



WHAT'S BREWING

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE BRITISH COLUMBIA VOLUME 22 No.2 MARCH - APRIL 2012

CELEBRATING WOMEN IN THE BC BREWING INDUSTRY

March 8, 2012 - Barley's Angels-Vancouver

BY LUNDY DALE

What better way to celebrate International Women's Day - Thursday, March 8, in Vancouver, than by having a Women in Beer event to celebrate the women in the industry! And, that is exactly what I have planned.

I wanted to help celebrate the first year of my start up of Barley's Angels - Pink Pints /Vancouver branch with a festive yet educational event in honour of those hard-working women in the brewing industry.



Lundy Dale - CAMRA President, Barley's Angel

For those of you that do not know who or what Barley's Angels is/are, we are the consumer leg of the Pink Boots Society®. We are committed to involving women in the enjoyment of craft beer by creating environments where women can learn more about beer in a friendly, educational and supportive atmosphere, thus creating more women beer

enthusiasts, and, ultimately, involving more women in beer- and brewery-related careers. Our hope and goal is to to advance the female consumer craft beer enthusiast, resulting in increased patronage and revenue from women, while encouraging education and interest in beer among this often under-recognized demographic group.

I approached Marnie Burnett, director of business development at Rogue WetBar, about having an event at her location and she was thrilled to take on the challenge. Rogue WetBar has Brewmaster dinners on a regular basis and their chef Cory Chapman always does a bang on job of matching beer with food.

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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

The Campaign for Real Ale BC has more than 1,000 individual members in British Columbia. If your company is in any way looking to market to people who know and love beer, you should join us. If you're not a member, you're missing out on the opportunity to reach the very people you need to reach. For ad prices please email camrabc@shaw.ca. You'll never buy a cheaper ad and you'll know it is going to exactly the people you need to talk to.

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Greg Garner

Greg.Garner@investorsgroup.com

250.727.9191

The Plan
by  Investors
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Investors Group Financial Services Inc.

Campaign for Real Ale British Columbia

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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

CAMRA BC: to join discussion group send request to:

CAMRA_BC_Discussion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

to post a message to the list, send to:

CAMRA_BC_Discussion@yahoogroups.com

Big Brit Bit this issue (*starts page 11*)... included because one of the principal threats to traditional British ale came from lager, which at one point looked to usurp ale and replace it completely. Step in CAMRA and a long, long battle to put things right. Perhaps the tide has changed ...

Check out Rebecca Knean's article on hops and get your order in now. You don't even need to be a home brewer to enjoy hops ... they are a beautiful and prolific climbing plant.

The LCB is getting flak following government's promise of a review of BC's liquor laws. Fingers crossed, but don't hold your breath; they are expert at riding out storms. §

Phil Atkinson

Pink Pints ... cont from page 1 ...

Because of the interest show by the women I approached, we went from having a sit down dinner with 3-4 brews, to eight women in the industry that wanted to be part of the night. We now have eight beers from eight breweries and the women involved are owners, brewers, assistant brewers and those behind the scene that make it all happen. Many are creating one of a kind beers just for this event!

In addition to the great beers and pairings, partial proceeds of this event will go the breast cancer survivors in B.C., and specifically to the dragon boat team, Abreast In A Boat. These ladies, including my stepmother, were the first all-women's breast cancer survivor dragon boat team in the world - first in Vancouver, and now spread worldwide.



Here's the line up!

Big River Brewing - Claire Connolly - Rose hibiscus honey ale

R&B Brewing - Kim Marrington, Lianne & Lynsday - Lychee wheat ale

Gulf Island Brewing - Becky Julseth & Heather Kilbourne - Heatherdale ale

Crannog Ales - Rebecca Kneen - Cardamom scented dry hopped IPA

Howe Sound Brewing - Leslie Fenn - Cascadian dark ale

Cannery Brewing - Patt Dyck - Squire Scotch ale

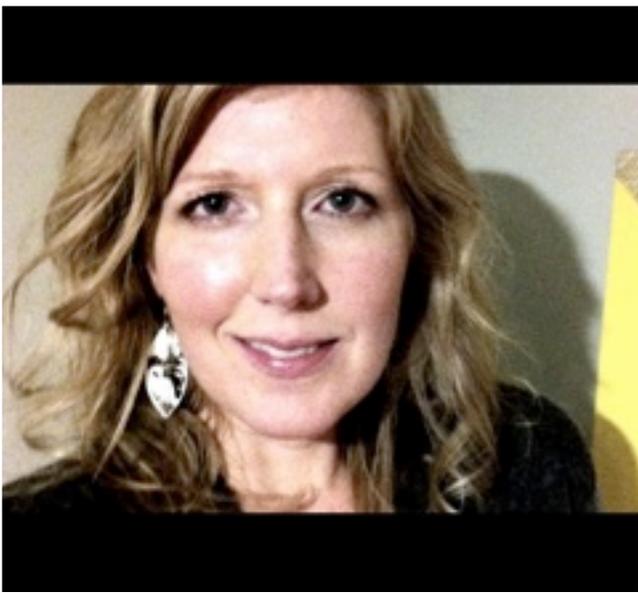
Nelson Brewing - Tessa Gabiniewicz - Blackheart oatmeal stout

Townsite Brewing Company - Karen Skadsheim - PowTown porter

Anyone interested in the event, check out the Rogue WetBar events page: www.roguewetbar.com/events §

BC Executive Welcomes Monica Frost

CAMRA BC membership tripped over the 1,000 mark last year and in order to take optimum advantage of the forward momentum, the Board is pleased to announce the appointment of the very capable Monica Frost as Communications Director.



Hello everyone! I'm very excited to be on board with CAMRA BC so thank you to everyone for agreeing on this new position.

I was on the CAMRA Vancouver executive for the past three years; elected as Corporate Liaison the first year and over the following two years that role became more of a mix of Communications and Corporate.

