THE “FAUX-CRAFT” DEBATE

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The Committee is excited to have this edition of the Pursuit of Hoppiness out and about in time for Choice Beer Week - the celebration of all things beer in New Zealand. We are looking forward to the range of events happening at some of our favourite bars, and run by some of our favourite people. Choice Beer Week fits well with SOBA’s vision that People have an appreciation of, and access to, a diverse range of quality beer.

Another reason we are excited about this edition is that it has been a long time coming. Many of you, our faithful members, supporters, and others will have noticed we seem to have missed our autumn edition. Many of you have asked about it and asked about why this happened...

You probably know that SOBA is consumer-based organisation with a mission to educate, promote, and advocate for the appreciation of, and access to, a diverse range of quality beer. What you may not know is that we are also a volunteer-run organisation. This includes the Committee, our Regional Coordinators, the people that organise our City of Ales and our Mid Winter Ales festivals and the editor, advertising officer and distributors for the Pursuit of Hoppiness.

Over the years, our editors, advertising officers and distributors have done a great job. And, the Committee has come to realise we have not thanked them enough for the work that they do. On face value, it may not seem too hard - to pull together a magazine, to arrange for support from our advertisers and to get the magazine out and about around New Zealand - but, it is. And, we have learnt over the past few months that we need to say thanks and we need to make sure that all the people that support the Pursuit of Hoppiness are better supported by us. This should mean no more hiccups in our timeframes, and the ongoing production of this quality magazine.

The Committee will provide the support needed, and ensure the future production of the Pursuit of Hoppiness as a key priority. We identified this in a strategic planning day we recently held to ensure that SOBA will be a strong and growing organisation into the future. We look forward to using the magazine, our website, facebook and twitter to tell you more about how we are doing this over the next year. So, follow us at http://www.facebook.com/nzsoba and via twitter at @sobanz. You may also be able to follow SOBA at a regional level. Just ask your regional coordinator; their details are included in the magazine. But, if you are not sure who they are, email members@soba.org.nz and we will pass on details.

Hope you enjoy this long awaited version of the Pursuit of Hoppiness, and the many more to come in the future. And, enjoy Choice Beer Week and all it has to offer.

Cheers - The Committee (Geoff, Tom, David, Dale, Tony and Steph
TUATARA SELLS A THIRD OF THE COMPANY

Tuatara Brewery has sold 35% of its business to the Wellington investment company, Rangatira Limited. Rangatira now owns the largest share of the company Tuatara’s General Manager, Sean Murrie, said the brewery would find it difficult to sustain the growth it has experienced during the past few years if it did not take on another investor.

But he said no changes will be made to the products as a result of the partial sale. “We will continue to use the finest quality ingredients in generous quantities in our brews, and our current head-brewers, Rik Valentine and Carl Vasta, will remain very much at the brewing helm.”

The brewery says Rangatira Limited’s investment will strengthen the company’s balance sheet, provide funding to expand the brewing capacity, and lift production to meet the growing public demand. Rangatira owns 50% of the New Zealand meat company, Hellers; owns shares in the theme park Rainbow's End through New Zealand Experiences Limited, and various technology companies.

NEW ZEALAND BREWING SUCCESS AT AIBA

Renaissance Brewery, based in Blenheim, was crowned the Champion Small International Brewery at the 2013 Australian International Beer Awards in Melbourne in May. Renaissance won nine medals (one gold, one silver, seven bronze) and a trophy for its 2011 ‘Tribute’ Barley Wine in the Best Scotch Ale & Barley Wine category.

Many other New Zealand breweries also featured at the awards — Lion Breweries won the trophy for the Best Australian Style Lager with its ‘Mac’s Gold’ and the trophy for Best Pilsner for ‘Mac’s Hop Rocker’; 8 Wired won the trophy for Best IPA with Superconductor; and Tuatara won the trophy for best packaging with its ‘Pilsner’ 12-bottle carton. Those breweries also won a range of medals, and 13 others based in New Zealand won at least won medal each.

A record number of beers were entered this year, with more than 1,480 entries from 230 brewers representing 35 countries.

NZ HOP HARVEST BELOW EXPECTATIONS

New Zealand produced a disappointing hop yield this year, with the total industry crop weighing in about 30,000 kilograms below industry expectations. While there were favourable weather conditions during the harvest, which ran from mid-February to late March, a cool spring and extremely dry summer impacted the growth of the hops. The Wakatu and popular Nelson Sauvin varieties were the most highly impacted.

The New Zealand Hops Chief Executive, Doug Donelan, said the weather in the months shortly before the harvest had the biggest impact on the crop. “The result was a little disappointing, especially in what is a buoyant market, but the reality is things could have been much worse when you consider just how persistently dry the summer was.”

The total New Zealand production volume was 682,500 kilograms made up of 15 unique New Zealand varieties, eight traditional northern varieties, and a mix of varieties produced under certified organics.

LOCAL COUNCILS DEBATE LIQUOR REFORMS

Changes to liquor laws were passed late last year and are being rolled out across the country. There are new restrictions on maximum trading hours for establishments that sell alcohol - 8am-4am for on licences and 7am-11pm for off licences. There has also been tightening of laws regarding I.D., manager’s certificates, premises inspections and penalties for licence infringements.

Local councils have also been given the ability to draft their own policies on liquor sales in their areas. They will be able to govern the number of liquor licences in their communities, set further limits to opening hours, and impose restrictions on premises.

Many councils have already started debating and implementing changes to local liquor laws — check out your local council’s website to find out more about the changes in your area.

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW

Wellington’s Garage Project is putting its 1200-litre brewhouse up for sale to make way for a larger model. The new brewhouse is due to arrive in November. The brewery’s Jos Ruffell said the sale is part of a larger upgrade to increase Garage Project’s capacity. The expansion comes just two years after the brewery started out on a 50-litre brew kit.

The brewery has also recently announced it will begin canning some of its range. Three beers will be released in cans initially — ‘Pils ’n Thrills’, ‘Angry Peaches’ and ‘Smoke & Mirrors’, which will all be available during August at selected venues participating in Wellington on a Plate. The cans will become more widely available at the end of August, and Garage Project also plans to release a fourth canned beer shortly after.
The brewery will continue to bottle selected beers in the 650ml size bottles as well.

- Denise Garland

**UPPER HUTT BREWERY EXPANDS**

Kereru Brewing Company, based in Upper Hutt, has spent the past few months fitting out a new building and installing a new 1800-litre brewhouse. The brewer, Chris Mills, has been brewing on a 100-litre brewkit in his home since 2010, and while 1800-litres is a big step up, there is room for further expansion in the new building.

Kereru is also working to get an off-licence, will be fitting a bank of fill-your-own and has plans to offer tastings and tours.

- Denise Garland

**BRAND NEW BREWERIES**

The former head brewer at The West Coast Brewery, David Kurth, has moved north and started his own operation, Hot Water Brewing, at Whenuakite in the Coromandel. Kurth installed his brewery at the end of May and plans to release his beer in 355ml cans.

Tuatara’s former head brewer, Mike Neilson, has also decided to go out alone and has set up Panhead brewery in Upper Hutt. Neilson was able to begin brewing at the end of June and one of his first beers, and Oat Stout, was poured at SOBA’s Winter Ale Festival in Wellington at the end of July.

Golden Eagle and Raindogs have opened a shared brewery in Riccarton, Christchurch. Both have been brewing their beer under contract until now, and they frequently brew collaborations under the Eagle vs Dog name. The first brew on the 1400-litre kit was laid down in early July.

The Nelson-based Sprig & Fern is also continuing to grow its business throughout the country, with new bars planned for Petone in Wellington’s Hutt Valley, and Auckland.

**MOA BREWING CO. 2013 FINANCIAL RESULTS**

The Marlborough-based brewery, Moa, lost more money than it expected to during its first six months as a publicly-listed company.

Moa Brewing has released its first financial report as an NZX-listed company, and the results for the six months to the end of March this year show the brewery made $2.45 million in revenue and posted a net loss of $1.92 million. The numbers were slightly worse than what was forecast in the company’s public offering prospectus, which said revenue was expected to be $2.54 million and that it would make a loss of $1.91 million.

Moa’s larger than expected loss was mainly blamed on an unforeseen increase in sales and marketing spending. The company expected to spend $392,000, but overshot that by $194,000. The extra spending was attributed to the sponsorship of the New Zealand PGA – something not accounted for in the prospectus. The agreement was for both the 2013 and 2014 championships.

