The Pursuit of Hoppiness

Your Craft Brewing and Pub Magazine

Winter 2015

‘Beer for all the Right Reasons’
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FOR THE LOVE OF BEER

Welcome to the winter edition of your favourite beer magazine, an issue strong on travel.

As someone keen to get back to West Coast of the United States after an all-too-brief visit to San Francisco a couple of years ago, I really enjoyed Greig McGill’s story on his recent visit to the West Coast (page 16). His guide to LA, San Fran, San Diego and Las Vegas (yes, Las Vegas, as crass it may look from a distance, has a pretty decent beer scene) is a must for anyone thinking of making that trip.

Closer to home, Denise Garland’s story on the Wellington SOBA visit to Nelson for Marchfest was a reminder of the some of the fantastic venues in that area. From the Old Moutere Inn to the Golden Bear brewpub in Mapua – it’s a region that has so much offer, though we won’t get into a debate as to whether Nelson or Wellington is our true craft beer capital.

Speaking of Wellington – like many beer lovers I will be travelling there for Beervana in August and I’m really interested to see where the new owners are going to take this festival. Martin Craig’s report (page 6) on the new ownership indicates there will be changes – but maybe not too many for this year’s event.

Richard Pettinger’s short and sweet tribute to the Lauder Hotel took me back to last summer when my wife and I called in there for a late afternoon beer as we rode the Central Otago

COVER: All you need is love (and beer): Thanks to Golding’s Free Dive for this sweet image which shows us there’s a beer for everyone, no matter what planet you’re from.
EDITORIAL

Rail Trail. There are some great pubs along the trail but Lauder was one of the few places that offered an alternative to the Speight’s dominated landscape. At the end of the Rail Trail we had a night in Clyde, where the Victoria Store Brewery wasn’t yet open for business. It is now, and as our story on page 30 details, it looks like a brilliant addition to the region.

As a keen home brewer (queue shameless plug for my new book: The Big Book of Home Brew – A Kiwi Guide, which will be available soon) I was delighted to read about Stewart Island’s home brew competition (page 40) and the revelation that even this far south in our great country we now have craft beer loving bar owners.

Finally, I’d thank all the contributors to this edition. We are blessed with some fine beer writers in this country and it’s a pleasure to be able to bring you articles from Martin Craig, Jono Galuszka, who explores the contract brewing industry in our main feature in this edition, Dylan Jauslin, who shares his love for the often under-appreciated Mata Brewery, and Jess Ducey, who documents her experience of brewing as part of the Beered Ladies collective.

Pulling together this magazine – from the delightful cover image to the pictures from the SOBA Otago awards night – I’m reminded what a diverse, interesting and talented bunch of beer people we have in this country.

Cheers!
Michael Donaldson
Find yourself at Beervana!

14-15 August
Westpac Stadium
www.beervana.co.nz
Beervana, New Zealand’s premier craft beer event, has been bought by the Wellington Culinary Events Trust (WCET), as David Cryer hands over the reins after four years. Under David’s reign, the event grew from 4000 to 10,000 visitors, included good food, moved to Westpac Stadium, and broke out of the beer nerd demographic.

We caught up with WCET chief executive Sarah Meikle the day after she arrived back from Melbourne’s Great Australian Beer SpecTAPular (GABS). With just a couple of months until Beervana 2015, Sarah says it will business as usual this year, with changes planned for following years.

“There’s a few things we will change this year but we won’t change everything at once. As far as the brewers go, we won’t be buying the beer up front any more, which gives the brewers...
more flexibility and control.

“From the volunteers’ point of view, we are recruiting now. Beervana wouldn’t be what it is without volunteers. People want to be more than just attendees – they want to be a part of it and we want to keep that opportunity for them.

“And for visitors, we want to streamline the process around issuing and charging the payment wristbands. We are committed to the Westpac Stadium concourse this year but we want to make some changes to make it a cheerier place to be – things like more heating, more seating, and other things we can do to make it more interesting for people.”

This year will repeat the trade show on the Thursday afternoon. International visitors from Australia and Portland as well as the Pink Boots Society will be back and other guests are being sought. Unfortunately the plastic glasses will be back too, for logistical reasons.

And for 2016 and beyond? Sarah is adamant that Beervana will never be subsumed into Wellington On A Plate.

“Beervana will remain a standalone beer event. It will have its own brand, its own manager, it is owned by a completely independent company. There’s no question Beervana is a great attractor to Visa Wellington on a Plate (VWOAP) but it never going to merged to become the VWOAP beer event.

“We’re going to review the venue and look at other options. There are some more creative options we can look at for the medium term. And that brings other opportunities, like looking at the timing, at the same time.

“Coming away from GABS, I feel really confident about Beervana. Undoubtedly the biggest draw card of GABS is the venue [the Royal Exhibition Hall in Carlton] – it’s stunning! But I think the opportunity for the brewers is better at Beervana and they can represent themselves well. I would like to look at a tasting paddle option, because that works so well at GABS, and I’d like to see more limited releases that you have to be at Beervana to experience.”

As the festival director for VWOAP, Sarah has an advisory group of hospo industry players. She wants to establish one for Beervana too, saying the event is for the industry, by the industry. She is also looking for any feedback and ideas from volunteers and visitors – contact her at Sarah.Meikle@wcet.org.nz.

**UPDATE** – Beth Brash has been appointed as Beervana’s Manager. Beth is well known to Wellington beer and food fans through her Eat and Greet blog. See Beth’s take on last year’s Beervana at [http://eatandgreet.co.nz/2014/08/beervana](http://eatandgreet.co.nz/2014/08/beervana)

Beervana, 14-15 August 2015, Westpac Stadium, Wellington
A year or so ago, we decided if we want to take Britain seriously we have to brew there to get the price point right. It was just matter of finding [a brewery] with the right batch size, quality control, and being able to keep our beer brewed there. - Stu McKinlay

If you go into any decent bottle store, pub or restaurant about once a week, you would have noticed the exponential increase in fresh New Zealand brewing companies. As much as some succeed, others do not, creating the frustrating scenario of buying a beer from a brand, only to spend the next year vainly hunting for more due to said brand folding like an English batting order (ahem, make that NZ batting order – Ed).

