



WHAT'S BREWING

The Magazine of the Campaign for Real Ale British Columbia

Volume 22 No. 4

September - October 2012

HAPPY 20TH BIRTHDAY TO THE GREAT CANADIAN BEER FESTIVAL!

This edition of What's Brewing falls into members' hands right before the GCBF, and less than three weeks before BC Craft Beer Month begins. How good is that?

Twenty years ago, when this magazine was only in its second year, a longed-for beer festival of our own came to fruition. I'd be lying if I said I thought one day I'd be pulling on a T-shirt that said 'GCBF 20 Years' ... but I am! (it's black and classy). So that old adage about great oaks from little acorns is not just an empty saying. Still, it didn't get this far into history without a lot of hard work and perseverance from

many, many, many people. CAMRA BC members will know the profile names at the core of GCBF, and there is no doubt they are owed a huge thank you, but let's not forget those people who are actually the backbone of the festival: volunteers. It began, and is still largely staffed by members of CAMRA BC's Victoria branch. From there we have grown to a well

respected consumer group with a thousand members. People from all walks of life: teachers, welders, doctors, retirees, IT pros, beer bloggers, butchers, bakers, policy makers. So give yourselves a slap on the back and be assured of what we can achieve with well-focussed campaigns. Join us if you're not already a member, and make sure you support the GCBF and BC Craft Beer Month. Count yourself in! §

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The Campaign for Real Ale BC has more than 1,400 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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Campaign for Real Ale British Columbia

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CAMRA_BC_Discussion-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

to post a message to the list, send to:

CAMRA_BC_Discussion@yahoogroups.com

I know you already noticed that's right, a redesigned, spiffy CAMRA logo. On the front page. And the back page. And in between. I think it's a cracker and it will be seen on all our materials from now on. If members need to use it for anything, please make sure you let the B.C. Executive know beforehand. Speaking of the BC Exec, a very productive meeting took place in Vancouver during the summer and we had one of our two face-to-face meetings of the year. Lots of ground covered and lots of new business still to discuss. Don't forget to add your voice to what goes on in the Society, after all, it belongs to you.

Following the revels of the Great Canadian Beer Festival and BC Craft Beer Month, it will be time to put serious thought into the AGM and annual elections. New faces and new ideas are what keep CAMRA BC current and relevant, so please consider putting your name forward to join either your branch executive or the provincial board. It's a labour of love laced with really good beer. Why would you not want a piece of that?

The way What's Brewing is disseminated changes with this issue. Members will receive the full version as usual, and an abbreviated version will go out to non-members. This is also a call for articles, so if what you have an interest in is not covered, why not write something yourself? Heads up corporate members, the next issue is the pre-holidays magazine November - December and the perfect place to advertise your Christmas wares, so please take advantage of the extremely reasonable advertising rates and book space through your local branch or directly to What's Brewing at camrabc@shaw.ca §

Phil Atkinson

Discounts from Corporate Members

Please note, discounts are neither a requirement nor an expectation of corporate members when they sign up with CAMRA BC. Such discounts are benefits offered by individual CAMRA BC corporate members as a way of saying thank-you to CAMRA members for their support. These discounts are totally at the discretion of the corporate members who offer them and are subject to change without notice. Please clarify with the corporate member representative, ahead of your purchase, if they offer a discount, and what that discount is, so there are no misunderstandings. If misunderstandings do occur, please respect the corporate members and their representatives and contact CAMRA BC directly at communications@camrabc.ca

Thank you for understanding and for supporting our corporate members.

CAMRA Victoria Summer Picnic

BY MAUREEN BLASECKIE



Brian Wigen, CAMRA Victoria Summer Picnic host, beer aficionado, gentleman

In a summer that has run hot and cold but mostly cold, there was celebration in Victoria when July 28 arrived draped in glorious sunshine and blue skies. Once the good folk emerged from their dens and stopped blinking, word quickly spread: “The sun shall shine upon the CAMRA Victoria BBQ, let the growlers be filled!”

Okay, that may have been just a little purple but it really was a glorious day for a BBQ. By mid-afternoon, Brian Wigen’s acreage on Oldfield Road in Saanich was rocking the craft beer scene in shorts and sunshine and happy, happy campers.

Ever the gracious host, Brian hid treasures on the grounds for a bit of a scavenger hunt. It was challenging but there were sufficient incentives to keep everyone looking under bushes, charging through tall grass and generally getting lost in the spirit(s) of the occasion.

The contributions to the buffet table were nothing short of a feast. From shrimp-stuffed cherry tomatoes to an enormous pavlova and five varieties of beer-based ice cream, every course



came up with delightful surprises. Becky Wigen supervised the indoor traffic: directing everyone to the facilities and amenities, catching up with friends and getting to know the newcomers. No one is a stranger under her roof.

And she makes amazing biscuits—seriously amazing, warm, flaky, the stuff dreams are made of biscuits.

One attendee was heard saying his grandchildren actually look forward to the CAMRA Victoria picnic. And they don’t even drink beer yet! So, if you weren’t there this year plan on it for next year. It’s children optional, of course, but feel free to bring the kids, the grandchildren or round up a few well-behaved kids hanging out in the neighbourhood. It’s a family event with good beer, good food and great people.

Many thanks again to Brian and Becky for their hospitality. §

Phillips Trainwreck Barley Wine wins Label of the Year

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE AUG. 5, 2012

Phillips Brewing Company, Victoria, B.C., has won the 2011 Label of the Year award at the 33rd annual convention of the Collectors of Canadian Brewery Advertising members across Canada and the US.

The power and strength of the two locomotives depicted on the Trainwreck label represent the potency of this 10 per cent alcohol by volume seasonal barley wine. The label was designed by Victoria-based artist, Shawn O'Keefe.

