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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Summer issue of The Pursuit of Hoppiness.

This is my first issue as editor, and it is an amazing privilege to be recording the rise and rise of craft beer here in New Zealand. My first ever article on our craft brewing industry was written in 1993, and been an amazing journey ever since.

That first article was published in Wellington community paper City Voice. It was about a very small, very pioneering, and rather strange brewery in Porirua. Anchor Brewery produced four or five different beers, sold in 750 ml bottles. All the beers were brewed to about 8% alcohol, and some were literally a watered-down version of the full strength beer. The full strength ale was called Blotto Beer.

The brewer, Warwick Jameson, was a very inventive chap and sold his brewery to move to Switzerland to pursue his claimed cure for AIDS. I haven’t heard from him since.

Thirty years ago craft beer was an obscure and niche hobby and business. Craft beer fans were quite possibly outnumbered by pigeon-fanciers back then. It has been very satisfying to watch this pioneering little industry grow into the thriving and professional boutique industry we are enjoying today.

Stainless steel is still relatively cheap at present, and manufacturing costs have dropped. There are now distribution businesses dedicated to craft beer, and the choice of retail outlets, including bars, stores and supermarkets, is massive compared to what we had 30 years ago.

We are now in a Golden Age of craft beer in New Zealand. Long may it last.

Cheers!

Martin Craig
editor.soba@gmail.com
I’ve had the role of SOBA president for just two months, but it seems like far longer. In this time, among the many other beery things in my life, I have found time to wrap up a few projects I’ve been working on for SOBA.

With the help of Tony Law from Lion, SOBA now has a top-of-the-line tap bank. These taps will allow SOBA to become more involved in beer festivals and help out those in need of taps. An updated SOBA t-shirt design is also now available on the SOBA website, this striking design is by Sean Golding of Golding’s Free Dive. These high quality new t-shirts should help raise SOBA’s public profile.

Since the August AGM, the new committee has come together very well. New committee members have taken on roles left vacant by leaving committee members and are doing a great job. Maree has taken over the BRO/Regional Coordinator portfolio, Tom is keeping an eye on beer festivals, Nolen is keeping the committee up to date with the National Homebrew Competition, Tony is maintaining a dialogue with the big breweries, Shane is working with ex-committee member, Steph Coutts, to strengthen the foundations of SOBA, and I have kept the Pursuit of Hoppiness portfolio.

As mentioned, some very important foundational work is being done with the help of Steph Coutts. I believe this is essential work that that will keep SOBA operating well into the future, and members should be aware of what’s being done.

Also in development are job descriptions for various roles within SOBA, such as President, Treasurer, BRO, Regional Coordinator and Membership Officer. These job descriptions will ensure SOBA can continue to operate and work toward its mission even in the event of an entire committee change. Once made public they will also help members understand what is involved in the fulfilment of these roles.

We have had a lot of queries asking for more of the SOBA door stickers to go to the many great beer venues popping up around the country. The committee decided it would be best to have criteria to be met before a ‘SOBA supports’ sticker is put on a venue’s door. The criteria have been determined, and stickers will now be given to venues meeting these annually. Look out for the updated stickers in early 2014!

The upcoming holiday period will see the first annual SOBA awards announced - you should have received an email with a link to the voting form. These awards will recognise the people and places that are helping advance beer culture in each region. Please respond to the questionnaire so we can honour those deserving individuals.

Let’s make 2014 the biggest year for New Zealand beer yet!

Cheers,

David Wood,
President
BREW NEWS

GREAT PACIFIC BEER EXPO

Wellington October 27 2013

“The Pacific Beers Expo’s like cleaning your teeth — you just have to do it!” That’s how one GPBE veteran described this year’s event, held on a sunny Wellington Labour Weekend at the St James theatre on Courtenay Place.

Thirty seven different beers were on offer, ranging from old favourites (Southern Tier Creme Brulee, Ballast Point Victory at Sea) to previews from 8 Wired, Fork & Brewer, and Parrot Dog. The Pacific theme was confirmed with brewers from New Zealand, United States, Australia, Japan and some interesting offers from Singapore’s Jungle brewery.

Entry cost $50 and included $22.50 in tokens. Top marks for the glass swap – you could swap your glass at any time for a clean one, already topped up with water. The souvenir glasses were small stem glasses – definitely the classiest beer festival vessels I’ve seen in New Zealand.

This was the first and last time the GPBE was held at the St James. A booking clash caused a shift from the usual venue on Wellington’s waterfront. The GPBE will return to the traditional Boatshed and Rowers Centre on October 25 and 26 2014.

Pursuit of Hoppiness attended the GPBE courtesy of organiser Hashigo Zake. Cheers!

MOA FAILS TO TAKE OFF

Moa Group’s first AGM brought more disappointment for shareholders. It predicted a loss of up to $6 million for the year to March, more than doubling the predictions made in its prospectus. Moa also confirmed sales will be 30% less than predicted. The Group’s shares fell to 72c after the 4 November
announcement, well down from the $1.25 float. Moa was forced to change distributor soon after its launch, after sales failed to meet predictions. Group chief executive Geoff Ross told shareholders New Zealand sales will recover in the second half of the financial year, while Australian sales will grow.

**DRINK-DRIVE LIMIT DROPPED**

If you drink and drive you're a bloody idiot, but now bloody idiots are only allowed 50mg of alcohol/100 ml of blood, down from our previous 80mg limit. The law change was introduced by the Government in early November, bringing New Zealand into line with most overseas territories. Previous attempts to reduce our drink-drive tolerance were widely resisted by National. Bill English, the No.2 man in Government, opposed changing the 80mg limit in 2003, saying it would discriminate against rural residents who had “a social drink”. “Anyone who's had a beer and a spoonful of cough mixture is potentially a criminal”. Now they will face a $200 fine and 50 demerits, but no criminal charges. As this issue went to print, the new law was expected to be introduced in mid-2014.

**RENAISSANCE REBIRTH**

Renaissance’s Champion Brewery status is expected to build its profile and increase national and export sales. Head brewer Andy Deuchars told the Marlborough Express the New Zealand award complemented the Small International Champion Brewery prize at the Australian International Beer Awards in July. “I guess that makes us the Australasian small champion brewery, which is a pretty significant thing to say”, Andy said. Renaissance’s biggest export market is
Canada, and Renaissance was keen to increase its profile in Australia, Europe and the United States.

For full Brewers Guild Award winners list, see page 12.