For the entire 2013 financial year, the brewery made $4.38m in revenue, up 81 percent from 2012. Most of the money came from New Zealand sales, with $1.29m made from overseas markets.

The Moa chief executive, Geoff Ross, said the results were ”pretty much bang on track with where we want to be”.

“We are a growth company and top line growth, which illustrates consumer preference and brand strength, is our focus. It remains our key indicator of success.”

New Zealand sales were up by more than 50 per cent, while exports more than tripled – which means overseas sales accounted for less than $430,000 of revenue in 2012.

Ross said sales to the United States for the 2014 financial year started strong, with 17 containers of beer sent to the country in the first three months of the year. That was compared to 12 containers sent in all of 2013.

It is the kind of sales growth Moa needs to have to meet forecast revenue from United States sales of $1.79m – an increase of 214 per cent.

To reach those goals, Moa is going to need to upgrade its brewery – which it cannot do until it is granted resource consent.

At hearings in front of Marlborough District Council staff recently, it emerged the brewery was in breach of its current consent. Moa has applied for retrospective consent for its one-million litre per year production – something not uncommon for growing companies – and permission to brew an extra 11-million litres per year, to ensure it can meet target volumes.

Thirteen parties made submissions to the council on the plans – eight in opposition of Moa’s expansion plans, four in support and one neutral.
TARANAKI

In February, a new establishment called The Hour Glass opened its doors in New Plymouth. Located on Liardet Street, the owners, AJ and Mark, offer an extensive range of more than 30 bottled beers and have the mike’s brewery range poured through the mike’s tap machines. They also offer a tasty selection of well-priced tapas and a discount for SOBA members.

Also in February, Mangrove Jacks teamed up with mike’s to brew fresh wort packs for home brewers. The brew night was light on attendance but heavy on hospitality - thanks to the mike’s brewer, Ron Trigg, for his generous support of SOBA events in Taranaki.

SOBA Taranaki is currently experiencing solid growth in numbers and interest in the local events, which are promoted via the Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/TaranakiSoba

Warwick Foy

MANAWATU

Manawatu has a new contract brewery called Stewart’s Brewing Co., which is run by farmer and long-time home brewer, Tim Stewart. Stewart is based in Hiwinui and brews on Massey University’s 200-litre system. He has two beers out at the moment – ‘Top of the Hops’ and ‘Malt of the Earth’, with a Dark Lager due for release shortly. He only uses New Zealand hops and sources all of his malt from Malteurop in Martin.

Find out more about the brewery at his website: http://www.stewartbrewing.co.nz/

- Jono Galuszka

WELLINGTON

Since late 2012 there have been some significant developments in the beer scene in Wellington, including the opening of five craft beer bars:

Bin 44 (3 Queens Wharf)
Located on Wellington’s waterfront, it has four taps pouring Tuatara and four taps pouring rotating craft beers. They also have a selection of great craft beers in bottles.

Black Dog (17-19 Blair Street)
Whilst the Black Dog name has been around for a while, it was only as a brewery. Now, they have opened their doors as a brew bar and serve seven beers made on the premises, and provide the opportunity to fill flagons to take home.

Bebemos (Corner of Hall Street and Riddiford Street, Newtown)
A South American influenced bar with six rotating beer taps and close to 50 other beers in bottles.

The Rogue & Vagabond (18 Garrett Street, Te Aro.)
A casual, laid back bar with nine beers on tap, one beer on hand pull and a selection nearing 80 different beers in bottles.

Goldings Free Dive (14 Leeds Street, Te Aro)
Wellington’s newest craft beer bar with six rotating taps and one hand pull. It had a remarkable turn out to its soft opening on the 15th of April and SOBA’s social visit in May saw a strong attendance too.

In other news, the 2012 Beer and Brewer Magazine awards were held and several Wellington venues and people received well-deserved recognition. Parrot Dog brewer, Matt Warner, was voted Young Brewer of the Year. The Brew House was awarded the Best Homebrew Shop. Scott Boswell from The Hop Garden was voted Beertender of the Year, with Hashigo Zake’s David Wood, and Shigeo Takagi taking out the second and third place, respectively.

Finally, it’s a great pleasure to be able to announce that Wellington’s SOBA socials have been getting bigger and better over the last six months, with attendance over 35 at our socials at Bebemos, The Rogue & Vagabond, Black Dog, Goldings Free Dive, and most recently, The Malthouse.

- Aidan Caig

NELSON

For a city with a population of about 93,000, the Nelson Tasman region is well served with breweries and craft beer outlets. We are seeing a number of bars with a craft beer focus opening, and established bars not renewing their brewery tie when it expires. Some establishments have to pay quite large sums of money to get out of the tie, but all of those that I have spoken to have seen beer sales increase. Kraut’s Restaurant & Bar has also moved to the centre of Nelson and it has, amongst others, a special German-style beer that is brewed especially for the establishment by Bays Brewery.
SOBA Nelson holds two home brew competitions a year which usually draw more than 30 entries. They are particularly for brewers who have not entered a competition before and are peer-judged, though we did have two professional brewers judge a competition earlier this year.

Nelson’s SOBA branch meets monthly at a different venue each time, either in the city itself or in the surrounding area. Whilst attendances are not large, we go to show our support for bars selling craft beer, and we do get one or two prospective members each time.

- Peter Mayes

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**BLENHEIM**

The popular Blenheim café and wine bar, The Secret Garden, has closed its doors and is no longer trading. The café had a good craft beer selection and will be missed.

- Mike Pink
BEER HUNTER MOVIE PREMIER  
4 August 2013, Roxy Cinema, Wellington

The Society of Beer Advocates is screening a documentary on the late beer writer, Michael Jackson, at the Roxy Cinema in Miramar. Beer Hunter screens at 8.30pm on Sunday August 4. Tickets are $18, which includes a beer during intermission. Book here: http://www.roxycinema.co.nz/movies/7896.php

CHOICE BEER WEEK  
5-11 August 2013, Wellington

Choice Beer Week is a week-long celebration of all that is great about beer. A range of events are being held all across the capital, including beer launches, meet-the-brewer opportunities and beer and food matching dinners. Check out the Choice Beer Week guide here: http://choicebeerweek.co.nz/guide

BEERVANA  
9 & 10 August 2013, Wellington

New Zealand’s premier craft beer celebration is being held once again at Wellington’s Westpac Stadium. More than 200 beers and ciders will be available at Beervana, as well as a wide range of food prepared by the capital’s best chefs. Tickets are available for four sessions across two days. More information can be found here: http://www.beervana.co.nz/

SOCIETY OF BEER ADVOCATES AGM  
10 August 2013, Wellington

SOBA is holding its AGM at Wellington's Westpac Stadium in the Level 3 East Lounge on Saturday, August 10. The meeting will commence at 9.00am and will finish shortly before the 11.00am start of Beervana’s first Saturday session. If you wish to submit an item for the agenda, please email: secretary@soba.org.nz

MIKE’S OKTOBERFEST  
26 October 2013, Urenui

An annual celebration of good food, live music, games and beer at mike's Brewery in Taranaki. The event sells out every year, so get your tickets now! http://mikes.simplytix.com/Event/1/mikes-Oktoberfest-2013/

GREAT PACIFIC BEER EXPO  
Labour Weekend, Wellington

Hashigo Zake puts on a beer festival showcasing the best – and rarest - beers from New Zealand, Japan, Australia and America’s West Coast. For information contact Hashigo Zake: info@hashigozake.co.nz

SOBA NATIONAL HOMEBREW COMPETITION  
2 & 3 November, Hamilton

Entries for the 2013 NHC are due in by 5pm on Friday, October 25th, with judging to take place on the first weekend in November. For more information check out: http://nhc.soba.org.nz/ or @soba_nhc on Twitter.
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There’s been a lot of talk, lately, about exactly what does and does not constitute “craft beer”. The definitional question seems to recur every couple of years in the beer industry worldwide, but has taken on a new element this time around with what’s come to be called “faux craft”. Essentially, the accusation is that not-really craft beer is increasingly being dressed in the trappings of “real craft beer”. This is usually by the large producers of mainstream beers which have been seeing their sales steadily decline, while no doubt noticing that craft beer (however defined) is countering the trend and slowly increasing in popularity. Whether this represents an intrusion onto the ‘turf’ of small and/or independent producers, or a welcome sign of a widening of the market, is a subject of understandably-passionate debate.
THE MOA CRAFT BEER SUMMIT

Intro: Moa Brewing recently held a meeting to discuss defining exactly what ‘craft beer’ is. Brewery representatives and people involved in the industry were invited along to Brothers Brewery in Auckland to debate the term and the potential for a New Zealand definition. Hugh Crozier was among the attendees.

