



**CAMPAIGN  
FOR  
REAL ALE**

Press Release

CAMRA toasts America's craft brewing revolution with  
new book

**Date:** Monday 3 March 2008  
**Status:** For immediate use

British journalists prove that there's more to American beer culture than big brands

CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale, today publishes Good Beer Guide West Coast USA, written by two young British beer writers, Ben McFarland and Tom Sandham, who have captured in print an infectious enthusiasm for the USA's exciting beer and brewing scene.

"We felt inspired to write the book as so many people are unaware of the joys of American beer," said Ben McFarland, the youngest ever British Guild of Beer Writers' "Beer Writer of the Year". "Fun, fanatical, cutting edge, joyful, often outrageous and bridled in envelope-pushing zeal - America is 'beervana', it's 'brewtopia', it's beer-drinking heaven. And the West Coast is the best place to discover this."

America is now home to more beer styles than anywhere else in the world and its flourishing brewing industry has a growing reputation for quality and innovation. In 1988 there were 46 micros and brewpubs. That figure has now risen to 1390 micros, brewpubs and regional craft brewers, proving that not all American beer begins with Bud and ends with Miller.

Tom Sandham adds, "Any beer fan worth his/her salt should be aware of every international pocket of beer excellence and the West Coast currently boasts some of the most innovative and enthusiastic brewers in the world. The book is a guide to the very best of them and adds to this with comprehensive coverage of the phenomenally successful brewpub scene and the very best beer bars up and down the coast."

This lively and humorous, full-colour, illustrated guide details over 500 hundred breweries, beers and great places to find them on America's West Coast plus Las Vegas, Alaska and Hawaii. The book also includes recommended beers and tasting notes, sections on the history of beer in America and US beer styles. It has all the information, and inspiration on travel and accommodation, beer festivals for the

independent traveller and drinker.

The broad appeal of the title has generated interest on both sides of the pond. Ken Grossman Founder & President of Sierra Nevada Brewing Co. said the title was "An amusing and thorough guidebook that captures the spirit of America's blossoming beer culture."

Good Beer Guide West Coast USA, - featuring Las Vegas, Alaska and Hawaii is priced £14.99 and published by CAMRA Books, on 3rd March 2008.

Available in all good bookshops or direct from CAMRA [www.camra.org.uk/shop](http://www.camra.org.uk/shop) and distributed in the USA and Canada by Trafalgar Square publishing from April 1st 2008. ISBN 978-185249-244-1.

About the Authors:

**Tom Sandham:**

With a degree in American Studies, Tom Sandham, 30, has a comprehensive knowledge of the States and has lived and travelled extensively around the country. As an established drinks journalist he has contributed to a host of top industry and national magazines and newspapers and is currently the editor of the UK bar trade's leading magazine CLASS.

**Ben McFarland:**

Ben McFarland, 31, is a freelance journalist who writes for a number of leading titles including Time Out, the Guardian, Beers of the World and Celebrator and is a columnist for a handful of specialist drinks magazines. In 2004, Ben became the youngest ever recipient of the British Guild of Beer Writers' 'Beer Writer of the Year' award. He won the award again in 2006.

**Both the authors are available for interview.** Ben: 07980 622437  
Tom: 07780991443

Read more about Ben and Tom and the book at [www.camra.org.uk/benandtom](http://www.camra.org.uk/benandtom).

Review Copies and Competition Prizes

A limited number copies for review or as competition prizes are

available by contacting the CAMRA press office on 01727 798443 or email  [\*\*georgina.rudman@camra.org.uk\*\*](mailto:georgina.rudman@camra.org.uk).

For more information:

Contact the CAMRA Press Office on 01727 798443.