When I initially started with CAMRA I took on the task of updating our image and branding. A new website was started (and eventually grew to their own team in Creative), business cards for the Vancouver Exec, and letterhead and a style guide was created. For the past two years my Communications duties

included all social media. I had a team of three looking after the newsletter, Facebook, Twitter and communication from the president and executive to Vancouver members via constant contact email. The profile, public awareness and membership of CAMRA Vancouver has increased in the past few years substantially.

I'm looking forward to working with CAMRA BC and I have ideas!:

- * Many people/members ask exactly what CAMRA BC is and/or does. Let's improve awareness and CAMRA BC's profile.
- * Website information update.
- * Our Facebook profile is basic and a Twitter account needs to be created and maintained. Social media for many of our members is an important way to be informed. It is also the primary choice of being informed for much of the public these days.
- * There has been much in way of attention focused on the antiquated liquor laws in the media lately. I'd like to make sure that our members province wide know that CAMRA is working on policy and advocacy initiatives.
- * CAMRA BC Newsletter? or What's Brewing becoming more collaborative and perhaps coming out monthly? I understand a lot of work goes into it now and I'd be happy to help.

I would also [love feedback](#) from you as to what you think my role should entail or include. I hope to meet with the rest of the Executive soon. Perhaps if not in person then by video Skype? §

Cheers, Monica

The Hops Project

by Rebecca Knean

It's spring and [Left Fields](#) has hop rhizomes for sale. Now you can beautify your garden with these spectacular plants and bitter your ales as well. No green thumb? Fear not, Rebecca reveals all about caring for the plant we all love.

The Hops Project started because I wanted desperately to grow hops. Before we moved to our farm, my partner, an avid home brewer with a penchant for putting anything I grew into his brew kettle, had finally convinced me to buy a hops seedling. We planted it against the 8' cedar fence around our (then) urban garden, with a little string for it to cling to. While I was pleased with the way it claimed its little patch of soil, I was not yet inspired. That happened later in the summer, as I happily spent an afternoon weeding my herbs and vegetables. I noted that, when I was at the beginning of one row, the tip of the hops plant had just reached a knot in the fence. By the time I had finished my row that afternoon, the plant had grown a full foot past the knot: I measured. I was entranced - and somewhat nervous! This must have been the plant that inspired John Wyndham's famous novel *The Day of the Triffids*. I decided that these amazing plants deserved a home with me, wherever I went. Since then, I have discovered that hops are a bit like orchids - not in the beauty of their flowers, but in the obsessions they create amongst growers.

Once we started Left Fields, growing hops became an integral part of our farm and brewery. However, it soon became clear that there was no information out there intended for growers like us - small-scale, organic, and low-input. All the material seemed to be written for large producers, or home growers of only one or two plants. While entertaining, the latter had little in-depth agronomic information, and were useless on the subject of drying and packaging. The former tended to make use of very expensive machinery and buildings, and were high- input and



conventional in nature. We were left to figure out small-scale trellising and drying on our own. Fortunately, the hops grew well despite our ignorance, and starting with clean ground gave us a pest-and-disease-free start. Ten years on, we have learned a lot, we are propagating hops at a great rate, and breaking ground for a new hop yard.

We have also discovered a huge potential market, as interest in organic brewing grows exponentially along with the rest of the organic market. Microbreweries of all sorts, organic and not, are springing up all over British Columbia, indeed, all over Canada. Public

interest in the source of food (which includes beverages) has meant a real growth in small-scale agriculture marketing direct to the consumer right across Canada. Both wineries and breweries have been taking advantage of this market niche alongside organic and other small-scale growers, participating in agri-tourism, farmers' markets and community markets. The distinctiveness of hops, along with its interesting history in B.C., means that not only is there a specialized market waiting to be filled, there is also a huge potential for agri-tourism on hops farms.

Investment Agriculture Foundation's support has made it possible to share what we have learned with other growers through this manual.

Although I find hops fascinating in themselves, the fact is that their chief purpose in life is to give flavour and aroma to beer. The stress in this manual, therefore, is on the characteristics of hops as they are used in brewing. While not strictly agronomic, the makeup of the hop, its oils and acids, are critical to the function they serve for the customer. Any grower of hops must be very familiar with the uses of hops and the desired acid and oil profiles for any given variety – for these are what make the



sale. A low-acid bittering hop will simply not be marketable, for example. It also makes it possible to understand the quality of hops as determined by testing labs – and these are the reports the brewer will look at to decide on what to purchase. §

Hops Sales run February through April 2012.

Please like our [Facebook](#) page to stay updated. Rhizomes \$5.75 and \$6.25

See our [catalogue](#) for descriptions of varieties

 **Crannóg Ales**
Certified Organic Irish Ales Brewed on-Farm in B.C.



Meet the Beer Bloggers

BY JEN REIHER

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

Beer Blogger: Chuck Hallett of [Barley Mowat](#)



Favourite beer of the moment: "Mélange Solide" from Upright Brewing

Beer is important because: "Beer (like any of life's pleasures) makes you forget about the crushing horribleness that exists outside your door, even if for a few fleeting moments."

Chuck started blogging about beer out of a fear of alienating all of his beer buddies with too many informative beer emails. "A blog seemed like the best way to have an outlet for my beer nerd enthusiasm and still have friends to drink with. Also, the possibility of receiving free beer is a powerful secondary motivator. Free beer can do anything." He does not have a clearly defined mandate for his blog other than to talk about beer and beer culture, although it sounds like those are his default topics regardless of blogging. He is clear that he does not shy away from calling it as he sees it. "No one seems

willing to criticize anyone in this industry because we're all just so freaking polite. If I feel someone out there is half-assing their moral responsibility to brew the best beer they possibly can, you'd better believe it'll get my attention." One topic he is staunchly against blogging about is the false precision of rating beer with numbers. There is no way that one person on two different days would rate the same beer the same way twice, let alone two different people, he explains with conviction and profanity [which has been softened for the gentle eyes of this newsletter]. "Say what you want about me, but I do one thing. And I do that one thing ... sorta okay, I guess?"

