



# WHAT'S BREWING

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE BRITISH COLUMBIA VOLUME 22 No.1 JAN - FEB 2012

## CAMRA BC PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2011- my first year of taking over the helm as President of CAMRA BC, and what a year it was!

We started off the year with the opening of a new branch with CAMRA Fraser Valley and ended the year with achieving over 1000 members for the province. And, in between, CAMRA BC helped to promote and support successful events from the VCBW in May, the GCBF in September and the first ever BC-Craft Beer month in October, along with ever so many events all year round.

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We saw an increase not only in CAMRA membership, but also in brewery increases and expansions, interest in craft beers, cask engines in many restaurants, more cask events throughout the province and new breweries preparing to open.



To end the year and bring in the new, we have also put together a 'CAMRA BC Approved' decal program. Expect to see these decals show up at CAMRA approved establishments over the next few months. Suggestions? Let us know, that is what we are here for!

Here's to a continued growth in 2012!

Lundy Dale

CAMRA BC President

[pres@camrabc.ca](mailto:pres@camrabc.ca)

# Corporate Members

Thank you **Corporate Members!** To join these professional beer lovers, (first-time members get a free 1/4 page ad!) Contact **CAMRA BC** today: **250 388 9769** or [camrabc@shaw.ca](mailto:camrabc@shaw.ca)

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# Campaign for Real Ale British Columbia

© tbpl What's Brewing ... deadline March - April issue: **February 24, 2012**

## CAMRA BC

### Web sites

CAMRA BC: <http://www.camrabc.ca>

CAMRA Fraser Valley: <http://www.camrafraservalley.ca>

CAMRA Vancouver: <http://www.camravancouver.ca>

CAMRA Victoria: <http://www.camra.ca>

E-mail [camrabc@shaw.ca](mailto:camrabc@shaw.ca)

CAMRA BC: to join discussion group send request to:

[CAMRA\\_BC\\_Discussion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:CAMRA_BC_Discussion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

to post a message to the list, send to:

[CAMRA\\_BC\\_Discussion@yahoogroups.com](mailto:CAMRA_BC_Discussion@yahoogroups.com)

Nominations for executive positions were solicited during December and we are close to confirming the new board. The nine-person BC Exec will comprise a president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, two members-at-large and three branch presidents. Don't forget to attend your branch AGM and vote in your local executive. Full results will be posted to the CAMRA BC web site and local results will be announced via local Facebook pages etc. And think about joining the board and making your views heard ... it's lots of fun and the little time it takes up is normally accompanied by delicious beer.

2011 bites the dust and this issue launches us into our 22nd year of publication. It's also the 20 year mark for the GCBF so look for some special ways of marking that landmark anniversary!

*Phil Atkinson*



## *Beer Powered Hospital*

Beer and health care may sound like an odd mix. In one case however, the two have formed an unlikely partnership to get creative with renewable energy.

[City Brewery](#) in La Crosse, Wisconsin is using all of its biogas byproduct from the brewing process to create three million kilowatt hours per year of electricity by employing a capturing, cleaning and burning process through an engine called a jenbacher.



Down the road from the brewery is [Gundersen Lutheran Health System](#) which is credited for the electricity produced by City Brewery. And while this only accounts for 10-13 per cent of their total needs, it means they are on their way to meeting complete energy independence by 2014.

As well as benefiting the hospital, the heat produced from the jenmacher feeds into the brewery's waste water treatment process, making the system more efficient.

[According to Gundersen Lutheran's website](#), the energy the hospital is receiving is enough to provide electricity to 299 homes and is the equivalent of removing 395 cars from the road.

Gundersen Lutheran also incorporates wind power as a renewable energy source. In reaching its 2014 renewable energy goals, the hospital stands to make around \$180,000 from the energy it sells back to the power company, [according to WaterWorld.com](#).

The move not only saves money but contributes to the broader goal of slowing climate change. [Based on an IEA climate change report](#), [The Guardian said](#) "The central problem is that most industrial infrastructure currently in existence – the fossil-fuelled power stations, the emissions-spewing factories, the inefficient transport and buildings – is already contributing to the high level of emissions, and will do so for decades."

However, [the Renewable Energy Markets Association](#) kicked off a new nationwide program on Friday to encourage organizations to purchase renewable energy for at least the next five years, [according to EarthTechling](#). The association has already found success with Austin, Texas committing to the pledge, and the area is the largest city government in the U.S. to switch to 100 per cent renewable energy. §





# Meet the Beer Bloggers

BY JEN REIHER

Follow Jen's excellent blog at  
<http://victorianfood.blogspot.com/>

**Beer Blogger:** Dan Lett of the [Small Beer Blog](#)



Favourite Beer of the Moment: Peche Mortel

**Beer is important because:** "... it is loved and shared and—as Bukowski said—beer is all there is."

Growing up in Northamptonshire, England, Dan says he didn't really appreciate the rich beer culture he left behind when he came to Canada in his mid 20s. He has since been converted to a full-fledged CAMRA executive in his adopted Victoria—not a bad place to continue the pursuit of craft beer.

**BLOG EXCERPT:** *[Since starting home brewing] "drinking sessions have become episodes of CSI. Two months ago I had but the vaguest idea of what DMS, acetaldehyde, or oxidation were. I now know that those charming, mysterious notes that wafted in and out of my palate as I supped a complex beer are faults that must be remedied and resisted. Likewise, even the most desirable of intended flavours must be*

*explained by my inquisitive mind as some product of ingredient, process or equipment. This is so much better than being able to sit and merely enjoy a beer..."*

Fuelled by a desire to write, and inspired by the sheer quality of beer from all over the world, Dan began to blog to document more than just the blind evangelism of beer. He focuses mostly on the social aspects of beer and beer culture. "If good and fascinating people did not make beer, I would not drink it."