But that is the reality of contract brewing. Usually founded by a beer fan or home brewer who wants to sell beer commercially but cannot afford to sink hundreds of thousands of dollars into stainless steel, contract brewing companies lease space and time from established breweries to get beer to the market.

While able to afford the first brew, waiting for the money to come in from sales means many
contract brewers become one-hit wonders. Søren Eriksen, the founder of 8 Wired, could have been one of those one-hit wonders. “If the first few batches didn’t sell, then we probably would not have made another one.” It is bonkers to think 8 Wired, which was crowned champion brewery at the Brewers Guild of New Zealand awards in 2011, may not exist today if sales of those first beers did not go well.

But his path from brewing on a Cooper’s home brew kit his wife gave him to opening his own brewery, complete with impressive wooden foedres for aging beer, is different to most contract brewers. Most have little experience in a professional brewery; Eriksen kicked off 8 Wired while working for Renaissance.

He says he started contract brewing at Renaissance because “that’s where I got the job”, but it was never supposed to be a long-term thing. “I planned to do that for three months.” But, to misquote a certain cheese commercial, some things take time – five years.

But it worked out well for both parties. He knew Renaissance had spare space, and he could make his beer himself on a kit he knew. “It was definitely the best of both worlds. I had the control and the flexibility of use and didn’t have to put up lots of cash.”

There were also next-to-no labour costs. While 8 Wired was technically invoiced for his work, he was paid by Renaissance to brew his beer. That is because he would, for example, filter Renaissance Stonecutter while brewing 8 Wired Hopwired. “I never really considered us being a contract brewery, because I did the work myself and used someone else’s kit instead of handing over a recipe.”
CONTRACT BREWING

That all changed when both companies grew too big for the one space, seeing Eriksen contract out the brewing of Hopwired to Steam Brewing in Auckland - a contract brewer getting someone to contract brew his beer, if you will.

Steam is an enigma for many people. They know it exists, and know brands such as Epic, Bach Brewing and Zeffer have worked with the crew there, but it is rare to see a beer widely distributed under the Steam brand.

It was never always that way.

Production manager Shane Morley says Steam was born out of the Cock & Bull pub chain. Steam was the brewing arm for the first pub, but when Cock & Bull expanded to three bars they needed more space.

Auckland Breweries was purchased in 2004 to keep up with demand for such beers as the widely acclaimed Monk’s Habit.

There was always contract brewing done on the new site, but things dramatically changed in 2012 when the chain was sold.

In a move SOBA described as an “end of an era for brewpubs”, the new owners signed a supply contract with Lion Breweries, killing off the Cock & Bull beers.

Since then, Steam has almost exclusively concentrated on the contract market.

Morley says Steam also does lots of work with non-alcoholic drinks and testing brewing techniques, but it is the brewing most know about.

The Cock & Bull legacy still shines through. Morley says Steam made a name for itself with
hopy beers, such as the aforementioned Monk’s Habit. That helps Steam get clients in this hop-addicted age we live in. It makes sense that Eriksen took Hopwired to Morley and his team, because they have been working with hop-driven beers longer than most people have been drinking them.

While Eriksen could do the work at Renaissance, he had to hand the reigns over at Steam. “Someone is not able to walk off the street and brew here,” Morley says. “Steam is a very manual brewery. The guys are always welcome to dig out the lauter, though.”

While Steam is a bit pickier about who they take contracts with than some – “we don't just brew for any Joe Bloggs” – Morley says he has noticed the rise in contract brewers.

Like any rising wave, it has to crash sometime.

“There is only so much market share in New Zealand. You are seeing some bars you go in and there are 10 different beers on tap. You maybe want a beer, but not want 500ml of a new beer that you may not like. People stick to what they know best.

“There are only so many taps out there now days. How does everyone fit into the picture?”

Hashigo Zake and Beer Without Borders frontman Dominic Kelly wrote about this phenomenon on his blog The Ladder late last year. In his “Random End of Year Rant”, he said more people are taking home six-packs of one beer as opposed to a selection of different beers.

“It’s as if the early adopters of the last five years are settling down with a few staples and experimenting less.”

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Yeastie Boys – Panhead – Tuatara – Kereru – Little Thief

Pursuit of Hoppiness - Winter 2015
“Making some good beer isn’t enough any more. A new brewery either needs a killer beer or exceptional branding. (Or both. Or very deep pockets.)”

Morley says contract brewers do have something on their side – the brewing gear being made in China. Being able to buy a brewery for as little as a third of the price as comparable equipment made elsewhere is obviously attractive, and could see more people side-step the contract model - but there is risk attached.

“You have to be careful what you buy. You get the possibility of people buying stuff and, a year or two down the track, it will fall apart.”

Of course, not everyone has plans to build a brewery. Or, at least, sticks to those plans.

Stu McKinlay of Yeastie Boys says he toyed with the idea of opening something like a brewpub, but volunteering at the New Zealand Brewing Awards resulted in him meeting Steve Nelly of Invercargill Brewing.

The pair got to know each other, discovering each other’s love of beer being experimental while drinkable, and a seed was sown in McKinlay’s mind.

“I got a good idea he was massively under-utilising [his brewery].”

McKinlay was still home brewing at that stage, although he knew the time to go commercial was coming.

“I found myself making home brew on the deck for myself, and it became so popular that people kept turning up with empty flagons. I thought by selling it to them I would find out who the real friends are and who were actually just customers.”

And customers there were. After three batches of contract-brewed beer at Invercargill, inquiries started coming in from overseas.

Fast-forward to today, and McKinlay is preparing to start contract brewing at BrewDog in Scotland.

“They asked a few times about buying beer to stock in their pub chains, but we never really had enough to send.

“After a year or so ago, we decided if we want to take Britain seriously we have to brew there to get the price point right. It was just matter of finding [a brewery] with the right batch size, quality control, and being able to keep our beer brewed there.”

Smaller breweries in the United Kingdom are growing quickly, meaning they have to hold onto their tank space. BrewDog, however, have already gone through those growing pains, meaning they should always have space for companies like Yeastie Boys.

McKinlay says having his beer brewed there is good for BrewDog’s employees, beyond just having an extra revenue source to pay the wages.

“BrewDog was founded on brewing interesting beers, but they brew so much Punk IPA and Dead Pony Club that the brewers probably want something to have fun with.”