**THE MCCASHIN’S STORY**

The McCashin’s Story – and the Kiwi brewery revolution it sparked is the authorised biography of Terry McCashin and his family brewery. The story stars Terry, Prime Minister Rob Muldoon, some fancy bottles, and men in suits who made an offer the McCashins didn’t refuse. Then the next generation starts craft brewing all over again. Includes recipes. The McCashin’s Story is written by John McCrystal and Simon Farrell-Green, published by Random House, and is available right now for $45.00. See our Autumn issue for a review.

**WORLD’S STRONGEST BEER**

The latest contender for strongest beer is 67.5% abv Snake Venom from Brewmeister in Scotland. The beer is made with two types of yeast, smoked peat malt, and is concentrated by freeze ‘distillation’. Snake Venom sells for £50 for a 275ml bottle.

**TARANAKI**

2013 has been a good year for craft beer in Taranaki. As in the rest of the country, enthusiasm and awareness has grown and our membership has increased. New members are always welcome too. Availability of craft beer has improved and more beer drinkers are enjoying the delights of our fine New Zealand hand-crafted brews. Taranaki SOBA has formalised the gatherings this year and organised a number of events.

Our SOBA Pizza and Beer Bus Trip to Mike’s Organic Brewery was a blast, attracting a diverse mix of people and some new faces. Labour weekend saw more action at Urenui: Mike’s annual Oktoberfest was sold out weeks ahead and was a huge success again. Rhythm and Hops, a new event the following day, also went well. Hopefully some of the punters will join SOBA and enjoy the benefits.

We have had a number of good meetings at The Hour Glass where AJ, Mark and their staff continue to support SOBA activities. We have also supported other bars that serve craft beer. A number of us travelled to Wellington for Beervana and we have plans to travel to other beer related events next year.

All our events are communicated through our Facebook page facebook.com/TaranakiSoba. Like it if you haven’t already.

**WANGANUI**

The Rutland Arms now has six taps serving craft beer and is the home of the SOBA get together at 7pm on the first Tuesday of every month.

**WELLINGTON**

In the past few months we have seen the opening of a couple more bars and a brewery here in Wellington. Laundry on Cuba at 240 Cuba Street is a café-based establishment with four craft beer taps and a small range of bottled craft beer. Bru on Cuba down the road at 191 Cuba Street has a generous range of 20 taps and a range of bottled craft beer. It will be offering SOBA members a discount.

Wellington has another new brewery in the form of Panhead Brewery in Upper Hutt. Head brewer at Panhead, Mike Neilson, is an ex-Tuatara brewer and has already put his skills to use in bringing some excellent beers into the market.

Aidan Caig
NELSON

The fifth iteration of the Nelson SOBA home brew competition was held on Saturday 14th September at the Moutere Inn. The competition, held every six months, has been getting more and more interest from new brewers in and around the Nelson region. Twenty home brewers from the Nelson region entered 40 outstanding brews for the peer-judged competition. The first taster, a lager, was poured at 10am with the darker beers, porters and stouts sampled in the afternoon.

The winners were: First, Gareth Kerr and Matt Hoddy, Red IPA; Second Paul Dunlop, American Golden Rye Ale; Third Krista and Guy of Badde Fairie Brewing, Saison.

Check out these stats:

- 20 brewers entered
- 35 guests attended
- 40 beer entries
- 2 reporters
- 32 litres of beer consumed
- 1 bus
- 320Kg of prizes
- 8 sponsors
- 600 marking sheets

We would like to thank our sponsors Cryer Malt, Gladfield Malt, New Zealand Hops, Dale's Brewing, The Moutere Inn, Deville and Bin Inn. Thanks to everyone who entered and came along to hang out and try some great beers! See you all in 6 months!

Monkey Wizard brewery is under new ownership and is renamed Hop Federation. The owner has come from Hallertau so we can look forward to some excellent beers over the next few months. The Rising Sun on Waimea Rd has re-opened following a fire and now has Harringtons beers as well as DB. Liquid Bar in Bridge Street has finally got out of its tie and
will be offering craft beers. Randall’s in Victory Square has closed. Bel-Aire is becoming well-established with 21 South Island beers, three wines and a cider, all on tap. Rhythm and Brown in New Street has two hand pumps and six taps serving beers from the South Island. - Peter Mayes

**CHRISTCHURCH**

Christchurch members have enjoyed a number of activities since the last PoH with the craft brewing scene expanding in the area.

In late August some 30 members visited Three Boys new brewing site in Woolston where owner Ralph Bungard generously provided samples of Best Bitter and Wiesenbock while giving an overview of the premises. In general, more space, the ability to brew and store 1800 litre batches in a range of vessels, and a larger chiller were the main features. The addition of bottling and labelling facilities has enhanced the whole operation which now has a smart street frontage leading to a retail area.

The evening finished with a short stroll to the Twisted Hop where Stephen and Clare Hardman were the hosts. The bar boasts 30 taps of which 12 are hand pumps. Seven taps are reserved for Twisted Hop beers. Members were able to try Hopmonger Jaffacino, 2 Ravens Fly by Night as well as old favourites Challenger, Hopback, and Goldind Bitter.

September saw two visits organised; the first to Harringtons Brewery, where Mark White gave a tour of the 20+ years old facility and provided tastings of some of the beers produced on-site. The brewery is due to move to new premises in Wigram in 2014, where it will have more room for the 50+ vessels, pasteuriser, bottling and labelling equipment, all of which is tightly packed into the current complex.

The second visit was to Cassels’ new brewery in Woolston which is part of Zak Cassels’ family hospitality and retail development, The Tannery. The brewery has only recently become operational and there are plans to progressively expand it over the next few years which is why the basic boiler/kettles/fermenters plant look a little lonely in the spacious warehouse. Once again members were treated to generous samples of popular Best Bitter.

Moving into October, the Twisted Hop hosted the launch of a new craft brewing name, Hop Baron, with its Poolside Pale Ale. A good number of SOBA members were in attendance and were able to taste the brew through tap and hand pump. Opinion was split about which was preferable but it was agreed to be a very palatable drop and we look forward to subsequent brews from James, Richmond and Richard.
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Summer season

Another year is almost at an end and the team at Emerson's will be brewing a lot over summer and getting cut and about, including some festivals where you'll be able to catch up with us and have a beer or two. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for events and new brews.

Something to wrap up the year...