Dan is very active in the local beer scene in Victoria, co-blogging news about local beer releases and events in Victoria with fellow CAMRA members at <http://beerontherock.com>. He also helped to found the BrewVIC (Vancouver Island and Cascadia) home brew collective to swap information, supplies and knowledge about brewing your own beer. For more information join the conversation at [BrewVIC.ca](http://BrewVIC.ca)

Find out more at [smallbeerblog.blogspot.com](http://smallbeerblog.blogspot.com) or [@dansmallbeer](#) on twitter §



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## *Plans for minimum alcohol price in England*

**Drinkers will pay a minimum price for alcohol under plans instigated by Prime Minister David Cameron to tackle a growing health crisis. These measures are being closely monitored by B.C.**

*The Daily Telegraph Dec. 27, 2011*

The minimum price would be accompanied by an 'aggressive' public health campaign and a more draconian approach to curtailing the sale of alcohol in shops, pubs and clubs.

The Prime Minister has ordered officials to develop a scheme in England to stop the sale of alcohol at below 40p to 50p a unit in shops and supermarkets.

Ministers could copy Scottish proposals, which would ban the sale of alcohol below 45p a unit, or bring in a more sophisticated system of taxes based on the number of alcohol units contained in the drink.

Both options would cost drinkers an estimated extra £700 million a year, with any extra tax revenue potentially going to the NHS. The Daily Telegraph understands that the Prime Minister personally ordered the radical "big bang" approach, which will be included in the Government's forthcoming alcohol strategy. It was due for release next month, but has now been delayed until February.

A recent official study found that setting a minimum price of 30p per unit would prevent 300 deaths a year, 40p about 1,000 deaths, and 50p more than 2,000 premature deaths.

The Downing Street diktat has led to intense Whitehall discussions and disagreements over how the minimum price, which has widespread support among the medical profession, can be introduced. Theresa

May, the Home Secretary, is said to favour taxing drink on the basis of alcoholic units. The Business Department has warned that forcing firms to charge a minimum price could be illegal under European law.

Andrew Lansley, the Health Secretary, favours a voluntary approach, but he has been overruled by Mr Cameron, although the compulsory scheme might fall foul of government lawyers.

The minimum price would be accompanied by an "aggressive" public health campaign and a more draconian approach to curtailing the sale of alcohol in shops, pubs and clubs.

A Whitehall source said: "The Prime Minister has decided that when it comes to alcohol, something pretty radical now has to be done and he is keen on the minimum price. It is complicated how this can be delivered, particularly under European law, but it is clear that the voluntary approach has not worked."

At present, the system of alcohol taxation is relatively crude. Beer and lager is taxed at about 18p a unit, compared with 19p a unit for wine and about 25p a unit for standard spirits. VAT at 20 per cent is also charged on alcoholic drinks.

The most radical scheme would involve a sharp rise in alcohol taxation. However, this is likely to prove politically unpalatable and would penalize responsible drinkers who are already struggling with high taxes elsewhere.

A more sophisticated scheme would target cheap drink sold in supermarkets and shops, while not hitting those sold in pubs or more expensive alcoholic drinks. A well-placed source said: "The minimum price is really designed to push up the cheapest alcohol prices, which cause the most damage, rather than an across-the-board rise. The Prime Minister is very concerned about protecting traditional pubs."

Mr Cameron is thought to have opted for a “big bang” approach to the alcohol problem after noting the success of the ban on smoking in public places.

Scotland is currently proposing a minimum alcohol price of about 45p a unit and several councils in England, including Greater Manchester and Merseyside, are considering bylaws to set minimum alcohol prices. Scottish estimates suggest that a minimum price per unit of 45p would result in the steepest price increases for cider, gin and vodka, while wine, beer and whisky would see more modest rises.

A bottle of own-brand gin with around 37.5 per cent alcohol content would go up from £6.95 to £11.85. A two-litre bottle of own-brand cider would more than triple in price from £1.20 to £3.75.

The cost of a £12 bottle of whisky would rise to £12.60, while a bottle of cheap wine would go up from around £3.75 to £4.20. A four-pack of beer with more than five per cent alcohol content would cost a minimum of about £3.95.

European law is complicated and minimum prices are only likely to be allowed if the authorities can demonstrate that they are tackling a major health problem without undermining competition. Last month, a group of 19 leading medical organizations warned that “pocket-money prices” for alcohol were endangering thousands of lives every year.

In a letter to The Daily Telegraph, doctors from the British Medical Association and Royal College of Physicians claimed that minimum pricing for alcohol would be the most “simple and effective mechanism” for tackling the problem.

Following the warning, the Prime Minister said he would “look very carefully” at how to tackle the problem of cheap alcohol.

Historically, governments have been reluctant to look at minimum pricing because of concerns about the

legality of the move and accusations of promoting a “nanny state” culture. Mr Cameron may also face criticism from Tories unhappy at any move to carry out such an intervention by raising taxes.



The Coalition has already banned supermarkets from selling alcohol at a loss and introduced higher duties for super-strength beers and ciders. But lager can still be sold for about 38p a can and wine for £2 per bottle. Dr Sarah Wollaston, an MP on the Common’s health committee and a former GP, said that alcohol misuse was costing the UK £20 billion, or £800 for every family. She has campaigned in Parliament for minimum pricing, arguing that alcohol abuse was the “single largest cause of deaths among young people.”

“Most health experts feel that changing pricing is the most effective way of achieving results,” she said.

Figures published earlier this month show that twice as many people are being treated in hospital because of alcohol misuse compared with 10 years ago.

