The Pursuit of Hoppiness
- the voice of SOBA -

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plus lots more!

Your Craft Brewing and Pub Newsletter
“Beer for all the right reasons”
Kia ora and welcome aboard the South Island special!

This edition unashamedly profiles the latest craft brewing activity in the Marlborough Region, focuses on where to get a decent pint in the City of Dunedin and features Martin Bennett, founder of the Twisted Hop Microbrewery in Christchurch and current Brewers Guild Executive Committee member, sitting in our Celebrity Corner. There’s also a low-down on Nelson’s newest free-house – called The Free House (!) – a great new addition to the vibrant pub scene in the Tasman area and even our 5 Minute Beer Quiz is themed around the southern half of Aotearoa.

So does this mean the craft beer scene is all quiet from Wellington northwards? Well, although the current economic climate may be challenging, the beer market has traditionally survived well during times of recession and there is certainly plenty of activity from the likes of Croucher, with their new bar in Rotorua (more on this in the next edition), Whitecliffs, with their re-branding and new mini-keg dispense systems and of course, Epic, with their launch of 500ml bottles and the powers of evil continuing to fight the powers of good in the form of the re-launched Armageddon IPA.

However, what many in SOBA currently feel is a serious threat to the potential growth of the craft beer market comes in the form of proposed government intervention over the sale of liquor. An economic analysis by Business and Economic Research Limited (BERL) focusing on estimating the costs to society and government of harmful use of alcohol, was commissioned by the Ministry of Health in March of this year, with a view to providing up-to-date cost estimates to inform policy development. One proposal from the Report suggests a blanket increase in excise on alcohol, which could prove extremely harmful for the smaller brewers in the current climate. A response to the Report, claiming that its financial arguments are fundamentally flawed, has been prepared as a Working Paper by the University of Canterbury. Entitled ‘The Price of Everything, The Value of Nothing’ it provides a detailed, if slightly heavy read and can be found at: www.econ.canterbury.ac.nz/RePEc/cbt/econwp/0910.pdf

Meantime, if you haven’t yet joined SOBA, now is an ideal time, with BrewNZ and Beervana 2009 just around the corner. Card holding members will be able to purchase heavily discounted entry tickets for the Awards Dinner, which is being staged on Thursday 27th August at The Duxton Hotel in Wellington. See page 7 for more information.

Finally, a confession! Being a keen hunter, I have broken my promise to boycott DB products and outlets by taking the Monteith’s Beer & Wild Food Challenge at my local Paremata Brewery Bar. Their dish, comprising breast of wild duck on a moi moi mash with pikopiko plus diced smoked eel parcels was very good, but the match with their Celtic just didn’t hit the mark. Now, if the available beer was a guest ale in the form of Invercargill Smokin’ Bishop, well, that would have been a corking match and it might just have tempted me to drink there a bit more often to boot. Cheers!

Nick Page, Editor

Going for Gold in Mapua
BLENHEIM’S BREWS

SOBA President, Geoff Griggs, put down his roots in the Eastern Marlborough town of Blenheim - was this fate or ingenious foresight?

HOSTING a recent Regional Wines Beer Tasting in Wellington, Geoff Griggs looked as happy as a dog with two dicks, or should that be a beer taster with two brewers. The ‘Marlborough Brewers Shootout’ demonstrated just how far the craft brewing industry has evolved in a region more typically renowned for its wines rather than its beers and it was a great pleasure to have both Brain Thiel of Renaissance and Geoff’s long time friend, Roger Pink, of Pink Elephant along for the evening.

These two contrasting breweries, along with new-kids-on-the-block 666 and Moa, mean that Geoff’s home town of Blenheim is now blessed with four world-class beer producers, each appearing to fulfill their own niche markets very nicely thank you.

Renaissance Brewing made their home in the old Dodson’s brewhouse on the northern edge of the town and their full range of beers can be sampled next door at the Dodson Street Alehouse. Head brewer American Andy Deuchars has now been joined by Danish brewer, Soren Eriksson and of late the beers have been undergoing stricter quality control. One introduction has been the use of copperflock seaweed as a fining agent which has improved the clarity and therefore the taste of the beers. Some of the beers are filtered although Andy is not a fan. The distinctive bottles once sourced from France are now manufactured to the same specification for a fraction of the price in China. The five products sampled on the night were Discovery American Pale Ale (4.5%), Perfection Pale Ale (5.0%), Elemental Porter (6.0%), Stonecutter (7.0%) and the newly-launched Marlborough Pale Ale (8.5%). Stonecutter currently tops the overall best seller list, with Perfection leading the distinctive packaged brands and Discovery the tap sales.

Graham Mahy began as a home brewer in Hamilton, going on to be a highly sought after brewing consultant throughout Australasia and together with Josh Scott was responsible for the creation of the Pilsner-style Moa Original. After a recent stint with a fledgling craft brewer in Australia, Mahy returned to Marlborough last October and has recently launched his own brand, 666 Brewing. Although the connotation of the name and the brewery’s cheeky “super-naturally brewed” slogan are deliberately controversial, the three sixes actually represent Graeme’s birthday, June 1966. Graham has recently acquired the old Three Boys brewing kit, but at present is scaling up his 25 litre home brew recipes for full production using the 200 litre plant at Dick Tout’s Lighthouse Brewery in Nelson.

The two rare samples served from riggers consisted of Diablo (5.4%), an New Zealand take on an American Brown Ale and Avarice (7.5%), a Double Pale Ale. The latter is the first of seven planned Seasonal Beers, representing the seven deadly sins! It rates as my favourite new beer created so far this year in a style that has some serious competitors.