Blog excerpt:

[W]hen was the last time you had OK Springs, or GI? Is it still awful? Don't worry, my friends, I will help you out. Between now and that fateful weekend [when you head out to a cabin in the middle of nowhere with no good beer selection to be found in the local liquor store], the intrepid staff over here at Barley Mowat will taste test those widely-available-but-not-quite-as-bad-as-Molson brews, and let you know which ones to get.

In order to qualify, beers must be: 1. Brewed in BC. This is a BC blog, after all. 2. Be available in six packs. While I don't condone drinking from the container, taking glassware on a long hike is awkward. 3. Be widely available in the LDB, or at least commonly available in a given region with known outback-type activities on offer. 4. Not have fruit, honey, or any other adulterants. 5. Not be considered a "macro" or a shadow brand thereof, or for that matter be an attempt at a macro-style beer.

Each beer selected will be compared on a broad variety of attributes, and drinking situations, against a reference beer that I feel exemplifies the style for BC, but isn't likely available near the cabin. Let me know if I've missed anything obvious here, and also if you'd like to sacrifice your taste buds for the greater good (The Greater Good).



Mediocre craft beer is not safe from Chuck's attention

Chuck's sense of humour tends on the dark and sarcastic side. He cheekily describes drinking beer to be something of a distraction from the fact that "life sucks", and something to "numb the suckiness of general existence is a welcome change from our dull, monotonous trudge from cradle to grave." When asked what he wished he had know when he first started drinking beer he replied "that I was doing it wrong. Lucky Lager straight out of the bottle? There's so much wrong with that image that I won't even



comment on it." He acknowledges that the "stale-tasting, slightly bitter version of water" that describes most mass-market beer is probably the impression that persists in the majority of the population. "It fills a very specific role as a utilitarian drink, and people can't even begin to comprehend it being something different." Thankfully, his blog and the work of the hard working organizers in his local Vancouver chapter of CAMRA are doing their parts to dispel those myths by spreading the gospel of great craft beer in B.C. §

Follow Chucks blog at barleymowat.com or follow him on twitter @barley_mowat



Beer and Chocolate Pairing

by Ian Lloyd

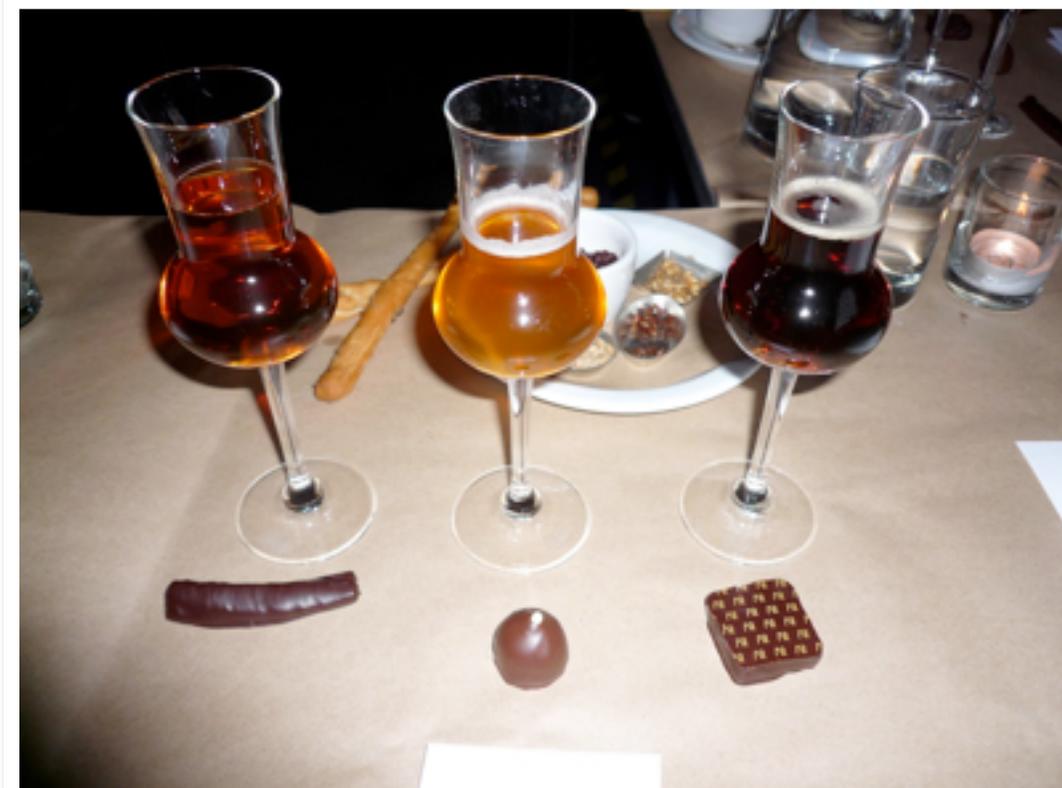
Beer and chocolate together at the same time is a tongue's dream. Some talk about chocolate and wine being the best. I disagree. The flavour range for beer is broader than for wine. From tart wheat hefes to citrus and cotton candy IPAs ... how is that for range. Options for chocolate lovers are just as vast. Even Purdy's makes a chili pepper dark chocolate and raspberry biscuit truffle. Fancy chocolatiers have even more creative options. Why not try and mix these flavours together? If you can

nothing better. Actually I can, but this is a family magazine. How about something on the lighter side. Will anything pair with a pale lager? It depends. Nothing will pair with Bud Light, other than perhaps a pretzel. However a full bodied (real) Pilsner is another story. These brews are light, sometimes creamy and always have a crisp and spicy hop snap at the end. Some pre-Prohibition lagers even contained appropriate amounts of rice. What would pair better with these than a good quality white chocolate. If that chocolate contained a little light fruit it would be perfect. The lighter flavours would not clash and it would set the stage for the next pairing.