Alcohol is linked to more than one million admissions to hospital a year in the UK, about 13,000 new cases of cancer and 25% of deaths of people 15 to 24.

Gavin Partington, of the Wine and Spirit Trade Association, said there was “no evidence [a minimum price per unit] will tackle alcohol misuse”. The association would rather see “enforcement, education and a series of policies to address the root causes of alcohol misuse”, he added. §

# Out and About with Scottie

## *Launching 2012*



I had the chance to hang out with my buddy John Mitchell just before Christmas and the conversation never ended about beer and beer related topics. John is still interested in the direction of beer and is a treasure trove of pre real ale beer facts—how we got to today.

He's followed the scene and of course has no end of opinions on all these matters. He paved the way—challenged the established ways and lack of consumer beer choice. He did it with passion for taste, flavour and choice.

In this past year we have all developed new relationships, beer appreciation and insights into all things beer by being associated with our cause, and beer group. B.C. breweries shine in the North American market—winning the hearts and minds of real beer aficionados turned onto the beer movement.

When we think of the west coast alone CAMRA has done a good job getting our name out there. All of us at CAMRA do it gratis.

We have a fantastic newsletter that's been in existence since the beginning and all of you have a voice in beer. We have a volunteer Executive, volunteer contributors—all things associated are volunteer in a registered society. I did the executive for many, many years from the beginning being everything including vice-president, events, and continue to this moment as roving event guy for our own What's Brewing plus anything else I could pitch in with. We stayed up with the evolution and revolution and members were pioneers demanding good beer and change. We met around town—and foraged for a good beer to be put on for us, wherever we met. Early choices were Shaftbury, OK Springs, Van Island, Whistler. I am leaving a couple out but hardly any brewers compared to today.

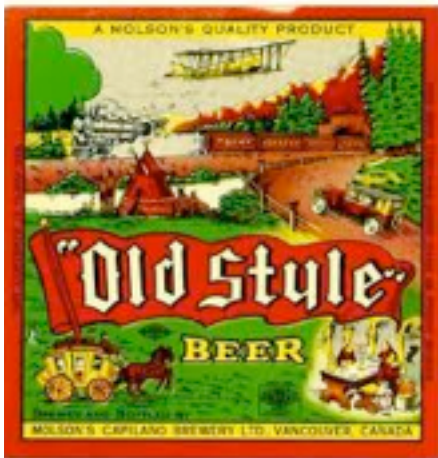
Early CAMRA went to Seattle and had a two-night wonderful beer old time and were hosted by Charles Finkel from original and still, and now again after selling years ago—Pike Brewing. We walked through the neighbourhood from his corporate offices to the brewery at the back end in Pike Place market—stopping on the street to chat with tavern owners—people greeting as we walked, the idea of the local guy comes around to see you—early fresh and local.

CAMRA went to the last commercial hop fields on a tour saying goodbye to another era in brewing—and Greg Evans was involved with the traveling exhibit on the topic Brewer's Gold.



It can go on what we did before as pioneers and earlier members—and now with social media in the mix—it's you new, younger folk—you shall make more things happen for Real Beer and the cause.

Throughout the province, especially in urban areas, we're seeing beer come alive. People are demanding it.



That didn't JUST happen but it's been a long time coming in farther out places. You know in many small B.C. places it's still like the days of 1960s beer parlour. Hard to believe but it's still out there. I always look in to remember it could have been this way forever—yellow, gassy, pop-and-fizz beer—dark dim room—sad cloud in the air—one choice and for food pickled eggs.

Pubs and retail are serving up more and more of a choice. Victoria and Vancouver and environs—it's a consumer paradise.

Becoming a province with a proclaimed Craft Beer Month was beyond words. The beer related events were astonishing—and this can only be the beginning of these matters.

CAMRA folk travel everywhere and engage in conversations around beer—whilst having a beer in some interesting place in some interesting situation. Then they share by writing about it in What's Brewing, beer blogs and many other places.

I am the old guard beer pioneer—and now we're seeing you younger ones rise up in the technological

beer age—it can only bring recognition of all things beer further into a world thirsting for knowledge. BEER worldwide is front and centre.

On the grander world stage—countries that accepted old pilsner ways as the norm and just the way it is are seeing beer revolution. Worldwide demand for natural beers is loud and clear. Supply doesn't always meet demands—but people are demanding good beer.

From small roots we have grown—fighting for real beer for no profit other than the choice we now see today. All of you along the road—who go to the events—dinners, samplings, festivals—you make it happen and continue to drive the beer bus.

I also remember all the CAMRA gatherings of decades past and all the folk who passed through the organization and group. I am good friends with many, many folks I met through real beer and its movement. In the beginning we flew by the seat of our pants through all kinds of storms—rallying together in meetings and supporting early breweries and pubs offering up good beers. We do think of you who pitched in on the movement with your time and effort. We do have archives of our history—what we did...but time is moving on.

This year we again plan to cover local events involving good beer—and continue to put out the word about real beer. This past year What's Brewing covered and wrote about beer events at Galiano Island, Gabriola Island, Nanaimo, Parksville, Port Alberni, Victoria, Vancouver, and the lower mainland and our travelers farther afield sent excellent reports of their exotic findings.