Roger Pink is yet another of the Kiwi craft brewing scene’s most endearing characters, but also one of the most elusive. Roger hails from the hop field area of Kent, where the flagship beer was the now long gone Fremlin’s of Maidstone. Their pink elephant logo remained etched in his mind and when he emigrated and began home brewing at Brightwater near Nelson in 1990, Pink Elephant PBA, the first ‘ale’ style beer in New Zealand, was born. This came as both a great relief and surprise to Geoff Griggs, who a few years later, when browsing the distinctly bland selection of beers on sale at Regional’s, was introduced to this unique and distinctive brew. Roger’s aim was to run a brewery/café and so he moved to Blenheim in search of this ideal, but the dream failed to materialise. Today, PBA is now known as Golden Tusk (minimum 7%), and is brewed at Renaissance. So is the flagship Mammoth (7%) and despite best efforts by Brian Thiel, he has failed to identify its secret ingredients contained in the 4 ‘buckets’ of hops and 1 ‘bucket’ of malt! Roger brews his specials at home using a 220 litre plant, but he “doesn’t like styles” and so wouldn’t be committed to defining the final beer of the night, The Pink Elephant Mystery Ale. The closest match would probably be a Belgian Strong Ale for this 10% stunner called Trumpet.

continued on p5
At Moa, Josh Scott has been using his winemaking expertise to craft a range of unique bottle-fermented beers. The brewing process starts off quite normally, using mainly local hops, malt, wheat or barley, then at the bottling stage a dose of yeast and sugar are added before sealing the caps. The brand has a strong international following with over 70% of production hitting the export market. The brewery is currently expanding to keep pace with demand via the installation of an additional 20,000 litres of fermentor/conditioning tanks. Look out for the new ‘Moa Reserve’ range which will include barrel aged St Joseph’s Tripel plus 5 Hop Winter Ale. Another work in progress is an oak aged Imperial Stout/Belgian Strong Ale.

The scores on the doors for this particular evening had 666 Avarice well on top, Pink Elephant Mammoth the runner-up and Renaissance Elemental Porter plus Stonecutter sharing third spot. Note that Moa had their own individual tasting in the month prior to the main shootout.

This was a tremendously enjoyable event with some absolutely corking beers, so Blenheim gets my vote as the destination for the next SOBA Weekend Away!
NEWS OF THE BREWS

‘TIS the Saison to be jolly….unless DB get their way.

First up is Hallertau Manuka Saison at 4.5% abv with a rating of 27 IBU. A Belgian Farmhouse Ale style with a funky, thirst-quenching character. Spiced with Manuka tips to give it some local funk. Pours a hazy gold with a spicy citrus aroma. Light and fresh with a soft earthy creaminess and gentle, refreshing sourness in the finish.

Next up is Mussel Inn White Tiger Saison at 5.7% abv - big and fluffy but watch those teeth.

Moving over to the dark side, Mac’s Solstice is a five malt beer, fermented from a mix of Pale malt, Vienna malt, Caramalt, Dark Crystal and Chocolate malt. The hop component comes from Southern Cross and Fuggles, while Horopito adds some mouth-warming clove and pepper aromas.

Current specials from the Emerson’s stable comprise:

JP 2009 - a Belgian inspired Dubbel - rich and dark with that tantalising Belgian fruitiness and a hint of aniseed at 8% abv.

Brewer’s Reserve - M’Lord Ale - a red brown coloured Mild Ale with tasty malt aroma and hint of chocolate at 3.6% abv.

New Seasonal - Weizenbock - an award winning Brewer’s Reserve will be released in 500 ml bottles on 10th August.

Last but by no means least - the gorgeous Old Cascade - currently available in very limited edition 500 ml bottles. The classic English Old Ale brew with heaps of additional apricot notes at 7% abv.

The Arrow Brewing Company has produced two seasonal beers and a mulled wine for the southern ski season. The first of the beers, appropriately named Wee Heavy, is a traditional Scotch Ale. It is a golden ruby in colour, similar to an oak aged whisky, and has good clarity. The aroma, being malt driven and with no hint of hops, is true to style with a pleasant bouquet of toffee and stewed peaches. Full bodied with flavours of toffee and orange brandy, it’s 7.8% leaves no trace of harsh alcohol and has been described by one enthusiastic drinker as a “terrific winter treat”.

Criterion Mid Winter Christmas Ale is the second brew. It’s deep mahogany hue and thick creamy head go hand in hand with the nostalgic and inviting seasonal aromas reminiscent of a traditional Christmas pudding. On the palate this beer unashamedly delivers rewarding you with a rich combination of festive fruits and spice.

AROUND THE PUBS

AUCKLAND has a new central craft beer outlet, Brew on Quay, located on the corner of Quay Street & Britomart Place. Regular tap beers include Epic Pale Ale and Tuatara Pilsner. The bar was the venue for the recent Auckland Area ‘West Coast IPA Challenge’.

The location of Hashigo Zake, Wellington’s newest craft beer bar and the brainchild of SOBA member Dominic Kelly, will be the basement at 25 Taranaki St. At the moment it is the home of Vintage Bar, and over the years it has variously been known as Cell and Monkey Bar. For opening night in late August there will be at least one pallet of rare and exciting beer sourced from North America, the UK and Scandinavia.

The new owner of The Old Bank Bar in Blenheim is ex-pat Pom Mike Pink. If you’re thinking that surname is familiar you’d be right; Mike is the brother of Marlborough brewer Roger Pink. Although Mike used to run a pub in Devon and plans to give the Cleghorn Street bar the feel of a friendly local, he’s at pains to point out that he’s not attempting to recreate an English pub. Also a SOBA member, Mike is dispensing an excellent range of beers from the 12 taps at his disposal including Bays, Renaissance and 666 Brewing, plus a rotating selection of guest beers.

The annual Whitecliffs Oktoberfest is being held on Saturday 3rd October. Tickets include return bus rides to and from New Plymouth, a giant collector’s stein, a Bavarian meal, two bands and other entertainment.

Tonic Bar in Dunedin will be staging its ‘Bestival of Feer 2009’ Passport Scheme, running for two weeks from September 19th. Taste your way round their New Zealand craft beer selection and receive a wondrous commemorative gift for accumulating 15 stamps!

The Moutere Inn has reached a significant landmark by ordering its 100th craft beer since reopening last October.

Rumours on the streets of Wellington are that an award-winning home brewer will be assisting with micro brewery production at Temperance Bar.

Meantime, Bar Edward is running out of space on his blackboard for all the beers! Twisted Hop Golding, on handpump, didn’t even get a mention but is tasting superb. Also on tap are Tuatara Helles, Porter, Pilsner, Emerson Bookbinder and Pilsner, Captain Cooker Manuka and Croucher Belgian Blonde, plus Tuatara Pale Ale on handpump.

Malthouse is shortly expecting to receive a shipment of bottled beers from the Brewdog Brewery in Scotland. With all the brouhaha about responsible drinking, will the order include the 18.2% abv Tokyo….?
BEERVANA 2009

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CAMRA - WHO ARE WE?

