inordinate amount of the bar was given over to serving food.

We then moved on to the Fingerpost Hotel, a pub with a fine imposing exterior, which is matched by the interesting interior. The pub has an incredible number of rooms, all of which are served from a central stillage. There is even a direction sign inside the pub for anyone who may get lost! Robinsons Best Mild and Best bitter were on offer and both were pleasant enough. None of our party were brave enough to tackle the potent Old Tom which was also available on draught. The writer who is a keen football fan also had the pleasure of seeing one of the great goals of the European Championship whilst standing at the bar.



The Strawberry Gardens

Further down Hempshaw Lane found us at the White House, drinking more Wilsons - both bitter and mild, together with Websters Yorkshire Bitter were available, although not particularly worth the travelling to drink.

The pub still retains a vault, although the lounge appears to consist of several rooms knocked into one. There were Websters Choice beer mats on the tables but no sign of the beer itself.

Our next stop was the Boddingtons and Oldham outlet, the Gardeners Arms, on Offerton Road. Not particularly the writers choice of an interesting pub, it is nevertheless popular, seemingly with people on their way 'clubbing'. The pub does have the distinction of serving both Oldham beers, extremely unusual outside Oldham itself.

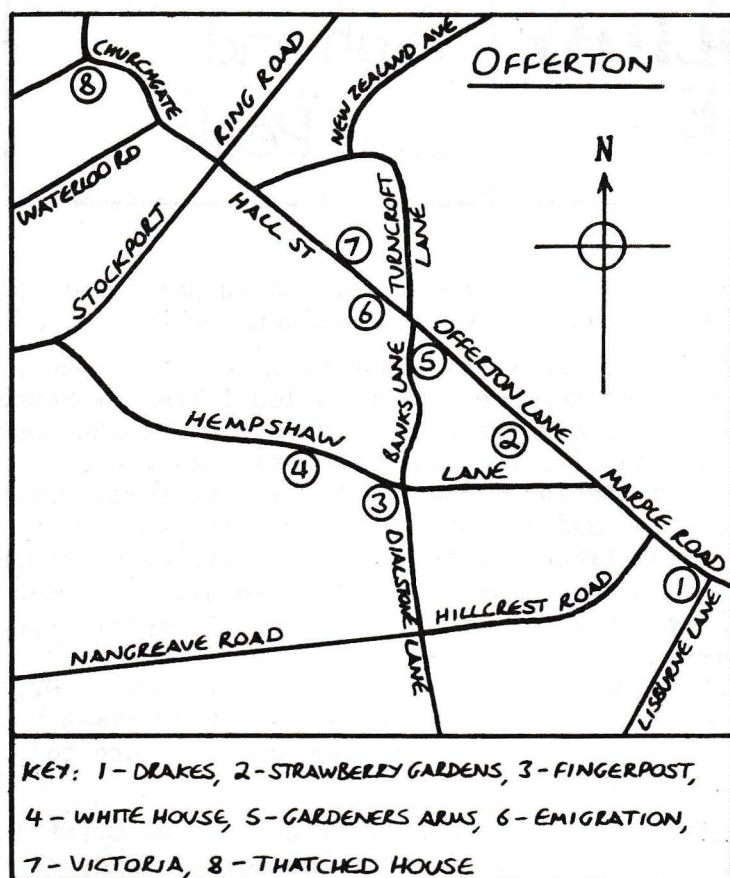
We had some pretty unkind things to say about our next stop on the last Offerton Stagger, but on this occasion the Emigration on Hall St offered us what turned out to be the best beer of the night. The pub itself remains a fairly typical Robinsons modernisation with all that entails by way of over-bright lighting and knocked out walls - there are now only two distinct drinking areas. It was interesting to see the famous Robinsons 'poems' framed and hung on the walls. Everybody will have their own opinion on this sort of pub but it is certainly popular.