I say it always and it bears repeating—it's always good to see you all and hear about where you've been and what's brewing. §

**Scottie McLellan**  
**What's Brewing**

# North to Alaska

by Laura Kotler

Summer 2011 provided me with two opportunities to visit Alaska, and I spent a few days in each of Sitka, Nome, Anchorage and Fairbanks. The abundant wildlife in water and on land and the beautiful, rugged scenery are major draws to this northern land. The relatively small population in this largest of states boasts a burgeoning brewing industry. Even tiny Sitka has a one-year-old brewery, called Baranof Island Brewing. With a population of about 9,000, Sitka is a friendly town situated on Baranof Island, reachable only by water or air – I arrived by dive boat after a journey up the Inside Passage. Sitka is the site of early Russian settlement in North America, dating from 1799, an era when sea otters were the target of choice. Why does Alaska belong to the United States and not Canada, I wondered? Because Russia sold it to them in 1867 for \$7.2 million. At that time Russia was not on good terms with Britain, and Canada was just being born.

I located the small Baranof Island Brewing up a side road in an industrial area outside the town centre. Welcomed by Carina, I learned that Rick Armstrong and Suzan Hess established the brewery in May 2010, and they brew 40-gallon batches but want to expand, because demand is outstripping supply locally. Currently only on draft (they also fill growlers), their beers come in a good range, a 12 oz. glass costing \$3.75, and a 16 oz. “pint” \$4.75. I had Halibut Point Hefe. A seasonal Imperial IPA was expected soon.

In town I came across Bayview Restaurant and Pub, which offers beers from several Alaska and Pacific Northwest breweries. Also, Larkspur Café has three drafts and many bottles, several from Alaska microbreweries. All to prove that even in the smallest of places you can find good beer. Well, maybe you need at least a few thousand people as a base....

Late August found me in little Nome – slogan: “There’s no place like Nome!” Alas, there is no craft



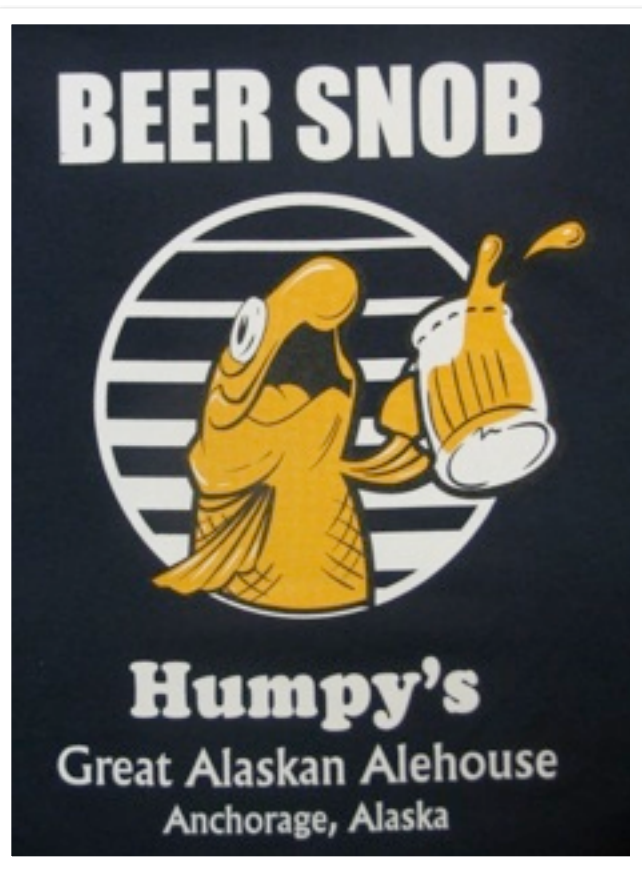
*Carina Nichols of Baranof Island Brewing, Sitka*

beer culture here. Its claim to fame is as the terminus for the Iditarod Sled Dog Race. With fewer than 4,000 people, the modest main street fits in several taverns and liquor stores, but I counted myself lucky to find a bottle of Rogue beer from Oregon. After two weeks on board a Russian ship and choking down a few canned Baltika lagers, I had to wait until I got back to the big smoke of Anchorage before the beer scene improved.

Besides the big Alaskan Brewing (started in 1986) in Juneau, many craft breweries exist in Alaska. I read

an article in the Feb.-Mar. 2011 *Celebrator*, by Jim Roberts, in which he described the mid-winter Great Alaska Beer & Barley Wine Festival (GABBF) in Anchorage, which is “the capstone event of Alaska’s fledgling Alaska Beer Week.” Beer Week includes dinners, a trade show and prizes, a “stunning array of locally produced craft beers from our 20 licensed brewing establishments.” There were three participating breweries, but he also mentioned eight other breweries in the state – in Haines, Wasilla, Anchorage, Fairbanks, etc. So life is good.

In Anchorage I found a good bottle shop, called Grape Expectations (I guess they also sell wine) and tried Midnight Sun’s Hop Dog Double Wheat India Pale Ale, at 8% abv and 100 IBUs, “designed to take the edge off the dog days of summer” – talk about strong and hoppy! I also had their Sockeye Red IPA, at a more tolerable 5.7% abv. Moose’s



Tooth Brewing produces an excellent Fairweather IPA, at 64 IBUs, and a nicely hoppy Polar Pale Ale.

Humpy’s Great Alaskan Alehouse (humpy refers to the humpback or pink salmon) is a large bar/restaurant, casual, sports oriented, with live, local music and a very impressive beer menu. Beers are listed by style, with more than 50 on draft, including eight Belgians, eight wheat or fruit beers and 19 local Alaska beers, as well as bottled Belgian and German beers. The fresh, grilled Alaska fish on the extensive food menu is delicious. (Yes, this vegan sometimes eats wide of her diet. When in Rome....)