Nuts. Who doesn't like to get a mouthful of delicious nutty flavours? Umm. Perhaps I should explain myself. Hazelnuts! Who doesn't like hazelnuts? A simple dark chocolate hedgehog has just the flavours

we are looking for. There are a few beers that would make a nice pairing. Perhaps a nut brown ale (Swan's and Spinnakers have nice ones) or Rogue Hazelnut nectar? You could also choose a cream ale. Much gastronomic research needs to be done.

Caramel. Who doesn't like to have a big bite of caramel? No explaining need here; you know what I mean. Lets make it a little



incorporate beer with dessert, that means you are permitted more beer at the dinner table.

Forget just dessert! Let's explore a whole evening of chocolate and beer. I can think of

better: a salted dark chocolate caramel. There is no shortage of beers with decent caramel flavours. Certainly, the best style would be a Scottish Ale, not the light style. In this case, go for the wee heavy or strong

version. Some English style bitters possess significant caramel flavours. Check out excellent Scottish ales from Swan's, Spinnakers and Russell's Angry Scotch Ale.

Any excuse to drink a barley wine is a good one. Can you pair this beer with chocolate? I have found a way: an ice wine truffle. Purdy's has a potent truffle that can stand up to it. Rich and warming, fruity and sweet, it is hard to tell if I am talking about the truffle or the barley wine. For a good barley wine it must be Driftwood's Old Cellar Dweller. It is potent, hoppy, warming, with sherry, tangerines and figs. Another good choice would be Woolly Bugger by Howe Sound. Swans' Legacy ale would be nice but I haven't seen it in a while (hint, hint).



You will notice that I never mentioned stouts. Pairing stouts with dark chocolate is easy ... any combination works. Just make sure the stout is good and the chocolate is rich and dark. You cannot go wrong. To make things a little interesting try an espresso stout (or porter) and chocolate covered coffee beans. Just don't try this before bed. For something completely different, try a Howe Sound Megadestroyer with hot chocolate and anise! A licorice lover's delight. Remember there is no bad pairing when you have good craft beer and good friends with which to share it. §

Has Britain Fallen Out of Love with Lager?

[BBC March 2, 2012] Once synonymous with the British night out, sales of lager have slumped. Why is the UK going off its favourite beer?

It is Saturday night, anywhere in the UK, and you have braved the town centre. The bulk of the young men around you are fuelled by the same substance - golden, fizzy and vaguely sweet-tasting.

Despised by real ale lovers yet consumed in vast quantities by pubgoers, for decades lager has rivalled tea as the beverage that best defines modern Britain.

And yet the nation's attachment to the supposedly refreshing qualities of pilsner and export appear to be on the wane.

While it remains by far the most widely drunk variety of beer, sales of lager fell from £12.7bn in 2006 to £11.4bn in 2011, according to market researchers Mintel - a decline that appears even sharper when a succession of above-average price increases is taken into account.



In the UK, draught lager is typically served from pressurised kegs - in contrast to cask-conditioned beer or real ale, which is matured in the container and is not carbonated.

By contrast, cider's volume sales have grown by 24% over the same period, according to figures released this week. And while overall revenues from

ale have also declined, the boom in darker (sic), connoisseur-favoured cask-conditioned beers has seen the number of craft breweries soar to an all-time high of 850.

It's an inauspicious outlook for a lager, whose appeal not long ago appeared impregnable. And yet rarely has a product consumed by so many been so widely disparaged. Young British males who behave violently while drunk are commonly "lager louts". Incidents of misbehaviour carried out under the influence are invariably described by newspapers as "lager-fuelled". Despite Stella Artois' attempt to brand itself as "reassuringly expensive", the 5% beer is still widely known by the less-than-aspirational sobriquet "wife beater."

At the same time, the rise of real ale has allowed producers of cask beers to portray the keg-based market leaders as ersatz, synthetic and soulless.

"What's the matter, lagerboy," ran the recent advert for pungently flavoured brew Hobgoblin, "afraid you might taste something?"

Nonetheless, according to Jonny Forsyth, a senior drinks analyst at Mintel, the driving forces behind the dip in lager are largely economic. The rising price of beer, fuelled by increases in taxation, has been blamed for widespread pub closures - the Campaign for Real Ale says 14 are shutting down each week. In response, Forsyth says, consumers have taken advantage of cheap supermarket offers and switched to drinking at home.

Equally, he adds, government-sponsored health campaigns have resulted in Britons drinking less - indeed, the UK adult drinking population dropped from 88% to 82% in the past five years.

Consequently, Forsyth says, Britons imbibing in the house and in lower volumes increasingly want their beer to be more distinctive than big-brand lager can offer - both in terms of taste and provenance.



"People want drinks that are a bit innovative, a bit different, and lager doesn't give them that," he says. "As a result, they're increasingly looking to the small artisan breweries rather than the global behemoths."

That a beverage best enjoyed cold has enjoyed such widespread popularity in a country with such a temperate climate is curious enough. But the post-war boom in lager - outstripping traditional tipples like bitter, mild and stout - offers some clues as to what made the drink so appealing to millions in the first place.

According to Roger Protz, editor of Camra's Good Beer Guide, lager took off during the 1970s due to a combination of social change and brewing giants looking after their own bottom line.

"In those days all bitter was cask-conditioned and had to be consumed within a few days of reaching the pub," he says. "Lager could be kept for longer, and the big brewers saw an opportunity.

"Also, young people from working-class backgrounds were going abroad for the first time and trying new beer. Lager appealed to them because it was refreshing, new and quite exotic - to many, ale was something their parents drank."

Crucially, he says, lager was pitched as an upmarket alternative to ale - and one that was suited to drinking in sizeable quantities.