If CAMRA had not been formed to save ‘real ale’ then this classic, great-tasting British drink would have become extinct

CAMRA campaigns for real ale, real pubs and consumer rights in the UK. They are an independent, voluntary organisation with over 95,000 members and have been described as the most successful consumer group in Europe. CAMRA promotes quality real ale and pubs, as well as acting as the consumer’s champion in relation to the UK and European beer and drinks industry. They aim to:

- Protect and improve consumer rights
- Promote quality, choice and value for money
- Support the public house as a focus of community life
- Campaign for greater appreciation of traditional beers and ciders as part of Britain’s national heritage
- Seek improvements in all licensed premises and throughout the brewing industry

Since its formation in 1971 CAMRA has achieved the following:

- In the 1970’s CAMRA successfully fought the efforts of the big brewers to replace traditional ales with tasteless keg beers.

- In the 1980’s CAMRA lobbied against the lack of choice in Britain’s pubs. In 1989 the Government responded with wide reaching reforms called the Beer Orders. The Beer Orders forced the big six brewers to sell or free from the tie over 11,000 pubs as well as introducing the Guest Beer provision.

- In the 1990’s CAMRA actively encouraged and supported real ale resurgence. During the decade CAMRA thwarted efforts by the EU Commission to abolish Britain’s Guest Beer provision.

- Since 2000 CAMRA has succeeded in campaigning for the extension of mandatory rate relief to public houses, reform of the outdated licensing laws in England and Wales leading to a more flexible licensing system and the introduction of reduced excise duty for small brewers which means that small brewers are able to compete on a more level playing field with the large brewers.

- CAMRA has run literally thousands of initiatives to promote and safeguard real ale and pubs including staging beer festivals, publishing books and guides, running National Pubs Week and the Saving Your Local Pub which was launched by Prince Charles, producing a generic beer campaign, holding regular promotions for endangered beer styles and cider, producing national and regional inventories for pubs with interiors of historical significance and much more.

SOBA’S goals are aligned to those of CAMRA in many ways. Help us make SOBA a similar success!

Cryer Malt

We Source and Supply the World’s Best Ingredients for the Australasian Craft and Premium Brewing Sector.

Cryer malt has been actively doing this for 15 years importing United Kingdom (Bairds) and German (Weyermann) Premium Malts and supplying the excellent products of Australia’s Barrett Burston Malting Pty Ltd.

We also source Kegs, both new and 2nd hand from Germany and supply a range of Brewing Enzymes to enhance brewhouse efficiency.

Cryer malt works in the Brewing Trade in Australia and New Zealand with Orca supplying our range with Brewing cleaners and sanitizers.

If you’re looking for any brewery related product we either have it or can help you find it.

The Pursuit of Hoppiness - Winter 2009
Radler - Game On!

IN A CYNICAL, but widely predicted move designed to maximise the distance from May’s negative publicity, DB has waited until the very last day possible to defend its trademarking of ‘radler’, the name of a recognised beer style. On Friday 10th July, the last day permissible, DB’s lawyers, Simpson Grierson, submitted a counterstatement to the Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand (IPONZ), registering the brewer’s intention to contest the Declaration of Invalidity filed by SOBA’s patent attorneys James & Wells Intellectual Property.

So what happens now? SOBA’s attorneys James & Wells now have up to two months to submit evidence to IPONZ. After this evidence has been filed DB’s lawyers have two months to file evidence in support of their claim that ‘radler’ is not a generic term. James & Wells then have a further month for a right of reply before a formal hearing at IPONZ, adjudicated by an IPONZ Assistant commissioner.

SOBA’s lawyer, Ceri Wells of James & Wells has already stated an intention to present his evidence as soon as possible, but DB’s inclination for maximum delay suggests the case could drag on for some months yet. Ceri considers the outcome of the case revolves around two main issues:
- whether DB knew ‘radler’ was a generic term for a recognised beer style when it applied to register ‘radler’ as a trade mark
- whether, at the time the trade mark application was filed, the generic term ‘radler’ was known and understood in New Zealand.

On the first point SOBA contends a large, European-owned brewer such as DB would be all too aware of such a popular beer style as ‘radler’. On the second issue, Ceri Wells and SOBA are now inviting written statements from as many of the country’s brewers, importers, retailers and beer lovers as possible.

In order to assist in the case, SOBA invites anyone prepared to state their knowledge of ‘radler’ prior to 2003, or with any other information showing ‘radler’ to be a generic term, to contact us at info@soba.org.nz. SOBA re-states its assertion that no brewery should be allowed to ‘own’ sole rights to the use of beer style names. SOBA believes that any such ownership is anti-competitive and detrimental to the education of the New Zealand consumer.
COMPETITION

Identify these two craft brewing locations and be in to win a $25 discount towards any purchase of homebrew supplies from Liberty Brewing when ordered online at www.libertybrewing.co.nz.

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) Mac’s, Wellington & B) Lighthouse, Nelson. The lucky winner of a free entry ticket to Beervana was Dave Pearce of Wellington.

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The Pursuit of Hoppiness - Winter 2009
Malt, the engine room of beer

MALTING is the process of germinating cereal grain by soaking the grain in water and then halting the germination by dry-kilning. My rudimentary understanding of what happens in this process is that the grain is full of carbohydrate and when germination occurs the seed sprouts a shoot. This is when the magic occurs. Inside the grain enzymes jump into action to begin converting the starch into sugars to provide food for the plant. A group of enzymes called amylase do this job for the plant, interestingly the same enzyme is found in human saliva and is an important part of digestion. The cleverness is in stopping the germination process by dry-kilning the grain - trapping the enzymes and the starch together in a tiny parcel ready for the process to be continued by adding warm water.

Once the maltster has done his job and kilned the barley to a specific level of colour and to a specific conversion of starch to sugar he then sends it off to the brewer. The brewer then re-awakens the enzymes inside the grain calling on it to complete its job of converting the starch to sugar by creating a mash, a thick porridge of warm water and milled malt. Now it just so happens that the enzymes are actually made up of two groups of amylase - alpha and beta, not that the naming of these means a lot but what is very significant about these siblings is that one has a different activity temperature range than the other and one creates sugars that are easily fermented into alcohol by yeast, whereas the other creates sugars that remain unfermented in the beer adding body and sweetness.

What this means is that by setting the temperature of the mash appropriately the brewer can affect the resulting alcohol content, body, flavour and body of the beer. The temperature range for the mash is normally somewhere between 60 and 70°C, the lower the temperature the more alcohol and less body and sweetness.

The great proportion of malt that a brewer will use in a brew will be pale malt, this has been kilned very lightly and is the blank canvas on which the brewer then creates the beer. Other malts such as crystal or caramel malt have been malted in a way that causes much more of the starch in the grain to be converted into unfermentable sugar. The carbohydrates are effectively stewed inside the grain husk. These malts add sweetness to a beer, a little colour and honey, caramel, toffee or raisin flavours. Some malts are roasted after kilning to produce darker colour malts and toasty, chocolate or nutty flavours. These malts are used in small quantities in the mash to create beers such as porter or brown ale.

