The Pursuit of Hoppiness
- the voice of SOBA -

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Your Craft Brewing and Pub Newsletter
“Beer for all the right reasons”

www.soba.org.nz
The Pursuit of Hoppiness - Spring 2008

As a card carrying member of SOBA, you would be demonstrating your dedication to great beer. Here is a list of sponsors, who are prepared to offer various discounts and/or benefits upon presentation of your SOBA membership card:

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More importantly, there’s a great social scene with the chance to be part of organised events such as Brewery Tours, plus the opportunity to become actively involved in the promotion of craft beer throughout New Zealand. So what are you waiting for?!

We see this Newsletter as an important vehicle in helping us to achieve some of those goals listed above and very much hope you gain satisfaction from reading the Springtime edition.

Enjoy the pursuit of hapiness!
NEW kids on the brewing block, Yeastie Boys, launched their hoppy Pot Kettle Black porter at Beervana and the beer went down a storm.

Co-founder and ex-SOBA Treasurer Stu McKinlay says Pot Kettle Black is the result of an ongoing friendly debate I’ve been having with fellow Wellington beer writer Neil Miller over whether hops or malt is the most important element in beer.

‘I’m all about malt, while Neil is a certifiable hop head. Pot Kettle Black, the first release from Yeastie Boys, is an American-style porter that combines the delicious elements of dark malty beers with the huge hopping rates usually reserved for modern craft pale ales. This beer will certainly save us a plenty of time arguing at the bar.’

In true Kiwi style, Yeastie Boys’ recipes originate from a 40 litre pilot brewery in a Wellington backyard shed. ‘Operating on such a small scale there was little chance of the beer making it any further than ourselves, and those in the know, until we partnered with multiple award-winning brewer Steve Nally of Invercargill Brewery to produce our first batch of commercial beer,’ said Yeastie Boys co-director and New Zealand’s most notorious beer hunter, Sam “The Grandmaster” Possenniskie.

‘Part of the Yeastie Boys concept is to utilise the excess capacity of New Zealand’s best little breweries and to promote the diversity in New Zealand’s craft beer scene. Steve, being one of the best experimental brewers in the country, is the perfect partner and mentor for us to produce our first beer with.’

Dux migrating further North
Have you noticed the influx of Dux to the Wellington area lately? Richard ‘Dicky’ Fife of the Dux Brewing Company has been staging a series of informative tastings around the city. He cites Wellington as the ‘craft beer capital of New Zealand’ and a place where the drinkers possess ‘discerning palates’. He feels the Dux range, previously limited to the Christchurch and Queenstown areas, will enhance the growing range of boutique ales available in the capital and with spare capacity at the Christchurch brewpub, he will be able to satisfy demand.

With a strong interest in the dining experience, Dicky ensures that the tastings have a distinct affiliation to beer and food matching and the diverse range of Dux beers provides ample scope for some interesting combinations. The full range comprises Dux Lager, Hereford Bitter, Nor’Wester, Sou’Wester and Ginger Tom.
## BREWNZ 2008 AWARDS - THE FULL RESULTS

**2008 Champion Brewery - Tuatara Brewing**

That’s Champion - Team Tuatara with 3 Gold Awards. © Robert Catto / www.catto.co.nz, all rights reserved.

### Classic Hybrid New Zealand Style

**BEST IN CLASS**
- Biman - Invercargill Brewery
  - Gold
  - Silver
- Weka Native Lager - Moa Brewing Company
  - Silver
- Mac’s Gold - Lion Nathan
  - Silver
- Alpine Ale - Dux de Lux
  - Silver
- Pure Lager - Hawkes Bay Independent Brewery
  - Silver
- Steinlager Classic - Lion Nathan
  - Silver
- Mac’s Hop Rocker - Mac’s Brewery
  - Bronze
- Mates Draught - Hawkes Bay Independent Brewery
  - Bronze
- Force Lager - Hawkes Bay Independent Brewery
  - Bronze
- Monteith’s New Zealand Lager - Waitemata Brewery
  - Bronze
- Speight’s Pilsner - Speight’s Brewery
  - Bronze

### Amber & Dark Lagers

**BEST IN CLASS**
- Hereford Bitter - Dux Brew Company
  - Silver

### International Golden Lagers

**BEST IN CLASS**
- James Squire Pilsener - Malt Shovel Brewery
  - Gold
- Genesee Beer - High Falls Brewery
  - Gold
- Genesee Cream Ale - High Falls Brewery
  - Gold
- Genesee Light - High Falls Brewery
  - Silver
- Samuel Adams Light - Boston Beer Company
  - Silver
- Virgin Lager - Yellow Cross Brewery
  - Silver
- James Squire Pilsener - Malt Shovel Brewery
  - Silver

### French & Belgian Style Ales

**BEST IN CLASS**
- Ardennes - Tuatara Brewing
  - Gold
- Ardennes - Tuatara Brewing
  - Silver
  - Archipelago Explorer - Archipelago Brewing
  - Bronze
- Moa St Joseph’s - Moa Brewing Company

### New World American Style Ales

**BEST IN CLASS**
- Epic Pale Ale - Epic Brewing Company
  - Gold
  - Silver
- Intergalactic Funk - Toasted Bastard
  - Silver
- Jim BeamQuote Stout - Emirates
  - Silver
- Mates Draught - Hawkes Bay Independent Brewery
  - Bronze
- Force Lager - Hawkes Bay Independent Brewery
  - Bronze
- Monteith’s New Zealand Lager - Waitemata Brewery
  - Bronze
- Speight’s Pilsner - Speight’s Brewery
  - Bronze

### UK & Other European Style Ales

**BEST IN CLASS**
- Tuatara IPA - Tuatara Brewery
  - Gold
- Tuatara IPA - Tuatara Brewery
  - Silver
- Bookbinder - Emerson Brewing Company
  - Silver
- Mata Artesian - Aotearoa Breweries
  - Silver
- Speight’s Pale Ale - Speights Brewery Dunedin
  - Silver
- Old Burton - Galbraith Brewing Company
  - Silver
- Black Duck - Hawkes Bay Independent Brewery
  - Bronze
- Bitter and Twisted ESB - Galbraith Brewing Company
  - Bronze
- Fuggles Best Bitter - The Cock and Bull
  - Bronze
- Founders Generation Ale - Founders Organic Brewery
  - Bronze
- Samuel Adams Brown Ale - Boston Beer Company
  - Bronze

### Stouts & Porters

**BEST IN CLASS**
- Clydesdale Stout - Harrington’s Brewery
  - Gold
- Clydesdale Stout - Harrington’s Brewery
  - Silver
- Three Boys Oyster Stout - Three Boys Brewery
  - Silver
- London Porter - Emerson Brewing Company
  - Bronze
- Speight’s Porter - Speight’s Brewery Dunedin
  - Bronze

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BrewNZ 2008 awards continued

Strong Ales and Lagers
BEST IN CLASS
Monteith’s Winter Ale Doppelbock - DB Mainland Brewery

Bronze
Monteith’s Winter Ale Doppelbock - DB Mainland Brewery

Wheat & Other Grain Beers
BEST IN CLASS
Emerson’s Weizenbock - Emerson Brewing Company

Gold
Emerson’s Weizenbock - Emerson Brewing Company
Tuatara Hefe - Tuatara Brewing
Redback Original - Matilda Bay Brewing Company

Silver
Buxom Blonde - The Cock and Bull

Bronze
Mac’s Great White - Mac’s Brewery

Fruit, Spiced & Herb Flavoured Beers
BEST IN CLASS
Boysenbeery - Invercargill Brewery

Gold
Boysenbeery - Invercargill Brewery
Ginger Tom - Dux Brew Company
Green Malt Celt - Green Man Brewery

Silver
Archipelago Samui - Archipelago Brewery
Emerson’s JP - Emerson Brewing Company
Emerson Piny Stout - Emerson Brewing Company

Bronze
Mata Manuka - Aotearoa Breweries
Moa Harvest - Moa Brewing Company
Three Boys Wheat - Three Boys Brewery

Experimental and low/non alcoholic beer
BEST IN CLASS
Enrico’s Cure - Green Man Brewery

Silver
Enrico’s Cure - Green Man Brewery
Brewer’s Res. Motueka Special - Emerson Brewing Co.