Glacier Brewhouse claims to be the number one brewpub in Alaska, the fourth largest brewpub in the Pacific Northwest and the eighth largest in the USA (out of about 1,000 as ranked by the American Brewers Association).” Its brewery resides in full view of diners, behind full-length windows. The beer list is on a card, on the reverse of which are diagrams and an explanation of the brewing process. I ordered a taster tray of blonde, amber, hefeweizen, raspberry wheat and double dry-hopped IPA, at 55 IBUs (they also had an oatmeal stout), and topped them off with a pint of the cask IPA that was available that day. The dinner menu changes weekly, welcomes passengers from that week’s visiting cruise ships and provides a list of events around town. The website says in 2011 they produced more than 4,000 barrels of draft. In a chilled vault beneath the floor of the brewhouse is a wall of casks containing special release beers, conditioning in various types of oak: “Virgin oak infuses notes of vanilla and coconut...those formerly used for chardonnay or Jim Beam will pass on the distinctive characteristics of their ‘mother tongue.’ Hungarian, Ukrainian and French oaks have their own distinctive profiles to add.” Glacier Brewhouse hosts a Twelve Days of Barleywine





celebration in December, offering two or three vintage brews each day.

In Fairbanks I did not find (or did not have time to find) as much in the way of craft beer. I never got out to Silver Gulch Brewing's newly renovated and expanded pub-restaurant-brewery-bottling plant in Fox, just north of Fairbanks.

I think it's good to leave a place with things left undone or unseen – there's reason to return. I left many beers untasted in our neighbour to the north.

Further to the article in the last issue, “The Other Things Used in Wine and Beer Making”: Tariq Kahn, brewmaster at Big Ridge Brewery in Surrey, does not use finings and produces vegan beers – four are not fined at all, and two use Biofine Clear from Kerry Group in Ireland, as well as cold maturation. Biofine is derived from silicic acid - <http://www.brewing-solutions.com/products.php?action=details&id=12>. Interestingly, he mentioned he'd spoken with some brewers in San Francisco who say they brew vegan beers, because the vegetarians in the population demand it. §



***BREW THE BEER  
YOU WISH TO SEE  
IN THE WORLD***





# Ullage and Spillage

BY J. RANDOM

I don't care what you say, size matters, at least when it comes to beer glasses. Much has been written on the subject and there will be many blogs, tweets and posts springing from CAMRA Vancouver's Fess Up Serving Sizes (FUSS) campaign. However, this is an issue close to my heart—after all my oesophagus runs right by it, so I have to commit my contribution to paper, or at least to pdf.

I was brought up on the 20 oz (568 ml) British pint and the 10 oz (284 ml) half pint. Perhaps brought up is perhaps the wrong term, since I only got served when I hit 16 and hung out with an older crowd. As a southerner, my favourite glass is the dimple mug. They were primarily designed to withstand repeated manual washing but the great thing about them is you put two fingers through the handle and grip the dimples it is pretty tough to accidentally let go if you get distracted or jostled. Northerners prefer the “straight glass” (officially known as a nonic) which is not of course straight but has a bulge designed primarily to prevent rims clashing and getting damaged (nicked) in storage. The bulge provides only limited grip assistance but then they do tend to have sawdust on the pub floor. Whatever the shape of glass, the pint is almost exactly the right quantity of beer; not excessively heavy like the litre steins I encountered in Germany, not gone in a flash like the tiny glasses that used to be served in Australian beer halls; maybe still are in some outback towns. With a British pint you are not permanently worried about where your next beer is coming from; whether barman or waitress, barlady or waiter will notice the perilously low level of beer in your miniscule glass.

A half is perfect for trying a beer you might not like, if the bar is not the type that will give you a taster. It

is ideal for trying a wide variety of beers in a bar with an impressive line up. It is also handy for that last beer of the night when you are pretty sure you don't need another pint.

However, I have to say I am not at all hung up on the need to have beer served in British pint and half pint glasses. I have grown used to 16 oz (454 ml) US pints and these days I find it easier to know my limit with them. As an aside, don't you just love the fact that America is bigger in everything except the really important stuff like the size of a pint of beer and the actual dimensions of the country? The one annoying factoid I unearthed in my research is that the US pint probably predates the UK pint in legal definition.



There are European glasses holding 500ml that are perfectly acceptable provided you know that's what they are, but “pints” that are not even close to 16 oz, do irritate me. They are particularly annoying when the glass is clearly designed to look or feel bigger than it really is. Classic examples are the thick bottom that

adds weight or the narrow bottom that adds height. I have no idea of the quantities in a goblet when I am given one while not paying attention; unless it is a Belgian beer glass which will have a line and a quantity written on it. Let's hear it for the Belgians! The small straight glass is particularly deceptive because it looks just like a pint glass and can be difficult to identify unless you have a real 20 oz pint standing next to it. The BC Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act states *"deceptive act or practice means, in relation to a consumer transaction, (a) an oral, written, visual, descriptive or other representation by a supplier, or (b) any conduct by a supplier that has the capability, tendency or effect of deceiving or misleading a consumer or guarantor."*

If I ask for "a pint" I expect to get either a British (568 ml) or US (454 ml) pint. I don't mind at all paying full pint prices for 568ml. I don't mind paying, hopefully slightly lower, pint prices for 500ml



or 454ml. I do object to paying pint prices for 14oz (397 ml) or even 12 oz (341ml) of beer, whether or not it is in a deceptively shaped glass. Mainly, I just want to know what I am paying for.

One thing I we can probably all agree on is if we are not out to get drunk, and I hope I am preaching to the quality rather than quantity crowd, we have to quantify how much we have consumed. Even our tough-on-drinking government should be able to understand this one. When walking and/or bussing, as I always do when drinking, maintaining a good buzz without getting drunk as a skunk is not always easy. If the glass size is ambiguous, and the alcohol content is not disclosed, it gets extremely difficult. For those who have an extremely restrained amount of beer at a restaurant, it could mean the difference between driving home and losing your license.