I arrived at Brothers Brewery to find a few familiar faces from breweries and beer organisations around the country, all chatting with beers in hand. After short introductions from beer writer and SOBA President, Geoff Griggs, and Moa’s Josh Scott, the forum got underway.

It was a long evening of slightly raised voices and people holding tangential and out-of-sequence disputes across a large room. We discussed many things: a possible industry body, voluntary regulation, the needs of the market, who we were actually attempting to define ‘craft beer’ for, and why a definition was — or wasn’t — necessary. After all of that circuitous conversation, it became obvious that at this time it was not possible, nor indeed desirable, to define ‘craft beer’.

It seems that the premise for this meeting was fear. Josh Scott was quite open, and said that he felt ‘faux’ craft brands were “holding the market down”. In newspapers, he suggested limiting craft beer to those brewed solely with New Zealand-grown hops.

But no drinker who is destined to drink cared-for, handmade, craft beer is ever going to be put-off by a craft interpretation like Crafty Beggars, nor will they simply settle for a ‘good enough’ Boundary Road. All craft beer enthusiasts have enjoyed some bland beer before discovering just how flavourful it can be.

Hugh Crozier is wine and craft beer enthusiast living in Auckland. He’s a massage therapist by day and is currently finishing his senior chiropractic internship. Follow him on Twitter: @hughthewineguy

THE PURSUIT OF HOPPINESS // WINTER 2013
If you’ll excuse the pun, ‘Counterpint’ exists to give two differing takes on a current topic of discussion — this time, the proli

GREIG MCGILL: KEEPING POSITIVE

I really don’t like the term faux-craft. I don’t like it because it’s meaningless, and I like it even less because it’s negative. Most of all, I don’t like the term because it represents a certain elitism which is becoming a divisive factor in the USA beer culture.

What do I mean when I say the term is meaningless? Despite recent debate and media attention, I don’t believe there’s any commonly accepted definition of what constitutes “craft beer”. Sure, many organisations have had a crack at defining it. Most seem to base their definition around quantity of production (hilariously shifting the numbers as their larger members grow and threaten to fall outside the definition, while implying big is always bad). That’s fine if you’re forming an organisation and need a specific definition for a constitution, but don’t expect everyone to agree on it!

Given that there’s no universally accepted definition of what craft beer is then, how can the term “faux-craft” convey any meaning at all? It seems to be lobbed as a sneer-laden grenade at any beer produced by large companies and utilising the terminology we’ve come to expect from our beloved smaller producers. It’s always meant as a pejorative, and seems to be commonly used before the target beer has even been tried!

This leads to the negativity issue. One of the founding principles of SOBA, one enshrined in the very name of the organisation, is advocacy. Advocacy is a positive action, not a negative one. You don’t promote your cause by detracting from another. You raise awareness and let the consumer decide. There are times, as with the Radler case, when SOBA has been forced to act in a negative way as a defence against dirty tactics. It could be argued that the marketing behind many of these supposed faux-craft beers is an attack. In some cases, this is completely accurate, and SOBA should call those responsible out – Lion Nathan, I’m looking at you here. “Someone should make a craft beer you can actually drink” indeed. Insulting, inaccurate, and downright dirty. But that’s a completely separate argument. Play the ball, not the player.

Finally, there’s the elitism. Whenever we talk about faux-craft, we’re implying someone else’s taste in beer is inferior. What if your sister, cousin, mate, or co-worker really loves that pint of Boundary Road Lawn Ranger they had last night? Who are we to condescendingly point out that “it’s not real craft beer, you know”. This attitude is causing arguments on beer blogs all over the USA, and it would be nice to think we can lead the States in something beer related on occasion!

Finally, I believe that the term arises out of a desire to promote the positive. To do good. That’s cool. I just think we need to find a more human way to do it. There’s no need for SOBA to use negative tactics. The ends never justify the means. The means are all we have. The end is a mirage.

PHIL COOK: END ALL MISREPRESENTATION

All the snobbery and elitism aside — granted, there is a lot of it around — the “faux craft” phenomenon is a pressing issue for the simple fact that it starkly illuminates a trend that’s been present for a while. Leave what does and doesn’t count as “craft”, for another day; what’s offensive is faking it.

Whether or not they amount to parts of a definition, the elements of “craft” that those accused of perpetuating “faux craft” most-often impersonate are scale and origin. The usual suspects (Crafty Beggars, Hancock’s, Boundary Road...) all massively distort their history and their present reality and wind up lying about simple things — like who owns the
brewery and where / how big it is — that people really do care about. And that’s enough to be upset over, even while allowing that taste is always subjective and people might enjoy their products.

Caveat emptor only ever gets you so far. We don’t ask people to determine the alcohol content or serving volume of their beer for themselves; why should we expect them to each independently research and verify its pedigree? It’s very hard indeed for buyers to “beware” when they’re completely outmatched by brewery marketing departments in terms of resources and access to the relevant information.

It’s a brute fact that a lot of people give a damn about the origin, ownership, and personalities involved in the beer. Maybe you don’t, particularly. Maybe, for you, it’s all about what’s in the glass. It mostly is for me, too. But you can’t deny someone right to care about such things. Or anything else. And then, given their sincerity, it’s hard to deny them the right to know. “Faux craft” marketing always appears so targeted as to betray an intention to deceive.

There’s nothing inherently wrong with being a huge corporate operator, nor with tiny family-run businesses in garages; there’s nothing objectively superior in “bricks and mortar” breweries, nothing suspicious in contract-only operations, and nothing hypocritical in being something in-between. But there is something wrong — there’s a lot wrong — in lying. That includes pretending a brewed-under-license Beck’s is genuinely imported, as much as it includes presenting “Hancock’s Brewing” as if it were the continuation of a small Auckland brewery from the 1800s. And it’s exactly as obnoxious when a small operator masquerades as a physical brewery when they ‘merely’ contract.

“Faux craft” is a problem, but only because it manifests as one kind or other of misrepresentation - a vice which should meet more resistance, more often. Let it be the dire example which spurs us all to wider action and more-animated insistence on fair dealing.

Greig McGill was a founding SOBA member, and is one half of Brewaucracy, which brews out of Hamilton’s Shunter’s Yard. He occasionally blogs at hamiltonon.net, posts ‘Awkward Beer Reviews’ to YouTube, and can be found on Twitter as @greignmcgill.

Phil Cook is a former bartender recently turned brewery-hand at Wellington’s Garage Project, and longtime beer blogger, writing the ‘Beer Diary’ at philcook.net. He can also be found on Twitter, as @phil_cook.

**DEAFINITION SERIES LIMITED RELEASE**

These special reserve beers are packaged in champagne corked 750ml bottles. Very limited quantities are available.

The celebration series comprises:

- A single malt Barleywine, brewed with 100% Canterbury malt. After fermentation, it was matured on U.S hops for 11 months. Unfiltered and bottle conditioned for maximum flavour. 10.5% ABV.
- Imperial Porter has Canterbury Pale Ale malt and five different specialty malts. The hops are NZ Pacific Gem and U.S Columbus. 10.5% ABV.
- Old Ale, brewed with the traditional English floor malted Maris Otter malt, Crystal malt and NZ hops. 7.6% ABV.

These premium beers can be enjoyed now or cellared for several years.

Available from Regional Wines & Spirits in Wellington or the brewery shop.

**JOIN US FOR DINNER**

Don’t miss the opportunity to meet Richard Emerson and try our award-winning beers alongside food from two award-winning restaurants. In Dunedin, guests will enjoy a special menu at popular Two Chefs on 3 October. Auckland diners will be treated to sensational matches at leading eatery Euro on 9 October. Dish magazine Editor Victoria Wells and Richard Emerson will host the evenings, guiding diners through the food and beer matches. Bookings are open now at Two Chefs and Euro.

**JP 2013**

Our 2013 vintage is a Belgian Stout. A big roasty stout fermented with three Belgian yeasts. Luscious and complex with a satin smooth finish. Serve unchilled. 8% ABV. Food matches: Pair with chocolate or blue cheese. Available now.

