



# Opening Times



February 1977

12th Edition

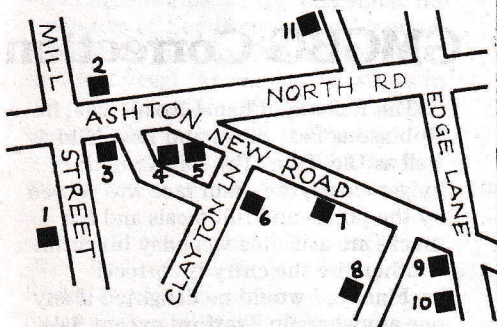
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## Beer Desert?

In the Greater Manchester GBC there is a large blank area which could be mistaken for a 'beer desert'. This large area of Bradford and Clayton does not have a single entry in contrast to thirteen entries for Gorton and Openshaw. So here is my guide to 'Real Ale in Bradford and Clayton':

1. Duke of Edinburgh Tetley M.B (E)
2. Bradford Arms Tetley M.B (H)
3. Bricklayers Arms Wilsons M.B(H)  
Smaller than Orange Tree  
Altrincham (Wilson's M.B(H)  
No spirits
4. Victoria Hotel Wilsons M.B(H)
5. Grove Inn Holts M.B (H)
6. Church Inn Bass B.M  
Charrington BrX(E)  
Avoid Keg Toby Light
7. Greens Arms Wilsons M.B (E)
8. Crabtree Wilsons M.B (H)  
On Ashton canal banks
9. Halfway House Holts M.B (E)  
Holts at its best under new  
landlord
10. Gardeners Arms Wilsons M.B (E)
11. Folkestone Boddingtons BM.B (E)

Alan Hurdle



Next Branch Meeting: Thursday March 10th at the Gateway, Didsbury, 8pm.

CAMRA AGM Blackpool, March. For further details contact Martin Blamey.

**Savour Seven**

**-NO, WE HAVEN'T MADE A SPELLING MISTAKE**

KEG BUSTER NEEDS

YOU See inside this wrapper for details. OPEN CAREFULLY what's brewing

**Campaign for Real Ale**

**WHAT'S NEW**

**express** DECEMBER No. 48  
Staff newspaper of Greater Manchester Transit

### SAVOUR SEVEN - THANK-YOU

Late last month I received a very pleasant communication from D. Ward Press and PR Officer of Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive comprising of a copy of the December 'Express', the Staff Newspaper of GMT. On P.2 of the newspaper was an article about CAMRA and its aims. They had, returned the compliment that we had paid to them (quoting from the newspaper and not flattering myself) by using the Savour Seven logo as a heading for one of the O.T. pub crawls. Anyway now its our turn to say thank-you to GMT PTE.

A.G.

P.S. Remember if you go by bus you can't be stopped for drunken driving.

## Significant difference

Dear Anna,

Your remarks in Opening Times about the price of the 1977 Good Beer Guide were a little disturbing.

The truth is that the price has increased from £1.40 to £1.60 (a 14.3 per cent rise) at the same time as its size has increased from 224 to 256 pages (again, 14.3 per cent up) and the number of pubs has risen from just over 4,000 to more than 4,700 (a 17.5 per cent increase). Inflation has also been running at a high level in the printing world, some paper costs having gone up by 50 per cent in the past year, but this burden has been absorbed by CAMRA.

The Good Beer Guide is a major source of revenue for the Campaign and helps more than anything else to keep the subscription down. It is important, therefore, that all members are encouraged to buy the guide - especially since they can get it at a discount price of £1.40 post free.

The new guide differs significantly from last years. Hundreds of pubs

have been removed and there are probably around 1,000 new ones. Surely this isn't a guide only for devotee collectors, as you put it, but an essential travelling companion for all real ale drinkers.

Michael Hardman

I was pleased to receive this letter from a member of the N.E. (well someone must read Opening Times) about a small article in last month's O.T. complaining about the high cost of the 1977 Beer Guide. It is nice to have the reasons given for the increased cost but would have been even nicer if the N.E. has bothered to let the branches know these reasons when it announced the cost of the new Beer Guide, thus preventing a lot of disgruntlement (is there such a word?) amongst members. So now you have the reasons (good ones too) go out and buy your Beer Guides!