Best Packaging
Monteith’s New Zealand Lager - Monteith’s Brewing Co.

BrewNZ 2008 Judging Panel
LOOKING FOR BEER ON THE BALKAN PENINSULA

FRANCES AND I spent most of May on back-to-back bus tours on the Balkan Peninsula. I spent some time looking for local beers in supermarkets and local stores. As expected, most of the beers I found were boring typical Golden European lagers, largely from the countries that made up the former Yugoslavia. The first was Mythos, which I drank in Athens and a beer you would be familiar with because it has been available in New Zealand. The only thing to be said for it is it is quite pleasant if you are sitting in a rose garden on the roof of your hotel on a hot Sunday afternoon looking at the Acropolis and Mt Lycabettus, both of which you have just been scrambling over. I did manage to find another Athens lager called Alpha (5%), which was very similar to Mythos, but came in a can.

Two days later we were in Bulgaria where again I found two more Golden lagers, Kamenitza (4.4%) from Inbev in Plovdiv and Apuha Lodge (4.5%) from the Ariana Brewery in Sofiu which is owned by Heineken. Neither of these beers was memorable, except for the circumstances in which they were drunk. It was May Day and we were sitting outside in Sofia having got our beer from a local stall. There were two demonstrations going on almost in front of us. One was the ultra right nationalists, who were objecting to Bulgaria being in the European Union, and that demonstration attracted a lot of police attention. The other was a demonstration by old-age pensioners who were complaining that they had spent nearly 50 years paying in to a state pension scheme and when the communist regime went, so did the money in the pension scheme - funny that. But there was one interesting Bulgarian beer which we actually found in Romania - a Christmas beer. They went away happy because I didn’t say that is a typical Golden lager. Our next stop was Slovenia which was magical, almost too perfect. I have subsequently discovered, which I should have known, that Slovenia produces 3% of the world’s hops, mainly Styrian, and has 2400 hectares in cultivation, making it the fourth largest in Europe and the fifth in the world. Despite that, I can’t say that Slovenian beer was particularly interesting. I tried two, a Union (4.9%) from Pivovarna Union in Ljubljana a superior golden lager in that you could at least taste some hops, not so with Lasko Club (4.9%) another very mediocre golden lager. A similar experience in three golden lagers in Croatia, Karlovacco (N/K) Karlovacco Pivovara in Karlovac. Karlovac is an industrial town close to Zagreb, but the beer is omnipresent throughout Croatia, even more than Lion or Tui here. But it does taste all right sitting on the harbour front in Dubrovnik watching the hoards arrive from the cruise ships. The other beers were Ouziko (5.2%) from Zgab Brewery and Pan Lager (5.2%) from Carlsberg Croatia. But I did like Tomislav (7.3%) from Zagreb Brewery, which I tasted in bottle form and on draft. It must be something to do with strong, malty dark beers. On a day trip to Montenegro I managed to find two beers from countries which were new to me, but both Golden lagers, Nik Gold (5.2%) from Montenegro, and MB Pils (5%) from Novi Sad in Serbia. However the bottle of red wine we had in a family restaurant in Montenegro, made by the family, was absolutely fabulous.

Finally in a little convenience store on a back street in Split I came across two beers from Falchiano in San Matteo. What attracted me to them was the fact that they had spring tops, and I have a small collection of spring top bottles. They were La Putena (6.5%) and La Tabachera (10%). Both rich, dark, fruity beers with Tabachera more like a Christmas beer. They were both worth purchasing for the labels.

TED VERRITY
Improving Your Beer - Part 2

In the last issue of The Pursuit of Hoppiness I talked about how to improve your homebrewed kit beers with a few simple tips. 1. Don't use sugar. 2. Add extra hop pellets for flavour and aroma. 3. Pitch the right volume of healthy yeast. Simple steps following the same principles used to make good food - using the freshest and highest quality ingredients will give the best results. But how can the equipment we use improve our beers?

Standard equipment in a brew kit includes a plastic fermenter with a large screwtop lid and a tap near the base, a plastic stirring spoon, a bottle capper and bottle caps and possibly a hydrometer to measure the level of sugar at the start and end of the fermentation. Instructions on the can are to pour the sticky, syrupy malt into the plastic fermenter with some hot water and top up the fermenter with cold water.

The two things that concern me about this procedure are cold water and plastic. One of the most common problems with beers entered in the recent SOBA National Homebrew Championships was infection - phenolic (medicinal, cloves), lactic (sour, acidic), sulphur (rotten eggs, burned matches) or Di-methyl Sulfide (cooked corn, vegetal), in many cases infection in the home brewing process becomes literally ingrained. Plastic is a relatively soft material and can easily become scratched during cleaning, especially if a hard brush is used to clean off dried krausen (the foamy, rocky head of yeast that forms at the peak of fermentation). The minute scratches created in the plastic become a home for bacteria that can happily survive a quick rinse with bleach or the dreaded sodium metabisulphite.

A more preferable vessel for fermenting your beer in is a glass carboy (or demijohn), normally used in New Zealand for fermenting wine but much more common in the US as a beer fermenter, you can get a 30 litre fermenter for about $40 at a homebrew store.

Although more difficult to get beer into and out of, a glass fermenter can be cleaned and sterilised with a lot more certainty than a plastic fermenter. Even better, if you can afford it, would be a stainless steel conical fermenter available from Earl's Stainless in Invercargill.

Adding cold water to your sugary wort without boiling first has the potential to add unwanted bacteria from the town water supply into an environment perfect for bacterial growth. Boiling the wort (the unfermented infusion of malt and hops) has a number of benefits when making a beer from scratch including isomerisation of hops to give bitterness and flavour; the coagulation of protein in the wort during the "hot-break" helping to improve the clarity of the finished beer; sterilisation of water and adjuncts; and boiling off any unwanted compounds such as hypochlorite and sulphur.

To boil a standard homebrew volume of beer you need a large 30 litre pot and a heat source, this can be your kitchen stove or a gas camping stove available from hardware stores. Portable gas camping stoves have the advantage of supplying high BTUs for a vigorous rolling boil. Once boiled the wort should then be cooled as rapidly as possible to reduce the possibility of wort contamination from bacteria. This can be done by submerging the pot in an ice cold bath or by using a Wort chiller.

One point to note with doing a full boil (brew) when using malt extract from beer kits is that boiling will increase caramelization (desirable in some cases) and will increase hop isomerisation meaning that any hop flavour or aroma in the kit will be converted to additional bitterness, the reduced flavour and aroma should be compensated for by adding extra hops late in the boil. Because the amount and bitterness of hops in a kit is difficult to gauge the answer is to do a brew starting from malted barley grain instead of extract, but that's something for the next issue.

Rob Owen

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SOBA Newsletter

Not so Amazing Journeys.
Every day.

JUST got back from a week’s ale sampling on the Sunshine coast and beer thoughts continued when sitting on AirNZ coming home. Heineken, Steinlager, Export Gold on offer. Would they offer wine drinkers 3 types of Sauvignon Blanc? Spirits drinkers three types of gin? I’m a realist and most people want to drink fizzy yellow lager, so I don’t have much problem with having, say, two of these beers. But why can’t the third be a different style. And if so, I thought, what should it be? I had 3 ideas.

One, Mac’s Sassy Red. It has the pull tab tops (easy for the hostesses and stewards to serve) and would be a nice contrast, and is a genuine New Zealand product.

Two, Epic Pale Ale. Maybe a bit more challenging, but again, something they could tout as being a Gold Medal winner at BrewNZ again this year.

Three, wherever possible, have available the beer that is featured in the Air NZ magazine for that month. In this instance, Geoff Griggs was writing about Monteith’s 140. I haven’t gotten around to drinking it, and would have been quite happy to try a bottle while reading his piece. What a nice tie-in that would be.

I just found it kinda depressing. AirNZ make a bit of a play about featuring the best of New Zealand when it comes to wine, and general service levels and all that. So why is the beer choice so bland?