Book Review by John Rowling, May 2008

Good Beer Guide to Western USA  
Ben McFarland and Tom Sandham  
CAMRA Books, St. Albans, UK  
Softcover  
£14.99 (£12.99 CAMRA members) \$27.95  
320 pages

I sure wish that we had had this book with us in San Francisco earlier this year. There are lots of hidden gems in the Bay Area that we did not know about. And that's what this book is all about. Unlike CAMRA's UK Good Beer Guide which focuses largely on pubs that are serving cask-conditioned beer, this book is for the traveller who wants to explore the Westcoast beer scene. With this book you can find the great beer bars that only the locals know about and the tourist bureaus have never heard of.

The book is written with the British beer traveller in mind, but there has not been a book like this published since Jack Erickson's 1991 comprehensive "Brewery Adventures in the Wild West". The introductory chapters zip the reader through a brief history of the Westcoast, a few travel and culture hints for the British traveller, a history of American beer, US beer styles, and, beer and food. This introduction is a clear and concise explanation of the development of the Westcoast versions of classic European styles. Then the authors launch into the meat of the book, a beer lovers guide to California, Oregon, Washington, Las Vegas, Alaska and Hawaii. There is an incredible amount of detail which will interest not just the UK tourist but any beer geek that plans to travel through the western USA. Especially interesting is the last section, "The best places to...", with a list of the authors' favourite bars, breweries and hangouts.

This is a very well organized book with clear maps of every venue listed. Nitpicking, I noticed that there are a few page numbering problems, but nothing that a keener couldn't figure out. The illustrations are many and excellent. The language of this book is quite entertaining. For example the San Francisco beer scene is described as "vibrant as a herd of pink elephants on LSD". Be aware that there are some expressions used that will puzzle someone not familiar with the jargon of British English (for example, a "sarnie" is a sandwich).

While the authors are at times humorous and irreverent, they are obviously full of respect for the Westcoast's depth and range of beer styles. The quality of the beer is mentioned frequently. However, they do not pull any punches when it comes to being brutally honest about a few of the pubs. But this only adds to their credibility.

The authors were smart enough to draw on two experts for the states that they did not visit. Celebrator beer News editor, Tom Dalldorf, and Jim "Dr Fermento" Roberts wrote the Hawaii and Alaska chapters respectively. Suffice to say that these two brought to this book the same standards of excellence that Celebrator readers have come to expect from them.

My recommendation: this book is a must for every beer lover's bookshelf. Oh, and a copy must be in the glove compartment of your car. In fact, buy two copies so you're never without: it's that good.

## Fall Pubbing on Vancouver Island

Living in Victoria, we have lots of fall visitors, many of them beer fanatics. We take them to our favourite pubs, and I thought we would share a dozen of these with WB readers. There are some great pubs in Victoria and on north: pubs that offer good beer, good food and just plain good times. Friendly staff will welcome you and make you feel at home. There are several craft breweries and brewpubs on the Island, so there are lots of fresh, local beers on tap for you to sample.

Victoria has four brewpubs with four top class brewers, so start with one of these. The granddaddy of the Victoria brewpubs is **Spinnakers**, established in 1984 at a time when there was no legislation allowing brewpubs! Paul Hadfield and John Mitchell arm-wrestled provincial officials into allowing them to sell beer brewed on site. Today, there are around thirty brewpubs in British Columbia thanks to their perseverance. Spinnakers Brewpub & Guesthouse in Vic West overlooks the busy entrance to Victoria's Inner Harbour, with Washington's Olympic Mountains as a backdrop. Brewer Rob Monk produces beers that range from wonderful classic British ales through Hefeweizen, bocks, and Belgian-style beers. The food is innovative and takes advantage of the available abundant local sources. In addition Spinnakers has an in-house baker and a chocolatier.

Across the Blue Bridge is **Swan's** Hotel and Brewpub. Brewer Andrew Tessier also has a flair for creating great beers and a taste for Belgian beers. His Witbier, Extra IPA and Barley Wine (Legacy Ale) make a visit here mandatory. The heritage hotel is a part of deceased owner Michael Williams' legacy to the University of Victoria, and it is full of his art collection, both in the pub and in the hotel rooms. The building used to be Buckerfield's Feed and Seed and has been converted into a bright, high-ceilinged pub. Friendly staff and good food give Swans a comfortable, traditional feel.