Matt Lockhart, Marketing and Communication Coordinator for Phillips Brewing said, "We were thrilled that Trainwreck won Label of the Year. We have a lot of fun dreaming up unique names for our beers and Shawn continually blows our minds with the designs he's able to come up with."



HOME BREWERS ...

Following last issue's article on cider, there has been a raised profile for the old tippie among our home brewing members. Too late to organize an olde world pomacing, it is hoped that folks will have taken advantage of B.C. abundant apple crop and made cider anyway. Next year, there will be a cider category in the CAMRA BC Home Brew competition.



Incidentally, CAMRA members did very well at national competitions this year, both through the Vancouver and Victoria brewing groups and as independent entrants. Let's take the challenge one step beyond and make B.C. the country's home brewing hot-spot as it is for craft beer!

If you have never made your own beer or cider, or are looking for those kindred spirits who do, you can find them at the two home brewer websites.

<http://www.vanbrewers.ca/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/107165103956/>

and ...

<http://brewvic.ca/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/brewvic/>

Although these groups are not affiliated with CAMRA BC, you'll see an awful lot of familiar faces!

Here is another gem that you might like for 'What's Brewing'. I found it in 'Quaint Signs of Olde Inns' by G.J. Monson-Fitzjohn (1926).

CHURCH INN: There are no fewer than 35 pubs of this name in Lancashire alone! In the old days coffins were always carried by the bearers from the house where the death took place, to the church yard where they were to be buried, sometimes covering enormous distances over fells and dales, in fact there are many paths known as 'corpse tracks' in the most inaccessible districts in Westmorland, Cumberland and Lancashire. On the

arrival at the church, the coffin was deposited at the lych-gate, for which purpose these covered gates were erected, and the bearers made quickly for the nearest ale-house, which the foresight of the inn-keeper always got as near as possible to the lych-gate, consequently the inn was naturally called the 'Church Inn'. The close proximity of these inns to the churches doubtless gave rise to Defoe's Lines:



The Church Inn, Oldham in Lancashire was voted brew pub of the year 2010 and is also in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide.

"Whenever God erects a House of Prayer,
The Devil's sure to build a chapel there,
And 'twill be found upon examination,
The latter has the larger congregation."

Cheers, Frank Appleton.

Brighter outlook for UK Breweries

One of the things I most enjoyed about the London Olympics was hearing the sidebar stories from British reporters. I learned that there are over 60,000 pubs in the UK (53,000 in England and Wales, 5,200 in Scotland and 1,600 in Northern Ireland). The number of breweries in the UK has increased four-

fold over the past 30 years. The Campaign for Real Ale said there were now 767 breweries operating across the country.

CAMRA's Good Beer Guide reported that 78 new breweries opened last year, a net increase of 56 after others had closed down. Many were small-scale micro-breweries, which CAMRA said were responding to demands for "taste and quality." §

What Causes a Hangover

BY IAN LLOYD

This is science. I am not going to tell you how to cure your pounding headache, nausea, fatigue, chills and feeling of remorse. You already know that answer. However, I will tell you the body chemistry about why it happened. That is right, this month you will learn all about the hangover. Perhaps you should have gone home, instead of going big.

There has been a lot of research done into the cause of a hangover, but - sadly - there is still no cure. It is thought that more than 75% of men and women have experienced at least one hangover during their lifetime. The financial drain upon society due to *veisalgia* is staggering. For any scrabble players: *veisalgia* is the scientific term for hangover. A report in 2006 produced by the Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse stated that over \$23 million was lost due to short-term disability from alcohol abuse. With this much productivity loss, 227,002 days worth, there should be a cure. Despite what the internet claims, there is no cure. But there are many theories about what causes a hangover.

The first theory about hangover symptoms is dehydration. Alcohol is a diuretic: it makes you pee. This loss of fluid can lead to symptoms of dehydration: thirst, dizziness, nausea/vomiting and muscle cramping. Sound familiar? Dehydration can also cause headaches. A rapid loss of fluids can lead to subsequent shrinking of the lining surrounding your brain. Sounds like a headache to me. Don't forget to drink plenty of water.

The next possible cause of hangover is the toxic effects of alcohol metabolism. Your body has to get rid of all that alcohol, specifically ethanol, roaming around your innards. It does this by breaking it down



into smaller pieces (called metabolites) that are easier to remove. One of these metabolites is called acetaldehyde, and is quite toxic. If you drink too much, your body cannot remove this toxic product fast enough. Symptoms of too much acetaldehyde include flushing, nausea and headaches.

We always blame hangovers on impurities within alcoholic beverages. These impurities are collectively called congeners. Sadly, these congeners provide the flavours and aromas we enjoy. There is a bit of truth to this hangover theory. I kid you not; real science has proven that 'cleaner' spirits like vodka and gin tend to produce milder hangovers than 'congener rich' spirits like cognac and red wine. These congeners also produce metabolic toxins as your body tries to clear them out. Perhaps the most notorious congener is methanol, which your body changes to formaldehyde. Who knows what it does to all those wonderful fruity ester and spicy phenols present in great craft beer.

The most suspect cause of a hangover is lack of quality sleep. While it is true that alcohol can act as a

sedative and make you sleepy, too much alcohol can prevent you from reaching restful rapid eye movement (REM) sleep. To make matters worse, alcohol relaxes throat muscles which can cause snoring and sleep apnea. Furthermore, excessive alcohol consumption reduces your body's ability to make the sleepy-time brain chemical melatonin. Add this to frequent nighttime trips to the bathroom - remember the diuretic problem three paragraphs back - and you have one tired imbibor. Symptoms of sleep deprivation mirror a hangover: muscle aches, depression, headaches, nausea, fatigue, memory lapses and irritability.

