



WHAT'S BREWING

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE BRITISH COLUMBIA VOL. 21 No.6 NOV- DEC 2011

DEAR CAMRA BC MEMBERS:

31 days hath October, and this October of 2011, those 31 days were filled with all kinds of beer related events to celebrate British Columbia's first official Craft Beer Month!

Breweries, brewpubs restaurants and BC Craft Beer Month sponsors from around the province took this month on with cask events, beer and food pairings, seminars, pub crawls and the list goes on and on. While Victoria and Vancouver were the two cities that had the most events going on, Mission, Nanaimo, Salmon Arm, Saturna Island, Penticton and Smithers got on board as well.



The month was officially launched in Vancouver by BC Minister of Agriculture Don McRae, accompanied by Environment Minister Terry Lake on the last day of September. October festivities began in Victoria with a pub crawl and a BC celebration of hops and ended with a night of cask events and, appropriately as it was Halloween, pumpkin beers! And in between

there were Oktoberfest events, pairings of BC beers with cheese, chocolate, and oysters, brewmaster dinners, and cask events in venues that had never held them before!

And to top off the fact that there was something going on every single day in October, the Craft Brewers Guild of BC, with Tree Brewing, put together the very first BC Craft Beer Pack available for all consumers in BC. And not just one, but *two*! A 12-bottle collection and a 12-can collection.

Our thanks to CAMRA BC who embraced BC Craft Beer Month with such enthusiasm and support. See you next year! §

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Campaign for Real Ale British Columbia

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

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

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Holy smoke but that was a busy coupla months just went by! Hardly wound down from the Great Canadian Beer Festival and we were carried away by the tide of events during the first BC Craft Beer Month. Such a lot of things to do - and taste - where will it all end?

I've noticed several comments, mostly derogatory, regarding the BC Liquor Control Branch cropping up in different publications lately. Having, on behalf of What's Brewing, submitted a query and got no reply I wonder if we'll ever rouse government into reforms that seem long overdue even to the most supportive or regulation lovers.

All the great Christmas beers are already making an appearance in the liquor stores. Hope you've been good.

Phil Atkinson

THE LITTLE VAGABOND *sent in by brewing guru and good friend Frank Appleton*

William Blake (the 'English mystic') 1757-1827

Dear mother, dear mother, the church it is cold,
But the ale-house is healthy & pleasant & warm;
Besides I can tell where I am used well,
Such usage in Heaven will never do well.

But if at the Church they would give us some Ale,
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,
We'd sing and we'd pray all the live-long day,
Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray.

Then the Parson might preach, & drink & sing,
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring;
And modest Dame Lurch, who is always at Church,
Would not have bandy children, nor fasting, nor birch.
And God, like a father, rejoicing to see
His children as pleasant and happy as he,
Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the Barrel,
But kiss him, and give him both drink and apparel.

Roundup: Pumpkin Ales 2011

Local Food Reviews for Victoria, BC

BY JEN REIHER

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

Trying something a little different this week - I sourced all of the seasonal releases of Pumpkin beers that I could find and have undertaken the very "arduous" "task" of trying them all. It was too much work for one person to undertake alone, so I recruited my oldest friend and her partner-in-food-and-life, as well as my own p.i.f.a.l. and we readied ourselves for some epic pumpkin-flavoured alcoholic beverages.



The line up - cooling in the fridge

It is impossible for me to not do things in a systematic way, so all the beers were poured out and put next to a piece of paper to take notes and the appropriate spices were placed near by to assist with placing the flavours. It felt oddly professional, but at least my friends were very entertained by the process. We opted not to do the blind tasting since we are pretty much all equal-opportunity beer lovers.



The lighting in our living room is lacking ...

... thankfully my friends are never far their trusty headlamp. I will present these from lightest tasting to strongest tasting. All of the selection were actually extremely drinkable and tasty, but there was significant variation between the brews so I will attempt to describe them so you can acquire the one that matches your preference(s) the best!



"Jumpkin Jack Pumpkin Ale" Tree Brewing • 6.4% • 650mL • Cook St. Liquor Store

This beer had the least flavour of all of our selections - a very neutral, subtle taste. I wish we had sampled this one first, because it was kind of overpowered by its predecessors. Tasting it again the next day on its own, it does have a hint of pumpkin spice flavours but they are extremely, extremely subtle. More pumpkin, way, way less pumpkin spice. On its own, I like it a lot - as part of a sampler it was lost. This was the most "beery" of all of the selections. This was also my favourite packaging! I love the name, I love their logo and the painted labels are so classy. Total simplicity on the labelling - no cute quote or rationale about the pumpkinness.