The legislation on serving sizes in B.C. is classic law modified by lobbying: it is extremely rigorous but with sufficient weasel words and loopholes to make enforcement impractical. The BC Liquor Control and Licensing Regulation, in section 40 (2) states *"A licensee must make available to patrons a list that shows, for all types of liquor sold in the licensed establishment, the quantities in which and prices at which the liquor is sold."* That seems pretty unambiguous but it gets a lot more dilute when you look at the wording in Liquor Primary Terms and Conditions: A Guide for Liquor Licensees in British Columbia. That document says on page 17 *"You must have a list available showing the types of liquor available, the size of each drink you sell and its price."* *"You may post the price list as a printed list or on a board or it can be available at all tables. At a minimum, it must be available to customers on request"* What, stuck in drawer behind the bar gathering dust? We are not talking about a high-end jewelers where if you walked in voluntarily you clearly don't care how much you are going to spend. That *'at minimum'* sentence reads like a late addition in response to industry pressure. It gets worse. In a side-bar, this document states *"Your price lists... must indicate the size of each drink (you may use common names, such as a sleeve of beer, which is 14 oz)."* Did you know a sleeve is 14 oz?

Call me an ignorant immigrant of a mere 25 years residence and 22 years citizenship, but I didn't. I seriously thought it was another name for a US pint, but let's not go into the complete list of the things I believed in that turned out not to be true. That would take a full WB issue to work through.

Amazingly, the guide is very clear on the size of a pint. On page 25 it states *"You may serve draught beer in single servings of no more than 24 oz (680 ml) or smaller servings of multiple brands, provided the total served at one time is no more than 24 oz (680 ml). For reference, a Canadian pint is 568ml."* Yes, that is 20oz. So British pints are not illegal as some bars were trying to make us believe. Far from it, the Canadian Weights and Measures Act defines a pint as 1/8 of a gallon, and gallon as 454,609 cubic metres (4.5 litres). That is a British gallon, not a US gallon which means the word pint in Canada definitively should mean 20 oz.

Nowhere in the BC legislation does it require licensees to disclose the alcohol content of the beers they are serving, though a number of the establishments you and I would frequent do so voluntarily and more power to 'em. Maintaining some level of control while drinking requires not only knowing the volume but also the alcohol content. Our previous premier should have figured that one out during his sojourn in the drunk tank in Maui. Apparently it did not occur to him to apply the lesson learned when he returned to B.C. Legislators in Canada are reluctant to limit the legitimate options of businesses but they are reasonably willing to require disclosure to the public of what exactly they are purchasing.

Four things I would like to see:

- The deletion of the weasel words *"At a minimum, it must be available to customers on request"* from the Guide for Liquor Licensees in British Columbia

- A requirement in the BC Liquor Control and Licensing Regulation to post the actual quantity, in millilitres and the alcohol percentage next to the prices wherever they are shown, or to use serving size names from a proscribed list and post on a board the actual quantity in each serving size.

- A proscribed list of serving sizes in the Guide for Liquor Licensees in British Columbia

- A requirement to put the initials "US" before "pint" anywhere the pints are 16 oz. §

#### Useful links:

[BC Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act](#)

[BC Liquor Control & Licensing Act](#)

[BC Liquor Primary Terms and Conditions](#)

[Canadian Weights and Measures Act](#)





# Oh, to be in England!

by **Laura Kotler**

I think I have become an Anglophile. I am spending some quality time in England, having selected a few places to stay a while and get to know. My camera is getting a workout with all the photogenic pub signs, not to mention the historic sites and picturesque scenery. The beer scene is alive and well. Yes, some breweries have been bought up by big companies, and some pubs are closing, but many small breweries are opening. I read of one farming family who, because of declining profits, needed to diversify, so they researched and studied and opened a brewery, which is now doing very well. I have seen notices for several beer festivals and seasonal cask events. Some beer bottles are emblazoned with a logo proclaiming “CAMRA says this is Real Ale.” Some pubs’ windows display a small poster declaring: “*Good Beer Guide* – We are in it!” I have seen some boarded-up pubs, but with many new brewers entering the industry, the choice of brews is very wide. Only once in two months have I repeated a beer; I want to try different ones.

I avoid the big breweries’ beers and their pubs in favour of free houses and small pubs advertising



“cask ales,” “real ale” or “proper ale.” (When I googled “proper ale,” I found this good opinion piece by David Yeadon: [http://www.travelclassics.com/library/england\\_ale.shtml](http://www.travelclassics.com/library/england_ale.shtml).) If your luggage isn’t already too burdensome, I’m sure it would be beneficial to carry around a copy of the latest CAMRA *Good Beer Guide* or one of the regional pub guides, but I have managed to find the desired kind of establishment wherever I’ve gone.

Most beers in the UK measure 3.5% to 4.5% ABV, so it is understandable if we North American craft beer drinkers think we can drink more over here!

The grocery stores sell beer, wine and liquor and sometimes have a decent selection of bottled beers from smaller breweries. I noticed one supermarket chain which has beer brewed and bottled under its name.

I asked a beer-knowledgable person what style a particular beer was, and the reply was that beer styles aren’t given so much weight here as they are in North America. In a competition, there might be many beers in the “specialty” category.

Some pubs serve the beer too cold, believe it or not, even for me who keeps her beer glasses in the fridge at home.

I read that emerging and recent brewers in the UK, Scandinavia and Netherlands get inspiration from North American microbrewers and are trying new recipes and becoming more educated.

