



# Opening Times

Dirt  
5P  
Cheap

December 1976

Tenth Edition

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## Beer Exhibition

The great day had finally arrived. After weeks of seemingly lurching from one crisis to the next the Exhibition was on. The final disappointment was to learn that due to an administrative error (not I hasten to add on our part) Batemans was not going to be available. Graham was fortunately able to arrange for some extra Timothy Taylors. However here was I at the Forum at 8.30 on the Friday morning ready to start setting up the Exhibition. Expecting to be inundated with helpers who had made rash promises to be there at that time I stumbled across one lone figure looking like an astronaut just returned from the moon but turning out to be Dave Heatley having just dismounted from his motor bike. So much for promises of an early start! Still by 9.30 there were enough present so that the hall started to take shape. Sam Smiths and Robinsons had already delivered. Lees, Wilsons, Greenalls and Hydes made early deliveries on Friday morning. Theakstons and Thwaites arrived via the Whitegates. Jennings arrived from Cockermouth via Jack Hopwood's garage and Dave Pollard turned up with two 36's instead of one — and a good job he did! Graham at this time was making a mad dash to Keighley to pick up the Taylors so by lunchtime the only brew short was Boddingtons which was apparently on a dray somewhere. (This did in fact arrive in the early afternoon). The organisation had gone so smoothly that we were able to take half an hour off and nip to the Jolly Butcher for a pint of Lees (imagine being surrounded at the Exhibition by 7,000 pints and having to go out for a drink!). By the end of the afternoon we had completed

the setting up of the hall and all the barrels were tapped (and some sampled) so we signed off and, surprise, surprise, it was just after 5.30 and as the Tatton Arms (Robinsons) just happened to be on the way home — well, what would you have done?

Saturday morning dawned, this was THE big day. There were plenty of helpers this time to sample the beer and make sure it had settled properly (there must be a moral here somewhere). Final organisational problems were sorted out and by 11 o' clock we were ready to open. This was the moment of truth — would we get sufficient customers? They came in steadily and by 1 o' clock we had some 350 people in the hall. This was it, we could breathe more easily. Some 450 people altogether came in the lunchtime session and this was very satisfactory. There seemed very little time between closing at 3.00 and re-opening at 5.30. After opening again there was a steady trickle of customers until about 7.30 when suddenly people started pouring in. From that moment on it was non stop — from worrying about attracting enough customers we were now worried about whether we had enough beer! Crisis followed crisis, a particular beer running short, glasses running out, tickets ran out but still the customers came in. All the problems were nevertheless overcome and we received very few complaints so we assume that everyone enjoyed themselves. I think that we were all pleased to get to bed that night feeling absolutely shattered but happy in the knowledge that the event was a success. We had over 800 people in over the Saturday evening session.

By comparison the Sunday lunchtime was fairly sedate with some 350 people but nevertheless it was very enjoyable. Closing time soon came and we were starting to pack up. Most of the beer had been sold but there was still a little left and those who had been helping were now able to relax a little and have a quiet drink for the first time all weekend. There seemed no point in

wasting any beer so containers of all shapes and sizes were produced, from bottles to 2 gallon jars, and people helped themselves to beer for home consumption. This was small reward, however, for all the effort which had been put in over the weekend. We were finally able to get away from the Forum at about 5.30 to find that two of the members had left their bikes outside and one had lost a lamp and pump, the other a front wheel. Fortunately I was able to squeeze them, their bikes and their 2 gallons of Boddingtons in my car and take them home. I think whoever pinched the wheel off Stan's bike probably did him a favour for how he was going to ride it home in his state I do not know.

There is no doubt that the Exhibition was a huge success. We had not necessarily set out to make a profit but, although not all the bills have yet been settled, it appears that a moderate profit will be made. The committee, however, is already unanimous in it's resolve that another Exhibition will be held next year and this will hopefully become an annual event. There is no doubt that mistakes were made this year but it is all experience which will stand us in good stead for the future.

I would like to finish by thanking everybody who helped or contributed in any way to the smooth running of the Exhibition. Special mention, however, must be made of Graham Lister for his organisational expertise and amateur draymanship, of Peter Simmonds and Peter Foy for looking after the cash (it remains to be seen what traumatic effects being locked up in a room together all weekend will have on them), of Martin Blamey for his work on the publicity and as amateur compere and of Jack Hopwood whose dipstick has never been more in use.