Cheers from the team at Emerson’s.
Hashigo Zake distributes the best range of local and imported beer available in New Zealand.

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- Ballast Point
- Coronado
- Moylan's
- Rogue
- Southern Tier
- Left Coast
- Speakeasy
- Bear Republic

Europe
- Mikkeller (Denmark)
- Nøgne Ø (Norway)
- Waldhaus (Germany)
- De Molen (Netherlands)

NZ
- ParrotDog
- Liberty
- Mike's
- Garage Project
- Funk Estate
- Panhead
- Behemoth

Japan
- Baird

Australia
- Moon Dog

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Finally, to give the issue a pragmatic and contextualised conclusion, Martin Craig offers some thoughts on the wider (and universal) business environment which creates phenomena like “faux craft”.

It’s easy to jump on a bandwagon. It’s a lot harder to invent and build a working bandwagon in the first place.

In 2009, Bluebird closed its potato chip factory in Timaru. A local spud grower family, the Bowans, bought the factory, installed new equipment and established the independent ‘Heartland Potato Chips’ brand, emphasising family ownership and the freshness of their spuds. Within weeks of Heartland’s launch, Bluebird launched a similar folksy range to compete with Heartland for supermarket space.

Three years ago, two young entrepreneurs, Tommy and James, established Nice Blocks – a range of ethically-produced gourmet ice blocks, made out the back of their local café. As soon as they had proven the demand was there, Fonterra launched The Ice Bar Co with a range aimed straight at Nice Blocks’ adult market.

Any debate of craft beer vs faux craft needs to acknowledge this context. Success inevitably brings competition — if you don’t have imitators, then you probably are one yourself. The large, established businesses that the newcomers contrast themselves against, have the capacity, capital and distribution needed to quickly jump on the bandwagon.

The fact that big international brewers want to get onto the craft beer market is no surprise, because it’s showing strong growth, while overall beer sales are static. If you have the capacity and the customers, you might as well give it a try. Having a large facility or being internationally-owned does not necessarily mean your beer will lack quality or innovation.

For example, Lion Breweries introduced fresh-hopping to New Zealand and now it’s a popular technique copied by many craft brewers.

At the time of writing, Moa’s Josh Scott was advocating for an official definition of craft beer. The problem with that is that any definition will inevitably exclude some brewers that have a genuine claim to craftiness. Scott’s daft suggestion was that craft brewers should be restricted to using New Zealand ingredients — that would mean no more US hops, Belgian yeasts or English malts for us!

The Brewers Guild president, Ralph Bungard, told The Listener a craft brewery, “is one where the people who own the business actually make the product”. This description could exclude contract brewing. What about brewery size? The product range? Its scale of distribution? Depending on where you set the arbitrary limits, you could exclude Steam, Harringtons and McCashins, all recognised as being craft brewers to some extent.

By definition, any “faux craft” label is not succeeding because it fails to convince craft beer buyers. If it did, it wouldn’t be faux. Big brewers can attract craft beer buyers, but they need to make good craft beer first. Lion’s Brewjolais was craft beer, Lion’s Crafty Beggars is faux craft. That’s why I don’t need a definition of faux or of craft — because I knows it when I sees it. Cheers!

Martin Craig is a Wellington-based business development manager and journalist. His first article on New Zealand craft brewing was printed in 1993. He’s written for Consumer NZ and was Managing Editor of the NZRetail magazine. Archives of his (semi?)-retired ‘NZ Beer Blog’ are still available online. Reach him at: martin@nzbeerb...
New Zealand’s beer festival scene is growing at a pretty impressive pace. Looking back just five years ago, Beervana was pretty much the only major beer event on the calendar, with a few community beer festivals sprinkled throughout the year. But with curiosity in craft beer growing, so too has the demand for festivals around the country. Many of those small, community-based festivals have grown to attract people from around the country on an annual basis, businesses are now getting in on the act and putting on events of all sizes, and even SOBA has set up winter beer festivals in Wellington and Auckland. So, as we count down to Beervana 2013, here’s a snippet of some of the other festivals that have been making an impact around New Zealand.
**THE GREAT KIWI BEER FESTIVAL**

The ‘G.K.B.F.’ is shaping up to be a key part of the vibrant and re-booted Christchurch festival scene, and a milestone on the beer calendar to rival (in its own way) Beervana. Christchurch ‘ex-pat’ (now Wellingtonian), Denise Garland, was there among the throng and reports back on the highlights of the second running of the colossal event.

Thousands of beer lovers turned out on a hot, sunny Christchurch day for the second annual Great Kiwi Beer Festival, held at North Hagley Park on Saturday, February 23. Last year’s event sold out, and expectations were high for the first big beer festival of 2013. The garden city put on a gorgeous summer day, with temperatures reaching more than 20 degrees before the gates had even opened.

Punters had the choice of purchasing either a general admission ticket, which entitled you to entry from 11.30am and a tasting glass; a ‘hoptimized’ ticket for $15 extra, which entitled you to entry from 11am, a tasting glass, and ten free tasters; or a VIP ticket for $135, which entitled you to entry from 11.30am, a tasting glass, and access to the VIP area, with a complimentary bar and free food.

All 12,000 tickets were sold by mid-afternoon, and when the crowds arrived, many people were overwhelmed by the choice on offer — 45 breweries and cider makers were showcasing their wares at individual stalls, with many offering four or more varieties on tap.

There was also a wide range of international beers, and plenty of seating, at Hashigo Zake’s World of Beer tent; more than 30 food stalls; music from 1pm — with the headline act, Supergroove, drawing a huge crowd; and a series of seminars about beer, brewing and beer and food matching.

The Society of Beer Advocates also had a strong presence at the event, with organisers providing a marquee, tables and chairs so it could host a series of educational talks with brewers. The “Brewer’s Table” was well attended, with the SOBA president, Geoff Griggs, and the beer writer, Phil Cook, hosting seminars.

Luke Nicholas from the ever-popular Epic; the Renaissance Brewery co-founder, Andy Deuchars; home brewer turned contract brewer, Dale Holland of Dale’s Brewing Company; Sam Wilson from Stoke Brewery in sunny Nelson; The Twisted Hop’s Martin Bennett; Belinda Gould from Amberley’s Brew Moon, and Ron Trigg of Mike’s Brewery, all discussed their unique viewpoints on beer and brewing, and shared their brews with the attendees.

SOBA also signed up new members and sold merchandise, with caps being particularly popular on the sunny day.

But the day wasn’t without its problems. While this year the organisers had enough tasting glasses for everybody, the large number of people in one place texting, tweeting and posting on Untappd caused Vodafone’s wireless to have a meltdown on several occasions. Crucially, that meant eftpos was out of action for large parts of the day, causing headaches for hundreds of punters who’d shown up with very little, or no, cash.

The festival organiser, Callam Mitchell, said while the crowd behaviour was very good, there were two arrests — one of which was a domestic incident after the event. “We’ll definitely be tightening up our alcohol management plan for next year in order to get that number down to zero,” he said.

Unfortunately for the breweries, despite 1,000 more people attending the event than last year, the festival goers didn’t seem quite as thirsty. Most stallholders were left with plenty of stock at the end of the day, while a year ago, a good chunk of them sold out.

The dry summer also meant the ground was rock hard and incredibly dusty. The wind blew dirt everywhere, which was quite unpleasant for punters, but even more so for the stall holders, with everything collecting a solid layer of dirt by the end of the day.

Drinking unique and tasty beer in Christchurch’s February sun is a pretty unbeatable experience, whether or not you can share it with the world on the internet, or leave with dirt-covered clothes. But perhaps remember to bring cash next year.

Denise Garland now lives in Wellington and works as a journalist and producer for Radio New Zealand. She blogs at agirlandherpint.wordpress.com and is on Twitter as @DemiseG.

Dale Cooper, who laboured all day at the SOBA stall and helped with details there, has recently turned his homebrewing hobby into a job at Wellington’s (DB-owned) Black Dog Brewery.
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THE NEW ZEALAND BEER FESTIVAL

Auckland is not as well-known for its beer scene as places like Wellington, Nelson or Christchurch, but it offers big beer opportunities for interested punters. Martin Bridges reports on one of the larger events of the year, held in March, with some mixed feelings.