P.S. Buy one for a friend or 2

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. 1

# Features

## Mr Trafford's Diary



### Financial Opening Times

Now that the silly season is over and we've thrown away our empty spirit and wine bottles and discovered there's enough empty beer bottles in the broom cupboard to buy a small brewery, it's worth looking around to see what the pound in our pocket will buy. So armed with a list of 31 pubs in my area covering all the 'big six' and eight independents I spent two weeks playing private detectives and scribbling down prices in dark corners!

### B B is best 4 U

No prizes for guessing the cheapest pint. With bitter at 23 or 24p ordinary mild from 19½ to 21p and best mild at 20 or 21p, Boddingtons lead the way. (NB. all prices quoted are best room prices and include the recent Government Christmas present of an extra penny a pint). Marstons come closest with bitter at 24p and mild at 22p (Pedigree 27p) in the Carters Arms, Northern Moor, but also showed the greatest variation with bitter at 27 and mild at 26p in the Hare and Hounds, Timperley. Holts are generally a safer bet, bitter 25 and mild 23p. Then comes a great gurgle of bitters on the 26p mark; Wilsons (25 in the Roebuck and Orange Tree, Altrincham); Lees; Samuel Smiths; Hydes; and John Smith's fizz. Robinsons varies between 26 and 27p for the best bitter, Greenalls is 27p as is tanked Whitbread Trophy,

fizz Worthington E and B.B. and cask conditioned Charringtons Brew 10. This leaves Tetleys at 29p (!) at two fizz pubs in Sale and S and N's Scotch bitter (real) 25p at Sale Wardens Association club bar.

### S.P.O.M.

'The Society for the Preservation of Mild' - a joking title but a serious course! Now is the time to open your eyes, mouth and wallet to the pleasures of mild drinking. It's certainly cheaper, probably better for you and usually a very satisfying drink. Besides Boddies, Marstons and Holts mentioned already, Robinsons at 22 to 24p is a good bet, as is Hydes, 23p. Sam Smiths, 25p, Less best mild at 25p and Charrington's 4 x dark mild at 26p are expensive, but still, needless to say, cheaper than their bitters. So give your stomach a birthday present and save money at the same time!

The survey also showed that draught Guinness varied from 29½ p a pint (Stamford Arms, Bowdon; Boddies) to 37p in two Whitbread pubs in Sale although the usual price was 34p. Most ordinary strength lagers were 32 or 33p a pint with Hydes Amboss lager and Lees Gold Medal the cheapest at 29p.

I have tried to record these prices faithfully, though it's possible some have increased since the time of writing. More news and views on bar prices welcome.

### The Ones the G.B.G. Missed

Since publication of The Greater Manchester Good Beer Guide, many good pubs have come to light as being worthy of inclusion and can at least receive some deserved publicity through The Opening Times. One such is the Old Roebuck (Wilson's) Victoria Street, Altrincham within sight of the Orange Tree which sees a steady procession of pub crawlers with guide clutched in the right hand rather like someone about to take the oath in a witness box. They then walk past the Roebuck to the Malt Shovels, next in the guide along the route. So next time, try the Old Roebuck. Manager Peter Cathcart is very keen and keeps an excellent pint in a friendly pub with four rooms. He

will welcome any CAMRA member and is always ready to chat to regulars and newcomers alike.

### Don't Bass us By

A few yards further down Victoria Street and opposite the Malt Shovels is the Victoria, the only real Bass Charringtons for miles (if there is another in Trafford, please let me know). This also is not in the guide but the pub has changed hands since the entries were submitted and the landlady, tenant Pat Muir, is trying to build up her custom in what is a very crowded area for real ale. Like Peter Cathcart, Pat will make you very welcome if you make yourself known as a CAMRA member to her. I personally really enjoy the 4x best dark mild. Brew ten bitter is also on draught and Pat is considering trying draught Bass which would indeed be a welcome addition to the choice in Altrincham. I hope to have more news before the next issue.

### News in Brief

A new Wilsons pub is to be built near the Malt Shovels to replace the Axe and Cleaver, pulled down to make way for the rebuilding of Altrincham town centre - I wonder what they did with the old handpumps? I trust the committee will sound out Wilsons policy on this one? Thanks Graham!

There is also a rumour of a big Boddies pub to be built on Atlantic Street, Broadheath - has anyone any definite proof of this?

## GMGBG Correction

The Railway, Chapel Road, Sale, has Robinsons Best Bitter and Best Mild as well as Old Tom. The folk Club no longer exists, the pram race was vetoed by the police and full meals and bar snacks are available weekday lunchtimes - otherwise the entry is correct!