The last stop in Offerton itself was a little further down Hall St, at the Greenalls Outlet, the Victoria. This is a typical 1960's refurbishment where the effect is not unpleasant

ESTD  1867
BURTONWOOD
BREWERY

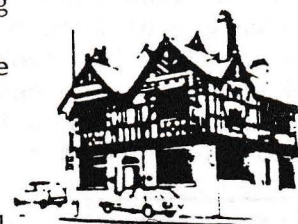


**A FAMILY TRADITION
OF FINE BREWING**



but easy not to notice (not unlike the beer). Some bottled foreign beers including EKU 28 (allegedly the strongest beer in the world) were on sale. The (real) draught beers were dispensed through Greenalls new Keating electrically operated 'handpumps'.

We then finished the evening by walking back down to the Thatched House on Churchgate a Wilsons pub selling Mild and bitter plus Websters Yorkshire Bitter, Green Label and Ruddles County. Readers will no doubt recall that this pub is now run by Don & Aline Cleary, formerly of the Good Beer Guide listed Castlewood, and they are making a serious and worthwhile attempt to smarten up this previously run-down pub. Of particular interest are the windows which provide the only reminder on any Stockport pub of the old Showells Brewery.



The Thatched House

So, once again, an interesting and varied evenings drinking was had by those who attended. As ever the views expressed simply reflect how we found things on the night - visit the pubs yourselves and make up your own minds.

THE BEER HOUSE

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

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



**Thatchers Traditional Cider
Hot and Cold Food**



MON.-SAT. 11.30 - 3.5.30 - 11.

SUN. 12.-2., 7.-10.30

Tel. 061 832 1452

ARDEN ARMS

An era comes to a close at the end of this month with the departure of Jack & Beryl from Stockport's Arden Arms after over 25 years in the pub.

Truly a classic pub if ever there was one, the unique atmosphere owes everything to the way Jack has looked after the pub and its contents. The new tenant is new to the trade and comes from the Portland Hotel. No changes are apparently planned; we wish Jack & Beryl a happy retirement.

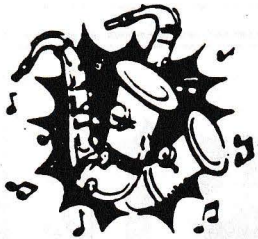
Bakers Vaults

MARKET PLACE, STOCKPORT

FINE ROBINSONS ALES

superb cuisine
including traditional
Sunday Lunch

LIVE MUSIC MOST EVENINGS



BOOGIE CLUB

SUNDAY NIGHT

TEL. 480 3182



SHAPERS

BARBERS SHOP

17 SCHOOL LANE

HEATON CHAPEL

STOCKPORT

432 6080

ALSO

CUT-BACK

44 ST. PETERSGATE

STOCKPORT

477 6739

HOLIDAY ALE

High and
Low Peak

By Rhys Jones

This month we look at Derbyshire, and in particular at three popular centres - Crich, Matlock and Buxton.

Though it's an attractive upland village in its own right, it's the presence of the National Tramway Museum that makes CRICH a major tourist destination. The nostalgia count can rise to dangerous levels as you're surrounded by vintage trams and the street furniture, advertisements, and so forth that go with them; with your admission ticket including free rides on whichever trams are in service when you visit, an afternoon can pass swiftly. On Sundays 'till the end of September, a direct bus on route 252 leaves Chorlton St Coach Station at 9.40am and Stockport Bus Station at 10.02, arriving handily in Crich at 12.30; at other times catch the normal 252 to Matlock and change there to local bus 139 or 140.