Alan Kellett  
Branch Chairman

WE WISH ALL OUR READERS A HAPPY CHRISTMAS

CAMRA is a democratic organisation run mainly on a voluntary basis, with a small paid staff. Its aims are to bring about an improvement in the choice and quality of real draught beer, and to fight for an improvement in the character of Britain's pubs.

# Features

## Mr Trafford's Diary



I suppose I was asking a lot, but at the time of writing no-one has phoned me about any real ale happenings in Trafford — it seems the only way to get any response is to knock Boddingtons or say that a pub in the area has real handpumped topless barmaids — and not say where! Still, I live in hope. Contact me at 9, Brogden Grove, Sale, (Tel: 973 6193) if you have any info.

### Triple X Multiplies

Further to last month's report on the Cresta Court Hotel, Altrincham, sales of the bottled Guinness Triple X

seem to be on the increase. You can even drink it in real Triple X Guinness glasses which take on a sort of golden glow after the first bottle. Mind you at 32p a bottle it ought to have some effect! I also received a letter from Mr Crick, the Administrative Sales Manager at the Runcorn office stating that the official launch of Triple X would take place on Tuesday November 30th from which time the number of outlets would be greatly increased.

### Keeping Track

Alterations at the Railway, Sale, are now under way and Fred (the landlord) is busy researching the pub's history. Bottle collectors (I suppose there is a long word for it ending in -ologists) will be interested in three funny shaped mineral bottles dug out of the foundations. They are now behind the bar and carry the engraving 'Wovenden of Sale — Chemists. Springfield Aerated Water Works' Fred told me a lot of other interesting things, but after several glasses of Old Tom it got a bit hazy (I also fell off me bike — but that's another story — I think I'll fit stabilisers before my next session). I can vaguely remember something about the original flags in one room turning out to be tombstones upside down and Fred saying he still had the original Kays Atlas sign which looks as if it was the

tailboard off a dray. This may well be displayed in a prominent place when the re-decoration is completed. He still hopes to install the old handpumps once he finds someone to restore them, the matter rests with Gaskell and Chambers at the moment. The coolers will also be removed when the cellar is brought up to scratch, which I think is good news since at the moment they chill the beer too much for my liking.

### Folk Tales from the Bridge

There's none so queer as Boddies drinkers.....Talk amongst some of the regulars in the Bridge, Sale, has been centred about the rumour that the Legh Arms, Sale Moor, has been selling Boddingtons (it is, of course, a Holts pub). After much rambling, cursing and sipping, they agreed that what they had at the Legh Arms was not quite Holts, nor was it Boddingtons, but a mixture of the two! Can anyone throw any light on this mystery? Mind you, the same regulars have also stated that Boddingtons do not brew a Mild and that it's going to be taken over by an Eastern European concern — so the sources are not exactly reliable! They even managed to have a chimney catch fire at the Bridge — which is centrally heated! By the way, congratulations to the Bridge on having their planning application approved. An extra 1,350

## National Executive meet at White Gates

The weekend of November 27/28th saw a meeting of the National Executive at the White Gates Inn, Hyde. They were made most welcome by the local branch ie the High Peak and North East Cheshire who met them in the George, Stockport on Friday night and arranged for a coach trip around Whalley Bridge and Chapel-en-le-Frith (where the non-existent Robinson's Dark Mild was sampled) on the Saturday evening.

I have since received a letter from Chris Bruton (chairman of CAMRA) wishing me to pass on his thanks to all the local branches for an excellent weekend on behalf of all the National Executive.

## POLLARDS

Pollard's new pub will be on Princess Street near Albert Square and his latest intention is to have 11 brews on (!!)

Whilst this must be welcomed, I trust that it will not turn into a purely high priced, high gravity beer pub (with no Mild) as one or two other real ale pubs in other towns have tended to be.

## GMGBG deletion

Broomwood Hotel  
Mainwood Road, Timperley,  
Boddingtons.  
is now a free flow electric and NOT  
handpumps as mentioned in the Greater  
Manchester Good Beer Guide.

## SAM'S & REAL SAM'S

My reliable source of Sam Smiths information has given us the latest bit of news:

- 1) The former Failsworth British Legion has re-opened as the Failsworth Arms selling cask conditioned bitter on handpumps and mild on electric meter pumps.
- 2) The Bulls Head (a former Whitbread pub) on Oldham Road, Failsworth/ Newton Heath has been bought by Sam Smiths and it is hoped that they will soon be selling cask conditioned beers there.

square feet of drinking area should improve the sardine tin conditions, unless they get another 1,350 customers!