"Crooked Tooth Pumpkin Ale" Phillips Brewery • 5% • 650 mL • Widely available at most liquor stores

This year's release of the Crooked Tooth is exceptionally light and smooth, with a creamy aftertaste. The spices were mellow with allspice as the most prominent of the spice flavours. This beer is probably the one that will appeal to the broadest audience, a smart move on Phillips part! The lightness also translated into colour, as it was the clearest and lightest of all of the beers we poured for the evening. We had a bit of a giggle at the note on the packaging, as it claimed it would inspire a wacky halloween costume. Bit of a stretch, Phillips, bit of a stretch.



**120 Craft Beer Events
31 Days of Joy**



"Pumpkin Ale"

Granville Island Brewing • 6% • 650mL • Fairfield BCLC (very few bottles released on the island!)

I was excited to try this beer, having read that they had roasted local sugar pumpkins for the roasting process. I'm sure others used a similar process as well, but this one did have the nicest pumpkin flavour of all. It was on the sweeter side with a prominent clove taste. The flavour stayed in your mouth in a nice way afterwards, I think this was a feature of the 'texture' of the beer. This had the most pretentious of all of the packaging, claiming the beer is "a reflection of autumn's changing landscape" and even offering pairing suggestions of "roasted meats, winter vegetables and this city's crisp fall weather."

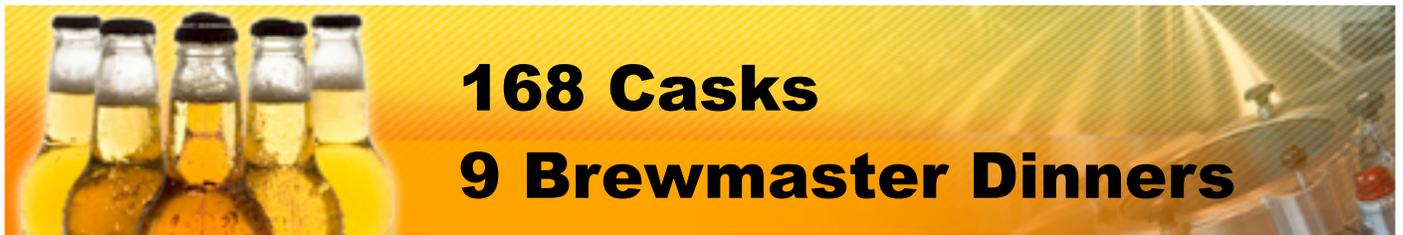
Eve-roll.



"Citrouille - The Great Pumpkin Ale"

St. Ambroise - Brasserie McAuslan Brewing Inc. • 5% • 341 mL • Liquor Plus

This beer is the only one coming from out of province. The St-Ambroise Brasserie McAuslan brewery is a Montreal Brewery. It was probably the most easy to drink, simple beer with an understated balance of all of the pumpkin spices. It was extremely similar to the Swan's but with perhaps just a little less intensity to the flavours. I enjoy the name - simple, and cute with a little nod to Peanuts in the subtitle. The packaging had a nice description of the beer on the back that uses the word "bewitch" which I think is a perfect word for a halloweenish beer.



168 Casks
9 Brewmaster Dinners



"Pumpkin Ale" Swans Brewery • 5% • 650mL • Swans Liquor Store, Cascadia & probably others

This was the unanimous favourite for the evening although huge caveat: it was in the back of my fridge for several days while I was sourcing the other beers, and when we went to pour it the water had frozen and separated out! I am not sure how much this changed the beer aside from making it stronger. Clearly I will just have to buy some more and test this out! The spices were the most prominent in this beer although less balanced than the St Ambrose, as the nutmeg stood out above all of the rest of the spices. This packaging was the most minimalist which was kind of refreshing after everything else. Pumpkin ale. No cute slogan. No fancy logo. Beer. Bottle. Drink and enjoy (Responsibly).