Contract brewing overseas is not just for outfits like Yeastie Boys. Wellington-based ParrotDog is getting its beer brewed at Two Birds in Victoria, Australia, while Panhead is also getting its beer made by someone else across the ditch.

Panhead founder and head brewer Mike Nielson says the reasons are two-fold. The obvious one is the impact on the bottom line.
Passionate about NZ craft beers and local wine
17 taps, 3 real-ale hand pumps, 8 guest taps wines
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“It costs less to brew in Australia than for us to manufacture it here and ship it over.” Freight is the big cost, but there are also savings on hops and excise tax.

The second reason to contract in Australia is to keep a foothold in the market.

“We can’t keep up with sending kegs to Australia. We sell quite a lot of keg beer over there, and just don’t have the capacity here.”

Brewing in Australia also enables Panhead to become part of the regular market there, Nielson says.

“It is easy to sell a container of beer a year, but we want to sell a container a month or a container a week. For us, the only way to achieve decent volume is to have it made over there. It keeps us active in the market; we get to be on the shelves all the time.”

Then there is the freshness issue. Nielson says the beers he makes – heavy on the hops with fairly lean malt bases – need to be drunk as fresh as possible, and brewing in Australia can cut four weeks off the time between kegging a beer and getting it into a bar.

“For me, it’s better for the beer.”

Contract brewing in different locations does create logistical issues. Nielson has employed a business and sales manager based in Melbourne, while McKinlay has hired someone to take care of Yeastie Boys’ New Zealand dealings while he is in Britain getting operations going there.

What is the future for new contract brewers?

McKinlay says it will never be a “get rich quick scheme”, but people who already have a foot in the beer industry are the ones likely to do well – people like Andrew Childs from Behemoth Brewing and Shiego Takagi from Funk Estate.

Staying open and transparent about how you operate is also important, McKinlay says, citing the Australian attitude to contract brewing.

Some early adopters to contract brewing there were economical with the truth when talking about who made the beer and where it was made.

“When we went there … people wanted to know what was going on behind the scenes and if we were just a marketing company. [That attitude] hindered the opportunity for lots of small Australian home brewers wanting to get into something like this.”

“It is interesting how quickly we were accepted [in New Zealand] and how that has changed the overall perception here.”

The positive attitude to contract brewing is probably because early adopters were, by and large, honest about how the beer was made.

That attitude here has, of course, made it more attractive. Eriksen says there were only a few serious players in the New Zealand market when he started, but it is impossible to keep up with them all now.

“I’m going to sound like an old hack, but there’s just too many. But, to some extent, it keeps everyone on their toes and shakes up the market.”

New brewing companies keeping established players alert, ensuring progress in brewing styles, improving quality and creating a vibrant market for consumers? That can only be a good thing.
Celebrating 10 years brewing Aotearoa’s most awarded beer

three boys
Oyster Stout

6.5% Alc/vol

Three Boys Brewery - 592 Ferry Road
Christchurch, Aotearoa New Zealand
In April, a group of friends and I went on a bibulous and hedonistic tour of the California beer scene. Las Vegas, Nevada, may also have snuck in there. I had planned to write a Greatest Hits style piece detailing some of the best places, but I realised that even with only four stops on the trip, I’d far exceed my word limit and still fail to do the trip justice.

Here then, instead, are a list of thoughts. Most relating to beer, but some general, inspired by the recent trip and possibly the associated sacrifice of more than a few pieces of grey matter at the altar of over-appreciation!

I’ve been visiting the USA annually since around 2008, and this trip was largely confined to California and Las Vegas. Still, it is always interesting to see the thematic changes and cultural ripples in the collective beer scene (if there is such a thing) with each visit. This time, things seemed different.

Los Angeles. The natives think you’re talking only about Downtown if you don’t say “LA County”. This is unsurprising, because the place is enormous, and annoying as hell to get around. Luckily Uber is improving this massively. It was my first time in the area, unless you count the train station and LAX airport, and you shouldn’t. Ever. I discovered that the Metro is a lot more useful than people say, you should always tip your UberX or UberXL driver, and that while Compton looks exactly as terrifying as it is portrayed in various sub-genres of hip-hop, Long Beach is gentrified and really quite pleasant. What would Snoop think? On that note, you can be quite sure that I left my wallet in El Segundo.

Must visits: El Segundo Brewing, Beachwood BBQ and Brewing, Monkish, Smog City.
San Diego. Another misleading place name. Worse though, all the locals actually seem to embrace all the remote and far flung bits as “San Diego”. This has the awful effect of making you believe that Escondido must just be a short Uber ride away instead of an 80 minute oh-dear-my-bladder-will explode-soon bus ordeal. For all that though, and once you adjust to the quirky public transport options, it really is an amazing place. The drought has intensified drastically since last I visited, and you can see the desert encroaching in many areas. The water tastes flat, dead, and salty. Bars have signs saying they will now serve water only on request.

It’s not all misery and tumbleweeds though. The brewing scene is as lively as ever. The trend towards saisons and sours which is sweeping much of the rest of the USA is more focused to individual breweries here.
Most breweries are still hop-driven (I/II)PA factories, churning out those pale pints as fast as the laid back dudes and dudettes of the area can drink them.

Must visits: Green Flash, Alesmith, Coronado, Modern Times, Stone (Escondido and Liberty Station), Societe, Pizza Port Solana Beach, Lost Abbey/Port Brewing

Las Vegas. Sin City. Craft beer in Nevada? Not when I first visited in 2009, but clearly the wages of sin are a truckload of excellent (if pricey) craft beer bars invading almost every nook and cranny of the Strip and beyond. Sadly, long time craft beer oasis in the desert, the Freakin’ Frog is “on hiatus”, and might be gone for good. That’s about the only bad news here though!

Must visit breweries and bars: Tenaya Creek Brewery, Banger Brewing, Atomic Liquors, The Public House, The Pub at Monte Carlo, Aces and Ales.

The Bay Area and Sonoma. San Francisco is famous for its diversity. Well, was. Now it’s famous for tech startups which tend to be a tad monocultural. Anyway, that diversity is still present, and no more so than in the range of beers available. New breweries are popping up everywhere. While IPAs are still dominant, the power of the sour is heard in the Bay. The bars are as vibrant and it’s great to see that despite the tech-ising of the area, the craft beer punters drinking their fill within are a lot more culturally and gender diverse than I’ve seen before. Beer heals. Beer builds.