Tell us in 100 words or less, your first Emerson's experience, or most fond experience of Emerson's.
Submit to our Facebook page or to brewer@emersons.co.nz
We'll pick a winner and before Christmas the lucky person will receive a special gift box.
We'll pull some vintage limited releases from the archive, some Deafinition Series beer and other treats. It will be a one off treasure trove!
Entries close on Friday 13 December.
We look forward to reading your anecdotes.
(The legal/PC conditions: To enter you must be 18 years of age or older. We may use your anecdote in future publicity).

Cheers from Richard and the team at Emerson's.

Photo: Issabella Harrex Photography
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### BREWERS GUILD OF NEW ZEALAND AWARDS 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEW ZEALAND CHAMPION BREWERY</td>
<td>Renaissance Brewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAMPION INTERNATIONAL BREWERY</td>
<td>Boston Beer Co</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TROPHIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EUROPEAN LAGER</td>
<td>Cassels &amp; Sons Dunkel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERNATIONAL LAGER</td>
<td>Townshend Oldhams Tap Riwaka Pilsner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRITISH ALE</td>
<td>Renaissance Tribute Barley Wine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER EUROPEAN STYLES</td>
<td>Emerson’s Dinner Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US ALE</td>
<td>Tuatara American Pale Ale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERNATIONAL ALE</td>
<td>Mac’s Shady Pale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOUT &amp; PORTER</td>
<td>Wigram Brewing The Czar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHEAT &amp; OTHER GRAIN</td>
<td>Renaissance Enlightenment Black the IPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLAVOURED &amp; AGED</td>
<td>Three Boys Coconut Milk Stout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW ZEALAND STYLES</td>
<td>Haagen Lager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPECIALTY STYLES</td>
<td>Garage Project Cockswain’s Courage Double-Barrelled Edition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIDER &amp; PERRY</td>
<td>Good George Drop Hop Cider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASK CONDITIONED</td>
<td>Townshend Old House ESB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACKAGING</td>
<td>Tuatara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FESTIVE BREW</td>
<td>Twisted Hop Cheery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MORTON COUTTS TROPHY FOR INNOVATION</td>
<td>Doug Banks and Jim Banks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEER WRITER OF THE YEAR</td>
<td>Michael Donaldson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Put Goldings on your bucket list.**
THE 2013 BREWERS GUILD AWARDS

The 2013 Brewers Guild Awards were held in the Wellington Town Hall on Thursday 8 August and it was a very successful evening for the New Zealand brewing industry. For starters, this year’s crop of medals provided quite the bountiful harvest, particularly for the craft brewing sector.

It couldn’t quite be called the night of the underdog as the big players took home a decent share of medals: Lion with 12 medals and one trophy (excluding Emerson’s haul) edged out Independent (10 medals and one trophy) for top position amongst the large breweries.

However the showings from the smaller breweries were surprisingly high and revealed a number of dark horses. The relatively young brewery Good George received six medals, largely in the cider category, and gained the trophy for its Drop Hop Cider.

Garage Project on the other hand showed its notable (and perpetual) dark-horsemanship by cleaning up in the off-beat style categories. It scored three medals in the Flavoured and Aged Category, the Trophy for Specialty/Experimental/Aged Styles and a gold in the Festive Brew Category for its Vietnamese Coffee Porter.

Another surprise came from Moutere-based Townshend Brewery which deservedly dominated the Cask Ale Styles, taking out nine medals and the trophy for its Old House ESB. However, in an unexpected twist, it also claimed the trophy for International Lager, with Oldham’s Tap Pilsner.

The non-brewing awards offered fewer surprises. Michael Donaldson took out the much deserved but hotly contested Beer Writer of the Year Award whilst Tuatara claimed the Packaging Award for the second year running.

One surprise did occur when a pair of hitherto unsung scientists from DB Breweries won the Morton Coutts Trophy for Innovation. It was revealed that brothers Jim and Doug Banks are responsible for a number of technological developments almost taken for granted these days in modern brewing.

Ultimate honours of the evening went to the much deserving Renaissance Brewing, who’s 6 medals (including 3 golds) and two trophies (for British Ale and Wheat and Other Grain) secured it the title of Champion Brewery. It was very pleasing to see a brewery long enjoyed by many of us garner some well-earned recognition.

Thanks must go to the organisers of the event for putting on a fantastic event and of course to the breweries for doing what they do best. Cheers all.

Dylan Jauslin is the manager at Wellington beer bar Goldings Free Dive and freelance beer punk. His further key-tappings can be found at thebottleneck.com
As a fan of stouts and porters, Black Out worked on several levels. Black Out Bar (phase 1) has the timber-top bar, stools, pie warmer and beer fridge of any respectable blokes’ space – it also has a three tier grandstand furnished with comfy recycled sofas and chairs focused on a big screen TV.

Dale was introduced to home brew as a teenager – trying (and swiftly discarding) the supermarket home brew kits. “Probably about five year ago I was introduced to all grain brewing – ever since then I just got into it a lot more seriously.

“I remember tasting my first all-grain beer and thinking ‘this tastes like beer you can buy from a shop’ as opposed to the kit beers which look like home brew, taste like home brew and have that home brew smell.”

In 2008 his project expanded into the rest of the garage with the creation of Black Out Brewery (batch size 50 stubbies).

“A lot of the equipment I have just made – and some is pretty basic. The mash tun is a fermenter bucket, inset with a nappy bucket with holes in the bottom.”

The Corona grinder was imported from the United States, while other pieces were picked up from Dunedin’s Malthouse, the Brewers Barn in Invercargill, and a few odds and ends from Mitre 10.

“I know a few people who do all grain brewing quite regularly and they seem to get some good results. I get the feeling it is growing in popularity over the last few years. It has lost some of the stigma that used to go with home brewing.
“Ten to 15 years ago, when someone offered you a home brew you really didn’t want to drink it, but things are different now – and even some of the kit stuff is okay.”

The internet proved a goldmine of full grain brewing information – with plenty of Youtube videos to illustrate the point. “You can learn so much that you would not have had access to previously.”

By the 2011 Rugby World Cup Dale was brewing up a storm. To stock his bar for the big event he’d planned for 15 brews of 11 styles.

“At one stage there I was brewing one at least every 10 days. You don’t just brew though, there’s a three week lag so you’d be brewing one night, bottling another, labelling, transferring to a fermenter or conditioning tank.”

Like many Kiwis, Dale had been a one-draught man before having his eyes opened and taste expanded while working in London.

“That was an opportunity to try different beers that you didn’t have in New Zealand – when I left New Zealand in the late 1990s beer brand loyalty was still quite a big thing.