"Pumpkineater Imperial Pumpkin Ale" Howe Sound • 8% • 1L • Widely available

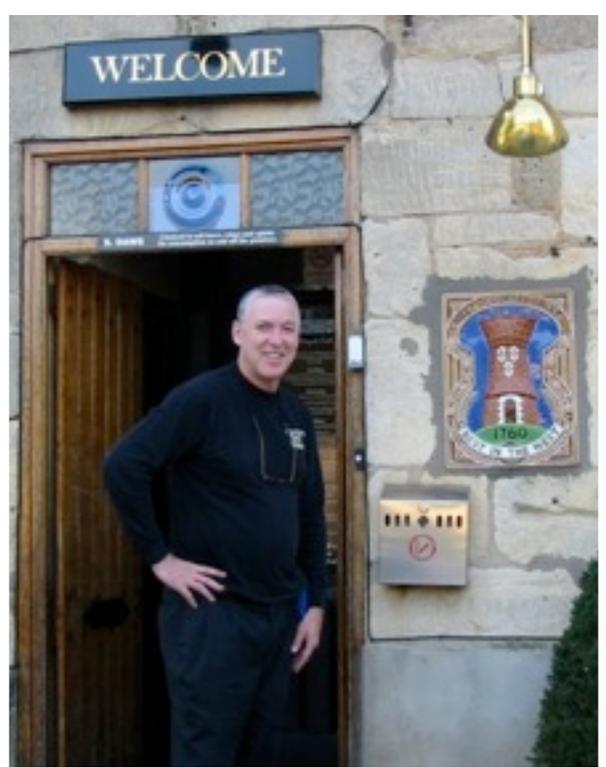
This one was quite a bit different than the others, and therefore hard to compare side by side. As an imperial ale, it was strong and bitey with a bit of wineyness to it. The flavours are very heavy and upfront, and this was the only beer which named itself as having star anise in the spice mix (although some of the beers did not disclose all of the spices). The stronger alcohol content means the flavours of the spices are a little bit overpowered, but it helps to cut the sweetness found in some of the less strong beers. The packaging on this is pretty average - not too pretentious, cute name again and it notes it is part of the "John Mitchell, Grand-father of Microbrewing" series of beers. §



**BC Craft Beer Month:
An Epic Success!**

Out and About with Scottie

So, what happens when this Victoria beer enthusiast goes to Toronto?



Well, I needed to be on the move so method of transport around the inner city was the \$10 TTC day pass. I also books of tickets on Viva to Richmond Hill ... out with the people for 11 days. There's so much to take in. I love going new places, making new finds, it makes or breaks a trip. Flavour and attitude in neighbourhoods. Three days in a row in the morning I visited the Beaches and walked through the beautiful trees out to the boardwalk. It was like walking in Vondelpark in Amsterdam with the sun, trees, and shadows. I visited College Street neighbourhood three times, Bloor Bathurst to The Annex twice, and on and on. This inner Toronto has always been a place I know. I got around really well and saw lots. Let's leave it at I love to visit, and get out there.

There are just no words to totally describe the beer scene in Toronto. It's all over the place and with the many millions of people in the Greater Toronto area, well, beer sales are huge. You have to go beer hunting and check the taps. Many places have interesting brewery signs outside and offer up a wide variety from import to local to mainstream. I spent lots of my time photographing pubs, cafes, and beer signs on the streets of Toronto. Stick my head in and check things out, feel it out, sometimes have a taste or two then get on the move again.

Many places are themed in the Irish manner with names accordingly and others in the English manner and themed accordingly. It never hurts to check out the taps. Umbrellas out front, or on a patio, often tell a story. If you want good craft brewed beer and atmosphere it's your job and indeed mission as a beer person to keep an eye out for all things beer whilst on the move: Out and About. As a beer traveller I watch for the signs of good beer as I roll and rumble into my favourite spots arriving by Toronto's well-used streetcar. Then the walking begins. I walked easily 100 miles in my 11 days. It's fabulous really. For long distances between visiting neighbourhoods I take Toronto subway, also known as Red Rocket.