On a sad note...this is the last time we will make this U.S style brew. There has been a worldwide shortage of hops, especially more pronounced in the USA where the number of hop farms have reduced dramatically due to the economic climate.

This is even more compounded by the growing demand from microbrewers round the world wanting to “hop on the U.S hop flavour-wagon”. As a swan song, we have ‘pushed more hops’ into this finale batch. Farewell APA...

Richard is hopping in other directions.

Welcome Bookie in 500 ml bottles...

This popular brew, previously only available in 1.25 litre PETs or on tap from the brewery and selected bars, the popularity of the Bookbinder has led to a summer time limited release in the distinctive Emerson’s 500 ml bottle.

Originally brewed in 1996 for the Oamaru Victorian Fete and named after two local bookbinders, Dutybound’s David Stedman and Oamaru’s Michael O’Brien. The beer went on to win devotees and numerous awards which cemented its place in the core range of Emerson’s beers.

The beer is brewed with Canterbury Pale Ale and Lager malt from Dunsandel, imported Crystal malt with ‘a touch of Black’ added then balanced with refreshing Nelson Fuggles and Saaz hops.

The Emerson Brewing Company Ltd
14 Wickcliffe St / P O Box 6514 Dunedin
Ph 03 477 1812 Fax 03 477 1806 www.emersons.co.nz

Geoff Griggs has informed SOBA that he is currently in discussions with Air New Zealand on this very subject.

Meantime, if you have recently flown AirNZ and wished there was a decent beer available, why not make the point in their online survey at www.airnzmyvoice.co.nz. Be warned the survey is very long & detailed!

We’d love to hear from you, the beer drinking public. E-mail your letters to editor@soba.org.nz.
New summer menu including stone cooked pizzas starting early November. Come and try an everchanging Beer of the Week.

COMPETITION

Identify these two craft brewing locations and win a 6-pack of Tuatara Pale Ale..

E-mail your answers to: editor@soba.org.nz.
Put Newsletter Competition in the header and include your postal contact details and telephone number. Winner’s details will be posted on the SOBA website and published in the next edition. Good luck!

Answers to last edition’s competition were:
A) Galbraith’s Alehouse, Auckland & B) Roooster’s Brewhouse, Hastings. The lucky winner of a SOBA t-shirt was Ed Siddle of Wellington.

Come and try an everchanging Beer of the Week.
New summer menu including stone cooked pizzas starting early November.
THE AFTERNOON started with a tour of the brewery, led by host Steve Plowman. This wasn't just your ordinary touristy brewery tour though; Steve gave us a detailed run-down of his brewing philosophy, and his methods and ingredients. He happily fielded all manner of detailed beer-geeky questions and gave us a real insight into how things operate out at Hallertau.

After that we adjourned back to the bar for a tasting session. First of all we ran through the house beers, with Steve giving a detailed run-down of the recipe, including how the recipes had evolved over time. I like the house beers anyway, so this was an excellent start.

Then it was onto the more exotic stuff - the two beers from Steve and Luke's IPA Challenge (Humulus Lupulus Maximus and Epic Armageddon). For those of you who tasted the Maximus in Wellington, this was a different experience as Steve has been running it through a canister of fresh hops en-route to the bar. The hops change regularly so the beer is constantly evolving. Magical stuff.

After that we tried Dan's traditional Bock - the winner from last year's National Homebrew Competition. Steve reckoned that beer was just hitting its straps after 12 weeks of conditioning, and I have to agree with him.

If we thought that was it, we were happy to be proved wrong. Steve dug out a bottle of his barrel-aged Porter, aged in Pinot Noir casks. A powerful monster that still has plenty of time to improve. We then managed to get a sneaky taste (straight from the fermenter) of the Stuntwoman Imperial Pilsner which had finished fermenting three days before. Dangerously drinkable at 9%!! Then it was time to grab a few takeaways before heading off into the evening. I didn't get a chance to say thanks directly to Steve as he was busy being mein host to a very busy bar and restaurant, but I dropped him an email afterwards.

I'm sure all who attended enjoyed themselves and learnt something, which is the intention of these events. Steve is a great friend and supporter of SOBA - long may he continue producing such superb beers!

MARTIN BRIDGES

Checkout our new website at www.themalthouse.co.nz
The judging for this year’s beer awards took place upstairs at Mac’s Brewery in Wellington and it was to the brewery that the brewers from Australia, Singapore, USA and New Zealand had to send their entries.

Over the following weekend the Head Steward and one of the other stewards started to sort out the beers and check that they were in the correct category, whilst Colin Paige, from Mac’s, put the real ales (from Twisted Hop, Christchurch, and Galbraith’s, Auckland) on their stillages. Come Monday, when the other five stewards arrived, all the beers had to be sorted into their different classes and marked up with an individual, random number – this so as to prevent the judges having any idea which beers they were tasting.

In total there are 91 different styles, in the 2008 World Beer Cup style descriptions, into which a beer might fit, with some of the styles having more than one subcategory. For example, the Fruit and Vegetable Beer has subcategories of fruit beer, fruit wheat beer, vegetable beer, and pumpkin beer. It is important that the brewer enters his beer into the correct category as failure to do so results in the beer being marked down or penalised due to being “out of class” – this did happen to a few beers presented this time, and was especially unfortunate when one such beer was described as the best beer one particular judge had tasted that day!

As an example of the style guidelines, these are the guidelines for an English style India Pale Ale (IPA):

**India pale ales** are characterized by medium-high hop bitterness with a medium to high alcohol content. Hops from a variety of origins may be used to contribute to a high hopping rate. Note that “earthy and herbal English variety hop character” is the perceived end, but may be a result of the skilful use of hops of other national origins. The use of water with high mineral content results in a crisp, dry beer; sometimes with subtle and balanced character of sulphur compounds. This pale gold to deep copper-coloured ale has a medium to high, flowery hop aroma and may have a medium to strong hop flavour (in addition to hop bitterness). English style India pale ales possess medium maltiness and body. Fruity-ester flavours and aromas are moderate to very strong. Diacetyl can be absent or may be perceived at very low levels. Chill haze is allowable at cold temperatures.

Tuatara IPA was a gold medal winner in this class.

Once the beers have been marked up, examples of each beer are taken from the stock room and placed in the fridge in the order that they will be served the following day.

In total there were eight judges (2 tables of four judges each) to assess the 200 plus beers presented. Some of the judges had come from as far afield as Sweden and the USA, whilst others were local.

Judging proper started on Tuesday morning. Only when the judges were seated in the tasting room, could the beers be removed from the fridges and opened or poured from the keg/cask taps – no judge was permitted to see any of the bottles or kegs/casks of beer presented, so as to maintain total impartiality.

The beers are poured into jugs, each marked with the beer’s unique identity code and beer style, and then taken in “flights” (several similar style beers served at the same time) through to the judges.

The Pursuit of Hoppiness - Spring 200812

IAN CAIG & SEAN MAHONY
Dead Good Beer Events

DEAD GOOD BEER EVENTS are based in Nelson and are the driving force behind the staging of quarterly beer festivals in the city. The next Beer Fete is on Friday December 5th, from 5.00pm till 10.30 pm at Founders Heritage Park, Nelson. Admission is $10 which includes your first beer and a free souvenir glass.

Also, make a note in your diary for MarchFest, which will be held on Saturday March 28th, 2009 at the same venue. MarchFest is aiming to become the Southern Hemisphere’s foremost beer festival, attracting beer lovers from around the world to taste unique Kiwi craft beers in the world-class setting of Nelson. As the event grows, more craft breweries will be invited to create festival brews and the event facilities will grow accordingly.

All the special festival brews created for MarchFest have the proviso that they must include locally grown hops and be previously unavailable anywhere else in the world.

MarchFest is the creation of Eelco Boswijk and Mic Dover, the people behind Dead Good Beer Events - connecting the new breed of Kiwi craft brewers with the growing number of beer drinkers who are demanding more from their beer.


Blues Brews & BBQ’s

BLUES, BREWS & BBQ’s is one of the most popular events on the summer calendar - a family fun day of barbecue fare, fine ales and great music that is held at three locations; Blenheim, Hastings and Mount Maunganui.