#### Digging Around the Gardeners

Which brings me to another demolition area on Deansgate Lane, Timperley. In the middle of a sea of rubble stands the Gardeners Arms, a shining example of all that's best in British pubs, it's very friendly, very busy and it's Boddingtons. There has been a pub on the site since 1911 although it was rebuilt in 1931. The family tree on the wall shows that the present licensee (since 1968) John Leicester is the third generation landlord in what is very much a family pub. The alterations planned are certainly extensive and work will last for 12 months, but the plans have been closely supervised by John so that the pub will not lose its intimate atmosphere. Basically they involve the building of a new bottle store and garage on the outside of the existing building, new toilet facilities extended at the rear, a greatly increased drinking area creating a new snug where the toilets are now, a bigger cellar (directly under the bar area to ensure the shortest possible run from barrel to point of dispense) to take hogsheads, and an increase in the actual bar area. There will be some opening out of rooms to facilitate easier supervision from the bar, and the vault and games rooms will lose the dividing wall to create one large games room and instead of the two existing entrances there will be one main entrance from where you will turn left into the games room or right to the best side. John gave me many other details which space will not permit me to print, so if you want

to know more, get down there yourself. John assures me that the alterations are designed to give better service, better supervision and to ease congestion while retaining the friendly atmosphere (and waiter service). He also points out that the interior work will not start until after the Christmas period so that customers will not be celebrating amidst ladders, picks and shovels!

#### Brainstormer

J.W. Lees went down very well at the Beer Exhibition, particularly the Strong Ale 'Moonraker'. There was one lad I remember who started off on the Moonraker, liked it, and came back for quite a few more. Unfortunately the more he drank, the worse his memory became and for his last few halves he asked for 'Moonraver, Moonbrainer, Rainmooner and finally Brainstormer.' He then fell over.

Lees are not greatly represented in South Manchester, though we do have the Park on Sledmoor Road, Northern Moor, very close to Wythenshawe Park, which was built 12 years ago (the pub that is) and the Jolly Butcher on Butcher Lane which is not all that far from Brooklands roundabout in the Sharston direction. The Jolly Butcher was only opened on March 5th this year and boasts a rather unusual ceiling — more like a church than a pub — in the lounge bar. There is also a frightening sculpture of a drunken looking butcher in the entrance hall. You can see his eyes move after a few jars! There is a strong possibility that Brainmooner, Moonrainer, Stormraker — you know the one I mean — could be on in the near future, so it's well worth a visit and an enquiry. The only other Lees pub I know of nearby is the Spread Eagle

Hotel, Lymm which is in the Warrington Branch area. The Spread Eagle boasts free folk evenings on Sundays and 'Traditional draught bitter drawn on handpumps direct from the wood.'

#### Gone for a Burton

It has been sad to note the declining sales of Pedigree which has meant that it has been removed from the Marston's pubs in Altrincham (The Railway) and Timperley (The Hare and Hounds). It is therefore doubly pleasing to report that The Carter's Arms on Northenden Road, Sale Moor (near the Lindlow) is selling four barrels a week of Pedigree. Not only that, but OWD ROGER should have made its appearance there by the time you read this column. Manager Peter Bates took over the Carters in February, 1976 and keeps an excellent pint and a lively pub.

#### Special Fried Rice and Tsingtao

Our oriental correspondent reports that the Peking Chinese Restaurant on Washway Road Sale (near Urban Road) stocks Tsingtao Beer, 'a brew of the Alkaline Mineral Water of Laoshan. Barley and Hops of the Best Quality under scientific procedures'. Not real but worth a try — the food's good as well!

#### Merry Christmas

The Altrincham and District LVA have had their applications approved for extensions until 11.30pm. on Christmas Eve and 12.30am. on New Years Eve.

Cheers.

Mick Rottenbury

# WHITE GATES INN



The White Gates Inn opened in 1854 when Charles Hincliffe brewed his own beer in the back yard.

In 1872 there were 11 spittouns in the Vault, and the pub sold canary seed to the miners on their way to the pit up the road.

The White Gates Inn was run by five generations of the Oldham family until 1975.

Today the pub is owned and run by CAMRA. It has been renovated and

extended. It is a maze of little rooms and alleyways. It sells bitter from Boddingtons, Pollards and Theakstons best mild from Thwaites, Old Peculiar Strong Ale, and good food at working people's prices.