I've included this link to help you hunt. It has everything beer you'll need to make your Toronto and Ontario experience a satisfying and memorable beer hunt. As a Canadian, I can't tell you how big a new Canadian experience this last trip was for me. I'll talk about it 'til my next visit. <http://www.greatcanadianbeerblog.com>

Toronto breaks itself down into neighbourhood villages with encouragement on shopping and living within the community. I revisit my favourites every time I go back and indeed that is part of the attraction. My villages of choice are Little Italy (College Street W.). I mention this neighbourhood first because it has some very good places for good beers, which include College Street Bar, Bar Italia, and Café Diplomatico ... all long-time purveyors of real beers. This is the tip of the iceberg in this neighbourhood. To me, this was the first neighbourhood focused on real beers and it continues to show its true style and pizzazz. Add to this the food side of the equation and you can't go wrong.

Little India on lower Gerrard Street (east) has superb cuisine and good beer can be found if you have a look at signage and on the menus. I ate twice here this trip. St Clair Ave west has some good selections, which include Zemra and Faro to name but two, further along St Clair the neighbourhood is called Corso Italia with many cafes to choose from.



Queen Street West is in the action zone, and the oldest name in this group to me from past years of beer hunting is the Rivoli, which is by no means the only good beer spot scattered throughout the zone known as

the Entertainment District. There are many great choices http://www.dine.to/toronto_gta_area_queen_west_strip_venue_bar. Queen Street, way to the east, is the neighbourhood called The Beaches so-called by old timers (now fancified to The Beach) and is hip happening and trendy. Lots of places to choose from. Here's a link http://www.dine.to/toronto_gta_area_beaches_venue_bar



Downtown Yonge Street is Café Volo, a good spot for beer. Another is Three Brewers brew pub. They are an outfit started in France, also in Quebec and now a Toronto location. Check them out here www.les3brasseurs.ca/eng/toronto_yonge.php. In Kensington Market you can find quite a number of hip and happening cafes with good beers to choose from. I overheard young lads having morning coffee in the warm sunshine of October's Indian summer discussing beer and it was all very refreshing to hear. There is a new craft brewery here called Kensington Brewing Co. torontobeerweek.com/events/tbw-ladies-pub-crawl/

The neighbourhood of the Annex (Bloor West) has a wide selection of bars with good choices in beer. Food and interesting finds abound. torontolife.com/guide/bars-and-clubs/bars/?sort=neighbourhood&order=asc.

One of the newest neighbourhoods emerging in the city scene is Roncesvalles Village nicknamed Roncy Village and also known as Little Poland. There are a number of cafes and bars to choose from. Good import and hard to find draught selections to be found. Lots of good food as well. This whole scenario carries on city wide. Pubs are neighbourhood locals with a choice of Toronto's good beers and indeed the province's good beers. ratebeer.com/Places/State/Cities/toronto/59.htm



Great spots still going strong include Mill Street Brewery Tap room in the very interesting Distillery District below King Street near Parliament Street. It was hopping on a Friday night when I was there. They brew wonderful beer. They offer a wide selection not all available at the retail level. It's a chance for those one-of-a-kind tries. On Front Street, one of Toronto's long running beer spots the C'est What still offers many of Ontario craft beers on tap all at one place. It's a logical place to go hunting for real beer. The Granite Brewery continues to lead in cask conditioned ales and has for many many years.

Selection in LCBO is very good and many of the craft and imports are plentiful. Toronto has many good beer events and one is the 7th annual cask festival at the U of T Hart House in October

featuring a wide variety of choices. Not all from Ontario. Check out a tour of Steam Whistle Brewing; very interesting location.

I always enjoy the multi cultural scene, the neighbourhood watering holes and the great diversity in food. Toronto has lots going on and you simply do a little homework to ensure yourself a rewarding, enjoyable, and satisfying outing.

Additives

What's Brewing continues to take great interest in fresh and local events. A few very successful recent events we were at were:

The Great Canadian Beer Festival 2011 – Sept 9&10

What's Brewing has been to all 19 GCBFs. We enjoy seeing what the beer movement has become from a grassroots startup, and our group of like-minded people who all became friends along the way. What's Brewing salutes all the small brewers who incur the expenditure to come to Victoria for this event, although it's not about money after all. It's the Fest of it. Being at this Festival as a brewery means being recognized for your craft and principles. Seeing old friends, sharing stories, creating new alliances and doing some business ... it's all in the mix.

With the largest selection of craft beers in Canada, over 180, it's also the longest running craft festival in Canada and this brings out the serious beer aficionado. So cheers to all who were part of the whole. Good to see so many old friends again this season. It was especially good to see John Mitchell, a lifetime achievement award winner from CAMRA. He got over for a couple of hours thanks to Leslie Fenn. Always good to see the Finkels from Pike

Brewing as well. We'll see you on the site next year. Wonderful festival to be at; with all the energy and great weather. Cheers to all!