Must visits: Zeitgeist, Mikeller, Monk’s Kettle, Toronado, Church Key, Cellarmaker, Jupiter, Eureka, The Rare Barrel, Lagunitas, Beer Revolution, The Trappist, Sprenger’s Taproom, Third Street Alehouse, Russian River … and a detox centre!
WINTER IS COMING.

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In the first of a series, Dylan Jauslin takes a close look at some of his favourite breweries.

Aotearoa Breweries aka Mata was started in 2005 by Tammy Viitakangas. The story is a fairly typical one for the era: Tammy had fallen in love with beer whilst on her OE. “I had always wanted to try owning a small business, having had jobs working for large food and pharmaceutical companies, I never found I really loved any of my jobs,” says Tammy. “I went on a road trip around the South Island to as many breweries as possible, and asked lots of questions, and decided I wanted to give brewing a go.”

With the help of her then partner and her parents, she bought the old Strongcroft brewery equipment and settled in Kawerau, where her Finnish-born father Joni and Kiwi mother Gloria (now Mata’s sales manager) lived. Tammy set out to create a brand and beers reflecting her Kiwi heritage. Being part Maori, she was keen to work with local flavours, such as Kawakawa, manuka honey, hangi-cooked kumara, and of course, New Zealand hops. Ten years on, Tammy and the family continue to brew from the same location - a somewhat stitched-together assortment of old shops. The Viitakangas clan has grown: Tammy’s uncle Esko and her two sons, Ari and Ezra have joined them.

Mata is a brewery close to my heart because they gave me my start in the beer industry. It was 2009, I was working a stand at Beervana, when Gloria approached me with the offer of working for them as a supermarket demonstrator. Every weekend in the lead-up to Christmas, my job was to haul a mobile demonstration table and packs of beer to local supermarkets (the supermarkets got a bit pernickety about me using their stock as samples), stand in front of the chiller and harass people who were just trying to find the fat-reduced yoghurt. Back then Mata made three varieties of nice 5% golden beers: the Artesian Kolsch, a Manuka Golden Ale, and Mata Feijoa (a fruit beer that I remember selling large quantities of by camping by the cider section). This relates to
another reason I love Mata.

You see, the reputation Mata had in brewing circles was very well respected: Tammy made clean, easy-drinking and consistent beers, in an era when consistent, quality production was an issue a lot of breweries struggled with. The reputation Mata had with beer geeks was another matter. They had unfortunately viewed that as something worse than bad: they were boring.

Now that’s entirely unfair. There is plenty of room in this world for clean, drinkable golden beers. But what I will say is the Mata range were beers of their time. Specifically the mid-2000s. But this was 2009 - the year the game changed. Yeastie Boys had blown our minds the year before with Pot Kettle Black. In 09, Renaissance and 8 Wired had dropped the twin hop-bombs of Marlborough

Pale Ale and Hopwired; officially ushering in the nuclear-age of the NZIPA. Drinkers could perhaps be forgiven for thinking two kinds of golden and a fruit beer were a bit quaint.

It could have been far too easy for Mata to stay in their particular groove, making good but un-adventurous beers, neither flourishing, nor failing. “We stayed comfortable with what we were brewing for a bit too long and noticed that out in the big wide world, away from little old Kawerau that much bigger things were going on with beer,” says Gloria. But instead of slowing sinking out of sight, they did what several other breweries have failed to do.

They listened to, and engaged with, their consumers. They looked at trends in the industry, then gradually changed. They added new beers to their range: an Amber Ale here, a Dry Stout there. I remember their first new beer that really excited me: Blondie Wit. Still very much part of their core range, it tastes of citrus, spice, apricots and sunshine.

Over the next three years came a raft of beers. Some have become core staples, others seasonals or one-offs. It started with Taniwha (hangi-smoked kumara beer), followed by the trio of the Volcano Red IPA, Hip Hop Pilsner, and Wai-iti Waka Pale Ale. The real 'Ah-ha!' moment for me came with Tumeke! IPA - generous Kiwi hops sitting on a malt character almost amber in colour and flavour. Whilst these beers are classical in their sensibility, Tammy has also proved herself adept at more avant-garde, flavoured beers. Her Mataccino Stout was, in my opinion, criminally robbed of a trophy in the BrewNZ awards. Their collaboration with Fat Monk, a Mango White IPA, is nothing short of sublime, and well on par with anything from Yeastie Boys or Garage Project.
BREWERY PORTRAIT

The really wonderful thing about Mata is they’ve managed what surprisingly few brewers from that era have done: take themselves from pre-‘craft’ forerunner to modern ‘craft’ brewery. Most importantly though, they have done this entirely on their own terms. They’ve taken onboard trends and developments in the market and made them their own. Tammy has stuck true to something that should be fundamentally important to any brewer: herself. The original goal was to make beers with uniquely New Zealand twists. “We’ve since expanded a bit beyond that, and now I really just create beers that I love myself, rather than always just thinking about New Zealand flavours as such,” says Tammy.

So what’s next? Long term, the plan is to move to a bigger site, possibly in a larger town. “We’re looking into setting up more of a retail aspect to the business either with a brewpub or brewery experience with off-site sales and we’re looking at possibly moving the brewery to Whakatane or elsewhere in the Bay. There isn’t really a big craft beer scene in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, and we think there is opportunity to set something up.”

More short term however, Tammy’s getting back to her Finnish roots, which means we can all look forward to Mata Sahti. This is a strong beer, similar to a Weizenbock, infused with honey and juniper branches and berries. Like Tammy herself, this beer is a hybrid: juniper branches are substituted with manuka tips.

Mata beers can be found in many great beer-spots around New Zealand. The Mata Sahti will be available this winter. Keep an eye out!
RISING CAN FESTIVAL 2015

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BREW DAY

Jessica Ducey joins the Bearded Ladies on International Women’s Collaboration Brew Day

The first time I brewed anything, I was a volunteer in Ethiopia, blessed with boundless evening free time in a small mountain town. I'd made cheese, read hundreds of books, churned butter, painstakingly stuffed dozens of tiny ravioli, and knitted endless scarves. Brewing seemed the logical next step in my quest for time-consuming hobbies.