One the most fascinating hangover theories is acute alcohol withdrawal. Withdrawal from long term

alcohol abuse is very similar to a hangover, only not as intense. Further ingestion of alcohol can sometimes make these symptoms go away. This explains the whole 'hair of the dog' hangover cure.

I told you there would be no mention of a cure, because there isn't one. There are, however, a few things you can do to help prevent a hangover. The most obvious one is to drink less. Drink plenty of water, make sure you have lots of food in your stomach, go home early and get lots of rest.

Perhaps the best thing you can do to prevent a hangover is keep previous bad morning memories fresh in your mind. But then again, painful memories fade fast. §



**It's here.
(finally.)**

DELIRIUM tremens

DELIRIUM tremens

Kegs and bottles now available in BC!

Contact: 604.709.9719 rsomers@mcclellandbeers.ca

The advertisement features a bottle of Delirium Tremens beer and a glass filled with the same beer. The bottle has a blue label with the text 'DELIRIUM tremens' and 'FAMILY BREWERY BRASSERIE FAMILIALE HUYGHE SINCE / DEPUIS 1844'. The glass has a yellow label with the text 'DELIRIUM tremens'. A pink elephant logo is visible on the bottle neck, the glass, and to the right of the glass. The background is white.

Field Guides to Fantastic Food
from Tastebud Guides

BY JEN REIHER

Follow Jen's excellent blog at

<http://victorianfood.blogspot.com/>



For the past year or so I have been taking the seed of an idea - eBook food guides written by members of Victoria's local food scene - to execution of the idea. The vision of the project is to take the existing content from food bloggers and food writers like myself and modify it into an eBook guide on Kindle, Kobo, Apple and Android eBook reader platforms.

The first guide was ‘born’ in May of this year after a stunningly fitting nine months of slow work and production of [Local Flavour: Victoria 2012](#). This guide is pulled from my own experiences, culling the list of 150 restaurants I have blogged about down to a list of 20 solid recommendations. The guide was designed to prove the model, and to begin to develop a baseline example of how to market and produce a guide.

As part of the introduction to Local Flavour, I made an infographic featuring the [craft beers of Victoria](#). After much interest and special request, I took the

silkscreening course at the OLIO Artist & Workers Cooperative to do a special screen printed run of the design onto 15x22 art paper. The proceeds of these limited edition posters will go towards future development and marketing of the Tastebud Guides project to help move it beyond Victoria in the coming year.



*Craft Beers of Victoria Infographic
Available for \$25 - find out where to buy at
www.tastebudguides.com*

The upcoming publication is a collaborative guide written by 20 of Victoria's poutine lovers (or as I like to call them, the Poutine Dream Team) with mini-recommendations to the authentic, fusion and fancy poutines available in restaurants around Victoria. This guide is a fun, free download and is scheduled for release by the end of September.

What's up next? I am in conversation with Colin Newell of coffee.bc.ca for the Coffee Crew guide to Victoria's Caffeine Scene, as well as Health & Wellness guru Olivia Keane of [Keane 2 Be Fit](#), who is interested in guiding people to healthier options when surrounded by temptation. Victoria's burgeoning craft beer scene is certainly on my radar! Are you a Victoria beer writer? I'd be interested in discussing a guide of your own ... contact me at jen@tastebudguides.com

Out and About with Scottie ... Summer Events

Hopoxia Phillips Brewery, Victoria

July 21 started out lightly overcast and was threatening in weather a bit. Just after noon the sun broke through, insurance for a gorgeous summer day. This annual event is held in the back yard of Phillips Brewery downtown Victoria. The theme is, of course, hops and each brewery attending brings along its hoppy beers and the variety is endless.

Breweries at the event were Hoyne, Phillips, Howe Sound, Granville Island, Driftwood, Vancouver Island, Moon Under Water, Tree, Parallel 49, Tofino, Lighthouse, Canoe, Longwood, Wolf, Coal Harbour, Spinnakers. Amongst the mix were owners, brewers and reps so the public was well informed.

The crowd consisted of hundreds of familiar faces from the B.C. beer scene, including dozens of CAMRA members. Lots of young people were in attendance and many interesting beer questions were asked, many good comments were made in regards to all things beer. The crowd vibe was fantastic as if everyone was on the same celebratory page of enjoying great beer outside in great weather. Lots of pride in the Island beer scene was evident.

The food purveyor was The Noodle Box and it was very well done. A fantastic local festival where the consumer meets the brewer and enjoys quality handcrafted beers in a relaxed and hospitable setting.

20th Annual Wine Festival, Galiano Island

Tickets \$35 with your expensive wine glass included. All proceeds to Galiano Health Care Society. With



much thanks to Lions Club volunteers for everything. What's Brewing was attending for its second year in a row. It's a festival people can walk on to at ferry terminals; and man do they ever. Folk come from Lower Mainland and Vancouver; other islands, Galiano itself and people from anywhere you can name. BC Ferries are moving with ships heading in all directions, large and small ferries, working, throughout our Gulf Islands, the most ships I've ever seen moving through these waters at one time. Sailings vary. The only direct sailing is 6:15 a.m. Far too early—did that last year. The 10:05 am is the one, it's two stops before getting there from Swartz Bay. From the mainland it's easier. It's a real fresh and local soiree.

New tents for participants were added this year. They put some investment into it. Lots of ice, volunteers walked continually through the festival with trays of finger foods hand crafted, artisan, and it's well done. Volunteers do totally everything for this festival, set up crew, catering, logistics, parking,

tear down, decorators, website designer, food, posters, stewards for booths. Most of the volunteers at the site appeared over 50 and they kept it moving and shaking. Very hard work went into this small event.