Nearby **Canoe Brewpub** is located in the 1894 BC Electric building where power for the old street cars was generated. In the summer the waterfront patios in front of the old brick building are the best place in Victoria to enjoy a cold one on a sunny day. Inside, despite the high ceilings, there's a very casual comfortable feeling. Because of space restrictions brewmaster Sean Hoyne has only four regular beers, plus a seasonal, but they are among the best beers in town. This May is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Canoe, and Sean has been brewing here since it opened.

**Hugo's** is located in the Magnolia Hotel on Courtenay Street. The house-brewed beer, excellent food and live DJs make this one of Victoria's hot night spots. Brewmaster Ben Schottle's beers are great and sometimes can be a bit over the top! Victoria's most unusual beer, Super G Ginseng Cream Ale, with its gingery finish has a strong earthy character. The name is a leftover from the days when Ben worked at a brewpub in the ski resort of Whistler. And what goes better with beer than pizza? Check out half-price pizzas on Tuesday nights.

The **Garricks Head Pub** is an easy one to miss. Which is a pity, since this pub has one of the best craft beer draft selections in the city. The pub is part of the Bedford Regency Hotel, but the entrance is round the corner in Bastion Square. There has been a pub on this site since 1867. There are records of beer deliveries from the Silver Spring Brewery to the Garrick's Head Saloon from over a hundred years ago. Today, a wide selection of micro-brewed and import beers are available on tap, and the menu is traditional English pub fare. The Garrick's Burger is a whopper at a half pound of fresh ground beef seasoned and flame grilled to perfection. On cool days and nights, customers linger around the wood-burning fireplace, and on warm days the patio is a good place to watch the world go by.

The other downtown pub worth visiting is the **Sticky Wicket Pub** at the Strathcona Hotel on Douglas Street. With over 40 taps this is one of the best in the city for checking out the local brews. There are 275 feet of bars in seven rooms on five different levels. It sounds huge but it is broken up into intimate little corners. It also has the world's only rooftop beach volleyball courts which are very popular in the summer evenings. The bar not to miss here is Big Bad John's which is a local legend. This one of a kind bar holds the first license to serve ever issued in British Columbia and is still going strong. It was opened for visitors spilling over from the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. It has a kind of Paul Bunyan and his Blue Ox type atmosphere complete with tree stump tables and burlap seats where you can enjoy a cold draft and peanuts while reading from the many messages visitors have left over the decades.

On up Island, if you like a pub with a view of beautiful scenery you can't beat the **Brigantine** at the north end of Maple Bay. Sitting on the patio of the Brigantine Inn perched high above the ocean you have a wonderful view of Saltspring Island. You look straight across at Burgoyne Bay with the towering cliffs of Mount Maxwell to the north. Or you can sit inside and enjoy the buzz of the locals. The Brig is now a bright pub with a simple décor, heritage photos, and good quality work by local artists on the walls. The pub used to be somewhat dark and gloomy but long time owners Dorothy Alexander and Brian Leckey have recently given it a facelift. They did not change the pub's distinctive bar built as a mini replica of a brigantine hull. This is the hub of the community with Sunday night jam sessions, an annual golf tournament, and lots of special occasions such as St. Patrick's Day. There's a dock for boaters and a liquor store downstairs. The food is good and the beers on tap cover the bases with national brands plus three imports and five craft beers.

The **Craig Street Brewpub** is a delightfully classy pub located in an old clothing store in Duncan's heritage downtown district. This is a large pub with lots of nooks and crannies giving it an intimate atmosphere. The bar comes from a 1906 Montreal hotel as does much of the wood panelling used throughout the pub. Old growth lumber from the original store has been reused for the grand staircase. Brewer Chris Gress brews four regular house beers. All of the beers are named after paintings by the late E.J. Hughes, the renowned artist who lived in Duncan.