On my first day in England, in **Canterbury**, I came across The Foundry brewpub in White Horse Lane within the city walls. Brewing under the name of Canterbury Brewers, the brewpub had opened only five months before and was already doing a brisk business, supplying casks to neighbouring towns and entering beer festivals. They offer a 10% discount to CAMRA members – even Canadian ones – on beer



and food. (Now *that's* a good idea!) In the adjoining four-barrel brewery on the other side of the glass wall, I spoke a while with co-brewer Tom Sharkey, who spoke highly of Pacific Northwest hoppy beers and let me smell the fresh Citra hops he'd just received. The brewpub is in a 19<sup>th</sup> century building, which was home to a successful foundry that supplied railways, constructed one of the first torpedoes and made lamp posts that are still in use today. Their brochure states that they “provide one of the largest and most diverse



*Refurbished Oast Houses, Kent*

ranges of beers and ciders on draught in Canterbury” and “aim to add something different to the ever-growing and vibrant micro-brew scene in Kent.” I tasted three of the brews available and had a pint of the mildly hoppy Bodicea Uprising bitter (Wikipedia says Bodicea was a tribal queen who led an uprising against the occupying forces of the Roman Empire in the year 61 AD). On another visit, I tasted their Scrumplin pumpkin ale and a very nice porter.

The Bottle Shop, a booth at The Goods Shed Market beside Canterbury West rail station, displayed an impressive array of craft brews. Here, the attendant Dave showed me a line of pale ales by London brewery, The Kernel, which uses a different hop variety or combination in each batch. I would have liked to taste them all, but I didn't need as much to sample our familiar PNW hop varieties, and a few were very high alcohol (8%+), so I narrowed it down to two: Galaxy, 7.4%, wonderful Australian hops, nice aroma, cloudy, golden colour, citrusy, made the back of my cheeks pucker with the bitterness of the first sip; and Borefts Rye, very cloudy, light-brown colour, not as much aroma, milder than above but still very hoppy and very drinkable. Borefts refers to a beer festival in Bodegraven, Netherlands...sounds like a destination! I had quite a conversation with Dave, who's 28 and loves microbrews. He's not a member of CAMRA (yet), but we talked about the situation in BC and the UK. His impression of CAMRA-UK is that its members are oldies. I wonder if CAMRA-UK is actively encouraging younger membership.

After a few weeks of adjusting my hophead palate to the mild British bitters, I couldn't resist reverting: I bought a four-pack of IPAs by Brew Dog of Scotland, each ale using a single variety of hops from four different continents: Sorachi Ace from Japan, Bramling Cross from England, Nelson Sauvin from New Zealand and Citra from United States. Each contains the same malt backbone and is brewed to be 75 IBU and “is enthusiastically kettle hopped and dry hopped.” All are 7.5% ABV. No surprise that Citra was my favourite.

In a healthfood store I found organic beers by Suma Co-op, a food cooperative in West Yorkshire. Historic Canterbury also boasts La Trappiste bar, which offers a hundred Belgian or Belgian-inspired beers, at least a dozen on draft.

The **Kent** countryside is dotted with oast houses, the distinctive buildings used for drying hops. Kentish hops are renowned; in the past they were a staple of the economy. At one time there were over 30,000 acres of hops in Kent, and until the 1960s “foreigners” would come from London for the summer hop-picking. In one old church the autumn harvest was on display, with garlands of hops among the baskets of apples. With more modern methods of drying hops, oast houses fell into disuse, but many have been given new life as spacious homes, a museum, a tea shop, a youth hostel, a theatre. Especially interesting was a line of about five oast houses made into row-house homes. This is a description about a B&B in a 150-year-old oast house: “The front of the oast is a large barn, behind which are three round kilns, capped by white ventilation cowl. They look out onto the spacious garden, with open fields beyond, grazed by sheep. The roundels provide guests with a dining room, a lounge and a twin-bedded room. The ‘cooling floor’ of the barn, where hops were spread after drying, has a further two bedrooms, both with en-suite shower rooms. They have beamed ceilings and the original diamond pane cast iron windows. <http://www.renvillecoast.co.uk/landing.htm> shows landing and hop press.”

In **Portsmouth** I picked up the local CAMRA chapter’s publication *Ale Mail*, a 28-page small-format magazine, which contained columns entitled “Pub Watch” and “Local Lowdown,” including a listing of all the area’s real ale pubs, a colour photo of each one, location, what they’re brewing or serving now and other current news. There was a list of the Champion Beers of Britain 2011 and announcements of beer festivals, such as a winter one in February; National Cask Ale Week in October; and the Great British Beer Festival in August, where local Gosport brewer Oakleaf won a gold medal for its specialty



*Lord John Russell, Portsmouth*

bitter. They had an event to locally launch the 2012 *Good Beer Guide*. Apple cider and perry are also supported by CAMRA, and a pub crawl to purveyors of them is organized by a CAMRA member in October, which has been named CAMRA’s cider month. The “Chairman’s Welcome” piece lamented the closing of six local pubs, citing the cause as their being unable to compete with other retailers on a level playing field: “There is currently a campaign to cut the rate of VAT (value-added tax) to 5% for pubs, to fall in line with the European Union hospitality rate.” There’s an online petition to sign. “If it gets enough signatures then it can be debated in the House of Commons.”

Being such a centre of naval and shipbuilding history, a lot of the pubs in the historic Dockyard area of Portsmouth have nautical names.

The relatively small **Isle of Wight** has four brewers. Goddards Brewery in Ryde had a nice 4% Scrumdiggity Bitter.

**Cambridge**, home of scholars, scientists and choristers, is an exceedingly interesting place to explore. And there are many pubs and some good bottle shops. My favourite beer here was City of Cambridge Brewery's Atom Splitter, a 4.5%, hoppy beer. The brewery "likes to commemorate and celebrate all things Cambridge, this one celebrating physicist Ernest Rutherford, director of the Cavendish Laboratory, Nobel Prize winner in 1908, who was acclaimed for the first evidence of artificially produced splitting of the Atomic Nuclei."