For CAMRA members who are also wine lovers, if you want a good-value getaway in a peaceful tranquil setting, walk-on walk-off, it's Galiano Wine Fest. Many small farm gate wineries were available as well as international wines, Sea Cider and Howe Sound brewery. This is the real gem—the small town but charming high end country craft farm gate festival. Also on these grounds the country market with fresh and local foods, crafts, and entertainment. Very earthy feel to it all. Local retail stores offer a good selection of craft beers to have on your visit to this magnificent spot on the map. Even if you don't go for the festival, go if you haven't; you'll be very surprised.

Moby's Beer Fest, Ganges, Salt Spring Island

Have you been to Moby's? It's on the ocean itself at Fulford Harbour, out back is the lot with a few other businesses and parking; well parking was

wherever you could. I think Harbour House across the road was allowing parking. I got one right in front of a wee mall of small businesses and stayed all day. When I arrived at noon designated parking on Moby's site was choc-a-bloc full. Each for your own and for sure Harbour House's big lot across the road was used. All good. No one was complaining about it.

What's Brewing got to the grounds an hour early. We like to catch up with industry folk before they get busy pouring beer. Event 1—8 pm. A poster had gone out around Salt Spring. Admission 10 bucks. First time event, folks were putting up tents and setting stages 1

hour before. On the run set up. Last minute details, anticipation. At admission you got plastic taster glasses. There was no programme. It was a relaxed and front gate controlled event. They seemed to have it under control, it was very laid back.

What's Brewing comes to support real beers, breweries and consumer choice and this was a good showcase shaping up. For the brewers, Moby's provided spill bucket, water for washing glasses, ice and when ice ran low, they bought more from their neighbours to keep it moving. Good show. Three brewers or so missed sailings because it was Saturday, summer Salt Spring, market day. Everyone



Moby's photos: Robert Steinbach

eventually made it, ferries running late, missed sailings, it's an all out real time effort to get there on Saturdays in the summer. As we know ferries allow no reservations on these routes. Planning and praying is the way experienced brewers figure it.

The festival had no dedicated stewards or helpers but Moby's staff did all pitch in for all brewers when help was needed. Lots of effort went into this event. There was a let's make it happen attitude from Moby's. They did fresh shucked oysters in their tent. Their youngest male oyster shucker danced in the



Fun in the sun Moby's Beer Festival, Salt Spring Island

Moby's tent and grooved all the time shucking. His energy for the music was right there.

Breweries with owners and reps included Lighthouse, Wolf, Phillips, Vancouver Island, Canoe, Merridale, Spinnakers, Howe Sound, Driftwood, and Salt Spring fine ales.

Good job on all craft lineup. Moby's had a cook tent, volunteers were cheerful, plain food, relish on the table, smokies, burgers beef and salmon. Basic. Everything purchased by ticket on entrance and a wristband was proof of payment for the event. The entire grounds were surrounded by an orange plastic fence keeping it separate from the pub. The local Mounties walked through.

A nice stage was erected at the back of the event, giving space for dancing in front of three bands over the day. The first group was Latin and they tuned for a fair while since they were a huge ensemble. From start to finish it was upbeat, cheerful, happening real ale festival. People danced for almost two and a half hours to the Latin band; Jose Sanchez's Cuban Party, the best I've heard, tight, sound of Santana with all the instruments. Very hot hot hot; add real beer. Absolutely a good Salt Spring vibe; relaxed and all groovy in its way.

Attendees seemed like a youth movement, lots of young men and women looking well styled in summer attire, there was a smattering of elder folk, all sorts of individual characters. Conversations were being had by some of the crowd, and between breweries, about beer, real beer folks were seen holding them up in the light and the brewers sharing tastes of each others' brews. It's a local catch-up for all the brewers. Always new reps coming on board as craft breweries grow.

Merridale merri berry cider, visually distinct rose in colour in the plastic glasses, was one I drank on draught at Spinnakers in its early days; was very evident. A summer treat. Many folks were seen sampling this product.

The day was awash in strong sun, shade, real ale and dancing. The second band was all early 20 year old guys doing 60s stuff their grandfathers grooved to. Aptly named The Covertones. They were awesome, played three hours and the crowd rocked. They did great covers of the Stones, all that era. The crowd was in the mood and danced and drank real ale. Great energy. In corners off in the shade people talked, laughed and partied.

As the day came to closing pace the third group of two people—The Pompadoors—called for musicians from the crowd but none came so they played an hour set by themselves, drums and singing, guitar. They also were very good. Continued dancing. Tasting real beers. Happy vibe. The crowd had fun, brewers had fun, and Moby's had fun. Real ale all the way on this hot summer event.

Brewers discussed all day how to get home at the end of this busy day, 7:50 from Fulford or the 8:30 Vesuvius-Crofton, or the last way off, 9:30 to Crofton. This option is where you drive back the hour and 15 to Victoria via Duncan over the Malahat. At its peak there were 425 folks in attendance. Great ales, great times on Salt Spring Island. Congrats to Moby's. §

Across the Channel to Northern Europe: *Bruges, Brussels and Copenhagen*

BY LAURA KOTLER

Following my travels in the UK earlier this year I took the Eurostar train through the Channel Tunnel to Brussels (it took only an hour-and-a-half) and on to Bruges – or Brugge, in the local language, since this is Flanders, the Flemish (Dutch)-speaking part of Belgium. Wallonia in the south is the French-speaking part, while the city of Brussels is officially bilingual, Dutch and French. After an excellent and sobering tour of Flanders battlefields, cemeteries and memorials, I went on a more light-hearted tour which featured three Belgian icons: waffles, chocolate and beer. We were treated to samples of four of the thousands of Belgian beers and were shown the bible of Belgian beers, a very thick, hard-cover volume listing in three languages every brewery and beer – 1,568 pages with full colour illustrations.