8th Annual Gabriola Island Wine Fest in the Surf Lodge - Sept 24

The historic Surf Lodge conjures images of a rustic lodge by the sea from older times ... yes, and it is just that. The whole laid back island just off Nanaimo is in a time of its own.

Alana did a great job bringing a huge selection of high end wines and craft beers for a small local crowd



of well heeled locals in the know. Beers and brewers were all craft in a separate lounge area with a view out across the straights and beyond.

Pouring with reps were Wolf Brewing, Longwood and Howe Sound and other products came from Lighthouse, Driftwood and Sea Cider. A volunteer poured the latter three and did a good job. Before the doors opened I gave her a crash course in all natural beer and its lingo and she did just fine. At the end, organizers put on a buffet dinner for the reps and many stay overnight in the lodge and cabins, and the

after party goes 'til all the great wines for the event are finished off. The selection in local stores is excellent for craft beers and a culture exists in another pocket of small town B.C. for craft followings. A great event ... fresh and local. This the second time What's Brewing has been to this event in its eight years of running.

Hopoxia Oct 01



This kick off to BC Craft Beer Month was held at Phillips Brewing in the back brewery yard. It was a celebration of top of the line beer. Breweries were invited to bring their hoppiest beers and attending were Vancouver Island, Phillips, Howe Sound, Tree, Granville Island, Driftwood, Spinnakers, Canoe, Tofino, Craig Street, Central City, R&B, Whistler, Wolf, and Longwood, all with reps, brewers and owners, and a full compliment of Victoria's enthusiastic beer crowd. It was a fun and upbeat event—a time to celebrate the craft of beer. Well done, Phillips!

Spinnakers Cask Festival Oct 22

What's Brewing tries to get to all local events to stay in touch with what's going on in our patch of beer world. Spinnakers has always been good at hosting and creating events. I caught up with many of the attending brewers at The Brewers Breakfast put on by Spinnakers for the brewers and their teams. Two tables set down in the front right corner looking at Victoria's outer harbour in the morning sun. Is there a better spot to relax before the festival?

As always I heard lots of stories and exchanges going on. The brewing community is strong in B.C. and



Storm 11% Flanders sour red

Swans ESB (dry hopped)

Tofino pale ale (Port Alberni handpicked hops)

Vancouver Island Hermmmanator

As is always the case, there were many industry and real ale lovers in attendance. What's Brewing salutes fresh and local events in the community—it's great to see everyone out in support! §

people take advantage of these events to exchange ideas on new brews, and what's up in the industry, themes, trends and the like.

Breweries attending and flavours in casks:

Canoe brown (chipotle peppers)

Central City pale ale (juniper berries)

Crannog (Blackcurrant molasses chocolate)

Daniel Knibbs IPA (rye)

Dead Frog pale ale (Nelson Sauvignon hops from New Zealand)

Granville Island ESB (fresh hopped)

Howe Sound pumpkin ale (fireball and pumpkin)

R&B IPA (dry hopped)

Phillips 10% IPA

Russell Marzen (Oktoberfest)

Salt Spring 1000th brew ESB (estate hopped)

Spinnakers' three offerings: Pumpkin ale (served from a carved out pumpkin)

Harvest ale (Cascades), Northwest ale (Chinook and Cascades)



Ullage and Spillage

BY J. R A N D O M

It's a rough job but somebody has to do it. Travelling to conferences is a key part of my job and it takes me to a wide range of towns and cities across North America. The great thing about these trips is the opportunity for reconnaissance for future vacations. Most places I end up in, there is also some decent beer to be tracked down. This fall, my work took me to Anchorage and Halifax both of which have their fair share of breweries and brewpubs. I had been to Halifax before and since early October in Nova Scotia seemed likely to yield better weather than late September in Alaska it was the former trip that The Wife and I decided to expand into a vacation.