The festivals are a celebration of everything that is unique about the traditional Kiwi summer lifestyle; our love of outdoor cooking, great music and enjoying an ale or two with good friends and family.

Blues, Brews & BBQ’s pays homage to the craft of brewing enabling small and large brewers alike to present their premier beers to a large and appreciative audience. For the public it represents a unique opportunity to sample a wide range of different styles and flavours.

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BEER FESTIVALS

Blues Brews & BBQ’s

The barbecue too is a real taste sensation with some of the leading chefs from each region serving up gourmet grill fare, with the range typically extending from authentic Indian, Middle Eastern, Ostrich, West Coast Whitebait to sweets and of course everything else that you would expect from the typical ‘barbie’.

All this is served up to a background of easy listening music with a strong ‘blues’ flavour performed by many of the country’s best performers.

There are three festivals are scheduled for the summer of 2009......

- Mt Maunganui - Thursday 8th January 2009
- Hastings - Saturday 17th January 2009
- Blenheim - Saturday 7th February 2009

Visit www.bluesbrews.co.nz for full details.
Ale and Cheese – The Perfect Partners

While the words ‘wine and cheese’ may confidently slip off the most sophisticated of tongues the combination itself often pales in comparison to the pairing of beer and cheese. The sharp, fruity, tannic notes that wine offers often provide contrast to cheese but there is seldom the element of harmony that can create a match that is greater than the sum of its parts. Beer on the other hand contains a complex array of aromas, flavours and sensations that can both contrast and accentuate the character of the cheese.

It is no coincidence that beer and cheese make good partners as they share both a history and a purpose. Both beer and cheese are fermented foods where a raw product, in the first instance grain, the second milk, are transformed in order to prolong their ‘shelf life’. In the days prior to refrigeration this was extremely important. Both also can trace their history to the chores of the farmhouse wife whose responsibility was both to ferment the grain into ale and the milk into cheese. Techniques for the production of both experienced significant improvement at the hands of Monks who had to provide sustenance for both themselves and travelling pilgrims, and more recently both have experienced significant industrialisation resulting in standardised characterless products. Thankfully both have experienced a craft revival with increasing interest in characterful living artisan products.

In each issue I will present a different match of beer styles and cheeses, drawing on my experience as both homebrewer, cheesemonger, beer drinker and cheese buff.

The Traditional Ploughman’s

It has been suggested that the ‘Ploughman’s Lunch’ is nothing more than a cynical fiction created by advertising executives in the 1960s as a way of growing the food sales in pubs. On his fantastically informative blog http://zythophile.wordpress.com the English beer historian Martyn Cornell has explored the history of the ‘Ploughman’s Lunch’ concluding that while the name may be recent - 1957 seems the oldest reference yet found - the tradition of bread, beer and cheese is certainly well established.

But enough with the controversy of history and let us get on to the glorious match that can be made between traditional cheddar and ale. The combination of sharp crumbly aged cheddar and traditional English ale is both the one which jumps to people’s minds when you mention beer and cheese and the one which I count as closest to my heart.

The Cheese

Much as the New Zealand beer market is awash with mass produced lagers the cheese market is inundated with young mass produced cheddar. However, characterful products are out there if you hunt. My favourite example comes from Barry’s Bay just out of Akaroa on Banks Peninsula. Barry’s Bay Cheddar is produced in traditional rounds rather than the square blocks that other cheddars are produced in. The rounds are wrapped in cloth before being aged for 2½ to 3 years. The cheese that emerges is rich, meaty and creamy at the core while closer to the rind it develops earthy notes reminiscent of horseradish and bonfires. The overall impression is of a complex cheese which is sharp with out being overly salty.

There are other examples of Cheddar that are produced in less artisan ways that nonetheless through aging achieve a high quality character. Kaimai Mature Cheddar from the Waikato, Totara Tasty from Whitestone Cheeses in Oamaru and Linkwater Cheddar from my employer Moore Wilson’s in Wellington all sit in this category. All are produced in large cheese factories but gain significant character from several years of aging. With Linkwater, the cheese is aged from 3 to 4 years and emerges with a creamy yet crumbly texture, a rich savoury palate and a sharp finish developing salty protein crystals with time.

The Beer

There are several criteria a beer must tick to stand up to the more characterful of cheddars. Firstly, there needs to be a distinct malt profile, typified by the rich body of the likes of Maris Otter, with its nutty and caramel notes. Secondly, there must be an evident earthy hop character whether it reveals itself just as bitterness or as flavour and aroma also.

Stylistically the beers best suited to this task range from Best Bitter through Extra Special Bitter and English style IPA’s, with some of the best matches coming from the family of Old Burton winter warmers, an old style now represented by the Old Ale and Strong Ale categories. English imports such as Fuller’s 1845, Marston’s Owd Roger, Adnam’s Broadside, Theakston’s Old Peculier and Black Sheep Riggwelter do the trick. For a local match try Tuatara IPA or Emerson’s Old 95.
The Match

As with any beer and cheese match, the balance between the flavours involved needs to be considered. Accordingly, the stronger the cheddar, the stronger the beer should be. With the ‘milder’ aged cheddars such as Kaimai Mature cheddar, where the emphasis is on rich creaminess, a good match can be found in Fuller’s E.S.B. The rich creamy character of the cheese can find a harmony in the nutty English malt profile of the beer, while the marmalade fruit provides a contrast. Finally, the earthy bitterness cleanses the palate, while the carbonation lifts the milk fats from the palate preparing you for the next sip.

With stronger, sharper, funkier cheddars like Barry’s Bay, a bottle conditioned strong ale such as Old 95, with its rich malt and orangey New Zealand hop character, or Fuller’s 1845, with its biscuit like amber malt character and its assertive bitterness, both provide harmonious moments where cream and malt blend together. A true union of earthy notes where hops and funky rind character combine and ultimately contrast as the bitterness lingers.

It is a testament to fermented food that such a complex range of flavours are to be had from one of the world’s simplest pub snacks. In the next issue I will look at the combination of goat cheese and wheat beer.

KIERAN HASLETT-MOORE
THE A-Z OF KIWI CRAFT BREWING

From Aotearoa to Wigram - there are over 50 craft breweries operating throughout NZ.........

AUCKLAND

EPIC Brewing Company - Regional Brewery
186 James Fletcher Drive, Otahuhu, Auckland
Ph 0800.21.BEER (2337)
www.epicbeer.com

Galbraith's Alehouse - Brewpub
2 Mt Eden Road, Mt Eden, Auckland
Ph 09 379.3557
www.alehouse.co.nz

Hallertau Brewbar - Micro Brewery
1171 Coatesville Riverhead Hwy, Auckland
Ph 09 412.5555
www.hallertau.co.nz

Twin Pines Brewery - Brewpub
Puketona Road, Paihia, Bay of Islands
Ph 09 402.7195
www.twinpines.co.nz

Shakespeare Tavern and Brewery - Brewpub
61 Albert Street, Auckland City
Ph 09 373.5396
www.shakespearehotel.co.nz

Steam Brewing Company - Regional Brewery
186 James Fletcher Dr., Otahuhu, Auckland
Ph 09.270.1890
www.steambrewing.co.nz

Trident Tavern - Brewpub
69 Selwyn Street, Onehunga, Auckland
Ph 09. 636.9070

Waiheke Island Microbrewery - Micro Brewery
82 Onetangi Road, Waiheke Island, Auckland
Ph 09.372.1014
www.waihekebrewery.co.nz

NORTHLAND

Brewhaus Frings - Brewpub
104 Lower Dent Street, Whangarei
Ph 09.438.4684
http://frings.co.nz

Sawmill Brewery - Brewpub
142 Pakiri Rd, Leigh, Warkworth
Ph 09.422.6019
www.sawmillcafe.co.nz

WAIKATO / BAY OF PLENTY CONTINUED

Croucher Brewing Company - Micro Brewery
49 Depot St, Rotorua
Ph 07.332.2711
www.croucherbrewing.co.nz

Kiwi Breweries - Micro Brewery
Morrinsville Ph 078.877.742

Shunters Yard Brewery - Micro Brewery
130 Woodside Road, Matangi, Hamilton
07 829.5826
www.sportsmuseum.co.nz