I'm starting to learn more about Belgian beer. There has been a rise in popularity of Belgian beer styles among North American brewers. In the processing of Belgian beer, sugar is often used to raise the alcohol content and thin or dry the beer texture. The sugar may be in the form of corn sugar, honey, fructose, brown sugar, syrup or candy sugar. Belgium has two types of beer: thirst-quenching or *désaltérant* (white, Flemish red) and special, gourmet or *dégustation* (higher alcohol, stronger aroma). There are four different fermentation processes. Basically, pils is mostly bottom fermentation; amber, white, abbey, Trappist and strong blond are top fermentation; gueuze-lambic is spontaneous fermentation; and red-brown (acid) beer from southwestern Flanders is a combination. (I wish a knowledgeable person would

write an article for *What's Brewing* to explain more about Belgian beers. Thanks to Jason at Driftwood Brewing for answering some basic questions of mine.)

There are 70 or more Abbey beers but only six Trappist brewers in Belgium: Achel, Chimay, Orval, Rochefort, Westmalle and Westvleteren. A seventh is in The Netherlands. Westvleteren beer is very hard to come by; you pretty well have to go to their abbey. So I was happy to hear that Cascadia Liquor Store in Victoria would be receiving a case of Westvleteren 12. It's the only Trappist beer I haven't tried before, so I'm on the waiting list.



All Trappist beers are strong ales with a re-fermentation in the bottle. Blond or brown, 6% to 12% alcohol, they do not properly constitute a unique beer "type." The Trappist denomination is protected by the trademark "Authentic Trappist Product." Other beers in the Trappist style must be called "abbey beer." Trappist beers are brewed by or under the control of monks within the walls of a monastery, while abbey beers in the Trappist style may be brewed outside monasteries.

A booklet published by the Belgian Brewers' Federation names Belgium the Beer Paradise. "Beer has always been deeply rooted in our culture and tradition and is more than just a drink...wide variety

of types, for everyone and for all occasions.” The federation is pleased that Belgian beers are gaining popularity around the world. “The art of serving a good glass of beer is part of the Belgian beer culture: each beer has its proper glass and is served according to the rules of the art.” The perfect way to serve a beer at home:

1. Bottled beer should be stored in a dark, dry place.
2. Cool the beer: place the bottles in the fridge at least 24 hours before serving.
3. Temperature. Thirst-quenching beers: around 3 degrees C. Gourmet beer: around 6-8 degrees.
4. Clean glasses with cold water in which a good detergent is dissolved, and rinse thoroughly with water. Glasses for gourmet beers should be dried.
5. Pouring. Thirst-quenching beer: pour the beer all in one go. Tip the glass slightly to one side and then raise it gradually to an upright position. Let the froth flow over the sides and then skim off the surface bubbles of the froth with a clean knife. Rinse the outside of the glass. Gourmet beer: serve the beer slowly so as to create a rich foamy head. Leave some beer in the bottle so the glass can be topped up afterwards. For beers that are bottle conditioned, leave the yeast deposit in the bottom of the bottle and present the bottle with the glass.

By 1900, there were more than 300 breweries in Belgium. Following declines during World War II,

there has been a revival of small and medium-sized breweries, alongside the mega/international ones. More than half of the production is exported. The Belgian Brewers’ Federation’s motto is: A beer brewed with care should be drunk with care. “We must combat alcohol abuse, not alcohol consumption. That is the challenge facing our federation.” An awareness campaign called “Bob” was introduced by the Belgian Road Safety Institute, Bob referring to the designated driver.



Tradition plays a big part in Belgium’s beer scene. In January-February each year, tributes are paid to Gambrinus, the King of Beer. The Knighthood of the Brewers’ Mash Staff is the active brewers’ guild in the country. Importers and restaurateurs who promote Belgian beer in their own countries may be

Friends don't let friends
drink rubbish beer. Buy them
a membership in CAMRA BC



made honorary knights. The memory of the patron saint of brewers, Saint Arnould, is revered in September during the Beer Weekend in Brussels.

Bruges is a lovely, picturesque town that tourists love: red-tiled roofs, neat and trim row-houses, lively main square, historic buildings and a pretty, winding canal. There is also a long-established brewery in town, an annual beer festival and a great drinkery called Brugte Bierhuis (Brugge's beer house). I would certainly spend more time in this beer house if given the chance. I made two choices from the large, plastic-sheeted beer menu: a North American style Imperial IPA by Viven Brewery in Damme, Belgium, 8%, refermented in the bottle – citrus hop aroma, very good; and Préaris Quadrupel, winner of this year's Brouwland Beercompetition, chosen by eight beer connoisseurs from among 150 entries – dark brown, smooth, very tasty. The beer menu was all in Dutch, but I heard my server operating in several languages. It was fun watching the servers constantly



bringing bottles from behind a swinging door and deftly pouring them into the appropriate glasses. Five beers on draft were listed on the blackboard. You can take away bottled beer if you pay the 10-€-cent deposit. The piped-in music is classical. The food menu has a pâté made with Trappist beer.

While in Bruges I read about the annual beer festival sponsored by BAB (Brugse Autonome Bierproveners), <http://brugsbierfestival.be/>. The website is not in English, but it's easy enough to make out the Dutch which says it is held in early February – Feb. 4-5, 2012, was the 5th annual, with more than 65 breweries and 250 beers, free entry, €1,25 per sample (C\$1.54). I noticed some books of interest: *LambicLand* by Tim Webb, Chris Pollard and Siobhan McGinn; *The Beer Walk Bruges*; and *Around Bruges in 80 Beers* by Pollard and McGinn. There's also a Brussels version of the latter, *Around Brussels in 80 Beers*, co-written by Joe Strange and Yvan De Baets. Joe Strange blogs as Thirsty Pilgrim. I found his July 13, 2012, blog interesting. He was visiting the US, and it's useful to hear a foreigner's opinion of North American beer:

... So I've been in America for some weeks and, to be honest, not much has changed here lately -- not on the beer front, anyway. Oh, there are more and more breweries and more and more beer specialist bars with more and more taps, and there are more and more regular bars and restaurants with growing lists populated by small and regional brewers. But the products are basically the same: resinously bitter and/or highly alcoholic. When not overly bitter they tend to be overly spiced, as with the caricatures of Belgian ale that seem to be flourishing.