A sack of guavas and a packet of bread yeast later, I lovingly placed a plastic bucket wrapped in a hoodie in the corner of my bathroom. The resultant sludge was pungently sweet and deadly strong, so I decided to retire from brewing until I could access proper equipment, decent ingredients, and/or some professional expertise.

Years later, I started apprenticing with a home brewer friend in Wellington and was dangerously close to investing in my own kit when the Bearded Ladies proposed we team up to participate in the International Women’s Collaboration Brew Day. Steph Coutts of Craft Beer College kindly organised logistics and supplies (thanks Gladfield Malt and Baylands for donating materials!), as well as paying duty so we could release the beer commercially.

Denise Garland developed our recipe and worked with Eugene at The Occasional Brewer to teach us the finer points of

Photo by Megan Whelan

A BREW TO UNITE THEM ALL

Photo by Steph Coutts
Plenty of beer treats available now…

Daredevil
At last, our popular Red IPA is in the bottle! A real favourite amongst our brewing team. The subtle hoppy flavours give little clue to what develops once you start tasting the beer… luscious malt body, hints of fruity toffee apples, then a long complex finish that inspires another mouthful to experience the full range of flavours all over again! Just the beer for the cool evenings in front of open fires, or for you townies – a heat pump.
Food Match: Treat as a digestif or with a sharp aged cheddar with quince paste. 6.6% ABV

JP 2015
This year we present a Belgian Specialty Strong Ale. Candy shop aroma with a delicate rich body and fruity caramel-toffee finish. Food match: Enjoy with a spicy Tagine or apple pie. 7.6% ABV

Dinner Bell
A Brewers Guild of NZ Awards Trophy winner in 2013, and fermented 100% with a strain of Brettanomyces (“Brett”) yeast, Dinner Bell was described by the judges to epitomise the Belgian Table Beer Style. The aroma has a complex breadiness, with a hint of sourness and tartness that is attributed to “Brett”. The body is light and slightly fruity with an almost lemony crisp, dry finish. Also awarded a Dish magazine medal in their “Session beer” tasting panel.
Style: Belgian Table Beer. 3.7% ABV

Cheers from the team at Emerson’s.

I fell in love with beer because of its limitless potential for diversity. Tea, gummy bears, fruit, coffee, lamb bones, coconut, chilies, jet planes, hops - there’s really nothing you can’t put in a beer (we’ll leave the question of whether you should for another day). Half the fun of craft beer is the constant surprises and innovation.

That’s the often-frustrating thing about drinking beer as a woman - beer, in all its glorious variety, is too frequently depicted as a ‘man’s drink.’ Women are pretty props for advertising, or the punchlines of lazy beer names and labels, but to many in the brewing (and make sure we followed directions!). For a nerdy kid who genuinely loved school science classes, brewing is an utter delight. Like baking, it’s a delicate balance of science and art. Temperature changes can ruin everything, and the timing of a hop addition can dramatically change the flavour profile of a beer.

Thanks to my kitchen brewing misadventures, I’ve long appreciated the amount of skill that goes into the beers I love. Getting to experience that, even just on a small scale, has only increased my awe of the brilliant brewers operating in New Zealand. I’d recommend having a go at brewing to anyone who loves beer or science (or both!).

Photo by Eugene at Occasional Brewer
industry, we’re still not real customers.

Participating in IWCBD gave us the opportunity to challenge that perspective and stick it to everyone who ever offered the cider when we ordered the stout or doubted our interest in the dry-hopped imperial IPA.

While brewing is a fantastic time in and of itself, the real fun came with the launch party at Little Beer Quarter. After attending countless launches as a consumer, it was nerve-wracking to watch people taste our Unite Under the Red Crescent Moon red ale for the first time. We’re amateurs, after all. For many of us, this was our first commercial brew. What if they hated it?

Maybe people were being kind, or maybe they were caught up in the novelty, but Unite was well received. I watched customers unaffiliated with the launch going back for another round and - more importantly - talking about women in the beer community. I hope next time they see a sexist beer advert they remember us and challenge our industry to do better. I look forward to seeing them at next year’s launch so they can see how much we’ve learnt. That’s what IWCBD is all about - celebrating beer and the people who make it and love it. All of them.

Launch Day
Photo by David Wood
Save the date!
November 7, 2015

www.dunedinbeerfest.co.nz
www.fb.com/dunedinbeerfest
Victoria Store Brewery takes the concept of a brewpub to a whole new level.

Nestled in a historic building, in a Central Otago Gold Mining town, in the middle of an iconic restaurant where diners literally walk through it on the way to the bar, it’s fair to say it’s far from average.

But then, neither are its owners – Dave and Andy Ritchie.

The couple bought the iconic Clyde B&B at the start of Central Otago Rail Trail in 2010 and set about turning it an historic idyll.

In restoring the old homestead and stables, they managed to retain authenticity, while adding the private bathrooms and luxury fittings the modern traveller expects.

They quickly became famous, not just for the accommodation, but for their food – delicious, fresh yet simple Central Otago fare that made the most of seasonality.

When, in 2014, they turned their mind to the old Victoria Store (once made famous by Fleur Sullivan) their plans for the 400 square metres space were ambitious.

Retaining as much of the 1868 old building and bringing it up to modern building code was a mammoth task; one they decided to tackle in six months (the start and end dates being bookmarked by a 500+ person Cuisine at Clyde cooking demonstrations weekend, and Easter Sunday when 1400 customers came through the property on its opening day.)

They decided on a 95 seat restaurant, bar, café and two commercial kitchens (one for the restaurant, the other to produce their own line of delicious breads, sauces and preserves.)
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They then decided to increase the degree of difficulty by adding a 1200 litre batch brewery to the plan.

Their brief was simple, the plant had to produce great beer (that was first and foremost), it had to be aesthetically appealing, it must comply with health and safety considerations – and it had to have a very small footprint, both physically and environmentally.

The answer to the space restriction was to go up; their bespoke brewery is designed by Steve Nally, and built by Invercargill-based Weldtech Engineering as a gravity fed plant, much of it built from up-cycled materials.