Usefully, the amylase enzymes in barley are so abundant that they can convert all of their own starch as well as other starches added to a mash such as rice, corn or even things like potato or pumpkin. This becomes very helpful to commercial brewers when other forms of starch are cheaper due to a greater supply in different areas. However, the resulting beer often lacks the malt flavours you want from a beer, think of Budweiser with added rice for example.

Before the days of modified malts and the variety of kilning and roasting methods applied by the maltster, the range of malts available to the brewer was limited. A smaller range of beers would be produced by a brewery. In those days it was common for the publican to blend beers from different barrels to produce a favourable beer for his patrons. It was also possibly a way to shift some of the stock that was on the wane. Unfortunately the art of blending has largely been lost these days, maybe it is seen as sacrilege. Porter was originally known as Three Threads due to its blend of three beers - ale, mild beer, and stale (twopenny, the strongest). To avoid the publican the trouble of having to pour the beer from three separate casks a brewer named Harwood came up with the idea of brewing a single beer that combined all the flavours of the three and called it Entire-butt, which became commonly known as Porter.

ROB OWEN
Tuatara trip proves popular
PLACES were unsurprisingly in heavy demand for the May visit to Tuatara Brewery, with 40 SOBA members keen to check out the new brewhouse and discuss with Carl Vasta how production was going plus the plans for future expansion. A great day!

Carl discusses the gradual evolution of the Tuatara

New Zealand Icons Beer Tasting
THANKS to Brendon Mackenzie for hosting an excellent tasting at Centre City Wines & Spirits in June. The contestants in this Royal Rumble were:

1. Whitecliff's Premium Organic Beer (Mike's Mild)
2. Founder's Generation Ale
3. Mussel Inn Captain Cooker
4. Tuatara Ardennes
5. Epic Pale Ale
6. Emerson’s Taieri George
7. Invercargill Brewery's Pitch Black
8. Three Boys Oyster Stout

We had a penalty shoot out to determine the winner.

Third place - the captivating Three Boys Oyster Stout
Second place - the inspiring Mussel Inn Captain Cooker
First place - the excellent Emerson's Taieri George

Swilling at the Sawmill
A GOOD CROWD of Auckland-area SOBA-ites converged on Leigh (just north of Auckland) on Saturday for a visit to Leigh Sawmill Brewery. And a very interesting visit it was. Peter and Decima gave us a detailed rundown of their operation, including some interesting little tidbits about their recipes. I was especially pleased to see that Peter is continuing to evolve his brewing knowledge and is always trying to learn new things and assimilate more brewing information.

We tasted our way through their full range (with the exception of The Doctor which was sold out) and I was very impressed. My favourite was undoubtedly the 12 Gauge - a strong, hoppy Pilsner style beer with tons of character. We also learnt a lot about the hassles that the taxman imposes on small breweries - surely there must be a better way?

On the way back to Auckland a few of us called in at Tahi bar in Warkworth, and we were very glad we did. Two Hofbrauhaus beers on tap and a fridge stuffed with about 40 of New Zealand's finest craft beers, with nary an East India Pale Ale (sic!) in sight! The owner (Ian) was delighted to be able to talk about beer with us, and we even managed a sneaky sample of Emerson’s Old Cascade. We’ll definitely be back there for a SOBA meeting sometime and I encourage everyone to call in if you’re passing through on your way north.

An excellent day out for all who came along - thanks to everyone who made the effort.

MARTIN BRIDGES

ED
**New Seasonal Release**

Following the popularity of the Weizenbock last year which was released as a Brewer's Reserve and won a trophy at BrewNZ 2008, this brew is now in production as a Seasonal Release. The first vintage of bottled Weizenbock was released in August and will be brewed annually.

Brewed in a similar way to a pale Weissbier, Weizenbocks have a warming higher alcohol level for those cooler months. Essentially it is a Bavarian cloudy Weiss or Wheat beer brewed to bock strength. Beers are deemed to be bock beers if they fall between the alcohol range of 6-7.5% alcohol by volume. Emerson's Weizenbock "generously" sits just beyond this range at a heart warming 8%.

As in Bavaria, Emerson's Weizenbock is dark in colour and has been brewed in the traditional way with German wheat malt and dark roasted malts.

The overall impression is a beer that is strong and malty, rich, full bodied and warming. Flavours of chocolate, Christmas cake, raisins, dark fruits and even a hint of Easter spices and clove characters.

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**BrewNZ and Beervana**

The Beervana Passport is your mission leading up to the Beervana event and you can have your passport validated for Emerson's 1812 India Pale Ale at Scopa Caffe, on the corner of Ghuznee and Cuba Streets and Organic Pilsner at Duke Carvell's, 6 Swan Lane. Richard and the Emerson's crew will be at Beervana and look forward to talking beer with you ... Watch out for the Emerson's Festive Brew!

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

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“THE CONTRAST between quiet, genteel Dulwich Village and noisy, over-crowded Brixton High Street is quite amazing, considering they are only a mile apart. So after the Dulwich Picture Gallery and the Imperial War Museum, it was to the Market Porter in Borough Market where we got a very good welcome from the landlord, who now expects us at this time every year.

The Market Porter serves over 600 real ales in the course of a year. I tried four beers. The first D-Day Ale, 4.2% from Mighty Oak, which I think is one of the best of the small, English breweries. It was a good, fruity summer ale, with a long, dry hop finish. I don't normally like summer ales because quite often there is too much ginger.

The next was another summer ale from Holdens, which is a new brewery to me. It was called Thigh Bones, 4.2%. Not as good as the D-Day because it was sweeter and not as hoppy.

The next beer was definitely the hit of the night. A mild called Oscar Wilde from Mighty Oak, 3.7%. I think this beer won a major CAMRA award about three years ago and has been kept on. Smooth, rich malt with light hops. Perfect.

Finally I finished up with Beyond the Pale, 4.2% from Eillands. A perfect example of a good English bitter. Malt, hop fruit and a good hop finish. While I was tasting these beers there was a respectable looking businessman sitting at the next table. He tasted 7 beers, drinking halves. He comes in once a week to taste the new beers. Cheers!”

TED VERRITY
BEER AND FOOD MATCHING

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.