“Living in Christchurch at the time you were either a Speights man or a Canterbury draught man. You couldn’t choose anything different or you would feel you were being disloyal. That ideal is dying away now and more and more people are looking to trying different flavoured beers.”

Four years ago he and partner Haley (a fan of wheat beers in general and Dale’s White Out in particular) started their family with son Cohen, and the hectic brew schedule slowed down accordingly.

When their second child Evie was born in 2012, Dale created his first non-rugby inspired brew – using White Out (cloudy
wheat beer) as a base for a Raspberry fruit beer he named for his daughter.

The couple had bought tickets to Dunedin Craft Beer and Food Festivals when Haley noted there was a home brew competition - and suggested Dale enter.

With only had two beers in the larder - White Out and Evie - Dale entered both, and ended up winning wheat and fruit categories, with Evie going one better and winning the overall trophy for best home brew.

"I was a little bit embarrassed about the whole thing - I didn't think I was entering to win anything."

His winning recipe was half wheat, half lager malt, fermented at 23 to 24 degrees to bring out the banana/clove flavours of the Belgium Wit 3944 yeast. Rakau organic and Hallertau hops were added to 18 IBU. With an original gravity of 1050, the beer was transferred into a glass Carboy when the gravity dropped to 1020. 1.8kg of raspberries were added. Three days later it was cold crashed, by then the berries were completely white and had fallen to the bottom, leaving the beer a beautiful pink. The beer was extracted from the top, kegged, carbonated and bottled and finally ready to drink.

The pink labelled beers (each with a different picture of baby Evie) have pride of place in the shelf of the Black Out brewery - right next to their own trophy.
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Malt adds many other qualities to beer other than feeding yeast to put those bubbles inside the glass. It provides colour, flavour and aroma but also adds to the mouth feel and body of the beer and is responsible for the lovely creamy head. Brewers all know that, but what about the people who they sell their beer to? The experience that a new craft beer drinker is looking for is no different from when they try other food or beverages. It’s not just about the product, it’s about what’s in it, where it’s from and why it tastes the way it does.

Malt isn’t that scary. Making malt is an easy natural process and you don’t have to be part of a secret society to make it. At least that’s what we have found at Gladfield. Just like any skill, the degree of success is dictated by the level of passion and energy that goes into it. Kiwis certainly have plenty of that.

Ten years ago Gladfield set out to produce the world’s best pure malt, and why not? For years the Europeans told us we could never grow grapes and match them at wine making. Just like a good wine the quality of the raw ingredients in beer making are very important. New Zealand’s unique climate and environment has proven itself with many world acclaimed wines coming from our shores. That same unique climate is also responsible for growing premium quality barley that we turn into malt at Gladfield. And guess what, now our brewers are starting to turn heads around the world with gold medal winning beers that reflect the true terroir of New Zealand.

But haven’t we been making malt in New Zealand long before Gladfield came along? Yes, but not for the true traditional style of beer making and only one style of malt at that. I don’t think anyone had the audacity to take the Europeans on at their own game before.

There are hundreds of different malt styles that can be crafted and used in countless combinations to create interesting and flavoursome beers. But what makes a good malt different from an average malt?
The answer is simple – start with good fat barley of the right variety that is clean and has 100% germination. Make sure the nitrogen level is in the right range for the style of malt. Add pure clean water and nothing else. Then look after it, remember barley grain is a living thing as it changes into malt through the germination process and remains living as it is kilned or roasted. It is a living thing right up until it gets boiled in the kettle by the brewer.

Ultimately, it is attention to detail that dictates the final quality and to me that is what should define a hand crafted beer. We just need to educate the new beer drinkers that there is more to beer than just hops and water. Maybe then they will realise how clever they will look compared to their wine drinking buddies who will surely be bitter with envy.

Written by Caleb DeFrees for Gladfield Malt.
In the last issue I explored the development of English style golden ales in the United Kingdom and in New Zealand. This issue I will look at how golden ales have developed in America. American Golden or Blond Ales have developed in a melting pot of influences with German and English traditions meeting locally grown hops resulting in an accessible golden lager-like beer that American brewpubs could offer a drinking population weaned on Budweiser, Miller and Coors.

**American Kolsch**

While some American brewers looked to Britain and emulated the English style of golden ale, albeit in a highly carbonated and often less characterful form, others looked to the German tradition and the golden Kolsch beers of Koln (Cologne). Kolsch appealed to American brewers with

**Kolsch Ale**

Kolsch is a golden top fermented beer that originates in the Rhineland city of Koln, or Cologne as the English render it. In the English-speaking world we consider Kolsch a golden ale due to the use of top warm fermenting yeast strains. However in Koln the style is cold conditioned or lagered and to the uninitiated the style is very lager like. The best examples do exhibit a subtle fruitiness from the warm fermentation. The style is dry, lightly tart, golden, with a flowery lightly spicy hop character and a dry but not aggressively bitter finish. The emphasis is on drinkability with subtle but complex flavours. In Koln Kolsch is served in ancient taverns by waiters called Kobes who continuously replace empty glasses with full ones until a coaster is placed over the empty vessel by the customer.
its German credibility, easy accessibility and high drinkability. While some American brewers have taken the German style and brewed examples that would fit perfectly in Cologne, more often they have produced beers that combine the American love of bigger bolder hop character and combined it with a crisp pale malt body. American interpretations also tend to not be lagered long, resulting in beers with big fruity fermentation character and assertive hop aroma, flavour and bitterness. Cream Ale developed in the late 19th century. Golden lager beer was gaining dominance over the American beer market and ale brewers developed a pale, clear beer brewed with their ale house yeast. The style was originally marketed as ‘Sparkling’ or ‘Brilliant’ beer but soon gained the nickname of Cream Ale, a term which eventually stuck. Cream ales combined a light fruitiness from their warm fermentation, with a light hop character. Their creamy texture comes from the addition of fresh wort to create a secondary fermentation for carbonation, a process known as krausening.