The “New Zealand Beer Festival” has a fairly mixed reputation amongst Auckland beer lovers. It has been running since 2007, initially at Ellerslie racecourse and, most recently, at The Cloud on the waterfront. The organisers are clearly focussed on the entertainment angle ahead of beer education, but over the last few years, the amount of craft beer available has increased significantly. Yes, there is still an emphasis on bands and dressing up, but the festival is exposing a very mixed audience to some of the best beers that New Zealand has to offer.

As a craft beer enthusiast, the key to having a good time at this kind of festival is to get there early. Doors opened at 12.30pm and the event ran until 9pm (with bars closing at 8pm). For the first couple of hours there was plenty of room to move around and the crowd was predominantly focussed on trying interesting beers. As the day wore on, the crowds built up, the bands kicked off on the stage, and the vibe headed more towards drinking without thinking.

The selection of beers and bars was excellent again this year. A few standouts for me were:

- Epic had two bars — one indoors, one outdoors — serving a staggering array of beers - who knew Luke made so many!
- mike’s had a really funky stand with an impressive range.
- It was great to see Richard Emerson — after his brewery’s sale to Lion — still at his stand, with a really interesting ‘White IPA’.
- Nelson’s Sprig & Fern was in town and was delighted to announce its entry into the Auckland market, with the news that it’s taking over The Drake.
- Schipper’s was pouring their expanded range of four beers. I was particularly taken by their ‘Boffin Bitter’.
- Joseph Wood from Liberty Brewing was lurking behind the Hopscotch stand, dispensing palate-destroying chilli to the unsuspecting!
- The Ale Brewing Chaps from Waiheke Island made their début with a great-looking bar.

One of the best aspects of the festival for me was the huge range of food options - I think every high-end food truck in Auckland was present. Special mention goes to Mexi Kai for their pulled-pork tacos and the frozen yoghurt truck — which saved me after the aforementioned chilli.

All in all, it was a great event. A crowd of 12,000 people was exposed to a range of exciting beers on a typically beautiful Auckland day, with great food to match it with. The focus may not be purely on the beer, but that leaves room for other, smaller festivals, such as the City Of Ales...

Martin Bridges is a long-standing member of SOBA, a keen home brewer, and was the driving force behind the City Of Ales festival. Follow him on Twitter, @mgbridges.
Marchfest, held annually in the historic grounds of Founders Heritage Park just out of Nelson city, serves as the region’s largest and most-adored celebration of beer and brewing. It was my first visit to Marchfest from Wellington, despite having heard positive anecdotes about it for the past few years.

In terms of beer, it was great to see some real innovation in the form of 8 Wired’s ‘Rastafari’ Foreign Extra Stout, Moa’s ‘Southern Alps’ White IPA, and Renaissance’s brilliant, medium-strength version of Stonecutter - the ‘Scotch on Rye’. However, the beer list seemed unnecessarily lager-heavy, including a couple of experiments that didn’t quite work -- the offerings with mint and coconut needed a bit more development.

I wish I could have attended the degustation lunch after hearing nothing but high praise for it, and the seminars run by local brewers were well-attended and thoroughly informative. The live music line-up was well-curated and helped towards setting the tone of the day, although it came to an awkward end due to strict noise restrictions as part of the festival’s licence.

The efforts of Eelco Boswijk and Mic Dover from The Free House over the past six years have made the event a fixture on the local calendar, and it was fantastic to see the whole community out enjoying local food and drink made by people who love what they’re doing.

For a visitor to the region, however, I was left a little underwhelmed. While it was indeed a very pleasant day out, I couldn’t help but feel that it didn’t quite succeed in every aspect of what it set out to do. In the face of City of Ales, Beervana, the SOBA Mid-Winter Ale Festival, Hashigo Zake’s X-Ale Festival, and even the Malthouse’s West Coast Challenge, it feels like 10 local ales and five lagers just doesn’t quite cut it anymore. The literature promotes it as a ‘beer-flavoured festival’, which is quite accurate, considering it is really a community festival with good beer, not a beer festival - there is a difference.

Upon leaving Marchfest, I was also left with the impression that the locals and the visitors tended to approach the festival in two quite different ways: Nelsonians appeared to treat the event as a way to see the summer out, to eat and drink something a bit different, to catch up with old friends, and to enjoy the convivial atmosphere. The Wellingtonian contingent that I spent the day with, on the other hand, spent rather more time trying to rate and compare their beer and cider, and also trying to taste all the offerings.

For me, the real beer highlights of Nelson continue to be the things you just can’t get in Wellington: a well-kept cask ale in The Free House on Collingwood St, the summer road trips to Monkey Wizard and Golden Bear for fresh flagons to drink on Rabbit Island in the late afternoon sun, the colonial atmosphere of the ubiquitous Sprig and Ferns, and the aroma issuing from NZ Hops during harvest. While I enjoyed my time at Marchfest and have no regrets about attending, the festival will not be on my calendar next year.

Tom O’Donnell has a wealth of beer knowledge as an experienced beer bartender. He currently works at one of Wellington’s hottest new beer bars, Golding’s Free Dive, and before that, he worked behind one of Wellington’s oldest – The Malthouse.
THE GREATER WELLINGTON BREWDAY

The Wairarapa is known for good wine rather than for good beer. But this year, breweries from Wellington City, Kapiti and the Hutt Valley joined those in the Wairarapa to celebrate the good beer being produced across the region. Hadyn Green reports on the inaugural Brewday festival

It was a nice day in the Wairarapa - the sun was peeking out from behind low clouds and a gentle breeze was blowing. In the distance, we saw the low cluster of tents where a dozen or so breweries from around the Greater Wellington region had set up shop for the day.

This was the Greater Wellington Brewday.

Every brewer from the Wellington region was represented, including the newer breweries, Funk Estate and Kereru. There was also a number of great little food places - the French chicken van was constantly crossing things off as demand outstripped supply.

It was a picnic atmosphere as groups of friends found bales of hay to use as seating, before splitting off to get food and beer. The music was a bit bland but I’m not sure if I’d want anything too off beat – there was, however, an Oompah band. If a beer festival ever has music, then it needs an Oompah band!

With a huge selection of beer and a huge selection of food, how could you go wrong? The police in Martinborough know how to deal with a festival based on alcohol. There were a few drunks, but with a single road in and out of the festival, they were quickly taken care of.

This was Greater Wellington Brewday’s inaugural event and I think they nailed it. There were small issues with take-outs (originally promised to be allowed after 5pm) being banned, but that was just a minor problem. The brewers I spoke to enjoyed themselves and had the chance to sell beer to new markets (including Wairarapa brewers who suddenly got a large crowd of Wellingtonians).

This year also suffered from being on the same weekend as Nelson’s Marchfest. But in 2014 the dates are separate, meaning there’ll be more brewers showing off their beers and more drinkers to enjoy them.

Hadyn Green is a Wellington-based writer, who’s lucky enough to be paid to discuss beer, sport, technology and video games in print for various publications and websites. Follow him on Twitter: @hadyngreen
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SUPERCITY OF ALES

While bigger is often thought to be better when it comes to the festival-atmosphere, sometimes, it’s the more intimate events which provide the best experiences. SOBA has organised and run small winter ale festivals in both Auckland and Wellington for the past few years, and Martin Bridges gives an organisers perspective on this year’s sell-out success in the City of Sails.

A year ago, the first City of Ales festival was held at Q Theatre on Queen Street. It was a great success, selling out ahead of the event and receiving a lot of positive feedback from attendees. This year’s festival, held on Saturday, June 29, was bigger and perhaps even more successful.

On a typically glorious Auckland winter’s day, more than 400 beer-lovers flocked to the Floating Pavilion in the Viaduct Harbour to sample some of the best beers that New Zealand has to offer. While the inaugural festival focussed on beers from Auckland’s plethora of breweries and brewpubs, this year’s event opened its doors to beers from across the North Island. Many of the beers were making their Auckland debut - indeed, for some it was the first time the beers had been tasted in New Zealand.

It’s hard to pick standout beers amongst the 30 or so on offer, but large queues formed whenever Hopocalypse (from the Four Horsemen) or Death From Above (Garage Project) went on tap. Galbraith’s launched their new India Red Ale even before it had gone on tap at the brewpub. The last keg of Breuacracy’s In Triplicate was drained, and Liberty Brewing’s latest collaboration with Fire Dragon Chillies (Bhuty Chocolate Stout) certainly made an impression on people’s taste buds!

As well as stunning weather and amazing beer, the crowd was treated to some delicious food – melt in the mouth beef shortribs, a tasty lamb curry and flavoursome roast vegetable salads went down well with the beers.