Fans hope high-quality craft lager will rescue the drink's reputation

In particular, it was targeted at men, who were seen as likely to ingest the most. For example, from 1969 to 1991 the Scottish brand Tennents adorned its cans with photos of sultry-looking models known as "Lager Lovelies".

This strategy, suggests Protz, explains the laddish tone of current adverts for the likes of Fosters and Carlsberg. But it may also partly account for lager's present malaise. With more people sourcing their drinks from the supermarket rather than the pub, suggests Forsyth, couples are more likely to choose drinks they can enjoy in the home together.

"Men seem to drink differently in the pub compared to the home," he says. "At home it's about sharing, opening a bottle together, and lager has never been marketed that way."

For this reason, drinks writer and author of 'Let Me Tell You About Beer' Melissa Cole believes the

beverage is eventually destined to be eclipsed by other types of beer. Despite efforts to market lager brands to women, she says, female drinkers are likely to remain suspicious.

"The big lager brewers have utterly shot themselves in the foot with their exclusive and quite sexist marketing," she says. "They excluded 51% of the population. Now they look cynical and greedy when they try to rectify the situation."

However, not everyone agrees that decline is terminal. Protz, a fan of quality lager, believes manufacturers will learn from ale's example and win back customers by improving quality.

He points to the success of imported premium varieties like the Czech Budveiser Budvar, as well as British producers like Meantime and Camden Town Brewery, which are admired by connoisseurs and High Street consumers alike.

And he believes that, in time, history will be kinder to mass-produced product than its fiercest detractors might anticipate.

"It's helped to make us less insular," says Protz. "We look abroad for food and beer, even if we don't think much of it."



It's unlikely to be an observation that will cross the minds of too many drinkers in town centre pubs and clubs this Saturday evening. Nevertheless, though depleted, for now lager looks capable of lasting another round. §

Tumbling ABV

Following a two-decade trend of drinking strong, continental-style lagers, Britain seems to be moving to lower strength beer. Several brewers have launched new lower-alcohol lines in the past five years, including a new range of 2.8% brews. Even flagship brands are getting weaker.

Factory lagers such as Carlsberg Export, Stella Artois, Budweiser, Beck's and Cobra are all cutting their alcohol content from 5% to 4.8% in Britain. The shift is slight and drinkers probably won't notice. Brewers say the trend will save them money as the cost of ingredients climbs steeply. In Britain, unlike in B.C., duty on beer is easy to calculate and makes up a substantial part of the cost of a pint. On a typical £3 (\$4.75) pub pint, around £1 is tax, far higher than elsewhere in Europe. Unlike wine and cider, beer is taxed on a sliding scale according to its strength. For big brands, a small adjustment can make a big difference, according to the British Beer & Pub Association.

Many are suggesting the move to weaker beers is a good thing, especially when it comes to those who only drink to get drunk. Government would make even more money from them as they would need to drink more to get to the same place. To lure punters some supermarkets and booze stores currently sell alcohol at a loss, but from April 6th they must charge at least the duty and sales tax due on a drink. The Scottish Parliament is considering a bill to introduce minimum pricing per unit of alcohol; David Cameron, the prime minister, is keen on this idea. And duty is likely to rise again in the March budget.

Beer of less than 2.8% alcohol by volume made up less than 1% of UK drink sales in 2010, but retailers clearly think it is a promising niche: since January mega supermarket Tesco has stocked 11 types. Such



brews are much cheaper—a tax tweak cut duty on very weak varieties from October 2011.

The official line is that these changes, it is hoped, will improve people's health and the economy: alcohol-related visits costs the National Health Service more than £3 billion a year in England. The question is whether diluting pints will also dilute their appeal. Brewers in Britain are already shedding customers. Although beer is still the nation's favourite tippie, its market share has shrunk from 76% of all alcohol consumed in 1956 to 37% now, according to the Institute of Alcohol Studies. For much of that time overall alcohol consumption per head was increasing. But that trend reversed in 2004.

And the good news is that craft breweries and other small beermakers are already gaining ground on big brands. §

Out and About with Scottie

... at the end of an era



It is news that frequently comes. Time has run out on things. This is the case with the Nanaimo Beer Festival.

Organizer Trish Newton Segall told What's Brewing this January that she had reached her limit. So much work involved and so on. She was tired. She did a great job for Nanaimo, putting forward a consumer showcase of beer into the spotlight. She put grand effort into a market, which was just coming out, 15 years back. CAMRA was there.

CAMRA attended every year. Proceeds were for the Kinsmen and everybody pitched in for the cause. CAMRA is for the consumer so we were always pro bringing beer into the spotlight. We did see things we questioned and on occasion put our voice into Tricia's idea pool. She always had integrity and enthusiasm in her manner with everyone.

CAMRA had a booth well over a decade ago as we were growing leaps and bounds in the Victoria beer movement., working on spreading out the good Real Beer BC word throughout the province. In Nanaimo we didn't get any earth shattering response to our cause, but we got individuals with voices. Still our group made every effort to work one consumer at a time explaining what we do for non-profit towards the end result of giving Nanaimo a greater selection in consumer beer choice.

Seemingly over the years, any beer was allowed into the festival thus we were in our quiet way at philosophical odds; with Trish over this; we wanted all craft; or at the least craft and respected and hard to find imports. We said we ask it for the fact that good beer is better; as well bringing a higher standard of beer sophistication and education into play through the brewers and reps; thus educating the public all at the same time; at the same event; not having to wade hip deep through large corporate image branding and mystique; rather having all brewers on the same playing field. Philosophies and charities don't always line up.

From CAMRA viewpoint, big brewers attending festivals and events where new and starting out craft consumers gather; have a way of trying to convince the consuming public they are themselves somehow promoting an arm of the corporation which is sending out imagery and messages that indeed they can be associated and referred to as a craft brewer, brand and beer and worthy of your buck.