Prohibition caused many of the country’s ale breweries to either fail or be taken over by larger lager brewing operations. The result was a reduction in the number of cream ales available with many of the surviving brands passing to lager brewers. New Jersey’s Ballantines brewery was one of the few ale brewers to survive prohibition as an independent company. Ballantines brewed a Cream Ale until the 1960s. Lager brewers who acquired cream ales included Christian Schmidt, Narragansett, F&M Schaefer, Hudepohl, and Stegmaier. By the 1950s the style was a niche in steep decline. Then in 1960 the Genesee Brewing Co launched a cream ale which went on

**AMERICAN BREWPUBS**

America has a legally divided, three-tier distribution system for beer. After prohibition producers, distributors and retailers were formally divided in an attempt to separate those who serve alcohol from those who make it, and thereby benefit from over consumption. American brewing consolidated into large brewing corporations which exerted a significant influence on the distribution companies stifling competition and making business very difficult for the fledgling craft brewing industry by the 1990s. One way around this was to set up your brewery in a restaurant or bar and sell your beer directly on your premises, a situation that was exempt from the three-tier system. The first American brewpub was established in 1982 when Scottish-born Bert Grant converted the old Yakima Opera House into a brewery and pub in the heart of America’s hop growing region to the east of the Cascade Mountains. Yakima Brewing Co won a Gold Medal at the World Beer Cup with its Lazy Days English-style summer ale.
to become a cult product with a strong following. Today cream ales are produced by several large regional brewers, smaller craft brewers, and brewpubs. In a similar way to how they treat the Kolsch style, many brewpubs and craft brewers increase the hop character in their interpretations of the style.

AMERICAN BLONDS IN NEW ZEALAND

There are a handful of American-style blond beers produced in New Zealand. Hallertau brewery produces a zesty, fruity, hoppy Kolsch under the Luxe label. The beer has a fantastic fruity hop character that sits in fine balance with a light malt backbone and a crisp finish. Like American Kolsches, Luxe would be unrecognisable to the drinkers of Cologne, however its vibrant New Zealand hop aromas and flavours make it unmistakably Kiwi.

Wellington’s Parrotdog Brewing Co produce a blond beer under the Haaxenfeather label which also passes a good resemblance for some of the American Kolsch beers. A good whack of tropical New Zealand hop character fills the nose before a lean crisp dry palate and a firmly bitter finish.

Graeme Mahy from Hamilton’s 666 Brewing Co has produced a modern hoppy interpretation of the Cream Ale style. Angels on a Pin combined a zesty New Zealand hop aroma followed by a full bodied pale malt character and a balanced crisp finish.

A BREWPUB CLASSIC

American blond beers have become brewpub classics providing American brewers with an accessible product that can be produced quickly in small breweries. As New Zealand gains more brewpubs we are sure to see more beers that combine the characteristics of an American Kolsch or Cream Ale with the unique character of New Zealand hops.

In the autumn issue will look at Belgian Blond Ale styles. Cheers!
You wouldn’t import croissants from France

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Once, winning awards for their beer wasn’t important. Now, “if we get a bronze or silver, it’s a bad result.”

In one throwaway remark, and with no hint of arrogance, Paul Croucher sums up the transformation that has taken Croucher Brewing from a garage in Rotorua to international beer awards success.

The co-owner of Rotorua’s Croucher Brewing is showing me around their Rotorua brewery, and this man of science – Paul worked at Auckland University as a pharmacy lecturer - takes on an almost evangelical zeal when talking about transforming water, grain, yeast and hops into liquid gold.

“It was never really interested in getting drunk. I was never a big drinker, but I enjoy the alchemy of brewing and wine making.”

It’s obvious Paul enjoys making beer, just as its obvious plenty of people are enjoying the end result.

But you don’t have to take my word for it. Judges at the New Zealand Beer Cup, Capital Times Beer Awards, Australian International Beer Awards and the BrewNZ/Brewers Guild Awards have all seen fit to award Croucher’s Pilsner, Pale Ale and Patriot American Black Ale awards by the truck load.

They have been so successful the next item on the Croucher Brewing agenda is to find new premises, as their current location simply isn’t big enough to house the new brewery equipment that will enable it to triple production to 300,000 litres a year.

Despite the talk of awards and triple-digit growth, Paul insists it isn’t a “slick”
operation, and he’s happy to talk about some of the bumps encountered along the road - including the commercial brewing debut at the 2006 Blues, Brews and BBQ’s festival.

“I started to pour the beer and nothing came out but froth. I was beside myself. Then this guy came over and wanted a beer, and everyone said ‘Paul, you’ve got to serve the first beer’. I was so stressed, but just as he came along the beer cooled down enough and we poured the perfect beer, and for the rest of the day it was nuts.”

This success was crucial in another way too, he explains.

“It was the first inkling that we could convert a hobby into a business. Every five seconds we were taking five dollars. We thought there’s money to be made here.”

He says their initial commercial brew was 600 litres, “and at the time, that felt like a lot!”

Transforming a hobby into a business involves a pretty steep learning curve, he admits.

“When you’re small you can make do with something out of your kitchen, you can modify a food processor. When you start cranking with a ton of grain, everything’s very different.”

With talk moving onto the wider growth in popularity of craft beer, Paul says they found a willing market of receptive beer drinkers in Rotorua. He says the supermarkets have also been happy to stock their beers.

However, he said the town’s bars and restaurants have been slower coming to the party. The solution? If you can’t join ‘em, beat ‘em.

In 2011 they opened Brew bar on Tutanekai Street which, with its range of Croucher and guest beers on tap, has become a craft beer Mecca for Rotorua.
Talking about the wider beer market in New Zealand, dominated by multi-nationals Lion Nathan and DB - Paul offers an interesting take on the competition.

“Beer traditionally is a price-sensitive market, while craft beer is almost a new market altogether.”

Given his marketing background it’s no surprise that Croucher co-owner Nigel Gregory picks this moment to join the conversation.

“From the outside it looks like we’re competing, but craft beer, it’s such a different market from mainstream beer,” Nigel says.

“Mainstream beer is trying to get someone to be a loyal Lion Red drinker, a loyal Tui drinker, and that person only drinks that beer. But craft beer people by and large want variety.”

Paul says craft beer drinkers are passionate and hard to please. However, this passionate customer base also means Croucher doesn’t need traditional advertising - something crucial to the mainstream players.

“Craft beer drinkers tend to be the gadget fiddlers, the IT geeks, most of them have a smartphone. In terms of advertising the more effective ways are actually free,” he says.

“Facebook, a whole lot of apps like RateBeer, Beer Advocate, Untapped, Twitter. We might get someone in Perth tweeting that they’ve had a Croucher Galaxy and someone in Canada saying I’ve seen that on the shelf here. You couldn’t do that with conventional media.”

Since the commercial launch in 2006, both men have front row seats for the transformation of the craft beer market, and while unable to work out the chicken—
and-egg conundrum of whether a maturing craft beer market has forged a new breed of drinker, or whether this new breed of drinker has prompted a new professionalism among craft brewers, they can agree the craft beer market is a different beast now.