Designed as a single piece of equipment, it’s mounted on a robust steel platform that sits inside the shell of the historic building and where barriers are required (for health and safety), they’re glass or perspex.

Cooled hop condensate rains onto the floor at the Victoria Store Brewery – designed to bring the delicious aromas of brewing into the restaurant.
The brewery has been designed to ensure steam, water, noise and chaff dust won’t disturb diners who will nevertheless get the benefit of what Nally describes as “pleasant food type aromas”.

“We wanted to bring the brewery into the restaurant, literally – our kitchen is open to view so we wanted the brewery to be too,” Dave said.

Victoria Store brewer Grant Radka is of a friendly disposition (on non-brew days you’ll find him behind the bar). The Central Otago native moved to Westport to learn his trade and couldn’t believe his luck when a new brewery was being built in his home town.

They’re starting with one beer – a Bohemian style pilsner appropriately called Stone Mason – which they’re serving alongside other great Southern craft beers.

“We sought a lot of advice and the best of it was to make a beer you enjoy,” Dave said.

“We did a lot of taste testing, lots of different hop and malt profiles and this is the one that ticked all the boxes.”

Great advice as it turns out. Stone Mason makes up 60% of their bar volume, and fans are now demanding bottled product to take home.

The light malt with a hint of toast is balanced with citrus and tropical fruit hop flavours – at 4.5% it’s a flavoursome thirst quencher perfect for the locale.

And perhaps in the best example of “build it and they will come”, the operation has united the Ritchie family – their son Edward and daughter Charlotte have moved to Clyde to help run the operation which almost overnight went from a cottage business run by Dave and Andy to one employing 50 staff.

“I never thought either of our children would live in a small town,” Dave said.

For starters they’ll just be making the one beer but to keep things fresh a 50-litre test brewery is on order for one-off and festival beers.
GARAGE PROJECT
Milk Bar

POP UP AT PREFAB AUGUST 19TH - 22ND
A PUB TO APPLAUD

If you are looking for a great ale in Central Otago, do check out the Lauder Hotel. Publican Derek “Knobby” Clarke aspires to having nothing but craft beers on his 8 taps. When we were there, a keg of local brewer Sam Forsyth's Ferris Road pale ale was finished and a new one opened. This beer is pretty fantastic. Just like a pale ale should be. Crisp and clean and clear. Nice! Well done, Sam.

Knobby wants Otago brewers to reliably supply kegs of good ale. I asked him for a soundbite. He says he tells his locals: “Give craft beer a go. I am.” (No need to tell SOBA folk that.) He also said “I really want to stay in Central Otago” to which I might add “so they can all live hoppily ever after.” I promised him I would mention him in SOBA circles and, although it didn’t seem right at all, I left him with a bottle of our own English mild.

There are a lot of great accommodation options in and around Lauder. The pub itself is a typical old style rural place to stay, with really excellent food on the menu. More modern B&B places abound. If you google Central Otago accommodation you’ll find them. One great one is just over the road from the pub.

So, between Dunedin and Queenstown/Wanaka, at last, there is at least one place to sample a craft beer. I can vouch for that.

Richard Pettinger
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Martin Craig argues Moa the beer doesn't have to go the way of Moa the bird … but it must change its image to survive.

In a world of indifferent breweries with great reputations, Moa remains a standout – it is a great brewery with an indifferent reputation.

There have been two distinct and contrasting beer cultures in my lifetime. Old Beer is dominated by big industrial brewers making indifferent products. It advertises big but avoids mentioning the beer itself. Old beer is masculine and actively objectifies women. It expects lifetime loyalty, often based around a back-story that is obviously false. No, Tui is not made by supermodels.

New Beer is a complete contrast. It has many small brewers, and the smart ones know how to separate themselves from the competition. Advertising emphasises the product and what goes into it. New Beer drinkers seek novelty over loyalty, and want authentic information about the brewery and its values. And New Beer is inclusive in a way that attracts female customers.

Moa has excellent New Beer credentials, but unfortunately this message isn’t getting out because Moa’s marketers to this point have stuck to an Old Beer message. That’s unfortunate for two groups – Moa’s shareholders; and people who want to enjoy and appreciate New Zealand craft beer.

Moa has good products – some very good. It has a great brewer: Dave Nicholls is talented, experienced, highly-qualified, admired by his peers. Moa could succeed in the New Beer environment. Instead it tried to take on Old Beer, failed, and alienated New Beer in the process.

Moa’s share launch was a bad start. Much was written and said about the debacle, especially the nasty 1980s-style sexism of the prospectus. That’s all history now, and it would be forgotten by most if the business had met the potential that prospectus promised.

But boy, it didn't. As I write this in May 2015, the share price is at yet another low at 32c - about 25% of the 2012 launch price of $1.25. That’s gotta hurt the egos who promoted themselves in that IPO launch. And it’s been obvious that Moa has backed off the confrontational advertising that CEO Geoff Ross used successfully to build his 42 Below vodka brand. Beer ain't vodka and Ross was slow to realise the different market values.

Moa had good products and a good reputation before its share float. Today it still has good products. It could reconnect with its market with a message that’s authentic, inclusive and all about the beer itself. Telling its New Beer story could turn Moa’s fortunes around.

And if it doesn’t? As the share price shows, Moa’s marketers have managed to build a poor reputation on the back of a good product. In the world of over-hyped beer brands, that’s some kind of unique achievement.

Read more from Martin Craig at www.beertown.nz
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HOPSTOCK 2015

Hopstock 2015 was Wellington's biggest ever celebration of green-hopped beers. More than 25 unique beers were served over four days in 18 bars.

Organised by Craft Beer Capital and wrangled by Pete Moran, the event has built a growing appreciation for the mysteries of green-hopped brewing. For the rest of the year brewers use dried hops which are more stable and brewers know what to expect from the finished beer.

But green-hopped beers take the hops straight from the farm to the kettle. This means – for better or worse – the beer gets the most volatile hop compounds that are otherwise lost in the drying process. It also means brewers are flying blind and the outcome can be unpredictable.

Some brewers go to great lengths to get the freshest hops possible. Tuatara chartered a light plane to bring the ingredients for its Conehead. And why not, when someone's conveniently located an airport near your brewery.