Waipa Brewery - Brewpub
90 Old Taupo Road, Rotorua
Ph 07.328.4677

HAWKES BAY / EAST COAST

Filter Room - Regional Brewery
Awatoto Road, Meanee, Napier
Ph 06.845.4084
www.thefilterroom.co.nz

Roosters Brew House - Brewpub
1470 Omaha Road, Hastings
Ph 06.879.4127

Sunshine Brewery - Micro Brewery
109 Disraeli Street, Gisborne
Ph 06.867.7777
www.gisbornegold.co.nz

TARANAKI / LOWER NORTH ISLAND

Shamrock Brewing Company - Brewpub
267 Main Street, Palmerston North
Ph 06.355.2130

Waituna Brewing Co - Contract Brewer
Fitzherbert Science Park,
Palmerston North Ph 06.326 6707
www.waitunabrewing.com

White Cliffs Brewing Co - Micro Brewery
Main Road North, SH3, Urenui, Taranaki
Ph 06.752.3676 www.organicbeer.co.nz

WELLINGTON

Island Bay Brewing - Distributor
6 Medway Street, Island Bay, Wellington
Ph 04.939.6253
www.bennettsbeer.co.nz

Loaded Hog Brewery - Regional Brewery
43 Main Road South, Levin
Ph 06.367.5408
www.loadedhog.co.nz

Mac's / Wellington Brewing Co - Brewpub
4 Taranaki Street, Wellington
Ph 04.802.1956 www.thebrewerybar.co.nz

continued opposite
WELLINGTON CONTINUED

Peak Brewery - Micro Brewery
18 East Taratahi Road, Masterton
Ph 021.149.6996
www.peak-brewery.co.nz

Temperance Bar - Brewpub
17-19 Blair Street, Wellington
Ph 04.801.7960
www.thetemperance.co.nz

Tuatara Brewing Co - Micro Brewery
183 Akatarawa Rd, Waikanae
Ph 04.293.3351

Yeastie Boys - Micro Brewery
Seatoun, Wellington
Ph 0274186639
www.yeastieboys.co.nz

NELSON CONTINUED

Townshend Brewery - Micro Brewery
Rosedale, Upper Moutere, Nelson
Ph 03.543.2170
www.townshendbrewery.co.nz

WEST COAST

Monteith’s Brewing Company - Large Brewery
cnr Turamahe & Herbert Streets, Greymouth
Ph 03.768.4149
www.monteiths.co.nz

West Coast Brewing - Micro Brewery
10 Lyndhurst Street, Weporst
Ph 03.789.6253
www.westcoastbrewing.com

CANTERBURY

Brew Moon Brewing Co. - Brewpub
150 Ashworth Road, Amberly, North Canterbury
Ph 03.314.8030
www.brewmooncafe.co.nz

Dux de Lux Brewery - Brewpub
Arts Centre, cnr Hereford Street, Christchurch
Ph 03.366.6916
www.thedux.co.nz

Harrington’s Breweries - Micro Brewery
199 Ferry Road, Christchurch
Ph 03.366.6323
www.harringtonsbreweries.co.nz

Monkey Wizard Brewery - Micro Brewery
9a Peraui Street, Kaiapoi
Ph 03.327.6389

Fusel’s Brewery - Micro Brewery
6 Tenth & Sheep, Cockburn, Christchurch
Ph 03.341.3229
www.fuselsthebrewery.co.nz

Three Boys Brewery - Micro Brewery
Woodston Mews, Christchurch
Ph 03.384.6140
www.threboysbrewery.co.nz

The Twisted Hop - Brewpub
6 Poclar Street, Christchurch
Ph 03.962.3688
www.thetwistedhop.co.nz

DUNEDIN / SOUTHLAND

Dux de Lux - Brewpub
14 Church Street, Queenstown
Ph 03.442.9688
www.thedux.co.nz

continued on p18
the current SOBA committee members are...
PRESIDENT: Geoff Griggs
VICE PRESIDENT: Kieran Haslett-Moore
SECRETARY: Greig McGill
TREASURER: Rob Owen
GENERAL COMMITTEE: Craig Bowen, Martin Bridges, Nick Page, Ian Caig, Mike Pink
All contactable via e-mail - info@soba.org.nz

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Dunedin / Southland continued

Emerson Brewing Company - Micro Brewery
14 Wickliffe Street, Dunedin
Ph 03.477.1812
www.emersons.co.nz

Green Man Brewery - Micro Brewery
9 Grange St, Dunedin
Ph 03.477.7755
www.greenmanbrewery.co.nz

Invercargill Brewery - Micro Brewery
8 Wood Street, Invercargill
Ph 03.214.5070
www.invercargillbrewery.co.nz

McDuff's Brewery - Micro Brewery
695a Great King Street, Dunedin
Ph 03.477.7276

Meenans Wines & Spirits - Micro Brewery
670 Great King Street, Dunedin
Ph 03.477.2047

Wanaka Brewery - Micro Brewery
Wanaka Transport Museum, SH6, Wanaka
Ph 03.443.1865
www.wanakabeerworks.co.nz

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SATURDAY October 4th 2008 has become a day to remember for over 400 Taranaki people, after attending the second annual Oktoberfest at Whitecliffs Organic Brewery.

The oompah band set the German tone very early on and soon got the singing underway. Enormous 1 litre collector’s steins enabled patrons to feel like they really were in Munich and the authenticity was continued with the serving of a delicious Bavarian meal. Vast quantities of Mike’s Organic Lager were consumed and reports are still being received about how no-one suffered a hang-over the next day!

The standard has been set now by the Trigg family of Urenui and we can look forward to more of the same in future years according to Ron Trigg. ‘The Oktoberfest is now set in our calendar and will certainly be an annual event in Taranaki.’

The first Saturday of October every year has been earmarked for this festival and people are already leaving their details and requesting a head’s up before next year’s event!

For details or to find out more visit: www.organicbeer.co.nz

To be placed on the reminders list email: info@organicbeer.co.nz or ring 0508 4 Mike’s

Mike’s Organic Ale and Mike’s Organic Lager are available in Wellington at Regional Wines and at Centre City Wines.
BELGIAN MARVELS

...with Geoff Griggs

The Regional Wines September Beer Tasting featured a range of Belgian brews, selected as much for their individuality as well as their quality. Hosted superbly by SOBA’s own El Presidente, Geoff Griggs, the evening’s menu featured eight beers, six of which were bottled conditioned. We were entertained with detailed profiles of the brewers and their products compiled by both Geoff and his fellow beer writers from around the world.

We kicked off with Palm a 5.4% ‘Belgian Ale’, very much in the English Pale Ale style. It had a slightly sulphury nose, indicating ‘Burtonising’ of the local soft water and orangey hints in the taste. A pleasant way to start proceedings. 6/10.

Next up was Lindemans Geuze, a 4% ‘Lambic’. Situated amongst the apple and pear orchards close to Brussels, the beer is famous for its wild yeast fermentation process, which takes place in large shallow trays known as ‘ships’. The Gueuze is a blended combination, consisting of a two year barrelled conditioned batch, combined with a freshly brewed version, which produces a unique sweet and sour, cidery taste with a sherry-like flor derived from the wooden casks. 7/10.

The evening would not have been complete without a true ‘Trappist’ beer and this was provided in the form of Achel Blond from the newest of the true monastery breweries, which interestingly has a cafe within the Abbey itself. Bottle-conditioned and weighing in at 8%, it has a beautiful, spicy vanilla nose and although the alcohol content is hefty, there is a balanced bitterness produced by the addition of Styrian and Saaz hops. 9/10.

The fourth offering was Dupont Moinette from the village of Tourpes, near Hanout. Again a high alcohol content of 8.5%, but with a hoppy, bitter, almost sour taste, prompting to Geoff to loosely categorise it as an ‘Abbey/Saison’. The 750ml corked, bottle-conditioned ale was originally created via a simple farmhouse operation and served as a quaffing beer for thirsty farmworkers. 8/10.