Crich's one entry in the Good Beer Guide, the Cliff Inn is just round the corner from the museum. A Hardy & Hanson (Kimberley Ales) house selling handpumped mild and bitter, it's externally imposing and consists of 2 small and cosy bars. A wide, though not particularly adventurous, range of food is available at lunchtimes and till 9 in the evening. The rule in Crich seems to be that the quality of the pubs decline with increasing distance from the museum; however the other pubs are all worth a look. Moving progressively down the village from the museum, they are: the Jovial Dutchman, electric (fake handpump) Kimberley mild & bitter; the Black Swan on the market place, handpumped Kimberley mild & bitter and managing to retain some local atmosphere despite severe opening-out; and the Kings Arms on the road to Fritchley, a would-be trendy open plan free house with a lone handpump amongst a forest of keg dispensers but a surprisingly good pint of Pedigree.

By contrast with Crich's recent rise to fame, Matlock has been a resort for years, and while commercialisation has taken its toll, there's plenty to see and do - the major attractions include Ribber Castle fauna reserve, the Peak District Mining Museum, and the cable car to the Heights of Abraham. Matlock Bath is the most frequented district, and here three pubs can be recommended. The Princess Victoria is a characterful wood-panelled free house selling Wards Sheffield Best Bitter 'Darleys' Mild, Taylors Landlord and a guest beer; some of the tables are inlaid with crib and draughts boards. If you want a good view with your pint, go up Temple Walk to the Temple Hotel and sit out at one of the terrace tables - the views are most definitely worth the climb, as are the beers (Theakstons Best Bitter, XB, and Old Peculier, and the impressive Mansfield Old Baily, all on handpump) and the imaginative menu (Sauerkraut and Venison Pie were among the dishes featured on OT's recent visit). Back on the valley

bottom again, the County & Station is a comfortable call for Marstons Border Mild, Burton Bitter and Pedigree; opposite Matlock Bath station, it has plenty of railway memorabilia. In Matlock town centre, the Boat House (Kimberley Ales) is known for food, while the same brewery's Railway Hotel, opposite the bus station, is a much improved and convenient stop before the bus home (bitter only in here, on electric pump).

Finally Buxton, the most accessible of our three featured venues (hourly rail service from Piccadilly via Stockport), and probably needing little introduction for most readers. Known for its Opera House (with the annual festival in full swing as this edition of OT hits the bars), the Micrarium, and the Peak Rail Centre (hoping to re-open the line to Matlock), this handsome spa town is a well pubbed place. Most characterful pub in town has to be the Bakers Arms on West Rd, a beautiful little two-roomed Bass pub with just Draught Bass on electric pump in a good old-fashioned atmosphere. The other Good Beer Guide recommendation in town is the Cheshire Cheese on the High St, though this Kimberley Ales pub, still externally striking, had more character before the internal reorganisation of a couple of years ago. Another worth recommending is the Leewood Hotel on Manchester Road - one doesn't always expect top quality beer from a hotel cellar bar, but the McEwans 80/- on handpump here seems to be consistently good. A shame they no longer sell Youngers No.3.

With all these good pubs and more, to go at, make sure you head for the hills with Opening Times while the days are still a decent length. Happy drinking!

ON THE WRONG TRACK

We told you in June's OT that we had reported the Railway in Cheadle to the Trading Standards Dept for misleading customers by displaying pumpclips for Boddies Mild when only keg OB was sold. We have now heard from A.Watson, the Trading Standards Officer who has got the licensee to reverse the pumpclips so they no longer face the customers.

He goes on to say: "Due to the difficulty of removing the clips from the pump handles entirely I do not intend to take any further action on this matter"

This really does beggar belief, has he never heard of the screwdriver?

We can I suppose, expect little more from a department which still sees nothing wrong in breweries conning their customers by selling keg beer through handpumps (see last months OT).



Egerton Arms

ST. PETERSGATE
TEL: 477 8008

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 home-made Hot & Cold meals, boasting our famous Hot Roast Beef & Pork Sandwich Carvery at 99p and including chilli, curries, steak & mushroom pie, lasagne & daily specials.

Evening meals available, children welcome lunchtime & early evening.