The green-hopping innovation continued this year. While earlier Hopstocks were dominated by green hopped version of pre-existing IIPAs, this year saw a broad range of entries, including Pilsners and Lagers, Red IPAs, a Schwarzbier, one sour and a “distressed fresh hop, brett barrel fermented, smokey IPA” from Mike’s.

Pete Moran says organising Hopstock is a juggling act. Planning starts in spring, and the event itself must be fitted into a free weekend some time before ANZAC Day. That means working around the known variable of Easter, and the less predictable variables of hop harvest dates and the time needed for fermentation and maturation. “We can't hold it over Easter, and after ANZAC the breweries have been sitting on the beer for too long,” Pete says. “It's fresh-hopped so you want to try it as soon as you can.”

Pete says Craft Beer Capital is considering running Hopstock over more than four days. “The feedback we had from bars and punters would be to spread the event over more days, especially with the number of entries increasing each year. We'd like to encourage the bars to run special events too – food trucks, bands, meet the brewer, that kind of thing.”

Next year marks the 10th anniversary of green-hop brewing in New Zealand. In 2006 Lion introduced Mac’s Brewjolais, crafted by the much-missed Colin Paige, and the rest is history. While the dates have yet to be set, Pete is planning for the biggest Hopstock yet. “After the great buy-in from bars this year, we're expecting big things. We expect more beers next year, just so long as the brewers can get the hops.”

Further north, the green revolution is slowly ensnaring Auckland under the banner of Fresh Hop. Brewers were paired with bars to create an array of green hopped beers which were then put to the taste test by punters via an online voting system.

There were some impressive beers on display at the initial tasting session at Newmarket’s Lumsden with Hot Water Brewing’s Wet Venetian, Epic’s Fresh Hop Ale and Hallertau-Liberty’s BDSM among the standouts.

When it came to the vote there was a clear winner: BDSM. This 8 per cent black lager, Bier das Schwarz Massive, is chocolate-orange delight thanks to the fresh Motueka hops enlisted; and proving that not all fresh hop beers need be massive IPAs.
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The date has been set for New Zealand’s Southern-Most Home Brew Competition in one of New Zealand's most scenic locations.

Hosted by Chris and Deanne Sara at Church Hill Restaurant and Oyster Bar on Stewart Island, it is a weekend of awesome brews and food, set this year for the first weekend in October.

Chris, a former DSIR scientist, moved to the island to become host at his wife's restaurant, a converted timber clad holiday home, perched on a hill overlooking Half Moon Bay. To describe Chris as a beer fan is something of an understatement – marrying his passion with Deanne's love of fresh local produce he was able to pair delicious meals with locally produced beers from Invercargill Brewery – and a stunning selection of whisky and bourbon from Sam Snead's House of Whiskey in Auckland.

Business on the island is very seasonal, summers are spent feeding an influx of tourists, while the winter months are the time for the Saras to slow down, close up shop and head abroad to recharge the batteries and absorb new ideas and flavours.

In 2014 the couple decided to kick-start summer with a home brew competition (Chris admits to not being a totally disinterested by-stander with a brew of his own he was keen to get the low-down on.) He decided to invite Sam Snead and Steve Nally to the island to host tastings for the locals – and judge the island’s very first home brew competition.

The event was clearly aimed at locals – but a few out-of-towners were allowed in. “So many festivals get hijacked by people who just want to get drunk,” said Chris. “We wanted something where it was about the beer itself.”

Accepting the invitation was a no-brainer, said Sam, a colourful Montana native who settled in Auckland where he quickly carved himself a niche as a whisky and bourbon specialist (a tough job, but one somebody had to tackle).

“It was my first trip to the island it was fantastic to meet other like-minded people,” he said. Just ten entries were judged on point against their respective styles for appearance, taste
and drinkability – with the top ranked beer
taking out the title.
“The standard of beer was incredibly high,”
Steve said, “a lot of home brewers are
producing beers that outshine some of our
commercial craft breweries.”
Once the formal judging was complete, the
floor was opened to festival goers to sample
the entries and decide a people’s choice.
In the blind tastings Peter Hilton of
Diamond Harbour Canterbury won the
overall title with his wheat beer, while Chris
Sara won people’s choice for his Kiwi Brown
Ale.
It was so successful the Saras have decided
to do it all again this year.
For further information on the 2015 event
check out the Church Hill Restaurant and
Oyster Bar Website http://www.churchhill.
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Between 2009-2011, former SOBA Committee member and Pursuit of Hoppiness editor, Nick Page, organised a SOBA trip to the Nelson/Tasman region around the weekend of the Marchfest beer festival. It was always a great weekend of fun with great beer and good people, and after a long hiatus, I decided it was time to bring it back.

So on Friday March 20th, a group of us met at Nelson Airport and began our beer and brewery tour. Our bus driver was Mike from On the Bus charter bus tours, which offers a fleet of heritage buses for tours. The 1974 “Sabrina” was our ride for the day.

We had four stops to make on the Friday and Hop Federation in Riwaka was the first. Simon Nicholas and his wife Nicki bought the Monkey Wizard brewery in 2013 and opened Hop Federation. Both Simon and Nicki were having a well-deserved morning off when we arrived, but we were treated to a brewery tour and generous tasters of the beers on tap at the tasting room.

The next stop was lunch at Moutere Inn – arguably the country’s oldest pub. The bar had just began its IPA showcase, so there was a great range of hoppy beers on tap to match the BBQ lunch the lovely crew put on for us.

By this stage we were already running late for our third stop, Townshend Brewery. The brewery is only a short drive from the Moutere Inn in a small wooden building out the back of Martin Townshend’s home, surrounded by bush and farmland. Martin spoiled us with case after case after case of beer to sample, let us have a nosy around the 2014 Champion Brewery and answered every one of our questions.
We then raced to NZ Hops, our last stop of the day and for which we were very, very late. Doug Donelan was kind enough to give us a tour of the factory anyway, where the hops are processed, packed and stored. It was mind blowing to see just how many hops were stacked in their refrigerated store house, especially since the harvest was still ongoing at that point. It was a great way to end our first day of the tour.

Saturday was festival day, and Marchfest was as great as always – the sun was out, there was a great variety of beer and food on offer, and there were a number of seminars which were educational, interesting and – at times – controversial.