Another local brewery, Moonshine, makes "Reel Ale [sic]" – I thought it was made for the Arts Picture House, which screens good movies and serves this ale on draft, but apparently it was originally for a fishing event. (geddit?)

Historic pub, The Eagle, existed as early as 1667! Over the centuries it has been frequented by university students, researchers, pilgrims, townsfolk, World War II airmen and tourists. This was where Francis Crick "interrupted patrons' lunchtime on 28 February 1953 to announce that he and James Watson had 'discovered the secret of life' after they had come up with their proposal for the structure of DNA."

The Cambridge Folk Museum is housed in an old stagecoach inn. It has a display of the paraphernalia from the old pub.

**Grantchester** village is reached by a pleasant half-hour walk on a public footpath over fens and meadows. Here, The Green Man pub was announcing its Christmas Beer Festival, the third festival held there this year, the previous two having been "a roaring success." There would be 35 beers and ciders from small, local brewers, food served all



*The Green Man, Grantchester*

day and a discount for CAMRA members. I read that Grantchester holds a barrel race on Boxing Day, with pub teams vying for bragging rights, after which everyone retreats to the warmth of the pubs.

The popular Kingston Arms Free House had a mini beer festival in the week preceding the Winter Fair along a city street on a November Saturday, and they had several local microbrews on offer.

Bacchanalia bottle shop had shelf upon shelf of interesting-looking beers. Too bad I had only two weeks in town. The shop hosts tastings occasionally. Moonshine's brewer was most recently there, offering samples of his "delicious local beers straight from the cask." I liked his rye pale ale.

Cambridge Wine Merchants is now a franchise of bottle shops. Their newsletter's Ale section said: "Our mission is to find the best of proper local brews. It's such a positive scene now in the UK (partly due to tax



breaks for smaller breweries). These really are excellent, artisan products made by folk who care, using traditional methods and local ingredients. If you're into proper ales, join CAMRA – they publish a really useful newspaper.”

**Whitby** – brooding ruins of the Abbey looking down on red-tiled roofs and pretty harbour. Most pubs have a few cask ales. There are ]

opportunities in the area, both coastal and inland, to earn one's daily brew. I walked the 3-mile track from Hawsker to **Robin Hood's Bay** one windy morning and had a pleasant pint and meal at the cliff-top Victoria Hotel, with its expansive sea view and all decked out for Christmas. While in Whitby, of course I tried Whitby Abbey Ale by Black Dog Brewery. I learned that here in North Yorkshire you don't order a “pint of bitter”; it's “pint-a-

baaar.” It's nearing Solstice/Christmas as I write this in blustery, invigorating, scenic North Yorkshire, and I'm cozy inside, enjoying Wassail, a 6%, “full bodied fruity beer with an underlying hoppiness,” produced by Ballard's Brewery, Hampshire, for the conservation organization English Heritage, “representing the very best of the fruits, hops and flowers from the English Countryside.”

It's so easy to travel in England – the people speak English! (I may have not immediately understood everything said by the North Yorkshiremen, but I'm sure that's a failing on my part.) After a while, driving

on the left just seems right. Who couldn't like a country with place names like the double- and triple-barrelled Cheeseman's Green, Thanington Without, Sutton Valence, Haffenden Quarter, Old Wives Lees, Guestling Thorn, and characterful names like Icklesham and Ugglebarnby! There's so much to see in this country, so much ancient history to learn or be



*Old Smuggler, Whitby*

reminded of, so much evidence of previous invaders and settlers and of the destruction caused by World War II. I know some other CAMRA members are planning trips to the UK this spring, so you may be reading more about this place. §





# Calendar

**TBA** - Fraser Valley (tentatively Feb. 5)

**Tuesday, January 17** - Time - 7:30 pm. CAMRA Victoria branch AGM. At the Collard Room  
Swans Hotel, 506 Pandora Avenue.

**Sunday, January 22** - Time - 12pm-3pm. CAMRA Vancouver branch AGM. At Smileys Public  
House – 911 W Pender Street.

**Don't Forget: Branch  
AGMs. Your vote  
counts!**



- Details on Vancouver area events at <http://camravancouver.ca/events/>
- Details on Fraser Valley area events at <http://www.camrafraservalley.ca>
- Details on Victoria area events at <http://camra.ca>

## CAMRA BC Membership Application Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my cheque for: Individual \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Joint \$40.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
Corporate \$75.00 \_\_\_\_\_

**Check:**

- ☐ Renewing  
☐ New member

Please mail this form and payment to:



CAMRA BC  
Box 30101  
Saanich Centre Postal Outlet  
Victoria BC, V8X 5E1

Visit [camravancouver.ca](http://camravancouver.ca) (Vancouver)  
and [camra.ca](http://camra.ca) (Victoria) to renew online.

## CAMRA BC

Web sites

CAMRA BC: <http://www.camrabc.ca>

CAMRA Fraser Valley: <http://www.camrafraservalley.ca>

CAMRA Vancouver: <http://www.camravancouver.ca>

CAMRA Victoria: <http://www.camra.ca>

E-mail [camrabc@shaw.ca](mailto:camrabc@shaw.ca)

CAMRA BC: to join discussion group send request to:

[CAMRA\\_BC\\_Discussion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:CAMRA_BC_Discussion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

to post a message to the list, send to:

[CAMRA\\_BC\\_Discussion@yahoogroups.com](mailto:CAMRA_BC_Discussion@yahoogroups.com)