Hughes was a regular and let Chris use his paintings for bottle labels. Reproductions of many of Hughes' paintings hang throughout the building giving the pub a strong West Coast feeling. With good food and beers, and owner Liz Steward buzzing around greeting customers, this has become a favourite meeting place for local people.

The **Crow and Gate** is at Cedar just south of Nanaimo, situated on ten acres of scenic property in the midst of farm land. Jack Nash, an ex-patriot from England built the pub 1972 and it became the first neighbourhood pub in British Columbia. He modelled it after an English pub with pegged beam & plaster, exposed beams, massive stonework open fireplaces, and heavy wood trestle tables. The walls are covered with authentic pub memorabilia from the U.K. creating an ambiance only otherwise experienced if you take a trip to the original pub in Sussex in the south of England. The Crow and Gate is a bit off the beaten track but well worth searching out. It has good food, good beer and a very relaxing atmosphere.

The **Longwood Brewpub** is in the Longwood Station shopping centre at the north end of Nanaimo. The impressive wooden building with the big silver 10 metre-high grain silo next to the entrance is certainly eye-catching. On your left as you enter the pub is the brewhouse proudly on display behind glass walls. Brewer Harley Smith offers a range of beers that cover the entire world of beer styles. From German Wheat Ales and Lagers to British Ales and Belgium fruit beers, Harley brews beers of outstanding quality. The Copper Bock is a huge creamy seasonal lager well balanced with mild hop aroma. Other great beers are the Czech pilsner, the IPA, an Extra Special Bitter, and a Scottish Ale to die for. The food is fresh and local West Coast style. The baked salmon comes with a dill mustard glaze that works very well with the Czech pilsner, and the Halibut with its mango salsa is perfect with the Irish red ale. The Longwood Brewpub is a great place to enjoy wonderful beer and savour a splendid West Coast menu.

**The Blackfin Pub at Comox** is another Vancouver Island pub with a great view. The pub overlooks Comox Harbour and Marina, and faces south west. On a clear day you can see the Beaufort Mountain Range and the Comox Glacier. On a summer evening the deck on the ocean side of the pub is one of the best spots for a beer on Vancouver Island. It goes without saying this is another pub that is popular with its locals. The friendly staff however always makes sure everyone feels welcome. The building is finished in finely crafted cherry wood and Honduras mahogany by local craftsman Ernie Winstanley. Present owners Ed and Lisa Moyes purchased the pub in 2005, and refurbished it with cosy booths and original art work by local artists. The beer selection is modest, but the glasses are 20-ounce pints and the beer is served at the right temperature. The food is great here and they make a lovely rich fish chowder with local snapper, clams, shrimps and scallops.

Three miles north Campbell River, is the **Tyee Pub** at Painters Lodge. Campbell River is the salmon fishing capital of British Columbia. The hotel was built in 1929

by E.P. Painter, a boat builder, near the most popular fishing pools: Frenchman's Pool and the Tyee Pool. The lodge has been a favourite among fishermen and celebrities alike. Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, John Wayne, and Julie Andrews are just a few of the stars who have stayed at Painter's. As BC fishing began to earn its international reputation, the lodge became legendary as the prime location for trophy fishermen seeking giant Pacific salmon. And the pub reflects this with a wonderful salmon skin upholstered bar. The pub has good beer and fabulous pub food, and views of Discovery Passage.



## CAMRA 2010

April 2010 is a very significant date in the history of British Columbia. Not only will all the athletes have finished squabbling over who took the most drugs and gone home, but CAMRA Victoria will be celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its first meeting.

It will be appropriate on that occasion to look back on CAMRA's 20 year record. It appears that while there will be many achievements to talk about, for the most part, we seem to be in danger of having a big blank for the last few years leading up to that anniversary.