Augustin Grand Cru from Ghent, East Flanders proved a little deceptive. Unsurprisingly, at 9% there was a distinct alcohol nose, but this golden coloured ‘Abbey Tripel’ seemed to lack body and the overall verdict was that it tasted a little ‘tired’ and smacked of being more of a mass produced product than some of our other samples. 6/10.

Number six was Het Kapittel, or ‘Hierarchy of Monks’, Pater from a brewery established in 1946 in the hop-heartland of Poperinge. An interesting ‘Abbey’ style once again, this time at 6% abv, it generated a variety of feedback for our host, with perhaps the most descriptive being that it tasted like ‘liquid fruit cake’. 8/10.

Geoff described our seventh offering as a ‘Flanders Brown’, but the 9% Dolle Brouwers Oerbier, most definitely sits in a class all of its own. Translated as ‘Our Beer’ from the ‘Mad Brewers’, this West Flanders ale uses no less than six malt and three hop varieties, plus candy sugar to provide an unexpected dry finish. The result is a memorable winey, roasty brew. 8/10.

Finally, yet another bottled-conditioned offering, this time from Abbey des Rocs. Their Abbey style ‘Tripel Brune’ uses seven pure malts, three hop varieties and ten spices. Formed in 1979 in a small garage near the French border, the beers are now brewed in 5000 litre batches to satisfy demand for this unique 9% ale. 7/10.

The evening’s combined vote count for best two beers sampled resulted in the Dupont Moinette way out on top, with a very close run second between the Lindemans Geuze, the Achel Blond and the Abbaye des Rocs.
As I write this I am using my Blackberry to send a Twitter.

Tonight I’m planning to have a good night’s sleep. It always makes me laugh when I have had way too many hops.

The thing I love most is big flavours from the food and beverages I consume.

It annoys me when people ring me to bitch about what people have posted on the realbeer.co.nz forums. Just reply online people, keep me out of the loop.

In my fridge I always have a selection of new beers I haven’t ever tried or tried in a long time, which I have picked up on my travels.

My ideal meal is an Indian curry. Washed down with a hoppy US style Pale Ale.

My perfect beer sampling trip was my most recent trip to San Francisco and San Diego, having tried serious Double IPAs and funky barrel aged beers.

My favourite brew at Beervana 08 was a tie between the Fiejoa Geuze from Mussel Inn and the Twisted Hop Skull Buggery, both where very exciting in flavour, but both a bit too rough and ready, but great to see the boundaries of beer being challenged in New Zealand.

I am most a peace when I’m away on holiday away from the phone and internet, it’s sunny and warm and at the end of the day spent on the beach I can have a cold beer.

My biggest letdown was being sick during the week of BrewNZ08, I missed out on good beer, good people, and good times. Look forward to next year.

In case you haven’t yet heard about the award-winning Epic Pale Ale, visit www.epicbeer.com.

October sees the bottling and nationwide release of Epic Pale Ale in a new 500ml bottle. Epic Lager will be available in November.

**5-MINUTE BEER QUIZ**

1. What are the following - Ahtanum, Chelan, Sterling & Willamette?
2. Who said “This is grain, which any fool can eat, but for which the Lord intended a more divine means of consumption... Beer!”?
3. From which country does La Trappe Tripel originate?
4. Which is the odd one out - Hastings, Palmerston North, Rotorua, Wanganui?
5. Who won the Rotorua ‘Emerging Business’ Of The Year, 2007 Award?
6. Which famous London landmark hosted the 1980 Great British Beer Festival in its grounds, after the Great Hall was destroyed by fire?
8. Who produces Munchner Dunkel, a Gold Medal Best in Class winner at the 2007 Australia Beer Awards?
9. In which year did Captain Cook order his crew to brew the famous ‘Spruce Beer’ on his arrival in Dusky Sound - 1753, 1763 or 1773?
10. How many tap beers are available at Regional Wines & Spirits in Wellington?

**ANSWERS**

1. American hop varieties.
2. Friar Tuck in Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves
3. Netherlands
4. Wanganui - all the other towns have a craft brewery.
5. Croucher Brewing
6. Alexandra Palace
7. Michael Jackson
8. Wigram Brewing
9. 1773
10. 11
NEWS OF THE BREWS

Try Calypso Bay for a taste of Summer

LAUNCHED last year exclusively for the restaurant adjacent to the brewery, the crisp, golden summer brew was an immediate hit with local drinkers. So, with the warmer weather here once again, Blenheim brewers Renaissance, have decided to bring it to a wider audience. Enter Calypso Bay Blond.

The grist for the 2008 release comprises a luscious, sweet pale ale malt from a fifth-generation Canterbury barley grower, along with a touch of wheat malt for a hint of quenching tartness. The brewkettle is loaded with perfumy Riwaka hops (they’re a Kiwi-grown variant of Bohemia’s revered Saaz variety). Then, to showcase those aromatic hops, the beer is fermented with an especially ‘clean’ American ale yeast. Finally, during the beer’s long, cool maturation, a few extra handfuls of those fragrant Riwaka hops are thrown in, just for good measure. The result is a most refreshing brew.

The bright golden hue hints it will be a great quaffer, but the explosion of passionfruit, pineapple and citrus hop aromas leave you in no doubt this beer offers far more than mere refreshment. On the palate the initial biscuity malt sweetness is soon joined by zingy tropical fruit notes and leads into a quenching tart finish.

Speciality beers on tap are chosen from the Emerson, Mata, Tuatara and Epic ranges

Contact Craig on 04 473 3600
69, The Terrace, Wellington

AROUND THE PUBS

Wellington

THE WATUSI, tucked away in Edward Street, was known as Tupelo in its previous life. However, after several months of repose it has been reborn with walls an energetic deep-sky blue, leopard print booths and bamboo chairs. The bar name comes from a 1960s dance, which in turn was named after a Rwandan tribe.

On tap there are Tuatara Porter, Gisborne Gold, Emerson’s Bookbinder and Pilsner. In the fridge you will also find Three Boys IPA & Pils, Tuatara Pilsner and Hefe plus Coopers beers all at reasonable prices. Opening hours are Wednesday - Saturday 5:00p.m. to 3:00a.m.

THE CRAFTSMAN at 1 Courtenay Place has recently opened its doors and with a name like that, SOBA-ites were getting excited at the thought of a new boutique beer outlet for the city. From the same stable as the Bristol on Cuba Street, the bar does offer the full Mac’s range on tap, plus Little Creatures from the bottle shelf, but that’s the limit of the selection.

Auckland

SALE ST, which opened recently, is the latest venture for Luke Dallow of DB Breweries. The 800-capacity venue marks a resurgence of the big bar concept, following the opening of David Henderson’s SOL Square in Christchurch, and more recently, the 1500sq m Temperance in Wellington.

Dallow expects Sale St - which has cost ‘between $1 and $5 million’ - to break even within 18 months. The site of what was originally a brewery and previously the head office of wine and spirit merchants Glengarry Hancocks, houses a daytime cafe, microbrewery and a cluster of bars.

Head brewer leaves Mac’s

SOBA bids a fond farewell to Colin Paige, the head brewer of Mac’s Shed 22 Brewery on Wellington waterfront and the man who put Sassy Red and Hop Rocker on the lips of beer lovers around the country. After six years in the job he has decided to take his brewing skills to Asia in the search for adventure and the chance to run his own business.

Colin’s country of choice is Cambodia where the stock exchange opens in September 2009 and natural gas exports are ramping up. ‘Signs are in a couple of years it will be dragged out of the third world. The locals drink ‘all lager’ except for a limited market for dark beer. There’s a bit of African mentality in Cambodia where men think dark beer will make them virile’, he says. ‘There’s not really a craft beer scene, but there is an opportunity to make standard beer as well’, he added.

Colin leaves New Zealand with fond memories and a few observations on the local beer scene. ‘It’s great to see the quality of the small breweries’ products has improved. I remember eight years ago some of it was diabolical’. He plans to spend around four months choosing a site and hopes to be brewing again by 2011.
The Moutere Inn

New Zealand’s oldest pub is set to become a haven for Real Ale enthusiasts.....

HOPS & GLORY was formed in 2006 with the aim of celebrating New Zealand’s craft brewers. The original trio of real ale enthusiasts Martin Townshend, Andrew Cole and Kieron Lattimer organised events in Upper Moutere showcasing craft beers from around the country.