Sunday was a quieter day for our tour group, after a big day (and night) on Saturday. Mike picked us all up in a 1977 Volvo Coach “Mary Ann” and we travelled to Mapua for a leisurely lunch and beers at Golden Bear. The weather, while still warm, had finally had enough and we experienced a few showers while hanging in the covered outdoor area at the brew pub. But it didn’t deter some of us from checking out the wharf and some of what else Mapua had to offer, before we were driven back to Nelson Airport for our flights home.

Thanks to Mike Boyton for driving us everywhere in his beautiful buses; Hop Federation, The Moutere Inn, Martin Townshend, Doug Donelan and Golden Bear for their hospitality; the SOBA Committee for allowing this to go ahead; and to all of those who attended.

Denise Garland
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This year will go down as a good year for malting barley, hops and cider apples. A hot, dry summer and autumn produced good quality harvests in all three crops, with an especially good year for Canterbury malts. Martin Craig reports.

MALT
MalteuropNZ sources malt from Hawkes Bay, Manawatu/Wairarapa and Canterbury. Its 2015 harvest report, commissioned by Cryer Malt, notes the hot and dry summer made up for a slow spring.
Hawkes Bay growers felt a wee flick from the tail of Cyclone Pam in March, but overall dry conditions in summer and autumn produced good harvesting conditions.
Manawatu/Wairarapa crops had a slow start but January showers and a hot February allowed the barley to catch up. Canterbury crops also started slow with the dry spring but caught up fast. Early dewfalls in Canterbury affected some harvesting but overall it was a strong year. The average yields reported for each region were 5-6 tonne/hectare in Hawkes Bay and Manawatu/Wairarapa; 8t/ha in Canterbury. Irrigated areas exceeded these averages. The report shows barley is now New Zealand’s biggest cereal crop, and malting barley makes up about 13% of the output (the remainder is animal feed). Our malting barley production has been static for the past decade at about 50,000 tonnes/year. And while mainstream beer production is down, the growth of craft beer, with higher alcohol levels, is maintaining demand.
The two main malting barleys grown in New Zealand are Jimpy and Fairview, both developed by MalteuropNZ from European varieties and bred to local conditions. Pop that into the conversation at your next beer tasting!

Meanwhile, Gladfield Malt in Dunsandel, Canterbury, recorded an exceptional crop. Owner-director Doug Michael: “The 2014/15 barley harvest was an absolute boomer! The growing season was looking promising all the way through, with a cool dry spring, which is ideal for barley to build good root reserves before going to air. Cool temperatures and dryer than normal conditions meant very little disease pressure on the crops.

“The summer proved to be one out of the box, the old Canterbury Nor’wester was back to her brilliant best with high sunshine hours during the crucial grain-fill period of December. Almost all cropping farmers in Canterbury are able to rely on irrigation nowadays, something other countries are so very envious of. We had hot temperatures and no rain in January. This meant the farmers were able to get the crop in the silo in perfect condition without any rain damage, and in most cases were able to enjoy a cold beer at the end of each day instead of panicking about what the weather was going to do tomorrow.”

Doug says one Canterbury farmer claimed a world-record harvest yielding 13.5 tonne/hectare. “As a farmer these are the years we dream about and what keeps us going through the bad seasons.”

**HOPS**

740 tonnes of hops were harvested in the 2015, a slight (3%) decline on 2014. Aroma/flavour hops accounted for 606 tonnes with Alpha-designated bittering varieties at 134 tonnes, New Zealand Hops said. The area of land devoted to hops increased slightly, showing the shift in demand to lower-producing aroma varieties. “An overall total of 389 hectares was harvested, an increase of 19ha from the 2014 harvest (370ha). Cultivation continues to be dominated by aroma/flavour varieties at 328ha, while Alpha-designated production continued to fall to 60ha.”

The Tasman spring was unusually cold, especially overnight, which held back plants considerably and slowed development until well into November. Tasman’s famous summer finally arrived in the New Year and persisted solidly into April. It brought long, sunny days with plenty of heat, interspersed with warm coastal rain.

Weather during harvest was near ideal, although some severe northerly winds and torrential rains did occur mid-point in the aftermath of Cyclone Pam. The harvest commenced with the traditional northern types of Fuggles and Styrian Golding arriving into store in the second week of February. Early New Zealand varieties such as Pacifica and Motueka commenced soon after with all picking operations in full swing by the start of March and concluding with the final bales of the later varieties Rakau and Green Bullet into cold storage by early April.

Some highlights of the 2015 harvest include:

- The most prolific variety was Nelson Sauvin (166 tonnes), followed by Wakatu (127t) and Motueka (103t).
- Organic varieties made up 20.6 tonnes of the 2015 crop (2.8%).
- The 2015 crop was approximately 95% sold prior to harvest. The remainder is expected to be sold by the 2016 harvest.
- A pilot brewing plant was commissioned during the season. New experimental hop varieties have been earmarked for brewing trials through the pilot system, with as larger
trials through commercial partners.
• Another highlight was the industry's green hop programme which saw NZ Cascade, Motueka and Nelson Sauvin distributed to 35 brewers throughout the main centres, supporting several green hop beer events and seasonal releases.

APPLES
Peckham’s Cider grows its own cider apples in Upper Moutere, Tasman, near where the hops come from. Caroline Peckham reports a good season with high-quality fruit. “We had enough cold nights last winter to provide good winter chilling for the trees; this resulted in excellent bloom on some of the more sensitive varieties in our cider orchard. A cool spring made it look as though it was going to be a late season, but everything caught up over the hot, dry summer. This resulted in a good harvest of smaller, but excellent tasting apples.
“Each year, our cider vintages improve, as our orchard matures and provides greater volume and complexity of fruit. This year, using some excellent fruit, we have made many experimental batches, including several wild ferments and single variety ciders, each with very different characteristics. Because we mature our ciders for at least 6-9 months, the proof won’t be in the pudding until late this year!”
In North Auckland, Zeffer Cider’s harvest showed excellent yields of small, juicy fruit. Cidermaker Jody Scott said its apple yield was well up on previous years, and produced “small, really good quality” fruit with a sugar content of 12-16 Brix (~ 1.065 OG). Jody says the all-cider apple Slack Ma Girdle is looking really good so far.
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