"WHATS ON IN OUR CONCERT ROOM"

Alternate Tuesdays: FOLK

Wednesday: 9.30 Live Entertainment

Thursday: 9.00 p.m. POP MUSIC QUIZ
PRIZE OF CHAMPERS

Friday & Saturday: LIVE BANDS

Sunday: DISCO - D.J. Richard

HAPPY HOUR 8 - 9.00 pm

& FREE DRAW

Parties catered for - function room available.
HAPPY HOUR 5.30 - 7.00 MON - FRI



Brewing a taste of tradition

NOW AVAILABLE IN
SELECTED
TETLEY WALKER
OUTLETS
IN YOUR AREA



*Brewers of fine Cumbria Ales
since 1828*

JENNINGS BROTHERS PLC
Castle Brewery Cockermouth Cumbria CA13 9NE
Telephone: (0900) 823214



THE NEW BREWERIES by PHIL LEVISON

The last issue in this series referred to the steady, but slow, progress in the establishment of new small breweries up to the end of 1978. About 7 a year seemed to have been the norm, but in 1979 there was a marked upsurge, as 13 appeared. A trend was also becoming apparent - the majority were setting up in the Southern part of the country. This of course was where the potential market appeared to be greatest, with a large number of free trade outlets - but it was only to become apparent later that a large proportion of this so-called free trade was not 'free' at all, but tied to the major brewers by low rate or 'soft' loans. There were bound to be exceptions to this southern trend and 1979 was the year when the first new Scottish brewery appeared.

February 1979 was a good month - no less than 4 newcomers appeared: three in the south and one in the north-west.

Soft drinks manufacturer John Watts set up his New Forest Brewery in a converted egg packing station at Cadnam, between Bournemouth and Southampton. His new product was simply called New Forest Real Ale (og 1038). Further along the South coast at Brighton, a slaughterhouse was pressed into service by Vincent O'Rourke, and Raven Bitter (og 1039) was produced using equipment that came from Watney's Mortlake Brewery, where Vincent used to work.

Yet more plant from Mortlake found its way to Canterbury, where the Taylor brothers set it up and started to brew Canterbury Ale (og 1038)

The fourth brewery, this time in North-West England, appeared in a former bomb factory just



outside Buxton. It was here that ex-salesman Clive Winkle began to brew his Saxon Cross Bitter (og 1038). It was supplied to local free houses, including his father's pub, the Swettenham Arms near Congleton. Besides Saxon Cross, 'house' beers were also produced for other free houses.

Clive was the second small brewer in the North-West (David Pollard was already brewing in Stockport) and this was in an area well served



by a number of independent regional breweries. But, when Peter Kelly started to brew at Skipridge Kennels, Neasha near Darlington, there was no other real ale brewery for miles. Kelly's Golden Bitter (og 1045) was inevitably abbreviated to KGB.

Former RAF pilot Mark Wallington was next to start commercial brewing, after a number of years experience as a home brewer. He spent some time training with Peter Austin, who supplied the equipment which was set up in an old Great Western Railway shed in Swindon, to produce Archer's Best Bitter (og 1040). Archer was an old family name.

All these new breweries had been set up specifically to supply the free trade, but now came a home-brew pub, the Fox & Hounds at Stoddesdon, between Bridgnorth and Ludlow, where the beer was brewed mainly for the pub by landlord Malcolm Downing. Some found its way to a couple of local free houses, and it also appeared at CAMRA's national beer festival Dasher Downings Draught (DDD) with an og of 1040 was followed later by Dasher's Disaster (og 1048) and other, stronger brews.

Next month Phil Levison continues his story with a look at more of the small breweries set up in 1979.