These events proved highly successful - so successful that the group were confident about taking the next step and running their own pub.

‘We’d always hoped to eventually own our own pub and the festivals were our way of testing the water to see if there was support for the kind of place we wanted to run.’ said Martin, who is also owner of the award winning Townshend Brewery.

The Hops & Glory organisation was joined by Dave Watson and the quartet are now owners of The Moutere Inn, built in 1850 and believed to be the oldest pub in New Zealand.

Dave will take up the position of live in bar manager. ‘It will be a change from my current career as a guitar teacher but it’s an opportunity I’m looking forward to, the potential of the pub is enormous.’

The four partners are excited by the opportunity to run New Zealand’s oldest pub. Over time they hope to return the pub to its former glory as well as provide a comfortable place for locals and visitors to enjoy great beer and food.

‘The changes to the pub will be gradual but we hope that we can count on the support of locals and visitors as we attempt to transform a community asset that has been neglected for far too long’ said Kieron.

Reflecting the ideals of Hops & Glory will see The Moutere Inn stock a fine selection of locally produced beer, wine, spirits and real ales complemented by meals from the restaurant.

“We’ve created a separate cellar just for the storage and serving of real ale” said Martin. “We’re also hoping that we’ll tempt other local brewers into experimenting with cask conditioned ales now that we can provide an outlet for selling the beer” added Andrew.

The village of Upper Moutere was settled in the early 1840s by German immigrants who brought with them hop plants and grape vines. Today the region is home to many wineries and is also the seat of New Zealand’s hop industry.

The original building was a two story structure built by Cordt Bensemann in 1850. A second wing was swiftly added to create accommodation for travellers and by 1857 the structure that is still clearly recognisable as The Moutere Inn was in place.

Some of the brews initially available include, Townshend Number 9, Tuatara Pale Ale, Three Boys Wheat Beer, Emerson’s Bookbinder, Mussel Inn Captain Cooker, Lighthouse Victory Ale, Invercargill Brewery Nally’s Cider and a new lager from Riwaka’s Monkey Wizard.

Opening hours are 4pm Mon to Thursday, 12am Friday and 11am Saturday and Sunday.

The Editor reserves the right amend or shorten contributions for publication.
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NHC AWARDS

BAR EDWARD in Newtown, Wellington was the venue for the National Homebrew Championships Awards Ceremony.

A bonus attraction were two fine homebrewed ales generously supplied by SOBA committee members Rob Owen and Keiran Haslett-Moore and served up by handpump. Needless to say the supplies of Robust Porter and English-style Best Bitter did not last too long!

Champion homebrewer James Kemp receives his accolade from host Rob Owen, resplendent in new SOBA t-shirt.

The Major Prize Winners were:

**SOBA NHC Champion - James Kemp**

NZ Hops Award - Chris Mills and Allyn York (Best hop balanced beer)

Liberty Brewing Award - James Kemp (Best malt balanced beer)

Mac's Award - Andrew Cherry (Best kit beer)

Hallertau Award - Steve Baker (Best commercial beer)

Brewcraft Award - James Kemp (Best beer)

**Best in Class Results - Advanced**

1. Light Lager - Alasdair Saunders
2. Pilsner - Darrell Hart
3. European Amber Lager - Alasdair Saunders
4. Dark Lager - Alasdair Saunders
5. Bock - Alasdair Saunders
6. Light Hybrid - Andrew Cherry
7. Amber Hybrid - Adam Genefaas
8. English Pale Ale - Greig McGill
9. Scottish and Irish Ale - R J Sherratt
10. American Ale - Barry Hannah
11. English Brown Ale - Greig McGill
12. Porter - Steve Baker
13. Stout - James Kemp
14. India Pale Ale - Martin Wolley
15. German Wheat and Rye - Glen Simpson
16. Belgian Strong Ale - Adam Genefaas
17. Strong Ale - James Kemp
18. Spice/Herb/Vegetable Beer - John Parrott
20. Traditional Mead - Grant Core
21. NZ Pale Ale - Chris Mills & Allyn York
22. Standard Cider and Perry - Darrell Hart

**Kit**

Lager - Andrew Cherry
Wheat - Dale Cooper
Pale and Brown Ale - Andrew Cherry
Porter and Stout - Craig, Phil, Leanne, Luke
Spiced and Fruit - Noel Sperry

A special thanks to all sponsors of NHC.
On the warm spring evening of 7 October 2008 a group of 20 or so SOBA members were seen loitering in the Mac’s bar on the waterfront in Wellington. They had forgotten that the email from Ian Caig had said to meet in the upstairs function room where he and about 5 others who could read were waiting! Once we were together, we began our tour and tasting with the very informative hosts Ali Clem, the head brewer and Nik Mossop, the assistant brewer. The plan of the evening was simple: check out the brewery and then taste some of its wares. Given the amount of space allocated to me (as a new writer) and that most of you probably know the process of brewing beer, I won’t go through all the details here.

However, to give a bit of background, the brewery/bar was established in 2002 as a Lion Brown establishment. At that time the brewery was used for the production of Lion Brown only, however the bar did have other Lion beers available on tap such as Sultry Dark, Sassy Red and Wicked Blonde. They also often had a guest or special beer, such as Shed 22 6XB and Demonic Ruby, which were festive brews for earlier BrewNZ events when the themes were ‘Celebrating the Hop’ and ‘Magnificence of the Malt’. The old bar was full of Lion Brown memorabilia including large posters of ‘Brown O’clock’ as you would have seen in Wellington rugby programmes back in the 70’s and 80’s. (Yes, I was around back then).

A couple of years back the brewery/bar became a Mac’s bar and since then has brewed Black Mac, Hoprocker, Spring Tide, Sassy Red and more recently Great White, plus Sundance for kegs and bottles. The bottling is done in Christchurch. The current capacity of the brewery is approximately 1.5 million litres per year and varies depending on the quantity of each beer brewed. A specific point of interest to me during the tour was the complication of using a brewery for a variety of ‘special commercial’ beers that was originally built to brew a relatively simple beer only. For example, Black Mac, which has five different malt varieties, whereas Lion Brown uses only one, resulting in a far more complex brewing process for those involved. After the tour we adjourned back to the function room and enjoyed tastes of Spring Tide, Sundance, Mac’s Gold, Great White, Hoprocker, Sassy Red and Black Mac and then quite a few more of those we particularly fancied! We finally left well after we had overstayed our allotted time, although Ali and Nik, being very hospitable hosts, did not seem to mind. A great evening was had by all and we are already thinking about the next event at the brewery. Many thanks guys. Cheers.

SEAN MAHONY
QUEENSLAND is less than a four hour flight from New Zealand. SOBA Committee member Ian Caig took advantage to spend a week checking out the current boutique brewing scene.

Having foolishly booked a holiday without actually checking the availability of decent beer first, I put out a call to the SOBA membership for guidance. One of our SOBA colleagues had visited Queensland two years ago and after visiting some 25 – 30 bottle stores had ended up with a bottle of Little Creatures Pale Ale and a 6 pack of Guinness FES!!! You can imagine how I was anticipating my visit with some trepidation, however the reality (thanks in no small measure to the extra advice of local beer enthusiast, Trevor Ford, on where to look) showed that the boutique beer situation has obviously changed remarkably in a very short time.

On arrival in Brissy we found that our accommodation was only 5 minutes walk away from the Grand Central Hotel (situated at the front of Central railway station – make sure you find the right bar!!). On our first visit we sampled Yippy IPA (from the new Mt Tamborine brewery, which was slightly cloudy, with a slight hop aroma and strong Saaz hop flavour), Dogbolter (a stout), Duke Pale Ale, 3 Ravens Blond (rather like Leffe Blond) and James Squire Pilsner (little aroma but with a pleasant nettle flavour) – being a hop head, the IPA was the beer that “did it” for me. Coming from New Zealand, we found the beer expensive, especially for such small measures – typically A$7 for a half.