The White Gates Inn  
Manchester Road Hyde

# Guinness Triple X

Having persuaded a very reliable contact in the CAMRA hierarchy to analyse a bottle of xxx Guinness the following results were obtained:

- It is pasteurised NOT conditioned in the bottle (therefore not acceptable to CAMRA)
- It has a gravity of 1017
- The editor likes it a lot even though its not CAMRA approved.

Guinness have now officially launched the beer and it should be available in many more outlets. Even though not 'approved' its well worth trying.

Bin in any modern pubs recently with more than two rooms? I doubt it. I certainly can't think of any off hand. It's a sad fact of urban life nowadays that the trend is to a large, often enormous, pub built either to replace three or four older pubs which have been demolished or to service a whole new housing estate. If the pub has two rooms, as like as not there will be no

## economics

difference between them in price, and not much difference in decor or layout either, apart from perhaps a pub games table in an alcove. OK, so we can appreciate for the most part that economic factors dictate pub siting and size since high building costs and rising rates nowadays make for a single simply structured unit accommodating as many people as possible. And why, given technical advances in building materials and design, have a wall where you could have even more standing customers per square foot? But is everything in pub design really forced on brewers and

## waiting rooms

their architects nowadays? Pub architecture in the fifties and sixties seemed to strive first for a station waiting-room 'feel' in new pubs, with depressingly square and uniform lines of seating. They grew more extravagant and gradually went to the other extreme, particularly in London, with 'theme' pubs. Some of the worst excesses though, were seen more in the case of existing pubs being 'modernised', rather than completely new pubs, since well paid imaginations could run riot at less cost to brewers with an often temporary facelift. I am thinking particularly of some of the larger, usually Big Six, pubs which have been given successive separate identities.

## supervision

Much of this subject has of course by now been well explored and documented, without really offering the drinker much enlightenment. There is, however, at least one important and disturbing factor which has not received the publicity it deserves: how much say the police seem to have, tacitly, in the way a pub turns out, by virtue of their apparent insistence on what they call 'adequate supervision' which means

# How many rooms at the Inn?

whether the landlord can see everyone everywhere in the pub from the bar.

## boot in blue

Now this, as far as I know is not legally defined or laid down anywhere, unlike the other things they can quite rightly insist on, but it is no less effective when it comes to putting a heavy foot down on architect's plans at a licensing hearing. I don't know whether it was originally drug abuse, or violence, or under age drinking, or a combination of all three, but something has made it hard if not impossible to build separate rooms, let alone nooks and crannies, even supposing the architect

## chips & double top

wanted them. Whatever the reason, it is not uncommon nowadays, for instance, to find a dartboard in the corner of a room also serving as a restaurant, which must be equally disconcerting for people engaged in either activity when both are in full swing. Perhaps someone with a legal knowledge could clarify this point of

'supervision' — it seems almost sinister to me.

All in all nowadays what the drinker wants comes some way down the list when you consider how many other peoples' views, and how many other factors, the architect takes into consideration when drawing up plans, apart from the brewery and police

## public health

considerations already mentioned. Is there enough car park space? Is there adequate access for fire engines? Will the Public Health people be satisfied with all aspects of washing up and toilet facilities? (Even they seem to overstep their mark nowadays — with some widely inconsistent and purely local views on dispensing methods, and some curious and arbitrary ideas on cellar hygiene). How about local traders, local residents, public transport facilities?

## corner pubs

It all used to be so simple in the days of street corner pubs, pubs often indistinguishable from the rest of a row of terraced houses, pubs whose interiors were indeed personal to the point where it was just like sitting in someone else's house. In some ways those days have gone for ever. But they will not disappear completely if we retain and treasure what is left of them as our national heritage. And more to the point could there be a change in

## high rise

thinking on the whole question of pub design? After all, other aspects of our environment have undergone similar changes in attitude — high rise flats for example are now being more or less admitted as a mistake. Is it not too much to hope for that there will be a change in climate back towards the old pub where a separate room was a world of its own, and not just an 'area' delineated by fancy partitions; where standing in a busy passageway, like in the White Gates or Printers, and being jostled and exchanging greetings is half the fun of being in the place anyway, where gregariousness comes naturally and it is hard not to make friends with someone, especially if he is pushing past you every five minutes to or from the bar or toilet?