Feedback from the sold-out crowd was again extremely positive, so the organising committee and their trusty band of volunteers will be looking to run the festival again next year. I’d suggest it’s time to start planning a visit to Auckland in late June 2014!

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Style is incredibly important to the world of beer. While wine hinges on grape variety, with beer it is style that communicates what to expect when the bottle is opened. For customers selecting what to purchase, judges assessing a beer, and brewers fine-tuning their craft, style is what frames expectations of a beer. A relative lack of serious academic interest in the subject, and beer writers passing on fables reinforcing often totally false ideas, has lead to a lot of myths about the history of beer styles. But the recent work of beer historians, such as Martyn Cornell and Ron Pattinson, has done much to shine light on the mists of time.

Here, I look at English Golden Ale — and will continue in the next issue with Belgian and American takes on the style.

Golden Ale is a modern style of beer tracing its roots back to the English and American craft brewing scenes of the 1980s. In England, it developed as a response from ale brewers to the rising popularity of Golden Lager. The style has become a hit, with Golden Ales making up an increasingly large slice of the UK’s independent beer market. English brewers are increasingly using exotic new world hops to create strikingly original and aromatic beers.

**GOLDEN ALE IN ENGLAND**

English brewers have been brewing relatively pale beers since the development of coke - a coal-based fuel which allowed malt to be kilned lightly, resulting in pale, amber, and golden beers. Prior to that, malt was cured over wood fires resulting in brown beer. Throughout the twentieth century, English brewers increasingly used crystal malts to give their beers copper to amber hues, and toffee and caramel notes. Crystal malt helped English brewers to quickly brew rounded, balanced, drinkable beer at the low gravities

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1. *The Publicans' Morning Advertiser* (UK) recently reported the sector was up 19.3% in volume, and 24.8% in value.
which two World Wars had dictated. By the 1980s, there was a significant divide between the amber ales of Britain’s traditional family and new micro-brewers, and the pale golden lagers of the national brewing companies.

It was into this environment that the Golden Hill Brewery in Wiveliscombe, Somerset launched ‘Exmoor Gold’. The year was 1986 and the brewery decided to mark the thousandth brew of their Exmoor Ale, a tawny session bitter, by brewing a stronger version from pale Pipkin lager malt alone. The resulting beer combined the hop character of a Pale Ale with the colour of a Golden Lager and proved a hit with drinkers. The brewery decided to keep brewing the popular beer and eventually renamed itself Exmoor Ales to reflect the popularity of the beer. While Exmoor Gold was the first beer in this new Golden Ale style, its influence on the English beer scene was limited; Golden Hill was located in the West Country, with the majority of its trade based in the local area.

The style was to be made popular by the Hop Back Brewery in Wiltshire. John Gilbert commissioned the brewery behind the Wyndham Arms in Salisbury the same year as Exmoor Gold was brewed. John initially had plans to brew a Golden Lager, a style he had experience with, but it never eventuated and in 1989 John brewed a Golden Ale naming it ‘Summer Lightning’ after a P.G. Wodehouse novel. The beer clocked in at 5% ABV — strong for an English tap beer — and was enthusiastically hopped with Challenger and Goldings hops. Summer Lightning was an instant hit, picked up a string of awards and was soon being brewed for bottle under contract to a slightly different recipe. The beer’s influence rapidly spread and by the early 1990s there were a string of Golden Ales being brewed by Britain’s micro brewers.

Golden Lager had been growing in popularity in Britain, appealing to a market that was increasingly falling for lighter coloured, drier beer — and was starting to pose a real threat to the traditional ale breweries.

LAGER INFLUENCE COMES FULL CIRCLE
Golden Ales were originally influenced by the rising popularity of continental Lagers. Colin Paige worked at Hop Back before finding himself in charge of Wellington’s Lion-owned Shed 22 Brewery. When he was designing ‘Wicked Blonde’, an influential pioneer of the New Zealand Pilsner style, he took influence from his days brewing Summer Lightning. So Lager beers spurred the creation of Golden Ales which, in turn, helped inspire New Zealand-style Pilsner Lagers.

NEW WORLD MEETS OLD
The first wave of Golden Ales all used English hops to create striking fruity, herbal hop characters. However, as the style began to take off, many brewers started to experiment with American, New Zealand, Slovenian, Czech and German hops. Oakham ‘JHB’, a 3.8% ABV Golden Ale brewed with American Mount Hood and English Challenger hops, was the first beer of the style to win the CAMRA Champion Beer of Britain trophy in 2001. Scotland’s Harviestoun ‘Bitter & Twisted’ followed, winning the top award in 2003 by using a combination of German Hallertau and Hersbrucker, Slovenian Styrian Golding, and English Challenger hops. In 2004, it was Kelham Island Pale Rider using American-grown Willamette that took the top award. The next year, a new Golden Ale category was introduced. Crouch Vale ‘Brewer’s Gold’ (using German Brewer’s Gold hops) took the top award the next two years running, and the trend has continued. Golden Ales have won the Champion Beer of Britain award six out of the last 12 years.

Larger regional and family brewers have followed the lead of the micro-breweries and have taken the style on board with notable examples from Fullers (Discovery), Adnams (Explorer), and St Austell (Proper Job).

MALTING
Coal had been used as a fuel in England since the Bronze Age, but was not used to roast malt as the noxious fumes released tainted the resulting beer. Wood and hay-fuelled fires were used in the malting process, likely producing dark amber to brown coloured beers. But in 1642 a new technology was trialled in Derby which used coke to produce a new time of malt. Coke — a fuel made from processed coal — allowed the development of precise kilns that produced taint-free pale malt.
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‘ENGLISH GOLDEN ALE’, AS A STYLE

English Golden Ales encompass a relatively broad style category, and can range in strength from 3.5% to nearly 6% ABV. They are generally brewed from pale malt alone — sometimes pale ale malt, sometimes lager malt — although they can have small additions of wheat, lightly coloured crystal malts, maize, and oats. They can vary from being relatively easy going to intensely and uncompromisingly hoppy, and are often late-hopped and dry-hopped. Further increasing their variety, they are usually fermented with the brewery’s house yeast strain, so can vary from notably fruity to relatively restrained in their fermentation profiles.

American craft beer influences are increasingly melding with the English Golden Ale style leading some, like the vocal Gazza Prescott of Steel City Brewing¹ to claim that a new ‘Mid Atlantic Ale’ style is forming, fusing the malt profiles and sessionable strengths of English Golden Ales with the intense late and dry-hopping of American IPAs.

GOLDEN ALE IN NZ

There are a few Golden Ales in New Zealand, although perhaps not as many as one might expect, considering the influence English and American craft brewing has had on the local craft beer scene — and how much use New Zealand hops have had in English Golden Ales. ‘Maris Gold’ was a trail-blazer, brewed in 2000 when Emerson’s were unable to brew their Pilsner due to a shortage of Riwaka hops. Combining Maris Otter malt, NZ Cascade hops and Emerson’s house yeast, the beer was a successful part of the brewery’s core range until it moved away from Maris Otter malt in favour of the local Gladfield pale malt. Emerson’s discontinued the beer, leaving more space for the incredibly popular Pilsner. Another notable New Zealand Golden Ale came from Christchurch’s Three Boys Brewery, launched in 2007 as a summer seasonal. Brewed with Nelson Sauvin hops and Gladfield pale malt, Three Boys Golden Ale became so popular that it is now an all year round brew. The Yeastie Boys have recently released an assertively-hopped take on the style, called Golden Perch, while under the guiding hand of head brewer Kelly Ryan, Hamilton’s Good George brewpub has released its Sparkling Ale, which is broadly in the Golden Ale style.

Golden Ale is a fantastic sessionable, sociable, summer style and one which our nation’s brewers might do well to brew more of!

Kieran Haslett-Moore was a founding member of SOBA, and is an avid brewer who has collaborated with Richard Emerson on several occasions and recently started releasing commercial beers under the ‘Southstar’ name. He is the Beer Specialist at Wellington’s Regional Wines & Spirits, and was a long-serving columnist in Capital Times (continuing in its new Capital Magazine incarnation). His columns are archived online at his ‘Beer From The Motherland’ blog, and he posts brewing-specific updates at southstarbrew.wordpress.com. Follow him on Twitter: @southstarbrew.