The following day we headed north to Noosa Heads and chanced upon Laguna Jacks bar and bottle store (not difficult as it is directly across the road from tourist information!). On our first visit we sampled Yippy IPA (from the new Mt Tamborine brewery, which was slightly cloudy, with a slight hop aroma and strong Saaz hop flavour), Dogbolter (a stout), Duke Pale Ale, 3 Ravens Blond (rather like Leffe Blond) and James Squire Pilsner (little aroma but with a pleasant nettle flavour) – being a hop head, the IPA was the beer that “did it” for me. Coming from New Zealand, we found the beer expensive, especially for such small measures – typically A$7 for a half.

As we were in a motel, and to cut cost, we went out shopping for our dinner at Woolworths – coming out of said store, I just “had to” check out the beers in the adjacent BWS bottle store, finding Square Pilsner (a clean, refreshing Pilsner) and Pale Ale (pleasant hoppy ale) plus Blue Tongue premium lager (an OK but not exceptional lager).

As the weather wasn’t great, the following day we headed out to Pomona (rather than the beach) and, on a routine inspection of Cellarbrations, discovered James Squire Pepperberry, Matilda Bay Bohemian Pilsner (slight blackcurrant flavour at first, then hints of honey), Pepperjack Hand Crafted Ale plus Coopers and a couple of others.

Later the same day we called by The Happy Brewer Home Brew shop at Noosa and exchanged some beery info with the owner, Dave Schofield (turns out that he has a namesake at Paraparaumu who runs a Home Brew shop with the same name) – he recommended that I take a look at Don Mather’s bottle store in Noosaville and, not being one to turn down a recommendation, duly did so. Apart from some beers already mentioned earlier, Don Mather’s also stocked Gage Road Pilsner (similar tasting to Becks), Little Creatures Pilsner and Rogers Ale (a little thin), and Knappstein Lager (very fruity with good Saaz hop flavour). I was particularly taken by the Knappstein beer.

Day three and we are on the beach and in the centre of Noosa, when the warmth inspires a thirst – went to Cotos Bar and tried their Redback beer, which reminded me of Hoegaarden. They also stocked Coopers and one or two other boutique beers.

Day 4 was a visit to Fraser Island and the only beer available with lunch was Castlemaine 4X or VB – this turned out to be the only occasion in a week when I had no choice other than to drink an industrial beer….the low point of an otherwise excellent day.

Thursday and we head south toward Brissy, calling at Sunshine Coast Brewery en route. Unfortunately we arrived at the start of owner Greg’s lunch time rush, so discussion was limited to gaps between customers. There is quite a range of beers available including a Summer Ale, Hefeweizen (actually passed its best), Best Bitter (nice biscuity malt flavour), Rye ESB (slight fennel aroma and good body) Rauch (smoked malt) beer and a chili beer. A tasting tray is available for A$7. A new brewer was expected to arrive the week after our visit, at which time a “tweaking” of beer recipes would take place.

...and it’s in the sunshine of course!
Once back in Brissy we set off to find the Brewhouse. This is in Albert Road (near the Queen St. Mall), brews a range of 8 beers and also holds brewing courses for those interested in how to make a “perfect” beer or how to match different foods and beers. Unfortunately it was a little too soon after eating, so I didn’t enjoy quaffing my beer quite as much as I might have done. The “Up your kilt” Scottish Ale I didn’t find to be exceptional, however I enjoyed the Engine Pale Ale, it having a respectable hop aroma and flavour. On the way back “home” we called by the Grand Central again, but the (tap) beer range was almost not existent with only one or two boutique beers being available.

On Friday night we walked over to the Storey Bridge Hotel to try that out. I’m sure that it qualifies a local icon but the beer wasn’t that fantastic in the first couple of bars we visited (Coopers, Kilkenny, Tooheys, Carlton Draught, Pure Blonde, Stella, VB, 4X, Cascade Premium Light etc) but the price was reasonable. Noticing the “Shelter Bar” door and doorman – I asked what was through there and he replied that he didn’t know but it was more expensive!! Well you only live once, so we ambled through and found that this bar also stocked Little Creatures, various beers under the Cascade, Boag and Hahn labels plus St Arnu on tap (from Regatta according to the barman – the reality is that it is contracted brewed by Australian Independent Brewers)…and it was more expensive.

The last day and whilst heading for the airport, we discovered that the Breakfast Creek Hotel (another iconic Brisbane bar) is right alongside the airport road!! What a coincidence – not that the wife believed me, all credibility about it “just being a relaxing holiday in the sun” having disappeared by the end of day two!! Duly stopped and sampled a very enjoyable pint of Castlemaine from the wood. The barman reckoned that they go through 2 to 3 barrels of beer from the wood every day, after the ceremonial tapping of the first barrel at midday. If the guys in Oz ever start a consumer organization, getting more outlets for beer from the wood must be a top priority!!

Apart from the venues mentioned already, Trevor also suggested the following:

The German Club by the Gabba – a good range of bottled German beers plus some on tap.
The Belgian Beer Café – the usual range of good Belgian beers.
The International Hotel – a microbrewery near the centre, which has up to 6 of their own beers available at a time.
The Regatta Hotel – stocks Squires ales plus an occasional in house brewed special.
The Spotted Cow at Toowoomba (100km west of Brisbane) The Mt Tamborine brewery (south of Brisbane) – beers currently available in Tamborine at the Bearded Dragon.
By completing and signing this form you agree to the following conditions:
1. I will abide by the charter of the Society Of Beer Advocates Incorporated (hereafter “SOBA”) and accept club rulings.
2. I absolve SOBA from any liability that may arise due to my participation in SOBA events or meetings or by using SOBA equipment, or other property, except as provided by law.
3. I will pay the specified membership fee of $30.00 within 90 days of completing and signing this form.
4. Membership, when granted, is active until the end of the current society year, which ends in September.
5. SOBA undertakes to collect, use and store the information provided on this form according to the principles of the Privacy Act 1993. The information will be used by SOBA for statistical, funding and administration purposes within the society. You have the right to access the information held about you and to request corrections.

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Email: ______________________@soba.org.nz
Forwards to: _________________@________________

WHAT’S ON
Check out the future SOBA gatherings...

WELLINGTON AREA

Tuesday 4th November, 7.30pm
Monthly Social
D4, Featherston Street, Wellington

Tuesday 2nd December, 7.30pm
Monthly Social
Bar Edward, Newtown, Wellington

Saturday 13th December, 1.00pm
Brewery Trip and Rural Pub Visit
Peak Brewery, Masterton plus The Lounge, Carterton

Tuesday 6th January, 7.30pm
Monthly Social
Southern Cross, Abel Smith Street, Wellington

Contact: Ian Caig, email condor@soba.org.nz

AUCKLAND AREA

Saturday 8th November, 2.00pm
Monthly Social
Cock & Bull, Newmarket

Saturday 6th December, 2.00pm
Homebrew Festival
Joint event with Auckland Guild of Home Brewers

Saturday 10th January, 2.00pm
Monthly Social
Der Metz, Kohimarama

Contact: Martin Bridges, email martin@soba.org.nz

MEMBERSHIP

Please join and support the Society Of Beer Advocates (SOBA) Incorporated.

Your membership fee of just $30 annually entitles you to:
- A SOBA membership card, offering discounts at supporting bars, breweries, and events
- Voting rights at SOBA meetings and the AGM
- A soba.org.nz email address, if you’d like one
…and allows us to:
- initiate and maintain effective campaigns
- advertise the society, and raise awareness of our goals
- maintain our online and print resources

How to sign up:
- Complete the form below, or download one from the SOBA website.
- Submit it:
  - In person, to the Secretary or Treasurer
  - By post, to SOBA, PO Box 9361, Hamilton
  - By fax, to 07 957 2659, marked Attention: SOBA
- Pay your membership fee:
  - In cash to the Secretary or Treasurer
  - By bank deposit to SOBA 01 0527 0079253 00 (use your name as a reference)
  - By sending a cheque to the above postal address

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FRONT COVER IMAGE

Brew Moon Hophead IPA.

Was this fine organic India Pale Ale the most underrated beer at Beervana? Quite a few drinkers thought so, including myself! I feel another trip to the Brew Moon Cafe & Brewery coming on....

Cheers & see you next time. ED