Dave K Hall

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# WILLIAM HICCUP

## COLUMN

NEIN HANDPUMPEN?

The second home of some of the committee members, that well known Robinsons house in Cheadle — the Printers, has recently undergone a conversion with hardly a murmur of opposition. The handpumps have been replaced by electric pumps. Now it is true that CAMRA accepts electric metered pumps just as readily as hand-pumps and that all the brewers insist that beer served via bar mounted or cellar mounted electric pumps is no different (and in theory why should there be any difference?) to handdrawn beer yet I would suspect that a substantial body of South Manchester CAMRA members prefer to have hand-pumped beer.

The use of electric pumps at the White Gates has not apparently been a great success, in fact I believe they are rarely used now as people prefer to be served at the bottom bar. Sam Smiths when they reconvert their houses back to cask conditioned beer nearly always put back handpumps, and yet Boddingtons, on their conversion jobs, always

By Brown Peter

replace the handpumps with electric, and I know for a fact that most of the branch's Boddington drinkers are firmly convinced that hand pulled Boddies is best (I don't agree, but then I think hand pulled Robbies is much better than metered Robbies).

I suppose what it all goes to show is that most people would, on the whole, rather have handpumps but will tolerate electric metered pumps as an alternative. Perhaps if breweries had to indicate what type of beer was being served through the electric pumps at the point of dispensation people would be much happier with them, or would they?

HOLTS WHERE ARE YOU?

I was firmly resolved not to mention the Beer Exhibition at Wythenshawe, which I will not in detail, except to say, why do Holts ignore the free trade, and

CAMRA? They alone of the Manchester brewers (save bad old Whitbread) were unrepresented. Its not because they are not wanted, its just because they refuse to have anything to do with the so-called free trade. Its such a pity, as they would have been most welcome.

STRONG ALE RULES OK

Now that we are back to the winter warmer season it occurs to me that Hydes and Boddingtons could do wonders for their sales by giving their respective strong ales a name.

One reason for Robinsons success I feel is due to calling their strong ale 'Old Tom'. If it were merely Robinson's Strong Ale, it would not be half as popular. If John Willie Lees can come up with such a superlative name as Moonraker (or as it was called at Wythenshawe — Brainacher) why cannot Hydes come up with an equally suitable name?

Anybody with any suggestions can either send them to Hydes and Boddingtons or to me, and I will send the best suggestions on to the two breweries.

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# WARRINGTON COLUMN

The recent Warrington and North Cheshire Branch visit to the large Bass Worthington Brewery at Burton-on-Trent aroused much interest which prompted me to write to the Brewery for the answers to the following questions:

(a) In what way is the Burton Union system of brewing unique to Bass Worthington? for it is understood that this fermentation method which was once utilised by several Burton Brewers is still used at Marstons. Mr Lovett, the P.R. Manager kindly replied: "I believe that one set is retained by Marstons producing yeast for their traditional beers, but obviously one single set cannot match the system which we still have, through which all our cask conditioned beers are actually fermented, and it is not simply used as a yeast production system."

(b) For how much longer will the system be operated? (in view of the fact that the system uses a large floor area

compared to say a modern Steinecker plant, and the daunting prospect of maintaining those 1500 oak casks and fittings.)

"The next question", replied Mr Lovett, "is like asking me how long is a piece of string. The Burton Union System produces our unique Burton Beers like draught Bass and Worthington White Shield, and while you keep drinking it, we will keep on producing it through this system."

So there you have it. The few Bass pubs in our Branch area don't even sell White Shield and it's our fault for not asking for it. My thanks to Mr Lovett who supplied a photograph of the Union Room. Contact me or the Editor if you wish to circulate it at your Branch's meeting.

As I write, all output has ceased at the Allied Brewery plant at Warrington due to a strike by the 260 drivers and

draymen and 450 production workers. One thousand pubs are affected but the 540 tenants of Tetley have been given an 'every man for himself' declaration and the go ahead to get beer supplies where they can. At first sight this seems a generous offer by the brewery and was proclaimed as such by many press headlines. It should be known that in practice, it is no more than a token gesture. The union's grip held firm at half a dozen breweries in the region that I contacted; Tetleys pubs being denied supplies.

The alternative for the unfortunate tenant is to persuade a landlord supplied by another brewery to over-order. In practice this too is easier said than done. He has to be a bosom pal to risk the wrath of his own draymen if the plot were discovered.