Washed Rind Cheese and Belgian Specialties - Fathered by the Wild

World renowned beer writer Michael Jackson started his final book, the Eye Witness Companions Beer (2007), with the lines “Within the world of food and drink there lives a family blessed with eternal life - the family of the fermented. There is an elemental appeal to those foods and drinks that are fathered by fermentation. There is within them a sense of the wild.”

The pairing of washed rind cheese and funky wild Belgian specialty beer is perhaps the best example we can find of this ‘sense of the wild’. Washed rind cheeses stem from a monastic tradition where the fermented bounty from the dairy herd was stored in caves which provided a cool constant temperate environment. The cool humid environment of the caves not only helped preserve the precious curds but also provided the perfect conditions in which wild yeasts could flourish. The curds would emerge from the caves imbued with the yeasty, pungent odours and flavours of the wild yeasts. To the devout monks it must have seemed like pure alchemy and surely the work of a benevolent god.

Likewise the spontaneously fermented Lambic beers of the Senne Valley and the vatted sour ales of Flanders must have seemed like divine gifts. These beers are living reminders of how all beer was once brewed. The sugary extract of the local grain was exposed to the elements or run into wooden vats where wild yeasts would take hold and slowly transform the sweet wort into tart dry fruity beer. So for this issue’s pairing we bring together two branches of the fermented food family which, as Michael Jackson might have said, have been fathered by the wild.

The Cheese

Today caves feature in the production of only a minority of washed rind cheeses. However the wild yeasts which originally thrived in the subterrarium store houses now have been cultured and are used by cheese makers to recreate the ‘cave experience’. Washed Rind cheese are known as such because the rind of the maturing curd is washed or smeared regularly with beer, cider, brandsy, wine or more often saline, in order to create an environment in which the formerly wild yeasts will thrive. The main culture used is called brevibacterium linens which not only adds a kaleidoscope of funky yeasty pungent aromas and flavours but also gives the rind of the cheese a distinctive brick red colour. Washed rind cheeses come in a variety of textures, however most of the ones available in New Zealand are at the softer end of the scale.

Local Washed Rinds

The most widely available washed rind cheese in New Zealand is Kapiti Ramara. Packed with lightly funky aromas, a subtle yeastiness, a creamy body and a moderate piquancy Ramara is one of the more interesting cheeses you will find on the supermarket shelf. While I feel this product has lost some of its character in recent years; a common tale of wider distribution accompanying less challenging product; it still provides all that’s required for this match when its got some age on it. Te Mata Irongate is of a more robust aromatic interpretation of the style with a big pungent nose that will dominate your fridge, a creamy flowing body when its ripe and a sharp long finish. Kaimai Cheese Co in the Waikato produces a slightly firmer interpretation called Washed Rouge which offers up the odd salt crystal, a semi soft creamy body and a sharp firm finish. Perhaps the brightest star of the local washed rind market is currently Over The Moon Galactic Gold. Having taken out the coveted Artisan Award at the Cuisine Cheese Awards this year Galactic Gold is in high demand. With an unparalleled cream character which runs like custard when ripe, a tangy yeasty aroma and a full flavoured satisfying finish Galactic Gold is a cheese which screams out for a glass of funky Belgian beer.

continued on p15
Imports

There are a range of washed rind cheeses imported into New Zealand. From France we have the semi soft Livarot, Pont L’Eveque and Munster, and the firmer Raclette famous for the cooked recipe of the same name. From Italy we have a rare example which still spends some of its maturation in caves.

Taleggio comes from the valley in Italy of the same name. The cheeses start their lives down in the valley; once the curds have formed they are taken up into the hills and aged in caves. Taleggio is an incredibly complex yet subtle cheese. Taleggio has a lightly yeasty aroma which reminds me more of the brew house during mashing or the smell of baking bread than the dirty socks which are often evoked when washed rind cheeses are opened. It has a spongy semi firm texture that is neither firm nor runny and a smooth fruity yeasty flavour.

The Beer

I was intentionally vague about the style of beer for this match. By naming it Belgian Speciality I was able to pick and choose the funkiest wild Belgian styles for this match. Lambic Geuze comes pretty much at the top of my list for matching with these cheeses. Tragically Geuze is becoming harder and harder to find in New Zealand as the imported beer sector shudders under the world financial crisis. If you can find them, Boon Olde Geuze, Mort Subite Original Geuze, Lindemans Geuze or the rather sweet Timmermans Geuze will work well with this match. Another style that works extremely well with washed rind cheeses is Flanders Sour Ale.

Rodenbach comes and goes on the New Zealand market and works extremely well. Liefmans is one of my all time favourite Belgian beers which hasn’t surfaced in New Zealand for some time. Having faltered financially and been bought out by Duvel Moortgat hopefully we will see it on the shelves again soon. The Trappist beer Orval is another candidate and one which works so well that I often prefer to drink it with a portion of funky cheese than on its own.

Sadly there are few New Zealand beers which fit the bill; however the Emerson’s JP range is doing much to right this. If you are lucky enough to have access to some cellared JP 07 you will find this has more than enough funky wild character to match.

The Match

What makes this match really work is the fact that it includes both harmony and contrast at the same time. Washed rind cheeses are often rich and sharp.

When matched with the wild Belgian beers there is a cleansing sensation as the rich milk fats are washed from the palate by the sharp acuity of the beer and then a harmony as the funky tangy fruity notes in the beer mingle with the yeasty fruity notes in the cheese.

When matching the really dry beers such as Orval or Boon with the richer washed rind cheeses you will find that the beer is softened. Conversely a really mature ’high’ sample of cheese will often be made far more acceptable to the faint of heart when matched with a goblet of tangy Geuze. But who am I kidding? this match is not for the faint of heart and all the better for it, or perhaps all the more for me!

Next issue as the weather warms I will look at the match of New Zealand Pilsner and Swiss style cheeses.

KIERAN HASLETT-MOORE

SOBA Newsletter
JOURNEY OF THE DUNEDIN BEER ADVOCATES

SOBA member Richard Pettinger searches for quality in the city’s bars

IT WAS A LOVELY fine night for an expedition as Kevin and I set out to traverse the range of Dunedin bars. We had been asked to carry out some vital research on our trek, and so we obliged. Our mission was to report back to HQ just what these high spots were like and what the view was like from them.

I had been talking to some brewers about how their beers are faring once they leave the brewery, and about how their beers are presented. When a brewer relies on word of mouth rather than advertising, how the drinker finds the taste on the day is critically important.