Kiwi Gold in the Motherland

New Zealand brewers have a pretty good track record in English brewing. Some of England’s best Golden Ales have been, or are currently, brewed by Kiwi brewers. The Taranaki-born-and-raised Kelly Ryan used to brew at Derbyshire’s Thornbridge Brewery, producing the zesty ‘Blackthorn’ and ‘Wild Swan’ Golden Ales. In the Lakes District, Matt Clarke brews a range of highly-regarded Golden Ales — and an equally-highly regarded New Zealand Pale Ale — at the Hawkeshead Brewery. I have been lucky enough to try Hawkeshead ‘Lakeland Gold’ — a very assertive and firmly bitter take on the style. ‘Ping Pong Pom’ James Kemp has, until recently, created and brewed a range of complex, hop-forward Golden Ales at the Buxton Brewery in Derbyshire, and before that, he also brewed at Thornbridge.

¹ See “Mid-Atlantic’ — Britain’s new favourite beer or a passing fad?, on the Oh Good Ale blog, 10 August 2010.]
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Wellington's brewing scene is on the up-and-up, with about five breweries popping up in the past two years. But, as Chris Rabey explains in his latest exploration of New Zealand's beery past, there's a rich brewing history in the region.

Craft breweries have been in Wellington a lot longer than many people think. Back in 1985, the Anchor Brewery was founded by Warwick and Wendy Jameson. Warwick was a former employee of Terry McCashin, and he set himself up in a corrugated iron building off Kenepuru Drive, Porirua. He called his brewery his “laboratory” because he was keen to engage in experiments on beer styles, and he produced four brews: Eureka Real Ale, Wellington Regional Brown (a hoppier version of Eureka), Anchor Lager, and Blotto (so named because of its 8% ABV).

Two years later, another craft — or “boutique”, as they were known then — brewery opened its doors. At the Western end of Jackson Street in Petone, Tim and Dee Armstrong, and Robert and Vivienne Hunter, created StrongCroft Brewery — an amalgam of Armstrong and Ashcroft, Dee’s maiden name. Among the brews they produced were ‘Directors’ (an IPA-like pale ale), Best Bitter, and ‘Owd Jim’, a winter-warmer seasonal beer named in honour of Jim Pollitt — the McCashin’s brewer who had helped get the novice brewers started. StrongCroft were able to sell their beers to a number of hotels and restaurants around Wellington, including the Park Royal (now the Intercontinental), which served it on tap.

Further up Jackson Street was yet another small brewery, simply named The Petone Brewery. Its brewer was Manfred Graff, originally head brewer with StrongCroft, who had decided to set up his own brewery. A short time later, StrongCroft had to relinquish its premises because the owner was redeveloping the site, so they all moved up the road. Graff produced a limited number of brews, including Settler’s Ale, and Graff’s new recipe for ‘Owd Jim’.

A third craft brewery in the Hutt Valley opened as the Valley Brewing Co., founded by Howard Pinder, who used to work for Lion and DB. Pinder established the brewery in a new retail area called the Station Village Complex, built on empty land behind the Lower Hutt (now ‘Western Hutt’) Railway station. A number of shops and entertainment venues were set up at the same time, and Pinder was able to open his own bar, the Parrot & Jigger, which pioneered the brew-bar concept in the Wellington region — an idea introduced to New Zealand by Auckland’s Shakespeare Tavern in 1986.

The Parrot & Jigger was the ideal location for patrons who could relax for a few hours enjoying the beers without a need for their own vehicle. A good friend of mine used to catch the train from Wellington, alight at Lower Hutt.
station, spend the afternoon supping, and then train back to Wellington. Valley Brewing’s beers were Valley Pale (a Pilsner-style brew), ‘Stoker’ Dark, Nor’Wester Strong Pale Ale (a 7% ABV top-fermented beer brewed in the true English manner), and Sou’Wester Strong Stout (also 7% ABV). Sadly, though, Parrot & Jigger is now just another Monteith’s Bar, though Valley’s beers are still brewed.

Finally, a further few details on my story from the previous issue on Wellington’s ‘Royal Oak’ Hotel, formerly on the corner of Manners and Cuba Streets. Its Bistro was run by ‘Tapuni’, a well-known drag queen of the time, and in stark contrast to the colourful entertainment, frequent stabbings also occurred. The ‘Front Bar’ was the domain of Maori and Pacific Islanders, and the upstairs Toledo Bar was known as ‘The Society Bar’. In both the New Tavern and the Bistro, ‘Toohey’s Tablets’ were apparently regularly sold. They were half-pink, half-turquoise in colour, with a narcotic content — a forerunner of today’s party pills (but stronger) and used to send people on hallucinogenic trips.

Chris Rabey is a long-time SOBA member and a long-time beer lover. While he spends his days working as a purchasing officer at Wellington Hospital, he spends his downtime drinking porters and stouts and has a passion for pubs – Chris has taken a photograph of every pub in the country, and has also spent some time in most of them.
Palmerston North is hardly a craft beer Mecca — the large student population is more likely to be seen with an orange can of ‘East India Pale Ale’ than a bottle of decent beer. Almost every restaurant serves lager, lager, lager, and a bit more lager — if you find a Stout on the menu, you’re probably in an Irish pub. There are plenty of bars to get a pint of Monteith’s or Mac’s, but there is only one tap in the central business district which pours craft beer produced by an independently-owned company — and it’s found in a cocktail bar.

But head out of the CBD and into the suburbs and one restaurant/bar is doing its bit to promote decent beer. Village Inn Kitchen in Hokowhitu really is a small slice of heaven for the craft beer fan.

Chef, owner and Palmerston North native, Nigel Lynn, purchased the place on April Fool’s Day in 2011 after a hospitality career largely spent in Wellington and Australia. Having worked at places like Brasserie Flip and Shed 5, Nigel said he really got into craft beer when he started work at The Malthouse when it was still on Willis St.

“Craft beer was what we had. It was the staffies beer — it was always on tap. I got to be surrounded by the stuff, and [The] Malthouse was so far ahead of its time.”

Having decent beer for people at his own place was a no-brainer, he said. “This whole area was aching for a quality local boozer really. There’s nothing around, except the golf club.”

At first the fridge was stocked with Tuatara and Epic, but things diversified when he started working with — and ordering from — Dominic Kelly, from Hashigo Zake.

Now, the fridge has a rotating list depending on the season. At any time, offerings could range from Garage Project to Green Flash. Nigel said he had to get some American beers in when he found out they were available. “I’ve always loved beers like Rogue Dead Guy Ale.”

Having beer machines from mike’s Brewery in Taranaki has also helped. “Ron Trigg [the director at mike’s] rocked up one day with a keg machine and two kegs and told me ‘see how it goes’. Having taps has made people more comfortable to treat this place as a local. They can say they’re going to come down and actually have a pint.” While the mike’s machines can only take a certain kind of keg, Nigel has managed to get some filled with beer from Emerson’s and Croucher. Plans are in the pipeline to get more beers on tap, maybe by using a kegerator.

But while having the product in stock is one thing, selling it can be another. Nigel said Palmerston North people have been more open to the idea of craft beer than some would expect. “Pricing has not affected it too much, as I compare it to a glass or bottle of wine — especially when it comes to boozer stuff. Something like Left Coast Hop Juice — that is a big beer. It is about telling people it is a beer to share and beer to dine with.”

Village Inn Kitchen — locals call it The Vik — has recently become the first bar in Palmerston North to be endorsed by SOBA, and offers 10 per cent discounts to members on Sundays.

Home brewers are also welcome to take their creations down to The Vik for Home Brew Sunday — a free, weekly event where people can share their latest creations and talk beer.

“For the amount of home brewers in this town — which is pretty impressive — there’s really nothing here for them,” Nigel said. “It is just like-minded people coming down to enjoy a good brew. What is the difference between that and a wine club?”

While a solid advocate for craft beer, Nigel said he could have made life easier for himself. “If I was hooked up with Lion, I would probably be busier. But you have to stay true to yourself. Plus, life is too short not go get in there and try something different. I just like to make sure it is quality.”

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On a Christmas trip to the UK, a former editor of *The Pursuit of Happiness*, Nick Page, and his family travelled via France and the Eurostar in order to avoid Britain’s crippling ‘green tax’. While there, Nick conducted a ‘Capital City Craft Beer Pub Challenge’ between Paris and London, and he reports back here on the results.