So much for the sweeping generalizations. There are some highly drinkable options out there, beers full of flavor and finesse. But it takes some hunting. It falls to us to share tips on what and where to hunt ...

De Halve Maan (Half Moon) Brewery is right in the centre of Bruges, established in 1856 and now run by



the sixth generation of the same family. A brewery has existed here since 1564! Today it's a popular tourist destination for beer, food and also the brewery tour, which costs €6,50 (C\$8). The tour I attended was crowded and being conducted in two languages, so it involved a lot of waiting, but the view from the roof was beautiful, and at the end you get a glass of Brugse Zot golden ale (*zot* means fool), 6% abv.

Brussels has a beer museum! One of the majestic, ornate buildings facing the big square (the Grand' Place) is the home of the brewers' guild of Belgium. In its cellar is the Belgian Beer Museum, a three-part museum comprised of a re-created 18th century brewery from Hoegaarden, an old estiminet or beer café, and equipment and displays about modern breweries.

Brussels once had 100 breweries. Now there are only two: Cantillon (a century old) and Leboucq's Brasserie de la Senne, opened 10 years ago. Brussels holds a Beer Weekend in the Grand' Place in September, and I noticed that in April there was an Open Breweries Day, with 24 breweries participating.

Two famous beer venues in Brussels are not to be missed:

À la Mort Subite beer café. The menu offered beer in two sizes: normal and small. Normal was 25 cL. The cost of the Mort Subite Framboise (raspberry) that I had was €4,40 (C\$5.67). The café is in a building about a hundred years old, with an attractive interior. The name "Mort Subite" comes from a game of dice in the early 1900s, called 421, played by employees of the nearby National Bank of Belgium. When their lunchtime was ending, they would play one last game, called *mort subite*, sudden death. At that time the pub was called La Cour Royale, and when a new café was opened, the owner chose the Mort Subite name. Mort Subite beer took the name of the café. It's now overseen by the fourth generation of the Vossen family.

Delirium Café. I wound my way through alleys lined with eateries and outdoor patios (with aggressive staff trying to encourage people to choose their place) to eventually find the so-called Delirium Village. The village includes the three-storey Delirium Café – three pubs with different atmospheres and beer focuses – and two doors down, the newer Delirium Monasterium, which focuses on abbey beer and vodka (100 abbey beers, 10 abbey taps, 22 Trappist bottles, 400 vodkas!). At another location not too many blocks away is Little Delirium Café. It has 30 beers on tap. Delirium is recognized as one of the best bars in the world. Apparently, it's in Guinness World Records. At the main café downstairs there are 2,400 bottles on the menu. The ground floor, called The Taphouse, has 27 drafts, including two foreign ones: Snake Dog (US) and Guinness (Ireland). Loud-ish North American and British oldies/goodies music was playing. Upstairs is the Hoppy Loft, with bottled beers and 10 taps from around the world, specializing in US craft breweries, but also from Scotland, Denmark, Netherlands, etc. Pouring is done in a



Brussels Beer Museum ... we need one of these!

particular way: tilt glass while pouring, scrape off extra foam, top up to line if needed, dip glass in water, serve with glass's emblem facing drinker. Delirium Monasterium offers a quieter environment with calmer music. All five pubs are likely worth a try!

There are beer festivals in several Belgian cities and towns and plenty of breweries to visit. It's easy and inexpensive for Brits to hop over to Belgium. An article in a CAMRA UK newsletter talked about their branch's visit to Gruut Brewery in Ghent, where woman brewer, Annick, uses special spices instead of hops. The reporter wrote: "Before the 13th century, beer in Belgium was mostly flavoured with herbs instead of hops. The composition of herbs was different from region to region, and only the ruler

knew the mixture and took taxes from it. The herbs were called Gruyt or Gruut. Eventually Gruut coins were made, which were used at the time of Emperor Charles to pay taxes on the Gruut-herbs. There were single and double coins. Even after the disappearance of those herbs, people still used the coins. Now, the Gruut-currency is used in the brewery logo." (Clifford Luff)

Copenhagen

I took a quick flight from Brussels to Copenhagen, where I had begun this multi-month trip, and spent a week seeing more of this great city and tasting more beers. And I lucked into a beer festival. There were *two* beer festivals happening on the same weekend!

Copenhagen is well worth a visit or two or more. This is where I found the imaginatively named, The Brew Pub(!), and ordered a taster tray of five of their seven brews on tap: a wheat beer, an American pale ale with Simcoe hops, an American red ale with Amarillo hops, a Belgian dubbel and an American IPA with Zeus and Willamette hops. The next time I was there,



they were out of Brewster US Pale Ale and Atlantic IPA, so I ended up with The Brewfather lager, which was only okay, but cost a scandalous 58 kroner (C\$10) for a half-litre glass. They also offered Beer Cocktails, such as Pale Ale Passion (light beer, vodka, vanilla, passionfruit) and Wheat 'n' Black (wheat beer, dark rum, vanilla, porter). I admit that this is a trend of which I am not yet a fan.

Copenhagen is the home of mega-brewer Carlsberg. The Carlsberg website says that J.C. Jacobsen's brewery pioneered steam brewing, refrigeration techniques and, greatest of all, the propagation of a single yeast strain. In 1883 Carlsberg's Emil Christian Hansen developed a method for propagating pure yeast, which revolutionized the brewing industry. The

yeast was named *Saccharomyces Carlsbergensis* and given freely to the world. By 1939, 55% of all beer imported to the UK was from Carlsberg. The old brewery site is now a 10,000 square-metre exhibition centre, where you can self-guide or book one of four guided tours of varying lengths and costs.