Our plan was to go on the quietest night of the week, and hope to get the attention of the staff, so I could ask them a few questions I had planned. First up, I needed to know from each one what tap beer was the fastest seller and which the slowest. I would then ask for a taster of the brew with the slowest turnover and see if it was coming through OK. If not, I would try to find out the likely reason. I would also ask about line cleaning, the length of the line, how long the keg had been sitting there, and importantly the ambient temperature immediately surrounding the keg and the line. Was it room temperature, cellar temperature or chilled? I hoped to draw conclusions that were of some use to SOBA.

We began at the Inch Bar and didn’t waste time before talking to Jon. The kegs are all at room temperature, and the turnover of all 4 on tap is fast. I have to say I have never noticed off-flavour in any beer in that bar. Jon was very happy to give a small taster. A shot-glass was ample. He has no room for a hand-pulled option and it’s not so surprising, as this must be the town’s smallest bar with real beer – I understand that the bar’s name could be something to do with the maximum legal separation distance between any two customers at after work peak times.

Kevin doesn’t muck around when he has a good bar to get to, and for our journey to the next bar we hitched a ride with Kevin’s wife Shelly on her way to work. Close to the heart of the campus, Eureka is divided in its loyalty to great beer and great food. I did find an infected beer here on this occasion, and bar manager Nigel said it was one of the three slowest to turn over. It was almost an undetectable level of infection, though, and this may be because all their kegs are kept at 4 degrees. There is quite a wide range of beers on tap, which by rights should slow turnover of some options down a bit.

Eureka - I’ve found it!

We sped past another bar that was worth a look but turned out a bit disappointing, and arrived at the very small and cozy Albar. Nothing wrong with their beers, including 2 hand-pulled ones. The smallest glasses for tasting were tumblers - as they were at Eureka - so, I felt a little greedy! It was quite busy.

English ales at the Duke of Wellington

On south to the Duke of Wellington. Now, this is a foreign-beer dominated place, so you might think continued on p17

The Pursuit of Hoppiness - Winter 2009
you’re in Beer Heaven, unless you were looking for a local brew. The slowest selling beer was English, and it tasted fine, although I was looking for the taste I had been warned about – a plasticky taste someone reported a while back in many of the beers. So, I had to try a few. Barkeep Mike said he couldn’t give me a taste in a shot glass, as it would have filled up with foam! The lines are long, up to 20 metres, so beer could sit in them for a while, if it wasn’t for the fast turnover Mike claimed for all his 16 tap options.

Finally it was back up the main street to tonic, where there is a high turnover in a smallish range of tap options, all stored at 5-6 degrees. Every beer I tasted was spot-on. Exhausted after such a lot of research, I thought it was time for a beer. Being a bit mad, I asked Fitzy to pour me something I hadn’t had for years: a Cooper’s Sparkling Ale poured clear. He did this for me and it was a bit of a treat. (I drank the dregs first.)

If a bar doesn’t do its best, it risks doing the brewer a disservice. Not to mention the punters, some of whom may not notice the contamination or infection, especially if the beer at the tap is very cold. Maybe we punters should stay with the fastest turnover beer options on offer, and curb our curiosity about the beer we don’t know much about or is slow-selling. I would now tend to ask: “What’s the most popular?” every time and, if my curiosity about any less popular beer gets the better of me, ask for a tiny taste only. That way I shouldn’t be left staring at a whole pint of something undrinkable.

The hand-pulled ones in Dunedin were only on for a day at a time, so you’d think they would usually be a safe bet. I went back to the Albar a few days later and my dentist shouted me a pint of Emerson’s IPA from the hand pump, and it was totally gorgeous.

By the way, the fastest turnover tap beer in every one of these bars was, and you might have guessed it: Emerson’s Pilsener. And not, apparently, because it is organic. It is just bloody good popular stuff. Being free of unnatural ingredients and pesticide residues, we should see some healthy customers in these bars for a few years, yet.

RICHARD PETTINGER

72 bottled beers - just the tonic

As I don’t get up to the Gardens Corner (and the Inch Bar) too often, I imagine tonic would be my unpretentious local, should I need a local at all. As with Inch, though, the size makes for cosy conviviality.

Every bar we carried out our research in was great, in its own special way. It was a brilliant evening, thanks Kevin. Can we do it again, every now and then, to check for any infected beer? - and see if we can pinpoint the reason.

My conclusions? It seemed to me that it is only if turnover is fast and the range of beers relatively limited, can the bar risk keeping long lines and kegs at room temperature. Any brew that is slow selling, I suspect, should be kept cold, if space for kegs is limited. Lines must always be kept clean, but there’s always the possibility that substances could leach out of the line itself, even when clean, if beer (which contains a pretty good solvent) is in contact with it for long enough. Leaching might be accelerated the warmer the line is.
**Inside the Lighthouse**

**THE LIGHTHOUSE BREWERY** is owned and run by Dick Tout. Whilst it is currently based in an industrial unit in Stoke, the brewery started its life in Hardy Street (in what is now, by a curious twist of fate, the Sprig and Fern pub), then moved closer to the port, before ending up where it is now. Dick chose Lighthouse as the name of the brewery, because it reflected the closeness of the sea to where he lived and because “nobody else was using the name”. Dick’s brewing education was gained at Ballarat, Melbourne.

Brewing of 200 litre batches takes place three times a week. Sparging of the mash is done at about 75 deg C. Once the boil is underway, hops are added at 15mins, 45 minutes and at the end of the 1½ hour boil. Dick prefers to use pelletised hops, as these have a third more flavour, weight for weight, when compared with cones.

The wort having been chilled and the ferment completed, the beers are left to condition for at least two weeks.

Under normal circumstances there are five beers available, though, on occasion, special beers will be produced for certain customers. The five beers are:

**Pilsner** – probably the favourite of the SOBA group visiting Nelson at the time – a beer using Saaz hops. Reportedly goes well with pan fried scallops.

**Cheeky Little Lager** – hopped with Sticklebracht and Hallertau.

**Classic Stout** – came with a warning to the ladies “don’t drink more than that as it rots the elastic on your knickers!” Goes well with ice cream according to our host.

**Dick’s Dark** – the cooking recommendation for this one is to use Dick’s Dark to replace water, when cooking mince, then drink the rest of the rigger whilst you cook!

**Fug Nose** – supposedly meant to reflect the smell of Fuggles hops that you get when sniffing out the aroma, however the “true” story goes that Dick was pouring a glass of this trial brew and a lady journalist asked him what name the beer was to go by. Not having thought through the consequences, Dick bluntly told her that he didn’t know, or words to that effect. The following day an article appeared in the newspaper, with the new beer noted as Fug Nose…and the name stuck. I leave you to decide on the veracity of the tale!