Just five evenings in Anchorage, not to mention a couple of lunchtimes, still permitted sufficient time to try most of the local craft beers that I figured I might appreciate. The conference hotel was within stumbling distance of both brewpubs, the Glacier Brewhouse and the Snow Goose (Sleeping Lady Brewery). However, the Glacier was on the main drag and packed at all hours whereas the Snow Goose was one block towards the docks and always quiet, despite having a better range of beers. That was definitely the best place for a quick lunch (I thought we weren't going to mention the lunchtimes?). Supposedly it is better-frequented in summer when visitors are attracted by its large deck with views of Denali way off in the distance. Sleeping Lady has deservedly won a bunch of awards and you understand why when you try their Fish-On NW-style IPA, Portage Porter and John Henry oatmeal stout. Their Double Black IPA, Spartan Warrior imperial stout and Old Gander barley wine are even more impressive, but the last two are very much sipping beers. One

disappointment was their cask Scottish ale which was a diacetyl bomb when I tried it.

Glacier Brewhouse's cask was a very quaffable and relatively gentle NW-style IPA. Their Amber ale was pretty much what one would expect from an amber ale and their stout was also quite passable. The stand-out was the bourbon rye bock, a hybrid beer if ever I tasted one, but way-exceeding expectations.

Humpy's—the multi-beer bar a few blocks away—is named after the mature male sockeye rather than a bordello. There I was able to try some out-of-town craft beers such as Alaskan Perseverance Russian imperial stout, Kenai Naptown nut brown, and Silver Gulch Sluice Box English brown. When was the gold rush in England? I forget. Maybe they are confusing it with the Welsh gold rush in '79; that would be 0079.



Further out of town in the unlikeliest of strip malls you find the Moose's Tooth Brewpub and Pizzeria. I would have had low expectations too, if I had not been to a similar hybrid in Colorado Springs, and heard from Adam and Gillian Gile (more of whom later) about the line up of IPAs at Pizzaport in San Diego, the main reason I am voting for San Diego for our next US conference location. The pizzas were very good, if you like that sort of thing, and the beers were excellent. Out of a fairly broad selection, the ESB and the stout had to be sampled, just because they were there.

Even further out of town in an industrial estate, but don't worry the cabs are strangely cheap, lies the Midnight Sun Brewing Company and its "tasting room." By careful reading of the licensing laws and, I suspect, some negotiation with the regulators, they can stay open until 8.00 pm, serve excellent meals and up to a limit of 36 oz of their various beers in 12 oz pours; so chose your beer very, very carefully. I had dragged along three other beer aficionados from the conference so we were able to split up the three - count 'em ... *three* - IPAs among us to start with. Just as well because one was off and, just like fishing, if you only have a three-bag-limit, you want to throw that one back. That allowed me to focus on the Sockeye red IPA, the Meltdown IPA and the Mammoth extra stout, all very good indeed. So if you find yourself talked into a cruise to see the tidewater glaciers before they are gone for the foreseeable interglacial, it is worth booking an extra night or two

in Anchorage so at least you can look forward to a few good beers.

Halifax, Montreal and Vancouver are, to my mind, Canada's triumvirate of great beer cities (sorry Torontot), boasting quantity and quality in both craft-brewery and brewpub categories. That's why we left Halifax as the last stop on our speed-tour of Nova Scotia. First, it was north-east to Baddeck and the Cabot Trail: scenery great, beer scene limited. I did try a Garrison Tall Ship amber ale which prompted



Paddy's Brewpub

the missus to comment that I should really stop trying amber ales because I always say "this is pretty much what one would expect from an amber ale."

A moderate day's drive west brought us to Kentville in the Annapolis valley, much more fertile ground for the beerhound. **Paddy's** Brewpub had much of the feel of a British pub and one of the best bitters I have had for a long time. It went under the appellation of Annapolis Valley ale and was described as their hoppy beer, but was not at all hoppy compared to west coast

bitters. Beautifully balanced, I could not get enough of it. Their Raven Scottish ale had a tad more diacetyl than I like in a Scottish, and their Chimney Swift stout a tad more sour mash than I like in a stout, but the nitro serve took the edge off. This was our first sight of the brewtender, a 112 oz cylinder of beer surrounding a cylinder full of ice equipped with a tap at the bottom. At Paddy's they called it a Giraffe. These are more for those after quantity rather than quality but it would sure stop your Alexander Keith's IPA from warming up, and that's a good thing.