“The whole industry has matured to the extent that the new guys coming in have to hit the ground running and at a much higher standard than a lot of us when we started,” Nigel says.

“And it’s important that they do as that standard has been set. The last thing we need is for a craft beer drinker to have a bad experience if they have something that tastes like their mate’s homebrew!”

The greater sophistication and market share of the craft market hasn’t gone unnoticed by the big players either.

Japanese giant Kirin, which owns the Asahi brand and Lion, home of Steinlager and Speights, paid $8 million for South Island craft brewers Emerson’s last year, while Moa Group felt emboldened enough to list on the New Zealand stock market in an IPO that raised $16 million.

So could Croucher end up on the block if a big player and a big cheque came along?

“At the end of the day everything is for sale,” Paul says. “But we’ve invested a lot of blood, sweat and tears. We’ve just started paying ourselves, and while its far from lucrative at the moment, we’ve settled on a plan we think will give us serious triple-digit growth soon. Don’t get me wrong, we want to make money out of this business, but our own empire, not just by flogging it off to Asahi!”

Benn Bathgate is a Rotorua-based journalist working for the Rotorua Review, where a shorter version of this article appeared. Cheers Rotorua Review!
I reckon the hop is one of life’s miracles.

See, if the terms strig, bract, and bracteole don’t get you excited, then I bet that a pint of good hoppy beer does. Well, of course it does, you’re reading this article! And it does for me too, and here is my story why.

In 2010, I was lucky enough to have a trip to the Yokohama Craft Beer festival, while I worked for Tuatara. It was Dominic Kelly of Hashigo Zake fame who introduced me to Ballast Point and Green Flash IPAs at the festival. In the twinkling of a hoppy eye, I was transported back 30 years, to when I worked in the hop fields of Kent in the United Kingdom.

I was in London in 1983, trying to scrape together some pounds to keep travelling. You could go to New Zealand House on a Wednesday afternoon, see the latest job ads and get straight into a pub or cleaning job.
This was early summer and most Kiwis were already planning to take off round Europe for the summer, so there plenty of pub jobs.

However, one job took my eye; driving a tractor in the hopfields in Goudhurst, Kent. I immediately rang the number and was asked to be out there the following day. I made it out there, and for the next 10 weeks I lived, breathed, and was totally immersed in picking those damn hoppy thingies.

In the early 1980s hop picking was a seasonal, summer activity. East Enders would spend their holidays picking hops in Kent. It was considered a holiday - a working holiday - and hundreds of families did this, as they had done for generations. In fact, on my particular farm, there were East End Londoners who had been coming out to this farm since they were kids.

When I was there, it was just before mechanisation took over, and there were, literally, several generations of East End Londoners, working in the fields. We were the Kiwi add-ins to make up the numbers.

Hops grow vertically, on bines - a bit like grapes, only they grow up wires to the top of the trellis, about 4 metres up - much higher than a person can reach. So, how do you get them down? Well, back then, they were cut down by hand. A small tractor would travel between the bines, towing a trailer with a 3 metre “pod”. The person cutting would climb up the small ladder into the pod, clutching a long-handed scythe. Travelling very slowly, the tractor would go up and down the lines of hop bines, while the cutter would reach up and cut the bine head from the wire. The bine would fall down into the trailer, and two people standing on the trailer either side of a high “U” shaped appendage, would place the hop stem into the “U”. Two others would follow the trailer, and pick up the bits and pieces of bines - with hops - and flick them back on the trailer.

Tractor driving was a privileged position - you had to be an East End Londoner to be able to drive the tractor! Same with the “cutters”, although I was allowed to cut once I had proved I was worthy.

We started work at seven in the morning, and worked to six at night, five and a half days per week, with an hour for lunch. We lived in small huts in a clearing on the hop farm itself - a bit like shearing quarters. Grubby, people snored and didn’t clean up the sink when they finished. We were working 55 hours a week, and time off was precious - we went to the pub.

That time on the hop fields in Kent was pretty good. We would go to Tunbridge Wells on Saturday afternoon to buy food for the coming week then go off to the pub. We would crash out on Sundays, and back into it on Mondays - until all the hops were picked.

Three years later, I went back to spend another summer - must have been 1986 - and it had all changed. Mechanisation! After decades of using a tractor, towing a trailer, using a “cutter”, and around eight people employed with each tractor-trailer unit, there was now a mechanised cutter and only 3 people. No cutter to position himself in the tower, brace himself (or herself - though
usually a him) as he cut away the bines from the wires above.

Damned mechanisation - I was lucky to have a job that year! Sadly, the generations-old traditions of East End Londoners working in the hop fields had pretty much come to an end. Although tractors were more reliable, and went for longer, they still needed tractor drivers; still needed workers on the back of the trailers; still needed people stripping off the bines before they reached the oast house where they were dried. However, the wage costs must have been dramatically reduced as the of machinery replaced them.

So, that's why a decent IPA sends me off into raptures.

Long live the hop!

David Bernard
Summer is upon us, so I will take you to the region known for its long, hot summers, Marlborough and Nelson.

First, we dwell a bit on Marlborough. One brewery doing well here is Renaissance. In its former life the brewery was known as Dodsons, and before that, the Marlborough Brewing Company.

The latter produced a remarkable Steam Beer, which had a unique taste. This type of beer is keenly sought after around the world, as very few breweries produce it.

Another diversification into beer occurred some years back at the Alan Scott Vineyard, where Alan’s son Josh started brewing within his parent’s vineyard, and thus Moa was born.

Back in time now, up to Picton, where there were, until recently, three big hotels gracing the waterfront: the Terminus, the Federal, and Oxley’s. Only Oxley’s remains now, albeit an original façade with a modern apartment complex behind it.

Oxley’s Hotel dates back to 1873 when it was built as the Pier Hotel. Francis Allwood Oxley married Mary Jane Divens, daughter of Pier Hotel owner Allan Divens, then the Oxleys took over the hotel in 1887. Francis Oxley did extensive alterations, added the present day façade, and when completed in 1902 the hotel boasted 29 rooms, 16 of them bedrooms. The name “Oxley’s” was added to the façade in 1909.

Oxley’s Hotel was the first building in Picton to have its own electric power plant, operated by water driving an 18-inch Pelton wheel.

We leave Marlborough now, and pass another successful brewer, Roger Pink, adjacent to a vineyard.