Dick currently has arrangement with 666 Brewing, whereby owner, Graham Mahy, scales up his trial brews to commercial quantities using the Lighthouse kit.

On behalf of everyone on the SOBA trip, many thanks Dick. Your hospitality got the weekend off to an awesome start.

The Lighthouse brewery is well worth a visit – you can enjoy sampling the beers whilst there and load up with riggers to take away……all the while being entertained by Dick’s dry wit. Address : 21 Echolade Place, Stoke, Nelson. Tel: 03 547 0983.

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SOBA Newsletter
CELEBRITY CORNER

MARTIN BENNETT arrived in New Zealand in February of 2003 having recently jacked in a career as an oil exploration geophysicist working as a British expat in Jakarta, Indonesia. He had then gone on to take up his hobby of photography professionally but he soon realised that Christchurch was crying out for the type of beer that he missed so much from his homeland.

Martin and like-minded POM, Stephen Hardman, had both independently mentioned this idea to Dux de Lux brewer, Dick Fife, who put the two in contact with one another.

Martin and Stephen decided to start a brewpub making cask conditioned real ales, and called it The Twisted Hop. They spent some time looking for the right location and finally plumped for an old warehouse in an emerging part of town known as Poplar Lanes. This rather dodgy area of narrow streets and passageways was shabby and unloved, in fact it was such a backwater that even Martin’s closest friends and allies began to doubt his business sense. They clearly hit on something, because the area has now turned into a vibrant cluster of bars, cafes and boutique shops, and people ask ‘how did they manage to get such a good spot for The Hop?’

The two of them did most of the building work to fit out the bar and brewery, and the equipment was fabricated and fitted by John Timpany of Invercargill (now co-owner and brewer at Arrowtown Brewing Co). John gave the boys a quick brewing lesson and then let them loose on the kit. After 6 months of doing all the brewing, the pub got busier and busier - help was needed! Now Sean Harris is the brewer and Martin only tends to don the overalls when Sean is on holiday.

In addition to his involvement with the pub and brewery, Martin plays an active role in the Brewers Guild, currently as Treasurer on the Executive Committee as well as webmaster for the new website and can often be spotted acting as adopted MC at many of their functions around the country.

Tonight I’m planning to...bury a dead sheep! Having a lifestyle block is not all fun. It is bad enough losing one of the flock, but then having to bury the damned thing is the last straw.

It always makes me laugh when...the slide falls off the end of my trombone. I play (very badly) in the local beginners brass band.

The thing I love most is...seeing the bar full of people drinking real ale and having a great time.

It annoys me when...my tractor won’t start on a frosty morning and the cows are mooning for their breakfast.

My most decadent pleasure is...a bottle of Enigma (our barley wine) with a chunk of Roquefort in front of a roaring log fire.

In my fridge I always have...I don’t keep beer in the fridge – too cold – in the garage however, I normally have a rigger of Challenger.

My ideal meal is...Beer Rendang, with Gado Gado, yes memories of my days in Indonesia.

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Washed down with...well, it would have been Bintang when I lived in Jakarta, but now it would have to be an IPA, any would do, as long as it really is an IPA.

My ultimate beer drinking companion would be...Alastair Hook, my old school friend and now owner of Meantime Brewery in Greenwich, my home town.

I am most at peace...on a longhaul flight – no phones, no emails, no stress!

My favourite beer is...in England Timothy Taylors Landlord, but here in New Zealand I do like a nice American style IPA especially if it is warm and flat!

My biggest letdown was...The Twisted Hop’s disappointing results in the BrewNZ awards (yes it happens every year!)

If there’s one thing in life I want to accomplish it’s...circumnavigating New Zealand in my trailer yacht, save that one for retirement.
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IT’S HARD WORK getting a Kiwi to drink real beer. Unlike his international counterpart, the Kiwi is a label drinker, “Don’t pour it into the glass, I want people to see what I’m drinking and recognise that I’m sophisticated.”

A generalisation I know. Regular drinkers at Galbraith’s and at other bars that stock interesting independent brewery products understand beer (especially the Wellingtonians) and this comment doesn’t apply to them. However, it does apply to some of their friends.

“What are you drinking Tom?”
“IT’s Bitter & Twisted cask-conditioned ale at 5.3% alc/vol, want one?”
“Christ no! Giz a Heiney mate.” (Not to be confused with a Steiny.)
“Wouldn’t you care to try one of Galbraith’s house brewed ales or lagers?”
“Na, I don’t drink home brew, I only drink imported lager, or, if I want an ale, a Speight’s mate.”

Never mind that both Heineken and Stella are brewed locally from local ingredients and bear no resemblance to the original and that Speight’s is a lager contrary to what it says on the label.

No, if it’s on the Telly with some Hollywood star congratulating us on how much he admires our “No Nukes stand” and it’s on the advertising hoardings at the game, it must be the best.

Why is it that we are open to new foods from all corners of the world, we get a hard-on over the newest grape variety to come out of Marlborough, but we stick to the beer brands that big advertising budget breweries tell us to drink? Are we too scared to be seen to be different in our choice of beer? “Me mates would think I was a poof if I drank anything other than Old Rugby Jock Strap.”

No, give us thin, blast chilled, boring and insipid fizz. Beers that bear no resemblance to the original beers they are supposed to emulate. Give us products that are to beer what McDonalds is to Haute Cuisine.

“I want it so chilled I can’t taste it. I want it the same today as it was yesterday, the same as I expect it to be in 50 years time. Me good old dad was a Ryan Red drinker and so am I, I’ll die before I change!”

The old joke about how many psychologists does it take to change a light bulb springs to mind. Answer, “Only one, but the light bulb has to really want to change.” Likewise the drinking public will only drink interesting beer if allowed to do so. The beers brewed, and advertising used by the big boys alienates all potential punters other than stereotypical knuckle-draggers.

The market for quality beer, although increasing, is finite. I believe Kiwis perception of what makes for quality beer will only change if the Big Boys get behind tasty and interesting beers and brewing is left to brewers and not the marketing genuses the breweries employ. These guys seem to think that producing the same beer day in and day out but changing how it is packaged is the answer, sorry chaps it’s not.

We need the boards of the big breweries to have the vision to put a percentage of their production into high end, high quality beers. Wake up guys, you’ve already lost major market share to wine companies. Why? Not because beer is a poor second cousin, it’s because you haven’t got the tackle to take the wine makers on at their own game. If you don’t, we’ll soon all turn into Rosé drinkers.