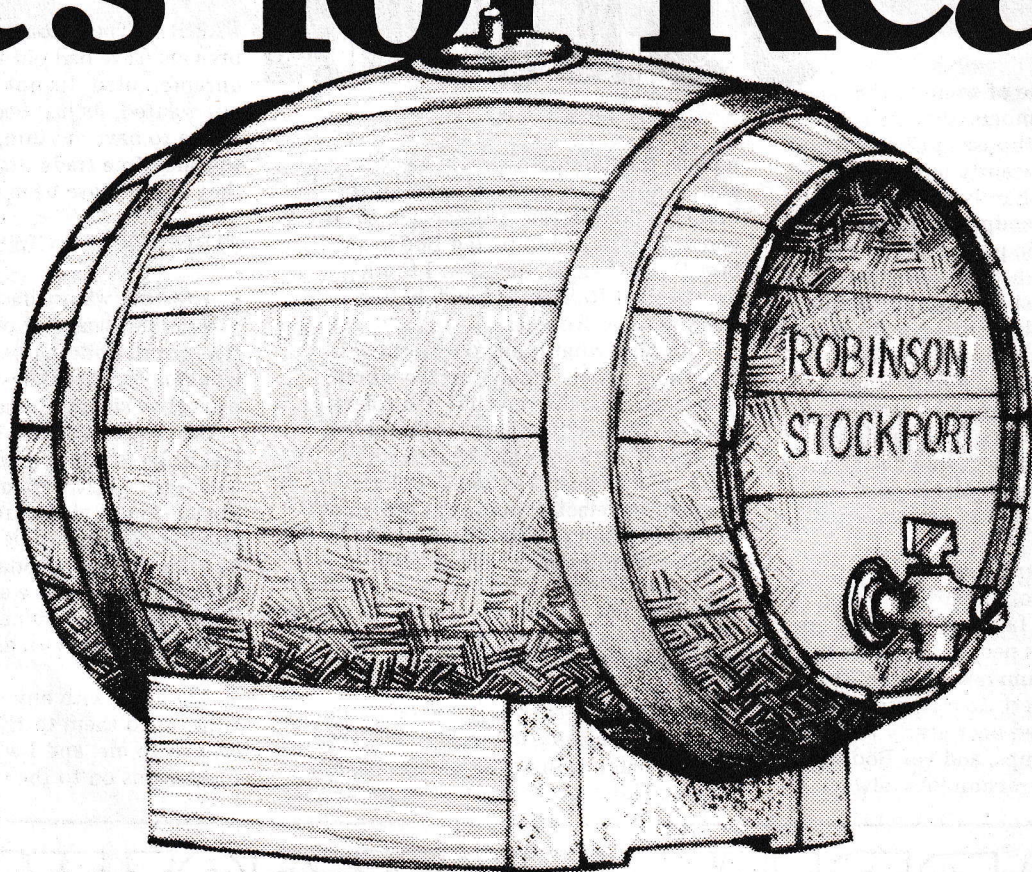
Let's hope that the dispute is settled soon for there can be nothing worse than a pub with no beer.

Gordon Smith

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# It's for Real



We, at Robinson's, think that what matters most about beer is its flavour. That's why we are still brewing beer the same way that we did a hundred years ago. Natural ingredients, the same time-honoured brewing ways, even on the same site – not many can say that!

And you can buy at least one, usually two and sometimes more of the traditional Ales listed here in any Robinson's pub within 100 miles of Stockport. Not many can make that sort of claim either.

Now you can have Real Ale at home for parties or just for your own enjoyment. Available in Firkins and Pins\*, complete with tap, stillage and detailed instructions. You can order

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Always available from Unicorn Wine,

**Old Tom Ale**  
**Best Bitter Ale**  
**Bitter Ale\***  
**Best Mild Ale**



Lower Hillgate, Stockport, (just by the Brewery) 061 480 6571. And its the cheapest way of buying beer. A little more trouble perhaps but we think you will agree with us that it is worth it.

There are deposits on the casks, stillages and taps, returnable in full when you bring them back. You can borrow glasses, paying only for those you break or fail to return providing you also make appropriate purchases of items to fill them.

We strongly recommend that you place your order as soon as possible for Christmas or New Year use.

**It's Robinson's . . . for Real.**

\*Bitter Ale not available in Pins.

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**When you buy any of these Robinson's Ales,  
you are buying Traditional Draught Beer  
-at its very best.**

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