APPLICATION FOR CAMRA MEMBERSHIP

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

NAME(S) DATE

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

SIGNATURE TELEPHONE NUMBER(S)

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

Overseas £12 ☐

I/We would like to receive further information about CAMRA ☐

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

T. Clarke, Flat 2, 2 Errwood Rd., Levenshulme, Manchester M19 2PA



MANCHESTER MATTERS

By Rhys Jones

Manchester's latest real-ale freehouse is the High Street branch of Yates's Wine Lodges, where handpumps now dispense Holts Bitter, Stones Bitter, Tetley Mild and Websters Bitter; there must be a danger though that the combination of high prices (Holts at 86p!) and (with the obvious exception) an unexciting range will make real ale a nine-day wonder here, just as it was at their 'Merchants' branch on Oldham Street. In Fallowfield and Stockport, they haven't even bothered trying - sorry Yates's, but these days your architects are showing more flair than your cellar staff! Elsewhere in the Centre, Rico's bar has closed, along with the taco-cum-pizza joint to which it was an adjunct.

Two Chesters pubs have gone back to handpumps - the Park Inn on Cotter St., Ardwick, just has bitter while the King William IV, Justin Close, Brunswick has mild as well. CAMRA locally is conducting a survey of the scope for further Chesters conversions, so if you'd like to see proper beer in your local Chesters keg pub, TELL THE LICENSEE - and if you get nowhere, tell us.

The Pack Horse in Openshaw emerged from its revamp less changed than had been expected. It now sells cask Greenalls mild as well as bitter, both on electric pumps equipped with the bizarre handpump-like handles that Greenalls are currently wasting money on; sadly though the 'handpump' marked 'Scrumpy Jack Cider' dispenses keg.

Finally, the Imperial, Birch St., West Gorton no longer sells Banks's Bitter but the Kings Head, Chancellor Lane, Ardwick now sells Theakstons Best Bitter on handpump.



CAMRA CALLING!

Not a lot of space this month, so I'll be brief.

If you get this OT before 6th August, you'll still have time to visit CAMRA's Great British Beer Festival in Leeds - do make the effort, with over 200 beers it's one not to miss.

On Monday 8th we have a social at the Mawson, Kincardine Rd, Chorlton-on-Medlock. As usual, all socials start at 9.00pm. The branch meeting is on 11th at the Royal Oak in Cheadle when we hope to have an interesting guest speaker.

There's another OT Awayday on Saturday 13th - York this time, catching the 9.46 train from Victoria, which connects at Stalybridge with the 9.30 from Stockport. We have a two-way social on 15th, starting at the Old Mill, Stockport Rd, Cheadle and moving on to be in the Cross Keys, Adswood Lane by 10.00.

Stagger is on 19th, this month Heaton Mersey, starting at 7.00pm at the Parrswood on Parrswood Rd, and meeting at the Griffin at 8.30. This is followed by a Sunday lunchtime social on 21st, at the Tatton Arms, Moss Nook when we will be presenting an award marking 10 years in the Good Beer Guide. There is a social on 22nd at the Queen of Hearts, Wilmslow Rd, Fallowfield and Pub of the month is on 25th at the Grove, Ashton New Rd, Clayton.

We'll be having a stall at the Castlefield Carnival over the Bank Holiday weekend - do come and meet us. We'll be recovering with a social at the Grafton, Chorlton-on-Medlock on Monday 29th and we celebrate the arrival of real ale with a social at the Sun & Castle, Hillgate, Stockport on September 5th. If you want more info phone Angela Walker on 0663 43769 (eves)



The Midway Hotel



BAR RESTAURANT

Under the personal supervision of the new tenants Ian and Gwen Parrott. You are invited to sample home style cooking and John Smiths fine beer

Pub lunches Monday to Saturday 12 noon-2 p.m.

Restaurant open Tuesday-Saturday 7 p.m.-10 p.m.

Sunday 12 noon-4 p.m.

Watch the board for Gwen's specials.