It is not too late to rectify this. There are still issues to be pursued. Among them are:

1. Short measures and misleading glassware in pubs.
2. Poor cellarman'ship, especially keeping the lines clean.
3. Labelling beer ingredients, and their origin.
4. Poor BC LDB handling and warehousing of craft beers.
5. LDB listings system that favours the mega-brewers.
6. The inability of brewpubs to be able to sell their own beers in their own private stores (e.g. Spinnakers).
7. Recognizing pubs that serve craft beers in a comfortable pub atmosphere and in true pints or glasses of known volume.
8. Recognizing private and government liquor stores that stock a good selection of import and craft made beers and ales.

Perhaps this is a time when some of the long-term CAMRA Victoria executive should be thinking of handing over the reins to others. I hope this is not read as a criticism of the current executive. Most successful societies have a system of rotating officers in all positions. Let us all think about this before the AGM in January 2009.

Sincerely

John Rowling and Terry Boorman

Book Review October 2008 by John Rowling

**100 Belgian Beers To Try Before You Die!**

Tim Webb and Joris Pattyn

CAMRA Books, St. Albans, UK

Softcover

£12.99 (£10.99 CAMRA members) \$27.95

320 pages

[www.camra.org.uk/books](http://www.camra.org.uk/books)

Hey! I've just found the perfect gift for your hard-to-buy-for beer-loving brother-in-law. You know, the one who has everything and has tried every beer. "100 Belgian Beers To Try Before You Die!" is a challenge to anyone who thinks that they've sampled all the different styles of Belgian beers. This is a fun book because even the most jaded beer aficionado will find something new here. Some of the beers will challenge the taste buds, because this book looks at the new avant garde breweries as well as the old traditional ones.

The authors are well known Belgian beer experts. Tim Webb has been writing about Belgian breweries for over twenty years, and is best known for his *Good Beer Guide to Belgium* published by CAMRA UK. Joris Pattyn is Flemish, and is a well respected beer judge at national brewing competitions around the world.

The introductory sections are very brief, so it is not a book for the novice Belgian beer drinker. You won't find many of your old favourites here – which is, of course, the point of the book. Otherwise it would have to have been 1000 Belgian Beers To Try Before You Die! The book is well illustrated throughout with images of beers, breweries, Belgian beer bars and some of the people involved in Belgian brewing.

Each beer is described on one page. The basic data at the top describes the beer's style and ABV, the available bottle sizes and whether it is served on draught. British and US importers are listed (unfortunately not the Canadian importers). Details of the importers are at the back of the book. There are tasting notes followed by the personal verdicts of the authors. Contact information is given for each brewery along with opening times and details of brewery taps.

This book is also a challenge in that some of the beers are going to be hard to find. One quarter of them are not available in the US, and six of them (Achelse Kluis Trappist 5° Blond, Girardin Oude Lambic, Rodenbach Oud Belegen Foederbier, Walgrave Pick-up Pils, Westmalle Extra Trappist, and Trappist Westvleteren 8°) are not expected to be ever available outside Belgium.

It should be noted that only 95 of the beers are sold in Belgium. At the end of the book, in a section titled Beyond Belgian, one Italian and four US beers are listed as being worthy of review.

I especially enjoyed the rapport that the authors had with each other. There is some good natured joshing, but they obviously respect each others opinions. For example, they include Westmalle Extra Trappist, a light (5.5% ABV!) ale occasionally brewed for the brothers and lay staff of the monastery. Webb writes: "as JPP is the only regular drinker of this beer not in a retreat, he could in fact write whatsoever he wants without much fear of contradiction. A pinch of salt may be required." Further on Pattyn says: "why include a beer you cannot find anywhere unless you take Holy Orders..... Because this is the *ultimate* Belgian session beer, bearing witness as none other that Belgian top quality does not necessarily equate to lethal alcohol content." To which Webb adds: "The idea that the ultimate session beer is found hidden behind cloistered walls for none but the most devout is one of the main reasons I love Belgium.

To which one can only add: Hear, hear!