In nearby Port William the Port Gastro-pub is almost as pretentious as it sounds, but with great location, great food and great beer, who gives a flying f---k! As the designated driver, I limited myself to the beer sampler tray, shared with the missus who also got to sup a full glass of Alpha Dog wet-hopped ale. The raspberry wheat would have been great on a hot summer day, the Planter's pale ale was a tolerable starter beer but the Blue

Heron bitter (ESB) was aggressively bitter-harsh with no redeeming features. I did like the Port in a Storm porter and the Alpha Dog but my favourite, despite the name, was the Rojo Mojo red ale, their best seller. It was very much in the style of a southern British bitter. We looked anxiously at the estuary outside the window as the water level kept rising to their highest tide of the year and started to creep into the car park at both ends threatening to strand us in the pub for the afternoon. No such luck! The food was suitably

“gastro,” a porpoise chased salmon in the estuary and we found a scenic footpath to walk off the alcohol before driving on.

Next stop Yarmouth and Rudder's Seafood Restaurant and Brewpub. Their Yarmouth Town brown ale and **Rudders** red ale were OK, if a little on the bland side, but their strong Irish red ale was much better. Best of the lot was a new IPA called Pompey Dick named after the first British Schooner into Yarmouth and nothing to do with the reputation of sailors from Portsmouth. More of an EESB than



Rudders Seafood Restaurant and Brewpub

an IPA, it was very nicely balanced with not as much citrus character as one would expect from the use of the three Cs of Pacific Northwest hops. Cliff the assistant brewer gave me a quick look-see at the brewery, the only one I know of featuring a lobster tank. I was lucky to get an Acadian chicken and potato dish called Rappie pie because it was described on the menu as seasonal. One wonders what time of year their chickens migrate south to Kentucky for the winter.

We hydroplaned most of the way to Halifax, caught up in the skirts of Tropical Storm Ophelia. Again the conference hotel was ideally placed, halfway between the **Garrison** Brewery tasting room and the Henry House of Granite Brewing. On previous occasions I really liked the latter's best bitter special (meaning cask conditioned) but this time it was somewhat underwhelming. Maybe it is just going through a bad patch. Although there are a lot of great pubs in



Garrison Brewery

Halifax, many of them only serve AK so you do need to have friends with local knowledge. The original 25 members of CAMRA Vancouver will remember the two hop-heads from California, Adam and Gillian, as being a major influence on Tony Dewald's ever more hoppy series of delicious IPAs. Gillian, originally from Ottawa, was our membership secretary for a year. They have since moved to the East coast, bought a house and were due to have baby No.1 the day we arrived in Halifax. We took them bottles of Driftwood Fat Tug IPA and Twenty Pounder to wet the baby's head with (latest news: Dylan Reef Gile is a healthy baby boy). We met in Maxwell's Plum, a British-style pub with about 60 beers on tap. They have virtually the whole range of Propellor, Garrison and Pumphouse (of Moncton NB) beers, which gives them a pretty good head start on their total. Adam

had bought a brewtender full of Pumphouse IPA, which was a challenge with Gillian not drinking and an imminent appointment at the Hart and Thistle. Greg Nash, the highly creative brewer, is the reason the "Fart and Whistle" is beer-scene central in Halifax. A very pleasant porter was their only house-brewed product but Greg was just keeping things low-key to build the tension in advance of Nash Bash, his birthday celebration the following Saturday.

Have I mentioned before that I am a lucky bastard when it comes to beer? We did not know about this in advance. It is not often you can sit outside in Halifax and enjoy a beer, especially in early October. It is even less often that you get the chance to try a series of kegs of Greg's seasonal and special beers that have secreted away just for the occasion. The first out was his new seasonal, a fresh-hop IPA, with rather less hop character than he had intended and the typical vegetal character that I am personally not keen on. However, the second was a pin of a delectable double IPA with a secret in its origin that I am not at liberty to

disclose. The third was Hop Ness Monster 2.0, a gorgeous big IPA reminiscent of some of the best well-balanced west coast double IPAs. It had a theoretical 1066 IBU and 9.2% alcohol. I was lucky enough to have been in Halifax when the original Hop Ness Monster came out and, if I remember rightly, 2.0 turned out even better. Finally we got to try his Commissar imperial stout, another huge beer at 10% alcohol with flavours of bourbon, oak spirals and vanilla beans.

As I said, it's a rough job. Oh the conferences? You would have been bored stiff.

Cheers §



Calendar

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

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