Come on guys give us independent guys a hand and take on your fair share of the load. Produce some high quality beers and cease pushing us out of on and off premise outlets. We are not the enemy; it’s those cheeky bloody wine makers. Together we stand……well, you know the rest.

GALBRAITH’S SOAPBOX

Keith Galbraith
5-MINUTE BEER QUIZ

1. What is the abv of Green Man’s Enrico’s Cure?

2. Who brews Good Bastards lager?

3. What is the NZ Hort Research adopted name for the ‘B’ Saaz variety of hop?

4. How many beers in the Wanaka Beerworks range?

5. Which craft beer pub can be found at 292 Kilmore Street, Christchurch?

6. In which month during 2008 did Mac’s cease production from its Stoke brewhouse?

7. What style of beer is Invercargill Brewery’s recently launched Not on Your Nally?

8. Timaru currently has a commercial operating brewery – true or false?

9. What do Wigram Spruce and Mussel Inn Captain Cooker have in common?

10. When DB Breweries closed down Monteith’s Brewing Company in 2001, how many days was it before it reopened?

CONTACTS

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
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All contactable via e-mail - info@soba.org.nz

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THE rate of pub closures in Britain is accelerating, with 52 going out of business every week at a cost of 24,000 jobs over the past year, figures show. Almost 2400 pubs and bars have vanished from villages and towns in the past 12 months, according to research for the British Beer & Pub Association. The closures represent the steepest rate of decline since records began in 1990 and has risen by a third compared with the same period last year.
COOKING WITH BEER

Vegetables Roasted with Sweet Stout

THIS is another recipe adapted from Susan Nowak’s "The Beer Cook Book". We tried it with roast lamb and steamed potatoes, and it went down very well. It would also be suitable for vegetarians. I haven’t given quantities, because it does depend how many you are cooking for.

INGREDIENTS
Peeled parsnips
Swede
Large carrots
Kumara
1 bottle of Invercargill Brewery
Pitch Black Stout
Butter for roasting

Place the vegetables in a large pan and pour in enough stout to half cover. Put on the lid and simmer gently until they start to soften, then remove from the heat, but leave in the pan to cool and draw in the stout, turning the vegetables in the stock from time to time. Remove vegetables from the stock and place in an ovenproof dish. Roast at a fairly high heat (200 degrees C) for 10 minutes until the vegetables start to caramelize. Glaze with the butter and return to the oven to crisp for a further 20 minutes, basting twice, until soft on the inside and crisp on the outside with an intense sweetness.

When I cooked it I made too much, so next day I mixed the leftovers with some leftover steamed potatoes, chopped spring onions and a dollop of my old standby Kato mayonnaise - and there was a delicious roast vegetable salad. Next time I think I would use a red onion instead of the spring onions.

FRANCES VERRITY
Holy Handpumps Batman - A Real Free House!

WHAT IS A ‘FREE HOUSE’? WIKIPEDIA: “Unlike a tied-house, a free house is a pub that is owned independently of the brewery (or breweries) that supply it. As a result, a free house can stock whichever beers it chooses from whichever breweries it chooses. Free houses are rare, the majority of pubs are tied-houses.”

Nelson’s first free house pub is the brainchild of Dead Good Beer Events, the creators of the ‘Nelson Beer Fêtes’ held quarterly at Founders Heritage Park and the annual MarchFest hops and music festival.

The venue is different in other ways too - it offers a safe, convivial community pub – a roaring woodburner rather than a glaring TV screen - chess, draughts and table top games rather than pokies - Nelson’s only pub piano rather than muzak. Welcome back to the art of good conversation and yes, they do stock local wines as well as beers! They also serve traditional pub food or you can bring in a curry from the Indian Cafe over the road. There is even a purpose-built, covered bike rack.

When visiting The Free House, expect to see beers from local breweries such as Founders, The Golden Bear, Lighthouse, Moa, Monkey Wizard, The Mussel Inn, Renaissance, Tasman, Townshend’s as well as great Kiwi craft breweries such as Croucher’s, Emerson’s, Epic, Green Man, Hallertau, Invercargill, Three Boys, Tuatara, The Twisted Hop, Wigram and more.

Nelson is at the heart of New Zealand’s hop growing region and is the epicentre of the Kiwi craft brewing industry. The Free House is Nelson’s first pub of its kind. The pub’s motto “set the beers free” in other words, offering patrons an endlessly changing menu of local and national craft beers. It is the only pub in Nelson serving cask-conditioned real ales.

The Free House, 95 Collingwood Street
Nelson 7010, Tel 03 548 9391
Opening Hours: Mon-Thurs: 4pm to 10-ish, Fri: 4pm to 11-ish, Sat: Midday to 11-ish, Sun: Midday to 6-ish

SOBA Newsletter
WHAT'S ON

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

Tuesday 4th August, 7.30pm
Monthly Social
Southern Cross, Abel Smith Street

Saturday 29th August, 9.30am
SOBA AGM
Ilott Theatre, Wellington Town Hall

Friday 28th August to Saturday 29th August
BEERVANA
Wellington Town Hall

Tuesday 1st September, 7.30pm
Monthly Social
Hashigo Zake, Taranaki Street

Tuesday 6th October, 7.30pm
Monthly Social
Cuba Street Crawl starting at Matterhorn

Tuesday 3rd November, 7.30pm
Beer Tasting tbc
Centre City Wines, Waring Taylor Street

Tuesday 1st December, 7.30pm
Monthly Social tbc
Mac’s Brewery Bar, corner Taranaki Street

AUCKLAND AREA
Contact: Martin Bridges, email martin@soba.org.nz
Upcoming events to likely include visits to Tahi Bar in Warkworth, the Croucher bar in Rotorua and possibly a brewpub in Tauranga, as well as the usual haunts closer to home!

MEMBERSHIP

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

Your membership fee of just $30 annually entitles you to:

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- 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

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.

Name: ___________________________________________
Address: ___________________________________________
Email: ___________________________________________
Phone: ___________________________________________
Date: ___________________________________________
I would like SOBA email address: Yes  No
Email: ___________________________________________
Forwards to: ____________________________ @

FRONT COVER IMAGE

Bar Top, Sprig & Fern, Richmond

The tiny Tasman Ales Brewery Tap has been undergoing a makeover, including a knock through into the hairdresser’s next door and a new patio out the back.

Cheers & see you next time. ED