Finally, I would be delighted if anyone anywhere in Trafford except Sale and Altrincham could take me round the Real Ale pubs in their area. Please telephone 969 7013, thanks.

Mick Rottenbury  
50, Poplar Grove,  
Sale, Cheshire.

## The Column that Jack built

### Ale and hearty keg beer

Sir, — As licensee of one of the diminishing number of public houses free from brewer, I feel that it is time someone presented the arguments in favour of the keg and pressurised beer, which has been the subject of such an onslaught of scornful denigration from the Campaign For Real Ale.

It is far more hygienic than the traditional draught beer, it is far less liable to contamination, no ullage or spillage can be poured back into it, and so the customer is guaranteed his pint of beer in first class condition. I myself enjoy the traditional ale, but there has only been a sudden change in temperature, and the beer is adversely affected as anyone knows who has been obliged to return his pint across the bar.

I and our customers have now acquired the taste for the modern chilled and filtered beer with very little effort, and consider that the advantages mentioned above have made that little effort worth while.

As to Nicholas Winterton's letter (January 25) regarding "bogus barrels and fake hand pumps," it seems to me a pity that he cannot find more serious matters to raise in the House of Commons than such trivialities which seem to characterise so much of the Campaign For Real Ale. —

Yours faithfully,  
W. C. Stevenson,  
Laughing Cavalier Inn,  
Market Street,  
Stalybridge, Cheshire.

The Laughing Cavalier is an apt name for this pub for it is now selling Boddingtons after all the fuss about the attributes of Keg Beer (see letter above taken from the Guardian around this time last year). Anyway good wishes to the proprietor for coming to his senses! Congratulations also to the Boddies Rep if he was instrumental in effecting this superb change of face.

Are the producers of 'The Archers' (BBC Radio 4 — 6.45, Monday to Friday) against dispensing beer by hand-pumps? The following conversation between Nora and Polly Perks was heard in The Bull at Ambridge last week:—  
Nora— "People are always making jokes about the beer pump handles, honestly, they are as old as your Sid's jokes!"  
(Letter to the producer of the Archers

on the way to try and verify the reason for the remark and also what type of beers they sell etc!)

It had to happen — it was inevitable, some people buy paintings to look at, others buy antiques etc. But myself, what have I aquired? I have obtained a complete set of 3 handpumps! Thanks to Stewart Revell who through his inquisitive mind found out what the original handpumps of the Bowling Green Inn at Droylsden were rotting away in the landlord's garage, I have become the proud new owner of these beautifully engineered objects. The pub has been completely modernised but due to the landlord's insistence, Marston's, contrary to their plans, have provided the pub with 2 double sets of brand new handpumps. (The Brewery had planned to install electric pumps). It seems that this area is fast becoming a handpump haven — remember the rescue of the handpumps at the Napoleon, Cornwall Street, last year?

Anyway, back to my latest toy. I have completely stripped the lot. I have made a new wooden cabinet for them and I am at present re-furbishing the beer engines themselves.

What am I going to do with these pumps? Beer Exhibitions? Loan them to pubs whilst we renovate their originals perhaps? Or just sit and look at them? Better still, why don't I have a pub? I can brew a reasonable beer, either mashing or malt extract!! But meanwhile I am just thinking of how many pints of Marstons have been pumped through these over the years!

Whitbread

They are on to a good thing this lot in using the name of their predecessors in the signs over a lot of their pubs. I am, of course, referring to the 'Chesters' signs you still see in situ outside a lot of the Whitbread Fizz Palaces. The trouble is that a vast number of their imbibers still think they are drinking Chesters Beer — doesn't say much for their tastes obviously. It really gets me going when I pass an ex-Chesters house — especially one with the name Chesters etc engraved on the windows (and this goes for Threlfalls too). To think that their names are actually involved with the dreaded plague. Still, better these windows and signs are still there rather than not at all — at least it is a reminder of the days gone by when good, wholesome beer was drunk within these pubs instead of the dead, sterile excuse for beer that is there now.. What a waste of good malt and hops (and water).

Jack Hopwood.

# WILLIAM HICCOP COLONNA

By Brown Peter

At the third time of asking our elusive Whitbread friend turned up last month and whilst I must praise his courage for daring to show himself, the amount of information he divulged was hardly worth the polite attention we gave him. To so many questions he either did not know the answer or would not supply it that it makes you wonder what on earth he bothered coming for. As for his contention that Whitbread were quite prepared to supply Real Ale if a demand could be shown to exist in 50 to 60 pubs, this I just do not believe and is, I would suggest, the talk of a good PR man doing his job.