The small brewers don't need to do this. They just speak straight goods to consumer. When all together in one event the consumer can see there is unique taste and flavour in the local craft brewed beers; adding to more

chance for smaller breweries to grow their market share, when the consumer comes to decide on what to make for their retail purchase. At beer festivals promoting the idea of good beer, consumer choice and education on good beer should go hand in hand with keeping the consumer alerted to the words ‘all natural ingredients’ and not to believe of all the advertising they’ve been subjected to. If all brewers are craft at events it’s all about real beer. Fresh local; no-nonsense hype. Of course in a perfect world as they say.

CAMRA attends many of these events and things don’t always line up with government guidelines and how licensing laws apply, and thus the group volunteering for the charity can be quite loosey-goosey ... perhaps not keeping to the standards and prescribed methods set down for these things.



The government area responsible for these events and festivals and the like is the BC Liquor Control and Licensing Branch: inspection, compliance, the works. In Victoria, the Great Canadian Beer Festival is seemingly constantly under the microscope of the branch, and when LCB looked at Nanaimo—well, it must have been the first time ever because they came down hard. Same is true for Canada Cup of Beer last year. It had to switch venues just days opening due to regulatory situations. I’m mentioning just two of hundreds of events, many others operate under the radar outside the set down guidelines.

CAMRA was mentioned at all these events ... out there along with the beer in the crowd. Its great to see volunteers at organized festivals trained on what to do. It shows esprit de corps with the organizers and they can cover areas such as what to watch for, and how to act, and help enforce all the rules that are set in place. At the smaller events no one watches so pretty much anything goes. All events like these for charity should comply with a single set of rules so it’s fair to all. Again in that perfect world.

Trish in Nanaimo: you did a good job year after year ... highlighting beer and giving consumers the chance to taste the same in Nanaimo. You did it for charity and good works and thanks to you the beer drinking public is wiser in a grassroots way for all of your 15 years of events and the press attention leading up to them. Your heart is in the right place.

CAMRA has had talks with leaders of the unofficial beer movement in Nanaimo and hopes we will get a by-the-book-beer fest this season 2012 in Nanaimo.

Let’s face it, if scrutiny and compliance is the name of the game then all these events should be treated the same. Breweries get paid; charities get paid; by the book.

The last word on the end of the Nanaimo Beer Festival comes in the way of a quote from Gerry Hieter, chairman of Great Canadian Beer Festival. “The Liquor Control and Licensing Branch is completely responsible for the demise of the Nanaimo Beer Festival.”

CAMRA will continue to attend and report on all matters related to consumer choices in good beer. We are a non-profit; volunteer organization registered with the government.

I continue to look forward to seeing you all at events and talking all matters beer. §

Hanging with the Island Maltster

BY MICHAEL LEWIS

As a craft beer fanatic and a home brew fanatic, I consider myself very lucky to live in Victoria. It has an amazing craft beer scene and a thriving home brewing culture. As a member of [BrewVIC](#), I am even more pleased that one of our earliest members of the club is Mike Doehnel, the Island Maltster. I have been lucky enough to use Mike's malt in a few of my beers, and if you've had any of Driftwood Brewing's specialty beers, you've tasted the product of his work as well. For BrewVIC's February meeting, Mike offered to give us a tour of his malting facility at his home north of Brentwood Bay.

The miserable weather deterred a few of the rain-weary members, but a great core group showed up to see how their malt is made. As most of the breweries and home brewers on the Island get their grain through the regional distributors, home brewers additionally through the home brew shops and U-brews, we understand that we can get different types and colours of malt that have different impacts on our mash and the final product. We rarely see the actual operation of grain malting and how each type of malt is created through its process. Mike was able to expose us to the entire process, and explain how his process mimics more of the historic process versus the process used in the large malting facilities today.

We started the day in his garage where he explained his basic process and talked about the types of grain he grows around the local area. Mike had examples of each of these types of grains. He showed us an assortment of amazing harvesting equipment that was so well designed when it was invented that it

continues to be useful today. Next was on to his malting house, but this leg of the trip was delayed by heavy rains. Like any good BrewVIC event, members bring some of their home brewed wares for sampling. The rain delay offered the perfect opportunity to start a little early. We were able to pepper Mike with questions and catch up with each other as we waited for the rain to abate.

After 45 minutes or so, we headed down to the malting house where Mike is practicing the way the oldest malting houses still produce their malt today.



*Long time CAMRA member Mike Doehnel:
Maltster, Grain Expert, Gentleman*

Floor malting over a heated floor and hand turning the malt is only used in commercial production by some of the oldest malting houses in Europe. Their grain is only available in limited quantity because of their production method, but it produces malt rich in character that is highly sought after by the finest craft breweries in Europe and North America. Luckily, we

have our own maltster here on Vancouver Island doing just that. It is an amazing craft that takes a serious depth of understanding about the processes occurring inside the grain. Mike was able to break it down for us in a fairly simple-to-understand way that left everyone even more curious. The questions were never ending.

We finally made it through the roasting and toasting processes over more beer samples in the garage. This was followed by some great snacks that Mike provided to go with the samplings and the discussion. After some announcements, the formal portion of the event was concluded, and the sampling and brewing discussions kicked into high gear. There were two highlight beers of the event: the keg of Kolsch from Tim Travis, a nice easy drinker that made the rain a little easier to tolerate; and the real belly warmer from Garritt Lalonde, it just took a nip, was the chili pepper stout. All in all, it was a wonderful, educational event. A big thanks to Mike for providing his time and a lot of grain samples for folks to take home and brew with, and to all the BrewVIC'ers that braved the weather and made it a fun time. §



Fess Up to Serving Sizes Update

BY PADDY TREAVOR

We have had great support from both corporate and individual members. More than 20 corporate members have already complied or committed to make the changes to comply. We also have 419 signatures on our on-line petition and hope to get more (have you signed?) We have had numerous media stories and blog posts about FUSS, including stories in the Vancouver Sun, Georgia Straight, Openfile.ca, various blogs across the country and on an on-line news episode called FreeTalk TV.