On our way to Nelson, the old Okaramio Hotel is seen, looking worse for wear, though it is nice and cosy inside. On our way, the Trout at Canvastown is passed. Soon, Havelock is reached. There are two pubs here, there were three, but the Clansman closed as a pub some time ago, for reasons not known.

Crossing Pelorus Bridge, we ascend the Rai Saddle, then come down into Rai Valley, where a pub and township lie. Next is the formidable Whangamoia Range, then Nelson is reached.

For those of you with a bit of adventure, take the French Pass turnoff, just out of Rai. Head toward Okiwi Bay, and after a long and windy and narrow road, this is a welcome stop.

Here is the Hook and Sinker Bar. It is well advertised, and signposted, however finding it is another adventure. The pub is at the top...
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of a very steep hill, the climb to the pub will certainly whet your thirst.

At last, Nelson is reached. The town has many craft breweries and craft bars, and this is not new for Nelson. Half a century ago there was the Harleys Brewery. Harleys had a reputation for producing their own brand of draught ale which didn’t go down too well with its punters. In fact, one elderly Nelson native told me “it was downright revolting!”. Nevertheless many hotels stocked it, both in bottle and draught, and today Bays Brewery has Harley’s as one of its own brews. Bays must have found the authentic Harley’s recipe, as when I gave my friend a glass of the ‘new’ Harley’s to try, he remarked “nothing has changed, it’s still bloody awful!”

Southeast of the Bays Brewery, at Stoke, lies Mac’s Real Ales. This building has had an interesting history. It began as the Rochdale Cider Factory, producing its own cider which was sold all over New Zealand. At one stage, this was the only cider available in the country. However, as more varieties of cider began to be imported, Rochdale began to see a substantial drop in sales to the extent it became unviable to continue operating.

Enter Terry McCashin, who had a vineyard and a small brewing operation at his property in Brightwater, further south. Terry saw an opportunity to expand with his brewing, and when the Rochdale building went on the market, he bought the building and the business, moved cider making to one side, and installed his brewing equipment.

Terry was keen to retain the Rochdale name, is it had become synonymous with Nelson, so combined the names as RocMac, owner operators of Rochdale Cider Factory and McCashin’s Malt & Brew House.

Terry’s business flourished, and his beers began appearing in bars and stores throughout Nelson. Terry sold the business to Lion Nathan, who then set up Macs Alehouses all over New Zealand.

Prior to all these changes, Terry and his brewers did a number of limited release brews from the Rochdale plant. How many of you can remember Blonde Mac (a wonderful wheat beer, with orange & coriander), AroMac (a smooth pilsner), Ambermac, and Copperhead? Blonde Mac was eventually rebranded and became the present day Great White.

Terry’s family did not want to see the Macs name get swallowed up with the big breweries, so they rebranded themselves in the form of “Stoke Real Ales, brewed by the McCashin family”, and these are enjoying popularity today.
Inn is the third hotel, the first was built in 1876 and was a two storey building, but fire consumed this only after a few years, then a second two storey building was established. This survived, with modifications and additions, till the late 1990s.

There are a number of other brewers around Nelson creating their own unique styles, among them Dick Tout's Lighthouse Brewery (which began in a small retail shop then moved to bigger premises), Sprig & Fern, which has created a chain of craft bars throughout Nelson and has now entered the North Island. Founders Brewery has been in business as long as the Museum has been open, and Townshends in Upper Moutere.

South of Nelson beyond Richmond lies the town of Brightwater. The current Brightwater Inn is the third hotel, the first was built in 1876 and was a two storey building, but fire consumed this only after a few years, then a second two storey building was established. This survived, with modifications and additions, till the late 1990s.

As the hotel was right on the main highway, and road widening was needed, it was decided to demolish the building. From the late 1990's, Richmond was expanding at a huge rate, and patronage at the Brightwater pub had dropped off.
Once roadworks were complete, the Brightwater community felt building a pub there was justified, so the third Brightwater Hotel was built, as close to the original site as possible. It now provides quality accommodation and a large restaurant.

South of Brightwater is Wakefield, where one of the oldest hotels in New Zealand still operates on its original site and with the same name.

The Wakefield Hotel has been open continuously since its opening in 1887. The first GP for Wakefield, Dr Pearless, had his consulting rooms upstairs in the hotel. Later GPs Doctors Johnson and Grimes also used the hotel as their consulting rooms.

Charles Harley began his career in the beer trade by buying the hotel in the late 1880s before he set up his brewery in Nelson. He did not have a good start to his career though. In 1892 he was taken to task by the Licensing Board about the bad conditions at the hotel. He had to provide more comfortable accommodation, a 6-stall stable, re-gravel around the hotel, and generally clean up the place. (This probably reflected in the less than desirable quality beer he was to produce later!)

Our autumn history tour will feature more pubs and breweries of old and new Nelson, and travel west toward Golden Bay.

Cheers, Chris
BOOK REVIEW

Craft Beer World – a guide to over 350 of the finest beers known to man by Mark Dredge

Review by Ted Verrity

Mark Dredge is quite a young guy (by which I mean under 40), who has won awards from the British Guild of Beer Writers in 2009, 2010 and 2011. His work has featured in leading publications across the world and he is an international beer judge.

The book is divided into two parts. The first is about understanding beer and consists of 14 sections on such subjects as “The Brewing Process”, “World of Hops”, “Understanding Beer: A Helpful Glossary” and “Beer and Food”.

The second part is “The World’s Greatest Beers” which has 62 sections starting with Pilsner Urquell and ending with Extreme Beer (including BrewDog Tactical Nuclear Penguin). Each section has at least four beers with a picture of the bottle or label and a description of each beer.

Sixteen New Zealand brews are included: Epic Armageddon IPA; Tuatara American Pale Ale; 8 Wired Tall Poppy; Hallertau Porter Noir Pinot Noir; Yeastie Boys Pot Kettle Black; 8 Wired Rewired Brown Ale; Three Boys Oyster Stout; Invercargill Pitch Black; Tuatara Helles; Epic Larger; Yeastie Boys Digital IPA; 8 Wired Hop Wired IPA; Emerson’s Pilsner; Renaissance Stonecutter Scotch Ale; Yeastie Boys Rex Attitude; and Good George White Ale.

There is also a reference to Phil Cook’s Beer Diary website and an acknowledgment to Kelly Ryan of Good George Brewing for supplying good New Zealand beers.
It would be easy for America to dominate this book because as I understand it they have the most breweries in the world, but keeping them to about 80 is about right. There are also 32 beers from England, 16 from Italy, ten from Japan, six from Denmark and three from Norway.