Functions catered for, weddings and birthdays are a speciality

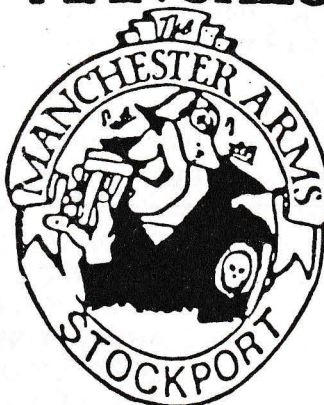
NEWBRIDGE LANE, STOCKPORT

061-480 2068

THE MANCHESTER ARMS

STOCKPORT

Tel 061 480 2852



CLASSIC JUKE BOX



BIKERS WELCOME



**ROBINSONS FINEST
ALES**



MARTIN & SANDY



Ruddles County has taken the place of the bland Websters Yorkshire Bitter at the Navigation on Lancashire Hill, Stockport *****

Castle Eden Ale has been withdrawn from the Chapel House, Heaton Chapel. The only remaining real ale is now Chesters Bitter. *****

Greenalls Pack Horse on Ashton New Road, Openshaw reopened on 11th July following a major refit. Much the same layout as before, the pub is much smarter on the lines of Greenalls current house style. Both bitter and, unusually for this area, mild, are available on handpump. *****

We reported last month that Fobs in Didsbury was due for a refurbishment and wondered whether real ale would be introduced. Mr R.S. Smith, the licensed house director of Bass North West, has now confirmed to us that cask Stones Bitter will be introduced. He also tells us that all outlets are reviewed for possible conversion to cask ale on refurbishment, a considerable amount having been introduced in their trading area. As he points out though, there has been little sign of this in Stockport & South Manchester. *****

John Smiths have now submitted their plans for the Railway in West Didsbury. The pub is to be extended into the adjacent shop and will be substantially altered although, as we are told by the Tenanted Sales Manager, the alterations will 'maintain all the present character which is inherent at the Railway'. The off sales area is to be knocked out to form a new public bar area, the lounge will become a catering kitchen. The snug will have a new entrance through the rear wall of the current public bar which will also be extended sideways to form a games room. There will be a new lounge formed out of the back room of the old shop. Although this sounds drastic, the plans do show that the brewery are aware of the character of the pub and, although different, the new Railway should still be a characterful local. The brewery

also tell us that cask beer will be installed, which news we think, will not please the current licensee who, when approached by CAMRA had no interest in selling the stuff - what chance it making a brief appearance and then being withdrawn due to 'lack of demand'? We'll keep you posted. *****

More real ale in clubs to report - this time we hear that the Keys Club on Whalley Road, Whalley Range (the old Conservative Club) sells hand-pumped Banks's and Holts bitter. *****

The long closed Circus in Ardwick formerly the Devonshire has been bought by Midsummer Leisure, the company that mounted a cheeky takeover bid for Boddingtons last year. It is to be renamed the Crazy Horse, we hear..... *****

A rare real ale loss to report in Stockport - the Carousel in South Reddish now serves only keg beer, the handpumps, complete still with pumpclip are now disused. The Carousel serves a wide area and we have asked the brewery to reconsider the position - we'll let you know what they say. *****

Due to pressure of space some articles, including our look at the fast-fading Host Group have been held over to the next issue. Copy date for the September issue: 22nd August, publication 6th Sep

Contributors to this edition:

Peter Edwardson, Jim Flynn, John Clarke, Ian Saunders, Adrian Budiko, Rhys Jones, Andy Cooper, Phil Levison, Angela Walker, John Hutchinson. *****



The Red Lion
WITHINGTON

LUNCH 7 DAYS A WEEK

ALSO MON.-FRI. 5.30-8.00

Handpulled Marstons
Pedigree and Bitter

Owd Rodger on draught
Newquay Steam Beers



OPENING TIMES IS PUBLISHED BY THE STOCKPORT & SOUTH MANCHESTER BRANCH OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE LTD. THE VIEWS EXPRESSED ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE CAMPAIGN EITHER LOCALLY OR NATIONALLY. ALL CORRESPONDENCE ETC. SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE EDITOR, JOHN CLARKE, 45 BULKELEY STREET, EDGELEY, STOCKPORT, SK3 9HD.