We have also received a reply from LCLB GM Karen Ayers: "Thank you ... we will bring this to the attention of our inspectors, and put a reminder in our next licensee newsletter, to remind licensees and staff of the requirement to make available serving size-price list information to customers."

We are going to continue to monitor to see if the LCLB follows through on their promise and have requested that our members write in emails of complaints if they come across licensed premises not providing serving size lists on request.

We will continue to push to get 100% compliance from our corporate members. To encourage this, we have started handing out our "CAMRA Approved" decals to those who meet the "gold standard" of support for CAMRA, a requirements of which is having the serving size list. I can tell you that the decal program is being very well received by recipients who have been thrilled to receive this award so far. §

Lakes, (Brew) Dogs, and Vikings: Soujourns in Cumbria, Glasgow and Shetland

BY LAURA KOTLER

Unexpected as it was, I discovered that there are many microbreweries in the English Lake District,

Cumbria. I spent Christmas and New Year's based in Grasmere, walking with a bunch of women in the beautiful countryside of northwestern England. Who cared that it rained almost every day, and when it



wasn't raining, it was hailing or just plain muddy? All the more reason to adjourn to the pub before dinnertime. Tweedies Bar became our pub of choice, and we weren't alone. Even on Christmas afternoon the place was packed with happy people, kids and dogs – yes, dogs and children are welcome in pubs. Tweedies offers seven hand pumps for guest ales and

one cider tap. New beers appear every few days, based on the landlord's taste and his support of local micro-breweries. Tweedies sampling glasses are presented in a "beer bat." Hilarity ensued when the women back at the ranch thought we were talking about "beer baths." (But then I was able to tell them about the beer spa in the Czech Republic, "Chodovar – Your Beer Wellness Land," where there really are beer baths! – *What's Brewing*, July-August 2009)

During my couple of weeks in the region, I was able to sample the wares of a list of breweries including Heskett Newmarket, Tirrill, Cumbrian Legendary Ales, Yates, Barngates, Stringers, Hawkshead, Coniston, plus the big Jennings company. Beers from a bit further afield were by Blackwater, Maypole, Black Hole, Goose Eye, etc. My favourite – but alas only available on one visit – was Pre-Raphaelite by

Blackwater Brewers. Theakston Old Peculier was popular among our group. Many of the beers measured 3.7 to 4% ABV, good session drinks.

Later, in Scotland, I no longer noticed the attractive, hanging pub signs; it appears to be more of an England thing. The Lowther Arms pub in Penrith had a plaque outside explaining the history of pub signs: "Although the first known reference to tradesmen's signs occurs in Egyptian times and involves some form of emblem, we may conclude that our forefathers adopted the signboard

from the Romans who made them in relief from terracotta, albeit a few were actually painted. In very early times publicans were compelled by law to have a sign, which was generally suspended from an iron bar fixed either in the wall of the house or in a post or obelisk standing in front of it and which was ritually removed if his licence was withdrawn. By the

middle of the 18th century reading had become a very general acquirement, and the necessity for pictorial signs was not so great, but the signboards remained, a result of extravagance rather than usefulness. Leading brewery companies of today support these old traditions and appreciate the historical value and origin of the names of our public houses.”

While exploring **Glasgow** (and being thrilled to find *four* vegan restaurants in town, one with an in-house brewery) I spent a few hours in the wonderful Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, a huge red-sandstone building packed with history, culture, nature, artwork and a big, old pipe organ that a music student comes to play each day. Upon exiting the museum, what did I notice right across the street? A



Glasgow: Matt at Brew Dog pub, glass of Viking's Revenge in foreground

Brew Dog pub! We can buy Brew Dog products at home in BC, but what about tasting them on draft?

I chatted with Matt, the personable barman. He's relatively new to the pub but has been absorbing information and beers and speaks highly of Brew Dog's ethos to educate the populace about good beer versus the mass-produced stuff. Brew Dog doesn't fine its beer, so they're vegan. Spent grain is sent to lucky cows in the region. Their pubs use reclaimed material and used

furniture. Brew Dog originated in 2007 with two 24-year-olds and has been growing fast. They have four pubs in Scotland and England, with the goal of 10, including overseas (maybe Tokyo). Their irreverent style has attracted some and repelled others. On the bar was a stack of little booklets called “Beer School,” which explains the brewing process in plain language; and they have a great video at <http://vimeo.com/32731091>. Brew Dog is based in Fraserburgh, near Aberdeen. Last year they sold equity shares to finance a state-of-the-art, energy-efficient building and equipment. This company is on the move.

This Brew Dog pub had eight taps of their own products, three guest taps and well over a hundred bottled beers from around the world. I enjoyed the strong, hoppy Viking's Revenge, produced for Brew Dog by Mikkeller, a Danish brewer who travels around brewing amazing beers. Then Matt introduced me to Paradox Jura, an imperial stout that has been aged in Jura whisky barrels – barrels which, before that, had American bourbon aging in them. The beer is wonderfully dark, smooth, 15% ABV and is served in third-pints for £3.50. Meant to be sipped and savoured, it would be great as a digestif – malty-sweet enough to be dessert. It's served in a glass that allows the drinker to breathe in the lovely aroma with each sip. I hear there's also an imperial porter aged in rum barrels. The pub serves burgers, pizzas and olives with bread. A “competition” evolved recently between Brew Dog and a German brewer to see how strong a beer they could brew. Sink the Bismarck was one; The End of History at 55% ABV was another. Wonder how drinkable they were.