The Danish Beer Enthusiasts group is growing. During the last five years the number of new Danish microbreweries has risen from zero to more than 90.

Impressive! (Maybe CAMRA BC should change its name to something to do with "craft beer enthusiasts"; we support more than just "real ale." Just a thought.)

I mentioned Mikkeller in my March-April article. He is an innovative, often roving brewer, craft beer promoter and importer. He blogs at <http://mikkeller.dk/>. It so happens that he also sponsors and organizes the Copenhagen Beer Celebration in May. I do wonder why it was held the same weekend as the 12th

annual Copenhagen Beer Festival. What a conflict. I read that the Celebration is for more discerning palates and offers 250 beers from "26 of the greatest breweries in the world" to 1,000 attendees, compared with the Festival's 900 beers to 5,000 attendees. The DKK300 (C\$51) tickets to the Celebration go on sale the previous November and sell out quickly, so you can't just show up at the event in May, like I was able

to do at the Festival. The Celebration ticket price includes a meal prepared by a famous local chef. The dishes either complement beer or contain beer as an ingredient. Beer samples are priced according to the time and cost of brewing. I am putting the Celebration on my travel bucket list.

The Festival boasted 70 exhibitors and brewers. Tokens were DKK10 (C\$1.70) for a 10 cL sample. The beer guide was a small-format, inch-thick, full-colour book, all in Danish but with recognizable beer style names. Occasional announcements over the loud-speakers were in Danish only, but most hosts spoke English – all friendly people, enjoying beer. I sampled nine beers, mostly from Denmark but two from Norway's Nøgne Ø, especially liking their AkuAku lemongrass pale ale. One brewer's booth had a really good idea: hanging on the front of each tap was a small glass vial with bulbous bottom, so that we could see the colour and smell the aroma of each beer before deciding which we wanted to try.

In the large cement-floor convention hall, besides the brewers' booths, there were vendors of bottled beer,



AkuAku lemongrass pale ale

two malster companies, memorabilia, t-shirts, and a yeast company proclaiming that “Yeast makes over 500 flavours and aroma compounds. We offer analytical services, consulting and training, yeast development, private yeast banking.” Tables and chairs were set up in one area by Ratebeer.com, so geeks and tickers could write their notes. Festival lanyards were made of thin neoprene, so they can stretch to accommodate different sizes of sample glasses.

While in Copenhagen I also had an organic Stuykman Wit by Nørrebro Bryghus, 5.2%, cloudy, citrusy – I liked it. At the Mikkeller pub were at least a dozen of their own beers on tap as well as guest beers. I see on the website that they're currently offering 10 Mikkeller brews, one from youthful Copenhagen brewery To Øl and nine from California's Port Brewing, including its line of Belgian-style beers. §

European Beer Consumers Union

The voice of the European beer consumer, the European Beer Consumers Union (EBCU) was formed in Bruges in May 1990 by three founding beer consumer organizations, representing Belgium, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom. They have since been joined by similarly minded national consumer groups from Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland. They support and campaign for the preservation of European beer culture and traditional brewing methods, against any activities likely to lead to further concentration of control in the European brewing industry, and for choice, quality and value for money in beers and brewing. The website includes a beer event calendar – good for travel planning! – and country-specific pages describing each country's beer styles, pub opening hours, prices, tipping, etc. §

Ullage and Spillage

BY J. RANDOM

Given the changing demographics of CAMRA BC I'm sure the majority of members can't remember a time when it was illegal to sit on a pub patio and drink beer in this province. Immigrating in '86, I couldn't understand why the locals were so crazy about the existence of a patio outside the Irish Rovers pub at the Expo site. It did have pretty good beer in the form of Okanagan Spring St. Patrick stout. Sadly, that has not been brewed for many years but a few of its genes still live on in OK porter. By that time Guinness, outside Ireland, had really gone downhill and I was pleased to find a stout I rated better than Guinness in my adopted country.

However, it was not just the beer they were raving about but the ability to sit outside and enjoy it, what's more the Irish Rovers kept open even after the rest of Expo was torn down. Later I learned a couple of B.C.'s outdated liquor laws had been changed in time for Expo so visitors would not label Vancouver as a no-fun city (including allowing drinking on a Sunday). Up till then the B.C. Government had been extremely concerned passersby might see drinkers having fun in a bar, somehow get the idea that drinking could be enjoyable, and be tempted inside. For the same reason, pubs did not even have windows. Of course, at that time, attaining fun



The view North from the Tap and Barrel lower patio.

generally required the consumption of several bland beers rather than the first sip of one really good one.

Today there is a huge wealth of patios in Vancouver where you can quietly sip your choice of beer styles while relaxing in the summer sunshine even, look you, on a Sunday afternoon. One of the most important words here being “quietly.” There are also a heck of a lot of otherwise decent patios on horribly noisy main streets: Broadway comes immediately to mind. Somehow the rumble of trucks and the occasional roar of a de-tuned muffler is not conducive to relaxation. Sorry, but Main St., now with an impressive patio culture, is also a main drag. Go to Rue St. Denis in Montreal, not a major through route, and you will notice a much better vibe. Of course, those hot sultry summer nights might help. Here our patios need global warming systems to ensure a decent length season of outdoor drinking. My favourite patios are not only away from traffic but have a west-facing aspect to allow for evening sun to provide the necessary warmth instead of getting my bald head toasted by an infrared lamp. Obviously a minimum couple of decent beers is a critical criterion. A decent view is another factor on which I personally place great weight. On Rue St. Denis that is provided by the people – your choice of gender. In Vancouver I am sure there are many great patios I have never been to, or might not recall, but I will accept no criticism for my personal shortlist.