A craft beer pub challenge between England and France’s main centres seems like an unequal match on paper. France is well-renowned for its wine and far less so for its boutique beers, while the UK has an established, but continually expanding, real ale market.

Representing the blue corner was La Fine Mousse (The Fine Head), situated a short stroll from Ménilmontant metro in the north-east of the centre of Paris. The street corner bar firmly lived up to my pre-trip Googling expectations. It is most definitely one of a kind, being the only true multi-craft beer bar in the whole of the city, dispensing 20 beers on ‘pression’ (pressure taps), plus stocking around a further 200 bottled varieties from around the globe.

The clientele on a freezing Parisien evening comprised hip young couples plus some obvious beer fanatics avidly discussing their respective purchases. The staff, especially the co-owner, Roman, were incredibly engaging, passionate, and informative about the range of beers on offer.

My plan was to focus on the French microbreweries, particularly those offering something different from the blonde and brune norm. All pression brews were served in attractive 250ml house-branded stems, with 500ml options also available. My first choice was the 5.5% ‘Etoile du Nord’ from Brasserie Thiriez. This unfiltered English-style IPA got the session off to a great start with its crisp fruitiness and fluffy head.

However, thrown off track by the unavailability of Brasserie des Garrigues’ ‘La Frappadingue’ IPA, I diverted to the Zona Cesarini from the Birrificio Toccalmatto in Italy (so much for a plan!). This 6.5% “Pacific IPA” was bursting with luscious passion fruit aroma and matched, if not bettered, anything I had previously sampled of this new world style.

The family and I ordered a Planche Mixte - a beautifully presented selection of fromage, charcuterie and breads - which arrived along with my third selection. This was a Tripel at 8.5% called ‘Silvanecte’ from the St Rieul brewery in Picardy. A great match for the platter, the beer was beautifully balanced, with a resinous citrusy fruit character and a strong malt presence.

In summary, I feel La Fine Mousse could easily be described as ‘the Hashigo Zake of Paris’, so if you ever find yourself in the city, I thoroughly recommend searching it out. **Verdict : 9/10**

Onto the ‘big smoke’ and a much-anticipated reunion with work colleagues. Having toiled away in London during both the eighties and the noughties, I became familiar with a range of real ale free houses. But with the recent upsurge in microbreweries, I was keen to search out a venue that offered the latest, and hopefully greatest, from the capital and beyond.

So, representing the red corner was the Southampton Arms, situated on the Highgate Road midway between Kentish Town and Gospel Oak. The pub is a classic, cash-only, unspoilt Victorian gem. Inside, the chalkboard proudly proclaims: “We are the only dedicated ale and cider house in London to sell only beers and ciders from small independent breweries”.

The bar boasts a bank of 12 handpumps for cask beer, another six for cider, and two pressure taps. On arrival at around 5.30pm there was a smattering of locals of all ages, but the elongated bar filled quickly as the evening progressed. During the quiet, early evening period I got a chance to chat to one of the co-owners and...
the knowledge and the enthusiasm displayed bore an uncanny resemblance to the Paris bar.

I began with a pint of Kent Brewery’s ‘Brewers Reserve’ Strong Pale Ale at 5%. This crisply bitter, straw-coloured beer represented a fine start and represented good value for London at £3.20. Next up was the Howling Hops ‘American Amber Ale’, an enjoyable and aromatic pale red ale at 5.5% with piney hop characters and a light, toasted maltiness.

It was impossible to resist one of the three varieties of home-made pork pie on offer. The pickle variety made a for perfect accompaniment to Dark Star’s Winter Solstice Special (4.2%), but eating it became a bit of a challenge, with the pub full to the gunnels.

I also had time to visit the dark side, first with a Magic Rock ‘Dark Arts Surreal Stout’ (6%) and finally, a Dark Star ‘Critical Mass’ (7.5%). I loved the comment from one local who proclaimed I would be a ‘critical mess’ at the end of it, but this was a perfect winter warmer to wrap up the night, with its Christmas-cakey character reminiscent of Emerson’s ‘T aieri George’.

In summary, the Southampton Arms is a true craft beer and traditional pub-lover’s paradise. Make sure you take the C2 bus straight there from Piccadilly Circus when doing your next OE. Verdict : 9.5/10

So there we have it, London wins by a very narrow half a point – or should that be half a pint? Two great bars showcasing the best of their respective country’s current microbrewery products in their own very special ways.

Nick Page is a former editor of The Pursuit of Hoppiness and has been an active SOBA member for many years. He’s just left ut of Hoppiness and has been an active SOBA member for many years. He left Wellington to pursue new adventures in Brisbane, Australia.
WEIZENBOCK BANANA PUDDING
MADE WITH SCHNEIDER TAP 6 UNSER AVENTINUS

Winter is a great time of the year to experiment with pairing (and cooking!) with rich, roasted, and warming flavors. With this in mind, I choose to use my favourite Bavarian Weizenbock: Schneider ‘Tap 6 Unser Aventinus’. A dark, strong, wheat beer brewed to 8.2% ABV with a top-fermenting ale yeast, it pours a dark, cloudy, ruby colour with a thick, luscious, creamy head and notes of super-ripe bananas, toffee, and dried fruits. It is extremely versatile, and works well with roasted meats, hearty stews, and pungent aged cheeses. However, for me it was an obvious choice to use in a caramelized banana pudding, an American southern classic from my childhood.

**INGREDIENTS — FOR 8-10 SERVINGS**

**FIRST STAGE:**
- 3/4 cup Aventinus
- 3/4 cup light brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
- 5 large ripe bananas

**SECOND STAGE:**
- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup Aventinus
- 2 cups whole milk
- 2 large eggs
- 4 egg yolks
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract

**THIRD STAGE:**
- 40 Super Wine biscuits

**METHOD:**

Combine the first four ingredients in a heavy-bottomed sauce pan, bring to a boil for 2 minutes, then add the bananas (sliced) and set aside. Whisk the second-stage ingredients in a heavy-bottomed pan. Cook over a medium-low heat, whisking constantly for 8-10 minutes or until the mixture thickens to a pudding-like consistency.

Next, in an oven-proof glass casserole dish, layer in the caramelised bananas with half of the biscuits on top — followed by the pudding, with the other half of the biscuits on top. Finally, beat the egg whites at high speed with an electric mixer until foamy, gradually adding the icing sugar and beating until the meringue holds a stiff peak. Spread the meringue evenly over the top layer of biscuits and bake at 150°C for 15-20 minutes until golden. Let the pudding cool on a rack for 30 minutes — then enjoy with the rest of the Aventinus!

**Fourth stage:**
- 4 egg whites
- 1/4 icing sugar

_A former chef turned craft-beer-bartender, Sam Whitney is an American import who now works at Hashigo Zake in Wellington, turning out surprisingly-many things from its minuscule kitchen. He regularly arranges beer-and-food pairings for Hashigo and for Craft Beer College._
LOCAL MEETINGS AROUND THE COUNTRY

**Auckland**  
Brent Westein  
brentwestein@gmail.com  
Every Friday from 5pm  
Check the Auckland SOBA twitter feed for the venue @soba_auckland

**Hamilton**  
Patricia Gleason  
gleason.patricia@gmail.com  
Thursday evenings

**New Plymouth**  
Warwick Foy  
wfoy@xtra.co.nz  
First Thursday of the month at 5.30pm  
Check the Taranaki SOBA page for the venue  
facebook.com/TaranakiSoba

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

**Wellington**  
Aidan Caig  
aidan.caig@gmail.com  
First Tuesday of the month at 5.30pm

**Nelson**  
Peter Mayes and Bill Fennel  
soba.nelson@gmail.com  
First Wednesday of the month

**Christchurch**  
Charles Swettenham  
manager@staffclub.canterbury.ac.nz  
One Thursday a month

**Dunedin**  
Richard Pettinger  
pettal@clear.net.nz  

- Wednesday 14 August 7.30pm at Tonic  
- Saturday 28 September 3pm BYOs & tastings at Paul & Karen’s, Phone: 03 455 7289  
- Wednesday 9 October 7.30pm at Inch Bar  
- Saturday 9 November 3pm at Duke of Wellington  
- Wednesday 11 December 7.30pm at Eureka

SOBA also has regional coordinators in areas which don’t yet have regular meetings, but please feel free to get in touch with the following people to register your interest:

**Blenheim:**  
Mike Pink - mikepink@paradise.net.nz

**Palmerston North:**  
Jono Galzuka - j.galuszka@gmail.com

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