Then it was north to the **Shetland Islands**, to chill out and to attend the annual Up Helly Aa fire festival, where the streetlights are switched off, a thousand torch-bearers process down the streets, and

a Viking longship is set ablaze – what a spectacle! I can't say there's much of a craft beer culture here. There is Valhalla Brewery, Britain's northernmost, on the island of Unst – I visited it 10 years ago – and not too far away in the Orkney Islands is The Orkney Brewery, but that's about it. Only one pub in Shetland's principal town of Lerwick has Valhalla beers on draft. A few dining establishments have the bottled products, but at one crowded pub when I didn't see any local

taps or bottles, I asked, and the barman brought out a bottle of Valhalla's White Wife from below the counter. Strange. One Shetland bar is in the *Good Beer Guide*, but its location and winter opening hours were not conducive to my making an excursion. During my time in Shetland I primarily relied on Scottish bottled beers. Favourites were Ben Nevis IPA and William Wallace by Traditional Scottish Ales (Stirling) and Border Gold by Broughton Ales.

It's fun trying beers made with not-the-usual ingredients. At home I've enjoyed bottled Fraoch heather ale. Here, I really liked Blessed Thistle by Cairngorm Brewery (Aviemore), which had this explanation: "Before hops were used for bittering, many different herbs and spices would be employed to impart bitterness and flavour ... thistles are boiled in the wort, giving bitterness, whilst pale, crystal and chocolate grains are used to create a smooth, full bodied malty ale. The late addition of Golding hops and a touch of ginger add to the flavours." An interesting one by Valhalla was Island Bere, brewed from bere, "a heritage barley that Vikings are thought to have introduced to Britain in the 8th century. Bere



Up Helly Aa fire festival, Shetland

was once widely grown in Orkney and Shetland and is unique amongst UK barley as it is still milled into a flour used for baking. In the past, it was also used to make beer and whisky and, even today, a tradition of making home brew from bere still survives in some Orkney farmhouses." Orkney Brewery has aged some of their Dark Island ale in Highland Park whisky casks, creating a 10% ABV ale designed for savouring. Demand for this Dark Island Reserve exceeds production, and I did not find it available in Shetland.

Update ...

... on my New Zealand article May-June 2010: A year after the February 2011 earthquake in Christchurch, enough of the popular Poplar Lane has been demolished to allow The Twisted Hop to extract its brewery equipment. They had to pour out lots of sour beer. The building requires strengthening and repairs. In the interim, they have been brewing and bottling at other premises, but they now have a new brewery of their own, and they plan to open two pubs in the suburbs. §

Ullage and Spillage

BY J. R A N D O M

“You’ve won.”

So said Stephen Quinn to Rick Green on CBC’s afternoon show. Rick, the former president of CAMRA Vancouver, was putting a Vancouver Cask Beer Week package up for bidding at CBC’s Food Bank Day just before Christmas. He agreed that Vancouver Craft Beer Week had a major impact over the last two years. That started me thinking. Some of what I thought is best not put down on paper. Here is the rest.

What Quinn meant was that the craft beer movement had won the battle with the macro-breweries. That is rather overstating the case, but I do think we have reached a tipping point. We are probably about 15 years behind the Pacific Northwest and, though the parallels are looser, about 25 years behind the UK. The 2008 launch of Rickards

White etc by Molson Coors recalls Ind Coope, an English bland fizz producer, reviving the name of Benskins brewing in the 80’s and putting out a line of cask-conditioned beers under that brand. In 1987, Scottish and Newcastle bought Theakstons. The 2009 purchase of Granville Island Brewing by Molson Coors parallels the 1994 purchase of a chunk of Redhook Ale Brewing company by

Anheuser Busch. What these moves meant is the bean counters at the macro’s had analyzed the numbers, concluded the trend is real and decided they wanted a piece of the action.

In the early days of the Canadian craft beer revolution it was mostly brewers breaking away from the mainstream to set up their own breweries to do



20% of CAMRA Vancouver membership in 2005, if you count the guy behind the camera.

the right thing. We saw the expansion of micro-breweries into medio-breweries, and I coined that term for more than one reason. We are now seeing a lot of new investor-run breweries, just like England in the 80’s when there seemed to be a new brewery opening every week. This tipping point is a good news/bad news dichotomy. The good news: if we haven’t exactly won, we have certainly gone from

facing a shut-out to a 3 goal lead. The bad news: there are a lot more pseudo-craft beers around, so those trying something outside their comfort zone aren't necessarily trying the good stuff. Even the bad news has a bright side. Moving from bland macro fizz to Red Racer IPA, Driftwood's Fat Tug or a mouth puckering Belgian is a pretty big jump. Most people need to work their way up. Transition beers have a big part to play in this process.



The key is to create awareness of the range of new flavour experiences available to the beer drinker once they have left the delights of corn and rice far behind them.

Creating that awareness is probably best done at beer festivals. I believe excluding medio-breweries and pseudo craft beers from these festivals is counter productive. Beer festivals are one of the few opportunities for recent converts to have their transition beers and then risk a small quantity of something a bit more exciting. Handing over a \$1.25 token for 4oz which you might want to pour out is a lot cheaper than buying an \$8.00 "pint" or laying down \$14.00 for a six pack, now that the government stores don't sell single bottles. I don't think there should be too much concern about validating pseudo-craft beers by including them. Observation of the length of the line ups and discussions in them should deal effectively with that issue.

Recognition of the tipping point means the time is exactly right for the current CAMRA efforts in education and advocacy. I remember saying back when the Vancouver chapter had 25 members (Victoria was around 300) that CAMRA BC would not have sufficient clout to effectively campaign until we hit 1000 members in total. Well that is where we are right now. *"This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning"* - Winston Churchill §

Have a friend who drinks
crap beer? Buy them a
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Calendar

- Details on Vancouver area events at <http://camravancouver.ca/events/>
- Details on Fraser Valley area events at <http://www.camrafraservalley.ca>
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**Got an opinion? Share
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CAMRA BC Membership Application Form

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