I know a lot of people rate St. Augustine’s and the Alibi Room as the best patios in Vancouver for sidestreet location, evening sun and predominantly choice of beer. Who am I to argue? Neither could be said to have the greatest views unless, with respect to St. Aug’s, you never grew out of train or bus spotting. For proximity to the Random abode, both BierCraft (Cambie) and Luke’s Corner Bar and Kitchen provide the beer essentials just off Cambie and Granville Streets respectively, but again the views

leave something to be desired. The Whip Gallery and Restaurant scores higher for being a little further down a side street and for nostalgia points – being the second place with regular cask events after DIX. Views on a Sunday afternoon mainly of people we know coming and going, otherwise not so great.

I can’t think of too many places with a just-off-Broadway patio, particularly since the Three Lions disappeared. The new Rogue Kitchen and Wet Bar Broadway location has one, but it is heavily shaded by trees, faces east and slopes severely – beer coasters are a must. Not that those negative elements entirely prevented me enjoying great beers and good food on one of this summer’s few really warm evenings. I am assured the beer list, dominated by lighter beers, will be turning considerably more robust through the fall.



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That should help keep those who think Vancouver is in California, keep warm in their shorts and hoody on those not really patio-worthy evenings.

Fourth Avenue can be almost as noisy as Broadway but, fortunately, the patio at Displace Hashery wraps around onto the side street where it's a lot quieter. We dropped in recently to say Hi to Duncan, formerly of the Whip. Clearly he has had a good influence on their beer selection. You've got to love a place where you can debate whether Baldwin and Cooper's best bitter is a better best bitter than Fat Tug IPA is a Northwest IPA, with readily available hard data.

Fortunately, our Vancouver brewpubs have done well for patio locations. Yaletown's patio, though east facing, is on a particularly quiet street; the ambient noise is from inside. Steamworks' patio is not bad for traffic noise and has something of an industrial view across Burrard Inlet. The Dockside Restaurant, despite its name, has a non-industrial view of False Creek, but it does not get much evening sun, and then there is the beer.

OK, Random, so where is the off-street patio with the best view in Vancouver? Well, if you insist, I will

tell you. For me, it has to be the Galley Patio at the Jericho Sailing Centre. One-hundred-and-eighty-degree views from Spanish Banks to Kits beach. The entire panoply of the North Shore Mountains displayed for your viewing pleasure, counterpointed by the downtown skyline, suitably diminished from your distant vantage point. A limited beer selection to be sure, but do try my latest invention, the R&B red and bitter – half and half Red Devil and East Side bitter. It goes down a treat with the Red Devil beer battered Alaska grey cod and chips. The Galley Patio is a lot quieter since they swapped out the loudspeakers for table buzzers but it has lost the entertainment value of those exasperated, third time of asking, food-ready announcements. It does face north but it is on the first floor and the building is only one storey higher so its gets plenty of sun, particularly in the evening. It can be very windy up there so it is probably the coolest patio in Vancouver on those very few stinking hot days.

Possibly the ultimate in Vancouver beer patios – one location, two patios – are at the Tap and Barrel which unofficially opened in July at the old Olympic Village site in southeast False Creek. It is a stone's throw from the water, a baseball pitch from the



... and the winner is ... Galley Patio at the Jericho Sailing Centre, Vancouver

Legacy Liquor Store and within birdseed fling of the giant sparrows. I gather we now have to call this area The Village which seems to me, as a fan of the old Prisoner TV series, to be just perfect. Not that it looks anything like Portmeirion, more like a setting for an Atom Egoyan movie, but it is dreadfully artificial. Way too much concrete, steel and plastic,



nowhere near enough wood, and the plants look as though they would happily move elsewhere if only they could. But, I digress more than usual. Both the ground level and first floor patios at the Tap and Barrel look north and west. The view is in-your-face downtown skyline against a mountain backdrop with a dash of False Creek, and we enjoyed the sun until quite late in mid-August. I imagine you could find a sunny spot on the lower patio from about midday. With 23 craft beers (all, if I remember rightly, from B.C.) there was pretty much something for everyone and three out of four of my favourite IPAs. I saw another chance to debate Baldwin and Cooper's vs. Fat Tug but plumped for Old Yale Sasquatch Stout and never looked back. It was served at a perfect temperature, cool enough for a Canadian but not too cold for an expatriate Brit. Their pints are not cheap at \$7.00 or \$7.50 but they are 20 oz. pints.

photo: VancouverIsAwesome.com



Tap & Barrel - Beautiful view and 25 BC beers on tap!

One thing I have to say about Vancouver patios is that there are quite a few on which I believe it perfectly possible to die of thirst. I can only think that greeter promises of "I'll get your server" must have something to do with ensuring internet connection because they don't seem to relate to the imminent arrival of service. Call me impatient (because I am), but about 15 minutes after sitting down, rather than walking out I will typically go direct to the bar—an English pub habit, I know. I have tried and tried to be a better tipper as part of my attempts at Canadianization. I really have. But no matter how good the service is once it begins, I can't help being influenced by time spent thirsty. Once I have a beer in front of me I am a much nicer person. I don't even have to take a sip to de-stress. I am then in no rush to order food. I can even wait with an empty glass for my second beer without getting overly ratty. Now that we have a really good choice of great beer patios in Vancouver, I am going to be favouring those where I get my first beer soonest. At well under five minutes from bum-on-seat to beer-in-hand, the winner this summer was the Tap and Barrel. What is more our server poured a dribble of beer out of my almost empty glass into my fresh pint. That guy got a really good tip. Cheers. §

Calendar

- Details on Vancouver area events at <http://camravancouver.ca/events/>
- Details on Fraser Valley area events at http://camrafraservalley.ca/?page_id=89
- Details on Victoria area events at <http://camra.ca/events/>

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