There are two breweries in Prague that particularly interest me, one I have visited. It is a brewpub called U Flek where they have been brewing on site for more than 500 years. They only make one beer, Tmavý Ležák, a dark lager. I can remember sitting there nearly 20 years ago in a drinking hall imagining a scene from a Czech film I had seen 20 years earlier about the assassination of Reinhardt Heydrich the German Governor of Prague during World War II. There was a scene of German soldiers sitting in a drinking hall which looked to be the same one. The centre of Prague (which is a World Heritage site) is dominated by the Vltava River with the castle on top of a steep hill. Towards the top where the hill flattens out is the Strahov Monastery where they make a delicious stout, a wheat beer, and an IPA. The author of the book did not make it to the castle. He stayed in the monastery contemplating the monastic life and drinking the IPA. I would have done the same.

Finally the book is for his wife Lauren who doesn’t like beer - sounds familiar. I would definitely recommend adding this book to your beer library.

Craft Beer World – a guide to over 350 of the finest beers known to man by Mark Dredge

Published by Dog & Bone, November 2013, ISBN 9780957140998, RRP NZ$49.99.
No hay que buscarle mangas al chaleco
5.0% Alc/vol.
- tres amigos
-
BEER + FOOD = GOOD TIMES

It's important to remember that beer is food. It is simply an ancient grain preservation technique. Barley was first cultivated by humans more than five thousand years ago in Mesopotamia. It was difficult to make into bread but when allowed to sprout it was relatively easy to make into beer. Over the course of agricultural human history beer has evolved into an astonishing array of styles representing nearly every country.

Today with the resurgence of small independent breweries beer is once again claiming its rightful place at our dinner tables. Because of its wonderful variety and complexity of flavours you can find a beer to match everything from a spicy Indian curry to a rich chocolate soufflé. There are no rules for a correct pairing however there are a few simple guidelines that can help you to create heaps of tasty combinations.

I usually start with the beer. I look at it and ask what is its style and flavour impact? When planning a dinner I select the progression of beer and food from light and delicate through to gradually richer, bolder flavours. It is also important to serve your beer at an appropriate temperature. To put it simply the lighter the beer the colder I serve it, right up to slightly below room temperature for darker malty styles.

You may also want to consider the amount of carbonation which helps deliver aromas, and most importantly cleanses and refreshes the palate of the richer mouth coating foods such as cheese, chocolate, or heavy stews.

Then I think about bitterness from hops or dark roasted grain, and any sweetness from residual malt sugars I have found bitterness in beer can be a tricky element, especially in modern IPAs which can very easily dominate light delicate dishes. However bitterness can help to cut through fats, and work especially well with spicy ethnic dishes.

Malt sweetness and caramelized flavours work really well with roasted meats and vegetables. Remember the goal is to balance the beer and food so they harmonize and create a greater whole together.

There are many wonderful resources available for information and recipes. I frequently refer to craftbeer, and beerchow.com, and also Garret Oliver’s excellent book The Brewmasters Table. You don’t need to plan an elaborate fancy dinner. Sometimes simple things are unbeatable, like a cheddar
cheese toasty with a malty English style ale, or a rich roasty stout with a chunk of dark chocolate.

Many restaurants have been taking note of increasing interest in the combination of beer and food. They are featuring increasingly better beer selections. Breweries such as Garage Project have also taken a very active role in organizing food events and brewing beers specifically designed to match with a particular dish. Garage Project also premiered its first trio of canned beers and distributed them to local restaurants to pair with their Wellington On a Plate burger entries. Chef Gavin Grant at The Hop Garden used fresh hops to smoke his delicious beef burger and paired it with the hoppy crisp Pils N Thrills.

Kieran Haslett-Moore and Regional Wines and Spirits have led the way on the amazing combination of beer, and cheese pairings. Some of my colleagues and I have been organizing exciting collaborations with local Wellington restaurants – Shiggy Takagi has held two popular dinners at Tatsushi featuring beers from Baird Brewery. His most popular dish at the last dinner was a miso marinated egg yolk and house tofu paired with the Single Take Session, a delicate Belgian inspired ale.

Hashigo Zake cellar with chef Marni Hunt’s amazing artisan meats. The crowd favourite at the last dinner was a grilled tahr sausage with a spicy mole sauce matched with De Molen’s Spanning and Sensatie, an imperial stout brewed with chilies, cacao, and sea salt. This type of event is vital to developing strong community around our shared passions for great beer, food, and conversation. I am really excited to see how these events continue to flourish and develop in new interesting ways. Hopefully this will inspire you to create an event of your own.

A former chef turned craft beer bartender, Sam Whitney is an American import who works at Hashigo Zake in Wellington. He regularly arranges beer and food pairings for Hashigo Zake and Craft Beer College. He is also the founding member of the Epicureans of Ninkasi, a supper club of cooks and beer lovers. Follow Sam on Twitter @thesouramerican.

I am also collaborating with Big Bad Wolf to pair some of my favourite beers from the
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Local meetings around the country

AUCKLAND
Every Friday from 5pm – check the Auckland SOBA tweets for the venue @soba_auckland
Brent Westein - brentwestein@gmail.com

HAMILTON
Thursday evenings. Email Patricia Gleason gleason.patricia@gmail.com

NEW PLYMOUTH
First Tuesday of the month at 5.30pm. Check the Taranaki SOBA page for the venue facebook.com/TaranakiSoba
Warwick Foy wfoy@xtra.co.nz

WANGANUI
First Tuesday of the month, 7pm at The Rutland Arms
Peter Northaway nz-pilgrim@vodafone.co.nz

WELLINGTON
January: Tuesday 7th: Bru on Cuba, 191 Cuba Street. SOBA discount will be available.
February: Tuesday 4th: Laundry on Cuba, 240 Cuba Street, to be confirmed.
All Wellington SOBA socials take place on the first Tuesday of every month starting at 17:30. Contact Aidan Caig, aidan.caig@gmail.com

NELSON
First Wednesday of the month
Contact soba.nelson@gmail for an up-to-date list of Nelson craft beer suppliers.

Peter Mays & Bill Fennel

CHRISTCHURCH
One Thursday a month
Charles Sweetenham manager@staffclub.canterbury.ac.nz

DUNEDIN
Wednesday, 11 December at 7.30 pm: Eureka
Wednesday, 12 February at 7.30 pm: Inch Bar
Saturday, 8 March at 3 pm: Portsider
Contact Richard Pettiger at pettal@dearnet.nz

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