By the way, who was the other guy who came along from Whitbreads — I don't remember him ever speaking?

The following suggestions have been received in response to my request for names for Hydes and Boddingtons Strong Ales. The Anvil image seems to be quite popular since Hydes as 'Blacksmiths Olde Ale' and 'Furnace Strong Ale' have been suggested. One person even suggested 'Old Moss Sider' (or was it 'Cider?') which might be geographically correct but leaves a lot to be desired. I think I prefer 'Old Smithy' on the whole if only because I like strong ales to be called 'Old' something or other, and you can hardly have 'Old Furnace.'

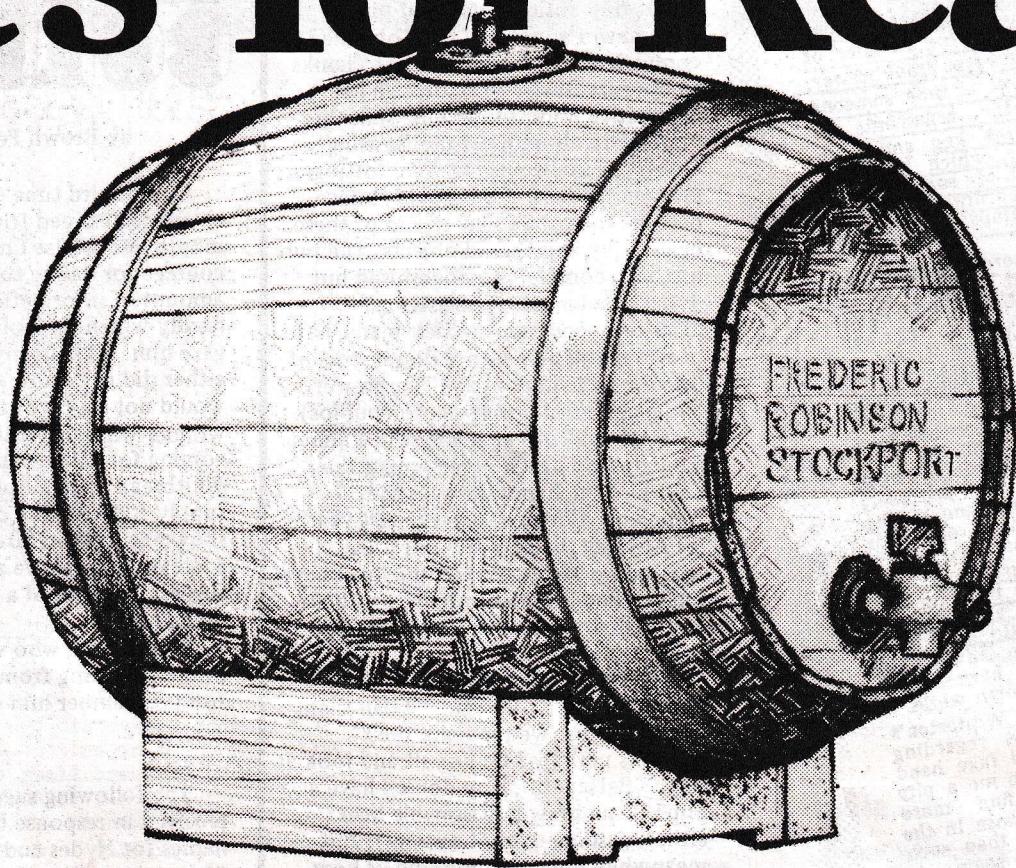
Boddington suggestions have been 'Boddibreaker' (!) 'Olde Boddies' (!!)' 'Strangeways Strong Ale' (although 'Olde Nick' might be more appropriate) and various other suggestions along H.M. Prison lines such as 'Porridge Ale'.

On a more serious note the one I vote for is 'Turnpike Strong Ale' submitted in view of the number of turnpike or toll roads in existence when the brewery was established in 1778. For that matter 'Old Stockport Borough Council' may be as good a name as any since their roads, having driven over them, give the same effect as 2 pints of 'Boddibreaker.'

Any more ideas?

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# It's for Real



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**Bitter Ale\***  
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It's Robinson's . . . for Real.

\*Bitter Ale not available in Pins.

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-at its very best.**

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